

- 1728-29, January 26th.—WILLIAM CONGREVE, in the south aisle, the celebrated dramatist. As is now commonly stated, he was baptised at Bardsey Church, near Leeds, 10th February, 1669-70, as son of Mr. William Congreve, of Bardsoy Gran; but this date does not accord with his age as stated either in the Funeral Book or on his monument—the former being 57 (and copied from his coffin plate), and the latter 56. If either is correct, he must have been born in 1671 or 1672; while, if he was the child baptised at Bardsey, he would have been probably quite 59 at his death, or certainly within a few days of that age. These rather serious discrepancies, covering a period of three years, fairly suggest the doubt whether the Bardsey baptism does not refer to an elder brother of the same name, who may have died in infancy. Congreve's personal history is too well known to require comment or recapitulation here. He died 19th January, after protracted suffering, leaving small legacies to his own relations, and the residue of his estate, which was considerable, to the Duchess of Marlborough. See also "Leeds Worthies," p. 136; and "Leeds Churches," pp. 139-142, etc.
- 1731, April 14th.—The Right Hon. ROBERT LORD BINGLEY, Treasurer of the Household, Ste. ; was the son of Robert Benson, of Wrenthorpe co. York, by Dorothy, daughter of Tobias Jenkins, of Grimston, in the same county, who remarried Sir Henry Belasyse (see her burial, 20th July, 1690). He had been M.P. for the city of York, and Commissioner, Chancellor, and Under-Treasurer of the Exchequer, and was created Baron Bingley, of Bingley, co. York, 21st July, 1713. He, was subsequently Ambassador to the Court of Spain. He died., according to the Funeral Book, 9th April, aged 55, and was buried on the left side of his mother. Leaving no male issue, the title became extinct. (See the burials of his wife, 11th March, 1757; his only legitimate daughter, 13th April, 1771; and probably of his sister, or some other member of his family, 15th February, 1698-9). His will, dated 27th June, 1729, with a codicil 9th March, 1729-30, was proved 13th April, 1731. After bequeathing his house in Queen Street, Westminster, to his wife, he left £7,000 to trustees for the use of his illegitimate daughter, Mary Johnson, then at boarding school, who was to take the name of Benson after his death, and whom he particularly recommended to the protection of his dear daughter Harriet. His next bequest was to Anna Maria, wife of John Burgoyne, of Park Prospect, Westminster, to whom he gave £400 per annum, his house in Park Prospect, and his house called "The Nunnery," at Cheshunt, Herts., with all its plate, jewels, and other contents, for her separate use for life, forgiving her husband what he owed him. The residue of his estate, except small annuities to two or three widows, was to be invested in lands in Yorkshire, to the use of his daughter. Harriet and the heirs of her body, who was married in 1731 to Fox, George Lane Fox with a dowry of £100,000, and £7000 a year. In 1762 her husband was created Baron Bingley, of Bingley, which again became extinct in 1772, the estates passing to his nephew, Mr. James Lane Fex, of Bramham Park, near Leeds.
- 1733, March 4th.—Dame FLEETWOOD BELASYSE, widow of Sir Henry Belasyse; was the daughter of Nicholas Shuttleworth, of Forcett, co. York, and of the city of Durham, and second wife of Sir Henry Belasyse, of Brancepeth Castle, co. Durham (see his burial, 21st Dec., 1717), to whom married about 23rd April, 1709. She died, according to her monument, 26th Feb., in her 56th year.
- 1747, October 16th.—The Hon. LIEUTENANT-GENERAL GHIESBREGHT, in the East Cloister, was another of the distinguished military officers of the period, whose origin was so obscure that his biographers could safely draw upon their inventive faculties when describing him. The common account is that he was born at Leeds, and was afterwards an ostler at Boronghbridge, in Yorkshire. According to his age, as given on his monument, he must have entered the army in 1685, at the age of 23, as the inscription states that he "closed a service of 60 years by faithfully defending Edinburgh Castle against the rebels in 1745,"

and that he died 14th October, 1747, aged 85. He attained the rank of Lieutenant-General 27th May, 1745. Among the doubtful stories related of him is one to the effect that he was offered £200,000 by the Pretender if he would surrender Edinburgh Castle, and that he indignantly refused the proffered bribe, which may or may not be true. That he was a brave, gallant, Aid loyal soldier, though unquestionably of very humble origin, no one can deny.

