NPS Form 10-900
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic U.S. GRANT BOYHOOD HOME

and/or common GRANT HOMESTEAD

2. Location

street & number 219 East Grant Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Georgetown ___ vicinity of

state Ohio code 039 county Brown code 015

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	_X_ occupied	___ agriculture	_X_ museum
_X_ building(s)	_X_ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	_X_ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name John & Judy A. Ruthven

street & number Doctor Faul Road

city, town Georgetown ___ vicinity of state Ohio

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Brown County Courthouse, Recorder's Office

street & number Public Square

city, town Georgetown state Ohio

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Ulysses S. Grant Boyhood Home has this property been determined eligible? _X_ yes ___ no

date October 8, 1978 _X_ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Interagency Resources Division, National Park Service

city, town Washington state DC

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The original section of the house is a two-story, brick structure facing onto Water Street, built in 1823, by Jesse R. Grant. In 1825 a one-story, kitchen addition was added to the north elevation (reconstructed in 1982) and shortly thereafter a one-story, lean-to was added to the west elevation, extending the full width of the house. In 1828 a larger, two-story, brick addition was placed at right angles to the original brick portion, facing onto today's Grant Avenue. This configuration has been retained. As in 1829 the house is an "ell" shaped, two-story, brick structure, with a one-story, shed-roofed enclosed porch (reconstructed in 1982) positioned in the "ell." The house is built on a dressed stone foundation.

The front 1828 section has a 3-bay facade, the entrance placed to the left. The door is deeply recessed, both the recess and door are paneled wood. There is a three-light transom above. The two windows on the first floor are 2/2. The second floor has three 6/6 windows. The west side of this portion of the house has no fenestration and the east side has a small, 4 pane window, offset in the gable end, and a single window, placed right of center, on each floor. There is a single, inside-end chimney.

The rear portion of the house (built 1823) is brick, two bays wide, facing onto Water Street. A recessed door is placed to the left. To the right is a 6/6 pane window which is not aligned with the top of the door but, rather, is higher than the door by one row of panes. The second floor has two 6/6 pane windows. The north end has a large, central, exterior chimney and a 6/6 pane window to the left of the chimney on the first floor. The west side has two 6/6 pane windows on the second floor; the first floor of this elevation is covered by the one-story enclosed porch (reconstructed in 1982) which has three 6/6 windows.

The roofs of both brick portions are gable, covered with a standing seam metal roof. The entire house is painted white.

The interior is in excellent condition, woodwork, floors, walls, and fireplaces are original. Inside walls are brick, painted white with pale blue woodwork. Floors are oak and ash.

The Restoration and the Boyhood Home as an Historic House Museum

By the mid-1960s the Grant Boyhood Home was seemingly doomed. There was at that time serious talk among the courthouse crowd of purchasing the property from Mabel Bier Kehoe, demolishing the house, and erecting a new building to house the county welfare office. Dr. John Y. Simon, the editor of the Ulysses Grant Papers, visited the site about this time and recalls, "I visited this house quite a number of years ago; at

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400–1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500–1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600–1699	architecture	education	X military	social/
1700–1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
X 1800–1899	commerce	exploration/settlement	philosophy	theater
1900–	communications	industry	X politics/government	transportation
		invention		other (specify)

Specific dates 1823-1839 **Builder/Architect** Jesse R. Grant

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The U.S. Grant Boyhood Home is nationally significant because it is intimately associated with the formative years in the life of one of the great captains in western military history and the 18th President of the United States. Grant was brought to Georgetown in the autumn of 1823 as a 16-month-old baby and lived in this house with his parents and siblings until leaving home to enter the U.S. Military Academy in May 1839. Although his family had moved to nearby Bethel, Cadet Grant spent most of his furlough in the summer 1841 in Georgetown, while Bvt. 2d Lieutenant Grant was a frequent visitor to his boyhood haunts during the summer of 1843 following his graduation from West Point.

