

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT
GUNSTON HALL PLANTATION
(44FX113)**

Report on 2010 Activities

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Contents

Preface	3
Acknowledgements	4
SECTION 1 – Archaeology in the Shadow of the Mansion	6
Introduction	7
Kitchen Yard Mitigation	12
Lift	14
Fence	23
Search for the Carriage Circle	31
Other Inquiries	36
Summary and Conclusions	40
Work Plan for 2011	42
References	43
SECTION 2 – Coming Full Circle at George Mason’s Gunston Hall	45
Introduction	48
Ownership of Gunston Hall from George Mason IV to the Commonwealth of Virginia	49
A Proposed Plan for the Carriage Circle at Gunston Hall	77
References	123
SECTION 3 – Notes of Archaeological Activities Conducted During 2010	
(Included as a separate document on the CD edition of this report.)	

Preface

The current annual summary of archaeology activities at Gunston Hall Plantation is actually comprised of three separate reports. The first is an account of the field work performed by the Staff Archaeologist and the Gunston archaeology volunteers in the immediate vicinity of the mansion.

The second report was prepared by Paul Inashima, who for the past two years has been serving as a consultant to the archaeology program at Gunston Hall. During the 2010 field season, Paul was engaged in an archaeological reconnaissance at nearby Mason Neck State Park, and thus it was convenient for him to spend most Saturdays working with us.

The final of the three reports provides a predictive model of the possible location and configuration of a carriage circle at Gunston Hall, as well as a very useful summary of the chain of ownership of Gunston Hall from George Mason IV to the present. Co-author Wendy Miervaldis is a statistician who taught at The Catholic University of America until her departure late in the season for New Jersey (and Seton Hall University). Claudia Wending is a document researcher who unearthed most of the historical background information for the project.

Acknowledgements

The archaeology program at Gunston Hall is a project of the Gunston Hall Board of Regents, and funding to support labor costs is provided by that organization. However, the program is dependent on gifts and grants to cover the cost of supplies, equipment and other expenses. I am enormously grateful, therefore, to the support provided in this respect during 2010 by Mrs. Frederick Martin, Mrs. Hugh A. Merrill and the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Virginia, Town and County Committee.

The continued support, interest and encouragement given by members of the Board of Regents has been most gratifying. Particularly appreciated has been the personal attention bestowed by First Regent Wylie Raab, Regents Archaeology Committee Chair Sandy Smith, Regents Historic Grounds and Gardens Committee Chair Margery Jenkins and all of the individual members of the aforementioned committees.

The program is indeed fortunate in that it is assisted by a corps of accomplished volunteers. Those providing assistance during 2010 were: William Bartelmes, Carol Boland, Alex Bowers, Janice Brose, M.J. Grabulis, Susan Hardenburgh, Kate Harrelson, Maggie Johnson, Kathy Jones, Vincent Knaus, Susan Marquis, Mike Massie, Wendy Miervaldis, Dennis Murray, Lynne Murray, Ann Oliver, Leslie Rakowsky, Gabe Soto, Veria Sperling, Kyle Tomanio, Liz Urtso, Karl van Newkirk, Don Ward, Gretchen Wendelin, Claudia Wendling and Karen Yang.

Thanks also go to Fred Grady, Natural History Museum, Smithsonian Institution, for assistance in the identification of faunal remains.

Since its founding in 1997, the Gunston Hall archaeology program has maintained a close relationship with the Fairfax County Park Authority's Heritage Resources Division. Dr. Elizabeth Crowell, Cultural Resource Protection Manager, serves as an advisor to the Gunston Hall archaeology program. Both Dr. Crowell and her colleague, Mike Johnson,

have always willingly made themselves available to provide advice and assistance whenever requested.

During the 2010 season, we were fortunate to have Paul Inashima serve as field consultant to the program. In addition to the overall advice provided, I am particularly grateful for the survey and excavation work he undertook for us and which is described in Section II of this report.

SECTION 1

Archaeology in the Shadow of the Mansion

Introduction

For the first time in the history of the current archaeology program at Gunston Hall, all of the major excavation work of a single field season was done in the immediate vicinity of the mansion. This made it possible, on an ongoing basis throughout the season, to achieve one of the objectives of the archaeology program: to make the *process* of archaeology part of the experience of a Gunston Hall visit. Because the mansion is usually the ultimate destination of our visitors, we were afforded the opportunity to interact with a very large number of people. Although this took a certain amount of time from excavation-related work, we found it a very satisfying experience.

That being said, it must be admitted that working close to the mansion does have a somewhat frustrating side. This is due to the rather extensive disturbances to the soil that have occurred to the soil over the years. Some of it is the expected result of the fact that the mansion has been continuously occupied for a little over 250 years. Much of it, however, stems from digging in the name of “archaeology” done during the years just after the Commonwealth of Virginia took position of Gunston Hall. The damage done to the archaeological record seems inexcusable from our present perspective. However the reason for it does make an interesting story.

The earliest excavations undertaken under Commonwealth ownership were not properly documented. The only mention of them appears in a series of letters currently held in the Gunston Hall archives. Fiske Kimball, a well known restoration architect working out of Philadelphia, directed the digging. The actual work was done by local laborers. The “field supervisor” was Herbert Claiborne, a property developer and husband of the then First Regent. Although Kimball had made several visits to Gunston Hall, his main interest seems to have been with the mansion itself; his direction of the excavation work was done largely or entirely by correspondence.

In 1937, Claiborne received a letter from Mrs. Ida Mason Burke stating that her niece was in possession of a drawing, attributed to George Mason's son John, showing colonnaded walkways leading diagonally northeast and northwest from east and west sides of the Gunston Hall mansion (Mrs. I. Burke to H. Claiborne, letter, 20 April 1937, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia). Each of the two walkways was shown to terminate at a small building which appeared to be a miniature of the mansion itself. Claiborne attempted to contact Mrs. Burke about the drawing in 1949, but found that she had passed away some years earlier (Claiborne 1949). Although he had never seen the drawing, Claiborne appears to have made locating evidence of the "little Gunstons" his principle excavation objective.

In August 1949, Claiborne (1949) reported to Kimball that he had overseen the digging of "numerous trenches" crossing area of the eighteenth century kitchen yard and had found "nothing of importance." This was in spite of the fact that later excavations by Kelso (1973), Outlaw (1973) and others found the area rich in both artifacts and eighteenth century features. Claiborne continued his trenching to an area just a short distance to the northeast of the mansion. Here he claimed to have found the remains of a 31' x 21' structure which could only be one of the flankers (or little Gunstons) described by Mrs. Burke (Claiborne 1949). Claiborne concluded that his finding "...verifies the drawing of Gen. John Mason, as described by Mrs. Burke" (Claiborne 1949). Subsequent excavations performed in the same area by other investigators (Fauber and Knight 1953; Kelso 1973; Outlaw 1973) revealed no evidence of such a structure. What *was* found here was a 20' x 18' foundation trench which was interpreted by all of the above investigators as belonging to a detached kitchen.

Kimball accepted Claiborne's assessment, however, and urged the Gunston Hall Superintendent, General Latane Montague, USMC Ret., to initiate excavations in the corresponding area off the northwest corner of the mansion. Gen. Montague undertook the work himself, following Kimball's written instructions (the former had no previous experience with field archaeology). Gen. Montague's work appears to have been carefully done, to the extent that the position of each artifact encountered was carefully

recorded (R.L. Montague to H. Claiborne, letter, 5 January 1950, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia).

Based on the artifacts that Gen. Montague found during his trenching operations, Kimball declared, “There is not the slightest doubt...that there was a North-west outbuilding at Gunston, exactly corresponding to the North-east one which Mr. Claiborne earlier found.” (F. Kimball to R.L. Montague, letter, 16 January 1950, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia). Kimball urged the Board of Regents to authorize the reconstruction of the little Gunstons. To do this, Kimball felt that he needed to know the positions of the interior walls and fireplaces. He asked Gen. Montague to resume his trenching in specific places that should reveal the locations of these features (F. Kimball to R.L. Montague, letter, 14 November 1950, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia).

Upon completing the additional work, Gen. Montague reported that “...our findings are not great.” Although a few artifacts were recovered, there were no building materials or other evidence of a structure (R.L. Montague to F. Kimball, letter, 21 November 1950, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia). Nevertheless, Kimball apparently continued press for the construction of the flanking little Gunstons. That the Regents resisted his suggestions on this and several other matters with respect to the restoration is revealed in a slightly earlier letter to Mrs. Claiborne. “On matters of historical truth the architects’ decision should be absolutely final”, wrote Kimball. “I say this particularly with reference to the flanking outbuildings... We have proved, and no one doubts, that the outbuildings existed...” Kimball then asserted that if the Regents wished to disregard his advice on the matter, “...just count us out as architects” (F. Kimball to V. Claiborne, letter, 9 October 1950, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia).

By 1952, Mrs. Lamot du Pont Copeland was Gunston Hall’s First Regent and J. Everette Fauber, Jr. had been engaged as restoration architect. In a letter to Fauber, Mrs. Copeland noted that, “The drawing... showing colonnades connecting with ‘little Gunstons’ has never been seen by anyone” (P.C. Copeland to J.E. Fauber, letter, 17 March, 1953, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia). She further pointed out that, although the drawing was supposed to have been made by John Mason, it is not

consistent with the description of the kitchen yard area provided in the latter's *Recollections* (Dunn 2004: 75).

Fauber brought in James Knight, a Williamsburg archaeologist, to do a five-week archaeological project under his guidance. (J.E. Fauber to P.C. Copeland, letter, 1 October 1952; M. Campioli to J.E. Fauber, letter, 19 January 1953, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia). After the project had gotten underway, Fauber expressed an opinion that in many ways reflects our own. "I am terribly disappointed to find out...that so much unsupervised and disorganized digging has been done in the area with which we are most concerned. There is no way of estimating the possible loss of evidence, and we are, of course, terribly handicapped to be digging in disturbed soil... Much of the evidence in such places will have to be discredited." (J.E. Fauber to P.C. Copeland, letter, 31 March 1953, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia).

Fauber and Knight then proceeded to compound the problem. The technique favored by restoration architects at the time is called "crosstrenching." This consists of digging a series of narrow trenches at close intervals aligned 45° to the main orientation of site. The digging is usually done by whatever source of labor is available more or less supervised by an architect or archaeologist. The principle objective is usually to locate buried foundations. Anything else that might be encountered is normally disregarded. Soil features are damaged or destroyed, and the spatial relationship of artifacts to one another and to features is completely disrupted. Further, the trenches are usually so narrow and their walls so roughly dug that it would in most cases be impossible to record the stratigraphy of the soil traversed, even if the diggers wanted to do so.

James "Jimmy" Knight worked for the office of the Williamsburg architect. He seems to have specialized in crosstrenching. His work is mentioned with dismay a number of times in the autobiography of Ivor Noël Hume (2010), long the head of the Williamsburg archaeology project.

Knight, under Fauber's guidance, employed crosstrenching extensively in the vicinity of the mansion (Figure 1). Fauber (1986: 7) noted that an area of 60,000 to 70,000 square feet had been trenched under his direction. Although we know the areas in which the

trenching was done, we do not know exactly where the trenches are until we encounter them in the ground. This, together with the even less well documented trenching under Kimball's direction, makes our work here very much archaeology of "nooks and crannies." We often do find things relating to the eighteenth century plantation, but seldom is it the whole thing and its relationship to the "big picture" is likely to have been obscured.

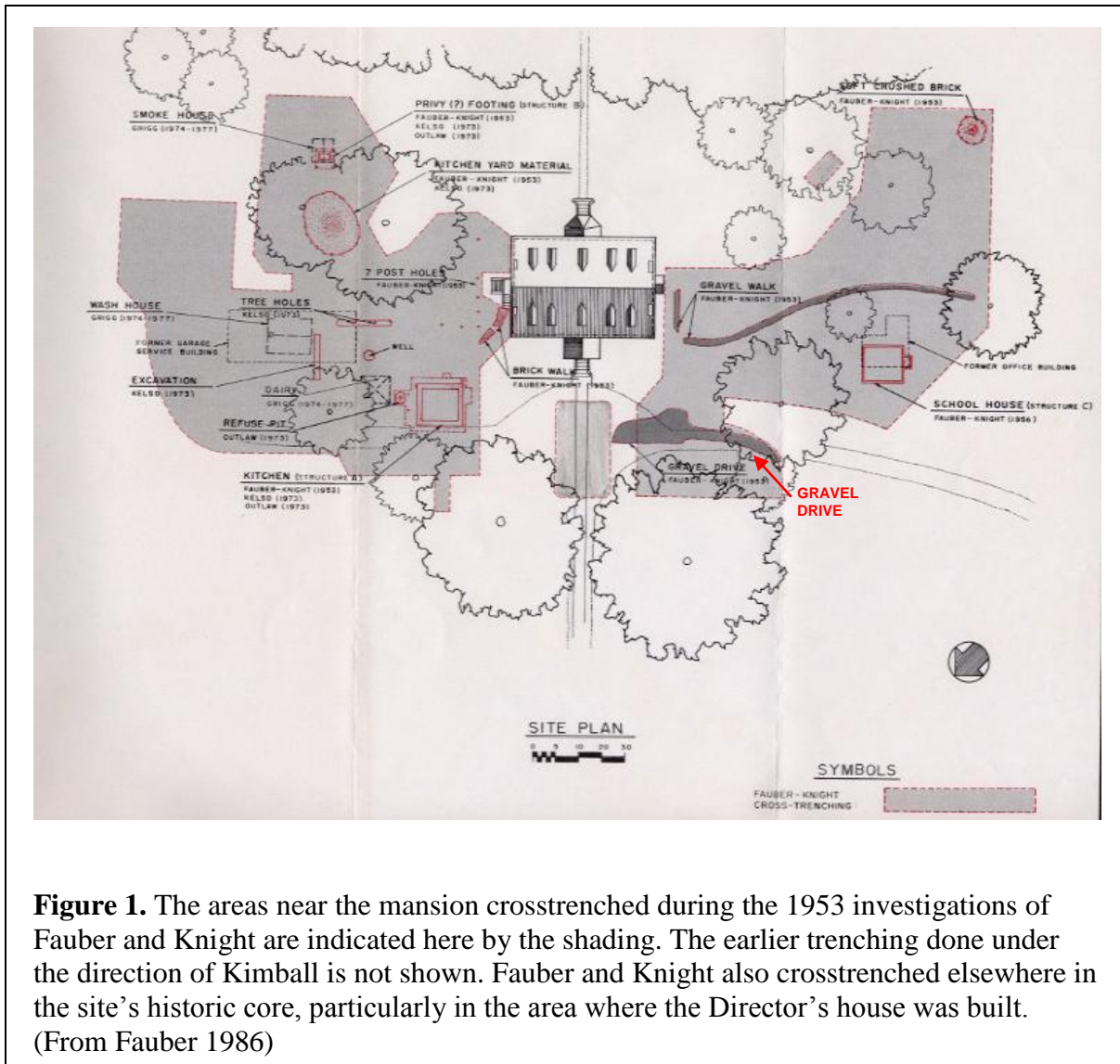


Figure 1. The areas near the mansion crosstrenched during the 1953 investigations of Fauber and Knight are indicated here by the shading. The earlier trenching done under the direction of Kimball is not shown. Fauber and Knight also crosstrenched elsewhere in the site's historic core, particularly in the area where the Director's house was built. (From Fauber 1986)

Kitchen Yard Mitigation

Early in 2010, Gunston had two construction projects scheduled for the kitchen yard which would require archaeological mitigation. The largest of these projects was to be the installation of lift which would help convey persons in wheelchairs, or otherwise unable to climb stairs, to the east entrance to the mansion. This lift would replace a long, wooden ramp which was built over the masonry steps to the entrance in the late 1990's. The lift was designed to be mostly underground when not in use, and would be considerably less visually obtrusive than the ramp (Figure 2).

The second construction project would involve the relocation of a segment of the paled fence which encloses the kitchen yard. The segment in question ran diagonally from the southwest corner of the detached kitchen structure to the northeast corner of the mansion, thus effectively joining the kitchen yard to the mansion. If this reflected the true eighteenth configuration, persons entering or exiting the east mansion door would have had to traverse the busy kitchen yard. It is thought that this probably was not the case. Therefore, it was planned to move the fence so that it ran parallel to the east face of the Mansion, leaving a twenty-foot wide open corridor between the mansion and the kitchen yard (Figure 3).

The excavation and recording procedures used by the Gunston Hall archaeology program have been described in earlier documents (Shonyo 2008b, 2008c). In general, excavation units are laid out on a grid system aligned with the orientation of the mansion. Since the long axis of the mansion is on a northeast to southwest axis, directional designations used in this account should be understood to refer to "site" directions, not compass points.

Excavating is almost always done with a trowel. An exception was made during the lift mitigation phase of the current project by using a spade to remove fill soil in the deepest (>3 ft.) part of unit 4-10. Excavated soil is screened through quarter-inch hardware cloth. In cases where the situation warrants, soil samples are also washed through window

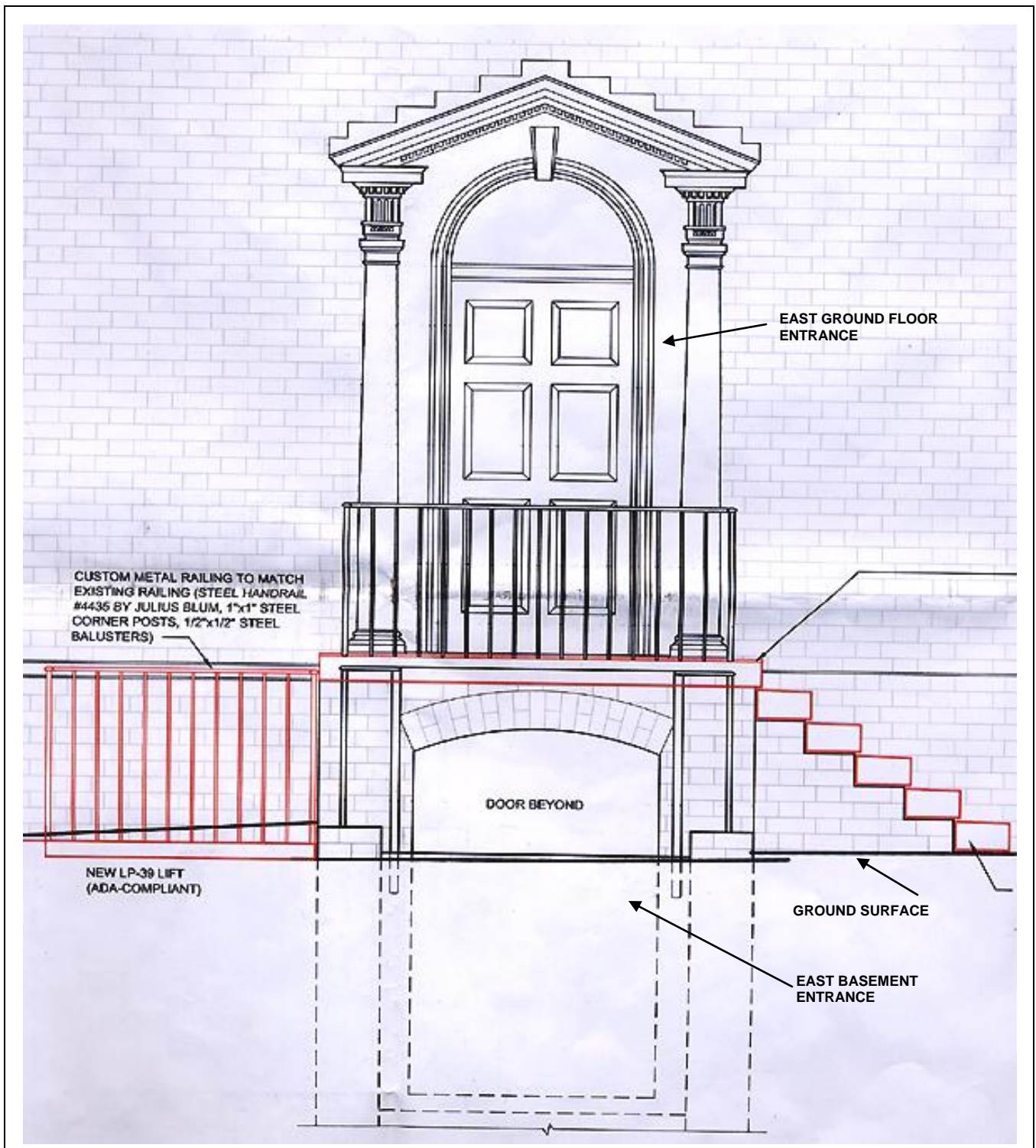
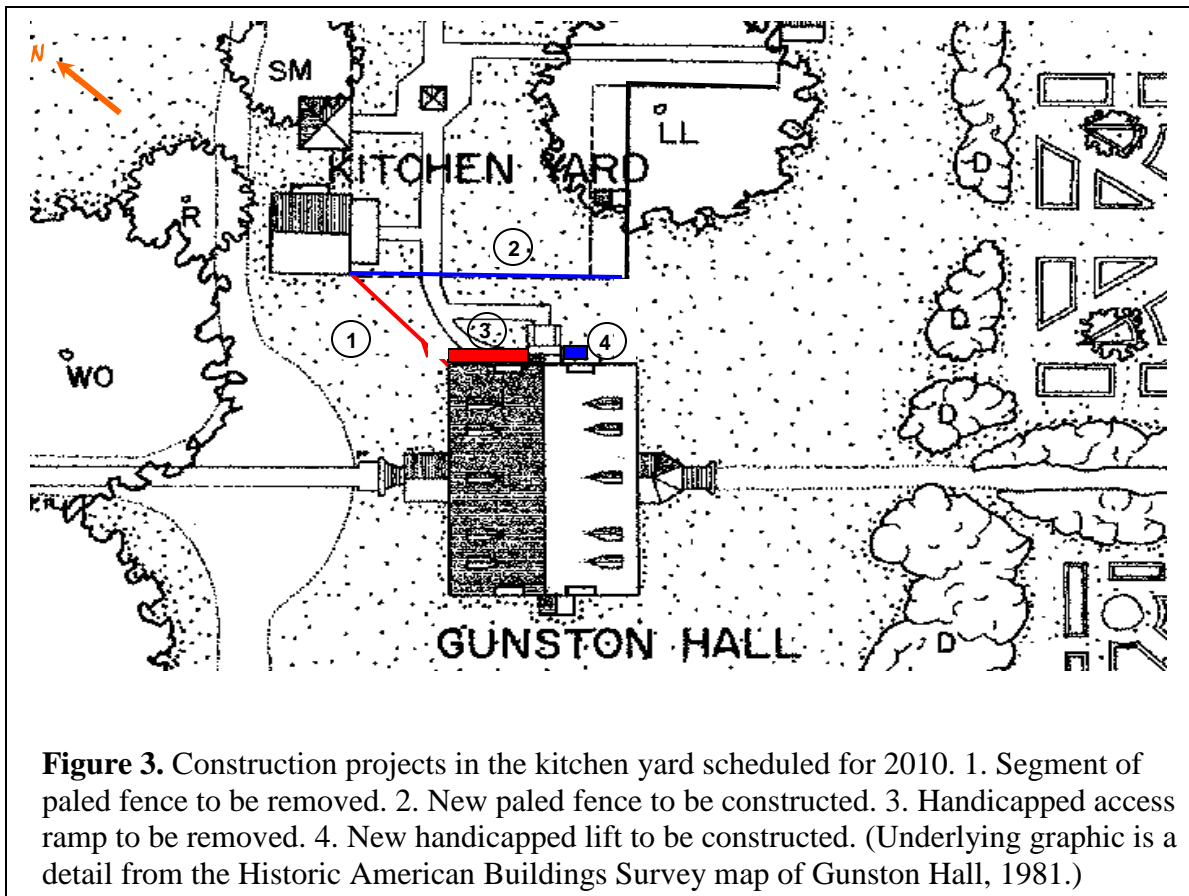


Figure 2. The lifting mechanism and motor were to be placed beneath the ground surface of the lift, shown in red at left. (Detail from a drawing by Mesick, Cohen Wilson, Baker Architects)



screening. This was done with material from the presumed eighteenth century strata of units 14-10 and 17-10.

Usually, all cultural artifacts are collected and processed in the laboratory. However, such a large volume of certain construction materials (brick, mortar, plaster, slate) was encountered during the lift mitigation project that fragments of these less than approximately 1 cm were discarded in the field.

Lift Mitigation

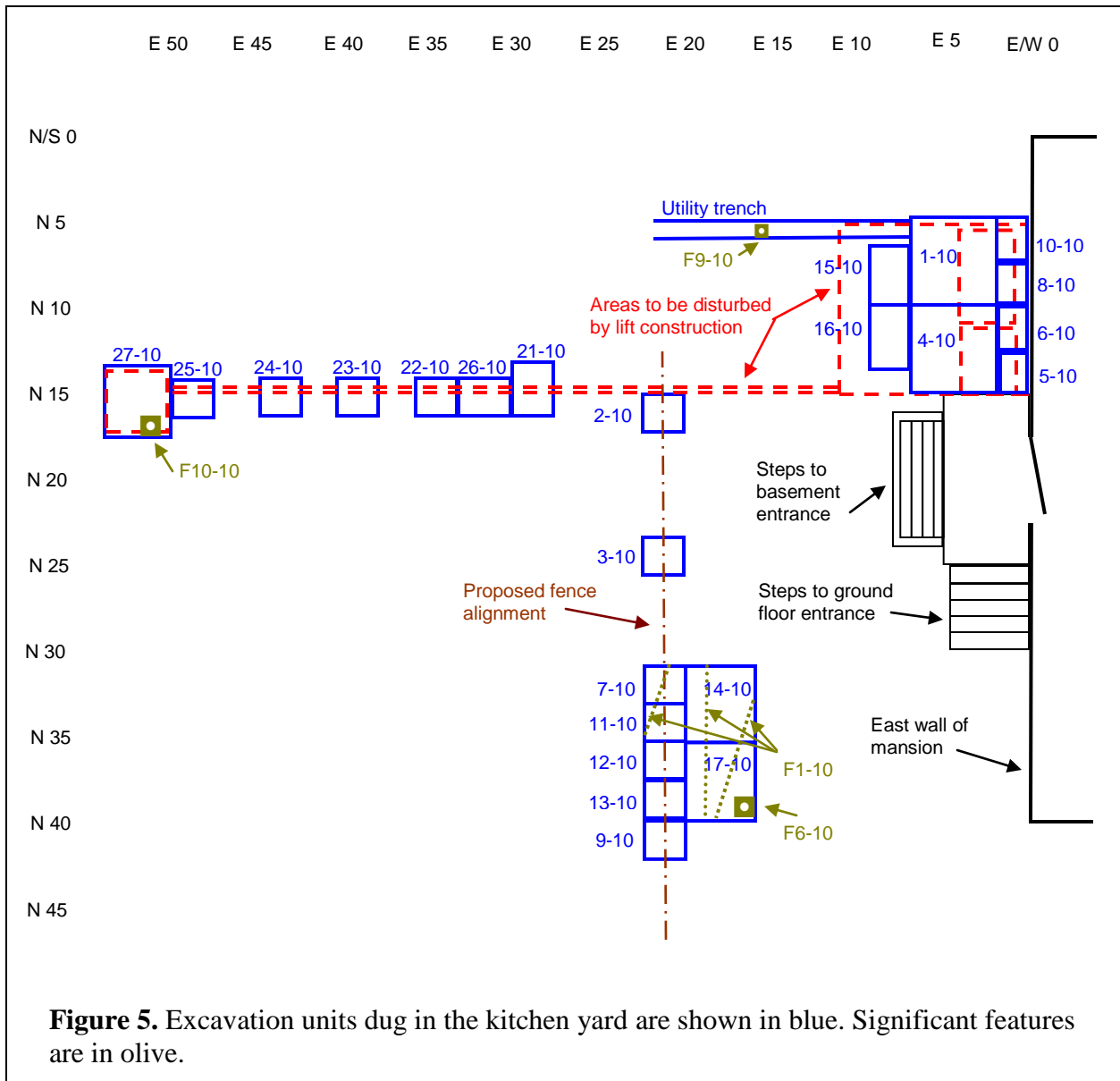
Construction of the lift would require the excavation of a cavity to house the motor and lift mechanism underground, trenches to accommodate power and drain lines, and the disturbance of some upper soil layers in order to lay new brick and stone slab paving. The area in which most of the construction was to occur was formerly the site of an extension to the mansion which held a kitchen and possibly other activity areas. (This structure had

replaced at least one other structure that had at an earlier time adjoined the east wall of the mansion.) The extension was demolished at shortly after the Commonwealth of Virginia acquired the property in 1949.

It was not realized until shortly before the mitigation project was to begin that there was a basement under at least part of the extension. This was revealed when a photo was found in the Gunston Hall archives showing basement windows along the south and east sides of the structure (Figure 4). A notation on the photograph indicated that it was taken sometime during the period that Gunston was owned by Joseph and Emma Specht (1891 – 1906). There other, better known photos of the same face of the extension, but in all cases there is thick foliage along the base of the structure which obscures the windows.



Figure 4. This view of the mansion was made during the Specht ownership period (1891-1906). The frame addition is on the right, against the east wall of the original mansion. 1. Basement windows in addition. 2. Post which may have been supported by the pier designated Feature F9-10. (Photo from the Gunston Hall Archives.)



The implication of this is, of course, that the cavity left by the basement would contain a jumble of fill soil of no particular archaeological interest.

Nevertheless, a series of units was excavated in the proposed construction area. These were excavation units 1-10, 4-10, 5-10, 6-10, 8-10, 10-10, 15-10 and 16-10 (Figure 5). Fill soil was indeed encountered in all of the units excavated. In places, the fill was secondarily disturbed by utility trenches and work done in connection with waterproofing the mansion foundation. It was eventually determined that the basement fill extended

somewhat over 20 feet from the east mansion wall. Although the frame addition extended along the entire width of the mansion east wall, the basement did not. The basement fill deposit ended somewhere between excavation units 3-10 and 7-10 (Figure 5).

The fill soil contained an abundance of artifacts dating from the eighteenth through the twentieth century. Much of this was construction debris, but there was also a significant amount of ceramic and container glass sherds, bone, oyster shell and a miscellany of other items. Apparently, a fairly rich artifact deposit was dug up and used as fill. But where did it come from? The fact that a Mason bottle seal (similar to the one shown on the cover of this report) was among the artifacts recovered, strongly suggests that the material was removed from somewhere around Gunston Hall itself. One possibility is that the fill is material that was excavated when the Director's house was built in the 1950's.

Excavation units 4-10, 5-10 and 6-10 were dug in the area where the actual lift mechanism was to be placed. Since the underground part of the mechanism would require a hole four feet deep, these units were excavated to slightly over that depth. The mixed fill soil was present throughout the units. What was not anticipated, however, was that this area turned out to be a major entry and exit point for utility lines associated with the mansion. This meant is that the lines would have to be relocated and additional areas mitigated.

Most of the utility lines would go in a trench that would join the mansion further south along the east wall ("Utility trench" in Figure 5). Lines to drain condensate from an interior air conditioning unit and accumulated water from the bottom of the lift unit would go to a sump to be dug in the kitchen yard (the area covered by unit 27-10 in Figure 5).

Pier feature. The soil in the area to be traversed by the utility trench was sampled with a coring tool. It was determined that the entire length of the trench would be within the area of the basement fill. Since the relocation of the utilities was considered an urgent job, an employee of the contractor was allowed to dig the trench under the observation of the staff archaeologist. About 15 feet from the mansion, a feature was encountered (feature

F9-10 in Figure 5). Once its presence became known, the feature was fully excavated by the archaeologist. It appears to be the remains of a pier associated with the frame mansion addition (Figure 6). Its position suggests that it may have supported the post pointed out in Figure 4. The contractor agreed to route the trench around the feature, so it was left in place and eventually reburied.



Figure 6. Feature F9-10 was encountered during the digging of a utility trench. It may be the remains of a pier that once helped support a frame addition to the mansion. The bricks are mortared and mortar has been roughly applied around the base of the brick structure. There are whole bricks lying in the soil to one side of the feature which may have been knocked there during the demolition of the addition.

The feature consists of a concrete pad supporting a U shaped structure of manufactured brick. The form of the structure appears to have once been square with a hollow center. Mortar has been crudely applied around the base of the brick structure. Mortar also seems

to have been poured into the cavity of the structure. The cavity also contains a black substance resembling soot from burning oil.

