

A Guide to the York County (Va.) Letter of George Mason to Benjamin Waller, 1789 August 12

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History

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode number
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Language
English

Collector
York County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics
2 p.

Location
Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

This item came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from York County.

Preferred Citation

York County (Va.) Letter of George Mason to Benjamin Waller, 1789 August 12. Local government records collection, York County Court Records, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Historical Information

York County was originally named Charles River County, for Charles I, and was one of the eight shires formed in 1634. The present name was given in 1643, probably in honor of James, duke of York, the second son of Charles I.

George Mason of Gunston Hall in Fairfax County, Virginia, was born 11 December 1725. He married first Ann Eilback (1734-1773) 4 April 1750, and second Sarah Brent (1728-1794) 11 April 1780. Mason represented Fairfax County in the House of Burgesses from 1758 to 1761; in the 3rd, 4th and 5th Virginia Conventions from 1775-1776; and in the House of Delegates from 1776 to 1781 and 1786 to 1788. In the 5th Virginia Convention, Mason was appointed to the committee which wrote Virginia's first state constitution. Mason authored the Virginia Declaration of Rights, which has appeared in every subsequent state constitution. Mason attended the federal Constitutional Convention in 1787, but did not sign the document because it did not have a bill of rights at the time. This lack of a bill of rights also led to his opposition to the Constitution during the Virginia ratification convention in 1788. When the Bill of Rights was finally added to the federal Constitution, it was based on his Declaration of Rights. George Mason died at Gunston Hall, in Fairfax County, 7 October 1792.

Scope and Content

York County (Va.) Letter of George Mason to Benjamin Waller, 1789 August 12, is a letter from Mason at Gunston Hall to attorney Waller in Williamsburg regarding a judgment and chancery suit against William Lee. Mason discusses his opinions on the various legal actions currently pending, gives instructions for what he wishes done regarding them, and asks for legal advice. He also mentions his good friend John Marshall of Richmond.

Index Terms

Persons:

Marshall, John, 1755-1835.

Mason, George, 1725-1792.

Waller, Benjamin.

Corporate Names:

York County (Va.). Circuit Court.

Subjects:

Actions and defenses -- Virginia.

Law -- Virginia.

Geographical Names:

York County (Va.) -- History -- 18th century.

Genre and Form Terms:

Letters (correspondence) -- Virginia.

Local government records -- Virginia -- York County.

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