



[www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-lessons.org.uk](http://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-lessons.org.uk)

[www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-reading.org.uk](http://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-reading.org.uk)

[www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk](http://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk)

Images & Text © Beryl L Pratt (excepting text of quotes)

## Blogs - 2018 - November

## 2 Lord Mayor's Show

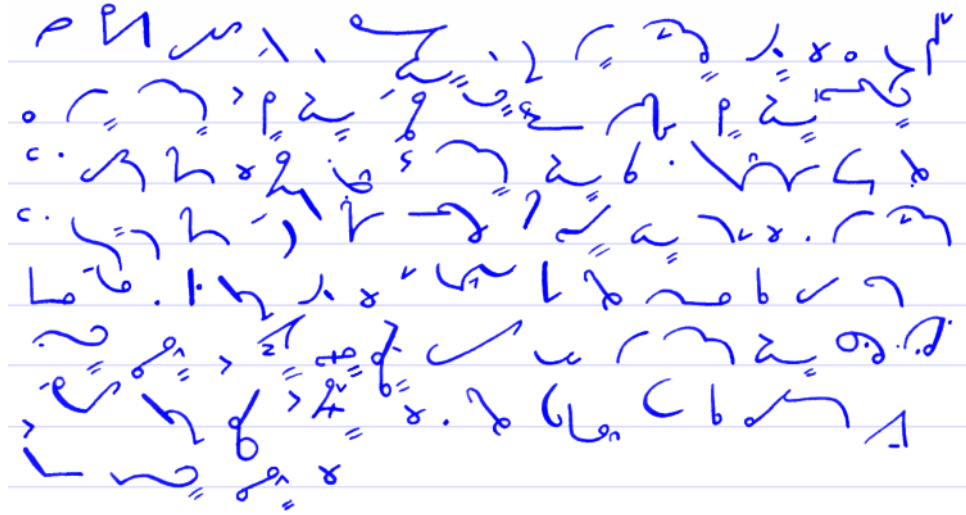
## 5 River Thames

## Z Fraser's Fright

## 13 Gift Quotes

All material (excepting text of quotes) 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: 1 October 2024



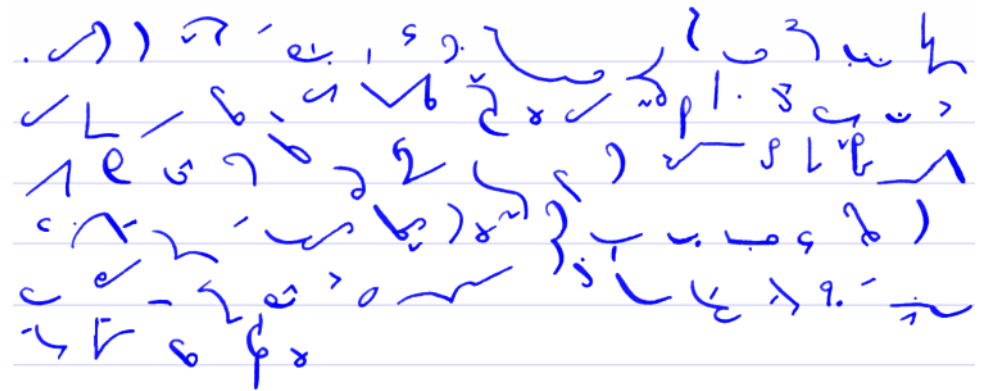
### Lord Mayor's Show

Last Saturday we went up to central London to see the Lord Mayor's Show. His full title is Lord Mayor of the City of London\* and he is the non-political leader of the City of London Corporation, with a one-year term. He should not be confused with the Mayor of London which is a popularly elected position, with a four-year term, and whose control covers the larger Greater London area. The Lord Mayor takes office the day before the show. On the following day the procession makes its way from Mansion House to the Royal Courts of

Justice where the new Lord Mayor of London swears allegiance to the sovereign before the Justices of the High Court. The procession then continues along its circular route\* back to Mansion House.

\* "City of London" Not using the omission phrase "City (of) London", as this is a title and full outlines are advisable for accuracy

\* "route" Always insert the vowel in "route" and "road" as they are similar in outline and meaning



### Lord Mayor's Show

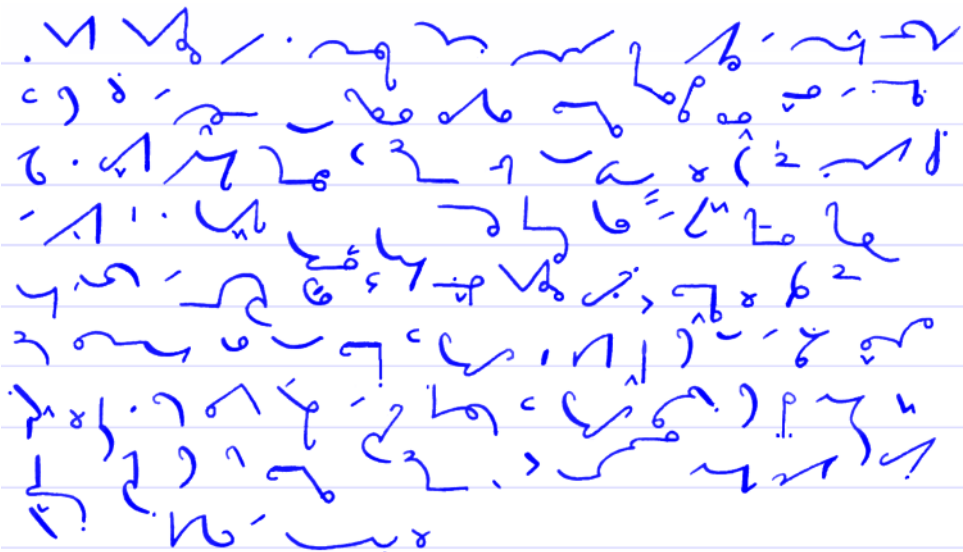
The weather was mild and sunny\* but with the threat of afternoon showers, although none were evident at the time we took our place to await\* the parade's arrival. We stood at a point near the end of the route\*, as we have found from past years that there are fewer people there, and we can stand at the side of the kerb with elbow room and no-one behind us. There was no need to guess when the procession was near, as we could hear the sound of the first military band being funnelled up the street and echoing off the tall buildings on either side\*.

\* "sunny" Always insert the vowels in "sun/snow, sunny/snowy"

\* "to await" Not phrased, so that it is clearly "await" and not "wait"

\* "route" Always insert the vowel in "route" and "road" as they are similar in outline and meaning

\* "on either side" Compare with the omission phrase "on the oth(er) side"