General Grant -- throughout a many faceted career highlighted by sweeping victories on numerous Civil War battlefields, his election and reelection as President of the United States, and his race against death to complete his military memoirs -- never put down any roots. He lived in the house at 219 East Grant Street almost twice as long as in the White House, the scene of his next longest residence. The home in Galena, Illinois, (a National Historic Landmark) presented to the hometown Civil War hero in August 1865, because of Grant's official duties, his restless nature, and his preference for various other homes he maintained in the East, was used infrequently, most notably during his victorious first campaign for the Presidency in 1868. After completing his second term in 1877, Grant resided briefly at Galena, but soon began an extensive world tour (1877-1879), after which he again resided in the Galena home for a short time. After the Grants settled in New York City in 1880, they rented out the Galena house.[8]

Dr. Simon, the editor of the U.S. Grant Papers and a distinguished Grant scholar, when asked to evaluate the significance of the Georgetown home, wrote:

> Certainly it conveyed a sense of Grant's upbringing, representing as it did a fairly typical home of the period of a moderately prosperous businessman. Its location, rather too close to the tan yard, still tells something about Jesse Grant's absorption with getting ahead, and how it shaped the character of his son, rather squeamish in later years, and only willing to join his brothers in the leather store in Galena in 1860 when no other alternative remained for the support of his family.
>
> Grant's boyhood in Georgetown seems to have been fairly representative of the place and the age. When he achieved fame as a Civil War general and as his career became entangled in the conventional political biography of the period, family and boyhood friends began to advance the cutomary accounts of incidents that foreshadowed his later achievements. Most of these remain unconvincing, at least those that are not banal.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Higginsport, Ohio-Kentucky **Quadrangle scale** 7.5

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	248210	4305700
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The house stands on a lot 105' wide (on E. Grant Avenue) and 190' deep (on N. Water Street) on the northwest corner of E. Grant Avenue & N. Water Streets.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edwin C. Bearss

organization National Park Service **date** August 16, 1984

street & number 1100 L Street, NW **telephone** (202)343-8163

city or town Washington **state** DC

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state ___ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

GPO 894-765

that time it was unoccupied and vacant. I was impressed then by the degree to which the original house had been unmodified and remained in fairly good condition."[1]

Harold Nye and Judge and Mrs George Campbell became concerned about the threat to the property, and on December 8, 1965, the Campbells purchased the house and lot from Mrs Kehoe of Miami, Florida. Mrs. Kehoe had inherited the house and lot from her brother Jess Bier. The property had belonged to the Bier/Parker family since February 1898. Walter Parker who had purchased the house and lot in the latter year was a brother of Mrs. Katie Parker Bier.[2]

In purchasing the Grant Boyhood Home, Judge and Mrs. Campbell had "been influenced by a keen sense of obligation to take a position in doing our share toward making a shrine" of the structure. They hoped to see the day "when the old Grant Homestead ... will ... become a state or national museum."[3]

The Campbells, after acquiring the Boyhood Home, refurnished certain of the downstairs rooms in period furnishings and took measures to improve the maintenance of the yards and grounds. In April 1972 the Boyhood Home was one of 13 featured stops on an historical driving tour of the "Land of Grant." The tour had been established in conjunction with the Ulysses S. Grant Sesquicentennial.[4]

In 1977, following Mrs. Campbell's death, John and Judy Ruthven purchased the Grant Homestead. During the next five years, the Ruthvens, who are dedicated preservationists, undertook an ambitious and well documented program to restore the Boyhood Home to its appearance, circa 1835.