- 1754 July 23rd.—Mrs. SARAH GUEST, died the 17th, in the East Cloister, where her husband lies, near General Withers's monument, was the relict of Lieutenant-General Joshua Guest. The Funeral Book gives her age as 64, and the journals of the day say that she died at Acton, Middlesex.
- 1755, October 1st.—NATHANIEL SWUM, of Hull, in the North Cloister. - The Funeral Book says that he died 26th September, in his 65th year, and was buried with his brother, Mr. William Smith.
- 1757 March 11th.—The Right Hon. Einem= LADY Biwa" formerly Lady Elizabeth Finch, eldest daughter of lieneage, first Earl of Aylesford, by Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Banks, and relict of Robert Lord Bingley (see his burial 14th April, 1731), to whom married, at St. Giles-in-the-Fields, Middlesex, 21st December, 1703. Her coffin-plate, exposed' in 1869, gives her age as seventy-eight, died February 26th. (See the burial of her only daughter, 13th April, 1771.)
- 1771, April 13th.—The Right Hon. HANNRER, Baroness MEDLEY, wife of the Right Hon. George, Lord Bingley, died the 7th. She was the only daughter and heir of Robert, Lord Bingley (see his burial 14th April, 1731), by Lady Elizabeth, his wife (see her burial 11th March, 1757). She was baptised at St. Margaret's, Westminster, 4th February, 1704-5, and was married, at Somerset House Chapel, 12th July, 1731, to George Fox, who afterwards assumed the additional surname of Lane, and was created Baron Bingley, 13th May, 1762. She died at Bath, according to the journals of the day, aged sixty-three, but was really in her 67th year. Her husband died 22nd February, 1773, when the title became extinct, their only son dying in his lifetime, without issue.
- 1771, 16th.—Miss Beinoter Betasyse died the 6th, aged thirty-eight years; only child and heir of Wm. Belasyse, son and heir of Sir Henry Belasyse. She was born 8th July, 1735, and died unmarried, at her house in Hill Street, Berkeley Square. She bequeathed her manor and castle of Brancepeth, co. Durham, and other estates, to her kinsman Henry Belasyse, second Earl of Fauconberg, of Newburgh Park, Yorks, and left legacies to numerous friends, varying from £500 to £25,000, besides £4,000 for founding an hospital at
- 1711C, December 12th. Right Hon. Sir elms. SAUNDERS, K.B., Admiral of the Fleet, and Lieutenant-General of the Marine Forces, died the 7th, aged sixty. He was one of Lord Anson's lieutenants, fought gallantly in the "Yarmouth" in May and October, 1747, was M.P. for Plymouth in 1750, and for Hedon, in Yorkshire, in 1734; Comptroller of the Navy, 1755; Rear-Admiral of the Blue, 1756; and of the White, 1758; Vice-Admiral of the Blue, 1759, and Commanded the fleet in the expedition against Quebec in that year; Lieutenant-General of the Marines, 1760; installed a Knight of the Bath, 26th February, 1761; a Lord of the Admiralty, 1765, and First Lord, 1766. He is said to have married, 26th September, 1751, the only daughter of James Buck, of London, banker, but she is not named in his will, which was dated 20th January, 1773, and proved 14th December, 1775.
- 1775, January 20th.—Rear-Admiral Joule STORE; died the 10th, aged seventy-four; was the son of Joseph Storr, of Hilston, co. York (see a pedigree of the family in Poulson's "History of Holderness," vol. H., pp. 79-80), and was born, according to his monument, 18th August, 1709. He attained a captaincy in the Royal Navy, 1st November, 1748, and became Rear-Admiral of the White, 19th March, 1779, and of the Red, 26th September, 1780. The Journals of the day say that he died at his house in Bedford Square. His

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Lady Lanesborough died in 1721, leaving the manor of Cobham and Down Place to her grandsons of the Fox family. In September 1725 George Fox joined in a bumble petition<sup>47</sup> to the Lord Chancellor, Peter, Lord King of Ockham, stating that John Tanworth of Dorking, second cousin to Elizabeth Smither, late of Dorking, had sued out a Commission of Idiocy against the said Elizabeth Smither, who was never reputed or deemed to be an idiot or lunatic until now in her 56th year. Should she be found an idiot the petitioners might be very much prejudiced in respect of their several estates purchased of the said Elizabeth. A commission met

the King's Head, Dorking, on 2 September at 10 a.m., and about 10 witnesses came from London and several other distant places, which, together with legal charges, cost the petitioners about £80. The meeting had to be adjourned until 4 p.m. owing to the 'mis-spelling of the name of John Bugden, Doctor of Physic. Nothing could be done at 4 p.m. owing to the absence of John Bomvicke, agent or solicitor for John Tanworth, at whose instance the said commission was sued out. A list of very frank questions and answers about Elizabeth Smither appears to refer to an adjourned meeting on 16 October, but the result of the enquiry is not given.

