

Ann Hopewell ID273 per *Duchess of Northumberland* 1853

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A mitigation of sentence is prayed for in consideration of the  
prisoner's good character and other circumstances

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Refer to the Chairman of the Sessions

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12<sup>th</sup> March 1852

Honoured Sir

The enclosed Petition having been instead for Col. Rolleston .  
I on Friday last had an interview with that gentleman at  
Watnall Hall and he informed me that the Petition was  
forwarded to you he had no doubt that the sentence would  
be mitigated I have therefore taken the liberty of forwarding  
the same to you my reason for so doing being that I believe  
the prisoner to be perfectly innocent of the charges for which  
she stands convicted her Masters customers living within 2  
miles of Hyson Green and he never considered it worth his  
time to go and inquire the reason they did not pay according  
to promise thus leaving the prisoner open to be imposed  
upon and in addition to which he three times went to London  
to see the Exhibition and afterwards to the Isle of Man leaving  
the prisoner in charge of his trade and a sick wife to see to  
and had stated he believes the prisoner did not wrong him of

a penny at that time and when she was took into custody instead of being taken before a Magistrate as required by law she was made a prisoner Hyson Green Penitentiary awhile Saturday in order to endeavour to get up a charge against her and as the Prosecutor has admitted that nearly 11 years her had no fault to find with her during that time she had lived with him but previous to which he kept her in lodgings (having seduced her) for between 2 and 3 years I cannot think that justice had been administered in the prisoners case I am happy to say that I have known the prisoner between 7 and 8 years and were she at liberty I would employ her in the same situation her late Master did to receive order and collect money for me as my customers [ ] for a distance of 10 miles round Nottingham should you require any further information I shall if in my power be most happy to furnish you with it and I do hope and trust that taking the above into consideration you will be pleased to advise Her majesty to remit such sentence of transportation to such term of imprisonment as may meet the ends of justice.

I beg to remain your humble servant

William Bilbie

Joiner and Broker

30 Long Row

Market Place

Nottingham

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To Col Rolleston

Watnall

Nottm

Honoured Sir

We the undersigned being inhabitants of Hyson Green in the county of Nottingham will esteem it a great kindness by you using your influence in the behalf of Ann Hopewell who was tied at the last General Quarter Sessions for the county of Nottingham “for defrauding her Master Mr John Gibbons Tailor and Draper of this place”, and who was sentenced to 7 years transportation. A sentence which your humble Petitioners consider to severe after taking into consideration the long period that she had served her said Master, and the responsible situation she held, and the manner in which she has discharged her duties as a servant had been satisfactory to your humble Petitioner. The Prosecutor had acknowledged the above to be the fact up to 9 years of her servitude, your humble Petitioners are happy to state that nothing to the best of their knowledge was ever impeached concerning her character prior to this charge. Your humble Petitioner humbly prayeth that your honour will deliberate upon the case and use the best means to mitigate the sentence that is possible.

Your humble servants will ever pray.

John Goodhall – Church Warden

Thomas Billyeald – Church Warden

Emma Kiddle

Sarah Keen

Susan Harris

And another 187signatures

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Shire Hall

Nottingham

28<sup>th</sup> April 1852

Sir

Ann Hopewell conviction

Col. Rolleston the Chairman of the Nottingham Quarter Sessions had handed to me your letter of the 16<sup>th</sup> April and the prepared accompanying the same. The Col was in Scotland at the time of the Sessions and in his absence I occupied the Chair.

The prisoner was indicted for obtaining goods under false pretences of wanting them for difference persons when in fact no such person's were in existence.

The evidence showed the Prosecutor was a Shopkeeper. The prisoner was in his employment and had been so far many

years and was in a very confidential situation as saleswoman in the shop and general servant.

The Prosecutor latterly began to be dissatisfied with and suspicious of the conduct of the prisoner and after some conversation told her one evening in or about December last he would the next morning require her to go round to his customers with him but on the next morning at 6 o'clock it was found that the prisoner had absconded during the night taking with her all her property and nothing more was heard of her for a fortnight when she was apprehended at Horncastle in Lincolnshire, 60 miles from Nottingham.

