

# <sup>1</sup> Chapter 2. History

## <sup>2</sup> INTRODUCTION

<sup>3</sup> This chapter presents the history  
<sup>4</sup> of the Truman Farm, including its  
<sup>5</sup> establishment by Harry S Truman's  
<sup>6</sup> maternal grandparents, the time period  
<sup>7</sup> in which Truman lived and worked on  
<sup>8</sup> the farm, through its final sale by Harry  
<sup>9</sup> S Truman to his nephews in 1965. More  
<sup>10</sup> recent history of the farm is also included,  
<sup>11</sup> as efforts have been made by the Harry S  
<sup>12</sup> Truman Farm Home Foundation and the  
<sup>13</sup> NPS to repair the property to convey its  
<sup>14</sup> relationship to the president.

<sup>15</sup> This chapter begins with an overview of  
<sup>16</sup> the history of the farm in relationship to  
<sup>17</sup> Harry S Truman. It provides a historic  
<sup>18</sup> context that addresses the influence the  
<sup>19</sup> farm had on President Truman. The  
<sup>20</sup> Truman family's development of the land  
<sup>21</sup> is also discussed. This is followed by a  
<sup>22</sup> statement of significance that describes  
<sup>23</sup> the historical significance of the Farm  
<sup>24</sup> Home, including its designations as a  
<sup>25</sup> NRHP site and an NHL, and presents the  
<sup>26</sup> period of significance as 1906 to 1965 to  
<sup>27</sup> include the years the president lived and  
<sup>28</sup> worked on the family farm and his on-  
<sup>29</sup> going relationship with the farm through  
<sup>30</sup> 1965 when he sold the last parcel.

<sup>31</sup> This chapter concludes with a  
<sup>32</sup> presentation of seven periods of landscape  
<sup>33</sup> development for the property, including  
<sup>34</sup> four periods that are within the period of  
<sup>35</sup> significance.  
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## <sup>1</sup> HISTORY SUMMARY

<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>3</sup> In 1906 Harry S Truman moved in  
<sup>4</sup> Grandview, Missouri, to work on the  
<sup>5</sup> family farm. The 22-year-old bank clerk  
<sup>6</sup> had never farmed before, and he was  
<sup>7</sup> leaving a job that paid an admirable \$100  
<sup>8</sup> a week. His friends doubted that he would  
<sup>9</sup> stick with the grueling work for very  
<sup>10</sup> long, but he surprised them, and maybe  
<sup>11</sup> he surprised himself, by succeeding at  
<sup>12</sup> farming for the next 11 years.

<sup>13</sup> The lessons the young bachelor learned  
<sup>14</sup> on the farm formed much of his character  
<sup>15</sup> and prepared him for the challenges  
<sup>16</sup> of his future. Although he moved away  
<sup>17</sup> when he was 33, Harry Truman remained  
<sup>18</sup> connected to the farm and to his family's  
<sup>19</sup> struggles to stay on the land. Forty years  
<sup>20</sup> later the land sustained the Truman  
<sup>21</sup> family in ways that they could not have  
<sup>22</sup> possibly foreseen in those early years on  
<sup>23</sup> the farm.  
<sup>24</sup>

## <sup>25</sup> Historic Context

<sup>26</sup> The Truman Family Farm was originally  
<sup>27</sup> developed by Harry S Truman's maternal  
<sup>28</sup> grandparents, Harriet and Solomon  
<sup>29</sup> Young. In 1841, the Youngs joined a  
<sup>30</sup> stream of settlers from Kentucky in  
<sup>31</sup> search of land and opportunity. The  
<sup>32</sup> Youngs and their two children travelled  
<sup>33</sup> by steam boat up the Missouri River to a  
<sup>34</sup> community known as Westport Landing  
<sup>35</sup> that would later become Kansas City.  
<sup>36</sup> From there they looked for good farm  
<sup>37</sup> land. The Youngs bought their first  
<sup>38</sup> property in 1844 with funds from the sale  
<sup>39</sup> of their land in Shelby County, Kentucky.  
<sup>40</sup> They gradually expanded their holdings  
<sup>41</sup> by applying for patents on public lands.  
<sup>42</sup> By 1859 the Youngs had obtained more  
<sup>43</sup> than 20 patents on public land. Harriet  
<sup>44</sup> and Solomon were the kind of people that  
<sup>45</sup>  
<sup>46</sup>

1 Congress had in mind when it opened  
2 federal lands to new settlement. The Land  
3 Law of 1820 allowed pioneers like the  
4 Youngs to buy federal property at \$1.25  
5 an acre with a minimum purchase of 80  
6 acres. The Youngs took full advantage  
7 of this and other federal land programs.  
8 When Congress passed the Homestead  
9 Act in 1862, Harriet patented land in her  
10 name.

11  
12 While Harriet Young managed the  
13 farming operations and raised their  
14 growing family, Solomon developed a  
15 freighting business. He transported goods  
16 to the west via ox-drawn wagons and led  
17 caravans over the Santa Fe and Oregon  
18 Trails. He returned home to Missouri to  
19 stay in 1870 and the couple concentrated  
20 on farming and raising livestock. Like  
21 many farmers, they found their products  
22 in high demand after the Civil War and  
23 were able to take advantage of the rapidly  
24 expanding railroad system.

25  
26 The railroads made it economically  
27 feasible to transport grain and cattle to  
28 distant markets. The newly accessible  
29 market for farm products changed the  
30 family farm from a subsistence operation  
31 to a profitable enterprise with cash crops  
32 and livestock. Grandview area farmers  
33 also benefitted from a rapidly growing  
34 local market in nearby Kansas City,  
35 where the population soared from 3,500 in  
36 1865 to an astounding 32,000 in 1870.<sup>1</sup> In  
37 1867 the Youngs acquired 398 additional  
38 acres and built a large home. This  
39 purchase brought their total holdings up  
40 to a little less than 2,000 acres. The next  
41 year, in 1868, Solomon and his daughter,  
42 Martha, planted stately rows of maples  
43 in front of the home. The Youngs were  
44 well-known in the area. An 1877 atlas  
45 for Jackson County lists the Youngs,  
46 with their seven children, as prominent

1 farmers and stock raisers.  
2 Martha Ellen Young was the second  
3 youngest child. She met and married  
4 John Truman, whose parents had also  
5 come from Kentucky. John Truman's  
6 family owned a nearby 200-acre farm.  
7 The couple married in 1881 and moved to  
8 Lamar, Missouri, where they shared their  
9 new home with John Truman's father,  
10 Anderson Shipp Truman.

11  
12 In Lamar, John traded livestock from the  
13 lot across the street from the house. Their  
14 son, Harry, was born on May 8, 1884. In  
15 1887, after attempts at farming on small  
16 acreages at a couple of locations, the  
17 Trumans moved in with Martha's parents,  
18 and helped the Youngs manage their  
19 sizable holdings.

20  
21 The Trumans and the Youngs all lived  
22 in Solomon and Harriet's large house.  
23 Harry's younger brother, Vivian, was born  
24 in 1886 and was about a year old when  
25 they moved to the Young's farm. His sister,  
26 Mary Jane, was born on the farm in 1889.  
27 Their paternal grandfather, Anderson  
28 Shipp Truman, also lived in the house for  
29 a short time before he died in July 1887.  
30 The children enjoyed only a few years  
31 of farm life before Martha insisted they  
32 move into Independence to attend school.  
33 In his autobiography, Harry remembered  
34 his first years at the farm very fondly, as  
35 almost any child would who was allowed  
36 to play on a farm, surrounded by loving  
37 grandparents.

38  
39 In 1892 Solomon Young died at the age of  
40 77, and Harry's uncle, Harrison Young,  
41 took over the management of the farm.  
42 Two years later, in 1894, the original  
43 Farm Home burned to the ground. Harriet  
44 and Harrison Young quickly built a new,  
45 smaller, home and planned to rebuild a  
46 grander home at a later date.

47  
48 The Trumans remained in Independence.  
49 The children were still in school in 1901

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1 Lawrence Christensen and Gary Kremer, *A History of Missouri Volume IV: 1875 to 1919*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1997. Page 44.

1 when John Truman gambled on a grain  
2 futures investment and lost all of the  
3 family's savings, including money that  
4 would have paid for Harry's college  
5 education. The family moved to Kansas  
6 City where Harry went to work for the  
7 railroad, and later found a job as a bank  
8 clerk.

9  
10 When Harrison Young announced his  
11 plans to retire from farming in 1905,  
12 Harry's parents and his sister Mary Jane  
13 returned to run the farm. Brothers Harry  
14 and Vivian left their city jobs to join  
15 the family. By 1906 the entire Truman  
16 family was back on the farm and living  
17 in Grandmother Young's house. Harry  
18 and Vivian shared the bedroom over  
19 the kitchen. Martha and John Truman  
20 had the bedroom on the south side of  
21 the second floor. Mary Jane presumably  
22 shared the bedroom on the north side  
23 with her grandmother.

24  
25 The farm in 1906 was much reduced  
26 from the Youngs' earlier holdings. When  
27 Solomon died without a will, Harriet gave  
28 160 acres to each of the seven children,  
29 along with about \$50,000 to \$60,000 in  
30 personal property to be divided among  
31 them. She retained the 600-acre farm,  
32 which was still very large for the times.  
33 The average Missouri farm in the early  
34 1900s had less than 125 acres. There were  
35 about 277,000 farms in Missouri in 1910,  
36 and only about 3,500 of those farms were  
37 greater than 500 acres.<sup>2</sup>

38  
39 The country around the farm had also  
40 changed during the Trumans' absence.  
41 The St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad  
42 and the Kansas City Southern Railroad  
43 now extended into the region. The town of  
44 Grandview was formed in December 1889  
45 near the stock pens and depot serving  
46 the two railroads. In 1891 the Grandview

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2 Richard Kirkendall, "Harry S. Truman, A Missouri Farmer in the Golden Age", in *Agricultural History*, October, 1974. Page 473.

1 Baptist church moved their church  
2 building from the edge of the Young's farm  
3 into the new town. The church had been  
4 established by the Blue Ridge Missionary  
5 Baptist Congregation in 1848. The  
6 congregation moved the church off the  
7 property, leaving a cemetery behind. The  
8 cemetery was established by Oliver "Pete"  
9 Thompson in 1848. Pete's wife, Matilda,  
10 was buried there in 1858.

11  
12 The Truman family returned to the  
13 Young farm in what has been called  
14 the golden age of agriculture. During  
15 the first two decades of the twentieth  
16 century, American farms tripled in value  
17 and doubled in gross income. Farm  
18 commodities prices soared. In Missouri,  
19 corn and wheat prices more than doubled  
20 between 1906 and 1916. Agricultural land  
21 values also went up. In Jackson County  
22 the average property market value for  
23 farmland grew from \$71 per acre in 1900  
24 to \$152 per acre in 1910, and then to \$229  
25 per acre in 1920.<sup>3</sup> The extraordinarily rich  
26 soils, long growing season and abundant  
27 rainfall combined with the close proximity  
28 of the railroads and the growing demands  
29 of Kansas City made Jackson County  
30 farmland among the most valuable in the  
31 state.

32  
33 All of the Trumans worked hard on the  
34 farm. Under John Truman's direction,  
35 Harry and his siblings completed the  
36 endless rounds of chores and tasks.  
37 Martha ran the household and cared for  
38 her mother, who by then was in her late  
39 eighties. John employed two daily workers  
40 and hired additional help during the  
41 busiest times. The hired hands in the area  
42 earned a minimum of ten cents an hour,  
43 but the Trumans paid 15 to 20 cents an  
44 hour and included meals.

45  
46 Farming in the 1910s relied on animal  
47 power. Tractors were introduced in 1913,  
48 but were slow to catch on. In 1919 there

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3 Ibid Page 471.

1 were over a million horses and mules on  
2 Missouri farms, and only 7,200 tractors.  
3 A horse or mule drawn plow could till an  
4 acre in about an hour and a half. A farmer  
5 would be happy to see eight to ten acres  
6 plowed in a day.

7  
8 Harry offered an insightful memory of his  
9 hours behind a gang plow, made by the  
10 Emerson Plow Company and consisting  
11 of two twelve-inch moldboards on a three-  
12 wheeled frame. The plow was pulled  
13 by four horses or mules. He noted “I’ve  
14 settled all the ills of mankind in one way  
15 and another while riding along seeing  
16 that each animal pulled his part of the  
17 load.”<sup>4</sup> Some of that tilling time went  
18 into growing crops to feed the horses and  
19 mules at the rate of about five acres per  
20 animal.

21  
22 The Trumans planted the wheat and oats  
23 using a twelve-disc drill that covered  
24 eight feet. They cut the wheat with a  
25 horse or mule drawn binder, a machine  
26 that replaced the old method of hand-  
27 cutting with a cradle-scythe, or cradle.  
28 The binders in operation in the early  
29 1900s could also tie the cut stalks into  
30 shocks. The thresher, which separates the  
31 wheat kernels from the straw stalks, was  
32 a big steam-powered machine. Grandview  
33 resident Leslie C. Hall owned several  
34 threshing machines, moving them from  
35 farm to farm where a group of farmers  
36 worked together, much to the dismay of  
37 Martha Truman. When the men arrived  
38 at their farm she had to help prepare  
39 huge meals to feed them. Martha did not  
40 like to cook and left that chore to others-  
41 usually Harry and Mary Jane-whenver  
42 she could.

43  
44 Corn harvests were equally tough. In  
45 order to make enough room for the  
46 mechanical cutter, Harry would pick two  
47 rows of corn by hand, using a curved

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4 Robert Ferrell, editor. *The Autobiography of Harry Truman*.  
Boulder: Colorado Associated University Press. 1980. Page 30.

1 husking knife or a peg strapped to the  
2 palm of a heavy glove. A farmer hand-  
3 picking the corn walked down each row,  
4 picking corn from stalks on the right and  
5 left, twisting each ear from the stalk and  
6 tossing it into a wagon pulled by horses.  
7 Harry wrote in a letter that this chore  
8 was surely a job invented by Satan.

9  
10 Hay had its own challenges. At about 80  
11 pounds per bale, moving a load of some  
12 250 bales was an exhausting job. Perhaps  
13 the worst part was loading the bales  
14 into a railroad car. The rail lines crossed  
15 through the Young’s farm with stops  
16 located a mile south in Grandview and a  
17 little farther to the north in Hickman’s  
18 Mill. Managing the weeds, fertilizing, and  
19 maximizing the crops kept the Trumans  
20 busy, but they also built two new barns,  
21 installed an outhouse and improved the  
22 hog pen.

