

John Walker junior. (1804 -1830)

The background to the Walker family is told in our article ‘The Walkers of Crow Nest’. Other articles in this section give an indication of how important the family was in the Hipperholme and Lightcliffe area and further afield.

John’s parents, John and Mary, had inherited the estate on the death in 1809 of John’s bachelor brother, William. John would have lived for the first few years of his life with his parents and sisters, Elizabeth and Ann, at Cliff Hill – the second largest house on the estate which still stands today. On his uncle’s death, the family moved into the principal house, Crow Nest. Both John’s parents died in 1823 and he inherited the bulk of the estate. His father’s will had made good provision for both of his daughters. The image is of Crow Nest mansion around 1867.



At the time of his mother’s death John Walker junior - still under the age of majority - was due to go to Brasenose College, Oxford which he proceeded to do although he never graduated. It was said that John Walker junior enjoyed his fortune reputedly over £6000 a year. This sum, the equivalent of well over £650,000 today, is substantiated by valuations of Ann’s wealth in the mid-1840s. But being young and inexperienced he had little interest in running the estate. He and his sisters continued to live at Crow Nest where they welcomed visitors and occasionally gave balls; they also attended balls in Halifax.

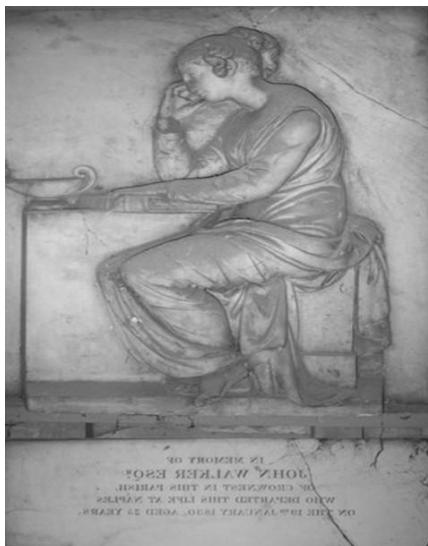
There’s an excellent summary of John’s life on <https://insearchofannwalker.com/john-walker-jnr/>.

In the summer of 1829, John Walker married Frances Esther Penfold. Fanny, as she was known, was the daughter of Rev. Penfold of Sussex and a niece through marriage of Christopher Rawson, a member of another influential local family. They had met when she had come to Lightcliffe to be a companion for Aunt Ann Walker who was on her own at Cliffe Hill after the death of her sister, Mary. Following the nuptials in Sussex John and Fanny set off for a Grand Tour honeymoon in Italy. But on 19th January 1830 twenty-five-year-old John Walker died in Naples. It was a sudden death possibly from a fever. He was buried in the protestant cemetery off the Piazza Garibaldi. The cemetery became a public garden in 1893 and 60 years later most of the bodies were reburied in the municipal Cemetery di Poggioioreale. There remain a few monuments and chest tombs in the original cemetery, but John’s wasn’t one of them.

A graphic description of the honeymoon can be found on the *Packed with Potential* website: <https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/4bf2337814424433c26e842cc58d6f2d/walkers-grand-tour/index.html>

This had been a very expensive honeymoon and return journey. At the cities on their journey, they had drawn substantial sums to cover their costs. In time these were all settled by William Priestley as a trustee through the Glynn and Co. Bank. The total bill was well over £2,000, the equivalent of £1¼ million today.

It took a long time for this news to reach the Walker family and for a pregnant Fanny to return to England. Apparently, Ann Walker went down to Dover to meet her, the Walker family possibly being fearful that a child would inherit. But later in 1830, at her parents' home, she gave birth to a still born son. With no heir and no will – John Walker died intestate – matters were complicated. There was much reading and rereading of his father and grandfather's wills and the terms of the marriage agreement. Records show that Fanny's brother, James Penfold, came north to be involved in the negotiations. Eventually Fanny was granted a 'widow share' which was at least £2 million in today's money. It partly consisted of an annuity of £300 per year from the Walker estate, a share of the disposable wealth and the £2,000 worth of shares in the Calder and Hebble Navigation company and other similar companies. There would not be any disposal or grant of land from the estate.



Fanny Walker had a memorial to her husband erected on the southern wall in St. Matthew's old church alongside one of the pulpits. It survives still, in two parts, and is now stored in the tower.

There is a detailed account of Fanny and her extended family on <https://insearchofannwalker.com/frances-penfold-walker/>

The death of their brother, John Walker (1804-1830) left sisters Elizabeth Sutherland as she was by then, and Ann Walker as extremely wealthy co-heiresses to the Lightcliffe estate and other properties. Sister Elizabeth Walker had met Captain George Mackay Sutherland at a ball and married him in Halifax in 1828. They would spend much of their married life in Scotland on his Inverness estate where most of their children were born. Although George Sackville Sutherland, at the time their eldest son, was baptised at St. Matthew's old church in 1831, presumably on one of their stays at Crow Nest. The Sutherlands occasionally staying at Crow Nest and Aunt Ann Walker residing at Cliff Hill may explain why Ann Walker chose to live at Lidgate House. She corresponded regularly with her sister in Scotland and also went to stay with the family there.

After John's death there are details of the sales of shares in both canals and turnpikes in 1832. Over the years the Walker family had invested in the development of the local canal network and some key new roads. These would have been bought both as potentially good investments and as ways to improve the family's trade with better infrastructure for importing raw materials and exporting finished goods. When the family had to fund the payment of the 'widow share' to Fanny, selling shares would be more appealing than selling land or gifting directly to Fanny.

