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Greenwich Part 6

Cutty Sark, Foot Tunnel, North Thames Views, Thames Clippers, River, Dragon on Prince Frederick's Barge

Word count:

Dates as 2 words - 1945 = nineteen forty-five

Monarchs as 3 words - Henry VIII = Henry The Eighth

Some hyphenated words counted as 2 = boat-shaped

Paragraph numbers not included

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PDF Date: 12 April 2023

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, corresponding to the text on page 92.

92. This is the state of the clipper Cutty Sark in August 2011*, undergoing* extensive repairs and refurbishment*, after the fire in May 2007*. The ship was already scheduled for conservation repairs and had been partially dismantled at that time. Having lived in the area for many years and passing the ship every morning on the bus to school, I found it disconcerting not to see the masts filling the sky, but instead several very large cranes. However, it was heartening to see the stern looking quite magnificent in black and gold. The fence

round the site showed pictures of the progress, as well as the ship in full sail and a mock-up of how the finished site will look.

* "2011" "2007" Long slash to represent the current century, arbitrary sign with no phonetic value

* "undergoing" Not using the short form "go" therefore has the diphone

* "refurbishment" Using halved M for "-ment", keep the En light and short, so that it does not look like "refurbishing"

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, corresponding to the text on page 93.

93. The ship is held aloft on a steel girdle, so that visitors can walk underneath the hull. The glass enclosure meets the ship at water level. On a blue sky day the glass will look like rolling sea surrounding the ship, but on a grey day it might resemble the skirts of a hovercraft. Many people will know the ship from televised scenes of the

London Marathon, as the runners circle round the ship - the professional runners just getting into their stride and the fun runners still managing to smile and wave, even though they are now facing the reality of the definition of the word - a strenuous long-distance race.

94. The repair and refurbishment began in 2006* at an estimated cost of £25 million but this figure finally rose to £45 million. The fire damage had added £10 million and an extra 18 months to the schedule. The ironwork and timbers are now protected and treated to prevent further decay. After six years of hard work and much fund raising, it was reopened by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on 25 August 2012*. Among my photos I found one that exactly matches the mock-up view that had been posted around the perimeter fence during the restoration. The ship is a glorious sight in the full sunshine and the undulating

glass canopy really does look like a gently* swelling sea, although not the surface that the ship would have been* sailing on most of the time. I think Cutty's past sailors would not wish to have the sea so calm, as no wind meant no speed, no winning of prizes leading to further business, and probably no bonuses for the crew.

* "2006" "2012" Long slash to represent the current century, arbitrary sign with no phonetic value

* "gently" Insert last vowel, as "gentle" would also make sense

* Omission phrase "would (have) been"

95. The Cutty Sark was built for Scotsman John "Jock"* Willis. She is a sailing clipper built for high speed in order to* outrun rival ship Thermopylae in the China tea run, and later the wool run from Australia. She travelled all over the world* until 1923, when she was bought by Wilfred Dowman who brought her back to the UK and restored her. Her last sea voyage was in 1938 and her last time* in the water was in 1954 when she was towed into dry dock at Greenwich. The ship was named after a character in Robert Burns' ballad "Tam O'Shanter". A girl called Nannie Dee, wearing a short-cut shirt or undergarment, known in the Scots dialect as a cutty sark,

was angrily pursuing Tam at high speed for having gazed at her dancing with the witches. Tam escaped by crossing a river on his horse Maggie* or Meg*, but at the last moment the horse lost its tail, grabbed by Nannie who was unable to cross the water.

* "Jock" Wavy underline, as the quote marks are not written in shorthand

* Omission phrases "in ord(er to) "all over (the) world" "las(t) time"

* "Maggie, Meg" Names should be vocalised whenever possible

Handwritten shorthand for paragraph 96, consisting of approximately 10 lines of cursive shorthand on a blue-lined background.

96. The ship's figurehead Nannie spent the next 80 plus years crossing all the water in the world*, chasing the rival ship instead of a horse. Not only is her own cutty sark flowing behind her, but also the ship of the same name in tow, looking like an extension of her skirts. The ship's Scottish name ensured that the nationality of her owner and the builders went with her everywhere. It seems to be a clear reminder to the rival ship that Nannie would never be far behind, catching their tail, and unconcerned at crossing any amount of water. From the side view she looks young and beautiful but her face is

actually frowning and snarling in anger. Whenever in port the crew would place in her hand a horse's tail made of old rope. Considering that the horse in the ballad was marginally faster than Nannie, maybe it should have been considered for the job of figurehead, but it would not have inspired the same interest and cautious* superstition from the crew. Most of all she embodies a teeth-gritting determination to outrun the competitor.

