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Bakalářská práce

Comparison of the Memoirs of Ulysses
S. Grant with Recent Biographies/
Analýza memoárů Ulysses S. Granta
v kontextu současné literatury

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ANOTACE

V této bakalářské práci, student provedl analýzu memoárů amerického generála a prezidenta, Ulysses S. Granta. Speciální zaměření bylo věnováno té části memoárů, která se věnuje Americké Občanské Válce. Podkladem pro analýzu byly tři zvolené biografie zabývající se Grantovou osobou, které student porovnal s výše jmenovanými memoáry. Cílem této práce bylo zjistit, zdali Grantovi memoáry a informace v nich uvedené odpovídají skutečným historickým okolnostem. Pozornost byla také věnována nejen informacím chybně uvedeným, ale také informacím Grantem cíleně opomíjeným.

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the student undertook an analysis of the memoirs of an American general and president Ulysses S. Grant. A special focus was given to the part of the memoirs that deals with the American Civil War. The basis for the analysis were three selected biographies dealing with Grant's person, which the student compared with the above-mentioned memoirs. The aim of this work was to find out whether Grant's memoirs and the information contained in them correspond to historical facts. Attention was also paid not only to wrongly stated information, but also to information deliberately neglected by Grant.

Klíčová slova: Ulysses S. Grant, Americká Občanská Válka, memoáry, analýza, biografie

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1 INTRODUCTION

The American Civil War was the most ferocious conflict ever fought in the history of United States and marked a turning point in its future. It was an inevitable clash of ideologies, the end of which allowed the United States to take its place among the world's most powerful countries. Despite its cruelty, the war made room for men who otherwise would have been forgotten by history and consequently allowed them to become national heroes. The most prominent of such men was General Ulysses S. Grant.

Except for those people interested in history, hardly anyone knows who Ulysses S. Grant actually was. It might seem that he is forgotten nowadays, despite being one of the most influential persons in the history of United States. He successfully led his country out of the terrific war and then served as president for two terms. The last chapter of his life was devoted to writing his memoirs, which were written and published to ensure financial stability for his family after his death.

The theoretical part consists of two chapters. In the first chapter, I described the life of Ulysses S. Grant. In the second chapter, I looked in detail at the attitude of Grant and especially his wife, towards the most controversial problem for the United States at the time, slavery.

The central element of my thesis are the *Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant*. Though the memoirs are held in high esteem by most historians for their factuality, they contain some factual errors and some information was completely omitted from them. Despite the fact that Grant, when writing the memoirs, had several people serving him as “fact-checkers”, the time pressure to complete them before his death was significant, and some mistakes inevitably had to occur in them.

Though the main goal of the memoirs was to secure financial stability for his family, to Grant they also served as propaganda of his own persona. For that reason, he omitted some information, especially those that could potentially harm his image.

In the second part of my thesis, I analysed the *Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant* and compare them with chosen biographies about Grant. I focused only on the part of the memoirs that deals with the American Civil War. I corrected mistakes hidden in the

memoirs, be it dates, chronology of events, or any other information that Grant got wrong. I also focused on pointing out the omitted information and if possible, explain why Grant chose not to include them in the memoirs.

As sources of information, I mainly used the primary text of Grant's memoirs, biographies of U. S. Grant or other strictly historical books. On several occasions in the theoretical part, I used newspaper articles from the 19th century.

I worked on this specific topic for more than one reason. I had previously written about certain characters from the Civil War era and grew interested in the period. I also believe the person of Ulysses S. Grant to be overlooked in overall historiography, and completely omitted in the Czech one. Though this thesis probably will not have an influence on that, I believe it may motivate those around me to learn something about U. S. Grant.

2 ULYSSES S. GRANT

2.1 The life of U. S. Grant

The Grant family put down its roots in America in May 1630, when Mathew Grant reached Dorchester, Massachusetts. After the death of Mathew's wife and a mother to his son Samuel, Mathew married a widow of his late fellow-passenger from the ship *Mary and John*, which had brought them to Massachusetts from Dorchester, England. Eight generations from Mathew and seven from Samuel later, Ulysses S. Grant was born a descendant to both of Mathew's wives by intermarriage. Grant's great grandfather, by the name of Noah Grant and his brother Solomon, "held commissions in the English army, in 1756 in the war against the French and Indians. Both were killed that year."¹

In 1821 Jesse Root Grant, an ardent supporter of the Whigs, former tanner and now foreman in a tannery, married Hannah Simpson and moved to Point Pleasant, Ohio. It was in this small town where Hiram Ulysses Grant saw the light of the day for the first time on the 27th of April, 1822. After eleven years of experience working as a tanner, Jesse established a tannery business of his own in 1823 at Georgetown, Ohio. It was here, where the future president would spend his boyhood years.

Grant describes his childhood in Georgetown as uneventful. Except for two winters, in 1836-1837 and 1838-9, which he spent in the nearby towns of Ripley and Maysville, he attended the local subscription schools from the age of five or six, until seventeen. Due to the fact that Jesse Grant did not receive a formal education as a child and had to educate himself in later years, he wished for his children a life without this disadvantage. Consequently, Ulysses "never missed a quarter from school from the time" since the time he was "old enough to attend till the time of leaving home."² Even though he rarely missed any class, labour was not an unknown thing for him. Unlike his father, Hiram detested the trade. He grew fond of agriculture and any other work requiring handling a horse. In the future years, his excellent horsemanship would prove very handy.

¹ McFeely, Mary Drake, and William S. McFeely. *Memoirs and Selected Letters: Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant, Selected Letters, 1839-1865*. New York, Library of America, 1990, 17.

² McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 22.

In the winter of 1838-9, Jesse Grant received a letter from United States Senator from Ohio, Thomas Morris, informing him that Ulysses might get an appointment to West Point. The power to appoint him was in hands of Thomas L. Hamer, a member of Congress. Hamer and Jesse had a history together, until a heated debate over politics separated them, for Hamer was a Democrat. However, the congressman's decision to appoint young Grant, "healed the breach between the two, never after reopened."³ When writing the name of the newly appointed cadet, Hamer mistakenly assumed that Simpson, Grant's mother's surname, was his middle name. Despite attempts to correct this mistake, Ulysses S. Grant replaced the name Hiram Ulysses Grant for the rest of his life.

Rather than a vision of a career in politics or in the army, traveling was what appealed to him the most. On May 30th or 31st, Grant arrived at West Point and passed his examination for admission, to his own surprise, with ease. "Sharing a common plight, cadets acquired reputations and nicknames that followed them into service."⁴ The future general and Grant's friend in arms and in peace, William Tecumseh Sherman, recalls the memory of how Grant got his nickname:" I remember seeing his name on the bulletin board, where all the names of newcomers were posted. I ran my eye down the columns, and there saw 'U.S. Grant.' A lot of us began to make up names to fit the initials. One said, 'United States Grant.' Another 'Uncle Sam Grant.' A third said 'Sam Grant.' That name stuck to him."⁵

'Sam' Grant was not the kind of a person, who devoted all his time to studying. Even though he spent many hours in the academic library, he hardly excelled in any of his classes, for he had would rather read novels than the books related to his studies. During his second year at West Point, his father sold out the tannery business in Georgetown, where Grant's boyhood had been spent, and moved to Bethel, near New York. Whenever there was a furlough, he was provided with a fine horse by his father and went back to Ohio to visit his former classmates. Upon his final year at the academy, he was to record his choice of regiment, anxiously hoping to join the cavalry. His wishes remained

³ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 29.

⁴ Smith, Jean Edward, *Grant*. Simon and Schuster, 2001. 25.

⁵ William Tecumseh Sherman interview, *New York Herald*, July 24, 1885.

unfulfilled, as he was assigned to 4th infantry. On June 30, 1843, Grant finished his studies and graduated.

Two months after the graduation, Grant reported for duty with 4th infantry at Jefferson Barracks, Saint Louis. The family of his roommate, by the name of Frederik Tracy Dent, from the last year at the academy, resided five miles west of Jefferson Barracks. During his stay in the named barracks, Grant learnt to visit White Heaven, as what the Dent's residence was called, frequently. F. T. Dent had two unmarried brothers and two unmarried sisters at home at the time. His third and oldest sister was spending that winter with the family of Colonel John O'Fallon in Saint Louis. After her return home in February, Grant's visits "became more frequent; they certainly did become more enjoyable."⁶ The pleasure these two shared in that time, was not meant to last forever. In May 1844, the 4th regiment was ordered to leave Jefferson Barrack and head towards Louisiana, near where the annexation of Texas was at hand. Before leaving Missouri, Grant and Julia Dent agreed to share their lives together and get married. This agreement remained unfulfilled till the summer of 1848. Until that time and during the future events, when Grant was required to leave his beloved, they would exchange correspondence regularly.

Texas was a former Mexican state, huge in its territory, but small in the number of its inhabitants. The situation changed when the Mexican government allowed American citizens to colonize this land. These colonists did not respect the supreme government, and brought slavery alongside with them, despite the fact that this institution had been abolished in this nation. Not so long afterwards, they set up their own government and a war between Mexico and Texas emerged. In 1836, the Texans captured Santa Anna, the Mexican general and the hostilities ceased. Not long before the Mexican-American war begun, Texans had offered their unrightfully acquired land to the United States and this offer was accepted in 1845. American troops under the direction of General Zachary Taylor, to whom his achievements in the war would later secure the presidency, were sent to Texas. On April 25, 1846, the war begun.

