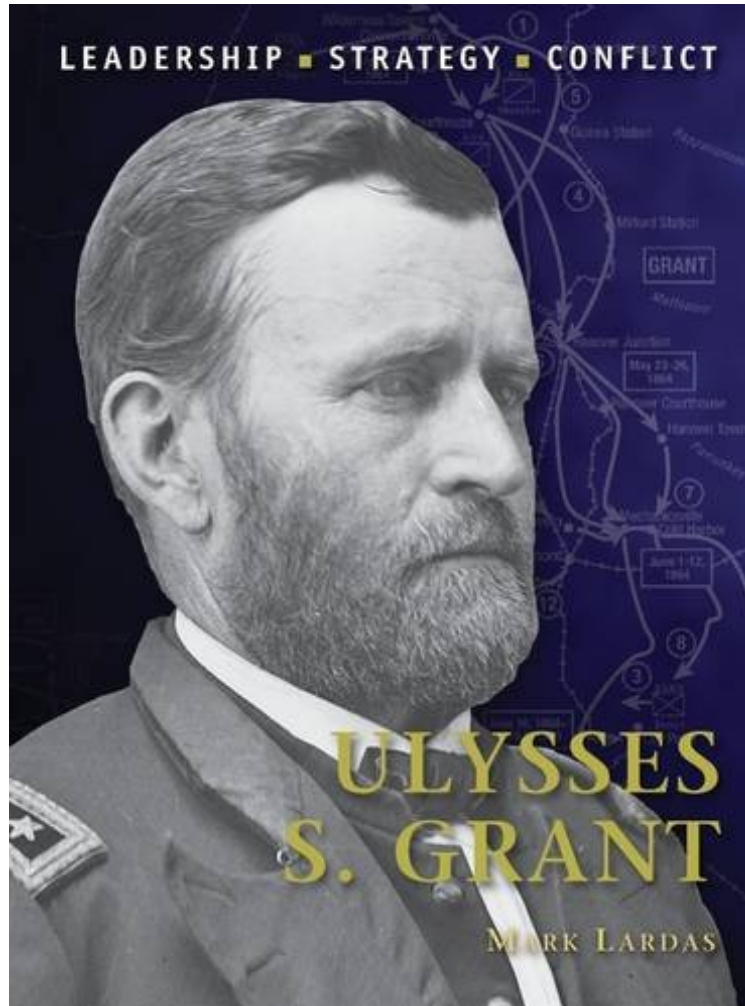


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## Ulysses S. Grant (Command)

Mark Lardas

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**Mark Lardas : Ulysses S. Grant (Command)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ulysses S. Grant (Command):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. "Unconditional Surrender" Grant...By HMS Warspite "Ulysses S. Grant" is a new entry in the Osprey Command series on battlefield leaders. Author Mark Lardas' account takes the reader in brisk workmanlike fashion through Grant's unpromising Ohio boyhood, education at West Point, heroism in the Mexican War, his departure from the Army under a cloud, his unsuccessful civilian years, his return to the Army for the Civil War, and his rise to greatness as Commander of all Union forces. The text is supplemented with lots of period photographs and illustrations, along with a nice selection of maps. For those used to seeing Grant in black and white photographs, illustrations showing Grant's red hair and beard may be a minor revelation. On the basis of his Civil War victories, Grant is identified as the greatest U.S. general officer since George Washington, but Lardas is careful

not to paint his subject as perfect. Far from it, the narrative acknowledges a sometimes costly learning curve throughout Grant's Civil War service, as he makes mistakes but learns from them. Grant stands out in this account for his low-key commonsense leadership style, his remarkable persistence in the face of adversity, and his refusal to be distracted from his objectives by obstacles, mishaps, and the failures of subordinates. Grant is also shown to have an effective grasp of Army politics during the Civil War. Lardas acknowledges Grant's problems with alcohol and his uneven postwar career. At the end of this brief account, the reader may be left with the question of how Grant, who is supposed to have failed at many things in life, was such a successful battlefield leader. Other authors have wrestled at great length with that question, which won't be answered in this account. Lardas notes General Sherman's characterization of Grant as something of a mystery, perhaps even to himself. "Ulysses S. Grant" is highly recommended as a good introduction to the man, and perhaps the mystery. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An entertaining biography of one of America's greatest generals By Carl W. This book is the latest in Osprey's Command series, which has covered numerous other world military leaders through the ages. The style is informal and entertaining to read, and if not a deeply scholarly treatment of Grant, provides a very useful overview of his career, with helpful maps and illustrations. It is fascinating to see, looking at Grant's early career, the utter improbability of his achieving future greatness, in sharp contrast to his great opponent Robert E. Lee, who from the beginning seemed destined for success. Even the name that he used for the rest of his life was the result of an error that the Army refused to correct! But in the end, Grant had what so many other contemporaries lacked - an indomitable will to win battles, and, as it turned out, sufficient skill to make it happen again and again, even if the cost in casualties was often very high. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Harold D. Outstanding

Ulysses Grant was the United States greatest general since George Washington. Like Washington, Grant's battlefield performance in the Civil War was the only factor standing between the United States continuing as one, indivisible nation. Grant was the keystone of Union victory, a man whose removal would have resulted in the Union cause crumbling into defeat - and the United States dissolving into a collection of competing sovereign states. It was not always so clear cut. An early military career had ended with his resignation for alleged drunkenness, while in civilian life a number of his business ventures foundered leading to the nickname "Useless" Grant. Then the Civil War began. Because he had military experience - he had gone to West Point and served in the Regular Army as an officer - when Grant enlisted in the Army, he became a Captain in an Illinois volunteer regiment. Through sheer competence - and overcoming a bad reputation - he quickly rose to colonel, brigadier general and then major general Grant. After he led the first successful major Union offensive of the war - which resulted in the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson - "Useless" Grant disappeared, replaced by "Unconditional Surrender" Grant. Despite - or perhaps because of - his ability to win battles, Grant had as many enemies among the officer corps of the Union Army as he had in the Confederate Army. Henry Halleck, Grant's immediate superior in the first years of the Civil War, was reluctant to trust Grant in an independent command, despite Grant's ability to win battles when acting independently. When it appeared that Grant would be relieved after Shiloh, President Lincoln, Grant's biggest supporter scotched this attempt. "I can't spare this man," Lincoln said of Grant, "He fights." When fellow generals claimed Grant was drinking again Lincoln is reputed to have replied "find out what he drinks, and send my other commanders a case!" Grant was also criticized as a poor commander. Many claimed Grant was simply a butcher. He often won in an ugly manner. At Shiloh a disastrous first day was followed with a powerhouse counterattack that swept the Confederates from the field. Vicksburg required several attempts - the first few of which were repulsed - but at the end it yielded to Grant. When Grant moved east and attached himself to the Army of the Potomac he faced the Confederacy's greatest general - Robert E. Lee. Grant and Lee fought a series of battles that caused the Confederacy's strategic position to deteriorate with each battle even though Lee fought achieved what should have been a victory on a tactical level. Yet Grant did win. He was one of the few Union generals that did consistently win. Most of the others that won consistently were Grant's protégées - William T. Sherman, Phillip Sheridan, and James B. McPherson were developed by Grant. Even generals like Joseph Hooker and George Thomas performed better after serving under Grant. Victory had its rewards. In March 1864 Grant was promoted lieutenant-general, the only United States Army officer except for George Washington and Winfield Scott to achieve that rank. By the end of the war Grant would become the United States Army's first full general since Washington.