

THE OLD RECTORY, GRASMERE, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment



Client: Richard Staite

NGR. NY 33695 07342

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July 2019



The Site	
Site Name	The Old Rectory, Grasmere
County	Cumbria
Listed Building Grade	II

Client	
Client Name	Richard Staite

Planning	
Pre-planning?	Yes
Planning Application No.	-
Development Proposal	-
Condition number	-
Local Planning Authority	South Lakeland District Council/Lake District National Park Authority

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Relevant Record Office(s)/Archive Centre(s)	Kendal
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Summary

Prior to any proposed changes to the Grade II Listed Old Rectory at Grasmere, Greenlane Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment in order to better understand the history and development of the property in order to inform proposals.

The former rectory is obviously associated with the church of St Oswald's in Grasmere. This has at least medieval origins; it is first recorded in 1254 and the church has surviving fabric thought to be of 14th century date. The map and image evidence for the rectory is relatively limited, showing only that the building was substantially remodelled and enlarged at the end of the 19th century.

There is no specific evidence for a rectory building at such an early date as the church appears; the first definite evidence relating to one at Grasmere is the point at which Henry Fleming took the position of rector and a new rectory was constructed in 1687. Details of the form that this building took are uncertain, but it is symbolic of the strong relationship between the le Fleming family and the church throughout much of its history. There are few details about any alterations to the building in the 18th century but it was said to be in a poor state of repair prior to being occupied by arguably its most famous residents: William Wordsworth and his family, who moved in in May 1811. The correspondence kept by his sister Dorothy provides some very useful descriptions of the building and some of the problems they encountered with it, most notably the damp conditions and smoky fires. Their time there was short-lived and filled with tragedy; two of William and Mary's young children died within six months of each other and it was during the time that their relationship with Samuel Taylor Coleridge became strained. They left within two years and amongst the other occupants of the building, most of whom were the rector, were the Tucker family of artists who were recorded there in the census of 1871.

The building clearly has a long and complex history, with a number of periods of change, although it is difficult to know how many of these are evident within the extant fabric of the building. This could only be ascertained through an examination of the building in the form of an archaeological building recording, although this could potentially be usefully accompanied by dendrochronological dating.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Richard Staite for commissioning the project, and his architect Mike Darwell at John Coward Architects for providing information about the building. Special thanks are due to the staff at the Cumbria Archive Centre in Kendal for their help with accessing the relevant archive material, and Ester White, Collections Trainee at the Wordsworth Trust, for providing relevant information from their collection.

