

Photos courtesy of the Rosewell Foundation



Visit Gloucester County and Rosewell

The building of Rosewell began in 1725 by Mann Page I (1691–1730), who married Judith Carter in 1718, the daughter of Robert Carter I. Mann Page was educated at Eton College and Oxford University in England and appointed to the Governor’s Council of the Virginia Colony shortly after his return to Virginia. He embarked on construction of Rosewell in 1725, but died only five years later, before he could see Rosewell completed.

It was Mann Page’s intention to build a home that would rival the newly-completed Governor’s Palace in Williamsburg not only in size but also in luxury. After Mann Page I’s death the home and property passed to his wife Judith. Their son “Mann Page II” saw the house through to completion after his father’s death.

The primary materials for construction were brick, marble and mahogany, some of which were imported from England. Architectural historians believe that the 12,000-square-foot house may have been designed by Mann Page himself. Larger than any home built in colonial Virginia, Rosewell probably owed its design to the London townhouses built to the stricter codes following the Great Fire of London (1666).

Governor of Virginia John Page (1744–1808) was the grandson of Rosewell’s first owner, Mann Page (I). He grew up at Rosewell and later lived there with his family. John Page was a life long friend of Thomas Jefferson and they were also classmates at the College of William and Mary in nearby Williamsburg where John Page graduated in 1763. John Page fought during the American Revolutionary War, attaining the rank of Colonel. He also served multiple terms in the U.S. Congress and the Virginia General Assembly.

Rosewell Mansion and part of its history were described by author James Joseph McDonald in “*Life In Old Virginia*” (The Old Virginia Publishing Co., Norfolk, Va., 1907) thus:

“The mansion is substantially built of brick, three stories and a basement. The foundation walls are three and one-half feet thick. The reception hall is large, the ceilings lofty, and the whole mansion is indicative of refined taste and wealth. From the upper windows, a magnificent view appears of the surrounding level lands and the waters of the creeks and the York River.”



ADDRESS: 5113 Old Rosewell Lane, Gloucester, VA 23061

PHONE: 804.693.2585

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