The three-bay porch fronting Grant Street was removed in 1978 and replaced by a flight of stone steps at the south entrance. While removing the porch,workmen found a time capsule placed under the porch foundation in 1905 by Jess Bier, whose family then rented the property. In the capusle where two contemporary newspapers and a photograph of the Boyhood Home with its front south porch added in 1876.[5]

The Ruthvens, in the spring of 1982, undertook major rehabilitation of the property. As the property was listed in the National Register and the work involved: (a) substantial changes to the site; (b) demolition of later additions; and (c) general overall repair and rehabilitation work, the proposal was reviewed by Ohio State Historic Preservation Officer Dr. W. Ray Luce. Satisfied that the restoration work met the Secretary of the Interior's "Standard of Rehabilitation," Dr. Luce certified the project for a tax credit.[6]

The restoration/rehabilitation work was accomplished by the D&D Construction Company and included:

a. Removal of a wooden shed at the north elevation of the 1823 section of the the homestead. The shed had been built in the late 1880s to replace the brick one-story, kitchen addition added to the house in 1824 by the Grants. The Grant addition had deteriorated and had been replaced by the frame shed.

b. On the site of the shed, the contractors erected a one-story 20-by 13-foot brick additon similar to the Grants'. Butting into the addition's north elevation is a large brick chimney raising to a height of 16'2". Two 6/6 pane windows are framed into the addition's east elevation.

c. The brick enclosed porch fronting on the west elevation of the 1823 section of the house was removed. Efforts by architectural historians to document when the porch was enclosed were unsuccessful, but it was assumed that it was done in the early twentieth century.

D & D Consturction then rebuilt the enclosed porch employing frame construction and wood siding. As reconstructed the structure is 35-by 10-feet with a shed roof. Three 6/6 pane windows are positioned in the west elevation of the enclosed porch. A doorway opening onto the backyard was framed into the north elevation.

When workmen removed the plaster from the inside wall of the enclosed porch, they found the date "1823" etched into the brickwork of the west elevation of the section of the house erected in the year by Jesse Grant. A bricked-up area nearby was also pinpointed, showing where a side doorway had been closed off probably coincidend with the 1828 addition.

d. The contractors covered the kitchen addition and the enclosed porch, as well as the 1823 and 1828 sections of the house, with a standing seam metal roof, and positioned new metal flashing around the reconstructed chimney and the 1823 chimney.

e. New gutters and downspouts, with splashboards to match existing splashboards, were positioned on the reconstructed enclosed porch and kitchen addition.

f. A concrete walkway was constructed leading from Water Street, passing in rear of the reconstructed kitchen, and providing access to the doorway in the north elevation of the enclosed porch.

g. The fireplaces were rehabilitated so that fires could be kindled and used to heat the house.

h. A central heating system was installed.

The interior woodwork was scraped in an effort to determine the original paint scheme. A number of layers were removed and analyzed and two of the earliest layers chosen by the Ruthvens for the repainting. After most of the trim had been repainted, an 8-penny nail, hidden from view, was found exhibiting similar layers of paint. It was postulated that, during the Grant years, the woodwork had not been painted, or that a subsequent owner had removed all the paint from the woodwork.[7]

John and Judy Ruthven manage the U.S. Grant Boyhood Home as an historic house museum to interpret the career of our 18th President and Civil War general, with particular emphasis on the important years that the future war leader and President lived in this house and Georgetown. The home is open two days during the week, Fridays and Saturdays, and on special occasions.

The home is partially furnished with period items, some of which are associated with the Grants and their Georgetown years.

Located in the reconstructed kitchen addition are restroom facilities, while interpretive exhibits and sales items are found in the reconstructed enclosed porch.

The U.S. Grant Boyhood Home is at the southeast corner of Lot No. 147. The lot has a frontage of 100 feet on East Grant Street and 200 feet on North Water Street. The lot is landscaped and seeded in grass.

There are three other structures on the lot -- a brick privy, a circular granite memorial stone, and the wooden portion of the porch that fronted the house from 1878 to 1978. The flat roof Victorian porch, positioned some 75 feet west of the enclosed porch, functions as a gazebo. The structure is supported by four short columns that formerly fronted on Grant Street. There are three flat arches across the front and one to each side. Diamond-shaped medallions and applied keystones in the center of each arch decorate the wood framing of the porch. The cornice is delinated by dentrils.

Grant opened his Memoirs, written late in his life, with a statement that his family was American, and there is reason to believe that there is more to this sentiment than appears on the surface. Like Lincoln, Grant was a representative product of a new nation and society, raised in the new town of Georgetown, whose founders represented the second wave of pioneers.

