

October Plenty

At the end of last month, we went to the October Plenty celebration which is held every year in Borough Market in London. This market is a hub for traders in artisan foods. It began in the year 1014, located at the south end of the original London Bridge and, despite changing fortunes, continues to this day. It is a food connoisseurs haven*, situated immediately underneath the railway* track and the old arches close by London Bridge Station. This is not where you go for a cheap snack of cardboard bread, soggy chips or lumpy burgers* with unknown ingredients. It is a place for those who know what they like and intend to eat it with supreme and knowledgeable* enjoyment in every aroma, fragrance and tang, every flavour, savour and taste, every nibble, slurp or bite, and every

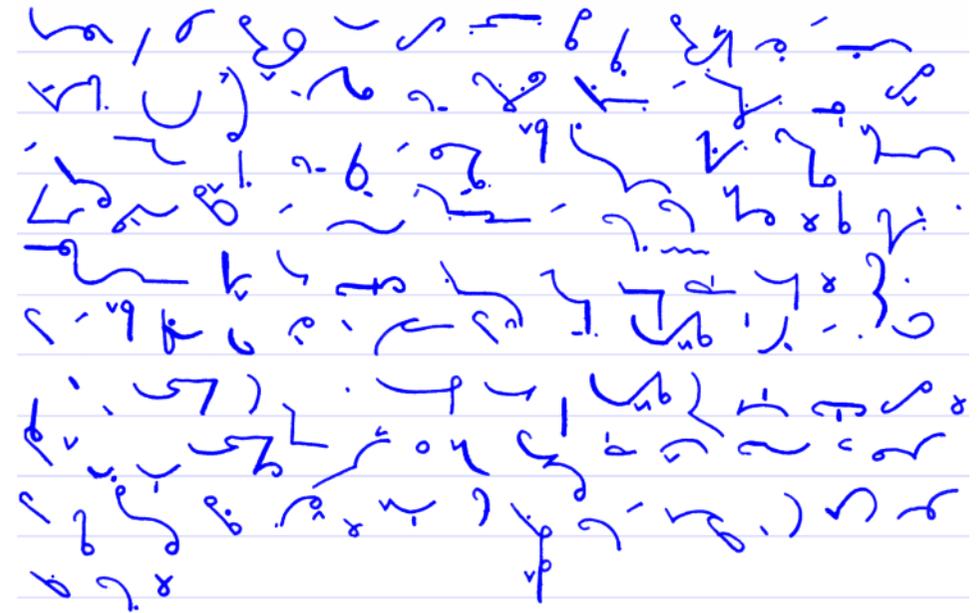
crumb and fragment from the wrappers and containers.

* "haven" Insert vowel, clearly thick, so it is not misread as "heaven"

* "railway" The R intersection stands for "railway" so if the text said "rail" that would need a full outline

* "burgers" This is in the shorthand dictionary under "burghers" from which it is derived, via the German spelling

* "knowledgeable" Always insert the diphthong in "enjoyable" to differentiate. Although not strict theory to put vowel signs in contractions, it would be acceptable to insert the dash vowel in "knowledgeable" if felt necessary



October Plenty

For the most part, each stall specialises in one category, such as cheese, speciality* meats and game, poultry, fish, oysters, olives, fruit, preserves, bakery and patisserie goods, wines and beers, coffee, tea, fruit juices and smoothies, cider, farm and dairy products, ice cream, chocolate, honey, spices, and many organic and "free from" items. It is truly* a gastronomic delight for the gourmand, epicure and foodie to get stuck into. There was an apple and cider tasting* event, lots* of local apple varieties on show and an information display, all to encourage us to take an interest in the different varieties, especially home grown ones. I need no encouragement really as I have over the years stocked my garden with small apple trees as far as space allows. I know they are pesticide free and, I am pleased to say, also mostly* pest free.

* "speciality" Ensure to put in the diphone, which here is placed before the Ish stroke as there is no room after. This is pronounced "speshi-A-lity" with the emphasis on the A. The alternative word and pronunciation "specialty" has no diphone and has the emphasis on the first syllable. Accented vowels can be indicated if necessary by placing a small cross against the vowel sign.

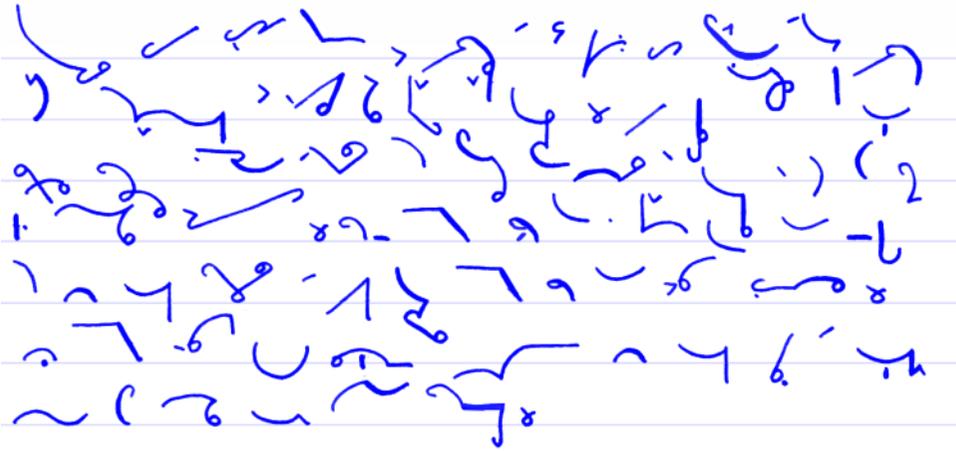
* "truly" and "utterly" Helpful to insert vowels in these as they are similar in outline and meaning

* "tasting" Insert the vowel, clearly thick, so it is not misread as "testing"

* "lots" and "masses" Always insert the vowel

* "mostly" Omits the lightly-sounded T

* Omission phrase "for the mos(t) part"



October Plenty

Afterwards we wandered back to the riverside and with the chilly wind blowing off* the river I was reminded of the origins of this type of festival. Our distant ancestors had no supermarkets, freezers, canning operations or overseas imports of foods, to see them through the dead months of winter. Fruit can be stored for a time, if in good condition, or made into preserves, and root vegetables can be

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stored in soil clamps. Meat can be salted, fish smoked, milk made into cheese, and no doubt many other methods now long forgotten.

