

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Gunston Hall  
other names/site number Franklin Hall

### 2. Location

street & number 324 Vanderbilt Road n/a not for publication  
city, town Biltmore Forest n/a vicinity  
state North Carolina code NC county Buncombe code NC 021 zip code 28803

### 3. Classification

|   |  |                                     |                       |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ownership of Property                       | Category of Property                         | Number of Resources within Property |                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)         | Contributing                        | Noncontributing       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <u>5</u>                            | <u>1</u> buildings    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State       | <input type="checkbox"/> site                | <u>1</u>                            | <u>      </u> sites   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal     | <input type="checkbox"/> structure           | <u>2</u>                            | <u>2</u> structures   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> object              | <u>      </u>                       | <u>      </u> objects |
|   |  | <u>8</u>                            | <u>3</u> Total        |

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

William S. Fair  
Signature of certifying official 9-4-91  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other: (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling  
secondary structureLandscape: garden

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling  
secondary structureLandscape: garden

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial RevivalOther: Early 20th-Century Vernacular

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls BrickWeatherboardroof Slateother WoodCast iron

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheet.

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Gunston Hall, Buncombe County, NC

Section number 7 Page 1Gunston Hall  
Architectural Description

Gunston Hall, a handsome and substantial Colonial Revival dwelling designed by Washington architect Waddy B. Wood, is located at 324 Vanderbilt Road and occupies one of the choice building sites in Biltmore Forest. Interestingly enough, the builder William Beverly Mason, who was attracted to the area because of his golfing interest, chose not to build the replica of his ancestral seat on the golf course but chose, instead, this superb position (and tract) consisting of four lots totaling some eight acres. The house stands near the south edge of the property and little short of midway between Vanderbilt Road on the west and the Hendersonville highway (US 25) to the east; it sits atop the crest of a ridge (near its northwest end) that drops gently away to the east and the north. On the east the house overlooks a broad, grassed lawn, mostly framed on the north and south by hemlocks that stretch down to a shallow volunteer and planted tree line along the Hendersonville highway. To the north there is cultivated woodland and a secondary drive to the gardener's cottage, to the northeast of the house, that is concealed by the above mentioned hemlock row. On the west, the house overlooks a shallow grassed area with an elliptical drive slightly larger than can be called a forecourt, that is edged by cultivated woodlands which continue downgrade to the west and Vanderbilt Road. The entrance flanked by decorated brick piers begins at the northwest edge of this area and climbs to the east to the house. In 1944 and in 1946 two purchases added another one and two-thirds lots to the south end of the property: these purchases, Lots #14 and #15, were contiguous and fronted on the Hendersonville highway. On these are located the boxwood garden, the summer house, the potting sheds and cold frame, a small Oriental (Japanese) garden, and finally woodlands and another service drive (off Hendersonville road) to the south. During the third ownership of the house, from 1970 to 1987, the house's condition deteriorated. A major, thorough, and entirely sympathetic restoration was undertaken by the fourth (present) owner in 1987.

Gunston Hall, named for the eighteenth century source of the design of its main block, is an impressive five-part Colonial Revival house consisting of a one-and-a-half-story main block, one-story hyphens, and one-and-a-half-story gable-end wings that are set perpendicular to the main block. It is built of brick laid up in Flemish bond, and features carved woodwork, bevelled stone quoins on the main block, and a slate roof. The exterior of both the west, entrance elevation and the east, garden elevation are entirely symmetrical in appearance; the north and south (service) elevations are less rigidly ordered; however, there is a general symmetry here. Although built just slightly off a true east/west axis, the house will be described as if on a true axis for the ease of drafting and easier reading.

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Gunston Hall, Buncombe County, NC

Section number 7 Page 2The Exterior

The main block of Gunston Hall, one-and-a-half stories in height and essentially double pile in plan, has a five-bay division on both the first and second stories. Because of the recessed position of the hyphens, all four elevations of the main block are enframed by stone quoins that rise from the ground to the molded wood cornice that is enriched with modillion blocks. Pairs of brick chimneys stand, sentinel fashion, on each interior gable end, rising through the north and south edges of the gable roof to corbelled tops. The facade (west elevation) has slightly overscaled window openings on the first story, flanking the central entrance and its porch, that hold six-over-six sash, instead of the nine-over-nine sash at the Virginia prototype. These openings hold molded three-part surrounds, molded convex sills, and flat jack arches across each top. Inset in the house's roof are a quintet of dormer windows that are sheathed with weatherboards and covered with gable front roofs. The window openings are fitted with four-pane casement windows inside three-part molded surrounds.

Although there are small differences in the appearance of the porches, original to copy--and mainly the omission of the triglyphs on the Biltmore Forest porch--the overall appearance and spirit of the two porches is largely identical. The porch here is one story in height supported by a quartet of Tuscan columns rising to a full entablature. At the rear of the porch, there are pairs of pilasters that flank the central entrance and the flanking windows to either side. The face of the wall is stuccoed and painted, and finished with moldings to give the appearance of wainscot panels below the windows. The columns and outer pilasters are connected by a handsome railing of simple members between shaped hand and bottom rails. The floor of the porch is cast stone. A series of four steps, occupying the space between the front, inner columns, descend to lawn level; a simple wrought iron hand railing, painted black, guards the ends of the steps. The pedimented gable-end form of the porch is broken by a demi-lune arch that rises from a spring point above the inner columns; the form of the arch continues, tunnel-like, to the facade wall, to complement the shape of the demi-lune fanlight over the central entrance.

The hyphens to the north and south are recessed approximately eleven and a half feet behind (east of) the main facade and are four bays in width. Here the hierarchy of use denotes simple differences in the appearances of the symmetrical elevations. The north hyphen, containing part of the family's suite of bedrooms, bathrooms, and closets, is fitted with rectangular window openings holding six-over-six sash and finished with molded sills and flat jack arches; these are identical but smaller versions of the windows in the main block. The south hyphen, containing the kitchen and service block, has even smaller openings, with arched heads, that hold rectangular six-over-six sash. The formal demands of exact symmetry reassert themselves in the identical appearance of the west gable ends of the two wings where window openings flank the interior gable end chimneys that rise through the roof and punctuate the overall composition. There are small square attic windows holding four panes each in the gable ends.

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The broad east, garden elevation of Gunston Hall is identical to the west elevation except for three important differences. Here, on the main block, is the first significant departure from the eighteenth century model. Waddy Wood, instead of duplicating the unusually handsome pentagonal porch on the Virginia house, designed a handsome classical three-part frontispiece. The doorway, surmounted by a fanlight, is embraced by engaged Tuscan columns that rise to the full entablature and broken cornice that enframes the complete unit. To the right and left, the door is flanked by small window openings holding four-over-four sash; then, at the extreme outside edges of the doorway there are Tuscan pilasters that rise to the entablature. This doorway opens onto a broad flagstone paved terrace overlooking the lawn, that carries completely across the five-bay front of the main block and terminates with plantings in front of the hyphen's elevations. Here is the second difference in the appearance of this house's two principal elevations. The wall of the main block is visually continuous with the wall of the hyphens except for a shallow recess to expose the quoins. However, what might be an overwhelming length of fourteen bays is mitigated by the dense plantings of boxwood in front of the hyphens that serve to contain the north and south ends of the terrace. Likewise, boxwood carries along the east edge of the terrace and flanks the steps that descend to the great lawn. The third important difference in the appearance of east and west elevations is the existence of single dormer windows in the center of the roofs of the hyphens that illuminate the passage in the attics of each that then connect to the storage attics over the wings. The east gable ends of the hyphens duplicate the west gable ends.

The south elevation is fronted by a brick-paved service court screened by a six-foot tall brick wall from the front of the house. Entry to the court from the main asphalt drive is at the southwest corner of the house through a pair of rusticated brick piers set into the wall. The outer, west face and south end of the wall is on axis with the west gable end of the south wing but it curves east as it approaches the house to a recessed position behind the wall plane. As can be seen on the plat map of the property, the south edge of the brick paved court is very near to the south property line and here only the hemlock hedge serves as a screen to the neighboring yard. The east end of the court is also open but separated from the house lawn by a series of mostly evergreen plantings.

The south elevation is asymmetrical in design, reflecting different uses of the three spaces in the wing. The largest area is given over to a two-car garage that is located in the center of the wing; its south wall projects about three feet beyond and south of the elevations to either side. The eight-foot wide openings here, originally fitted with the side-hinged wood doors, now contain metal overhead doors. The west end of the roof continues to cover a shallow service porch that opens into the laundry/mud room in the west end of the wing. The porch has a wood floor and molded square-in-plan columns connected by a simple member railing. The east end of the wing contains the furnace room. There is a single door in the center of the exterior wall, whose width corresponds to the interior

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space; like the laundry door it features six glazed panes above a large single flat panel.

The north elevation of the house (and of the north wing) is simple in appearance. Here occupying the center third of the wall is a shed roof porch that is accessible from the dressing room for the east bedroom in the wing. It appears that this porch was originally a sleeping porch; it has a brick foundation and weatherboarded shed ends. Late in the Dennis or Franklin ownership of the house it was refitted with fixed center panes and casement flanker windows and extended a few feet to the north.

#### The Interior

The interior plan of Gunston Hall directly reflects its predecessor in the position, scale, and ornamentation of the center, stair hall that stretches through the depth of the main block and in the program of carved woodwork in the Reception Room and Dining Room. Mason and his architect made obvious choices to retain those elements for reproduction here since they satisfied the social needs for a large hall and formal rooms that have persisted since the eighteenth century. Likewise, the decision not to retain the four smaller chambers of the original plan was also conscious. As was the case with many of the finer suburban houses of the period, including those built in Biltmore Forest, clients who built houses in the 1920s asked for substantial dining rooms and even larger living or drawing rooms than were necessary for houses of like status in the eighteenth century. In consequence, Waddy Wood provided Mr. Mason with an exceptional, paneled living room that occupies the entire north end of the main block's first story and a handsome dining room that is the larger of the two rooms on the south (right) side of the hall. Whereas the woodwork of the other first story rooms largely replicated that of the original Gunston Hall, the finish of the living room drew freely on eighteenth and early nineteenth century architectural models. Since this house was built for summer occupation and relatively informal living, the family bedrooms and related quarters are all off a long corridor that opens off the north side of the living room, rather than off a secondary hall that might have connected with the entrance hall. Likewise, the kitchen and its supporting rooms together with the garage and furnace room are accessible through a single door from the dining room into the butler's (china and glass) pantry. However, there is a secondary stair here in the south hyphen that leads from the servants's bedrooms on the second story down to the servants's hall off the kitchen. The quality and character of the interior woodwork reflects the descending heirarchy of importance, moving from the most elaborate in the public spaces, to the less elaborate in the family quarters, to the simplest in the second-story servants's rooms and the first story service wing. The general character is Colonial Revival and typical of the best houses of the period.

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As noted above, the entrance hall here is the nearest of all the interior spaces in plan and overall detailing to the same space at Gunston Hall in Virginia. It is a long rectangular chamber with pine floors and plaster walls and ceiling. The entire hall is encircled by a molded flat-panel wainscot that rests on a painted (black) baseboard and is topped by a three-part molded chairrail. The widths of the panels making up the chairrail correspond to the window and door openings and they are arranged with square panels flanking long rectangular ones. The wainscot continues up the stair to the second story hall. The three-part surrounds of the doors rest directly on the baseboards; in similar fashion the surrounds for the pairs of windows flanking the front and back doors rest on the chairrail and have deep sills. The principal ornamentation in the room is applied to the screen separating the front (entrance) part of the hall from the rear (stair) half. Here, as at George Mason's Gunston Hall, fluted pilasters rest on plinths in the wainscot and rise to the spring point from which the paired arches stretch across the hall from either side to converge in the center. The arches are finished with volute keystones. The Wall-of-Troy cornice breaks over a triglyph directly above the composition pineapple finial. The cornice, keystones, pineapple, and portions of the other ornament are plaster or composition. The railing for the stair that occupies the same position here as in the Virginia house is handsomely but more simply finished. The foliate scroll brackets of the old house are replaced here with like scrolls that incorporate a crescent shaped device together with stopped fluting that drops from the horizontal line of the stair treads. Likewise, the turned and fluted spindles of the old railing are replaced here with simple rectangular uprights below a shaped walnut handrail. The mahogany veneer doors have an eight-panel arrangement.

