Gunston Hall, an architectural gem overlooking the Potomac River 15 miles south of Alexandria, is a fitting monument to George Mason, constitutionalist. Mason (1725-92) is most noted for the various constitutional papers he wrote during the Revolutionary and immediate post-Revolutionary periods, including the "Fairfax Resolves" of 1774, relating to the constitutional position of the colonies and the mother country; the "Virginia Declaration of Rights" in 1776, which furnished at least a part of the inspiration for the Declaration of Independence and the Federal Bill of Rights; and the "Objections to the Proposed Constitution" in 1788, setting forth the basis of his opposition to the adoption of the Federal Constitution. Though Mason's fight against ratification of the Constitution failed in Virginia, most of his objections finally proved valid. Almost as important as his public writings was his influence upon his younger colleagues, many of whom became leaders in Virginia and National politics.

Mason built Gunston Hall during the years 1755-58, employing William Buckland, a skilled craftsman from Oxfordshire, to do the interior wood carving. The house is comparatively small and plain, but with elaborate projecting porches on both the land and river sides.

Nomination Form

Gunston Hall

Gunston Hall

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places October 15, 1966; archaeological survey added August 9, 2007