#### MANOR OF COBHAM

It is now no longer convenient to deal with Down as a separate manor, and we return to a consideration of the manor of Cobham. After Lady Lanesborough's death there appears to have been no resident lords until Thomas Page of Pointers bought the manor in 1779. The Fox family lived at East Horsley, and it was James Fox of Horsley who had founded a school in Cobham by 1724." He was the second grandson of Lady Lanesborough, and inherited Cobham and other Surrey properties when still an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford. Lady Lanesborough provided that if he should not take Holy Orders within seven years of her death the profits of the estate should be divided among the younger grandchildren. As it happened they released James of the obligation to take Orders. James died without issue on 22 October 1753, and was buried in East Horsley church. He was succeeded by his brother, Sackville Fox, who died on 1 December 1760, leaving the estate to his son James, then four years old. The property was then placed in the guardianship of James's uncle, George Fox, who in 1751 had taken the additional surname of Lane in compliance with the will of the last Lord Lanesborough. In May 1762 George was created Lord Bingley, and though using East Horsley as a residence he seems to have interested himself in laying out the grounds of his Yorkshire seat at Bramham Park:

Where "crystal currents sweetly murmuring flow,  
Fair temples rise, and future navies grow."

<sup>7</sup> Leeds Public Library, LF/LXXXIV/4.6.

<sup>8</sup> *Sy.A.C.*, xxxix, 80.

Lord Bingley died on. 22 February 1773, and James, aged 161/2, inherited.

Mr Fox, young and unexperienced, engaged in a very dissipated and extravagant Course of Life during his Minority, and squandered away large Sums of Money, far beyond what. were proper to be allowed for his Maintenance and Education, whereby he became exposed to great Distress; and during his Infancy, and soon after he attained the Age of Seventeen Years, he, in Oppoition to thc repeated Advice and Remonstrances of the Gentleman who was employed as his Solicitor, procured large Sums of Money by selling Annuities during his Life, and by procuring his Friends and Acquaintance (who were engaged in the same extravagant Course of Life, and had barely attained Twenty-one) to join with him or give Securities for the Payment of such Annuities. The Money thus obtained by Mr Fox was obtained upon Terms the most disadvantageous to him that can be conceived, and the Means used to obtain it were carefully concealed by him from his Solicitor and Friends. By this imprudent and dissipated Conduct . . . Mr Fox, was in the Year 1776 involved in Debt to the Amount of 26,000, or thereabouts, and in the Month of May in that Year he was (although under Twenty Years of Age) arrested by different Creditors.

Mr Fox's distressed Situation and Conduct could be no longer concealed from his Friends, who, upon being made acquainted with it, found it absolutely necessary to adopt some Mode for extricating him from his Distress.—It was therefore proposed by Mr Fox's Solicitor (who had been appointed to manage his Affairs by his Friends) and agreed to by Mr Fox and his Friends, that as soon as he should attain Twenty-one he should suffer a Recovery of his Estates in the County of Surry (of which he was Tenant in Tail in Possession) and that those Estates, or a competent Part thereof, should be vested in Trustees, upon. Trust to sell the same, and apply the Money arising from such Sale in paying his Debts, and redeeming the several Annuities which he and his Acquaintance had engaged to pay 'or him during his Life: And in order to get a true Knowledge of the . . . Situation, both with respect to his Debts and Annuities, and with respect to the Value of his Estate in the County of Surry, so intended to be vested in Trustees, it was proposed by his Friends, and agreed to by Mr Fox, that Mr Farrer, his Solicitor, should forthwith endeavour to procure an Account of his Debts and Annuities, by inserting Advertisements in the public Newspapers, or by such other Means as he thought adviseable; and that Mr Fox should, in the mean Time, get his Estate in Surry valued by some Surveyor skilled in the Value of Lands in that County: And it was also proposed and agreed, between Mr Fox and his Friends, that when an Account 'could be obtained of his Debts and Annuities, a List should be made thereof, or of such of them as were found to be fair and just; and that such List should be annexed by Way of Schedule to the Trust Deed: And it was likewise determined that the Plan of the Deed should be to secure upon the Estate to such of the Annuity Creditors as should agree to liquidate their Annuities, and should accept the Proposals made to them on the Part of Mr Fox, their Principal Money, and Interest at Four and Half per Cent.; and that such of the Creditors who should refuse to sign the Proposals, should be excluded from all Benefit under the Trust Deed. And, in order to make the most of the Estates, it was proposed that the Trustees should sell the same in *Parcels and by public Auction*.

