#### Ann Walker's Lightcliffe - ALBW2025

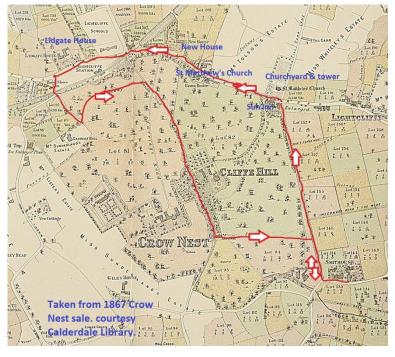
Welcome to Lightcliffe.

However, if you are planning your visit you'll need to get to the churchyard for the start of your walk. There is a regular bus service (255) to Lightcliffe from Halifax, ask the driver to put you off at the Sun Inn Wakefield Road. If you are travelling by car the post code is HX3 8TH. Again, by taxi, ask for the pub. The walk is around 2 miles and is mainly on hard surfaced pavements though part of it, down the Coach Road, is a hard surface but could be muddy. Powered wheelchairs would have difficulty on the Coach Road.

Please respect the houses that are mentioned, they are all private.

This walk will take you round just a part of the Walker estate and introduce some local history which is after Ann Walker's time. The Walker family had been in Lightcliffe from early in C18 becoming increasingly wealthy. By 1770 William Walker embarked on the rebuilding of his two main houses, Crow Nest and Cliff Hill, and largely funding the church built on this site to replace a much older chapel. When his grandson, John, died in 1830 his two granddaughters, Elizabeth and Ann, inherited the estate. They owned much of Lightcliffe and Hipperholme, farms and other properties in the Shibden Valley, Ovenden, Greetland, central Halifax, Stainland, parts of Huddersfield and mills in Honley. This walk is round their

Lightcliffe properties.



**Sun Inn** coaching inn dates from at least 1730 and was a farm before becoming an inn. It was owned by the Walkers and sold to Whitaker's Brewery in 1867 for £860. It would have been converted into a coaching inn when the Halifax to Wakefield Turnpike was built.

Much of what we know about what they owned



comes from detailed accounts written by Ann's land steward, Samuel Washington, in 1847 and the auction of much of the estate held in 1867 as Elizabeth's son – Ann's nephew, Evan Charles Sutherland Walker sold up as he moved to Skibo Castle in Scotland. We have also got the 1835 agreements between Ann, Elizabeth and her husband, George Mackay Sutherland.

Turn and begin to walk towards the new church which is 300m back towards Halifax. You will see the current entrance to Cliffe Hill with its lodge.



Ann was born here, spent the last few years here and died in the house. For much of her life her aunt, Ann senior, lived here and we know that this lady was visited by many of status in the Halifax area as well as by her niece and Anne Lister.

The motto above the door belong to the Foster family – Justum perficito nihil timeto – act justly and fear nothing.

Ann's motto, granted in 1842, was Per ardua virtus – virtue

through difficulty.

As you come up to the new church you will see a house and then a terrace called Greenhouses. Both terrace and church were built on the site of a farm, Green House, bought by Ann Walker in 1841.

The new **St Matthew's** stands on the site of **Green House**. It was founded by Major Johnston Jonas Foster who bought Cliffe Hill in 1867. Once the church opened in 1875 the old church became largely redundant but more of that later.



We now pass, on the right, where **New House** used to be. It has been called the Grange and the Manor and is now a new housing estate. The William Priestleys lived here and you can see that it was very close to the two principal houses belonging to the Walkers.

On the opposite side of the road is the lodge to Crow Nest estate. This was built after 1867 by Sir Titus Salt, a wealthy textile merchant. You can just about see an alpaca, the source of some of his wool, in the coat of arms. This new driveway would give easier access to the mansion going under the old road by a bridge. You will see original entrance later. [If you are new to the area and have time to spare do visit the model village of Saltaire, its mill and church near Bradford]

At the crossing you're at Knowl Top, a couple of the cottages and a house are old and were part of a farm and workshops in the time of the Walkers. We're fairly sure that Ann's school was based in one of the cottages or the house.



