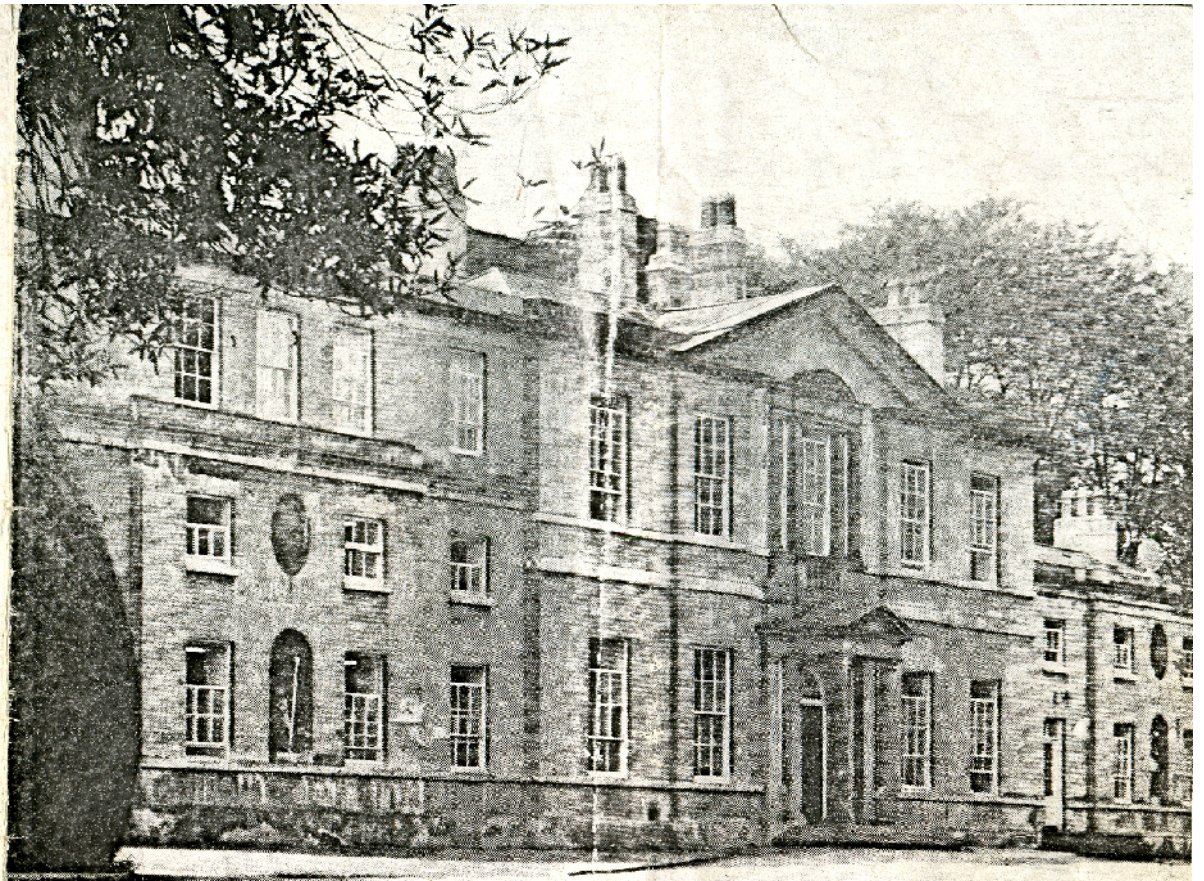


Hargreaves Group Ltd.

BOWCLIFFE HALL
BRAMHAM : BOSTON SPA
Phone: Boston Spa 2081



(Reprinted from Hargreaves Group Magazine.)

THE HISTORY OF BOWCLIFFE HALL

AS WE look through the great windows of Bowcliffe Hall across the peaceful lawns it is hard to believe that this was the scene of two great battles in the 15th and 17th centuries.

