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Greenwich Part 5

**Queen's House, Old Royal Naval College,
Painted Chapel, Painted Hall, Greenwich
Town, St Alfege Church**

Word count:

Dates as 2 words - 1945 = nineteen forty-five

Monarchs as 3 words - Henry VIII = Henry The Eighth

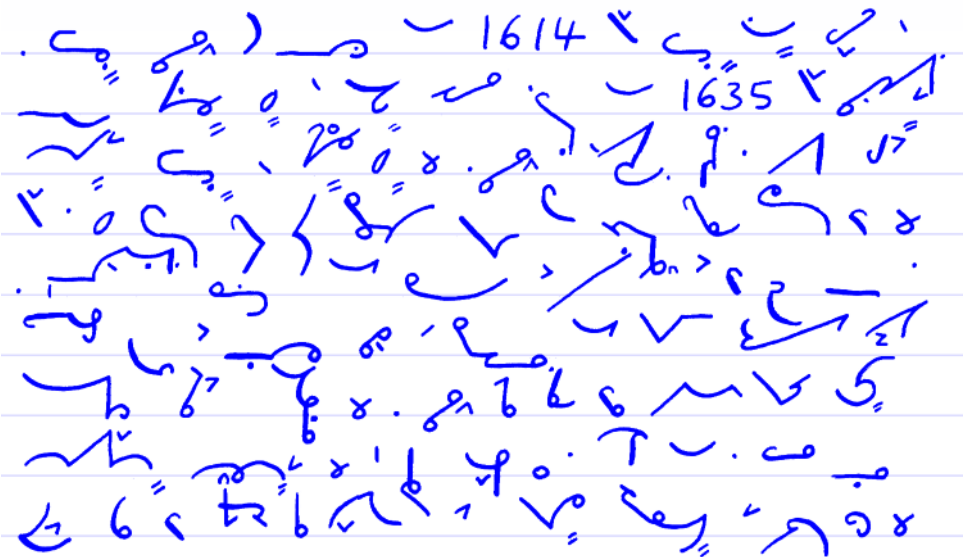
Some hyphenated words counted as 2 = boat-shaped

Paragraph numbers not included

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PDF Date: 12 April 2023

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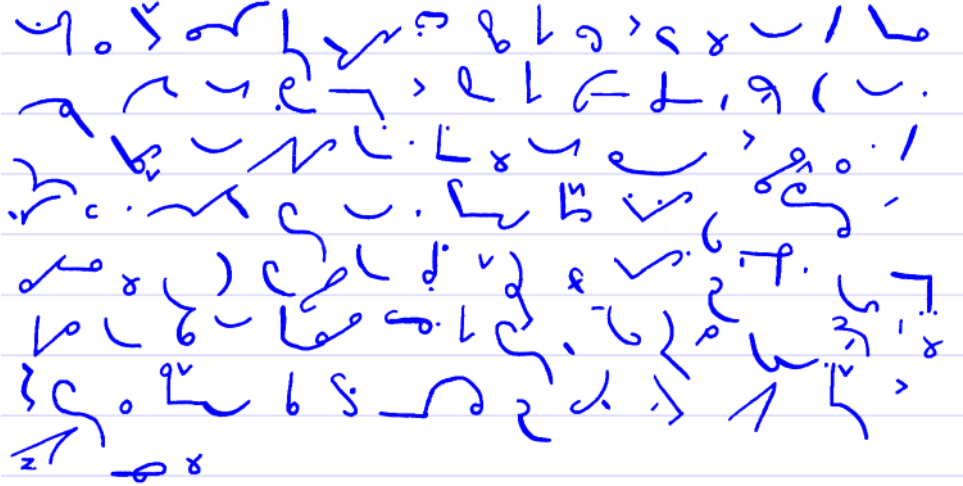
72. The Queen's House was commissioned* in 1614 by Queen Anne, wife of King James I of England, and was completed in 1635 by Henrietta Maria, Queen to Charles I. The house originally straddled a road, joined by a first floor bridge, which was subsequently built over to produce the present square building. The colonnaded section in the centre of the rear of the building would have given a grandstand* view of the games, hunts and spectacles in the park that were the royal entertainment of choice in those days. The house and its adjacent buildings are now part of the National

Maritime Museum. On display inside is a model in a glass case showing this building at the beginning* of its life and the Palace of Placentia on the river front.

* "commission" and derivatives do not use the Con Dot

* "grandstand" On its own "grand" is halved

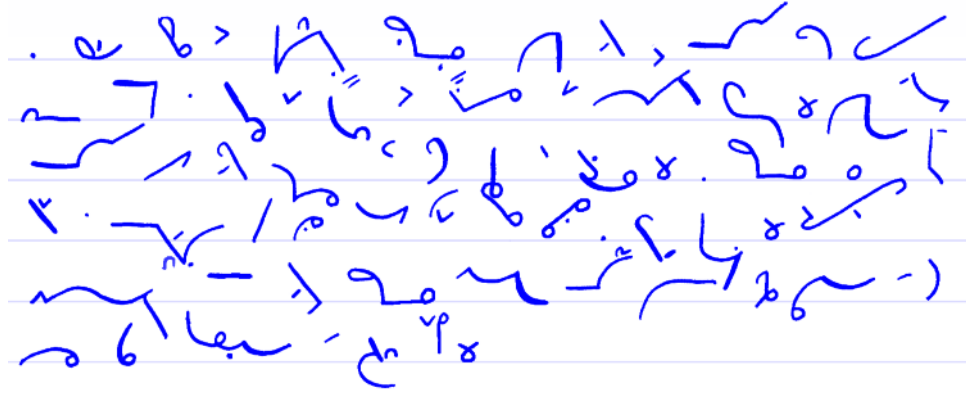
* "beginning" If more convenient, this intersection can be written underneath the preceding outline e.g. "in the beginning"



73. Entry is by the small door between the grand steps at the front of the building. Any large bags must be* left in the safe-keeping of the staff at the welcome desk, who store them in a room behind, in return for a tag. In the centre of the house is a large hall with a marble floor in a black and white* diamond pattern within squares and circles. If this was ever used for dancing, I