In May or June 1776, Mr Fox, with the Rev. Dr. Shepherd, his Tutor, set off upon his Travels with an Intention of making the Tour of Italy, and of remaining Abroad until he should have attained. Twenty-one.—He travelled almost immediately to Turin, but instead of making the Tour of Italy, as had been intended, he very soon went to Paris, where his Tutor left him, and *during his Residence at Paris*, and after his Return to England, he lived in a very dissipated and extravagant Manner, and became so very much overwhelmed. in Debt and Distress, that he would have executed almost any Engagements or Securities that could be proposed to him for the

Purpose of raising Money to answer his Purposes, which was easily discovered by azy Person who had Money Transactions with him. At this Period the Indiscretion and Extravagance of Mr Fox and his Acquaintance were so great that they sold Annuities for his Lire for Five or Six Years Purchase, and left Part of the Money in the Hands. of the Purchasers or Procurers of the Money, in order to answer the growing Payments of the Annuities, and without keeping any Account thereof; and they also executed Bonds and Warrants of Attorney to confess Judgments to Persons whom they employed, without receiving any Consideration, and without keeping any Account thereof, in order that such Persons might raise Money thereon by Assignments of such Securities.

About the Beginning of October 1777, in pursuance of Directions received from Mr Fox and his friends, his solicitor, Mr Farrer, caused advertisements to be placed in the public newspapers, desiring all the Creditors and Annuitants of Mr Fox, and all other Persons having any Claims upon him, to send in an Account of their respective Debts, and Demands; and in consequence of such Advertisements, a great deal of Debts and Annuities were claimed against him amounting together to 50,000, or thereabouts, a List of which Debts and Annuities was made out by his Solicitor, in order that the same might be taken into Consideration by Mr Fox, and his Friends and Trustees; and in order that such of the said Debts and Annuities as were found to be just and fair might be scheduled to the said intended Trust Deed, Mr Fox about the same Time employed Mr Thomas Jackman, an experienced Surveyor, who resided in the County of Surrey, near his Estates in that County, to value the said Estates; and Mr Jackman, after having carefully surveyed the said Estates, valued and estimated the same, with the Timber growing thereon, (and without Furniture in the House and Offices) to be worth the Sum of £45,000 . . . Mr Fox attained Twenty-one in August 1777.<sup>49</sup>

At this time the Rev. Dr. Shepherd spoke about Fox's affairs to a notorious and fraudulent gambler named Robert Mackreth, with the result that Fox continued in his profligate course, and became deeply indebted to his new acquaintance. Mackreth was one of three liveried servants who acquired knighthoods and entered Parliament. The others were James Craggs, the elder, Postmaster-General, and Thomas Rumbold, the latter starting as a club waiter under Mackreth.

When Mackreth served in Arthur's crew  
He said to Rumbold, "Black my shoe",  
To which he answered "Ay, Bob".  
But when returned from India's land  
And grown too proud to brook command,  
He sternly answered "Nay Bob".

Mackreth became a trustee for the sale of the estates to pay Fox's debts, but in 1779 bought the estates himself, and before the completion of the contract sold the Cobham estate at a highly advanced price to Thomas Page of Pointers, Cobham. (In 1783 the Court of Chancery decreed Mackreth to be a trustee for the original vendor as to the sum produced by this second sale.)

Pointers, which now became the manor house, was in 675 known as Pointintone, possibly "Punt's farm," or the land at the point or

<sup>49</sup> Leeds Public Library. LF/I/1. Statement of the Respondents' Case before the House of Lords, c. 1786 (printed).

curve of the River Mole. William Bray, the historian of Surrey, had become..steward of the manor in 1770, and noted in his diary that of 14 September 1781 he had breakfast at Pointers.<sup>50</sup> Thomas, Page died in this year, and his son of the same name at once enlarged the house and much improved the grounds, receiving several times the Duke of York ("Poor Fred") and other members of the royal family.<sup>51</sup> Part of. the improvements consisted in diverting the public road which ran between the house and the Mole.<sup>52</sup> The Pages appear to have lived at Pointers until the middle of the nineteenth century, when their descendants, the Mounts, inherited the manor, holding it until manorial jurisdiction was brought to an end by general Act of Parliament. The court rolls and related documents were given to the Kingston Record Office.

### THE RIVER MOLE: ITS MILLS, FISHERIES, AND BRIDGES

Before giving an account of the other Cobham manors it would be appropriate first to mention the river and then the enclosures. The mills and fisheries were manorial assets, the bridges a liability. Three mills are mentioned in Domesday Book. These would have been Cobham and Downside nulls, still more or less in existence, and Ashford mill which is mentioned as one of the bounds of Cobham in the Chertsey Cartulary. It is tempting to connect Ashford mill with the statement that in 1275 one messuage and one mill and 60 acres of land with appurtenances called la Pypsyng in the manor of Cobham were bought for the monastery of Chertsey from Thomas Haunsard and Alice, his wife.<sup>53</sup> This transaction may be connected with the death of Sir John Hannsard of Little Bookham in. 1275. We shall later see that Sir John was the first to witness the agreement on the grazing of Cobham Tilt (adjoining Ashford) drawn up in 1268-9. In the early part of the next century Abbot John de Rutherwyk, we are told by the Cartulary, made two mills at Cobham and constructed a new mill house.<sup>54</sup> This probably means that he rebuilt Cobham and Ashford mills. Agas does not mention Ashford mill in 1598, therefore it was presumably then no longer in existence. It may be connected with the 8 acres 2 roods 23 perches of arable and meadow known as Mill field and Mill meadow which the tithe map of 1845 shows on the site of Cobham cemetery.