23  
24 The Trumans planted about half of the  
25 farm acreage, and used the other half as  
26 pasture. They employed new techniques  
27 to improve the soil by spreading manure  
28 on their fields, and rotating crops.  
29 They planted “clover”, a nitrogen-fixing  
30 plant that could replace the nutrients  
31 depleted by wheat and corn. They  
32 followed the clover with corn, then oats,  
33 and then wheat. The rotation boosted  
34 crop production and the clover provided  
35 additional feed for the cattle.

36  
37 Most of the corn crop went toward feeding  
38 the farm animals. Harry got up every  
39 morning at five a.m. to do this chore,  
40 while his father did the milking.

41  
42 Cattle could be sold to nearby consumers  
43 in Kansas City, or shipped farther away  
44 on the train. The Trumans had some  
45 registered Shorthorns. Harry was not  
46 fond of cattle, particularly after one  
47 cantankerous calf bucked Harry over  
48 his head, breaking his leg. The Trumans  
49 raised hogs, specializing in the Hampshire



1 breed. A cholera epidemic killed most of  
2 the hogs in 1912, but by 1917, the farm  
3 had 40 hogs. The Trumans also raised  
4 chickens, a necessity, if only because  
5 fried chicken was the only meal Martha  
6 liked to make. The family had quite a few  
7 chickens, counting 65 in a 1910 report.

9 After 42 years on the farm, Harriet Young  
10 died at the age of 91 in 1909. Harriet left  
11 the property to Martha and Harrison. The  
12 other siblings challenged their mother's  
13 will in a lawsuit that questioned their  
14 sister and brother's character, which  
15 dragged on for over five years. The  
16 Truman family continued to farm during  
17 the legal battle over who actually owned  
18 the land.

20 Vivian married in 1911 and moved away  
21 to start his own farm. John Truman  
22 hired a worker to replace Vivian and  
23 Harry found himself sharing his bedroom  
24 with hired hands. A heavy blow came  
25 when John died in November 1914. It  
26 is not totally clear how John died. He  
27 apparently had an obstruction in his  
28 stomach related to a hernia he developed  
29 when moving a large boulder as part  
30 of his non-farm job as a county road  
31 overseer. After John's death, the burden  
32 of running a 600-acre farm fell to 30-year-  
33 old Harry Truman. Harry worked hard to  
34 manage the daily operations and realized  
35 a profit for the farm.

37 Up until his father's death, Harry's life  
38 had been exceedingly full. His non-farm  
39 activities filled every extra hour. He was  
40 a member of Company B of the Missouri  
41 National Guard for two terms from 1905  
42 to 1911. He was a Mason, and a member  
43 of the Farm Bureau, the Grandview  
44 Commercial Club and the Modern  
45 Woodmen. Except for the National  
46 Guard, he was elected by the members  
47 to leadership roles in each of these  
48 organizations.

1 He did not let up after John's death.  
2 Harry resumed his father's position as  
3 a county road overseer until political  
4 changes ended his appointment in 1916.  
5 He applied for, and was appointed to, the  
6 postmaster job in Grandview in December  
7 1914, only to assign the duties and salary  
8 for the year 1915 to another. He also filled  
9 a vacated position on the Hickman Mills  
10 School District board from 1916 to 1917.

12 All of these extra-curricular activities  
13 paled in comparison to his enthusiastic  
14 courtship of his future wife. Bess Wallace  
15 was a "city girl" he had known in school  
16 in Independence. During their courtship  
17 from 1910 to 1917, Harry wrote weekly  
18 letters to Bess and visited her almost  
19 every weekend.

21 Harry's regular trips to see Bess and his  
22 travels to other chapters of the Masonic  
23 organization took him away from the farm  
24 on a regular basis. He was impressed by  
25 the automobile, a brand new invention  
26 that promised to make his travels a little  
27 easier. In April 1914, Martha Truman  
28 provided Harry with \$650 to buy a 1911  
29 Stafford automobile, a five-passenger  
30 touring car with the top attached by  
31 straps to the front part of the frame.

33 The open car needed shelter from  
34 Missouri weather. Harry purchased a  
35 store building in Grandview, moved it  
36 onto the farm, and converted it into a  
37 garage. Harry Truman's nephew would  
38 later remark that he had been told the  
39 garage was a former Grandview post  
40 office that his uncle moved after his  
41 term as postmaster ended in the middle  
42 of 1915. The Truman Library archives  
43 provide a clue to the origin of the store.  
44 The archives contain a copy of a deed  
45 from 1915, wherein Harry purchased  
46 a barber shop on Lot 4 of Block 10 in  
47 Grandview from G.A. Kinchloe.<sup>5</sup> The deed  
48 described the purchased goods as a metal

49 <sup>5</sup> HSTL, General File 1876-1951, Box 23.

1 barbershop with two barber chairs and all  
2 of the associated contents of the shop. It is  
3 possible the post office was also located in  
4 this shop until 1915, when he moved it to  
5 the farm.

7 The automobile was a useful but significant  
8 expense for the Trumans in 1914. The  
9 protracted lawsuit over Harriet Young's  
10 estate was finally settled that year, affirming  
11 Martha Truman and Harrison Young as the  
12 rightful owners of the farm. This made them  
13 responsible for a \$9,500 cash settlement to  
14 their siblings and \$3,000 in attorney fees.  
15 Martha mortgaged the farm for \$7,500 to  
16 pay these debts.

19 Feeling the pinch of the farm debt and  
20 the desire to make enough money to meet  
21 the expectations of his future wife and  
22 mother-in-law, Harry considered land  
23 speculation in South Dakota and Texas,  
24 losing money in investments in a lead and  
25 zinc mine and an oil venture. The failed  
26 ventures drew down on the farm profits  
27 as Harry's mother helped him pay off his  
28 debts.

30 Martha Truman increased the mortgage  
31 to \$25,000 in 1917. The increase may not  
32 have been too alarming for the times.  
33 Farm lands and commodities prices were  
34 still going up and the Trumans agreed  
35 with the widely-held belief that farm land  
36 values would continue to rise. A \$25,000  
37 mortgage on a 600-acre farm valued the  
38 land at a little more than \$41 an acre, a  
39 value that was way below Jackson County  
40 farm values for the time.

42 Harry was probably not worried about  
43 the mortgage when he enlisted in the  
44 Army and went to Europe to fight in  
45 World War I. In June 1917 he rejoined  
46 the Missouri National Guard and was  
47 elected first lieutenant of Battery F, 2nd  
48 Missouri Artillery. In August he was  
49 sworn into regular army service as a

1 member of 129th Field Artillery regiment  
2 and went to Camp Doniphan at Fort Sill,  
3 Oklahoma. His regiment shipped out to  
4 France in April 1918 and remained there  
5 until April 1919.

7 While Harry was away, Mary Jane  
8 managed the farm with the help of a hired  
9 man who lived in a separate house on the  
10 property. Many years later, Mary Jane  
11 remembered that even though they had  
12 difficulty in war time finding additional  
13 good help, the farm was productive in  
14 those years.

16 Harry returned in 1919 to marry Bess.  
17 Mary Jane was reluctant to continue  
18 running the farm on her own, so the  
19 family sold their farm equipment and  
20 leased the land. Harry sold his part of the  
21 ownership in the property to his mother,  
22 and moved in with Bess and her mother  
23 in Independence.

25 Mary Jane and Martha stayed on the  
26 farm, living in the house. They may  
27 not have realized it at the time, but the  
28 Trumans ended farming at the end of  
29 farming's golden age. Farm prices peaked  
30 in 1920 and began a long, nation-wide  
31 decline. Missouri farm property values  
32 dropped 40% in the 1920s. State taxes  
33 tripled in that decade and about half of all  
34 Missouri farms were mortgaged.<sup>6</sup>

36 In the 1920s, progress encroached on  
37 Grandview and the Truman Farm. The  
38 Trumans granted rights-of-way to the  
39 Kansas City and Grandview Railway, and  
40 to Jackson County to extend Blue Ridge  
41 Boulevard through their land. They also  
42 granted right-of-ways to the Missouri  
43 Highway Department for the extension of  
44 State Highway 71 through the property,  
45 and to the Kansas City Power and Light  
46 Company. The negotiations with the

6 Statistics on Missouri farms in this paragraph are from  
Richard Kirkendal, *A History of Missouri Volume V, 1919 to  
1953*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986. Page 56.

1 power company in 1929 likely brought  
2 electricity to the property. In this respect  
3 the Trumans were well ahead of the rest  
4 of rural Missouri. By 1940, only 18% of  
5 Missouri farms had electricity.<sup>7</sup>

6  
7 In 1927, Vivian and his wife, Luella,  
8 purchased some of the former Young  
9 farm property located to the north of his  
10 grandparents' house. They built a home  
11 there in 1930 and farmed the land. Their  
12 oldest son, John, managed the farm in the  
13 first half of the 1930s.

14  
15 In 1922, Martha subdivided  
16 approximately 60 acres of the property  
17 into 11 lots and sold them as the Truman  
18 Subdivision. Even with the sale of 60  
19 acres, she only managed to pay the  
20 interest on the farm mortgage. Things  
21 came to a head during the Depression,  
22 when the holder of the mortgage told the  
23 Trumans they would need to find another  
24 entity to take over the note. In an unusual  
25 move, the local school district agreed in  
26 April 1938 to assume a \$35,000 mortgage  
27 on the farm. The mortgage was increased  
28 from \$25,000 to consolidate other debts.  
29 The Trumans did not make the one-year  
30 payment schedule. After a few years of  
31 attempts to renegotiate the note, Jackson  
32 County foreclosed on the farm on July 16,  
33 1940.

34  
35 The foreclosure forced Mary Jane and  
36 Martha to leave their family home  
37 in 1940. They moved into a house in  
38 Grandview at 1003 High Grove Road.  
39 Jackson County rented out the Farm  
40 Home from 1940 to 1945, when the county  
41 put the land up for sale. A family friend,  
42 Charles F. Curry, led an effort to return  
43 the land to the Truman family. Working  
44 with E. Kemper Carver and Tom Evans,  
45 he submitted the winning bid of \$43,500  
46 to the Jackson County Court to purchase  
47 the land. Vivian Truman had already  
48 committed to provide \$20,000 to buy the

49 <sup>7</sup> Ibid. Page 303.

1 Farm Home and its associated 87 acres  
2 from the partnership. He purchased the  
3 land in 1945 and deeded it to his brother  
4 Harry in 1946. The partnership sold the  
5 remaining 200 acres in 1946 to Harry  
6 Truman for \$20,000.

7  
8 Harry Truman participated in this  
9 brief but anguish-filled period of land  
10 transactions from a distance. He left the  
11 farm in 1919 to start a men's clothing  
12 business in Kansas City. When his  
13 business failed, he turned to politics and  
14 won a seat as a Jackson County Judge,  
15 which was actually the equivalent of a  
16 county commissioner position. He served  
17 as a county judge from 1923 to 1935 with  
18 a two year break from 1926 to 1927, when  
19 he lost that election. He went on to a  
20 seat in the United States Senate in 1935.  
21 His 1940 campaign for re-election to the  
22 senate included political maneuvers from  
23 his opponent, who raised the issue of the  
24 family farm mortgage and pressured the  
25 foreclosure on the property.

26  
27 Truman won the 1940 election and  
28 remained in the senate until he was  
29 elected vice-president to Franklin D.  
30 Roosevelt in the 1944 election. While  
31 his family struggled with the farm note,  
32 Truman struggled with his own finances.  
33 He finished paying off his debts from  
34 the failed clothing store in 1935, but his  
35 senate campaigns created new financial  
36 burdens. He was on such a tight budget  
37 during his campaign for the senate in  
38 1940, that one night he could not afford a  
39 hotel room, so he slept in his car. Truman  
40 finally settled his debts and become  
41 solvent after the 1940 senatorial race.  
42 Fortunately, the Democratic Party funded  
43 a large part of the vice-presidential  
44 campaign.

45  
46 Upon the death of President Franklin  
47 D. Roosevelt and with less than three  
48 months of experience as vice-president,  
49 Harry Truman assumed the presidency

1 on April 12, 1945. The new president  
2 was consumed by the demands of the  
3 job. His first year in office included some  
4 of his most important actions and must  
5 have absorbed all of his time and energy.  
6 The critical farm land purchase had just  
7 been completed on February 25. Without  
8 the help of Vivian in Grandview, the  
9 Truman farm transactions might not  
10 have happened. President Truman, with  
11 Vivian's help, found time to make some  
12 additional small land purchases to add to  
13 the farm holdings.

14  
15 Even though the Trumans had reclaimed  
16 the Farm Home, Martha was now too frail  
17 to return to her old home. She broke her  
18 hip in 1945 and moved with Mary Jane  
19 into a one-story home at 604 (now 602)  
20 High Grove Road in Grandview, where  
21 she died in 1947 at the age of 95.

22  
23 Vivian, with his sons Gilbert and Harry,  
24 worked the farm in the 1940s and 1950s.  
25 Young Harry moved into the dilapidated  
26 Farm Home with his wife Dorothy in  
27 1948. They had no indoor plumbing the  
28 first year they lived there. In 1949, water  
29 from the Grandview municipal water  
30 system was connected to the house and  
31 the Trumans built a bathroom on the first  
32 floor. The farm report used for President  
33 Truman's 1949 tax return showed the  
34 new bathroom cost \$500.69 for plumbing,  
35 carpentry, electrical work and fixtures.

36  
37 The young Trumans enjoyed many  
38 benefits of mechanized farming that had  
39 developed since the animal-powered  
40 days of the 1910s. They focused on dairy  
41 farming, building a milk barn complete  
42 with a vacuum milking system, a hot  
43 water heater and a milk cooler.

44  
45 During his second presidential term,  
46 President Truman contemplated  
47 developing his presidential library on the  
48 farm. He approached the architectural  
49 firm Neild-Somdal Associates in 1950

1 to develop conceptual drawings with a  
2 particular emphasis on reconstructing the  
3 old Solomon and Harriet Young house.

4  
5 The plans for the Truman Library  
6 stayed on the table until early 1954.  
7 The now-retired president hesitated  
8 on the Grandview location. Historians  
9 suggest a variety of factors that created  
10 the uncertainty in Mr. Truman's mind.  
11 The location was not convenient to the  
12 Truman's Independence home; the town of  
13 Grandview did not offer much lodging or  
14 ease of access for out-of-town researchers,  
15 and the donation of the acreage for the  
16 library facility reduced the land available  
17 for development. In July 1954, the City of  
18 Independence offered a site for the library,  
19 which Truman accepted.

20  
21 The presidential library was one of two  
22 significant developments proposed for  
23 Grandview in the early 1950s. The Air  
24 Force planned to convert the Grandview  
25 airport into a large base. The 19 million  
26 dollar project would have expanded the  
27 airport to support the Continental Air  
28 Command and the Central Air Defense  
29 Headquarters. The proposed development  
30 sent Grandview area land prices soaring  
31 for a short time before the project was  
32 disbanded.

