“To print her discourses & hymmes”: the typographic features of Anna Trapnel’s prophecies

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ABSTRACT
This article discusses Anna Trapnel’s final publication: a 990-page volume of prophetic verse printed in around 1659, which now survives in a single copy held by the Bodleian Library. Advocating the value of attending to the materiality of early modern women’s texts, this article examines the semantic significance of the typography in this large volume of prophecies. First, I argue that the work’s distinctive letter forms and ornamental headers may affiliate it with the printing house of James Cottrell. Second, these specific visual motifs are explored as indicators of Trapnel’s broader religious and textual community in mid-seventeenth century England. Finally, the article suggests ways in which we might read the volume’s typographic features as both supportive, and subtly undermining, of Trapnel’s highly charged religious discourse.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 20 February 2019
Accepted 9 January 2020

KEYWORDS
Anna Trapnel; prophecy; women’s writing; material texts; book history; typography

Anna Trapnel has become a prominent figure in academic studies of early modern women’s writing: her rise to public recognition, combative politics, and passionate religious discourse marking her out as a focal point for surveys of the English Civil War period. However, this critical attention has tended to concentrate primarily on Trapnel’s activities in the year 1654, when four pamphlets were printed documenting her religious experiences and recounting the prophetic discourse she delivered during an ecstatic trance at Whitehall. In part, these Trapnel texts from 1654 may dominate today’s critical conversation because of the comparatively challenging format of her final extant volume of prophecies, which does not appear to have been printed until the end of the 1650s. This later publication is a dauntingly long work, recording prophetic verses delivered by Trapnel between October 1657 and August 1658 in over 990 folio pages. Moreover, this large text survives in only one known copy, which lacks any contextualising title page or preface, and which is held (as yet undigitised) in the Bodleian Library under the shelfmark Arch A. C. 16. Large, isolated, and disconcertingly title-less, Arch A. C. 16 poses interpretative challenges for the critic. And yet, in order to fully attend to Trapnel’s discourse beyond 1654, we must seek ways of properly attending to this striking finale to Trapnel’s printed prophesying.

This article proposes a way of reading Arch A. C. 16 that moves beyond a reliance on the contextualising information usually offered by preface and title page, by focusing
instead on an analysis of the volume’s typographic features. Despite its bibliographic blind spots, Arch A. C. 16’s extant materiality remains a rich source of information and semantic signification. As this article demonstrates, elements of the volume’s typography offer valuable evidence of the specific circumstances of the text’s production (including its likely printer). Moreover, its typographic features reveal Arch A. C. 16’s participation in a broader community of ideas and experience, whilst also shaping the meaning and interpretation of Trapnel’s text within the volume itself. By examining the typography in Arch A. C. 16 in these ways, I am able to extend our understanding of Anna Trapnel beyond 1654, and highlight the rich interpretative potential of exploring the textual materiality of women’s prophetic discourse.

Who printed Arch. A. C. 16?

Measuring 31 centimetres long, 20 centimetres wide, and 7.5 centimetres deep, Arch A. C. 16 is an imposing textual object, which must have required considerable ambition, labour and cost to produce. The volume’s 990 pages consist mainly of twin-columned blocks of verse, which are predominantly neatly printed and surrounded by broad blank margins. The text itself contains very few typographic errors. Moreover, Arch A. C. 16 diligently corrects errata in the five prophetic verses it reproduces from an earlier, much shorter, Trapnel publication entitled Voice for the King of Saints and Nations (1658). Printing Arch A. C. 16’s abundant and accurate pages would have been a costly undertaking. However, as the daughter of a London shipwright, Trapnel was of modest means. Consequently, critics have reasonably assumed that the project to produce Arch A. C. 16 was funded and supported by members of Trapnel’s Fifth Monarchist religious community in London. In addition, however, the scale and high production values of Arch A. C. 16 also suggest the involvement of some conscientious and skilled members of London’s printing trade, who enabled the volume’s hundreds of pages of prophecy to be produced with care.

In his study of Arch A. C. 16, Paul Salzman has speculated that the booksellers Thomas Brewster or Robert Sele might have been involved in this work’s production. Salzman’s suggestion derives from the fact that two of Trapnel’s 1654 pamphlets state that they were “printed for” Brewster or Sele in their imprints. Brewster was a bookseller involved in funding and selling many radical religious texts throughout the 1650s. For example, a list of books sold by Brewster in 1657 includes works by one of Trapnel’s associates, Henry Jessey (an independent Baptist minister), and a collection of polemical pamphlets “against the Quakers”. Given these publishing interests, it seems possible that Brewster may well have become involved with publishing Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16 volume, which is itself a text that contains a “Psalm against the Quakers”. However, without a title page imprint, or any contemporary records documenting Brewster’s involvement in Arch A. C. 16, it remains difficult to connect the bookseller conclusively to the project to publish this particular Trapnel text.

Instead, I would suggest that Trapnel’s final printed work might be more persuasively attributed to the labours of a specific printing house. By matching Arch A. C. 16’s typeface and decorative printing ornaments with those found in contemporaneous works attributed to named printers, the likely producer of Trapnel’s final work may be identifiable. First, however, it must be acknowledged that this method of analysing
typography in order to attribute a printer to an anonymously printed early modern work is far from straightforward. Derek Nuttall has documented the many difficulties of identifying and matching distinct seventeenth-century typefaces due to “factors such as rough-surfaced paper, over-inking, worn letters, and heavy impression”, which can all “badly distort the true letter form”. Moreover, Adrian Weiss has cautioned that printing houses often shared founts and other equipment and that these “sharing strategies frequently defy common-sense logic”. Thus, even when we can identify a distinct typeface or decorative ornament as characteristic of one particular printing house’s type-stock, it is impossible to guarantee that those items were not shared with other printers upon occasion. Nevertheless, the well-printed pages of Arch A. C. 16 offer the possibility of positing a likely printer for the volume, provided that we can match multiple elements of its typography with those found in other works known to have been produced by a named printer.

