

Gunston Grapevine

Spring 2014



Contents

The Stuff of History	2
Mason in NYC	4
Newly Acquired	8
New Docents	10
The Grand-Masons	11
Spring!	13
A Piece of Buckland	17



FROM THE DIRECTOR: *THE STUFF OF HISTORY*

HISTORY MUSEUMS AND HISTORIC SITES are frequently defined by their collections. These collections

can include houses, pieces of pottery, letters, photographs, furniture, textiles and far too many other categories to list within the confines of this article. Although the public only sees or otherwise has access to a minute fraction of these collections, suffice it to say that there is a lot of stuff out there in museums.

Personally, I love the stuff. The stuff is what initially attracted me to museums, first as a young boy gazing through glass and later as a curator at two different institutions. The stuff is cool. The stuff is prestigious. The stuff is distinctive. The stuff is beautiful. Clearly the stuff is worth having and even more importantly, worth seeing.

As a lover of stuff, it was with great anticipation and more than a little healthy giddiness that several members of our Board of Regents and our staff team travelled to the Library of Congress—one of the holy grails of stuff. We did so for the **purpose of seeing George Mason's 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights**, other Mason papers, and letters written by contemporaries of Mason in which he was referenced. This was going to be awesome!

Upon arriving at the Library of Congress, we went through security, checked everything in our possession which made it through security in a guarded side room, met our extremely gracious and generous hosts, and signed the guest registry --in pencil, of course, before beginning our descent into the basement of the Madison Building. After going deeper and deeper, several of us commented on how we missed sunlight, but we were **descending this deep because the Library's great-**

est treasures, including the Declaration of Rights, were safest and most secure in such an environment.

The anticipation grew as we walked through stacks featuring collections of papers associated with over twenty presidents, Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglas, Earl Warren and a number of other individuals and organizations, all of which begged exploration, but we were on a mission. Finally, we reached one of the many conservation labs, this one for paper, and approached a table containing several boxes of Mason materials. We made it!

After a brief introduction during which we learned that the Declaration of Rights had been publically displayed in the 1940s and, as a result, was quite faded, one of our hosts opened the box. We all leaned in for a look and there it was, **Mason's 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights**, one of the most influential and important documents in world history, sitting right there before our eyes. YES!

For a few minutes..... just silence. I can't speak for the others, but as was the case when I was a child visiting places like Independence Hall and the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, I wanted to touch it, to pick it up, and to sit back and read it just like those gathered in Richmond for the purpose of charting a new future for the Colonies back in 1776.

Following this initial reaction, we were amazed by the handwriting. The script, laid out in seemingly perfect lines, tightly spaced, and carefully constructed, was beautiful. Then we began to look more deeply at the document before us. While the Declaration was in fact faded, you could still read portions of it and this is what we did, sharing sections out loud for all those in the vicinity to hear.

One of us read "that the freedom of the press is

(Continued on page 3)

"My father was fond of his garden and took most of the exercise he did take during the times of close occupation in it....It was here that my father - in good weather - would several times a day pass out of his study and walk for a considerable time wrapped in meditation, and return again to his desk, without seeing or speaking to any of the family. And in these walks we all well knew that he was not to be disturbed – more than when sitting amidst his papers." *John Mason's Recollections*

On the Cover: Doug Cohen reenacts one of George Mason's walks in his garden during a beautiful May afternoon after the Patriots defeated the British invaders at the second annual "Battle of the Deer Park."

(Continued from page 2)

one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty,” another shared “that the people have a right to uniform government,” and next we recited “that all men are by nature equally free and independent.”

Although not physically in our possession, we had actually succeeded in “holding” the Declaration!

More importantly, while I had seen copies and read those same words previously, this experience was deeper. Somehow, perhaps, but not solely because of the community generated by reading something aloud, while deep below ground, located in an otherwise sterile and secure place, despite fading and being incarcerated in an acid free box, the Virginia Declaration of Rights came to life, became real, and immediately the ideas and values written by Mason in 1776 achieved new meaning and power.