* "off" It is generally helpful to insert the vowel in "off" to distinguish from "for" but here useful to prevent misreading as "blowing over the river"



October Plenty

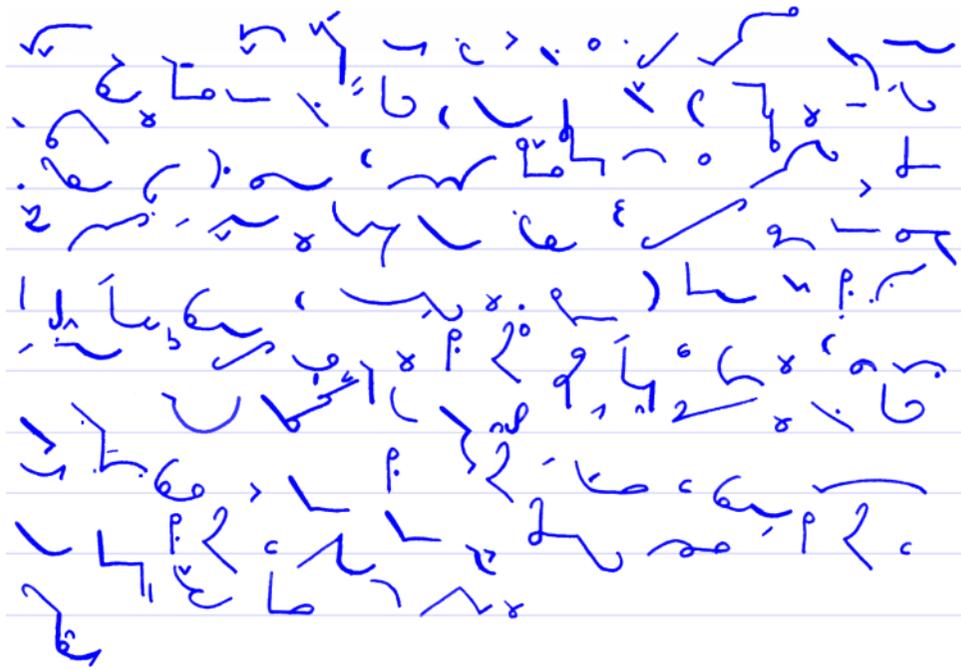
It is quite difficult for us to get into that frame of mind*, where everything must be* produced locally and then stored up for many months to come, with failure to do so resulting in starvation. However, we are still actually doing this in one small way, although not through necessity. This is normal Christmas behaviour, stowing away the food and treats, so that we can play at having our own little winter siege, when we are self-contained, self-sufficient and self-satisfied with our over-endowed store

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cupboards. October plenty reappears as December plenty, a time to stop work for a while, and appreciate and consume all the goodies that we have worked for and can now enjoy in a more leisurely way, at least* for a few days. (759 words)

* Omission phrases "frame (of) mind" "mus(t) be"

* "At least" and "at last" Always insert the vowels



Stay Sharp

I like to listen to talks on my Ipod*, in the comfort of the bed, as a way to relax before going to sleep. I can pay attention without being distracted by other activities. Quite often, the person will say something that immediately strikes me as relevant to the task of shorthand learning and writing. Fortunately, being conversant with that wonderful system, I can scribble it down and continue listening without interruption. The speaker was talking about staying alert and acting on what one knows to do. "Stay sharp" he said and continued with his theme. That seemed to me* to be the epitome of efficient behaviour for both the student and the shorthand writer*. Pay attention in the lessons, to the book, stay sharp and focused* when listening to matter being dictated, stay sharp when

reading back to avoid transcription mistakes*, and stay sharp when producing the final text or report.

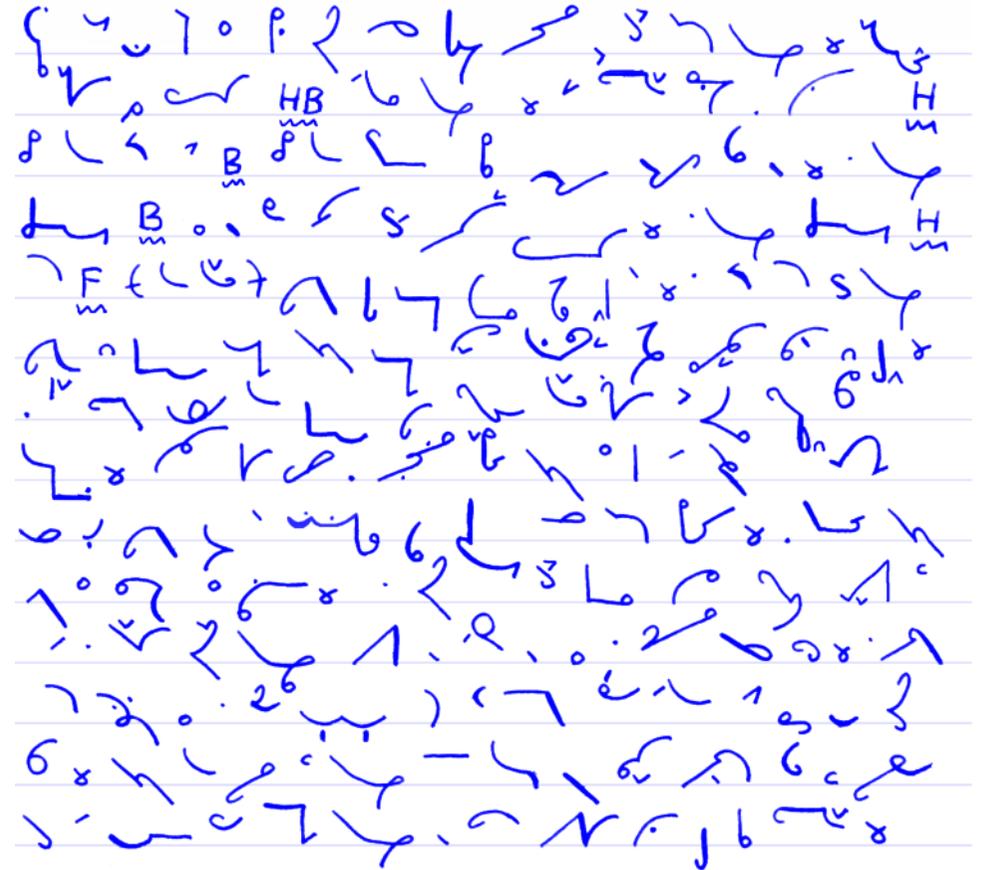
*"Ipod" and "Ipad" Always insert the second vowel

* "to me" and "of him" Helpful to always insert the vowel when "me" or "him" is out of position in a phrase

* Omission phrase "short(hand) writer"

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

* "mistakes" Omits the T sound



Stay Sharp

That's not the end of it, as "stay sharp" most definitely refers to the point of your pencil. I have found the ideal is the normal HB* office pencil. On the graphite scale, the letter H stands for Hard, and the B stands for Black, as it is midway between those two. A pencil designated B is too soft and will blunt really quickly. A pencil designated H or F (for Fine) will be difficult to get thicks and thins out of. A hard or blunt pencil will have you digging into the paper to get the line variations, and this will* seriously slow you down. The tight grip necessary for digging will prevent fine control of the shapes produced, as well as fatigue. Lastly* it will waste the reverse side of the paper as it, and possibly also the next sheet, will be full of indentations, thus doubling the cost of your stationery.