First, however, it is necessary to limit the timeframe in order to compare Arch A. C. 16’s typography with that found in texts printed at around the same time. The Bodleian Library catalogue attributes a publication date of 1659 to Arch A. C. 16. The volume’s final prophecy was delivered by Trapnel in August 1658, but the volume’s lengthy text is likely to have taken a considerable amount of time after this date to prepare for printing. Moreover, once the copy-text was produced, there is no indication that the printing of the work was then divided between different printing houses to save time: the work’s typography and paper remain consistent throughout the volume. Thus, estimating a publication date of 1659 allows for the considerable months of work required to print such a large volume of material in a single printing house.

A later publication date than 1659 also seems improbable. In the prophecies of Arch A. C. 16, Trapnel discusses current political affairs (including her disdain for Cromwell) that would quickly seem outdated following his death and the Restoration. Moreover, Arch A. C. 16 reproduces five prophecies first printed in Voice for the King of Saints and Nations in 1658. Given the precedent set in 1654 for multiple Trapnel texts to be printed in quick succession, it seems unlikely that Trapnel and her supporters would have allowed a long time to elapse between the appearance of Voice for the King in 1658 and the publication of the affiliated work Arch A. C. 16. Thus, in order to compare Arch A. C. 16 to its typographic contemporaries, it seems a sensible approach to situate it within a corpus of works printed in England in 1659.

Working through a list of over 2000 works printed in this year, I was able to identify consistent similarities between Arch A. C. 16’s typography and that featured in multiple works stated to have been “printed by” the printer James Cottrell in 1659. Aside from their use of the same typeface, one of the most striking similarities between Arch A. C. 16 and Cottrell’s 1659 publications is their matching use of decorative headers comprised of scrolling motifs of the same design. To demonstrate this shared typography, Figures 1–3 show the appearance of these headers in Arch A. C. 16, and Figures 4–5 show headers in two named Cottrell printings from 1659. This style of decorative header appears nearly fifty times in Arch A. C. 16. In my list of works printed in 1659, fifty-six texts state that they were “printed by” Cottrell or by a printer with the initials “J. C”. in their imprints. Of these Cottrell publications, one quarter contain decorative headers in which the constituent motifs directly match the design of those used in the headers in Arch A. C. 16.
Figure 1. Oxford, the Bodleian Libraries, Arch A. C. 16, Zzzz3r (detail). Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. Reuse not permitted without prior authorisation from the Bodleian Libraries.

Figure 2. Oxford, the Bodleian Libraries, Arch. A. C. 16, G4r (detail). Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. Reuse not permitted without prior authorisation from the Bodleian Libraries.

Figure 3. Oxford, the Bodleian Libraries, Arch. A. C. 16, Lllll1r (detail). Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. Reuse not permitted without prior authorisation from the Bodleian Libraries.

Figure 4. James Harrington, Virgil’s Aeneis the Third Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Books (London: “printed by J. Cottrel”, 1659), A3r (detail); California, San Marino, The Huntington Library, 131062. Reuse not permitted.

Figure 5. John Gadbury, The Nativity of the Late King Charls Astrologically and Faithfully Performed (London: “printed by James Cottrel”, 1659), A2r (detail); Cambridge University Library, Syn.8.65.87. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library. Reuse not permitted.
Appearing so consistently within named Cottrell printings from 1659, the scrolling ornamental motifs shown in Figures 1–5 appear to have been a distinctive trademark of his printing house’s output. Indeed, in my corpus of works printed in 1659, I did not find the same header style reproduced in works attributed to any other named printer that year. Moreover, whilst early modern printing houses did share and copy each other’s ornamental type pieces, as Ronald B. McKerrow has argued, “the worse, the rougher, and more insignificant an ornament is, the greater use is it likely to be to the bibliographer” when attributing a work to a printer.\textsuperscript{17} Since the more “elaborate and better designed ornaments” were more likely to have been “copied”, or “borrowed”, or sold to more than one printer, it follows that simpler decorative pieces were more likely to have been retained by one house.\textsuperscript{18} The decorative motifs used in the headers throughout Arch A. C. 16, and in the works attributed to Cottrell in 1659, appear to be of the “rougher” sort. As Figures 1–5 demonstrate, the decorative motifs are small and their design and execution are fairly unpolished. As such, it seems probable that the header motifs used throughout Trapnel’s final volume match the appearance of those found within Cottrell’s printings because these texts were produced in the same printing house, rather than because the decorative type pieces had been shared with another printer during the year.

A further typographic indication of Cottrell’s involvement in the printing of Arch A. C. 16 can be found in a more diminutive form than decorative headers. Many of Cottrell’s publications in 1659 are characterised by a distinctive imperfect capital G. Instances of this same blemished letter also appear frequently throughout Arch A. C. 16 (see Figures 6 and 7 for comparative examples). In his guide to attributing early modern works to printers, Weiss describes such “gross features” as a potentially valuable means of identifying a particular printing house’s output.\textsuperscript{19} In Cottrell’s publications, these flawed printed Gs have a small amount of ink connecting the serif at the top of the curve with that at the bottom. This conjoined appearance could occur if the matrix used to produce the pieces of metal type became flawed and uneven, thus producing irregularly cast pieces of type that made imperfect impressions when inked.\textsuperscript{20} Whilst not all of the Gs printed in each Cottrell text demonstrate this flaw, it is clear that a certain number of malformed pieces of type had entered the compositors’ type cases at his printing house and were consistently being reproduced in works.

\textbf{Figure 6.} John Gadbury, \textit{The Nativity of the Late King Charls} (London: “Printed by James Cottrel”, 1659), C5’ (detail); Cambridge University Library, Syn.8.65.87. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library. Reuse not permitted.
attributed to Cottrell in 1659. Therefore, the presence of similarly flawed Gs throughout Arch A. C. 16 provides another suggestive typographic link between this anonymously printed publication and Cottrell’s printing house.

