

The Pictures of Bellamy Manor

Bellamy Manor was the home of T. Marshall Bellamy, Sr., who was known as the dean of Tidewater real estate developers. He developed Ghent, Larchmont, Colonial Heights, Stockley Gardens, Maury Place and Carrollton Place in Norfolk. He also bought 200 acres of land outside of Petersburg, VA in 1910. The subdivision he started there later became the present city of Colonial Heights.

Mr. Bellamy bought 432 acres of land in Kempsville in 1916. The land had been known as the Woodlawn Farm, which is recorded in the earliest map book at the courthouse. It's rumored that part of the revolutionary war battle in Kempsville in November, 1775 took place on the Woodlawn Farm.

Development began on the farm in 1956. The neighborhood was called Bellamy Manor. Suburban development was in its infancy; you could buy a lot and build your own home. At the age of 93, Mr. Bellamy died in 1967 and his heirs sold 9.8 acres of the land around his home to the City of Virginia Beach and a few months later for \$50,000.

As I understand it from library users, the house was located near where the library now stands. During the construction of the new Kempsville Library, a few old bricks were found by the workers as they were preparing the foundation. These bricks were found where the nonfiction collection and the periodical room are now located.

The two pictures of Bellamy Manor were given to the library by C. Carroll Bellamy, a son. They are an enlargement of photographs of the house. We do not know when the photographs were taken. One shows the house with red brick on the front; the other was white brick. We do know that the white brick picture is later than the red brick. Patrons have told me that they thought the house was painted where just a few years before Mr. Bellamy died. Note the live oaks and other trees that seem to form a row in the foreground, perhaps for the driveway.

There is a statement on the back of each picture that says the house was building in 1758. However, the house is not mentioned in Old Houses in Princess Anne Virginia, by Sadie Scott Kellam and Hope Kellam. An article in 1968 on Bellamy Manor in the Virginia Beach Beacon also referred to the house as being built in the 1700's. A patron told me that the white frame portion in the back of the house was added during the 1930's, he thought.

When the city purchased the property, part of the land was set aside for a new library and the house was designated for use by the city's recreation department. It was even rumored, according to a newspaper article in 1968, that the site might be ideal for a miniature city hall complex. The house failed to pass a city inspection and was condemned. It was estimated that it would cost more than \$100,000 to renovate it. It was torn down in 1968.

I have researched the deeds to the land back to 1901 and to ownership at that time by George A. Wilson. We need to continue this research.

