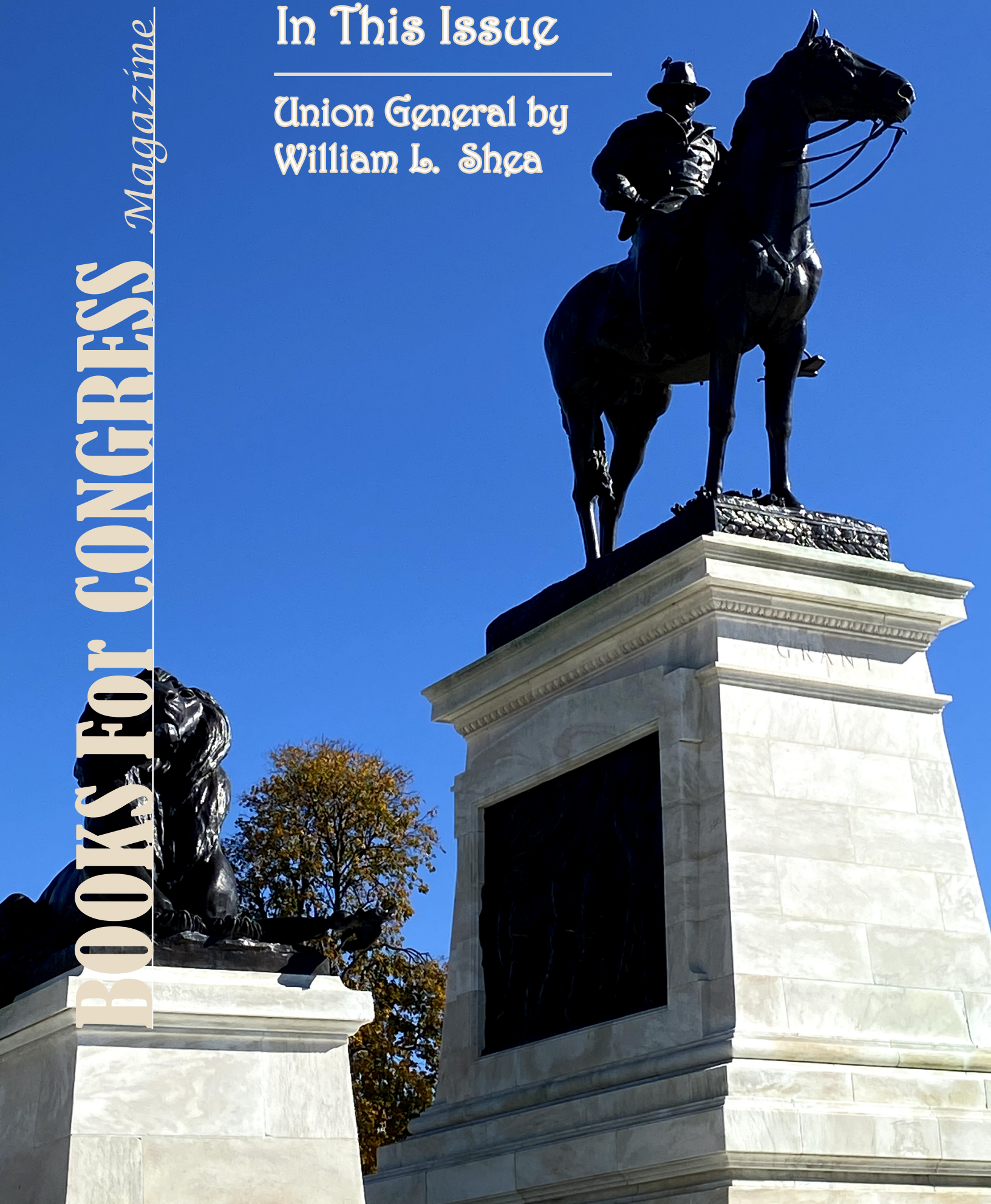


In This Issue

Union General by
William L. Shea



Books for Congress

History, Politics, War

The American Founders were gifted, multi-dimensional leaders. Many of them had multiple careers throughout their lifetimes, holding positions as surveyors, farmers, merchants, lawyer, and soldiers. Their stories can serve as an inspiration to the current generation of leaders who must struggle with many of the same issues the Founders struggled with in developing this nation. Wartime service, particularly from the American Revolution to the Civil War, was often a prerequisite for future leadership in state and federal government.

Union General: Samuel Ryan Curtis and Victory in the West by William L. Shea brings the story of General Samuel Ryan Curtis to life in his first biography. General Curtis was a highly successful West Point graduate, engineer, Congressman and soldier during the Mexican-American and Civil Wars. His life is well-documented by many letters he shared with his family and scrapbooks that he kept from his military campaigns.

General Curtis is probably just now receiving the attention he deserves because he primarily served the outer boundaries of the then Western frontier in Missouri and Arkansas. Most of the attention during the Civil War was on the Eastern theater where the likes of Generals Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman fought. Despite his distance from his superiors, General Curtis held a

steady hand of leadership and defended the U.S. Western boundaries from the Confederates and Native American uprisings as local tribes were also being pushed West.