Post feature. The contractor decided rather late in the field season to place the drain line and sump in the kitchen yard. Gunston Hall holds a night time Christmas program in early December which makes heavy use of the kitchen yard area. Therefore, we had a rather brief period in which to complete the mitigation work, backfill and generally clean up the area. It was decided to place a series of 2' x 2' units along the portion of the proposed route of the drain line that lay beyond the basement fill area. The units were placed three feet apart; it was planned to excavate the intervening spaces as time permitted. A 4' x 4' unit would be excavated over the area where the sump was to be placed. (See Figure 5, units 21-10 through 27-10.)

Unit 21-10 was nicely stratified, with a buried shell and pebble surface above an apparent eighteenth century deposit. (This unit was dug 2' x 3' because of a decision, while the excavation was in progress, to slightly alter the route of the drain line.) The intact stratigraphy continued about halfway across the next unit, 26-10. From that point, the stratigraphy had been disrupted down to 1.3 to 1.4 feet, below which the soil was free of cultural artifacts.

In the last unit to be dug, unit 27-10, a post hole and mold revealed itself immediately below the disturbed layer (Figure 7). This feature (F10-10) had a very familiar look. It had all the characteristics of a series of post features found some years earlier along both the east and west sides of the eighteenth century regular garden. On the west side, the line of post continued past the margin of the garden to a point almost opposite the west basement entrance to the mansion. Here, the line turned 90° and joined the mansion wall just south of the basement entrance (Figure 8).

The possibility that the line may have also extended beyond the margin of the garden on the east side was not investigated. However, during a kitchen yard mitigation project undertaken during the 2002 field season, two sets of post holes and molds were



Figure 7. Feature 10-10 was exposed at the base of a disturbed deposit in excavation unit 27-10. A post mold (i.e., the space once occupied by a post) is indicated by the arrows. Some of the charcoal that coated the underground part of the post was left along the edges when the post was pulled or rotted out. The trace of the hole that was dug by shovel to accommodate the post is to the left and above the post mold.

uncovered near the smokehouse. These were aligned with the similar post features along the east margin of the garden and thus suggesting that the east line of posts may have extended into what is presently presented as the kitchen yard.

All of the post features had certain features in common. The holes were dug by shovel and had a roughly oval shape in plan view. Near the surface, they extended about two feet along their greatest dimension. The post molds were always flush with one side of the post holes. There were unusually rocks or brick bats next to the base of the molds. The underground parts of the posts were slightly tapered. This was apparently accomplished by trimming the corners of the lower parts of the square posts, so that the flat sides of the

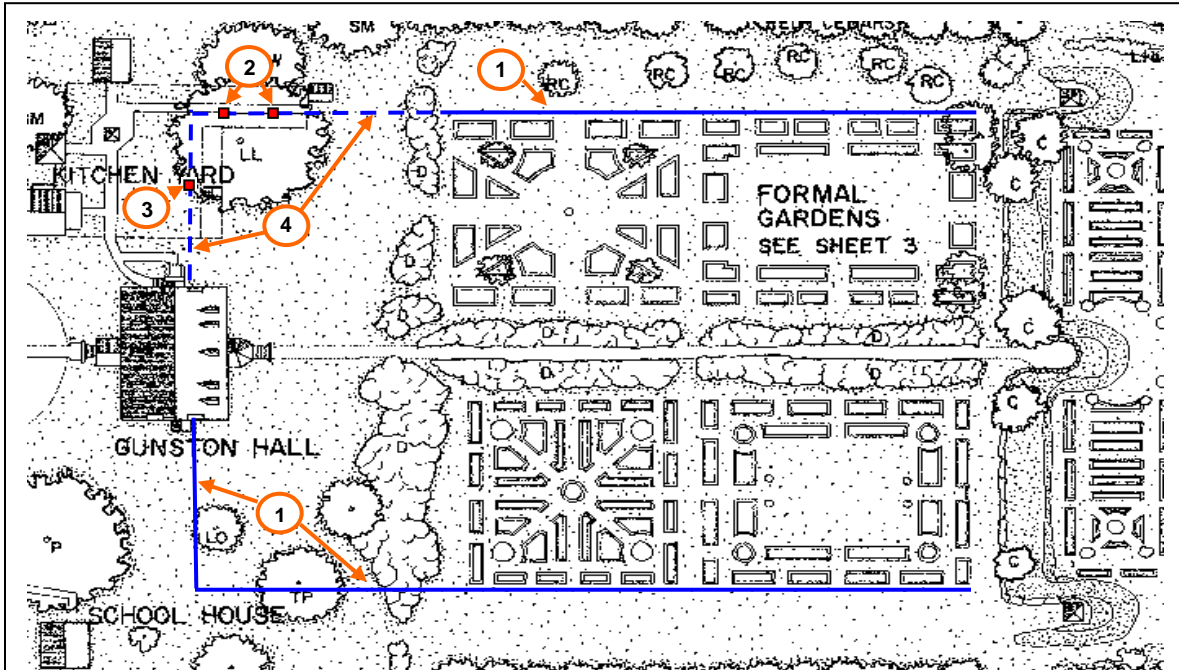


Figure 8. The solid blue lines (1) show the locations of lines of post features. The post features (post holes with post molds) were spaced at 10-foot intervals along these lines and probably represent eighteenth century fences. Two additional post features were found at (2) in 2002. They had the same characteristics as the post holes and molds previously found along the (1) lines and were aligned with one of those lines. The post feature found in 2010, feature F10-10, is shown as the red square at (3). The dashed blue line (4) connecting (2) and (3) suggests that a fence may have enclosed the riverfront area in a symmetrical way. (The base map is a detail from a 1981 drawing made for the Historic American Building Survey.)

underground part would be at a 45° angles to the sides of the above ground part. This has the effect of putting the flat sides of the post molds at a 45° angle to the alignment of the fence they were once a part of. A final, and very noticeable, characteristic of all the post molds is a line of charcoal along their edges. This is a result of the practice of charring the underground parts of the posts in an effort to retard their decomposition. This was not an uncommon practice (Bealer 1980:49), but it has not been seen at Gunston Hall anywhere but those locations shown in Figure 8.

The post features were spaced exactly 10 feet apart. This would be characteristic of a post and rail fence built to colonial Virginia standards, but it could also indicate a paled fence.

(Early paled fences were basically post and rail fences with vertical boards nailed to the rails.) The two post features excavated in 2002 were 20 feet apart. However, the space at 10 feet between them was not excavated, so it is entirely possible that there is actually a row of post features at 10-foot intervals here as well.

As Figure 8 indicates, if a line which runs through the post features on the east side of the garden is extended through the post features found in 2002, and is turned 90° to pass through feature F10-10, it would intersect the east wall of the mansion exactly opposite the point where the line of post features intersects the west wall. If the post features indeed represent fence lines, they would form a symmetrical enclosure around the regular garden and the grassy bowling green just south of the mansion. (We do not yet know what happened to the fence lines at the terraced end of the garden.) This would be quite consistent with the other known symmetrical features of the eighteenth century formal landscape and, of course, with the symmetry of the Georgian-style mansion itself.

Such an arrangement of fences would be at variance with the way the kitchen yard is currently represented. The present configuration is supported by very little in the way of documentary or archaeological evidence. The only contemporary known to have described the original kitchen yard was John Mason. In his *Recollections*, he wrote that it just east of the mansion was "...a high paled yard...within or connected with which yard were the kitchen, well, poultry houses, and other domestic arrangements" (Dunn 2004: 75). The casement of the well in the kitchen yard is considered to be eighteenth century, and the present detached kitchen stands over a possible eighteenth century foundation trench. The remainder of the current kitchen yard display is entirely conjectural.

However, more work will have to be done before the configuration shown can be fully accepted. As was previously mentioned, feature F10-10 was found on almost the last day that it was possible to excavate during the field season. There was not time to examine the post hole fill or determine whether there might be other similar post features at 10-foot intervals along the lines proposed. That work awaits a future field season.

Fence Mitigation

It was planned to excavate 2 x 2 foot test units in the places where post holes for the new fence section would be dug. The first two units excavated (2-10 and 3-10 in Figure 5) yielded the same kind of fill soil and artifact mix as was to be found where the lift was to be constructed. However, the next test unit north along the proposed fence line, 7-10, revealed a well defined kitchen yard stratigraphy. A small amount of fill soil intruded into the south wall of this unit, suggesting that it was close to the edge of the filled basement.

Units 7-10, 9-10, 11-10, 12-10, 13-10, 14-10 and 17-17 all yielded stratified deposits with only minor disturbances by post-nineteenth century activities. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that, during the latter part of the nineteenth and first part of the twentieth centuries, this part of the site was protected by the unbasemented part of the addition to the mansion. Nevertheless, this window into the past was a rather limited one. It was evident that the soil had been massively disturbed on the east, south and west sides of the cluster of units. The intact stratigraphy seems to continue northward, but the excavation of additional contiguous units in that direction would have required the removal of part of a brick walkway and made access to the kitchen yard displays from the mansion awkward.

The uppermost strata of the units in this cluster contained a certain amount of construction debris, especially cut nails. This material probably came from the construction and subsequent demolition of the frame addition. The lower strata yielded an abundance of artifacts that could be considered characteristic of a kitchen yard deposit. In addition to ceramic and container glass shards, there were many bones and oyster shells as well as personal items such as buttons and straight pins. Most of the friable items were broken in small pieces, probably indicating that they were originally deposited on the ground surface and then ground down by foot traffic.*

* The artifacts recovered during the field season had not been completely processed and analyzed at the time of this writing.

Pebble features. The top of a pebble surface was encountered in the eastern portion of excavation unit 7-10, about 0.75 ft. below the ground surface (F1-10 in Figure 5). The feature was about 0.4 ft. thick and composed of pebbles of a kind found in previously excavated eighteenth century walkways at Gunston Hall. What appeared to be the same feature also appeared in unit 9-10, so additional units were opened in an effort to determine the size and configuration of the pebble surface. Three additional contiguous 2'x2' units were excavated along the proposed fence line between units 7-10 and 9-10, and two 4'x4' units were excavated adjacent to these on the east (Figure 5).

This area is capped with a stratum of clayey soil. The stratum extends the entire width of the east front of the mansion, including the area of the basement fill. The fact that Fauber and Knight dug through this stratum during their 1953 excavations indicate that it was deposited sometime between 1949 (or whenever the basement was filled) and 1953. Its purpose was probably to help protect the mansion cellar from water damage by creating a downward slope from the east wall with a relatively low-permeable soil. Below this stratum, in parts of units 14-10 and 17-10, was a layer of ash containing numerous machine cut nails. This may have been the result of burning old lumber from the demolished addition.

Below these strata, and separated from them by a stratum of fine sandy loam of varying thickness and integrity, was the pebble feature first noted in unit 7-10 (Figures 9 and 10). It had well defined parallel margins and was about six feet wide. The margins were at a diagonal to the wall of the mansion and, if extended, would intersect the east mansion entrance on one side and the detached kitchen display at the other. There seems little doubt that the feature was a buried walkway.

Under part of this walkway feature in units 14-10 and 17-10 was a second, similar, feature. In places the two were separated by several inches of a rather humic fine sandy loam; in other places, one was directly on top of the other (Figures 9 and 10). The principle difference in appearance was that one edge of the lower feature extended into the disturbed area to the west of the units, and the other margin ran parallel to the east



Figure 9. The north wall of excavation unit 14-10 is shown partially excavated. The west edge of a pebble walkway is at 1A, with the feature exiting the unit at 1B. The walk ran diagonally through the units excavated, toward the east mansion entrance on one side to the area of the detached kitchen display on the other. Below this feature is a second walkway, this one running parallel to the east side of the mansion. The east edge of this feature is at 2A, and it exits the unit at 2B. At the top of the wall is reddish brown clayey deposit. Below that is a grey ashy deposit containing an abundance of cut nails. The stratigraphy has been disrupted in the center of the photo (below the black and white arrow), perhaps by an earlier archaeological intrusion.

wall of the mansion. Thus, it appears that, in addition to a walkway that ran at a diagonal to the orientation to the house, there was an earlier walkway that, in the segment excavated, ran parallel to one of the walls of the house.

A preliminary examination of the artifacts found under the upper walkway revealed those that could be assigned a date range were mainly from the eighteenth century, but some were items that could not be present before the early nineteenth century. (However, nothing was found that was first manufactured after about 1830). Based on this, the upper walkway would seem to have been laid down in the first quarter or so of the nineteenth century. The dateable artifacts found under the lower walkway, however, were all items that could have been present during the eighteenth century. This walkway, therefore, may



Figure 10. This view of the partially excavated unit 17-10 shows the north wall and part of the floor. 1A, 1B, 2A and 2B are the same as in Figure 9. The upper pebble walk lies directly on the lower walk between 1A and 2A. Feature F6-10 is at the lower left. The margin of the post hole is at 3, and 4 indicates remains of the post itself. The glass artifacts in the sidewall at left are embedded in the post hole fill.

have been in use during George Mason’s time. That this walkway was parallel to the side of the mansion is consistent with the fact that the “built” elements of the Mason landscape are all aligned with the mansion, emphasizing its dominant position in the landscape* .

It should be mentioned that yet a third possible pebble feature was found below the level of the lower walkway. This was approximately at the where the sidewall meets the unit

* An exception is the “goose’s foot” arrangement of the cherry tree avenue flanking the entrance drive, which focuses attention on the mansion in a different way (Shonyo 2009: 8-15).

floor in Figure 9. The feature was almost a monolayer and not heavily populated with pebbles. It may have been scatter from a nearby pebble surface.

Post feature. During their explorations in 1953, Fauber and Knight uncovered a line of post remains near the east wall of the mansion. The posts seemed to form a line that ran parallel to almost the full width of the east wall, and then turn eastward at a 90° angle just short of the northeast corner (figure 11). According to Fauber (1953: 6), “These could have very well been the remains of the posts that supported the high paled-fence mentioned in the documentary research.”

The idea that the posts may have been the remains of the paled fence mentioned in John Mason’s *Recollections* (Dunn 2004: 75) persisted for years (e.g., Sears 1984: 3). The location of Fauber and Knights posts remains was used for the original placement of the paled fence in the 1976 construction of the kitchen yard display. However, a fence in the position of the post remains found by Fauber and Knight would have placed what was later identified as the detached kitchen outside the kitchen yard. Furthermore, Fauber and Knight appear to have made no attempt to determine the age of the posts.

The post feature F6-10, found in excavation unit 17-10 (Figure 5), was exactly the same distance from the mansion as the corner post reported by Fauber (Figure 11). The feature differed from eighteenth century post features previously found at Gunston Hall in many respects, not the least of which was the fact that some of the post wood was present (Figures 10, 12). The post hole fill contained a significant number of nineteenth century artifacts, including an 1812 half cent and nineteenth century container glass.

Included in the later category was an intact conical ink bottle made with a two part vertical mold having a separate base piece. This kind of bottle would have been manufactured from about 1850 until around the turn of the twentieth century (Jones and Sullivan 1989: 28; Kovel and Kovel 1996: 123). Also, the post hole had been dug through the lower, probably eighteenth century, walkway, which would put its age later than that of the walkway. All of this indicates that the posts could not have been

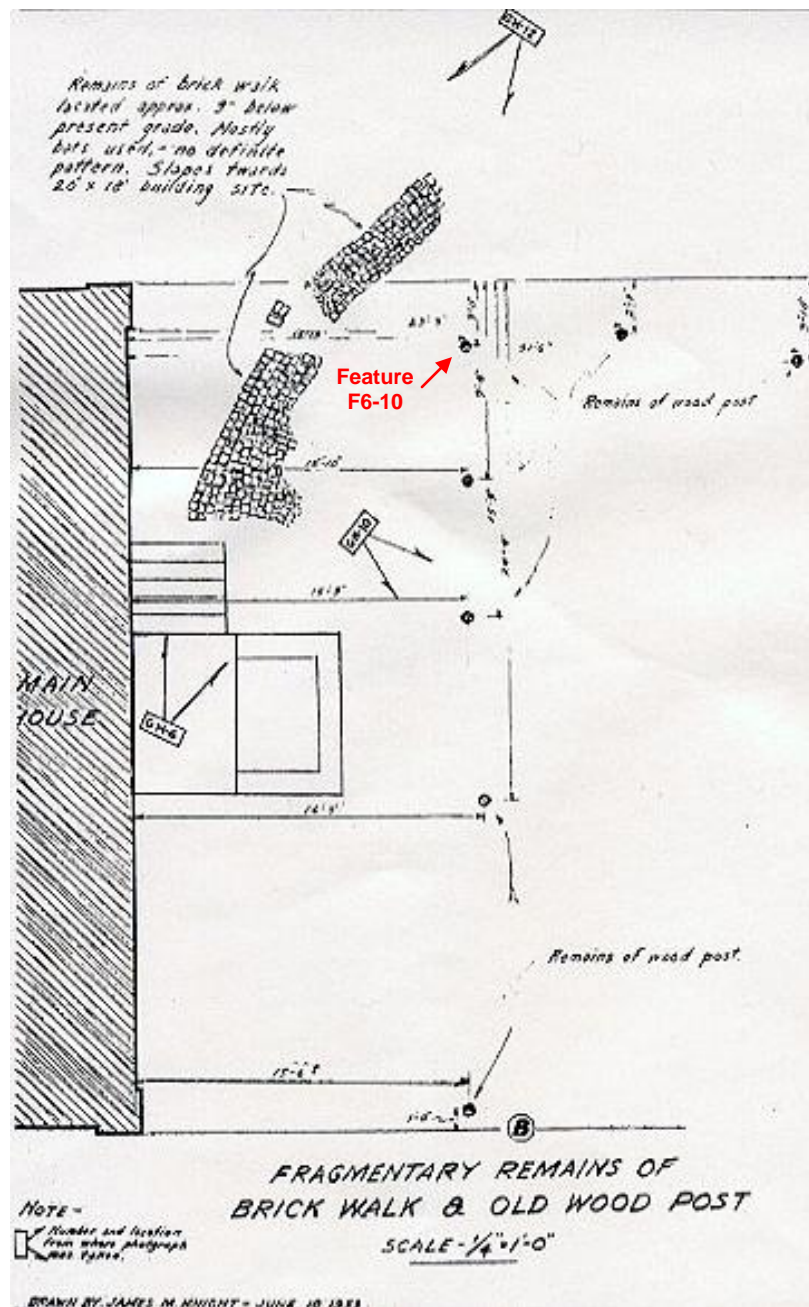


Figure 11. This drawing by James Knight shows the features found during his 1953 exploration of the area just east of the mansion. Feature F6-10 of the 2010 excavations corresponds to one of the post remains found by Knight. Note that the posts are not perfectly aligned with each other, as they would have to be in anything but the most carelessly constructed paled fence. (Detail from Fauber 1953: attachment.)

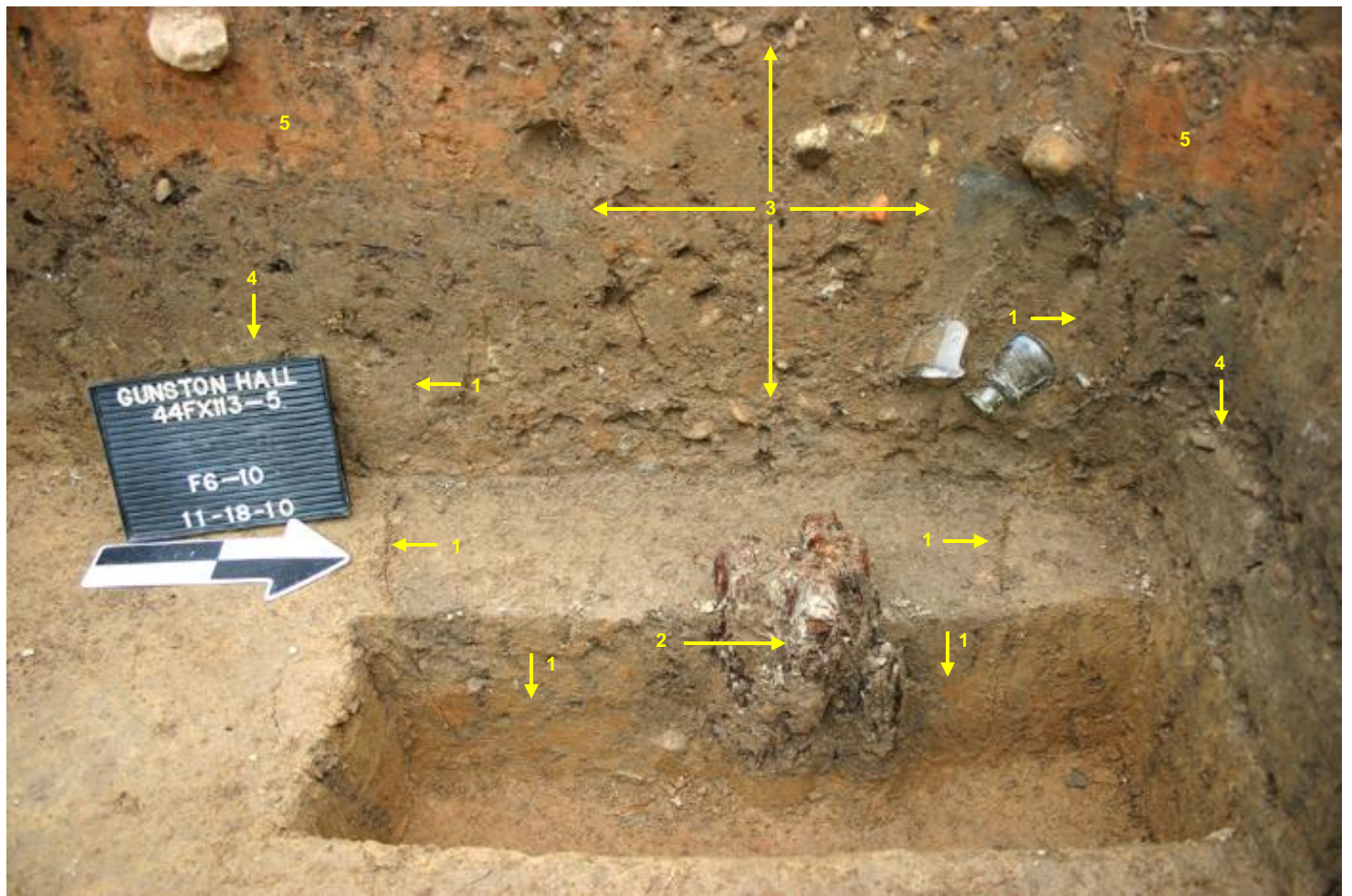


Figure 12. Post feature F6-10 and some of the elements associated with it. 1. Limits of the post hole. 2. Remains of the post. 3. Hole dug into the post feature, probably by Knight in 1953. 4. The lower pebble walkway component of feature F1-10. The post hole was dug through this feature. 5. Clayey “cap” deposited sometime between 1949 and 1953, when hole 3 was dug through it.

associated with the eighteenth century paled kitchen yard fence described by John Mason.

The post feature was close to the sidewall of the unit, so the associated stratigraphy could be easily seen (Figure 12). Like elsewhere east of the mansion wall, the area of excavation unit had been capped by a deposit of clayey soil. As discussed previously, this cap appears to have been laid down sometime between, 1949 and 1953. The part of the cap over the post has been dug through, and the soil under the cap removed (and

replaced) to a depth of about 1.5 feet. This was almost certainly done by Knight in 1953. Since he noted the presence of a post here, he must have removed or destroyed the part of the post that was within the cavity he dug.

Whatever fence that these post features represent must have been present during the nineteenth century before the addition to the mansion was erected, but no known documents make any reference to it. It is also possible that the features represent the pilings of an earth-fast structure* but, again, there is no record of any structure that would correspond to the pattern of the post features.

Knight's drawing (Figure 11) indicates that he also excavated a brick walkway near the east wall of the mansion. Again, there apparently was no effort made to determine the age of this feature. The area shown in the drawing was investigated with a soil probe in 2010, but no evidence of the brick walk could be found.

* Note in Figure 12 that the bottom of the post is somewhat below the bottom of the post hole. One possible explanation for this would be that the weight of an overlying structure pressed the post into the soil below the hole.

Search for the Carriage Circle

A carriage circle was an almost universal feature of the eighteenth century plantation home landscape. It is unlikely that Gunston Hall was an exception. However, as yet no documentary or other evidence has emerged that would verify the presence of a carriage circle here in George Mason's time.

The earliest aerial photo of Gunston Hall, taken c.1920, shows a stirrup-shaped "circle" on the land front (north) side of the mansion (Figure 12). The surface evidence of this feature was removed in 1976, but much of the subsurface part of the roadbed is still largely intact. Sections of it were investigated during the 2005, 2006 and 2007 field seasons (Shonyo 2008: 9-12). The artifactual evidence indicated that the stirrup-shaped drive could be no earlier than very late nineteenth century. This is consistent with a statement collected in 1952 by Gunston Hall Superintendent Montague from a Mr. Haislip, "who said he remembered the place during Col. Daniels' time..."* Montague wrote, "I questioned him about the circle and he said he did not remember any circle, but did remember a pathway straight to the Mansion" (R.L. Montague to P.M. Sullivan, letter 5 February 1952, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton, Virginia).

During the 2007 field season, a series of 2' x 2' test units was excavated at 12-foot intervals along a line set parallel to the north face of the mansion and 70 feet from it. The line extended 108 feet west from the entry drive. No evidence of a feature suggesting a carriage circle could be found. The soil to a depth of two feet appeared to be a rather uniform fill soil, containing an unstratified mix of eighteenth and nineteenth century artifacts. This apparent fill rested directly on a clayey subsoil. As part of the same project, vertical sections were made of the stirrup-shaped drive that was partially removed in 1976. The sections were excavated down to the clayey subsoil. There was no evidence of an older drive below the more recent one. The soil encountered down to the subsoil was the same kind of fill seen in the test units (Shonyo 2008a: Figure 4).

* Edward Daniels owned Gunston Hall from 1868 until 1891. It is not clear from Mr. Haislip's statement, however, how far back in this period that his memory extended.



Figure 13. This detail from a c.1920 aerial photograph shows the stirrup-shaped drive on the land front side of the mansion. (Photo from the Gunston Hall Archives.)

It appears, therefore, that much or all of the area that may have been occupied by an eighteenth century carriage circle had been obliterated by some sort of land filling operation. The land fill would have been deposited at some time before the stirrup-shaped drive was constructed.

One area which may have been traversed by an eighteenth century carriage circle, but which had not been examined, was that between the north wall of the mansion and the drive that runs parallel to it. This drive is part of a road that has been known since the eighteenth century as Log Town Road. An examination of archival photos from the late nineteenth century (e.g., Figure 15) revealed that this road once passed closer to the mansion than the present drive does. It was decided to expose the remains of the older road, which was assumed to lie between the present drive and the mansion, and try to ascertain whether it was intersected by a carriage circle.

To this end, a 5' x 5' unit was excavated with its southwest corner at N65W65. (That put it 25 feet north of the north wall of the mansion and even with the northwest corner.) A scatter of pebbles was found a short distance below the surface, with a densely packed



Figure 14. Part of an old road runs horizontally across the lower portion of excavation unit 18-10, while a presumed walkway runs parallel to it in the upper portion. 1. Buried road (Feature F3-10). 2. Cobbles at the base of the road. 3. Vertical section of a possible walkway (Feature F4-10). There was a space of 1.4 feet between the margins of features F3-10 and F4-10. (The black and white arrow has inadvertently been placed to point south, rather than the usual north.)

surface of pebbles in a fine sandy loam matrix appearing at slightly over 0.4 foot below the surface (1 in Figure 14). This was almost certainly the remains of the road seen in the nineteenth century photographs. The pebbly deposit was divided into upper and lower components, separated by a layer of fine sandy loam. This suggests that the road may have deteriorated at some point, and was repaired by the deposition of the upper layer of pebbles.

Immediately below the pebble beds, and arranged along its southern margin, was an approximately one-foot wide strip of cobbles (2 in Figure 14). The other eighteenth century roads and walkways found at Gunston Hall have always had cobbles as their base

layer. If the feature does indeed date to the eighteenth century, the cobbles other than those in the strip may have been dislodged in the process of making road repairs. The north side of the road has not yet been excavated so, of course, it is not yet known whether the pattern of cobbles is repeated on that side.

A second pebble feature was found in the unit (Feature F4-10; 3 in Figure 14). Its upper surface was about 0.4 foot below the ground surface, which is the same depth as the top of the soil layer that separated the two pebble layers of feature F3-10. The feature ran east-west across the width of the unit, parallel to F3-10. The edges of the two features were 1.4 feet apart. F4-10 was about 0.4 foot thick and composed entirely of pebbles, with no cobbles evident in the part sectioned. It is possible that this feature was a walkway running parallel to the road.

The artifacts found in association with the two features had not been processed at the time of this writing. However, an inspection of the artifacts as they were removed from the units indicates that those recovered from depths below the features may be items which could have been present in the eighteenth century.

A second 5'x5' unit, designated 19-10, was opened to the north and west (N70W75) of 18-10. The purpose was to locate the north edge of the buried road, and then follow that edge to find out if it intersected a possible carriage circle. However, it became necessary to postpone completion of the excavation in order to do additional mitigation work in the kitchen yard. The project will be resumed during the 2011 field season.

* * * *

Fauber (1953: 8) mentions encountering a gravel feature northwest of the mansion during his trenching operations ("gravel drive" in Figure 1). The feature was reported to be 12 to 16 inches below the ground surface. Judging from the drawing, the feature would seem to be of the right shape and in the right place to be of interest as a possible carriage circle. Unfortunately, most of the feature would be under (or, more likely, obliterated by) the road that now runs parallel to the land front side of the mansion. However, a small part of the most northwestern part of the feature appears in Fauber's drawing (Figure 1) to

protrude a little beyond the present road. The use of a soil probe in this area in an effort to locate the gravel feature was not successful. A 2'x2' test unit (20-10) was then excavated slightly to the west of the area probed. A pebble surface was, in fact, exposed in this unit at a depth of 1.2 feet below the ground surface. However, it was not clear whether this was the "gravel drive" of Fauber and Knight, or the remains of the drive removed in 1976. This aspect of the project could not be completed in 2010 and will be continued during the 2011 field season.

Other Inquiries

It is worth briefly mentioning two lines inquiry that will have a bearing of future excavations. These involved a carriage mounting block and the curtilage that enclosed the mansion.

Carriage Mounting Block

Photographs from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries show a carriage mounting block just outside the land front entrance to the mansion. It is not known whether the block dates to Mason's time. Further, the various camera angles and degrees of foreshortening exhibited in the photos made it difficult to determine precisely where the block was located.

Gunston Hall Director David Reese and the present author reviewed all the known photos showing the block in an effort to determine its position relative to the portico. The photo reproduced here as Figure 15 was particularly useful in this respect. The human figures, especially the man sitting on the block, lent the image a certain sense scale and depth. It was possible to determine where the photographer would have to be standing to take this photo and, from that, the most likely position of the mounting block.

The position was marked for future reference with spikes driven into the ground. It may be possible to find evidence in the ground of the footprint of the block. An examination of any artifacts lying under the footprint may provide clues concerning when the block was set in place.

Curtilage

In his *Recollections*, John Mason speaks of an "enclosed ground," (Dunn 2004: 77), which probably was a curtilage or formally-maintained area surrounding the mansion. He provides no clues as to the dimensions or configuration of this area.