A connection was created, a connection between generations and over time, a connection defined by vastly different contexts and contemporary realities, but a genuine connection nonetheless. Mason crafted this Declaration, the one before us, and he contemplated, studied, and expressed ideas in doing so that continue to inform, inspire, challenge, and benefit. **And, here in the basement, we were “holding”** these ideas, experiencing this effort, and gaining something of value by witnessing this document.

Later in our visit, we returned to the presidential papers and read a letter written by James Madison during the Virginia Ratifying Convention in 1788 criticizing Mason and Patrick Henry, allies at the time, for their position

on the proposed U.S. Constitution. This stop was followed, signaling the end of our tour, with the opportunity to see Mason’s survey of what was then Dogue’s Neck, now Mason Neck, which he compiled and completed prior to building Gunston Hall in 1755.

Returning to Gunston Hall that afternoon, I thought about all we had seen, read, and experienced while at the Library of Congress. Simultaneously, I felt exhausted and exhilarated. I felt awed and humbled by witnessing a document of such importance and something so closely associated with a man and place of great meaning to me. I felt thankful; thankful the document existed, thankful the document remained, and thankful I got to see it even if only briefly.

Then I realized that I feel much the same way every day at Gunston Hall and immediately I understood the transformative power of collections, of place, and of history in a new way. Ultimately, the feelings and emotions generated by connections which by virtue of their humanity defy time, connections produced when we are able to witness and hold ideas, are what is possible when we fully open ourselves to transcendent experiences in our individual present, but which are born of our collective pasts. These experiences possess the power to change how we think and what we think about, how we feel and what causes feeling, and how we choose to act and for what purpose.

Simply put, the Virginia Declaration of Rights changed the world, and so can seeing it.

It is a great day at Gunston Hall,

Scott Muir Stroh III
Executive Director



Gunston Hall Mission

To utilize fully the physical and scholarly resources of Gunston Hall to stimulate continuing public exploration of democratic ideals as first presented by George Mason in the 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights.

Gunston Grapevine is a news magazine for, by, and about all members of the Gunston Hall community. Contributions, ideas, questions, and comments are always welcome. Contact the editor Frank Barker at fbarker@gunstonhall.org.

GEORGE MASON'S LEGACY FOR HIS CHILDREN: A LITTLE-KNOWN VISIT TO NEW YORK CITY

By Jerry Foster, Archaeology Volunteer

IN MAY 1787 GEORGE MASON, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS 21-YEAR-OLD SON JOHN, went to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia with a dual purpose: clearly, to forge a workable framework for government, but also to advance his son's fledgling business career.

Mason was not very successful, unfortunately, in improving John's prospects. In a May 27, 1787, letter to George Mason, Jr. he writes "I have not yet been able to do anything respecting your brother John, and fear I shall meet with much difficulty on that subject."

After two months' work, the Convention recessed for ten days while the Committee of Detail compiled a draft Constitution. The interval began Friday, July 27, and the Convention resumed on Monday, August 6. George Mason was present Thursday, July 26, as well as on the date of resumption.

This gave him opportunity to search farther afield for individuals who could promote John's interests. He and John went to New York.

New York

Based on George and John Mason's presence at a dinner hosted by John Jay in Manhattan, we know the pair was in New York City during the convention recess. We know the time it would take to go by stage based on David Franks' *The New-York Directory* for 1787:

PHILADELPHIA Stages – Two of them set out from Pawles Hook, at Four o'Clock every Evening, and go by Way of Newark, where they stop at night, and arrive at Philadelphia the next Day. ---The others go by Way of Bergen-Point, stop at Elizabeth-Town at Night, and arrive at Philadelphia the next Evening.

Assuming two days' travel time each way gives a maximum stay in New York of six days. What they did during their time there is a bit of a mystery.

With whom did they stay? The primary candidates were their closest friends in New York – Richard Henry Lee, a member of the Continental Congress, and his younger brother, Dr. Arthur Lee, the latter residing in New York as a member of the Treasury Board.

