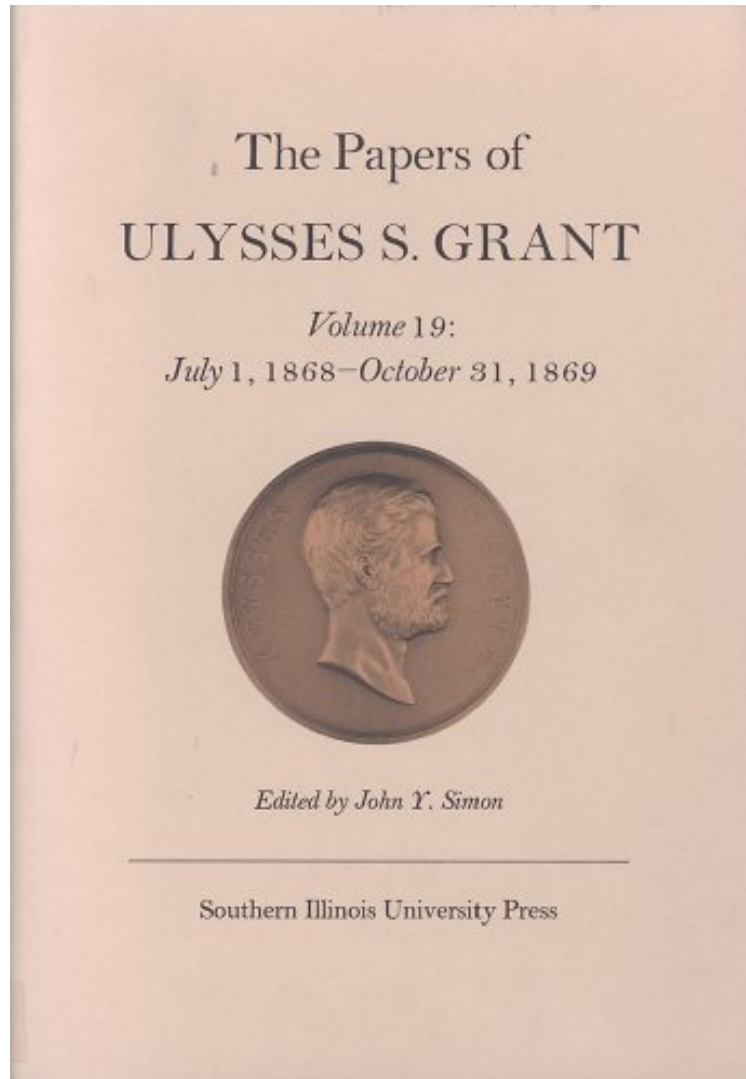


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The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 19: July 1, 1868 - October 31, 1869

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From Southern Illinois University Press : The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 19: July 1, 1868 - October 31, 1869 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 19: July 1, 1868 - October 31, 1869:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Real U.S. Grant By Gloria Mundi The twenty-six (and counting!) volumes comprising all the known extant writings of Ulysses Grant are indeed a remarkable example of published primary source material. While every volume contains much material that is admittedly of trivial importance to even

the most rabid Grant scholar, each book in this series also contains fascinating nuggets of information not found anywhere else. Anyone with even a casual interest in USG is sure to discover something worth reading in every volume. In gathering together not only all of Grant's known correspondence, but relevant peripheral documents, the editors of this series are doing a truly Herculean job and deserve great commendation. I have only a few quibbles with the series. The first involves something over which the editors had no control. I refer to the fact that, in the first few volumes (particularly Volume One,) Grant's descendants insisted that certain passages in Grant's letters to his fiancée-turned-wife Julia Dent that had been crossed out (either by Julia or other family members) not be published. This idiotic decision is not only extremely frustrating for the reader, but, ironically, damaging to Grant himself. By all accounts, the deleted passages contain nothing that could be considered detrimental to Grant's good name, but by leaving them out, these descendants unwittingly gave the impression that there was something to hide. Hopefully, in an "Appendix" volume at the end of the series, the editors will be sporting enough to include whatever deleted passages can be transcribed, and the series will at last be considered complete. My other complaints about this series are more minor. While each volume contains copious, and frequently illuminating, footnotes, the editors occasionally fail to provide enough context. That is to say, a brief, undetailed letter of Grant's will frequently be followed by several pages of footnotes providing other letters and documents on the same subject, without giving much information explaining what, exactly, it all meant. The reader who is not already fully informed on the subject being addressed is sometimes left feeling confused about what exactly is being discussed, and what its relevance may have been. Another drawback is, simply, the price. While these books are certainly handsomely--and obviously expensively--printed and bound, those of us who study history as a hobby rather than as a profession could wish for editions that were more cheaply done, and thus more affordable. Unless you are fortunate enough to have access to a good academic library, these extremely expensive (even when you buy second-hand) volumes are simply out-of-reach for many people. That's a great pity, because in these books is an "insider's view" of Grant that does not fully come across in any regular biography.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A masterful achievement
By Candace Scott "The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant" is a project begun in 1962 for the purpose of publishing all the known letters written by Ulysses S. Grant. Volume one was published in 1967 and there are now twenty-four volumes in the series. People who follow Grant's career are aware of the inestimable value of this project. The Papers contain all known correspondence written by Grant and letters received by him. The editing of the series is unparalleled and the volumes represent primary source material at its apex. Those who believe Grant was a "drunkard" or a "butcher" should read his own words, which show Grant's humor, pathos and unique personality. Masterfully edited by John Y. Simon, these volumes are a "must have" for anyone with an interest in U.S. Grant as a general, a politician and as a man

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This volume carries Ulysses S. Grant through a brief period of welcome calm to the storms of the White House. Seemingly resigned to becoming president, Grant detached himself from military routine in Washington, D.C., during the summer of 1868 to tour the Great Plains. He then settled in Galena to escape the clamor of the presidential campaign. Grant reveled in his respite from official duties, writing to his father, "I have enjoyed my summers vacation very much and look forward with dread to my return to Washington." Grant's residence in Galena shielded him from public scrutiny. "Whilst I remain here I shall avoid all engagements to go any place at any stated time. The turn out of people is immense when they hear of my coming." Grant remained in or near his prewar hometown until the election forced him back to Washington. Grant publicly said that he accepted presidential responsibilities "without fear" but privately lacked eagerness for the office. Even before his electoral victory, he wrote disapprovingly of "the Army of office seekers" and "begging letters" from potential appointees. Never enamored with the "pulling and hauling" so much a part of politics, Grant tried to minimize importunities by withholding names of his cabinet selections until after his inauguration and keeping his policy pronouncements spare and noncontroversial. His earnest desire as president was simply to inspire every citizen to work for "a happy Union."

"The value of these volumes reaches beyond their author, his mail, and message or calendar listings. General Grant is handsomely served by John Y. Simon's flawless editing and presentation, which includes lengthy explanatory commentaries that simplify the reader's understanding. Through every line shines the victor in battle and also the herald who described it. Like Lincoln, Grant knew what the Union had cost."—David L. Smiley, Illinois Historical