In the year 1403, Hotspur, son of the Earl of Northumberland, was killed at the battle of Shrewsbury. Upon hearing of the death of his son the earl went to see the king, Henry IV, and after

the Parliamentarians was well under way. Both sides were weak and needing extra help, so the Royalists obtained part of the Irish Army and the Parliamentarians part of the Scottish Army. In the meantime however, Cromwell was training farmers' sons in and around the district of Bowcliffe Hall: these young farmers were accustomed to riding and were ideal for cavalry. The

he had to sell the house as it stood (the section now occupied by William Pepper & Co.). The purchaser was John Smyth and the price involved was £2,000. Smyth then set to work on completing the house and forming the garden, and in 1819 he purchased the two cottages overlooking the Great North Road from the innkeeper of Bramham. When he died in 1840 the house passed into the hands of his sisters, Lydia Osbourne and Catherine Mason; they never lived in the house, but it was put into trust by them until such time as it could be sold.

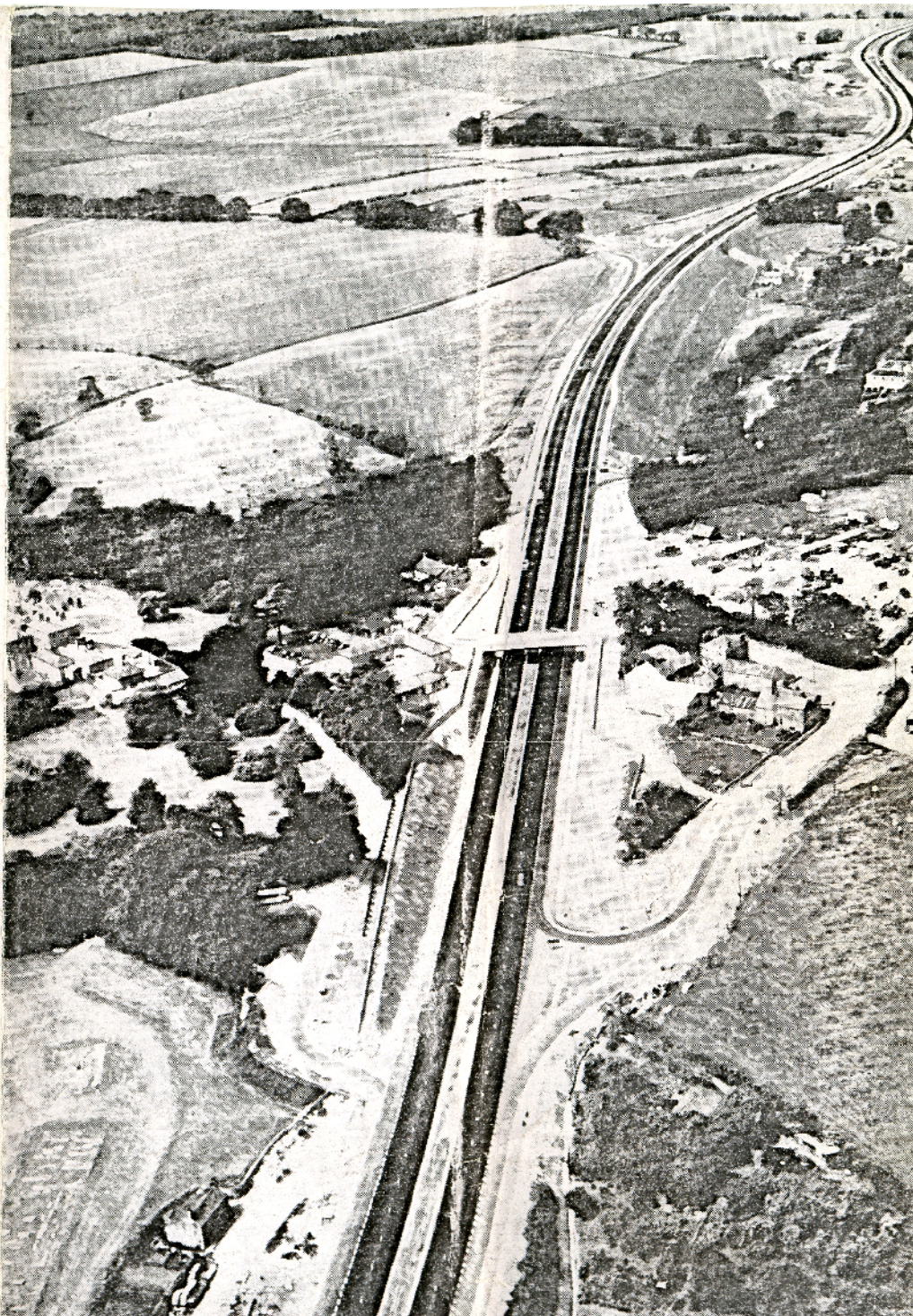
The house was bought by George Lane Fox of Bramham Park, the Park having been destroyed by fire in 1828. He died in 1848, leaving debts amounting to £175,000, and his eldest son, also George, succeeded him. He was known over most of Yorkshire as "The Squire", and it is said that he used to drive the London/Carlisle mail coach. He was a great sportsman, and in the same year he had the Bramham Moor hounds returned to their native village from Harewood, where they had been kept since the death of James Fox in 1821. The Squire died in 1896 and was succeeded by his second son, as the elder had decided to devote his life to religion. James Lane Fox, the second