33  
34 Although neither the library nor the  
35 air base were developed, Grandview  
36 experienced its share of growth. The  
37 prosperity and expansion of Kansas City  
38 after World War II transformed many of  
39 the area's rural properties into suburban  
40 developments. While reporting on the two  
41 projects, U.S. News and World Report  
42 painted a clear picture of the boom in  
43 Grandview. "Even before this prospect  
44 developed, however, the demand for  
45 property had been making some land too  
46 valuable for ordinary farming. A few of the  
47 larger farms had become estates for city  
48 people....Other farms are subdivided....for

49



suburban homes.”<sup>8</sup>

The U.S. News and World Report article also offered some insight into the Truman holdings. “All of this has made the Truman farm, one of the largest and best in the area, a matter of lively interest to real estate developers. Would-be buyers show up every week or so. Brokers report many offers for the land....Estimates are that the farm now would bring \$350,000 to \$500,000 if subdivided and sold. The best acreage would undoubtedly sell for \$800 to \$1,250 an acre.”<sup>9</sup>

Harry S Truman’s decision to locate his presidential library in Independence opened other options for the farm. The potential profits from developing the farm land were particularly important to the former president who left Washington, D.C. in early 1953 without a steady income. Congress did not authorize presidential pensions until 1958. He planned to cover the immediate family expenses with income from publishing his autobiography.

Under Harry’s leadership, the Truman family went into the land development business. In August 1955, the Trumans sold 105 acres to Columbus, Ohio developer Don Casto for approximately \$130,295. Known for his development of automobile-focused shopping centers in the Midwest, Don M. Casto, Sr. established a firm that built 27 regional shopping centers and malls. Radio commentator Paul Harvey described him as “the man who changed the shopping habits of the free world.” Many of the Casto developments were called “Town and Country” shopping centers with a descriptive prefix related to the location of the center. Casto and his son, Don Casto

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<sup>8</sup> U.S. News and World Report article photocopy located in the Vertical File on the Grandview Farm at the Truman Library. Article date estimated 1953. Specific date unavailable.  
<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Jr., planned to develop the farm land into the Truman Corners Town and Country Shoppers City.

Gilbert and Harry Truman, who had been farming on the land, sold 74 dairy cattle at an auction in August 1955 and moved their operations to a 400-acre farm in Louisburg, Kansas.

In 1955, the Trumans also sold 18 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres to the Mary Don Company, a Kansas City real estate firm owned by Mary Agnes Donnelly and her husband Cornelius Edelbrok. The Mary Don Company subdivided the land into 71 lots.<sup>10</sup>

The next year, in 1956, the Trumans sold a strip of land on the east side of Highway 71 to the Missouri Highway Department for \$13,864. The sale was a win-win for the Highway Department, which would expand the highway and for the Trumans who could offer better access to their properties.

With the development underway, the Trumans rented out the old Farm Home to the Williams family for \$65 a month. While living in the house, the Williams family did some repairs to the foundation, installed concrete floors on the porch and patio, and re-shingled the roof. In spite of their work, the house continued to decline.

The Truman Corners Town and Country Shoppers City opened to great fanfare on September 12, 1957. Harry, Vivian and Mary Jane attended the opening ceremonies, which included remarks by the former president and the unveiling of a plaque. The planned August opening

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<sup>10</sup> These sales amounts were listed by Harry Truman in one of his personal accounting ledgers and are located in the Harry S Truman Library. Harry S Truman Post Presidential Papers 1953-1973 Box 492. It was not completely clear from the ledger entries if this sale was for \$65,000 or for \$45,000.

1 had been delayed by a massive tornado  
2 that tore through the Grandview area,  
3 ripping the last of Solomon Young's maple  
4 trees from the ground and blowing down  
5 the old hog house on the farm.

6  
7 In January 1958, Ben Weinberg of the  
8 Triangle Development Company in  
9 Kansas City bought the last big piece of  
10 the farm. He paid \$220,000 for 220 acres  
11 located across Highway 71 from Truman  
12 Corners. Weinberg planned a multi-use  
13 development of commercial, multi-family  
14 and single family housing to be called  
15 Truman Village.

16  
17 The sale to Weinberg left about 40 acres  
18 in Truman ownership. Half was the land  
19 associated with Vivian's house. Harry S  
20 Truman transferred all of his remaining  
21 holdings to his nephews Harry and  
22 Gilbert in late 1964 and early 1965. After  
23 Vivian died in 1965 his wife, Luella,  
24 moved to Kansas to live with her sons.  
25 They rented their house, and extended the  
26 lease of the Farm Home to the Williams  
27 Family. The next year in 1966, Solomon  
28 Young's big barn burned to the ground.

29  
30 After Vivian's death, Harry and Gilbert  
31 inquired through their attorney if Jackson  
32 County would be interested in acquiring  
33 and preserving the Farm Home. The  
34 County could not meet the asking price  
35 of \$200,000, so the Trumans continued to  
36 rent the house to the Williams family, who  
37 stayed until 1983.

38  
39 Harry S Truman died in 1972, followed  
40 six years later by Mary Jane and Luella.  
41 Bess Truman died in 1982. Harry and  
42 Gilbert eventually sold Vivian's home and  
43 a shopping center was built on the land in  
44 1987.

45  
46 Various efforts were made to preserve the  
47 Farm Home. The Grandview Chamber  
48 of Commerce started a fundraising effort  
49 to purchase the house, and was able to

1 have the property listed on the National  
2 Register of Historic Places on May 5,  
3 1978. The Harry S Truman Farm Home  
4 Foundation formed in 1980 and assisted  
5 Jackson County in their negotiations to  
6 purchase the Farm Home on 5.26 acres  
7 from the Trumans in 1983. The appraised  
8 value of the property by then had grown  
9 to \$700,000. The Truman brothers agreed  
10 to sell the site for half the appraised value  
11 and the Foundation worked with Jackson  
12 County officials to obtain a \$378,250 grant  
13 from the Department of the Interior's  
14 Land and Water Conservation Fund  
15 State Assistance Program. The Harry S  
16 Truman Farm Home Foundation raised  
17 funds to repair the home and supported  
18 the designation of the site as a National  
19 Historic Landmark on February 4, 1985.

20  
21 The repair of the Farm Home cost at least  
22 \$142,198 and was conducted under the  
23 direction of George Fogelsong. In addition  
24 to the extensive work on the house, a  
25 small maple grove was planted and  
26 volunteers placed a new smokehouse and  
27 privy on the property. An archeological  
28 study of the grounds was also conducted.  
29 The foundation ran into financial trouble  
30 and Jackson County resumed full  
31 responsibility for the site in 1987 with a  
32 "Friends of the Truman Farm" auxiliary  
33 group providing tours.

34  
35 Jackson County found it difficult to  
36 market, manage and maintain the  
37 property within its budgetary constraints.  
38 In mid-1989, county officials began to  
39 work with Missouri congressmen to  
40 approach the National Park Service  
41 about the property. After considerable  
42 review and consideration, Congress  
43 passed a resolution authorizing the  
44 approval of a donation of the property to  
45 the Department of the Interior. Jackson  
46 County conveyed the property to the  
47 federal government on April 4, 1994.  
48 The Truman Farm opened to the public  
49 in 1996. The NPS has since completed

1 a restoration of the garage (2009) and  
2 several projects to preserve the historic  
3 Farm Home. The NPS continues to  
4 maintain the buildings and grounds.  
5  
6



Figure 2-1. The Truman Farm from Blue Ridge Boulevard in Grandview, Missouri, BN 11/23/11



## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The historic significance of the Truman Farm is defined in the National Register nomination form and the National Historic Landmark documentation. The farm was listed as the Solomon Young Farm on the National Register of Historic Places (1978 NRHP) on May 5, 1978. The National Register nomination was prepared in 1977, and states the property is significant for its association with Harry S Truman. The 1978 NHRP established the period of significance to be between 1906 to 1917 to correlate with the eleven years Truman spent working on the family farm.

The farm was designated the Harry S Truman Farm Home National Historic Landmark in 1985. The significance stated in this documentation expands the period of significance beyond 1917 to include the on-going relationship that Mr. Truman had with the property after he left the farm. The significance discussion describes how Truman's experiences as a young farmer affected his electability and informed some of his policies when he served in elected office. It also describes the family's use of the property, their struggles to maintain possession of the land, and their ultimate decision and actions to sell the land.

### Period of Significance

The period of significance for the Truman Farm is 1906 to 1965, which represents the time Harry S Truman had a primary role in the management and operations of his family's farm. This period includes the years between 1906 and 1917 when Harry lived and worked on the family farm in Grandview, Missouri.

The "Specific dates" indicated in the significance discussion in the National Historic Landmark documentation are

"1867–present." It is not clear if the reference to the present means the date when the Landmark documentation was prepared (1984) or the present moment for the reader. New information has come to light since the NHL documentation was completed. This new information offers a rational for changing the end date of the period of significance to 1965.

In June 2011, the Truman Library released new documents to the public. Much of the newly released information concerns the Trumans' business dealings after 1954. This information clarifies some of the details about the Truman Corners Shopping Center, the Truman Heights project and other development of the former farm land. The recently released data verifies that the Truman family farmed and managed the property until 1955 and then, under the leadership of Harry S Truman, participated in the development and sale of the farm land. By late 1964 or early 1965, Harry Truman had transferred all of his remaining ownership in parcels in the Grandview area, including the Young Farm Home, to his nephews. Since these last transfers ended his life-long association with the Grandview properties, it would be appropriate to end the period of significance in 1965 to reflect the end of his involvement in the Grandview properties.

## Comparison to Other Agrarian Properties in the Region

The remaining small parcel that comprises the Harry S Truman Farm Home National Historic Landmark is a remnant of the large original farm. The Truman Farm conveys the sense of an agrarian property, but it no longer retains the original barns and long-distance vistas of land that are typical character-defining features of farms.

The Farm Home, with its vernacular form and modest trim is a typical rural home. The form, known as an I-House, was ubiquitous throughout rural Missouri, beginning in about 1840.<sup>11</sup> It was a very popular house form in the Grandview area up until the 1930s.<sup>12</sup>

Consultation with David Jackson of the Jackson County Historical Society and via an email exchange with Judith Deel of the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office did not identify any well-known outstanding examples of vernacular farm houses in the region. However, a windshield survey of the area surrounding Grandview determined that other vernacular farmhouses of a similar size exist in the region. Many of these houses did not appear to have any association with farm land and may have survived piecemeal development of their associated land, just as the Truman Farm did. The National Register of Historic Places does not include any agrarian properties with vernacular farmhouses in Jackson County. The register has some very large farms that thrived in the 1920s and later, but they are not comparable to the Truman Farm. They include the Longview Farm, located on Longview

Road in Lees Summit, and the Four Gates Farm, located at 13001 Little Blue Road in Kansas City, which was more of a rural retreat for a wealthy owner. One somewhat comparable farm on the NRHP is located at the edge of the community of Lees Summit, about ten miles east-northeast of Grandview. It is the Bailey Family Farm, which was established by 1880 and continues to operate today. The Bailey Farm is listed as a historic district on the NRHP and has character-defining features such as open spaces and fields, barns and a house. The farm has about 240 acres. The farmhouse, however, is not a vernacular form. It was built in 1914 to replace a former house and is a very good example of Prairie School-style architecture.

The historic resources located in Lees Summit have also been documented and described as part of a listing on the NRHP via a multiple property listing nomination. The nomination indicates there are numerous similar vernacular homes in the community, as they were a common building form up to the late 1890s.

<sup>11</sup> Howard Wight Marshall. *Vernacular Architecture in Rural and Small Town Missouri*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Extension Publications. 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Sally F. Schwenk. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form for the Grandview Residential Historic District". National Park Service. 2005. Section 8, Page 38.

## <sup>1</sup> PERIODS OF LANDSCAPE

### <sup>2</sup> DEVELOPMENT

<sup>3</sup> The following periods of landscape  
<sup>4</sup> development describe the physical  
<sup>5</sup> evolution of the Truman Farm's cultural  
<sup>6</sup> landscape from the mid-19th century  
<sup>7</sup> through present day.

<sup>8</sup>  
<sup>9</sup> The beginning and end of each period  
<sup>10</sup> corresponds to, and documents, points of  
<sup>11</sup> major change in the management of the  
<sup>12</sup> farm. Some of these dates also correspond  
<sup>13</sup> to major physical changes.

<sup>14</sup>  
<sup>15</sup> Pre-History (pre-1856)

<sup>16</sup>  
<sup>17</sup> Young Farm (1844 to 1905)

<sup>18</sup>  
<sup>19</sup> **Harry S Truman Farm (1906 to 1917)**

<sup>20</sup>  
<sup>21</sup> **Martha Ellen and Mary Jane Truman**  
<sup>22</sup> **Farm**  
<sup>23</sup> **(1917 to 1940)**

<sup>24</sup>  
<sup>25</sup> **Farm Foreclosure and Repurchase**  
<sup>26</sup> **(1940 to 1955)**

<sup>27</sup>  
<sup>28</sup> **Truman Corners Development and Selling**  
<sup>29</sup> **the Farm (1955 to 1965)**

<sup>30</sup>  
<sup>31</sup> Modern Day (1965 to present day)

<sup>32</sup>  
<sup>33</sup> The following narrative text, photographs,  
<sup>34</sup> drawings, and illustrations present the  
<sup>35</sup> periods of landscape development.





## 1 Pre-History (pre-1856)

2

3 Prior to cultivation, the land of the  
4 Truman Farm was a long-grass prairie  
5 interspersed with woodland groves,  
6 typical for the region. Situated between  
7 the Big Blue and Little Blue Rivers, the  
8 landscape would have been open prairie  
9 with glades of trees that followed the  
10 natural drainages.

11  
12 Before European-American settlement,  
13 the land was inhabited primarily by the  
14 Osage people, who lived in decentralized  
15 villages that extended from the  
16 Mississippi Valley to the eastern Plains  
17 to the Ozark Mountains.<sup>13</sup> The Osage  
18 hunted game and made semi-annual  
19 trips to hunt buffalo on the Plains, while  
20 also growing corn, squash and other  
21 vegetables near their villages.<sup>14</sup>

22

23 In the late 18th century, Missouri was  
24 part of Upper Louisiana which was  
25 technically part of France at the time.  
26 By the 1800s, increasing numbers of  
27 Europeans moved into the area. After the  
28 Louisiana Purchase in 1803, Missouri  
29 became a state in 1821.

30

31 The increasing migration of homesteaders  
32 moving west from the eastern states  
33 from the 1830s to the 1860s, resulted in  
34 Missouri's population almost doubling  
35 with every decade. Most of the newcomers  
36 were American-born farmers who  
37 practiced subsistence farming prior to the  
38 Civil War.<sup>15</sup>

39

### 40 pre-1800

41 The Osage people farmed and hunted at  
42 the border of the Plains and Woodlands in  
43 the area now known as Jackson County,  
44 Missouri.