1. Introduction

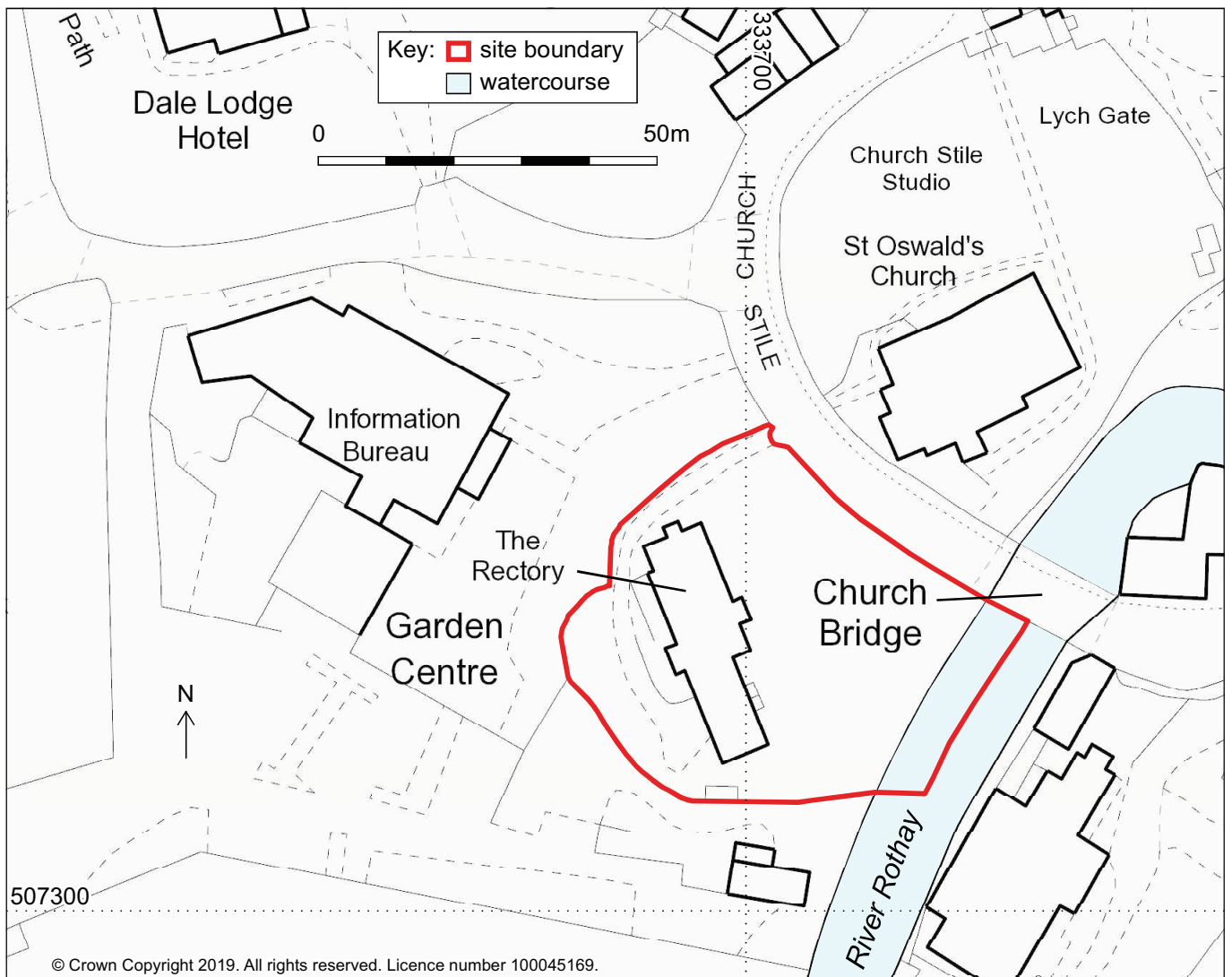
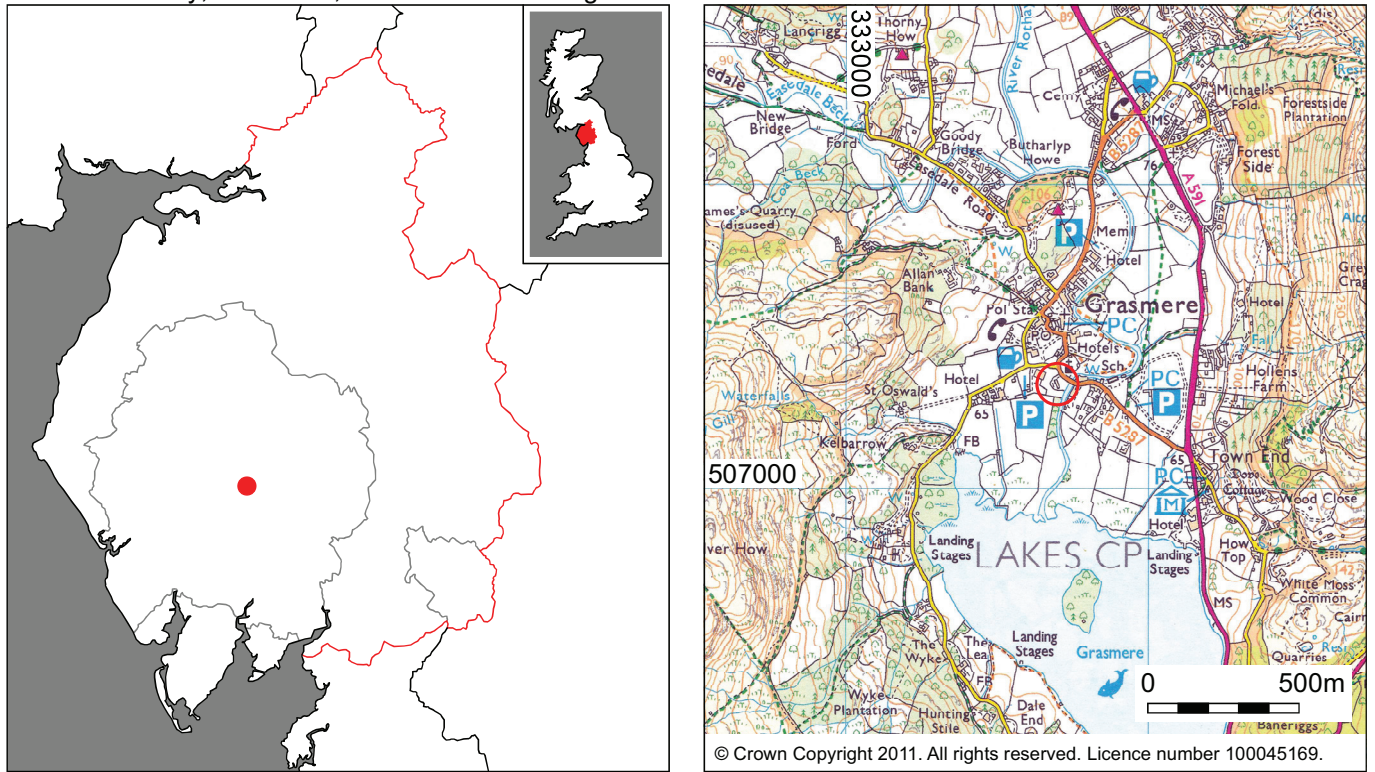
1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 The circumstances of the project are set out in the tables on the inside cover of this report.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Grasmere is a popular tourist destination in the centre of the Lake District National Park. The Old Rectory is close to the centre of the village, directly opposite (to the south-west) St Oswald's Church off Church Stile, with the south-east side of the garden adjacent to the River Rothay (Figure 1). It lies at approximately 60-70m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2011; Figure 1).

1.2.2 The area is part of the Cumbria High Fells, characterised by deep glaciated valleys with extensive lakes (Countryside Commission 2002, 31). The solid geology, which comprises rocks of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group of Ordovician age, is overlain by deposits of glacial debris in the form of boulder clay or moraines (Countryside Commission 2002, 33).



Client: Richard Staite

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Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

2.1.1 A desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a). This principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site and published secondary sources. A number of sources of information were used during the compilation of the desk-based assessment:

- **Record Office/Archive Centre:** the majority of original and secondary sources relating to the site are deposited in the relevant Record Office(s) or Archive Centre(s), as specified in the cover sheet of this report. Of principal importance are early maps of the site. These were examined in order to establish the development of the site, date of any structures present within it, and details of land use, in order to set the site in its historical, archaeological, and regional context. In addition, any details of the site's owners and occupiers were acquired where available;
- **Wordsworth Trust:** in addition, the Wordsworth Trust was consulted to see if they held any additional information regarding the building, as a result of which additional information was obtained;
- **Online Resources:** where available, mapping such as Ordnance Survey maps and tithe maps were consulted online;
- **Greenlane Archaeology:** Greenlane Archaeology's office library includes maps, local histories, and unpublished primary and secondary sources. These were consulted where relevant, in order to provide information about the history and archaeology of the site and the general area.

2.2 Archive

2.2.1 The archive of the project will be deposited with the relevant Record Office or Archive Centre, as detailed on the cover sheet of this report, together with a copy of the report. The archive has been compiled according to the standards and guidelines of the CIfA guidelines (CIfA 2014b). In addition, details will be submitted to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) scheme. This is an internet-based project intended to improve the flow of information between contractors, local authority heritage managers and the general public. A copy of the report will be provided to the client and a digital copy of the report will be provided for the relevant Historic Environment Record, as detailed on the cover sheet of this report.

3. Results

3.1 Desk-Based Assessment

3.1.1 The results of the heritage assessment have been used to produce two main elements. Firstly, all available maps of the area were compiled into a map regression, demonstrating how the site physically developed (Section 3.2). The second purpose of the desk-based assessment is to produce a background history of the site. This is intended to cover all periods, in part to provide information that can be used to assess the potential of the site, but more importantly to present the documented details of any sites that are known (see Section 4).

