

Eli: Hello and welcome to Queer as Fact. I'm Eli.

Irene: I'm Irene.

Alice: I'm Alice.

E: We're a queer history podcast coming out on the 1st and 15th of every month, but as you'll notice, it is neither of those dates today. It is, in Australia at least, the 25th of December, also known as Christmas – I've got that right, don't I?

[laughter]

A: You're doing good, you're doing good.

I: You totally nailed it.

E: Alright, great. So we thought we'd do a little bonus episode for you guys because we're returning today to the story of Anne Lister who we talked about very early on in the podcast, and who was a 19th century landowner and diarist.

[music plays]

E: So as I said, we've talked about Anne Lister before, and the reason we are talking about her again is because I done goofed a little bit.

[laughter]

E: I said, in the episode, at a certain point that we'd run out of published diaries and I was wrong. I could give a lengthy explanation about the inconsistent cataloguing system in my library. Instead I'll just graciously admit that I screwed up.

I: [laughter]

E: We became aware that there were in fact more published diaries from Helena Whitbread, the historian who edited the first two volumes, so thank you very much for getting in touch with us. We thought we'd do this as a little bit of a special, instead of its own episode because it is going over someone we've talked about before. I'm going to give a little recap in a second about what we covered in the first episode when we talked about Anne Lister, but it probably would be worth your while going and listening to that if you never did.

So for content warnings for this episode, I thought, this will be a fun Christmas episode, and then I started doing the research and I left it too late to back out. So this episode has period-typical homophobia. It also has mental health problems and people dealing with those in not particularly helpful ways. It has a manipulative and otherwise kind of unhealthy relationship and it also has a brief mention of child labour.

I: Merry Christmas from Queer as Fact!

E: The 19th century was a time! So as I said, Anne was an early 19th century landowner and diarist.

The land which she was to inherit was the estate attached to Shibden Hall, which was one of two of her family's properties. So she was the elder of two surviving sisters, so she gets the big family property.

A: I didn't remember Anne had a sister – oh no, I did, because her sister has the same name as her girlfriend.

E: Mm. Yeah, there are two names.

[laughter]

E: We'll get to it in a minute, don't you worry. So she moves there in her early twenties to learn how to manage the estate. It's quite a small town, she's often quite frustrated with living in quite a small area and with not having access to kind of like... the upper echelons of society because that's very important to her.

I: Oh that's right, I remember this.

E: [laughter] Yes.

I: She was bad and classist.

E: She's quite classist, she's very blatantly classist. If you said to her, you're quite classist, she'd probably say, yes, as I ought to be, or something like that.

I: [laughter]

E: She lived with her unmarried aunt and uncle and she's increasingly independent financially. She's able pretty much to do what she likes with her money and she's also able to pretty much do what she likes with her time, and she spends a lot of that on educating herself, she really values education.

Anne is attracted to women from quite a young age, she has her first relationship with her boarding school room mate, Eliza Raine, which is, as I understand it, pretty much how women's boarding schools go.

I: Yeah.

E: Yeah.

I: Yeah, I believe so.

E: The big love of her younger life, though, is a woman named Marianne Belcombe, so you're right, it is the same as her sister's name. Um -

A: The two names, but combined into the third name, Marianne.

E: [laughter] Indeed. She is one of five sisters, they're a like, upper class family but they're not very well off at the moment, so Marianne pretty much has to get a husband to get by in life. So Marianne marries a man named Charles Lawton, and this devastates Anne, it's a constant problem

in her life, that her girlfriend is now married to some guy.

A: Fair enough.

E: Uh huh.

I: I would be quite sad, yeah.

E: She never really gets over it or manages to come to terms with it, as you wouldn't, I suppose. My favourite anecdote, probably, about Anne and Marianne is that when Charles and Marianne were about to get married, they got a set of wedding rings, as you do, and Anne stole Charles', put a copy in its place, and she and Marianne wear the pair of wedding rings.

I: Oh, I remember this.

E: Yes.

I: That was quite great.

E: Yeah. The plan had been for Marianne and Anne to be covert until Charles died and then Marianne would come and live with Anne, but Charles becomes quite suspicious of their relationship, he makes it quite difficult for them to meet and Anne is quite often despairing that this will ever actually come to pass, that they'll ever get to live together. There's also the fact that Marianne is quite embarrassed by Anne not being discreet enough and by looking quite masculine and things like that so overall it's quite a stormy relationship at times. Eventually Anne realises that Marianne is probably never going to come and live with her realistically and it takes several more years after that but eventually Anne gives up on this dream and she falls out of love with her.

The other prominent relationship she has in her youth is with a woman named Isabella Norcliffe. Isabella is someone she met in society in York and she's the one who introduced her to Marianne, which can't have been a good feeling.

I: [laughter]

A: Mm.

E: Sometimes Anne thinks she might settle for Isabella when she and Marianne aren't going so well, but she kind of just like, strings Isabella along and then eventually they also drift apart because Anne doesn't really like Isabella's personality enough to be in a long-term relationship with her.

Anne travels a fair bit; that's very important to her, having the opportunity to do that. So she goes to Paris several times, for example, and after one of her Paris trips her uncle dies in 1826, so Anne's 34 then. And she's more or less completely independent at this point; she's inherited Shibden Hall and its estates and she can control the estate and how it goes about making money and things like that. The estate's incomes are still divided between Anne, her father and her aunt, though.

As we meet Anne now, as we rejoin her story, her concerns are to be making money with the estate. So she's quite a competent estate owner but she wants to keep escalating how much money it's making so she can keep travelling and things like that. She wants to travel, so that feeds into the first goal.

A: Mhm.

E: And she wants to find a wife.

I: Yep. Oh yeah, I remember this.

E: She ideally wants a partner who is able to help her better herself socially and financially, and she also wants a partner who can come and live with her. That's very important to her.

A: I think Anne would have benefited from living in the era of like, online dating where she just put up a clear profile being like, 'these are the things that I am looking for.'

E: Mm.

A: 'Are we compatible?'

E: Yeah.

A: Like I feel she has a very pragmatic approach to this.

E: Yeah, I mean, it's quite a pragmatic time...

A: Mm.

E: ...in terms of marriage matches and things.

A: True.

E: I have spoken to people about her and they've taken quite a harsh view of her attitude to marriage.

A: Mm.

E: But it's really just the norms of the time.

I: Yeah.