Alongside this typographic evidence, it is also important to confirm whether Cottrell had the means to print Arch A. C. 16 at the end of the 1650s. According to Stationers’ Company records, James Cottrell was apprenticed to the printer John Raworth in August 1638, and was freed eight years later by Raworth’s widow Ruth Raworth in 1646.21 From the 1650s onwards, Cottrell’s name, and his premises on Addle Hill, began to appear in the imprints of texts.22 By 1659, Cottrell would have four officially registered apprentices of his own.23 In my corpus of texts printed in 1659, the printers most frequently mentioned in imprints – John Field, John Streater, and John Macocke – all boasted a similar number of registered apprentices to Cottrell, which may suggest that he could offer a similar level of service to these prolific printing houses.24 Further evidence of Cottrell’s capacity is provided by Robert L’Estrange’s survey of printing presses in July 1668, in which “Mr Cotterells” establishment is listed as possessing two printing presses, and one assumes that Cottrell must have had at least this number of presses in operation a decade earlier, before the restrictions that followed the Restoration.25 Thus, in 1659, with Cottrell’s supply of presses and apprentices, and with his established printing business, he would appear to have been equipped to handle a printing project like Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16.

Moreover, the production of a volume of Arch A. C. 16’s considerable size would not have been unusual for Cottrell. In 1656, Cottrell was named as the printer of a 700-page edition of Thomas Moore’s An Explicite Declaration of the Testimony of Christ, while, in 1658, Cottrell printed John Gadbury’s Genethliologia, which is a work that spans nearly 600 pages.26 These page-counts are not of quite the same magnitude as Arch A. C. 16’s, but they do provide a precedent for Cottrell’s printing house working on large volumes. Indeed, Arch A. C. 16’s 990 pages may not have seemed particularly exceptional or prohibitive to an established mid-seventeenth-century printer. Amongst my list of works printed in 1659, Arch A. C. 16 is one of the largest surviving texts from the year. However, its page count pales in comparison with that of Andrew Moore’s A Compendious History of the Turks (1659), which was printed by the prolific John Streater and had over 1,500 pages.27 In 1659, additional works with over 800 pages were printed by Peter Cole, Roger Daniel, John Fletcher, Roger Norton, Mary Simmons, and Thomas Warren.28 These similarly sized contemporaneous publications – and the range of different printers responsible for creating

Figure 7. Oxford, the Bodleian Libraries, Arch A. C. 16, Qqq3r (detail). Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. Reuse not permitted without prior authorisation from the Bodleian Libraries.
them – suggest that Arch A. C. 16’s length would not have made it a highly unusual enterprise for this year, or for a printer like Cottrell.

To conclude, the typographic and contextual evidence suggests that James Cottrell’s printing house may have been involved in printing Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16 volume. By proposing this connection to Cottrell, I hope to demystify our impression of the production of Trapnel’s final, title-page-less volume of prophecies. Cait Coker has recently argued that there is a need for book historians to resist depicting printing house workers as nebulous “passive constructs” within a generic early modern printing process. Instead, she recommends the value of trying to identify and examine “specific individuals with their own agency to operate within a practical, rather than just a theoretical, system” of material production. Accordingly, by attributing a named printer to Arch A. C. 16, I am able to reframe this volume as a constructed material object, which contains legible signs of its own specific place within an established system of production. In the next section of this paper, I will continue to consider Arch A. C. 16’s participation in this peopled network of seventeenth-century textual production by asking how the work’s typography signifies Trapnel’s position within her religious community.

“An unworthy handmaid to second those cryings”: typography and Trapnel’s community

Trapnel belonged to a group of Fifth Monarchist millenarians, whose readings of the book of Daniel had led them to believe that a new fifth age was approaching, during which Christ would reign with his saints in a final empire on earth. After the fall of the short-lived Barebone’s parliament in 1653, Trapnel’s religious community lost hope in formal political representation and increasingly turned to print as a way of criticising the country’s leaders and urging people to prepare for the rule of Christ. For example, in August 1655, Fifth Monarchists in London were involved in the publication and circulation of an anonymous pamphlet entitled A Short Discovery of his Highness the Lord Protector’s Intentions Touching the Anabaptists in the Army, in which Cromwell is urged to “leave off” his “wicked design of casting off the Interest of the People of God”. Bernard Capp lists this pamphlet as one of the Fifth Monarchists’ many “deliberate attempts to subvert the army” by encouraging distrust of Oliver Cromwell.

James Cottrell appears to have been involved in the printing of this rabble-rousing pamphlet A Short Discovery (1655). Following the work’s publication, the bookseller Richard Moone was examined by Secretary Thurloe and confessed that one of Cromwell’s life-guards (a Baptist pastor named John Sturgeon) had paid him to arrange for the pamphlet to be printed. Moone also revealed that, on the same Saturday night he was approached by Sturgeon, he immediately “sent for mr. James Cotterel the printer, who forthwith came to him” at an “alehouse near Puddle wharf”. Moone reports that Cottrell then agreed to produce a thousand copies of the single-sheet pamphlet in two-and-a-half days and admitted that “several” of the texts could be found “in the streets the next morning” outside his bookshop. Here, Moone’s detailed testimony demonstrates how the publications of Trapnel’s community relied upon networks of social interaction and labour. Within this network,
Cottrell was clearly sought after as a reliable (or at least willing) printer, who might facilitate the group’s textual productions despite the political risks.

Like A Short Discovery, Arch A. C. 16 also includes multiple passages that criticise Cromwell. For example, speaking in March 1658, Trapnel states that, “Cromwel and his host they are such,/And do devour and tear/[… And are abominable ones,/With cunning subtilty they come” (Nnnn4r). There are also typographic similarities between Trapnel’s volume and the anti-Cromwell pamphlet produced by Moone and Cottrell in 1655. As Figure 8 illustrates, A Short Discovery (1655) contains the same style of decorative header that later featured in Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16 volume at the end of the decade. This shared typography suggests a shared place of production, in a way that elides the temporal gap between these two publications. In addition, these matching motifs provide a visual corollary to the texts’ articulations of a similar form of political dissent. In this way, Cottrell’s header motifs establish a material signifier of the ideological link between Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16 volume and other tracts produced by her fellow religious radicals earlier in the 1650s.

