



Woodlawn's significance lies in the story it reveals about the evolving history of historic preservation in the United States. Constructed 1800-1805 following the marriage of Nellie Custis to Lawrence Lewis, every owner following the Lewises recognized the historic value of the site. This is evidenced by the lack of substantial alterations to the central block of the house. It is clear that as early as the 1890s the site was considered an important historical landmark worthy of preservation and even a tourist attraction. Although owners in the early twentieth century altered the hyphens and wings, their changes demonstrate an effort to adapt the house to their lifestyle while maintaining a sense of its historic architectural character. Scores of nationally prominent figures played large parts in the preservation effort, both in the physical restorations and in the rescue from sale to a missionary order, led by the Woodlawn Public Foundation. Created in tandem with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Woodlawn Public Foundation's efforts served as the example of the purpose for which the National Trust was created and resulted in the National Trust accepting Woodlawn as its flagship property in 1951.



Woodlawn

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places December 26, 1970;
boundary increase September 22, 2011