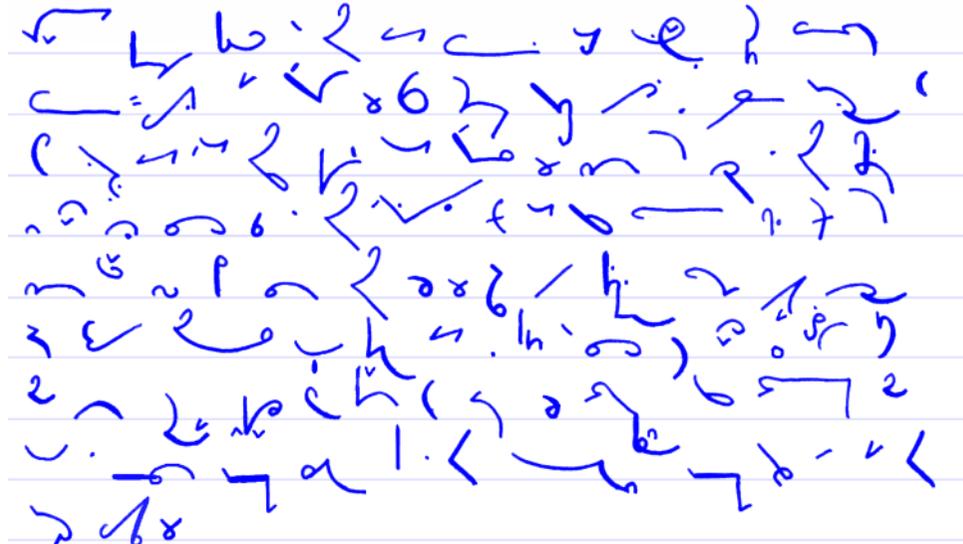
The back of the paper should be as smooth as silk. A sharp point takes less pressure to write with and a pile of sharp pencils, ready to swap to, is a shorthand writer's* best friend. A rubber or eraser is a shorthand no-no, so that can be sawn off and the second end sharpened as well. Paper for use with pencil can afford to be slightly rougher than when using pen and ink, in order to* get the pencil to more readily lay down its graphite.

* "HB" Alphabet letters are general written in lower case, but here it seems more legible to use capitals

* "this will " Downward L in order to join the phrase

* "lastly" Omits the lightly-sounded T

* Omission phrases "short(hand) writer's" "in ord(er to)"



Stay Sharp

I like the dictionary definition of sharp: quick, intelligent, incisive, astute, clever, quick-witted, on the ball. This is so much* better than running the risk of earning that other epithet "Not the sharpest tool in the box*." You may or may not be a sharp dresser, you might meet someone who is a sharp operator (not the best character trait*) or you may find you have said some sharp words. All these are detracting from the real meaning of the word that we shorthanders* know it should have: the attitude of someone whose mind is constantly on their shorthand improvement, seeing outlines every time they hear words, and producing fast and correct shorthand in

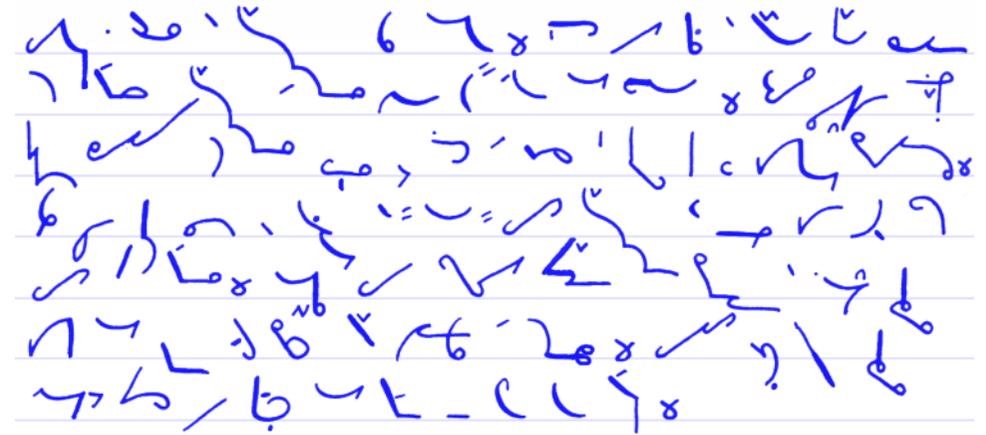
an exam to get the certificate, at a job interview to get the position, and on the job to earn the wages. (529 words)

* "so much" Includes the M stroke in order to join the phrase

* "box" "bags" "packs" "pockets" Helpful to insert the vowels in these

* "trait" Also pronounced "tray"

* "shorthanders" The D sound is included in the doubling, so do not thicken. A thickened N would signify a doubled Ing = ang-ger or ang-ker