![Figure 8](image-url)

Trapnel herself seems to have embraced this idea of participating in a spiritual community of shared ideas and collective material experience. Like Trapnel, Christopher Feake was a prominent Fifth Monarchist, who spoke out against Cromwell’s installation as Protector and suffered periods of imprisonment at the hands of the authorities. In her autobiographical work, Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea (1654), Trapnel expresses her joy at being imprisoned in the same room in which Feake had recently been confined:

I was had to my Chamber, which was Mr. Feaks prison first; so that I was quickly raised in my Joy, in thinking of that prayer, which had been put up in that room, for the coming of King Jesus to reign on the earth, and to throw down Babylon, for this did that dear servant of Christ cry earnestly, and the Lord made an unworthy handmaid to second those cryings, and to ring a peal to Whitehall ward, but they had not a mind to hearken, though the cry of a stone was brought near them again [.]36

Here, Trapnel stresses her close experiential and ideological affinity with Feake, which is evoked for her by them inhabiting the same physical space of confinement (albeit at different times). The passage also alludes to Trapnel and Feake’s shared commitment to communicating the same religious message about “the coming of King Jesus”. Indeed, Trapnel depicts herself as “an unworthy handmaid to second those cryings” already “put up in that room” by Feake. In her use of the word “cryings”, Trapnel seems to deliberately
evoke the title of one of her 1654 pamphlets, *The Cry of a Stone*, which recorded her own prophetic orations at Whitehall.\(^{37}\) In the same year, Feake also produced a pamphlet, entitled *The New Non-Conformist* (1654), which describes him as “Crying, From his Watch-tower at W. C. [Windsor Castle] Unto his Little Flock at W. L. [Warwick Lane, London] With a loud voice”.\(^{38}\) Thus, when Trapnel depicts herself as seconding Feake’s “cryings”, she also echoes Feake’s pamphlet’s description of his loudly “Crying” out to the city below. In this way, Trapnel’s language works to intertwine her and Feake’s modes of religious publication, just as their physical experiences intersect within the same geographic space of the prison.

This strong sense of connection between Trapnel and Feake is further intensified by the shared typography in their publications. The scrolling motifs of the headers in *Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea* (Figure 9) and Arch A. C. 16 (Figures 1–3) match the design of those found in Feake’s two 1654 pamphlets, *The Oppressed Close Prisoner in Windsor-Castle* and *The New Non-Conformist* (see Figure 10 for an example).\(^{39}\) Once again, these shared typographic motifs provide a visual articulation of Trapnel’s intimate and continuing connection to the members of her religious community: a group with whom she shared ideas and modes of expression, as well as prison cells and printing houses, throughout the 1650s.

Figure 9. Anna Trapnel, *Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea* (London: 1654), A2’ (detail); London, Library of the Society of Friends, Box 579/4 Copy/17908. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain. Reuse not permitted.

Figure 10. Christopher Feake, *The New Non-Conformist* (London: 1654), B1’ (detail); California, San Marino, Huntington Library, 320794. Reuse not permitted.

Another prominent individual in Trapnel’s spiritual network was the minister Henry Jessey. Jessey was the author of the popular work, *The Exceeding Riches of Grace* (1647), which relates the religious utterances of a young Londoner named Sarah Wight, who fell into a bedbound trance and delivered prophetic messages to an audience gathered in her chamber. Notably, Jessey lists “Hanna [Anna] Trapnel” amongst the names of those who visited Wight’s bedside to consult with her.\(^{40}\) Jessey’s *The Exceeding Riches of Grace* was reprinted many times, and its seventh edition was “printed by J. C”. in 1658. This edition
of the text includes multiple examples of Cottrell’s flawed letter “G” and a decorative header composed of motifs that match a variant design used in Arch A. C. 16. These typographic similarities between the seventh edition of *The Exceeding Riches of Grace* (1658) and Arch A. C. 16 ([1659]) seem to recall Trapnel’s physical presence at the site of Wight’s prophesying by suggesting a further space of proximity. In appearing to have occupied the same printing house, the material texts of Wight’s and Trapnel’s prophecies become an evocative articulation of the other social and experiential connections between these two women.

Throughout Trapnel’s prophetic discourse, community, and the material spaces and manifestations of her networks, are a central concern. In Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16 prophecies, she repeatedly references a group of “companions” gathered together to hear her prophetic utterances. For example, in a typical passage, Trapnel concludes by saying “Companions now go home and praise;/And those that do stay here/Will also return thanks to the Lord” (Ddd3). On another occasion, Trapnel states, “O Companions, now praise the Lord/[…] And we that stay under this roof,/We also praise his Name” (Hh4). In this way, Trapnel articulates an awareness of her community and its location, and takes time to highlight the way in which they share worship and a physical space. Fittingly, the Arch A. C. 16 prophecies produced in this communal space were later printed in the shared hub of Cottrell’s printing house, which, as I have demonstrated, was another location frequented by members of Trapnel’s community.

Such rhetorical and bibliographic articulations of community may have been especially important for Trapnel in the late 1650s. Scholars have contended that by late 1657 Trapnel was part of a radical faction of Fifth Monarchists, which had split away from John Simpson’s open-communion congregation at Allhallows in a dispute over whether to support Cromwell. This has led Erica Longfellow to suggest that Arch A. C. 16 – with its “large, monumental format” – perhaps represented a “new Fifth Monarchist Bible” for this “radical offshoot” of companions. Indeed, Arch A. C. 16’s heft and scale were perhaps designed to provide a reassuring anchor around which Trapnel’s new, smaller faction could unite at the end of the 1650s.

In addition, Arch A. C. 16’s typeface and decorative headers also position Trapnel’s prophecies in community with other texts recording similar views and modes of expression to Trapnel’s own. Notably, these shared typographic features frequently establish authorising, cross-temporal links between Arch A. C. 16 and publications produced by Trapnel’s associates earlier in the decade. In this way, we might ask whether the continued use of the same decorative designs by seventeenth-century printing houses could produce a sense of continuity and community between texts, which might (perhaps deliberately) help disguise the shifting allegiances of their authors over time. Certainly, the reader who attends to Arch A. C. 16’s typographic intertextualities is encouraged to reconceptualise this single extant volume as a work in community and dialogue with a wide range of other print productions from the period.

