

THE
LIFE, SUFFERINGS,
AND
SURPRISING ADVENTURES
OF
ELIZABETH SMITH;

Daughter of a Merchant in Greenock.

Written by Herself.



GLASGOW:
DAVID TROTTER.
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DAVID T. FORTER
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A
SURPRISING ADVENTURES
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I am a native of Greenock, my parents are respectable merchants of that town. I was born on the 1st of October, 1822. About 10 years ago, a young man of the name of Robert Taylor, paid his addresses to me; he was then serving his apprenticeship to a cabinet maker: our love was mutual, our attachment growing stronger every hour. In the beginning of 1839 he proposed to have a secret marriage, but I would not consent without acquainting my parents. My mother consented, observing that she could not attempt to marry me contrary to my inclination: but my father refused me to marry a man without property. He said I was too young to marry, and that when I grew older he would provide a suitable match for me. He watched me closely, but we contrived to meet every evening. I told him my father's determination, and he was sad—our grief was great, and we shed tears of sorrow. At length I consented to a private marriage—parted in sadness, fearing that my father would prevent us accomplishing our purpose, and so it proved.

On the following morning he compelled me to accompany him on a visit to my uncle who resides in

St. Vincent Street, Glasgow. The next day he set out on his return home, and left me in strict charge with my uncle, who would not allow me to leave the house. I remained there for seven months. My lover heard of my removal from Greenock, and not being able to obtain information where I was, he wandered about, working a short time in his place, when he became oppressed in spirits on my account, and could not settle to work. He took to excessive drinking, and associated with bad companions: he and two others robbed a gentleman named Heriot, on the Glasgow and Paisley road: the rest escaped, but he was arrested in Glasgow, where he was tried and sentenced to 7 years' transportation. My parents were one evening conversing about me, my mother desired my father to fetch me back, but he refused until Taylor had left England.

Being overheard by Catherine M'Clarty, the chambermaid, who was fond of me, and knowing where my uncle resided, and learning by their conversation that I was in Glasgow, she resolved to set out in search of me immediately,—which she accordingly did, and contrived to deliver a letter which informed me of my lover's fate. I read it on going to bed at night, and my feelings may be better imagined than described—I sank insensible on the bed, where I remained a considerable time: on recovering, I passed the remainder of the night in planning my escape, which I effected the next evening, taking £200 belonging to my uncle. I was determined to go to the same place as my lover: I dressed myself in man's apparel, and paid my passage on board the *Maryanne*, Emigrant ship, bound to New South Wales, where, I learned, Robert Taylor

was sent. We sailed on the 16th November, 1839:—
on the 18th of the month following, we were visited by
a tremendous tempest---peals of thunder rolled through
the dark concave of heaven, and the vivid flashes of
lightning, by their awful brilliancy and grander seem-
ed to open the gates of the firmament, and presented
a dreadful and magnificent blaze of electric fluid---
torrents of rain descending from the clouds, and all a-
round conspired to produce in the breasts of the crew
and passengers a feeling to lay ourselves down and die
to be relieved from the intense sufferings we endured
during the terrible storm. The wind proved contrary,
the vessel leaked- crew and passengers worked incess-
ently at the pumps, 1 and two others who were assist-
ing on deck, were washed overboard, when 1 for-
tunately seized hold of of one of the masts of the ship
which fell over the side---masts and yards being swept
away. But, by the preserving power of the Almighty,
I escaped a watery grave, by being washed ashore at
daybreak in the morning. I remained there the whole
day, and found myself on a desolate island---no human
being to administer to my wants or sooth my sorrow.
At night I sought for some place of shelter, but could
find none: and being under fearful apprehensions of
being devoured by wild beasts that I heard roar, which
struck horror to my nearly broken heart: I climbed up
a large tree, where I remained till morning,---it was
then that I thought of my father's cruelty, he being the
sole cause of my disastrous situation: but, praise be to
Him who is always ready to assist in the hour of danger,
those who believe in his promises, and put their trust
in him. On the third day of my being on this deso-