The Prosecutor afterward found that examining his books that he had been defrauded by the prisoner by reason of goods obtained under false pretences by false entries in the books and other means to upwards of £1000 to his entire ruin. 2 cases were selected upon which the prisoner was indicted. She was defended by Counsel who did attempt to deny tje prisoner had the goods. The Jury found her guilty on the first indictment and thereupon the 2<sup>nd</sup> was not proceeded with but it appeared equally a clear case with the first and the Court considering it a most flagrant breach of trust she was transported for 7 years.

The Prosecutor who is 66 years of age and an old man of that age was accused on cross examination at the trial of improper intimacy with the prisoner in like manner as in the biblical since, he denies it most solemnly upon his oath and

still persists in his denial and the woman herself denied it to me herself.

A burglary was omitted in prosecutors house and shop some time ago and on Saturday last he stated to me from what has since transpired he had now goof reason to believe the prisoner was concerned in that robbery. He stated to me on Saturday that upon a rough stock taking at Christmas 1850 her believed himself worth about £1700. That immediately after the discovery of the way he had been robbed by that prisoner he was threatened with bankrupsey did make an assignment and is not now worth a shilling. The system of the prisoner appears to have been sometimes to tell the Prosecutor she had wanted goods to sell to some particular person (naming them) and upon obtaining such goods to dispose of them to her own advantage (no such person as named by her in fact being in existence ) At other times she entered into the Prosecutors Ledger account of goods as sold by herself and occasionally paid a small sum on account when in fact no such goods were sold so that by these means whilst the Prosecutor believed he had a large amount of good debts in his books he had in fact not anything.

Bilbie is a man of perhaps questionable character. He is a Joiner and Broker in a very small way. The Prosecutor was a Draper and Bilbie had no means of employing the prisoner as offered by him in his letter and the Prosecutor states he has no doubt that Bilbie and a woman with whom he cohabits

have been recipients of a parcel of the property plundered from the Prosecutor.

I enclose a letter from Col. Rolleston by which it will be seen he was in Scotland at the time Bilbie stated he saw the Col. at Watnall and Bilbie being called before the Col. to account for this apparent falsehood Bilbie stated the letter although dated 12<sup>th</sup> March was only written the day before sent to the Secretary of State and that he saw Col. Rolleston at Watnall on Good Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April. The Col. amongst the number of persons calling upon him has no recollection of the interview but will not under oath to say it did not take place but states positively if it did that he never stated "he had no doubt the sentence would be mitigated " as stated by Bilbie in his letter.

The Prosecutor had been shown Bilbie's letter and earnestly denies every insinuation there contained as to [ ] [ ] [ ] . I may be [ ] be perhaps necessary to add that he was only once at the Exhibition and stayed only from Saturday to Monday.

In conclusion I have the honour to express my opinion (as requested ) that there did not appear upon the trial nor has there appeared from the enquiries I have made since the receipt of your letter any circumstances to call for a reconsideration of the sentence.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

Thomas Nixon.

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The Chairman of the Quarter Sessions is of the opinion that there is no grounds for a mitigation of the sentence in this case.

[SHW]

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Watnall

18<sup>th</sup> April 1852

My Dear Nixon

I have just received the enclose from the Home Office and as you tried the prisoner Ann Hopewell during my absence in Scotland, you [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] the necessary observations with your opinion in the case. I must however (for the information if the Home Secretary) that the statement in the letter to the Secretary Walpole dated the 12<sup>th</sup> March and signed Mr Bilbie, I have not the slightest recollection of and as I only returned home on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April the [ ] of having had an interview with me at Watnall on the Friday previous, is evidently incorrect, nor have I ever seen the Petition till this morning of the case

therefore I can say nothing, as you are well aware that it [  
]some confusion.

Believe me

Very truly your

Lawrence Rolleston

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Ann Hopewell aged 36

Notts Quarter Sessions February 1852

Obtaining good by false pretences

Transportation for 7 years

Gaol Report – Character – Good

Series – HO 18

Piece Number – 331