Grant apparently admired general Taylor. Other veterans of the Mexican-American war later in their lives mentioned how much Grant resembles him. On the other hand, general Taylor had also seen great military qualities in young Grant. In the early phase of the conflict, while residing at Corpus Christi, Taylor went for a ride to the nearby beach.

⁶ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 37.

There he saw Grant failing to explain to his men to clear some underwater obstacles. To derision of other officers, he jumped into the water to demonstrate his demands. The General silenced the officers and added: “I wish I had more officers like Grant who would stand ready to set a personal example when needed.”⁷

For Grant, this conflict was a ‘baptism of fire’. He went through as many battlefields as one man could possibly ever handle. Under Zachary Taylor, “he first saw blood shed at Palo Alto on May 8, 1846, and was also in the battles of Resaca de la Palma and Monterey and the siege of Vera Cruz.”⁸ It was at Monterey, where Grant showed his excellent horsemanship and offered a fascinating spectacle. During the battle, the 3rd and 4th regiments of infantry, which were fighting in the city started running out of ammunition. Grant volunteered to deliver the request for ammunition to General Twiggs, thereby putting himself into a mortal danger. In his memoirs, he describes this deed as follows: “I adjust myself on the side of my horse furthest from the enemy, and with only one foot holding to the cantle of the saddle, and an arm over the neck of the horse exposed, I started at full run.”⁹ He ran so fast that before the enemy snipers even realized what is going on, he was already gone, thus finishing the task without a scratch.

Taylor’s winning streak in the war consequently influenced political balance back in the U.S. so the power of the Whig party skyrocketed. James Knox Polk, the U.S. president of the time, afraid of Zachary Taylor’s growing popularity, decided to divide Taylor’s army and form a new one under the command of Major General Winfield Scott. To him, the task of bringing the war to a final success, was assigned. The 4th regiment was also transferred under his command. After Scott’s army landed and took control of Veracruz, the next step was to take control of Mexico City, the capital city which was 250 miles away.

On the way to the Mexican capital, under the lead of General Scott, Grant “fought in the battles of Cerro Gordo, Churubusco, and El Molino del Rey. After the latter battle, he was breveted first lieutenant.”¹⁰ He received a promotion to the rank of captain after the Battle of Chapultepec. After reaching Mexico City and defeating Santa Anna’s army in front of its gates, both sides agreed to initiate peace negotiations. The results of the peace

⁷ Lafayette McLaws interview, *New York Times*, July 24, 1885.

⁸ *New York Tribune*, July 24, 1885.

⁹ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 80-81.

¹⁰ Tucker, Spencer C., “*The Encyclopedia of the Mexican-American war: A political, social, and Military history*”. Vol. 1. ABC-CLIO. ed. (2013). 271.

treaty signed on February 2, 1848, were bitter for Mexico, as they lost vast territory including California, Texas, and New Mexico.

On July 28, 1848, Grant returned from Mexico to St. Louis, where the Dent family was currently staying, his wife-to-be Julia as well. The wedding was set to happen August 22. Several men from the army attended the wedding, among them was James Longstreet, Julia's cousin, and a future confederate general, who would surrender to Grant at Appomattox in 1865. On the other hand, no one else from the Grant family appeared at the wedding. Jesse Grant was an abolitionist, while the Dents were slave owners. On November 17, 1848, after the honeymoon, Grant reported for duty, bringing his wife with him. After settling problems with wrong assignment of him, Captain Grant was placed in Detroit.

In 1852, he got transferred to California, now without his beloved, for she was already carrying her husband's second son. Here, he hoped to make a fortune and invested in quite a few businesses, such as opening a store or selling ice. Due to a bad luck or people who deceived him, none of his businesses ever turned out profitably. The separation from his wife and his children, the deterioration of his financial situation, consumed him. During his stay "on the West Coast, Grant began to drink more than was good for him."¹¹ Longing for his family and concerned about where he might get assigned next, he decided to resign from military service. The resignation took effect on July 31, 1854. He had returned to St. Louis where he was reunited with his family, without any vision of how to provide for them.

Julia received a farm from her family near St. Louis, though a house had to be built there first. With a large portion of hard work, the home was built. If there was no work to do or no other way to earn money, Grant would "load a cord of wood on a wagon and take it to the city for sale."¹² He managed to sustain this way of life till fall of 1858, when he fell ill with a fever and ague. To survive financially he had to give up farming and sell everything that it required. In May of 1860, he started working as a clerk in his father's store in Galena, Illinois.

During the time Grant was residing in Galena, a Republican candidate, Abraham Lincoln, was elected president. In a rapid succession of events, eleven southern states

¹¹ Smith, *Grant*, 83.

¹² McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 141.

seceded from the Union and on the 11th of April, Fort Sumter was fired upon. The war has begun, and Lincoln called for 75 000 volunteers willing to fight. According to quotes one company, which is 100 men, should be formed in Galena. A former captain, and a veteran of Mexican-American war would be of great service. Even though Grant initially did not want to abandon his family, he accepted the proposition and again joined the army.

On August 5, Grant received promotion to the rank of Brigadier General of volunteers. His first action in the new position was an advance on Paducah, Kentucky. The point of this operation was to prevent neutral Kentucky from joining the confederacy. He reached the city on September 6 and took the city without a single bullet being fired. To assure inhabitants of the city of his good intentions, Grant wrote a proclamation that started with saying: "I have come among you, not as an enemy, but as your friend and fellow-citizen."¹³ This text even got into President Lincoln's hands, who appreciate it and gained his first awareness of Grant.

Grant gained the first combat experience of the Civil War in November 1861, when his army was driven off by the defending southerners at the Battle of Belmont. Despite the fact that the casualties were pretty much the same on both sides, confederates considered this battle a victory since they repelled the attack. He made up for his previous setback by taking Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in February 1862. When asked under which terms he would accept the capitulation of the latter fort, he replied with: "My terms are immediate and unconditional surrender"¹⁴, therefore getting a new nickname alongside a promotion to Major General.

On the 6th of April, in the early morning hours, the Union army got surprised by the confederates near Shiloh. The army began to panic and dissolve. General Sherman with his men managed to hold the enemy's progress but had many wounded casualties in the process. Main goal of the day was to hold the enemy off until reinforcements arrive. Thanks to Grant's clever use of the terrain and his dogged determination, the fighting stopped in the evening, giving the Union Army time to organize itself. In the night, General Buell's army arrived. The next day the Union Army counterattacked and eventually scored a victory. This battle came down in history as the bloodiest one fought

¹³ McFeely, William S., *Grant*, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2002, 153.

¹⁴ Catton, Bruce, *Grant moves south*, Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1960, 174.

on the American soil till that time. It had also shattered the idea of bringing this war to an end by any means other than the total conquest of the South.

Vicksburg, Mississippi was the second most important city of the Confederacy after Richmond, Virginia. Seizing it would mean taking control of the Mississippi river and splitting the enemy territory in two. This campaign was Grant's masterpiece and consisted of crucial naval operations, manoeuvres and as much as eleven battles. It all took place between December 26, 1862, and July 4, 1863. In the end, the city was captured, the river controlled by the Union, and the South divided.

In late fall of 1863, a Union army had found itself trapped and surrounded in Chattanooga, so Grant was sent to do what he does best, solve a problem and win. Even though his plans did not go as expected, Grant showed a great strength of mind and adaptability and eventually secured a massive victory, consequently opening Georgia to invasion. On March 2, 1864, Grant received promotion from Abraham Lincoln to the rank of lieutenant general, "a rank that had been held by only one man: George Washington."¹⁵ It meant that he would be in charge of all of the Union armies and its campaigns. Upon receiving the promotion, he got also ordered to move from the Western Theatre to the Eastern Theatre. The latter one used to be a source of constant bad news for President Lincoln. The generals there were changed quite often, no progress had been made and the Confederate army under the command of Robert E. Lee even managed to threaten Washington D. C. Now the two greatest generals of the entire war would face each other.

The series of battles that followed Grant's transfer granted him a new nickname in the media of "Butcher". After the battle of the Wilderness fought in May 1864 the casualties were so high, that Grant, known for not showing any emotions, wept. The battles of Spotsylvania and North Anna brought the nation another reasons for grief. One thing that made Grant such a successful commander, was that he never retreated. He knew he had to keep pushing Lee, until the very end. He had an ace up his sleeve that Lee did not. He could simply replace his fallen soldiers with new ones, but Lee could not. At the battle of Cold Harbor, the unionists suffered a disastrous defeat, yet Grant kept on pushing. From June 9, 1864, to March 25, 1865, a siege of Petersburg took place. During that time, General Sherman was besieging Atlanta but managed to take the city earlier and caused

¹⁵ White, Ronald C., *American Ulysses: A Life of Ulysses S. Grant*, New York, Random House Publishing Group, 2016, 313.

a great loss to Southerners. In the besieged Petersburg, hunger and trench warfare began to dissolve the will to fight of the defenders. Lee's men lost faith in his commander and started deserting. Lee had to abandon Petersburg and nearby Richmond and hoped to escape with his army. His plan did not work out and his army got caught between the Unionists. On April 9, at the Appomattox Court House, General Robert. E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant, dispersing all hopes of a Confederate victory in the war.

