

## THE RECTORY

The Rectory attached to St. Mark's church has been utilised by all the rectors from 1850 to 2007. During a long interregnum, following the departure of Rev. Michael Ainsworth, it was acquiesced by Manchester Diocese to house the Bishop of Bolton and was accorded the name Bishop's Lodge by the then Bishop of Manchester. During the 1880's, it was the home of the Earl of Mulgrave who had at that period 3 curates working with him and who resided there. Its first occupant was the Rev. St. Vincent Beechey.

By mid-1850, the Rev. St. Vincent Beechey's time in charge of Fleetwood was coming to an end. His final sermon was to be given on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June at St. Peter's Church. *The Manchester Times* of Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July 1850 reported that "The Earl of Ellesmere has nominated the Rev. St. Vincent Beechey to the Perpetual Curacy of Worsley, vacant by the resignation of the Rev. Charles Cameron." Then, on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 1850, a presentation was made to St. Vincent Beechey at Fleetwood. £80 had been raised to allow the purchase of an excellent microscope and case, and a beautiful rosewood cabinet, made by a local cabinetmaker. His speech of thanks took 1½ hours to deliver!

The newspapers reported:

*Liverpool Standard* - Tuesday 26 March 1850 The Rev. Charles Cameron, M.A. has resigned the incumbency of St. Mark's Church, Worsley. The living is in the gift of the Earl of Ellesmere, the patron.

*The Manchester Times* - Saturday 20 July 1850 The Earl of Ellesmere has nominated the Rev. St. Vincent Beechey to the Perpetual Curacy of Worsley, vacant by the resignation of the Rev. Charles Cameron.

As for the parish of Worsley, when he was invited to come to here, the income was doubled and a new parsonage was proposed for him and his family. [The former vicarage, now the home of the Bishop of Bolton, bears the year 1850 above the doorway].

St. Vincent Beechey had for some time been a strong advocator of education, both in Norfolk and in Lancashire, where he was the founder of Rossall School for the sons of clergy and laity. The Earl of Ellesmere by this time had become a contributor to the school's funds and it is this that brought the two men together.

Consequently, SVB received a short letter from Lady Ellesmere, an invitation to become the Vicar of Worsley. She wrote:

*Dear Sir,*

*Lord Ellesmere is not well enough to write himself, but he wishes to say that the living of Worsley will be vacant in three months, and if you will accept it, he will double the income and build a house for your family.*

*Yours truly,  
Harriet L. Ellesmere.*

Unlike the church of St. Mark, the house has not been granted any national heritage status, but it is a building of local heritage and significance, and has been classified as such by the local council of Salford. In order to be granted this status, the Rectory had to satisfy any number of criteria. The building satisfied criteria 1, 4 and 6. It could be argued that the building would satisfy other criteria. These are shown in full below:

**Conservation areas**

- St. Mark's

**Locally listed heritage assets**

- St Marks Vicarage (Crossfield)
  - Reference: HE\_LLWO27
  - [More information about locally listed heritage assets in Salford \(opens in a new window\)](#)
  - Access more detailed heritage information using the [interactive heritage map](#)

**Land classification**

Vicarage to the north of St Mark's Church, Worsley, Salford

- Reference: HGM31116
- Summary: Vicarage built c. 1850 (1) H.E.R.1547.3.0. On mid C 19th mapping it is named as Crossfield House and has substantial grounds & an ornamental lake (2). On late C 19th mapping it is described as a vicarage (3). It may lie within Worsley Park (4).

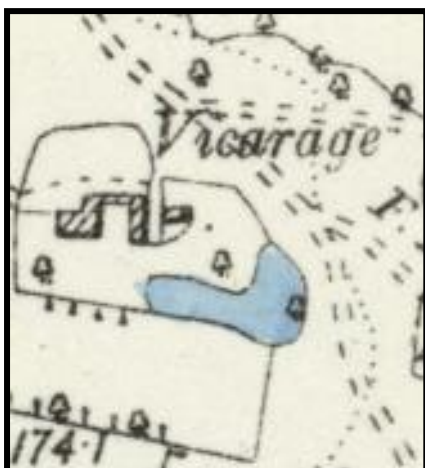
**Latest classification date range: 1850 - 1851**

- Character Type: Residential - Villas/ Detached Housing
- Period: AD 19th Century
- Confidence: Certain

**Earlier classification date range: 1600 - 1851**

- Character Type: Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational - Private Parkland
- Notes:
- Confidence: Probable

One very interesting feature of the panel above is the summary. It estimates the building of the Rectory at about 1850. Further to that is the reference to a map in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century showing it named as Crossfield House, with substantial grounds and an ornamental lake. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was described as a vicarage. The old OS map copied below, surveyed in 1845 and published in 1848, shows the outline of the new church with its north wing missing. This was added in 1851. It also shows the crescent-shaped ornamental lake to the east of the house.