late place---never will it be erased from my memory, the joy I experienced at perceiving a sail at a distance : in my excessive joy, I climbed a tree, but I was at a loss then how to attract their attention : at length I devised a plan---I tied my shirt to one of the branches of the tree, it floated in the breeze, which they perceived, and knowing it to be a signal of distress, they sent their boat to my relief, in which I reached the ship, which proved to be a Dutch merchantman. I was conveyed to Amsterdam, where I was taken before the British consul, to whom I discovered my sex, and related the whole of my sufferings. He offered to procure me a passage to England, but I preferred to stay there for a time, in hopes of getting a passage to New South Wales. But no vessel presented itself for the space of two years, during which time I was in service with an English family residing there. At the end of that time I procured a passage, and travelled 300 miles in search of my lover! I at length succeeded in discovering the place he was employed in, and applied to his master, who kindly permitted us to have a private interview, which were the happiest moments of our lives. My pen cannot describe our feelings on this occasion---we ran to each others arms, while tears of joy ran down our cheeks. I was so overcome, that I fell down insensible, and when I recovered, my lover was standing over me in breathless anxiety. After embracing each other affectionately, I related the whole of my sufferings to him, for whose sake I underwent them.

While I was relating them, we shed tears of joy and sorrow alternately, and at the conclusion he embraced me, saying, he hoped God would prolong our days,

and that the time was not far distant when we should be joined in the bands of wedlock, never to be separated until death. The master he was serving on learning the particulars, was astonished, and sympathised deeply in our feelings, and said, he would render his assistance to make us happy for the future. He admitted me into his house as a servant, where I remained till my lover's time expired, when we were married by the Rev. Mr. Jones, in the presence of our master and several friends. After which he offered us an opportunity of settling in that country, but we declined, being desirous of returning to England. He then rewarded me for my past services, which together with the money I brought from England, and the wages I received in Holland, procured us a passage to Liverpool, where we arrived on the 3rd of last month. We immediately repaired to Greenock, and were welcomed by my parents, who were overjoyed at seeing their long lost child, whom they never expected to see again, for they had come to the conclusion, that I had destroyed myself, which caused great dissension amongst them, my mother laying all the blame on my father, for refusing to consent to my marriage with Robert Taylor. We now reside in a pleasant country seat near Greenock, in the greatest harmony amongst our relations and friends.

ELIZABETH SMITH.

COPY OF VERSES.

Some all you constant lovers of high and low degree,
Pray you give attention and listen unto me;
The sufferings of a female, whom Cupid pierced her heart,
But her father had contrived it so, she and her lover to part.

In Greenock town we did dwell—from infants loved sincere,
But my father thus to part us, acted a part severe;
He sent me up to Glasgow that we might parted be—
To my uncle's house confined me, which caused my misery.

Robert Taylor was my lover's name, and when he came to know
That we were separated, distracted he did go;
He roamed about in deep distress—his mind could find no rest
The thought of his Eliza disturbed his troubled breast.

In search of his true love, he wandered up and down,
In lonesome groves and valleys, and many a seaport town;
But still no tidings he could get of her he loved so dear,
Which caused him dreary nights to pass, and many a bitter tear.

Her absence threw him in despair, all earthly joys were fled,
And with a gang on the highway, to rob by them was led:
A gentleman of wealth and store they met upon the road,
But he was seized, and 7 years sent o'er the salt sea flood.

When I read my lover's fate that night upon my bed,
To rob my uncle, soon the thought came to my troubled head,
200 pounds from him I took, and quickly ran away,
Dressed out in man's apparel to cross the raging sea.

Our ship from Glasgow did set out to go to New South Wales,
But on the way she was o'ertook by dreadful storms and gales;
Her timbers crashed, her decks were swept by the resistless waves,
And every one, except myself, met with a watery grave.

Kind providence preserved my life—I was washed on shore,
No food or shelter could I find, but heard the wild beasts roar:
By chance, a Dutch ship came that way, on her I got aboard,
When they found out I was a maid, their help they did afford.

To New South Wales they did take me which eased my troubled
mind,

Hundreds of miles I travelled, my own true love to find;
But fortune still did prove my friend, my love I soon did see,
His master when he heard my woe, shed tears of grief for me.

He took me in his service, and was very fond of me,
My Robert and I got married in the bonds of unity;
And when his time was expired, to Scotland we sailed o'er,
Our friends received us kindly, never to part more.