Why should Annie Seymour Pearson have her statue in York?

Izzy — Hi, I’m Izzy, my *real* name is Isabelle but—

Edith — No no no! Let’s not get into that topic, she’s Izzy, and I’m Edith.

Izzy — Did you hear? A statue of the Queen is to be erected on Minster Front, celebrating her 70 years of reign over Britain and the Commonwealth!

Edith — Oh really? Wow, she must be very, very important!

Izzy — Uhh yeah, she is duh! She’s only ruled the country for like- FOREVER! Hellooo? Platinum Jubilee celebrations! Have you been living under a rock?! But honestly, who else deserves to have their statue in York as well?

Edith — Errrr… I dunno? Boris Johnson? He’s the prime minister…

Izzy — Of course not! He nearly got voted out remember!

Edith — Oh, ok, moving on… Why don’t you tell me a bit more about the Queen?

Izzy — The Queen is the head of British state, known for her sense of duty and her devotion to a life of service. She sees public and voluntary service as one of the most important elements of her work, and has become a much loved and respected figure across the globe.

Edith — Right, she gets my vote!

Izzy — Yeah, but what about anyone else?

Edith — Hmmm… let me think… Oh! I know! How about Annie Seymour Pearson?

Izzy — Annie who who?

Edith — Annie Seymour Pearson! You must’ve heard of her! She was one of York’s most proud suffragettes. A suffragette may seem a far cry from our stately Queen, but these two women have more in common than first meets the eye.

Izzy— Ooo tell me more!

Edith — Well, both were willing to give up their liberty for what they believed in, and then became devoted to that cause. They are also both mothers—

Izzy — Yes, a very important role! (then aside to the audience) That should get the mums’ vote!

Edith — (looking slightly annoyed) As I was saying, and they have both, at times, have had to put their sense of duty before their family role.

Izzy — Oh yeah wasn’t she the one who went to prison for campaigning outside the House of Commons?

Edith — Yes, I knew you’d heard of her! In 1913, at age 35, she went to protest at the House of Commons, but was arrested, and charged for obstructing the police. She was summoned to appear in court on 18th January 1913.

Izzy — Yes! I remember! She was given the choice of a 40 shilling fine or time in prison. Annie opted for prison, but two days later her husband paid the fine and she was released from Holloway.

Edith — Wow that was so brave of her!

Izzy— I know! Annie was such an amazing woman!

Edith — She even received a prison brooch from the WSPU!

Izzy — Wait-wait- WAIT! Are you telling me she got a REwaRD for being in PrisON?

Edith — Yes! She had contributed to the campaign so she was invited to their next meeting at their HQ on Coney Street!

Izzy— Ok, but who in the world is the WSPU?

Edith — The Women’s Social and Political Union!

Izzy— ‘ACTIONS NOT WORDS!’

Edith — ……….

Izzy— Not the right time- hehe…

Edith — Yeah… terrible time.

Izzy— (looks embarrassed)

Edith — Anyway, isn’t it amazing to think that the HQ of a really cool women’s society was on my favourite street to go shopping on!

Izzy — Yeah it **is**… You’ve got H&M, Zara, Paperchase, WHSmith, oh, and—

Edith — Nobody cares.

Izzy — Ok…

Edith — Well, I guess that a statue of the Queen doesn’t just represent the Queen, it represents everything and everybody within our nation.

Izzy — Aaand?

Edith — And a statue of Annie Seymour Pearson doesn’t just represent her, it represents everyone who has done something similar to her.

Izzy — So in a way, we not talking about one person, we are talking about many.

Both — AND THAT’S WHY WE THINK ANNIE SEYMOUR—

Izzy — Wait, wait, wait, I’ve just realised something! The Queen is amazing, and she’s a woman, and Annie was amazing, and she was a woman!

Edith — Uh-huh, you were supposed to realise that *ages* ago

Izzy — Yeah well I’m a bit slow on the uptake ok? But you know what this means…

Edith — I think I know what you’re getting at…

Izzy — Three… two… one..

Both — GIRL POWER!!