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## Blogs - 2016 - April

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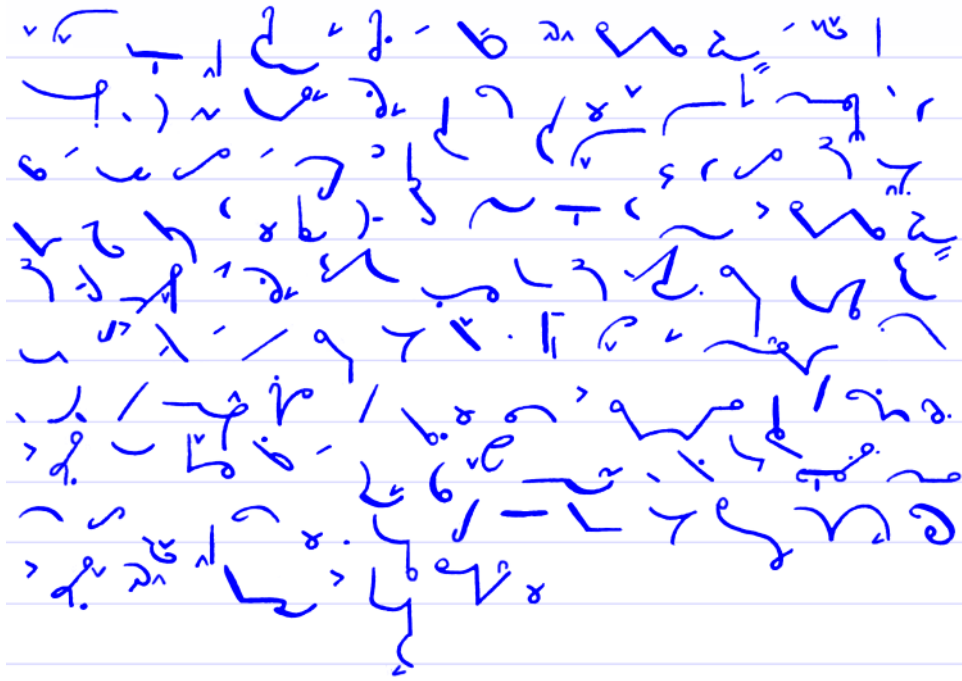
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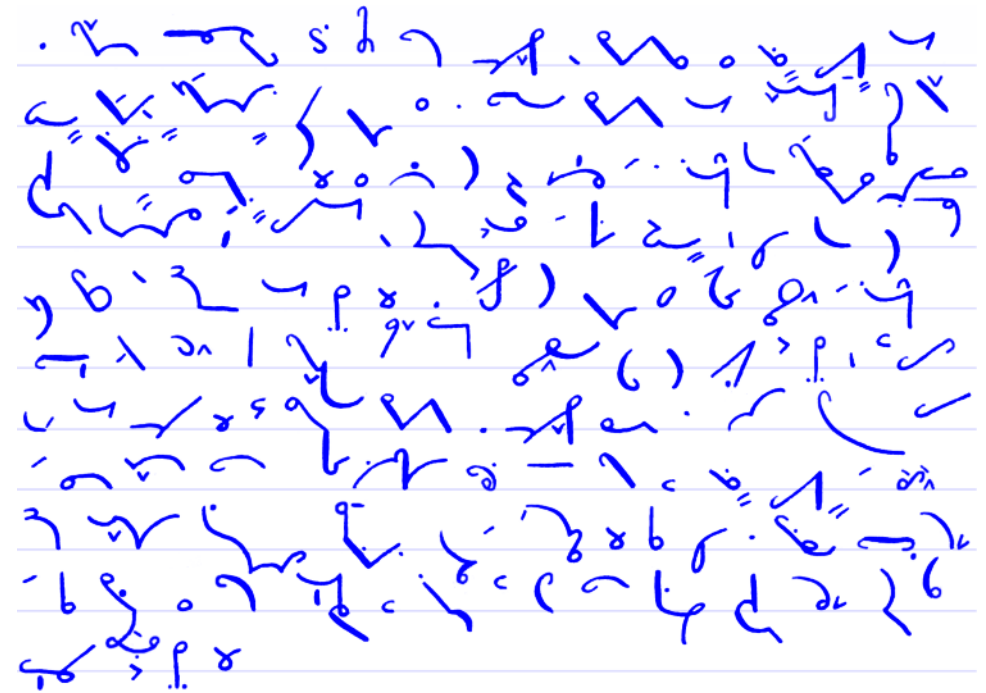


**Petts Wood**

I like to go out travelling on the trains and buses around the suburbs of London and I find it interesting to see how the various areas differ from each other. I look at the mixture of old buildings and new ones, and imagine what it would have been\* like when the old ones were newly built, and even before that. It is not so long ago that many of the suburbs of London were open countryside and the areas that we have names for were originally separate villages that have now joined up and are separated

only by a dotted line on the municipal map to show which council controls which piece. Some of the supermarkets display large framed prints of the high street in times past, and seeing these whilst queuing to pay for the groceries makes me want to find out more. The photos generally go back only as far as the earlier versions of the high street around the beginning of the twentieth century.