Five days after Lee's surrender, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's Theatre by John Wilkes Booth, and Andrew Johnson took his place. U. S. Grant remained the chief of the Union Army from 1865 to 1869. There was a war with the Natives in the west during this period among other struggles, but most of his time was occupied with the Reconstruction of the South. Reconstruction in its core was a military occupation. The goals of this occupation were to rebuild infrastructure, to help transition newly freed people and to restructure legal systems to protect those people. Grant did not have the same amount of respect for President Johnson as he had for his predecessor. Their dispute partly contributed to an escalation of a conflict between the President and the Senate, which resulted in a failed attempt to impeach Johnson. On the other hand, Grant's popularity grew to the point where he was chosen as a Republican presidential candidate. The elections of 1868 were firmly in his hands and on March 4, 1869, became the youngest President up to that point in time.

Grant's presidency was filled with controversies. The media labelled him as an alcoholic and a dictator. The latter label was related to the Reconstruction and a fight with emerging Ku Klux Klan, because martial law was used frequently. To some people it seemed overused. To succeed him at the rank of commanding general of the army, he chose the man whom he trusted deeply and who stood with him during the darkest of times, General William T. Sherman. Grant served two terms and in March of 1877 left the Oval Office, succeeded by Rutherford B. Hayes.

The next two and a half years, Julia and Ulysses Grant spent touring around the world. They met with various eminent people, such as Victoria the queen of England, Pope Leo XIII or Otto von Bismarck. Wherever Grant appeared, he was welcomed as the great Civil War hero by thousands, even hundreds of thousands of people. Grant also served as a nonofficial representative of the United States, displaying the power and prominence of his country. In addition to the majority of European countries, they also visited east Asian

countries such as China or Japan. They were received with great fanfare upon their return to the states.

During the 19th century, former presidents of the United States were not granted any pension and his tour around the world was costly. To make for a decent life, Grant and his son Buck opened up a firm with Ferdinand Ward, a Wall Street's new rising star, named Grant & Ward. After an initial success and following failures, Grant found out he was deceived by Ward. This business did not only cost him almost all of his money, but he sold many of his war mementos to pay off a debt that he was told not to pay back. His honour was dear to him, so he promised to repay everyone to the last penny.

In 1884, another heart breaking new came to the Grant family. The former president was diagnosed with throat cancer, caused by his fondness for cigars. Now without money and with a death sentence, Grant's mind was fully concerned with how to provide for Julia once he was gone. He was told several times previously that his memoirs could raise a lot of money. The initial plan was to publish his memoirs for *The Century Magazine*. However, Samuel Clemens, better known as Mark Twain and Grant's good friend, proposed such a generous offer that Grant agreed to let him publish the book.

Once the work on the memoirs commenced, Grant could hardly be found doing anything else than dictating, reading, or listening to what had already been written. Frederick Grant and Adam Badeau were of great assistance to him, writing, fact checking or generally taking care of the sick general. On July 18, 1885, the work was finished, and the memoirs were ready to be published. The book eventually ended up netting an enormous sum of 450 000 dollars for Julia, securing her for the rest of her life. With his work finished, it seemed nothing remained to keep him alive. He achieved and finished everything he needed to and was ready to rest.

Aged 63, near Mount McGregor, in a cottage in Wilton, New York, Ulysses S. Grant died on July 23, 1885. His deathbed was surrounded by his sons Fred, Jesse and Buck, his daughter Nellie, his wife Julia, and doctor John Douglas. "With flags lowered to half-mast across America and mourning symbols swathing the White house, the Grant family conducted a private funeral at Mount McGregor on August 4."¹⁶ Two days after the funeral, the casket with Grant's body began its journey to New York City. When the train carrying the casket was passing Grant's alma mater, West Point, local cadets saluted the

¹⁶ Chernow, Ron, *Grant*, New York, Penguin Press, 2017, 955.

formal General. “Tens of thousands of people awaited Grant’s arrival in New York City.”¹⁷ His body was placed In the City Hall for the next 24 hours, so that people could pay their homage to him. As much as three hundred thousand people came to say goodbye to their former President that day.

On April 8, the casket containing the remains of General Grant set out on its last path. Carried by twenty four black stallions and followed by hundreds of thousands of people including famous Civil War generals and Grant’s friends, like William T. Sherman, the casket made its way through the streets of New York City up to Riverside Park. “Two hours later after a short service. Grant’s casket was officially interred in the temporary mausoleum.”¹⁸ General Grant’s eternal rest was interrupted on April 17, 1897, when his remains were transferred to a newly built tomb, officially named *General Grant National Memorial*. “Commanding a hill on the north end of Manhattan’s Riverside Park, 270 feet above the Hudson River, the huge 160-foot gleaming granite and marble mausoleum is one of the most impressive Civil War monuments ever built and the largest tomb in North America.”¹⁹ When Julia Grant died on December 14, 1902, her remains were laid to rest beside her husband.

¹⁷ Perry, Mark, *Grant and Twain: The Story of a Friendship That Changed America*, New York, Random House, 2004, 229.

¹⁸ Perry, *Grant and Twain*, 231.

¹⁹ Waugh, Joan, *U. S. Grant: American hero, American myth*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009, 262.

2.2 Julia and U. S. Grant and slavery

Throughout the course of the Civil War, General Grant rose to the position of the second most prominent leader of the Union. The question of slavery was what initiated the partition of the nation, but its abolition was not the main objective of the war, nor the political policy by the new president. After President Abraham Lincoln issued the “Emancipation Proclamation” on the first day of January 1863, the conflict took on another meaning. From that point on, the war was not just about preventing the secession of the southern states, but also to fulfil the idea from the Declaration of Independence that all men are born free, regardless of the colour of their skin. As noble deed as the abolition of slavery was, naturally the southern slaveowners would not accept it willingly. President Lincoln might had given a promise of freedom to all the African American people living under whips of their masters, but to actually free those people was a job for military leaders, particularly for Generals William T. Sherman and Ulysses S. Grant and their divisions. Born into an abolitionist family, Grant always despised slavery. The public, slaves especially, saw him as the man who fulfils Lincoln’s Proclamation and delivers freedom. As clear as his relationship to slavery was in public, in his home however, the subject of slavery was more delicate. Long before he became a great general and a Civil War hero, U. S. Grant married into a family of the slaveowner Frederick Dent. Whenever in the future Grant’s dedication to President Lincoln’s cause was questioned, it was usually caused by his wife Julia.

On January 26, 1826, Julia Boggs Dent, future first lady of the United States was born as a fifth child of Frederick Dent in Missouri. “The Dents owned eighteen slaves who worked on White Haven”²⁰, as the Dent estate was called. During her childhood, Julia cultivated warm relationships with her father’s slaves. She grew especially close to a slave girl of approximately the same age, with whom she shared the same first name. To avoid mystification, Mrs. Julia changed the slave girl’s name to Jule. Since the time Julia received Jule as a present for her fourth birthday, Jule had been a loyal and especially dear to her mistress.

In their early years, Julia and Jule would spend a lot of time playing together and escaping from the rush of White Haven, as if they were nothing more than friends. When

²⁰ Fitz-Gerald, Christine Maloney, *Julia Dent Grant, 1826-1902*, New York, Children’s Press, 1998, 19.

the girls grew older, their roles in the social hierarchy became clear to both of them. Mrs. Julia rose to be a traditional southern lady, expected to marry a man of high rank who would provide for her, while Jule was to be Mrs. Julia's servant. Despite each of them standing on a different side of the barricade, they remained close friends into adulthood.

Ulysses S. Grant began visiting White Haven in 1844. Mrs. Julia fell in love with him, "despite his objections to slavery and his respectful disagreement with her father on almost every conceivable issue"²¹ When Julia became engaged to Grant, she was afraid to inform her father of this news, for Frederick Dent would probably not welcome a man of Grant's position and beliefs into the family. The matter had to be postponed, as the war on Mexico was beginning. After the conflict ceased, and Captain Grant returned to Julia, Mr. Dent was no longer against their commitment, yet he still believed the life of a soldier's wife would not suit his daughter. The reason which caused this shift in Mr. Dent's opinion was that Grant very likely saved Julia's brother's life during the Battle of Molino del Rey. The wedding fully displayed the difference of the newlyweds' origins. Not a single member of the Grant family showed up for the ceremony.

After Captain Grant resigned from the army in 1854, he worked on the land his wife received from her father. During the same year, Grant purchased a slave from his father-in-law, as an addition to those that belonged to Julia, even though her father was their official owner. He was often mocked for working alongside slaves. This state of affairs would please neither of his families, because to his father owning slaves was wrong, but to his father-in-law seemed wrong to work alongside them. Though as a matter of fact there were many Southerners who worked alongside their slaves in the South. During Grant's most desperate financial times in 1859, after he had to give up farming and sell all his farming related tools to make ends meet, when he had to move to Galena, Illinois to work in his father's leather store, he chose not to sell his slave, but rather to set him free. When Julia found out, she was displeased. "I would free your slaves too, were they mine"²², Grant told his wife. Julia at that time believed that slaves were happier when serving their masters than being free, because her father treated them reasonably.

When southern states seceded from the Union and the Civil War broke out in the spring of 1861, Grant at that point residing in Galena accepted the proposition and joined the

²¹ Chiaverini, Jennifer, *Mrs. Grant and Madame Jule*, New York, Penguin Random House, 2015, 16.