The Reception Room, opening off the right side of the hall and occupying the southwest corner of the main block, is a small elegant room. It has a wide molded two-part chairrail and the same black-painted baseboard with an applied top molding that appears in the hall. The door surround here is the same as appears in the hall; however, the two window surrounds on the west wall are far more elaborate. They consist of fluted pilasters, resting on projecting paneled plinths flanking the grillwork covering the radiator below the windows, that rise to support a full and deep classical entablature over the windows. The reveals have flat molded panels. Based on the much-published window surrounds in the Drawing Room of the eighteenth century Gunston Hall, they repeat their form and much but not all of the elaborate detail that so enriches the original. The plaster cornice here is likewise the most elaborate in the house and features a Wall-of-Troy dentil course and modillion blocks; the soffits between the blocks are further ornamented with cast plaster rosettes. Many of the rosettes were recast by craftsman Donald Smith during the 1987-1988 restoration. The Reception Room was originally hung with wallpaper. The following inscription, found on the plaster during the restoration, reads as follows:

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Hung by W. J. Carroll, Richmond, Va.  
Fresco Decorating  
w/ R. E. Bowles  
Asheville, N.C.  
Feb. 16, 1923

The walls of the Reception Room are now painted a cool aquamarine that recalls the eighteenth-century decorative schemes of Robert Adam.

As elaborate and handsome as the window surrounds are, the focus of attention in this room is the fireplace and mantel, given added prominence by the projecting chimneybreast. A free composition based on motives often used on the eighteenth century model, it is in the center of the south wall directly opposite the door from the hall. The principal feature here is the crossetted surround that enframes a panel above the mantel shelf and the firebox opening. A variegated black and white marble is used to face the brickwork of the firebox and for the hearth. The applied surround here, enriched with a heavy egg-and-dart molding, is surmounted by a pair of acanthus leaf brackets that support the molded mantel shelf. It breaks forward over a center panel. The existing brass andirons, fender, fire tools, and candlestand date to the Franklin occupancy or earlier.

The Dining Room, situated east of the Reception Room and the larger of the two chambers on the south side of the center hall, has the appearance of being square in plan; however, its proportions are more subtle. It measures twenty-three feet and six inches from the window wall to its common wall with the Reception Room and twenty feet and nine inches from the door, connecting it with the hall, to the opposite door opening into the butler's pantry. The finish of this room is largely the same as that of the Reception Room.

The mantel with over-mantel here is the handsomest in the house and underscores the hospitality of Mason's table. The black and white variegated marble reappears here for the surround and hearth as does the egg-and-dart enriched crossetted surround. The foliate form of the acanthus leaves, used for the shelf brackets in the mantel frieze in the Reception Room, reappears here in the palm leaves forming the frieze that swell at the bottom and taper to the top (and the end point) and flank a recessed molded blank panel. Rows of Wall-of-Troy and egg-and-dart molding carry under the projecting mantel shelf that serves as the base for the elaborate over-mantel. It consists of a broad raised panel, enframed with a crossetted surround with foliate moldings and beading, flanked by elongated scrolls. There are applied rosettes in the corners of the crossettes. The over-mantel is crowned with a frieze of rosettes and broken pediment that is based on the doorway surround in the Drawing Room of George Mason's house. Most of the mantel ornament is gesso rather than carved wood.

The palm leaves in the mantel frieze reappear in the ceiling medallion, supplied by Focal Point of Atlanta, Georgia, that was installed by the current owners. Georgian Lighting, also in Atlanta, designed and made the cut crystal candle



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chandelier that complements the three pairs of imported mirrored wall sconces still in place and original to the Mason occupancy. Adding further presence to this handsome combination of mirror and glass, is a Venetian mirror on the west wall hung by the Schaub's. In addition to the principal entrance from the hall there is a second door, in the east end of the north wall, that also opens into the hall and under the stair. When the wallpaper was removed here during the restoration a second inscription was found on the plaster; the work in the Dining Room was completed by the same workmen on June 14, 1923, two weeks after the Mason family arrived from Washington to occupy the house during their first summer here.

The appearance of the Living Room is unusually pleasing, a quality provided in large part by the size of the room, the advantage of having windows in pendant positions on the outside east and west walls, and the walnut paneling. Occupying the main block's entire space north of the center hall on the first story, the room is twenty feet wide and thirty-seven-and-a-half feet in depth. The door from the hall is set in the center of the south wall and directly opposite is the fireplace and mantel on the north wall. The fireplace, in turn, is flanked by a door to the family quarters to the east and a window to the west. The walnut paneling includes a molded flat panel wainscot between the baseboard and chairrail. The symmetrical arrangement of the panels is repeated on the broad walls above the chairrail. A Greek key frieze carries around the top of the paneling below a molded cornice enriched with the egg-and-dart molding that so pervades the eighteenth century woodwork of the model. Both are molded plaster and stained and grained to simulate walnut. On the west and east walls, a trio of recessed bookcases enframe the window openings that feature deep splayed paneled reveals and three-part moldings. The mantel and over-mantel here are restrained. A rich, black and ochre variegated marble is used for the hearth and firebox surround. The opening is simply framed with a molded architrave that supports a plain board frieze and molded shelf. The over-mantel, similar in its design to the one in the Reception Room, features an outer crossetted molding enclosing a molded flat rectangular panel. Designed to be inobtrusive, the doorway to the right (east) of the projecting chimneybreast opens onto a long corridor in the hyphen serving the family quarters.

The Family Quarters

The corridor, leading from the Living Room to the north wing, is located off-center in the hyphen and has black baseboards, pine floors, and plain plaster walls. The Schaub's added a simple, traditional chairrail and crown molding to enliven the long bare walls in their restoration. On the east--and shallower side of the plan--there is, moving south to north, a lavatory for guests, a linen room fitted with closed shelves on the south wall, and a bathroom that is accessible only from a shallow hall serving the east bedroom in the wing. On the right (west) side of the hall there is a bedroom with companion closet and bathroom and the closet and bathroom serving the west bedroom in the wing, accessible only from

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that suite. The finish of these rooms and the two bedroom suites in the north wing is typical of the period and nearly identical, room to room. The current owners added a simple, attractive chairrail to all of the rooms, except the bathrooms and closets, in the family quarters. The six-panel doors are birch veneer over pine and are set in two-part Colonial Revival surrounds.

The bedroom in the hyphen was occupied during the early years by Mrs. Mason's mother on visits to Biltmore Forest. It is the smallest of the first-story bedrooms and has a fireplace centered on the south wall, two symmetrical windows on the west wall, and doors for the closet and bathroom on the north wall. The mantel features a crossetted surround, a faux pulvinated frieze, and a molded shelf with a dentil course. The concrete hearth and firebox facing are painted black. The bathroom has a ceramic tile floor and wainscot and retains its original tub and hot and cold water knobs. The toilet and sink are modern (Franklin era?) replacements.

At the north end of the corridor serving the family quarters there are single doors on both the east and west that open into short halls leading into the front (west) and rear (east) bedrooms. These rooms are equal in size and are arranged en suite with individual dressing rooms and bathrooms. The bedrooms occupy the east and west ends of the wing, with fireplaces in their respective east and west gable end walls, while the dressing rooms are positioned, back to back, in the center of the wing. It appears that the rear (east) bedroom was the master bedroom since the dressing room is fitted with a solid bank of closets on its west wall. The three center doors have full length mirrors while the flanking doors have six-panel divisions. A series of luggage closets carries across the top of the clothes closets. There is also a door in this dressing room that opens onto the former sleeping porch on the north elevation; the door has nine glazed panes above a solid lower panel and is surmounted by a three-pane transom. There is a small and very handsome silver and crystal chandelier in this room that is thought to be original to the Mason occupation of the house. The bathroom, en suite with the master bedroom, has hexagonal floor ceramic tile and square wainscot tile that was installed by the current owner. The bathtub and the medicine cabinet with its mirrored door are original; the iron and marble sink was built for the Schaub by the Asheville Ironworks. In both bedrooms the Schaub installed a dentil cornice that replicates the dentil course on the mantels. The front (west) bedroom is now furnished as a sitting room. There are no closets in its companion dressing room; it has movable racks and is now used as a closet by Mrs. Schaub. This bathroom (situated in the north end of the hyphen) retains its original tub, shower nozzle and knobs, and the horizontal creamy white tile around the tub that was installed in 1923. The mirrored medicine cabinet, recessed in the wall above the sink, is also original. There is a closet for this bedroom off the short hall leading back to the corridor.

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The Kitchen and Service Areas

At the opposite end of the house the kitchen and main service areas are located in the south hyphen. There are five rooms in this area. From the dining room one enters the butler's pantry with a window on the west. It connects to the kitchen, the largest room, that occupies the remainder of the area behind the other three bays on the west elevation. Ranked behind--and boasting windows overlooking the east lawn--are the servants' hall, the second largest room of the quintet that has a connecting lavatory, and the pantry that is fitted into the southeast corner of the hyphen. As might be expected, the fixtures of these rooms have been largely replaced over the course of ownership by four families; however, the essential fabric of the rooms remains intact including the simple beaded plain board door and window surrounds and the five, horizontal panel, birch veneer over pine doors. The baseboards throughout the service area are painted black. The flooring throughout the hyphen was replaced in the 1987-1988 restoration with a handsome herringbone pattern in limed oak, installed by Waite Flooring Service of Asheville.

The butler's pantry has a galley-like arrangement of counter top and glazed wall-hung cabinets on both the north and south elevations to the east of the doors opening from the Dining Room and into the kitchen. There is a third bank of glazed wall-hung cabinets on the east end wall. The west end wall has been fitted with a counter top cabinet that incorporates a temperature controlled wine rack and a brass sink for use as a bar; there are also wall-hung closed-front cabinets here flanking the window. The glazed wall-hung cabinets for china and glassware were installed when the house was built and repaired during the 1987-1988 restoration. The other cabinets are solid white maple manufactured by Crystal Cabinets of Plymouth, Minnesota, and installed by Cooper House of Asheville. The counter tops are solid white maple; the bar counter top is a sheet of Georgia Blue Granite.

The cabinets in the kitchen are also of solid white maple, manufactured by Crystal Cabinets of Plymouth, Minnesota, and installed by the Asheville firm Cooper House. The counter tops are Georgia Blue Granite. There are two work stations here: one in the perimeter wall cabinet unit and another at the island in the center of the room. There are three doors in the east wall. One connects with the servants' hall in the northeast corner; the middle door opens into the food pantry; and the third door opens into another pantry. The servants' hall is a plain room of little interest except for the stair that begins in its northwest corner and rises to the south along the west wall to the second story. It is made of pine and has a square newel, a shaped handrail, square uprights, and pine treads; there is an opening, providing access to the crawl space, under it that is fitted with a vertical two-panel door. The room has a traditional chairrail added in 1987-1988. An important survival in a house of this period is the call bell box for servants that is mounted on the south wall here. The former pantry is now fitted with new cabinets on the north wall and open shelves along the south wall for Mrs. Schaub's cookbook collection.

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The south wing contains the laundry/mud room, garage, and furnace room. A door in the west end of the kitchen's south wall opens into the laundry/mud room that is positioned in the west end of the south wing. The cabinets along the east and west walls here were also manufactured by Cooper House of Asheville. The tops are "Corion," a manufactured material that simulates light grey granite. The flooring here is sheet vinyl printed with a pattern that represents inlaid ceramic tile. On the south wall there is the aforementioned door onto the rear porch and service court. On the east wall there is a door that opens into the garage. The single space, two-car garage has a cement floor that is two steps down from the floor of the laundry. The walls are exposed brick blocks. A door in its east wall opens into the furnace room that also has a poured cement floor and exposed brick block walls. Its floor is three steps below the grade of the garage and contains the principal mechanical systems for the house.

The Second Story

The second story of the main block of Gunston Hall includes a hall and bathroom above the first-story hall, two guest rooms above the Living Room, and a secondary hall, three servants rooms and their bathroom over the Reception and Dining rooms. The two guest rooms are nearly identical in size and treatment and each has a fireplace in the north gable end wall. The mantels are identical to those in the first-story family quarters; the six-panel birch veneer doors and molded surrounds also repeat those below. A traditional chairrail was installed in both rooms in 1987-1988. A door in the north wall of the east guest room--the larger of the two rooms--opens into the attic passage in the hyphen that, in turn, continues to the large floored but unfinished attic in the north wing. The two bedrooms also have a communicating door; the west bedroom has a closet. The guest bathroom is fitted into the west end of the hall and retains its original corner bathtub and mirrored medicine cabinet. The floors and fixtures are replacements.

A door in the south wall of the second story hall opens into a narrow hallway that has doors on the west wall opening into two servants's bedrooms, and two doors on the east wall that open into the third bedroom and the servants's bathroom in the southeast corner of the main block. The rooms have a very plain appearance enlivened only with the beaded board door and window surrounds, black baseboards, and a modest chairrail installed in 1987-1988. All three rooms are used as personal offices by the present owners. The bathroom here has new fixtures. A door in the south end of the hall opens onto a flight of four steps that descend to a passageway that, in turn, has the landing of a staircase rising from the servants's hall. There are four closets fitted along the west wall of this passage for the servants; they have board and batten doors. A five horizontal panel door in the south wall opens into the floored but otherwise unfinished attic of the south wing.

