

Message on the Birthday of President Ulysses S. Grant

April 27, 2026

Today our Nation marks the birthday of President Ulysses S. Grant, the fearless general who carried the Union to victory in the Civil War. As our 18th President, he lifted a wounded Republic out of the shadow of conflict and called its people to unity once more.

Born on April 27, 1822, in Point Pleasant, Ohio, Ulysses S. Grant was the son of a hard-working leather tanner and a devoted mother, raised in a Christian family. At 17, he entered the United States Military Academy, where, as a cadet, he distinguished himself as the finest horseman in his class before earning his commission in the United States Army.

During the Mexican-American War, Lieutenant Grant fought with the 4th Infantry Regiment in nearly every major engagement of the campaign. He later returned to service at the outbreak of the Civil War, securing decisive victories from Fort Donelson to Vicksburg, before President Abraham Lincoln elevated him to lieutenant general in command of all the armies of the United States. At Appomattox Court House in April 1865, the tenacity that earned him the name "Unconditional Surrender Grant" brought the conflict to its end, as he accepted the surrender of General Robert E. Lee and brought 4 terrible years of civil war to a close. It was Grant's relentless resolve that secured the Union's triumph, an unyielding commander who overcame every obstacle through sheer force of will and inspired unwavering loyalty in his army.

Elected President in a landslide victory in 1868, Grant devoted two historic terms to healing the Nation's wounds and rebuilding the American Republic from the ashes of war. He championed ratification of the 15th Amendment, established the Department of Justice to enforce the rule of law, made Yellowstone our first national park, guided the great westward expansion of our people by adding Colorado to the Union, and worked tirelessly to restore the strength of our economy and the unity of our citizens after years of bitter strife.

The story of Ulysses S. Grant is the story of America itself: forged in fire, built with grit, and destined for greatness. Through every triumph and tribulation, nothing could stop Grant or the promise of our Republic. As President during our Nation's centennial, Grant led a country that, in just 100 years, had built, innovated, and destroyed itself, only to reemerge as the rising force in the world. Today, as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of our Republic and stand as the greatest Nation in the world, we carry forward the principles to which Grant gave his life's work. My administration is restoring order in our streets, defending the rule of law in our national institutions, strengthening our military, and uniting our great country once more beneath the banner of strength, faith, and freedom that Grant himself bore so bravely throughout his life.

On what would have been his 204th birthday, we honor the life of President Ulysses S. Grant, whose courage and leadership forged a stronger Union and whose tremendous legacy still lights the way for a strong, free, and fearless America.

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