

Rev John Greenly (1778 – 1862), Battle of Trafalgar and Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson (1805) A letter from John, to his father William Greenly in Hereford, a week after the battle Oct 28 1805

"I die happy, never was there so grand a day for England, nor Englishmen behaved better". Admiral Lord Nelson – final words.

Letter no.2 was written a week following the battle. John Greenly describes Nelson's last words "I die happy ..." The elation of the first letter is gone; Nelson is dead and severe gales has destroyed the great prizes that they had fought so hard for.

<p><i>copy no 2</i> <i>of Cape St Mary's Oct 28th 1805.</i></p> <p>Dear Father.</p> <p>In my last to you, I told you a few of the Ships taken, but I have now to tell you of 21 sail of the line, most of them burnt & destroyed, as we have had complete gale of wind since the action. I hope all our ships are safe, many of them are totally dismantled - we ourselves are in a terrible state, but owing to the exertions of the Ship's Company, we are in a state to keep the sea. Two Spanish three deckers burnt, & four Admirals taken. We have bought the Victory dearly, as our brave Commander died of his wounds the night of the action - his dying words were: - "I die happy, never was there so grand a day for England, nor Englishmen behaved better". There has been dreadful slaughter on board the "Revenge" and "Victory", "Bellisle", "Tonnant" & "Royal Sovereign".</p> <p>I was wounded in twenty places by splinters of shot that came close to me, but mere scratches; it's rather an unusual thing for a Chaplain to be wounded in action, but mine were so slight that I would not be put in the list of wounded. Our ship is full of French & Spanish which we took out of the Prizes - Capt Moorsom was complimented by the Admiral the the evening of the action & sent to enquire if he was well, & to lead the English down again to destroy the enemy - If the wind had not come on</p>	<p>Off Cape St. Mary's Oct 28th 1805</p> <p>Dear Father</p> <p>In my last to you, I told you a few of the Ships taken, but I have now to tell you of 21 sail of the line, most of them burnt & destroyed, as we have had complete gale of wind since the action. I hope all our ships are safe, many of them are totally dismantled - we ourselves are in a terrible state, but owing to the exertions of the Ship's Company, we are in a state to keep to sea. Two Spanish three deckers burnt, & four Admirals taken. We have bought the Victory dearly, as our brave Commander died of his wounds the night of the action - his dying words were "I die happy, never was there so grand a day for England, nor Englishmen behaved better". There has been dreadful slaughter on board the "Revenge" and "Victory", "Bellisle", "Tonnant" & "Royal Sovereign".</p> <p>I was wounded in twenty places by splinters of shot that came close to me, but mere scratches; its rather an unusual thing for a Chaplain to be wounded in action, but mine were so slight that I would not be put in the list of wounded. Our ship is full of French & Spanish which we took out of the Prizes - Captain Moorsom was complimented by the Admiral the evening of the action & sent to enquire if he was well & to lead the English down again to destroy the enemy - If the wind had not come on ..</p> <p style="text-align: right;">over</p>
<p>to a furious gale, we had not left a French or Spanish ship in existence; so it is we have destroyed 21 sail for certain - all very large ships; the gale still continues but we are all clear of danger; the loss of prize money will be great, as had the wind permitted us to have brought the ships home I should have had £500 - but now not £20, though we are glad to have lowered their pride.</p> <p>We are all in good spirits, though no sleep for three nights. Poor Lord Nelson's body will will be brought home - the people of England have got as fine a man, old Cuddy Collingwood who lead us down like a lion & is close to our ship now. I have no time for more.</p> <p>Yours affectionately J. Greenly</p> <p>N.B. The Spanish & French must have lost more than 6000 men.</p>	<p>.. to a furious gale, we had not left a French or Spanish ship in existence: as it is we have but destroyed 21 sail for certain - all very large ships: the gale still continues but is are all clear of danger: the loss of prize money will be great, as had the wind permitted us to have brought the ships home I should have had £500 - but now not £20, though we are glad to have lowered their pride.</p> <p>We are all in good spirits, though no sleep for three nights. Poor Lord Nelson's body will be brought home - the people of England have got as fine a man, old Cuddy Collingwood who lead us down like a Lion & is close to our ship now. I have no time for more.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yours affectionately J. Greenly</p> <p>N.B. The Spanish & French must have lost more than 6000 men.</p>