1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: **WOODLAWN**

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 9000 Richmond Highway Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Alexandria Vicinity: X

State: Virginia County: Fairfax Code: 059 Zip Code: 22309

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property		Category of Property	
Private:	X	Building(s):	_
Public-Local:	_	District:	X
Public-State:	_	Site:	_
Public-Federal:	_	Structure:	_
		Object:	_

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
3	4 buildings
1	___ sites
2	___ structures
___	___ objects
6	4 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 6

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

Designated a NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK on AUG 5 1998 by the Secretary of the Interior

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling
Secondary Structures (Smoke House, Dairy, Necessary, Well House)

Current: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: Museum

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: EARLY REPUBLIC: Georgian/Federal

MATERIALS:
Foundation: BRICK
Walls: BRICK
Roof: SLATE (Mansion); WOOD SHINGLES (Dependencies)
Other: AQUIA SANDSTONE (Decorative Elements)

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

SUMMARY

Woodlawn is a five-part Palladian plan mansion exhibiting elements of the Georgian and Federal styles. Dr. William Thornton, the first architect of the U.S. Capitol, designed the mansion, located on a site selected and once owned by George Washington. The house consists of a symmetrical two story, jerkin-roof double pile center hall central block with four interior end chimneys. The flanking one and one-half story wings are connected by one and one-half story hyphens. A smokehouse and dairy are located beyond the main house and tied to it by brick garden walls. Funds to build the Woodlawn Mansion, supporting outbuildings, grist mill, distillery, and the 2000 acre site were given to Major Lawrence Lewis and Eleanor (Nelly) Parke Custis, the nephew and granddaughter of George and Martha Washington, in Washington's will. The two were married on Washington's last birthday, February 22, 1799, and construction, begun in 1800, was completed in 1805.

The facade of the main block is five-bays wide with a central pediment gable, semi-circular arches over the central openings, and inset rectangular stone panels between the stories. The east, or river, facade has a one-story classical portico with Tuscan, stucco-covered brick columns. The end pavilions are arranged perpendicular to the main axis of the house with oval ox-eye windows in the gables and semi-circular arched windows overlooking the valley to the east.

The floor plan is formally arranged in a central hall plan with an elliptical curving staircase and four rooms, two on each side of the hall. The chambers of the south side of the hall are embellished with crown moldings and Italian marble mantles. On the north side, the chambers are less formal and have a more simplified wood molding. The wings located to the north and south of the main block are connected via one and one-half story hyphens.

The site of Woodlawn currently encompasses approximately 126 acres which is divided roughly in half by United States Route 1--Richmond Highway. Of that parcel, the approximately 69.63 acres located to the north of Route 1 is included in this nomination. The original 2000 acre estate was part of George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, which is located three miles to the east. Washington selected Grey's Hill because he believed it was "an excellent site for a gentleman's seat" due to the magnificent view of the Potomac River, located approximately one mile to the southeast, and the Maryland shore beyond. The river has been an integral link between Woodlawn and other sites along the Potomac as well as connecting the inhabitants of the plantation with Alexandria, Virginia; Washington, DC and other ports in the Chesapeake Bay and beyond.

EXTERIOR

<u>The main block</u>

The Woodlawn plantation house is a five-part Georgian Palladian plan mansion, built of brick formed and fired on the grounds and laid in Flemish bond. It is made up of a two story central block, flanked on the north and south by one and one-half story hyphens and wings. The main

block measures 57 by 45 feet, five bays across, with a jerkin hip roof, covered in slate. The central, entrance bay is demarcated by a cross gable with oval ox-eye window and raking cornice of wood. On the west facade, the entrance is approached by a semi-circular concrete step and contains a false, semi-circular fanlight above it. On the opposite facade, a classical, one story tetrastyle, Tuscan columned portico marks the entrance, with a pair of steps with iron railings leading up to the covered porch from each side. The porch was altered in 1903 and reworked in 1915 to more closely match the original configuration of the steps and balustrades. A semi-circular fanlight with twenty-four sections separated by lead muntins is set above the door. The floor of the porch is laid with white marble paving blocks. The entry doors on both facades consist of a pair of three panel doors.

The windows on both levels of the facades are twelve-over-twelve double hung sash and are embellished with Aquia sandstone sills and jack arches, each with a prominent, stylized keystone and louvered shutters. Between the windows on each level is a sandstone apron marking the two stories of the house. The central window on the upper story of the west facade is arched and has a decorative mullion design and accentuated sandstone keystone. On the upper story of the east facade, leading out onto the portico, is a pair of French doors below a semi-circular fanlight with decorative sandstone trim. Enclosing the second story of the portico is a wood balustrade, also added in 1915, in a Chinese Chippendale geometric design that is separated into three bays on the east side, matching the three bay rhythm established by the columns below.

The center block has a wood cornice with Georgian dentil detailing and a watertable of Aquia sandstone, below which are two, four lites over two windows which provide light and ventilation into the basement level. The west side of the portico has a semi-circular fanlight embedded into the brick wall on the ground level. Four interior end chimneys, two on each end of the center block, flank the center block and penetrate each side of the jerkin head roof which is covered in slate.

The basement below the main block of the house has a seven foot high ceiling. Originally this level only extended beneath the main block of the house and measured about five and one-half feet deep, but subsequent restorations of the house in 1915-1920 lowered the basement an additional foot and a half and extended it beneath the wings and hyphens. The foundation itself is composed of brick and is underpinned with poured concrete.

Hyphens and wings

The main block of the house is flanked to the north and south by one and one-half story wings and hyphens. In 1805, the hyphens were simple, one story covered walkways leading to the wings which were finished on one level with a loft space above. The north wing served as the office and library, while the south wing was the kitchen and laundry space. The hyphens had a gable roof perpendicular and connecting to the gable roof of the wings. The loft space of the wings had two dormers each faced the main block of the house, one on each side of the hyphen gable. Renovations made by owners in the early decades of the twentieth century altered the appearance of the wings and hyphens, completely rebuilding portions of the south hyphen and wing in 1915. A half story was raised above the hyphens, and the ceiling height of the second story of the wings was raised accordingly to provide a series of storage areas, baths, and

guest/servant quarters. The two original dormers were removed and three were rebuilt on the opposite side of the gable, facing outward toward the north and south respectively. A new cornice was constructed which matched the main block of the house.

The east facade of the hyphens consists of a series of three, brick semi-circular arched openings with sandstone keystones on the first level which have been inset with plaster surrounding arched windows. The window in the center bay is larger than the flanking two which are five-over-four lights, single hung arched windows. The center window consists of a fourteen-over-eight light single hung arched window. The west facade has a series of three arched openings which contain pairs of glass doors. While all three are operable, only the middle set provides access in and out of the building. The two flanking sets of doors are enclosed with a projecting iron balcony, semi-circular in plan, added in 1915. The open rails of the iron balcony floor provide light and ventilation to the two basement windows below.

The east facade of the wings each contain a single arched twelve-over-nine single hung window, while the single windows on the west facade are rectangular in shape and are spanned by a sandstone jack arch and keystone. An oval ox-eye window is located on the second story above the windows on both sides. The oval windows are similar in design to the window found in the pediment gable of the main block, and are original to the house. Each is articulated with sandstone carvings.

Only the wings include a stone watertable similar to that found on the main block. A series of nine light windows are located below the watercourse, one below the center window of the hyphen and one below the window on the east and west facades of the wings. Each have stone sills and simple sandstone jack arches above. Below the two flanking windows on the hyphens, two sandstone aprons have been set into the brick which are carried over from the main block.

Two one-story porticos, one in the middle bay of the north facade and one in the south facade of the wings, similar in design to that on the east facade of the main block, mark the entrances. Added in the 1915 renovations, both incorporate Tuscan columns with a wood cornice and a simple wood balustrade on the east and west sides of the porticos. The south portico is covered with a simple standing seam metal hip roof. The more stylized north portico contains a door in the middle dormer which opens onto the second story of the portico. A wood balustrade, whose design mimics that on the east facade portico, encloses the second story.

INTERIOR

The floor plan of Woodlawn is a formal, central hall plan, with two chambers on the north and south side of the hall and a curved, U-plan staircase leading from the first to the second floors. The decorative detailing found in each room dictates the level of formality and elegance each room possesses and is indicative of the role each room played in the lifestyles of the many owners of the house.

The main block, first story

The first story is comprised of five principal spaces: a hall, a parlor and bedroom on the north side of the hall, and a parlor and a dining room on the south side. The hall is accessed from both the east and west sides from the exterior through sets of double doors.