The Georgetown house, where Grant lived so long, is the only standing physical remnant of the major phase of his boyhood and youth. Situated in a town that has changed so little -- as such towns go -- from the town that he knew, it has special importance and meaning....[9]

U.S. GRANT'S GEORGETOWN YEARS -- 1823-1843

In his Personal Memoirs, President U.S. Grant wrote:

> In June, 1821, my father, Jesse R. Grant, married Hannah Simpson. I was born on the 27th of April, 1822, at Point Pleasant, Clermont County, Ohio. In the fall of 1823 we moved to Georgetown, the county seat of Brown, the adjoining county east. This place remained my home, until at the age of seventeen, in 1839, I went to West Point[10]

The family's move from Point Pleasant to Georgetown was dictated by Jesse's desire to better himself economically by establishing a new and larger tannery near an area promising a ready supply of tanning bark. The tannery was located on a lot on the south side of Cross Street (today's Grant Avenue) down the slope and several hundred yards east of the courthouse square. On the opposite side of the street from the tannery, at the northwest corner of Cross and Water Streets, Jesse built the small two-story brick house into which he moved his family in the autumn of 1823.[11] Jesse Grant did not secure clear title to lot 147 on which he built his new home until October 6, 1824. On that date Thomas Morris and William Middleton conveyed to Jesse Grant the subject property.[12]

On September 23, 1824, Hannah Grant gave birth to a second boy, christened Samuel Simpson, and Jesse added a one-story brick kitchen to the home's north elevation. Then, in 1828, Jesse Grant, confronted with a further increase in his family, had a wing, larger than the original house, constructed. On the first floor of the addition there was a "solidly respectable parlor and a hall in which a straight-banister staircase rose to two bedrooms above," and a sideroom said to have been Ulysses.'

Jesse Grant subscribed to several newspapers and assembled a library of some 35 volumes. To a neighbor boy, a few years older than Ulysses, it looked "like a mighty big book collection." By the time Ulysses was six he was able to read.

When the circuit-riding Methodist preachers visited Georgetown, they usually stopped with the Grants. There were not many two-story brick houses in Brown County in the late 1820s, and the clergy kept posted on which homes in the community best understood their poverty and the honor that was ?

On December 11, 1828, Hannah Grant gave birth to a daughter, Clara Rachael. Three more children -- Virginia Paine, February 20, 1831, Orvil Lynch, May 5, 1835, and Mary Frances on July 30, 1839 -- were born in the Grant Homestead.[13]

Grant's Memoirs, as William F. McFeely points out in his masterful biography:

> gives an uneven picture of the general's boyhood. He wrote no recollections of his mother's activities to balance his recital of those of his father -- such as the story of a trip Jesse made to Connecticut to attempt, unsuccessfully, to reclaim after seventy years a bequest from his great-uncle Solomon, who had dies in the French and Indian War. Other of Jesse's efforts to negotiate, which had indifferent success caught Ulysses' pained attention, but there is little discussion in the... [Memoirs] of what the parents hoped the children would achieve. Once his children were grown, Jesse Grant demanded much of them, and depended on them to enhance his sense of importance, but there is no evidence that while they were children, he exploited their labor to the detriment of their education. They had time to go to school and roam the countryside. Grant recorded no parental scoldings, and Jesse would seem to have indulged the boy's disgust with his business and accepted the fact that "he did not like to work," at least to the extent of allowing him to substitute chores involving draft horses for tasks in the tannery.[14]

"When I was seven or eight years of age," Grant wrote in his Memoirs, I began hauling all the wood used in the house and shops. I could not load it on the wagons, of course, at that time, about I could drive, and the choppers would load and someone at the house unload." By the time he was 11 he was strong enought to hold and walk behind a plow. From then until he left home to enter the United States Military Academy, in mid-May 1839, Ulysses did all the family's work done with horses, "such as breaking up the land, furrowing, ploughing corn and potatoes, bringing in the corps with harvesting, hauling all the wood, besides tending two of three horses, a cow or two, and sawing wood for stoves, etc., while attending school."