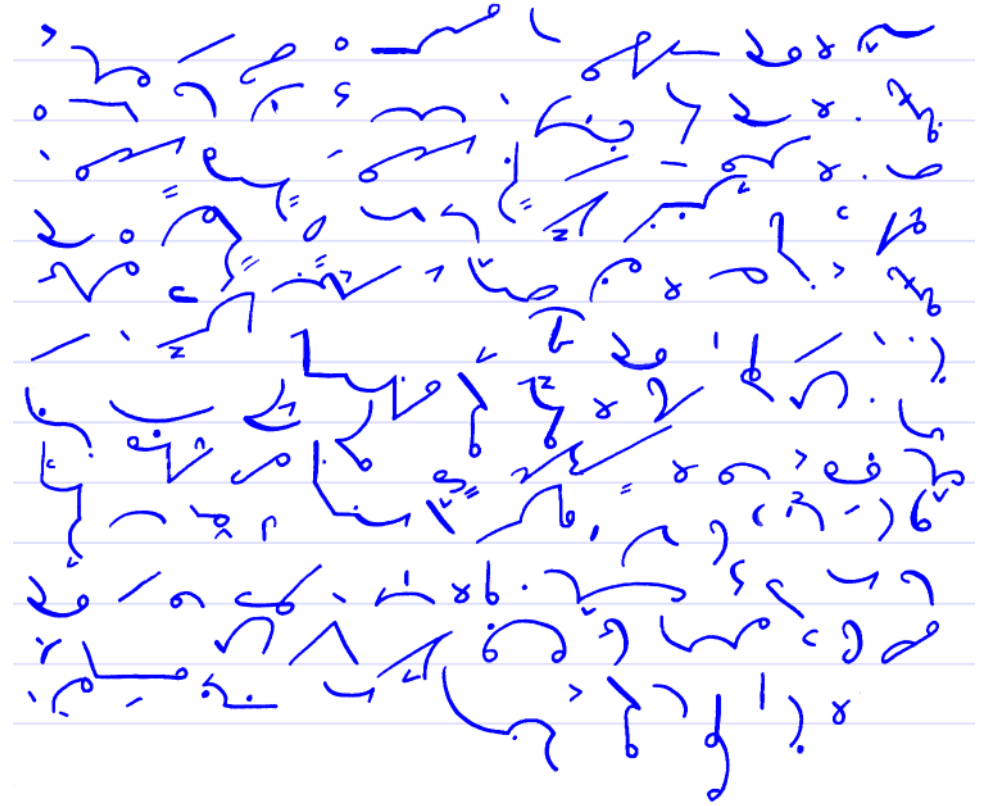
suspect the bold patterning would have caused a few giddy turns for any dancers glancing at the floor too often, especially as the evening wore on. Although the floor is striking, its plain colours would have shown up the rich attire of the royal guests.

* Omission phrases "mus(t) be" "black (and) white"



74. The stone steps of the Tulip Staircase lead up to the gallery, from where you can get a bird's-eye view of the patterns on the marble floor. Leading off the gallery are the upper rooms with their displays of paintings. The staircase is topped by a cupola which

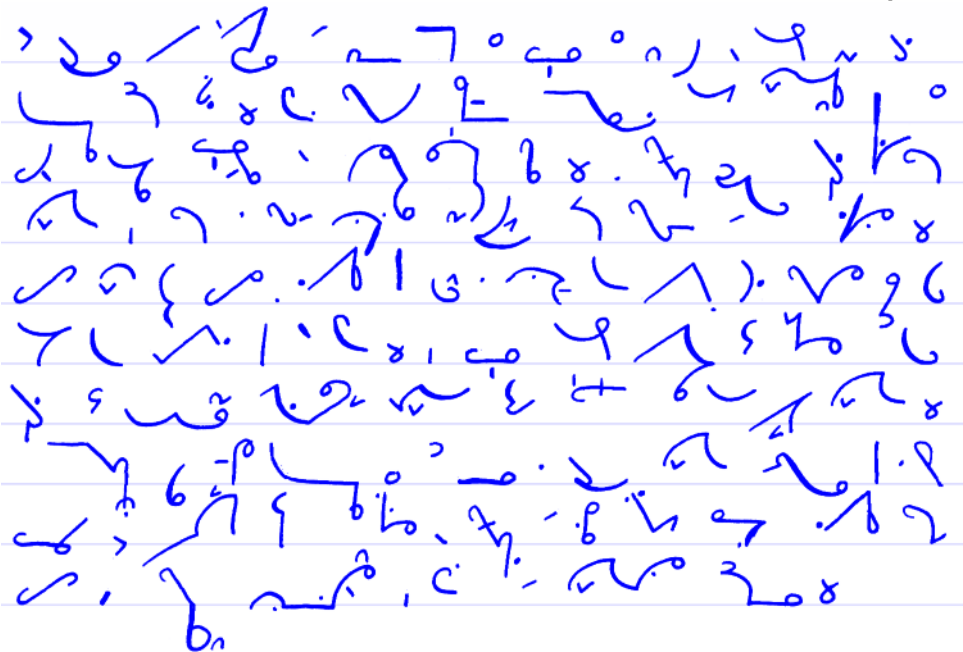
lets in the light, hence the blue tinge. I wonder how many people go up the staircase and never actually look towards the ceiling, and so miss this fascinating and beautiful sight.



75. All the rooms are used as galleries for historical paintings. Lighting is kept very low, with the minimum of illumination for each painting. The portraits of Henry VII and Henry VIII are quite small. The next painting is Elizabeth I in all her royal regalia, dripping with jewels and pearls, gold embroidery and the finest lace. Most of the portraits are of royalty and dignitaries, but the majority of the paintings on display are of a seafaring* nature, showing ships, battles and voyages. There are also a few 20th century ones

depicting the Second World War. Some of the scenes remind me of accounts told by relatives who lived through that war and so those paintings are somewhat "closer to home". It is a reminder that the people in the very old pictures also represent real sailors and their families, with their own stories of loss and heartache in the aftermath of the battles or disasters at sea.