The entry doors are faux grained and contain three full width rectangular panels. Surrounding the doors is a two-step molding painted white that encircles a semi-circular fanlight, located above the east entrance. A plinth is formed where the molding reaches the baseboard. The two-step chair rail molding is composed of a white band surmounted by a horizontal, faux grained member which protrudes approximately two and one-half inches from the wall. A wood, reverse ogee two-step crown molding adorns the ceiling. Both the ceiling and molding are painted white. Approximately six inches below the crown molding, a picture rail embellishes the wall. The walls themselves are painted a light grey tone and are punctuated by three openings leading to other rooms of the house. All of the paint colors on the first floor have been substantiated to be of the 1805-1839 Lewis period through paint research conducted by Matthew Mosca in 1976.

On the north side of the hall, the doorway leads into a parlor, which is approximately 22' by 16' and measuring 13' 6" high. A fireplace with adorned wood carved mantle is located on the north wall between two grained doors. One of the doors leads to a closet, the other into the north hyphen. Each chamber contain closets which are important architectural features, because they maintain a sense of formality and order through the symmetrical arrangement of openings and architectural elements.

On the east wall of the parlor, two large windows provide a view of the hillside and Mount Vernon beyond. These twelve-over-twelve window openings are surrounded by wood molding similar to that found in the hall. The window panels in all rooms on the first floor are set back and located toward the exterior of the wall and therefore have double decked, recessed, interior shutters which can be used to control light levels in the room. The blue-green field and dado are accented by blue molding and chair rail.

On the west side of the room, a doorway leads into a bedchamber. The room has a fireplace on the north wall which is flanked by closets, also faux grained. The room is painted a soft beige color with two-step moldings around doorways and the chair rails, painted white. The curtains and bed hangings have a toile fabric in a pattern entitled "The Apotheosis of George Washington." A reproduction of the original fabric, it depicts Washington ascending to heaven where he is crowned by a group of angels. The master bedchamber was placed on the first floor to take advantage of natural convection currents and to provide an additional degree of privacy and separation, which was important to the Lewises who frequently entertained guests and visitors.

A formal parlor and a dining room are south of the center hall. More ornate in decoration and embellishments, they were historically used as principal entertaining rooms by the Lewis family. The formal parlor is referred to as the Music Room and is the only chamber devoid of closets. Located in the southeastern quadrant of the plan, the Music Room's windows open to the east and provide a commanding view of the trees of Mount Vernon and the Potomac River. The

room is painted a bright yellow accented by white trim molding. The ceiling height is higher than all other rooms on the first floor, reaching approximately 14' 6" high, believed to have been built for proper acoustics. This feature suggests the hand of an experienced architect who considered the relationship between the proportion of space and music.

One of the more striking features of the room is the marble mantle. Intricately carved Italian marble with scrolling acanthus leaves, ox heads, festoons, and mythical figures, the mantle is said to have been a gift from the Marquis de Lafayette, who visited the home in 1824 during his triumphal tour of the United States. A similar pair is located in Arlington House, the home of George Washington Parke Custis, the brother of Eleanor Lewis. The plaster crown molding continues the motif of acanthus leaves. Intricately carved with grape vines on the horizontal, and acanthus leaves on the vertical, it is a highly decorated two-step molding. A series of small beads separates the two levels.

This same molding is found in the dining room. The two rooms are connected via a doorway on the west wall of the Music Room. The moldings, chair rails and baseboards which are similar to those found in the other rooms on the first floor, are painted white with the walls painted a light shade of blue. Like the Music Room, the mantle is intricately carved Italian marble with stylized acanthus leaves and mythological figures.

First floor, hyphens and wings

Historically, the south hyphen was a covered walkway without walls or floors, which led to the kitchen and laundry. A well originally provided access to water used for cleaning, bathing, and washing. The room has since been enlarged and modernized. The west wall of the space was extended outward to the west approximately six to eight feet, and the walls have been enclosed with windows. Later owners of the house used the room as a formal dining room. It is currently referred to as the Underwood Dining Room in honor of the last private owner of Woodlawn, Senator Oscar Underwood of Alabama. Two openings on the south wall, leading into the kitchen on the eastern end and into what currently serves as an all-purpose room on the western end, flank a fireplace with a wood carved mantle. A crown molding similar in design to that found in the Music and Dining Rooms surrounds the top edge of the walls which have been painted a light cream color with dark tan trim. The molding provides a sense of cohesion between the spaces principally used for entertaining: the Music Room, Dining Room, and renovated south hyphen. Excavations of the area below grade beneath the hyphen lowered the height of the well, now accessible through the basement.

The kitchen has been significantly altered from its original appearance. No documentation on the original configuration of the kitchen has been located. Edward Donn, Jr, a Washington, D. C. architect, completed measured drawings of the house in 1895. These were copied by an unknown draftsman and published in 1900 in *The American Architect* and in the publication *The Georgian Period.* Although these drawings were based on Donn's work, they contain several errors. However, the drawings suggest a possible configuration for the plans of the wings and hyphens. The plan of the kitchen shows a doorway on the south end of the wing, located off-center. It also indicates a large brick hearth in the center of the room.

Originally, the north hyphen was also a covered breeze-way which led from the informal, family parlor to the office wing of the Mansion. Like its counterpart on the south end, the west wall of the hyphen was extended to the west approximately six to eight feet around the turn of the century. The dirt floor was covered, and the room served as a ballroom in the early part of this century. Currently, the room serves as a visitor reception and orientation area and is decorated in a sympathetic, Colonial Revival style. The trim is painted blue and surrounds the arched openings and doorways. Below the chair rail, the dado is painted blue with a light cream toned field. A fireplace is offset by a single doorway on the eastern end of the north wall, which leads into a smaller ancillary space which serves as a meeting room and lounge. The lounge also has a fireplace with wood mantle and is flanked by two doorways on the west, which open into a closet and office space on the south and north respectively. Another doorway on the north wall provides access to the exterior. The same color scheme of the reception room is carried forth into the lounge and office space beyond. A bathroom on the south wall in the office is located beneath a set of stairs which were placed in the house circa 1915. Elizabeth Sharpe purchased and relocated the staircase from a house in Alexandria, Virginia.

Second story, main block

The two levels of the main block are connected via a graceful, curving staircase which stretches above the carriage entrance on the west facade. A walnut banister is supported by simple, rectangular balusters which are interspersed with supporting, metallic members, believed to have been inserted during Elizabeth Sharpe's renovations. The banister extends from a scrolling volute on the first floor and is mirrored on the outside of the stair by a grained chair rail. On the interior of the staircase stringer, a decorative wood panel, cut in a curving, floral design, is located beneath each tread. Beneath the banister on the second story of the hall, this scrolling floral molding is replaced by a carved wood molding.

The second story configuration is similar to the first: a central hall with a series of chambers extending off of it. The rooms on the north and south of the hall are all of a similar appearance in terms of architectural woodwork and moldings. Each contains a fireplace with simple, carved wood mantles, flanked by closets on each side and two twelve-over-twelve windows.

The upper hall is divided roughly in half. The western section serves as a transition area into each of the chambers. On the west wall, a large, twelve-over-twelve arched window overlooks the carriage circle and serpentine walk. A doorway on the south side of the east wall leads into a smaller, ancillary chamber which is referred to as the Linen Room, while another door on the east wall opens onto a stairway which leads up to the attic. The Linen Room is a 12' by 14' room with a large arched opening with a set of double doors opening on to the balcony above the portico on the east facade.

Two steps lead up into the room in the southeast quadrant which is to allow for the raised ceiling of the Music Room below. This room, painted a deep apricot orange, is referred to as the Lafayette Bedroom and is believed to be the room where the Marquis de Lafayette stayed during his visit to Woodlawn in 1824. Due to the raised floor level, the ceiling height of this room is 12' high while the other rooms on the second story are 13' high.

Second story, hyphens and wings

Renovations made during the early twentieth century converted the inside closet of each chamber into doorways which led into the raised second story above the hyphens. Principally the rooms above the hyphens and wings served as servants and guests quarters and have since been converted into office and storage areas. While none of the alterations are of architectural significance, they do illustrate how lifestyles changed through the addition of modern plumbing and electrification, and how subsequent owners of this house respectfully altered and modernized the homes with a minimum of intrusion into the historic fabric of the house.

