



www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-lessons.org.uk

www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-reading.org.uk

www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk

Images & Text © Beryl L Pratt

Blogs - 2012 - September

2 Traditional British Seaside

6 **Pleasure Piers**

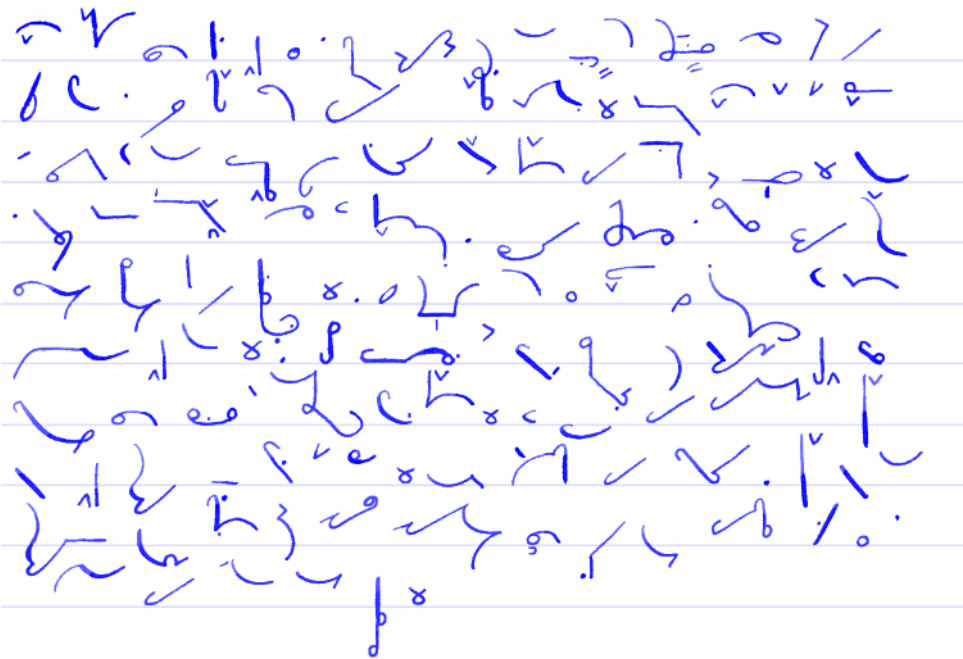
10 Pond Depot Report

14 Wet And Windy

15 Crossness Pumping Station

All material is copyright Beryl L Pratt and may not be republished, or reposted online, in any form. This file is intended for non-commercial personal study use only. The only permitted download site for this file is <https://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-reading.org.uk>

PDF Date: 15 December 2024

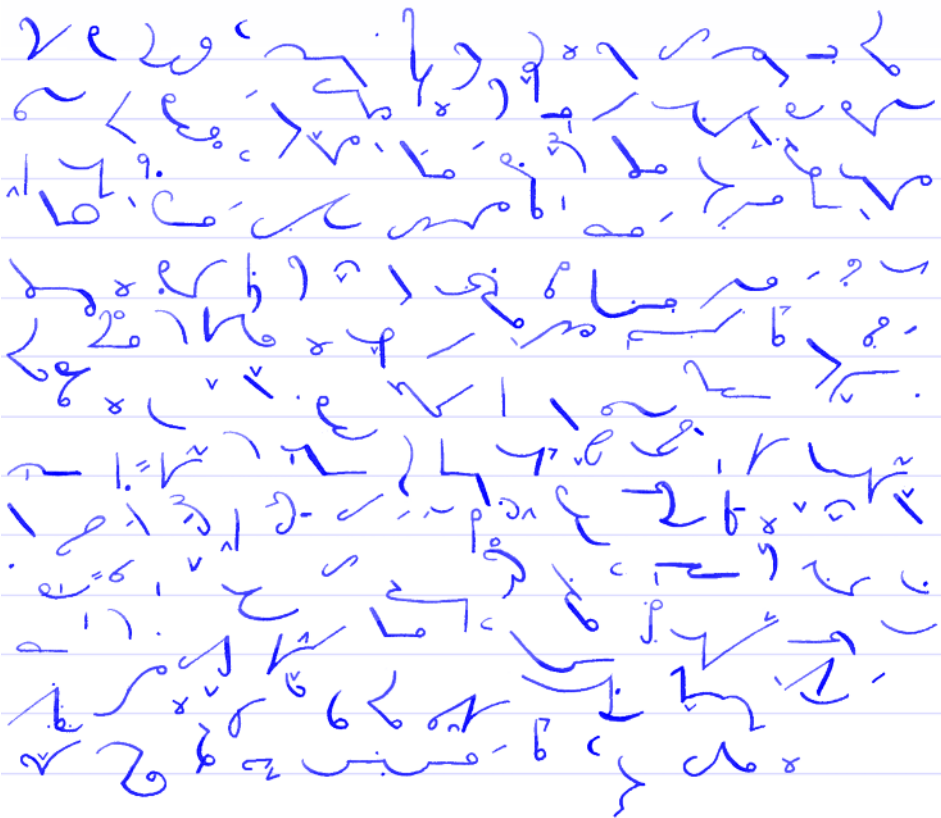


Traditional British Seaside

My ideal summer day out is a trip to one of the seashores in Kent or Sussex, most of which are just over an hour's drive from where I live. I keep my eye on the sky and hope that any clouds will vanish by the time we get to the coast. Being a passenger I can occupy myself with admiring the scenery and it is sometimes a surprise when we arrive, seemingly suddenly, at our destination*. The first seagull or his cry is the confirmation that I am looking out for. The sudden glimpse of the blue strip of the sea between the town buildings brings the same sense of

anticipation every time. When younger, we wanted the tide to be out, so that we could* play on the sand. Now older, we prefer the tide to be in, so that we can view the drama of the sea and waves, and we feel somewhat cheated if the water's edge is a long way off in the distance.

- * "destination" Not using a Stee Loop to avoid it looking like "distinction", similary "destiny" with full strokes
- * "we could" Not phrased, so it is not misread as "we can"

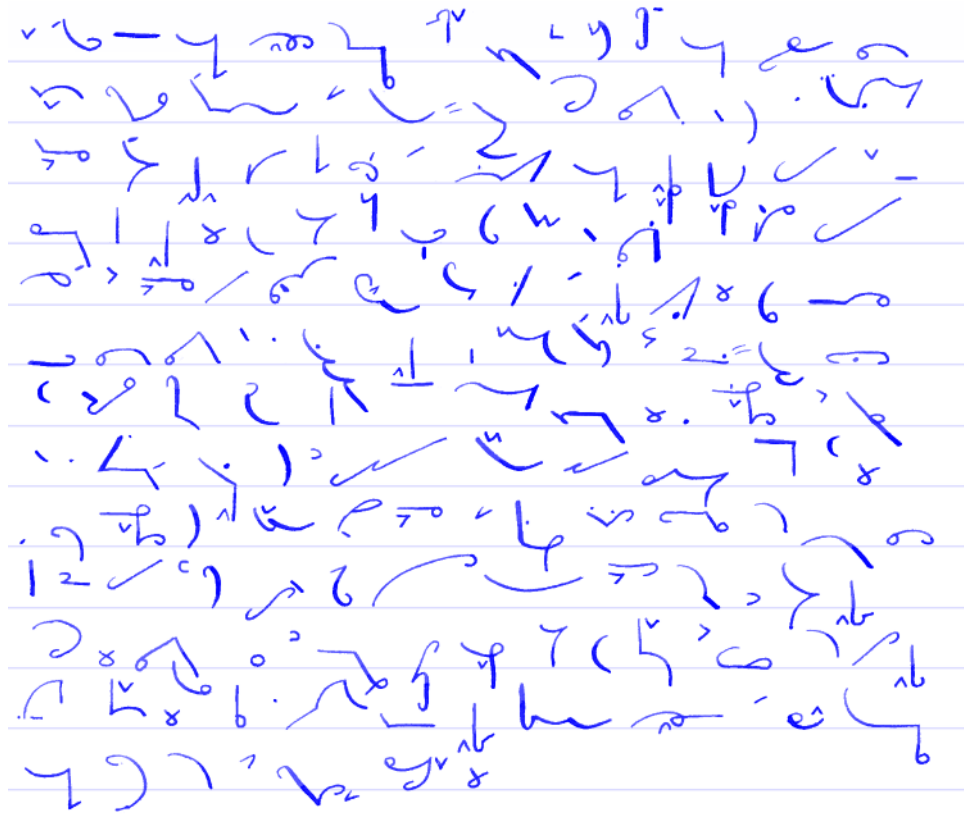


Traditional British Seaside

There are several essentials that make up a traditional British seaside. Number one must be the gift shops, selling cheap souvenirs and beach equipment. Their goods are invariably seen spilling out into the street, with piles of buckets and spades, wire baskets full of plastic footballs, boxes of flags and whirling windmills on sticks, and racks of postcards. Safely tethered there might be the inflatables, such as dinghies, rings and rafts in the shape of sharks or dolphins. Inside are ornaments, crockery, toys, beach hats and sandals. If I buy a souvenir, I prefer it to be something practical, like a mug, tea-towel or notebook, so that it can be enjoyed whilst in use but which will eventually be used up, worn out and thrown away, and not sit around forever gathering dust. I might buy a sunhat but I no longer want to collect

varnished pebbles with goggle eyes and felt feet stuck on, or a wooden jewellery box with pink satin interior, covered in iridescent shells. I still find these shops hugely entertaining, and admire the originality and fertile imaginations of those who create the knick-knacks and toys that fill the shelves.

- * "make up" A phrase, with the first word in its correct position. The noun "make-up" would have the P on the line, being the first up or downstroke of the outline, as per normal rules.
- * "inflatables" It is the Flt stroke that is in position on the line, regardless of where the position N stroke appears to be
- * "forever" This outline does not use the short form "for"
- * "I might" Not phrased, so it is not misread as "I may"
- * "iridescent" Spelled with one R, from "iris"



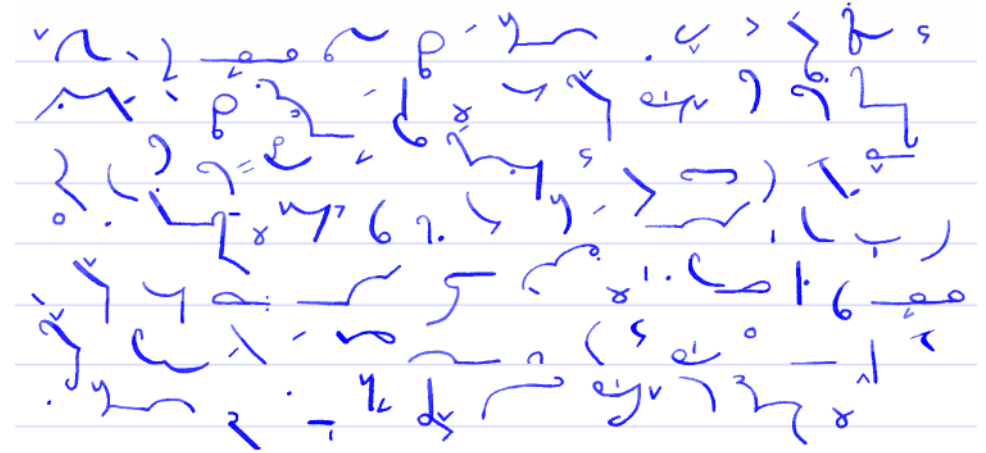
Traditional British Seaside

I often go into the amusement arcades and try to remember why I was drawn into using some of my precious pocket-money on the penny-pushing machine, hoping to see an avalanche of coins fall down the hole at the front and emerge into the outside dish where I could* scoop it out. If only I had known then about the two concealed side holes, where most of the coins are slowly flowing over the edge and out of reach. These games gave some hope of a favourable outcome, but I never bothered with the weak-fingered crane that always dropped whatever it managed to grab. The excitement of the possibility* of a jackpot payout was what we were buying,

and we certainly got that. The free excitement was finding lost coins on the densely patterned carpets, or maybe someone had walked away with their winnings and then later on another coin or two would fall out of the machine. Hopefulness is what keeps the children inside, until they tire of the quest or run out of allotted time. It is a relief to come out of the deafening music and sound effects, into the fresh air and the brilliant sunshine.