²² Chiaverini, *Mrs. Grant and Madam Jule*, 64.

army of the Union. For Julia, this meant that her husband would fight against members of her own family. Grant did not consider himself an abolitionist, but he believed this rebellion would bring an end to the institution of slavery. Julia believed in her husband and in the Union, yet she did not believe that victory of the Union would necessarily mean ultimate victory for the abolitionists.

Grant's actions before the war broke out pointed out that he did not sympathise at all with the idea of owning and selling people. Few weeks after Fort Sumter was fired upon, Grant showed disregard to the matters of slavery in a letter to his father, stating that after the Confederacy loses a few battles, the prize of slaves will collapse, and no one will want to own them anymore and that will solve the problem. In another letter addressed to his father, written on August 3, 1862, Grant again shows no intention regarding any slave, "to effect his freedom or to continue his bondage."

While Grant was residing in Cairo, Illinois at the Southern border with slave states, yet a free state, in 1861, he asked his wife to join him there. To the general's surprise, his wife also brought her slave Jule alongside her. The people around Grant disliked the image of the general's wife being followed by a slave while their soldiers fought to free those enslaved. They also believed that it was harmful to the general's public image. On several occasions, General Grant criticised his wife for her approach towards slaveholding, and stated that if Jule were to run away, he would wish for her nothing but the best of luck. The idea of running away was stuck in Jule's mind for quite some time, but she did not dare to do it yet.

Later in life Julia recalls the historical landmark this way: "Eliza, Dan, Julia, and John belonged to me up to the time of President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation."²³ Even after that, Jule remained in the service of Mrs. Julia up to the next year. In 1864 Julia's son Fred fell seriously ill in St. Louis while Julia accompanied her husband in Nashville, Tennessee. Julia immediately departed accompanied by Jule. At the train station in Louisville however, Jule ran away from her mistress, perhaps fearing the loss of her freedom in Missouri. The only information on Jule provided in Julia Grant's *memoirs* after that, is that she "married soon afterwards."²⁴ Their parting hurt Julia, but she had to

²³ Simon, Johny Y. (ed.) *The personal memoirs of Julia Dent Grant: Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant*, Southern Illinois University Press, 1988, 83.

²⁴ Simon, *The personal memoirs*, 126.

hurry to be with her son in his hour of need. Luckily, young Fred overcame the disease that nearly killed him.

During the war and especially after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, slaves began to leave their masters' plantations. Even though the Proclamation did not apply to Missouri, because it officially remained with the Union during the war, the same thing happened at White Haven, from which slaves walked off.

As the war progressed, Julia felt that "all the comforts of slavery passed away forever."²⁵ She definitely associated slavery with her childhood, which was indeed very happy, rather than slavery itself. When Ulysses S. Grant ran for president, Julia felt even more joy than the candidate himself, and accordingly helped him significantly to be elected. During his presidency, Grant fought for the rights of black people. With the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment, former slaves were allowed to vote. The Department of Justice was formed to secure protection of the newly freed men. A war upon Ku Klux Klan was waged, and the organisation was temporarily dispersed. Grant passed the Civil Rights Act, banning segregation in education and in public transportation, but this act was later struck down by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional.

The relation to slavery of Ulysses S. Grant is intriguing. From his early days he was against owning and selling people, yet he would not call himself an abolitionist, much like Abraham Lincoln himself. As a civilian he freed his only slave, yet previously he had purchased him. As a general he was President Lincoln's greatest man and freed a great number of slaves, though General Sherman freed many more in his campaign in the South. but in privacy he showed no regard to the question of slavery. As president, he fought to secure rights and freedom to the former slaves. During his lifetime, his position on the issue of slavery did not change much. During her life, Julia Dent Grant grew from a girl enjoying all the benefits of slaveholding, into a woman fully supporting her husband in destroying it.

²⁵ Simon, *The personal memoirs*, 34.

3 COMPARISON OF THE MEMOIRS

3.1 Shiloh

After the war broke out and President Lincoln called for volunteers for service in the Union Army, a meeting was held in Galena, Illinois, where Grant was currently residing, to form a company. Even though Grant was a stranger in the city, he was the only one in the town who already had any military experience, so he was offered a captaincy of the newly formed company, which he refused.

I declined the captaincy before the balloting, but announced that I would aid the company in every way I could and would be found in the service in some position if there should be a war.²⁶

Information that Grant omits in his memoirs is the reason why he chose not to accept the proposition. All of his biographers, and McFeely especially emphasize this information, agree that Grant expected to be offered a position in the regular army and “to take a command of a volunteer company would be a demotion.”²⁷ Even though he did not accept to command the company, he helped to muster the men and trained them.

After Grant was appointed colonel of the 21st Illinois regiment, a much higher rank than captain, while residing in Springfield, he received his first order to move with his men to Quincy, Illinois, on the Mississippi River near Missouri, a slave state. The information on when Grant and his men left Springfield and set out on the march varies among authors. According to Smith and the memoirs, the 21st regiment left Springfield on the 3rd of July. Chernow however states that the regiment left the city on 3rd of June. Chernow’s date is surely just a typographical error, as it would have meant that Grant had been in command of the regiment two weeks before being appointed its colonel.

Other information related to the movement of the 21st regiment from Springfield which differ from one author to another, is at what point of the march the final destination was changed from Quincy, Illinois to Ironton, Missouri. Grant informs and Smith confirms that the final destination was changed after the regiment crossed the Illinois river, before reaching Quincy. Chernow states that the order arrived while the regiment was already in

²⁶ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 153.

²⁷ McFeely, *Grant*, 73.

the town. McFeely makes no contribution to the question because, according to his book, the regiment headed straight to Missouri from Springfield. The following events such as Grant's promotion to the rank of brigadier-general, moving to Cairo, Illinois and occupation of Paducah, Kentucky are described in the memoirs just as they are in the biographies.

When Grant left Cairo before the battle of Belmont, he was ordered to conduct a military demonstration by the Mississippi river. The order clearly stated not to engage in a combat.

I had no orders which contemplated an attack by the National troops, nor did I intend anything of the kind when I started out from Cairo.²⁸

Neither McFeely nor Chernow questions Grant's intentions to fight. However, according to Jean Edward Smith, Grant possibly planned the attack. The General discussed the possibility of an attack on Belmont with Captain Porter a month before the battle. Also, Commodore Andrew H. Foote "sat down with Grant to plan the operation."²⁹ General Grant also supposedly discussed his plan of the attack on Belmont with General Smith, but this information is just hearsay. Even though he would have had a plan, he could not disobey the direct command of a superior officer. So, when the order to conduct a demonstration came, it was an opportunity for Grant to carry out his plan. The battle of Belmont could scarcely be called victorious for the army of the Union, but Grant at least managed to burn the enemy camp and weaken the Confederacy's position in the area.

After the "battle" of Belmont, but not as a result of it, General Fremont, Grant's superior, and the chief of the Department of Missouri, was replaced in command by Major-General Henry W. Halleck. According to the memoir, this change took place on the 9th of November. Ron Chernow in his work states that it actually happened on the 19th of November. Other authors do not present an exact date of this event, for instance McFeely only states that it happened "just days after Belmont."³⁰ Unfortunately, this trend of two different dates continues even among Halleck's biographers, one half of them giving the date the 9th of November, and the other half the 19th of November.

²⁸ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 153.

²⁹ Smith, *Grant*, 136.

³⁰ McFeely, *Grant*, 94.

Of the 2nd of February, after General Grant received permission from the commander General Halleck, he began to move on Fort Henry on the Tennessee River. The army under Grant's command could not be moved by the river, for there were not enough boats to carry, according to his memoirs, 17 000 men. Jean Smith determined the number of soldiers under the General's command at 15 000, meaning Grant slightly exaggerated the number of his men.

Before the attack on Fort Henry, 2500 out of 2600 confederate soldiers that were defending the fort moved from it to a nearby Fort Donelson. After Fort Henry was taken and its commanding Confederate general Lloyd Tilghman captured, he told Grant that the men abandoned their position on his command.

On our first appearance Tilghman had sent his entire command, with the exception of about one hundred men left to man the guns in the fort, to the outworks on the road to Dover and Donelson, and before any attack on the 6th he had ordered them to retreat to Donelson.³¹

Opinions on this retreat differ among Grant's biographers. McFeely accepts and believes in Tilghman explanation the way Grant recorded it in his memoirs. Smith opposes this explanation, for it being a "revised rebel version"³² and states that the soldiers were afraid of the incoming artillery fire, panicked, abandoned their positions, and ran to safety to Fort Donelson. Smith believes that "Grant was perfectly happy to accept the revised version because he was embarrassed that the 1st division had not move quickly enough to cut the Donelson road."³² Ron Chernow approaches this issue more cautiously and admits that both theories could be true.

The Battle of Fort Donelson as presented in the memoirs is described very similarly in all the biographies. The only information that slightly differs among the authors is how many Confederate soldiers were defending the fort before the battle began and how many of them Grant actually captured when he conquered the fort. The difference in numbers among the authors is in hundreds, or in lower thousands. What all authors, Grant included, agree on is that the exact number of soldiers simply cannot be determined but only estimated. Highest number of the defenders of the fort before the battle is estimated at 21 000. The lowest figure given is approximately 17 000 men. The number of captured soldiers most frequently used is around 15 000.

³¹ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 192.

³² Smith, *Grant*, 147.