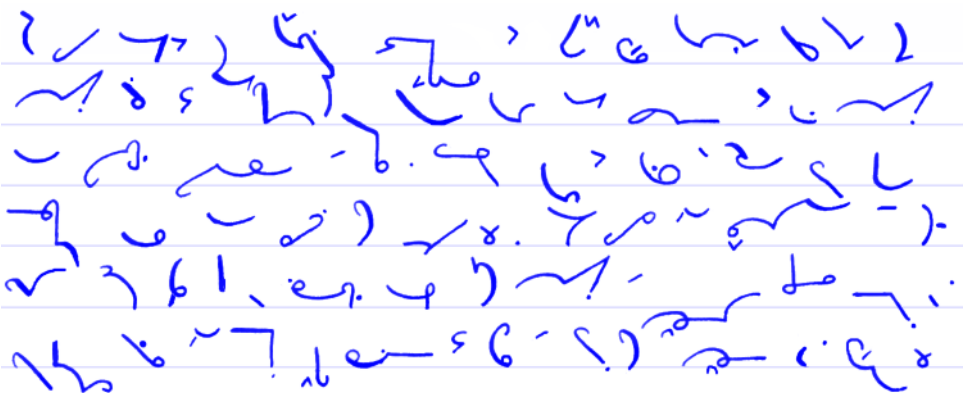
Lord Mayor's Show

The parade participants are a mixture of army, military, troops, regiments and mounted cavalry, with their bands and music, young persons' service groups such as scouts, guides and cadets, and then a wide range of organisations that work and trade in London. They walked, marched, danced and rode on a variety of vehicles, vintage cars, taxis, vans and giant trucks transformed\* into novel and colourful floats with the excited participants waving to the crowds. Those who walked were smacking hands in greeting with everyone who held out their hand and endless\* smiles

abounded. It was a very happy, positive and cheerful atmosphere, with everyone celebrating their city and enthusiastic about declaring and advertising their particular group's work to all the onlookers, and indeed the world watching by television and internet.

\* "transformed" Optional contraction

\* "endless" Compare with the distinguishing outline for "needless" which has full N and D strokes



Lord Mayor's Show

Although we enjoyed seeing the vibrancy and creativeness of the giant floats, for me the best part was the marching bands, with the drum beats being felt in the stomach, all the feet marching in well-trained unison, and a close-up view of the faces of ordinary people doing extraordinary\* things in serving their country. The only ones not

smiling quite so broadly were those who had to concentrate instead on their marching and musical tasks, keeping to a predetermined pace, not getting out of sync with the others and playing their music without a fluff.

\* "extraordinary" Optional contraction

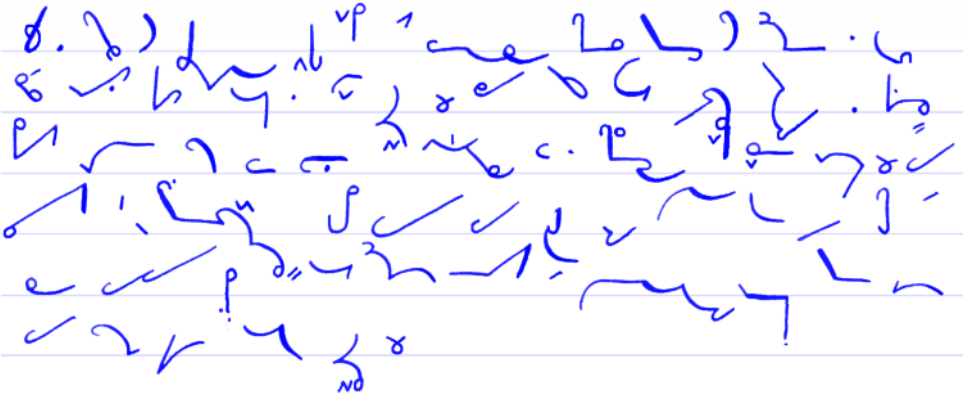


**Lord Mayor's Show**

Towards the end of the parade came the Lord Mayor's golden coach, a very old and splendidly ornate vehicle, pulled by magnificent horses and surrounded by guards in uniforms from past centuries. This coach can be seen year round in the Museum of London where you can get a good leisurely close-up view of all the detail. I enjoyed watching the groups of Horse Guards go by, and the horses were perfectly groomed and kitted out in just as

much finery as the dignitaries and the Lord Mayor himself. One particular beautiful white horse seemed to have glowing yellow legs as he passed us and went up the street, but then I realised it was the headlights of the large van that was following at a little distance behind to act as a spacer between them\* and the next set of groups.

\* Omission phrase "betwee(n) them"

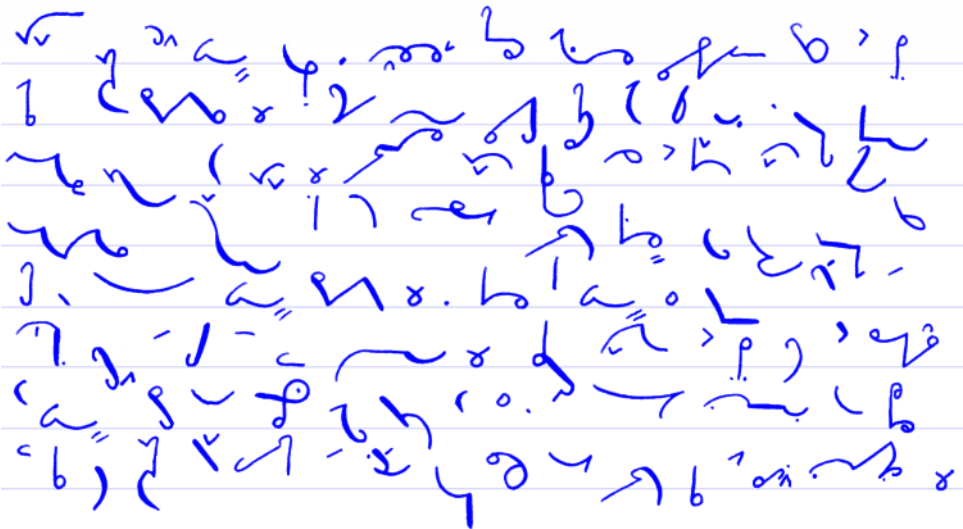


**Lord Mayor's Show**

Just as the procession was disappearing out of sight and the cleansing trucks began their work, a few spots of rain turned into a light shower. As we passed along the riverside pathway, the Thames started to look very cold, grey and unpleasant, with a darkening sky to match. We hurried on to

Blackfriars Station, where we did not have to wait long for our train and soon we were sitting in the warm carriage and looking forward\* to getting back home, away from the chilly November showers. (689 words)

\* Omission phrase "looking fo(r)ward"

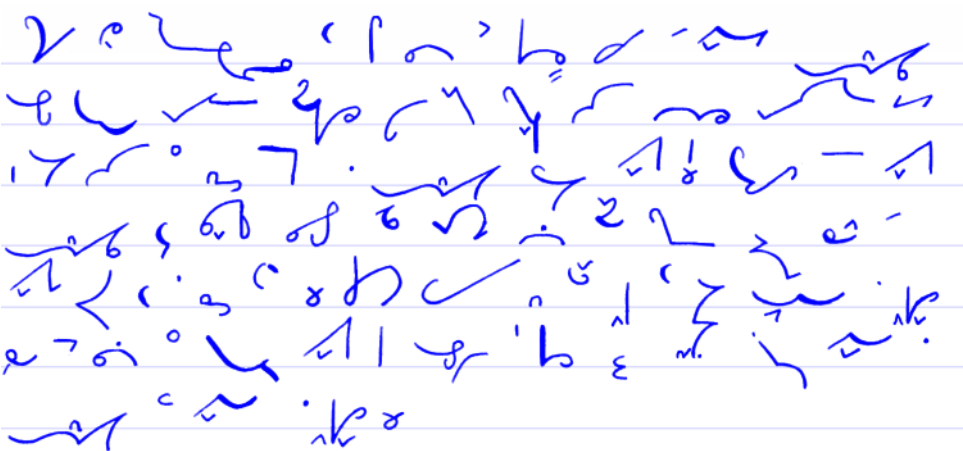


**River Thames**

I like to travel around London, visiting the museums, attractions and famous historical places of the city and its suburbs. There are many hidden treasures and they just need a bit of digging and investigation to bring them to light. Regardless of my destination, most of the time my journey involves arriving at or crossing the River Thames, even if only to get the fast train to another London suburb. The Thames at London is big, broad and muddy\* brown, and

generally quite cold looking. It has been the life of the city through all the centuries that London has been in existence, and even before that as a natural magnet for settlements, with its ease of travel by water and abundant food sources in the river itself and the surrounding marshland.