\* Omission phrase "it would (have) been"



**Petts Wood**

A prime example of planned transition from countryside to suburbs is Petts Wood in the London Borough of Bromley which was built as a "garden suburb" in the 1930's by developer Basil Scruby. His aim was to build homes and a community for prosperous middle class families who wanted to escape the noise and dirt of London, but still have easy access to their places of work in the city. The railway station\* was built first and then the houses and community grew up around it, providing high quality housing within easy reach of the city but with one foot in the

country. With the spread of the suburb, the countryside is now a little further away and some of my more elderly friends can remember when Petts Wood and surroundings were entirely farmland, strawberry fields and orchards. It is still a pleasant green area, and its spaciousness is very noticeable when compared with other more densely developed areas, especially those closer to the City.

\* "railway station" Write the R stroke first, as it is spoken first



The Markfield Beam Engine and Museum, which is located in Markfield Park on the River Lea Navigation Channel next to the Walthamstow reservoirs in north east London. Like its larger cousins at Crossness in south east London, this is a steam powered beam engine from the Victorian era, built for the sewage works which served the Tottenham\* and Wood Green area. The engine and engine house have been fully restored and on certain open days throughout the year, the engines are steamed up and can be seen in full

**Markfield Beam Engine**

At the end of March we went to an open day at the Markfield Beam Engine and Museum, which is located in Markfield Park on the River Lea Navigation Channel next to the Walthamstow reservoirs in north east London. Like its larger cousins at Crossness in south east London, this is a steam powered beam engine from the Victorian era, built for the sewage works which served the Tottenham\* and Wood Green area. The engine and engine house have been fully restored and on certain open days throughout the year, the engines are steamed up and can be seen in full

operation. They are no longer used for pumping and so the engines are not under load and the only purpose is to keep them in good order, and for enthusiasts, visitors and educational\* groups to see the glories of Victorian engineering in action.

\* The H is not pronounced, generally spoken as "Totnam"

\* "educational" The U diphthong is normally written outside the Shun Hook but here there is nowhere else for it to go

The beam engine was built in 1886 to pump effluent into the London system towards the Beckton treatment works. It remained in service until 1905 when it was demoted to standby pump for storm water. Operations ceased in 1964 and all the machinery\* was scrapped except for the engine which was mothballed. A partial restoration was undertaken from 1972 to 1976. A complete restoration and overhaul was carried out\* in 2009\* when the engine gave its first demonstration to the public. The engine, museum and grounds were

**Markfield Beam Engine**

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completed and opened to the public in 2010\*. The engine and pump house are grade two listed and so are protected and secured for the future.

\* "machinery" Optional contraction

\* "carried out" Halving for the T

\* "2009, 2010" Long slash to represent current century, arbitrary sign with no phonetic value



**Markfield Beam Engine**

The engine is a 100 horsepower\* free-standing double-expansion compound rotative beam engine, built by Wood Brothers of Yorkshire. The flywheel\* weighs 17 tons and is 27 feet in diameter. There is a Watt centrifugal\* speed governor\* and the drive coupling to the cylinders is a Watt parallel motion linkage. The engine is built within its own cast iron frame so that it is independent of the brick building, except for the flywheel axle fixing which has its own iron frame built into the wall. When under load, the engine consumed 200 kilos\* of coal per hour and the two pumps together were able to move 4 million gallons\* every\* 24 hours.

\* "horsepower" You could contract this by leaving out the Ray

\* "flywheel" It is not practical to join the WHL stroke here

\* "centrifugal" Based on the outline for "centre" for convenience, to obtain a clear and fast outline, similarly "central" "concentric"

\* "gove(r)nor" Optional contraction omitting the first R. You could write it with Vr stroke, but it is clear enough without