* "I could" Not phrased, so it is not misread as "I can"

* "possibility" Optional contraction

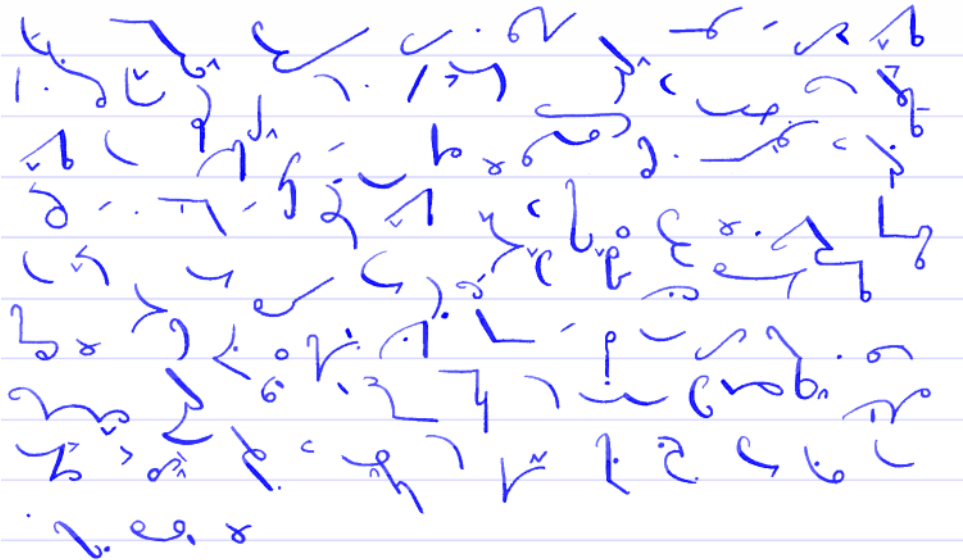


Traditional British Seaside

I love to see the kiosks selling sweets and ice cream, the white of the bothies contrasting with the rainbow of sweets, artwork and advertisements*. In the bright sunlight they are very attractive, especially if they are free-standing on the promenade, with the beach, green sea and blue sky as a backdrop. I enjoy this treat for the eyes and camera, but have no wish to bite into sticky coloured sugar lollies. On an overcast

day, these kiosks brighten everything up and almost make you think that the sun has come out and that an ice cream would be a good idea despite the lack of sunshine or warmth.

* "advertisements" Contraction. The normal outline "adverts" is very similar and should always have the first vowel written in to help with reading back.



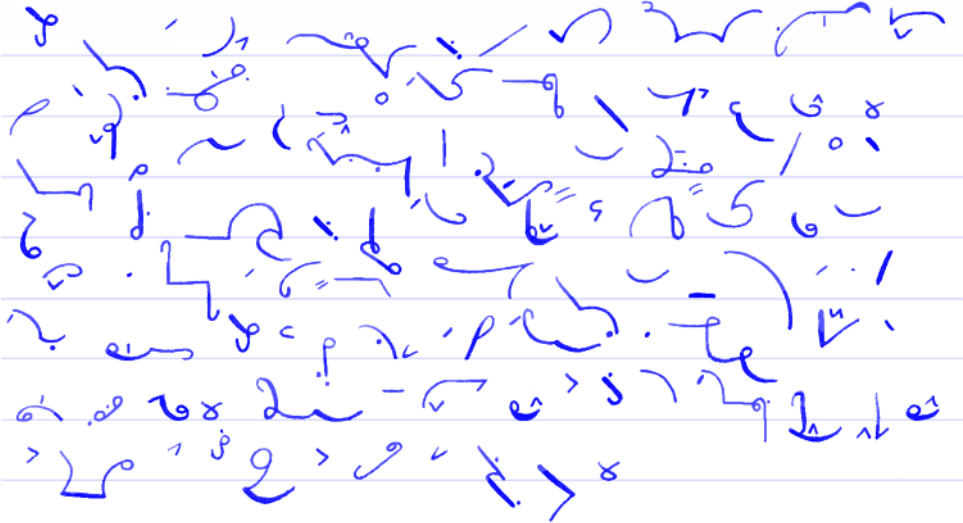
Traditional British Seaside

Funfairs can be found everywhere, whether a solitary bouncy* castle and one or two* rides at a tiny seaside town, or a large noisy collection that includes the more boisterous rides for older children and young adults. As long as there is a carousel with painted horses, and a cup and saucer ride, I feel that tradition is fulfilled. The ubiquitous deckchairs for hire fill in the scenery along the seafront either side of the main central attractions. Their shape is truly "laid back" and sitting in one produces

the same frame of mind*, banishing thoughts of work, activity or anything other than almost motionless enjoyment of the surroundings, possibly with newspaper or towel draped artfully over the face for a brief snooze.

* "bouncy" Not in dictionary, but following the outline for "pansy"

* Omission phrase "one (or) two" "frame (of) mind"



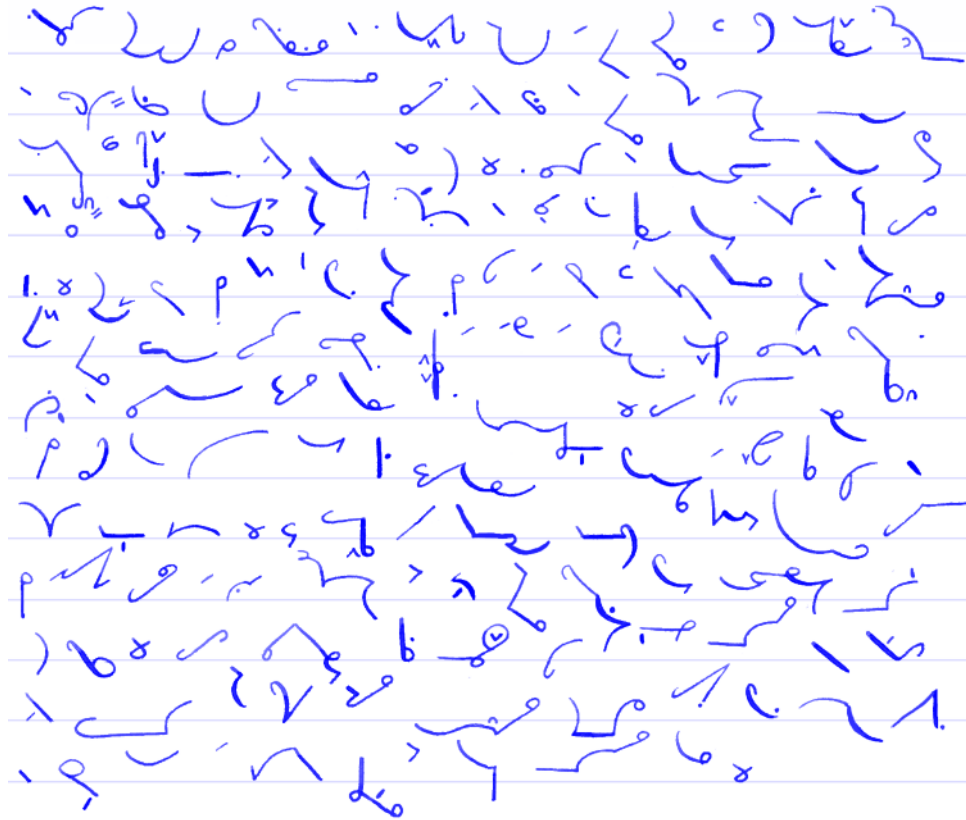
Traditional British Seaside

Bandstand*, pier and showy municipal bedding are also warmly welcomed on my list of seaside accessories, but they count as optional extras, to be enjoyed whenever found. Pictured is the long promenade at Eastbourne in Sussex, which has all of these, dense colourful bedding displays, often designed with the latest national events in mind, an attractive and well-kept central pier in good order, and a large ornate sunken bandstand*, with seating area and stage, offering an extensive diary

of summer concerts and events. There is nothing quite like the sound of the band or orchestra drowning out the sound of the seagulls and the constant swishing of the waves on the pebbly* beach.

* "ba(n)dstand" Alternative outline that omits the first N. The full outline is written in two parts.

* "pebbly" Insert the final vowel as "pebble beach" also makes sense



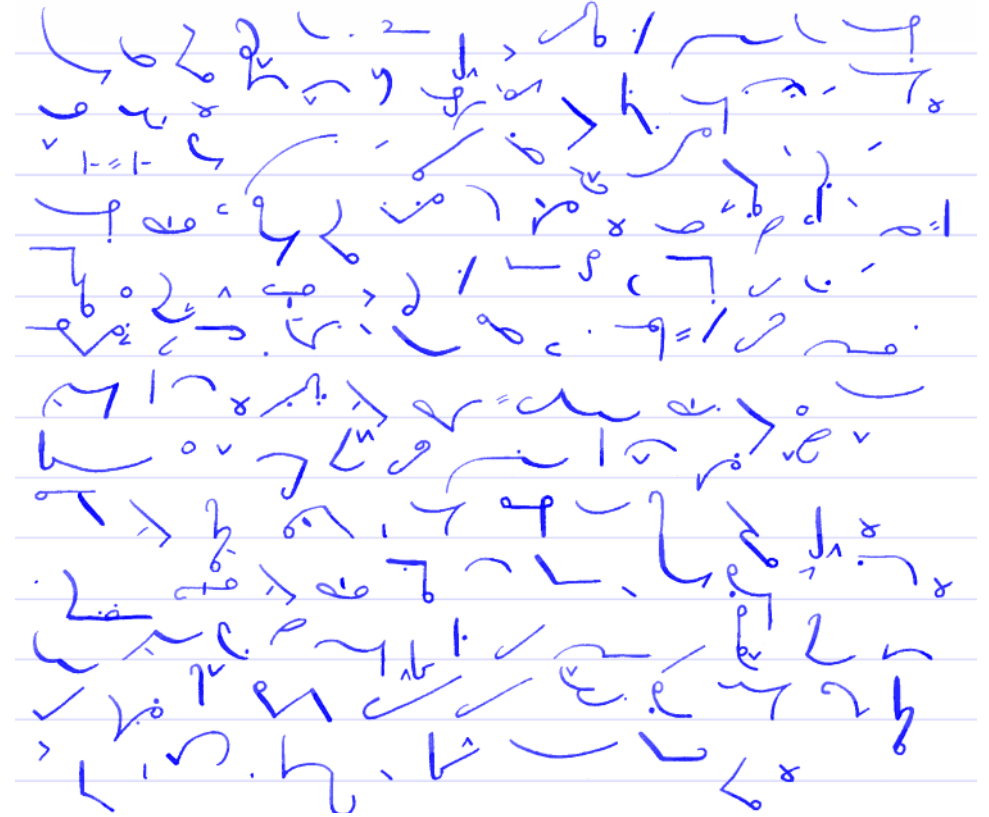
Traditional British Seaside

Absolutely essential is the presence of a variety of fish and chip shops, with their enticing artwork of friendly-faced fish characters serving up plates of chips or the mythical King Neptune with his trident, giving up the bounty of his sea. The smell of vinegar being splashed about is indispensable to the enjoyment, although the aroma of hot fat does not have the appeal that it once did. Seeing people sitting about on every available seat, wall and step, with paper bags full of voluminous giant chips, golden yellow, crispy* outside, and soft and fluffy inside, somehow produces an illusion of hunger that was absent a few minutes ago. We like to save such pleasures for later in the day,

when we have seen everything else, and whilst it is still too early to go home. When the clouds are beginning to gather at the end of the afternoon, we can sit and watch the waves, and let the warmth of the hoard of chips prevail over the increasingly cool sea breezes. One hopes that the day's exercise will cause the calories to be burned up quickly, although there are always numerous seagulls watching every move, ready to swoop* in and help dispose of the fatty calories for us.