45

---

46 13 Peter J. Kastor, *Making Missouri American: A Crowded*  
47 *Frontier in the Age of Lewis and Clark*, State Historical Society of Missouri, 2004.

48 14 Ibid.

49 15 Ibid.

### 1 1821

2 Missouri became the 24th state of the  
3 Union.

4

### 5 1841

6 Solomon and Harriet Louisa Gregg  
7 Young, Harry S Truman's maternal  
8 grandparents, moved to Jackson County,  
9 Missouri from Kentucky.

10

11 While in their early twenties Solomon  
12 and Harriet married and farmed in  
13 Kentucky. They moved to Missouri with  
14 two children (the couple would have  
15 seven). They sought public land as part  
16 of the Preemption Act of 1841, which  
17 granted ownership rights to U.S. citizens  
18 and aliens who had established farms on  
19 unclaimed public lands.<sup>16</sup>

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16 Gail E.H. Evans-Hatch and D. Michael Evans-Hatch, *Farm Roots and Family Ties: Historic Resource Study, The Harry S Truman Grandview Farm, the Wallace Houses, and the Noland House in Independence*. Silverton, Oregon: Evans-Hatch Assoc., 2001, 3.



<sup>1</sup> Figure 2-2. The Solomon Young Barn was built in 1867 and modified twice in later years, before  
<sup>2</sup> burning to the ground in 1966. It was originally built as a crib-style barn, a style most typically as-  
<sup>3</sup> sociated with areas of Kentucky and Tennessee. They style was typified by a central drive running  
<sup>4</sup> the interior length of the barn with stalls for animals located on either side. At the Truman Farm, a  
<sup>5</sup> large flattened and fenced barnyard extended to the south of the barn. HSTL 84-12-04, c.1900

## **1 Young Farm (1844 to 1905)**

2

3 This period of development captures  
4 the time in which Harry S Truman's  
5 maternal grandfather, Solomon Young,  
6 purchased the land, developed the farm,  
7 and expanded his holdings. It includes  
8 the death of Solomon Young in 1893, at  
9 which time his widow, Harriet Louisa, ran  
10 the farm with the assistance of Harrison  
11 Young, Harry S Truman's uncle. This  
12 period also captures the birth of Harry  
13 S Truman in 1884, and the movements  
14 of his family as they moved from Lamar  
15 to the farm for three years, then to  
16 Independence, and back to the farm in  
17 1905. The period ends in 1905, when  
18 Harrison Young recruited his brother-in-  
19 law, John Truman, to take his place on the  
20 farm. John Truman, with his wife Martha  
21 Ellen and daughter Mary Jane, Harry's  
22 father, mother, and sister respectively,  
23 moved to the farm in 1905.

24 The Young Farm was originally situated  
25 on 398 acres of land north of Grandview,  
26 in Township 47 North Range 33 West,  
27 Section 14. Their landholdings soon  
28 expanded to 591.55 acres.

29 The first building on the property was  
30 a small cabin, located to the east of the  
31 present Farm Home. The second home  
32 was built in 1867 and burned in 1894, and  
33 was replaced by the current house shortly  
34 afterwards. Other structures built by the  
35 Youngs included barns and outbuildings  
36 necessary for operation of the farm and  
37 household. A portion of the farm land was  
38 cultivated while the remainder was used  
39 as pasture for cattle.

### **43 1844**

44 After emigrating from Kentucky in 1841  
45 to Jackson County, Missouri, Solomon and  
46 Harriet Louisa Young purchased the first  
47 portion of what would later become the  
48 Truman Farm in 1844.

1 Solomon Young, Harry S Truman's  
2 maternal grandfather, acquired 398 acres  
3 of farmland north of Grandview, Missouri.

4 A small brush-roofed log cabin was  
5 already located on the property.

### **8 1850 to 1851**

9 Solomon Young acquired parcels in  
10 Section 13, Township 47N Range 33W,  
11 adding to the acreage of his original  
12 farmland.

### **14 1851**

15 John A. Truman, Harry's father, was born  
16 to Anderson Shipp Truman and Mary  
17 Jane Holmes Truman, in Jackson County,  
18 Missouri.

### **20 1852**

21 Martha Ellen Young, Harry S Truman's  
22 mother, was born in Jackson County,  
23 Missouri. She was the seventh and second  
24 to last child of Solomon and Harriet  
25 Young.

### **27 1853**

28 The Youngs and the Blue Ridge Baptist  
29 Church had conflicting claims on who  
30 owned the property along Grandview  
31 Road. The Baptist Church had been built,  
32 and a cemetery was also located on the  
33 property.

### **35 1861 to 1865**

36 During the Civil War, the Young family  
37 lost animals and supplies, and were forced  
38 to feed and house Union Soldiers. Later,  
39 they were evicted from the farm in 1863  
40 by General Order 11 and forced to move  
41 to Platte County, Missouri until after the  
war.

**1867**

Harriet Young bought land in sections 11 and 13 from Thomas A Smart.

Solomon Young built a wood frame house on a limestone foundation that measured 43' x 18'.

He also built outbuildings associated with farm operations, including a large barn (Solomon Young Barn), a coalhouse located near the house, and a 200 gallon cistern east of the barn.<sup>17</sup> Solomon Young may have also built the smokehouse, granary, and small barn but this is not fully documented.<sup>18</sup>

**1868**

Solomon Young planted a sugar maple grove west of the 1867 house that extended towards the entrance gate on Grandview Road.<sup>19</sup> The entrance to the house was along a dirt road, located just south of the grove.

**1881**

John Anderson Truman and Martha Ellen Young were married in Grandview, Missouri. They moved to Lamar, Missouri where John Truman traded livestock.

**1884**

Solomon Young purchased 160 acres in section 11 from JF Musselman, adding to the farm's acreage.

**1884, May 8**

Harry S Truman was born to John and Martha Ellen Truman in Lamar, Missouri.

---

<sup>17</sup> National Park Service, *Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Truman Farm, Harry S Truman National Historic Site*. Omaha NE: Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, 2010, 18.

<sup>18</sup> Robert T. Bray, *Archaeological Survey and Testing at the Truman Farm Home and Grounds – Grandview, Missouri*. Independence: Truman Farm Home Foundation, 1983. 37, 48..Archeological evidence suggests the foundation remains of these barns date to the Solomon Young period.

<sup>19</sup> NPS, *CLI*, 53.

**1886**

John Vivian, Harry's brother, was born to John and Martha Ellen Truman in Lamar, Missouri.

**1887**

John and Martha Ellen with Harry and Vivian moved to the family farm. The family lived there for three years, from 1887 to 1890.

**1889**

Mary Jane, Harry's sister, was born to John and Martha Ellen Truman on the family farm.

The Kansas City Southern and San Francisco Railroad was built, crossing the Young's property in Section 11.

The town of Grandview was platted near the depot serving the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad, and the Kansas City Southern Railroad.

**1890**

The Truman family moved from the farm to Independence, Missouri, where the children could attend better schools.

**1891**

The Youngs quit filing competing land claims with the Blue Ridge Baptist Church, then located on Grandview Road, after the church was moved off the property and into Grandview. The cemetery remained.

**1893**

Solomon Young died in 1893. At the time of his death, he owned at least 1,500 acres of land, however it is unclear how much of it was contiguous. Solomon died without a will, and Harriet Louisa gave 160 acres to each of the seven children, along with \$50,000 to \$60,000 in personal property to



1 be divided among them. She retained the  
2 600-acre farm and operated it with the  
3 help of her son, Harrison Young, Harry's  
4 uncle.

#### 6 **1894, October**

7 In October 1894, the original 1867 house  
8 built by Solomon and Harriet Young was  
9 destroyed by fire. Nothing was saved but  
10 some bedding.<sup>20</sup>

#### 12 **1894 to 1895**

13 Between the end of 1894 and sometime in  
14 1895, Harrison Young built the house that  
15 now stands.<sup>21</sup>

16  
17 The extant Farm Home appears to have  
18 been completed in two stages. The central  
19 section of the east wing was built first,  
20 constructed above a full basement of  
21 fieldstone set in primarily clay mortar and  
22 was probably the root cellar of the original  
23 Young 1867 house. The front (west) two-  
24 story portion with the sitting room, parlor  
25 and two bedrooms was built later, on  
26 a brick foundation, as was a one-story  
27 kitchen, on brick piers.<sup>22</sup>

#### 29 **c.1900**

30 The extant poultry house was built and  
31 was located north of the Farm Home.

#### 33 **1901**

34 Harry graduated from High School in  
35 Independence, Missouri.

36  
37 John Truman lost all of the family's  
38 savings, including money that would have  
39 paid for Harry's college, on grain futures  
40 investments.

41  
42 The family moved to Kansas City. Harry  
43 worked for a railroad.

---

46 <sup>20</sup> NPS, *CLI*, 18.

47 <sup>21</sup> Ibid.

48 <sup>22</sup> Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 17.

#### 1 **1904**

2 A plat book from 1904 indicates Harriet  
3 Louisa Young owned 519 acres, and  
4 Harrison Young owned 80 acres.

#### 6 **1903**

7 The Truman family moved from  
8 Independence to Kansas City, Missouri.

#### 10 **1905**

11 John, Martha Ellen, and Mary Jane  
12 moved from Kansas City to Clinton,  
13 Missouri. Mary Jane was 16, Harry and  
14 Vivian stayed in Kansas City working as  
15 bank clerks.

16  
17 Harrison Young recruited his brother-in-  
18 law, John Truman, to take his place in  
19 the management of the farm. Soon, John  
20 requested his two sons move to the farm  
21 to assist with the farm operations.

22  
23 Harry enlisted with the Missouri National  
24 Guard, Battery B.<sup>23</sup>

#### 26 **1905, late**

27 Vivian Truman, Harry's brother, moved to  
28 the farm.

---

23 Jon Taylor, *Truman's Grandview Farm*, Charleston: The  
History Press, 2011, 56.



1 Figure 2-3. Harry S Truman moved to the Grandview farm in 1906, pictured here with his mother Martha Ellen, on  
2 left, and grandmother Harriet Louisa Young, seated. A small barn can be seen in the background at right, as well as  
3 the well and windlass. A downspout leads from the corner of the back porch to a rain barrel. At the left of the photo-  
4 graph, just north of the house is a small structure, which was possibly the original location of the poultry house. At  
5 the right is a large pine tree; the remainder of the yard is unornamented and covered with short grass. HSTL 84-13,  
6 c.1906-1909

## **1 Harry S Truman Farm (1906 to 1917)**

2 This period captures the 11 years Harry  
3 S Truman lived and worked on the family  
4 farm. Beginning in 1906, Truman worked  
5 as an agricultural laborer, supervised  
6 other laborers, and as his father's health  
7 declined, he took over accounting and  
8 management. This period ends in 1917,  
9 when Truman left the farm to serve in  
10 World War I. He would never live on the  
11 farm again, but would instead influence its  
12 management from a distance.

13  
14 During this period, the family built  
15 numerous outbuildings, including at least  
16 one new barn, garage, and an outhouse.  
17 The poultry house was located north of the  
18 Farm Home (it was moved c.1940 to its  
19 present location), and an L-shaped chicken  
20 yard framed the house. Prior to 1911,  
21 a wood woven fence enclosed the house  
22 yard, and another wood fence enclosed the  
23 barnyard.

24  
25 The Trumans raised horses, mules,  
26 chickens, Shorthorns (a cattle breed good  
27 for dairy as well as beef), and Hampshire  
28 hogs. For their own use, the Truman's had  
29 a garden that included a large asparagus  
30 bed, an apple and peach tree orchard, a  
31 grape arbor, a blackberry and strawberry  
32 patch, and a small kitchen garden. The  
33 garden was located east of the house,  
34 between the chicken yard and the Solomon  
35 Young Barn. According to Truman, a large  
36 sycamore tree grew to the east of the large  
37 Solomon Young barn.

38  
39 During this time, Harry S Truman courted  
40 Elizabeth "Bess" Wallace, his future wife,  
41 who was living in Independence, 20 miles  
42 and a day's trip away. Their courtship is  
43 documented through their many letters.

44  
45 Although managing the farm was already a  
46 full-time job, Harry also served in the U.S.  
47 Army National Guard, was the Grandview  
48 postmaster, joined the Farm Bureau, and

1 was a Free Masons during this time. He  
2 was active in his community in other  
3 ways, including serving as Road Overseer,  
4 and helping the adjacent cemetery with  
5 digging graves.

6  
7 This period ends in 1917, the year Harry  
8 S Truman left the family farm to serve in  
9 World War I as an artillery officer.

### **12 1906, late**

10  
11  
12 In 1906, Harry S Truman left his job in  
13 Kansas City where he was working as a  
14 bank clerk, and moved to the family farm  
15 to assist with the farm operations.

16  
17  
18 The entire family was now living on the  
19 farm, sharing the Farm Home with their  
20 maternal grandmother.

21  
22 By 1906, the smokehouse with storage  
23 wings on each side, located near the  
24 garage, and the icehouse located just east  
25 of the smokehouse are evident in historic  
26 photographs although these structures  
27 may have been constructed earlier.

28  
29 In 1906, the farm was much reduced  
30 from the Youngs' earlier holdings. When  
31 Solomon died without a will, Harriet gave  
32 160 acres to each of the seven children,  
33 along with about \$50,000 to \$60,000 in  
34 personal property to be divided among  
35 them. She retained the 600-acre farm.

### **37 Pre-1909**

38 The small barn located just east of the  
39 Farm Home was built.

### **41 1909**

42 Harriet Young, Harry's maternal  
43





<sup>1</sup> Figure 2-4. Solomon Young planted a large sugar maple grove, left of photograph. Pine trees were  
<sup>2</sup> located around the Farm Home. A network of wood fences delineated the yard around the house from  
<sup>3</sup> that of the barnyard and pastureland. A small barn, non-extant, possibly built by Solomon Young, is  
<sup>4</sup> at far right. HSTL 72-3585, c.1912-1920

<sup>5</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Figure 2-5. Left, a young Mary Jane with grandmother Harriet Louisa and uncle Harrison Young. The  
<sup>7</sup> exact location is unknown, but the barn, on left, appears to be the same as the non-extant barn that  
<sup>8</sup> was located immediately behind the house. The wooden fence enclosed the house yard. Right, Mary  
<sup>9</sup> Jane and others around the well with the small non-extant barn in the background, and the large  
<sup>10</sup> barn (Solomon Young Barn) in the far distance at right. A small structure is north of the small barn,  
<sup>11</sup> likely a privy. Wood barrels at the corners of the house and porch were likely for capturing rainwater.  
<sup>12</sup> HSTL 84-12-01, c.1905; HSTL 84-12-09, c.1905



1 grandmother, died in 1909. A legal dispute  
2 amongst her children ensued over her  
3 will. Of her seven children, Harrison  
4 and Martha Ellen were the only two  
5 who inherited her estate. The other  
6 five children received five dollars and  
7 contested the will.