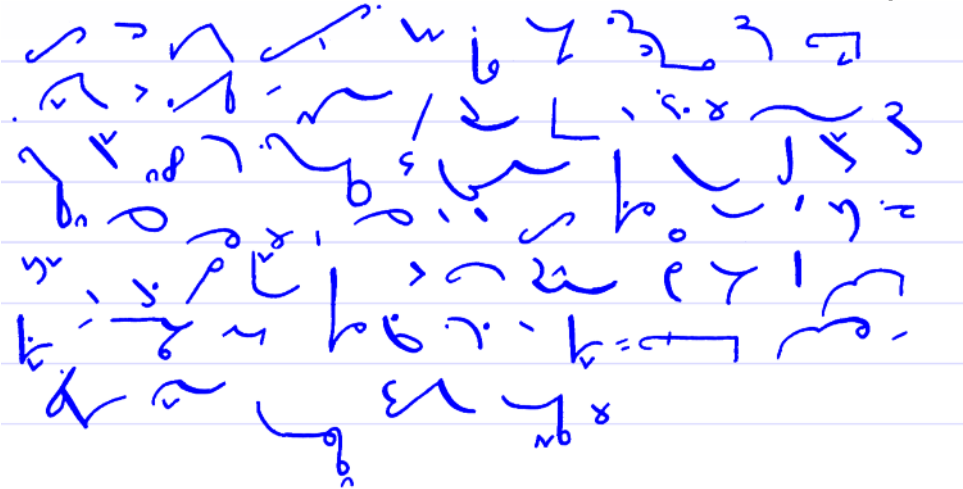
* "seafaring" Dictionary gives this as one outline, but this takes it too far into the lines below



76. All the paintings are originals and you can get as close as you wish to inspect how the paint effects were achieved. Every brush stroke can be seen in the minutest detail, as shown in these close-ups of Elizabeth's sumptuous* dress. The portrait would not have been painted from life, but from an approved image, showing her perfect and ageless. One might think that once the artist had found a method for representing, say, pearls, he would then only have to repeat it all over. But close

inspection reveals that the items have been painted with the nuances and variations of lighting that would occur in real life. Capturing these subtle effects is what gives a painting life and brings it a step closer to the reality that it attempts to portray, and sets apart the skilled artist from one who produces meticulous but flat and lifeless works.

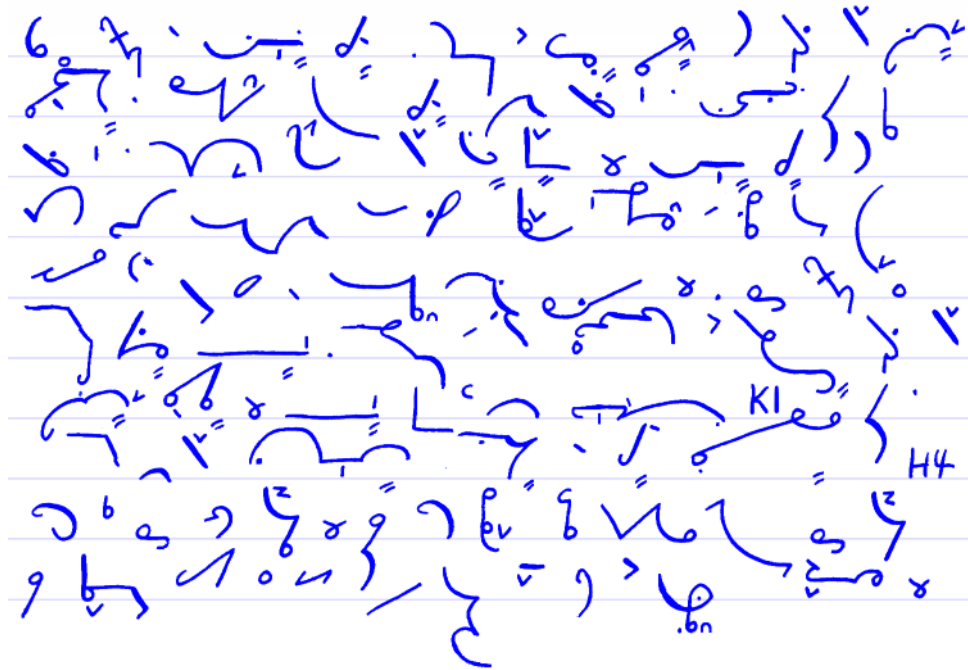
* "sumptuous" Omits the P sound



77. One cannot help wondering about the conditions in which the artworks were created, the life of the artist and how long each painting took to complete. Many would have been* produced by students or apprentices, with the finishing details being done by the master himself. But most of all, one is in awe of their acute eyesight to paint such tiny details, all the more astounding as they only had limited

daylight and candles, and not the vast array of daylight-corrected lamps and adjustable lighting fixtures* that we have nowadays.

* Omission phrase "would (have) been"
* "fixtures" In the singular, the U diphthong is written through the end of the stroke



78. This portrait of Inigo Jones, the architect of the Queen's House, was painted by William Hogarth a century after Jones lived, based on an engraving, which was itself based on an earlier drawing by Van Dyck. Inigo Jones was also greatly involved in stage design, costumes and sets for the theatre, and was thought to be the first to introduce movable scenery. The second portrait is Captain James Cook, the explorer and cartographer of the Pacific Ocean*, painted by William Hodges. Cook

took with him chronometer K1, which was a copy made by Larcum Kendall of John Harrison's H4 version, on his second and third voyages. He was very satisfied with its performance and after the second voyage he described the watch as "our faithful guide through all the vicissitudes of climates."

* "Pacific Ocean" Using Shun Hook for "ocean"; similarly "Atlantic Ocean"



79. David Samwell* accompanied James Cook as surgeon on board the* ship Resolution, and described him: "He was a modest man, and rather bashful; of an agreeable lively conversation, sensible and intelligent. In temper he was somewhat hasty, but of a disposition the most friendly, benevolent and humane*. His person was above six feet high: and, though a good looking man, he was plain both in dress and appearance. His face was full of expression: his nose extremely well shaped: his eyes, which were* small and of a brown cast, were quick and piercing; his

eyebrows* prominent, which gave his countenance altogether an air of austerity."

