

# Book Marks

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## A Good Soldier

*The Second Installment of the US Grant mystery series*

18 months after the release of **The Ambush of My Name**, the second installment of the US Grant mystery series will make its debut in February 2003. The next mystery will take place in the small town of Bethel, Ohio. Bethel is known as the town where Grant visited during his summers off from West Point. Additionally, Julia made Bethel her home while she was pregnant with two of their children, since she was in no condition to travel with her military husband. If that wasn't enough, Jesse Grant, Ulysses' father, was Bethel's first mayor.

So the town has a rich association with the Grant family and that serves as the background for the new book. When Grant makes a stop in Bethel while traveling in Ohio after the war, he finds his boyhood friends living high on the hog, despite having spent most of final year of the war in Andersonville, the most notorious of the Southern

*continued on page 2*

## Inside This Issue

- 1 A Good Soldier
- 1 Bland Ambitions
- 2 And the Winner Is . . .
- 2 Back to the Future
- 3 Calendar of Events
- 4 Books in Print
- 4 Short Takes on the President

## Bland Ambitions

*Answers to frequently asked questions about the Grant series.*

One of the comments I received about the first Grant book, **The Ambush of My Name**, was whether or not Grant harbored presidential ambitions, like the ones portrayed in the book.

The honest answer is that no one knows. Grant was not talkative. He rarely revealed information of a personal nature with friends or colleagues. This left historians with gaps in what they can divine about his motivations beyond the war.

We do know that he refused the Democratic nomination in 1864. The party approached him about running against Lincoln and he bluntly refused. However, Grant was fighting a war at the time and had no time or desire to leave that position for politics.

After the end of the war, the political landscape was very different. Lincoln was dead, and the much hated Andrew Johnson was president. Grant had befriended with the Radical Republicans. He didn't participate in the political process, but he did accept the nomination for the presidency. He didn't campaign, choosing to stay in Galena. Yet he did accept the position when he was elected

If he hadn't wanted the presidency, Grant could have rejected the overtures. Sherman did refused all political offers. It could be done. Grant had a lifetime pension as Lieutenant General. He and his family would have had a guaranteed income.

*continued on page 3*

prisoner of war camps.

When Jess Grant, Ulysses' son, is suspected of stealing gold coins, Grant and Julia decide to look into the mystery of this sudden bounty.

The question of money after the Civil War was an intriguing one. The Federal government had begun supplying greenback bills in lieu of gold. With the collapse of the Confederate states, an entire nation's money was rendered invalid. To make matters worse in the South, the Confederate gold supply had turned up missing at the end of the war, leaving many people hunting for the missing gold.

Grant find some surprising answers and even more difficult questions as he tries to defend his acceptance of a multitude of gifts, homes, and money after the war.

## And The Winner Is. . .

*Who Was That Lady?* was nominated for multiple awards this spring. The book received notice in the Best Biographical / Critical Work from the Edgars (Mystery Writers of America) and Best Non-Fiction from the Agathas (Malice Domestic). Unfortunately, the book lost out twice. The book was also nominated for Best Non-Fiction from the Macavities (Mystery Readers International). That award presented in October.

## Back to the Future

The first collection of Craig Rice short stories in 38 years appeared in June. *Murder, Mystery, and Malone* came out from Crippen and Landru this spring, 12 stories that appeared in mystery magazines in the 1950s and 1960s.

Additionally, *Home Sweet Homicide* will be re-issued by Rue Morgue Press before the end of 2002, marking its first publication in 40 years.

## What People are Saying about *Intent to Sell*:

"Writing is a business, even for the most literary of authors, and novelist Jeffrey Marks--who just happens to be an MBA--tells genre writers how to handle that reality. His advice is sharp, realistic, to the point, and practical. Authors who follow even 10 percent of what Marks advises will do themselves the biggest favor of their careers. Marks has been there with his own books, fiction and nonfiction, and as the editor of short story compilations. He knows the markets and is savvy. Newly published and even self-published writers will do well to begin as soon as possible to devour this must-have book."

G. Miki Hayden, *Writing the Mystery* (Intrigue Press)

"Solid advice from the trenches of self-promotion."

--Donald Maass, president of the Donald Maass Literary Agency and author of *Writing the Breakout Novel*



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2002

August 3<sup>rd</sup> Barnes and Noble, Merrville, IN,  
2-4pm.