* "crispy" Insert the last vowel, as "crisp" would also make sense

* "swoop" Insert the vowel, as "sweep in" also makes sense



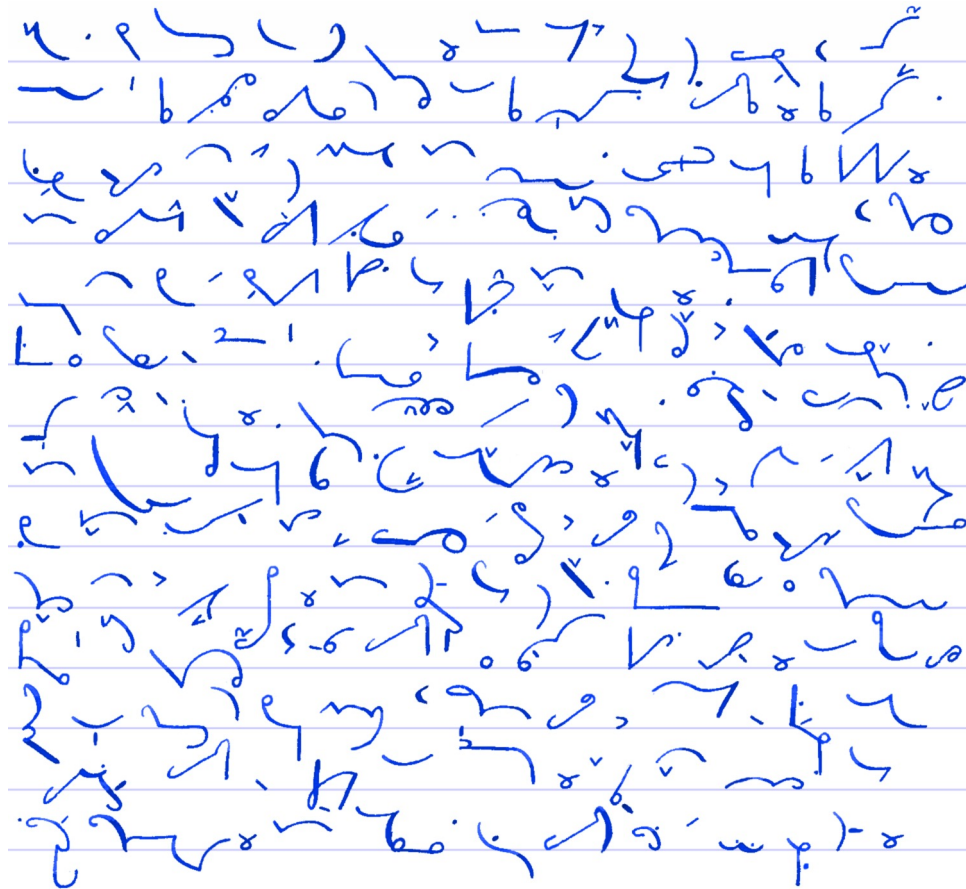
Traditional British Seaside

After the feast of chips, there is time for a walk down to the water's edge, looking for interesting things underfoot. My eyes instantly sort the beach debris into man-made and natural. I tut-tut over the litter and hurry past to find shells, bits of seaweed, and interesting stones with strange shapes, patterns or holes. Next on the list of must-do activities is seeing how close to the sea's edge I can stand without getting wet feet, and experiencing yet again the folly of being surprised when an extra large wave makes a lunge at me. Retreating up the steeply-shelving stony* beach is another adventure, as I imagine giant waves licking at my heels, whilst I

scrabble up the treacherous slope, but only succeed in treading the pebbles down. A zigzag* course up the stones gets me back to safety and the car. Having wrung every last minute out of the day, we make our satisfied journey home to our sea-less dry suburb, where we are finally safe not only from the dangers of the deep, but also the temptation to devour another bag of chips. (1302 words)

* "stony" Insert last vowel, as "stone" would also make sense

* "zigzag" An initial Z sound must have stroke Zee



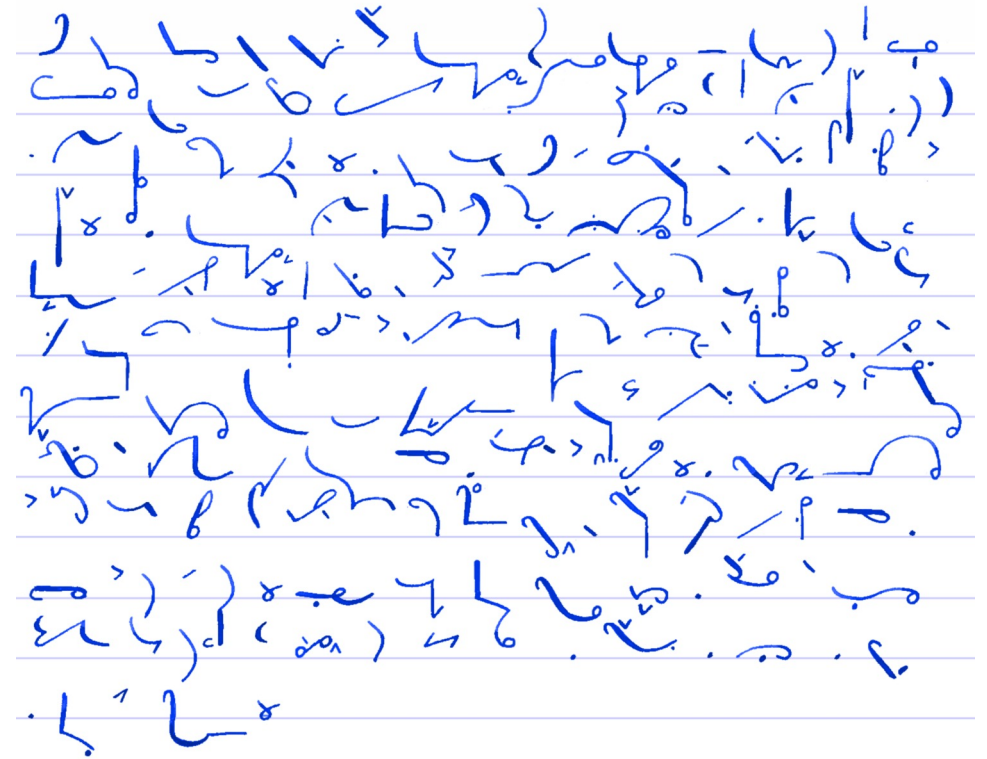
Pleasure Piers

I have a special affection for pleasure piers. I can enjoy seeing the sea close up without actually going on its restless surface or in its murky waters. It is really a face-off between me and the sea, and I know that I am making an incursion into its territory. I am surrounded by sturdy railings and a massive iron framework underneath, that promises to keep me safe and supported, at least* for the duration of my visit. The solid planking deck is pleasant to walk on, the thickness of the timbers and the giant size of the bolts inspiring a goodly amount of confidence. The pier amusements are there to provide a semblance of normality* whilst I am venturing into this alien environment. With sea to the left and right, I feel safe on my narrow island, but the

glimpses and splashes of the waves through the gaps between the planks remind me of the real situation. I am suspended over the sea by a structure that is not as permanent as it appears, on iron pillars that the salt water is slowly turning to rust. In strong winds there would be no protection or safety, and I am sure that storm waves would manage to deposit enough windblown water to dislodge any walker. I choose my moment for the confrontation very carefully. I am, in this case, a "fair weather friend" and intend to stay so.

* "at least" and "at last" Always insert the vowel

* "normality" Alternative outline

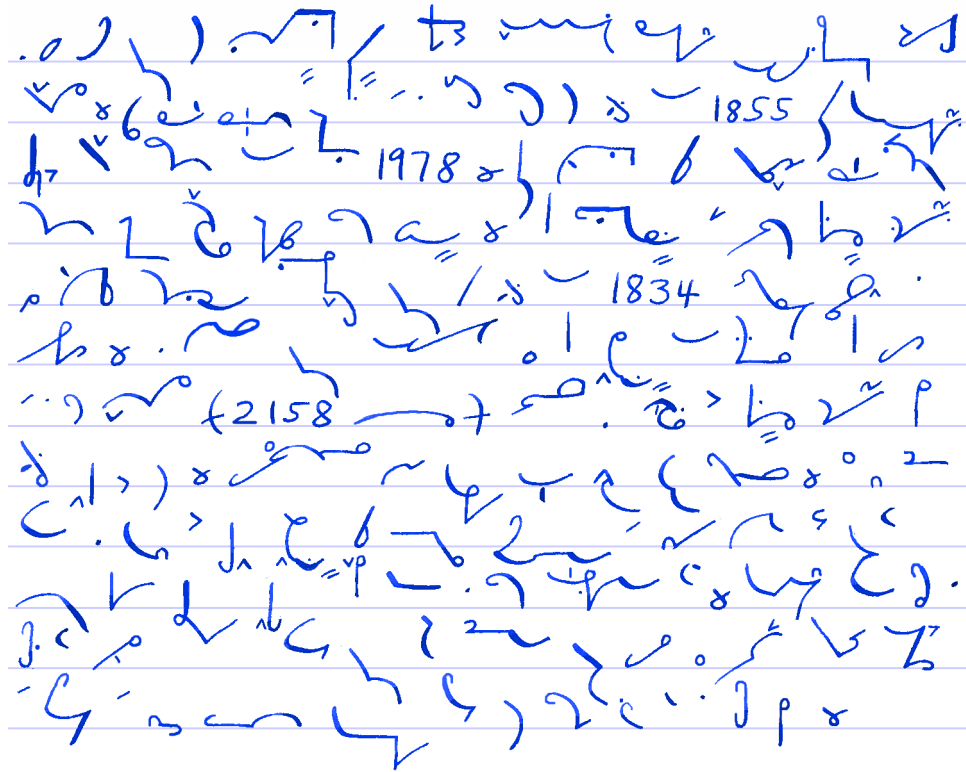


Pleasure Piers

Pleasure piers began to be built by the Victorians, so that visitors could view the sea at close quarters*, even in places where the shallowness of the sea meant that at low tide the sea was a long distance from the shore. The pier enabled pleasure and steam boats to operate at all states of the tide. The Victorians loved decoration and their ornate embellishments are a delight, even when decaying and rusted. It pays to point the camera upwards, or under the seats, or over the edge to get more interesting shots of the ornamented detail or the method of construction. The

rows of tree-like pillars have their own geometrical beauty, with the repeating patterns of the crossbars and braces, all holding each other firm against the onslaught of the waves. The brilliant colours of the iron in all stages of rust from dark brown to bright orange are set against the greens of the sea and seaweed. Gazing into the depths brings to mind the abundance of names that we have for the sea that surrounds us: the briny, the main, the blue, the deep and the drink.

* "quarters" Optional contraction



Pleasure Piers

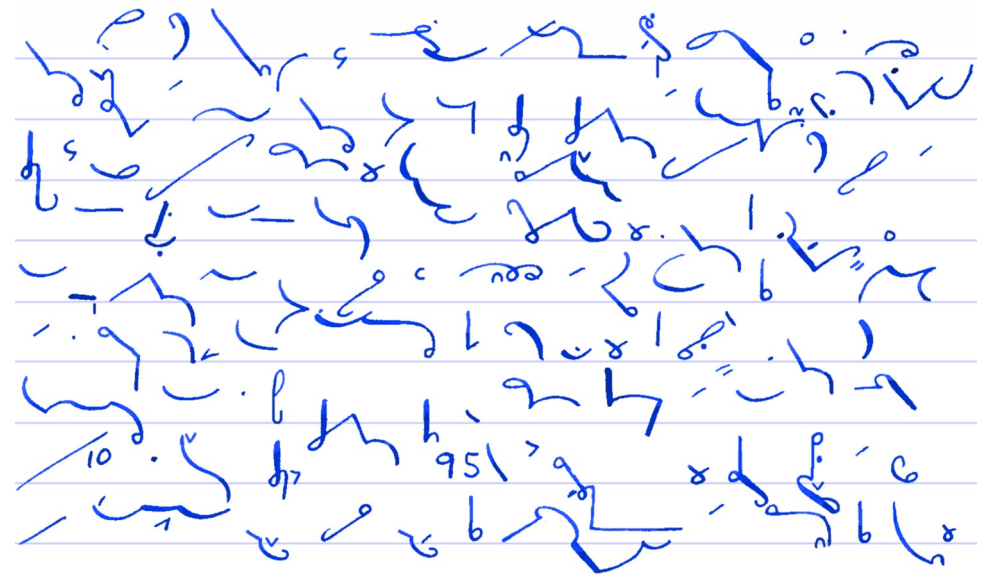
The first pleasure pier was Margate Jetty at the beginning of the nineteenth century, initially constructed of wooden piles. These soon succumbed to decay and an iron version was opened in 1855, which was eventually destroyed by storm in 1978. It was located just behind the stone harbour arm and took arrivals of tourists from London. At Gravesend on the River Thames Estuary is the oldest remaining cast-iron pier, which opened in 1834 and presently houses a restaurant. The longest* pier in the world* is at Southend in Essex at one and a third* miles (2158 metres), and crosses the mud flats of the Thames Estuary as it opens out to the sea. Waymarkers let the visitor know how far they have progressed. As you walk along, the view of the town of Southend just keeps shrinking and you are left with the

feeling that maybe it will disappear out of sight altogether, a very unsettling thought. Fortunately there is a train that runs along the pier, although walking both ways is really part of the enjoyment and challenge, and you cannot claim victory over the sea from the comfort of a train seat.

