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## EDWARD GREENSTED'S JOURNEY

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This copy of Edward Greensted's Ballad was written on the unused pages of the 'Wateringbury Place Farm Accounts' book for the years 1804-1807. When the book ceased to be used for daily transactions by Benjamin Stone, after 22 years C (Caroline ?) Stone, a daughter, started using the blank pages as a 'CRAP BOOK'. (The word is clearly written. Is this use of the medieval word for 'siftings'?)

First she wrote a 2½ page eulogy to the late M<sup>rs</sup> Frances Greensted, described as the daughter of Edward, who died unmarried in August 1829. (Is the M<sup>rs</sup> title a survival of the seventeenth-eighteenth century way of describing an unmarried lady?).

Then follow many pages of contemporary riddles, jokes, herbal recipes, use of leeches, and statistics of all sorts. The writers, in several different hands, must have had access to a lot of Greensted's work, the copyist always acknowledging this, with extracts from his 'History of Wateringbury to the year 1781', 'The Hailstorm of 1763', and 28 pages on 'Nettled Place'. Comparing the writings of Hasted and Greensted, I feel the two must have met, or exchanged letters.

Coming to the Ballad, I have taken the liberty of putting one or two couplets in correct geographical sequence; the whole return journey can be traced on our modern O.S. maps. (Landranger 188 and 189), bearing in mind that the 'Star Inn' has moved from Linton crossroads to 300 m. north towards Maidstone.

I have yet to discover why Edward undertook to do such a journey on foot in the very wet and windy winter of 1772 - 'to find friend Powel's settlement'.

MR EDWARD GREENSTED'S  
TWO DAYS JOURNEY FROM  
WATERINGBURY TO BETHERSDEN  
Nov 28th & 29th 1772

Saturday I well remember  
The Eighth and Twentieth of November  
I start for Bethersden intent

To find friend Powel's settlement.  
 With a lantern, Candle, moving by five  
 Set out as hard as I could drive.  
 Unlucky was at first no doubt  
 I fell down and put my candle out.  
 Lighted up again at Teston  
 And road pursued with might and main  
 Till light, again, was forced to yeild  
 to wind in Mr Charlton's field.  
 Got a light again at Farley Green  
 And soon by me Cocks Heath was seen.  
 To Linton the road still rough  
 Here got a pint & an ounce of snuff.  
 Hear blustering wind and driving rain  
 Bothered and drove me o'er the plain  
 Thro' thick, thro' thin, now wrong now right  
 Half up the Ley – I lost my light.  
 But dawning light now seven o'clock  
 I found myself at Boughton Cock.  
 Left here my Lantern, got some rum  
 Not having drank since came from home  
 Refresh'd set forward with good heart  
 Walked briskly till I came to Chart  
 Called on Ned Brook acquaintance old  
 Who gave me a dram to keep out the cold  
 And raised a fire to keep me warm  
 My poor old coat being quite wet through.  
 Then asked me in a friendly way  
 Break fast with them – at tea to stay  
 May every blessing Ned attend  
 And wet thro' ne'er want a friend,  
 To dry his coat, ask him to eat  
 and could him with a dram treat  
 here sit I now both dry and warm  
 which happened not till after even  
 the clock had struck, and gone eleven,  
 Roused now at my unlooked for stay  
 Took leaf, for Sutton took my way  
 Here stopt – enquired the rediest road  
 To Bethersden, my friends abode –  
 I was told the Country down below  
 was all with water in a flow,  
 by Headcorn, Smarden couldn't go  
 And if my journey I'd fulfil  
 Keep round I must upon the hill.  
 Lengthened my journey this the case  
 Oblidged I was to mend my pace  
 Straight to East Sutton took my way

To Ulcombe next – here made some stay  
 Just drank a pint with Neighbour Pain,  
 and took me to my road again.  
 Here Boughton Malherbe took my way  
 Passed here the Church where the Wottons lay  
 Once here a name of great reknown  
 Tho' now forgot, a name scarcely known  
 Down hill – up hill I hence went on  
 Till nearly came to Egerton.

(The Waltons are interred in this Church, Egerton, one of whom Sir Nick<sup>s</sup>. – was Lord Mayor of London Anno 1414 & 1431, another Sir Nick<sup>s</sup>. – was privy Councillor to K Hen 8, Edw<sup>d</sup> the 6th – Queen Mary & Queen Eliz<sup>h</sup>., and was 9 times public Ambassador to foreign courts . . .