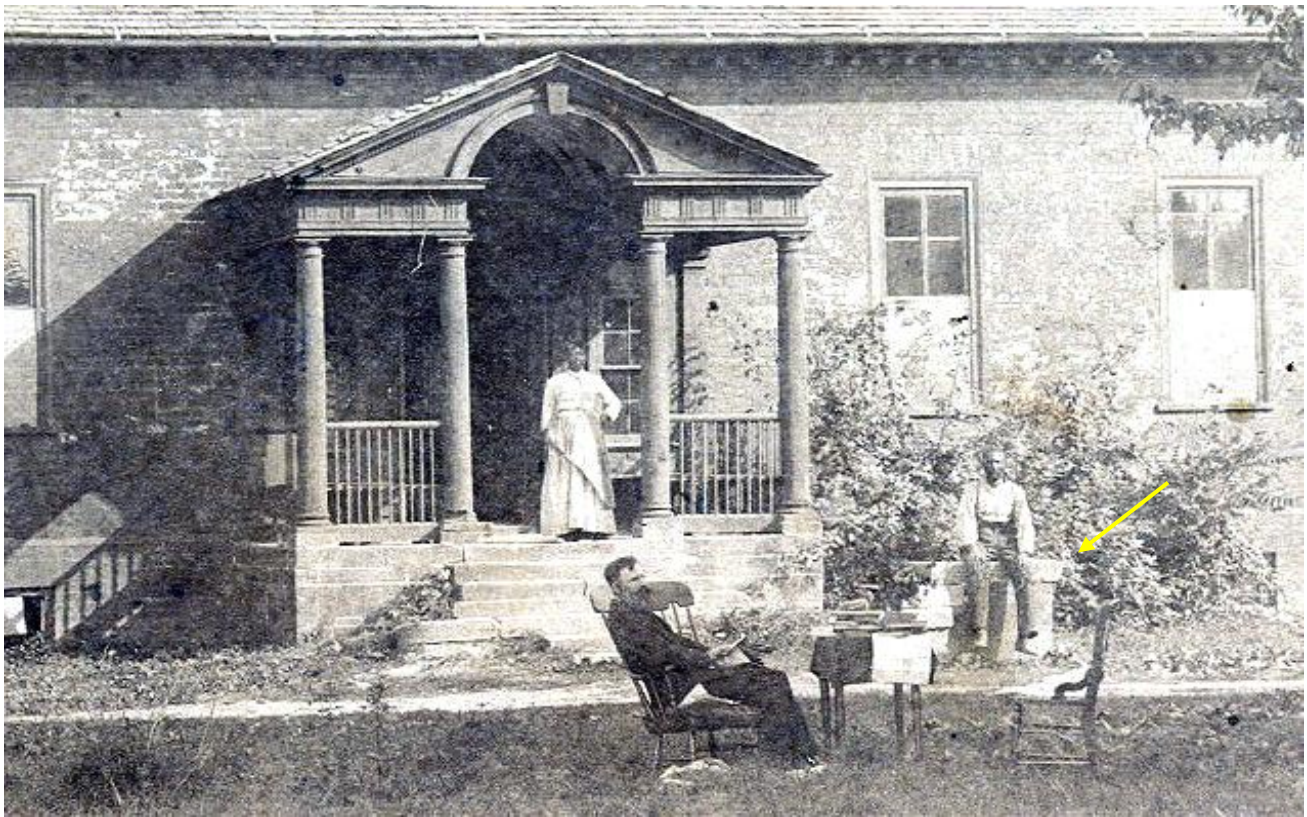


Figure 15. A carriage mounting block can be seen (arrow) just outside the land front entrance in this c.1880 photograph. The road pictured is closer to the mansion than is the present day road. The man seated in the foreground is Col. Edward Daniels, then owner of Gunston Hall. (Detail of a photo from the Gunston Hall Archives.)

During the summer of 2010, an old rail fence was removed from around a meadow which lay just to the west of the entrance road. (Part of the meadow is visible in the lower part of Figure 13.) David Reese suggested that, since fence lines tend to stay in the same place through the years – even though the fences themselves get replaced – perhaps the fence just removed marked the margin of George Mason’s curtilage. To test this possibility, a line parallel to the west side of the mansion was surveyed both north and south from a corner post of the removed fence

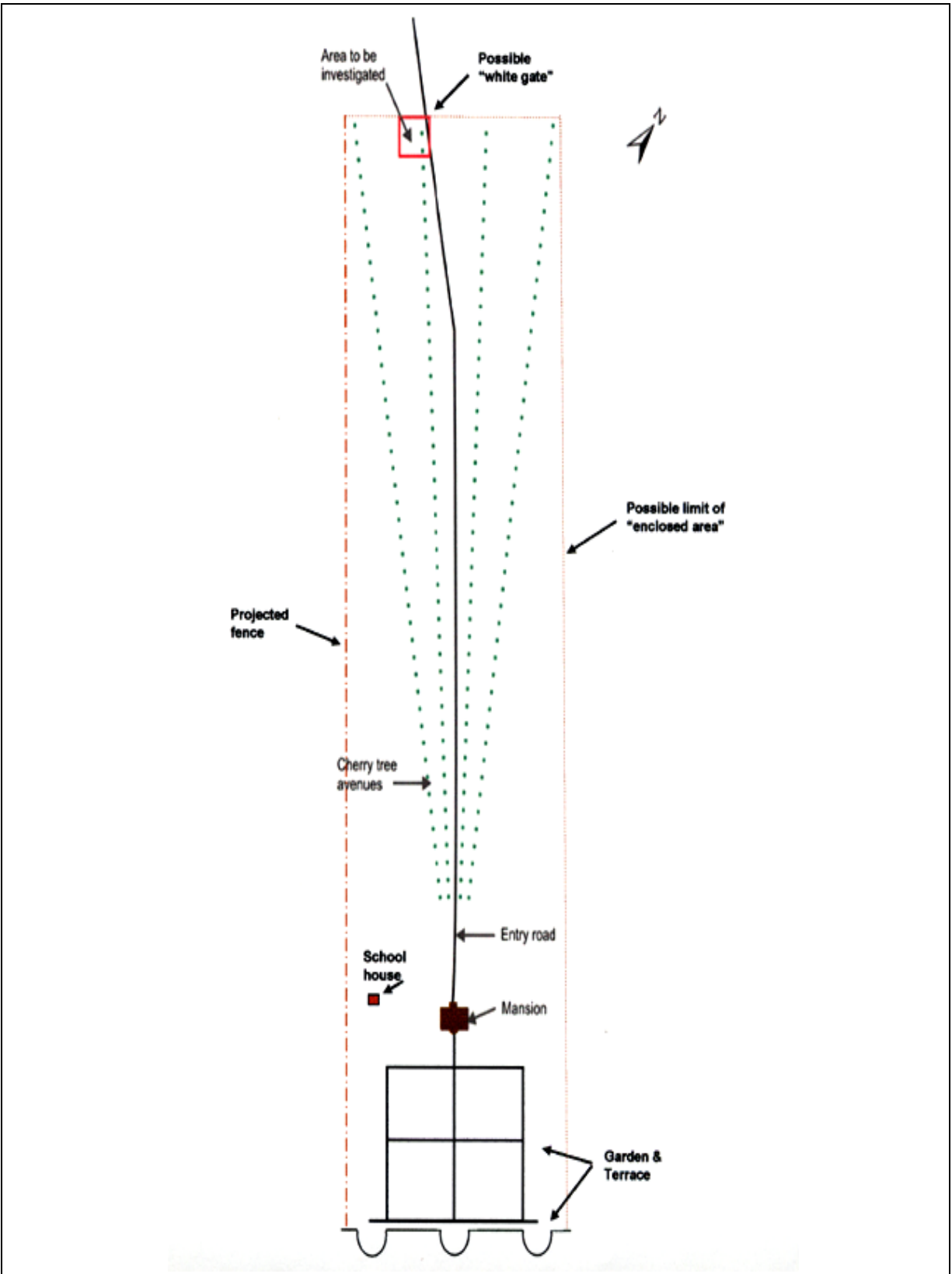


Figure 16. Schematic of a possible configuration for the Gunston Hall curtilage.

A descendent of George Mason, Kate Mason Rowland, wrote that there was a “white gate” on the entry road about 1,400 feet from the mansion, where the cherry tree avenues ended (Rowland 1892: 106). It was surmised that the white gate may have provided entry through an enclosure into the curtilage, so the line was surveyed northward 1,400 feet. It came as something of a surprise to find that the surveyed line ended at almost the same place that the west-most line of cherry trees in the avenue had previously been projected to end (Shonyo 2009:8-11). When the line was extended south, it met the terrace rim at just about the point where the “sculpted” part of the terrace slope met the natural terrain. This permitted the construction of a very reasonable hypothesis concerning a possible configuration of the curtilage, as diagramed in Figure 16.

Summary and Conclusions

Mansion addition

Sometime during the second half of the nineteenth century, Edward Daniels built a frame addition on the east side of the mansion (R.L. Montague to P.M. Sullivan, letter 5 February 1952, Archives, Gunston Hall Plantation, Lorton Virginia). This appears to have served primarily as a kitchen. It was not realized until shortly before the start of the kitchen yard mitigation project, however, that the structure had a basement. Excavation revealed that the basement did not occupy the entire area under the addition. It extended from the south end of the addition to a point just beyond the present east mansion entrance. A brick and concrete pier found during the project may have helped support a corner of a porch attached to the addition.

The addition was demolished shortly after management of the site passed to the Colonial Dames of America, and the basement cavity was filled in at that time. The fill soil contains construction debris as well as a wide variety of other kinds of artifacts dating from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. It is not known where the fill soil was taken from, but a possibility would be the area of the Director's residence, the construction of which commenced at about the same time as the demolition work.

Walkways

The part of the addition that was not situated over the basement served to protect some of the original fabric of the kitchen yard. In addition to an abundance of artifacts, the area yielded parts of two walkways. The upper of the two was orientated on a diagonal to the side of the mansion. It may have been laid between the east entrance to the mansion basement and the detached kitchen. A preliminary assessment of associated artifacts suggests that this walk may have been in use during the early nineteenth century. In the area excavated it passed over a second, lower, walkway which was orientated parallel to the side of the mansion. The artifacts associated with this feature indicate that it was in use during the eighteenth century. This walk has the potential for assisting our

understanding of the layout of the mason-era kitchen yard and will be investigated further.

Post features

Two significant post hole/mold features were uncovered during the course of the mitigation work. One, Feature F6-10, proved to be of unquestionable nineteenth century origin. This dispels the previous suggestion this post and its companions were part of the high paled fence mentioned by John Mason. The other post feature, F10-10, is far more interesting in that it has the potential for altering our picture of two important landscape features. First, it suggests that a symmetrical fencing system served to enclose the regular garden and the bowling green on the south side of the mansion. Further, the fences abutted the mansion at equivalent spots on both the east and west sides, just short of the basement entrances. Secondly, one of the sections of the fence must have part of the kitchen yard fence, which would give the kitchen yard enclosure a configuration quite different than is currently presented. Obviously, additional study is required to test whether the interpretation suggested by F10-10 has any validity.

Carriage circle

It has been shown that an older, now buried, road did pass closer to the north front of the mansion than does the current road, and that the older road may date to the eighteenth century. It remains to be seen whether the road was intersected by a carriage circle.

Work Plan for 2011

The principle task in the coming field season will be to resolve the question of the carriage circle. The north side of the old road exposed in excavation unit 18-10 will be sought and then followed to determine whether it is intersected by a carriage circle. Another attempt will also be made to locate the “gravel driveway” encountered by Fauber and Knight in 1953. If it is found and can be dated to the eighteenth century, it could certainly be a strong candidate for part of a carriage circle. Simultaneously, the carriage circle model presented in Section 3 of this report will be tested through appropriate excavations.

The lower of the two pebble walkways found during the mitigation project has the potential for enhancing our understanding of the eighteenth century kitchen yard. The walk seems to have been destroyed south of where it was found, but it may continue northward at least partially intact. Therefore, excavations will be extended in that direction with the intention of following the walk as far as possible.

A project that has been pending now for several years is the investigation at the confluence of the white gate (and presumed associated fence), cherry tree avenues and, now, a possible curtilage enclosure. It is hoped that time will permit getting at least a start on that effort.

Finally, the shovel test pit survey of the west meadow, begun in 2010 (see Section 2), will continue as time and manpower permit.

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SECTION 2

COMING FULL CIRCLE AT GEORGE MASON'S GUNSTON HALL

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Gunston Hall, the home of George Mason, holds many mysteries, including how exactly carriages would approach the land side entrance of the mansion. Almost sixty years of archaeological excavations have revealed precious little information. Therefore, archaeologists must excavate facts rather than artifacts. In light of this, the chain of ownership will be presented along with any known changes done to the land side lawn during residence. Influences on Mason at the time he built Gunston Hall will be explored. Plantations he lived in and those belonging to relatives, friends, and associates are researched for clues. Literature available in the colonies at the time of Gunston Hall's construction is reviewed. The plantations he designed for his sons, as well as the plantation built by one son after Mason's death, have been examined for hints. A possible plan for the carriage circle, based on this research and archaeological evidence, is presented.

Contents

Introduction	48
Part I: Ownership of Gunston Hall from George Mason IV to the Commonwealth of Virginia	49
George Mason IV	49
George Mason V and George Mason VI	54
Eleanor Mason	55
George Mason Graham	56
William Merrill and William L. Dawson	58
Colonel Edward Daniels	59
Henry and Henrietta Sheets	61
Emma and Joseph Specht	66
Paul Kester	72
Louis Hertle	73
Commonwealth of Virginia	75
Part II: A Proposed Plan for the Carriage Circle at Gunston Hall	77
Residences of George Mason IV prior to Gunston Hall	78
People and residences in the vicinity known to George Mason IV during the 1740s and 1750s	79
Dimensions of the carriage circles at Belvoir and Mount Vernon	89
Homes belonging to the sons of George Mason IV	93
Lexington	93
Hollin Hall	96
Analoatan	98
Comparisons	99
Proposed carriage circle plan	101
George Mason IV's knowledge of mathematics	101
Pattern books & books on perspective available to George Mason	103
Carriage circles at other plantations	106
Possible shape of the carriage circle feature at Gunston Hall	108
Conclusion	111
Appendix A: Additional people and residences studied	115
Appendix B: Golden Rectangle Calculations	119
Appendix C: Calculations used in circumscribing and oval around two circles	121
References Cited	123

Introduction

Defining George Mason is no easy feat. Most would quickly say he was a Patriot, the Father of the Bill of Rights. Some might say he was an intellectual, sought out by Virginia for the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention. There are those who would say he was a dedicated family man, greatly concerned for his children's welfare, especially when they were adults.

How many would answer that Mason was an architect, a gardener, or a mathematician? How many would say that he and his wife raised the bar for interior design by allowing Buckland to design the only "Chinese Room" in Virginia?

Mason was a man of many talents and facets. He was also a man of mystery, at least concerning how he designed the land side lawn at Gunston Hall. How did carriages actually approach the mansion door? The cherry tree-lined drive is well known but what did the last two hundred feet between the cherry trees and the door actually look like?

There is no easy answer to this question. Archaeological excavations have revealed very little evidence. Traditional archaeology may not be the complete answer. Perhaps an excavation of facts will help solve this mystery.

The first step toward revealing what Mason might have planned is to identify changes made to the land side lawn by subsequent owners. In order to do this, the chain of ownership must be established. This is anything but straight forward. Next, any changes made by the owners would need to be recorded. Again, this is no small task.

It is also necessary to look at Mason himself. What influenced him as he planned Gunston Hall? What was he capable of planning and implementing without help? All indications are that he planned the mansion and landscaping by himself. What plantations was he familiar with? Did he copy someone else's carriage circle at Gunston Hall? Did he recreate the Gunston Hall carriage circle at either of the homes he built for his sons, George and Thomson? Did his son, John, incorporate elements of the Gunston Hall land side lawn into the landscaping at his plantation, Analostan?

These things were considered in an attempt to discover George Mason's carriage circle at Gunston Hall. The results of the research and a plan for the carriage circle are presented.

Let your imagination be your travel guide. Your carriage awaits as we move from the cherry trees to the door of the mansion, coming full circle at Gunston Hall.

Part I: Ownership of Gunston Hall from George Mason IV to the Commonwealth of Virginia

Gunston Hall was home to several owners and their families throughout the years since the construction of the mansion was completed between the years 1755 and 1759. Some of the individuals and families that had the privilege of living under the roof of Gunston Hall are well known to us and others escape identification since Gunston Hall was also leased and used as a summer boarding house. (Gunston Hall (GH) 2009a, 2009b) Gunston Hall's website makes the following important point about George Mason IV's wish for his home: "Though George Mason IV built Gunston Hall as the "family seat" designed to remain in the family hands in perpetuity, this was not to be the case." (GH 2009b) Although Mason's wish for his home was not realized, the man as well as his home was respected and revered by several of its owners. Colonel Edward Daniels, a later owner, was an example of this respect and reverence. In a letter to the editor of the *Fairfax Herald* in 1907, he spoke of his reason for the purchase of Gunston Hall and made the following statement: "This outlay was on purely sentimental grounds, out of respect for the great man who built it, and the many noble patriots, statesmen and soldiers who had crossed its threshold and been sheltered by its roof." (Daniels 1907)

A look will be taken not only at George Mason's involvement in planning Gunston Hall, but also at subsequent owners and occupants and changes they made, if any, to the front lawn since this was the side where the carriage circle would have been located. In researching the many owners and occupants of Gunston Hall difficulties in determining ownership were encountered. While the ownership of Gunston Hall is straight forward in some cases, others are still not clear and further research is warranted.

Examining the ownership of Gunston Hall is an important endeavor. Each owner or occupant is a possible source of information as to the design of the carriage circle. An owner may have left a diary, correspondence, sketches, photographs or other useful information as to the design. Perhaps, there was an account of a wedding of a daughter or son, a funeral of a loved one, or an account of a party held to honor a special guest or guests. A subsequent owner or occupant might have left an accounting ledger noting payment for gravel to repair the driveway; paid someone to plant shrubs around the circular drive or paid for trimming of the 200 cherry trees that lined the approach to the house. Clues the owners or occupants may have left may not be as obvious as the examples given above. It is important to remember that each occupant or owner was once flesh and blood as we are now and had hobbies, interest, social circles, etc. Researchers can look at who they talked to, what books they read and what art hung on their walls. Like archaeologists researchers can dig and sift, but instead of dirt and soil we dig instead through paper; sifting through content of books, files and internet sites looking for sherds or clues through the examination of the lives of those who called Gunston Hall their home.

Gunston Hall's website provides us with a chain of ownership which was used as a starting point and guideline for researching. As you will see, this research revealed new information and paints a somewhat different picture of the ownership, sometimes adding to, and sometimes modifying what Gunston Hall's website states. The following is what is provided about the ownership by Gunston Hall's website:

After his death [George Mason IV] in 1792, the mansion passed in quick succession to his son, George Mason V, who died in 1796, and then to his grandson, George Mason VI. Upon his death in 1834, his second wife Eleanor Clifton Patton Mason inherited the residence. She and George Mason Graham, who owned part of the property, sold Gunston Hall by 1867 to William Merrill and William Dawson. They in turn deeded the property to Edward Daniels in 1868. During the 1880s, the house was leased to Frank and S.M. Smith, who boarded local residents during the summer. Emma and Joseph Specht purchased the house in 1891 from Edward Daniels. The Specht's daughter Adelaide sold the house to Paul and Vaughn Kester in 1907. After his brother's death, Paul Kester sold the house to Louis Hertle in 1912. The Hertles were the last private owners of Gunston Hall before its gift to the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1949 to be administered by Regents from the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. (GH 2009b)

George Mason IV was born on December 11, 1725. His father, George Mason III, died in 1735. At the time of his father's death George Mason IV was 10 years old. His father died leaving no will. Since George Mason IV was the eldest son he inherited his father's estate and came into possession, receiving full title, when he became of age in 1746. His inherited estates included property in Virginia as well as Maryland. (Price 1982:8)

George Mason IV married Ann Eilbeck in 1750. George and Ann Mason were residing in their new home, Gunston Hall, in 1759. (Lembo 2001:1-2) According to the Historic American Building Survey or HABS report for Gunston Hall, George Mason was very involved in the construction of Gunston Hall. The HABS report makes the following statement:

It is known that George Mason was a meticulous man who took a personal interest in every facet of his house. No matter who may have been in charge of the building operation, Mason himself must be credited in large measure. In 1763, he wrote a letter to Alexander Henderson of Colchester giving specific instructions on the proper ratio of lime and sand in brick mortar. In that letter he states, "when I built my house I was at (some?) pain to measure all the Lime & Sand as my mortar was made up, & always had two Beds, one for outside- Work 2/3ds. Lime & 1/3d. Sand, the other equal parts of Lime & Sand for the Inside-work-, ... and there is no other way to be sure of having your mortar good without Waste, & the different parts of yr. Building equally strong. (Price 1982:11)

The HABS report also has the completion date of the house between 1755 and 1759 and the report further states, "... it is now known that the mansion was begun well before

William Buckland's arrival in the fall of 1755. The best guess is that the basic construction of the house was virtually completed before Buckland's arrival in the fall of 1755." (Price 1982:10) We can conclude that the front yard most likely was already laid out before Buckland arrived and that George Mason IV had the knowledge to be involved in its design. We also know that George Mason was experienced with surveying. In Kevin Shupe's Surveying the Land section of *Gunston Hall Plantation, Architecturally Speaking*, he states the following:

George Mason appears to have done some of his own surveying. One of his first activities after moving to his property on Dogues Neck (what we now call Mason's Neck) was to conduct a detailed survey of this property. While this is the only known Mason survey, we do know that he and Washington surveyed their adjoining properties in April 1769.

The first step in building Gunston Hall was to survey the plot and establish the dimensions of the house.

In 18th century terminology a surveyor was often the person who oversaw the building of a house. (Shupe 2002)

There is other evidence of George Mason IV's building knowledge that would back up the likelihood of Mason's involvement in the design of the carriage circle. Mason was a member of Pohick Church and church records show that he was on a committee that supervised the building of the new church in 1774. Upon the death of the contractor, records from the church show that he took over the duties of the contractor. (Shupe 2002) Also, it appears that George Mason IV was involved in the supervision of the building of Hollin Hall, a house for his son Thomson Mason. Thomson Mason and his wife were living in Hollin Hall by December of 1788, but the house was not complete at this time as evidenced in correspondence from George Mason to his son Thomson in May of 1792. In this letter George Mason IV writes about the difficulties of obtaining front porch materials. (GH 2009c)

George Mason IV had the knowledge of surveying and construction, opportunity to plan the carriage circle before Buckland arrived on the scene, wealth, and desire to have been very much involved with the design of the carriage circle. It was, after all, his house that he planned on sharing with his bride and young family. He was most likely eager to please his new bride and we also know he wanted his house to live on long after he was gone and be enjoyed by many future generations of the Mason family.

Very little descriptive information of Gunston Hall plantation exists from George Mason IV's time. The most descriptive piece comes from his son John's *Recollections*. John Mason was the 8th child of George Mason IV and Ann Eilbeck, born on April 4, 1766, at Mattawoman. In Lois Lembo's, *Fifty Years of Gunston Hall Archaeology* report, Lois states the following about John Mason. "Although John Mason had not lived permanently at Gunston Hall for more than 50 years when he wrote his "Recollections"

for his children and grand children, his memories are vivid and detailed. In areas where excavations have been done, archaeology has also proven the “Recollections” accurate.” (Lembo 2001:1-3) Important to the research of the carriage circle is John Mason’s recollection of the north front lawn or “principal approach” to Gunston Hall. The following is John Mason’s description:

On the north front, by which was the principal approach, was an extensive lawn kept closely pastured, thro’ the midst of which led a spacious avenue girded by long, double ranges, symmetrical rows of that hardy & stately cherry tree, the common black-heart, raised from the stone & so the more fair & uniform in their growth, commencing at about 200 feet from the house and extending thence for about 1200 feet, the carriage way being in the center & the foot ways on either side between the two rows forming each double range of trees. But what was remarkable and most imposing in this avenue was that the four rows of trees being so aligned as to counteract that deceptions in our vision, which, in looking down long parallel lines, makes them seem to approach as they recede. Advantage was taken of the circumstance, and another very pleasant delusion was effected. A common center was established, exactly in the middle of the outer door way of the mansion on that front, from which were made to diverge at a certain angle, the four lines on which these trees were planted. The plantation not commencing but at a considerable distance there from (about 200 feet as before mentioned) and so carefully and accurately had they been planted & trained and dressed in accordance, each with the others as they progressed their growth, that from the point described as taken for the common center –and when they had got to a great size – only the first four trees were visible. More than once I have known my father, under whose especial [*sic*] care this singular and beautiful display of trees had been arranged and preserved, and who set great value on them, amuse his friends by inviting some gentleman or lady (who, visiting Gunston for the first time may have happened to have arrived after night, or may have come by way of the river and entered by the other front and so not have seen the avenue) to the north front to see the grounds. And then by placing them exactly in the middle of the doorway and asking, “How many trees do you see before you?” “Four,” would necessarily be the answer, because, the fact was, that those at the end of the four rows next [to] the house, completely – and especially when in full leaf – concealed from that view, body & top, all the others, tho’ more than fifty in each row. Then came the request, “Be good enough to place yourself now close to either side of the door way & then tell us how many you see.” The answer would now be with delight and surprise, but as necessarily, “A great number, and to a vast extent, but how many it is impossible to say!” And in truth, to the eye placed at only about two feet to the right or left of the first position, here were presented, as if by magic, four long and apparently close walls of wood, made up of the bodies of the trees, and above as many of rich foliage constituted by their boughs stretching as seemed to an immeasurable distance. (Dunn 2004:74-75)

John Mason’s description gives us a vivid and reliable picture of the front lawn from which we can draw much necessary information for our idea of how the carriage circle may have looked.

According to *Gunston Hall Room Use Study* report Charles Phillips and Paul Buchanan were hired by the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall in 1982. Their job was to reassess the entire structure. In discussing changes that were made after the house was occupied in 1759, they mention the porch on the “north front” or “principal approach” as it was referred to in John Mason’s *Recollections*. Their research of the front porch indicated the following:

Phillips and Buchanan found that the land side porch was added sometime during the third quarter of the century. Evidence indicated that originally the land front of the house was probably adorned with a flat, Palladian-styled frontispiece, probably quite similar to the entrance of the Chase-Lloyd house in Annapolis, also designed by William Buckland. Since the river side of the house sports a porch dating to the original construction, the addition of a second porch may speak to Mason’s love of sitting outdoors. It also sheltered the door on the north façade as well as providing another layer of control and elaboration at the front entrance. Visitors who sought to gain admission to Gunston Hall would have to enter this impressive threshold with its classical ornamentation before they could even knock on the front door. (GH 2002)

John Mason’s *Recollections* do not mention that his father stood on a porch on the land side entrance when he showed his guests the cherry tree avenue. Rather he says, “And then by placing them [visitors] exactly in the middle of the doorway,” (Dunn 2004:74-75) While we do not have enough information to conclude one way or the other about the porch existence for the time period John Mason is recalling this childhood memory, we do know that he was born in 1766. If the porch was added in the third part of the century, as Phillip and Buchanan suggest, John Mason would have been old enough to remember this addition.

Kate Rowland Mason, a great great grand niece of George Mason IV, was born in 1840. She was the author of the *Life of George Mason 1725 – 1792* published in 1892. She too, like John Mason, wrote about the approach to the house. Some of her description was drawn from John Mason’s *Recollections* and some; it appears, from her visit to Gunston Hall in 1890. After her visit she wrote an article for the *Home-maker* magazine in which she describes the approach as follows:

A long avenue of fine cherry-trees in former times extended beyond the lawn in front of the house a distance of some twelve hundred feet, to the “white gate”. The carriage-way in the centre, and a foot-path on either side between the double rows of trees, which were kept carefully trimmed and symmetrical, presented an imposing appearance. Beyond the cherry-tree avenue was an English hawthorn hedge which reached to the “red gate,” and this last opened on the public road, then the great highway between the North and South. (Rowland 1890:21-28)

Beyond John Mason’s *Recollection* and Kate Mason Rowland’s writings there appears to be little else of descriptive significance written about the front lawn of Gunston Hall.

George Mason V and George Mason VI

After George Mason IV's death in 1792, ownership of Gunston Hall passed to his oldest son, George Mason V. Sarah Brent, George Mason's second wife [married April 11, 1780], retained dower rights to live in the house during her lifetime, plus 500 acres of Mason Neck land. (Lembo 2001:1-11) For whatever reason, Sarah Brent Mason did not stay at Gunston Hall after the death of George Mason IV. It is thought that she moved to Dumfries and lived with her sister Jean. She also struck a deal with her stepson, George Mason V, concerning her 500 acres of land. Under this agreement she gave up the land and received 35 pounds each month during her lifetime. (McHugh (2011); Price 1982:17)

At the time of his father's death, George Mason V remained at Lexington, within close proximity of Gunston Hall. George Mason V died in 1796, so he was not in ownership of Gunston Hall for long. (Lembo 2001:1-11) It is not known if George Mason V made any changes to the front lawn of Gunston Hall during his ownership. It is known that his will contained the following provision for the upkeep of Gunston Hall. "Item I direct that the House at Gunston be kept in Decent repair & the Garden enclosed & the Expense paid out of the money arising from the profits of my Estate." (Price 1982:17) The HABS report also mentions that a James G. Smith lived in the mansion as a caretaker until 1807. (Price 1982:17) The fact that George Mason V left provisions in his will for the upkeep of Gunston Hall after his death is a good indication that he was probably providing for its care and upkeep prior to his death. Most likely he had a caretaker living there as well during his absentee ownership.

When George Mason V died on December 5, 1796, he left a wife, Elizabeth Mary Ann Barnes Hooe, and five children. According to Gunston Hall's database of descendants, *Mason Web*, he left the following children: [Also included are their birth date and their respective age at the time of their father's death]

1. Elizabeth Mary Ann Barnes Mason	03/11/1785	11 years
2. George Mason VI	08/11/1786	10 years
3. William Eilbeck Mason	02/03/1788	8 years
4. Ann Eilbeck Mason	04/01/1791	5 years
5. Sarah Barnes Hooe Mason	05/27/1794	2 years

At the time of George Mason V's death, his wife Elizabeth was pregnant and gave birth on January 16, 1797, to a son, Richard Barnes Mason (Lee 2010) According to the provisions of George Mason V's will, Mason Neck was divided into two sections. One section was the Gunston Hall section and the other section was Lexington. His two oldest sons, George Mason VI and William Eilbeck Mason were both minors at the time of his death. When they became of age, the oldest, George Mason VI, was given the

choice of the two sections and he chose Gunston. Since he was ten years old when his father died he did not take possession of the property until 1807, when he became of age. (Price 1982:17; Lembo 2001:1-12,1-13) There is no evidence or report of any changes to the front lawn during George Mason VI's ownership. He tried, but was unsuccessful in selling Gunston Hall prior to his death. Advertisements for the sale of the house were found for the years 1806, 1818, 1825 and 1823; however, none of these ads say anything that would indicate a change to the front lawn. (Price 1982:17; Lembo 2001:1-12,1-13)

Death of George Mason VI

When George Mason VI died in 1834, he died intestate or without a will. From here the chain of ownership becomes very muddy. George Mason VI was born on August 11, 1786. He married Elizabeth Thomson Mason on February 17, 1813. Elizabeth Thomson Mason was the granddaughter of George Mason IV, by his son Thomson Mason. She died on September 2, 1821. George Mason VI and Elizabeth Thomson Mason had six children. Listed below are their names, birth dates, death dates and ages, if living, when their father George Mason VI died. (Lee 2010)

1. Helen Eliza	12/01/1813 - 06/27/1876	21 years
2. Sarah Eugenia	05/16/1816 - 06/29/1816	Deceased
3. John McCarty	04/25/1817 - 07/07/1837	17 years
4. George Thomson	08/17/1818 - 04/26/1846	16 years
5. Georgiana	12/19/1819 - 07/24/1820	Deceased
6. Sally Eilbeck	03/11/1821 - 08/29/1888	13 years

George Mason VI married second Eleanor Ann Clifton Patton on January 2, 1823. George Mason VI and his second wife, Eleanor, had one child. (Lee 2010)

1. Richard Barnes Patton Mason 03/04/1824 - 05/10/1847 10 years

Eleanor Mason

Louis Hertle, the last individual owner of Gunston Hall, paid for a title abstract search of Gunston Hall in 1947. This history gives us the following information about the transfer of the deed after George Mason VI's death. "George Mason [George Mason VI] died intestate and Gunston Hall was allotted in partition of his property, to his widow, Eleanor A. C. Mason." (Hertle Abstracts Title [HAT] 1947), Gunston Hall Archives [GHA] In other words, since George Mason VI died intestate, the court would have divided George Mason's VI's estate land into smaller parcels and each heir of the estate would have received one of these smaller parcels according to the dower and intestate succession laws of that day. Also, note that at the time of George Mason VI's death he was survived by only five of his children. Of these five, four were minor by the standards of the day. Further verification of Gunston Hall belonging to Eleanor Mason

after the death of George Mason VI can be gleaned from information provided in a chancery suit filed in Fairfax County in 1836. The pertinent information from the chancery suits reads as follows:

Eleanor Ann Mason, Thomas Ellzey & Helen his wife, (former Helen Mason) and John Mason, George Mason, Sally Mason and Richard Mason the four last named parties being under the age of twenty one years, by their next friend Eleanor Ann Mason, respectively [knew?] that George Mason late of Fairfax County departed this life on the [blank space] day of August 1834 intestate, being seized at the time of his death of a certain tract or parcel of land situate in the said county of Fairfax formally called the Seneca Farm – and leaving at the time of his death the said Eleanor Ann Mason his widow, entitled to dower in his real estate, and the said Helen, John Mason, George Mason, Sally Mason and Richard Mason his children & heirs at law, of whom the said Helen has since intermarried with the said Thomas Ellzey
(Fairfax County (Virginia) Chancery Causes [FCCC], 1803-1963, 1837)

At this point it appears that things went as one would expect and that Gunston Hall is still owned by a Mason family member. However, for some reason, yet to be determined, George Mason of Hollin Hall filed a law suit against Eleanor Mason. The result of the suit was the public auction of the Gunston Hall Tract on February 9, 1842. (Moxham 1975) To understand the family dynamics at the time of George Mason VI's death it is necessary to understand how George Mason of Hollin Hall fits into the Mason family. He, like George Mason's first wife, was a grandchild of George Mason IV by George Mason IV's son Thomson Mason. So, George Mason of Hollin Hall and George Mason VI's first wife, Elizabeth Thomson Mason, were siblings. He was also a cousin to George Mason VI. Why he brought the suit is unknown at the time. Perhaps, he felt entitlement or perhaps he was worried that Gunston Hall would be sold to satisfy debts of the heirs and bringing suit was a way of forcing the sale and making it available to a family member that could afford its maintenance. Lois Lembo wrote of the matter in her *Fifty Years of Gunston Hall Archaeology* and her take on the story is as follows:

It is difficult to sort out the details of the legal battle; Robert Morgan Moxham reports that he was frustrated in his efforts to research the issue because, "The papers ...are missing from the Fairfax County Court records. Sources differ significantly on the legal questions and how and why the eventual outcome came about. (Lembo 2001:1-14)

Without the court records, a thorough understanding of the prevailing estate laws, dower laws, intestate succession laws, and family dynamics of the day we can only speculate as to what happened.