* "longest" Alternative contraction that omits the G stroke, similarly "strongest"

* Omission phrase "in (the) world" Caution is needed when transcribing phrases with "world" as they do not always contain the word "the" e.g. "in world politics"

* "one and a third" See www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/vocabulary-numbers.htm#fractions for a quicker way to write fractions



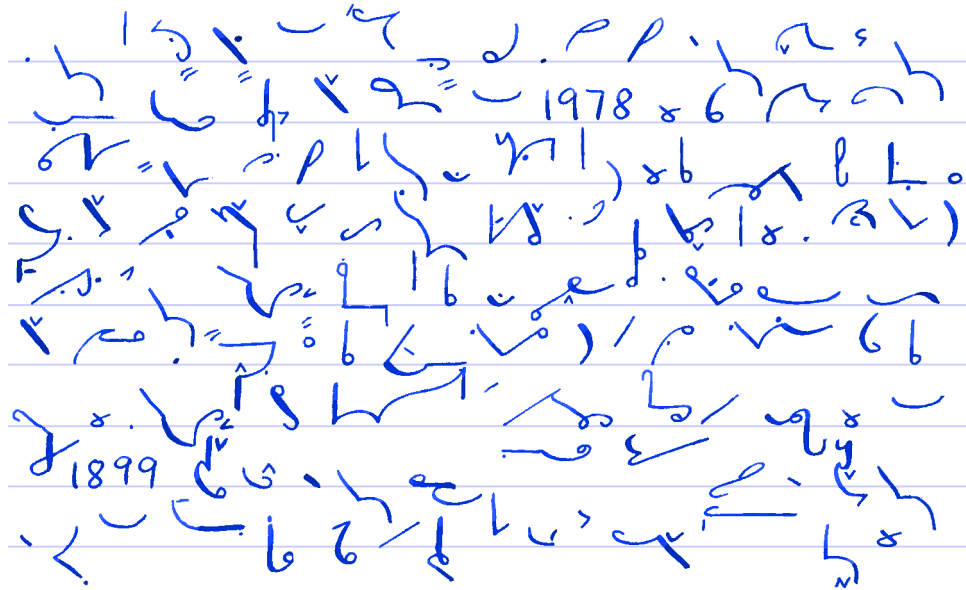
Pleasure Piers

Piers lost their popularity when the expanding railway network supplanted steam boats as a means of transport, and many piers fell into disuse, disrepair and eventually complete or partial destruction with the next winter storm. They have only* survived where they are used and can generate income for their preservation. The pier at Eastbourne is in good repair and in full use, with amusements and shops along its length, and a separate area for anglers at the very end. At Hastings the

pier was for many years in a state of disrepair due to storm damage, and in October 2010* a fire destroyed 95 per cent of the superstructure. It has been stabilised and efforts are ongoing to find ways to fund its refurbishment and secure its future.

* "they have only" Hooked form for "only" in some phrases but full outline when alone

* "2010" Long slash to represent the current century, arbitrary sign with no phonetic value

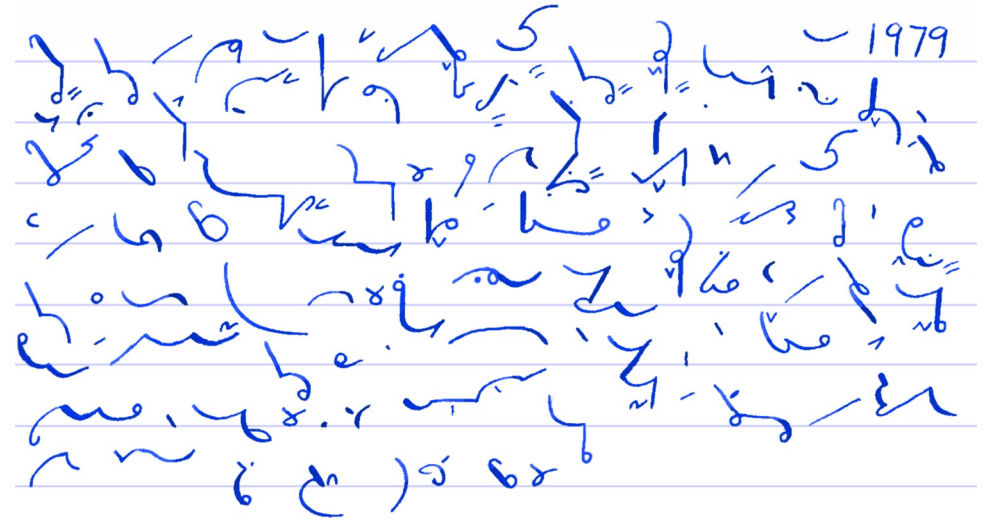


Pleasure Piers

The pier at Herne Bay in North Kent shows the last stage of pier life, with the pier neck having been destroyed by storm in 1978. This left the more solidly-built landing stage at the far end isolated at sea. Its miserable state of decay is overshadowed by the rows of bright white wind farm turbines a short distance behind it. The landward part was retained and the Pier Pavilion constructed at its end, housing a sports centre, named by locals "the cowshed" as its chunky

appearance was much less appealing than its predecessor. The pavilion has been demolished and replacement attractions are under consideration. In 1899 divers found two pier signal cannons that were used to identify the pier to shipping in foggy* conditions, and these are displayed at the foot of the nearby clock tower.

* "foggy" Insert the last vowel, as "fog conditions" could also make sense



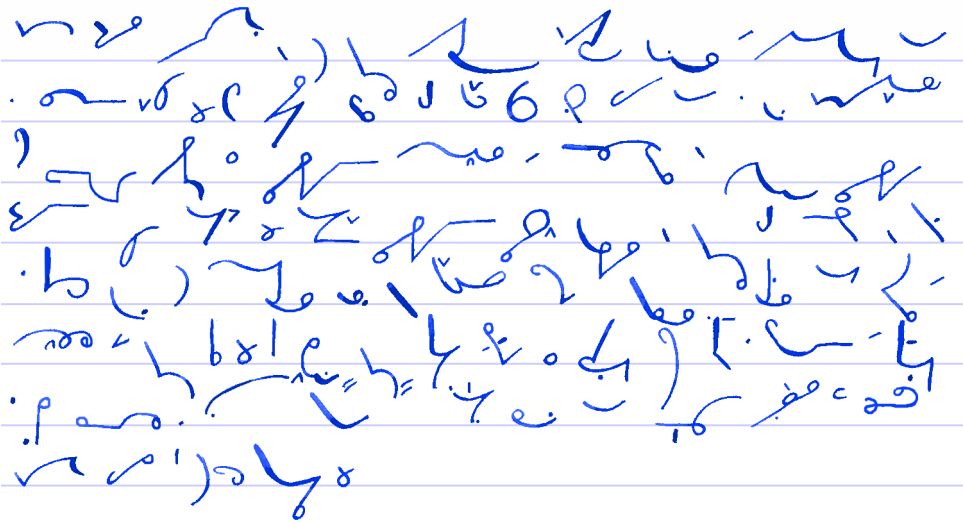
Pleasure Piers

Britain's piers are listed in detail on the website of the National Piers Society, founded in 1979 under the late poet laureate Sir John Betjeman*, who had an ardent desire to preserve the best of Victorian architecture. He loved to write about our national obsession with our favourite places, including the delights and adventures of the seaside, and one of the trains on Southend Pier is named after him. Considering the amazing* engineering achievements that are possible nowadays,

saving and renewing piers is not a matter of ingenuity, but of finance and the willingness to invest. The old hand-coloured photos and postcards are all that we have left of many of these beautiful seafront buildings.

* "Betjeman" Strokes often in full for proper names for greater clarity

* "amazing" and "amusing" Always insert the vowel after the M

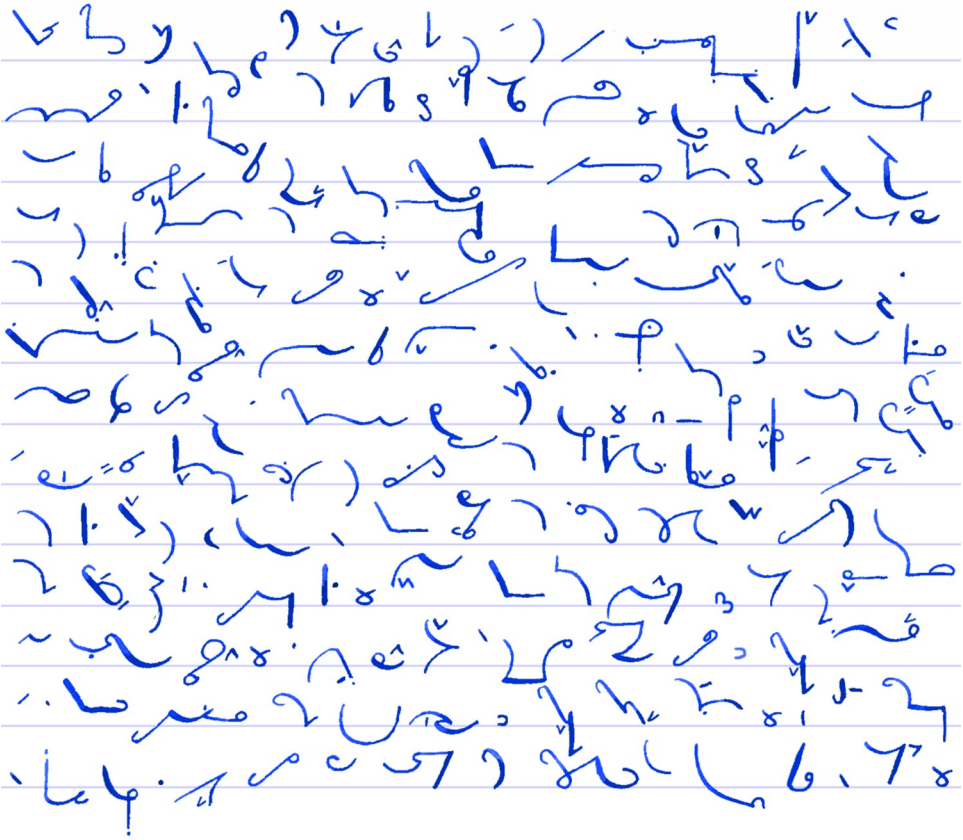


Pleasure Piers

I am always relieved to see piers retaining their* original fittings and renovated in a sympathetic style. Other heritage buildings do not find themselves swept away in a fit of modernisation, they are carefully restored as historic monuments and examples of living history that we can still enjoy. Unlike historic houses, visitors to piers do not expect to pay an admission fee, so maintenance needs to be financed from the business tenants in the shops and

amusements on the pier itself. At Southend Pier additional support is generated through their* Adopt A Plank and Donate A Seat schemes, the latter being commonly seen in coastal* resorts with inscriptions to loved ones on seafront benches.

- * "retaining their" "through their" Doubling to represent "their"
- * "coastal" Omits the lightly sounded T

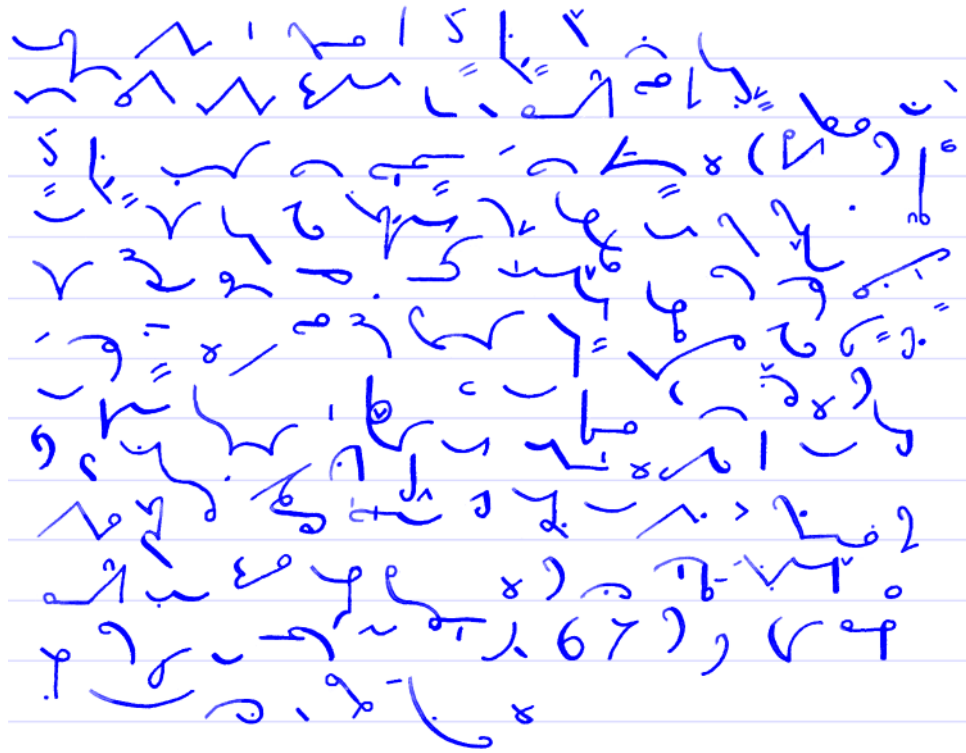


Pleasure Piers

Part of the attraction of pleasure piers is that they are only found at the seaside and so are inextricably tied up with memories of day trips or holidays spent in those locations. Even if you are not interested in its history, just seeing the pier brings back recollections of time spent on the beach, paddling in the sea, eating ice cream or sticky candyfloss, digging your own moated castle in the sand or bouncing flat pebbles off the waves. I wonder if an enterprise offering to build a balcony on your house looking just like a piece of an existing pier would find any takers amongst those who want to have a permanent souvenir of their visit. You could sit outside in your flipflops and sunhat, admire the friendly sea serpent or dolphin designs, and recreate your day

by the sea, without having to pack sandwiches or concern yourself about the weather forecast or the blusterings of the sea on a windy day. Lying back on your lounge, you would only see the sky, and not neighbouring houses. A looping sound file of seagulls and crashing waves would provide the ambience, and a bag of winkles from the fishmonger would provide the appropriate aroma. But don't forget to continue visiting the real ones, in order to* encourage their preservation for future generations* to enjoy. (1341 words)