* Omission phrase "in (the) world"

* "cautious" Ensure the K is straight, so it does not look like "anxious"

Handwritten shorthand for paragraph 97, consisting of approximately 10 lines of cursive shorthand on a blue-lined background.

97. The design of tea clippers was based on the American Baltimore cotton clipper ships. The name comes from one of the meanings of "clip" which is to move swiftly. Their grace and elegance is aptly described by George Campbell in his book China Tea Clippers - "The delightful form of the hull* of a tea clipper ... all being moulded perfectly into the curves toward the keel, must surely rank as the most aesthetically perfect manmade shape*." The Cutty Sark's specification for building and fitting out lists not only the construction requirements and materials in precise detail

but also an inventory of every item needed on board, from guns to teaspoons, anchors, foghorn*, deck scrubbing brushes, fishing lines and shark hook, teak hen coops and pig houses, copper tea kettle and coffee pot, complete tea service and fancy bread baskets - just a few of the hundreds of items listed.

* "hull" Insert the vowel, as "whole" could also make sense here

* "shape" Insert the vowel, to prevent misreading as "ship"

* "foghorn" On its own "horn" has Tick Hay

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper.

98. Reading the inventory is almost like a trip through an average day on the ship, although many of the nautical equipment terms would only be intelligible to those with sailing experience. Also required was "a figurehead by Allan with suitable carving

about the stern and to correspond with the name of the ship" and* "the whole to be of the very best workmanship, material and finish."

* "and" Wavy underline to show this is not part of the quotations

Blank lined area for writing.

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, including the number 370 and 1902.

99. In the background of the Cutty Sark photo is the glazed dome over the lift and stairwell down to the foot tunnel under the river, which links Cutty Sark Gardens to Island Gardens in Tower Hamlets on the north side. The tunnel is 370 metres long, 2.7 metres in diameter and just over 15 metres deep. Its width does not sound much but it is not a cramped area. It was opened in 1902 to replace the ferry service, so that workers could travel more easily and cheaply from their* homes in South London to the shipyards and docks on the Isle of Dogs. At the north end is a very

short length reinforced in steel and concrete, as that part was damaged in World War II. The original lift was a large room with wide doors on both sides and an attendant to operate it. It had seats on each side and the sort of varnished wooden panelling that you might see on a vintage train carriage. A guess at its capacity would be about 50 people. Passengers entered at one side and exited at the other, and this arrangement enabled it to serve the large numbers of people using it to travel to work.

* "from their " Doubling to represent "their"

Blank lined area for writing.

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, corresponding to the text on page 100.

100. The tunnel is identical to the one at Woolwich. Some time in the 1920's my grandfather*, on his way to work in North Woolwich, saw a dog running up and down the tunnel. The dog was still doing the same when he returned home that night, never going far enough in either direction to reach the stairs. The tunnels slope down to the middle and the ends cannot be seen during the walk. My grandfather rescued the anonymous dog and took it home with him. In later years, he delighted to tell his children of the dog's great intelligence. After a theatrical* pause, and seeing that all eyes were intently fixed* on him, he boldly told them of the astounding exploit. He said he came down one morning and found the dog in the kitchen frying himself a breakfast of eggs and bacon. On hearing this, there came a burst of incredulous

laughter from the children and an equally resounding guffaw from himself at such an outrageous proposition. The moral of the story was: don't hang on to someone's every word, because they may be tempted to lead you "up the garden path". The other lesson from this is* the necessity to press on, and not give up and turn back.

* "grandfather" On its own "grand" is halved

* "theatrical" Based on the outline for "theatre" for convenience

* "fixed, focused" Always insert the first vowel, as these are similar in outline and meaning

* "this is" Separate outlines reflect the pause between the words

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, corresponding to the text on page 101.

101. After your surreal journey along the tunnel, you emerge into Island Gardens where you can sit facing the river and enjoy the real world and fresh air. Looking at the waves reminds you of what was above your head on your subterranean walk, a fact which suddenly becomes even more pressing, as you will be doing it all again in reverse quite soon. There are river walks in both directions, which are more

gritty than pretty, and a blue sky day would help if you prefer your photos of the river to be more inviting and less like cold watery coffee. If you position yourself directly opposite the Old Royal Naval College, you can compare your own photo with the painting of this scene by Antonio Canaletto "Greenwich Hospital from the North Bank of the Thames".

Horizontal lines for writing notes or answers.