\* "muddy" Helpful to insert the first vowel, as "moody" could also make sense when describing landscape

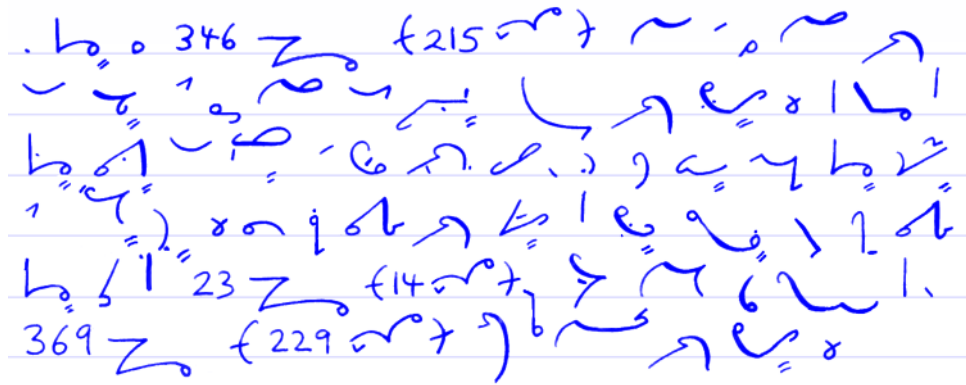


**River Thames**

There are lots of facts and figures\* that tell some of the Thames story, and writing the numerals instead of having to recall shorthand outlines will, I hope\*, provide little moments of relief - but only little as you cannot get a numeral "nearly" right! Everyone can write numerals without the slightest hesitation, and that is also the aim of shorthand practice, to hear the sound and write the shape without a second

thought. It is also where you find out that intellectually knowing an outline is not quite the same as being able to write it instantly on demand, when you compare writing a numeral with writing an outline.

\* Omission phrase "fac(t)s (and) figures" "I (h)ope" Only use "fac(t)s" in a common phrase, so that it is never misread as "fax". More often it can be phrased as "(f)acts".



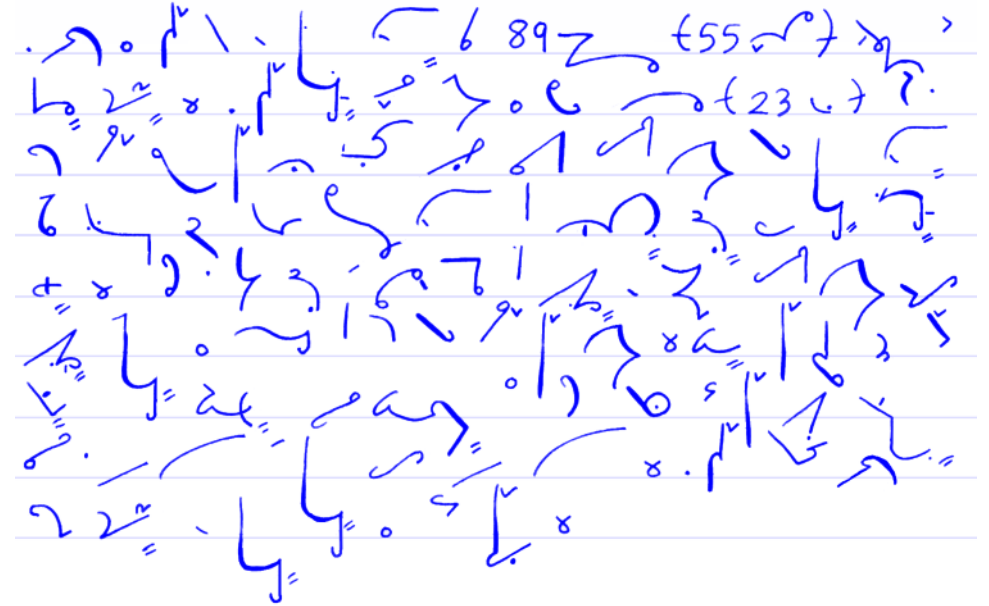
### River Thames

The Thames is 346 kilometres (215 miles) long, and is the longest\* river in England and the second longest\* in the UK, after the River Severn. It begins at Thames Head in Gloucester and flows roughly west to east, through London and into the Thames Estuary and the North Sea. Some consider the head of the River Churn at Seven Springs to be the true\* head of the Thames, which would add 23 kilometres (14 miles) to its overall\* length, thus bringing it to

369 kilometres (229 miles) and therefore longer than the River Severn.

\* "longest" Alternative outline that omits the G stroke

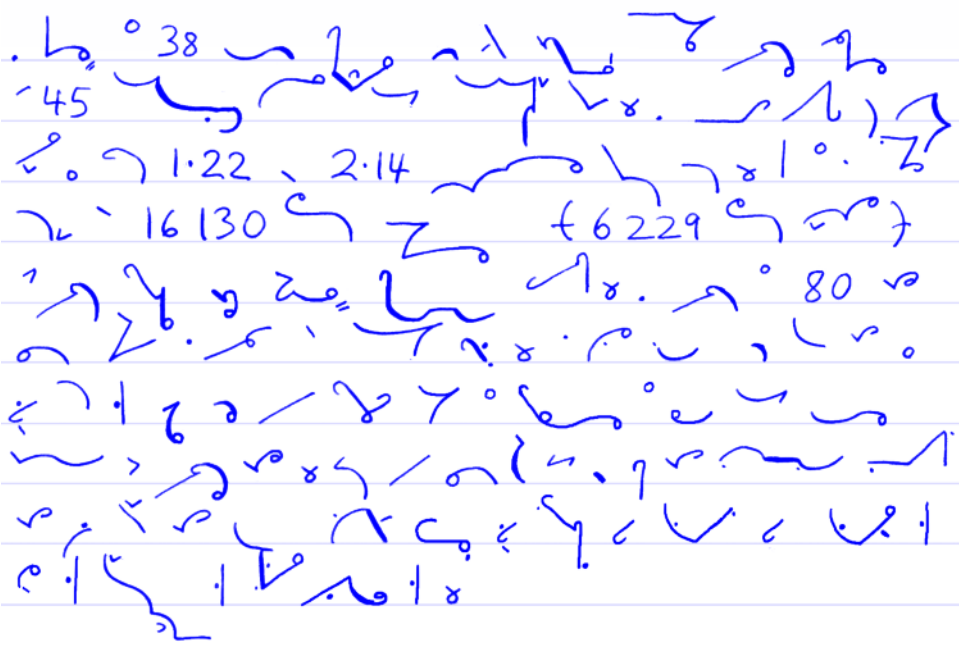
\* "true" Always insert the vowel in this, and in "outer" "utter", to help differentiate  
 \* "overall" Full strokes, not using the short form