Likely joining the Masons and Lees as they socialized would be George Mason's nephews, George and John Graham, who were attending Columbia University that summer.

John Jay

In the John Jay papers at Columbia University is a letter of introduction dated July 23, 1787, written by George Mason, Jr. on behalf of his father and brother, John. George Mason, Jr. and Jay along with Sarah Livingston Jay – John Jay's wife – had been well acquainted in Paris in the early 1780's while Jay negotiated a peace treaty with England and George, Jr. spent time abroad recovering from illness.

In April 1783, John Jay entrusted George Mason, Jr. with important letters to George Washington and Robert R. Livingston, then U.S. Secretary for Foreign Affairs, to be delivered by him after his arrival in the U.S. from France. At the same time, Sarah Jay asked George to buy a fan for her sister to replace the one she had inadvertently brought to France. So, there was a somewhat intimate connection between the Jays and George Mason, Jr.

Presumably, sometime during their visit to New York, George Mason, Sr. and his son, John, would have visited John Jay in his offices at Fraunces Tavern where he was the U.S. Secretary for Foreign Affairs

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

[see sidebar]. John Mason, and a partner, would ultimately open business offices in **Bordeaux, France, and John Jay's French** connections may have been useful.

We do know that almost at the end of **the Masons' maximum stay John Jay** hosted a dinner Thursday, August 2. The guest list is impressive and varied.*

Besides the two Masons there were Alexander Hamilton and Hugh Williamson, both, like the elder Mason, delegates on hiatus from the Federal Convention; John Paul Jones; President of the Continental Congress Arthur St. Clair; William Grayson and Richard Henry Lee, Virginia delegates to the Continental Congress; **Lee's younger brother** Dr. Arthur Lee, a member of the U.S. Treasury Board; Secretary of War General Henry Knox; James Duane, Mayor of New York City; a Major Butler (Probably Thomas Butler who would later serve under St. Clair, after the latter became governor of the Northwest Territory in 1788); a Captain Butler (Probably Edward Butler, brother of Thomas, who would also serve under St. Clair in the Northwest Territory); and, to give the dinner an international connection, Don Diego de Gardoqui, Spanish ambassador to the U.S.

Guest lists to John Jay's dinners include, according to Louise V. North's annotations, 27 merchants over the period 1787-1788. Among their papers may be additional insights regarding George and John Mason's activities.

Besides John, George Mason had eight other children to be concerned about. He would want to ensure the security of his Kentucky lands they would inherit, and the **Northwest Ordinance's passage on July 13** by the Continental Congress sitting in New

Fraunces Tavern

In early 1785, tavern owner Samuel Fraunces leased his tavern in New York City to the Continental Congress to use as office space for the Department of Foreign Affairs. By 1787, the War Department and the Treasury Department were also using leased rooms in the building. Henry Knox headed the Department of War on the first floor. John Jay and the Department of Foreign Affairs were located on the second floor. The Treasury Department was on the third floor. The three departments were tenants until May of 1788.

York would, no doubt, have piqued his interest.

This ordinance provided a framework for western territories to be admitted to the Union without an Eastern bloc of **states' obstruction.**

Certainly, during the Masons' visit, there must have been sub rosa discussions of the new Constitution, but it is the Northwest Ordinance and its implications that concern us here.

Northwest Ordinance

The Northwest Ordinance, upon whose drafting committee Richard Henry Lee sat, gave a framework for governance and land rights that could also extend to the southwestern territories of Kentucky and Tennessee.

But trouble was brewing in the rebellious territories of Kentucky and Tennessee. Spain owned the rights to Mississippi River commercial navigation, and John Jay as Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had attempted a treaty with Spain delaying

(Continued on page 6)

*Dinner list transcription by New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. Annotated by Louise V. North.