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## 2. The Grounds and Garden. 1920-ca. 1955. Contributing.

The grounds and gardens of Gunston Hall, occupying eleven and a quarter acres, contribute to the significance of the property on two accounts; first, the natural and planted materials form the setting for the landmark Colonial Revival house; an equally critical value is their individual significance as an important designed domestic landscape developed by two owners during a thirty-five-year period in the first half of the twentieth century. When Biltmore Forest was being planned, extraordinary care was taken to preserve the existing topography and plant material. This is the case at Gunston Hall where stands of trees between the house and Vanderbilt Road, an aged white oak standing near the northeast corner of the house, and other specimen trees clearly pre-date 1920. During the twenty-four years of William Beverley Mason's ownership of the property and particularly during the period from 1923 until 1936 when the family used Gunston Hall as a summer place, Mr. Mason, with the assistance of Chauncey Delos Beadle, initiated the development of the house grounds. Their attention was focused on the four lots--#12, #13, #36, #37--that then formed the house grounds. During this period the rows of hemlocks were planted on the south and north sides of Lot #13 where the great lawn is laid; they also initiated the planting of hemlocks and other evergreens along the east side of Lot #13 to cut the private lawn of the house off from public view along the Hendersonville highway (US 25). These border and screen plantings were supplemented during the ownership of Mrs. Lola Anderson Dennis: a row of white pines along the north border of Lot #12 was planted either during the Mason occupation of Gunston Hall or early in Mrs. Dennis's ownership since it was she who erected the tool shed (later remodeled as the gardener's cottage) on Lot #12 about 1944. During the period from ca. 1944 to ca. 1955 Mrs. Dennis installed the boxwood garden on Lot #14 and added the Japanese garden on the southern edge of the lot where it spills somewhat over onto Lot #15 that she acquired in 1946. Thus by 1946 the size of the house grounds was complete and the major plantings were in place by 1955.

For the purpose of explanation, the grounds and the gardens of Gunston Hall can be divided into three component parts: the entrance and the front plantings along Vanderbilt Road; the immediate house grounds and the great lawn; and the boxwood and Japanese gardens that adjoin the "Breezeway." The remainder of the property including the informal, mostly natural woodlands along the northern edge of the estate (the north border of Lots #12 and #37) and the majority of Lot #15 are mixed evergreen trees, mostly white pines and hemlocks and some deciduous trees. There are two service drives leading onto the house grounds from the Hendersonville highway. The older of the two is the gravel drive that enters the grounds in the extremely northeast corner and leads in a generally southwest path to the gardener's cottage. There is a less developed service lane that leads from the Hendersonville highway and the east edge of Lot #15 in a northwesterly route to the rear of the "Breezeway." It was used by gardeners and caterers for the entertainments that Mrs. Dennis held at Gunston Hall.

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As is the case with many of the older houses in Biltmore Forest--and particularly those occupying larger tracts of land--the entrance to the property is more or less simply marked by gates or piers with background plantings of indigenous shrubs. That is the fact here where plantings of rhododendron carry along both sides of the asphalt entrance drive from Vanderbilt Road for about a third of the depth of the front lots. Massed plantings of rhododendron then carry west along Vanderbilt Road to a point approximating the line between Lots #36 and #37 where they merge with plantings of winter honeysuckle (*Lonicera Fragrantissima*) that carries along the remainder of the Vanderbilt Road frontage. The density of these shrubs gradually and easily lessens into the mostly evergreen woodlands that occupy the remainder of the front grounds and continue up to the low boxwood border that carries along the west (outside) of the elliptical drive in front of the house.

The immediate house grounds of Gunston Hall and the foundation plantings are mostly boxwood, arranged in specimen and massed situations. Both the west front and rear lawn elevations have foundation plantings of boxwood. On the east side of the house the boxwood and some juniper are planted along the long east front of the flagstone terrace and beside the steps that spill forward onto the lawn. There is also a low juniper hedge--about the width of the main block--set on the east edge of the grass oval inside the front drive. On the north end of the house there is a mixed planting of rhododendron and winter honeysuckle that forms a partial screen between the house and the service drive that leads off the front drive and continues to the gardener's cottage. As noted above the great lawn, occupying almost all of Lot #13, on the east front of the house is framed on both the north and south by a single row of hemlocks. (Behind and northwest of the north hemlock row and adjacent to the gardener's cottage is the site of a one-time vegetable garden and Mrs. Dennis' duck and poultry yard, now overgrown with broom straw.) There is a shallow mixed hemlock and white pine woodland planting along the entire east end of the lawn that continues in varying density to both the north and south to the edges of the Gunston Hall property. Along the edges of the lawn and mostly toward the east end there are some specimen trees including a weeping cherry and dogwood. The most important of these individual trees is a large old white pine that stands on the edge of the east (roadside) woodland border; it is the sole survivor of a row of white pines that once ran from Hendersonville highway up through the center of the lawn to the east side of the house. According to local tradition this avenue was a part of the landscape treatment for a long-lost house that might have stood on this important site prior to Vanderbilt's acquisition of the property. Just to the south of the terrace steps there is a stretcher brick path that begins here and carries along the edge of the boxwood and to the southeast. It continues behind an unusually beautiful cut-leaf Japanese maple to a point along the hemlock hedge and thereafter it carries along the hemlock hedge down to the boxwood garden.

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The boxwood and "Japanese" gardens occupy most of the two-thirds of Lot #14 that is within the estate. The boxwood garden is rectangular in plan and covers about a third of this area. It is situated in the northwest corner of Lot #14; its west border is bounded by the property line with 328 Vanderbilt Road while its longer north border is the line between Lots #13 and #14. The boxwood garden is divided into three principal parterres, arranged in parallel fashion and each along a north/south axis; there is a principal east/west axis that carries through the center of the garden and the three parterres and terminates on the east with the gazebo. Within this framework of simple rectangles there are specimen and group plantings of arborvitae and other hardy evergreens in addition to the hemlock hedge that both punctuate and enframe the boxwood garden. The paths and walks within the garden are brick (laid over the original gravel by Mrs. Dennis) except for the flagstone walks off the gazebo. The upper (west) parterre of the garden is laid out in five areas defined by brickwork.

The entrance into the garden is flanked by a pair of triangular plantings of boxwood that focus on a cast stone well head in the form of free Corinthian capital. It stands on a circular base that, in turn, is enhanced by concentric rows of brick paving. That ornament marks the north end of the upper parterre where a handsome cast stone covered vase, ornamented with fluting and foliate decoration, stands in an outlined square on the south end, just north of the garden pavilion. The center panel is also square in shape while the intermediate plots are marked by "X's" in brick. The central square was originally a pool with a shallow fountain but it was drained and planted with boxwood by Mrs. Dennis in the early 1960s. A walk leaves from the center square and descends to the second and center parterre that has a sunken circular pool, probably earlier holding a fountain, as its principal focus. This brick walk intersects brick walks leading to the north and south and continues on to the gazebo on the east. The third and lower parterre is outlined with boxwood that has largely grown into the center fields which once could have been planted with perennials. There are secondary brick walks that carry along the north and south borders of the box garden and lead down to the grassy open area between the boxwood garden and the potting shed. Here there are several long rectangular beds outlined with brick that were used for vegetables. The "Japanese" garden, described by Mrs. Remer, Mrs. Dennis' niece, as an "episode" in the garden, is a small undefined area arranged around a principal and two secondary pools that are shallow, asymmetrical in plan, and of poured concrete. It is south of the boxwood garden and off the southeast corner of the breezeway. It is planted with azalea and small specimen shrubs chosen for their ornamental qualities of form and texture. The garden also incorporates the use of ornamental stones to punctuate the setting.

The Secondary Resources at Gunston Hall

3. The Breezeway. Ca. 1950. Contributing.

The garden pavilion, known as the "Breezeway," is a one-story rustic-style building that was erected by Lola Anderson Dennis during the period in the

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later-1940s/early 1950s when she was developing the boxwood garden. Mrs. Dennis acquired a second one-third interest in Lot #14, on which the breezeway stands, in June 1944. The pavilion is set at the south end of the upper terrace of the boxwood garden on the west edge of Lot 14, where the boxwood garden was developed. The design of the rectangular pavilion with enclosed ends flanking an open flagstone-paved terrace, all under the shelter of an expansive hipped roof, allows the building to serve as a terminal feature for the garden parterre while the open terrace provides a covered outdoor sitting area and allows the eye to extend beyond to the woodland. There is a flagstone terrace extension carrying along the north side of the pavilion; it has deteriorated in recent years but is being renewed. The end blocks are sheathed with an unusual wood slab siding. The building was designed as a retreat in the garden and for the convenience of entertaining. The west block contains a small kitchen that is sheathed in vertical pine paneling. The east block, extended by a later shed addition on the east, contains a bathroom for guests and a small sitting room. The chimney in the center of this block provides a fireplace for the sitting room and contains the stack for a barbecue grill located in the center terrace. During the Franklin occupancy of Gunston Hall the pavilion was remodeled for a rental dwelling. Those minor changes to the pavilion's interior and exterior are being removed during the restoration now in progress. The original window surrounds are plain boards with perimeter fillets. The original surviving doors are six panel.

4. Gazebo. Ca. 1955. Contributing.

The gazebo, functioning as the terminal of the principal east/west axis of the boxwood garden, was built about 1955 when the overall plan of the boxwood garden was completed and planted. It is octagonal in shape with the cardinal sides being longer than the other four sides. It has a brick foundation and a floor of multicolored flagstone that was laid down over the original brick paving; the step up from the garden on the west was likewise paved with flagstone as are walks leading from the north and south sides. The supports for the roof are paired octagonal wood posts holding a vertical foliate cast-iron panel; these are set in the four short sides of the octagon. On the east side there is a somewhat awkwardly composed railing between the two corner supports that incorporate four short sections of the foliated vertical panel; it is topped by bracket-like features that are also foliate in their composition but of a different character. The roof has exposed rafters and asbestos shingles; a pretty, old colored glass lantern hangs inside from the top of the roof. A metal eagle is mounted as a weathervane on the apex of the roof.

5. Pump House. Ca. 1970. Noncontributing.

This small unobtrusive structure is low to the ground, constructed of painted cement blocks, and is covered with a gable roof.



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6. Pump House. Ca. 1970. Noncontributing.

This small unobtrusive structure is low to the ground, constructed of painted cement blocks, and is covered with a gable roof.

7. Tool Shed/Potting Shed. Ca. 1951. Contributing.

Located east of the boxwood garden and between it and the woodland border carrying along the boundary on the Hendersonville highway, the tool shed/potting shed is a rectangular frame building. It is the "frame garage" on the estate map. It is covered with the same wood slab siding as the garden pavilion and has an asphalt shingle hipped roof. It has two large sixteen-pane metal casement windows on the west wall and a door that is modern and deteriorated. There is a smaller metal casement window on the east end of the south elevation. The east elevation is blind; there is an opening fitted with an overhead garage door on the north end. The interior of the shed has no sheathing and a dirt floor. There are shelves on the south and east walls, a sink with water under the window on the south, and a long potting work board occupying the entire length of the west elevation except for the door opening. It was built by Mrs. Dennis to replace the estate's first tool shed that she remodeled and expanded for the gardener's cottage.

8. Greenhouse. Ca. 1954. Contributing.

The present Greenhouse, located on the far side of the hemlock row forming the north border of the great lawn, is a rectangular building with appendages on both the east and west ends. It was built by Mrs. Dennis about 1954 to replace an earlier and smaller greenhouse that she built here in the mid-1940s. The building is partially set into the ground; a shallow perimeter apron of cement blocks forms the base of the glazed metal-framed gambrel roof. The metal grid framework has closely spaced members that hold glass panes. On the west gambrel end there is a small projecting gable-front block that contains the entrance. Here six steps flanked by planters descend into the greenhouse. The interior of the greenhouse is laid out with an elongated octagonal pool in the center that is surrounded in concentric fashion by a walk. Then the area between the walk and the walls is given over to a concentric perimeter octagonal planting bed in which Mrs. Dennis had camellias. The shed roof ell on the east end of the greenhouse contains a hothouse with an entrance on the east and the boiler room reached by descending steps on the east elevation. Although deteriorated and long since unused, the building is in stable enough condition for renovation and reuse.