George Mason Graham

At the public auction of the Gunston Hall tract the winning bid was placed by George Mason Graham and Eleanor Mason was granted life tenure. (Moxham 1975) George

Mason Graham was a half brother to George Mason VI, Eleanor Mason's late husband. After George Mason VI's father, George Mason V, died, his wife Elizabeth Mary Ann Barnes Hooe Mason married George Graham. George Graham and Elizabeth Mary Ann Barnes Hooe Mason had four children, one of which was George Mason Graham born August 21, 1807. So, Eleanor Mason's first husband, George Mason VI and the purchaser of Gunston Hall at auction, George Mason Graham, were half brothers. (Lee 2010) Why he purchased Gunston Hall at auction is as unclear as to why George Mason of Hollin Hall brought suit against Eleanor Mason. Perhaps, George Mason VI and George Mason Graham were close half brothers and George Mason Graham felt an obligation to his half brother's widow, Eleanor Mason. Also, George Graham, father of George Mason Graham, was a nephew of George Mason IV's second wife, Sarah Brent, and came to live at Gunston Hall in 1789. (Lembo 2001:1-14,1-15)

Eleanor Mason died on June 10, 1867. The obituary that appeared in the *Louisiana Democrat* at the time of Eleanor Mason's death gives us an indication of the occupancy of Gunston Hall during her ownership and life tenure. The following is an excerpt from her obituary:

At an early age she was married to the late George Mason of Gunston Hall. Her husband having died in 1834, on her alone was devolved the care of an only child and four step children, to whose mental and moral training she devoted herself with that conscientious sense of duty for which she was ever remarkable. She resided on her estate of Gunston Hall, famous as the former home of her husband's great ancestor, George Mason, Like all the old Virginia Manorial homesteads Gunston Hall, under Mrs. Mason's ownership, was the seat of elegance, refinement and hospitality....

Having lost her only child, and her family having been otherwise broken up, Mrs. Mason came to Rapides in 1855, and had resided in this Parish from that time until her recent death. ... Under the impression that a change of climate would prove beneficial to her health Mrs. Mason left Rapides in the month of May last for a visit to her friends in Virginia. She had barely reached her destination when it became evident that an insidious disease was about to cut short her days on Earth. And there, on her native soil, in sight of the majestic Potomac which had so often charmed the eyes of her childhood and early youth, in the midst of devoted friends and relatives, her pure spirit passed away, and her mortal remains found a resting place among the people she had love so fondly. (The Louisiana Democrat, 18 September 1867:3)

Even though she probably remained at Gunston Hall until 1855, we still know little of how the property was maintained during her ownership and during George Mason Graham's ownership. (Lembo 2001:1-16) Lois Lembo's *Fifty Years of Gunston Hall Archaeology* states the following about Gunston Hall's occupancy during Eleanor Mason's absence:

There is evidence that the property might have been rented to the subsequent buyer, William Merrill, during the later years of the war. The Fairfax County deed book states: "Eleanor A.C. Mason, now residing in Rapides Parish, LA, gives power

of attorney to Alexander Innis. He can convey Gunston to William Morrell (*sic*) if rent of \$500 a year is paid for 1863, 1864, 1865. (Lembo 2001:1-15,1-17)

The rent must have been paid because the Hertle title abstract shows, "By deed, dated 1 August, 1866, Eleanor A. C. Mason and George Mason Graham conveyed the property to William Merrill and William L. Dawson, reserving the graveyard and the right of way thereto for the Mason family." (HAT 1947, GHA)

While Eleanor Graham was living in Louisiana, Gunston Hall had a manager or tenant, one of whom was a rector of Pohick Church by the name of Mr. Johnson. (Lembo 2001:1-15) During the Civil War there are accounts and rumors that Gunston Hall was occupied by both Confederates and Union troops. Lois Lembo's *Fifty Years of Gunston Hall Archaeology* states an 1874 account as evidence to the above: "During the late war, the house, from its position between the hostile lines, was alternately occupied by the soldiers of both armies; and this resulted in serious injury to the building and the grounds." (Lembo 2001:1-16) Further supporting evidence of Civil War activity in and around Gunston Hall is found in an article of a local newspaper, *The Local News*. On February 5, 1862, this paper ran the following article on page one:

George R. Davies of Portland, Me., the agent appointed by the Governor, under the laws of that State, for the distribution of hospital stores to the troops at the seat of war, made visits the past week to the several Maine regiments on the Potomac, and passed beyond the Union Pickets in the region of Mount Vernon, and among other curiosities brought back an original title deed, on parchment, bearing the signature and seal of Lord Fairfax, dated February 1, 1776, taken from Gunston, two miles beyond Pohick Church, at which point the Third Maine regiment has now been advanced. This was the family church of General Washington. (The Local News, 5 February 1862:1)

Most likely, if the Civil War stories are true, the front lawn of Gunston Hall was trampled from soldiers coming and going on horses or on foot and with no one living there on a regular basis, it is doubtful that much attention if any was paid to the lawn.

William Merrill and William L. Dawson

After the close of the Civil War, Gunston Hall was owned by William Merrill and William Dawson. This was the first time since George Mason built Gunston Hall that it was not owned by a Mason family member. From reports and accounts passed down through the years it is surmised that these owners didn't care about the house or its history. They were wood choppers or timber merchants and cared only about the potential of making money from the timber on the land. (Price 1982:19) The HABS report gives the following account of how the house and land was treated during this time period:

There are references that "the Hall was occupied with 4 colored families in the first floor & two white families on the second floor & a boarding house for their workmen." Most of the neglect to the house seems to have occurred at this time. An account of W.S.

Freeman, who worked at Gunston Hall at the time, refers to horses in the basement: "Freeman remembers his beating them & running them around the Hall to cure the colic." There are no identifiable illustrations of the house during these years, although some examples a few years later do show the house in the fallen state. (Price 1982:19)

For some reason, William Dawson did not stay an owner for long. The title abstract that Louis Hertle paid for in 1947 shows the following entry: "By deed dated 8 January, 1868, William L. Dawson conveyed his one-half interest to William Merrill." (HAT 1947, GHA) Suffering obvious neglect during Merrill and Dawson's ownership and possible devastation during the Civil War the house and the grounds must have been in terrible shape in 1868 when Dawson sold his one-half interest. William Merrill didn't waste much time selling Gunston Hall. Less than a month after William L. Dawson conveyed his one-half interest, Merrill sold the property by deed dated February 6, 1868, to Edward Daniels. (HAT 1947, GHA; Price 1982:19)

Colonel Edward Daniels was a geologist, an abolitionist, a Civil War soldier, and an editor of a Republican Richmond journal. (Wikipedia contributors 2010) In a letter written October 24, 1907, to the editor of the *Fairfax Herald* and published on November 11, 1907, Daniels tries to set the record straight on the restoration efforts made by various owners, including him. The following is an excerpt of his letter as it appeared in the newspaper:

In your last issue you made editorial notice of the purchase of Gunston Hall by Paul Kester. Incidentally it also stated that Mr. Joseph Specht had restored it from the condition in which he found it to its original state, etc. This is an error. Mr. Specht made improvements on the place which modernized it but made it less like the Gunston Hall of colonial days ... I spent \$5,000.00 in restoring the Hall to its original condition. This outlay was on purely sentimental ground, out of respect for the great man who built it, and the many noble patriots, statesmen and soldiers who had crossed its threshold and been sheltered by its roof. ... Only when we had experienced heavy losses by the long depression of business, did we part with the old home. It is now, in worthy hand, who will add new luster to its glorious history. (Daniels 1907)

Colonel Edward Daniels

Colonel Edward Daniels also left a diary behind that is currently being reviewed. Some changes to the house and grounds have been noted so far, but no identifiable changes to the front lawn. Colonel Edward Daniels used the house and grounds not only as a residence, but for several different business adventures. One such enterprise involved transporting people by steamboat to Gunston Hall for adventures of different sorts. During one of these visits in 1874, The *National Republican* reported, "But the healthy and heavily-laden young fruit trees, to the number of over 8,000 attracted the most attention. Grapes in great abundance and of almost every variety were also exhibited, which promise delicious feasts in the future." (National Republican [NR], 7 August 1874:4)

In 1876, we again find Colonel Edward Daniels trying his hand at having guests arrive at Gunston Hall by Steamboat where they would be enjoying scientific lectures and such. An excerpt from the *National Republican* of September 4, 1876, gives the following account:

Yesterday the steamer Mary Washington extended her usual trip to Mount Vernon springs and took a select party of about a hundred person, of both sexes, to Gunston Hall ... where at the mansion and in the wildwoods, here and there adorning the old Mason estate, they enjoyed themselves greatly,. ... Prior to their departure for home the Sunday pleasure-seekers resolved themselves into an informal school of science, and listened to highly-interesting remarks upon scientific fruit-growing, astronomy, etc., by Professor Brainerd and others, which were interspersed by comic "opera" by a band composed of Professor W. H. Burr, author bibliologist, journalist, astro-theological critic, quiet humorist, etc., and a pumpkin-vine artistically modified by a jack-knife, as well as other varieties of amusement. (NR, 4 September 1876:1)

Colonel Edward Daniels seemed to always have some get rich scheme in the works, but it appears that none ever took hold. One of his endeavors was a company called Industrial Home Company described in *The Washington Post* on April 23, 1878, as follows:

The new enterprise started by Col. E. Daniels at Gunston, a few miles below this city, styled the "Industrial Home Company", have commenced to put the place in order for those who may apply to become members, each one of them having to pay an entrance fee or own stock. The design is to build up all mechanical and agricultural pursuits necessary to make a self-supporting community. They will all board at a boarding house kept by the company and pay for it in work. The *proceeds* of the company are divided equally between labor and capitol. (The Washington Post [TWP], 23 April 1878)

Colonel Edward Daniels also traveled frequently and while he was on trips it is noted that he rented Gunston Hall out during his absence. One of his renters in 1890 was Harriet Kester, mother of future owner and resident, Paul and Vaughan Kester. (Price 1982:19) Gunston Hall was also rented to S. M. Smith and Frank Smith. Evidence of this is found in an 1882, Fairfax County Chancery suit. In his testimony for this case, Colonel Edward Daniels made several statements, two of which are as follows:

1. Complainant owns a large estate in Fairfax County known as Gunston Hall, and some time in 187 [blank] he rented the same to Frank Smith and S. M. Smith for a period of three years.
2. That in the year 1881 some differences arose between your orator and the defendants as to the amount due from said Smiths, and in January, 1882, the parties hereto agreed to submit their accounts to Robert Wiley, Esq. for arbitration. (FCCC 1882)

The Smiths in turn used Gunston Hall as a Summer Boarding House. The *National Republican* newspaper ran the following advertisement on April 1, 1881, advertising the boarding house. Titled *Summer Boarding At Gunston Hall* it reads as follows:

One of the pleasantest homes on the Potomac. Twenty miles from Washington, seven from Mt. Vernon. Steamer W.W. Corcoran lands at the wharf every day. Post-office in the Hall, a fine Library, plenty of all kinds of fruit. Terms reasonable. Refer to L. L. Blake. Address: S. M. Smith, Gunston Hall, Va. (NR, 01 April 1881:3)

Henry and Henrietta Sheets

It appears that Colonel Edwards Daniel let Gunston Hall go, not because he wanted to, but because of a sluggish business economy that caused him a personal cash shortage and perhaps too many business schemes that went sour. It seems he did not have the capital to keep the mansion as it deserved, so he sold it. Gunston Hall's website regarding the History of the Mansion records the sale of Gunston Hall by Colonel Edward Daniels to Emma & Joseph Specht. (GH 2009b) While the Spechts were owners, Gunston Hall was home to another family prior to this and their ownership is not mentioned as part of the Mansion History on Gunston Hall's website or in other various accounts encountered during research. Hint of this ownership was found in the following *Washington Post* article published March 7, 1889, and titled *The President's Relatives: A Family Reunion Yesterday at Gunston Hall, Virginia* and appeared as follows:

The relatives of President Harrison who have been in Washington attending the inaugural ceremonies, left on the steamer yesterday morning for a visit to Capt. H. H. Sheets, at Gunston Hall, Virginia. The distinguished visitors were Mr. John Scott Harrison, brother of the President, his wife and two children; Mrs. Betty Eaton, of North Bend, Ohio, the ancestral home of the Harrisons, who is the eldest sister of the President; Mrs. Thomas Devin, of Ottumwa, Iowa, an elder sister also, and her husband; Mrs. Bettie Sheets Harrison, the widow of Archibald Irwin Harrison, the President's elder brother; Mr. William Sheets Harrison, the son of the last named lady, a young gentleman of about twenty-three years of age, now a resident of Chicago, and Mrs. Janie Davenport, *nee* Taylor, the granddaughter of President William Henry Harrison, her mother being his eldest daughter, who married Col. W. H. Taylor, of Ohio.

Capt. Harry M. Sheets, their host, who entertained them for a few days, was a staff officer of the Army of the Cumberland during the entire war, and purchased Gunston Hall, the ancestral home of the Masons, of Virginia, about three years ago. His father, William Sheets, was one of the most distinguished and able of the great Indianians of the past; he was the Secretary of the State in 1840, and was a close personal friend and confidential adviser, of President William H. Harrison. Through his influence and diplomacy alone the breach between the elder Harrison and Webster was healed, which was necessary to make possible the election of the former.

After Harrison's election he tendered a Cabinet position to Mr. Sheets, which was declined. William Sheets married the daughter of Thomas Randolph, of Virginia, who was killed at the battle of Tippecanoe, and was a cousin of John Randolph Roanoke. This lady, the elder Mrs. Sheets, is a granddaughter of Arthur St. Clair and a cousin of five presidents of the United States, a brilliant, charming lady yet, with the grace and

dignity becoming her courtly descent, although now nearly eighty years of age. And nowhere could the distinguished party find a more gracious, refined and accomplished hostess.

Mrs. Sheets, the present mistress of Gunston Hall, is a lady of rare intelligence and infinite warmth of heart, the mother of three brave boys, who abide with her, and who esteem their home a paradise. She is a daughter of an eminent citizen of Tennessee, Col. Jordan Stokes, of Lebanon.

Gunston Hall was built by George Mason, the great Virginia statesman, who wrote the Virginia Bill of Rights more than a hundred years ago. Located only three miles below Mount Vernon, the first proprietor was not only a near neighbor but an intimate friend, and associate also, of the Father of our Country. And often did George and Martha cross the threshold of Gunston and wander familiarly through the mighty halls and grand old rooms. Thither also came Jefferson and Madison and Patrick Henry to confer with the great Virginian who dwelt therein. (TWP, 7 March 1889:1)

Indeed it does appear that Gunston Hall was the home to Mr. and Mrs. Sheets, relatives of the Harrison family. Further information about their ownership of Gunston Hall was found. It was not found in one book or one article but was pieced together by gleaning several sources. Eventually, enough was found to give a fairly reliable account of how this happened, even though further research into this would be of interest because of the claimed connection to President Harrison. The next reference to their ownership is found in a Fairfax County Chancery suit filed with the court in 1887, by Henry and Henrietta Sheets against Edward Daniels, Iona G. Daniels, Warrington Gillingham Trustee, Westel Willoughby and Edward W. Donn. The file is very lengthy, difficult and very tedious to read – a study in progress. However, there are some things in the file that can be gleaned from this source. The first item is an advertisement for the sale of Gunston Hall at Public Auction that appeared in a local paper. From other documents in the file it can be concluded that the paper was the *Alexandria Gazette*. What follows is the advertisement as it appeared in the paper found in the Chancery suit file:

AUCTION SALES.

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF THREE HUNDRED ACRES OF LAND PART OF GUNSTON HALL ESTATE, FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA., INCLUDING GUNSTON HALL MANSION.

Under authority of a deed of trust from Henrietta H. Sheets and Henry H. Sheets to the undersigned, as trustee, dated April 12, 1887, recorded in liber G, No. 5, page 80, of the land record of Fairfax county, Va., the undersigned will sell at public auction on Monday the 13th day of May, 1889, at 1 o'clock p. m. on that day in front of the Market Building, on Fairfax street, in the city of Alexandria, Va., the following property, to wit: Being about THREE HUNDRED ACRES, PART OF THE GUNSTON HALL ESTATE, and more particularly described in the said deed of trust, and now occupied by the said grantors in said deed of trust.

Terms: Cash for so much of the proceeds as may be necessary to defray the expenses of executing this trust, the fees for drawing and recording their said deed of trust and to discharge the amount of money upon notes in default, which are one note of \$1,000, with interest from February 15, 1887, and \$300 besides; the remainder to be payable according to terms to be made known at the day of sale.

Warrington Gillingham

Trustee

The above sale is postponed till Saturday, May 25th, 1889, at the same time and place.

Warrington Gillingham
Trustee (FCCC 1889)

It is clear that Henry and Henrietta Sheets were indeed considered owners of Gunston Hall at this point in time. The advertisement clearly lists their names and their ownership as documented on the Deed of Trust of April 12, 1887, and recorded in the appropriate land record books of Fairfax County. It also clearly states that it includes the Gunston Hall Mansion. Also, an article that appeared in the *Fairfax Herald* of March 29, 1889, has Gunston being owned by a Harrison relative. The brief article states the following:

Postmaster General Wanamaker and some friends will soon pay a visit to Gunston, a few miles below Alexandria. The Society of the Army of the Cumberland are contemplating purchasing of that and adjoining property and making it a recreation ground. The house and the surrounding land now belong to one of the President's Western relatives. A reunion of the Western Harrisons was held there a short time ago, at which none of the President's Virginia relatives were present (Fairfax Herald [FH], 29 March 1889:2)

In the paperwork for the Chancery litigation are several statements. What follows is Henrietta Sheet's statement for the litigation. While it doesn't completely explain the public sale of Gunston Hall and the litigation that follows, it is one of the few documents in the chancery file that is easily read and that provides a brief account of the situation from the buyer's point of view. Also, note that the sale took place on May 25, 1889, and Henrietta Sheet swore to the below statement on November 8, 1889. (Please note that this transcription may contain transcribing errors due to the illegibility of some parts.) Her statement is as follows:

The deponent Henrietta H. Sheets says on oath that she is the same person who purchased Gunston Hall of Edward Daniels. That she in settlement of the purchase money assumed a debt of five thousand to the wife of Daniels secured by mortgage and gave her three notes of one thousand dollars each to Ed Daniels secured by [Deed of Trust] on the premises purchased. These three notes of one thousand dollars each were

dated February 1887 and were payable in one two and three years from date. These three notes were in addition to one of fifteen hundred dollars – which has been paid – When this purchase of Gunston was made it was distinctly understood between deponent & Edward Daniels, that these three notes would not be paid until the estate of her father was settled in Tenn. That deponent had no other means to pay these notes than money to be secured from her father’s estate – That the settlement of said estate has been delayed by litigation beyond any [explanation] of hers.

That at one time after one of the three notes had fallen due the deponent through her husband and General Roscreaous was negotiating a loan to pay them all. That Edward Daniels hearing of this insisted that no loan should be obtained and that he the said Daniels would hold these notes until her money came from Tenn. He further warned the deponent that the lender of this money might press for its payment and he would not.

He made repeated assurances of this – one in presence of General Roscreaous and at other times in presence of other gentlemen – after these assurances from Daniels deponent ceased her efforts to borrow and relied on the repeated assurances of Daniels.

Signed: Henrietta H. Sheets
District of Columbia
City of Washington

Sworn to and subscribed to before me this 8th day of November 1889.
Rufus H. Thayer
Notary Public (FCCC 1889)

Other documents in the Chancery suit file state that Colonel Edward Daniels was the only bidder and bought Gunston Hall at the Public Sale on May 25, 1889, for \$9,000.00. There is a document in the chancery file that may be the final decree. It is very difficult to read but what little I can make out it appears that the court considered the public sale irregular and Colonel Edward Daniels was to re convey the deed to the trustee. (FCCC 1889) In this same chancery file is a very interesting letter from the County Treasurer of Fairfax County, Virginia. The letter is dated November 13, 1889, and reads as follows:

This is to certify that the tax on 715 acres of land in Mt. Vernon District called “Gunston Hall” has not been paid for the year 1887, and that said land has been sold to the Commonwealth.

I also certify that the tax on 300 acres, (a part of the above tract) for the year 1889 assessed to Henrietta Sheets has not been paid.

Signed: S.R. Donohoe, Treas. (FCCC 1889)

After considering this letter it appears that the Mr. and Mrs. Sheets didn't pay their taxes and Gunston Hall was once again up for grabs possibly with the Commonwealth of Virginia holding the deed. Shortly before the Public Auction of Gunston Hall on May 25, 1889, to Colonel Edward Daniels, the following article appeared in *The Columbus journal* dated May 22, 1889, and reads as follows: "Mrs. Sheets, born Randolph mistress of Gunston Hall, Virginia is the cousin of five presidents, among them President Harrison, whose inauguration she witnessed."

(The Columbus Journal, 22 May 1889:4)

From this article we can ascertain that Mr. and Mrs. Sheets were living at Gunston Hall when the public auction of their home was to take place in only a few days. To date no other information has been found about the possible ownership of Gunston Hall by the Commonwealth of Virginia, but other articles found indicate it is highly likely. An article titled *Romance of the War* and published in *The Washington Post* shows us that Mr. and Mrs. Sheets still called Gunston Hall their home February of 1890, approximately three months after the letter from the Fairfax County Treasurer was written. The last paragraph of the article reads as follows:

The wedding the Kentuckian attended with his mother was that of Miss Sheets, sister of the Federal captain and daughter of William Sheets, esq. of Indiana. The groom was a brother of Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States. The Kentuckian is Col. John B. Castleman, of Louisville, Ky., late adjutant general of that State, and his cousin, the Federal captain, who road and lounged with him under the shade trees, near Indianapolis is Capt. Harry Sheets, of "Gunston Hall," on the Potomac near Mount Vernon, the home of Washington. (TWP, 16 February 1890:4)

So, if the Commonwealth of Virginia owned Gunston Hall at this time it is not apparent considering it was still considered the residence of the Sheets. Perhaps, the Commonwealth of Virginia had started legal proceedings to evict them from their house. This might make sense because on March 19, 1890, notice was given in *The Washington Post* that Gunston Hall would once again be sold at Public Auction. The article appeared as follows: "Gunston Hall, once the property of George Mason, the author of the Bill of Rights of Virginia, and on his home country seat, near Mount Vernon, is to be sold this week under the hammer." (TWP, 19 March 1890:2) Further, on March 23, 1890, two articles appeared in newspapers regarding the sale of Gunston Hall. One was in *The Washington Post* and the other was the *Richmond Dispatch*. *The Washington Post* recorded the sale as follows:

The Gunston Hall estate, including 300 acres of land adjoining Mount Vernon, and once the property of George Mason, the author of the bill of rights of Virginia, was yesterday sold in Alexandria at public auction, under a decree of the court there, to Colonel Daniel, of Fairfax county, for \$11 per acre. (TWP, 23 March 1890:5)

The other article appeared in the Alexandria section of the *Richmond Dispatch* as part of an article titled, *Of Interest to Odd Fellows –A Sale of an Historic Estate* and the pertinent section appeared as follows:

Three hundred acres of the old Gunston Hall estate on the Potomac, below this city, near Mt. Vernon was sold today at public auction in front of the Market building here to Colonel Edward Daniels for \$3,300.00. Gunston Hall was the home place of George Mason, who wrote the Virginia Bill of Rights there. (Richmond Dispatch, 23 March 1890:3)

The above referenced sale notice makes mention of a “decree of the court there”, so possibly this is the sale of Gunston Hall by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Again further research is needed, but Colonel Edward Daniels does leave us a clue as to what happened to Henry and Henrietta Sheets after this public sale in a letter to his friend Owen dated June 29, 1890. The pertinent passage reads as follows:

I have been here now for several months fighting for the possession of Gunston and yesterday was put in possession by the sheriff ... the parties still occupying a part of the house and yielding only to necessity. They are cousins of Harrison with high pedigrees and little else to brag of. They have been her four years will neither pay nor improve but only tear down & destroy. (Edward Daniel’s, Personal Letter to Owen – a friend, Gunston Hall Archives)

At this point, we have several pieces of the puzzle concerning the confusion over the ownership of Gunston Hall at this time in history. Another piece, but not the final piece, is the article that appeared in *The Washington Post* dated July 9, 1890. It states, “The celebrated Gunston Hall, on the Lower Potomac, has been secured by Col. Edward Daniels, after a long litigation.” (TWP, 9 July 1890:8)

So once again, Colonel Edwards Daniels is in possession of Gunston Hall, a home that he has much love for out of respect of George Mason, but a home that he has struggled with keeping, the location of various enterprises of his and one that he must now again sell despite his fondness for it. Not long after his battle to win back Gunston Hall, on July 15, 1890, *The Washington Post* ran the following for sale advertisement of Gunston Hall:

FOR SALE – GUNSTON HALL, The most noted of the old Virginia homes on the Potomac; 17 rooms in good repair; large barn, tenant houses, every variety of fruit, forest, fisheries, 800 acres; a grand home for a social club, for a school, or for boarders; come and see it: some fine places for sale near by; daily mail and boat’s wharf on next farm. Address OWNER, 15 6th st. ne. (TWP, 15 July 1890:3)

Emma Specht

It wasn’t long before Gunston Hall was purchased, being sold next to Mrs. Emma H. Specht. Colonel Edward Daniels sold Mrs. Specht the property according to the Title

Abstracts, "By deed, dated 18 June, 1891." (HAT (1947), GHA) As mentioned earlier, Gunston Hall's History of the Mansion reported the sale as being to Emma and Joseph Specht. It may have been Joseph Specht's money that was used to make the purchase, but by deed Gunston Hall belonged solely to Mrs. Emma H. Specht. The *Fairfax Herald* reported the transfer of deed in their paper on July 24, 1891, as follows. "'Gunston,' the home of the celebrated George Mason, of this county, has been sold by Col. Edward Daniel [Daniels] to Mrs. Emma H. Specht, wife of Jos. Specht, of St. Louis. The tract sold contains 315 acres, including the dwelling house and the price paid was \$10,000." (FH, 24 July 1891:3)

Perhaps it was deeded to Mrs. Specht as a gift or maybe it was a tax strategy, but Gunston Hall belonged to Mrs. Emma Specht.

It wasn't long after the sale to Emma Specht that Gunston Hall, its inhabitants and some of their neighbors became the subject of local, national and international news. Gunston Hall received much attention, but not for its hallowed halls, but for scandalous events. *The New York Times* ran Joseph Specht's obituary in their September 14, 1902, issue. According to this obituary Joseph Specht was a wealthy merchant of St. Louis; had bought Gunston Hall ten years prior to his death and had acquired additional acreage, giving him around 1,000 acres. It also says he planted with the help of many men 50,000 rose bushes. (The New York Times [TNYT], 14 September 1902:7) Now that we know a little about Joseph Specht a glimpse of Emma Specht is in order. This glimpse comes to us in *The Washington Times* gossip column. Published in the paper on May 27, 1894, the pertinent sections are as follows:

A party of St. Louis ladies were discussing the Specht story that recently appeared in the Times.

"Yes, I knew Mrs. Specht well in St. Louis," said one. "The Spechts lived in one of the most elegant houses on West Pine street, one of the fashionable neighborhoods of the city. Mrs. Specht was a great swell in St. Louis Society, but was always thought to be rather peculiar.

"She wrote an exoteric novel called 'Alferida,' [Alfreda] was pretty thoroughly roasted by the papers in which Mr. Specht was not an advertiser. Nobody ever read the book that I know of, although some of her friends had periodical spells of attempting to do so. It was a wishy washy version of a love affair of her own, with some unintelligible mysticism thrown in. She sent a copy of it to Queen Victoria.

Mrs. Specht professed to be the most unselfish of women, and posed generally before the public as a follower of Prince Gautama, but her generosity existed mainly in giving large amounts where they would redound to her credit publicly." ...

"Mrs. Specht had a class of ladies in St. Louis who met at her house to study the occult arts. These studies were directed by Dr. Howard, who received applicants if he approved their character, which he said he could read from their autograph. ...

“Mrs. Specht was enthusiastic about her life at Gunston Hall after Mr. Specht purchased the property. She described the old house full of memories of the past. To her friends in St. Louis the crystal well water, the golden butter, the home-made bread, and the abundant fruit that grew there were dwelt upon, and she invited them all to visit her. ...”
(The Washington Times [TWT], 27 May 1894:7)

The scandalous events that happened in and around Gunston Hall were reported by many newspapers of the time. However, an account that was published by a New Zealand newspaper, *The Nelson Evening Mail*, did a great job of explaining the various events that transpired. The fact that this news made it to a New Zealand paper speaks to the enormity of the scandal to the people of this era. The newspaper’s account was published September 14, 1894, on page four, is titled, *A Sensational Story, Charmed by a Fakir* and appeared as follows:

Washington, July 22. -----Divorce proceedings have been instituted at Fairfax Courthouse by Mrs. Specht against Millionaire Joseph Specht, formerly of St. Louis, but now residing in Gunston Hall, a few miles below this city.

The action of Mrs Specht in filing the suit for divorce is probably the beginning of the last chapter in one of the most sensational dramas that has ever been played in real life.

While living in St. Louis some years ago there entered into the household of the Spechts Dr Granby Staunton Howard, according to himself, a man of many titles, the descendant of thirty barons and high priest of the Occidental Order of Sat Bal Kooha.

He gave everyone who met him the impression that he was exceedingly wealthy and dropped vague hints of a supernatural power of compact with the evil one and of various other like attainments he possessed.

He was of prepossessing appearance, gifted with splendid conversational powers, and as a result was cordially welcomed into the circle in which the Spechts moved. The Spechts, however, were person whom he especially cultivated, and he soon gained a control over Mrs. Specht which that lady has evidently been unable to withstand. Mr. Specht, becoming tired of St. Louis, purchased the Gunston Hall estate, on the Virginia bank of the Potomac River, and removed his family to his new home.

Dr. Howard came with them and started a school of occultism, of which Mrs Specht was to be made high priestess. He made this institution, it is alleged, the means of draining thousand of dollars from Mrs. Specht. Mr. Specht remonstrated in vain. His wife would not give up the Sage of Aru, as Dr Howard called himself.