- * Omission phrase "in ord(er to)"
- * "generations" Optional contraction, otherwise J + Nr + Shun hook



Pond Depot Report

Interim Report on Progress at Pond Depot
by M Fibbian

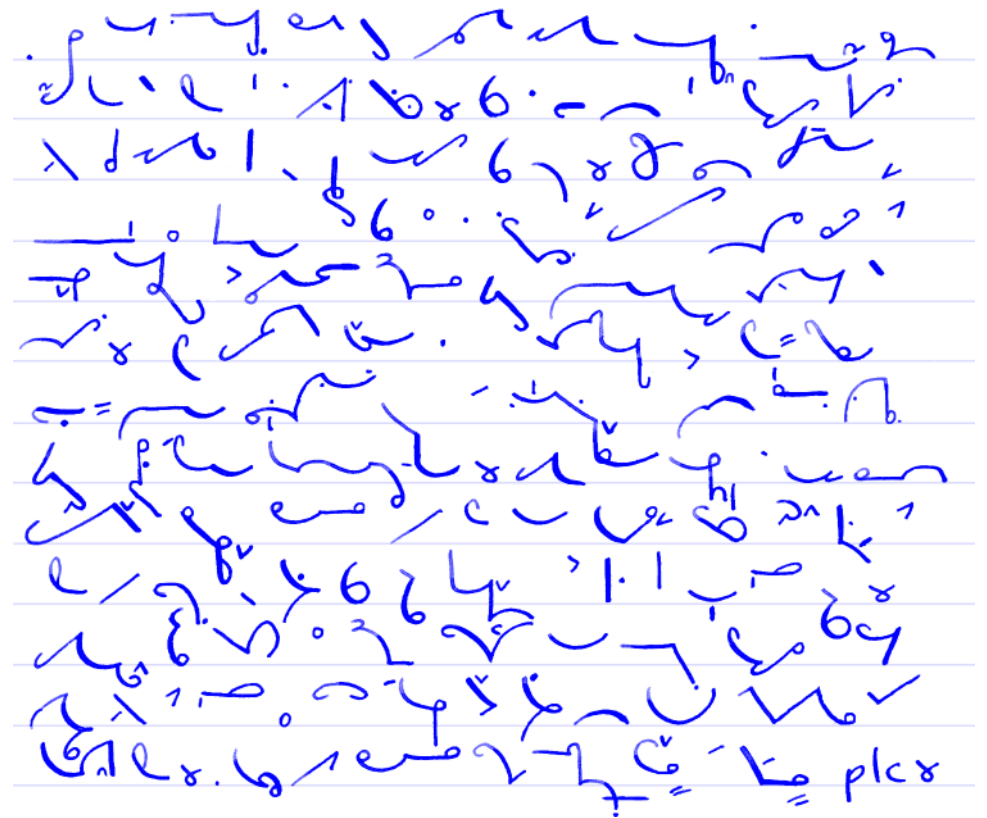
I am happy to report that we now have two security guards at the business end of Pond Depot, namely Mr Croaker and Mr Jumper. They started their duties with us in early February and have been patrolling the area for several months now, principally providing an early warning system against the occasional uninvited visits from Mrs Herron and Mrs Katt. Our guards were formerly body-builders and have been well trained in dealing firmly but decisively with any difficulties that may arise. They are confident that they are able to enforce the rules and regulations* laid down in the handbook. We have not* had any reports

of trouble occurring and do not anticipate any repeat of the break-ins* through the security netting that was installed several years ago. Their main modus operandi is to sit very still under cover and not show themselves until they are sure they will succeed in their mission to surprise the offender.

* Omission phrase "rules (and re)gulations"

* "we have not" The advantage of using halving and N hook for "not" here is that this phrase cannot be mistaken for "we have no"

* "break-ins" Full stroke N rather than hook, to reflect the derivation



Pond Depot Report

The situation in the canteen has now been resolved and we have introduced a queuing system for all staff, on a rota basis. This is a great improvement on everyone turning up at once*, and we have not* had to discipline anyone this year. There is still* some jostling but the cook is taking this as a compliment* on the wonderful meals served and the excited anticipation of the hungry workers who have been looking forward to lunch all morning. However, we will be finding an alternative to the ever-present grey-looking semolina pudding and unappetising limp soggy lettuce which have been the staple offering for many years. We have instituted* a new scheme whereby subsidised snacks are offered in various places around the depot, and the staff are free to avail themselves of these at any time of the day, at no cost to themselves. We have found that this policy has worked very well in keeping everyone's energy

levels up, and the cost is more than offset by the vastly improved efficiency and performance of our valued staff. The favourites are the snacks from the catering company Flyze and Buggs PLC.

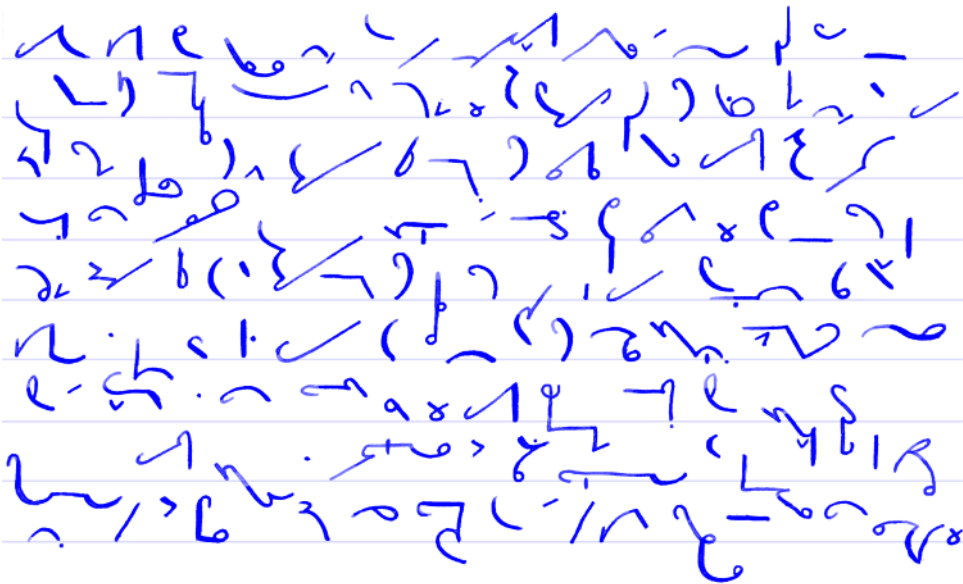
* Omission phrase "at (wu)ns" "there is s(t)ill"

* "we have not" See note on previous paragraph

* "compliment" Note spelling, meaning a flattering or praising comment, adjective "complimentary" which also means given as a free gift. "Complement" means something that completes or matches another, adjective "complementary"

* "ins(t)ituted" omits the first T

* "vastly" Omits the lightly sounded T

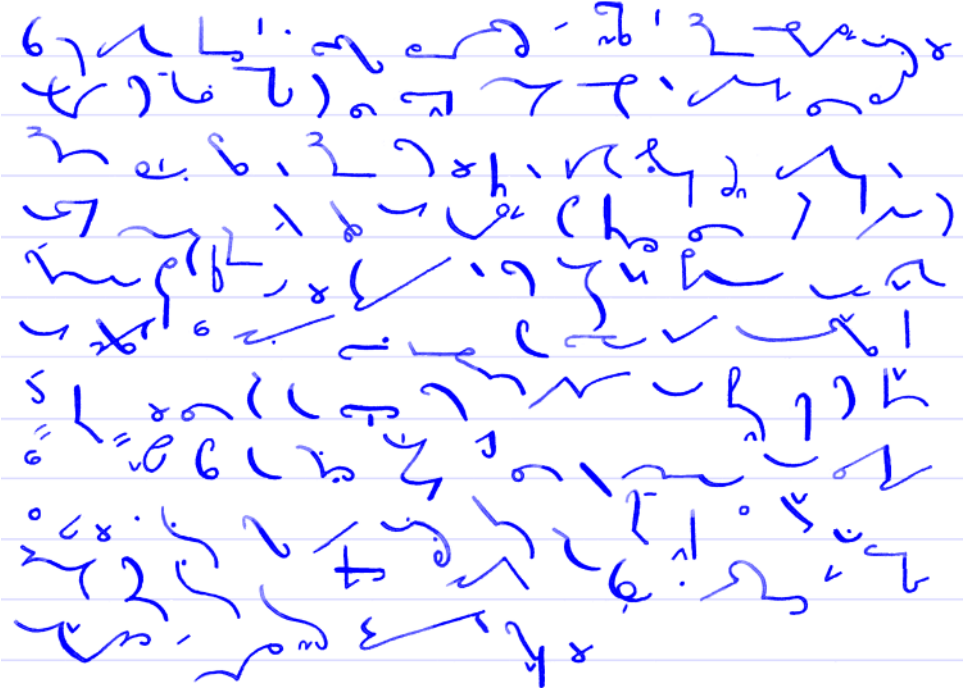


Pond Depot Report

We have held several business meetings for our countrywide representatives, and many attended in order* to give feedback on their activities in their particular area. Although everyone showed their faces at the meetings, all we heard from the discussions was how they were just keeping their heads above water and that they really needed more resources if they were to grow and expand as they had hoped. As they come from different areas of the country, at first* they all kept their distance from each other, but we overcame

this by holding a Team Building day, where they improved their methods of promoting co-operation amongst staff, and acquired a more corporate spirit. We had instructed the catering staff to provide plenty of drinking water, to prevent a recurrence of the endless croaking that took place at last year's meeting, which all the delegates were most grateful for and which helped proceedings go more smoothly.

* Omission phrases "in ord(er to)" "at (fir)st"

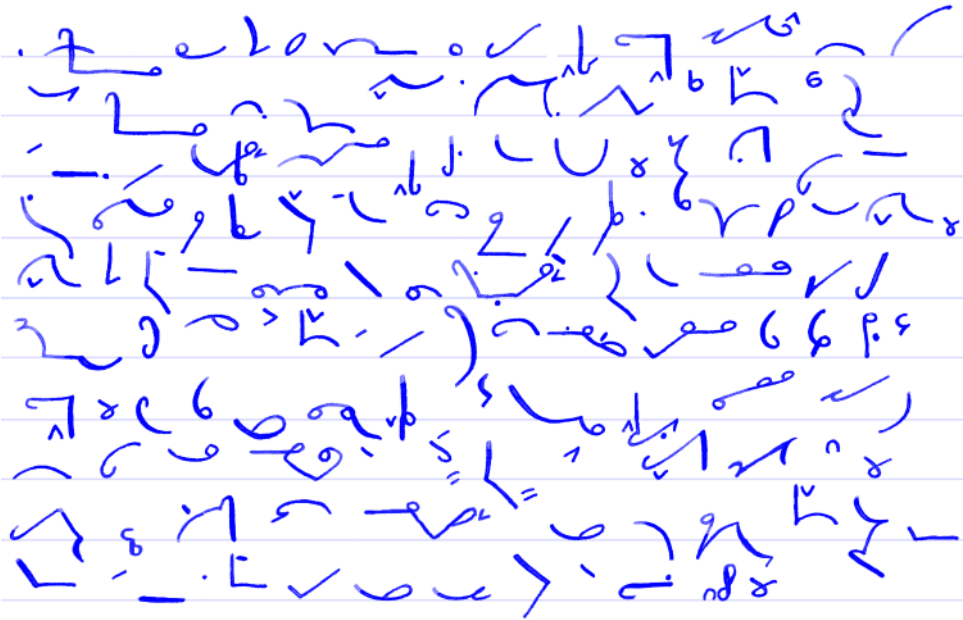


Pond Depot Report

This year we have taken on a great number of school leavers and graduates on work experience internships. Unfortunately* their office accommodation was somewhat crowded, mainly because they all wanted the same warm sunny place to work from. Due to health and safety issues, we have had to encourage many of them to take up positions in the various other departments, some of which are not so prominent as they had at first* wished. They were all very enthusiastic about starting their* new life in the business world* with us and were* eager to explore every corner of our enterprise at Pond Depot. Some of them have grown very rapidly in stature during their time with us, whilst others have remained unchanged and do not seem to be making any headway as yet. A fair

number of our interns appear to have dropped out, as by the end of the month there were* far fewer than at the beginning and we hope this is not a reflection on the quality of the environment and meals that we are able to provide.