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The Road inquir'd still – the meanwhile –  
 Till Crablin Barrs would have Stile,  
 indeed a fact with him disputed  
 But obstinate he'd not be refuted  
 Lucky from him I understood  
 At last, the Road lay thro' a wood.  
 To Egerton came next the Street,  
 Here took a dram, but nothing to eat –  
 To Pluckley next the road I took  
 Pass I many a dirty Road and Brook  
 Call'd for a pint being well mired  
 For Bethersden the road inquired –  
 Sundown. Road I had to find,  
 Besides advers'd [advised] to have a guide –  
 I soon consented this, some cost –  
 Unwilling I was not to be lost –  
 In quicksand ditches or mire slough  
 Then lets get out if I know how,  
 A guide for me was so procured  
 One to this country long inured  
 Brisk on his staff, did soon arrive  
 Three weeks advanced he's eighty five  
 Deaf as a post, so though he neither  
 Fear'd Marl pit, slough, ditch, wind nor weather  
 Agreed with him for sixteen pence  
 Safe to conduct me there from hence  
 One shilling dry, a Groat in beer  
 When safe we both arrived there  
 Set out we passed o'er hedges and fields  
 Mire bogs which this blest country yeilds  
 Dark blustring – could not see my hands  
 Uncertain whether sea or land

Civil my Guide still as we passed  
 Expressed his fear – he walked too fast  
 Oblidg'd I bid him still go on –  
 By eighty five would not be outdone  
 Nor Ditch, for Dark we could not see over  
 Fell at first & then got over –  
 Oft courted by the attracting clay  
 Our shoes to leave another day.  
 Kept on we. Ruffet crost  
 Till in the dark my friend I lost,  
 I mist him as he pass'd his muse  
 one so famed to read through use  
 Now fors'd to hallow out a maine  
 Ere I my guide I found againe  
 Once more now met, made fresh assay  
 Till both lost in a miry way  
 Though I must here not only lose  
 E'en one, but also both my shoes  
 But resolute by mear main strength  
 we Freed our legs – got out at length  
 made most of time & travell'd hard.  
 Till safe we got in the Churchyard.  
 But interrupt'd in our chat  
 I fell o'er the graves and lost my hat  
 Blown somewhere by the gust of wind  
 Search'd but in vain no hat could find  
 Oblidg'd to leave it with the dead  
 And at the George arriv'd bare head.  
 Here got a light & with some pain,  
 Went back and found my hat again,  
 Wet, dirty set me by the fire –  
 Shoes, stockings, coat all in a mire  
 My stomach loudly called for meat  
 Steaks got for supper I hardly eat  
 Some beer got after, and some wine  
 Went off to bed, the clock struck nine.  
 But should have told you that my guide  
 In vain for home this evening tried  
 Set out – lost in the dark his way  
 Came back again & with me slept  
 Laid warm, we soundly slept all night  
 Rose in the morn'g as soon as light  
 My stockings wet they made me shiver  
 As those who with an ague (do) quiver  
 Had yet a mile and half to go  
 To Powels at a green below,  
 To shew the road I begg'd my friend  
 Would further his assistance lend

Willing he was to go, but thought  
 And feared the he'd most forgot  
 The fifty years or more agow  
 he went each morn that way to mow  
 Nor travel'd since he had that road  
 Removed hence distant his abode.  
 Unlucky we mistook the stile  
 and wandered wrong for half a mile  
 But found at last Friend Powels home  
 who wonder'd star'd to see us come  
 Housekeeper, him at breakfast found  
 Ask'd us to tea and sit us down  
 beg him to excuse my stay  
 for business done I must away  
 Up to the George there breakfast took  
 towards home then my journey make  
 Sunday bells now begin to chime  
 The Church I viewed, but my short time  
 I saw here to tombs of most repute  
 from Lovelaces & down to Chute  
 Decent tho' Gothick still most neat  
 The Temple seen & Pew'd complete  
 From the Churchyard hence view'd Palace  
 The Mansion Bethersden and Lovelace.  
 Lovelace here erst of noble fame  
 Who to the Mansion lent their name  
 Extinct that name, next with repute  
 A Hales succeeded, then a Chute  
 Famous alliance. Tho now forgot  
 Unless by Tombs to mem'ry brought  
 Learn giddy mortals hence to know  
 nothing substantial here below.  
 But learning now the musing strain  
 For home I now set out again  
 O'er meads thro woods each Cosway I tread  
 Towards the town of Smarden led.  
 The cosway smooth of slated stone  
 Tenacious found here many one  
 form'd of the Perriwinkles kind [Bethersden marble!]  
 Compact in masses formerly joined  
 but how they came connected so  
 To naturalists I leave to show.  
 The nodding mansion next I past  
 and tow'ring Seat surround with Tolls  
 here of oaks seen rise on high  
 While the late Vestas round lie  
 May the right owner of this place  
 Proceed to wipe off such disgrace –

