

The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant. Volume 5, April 1-August 31, 1862. Edited by John Y. Simon; assistant editor, Thomas G. Alexander. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973. Pp. xxv, 458. Illustrations, notes, maps, index. \$15.00.)

The period covered in this volume begins with the Battle of Shiloh and ends with Ulysses S. Grant in his headquarters at Corinth, Mississippi, commanding a widely scattered army in a hostile land and struggling to maintain his lines of supply and communication. The story that unfolds includes some of the most important and controversial issues of Shiloh: the question of surprise and the acrimonious, post-battle debate in which northern newspapers severely criticized Grant; Lewis Wallace's errant march which deprived Grant of an entire division through the first day of fighting; and the failure of the Federals on the second day to pursue the defeated Confederates, a boner which resulted in part from a faulty command structure. Following the battle Henry W. Halleck appears on the field to lead the Union army personally in an advance to Corinth that covered twenty miles in thirty days! Grant, then a deputy of Halleck with no command at all, requests but fails to get a different assignment.

Then comes a turning point in Grant's career. In June he returns to his original command with headquarters in Memphis, and in mid-July, when Halleck is appointed general-in-chief, Grant assumes command of the vast area between the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers northward to Cairo, Illinois. Now, in a country teeming with hostile citizens, guerrillas, and enemy cavalry, he abandons his belief that one major battlefield victory can end the war in the West, for he has found it necessary to stop southern trade with the North, suppress hostile newspapers, confiscate enemy property, arrest and imprison civilians who aided or were suspected of aiding the Confederate cause, and put southern Negroes to work for the Union. In short, he has found it necessary to do battle with the people, to take important steps toward waging total war.

To readers of Grant's *Memoirs* much of this is familiar, as are the general's assessments of his principal associates—Halleck, Wallace, William T. Sherman, Don Carlos Buell, John A. Rawlins, and many more. But what Grant wrote in

his *Memoirs* must be compared with what he wrote during the war, for there are important differences, as the editor clearly indicates. Of course, the person about whom these documents reveal most is Grant himself—the man and the army commander—whose character, patterns of thought, decision making process, and prowess as a military leader almost defy comprehension.

The text consists of all of Grant's significant official and personal letters (including eighteen previously unpublished letters to his wife), telegrams, reports, and general orders. They are printed in full and appear in chronological sequence with related communications, explanatory notes, two maps, five illustrations, a chronology, and a calendar containing other Grant documents. The editing is truly professional, the notes are well prepared and informative, and the index is superb. The editor, his assistant, and the Ulysses S. Grant Association merit congratulations for a publication that is and will remain an indispensable contribution to American biography and history.

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The Politics of Inertia: The Election of 1876 and the End of Reconstruction. By Keith Ian Polakoff. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973. Pp. xiv, 343. Notes, essay on sources, index. \$10.95.)

Because the election of 1876 represented an important turning point in American history and was marked by a dramatic electoral crisis, a substantial body of historical literature exists on the subject. Historians have generally focused on the electoral controversy or treated the election in the larger context of Reconstruction. In this book, Keith Ian Polakoff presents the first comprehensive study of the actual campaign. *The Politics of Inertia* carefully details the events leading to the respective nominations of Rutherford B. Hayes and Samuel J. Tilden and the presidential campaign on both the national and state levels, as well as the ensuing electoral stalemate and controversy.