E: Like a man looking for a wife or a woman looking for a husband would do the same thing.

I: Yeah, it is interesting to me that she's looking for a wife, like, I hope that she can bring me, like, social mobility and greater wealth and that kind of thing, it's interesting to me that she's thinking that a same-sex marriage can better her socially.

E: Yeah well, we'll get into a bit more how she navigates having the marriage because we're about to ...

A: Spoilers.

E: [laughter] ...meet someone named Ann Walker. Now the first thing about Ann Walker is that she's called Ann.

[laughter]

I: Oh no.

A: They must have called each other something else, they can't have called each other Anne and Ann.

E: For a long time, Anne Lister calls her Miss Walker.

I: [laughter] Of course.

E: Which I don't tend to do past the first date personally.

A: [laughter]

E: Ann Walker is another local heiress. She comes from newer money than Anne, her family has only really had money...

A: [laughter]

E: ...for a few generations, what's funny, Alice?

A: [laughter] That they're both called Anne, I haven't moved on yet.

I: [laughter]

E: I'm sorry.

A: I'll try and just accept this.

E: [laughter] I didn't want this to happen.

[laughter]

I: She should have put this on her list, no Anns.

A: Yeah.

E: That would have cut her already small dating pool down in half probably.

I: Yeah true.

E: Ann Walker's family's only really been making money for a few generations, they're part of the new manufacturing elite. Ann Walker herself is born in 1803, she has an older sister and a younger brother.

A: Do you know what they're called?

E: Her older sister is called Elizabeth and her younger brother's called John.

A: Okay.

E: In 1809, her father inherits Crow Nest which is their estate in Halifax, so in the same area that Anne Lister lives and they move there.

A: That sounds like it belongs in a Gothic novel.

I: Yeah, the name.

A: Crow Nest.

E: Mm, mm, yeah. We don't know very much about her early life otherwise, we don't know much about her education or her relationship with her parents or anything. We do know that the Listers were on calling terms with the Walkers but no real friendship develops for a long time. Part of this is because Anne Lister looks down on them for being involved in trade.

A: Victorians, why are you like this?

E: Victoria's not yet come to the throne.

I: [laughter]

A: 19th century Britons, why are you like this?

[laughter]

E: We nevertheless do get mentions of Ann Walker in Anne Lister's diaries in 1821, she mentions going on a walk with her and how she enjoys flirting with her, although seemingly this is just because she likes flirting with women. She doesn't think that anything is going to come of it at that point.

I: Still, like, a good beginning.

E: In 1823, Ann Walker's parents die. Anne Lister again recalls, in her diary, that she paid condolence calls to the family.

A: Mhm.

E: But we don't know anything else about how, like, Ann Walker felt or anything like that. She was only nineteen.

I: How old was Anne Lister at this point?

E: Anne Lister is about 31 at this point, so there is a reasonable age gap at this point.

I: Okay.

E: Alright. Ann Walker's father leaves behind an estate worth **30,000 pounds** at the time, or 3,300,000 today.

A: Oh wow, so they're rich people.

E: They're quite rich, yeah. He leaves the property to his son, because that's what you do, but he

does leave significant, like, stock and just cash to his daughters.

A: Mmkay.

E: So she's a medium heiress at this point.

A: Mmkay.

E: Her older sister, Elizabeth, marries a Captain Sutherland who's quite poor and everyone suspects him of just being a fortune hunter.

A: Yep.

E: They have a daughter and a son. And then in 1829, her younger brother John marries a woman named Fanny Penfold and they go off to Italy on their honeymoon and he dies.

A: Oh.

I: Whoops.

E: Yes. Yeah, it's quite sad. His wife is pregnant at the time, and if she had given birth to a son, then he would have been heir to the estates, and she unfortunately delivers a stillborn child. And she then forfeits her rights to whatever inheritance she could have got out of the Walker estate; it's quite clear that they just kind of want her to go away.

A: Poor Fanny.

E: Yeah.

A: Like that's a very hard time she's just had.

E: Yeah. It absolutely would be. After that, however, the property is split between the two sisters. Ann Walker is now quite wealthy. Over the second half of 1832, Anne Lister begins to visit Ann Walker.

A: I'm-

I: Fortune hunting.

A: Mm, I, I didn't want to say that, but I was like, she showed no interest until she had a fortune, is this part of her thing that she wants to have a wife who will improve her social standing and like, set her up with money? Or am I just being very harsh on her? I don't know.

E: She's stated what she wants out of this, y'know...

A: Okay. Fortune hunting.

E: Yep. Anne Lister starts to consider that she might be a potential wife. They have these quite nice-sounding conversations where they talk about business together and they compare notes on like, what lawyers they're employing and what they think of particular men they're working with and things like that.

A: Okay, no, I like that, I like that.

I: That sounds like a deeply unfun date from my perspective.

E: [laughter]

I: But like, whatever suits them.

E: Well, these diaries are quite interesting because you get to look at how a woman can manage to be financially independent and to run an estate...

I: Yeah.

E: ...in a society that's set up to not allow her to do that. So it was very interesting and entertaining to watch these women form this network where they could use each other to get ahead over men.

A: Mhm.

I: Yeah.

E: Anne Lister does reflect on the fact that she wants a wife who is of higher rank than her which Ann Walker is not.

A: What does that...?

E: So Anne Lister's family has lived at Shibden for generations, they're part of the local landed elite.

A: Yep.

E: Ann Walker's family is not.

A: Okay. Yep, okay, I understand.

E: Mm.

A: So Anne Lister is more aristocratic than Ann Walker.

E: She's just barely noble.

A: Yep.

E: So yeah, kind of. Ideally she would want a wife who would come with all sorts of connections to yet higher social strata.

A: Mhm.

E: And Ann Walker doesn't have these, but she does have quite a bit of money, so Anne Lister thinks, y'know, well, maybe that makes up for it.

A: Oh, Anne... Lister.

I: [laughter]

E: They become close very quickly. They start to exchange gifts of books and shrubs.

I: Shrubs.

A: I love receiving shrubs.

[laughter]

A: That's so romantic.

E: Yes. And they start discussing visiting Rome together, which was quite a big deal, it's not like, a normal thing to just go on holiday with your friends, it speaks of some kind of commitment or intentions there.

I: Mm.

E: So in a little while, Anne Lister will spend a while trying to get Ann Walker to commit to going overseas with her so she can become more sure that their relationship has, like, moved up a level.