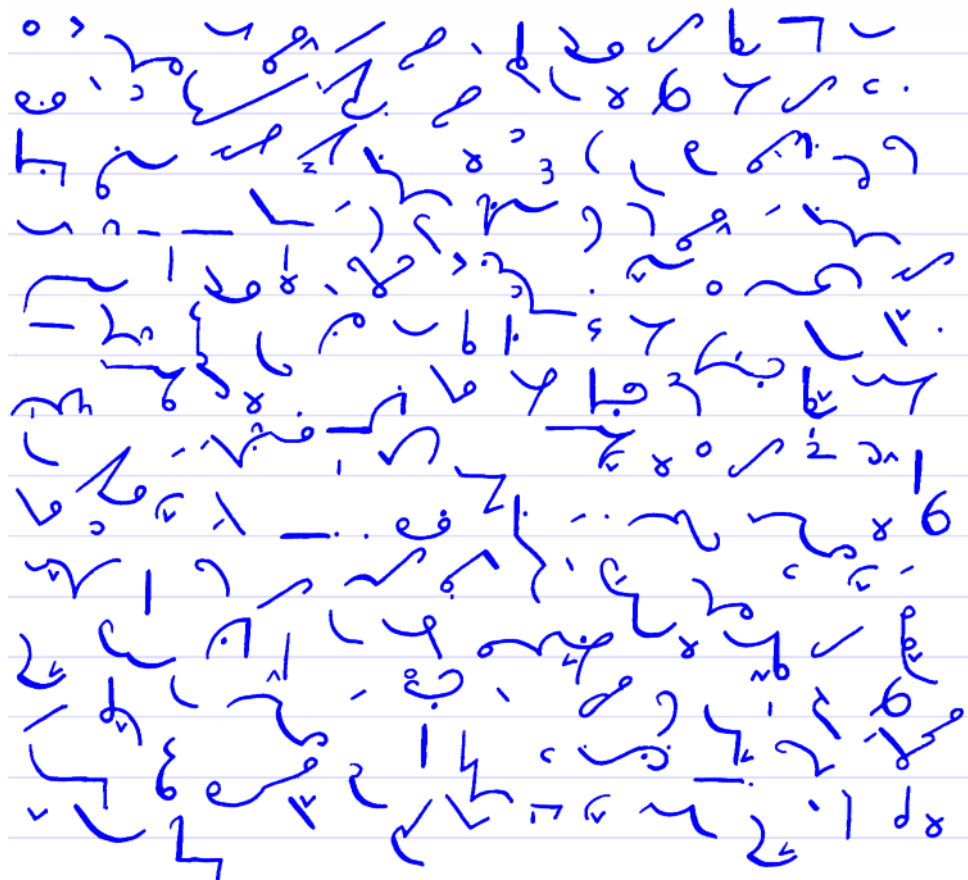
* Samwell" Essential to insert the vowels, as "Samuel" is similar

* "on board the" On its own "board" is written with full strokes B + Rd

* "humane" on the line, and "human" above the line, in order to distinguish. It helps to think of these two outlines as following their second vowel.

* "eyebrows" The singular has the final diphthong joined to the stroke

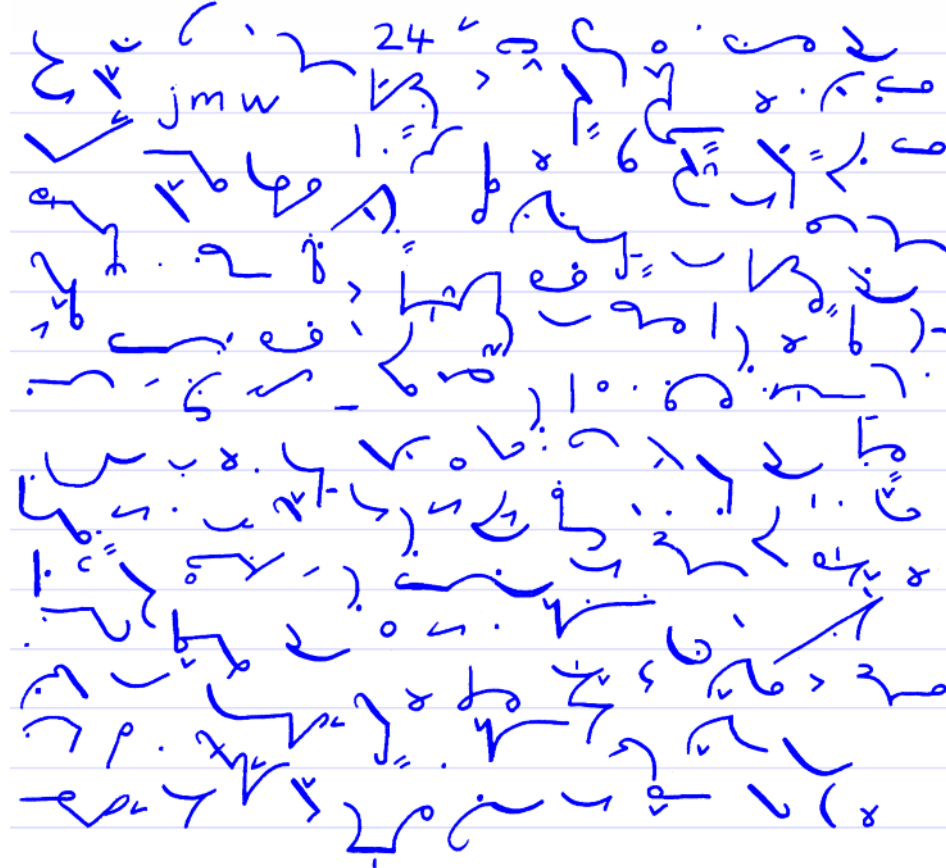
* Omission phrase "which (w)ere"



80. As all the rooms in the house are used to display paintings, one does not get any sense of what they were originally used for. This is the only one with a decorated ceiling and was the royal bedroom. What would you think if, several hundred years from now, you could come back and see people trailing through your house and bedroom, looking at paintings! To preserve all the artwork the lighting level is minimal and one can assume that it would have been* even less in its day, with the only illumination being by a multitude of candles. The gilded parts in such decorations were designed not only for richness and opulence, but also to catch the candle-light. As one