3.1.2 Once this information has been compiled the significance of those sites of archaeological interest within the study area, their potential, and the degree to which they are likely to be affected is considered (Section 5) and based on this possible mitigation work is then suggested.

3.2 Map and Image Regression

3.2.1 **Tithe map for Grasmere, 1838:** a long north-west/south-east aligned building is shown at the site on the opposite side of the road to the church (Plate 1). The block narrows at the south-east end and boundary lines meet it at the south-east end and at the north corner.

3.2.2 **Plan of Grasmere Township, 1848:** the rectory is clearly marked (Plate 2). The site comprises a large block of buildings, essentially formed of two rectangles, with the one to the north being slightly wider than the one to the south. The structure also juts out slightly on the south-west side towards the north end.

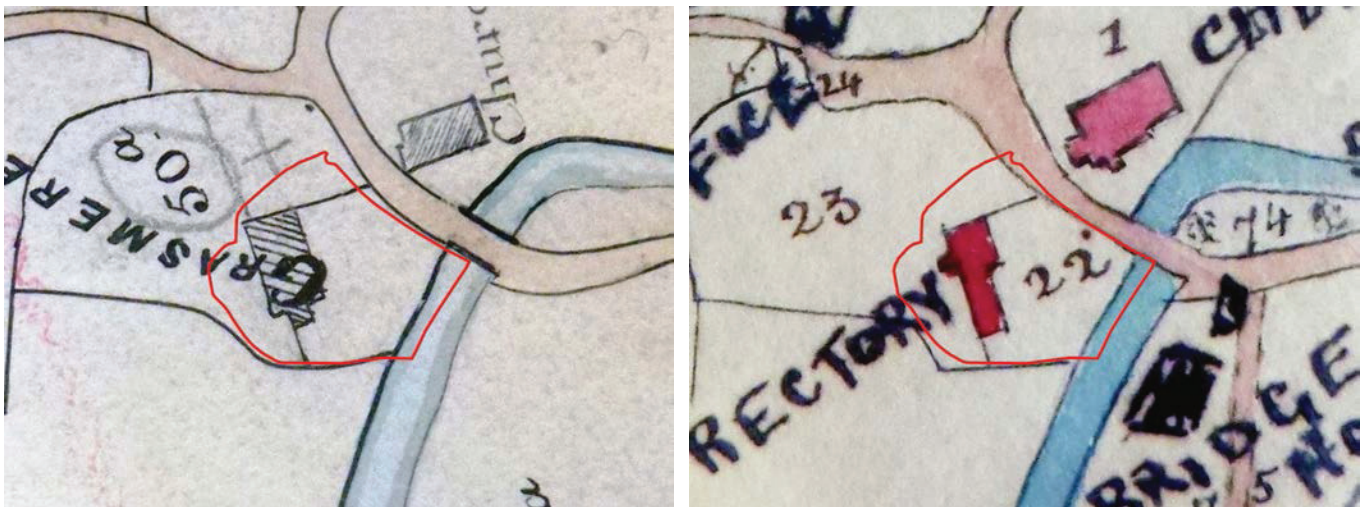


Plate 1 (left): Extract from the tithe map for Grasmere of 1838 (CAC(K) WPR 91/3/1/1 1838)

Plate 2 (right): Extract from a plan of Grasmere township of 1848 (CAC(K) WPR 91/17/6 1848)

3.2.3 **Ordnance Survey, 1861:** this is the first edition Ordnance Survey map at a scale of 1:2,500, surveyed in 1859 (Ordnance Survey 1861; Plate 3). A large block of buildings is marked at the site, comprising two rectangular blocks, aligned slightly north-west/south-east, with a division shown near the centre. The structure juts out slightly on the south-west side towards the north end and on the south-east elevation towards the south-west end. There are what appear to be additional small structures against the southern property boundary. A track and fence run from the north corner of the block to the main road and the edge of the property is wooded, while to the rear (west) side there is what is presumably some form of ramped access to the southern end of the building.

3.2.4 **Ordnance Survey, 1862-63:** much the same information shown on the 1861 edition is shown on the first edition 1:10,560 edition Ordnance Survey map, albeit in less detail due to the scale at which it

was produced (Plate 4; cf. Plate 3). Additional paths are marked in front of the property to the north-east of the buildings.



Plate 3 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1861



Plate 4 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1862 and 1863

3.2.5 Ordnance Survey, 1898: the property has clearly been remodelled and extended to the north-west between the earlier edition and the 1898 edition of the 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey mapping covering the area, which was revised in 1897 (Ordnance Survey 1898a; 1898b; Plate 7; cf. Plate 3). The extension is the same width as the block to the south-east for the most part, with a slightly narrower section at the north-west end. The route of the main road through Grasmere, to the north of the site, has been altered since the earlier map; the paths in front of the house have changed slightly; the dividing line shown within the block of buildings on the earlier edition has shifted to the south, and there is no track or fence from the north corner of the block of buildings. The jutting section to the south-west side of the building has also shifted southwards and a new section juts out to the north-west, close to the centre of the block. A new boundary is also marked to the north of the building, close to where it is now.

3.2.6 Photographs, late 19th century: three photographs, including a glass slide, of the rectory are held as part of the archive of the Wordsworth Trust (Wordsworth Trust 1993.32.13 nd; Wordsworth Trust GRMDC.KA.28.5 nd which is a poor copy of the former) and Wordsworth Trust GRMD.KG.61 nd). All are undated but are probably late 19th century, prior to the remodelling of the building in 1895/6 (see Section 3.2.7 and 4.3.11 below). These photographs all show the front (east) elevation of the rectory as they are taken from the adjoining road (Plate 5 and Plate 6). Both show that at this time the building was slightly shorter, with apparently only four bays, a simple front door with raised surround and entablature, and the barn at the south end.



Plate 5: An undated view of the rectory at Grasmere (Wordsworth Trust 1993.32.13 nd)



Plate 6: An undated view of the rectory at Grasmere (Wordsworth Trust GRMD.KG.61 nd)

3.2.7 **Ordnance Survey, 1899-1900:** the 1:10,560 editions of the Ordnance Survey map from 1899-1900 show a simplified version of the 1897 revisions shown on the 1:2,500 edition (Plate 8; cf. Plate 7). The property is shown to connect to the boundary to the south, but this is probably due to its scale.