*“Spangled talk”: reading the decorative headers in Arch. A. C. 16*  
Following the previous section’s analysis of the intertextual typographical links between Arch A. C. 16 and other works produced during the 1650s, I will now turn to exploring the signifying power these typographic features hold within the pages of Arch A. C. 16 itself.
Cottrell’s distinctive decorative headers appear before each of Trapnel’s recorded prophecies, thus providing a pause and introducing each new oration with a visual fanfare. As discussed, these headers consist of a single line of scrolling baroque motifs. However, rather than each header being printed from a single block, each constituent motif in the headers appears to have been rendered from a separate piece of type. In Cottrell’s printing house, these individual decorative motifs could be arranged in a row to produce headers of varying lengths, as demonstrated by comparing Figures 1–3 with the shorter headers in Figures 4 and 5. This mode of production is further indicated by the way in which many of Cottrell’s headers also contain punctuation marks, which have been inserted between individual decorative motifs at varying points. For example, in Figures 1–4, colons have been inserted between the constituent motifs of the headers at different intervals. This insertion of punctuation occurs frequently in other Cottrell publications printed in 1659, for example Figure 5 shows a Cottrell header featuring six exclamation marks.

The compositors in Cottrell’s printing house probably inserted pieces of punctuation between individual decorative motifs as a form of “furniture”, which was a method of ensuring that the set header reached a desired line length. These small adjustments to spacing may have aided the mechanics of the printing process by making the decorative pieces fit more securely within the metal frame, thus ensuring a more even impression. The inserted punctuation furniture was also a convenient means of aiding the overall aesthetics of the page by ensuring the header’s length more pleasingly matched the surrounding text block. In this way, the punctuating compositors clearly endeavoured to produce a professional and controlled mise-en-page in Trapnel’s volume of printed prophecies.

In her analysis of early modern printing ornaments, Juliet Fleming explains that “in the 1550s French and Italian printers started using types with individual design elements that, put side by side like the letters of a word, composed themselves into serial patterns”. Fleming also notes that these header designs (like those employed in Arch A. C. 16) are constructed in a way that mirrors the composition of lines of writing and look “as much like printed writing as it is possible to look without actually being it”. Consequently, Fleming reads these decorative headers assembled from multiple motifs as an “exploration and celebration of the intellectual and cognitive resources of the specific technology that is movable type”. In addition, I would argue that the punctuation furniture in Arch A. C. 16’s headers is a perfect extension of this “exploration and celebration” of movable type in printed headers. Rather than punctuating the written word, exclamation marks, colons and full stops are used by Cottrell’s printing house as a convenient way to punctuate rows of decorative motifs. In this way, units of language are recontextualised and exposed as objects with a physical heft and ability to insert a fixed space. Thus, Cottrell’s headers celebrate the “specific technology that is movable type”, by highlighting the way in which language gains a materiality through printing. In this way, the punctuated decorative headers in Arch A. C. 16 help to signal the art, labour, and creative resourcefulness of the printing house practitioners responsible for producing Trapnel’s text.

However, upon occasion, these punctuated headers seem to pose a curious contradiction to the ideas expressed in Trapnel’s discourse. In her prophetic verses, Trapnel frequently articulates a distrust of ornate and decorated forms of language. For example,
on 28 November 1657, Trapnel declares that “He [Jesus Christ] hath a high esteem of that/Which is sincere, though plain” (H4’). Later that same day, Trapnel complains:

Dear Lamb, this Generation is so proud,
Because they hear spangled talk:
But as for plain and pure Gospel,
They care not after it to walk.
They more delight in that which is
But a vain empty shew: (I1’)

In this passage, Trapnel articulates a key component of Reformation rhetoric: the valorisation of simplicity and an attendant condemnation of ornateness. As Jo Carruthers summarises, simplicity as a form of “stripping away” is a particularly “Protestant aesthetic”, which was “intimately tied up with popular Reformation theologies of unmediated and direct access to divine revelation”.

Accordingly, Trapnel’s condemnation of sinful “spangled talk” centres on the way in which ornamented rhetoric stops listeners from following and delighting in the plainness and transparency of the Gospel.

In practice, this vehement commitment to pure, “plain” speech is challenging to maintain. As Carruthers also points out, there is something inherently self-contradictory about an ambition to achieve a “non-aesthetic way of being in the world […] disentangled from affective experience, beyond the ‘allure’ of the world’s pleasures and riches”, or, in Trapnel’s words, beyond its “vain empty shew”.

As a being in the material world, pure simplicity is impossible to attain. Frequently, even in expressing a preference for plainness, a writer’s participation in the world and its hierarchy of aesthetics is revealed. Indeed, Trapnel’s own discourse celebrates the “plain and pure” style of the Gospel’s writing in the notably un-plain and stylised form of rhyming verse.

Furthermore, in advocating rhetorical plainness, Trapnel also makes use of the poetic metaphor “spangled talk”. With this phrase, Trapnel disdainfully likens the “vain” speech that people “delight in” to luxurious “spangled” fabrics embroidered with ornamental spangles. These metallic spangles and “oes” (rounded, o-shaped embellishments) were early modern precursors to today’s sequins. The small metallic decorations were produced through hammering rings of gold or silver wire flat, or by punching shapes out of a sheet of metal.

Due to the attractive way in which the resulting embellishments glinted in candlelight, the word “spangled” appears frequently in seventeenth-century descriptions of the night sky. For example, in 1633, the writer Henry Hawkins described the stars as “siluer Oes, al powdred heer and there, or spangles sprinckled ouer the purple Mantle or night-gowne of the heauens”.

When metaphorically depicting “vain” speech as “spangled talk”, Trapnel likens elaborate rhetorical discourse to the frivolity and luxury associated with spangled textiles. However, in doing so, she also engages in her own form of rhetorical ornateness, as she constructs a visual metaphor using a word often utilised in the period’s poetic language.

In addition to this distinctly unsimple use of visual imagery, the pages of Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16 prophecies are also “spangled” with their own form of ornamentation. In fact, I would argue that there is a strong visual similarity between Arch A. C. 16’s decorative headers and the scrolling patterns of the spangled fabrics to which Trapnel dismissively compares un-plain speech (see Figures 11 and 12 for examples of spangled embroidery). The period’s colloquial name for metallic embellishments – “oes” – already
acknowledges a certain visual affinity between decorated textile and textual typography. However, there are perhaps further forms of similarity here too. A pamphlet printed in 1658 discusses legislation introduced to protect against “Wyer drawers, Silkmen and others […] buying and selling of Gold and Silver” and “not bringing the same unto the Mint, Exchanges and Goldsmiths […] as they ought to have done” but instead converting “the same to the making of Silver thred, Spangles and Oaes, and such like unnecessary things”.