### River Thames

The river is tidal up to Teddington Lock which is 89 kilometres (55 miles) upstream of the Thames Estuary. The tidal rise and fall is 7 metres (23 feet) although a very high spring tide may occasionally raise the head water level above Teddington Lock, and this effect would be felt as far as the lock at Molesey Weir near Hampton\* Court. There is an additional weir and sluice gates at Richmond, to ensure the water level

between Richmond and Teddington is maintained at or above half-tide level. London tide tables, issued by the Port of London Authority, use London Bridge as their basis, with the tide reaching Putney half an hour later, and Teddington one hour later. The tidal part of the river from the Estuary to Teddington is called the Tideway.  
 \* Hampton" Proper names always use the Imp stroke, necessary for distinction



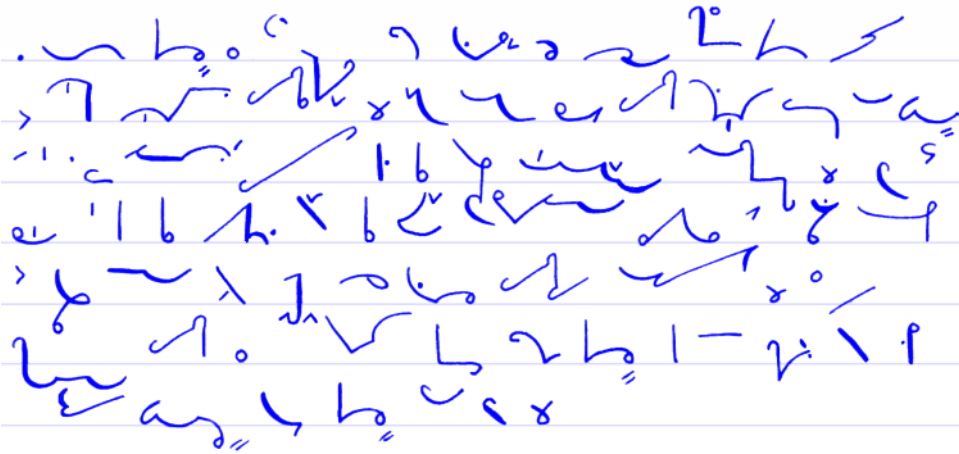
River Thames

The Thames has 38 named tributaries made up of brooks, canals, rivers and streams\*, and 45 navigation locks in the non-tidal part. The current rate of sea level rise is from 1.22 to 2.14 millimetres per year. It has a catchment area of 16,130 square kilometres (6,229 square miles) and the river provides two-thirds of London's drinking water. The river has 80 islands, some of which are a result of natural braiding. A less common word for island is "eyot" or "ait" and these words are preserved only as place names, as seen in

the names of many of the river's islands. Here are some of them: Two Tree Island, Magna Carta Island, Eel Pie Island, Fiddler's Elbow, Queen's Eyot, Appletree Eyot, Ferry Eyot, Pharaoh's Ait, Lot's Ait, Firework Ait, Raven's Ait\*.

\* "and streams" In phrases it is sometimes possible to show the R Hook fully

\* A long list of proper names can be written without the cap marks, as that would be too slow to write



River Thames

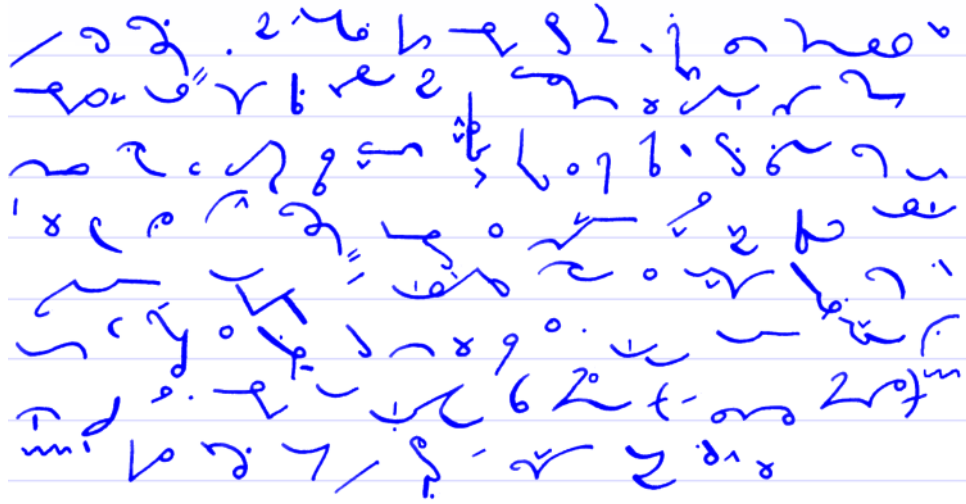
The name Thames is thought to derive from various words meaning "dark" which may refer to the muddy murky waters. I have never seen the water remotely clear in London, and on a cold and gloomy winter day it is positively uninviting and unattractive. However, with the sun\* on it, it is redeemed by its shiny sparkling surface and the endless interest of the vessels going up and down the most

famous waterway in the world\*. As our drinking water is partly taken from the Thames, it can truly be said that we Londoners have the Thames in our blood. (702 words)

\* "sun" Always insert the vowels in "sun/snow, sunny/snowy"

\* Omission phrase "in (the) world"





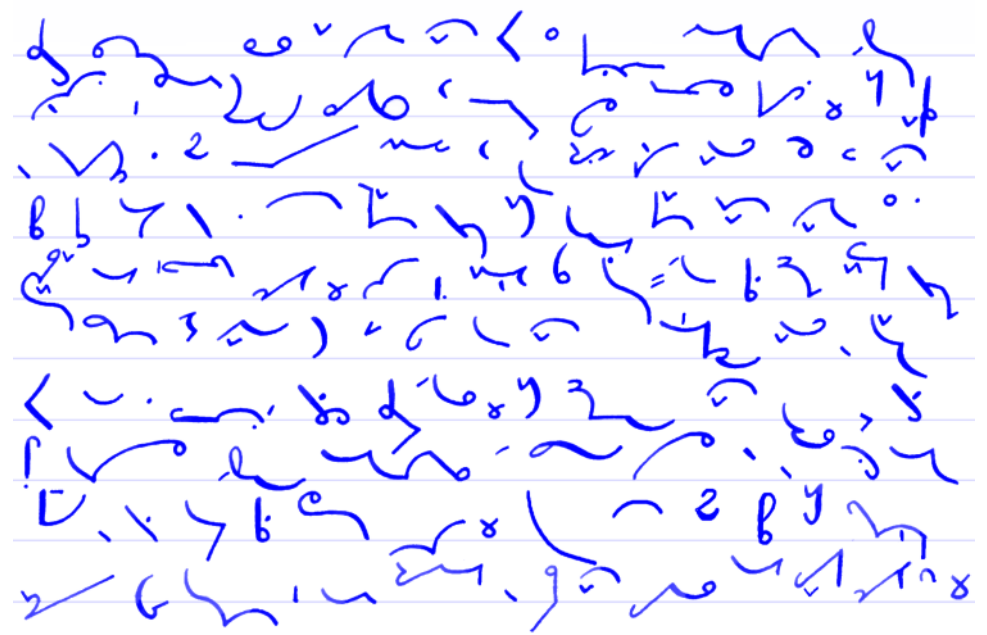
### Fraser's Fright

We met Fraser in August 2018 and October 2015 blogs

Our friend Fraser, the shorthand novice turned expert, has been asked to contribute some reminiscences of his experiences in his early days of using shorthand outside of the classroom. We know you will forgive the mixed metaphor when we say that he has climbed to the top of his tree and it is all plain sailing from now on. However, let's allow Fraser to explain his meteoric rise to shorthand

distinction in his own unique, incomparable and unsurpassed manner, as entirely befits the very apt name that Providence has bestowed upon him. He has an uncommon knack of finding "le mot juste"\* and is an expert in unearthing those charming (and sometimes charmless) turns of phrase in which our splendid and fertile English language abounds.