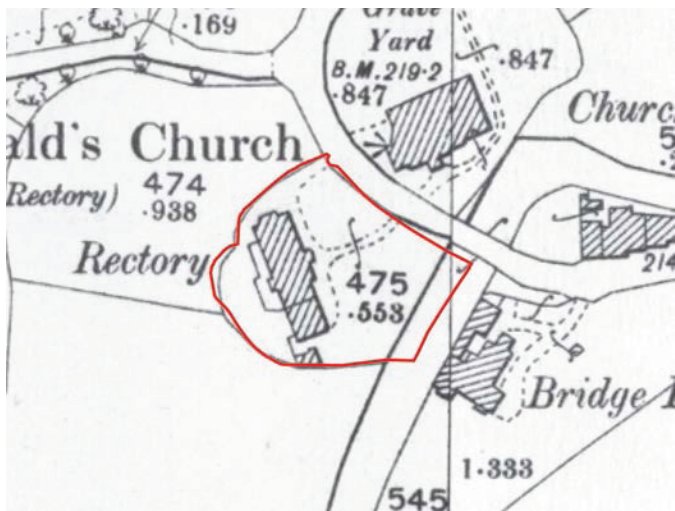


Plate 7 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1898



Plate 8 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1899 and 1900

3.2.8 **Photograph, 1904:** this evidently shows the rectory after the alterations of 1895/6, which fits with its date. The building has been extended to the north by an extra bay with a slightly lower hipped roof outshut added to this.



Plate 9: View of the rectory dated 1904

3.2.9 **Ordnance Survey, 1915:** the 1915 editions of the 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey maps covering the area were revised in 1912 (Ordnance Survey 1915a; 1915b). The south-east end of the block of buildings is unchanged; however, where there was previously a wider block, closer to the width of the rest of the block to the south-east, the north-west end of the block now only has a narrow jutting out section, and a small addition has also been made to the north-east side of the block at the south-east end (Plate 10).

3.2.10 **Ordnance Survey, 1920:** the 1920 editions of the 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey maps covering the area are very simplified, to the extent that the jutting sections to the sides of the block and the buildings

to the south side of the site are not shown (Plate 11; cf. Plate 10). This could represent a revision, c1912-13, but it could equally be an oversimplification due to the scale.



Plate 10 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1915



Plate 11 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey maps of 1920

4. Site History

4.1 Background History

4.1.1 The background history to the site helps our understanding of the development and use of the building and is substantially informed by the map evidence presented above (see *Section 3*).

4.2 Medieval Period (11th century AD – 16th century AD)

4.2.1 **St Oswald's Church, Grasmere:** the history of the former rectory is inevitably connected to that of the church, and although the church's origins are not understood with any certainty, it definitely existed from at least the medieval period. The earliest relevant reference is in 1254 (Armitt 1912, 45; Curwen 1914, 312; Anon 1934, 203 gives a date of 1203 for the earliest reference but no source) and there are surviving elements within the church that can be dated from 14th century (Curwen 1914, 313). It is not clear at what point a dedicated Rectory serving the church at Grasmere was constructed, with the only certain evidence coming in the post-medieval period (see *Section 4.3* below). However, a list of rectors during the medieval period (1254 to the end of the 16th century) can be compiled based on evidence collected by Mary Armit (Table 1), some of whom may well have lived in a building located on the site of the later rectory.

Date	Name
1254	Henry de Galdingham
1290-1291	William de Kendale
1332	Richard ????
1334	Oliver de Welle
1349	Edmund de Ursewyk
1362	Hugo de Middleton
1401	Walter Hoton
????	Reginald Pulham
1443	Peter Yrford
1459	George Plompton
1486	James Chamer
1505-1506	Hugh Ashton
1511	John Frost
1525	William Holgill or Hawgill
1548	Gabriel Croft
1563	Sir Thomas Benson
1569	John Benson
????	Lancelot Levens
1575	John Wilson

Table 1: Rectors of Grasmere in the medieval period (after Armit 1912, 59-60)

4.3 Post-Medieval Period (16th century AD – present)

4.3.1 **The Rectory – Early occupiers:** while it is possible to compile a list of the rectors in the early part of the post-medieval period, again based on the research of Mary Armit (Table 2) there is relatively little information available about any of these. The critical exception is Henry Fleming whose incumbency, as will be discussed in *Section 4.3.6* below, led to the construction of a new rectory. Desirable positions for Henry Fleming, the son of Sir Daniel Fleming, were being discussed by at least 1681: a letter from Thomas Dixon to Daniel Fleming dated 12th July states '*weel [sic 'we'll'] see what can be done for him of parsonages should drop worth a mans acceptance*' (CAC(K) WDRY/5/2427 1681). According to Mary Armit he had taken up the position at Grasmere by 1684 (see Table 2) and a new rectory house was constructed for him in 1687 (see *Section 4.3.6* below). Henry Fleming remained at Grasmere for over 40 years, even though by 1689 his father Sir Daniel Fleming was writing to him regarding the situation: '*your parsonage being expired ye 6th of this month [January] your curate spoke to me enquiring what you would do about it*' (CAC(K) WDRY/5/3429 1688/9). Details of other rectors during

this period are scant. John Craik, rector throughout the second half of the 18th century, was apparently in an unfit condition during the latter part of his tenure: a petition from Sir Michael le Fleming and others to the Bishop of Chester requested a sequestration of the rector who *'has for many years last past laboured under such an indisposition of mind as to be rendered by it totally incapable of taking care of the Rights of the said Rectory or Performing the Duties incumbent upon him in the said parish and parish church'* (CAC)K WD/AG/Box 5/8 nd).

