

Harry S Truman

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harry S Truman National Historic Site



The Harry S Truman Farm

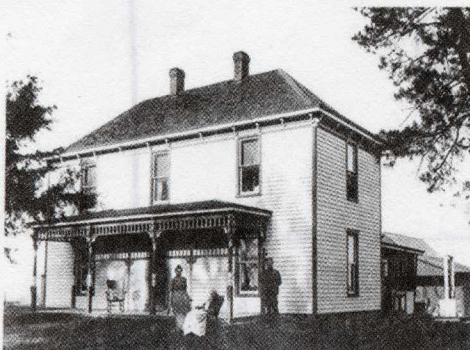


The Truman family farm house in Grandview.

On May 15, 1984, Harry S Truman National Historic Site opened to the public in Independence, Missouri. At that time, the site only included the Truman home on Delaware Street. Since 1984, other properties relating to the Truman family in Independence have been added to the site. The latest addition to the park, the Harry S Truman Farm in Grandview, Missouri, occurred on May 8, 1994.

This brochure will tell you more about the history of the farm home and it will allow you to take a self-guided tour of the farm grounds. For details about tours of the Truman farm home in Grandview, or the Truman home in Independence, please log onto www.nps.gov/hstr or call the National Park Service at (816)254-2720.

The Solomon Young Farm



Young Harry Truman on right with his grandmother (sitting) and mother in front of the 1894 farm house.

In 1867, Solomon and Harriet Young, Harry S Truman's maternal grandparents, purchased property in Grandview, Missouri, and built a beautiful farm home. This home, no longer standing, stood on the present farm home site.

In 1881, John A. Truman married Martha Ellen Young, daughter of Solomon and Harriet. The newlyweds moved to Lamar, Missouri, where their first child, Harry S Truman, was born on May 8, 1884. Less than a year later, the Truman family left Lamar and lived on two other farms before finally moving to the Young farm in Grandview in 1887.

John and Martha Truman stayed in Grandview until 1890, then moved to Independence so Harry and the family's younger children, John Vivian and Mary Jane, could attend school.

After the Trumans had left, tragedy struck the Young farm in 1894. The original 1867 structure caught fire and burned to the ground. Harry Truman's grandmother soon had another dwelling built on the same site. The new house was intended to be temporary, but it eventually became permanent. The home presently located on the Truman farm is this "temporary" structure built in 1894.

Harry S Truman: Farmer



Harry Truman riding a cultivator on the family farm.

Harry S Truman graduated from Independence High School in 1901 and held several different jobs in Kansas City. Within four years, financial difficulties caused the rest of his family to return to the Grandview farm, and in 1906, his father called Harry to join them. Harry was 22 years old and had never farmed before, but he learned quickly. In describing his duties, Mr. Truman later said he, "...Plowed, sowed, reaped, milked cows, fed hogs, doctored horses, bailed [sic] hay, and did everything there was to do on a six hundred acre farm with my father and my brother."

In 1914, Harry's father died and he assumed full responsibility for the farming operation. He continued farming until 1917, when he left

Grandview to serve in World War I. While farming occupied most of Harry's daylight hours, he still managed to find time for other pursuits. He served in the Missouri National Guard, was postmaster of Grandview for a brief time, and was a road maintenance overseer. He also became active in Freemasonry and other organizations. He even attempted to learn the clarinet so he could play in the town band. His most pleasurable pursuit, however, was his courtship with Bess Wallace, whom he had known since childhood in Independence. The courtship, which began after Harry had returned to the farm, led to their wedding in 1919. Upon his marriage, Mr. Truman left the farm for good and moved back to Independence.