In the meantime Gunston Hall and Benvenue, another of Mr Specht’s estates, had been deeded to Mrs. Specht. Mrs. Specht made a demand for an increase of 3000dol. in her allowance in March last. Her request was refused. She thereupon declared if her wish was not complied with she would not reside any longer in Gunston Hall.

In April she made a will giving Howard Gunston and her daughter Adelaide, Benvenue, and appointing Howard executor. Mr. Specht employed detectives to find out who Howard was, and fearing exposure the "Sage of Aru" fled.

In her application for a divorce Mrs. Specht alleges cruel treatment, and asks for alimony. The allegation of cruelty made by her is said to grow out of her husband's attempt to bring to an end the influence of Howard. (The Nelson Evening Mail, 14 September 1894:4)

The Specht's story was definitely sensational for its time and obviously sent a shock wave through the community that spread like wild fire through this country and other parts of the world. *The Washington times* ran an article covering the latest events and happenings of the story on May 15, 1894. The article gives an interesting account of Mr. Howard and also the report of a Gunston resident and former Gunston Hall employee of the Spechts, Mr. Walter Haislup. The following section of the article paints a vivid picture of Dr. Granby S. Howard:

The accomplishments of this man seemed unlimited, his learning appeared unbounded, he was apparently possessed of strange occult powers. He averred that a most peculiar array of spirits frequented his abode. The devil came to him and had little chats. Noted men of the past who had tread the floors of Gunston Hall came to his bedside at night and made his acquaintance . . .

The self asserting and fanatical snide kept his weird and fantastical schemes before his people continually, until he succeeded in exerting a hypnotic and almost supernatural influence over them, particularly Mrs. Specht. ...

Valuable corroboration of the story was given last night by Mr. Walter Haislup, of the city, who was at one time the foreman of the Specht estate. He says it is almost impossible to make an estimate of the amount of money swindled from the people, as there were several residents of Baltimore and other places who succumbed to the senseless protestations of this duper. ...

Mrs. Haislup said that Mrs. Specht had often talked to her upon the subject and appeared to be sane on what she said, but she was so hypnotized she would sell anything to give money to Howard. (TWT, May 15, 1894:1)

Mrs. Haislup may have been right in her opinion about Mrs. Specht's willingness to part with her worldly goods for Dr. Howard - possibly even Gunston Hall, which was deeded in her name. Dr. Granby S. Howard gives his side of the story in an interview for *The Washington Times*. He had fled to Montreal Canada and was living there with his wife when the interview took place. Published on June 19, 1894, the following excerpt, explaining his side of the story, is as follows:

In 1890 Col. Price lectured on the new doctrine, and he was sent for to assist him. His success was such that on his return to Montreal he received letters suggesting that he should organize a home for students of their religion and the aged and sick.

He was to teach Brahminism [Brahmanism] as it was before the days of Buddha, as preserved by a certain sect of priests in India. Mrs. Specht having offered to furnish funds, he went to St. Louis and was given \$500 without any condition as to its application or control. ... The money was spent on the purchase and improvement of a five-acre park, with houses, adjoining Gunston Hall. He claims that all was going well until a few months ago, when Specht and his son endeavored to steal from Mrs. Specht the right to the Gunston Hall property.

He met Mr. and Mrs. Specht and son at the St. James hotel, Washington, on May 10, where Spechts tried to force his wife to give up her claim. Failing in this, he locked her in her room, and, with his son, got out a warrant charging her with lunacy. Howard was to be called as a material witness, but it was soon seen that before a jury who knew nothing of the strange religions. Mrs. Specht had accepted the doctor's testimony of his oaths and obligations she had taken would surely result in a verdict in accordance with the charge of lunacy.

In order to save Mrs. Specht he departed for Canada. (TWT, 18 June 1894:2)

Most likely the truth lies somewhere in the middle of all the player's stories. Perhaps, Mr. Specht did indeed only turn on Howard when he feared Gunston Hall would become the property of Dr. Howard. It is uncertain who the real villain was, but despite who was to blame these events proved tragic to the Specht family. Caught in the midst of all of this were four Specht children – one a minor girl named Adelaide. Mrs. Specht ended up filing for divorce in Fairfax County on July of 1894. (FCCC 1895) Joseph Specht's response to her charges of cruelty appeared in *The Washington Times* on August 5, 1894, as follows:

Specht denies his wife's charges of cruelty, and alleges that she is not in her right mind. Mrs. Specht, according to her husband's statements, is under the influence and control of Dr. Granby Staunton Howard, whom, he says, is an imposter claiming to be a dual incarnation of Christ and Buddha.

He further alleges that Dr. Howard is responsible for the alienation of his wife's affections, and his doctrines have caused her to become mentally irresponsible. Mr. Specht says that his wife lavished money upon Dr. Howard "and his schemes of humbuggery, even going so far as to pawn her jewels for him." Believing his wife to be insane, Specht asks the court to grant the custody of their daughter to him. He does not deny his wealth nor refuse to make ample and suitable provision for his deluded wife. (TWT, 5 August 1894:1)

Joseph and Emma Specht did not get divorced in the end. Instead, they entered into an indenture or a contractual agreement. The Washington Loan and Trust Company was the trustee of the agreement. Among other things Mr. and Mrs. Specht agreed to separate and not cohabit for the remainder of their marriage. Mr. Specht agreed to deposit with the trustee \$150.00 on the first day of each month to be given to his wife. He also agreed to deposit with the trustee \$30,000.00 in stocks of his company, Famous

Shoe and Clothing Company of St. Louis Missouri, to be held as collateral for the monthly payments to his wife through the trustee.

Most importantly to this research are the terms of the agreement concerning Gunston Hall. Per the agreement, Emma Specht was to do the following:

...to execute such conveyances of the property in Fairfax County, State of Virginia, known as Gunston Hall and Ben Venue as shall be necessary to vest title to same in said party hereto of the first part [Joseph Specht], and if requested by him, is to unite with him in any future deed or deeds of said property and also of any other real estate, owned or to be owned by him, (FCCC 1895)

This agreement between Joseph Specht and Emma Specht was signed on December 18, 1895. (FCCC 1895) The same day the deed to Gunston Hall was conveyed by Emma E. H. Specht and Joseph Specht to Jesse E. Potbury and by deed, also dated December 18, 1895, Jesse E. Potbury conveyed the property to Joseph Specht. (HAT (1947), GHA) So, in a nutshell, Emma Specht traded her title to Gunston Hall and Ben Venue for her freedom and \$150.00 a month for her lifetime.

Joseph Specht lived out the rest of his life at Gunston Hall and died there in September of 1902, leaving no will. E.P. V. Titter was appointed administrator of his Estate both in Fairfax County and in St. Louis. His estate in Virginia was valued at \$125,000 at the time of his death. (The St. Louis Republic [TSLR], 13 September 1902:3, 24 October 1902:2) After Joseph Specht's death Gunston Hall was in dispute amongst the heirs and tied up in legal proceedings. (TWT 18 June 1904:4) Gunston Hall's History of the Mansion lists Adelaide Specht, daughter of Joseph and Emma Specht as the seller of Gunston Hall to its next owner Paul and Vaughn Kester in 1907. (GH 2009b) While there were changes made to the property during the Specht's ownership there is no direct mention of changes to the front lawn. *The morning times* ran an article on June 14, 1896, about a pilgrimage to Gunston Hall in remembrance of the 120th anniversary of the Virginia Bill of Rights' adoption. The house at this time was still owned by Joseph Specht. The article speaks of the roadway to the house as follows:

The first gate is the "red gate," and this leads through a bramble of English hawthorn hedge to the "white gate." Here the roadway, formerly flanked on either side with well-kept walks and the fragrance of the rows of cherry trees, was fresh in spring time. It leads to the north front of the old mansion. (The morning times, 14 June 1896:10)

Another reference to the front of the mansion is found in a book published in 1900. The book makes reference to the cherry tree avenue approach as described by John Mason in his *Recollections* and said, "No vestige remains of this remarkable avenue." (Ware 1900) The cherry trees may have died out during the Civil War when Gunston Hall was somewhat neglected and like the house, the trees would have needed care and may have become diseased. It is fairly certain that they weren't there in the latter part of the 19th century.

Prior to the purchase by Paul Kester, other purchase offers of interest were made on Gunston Hall. *The Washington Post* of August 22, 1905, reported the following potential sale. "Thomas E. Watson of Georgia, former member of Congress and nominee for President on the Populist ticket of 1904 is negotiating for the purchase of Gunston Hall in Virginia." (TWP, 22 August 1905:5) His plan to purchase never materialized. It was thwarted by another interested party, General Robert Gibson Smith of New Jersey. While Tom Watson was in the negotiating stages, Gen. Robert Gibson Smith came into the picture and reportedly purchased Gunston Hall for \$50,000. (TWP, 22 April 1906:RA5) No further information has been found concerning this sale. Perhaps, it fell through due to legal battles pending among the Specht's heirs.

Paul Kester

Next to grace the halls of Gunston were the Kesters. Paul and Vaughn Kester were living there, but it appears from the Hertle Title Abstracts that only Paul Kester was on the deed, since it reads as follows: "Paul Kester acquired the interest of all the various heirs of Joseph Specht by two deeds, dated 21 August, 1907 and one deed dated 28 August 1907, and other portion of the original estate by a deed dated 3 June, 1910." (HAT (1947), GHA)

An article in *The Washington Post* on April 22, 1934, spoke of Paul Kester and attributed the following quote to him: "Going inside of Gunston with its simple exterior, always reminds me of opening a jewel box and discovering all the exquisite things inside." (TWP, 22 April 1934:SM8) Obviously, Paul Kester loved his house but it appears from Lois Lembo's *Fifty Years of Gunston Hall Archaeology* the money he lavished on the house was not to make it the Colonial home it once was, but to decorate it and furnish it to his liking. Her comments on the matter are as follows:

Photographs of the mansion interior during the Kester's brief ownership show their eclectic and somewhat exotic tastes; their interest in historic properties apparently did not extend to the recreation of 18th century interiors. Although there is no specific information about any changes that the Kesters might have made to the grounds, it is likely that their attention was directed to the mansion itself while they lived at Gunston Hall. (Lembo 2001:1-22,1-23)

Prior to owning Gunston Hall, Paul Kester and his brother Vaughan Kester owned Woodlawn Plantation. Paul and Vaughn Kester were also familiar with Gunston Hall having Lived previously at Ben Venue. (TWP, 24 March 1901:6) The sale to Paul Kester was covered in *The Washington Post* on October 9, 1907, reads, "The Gunston Hall estate in Fairfax County, Va., bought several years ago by the late Joseph Specht, a St. Louis merchant, has been sold to Paul Kester the well known Dramatist, by the Specht heirs, the consideration was \$25,000." (TWP, 9 October 1907:5)

Vaughan Kester died on July 4, 1910, while living at Gunston Hall. (TWP, 6 July 1911:2) He wrote his novel, *The Prodigal Judge*, while living at Gunston Hall. Gunston Hall may have been inspiration for certain elements of his book. There is mention of a Red Gate in the book but whether it is the same one that gated Gunston Hall is unknown.

Louis Hertle

Louis Hertle purchased Gunston Hall in 1912. He and his wife, Emma Hertle were the last people to use Gunston Hall as a private residence. Louis Hertle's *Recollections* transport us back in time for a rare glimpse of the day he fell in love with Gunston Hall in November of 1912. Mr. Hertle writes, "On arriving I remember well the impression I got on rounding the circle and approaching the hall and Mrs. Kester coming with kindly greeting down the front porch. I felt at once the place would be mine." (Hertle's *Recollections* [HR], GHA)

Mr. and Mrs. Hertle's love of Gunston Hall led them in the direction of preserving the original features of the house and ground while still making it a comfortable, beautiful, functional home. The *Fairfax Herald* on April 23, 1915, reported, "He is neither sparing money or time to bring it back to its original state." (FH, 23 April 1915:2)

The Hertles were also interested in recreating George Mason's avenue of cherry trees. In December of 1914, Paul Bartlett, a sculptor, visited the Hertles. At that time they were also using the services of architect Glen Brown. An entry in Louis Hertle's *Recollections* is insightful into the difficulties that they encountered with the plan. Mr. Hertle's remembrance is as follows:

I can see him [Paul Bartlett] with Glenn Brown lining up books on the floor in the evening trying to reproduce George Mason's avenue of 4 rows of cherry trees on front road and to get the narrowest possible road after going out about 1250 feet from beginning as described by General John Mason in 1932. (see Kate Mason Rowland page 92) the result was they finally decided they could not get it narrower than 750 at that end, a rather wide road! (HR, GHA)

The task in the end must have proved too daunting because they ended up making changes to the road, but not as it was in George Mason's day. On March 5, 1915, the *Fairfax Herald* reported, "Mr. Hertle is making a beautiful automobile road leading from the Hall to the public highway." (FH, 5 March 1915:2) In Louis Hertle's *Recollections* he speaks about the road and the gates and the changes he made as follows:

Brick gates: 1917/1919 In about 1917 we built the large Brick gates at the end of the present rows of poplars. ... We would have been happy could we have seen our way clear to restore the four rows of cherry trees Gen'l John Mason of Analostan describes in his letter of *Recollections* of life at Gunston Hall when he was a boy, written in 1832. There must have [been] considerable erosion since Mason's day judging from the fact that there is quite a rise between the edge of the woods on north side of field and the

present gates. The result would be destructive of effect of the long rows of trees visible when viewed from sides of door as that farthest point from Hall only upper Parts of trees would be visible.

We felt the need of a limit to our house grounds & decided upon the highest point as best place to stop. The gates being built in war days, I remember Mrs. Hertle saying "in case of arrival of a bomber we could get into the center of the gates posts for protection."

Entrance Wall: 1922 The entrance at Gunston Hall was on my arrival over a right of way between a small triangular piece owned by Freeman and the woodland then owned by two neighbors.

We decided we had enough of our own for roads without infringing upon others so we built the road turning north westward & following down the slope of hill diagonally to county road.

We then build [built] the 2 low curved brick walls on which are planted climbing euonymus sent us by Miss Florence Bartlett from Lake Geneva, Wisc.

I remember on my first coming in 1913 the trees at entrance were so covered with the thorny briar so common about here, it had the appearance of a swamp. (HR, GHA)

In a memo concerning the entrance road to Gunston Hall, Bennie Brown, Jr., a former librarian at Gunston Hall, explains Hertle's changes to the road and some post Hertle changes as follows:

The present curved entrance road into Gunston Hall was created in 1922-23 when Mr. Hertle owned the property. Originally, the access road was a straight line across the adjoining northern properties (then owned by W.S. Freeman and Ann Smith) to which the Hertles had a right of way. Mr. Hertle changed the road to its present double curves on his own property to avoid the negro school and its playground then so near the old access road.

Few modifications have occurred to the double curved entrance road since Mr. Hertle constructed it. Shortly following the take over by the Board of Regents, the sharp curves were softened and paved by the State Highway Commission. Since then, some widening of these narrow curves has taken place. (Bennie Brown, Jr., Memo Concerning the Old Negro School and the Entrance Road to Gunston Hall, Hertle File, GHA)

There were other changes to the road in front of the house that Hertle doesn't speak of in his *Recollections*. In a letter written by R. L. Montague, Resident Superintendent of Gunston he discusses conversations he had on February 2, 1952, with men who had worked at Gunston in the past. The men were a Mr. Haislip and a Mr. Harley. According to Mr. Montague, Mr. Haislip had worked at Gunston Hall when Colonel Daniels owned the property and had also been there during Mr. Specht's ownership. Mr. Montague

questioned the gentlemen about certain aspects of Gunston Hall. When he asked Mr. Haislip about the circle, Mr. Haislip indicated that he did not remember a circle, only a pathway straight to the Mansion and he could not recall if the road was paved or not. Mr. Harley told him that he had worked at times for Mr. Specht and Mr. Hertle. He told Mr. Montague that he remembered helping the Hertles when they moved the circle road closer to the house. Mr. Montague's comments on the circle saying, "My excavations two years ago showed that the circle road had been about 25 (feet) further north, passing over the foundations of the flanking buildings. This would prove that the road was put there after the flanking buildings disappeared." (R.L. Montague letter to Mrs. John L. Sullivan, Daniel's file, GHA) When Mr. Hertle went to see Gunston Hall the first time he spoke of seeing Mrs. Kester coming to greet him as he rounded the circle, so perhaps the Kesters put in a new circle road, or uncovered one that had disappeared from neglect.

Mr. and Mrs. Hertle kept diaries and there are several entries in their diaries concerning the new road. In March of 1915 they noted that graveling of the road had been completed and across the road entrance Mr. Freeman and built a little bridge. In May of 1915 they planted 30 box plants to edge the lawn on the entrance road to the house. (Hertle Diaries [HD] 1915, GHA) On May 10, 1915, a very important entry concerning the road was noted: "The entrance road nearly completed. Wood the well digger & his men are making it. Widening it to 16 ft. & straightening it." (HD 1915, GHA) On September 30, 1916, the Hertles noted, "The entrance road is all cut & partly graveled – After the top dressing has been put in the road will be finished." On October 9, 1916, the Hertles noted that grass was appearing and the road was finished. (HD 1916, GHA) In 1933 there were several entries about removing poplar trees along the road and on January 15, 1938, they said they were buys that day, "Pulling, digging & sawing up maple tree in circle between the Willow Oaks – about 84 years old counting circles." (HD 1933-1938, GHA)

In Louis Hertle's *Recollections* is an entry in 1922 of interest to the front lawn. The Hertles had planted poplar trees along the road to the house. The trees were planted starting at the Brick Gates and ended at the "Hall Circle". In 1922 they realized that the trees may not live very long so they planted a magnolia grandiflora between each tree. They planted 87 trees in 1922, forty in 1923, two hundred in 1929 and fifty in 1931. They also wanted to have some extras on hand and put some of these in different places. They said they lost many of these trees so sometime around 1930 they put in a row of cedars in on either side of the road. These were placed behind the magnolia trees with the idea that they would provide protection against weather and provide an evergreen approach when the other trees died out. (HR, GHA)

Commonwealth of Virginia

Mrs. Hertle died on June 6, 1929. Gunston Hall was deeded to the Commonwealth of Virginia, by Louis Hertle in 1932, with administration by Regents from the National

Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Mr. Hertle retained a life tenancy and died in 1949. According to a *Washington Post* article dated February 27, 1932, Gunston Hall was given to the Commonwealth of Virginia, as stated in the deed because, "it was the wish of Eleanor Daughaday Hertle, beloved wife of the party of the first part, now deceased, and in accordance with the desire of the donor, as a perpetual memorial to the memory of George Mason and in honor of the principles of just government and civic righteousness exemplified in his life and in his work, and with the hope and expectation that such a memorial will serve to strengthen the adherence of all who may visit the memorial to the fundamental view on government and social obligations and privileges expressed by him in the Declaration of Rights." (TWP, 27 February, 1932)

Lois Lembo's *Fifty Years of Gunston Hall Archaeology* says that prior to Mr. Hertle's death the public was allowed access to the property, but not formally until 1949. She also had no further information available about changes to the property since the Hertle ownership. (Lembo 2001:1-28) In the 1940's, prior to the death of Louis Hertle, the Board of Regents of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America worked with the Garden Club of Virginia on a plan for the restoration of the gardens at Gunston Hall. The garden club hired a landscape architect by the name of Alden Hopkins to assist them with the restoration. In conversations between Hopkins and the Garden Club of Virginia, Hopkins expressed his desire to obscure the view of the parking area and superintendant's building. His plan included an impressive tree line approach that was only accessible to foot traffic. (Virginia Historical Society – The Center for Virginia History 2011) At this point in time it seems we have gone full circle back to an approach and idea of concealment similar to what was there during George Mason's time. Visitors approaching Gunston Hall would once again be "wowed" when they came to visit.

Part II: A Proposed Plan for the Carriage Circle at Gunston Hall

Imagine the clock has been turned back and you find yourself in eighteenth century Virginia, travelling south in your carriage on the King's Highway. You have just passed through that new town, Alexandria, and are disappointed you did not buy property there when it was first available. After awhile, you turn off the highway and head toward the Potomac River. George Mason has invited you to stop by Gunston Hall during your travels. You are curious; you have heard so much about his "Chinese Room." Your carriage turns into his avenue and you are impressed with the beautiful cherry trees lining the roadway. Eventually, you see the end of the cherry trees up ahead, but you still cannot see the mansion. All you can see is the door! Your carriage begins to turn slowly as you move away from the cherry trees. Suddenly, the entire mansion comes into view. You had no idea it was so magnificent. You hardly notice anything else but this stately brick manor as your carriage moves toward the door.

How did George Mason accomplish this effect? How did he plan that last piece of the journey? Making a powerful impression would have been important to Mason yet so very little information is available to describe the last few steps. It is a tall order trying to get into Mason's thoughts. Where did he live and did he see anything at those homes that would influence him? Who were his friends and business associates and what did he learn from them? What books did he read? What else did he plan?

Information was gathered on his early homes, residences he was familiar with while planning Gunston Hall, and the homes of his sons, searching for clues to solve this mystery. What his education might have been and the literature available to him at this time was also studied. This wealth of information was sifted through and a proposed plan for the carriage circle has been drawn. Unless archaeological investigations should happen to uncover some contrary evidence, this plan remains our dream of what George Mason might have done with those last two hundred feet to the mansion door.

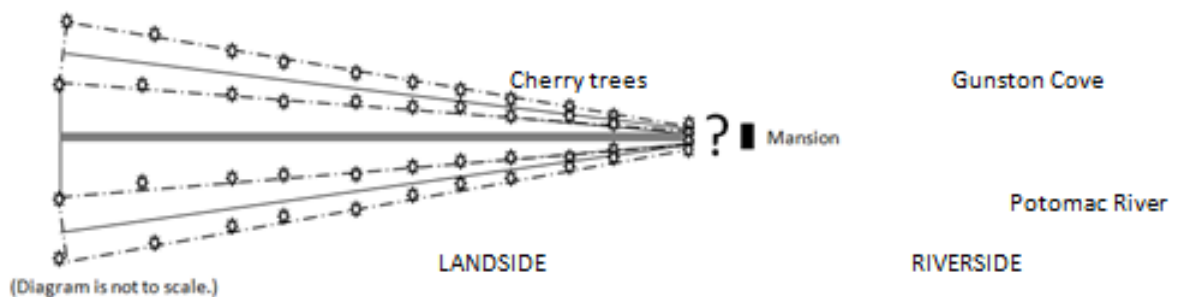


Figure 1 The layout of Gunston Hall landside lawn

Residences of George Mason IV prior to Gunston Hall

Mason was born at Newtown on Mason Neck, believed to have been located about a quarter mile east of where Gunston Hall now stands. (Moxham 1975) Newtown is thought to have been constructed by George Mason II prior to 1692 (Moxham 1975) and George Mason III may have lived there with his family. The home overlooked Gunston Cove but details about its structure and access have been lost. Mason's parents then moved to Christian Temple Manor which was located on Chickamuxon Creek in Maryland. (Copeland and MacMaster 1989 [1975]: 56) No details about the structure or landscape of this Mason residence are known either. This pattern would become all too familiar as the research progressed. The Mason property abutted Mount Eilbeck on Mattawoman Creek, a plantation owned by William and Sarah Eilbeck, the parents of Mason's first wife, Ann Eilbeck Mason. The plantation eventually became known as Araby, a name carried down to the present. Araby will be discussed later in this paper.

In 1735, George Mason III drowned while attempting to cross the Potomac in his sloop. Mason's mother moved the family back to Virginia to Chopawamsic, the plantation she received from her husband's estate. Mason's uncle, John Mercer, along with Mason's mother, was named as legal guardian. He took an active role in Mason's education and placed high importance on mathematics. (Copeland and MacMaster 1989 [1975]: 76) While at Chopawamsic, Mason, along with his lifelong friend Richard Hewitt, was tutored by a gentleman known as Master Williams. Mason was to board with Williams after his move to Maryland sometime before 1740 but was back in Chopawamsic in 1740 studying with different tutors for unknown reasons. (Copeland and MacMaster 1989 [1975]: 75) Perhaps Mercer was no longer satisfied with Williams. Mason spent much time with Mercer in Marlborough and had access to his legendary library which contained such works as John Evelyn's *Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest Trees* (1679). (Dunn 2004:86, Note 38) Evelyn's book may have influenced Mason and will be discussed later as well.

Mercer did not begin building his mansion, Marlborough, until 1746, the year George Mason turned 21, reaching his majority. While with Mercer, Mason would have lived in a different, simpler residence than the Marlborough mansion. (Benjamin 2008) He was no doubt privy to discussions concerning Marlborough's construction. Mercer was known to have hired the most highly skilled workmen for Marlborough, including David Minitree who did the brickwork for Carter Burwell's Carter's Grove. (Benjamin 2008) Similarly, Mason will ask his brother, Thomson, to help find skilled artisans in London to work on Gunston. The mansion at Marlborough no longer exists, having burned sometime before 1819, and information about its grounds are nonexistent.

Upon reaching majority, Mason would have moved to his property on Mason Neck. Moxham speculates that Mason built a dwelling called "Dogues Neck" at this time, located at Sycamore Point on the Potomac. (Moxham 1975) The construction of Dogues

Neck would have taken place between 1746 and 1750. Mason must have spent a lot of time traveling across the Potomac between this residence and the family's Mattowan Creek plantation while he was courting his first wife, Ann Eilbeck Mason.

George Mason and Ann Eilbeck were married at Araby in 1750. While Gunston was being built, Ann and George Mason lived at both Araby and another dwelling on Mason Neck, possibly the one Mason lived in before his marriage. Araby, which still exists today and is privately owned, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1974. Although information about Araby can be found in the nomination forms for the NRHP, no mention is made of a carriage circle or drive. (Rivoire 1973)

In the book, *Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland* by Henry Chandler Foreman, Araby, Gunston Hall, and Smallwood's Retreat, which is located approximately four miles southwest of Araby, are referred to as being in the Mattawoman Creek style. (Foreman 1982 [1934]:69) At the time Mason was building Gunston Hall, Araby would have been a one story building with a five bay gambrel roof. It is a brick home, done in Flemish bond like Gunston. Since the homes are linked architecturally, Araby may hold some clues to the carriage circle at Gunston Hall.

The remains of a circular feature immediately in front of the mansion and attached kitchen can be seen in viewing an aerial shot of Araby. This could possibly be the remains of a carriage circle or circular drive. The original Araby mansion would not have been connected to the kitchen at the time of George and Ann's courtship and residence. The face of the house as it existed in 1755 would have been approximately 40 feet wide. The circular feature looks to be about the same width as the original mansion. There is also a double row of trees that may have lined an entrance drive. The break in the trees is in a fairly straight line and points toward the center of the circular feature, beginning about 100 feet from the mansion.

People and residences in the vicinity known to George Mason IV during the 1740s and 1750s

George Mason was an independent thinker and probably not greatly influenced by neighbors or associates in the design of his estate. However, it would have been important to Mason that the design fit in with local styles. Being Mason, however, he would have elevated that style to a new level. Mason wanted his visitors to immediately grasp his social station. To do this, he would incorporate designs and techniques that were familiar to visitors so that they could appreciate his wealth and position using their own personal yardsticks.

In addition to the homes Mason lived in before Gunston Hall, the homes of his relatives, friends, and business associates were also studied. To ascertain who these people might have been, a running list of names was kept while researching. The Biographical – Geographical Glossary prepared by Sandra Ryan Dresbeck in Volume I of *The Papers of*

George Mason was also combed. The following cannot be a complete list but it gives a good representation of the business and social worlds to which Mason belonged. For brevity's sake, the information to be presented has been limited to those people and residences within close proximity to Gunston Hall, basically modern day Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

Brief explanations of who these people were to Mason as well as any information gleaned about their residences is presented below. All information has been taken from Dresbeck's Biographical – Geographical Glossary unless otherwise noted. A "neighborhood" map which shows the locations of the following residences is provided. Unfortunately, the homes of so many of Mason's contemporaries have been lost to time. A separate list is provided in Appendix A of those for whom we could find no information about their homes, other than their former locations. The stories of these acquaintances should be told as well. The numbers that are bolded on the map correspond with the residences described below; the other numbers correspond with listings in Appendix A.

4. Carlyle House (John Carlyle) – built in 1759

Carlyle was a prominent businessman and one of the original trustees of the town of Alexandria, along with Mason. Carlyle was married to the daughter of William Fairfax. He resigned from the Ohio Company at the time Mason became treasurer.

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) document shows a courtyard between the house and street. The courtyard is set up in a manner similar to Mount Vernon with flanking buildings connected to the mansion by covered walkways. The courtyard is designed in a semi-circular fashion with a central roadway, or large walkway, on the axis of the mansion. As the roadway approaches the mansion, it splits to run parallel to the face of the mansion and returns toward the entrance, passing the flanking buildings. A sketch exists in the HABS report but it is listed under the photo section, not drawings. (Waterman 1941b)

7. Ramsay House (William Ramsay)

Ramsay was a friend of Mason's and a business partner of John Carlyle's. Ramsay is credited with having brought Mason in as a Trustee of Alexandria. Ramsay's home is located at the corner of King Street and Fairfax Street in Old Town, Alexandria. From its modern appearance, it does not appear that a carriage circle would have been needed at this location.

HABS is on file but the diagrams included refer only to the structure itself. (Waterman 1941c)

People and homes George Mason would have been familiar with at the time Gunston Hall was being built (1754 – 1758)

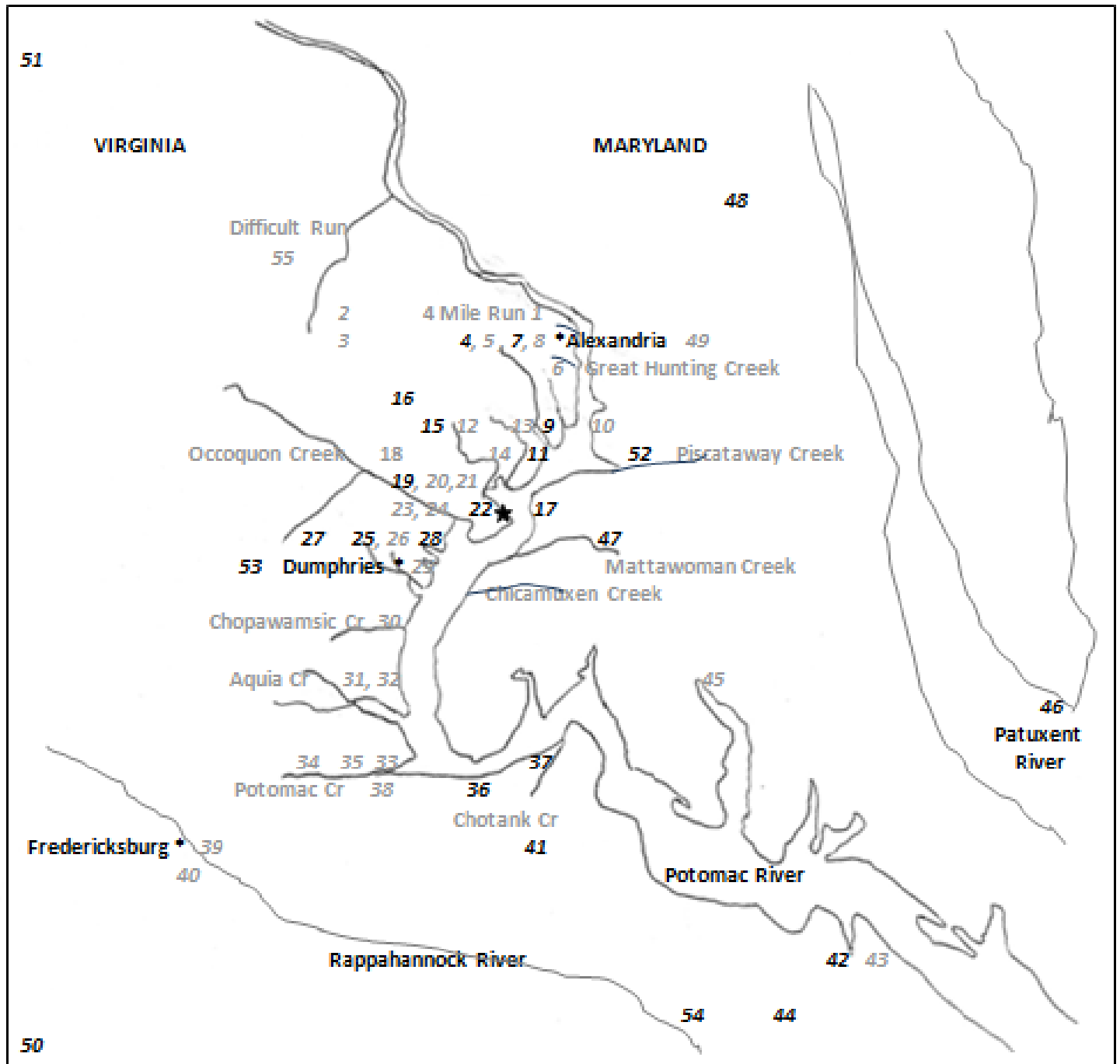


Figure 2 ★ Gunston Hall

9. Mount Vernon (George Washington)

Washington was a good acquaintance, a fellow member of the Truro Parish vestry, and a political ally of Mason's. The iconic carriage circle at Mount Vernon will be discussed later.