\* "le mot juste" French for "the exact/fitting word", with wavy underline to show it is not English



### Fraser's Fright

It has been some years now since I left my job as tea-maker and envelope-stuffer, lowly but essential services that keep the wheels of commerce turning. I had decided to pursue a shorthand career and I knew that if I went the whole nine yards with my studies, it would only be a matter of time before I was having the time of my life as a high-flier in the corporate world. Little did I know that those far-off days were the quiet before the storm and that the writing was on the wall for my undemanding nine to five job in a gloomy basement despatch office. I was working my fingers to the bone delivering folders, stuffing envelopes

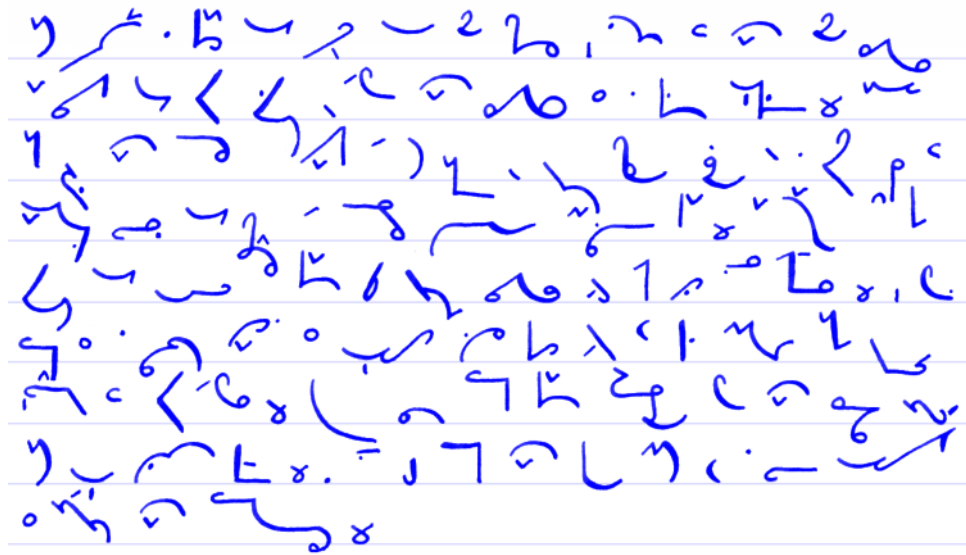
and stamping letters, all to earn enough dosh\* to pay for each day's square meal. After my shorthand studies, I had been promoted\* to shorthand writer\* within the firm, but now I wanted to stretch my wings in the wide world beyond.

\* "dosh" Slang for money

\* "promoted" Helpful to insert the vowel in "promote" and "permit" and their derivatives, as they can often both make sense

\* Omission phrase "to short(hand) writer"





### Fraser's Fright

I was really a diamond in the rough in shorthand terms but, armed with my shorthand certificates, I headed for the job agency\* to offer my services as a temp\* note-taker. I knew I had to play my cards right and so I took to power dressing, consisting of a sharp suit with knife edge crease in the trousers and expensive looking silk tie. I arrived at the agency in the nick of time, just before the heavens opened and it rained cats and dogs\*. But every cloud has a silver lining, as no-one else turned up that day and I felt I had the pick of the crop with job offers. After some quality time of questioning over my skills, I proved I was no lame duck\*. The cat did not get my tongue and I was without a care in the world\* as I proffered my qualifications\*.

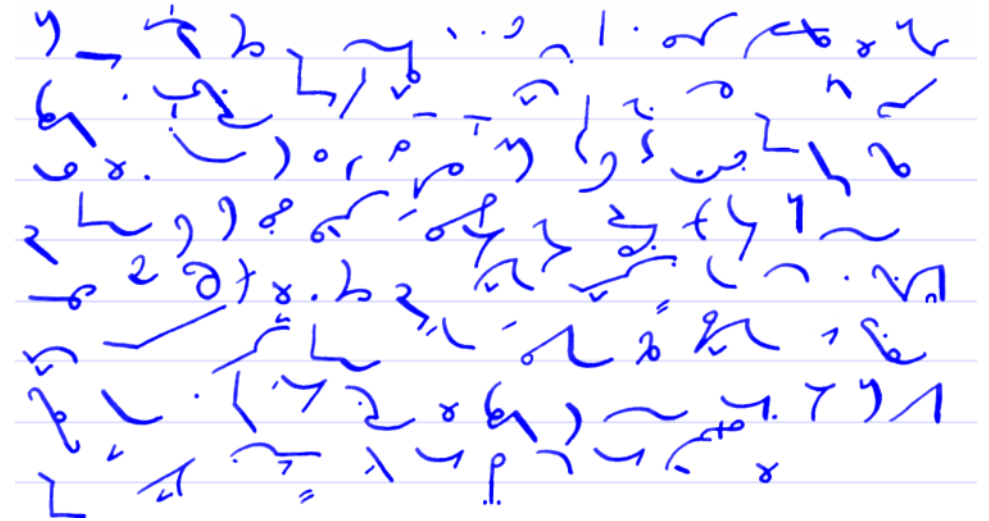
\* "agency" Using stroke N, to help differentiate from "agent" which has N hook and stroke T

\* "temp" A common term for someone who does temporary work, usually through an agency

"dogs" "duck" Best to insert the vowel

\* Omission phrase "in (the) world"

\* "qualifications" You could use the optional contraction "qualifi(ca)tion" but that is very similar to "cultivation" which could also make sense in some contexts. If you decide to adopt the contraction, ensure you always insert the intervening vowel in "cultivation".



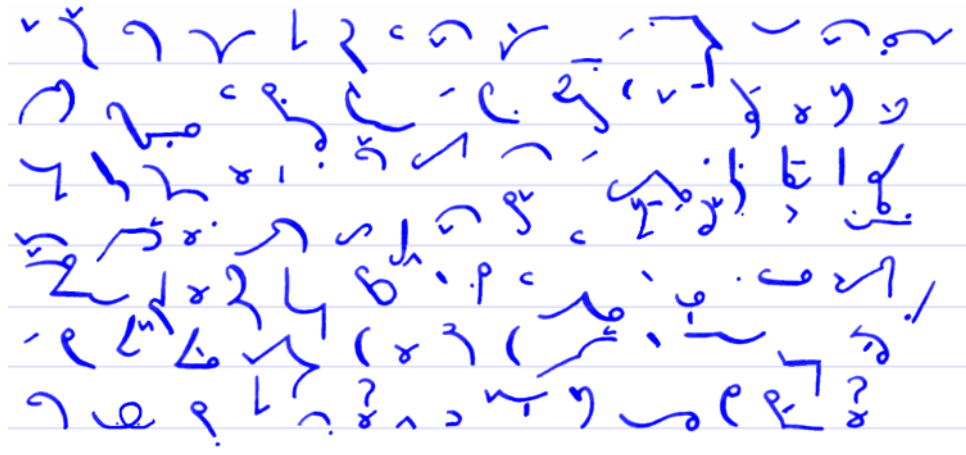
### Fraser's Fright

I was given a humble assignment\* to take the minutes of a short meeting at a small local business. I felt this would be a no-brainer on which I could cut my teeth, and fit myself to take on board greater things. The company was as old as the hills and I was sure that the ancient board members would be talking through their hats, slowly and hesitatingly, and full of clichés (for which I had many excellent shorthand phrases). The assignment would be the life of Riley for me, a prelude to my career really taking off and heading towards the

high life, and the pleasant\* prospect of being a top notch earner. This would be easy money indeed until I was ready to take on the real McCoy, up in the city or in the law courts.