\* "kilos" "gallons" Both units of measurement, so prudent to insert vowels

\* "every" Insert the final vowel, as "over" would also make sense

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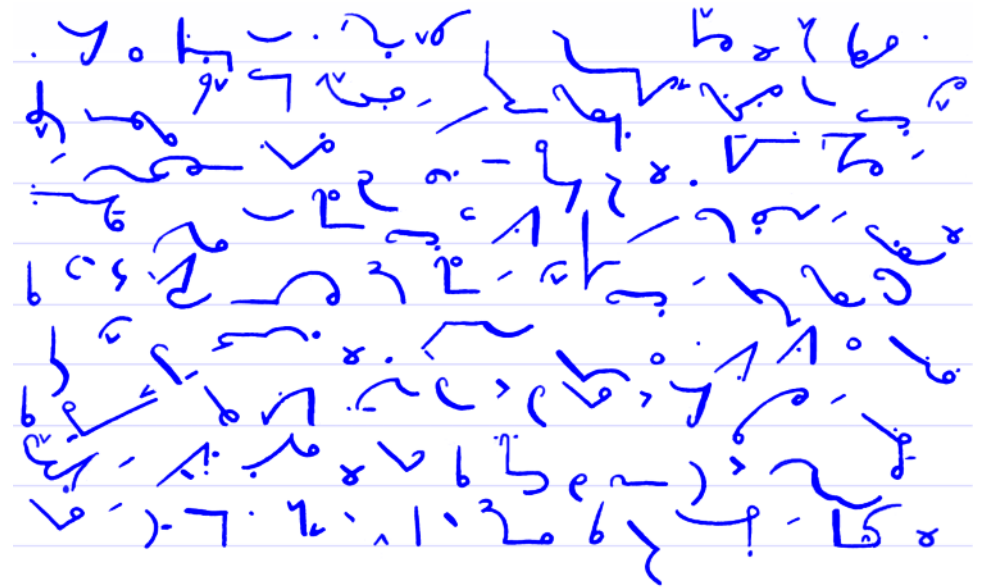
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**Markfield Beam Engine**

The engine is decorated in an ornate style typical of Victorian times. I think this was a desire to express high quality and fineness, and our present-day preference for clean lines and minimalistic\* appearance would have seemed quite strange to them. The Doric columns and acanthus leaves in dark green with red detail are very smart and pleasing. It is thought that the original colours were dark and light green, and before the present version it was light blue and cream. The rocking beam is a rich red, as befits its superior position, held aloft

over all the other parts of the engine, cylinders and pistons, flywheel and rotating shafts. Part of its attraction is that you can see all the moving parts and so get an idea of how it all works, which is both interesting and educational\*.

\* "minimalis(t)ic" Omits the T (outline not in dictionary)

\* "educational" The U diphthong is normally written outside the Shun Hook but here there is nowhere else for it to go

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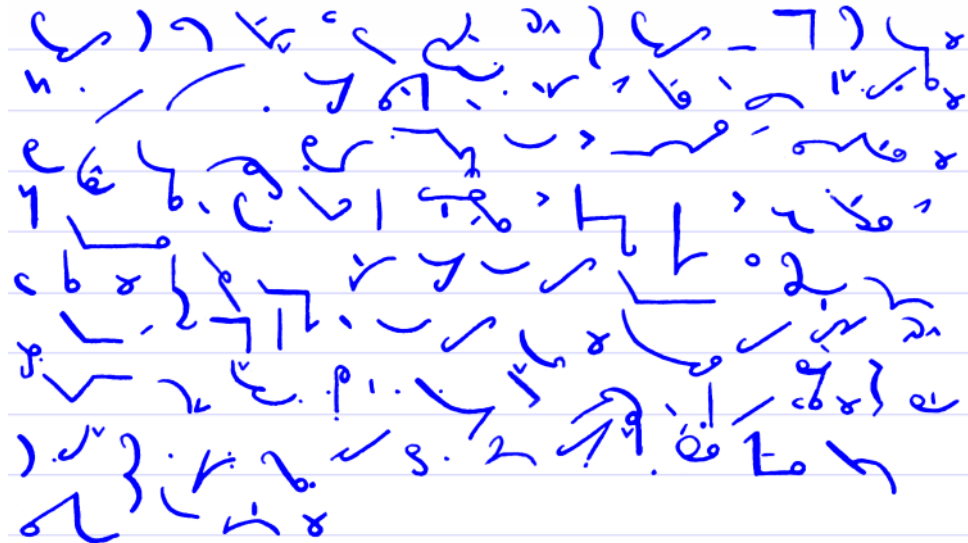
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**Markfield Beam Engine**

Everyone was very polite with people shuffling around so that everyone could get their photos. About an hour later the engine slowed to a halt and the puffs of steam died away. Several thousand photos must have been\* safely captured in all the cameras and smartphones. I had pictures of every part of it, close-ups of the decorative detail, all the individual components, and the building itself. It was not possible\* to get the whole engine in one picture as there is no room to stand back and get it all in one view. Afterwards we wandered around the park area, finally settling on a bench by the riverside to eat our sandwiches. Although the sun was

shining, there was a chilly breeze, and we spent a short time\* watching the swans and ducks\* before heading for home. (908 words)

\* Omission phrase "must (have) been" "short (time)"

\* The phrase "was not possible" on its own could used the shortened "poss", but here it would descend too far below the line.