The map of 1891/1894 (left) shows the existence of part of the original lake. By 1909, the lake had disappeared.



### Salford's Local List of Heritage Assets.

The selection criteria used in assessing whether a building, structure or feature should be included on the list include:

1. **Architectural Interest:** Buildings and structures of an architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship that contributes positively to their environment and offer a composition that affords value, in its proportions, materials and construction
2. **Historical Interest:** A building, object or place that is connected with Salford, Greater Manchester or the north west's social, economic and cultural growth and development, or is concerned with a person or event that plays a significant role in local or regional cultural heritage.
3. **Age:** Local heritage assets will be considered from all periods. However, particular attention will be given to buildings that pre-date 1919 and therefore contribute to the principal industrial era under which the city established itself. Nevertheless, there are many 20th century buildings of impeccable design that must be considered due to their own cultural merits.
4. **Aesthetic value:** The appearance of buildings, monuments, places and landscapes, including groups of buildings that individually or together form a set piece or characterise a townscape. Particular attention will be given to style, design, materials, composition and layout.
5. **Local Interest:**
  1. People and events - buildings and landscapes associated with influential people and events.



2. Industrial heritage - buildings and landscapes that represent most strongly Salford as a place different from other areas of the region or even within Greater Manchester.

6. Group value: The collective value of a townscape or landscape where individually assets have limited value, yet together comprise a common theme important to the growth of the city or with attractive aesthetic properties.

7. Landmark Value: Assets that have historically marked important moments in the landscape, provide punctuation to streets or mark arrival points.

8. Social or Communal Value: Assets that are of value to a particular residential commercial, historical, religious or interest group.



It has long been a puzzle as to who the architect of the rectory was. By the mid 1850's, the foremost church architects and designers of the day (Scott, Blore, Barry and Pugin) had all had contact with Francis Egerton. I am indebted to Beryl Patten, local historian, for passing to me the following information taken from a book published by the Manchester Group of the Victorian Society 2024:

Extract from:

A Biographical Dictionary of the Architects of Greater Manchester  
1800 - 1940

Building name	Worsley Parsonage
Date	1841 - 1843
District/town	Worsley
County	G.M.C.A., England
Architect	Edward Blore
Client	Francis Egerton
Work	New Build

Although the date is incorrect, it is pleasing to note that the architect seems to have been Edward Blore, the architect of Worsley New Hall for the Earl of Ellesmere.

The locally listed heritage asset in Salford shows:

**St. Marks Vicarage (Crossfield), Walkden Road**



- **Reference:** HE\_LLWO27
- **Description:** Vicarage, (now home to the Bishop of Bolton). Built 1850 (according to the date stone, but was remodelled from an earlier structure). Entrance lodge and a crescent shaped lake to the east of the house are now lost. Linked by footpaths to St. Mark's Church and Worsley School. Gothic Revival style constructed in red clay brick and dressed in sandstone, with a decorated Welsh slate roof behind copped gabled ends and carrying substantial diamond plan chimneys.
- **Significance:** Completed (remodelled) just four years after the consecration of the Church of St. Marks (Grade I listed church by George Gilbert Scott). It is constructed in the Gothic Revival style to ensure exceptional group composition with the church. The building is very much in the style of Augustus Pugin, with the gothic style expressed honestly and the decoration functional. The building owes much to Pugin's house 'The Grange' in Ramsgate, Kent (1844).
- **Number of buildings:** 1
- **Criteria:** Architectural interest (1), Aesthetic value (4), Group value (6).

Finally, the writer of a potted history of the church which appears on the official website of the church states, in reference to the Rectory:

*The Site*

A commanding site of 10.403 acres was chosen, known as Cross Field, taking its name from the 'Travellers' or Our Lady's Cross which formerly stood at the junction of Leigh and Walkden Roads. It appears on 18th-century maps and was probably a travellers' cross

Later that century, the Duke of Bridgewater and his agent/engineer John Gilbert built a lead pencil manufactory on the site - the vaulting in the cellar of what is now the Rectory, which was built in 1850 and originally known as Crossfield House, may be a relic of this (John Gilbert has received belated recognition with the naming of a new pub opposite the church - at which the Rector pulled the first pint.)

The church dominated the rural landscape then, as it does the motorway network now.

As of August 2024, the future of the Rectory has not been resolved with the Diocese.