In 1534 Richard Sutton. leased *Cobliam, mill* with the manor from the Abbot of Chertsey for 40 years.<sup>55</sup> Goodwyn's survey of 1546-9 refers to the king's mill, called stewarde mill, and also to Coveham myll in the tenure of John Collyn. The former, in the tenure of

<sup>50</sup> *Sy.A.C.*, XLVI, 49.

" Bra.v1cy, E. W. *op. cit.* (see note 7). Vol.            p. 411.

<sup>52</sup> K.R'.O. Sessions Rolls, Easter and Michaelmas 1783.

<sup>53</sup> *Sy. Rec. Soc.*, No. V (1915), p. 121. (Chertsey Abbey Cartularies.)

<sup>54</sup> *Sy. Rec. Soc.*, No. XXXIV (1932), pp. 289, 291, 320. (Chertsey Abbey Cartularies.)

Guildford Muniment Room. Cobham 1/32/1. "Robert Gavell Esq. his Title."



## THE SAVING OF A YORKSHIRE ESTATE: GEORGE LANE-FOX AND BRAMHAM "PARK"

By J. T. WARD

Several classic examples of aristocratic, indebtedness in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have attracted the attention of historians. The fall of the 2nd Duke of Buckingham and Chandos was a melancholy warning to Victorian landowners during his own lifetime; through politics, entertainment, collecting, land buying and litigation he had contrived to accumulate over £1,500,000 of debt before his financial collapse in 1844. The 1st Marquess of Ailesbury reached an almost equally dangerous position in the 1730's, through rash building and large family provisions, but was saved by careful trustees. Another Yorkshire landowner, the 6th Duke of Devonshire, spent so much on buildings that even he, a great magnate, was compelled to sell his East Riding estate; he left debts of £1,000,000 on his death in 1857. Family charges amounted to over half of the 7th Duke of Bedford's encumbrance of over half a million in 1739; and in the 'forties debt charges consumed £20,000 of Ailesbury's gross income of £54,000, £60,000 of Devonshire's £200,000, £45,000 of the 3rd Earl Fitzwilliam's £150,000 and £26,000 of the 2nd Earl of Durham's £10,000 (he having inherited £635,000 of debt in 1841).<sup>1</sup>

Such debts arose from many causes, but few led to the tragedy of the Buckingham sales. Careful Victorian retrenchment and an aversion to Regency profligacy saved some estates, while others were aided by rearrangements of family portions, large-scale agricultural improvements and the rise in mineral and urban incomes. Many new debts were incurred not for traditional gambling, entertainment or political purposes but for ventures which themselves promoted an increase of income. Thus Sir James Graham of Netherby owed a total of £200,000 to the Equitable Assurance Society by 1838 but used the debt partly to consolidate previous borrowing at a lower rate of interest and partly to improve estate. And the 7th Duke of Devonshire alternately supported and encumbered his great rural properties by his pioneer industrial ventures at Barrow. There were many similar examples.

The purpose of the present paper is to examine the problems facing the owners of a 'second-line' estate in the nineteenth century and the methods by which they were solved.

### I.

The Lane-Fox family of Bramham Park near Wetherby was descended from William Fox, a landowner at Grete in Worcestershire in the reign of Edward IV. In the seventeenth century Joseph Fox served with the Army in Ireland, where he married Theraasine Blayney, the widow of Sir Henry Pierce and daughter of the 2nd Lord Blayney. His son Henry (d. 1719) first married Jane Oliver of Clonodfoy and in 1691 established the family's fortune by marrying secondly Frances Lane, the daughter of Sir George Lane of Tulske, the Irish Secretary and later 1st Lord Lanesborough. Henry Fox's son George succeeded to the large Lane estates on the death of his uncle James, the 2nd Viscount, and in 1751 assumed by Act of Parliament the additional surname of Lane.

