

Ann Walker's funeral – a possible scenario.

This article is different from the many others that we've researched and posted on our website. As far as we know, there are few facts and no detailed report of Ann Walker's funeral, so this is just me speculating as to how it might have unfolded. I'd welcome any further information or suggestions. It isn't often that our articles contain so many 'possibly' or 'probably' comments.

Hence this article is speculative.

It draws on knowledge of how society funerals took place in the early to mid-19C, accounts in Anne Lister's diaries of funerals that she attended, some information about Ann Walker senior's funeral and a few other pieces of information.

Superintendent Registrar's District <i>Halifax</i>									
Registrar's District <i>Brighouse</i>									
1854. DEATHS in the District of <i>Brighouse</i> in the County of <i>York</i>									
No.	When Died.	Name and Surname.	Sex.	Age.	Rank or Profession.	Cause of Death.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.
<i>6</i>	<i>Twenty-fifth February 1854 Cliffe Hill Hipperholme</i>	<i>Ann Walker</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>57 years</i>	<i>Spinner</i>	<i>Congestion of the Brain effusion Cerebral</i>	<i>J. The master of John Kelly prosecut ab deante Cliffe Hill Hipperholme</i>	<i>First March 1854</i>	<i>Thomas Joseph Registon</i>

Her death certificate was witnessed by John Kelly, the coachman at Cliffe Hill and one of Ann's servants. He appears on the 1851 census for Cliffe Hill which also includes Ann as head of the household and Lydia Fenton née Wilkinson as the housekeeper. Of the five servants, Irish born Johnna O'Brien was 'Attendant on Miss Walker'.

1851 England Census for Ann Walker						
Yorkshire > Hipperholme cum Brighouse > 2d						
<i>Cliffe Hill</i>	<i>Ann Walker</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>27</i>
	<i>Lydia Fenton</i>	<i>Housekeeper</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>25</i>
	<i>Johnna O'Brien</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>21</i>
	<i>Ann Parrham</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>24</i>
	<i>Edna Thompson</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>21</i>
	<i>Harriet Lambert</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>22</i>
	<i>John Kelly</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>24</i>
	<i>John Greenwood</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>W</i>			<i>25</i>

The notification of her death was announced in a number of newspapers. 3 March 1854 Morning Herald (London), 3 March 1854 London Evening Standard, 4 March 1854 Saint James Chronicle London and 4 March 1854 Manchester Courier,

DIED.

On Feb. 28, at his residence, 3, Royal-crescent, Bath, William Baldock, Esq., aged 61.

On Feb. 25, at Cliffe-hill, Halifax, Yorkshire, Ann, youngest daughter of the late John Walker, Esq., of Crowsnest, aged 50.

and in the Leeds Intelligencer of 4 March, 1854,

Halifax—On the 25th ult., at Cliffe Hill, ANN, youngest daughter of the late John WALKER, Esq., of Crownest, aged 50.

and then the Halifax Courier on 11 March 1854.

DEATHS.

On Sunday week, at Rochdale, aged 75 years, Mrs. Susan Rankin, sister of the late Mrs. Denton, Union-street, Halifax.

March 1, at Dapper Mill, Ovenden, in the 60th year of his age, after a severe illness, and deeply regretted by a large circle of friends, Mr. Wm. Cardus, for more than 32 years engineer at the above place.