11. Belvoir (William Fairfax /George William Fairfax)

William Fairfax was an acquaintance of Mason's, serving with him on the Truro Parish vestry and as an original trustee of the city of Alexandria. William died in 1757 and George William Fairfax inherited Belvoir. George William also served on the Truro Parish vestry and was an original Alexandria trustee as well. He resigned from the Ohio Company at the time Mason assumed the position of treasurer. A discussion of the Belvoir carriage circle unearthed during archaeological investigations is discussed later.

15. Mount Air (Daniel McCarty)

Mount Air stood until it burned to the ground in 1992. It had originally suffered damage during a fire in the 1850s. Part of the plantation had passed out of the McCarty family's possession and into the Chichester's by 1815. George Mason's son, Thomson, married Sarah Chichester. The foundation ruins of the mansion are still visible and the Fairfax County History Commission has placed a marker at the ruins to commemorate the mansion. Although information is available on the house, no information about the carriage circle was found. (Swain 2009)

16. Rose Hill (Daniel French)

Daniel French was a distant cousin of George Mason's. He served on the Truro Parish vestry and contracted to do repair work on the original Pohick Church in 1751. He also contracted to construct the new church in 1769 but died before completing the work. Mason assumed his duties. Rose Hill had a terraced garden of rose beds on the hillside looking toward the Potomac. An 1814 ad for the sale of Rose Hill appeared in the Alexandria Gazette. The house is described in detail but there is no mention of a carriage circle. Rose Hill burned completely in 1895. (Sell (2011))

17. Grimes Ditch (Nathaniel Chapman)

Gunston Hall was built across the Potomac from Grimes Ditch. It was a large plantation containing a one and one-half or two-story brick mansion having five bays on the most prominent side of the mansion, like Gunston Hall, but only three on the reverse side. The first floor resembled Gunston in that it had four rooms, two on each side of a central hallway. The outbuildings identified in the inventory taken after Chapman's death

in 1761 were a kitchen, store, and office. The mansion was destroyed shortly after 1783 and was replaced. (Rivoire 1992, 7:7; Chapman 1946).

19. Belmont (Catesby Cocke/Edward Washington)

Catesby Cocke was a neighbor of George Mason's and was a Clerk of the Court for both Prince William and Fairfax Counties. Edward Washington was one of the original trustees of Colchester. Believed to have been built by Cateby Cocke in 1730, the house is now referred to as the Edward Washington House, Washington having purchased it in 1742. The house started as a small frame structure but a substantial brick wing was added. Most of the original house was destroyed in 1866. Pictures are present on the HABS site but are inconclusive in terms of a carriage circle. (Bailey and Jones 1954a) The house ruins were bulldozed in 1959. (Catesby Cocke Genealogy (2010))

22. Lebanon (William Fitzhugh/Edward Bates?)

Some controversy exists over when Lebanon was actually built. Local legend has assigned the ownership of this land and manor house to Edward Bates but written record of land transactions would seem to link William Fitzhugh to the land through 1791. (Sprouse 1999-2000:59) The manor is presently being used as the clubhouse for Pohick Bay Golf Club, run by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. The long roadway leading to the clubhouse was built over the original juniper-lined drive. (Hausman 1971:7) A somewhat heart-shaped carriage drive currently exists, being wider closer to the mansion and tapering off as it approaches the drive to the long entrance roadway.

25. Rockledge (John Ballendine)

John Ballendine was a ship captain and entrepreneur, which is probably why Mason and Ballendine were friends. Rockledge was constructed around 1758, being the first commission Buckland accepted after Gunston Hall. One can imagine Mason and Ballendine comparing construction plans. The property contained a merchant's mill. The pictures in the HABS report on file show the similarity between the interiors of Rockledge and Gunston. (Bailey and Jones 1954b) However, it does not appear that Rockledge has a traditional carriage roadway. A road ran parallel to the front of Rockledge without doubling back to the main road.

27. Bel Air (Capt. Charles Ewell)

According to the Virginia Historic Landmarks Survey form dated June, 1987, Capt. Charles Ewell was the son of the architect who designed the Capitol in Williamsburg. (Polhill 1987) He built Bel Air around 1720, possibly on the foundation of an earlier building. It is not clear that

Mason had any type of relationship with Ewell. This house is listed because of its age and the fact that Ewell was related to George Washington and hosted him as well as Thomas Jefferson at Bel Air (Moody 1970:Documents) Dr. James Craik, Washington's physician, was married in this house to Mariamne Ewell in 1760. (Morton 1937) Parson Mason Locke Weems, the eccentric first biographer of George Washington, married a descendent of Capt. Ewell. He lived for awhile at Bel Air and is buried in the cemetery near the Bel Air property. The HABS report on file does not give evidence of a carriage circle and an aerial photo does not seem to show a traditional carriage drive. (Historic American Buildings Survey 1936a) One can see a driveway entering the grounds that heads toward the house but this drive appears to stop at the house. Cars must return to the main road along the same path.

28. Rippon Lodge (Richard Blackburn)

Richard Blackburn did construction for the Truro Parish vestry and was also one of the original Trustees of Dumphries with Mason. Rippon Lodge still exists and is open to the public. A HABS document is on file and the Plot Plan shows a walkway leading up to the doorway. (HABS 1936c) The driveway is somewhat circular in shape, extending around the house. This can be verified by viewing an aerial shot of the grounds. Something similar is hypothesized for Hollin Hall.

36. Eagle's Nest (Henry Fitzhugh)

Eagle's Nest was inherited by William Fitzhugh, the owner of Chatham (#40, Appendix A). Unfortunately, the original home was destroyed during the Civil War. A detailed description of the wooden manor home is available, along with a picture, but no information has been found on the grounds or carriage circle. (Heflin 1937)

37. Stratford Hall (Philip Ludwell Lee)

Philip Ludwell Lee was a lawyer, a member of the House of Burgesses and served on the Governor's Council. He was also a member of the Ohio Company and a noted turfman. A turfman is someone having a professional interest in raising horses. He held substantial land in both Virginia and Maryland. Stratford Hall has been restored and is open to the public. (Stratford Hall Plantation 2011)

A HABS report is on file showing a diagram of the carriage way, similar to what exists presently at Stratford Hall. (Waterman 1940) The HABS documentation mentions a 1700 foot drive. Using the ruler function in Google Earth, it would appear that this refers to the circumference of the drive, not the diameter from the doorway to the far end of the drive. The formal courtyard has symmetrically arranged outbuildings. The carriage

drive is a large, oval shaped roadway that comes up to but does not cross into this courtyard. It is approximately 800 feet from the far edge of the circle to the courtyard. The roadway around is lined with tulip poplars on the inside of the circle. Archaeologists are currently studying the foundations of outbuildings located at the far end of this carriage way. The road from the highway to this circle was aligned along the central axis of the mansion. A double row of trees leading from the circle out toward the highway extends approximately 1100 feet. The cherry tree-lined drive at Gunston Hall is thought to have been 1200 feet long.

41. Marmion (William Fitzhugh, different from the William Fitzhugh who owned Eagle's Nest and Chatham)

William Fitzhugh was a Burgess from Stafford County and had a military career in the Stafford militia.

Marmion still exists but is privately owned. The Plot Plan of the HABS report on file shows an elliptical carriage circle with the longer diameter running parallel to house. (HABS 1936b) The inner grassy area looks to be the same length as the face of the house, which is approximately 55 feet, and the roadway around the circle is quite wide. The grassy area with the roadway on either side measures approximately twice the face of the house.

A recent aerial shot shows that the carriage circle described in the HABS report no longer exists. However, vestiges do remain upon close inspection.

42. Nomini Hall (Robert Carter)

Robert Carter was an attorney and a member of the Ohio Company. It is known that he possessed a large library.

The original Nomini Hall burned in 1850 and was replaced. The tutor, Fithian, sketched the house in the 1770s (Rager 2007) and described it in great detail in his journal. (Farish 1978[1943]:127-131) Undated sketches done by R. E. Collins also exist that seem to match Fithian in most details. (HABS (1936e)) (The entry is listed as being "Nomoni Hall, Westmoreland County.") Both artists show a formal courtyard, with outbuildings symmetrically placed. A wide, tree-lined walkway approaches the doorway, with smaller walkways connecting the sets of outbuildings on either side of the mansion, giving the impression that the mansion is sitting in the middle of a rectangle. The design somewhat resembles the findings of archaeological excavations in the north lawn of Lexington.

44. Sabine Hall (Landon Carter)

Landon Carter was a Burgess from Richmond County who is best known for writing a diary of life in Virginia before the Revolution.

In the HABS report on file, the Plot Plan shows a perfectly circular carriage circle, with the width of the grassy part in an almost 3:2 proportion to the width of house. (Stern 1936) The first floor of the house is approximately 60 feet wide and the outside edge of the carriage circle is twice the width of house. These proportions will be discussed later when the plan for the carriage circle at Gunston Hall is presented.

46. Rousby Hall (William Fitzhugh)

William Fitzhugh was a cousin of Mason's. He was a merchant who sold provisions to ships on the Chesapeake. His second wife was Ann Frisby Rousby whom he married after five rejected proposals. Legend has it he kidnapped her infant child and threatened to kill the baby if she didn't consent to marriage. (Calvert Independent, 23 September 1954:17) He moved from Stafford County, Virginia, to Rousby Hall in Calvert County, Maryland, in 1759. (Calverthistory 2011) He refused to sell supplies to British merchants when the Revolution was imminent. Therefore, British soldiers burned the original Rousby Hall in the 1770s. The house was rebuilt later and is privately owned. No description of the original house or grounds has been found.

47. Mount Eilbeck (later Araby) (William Eilbeck)

William Eilbeck is the father of Ann Eilbeck, Mason's first wife. His home, Araby, was discussed earlier.

48. Carroll House (Charles Carroll of Annapolis)

Mason's dealings were more often with Daniel Carroll but he would have been familiar with the other branch of the powerful Carroll family. Charles Carroll of Annapolis built this brick mansion around 1726. This home is listed here because Carroll used the Golden Ratio in his triangular garden design. (Cochran 2001) The Carroll House is open to the public on weekends from June through October. Carroll's son, Charles Carroll of Carrolltown was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

50. Elsing Green (Carter Braxton)

Carter Braxton was a King William County Burgess and signer of the Declaration of Independence. He purchased Elsing Green in 1752. It is currently owned by the Lafferty Foundation. (The Lafferty Foundation (2011)).

At the present time, Elsing Green has a very complex entrance drive. The house is approached by an extensive tree-lined drive that is over 4000 feet long. The road then splits and continues up toward the house, forming a shield pattern. The entrance drive also continues through the middle of this shield, overlaying the central axis of the house. This 1200 foot central drive ends in an oval carriage circle, the diameter of which appears to be approximately the same width as the face of the house. A rectangular walkway surrounds the house. The oval carriage circle stops just short of the sidewalk "rectangle." The lawn on the other side of the mansion appears to be terraced.

A HABS report is on file; however, the entrance drive is not shown. (Waterman and Bradbury 1936-1938) The tiny piece of the carriage circle that is shown does not seem to match the present day pattern.

51. Greenway Court (Thomas Fairfax)

Thomas Fairfax was the 6th Lord Fairfax of Cameron and was Proprietor of the Northern Neck of Virginia. Mason leased land from Fairfax and dealt with him as the Treasurer of the Ohio Company. It is known that Fairfax lived from 1747 through 1752 somewhere on the Potomac then relocated to Greenway Court in the Shenandoah Valley. HABS reports exist of an outbuilding, estate office and the powder house; however, the original hunting lodge was replaced. According to the HABS reports, the additional buildings were constructed at the time Fairfax took up residence. The lodge has been described as being one-storied, made of limestone, with a long sloping roof that forms a veranda running the length of the lodge. (G.P. Putnam and Company 1857 54(9):562-563)

52. Marshall Hall (Thomas Marshall)

Thomas Marshall was a planter who raised tobacco, corn, and wheat and was a Justice of the Peace in Charles County, Maryland. Marshall Hall was built around 1725. It was included as part of an amusement park until 1961 when Piscataway Park was established by the National Park Service. The mansion burned in 1981 however large portions of the brick walls remained intact. In 2003, a truck ran into the ruins but the walls have since been stabilized. (Marshall 1997)

A HABS report is on file which gives detailed information about the original mansion but nothing about the landscaping. (Waterman 1942) Of particular interest is the card prepared by Waterman that can be found in the Supplemental Material. Here, he describes the original Marshall House as being two stories, constructed with brick in Flemish Bond

pattern. The original dwelling had five bays and seems very similar to Gunston Hall.

54. Mount Airy (John Tayloe)

John Tayloe was a Justice of the Peace for Richmond County and a member of the Ohio Company. He raised horses and owned the Neabsco iron furnace as well as land in several counties including Fairfax. It is thought that Tayloe was the wealthiest man in Virginia at the time Gunston Hall was built. Mount Airy is a private residence and remains within the Tayloe family.

Mount Airy was built between 1758 and 1762 and is attributed to John Ariss. According to the Architectural Data Form presented in the HABS report, Mount Airy is the earliest known Palladian villa built in America. (Null 1983; Snell 1971)

Mount Airy has a terraced courtyard with two outbuildings symmetrically placed at the end of the terrace and before the carriage circle.

Presently, as seen in an aerial shot by Google Earth, Mount Airy has a perfectly circular carriage circle. It does not have an entrance drive on a central axis of the house but rather has slightly curved roads leading into the circle. The circle looks like it is sitting in the middle of an elongated "S." The face of the house is approximately 60 feet wide, as is the diameter of the outer edge of the carriage circle. The grassy inner circle has a diameter of approximately 30 feet.

Another residence that is important to consider is the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg, Virginia. In 1716, Mason's aunt, Simpha Rosa Ann Field Mason married John Dinwiddie (Lee 2010:132), the brother of the Robert Dinwiddie, who would become the Royal Governor of Virginia from 1751 through 1758. Since Mason was born in 1725, his memories would be of Simpha Rosa's second husband, Jeremiah Bronaugh, whom she married in 1729 and lived with at Newtown. Mason's father had also been a member of the House of Burgesses from Stafford County from 1720 through his death in 1735. From both of these connections, it is reasonable to assume that a young George Mason would have been to Williamsburg and seen the Governor's Palace. He can also be placed in Williamsburg for an Ohio Company meeting on May 7, 1752 at Mr. Wetherburn's, a well-known tavern. (Rutland 1970:15)

Mason would have been familiar with the stately, tree-lined green leading to the Palace. This green is over 800 feet long and positioned on the north/south axis line through the Palace. The HABS report shows that the face of the Governor's Palace is 54 feet, approximately the same as that of Gunston Hall. (Waterman 1941d) It cannot be known

for certain what the carriage circle looked like during Mason's visit but there would have been some type of staging area between the courtyard gates and the green.



Figure 3 Governor's Palace and green, Williamsburg, Virginia

Dimensions of the carriage circles at Belvoir and Mount Vernon

It is difficult to find out information about the original dimensions of carriage circles at homes existing at the time Gunston Hall was built. However, measurements are available on two homes Mason would have been quite familiar with, Belvoir and Mount Vernon.

Belvoir

The first "neighborhood" mansion to be discussed will be Belvoir, the home of George William Fairfax at the time Gunston Hall was being constructed. The Belvoir ruins are located on the grounds of Fort Belvoir today. From all accounts, the main house at Belvoir, completed in 1741, was one of the more elegant in northern Virginia, with furnishings that can be described as opulent. Given the impending hostilities, Fairfax left for England in 1773, naming Washington as his agent. Belvoir was rented to Rev. Andrew Morton in 1774 for seven years. (Russell 1964-1965:11) Morton made no known changes to the manor or grounds. Unfortunately, the manor burned to the ground in 1783. The ruins of the manor house as well as any remaining outbuildings were bombarded by the British in 1814 during the War of 1812. (U.S. Army Garrison

Fort Belvoir and the Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Project 2010; Russell 1973) Although it is tragic to lose the mansion and buildings, their early destruction and subsequent neglect preserved the foundations and many of the landscape features, including the outline of the carriage circle.

The carriage circle, which was uncovered during archaeological excavations performed in the 1970s by the United States Army, had been remarkably preserved. (Shott 1978) Excavations revealed that the carriage circle at Belvoir was perfectly circular. The diameter of the inner circle was 130 feet with a roadway of 15 feet, making the entire carriage circle feature 160 feet wide. Belvoir was similar in dimension to Gunston Hall, being approximately 57 feet wide and 37 feet deep without porches, according to the Basement Plan included in the HABS report. (Waterman and Gutterson 1940) In *The Mansions of Virginia*, Waterman suggests that the walls on the land front which frame the courtyard may have been designed by John Ariss in 1757, the year George William Fairfax inherited Belvoir. (Waterman 1945:331) The following is an aerial view of the Belvoir ruins taken during archaeological excavations in the 1970s with the carriage circle marked by arrows.



Figure 4. Aerial photo of Belvoir Mansion ruins
Permission for use granted by Mount Vernon Archaeology, George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate

The following is a sketch included in the archaeological report in which the carriage circle can more easily be seen. The sketch shows the carriage circle is placed at the land side garden walls. Belvoir resembled Gunston in that it was located at the highest point on the bluff and had formal gardens on the river side. Belvoir differs from Gunston in that there was no tree-lined avenue approaching the land side entrance. An elaborate, multi-levelled garden was in between the entrance and the carriage circle. No evidence that a formal garden such as this has been found on the land front side of Gunston Hall.

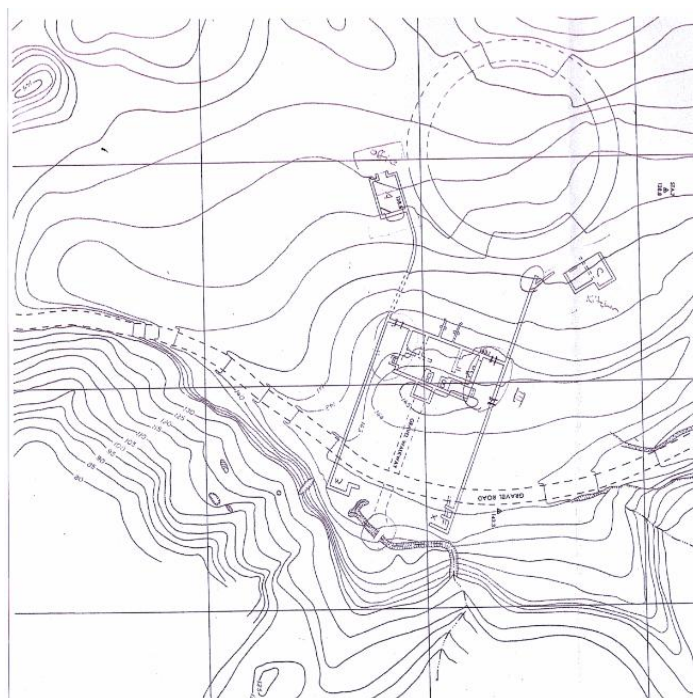


Figure 5. Belvoir Mansion ruins
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Mount Vernon

George Washington lived for much of his youth at Mount Vernon, the home of his half-brother, Lawrence. He inherited an interest in Mount Vernon upon Lawrence's death in 1752 and took possession of the plantation by purchasing his sister-in-law's interest in 1754. (The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union 2005:13) He was contemplating changes to the mansion and landscape while Mason was planning and building Gunston. In 1757, Washington began making additions and improvements, inheriting Mount Vernon in 1761 upon the death of his sister-in-law. In the unpublished article, "Approaching Mount Vernon," Dennis Pogue discusses the difficulty in determining how carriages would have travelled the distance between the West Gate at Mount Vernon up to the mansion door. He states that prior to 1785, the last part of the entrance drive would have been straight to the carriage circle from what is now the end of the Bowling Green, which was not in existence during the time Gunston Hall was being built. (Pogue 2010:10) This portion of the drive would have been about half the length of the entrance avenue at Gunston Hall. Although he continued to rework parts of Mount Vernon through the 1790s, Washington did not change the dimensions of the grassy, inner part of the carriage circle.

The grassy area of the carriage circle at Mount Vernon was elliptical in shape, rather than circular as at Belvoir, with the longer diameter running from east to west, facing the entrance drive at that time. The east-west diameter measures 99 feet, approximately twice the width of the original mansion, which was about 50 feet wide. The north-south diameter measures 75 feet, or 1.5 times the face of the original mansion. The width of the face of the house may have been taken into consideration in



Figure 6 George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate

the design of the carriage circle. The ratio of the diameters of the width to the length is approximately 75:100, or more simply, 3:4. Applying these proportions to the measure of the face of Gunston Hall would result in a carriage circle with an inner grassy part that was 90 feet wide and 120 feet long. The basic unit used to

calculate this 3:4 relationship at Gunston Hall would be 30 feet, whereas the basic unit used for Mount Vernon is 25 feet.

Washington was able to achieve an interesting effect by using an elliptical shape and orienting it so that the longer diameter pointed toward those approaching the circle. From a distance, the grassy area of the carriage circle would appear to be circular. Upon reaching the carriage circle, however, one would realize, perhaps subconsciously, that



Figure 7 George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate
Picture taken by David Samuel, May 18, 2010

the distance to the mansion was slightly further than anticipated. A panoramic view of the carriage circle taken from the 1750s entry point is included that shows this effect. By elongating the lengthwise diameter, the impression would be given that there was more land to

travel than thought before reaching the doorway. More land meant more wealth waiting behind that doorway. We know that Washington took pride in the interior of his mansion, making sure to leave an impression of power and wealth upon his visitors in the choice of paintings, plaster carvings, and wall colors. It is not surprising that he might employ this optical technique to achieve the same effect on visitors prior to entering the mansion.

Homes belonging to the sons of George Mason IV

George Mason IV had five sons:

- George Mason V (1753 – 1796)
- William Mason (1757 – 1818)
- Thomson Mason (1759 – 1820)
- John Mason (1766 – 1849)
- Thomas Mason (1770 – 1800)

Mason gave land adjacent to Gunston Hall to his eldest son, George, in 1774, and may have planned the mansion and grounds of this plantation, which he named Lexington in honor of the Revolutionary War battle. His son, William, inherited the Mattawoman Creek plantation and Araby, from his maternal grandmother in 1780. Thomson was given parcels of land in 1781 and 1786 which were combined to form his plantation, Hollin Hall. This plantation was located approximately three and one-half miles northeast of Mount Vernon, and one and one-third miles northwest of Washington's River Farm. As with Lexington, it is thought that Mason designed the mansion and grounds. John Mason inherited Mason Island, present day Roosevelt Island, and built his own mansion, Analostan. It is believed to have been modeled in many respects upon Gunston Hall. Finally, Thomas Mason inherited land south of Gunston Hall on the Occoquan River where the Mason family ferry ran for over 100 years. This land was named Woodbridge, giving its name to the present day town. He may have lived in a home built by George Mason III while planning his own mansion. (Shwartzman 1997:33) As he died in 1800, it is possible that the mansion was neither completed nor even started. No evidence of a mansion owned by Thomas Mason has been found to date. His estate inventory, however, indicates that he was quite wealthy at the time of his death. (Shwartzman 1997:53-64)

Lexington and Hollin Hall, the two mansions that George Mason IV may have had a hand in designing for his sons, George and Thomson, will be discussed as well as Analostan, the mansion John Mason built based on his recollections of Gunston.

Lexington

Lexington was built for George Mason V sometime between 1784 and 1787. The plantation was located on Mason Neck, on a bluff overlooking Kane Creek, off Belmont

Bay. It would have been one of the neighboring plantations to Gunston Hall. Presently, its ruins are located on the grounds of Mason Neck State Park. Archeological excavations were performed in 2006, led by Paul Inashima, Archaeologist, Fairfax County Park Authority. The following information is taken from Inashima's 2008 report, "Archaeological Investigations at the Lexington Plantation Site, 44FX736" prepared by Inashima for the Fairfax County Park Authority Resource Management Division, Cultural Resource Management and Protection Section. (Inashima 2008) Information in the National Register for Historic Places Registration Form, prepared by Inashima and dated February 19, 2008, was also used for this report. The NRHP Registration Form is included in Appendix 3 of Inashima's report.

The mansion at Lexington faced north and south, oriented approximately 45°

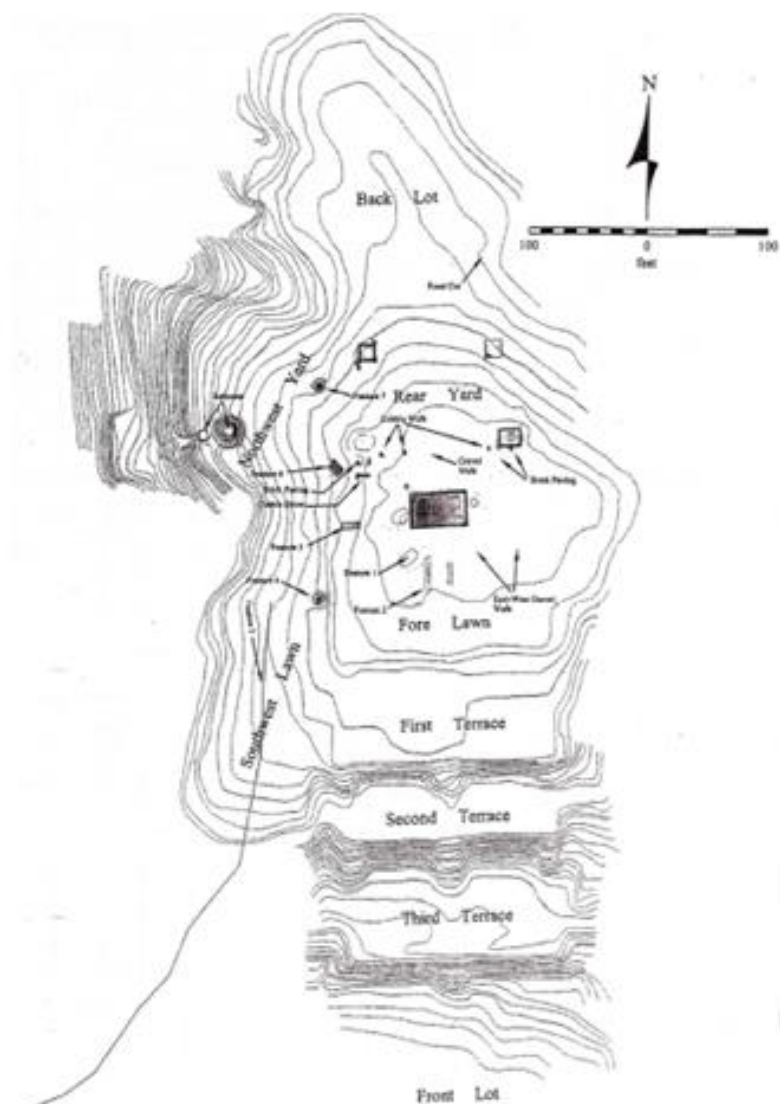


Figure 8 Permission for use granted by Paul Inashima, Fairfax County Park Authority

differently from Gunston Hall. The entrance drive and gardens were aligned along a north-south axis. Given the detail of its terraced landscaping on the south side of the mansion, it would have rivaled the grandeur of Gunston Hall. Both George Mason V and his heir, George Mason VI, died at relatively young ages, causing a rapid succession of owners. After 1818, Lexington began its long decline into disrepair and ruin, the main dwelling finally burning in 1888. Because of this neglect, much of the plantation outline, although overgrown, remains to this day.

Inashima and his team were able to determine the location of the mansion and outbuildings at

Lexington. The terraces on the south side of the mansion, although overgrown, are still visible. Portions of walkways and roads which may have been present at Lexington at the time it was constructed were also uncovered. The Plan of Archaeological Features (Inashima 2008: 5.36, Appendix 3) is presented for reference.

Inashima states that the core area is made up of the mansion and four outbuildings, taking up approximately one acre in area. (Inashima 2008:4.1) Coincidentally, John Mason mentions that his father frequently described the garden area on the river side of Gunston Hall as measuring exactly one acre. (Dunn 2004:67) This would be on the opposite side of the mansion from the core area at Lexington.

Evidence of a gravel drive that is at least 14 feet wide was found that runs along the north-south axis, oriented toward the center of the cellar foundation. This would be the entrance roadway. (Inashima 2008:4.9) Inashima also states that this central entry drive runs along the north-south axis until it angles over to the main road. (Inashima 2008:5.56) A cut in Gunston Road is indicated on the Plan of Archaeological Features at approximately 200 feet north of the Lexington mansion. It would appear that this drive connected present day Gunston Road to the front of the mansion. However, the return route a carriage would travel is not evident. Inashima calls for further excavations to determine whether loop segments can be found, explaining the return path. (Inashima 2008:5.56) He hypothesizes that the roadway was an original component of the landscape.

Four outbuildings are symmetrically placed on the north side of the mansion. Buildings thought to be the kitchen (Inashima 2008: 4.15) and office (Inashima 2008:4.26) are located opposite each other, about 110 feet apart, placed closest to the mansion. Buildings thought to be the smokehouse (Inashima 2008:4.19) and dairy (Inashima 2008:4.32) are placed further north along the central entrance drive and are approximately 90 feet apart.

In addition to determining the entrance road, another excavation site revealed a cobble drive existed in front and slightly to the west of the mansion, near the kitchen (Inashima 2008:5.41). This drive is parallel to the entrance drive and contains a portion of curbing on the east side, the side that would be facing toward the central walkway or drive. Inashima indicates that the drive may veer to the west of the kitchen. (Inashima 2008:5.41) He also states that the drive can be dated to pre 1820s but was not able to conclude at this time whether the drive was contemporaneous to the mansion. (Inashima 2008:5.44) Excavations did not find a parallel drive in relation to the office. As the return route for carriages is unknown, one cannot help but wonder if the discovery of a roadway running parallel to the central drive is somehow incorporated into a return loop. Portions of a cobble walkway were also uncovered that ran between the kitchen and office, perpendicular to the central roadway. (Inashima 2008:5.50) This walkway is three feet wide, quite narrow in comparison to walkways found on the south side of the mansion. As with the gravel drive leading toward the kitchen, this walkway is

most probably dated prior to 1818 but further excavations are recommended in order to assign a more definitive date. (Inashima 2008:5.52)

The excavations on the south side of the Lexington mansion uncovered two parallel trenches, which appear to have bordered a walkway positioned on the axis line. (Inashima 2008:5.10) The trenches are 15 feet apart and thought to be part of the original landscaping. The entrance drive and walkway through the center of the garden form the axis line for the plantation. (Inashima 2008:5.6) Excavations also uncovered a 12 foot walkway approaching the mansion cellar from the east. (Inashima 2008:5.18) Because of the location of the ramps on the first terrace, flanking walkways running parallel to the central walkway may have also existed. (Inashima 2008:A3.11 (NRHP, Section7, p. 5)). Inashima speculates that the collection of walkways would have formed a rectangular shape, perhaps outlining parterres, and would have connected to the ramps on the first terrace. (Inashima 2008:5.31) Furthermore, these three walkways would have extended down through the three terraces by means of the ramps located on each terrace.

The lawn on the south side of the mansion is approximately 190 feet wide and 110 feet long. This is roughly equivalent to two of the four parterres at Gunston Hall. It is important to note the use of approximately 200 feet in both the north and south sides of the mansion in the design of the Lexington plantation, the cut in Gunston Road to the north and the width of the formal garden to the south. This measurement is incorporated into the landscaping on both sides of the mansion at Gunston Hall as well. At Gunston Hall, the cherry trees started at about 200 feet from the door on the land side and the length of the parterres in the formal garden is also about 200 feet.