<sup>1</sup> See I. N. L. Thompson, 'The End of a Great Estate' (*Economic History Review*, 2nd Ser., viii, 1, Aug. 1955), 'Frustrated Landownership: The Ailesbury Trust, 1832-56' (*ibid.*, 2nd Ser., xi, 1, Aug. 1952), 'Irish Great Estates in the 19th century, 1790-1914' (*Contributions to the First International Conference of Economic History* (Paris, 1960), pp. 385-97), *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (1963), pp. 111-112; D. and E. 'The Boil of the Grenvilles, 1854-1848' (*The Huntington Library Quarterly*, xix, 2, Feb. 1956); David Spring, 'Landownership in the Nineteenth Century: A Critical Note' (*Economic History Review*, 2nd Ser., ix, 3, Apr. 1957), 'The Ark of Noah and the Great Northern Coalfield, 1830-1880' (*Canadian Hist. Rev.*, xxxiii, 3, Sept. 1952), 'The English Landed Estate in the Age of Coal and Iron, 1530-1880' (*Journal of Economic History*, xi, 1, Winter 1951).

Graham MSS., by courtesy of Sir Fergus Graham, Bt., KJ3.E.; S. Pollard, 'Barrow in Furness and the Seventh Duke of Devonshire' (*Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2a.1 Ser., viii, 2, Dec. 1955).



George Fox-Lane (?1696-1773) was Tory M.P. for Hindon in 1734-1741 and for York in 1742-1761. He further enlarged the family's property in 1731, when he married Harriet Benson, the daughter and heiress of Robert, Lord Bingley. Robert Benson was a self-made Tory (and later Whig) who sat for Thetford in 1702-1705 and for York in 1705-1713. He became a Commissioner of the Treasury in 1710 and was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1711 to 1713, a Privy Councillor in 1711-1714 and from 1730, Queen Anne's Ambassador to Madrid in 1713-1714 and Treasurer of the Household for King George II in 1730-1731. Queen Anne's favour led to a *Crown* grant of land on Bramham Moor, where Benson built his great mansion in the first decade of the eighteenth century.. Created a Baron in 1713, Benson supplemented official receipts by acting as a director of the South Sea Company from 1711 to 1715.

On his marriage, Fox-Lane succeeded to most of the Benson estates; Harriet brought him £100,000 and an annual income of £7000. In May 1762 he was himself created Lord Bingley, taking his title from the township where the Bensons had long been lords of the manor — although the Bingley property had passed for life to Benson's natural daughter, Lady Goodricke. Bingley's only legitimate son, Robert, born in 1732, succeeded to the York seat in 1761 — after failing in 1758. Although twice married — to Mildred Bouchier of Benningborough and to Lady Bridget Henley (daughter of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Northington) — he died without issue in May 1768. According to Horace Walpole, General Burgoyne was Bingley's illegitimate son. But when the Baron died in 1773, the title became extinct.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Bingley devised his lands in England and Ireland to his 15-year-old 'nephew James, the son of Sackville Fox and Ann Holloway, who also inherited the Lanes' Irish estates and name. A man of the world, scholar, raconteur, traveller and philanthropist, Fox-Lane sat in the Commons for Horsham as a supporter of his friend William Pitt, who offered to revive the Lingley peerage for him; Fox-Lane, however, was proud of belonging to 'one of the very few old English families, [being] a commoner (not a trader) of high birth and fortune'. Unfortunately for that fortune, he became a friend of the Prince Regent. Another Yorkshire squire, Sir George Wombwell, 3rd baronet, was said to be the only friend of 'Prinny' who was not financially ruined by the association?

Fox-Lane married the hon. Marcia Pitt, daughter of the 1st Lord Rivers, in *July* 1789 and died in April 1821, leaving four sons and one daughter. The entailed estates passed to the eldest son, George (who was generally named Lane-Fox), but £300,000 was settled on the widow and the younger children, William Augustus, Sackville Walter, Thomas Henry and Marcia Bridget. Fox-Lane's wife died in London in August 1822, and it was reported that property worth between £8,000 and £10,000 a year then passed to her family... William (1796-1832) served in the Grenadier Guards and married Lady Caroline Douglas; his second son succeeded to the Wiltshire property of Lord Rivers and assumed the name of Pitt-Rivers by Royal Licence in 1880. Sackville entered politics as a Tory and in 1826 married Lady Charlotte Osborne, the only daughter of the 6th Duke of Leeds. Thomas' entered holy orders and died without issue; and Marcia married the hon. Edward Stourton, second son of the 16th Lord Stourton, dying in 1826, two years before her husband was, created a baronet, as Sir Edward Vavasour of Hazlewood Castle.' In general, the younger children were financially secure.