Basement

The original cellar was accessible via an enclosed service stairway located under the main stair of the center hall. Originally, the headroom was only about five and one half feet with the foundation footing extending an additional two feet below the floor. Beginning in 1915, the owner of Woodlawn, Elizabeth Sharpe, began excavating the basement to allow a seven foot high ceiling. The foundations were underpinned with concrete footings. The area beneath the wings and hyphens was also excavated. For the most part, the configuration of the rooms and spaces of the basement is similar to the first floor in the main block. However, the space beneath the family parlor is now a working kitchen as well as a school room for educational programming. A doorway from the school room in the northeast corner leads into the furnace room beneath the north hyphen. Another doorway on the north end of the furnace room provides access to public restrooms which are located beneath the north wing. The restrooms are also accessible from the exterior through a set of concrete stairs on the north end.

A well, approximately twenty seven feet deep, is also located in the basement. Originally, the well extended to the grade level of the south hyphen, but excavations in the 1910's allowed access to the well from the basement level. It is constructed with a single course of wedge-shaped bricks that spiral upward from the base of the well.

Another set of concrete stairs, also constructed during the early decades of the century, leads from the exterior beneath the south wing. This room is currently used by the museum shop for display and retail sales, as is the area beneath the south hyphen and Dining Room of the main block. Another educational/multi-purpose space is located beneath the Music Room, while the area beneath the bedchamber is used for storage.

Outbuildings

In the early nineteenth century, the plantation complex included a large number of outbuildings such as barns, slave quarters, and other supporting structures. While many were scattered throughout the 2000 acre estate, a series of buildings, including a smokehouse, dairy, ice house, bower, and two necessaries, were situated in close proximity to the Mansion itself. These structures were aligned symmetrically around the Mansion, in a broad, arcing fashion toward the east. This arrangement is indicative of the Lewises', and more generally the Virginia planter class' attempt to order and structure the landscape through the introduction of man-made elements. The arrangement also suggests the hand of a trained gentleman architect, versed in

contemporary landscape practices of the region. Of the linked structures, only the smokehouse to the north of the Mansion, and dairy, necessary, and archaeological remains of the icehouse on the south side, presently exist. Archaeological investigations performed in 1954 by landscape architect Alden Hopkins determined the location of a bower to the north through evidence of brick walkways and debris. The exact location of other outbuildings, such as barns, slave quarters, and other related structures remains undetermined.

Located approximately twenty-two feet to the north and south of the main house are the smokehouse and dairy, respectively . Both structures are made of brick, laid in Flemish bond, and have hipped, cedar shake roofs. Roughly square in shape, they are connected to the main house via nine foot high brick garden walls. These walls were removed during renovations around 1903 during Kester's tenancy and replaced by Elizabeth Sharpe. Each wall is punctuated with a central opening.

The smokehouse has two entrances, on the east and west facades. Over both six panel doors springs a semi-circular shaped, perforated board surrounded by a sandstone arch and keystone. A large rectangular stone apron is inset in the brick on each side of the exterior below the eaves. The wood cornice is perforated along each side with a series of auger holes, arranged in a diamond pattern, to allow smoke and air to flow out of the structure. Large, hand-hewn timbers in the ceiling of the structure have been fitted with hand-forged metal hooks, attesting to the practice of hanging meats to cure.

The dairy on the south side complements the smokehouse on the north. Like its counterpart, the dairy has an arched opening with a six panel door and semi-circular, perforated board. However, the dairy only has one entrance, located on the east facade. Instead of stone panels, a series of rectangular openings have been covered in wood lattice.

Beyond the dairy stands the necessary, a six-sided reconstruction of the original. While the structure itself is currently empty and non-functioning, the necessary is not as significant by itself as it is to the overall harmony of Thornton's design. The structure consists of concrete piers located in the corners with brick in-fill. A concrete step provides access from the grade to the floor level of the structure. One small, louvered window on the northeast side of the building allows some light and ventilation. A hipped, cedar shake roof completes the building.

To the immediate west of the dairy stands the well house. Measuring 8' by 9', the structure covers a well shaft capped in concrete, that extends approximately fifteen feet below grade. The structure was built circa 1920 and contains a cedar shake, gable roof which, at the ridge beam, measures five feet above ground level.

SETTING

From the original 2000 acres, Woodlawn currently encompasses a 126 acre parcel of land, divided roughly in half by United States Route 1- Richmond Highway. Of that parcel, only the approximately 69.63 acres located to the north of Route 1 is included in this nomination. The significant, contributing elements of that parcel are enumerated as follows: the Woodlawn Mansion (1), the Smokehouse (2), the Dairy (3), the Necessary (4), the Ice House site (5), the

Well House (6). While contributing to the historic viewshed of the property and demonstrative of the evolution of the site, the parcel on the south side of Route 1 has been altered from its original appearance through the introduction of an equestrian complex after the National Trust acquired the property in 1951. This area is currently leased to a private organization. Although listed in the National Register nomination, completed in 1969, the buildings and structures located thereupon do not contribute to the site's national significance and the activities located thereon do not relate to nor are they relevant to Woodlawn's role as a museum.

The Woodlawn Mansion, situated atop Grey's Hill, overlooks the Potomac River and Mount Vernon, three miles in the distance. Beginning in 1848, owners of the Mansion and the original 2000 acre tract began subdividing the land into smaller farm parcels, a pattern that subsequent owners followed for over fifty years. In 1901, Paul Kester purchased the Mansion and remaining 54 acres. He and later owner Elizabeth Sharpe purchased additional tracts which brought the property to its present 126 acres. However, throughout the many changes and alterations to the land, the historic viewshed has been conscientiously maintained as an integral part of the historic setting of the Mansion. Reports from many periods of ownership speak of its advantageous siting. In the 1980's, in an effort to minimize the visual and audible impact of the four lane highway, groups of trees and native shrubs were planted at the base of the hill to screen the view of Route 1 from the Mansion.

Four other structures are also located on this parcel but are counted as noncontributing in this nomination: Grand View, a domestic residence built in 1858 and located 150 yards to the south of the Woodlawn Mansion (a)[1]; the Maintenance Building (c), erected circa 1920 by owner Elizabeth Sharpe, also located to the south of the Mansion; the Summer House (d), erected circa 1955; and the Pope-Leighey House (b), a 1940 Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Usonian house that was relocated to the grounds of Woodlawn, north of the Mansion, in 1964. (The original site of the Pope-Leighey House in Falls Church, Virginia was threatened with demolition by the construction of Interstate 66.) The surrounding buildings are screened from view of the Woodlawn Mansion. Woodlawn, its outbuildings and its related structures and surrounding historical environs have been designated a historic district by Fairfax County.

Currently the site is accessed by a drive which enters through wooden gates near the north end of the property and U.S. Route 1. The drive curves through a wooded area and culminates in a public parking lot located to the northwest of the Mansion. From there, a series of brick pathways lead to the Mansion which is fronted on the west facade by a circular drive which splits off into two splayed driveways to the north- and southwest. They surround a serpentine walk, restored in the 1950's by landscape architect Alden Hopkins. To the southwest of the Mansion, Hopkins introduced a Colonial Revival garden. The garden contains a series of formal garden parterres, based on his archaeological testing and documentary evidence found at Mount Vernon and Tudor Place in Washington, D.C. Also designed by Dr. William Thornton, Tudor Place was the home of Martha Custis Peter, the sister of Eleanor Parke Custis. The formal garden has a circuit of

[1] Grand View, while falling under the stated period of significance, has since been converted from a single family dwelling into two apartments. These alterations have substantially altered the historical integrity of Grand View, thus excluding the building as a contributing element to the national significance of the site. Similarly, the Maintenance Building, while also falls under the period of significance, has also undergone several alterations and additions which minimize the integrity of the building.

brick and pea-gravel walks which enclose and intersperse the parterres. At the terminus of the main axis Hopkins built a wooden summer house, sympathetic to the period of the Lewises.