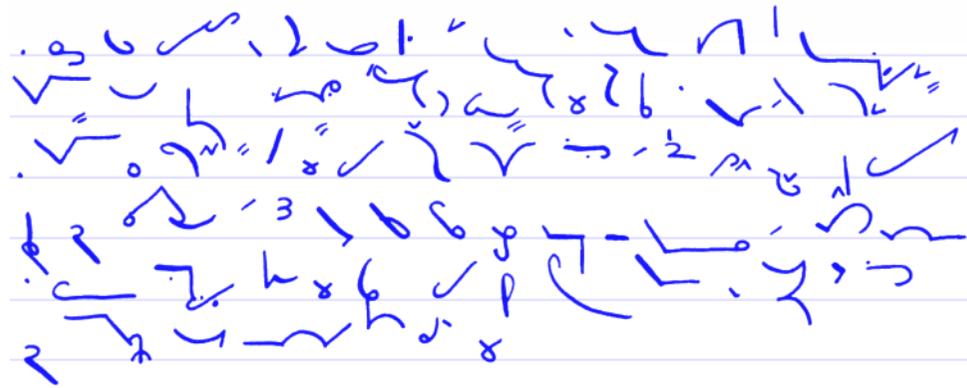


Fireworks 2017

We have had an abundance of fireworks this November. Gone are the days of buying tiny single or boxed fireworks and letting them off in the garden. That was hugely exciting at the time, as we were so close to the action, and almost on top of it when holding the sparklers. Those who still do so seem to favour the all-in-one firework that gives the whole show from

one large box. Nowadays, we prefer the gigantic spectacle of communal displays held in the big open spaces by local authorities and organisations. We went to three public displays and enjoyed much more than* our donation in the bucket could ever have bought.

* Omission phrase "much m(ore tha)n"

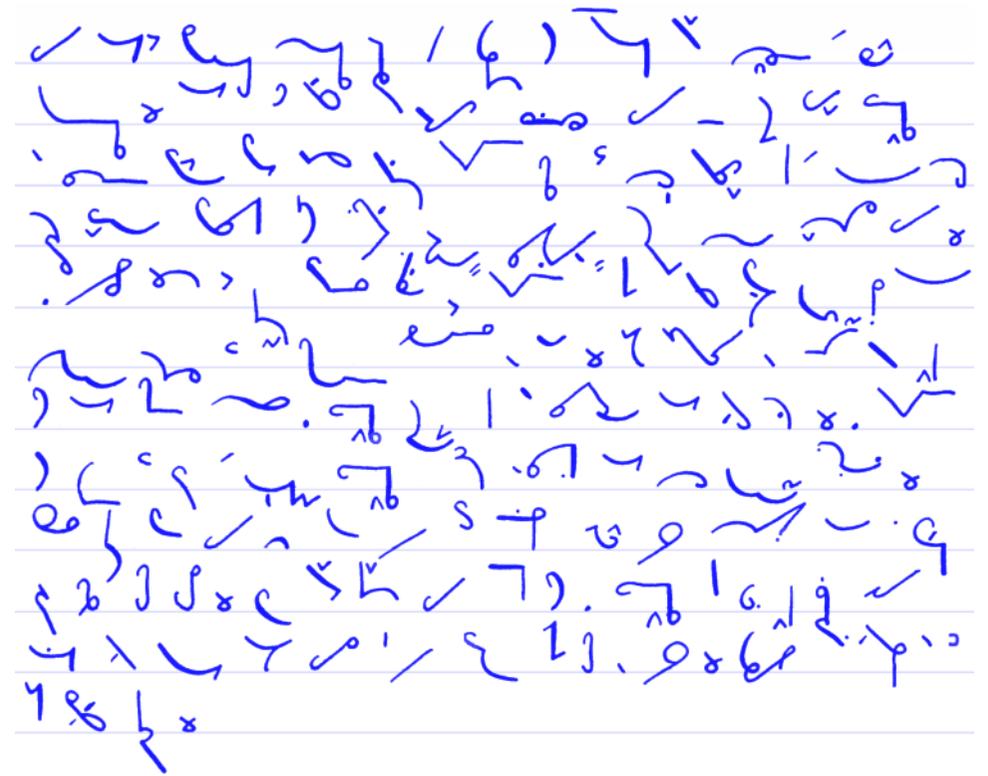


Fireworks 2017

The second event we went to was the next day on the fifth of November, held at Victoria Park in Tower Hamlets*, north east London. Although it is a built up area, the park is very large. We arrived early again and walked round to find out where the display would be happening, and what would be the best place to stand to get

good pictures, and also to make a quick get-away at the end. This time we stood further back, to ensure all the action would be captured in the camera shots.

* "Hamlets" Note the vowel goes to the left of the Tick Hay, to ensure it is clearly at one end of the stroke and not in the middle

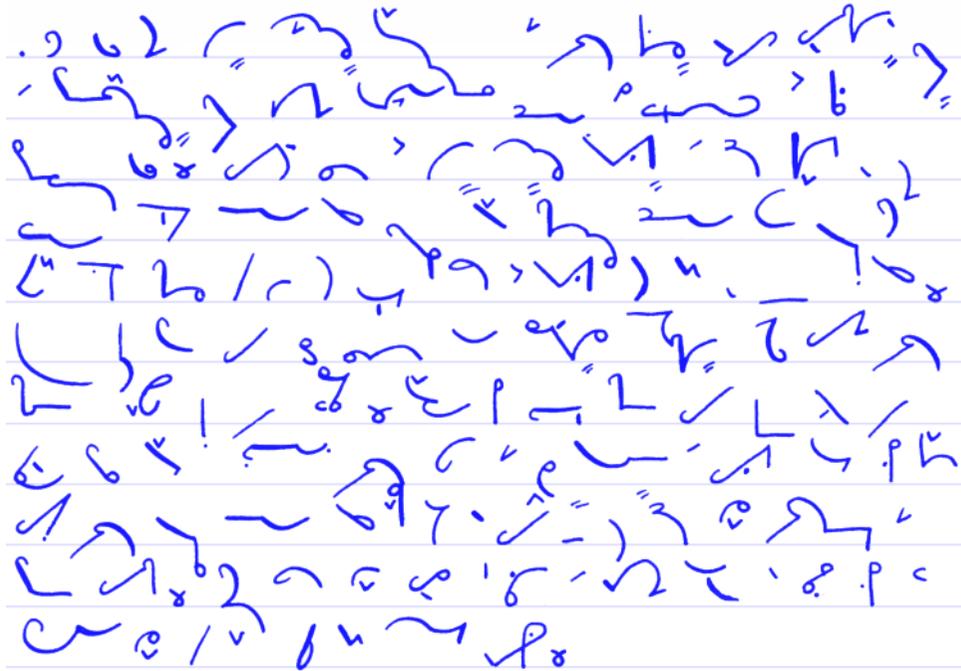


Fireworks 2017

We enjoyed seventeen minutes of display, which this time was accompanied by music and sound effects. In the short pauses between segments, we could* see the white clouds of smoke blowing over the almost bare park trees, with the moon behind it and intermittent airplanes gliding overhead on their approach to London Heathrow Airport many miles away. The residents of some of the tower blocks adjacent to the park had the best overall view, sitting in their living rooms, with drink and snacks to hand. I think I prefer to actually be out there in the dark amongst the crowds, seeing it all happening in the open air. The park was

thick with people and no doubt the crowds were solid in the main viewing arena. As soon as it was over, we made for our planned exit, and found ourselves marching in a flood of people towards the train station. However, by the time we got there, the crowds had thinned out considerably, and we ended up being the only ones on our platform and had the train to ourselves. This was the opposite of what I had supposed it would be.