Opposite is the entrance to the **Coach Road** and you're standing over the Halifax to Bradford railway line. The railway was opposed initially by Ann but she then sold the land to allow the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway to come through, opening in 1850. The family did quite well out of this as, apart from the land for the rail track, the land for the station and goods yard was sold as was a considerable amount of stone for the construction of bridges and the viaduct. We know that the line runs through both Lister and Ann Walker estates. The records say £9,000 was paid by the railway company between the two estates. Ann received it all as she was heiress to the Shibden Hall as well as Crow Nest estate at the time. Not that she could have spent it as she was only entitled to the Shibden estate revenue.

Continuing along Wakefield Road you will pass the **National School** (now Lightcliffe Primary School). Land was owned by the Walkers and donated by Sutherland Walker as was the school dating from around 1865. It was designed by John Smith – the land agent brought down from Scotland by Sutherland Walker to replace Samuel Washington.

If you walk towards the newish housing estate and stand by the entrance pillars you can see the end part of **Lidgate House.** It was here that Ann moved sometime around 1829 or early 1830. It seems likely that she moved out of Crow Nest when her brother, John, got married. When she moved to Shibden Hall with Anne Lister in 1834, the house was rented out to the splendidly named Lamplugh Wickham Wickham for 10 years — clearly Ann had no intention of returning. Later Samuel Washington rented the property. You'll notice the spelling has changed to Lydgate but



there have been other variations over time including Ledgate. The house itself has been changed considerably since Ann lived here. Similarly, Cliff Hill acquired a final 'e' later in its life.

You can see how it had outbuildings which would have bee part of the farm. Almost all of the land here, in Ann's day, would have been farmland producing income for Ann. When you walk round the front of the house, you are passing through the front garden which included a large pond.

As we leave Lidgate we will detour through our war memorial park, The Stray to see the benches with appropriate inscriptions. All of this was farm land in 1830s.

Ann owned three pubs in Lightcliffe and Hipperholme (the Sun, the Travellers and the Hare & Hounds). Elizabeth owned the Horse Shoes. This is immediately opposite to the front of Lidgate on the opposite side of the road. It is now a private house called The Poplars. When it was a pub, the turnpike ran in front of it. It was only when the railway came that this road was diverted to the current line of Wakefield Road.

Before you move on you might think of the walk that Ann and Anne would have had from here to Shibden Hall. It is about 2 miles and would have followed the lines of the current main roads. Halfway was reckoned to be Lane Ends which is on the A58 by the pet store.

You've now two choices depending on recent weather and ease of access. You can retrace our steps to the start of the Coach Road and walk down towards Crow Nest and Cliff Hill or cross the road, walk under the railway bridge on St Giles Road and bear left between a row of cottages and Park View leading to Brookelea.

Walk along past the houses and there is a path to the left of the golf course. It is flagged and passes through what was the grounds of Crow Nest. As you walk along, the mansion would have been seen on the righthand side in the distance. Much has changed since Ann's day. The house was demolished in the 1960s, a neglected ruin. The parkland had been quarried for the much sought after local sandstone, the house used for munition manufacture during the first world war and completely neglected for many years after that period. It was from a quarry here that huge blocks of stone were taken to form part of the foundations of Blackpool Tower.

At the top of the path you join the Coach Road (and anyone who has taken the easier path). This road has access from both ends and was built to service both houses. Almost immediately you cross the bridge under which runs the drive created by Titus Salt. Look to the left and you have a good view of the church and the Arts & Crafts former vicarage (1899/1900).

The first feature will be the entrance gates to Cliff Hill on the left. You can make out the initial JJF for Johnston Jonas Foster and the date 1867 when he bought it at the sale. As you walk down the slope you may get glimpses of the side of Cliff Hill and its outhouses but this will be dependent on how tall you are and the time of year. In summer most of the view is blocked by trees even if you are tall!