George Lane-Fox, who succeeded to the estates at the age of 28, was a sporting squire who represented Beverley and Pontefract before retiring from politics in 1841 because of ill-health. He was active in Yorkshire society as a Yeomanry major and a Deputy

G. E. C(ockayne), *The Complete Peerage*, ii (1912), 177-178; *Burke's Landed Gentry* (1898 edn.), 545; R. V. Taylor, *Biographia Leodiensis* (1865), 173-174; Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke, *The House of Commons, 1754-1790* (1964), ii, 466-467, iii, 19; J. T. Ward, 'A Nineteenth Century Yorkshire Estate: Ribston and the Dent Family' (*Yorks. Arch. Jour.*, xli, 1, 1963); on Bramham Park see N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. Yorkshire: The West Riding* (Penguin Books, 1959), 141-143.

Burke (1898), *op. cit.* i, 545; Taylor, *op. cit.*, 283-286, 445; J. Wilkinson, *Worthies, Families and Celebrities of Barnsley and the District* (1883), 114-118.

<sup>1</sup> Taylor, *op. ca.*, 285-286; Burke (1898), *op. cit.*, i, 545, 1260; *Burke's Peerage* (1845 edn.), 1006-1007.

Lieutenant. But agriculture was his principal interest, and he was keenly concerned the movement for agricultural improvements. He started the annual shows at Bramham Park and was a vice-president of the Wetherby Agricultural Society. He improved the new lands enclosed by his father under the Bramham Enclosure Act of 1807 and spent considerable sums — some £1300 in 1826, £1000 in 1827, £2500 in 1828, £4300 in 1829 and £3300 in 1830 — on estate repairs and improvements.' But his good intentions were not enough and his affairs became increasingly difficult, in several ways.

## 11.

The young squire does not appear to have been unduly rash in his expenditure, judged by the standards of his time. Certainly he found it necessary to take a London house for the Season. His father had paid £630 *per annum* for 45 Dover Street for six years from 1808, and the family later took a lease in Old Bond Street. But gentry with much smaller properties had London houses. Undoubtedly, the maintenance of Bramham Park' and its great gardens was costly; but when the mansion was ravaged by fire in July 1828 the squire moved to a smaller house on the estate. Lane-Fox sought to benefit from new sources of income. Since 1797 the family had drawn mineral rents from Allerton Bywater colliery. In 1821 Lane-Fox sold about £10,000-worth of timber, and in the following year he leased his lead mines at Rimmington for 21 years. In 1823 he even called in surveyors to report on the possibility of minerals under Bramham Park itself. And he held shares in the Aire & Calder and Calder & Hebble Navigations, the Barnsley Canal and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal (which had bought land from his father).<sup>2</sup> Yet his financial position gradually worsened.

Part of the trouble lay in the family's domestic affairs. James Fox-Lane's will had starved the estate of capital by lavishly providing for his wife and younger children. This difficulty continued. In 1814 George Lane-Fox had married Georgiana Henrietta, the daughter of Edward Pery Buckley of Minstead Lodge and his wife, Lady Georgiana West. They had one son and two daughters, but the marriage failed and in 1824 a deed of separation was negotiated, under which Mrs. Lane-Fox received an annuity of £500. Lane-Fox and his wife parted bitterly, but in January 1826 Lane-Fox proposed a reconciliation. Mrs. Arbuthnot advised her friend to the offer, but to make certain that the financial arrangements were satisfactory. However, by 1827 Mrs. Lane-Fox appeared to be accepting the long-continued blandishments of the 6th Lord Chesterfield, and Mrs. Arbuthnot, now much less friendly, thought he was 'wasting himself'. By 1829 Chesterfield and Mrs. Lane-Fox were virtually living together, offended the Duke of Wellington by staying unchaperoned at Walmer Castle and caused a stir in High Society by issuing invitations to the Doncaster races. Mrs. Arbuthnot 'would not act the *Madame Commode*' and now found Mrs. Lane-Fox 'a person ... to whom it was impossible to 'give advice'. Although far from prudent herself, she wished her contemporaries would '*pull up* a little and set their faces against the barefaced liaisons that were becoming the fashion'; Chesterfield's arrangement was 'too bad'. Other social gossips were equally shocked. Thomas Creevey met the couple at the Duchess of St. Albans' in 182; and at Lady Sefton's (where they 'came together and sat together all night', among other-'most notorious and profligate women') in 1829. And in October 1830, when Chesterfield surprised everyone by announcing his marriage to the hon. Anne Forester; it was Charles. Greville who carried the news to the harshly-rejected mistress. Even Mrs. Arbuthnot was angry at Chesterfield's 'barbarous' act, believing that he had dropped Mrs. Lane-Fox because when she finally yielded and for two years lived with him he had 'felt the inconveniences of his attachment' through Society avoiding him. Mrs. Lane-Fox could only affect not 'to care a pin' in public, but actually protested even to Wellington. She consoled herself with the friendship of the Prince of Orange; and by 1834, her house, noted Greville,

<sup>1</sup> Lane-Fox MSS. in Leeds City Library, by courtesy of Colonel F. G. W. Lane-Fox, to whom I am indebted for further information.