* "we could" Not phrased, so that it is not misread as "we can". Similarly "you could" "I could" are not phrased.



Fireworks 2017

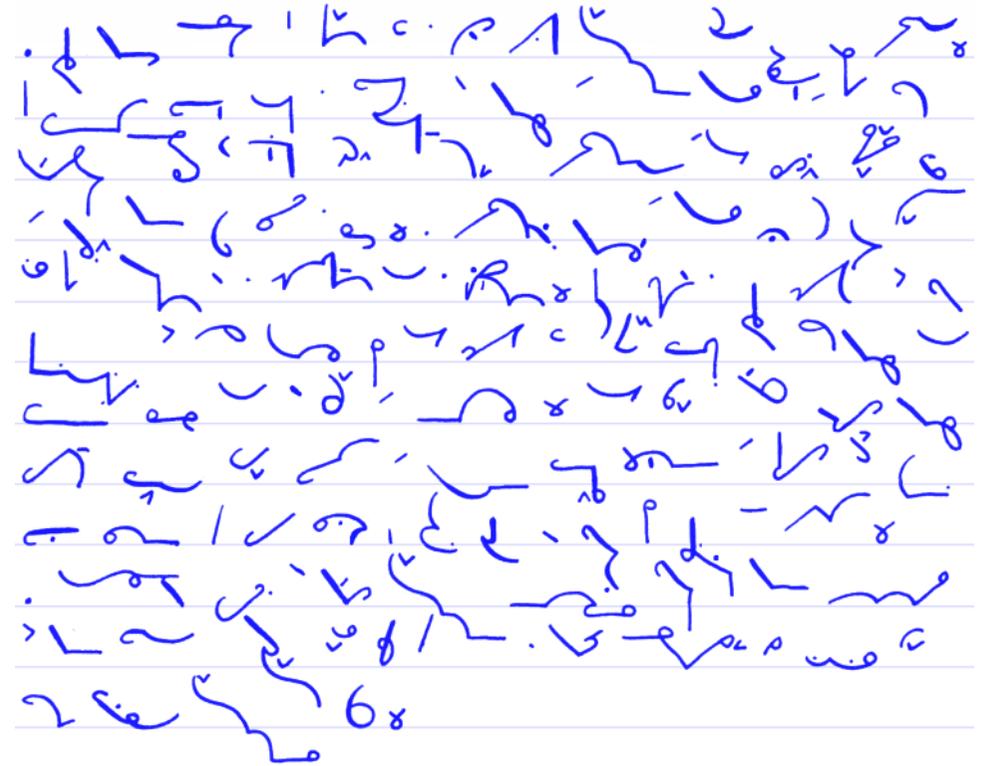
The third event was the Lord Mayor's fireworks on the River Thames between Waterloo Bridge and Blackfriars Bridge, held the following weekend, as the culmination of the day's spectacular events. We saw some of the Lord Mayor's Parade and were delighted to see the golden coach going past, preceded by drummers walking along beating their giant kettle drums, which let us know* the star of the parade was about to come past. After it was over, we spent some time in St Paul's Cathedral and then watched the river traffic whilst eating our sandwiches. Finally, as it grew dark, we took up our chosen place by the granite riverside wall on the South Bank and

waited for the set time, watching river boats going past, until all we could* see were lights reflected on the black water. There were* more light wands on sale and also the novelty of hats set with flashing lights, which I just about managed to resist.

* "let us know" Downward L in order to join the phrase

*Omission phrase "there (w)ere"

* "we could" Not phrased, so that it is not misread as "we can". Similarly "you could" "I could" are not phrased

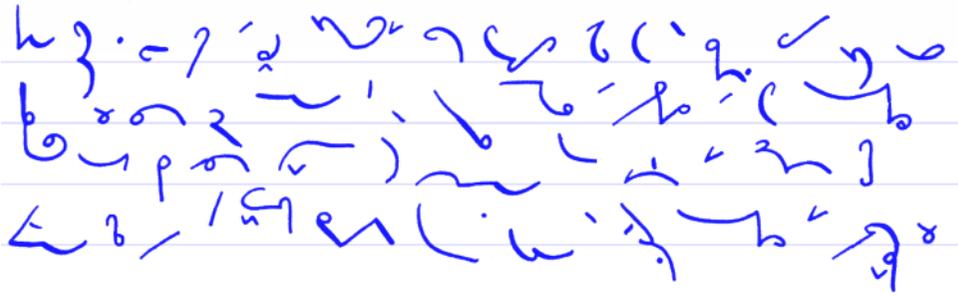


Fireworks 2017

The display began exactly on time, with a lone red firework ascending to let us know* to start recording. It quickly grew into a crescendo of bursts and bangs, and very forceful explosions that echoed around the area, reflecting off the surrounding high rise buildings and bouncing back within half a second. The reverberating booms and bangs made us feel like ants at the bottom of an oil drum in a hailstorm. It was truly a display worthy of the principal dignitary of the most famous city in the world, with giant glittering starbursts in quick succession, in all sizes and colours. In the

slight pauses between bursts, we saw glowing white, yellow and pink clouds of smoke, and at one point thick grey smoke, which we smelled but thankfully did not have to breathe as it dissipated quite rapidly. The unmistakable whiff of burnt firework chemicals brought back memories of the back garden bonfire nights, just as much a part of the experience as the intense light from the blazing fireworks themselves.