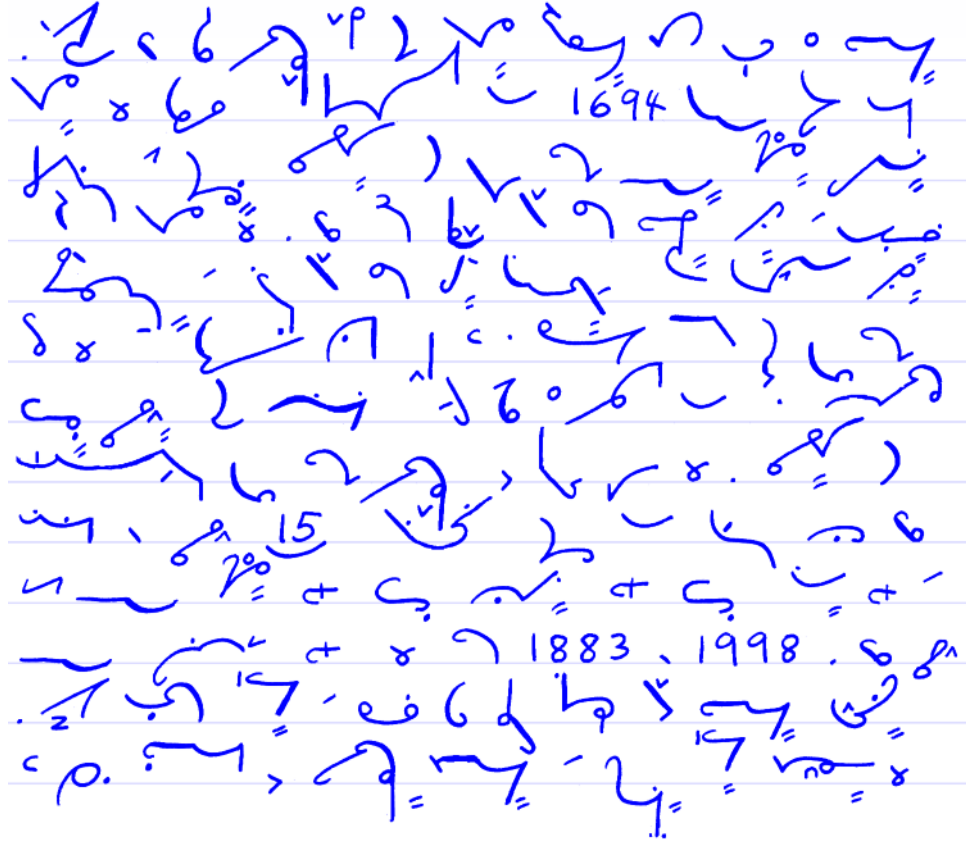
walked around, different parts would light up, giving the scenes depth and an impression of movement. This is entirely different from our own modern habit of flooding rooms with light and seeing everything laid out for inspection simultaneously. Nowadays we satisfy our desire for movement and narration of stories through video, but I believe this is the effect that these sceneries would have had at the time, with animation coming from the observer's eye being directed by whichever part caught the light, and never seeing all of it at once.

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



81. Filling the end wall of Room 24 on the ground floor is an enormous painting by J M W Turner of the Battle of Trafalgar. A low glass barrier keeps visitors at a little distance. This beautiful boat-shaped glass sculpture by Rosie Leventon in the same room provides a stark contrast to the tumultuous scenes in Turner's painting and the gloomy scenes of ships in storms at sea. It is so calm and elegant, and one could almost see it as a sailor's hammock or a

fishing net. The photo below is part of a more upbeat painting, Thomas Danby's "A new bride for the sea" showing construction of a ship on a fine day, with both carpentry and sea gleaming in the warm sunlight. The caption describes the painting as "an idyllic vision of rural labour in Victorian Britain". It seems unlikely that the lives of the workers matched such a portrayal, the idyllic and free life being experienced only by the seagulls wheeling in the sky above them.

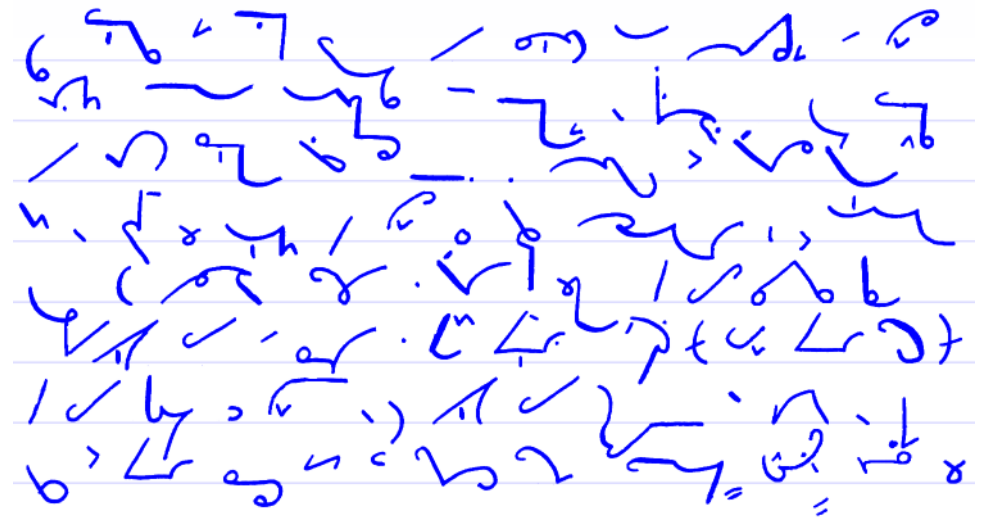


82. The original building on this riverside site was the Palace of Placentia, also known as Greenwich Palace. This was demolished in 1694, having fallen into disrepair, and the Seamen's Hospital was built from the King Charles Wing of that palace. The buildings were designed by Sir Christopher Wren and Nicholas Hawksmoor, and completed by Sir John Vanbrugh following Wren's plans. They were laid out with a central gap so that the view from the Queen's House was not impinged upon, and this has resulted in a marvellous uninterrupted view from the riverside to

the top of the hill. The Hospital was intended to house 1,500 pensioner seamen in four main buildings – King Charles Court, Queen Mary Court, Queen Anne Court and King William Court. From 1883 to 1998 the buildings housed the Royal Naval College and since then it has been administered* by the Greenwich Foundation*, with leases granted to the University of Greenwich and Trinity College of Music.

