

= Sully Historic Site =

Sully Historic Site , more commonly known as Sully Plantation , is listed in the National Register of Historic Places , and is a Virginia landmark in Chantilly , Virginia . Possessed by the Lee family of Virginia from 1725 to 1839 , Richard Bland Lee built the main house in 1794 .

Following the purchase by William Swartworth in 1838 , Sully was used as a home , a working farm , or both by a series of private owners . Then in 1958 , Sully was acquired by the federal government as a part of the area to be used for the construction of Dulles Airport . One year later , Sully became a national historic site . Today the Fairfax County Park Authority operates the site with a specific focus on the Lee family .

= = History = =

= = = Pre @-@ Lee period = = =

The land that would become part of Sully was likely controlled by several groups before the Doeg claimed the area . English settlers encountered Algonquian language speaking members of the Doeg tribe in modern @-@ day Northern Virginia . The Doeg are most well known for their raid in July of 1675 that became a part of Bacon 's Rebellion . English colonists settling in modern Northern Virginia came into conflict with the Doeg from 1661 to 1664 . When diplomatic attempts failed , the governor sent the Rappahannock County militia in June of 1666 . The specifics of that military action are unclear , but later land grants to English settlers are not disputed , suggesting the English gained control of the area . The English presumptively took control after a violent conflict with the Doeg in 1666 . Little is recorded about the disposition of this land from the time when the English gained control of it until the land is patented by the Lee family of Virginia .

= = = Lee period = = =

Originally acquired in 1725 by Richard Bland Lee 's grandfather , Henry Lee I , Sully was inherited by Richard 's father Henry Lee II of " Leesylvania " . At his death in 1787 , the land was divided between Richard and his younger brother Theodorick Lee . Being the older of the two , Richard was given the more alluvial northern half , having resided there as manager of the property since approximately 1781 . During this period the predominant crop grown was tobacco .

= = = Richard Bland Lee = = =

Richard severely curtailed tobacco production in favor of more sustainable crops , including wheat , corn , rye , and barley . This reduced the soil depletion inherent to tobacco production , and allowed for the practice of crop rotation . He also planted fruit orchards , including peach and apple trees , which he used to produce spirits . In 1801 Richard constructed a dairy , which ran primarily under the supervision of his wife Elizabeth Collins Lee .

After his election to the United States Congress in 1789 , and for most of the next five years , Richard turned day @-@ to @-@ day management of his estate over to his brother Theodorick , who supervised spring planting and fall harvest . Theodorick also managed the collection of rent from tenant farmers and the construction of the large house Richard had planned for the estate , on which construction had begun in 1794 . Before he left for Congress in 1789 , Richard had chosen the name " Sully " for his estate .

By 1811 , having been drawn into heavy debt trying to aid his brothers , Henry Lee III and Charles Lee , extricate themselves from severe financial difficulties , Richard Bland Lee decided he could no longer sustain ownership of Sully . Accordingly , he decided to sell the plantation to raise cash to pay some of the debt . He sold Sully for \$ 18 @,@ 000 to his second cousin , Francis Lightfoot Lee II , son of Richard Henry Lee .

=== Francis Lightfoot Lee II ===

For several years after his purchase of Sully , Francis Lightfoot Lee II (called F. L. by his family) was able to realize an annual profit of \$ 1 @, @ 500 to \$ 2 @, @ 500 . At least part of that success was due to the " judicious system of husbandry " employed by F. L. ' s wife Jane Fitzgerald Lee . Then in 1816 , due to complications during the delivery of their fifth child Frances Ann Lee , Jane Fitzgerald Lee died . Four years later in 1820 , F. L. had either a nervous breakdown or stroke . Unable to care for himself , he was committed to the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia in 1825 .

Following the breakdown , Sully was placed under the administrative care of F. L. ' s nephew Richard Henry Lee II . Richard Henry Lee II 's management was marked by negligence and apparent apathy towards the dishonesty of managers who were embezzling money from the estate :

" ? mismanagement , having allowed an estate clear of debt , well stocked , well arranged under a good system as it had been for years ' according to ' the universal belief and opinion of all friends , connections and neighbors ' to be ' wasted and the debts lost . ' ... Colonel W.C.B. Butler replaced Richard Henry Lee as the ' Committee ' for the Estate on January 1 , 1827 , but Butler also proved unsatisfactory . On June 23 , 1830 the county court ordered his removal and , ' for the safekeeping and good management ' of the estate ... "

Control of Sully was next placed in the hands of Colonel George Washington Hunter in 1830 . Gamble claims , " in no hands ... would Sully fare as well as when it had been assiduously maintained by a single , devoted , industrious proprietor . "

After their father 's move to the Pennsylvania Hospital during the summer of 1825 , F. L. ' s children (with the exception of Samuel Philips Lee who had entered the Navy) , were under the care of William Brent , Jr. and Winifred Brent . The Brents were relatives who had moved to Sully to care for the Lee children and to start at Sully , a " select seminary " for boys and girls .

During subsequent years , as the Lee children grew older they began to leave Sully . Samuel Phillips Lee had entered the Navy , and John Lee went to West Point . Arthur Lee moved west to the Ohio country , while his oldest daughter Jane Elizabeth Lee married Henry Tazewell Harrison in a sunrise ceremony at Sully on February 6 , 1834 . With his brothers @-@ in @-@ law absent from the estate , Harrison took over representing their interests with the appointed administrator , Colonel Hunter , whom he replaced on July 18 , 1836 . Finally , in 1838 , after a bizarre period , in which the estate had ostensibly been sold to a buyer who was arrested in England prior to completing the purchase , Sully was sold to merchant William Swartwort .

=== Post @-@ Lee period ===

Following the purchase by William Swartwort in 1838 , Sully was used as a home , a working farm , or both by a series of private owners . Then in 1958 , the land including the main house was acquired by the Federal Government to make way for construction of Dulles Airport . A campaign to save the site began almost immediately afterwards . Those involved included previous owners of the property , Lee descendants , and a neighbor , Eddie Wagstaff , who later endowed the Sully Foundation that still provides support for the site . This campaign ended in 1959 when President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed legislation making Sully a national historic site .

The Fairfax County Park Authority agreed to operate the site as a county historical park , and has since acquired an additional 60 acres (240 @, @ 000 m² ; 2 @, @ 600 @, @ 000 sq ft ; 24 ha) to bring the total size of Sully Historic Site to approximately 120 acres (490 @, @ 000 m² ; 5 @, @ 200 @, @ 000 sq ft ; 49 ha) . The site 's historic period of significance encompasses the ownership of Richard Bland Lee and Francis Lighfoot Lee (1787 ? 1838) . Interpretation at the site reflects the ownership of its founder Richard Bland Lee , which explains the park authority decision to have Sully " completely furnished with antiquities from the Federal period . "

=== Chain of ownership ===