Once the two forts were captured and Grant was accordingly promoted to Major-General, his next objective was to take control of two towns on the Cumberland River, Clarksville, and Nashville. Thanks to the success at Fort Donelson, both towns were evacuated and could have been taken without a single drop of blood. Unfortunately for the newly appointed Major-General, he could not take the towns himself, for he had not received permission for such action from General Halleck. In his memoirs, Grant recalled that he wrote to department headquarters that “I should go to Nashville myself on the 28th if I received no orders to the contrary.”³³ There is no other date or any mention of a change of date related to his visit to Nashville in his memoirs, signifying that no change occurred and he proceeded according to what he wrote to headquarters. Grant probably got the date wrong because every biographer of him states that he arrived in Nashville on February 27th.

On the 6th and 7th of April, one of the key battles of the American Civil War took place, the Battle of Shiloh. Grant in the head of the army, which would be later called the Army of the Tennessee, was preparing an attack on an important railway junction, Corinth, Mississippi. While Grant and his army were based at Pittsburg Landing, only twenty miles from Corinth, he got caught by surprise by a Confederate army led by General Albert Sidney Johnston. According to the memoirs, Johnston set out with his army from Corinth on the 2nd of April. This information is not correct. On the 2nd of April, Johnston received word from another Confederate general, P. G. T. Beauregard, advising him to advance against the army at Pittsburg Landing before it was fully prepared and reinforced. “It was on April 3 that Albert Sidney Johnston put his army in motion toward Pittsburg Landing”³⁴

In his final years, Grant wrote in his memoirs that on the morning on the eve of the battle, “About eight A.M., I found that the attack on Pittsburg was unmistakable.”³⁵ However, judging by his correspondence, it is “crystal-clear that he had no intimation of a massive attack in the offing.”³⁶ I believe the reason behind Grant’s revision of history is not simply a lapse of memory. Even though in the future he surely atoned for all of his mistakes, he was ashamed to admit that he underestimated his opponents and that the

³³ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 216.

³⁴ Smith, *Grant*, 183.

³⁵ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 226.

³⁶ Chernow, *Grant*, 197-8.

battle became bloodier for Union soldiers than it might have been, because of his miscalculation.

During the first day of the battle, in the early afternoon, main Confederate general Albert Sidney Johnston was shot in the calf of his right leg, and in less than hour died as a result of that injury. He was subsequently replaced in the command of the army by P. G. T. Beauregard. Grant believed that Johnston, despite being aware of the injury, continued in supporting his men and kept their morale as high as possible. Looking at Johnston from Grant's perspective makes him seem as a determined and brave leader, who cared more about his men rather than about his own life. Although Johnston's actions indicate that he was no coward, Smith offers a simpler explanation for why Johnston did not care about his wound, even though it might have saved his life. In 1837, Johnston took part in a duel where he "was struck in the right hip by a pistol ball that cut the sciatic nerve. From that time onward, his leg had been numb to pain, heat, and cold."³⁷ It was not however, and never will be figured out whether Johnston was aware of the fatal injury or not. The fact that he did not seek help, supports both interpretations.

In the evening and night, after the firing ceased on the first day of the battle, reinforcements under the command of Union Generals Buell and Wallace began to arrive in support of Grant. These new circumstances heavily changed the course of the battle, as the number of soldiers under Grant's command had more than doubled. Grant described the situation of his enemies at night and in the morning on the 7th as follows.

It is known now that they had not yet learned of the arrival of Buell's command. Possibly they fell back so far to get the shelter of our tents during the rain, and also to get away from the shells that were dropped upon them by the gunboats every fifteen minutes during the night.³⁸

It is true that the Confederate general P. G. T. Beauregard did not act according to the new circumstances. Indeed, he did not know about the arrival of Buell's men. However, one of his subordinates knew that something was going on in Grant's camp. One of Beauregard's subordinate commanders, William Hardee received in the night a report from Nathan Forrest, a commander of the cavalry corps and a future first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, informing him that there was a huge boat traffic on the Tennessee River and that the boats are transporting soldiers. Hardee believed that to be good news,

³⁷ Smith, *Grant*, 195.

³⁸ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 235.

as it meant that the Union soldiers were retreating. With this thought, Hardee went to sleep without forwarding the report to Beauregard.

Other information that Grant did not describe correctly, is why the Confederate soldiers were present at what was a Union camp only a day before. Jean Smith explains that the soldiers were not seeking shelter, but plunder. It was a common practice at the time, and also one of the reasons why the Confederate army did not secure a clear victory on the first day of the battle. A good number of soldiers began to plunder the camp once its defenders were driven from it. Other information confronting the idea of Confederates seeking shelter from rain and shells comes from Ron Chernow. “Many soldiers died of exposure that night while the living found no shelter as they slept in puddles.”³⁹

In the early morning of the second day of the battle of Shiloh, Grant’s army launched a counterattack. By three o’clock in the afternoon, the battle was over, and the Confederate soldiers were driven back to Corinth, Mississippi. The events of the second day are described the same in the memoirs as they are in the biographies. A bit surprisingly, everyone even reports the same number of casualties, 24 000 combined.

³⁹ Chernow, *Grant*, 204.

3.2 Vicksburg

On April 30, the troops at Pittsburg Landing, which were once under Grant's command, now under the command of General Halleck, began to move on Corinth, Mississippi. On the same day, Halleck decided to reorganize the army's command structure. General Grant "was named second to be in command of the right wing and reserve."⁴⁰ Halleck wanted Grant to be his adviser, rather than commander. To be second in command of all the Union forces in the west seems like a prestigious position, but not for Grant. Throughout his military career, he never was someone's adviser, but was always in charge of at least a regiment. To command the right wing of the army might have offered a partial satisfaction for Grant's desire to lead, and even though he stated in his memoirs that he was, Grant was nevertheless not put in charge of the right wing. The man who actually was put in command of the right wing was George Thomas.

On May 30, units under the command of General Halleck entered into the abandoned city of Corinth. Thanks to Halleck's indecisiveness, Beauregard's men had enough time to evacuate the city. After that, Halleck returned to St. Louis and Grant assumed his previous command. The summer of 1862 was a defensive one for Grant. Not having enough men to strike on the enemy, he was forced to defend the newly acquired territory from the Confederate Generals Price, Van Dorn, and Bragg. On the 19th of September, a battle of Iuka took place. What was planned to be an easy Union victory over General Price, turned out to be, thanks to unfortunate weather and a mistake, a missed opportunity with the Union army suffering more casualties than its enemy.

On October 3, General Van Dorn decided to regain possession of Corinth. Grant does not capture this battle correctly in his memoirs. Firstly, despite the fact that from the perspective from which Grant describes the battle it may seem that he was directly involved in it, the opposite is true. The defence of the city was commanded by General Rosecrans.

Secondly, he believed that "on the 4th Van Dorn made a dashing attack."⁴¹ However, according to Smith, "on October 3 the Confederates struck Corinth with full fury."⁴² From Grant's description, the battle began on October 3 with some minor skirmishes, but the

⁴⁰ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 248.

⁴¹ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 279.

⁴² Smith, *Grant*, 218.

main events of it happened the next day. That is untrue, as the main attack on the city happened the first day of the battle.

Thirdly, Grant wrote that Van Dorn's attack repelled and a counterattack, so that victory was secured. When mentioning the counterattack, Rosecrans name is completely omitted and other commanders are presented instead, even though it was him who ordered the counterattack. In his description of the battle, Grant did not praise Rosecrans for his actions and completely omits his courage. He stated that Rosecrans managed to defend the city solely thanks to defensive fortifications built after Halleck's departure, therefore meaning built during Grant's command. This approach towards Rosecrans is unjust, because as witnesses of the battle later claimed, "Old Rosy was all over the battlefield, rallying his men. After one day his clothing was sprinkled with blood and pocked with bullet holes."⁴³

I believe that no matter what he did, Grant's opinion on Rosecrans was overshadowed by his earlier and later mistakes. After the Confederates were driven back, Rosecrans did not pursue them and allowed them to escape. The same thing happened to General Meade after the battle of Gettysburg, which resulted in Meade's decrease in popularity in eyes of the President. This was already a second time in a few months this happened to Rosecrans. He displayed the same indecisiveness that Grant detested in his superior, General Halleck. Another aspect that surely did not appeal to Grant was Rosecrans' public image. In the press, Grant was depicted as a drunk who should not lead an army, while Rosecrans, and even more after the battle of Corinth, was depicted as a national hero. These issues and surely others led Grant to be both critical and sceptical to Rosecrans.

Even though the memoirs are by some considered to be a strictly and historically accurate work, Grant like most people tends to express his own propaganda in it. He displays certain people in better light, but simultaneously damages the reputation of other people, such as General Rosecrans. More importantly, he wishes to make himself look better by omitting some of his mistakes. One of such mistakes that Grant did not mention in the memoirs are the "General Orders No. 11" issued on December 17, 1862. During the Civil War, Cotton became a highly valued commodity, but because of the Union blockade, Southern planters could not sell it. This state attracted many traders from the North, willing to buy or in case they did not have permission to do so, smuggle cotton.

⁴³ Chernow, *Grant*, 225.

The army became responsible for overlooking the cotton trade, “and army officers were regularly bribed to wink at smuggling.”⁴⁴ Grant was infuriated by the war profiteers. In the shadow of rampant antisemitism, he blamed Jews for it, therefore issuing the controversial orders. According to this order, Jews as a class were to be expelled from Grant’s Department. These orders did not apply solely to traders, but to soldiers and other military staff as well. Now the men who fought alongside and for the same cause as their non-Jewish friends were brought into shame. Though President Lincoln cancelled the orders two weeks later, but damage both in the pride of the Jewish soldiers and in Grant’s public image was done.

The memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant served partially as a propaganda of its author, so to make himself look better, he did not only omit some more or less minor controversies, but also some really big ones. A major problem that haunted General Grant throughout his whole career and is purposely avoided in the memoirs is his difficult relationship to alcohol. His public image was severely damaged by numerous allegations of his drunkenness. Some of Grant’s military colleagues were spreading rumours of his abuse of alcohol, in hope of being promoted in his place. It is a well-known fact that rumours spread much faster than truth and once the media get wind of a scandal, they get on it, especially if it was in some way sensational.

Luckily for General Grant, he was surrounded and backed by prominent people willing to help and stand for him. Even President Lincoln knew Grant’s worth and when his advisors demanded Grant’s removal from the army, he responded: “I cant’s spare this man; he fights”⁴⁵ On of the running jokes of the time related to Grant’s drinking, was that when President Lincoln was asked to expel Grant for abuse of alcohol, he asked his advisors whether they know what exactly is Grant drinking, so that he could distribute it to other generals.

Other man steadily fighting against the allegations of Grant’s insobriety was his confident, General John Rawlins. Rawlins’s father was an alcoholic, so he knew to what results drinking could lead to and in Grant, he probably saw a soul to be saved, and promised Grant that he would keep an eye on him and keep him away from the bottle. Almost a miraculous effect on Grant’s behaviour was expected by his wife, Julia. Grant

⁴⁴ Chernow, *Grant*, 232.

⁴⁵ Smith, *Grant*, 205.

always behaved himself when she was present and did not dare to drink too much. For that reason, it was hard for Julia to believe to what the press was saying about her husband. Neither last nor least of Grant's supporters was General William T. Sherman. Sherman had his own hard times, being bullied by the press and labelled crazy and insane. On several occasions, Sherman wanted to leave the army and so did Grant. However, whenever one of them wanted to quit, the other persuaded him to stay. General Sherman himself described their relationship perfectly. "He stood by me when I was crazy and I stood by him when he was drunk"⁴⁶

During the winter of 1863, when General Grant was trying to find a way to move his troops south from Vicksburg so that he could attack the city, he was accompanied by an officer of the War Department named Charles Dana. What Grant did not know, or at least did not mention it, about this man, was that he was sent to report whether Grant was drinking or not, for accusations of it were spreading again in the news. Dana was charmed by the General's modesty and honesty, and to the accusations he responded negatively. "I have been able, from my own knowledge to give a decided negative,"⁴⁷ Dana wrote to Washington.

After several failed attempts to change a flow of the Mississippi River or to get his men across the river, Grant decided to run the rebel Confederate blockade with steamers and gunboats and then establish a beachhead south the city for the infantry. A key person in this plan was Admiral Porter who was not under Grant's command. "My recollection is that Admiral Porter was the first one to whom I mentioned it"⁴⁸ Grant wrote in his memoirs. According to Ron Chernow, the first person with whom had General Grant discussed the plan, was General Sherman. Even though Grant wrote that Admiral Porter was perfectly happy with the plan and approved of it at once, he was rather unsure and sceptical towards it at first glance. To his superior officer, Porter wrote that "I am quite depressed with this adventure, which as you know never met with my approval."⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Admiral Porter soon approved the plan and offered to superintend the preparations himself.

⁴⁶ Smith, *Grant*, 206.

⁴⁷ Chernow, *Grant*, 252.

⁴⁸ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 306.

⁴⁹ Chernow, *Grant*, 254.

After the plan turned out to be successful, Grant had to figure out where to move his men across the river. The initial plan was to attack a small fort below Vicksburg named Grand Gulf on the 29th of April, Admiral Porter began bombarding the defending Confederate batteries with his fleet in order to make it safe for the infantry to land. After five hours the firing ceased, yet the Union army did not land. According to the memoirs, “the fleet withdrew, seeing their efforts were entirely unavailing.”⁵⁰ Judging by Smith’s approach toward this event, Grant was too harsh about Admiral Porter and his effort. Smith believes that Porter’s effort proved to be victorious and he managed to silent the opposite batteries. However, Grant was not sure whether there were no other batteries hidden behind, and therefore called off the attack. None of the other biographers help to resolve the question of which of these interpretations is factually correct. Chernow only briefly mentions that the attempt was fruitless, but not for what reason.

It might seem that Grant tends to overestimate Porter’s passion for his plans. Admiral Porter indeed always supported Grant’s ideas, but not as eagerly as Grant describes it in the memoirs. After the failed attempt to land at Grand Gulf, Grant decided to run the fort’s batteries just as he did at Vicksburg, but now using Porter’s gunboats to transfer the infantry. According to Grant’s own words, Porter came up with the offer of the unorthodox usage of his gunboats to Grant. Nevertheless, Chernow states that “Grant awaited Porter’s response with some anxiety”⁵¹ therefore meaning that Grant approached Porter first, before they agreed on the plan.

The capture of Vicksburg was a highly demanding campaign, consisting of several minor, but also of some major battles. Some of the battles like Battle of Champions Hill or Battle of Black River Bridge, were astonishing victories for the Union army. An interesting trend keeps occurring in relation to casualties of these battles. Grant has been famous for his honesty, and his willingness to admit his own mistakes. However, when it came to mentioning casualties, his approach varied greatly depending on the outcome of the battle. If the battle had been victorious for Grant, he would have given exact number of Confederate soldiers killed, captured, wounded and fugitives. For example, after the Battle of Black River Bridge, Grant gave the number of Confederate losses in more detail than any of his biographers. To emphasize his success, he would

⁵⁰ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 317.

⁵¹ Chernow, *Grant*, 259.

also attach a detailed list of Union losses, which were smaller in comparison with those of the enemy.

On the other hand, when the battle was lost, like two assaults Grant launched against Vicksburg on 19th and 22nd of May, Grant's description differed. During the first assault, Union army suffered five times higher casualties than the enemy, yet Grant only mentioned that his army secured a better position. In relation to the second assault, he likewise did not present any number and in one sentence summed up the fact the "last attack only served to increase our casualties without giving any benefit whatever."⁵² It surely would not seem good to mention that during the second assault, approximately 3000 of Grant's soldiers died, while the Confederates suffered much fewer casualties. Grant proved here that even though he is capable of admitting a failure, he omitted the range or significance of his errors, and once again displayed his intentions to be perceived more positively by readers of his memoirs and by history.

It has to be noted, that Grant did not omit only his mistakes, but also some of his heroic acts. As the siege of Vicksburg was being prepared, artillery had to be dismantled and brought from Admiral Porter's ships and then assembled again near Vicksburg. While batteries were being constructed, Confederate sharpshooters were harassing the workers. Men were afraid to continue working, so General Grant stood up, and while being completely exposed to the enemy fire with bullets whistling around, he began giving orders to the workers. He had previously acted many times like he was just one of his soldiers, and it always had a marvellous effect on the morale and loyalty of his men so they held him in the highest esteem. Though Grant wanted to cover up his mistakes, he was also reluctant to show off in his memoirs.

As consequences of the siege were becoming unbearable for the Confederate soldiers, without any sign of its relieve, the commander of the Vicksburg garrison General Pemberton decided to start negotiating terms of peace on July 3rd. As the generals of the opposing sides met, it crystalized clearly that neither of them was willing to budge on his terms. To relieve the tension, Confederate General Bowen suggested, that he should discuss the terms of surrender one-on-one with some of General Grant's subordinates. Who was the Grant's subordinate chosen to discuss the terms is expressed differently in the literature. According to Grant's memoirs, the chosen subordinate was General A. J.

⁵² McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 356.

Smith. In the biography written by Jean Edward Smith, the name given in relation to the negotiation is General James McPherson. Ron Chernow supports what Grant wrote and presents A. J. Smith's name. Nevertheless, the one-on-one conversation still proved fruitless and Grant with Pemberton agreed on different terms, which were accepted and executed on the 4th of July 1863.

3.3 Chattanooga

The capture of the large city of Vicksburg, Mississippi and the victorious battle of Gettysburg brought great joy to the government in Washington. In the middle of September 1863, joy was replaced with consternation as the bloody battle of Chickamauga turned out disastrous for the Union army, led by General Rosecrans. Grant dated this battle between the 19th and 20th of September. According to Smith, the battle commenced one day prior to Grant's dating, stating that "On September 18 the Confederate counterattack commenced. For three days the desperately bloody battle of Chickamauga raged on."⁵³

After the battle, the army of General Rosecrans was trapped in Chattanooga, Tennessee, surrounded by hills occupied by the enemy. As a result, Rosecrans was replaced in command by General Thomas and Ulysses S. Grant was sent to resolve the situation. On November 7th, while being trapped, General Grant ordered General Thomas to attack the right wing of the enemy. According to Grant's memoirs, Thomas responded to the order saying that he "could not see how he could possibly comply with the order."⁵⁴ Ron Chernow explains why Thomas refused to obey the order to attack. In Chattanooga, there was a shortage of animals that could carry artillery, due to a lack of food, resulting in deaths of as many as ten thousand mules and horses. General Thomas also claimed that the enemy had a very strong position and that he also was not sure of the readiness of his men. Grant's ability to listen to his staff and make decisions based on what he had learnt, was one his greatest strengths. Even though he always had the last word, Grant wanted to hear and consider what others might have in mind.