A: Mhm.

I: Yep.

E: They're going on a lot of walks together and they start to visit this little hut on the grounds that I assume was quite secluded.

[laughter]

A: That seems to be, like, 90% of dates in the Victorian era, just going on walk together, that's it, that's all we can do.

E: And making out in a hut.

[laughter]

A: Presumably like that's the second half of the date.

I: I guess that when you design a Victorian home...

E: [laughter]

I: ...you have to be like, alright well, here's the house, here's that like, little cabin besides the tennis courts, where we're going to put the sauna, here's the sex hut.

E: [laughter] The sex hut.

I: Like in your grounds.

[laughter]

E: They're not having sex in the hut, but they are sitting and having very cosy little chats in the hut. So Anne writes in her diary, "We laughed at the idea of the talk of our going abroad together would [produce]. She said it would be as good as a marriage. 'Yes,' said [I], 'quite as good or better'".

[laughter]

I: Subtle, Anne.

A: Oh no, Anne Lister.

E: And then another day, back in their hut, she writes of it, "Bordering on love-making in the hut... Our liaison is now established... Perhaps after all she will make me happier than any of my former flames."

I: Aww.

A: Well, that's nice.

E: So to be clear, love-making doesn't mean they had sex in the hut.

A: [laughter]

E: Anne Lister spends quite a while trying to get Ann Walker gradually into bed, and their not there yet. It just means like, making out or whatever, I guess.

A: Alright.

I: Okay, yep. So on my, like, architectural plan I'll label it, like, kissing hut.

A: And then like, further into the woods...

[laughter]

I: Yeah, we have, yep. Third base hut.

[laughter]

A: Yeah.

E: One day, Ann Walker invites her to dinner, and, quote, "the manservant withdrew."

[laughter]

A: Oooh.

E: Anne Lister writes of this date, "She sat on my knee and I did not spare kissing and pressing, she returning it..."

A: [laughter] And pressing.

E: [laughter] Yes.

A: That's not a very like... sensual sounding word.

E: Yeah, she does use different words than we would use.

A: Yeah.

I: Yeah.

E: So basically she's being like, she sat on my knee and I kissed her and felt her up.

A and I: Yep.

E: And then they go into the darkened living room. I just love that we have these so much.

I: Yeah.

E: This is such a rare treasure. She wrote, Finding no resistance and the lamp being out, let my hand wander lower down gently to getting to [her] queer." Which is like, her vulva.

A: Okay.

I: How do you spell that? The same as...?

E: Queer.

A: [laughter]

I: Oh, that's so nice.

E: There's a Queer as Fact fact for you!

[laughter]

A: I never heard that before.

E: I've heard it a few times, I never really occurred to me to look into, like, why.

[laughter]

E: But I've definitely heard that. Anyway, Anne Lister continues, "still no resistance - so I whispered surely she could care for me some little. "Yes." Is her reply.

[laughter]

E: So things are moving along.

I: Alright.

A: Good, good.

I: She fades to black in the diary then.

A: She was already in black, the lamp was out.

[laughter]

E: By this point, Anne Lister has wholeheartedly set about seducing Ann Walker. She wants her for her wife. Things become more serious, they have formal family visits.

I: Aww.

E: They both alter their wills to make the other life tenant of the other's property. So what that means is that their property will still belong to the line of succession in their family, but if, say, Ann Walker dies before Anne Lister, Anne Lister owns her estate until Anne Lister dies, and then it just goes through the Walker line of succession.

A: Okay.

I: Yep.

E: Yep.

I: Yep.

E: They do various drafts of their wills, they don't actually finalise til much later but it's something that they're just kind of working towards at this point.

A: Mhm.

E: By the end of 1832, Anne is already taking on responsibilities at Ann Walker's estate. Anne Lister also suggests that they formally sanctify their relationship with Anglican rites.

A: So a marriage.

E: So a marriage. About them having kind of formal marriage vows as it were, Anne Lister writes in her diary, "Insinuated (first time) that our present intercourse without any tie between us must be as wrong as any other transient connection... Miss W- told me in the hut if she said "Yes" again it should be binding. It should the same as a marriage... made no objection to what I proposed, that is, her declaring it on the Bible & taking the sacrament with me".

A: Okay, so that is very much a marriage.

E: Mm, yeah, she very much conceptualises it like a marriage.

A: Mhm.

E: So Anne Lister very much presents it here that, well it's wrong of us to be carrying on and... I was about to say canoodling.

[laughter]

A: I think you should say canoodling.

[laughter]

E: And *canoodling* without having some kind of formal union between us and I'm not sure if that was genuinely a belief that she held or if she knew that this was a way that she could get Ann Walker to do what she wanted.

A and I: Mm.

A: Yeah.

E: Ann Walker is quite religious. She feels some religious guilt at times. Anne Lister doesn't really seem so. She is devoutly religious, like she does go to church and things like that, but I'm not really sure how much of that is like, genuine fear of God and how much of that is very tied up with her society.

They do have problems with their relationship. Ann Walker is quite reluctant to kind of make the

final commitment. There are for several months a pattern of what Anne Lister describes in her diaries as "acquiesce, guilt, lamentations, equivocation, apologies." So she keeps being like, oh I do, and then backing out, and Anne Lister is just quite annoyed by this and wants to hurry her up and get this finalised basically.

I: Yeah.

A: Mhm. Yep.

E: There's also the fact that Ann Walker is periodically quite unwell. It's not really 100% clear how we would understand her illness today. There's a number of factors to it. Some of it is either a physical illness or manifests itself as physical symptoms. So she doesn't get her period for months at a time and she has quite bad back pain and things like that.

I: Okay.

E: She also has quite a bit of religious guilt. So Anne Lister doesn't, as I alluded to a moment ago, really have any guilt about their relationship. She's very established in thinking of herself as a woman who is into women and as someone who has relationships with women. It's like, in her life, established for her. And that's not the case for Ann Walker. There's no sign to suggest that Ann Walker's...

I: Ever done this before.

E: Ever done this before. Or possibly ever considered this as a possibility in her life or anything.

I: Okay.

E: She also just has depression and anxiety all the time. So Anne Lister details how she spends like, days just like, lying on the sofa crying and can never pull herself together and she's very anxious and upset. She feels that she would be a burden on Anne Lister if they were to get together at this time or if they were to travel together or whatnot, and Anne Lister is just brutally impatient about this. She has no time for it.

