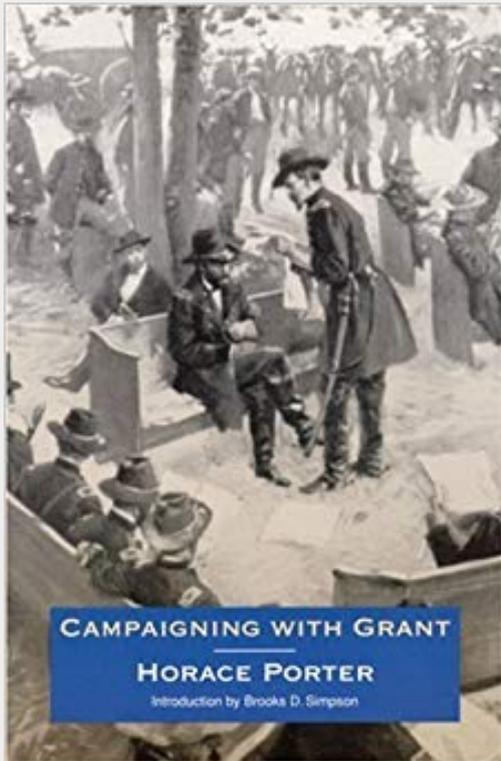


## Campaigning With Grant by Brooks D. Simpson, Horace Porter



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In 1863 Horace Porter, then a captain, met Ulysses S. Grant as Grant commenced the campaign that would break the Confederate siege at Chattanooga. After a brief stint in Washington, Porter rejoined Grant, who was now in command of all Union forces, and served with him as a staff aide until the end of the war. Porter was at Appomattox as a brevet brigadier general, and this work, written from notes taken in the field, is his eyewitness account of the great struggle between Lee and Grant that led to the defeat of the Confederacy. As a close-up observer of Grant in the field, Porter was also able to draw a finely detailed, fully realized portrait of this American military hero—his daily acts, his personal traits and habits, and the motives that inspired him in important crises—rendered in the language that Grant used at the time. Porter intended to bring readers into such intimate contact with the Union commander that they could know him as well as those who served by hi



## Reviews of the **Campaigning With Grant** by Brooks D. Simpson, Horace Porter

### 1. Gogal

Excellent book. Written by a staff member on Grant's staff with first hand knowledge and daily contact with Grant, written soon after the end of the war, and published in 1897.. Easy reading and one of those books that it is hard to put down and not continue reading. Shows the personal, as well as professional side of Grant, that could only be recounted by someone's first-hand experience. No matter how many books you have read about Grant, the story is not complete without reading this book.

### 2. Hylchis

This book contains fascinating details of Grant's personality and his relationships with others. Accepting it at face value, the book could only have been written by someone who essentially lived with Grant for several years of the war, as Porter did. It is very well written and easy to read. Compared to other commanders' Civil War biographies, the level of military detail is often less, though sometimes illuminating, but the human interest content is far higher. I recommend it for persons interested in his personal characteristics 'inside and outside of the battle environment rather than readers interested in technical details of military operations.

### 3. Delalbine

Although Horace Porter did not have the wit of Colonel Theodore Lyman (of Meade's staff), he did possess remarkable powers of observation and a clear love of the subject he was observing. And he does toss in a funny line here and there. But the strength of his book on Grant was based on his frequent notes taken at the time he was in the field.

Lyman's "Meade's Headquarters" was composed of letters to his wife and published after his death, so the tone, humor, and observations are of a different quality, and extremely amusing. He was also keenly aware of the history he was observing and noted in one letter that he had seen standing together on a single day Grant, Sherman, Meade, and Sheridan.

But Porter gave us a truly fresh impression of Grant as a person, instead of Grant the icon. I read a tremendous number of source materials on the Civil War and my favorite accounts are those of line soldiers and aides-de-camp. They have an immediacy and personality to them that brings us so much closer to the generation that lived through the greatest convulsion in American history.

#### 4. Very Old Chap

I love Grant's campaigns in the West, but I never liked the campaign in the East, even though I must have read a dozen or two dozen versions of it, until I read this book. Porter makes it clear what it was all about, step by step. Again, read the original sources, it's the only way to learn what really happened. Sure, read the histories, too. Why not both? And Porter tells many a fine anecdote about the General and the war. If you love Grant, why haven't you read this book?

#### 5. Kamuro

Porter's devotion and admiration for Grant left one wondering about objectivity but that does not diminish the real worth of the book. First hand accounts of historic events send chills up your spine. Grant's first meeting with Lincoln was spellbinding. Porter's account Lee's surrender at Appomattox cast a whole new look on the event for me. In stead of the tragic, honorable, heroic character Lee has been portrayed Porter's description shown him as bigoted and egotistical, humbled only by Grant's magnanimity. I read Porter along with Grant's memoirs (a tougher read) and got a genuine feel for the events and the time.

## 6. Meri

I read this on Kindle, the formatting was excellent. Porter was serving on General Thomas's staff at Chattanooga when Grant was first took over all command of the Union armies. He was so impressed by Grant's immediate command of the situation, not just at Chattanooga, but in all the areas wherein Union armies were in the field that, when the opportunity arose he asked to be transferred to Grant's staff. From then on he was a close aide to Grant. One of the more interesting missions he undertook on Grant's behalf was to travel to Atlanta to visit with Sherman about possible future actions. His notes are detailed and reveal a great many of the details of Grant's life and behavior bot under fire and when in a relaxed more personal setting. He writes well and smoothly is articulate and although he occasionally shows hints of a bit of hero worship he is extremely careful to stick to the facts.

## 7. Golkis

Horace Porter being a staff officer with Ulysses Grant during the latter stages of the war makes his memoir very key to understanding Grant's personality. Porter makes the most of his opportunity in this memoir. The book is very well written and even though it was first published over 100 years ago the writing style is not dated at all. Porter tells a host of anecdotes about Grant and this makes the book very personal and a reader is presented with a very human U.S. Grant. It is a shame that more people did not take this portrayal of Grant to heart and there wouldn't have been throughout the 20th century a 'Grant the Butcher' school and Grant seen as someone totally unfeeling and uncaring to suffering.

Through Porter's excellent work you will get views of Grant during the Chattanooga Campaign and the very bloody Overland campaign. You will see his nervous reactions during the Battle of the Wilderness and will read accounts of his personal bravery at Petersburg. Porter also has humorous descriptions of Abraham Lincoln that are enjoyable to read and there is a moving account of the final days of the war in the East and the meeting of Robert E. Lee and Grant at Appomattox Courthouse.

The Bison Book edition has as a nice bonus a excellent introduction by Grant historian Brooks Simpson who gives some good background on Porter and Grant's relationship and points out where the memoir differs from other accounts.

I highly recommend this book!

8. Simply a great book! General Porter gives a thorough and incredibly insightful look at the two most important men of the Civil War. I have read many books on the subject and the men, but I have to say this next to Grants Memoirs, this is my favorite! Highly recommend.

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