#### 9 1909 to 1919

10 Between 1909 and 1919, Harry raised  
11 Shorthorn cattle, at least 15 animals in  
12 total.

#### 14 1910

15 While visiting his aunt and uncle, Joseph  
16 T. and Ethel Noland in Independence,  
17 Harry returned a cake plate to their  
18 neighbors across the street at 219 North  
19 Delaware, and was re-introduced to his  
20 old childhood sweetheart, Bess Wallace.  
21 A period of long courtship began. Harry  
22 became a regular visitor to the Wallace  
23 home, travelling by train from Grandview  
24 to Kansas City and from there to  
25 Independence.<sup>24</sup>

#### 27 1911

28 A plat map dated 1911 noted that 591.55  
29 acres belonged to Solomon Young and  
30 Harriet Louisa Young, of which 193.55  
31 acres belonged to Harriet with 398 acres  
32 belonging to Solomon. However, since  
33 Solomon Young died in 1893, it is possible  
34 that the plat map dated 1911 is misdated  
35 and these records are actually from an  
36 earlier time.<sup>25</sup>

38 Vivian married Luella in 1911 and moved  
39 from the Farm Home into his own home.  
40 He continued farming, moving around  
41 the area before settling on land just north  
42 of the Farm Home and building a home  
43 there in 1930.

---

44  
45 24 Ron Cockrell. *Historic Structures Report, History and*  
46 *Significance, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Inde-*  
47 *pendence, Missouri.* Omaha: National Park Service, 1984, 59.  
48 25 Berry Publishing Company, Twnshp 47 North, Range 33  
49 West, HST Archives Grandview Farm Verticle File.

#### 1 1911, April 17

2 Harry noted in a letter to Bess that a  
3 barn was to be built with an estimated  
4 completion in July. “When we get our new  
5 barn done we are going to have a barn  
6 dance... there will be a smooth floor 50 by  
7 72 and I think that is large enough.”<sup>26</sup>

#### 9 1911, August 27

10 Harry built a grass tennis court in the  
11 yard, its exact location is unknown.<sup>27</sup>

#### 13 1911, November 28

14 In a letter to Bess, Harry asked: “Don’t  
15 you think a violent green gate will look  
16 good with these white stone posts?” He  
17 also noted that he was busy the previous  
18 day, “making a new gate for the back lot,”  
19 which he painted green. He noted that  
20 “green is not suitable for the front gate —  
21 white is the only safe color for the front  
22 gate — gets dark there.” It is possible that  
23 the front gate he referred to was located  
24 within the sugar maple grove — it would  
25 have been located in front of the house  
26 and the trees would have made that area  
27 dark.

29 It is unknown where the stone posts were  
30 located at this time. They could have  
31 been near the house or elsewhere on the  
32 large farm, or at the entrance posts at  
33 Grandview Road.

#### 35 1912

36 By 1912, a one-story kitchen, on brick  
37 piers, was built on the east side of the  
38 Farm Home.<sup>28</sup>

40 Historic photographs indicate that pine

---

43 26 Truman, Harry S. *Dear Bess: The Letters from Harry*  
44 *Truman to Bess Truman, 1910-1959.* Edited by Robert H.  
45 Ferrell. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1983. Letter  
46 April 17, 1911. It is unknown where this barn was located,  
47 although the dimensions roughly correspond to those of the  
48 Solomon Young Barn.

47 27 Truman, *Dear Bess*, Letter August 27, 1911.

48 28 Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 17.



<sup>1</sup> Figure 2-6. The Solomon Young barn, left, was built in 1867. A new hay barn built was built c.1911.  
<sup>2</sup> Both barns are non-extant. HSTL 84-17, c.1911

<sup>3</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Figure 2-7. Vivian and Luella Truman were married in 1911 and moved to a neighboring farm. Pho-  
<sup>5</sup> tographs taken at this time show that the wood fence that had enclosed the house yard had been  
<sup>6</sup> removed or had fallen into disrepair. It had been replaced with a post and wire fence, which still  
<sup>7</sup> enclosed the front and sides of the house yard. The sugar maple grove is in the background. HSTL  
<sup>8</sup> 80-07, c.1911; HSTL 72-3594, c.1911

1 trees were planted on both the north and  
2 south sides of the house.

### 1912, May 8

3  
4  
5 Harry noted that “the girls” have made  
6 the tennis court into a croquet ground.  
7 The exact location of this area is  
8 unknown.<sup>29</sup>

### 1912, May 21

9  
10  
11 Harry noted in his letter to Bess in May  
12 that he painted the pump handle white.  
13 It had originally been black. The pump  
14 stood in front of the back door. On a dark  
15 night Harry ran into it so he decided to  
16 paint the pump white so he could see it  
17 at night.<sup>30</sup> It is possible that this was also  
18 the year the pump was added to the well,  
19 replacing the earlier windlass and bucket.

20  
21 Harry noted in the same letter that the  
22 front gate, which was made of cypress,  
23 was given “another coat.”<sup>31</sup>

### post-1912

24  
25  
26 After 1912, an addition was built onto the  
27 porch at the southeast corner of the Farm  
28 Home.

### 1913

29  
30  
31 Harry proposed marriage to Elizabeth  
32 ‘Bess’ Wallace, but dating continued  
33 due to Truman’s desire to make a more  
34 lucrative living than farming, and Bess’s  
35 family obligations.<sup>32</sup>

### 1914

36  
37  
38 The legal dispute over Harriet Young’s  
39 will was finally settled in 1914. Harrison  
40 and Martha Ellen won the suit against  
41 their siblings but had to pay a settlement

42 <sup>29</sup> Truman, *Dear Bess*, Letter May 8 1912.

43 <sup>30</sup> Letter to Bess, May 21 1912

44 <sup>31</sup> Truman, Harry S. *Dear Bess: The Letters from Harry*  
45 *Truman to Bess Truman, 1910-1959*. Edited by Robert H.  
46 Ferrell. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1983. Letter May  
47 21, 1912.

48 <sup>32</sup> Cockrell, Ron. *Historic Structures Report, History and*  
49 *Significance, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, 60.*

1 of \$9,500 to their siblings and \$3,000 to  
2 their attorney. Martha took out a \$7,500  
3 mortgage on the farm to cover expenses.

4  
5 Harry was elected postmaster for  
6 Grandview. He did not do any of the work  
7 but instead appointed Mrs. Hall, a local  
8 widow, to do the job and draw his salary.<sup>33</sup>

9  
10 Harry purchased a Stafford car for 650  
11 dollars. The car helped Harry make  
12 more frequent and quicker trips to  
13 Independence to visit Bess.<sup>34</sup>

### 1914, July

14  
15  
16 In Harry’s letter to Bess, he noted that  
17 Mary Jane ran into a gate and bent the  
18 front axle of his car. He stated, “I am very  
19 thankful that she hit the gate instead of a  
20 stone post.”<sup>35</sup>

### 1914, November 3

21  
22  
23 John Truman, Harry’s father, died.  
24 Harry was made the sole manager of the  
25 family farm. The farm remained in the  
26 ownership of Martha Ellen, his mother.

### 1914, November to 1916

27  
28  
29 Harry served as Road Overseer for  
30 Jackson County, responsible for collecting  
31 the poll tax, which was used to pay for  
32 road improvements.

### 1915

33  
34  
35 Harry purchased a barbershop with  
36 two chairs and associated contents. He  
37 moved the building to the farm where  
38 he modified it to serve as a garage,  
39 presumably to house his new Stafford  
40 car. The building had also previously  
41 functioned as the Grandview Post Office.<sup>36</sup>

### 1916

42  
43  
44 On February 2, 1916, Harry S Truman

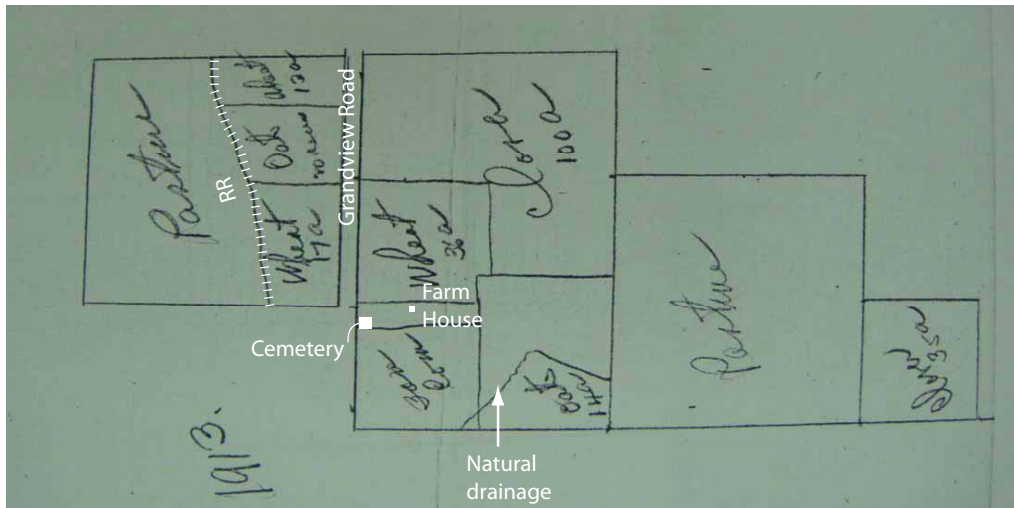
45 <sup>33</sup> Truman, *Dear Bess*, 172-3.

46 <sup>34</sup> Cockrell, Ron. *Historic Structures Report, History and*  
47 *Significance, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, 60..*

48 <sup>35</sup> Truman, *Dear Bess*, Letter July 1914.

49 <sup>36</sup> HSTL, General File 1876-1951, Box 23.





**Figure 2-8.** Harry Truman kept records of the different crops grown on the farm from year-to-year. Crop rotation improved the soil and prevented erosion, ultimately leading to increased crop yields. HSTL, Mary Jane Truman Papers, Box 1, 1911, 1912, 1913

1 wrote in a letter to Bess that “the old  
2 house is going to wreck for want of  
3 repairs,” indicating the Farm Home was  
4 in a period of structural decline. The  
5 property was declining “because I must  
6 pay interest on a debt I had no hand  
7 in making and my dream has to keep  
8 waiting.” He also noted that he did not  
9 want to remedy the situation by selling  
10 the “place that’s been home to her (his  
11 mother) so long.”

12  
13 **1917, February**

14 Martha Ellen increased the farm’s  
15 mortgage to \$25,000. She was further  
16 in debt due to Harry’s failed business  
17 speculations which she helped to finance.

18  
19 **1917, June**

20 Harry rejoined the Missouri National  
21 Guard and was elected first lieutenant  
22 of Battery F, 2nd Missouri Artillery,  
23 leaving the farm to serve in World War  
24 I. He remained involved in the decisions  
25 and management of the family farm from  
26 a distance. However, he never lived or  
27 worked on the farm again.

28  
29 **1917, August**

30 Harry was sworn into regular army  
31 service as a member of 129th Field  
32 Artillery regiment and went to Camp  
33 Doniphan at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.





1 Figure 2-9. From left to right, Mary Jane, Harry S, Martha Ellen Truman, Myra Colgan Hornbuckle,  
2 Vivian Truman, and Nellie Noland. The Solomon Young barn (non-extant) is in the background, in its  
3 1867 form. HSTL 62-425, c.1906



4 Figure 2-10. Mary Jane with horse Bill, at far right. The granary is just behind, and the Solomon  
5 Young barn with modified dormers, is to the left. Another outbuilding is at the far left, perhaps it is  
6 the icehouse. HSTL 80-8, c. 1910s.

Legend

- A Truman Farm Home (1895 -TF01)

B Truman Farm Garage (c.1914 -TF02)

C Truman Farm Poultry House (c.1900 -TF03)

D Outhouse (c.1900)

E Small Barn (c.1900)


F Smokehouse (c.1900)


G Coal House/Ice House (c.1900)


H Solomon Young Barn (c.1867)

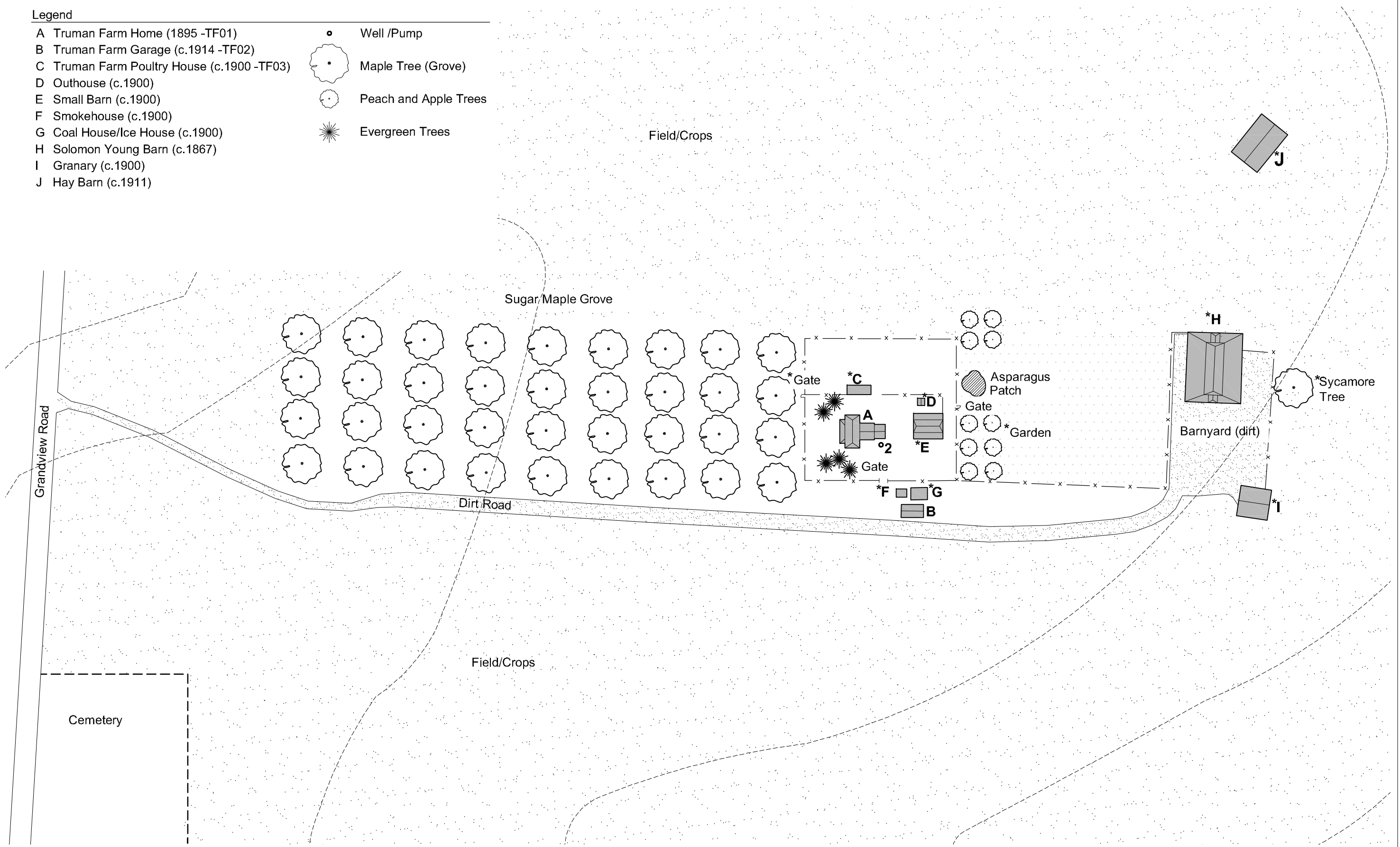
I Granary (c.1900)

J Hay Barn (c.1911)
- Well /Pump

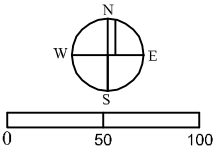
 Maple Tree (Grove)

 Peach and Apple Trees

 Evergreen Trees



NOTE:  
Buildings marked with \* are speculatively located, but placement is based upon aerial photographs (1940, 1954), historic photographs, and oral histories.