* "let us know" Downward L in order to join the phrase

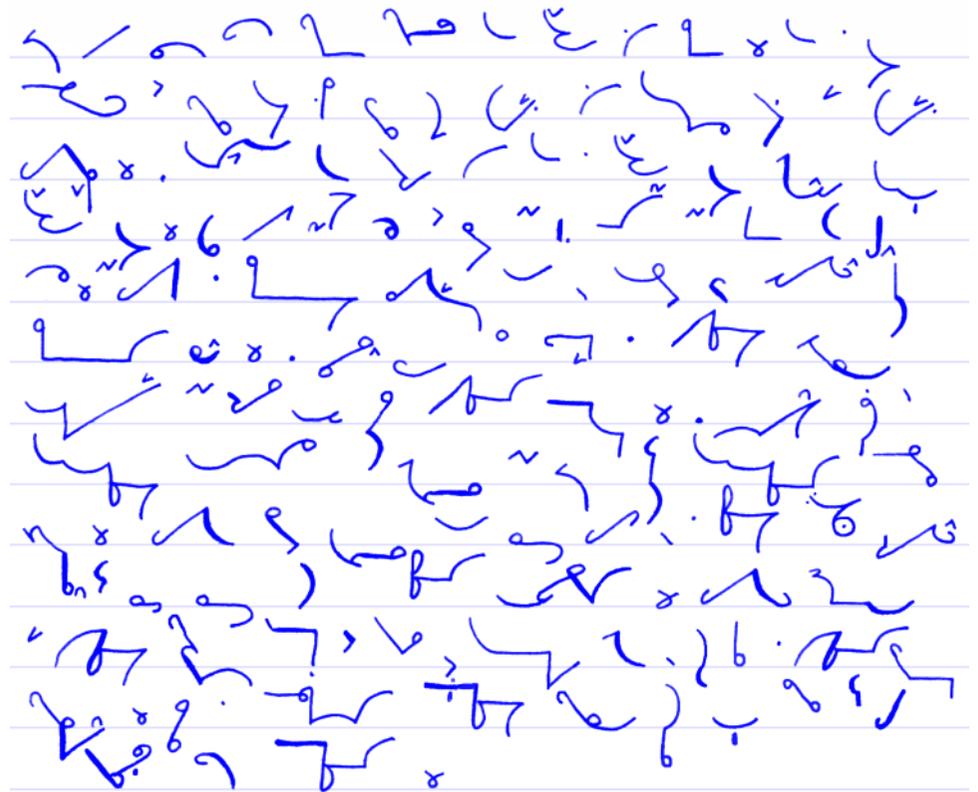


Fireworks 2017

At the end there was a great cheer and shouts of appreciation from everyone, and then they all streamed away to their next destinations. Some would be going on to pubs, cafés and restaurants, and other

entertainments in the city, and some like us making for home on the warm train, chugging towards our much quieter suburb, after an evening of open air entertainment on the riverside. (1083 words)

Horizontal lines for writing practice.



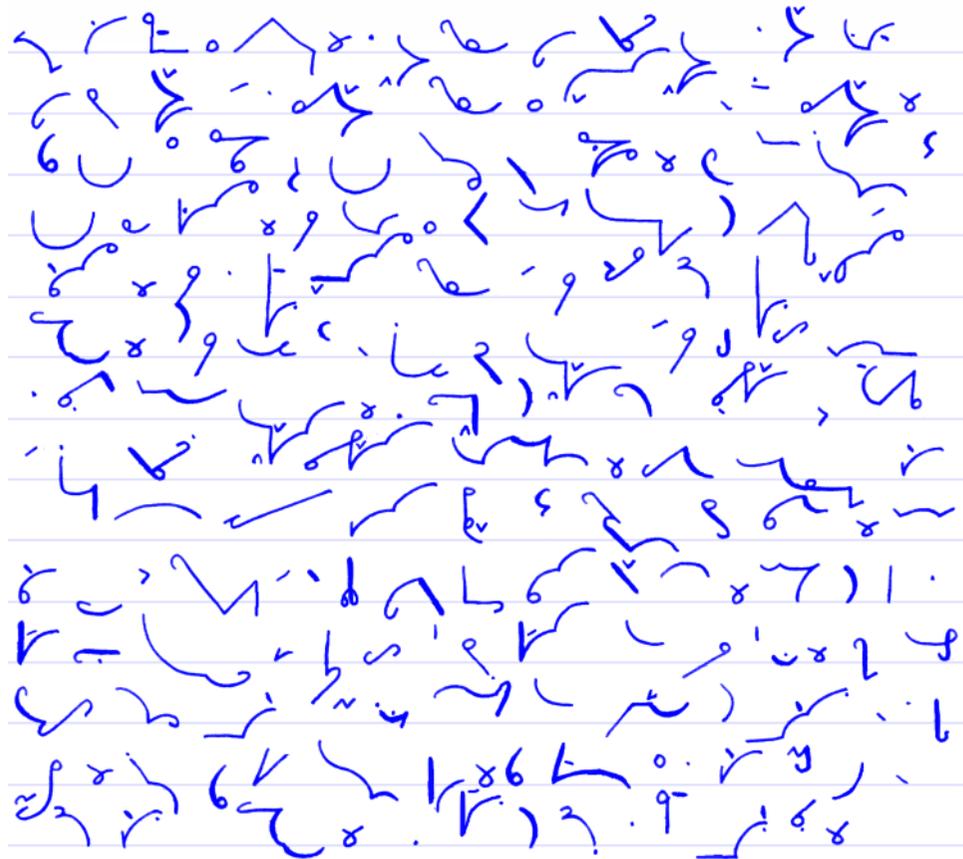
Downward L 3

Here are some more practice paragraphs for final L stroke. For a full explanation of the principles for each set, please see the Theory L Forms* page on the theory website. The following have upward L for a final vowel and downward if no final vowel. These are the actual words of the speech and I did actually take them down myself. We had a structural surveyor in to inspect the building and we found it was structurally sound. The house owner has created an artistical and pleasing interior and I always knew he was artistically gifted. The mural consisted of fantastical animals and figures, and I hear that it was

fantastically expensive to produce. We have subjected the figures in section one to a statistical analysis, but we found that the second section was statistically unusable. We have been working on the logistical problem of getting all the parts to the factory, and have to say that it is a logistically complicated procedure. He is an extremely egotistical person, so it is no surprise that he generally behaves very egotistically.

* www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/theory-14-L-forms.htm

Horizontal lines for writing practice.



