

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED SEP 28 1979
DATE ENTERED OCT 11 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Codman-Davis House

AND/OR COMMON

Louise Home

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2145 Decatur Place, NW

___NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Washington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

___ VICINITY OF Walter E. Fauntroy, DC Delegate

STATE

District of Columbia

CODE

1 11

COUNTY

District of Columbia

CODE

001

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- ___DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- ___STRUCTURE
- ___SITE
- ___OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- ___PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- ___BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- ___IN PROCESS
- ___BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- ___OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- ___WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- ___YES: RESTRICTED
- ___YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- ___AGRICULTURE
- ___COMMERCIAL
- ___EDUCATIONAL
- ___ENTERTAINMENT
- ___GOVERNMENT
- ___INDUSTRIAL
- ___MILITARY
- ___MUSEUM
- ___PARK
- ___PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ___RELIGIOUS
- ___SCIENTIFIC
- ___TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: vacant

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mrs. Stelletta Stapleton Renchard

STREET & NUMBER

1745 22nd Street, NW

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

___ VICINITY OF District of Columbia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

6th and D Streets, NW

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

District of Columbia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

District of Columbia's Inventory of Historic Sites

DATE

___FEDERAL STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Codman-Davis House (the Louise Home) is a four-story red brick Neo-classical residence which dominates the northeast corner of the intersection of Decatur Place and 22nd Street, NW.

Designed by Ogden Codman, a well known and respected New York and Boston architect of the turn of the century, the house was constructed in 1906-1907 for Miss Martha Codman. The clean lines and elegant dimensions of the house are accentuated by the pair of large wings which extend from the front facade to form an impressive enclosed brick court laid in herringbone pattern around the main entrance. High brick walls, crowned by Renaissance inspired stone balustrades enclose the lawn and grounds of the wings at the second floor level. Tall, arched French windows, framed by louvered exterior blinds were designed by the architect to encircle the building at this level. The severity of the wings is further relieved by the use of three additional architectural elements on the exterior: recessed panels, composed of foliated swags located between the second and third floors; a wide impressive cornice separating the third and fourth floors; and the use of stone quoins at the corners of the wings.

A small but important component of the building is the conservatory connected to the principal dining room of the main house, which terminates the west garden on its north end. Here the architect designed a series of arched glass windows on the south side of this long narrow appendage. This wing is framed on the north side by a roughly textured concrete wall, and resembles a grotto.

The interior of the Codman-Davis House possesses equally noteworthy architectural details. Upon entering at grade level, the visitor faces an elegant spiral stone staircase across a black and white marble floored vestibule (faced with stone walls with elegant niches), which ascends directly to the fourth floor. At the roof the stair is crowned by a handsome skylight, encircled by unusually fine plaster detailing. Although most of the ground floor is devoted to kitchens, pantries, and servants rooms, a finely proportioned reception room opens from the foyer to the left. Upon reaching the white and red marble floor of the second floor hallway, one finds the richly paneled library to the east and the music room, drawing room and dining room to the west. It is remarkable that the original chandeliers, wall sconces, finely carved mantels, and beautifully executed cornices remain intact on the principal second floor. The family bedrooms on the third floor and the servants rooms on the fourth floor were reduced in size in 1946 when the mansion was converted for use as the Louise Home, a residence for women. Other changes to the house include, the addition of a one-story service wing to the east rear in 1935 that is unnoticeable from the street.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated the Codman-Davis House (the Louise Home) a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. The Codman-Davis House is a significant Washington residence of the turn of the century, noted for the formality and monumentality of both its exterior and interior design. Still maintained in excellent condition, the house is a notable example of the Neo-classic Revival so popular among the rich at this time. This tasteful design is a well conceived composition based on late eighteenth century French domestic architecture built in the fashionable residential area of Dupont Circle, the mansion possesses an unusual forecourt paved in brick and enclosed by handsome iron gates. The three occupants of the residence, namely Martha Codman, Dwight David, and the members of the Louise Home, contributed significantly to the cultural and social life of the District of Columbia. The architect of the house, Ogden Codman, was a socially prominent New York-Boston architect of the period, trained in Beaux-Arts architecture.

