



Grant's Last Battle: The Story Behind the Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant (Emerging Civil War Series)

Chris Mackowski

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"The former general in chief of the Union armies during the Civil War . . . the two-term president of the United States . . . the beloved ambassador of American goodwill around the globe . . . the respected New York financier—Ulysses S. Grant—was dying. The hardscrabble man who regularly smoked 20 cigars a day had developed terminal throat cancer. Thus began Grant's final battle—a race against his own failing health to complete his Personal Memoirs in an attempt to secure his family's financial security. But the project evolved into something far more: an effort to secure the very meaning of the Civil War itself and how it would be remembered.

The news of Grant's illness came swift on the heels of his financial ruin. Business partners had swindled him and his family out of everything but the money he and his wife had in their pockets and the family cookie jar. Investors lost millions. The public ire that turned on Grant first suspected malfeasance, then incompetence, then unfortunate, naive neglect.

In this maelstrom of woe, Grant refused to surrender. Putting pen to paper, the hero of Appomattox embarked on his final campaign: an effort to write his memoirs before he died. The Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant, would cement his place as not only one of America's greatest heroes but also as one of its most sublime literary voices.

Filled with personal intrigues of its own and supported by a cast of colorful characters that included Mark Twain, William Vanderbilt, and P. T. Barnum, Grant's Last Battle recounts a deeply personal story as dramatic for Grant as any of his battlefield exploits.

Authors Chris Mackowski and Kristopher D. White have recounted Grant's battlefield exploits as historians at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, and Mackowski, as an academic, has studied Grant's literary career. Their familiarity with the former president as a general and as a writer bring Grant's Last Battle to life with new insight, told with the engaging prose that has become the hallmark of the Emerging Civil War Series."

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