The sale of turnpike shares shows that investment had been made in several schemes. Halifax to Huddersfield, Halifax to Wakefield, Huddersfield to Woodhead, New Hey to Huddersfield (across the Pennines), and small amounts in a road to Salterhebble to Stainland and the Leeds Whitehall turnpike. The latter two were recent developments and it suggests that, possibly, John was not investing in the same way as his father and grandfather had done. As an aside, we know that his sister Ann had invested in the road to Leeds from 1825. (See Alan Greenwood's book *Drawn on the landscape*.)

Amount of Purchase Money arising from sale of Road Stocks		
Halifax & Huddersfield Turnpike road	100	- -
Halifax & Wakefield	200	- -
Huddersfield & Woodhead	130	- -
New Hey & Huddersfield	150	- -
Leeds & Whitehall	5	- -
Salterhebble & Stainland	5	- -
		<u>£</u> 1192.00

This sale raised £1,192.

The family had invested significantly in canals. Primarily in Calder and Hebble Navigation which connected Sowerby Bridge to Wakefield (and from there to the Humber) and then into Halifax itself. The Barnsley Canal project involved the Calder and Hebble company targeting a route from the coalfields around Silkstone through to the main waterway. They had a small investment in the Huddersfield Canal which joined the Huddersfield Narrow Canal to the Calder & Hebble Canal – a link through to Lancashire. The sale of these shares released over £16,000.

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Amount of Purchase Money arising from sales of Canal Shares		
Five Shares in the Barnsley Canal	1100	0 0
Thirty nine Shares & a fraction in the Calder & Hebble Navigation	12270	10 0
Thirteen Shares in the Huddersfield Canal	169	- -
Twenty Shares in the Calder & Hebble Navigation chargeable with 3 solds subject to the Previous jointure of £300. per annum.	3110	. .
Five Shares in the Halifax Public Works.	80	0 0
Library Tickets	5	0 0
		<u>£</u> 16,682.00 0 0

In the agreement between Fanny and the Walker family, she was entitled to family household goods. There is an inventory of the silverware which, for interest, is tabulated here. We're not sure if she would have all of this or whether there was some division. It certainly gives an impression of how the wealthy lived.

Silver grape scissors	2 silver tea spoons	silver water jug and stand
Silver egg stand and spoons	silver tea pot, small	silver tea pot, large
Silver soup ladle	silver candle snuffers & stand	8 soup spoons
4 silver spoons, old	6 desert spoons	6 silver forks
Silver sugar tongs	silver butter knife	4 silver desert forks
6 silver tea spoons	6 silver tea spoons	large silver washer
3 plated bed candle sticks	1 dozen ivory handled silver fruit knives	
Silver coffee pot	silver tea kettle, lamp and stand	silver coffee pot
Silver toast rack	12 silver desert spoons	silver bread basket
Silver fish slice	5 silver decanter stands	4 silver waiters
5 silver shafted knives	1 silver butter knife	1 silver cheese knife
1 silver sugar spoon	20 silver desert forks	silver cream jug
12 silver forks	6 silver candle sticks	silver tea caddy
6 silver desert spoons	4 silver gravy spoons	5 silver plated nut crackers
12 silver desert forks with ivory handles		4 silver table spoons
4 silver salt spoons	silver sugar spoon	silver foreign spoon
Silver waiter, small	4 silver shafted knives, old	2 silver sugar basins
Silver sugar basin, small	6 silver tea spoons	silver meat squeezer?
6 silver, old spoons		

Some of the cutlery had engraved initials. Our spelling of desert has a double 's'.

West Yorkshire Archives (CN:99/2) have parts of Mr Priestley's accounts for the late John Walker. Apart from the settlement of debts from the ill-fated honeymoon, it has a number of interesting entries which reflect on the Walkers and their associates.

- Mourning costs, mainly through Leonard Duncan, came to £172 and Jonas Wilkinson was paid £283 for mourning rings.
- John must have belonged to the Halifax Hunt as a balance of £25 was paid.
- A penalty of £25 was paid under the Game Law for an infringement by George Eastwood.
- Samuel Washington was paid for his services, £300, in 1830. This suggests that he was acting as land agent by this time.
There is a detailed response from Washington to a series of queries posed by George Mackay Sutherland regarding some rental income and estate maintenance expenditure.
- The rental incomes from several properties known to belong to John had been collected – presumably by Washington.
- A sum of £2,000 was agreed by Capt. Sutherland, Elizabeth's husband, for furniture. This is a very large sum (the furniture in Lidgate House, 15 years later, only reached £170 at auction.) This suggests that the Sutherlands were keeping the furnishings in Crow Nest mansion. Otherwise, they might have been legally Fanny's.
- There is a bond of £13,000 in Ann Walker's name though I don't understand the significance of this.
- The probate expenses were listed as £655.

A Penfold story footnote: One of Fanny's brothers, Christopher Rawson Penfold (note the Rawson family connection) was a doctor in Sussex. He and his wife, Mary, believed in the medicinal benefits of wine particularly fortified ones such as port and sherry. They emigrated to Australia and set up on the outskirts of Adelaide. A vineyard was planted, and they produced wine. After a time, they found that the wines were more productive than medicine and grew the industry. Penfolds as a brand within a larger company is still going strong with vineyards in the original Magill Estate, Barossa Valley, Eden Valley and elsewhere.

Ian Philp May 2023