* "administered" Omits the R

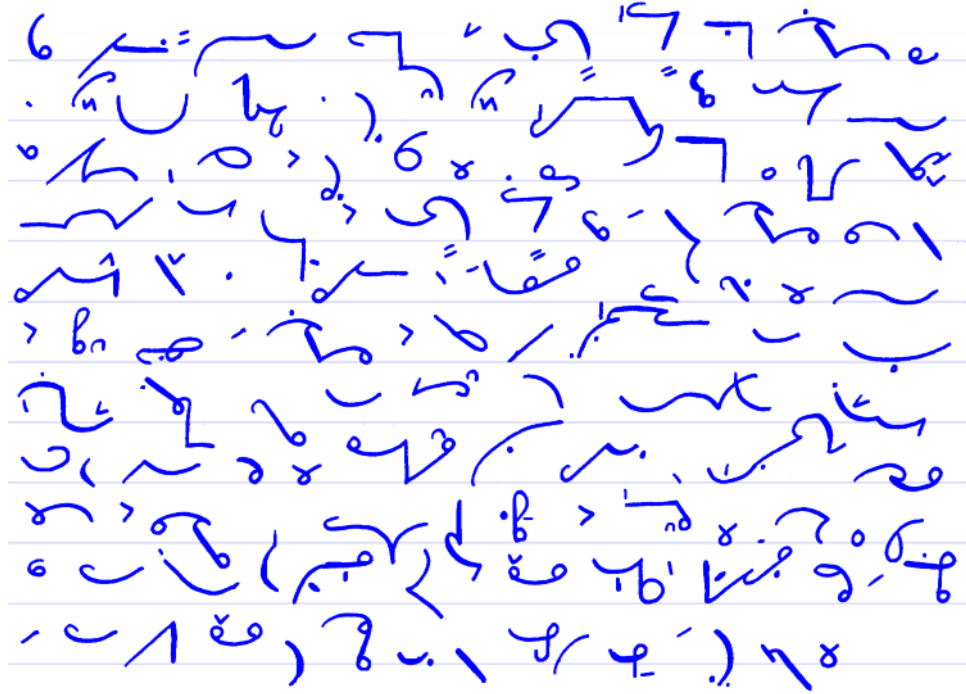
* "foundation" Note this is not a Shun Hook



83. These globes on the gate plinths are smothered in meridians and lines of latitude* going in all directions, quite giddy to contemplate if the clouds are also scudding past, giving the impression of the balls being about to topple. No doubt each line is positioned meaningfully, but to the uninformed visitor they resemble firstly a ball of string, which one hopes does not

roll away, and secondly a giant chocolate orange (white chocolate version) which we definitely would like to see roll away, so that we can all help to eat the pieces of the chocolate sections, with permission from the Greenwich Foundation, of course.

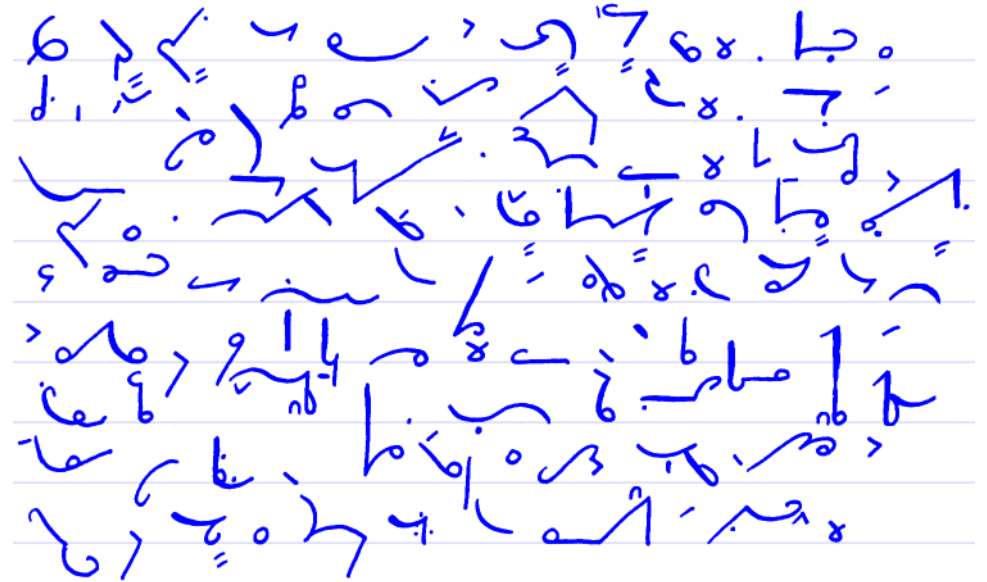
* "latitude" Always insert the first vowel in this and "altitude", in order to distinguish



84. This regal-looking creature on the Naval College gate emblem is not a lionfish, and definitely not a sea lion, but we can be sure that he is not only king of his realm, but master of the seas as well. The second gate is directly behind the camera in the photo of the Naval College buildings, and both emblems seem to be surrounded by a circle of officer's gold braid. Many of the statues, crests and emblems of the past are allegorical in nature, embodying abstract principles in human* or animal form, conveying the information without

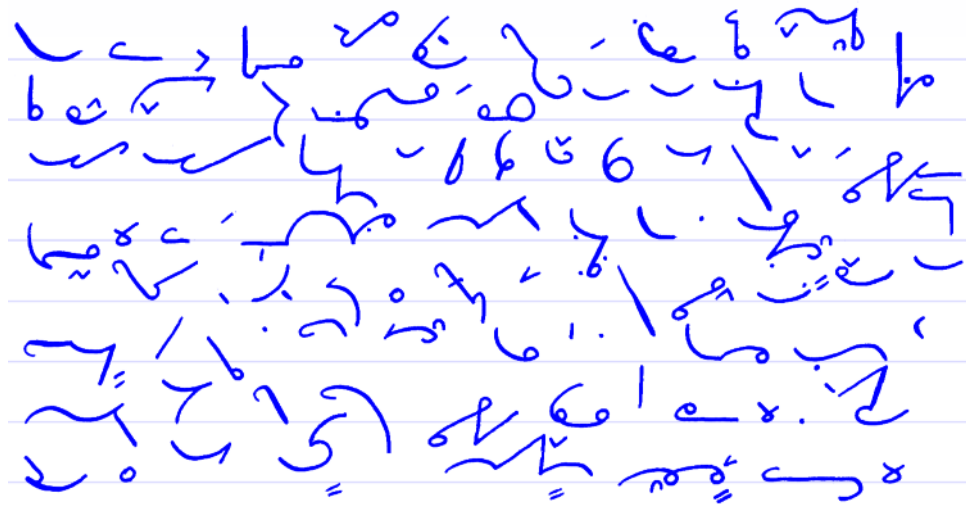
written words. Centuries later we need to unravel the meanings of some of the symbols but they clearly advertise the status of the occupants. The method is still with us today in our company logos, shop signs, notices on doorways, stairs and exits, and in our road signs, whose messages need to be instantly understood and easy to remember.