Downward L 3

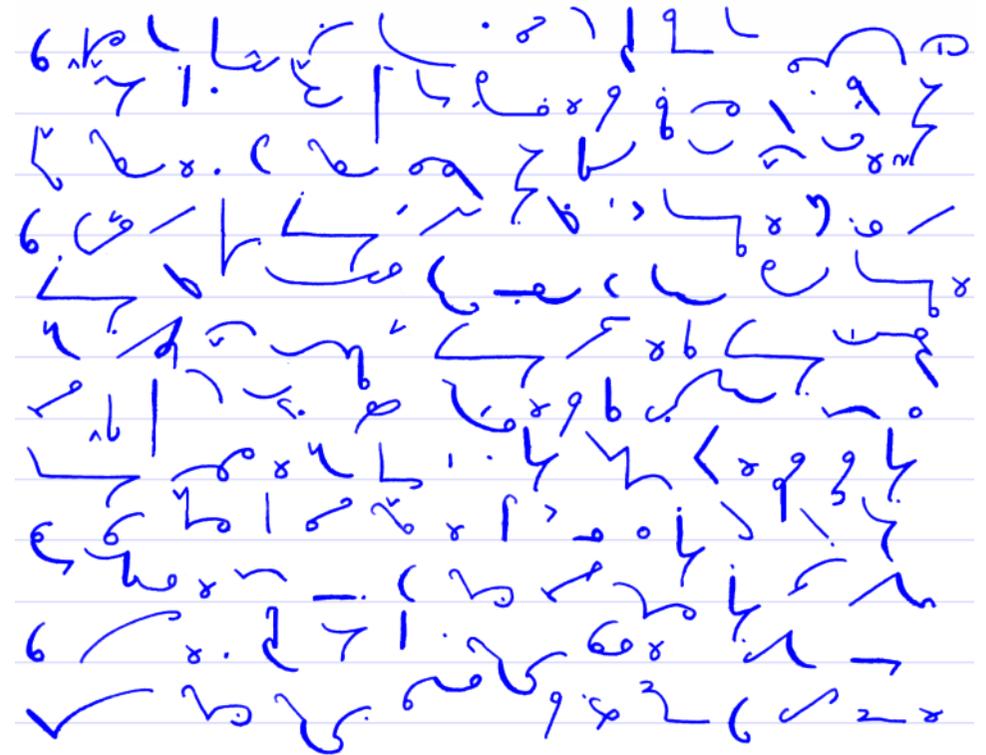
Here the L stroke is repeated. A foul person will behave fouly, a vile fellow will speak vilely and a servile person is likely to act servilely. This fish has scales but that fish appears to be scaleless. However I can confirm that the fish is not tailless. He felt his job in the factory was repetitive and soulless. He was a totally* quileless person and he always wore totally* styleless clothing. He knew that to continue would be futile, and he did not want to make a habit* of acting futilely. The crowd was very hostile to the authorities, and continued behaving hostilely for a long time*. We have investigated the whole matter and we are wholly satisfied that the problem has been solved. I am the sole owner of the property and all decisions will

be taken solely by me. Not only was it a dull grey afternoon but the teacher went on speaking dully for hours on end. During the incident everyone remained cool and I commend the manager for reacting so coolly to a difficult situation. Compare these which are formed differently. This jumper has a hole and I do not wish to wear holey clothing. The dolly was wearing a straw coolie hat.

* "totally" Note that "total" uses L Hook on the second T

* "habit" and "hobby" Insert the first vowel as they are similar in outline in meaning

* Omission phrase "for (a) long time"



Downward L 3

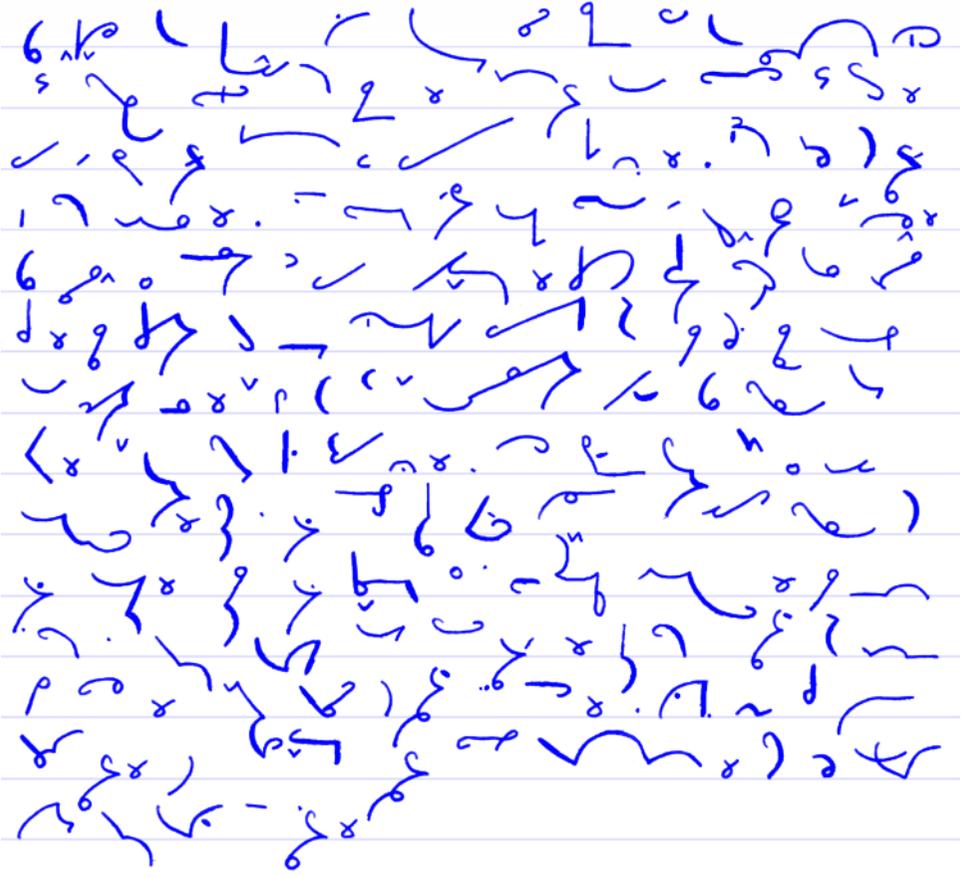
These outlines have downward L after a halved* or doubled* stroke, for similar motion, and only add a final dot for the suffix. He considers himself to be a sober intellectual type of person. The other person seems to be intellectually deficient in my opinion. These theories are totally conjectural and are not based on all the facts. All their comments are conjecturally based, in other words they have been guessing without having sufficient facts. I have registered my name and address* on the electoral record. It is electorally unacceptable to use out of date or incomplete lists of voters. He does weightlifting to improve his pectoral muscles. I have taken on an additional part-time job. He said he would additionally

let us have* the sale items at half price. Delivery of the goods is conditional upon paying for them in advance. I am giving them permission to use the rooms conditionally and will review this later on. The driver only had a provisional licence. We have given the builder permission provisionally, as long as he completes the work within one week.