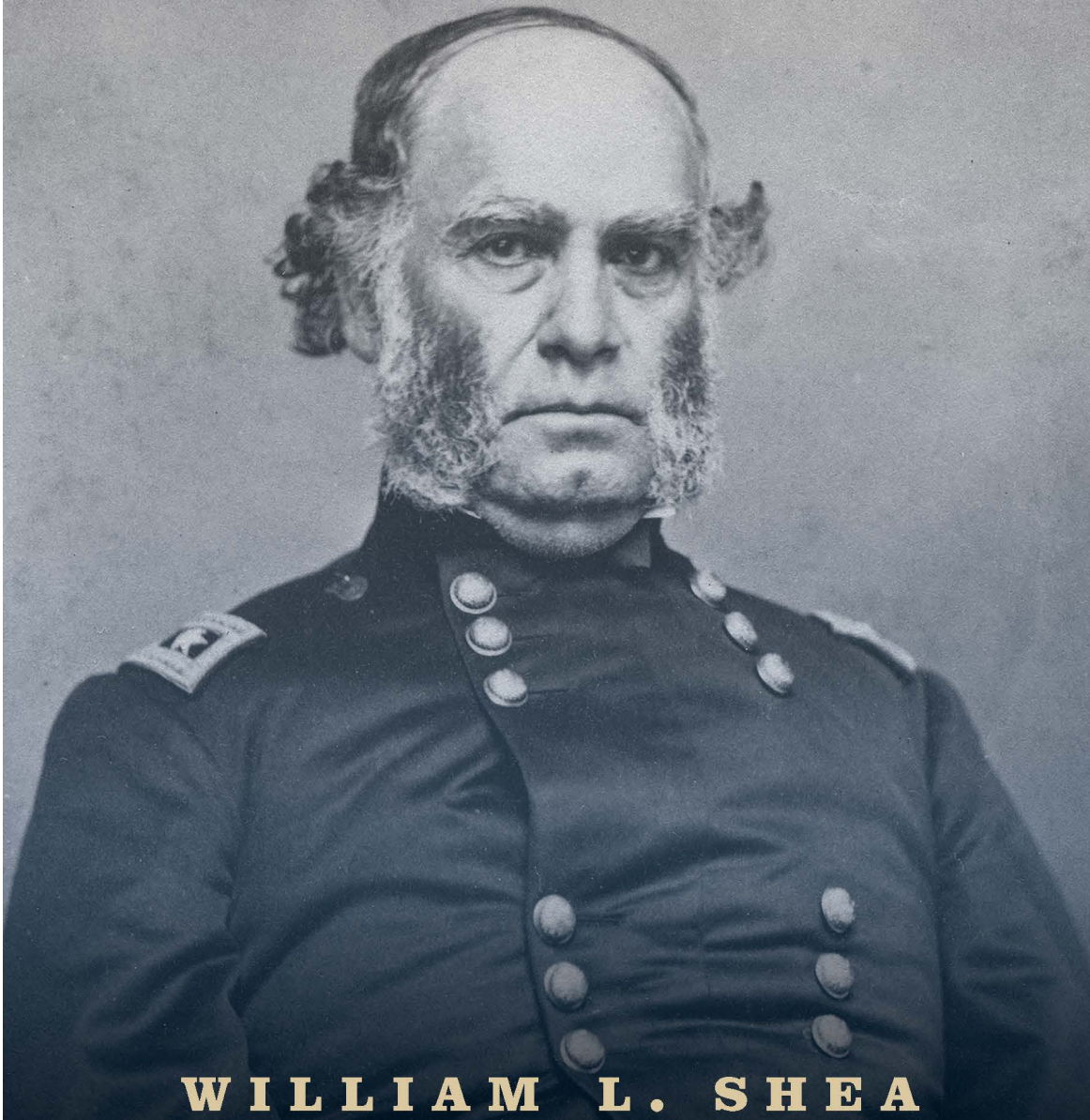
There are common themes in the lives of the great military leaders of the American Revolution and Civil War generations. They were incredibly smart and had basic foundational skills that made them knowledgeable about traversing the land and building earthworks whether it be from experience as a surveyor, engineer, or explorer. Many also endured great personal tragedy and long separations from their families. There were also always internal political battles within the military for recognition, promotion, and choice assignments. General Curtis's life follows this familiar pattern.

Although the pattern of the story is not new, Shea's writing style makes *Union General* an excellent read. The narrative and quotes Shea provides gives the reader a real sense of Curtis's character and moments of pride and disappointment. Shea also kept the story moving by including in-depth overviews of the battles Curtis led and the strategies he deployed to defend his territory and supply and maintain his troops.

Union General is an obvious good choice for military and Civil War historians and anyone who enjoys a good book. This

UNION GENERAL

SAMUEL RYAN CURTIS and VICTORY in the WEST



WILLIAM L. SHEA

review is based on receipt of an advanced review copy.

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