DECEMBER 2012		HSTR 492 116050	
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR TRUMAN FARM NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE		TITLE OF PROJECT TRUMAN FARM CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT	
		TITLE OF DRAWING 1906 - 1917 FARM LAYOUT	
		NAME OF PARK TRUMAN FARM - HARRY S TRUMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE	
		REGION MIDWEST	COUNTY JACKSON
		STATE MISSOURI	





Figure 2-11. By 1920 the Solomon Young Barn was modified with dormers/hay hoods on both the south and north ends. The hay barn is in the background at right. HSTL 62-385, c.1920



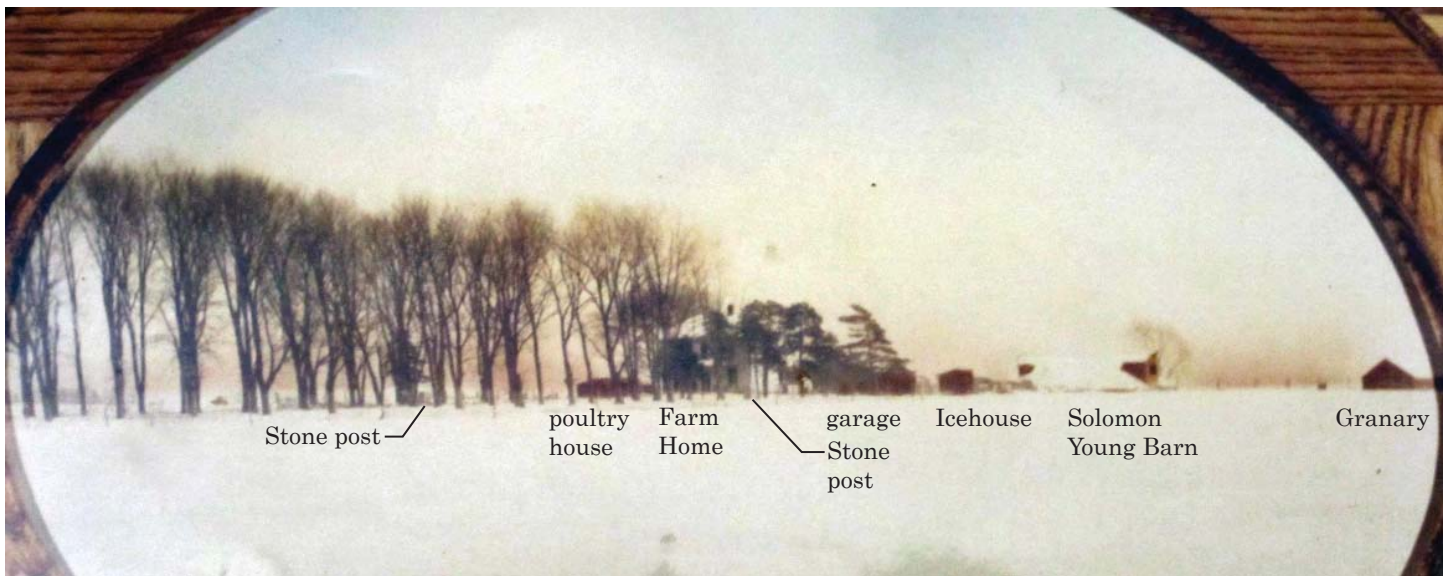


Figure 2-12. This circa 1920 to 1930 view of the farm shows the Solomon Young Barn with its later appearance (hay-hoods). The poultry house is just to the left (north) of the Farm Home, it was moved to its current location c.1940. Just visible are the stone posts at the corners of the Farm Home yard. HSTL 83-127, c.1920-1930



Figure 2-13. The garage was moved onto the farm in 1915, far right. The small shed between the garage and house may have been the smokehouse, icehouse, or coal house. It is unknown if the sheep belonged to the Trumans as no records indicate their ownership. It is possible that they belonged to a neighboring farm, or that the raising of sheep was a temporary business venture. HSTL 84-72, 1930-1940



## **1 Martha Ellen and Mary Jane** **2 Truman Farm (1917 to 1940)**

3 This period begins in 1917, the year Harry  
4 left to serve in World War I and includes  
5 the time in which Martha Ellen and Mary  
6 Jane managed the farm. This period also  
7 includes the initial selling of farm land,  
8 200 acres, for the ‘Truman Subdivision’  
9 in Section 11, between the Kansas City  
10 Southern and San Francisco Railroad and  
11 Grandview Road. This period ends with  
12 the foreclosure of the farm in 1940.  
13

14 After Harry left for the war, Mary Jane,  
15 his sister, managed the family farm. Upon  
16 his return the family gave up farming,  
17 leasing much of the land and selling  
18 parts. Harry briefly visited the farm upon  
19 returning from the war, and then married  
20 Elizabeth “Bess” Wallace in 1919 and  
21 settled in Independence, Missouri.  
22

23 During this time, Harry S Truman  
24 participated in the farm transactions  
25 from a distance. In 1919, he started a  
26 men’s clothing store in Kansas City. When  
27 the business failed, he won a seat as a  
28 Jackson County Judge, similar to a county  
29 commissioner position, serving in this  
30 position from 1923 to 1935 (with a break  
31 in 1926 to 1927). In 1935, he was elected  
32 to the Missouri State Senate.  
33

34 Physical changes to the farm during this  
35 time period included the removal of the  
36 small barn behind the house, the addition  
37 of Vivian’s home and outbuildings on the  
38 land north of the house, and the probable  
39 construction of ten stone fence posts,  
40 set at corners of the house yard and  
41 barnyard.<sup>37</sup> It was also during this period  
42 that the Solomon Young barn was first  
43 modified.  
44

---

45  
46 37 References made to the stone posts from HST’s letters  
47 indicate that these posts may have been in place in 1911 and  
48 1914. However, the posts are not documented in photo-  
49 graphs until the 1930s. There is still some uncertainty about  
their date of origin.

1 By 1935, a two-story addition was built  
2 onto the east wing of the house, replacing  
3 an earlier one-story kitchen, and the back  
4 porch was fully extended along the house’s  
5 south side. The poultry house was moved  
6 from north of the house to its present  
7 location northeast of the house.  
8  
9

### **10 1917 to 1919**

11 Mary Jane ran the farm while Harry  
12 served in World War I. She also served as  
13 Assistant Postmistress for Grandview.  
14

### **15 1918, April**

16 Harry’s regiment was shipped out to  
17 France.  
18

### **19 1919, April**

20 In the spring of 1919, Captain Harry S  
21 Truman returned from World War I and  
22 briefly returned to the family farm. The  
23 family soon ceased farming operations.  
24 Equipment and livestock were auctioned,  
25 and much of the land was leased out.<sup>38</sup>  
26 Despite this, Martha Ellen and Mary Jane  
27 Truman continued to live on the farm  
28 until 1940, leasing the land for farming.  
29

### **30 1919, May**

31 Harry and Elizabeth “Bess” Wallace were  
32 married and settled in Independence,  
33 Missouri.  
34

### **35 c.1920**

36 The Solomon Young barn was modified, by  
37 the addition of dormers on either end to  
38 serve as hay hoods.  
39

### **40 c.1922**

41 The small barn directly to the east of the  
42 Farm Home was removed.<sup>39</sup> The date of  
43

---

44 38 Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 82-83.

45 39 Oral History Interview With Martha Ann Swoyer; July  
46 9, 1991; Oskaloosa, Kansas Interviewed By Jim Williams  
47 Oral History #1991-5, Transcript, Harry S Truman National



<sup>1</sup> **Figure 2-14.** Martha Ellen and Mary Jane, Harry's mother and sister, managed the farm when Harry  
<sup>2</sup> left to serve in World War I. Upon his return they ceased farming, leasing much of the land and sell-  
<sup>3</sup> ing some parcels. The two women continued to live there. Around this time, a rose arbor was built  
<sup>4</sup> at the front gate to the Farm Home and roses were lined along the south fence. The fence on the left  
<sup>5</sup> separated the Farm Home and land from Vivian's land to the north. The hay barn is visible in the  
<sup>6</sup> background at left and the Solomon Young barn is just to the left and behind the Farm Home. HSTL  
<sup>7</sup> 84-9, date unknown, prior to 1957

1 the small barn's construction is unknown  
2 but it appears in early photographs prior  
3 to 1909.

#### 5 **1922**

6 Martha Truman platted 60 acres  
7 and sold several of the plats to a real  
8 estate developer. Named the 'Trumans  
9 Subdivision,' this portion of land was  
10 west of Grandview Road but east of the  
11 Kansas City Southern and San Francisco  
12 Railroad.<sup>40</sup>

#### 14 **1924**

15 Separate right-of-ways were deeded  
16 to Missouri Highway Department for  
17 Highway 71 from Martha, Mary Jane, and  
18 Vivian.

#### 20 **c.1927**

21 In the 1920s, Vivian Truman purchased  
22 a parcel of land to the north of the Farm  
23 Home. In 1930, he built a house, a barn,  
24 and several outbuildings.<sup>41</sup>

#### 26 **1927**

27 Right-of-way granted to the Kansas City  
28 & Grandview Railway company from  
29 Martha, Mary Jane and Vivian. This  
30 new railroad route followed the general  
31 alignment of Blue Ridge Boulevard.<sup>42</sup>

33 Highway 71 was built, splitting the  
34 Truman Farm property along the section  
35 line between Sections 11, 12, 13 and 14.

#### 38 **1929**

39 Martha granted right-of-way to Kansas  
40 City Power and Light Co. The first

---

43 Historic Site, NPS. Martha did not remember the small barn,  
44 indicating it must have been removed before she was born or  
when she was very young.

45 40 Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 296.

46 41 Ibid, 84.

47 42 HSTL, Post Presidential Papers, Box 941, Warranty  
Deeds.

1 electricity reached the farm.<sup>43</sup>

3 Martha, Mary Jane, and Vivian deeded  
4 separate right-of-ways to Jackson County  
5 for the extension of Blue Ridge Boulevard,  
6 bisecting the property and separating the  
7 west portion of the sugar maple grove and  
8 the cemetery from the Farm Home.

#### 10 **1930s**

11 According to Harry's niece, Martha Ann  
12 Swoyer, an asparagus bed was located  
13 east of the Farm Home just north of  
14 the east yard fence, and an L-shaped  
15 chicken lot surrounded the yard.<sup>44</sup> Also,  
16 a smokehouse was located near the  
17 garage; this could have been the same  
18 smokehouse that stood from the time  
19 Harry lived on the farm.<sup>45</sup>

#### 21 **c.1930**

22 The ten stone posts are documented in  
23 photographs, noticeable at the front of the  
24 house yard.

#### 26 **1931**

27 An Atlas Map indicates that Martha  
28 E Truman owned approximately 446.5  
29 acres and that Luella Truman, Vivian's  
30 wife, owned around 80 acres. The map  
31 also illustrates the Trumans Subdivision,  
32 approximately 80 acres, between  
33 Grandview Road and the Kansas City  
Southern and San Francisco Railroad.<sup>46</sup>

#### 36 **1932**

37 Martha sold the remainder of the Truman  
subdivision, 60 acres, to Willock Realty.<sup>47</sup>

#### 40 **1934, post**

41 The house was painted entirely white

---

43 Ibid.

44 Interview with Martha Ann Swoyer, 63.

45 Oral History Interview With Fred L. Truman June 18,  
1991; Raymore, Missouri; Interviewed By Jim Williams; Oral  
History #1991-1, Transcript; Harry S Truman National His-  
toric Site, NPS, 29.

46 Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 296.

47 47 HSTL, Post Presidential Papers, Box 941, Warranty  
Deeds.





<sup>1</sup> Figure 2-15. The rose arbor on the south side of the house framed the entrance to  
<sup>2</sup> the back porch. The farm's entrance drive is visible behind the gate. HSTL 84-82-1,  
<sup>3</sup> c.1920s-1953



<sup>4</sup> Figure 2-16. Harry S Truman's nephews built a milk barn, west of the hay barn, on Vivian  
<sup>5</sup> Truman's land. HSTL 66-3778, c.1940

1 without the green trim, which had been  
2 the color scheme since it was completed in  
3 1895.

4

#### 5 **1935**

6 By 1935, a two-story addition was built  
7 onto the east wing of the house, and the  
8 porch was fully extended along the house's  
9 south side.

10

11

#### 12 **1935 to 1945**

13 Harry S Truman was elected United  
14 States Senator of Missouri in 1935, and  
15 served in this capacity until 1945 when he  
16 was elected Vice President of the United  
17 States.

18

#### 19 **1938**

20 By 1938, the Truman family had sold  
21 more than half of the farm's original  
22 acreage (<600 acres) with only 287 acres  
23 remaining.<sup>48</sup> The property mortgage was  
24 to \$35,000.<sup>49</sup>

25

#### 26 **1940 to 1944**

27 Alteration and extension of the east  
28 wing of the house is evident in historic  
29 photographs.

30

#### 31 **1940, July**

32 On July 26, 1940, a mortgage held on the  
33 farm by Jackson County was foreclosed  
34 upon, forcing Martha and Mary Jane  
35 Truman to move from the family farm.<sup>50</sup>

36

37 This was seen to be largely a political  
38 move by the opposing political party in an  
39 effort to embarrass Senator Truman as he  
40 sought re-election.<sup>51</sup>

41

42

43

---

44 <sup>48</sup> Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 87.