In repayment for doing his chores, Grant recalled, he was never scolded or punished by his parents, and they never objected to his "rational enjoyments" like fishing, going to White Oak Creek, nearly a mile away to swim, where incidentally he nearly lost his life. He was also recalled taking a horese and visiting his Simpson grand-

parents in adjoining Clermont County, 15 miles to the west. In the winter he skated or took a horese and drove a sleigh when snow covered the ground.[15]

Grant attended school regularly, which required his father to pay tuition. One of schools (still standing) was on the opposite side of today's Grant Street and between the Boyhood Home and the Courthouse Square; the other was a few blocks farther from the home. The students were not divided by classes, sat in one room, and were taught by "a single teacher -- who was," as Grant recalled, "often a man or woman incapable of teaching much, even if they imparted all they knew."[16]

The Georgetown classes consisted of 30 to 40 students, male and female, "from the infant learning the ABC's to the young lady of eighteen and the boy of twenty studying the highest branches taught -- the three Rs, 'Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic." Grant recalled that, "I never saw a algebra or mathematical work higher than the arithmetic in Georgetown, until after I was appointed to West Point."

Average in geography, grammer, and spelling, Ulysses stood at the head of his class in cyphering. Though many problems were presented as slate exercises, "mental arithmetic" was in its heyday and teachers enjoyed calling out problems for students to work out the solutions in their heads. Whether on the slate or in his head, Ulysses excelled.[17]

At age 14, in the 1836-37 school year, Grant was sent across the Ohio River to attend Richeson's and Rand's Maysville Seminary, where he boarded with an aunt. In the autumn of 1838 he attended the Presbyterian Academy at nearby Ripley, Ohio, where he roomed and boarded with a tanner.[19]

Recalling his academy years, Grant reported in his Personal Memoirs:

> I was not studious in habit, and probably did not progress enough to compensate for the outlay for board and tuition. At all events both winters were spent in going over the same arithmetic which I knew every work of before, and repeating: 'A noun is the same thing,' which I had heard my Georgetown teachers repeat, until I had come to believe it...."[20]

Grant's education was standard and sturdy, remarkable in this era neither for its deficiencies nor excellance. When he entered West Point, his schooling had provided him with a solid background for most of the subjects included in the cirriculum.

Though recalled as an average student, Grant, during his boyhood, was unequalled among his peers in his ability to understand and work horses. As a baby his trust in horses appalled the neighbors. While it was bad enough to see him frolicking in a

stall under the bellies of his father's horses, it was frightening to see him crawling among the legs and hooves of strange teams teathered in front of the tannery. When neighbors rushed into the Grant house, Hannah would exclaim, "Horses seem to understand Ulysses."

Horses intrigued Ulysses and he delighted in holding the reins of teams or saddle-horses of men stopping at the tannery. He would stand there alone with the horses.

At eight, Grant became enamored with a colt owned by a local family, Robert Ralston. As Grant recalled in his Memoirs:

> My father had offered twenty dollars for it, but Ralston wanted twenty-five. I was so anxious to have the colt, that after the owner left, I begged to be allowed to take him at the price demanded. My father yielded, but said twenty dollars was all the horse was worth, and told me to offer the price; if it was not accepted I was to offer twenty-two and a half, and if that would get him, to give the twenty-five. I at once mounted a horse and went for the colt. When I got to Mr. Ralston's house, I said to him: "Papa says I may offer you twenty dollars for the colt, but if you won't take that, I am to offer twenty-two and a half, and if you won't take that, I am to give you twenty-five." It would not require a Connecticut man to guess the price finally agreed upon. This story is nearly true. I certainly showed very plainly that I had come for the colt and meant to have him. I could not have been over eight years old at the time. This transaction caused me great heart-burning. The story got out among the boys of the village, and it was a long time before I heard the last of it. Boys enjoy the misery of their companions, at least village boys in that day did, and in later life I have found that all adults are not free from the peculiarity. I kept the horse until he was four years old, when he went blind, and I sold him for twenty dollars. When I went to Maysville to school, in 1836, at the age of fourteen, I recognized my colt as one of the blind horses working on the tread-wheel of the ferry-boat.[21]