(Continued from page 5)

U.S. rights to commercial navigation for 30 years. Although this treaty ultimately failed, westerners felt an eastern bloc of states was allied against them, and a **“Spanish Conspiracy” ensued.**

These southwestern territories desperately needed the Mississippi River to transport their produce to market—mountains to their east were an obstacle.

In July, just at the time of Mason’s visit to New York, James Wilkinson, a Kentuckian, who wanted Kentucky to break away from the United States, was in New Orleans for discussions with the Spanish **governor. Wilkinson’s object was to secure** commercial navigation rights to the Mississippi River for an independent nation of Kentucky.

Similar negotiations had previously occurred regarding Tennessee breaking away from the U.S., and thereby gaining access to the Mississippi. These discussions were held at the New York residence of Spanish Ambassador Don Diego de Gardoqui, between the ambassador and Dr. James White representing rebels in Tennessee. Their initial, clandestine meeting took place in the summer of 1786.

Did Mason also meet with Gardoqui **privately at the latter’s residence to discuss** the Mississippi River stalemate – did they discuss it at the Jay dinner they both attended?

Mason owned over 70,000 acres of Kentucky lands intended for his heirs. He describes them as being near, and below the falls of the Ohio River. The Ohio River, of course, connects with the Mississippi River and provided a critical commercial artery for trade.

Manasseh Cutler

Manasseh Cutler, of the Ohio Company of Associates of Massachusetts, acted as a lobbyist at the Continental Congress attempting to secure a contract for his cli-

ents to purchase one million acres of the Northwestern Territory.

His journal states the committee drafting the Northwest Ordinance (Richard Henry Lee et al) gave him a draft copy and asked for his comments. He returned the draft the afternoon of July 10 with his remarks and departed for Philadelphia to meet with Benjamin Franklin, Dr. Benjamin Rush, and other acquaintances with whom he corresponded on scientific subjects.

According to his journal, he stayed in Philadelphia at the Indian Queen Tavern, and spent the evening of July 13 in discussion with his fellow lodgers among whom were George and John Mason, Hugh Williamson and **“several other gentlemen who were spending the evening with them.”** It seems likely the Northwest Ordinance was discussed.

Hugh Williamson, also residing at the Indian Queen with the Masons, is at the Jay dinner mentioned above. Did they travel together to New York?

Also at the Jay dinner of August 2 were several individuals with direct, or indirect, connections with the Northwest Ordinance.

Manasseh Cutler, as someone influential with Congress, spent the evening of July 23 in New York, according to his journal, with **“Colonel Grayson and members of Congress.”** **It was at this meeting he suggested** Arthur St. Clair be governor of the Northwest Territory. St. Clair was present at the Jay dinner, and did become Governor of the Northwest Territory.

Also there was, the just-mentioned, William Grayson, and the Butler brothers, who, if their annotation by Louise V. North is correct, would serve under St. Clair when he was Governor of the Northwest Territory.

And, present, too, was Richard Henry Lee, one of the drafters of the Ordinance,

(Continued on page 7)


(Continued from page 6)

and his brother, Dr. Arthur Lee. The latter, on the Treasury Board, approved the contract for Manasseh Cutler to purchase the vast tract of land on behalf of the Ohio Company of Associates.

The Jay dinner may have provided a forum for George Mason to better understand the ramifications of the Northwest Ordinance as a paradigm for admitting future territories to the Union.

Perhaps future research will shed more light on this as well as fill in some of the gaps regarding how George and John Mason spent their time in New York City in the summer of 1787.

All's Well That Ends Well

Kentucky was admitted to the Union, June 1, 1792, on the terms laid down by the Northwest Ordinance. The Mississippi River was opened to commercial navigation by the United States via the Pinckney Treaty with Spain in 1795. 

Author Jerry Foster has a B.A. in History and an M.L.S. from Columbia University in New York. He has been an Archaeological Volunteer at Gunston Hall since 2006. On May 31, he left Gunston Hall for Appomattox.

