



Citizen of a Wider Commonwealth: Ulysses S. Grant's Postpresidential Diplomacy (World of Ulysses S. Grant)

Edwina S. Campbell

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In 1877 former president Ulysses S. Grant, along with his family and friends, embarked on a two-year world tour that took him from Liverpool to Yokohama with stops throughout Europe and Asia. Biographies of Grant deal very briefly, if at all, with this tour and generally treat it as a pleasure trip filled with sightseeing, shopping, wining, and dining. Far from an extended vacation, however, Grant's travels in fact constituted a diplomatic mission sanctioned by the U.S. government. In this revealing volume, Edwina S. Campbell chronicles Grant's journey—the first diplomatic mission ever undertaken by a former U.S. president—and demonstrates how it marked a decided turning point in the role of the United States in world affairs.

Traveling commercially and on U.S. Navy warships, Grant visited ports of call throughout the British Empire, Europe, and Asia, including Britain, France, Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Scandinavia, Russia, Spain, Portugal, Gibraltar, Ireland, India, Singapore, Hong Kong, China, and Japan. Along the way, he met with monarchs, ministers, and average citizens, creating the model for the summetry and public diplomacy practiced by future American presidents and articulating concepts of national self-determination, international organization, and the peaceful settlement of international disputes decades before Elihu Root's advocacy of binding international arbitration and Woodrow Wilson's proposal for the League of Nations.

Campbell reveals Grant to be a skillful envoy who brought to his travels the deep interest in foreign policy issues he had shown during his administration. Grant confirmed the United States' commitment to Anglo-American cooperation, demonstrated America's interest in the territorial integrity of China, affirmed American faith in universal (male) suffrage as the basis for governmental legitimacy, and asserted the importance of an international order based on equality and justice for all states and their citizens. Grant's efforts shaped not only John Hay's Open Door policy in 1899–1900 but also the broader American approach to twentieth-century international relations. Throughout the trip, Julia Grant proved essential to the success of her husband's mission, and Campbell tells how the couple impressed people around the world with an enduring image of an American president and first lady.

By illuminating the significance of Grant's often overlooked postpresidential travels, *Citizen of a Wider Commonwealth* establishes the eighteenth president as a key diplomat whose work strongly influenced the direction of future U.S. foreign policy and contributes substantially to the study of American international relations.

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