To the east of the Mansion, the land slopes down in a series of terraces, terminating in a large grass field. On the north side of the Mansion, a Colonial Revival garden introduced by the last private owners, Senator and Mrs. Oscar Underwood and named in their honor, contains a fountain and brick walkways. Enclosed by large American boxwood, the garden is an example of how later owners developed the site with respect for its historical significance.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide:_ Locally:_

Applicable National Register Criteria:	A X B X C X D_
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):	A_ B_ C_ D_ E_ F_ G_
NHL Criteria:	1, 2, 4
NHL Exceptions:	8
NHL Theme(s) (1994):	II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements 1. Clubs and organizations III. Expressing Cultural Values 5. Architecture, landscape architecture 6. Popular and traditional culture
Areas of Significance:	CONSERVATION, ARCHITECTURE
Period(s) of Significance:	1799-1951
Significant Dates:	1799, 1802-1805, 1846-1889, 1901, 1915-25, 1948, 1951
Significant Person(s):	Washington, George Lewis, Eleanor Parke Custis Underwood, Oscar
Cultural Affiliation:	N/A
Architect/Builder:	Thornton, William McLain, Isaac Donn, Edward Jr. Wood, Waddy D. Hopkins, Alden
Historic Contexts:	XVI. Architecture C. Federal, 1780-1820 M. Period Revival 1. Georgian, 1870-1920 XXXIII. Historic Preservation H. The Federal Government Enters the Movement, 1884-1949 4. The National Trust

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

SUMMARY

Woodlawn's significance lies in the story it reveals about the evolving history of historic preservation in the United States. Every owner following the Lewises recognized the historic value of the site as 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 largely 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 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 is also nationally significant for its architecture as one of Dr. William Thornton's surviving domestic residences. Its integration of Georgian and Federal features makes it unique among the two other extant Thornton residential buildings in the nation's capitol.

Woodlawn is also unique in the several different ways it is closely associated with George Washington, both as Eleanor Lewis' benefactor and adoptive father, and for the role it played in the powerful iconic significance of Washington after his death. The estate was carved out of Mount Vernon for the young woman who, as a child, had played a significant role in establishing the image of Washington as a parent and family man. She, in turn, both adored him and basked in the aura conferred on members of his immediate family. Woodlawn, home of his adopted daughter and favorite nephew, was the place where the myth of Washington was actualized, and thus became a monument to the memory and honor of him. Lawrence and Eleanor Lewis lived their lives in the shadow of his greatness. More than the other homes of Washington's descendants, Woodlawn became a shrine to Washington's heritage--located on a site selected by Washington himself, designed by an architect that Washington selected, and paid for with funds Washington provided. Woodlawn is therefore inseparably linked to the honor and memory of Washington.

Following the Lewis occupancy, Woodlawn became the nucleus of two abolitionist religious communities. The Quaker and Baptist settlements of the mid- to late nineteenth century are significant because, they conducted their business operations without slaves and offered schooling, farming and other opportunities to former slaves and free blacks. Woodlawn was used as both a home and as the site of religious and educational meetings. One of the first free, integrated schools and libraries in the state of Virginia was organized within the Mansion itself.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

George Washington and Eleanor Custis

The history of Woodlawn begins with the death of John Parke Custis, the son of Martha Washington, the only surviving child of her marriage to Daniel Parke Custis. John Custis had been an aide-de-camp to Washington in the Continental Army when he contracted camp fever at Yorktown where he died in November 1781. He left a widow, Eleanor Calvert Custis, and four children. The two youngest children, Eleanor, age 2 born in 1779 (referred to as Nelly) and George Washington, an infant, were taken to Mount Vernon to be raised by George and Martha Washington, with the permission of their mother. They had already spent a majority of their lives in the Washington's household often in the care of an overseer's wife; Eleanor Calvert was in poor health after the birth of each of the children.

Although the children were not legally adopted by Washington following the death of their father, they were not treated differently than their two older sisters and were considered very much a part of Washington's household. While Nelly and her brother did maintain contact with their mother, who remarried, they looked to George and Martha Washington as parental figures. Nelly and George Washington, or Washy, received benefits above and beyond what their Custis siblings could expect. From the finest tutors of the day, both in academics and in the arts, they received an education befitting their status as the children of Washington. Nelly received particular instruction in the proper management of a household from her grandmother, who taught her the necessary skills of managing slaves and servants, greeting and receiving guests, the appropriate methods by which to keep and prepare foods and medicines, and how to dress and behave in a manner proper for a mistress of a household. The time she spent with Martha Washington forged deep and enduring emotional bonds. George Washington held an especially important place in her heart, and it is through Nelly's personal correspondence that the image of Washington as a father begins to emerge. He doted on the young girl, and he found her to be a constant delight.[2]

As the children of Washington's household, Nelly and Washy followed Washington to New York and Philadelphia during his presidency. An adolescent in the capital cities, Nelly met and socialized with many of the important figures of the early nation. At the conclusion of Washington's presidency in 1797, the Washington family returned to Mount Vernon, where the children's education, both formal and informal, continued.

The role of Nelly and her brother as the children of Washington is best illustrated by Edward Savage's life-size portrait, *The Washington Family*, begun in 1790. It depicts Washington surrounded by his family -- Martha, Nelly, and Washy -- as well as his man-servant, Billy Lee. Nelly, age 10, is portrayed across a table from George Washington, where he and Martha sit. Nelly helps to spread a map of the new capital city. Washington has one arm resting on the corner of the map, while his other arm rests on George Washington Parke Custis's shoulder. The

[2] Patricia Brady, ed. *George Washington's Beautiful Nelly*. (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 2-3.

portrait is perhaps the most well-known image of the Washington family and clearly demonstrates the intimacy among the members of the Washington household.

In retirement, Washington received numerous visitors who had traveled to Mount Vernon to meet and pay homage to the hero of the Revolution and the Father of the new nation. Proper social mores dictated that any visitor with appropriate papers of introduction be received, fed, and accommodated for a brief stay. Washington, now age 65, compared his bustling home to "a well resorted tavern."[3] He called for his nephew, Lawrence Lewis of Kenmore in Fredericksburg, Virginia, to come to Mount Vernon to serve as his social secretary. Lewis, the son of his sister Betty, was a quiet, retiring widower who had served in the military and retained the title of Major. He had a small, independent income which allowed him the luxury to come to Mount Vernon. There he became reacquainted with Nelly, age 18, who was in many ways his opposite; where Nelly was energetic, bright, and engaging, Lawrence was serious, dignified, and somber. In spite of their differences, Lawrence and Nelly soon fell in love and announced their engagement, much to the surprise of the Washingtons. However, Nelly's decision to marry Lawrence was in many aspects a wise one. Their marriage would not only allow Nelly to remain close to George and Martha Washington but also would allow Lewis to continue to act as Washington's secretary. Their marriage would also serve to strengthen the bonds between the Washington and Custis families. Although Washington was surprised by her conservative choice, he was pleased. In January of 1799, Washington legally adopted Nelly in order to authorize the license for their marriage.[4] On the evening of what was to be Washington's last birthday, February 22, 1799, the two were married.

Design and Construction

As a child of the Washington household, Nelly could expect to receive a substantial portion of Washington's estate. Anticipating Nelly's desire to remain close to Mount Vernon and her grandparents, George Washington made provisions in his will for the couple. He carved out nearly 2000 acres of his estate, including parts of his Dogue Run Farm, the Old Mill Farm, his grist mill and distillery, and set aside sufficient funds to build a grand plantation home. Washington himself selected the site for the home. In a 1793 map of his estate, Washington notes that a 463 acre parcel known as "Chapel Land" contained a "Great part within these lines is in wood, but there is a sufficiency of grounds cleared and under cultivation for a middle sized farm, with a house thereon; and a most beautiful site for a Gentleman's Seat." Washington also writes that "few better sites for a house than Grey's Hill and that range are to be found in this country or elsewhere."[5]

Dr. William Thornton, the first architect of the U.S. Capitol, was selected to devise a plan for the home. Thornton and Washington had become acquainted during the competition for the U.S.

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[3] George Washington, letter to Mary Washington, 15 Feb 1787, Washington Papers, Mount Vernon Ladies Association, Mount Vernon, VA.

[4] George Washington, letter to Lawrence Lewis, 17 February 1799, Washington Papers, Mount Vernon Ladies Association, Mount Vernon, VA.

[5] George Washington's Map and Survey of Mount Vernon (1793).

Capitol. The two men became friends, and Thornton's close association with Washington is illustrated in a letter Thornton wrote after the death of Washington in which he states: "I have lived weeks together with the General at Mount Vernon at different times during many years, and the more I knew of him the more I sincerely regarded him."[6] Thornton also came to know both Nelly Custis and Lawrence Lewis, as reflected in a letter written prior to their marriage: "We lament that the badness of the weather did not permit us to pay those attentions to you and your lovely Bride that we could have wished..."[7] A close associate and friend of the Washingtons, Thornton was the logical choice for the architect of the newlywed's home.

