

“Grant’s Farm,” 10501 Gravois Rd., 1910-1911, Widman & Walsh



“Grant’s Farm” is the palatial suburban estate located in Grantwood Village and associated with the Anheuser-Busch Brewing family. The grounds partly open to the public display the Busch family zoo, a collection of coaches, and riding memorabilia as well as the brewery mascots, the Clydesdale horses. The land was once farmed by Ulysses S. Grant, hence the appellation. After Grant’s log house was displayed at the World’s Fair of 1904, the Busch family purchased and reinstalled it about a mile south of its original location.

Also located on the grounds, but removed from the public-access areas by landscaping, is the very private Busch residence constructed in 1910-1911 for August Busch Sr. It is an enormous brick structure in the French Renaissance Revival style. The Busch residence was designed by the architectural partnership of Frederick Widman and Robert W. Walsh, formed in 1885. The two men specialized in brewery architecture, and among other notable accomplishments, they were responsible for “Machinery Hall” at the World’s Fair of 1904.

The Busch family history goes back to 1857 when Eberhard Anheuser, a soap manufacturer, bailed out Urban and Hammer’s Bavarian Brewery with a loan and then proceeded to take over the business in partnership with his son-in-law, Adolphus Busch. They founded the Anheuser Busch Brewing Company.

Another notable structure on the Busch estate is the Bauernhof, designed by Klipstein & Rathman and constructed in 1914. The structure forms the core of the area of Grant’s Farm which is open as a public attraction and zoo. It is a U-shaped building, and it once held an office and garage in front, with stables and exotic animals in the rear. After the Clydesdale became the advertising symbol for the Anheuser-Busch Company in 1953, the large work horses were bred there.

“Hardscrabble,” Grant’s Farm, 10501 Gravois Rd., Grantwood Village, 1856, NR



Prior to the Civil War Ulysses S. Grant built a log house for his wife Julia Dent on property that was given to the couple by her father and attempted to work as a farmer. He named the property “Hardscrabble” as a sardonic comment on the quality of the soil of his farm, and the couple moved there in 1856. While Grant was pleased with the house, Julia was evidently less appreciative, as the couple lived there only three months before returning to White Haven. Hardscrabble is a horizontal log house with “V” notched corners. It shares with only one other house in the country the distinction of having been built by the hand of a U.S. president. This period of struggle with the farm and the building of Hardscrabble were apparently dear to Grant’s heart, as throughout the years after the war and his presidency he was reassembling the White Haven property in the hope of retiring to a life of farming and raising horses.

“White Haven,” (Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site), 7400 Grant Rd., Grantwood Village, 1818, c. 1837, NR



Although “White Haven” is best known for its association with President Ulysses S. Grant, the house possesses a notable earlier history. Ownership of the property upon which White Haven sits dates back to the time of the Spanish land grants. The first grantee was Hugh Graham, who exchanged the tract with James MacKay by 1799. MacKay served as deputy to the Spanish commandant. He married one of the daughters of Captain John Long (builder of the Long Log House) acquired part of the land from his brother-in-law in 1808, the same year that he married Elizabeth Sappington. The Longs began the two-story frame house now on the site, but they must have lived elsewhere because the house was still unfinished when they sold it in 1818. The west wing is a vertical log addition which was apparently constructed by the third owner, Frederick Dent about 1837.

The Longs sold the house to Theodore Hunt and Anne Lucas Hunt. Theodore Hunt was a former naval officer and an agent of the Astor Fur Company. Anne Lucas Hunt was the only daughter of Jean Baptiste Charles "J.B.C." Lucas, who had come to St. Louis in 1805 under the appointment of President Thomas Jefferson to act as one of the three land commissioners and Judge for the Louisiana Territory. The Hunts lived in the house for two years. Anne Lucas Hunt writes in her memoirs that she sought refuge in the house to avoid contact with Thomas Hart Benton, who had killed her brother Charles Lucas in an infamous duel on "Bloody Island." She later became a noted philanthropist, donating nearly a million dollars to religious and humanitarian organizations within the St. Louis area.

The house was purchased by "Colonel" Frederick Dent, a St. Louis merchant in 1820. Dent named the house "White Haven" after an ancestral home of his family in Maryland. Dent married Ellen Bray Wrenshaw, the daughter of a Pittsburgh merchant, born in England. The couple had three sons and two daughters. Frederick Dent, the son, entered the military and graduated from West Point in 1843. His roommate at West Point was Ulysses S. Grant. Shortly after graduation the two men received their first assignments and were stationed together at Jefferson Barracks, at which time Grant began to visit White Haven. There he met and later married Julia Dent. White Haven provided the setting for their courtship. Julia and Ulysses also lived in the house or on the White Haven property from 1854 to 1859, throughout the difficult period prior to the Civil War when Grant attempted to make his living as a farmer, having temporarily resigned from the military.