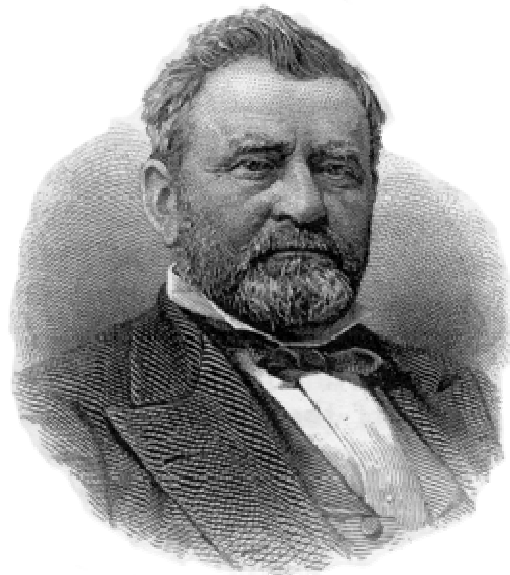


ULYSSES S. GRANT YAZOO RIVER BENDER

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American History I
December 5, 2005



Ulysses S. Grant

Major General Henry Halleck, who was nicknamed “Old Brains”, was very upset that General Ulysses S. Grant was getting all the credit for taking both Forts Henry and Donaldson. Halleck believed that he deserved all the credit so he started a rumor that General Grant went back to his bad habit of drinking. Because of this rumor, Grant was removed from command after the Battle of Shiloh, but later regained the field of command in 1862.

Grant had to carry the baggage of being a drunk for years afterwards. His wife sometimes traveled with him, but it was when she was away that he overwhelmingly missed her to the point that he would have a drink. Being as though he was a small man, it took only one drink for him to begin slurring his words. This didn't make him an alcoholic. He just couldn't handle it.

When commanding the 21st Illinois Infantry Regiment during the Civil War, Grant started to climb rapidly in rank. Lincoln ignored the stories of Grant being a lucky drunk until he became worried of the outcome at Vicksburg. Grant had been planning schemes to get his troops around the delta country between the Yazoo and Mississippi rivers, at which time Lincoln and Secretary of War Ed Stanton sent Charles A. Dana to travel with Grants army to watch over him. The victory of Vicksburg was top priority for the government. Grant's aide, John Rawlings, put out word that anyone caught giving alcohol to Grant would be severely punished.

Dana arrived with total freedom, soon becoming Grant's number one fan. Another to fan of Grant's was a newspaperman named Sylvanus Cadwallader who was also given total freedom. Ninety-two years later Cadwallader's book, “Three Years With Grant” was published starting a controversy over an incident of what really happened

during Grant's steamship ride north on the Yazoo River to the town of Satartia. Grant supposedly took this trip to see if there was anything to the rumor that Confederate General Joe Johnston was headed in their direction.

Cadwallader took another steamer called the Diligence. While he was headed back down the river to Chickasaw Bayou and Hayne's bluff, he met with the other steamboat that was carrying Grant. Cadwallader said that Grant and his cavalry were transferred to the Diligence and that Grant had been drinking. He said all kinds of things about Grant being drunk which were the total opposite of what Dana had to say.

Dana said that Grant suffered from migraine headaches. The way he acted when having one of these headaches might make others think he had been drinking to the point of acting drunk. After the Diligence arrived at Chickasaw Bayou, Cadwallader said he caught Grant with a glass of whiskey in his hand. When Cadwallader got him off the ship, Grant supposedly climbed up on his borrowed horse named Kangaroo and began to ride recklessly through camps, scattering campfires, and riding over soldiers.

It seems to me, after reading this article that Cadwallader didn't have much proof to back up a lot of the stuff he wrote in his book about Grant. I think that Cadwallader made up most of the stuff he wrote to gain his own fame as a newspaperman. He needed to start a controversy to become well-known himself.

Fortunately, Grant turned out to be a very good general who did exactly what he was expected to do. He conquered three armies, won a peace with the Confederacy and prepared the foundations for the reconciliation of the North and South through his terms to General Lee. Because of all the good he did, he was forgiven for a few sips of whiskey here and there.