



Yorkshire Sculpture Park
and the Bretton Estate

HERITAGE





Lady Eglinton's Well

Some of the early follies in the Bretton parkland include Lady Eglinton's Well at Dam Head on The Lower Lake. The well commemorates the baronet's wife Grace, who married Alexander Montgomerie, 8th Earl of Eglinton, after Thomas' death in 1675.



Dam Head Bridge

ALL THE KINGS' MEN

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) – set in the 500-acre Bretton Estate near Wakefield in West Yorkshire – opened in 1977, but the estate has a long and fascinating history that reaches back to Norman times. Bretton and West Bretton were listed in William the Conqueror's Domesday Book of 1086, and the land was settled by the de Bretton family in 1158. In the 13th century the de Brettons intermarried with the Dronsfield family of West Riding, and from then until modern times the estate was owned by three interconnected families: the Dronsfields, the Wentworths and the Beaumonts.

The Dronsfields built up the estate on the edge of the River Dearne and lived there until 1407, when the estate passed to Agnes Wentworth, wife of John Wentworth. She later bequeathed it to her son Richard. The Wentworths lived at Bretton for the next four centuries, with the house and land passing through the male line of the family until 1792. Richard's grandson Thomas

Wentworth built the first documented house on the estate around 1508. Henry VIII knighted Thomas in 1523 and in 1533 he became a Knight Marshall to the King. Sir Thomas furnished the house with a magnificent, carved oak bed especially for the King, though it is unlikely he ever slept in it.

At this time Bretton Hall was a substantial timber building which, in 1577, appeared on the cartographer Christopher Saxton's first map of Yorkshire. The estate continued to increase in size and wealth. Baronet Sir Thomas Wentworth, a Cavalier for King Charles I, was imprisoned after the Battle of Naseby in 1645 and again by Cromwell in 1657, escaping banishment to Jamaica when Cromwell died the following year. Charles II knighted him in 1660 and made him a baronet after the Restoration in 1664.



Bretton Hall

GRAND PROSPECTS

When the Baronet died in 1675, the estate passed to his brother Matthew, and it was his grandson William (4th Baronet of Bretton) who built the three-storey, nine-bay Palladian limestone mansion that still stands on the estate today. In 1720, William married Diana Blakett, daughter of Sir William Blakett of Wallington Hall in Northumberland. Bretton Hall was most likely designed the same year by Wentworth's architect friend James Moyser, who later worked on nearby Nostell Priory

More buildings, features and follies were added throughout the 18th century, including the sandstone St Bartholomew's Chapel in 1744, and the Pheasantries, houses for William's gamekeepers, in 1748.

Jane Austen was distantly related by marriage to the Bretton Wentworths, who in turn were a junior branch of the much grander Wentworth-Fitzwilliam family, who lived at nearby Wentworth Woodhouse. It's surely no coincidence that these Yorkshire landed gentry surnames all appear in her novels: Captain Wentworth in *Persuasion*, Emma Woodhouse in *Emma*, and Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*.





Camellia House

IN CAPABLE HANDS

It was Diana's son Thomas, 5th Baronet and the last Wentworth to own Bretton Hall, who was responsible for the development of the landscape. This was designed by Richard Woods, a talented contemporary of 'Capability' Brown. He introduced a rich variety of trees and plantings, and created many of the idyllic views and vistas still enjoyed by visitors today.

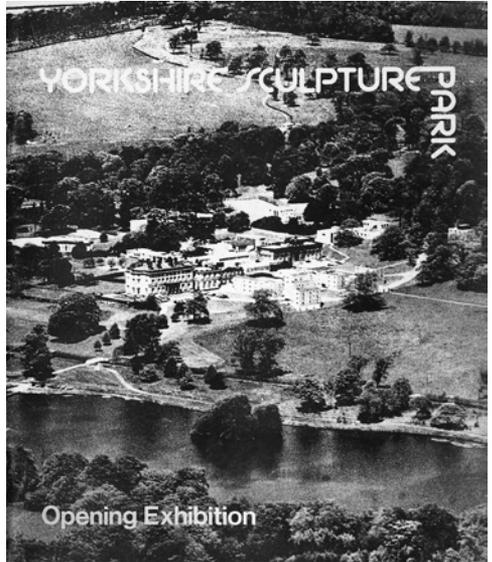
Thomas never married but bequeathed the estate to his illegitimate daughter Diana when he died in 1792. Diana was already wealthy through her marriage to Colonel Thomas Beaumont, an MP for Northumberland. The Beaumonts came to live at Bretton and Diana more than doubled the size of the hall.