Here, this concerned author highlights how the production of spangles involved the transformation of precious commodities into vain “unnecessary things”. Similarly, the colons – dotted like spangles between the scrolling patterns of Arch A. C. 16’s decorative headers – are also signifiers emptied of their semantic value in the service of aesthetics. In this way, Arch A. C. 16’s spangled/punctuated headers might be read as epitomising the “vain empty shew” that Trapnel condemns so passionately in the discourse they decorate.

On the other hand, the typographic “showiness” of the headers – designed to attract and please the viewing audience of Cottrell’s printed products – can also be read as a perfect complement to the tone of Trapnel’s orations. Like her mise-en-page, Trapnel does not always practise the plainness and humility she preaches. Opening with eye-catching decorative headers, Trapnel’s prophecies frequently close with attention-grabbing rhetorical finales as the prophet attempts to appeal directly to an audience she wishes to encourage. Trapnel’s verses often conclude with deliberately tantalising promises that God will deliver more prophecies soon. For example, one prophecy ends with the lines, “And to morrow he will send down more,/To make our souls to thrive” (Zzzz2). Similarly, Trapnel’s prophecy dated “The twenty sixth day of the fourth moneth, 1658” concludes with the prayer: “O to morrow let them come/Early and attend

Figure 11. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Forehead cloth, 1600–1630. British” (detail), 64.101.1243. Image reproduced in compliance with CC0 1.0 licence.

Figure 12. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Pair of Gloves, 1620s. British” (detail), 64.101.1248.1249. Image reproduced in compliance with CC0 1.0 licence.
here/That so they may see what there shall/from Zions throne appear” (Uuuuu4’). As advertised, the following chapter in the volume records a prophecy delivered the very next day, and the start of its record is signalled by a punctuated decorative header celebrating the verse’s (and the reader’s) return. Thus, with its spangled pages, Arch A. C. 16’s typography might also be read as colluding with Trapnel’s audience-seeking discourse, even whilst embedding a visual contradiction to her advocacy of plain speech.

It may of course seem strange to “read” anything at all in non-textual elements like decorative headers, and to linger for so long on the textual spaces that appear before Trapnel’s speeches even begin. In her earlier text The Cry of a Stone (1654), Trapnel is questioned about the long periods of silence that fall between her prophetic utterances. Trapnel responds by describing how during these pauses she is “swallowed up of the Glory of the Lord”.

Trapnel’s scribe confirms that “once she ended” her speech she cried “Oh what brightness! What glory! What sweetness! What splendour! Which last word she hardly expressed in a full sound.” Here, the soundless pauses that fall before and after Trapnel’s prophetic utterances are characterised as special, productive moments of communion with God. In Arch A. C. 16, it is to the workers in the printing house – with their punctuated decorative headers – that these important silent spaces are entrusted. As I have shown, the non-textual features that the printing house added to the page can be read as being akin to the non-verbal silences that fall between Trapnel’s utterances: as meaningful and productive signifiers within her spiritual discourse.

“Thousands of the ffanatick crew”: understanding the collaborative production of Trapnel’s printed prophecies

In February 1654, the journalist and informant Marchamont Nedham prepared a detailed report about a Fifth Monarchist meeting at Allhallows the Great. The account describes the group’s subdued atmosphere following the recent arrest of the congregation’s leaders Christopher Feake and John Simpson. Nedham records that one of the only figures left to raise the London Fifth Monarchists’ spirits was Anna Trapnel. Indeed, the congregation were excited about “a 2 fold designe now in hand, concerning the prophetesse Hannah who plaid her part lately in whitehall”.

The first part of this “designe” was, according to Nedham, “to print her discourses & hymmes; the other, to send her abroad all ouer England, to proclaim them, in the name of the Lord, vivâ voce”. Nedham’s report explains that Trapnel herself was “daily perswaded” of this course of action “by thousands of the ffanatick crew” and “chiefly by those of Mr. Simpson’s congregation”. Nedham also saw the prophecies due to be printed, “in the hand of a man, who staid in the womans chamber when she uter’d them day by day in her trance, as they call it”. Unfortunately, Nedham could not read the pages in full because the man was going “in haste” to London, to “confer with the woman her self, and with divers others of her ffriends, about the publishing” of them.

Whilst one imagines that Nedham exaggerated in his claim that “thousands” of people were urging Trapnel to print her religious discourses, his wonderfully detailed report does indicate that a whole community of people were involved in Trapnel’s publication plans in 1654. During his visit, Nedham discovered that the “designe” to print Trapnel’s prophecies was a passionate group goal for the Fifth Monarchist congregation. For this community,
Trapnel’s printed texts were conceived of as a project to be worked on collectively through conferences between the prophet, her scribe, the congregation, and “divers others”.

By analysing the typography in Arch A. C. 16, we are able to expand our understanding of this collective “designe” to publish Trapnel’s “discourses & hymmes” into the late 1650s. At this point, the printer James Cottrell was perhaps amongst the “divers others” consulted and involved in facilitating and shaping the printed articulation of Trapnel’s prophetic voice. As I have demonstrated, early modern printing houses like Cottrell’s encoded the texts they produced with markers of their places of production. These markers – including decorative headers and flawed letters – could then signify a work and its author’s participation in a broader collective network of social and religious affiliation. In the case of Arch A. C. 16, Cottrell’s distinctive typography sometimes appears to contradict Trapnel’s own desires to promote a religious rhetoric of humility and simplicity. However, the volume’s eye-catching headers also collaborate with the prophet’s endeavours to attract and engage an audience. In this way, works like Anna Trapnel’s Arch A. C. 16 demonstrate how typographic features shape and produce meaning, the design of the book intersecting with the “designe” to communicate a woman’s religious discourse in the mid-seventeenth century.