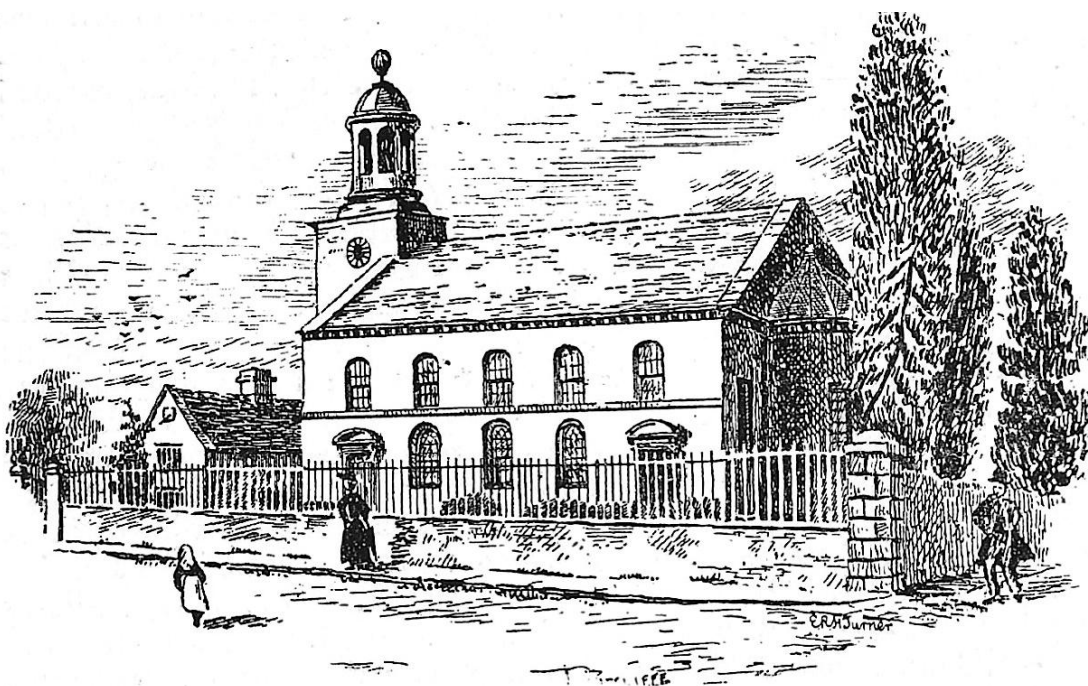
Feb. 25, at Cliffe Hill, Halifax, aged 50 years, Ann, youngest daughter of the late John Walker, Esq., of Crow's-Nest.



Cliffe Hill where Ann Walker was born and where she died

The funeral took place at St Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe on 3rd March 1854. The Anglican church of St Matthew's, Lightcliffe would have been in its simple form – a plain Georgian preaching church – as built for Ann's grandfather 80 years before. The re-ordering including the new pulpits and stained-glass east window were arranged by Evan Charles Sutherland Walker some ten years after Ann's death in memory of his family including his aunt.

There could have been singing from the choir in the rear gallery by the Schnetzler (Snetzler) organ. However, this is probably unlikely as funeral services were probably 'said' services. The tower's single bell probably tolled.



LIGHTCLIFFE OLD CHURCH; built on the site of Eastfield Chapel.

We know that Rev Charles Musgrave, Vicar of Halifax, took the service and signed the register. His attendance indicates the high profile of the funeral. Surely Rev William Gurney, the perpetual curate of St Matthew's, would have been present too. He would have known Ann since his appointment in 1840 and especially as 'parish' priest in her final

BURIALS in the Parish of <i>Halifax, Chapelry of Lightcliffe</i> in the County of <i>York</i> in the Year 1854				
Name.	Abode.	When buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
1854 <i>Ann Walker</i> No. 881.	<i>Cliff Hill</i> <i>in</i> <i>Lightcliffe</i>	<i>March</i> <i>3^d</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>Charles</i> <i>Musgrave</i>

seven years when she was living in Cliffe Hill.

The Funeral Director was Leonard Duncan who was an undertaker and draper. He appears to have been the obvious choice for the gentry of Halifax having arranged funerals for Anne Lister and several of her family,

The principal mourner would have been Evan Charles Sutherland, Ann's nephew and heir, known subsequently for a number of years under the terms of Ann's will as Sutherland Walker. He was around 20 years old. He was possibly supported by his step-mother, Mary Elizabeth Sutherland née Haigh who was George Mackay Sutherland's second wife. Whether Ann Walker Sutherland, Ann's niece would have returned from boarding school is unknown.

It seems likely that Ann's Committee, relatives Mrs Harriet Dyson née Edwards and Mr John Rawson junior, who had legally looked after Ann for several years would have attended.

From Cliffe Hill, surely Lydia Fenton née Wilkinson - a lifetime friend – would have been present and, possibly, Johanna O'Brien, the attendant and servant provided by the Committee. Another possible female attendee - even though few women, apparently, attended funerals at this period – may have been her friend and neighbour Ellen Carter née Nicholl. From Anne Lister's diaries we know that Ann Walker and Ellen Carter regularly visited one another. Presumably this continued, perhaps even more frequently so, after Ann moved back to Cliffe Hill as by then the widow Ellen Carter was living nearby in Smith House.

William Gray junior of York, Ann's only named Executor might have been present. It is highly probable that Robert Parker and Thomas Adam, her family solicitors would have been there.

There may well have been members of the local gentry, landowners and millowners in attendance. For example, William and Eliza Priestley were related to Ann and had been neighbours when they rented New House before moving to Thorp Arch.