son, whilst living at Bowcliffe, started work on the rebuilding of Bramham Park, and the Lane Fox family eventually moved there in 1907, although James died the previous year.

Bowcliffe Hall was empty for a short time, but in 1908 was taken over by a Mr. W. G. Jackson. Although it is known that he lived in the house for about 12 years no other records are available.

The last private owner of Bowcliffe Hall was Mr. Robert Blackburn who purchased the house in 1920. He was a famous aircraft pioneer, connected with the North Sea Aerial Navigation Company; Chairman of Blackburn Aircraft Ltd., and founder of the Flag School at Brough for the training of officers of the Air Reserve. In 1912 he built a one-seater two-engine plane which is today the oldest British aeroplane still flying. He was also the owner of a plane which won the "War of the Air Trophy", presented by the Yorkshire Evening Post. Although Mr. Blackburn was connected with aircraft all his life he never took out a pilot's licence. He died in 1955, and in May of the same year Bowcliffe Hall was taken over by Hargreaves, and although converted into offices it has not lost the stately atmosphere of an old country house.

Below is the southern face of Bowcliffe Hall, whilst right can be seen the modern highway that sweeps past our grounds.



Payments on acct of Additions to Bowditch House
in the Year 1867

1867.

Jan ^y . 5.	Paid Geo. Jennings, Plasterer. —	£25. 0. 0
18.	Paid W ^m . Bellamy, Carpenter. —	100. 0. 0
May 20.	Paid Fryer & Son, Bell Hangers. —	50. 0. 0
23.	Paid Henry Wilks, Plumber —	50. 0. 0
June 20.	Paid W ^m . Skelton, Marble mason —	100. 0. 0
25.	Paid John Hettlewell, Mason —	50. 0. 0
July 6.	Paid Geo. Jennings, Plasterer —	25. 0. 0
11.	Paid John Johnson for Stone. —	12. 13. 0
19.	Paid W ^m . Bellamy, Carpenter. —	100. 0. 0
Aug. 10.	Paid Geo. Jennings, Plasterer. —	25. 0. 0
16.	Paid W ^m . Bellamy, Carpenter —	100. 0. 0
Sept. 2.	Paid Henry Wilks, Plumber. —	50. 0. 0
3.	Paid John Hettlewell, Mason —	50. 0. 0
		<hr/>
		£. 737. 13. 0