On the righthand side there are views across the golf course, all of which was part of the parklands. A little further down you will come across the main drive gates to Crow Nest. Standing there you have to imagine a curved drive swinging left towards the house. You'll now walk between high walls separating the two properties. Crow Nest was the jewel in the crown of the Walker estate. The dining room was 33' by 19', the drawing room only slightly smaller with a large library, breakfast room, morning room and billiard room. Also on the ground floor



were school rooms, nurseries and a Steward's office. There was a butler's pantry, a housekeeper's room, a kitchen and servants' hall together with cellars for dairy, wines and washing. Upstairs were excellent bedrooms with servant bedrooms in the attics. The mansion was heated throughout by Ormson's Hot water apparatus but this was done by her nephew after her time.

Outside were extensive facilities for horses, coaches and a house for the coachman. There were standings for cattle, piggeries, hen houses, ice house and a series of outbuildings. In total, 78 acres and pews 1 and 7 were included in the sale.

The gardens were described in great detail and included a pheasantry, a rabbit warren and a fish pond (the only bit that remains). The conservatories were designed and recently built for vines, melons, camellias, peaches, cucumbers and orchids. The gardener had a four-bedroom

house and there were potting sheds and a mushroom house. The ornamental gardens were augmented by an orchard. The carriage drive was about half a mile in length leading to a lodge.

All that remains is the small lake. As you walk down to the cross path, look to the right and you can see a bench on the golf course. In front of that is the lake with an interesting shot across the water to the green.

Just before the road narrows for a bridge you turn left along another flagged pathway. As you set off, look to the left and you can see where there was a passage from this field to the mansion. Tucked into the corner there are signs of some form of building. This was the gas works built by Sutherland Walker to service the two big houses and Hoyle and Smith Houses. They all had some gas lighting, hot water and a form of heating.

Along this path you are walking along the southern edge of Cliff Hill. Frustratingly there is no view of the house.

Looking south you can see evidence of old buildings which were part of **Hoyle House** farm. At the end of the path, please turn right for a brief diversion to see **Smith House**. This is one of the oldest houses in the area. It, together, with Hoyle House were bought by Ann in 1843 – this was the purchase which involved litigation with Charles Hardcastle. Go to the T-junction and turn left on Smith House Lane. A few paces up on the left you will find Smith House with a stone indicating 1672 but it may be older. Part of its fame came from its owner in the 1740s, Elizabeth Holmes who entertained John Wesley and other non- conformist preachers. When she died, she left money to help build the 'old' St Matthew's and £40 to the government of the day, in her will, to support it in quelling the rebellion in our North American colonies!!

Retrace your steps up Stoney Lane keeping to the left pavement. When you are passing the primary school and before you reach the secondary school's pitches, look to the left. Through the trees you will be able to see the facade of **Cliff Hill**. Even in summer with growth on the trees, there is still a good though distant view. There has been a house here for centuries, it was bought by William Walker in the 1760s and remodelled at the same time as Crow Nest.



In the sale document there is a glowing description which includes two halls, a dining room, drawing room, library and morning room on the ground floor. The domestic arrangements included butler's pantry, housekeeper's room, kitchen, servants' hall, good bedrooms and attics. It had stables for 13 horses, a coach house with hot water and standing for several cows. There were pleasure, flower and kitchen gardens and grand views to the south. Ann was born and died in the house.

All of the land to the right of Stoney Lane was bought by Ann in 1836 from Sir Joseph Ratcliffe which included farms, cottages and farmland, about 100 acres.

Continue to the top of the road and cross into the churchyard. You see the tower which is all that remains of the old church. As we've seen earlier, once it was replaced by the new church it was rarely used. Following storm damage in the 1960s and then vandalism the Diocese decided to demolish the entire building. Crucially a newly founded charity The Friends of Friendless Churches stepped in and took responsibility for the tower. By 1973 the church itself had been demolished. Four memorials are stored in the tower which is opened occasionally each year.