Date	Name
1627	Robert Hogge
1628	Henry Wilson
1645	Mr Benson
1646	Sir Christopher Rawling
1653	John Wallas
1655	John Thompson
1660	John Ambrose
1684	Henry Fleming
1728	William Kilner
1728	George Fleming
1733	William Fleming
1743	John Craik
1806	Thomas Jackson

Table 2: Early post-medieval rectors at Grasmere (after Armitt 1912, 60-61)

4.3.2 **The Wordsworths:** arguably the most famous occupiers of the rectory at Grasmere were William Wordsworth, his wife Mary, their children, his sister Dorothy, and sister in law Sara Hutchinson, although theirs was also one of the shortest periods of occupation in the building's long history. While living in Coleorton in Leicestershire Dorothy had expressed their interest in living in a rectory; in a letter dated 14th November 1806 she stated that *'My sister and I are very fond of the parsonage-house [presumably in Coleorton], and should like to live there, as we said to each other one morning when we were walking beside it – if we could but persuade William to take orders'* (Knight 1907, 262). It was perhaps therefore not unexpected that on their return to Grasmere the rectory was an appealing prospect to them and on the 10th May 1810 Dorothy was able to write *'You will be rejoiced to hear that we shall not be forced to leave Grasmere vale. We are to have the parsonage-house, which will be made a very comfortable dwelling before we enter upon it, which will be next year at this time'* (Knight 1907, 499). As expected, they had moved in by May 1811 and the house was soon adapted to their needs (see Section 4.3.8 below). However, their time at the rectory was filled with tragedy and came during a very difficult time in William Wordsworth's career, in particular his falling out with Samuel Taylor Coleridge. This symbolically came to a head in February 1812 when Coleridge, while on a visit to Robert Southey and family at Greta Hall in Keswick, collected his sons from Ambleside and drove through Grasmere right past the rectory without stopping (Hebron 2000, 86; Jones 2000, 189). Worse was to follow; on the 4th June 1812 William and Mary's daughter Catherine, who had suffered from ill health since birth, died at the age of four. Both parents were away at the time and due to missed post William did not receive the news for six days and Mary even later, so that only Dorothy, Sara Hutchinson and the Wordsworth's elder son John were able to attend the funeral (Hebron 2000, 87; Jones 2000, 213). Within six months, at the end of 1812, there was an outbreak of measles in the family and their youngest son Thomas also died as a result, after developing pneumonia (Hebron 2000, 87; Jones 2000, 219). Whatever the cause of their tragedy it was clear that they could not continue to live in the rectory; Dorothy wrote: *'Wherever we look we are reminded of some pretty action of those innocent children... especially Thomas whose life latterly has been connected with the church-yard in the most affecting manner – there he played daily amongst his school fellows, and daily tripped through it to school, a place which was his pride and delight'* (Hebron 2000, 88). In January 1813 Dorothy wrote to her friend Elizabeth Threlkeld explaining that *'You will be glad to hear that we are going to remove from the Parsonage House, a place which is so very melancholy to us now that we resolved immediately to look out for another house, and we have got the promise of the pleasantest residence in this neighbourhood'* (de Selincourt 1937, 543). By May that year, two years after they had arrived at the rectory, they had moved to Rydal Mount (Hebron 2000, 90). Whether it was connected to the misfortune the Wordsworths had suffered there or for some other

reason the following occupier of the rectory – the subsequent rector, Sir Richard Le Fleming, who had been living in Langdale – did not occupy the building for ‘*some few years*’ after the Wordsworths had left (CAC(K) WPR 91/17/8 1881).

4.3.3 Later occupiers: details about the occupiers of the Rectory from the later 19th century onwards are available in a number of sources, specifically the census of between 1841 and 1911 (*Appendix 2*) and trade directories, and while it was generally occupied by the Rector of Grasmere this was not always the case. The census shows that it was occupied by members of the Fleming and Hayes families in 1841 and 1851. Richard Fleming, the head of the family, is described as a clerk, meaning rector, in 1841 and ‘Rector of Grasmere’ in 1851, while the Hayes family clearly dealt with the agricultural holdings that came with the rectory. By 1861 the house was occupied by the Green family and their servants. The head of the family, John Green, was a land surveyor and agent. The Rectory was the residence of five members of the Tucker family in 1871, a well-known family of artists (see below). By 1881 it was home to the Clarkson family. In 1891 it was again the residence of the Rector of Grasmere, by this time Henry Fletcher and his family. In 1901 it was the home of the Jennings family, and William Jennings is described as clergyman for the Church of England. The evidence from the trade directories (Table 3) is somewhat contradictory as they always state that the rectory was occupied by the rector:

Year	Name	Source
1829	Sir Richard le Fleming	Parson and White 1829, 619
1851	Sir Richard le Fleming	Mannex and Co 1851, 257
1858	Rev Edward Jefferies	Kelly and Co 1885, 22
1873	Rev Edward Jefferies	Kelly and Co 1873, 913
1885	Rev Henry M Fletcher	Bulmer 1885, 412
1894	Rev William Jennings	Kelly and Co 1894, 54
1897	Rev William Jennings	Kelly and Co 1897, 51
1905	Rev JH Heywood	Bulmer 1905, 162
1906	Rev JH Heywood	Kelly's Directories 1906, 52-53
1910	Rev Magnus Fraser Peterson	Kelly's Directories 1910, 56
1914	Rev Magnus Fraser Peterson	Kelly's Directories 1914, 56
1921	Rev Magnus Fraser Peterson	Kelly's Directories 1921, 51
1925	Rev John Branch Phillips	Kelly's Directories 1925, 51
1929	Rev John Branch Phillips	Kelly's Directories 1929, 49
1934	Rev John Branch Phillips	Kelly's Directories 1934, 51
1938	Rev John Branch Phillips	Kelly's Directories 1938, 49

Table 3: Rectors of Grasmere recorded in Trade Directories, 1829-1938

4.3.4 From the additional information included with these entries and other sources it is possible to create a list of all of the later rectors, from 1829 until 1938 (see Table 4 below). However, it is apparent from this, when compared with the census information, that both Edward Jefferies and Henry Fletcher did not live in the rectory for the full period of their incumbencies. This is perhaps because the building required renovation at that time and was not considered fit for the rector's use, something that is perhaps confirmed by the rebuilding that took place in 1896 (see *Sections 4.3.11* below).