November 25th, 1863, is marked in the history of United States as the day the Battle of Chattanooga was fought. It was a culmination of two months lasting siege and progressively prepared position. The way Grant described events of the day is almost humorously simple.

My recollection is that my first orders for the battle at Chattanooga were as fought. Sherman was to get on the Missionary Ridge, as he did, Hooker to cross the north end of Lookout Mountain, as he did, sweep across Chattanooga Valley and get across the south end of the ridge near Rossville.⁵⁵

⁵³ Smith, *Grant*, 263.

⁵⁴ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 425.

⁵⁵ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 450.

First thing that Smith mentions in his description of the battle is that “nothing went as planned”⁵⁶ General Sherman was initially supposed to get on Missionary Ridge in the early morning, maximally in a matter of few hours. However, Sherman still was not in the designed place by the early afternoon. His four divisions supported by two other divisions did not manage to break through the Confederate defensive line guarded by merely one division led by General Patrick Cleburne. As much as two thousand Union men died during Sherman’s attempts to break the enemy line.

General Hooker’s mission to get across the Chattanooga Valley also encountered difficulties. To get his men in a position suitable for attack, Hooker needed to move across Chattanooga Creek. There he was faced with the harsh reality, realizing that the Confederate soldiers destroyed the only bridge leading across the creek. The construction of a new bridge took four hours. It was not until mid-afternoon that Hooker’s first men started appearing in the right position.

What actually saved the day, were veterans of the Chickamauga battle under the command of General George H. Thomas, whose name Grant’s memoirs did not associate with any merits. General Thomas was a supporter of General Rosecrans, who was removed from command and replaced by Thomas according to Grant’s wish. General Thomas was not pleased with Grant’s presence in Chattanooga, and it is to be said that the feeling was mutual. More than twenty thousand soldiers led by General Thomas were placed in the centre of the battlefield but were not supposed to engage until given a command, acting rather as reserves.

Grant initially wanted the glory of victory to be conquered by Sherman or at least Hooker, but once he saw the futility of their efforts, he decided to put Thomas’ men in. Grant expected that this attack would relieve some pressure from Sherman and Hooker, and that the attack would stop once the Confederate first line was conquered. However, once the vengeance-seeking Chickamauga veterans were put in motion, they stormed one line after another until the Confederates positioned in their way were running away. Indeed, this attack relieved the tension from Sherman and Hooker, because as the men fighting against them saw their comrades running, they consequently started running as well.

⁵⁶ Smith, *Grant*, 276.

As it seems, Grant did not exactly lie in his description of the battle; he just omitted an important character, General Thomas, and treated him unjustly in his memoirs. It is basically the same with General Rosecrans. The man may have acted bravely and fruitfully, but if he did not act as Grant imagined or made a mistake, he would fall out of favour with Grant and, considering the success of the memoirs, with history. In the battle of Chattanooga, Thomas did not act according to orders, but the actions of his men proved to be more fruitful than those of Grant's favourites, yet "Grant never forgave Thomas for the fact that the men of his Army of the Cumberland, whom Grant held in some contempt, had carried the day."⁵⁷

⁵⁷ McFeely, *Grant*, 148.

3.4 Appomattox

Grant's successes in the Western Theatre were followed by an increased admiration of the general. In March 1864, Grant was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General, a rank previously held only by George Washington. With this promotion, Grant replaced General Halleck in a position of commander of the whole Union Army and was accordingly obliged to move to the Eastern Theatre. On a meeting with President Lincoln, Grant intended to share his plans of the following campaign with the President, but as Grant describe it, "he did not want to know what I proposed to do."⁵⁸ At first glance, it may seem that President Lincoln did not care about Grant's intentions. However, the opposite is true. Lincoln cared so much about the plans that he did not want to hear them, for he knew there "was always a temptation to leak"⁵⁹

As General Grant was preparing to put his plans in motion, an unpleasant situation emerged. Grant wanted all the Union armies to act in harmony to fully use the populational advantage of the North. One of the armies commanded by General Banks, whose goal in Grant's plan was to move on Mobile, Alabama, was currently on an expedition to take Shreveport, Louisiana. From what can be learned from the memoirs, Banks' expedition resulted in failure, and Grant commented, "I make no criticism on this point. He opposed the expedition."⁶⁰ From Smith's description of the expedition, Grant had many reasons to criticize Banks. First, Banks' army was attacked while it was marching in a column, meaning Banks must had been unaware of an enemy army located close to him, resulting in death of more than 2000 men. Second, Banks was strongly unpopular amongst his men, which always have a cause. The cause is usually the General himself. Third, Banks allowed massive corruption related to cotton speculations, to spread amongst his men, and in the whole Department, accordingly weakening the army. Even though this expedition was not a good idea, the way it was executed was even worse than the idea itself and Grant should had been harsher to Banks.

In the night of the 3rd and 4th of May, Lieutenant General Grant with the army of Potomac crossed the Rapidan River into the Wilderness. Throughout his life, Grant believed that it "was undoubtedly a surprise to Lee."⁶¹ Grant considered as proof of

⁵⁸ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 474.

⁵⁹ Smith, *Grant*, 300.

⁶⁰ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 484

⁶¹ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 518.

surprise the fact that the army crossed the river unopposed. However, Confederate General Robert E. Lee was hardly surprised. According to Smith, Robert E. Lee knew very well of Grant's intentions but he planned to let the whole Army of the Potomac cross the Rapidan before attacking it. The reason why Lee wanted to let the army cross, was that "the Wilderness was a great equalizer"⁶² Once Grant's army was across, Lee would strike it hard and inflict on it as much losses as possible.

On May 5th, the Battle of Wilderness commenced. The first one to spot Confederate lines ready to attack, was General Warren, at approximately 6 a.m. Both Jean Smith and Grant agreed on this information, but what followed each one described differently. When Warren first got glimpse of the enemy, Grant was far behind, awaiting General Burnside and his reinforcements. Grant writes that as soon as he received word from General Warren, he informed General Meade and rushed to see him, not waiting for Burnside any longer. According to Smith, the first one to be informed from General Warren, was General Meade and he then had Grant informed. It was also not until 9 a.m. that Grant stopped waiting for Burnside and went to see Meade.

May 5th and 6th saw some of the most brutal fighting to ever took place on the American continent. Wilderness was basically just a dense forest, and in this season also a very dry one. All it took was just a spark and the battlefield turned into a blazing hell. Cries of wounded soldiers could be heard throughout the days and nights. The number of casualties was staggering. Grant knew that casualties of The Army of the Potomac were sever, but he believed "the Confederates must have been even more so."⁶³ They were not. Counting in percentages then both armies had lost approximately 18% of their numbers. The difference is that Grant crossed the Rapidan with much bigger force than was available to Lee. Counting in numbers displays how mistaken the Lieutenant General was, for "the 17,500 Union casualties exceeded 11,000 on the other side."⁶⁴

The battle of Wilderness was followed by bloody battles of Spotsylvania Courthouse, North Anna, and Cold Harbor. The last battle mentioned was a source of great sorrow for Grant for the rest of his life. As he said, he had "always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made."⁶⁵ Though Grant regretted the assault, he failed to describe

⁶² Smith, *Grant*, 312.

⁶³ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 534.

⁶⁴ Chernow, *Grant*, 384.

⁶⁵ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 588.

the atrocities of it. In comparison with other battles, the Battle of Cold Harbor only takes up a few pages and to an uninformed reader it may seem that the battle was but a mere skirmish. That could not be farther from reality, as the Army of the Potomac lost “more than 7,000, most of them during the first half hour.”⁶⁶ The losses of the enemy did not exceed 1,500 men. It surely was caused by the sorrow with which Grant had to live for the rest of his life, that prevented him from depicting the battle in all its full horrors. The wound was still deep and fresh, even after all those years, when Grant wrote the memoirs, and he certainly did not want to add salt to it.

While other generals of the Union had turned around and run once getting whipped by Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia, Grant did not. Even though he suffered as much as 40,000 casualties, a number that was completely incomparable with previous experiences, since crossing the Rapidan, his dogged determination kept him pushing. Rather than again confronting Lee at Cold Harbor, the Lieutenant General decided to let Lee where he was and swiftly moved towards Petersburg. In order to do so, he had to cross the wide James River. To cross the river, General Grant decided that a pontoon bridge would be built. Grant described this marvel of engineering very briefly.

The material for pontoon bridge was already at hand and the work of laying it commenced immediately. On the evening of the 14th the crossing commenced.⁶⁷

It seems as if he did not know or did not care how much of an accomplishment the building of the bridge was. The bridge had to be 2,100 feet long and 13 feet wide. “When finished this was the longest pontoon bridge in military history.”⁶⁸ The next fascinating feat of the engineers building the bridge was, that it was definitely constructed within 24 hours, yet the time the bridge was completed varies among the authors. Grant wrote that the crossing commenced in the evening, which possibly could be true. It depends on which biographer determined the time more accurately. Smith believed that bridge was finished at 11 p.m., what could be still considered an evening. According to Chernow however, the bridge was finished after midnight, therefore not in the evening.

Despite their swift and undisturbed movement to Petersburg, Grant’s subordinate generals did not manage to take the city before Lee’s army arrived, so a siege had to be

⁶⁶ Smith, *Grant*, 364.

⁶⁷ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 596.