Walk down the path and stand with the tower door to your back. You can see the outline of the old church on either side and the curved appear at the far end. It was a small simple Georgian church



established in 1775 and replacing the earlier Eastfield Chapel which was founded in 1529. There was a gallery on three sides and the organ was above your head. Over your left shoulder, in the gallery, was the pew rented by Anne Lister and mentioned in her diaries.

Under the church were a few vaults where some of the priests and benefactors were buried. Ann Walker was buried with her two aunts towards the front of the church and marked by flowers and a simple stone.

Ann's nephew, Evan Charles Sutherland Walker made improvements to the church's interior including a stained glass east window commemorating his parents and aunt and two pulpits. The one on the left (north) was over the Walker vault and a plaque, now stored in the tower, was placed across a window.

Immediately beyond the apse is a large flat gravestone commemorating Ann's parents. George Mackay Sutherland's grave is marked by a large chest tomb by a rhododendron bush. Towards the west wall are the graves of Samuel Washington the Crow Nest (and Shibden) land steward, Lydia Fenton who was at Cliff Hill when Ann died, William Mallinson the mason who built the church, Samuel Sowden who died of old age not as portrayed in Gentleman Jack and other tenants of both estates who also appear as characters in the series. If you use a QR reader on the two information posts in this area you will be given more

#### Ann Walker and Anne Lister linked gravesites



AL Tenant Charles Howarth senior
AL Joiner Charles Howarth junior
AL Tenant Samuel Sowden
AL Tenant's wife Martha Sowden
In AL diary James Hinscliff junior
AL coal merchant James Hinscliff senior
AW & AL Land agent/steward Samuel Washington
Wife Hannah Washington
Daughter Susannah Washington
Daughter Anna Maria Washington
AW Brother in law George Mackay Sutherland
In AL diary Rev George Fenton
AW Friend / Housekeeper Lydia Fenton
Ann Walker

AW Aunt Mary Walker
AW Aunt Ann Walker
AW Baby Brother William Walker
AW Sister Mary Walker
AW Father John Walker
AW Mother Mary Walker
AW Niece Mary Sutherland

This is very roughly where the gravesites can be found. Use the QR codes on the posts and / or the notice board posters for more directions.

information and directions.

Please feel free to wander round the churchyard and look at the gravestones. Many make interesting reading. There are further QR posts around the churchyard.

The Friends of St Matthew's Churchyard website has a lot more detail about the church and the many people buried here.

Visit **lightcliffechurchyard.org.uk** or keep up to date on its Facebook page.

In particular, you can find lots more about Ann, her family, friends, tenants in our People of Interest page on the website. https://www.lightcliffechurchyard.org.uk/about-churchyard/people-of-interest

We hope that you have enjoyed your walk and your time in Lightcliffe, Halifax and Calderdale.

Ian Philp,

## Anne Lister diary references. Thanks to West Yorkshire Archives and the team of translators. LIDGATE HOUSE

#### Saturday 29th September 1832

Mrs P- asked me to dinner at 4 but I declined, saying I had already made quite a visitation – said I had intended calling at Cliff hill, but it was too late – said I would call on the other Miss Walker instead – at Lidgate at 2.5 – Miss W- had dined and would go with me to Cliff hill, if I could wait till 4 – sat talking till off at 4.% - and found Miss Walker at home glad to see us and persuaded us to stay to tea – came away at 7 – sat 1/2 hour with Miss W- at Lidgate and home in  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour at 8.% - we get on very beautifully I obscurely lovemaking and she all smiles said felt sure of my own happiness and I might be equally so of hers oh she was sure of hers but had been thinking last night whether she could.....

#### **Tuesday 30th October 1832**

Took Sykes the gardener and looked over the Lightcliffe plantation for laurels. Sat about an hour with Miss [Aunt] Walker of Cliffe Hill. Gave Miss W one of the fine large, common laurels growing at the Stags Head, and Sykes the gardener and Eastwood went for it, and just got it planted here (Lidgate) before dark. Sykes positive and stupid about it, and I got annoyed and gave him a set down. He had not got it up well.