I: Okay, Anne Lister. I think you're making a mistake with this relationship.

E: Yes.

I: I mean, Ann Walker, you're making a mistake too probably.

A: Mm...

E: They're not the best suited. I don't want to try and paint it that their relationship was just bad. Y'know, they did provide like, very much needed companionship to each other and they did genuinely like each other. But there's also these problems.

I: Yeah.

A: Mhm. Yep.

E: Anne Lister recommends that Ann Walker see a doctor and she takes her to Marianne's brother, the doctor, who she's dealt with before for discreet things. So they go to York, where he's based, and Dr Belcombe arranges very discreet lodgings there for them. They're essentially pretending that they're treating a strictly physical illness.

A: Mhm.

E: Of this, Anne Lister writes in her diary, "there are certain ladylike derangements of [the] system which it is always well to have cured as quietly as possible."

A: What does that mean?

E: Well I'll read you her summary of what the doctor essentially diagnoses her with: "Nothing the matter with her but nervousness. If all her fortune could fly away and she had to work for her living, she would be well. A case of nervousness and hysteria. No organic disease." So they do seem to have this idea that she's kind of just being self-indulgent and she needs to sort of... she could be snapped out of it.

A: Yep, yep.

I: Yeah, that very... if she had to work for her living she wouldn't do this thing.

E: Mm. Yeah. She also doesn't really seem to think... Anne Lister doesn't seem to think Ann Walker's up to her level intellectually. So she creates a study plan for Ann Walker of French, drawing and reading because she feels she's not sufficiently educated.

I: Oh my God.

A: I know that drawing was kinda like one of those things that was expected of a lady of a certain class in that time...

E: Mhm.

A: But to be like, I really want to marry you, but you need to be better at drawing.

[laughter]

A: It's like... sounds so wrong.

I: I'm sorry, I went on your DeviantArt and I was embarrassed.

[laughter]

E: Well on that note, not quite a DeviantArt but Anne Lister does write about a letter she receives from Ann Walker in French and this was hard to read. She writes, "Such French as I never read before - but I contived to make out her meaning - she begs me to send it back corrected but that is quite impossible without changing every word."

[laughter]

A: Oooh. Ouch.

E: Yeah.

A: Oh dear.

E: Mm.

I: Come on, Anne Lister, she tried, she wrote you a French letter.

E: Yeah.

[laughter]

E: I think it's this thing where Anne Lister very much wants a woman who will kind of very much just like, respect her authority and do as she's told and kind of respect that Anne is superior to her, but also she wants someone who's on her level in terms of like, energy and intellect and things like that. I'm not quite sure how that really could have come out to her complete satisfaction.

A: I think that's what Victorian men looked for in wives a lot of the time...

E: Yes.

A: ...too, like that's just kind of the social expectation of a wife, she's just looking for a wife as a man of the time looked for a wife.

E: Yes.

A: Which is bad.

[laughter]

A: A bad way to find a partner.

E: There's also the fact that Anne Lister relatives are quite disapproving. Initially, Anne Lister, because she's a woman, can't really be suspected for fortune hunting.

A: Mhm.

E: So she's given almost unlimited access to Anne in a way that a male suitor just never would have been.

A: Oh yeah.

E: But gradually they become suspicious about what exactly they're relationship is and why Anne Lister is starting to make decisions in Ann Walker's estate and why Ann Walker comes to live at Shibden eventually.

I: Yeah.

E: One of Ann Walker's relatives, Mrs Priestley, walks in on them kissing one day. She, I think, kind of storms out and then the Annes go back to making out on the couch.

[laughter]

E: But nevertheless it does permanently damage their relationship with her.

A: Mhm.

E: One of the extended family kind of just happens to be in town when Ann Walker is staying in Dr Belcombe's care in York and drops into his offices and is sort of like, what's going on, why is she here?

I: Yeah.

A: Mhm.

E: Anne Lister has to quite regularly meet with various relatives to try and do damage control and say like, y'know, obviously I have her best intentions at heart, and all of this.

A and I: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

E: So that's an ongoing difficulty in their lives. She has varying success at that. Sometimes she goes home and is like, good, I think they're like, accepting now, and other times she's like, eh, they're not really buying it.

I: Yep.

E: Yeah. They stay in this sort of limbo for a long time where they're clearly in a relationship but Ann Walker can't bring herself to commit. Anne Lister gets into this habit of starting her diary entries with a description of what she's managed to do with Ann Walker sexually the day before. So she'll start her diary with a little summary of her sex life and then just go on to be like, weather very chilly today...

I: [laughter]

E: ...went and saw about the back paddock.

A: Oh, Anne.

E: So an example of one of her startings of her diary entries, this is one of the longer ones, they're quite brief, starts, "'Tolerably near her last night... She seems very fond of me - is very proper during the day but very sufficiently on the amoroso at night...'"

[laughter]

I: On the amoroso, I love it.

A: That's so terrible, I love it.

[laughter]

A: Oh dear.

E: "...that I am really [sure I] soon shall be satisfied wih her and I really hope we shall get on very well together."

A: Is that I really hope we'll have sex soon or really I really hope we'll get along well and have and have a good long term relationship?

E: I think it's, I think she's suitable for me, but part of that is, I think my sex life is going to be satisfactory. Sex is important to Anne Lister.

A: Yeah, I remember that from last time, Anne was very hung up about sex.

E: Yes.

I: I remember her having sex in a thunder storm?

E: She did do that.

A: Oh, she did.

E: I read you that quote.

I: Yeah.

A: That was a good quote, yes.

E: Yes. They decide to exchange rings at some point. It's not really clear exactly what occurs here, whether they arrange together to buy a pair of rings that they then exchange or whether Anne Lister just buys a ring and gives it to Ann Walker and is like, hey, you should give that to me.

[laughter]

E: I'll read you a quote. I'm not sure if it's the ring that she's had as her kind of wedding ring with Marianne or not. "I asked her to put [on] the gold wedding ring I wore... She would not give it to me immediately but wore it till we entered the village of Langton and then put it on my left third finger in token of our union - which is now understood to be confirmed for ever tho' little or nothing was said."

A: So it sounds to me...

E: Mhm.

A: ...like Anne Lister was wearing a wedding ring...

E: Yes.

A: ...presumably the one she got from Marianne.

E: Yes.