\* "ducks" Insert the vowel, so it is not misread as "dogs"

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**Croydon Airport**

I am always on the lookout for places of interest to visit, in and around London. I am discovering many places that I did not know existed, even though I have lived in London all of my life. This happened last month when we visited the former Croydon Airport in south London. The site is now mostly\* built over with housing, industrial units, playing fields and parkland. The terminal building is now used as a business centre, and the booking hall, two small rooms and the control tower are where the Croydon Airport Society have their displays. The Society hold their open day once a

month and I was expecting to find out some facts about what I mistakenly\* thought was a minor airfield of limited importance, but probably worth visiting for a day out. I realised I was wrong when I checked their website prior to the visit, which shows that Croydon Airport was the first international airport in the world and the source of all our methods of aircraft and passenger management.

\* "mostly" "mistakenly" Both these omit the T

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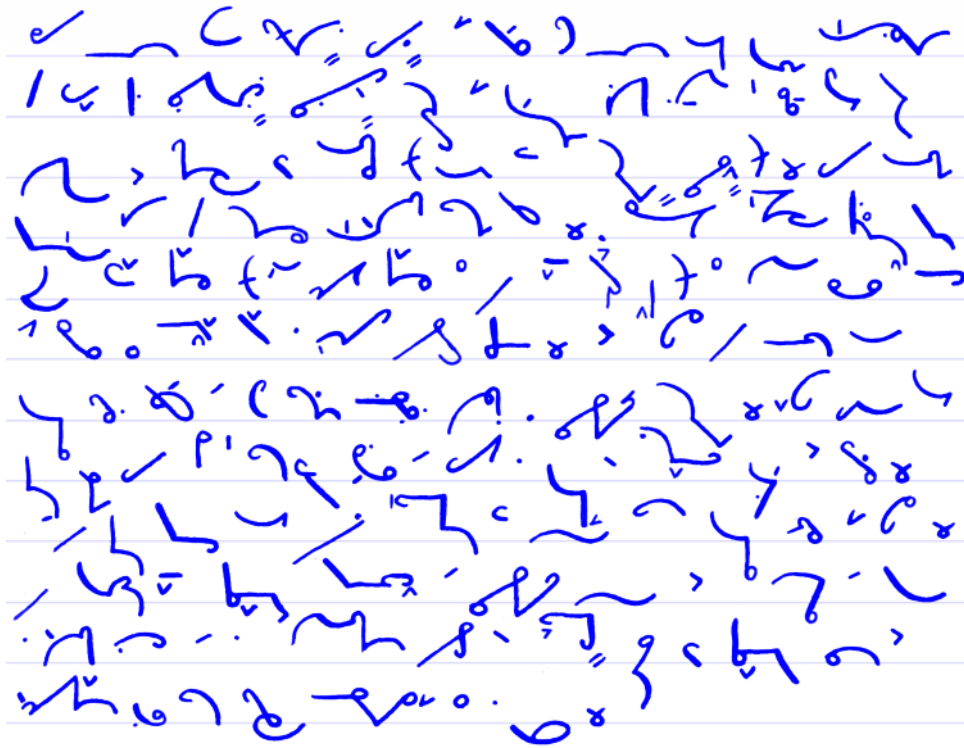
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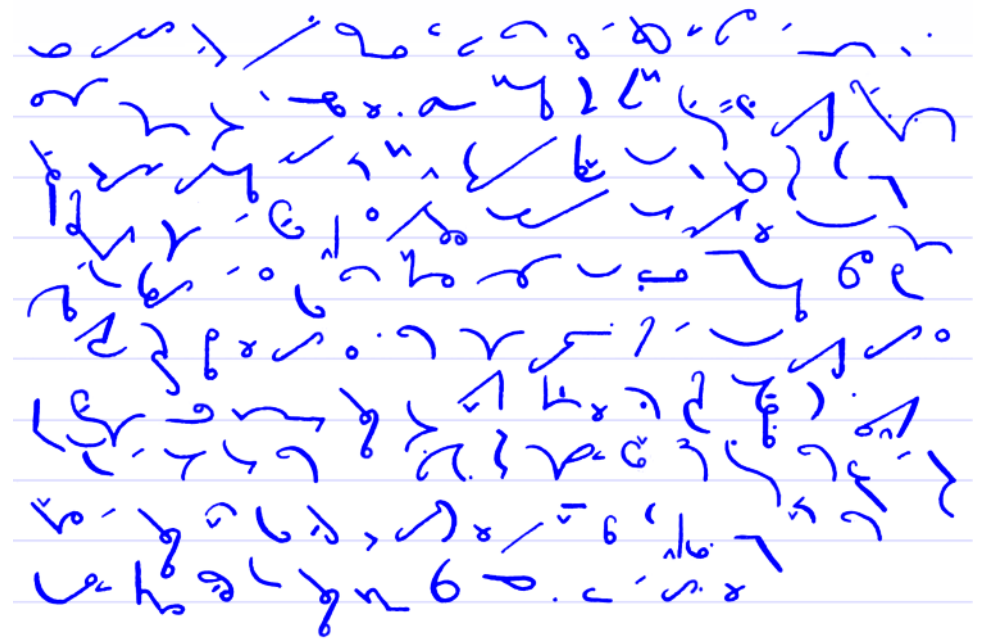
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**Croydon Airport**