Years	Rector
1822-c1851	Sir Richard le Fleming
c1858-c1878	Edward Jefferies
c1884-1892	Henry Fletcher
1893-c1904	William Jennings
c1905-c1906	John Henry Heywood
1909-1921	Magnus Fraser Peterson
1922-post-1938	John Branch Phillips

Table 4: Rectors at Grasmere from 1829 to 1938

4.3.5 **The Tucker Family:** as already outlined, there was a considerable gap in the late 1860s until the early 1880s when the rectory was not occupied by the rector. The census for 1871 reveals that at this time at least five members of the Tucker family were living there: Edward Tucker (23), Alfred Tucker (22), Hubert Tucker (19), Frederick Tucker (15), and Arthur Tucker (7). The three oldest are recorded as

artists and the two youngest would also become artists in their own right (see Table 5). They are all listed as sons of the head of the family, presumably Edward Tucker Snr (see below), although his name is not recorded in the listing. The family are celebrated watercolourists and all of them apart from Alfred were prominent members of the Lake Artists Society (Artist Biographies 2019e). *'The Lake Artists Society was founded in 1904 largely on the initiative of W. G. Collingwood, the well known artist, local historian and secretary to John Ruskin, to promote the work of its members. Members in the early years included...Arthur and Fred Tucker and Hubert Coutts (Tucker), who was the first President'* (The Lake Artists Society 2019). The artists' biographies are summarised in Table 5 from information available online (Artist Biographies 2019a; 2019b; 2019c; 2019d; 2019e; 2019f).

Name	Lifetime	Information
Tucker, Edward Snr	1825-1909	Painter born in Bristol who had five artistic sons: Edward Jnr, Alfred, Hubert, Frederick and Arthur, all of whom he taught to paint and apart from Alfred all of whom were stalwarts of the Lake Artists
Tucker, Edward Jnr	1847-1910	Painter born in Gravesend, Kent, the eldest son of artist Edward Tucker
Tucker, Alfred Robert	1849-1914	Painter and illustrator, born in Woolwich
Coutts (Tucker), Hubert	1851-1921	Painter and third son of Edward Tucker Senior; in 1892 he changed his name by deed poll to avoid any artistic reference to his family name
Tucker, Frederic	1856-1935	Painter, born in Weymouth
Tucker, Arthur	1864-1929	Painter and etcher, born in Bristol

Table 5: Artist biographies for members of the Tucker family

4.3.6 **The Rectory building:** as has already been outlined, a rectory at Grasmere is known to have existed from at least the late 17th century; it is likely that a building serving the purpose existed before this but no specific reference to it is recorded, although a 'chamber' belonging to the rector is recorded in the late 16th century (Armitt 1912, 68-69), but it is not clear what this comprised, and in at least one case they may have resided in 'bachelor quarters' established at Rydal Hall (*op cit*, 90). Mary Armitt speculated that the rectory complex might originally have included some form of manor house but there is no other evidence for this (*op cit*, 171). The position of Rector and therefore the Rectory was initially closely connected to the le Fleming family, import local landowners based at Rydal Hall, who purchased the patronage of the rectory after the Dissolution (Parson and White 1829, 614) and were able to use their position to influence the appointment of Rector, with several members of their own family taking the role. The earliest reference to the specific building of rectory is from 1686/7 when the position of Rector was about to be taken by Henry Fleming, son of Sir Daniel Fleming. A letter dated March 14th from Henry to his father states: *'This morning I received a letter from my brother William concerning Grasmere church and parsonage house, with a model of the house he designes [sic] to be built; which I like very well, if the money will finish it, and adorn the church. But I am afraid it will fall short, unless you be pleased to be assisting in wood'* (CAC(K) WDRY5/3094 1686-1687). This is essentially confirmed by the discovery during renovations in 1895 of a beam into which was inscribed *'This house was built 1687 Henry Fleming Par'* (Armitt 1912, 164). Confirmation of this event is found in the account of the Rev Thomas Machel, who travelled through the area in 1692. He was guided through Grasmere by the Rev Henry Fleming and described the parsonage as *'lately rebuilt by the present rector... from the very foundations'* (Ewbank 1963, 144), which implies that there was an earlier structure but that it had essentially been totally removed. However, the construction of the new parsonage was clearly not without its problems; a letter from Henry to his father dated 28th September 1689 stated that the parsonage house was *'laying open to the wind and weather, which necessarily must decay and ruin it in a short time, requires some attendance'* (CAC(K) WDRY/5/3670 1689).

4.3.7 There is a considerable gap in the available information about the rectory building following its original construction in 1687. However, it is apparent that prior to the brief residency of the Wordsworth family the building was renovated, having been described by the church wardens as being *'in a ruinous state'* in 1798 (Armitt 1912, 170). This corresponds with the period in which John Craik was rector (see Table 2); an undated document describes how *'the Rectory or Parsonage House... is very much out of Repair and the out Buildings in a ruinous and dilapidated stage so much that it will be necessary to take*

the said outbuildings down and rebuild them' (CAC(K) WD/AG/Box 5/8 nd). However, a survey made in 1805 states that the rectory still comprised 'an House, Barn, Byer & Stable with a garden' (CAC(K) WDRY 2/6/3/4 1728-1825).

4.3.8 With the arrival of the Wordsworths at the rectory the documentary record about the building increases considerably due to the large amount of correspondence that has been preserved. Dorothy Wordsworth provides a number of descriptions of the building prior to their move and afterwards. Writing on May 11th 1810 she stated that *'it will have rooms enough. He [Mr Jackson, the vicar at the time] will make us a good library out of a part of the barn, and there are already two parlours and four good bedrooms. The stair-case is roomy, and there is a lumber-room and servant's-room, a decent small kitchen, and Mr J. is going to build a new back-kitchen'* (Knight 1907, 500). Writing again in December of that year she describes the progress at the building and their plans for it: *'If the parsonage were ready to receive us – garden made, trees planted, etc, etc – I should look forward with pleasure to the month of May, the time of our removal from Allan Bank. But alas! nothing is done, and the old parson is so ill that it seems absolutely inhuman to send workmen into his house. William has undertaken the whole charge of getting the business done, and you know how unfit he is for any task of this kind. Mary and I are, however, determined not to enter upon it, till it is finished completely; for we were thoroughly sickened of workmen when we first came hither'* (Knight 1907, 507).