A: And then she gave it to Ann Walker and was like, can you put this on me as a ceremonial thing.

E: Yes.

A: And then Ann Walker kept it for a bit and then did as she asked.

E: Yeah, maybe.

I: Yeah. That's what it sounds like. Like she's giving Ann Walker the ring that she normally wears and is like, wear this for a bit and then give it back to me symbolically and we will be married.

E: Mm.

A: Yeah. Yeah. I think so.

I: Like extra married.

E: They finally do go overseas together from June to August of 1834. They travel to France and Switzerland.

A: Mhm.

E: They're travelling in more luxury than Anne Lister had travelled before because now she has access to Ann Walker's money.

A: Yep.

E: Anne Lister describes her wife as being a "blithe and happy traveller" in her letters to her aunt, but in her own private diaries she's less pleased with her conduct. She's very anxious and she's very fidgety and Anne Lister dislikes it.

I: I mean, this is understandable though, the like, anxious and fidgety.

E: Yes.

A: Yeah.

E: Yes

A: Yep.

I: Like I imagine it would be fairly big for Ann Walker to have come on this overseas trip in the first place.

E: Yeah, I think if she finds life in her own estate stressful enough that it exacerbates anxiety, going to Switzerland...

I: Yeah.

E: ...probably isn't actually going to help.

I: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

E: So they're married now, they're well and truly married and when they come back from this trip they start to move in together.

A: Once they get married...

E: Mm.

A: How does Anne Lister refer to Ann Walker in her diaries? Does she just call her Ann, does she say that's her wife or spouse or anything like that?

E: She doesn't use words like wife or spouse.

A: Uh huh.

E: I'm not quite sure exactly at what point she stops saying Miss W-. I think at some point she stops calling her A-.

A: Oh yeah.

E: She once or twice called her Adney.

A: Okay.

I: That's an odd one.

E: As a nickname. I was going to suggest it but then I didn't like how it felt in the mouth so I didn't.

I: [laughter]

A: Yep, fair enough.

E: And now they've moved in together, Anne Lister's diaries become less sexual and more practical in focus, so she's got that nailed down, she can get back to running her estate.

I: [laughter]

A: Good for her, good for her.

E: And Ann Walker's relatives are very suspicious, they're questioning why they're living together in the first place.

A: Mhm.

E: Because Ann Walker hasn't really told anyone any kind of like, cover story or anything. They also start going to church together, it's part of them presenting themselves as a...

A: Couple.

E: ...unit to the world in a respectable way. Some of Ann Walker's relatives do soften over time and do gradually accept their relationship a bit more but others just remain completely appalled by it and they just have to deal with that.

A: Do you think these relatives are worried about the fact that Anne Lister is kind of going to take Ann Walker's money and is taking advantage of her in like, a financial sense, or are they worried about the moral implications of a lesbian relationship?

E: I think it's both.

A: Okay.

E: There's some explicit talk about like, why do you have access to her money?

A: Mhm.

E: And things like that. The historian who edited the last volume of diaries, Jill Liddington, wrote about how Anne Lister could kind of get away with more because there was no possible way for polite society to accuse her of being in a lesbian relationship.

A: Yep.

E: Like there are words at this time, but they're not words that you use in polite company.

I: Yeah.

E: So people could kind of hint at each other, but no one could just say anything about it really.

A: Mmkay.

I: Yep.

E: So there does seem to have been suspicion there and we know at least one of Ann Walker's relatives has walked in on them kissing.

A: Yeah.

E: But they can't really articulate that and so we're not really sure the extent of what people are worried about.

A: Okay. That makes sense, that makes sense.

E: In any case, one of Ann Walker's aunts reduces her inheritance in her will when she moves in with Anne Lister.

A: Mmkay.

E: Some of their concern very much is that Anne Lister is controlling Ann Walker and her money and that is kinda fair, to be honest. Anne Lister is very upfront in her diaries about the fact that she does want to control Ann Walker's money and Ann Walker. When Ann Walker's living in York while she's seeing the doctor, Anne Lister leaves word with the Belcombes that Ann Walker isn't to be introduced to anyone without Anne Lister approving it first.

A: That's a bit intense.

E: Yes. From our point-of-view it certainly is. I think it would have been quite normal for a husband to do at the time.

I: Yeah.

A: Oh yeah. That would be.

E: Yes.

A: But from our point-of-view, that's very controlling.

E: Anne Lister also helps Ann Walker write her letters to her relatives to help her present themselves to them.

A: Mhm.

E: This isn't a huge source of conflict between the two women but Ann Walker does grow increasingly unhappy with being caught between her partner and her family.

I: Yep.

E: She also does, to some extent, resent the fact that Anne Lister has comparatively a lot more freedom than her to just kind of go about her life as she wants to. She is just pretty much living at Shibden Hall and sometimes Anne Lister takes her socialising and sometimes she won't.

A: Why is it that Anne Lister has more freedom?

E: I think Anne Lister has just established that she's...

I: The husband here.

E: The husband.

A: Mhm.

E: And Ann Walker, as quite a nervous person is frankly quite easy to control.

A: Mhm.

E: And Anne Lister wants that.

A: Yep, yep. And I suppose if Ann Walker has moved in with Anne Lister then Anne Lister has established herself and how she lives at Shibden Hall...

E: Yeah.

A: ...and what she does and who she sees and Ann Walker doesn't have that necessarily.

E: Mm. So Ann Walker will try and assert independence in the relationship sometimes and Anne Lister sees that as a struggle for the upper hand and she won't have that. She is very clearly determined that she will have the upper hand in this relationship at all times.

I: Yeah.

E: At some point, because of these problems, Anne Lister begins to think that maybe she won't stay with Ann Walker forever. It really seems to me that Anne Lister might be able to extricate herself from this and continue on with her life okay but I feel like Ann Walker would have had a lot more trouble returning to her day-to-day life.

A: Mhm.

I: Yeah.

E: And I just wanted to note that 'cause I don't think that's something that Anne Lister thought about all that much.

A: Yep, yep.

I: I mean Anne Lister seems to have mostly thought about Ann Walker in terms of what can Ann Walker do for me?

E: Mm.

I: And never Ann Walker as sort of her own...

E: Person.

A: If Anne Lister had just walked away from this relationship, how was Ann Walker's relationship with her own family? Would she have been able to just go back to her family and be fine or had she damaged the relationship with her family too much by having this relationship with Anne Lister?