As we came along Purley Way on the bus, there came into view the unmissable large white de Havilland Heron airplane on the forecourt, held aloft on struts over the path leading to the terminal building entrance now called Airport House. We entered the booking hall which remains unaltered from the past. The central columnar departure board showing flight times (not world times, as our guide pointed out) has long since gone, and the space is occupied by a modern reception desk. All the walls are covered in photos, prints, posters and other

framed exhibits illustrating the history of the airport. While waiting for the tour to start, we sat on very comfortable sofas and watched a video of archive footage of the planes. Our tour began in the rear corridor, with many more photos and prints on the walls. Our volunteer guide described the background and history of many of the images, and, being an older man and a long-term resident of Croydon, he was able to describe some of the wartime events from personal experience as a youngster.



**Croydon Airport**

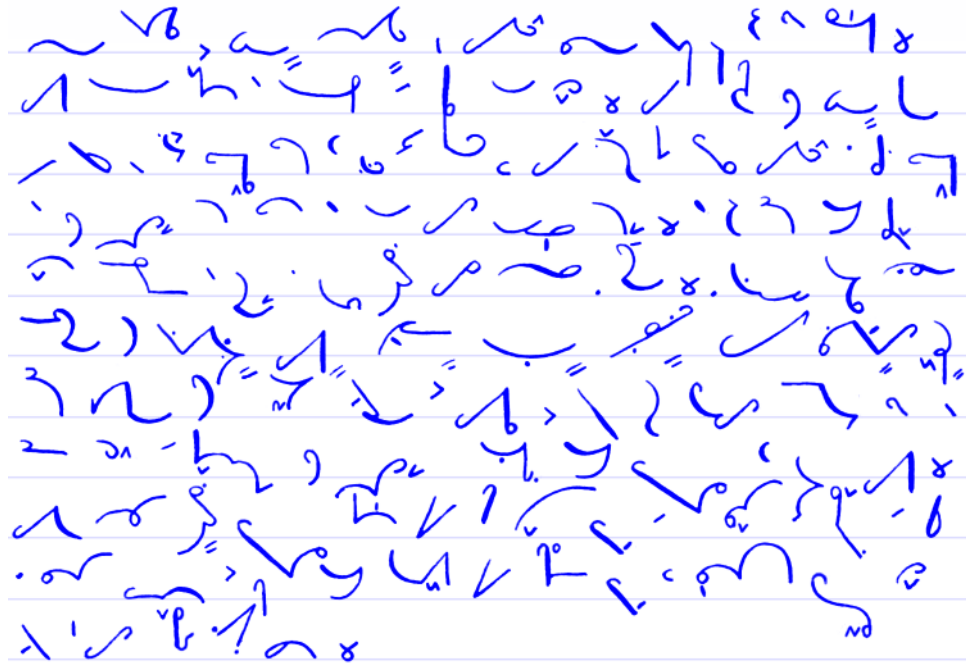
Next we went up the rear staircase, with yet more prints and posters on the walls, and came to a small room full of exhibits. The first thing I noticed was the giant 4-blade wooden propeller positioned between the windows, and we heard about how they were designed in two pieces, so that they could be transported easily and flown out as replacements anywhere in the world. Another room leads off this one and has even more items, mostly in glass cabinets, as well as several original airplane seats.

One is a very early wicker chair and another wooden one has deep floral cushions to make the passengers feel right at home. Air travel in those days was a huge novelty and only for the very wealthy, although the earliest flights were far from comfortable, and both pilots and passengers might have been open to the weather. Our guide told us that outfits could be hired from various department stores for passengers to protect themselves against the cold and wind.









**Perivale Wood**

Many apologies to the London Marathon, but we found something better to do with that particular Sunday. We had another item of interest and destination in mind. We travelled through London doing our best to avoid\* the crowds from that event, and yet when we arrived at the place, we found a dense crowd of three million or more all in one enclosed area. All of them were English despite my expectation\* of seeing a few Spanish ones amongst the throng. The venue for this amazing\* gathering was Perivale Wood Local Nature Reserve where the Selborne Society were holding their annual opening of the woods to the public, so that everyone can have the opportunity to walk around and admire the three million native English bluebells that fill the wood.