The first few years of Nelly's marriage were marked by loss and tragedy. George Washington died in December of 1799, a month after the birth of her first child (bedridden due to complications, she was unable to visit her benefactor on his death bed). Martha Washington's death in 1802 was immediately followed by the death of the second Lewis child, a ten-month old infant girl who had been named for her grandmother. With the death of both elder Washingtons, Mount Vernon fell into the hands of Judge Bushrod Washington, another Washington nephew, and the Lewises had to relocate. Construction of Woodlawn had begun in 1800, and the Lewises lived in the completed north wing of Woodlawn until the main block of the Mansion was completed in late 1805. Eventually, the Lewises had eight children; only three lived to adulthood.

Although no original drawings of the house survive, several diary entries of Anna Maria Thornton, the wife of Dr. Thornton, indicate that the noted architect played a significant role in the design and construction of Woodlawn. On March 8, 1800, Mrs. Thornton wrote :"Dr T— came home about two Oclock— ... having been out all Friday morning with Mr Lewis to see the situation on which he is going to build on the Mt Vernon Estate— and to mark the trees he ought to cut down, &c."[8] Later that year, while visiting Mount Vernon, the Thorntons and Lewises visited the site to see "Mr. Lewis's hill where he is going to build— and his farm and mill and distillery. Dr. T. has given him a plan for his house. He has a fine situation, all in woods, from which he will have an extensive and beautiful view."[9] As was customary, Thornton would have provided a drawing of the exterior and a diagram for the two interior floors. The actual construction details would have been left to a master craftsman and builders.

The house was constructed of bricks, which were formed and fired on the plantation in a kiln located to the north and west of the Mansion. The Mansion incorporates a five-part design, with a large, two story central block flanked by one and one-half story wings connected by one story, covered walkways called hyphens. A well, located in the south hyphen itself, provided a close and convenient water source for cleaning, laundry, and bathing. The exterior walls are 24" thick

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[6] William Thornton, letter to John Quincy Adams, 13 August 1823, Thornton Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[7] William Thornton, letter to Lawrence Lewis, 3 April 1799, Thornton Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[8] Anna Marie Thornton, Diary, 8 March 1800, Thornton Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[9] Anna Marie Thornton, 4 July 1800.

while interior are 18". Wood from the property was used for framing, flooring, and other elements of the construction. The construction methods for the house and the materials used are consistent with other building projects of the period. Decorative trim, such as the stone aprons on the exterior, water table, and trim, was made from local Aquia sandstone.

While the design of Woodlawn is attributed to Dr.Thornton, it is probable that the actual construction was supervised by another builder. A contract dated June 15, 1805 between Isaac McLain and Lawrence Lewis called for the carpenters and "Joiners Work of a House which said Lewis is now about to build on his Site call'd Woodlawn."[10] During construction, British painter and landscape artist William Russell Birch visited the site, "the great home of the Lewises near Mount Vernon." He remembered that "the two wings which were handsome elevations" were already completed but that the work on the main part of the house had been halted due to "a defect in the plan of the architect" which was a result of building too close to the slope of the hill on the river side of the Mansion. Birch also noted that the problem was soon corrected so that construction could proceed.[11]

Dr. Thornton was also familiar with details of the Mansion's construction. In 1817, Thornton, in a response to Thomas Jefferson regarding the construction of the University of Virginia, demonstrates his intimate knowledge of the structural details of Woodlawn:

> I advise that it be built of brick in the roughest manner & plastered over in imitation of freestone. Columns can be made in this way most beautifully; as I have seen them done at Mr. Lewis's near Mount Vernon where they have stood above 12 years & I did not find a crack or fissure. The bricks were made especially for columnar work, & when they were to be plastered the Brick work was perfectly saturated with water...All the plastering should be tinctured in the same manner for the plain ashlar work, the Columns & Entablature being white will produce a beautiful and delicate contrast. I prefer a yellow to white for general ground colour of a Building as it assimilates beautifully with the Trees and general Tint of Nature...I would rough out all the outside of the Building. It may be coloured with a little yellow oaker or a solution of vitriol of Iron.[12]

Woodlawn is an interesting example of Thornton's work. The design of Woodlawn did not incorporate the same sorts of geometric forms found in the Octagon or Tudor, built in Washington, D.C. contemporaneously with Woodlawn. While his other designs exhibit the geometric plan forms and slender detailing characteristic of the Federal period, Woodlawn integrates the five part Palladian plan and center hall more commonly found in Georgian architecture of the mid- to late- eighteenth century. The Georgian elements and resemblance to Kenmore plantation in Fredericksburg, Virginia, the home of Lawrence Lewis, suggest Lewis

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[10] Lawrence Lewis, manuscript agreement, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

[11] William Russell Birch, *The Life of William Russell Birch, Enamel Painter*, manuscript, Philadelphia Free Library, 17.

[12] Letter, William Thornton to Thomas Jefferson, 27 May 1817, Thornton Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

had made suggestions to Thornton during the design process.

The conservative, almost retardataire design of Woodlawn was, of course, in keeping with the styles of a number of other plantation homes in the mid-Atlantic region. Archaeological remains of Belvoir, the Fairfax estate built in the mid-eighteenth century and located approximately two miles to the southeast from Woodlawn, indicate a similar arrangement of a grand, plantation home surrounded by ancillary structures. It is believed that the home, also built of brick, was a prototypical example of Georgian architecture--rigid symmetry, axial entrance, geometrical proportions, and a clipped gable roof. Woodlawn also bears a close resemblance to other plantations in the region, also designed in the eighteenth century. Montpelier, the Snowden home in Laurel, Maryland, exhibits a similar five-part Palladian plan with central pediment cross gable. However, Kenmore was most probably the primary design inspiration for the central core of the house. As a member of the landed gentry, and from what is known of his conservative nature, it would have been logical for Lewis to suggest his stylistic preferences to Thornton. Thornton, following the wishes of Lewis, superimposed his own Federal style refinements, such as the alignment of surrounding outbuildings, layout of the approach, and the proportional modifications found in the Music Room, over a Georgian framework. Thus Woodlawn demonstrates both Thornton's knowledge of contemporaneous building practices and his fluency of architectural languages.

The Lewises furnished their home primarily with pieces from Mount Vernon. With the death of Martha Washington, many items left the Washingtons' home and were dispersed among her four grandchildren and the homes that they had built in the Washington area--Arlington House, the home of George Washington Parke Custis; Tudor Place, the Georgetown home of Martha Custis and her husband Thomas Peter, also designed by Dr. Thornton; and Hoxton House, the home of Eliza Custis Law, in Alexandria, Virginia.

Woodlawn and the *Apotheosis of George Washington*

Under Judge Bushrod Washington's tenancy, Mount Vernon continued to receive guests after George and Martha Washingtons' death, and many came to pay homage to Washington's gravesite. But the judge's connection to his uncle had been less intimate than that of Eleanor Custis Lewis, who herself had attained something akin to celebrity status as a result of her childhood and adolescence at Mount Vernon. During the almost forty years the Lewises lived at Woodlawn, they received and entertained scores of honored guests and visiting dignitaries, including John Adams, Zachary Taylor, Meriwether Lewis, Robert E. Lee, and the Marquis de Lafayette, the latter a particular favorite of Nelly's who visited Mount Vernon when she was a child.

The role that Woodlawn played in keeping the memory of George Washington alive was part of the larger deification of the great man after his death. Visitors to Woodlawn could expect to relive their memories of the Washington, graciously entertained by Washington's "daughter" herself. Washington was the first of the founding fathers to die, and he had been the first President of the United States. Perhaps even more important in his apotheosis was the role he had played as the hero of the Revolutionary War. His leadership during the war was legendary, and afterwards he had modestly declined public efforts to have him crowned as the new nation's

king. In the minds of many, Washington had come to represent the meaning of America even during his lifetime, and with his death the public outpouring was enormous, his status as national icon even more exalted. His death spurred songwriters, poets, print-makers, and painters into a frenzy of activity that aimed at immortalizing Washington as a heroic figure. References from classical history, such as Cincinattus, the military genius who returned to his agrarian lifestyle at the end of his term of service, were applied to Washington. As one author noted:

> Washington had played such a central role in the extraordinary events of a quarter century that his death was an event of great emotional consequence in America, affecting the very identity of the nation. The year 1800 thus became an opportunity to reflect on the significance of the past decades. In honoring Washington the nation was honoring its own history.[13]

Paintings such as Rembrandt Peale's *Apotheosis of George Washington*, which depicts Washington ascending to heaven where he is crowned with immortality, reflected the nation's deep admiration of the founding father, as well as his literal ascension into the realm of myth. The image was popularized and spread into other areas of cultural expression: literature, textiles, and other artistic representations.