- * "unfortunately" Optional contraction
- * Omission phrases "at (fir)st" "there (w)ere"
- * "starting their" Doubling to represent "their"
- * "and were" Add the vowel, so it is not misread as "we are", this is still quicker than writing separate outlines
- * "business world" Write the Bs stroke first, the order in which it is spoken

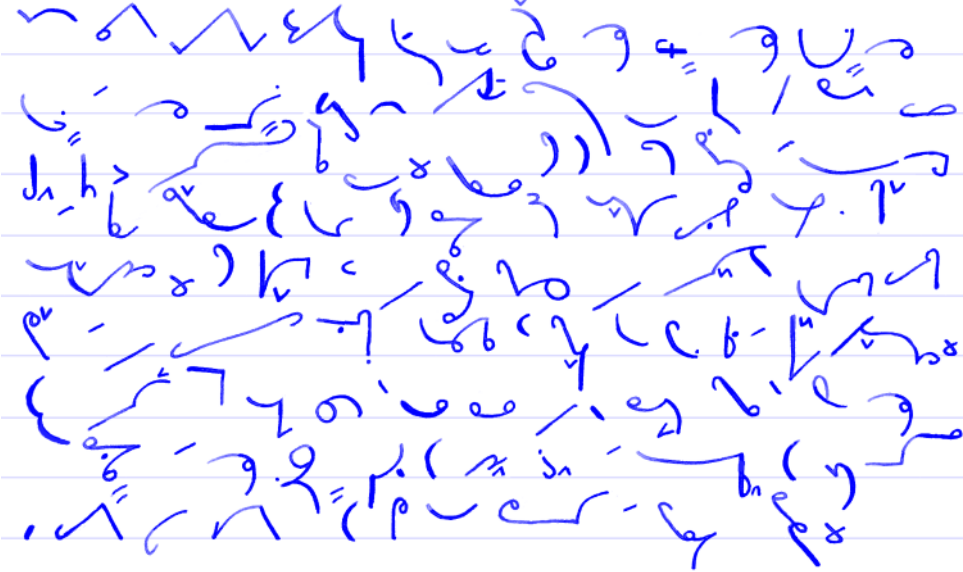


Pond Depot Report

The Managing Director's* son was the first to make his way out of the crowd and we found him later in the Directors' Meeting Room, writing a lengthy report on his time with us so far, and giving our various departments marks out of ten for efficiency. I think this lad will go far, as long as he does not bite off more than he can chew at such an early stage in life. Life at the top can sometimes be somewhat precarious, especially for executives, who are generally working on their own most of the time and are therefore more exposed to risks than

those who stay with the crowd. However, this youngster seems to have* decided that the benefits outweigh the hazards, and we wish him well in his explorations of Pond Depot and the wide world beyond. We hope that, when he is older and more experienced next year, he will have the time available to come back and give a talk to our next new batch of eager students.

- * "managing Director's" Write the M stroke first
- * Omission phrase "seems (to) have"



Pond Depot Report

I am happy to report that we have had four new arrivals, Mrs Gold*, Mrs Fish, Miss Finn and Miss Gill*, who have been made redundant from their* own depot, which has now closed down due to the relocation of its owner. Business there was very sparse and intermittent, and it is not surprising that they felt that their skills were entirely wasted in such a dry environment. They are delighted with our spacious premises, our reliable filtered water supply and our wonderful catering facilities that provide for every taste and dietary requirement. They have really got into the swim of things since our two senior

members of staff, Mrs Scales and Mrs Swisher, showed them round the compound and introduced them to their colleagues, who we hope will help them settle in as quickly and pleasantly as possible.

- * "Mrs Gold" Short forms are not used for names, except for Child, Gold and Short, in which case they must be vocalised
- * "Gill" Pronounced thus as a surname, but pronounced Jill as a forename
- * "from their" Doubling to represent "their"

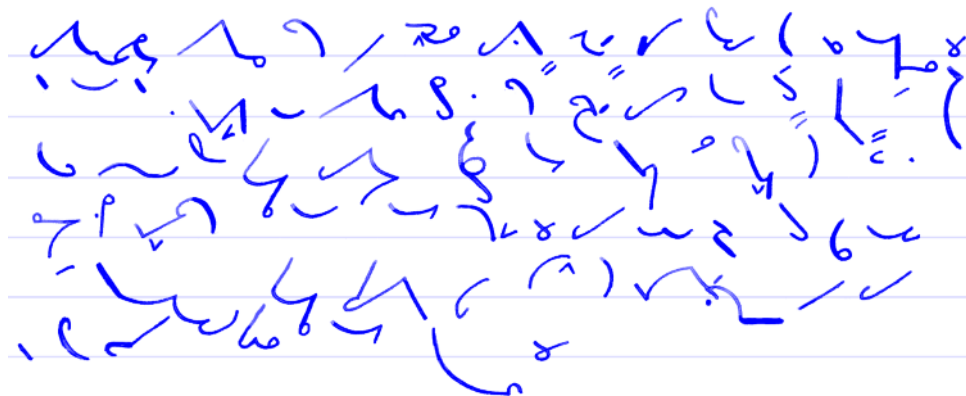


Pond Depot Report

We have received* clearance from Air Traffic Control for us to commence our first trials of our airborne remote controlled lightweight dragon-cam. The device has been sending back very clear aerial pictures of Pond Depot, and our surveyors have now produced a composite image of the whole area. Once the surveying is complete, our

engineers will be tweaking the software so that we can use the dragon-cam to monitor activity throughout the area on a daily basis, with an especial emphasis on improving security, which is our top priority for the immediate future.

* Omission phrase "we have (re)ceived"



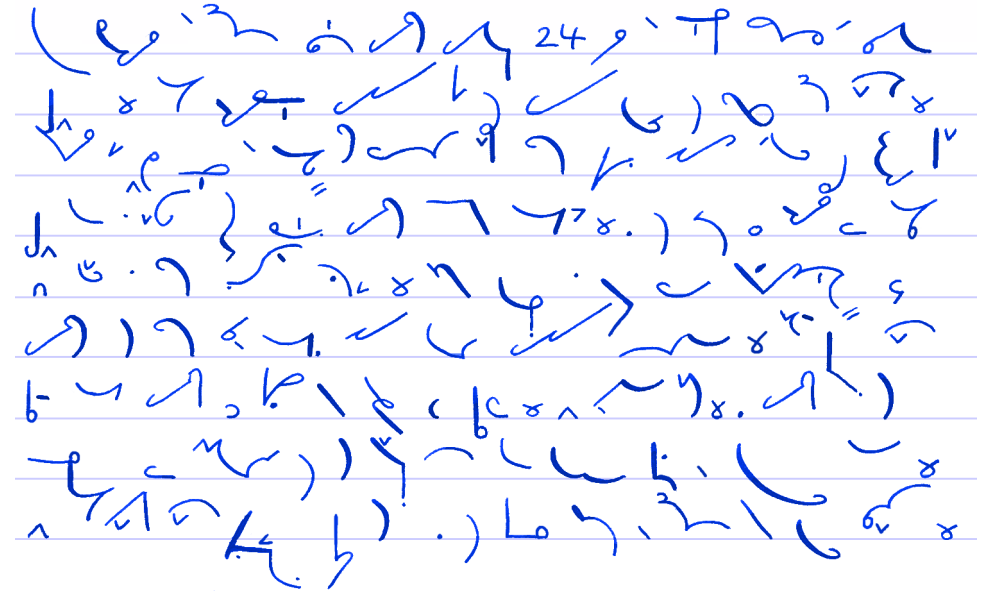
Pond Depot Report

We have not yet received the* report and accounts* from our accountants Webb and Foote who will forward them to us in due course. All in all the period under review has been a very fruitful one for Pond Depot, and although there* have been many staff changes, we feel that this has been for the better and has provided us with a skill set to rival any in the area. We intend to build

upon these new and beneficial changes which we hope will allow us to leapfrog our way to ever greater achievements in the future. (1197 words)

* Omission phrase "we have not yet (re)ceived the" "rep(ort and) accounts"

* "although there" Doubling to represent "their"



Wet And Windy

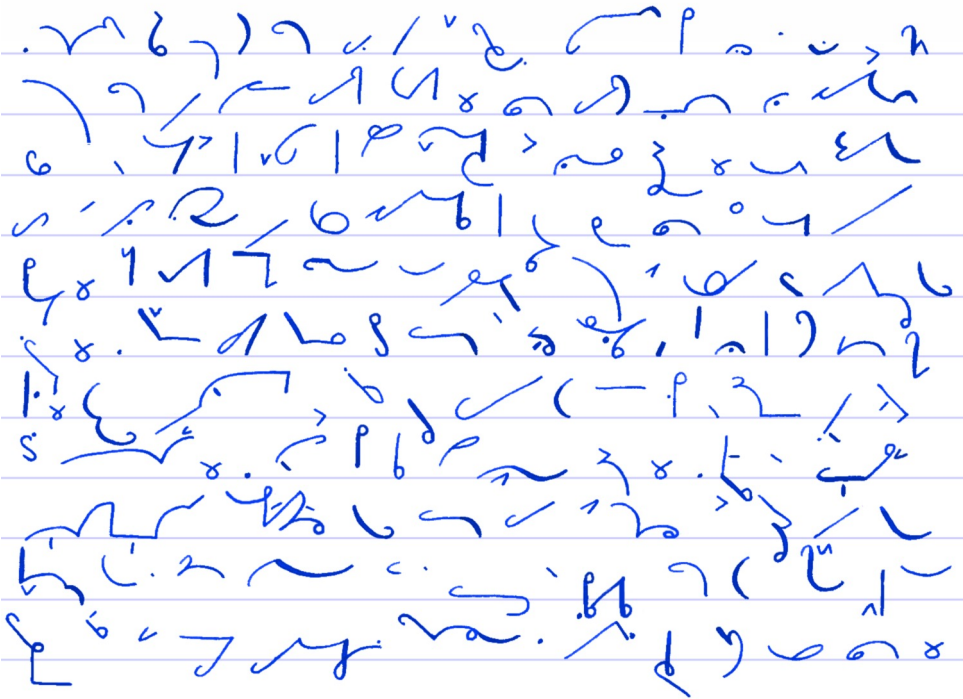
After several weeks* of warm summer weather, we have had 24 hours of gusty storms and heavy downpours. Only two weeks ago* we were at the seaside where even the sea breezes were mild. On the south coast of England* they are normally very chilly and one often wishes that they would die down for a while, so that the sunny weather can be enjoyed. The sea here is always cold, unless you find a very shallow area. I remember visiting a beach near Bournemouth when the weather was very hot indeed and we felt we were melting. I thought dipping my toes in the

water would at last* be possible without discomfort. How wrong I was. The water was exceedingly cold and I felt the sea was biting me for having dared to venture in. How right my geography teacher was, the sea takes all year to warm up even slightly.

* Omission phrases "several wee(k)s" "two wee(k)s ago"

* "at last" and "at least" Always insert the vowel

* "England" Contraction that omits the hard G sound

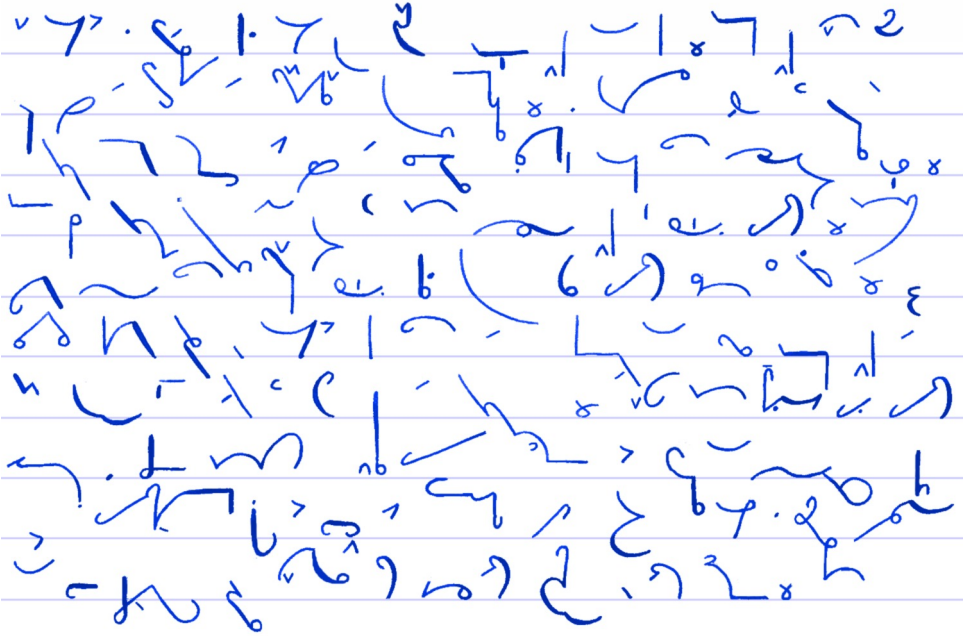


Wet And Windy

The early part of this year was very wet, which I personally welcomed as it meant an end to the drought order from our local water authority. Summer weather came late, and we have made efforts to enjoy it while it lasts, mindful of the lateness of the season. Now that we have wind and rain lashing our faces and windows, it feels as if summer has ended rather suddenly. I had already got the garden in reasonable order, and the necessary building repairs have been completed. The bike storage box has been cleared of hordes of snails who had made it their home during the day. They

have been relocated to the compost bins where they can set to work chewing up the plant material. The lawn has had its last mowing of the year. The tubs of glorious multicoloured nasturtiums have been cleared away and the remains of the pansies are being admired for a short time* longer, with a collection of seed heads from them drying out in plastic pots on the kitchen window sill, promising a repeat display all through next summer.