9. The Gardener's Cottage. Ca. 1944, 1951, and later. Noncontributing.

This house appears to be the most heavily remodeled building on the estate. The core of the cottage was built about 1944 as a tool shed. It was expanded and remodeled in 1951 as the gardener's cottage. Now it is a rectangular frame

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building with various sized window openings in an asymmetrical arrangement on its east, south, and west elevations. There are some single and paired six-over-six sash windows in plain board surrounds with perimeter fillets that appear to be original, although most appear to be replacement. The north elevation is taken up by a two-car gable-roof frame garage that was added in the later 1960s by Mrs. Dennis; it has pairs of overhead doors opening on both the east and west elevations. The house has a brick foundation with a poured cement slab floor. It is covered with weatherboards and an asphalt shingle gable roof. The interior, like the exterior, has been remodeled several times but still retains some two panel doors and contemporary surrounds that appear to be original to the 1951 conversion.

10. The Garden Shed. Ca. 1951. Contributing.

The garden shed, built for lawnmower storage, is a rectangular frame building covered on the north and west side elevations with the same wood slab siding that appears on the garden pavilion and the potting shed. The east and south elevations are fitted with the former side-hinged and partially glazed wood doors from the garage on the house.

11. The Entrance Piers and Gates. 1923. Contributing.

The entrance to Gunston Hall on Vanderbilt Road is marked by a pair of rusticated brick piers, square in plan, that rise to a height of approximately ten feet. They are capped by a cast stone block. The base of the block is a frieze of guilloche bands that supports a shallow projecting cornice. Surmounting the composition is an antefix ornamented with anthemions on each face. At some point after the piers were erected they were fitted (by Dr. Franklin?) with attractive but fairly conventional cast iron gates that were said to have been brought here from Gunston Hall in Virginia. This attribution appears to be without genuine basis since they appear in none of the many photographs of the house made while Louis Hertle owned it. Dr. Franklin did add a cast iron arch bearing the inscription "Franklin Hall": its ends spring from the tops of the piers to which he (also, it would appear) added unimportant and underscaled lantern-style light fixtures.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Development

Landscape Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1920-ca. 1955

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1923

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Beadle, Chauncey Delos-landscape architect

Dennis, Lola Anderson-landscape architect

Merchant, Luther L.-contractor/builder

Wood, Waddy B. architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet.

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## Statement of Significance

Gunston Hall, a handsome five-part Colonial Revival house completed in 1923 for Dr. William Beverley Mason and occupying grounds of eleven and a half acres, is an estate of extraordinary significance in the history of American domestic architecture. It is significant on the local, state, and national level within the closely related criteria of architecture, landscape architecture, and community development. When Dr. Mason set about to build this summer place in the newly-developing residential park of Biltmore Forest, he chose as a model for its design his family's ancestral seat in Virginia, Gunston Hall. Clearly in those heady days of the 1920s, Dr. Mason was attempting to re-establish both his family's connection with the house built for his great-great-grandfather George Mason that had left the family in 1868 and with the patrimony associated with the author of the Bill of Rights. During the 1920s in the period of architectural practice when the qualities of appearance, association, family background, and aristocratic tradition became closely interwoven with architectural design, Gunston Hall is unique. It holds national importance for its role in the American Colonial Revival as the first known house replicating one of the nation's landmark eighteenth century houses that was built by a descendant of the original builder. The idea of copying colonial and eighteenth century models was one of increasing popularity throughout the 1920s and 1930s and particularly as a result of the promotion of the restorations at Colonial Williamsburg; however, Dr. Mason's pioneering construction of Gunston Hall anticipated those efforts by several years, and it was among the first such houses that substantially replicated both the form and the finish of its antecedent. The success of this effort owes in large part to the skills of the architect Waddy B. Wood, Mason's friend and fellow clubman in Washington, D.C., who had both renovated Woodlawn for Senator O. C. Underwood and a Washington townhouse residence for President Woodrow Wilson.

This assessment of the estate's national architectural significance should not overshadow its state and local importance in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, and community development. Completed in 1923, Gunston Hall was one of the first major houses erected in Biltmore Forest, an exceptional suburban residential park adjoining George Vanderbilt's legendary Biltmore House. It is clear that the developers of this residential neighborhood, pre-eminent in both Asheville and the state, saw Gunston Hall as a model and standard for emulation by future house builders in Biltmore Forest. It was prominently featured in their lavish promotional book The Story of Biltmore Forest (1925). Biltmore Forest was no ordinary tract of land on which a suburban neighborhood was overlaid. Instead, it was a former part of the Vanderbilt estate that was set aside in 1920 and carefully planned as a residential park to appeal to the affluent and important men of the day. Overseeing the development of the park and its roads, lots, drives, and other amenities was Chauncey Delos Beadle, the superintendent of the Biltmore Estate whose hand can be seen in the early development of the Gunston Hall grounds. Whereas the house was constructed in a short period of time, the

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creation of its setting and gardens was effected throughout a period of thirty-five years from 1920 until ca. 1955. Lola Anderson Dennis, the second owner of Gunston Hall, with her gardener George Abner Marshall, further developed the landscape plan of Beadle and Dr. Mason and added the boxwood garden that brought to final fruition the country house trio of elements--house, pleasure garden, and landscaped setting. Developed as a continuum from 1920 to ca. 1955, the grounds and garden of Gunston Hall are significant in the landscape history of Asheville and North Carolina as an important and largely intact designed landscape from the first half of the twentieth century and thus satisfies Criteria<sup>a</sup> Consideration G.

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## Gunston Hall Historical Background and Community Development Context

As proved to be the case with all too many of the truly great estates developed in the United States in the later-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the history of Biltmore was one of short-lived glory; however, much of its grandeur is now enjoyed by tens of thousands of tourists yearly. George Washington Vanderbilt's dream of a great country place designed by his architect Richard Morris Hunt and Frederick Law Olmsted, the landscape architect, was realized on a scale unprecedented in America at that time but it was nearly stillborn. The great expenses involved in the herculean project not only sapped Vanderbilt's income but drained away much of his capital. Occupying some 125,000 acres and opened with a lavish house party at Christmas, 1895, Biltmore was Vanderbilt's residence for but a score of years until his early death in 1914. Almost immediately his executors and trustees began to dismember the estate. The bulk of Vanderbilt's holding in western North Carolina was separated in 1915 and deeded to the United States government; these nearly 87,000 acres became Pisgah National Forest.

That sale came largely as a result of the settlement of the estate but there would be additional portions of the estate sold in the following decade because of the expense of running so vast a residence and the need to recoup capital. Early in 1920 Edith Stuyvesant Dresser Vanderbilt, the builder's widow, sold Biltmore Village, a complex of shops, dwellings,<sup>2</sup> and other buildings that lay at the gate to the estate, to an investment group. In June of 1920, a tract of some 1,500 acres, lying within a half-mile of the mansion itself, was set aside for a suburban residential community. It was given the name Biltmore Forest.

Biltmore Forest was to be no typical suburban community in any sense of the word. The project was announced in articles in both the local newspapers on 20 June 1920 that described the undertaking in broad detail. To implement the project, a holding company, the Biltmore Estate Company, was created and took in four principal partners who participated with the Vanderbilt estate as developers: Burnham S. Colburn; Thomas Wadley Raoul; William A. Knight; and Junius G. Adams. The nurturing of the landscape that so distinguished Biltmore itself was continued here under the direction of Chauncey Delos Beadle who had come to the estate in the employ of Frederick Law Olmsted, and was then the superintendent for landscape work. Donald Ross, the finest golf course builder of the period, was engaged to design the first of two eighteen-hole courses<sup>3</sup> adjoining the proposed country club planned as the centerpiece of the development.

Clearly, the developers intended to maximize the association with the Vanderbilt family and to appeal to the growing number of affluent businessmen who came to western North Carolina in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The Asheville Sunday Times advised its readers of the exclusiveness of the estate project:

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A feature of the new company is the fact that it will be a new real estate firm, operating on a plan that has never been used in or near Asheville. Instead of cutting the tract into small lots a minimum acreage will be observed, no tract smaller than two acres to be sold.<sup>4</sup>

The Sunday Citizen further defined the proposed character of the development:

The idea is to throw restrictions around the property so that wealthy people from all sections of the country will be attracted here where they can purchase land and develop their own estates. Already it is learned that several fine residences are planned for the property, among them being one by Mr. Colburn which will be one of the finest to be found in this section of the country.<sup>5</sup>

Real estate promotions of the period are rife with promise and speculation; however, it is apparent that the developers of Biltmore Forest were committed to creating a community of the highest quality and were well-prepared to make investments in the project necessary to accomplish those ends. Work on the component parts of the estate developed was undertaken in the summer and early autumn of 1920 and moved ahead with no hesitation. These efforts were described in the Sunday Times on 24 October in an article based largely on an interview with Mr. Raoul who emerges as the guiding force among the group of investors. Raoul ". . . made it known that houses were contemplated by himself, Dr. W. B. Mason, Dr. C. V. Reynolds, Mrs. A. B. Burroughs, B. S. Colburn, J. G. Adams, and S. R. Forbes."<sup>6</sup> It becomes apparent that Raoul and his colleagues had cultivated the project among both local residents and the group of national figures who came to summer and pursue golf in western North Carolina.

Although the deeds for the tracts in Biltmore Forest required the construction of houses costing at least \$15,000, the houses erected by the first tier of homebuilders cited above were far more costly and intended to establish the scale for future construction. Raoul's house was to be ". . . a home of the English country type to cost in the neighborhood of \$60,000." A house of like design and price was to be built by B. S. Colburn based on the designs then being prepared by Richard Sharp Smith, the English architect who had designed most of Biltmore Village and secondary buildings at Biltmore for Vanderbilt. The costliest of the proposed houses was to be built by Dr. C. V. Reynolds and would be ". . . similar to the one he formerly owned on Edgemont road and sold for about \$75,000."<sup>7</sup>

Included in this discussion of the earliest houses to be built in Biltmore Forest is a short paragraph that first documents the plans for building the house that would be known as Gunston Hall:

Dr. W. B. Mason, a specialist of Washington, D.C., who in future expects to make Asheville his home, has in mind the erection of a large house, to cost \$50,000 and to be located upon a five-acre tract he has purchased in the

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park. Dr. Mason, as a nose and throat specialist, was well known in the capital city for many years.

Although Mason might have committed himself to the purchase of the above-mentioned tract, the deeds for Lots #13, #36, and #37 were not prepared until December of that year. Lots #36 and #37 fronted on Vanderbilt Road, the principal avenue in the development; Lot #13 was immediately east of Lot #36 and fronted on the Hendersonville highway. The erection of the house did not begin until 1922; in September, 1922, Mason and his wife purchased Lot #12 that made a total of eight acres in a rectangular tract on which Gunston Hall would be built.

Dr. William Beverley Mason was born in Marshall, Virginia, on 26 July 1874 to John Stevens (1839-1918) and Eliza Randolph (Beverley) Mason. John Stevens Mason was the great-grandson of George Mason (1725-1792), the builder of the Georgian house in Virginia that he named Gunston Hall. Mason attended the University of South Carolina and received his medical degree from the Medical College of Virginia in 1899. He served his internship at the New York Polyclinic Hospital and remained in the practice of otolaryngology in New York until 1905 when he relocated in Washington, D.C. Throughout his forty-three year practice in Washington from 1905 until retirement in 1948, Dr. Mason continued to specialize in otolaryngology in both private and public practice. He was attending surgeon in otolaryngology at the Episcopal Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital until retiring in 1939. From 1914 until 1940 he was consultant otolaryngologist at Columbia Hospital for Women and Lying-In Asylum. He was chief of staff of otolaryngology at Emergency Hospital from 1922 to 1938 and member of the staff at Children's Hospital from 1922 until 1948. Mason served as professor of otorhinolaryngology at George Washington University from 1931 until his retirement as professor emeritus in 1940. He was a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and numerous other professional organizations and societies. He was a member of the Chevy Chase (Maryland) Club, the Metropolitan Club (Washington), and the Biltmore Forest Country Club. On 29 August 1907 he was married to Agnes Gray Kennedy, the daughter of Dr. Stephen Dandridge Kennedy of Annapolis, Maryland. Three sons were born to the couple: William Beverley Mason, Jr. (b. 1908- ); Dandridge Kennedy Mason (1912-1978); and John Stevens Mason (19\_\_-1985).