William McFeely in his Grant biography speculates that

> Grant presented this incident as having provided a lesson well learned in his education as a maturing businessman, but actually it functioned in the opposite way. It reminded him every time he had business to do that he was not good at it, that he was still an embarrassable boy. What was more, he had been humiliated and mocked not for being discovered secretly doing something nasty, but for being innocent and open; in effect, he had been told that grown-up things, business things, were the affairs of men who laughed at boys who were direct about what they feigned sophistication, from the owner of the horse, and very probably

from his father, who without malice but with great ability to harm, may have laughed at the boy's ingenuousness. If the story is seen as demonstrating a second point, Ulysses' love of horses, the blinding of the animal sours the effect. "My colt" -- that unspoiled beautiful mount -- became a broken animal, and in the terrifyingly cruel end to which the creature had come Grant saw himself. The blinded beast walked nowhere in ceaseless drudgery. Trivial though the story of the purchase of the horse may seem, Grant spent a lifetime not getting over the transaction with Mr. Ralston.[22]

Ulysses by age nine had become adept at breaking a horse to pace. His ability to break, train, and ride horses gained for the boy the respect of his peers. By the time he was 15 Grant had the reputation of being one of the best horsemen in Brown County. As Grant biographer Lloyd Lewis has written, "Confidence was all over the home. The mother had confidence in the Lord the father had confidence in the son, and the son had confidence in horses."[23]

A restless individual, Ulysses liked to travel, and his ability as a horseman gave him the opportunity to do so. If a Georgetown family made a trip, Ulysses was an obvious choice for the driver. He recalled trips to Cincinnati and Maysville, Kentucky, and once to Louisville. The latter a long one for an Ohio boy in the 1830s. There was a 70-mile journey with a two-horse carriage to Chilicothe and a similar trip with a neighbor to Flat Rock, Kentucky.

There he found a good looking horse and traded one of his team for it, although the colt was not broken to harness. On the return trip, the new horse was frightened when they encountered a "ferocious dog." Grant, after a few hectic moments, calmed the horse and they drove on. But as the wagon descended the escarpement into Maysville, the horse became terrified at the sight of a 20-foot embankment and there was a second runaway. Once again, Ulysses prevailed and stopped the team one the "brink of the precipice." Whereupon, his passenger deserted Grant and hitched a ride into Maysville on a freight wagon. Left alone, Ulysses blindfolded the horse with his bandana and reached Maysville the next day. Grant, in recalling this story, demonstrated that he overcame his fear, subdued the horse, and asserted his power.[24]

In autumn of 1838, while Ulysses was matriculating at Ripley's Presbyterian Academy, his father investigated the possibility of sending him to the U.S. Military Academy. Jesse Grant was self-taught, and he undoubtedly wanted to give his eldest son the advantages he had lacked to enable him to compete through higher education. Concidentally, he seemingly did not have the same asperations regarding his other children, preferring that his daughters remain at home while Samuel Simpson and Orvil went into the family business rather than furthering their education. It has been suggested by several Grant biographers that the father, despairing "of making a tanner of Ulysses,

wondered what to do with him, and saw in the United States Military Academy a prestigious solution."[25]

Ulysses was home from the Ripley school for the Christmas holidays, when his father received a letter from Thomas Morris of nearby Bethel, a United States Senator from Ohio. After reading it, Jesse turned to his son and said, "Ulysses, I believe you are going to receive the appointment." "What appointment?" the son acquired. "To West Point; I applied for it," the senior Grant rejoined. "But I won't go!" Whereupon, Ulysses recalled his, father said "he thought I would, and I thought so too, if he did." Personally, Grant had no objection to going to West Point, except that he had "a very exalted idea of the acquirements necessary to get through. I do not believe I possessed them and could not bear the idea of failing." Five of his Brown County acquaintances had been appointed to West Point, and of these one, the son of Dr. Bailey, the Grant's nearest and most intimate neighbor, had been dismissed and refused permission by his father to come home to Georgetown. It was Bartlett Bailey's dismissal that gave Ulysses his opportunity.