The author wishes to thank:

Elizabeth Nuxoll, Editor of the John Jay Papers at Columbia University; Allan Weinreb, Curator, John Jay Homestead; Reference Staff, Library of Congress; Judy Hynson, Director of Research and Library Collections at Stratford Hall; Mark Whatford, Librarian/Archivist and Deputy Director at Gunston Hall; a terrific fellow researcher, Claudia Wendling; and Dave Shonyo and the Gunston archaeology team.

GUNSTON HALL PROBATE DATABASE UPGRADED

BY THE FARNERS


By Mark Whatford, Deputy Director

Barbara and Dick Farner have completed an upgrade of the Probate Database available on our website. Barbara has added a new section on books listed in inventories and has worked to identify the titles when possible. Along with a few other important additions for easier use the system has been upgraded to Microsoft Access 2013.

Barbara and Dick have been working on **this upgrade for over a year and we can't thank them enough** for the time and effort they have put into this project to make it the success it is.

Gunston Hall has published the full database online for download because many of the extensive search features of the original database were not retained in the web version. This full version allows quick and flexible searches of individual items. For example, it can be used to find and compare inventories containing such items as silver candlesticks or Windsor chairs. In addition these searches can be done in combination with categories such as class and gender, as well as urban or rural dwellings.

For the original project Court records were collected from nearby counties of Fairfax, Prince William, and Stafford in Virginia and Charles and Prince George's counties in Maryland. To these were added selected records from the Virginia cities of Norfolk and Fredericksburg and the Virginia counties of James City, Elizabeth City, Lancaster, Surrey, Richmond, Frederick, Charles City, Spotsylvania, Middlesex, Westmoreland, and York, as well as Anne Arundel County and Annapolis in Maryland. In all, 325 selected inventories were transcribed, and these were compiled into a database that allows searching for individual items.

Originally Gunston Hall partnered with the Center for History and New Media (CHNM) at George Mason University to adapt this database for the general public and publish it on the CHNM website along with teaching guides and images of the original documents. The result is [Probing the Past](#). 

Read All About It! A New Federal Constitution

By Mark Whatford, Deputy Director

GUNSTON HALL HAS ACQUIRED at auction the September 1787 edition of *The Columbian Magazine*.

This Philadelphia magazine includes one of the first printed texts of the new Federal Constitution. The text of the Constitution appears to be a last minute addition to the publication; this is based on the size and quality of the paper it is printed on not matching the paper size or quality of the rest of the magazine.

The first form of the Federal Constitution of September 17, 1787, with the list of delegates appears in the September issue for that year under the running title "The new Plan for a Federal Government" but with no preliminary title or introduction whatever, beginning baldly on page 659, "WE, the People of the United States. . ." After the document is **a copy of Washington's letter transmitting the document to the printer.**

In form, *The Columbian Magazine* resembles very nearly such English publications of the 18th century as *The Gentleman's Magazine* and Smollett's *Critical Review*.

A usual issue begins with an engraved frontispiece (and after January, 1787, with a table of contents) and continues with a variety of materials, factual and fictional, interspersed with occasional engravings, decorative or diagrammatical, and comes to a close after somewhat less than 50 pages with **a few pages of verse ("The Columbian Parnassiad") and a few of news ("Intelligence").** All departments lean on the crutches of unpaid voluntary and anonymous contribution and simple theft—in the absence of copyright protection—from other publications. But there is far less piracy here than in other American magazines of the period, and as time goes on it becomes the studied distinction of the *Columbian* to publish original contributions from capable hands. It was the first magazine



in the country to engage a professional editor and the first one to reimburse a correspondent.¹

The September issue of *The American Museum or Repository*, another Philadelphia magazine, also printed the Constitution of the United States, in the September 1787 issue. It is possible that *The American Museum's* issue preceded the *Columbian's* by two days, with the *Columbian's* out and in general circulation by Monday the 24th, one week after the end of the Convention. *The Pennsylvania Packet & Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, printed the full text of the Constitution on September 18, 1787. 🌸

¹ *University of Rochester Library Bulletin*, Volume VII-Spring 1952 · Number 3, "The Columbian Magazine," Highfill, Jr., P. H.