Not surprisingly, the Lewises took both comfort in and advantage of their close connection to George Washington. They decorated their home with depictions taken from life and other remembrances of Washington. Nelly selected a toile fabric entitled "The Apotheosis of George Washington" for the bed hangings and window treatments of the master bedchamber. Martha Washington bequeathed to Nelly a copy of Savage's *The Washington Family*. The Lewises continued to place images of their benefactor throughout their home, surrounding themselves with his image. Nelly herself was immortalized in countless adaptations of Savage and other artists' paintings as they strove to define the many roles Washington played in the life of the burgeoning nation. When Ann Pamela Cunningham launched her effort to save Mount Vernon, Nelly's harpsichord, purchased for her by George Washington in 1793, was the first original piece to return to the house. Given in 1859 by the widow of Nelly's only son to survive into adulthood, the piece formed the nucleus of Mount Vernon's Washington collection. Additionally, other pieces given by the Lewis family to the National Museum, which later became the Smithsonian Institution, were instrumental in establishing a collection of Washington-related artifacts.

Woodlawn as an Economic and a Social Enterprise

Like Mount Vernon, Woodlawn was a plantation that relied on farming and an agrarian economy to produce the necessary revenue to support the lifestyle of the Lewises. Census records indicate that the vast majority of Woodlawn's inhabitants were black slaves, numbering over 90 people in 1820.[14] While under the tutelage of George and Martha Washington, Nelly's education consisted

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[13] Wendy Wick, *George Washington: An American Icon* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution), 70.

[14] United States Population Census, 1820 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration).

of academic subjects, such as languages, writing skills, and mathematics, art instruction in the form of music, painting, and needlepoint, and social skills and graces. These pleasures enjoyed by people of the Lewises' social status came only at the cost of human enslavement. While Washington often decried the institution, slavery was an integral and inseparable part of plantation life. Although Washington manumitted his slaves at the time of his death, many of the slaves who lived at Mount Vernon belonged to Martha Washington and her heirs, and thus did not receive their freedom from Washington. Additionally, the Lewises did not share George Washington's view on the issue. The Lewises dispersed a portion of Woodlawn's slave population when their children married and relocated in other parts of the country in the late 1820s and 1830s, but not before.

At Woodlawn, Lawrence Lewis spent his days managing the plantation and his other land in what is now Clarke County, Virginia. Washington's will also stipulated that Lawrence Lewis and other relatives including Nelly's brother George Washington Parke Custis, were to be the joint executors of Washington's estate. However, under an agreement between the executors, this task mainly fell to Bushrod Washington and Lawrence Lewis, with Lewis playing a major role. George Washington had owned extensive tracts of land in Virginia and other parts of the country, and the task of paying off Washington's debts immediately fell onto Lawrence's shoulders. Lewis was also charged with constructing a new grave vault to replace the old family plot at Mount Vernon. The work on the new vault was completed in 1837, according to the terms established by Washington's will.

Woodlawn, unable to produce enough crops to support the plantation population, became a financial burden, incapable of generating a profit large enough to support an elite lifestyle. Following a pattern similar to other plantation sites in Virginia, as soils became depleted from years of heavy cultivation, farmers and plantation owners searched for other revenue producing activities. Lawrence Lewis grew hay and was one of the first planters in Virginia to import merino sheep. Lewis also investigated raising race horses. However, as the plantation grew older and funds became scarce, food was often shipped to Woodlawn from Audley, a plantation Lawrence Lewis owned in Clarke County, Virginia to feed the vast numbers of workers still toiling to make Woodlawn successful.[15] After the death of Lawrence Lewis in 1839, Nelly, age 50, left Woodlawn and relocated to Audley, which was then the home of her son Lorenzo.

After Lawrence's death, the house stood abandoned and the many fields fallow. In 1846, Woodlawn was sold to the Gillingham-Troth Company, a Quaker-owned organization from New Jersey. Woodlawn's timber and arable land attracted the company, a supplier of ships timber and tanning bark to the Philadelphia market. The Troths and Gillinghams, recognized in Woodlawn's acres an opportunity to provide farmland to other like-minded families and form the genesis of a Quaker community. The setting was further enhanced by the proximity of the Potomac River, an important transportation route.

The Quaker settlement is significant because it was established with the express purpose of using free, rather than slave, labor. Staunchly abolitionist, the Quaker community began as an

[15] Eleanor Parke Custis, letter to Elizabeth Bordley Gibson, 23 March 1835, Mount Vernon Ladies Association, Mount Vernon, VA.

experiment, in the midst of the antebellum, slave-holding South, designed to prove to regional landholders that farming could be done successfully without relying on human enslavement. Additionally, the Quakers and the Mason family, devout Baptists who purchased Woodlawn from Jacob Troth in 1853, assisted former slaves and other free blacks by helping them to acquire land, establish farms, and become prosperous farmers. Neither group placed racial restrictions on attendance at their schools and churches, held within the historic Mansion during their infancy stages. Jacob M. Troth, a member of the Quaker community noted

> Not only Woodlawn but a large amount of surrounding territory was by [the Quakers] reclaimed...from the 'dry rot' of slavery, in a quiet, peaceable way, and without interrupting the friendly relations which existed from the first between them and their slave-holding neighbors.[16]

While their efforts were contained to a local level, the settlement is significant for the fact that no other Virginia plantation site emulated this model of transition from slave to free labor.

The Troth-Gillingham Company, after purchasing the rundown estate, oversaw the sale of Woodlawn lands and those of surrounding plantations for small farms. In addition to developing their farms, the settlers repaired the house and designed boats to carry passengers on the Potomac and to transport Woodlawn's products to Alexandria and Philadelphia. Some of these boats, including the 1874 "Mary Washington," were among the largest and most famous on the Potomac during this era.

Within two years, a sufficient number of Quakers had settled at Woodlawn to establish a meeting. Formed in the Mansion, the meeting joined an already established school. Later, when Paul Troth acquired the house for his personal use, the school and meeting were moved to the Miller's House at Washington's Grist Mill. A permanent home for the burgeoning group was essential, however, and in 1851 a meeting house was built on the grounds of Woodlawn. Another structure was built about 100 yards from the Mansion when Jacob Troth built his home, Grand View, c. 1858. Both structures remain standing.[17]

After 1850, Woodlawn's Quaker community lived alongside John and Rachel Mason who in 1853 purchased the Mansion from Paul Troth and acquired Troth's 500 acres parcel. The Masons, originally from New Hampshire, had moved to New Jersey some years earlier and had worked with the Quakers in the lumber business there. In time, they bought additional land from Jacob Troth and eventually acquired almost half of Woodlawn's original acreage. Timber rights and water rights on Dogue Run, however, were retained by the Troth-Gillingham Company.

The Masons, like their Quaker neighbors, were deeply religious and organized in their home a Baptist Sabbath School, which grew sufficiently in two decades to create a church. They also founded one of the first free, public libraries in the state of Virginia within the Woodlawn

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[16] Jacob M. Troth, "History of Woodlawn, " unpublished manuscript, 3.

[17] The Woodlawn Friends Meeting House, located approximately 200 yards to the southwest, is currently operated by the Woodlawn Friends and continues to be in active use. Once located on the grounds of Woodlawn, the site is now surrounded by Fort Belvoir, a U.S. Army installation.

Mansion. In 1872, the Masons' son, Otis Tufton Mason, and his wife donated land they owned at the southern end of Gray's Hill, on which the Mansion and Grand View stood, for the construction of Woodlawn Baptist Church. The library and other services held in Woodlawn were moved to the new church building. The Mason family also donated the land on which the Woodlawn Elementary School was eventually built. This school predated the beginning of the Virginia public school system by 25 years.

During this period, the character of the Woodlawn community was intellectual, religious, and deeply committed to participation in community affairs. The Woodlawn Baptists and Quakers exerted great influence in the area, but they were alone in their opposition to slavery and Virginia's Ordinance of Secession. Although the surrounding communities overwhelmingly voted for secession, the Woodlawn settlers remained staunchly opposed and lived out the Civil War in relative isolation. Of the 1, 520 votes cast in Fairfax County in the May 23, 1861 referendum of secession, only 289 of those were against seceding. A majority of those voting against came from three precincts, one of which was the Accotink precinct which included Woodlawn and the surrounding area.[18]

The community remained active, however, during and after the Civil War. Woodlawn was well-known in the area during the last half of the nineteenth century for the community meetings and study groups concerned with topics ranging from scientific farming methods to improved roads and schools. Both John and Rachel Mason died by 1889 and were buried at Woodlawn Baptist Church. The Woodlawn estate was divided equally among their children, but only Otis Tufton Mason established a part-time residence there. Mason, a well-known scholar and lecturer, lived in Washington, D.C., but frequently spent weekends and summers at Woodlawn in the Mansion and in another house on Gray's Hill near Woodlawn Baptist Church.