* "human" Above the line, to distinguish from "humane"



85. This is the Painted Chapel in the centre of the Naval College buildings. The decoration is dense, but not too busy as it is the same pattern repeated all over. The gilding and pink walls give the interior a warm glow. At the entrance to the chapel is a marble bust of Vice Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy, with the inscription: "Eminent for judgement and self-possession; ever

anxious for the improvement of the service, to which he had devoted himself; equal to all its difficulties and duties, and conversant with its minutest details, the name of this gallant and distinguished officer will descend to posterity, as one of the noblest ornaments of the profession, to which England is so much indebted for security and renown."



86. Being equal to the difficulties of one's chosen profession and conversant with its minutest details does sound like the path to excellence and success in any endeavour, for anyone, anywhere, at any time, not just those who find themselves in the public eye and historical figures. Cold and colourless marble effigies have an inhuman* quality, and I prefer to show here his portrait on the public house inn-sign* in Greenwich, which puts a more human* face on a famous name that many people only remember from their* history lessons at

school. The original painting is in the National Maritime Museum's collection.

* "inhuman" Insert the last vowel, to distinguish it from "inhumane". Being less frequent, this pair do not have the benefit of a pair of distinguishing outlines.

* "inn-sign" Written as separate outlines, to distinguish from "ensign"

* "human" See note above para

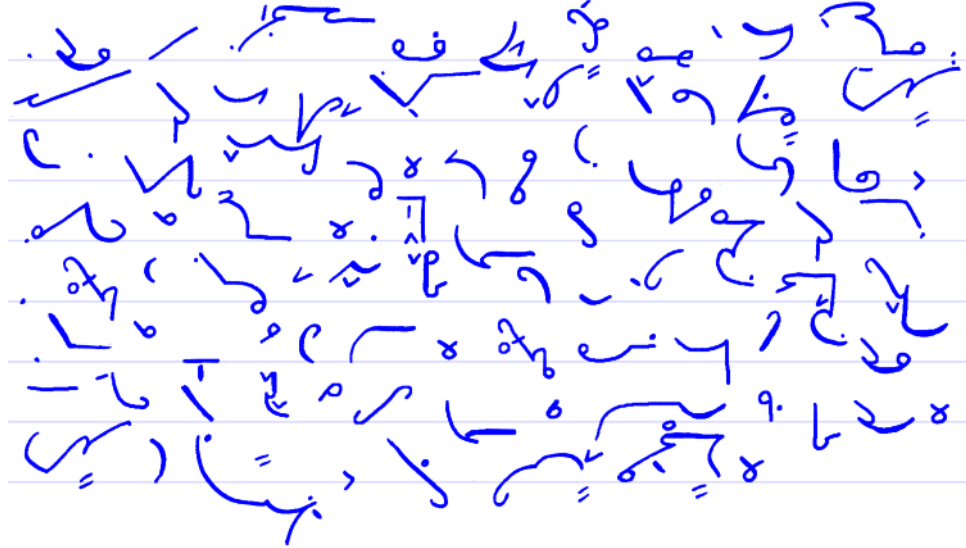
* "from their" Doubling to represent "their"



87. The Painted Hall is located across the square from the chapel, and was intended to be the dining area for the pensioner seamen living at the Hospital, but it was considered too magnificent for this purpose* and became instead an attraction for tourists. From 1824 to 1936 it housed the National Gallery of Naval Art. The Hall is approached by a flight of grey marble steps and the floor throughout is black, white and grey marble. Several wheeled mirror trolleys are placed along its length

so that visitors can admire the ceilings in comfort, and these do appear to be magnifying, so the details are easily made out. At the rear of the Hall is a plaque commemorating those Americans who volunteered to serve as sea officers in the Royal Navy in the Second World War "when the fate of Great Britain and the cause of freedom hung in the balance."

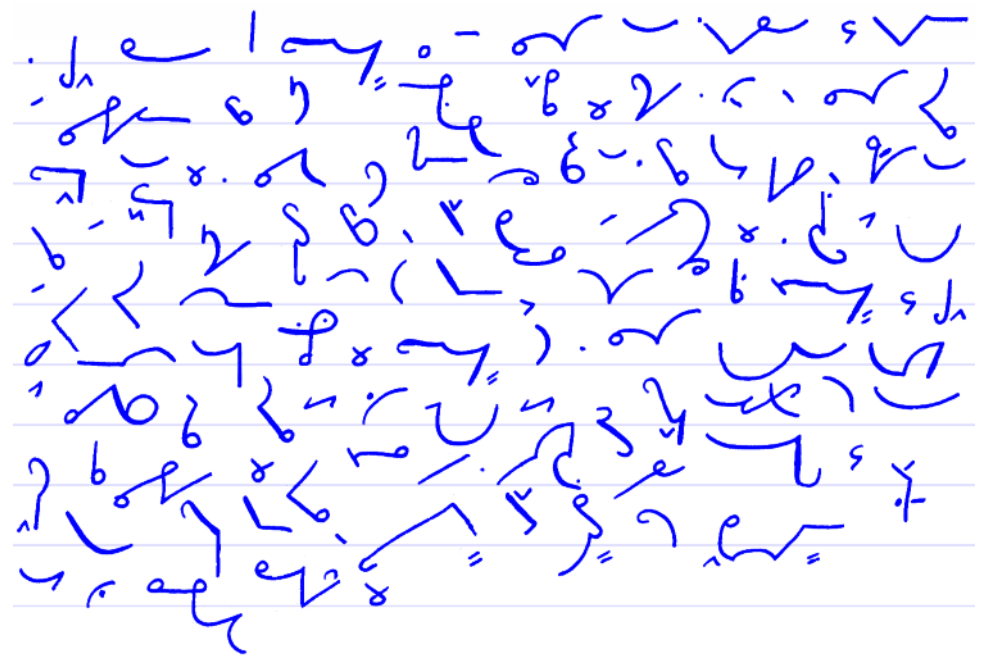
* "for this purpose" Optional intersection



88. The paintings are allegorical scenes showing the Protestant* succession of English monarchs and were painted in the Italian baroque style by Sir James Thornhill over a period of 19 years. Here he is, thanking visitors for their donations to the conservation of his work. The cut-out figure has been skilfully painted copying the self-portrait that appears on the right-hand side of the very end wall, and creatively

providing the back of his coat and his other leg. Self-portraits sneaked into larger paintings can often be identified as being the one figure who is looking straight out of the painting. Thornhill was father-in-law to the painter William Hogarth.