LOUISE ARCHER FOURTH GRADER WINS CHRISTY HARTMAN MYERS WRITING AWARD

By Barbara Farner, Docent

MISS NIYATI AMBATI OF LOUISE ARCHER Elementary School in Vienna is the winner of Gunston Hall's Christy Hartman Myers Writing Award for 2014. Nyati is in Mr. Greg Drost's fourth grade class.

Besides her certificate, Niyati was awarded \$100 and a scholarship to the Christy Hartman Myers Writing Workshop on June 7.

Niyati's eloquent essay addressed the need for exercise time and playgrounds for children as something that she sees that would make her community a better place. Docents Judy Berriss, Linda Hartman, and Barbara Farner presented the award to Niyati in her classroom. Judy Berriss, who was one of the judges of the competition, shared with the students

how very good all the submitted essays were and how difficult it was to choose "the best."

Nine honorable mentions went to Mr. Drost and Ms. Kathy Porterfield's 4th grade students. Ms. Porterfield told all the students that this was an occasion worth celebrating, so the teachers treated both classes to donut holes and mini muffins!

Ms. Porterfield also told the docents that their field trip to Gunston Hall in April was "amazing!"

Thanks to all the docent readers, and to docent and retired teacher Scootie Prior for her new evaluation rubric for the essays.

And many, many thanks to Scott Stroh and Susan Blankenship for making it possible for the Award/Workshop program to continue.



YOUNG WRITERS GATHER AT GUNSTON HALL

ASPIRING FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADE WRITERS came to Gunston Hall to learn from professionals how to better their craft at the annual Christy Hartman Myers Writing Workshop Saturday, June 7.

Led by docents, the young writers took a tour of the Plantation, then met Col. George Mason and his daughter Nancy (portrayed by Dan McMahan and Janis Harless). Col. Mason himself showed the children through the lower level of his house and spoke to them about his role writing the Virginia Declaration of Rights and about his

recent trip to Philadelphia to the Federal Convention.

The students then went to learning sessions where they learned to write poetry with the former Poet Laureate of Virginia, Carolyn Kreiter-Foronda (pictured above) and practiced illustrating their writings with professional illustrator Linda Johnston.

They learned how to get the facts correct in a non-fiction/biography session with Carla R. Heymsfeld and Joan W. Lewis, co-authors of *George Mason: Father of the Bill of Rights*. The young writers continued to learn about writing facts with a session about news writing and the inverted pyramid with former English and journalism teacher Frank Barker.

To balance all the information about writing the facts, the young scribes learned to create their own facts when they attended a session on writing fiction with writer and docent Sharon Rasmussen.



NEWLY TRAINED DOCENTS JOIN GHDA



Nine new docents completed their training and received their badges on March 7, bringing the total number of active docents up to 81. The new docents are Nancy Abel, Margie Schoenberg, Carl Jenkins, Micheyl Bartholomew, Betty Weatherley, Camille Morrone, Kim De Beradinis, Sherri Shunfenthal, and Theresa Kutruff.

THE NINE NEW DOCENTS trained in February and March have varied backgrounds, but a common love of history has brought them all to Gunston Hall.

Nancy Abel is originally from Texas, but as an Air Force brat she moved frequently. Eventually settling in Vienna, she taught in Fairfax County for over 30 years.

Micheyl Bartholomew is a former Gunston Hall docent who is the current director of the Historic Pohick Docent Guild. She is a retired interior designer.

Originally from Germany, Kim De Beradinis has studied pre-med and hotel management. She has always liked history and would like to have a conversation with George Mason.

Carl Jenkins retired after 36 years of flying helicopters in the Army. He is currently working on his preK-6th grade certification so he can teach 4th grade Virginia history. Carl is originally from Alabama, but now lives in Halting Point.