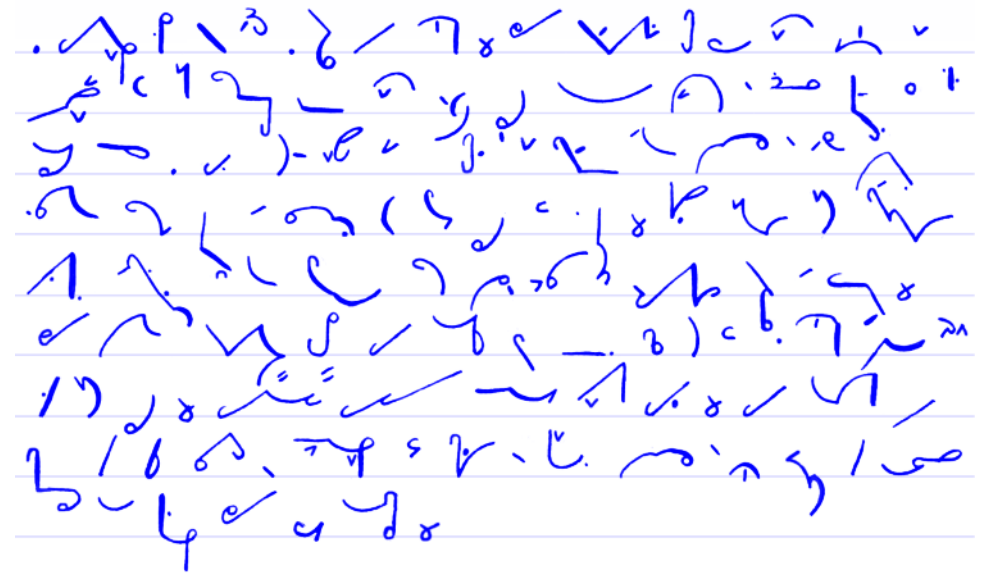
We have mostly\* Spanish bluebells at home, which are larger, lighter blue and slightly stripy, and just a small clump of the true English variety, which are darker blue, with smaller flowers lined up on one side of the arching stem.

\* "avoid" and "evade" Always insert the second vowel

\* "expectation" Optional contraction

\* "amazing" and "amusing" Always insert the second vowel

\* "mostly" Omits the T



**Perivale Wood**

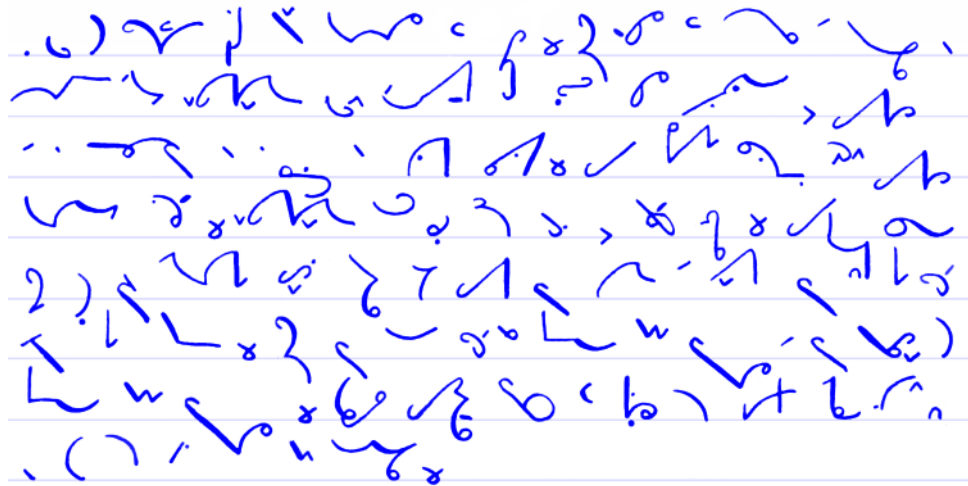
The website said, be warned, the paths are muddy. As we boarded the train near my home, I realised that I had forgotten to give my oldish\* shoes another layer of wax dubbin as added insurance against the wet, so whilst on the train I broke off lumps of soft lip salve from the tube and smeared them over the shoes with a tissue. At last\* I felt I was properly\* ready and prepared for everything from loose soil to woodland puddles and gloop. As we left Perivale Station, we noticed people coming towards us with a muddy ring around the edge of their shoes. We knew we were going the right way. We followed our directions which

just happened to coincide with the trail of tiny lumps of mud here and there\*, which increased in density as we neared the entrance.