My friend now eased us of some toil  
 Cut a cross the fields sav'd near a mile.  
 Smarden the town saw it nigh  
 The Church to the left we pass'd by  
 Where Justice Drainer once of fame  
 Of Justice Nine Hales got the name  
 who in the bloody Mary days  
 Informer turned, fortune to raise  
 Hear (here) through nine Hales with many a nod  
 Respt'd and adored his past wrought God  
 To Protestants denounced still was  
 who Reverence none his God would show  
 But in the end it came to pass  
 he lost his God and proved an ass  
 But leaving him long dead and gone  
 Our road we still kept briskly on  
 Call'd drank a mug of beer at the Kings Head  
 Still kept the road to Headcorn led.  
 Hence soon a Baptis meeting past  
 The preacher at it loud and fast  
 of noise possessed a noble stock  
 and loudly ball'd o'er all his flock  
 To hear his Doctrine could not stay  
 Oblig'd to keep still on our way  
 Nor nothing of notice 'tmore did meet  
 Until we came to Headcorn Street  
 Saw here the Church where once of old  
 The Monks seiz'd, satanic we're told  
 When holy water be to shund  
 Feign'd from the sprinkling mop to run  
 Here Monk a Saint, there Monk a devil  
 Passed on the vulgar of those days  
 From pious cheat their gain to raise  
 Monks for their gain know how to do it  
 If not the friend – still some shall rue it  
 My friend & I being now to part  
 I treated him with beer a quart  
 Who civil to me still was seen  
 Went with me to FivePlum-tree green  
 Direct me the ready way –  
 That to the town of Sutton lay  
 The nearest road by Sutton then  
 He told me was by Mottenden –  
 But I somehow by a mistake  
 To Farthing Green my way did make.  
 Thro thick, thro thin the Horse track round  
 I got from hence to Sutton Town –  
 Here stopt awhile I made a stand –

One footing more, I found on dry land,  
 The Church bells had just rung –  
 The Evening Service to begin –  
 Here got I some beer, bread & Cheese  
 And now refreshed my way I took  
 To see my honest Friend Ned Brook  
 Who gave me kindly in relief  
 Some good Plumb pudding & boiled beef  
 Diet before I ne'er had found –  
 In all my dirty tedious round  
 Insisted, made me to agree –  
 To stay and drink a dish of tea –  
 The evening with darkness spread  
 And I so far home to my bed –  
 My friend a lantern lent and light  
 Cross to Cocks Heath – he'd set me right  
 And to my friends I now in brief  
 Gave thanks & to him took my leave  
 For Ambro Green now set off straight  
 From whence to the fields I mist the gate  
 Met here some beaus, who thought fit  
 Me, to direct into a pit –  
 not them to mind as under brained  
 My road I found, Cocks Heath attained  
 Where at the Cock I staid an hour –  
 To save me from a bothering shower  
 The shower o'er I lighted up –  
 Intended yet at Home to sup  
 Walked on with all convenient haste  
 Till the Star some distance past  
 When yet the wind still at its height  
 Once more again blew out my light  
 Went to the Star to light again  
 Here comp'ny I found in a merry vain  
 Near half seas over – harty fellows  
 From Maidstone some both blues & yellows  
 Talked politicks of town and Nation –  
 But disagreed in conversation  
 I sat to drink my pint and heard 'em  
 But sometimes they so high I fear'd 'em  
 One asked the meaning of a Blue  
 Which he himself no other knew  
 Dropt this discourse – The next in vogue  
 Friend Wilks – blue, swore he was a rogue  
 Maintained the contrary by Yellows  
 Who Wilks declared an honest fellow  
 That bravely for his country stood  
 Rights, Liberties, & all thats good



Words high – ill language neither spared  
Fell both together by the ears  
The women squall'd alls in uprore  
They fought and roll about the floor  
To fight the Champions little stood  
And best of all – was shed no blood  
They struck indeed like other folks  
But staggering – still they miss their strokes  
Till by the interposing friend  
The fight was put unto an end  
And as friend Hudibras doth say  
both lived to fight another day  
My pint now out, and reckoning paid  
Left Blues and Yellows – homewards made  
Cocks Heath now crossed, the road there led  
Thro Farleigh Street – here all abed  
Toward Teston next I took my rout  
Once more my candle here went out  
Through Teston come without a light  
And home I got about twelve at night  
Wet – dirty was enough in reason  
Nor journey good for the winter season  
The country wild & weather rough  
Gave me of Bethersden enough  
And let what will hence be my station  
I wish no such like perambulation.