

GORSE BANK FARM

Gorse Bank Farm is half a mile north of Baslow village on the ancient road from Baslow to Curbar. The next farm on this road, Grislow Fields, is mentioned in the Court Rolls of 1350. Perhaps Gorse Bank Farm could be of similar age, but there is no record to confirm it. Until the 1900s, it was part of the Manor of Baslow and belonged to the Duke of Rutland. The occupants were always tenant farmers. Early names were Goss Bank and Gozebank.

The Damm family had close connections with the farm. Parish records show that they lived in Baslow from Elizabethan times. The first record is a marriage dated 1577. They may have lived at Gorse Bank for generations, but there is no proof of their residence there until the mid 1600s.

Roger Damm was born in the early 1600s, and was succeeded by his son, Alexander 1637-1714, then by his grandson Alexander 1666-1751.

He had no living sons, so the inheritance went to his daughter Maria. She was born in 1694 and married in 1713, almost 40 years before the death of her father. Her husband was Robert Froggatt a prominent local farmer who lived at Cross Farm in Bubnell, only half a mile away on the other side of the river Derwent.

After Alexander died in 1751 the lease went via the eldest daughter Maria to her husband Robert Froggatt then his son Henry Froggatt. At the time they must have been engaged with their own farm in Bubnell and they did not take up residence. Gorse Bank Farm may have been occupied by Henry's brother in law Robert Grundy (there is a record that his daughter Ann by then married to John Lea had her first child there in 1772).

Meanwhile, Henry Froggatt's eldest son Alexander Damm Froggatt 1752-1817 – obviously named after his maternal grandfather- came of age and married. He took over the Farm in the early 1770s and stayed there for 20 years before he remarried and moved back to the family home at Cross Farm. He left his son Thomas, born 1776, at Gorse Bank. No doubt at the start help and advice came from at Cross Farm the other side of the valley

Thomas Froggatt was followed by Alexander 1801-1872 then John born in 1843-1912. On his death he was followed by his sons Alexander William b 1874 and Harold B b1882. The Duke of Rutland sold the freehold in his great sale of 1920. The brothers failed to buy, and it was sold to Mr Thorp, whose family have owned it ever since.

Roger Damm

Alexander Damm Froggatt	1752 - 1817
Thomas Froggatt	1776- c1845
Alexander Froggatt	1801- 1872
John Froggatt	1843- 1912
Alexander W Froggatt	1874 -1929

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