Mason's practice as a specialist in otolaryngology flourished in the capital in the 1900s and 1910s. He purchased the four-story brick row-house at 1738 M Street, N.W., and remodeled it, installing his office on the first story and occupying the upper stories as his residence. During this period he would spend increasingly longer periods of time on summer holidays with his family. On one such vacation in 1917 at Bar Harbor, Maine the fog was so bad that he resolved never to go back. Attracted to western North Carolina by both the weather and his golfing interest, Dr. Mason brought his family to Asheville in 1918 and rented a cottage at the Manor Hotel for at least two summers and played golf at the Asheville Country Club. Thereafter he rented a house near Biltmore until Gunston



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Hall was completed for the family's occupation on 1 June 1923. Unlike the other<sup>10</sup> early houses built in Biltmore Forest, Gunston Hall was to be a summer place.

In addition to building a summer place, the construction of Gunston Hall in Biltmore Forest allowed Dr. Mason the opportunity to reestablish his family's connection with the important family seat on the Potomac River in Virginia. George Mason's Gunston Hall was sold out of the family in 1868 and for the remainder of the nineteenth century it languished as a local farmhouse. In 1907 it was purchased by Paul and Vaughan Kester who in 1912 sold it to Louis Hertle. Hertle undertook the restoration of the house and the grounds. This work was completed by the architects Glenn Brown and Bedford Brown, IV, whose office was located in Washington, D.C.<sup>11</sup>

William Beverley Mason also turned to a Washington architect and fellow member of both the Metropolitan and Chevy Chase clubs for the design of his house in Biltmore Forest: his name was Waddy B. Wood. Wood had practiced architecture in Washington since 1896 and in association with Edward W. Donn, Jr., and William I. Demming he designed numerous commercial and public buildings in the capital city as well as houses and remodelings for important social and political figures in Washington. Critical to the success of his work for Dr. Mason was the remodeling scheme he designed for Woodlawn, also on the Potomac, for Senator O. C. Underwood. When Dr. Mason came to Wood in 1921/1922 for the design of his new summer place, Wood was already skilled in accommodating twentieth century domestic and entertaining needs within the (often expanded) plan of eighteenth and nineteenth century Virginia houses.<sup>12</sup>

In the design of Gunston Hall, Waddy Wood used his client's great-great-grandfather's house as the model for the central block of the five-part composition. The proportions, scale, and form are replicated in near literal fashion. The beautifully detailed pedimented porch on the land front at the Virginia house was duplicated here for the main entrance on the west elevation. The only significant variance in the exterior appearance of the new house to its model is on the opposite garden (east) front where wood placed a handsome three-part doorway overlooking a flagstone terrace instead of the Chinese Gothic porch that appears on George Mason's house. Wood installed the family bedrooms with companion bathrooms and dressing rooms in the hyphen and wing to the north. In the wing and hyphen to the south he installed the butler's pantry, kitchen and its companion chambers, and the garage. The second story of the main block is given over to guest rooms in the north end and servants' rooms on the south; the attic story of the north hyphen and wing is unfinished whereas on the south the second level of the hyphen serves as a corridor between the servants' bedrooms and the work spaces below while the attic of the south wing is unfinished storage. The house was constructed by Luther L. Merchant, a contractor who lived on Fairview road in Biltmore Forest.<sup>13</sup>

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The newly completed house was featured in both local and national publications. It first appeared in a deluxe privately printed promotional booklet, The Story of Biltmore Forest, that was published in 1925 by the Biltmore Estate Company. It was the first of six new houses that were illustrated in pen and ink sketches together with the country club, Biltmore House, and the lodge gateway. Four of the six houses were English or Tudor in design, including those previously mentioned and built by three of the developers: Mr. Raoul, Judge Adams, and Mr. Colburn. Gunston Hall and the home of Dr. Charles L. Minor were Colonial Revival in design.<sup>14</sup> The house was prominently featured the following year in the "Biltmore Forest Section" of a special edition of the Asheville Citizen on 15 August. In this two-page advertisement for Biltmore Forest a photograph of Biltmore House is centered above the advertising text while a slightly smaller photograph of<sup>15</sup> Gunston Hall appears at the bottom of the sketch of the development.

According to the builder's son, William Beverley Mason, Jr., the family normally occupied the house during the months of June, July, and August, beginning in June, 1923. Mrs. Mason and the children spent the full three months at Gunston Hall in Biltmore Forest. Dr. Mason joined them for July and August. This practice continued through 1934 and in 1935 and 1936 Dr. Mason and Mrs. Mason were largely alone in the house. The summer of 1936 was the family's last season at their summer place.<sup>16</sup>

The guest book for the house, stamped "Gunston Hall" in gold letters on leather, survives and on the opening page is the following inscription occupying five lines:

Gunston Hall  
Biltmore Forest  
Biltmore, N.C.  
Completed June 1st 1923.  
William Beverley Mason M.D.

The guest book covers the period from 1923 through 1936 and interestingly enough the first signature is that of Irwin Porter, an architect on the staff of Wood's office. The year 1924 was perhaps the busiest year at Gunston Hall and there are over three pages of guests' signatures beginning with early house parties in April and May. Various family members included the builder's brother Richard Mason of The Plains, Virginia; Mrs. Mason's sister Mary W. K. Page of "Rocksavage" in Virginia; her mother Mary Selden Kennedy; and Dr. Mason's cousins Robert Beverley Herbert and George Hull Herbert of Columbia, S.C. whose brother William P. Herbert would build the house next door at 328 Vanderbilt Road. In July, 1927, Dr. Mason was host to his first cousin Ida Beverley Wellford, then the mistress of Sabine Hall at Warsaw, Virginia, and her two sons Robert Carter Wellford and Hill Beverley Wellford. Family and friends from Washington, D.C. and elsewhere

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continued to visit through the 1920s. In the 1930s the entries in the guest book became slimmer in number; there is but one entry for the year 1936. Gunston Hall was rented out after 1936 and until 1944 when Dr. and Mrs. Mason sold Gunston Hall to John B. and Lola A. Dennis.<sup>17</sup>

During the period that the Masons enjoyed Gunston Hall as their summer place they removed from the tall townhouse on M Street to a house on Kalorama Road in northwest Washington, and lastly to an apartment at the Dresden. One of Washington's most handsome Georgian Revival apartment houses, the Dresden stands at 2126 Connecticut Avenue, at the corner of Connecticut Avenue and Kalorama Road. Most of the furniture from Gunston Hall was retained by the Masons and now belongs to their surviving son and other descendants.<sup>18</sup>

The pleasure that John Bartlett Dennis took in the ownership of Gunston Hall was short-lived. He and his wife purchased the property on 12 April 1944, and he died less than three years later on 12 February 1947. Mrs. Dennis, nee Lola Anderson, lived here for another twenty-two years until her own death in 1969. According to Anderson family tradition, the Dennises might have been living in Gunston Hall as early as 1942 and, therefore, renting from Dr. Mason. In June, 1944, the Dennises purchased a second one-third interest in Lot #14, the future site of the handsome terraced boxwood garden. Two years later in December, 1946, Mrs. Dennis purchased Lot #15, to the south of Lot #14. Most of this lot remained undeveloped woodland; however, it seems clear that by 1946 Mrs. Dennis had an overall concept for the garden and where it would be located. The boxwood garden and its breezeway and gazebo, together with the tool shed subsequently converted to the gardener's cottage, and the plantings that now comprise the setting of Gunston Hall, were added year by year during the period from 1944 until about 1955. Equally critical to this matter is the fact that Mr. Dennis hired George Abner Marshall to be the gardener and caretaker of the estate. Marshall would remain here until after Mrs. Dennis' death.<sup>19</sup>

A circuitous series of events brought John and Lola Dennis to Gunston Hall. He was born on 4 March 1866 in Gardiner, Maine to David and Julia (Bartlett) Dennis; his father was president of Merchants National Bank of Gardiner. John B. Dennis studied at Cornell and took his degree at Columbia in 1887. In 1890 he joined Blair and Company, a New York banking house, where, until the company was dissolved in 1920, he established his reputation and career as a financier. He came to western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee as an investor and president of the Carolina, Clinchfield, & Ohio Railroad. Dennis is acknowledged as the founder of Kingsport, Tennessee, the modern industrial city designed by John Nolen. From the early 1910s through the 1930s he was heavily involved in the development of Kingsport and located a coaling station for the railroad here. One of his principal investments in the town, however, was the creation of the Kingsport Press. During this period and through his purchase of Gunston Hall he maintained homes in Oyster Bay, Long Island, and at Kingsport where he owned an estate named

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Rotherwood adjacent to the farm where he pastured his well-known herd of Jersey cattle. On 26 October 1929 he was married to Lola Anderson, who was born in 1885, the daughter of Col. Albert W. Anderson (1863-1930), the president of the Charleston and Western Carolina Railroad until his death.<sup>20</sup>

Gunston Hall, then, is best described as the home of Lola Anderson Dennis from 1944 until 1969. She was born in Laurens, South Carolina, and was educated at Randolph-Macon Women's College and at Cornell University where she studied landscape architecture. After completing her studies at Cornell she moved to New York City and worked for a landscape architecture firm. She was hired in New York by Mr. Dennis who sent her to Kingsport to manage the Kingsport Nurseries and to assist with the landscape for the newly-developing industrial city. Following her marriage to the wealthy financier in 1929 she never again pursued active work in landscape architecture. The grounds at Gunston Hall and its boxwood gardens remain her principal achievement, after Kingsport, and were the focus of her interest until her death on 19 December 1969. Mr. and Mrs. Dennis are interred in an unusually handsome mausoleum in Kingsport, Tennessee.<sup>21</sup>

In November 1970 Wachovia Bank and Trust Company, executor of the estate of Lola Anderson Dennis, sold Gunston Hall to C. Ray Franklin and his wife Ruth Holman Franklin.<sup>22</sup> It is said that Franklin purchased the house as the setting for his collection of American antique furniture. Franklin was born in Kentucky and portrayed himself as a descendant of Benjamin Franklin. He studied at Western Kentucky University, the University of Louisville Medical College, and Harvard University under Dr. George S. Derby, the head of the department of ophthalmology and the great-grandson of Elias Haskett Derby, the Salem merchant. A childhood interest in antique furniture broadened as a result of the relationship that developed between professor and student. During the inter-war years, Franklin emerged as an early and recognized collector of American antiques, and in 1948 his collection was featured in an article in The Magazine Antiques. He made his home from the mid-1920s through the 1950s in New York and during this period he was on the staff of the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University. Following his retirement, Dr. Franklin removed to Asheville and installed his collection at Gunston Hall. He gave the house a new name, Franklin Hall, and erected a metal arch bearing that inscription over the entrance on Vanderbilt Road.<sup>23</sup>

About 1983/1984, Dr. Franklin decided to dispose of his collection and to leave the Biltmore Forest house to return to his native Kentucky. In 1984 the bulk of the collection was sold privately to John Newcomer, a Maryland antique dealer who consigned it to auction. The "Highly Important American Furniture from the Collection of Dr. C. Ray Franklin" was sold at Christie's auction rooms on 13 October 1984.<sup>24</sup> The house stood vacant for some years, housing the remnants of the Franklin collection, until January 1987 when Dr. Franklin's widow sold it to Robert D. Schaub, the current owner.<sup>25</sup>

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Robert DuVall Schaub, the son of Frederick W. and Thelma (DuVall) Schaub, was born on 14 November 1927 in Decatur, Illinois. He was educated at Milliken University in Decatur and at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida. In January, 1955, after working for WCIA-TV in Champaign, Illinois, for just over a year, he began work at the Champaign-Urbana Courier. That was the beginning of his professional and administrative involvement with the family-owned newspaper and communications group that lasted for a quarter of a century until 1979. He was elected to the board of directors of the Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers, Inc., Decatur, Illinois, in April 1958. In June, 1970, he was named executive vice-president of the company and in April, 1975, he was named president. He served as president until October, 1979, when he retired and the newspaper chain was sold out of the family. His marriage to Margaret Lucille Newberry in 1953 in Decatur was dissolved by divorce in 1977. In 1978 he was married to Norma Jean Hockaday Allsup. Following his retirement the couple moved to Sarasota, Florida, where they lived until purchasing and occupying Gunston Hall in 1987.<sup>26</sup>

In 1987 Schaub and his wife Norma undertook an extensive and painstakingly careful restoration of the house and particularly of the interior that had received little attention during the final years of the Franklins' ownership. Here the principal task was the removal of multiple layers of paint and the accumulation of grime that had obscured the appearance and profiles of the woodwork and hardware. Likewise, the paneled walls of the library were cleaned, oiled, and waxed to restore as much of the original lustre as possible. The plaster ornament throughout the first story and the plaster walls were also repaired where necessary. For about three months following the purchase of the house in January, 1987, a crew of six to nine people were at work clearing out the house and the later-day accumulations of wall coverings, window hangings, and faulty plaster. In the summer of 1987, the crew doubled in number to twelve, and remained at work into June of 1988. During this period the structural and surface finishes of the exterior and interior were renewed, repaired, or restored, the house's interior and exterior mechanical systems were updated, and the kitchen was fitted with new solid maple cabinets with Georgia granite tops and new appliances. The craftsmen involved in this effort include: Don Smith who repaired the plaster walls and plaster ornament; Dr. Carl Mundy who cleaned, oiled, and repaired the woodwork throughout the house; and his brother Charles Mundy who did most of the principal painting with the assistance of Alan Bates and Susan Heaton. Laborer Jim McPherson, gardener Kay Butt<sup>27</sup>, and Joyce Hardin, the housekeeper, also assisted in these and related efforts.