\* "oldish" Both strokes are written downwards

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

\* "properly" Always insert the first vowel, and the diphone in "appropriately", as they are similar in outline and meaning



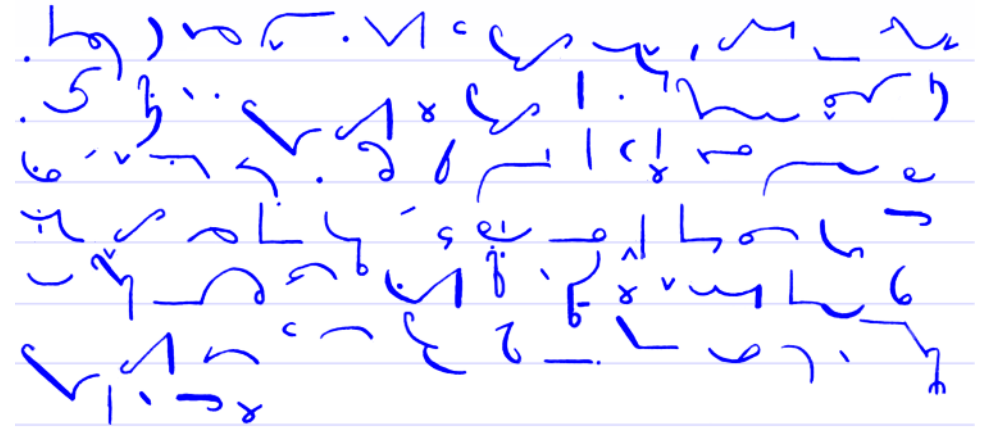
**Perivale Wood**

The event was very well attended by families with children. There were\* stalls with maps and pencils to mark off the wildlife found en route, craft stalls relating to the woodland and an example of a section of laid hedge. We started the circuit around the woodland, following the arrows. Wildlife information sheets were pinned to the posts and trees. We continued swimming through the sea of blue and followed the winding paths until we had blue left and right, blue at the front and blue at the back. There were\* people in

front of us talking about the bluebells and people behind us talking about the bluebells. This was one of those\* places that demands your whole attention and does not allow you to think or chat about anything else.

\* Omission phrase "there (w)ere"

\* "one of those" Insert the vowel in "those" and "these" when they are in a phrase and out of position



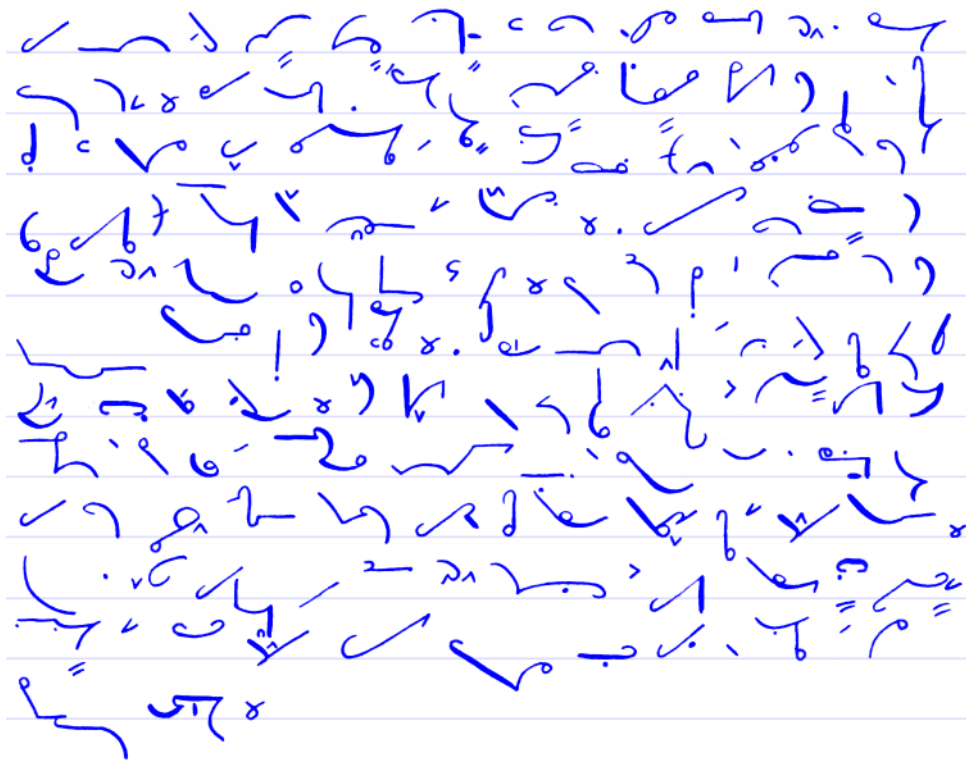
**Perivale Wood**

The atmosphere was almost like a party, with everyone invited who wanted to come and appreciate the national treasure of a bluebell wood. Everyone had a permanent\* smile on their face and I kept hearing the phrase "Just look at that!" Of course, looking is not enough, one must take photos, and when the sun comes out, take the same view again in brighter colours and more varied contrast of shadows\*. I intended taking this bluebell wood home

with me for ever, and then coming back next year to capture it all again.