45 <sup>49</sup> HSTL, Post Presidential Papers, Box 941, Warranty  
Deeds.

46 <sup>50</sup> Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 86-88.

47 <sup>51</sup> National Park Service, *National Register of Historic  
Places Inventory - Nomination Form, Harry S Truman Farm  
Home*, Missouri: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1984,  
49 Form 2.





1 Figure 2-17. The Truman Farm in 1945, as published in *The Modern Woodman*. The sugar maple grove is in poor  
2 condition. The Solomon Young barn, the poultry house, and two other small buildings (unknown) are to the left of  
3 the house. The garage is on the right, with another small structure just to the north. One of the stone posts is visible  
4 just to the left of the garage. A fence and arbor frames the house. HSTL 2008-311, 1945

## **1 Farm Foreclosure and Repurchase** **2 (1941 to 1955)**

3  
4 This period includes the repurchase of the  
5 farmland by Truman and his brother, and  
6 the continuation of farming by Harry's  
7 nephews. In what was likely a political  
8 move that would embarrass Harry S  
9 Truman as he sought re-election to the  
10 U.S. Senate. The period spans the time  
11 in which Harry S Truman served as Vice  
12 President of the United States, under  
13 Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and the time  
14 Truman served as 33rd President of the  
15 United States. It ends with the sale of  
16 parcels of the Truman Farm by Harry S  
17 Truman for commercial development in  
18 1955.

### **20 1940 to 1945**

21 Jackson County leases the farm to  
22 renters, putting the land up for sale in  
23 1945.

### **25 1941**

26 Mary Jane deeded a four-foot wide strip of  
27 land to the Jackson County Public Water  
28 Supply Division.<sup>52</sup>

### **30 1944 to 1954**

31 During this time, the Solomon Young  
32 barn was modified. The entire roof was  
33 modified to be a broken pitch gable, with  
34 the ends extended to encompass the  
35 sections that were previously hipped.

### **37 1945**

38 Harry S Truman became Vice President of  
39 the United States under Franklin Delano  
40 Roosevelt.

### **42 1945, April 12**

43 Harry S Truman became the 33rd  
44 President of the United States following

45 \_\_\_\_\_  
46 <sup>52</sup> HSTL, Post Presidential Papers, Box 941, Warranty  
Deeds.

1 death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.  
2 Harry S Truman served as President of  
3 the United States from 1945 to 1953.

### **5 1945, February**

6 On February 24, 1945, Charles F. Curry,  
7 E. Kemper Carver, and Tom Evans,  
8 friends of President Truman from Kansas  
9 City, purchased the 287-acre Truman  
10 farm from Jackson County for \$43,500.<sup>53</sup>

11 Vivian repurchased the Farm Home and  
12 the 87 acres immediately surrounding  
13 it for \$20,000.<sup>54</sup> In October 1945, Harry  
14 purchased this acreage from Vivian.<sup>55</sup>

### **17 1946 to 1949**

18 President Truman purchased the 200  
19 acres of farmland back from his friends  
20 for \$23,000 as he came up with the  
21 money.<sup>56</sup>

### **23 1947**

24 Martha Truman died in Grandview,  
25 Missouri, aged 94.

26 Additional land holdings were added  
27 to the farm. President Truman listed  
28 four 1947 land purchases in sections  
29 12, 13, and 14 in a hand written ledger.  
30 Purchases totaled \$65,578.

### **33 1948 to 1953**

34 Harry S Truman was re-elected President  
35 of the United States.

36 Truman's campaign focused on his  
37 agricultural background and knowledge,  
and was made famous by his Whistle  
Stop Tour of rural America. As president,

38 <sup>53</sup> NPS, *CLI*, 17.

39 <sup>54</sup> NPS, *NRHP*.

40 <sup>55</sup> HSTL, Post Presidential Papers, Box 941, Warranty  
Deeds.

41 <sup>56</sup> Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 92-93.



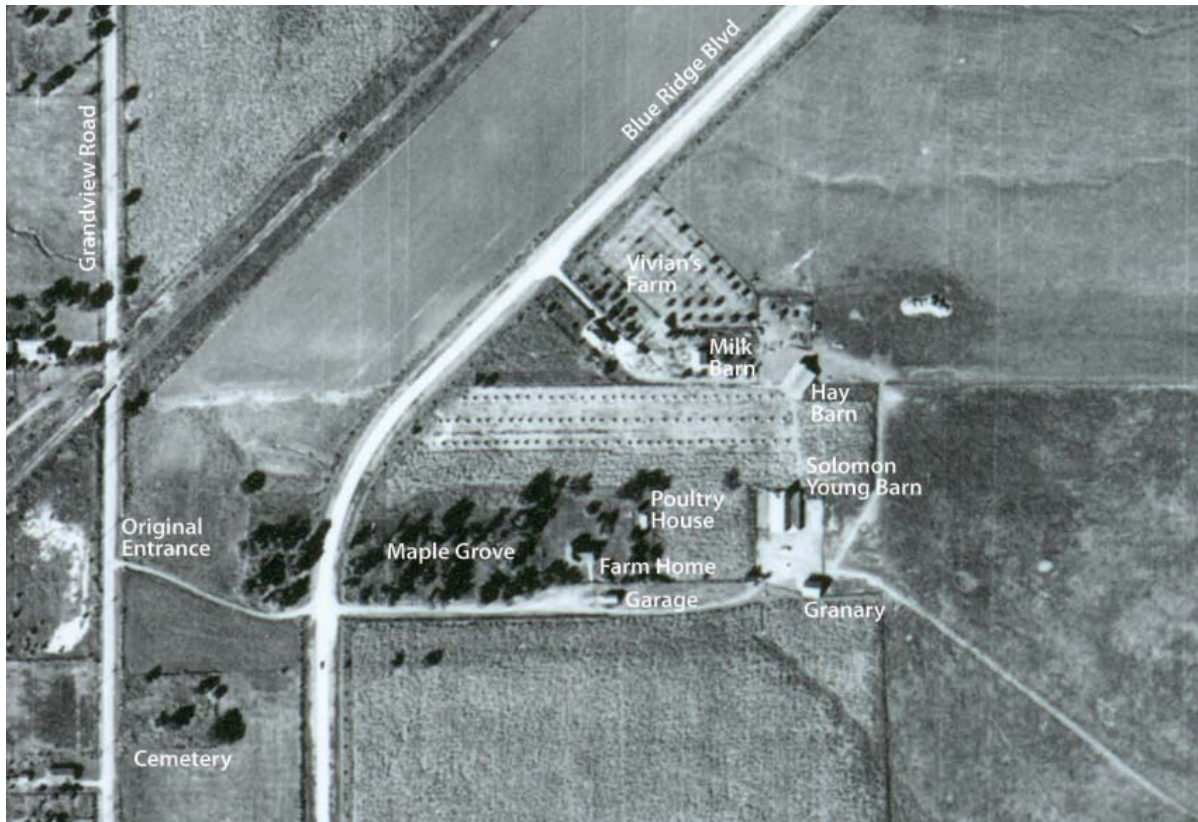


Figure 2-19. Aerial from 1944 showing the layout of the Truman Farm at that time. HSTL, United States Soil Conservation Service aerial, 1944



Figure 2-18. This 1953 photograph is the first color photograph of the farm. The milk barn is on the far left. The red hay barn is in the center, and the distant outline of the Solomon Young barn is just left of the Farm Home. Another structure is in front of the Solomon Young barn, but its outline appears different from the poultry house. Also, fences demark the land between Vivian's land to the north and the Farm Home. HSTL 11/23/1953

1 Truman developed a federal farm  
2 program.

3  
4 **1948**

5 Vivian's son Harry A. and his wife,  
6 Dorothy, move into the Farm Home.

7  
8 **1948-1951**

9 Vivian and his sons, Harry A. and Gilbert,  
10 leased the property from Harry. They  
11 focused on dairy farming with a 33-cow  
12 dairy herd, and built a milk barn complete  
13 with a vacuum milking system, hot water  
14 heater, and milk cooler.

15  
16 **1949**

17 City water is piped to the Farm Home,  
18 and a bathroom is installed on the first  
19 floor.

20  
21 **c.1949**

22 By 1949 the Trumans had re-purchased  
23 540 acres of the farmland previously  
24 lost due to the foreclosure. The land  
25 repurchased was nearly the original  
26 extent of farmland owned by Solomon  
27 Young. However, the 60 acres in Section  
28 11 that had been platted and sold in the  
29 1920s and 1930s was not re-purchased.

30  
31 **1950, June 26**

32 President Truman contacted architect  
33 Edward F. Neild of Neild-Somdal  
34 Associates to begin the design of the  
35 Presidential Library, which the President  
36 envisioned being located on the family  
37 farm.

38  
39 In President Truman's detailed letter to  
40 Mr. Neild, dated November 20, 1950, he  
41 described the restorations to the farm  
42 that should be made, including rebuilding  
43 the old smokehouse, and the old icehouse  
44 behind it. He also specified restoring the  
45 asparagus bed, grape arbor, peach trees,  
46 and the sycamore tree to the east of the  
47 Solomon Young Barn.<sup>57</sup>

---

57 HST Letter to E. Neild, Nov 20, 1950, HSTL, PPP, Box 18.

**1950**

By 1950, Mary Jane owned the north half and Vivian owned the south half of the SE <sup>1/4</sup> of Section 11, Township 47N Range 33W.

**1950s**

Vivian, with his sons Gilbert and Harry A. worked the farm in the 1940s and 1950s. The young Trumans enjoyed many benefits of mechanized farming that had developed since the animal-powered days of the 1910s. They focused on dairy farming in addition to growing crops.

**1951**

Mary Jane resided in a third house on the family farm, however the exact building or location is unknown.<sup>58</sup>

**1952, December 20**

Plans for the Presidential Library to be built on the family farm were announced in a press release, noting construction was to begin in 1953.<sup>59</sup> However the construction never occurred.

**1954, July 8**

After considering other sites for the Truman Presidential Library, a site in Independence, Missouri was selected as it was close to a densely populated area, and near the family home on Delaware Street.<sup>60</sup> The City of Independence donated the land for the library.

---

58 U.S. News & World Report, 22 September, 1952.

59 U.S. News & World Report, 22 September, 1952.

60 Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 95.





<sup>1</sup> Figure 2-20. By the 1960s, the setting of the Farm Home had deteriorated. The maple grove had been  
<sup>2</sup> mostly destroyed by a tornado in 1957, the rose arbor was in disrepair, and adjacent development  
<sup>3</sup> filled the previously open landscape. The Solomon Young barn, right of Farm Home, had been  
<sup>4</sup> modified by the addition of an extended gable roof which obscured the earlier hayhoods/dormers.  
<sup>5</sup> HSTL 61-66-01, 1961

## **1 Truman Corners Development and 2 Selling the Farm (1955 to 1965)**

3 This period begins in 1955 with the first  
4 sale of farmland for commercial develop-  
5 ment. Soon after repurchasing the farm-  
6 land lost due to foreclosure, the Truman's  
7 began to sell parcels of the farm for de-  
8 velopment. Harry S Truman played an  
9 active role in the selling of the land, and  
10 its future development. The sale of the  
11 farm went to fund his retirement after his  
12 presidency, but Truman also embraced the  
13 new land use with enthusiasm.  
14

15 The most notable commercial  
16 development was the 105-acre Truman  
17 Corners Town and Country Shoppers  
18 City, a new suburban shopping center  
19 which embodied hopefulness in the future  
20 of America after World War II. Truman  
21 was active in the design, offering his  
22 planning advice to the developers and  
23 was present when the shopping center  
24 was inaugurated in 1957. This first  
25 development was soon followed by the  
26 selling of 220 acres of the farm property to  
27 B.F. Weinberg and Associates who planned a  
28 residential and commercial development. By  
29 1965, only 40 acres remained of the original  
30 family farm.  
31

32 This period ends in 1965, as Harry S  
33 Truman's involvement in the farm ended  
34 with his sale of the remainder of the farm to  
35 his nephews.  
36

### **37 1955**

38 All three siblings are credited with selling  
39 105 acres to Don Casto to develop Truman  
40 Corners. Harry provided leadership in the  
41 planning, design, and orchestration of the  
42 new shopping center.  
43

44 Harry sold 18 3/4 acres to the Mary Don  
45 Company (aka Edelbrock, Inc), a Kansas  
46 City real estate firm, for either \$45,000  
47

1 or \$65,000. A plat shows the property  
2 was located near the southeast corner  
3 of Grandview Road and 125th Street  
4 and extended east to Highway 71. They  
5 subdivided the land into 71 lots.  
6

7 Gilbert and Harry A. Truman, who  
8 had been farming on the land, sold  
9 74 dairy cattle at auction and moved  
10 their operations to a 400-acre farm in  
11 Louisburg, Kansas.  
12

### **13 1955 to 1958**

14 In 1955, Harry S Truman's continued  
15 financial woes following his presidency  
16 spurred Congress to begin crafting  
17 legislation to provide for presidential  
18 pension benefits.  
19

### **20 1956**

21 Harry S Truman sold a strip of land  
22 on the east side of Highway 71 to the  
23 Missouri Highway Department for  
24 \$13,864 for expansion of the highway.  
25

### **26 1956 to 1982**

27 The Williams family rented and occupied  
28 the Farm Home. Harry received 65 dollars  
29 per month in rent. They replaced the old  
30 stone columns that supported the kitchen  
31 with a concrete foundation, screened in  
32 the back porch, and a concrete patio off  
33 the kitchen door, installed a concrete floor  
34 for the front porch, and shingled the roof.  
35 Despite these improvements, the property  
36 remained in a state of decline.<sup>61</sup>  
37

### **38 1957**

39 Truman Corners Town and Country  
40 Shoppers City opened to fanfare in 1957  
41 as a state-of-the-art shopping experience.  
42

44 The sugar maple grove planted by  
45

---

46 <sup>61</sup> Evans-Hatch, *Historic Resource Study*, 88-89.