Theresa Kutruff is originally from Pennsylvania. She was a kindergarten instructional assistant for 33 years with Fairfax

County so naturally she states, **“I love working with children.”**

Camille Morrone is another former docent who has returned for a second tour of duty. She has been a high school counselor for the past 20 years. Originally from New York, she now resides in Springfield.

Another New Yorker, Margie Schoenberg studied history and Russian at NYU and earned an MLS from U. of Md. She has lived in Washington, Pittsburgh, San Juan, Albuquerque, and Burke. She is a retired Fairfax County librarian, where she often conducted an Ann Eilbeck

Mason program for children.

Sherri Shunfenthal, from Philadelphia originally, leads poetry workshops and has two published books of poetry. She says she is **“fascinated by the skills needed to keep a plantation running” as she grew up in the north, learning about “city history.”**

Betty Weatherley was born in Washington, D.C. and grew up in Chevy Chase, MD. She moved to England and married an Englishman, then worked for Time-Life Books in London and Alexandria for 25 years. She graduated from George Mason University in 2007 and was an instructional assistant at Fort Hunt Elementary for 13 years. An aunt and a cousin were formerly on the Gunston Hall Board of Regents.

The docents were extensively trained in **George Mason’s life and accomplishments, his family, his plantation world, and practiced giving tours and shadowed tours being led by experienced docents.**

Each of them has already led their own school groups into the 18th century world of Gunston Hall.



GUNSTON HALL: THE NEXT GENERATION

GETTING TO KNOW THE GRAND-MASONS

By Frank N. Barker, Assistant Education Coordinator

GEORGE MASON and his first wife Ann Eilbeck Mason had 12 children, nine of whom survived until adulthood.

Each of them had children of their own, some with families as large as or larger than **their parents' family.**

First born George Mason V (or George Mason, jnr.) and his wife Elizabeth Mary Ann Barnes Hooe Mason had six children. First born daughter Ann (Nancy) Eilback Mason Johnson and her husband Rinaldo Johnson had three. William Mason and Ann Stuart Mason had 5.

Thomson Mason and Sarah McCarty Chichester Mason had a family of eight. Sarah (Sally) Eilbeck Mason McCarty and her husband Daniel McCarty, Jr. had 10. Though **she was the Mason's fifth born, Sally was the first to marry (1778) and the first to have a baby (Daniel III, 1780.)**

Her sister, Mary Thomson Mason Cooke and John Travers Cooke had more children than all the Mason siblings with 11. Her

brother John and Anna Maria Murray Mason came close with 10. Elizabeth (Betsy) Mason Thornton and husband William Thornton had two. The youngest child, Thomas Mason and his wife Sarah Barnes Hooe Mason **(sister of George Mason V's wife) had a family of four children.**

Naming 59 children would usually be a challenge, but the Mason family reused and recycled.

Six of George Mason's grandchildren were named George. Another six were named Ann.

Five grands were William and another five were Sarah. Four were Elizabeth and four were John. There were three Marys, two Thomsons and two Thomases.

Seven of the grandchildren had the middle **name of Eilbeck and one (John's son) had the first** name of Eilbeck. Five of the grandchildren had Mason for a middle name.

And one of George Mason's grandchildren was one in a million. That would be Mary Mason Cooke's first born, Million. 🌸

MEET MASON GRANDSON RICHARD BARNES MASON

The youngest of George Mason V and Elizabeth Hooe Mason's children was Richard Barnes Mason. Born January 16, 1797, at Lexington Plantation, Mason would grow up to become a career soldier in the United States Army.

Commissioned in 1817, Mason served in the 1st Infantry Regiment during the Black Hawk War in 1832. A year later, he was transferred to the newly formed United States Regiment of Dragoons as its first major. After the formation of a second regiment of dragoons, **Mason's regiment became the 1st Dragoon Regiment** and would eventually become the 1st Cavalry Regiment.