The cultural history of the Codman-Davis House (Louise Home) remains as interesting as its noteworthy design. The residence was commissioned by Martha Codman (1856-1948), the heiress to a prominent Boston clipper ship family. During the spectacular age of elegance in Washington, 1870-1930, when the Nation's Capital became the winter Newport of America, hundreds of newly rich Western industrialists and miners as well as long established families from the northeastern seaboard built second houses in Washington. Mainly designed for entertainment, the Codman-Davis House (Louise Home) remains one of the finest examples of this era. Miss Codman entertained on a magnificent scale between 1907 when she occupied the house until her late marriage in 1928 to Maxim Karolik after which she spent most of her years in Europe. Her prominent collection of early nineteenth century American paintings was left to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. She sold the house in 1938 to Dwight F. Davis, the former Secretary of War under President Herbert Hoover and Governor General of the Philippines. Considered one of the finest American tennis players in his youth, Davis conceived of the idea of an international tennis trophy. His generous donation of the trophy, known as the Davis Cup, has since made his name known throughout the world as a patron of international sports. During the occupancy of the Davis family the house continued to form an important nucleus for Washington social life.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(see continuation sheet Form No. 10-300a)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately .36 acres
UTM REFERENCES

UTM NOT VERIFIED

A	1, 8	3 2 2 9, 8, 0	4, 3, 0, 4 3, 8, 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Codman-Davis House occupies Lot 43 of Square 2515. Lot 42 is approximately 100 feet by 155.45 feet, or 15517 square feet.

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

Suzanne Ganschietz, Architectural Historian 25 August 1979

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Preservation Office, DHCD

(202) 724-8795

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1325 G Street, NW

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington,

D.C. 20005

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

SEP 25 1979

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

10-11-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

10-9-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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After the death of Davis in 1945 his widow sold the house to the Louise Home the following year. This institution was established in 1869 by Washington banker William Wilson Cocoran as a refuge for genteel women impoverished by the ravages of the Civil War. After its original home, built in 1869 at Massachusetts Avenue and 15th Street, NW, had become inadequate, the trustees of the Louise Home purchased the Codman-Davis House and partitioned the two upper floors for additional bedroom space. Desiring more adequate facilities with full time medical attention, the organization vacated the house in 1976 to merge with the Lisner Home on Western Avenue, NW.

In addition to the cultural significance of Martha Codman and Dwight Davis to American history, mention must be made of the architect, Ogden Codman (1863-1951). Born into a patrician Boston family (a cousin of the builder, Martha Codman), Codman spent much of his youth at his family's second home in France. After the study of architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1882, he served as an apprentice in several architectural firms in Boston before opening his own office in New York in 1893. As a member of the social circles of New York-Boston-Newport, Codman won many commissions from his wealthy friends. Dedicated to Italian and French Neo-classical styles, Codman's work was centered on large residence, in which the quality of workmanship and materials used became a hallmark of his reputation. He was the author of several books, of which the most important was probably "The Decoration of Houses," coauthored with his friend Edith Wharton. This 1897 work (recently reprinted) became a major influence in teaching "good taste" to the nation's newly rich. Codman received major commissions from his friends to decorate dozens of great rooms, including those in the residences of Cornelius Vanderbilt II in Newport, William Vanderbilt in Hyde Park, New York, and John D. Rockefeller in Tarrytown, New York. With the change in American architectural tastes in the 1920s, Codman retired to a villa in France where he spent the remainder of his life. His notable collection of materials on French chateaux was donated to the French government. He was architect of numerous American houses with grand details and magnificent proportions - through their simplicity of statement and the Codman-Davis House (Louise Home) remains one of the few still intact.

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A large part of this narrative was taken from "Application Form-- Historic Landmark: The Codman-Davis House (the Louise Home)" prepared by James M. Goode, March 3, 1979 and on file at the National Capital Planning Commission.

Information for preparation of the application was taken from an undated paper on file at the National Capital Planning Commission: Janet Davis, "The Ogden Codman House, 2145 Decatur Place, Washington, D.C." pp. 1-21.

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National Archives

D.C. Public Library

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