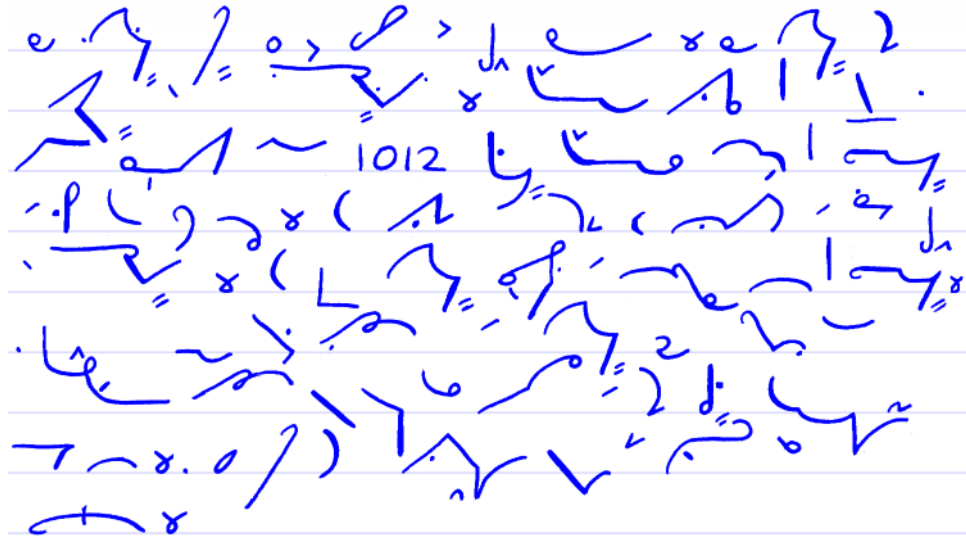
* "Protestant" This outline cannot be fully vocalised, the middle E vowel cannot be shown



89. The town centre at Greenwich is quite small, in comparison with the park and historical buildings on their extensive* sites. There are a lot of small shops crowded in. The heavy through traffic means that this is not a place for the tourist to stroll in peace and quiet, but there are plenty of places to buy souvenirs and refreshments. The tavern and the fish and chip shop make me think back to the early days of Greenwich, when the town first came into existence.

Greenwich was a small fishing village and the services of these establishments – ale and fish – would have been provided in one form or another throughout its history. Chips of course are a relatively recent introduction, with the potato being brought back to Europe by the Spanish from South America in the late 16th century.

* "extensive" "expansive" Keep the T and P clearly at their correct angle, as these two are similar in meaning

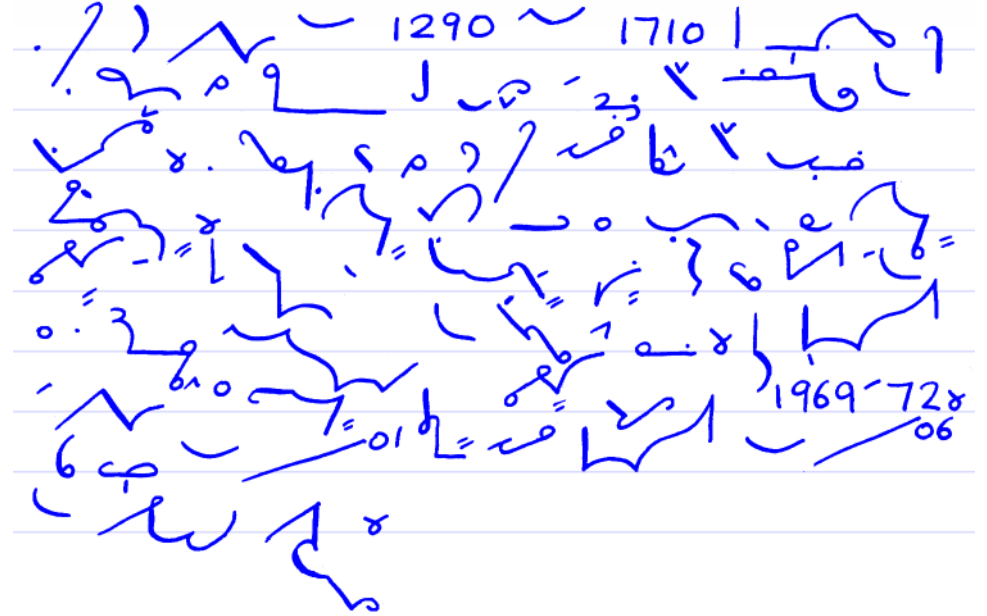


90. St Alfege* Church is to the west of the town centre. St Alfege was the Archbishop* of Canterbury. Viking raids had become a regular scourge and in 1012 Danish Vikings moored at Greenwich and stayed for three years. They raided the area without mercy and sacked the town of Canterbury. They took Alfege hostage and imprisoned him at Greenwich. The townsfolk could not pay the

ransom, and Alfege would not permit any ransom to be paid for his release, and so the Danes eventually killed him. The first church was reputedly built on the location of his murder.

* "Alfege" Sometimes spelled "Alphege"

* "Archbishop" Optional contraction



91. The church was rebuilt in 1290, and in 1710 it collapsed during a storm, as the structure had been undermined and weakened by excavations for burials*. The present-day building is the third church and was designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor. Alfege also gave his name to St Alfege's Hospital at the bottom of Vanbrugh Hill, although the buildings started off as a workhouse and infirmary for paupers and the sick. It was demolished and rebuilt as

Greenwich District Hospital between 1969 and 1972. This closed in 2001* and was demolished in 2006* for residential redevelopment. (2607 words)

* "burial" Special outline with upward L, to help distinguish it from "birth"

* "2001, 2006" Long slash to represent the current century, arbitrary sign with no phonetic value