* "short time" Halving to represent the T of "time"



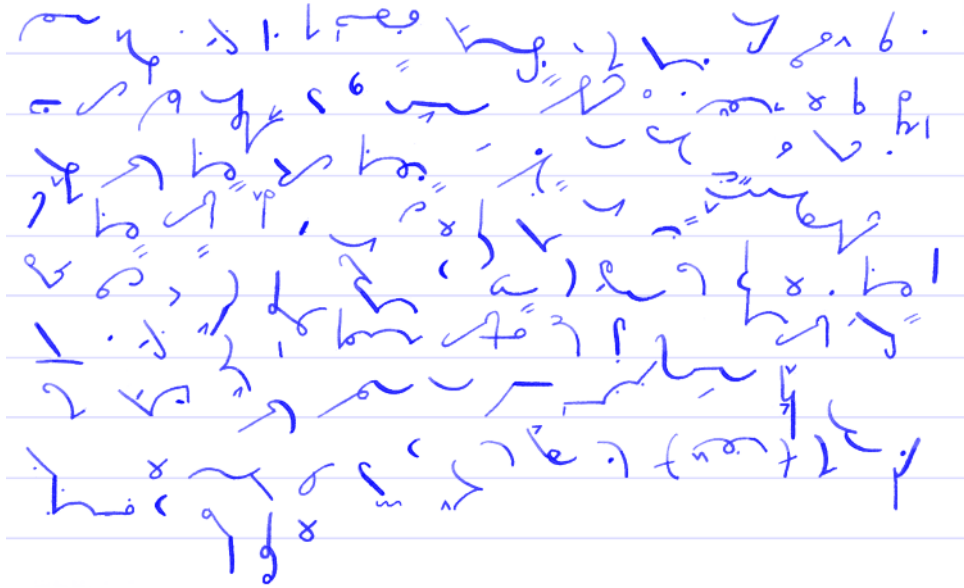
Wet And Windy

I enjoy a blustery day only if I do not have to go out in it. I get out my shorthand to-do list, and plan and prioritise future activities. The folders stuffed with bits of paper can be organised, and the lists and scribbles consolidated into more meaningful notes. I can sit before the computer and not feel that I am missing out on sunny weather. I am sure there* will be many more bright sunny days after this weather system has passed. When that happens, it will be possible to enjoy it more and take up any opportunities to get out and about, having caught up with other duties and

paperwork. While I am tolerating the wet weather and clearing the desk, I am also aware of the floods in many places, due to the waterlogged condition of the ground and the quantity of rain falling in such a short space of time*, resulting in great disruption to people's lives, their homes and their travelling to and from work. (508 words)

* "I am sure there" Doubling to represent "there"

* Omission phrase "short space (of) time"



Crossness Pumping Station

Last weekend* I visited an open day at the Crossness Pumping Station to see the Beam Engine House, which is a Grade 1 Listed Industrial Building that is undergoing* restoration as a museum. It is situated beside the River Thames between Thamesmead and Erith in north Kent, and is part of a larger Thames Water site, who own the land. It was built in the mid-nineteenth century as part of the solution to the sewage disposal problem that London was suffering from at that time. The Thames had become an open sewer, but at the same time* the water companies were delivering drinking water obtained from the polluted river, resulting in regular cholera and typhoid fever epidemics. Many

people still believed* that foul or poisoned air (miasma) was the agent that spread diseases.

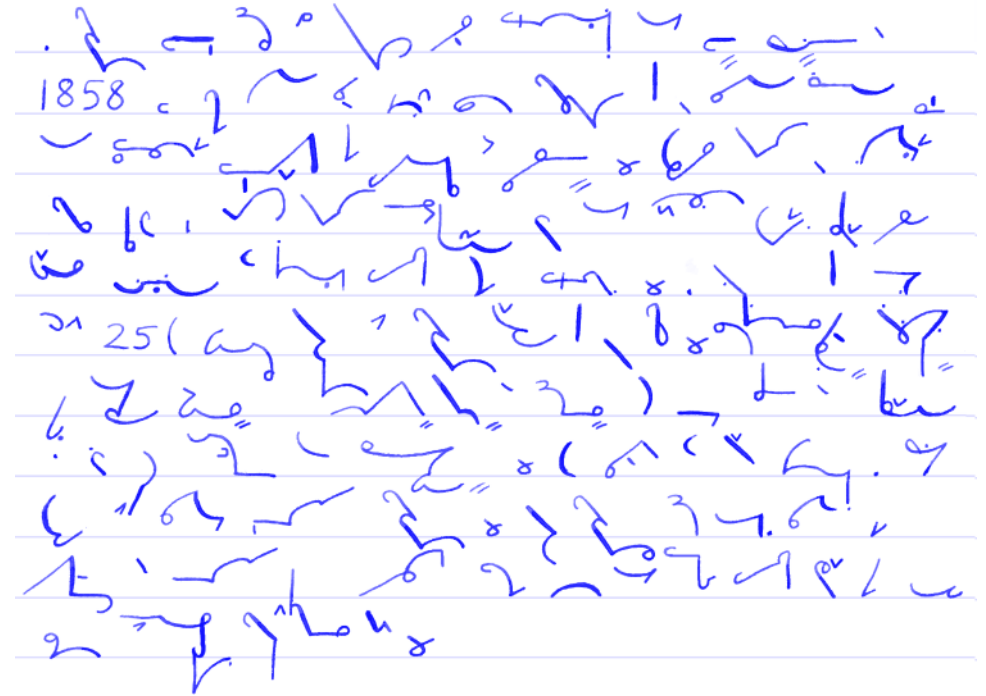
* Omission phrase "las(t w)eekend"

* "undergoing" Not using the short form "going" hence the diphone

* "at the same time" Halving to represent the T of "time"

* "believed"

* "believed" This could also read as "believe", therefore use wavy underline to remind it is past tense

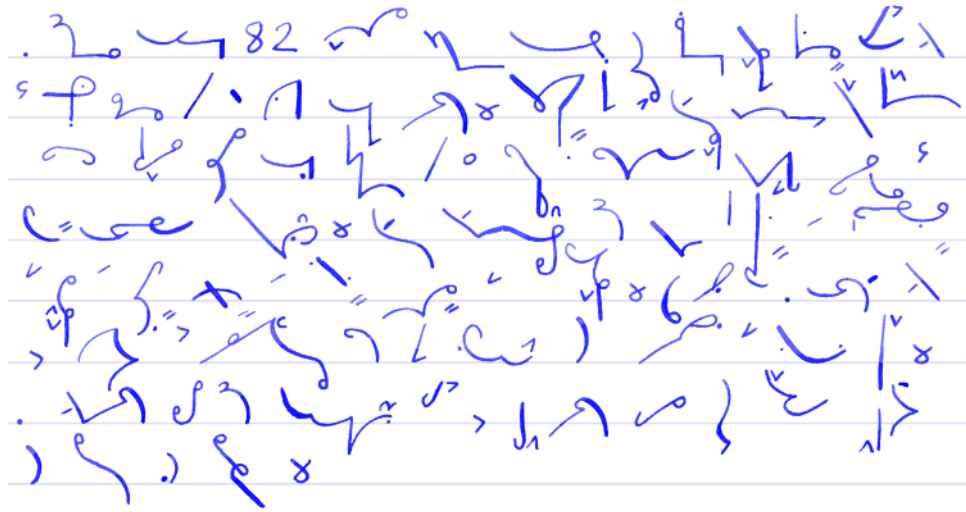


Crossness Pumping Station

The problem grew worse as the population rose, culminating in the Great Stink of 1858, when during the long hot humid summer Members of Parliament* had to hang sacking soaked in calcium chloride at the windows of the House of Commons*. This was partly to alleviate the members' discomfort but also partly because of the continuing belief in the miasma theory, despite recent findings indicating that contaminated water was the culprit. The epidemics had killed around 25,000 Londoners by that time and the problem finally had to be addressed. Sir Joseph

Bazalgette, Chief Engineer of London's Metropolitan Board of Works, was given the task of designing a complete sewage network for Central London. They hoped that by eliminating the stench, they would solve the cholera problem. Both problems were indeed solved, but the reduction of cholera outbreaks resulted from the improvement in the quality of the water supply which the new system coincidentally brought about.

* Omission phrase "Members (of) Parl(iament)" "House (of) C(ommons)"

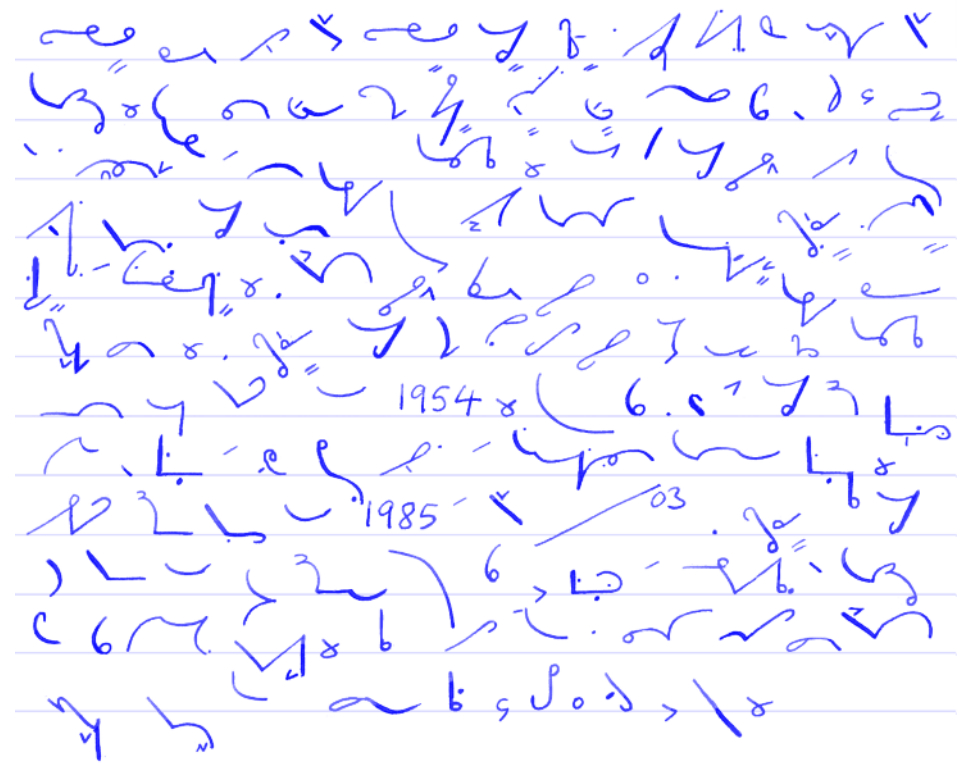


Crossness Pumping Station

The works included 82 miles of brick intercepting sewers constructed beside the Thames, joining up with the existing systems which all led into the river. Bazalgette had the foresight to make the pipe diameter more than twice as large as was needed at the time, which has produced a very long period of usefulness, with the ever-increasing population. Four pumping stations were built, at Deptford* and Crossness on the south side, and

Chelsea Embankment and Abbey Mills on the north side. These raised the inflow up to the level of the reservoirs from which the effluent was released on the ebbing tide. The upriver stations were eventually joined to the downriver ones, so that the final outfall was as far east as possible.