\* "assignment" Contraction therefore on the line

\* "pleasant" Insert the vowel in this and "pleasing", as they are similar in outline and meaning



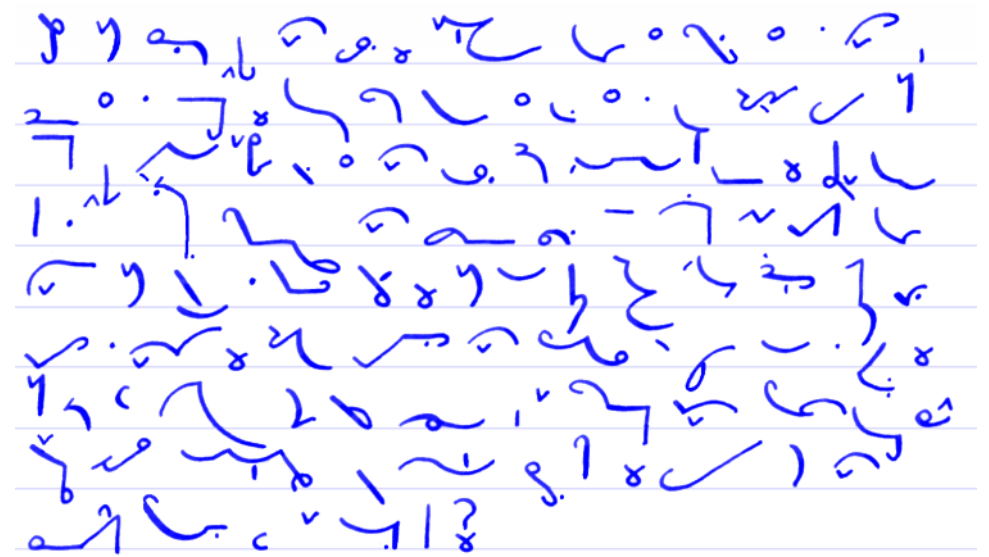
### Fraser's Fright

I arrived very early at the establishment, with my whole kit and caboodle in my smart leather briefcase, with spares of everything and every shorthand pen that I possessed. I was ushered into the board room. But a fright awaited me and whoops-a-daisy doesn't do justice to my reaction. A shiver went down my spine when I saw the size of the antique mahogany table. There were\* twenty places all set with sheaves of notes, a glass of water each and several

giant jugs to refill them. Were they really all going to get hoarse from incessant\* speaking at the meeting? How would I know all their names as they spoke?

\* Omission phrase "there (w)ere"

\* "incessant" Written thus to ensure it cannot be misread for "unceasing" which has a similar meaning



### Fraser's Fright

All of a sudden\* I was scared out of my wits. I no longer\* felt as brave as a lion, but weak as a kitten. Far from being as fit as a fiddle, I wondered whether I had got out the wrong side of the bed, as my knees\* were knocking together. Despite having had a hearty\* breakfast, my stomach seemed quite empty\* and I already felt like I was becoming a bag of bones. I was in danger\* of falling off the wagon and it was too late to run a mile. I would have to regain my nerves of steel in a jiffy. I had heard that laughter was the best medicine but I forgot all my former confident sound bites and was in no position\* to be my own spin doctor. Where was my security blanket when I needed it?

\* Omission phrase "All (of a) sudden"

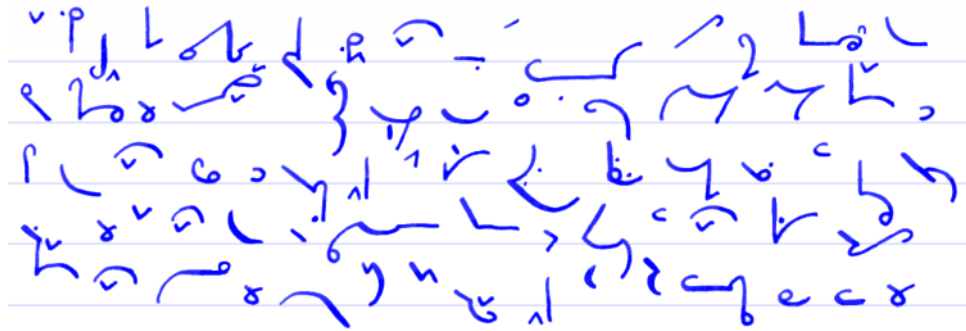
\* "no longer" "in no position" Always insert the vowel in "no" when it is in a phrase, and especially when it is out of position, to differentiate from "any"

\* "knees" Always insert the vowel in this and "nose" to differentiate

\* "hearty" Special outline to differentiate from "hardy" (Hay + Ray + D)

\* "empty" Omits the lightly sounded P, therefore stroke M, not Imp

\* "in danger" Always unphrased, to differentiate from "endanger/ed"

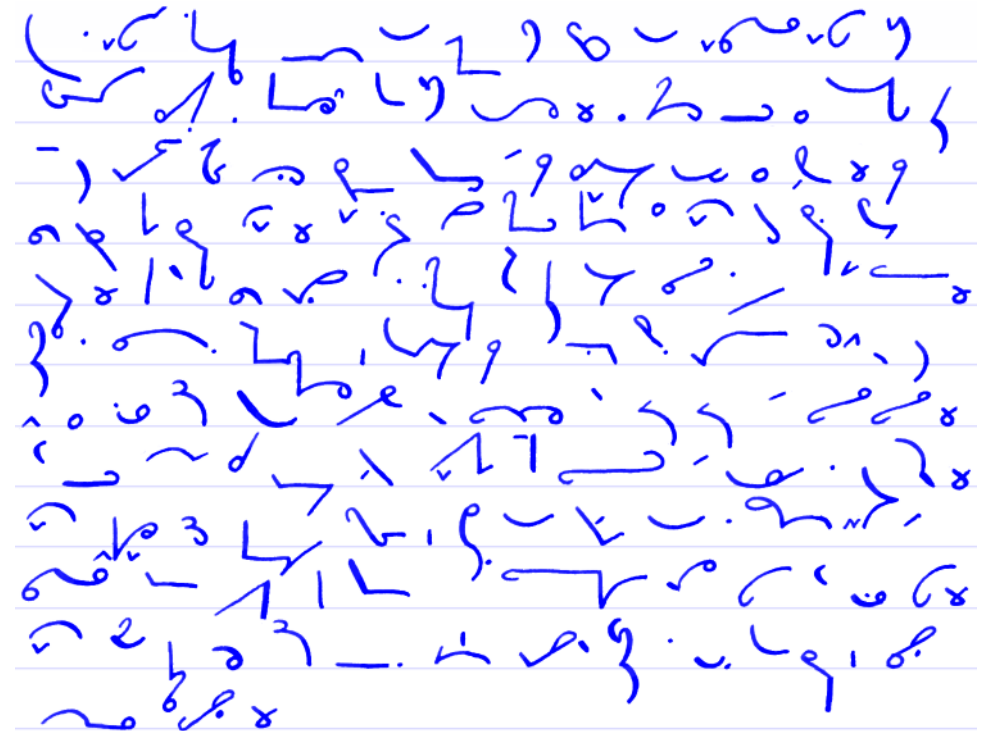


### Fraser's Fright

I sat down at the head of the table, set out\* my kit, and quickly ran through the documents for special terms. I realised that there was no such thing as a free lunch and only time would tell if my efforts would peter out and the whole shebang descend into the pits, with tears before bedtime. I might have to slink back to the agency with my tail between my legs. Maybe I was about to find out that all that glitters\* is not gold.