⁶⁸ Smith, *Grant*, 372.

laid. During the siege, Confederate General Early attempted to strike on Washington D.C. According to the memoirs, Early arrive before Washington on the 11th of July, but actually he was near Washington on the previous day. It is possible that Grant had the day mistaken, for on the 10th, nothing else happened while on the 11th, the panic intensified and there was a frequent communication between Grant and Washington D.C. related to General Early's movement.

On July 30th a plan that was supposed to open the defensive lines of Petersburg for an assault culminated. The defensive lines were undermined and the tunnels filled with gunpowder. In relation to the explosion, Grant got the numbers wrong. He wrote that there were eight chambers, each filled with a ton of gunpowder, therefore eight tons altogether. However, the chambers were filled "with eight thousand pounds of explosives"⁶⁹, which is only four tons.

Grant's estimate of how large a crater the explosion created is not exactly accurate. He believed the explosion made "a crater twenty feet deep and something like a hundred feet in length."⁷⁰ The accurate measurements are 170 feet in length and 30 feet in depth.

On the 3rd of February, three appointed peace commissioners from the Confederate states met with President Lincoln at Hampton Roads, Virginia. After their short meeting, the President informed General Grant of the result. The president supposedly insisted on two conditions, which the South had to accept, or no peace negotiations could commenced. First, The Union had to be restored and second was the abolition of slavery. Chernow adds that the President had a third condition, declaring "no cessation of hostilities until all rebel forces were disbanded."⁷¹ Nevertheless, the negotiation proved fruitless.

General Lee decided to break the siege at Petersburg and on the 25th of March, even though Grant wrote it happened on the 24th, an attack was made, commanded by General Gordon. Initially the attack was successful, but soon after the Confederates were pushed back, suffering heavy casualties. Grant estimated the number of losses of Southerners at

⁶⁹ Chernow, *Grant*, 427.

⁷⁰ McFeely, *Memoirs and Selected Letters*, 612.

⁷¹ Chernow, *Grant*, 468.

approximately 4,000. Smith believed the number to be even higher and estimated that “Lee lost 5,000 men.”⁷²

Seeing the futility of holding Petersburg, General Lee managed to slip out of the town, desperate to get provisions for his men and escape from the Army of the Potomac but he remained closely chased until the end of the war. The two armies met at Sailor’s Creek on the 6th of April 1865. The results were again devastating for the Army of Northern Virginia, with 2,000 soldiers dead and 6,000 men taken prisoner. Grant little bit exaggerate a little bit the number of prisoners in his memoirs, giving 7,000. All of the biographers agree that the more accurate number is six, not seven thousand.

Once Lee saw the hopelessness of his situation, he decided to start negotiating with Grant by letters. The negotiations culminated on the 9th of April 1865, when General Lee officially surrendered to General Grant in person. On the 10th of April Grant wanted to have a last chat before leaving for Washington. They mostly talked about what was going to happen next. According to Grant they held the conversation approximately half an hour. Other sources claimed that the two generals “conversed for more than an hour.”⁷³

The events that followed were described in the memoirs just as they are in the biographies. The only difference between Grant’s writing and that of his biographers is the effect President Lincoln’s assassination had on Grant. Even though Grant wrote the memoirs many years after the assassination, the feelings of despair and sadness were still alive and fresh in him, and he managed to put them on paper in such a way that cannot be reproduced.

⁷² Smith, *Grant*, 393.

⁷³ Smith, *Grant*, 406.

4 CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to analyse the *Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant* and compare them with three chosen historical biographies to identify, whether what is written in the memoirs is historically true or not. I analysed the part of the memoirs that only deals with the American Civil War. In analysing the memoirs, I focused not only on the information that is not correct, but also on information that is omitted and tried to explain why Grant decided not to include such information in his memoirs.

In the theoretical part, I described the life of Ulysses S. Grant to provide information required to understand what the second part of my thesis is about. In the first part I also presented what attitude Ulysses S. Grant held towards slavery. Since Grant's public image in relation to slavery was damaged by his wife, who was born into a traditional slave owning family, I found it necessary to also describe what her attitude towards the institution of slavery was. Like many American families, Grant's was somewhat split on this issue.

It turned out that Julia Grant's feelings towards the whole emancipation process were mixed. Once the Civil War was over, many people previously engaged in the slave owning business regretted it and were not ashamed to admit it. Julia Grant was not one of those people. Never in her life did she criticised the institution and would later in life recall how happy her childhood was thanks to slavery. On the other hand, she fully supported the Union during the Civil War, which was fighting to abolish slavery. However, were it not for her husband who made a career fighting for the Union, she would probably support the Confederacy.

The second part of my thesis focussing on the Civil War is divided into four chapters, each named accordingly by the most significant Civil War battle of the period that the chapter dealt with.

My effort to reveal mistakes made in the memoirs proved to be fruitful, though most of the information given by Grant proved to be true. The biggest portion of mistakes was in statistical numbers. The numerical information given by Grant was never far from true. If a mistake was made in a date, Grant was usually only a one day off. The mistakes that Grant made are minor given the limited time he had to complete his memoirs and his rapidly deteriorating health.

What I found more interesting than wrongly given dates or numbers, were the information that Grant purposefully omitted or changed. As I mentioned in the introduction, the memoirs served partially as propaganda and, when compared with the scholarly biographies, it is possible to see what Grant was ashamed of and what he wished happened differently.

Those omitted or changed information could be divided into three parts. The first part consists in the information Grant did not want his readers to know. The antisemitic orders he issued, his drinking problems, the excessive consumption of cigars or the high numbers of casualties caused by his misjudgements were among such bits of information. His abuse of alcohol was an information wisely omitted even though the public had been regularly exposed to it. Throughout his life, he was called a deliberate drunk while he and his closest defended him. It would not help anything to deny these allegations, since he was doing that his whole life. To confirm these allegations, however, would only harm everyone who had defended him.

The second part of the information omitted are those which depicts Grant as a man not afraid of anything. Those are mostly his heroic acts, and there is no better explanation of why he left them out than that he simply forgot about them, for there were too many of them. It may also be a part of his personality to not brag about this attribute, given the huge number of the Civil War dead.

The third part are the information changed for the benefit or disadvantage of other people. Even though Grant did not name people, especially other generals he did not like, the way he dealt with them in the memoirs reveals who they were. Since Grant's memoirs became a bestseller after they came out, the way he treated people in them could strongly influence their historical legacy.

This thesis might serve as an inspiration for either a similar analysis, or a deeper analysis of Ulysses S. Grant, for he is one of the most important characters in the history of the United States in the 19th century. I hope this thesis could persuade some people to read the memoirs on their own, as it is a masterfully written guide through the most difficult and challenging chapter of the American history.

5 RESUMÉ

Tato práce analyzuje memoáry amerického generála a prezidenta Ulysses S. Granta a porovnává je s biografiemi o něm napsanými. Tato práce se zaměřuje výhradně na tu část Grantových memoárů, jež je věnována Americké Občanské Válce. Cílem práce bylo zjistit, zdali a popřípadě jakých odchylek od současného výkladu dějin se Grant dopustil, a zdali informace obsažené v memoárech odpovídají skutečným historickým okolnostem. Kromě této analýzy obsahuje práce také popis života jmenovaného generála a prezidenta a zároveň je v ní také věnován prostor pro objasnění vztahu generála Granta a jeho manželky Julie k otroctví.

Práce jako celek je rozdělena do dvou hlavních částí, jež se dále dělí na kapitoly. V teoretické části práce je pozornost věnována postavě Ulysses S. Grant a jeho historickému významu. V první podkapitole je stručně a srozumitelně popsán průběh jeho života se zvláštním zaměřením na jeho roli v Americké Občanské Válce. Tyto informace jsou pokládány za nezbytné pro plné porozumění informací v druhé části práce. Součástí teoretické části a její druhou kapitolou je rozbor vztahu U. S. Granta a jeho manželky k otroctví. Základem pro tuto podkapitolu je fakt, že oba manželé pocházeli ze zcela odlišných poměrů. Zatímco Grantův otec byl zarytý abolitionista, Julia pocházela z rodiny otrokářů.

Druhá část práce je pak věnována samotné analýze výše zmíněných memoárů. Tato část je rozdělena do čtyř kapitol, kde každá nese název dle nejvýznamnější bitvy, jež se odehrála v období, jímž se daná kapitola zabývá.

Cílem druhé části práce pak bylo sledovat, jakých odchylek a chyb se Grant při psaní memoárů dopustil. Vzhledem k tomu, že v závěru svého života, kdy byl finančními problémy přinucen začít psát ony memoáry, bojoval Grant s vážnou nemocí, která proměnila dokončení memoárů v závod s časem, se nevyhnutelně musel dopustit řady omylů, ať už v chybně uvedených datech, číslech či popisovaných událostech.

Při analýze Grantových memoárů byla pozornost věnována nejen informacím, jež autor uvedl chybně, ale také informacím, které autor neuvedl vůbec. I přesto, že důvodem vzniku memoárů byla především finanční tíseň, Grant jich využil také jako propagandu své osoby. Informace kompromitující Granta jsou v memoárech zcela opomíjeny, naopak

některé informace jsou v jeho prospěch pozměněny. Důležitý byl také Grantův přístup k jiným významným osobám té doby, neboť to, jakým způsobem o nich napsal, mohlo rozhodnout o tom, jak budou tyto osoby vnímány budoucími generacemi.

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