#### Friday, 25th January 1833

then to Lidgate and there at 2 10/.. found miss W- [Walker] and her friend miss Rawson just sitting down to dinner – miss W- [Walker] had had a bad night, and was very poorly that is worse as to her mind more despairing and beside herself very soon went with her to her

room she lay down and I sat by talking and reasoning which did her good for the moment while it lasted but no longer

#### **Monday 11th February 1833**

Out with Miss W- at 1 – Brought her along my walk to the house at  $1 \, 3/4$  – She sat a little with my aunt and father and Marian, had a sandwich and wine, and then off again and at Lidgate at 3 – Miss W- dined in 10 minutes and then I walked with her to Cliff hill to look at her plantations that Sykes pruned, and then sat 20 minutes with Miss W- at Cliff hill and then back to Lidgate and sat with Miss W- till near 7 – She is now sorry for having said no, said she had been a foolish little thing, and seemed low at the thought of parting.

Miss W- wanted me to stay, but I said I could not – In fact, staying all night there never suits me – I do not sleep really well, and my bowels always get wrong, so they have been the last 3 mornings that I have been there –

#### Saturday 15th March 1834

Miss W- [Walker] quite satisfied to let Lidgate house and land together next Spring -

#### Sunday 1st June 1834

In the hut walk 1% hour when called in to Washington, told him he had best ride over and see Mr Lamplough Hird tomorrow, find out whether he was likely to be a permanent tenant or not and let me know at 10 am tomorrow.

Washington would ask £60 for the house and about 17 days work, could let off the other and 16 days work very well. Thought the furniture should be worth £15 or 20 a year, I said £20 certainly but it would be well to ask Greenwood's opinion – to which he quite agreed and I made no objection to the rent he (Washington) had proposed.

#### Saturday 6 September 1834

No kiss. F58° at 8 40 am and haze and small rain - breakfast at 10 - had Washington with our rent accounts I received £190 in bills + 37 sovereigns + 1/4 leaving £50 in his hands, clear of all the payments – dawdling over 1 thing or other – wrote out journal of 27 th and 28 thultimo - Mr Hird Lampleugh came at  $1 \frac{3}{4}$  and took Lidgate and all the land and the house furnished for 10 years at £100 per annum, the 1st  $\frac{1}{4}$  year's rent to be allowed for improvements – he staid about  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour and behaved handsomely

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## The length of this tenancy indicates that Ann was confident about her move to Shibden Hall.

There is a lovely extract in the diaries for the same day when Anne describes spending time in the cellars getting the 17 bottles of champagne, 6 & half dozen bottles of Port (1825 vintage), 19 bottles of fine old Madeira and some wine ready for transport to Shibden Hall. The many bottles were moved to the Hall later in the month.

#### November 14th 1834

– read over Adney's lease of 17 years of Lidgit to Mr. Lampleugh Wickham Hird, he having the option to give it up on 6 months notice at the end of the 10 years or if not keep it 17 – advised her objecting to the exception of any property tax from the taxes he is to pay – read from page 179 to 248 ii Gutzlaff's history of China – very fine day Fahrenheit 44° now at 10 p.m.

#### 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1838

and of going to see the railroad to Cette [Séte] which is almost finished – Mr. Wickham is here in the winters – his wife died about 2 years ago – his retired pension 25,000/. a year and may have an hereditary estate of about £800 a year – not everybody would have accepted his place – that of government spy – great sums of money passed thro' his hands for buying over this person and that and yet he himself not rich –

This fits nicely with what we knew about **Lamplugh Wickham Wickham** in that he married Frances Hale of Acomb in July1834 - moved in perhaps after their honeymoon. In Anne Lister's diary there is an entry indicating that Ann Walker met Wickham regarding the agreement. Presumably this was resolved.