Preservation of Woodlawn and the Role of Paul Kester

Since the Mason children were all well established elsewhere in the country when their parents died, none wished to make a permanent move to Woodlawn; thus the descendants decided to sell the Mansion in 1892. Because the Mason family recognized the historical importance of the home, they searched for a buyer who would preserve the house. They eventually formed an agreement with the New Alexandria Land and River Improvement Company, which planned to build a tourist trolley line from Alexandria to Mount Vernon and Woodlawn. According to their plan, the house would be preserved as a memorial to the Lewises. Historic and civic groups would be invited to use Woodlawn for meetings and as an archive for historic documents.

These plans were never realized, however. In a period of two days in September 1896, a devastating hurricane struck the area and Woodlawn, standing alone and unprotected, sustained considerable damage. Trees near the house were blown down, shutters and windows were badly damaged, and part of the roof was torn off. Although some repairs to the house were made, the effects of the storm and the bleak financial outlook for the trolley caused the company to abandon its efforts to preserve Woodlawn.

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[18] Nan Netherton, Donald Sweig, Janice Artemel, Patricia Hickin, and Patrick Reed, *Fairfax County, Virginia, A History* (Fairfax: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, 1978), 332.

Once again, the house was put up for sale. Paul Kester, a young New York City playwright, bought the badly deteriorated structure in 1901. He began repair work immediately and soon moved in with his brother, Vaughan, their mother and sixty cats. This purchase saved Woodlawn from eventual demolition by neglect.

During their four-year residence, the Kester brothers oversaw continuing repairs to the house while they pursued their literary careers, creating an artistic colony on the estate. Vaughan wrote a novel, *The Fortunes of the Landrays*, and Paul dramatized several plays, including two that made Julia Marlowe the best known American actress of the day. Marlowe and other playwrights and literati from New York spent long periods of time in the Mansion during the Kesters tenancy. In addition to their repair work, the Kesters made several structural and ornamental changes to Woodlawn. Most notably, they raised the wings and hyphens to accommodate the addition of modern conveniences.

Elizabeth Sharpe, Oscar Underwood, and the Colonial Revival

The Kesters sold Woodlawn in 1905. The new owner, Elizabeth Sharpe of Pennsylvania, set out, she believed, to accurately restore the house. In the course of her 20-year residence, she spent over $100,000 on the project. She hired the prominent Washington architects, Edward W. Donn, Jr., and Waddy Wood to oversee the work. Both were preeminent Washington, D.C. architects designing in the Colonial Revival style. Wood completed several residential structures around the Dupont Circle area, most notably the Henry Parker Fairbanks House on S Street NW, later purchased by President Woodrow Wilson.

Edward W. Donn, Jr. first visited Woodlawn in May, 1895 as a member of the Washington Architectural Club. As was the practice of the time, architects learned how to design in a specific style by taking measured drawings of those buildings that were thought to be the prominent models of that style. Following the suggestion of noted architect Glenn Brown, the group visited Woodlawn to assess the condition of the abandoned mansion, photograph the house, and most importantly, to make measured drawings of the home. Donn continued to make periodic trips to Woodlawn for the drawings which were published in *American Architect*, a leading architectural journal of the period and later in William Rotch Ware's *The Georgian Period* in 1899. A three volume collection of measured drawings and photographs of buildings and architectural features, the work was extremely influential for the Colonial Revival in disseminating information to architects on the design and construction of Georgian-style buildings. Woodlawn's inclusion in the volumes is significant, because it demonstrates that from the initiation of the Colonial Revival's architectural manifestation in the early decades of the twentieth century, Woodlawn was recognized for its architectural excellence and as a preeminent example of Georgian design.[19]

Following his initial survey work at Woodlawn, Edward Donn was involved at the Octagon House in Washington, D.C. He then returned to Woodlawn in 1915 to carry out extensive restoration work for Elizabeth Sharpe. He later was involved with the restoration of Kenmore and at Wakefield, two Washington and Lewis family homes, as well as Pohick Church, only a

[19] Edward W. Donn, Jr., "Notes on Woodlawn Mansion," unpublished manuscript, 1949, 1.

few miles from Woodlawn. Donn's continued involvement with this series of important sites ranked him as one of the leading and most important architects of the Colonial Revival.

Donn's restoration work at Woodlawn altered some of the Kester changes that Sharpe considered inappropriate. She tore down the raised areas of the wings and hyphens the Kesters had built, because the bricks, windows, and entrances were not in harmony with the rest of the house, and rebuilt large portions of the south wing. In rebuilding these features, she chose to retain the increased space created by the Kester plan. Her alterations are significant examples of Colonial Revival work. Sharpe, born in Pennsylvania, had lived in Pennsylvania and Philadelphia for the majority of her life. As an heiress in high Philadelphia society at the turn of the century, she undoubtedly was exposed to and took part in the fervor generated by the Centennial Exposition held in Philadelphia in 1876. Furthermore, Elizabeth Sharpe's sister was the wife of Henry St. George Tucker, who had served as the president of the Jamestown Exposition of 1907. It was through this connection that Sharpe first visited the Washington, D.C. area and learned of Woodlawn. During her renovations of the house, she brought architectural elements from the Jamestown Exposition for installation at Woodlawn, including mantle pieces and a set of large iron gates which she placed at the entrance to the estate which was at the time located to the west of the Mansion. She is an example of the generation of female preservationists whose patriotic efforts were responsible for saving many of the nation's historic resources, such as Ann Pamela Cunningham in 1853 whose efforts led to the rescue of Mount Vernon, and Vivian Minor Fleming, who conducted the effort to save Kenmore in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

In addition, Kester's and Sharpe's alterations demonstrate how historic homes, such as Woodlawn, could be adapted to the monumental changes brought about by modernization and still maintain their historic character. Kester's and Sharpe's intrusion into the historic central block of the house were minor, saving major structural changes for the wings and hyphens. Their financial resources allowed each of them to fulfill their desires to keep Woodlawn intact as an historic site while accommodating their desires for modern conveniences. As with previous owners, the wings and hyphens were thought of almost as outbuildings, separate and ancillary to the main body of the house. Both Kester and Sharpe maintained the historic nature of the central core, limiting their alterations to the wings and hyphens. All changes that were made to the central block were cosmetic: changing paint color, window treatments, and at the extreme, adding or removing small portions decorative woodwork, while structural modifications only occurred in the most discreet manner; in closets, under staircases, etc.

With the re-acquisition of additional land, Elizabeth Sharpe brought the Woodlawn estate to roughly its present size of 126 acres. She planted a formal garden patterned on eighteenth-century prototypes and also installed the boxwood in front of the river entrance. She actively sought items related to the Colonial period for installation at Woodlawn, such as those from the Jamestown Exposition and iron railings copied from those at Thornton's Octagon in Washington, D.C. During the Sharpe period, Woodlawn had many prospective buyers, among them President and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson. All offers were steadfastly refused.

After Miss Sharpe died in 1924, Woodlawn was purchased by Senator and Mrs. Oscar Underwood of Alabama. Underwood had served as Majority Leader of both houses of Congress and had been Wilson's chief rival for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1912. He

refused Wilson's offer of the vice presidency and, in 1924, again sought his party's nomination for the presidency. However, his outspoken opposition to the Ku Klux Klan defeated him. In 1927 Underwood retired from the Senate without seeking another term. With the Underwood residence, as with the Quakers and Mason family before him, Woodlawn again became associated with a vehement advocate of racial justice.

In retirement at Woodlawn, Underwood devoted himself primarily to writing the story of his 30-year political career in *The Drifting Sands of Party Politics*. Published in 1928, the book received acclaim as both a literary work and a fine history. The Senator and his wife, Bertha, continued the restoration work begun by Woodlawn's previous owners, hiring Waddy Wood to work on the dining room in the south hyphen. Like Kester and Sharpe before them, the Underwoods preserved the central core of the house as the primary historic resource. Waddy Wood's Colonial Revival work, while restricted to the interior, attempted to sympathize with the architectural language of the house without interfering with the historic main block. Wood also provided Mrs. Underwood, who did much of the gardening around the estate, with a landscape plan for the grounds. She planted small groups of Osage orange trees as fencing in several locations around the estate.