E: I think with some relatives at least, it would have taken some work.

A: Mhm.

E: To get back to normal. And I think it also depends on how the relationship was dissolved. Like, what that looked like publicly.

A: Oh yeah, that's true.

E: 'Cause it's possible that they could have spun it just as, well, Ann Walker was quite unwell at that time and I lived right here and we were quite close so we just lived together for a year, it's nothing untoward, what are you talking about?

A: Yep.

E: Or it could have been a messy public thing. The epilogue to the edited edition of this section of the diaries I read more or less starts it off with the quote, "Few readers will reach the end of this narrative without murmuring to themselves, 'She wasn't very nice, was she?'"

[laughter]

A: I was about to say, Anne was a very self-interested person, wasn't she?

E: She was.

A: And like, she really was.

E: She was. In the early months of 1836, Anne Lister's father's health is declining and he dies on the 3rd of April.

A: Mhm.

E: Anne Lister's the one to arrange the funeral. She remains very collected and reserved in her response to this. A woman at the funeral notes that there's not many people crying and she, in her diary, writes down her response to this, which is, "No, I've not shed one. Nor did I when my father was with me over my mother's grave or at my uncle's. There may be grief without tears."

I: Aw.

E: Mm.

A: So was – I can't remember from the first episode – was Anne Lister close to her father?

E: No.

A: Okay.

E: Their relationship was quite difficult. At this time, Anne Lister, her sister and her father are living there and they're all kind of living separate lives.

A: So they're all living at -

E: Shibden, yeah.

A: Shibden Hall together? Okay, okay.

E: Anne Lister starts to make plans to travel again in the summer and she starts to prepare her estate for her long absence.

A: Mhm.

E: Ann Walker is still very emotional and crying all the time and Anne thinks, well, we'll travel for a couple of years, and then my estate will be more profitable and I can start thinking about divorcing Ann.

A: I feel so sad for Ann Walker. Like, she's not suited to the time she was born in.

E: No.

A: No one is truly suited to the Victorian era, y'know, some people did okay.

E: Yep. In October of 1836, Anne's aunt passes away, she's been sick for quite a while.

A: Anne Lister's aunt?

E: Anne Lister's aunt, yeah, sorry. And Anne Lister is again the one to organise the funeral so she now has full control over the estate and all of its incomes.

A: Mhm.

E: Now that her father and her aunt are...

I: Okay.

E: ...dead.

A: Yep.

E: In 1836, they finally sign and publish their wills in favour of each other and then they prepare to go off on this long trip. Before we get to the end of Anne's story though, I just wanted to talk about a few more major themes of her life...

I: Mhm.

E: ...which are how she's dealing with her estate and local politics.

I: Ah.

E: [laughter] So you can turn this episode off now.

A: We are definitely in for a time, I feel.

E: So in the 1830s, Anne Lister has been considering how best to make money off her lands. Her family had been involved in trade a few generations earlier.

A: Ooooh.

E: Yep. The last person to do so was one of her uncles who made some ventures into the cloth trade in the 1770s. She finds records of this in a drawer in Shibden and is very, very embarrassed and has them all burnt.

[laughter]

A: I was about to say, does she have them all burnt?, as a joke.

E: No, she has them burnt. So she's quite disdainful of the possibility of making money off of manufacturing, but in reality, she doesn't actually have the capital necessary to start up a mill anyway.

A: Yep.

E: And it also isn't really acceptable for a woman to be running one.

A: Mhm.

E: She relies, in order to make money, on very traditional methods for the area. So she rents out her land, she invests in canal shares, she quarries stone and she looks into mining coal. The way that she's going about these things is also very traditional, so it's not industrialised yet, it's done by manual labour. So this is essentially how people have been making money off the land in this area for generations.

She starts looking into mining her lands and she finds herself faced with a very steep learning curve. She goes about picking the brains of all these local men to try and figure out how things are done and what price people are selling things at, and she's especially trying to get an idea of what

the Rawsons' operations are looking like. So these are her big coal mining rivals. She hates them.

[laughter]

E: She does quite well because people aren't suspicious about her asking questions about this, because she can't possibly be a business threat, and then she establishes herself as a business threat.

A: I'm quite surprised that like, Anne's neighbours haven't worked out how shrewd she is yet.

I: Every time she does anything they're like, oh yeah, she's a woman, not really worried about it...

A: Yeah.

I: ...and then it's like seven months later, she opens a coal mine and they're like, what, where did this come from?!

[laughter]

E: Over time, she becomes more and more proactive about, say, negotiating and things like that, but she does spend a long time developing a coal pit, and she never makes tons of money off it.

A: Mhm.

E: Her rivalry with the Rawsons constantly intensifies though. She suspects them of trespassing into her coal and of deliberately sabotaging her pits. Early on, Christopher Rawson, one of the Rawson brothers, wants to buy ten acres of land off her to mine and he sends a younger Rawson brother, Jeremiah to come negotiate a price with her. So what she does is she leaves him waiting for ten minutes before she'll see him.

A: Ooooh.

[laughter]

E: And then she starts beating him down on price. Some kind of comment is made about her being a woman she writes down that she said, "It is the intellectual part of us that makes a bargain, and that has no sex or ought to have none."

I: Fair enough.

A: Good on Anne.

E: They end up drawing up a proposal but it's such a tight proposal that Christopher Rawson refuses it, saying, "I would not sign such a proposal for all the coal she possesses."

[laughter]

E: So I'm quite proud of her.

A: I respect her in this faculty.

E: I do, yeah, I do. She does very well with the fact that she hasn't been raised to know how to handle any of this...

A: Mm.

E: ...because she's a woman, and she just figures it out and gets it done, so.

A: Yeah. Like if someone just put me in charge of an estate, I wouldn't be like, yeah, I can handle this, I'll hire these overseers, I'll go and negotiate stuff. I'd be like, what do I do, what do I do, panic and just would not...

E: I'd hire an overseer and be like, please don't cook the books too much but I won't know if you do.

[laughter]

I: Yeah, same, same.

A: Yeah, that's probably true.

E: Yeah. Um...

I: Posting on Facebook, anybody know any reliable estate overseers?

E: The Rawsons stir up quite a bit of working class opposition to her in response. Um, also, and this is the least pleasant part of the episode, and I think the first thing that upset me as opposed to just made me mad, uh, she definitely does use child labour.