In 1841 census for the night 6th June 1841 has Lamplugh Wickham Hird also known as Wickham Wickham, Iron Master and his wife and 5 year old son at "Lidgate" with 4 servants. He was associated with the Low Moor Company. Frances died a year later and is buried in St Matthew's Churchyard.

Samuel Washington's accounts to the Committee (of Ann's Lunacy, i.e. George Mackay Sutherland) have these entries. 'December 1844, L (Lamplugh) Wickham Wickham paid £100 annual rent for the furnished Lidgate Farm. The furniture was sold April 1845 for £172 4s 8d (less cost of sale, £11 4s. 0d). Samuel Washington became the tenant at £63 per annum, unfurnished.' The property was advertised in January 1845. It looks as though Samuel Washington moved in as no other tenant could be found. The selling of the furniture indicates that a decision had been made that Ann would never return to Lidgate. This change reflects the original 10 year agreement between Ann Walker and Lamplugh Wickham Wickham.

Henry Wickham Hird was a signatory to Ann's 1835 property agreement with her sister and brother-in-law. He was Lamplugh's brother.

You may find references to Wickham Hird and Wickham Wickham. They are the same, the brothers reverted to the paternal name after the death of their father. He had taken the additional surname of Hird when he married Sarah Hird as a condition of her inheritance.

Lamplugh and family moved to Low Moor House where he and his brother were part of the Low Moor Company.

1842 Frances Hird of 'Lidgate' died and was buried in the churchyard on 20<sup>th</sup> October1842.

# IN A VAULT UNDERNEATH THIS STONE ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF FRANCES WIFE OF LAMPLUGH WICKHAM HIRD ESQUIRE AND DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM HALE ESQUIRE OF ACOMB NEAR YORK. SHE DIED THE 14<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF OCT 1842 AGED 37 YEARS

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### Lidgate House at the time of the 1867 Sale of the Crow Nest Estate by Evan Charles Sutherland Walker.

Capital family Residence called Lidgate House, with Barn, Stables, Coach House, Mistal, Yard, Garden, Shrubberies, Pleasure Grounds and Land with Pew No. 47 in Lightcliffe Church.

Rented by Mr Joshua Smithson.

8 acres, 3 roods and 37 perches.

The fields were called Croft, Knoll, Back Laith Close, Joan Ing, Lower Broad Close and Lower Sour Ing.

It didn't sell at the auction because Smithson still had several years on his lease agreement.

In time, he bought it.

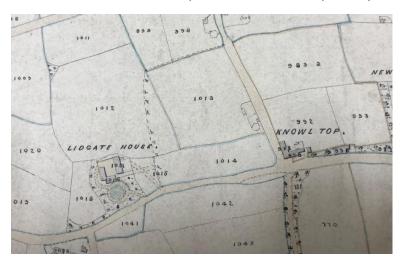
His family sold the surrounding land after WW1 to become our memorial Lightcliffe Stray in remembrance to those who lost their lives.

An early photo of Lidgate House. Prior to the additional first floor bay window.

We do not know what the house was like in Ann's time but it reasonably could have looked like this. Conservatories were being built onto house during the C19.



This map is from 1850. It shows the house, a large pond in front of the house. You can also see the houses at Knowl Top, one of which was possibly where Ann had her school.



Here's a fairly recent photo of the house from the air. It is covered in Autumnal colours of the Virginia Creeper.



The house looks red from a distance. Could this explain the description of the house as 'a handsome brick building' in a recent book about Ann? Someone who has never been here?

Thanks to the help of a neighbour, we can add a couple of photos of the main bedroom. When the house was sub-divided around 1980, most of the features were removed. As the bay window was added in 1926, the panelling shown in the righthand photo are probably of that period. The cellar has a vaulted roof.



We are grateful to Joan Sugden for providing this sale notice. The second page gives details of the rooms and their sizes giving an indication that this was, in the words of previous sale documents 'a Capital house'. The sale would be about 1949.



