

his narrative chronicling the man, Grant, not the carnage that surrounded him. His point is to convey to the readers a sense of why "war, for a man like Ulysses Grant, was the only situation in which he could truly connect to his country and countrymen and be at one with them and with himself" (p. 68).

McFeely, who wrote previously on Oliver O. Howard and the Freedman's Bureau, has a special concern for the plight of black Americans. His discussion of Grant's seemingly inconsistent relationship to the people who viewed him as a liberator is among the high points of the book. This emphasis on black history, however, occasionally leads the author away from his subject. A twelve-page digression to discuss some eventually irrelevant 1865 peace negotiations (with emphasis on their relation to the emancipated slaves) and a five-page discussion of early attempts to integrate West Point are the most glaring examples. Such digressions would be understandable if more important matters, such as the Appomattox campaign and the Belknap impeachment, were not passed over too quickly.

Such caveats notwithstanding, this book is worthy of the acclaim accorded it by the popular press. McFeely succeeds admirably in presenting the roots of Grant's mighty successes and monumental failures. The reader cannot fail to empathize with this most human of generals and presidents. McFeely indeed makes Grant recognizable. This book will not replace Hesseltine or Lewis and Catton, but room will most certainly have to be made for it on the shelf with them. McFeely has clearly written the standard one-volume account of Grant's entire career.

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*The Presidency of William McKinley.* By Lewis L. Gould.  
(Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1980. Pp. xi, 294.  
Notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$15.00.)

Was William McKinley a spineless politician who weakly succumbed to public pressure for a needless war while serving as the compliant tool of big business and Mark Hanna, or was he a masterful wartime leader who, as the first modern president, established important precedents for his successors? Lewis L. Gould has assembled impressive evidence to refute the stereotyped view of McKinley as simply a mediocre prelude to the dynamic Theodore Roosevelt. This interpretation of McKinley as a strong president was first advanced twenty years ago

by Margaret Leech and Wayne Morgan in their biographies. Using some new sources but drawing heavily on their work, Gould has reinforced this view while providing additional focus on the many ways in which McKinley strengthened the powers of the presidential office. He has also produced an encyclopedic account of the administration, an account rich in its insightful analysis of McKinley as decision-maker and national leader.

Foreign policy tended to dominate during the McKinley years because of the Spanish-American War, the establishment of the United States as a colonial power, and the struggle for foreign markets. Gould demonstrates that McKinley was the dominant figure in each of these far-reaching developments. The president utilized telegraphic communications and his own White House staff to control the negotiations with Spain. When talk failed and war came, he used these same tools to set up an executive war room from which he ruled as commander-in-chief in fact as well as title. McKinley set an unfortunate precedent by initiating hostilities before Congress declared war and, again without consultation with the legislature, made the crucial decision to dispatch troops to the Philippines. It was this action that made it almost impossible for the United States to withdraw from the islands when the war ended. This involvement, in retrospect, made the creation of an American empire inevitable. McKinley used firmness and patience to extract from Spain the peace terms that he had decided upon. The political skill and sensitivity that he displayed in winning Senate approval for his very controversial peace treaty could have served as a model for Woodrow Wilson.

*The American Presidency* series of which this volume is a part is composed of synthesized studies based primarily on secondary literature. Gould, however, has also drawn on original sources to examine McKinley's conduct of the presidential office. It is this facet of the work that makes it a particularly significant contribution to an understanding of William McKinley.

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*Ethnicity Challenged: The Upper Midwest Norwegian-American Experience in World War I.* By Carl H. Chrislock. (Northfield, Minn.: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1981. Pp. 174. Illustrations, notes, index. \$10.00.)

In this third volume of a topical studies series by the Norwegian-American Historical Association, Carl H. Chrislock