Samuel Washington as a tenant – at the time he and his family were living in Lydgate House - and the Crow Nest land agent would certainly have been present. He had known the Walker family all his life, his father having served as bookkeeper to both Ann's grandfather, father and uncle. He then served Ann for many years, being very much involved with documenting the Crow Nest estate's finances and assisting Ann in the purchase of properties.

The headmaster of Hipperholme Grammar School, Rev John Warburton received part of his salary from two of Ann's farms and so may very well have also attended the funeral. Other attendees may have included at least some of Cliffe Hill's neighbours; Titus Salt was renting the Crow Nest mansion at the time, Daniel Carter, Ellen Carter's son, resided at Giles House, a representative of the Sunderland family of Coley Hall and Henry William Ripley who lived at Holme House.

Presumably many of Ann's principal tenants would have been there. Arbitrarily, I've used a cut off of £30 per annum rent and assumed that those tenants known to be paying rent in 1845 were still in possession. If they weren't, it would likely be the next generation of the family – tenancies often followed without break. On this basis, many of the following may have been in the congregation.

James Pearson (Holdsworth Farm), John Mallinson (Lane Ends & Tanhouse Farms), Simeon Shaw (Langley Farm), James Sharp (Townend Farm), James Sowood (Bouldshaw Farm), Samuel Hebblethwaite (Lower Hagstocks), Abraham Holdsworth (Hall Houses), widow Bottomley (Shibden Mill, Inn and mine), widow Hainsworth (Shugden Head), Samuel Firth (Black Castle North), Caleb Wilkinson, John & Samuel Wood (Water Lane Mills), John Haigh (Honley Mills), William Throp (Shaw Syke, Ann & Anne's plant supplier), John Holdsworth (Black Horse Inn), John Stott (Middle Ellistone), Thomas Outram (Upper Ellistone and land by his mill), Joseph Taylor (Hard Platts), William Hirst (Moor Meers), Levi Sykes (Moulson Place), Ezra Milner (Green House), Henry Ripley (Manns Farm), George Haigh (Mortimers Farm) and John Hirst (Lower Crow Nest). We can probably add many other tenants and workers. All would have known their place, inside or outside the church building.

Samuel Sowden and other Lister estate tenants would have known Ann Walker at least from her time living at Shibden Hall if not before. It is possible that some of them, especially the key tenants, would have been expected to attend the funeral in the same way that they were expected to attend the Lister funerals. As a former churchwarden at Lightcliffe and with two sons as vicars Samuel Sowden was perhaps the most likely to have attended.

In 1854 there were four churchwardens, Joseph Thornton, Joseph Wormald, Gilbert Goldthorpe and Thomas Lister, some or all would have been there. As would Sidney Ellis as the sexton, vergers and clerk at St. Matthew's.

The coffin may have been made by Charles Howorth whose family for generations had been Shibden Hall tenants. They were joiners who did lots of work for Anne Lister at Shibden Hall and, when needed, they made coffins. Alternatively, it might have been made by George Casson a joiner tenant based in Square. It would have been lead lined and sealed for hygiene reasons as it was to be buried underneath the church. It would have been very heavy and would have needed eight pallbearers, especially for the delicate job of lowering the coffin into the vault. One of the bearers might have been John Kelly, noted above.

The sexton would have prepared the vault prior to the funeral. The box pew covering the vault would probably have had to be taken apart and the vault cover removed. This would have revealed, at some distance below the surface, the coffin of Ann Walker (senior) who had been buried seven years before and before that her older sister Mary Walker who died in 1822.

The cortege would have left Cliffe Hill and proceeded to St Matthew's Church probably directly along the relatively new carriageway rather than the old route up the Coach Road.

The service would follow the Order for the Burial of the Dead as laid out in the Book of Common Prayer (1662). The priests and clerk would meet the cortege at the entrance to the churchyard and would proceed to the church. At the entrance the Vicar of Halifax would say or sing 'I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me,

though he were dead, yet shall he live.’ The coffin would be carried up the nave towards the altar and laid on trestles. The service would continue with a psalm and the lesson taken from the Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians.

At the appointed time, when the coffin was made ready to be lowered into the vault, the priest continued by saying ‘Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live..’ This was followed by the prayer of committal ‘Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear sister, Ann, here departed, we therefore commit her body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life...’

There may have been an address by one of the priests and the service would end with the Blessing. At this stage, the priests and congregation would depart and, at some stage, the vault would be covered and subsequently the pew would be put back in place.



The view looking from the altar.

Note the coat of arms, the organ and the memorial on the left to Ann’s brother, John.