Hollin Hall

In 1788, George Mason began supervising the construction of Hollin Hall as a residence for his son, Thomson, and his family. It was located close to Washington's River Farm, on land that is now owned by the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church. Although the home that Thomson Mason occupied no longer stands, information about this plantation can be gleaned from the Mutual Assurance Society policies taken out on Hollin Hall, dated 1803 (Mutual Assurance Society Policies 1796-1865 1803), 1805 (MAS 1805a), and 1815 (MAS 1815). The mansion built for Thomson Mason and described in these policies burned to the ground in 1822.

The 1805 renewal policy is most informative in that it clearly shows what appears to be a carriage circle in its diagram. An interpretive sketch based on the three policies is included as Figure 9. A large outer circle has been drawn with a dotted line. This circle is almost complete and surrounds the mansion as well as the kitchen and a second dwelling. The placement of the mansion inside a circular feature will be seen again in Analostan, John Mason's home. A semi-circle in the lower half of the 1805 diagram is

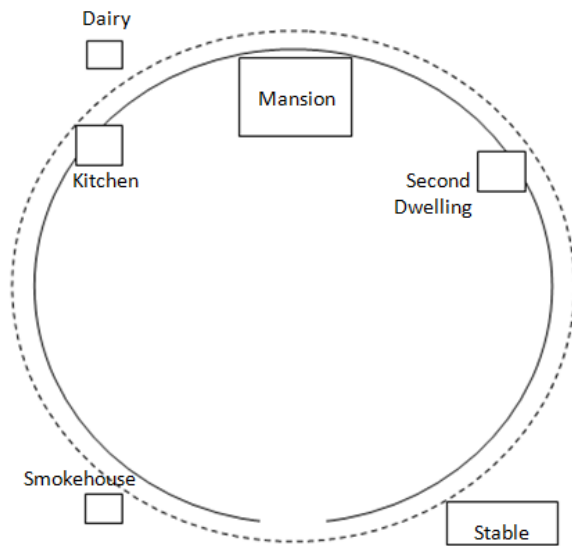


Figure 9 Interpretive sketch of Hollin Hall

drawn with a solid line and has a small break at the very bottom. The semi-circle runs from the kitchen to the second dwelling and has the same center of origin as the larger dotted circle. Both the outer circle and semi-circle appear to have been constructed using a compass which was, at first, of concern. It was questioned whether this actually represented a carriage circle or was some type of survey marking to display distances between buildings. The 1803 and 1815 policies clearly note that the buildings are not within 20 or 30 feet of each other while the 1805 document does not have a similar statement. The

diagram on the 1805 policy was drawn by P. R. Marble.

To verify that the circle and semi-circle drawn by Marble on the 1805 document did indeed represent a carriage circle, policies issued at approximately the same time as the Hollin Hall policy were examined. Five policies written by Marble between April and June 1805 were found in the digitized Mutual Assurance Society database for Richmond and Henrico Counties, the only Virginia counties having digitized records. No circular markings were present on any of these five documents. Over 200 policies written by other agents between 1796 and 1822 were also examined in this database to determine if circular markings were ever used to denote distance but none of these documents contained anything even remotely resembling these circles. Additionally, microfilm from the Library of Virginia that contained the Hollin Hall 1805 policy was reviewed. The 1805 renewal policy for Mount Vernon was the policy processed immediately before the one for Hollin Hall. It was also prepared by P. R. Marble and contains a beautiful representation of its carriage circle. (MAS 1805b) Several other policies written in Fairfax County and Prince William County in 1805 were viewed and none contained circular markings similar to those on the Hollin Hall and Mount Vernon 1805 policies. It was noticed that several of Marble's policies were much simpler in design than these two, perhaps reflecting the amount of time he had or the client's perceived importance.

In general, Marble's policies stand out for their meticulous and artful drawings. He appears to have attempted to give a three-dimensional sense to his drawings whereas others tended to represent buildings as rectangles or with few details. Marble sketches the main door to Hollin Hall and even the fanlight window above it. He takes care to show the details in the elaborate nine-foot wide piazza and indicates a similar one on the back of the mansion. As an added touch, he even shows smoke coming out of the

chimneys. Given the level of detail in Marble's drawings, it is tempting to envision the location of the outbuildings as he has portrayed them. However, as only the buildings were insured, drawings were intended to indicate all the buildings on the property and not necessarily their exact location. (L. Gerard Roach, President of Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia, personal communication, 2011)

The darker, inner circle may be intended to mark the edge of the carriage circle, perhaps having a curb as at Lexington. A break in the dark lines at the base of the circle could possibly indicate the presence of a road or walkway to the door, as at Lexington. The actual route carriages would take is not clear. One possibility is that the drive was semi-circular, with carriages turning as they approached the house, traveling parallel to the front of the house and turning back to the exit at the start of the out buildings. Another possibility is that carriages would travel completely around to the opposite entrance to let passengers out, then continue on the circular drive toward the exit.

The layout of Hollin Hall would appear to be very similar to the current design of the carriage circle at Rippon Lodge which is shown below.



Figure 10 Rippon Lodge, Woodbridge, Virginia

Analostan

John Mason began construction on Analostan in the late 1790's, having inherited Mason Island upon George Mason IV's death in 1792. This plantation is being discussed because it has long been the belief that John Mason modeled some of the landscape features on those found at Gunston Hall. Originally, Analostan was supposed to have been built as an "H" style mansion. However, only the hyphen and west wing were completed.

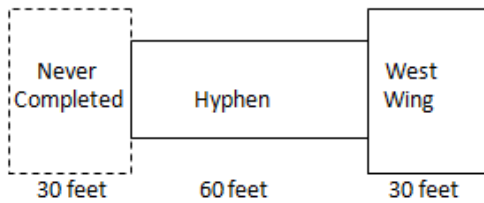


Figure 11 Analostan, Roosevelt Island, Washington DC

The width of the hyphen and west wing can be deduced by examining the drawing of the First Floor done by Stuart M. Barnette, included in the Historical American Building Survey. (Barnette 1936, picture 4) The hyphen was approximately 60 feet wide and the west wing, 30 feet.

A stylized map, which is based on the 1818 map of Washington DC done by Robert King, (Barnette 1936, picture 1) is included for the sake of discussion. King’s map appears to show the mansion situated in the middle of a circle, somewhat like the drawing of the carriage circle in the 1805 policy for Hollin Hall. However, it is possible, and probable, that a formal carriage circle was in front of the mansion. An undated sketch exists of the mansion showing a small portion of what appears to be a carriage circle with its roadway directly in front of the mansion. (Barnette 1936, picture 9) Additionally, in Section 7, p. 16 of the National Register of Historic Places, the entrance drive is described as terminating in a “circular drive just north of the house.” (National Park Service 2001: Section 7, p. 16)

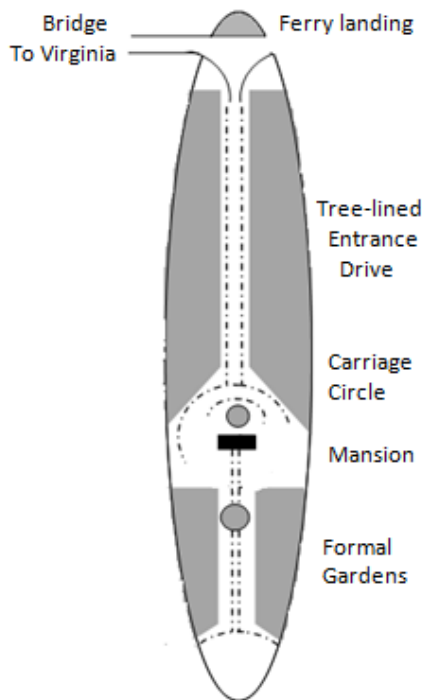


Figure 12 Stylized map of Analostan

The semi-circular pattern of trees facing the house was intended to camouflage the house from the view of those at the ferry landing. The ferry was still in use at the time of John Mason’s residence. (National Park Service 2001: Section 8, p. 38) Analostan shares a lengthy entrance drive to the mansion and a formal garden with Gunston Hall. The tree-lined entrance drive was approximately 2000 feet long, compared to the tree-lined entrance drive at Gunston Hall which was 1200 feet long. The formal garden on the south side of the mansion at Analostan was approximately 1000 feet long, compared to a length of about 200 feet at Gunston.

The architectural firm, DC Historic Designs has posted pictures of a possible reconstruction of Analostan on their website. (DC Historic Designs, LLC 2010) The carriage circle depicted in their diagrams appears to be approximately 60 feet wide, centered at the doorway and extending to where the hyphen meets the west wing. This matches the sketch mentioned previously. Also, the roadway around this grassy area extends to the end of the west wing in both the sketch and in DC Historic Designs pictures. If one accepts that the carriage circle has a grassy

area 60 feet in diameter and a 30 foot roadway surrounding it, the design of the carriage circle is an exact reflection of the dimensions of the mansion as it was originally planned.

Sadly, the mansion burned in 1806. John Mason's family continued to use another dwelling on the southern end of the island until 1833 when the island was lost due to foreclosure on a loan.

Comparisons

Gunston Hall and Lexington have similar formal gardens, designed in a rectangular shape, containing walkways and parterres. Lexington had perhaps two parterres and Gunston had four, but the area of each parterre may have been designed to be approximately the same at both mansions. Both also had elaborate terraces. In addition, measurements of approximately 200 feet appear in both landscapes. Lexington differs substantially from Gunston Hall by having symmetrical outbuildings on its north side. This does not appear to have been the case at Hollin Hall and it was definitely not the case at Analostan. It is as if Mason was attempting to combine the older Georgian style of Gunston Hall with the newer, Palladian style in the design of Lexington. Although it is reported that Lexington had a tree-lined drive, its length would be much shorter than Gunston Hall's entrance avenue and it had single rows of trees as borders, not the goose foot pattern of four rows of trees found at Gunston Hall. Analostan had a lengthy entrance drive but it also had only single rows of trees lining it. Nothing is known of the entrance drive at Hollin Hall. The modern day road, Mason Hill Drive, curves sharply at about the location of Thomson Mason's Hollin Hall. Given the topology of the area, it does not appear that a lengthy drive could have been planned at this location.

Comparing the entrance approaches of Lexington, Hollin Hall, Analostan, and Gunston Hall, Gunston Hall seems most similar to Analostan in its long, fairly flat landscape. It is intriguing that Analostan's drive ends in a carriage circle feature that includes a semi-circle of trees shielding the front of the mansion, as the cherry trees would hide the front of the mansion from someone traveling down the avenue toward the door at Gunston Hall.

Construction on Lexington may have been started after George Mason V's return from Paris in 1783. It would seem that construction was going on at Lexington and Hollin Hall simultaneously from the letter written by Mason to his son, George, on June 1, 1787. In this letter, Mason advises his son, to procure construction supplies for himself and his brother, Thomson. (Rutland 1970: 890-893). The letter refers to plastering materials which would indicate work was still being done on the interior walls at Lexington. Thomson and his family moved into a building on the Hollin Hall property in 1788 but the construction of Hollin Hall was not begun until 1792. (Phinney 1994) It is possible

the supplies mentioned in Mason's letter could have been intended for the older building Thomson and his family were occupying at the time or construction on Hollin Hall was delayed after the letter was written. Delayed construction might possibly explain the differences in styles between Lexington and Hollin Hall. There is no evidence that Lexington contained the elaborate piazza found at Hollin Hall.

Letters that reveal more about Mason's involvement in the construction of Hollin Hall were written to his son, John, on May 22 (Rutland 1970:1265-1267), July 5 (Rutland 1970:1267-1269), and July 9, 1792 (Rutland 1970:1270-1271) concerning an ill-fated shipment of cypress scantling that was intended to be used on the piazza. On August 30, 1792 (Rutland 1970: 1271-1273), six weeks before Mason's death, he is asking John to help arrange the services of two stone masons working in Dumphries to complete four fireplace mantels at Hollin Hall. Clearly, Mason relied on his son, John, rather than Thomson, and actively involved him in the construction. John would have been 26 years old at this time and perhaps Mason, aware that his own health was failing, was preparing John for the construction of his own mansion. One can only speculate on the types of discussions that took place between Mason and his son, John. Construction on John's mansion, Analostan, began in 1796, four years after Mason's death, and was never completed.

Proposed Carriage Circle Plan

The challenge is to determine how the approximately 200 feet from the end of the cherry tree-lined drive to the doorway of the Gunston Hall mansion was traversed. The *patte d'oie*, or goose foot pattern of cherry trees was unique. This pattern involves the positioning of four rows of trees so that they spread across the lawn like rays emanating from the mansion door. The lines of trees were angled so that only the four trees in the first row would be visible from the center of the porch, the spot Mason determined should be the line of sight. It was an integral part to Mason's overall vision for the land side lawn. Whatever was in place for those last 200 feet had to have blended in stylistically with the cherry trees and the design of the mansion, enhancing rather than detracting from either. In attempting to determine what Mason planned, research was done on mathematical education during his time and on what literature would have been available to him as he planned Gunston Hall. Carriage circles at locations that existed while Gunston Hall was being planned were also studied.

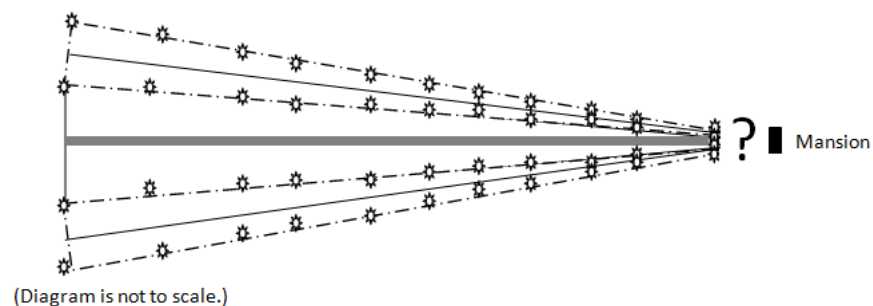


Figure 13 The landside lawn at Gunston Hall

George Mason IV's knowledge of mathematics

Although Mason did not have a formal, collegiate education as did many of his peers, he is admired for his intelligence and self-taught knowledge. In his will, Mason specified that his books should be divided equally among his sons, indicating that there were several books to warrant this mention. (Rutland 1970:150, 152, 153, 154, 155) Unfortunately, there is very little knowledge of the books Mason owned. He had access to John Mercer's incredible library and guidance in his education during formative years. Mercer valued mathematics and saw to it that Mason received good training by his tutors. (Copeland and MacMaster: 71) Unfortunately, there is no record of the specific texts used by Mason's tutors. Books available at this time include translations of classic works by Euclid and Newton and editions of popular works such as Edward Cocker's *Arithmetick* (1677) and John Ward's *The Young Mathematician's Guide* (1706). Topics covered in these books include decimals, fractions, ratios, interest and pension, or annuity, calculations. The books also covered basic geometry including more complicated theorems on circles. Trigonometry, logarithms and algebra could have been studied as well. Given Mason's social status and intelligence, he might have had the opportunity to study and master the more difficult topics. In addition to mathematics, young men at this time in the southern colonies would also have been taught science and plantation management. (Education World 2000)

Mason would have known two particular mathematical relationships and may have used them in the design of his carriage circle, the Golden Ratio and the Rule of Thirds. If either the width or the length of a room, landscape feature or item is known in advance, it is possible to determine the "perfect" other dimension by using the Golden Ratio or its more practical interpretation, the Golden Rectangle. The width of the carriage circle feature could be determined if the distance from the door to the cherry trees is known. John Mason's "about two hundred feet" could be taken to be 210 feet, a multiple of 30, a measurement seen throughout the plantation. (David B. Shonyo, Archaeologist at Gunston Hall, personal communication 2010) Using the Golden Rectangle, the width would be 130 feet for a feature having a length of 210 feet. Therefore, whatever Mason designed for his carriage circle should fit inside a rectangle that is 210 by 130 square feet. The calculations supporting this can be found in Appendix B. Interestingly, the diameter of the grassy, interior part of the carriage circle at Belvoir was 130 feet.

So much care was put into the optical effect of the four rows of cherry trees that whatever Mason put between the cherry trees and the house would need to reinforce or enhance this effect. As one traveled down the roadway toward the front of the house, only the doorway, and later the elaborate porch, would be visible. As one looked toward the door, the final 210 feet would be crucial in drawing the eye to the mansion. From further back on the roadway, a person would see a patch of green and the contrasting color of cobble stones or gravel around the green. The proportion of the green grass to stones in this limited view would need to be pleasing and not distracting.

It would need to feel comfortable enough to the viewer so as not to interfere with the view of the front door framed by the cherry trees.

One of the most common artistic techniques at this time was the use of the Rule of Thirds. The Rule of Thirds states that an object should be measured into three equal parts, then divided into two such that one part is equal to one third of the total measure and the other part, two thirds. The grassy area of the carriage circle may have been planned to be twice as long as the gravel and cobble area immediately in front of the house. A lengthwise diameter of 120 feet for the inner part of the carriage circle, with the grass starting at 60 feet from the house makes mathematical sense. It fits into a rectangle that is 210 feet long, leaving room for the roadway between the grass and the start of the cherry trees. A lengthwise diameter of 120 feet is twice the measure of the face of the house, approximately the same proportional relationship as at Mount Vernon.

As with the carriage circle at Mount Vernon, an oval, looked at from a distance, appears circular. A visitor travelling the cherry tree-lined avenue might possibly assume that the patch of green ahead of them, beyond the cherry trees, was perfectly circular. Arriving at the end of the trees, another optical effect would be achieved upon seeing an oval. The visitor may be looking at an oval but the perception is still in their minds that they are looking at a circle. The proposed dimensions of 120 feet by 90 feet are similar enough that their difference may not be detected, especially since the visitor's focus is now on the mansion for the first time. The oval they are looking at is 90 feet wide but the circle in their perception is 120 feet wide. This optical effect would make the land side lawn of Gunston Hall appear wider to a visitor than it actually was. If the lawn appeared wider, the mansion would as well.

Pattern books and books on perspective available to George Mason

Given his social standing, it can be assumed that Mason was familiar with the most popular pattern and gardening books, whether reading his own personal copies, copies belonging to friends, or having seen copies in John Mercer's library. As mentioned before, Mercer had a copy of John Evelyn's *Sylva*. Mason would have been living or visiting with Mercer up until 1748, the year Mercer built his own mansion, Marlborough. Both Nathaniel Chapman and John Carlyle were planning their mansions as Gunston Hall was being built. Washington was planning his revisions to Mount Vernon and George William Fairfax was reworking Belvoir. John Tayloe would have started construction on Mount Airy as Gunston was being finished. Mason was surrounded by friends and business associates in the process of planning and constructing their homes and would, no doubt, have exchanged ideas with them.

It is fairly certain that William Buckland used drawings from the works of Batty Langley and Adam Swan in designing the interior of Gunston Hall. Buckland designed a Palladian Room and used Palladian techniques throughout Gunston Hall; therefore, Mason must have been familiar and comfortable with this style. Several other books based on the works of Andrea Palladio were available at this time which contained detailed geometrical drawings. The number of subsequent editions published for many of these books indicates the popularity of Palladian ideals. One such book was William Salmon's *Londenensis Palladio: or, the London Art of Building* (1734). This book is somewhat basic compared to others published at this time and appears to have been aimed at a wider market. (Park 1961:119) In Chapter 3 of his book, *The Mansions of Virginia, 1706 – 1776*, Waterman uses diagrams from this book more often than those from any other to trace design origins in the Early Georgian Period. Robert Carter owned a copy of this book although the date of purchase is not known. (Farish 1978:222) Another book available at this time was Giacomo Leoni's *Architecture of A. Palladio in Four Books* (1720), a translation of the original work by Palladio. Isaac Ware also published a translation titled *The Four Books of Andrea Palladio's Architecture* (1738), considered the most widely accessible version of Palladio's work in the American Colonies. (Dixon 1981:130-131) Other architects whose books may have been available to Mason include Edward Hoppus, Inigo Jones, James Gibbs and Robert Morris.

Salmon's book, *Londenensis Palladio*, contains diagrams that explain how to form an oval by circumscribing it around two circles. (Salmon 1767:12-13, Plate I, Figure 24) Given Mason's mathematical training, he may have been able to realize this geometric construction. Using Palladio's technique, as described by Salmon, it is possible to form an oval that has a lengthwise diameter of 120 feet and a sideways diameter of 90 feet, dimensions previously suggested for the grassy part of Mason's carriage circle. This technique works for the Mount Vernon carriage circle as well. If one uses Washington's exact lengthwise diameter of 99 feet in his carriage circle, it is possible to circumscribe an oval that is exactly 75 feet wide in the sideways diameter, the dimensions of the grassy part of the carriage circle as Washington planned it at Mount Vernon. Washington and Mason may have used the same techniques as found in Palladio's work in designing their carriage circles. Please see Appendix C for the calculations for both Gunston Hall and Mount Vernon.

It is fairly well accepted that the mansion at Gunston Hall was already built by the time William Buckland arrived. (Waterman 1945:226-229) Buckland is referred to as a carpenter and joiner, not an architect, in the Indenture Contract signed by Buckland and Thomson Mason in 1755, in which he agrees to travel to Virginia to work on a plantation. (Sones 2000) In 1759, when Gunston Hall was completed, George Mason wrote an Endorsement on the indenture in which he states Buckland, "had the entire Direction of the Carpenter's & Joiner's Work of a large House." (Rutland 1970:45-46) Again, Buckland is not credited with having done any architectural work.

Gunston Hall is in Georgian style with the face of the mansion measuring 60 feet and the depth, 40 feet. The avenue approach would most likely have been planned before construction started. (Sarudy 1998:57) Therefore, Mason probably designed the cherry tree-lined avenue to Gunston Hall. The cherry trees may have been planted in advance of the mansion's construction in order to achieve the famous optical effect shortly after taking residence. In *Sylva*, John Evelyn states that cherry trees may be replanted from the nursery after two years. (Evelyn 1776 [1670]:113-114) The procedure for starting cherry trees and using them for avenues is also discussed in *Sylva*. Mason had been residing at Dogues Neck starting in 1746 which would allow ample time to raise the trees in a nursery in anticipation of Gunston's construction. Since he married Ann Eibeck in 1750, he probably began planning Gunston at about this same time.

In addition to the avenue, it is also thought that Mason planned the formal gardens on the river side. Fortunately, archaeological excavations have revealed the walkways present in the formal garden. It has been determined that the garden started 60 feet from the doorway, with a main walkway 12 feet wide on the central axis. Symmetrically, it seems that the grassy part of the carriage circle on the land side of the mansion would also start 60 feet from the doorway. This symmetry coincides with the measurements presented in the Rule of Thirds discussion.

Mason owned a copy of *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum* (Rules and examples of perspective proper for painters and architects) by Andrea Pozzo, which was originally written in Latin in 1693 and translated into English in 1707. Pozzo believes that artists and architects should design their works based on one line of sight. His diagrams suggest that a particular point should be used to determine all proportions, admitting that views from anywhere other than this point will be distorted. This is reminiscent of John Mason's story of his father making people stand in the center of the porch to view the cherry trees. The center of the doorway determines the line of sight for the cherry trees. Figure 73 in Pozzo's work (Pozzo 1707:156; Pozzo 2010 [1709]: Figure 73) is quite similar to the goose foot pattern of cherry trees found at Gunston Hall. Figure 14 (Pozzo 1707:36; Pozzo 2010 [1709]: Figure 14) shows how to put circles into perspective. Three examples are given, the third of which shows two concentric circles, an abstract representation of the carriage circle, if you will. Pozzo shows these circles as ovals when they are designed to be viewed from a single line of sight in the distance. The original circles are inscribed in a square. From a distance, these circles would look like ovals inscribed in a rectangle. This is similar to the technique described earlier in which the width of the carriage circle feature was determined by using the Golden Rectangle. In order to make something appear circular from a distance, Pozzo would represent it as an oval.

Robert Morris also relies upon one line of sight in determining his landscapes, defined as "where the whole may be seen without moving the eye." (Morris 1734:90) He is attempting to find the ideal spot from which to view a structure. For a building the size of Gunston Hall, Morris takes one-half times the sum of the width and height to

determine the ideal spot from which to view the building. With this in mind, Morris's ideal spot for Gunston Hall would be between 46 and 47 feet from the doorway, since the width of Gunston Hall is 60 feet and the height is 33 feet, one inch. If a carriage approached the mansion along a 12 foot wide roadway surrounding the grassy part of the carriage circle, and if the carriage stopped directly in front of the mansion to let passengers out, a person stepping out of the carriage would be at approximately Morris's line of sight.

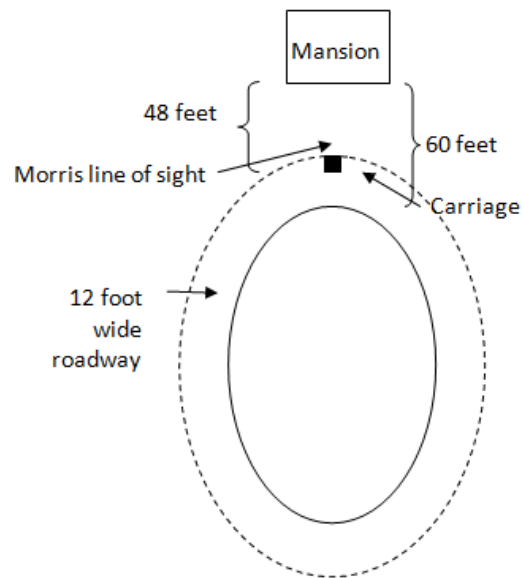


Figure 14 Robert Morris's line of sight at Gunston Hall

Another interesting mathematical relationship can be seen in a carriage circle feature having the dimensions that have been proposed. If the grassy part of the carriage circle started at 60 feet from the house, the diameter of the width of the circle was 90 feet, and the diameter of the length was 120 feet, these three measurements would be in a 60: 90: 120 ratio, or 2: 3: 4, using a 30 foot unit of measurement. In designing buildings, Morris suggests that using this set of ratios for the front, depth and height of a building would "make an agreeable front." (Morris 1734:76)

Carriage circles at other plantations

In examining carriage circles found at other plantations, it seems clear that the measure of the face of the building is taken into consideration in planning the size of the carriage circle. The inner part of the carriage circle at Mount Vernon, which has already been discussed, had a lengthwise diameter that was approximately twice the measure of the original mansion and the diameter of the width of approximately one and one-half times the measure of the original mansion. This results in a 3:2 proportion. As stated

before, applying this same proportion to the measure of the face of the mansion at Gunston Hall results in an inner circle with dimensions of 120 by 90 feet. The proportional relationship and Palladian techniques would agree. Although he did extensive landscape renovations after the Revolutionary War, Washington did not change the dimensions of the inner part of the carriage circle. The grassy area of the carriage circle seen today at Mount Vernon would most likely have been the same as it was during the time Gunston was being built. When visiting Mount Vernon, Mason may have seen a circle of the same dimensions and noticed how it related to the face of Mount Vernon.

It can be confusing and frustrating to look at modern restorations of carriage circles but it is important to view them, hoping that these interpretations were based on some type of evidence. Very few of the supporting documents submitted to the HABS or NRHP contain diagrams that include carriage circles. Of those that do, there is rarely indication that the carriage circle is shaped in the same manner or located in the same place as it was during Mason's time.

In the Plot Plan submitted in the HABS report for Marmion, the home of William Fitzhugh in King George County, Virginia, the carriage circle is oval in shape, with the longer diameter running parallel to the front of the mansion. The grassy part of the carriage circle appears to be the same width of the house.

In the Plot Plan submitted in the HABS report for Sabine Hall, the home of Landon Carter in Richmond County, Virginia, the carriage circle is shown as being perfectly circular. The diameter is approximately one and one-half times the measure of the face of the mansion.

An aerial shot of Elsing Green, the home of Carter Braxton in King William County, Virginia, reveals a beautiful and complex approach to the mansion. A carriage would first travel over 4000 feet along a tree-lined drive, then arrive at the base of a "shield" pattern of roadways. Most probably, a visitor would choose to travel straight toward the mansion along a continuation of the tree-lined drive for an additional 1200 feet until reaching a road that travels around a rectangular green. The lengthwise diameter of this green as one faces the mansion is approximately three times the measure of the face of the mansion. The sideways diameter appears to be almost the same measure as the face of the house. It would appear that the road bordering the green comes to within approximately 60 feet of the doorway.

Summarizing these points, it is conceivable that Mason would have somehow balanced the lawns on either side of the mansion, starting the garden on the river side and the grassy part of the carriage circle 60 feet away from the doorway. He may have designed the carriage circle in such a way that the sideways and lengthwise diameters would relate to the measure of the face of the mansion at Gunston Hall. It is possible that he considered a carriage circle with a lengthwise diameter of 120 feet, twice the face of the

mansion, and a sideways diameter of 90 feet, one and one-half times the face. Whatever the design of the carriage circle, it would have fit into a rectangle that was 210 feet long and 130 feet wide if Mason used the Golden Rectangle in his calculations.

Possible shape of the carriage circle at Gunston Hall

Although a hypothesis on the dimensions of the carriage circle has been formed, the actual shape of the carriage circle feature must also be addressed. Given that Mason so carefully planned the optical effects of the rows of cherry trees, one would expect him to design a carriage circle that would continue to increase the visitor's awareness of the grandeur of Gunston Hall. As mentioned before, a person traveling down the carriage road toward the house would only be able to view the doorway; the cherry trees would block the view of the rest of the mansion. As a visitor reached the end of the cherry trees, the mansion would suddenly loom large, surprising the viewer by its size and solid brick construction. The structure of the lawn from the end of the trees to the doorway could not interfere with this image. Therefore, the shape would have to feel as natural to the visitor as to go unnoticed. The carriage circle would be designed with elegant and understated simplicity.

Hogarth, in the *Analysis of Beauty*, published in 1753, describes the oval as being preferential to a circle because it has more interest. (Hogarth 1753:23) He then suggests if the oval was made smaller at one end, egg shaped, it would be more interesting yet. It is not possible to know if Mason read Hogarth's work but it would seem he could have been familiar with his concepts.

The fact that Buckland was allowed to design the first "Chinese Room" in Virginia at Gunston Hall indicates that style and fashion were important to Mason. (Waterman 1945:226-227) He was willing to take a chance on the unusual, per Hogarth's philosophy, but only in the interior of the mansion. The landscaping is in a more conservative style with its long, tree-lined drive and formal garden on the river side. The conservatively styled drive and brick mansion would emphasize Mason's wealth and power. There is no evidence that Mason planned any landscape features that used Hogarth's "S" pattern of beauty. However, the unusual use of the goose foot pattern of cherry trees within the traditional avenue is consistent with Hogarth's philosophy of incorporating the unusual, but with moderation and decorum. (Porter 2002:397) Whether consciously aware of Hogarth's comparisons or responding intuitively to current trends, it is possible that Mason could have designed the carriage circle such that the grassy, oval shaped inner circle was situated in an egg shaped feature of gravel or cobble stones.

Archeological excavations on the river side of the mansion have proven that the central walkway through the formal garden measures 12 feet wide. This walk lays on top of the axis line that runs from the center of the formal garden, through the middle of the

mansion, and down the cherry tree-lined drive. It would seem that the roadway between the cherry trees would also measure 12 feet wide, balancing with the central walkway of the river side garden.

The cherry walks are another mystery within this puzzle. John Mason in his memoirs talks about the “foot ways” between the outer rows of cherry trees. (Dunn 2004:74) As with most things Gunston, John Mason is the primary source containing this reference. In trying to envision how someone would get to these walks from the house, it seems unlikely that they would be expected to walk across the lawn. Everything else about Gunston Hall, from the formal garden to the goose foot pattern of cherry trees is so structured that it would be out of character not to provide a walkway from the house to the cherry walks. It is possible that the walkway may have been grass rather than gravel or brick. However, since evidence of gravel walkways from the eighteenth century have been found on the river side of the mansion, it would not be consistent to have a grass walkway as part of the formal presentation of the mansion.