<sup>2</sup> Lane-Fox MSS., *passim*; J. T. Ward, 'West Riding Landowners and the Nineteenth Century' (*Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research*, xv, 1, May 1963); q.

By 1846 Lane-Fox and his son resolved that new arrangements must be made for the management of their debts. Their legal adviser, Burrell, proposed in October that all the estates should be charged in mortgage to Marjoribanks and Antrobus for the sum required and that the Bowcliffe estate should be taken in reconveyance from the devisees of Fenton Scott and (with all lands bought since 1838) used as security with the bankers. Furthermore, Lane-Fox should demise all his estates, except Bramham, Ogletorpe, Bardsey, Collingham and Scarcroft woods, to his son for 99 years, while the son should arrange that all the rents and profits of the estates should be paid into the Farrers' bank in a joint account though the bank should act only on his own orders. After accepting this arrangement, father and son worked out their expenses between 22 July and 1 November 1847. Interest of £3464. 18. 1. was due to Coutts, £509. 13. 9 to James Forrer's executors and £194. 3. 4. to Marjoribanks' trustees. Lane-Fox himself drew £2250 quarterly and his estranged wife (who had negotiated for the payment of her debts and an additional annuity in 1843) took £546. 1. 11. a quarter. George's wife received only £100 half-yearly, as did Mrs. Liddell, while Liddell had £150 per quarter, plus £50 as auditor, and George was paid a quarterly sum of £750. Sundry small pensions and fee farm rents made total outgoings £8155. 7. 1. by mid-October. In contemporary circles £9000 a year for the owner of such an estate and £3000 for an heir who had broken the entail would not be considered too generous. But there were further 'expenses. 'Mr. Kell's drafts during the above period last yr. amt' to £1400. 9. 3.', and £2491. 14. 11. was due to Farrers, making the total estimated expenditure £12,047. 11. 3. for 101 days. The only expected income was £823. 3. 4. from the Aire & Calder Navigation and (if the 1846 sum were repeated) £750 from coal rents. Consequently, on 1 November 1847 the current account would be overdrawn by £10,474. 7. 11. The Yorkshire rents were not yet due, but, as the harassed squire needed,<sup>1</sup>

since this year commenced, nothing has been remitted or account of the Irish Estate, and from the present state of Ireland is quite uncertain whether any and what remittance will be made therefrom.

The Ireland of the Famine paid little to its landlords. With his affairs in this state, Lane-Fox died on 15 November 1848:

#### IV.

On succeeding to the estates, the new squire inherited nearly a quarter of a million of debt and annual payments totalling £14,092. 8. 7. Interest on £204,399. 10. took £8414. 9. 6., family payments £4570, pensions £466. 5., the rent of a house and stables in Eaton Square £370 and insurances and miscellaneous items £271. 14. 1. His account with the Farrers stood at £3467. 19. 2.: 'the recent receipt of the Yorkshire Rents has placed the account in Cash', he noted, 'but there are payments to make this month and the next for Interest &c. between 5 and 6000 pounds'.

Lane-Fox now started the long task of saving the estate. By 1848 only £19f:0 of the mortgages had been paid off, but in 1851 and 1852 he paid a further £7737...:10. A valuable new source of income was the sale of land to the railways. The family disliked the brash newcomer to the countryside; in 1845 George Hudson complained... at a meeting of the York & North Midland Railway that the Earl of Harr. wood and'; Lane-Fox had objected to the construction of the Harrogate line. But in April 1846 Lane-Fox sold Harrogate land to the company and in May agreed to sell land also to the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway. His son followed this lead, selling strips to the Lancashire & Yorkshire, the Leeds & Bradford, the Great Northern, the Midland, the,, North Yorkshire & Durham, the North Eastern, the Rotherham, Sheffield & Goole; the Skipton & Wharfedale, the Sligo, Leitrim & North Coast and the Waterford &

<sup>1</sup> 'Mr. Lane-Fox's Mortgages, 17 February 1853'; 'G. L. Fox, Esq., Annual Payments' (2 Dec. 1848); 'Copy of Mr. Burrell's Opinion (19th Oct. 1846)'; 'G. L. Fox, Esq. and O. L. Fox Junr. Esq. Account, Current', 1847. (Lane-Fox MSS., *passim*).

<sup>2</sup> 'G. L. Fox, Esq. Annual Payments' (2 Dec. 1848); 'Memorandum as to Affairs' (2 Dec. 1848); 'Mr. Fox's Mortgages', 17 Feb. 1853 (Lane-Fox MSS., *passim*).