



John Walsh (1856-1951) was born in Crewe in the north of England on October 24, 1856, to Irish-born parents, Patrick and Bridget Byrne Walsh. His mother was a native of County Louth, and her parents were weavers who sold goods to England. His father, who was born in County Down, was a trader. His parents sought opportunity in England but never lost their Irish spirit and patriotism. He graduated from St. Paulinus's Academy in Yorkshire in 1870 at the age of 14.

In 1880 he married Anna Markey, who taught school in Crewe, and they left almost immediately for America, landing in Philadelphia on October 25, 1880. In Philadelphia, they toured the buildings of the Centennial Exposition but then traveled on to Cleveland, where John's brother had set up a hand-weaving operation. The enterprise soon failed, however, because power machinery took over the weaving business. In 1884, John began teaching at Immaculate Conception school. In 1888 he went to work at the Post Office, where he served for 18 years, under four postmasters. He became a member of the Civil Service Commission.

During the 1890s he organized and was first president of the Cleveland Branch of the Catholic Knights of Ohio. He was a delegate to the New Movement Convention of 1895. In Cleveland he joined the Parnell Branch of the Land League and served as president of the MacNeven Club and secretary of the John Mitchell Council of the Irish National Association. All three organizations promoted the cause of Irish nationalism. He also served as county president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, who honored him in 1949.

He became Assistant County Treasurer under J. P. Madigan. In 1907 he moved to East 84th Street. On January 1, 1911, he was appointed bailiff at the Common Pleas Court under the Honorable Martin A. Foran, a former member of congress. He also served in Judge George Baer's court. He held the position of bailiff until 1949, when he was 93, and was one of the oldest and longest serving staff members in the Courthouse.

He was able to visit Ireland twice—in 1923 with his wife Anna and in 1933 with his daughter Elizabeth. He and his wife had seven children who survived infancy: May, Emmet, Hugh, Elizabeth, Gerald, Kathleen, and Nora. He had a deep religious faith and love of the Irish.

Some of his correspondence, club program books, and other memorabilia can be found among the John Walsh Papers in the Western Reserve Historical Society Library. His grand-daughter Margaret Walsh Campbell was a member of the Board of the Irish American Archives Society.