Notes

1. The four 1654 pamphlets are as follows: Anna Trapnel, A Legacy for Saints (London: 1654); Anna Trapnel, Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea (London: 1654); Anna Trapnel, Strange and Wonderful Newes from White Hall (London: 1654); Anna Trapnel, The Cry of a Stone (London: 1654). A recent collection of essays on early modern women’s writing includes a section discussing the content of Anna Trapnel’s 1654 publications, but the “folio collection of Trapnel’s writings” printed at the end of the decade is mentioned only briefly: W. Scott Howard, “Prophecy, Power, and Religious Dissent”, in A History of Early Modern Women’s Writing, ed. by Patricia Phillippy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 315-31 (p. 328). See also, the strong emphasis on 1654 in the Trapnel coverage provided in the following anthologies: Anita Pacheco, ed., A Companion to Early Modern Women’s Writing (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2002); Helen Ostovich and Elizabeth Sauer, eds, Reading Early Modern Women: An Anthology of Texts in Manuscript and Print, 1550-1700 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004).

2. Critics have adopted various strategies for referring to this volume. Marcus Nevitt cites the text as “Trapnel, Anna, Poetical Addresses (London, 1659)” in Women and the Pamphlet Culture of Revolutionary England, 1640-1660 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006). Matthew Prineas simply refers to the work as “the Bodleian folio” in his article, “The Discourse of Love and the Rhetoric of Apocalypse in Anna Trapnel’s Folio Songs”, Comitatus, 28 (1997), 90-110. The final Trapnel volume has also been referred to as S 1. 42 Th (the shelfmark of the Bodleian’s microfilm copy of the work), for example in Rachel Adcock’s Baptist Women’s Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640-1680 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015). Given this paper’s interest in the material text, I have elected to refer to the volume by the shelfmark of its physical copy in the Bodleian Library.

3. All of the 1654 texts have title pages, are less than one-hundred pages long, and survive in multiple copies. Meanwhile, Erica Longfellow has noted that Arch A. C. 16 “unfortunately has no extant title page or prefatory material, so we can only infer its purpose”, in Women and Religious Writing in Early Modern England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 170. Similarly, Paul Salzman has described the solitary surviving volume as “something of a mystery”, explaining that “given the lack of evidence on the fate of however many copies of the folio were printed—“it is impossible to determine just how Trapnel’s
final prophecyes were received, in Reading Early Modern Women’s Writing (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 121-2.

4. See Longfellow, p. 171, and Adcock, p. 150. Trapnel had first become affiliated with the London Fifth Monarchists at Allhallows the Great Church on Thames Street earlier in the 1650s.

5. Salzman, p. 121.

6. Anna Trapnel's Report and Plea (London: 1654) was printed for Thomas Brewster. Strange and Wonderful Newes from White Hall (London: 1654) was printed for Robert Sale” in its first edition and “for Robert Sele in its second. Rebecca Bullard has noted that Robert Sale/Sele may have been a pseudonym for Thomas Brewster as the name Sale/Sele appears in no other surviving imprints or Stationers’ Company records from the period; see Rebecca Bullard, Textual Disruption in Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea (1654), The Seventeenth Century, 23 (2008), 34-53 (40).

7. Trapnel declares that she is “well known to Mr. Henry Jesse, and most of his society” in The Cry of a Stone (London: 1654), A2’. The list of Brewster’s publications appears in Robert Purnell, A Little Cabinet Richly Stored (London: 1657), II3r-II4r.

8. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Arch A. C. 16, G4v. All further page references to this volume will be given in parentheses within the text.

9. Derek Nuttall, English Printers and their Typefaces, 1600-1700”, in Aspects of Printing from 1600, ed. by Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic Press, 1987), pp. 30-48 (p. 31).

10. Adrian Weiss, Bibliographical Methods for Identifying Unknown Printers in Elizabethan/ Jacobean Books”, Studies in Bibliography, 44 (1991), 183-228 (203).

11. The volume’s catalogue entry can be viewed here: <http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/primexplore/fulldisplay?docid=oxfaleph011000873&context=L&vid=SOLO&search_scope=LSCOP_ALL&tab=local&lang=en_US> [accessed 13th May 2019].

12. Records of the Cambridge University Press show that 1500 copies of a 954-page folio took the press twenty-two months to print from 1701-3. D. F. McKenzie notes that, whilst these figures are indicative of the length of seventeenth-century printing times, they cannot be directly applied to other similarly sized printed works. Edition sizes of early modern texts varied (we do not know how many copies of Trapnel’s final work were printed), and printing houses usually worked on multiple texts concurrently (we do not know how many other books were being printed by the press at the same time as Arch A. C. 16). Consequently, it is difficult to calculate exactly how long Arch A. C. 16 would have taken to print, thus making 1659 a best guess. See, D. F. McKenzie, “Printers of the Mind: Some Notes on Bibliographical Theories and Printing-House Practices, Studies in Bibliography, 22 (1969), 1-75 (32-3).

13. This list consisted of 2119 texts recorded in the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) as having been printed in 1659 (i.e. those with 1659 in their imprints or with that date attributed to them by library catalogues). Necessarily, my list included some works printed between January 1660 and 25th March 1660 (N.S.) as these works may have been given a publication date of 1659 in old style dating. Hosted by the British Library, the ESTC is searchable online at: <http://estc.bl.uk/F/?func=file&file_name=login-bl-estc> (accessed 6th October 2017). I am grateful to Virginia Schilling, for sending me a CSV file of the catalogue’s 1659 texts on 9th October 2017. Attempts to reproduce my 1659 list may vary, as the catalogue is often updated, and searches can provide different results depending upon the system used. I then viewed copies of each text using Early English Books Online and/or in the British Library when I needed to take measurements of type.

14. Only one of the volume’s fifty dated prophecies (The twelfth day of the second moneth, 1658) is preceded by a header containing a different style of motif (Eeee1”).

15. Of these fifty-six texts, forty-two stated only that they were “printed by J. C.. It is possible that these initials may not always refer to James Cottrell. However, I have been unable to identify any other printers active in this year who might feasibly have been referred to by these initials.
16. Alongside the headers shown in Figures 4 and 5, further examples of these decorative headers can also be found in the following texts: Thomas Pecke, *Parnassi Puerperium* (London: Printed [...] by J. Cottrel, 1659), A2; James Harrington, *Aphorisms Political* (London: Printed by J. C., 1659), A2; James Harrington, *The Art of Law-Giving* (London: Printed by J. C., 1659), P2; Richard Gardiner, *XVI Sermons Preached in the University of Oxford and at Court* (London: printed by James Cottrel, 1659), A4.

