Early history of the St Ives Estate is not clear. To the west lies Catstones moor with the 'Catstones Ring', a scheduled ancient monument. The age and purpose of these remains is not known and it is thought that they may be from Iron Age or Roman times1. On the St Ives Estate there is an earth work, known as the 'Fairfax Entrenchment'. Again, we do not have a clear idea as to what function this served or who built it. This too may be of a similar age to the Catstones Ring but this is only conjecture. Dr A Z Redmond2 has researched the known history of the area in a report for the Friends of St Ives that was funded by 'Heritage Lottery Fund'. It is from information in this report that most of the following short notes have been derived.

From the large number of items found in the upper part of the estate and dating from the Neolithic-Bronze Age, we know that the area has been occupied for a long time. From the 12th Century to the dissolution of the monasteries in 1540, the main area of the Estate was part of the properties belonging to the Monks of Rievaulx, having been given to them by Adam de Birkin between 1165 - 85. The deeds covering the transfer of the land also includes the instruction that the land be free from secular dues. This was indicated by patriarchal crosses on buildings, two of which were later transferred to more recent buildings and can be seen to this day. One is located on one of the gables of the old coach house near the mansion and the other is on the gable of the old hunting dog kennels at Cuckoo Nest. Some of the land that now falls within the Estate (White Cote) was owned by the monks of Drax. Monastic ownership lasted up to the dissolution when the Estate passed to Walter Paslew of East Riddlesden in 1540.

For most of the next century, land in the area was owned by the Laycocks and the Milners two families well linked to the history of the Bingley area. Another notable family in Bingley was the Ferrands, who purchased Harden Grange in 16363. However the St Ives of that era was the property we now know as Harden Grange. In 1858 the two names were exchanged.

Whilst General Fairfax and his troops may have camped on the estate, the facts have yet to be verified. It is almost certain that they did not make the 'Fairfax Entrenchment'. There are however compelling stories that 200 of Fairfax's troops died and were buried on the estate.

Regrettably, Druid's Alter, just outside the Estate and overlooking the Aire Valley; never saw Druids or the rituals that our 19th century ancestors loved to imagine.

**Recent history in a nut shell**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1165 - 1185 | Adam de Birkin gives estate to the monks at Rievaulx |
| 1540 | Walter Paslew aquires land at the dissolution of the monasteries |
| 1590 - 1636 | Nathaniel Birkhead |
| 1636 - 1674 | Robert Ferrand purchases Old Harden Grange in 1636 |
| 1674 - 1699 | Benjamin Ferrand (1624 - 1699) Inherits the property |
| 1699 - 1711 | Robert Ferrand (1647 - 1711) Inherits the property |
| 1711 - 1742 | Robert Ferrand (1687 - 1742) Inherits the property |
| 1742 - 1803 | Let to Thomas Middlebrook and others |
| 1803 - 1835 | Walker Ferrand lives here after Edward Ferrand Inherits the property |
| 1835 - 1839 | Mrs Walker Ferrand (widow)  |
| 1839 - 1889 | William Busfield Ferrand alters and further enlarges the house |
| 1858 | St Ives and Harden Grange exchange names |
| 1889 - 1927 | William Ferrand |
| 1928 | St Ives bought from executors for £ 39,000 by Bingley Urban District Council |
| 1974 | Bingley Urban District Council becomes part of Bradford Metropolitan Council |

**Note**

Those looking into the monastic history should be aware that several names are used. Perhaps most commonly: referring to 'Harden Grange' as 'The Grange at Halton'.

Ref. #1 West Yorkshire Archaelogical Service, web publication 'Cullingworth Conservation Area' WYAAS 2007

Ref. #2 'A report of the archaeo-historic heritage of the St Ives Estate, Harden, Near Bingley, West Yorkshire', By Dr A.Z. Redmond Phd BSc(Hons.) 2007, Prepared for the Friends of St Ives in conjunction with the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and under the authority of The University of Bradford.

Ref. #3 Fragments relating to the history of Bingley parish. By J A Busfeild 1875.

**Notes for genealogists**

There are a few things to watch:-

If you have an ancestor that lived at 'St Ives', could it have been 'Harden Grange'. Remember that they swapped the names in 1858.

You have an ancestor that has the right name but the dates of birth do not match, don't despair, many had the same name, so you may just be looking at the wrong one.

Those inheriting the property may have been required to change their name to Ferrand, under the terms of the will.

Michael Ferrand has brought the Ferrand family tree up to date and a copy of this is on the wall; in the visitor centre.