In 1836, Mason was promoted to lieutenant colonel. In command of several companies of the regiment, he served in the Territory of New Mexico and in California during the Mexican War. He was promoted to colonel in 1846 and was appointed military governor of California in 1847. While he was governor, gold was discovered at **Sutter's Mill.**

Col. Mason's report to the Adjutant General in Washington dated August 17, 1848, was one of the catalysts that started the California Gold Rush. Read his letter [here](#).

Mason left the governorship in 1849 and died in 1850 at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis as a Brevet Brigadier General after 33 years of service.



17 things YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED **if you weren't at** Gunston Hall THIS SPRING



A Regent speaking in tongues, Triumphs and MGs and Morgans, superheroes, superwriters, embroiderers, kite fliers, bluecoats, redcoats, fire trucks, food trucks, dancers, wedding planners, new discoveries, new citizens, artillery, baby blue-birds, and happy campers.





Bluebird photograph by docent and bluebird monitor Carol Coose. All other photos by Frank Barker.

WILLIAM BUCKLAND WORK DONATED TO COLLECTION

By Mark Whatford, Deputy Director

A STAIR END FROM ROCKLEDGE in Occoquan has been donated to Gunston Hall by Mr. Marius B. Péladeau, Director Emeritus, Farnsworth Art Museum.

John Ballendine, an acquaintance of George Mason, hired William Buckland to build a home at the falls of the Occoquan, called Rockledge (or The Den). Buckland spent the years 1760 and 1761 working on this project. Stone structures are unusual in Tidewater Virginia and this one was built in three parts.

The main block is a two story structure, one room deep, with gable roof. Two wings on the same side suggest the smaller was the first built. The house contains simple but good woodwork consisting of six conventional mantels, chair rails, base boards and cornices in the principal rooms, with a handsome dentilled cornice on the exterior.¹

Rockledge was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, with the application noting that much of the historic woodwork had been removed from the house.

Mr. Péladeau visited Rockledge in 1972 when it was being renovated. Much of the interior was being removed, and he was given the stair end. He wished he could have saved more but did not have room in his D.C. apartment. Layers of paint have been removed returning the fragment to its original light green shade. Two hand forged nails protrude from the top back.

¹Beirne, Rosamond Randall., and John H. Scarff. *William Buckland, 1734-1774; Architect of Virginia and Maryland*. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1958.



Top: Stairs at Rockledge prior to renovation showing Buckland woodwork.

Right: stair end now in the Gunston Hall collection.

UPCOMING SUMMER EVENTS

JULY



SEARCHING FOR HISTORY'S MYSTERIES **EVERY DAY IN JULY AND AUGUST**

Bring your family to solve a historic mystery at Gunston Hall. Young detectives and their adult companions complete a scavenger hunt during a child-friendly mansion tour.

Children and Friends free, Adults regular admission.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

FRIDAY, JULY 4

9:30 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Honoring the Author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights Celebrate Independence Day at Gunston Hall. Converse with Col. Mason, have a mansion tour, enjoy the grounds, and bring a picnic lunch.

Free Admission



ARCHITECTURE IN THE AFTERNOON

FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS, JULY THROUGH OCTOBER

2:00 P.M.

This 90-minute tour explores the Mansion's exterior and interior, including the cellar. View the master work of carpenter William Buckland and carver William Bernard Sears up close.

Included in regular admission. Tour recommended for adults and young persons over 12.



GUNSTON HALL CONVERSATIONS

SECOND AND FOURTH SUNDAYS, JULY THROUGH OCTOBER

NOON - 4:00 P.M.

George Mason's family, friends, and servants discuss politics, play games, and perform domestic skills in 18th-century Virginia. The mini-program varies each session.

Included in regular admission. Friends free.

AUGUST

TEACHERS' DAY OUT

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6

9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Spend an informative day devoted to the life and ideals of George Mason. Indulge in a specially designed plantation tour, examine Mason documents, and discuss strategies to make the patriot come alive in your classroom.

Open to all teachers for 8 re-certification points. \$25 fee covers materials, snacks, and lunch. Registration required.

Please register for Teachers' Day Out [here](#).