* "Deptford" Pronounced "detford" although some residents of the town might say "depford"



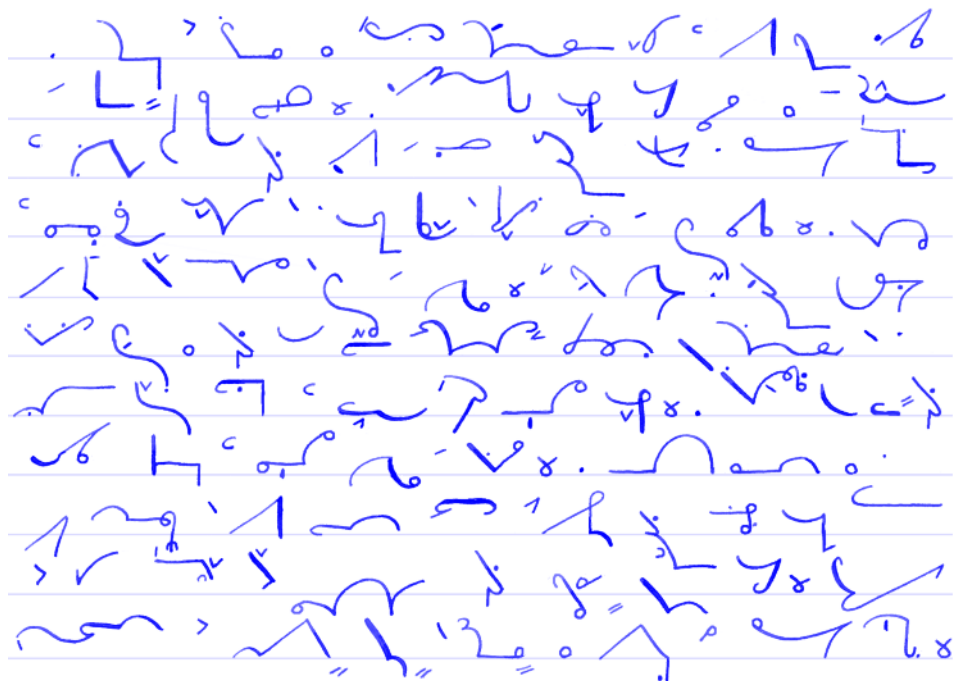
Crossness Pumping Station

Crossness is now run by the Crossness Engines Trust, a registered charity staffed entirely by volunteers. They have received* some funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, amongst others, to assist with the creation of a museum and improve visitor facilities. In the large Engine House are the four rotative beam engines, named after the royal family: Victoria, Prince Consort, Albert Edward and Alexandra. The Boiler House, which is now used as a visitor centre, provided the steam. The Prince Consort engine was the last one used until the new treatment facilities came into operation in 1954. After this, the building and the engines were decommissioned, left

to decay, and suffered severe rusting and vandalism for many decades. Restoration work began in 1985 and by 2003* the Prince Consort engine was back in full working order, thanks to the dedication and expertise of volunteers over this lengthy period. It is run off a small modern steam boiler, to provide power for "steaming days" when the station is open to the public.

* Omission phrase "they have (re)ceived"

* "2003" Long slash to represent the current century, arbitrary sign with no phonetic value



Crossness Pumping Station

The architecture of the complex is Norman Romanesque style with red brick arches and dog-tooth string courses. The ornamentation inside the Engine House is quite astounding*, with elaborate* painted wrought and cast iron work in the form of a central octagon, with screens consisting entirely of an intricate design of twining stems and flower heads. The pillars are topped by capitals of flowers and leaves. On the upper level the openwork* fish-scale pattern flooring is painted in grey and vermilion, which seems to me* to be reminiscent of a metal fire grate with glowing orange coals inside. The balustrades have gold-painted handrails decorated with scrolls, leaves and berries. The colour scheme is a rich mixture of red, cream and green, and the restored paintwork extends into the quarter* of the

hall occupied by the similarly painted Prince Consort beam engine. Everywhere the monogram of the Metropolitan Board of Works is repeated as the central motif.

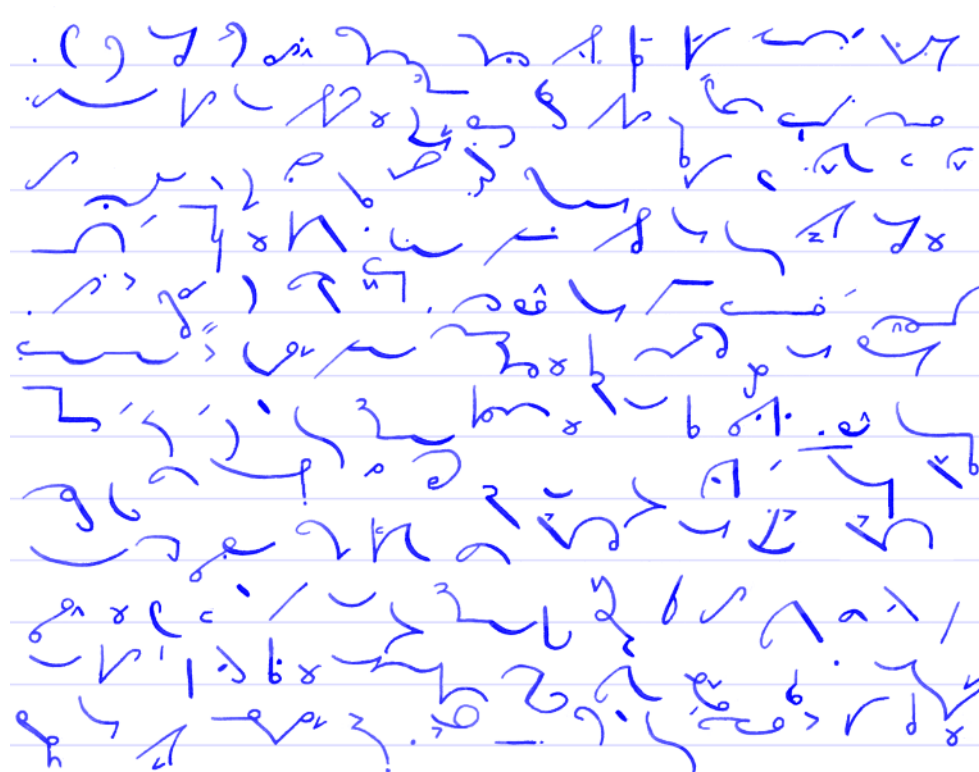
* "astounding" Helpful to insert the diphthong, as this is similar to the optional contraction "astonishing" but better to avoid using the contraction

* "elaborate" Compare this with the outline for "laboured" which uses Br halved

* Omission phrase "in the f(orm of)" "which seems (to) me"

* "openwork" Insert the first vowel, so it does not look like "paintwork"

* "quarter" Optional contraction



Crossness Pumping Station

The other three engines and their surrounding framework remain rusty*, dusty, dull and gloomy, patiently awaiting their* turn for restoration. Seeing the section that has been returned to its former glory makes one impatient to see the last piece of rust banished, bringing the whole building alive with light, colour and activity. It will be a fitting regal residence for the four royal engines. The running of the Prince Consort was remarkably quiet, the main sounds being the regular clicks and musical clanking of the various regulating mechanisms. It would be marvellous to stand in the central octagon, and hear and see all four working at the same time*. In its heyday the sound effects must have been* even more interesting, as the machines would be under full load, and accompanied by intermittent hissing from the twelve steam boilers in the adjoining

Boiler House. However, when all are in full working condition, I suspect that just one will be steamed up, each in turn, on different open days. In the meantime imagination will have to suffice, but that is an inferior substitute* for the real experience of hearing the noises coming from all four corners of the hall at once.

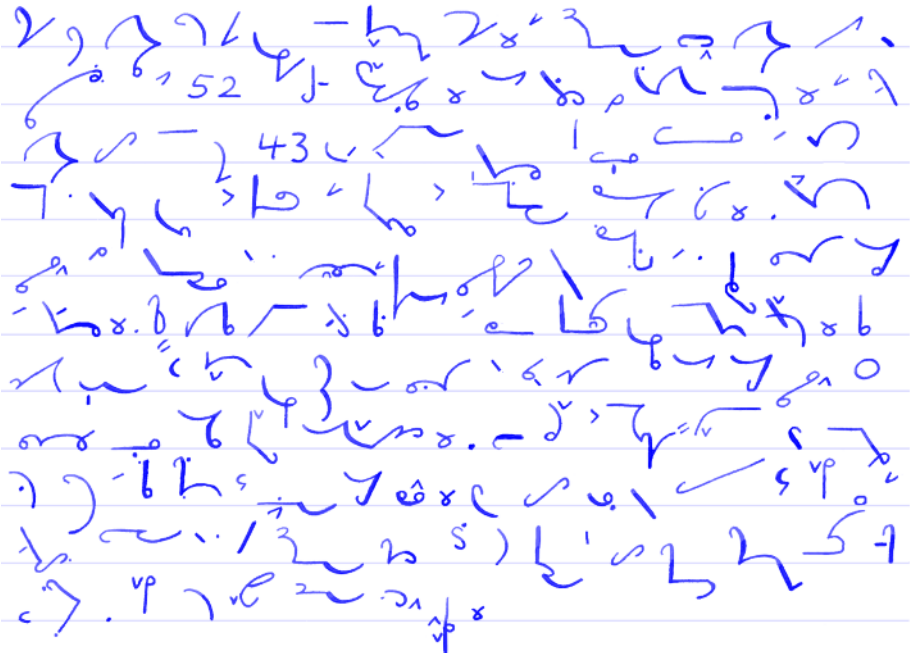
* "rusty" Insert the last vowel, to ensure it is not misread as "rusted"

* "awaiting their" Doubling to represent "their"

* "at the same time" Halving to represent the T of "time"

* Omission phrases "must (have) been" "at (wu)ns"

* "subs(t)itute" Omits the first T

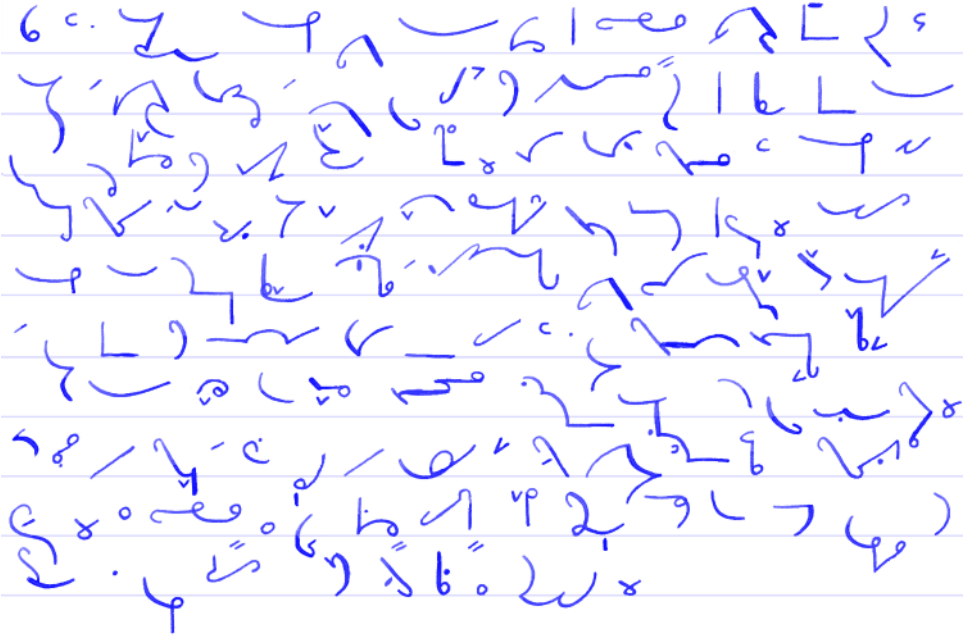


Crossness Pumping Station

There are three levels from which the visitor can admire the machinery*. On the working ground level are the two cylinders and the 52-ton flywheels*. In the basement is the valve gear. On the upper level one can see the 43-foot rocking beams at close quarters* and also get a better view of the decorations on the top parts of the octagonal central well*. The Boiler House has the beginnings of a museum detailing the history of public sanitation and a display of small engines and pumps. The Trust holds regular open days, and school educational* visits can be made by arrangement. It is worth noting that on my visit there was no smell of hot oil in the Engine House, as is sometimes the case in this type of environment. The great size of the cathedral-like building keeps the air fresh and adds drama with

the echoing engine sounds. However, one needs to be aware that the site is on the upwind corner of a large working treatment plant, so, depending on wind direction, there may be the occasional odour when approaching the site or whilst walking around outside.

- * "machinery" Optional contraction
- * "flywheels" It is not possible to use the Whl stroke in this compound word
- * "quarters" Optional contraction
- * "well" Insert the vowel so it is not misread as "wall"
- * "educational" The U diphthong sign would normally go outside a shun hook, but not possible in this outline because of the L stroke



Crossness Pumping Station

Those with an engineering interest will be in their element at Crossness and will be able to "talk shop" with the enthusiastic and helpful volunteers, and maybe even join their ranks so that it does not take another fifteen years times three to reach the final target. I will follow progress with interest and would prefer not to wait until I reach my century before I can see it completed! Anyone interested in architecture, design, motifs and ornamentation will be greatly

inspired by the interior and, if they take their camera, they will come away with a full programme of creative ideas in their minds for all kinds of graphics, artwork, needlework or even knitting projects. Hard hats are provided and flat shoes are necessary on the upper level with its perforated floor. As Crossness is within the Thames Water site, there is no access for casual visitors, so planning a visit on one of their open days is essential. (1286 words)