



Photo Jeff Beall

Redstone Castle

A ROBBER BARON'S ROOST

ARTICLE NICOLETTE TOUSSAINT

John Cleveland Osgood, who in 1900 became the sixth wealthiest man in America, built the Redstone Castle, also known as Cleveholm Manor.

Redstone Castle has played host to many famed guests, welcoming John D. Rockefeller, J. Pierpont Morgan and Teddy Roosevelt, among others. During January, tour guides in period costume welcome your family to tour the castle, starting at 1:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

John Osgood made a robber-baron fortune by founding the Colorado Fuel and Iron (CFI) Company. The distinctive brick furnaces that line Route 133 at the Redstone turnoff are coke ovens. They heated coke, turning it into coal to run the Crystal River Railroad, which carried the fuel down Crystal River and Roaring Fork to Pueblo and to CFI's iron works.

Bedeveled by costly miner's strikes in 1894 and 1901, Osgood decided to see whether "welfare capitalism" would eliminate unions—in theory, contented workers wouldn't need to strike. Osgood, who was something of an idealist as well as an industrialist, developed Redstone as a labor relations experiment. It was a model company town, progressive for its day, and its 88 individually-styled European cottages came complete with plumbing and electricity. These cottages housed Osgood's workers, and a few remain along Redstone's main street.

John Osgood's own home, known as Redstone Castle, stands just up the hill. Built in an English Tudor style, it was used as a hunting retreat. The castle is half-timbered and hewn from the distinctive red sandstone that gave the town its name.

Osgood brought the era's finest craftsmen to Redstone to design his 42-room, 24,000-square-foot home. Gustav Stickley crafted its wood paneling. Louis Comfort Tiffany designed the fixtures, and Persian carpets line the hallways and floors.

Eighteen-foot ceilings tower over a great hall that features a sandstone block fireplace carved with the Osgood Coat of Arms. The dining room recalls the court of the Russian Czars. Its walls

feature Honduran mahogany paneling hand-rubbed to a cherry red finish. Ruby colored red velvet covers the walls, and a gold leaf ceiling shines overhead.

The library is decorated in a Persian motif. Its style recalls the deluxe railroad cars favored by turn-of-the-century industrial magnates. The library's gold leaf ceiling features border with a peacock design, and the room's furnishings include an intricately inlaid writing desk with multiple hidden compartments.

The castle's upper floors include the original bedroom suites where the Osgoods and their guests reposed. Each bedroom features a fireplace decorated with unique colored tile or Italian marble and an ensuite bathroom with a clawfoot tub.

Redstone Castle looks much the same today as when it was built; many areas have been

renovated in anticipation of the eventual opening of a resort and spa.

The nearby Redstone Inn offers excellent breakfasts, lunches and dinners, while the Crystal Club Cafe offers more casual fare. Only about an hour's drive from Glenwood Springs, it offers a charming day trip for both adults and kids.



Costumed tour guide tells visitors the history of Redstone Castle. Photo Nicolette Toussaint