I: But surely did everyone?

A: Yeah.

E: Yeah, she did, but I'll tell you the quote and then you'll see why I'm upset.

I: Alright.

E: So the local commissioner visits one of their pits, and encounters a boy "crying very bitterly and bleeding from a wound in the cheek because his master had thrown coal at him to get him to work faster."

I: Okay.

E: So that's happening.

I: That's how child labour.

E: Yeah. She isn't any better or any worse than any other coal miner at the time, yeah, that's true, but...

A: Mm.

I: Yeah, it's just that you've got to know her sex life personally.

E: [laughter] Yeah. Well, I didn't want to paint too much of a like, what a good businesswoman, without making sure we kept in mind the realities of...

I: Being a good businessperson in 19th century England, yeah.

E: Yeah, this is what labour is like.

A: How reliable a narrator do you think she is of her life?

E: As long as you keep in mind that she's desperately self-interested?

[laughter]

E: Not very, I think you very much need to read her diaries as a version of what happened.

A: Mmkay.

E: You can contrast versions sometimes with letters and her diaries.

A: Mhm. And is there a big difference?

E: There's a... there's a difference of perspective, not so much as outright facts.

A: Okay, yep yep yep.

E: Y'know, she's writing this just for herself, so y'know, she never wanted anyone to read it or anything like that.

A: Mhm.

E: But I think no one can really be an impartial observer of their own lives.

A: No, that's very true.

E: Her other big interest is politics. At this time, there's an increasing social awareness, there's increasing organisation of the working class, and Anne has no time for this and does not approve of it. She writes at one point in her diary, "I could not like a vulgar person. Why do I so revere the pride of ancestry? Because how rarely, how very rarely we see nobility of mind among the lowly born!" Now we don't swear on this podcast.

A: I was literally about to say that. But!

E: But sometimes we're tempted to!

[laughter]

E: She's also a staunch Tory. She's very concerned with local Tory elections over this period. Part of her involvement is in securing votes from her tenants for local Tory candidates.

A: I'm worried.

E: So she doesn't tell them who to vote for, but she does go around to all her tenants and say, oh I would never want to change your mind, but I just want you to know that it's very important to me

that the Tories get in and well, I really couldn't consider renewing the leases of anyone who didn't vote for them.

A: Did they have secret ballots in England at this time?

E: No. No.

A: Right.

E: Yeah.

A: So it's very easy to just blackmail someone into voting what you want.

E: Yep. Yes it is. It is technically illegal, to be clear.

I: Yep.

A: Yeah.

E: But she's doing it. In order to vote, you had to be, like, paying rent on land of 50 **pounds** or up a year.

I: Yep.

A: Yep.

E: We have record of her getting one of tenants, Charles Howarth, to start paying 50 **pounds** instead of 46 pounds a year, and then giving him two pounds back every six months.

I: [laughter]

E: With the understanding that he would then give her Tory votes.

I: Yep.

E: Another tenant of hers is a man named Jonathan Mallinson and the land that he leases has an inn on it called The Stag's Head and Anne was very angry to hear that he allowed radical workers and unionists and people like that to meet on his property and told him that he could either stop allowing that or he could vacate the land and he stops.

I: What a bad person.

E: Anne also tries to secure property that has inns on it. Inns are a very valuable thing to have because so much political conversation goes on in them, so if you can control the inns, you can make it more difficult for people to have political conversation that you don't want.

A: Mhm.

I: Yep.

E: In the 1834 election, the Tory candidate wins on of the seats by a single vote and there's immediate outrage and cries that some of the Tory votes have been gained by bribery and

intimidation, which is factual. There's boycotting of Tory businesses, and there's a parliamentary inquiry into bribery, but it doesn't come to anything.

A: Mmkay.

E: Mm. The next election, however, she finds more resistance to her vote influencing. This time she also goes around to all her tenants and pressures them into voting for the Tories, but she finds a lot of them just mysteriously aren't home at the moment.

I: [laughter]

E: Or they just say, oh really, I've already promised so-and-so that I'd vote for the Whigs candidate, if I knew it meant so much to you I wouldn't have, I'm sorry, I can't go back on it.

[laughter]

E: And things like that. So it's quite a small, quiet rebellion but it's masking this very deep anger...

I: Yeah.

E: ...in the local community about fairly blatant...

I: Yeah.

E: ...Tory election influencing. The election is held and the Tory candidate loses disastrously.

I: That's what you get. That's what you get, Anne.

E: Mm. Most of Anne's tenants don't vote for him.

I: [laughter]

A: Good.

E: I assume that she doesn't actually throw people off her land then, because she can't afford to throw like, all of her tenants off...

I: Mm.

A: No.

I: She'll stop getting money and she'll be sad.

A: That's probably exactly what their plan was.

E: Hopefully. So. Workers of the world unite.

I: Yeah, basically.

A: Take a lesson from that, listeners.

E: There's also just general growing public dissatisfaction with harsh working conditions and social disenfranchisement at the time. Chartism, which is a working class movement for political reform,

begins around this time, and by 1838, it's powerful enough that Halifax magistrates have applied to have extra soldiers present in the town 'cause the rich don't feel safe. Which is how I like my rich.

[laughter]

E: Anne hosts some on her property.

A: The soldiers?

E: Mm. Anyway, here's a fun fact. Word also came around that apparently both Ann Walker and Anne Lister had been burned in effigy by the public.

[laughter]

A: Oh wow, okay.

E: Jill Liddington said that it was a rumour, I don't really know believable this is. I think we hear about it from the Rawsons.

I: Okay.

E: But anyway, it's being said and that's quite a time, it's definitely the first time one of our topics has been burned in effigy. I also wanted to mention – it doesn't really fit in with any particular section, but just regarding her involvement with the town. She's involved with the founding of the Halifax Literary and Philosophical Society and she considers going and seeing the stone be laid.

A and I: Mhm.

E: And she decides not to. This is a tremendous shame because a daguerreotype of the attendants is taken, so if she'd been there it would have been the first and only photograph we would have had of her.

I: Aww.

A: Of Anne? Oh, because we only have the painting.

E: We only have the painting.

A: Oh, that's so sad.

I: Mm.

E: Yeah. But yeah, that's all I really wanted to say about her life in Halifax, so we can return back to her big international trip now. In June of 1839, they leave Halifax for Moscow. So they travel around for a bit over a year and then Anne Lister is bit by a fever-carrying tick and dies in Georgia on the 22nd of September 1840. Ann Walker is left to bring the body back to Halifax. It takes her over six months.

