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Lafayette, IN 47901
November 8, 1999

C SPAN
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ATTN: Program Contents

I wish to comment on the C SPAN discussion of how the 18th President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant, got his name. I thought the C SPAN discussion was rather incomplete. The best way to approach this subject is to say that the U.S. Grant name evolved as did his life.

Ulysses S. Grant was born Ulysses Hiram Grant on 27 April 1822 to Jesse R. Grant and Hanna Simpson Grant. (See Clermont County, Ohio, Historical Records). Later his baptismal record is listed him as Hiram Ulysses Grant (See Carl H. Thompson, Historical Collections of Brown County, Ohio). Over time this has led to the question: was his first name Ulysses or was that his middle name? Some explanation of the conflict can be found in the reports of the maternal grandmother's (Simpson) influence as to the sequence of names at the baptism.

Next, Congressman Thomas L. Hamer, 5th District, Ohio 1833-1839 did not have or could not recall Ulysses' full name when completing his application to enter the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1839. But he was well acquainted with his mother's family, the John Simpsens, of Clermont County. So he entered Grant's name as Ulysses Simpson Grant on the application. (See Congressman and General, Thomas L. Hamer Collections, Brown County Historical Society). Another sidelight in Congressman Hamer's action is that of Jesse R. Grant, Ulysses' father, who was an outspoken Whig in Brown County, whereas Congressman Hamer was a Democrat. So the exchanges between these two men may not have been all that cordial. Also the Simpsens were Democrats and pioneers from the Pennsylvania area similar to that of Congressman Hamer.

There were other changes in President Grant's name, particularly during his years at West Point where it was listed as Ulysses Sidney Grant. As a result some of the U.S. Military Academy records add further confusion to the question of what the "S" stands for in Grant's name. After graduation from West Point in 1843, Grant apparently, on his own and by his own wishes, lists his name as Ulysses Simpson Grant, dropping all references to Sidney. As history well records these are some of the facts leading to how the famous name of U.S. Grant, General of the Union Armies, came to be.

O. Ammer

My own background: I grew up in Georgetown, Ohio,
graduating from Grant Memorial High School. As a senior I
researched and wrote an essay on how U.S. Grant got his name.
There are several additional references I could add if they are
of interest.

Yours truly,