Although Underwood was no longer a member of either body, both the House and Senate adjourned in honor of the Senator when he died at Woodlawn in January 1929. Mrs. Underwood lived in the house periodically until 1935 when she rented it for two years to Secretary of War and Mrs. Harry W. Woodring. During their residence, the house was the scene of many social events and conferences. Mrs. Underwood returned to Woodlawn in 1937, and the house remained in the Underwood family until her death in 1948.

Preservation of Woodlawn and National Trust Ownership

In 1936, during the Woodring residence, Frederick Doveton Nichols, noted restoration architect and early pioneer of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), photographed Woodlawn for the HABS collection. Initiated in 1933, HABS was created by the Federal Government to document historic resources through photographs and measured drawings. The inclusion of Woodlawn at this early date is noteworthy; it again demonstrates that Woodlawn was well-known as an important example of Thornton's work, and for its historical association with George Washington. HABS early documentary work was published in a comprehensive volume in 1941, a work that included Woodlawn. The volume listed the significant examples of architecture from the Colonial period through the Greek Revival.

On August 18, 1948, Judge Paul Brown of the Fairfax Circuit Court approved the sale of Woodlawn by the guardians of Mrs. Bertha Underwood's estate to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission Society, Inc., a Belgian missionary order, for $170,000. The Mission Society planned to use Woodlawn as a world headquarters and boys school. In response, a group of individuals formed the Woodlawn Public Foundation, Inc. whose goal was to "Save Woodlawn For The Nation" as a monument to the Lewises and their important connection to Mount Vernon and George Washington. Incorporated on September 3, 1948, the nonprofit organization was led by Armistead Rood and George Maurice Morris. Morris had prior experience in the field of historic preservation. He had enlisted the help of the architect of Colonial Williamsburg, Walter

Macomber, to move the Lindens, an eighteenth century home from Danvers, Massachusetts to Washington, D.C. in 1935.

The Woodlawn Public Foundation formed and circulated a petition to stop the sale of the house. With the cooperation of the order's attorney, the Foundation was able to secure a stay of sale to the order until Dec. 31, 1948. In that time, they had to raise the $170,000 for the purchase plus an additional ten percent.

The Foundation began a nationwide capital campaign. Rood enlisted the help of the newly formed National Council of Historic Sites and Buildings, the first nationwide private preservation organization. During September of 1948, he succeeded in appointing David Finley, director of the National Gallery of Art, and Charles C. Wall, superintendent of Mount Vernon, and General Ulysses S. Grant III, president of the National Council of Historic Sites and Buildings, to the Woodlawn Public Trust Committee. All were nationally known figures involved in historic preservation.

During that period, David Finley was working with General Grant and the National Council to create a new organization, whose goal would be to spearhead national preservation efforts that could not be met by the National Park Service or the National Council. This new organization, to be called the National Trust for Historic Preservation, would be modeled on Great Britain's National Trust. Finley strongly believed that an essential part of the National Trust would be to preserve great and important homes. In 1948 at the annual meeting of the delegates of National Council, David Finley addressed the Council regarding the need and role of a national trust. He pointed to the efforts of the Woodlawn Public Foundation as exactly the kind of preservation battles a national trust would address. Finley asked George Maurice Morris to address the ambitious fund-raising and public relations battles he and the Woodlawn Public Foundation had undertaken.

As Rood and Morris attempted to raise the necessary funds for the purchase of Woodlawn, the largest and most substantial gift came in December 1948: the Old Dominion Foundation, led by president and founder Paul Mellon, announced that it would match all public donations, beginning December 18, on a two to one basis, up to $100,000. Paul Mellon's involvement with the nationwide effort was crucial; his name alone had a certain cachet that the Woodlawn Public Foundation hoped would inspire other large donors. Mellon, through his philanthropic Avalon Foundation, had also given a substantial gift toward the purchase of Oak Hill, the home of James Monroe in Loudon County, Virginia. As Charles B. Hosmer Jr. noted in his 1981 work *Historic Preservation Comes of Age*:

Nothing as important as the Avalon and Old Dominion gifts had come to the field of historic preservation since Henry Ford and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had decided to invest in Greenfield Village and Colonial Williamsburg.[20]

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[20] Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Preservation Comes of Age: from Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*, 2 vols. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, for the National Trust for Historic Preservation–The Preservation Press, 1981), 846.

At the January 5, 1949 court hearing, the Woodlawn Public Foundation, while they did not have all of the necessary funds, demonstrated to the court that there was significant public interest and support for the project. The court stayed the sale until February 21, 1949 to raise the rest of the funds. Due to a $60,000 gift from Mellon's Old Dominion Foundation, they were able to raise $95,000 in cash for the purchase and signed a note for the remaining $75,000. On Washington's Birthday, 1949, Virginia Governor William M. Tuck, on behalf of the estate of Mrs. Underwood, formally bestowed the keys of Woodlawn to the Woodlawn Public Foundation President George M. Morris. On April 10, 1949, Woodlawn officially opened its doors to visitors.

In the same year, David Finley, Frederick Rath, Jr. and other members of the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings , presented a charter for the National Trust to the United States Congress. In October, Ulysses S. Grant III announced the formal Congressional Charter creating the National Trust for Historic Preservation to the public. The charter stated that the purpose of the National Trust would be "to receive donations of sites, buildings, and objects significant in American history and culture, to preserve and administer them for public benefit...."[21] David Finley became the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, while Frederick Rath, Jr. served as the Trust's first director. After his tenancy with the National Trust, Rath went on to serve as the deputy director of the New York State Historical Association and later to found the Cooperstown University program in historic preservation where Woodlawn was used as the model for the preservation of historic houses. David Finley's descendants gave his home Oatlands, in Leesburg, Virginia, to the National Trust in 1965 in his memory.

While Woodlawn continued to be operated by the Woodlawn Public Foundation with Paul Mellon's financial support, a substantial debt remained. There was some thought to bring Woodlawn under the control of the National Council, but it never materialized. In April of 1951, the Woodlawn Public Foundation passed a resolution to lease the "real and personal property of the Foundation to the National Trust for a period of 50 years." This lease agreement stipulated that the National Trust would pay off the first 33 mortgage payments of $1,000 and also that they would spend no less than $150,000 to renovate the Mansion and grounds. Thus the National Trust assumed the administration of Woodlawn, its first museum property, fulfilling the goals established by the Congressional Charter in 1949.

In a letter dated April 26, 1951, the Old Dominion Foundation informed the National Trust that it would be awarded a grant of $200,000 for the restoration and renovation of the property. The grant award was spread out so that Woodlawn and the National Trust would have a source of funds to fall back on and draw down if there was a deficit. On April 12, 1957, a deed conveyed ownership of Woodlawn from the Woodlawn Public Foundation to the National Trust for the sum of $1.[22]

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[21] Act of Congress, October 26, 1949, PUB. L. NO. 81-408, 63 Stat. 927.

[22] Ownership of Woodlawn fell to the National Trust in 1957. Throughout its more recent history, Woodlawn has continued to have a leading role in the preservation movement. In the 1950's Colonial Williamsburg landscape architect Alden Hopkins, acting on behalf of the Garden Club of Virginia, performed a limited archaeological survey and restored the nineteenth century formal gardens. In 1964, Frank Lloyd Wright's Pope-Leighey House, a small, 1200 square foot Usonian home built in Falls Church, Virginia was relocated to the site of Woodlawn. While a non-contributing element to this nomination, the relocation of the Frank Lloyd Wright house is

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significant for Woodlawn as a reflection of preservation philosophy of that period.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

__ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
X Previously Listed in the National Register: # 70000792, listed on 02/26/70
__ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
__ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
X Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # VA-337
__ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State Historic Preservation Office
__ Other State Agency
__ Federal Agency
__ Local Government
__ University
X Other (Specify Repository): Woodlawn Office, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, Virginia, 22309; National Trust for Historic Preservation Archives, 1785 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington, D. C. 20003; George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens, Mount Vernon, Virginia.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 69.63

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A:	18	314240	4288000
B:	18	314560	4287320
C:	18	313760	4286950

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is described in a deed record in the Fairfax County, Virginia Land Records Book 1549, page 557, 12 April 1957. Of the approximate 126 acres described by the deed, only 69.63 is included in this nomination, being the parcel located to the north of United States Route 1.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes all buildings and archaeological remains that have historically been part of Woodlawn and that maintain historic integrity. That parcel of the 126 acres located south of United States Route 1 has been excluded because an equestrian complex dating after the period of significance has been constructed here, and the activities located thereon do not relate to nor are they relevant to Woodlawn's role as a museum.

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July 2, 1998