Figure 2-21. The Truman Corners Town & Country Shoppers City was designed as an automobile focused regional shopping center, which would “change the shopping habits of the free world.” The Trumans sold 105 acres to Don Casto to develop Truman Corners in 1955 (in blue). The remaining portions of the farm (in green) were gradually sold over the next several years. HSTL 1954



Figure 2-22. Harry S Truman, Vivian Truman, Luella Truman, and Mary Jane Truman at the inauguration ceremony for Truman Corners. The Solomon Young barn is in the background. HSTL 97-42, 1957

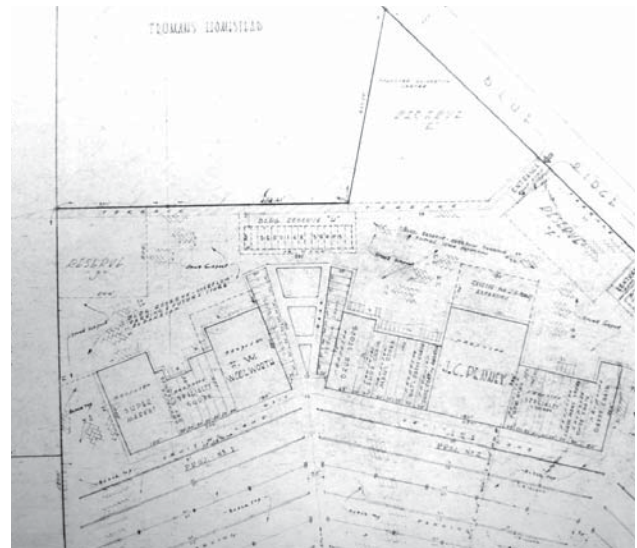


Figure 2-23. The Truman Corners plan of 1956 included several department stores arranged around a central parking area. The land around the Farm Home remained agricultural, upper left of drawing. HSTL 1956

1 Solomon Young c.1867, was destroyed by a  
2 tornado along with a hog shed. The Farm  
3 Home was also damaged, resulting in the  
4 Williams family repairing the roof and  
5 exterior.

6

## 7 **1958**

8 Harry, Vivian, and Mary Jane Truman  
9 sold 220 acres of the farm property to B.F.  
10 Weinberg and Associates for \$220,000.

11

12 This land was located across Highway 71  
13 from Truman Corners, where Wienberg  
14 planned a development of commercial,  
15 multi-family, and single family housing  
16 to be called Truman Village. This site left  
17 only 40 acres remaining of the original  
18 farm, half of which was associated with  
19 Vivian's house.

20

21 During this time, the Farm Home and  
22 grounds were in disrepair. The grounds  
23 were rarely maintained and the house  
24 had unpainted, rotting siding and a leaky  
25 roof.

26

27 The Former Presidents Act was passed  
28 into federal law in 1958, providing a  
29 pension to previous Presidents of the  
30 United States.

31

## 32 **1959 to 1965**

33 The granary was removed.

34

## 35 **1961**

36 Electric poles were installed north of the  
37 Farm Home yard.

38

39 A photograph from this time indicates  
40 that the rose arbor was in disrepair and  
41 that the pump had been removed.<sup>62</sup>

42

## 43 **1965**

44 In late 1964 and early 1965, Gilbert and  
45 Harry A. Truman, Vivian Truman's sons,  
46 purchased the remainder of the farm

---

47 <sup>62</sup> HSTL, photograph 61-66-02.

from Harry S Truman.<sup>63</sup> The property at  
this time included part of section 14, lots  
9-10 in Shelton's first addition, and lots  
5 to 7 and 9 to 11 in Truman Blue Ridge  
Heights.

John Vivian Truman died on July 8, 1965.  
His widow Luella moved to Kansas to live  
with her sons. Her house, located north of  
the Farm Home, was rented.

---

<sup>63</sup> NPS, *CLI*, 20.





<sup>1</sup> Figure 2-24. In 1984 the Farm Home and adjacent landscape were repaired. The Farm Home was in  
<sup>2</sup> poor condition and the adjacent vegetation had overgrown obscuring the historic appearance of the  
<sup>3</sup> farm landscape. Al O'Bright 1983



<sup>4</sup> Figure 2-25. The Farm Home and adjacent landscape underwent extensive repair in 1984. Much of  
<sup>5</sup> the Farm Home's wood exterior was replaced, interior portions were repaired, and more recent addi-  
<sup>6</sup> tions removed. Outside, the sugar maple grove was replanted and an outhouse and smokehouse were  
<sup>7</sup> added to the site to convey to visitors the farm landscape, although they were not placed in histori-  
<sup>8</sup> cally accurate locations. (The milk barn is visible in the background at the left). Jill O'Bright 1984

## **<sup>1</sup> Modern Day (1965 to present)**

<sup>2</sup> This period begins in 1965, once the  
<sup>3</sup> sale of the land to Harry's nephews was  
<sup>4</sup> complete. This period includes the leasing  
<sup>5</sup> of the land and the Farm Home, and the  
<sup>6</sup> later efforts to preserve the property. After  
<sup>7</sup> Vivian's death in 1965, the brothers tried  
<sup>8</sup> to sell the property to Jackson County, but  
<sup>9</sup> the County did not have the funds at the  
<sup>10</sup> time, and so the Farm Home continued to  
<sup>11</sup> be rented.

<sup>12</sup> By the 1970s efforts had begun to preserve  
<sup>13</sup> the Farm Home and its adjacent land. In  
<sup>14</sup> 1978 the Harry S Truman Farm Home  
<sup>15</sup> was listed on National Register of Historic  
<sup>16</sup> Places. The Harry S Truman Farm Home  
<sup>17</sup> Foundation actively worked to preserve the  
<sup>18</sup> property.  
<sup>19</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Physical changes to the property during  
<sup>21</sup> this period include the loss of the Solomon  
<sup>22</sup> Young barn in 1966 to fire, as well as the  
<sup>23</sup> loss of the hay and milk barns (located on  
<sup>24</sup> Vivian's farm) and five of the stone posts.  
<sup>25</sup> These were removed in the 1980s for the  
<sup>26</sup> commercial development to the north.  
<sup>27</sup> The posts were piled on the Truman Farm  
<sup>28</sup> property.  
<sup>29</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The Grandview Chamber of Commerce  
<sup>31</sup> started a fundraising effort to purchase  
<sup>32</sup> the house. The Harry S Truman Farm  
<sup>33</sup> Home Foundation formed in 1980  
<sup>34</sup> and assisted Jackson County in their  
<sup>35</sup> negotiations to purchase the Farm Home  
<sup>36</sup> in 1983.  
<sup>37</sup>

<sup>38</sup> In 1984, the Farm Home was extensively  
<sup>39</sup> repaired. The front porch was rebuilt,  
<sup>40</sup> exterior siding was completely replaced,  
<sup>41</sup> modern additions were removed, the roofing  
<sup>42</sup> was replaced, chimneys were rebuilt, the  
<sup>43</sup> interior was renovated, and extensive  
<sup>44</sup> woodwork was replaced. A new sugar  
<sup>45</sup> maple grove was planted and additional  
<sup>46</sup> outbuildings were added.  
<sup>47</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Due to financial difficulties in operating  
<sup>2</sup> the property, Jackson County transferred  
<sup>3</sup> management to the National Park Service  
<sup>4</sup> in 1994. The NPS continues to manage it  
<sup>5</sup> as part of the Harry S Truman National  
<sup>6</sup> Historic Site.  
<sup>7</sup>

### **<sup>8</sup> 1966**

<sup>9</sup> On November 6, 1966, the Solomon Young  
<sup>10</sup> Barn was destroyed by fire. Following the  
<sup>11</sup> fire, all of the surrounding wooden fencing  
<sup>12</sup> was bulldozed.<sup>64</sup>  
<sup>13</sup>

### **<sup>14</sup> 1971, November 11**

<sup>15</sup> The Harry S Truman Historic District  
<sup>16</sup> was designated a National Historic  
<sup>17</sup> Landmark for the period of 1919 to 1971  
<sup>18</sup> in Independence, MO, meeting Criterion 2  
<sup>19</sup> —association with life of person nationally  
<sup>20</sup> significant.  
<sup>21</sup>

### **<sup>22</sup> 1972**

<sup>23</sup> President Harry S Truman died on  
<sup>24</sup> December 26, 1972 and was buried at the  
<sup>25</sup> Harry S Truman Presidential Library and  
<sup>26</sup> Museum in Independence, Missouri.  
<sup>27</sup>

### **<sup>28</sup> 1974 to 1983**

<sup>29</sup> Between 1974 and 1983 the slope of the  
<sup>30</sup> Farm Home's shed roof (over the south  
<sup>31</sup> porch) was increased. It covered the lower  
<sup>32</sup> half of the south facing second story  
<sup>33</sup> windows.  
<sup>34</sup>

### **<sup>35</sup> 1978**

<sup>36</sup> The Harry S Truman Farm Home was  
<sup>37</sup> registered on National Register of Historic  
<sup>38</sup> Places.  
<sup>39</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Mary Jane Truman died in Independence,  
<sup>41</sup> Missouri, at age 89.  
<sup>42</sup>

### **<sup>43</sup> c. 1980**

<sup>44</sup> The Harry S Truman Farm Home

---

<sup>64</sup> NPS, *CLI*, 20.

1 Foundation was actively working to  
2 preserve the property. They organized  
3 the purchase of the remaining property  
4 by Jackson County through a grant of  
5 \$378,250 provided by the Department of  
6 the Interior.

## 9 1982

10 Bess Truman died at age 97 in  
11 Independence, Missouri.

## 13 1983

14 The Truman family agreed to sell the  
15 property to Jackson County for half of its  
16 \$700,000 value.

18 The first archeological survey of the  
19 Truman Farm was conducted.<sup>65</sup>

## 21 1983 to 1985

22 Between 1984 and 1985, the Truman  
23 Farm Home Foundation undertook  
24 extensive repairs to the Farm Home, led  
25 by George Fogelsong.

27 The front porch was rebuilt, exterior  
28 siding was completely replaced, modern  
29 additions were removed, the roof was  
30 replaced, chimneys were rebuilt, the  
31 interior was renovated, and extensive  
32 woodwork was replaced.

34 A new sugar maple grove was planted and  
35 additional outbuildings were added.

## 37 1985

38 In 1985, the Truman Farm Home  
39 Foundation moved two structures to  
40 the property, a smokehouse and a privy.  
41 Neither structure was original to the  
42 property.

44 The Harry S Truman Farm Home was  
45 designated a National Historic Landmark.

65 Bray, *Archaeological Survey and Testing*.

## 1 mid-1980s

2 Paved walkways were built. These  
3 walks do not follow established historic  
4 circulation routes.

## 6 1987

7 In 1987, construction of the Truman Farm  
8 Shopping Center began on the parcel  
9 adjacent to the north boundary of the  
10 present-day Truman Farm. This parcel  
11 was the Vivian Truman Farm, which  
12 historically was part of the original farm.  
13 Several structures were razed including  
14 the milk barn (and possibly the hay  
15 barn). Five stone posts were removed  
16 and relocated to the present-day Truman  
17 Farm.<sup>66</sup>

19 The National Association of Retired  
20 Federal Employees planted a native pin  
21 oak tree about 15 feet east of the Farm  
22 Home. This tree does not represent a  
23 historic planting.

## 25 1993

26 On December 14, 1993, Congress  
27 authorized the acquisition of the  
28 Truman Farm Home, by donation, from  
29 Jackson County, Missouri. Congress also  
30 authorized and directed the Secretary  
31 of the Interior to provide appropriate  
32 political subdivisions of the State of  
33 Missouri with technical assistance for  
34 the development and implementation of  
35 plans, programs, regulations, or other  
36 means for minimizing the adverse affects  
37 on the Truman Farm of the development  
38 and use of adjacent lands.<sup>67</sup>

## 40 1994

41 Jackson County and the Truman Farm  
42 Home Foundation lacked the funding  
43 to adequately maintain the Truman  
44 Farm. On April 4, 1994, Jackson County  
45 conveyed the Truman Farm deed to the

66 NPS, *CLI*, 20.

67 National Park Service, *Long-Range Interpretive Plan:  
Harry S Truman National Historic Site*. Harpers Ferry: Har-  
pers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning, November 2000, 3.



1 federal government and the NPS assumed  
2 management of the property. The property  
3 became part of the Grandview Unit of the  
4 Harry S Truman National Historic Site.

5

#### 6 **1994 to 2009**

7 Beginning in 1994, and occurring in  
8 stages until 2009, the NPS completed  
9 extensive repair to the garage, including  
10 internal stabilization with cabling.

11

12 During this time the Farm Home was  
13 shingled and painted, and gutters were  
14 added. Floorings were also replaced on the  
15 front and south porches.

16

#### 17 **1995**

18 The National Park Service built a  
19 maintenance storage shed next to the  
20 garage.

21

#### 22 **1996**

23 A wood ramp providing universal  
24 accessibility was built connecting the  
25 south side of the Farm Home to the  
26 parking area.

27

#### 28 **1996 to 1997**

29 New wayside exhibits were installed, and  
30 were later updated in the 2000s.

31

#### 32 **1999**

33 A General Management Plan (1999  
34 GMPA) and Long Range Interpretive  
35 Plan (2000 LRIP) were developed for the  
36 Truman Farm.

37

#### 38 **2003**

39 The NPS received funds to perform  
40 additional stabilization on the garage.

41

#### 42 **2005**

43 Repairs to the Farm Home included  
44 in-kind replacement of windows,  
45 deteriorated siding, and chimney caps,  
46 tuck-pointing the foundation, and  
47 installation of updated security lights.

48

1 A NPS woodcrafter replaced rough  
2 sawn rafters in the poultry house. Roof  
3 sheathing was also replaced using metal  
4 sheets and the original roofing material  
5 was replaced.

6

#### 7 **2006**

8 In 2006, a geothermal heating/cooling  
9 system was installed for the Farm Home.  
10 The parking lot was repaired after  
11 installation of the geothermal system.

12

#### 13 **2008**

14 The parking lot was repaired with the  
15 use of a petroleum based asphalt sealing  
16 product, used to fill in large cracks, and  
17 the entire surface was coated to prolong  
18 the life of the pavement.

19

#### 20 **2009**

21 The NPS acquired five acres of open field  
22 adjacent to the south boundary of the  
23 Truman Farm, Tract 2.

24

#### 25 **2010**

26 The heating and cooling system units  
27 supplied by the geothermal system were  
28 destroyed by flooding and were replaced.

29

30 The exterior of the Farm Home was  
31 repainted and minor repairs were made to  
32 exterior wood surfaces.

33

#### 34 **2011**

35 The Harry S Truman National Historic  
36 District in Independence was expanded  
37 to include three additional discontinuous  
38 parcels: the Missouri Pacific Railroad  
39 Depot, 131 East Farmer Street, and 409  
40 North Liberty Street.

41

42 NPS acquired Tract 101-08 immediately  
43 adjacent to the property on the south side.  
44 The transaction included the acquisition  
45 of a building, previously used as a paint  
46 store. Possibilities for the reuse of the  
47 building were noted by the 1999 GMPA to  
48 include visitor facilities, administrative



1 offices including curatorial staff and the  
2 function to care for museum collections,  
3 maintenance, storage and curatorial  
4 storage. A joint use with other local and  
5 regional partners was also noted as being  
6 possible.

7  
8 Portions of the maple grove were  
9 replanted.

10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
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