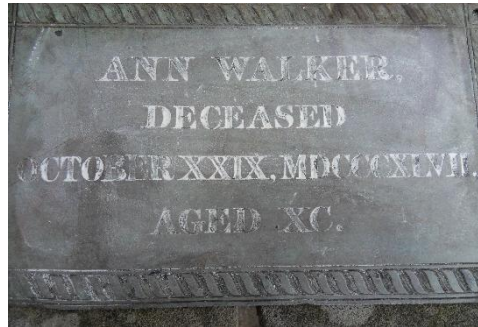
It was normal practice then, as now, for those attending to be invited for refreshments. This presumably would have been at Cliffe House and may have included cold meats, cheese, beer and wine.

The Vicar of Halifax would have received a fee of £10 or similar. The clerk and sexton would also have been paid for their work. This, if in line with the 1847 burial of Ann Walker senior for which there were accounts, would have been 15s each. This is interesting because Sidney Ellis was sexton, vergger and clerk at St Matthew’s for many years and, certainly, was in office at the time. Did he receive a composite sum? He lived at the cottage which was shown immediately behind the church in the 1860 image. It was called ‘The Priest’s House’ or ‘The Curate’s House’, though it was mainly used by the vergger. This cottage was moved, stone by stone, for Evan Charles Sutherland Walker in the mid-1860s.

Presents were usually given to servants and Samuel Washington would have settled any outstanding debts with tradespeople. The undertaker, Leonard Duncan, had organised Ann senior’s funeral at a cost of £117. Presumably, it cost a similar amount for Ann junior’s

funeral. Duncan was also a draper and specialised in funeral clothing including black crepe for the ladies.

It is likely that a brass plaque, similar to that for her two aunts, would have been made and fixed either to the pew or to a nearby wall. Whereas those of Mary and Ann survived, there has been no sign of Ann's. Aunt Ann's cost £1 15s. In addition, for Aunt Ann, a gravestone cost £2 19s. It is likely that this referred to a stone attached to the vault cover indicating the burial. It would be reasonable to assume that a similar addition to the vault cover was commissioned for Ann Walker.

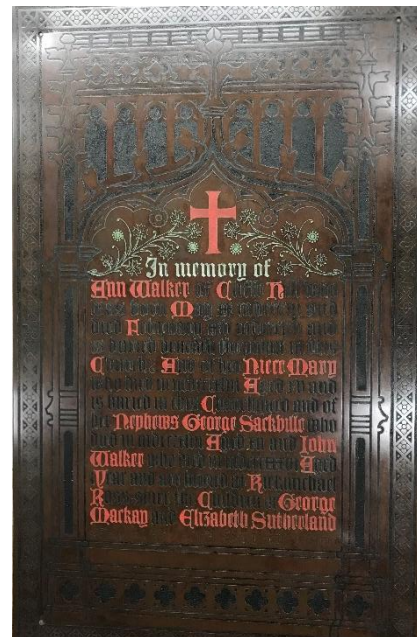


This notice about the funeral would have been widely distributed.



Ann Walker senior's estate spent £88 on mourning rings. The assumption is that a similar distribution would have been made for Ann. A mourning ring is a finger ring worn in memory of someone who has died. It often bears the name and date of death of the person, and possibly an image of them, or a motto. They were usually paid for by the person commemorated, or their heirs, and often specified, along with the list of intended recipients, in wills. Stones mounted on the rings were usually black and, where it could be afforded, jet was the preferred option.

As we know when the old church was demolished a memorial brass plaque dedicated to Ann Walker, a niece and two nephews was preserved in the tower. It was restored and repositioned in 2022. It indicated where Ann Walker was buried 'under the pulpit'.



In early 2024 following requests, a formal application was made to the Diocese for a memorial to all three Walker ladies interred in a vault in the old church. A faculty was granted, and a major fund-raising appeal raised the funds in less than 24 hours. This new memorial ledger stone bearing all three Walker ladies' names and dates should be in situ over where the vault was by summer 2024.

For further articles about Ann, her family, friends and tenants visit <https://www.lightcliffchurchyard.org.uk/about-churchyard/people-of-interest> and scroll down until you reach the 20 or so articles.

With thanks to:-

- David Glover
- Diaries of Anne Lister, the translators, and the invaluable search facility. A prime example, for this article, I just put 'coffin' into Search and I had the information immediately.
- West Yorkshire Archive Service
- The *In Search of Ann Walker* group
- Wikipedia for definition of mourning rings.
- The image of the old St Matthew's is taken from J Horsfall Turner's 'The History of Brighouse, Rastrick and Hipperholme' and said to be around 1860.

and, of course,

Dorothy Barker for lots of information.

Ian Philp

April, 2024

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