
 ANNA TRAPNEL

 Anna Trapnel's Report and Plea, or, a Narrative
 of Her Journey from London into Cornwall.

* * * After that day wherein I was thus carried forth to speak for Christ's interest, the clergy, with all their might, rung their jangling bells against me, and called to the Rulers to take me up. That I heard was the speech of Mr. Welstead: and others said, "The people would be drawn away, if the rulers did not take some course with me." . . . But while I was singing praises to the Lord for his love to me, the justices sent their constable to fetch me; who came, and said, "He must have me with him": and he pulled, and called me, they said that were by, but I was not capable thereof. . . . Then a friend persuaded them to see whether they could put me out of that condition [a trance], and told them "I was never known to be put out of it."¹ So they came. Justice Launce, now a parliament-man, was one of them, I was told. These justices that came to fetch me out of my bed, they made a great tumult, them and their followers, in the house, and some came upstairs, crying, "A witch, a witch"; making a great stir on the stairs; and a poor honest man rebuking such that said so, he was tumbled downstairs and beaten too, by one of the justices' followers. And the justices made a great noise, in putting out of my chamber where I lay, many of my friends; and they said, "If my friends would not take me up, they would have some should take me up." One of my friends told them, "that they must fetch their silk gowns² to do it then, for the poor would not do it." And they threatened much, but the Lord overruled them. They caused my eyelids to be pulled up, for they said, "I held them fast, because I would deceive the people": they spoke to this purpose. One of the justices pinched me by the nose, and caused my pillow to be pulled from under my head, and kept pulling me, and calling me; but I heard none of all this stir and bustle.

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And when I came before them [at the court session], Lobb being the mouth of the court, as he was foreman of the jury, he represented the whole court. And he first demanded of me my name, and I told him; and he said, "Anna Trapnel, Here is a Bill of Indictment to be read, for you to give in your answer concerning." Then Justice Lobb said, "Read the Bill": so it was read to me. And Lobb said, "Are you guilty, or no?" I had no word to say at the present; but the Lord said to me, "Say not guilty, according to the form of the Bill"; so I spoke it as from the Lord, who knew I was not guilty of such an indictment. Then said Lobb, "Traverse the Bill to the next assizes," so that was done. . . .

And I thought they had done with me at that time; so they had, if they had gone according to true law, which was, not to have brought their interrogatories then. But the report was, that I would discover myself to be a witch when I came before the justices, by having never a word to answer for myself; for it used to be so among the witches, they could not speak before the magistrates.

1. I.e., on other occasions no one was ever able to bring her out of such a trance.

2. The justices.

And so they said, it would be so with me; but the Lord quickly defeated them herein, and caused many to be of another mind. Then Lobb said, "Tender her the book which was written from something said at Whitehall." So the book was reached out to me, and Justice Lobb said, "What say you to that book? will you own it? is it yours?"³

A. T. "I am not careful to answer you in that matter."

Then they said, "She denies her book." They they whispered with those behind them. Then spake Justice Lobb again, and said, "Read a vision of the horns out of the book." So that was read. Then Justice Lobb said, "What say you to that? Is it yours?"

A.T. "I am not careful to answer you in that matter, touching the whole book, as I told you before, so I say again. For what was spoken, was at Whitehall, at a place of concourse of people, and near a council,⁴ I suppose wise enough to call me into question if I offended, and unto them I appeal. But though it was said *I appealed unto Caesar, and unto Caesar should I go*, yet I have not been brought before him which is called Caesar." So much by the by.

Again, I said, "I supposed they had not power to question me for that which was spoke in another county." They said, "Yes, that they had." Then the book was put by; and they again whispered.

Then Justice Lobb asked me about my coming into that country, "How it came to pass, that I came into that country."⁵

I answered, "I came as others did, that were minded to go into the country."

Lobb. "But why did you come into this country?"

A.T. "Why might not I come here, as well as into another country?"

Lobb. "But you have no lands, nor livings, nor acquaintance to come to in this country."

A. T. "What though I had not, I am a single person, and why may I not be with my friends anywhere."

Lobb. "I understand you are not married."

A. T. "Then having no hindrance, why may not I go where I please, if the Lord so will?"

The spoke Justice Launce. "But did not some desire you to come down?" And this Lobb asked me too: but I told them, "I would accuse none, I was there to answer, as to what they should charge my own particular with."⁶

Launce said, "Pray Mistress tell us, what moved you to come such a journey?"

A. T. "The Lord gave me leave to come. Asking of him leave, whithersoever I went, I used still to pray for his direction in all I do. And so I suppose ought you," I said.

Justice Launce. "But pray tell us, what moved you to come such a journey?"

A. T. "The Lord moved me, and gave me leave."

Launce. "But had you not some of extraordinary impulses [of] Spirit, that brought you down? Pray tell us what these were."

A. T. "When you are capable of extraordinary impulses of Spirit, I will tell you. But I suppose you are not in a capacity now," for I saw how deridingly he spoke. And for answering him thus, he said, "I was one of a bold Spirit; but he

3. *The Cry of a Stone*. She never directly answers the question about authorship, presumably because the work the product of a trance, divinely inspired.

4. Presumably, the magistrates at Whitehall, who could have called her before them if they thought

they had cause.

5. "Country" is often used for "county" in 17th-century texts.

6. A neat evasion to avoid naming others or giving any color to notions of conspiracy.

soon took me down." So he himself said, but some said, "I took them down." For the Lord carried me so to speak, that they were in a hurry and confusion, and sometimes would speak all together. That I was going to say, "What, are you like women, all speakers and no hearers?" But I said thus, "Why do you speak all at a time? I cannot answer all, when speaking at once; I appeal to the civillest of you." And I directed my speech to Justice Lobb, who spake very moderately, and gave me a civil answer, saying, "You are not acquainted with the manner of the Court, which is to give in their sayings."

A. T. "But I cannot answer all at once; indeed I do not know the manner of the Court, for I never was before any till now."

Justice Lobb. "You prophesy against Truro."

A. T. "Indeed, I pray against the sins of the people of Truro, and for their souls' welfare. Are you angry for that?"

Lobb. "But you must not judge Authority, but pray for them, and not speak so suspiciously of them." And more to this purpose he spoke to me.

A. T. "I will take up your word, in which you said, I was not to judge: you said well, for so saith the Scripture, *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand.* But you have judged me, and never heard me speak: you have not dealt so well by me as Agrippa dealt by Paul. Though Agrippa was an heathen, he would have Paul speak before he gave in his judgement concerning him."⁷

Justice Treggle. "Oh you are a dreamer."

A. T. "So they called Joseph, therefore I wonder not that you call me so."

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I seeing they were very willing to be gone, I said, "Have you done with me?" Answer was, "I might now go away," but I said, "Pray what is it to break the good behavior you have bound me over to? I know not what you may make a breaking of it: is it breaking the good behavior, to pray and sing?"

Justice Travel said, "No so I did it at the habitation where I abode."

"It's well," said I, "you will give leave it shall be anywhere."⁸ I said, "I will leave one word with you, and that is this: A time will come when you and I shall appear before the great Judge of the tribunal seat of the Most High, and then I think you will hardly be able to give an account for this day's work before the Lord, at that day of true Judgement."

Said Treggle, "Take you no care for us."

So they were willing to have no more discourse with me.

7. The story of Paul invited to speak for himself before Agrippa is recounted in Acts 25.13 to 26.1-32.

8. Because she proposes to continue traveling about.