Moses Cook states that walkways must end in a geometric figure in his work, *The Manner of Raising, Ordering, and Improving Forest and Fruit-Trees: Also, How to Plant, Make and Keep Woods, Walks, Avenues, Lawns, Hedges, etc.*, which was published in 1676. (Cook 2009[1679]:137) He includes several diagrams in which walkways enter into circles and one which shows three walkways entering into an oval. (Cook 2009[1679]:Figure 23) It would seem that Mason would have somehow integrated his cherry tree walks into the land side lawn feature by connecting them to the carriage circle in some way.

A structured walkway can be incorporated into the proposed model without disturbing the proportions or dimensions already discussed. The walkways can be placed around the carriage circle road. Sarah Couch quotes John James as suggesting that walkways be 12 feet wide in order to accommodate four people; but admitting that, due to circumstances, it might be necessary to have walkways that are not quite as large at times. If it is the case that walkways must be less than 12 feet wide, he states that they should be no less than six feet wide. (Couch 1992:188) Cook states that if there are three walks, the middle walk should be equal to the sum of the widths of the two walks on either side. (Cook 2009[1679]:139) Substituting the roadway in the avenue for the middle walkway in Cook’s model, this describes what may have been at Gunston Hall. The avenue road may have measured 12 feet wide while the cherry walks on either side of the roadway measured six feet wide. Walkways of this width compliment the hypothesis of David Shonyo, that, in the first row of cherry trees, the outer rows of trees were 12 feet apart and the two inner rows of trees surrounding the avenue were 24 feet apart. (Shonyo 2009:12)

It would be necessary to separate the walks around the carriage circle from the dust of the roadway. Therefore, either a natural boundary of bushes, such as the small boxwoods planted in the formal garden or a curb, as found in the north lawn at

Lexington, would be used. Also, some type of border might possibly be used on the outside edge of the walks as well. It is reasonable to assume that the borders on either side of the walkway would take up approximately one foot of space each. Therefore, a six foot walkway with borders of one foot each would add eight feet to both sides to the diameter of the carriage circle. It might also be possible that a two foot border separated the walkway from the roadway, with no type of border on the outside edge. Given that the roadway would be 12 feet on either side and the sideways diameter is 90 feet, adding eight feet to each side brings the overall diameter of the lawn feature to be 130 feet wide.

The attached diagram is a proposed plan for the carriage circle and walkways on the land side at Gunston Hall. The total length of the feature is 210 feet and the total width is 130 feet. Overall, the feature is egg shaped with an oval carriage circle situated inside. The grassy part of the carriage circle, which begins 60 feet from the mansion door, has a lengthwise diameter of 120 feet and a sideways diameter of 90 feet. The roadway entering into the carriage circle is 12 feet wide and continues at this width. There are six foot wide walkways running from the house to the cherry trees that surround the grassy oval. The walkways will have some type of border, at least on the side toward the carriage circle. These walks would continue through the outer rows of cherry trees.

As detailed in Part I of this report, the land side lawn at Gunston Hall has been disrupted over time and is now an archaeologist's nightmare. Whereas the solution to these mysteries might be solved by excavating, the reality of the situation is that even extensive digging may not provide the information needed to recreate the carriage circle at Gunston Hall.

Morley J. Williams, an archaeologist affiliated with both Mount Vernon and Gunston Hall, had prepared a diagram of his interpretation of the land side lawn at Gunston Hall in 1931. In November of 1935, he wrote in a letter to Mrs. Herbert Payson, "It is probable that the present circle is much larger than was originally the case for within this area are foundations which probably faced in to the drive and not out to it." (Morley J. Williams letter to Mrs. Herbert Payson, Gunston Hall Collection, George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate Library) Williams had prepared an aerial view sketch of Gunston Hall in 1931 for Louis Hertle. At the bottom of the sketch it mentions that Mr. Hertle is the owner "with whose permission these measurements were made." (Williams 1931)

It is difficult to determine if the sketch portrays the carriage road as of 1931 or is Williams' suggestion for how it should be realized. The cherry trees he has drawn into the picture did not exist at that time. In addition, he has the trees starting at 240 feet from the mansion door, somewhat further away than John Mason indicated. If the carriage way is an accurate depiction of the roadway in 1931, it can be seen that it would indeed run through the kitchen yard and possibly the school house, which is

perhaps what Williams is referring to in his letter to Mrs. Payson. The carriage circle that Williams depicts in 1931 is approximately 180 feet wide as it runs parallel to the mansion and is consistent with pictures appearing in the HABS report for Gunston Hall that were transmitted to the Library of Congress in 1933 and 1938. (Price 1982: pictures 1 and 3) The letter would seem to indicate that Williams was now claiming this roadway would be incorrect.

In 1952, R. L. Montague, the Resident Superintendent of Gunston Hall, stated in a letter to Mrs. John L. Sullivan that he had found part of a carriage circle while excavating two years prior. (R.L. Montague letter to Mrs. John L. Sullivan, Daniel's file, GHA) He interviewed an employee of Mr. Specht's who helped to move the carriage circle closer to the house. Montague indicates that he did find a roadway during his excavations in 1950 that had been about twenty five feet further north. However, this roadway passed over foundations of flanking buildings, proving that the roadway had been constructed at a later time. The roadway that Williams seems to be referring to in his 1935 letter was located close to the house. It was, perhaps, the roadway Montague found.

In 1953, J. Everette Fauber prepared a report on archaeological excavations, stating that additional cross trenching was done to verify the 1950 excavations. (Fauber 1953a) On the Location Plan included with his report, Fauber has marked an area of gravel found southwest of the mansion that may have been part of a carriage drive at one time. (Fauber 1953b) He indicated on p. 8 of the report that this section of gravel and additional walkways uncovered were dated from the early nineteenth century. This large area of gravel has been notated on the enclosed plan.

In Fall 2010, David Shonyo found the remains of a pebble and cobble roadway approximately where a roadway was located near the mansion in the 1870s. (David Shonyo, personal communication 2010) Shonyo reports that the dirt underneath the pebbles and cobbles contained artifacts from the eighteenth century but he had not been able to definitely date the roadway itself. Per correspondence on March 18, 2011, he states that a walkway was also found that was 1.4 feet south of the roadway. Shonyo's find appears to be consistent with the proposed model. Therefore, the results from the continuation of these excavations at Gunston Hall in 2011 are eagerly awaited.

Conclusion

The land side lawn of Gunston Hall has been churned repeatedly in the last two hundred years. At times, owners were far away and could not protect the family home. Renters abused the lawn and house. Soldiers camped on the lawn while waiting for battle. Many of the cherry trees died from neglect, others were destroyed for their wood. Some owners thought to beautify Gunston by reworking the landscape to their own tastes, obscuring what Mason had planned. The angle of the road from the highway was changed. The road close to the house was rerouted. In all, the details of Mason's lawn have almost been lost.

An attempt was made to recapture Mason's ideas, not by excavating dirt but rather, excavating facts. The journey went from library to library and, thanks to the Internet, across the oceans to Germany and New Zealand. Many things uncovered were fascinating and exciting and some things even brought a chuckle or two. Unfortunately, some things brought sadness as well.

Mason himself was investigated. Places he knew as a child were studied to determine what may have influenced his ideas about mansions and landscaping. His education was examined to see what he might have been capable of planning and implementing by himself. His friends and associates were tracked down and their homes explored in an attempt to discover what kinds of carriage circles he might be looking at as he planned Gunston's land side lawn. Pattern and gardening books and books on perspective that might have been found in a wealthy gentleman's library during the 1740s and 1750s were read on-line, all in the hopes of finding that magical combination of facts that would come together to reveal the carriage circle at Gunston Hall.

Based on all this, a proposed plan is presented. The plan takes a little bit from mathematics, a little bit from art, and a little bit from his neighbors as well. From the moment the question was raised concerning the carriage circle to the preparation of this report, we can honestly say we have come full circle at George Mason's Gunston Hall.

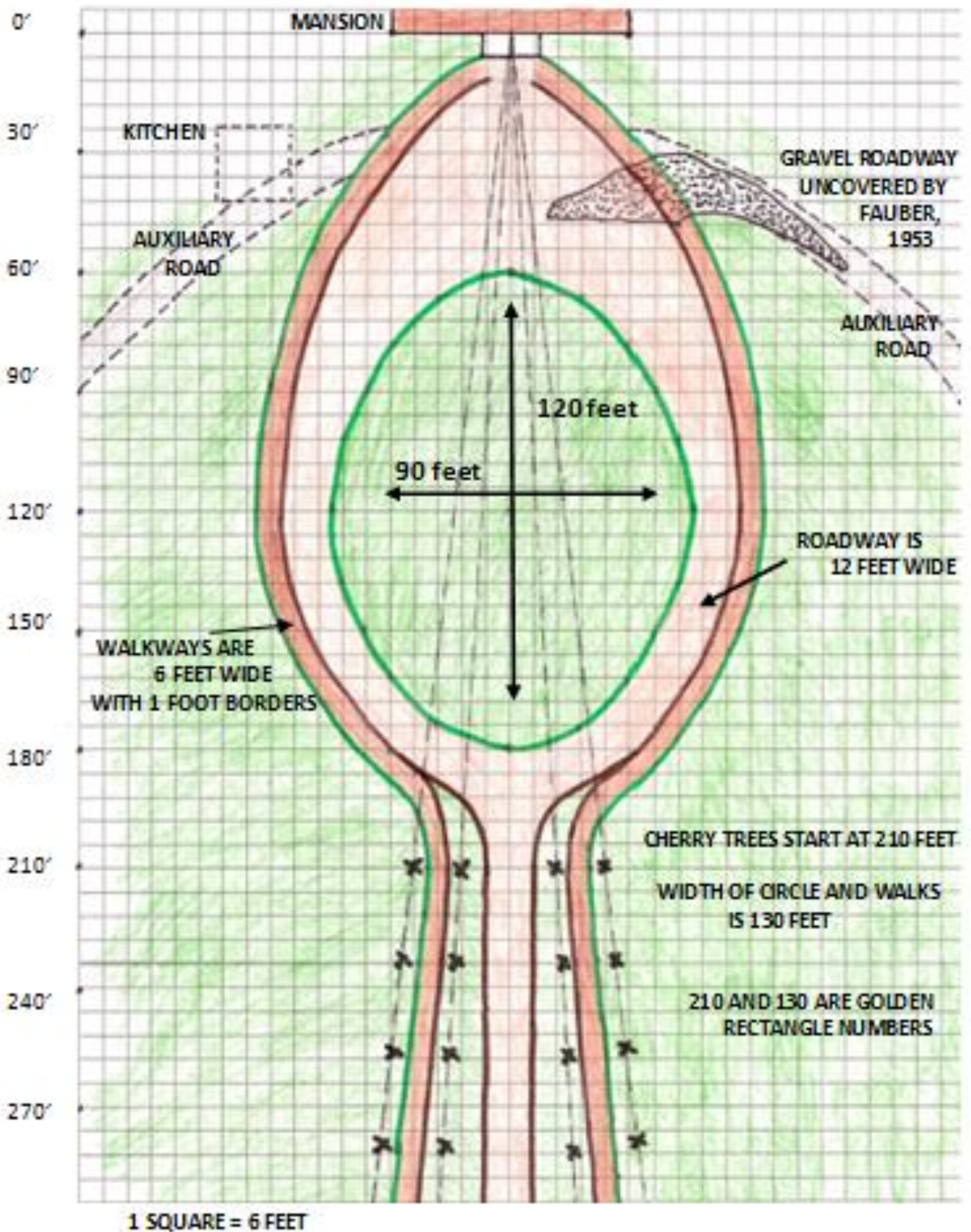


Figure 15 Proposed plan for the Carriage Circle at Gunston Hall

Acknowledgments

We would like to say a special thank you to Dave Shonyo, Gunston Hall's archaeologist, for allowing us to take this incredible journey. His patience in teaching and encouraging volunteers in Gunston Hall Archaeology is boundless. His dedication to Gunston Hall is inspiring and infectious.

We greatly appreciate the camaraderie, talents, and cheering on of the Thursday archaeology volunteers at Gunston Hall: Carol, Jan, Don, Susan, Leslie, Karl, and all the rest. You make digging in the dirt so much fun.

To Mark J. Whatford, at the Gunston Hall Plantation Library, we could not have accomplished as much without you and your love for making books and materials accessible. Gunston Hall's Mona Chandan's help at the start of our research was invaluable and we wish her well in her new endeavor.

Paul Inashima, Archaeologist, Fairfax County Park Authority, graciously allowed us to use the Lexington Archaeology Site Plan in our report and we would like to thank him once again for this and for additional guidance he gave.

Curt Breckenridge, formerly of George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens, shared his enthusiasm and research on Mount Vernon with us for which we are thankful. A very special thank you goes to Esther White, Director of Archaeology at Mount Vernon, for tracking down information on Mount Vernon and on Belvoir. Thank you also to Dennis Pogue, Associate Director for Preservation at Mount Vernon for sharing his work on the entrance way to Mount Vernon. Thank you to Joan Stahl and Michelle Lee at the Mount Vernon library. Your "little" collection on Gunston Hall did indeed hold a gem.

Special thanks goes to Susan Levy at the Virginia Room in the Fairfax County Library for providing us access to various historic property files and photos and for her suggestions on other research materials.

Sue Felshin and Kimberly Walters helped us to imagine the fashions in vogue while Gunston Hall was being built and we would like to say thank you for sharing your knowledge. It was great imagining Ann Eilbeck Mason and her husband walking toward the cherry trees. Liga Greenfield, Master Gardener Volunteer, State of Michigan, helped us to imagine the cherry trees aging on the avenue while her husband, Dr. John Greenfield, tracked down the Golden Rectangle for us. Dr. Rich Veit helped us interpret the MAS policies. Sharon Walker lent her editing expertise and tactfully made suggestions on how to handle the "neighborhood watch."

Finally, we say thank you to our families who so patiently tolerated our time traveling. We're back home now. Sort of.

Wendy and Claudia

Appendix A

Additional people and residences studied

Research was done on the residences of the following friends, relatives or associates of George Mason. Unfortunately, no information about their homes or landscapes was found.

1. Summer Hill (Nathaniel Chapman)
Nathaniel Chapman was a business acquaintance of Mason's, having been the treasurer of the Ohio Company immediately before Mason. Chapman also owned Grimes Ditch (#17) which was across the Potomac from Gunston Hall.
2. Springfield (Charles Broadwater)
Broadwater was a member of the Truro Parish vestry at the same time as Mason. Springfield was demolished in the 1980s to make room for a subdivision. The family cemetery still exists at the location of the property. (Find a Grave 2006)
3. (Thomazin Ellzey or Ellsey)
Ellzey is listed as an attorney and friend of George Mason's in the Glossary. No information is known about his home, only that Payne Church was built on land he owned. (Gilbert and Gilbert 2011) William Ellzey, whose relationship to Thomazin is unclear, is listed as Mason's attorney prior to the Revolution.
5. (Hugh West, Sr.)
West was a member of the Truro Parish vestry at the same time as Mason. Both men oversaw the construction of the new glebe buildings. West was also one of the original trustees of the town of Alexandria along with Mason.
6. West's Grove (Col. John West, Jr.)
West had a distinguished military career and served on the Truro Parish vestry at the same time as Mason. West was the County Surveyor for Fairfax and worked with George Washington to lay out the town of Alexandria in 1749. (Robey 1999) He is mentioned in Mason's will, along with James Scott, as an "old and tried friend." (Rutland 1970:160)
8. (George Johnston)
George Johnston was a Fairfax County Burgess and a close political ally of Patrick Henry. He also owned one of the original lots in Alexandria. It is not known whether Johnston had a residence at this location. Johnston did not own any other land in Fairfax County in 1760. (Mitchell and Sweig 2010 [1987])
10. Warburton Manor (William Digges)
Digges was a close friend of George Washington. Warburton Manor was located directly across the Potomac from Mount Vernon. The manor is in ruins with only the foundation present. It is located within what is now Fort Washington National Park. The original name of Fort Washington was Fort Warburton. (National Park Service 2007)

12. La Grange (Robert Boggess)
Robert Boggess ran the ordinary and racetrack on modern Fort Belvoir land. He also owned land close to Gunston Hall but it is believed that the name "La Grange" refers to the ordinary. An ordinary was a tavern or inn during Colonial times. (Boggess 2007)
13. Rover's Delight (John Posey)
John Posey held various offices in Truro Parish. He ran a ferry from a point just south of Mount Vernon over the Potomac to Maryland. His is a sad story of steadily declining fortunes. He was eventually to lose the ferry to George Washington during an auction of his assets to pay off debts. (George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens 2011a)
14. Cedar Grove (Daniel McCarty)
Daniel McCarty, one of the wealthiest men in Virginia, was a friend of Mason's, serving on the Truro Parish vestry with Mason. Along with Mason, he supervised the construction of the new glebe buildings. He was one of the executors of the will of Augustine Washington, Sr. Cedar Grove was not his main residence. It is believed that he resided at Mount Air, #15 in Part 2. (Jackson and Twohig 1976: 247-248)
18. Bradley (Rev. Lee Massey)
Massey was a friend of Mason's and is mentioned in his will. His third wife was Mason's cousin, Elizabeth Bronaugh. Massey lived at Bradley and eventually inherited Springfield from the Cockburns. He was a lawyer whom Mason and McCarty encouraged to pursue ordination in the Church of England. All that is known of Bradley is its former location. (Rutland 1970:160)
20. (Peter Wagener)
Peter Wagener was an attorney upon whose land the town of Colchester was built. His son, Peter Wagener, Jr., although much younger, is listed as a good friend of Mason's.
21. Springfield (Martin Cockburn)
Martin Cockburn was married to Mason's cousin, Ann Bronaugh, and was godfather of Mason's youngest daughter. He was also an executor of Mason's will. Nothing is known about the structure or landscaping of Springfield other than its location in proximity to Gunston Hall.
23. Alexander Henderson was a merchant in Colchester. Mason named him to a committee responsible for ensuring that his estate was properly divided.
24. Samuel Bayly is simply listed as a neighbor of Mason's in the Glossary.
26. Belle Air (Benjamin Grayson)
Benjamin Grayson was a wealthy merchant having several businesses in Occoquon. His son, Benjamin Grayson, Jr., was a partner of John Ballendine and a friend of George Washington's. The original home was destroyed during the Civil War. No information is known exact its location in Occoquon. (Lawson (2011))

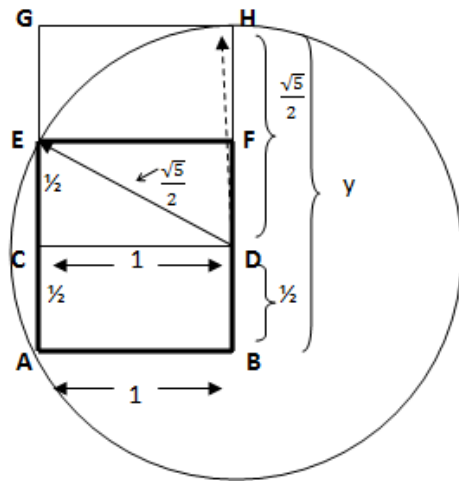
29. Leesylvania (Henry Lee II)
Henry Lee II was an attorney living in Dumphries. He was politically active at the time Gunston was being built, beginning his appointment as a Burgess from Prince William County in 1758. The mansion built by Lee was destroyed by fire shortly after the death of his wife, Lucy Grimes, in 1792. (Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation 2011) Although a HABS report is on file, the ruins referred to in that report are from the house built by Henry Fairfax sometime after 1825. (HABS 1936d) No information is known about the grounds of the Lee mansion.
30. Dipple (Rev. James Scott)
James Scott was an ordained minister who married a cousin of Mason and relied on him for assistance in business matters. Scott was a member of the Ohio Company. He occasionally officiated at Truro Parish and served as a trustee at Dumphries. Scott officiated at the funeral of Mason's first wife, Ann, and at the marriage ceremony of Mason and his second wife, Sarah Brent. (Rutland 1970:480) Mason mentions Scott in his will, along with John West, Jr., as an "old and tried friend." (Rutland 1970:160). He is the brother-in-law of Rev. John Moncure (Please see #55).
31. Richland (William Brent)
William Brent married the daughter of Daniel Carroll and was politically active in Stafford County. Later, his sons Daniel Carroll Brent and Richard would assist John Mason in business matters. The mansion was severely damaged during the Revolution, both by the British and county militias. (Russell and Gott 2007[1977]:106)
32. Woodstock (Robert Brent)
Robert Brent was the brother of George Mason's second wife, Sarah. He owned the Aquia quarries. Woodstock passed out of the Brent family in 1832. Nothing remains of the house except the cemetery. (Healy 2008)
34. Society Hill (Francis Thornton)
Francis Thornton was married to a cousin of Mason and was referred to as a turfman in the Glossary.
35. Bellevue (Thomas Ludwell Lee)
Thomas Ludwell Lee was a member of the Ohio Company, a member of the House of Burgesses, and was a political ally of Mason's. A draft of a Bill of Rights exists written in both the handwriting of Lee and Mason. No information, other than its location, is known about this plantation.
38. Salvington or Selvington (Samuel Selden)
Samuel Selden's first wife was Mason's sister, Mary. His second wife was a cousin of Mason's. It is difficult to find information on Salvington, or for that matter, Samuel Selden. In 1795, James Anderson, who began Washington's distillery, took over the management of Salvington. He reports that the plantation was 1700 acres and included a distillery. (White 2003) This describes the plantation forty years after the time Mason was building Gunston Hall.

39. (Charles Dick)
Charles Dick married a distant cousin of Mason's and was an associate of Fielding Lewis in a weapons factory.
40. Chatham Manor (William Fitzhugh)
William Fitzhugh also owned Eagle's Nest, #36. Please see his description listed there.
43. Hickory Hill (John Turberville)
John Turberville bred and raised horses. He also owned land in Fairfax County. Hickory Hill was located about one mile from Nomini Hall but no information is available on the structures or landscape. (Farish 1978[1943]:242)
45. (John Barnes)
John Barnes was the brother-in-law of Mason's brother, Thomson. Nothing is known of his dwelling other than that he lived in Port Tobacco, Maryland.
49. (Daniel Carroll)
At the time Gunston Hall was being built, Daniel Carroll owned and lived on an estate in Upper Marlborough, Maryland. Initially prevented from holding political office by his faith, Carroll was elected to the Maryland legislature in 1777. He signed both the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution. (Wright and MacGragor 1987:152-153)
53. (Thomas Marshall, different from Thomas Marshall in #52)
Thomas Marshall was Lord Fairfax's agent in Fauquier County who surveyed with Washington. Marshall occasionally assisted Mason with legal matters. He is the father of Chief Justice John Marshall.
55. Clermont (Rev. John Moncure)
John Moncure was an ordained minister who married a cousin of Mason. Moncure served as a trustee at Dumphries. He is the brother-in-law of Rev. James Scott. Mason acted as guardian of his children and was godfather to several of them. Mason mentions Moncure in his will (Rutland 1970:160) and was also named executor of Moncure's will. Moncure performed the marriage ceremony between Mason and his first wife, Ann Eilbeck Mason. (Rutland 1970:479) He owned large tracts of land on the Potomac which he called Clermont.

Appendix B

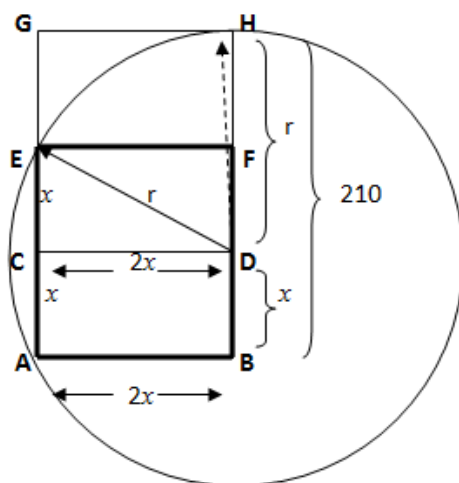
Golden Rectangle calculations

According to the Golden Rectangle, the length of an item is related to the width of that item by a factor of approximately 1.618. If either the width or length of an item is known, it is possible to determine the desired measure by working with this relationship.



The following is a diagram of this special relationship. The variable, y , stands for the Golden Ratio or 1.618. This can be applied to the one measurement that is known about the front lawn of Gunston Hall, that the cherry trees begin at “about 200 feet” from the center of the doorway on the landside. Assume that this actually measures 210 feet. In the diagram, this 210 feet would be the measure of the side, BH.

Notice that the highlighted area, ABFE, is a square. That means that AB, CD, and EF will all have the same measure. That is important since the goal is to try to determine the width, AB. If AB is the same measure as CD, then the triangle CDE and all its special relationships can be used to calculate the measure of the carriage circle feature width. Also, it should be noticed that CD is placed in such a way that the measure of AC equals the measure of CE. AC will also measure the same as BD. That is, AB is twice the measure of AC, CE, or BD.



In this diagram, $\frac{\sqrt{5}}{2}$, represents the measure of the radius of the circle. It also happens to be the hypotenuse, DE, of the triangle CDE. If the hypotenuse of the triangle can be determined, the measure of CD, and therefore, AB can be determined as well.

Now, let the radius of the circle be represented by r and the measure of CE be represented by x . This means that the measure of AC and BD are also x . Then, $r + x = 210$. Going back and looking at the triangle CDE, the Pythagorean Theorem can be applied to get an expression of r using the

variable, x .

$$(2x)^2 + x^2 = r^2$$
$$4x^2 + x^2 = r^2$$

$$\sqrt{4x^2 + x^2} = r$$
$$\sqrt{5x^2} = r$$
$$\sqrt{5}x = r$$
$$2.24x = r$$

Recalling that $r + x = 210$ feet, this can now be expressed as

$$2.24x + x = 210$$

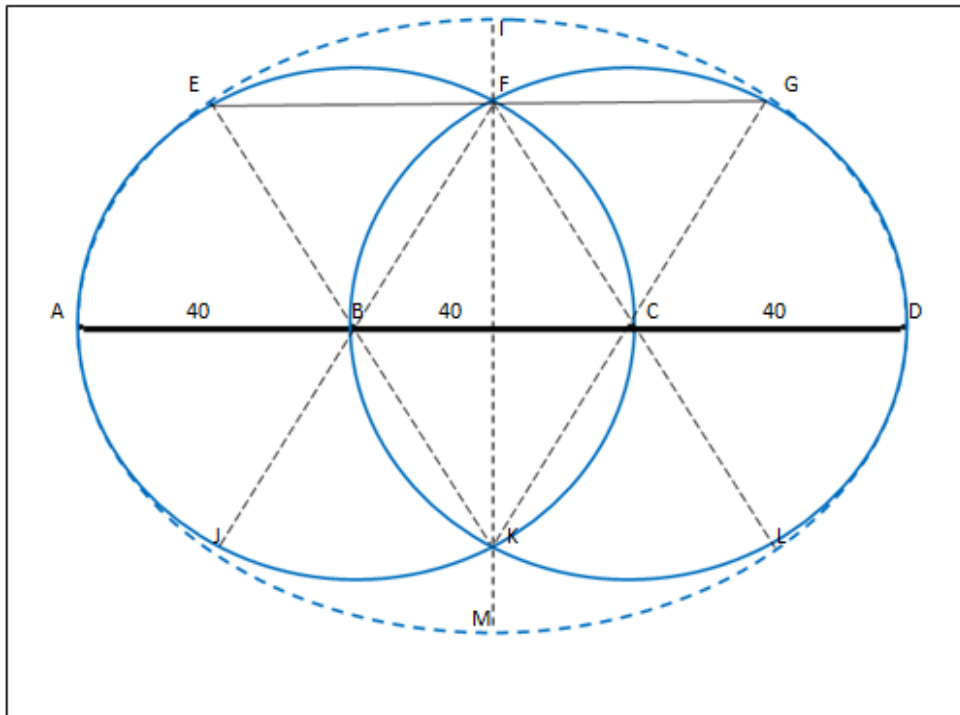
$$3.24x = 210$$

$$x = 64.815, \text{ approximately } 65 \text{ feet}$$

Then the measure of AB, the width of the rectangle and the width of the carriage circle feature, would be twice this amount, or 130 feet.

(Wikipedia contributors 2011b)

Appendix C
Circumscribing an oval around two circles



In order to circumscribe an oval around two circles, it is first necessary to determine the measure of the longer diameter in the oval. Mason would have had to know in advance that he wanted the diameter to be 120 feet. In the following diagram, AD represents the longer diameter and is 120 feet long. The first step in this mathematical procedure is to divide this diameter into three equal parts. Segments AB, BC, and CD all equal 40 feet. Draw a circle, centered at point B, that goes through points A and C. Similarly, draw a circle, centered at C that goes through B and D. The measure of the radii of both circles is 40 feet and the diameter is 80 feet. It can be proven that the measure of EF and FG is 40 feet, making the measure of EG 80 feet. The goal is to determine the shorter diameter of the oval or the length of IM in this diagram.

The first step in determining the length of IM is to find the length of IK. Since both EK and GK are diameters of their respective circles, their measure will be 80 feet each. EK and GK are actually radii of a larger circle that is not shown. Imagine stretching a piece of string from point E to point K, fastening the string down at point K, then moving the other end of the string over to point G, it can be seen that IK is also a radius of this invisible, larger circle. Then IK measures 80 feet. Next, the measure of KM needs to be found. Since, by design, everything is symmetrical around the line AD, the measure of KM can be assumed to be the same as the measure of IF.

Since the measure of IK is known to be 80, the measure of IF can be found by subtracting the measure of FK from IK. Consider the triangle, EFK. Using the Pythagorean Theorem,

$$\begin{aligned} (EK)^2 &= (EF)^2 + (FK)^2 \\ (80)^2 - (40)^2 &= (FK)^2 \\ 6400 - 1600 &= (FK)^2 \end{aligned}$$

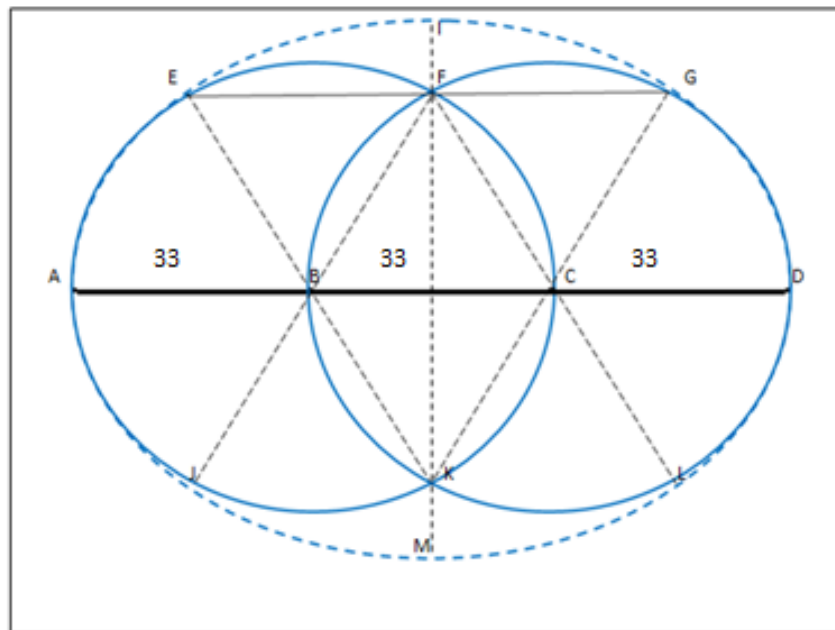
$$4800 = (FK)^2$$

$$69.28 = FK$$

The measure of IF = 80 – FK
 IF = 80 – 69.28
 IF = 10.72

Then the measure of IM = 10.72 + 69.28 + 10.72 = 90.72 feet, which is remarkably similar to the measure of 90 feet hypothesized using the proportional relationship of 1,5 times the face of the house.

To use this technique to compute the sideways diameter of the carriage circle at Mount Vernon, use a measure of 33 instead of 40 for segments AB, BC, and CD since Washington's measurement was 99 feet.



$$(EK)^2 = (EK)^2 + (FK)^2$$

$$(EK)^2 - (EK)^2 = (FK)^2$$

$$(66)^2 - (33)^2 = (FK)^2$$

$$4356 - 1089 = (FK)^2$$

$$3267 = (FK)^2$$

$$57.16 = FK$$

The measure of IF = 66 – FK
 IF = 66 – 57.16
 IF = 8.84

Then the measure of IM = 8.84 + 57.16 + 8.84 = 74.84, which rounds to 75 feet, the exact measure of Washington's shorter diameter. (Salmon 1767:12-13, Plate 1, Figure 24)

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