\* "set out" Halving to represent "out", similarly "carried out"

"glitters" This common proverb comes from original quotes that use the archaic word "glisters" (Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice, and last line of the cat/goldfish poem by Thomas Grey)



### Fraser's Fright

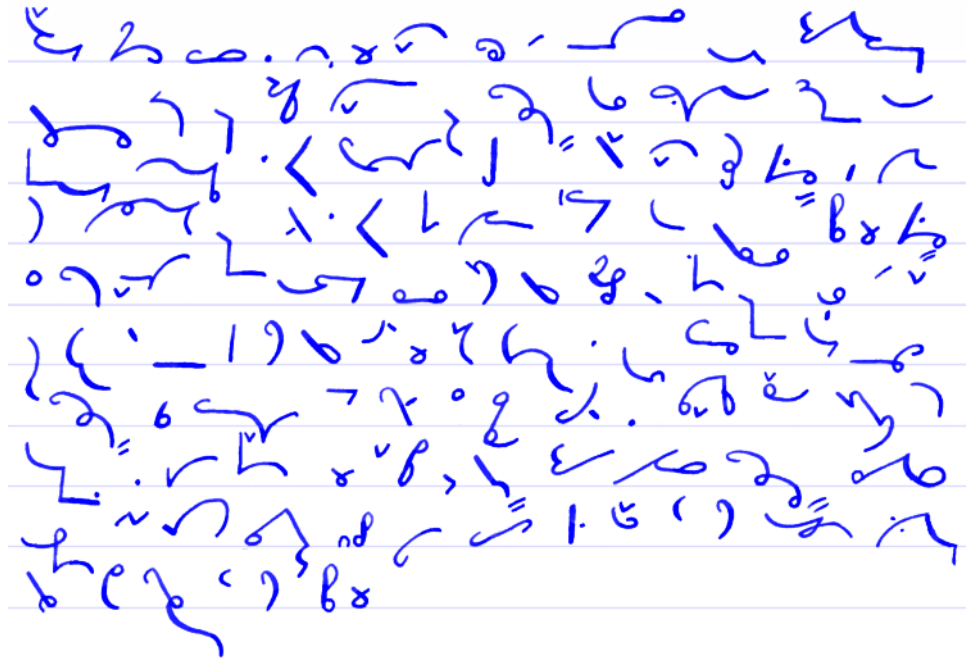
After a while the attendees came in and took their places in silence, while I was frantically searching the documents for all their names. The chairman gave his introduction, which was quite easy to record, and then the main speaker began and he certainly knew his stuff\*. He seemed to speak at the speed of light. I completely lost track of time as my pen sped over the pages. It all seemed to last an eternity although it was only half an hour on the clock. There was a smattering of technical terms, but fortunately he kept stopping to look around to see how his comments were being received, to murmurs of "Here, here" and "Yes, yes". That gave me the chance to catch up, write

the odd correction and insert a vowel or two. My outlines were not dictionary perfect but, as they say, any port in a storm and as long as I can read it back correctly, all's\* well that ends well. My shorthand teacher's words were coming home to roost, that there was a need for speed but haste makes waste.

\* "stuff" Insert the vowel, as in this particular context it could be misread as "staff"

\* Omission phrase "tech(nical) terms"

\* "all's" Apostrophied phrases use full outlines and vocalised, not short forms



### Fraser's Fright

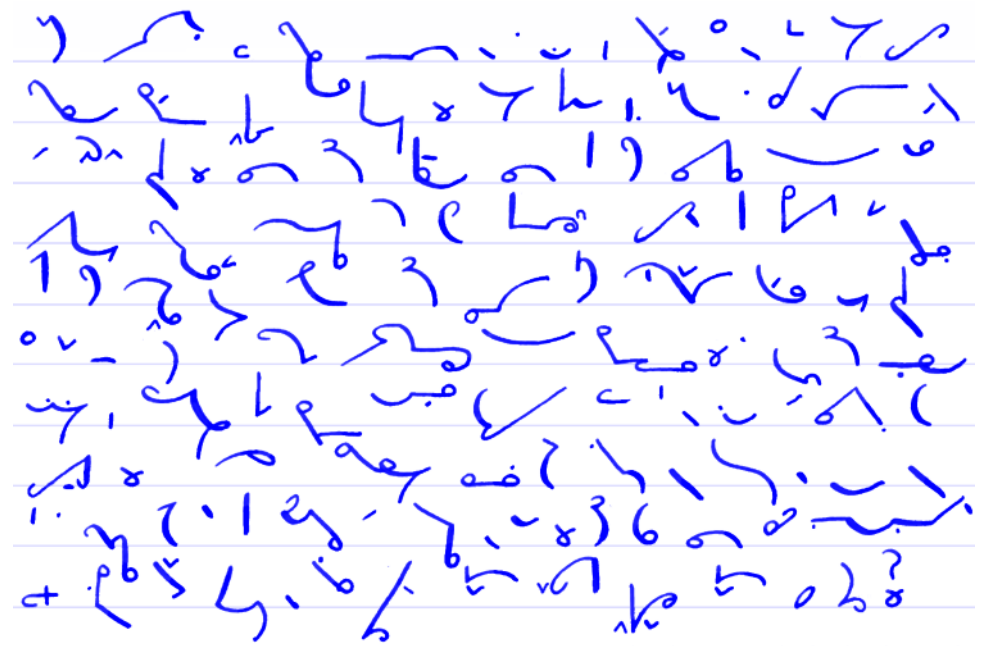
Finally the chairman closed the meeting. My friends and colleagues, now that we have concluded\* business matters\* here today, I would just like to thank Fraser for his sterling work in taking the minutes, a job formerly done by my assistant James who left us last month to take up a job at the local College for Business Studies. James has very kindly encouraged six of their best shorthand students\* to attempt to take notes, and I see that they have all given it their best shot. I think they may have a few questions\* for the excellent Fraser who is clearly quite the pro, as he has not shown the slightest sign of pressure or fatigue the whole time. I suggest to the Board that we request Fraser's services next time\*, and I also hope that the students will one day find

they are in the same elevated position, as they persevere with their studies.\*

\* Omission phrase "that we have (con)cluded" "biz(ness) matters" "las(t) month" "ne(k)s(t) time" "shorthand s(t)udents"

\* "questions" Optional contraction

\* Of course, Fraser is well aware that minutes of meetings are always confidential, so he did first ask the chairman if he could use a paraphrase of part of the closing address before writing this article and, having gained permission, sent him a copy of his draft for approval. Clearly the meeting was of a general nature, or they would not have invited shorthand trainees to be present.