102. This is a Thames Clipper catamaran called Hurricane Clipper, painted in holiday mood colours and brightening up a grey day and the murky, cold, choppy waters of the Thames. They really do zip past leaving a wide frothy wake, especially when they turn on a sixpence in order to be facing the right way as they approach the boarding jetty. This vessel is named after something that anticipates and describes its great speed and power, exactly the same reason as the naming of the Cutty Sark – an act of faith, confidence and expectation*, before the ship ever entered the water on its first

launch. Even when stationary, the name lets prospective travellers know what to expect of its performance. However, I doubt if a sea-going* ship named after a storm (as several of these clippers are) would inspire the confidence of its sailors, unless they and the ship's owner were of a defiant disposition.

* "expectation" There is also an Optional contraction "expec"

* "sea-going" Does not use the short form "go", therefore has the full diphone

103. We are now back on the south side of the Thames, in front of the Old Royal Naval College buildings, looking eastwards down the river. At low tide there is both sand and shingle. Wide stone steps lead down at intervals and as you walk along the shore, your eyes are focussed* on the stones, to see if anything of interest has washed up***. Fragments of dressed stone and wave-worn rounded red brick lie scattered amongst the pebbles, conjuring images of Tudor houses or Roman buildings of long ago. Although the river in the photo appears clean and blue, it is actually a murky brownish grey from the silt that the river carries, and is not at all inviting, or even hygienic, for paddling. The green on the embankment* wall indicates the level at high tide.

* "focussed" "fixed" Always insert the first vowel, as these are similar in outline and meaning

*** Please note that the foreshore and anything on it may not be disturbed or removed without a permit from Port of London Authority <https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Thames-foreshore-permits> ("While you may visit the foreshore, you may not search the tidal Thames foreshore from Teddington to the Thames Barrier - in any way for any reason. This includes all searching, metal detecting, 'beachcombing', scraping and digging.")

* "embankment" Optional contraction

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper.

104. Here is another of the twelve Thames Clipper high speed catamarans that ferry tourists and commuters along the Thames, from the London Eye down to Woolwich. This seems to be* our modern-day version of the Cutty Sark, built for speed in order to* capture trade, with a quick turnaround of "cargo", but offering vastly* more comfortable accommodation and calmer

waters to travel on. After watching the boat speed past, and another passing in the opposite direction, I resumed my inspection of the foreshore for interesting debris and photo opportunities.

* Omission phrases "seems (to) be" "in ord(er to)

* "vas(t)ly" omits the T

Horizontal lines for writing.

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper.

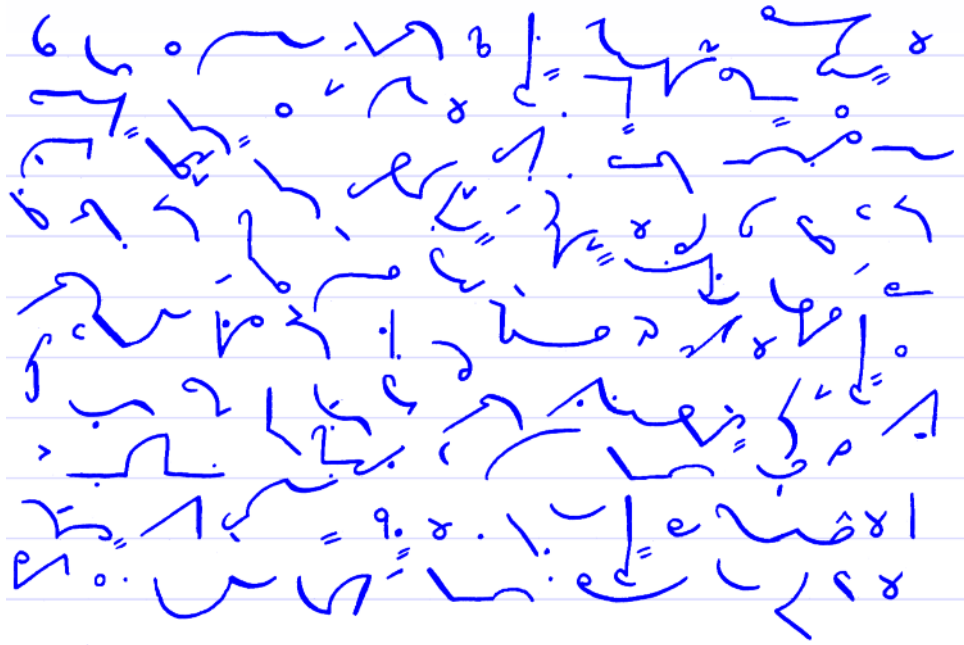
105. A sudden roaring and growling of the water took me by surprise, as a succession of large wakes from the two clippers arrived at the shoreline, having made their way in my direction, completely silently, unseen and unnoticed. The grey soupy water rose up and pounded itself into white foam on the pebbles. The waves could have knocked over any small child standing at the water's edge and it was a stern reminder that the foreshore is not a playground. Having obtained river level photos in all directions, I returned up the

stone steps, staying away from the slippery green edges and going gingerly* up the middle where the sun had baked the stone dry. I was rather glad to be looking down on the river and not level with it. I don't think any of my doughty Greenwich ancestors would have recognised much of the seafaring* spirit in me that day!