Their work on the interior and exterior of Gunston Hall now largely complete, the Schaub's are turning their attention to the secondary structures on the estate and to the grounds. The restoration of the breezeway at the south end of the boxwood garden was undertaken in the winter of 1990/1991. During their three years of ownership the Schaub's have also trimmed and nurtured the boxwood garden, the principal pleasure spot on the grounds. Likewise, they have begun an extensive

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program of stewardship of the planting of trees, shrubs, and other plants that form the larger setting of Gunston Hall and had been allowed to grow untended during the years of the Franklin ownership. Soon, it can be expected, the entire property of eleven and a quarter acres will be returned to its prime appearance.

Architectural Significance

The design and construction of Gunston Hall in Biltmore Forest, North Carolina, occupies an important place in the history of domestic architecture in the United States in the inter-war period. As one of the many Colonial and Georgian Revival style houses based on the landmark eighteenth century houses of Virginia and Maryland that were constructed during that period throughout the country, it is a good example. Likewise, it can be counted among the important houses produced by Waddy B. Wood, an architect whose practice, while confined to Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, achieved national notice because it was concentrated in and around the nation's capital. However, its national significance holds to a high distinction: in a period of architectural practice when the qualities of association, family background and heritage, and aristocratic tradition were frequently used, in both the professional and popular press, to describe the design and appeal of Colonial and Georgian Revival houses, Gunston Hall is unique. It is the first known house (and surely among a small number of any such) based on a landmark Virginia house of the eighteenth century that was built by a descendant of the original builder who, through its construction, reclaimed his association with his heritage.

The reproduction of the nation's landmark Colonial, Georgian, and Federal period houses during the first decades of the twentieth century was a cultural phenomenon that likewise influenced the development of related arts. It was during this period that many of the important pioneering collections of American antique furniture, paintings, and decorative arts were formed. There was likewise a growing interest in the early American landscape and its artifacts, best seen in Alice Morse Earle's Old Time Gardens of 1901. In publishing the colonial period was increasingly the setting and scene for popular (and serious) novels just as an emerging generation of researchers in the relatively new field of genealogy looked back to their seventeenth and eighteenth century ancestors as the founders of important American families.

In the field of architectural design, the important plantation seats of eighteenth century Virginia and Maryland, and Massachusetts to a lesser extent, were looked upon as common heritage whose blessings of status were immediately clear. In the first decades of the Colonial Revival--beginning in the 1890s--architects more often chose details, motives, and other features of eighteenth century architecture and freely incorporated them into the design of houses whose form, massing, and plan were often late-Victorian. As the twentieth century wore on the character of Georgian detail came to markedly influence the symmetrical plan and

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form of houses. During the 1920s the idea of "architectural correctness" became a significant philosophical issue in the architectural profession. The reproduction of Colonial and later houses became more academic and specific in the correctness of their form and finish. (This vein of the domestic practice would reach nearly fetish levels in the late 1920s and 1930s as a result of the promotion of the restoration of the buildings of Colonial Williamsburg.) The design and construction of Gunston Hall occupies a critical position in this evolution, having been built just prior to the broad promotion of the restoration of the buildings of Colonial Williamsburg. It is one of the first important houses in American Colonial Revival domestic architecture in whose design and appearance the values of historical association and the liberal borrowing of architectural details are superseded by a studied correctness and careful attention to the model. But within the framework of the authentic, there is accommodation to the present in the addition of hyphens and wings and some alteration to the interior plan and finish. In this the designer of Gunston Hall was not alone. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, architects remained committed to the appearance and spirit of the eighteenth century domestic models, but in their work they demonstrated a remarkable ability to accommodate twentieth century living patterns in the plan and massing of reproduction houses. In many of their most successful efforts, hyphens, wings, and dependencies took on the appearance of additions made by successive descendant generations of owners. Herein were housed the numerous bedrooms, closets, dressing rooms, as well as the increased number of bedrooms required for the twentieth century notions of privacy. At the opposite end of the 1920s Colonial Revival house there were separate and more clearly defined spaces for china and glass pantries, silver vaults, and food pantries. Likewise the functions of the former laundry and smokehouse dependencies were absorbed into the service wing of the twentieth century house, as was the automobile garage.

The appeal of his family's role in the aristocratic life of the Virginia plantation society and the nation's political life in its early days of independence was surely irresistible to William Beverley Mason. Gunston Hall had passed out of the family in the mid-nineteenth century. Likewise, the great seats at Westover, Berkeley, Mount Vernon, Monticello, and countless others had also long since passed into other hands. Only a trio of great Virginia houses--Shirley, Mount Airy, and Sabine Hall--had remained the seats of the descendants of the original builder. William Beverley Mason's decision to replicate his ancestral home in the design of a new summer place was clearly a conscious one. Like impulses would influence other builders to adopt the patrimony of Westover, Berkeley, Mount Vernon, Gunston Hall, and numerous other Virginia houses in the design of their new country places.

That decision was also one that was influenced by yet other events. In 1891 George Mason's house was acquired by Joseph Specht who undertook some improvements to it. During the settlement of the Specht estate Gunston Hall was sold in 1907 to Paul Kester who sold it in 1912 to Louis Hertle of Chicago. Like other

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industrialists and businessmen who claimed the mantle of Virginia by buying old plantation seats and refurbishing them as weekend places for house and hunting parties, Hertle lavished substantial sums of money on the first restoration of Gunston Hall. Interestingly enough he hired <sup>28</sup> his architects Bedford and Glenn Brown, men who fully understood his ambition. The Brown brothers' work for Hertle, both in the house and the garden, was published in the 1920s and would have been well known in Washington architectural and social circles. While William Beverley Mason could not purchase the family seat he could and did do the next best thing. He replicated it in the Biltmore Forest house, the only residence he would build. Choosing a friend and fellow clubman as his architect, he also chose one who would be familiar with the Brown brothers' work for Louis Hertle. The association between the original Gunston Hall and the younger Mason's house was boldly conveyed in a four-page article that appeared in Country Life in 1925. Like photographs of the individual houses and their features were compared on opposite pages with the identifying bylines of "Old Gunston Hall" and "New Gunston Hall." Views made in each house, from the nearly identical <sup>30</sup> angle and position, reinforced the literalness of the North Carolina replica.

While William Beverley Mason's Gunston Hall is the first known replica of a great Virginia house built by a descendant of the builder, it is also surely among the first of a long line of houses erected in the 1920s, 1930s, and to the present whose design totally or substantially replicates the landmark colonial houses of the American colonies. Influenced by the broad recognition given to the efforts to restore Colonial Williamsburg, house builders throughout the country duplicated the Wythe House and others. Westover, Berkeley, Mount Vernon, and the great eighteenth and early-nineteenth century brick houses of Virginia and <sup>31</sup> Maryland also followed in examples built in suburban developments, coast to coast.

While significant on a national level, Gunston Hall in Biltmore Forest is also important as one of a number of handsome country houses erected in North Carolina in the inter-war period. Its contemporaries include the extraordinary group of houses erected in Winston-Salem to designs of Charles Barton Keene, the work of Martin Boyer and William Peeps in Charlotte, and a group of less-well-known architects who provided the designs for the large body of houses erected in the suburban residential parks of the period. While it is the only known North Carolina house designed by Waddy B. Wood, it is one of a number of houses built for clients who turned to architects in New York and other major cities for their residences. Keene was one in this group, but so, too, was William Lawrence Bottomley, Dwight James Baum, Aymar Embury, II, Henry Bacon, and Harrie L. Lindeberg. It is closest in spirit to the Georgian Revival houses designed by Bottomley, particularly Tatton Hall in Raleigh and the DeLeon Green House in Weldon, and the remarkably fine mansion Meadowmount designed by James Edmunds and Herbert <sup>32</sup> Crisp--a Baltimore partnership--for David St. Pierre DuBose in Durham County.



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Likewise, within the context of its own neighborhood--Biltmore Forest--Gunston Hall is both typical of the upper tier of residential construction and exceptional. As one of the first six major houses built in Biltmore Forest, it is important for its role in influencing the architectural character of that development that retains its cachet and prestige to the present as one of the finest residential parks in North Carolina and perhaps the only one with an appeal on a national level. But there, too, it is one in a handsome body of near equals. In the decade of the 1920s it was joined in Biltmore Forest by: the Oglivie-Wright house designed by William Lawrence Bottomley; Ellsleigh, the Robert Lee Ellis house, designed by Harrie T. Lindeberg; and the Mediterranean Revival style Frith House designed by Addison Mizener for Edith Dresser Vanderbilt who in 1925 married Senator Peter G. Gerry of New York; and houses designed by Richard<sup>33</sup> Sharp Smith, William Waldo Dodge, Jr., and other local and regional architects.

Landscape Significance

The grounds of Gunston Hall, comprising the cultivated woodlands, the hemlock borders enframing the great lawn, the boxwood and Japanese gardens, and a series of other secondary specimen and grouped plantings, are significant in the landscape history of Biltmore Forest, Asheville, and the state of North Carolina. As it exists today--and excepting the untidy growth of a period of neglect in the later-1970s and early 1980s--the landscape incorporates older native growth over which were laid the efforts of Chauncey Delos Beadle and Lola Anderson Dennis. The major parts of the landscape were installed in a thirty-five-year period beginning in 1920 when Beadle actively began work on this part of the Vanderbilt estate for the Biltmore Forest Company. During Mason's ownership of the property Beadle is said to have continued to provide landscape architecture services. It is clear that Beadle was responsible for the architectural framework of the landscape design--the bones of the skeleton, as it were--on which Lola Anderson Dennis, the second owner, with the assistance of her gardener George Abner Marshall, planted and overplanted to create a lush setting for Gunston Hall. Her most critical contribution to the grounds of Gunston Hall is the terraced boxwood garden on the south side of the great lawn. Here in the period from the mid-1940s to about 1955, she designed and installed the estate's most elaborate landscape features and erected the surviving garden pavilion called the breezeway, tool shed/potting shed, gardener's cottage, gazebo, and greenhouse.<sup>34</sup>

In the articles announcing the project in the Asheville newspapers in 1920, Beadle's work for the development company was explained:

The landscape work of the property will follow the general lines of the Biltmore Estate and C. D. Beadle, the manager of the estate, will be retained by the company as landscape engineer to be in charge of the work of laying out the grounds, drives, roads, and walks. Mr. Beadle will soon<sup>35</sup> begin the work which will take practically all of his time for many months.

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Advertisements for Biltmore Forest in 1921 carried the slogan "Designed by Nature" and advised readers that "Here you will find a property that for years has been under the protective influence of the Biltmore Estate, and under this protection the trees and shrubs have reached a high state of perfection."<sup>36</sup>

The extent to which Beadle was personally responsible for aspects of the landscape of Gunston Hall remains to be confirmed; however, there can be no doubt but that he assisted early house builders with the layout of their grounds. This "service" to lot buyers was one of his incentives to would-be purchasers<sup>37</sup> practiced by many major developers in early-twentieth century North Carolina. It is likely that Beadle, working with Dr. Mason, was responsible for determining what of the native growth to retain on the house tract and for advising his client on what trees and shrubs should be added to enhance the existing natural landscape. In this second regard, it is again likely that Beadle was responsible for the dense plantings of rhododendron in the northwest corner of Lot #37, at the entrance on Vanderbilt Road through which the house drive curves upward. Near the border between Lot #37 and Lot #36 (on which the house itself is built), the rhododendron gives way to winter honeysuckle that carries across most of the remainder of the frontage on Vanderbilt Road. Likewise, Beadle probably also recommended that hemlocks--a plant he greatly favored--be used for the rows framing the great lawn.

Whether Beadle was specifically responsible for the hemlock border that frames the great lawn--most of Lot #13--or whether it was Dr. Mason's idea is unclear. However, parts of the border were put in by Dr. Mason and the remainder by Mrs. Dennis in the 1940s. Except for the rhododendrons and some few other flowering shrubs and trees, the designed landscape of Gunston Hall from 1920 until 1936 was largely evergreen. This, in large part, was because the house was designed as a summer place at which year-round maintenance was minimal.