Farming Influences



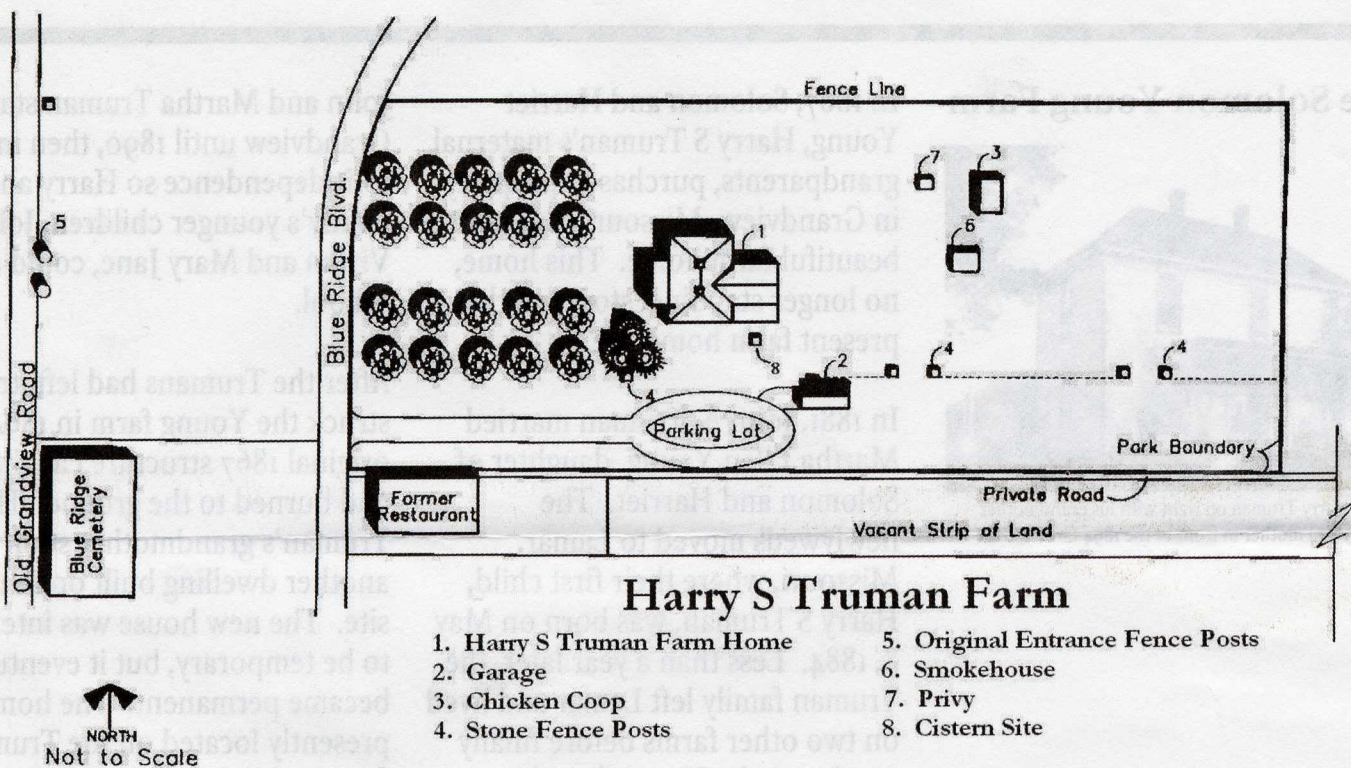
Young Harry Truman with family on a farm wagon in Grandview. Sister Mary Jane Truman; Harry S Truman; mother Martha Young Truman; cousin Myra Colgan; brother J. Vivian Truman; and cousin Nellie Tilford Noland.

Harry Truman's eleven-year experience with farm life shaped his character forever. As Mr. Truman remarked years later, "...Riding one of these plows all day, day after day, gives one time to think. I've settled all the ills of mankind in one way and another while riding along seeing that each animal pulled his part of the load..."

Farming is a career that requires self-sufficiency and determination. Not only did farming give Truman time to think about issues, it also taught him to work hard, take responsibility for himself, face frustration and difficulties with

optimism and courage, and exercise common sense. These were characteristics he would take with him to the White House.

Importantly as well, it was during the farm years that Truman's membership in groups such as the Masons allowed him to develop widespread associations with other people. These he would call upon for support in his political campaigns, all the way from Jackson County Judge in 1922 to President of the United States in 1948.



Self-Guided Tour of Farm Grounds

1 Harry S Truman Farm Home Built in 1894, this is the house Harry Truman lived in from 1906 until 1917.

2 Garage This original structure once served as the Grandview post office. Harry Truman moved it to the farm and used it to store his 1911 Stafford automobile.

3 Chicken Coop This is an original structure that was present at the time Harry Truman lived here.

4 Stone Fence Posts The stone fence posts marked the boundaries of the farm home. Five stone fence posts to the south of the home are in their original locations. Posts to the north of the home have been dismantled and their remains can be found behind the chicken coop and in the field.

5 Farm Home Entrance The two round posts located across Blue Ridge Blvd. mark the original entrance to the farm home. Notice that the posts are directly in line with the front of the farm home. Also notice the stone pillar immediately north of the entrance. It would have lined up with the northern most posts that are no longer present.

6 Smokehouse This is a reconstructed structure and is not original to the farm.

7 Privy This is a reconstructed structure and is not original to the farm.

8 Cistern Site One dark night, when coming home late, Harry walked into a pump that stood here over the cistern. The next morning, he painted the pump white.

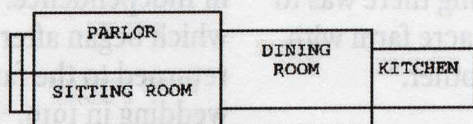
Blue Ridge Cemetery (southwest corner of map) Mr. Truman dug graves at this cemetery when he was on the farm. His aunt Elizabeth F. Young, daughter of Solomon and Harriet Young, is buried here.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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www.nps.gov/hstr



FLOOR PLANS

First Floor



Second Floor