Senator Morris for some reason declined to act on Jesse Grant's letter and turned it over to Thomas L. Hamer, who represented the 5th District in the 25th Congress. Hamer was a vociferous Jackson Democrat and Jesse was a Whig, and they had not spoken for several years. Hamer, however, did not strictly adhere to the spoils system and named Ulysses to the vacancy. This healed the breach between Hamer and Jesse.[26]

In addition to the arguments employed by his father that "he thought I would go" to West Point, Ulysses had a another strong inducement,-- he liked to travel. "I was," he recalled, "already the best travelled boy in Georgetown, excepting the sons of John Walker, who had been to Texas." Already, Grant had been east to Wheeling, north to Ohio's Western Reserve, West to Louisville, and south to Bourbon County, Kentucky. Going to West Point would give him the opportunity of visiting the nation's two greatest cities -- New York and Philadelphia. That was enough, and, in mid-May 1839, Grant took passage on an Ohio River steamer at Ripley for Pittsburgh.[27]

Grant, when he entered West Point, was one month passed his 17th birthday. He weighed 117 pounds, stood 5 feet 1 inch in height. His hair was brown, his skin fair and freckled, his hands and feet were small, and then, as later, "his body tightly muscled but smoothly turned."[28]

After their second year at West Point, the cadets were given a two-month furlough, extending from the close of the June examinations through August 28. Grant recalled these two months as the most enjoyable in his life. His father had sold the Georgetown tannery, but not the home, and had moved to Bethel, 12 miles to the west in Clermont County. This change was disconcerting to Ulysses, who had known to other home

than Georgetown. His father bought him "a young horse that had never been in harness" for him to break and ride while on leave. Here was a challenge and an opportunity for a good time. Except for his parents and brothers and sisters, he had no ties to Bethel, and Grant spent most of his time in Ohio among his former Georgetown schoolmates, and found "these ten weeks were shorter than one week at West Point.[29]

Grant graduated from the U.S. Military Academy as number 21 out of the 39 in the class of 1843 and was assigned to the 4th U.S. Infantry as a brevet 2d lieutenant. During the four years on the Hudson, he had grown six inches and stood five feet seven. Like other members of his class, Ulysses was given a leave of absence with orders to join his regiment at Jefferson Barracks at the end of September.

Once again, as in 1841, Grant spent his furlough in Ohio among his "old schoolmates; and again I found a fine saddle horse purchased for my special use, besides a horse and buggy that I could drive." He, however, had been ill with a severe cough since January and his weight was down to 117 pounds, so he was "not in a physical condition to enjoy" himself as well as in 1841. Even so, he spent the summer "visiting friends in Georgetown and Cincinnati, and occasionally other towns in that part of the State."[30]

In December 1847 Jesse Grant, although he had been living in Bethel for seven years, finally sold the Georgetown home and lot to Thomas Jennings.[31] The next August, Ulysses on his return from Mexico, following distinguished service in the Mexican War, traveled to St. Louis where he married Julia Dent. While en route to this next post at Sacketts Harbor, New York, the newlyweds visited Grant relatives and friends in Bethel and Georgetown.[32]

Early in 1854, while Captain Grant was on the Pacific coast, Jesse Grant relocated his family from Bethel to Covington, Kentucky. Although his parents and siblings no longer lived in the immediate area, Grant did not forget the scenes of his childhood and hometown friends. While Grant was President, John M. Sanderson, a boyhood companion, chanced to be in Washington and called at the White House. He had written "Georgetown" at th bottom of his card and