4.3.9 Despite this and as already discussed, the Wordsworths had moved in by May 1811, and Dorothy was able to write on the 11th of June 1811 *'We have just got into our new house, and we think we shall like it very well when we are settled'* (de Selincourt 1937, 451). On 16th June 1811, Dorothy Wordsworth wrote to her friend Catherine Clarkson and provides a lengthy description of the building, although she initially complains that completing the work has been hampered by wet weather and that they *'cannot gravel the walks until the River falls'* hinting at the ongoing problem with flooding:

'Now I must tell you that we like our new house very much. There are only three important objections to it. First, that it fronts the East, and has no sitting rooms looking westward, therefore we lose the sun very soon; secondly, that it is too public, but this evil will wear away every year, for we shall plant abundance of shrubs in the Autumn in addition to those already planted; and thirdly that the field in which the house stands is very wet, and cannot be drained. It is no playing-place for the children, and being at present not divided from the road to the house, it leads them into continual temptation to dirty and wet themselves; but, when all other things are done it is to be fenced off, and a plantation to be made all round the back part of the house.'

Mary's Room is so large that it would easily contain two beds, and on occasion a truckle bed may be made there, for a child or two. Mine is a large room also, and a very large bookcase stands in it conveniently. Sarah's is smaller, but a very pretty room—we have got new hangings for her Bed, formerly our white Bed. The Children's room holds the two Camp beds very nicely. They stand at the end—it is a long cottagelike room with a coved ceiling. The Maids Room is large and holds boxes etc without any appearance of litter or crowding—indeed we could at any time have a truckle-bed there when we want to accommodate Friends: but as this cannot be done without disarranging the Family and still more because the parlours are small, we do not intend to have Hartley and Derwent for two days in the week, as at Allan Bank.

The noise and confusion of so many children for so long a time in the house would be intolerable; but in fine weather they may always walk over on Saturday or Sunday morning, and spend the day with us. Hartley is here to-day, and will return at night. Below stairs we have two good kitchens, with a porch at the back door. William's parlour is but a little cabin; but it will be very snug and neat, when we have got the furniture put into it. It holds two small bookcases conveniently. The larger parlour is considerably bigger than the sitting room at Town-End, and all the rooms are of a good height. We have a large store-room and dairy, a wee cellar—big enough for us—and a good pantry. In short there is no comfort wanting, and our furniture takes to its places much better than at Allan Bank—at least things look much more as if they were made for us and the house, than at Allan Bank. The upper rooms have bad floors – they are of old black oak and very rough, but Fanny flatters herself she will make them look good when she gives the house its final cleaning. Many are the cleanings we have had - such scouring of lime – oh! You would pity us. The workmen here seem to take a delight in scattering lime about them wherever

they go. There is an oblong four-cornered court before the door, surrounded by ugly white walls. The kitchen garden lies prettily to the River, is all rough and desolate at present, and we content ourselves with prophesying a speedy growth to the shrubs. If they thrive, as at Town End [meaning Dove Cottage], we shall soon be huddled up in a leafy nest' (de Selincourt 1937, 452-453; a slightly abbreviated version of this letter is also reproduced by Knight (1907, 519-520).

4.3.10 The same letter also provides some additional information about the building and how it was utilised by the Wordsworths: *'yesterday we were all employed in bearing the books out of the barn, and arranging them; a most serious labour, as well as a very perplexing and troublesome job. We got the work accomplished and went to bed at ten o'clock completely wearied'* (Knight 1907, 521-522; de Selincourt 1937, 455-456). By the end of the year however problems with the building were becoming apparent, as described by Dorothy writing in on December 27th 1811: *'to return to the smoke, we have been obliged thus far to submit to the inconvenience, and must endure it yet some weeks longer, on account of the parson's tithe-corn, which is lodged in the barn, and the chimney cannot be cured till that is removed. We hope however that it may be cured, but there are other inconveniences attending our situation, which in summer we did not fully perceive. The field is a perfect bog; and our landlord is so dilatory that we may wait yet another half-year before we are clean and decent, even at our very doors'* (Knight 1907, 541-542). As already discussed, the Wordsworths had left the rectory by May 1813; the following year a terrier was produced, which gives a remarkably detailed description of the rectory: *'one slated dwelling house, in length fifty feet in breadth thirty three feet without the walls [i.e. external dimensions]. One slated barn in length forty five feet in breadth twenty six feet, under which are four stall stable and cow house and one peat house'* (CAC(K) WDRY 2/6/3/4 1728-1825).

4.3.11 **Later alterations:** it is apparent from various late 19th and early 20th century terriers for the Rectory that the range of agricultural buildings attached to the house described in 1814 remained throughout the majority of the 19th century. Terriers for 1867, 1878, and 1884 (CAC(K) WPR 91/4/4/1 1867; CAC(K) WPR 91/4/4/2 1878; CAC(K) WPR 91/4/4/3 1884) list them as comprising *'Hay Barn, Stable, Cow byre, Peat house, Wash house, Hen house, Pigsty, and Privy'* as well as listing a garden and orchard and other land. The barn is regularly referred to from the early 20th century onwards as *'the old tithe barn'* (Armitt 1912, 164; Curwen 1914, 324), confirming Dorothy Wordsworth's statement about it in 1811 (see *Section 4.5.7* above). Various sources refer to alterations carried out to the fabric of the rectory in the later 19th century, specifically 1895/6 (Kelly and Co 1897, 51; this is evident in the changes shown to the site in the historic maps; see *Section 3.3*). Mary Armit states that *'On the re-construction of the rectory in 1895 the old elevation was preserved as much as possible, but the level of the ground floor was raised five feet'* in order to deal with the damp (Armitt 1912, 171), although the Listed Building information states the rectory is 18th century (Historic England 2019; *Appendix 1*). The part of the building originally comprising a barn was also subject to alterations in 1905 in order to convert it into a parish room; it is not clear what these changes comprised but the beam dated 1687 that had been rediscovered during the renovations of 1895/6 was apparently incorporated into the new parish room (Armitt 1912, 164). The later terriers also reflect this way in which the building had changed, with that of 1894 originally listing the same range of outbuildings of an agricultural nature, the former of which have been crossed out in pencil and the words *'Rectory Room'* added (CAC(K) WPR 91/4/4/4 1894). In the following terrier the list has been changed to just *'Rectory Room, Peat House, and Wash House'* (CAC(K) WPR 91/4/4/5 1908).