* "halved" "doubled" Ensure these are clearly half length, as "half or double stroke" would also make sense

* Omission phrase "name (and) address"

* "let us have" Downward L in order to join the phrase

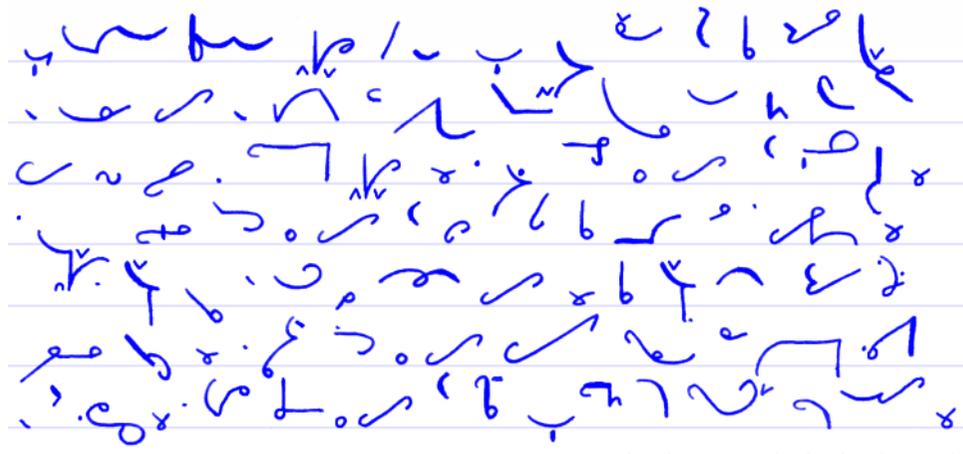


Downward L 3

These outlines have downward L after the halved* stroke in order to* have similar motion with the preceding curve or hook. I am completely in agreement with the plan. We should speak boldly on the matter* when we are at the meeting. The war of words was bloodless but very intense. The cat crept softly into the garden and pounced swiftly on the mouse. This house is exactly what we require. It is also adequately furnished for us to use at once. He has deservedly been given the monetary award, although he says he is not interested in worldly goods. I told them that I unreservedly recommend this person for the job. I vividly remember the day that we met. The man spoke fervidly about his new invention. There was a fatal accident* at this junction last week* and one person was fatally injured. He was fitly described as a great scientist and inventor* . He came from a poor village in the northern foothills. It was very thoughtless of them to

make such remarks. I hope they will not behave so thoughtlessly again. The lady made the dance look absolutely effortless. She glided effortlessly across the ballroom. Their words unfortunately* left the poor fellow quite comfortless.

- * "halved" Ensure clearly half length, as "half stroke" would also make sense
- * Omission phrases "in ord(er to)" "on (the) matter" "las(t w)eeek"
- * "accident" Ensure the K is straight, and the N of "incident" well curved, to prevent misreading, and helpful to also insert the first vowel
- * "inventor" Keep the hook clear, and insert the O vowel in "innovator" as these are similar in outline and meaning
- * "unfortunately" Optional contraction



Downward L 3

Note the following distinguishing outlines which need no vowel sign although it is always advisable to insert one to help with reading back, if there is* any doubt over whether you have used the correct outline. A fatal accident* is one that causes death. A futile course of action is one that will not achieve its goal and is a waste of time*. A vital piece of information is the most important* one. It is vitaly important that we assess the risks beforehand*. A thoughtless action is one where the person has not looked ahead to all the consequences. A thankless task is one that draws no gratitude or appreciation from anyone. The outline uses the short form.

* "if there is" Doubling is used for "if" but never for "for"

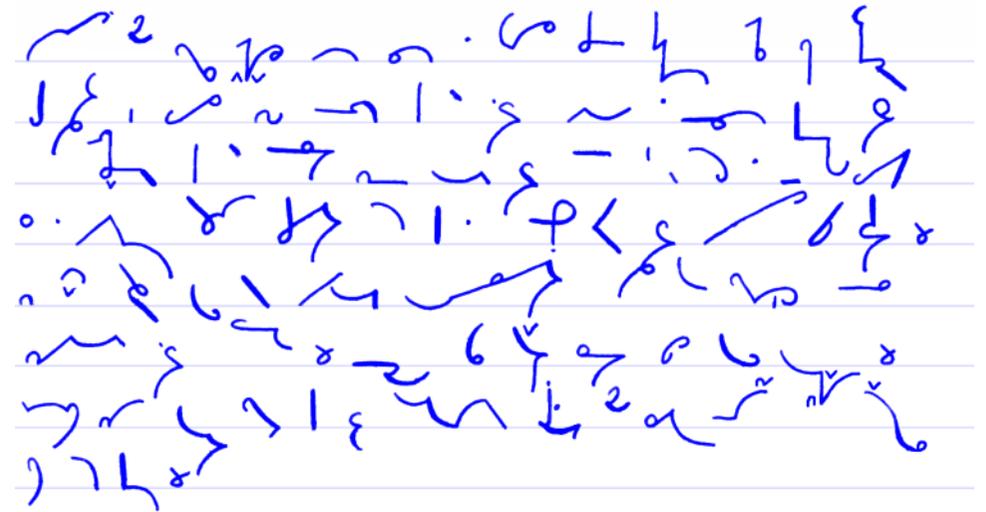
* "accident" Ensure the K is straight, and the N of "incident" well curved, to prevent misreading, and helpful to also insert the first vowel

* Omission phrases "was(te of) time" "mos(t) important"

* "beforehand" Optional contraction

See www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-5-care-e-n.htm "fatal futile vital"

See www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/distinguishing-outlines-6-care-o-z.htm "thankless thoughtless"



Downward L 3

Learning shorthand principles and outlines may seem a thankless task at the time, and it is true that it cannot be done thoughtlessly, but once you have covered it all completely, written an exam dictation swiftly and transcribed it all exactly, you can now boldly go on to earn a good wage as a reporter, absolutely deservedly, or do an existing job effortlessly rather than just adequately. You might possibly even be

recommended unreservedly for promotion because you are now completely qualified. Gaining this vital skill will not have been futile. I am sure you will vividly remember the day when that envelope containing the shorthand certificate actually arrives through your door. (1007 words)

* "transcribed" Omits the second R so that it does not look like "described"