17. Ronald B. McKerrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* (Winchester: St Paul’s Bibliographies, 1927), p. 114.

18. Ibid, p. 114

19. Weiss, p. 185.

20. Described in McKerrow, p. 183.

21. See D. F. McKenzie, ed., *Stationer’s Company Apprentices 1641-1700* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1974), p. 38.

22. Cottrell’s premises are identified as being located at Addle Hill in the imprint to Matthew Coker, *A Whip of Small Cords, to Scourge Antichrist* (London: printed by James Cottrel, on Addle-Hill, 1654).

23. Figure derived from McKenzie (1974), p. 38.

24. John Field and John Streater are recorded as having three registered apprentices in 1659. John Macocke had four apprentices. Figures derived from McKenzie (1974), pp. 56, 160, 104.

25. London, The National Archives, State Papers 29/243, no. 126.

26. Thomas More, *An Explicite Declaration of the Testimony of Christ* (London: 1656); John Gadbury, *Genethlialogia* (London: 1658)

27. Andrew Moore, *A Compendious History of the Turks* (London: 1660 [i.e. 1659])

28. Peter Cole printed Jeremiah Burroughs’s *Four Books on the Eleventh of Matthew* (London: 1659). Roger Daniel printed John Pearson’s *An Exposition of the Apostles Creed* (London 1659). John Fletcher printed Henry Hammond’s *A Paraphrase and Annotations upon all the Books of the New Testament* (London: 1659). Roger Norton printed Robert Gell’s *An Essay Toward the Amendment of the Last English-Translation of the Bible* (London: 1659). Mary Simmons printed Joseph Caryl’s *An Exposition with Practicall Observations Continued* (London: 1659). Thomas Warren printed John Florio’s *Vocabolario Italiano & Inglese, a Dictionary Italian & English* (London: 1659)

29. Cait Coker, *Gendered Spheres: Theorizing Space in the English Printing House*, *The Seventeenth Century*, 33 (2018), 323-36 (329).

30. Ibid, p. 329.

31. Anon, *A Short Discovery of his Highness the Lord Protector’s Intentions Touching the Anabaptists in the Army* (London: 1655), A4.

32. Bernard Capp, *Fifth Monarchy Men* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 113.

33. Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe Vol. 3* (London: 1742), pp. 738-9.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. Anna Trapnel, *Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea* (London: 1654), F3.

37. Anna Trapnel, *The Cry of a Stone* (London: 1654).

38. Christopher Feake, *The New Non-Conformist* (London: 1654), A1.

39. Ibid., G1 and B1; Christopher Feake, *The Oppressed Close Prisoner in Windsor-Castle* (London: 1655 [i.e. 1654]), B1, B3, and Q2; Anna Trapnel, *Anna Trapnel’s Report and Plea* (London: 1654), [B]1.

40. Henry Jessey, *The Exceeding Riches of Grace*, 1st edn (London: 1647), a1. In the sixth and seventh editions of *The Exceeding Riches of Grace* (printed in 1652 and 1658) Trapnel’s name is removed from the list of Wight’s visitors. It is possible that this indicates a rift between Trapnel and Jessey and Wight. However, this seems unlikely because the sixth and seventh editions do not remove two other passages in which Jessey likens Wight’s experiences to a woman named H. T. (probably Hannah/Anna Trapnel), who fasted, had visions, and was of “approved godliness (D6 and K6 in both editions). It therefore seems more likely that
Trapnel’s name was mistakenly omitted from the list of visitors in the sixth and seventh editions due to a printing error.

41. Henry Jessey, *The Exceeding Riches of Grace*, 7th edn (London: 1658). The decorative header appears on page B1’ of Jessey’s text, and matches that found on page Eeeee1’ of Arch A. C. 16. A good example of the flawed G appears on page B1’ of Jessey’s text.

42. See James Holstun, *Ehud’s Dagger* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 298 and Adcock, p. 147.

43. Longfellow, p. 171.

44. In his guide to printing, Joseph Moxon defines “furniture” as pieces of wood (such as Head-sticks and Foot-sticks) and explains that the office of these [pieces of furniture] […] are to *Lock* up the *Form*, viz. to wedge it up […] that every *Letter* bearing hard against every next *Letter*; see Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises Or, the Doctrine of Handy-works applied to the art of printing*, Vol. 2 (London: 1683), F1’.

45. Juliet Fleming, *Cultural Graphology: Writing after Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), p. 63.

46. Fleming, p. 65.

47. Ibid.

48. Jo Carruthers, The Aesthetics of Simplicity, in *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Religion*, ed. by Mark Knight (Oxford: Routledge, 2016), pp. 156-66 (p. 157).

49. Carruthers, p. 159.

50. See Cristina Balloffet Carr, The Materials and Techniques of English Embroidery of the Late Tudor and Stuart Eras, *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (2010) <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mtee/hd_mtee.htm> [accessed 20th March 2019] (paras. 12-13 of 15). The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s website includes images of metallic spangles decorating a pair of seventeenth-century gloves (Accession Number: 28.220.3, 4): <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/28.220.3.4/> [accessed 20th March 2019].

51. Henry Hawkins, *Partheneia Sacra* ([n.p.]: 1633), H7’.

52. D. T., *A True Relation of an Imposition Layed by the Late King upon the Manufactures of Gold and Silver-Wyer* (London: 1657), A4’.

53. Anna Trapnel, *The Cry of a Stone* (London: 1654), B4’.

54. Ibid.

55. London, The National Archives, State Papers 18/66, no. 20.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

**Acknowledgments**

This work was supported by funding from the AHRC’s NWCDTP. I am grateful to the staff at the Bodleian Library for facilitating my study of Arch A. C. 16. I would also like to thank Hilary Hinds and Jo Carruthers, who have provided invaluable suggestions and support throughout the preparation of this article. Finally, Caroline and John McGann and Mathew Pitts have (as always) offered their excellent encouragement; thank you.

**Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

**Funding**

This work was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council [NWCDTP PhD studentship].
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