\* "permanent" See Distinguishing Outlines 2 page on theory website "prominent, permanent, pre-eminent"

\* "shadows" Insert the second vowel, as "shades" could also make sense

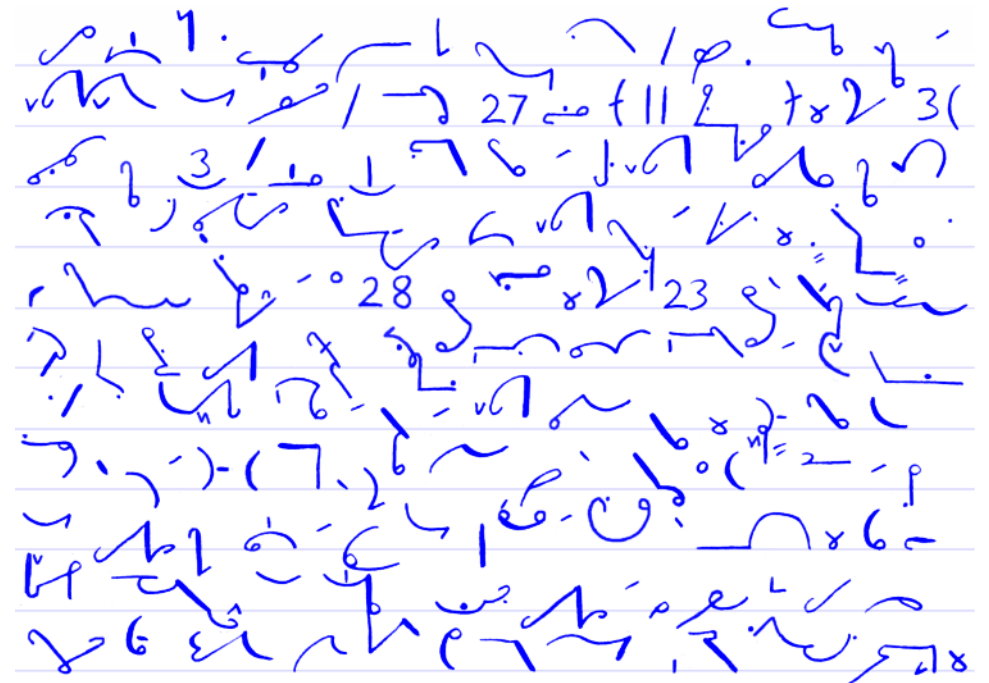


**Perivale Wood**

We came upon Little Elms Meadow with more stalls scattered around a central clear area. As we entered, the Northfields Morris Dancers started their display of traditional dancing, with bells, white handkerchiefs and clash sticks (made of hazel from these woods), accompanied by music on the violin. The wonderful Mr Stag was standing around and having his photo taken with the children. People were sitting on logs or their picnic blankets eating their sandwiches. The sun came out and lit up the trees which were\* just showing green buds opening. I was delighted to be here at

this repetition of the long-held English custom of special events and gatherings to mark the coming of spring, in a secluded field away from houses and traffic, apart from one or two\* trains passing behind the trees on the boundary bank. After a while we continued our walk around the remainder of the wood, passing the Grand Union Canal on the northern boundary where the bluebells gave way to nettles and less spectacular undergrowth.

\* Omission phrases "which (w)ere" "one (or) two"



**Perivale Wood**

Once home I had a closer look at the printed map, which lists the quantities of trees and wildlife in the reserve which covers 27 acres (11 hectares). There are 3,000 hazel trees, 300 large oaks, 100 crab apples and 10\* wild service trees, also maple, ash, hawthorn, blackthorn, elm, wild privet and cherry. The Paddock is an old permanent\* pasture and has 28 species of grass. There are 23 species of butterfly, including orange tip, speckled wood, purple hairstreak, comma, small copper and peacock, and a large variety of moths and beetles, and wild honey bees. Society members have access all year and so they get to see the long list of birds, as they walk and sit in the woodland during the summer and listen for the different songs

and flashes of colour. This great diversity can only be\* found in undisturbed ancient woodland and is the reason why we must preserve those that we have left, as they can be managed but cannot be artificially recreated. (877 words)

\* "10" Always insert the vowels in the outlines for 10 and 18

\* "permanent" See Distinguishing Outlines 2 page on theory website "prominent, permanent, pre-eminent"

\* "can only be" On its own, "only" is written with full N and L strokes