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 There is a remarkably detailed historical record relating to the old rectory at Grasmere, although this is not uncommon for buildings associated with the church. Nevertheless, this has been enhanced by its connections with the le Fleming family and the Wordsworths.

5.2 Significance

5.2.1 The building represents a significant structure in its own right, with at least late 17th century origins, that was substantially rebuilt at the end of the 19th century so that it is not clear how much early fabric remains. However, according to the Listing, large parts of it are 18th century, and while there is some documentary record of alterations at this time it is not clear how extensive these were. Regardless of the significance of the actual building, it is its connections to various famous families – initially the le Flemings, for a short but important time the Wordsworths, and also in the late 19th century the Tuckers, a family of artists – that add a considerable amount to the importance of the site.

5.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.3.1 Given the number of phases of alteration recorded in the documentary record there is undoubtedly more that could be learned about the property through a more detailed investigation of its fabric. This would be best achieved through an archaeological building recording and would establish in more detail the manner in which the building developed and potentially whether there was any of the 17th century (or earlier) fabric remaining. Dendrochronological dating of any suitable timber would also be a useful approach as part of this research.

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Appendix 1: Listed Building Information

Summary from Historic England (2019).

Heritage Category:	Listed Building
Grade:	II
List Entry Number:	1245159
Date first listed:	12 th January 1967
Statutory Address:	RECTORY
County:	Cumbria
District:	South Lakeland (District Authority)
Parish:	Lakes
National Park:	LAKE DISTRICT
National Grid Reference:	NY 33695 07342

Details: GRASMERE Rectory. 18th century. Wordsworth lived here 1811 to 1813. Colour washed roughcast with slate roof, two storeys. Gabled porch with round-arched opening and inner door. Three 16-paned sash windows on ground floor, with labels added, and four 16-paned sash windows above. Lower wing at each end in the same style.

Appendix 2: Census Information for The Rectory, 1841-1911

1841 Census (HO107/Piece 1159/Folio 6/Page 7 1841)

Place	Name	Age	Relationship to head	Profession	Place of birth
Rectory	Richard Fleming	40	-	Snr Clerk	Not Westmorland
	Isabella Fleming	11	-	-	Westmorland
	William Fleming	7	-	-	Westmorland
	Henry Hayes	20	-	Agricultural labourer	Westmorland
	James Hayes	15	-	Agricultural labourer	Westmorland

1851 Census (HO107/Piece 2441/Folio 5/Page 3, 1851; HO107/Piece 2441/Folio 6/Page 4 1851)

Place	Name	Age	Relationship to head	Profession	Place of birth
Rectory	Richard Fleming Kt. Bart.	60	Head	Rector of Grasmere	Cumberland, Whitehaven
	Elizabeth Fleming	24	Daughter	-	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Isabella Fleming	21	Daughter	-	Westmorland, Grasmere
	John Hayes	53	Servant	Cow man	Westmorland, Staveley
	Mary Hayes	37	Servant	Housekeeper	Westmorland, Ambleside
	Jane Hayes	13	Servant	House servant	Westmorland, Rydal

1861 Census (RG 9/Piece 3963/Folio 85/Page 1 1861)

Place	Name	Age	Relationship to head	Profession	Place of birth
The Rectory	John Green	44	Head	Land surveyor and agent	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Elizabeth Green	38	Wife		Lancashire, Rivington
	John S Green	12	Son	Scholar	Lancashire, Bury
	Eliza Green	8	Daughter	Scholar	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Margaret J Green	6	Daughter	Scholar	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Thomas A Green	3	Son	-	Westmorland, Grasmere
	James Green	9 mo	Son	-	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Harriett Jones	24	Governess	Governess	Middlesex, London
Sarah Watson	30	Servant	General servant	Cumberland, St John's	

1871 Census (RG10/Piece 5278/Folio 39/Page 4 1871)

Place	Name	Age	Relationship to head	Profession	Place of birth
Rectory	Edward Tucker	23	Son	Artist	Kent, Gravesend
	Alfred Tucker	22	Son	Artist	Kent, Woolwich
	Hubert Tucker	19	Son	Artist	Middlesex, London
	Frederick Tucker	15	Son	Scholar	Dorsetshire, Weymouth
	Arthur Tucker	7	Son	Scholar	Gloucestershire, Bristol
	Elizabeth Hall	21	Servant	Domestic servant	Northumberland, Shields

1881 Census (RG11/Piece 5207/Folio 6/Page 3 1881)

Place	Name	Age	Relationship to head	Profession	Place of birth
The Rectory	William Clarkson	46	Head	Labourer	Yorkshire, Melbourne
	Sarah A Clarkson	42	Wife	-	Yorkshire, Willerby
	Robert Clarkson	16	Son	Telegraph clerk	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Ann Clarkson	5	Daughter	Scholar	Westmorland, Grasmere

1891 Census (RG12/Piece 4328/Folio 108/Page 3 1891)

Place	Name	Age	Relationship to head	Profession	Place of birth
The Rectory	Henry M Fletcher	68	Head	Rector of Grasmere	Scotland
	Charlotte Fletcher	70	Wife	-	Scotland
	Elizabeth L Fletcher	32	Daughter	-	Derry Hill, Wiltshire
	Jane Atkinson	25	Servant	Domestic servant	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Dorothy Kirkby	26	Servant	Domestic servant	Westmorland, Grasmere
	Sarah A Benson	23	Servant	Domestic servant	Westmorland, Patterdale

1901 Census (RG13/Piece 4907/Folio 113/Page 17 1901)

Place	Name	Age	Relationship to head	Profession	Place of birth
The Rectory	William Jennings	54	Head	Clergyman Church of England	Westmorland, Helton
	Charlotte H F Jennings	46	Wife	-	Scotland
	Muriel S Jennings	19	Daughter	-	Hong Kong
	Irene Jennings	12	Daughter	-	Hong Kong
	Violet Jennings	9	Daughter	-	Scotland
	Eunice Lillian Smith	36	Servant	Governess	Gloucestershire, Bristol
	Catherine Cooper	32	Servant	Cook Domestic	Cheshire, Crewe
	Sarah Ann Cooper	29	Servant	Housemaid	Cheshire, Crewe