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Some account of HANNAH SNELL, the Female Soldier.

ANN^{NAH} SNELL, was born in Fryer-street, Worcester, April 1723. Her father was a hofier and dyer, and son to lieut. Snell who was at the taking of Namur, in the reign of king William, and afterwards served in queen Anne's wars.

When her father and mother, who by their industry brought up 3 sons and 6 daughters, died, Hannah set out for London, where she arrived on Christmas day, 1740, and resided some time with her sister, who had married one Gray, a carpenter, and lived in Wapping. Here she became acquainted with James Summs, a Dutch sailor, to whom she was married in 1743; but he treated her with great inhumanity, and left her when seven months with child, which dying at six months old, she decently buried it. She put on a suit of her brother-in-law's apparel, on November 23, 1745; left her sister without communicating her design, and went to Coventry, where she enlisted herself in Guise's regiment of foot, and marched with it to Carlisle. Here her serjeant, whose name was Davis having a criminal inclination for a young woman, applied to Hannah to assist him. Hannah went to the girl, but instead of executing her commission, warned her to avoid him. This instance of virtue, so uncommon in a soldier, created an intimate friendship between them; and Davis finding them together, and being unexpectedly repulsed, became jealous of Hannah, and to gratify his revenge, accused her of neglect of duty to the commanding officer, and she was sentenced to receive 600 lashes; 500 she did receive, having her hands tied up to the castle gate; but by the intercession of some officers, the other hundred was remitted. Soon after this whipping, a recruit was brought to the regiment who had seen her at her sister's, and by whom she feared she should be known. This circumstance, with the ill treatment which she still received from the serjeant, induced her to desert; and her female friend having furnished her with some money, she set out on foot for Portsmouth, and exchanging cloaths with some people who were cutting pease near Carlisle. At Portsmouth, she enlisted in Frazer's marines, and a draught being made for Boscawen's fleet, she as one of them went on board the Swallow sloop, Capt. Rosier. Lieutenant Weygate of the marines, observing Hannah to be expert at washing and dressing victuals, took her into the officers' mess. She was regarded as a boy, and in case of an engagement, her station was on the quarter-deck, to fight at small arms, and she was one of the altar-guard; she was also obliged to keep watch every four hours, night and day, and frequently to go aloft.

The Swallow being in great distress, in two violent storms, Hannah worked at the pump in her turn, and the ship at last putting into Gibraltar, she there attended lieutenant Weygate at his lodgings, during a dangerous illness.

From Gibraltar they proceeded to the Madeira, and the Cape of Good Hope. During this passage they were reduced to short allowance, and but a pint of water a day. Here they joined the admiral in the Namur, and the rest of the fleet, which proceeded on their expedition, and Hannah soon after signalized herself at the attempt on the island of St. Mauritius.

From St. Mauritius they sailed to St. David's, where Hannah, with the rest of the marines, joined the English army, that was encamped, after a march of 3 weeks, before Aria Coupan, which was to have been stormed, if a shell had not blown up their magazine, and obliged the besieged to abandon it.

They proceeded with the army to Pondicherry, before which they lay 11 weeks, and were great part of the time up to the middle in water, without bread, and exposed to a terrible fire

from the forts. An attack was at length made, in which Hannah having fired 37 rounds, received a ball in the groin, six wounds in one leg, and five in the other,

The siege being raised, she was sent to the hospital at Cuddylorum, to have her wounds dress'd, but she extracted herself the ball from her groin with her finger and thumb, after she had endured a most violent pain for two days, and always dress'd it herself. In about 3 months she recovered, and was put on board the Tartar Pink, and when the fleet came from Madras, was turned over to the Eltham, Capt. Lloyd, with whom she sailed to Bombay.

Here the Captain being on shore, one night on her watch, Mr. Allen, who had the command of the ship, desired her to sing; she excused herself as not being well; but he absolutely commanding her to sing, she as absolutely refused, alleging, that to sing was no part of a soldier's duty, and that he had no authority to require it. He, fond to shew his power, caused Hannah to lie in irons five days, then to receive a dozen lashes at the gangway; and sent her to the fore-top-mast head for four hours: This injustice of his, did not however go unpunished, for as they were unrigging the ship, after her arrival in England, one of the sailors let a block fall upon his head, which hurt him greatly, and endangered his life.

She was on board the Eltham in the hurricane, in which the Namur, the Pembroke, and other ships, were lost: And coming to Lisbon, on her return, she went often on shore with the men, and entered readily into schemes of pleasure, to prevent suspicion; she was of a party that went to an Irish house to drink wine. At the door of this house was sitting an English sailor, who had lately come from Genoa in a Dutch ship, and was known to some of Hannah's company: This man was taken into the party, and each one beginning to relate his adventures, Hannah enquired if he knew one Summs, a Dutchman; the stranger immediately replied, that he knew him well, and that he was executed at Genoa, for giving a Genoese a mortal stab with his knife; that he visited him in prison, where he expressed great remorse for ill treating his wife, whom he left in England.

Hannah heard his relation, without discovering any extraordinary emotion, and soon after arrived at Portsmouth, where the house being full, she was obliged to accept of a male bed-fellow, and lay three nights with two different men, one of them her ship-mate on board the Eltham; but conducted herself with so much caution, that her sex was not suspected. Here she fell in company with her female friend, for whose sake she had been whipped at Carlisle. This girl was then single, and remembering Hannah, would have married her, but as she did not chuse to discover herself, nor readily to refuse the favour, she desired it 'til she had been at London and received her money. She accordingly came to London soon afterwards, and when in company with her fellow adventurers, after receiving their pay, and she was about to part with them for ever, she discovered her sex, that they might be witness of the truth of her adventures. One of them, who had been her bed-fellow, immediately offered her marriage, which she refused.

She wears man's cloaths, a laced hat, and cockade, sword and ruffles, and is not to alter the military dress, 'til further orders from the duke.

For she prepared a disguise of her sex, by tying an handkerchief round her neck, and spreading the ends of it over her breasts. When she was whipped at Carlisle, she was not so full, and her arms being drawn up, the protuberance of the breasts was inconsiderable, and they were hid by her standing so close to the gate.