When Mrs. Dennis came onto the property in the mid-1940s she did not greatly alter the existing landscape. Instead, she took the opportunity to develop the boxwood and Japanese gardens and to supplement the existing plantings. The boxwood garden can be seen as the culmination of Mrs. Dennis' long experience as a gardener, landscape designer, and nurseryman.<sup>38</sup> She was fifty-nine when she and Mr. Dennis purchased the estate in 1944.

Mrs. Dennis' garden-making at Gunston Hall assumes the character of a coda in terms of the landscape of her house and in the larger context of inter-war (and immediate postwar) residential and Colonial Revival garden-making in the South. In short, with her addition of the boxwood garden at Gunston Hall she brought to a handsome conclusion the development of the estate: house, and, now, garden achieved a unity of composition within the framework of a landscape setting devised by Beadle in the early 1920s. The garden that Mr. Mason probably would have planted had Gunston Hall become his permanent home (as was hinted in the 1920s newspapers) was installed by his successor who did make the estate her permanent residence. Although the garden

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and its complementing structures were installed between the mid-1940s and about 1955--and thus dating after World War II--they represent the final chapter of the Southern inter-war garden-making renaissance that so distinguished the early twentieth century suburban neighborhoods. In the 1950s, the character of garden-making and architecture, for that matter, underwent a great change; but Mrs. Dennis with experience, expertise, and financial ability all developed in the inter-war years, persisted, made the boxwood garden at Gunston Hall, and brought to an end an era of garden-making in the South.

The landscape significance of Gunston Hall lies not in its being the masterwork of a great landscape architect but rather in being a fine and surprisingly intact example of an important designed suburban landscape in Asheville and in North Carolina. Its success owes not to a single hand but to three: the talents of Chauncey Delos Beadle, who had worked for the Olmsted brothers, served as superintendent of Biltmore Estate, and who oversaw the design of the residential park and the planting of the early house grounds; the ambition and intent of William Beverley Mason who built this replica of his ancestral family seat; and the trained and tried hand of Lola Anderson Dennis who in the boxwood garden and other plantings brought to Gunston Hall the schooling and experience of forty years of landscape gardening.

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1. Aslet, Clive, THE AMERICAN COUNTRY HOUSE (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 3-17. Hewitt, Mark Alan, THE ARCHITECT AND AMERICAN COUNTRY HOUSE (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 1-8. Both books, from different points of view, discuss the design, construction, and occupation of American country houses from the last decade of the nineteenth century through the inter-war period. Although each generally concerns itself with houses on a level of expense and costliness above that of Gunston Hall, nevertheless, they are the best and most recent discussions of the context and period of significance of Gunston Hall in Biltmore Forest.
2. Aslet. THE AMERICAN COUNTRY HOUSE, pp. 16-17. ASHEVILLE SUNDAY TIMES, June 20, 1920. George Stephens of Charlotte was one of the principals in the investment group that purchased the Biltmore Village. He was the developer of Myers Park, the pre-eminent suburban residential park in Charlotte, that had been designed in 1911 by John Nolen.
3. ASHEVILLE SUNDAY TIMES, June 20, 1920. SUNDAY CITIZEN (Asheville), June 20, 1920, hereinafter cited as the SUNDAY CITIZEN. The two articles contain largely identical information that was supplied by the development company as part of the initial promotion of the project.
4. ASHEVILLE SUNDAY TIMES, June 20, 1920.
5. SUNDAY CITIZEN, June 20, 1920.
6. ASHEVILLE SUNDAY TIMES, October 24, 1920. Raoul (1876-1953) was a man of both the position and experience to direct the development of Biltmore Forest. He was the principal of the Albemarle Park Company that had hired Samuel Parsons to design the residential neighborhood around the Manor Hotel--built in 1898 for Raoul--where Dr. Mason, and surely others, first stayed when they came to Asheville. Raoul sold his interest in the Manor and Albemarle Park in 1920 and thereafter turned his attention to Biltmore Forest. Burnham Standish Colburn (b. 1872), the vice-president and treasurer of the Biltmore Estate Company, was a native of Detroit and had a background in both engineering and banking. He began his career as a draftsman in 1896 at the Detroit Bridge and Iron Works and served as the resident engineer for the Victoria Jubilee Bridge in Montreal (1898). In 1900 he was one of the organizers of the Canadian Bridge Company and served as secretary and treasurer until 1911; from 1911 to 1913 he was vice-president of the Peoples State Bank in Detroit. He came to Asheville in the 1910s and became president of the First National Bank and Trust Company. He was a member and governor general of the National Society of Mayflower Descendants. For additional biographical information see: WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA, Vol. 22 (1942-1943). William A. Knight, of St. Augustine, Florida, was living at Skyland in 1920. Judge Junius G. Adams was the Asheville attorney for the trustees of George Vanderbilt's estate. Local

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tradition suggests that the idea of Biltmore Forest was sparked during a poker game played by Mr. Raoul, Judge Adams, Mr. Colburn, and Mrs. Vanderbilt; however, the need for income was clearly the determining factor.

7. ASHEVILLE SUNDAY TIMES, October 24, 1920. The houses erected for Mr. Raoul, Judge Adams, and Mr. Colburn were illustrated together with Gunston Hall in the 1925 promotional booklet, THE STORY OF BILTMORE FOREST. Colburn's residence, perhaps the most handsome of the trio, stands at 7 Stuyvesant Road.
8. ASHEVILLE SUNDAY TIMES, October 24, 1920. Biltmore Estate Company to William B. and Agnes K. Mason, December 20, 1920. Buncombe County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Buncombe County Court House, Asheville, Book 240, 459-462, 467-470, hereinafter cited as Buncombe County Deeds. Biltmore Estate Company to William B. and Agnes K. Mason, September 5, 1922, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 240, 603-606.
9. Author's interview with William Beverley Mason, Jr., Upperville, Virginia, December 2, 1990 (notes on interview are on deposit in the Gunston Hall file in the Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina), hereinafter cited as Mason Interview. Mr. Mason, Jr., also provided to the author a photocopy of the entry for his father in the NATIONAL CYCLOPAEDIA OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 116 (no date noted). The interview with Mr. Mason is the principal source of biographical information on Dr. Mason and on his construction and occupation of Gunston Hall as a summer place.
10. Mason Interview. It seems likely that several of the houses built in Biltmore Forest might have been built for summer occupation only; however, a comprehensive documentation of Biltmore Forest has not been undertaken.
11. While Gunston Hall is discussed in dozens of books published in the 1920s and 1930s, perhaps the best source on the history of the construction and sequential restoration of the house is the historic structures file compiled from 1983 to the present by Phillips & Oppermann, P.A., who are the restoration architects for the current project.
12. Mason Interview. SUNDAY STAR (Washington, D.C.), September 15, 1940. A photocopy of the above article and lists of buildings designed by Wood and included in the Waddy Wood papers in the Library of Congress were supplied to the author by Ford Peatross, curator of prints and photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
13. Mason Interview.

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14. THE STORY OF BILTMORE FOREST (Asheville: Biltmore Estate Company, 1925). A photocopy of this booklet was provided to the author by Norma Jean Schaub. The attractive pen and ink sketches were made by Richard G. Deacon.
  15. ASHEVILLE CITIZEN, August 15, 1926.
  16. Mason Interview. The staff at Gunston Hall in the summer consisted of four or five persons, all white. Mr. and Mrs. Oates lived in the house year-round and were the general caretakers for the property. Two maids also lived in the house during the summer. The chauffeur Richard Pearson Hobson Jackson lived off the property; after 1936 he moved to Washington and served as Dr. Mason's chauffeur there. As the Depression deepened, Dr. Mason's income lessened and he was, hereafter, unable to spend his summers at leisure.
  17. Mason Interview. The guest book for Gunston Hall, with the name stamped in gold letters on a leather cover, survives in the possession of Mr. Mason, Jr. There is a tradition that the owner of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in Atlanta, Georgia, was interested in purchasing the house; however, he and Dr. Mason could not agree on a price.
  18. Dr. Mason lived at the Dresden until his death in 1949. His widow lived on there until her death in 1960. Dr. and Mrs. Mason are buried at the Little Georgetown Cemetery at The Plains, Virginia. Mr. Mason, Jr., retains the presentation drawing for Gunston Hall and the suite of Adam Revival furniture that was used in the Reception Room, among other family furnishings.
  19. William B. and Agnes K. Mason to John B. and Lola A. Dennis, April 12, 1944, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 560, 22-24. Author's interview with Virginia Page Remer, Asheville, February 6, 1991 (notes on the interview are on deposit in the Gunston Hall file in the Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina), hereinafter cited as Remer Interview. Mrs. Remer is the daughter of Dr. Hugh Nelson Page and his wife, Virginia Anderson, who was Lola Anderson Dennis's sister. Lucy M. Bell, widow, to John B. and Lola A. Dennis, June 9, 1944, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 563, 7-8. Lucy M. Bell, widow, to Lola A. Dennis, December 11, 1946, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 631, 362. Author's interview with Viola Allen Marshall, Rockwell, North Carolina, June 4, 1991 (notes on the interview are on deposit in the Gunston Hall file in the Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina), hereinafter cited as Marshall Interview. According to Mrs. Marshall, Mr. Dennis hired Mr. Marshall after he acquired Gunston Hall. Marshall (1882-1975) was the son of George and Sarah (Hogan) Marshall and a native of Buncombe County. Marshall worked on the Biltmore Estate as a gardener and perhaps in other capacities for some twenty years from the early 1900s to about 1922. Then for six years through 1928 Marshall was the gardener and caretaker at the home of George Stephens, the president

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of the Citizen Company, the publisher of the ASHEVILLE CITIZEN. It appears possible that Marshall returned to the Biltmore estate to work either before or after he served as gardener and caretaker for attorney Francis J. Heazel from about 1938 to 1941. While the exact sequence of events prior to his coming to Gunston Hall in Mr. Dennis's employ remains to be confirmed, it is a fact that George Abner Marshall was employed by Mr. Dennis and later his widow from about 1946 until her death in 1969. During this period of about twenty-three years Mr. Marshall worked closely with Mrs. Dennis on the planting and nurturing of the gardens and grounds of Gunston Hall. Some photographs of the gardens taken about 1958 survive in Mrs. Marshall's possession. In 1951 Mr. Marshall married Viola Allen. Mrs. Dennis expanded and remodeled the existing tool shed as a cottage for the couple and they lived in it until 1970. Mrs. Marshall assisted her husband in the maintenance of the estate.

20. Remer Interview. Hillhouse, Helen T. and Petigru, Laurens, THE HILLHOUSE FAMILY (SOUTH CAROLINA BRANCH) (published by the authors, 1950). NEW YORK TIMES, February 13, 1947.
21. Remer Interview.
22. Wachovia Bank and Trust Company to C. Ray and Ruth Holman Franklin, November 2, 1970, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 1028, 279-280.
23. A short biographical sketch of Dr. Franklin appears in the catalogue for the sale of his collection of American furniture with which he furnished Gunston Hall. "Living With Antiques: The Home of Dr. and Mrs. C. Ray Franklin in Lincolndale, New York," THE MAGAZINE ANTIQUES, LIV, No. 4 (October 1948), 260-263.
24. Bruce Young, registrar, Sackler Museum, Washington, D.C., to the author, January 25, 1991, in the author's possession. A copy of the hardbound catalogue for the sale was loaned to the author by Norma Jean Schaub. There were a total of 164 lots offered for sale in the catalogue. The two most valuable illustrated pieces sold, each for \$77,000.00, were a Federal carved mahogany settee attributed to Duncan Phyfe and a Newport Queen Anne walnut chest of drawers. The post-sale price list for the Franklin sale includes a number of items added to the sale after the catalogue was compiled; one unidentified item was sold for \$93,500.00
25. Author's interview with Robert D. and Norma Jean Schaub, Asheville, November 8, 1990. In January, 1979, Dr. and Mrs. Franklin deeded the house to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association: C. Ray and Ruth Holman Franklin to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 1208, 729-730. The gift was disallowed by the Internal Revenue Service and two years later the association deeded it back to the Franklin: Billy Graham

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- Evangelistic Association to C. Ray and Ruth Holman Franklin, February 10, 1981, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 1269, 95-96. In 1985, Previews, Inc., published a handsome color brochure for "Franklin Hall," including four photographs of the principal first-story rooms furnished with the Franklin collection; the house was then offered at \$950,000.00. Ruth Holman Franklin, widow, to Robert D. Schaub, January 29, 1987, Buncombe County Deeds, Book 1463, 335-336.
26. Norma Jean Schaub to the author, April 13, 1991, on deposit in the file of Gunston Hall, Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
27. Schaub Interview. "Franklin Hall," an unpublished two-page account of the restoration of Gunston Hall, was prepared by Norma Jean Schaub on April 30, 1990; a copy was made available to the author and is on deposit in the file for Gunston Hall. ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, November 15, 1987. Mrs. Schaub's son, Mark S. Allsup, is assisting her in the restoration of the estate grounds.
28. Although there is some coverage of traditional early-twentieth century residential architecture in the two books on American country houses published in 1990 and cited above, those books concern themselves with a largely elite body of domestic architecture. Mark Hewitt devotes a scant six paragraphs in his work (pages 83-88) to "The Colonial Revival," discussing a small number of houses that form the context for Gunston Hall and are its contemporaries. Unfortunately, there is, at present, no substantive work on mainstream upper-class Colonial/Georgian Revival residential architecture in the United States for the period 1900 to 1940. There are a number of studies of the work of individual architects who practiced in that style during that period. They include the following: Grady, James, ARCHITECTURE OF NEEL REID IN GEORGIA (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1973); and O'Neal, William B. and Weeks, Christopher, THE WORK OF WILLIAM LAWRENCE BOTTOMLEY IN RICHMOND (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985).
29. Wilson Glenn and Bedford Brown, IV., were the sons of Bedford Brown (1795-1870) who owned a handsome plantation, Rose Hill, in Caswell County, North Carolina. The elder Brown served as U.S. Senator from North Carolina from 1829 until 1840. Having become disillusioned by political life in North Carolina, Brown sold Rose Hill and removed to Missouri. He returned east in 1847 and after stays in both Albemarle and Fauquier counties (Virginia), the lure of his old home brought him back to Rose Hill. He purchased the plantation and lived there until his death; he is buried in the family cemetery on Rose Hill. See: Powell, William S., DICTIONARY OF NORTH CAROLINA BIOGRAPHY, VOL. I (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979).