> was ushered in immediately past a room full of people waiting to see the President. Grant gave me plenty of time and asked about a lot of people in Georgetown. He even remembered their middle names![33]

Grant's last visit to Georgetown was in the spring of 1877 after he had left the White House and before he and Julia left for Great Britain, their first stop on a tour that was to last more than two years and take them around the world.[34]

ENDNOTES

1. Letter, Simon to Bearss, July 13, 1984.

2. Personal interview, Mr. and Mrs. John Ruthven with Bearss, June 30, 1984; Brown County Deed Book 93, p. 277; Letter, George Campbell to Conrad Wirth, January 22, 1966, National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings File, U.S. Grant Boyhood Home, History Division, National Park Service.

3. "Georgetown Couple Buy Grant Homestead; Have Vision of Site as Future State Museum," undated clipping, National Survey of Historic Sites and Buldings File, U.S. Grant Boyhood Home, History Division, National Park Service.

4. Ulysses S. Grant Sesquicentennial: Souvenir Program (Cincinnati, 1972), pp. 22, 59.

5. Georgetown News Democrat, April 22, 1983.

6. Historic Preservation Certificate Application, U.S. Grant Homestead, 219 East Grant Avenue, Georgetown, Ohio, April 8, 1983.

7. Personal interview, John & Judy Ruthven with Bearss, June 30, 1984, News-Democrat, April 22, 1982; Goetzman & Follmer, U.S. Grant Homestead, Site Plans, November 1981.

8. "Presidential Sites: An Inventory of Historic Buildings, Sites and Memorials Associated with the Former Presidents of the United States: A Report to the United States Congress by the Secretary of the Interior," (prepared by the National Park Service, 1982), pp. 138-154.

9. Letter, Simon to Bearss, July 13, 1984.

10. Ulysses S. Grant, Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, 2 Vols. (New York, 1885), Vol. I, p. 24.

11. Lawrence A. Frost, U. S. Grant Album: A Pictorial Biography of U. S. Grant (Seattle, 1970), p. 10; Willaim S. McFeely, Grant: A Biography (New York, 1981), p. 7; Lloyd Lewis, Captain Sam Grant (Boston, 1950), p. 21.

12. Brown County Deed Book D4, p. 301. The grantors had been named trustees to convey the lots which had been transferred to them under the grant made to Brown County upon the county seat being located in Georgetown.

13. McFeely, Grant, pp. 7-8; Lewis, Captain Sam Grant, pp. 22-23; Frost, U.S. Grant Album, pp. 12-13.

14. McFeely, Grant, p. 9.

15. Grant, Personal Memoris, Vol. I, 26-7.

16. Ibid., 24.

17. Frost, U.S. Grant Album, p. 13.

18. Ibid., p. 13; Lewis, Captain Sam Grant, p. 24.

19. Frost, U.S. Grant Album, p. 13; McFeely, Grant, p. 10.

20. Grant, Personal Memoirs, Vol. I, 25.

21. Ibid, 29-30.

22. McFeely, Grant, p. 11.

23. Lewis, Captain Sam Grant, p. 22; Frost, U.S. Grant Album, p. 13; McFeely, Grant, p. 10.

24. Grant, Personal Memoirs, Vol. I, pp. 27-9; McFeely, Grant, pp. 11-12.

25. McFeely, Grant, p. 22; Frost, U.S. Grant Album, p. 13; Grant, Personal Memoirs, Vol. I, 32.

26. Grant, Personal Memoirs, Vol. I, 32-3.

27. Grant, Personal Memoirs, Vol. I, 36-7; McFeely, Grant, p. 12.

28. McFeely, Grant, p. 13.

29. Grant, Personal Memoirs, Vol. I, 40.

30. Ibid., 32-3; McFeely, Grant, p. 20.

31. Brown County Deed Book X-23, p. 202.

32. Grant, Personal Memoirs, Vol. I, 193.

33. Clyde W. Park, That Grant Boy (Cincinnati, 1957), p. 52.

34. Ibid., 51; McFeely, Grant, p. 448.

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