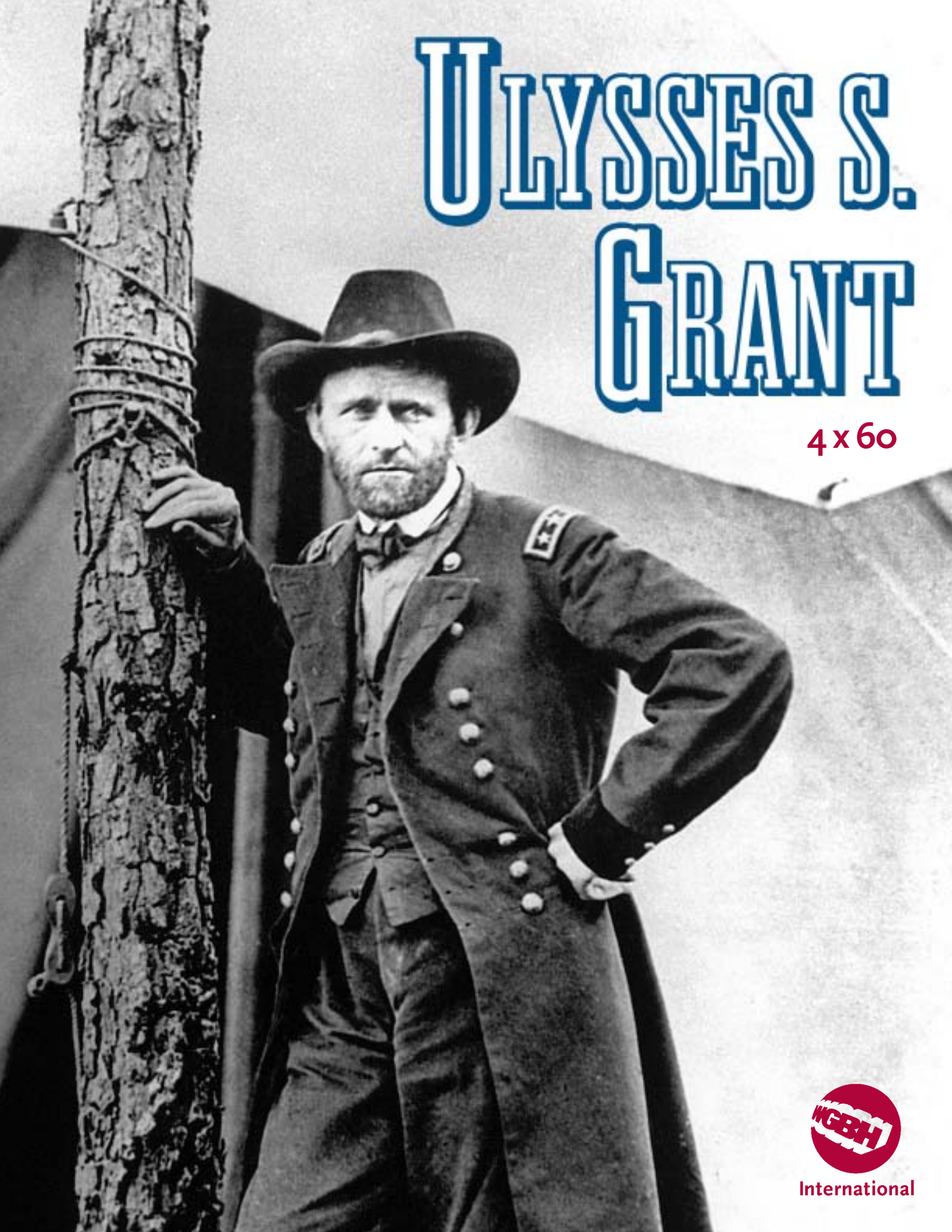


ULYSSES S. GRANT

4 x 60



International

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Ulysses S. Grant is a four-hour portrait of the greatest Union hero of the Civil War. During the Civil War, Grant's ruthlessness in battle won him the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" and the admiration of the Northern public. He was the author of the great Union victory at Vicksburg, which etched his name in military history and irrevocably altered the course of the war. He was Abraham Lincoln's favorite general, and was elevated to an exalted military rank held previously only by George Washington. He was a leader for whom thousands of Northern soldiers were willing to fight and die, and for whom thousands did. Perhaps most memorably, he was the general who took Lee's surrender at Appomattox, and the author of its generous terms.

Grant was also president of the United States during one of the most tumultuous moments in its history. For two terms, he struggled to define the meaning of the war he had fought so hard to win, and the union he had fought to preserve. "The good news was that the Union had been preserved," says historian David Bradley. "The bad news was that the Union had practically killed itself. Guys were coming home missing arms and legs. A lot of guys weren't coming home. It was a mess—it was a total mess."

As President, Grant confronted scandal and economic depression. He sought ways to re-establish national unity and sectional harmony after a bloody and divisive conflict. Most important to us today, he confronted fundamental questions about the role of freed African Americans within the American nation. "He's the last president that we have in the 19th century to talk with a kind of passion about protecting the rights of African-Americans," notes historian Dan T. Carter.

Few public figures have ever held such a firm grip on the American popular imagination. Grant was a man whose rise from obscurity made him a hero to millions. "He was a very honorable man, he was a principled human being. He was a reasonable man in an unreasonable time," says author David Bradley.

Even after his troubled presidency, he was, according to historian Don Miller, "the most popular man in the 19th century—no question about it. Even in death, Lincoln wasn't as popular as Ulysses Grant." When Grant made public appearances, tens of thousands of Americans turned out to honor him. They regarded him not as the failed politician, but as the victorious general, the savior of the Union.

When Grant died on July 23, 1885, church bells tolled sixty-three times in his honor, once for each year of the general's life. In the largest funeral procession New York had ever seen, Grant's body was carried through a city draped in mourning to a temporary tomb in Riverside Park. Alongside his coffin marched the pallbearers: two former Union generals—who had fought with him—and two former Confederate generals—who had fought against him. A newspaper the next morning proclaimed, "If the war did not end in 1865, it certainly ended yesterday."

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