### Fraser's Fright

I was relieved when proceedings came to an end but puzzled as to why only one person spoke out of the twenty. Only at the end did I have a chance to look up and around the table. Some were dozing, some had their heads in their hands, reading the previous minutes or other documents, one or two\* had started on the biscuits and had their mouths full, and several were secretly on their mobile phones under the table, as I could see from the reflections in their spectacles. A few were gazing intently but nervously at the speaker, in case they were called on to comment and hoping they wouldn't\*. Most surprisingly six of them

appeared to be far too young to be on a board of directors\*, and they all had shorthand pens and pads to hand. What was this, some sort of kangaroo court, set up by the agency, to pass judgement on my wild outlines, on my first assignment?

\* Omission phrase "one (or) two" "board (of) dir(ectors)". You would not use this latter phrase if the subject matter were doctors/medical, in which case you would include the doubled K stroke.

\* "wouldn't" Apostrophied phrases use full outlines and vocalised, not short forms



### Fraser's Fright

I don't have to tell you that I had a grand old time talking to the students, as I was not far off that state myself, and regaled them with tales of the tea trolley, the despatch room, college studies and exam escapades. But I had to cut it short as I was going to be rushed for time in turning in my transcript\*. Word had already got back to the agency on the Board's satisfaction and there was a message on my phone inviting me to accept another

assignment in short order. To make a long story short, providing I and the visiting students all keep up our efforts to improve, we can be sure that we will all live happily ever after in our own adventurous and fascinating shorthand world. (1550 words)

\* "transcript" This set of words "transcribe/transcription" etc omit the R, so that they are differentiated from "describe/descriptions"



### Gift Quotes

It will soon be December, the gift giving season for those who celebrate Christmas. Given the swiftness with which the shops start displaying Christmas stuff - cards sneaked onto the shelves at the end of August is the record here - many people will have already started buying their gifts. Sometimes the January sales, which often begin on Christmas Eve, are a good place for the super-organised person to stock up on items for the next year, as long as they have a secure and secret place to stash\* them. Apart from spending amounts of money, great and small, I find the gifts that

are best and longest\* remembered are those that are more personalised, created by the giver, or with extra thoughtfulness going into their choice. It can often be something that the recipient might not have thought of at all, but turns out to be of great interest once received.

\* "stash" Stee loop is not used before Ish stroke

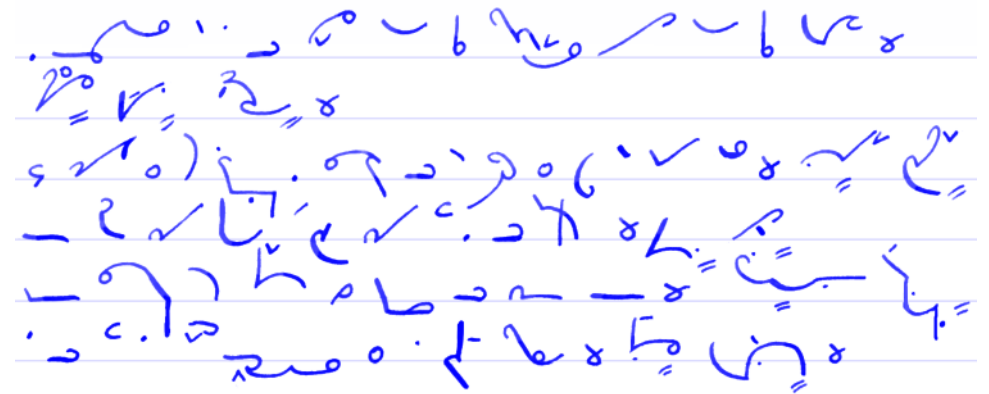
\* "longest" Alternative outline that omits the G stroke



### Gift Quotes

Useful items disappear into the stock of possessions in the house, eventually wear out and are thrown away. Some gifts are treasured, maybe tucked away and brought out occasionally to muse over, and will always draw the comment, "So-and-so gave me that" and so they remain as special reminders. Your gift to yourself this Christmas is a small notebook with your study, learning and practice plan written out, a list of items to learn or revise, to be

adhered to as closely as possible, and a chart of speed achievements and dates as they occur, so that your shorthand progress does not falter, get pushed aside or postponed. Once that skill is earning for you, then you are in a better position to give to your loved ones, and when they thank you, you can thank your newly-acquired skill for contributing to your career prospects.



### Gift Quotes

The excellence of a gift lies in its appropriateness\* rather than in its value. Charles Dudley Warner

When the world is so complicated, the\* simple gift of friendship is within all of our hands. Maria Shriver

Give whatever you are doing and whoever you are with the\* gift of your attention. Jim Rohn

To give somebody your time is the biggest gift you can give. Franka Potente

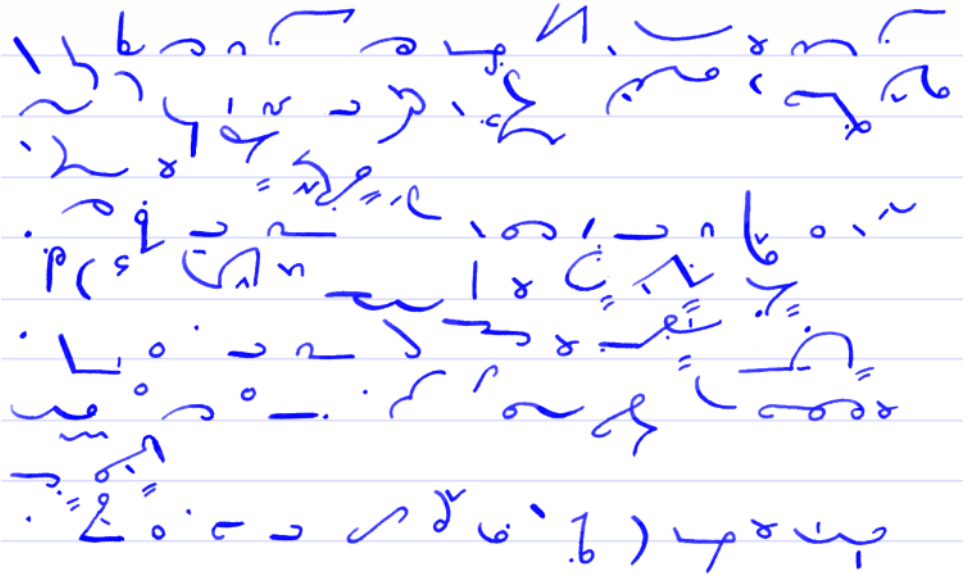
A gift, with a kind countenance, is a double present. Thomas Fuller\*

\* "appropriateness" Always insert the diphone in "appropriate" and the first vowel in "proper" and their derivatives, as they are similar in outline and meaning

\* "complicated, the" "you are with the" In both cases "the" does not belong with the previous word, so the tick is not used here

\* "Fuller" The normal noun "fuller" has the Rer stroke, but as this is a name, it is prudent to use full strokes so that all vowels can be written in





Gift Quotes

To be poor does not mean you lack the means to extend\* charity to another. You may lack money or food, but you have the gift of friendship to overwhelm the loneliness that grips the lives of so many. Stanley Hauerwas

he most considerate gift you can offer to someone who gave you advice is to not saddle them with the fallout of you ignoring it. Alan Robert Neal

A book is a gift you can open again and again\*. Garrison Keillor

Nothing's as mean as giving a little child something useful for Christmas. Kin Hubbard

A hug is a great gift, one size fits all, and it's easy to exchange. Unknown (486 words)

\* "extend" Keep the T clearly vertical, and the P in "expand" clearly sloped, as these two are similar in outline and meaning

\* Omission phrase "again (and) again"

A series of horizontal lines for writing shorthand notes, corresponding to the lines on the left page.