Back in Halifax, Anne Lister's will is read and of course the estate is left to her distant cousins, the only surviving Listers, but Ann Walker is a life tenant.

A and I: Yep.

E: Ann Walker, however, and I can just say Ann now because she is the only Ann.

A: Ohh.

E: Struggles to manage both of the estates, however. She's struggling psychologically a fair bit. In 1843, her sister Elizabeth, with the help of various others, including Dr Belcombe, decide that they're going to forcibly remove her from Shibden. In order to do so, a local constable has to come and take a locked door off its hinges.

I: Wow. Okay.

E: To get to her.

A: What are the sources at this point, now that Anne Lister is dead?

E: Letters from her various relatives...

A: Okay.

E: ...and things, I believe. It does get patchier.

A: Yep.

E: Of course. But some of her sources so far have been letters from other people, not just Anne's diaries.

A: Oh, okay.

E: Yep. She is taken to Dr Belcombe's private asylum near York and Shibden Hall is leased. There are some bitter legal battles about the two estates that follow and there's suspicious questions being asked about what the relationship was between the two of them. Captain Sutherland, which is Ann Walker's sister Elizabeth's husband.

A: Yep.

E: Ann Walker's brother-in-law.

A: Mm.

E: At this time is very harsh about Anne Lister, writing about how he thought that she had just cruelly manipulated Ann Walker in order to get control of her money and things like that.

A: She did manipulate her but I don't think it was a cruel as such.

E: No, she's a bit careless, but she does genuinely love Ann Walker.

A: Mhm.

I: I do think she just sort of had certain expectations of the relationship and she went into it looking for like, a wife with all the sort of social trappings and conventions that that had and it

never occurred to her that they were both wives.

E: Yes.

A: Yeah.

E: I think in Anne Lister's mind though she would have been fulfilling her half of the bargain by looking after the estates and generating money for...

A: Mm. Yeah.

E: ...Ann Walker.

A: But she was fulfilling the husband role.

E: Yeah.

A: And so they were fulfilling different roles and there were different expectations on both of them even though they were both women and there was no inherent reason seen by society that they should have fallen into those roles.

E: Ann Walker does eventually end up living back at Crow Nest, so back at her original estate, and she dies there in 1854. She's quite impoverished and she's thought to be mad.

A and I: Aw.

E: Yeah.

A: Aw.

E: So it's a sad end for her. In 1854, so following her death, the distant Listers come and live at Shibden because now they own it. In about 1887, John Lister, one of her distant descendants, begins to publish diary excerpts from her diaries, which were just left at Shibden Hall.

A: Mhm.

E: He's publishing them in the local paper. And he and another antiquarian, Arthur Burrell, eventually crack the code. Anne Lister devised a code which was essentially a cipher and she wrote the sensitive parts of her diary in that code. And the code gets cracked. Burrell said, "He was very distressed, but he refused to take my advise, which was that he should burn [them]".

A: Thank God for that.

E: Yes. Thank you, John Lister. The local librarian in Halifax gets the diaries and starts sorting them out. It's not until 1988 when Helena Whitbread publishes her first volume of the diaries that Anne's sexuality becomes public knowledge, however. Her first collection of these diaries is very controversial. Some of it is over whether or not the diaries are fake because they are so overtly queer.

I: Ah, yeah.

A: Mhm.

E: However, they aren't fake, they are real. Anne Lister existed. She did these things. She married these women. And one commentator because of that has called them "a veritable Rosetta Stone of lesbian life".

A: [laughter]

I: I mean it really is.

E: It really is.

A: Yeah.

E: Sorry, I feel like you had more to say.

I: Yeah, no, it really is, even just from those sort of parts where it was like, she sat on my lap, I did not hold off from pressing.

E: Yeah, yeah. First person accounts, especially at this amount of depth, are so rare.

I: Yeah.

E: And so _____.

I: Yeah. Like, I'm so used to reading that like, one quote from the person where they're like, and this girl, I loved her, and that's like...

A: Were they gay?!

[laughter]

I: Yeah, and that's like, it. And then she's just here being like, so anyway, when will we have sex? I really wanna have sex.

[laughter]

E: Yes, yes.

A: Oh, Anne.

E: Got to second base with my girlfriend last night.

[laughter]

I: Yeah.

E: It also challenges what, I think it was Jill Liddington called the 'no lesbians before 1900' myth...

I: [laughter]

E: ...in terms of its sexual content.

A: Ah yes.

E: So going off of that, it has been said quite often in scholarship that queer women didn't have sex in history until quite recently 'cause they just couldn't figure out...

A: [laughter]

E: ...that that was an option for them.

[laughter]

I: Come on, come on, women know how to masturbate.

A: Give them some credit.

E: Yes, they do! Yeah, which is... Like it's really good that we can just treat that as completely stupid.

I: Comical, yeah.

E: But it's quite a common one, that... Like it's quite common for people to recognise well, these two women did seem to have some like, romantic friendship happening and they did live together their whole lives but they probably wouldn't have ever thought to have sex, or have known how if they wanted to and it's like, they had sex.

[laughter]

I: They could have figured it out if they wanted to.

E: Yeah, yeah. Maybe they didn't want to, maybe some of them genuinely were like, not that type of relationship, but if they wanted to, people figure out how to have sex.

I: Yeah.

A: Yep. Yeah.

E: And with that, we've been Queer as Fact. Merry Christmas.

[laughter]

I: Happy Christmas.

E: So we hope you've enjoyed our first ever Christmas episode. We will be back as usual on the 1st of January and we'll be talking about the 14th century king of England, Edward II. In the meantime, you can find us on Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr as Queer as Fact. If you want to email us more directly you can find us as queerasfact@gmail.com. I wonder if it's a sign that our name isn't very good that no one took any of those.

[laughter]

A: I think our name is good, I like our name.

E: We're also on iTunes, again as Queer as Fact. You can find us there. And if you do find us there,

please give us a review and a rating out of five stars, up to you, it is the Christmas season though.

[laughter]

I: Feel generous.

E: Feel generous. Whether you celebrate Christmas, or another holiday, or nothing at all and are just enjoying whatever public holidays happen to come your way, have a lovely time towards the end of the year and we'll see you on the first of January.