They introduced more features and follies, including the Archway Lodge on Huddersfield Road in 1807, the Camellia House around 1817 and the 'far famed' domed conservatory, believed to be the largest of its kind in the

world at the time. The house was remodelled with a portico and bow end to the south. There were more additions in the 1840s, including an impressive stable block and the kennel block (now the home of YSP Learning), by the architect George Basevi, a pupil of Sir John Soane. When Diana died in 1831 the estate passed to her son Thomas Wentworth Beaumont.

In the 1820s, Robert Marnock, one of the greatest park and garden designers of the 1800s, was taken on as Head Gardener at Bretton Hall. He worked at Bretton for five years before designing the Sheffield Botanical Gardens and, later, the gardens of the Royal Botanic Society in Regent's Park, London.

In 1766, a wealthy American businessman, John Wentworth, visited his English cousin Sir Thomas Wentworth at Bretton Hall. During his stay he discovered that he had been made Governor of New Hampshire. A few years later he granted a parcel of land in the White Mountains of New Hampshire to Sir Thomas Wentworth, naming it after his Yorkshire home. Nearly two centuries later in 1944, this was where the Treaty of Bretton Woods, which created the International Monetary Fund after the Second World War, was signed.



Opening exhibition catalogue

A CENTURY OF CHANGE

Thomas was succeeded by his son, Wentworth Blackett Beaumont, who was made Baron Allendale in 1904. Wentworth's son, the first Viscount Allendale, was attached to the Royal Household and spent very little time at Bretton, except to use it for shooting parties and race meetings. During the Second World War it was requisitioned by the War Office.

In 1948, the house and 260 acres of land were sold for £30,000 by Viscount Allendale to West Riding County Council. When he died in 1958 his son sold more land. The final act of the Beaumont family was to plant a line of trees along the access drive, which was renamed Beaumont Drive in 1982.

In 1949, at the instigation of Sir Alec Clegg, Chief Education Officer for West Riding, the mansion house became Bretton Hall College, a teacher training college specialising in music, art and drama. This merged with the University

of Leeds in 2001 and the buildings were sold to Wakefield Council in 2007. Bretton Hall College had a liberal educational ethos which emphasised direct contact with materials and processes. This ethos lives on at YSP in its hugely successful public programmes.

In 1977, Peter Murray, a lecturer in art education at Bretton Hall, installed a sculpture exhibition in the grounds of the college. The idea to establish a permanent sculpture park rapidly took hold, and Yorkshire Sculpture Park opened in September 1977, with a grant of £1,000 from Yorkshire Arts. It was the first of many outdoor sculpture parks, open-air exhibitions and trails to open throughout Britain.

In 1997, the Pavilion Gallery opened and later a new entrance road and car park were introduced to unite the historic Bretton Estate and landscape.



Shell Grotto

In 1998, YSP bought a further 237 acres of parkland which had been the estate's hunting ground and Great Pasture. Longside Gallery was opened to the public in 2001 after major renovation work to the old equestrian centre.

The YSP Centre, which straddles the historic ha-ha, opened in 2002. The Underground Gallery followed in 2005, cleverly designed to respect the views across the historic landscape. Many significant features have been brought back into use as both permanent and temporary sitings for art works, for example the 18th century triple-arched Deer Shelter, now home to James Turrell's *Skyspace*, an Art Fund Commission.

In 2009, with the support of English Heritage and funding from Natural England, YSP commissioned a Historic Landscape Management Plan to set out a framework for the conservation and future management of the estate.

In 2011, YSP reopened 85 acres of woodland around two 65-acre designed lakes, following an extensive £500,000 restoration project. This opened up significant footpaths, bridges, views, follies and incredible historical features including the Greek Temple, a now land-locked Boat House, Stepping Stones and the magical Shell Grotto. This was a considerable achievement that has allowed access to, and the opportunity to explore, a previously inaccessible area of the Park.

The Bretton Estate's 18th century chapel underwent a major restoration in 2013. In May 2014, the newly restored building reopened as an exceptional gallery space, preserving its future as a publicly accessible space for years to come.

YSP's aim is to provide 'exceptional art for everyone' by offering a unique combination of art, landscape and heritage.

Our historic sculpted landscape is perhaps the largest 'sculpture' on site. We will continue to protect and enhance this as a space for exploration and inspiration, allowing for personal journeys and encounters amongst art and nature.

Explore the heritage of the Bretton Estate and Yorkshire Sculpture Park through regular tours and talks.

To find out more visit yvsp.co.uk/heritage

 #YSPHeritage

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