August 10<sup>th</sup>, College of Mt. St. Joseph,  
Cincinnati, OH 9am

October 11-14<sup>th</sup>, Southern Festival of Books,  
Nashville, TN

October 25-27<sup>th</sup>, Magna cum Murder, Muncie,  
IN

November 2<sup>nd</sup>, Kentucky Book Fair, Frankfort  
KY

(I will not be attending Bouchercon this year,  
despite having registered earlier.)

2003

March 19-23, Virginia Festival of the Book,  
Charlottesville, VA

At the Edgars with the PJ Parrish team.



Yet he did accept the position and serve. This set of contradictions has left historians split almost 50/50 as to whether or not Grant desired the presidency.

In 1880, Grant did actively seek the presidency for a possible, unprecedented third term. He made a rare foray into the political process and attended the nominating convention to seek the Republican nomination after having been out of office and travelling the world for four years. He was denied the opportunity of being nominated, losing out to James Garfield, another Civil War general from Ohio.

The next book in the series deals more with Grant's post-war riches, a long way from his days at Hardscrabble or selling wood on the street corners of St. Louis. **A Good Soldier**, the next book in the US Grant series, tackles the subject of the enormous amount of gifts to Grant following the war. Even if the presidency wasn't handed to him on a platter, most everything else was. From homes to horses to thousands of cigars, Grant took gifts for his contribution to ending the War Between The States.

I've already started researching the third book in the Grant series, which will be set in Cincinnati. The murder of a former slave sets the city on edge. When Grant sees the man's ghost, he decides to get to the bottom of the mystery.

For more information on Grant's own ambitions:

*Grant* by Jean Edward Smith

*Ulysses S. Grant: Triumph Over Adversity, 1822-1865* by Brooks D. Simpson

PBS American Experience: Ulysses Grant: Warrior President. (available on video now)

*Ulysses S. Grant* by Jeffrey Perret

**A Good Soldier (A US Grant Mystery)** Due out in February 2003

Overmountain Press; ISBN: 1570722153 \$23.95

Overmountain Press; ISBN: 1570722161 \$13.95

**Intent to Sell: Marketing the Genre Novel**

Deadly Alibi Press; ISBN 1-886199-16-7; \$18.99

**Murder, Mystery, and Malone** (Craig Rice short story collection) Intro by Jeffrey Marks

Crippen and Landru; ISBN: 1885941706

Crippen and Landru; ISBN: 1885941714

**The Ambush of My Name** (A US Grant Mystery)

Overmountain Press; ISBN: 157072184X \$23.95

Overmountain Press; ISBN: 1570721858 \$13.95

**Who Was That Lady? Craig Rice: The Queen of Screwball Mystery**

Delphi Books; ISBN: 0966339711, \$21.95

**Magnolias and Mayhem** (Anthony Nominee)

Overmountain Press; ISBN: 1570721122 \$24.50

Overmountain Press; ISBN: 1570721289 \$15.00

**Canine Christmas**

Ballantine Books; ISBN: 0345436571 \$5.95

**Canine Crimes** (Maxwell and Agatha Nominee)

Ballantine Books; ISBN: 0345424115 \$5.95

## Short Takes on the President

I have written a number of short stories about Ulysses Grant in addition to the novels. Each of the short stories is entitled "Under something", and features Grant during the Civil War or just after it. Each of the stories begin prior to the timeframe of the novels.

The next story in the series is "Under Hoof", which appears in *Presidential Pet Detectives*, edited by Carole Nelson Douglas of Midnight Louie fame. She requested a story about Grant and his pets. While Grant didn't have any dogs or cats, he did have a prized thoroughbred horse, named Cincinnati. The horse had an impeccable lineage, and Grant passed up offers to sell the horse. So Cincinnati plays a prominent part in solving a murder blamed on one of the other horses in the compound outside of Petersburg, Virginia in 1865.

"Under Suspicion" appeared in the June issue of the *Writer's Hood*, [www.writershood.com](http://www.writershood.com).

In 2003, "Under Cooked" will appear in *Criminal Appetites* from Silver Dagger Mysteries as well.

### BOOK MARKS

A Jeffrey Marks Newsletter

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