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30. "Old Gunston Hall near Washington, D.C. (and) New Gunston Hall at Biltmore, N.C.," COUNTRY LIFE (December, 1925), 42-45. A photocopy of this article was supplied to the author by Susan Burchardt, curator, Gunston Hall, Lorton, Virginia.
31. A replica of Westover was built in Biltmore Forest about 1937 at 7 Greenwood Road. In the "Determination of Eligibility, Biltmore Forest Historic District," prepared by the North Carolina Department of Transportation staff architectural historian Barbara Church, points out that this house--as was the case with Gunston Hall--is largely a true replica of its prototype in its scale, proportions, massing, and materials but varies from its model in its detail and finish, reflecting the oftentimes eclectic character of the Colonial Revival. The report was prepared in September, 1989; the district, as defined by Mrs. Church, was determined at the National Park Service to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in March, 1990. A copy of the report was made available to the author by Martha Fullington, Western Office, Division of Archives and History.
32. William Lawrence Bottomley (1883-1951), a New York architect who specialized in Georgian Revival country houses, designed four houses for clients that were built in North Carolina including Tatton Hall in Raleigh and the DeLeon Green House in Weldon. He designed a handsome Mediterranean Revival house for Mrs. William A. Reynolds that was built on Providence Road in Charlotte. His 1927 house in Biltmore Forest for Mrs. Hanson Oglivie stands at 31 Busbee Road. Dwight James Baum (1886-1939) was the architect for a house in Tarboro. Aymar Embury, II (1880-1966), another New York architect but one who specialized in a more eclectic Colonial Revival practice than Bottomley's, designed known buildings for Charlotte and Southern Pines clients; the most prominent house in the large group of buildings in Southern Pines is Weymouth, designed for the author James Boyd, of 1922. Weymouth was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. Henry Bacon's North Carolina projects were largely in Wilmington, N.C. In 1912 he designed Live Oaks, an extraordinary house overlooking the Masonboro Sound, for Walter Linton Parsley (see: Hood, Davyd Foard and others, HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE OF NEW HANOVER COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA (Wilmington: New Hanover County Planning Department, 1986). Harrie T. Lindeberg (1880-1959) was the author of less than a dozen projects in North Carolina, most of which remain to be recorded. The two best known of his country houses are Morrocroft, designed for Governor Cameron Morrison and built in Charlotte in 1925-1927, and Ellsleigh, designed for Robert Lee and Nan Webster Ellis and completed in 1927 at 398 Vanderbilt Road in Biltmore Forest. Live Oaks is in the Masonboro Sound Historic District for which a nomination is in the final stages of preparation; Morrocroft was individually listed in 1983. This author prepared the nomination for Meadowmount, that was listed in the National Register in 1985. Excepting Reynolda House, designed by Charles Barton Keen (1868-1931) for R. J. Reynolds, the work of Keen and

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his North Carolina contemporaries Martin Boyer and William Peeps is somewhat known but remains to be examined in depth. See also: Bishir, Catherine W. and Earley, Lawrence S., EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY SUBURBS IN NORTH CAROLINA (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1985). Beadle was the landscape architect for Intheoaks, a retirement estate at Black Mountain, designed by New York architect Frank Wallis for Franklin Silas Terry.

33. The social prestige and desirability of Biltmore Forest as one's home was greatly enhanced in 1925 when Edith Stuyvesant Dresser Vanderbilt, the widow of George Vanderbilt, and her second husband Senator Peter Gerry of New York, built a home in Biltmore Forest at the south end of the estate development. Frith House was designed by Addison Mizener (1872-1933), the Palm Beach architect. The garden and grounds of Frith House were designed by Fletcher Steele (1885-1971) in 1926-1928. See: Karson, Robin, FLETCHER STEEL, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989), pp. 101-104. Frith House, 7 Frith Road, remains the residence of Mrs. Vanderbilt Gerry's grandson, William A. V. Cecil.
34. Remer Interview. Virginia Page Remer (b. 1915), Mrs. Dennis's niece, and her brother, Nelson Page (b. 1921), were both close relations of Mrs. Dennis who had no children of her own; at her death in 1969 they were among her principal heirs. Mrs. Remer visited often at Gunston Hall throughout her aunt's lifetime and believed that John and Lola Dennis were renting Gunston Hall as early as 1942 and, with the intention of buying the house, had already begun the planting of the grounds. Mrs. Dennis had one full-time white gardener George Abner Marshall who lived in the gardener's cottage with his wife and a black employee who worked in the garden part-time and also served as her chauffeur.
35. SUNDAY CITIZEN, June 20, 1920.
36. ASHEVILLE TIMES, August 21, 1921.
37. As is the case with many of the important landscape architects of the early twentieth century, the career of Mr. Beadle remains to be thoroughly examined. A single sentence in THE STORY OF BILTMORE FOREST confirms the fact that Beadle was responsible for preserving and enhancing the features of the landscape that make Biltmore Forest unique in North Carolina. "Mr. C. D. Beadle, formerly associated with the Olmstead Brothers of Boston, the original designers of Biltmore Estate and the Landscape Architect who contributed so much to its creation, was engaged to insure that the natural beauty of the property was preserved and protected." Mr. Mason, Jr. recalls from the memory of a youth that Mr. Beadle "helped his father." The best known example of the provision of landscape architectural services to the purchasers of lots in a North Carolina suburb occurred in Myers Park in Charlotte. Earle Sumner

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Draper (b. 1893) was sent to Charlotte by John Nolen in 1915 to oversee the development of Myers Park and assisted new lot owners for two years in that capacity until establishing his own office in 1917.

38. Remer Interview. Mrs. Remer is one of the principal sources of information on her aunt's gardening activities at Gunston Hall.
39. Just as North Carolina clients turned to out-of-state architects for the design of their houses they, too, turned to out-of-state landscape architects. The best known members of this landscape architecture fraternity were the aforementioned Earle Sumner Draper, Thomas Warren Sears (1880-1966) (who worked mainly in Winston-Salem), Charles F. Gillette (1886-1969), and Ellen Biddle Shipman (1870-1950). Their work remains to be thoroughly examined; however, it and other work by lesser known men and women is sufficiently known to this author to enable a judgment to be made on the significance of the garden and landscape of Gunston Hall.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Buncombe County Records, Office of the Register of Deeds, Buncombe County Court House, Asheville, North Carolina (Sub-group: Deeds).  
"Determination of Eligibility Biltmore Forest Historic District." Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Transportation, 1989.  
William Beverley Mason, Jr., interviewed by Davyd Foard Hood, Upperville, Virginia, December 2, 1990; interview notes in the Gunston Hall file.  
Virginia Page Remer, interviewed by Davyd Foard, Asheville, North Carolina, February 6, 1991; interview notes in the Gunston Hall file.  
Robert D. and Norma Jean Schaub, interviewed by Davyd Foard Hood, Asheville, North Carolina, November 8, 1990.  
The Story of Biltmore Forest. Asheville: Biltmore Estate Company, 1925.  
"Old Gunston Hall (and) New Gunston Hall." Country Life (December, 1925), 42-45.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 11.25 acres

UTM References

A 1 7 3 6 0 5 5 0 3 9 3 4 7 2 0  
 Zone Easting Northing  
 C 1 7 3 6 0 8 8 0 3 9 3 4 5 4 0  
 E 1 7 3 6 0 7 4 0 3 9 3 4 6 3 0

B 1 7 3 6 0 7 7 0 3 9 3 4 8 2 0  
 Zone Easting Northing  
 D 1 7 3 6 0 7 8 0 3 9 3 4 5 1 0  
 F 1 7 3 6 0 6 1 0 3 9 3 4 5 9 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property being nominated comprises Lots #12, #13, #15, #36, #37, and two-thirds of Lot #14, as shown on the "Survey for Robert D. Schaub," prepared by the Blue Ridge Land Surveying, Inc., and submitted with this nomination. These lots appear in Block A of the Biltmore Estate Company Plat recorded in the Buncombe County Book of Plates No. 2, page 39.

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Boundary Justification

The property being nominated consists of those four lots purchased as the house site in 1920-1922 (Lots #12, #13, #36, and #37), together with one-third interests in Lot #14 acquired by Mr. Mason in 1925 and Mrs. Dennis in 1944, and Lot #15 that was acquired by Mrs. Dennis in 1946. These aggregate five and two-thirds lots form the house site, gardens, and setting for Gunston Hall and have been the house property since 1946, transferred intact in the sales to subsequent owners thereafter.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Davyd Foard Hood, Architectural and Landscape Historian  
 organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 1 May 1991  
 street & number 7360 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331  
 city or town Vale state North Carolina zip code 28168

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National Park Service

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## GUNSTON HALL: SCHEDULE OF PHOTOGRAPHS

The following lettered list of photographs is keyed to the map of Gunston Hall. Where appropriate, the corresponding Resource List number has been indicated in parentheses in the photograph description. Whereas the house was described as if it was built on a true east/west axis, for the convenience of the description, the actual compass points are cited in this schedule of photographs. The following information applies to all of the photographs.

Name of Property: Gunston Hall  
324 Vanderbilt Road  
Biltmore Forest  
Buncombe County  
North Carolina

Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood

Date of Photographs: 19-20, 31 December 1990

Location of Original Negatives: Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

- A. Gunston Hall: West(main) Elevation(1)  
looking north
- B. Gunston Hall: East(garden) Elevation(1)  
looking northwest
- C. Gunston Hall: Entrance Hall(1)  
looking west to the front door
- D. Gunston Hall: Reception Room(1)  
looking south
- E. Gunston Hall: Living Room Mantel(1)  
looking northwest
- F. Gunston Hall: Dining Room Mantel(1)  
looking southwest
- G. Gunston Hall: West Bedroom(1)  
looking northwest
- H. Gunston Hall: Entrance Piers and Driveway(11)  
looking east/northeast

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- I. Gunston Hall: Great Lawn(2)  
looking southeast
- J. Gunston Hall: Upper Terrace of the Boxwood Garden(2)  
looking south/southeast to the Breezeway(3)
- K. Gunston Hall: Major "East/West" Axis of the Boxwood Garden(2)  
looking east/northeast to the Gazebo(4)
- L. Gunston Hall: Japanese Garden(2)  
looking southwest
- M. Gunston Hall: Gardener's Cottage(9)  
looking west



3937

938g (OTEN 201-SW) FARVIEW T.M. 4555 III SW BAT CAVE T.M. 3937

BUNCOMBE Co.  
 GUNSTON HALL  
 BILTMORE FOREST, N.C.  
 3935 ASHEVILLE QUAL  
 ZONE 17

A.N. 3934720  
 E.I. 360550  
 B.N. 3934820  
 C.N. 3934540  
 D.N. 3934510  
 E.I. 260780

32°30'  
 E.N. 3934630  
 F.N. 3934590  
 E.I. 360740  
 E.I. 360610