* "gingerly" Optional contraction

* "seafaring" The dictionary has this as one outline, but this takes it too far into the line below

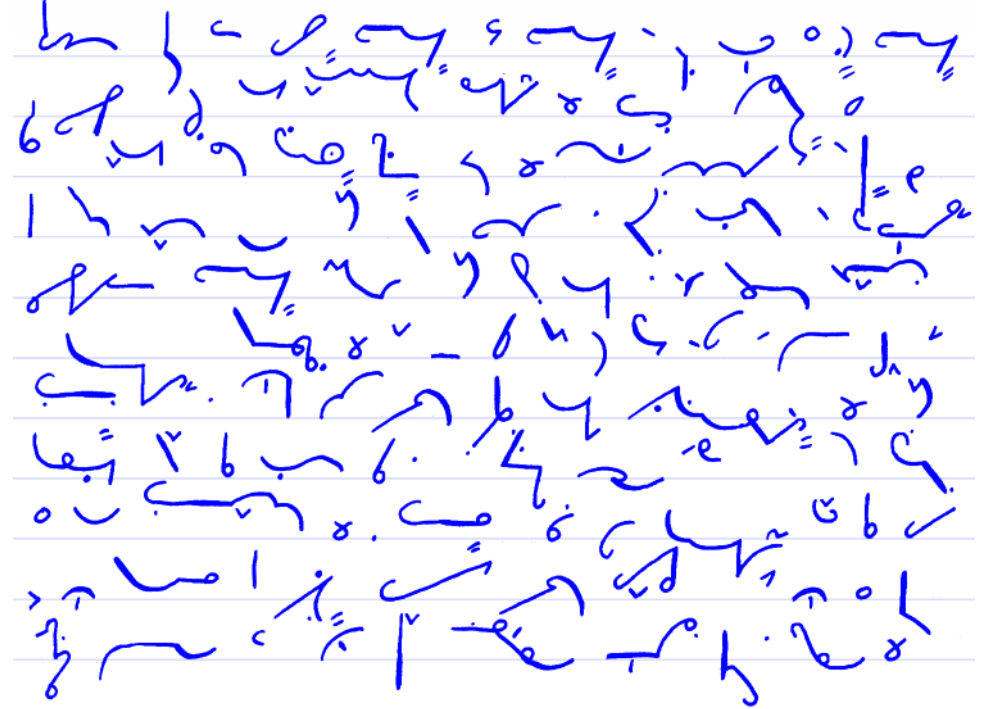
Horizontal lines for writing.



106. This view is looking upriver towards Deptford and eventually Central London. Greenwich Pier is on the left. The Cutty Sark is located behind the pier, wistfully watching the clipper catamarans going past and remembering her trips to China and Australia. She is well pleased with her refurbishment* and looks forward to entertaining visitors and schoolchildren with tales of her 80 years of adventures around the world. Deptford is named from the deep ford over the River Ravensbourne, which was on the route of the Celtic* trackway that later became known as the Roman road Watling* Street. The "P" in Deptford is not pronounced. It started as a

fishing village and became a centre for shipbuilding.

- * "wistfully" Omits the lightly-sounded T
- * "refurbishment" Halved En used for "-ment", keep the En light and short, so that it does not look like "refurbishing"
- * "Celtic" Can also be pronounced "seltic" which is sometimes used for modern items e.g. football teams. Archaeology generally uses "keltic" and it is occasionally spelled with a letter K
- * "Watling" Outline reflects derivation. The words "wattle, wattling" etc" have T with L hook"



107. At one time* it was called West Greenwich, with the Greenwich of today known as East Greenwich, but this usage ceased in the 19th century. Queen Elizabeth I knighted Sir Francis Drake here. My own memory of Deptford is that it appeared to my young eyes to be merely a shabby neighbour of glorious historical Greenwich, and I felt I was stepping into an old postcard* of grimy Victorian backstreets. I could just about see over the wall and look down on the Quaggy, a muddy little river discharging* into the Ravensbourne. I was fascinated by its name, which is an adjective meaning soft

or flabby, as in quagmire*. The Quaggy's silt will eventually find its way to the mud banks at Erith where the river widens and the mud is deep and treacherous looking, with low tide exposing gullies deeper than a person. (2344 words)

- * "at one time" Halving to represent the T of "time"
- * "postcard" Omits the lightly-sounded T
- * "discharging" Optional contraction
- * "quagmire" This can also be pronounced "kwog-"