



<https://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk>

<https://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand-reading.org.uk>

<https://long-live-pitmans-shorthand.blogspot.com>

Images & Text © Beryl L Pratt

## Blogs - 2013 - July

**2 Fishing For Business**

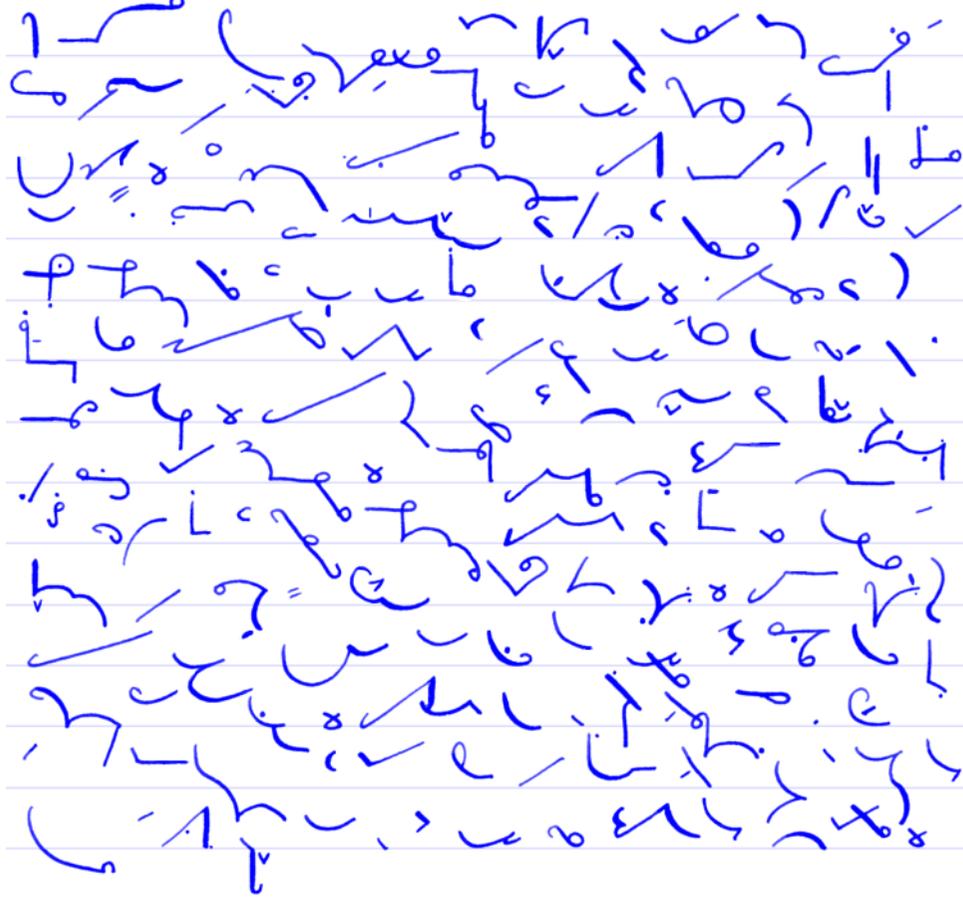
**6 Hot Weather Cold Water**

**13 Free Shorthand Dictionary**

**16 July Thunderstorms**

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: 3 June 2021



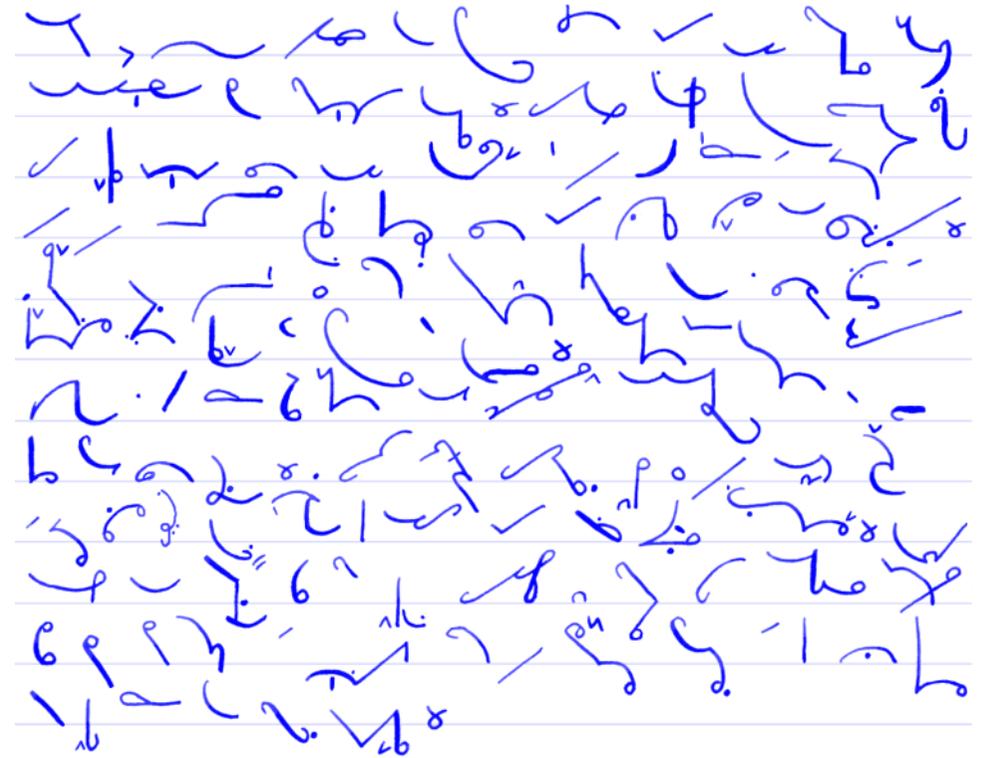
**Fishing For Business**

*The fishes at my local garden centre at Polhill have kindly donated one of their internal newsletters to provide some business vocab and phrases:*

Dear Colleagues, Further to your recent enquiries, I am delighted to be able to answer all your queries and questions\* regarding our operations and activities in our new premises here at Fish World. As you may be aware, some years ago we had to carry on our day-to-day tasks in a cramped, cold and uninviting building, which meant that business was largely confined to our existing customer base, with no new contacts forthcoming. A replacement building was constructed for us and we are pleased to report that our comfortable new offices have proved to be

an excellent investment. We are especially pleased with the improved lighting, specially designed to illuminate each section of our workspace. Extra windows mean that we can make constant friendly contact with prospective customers who are now able to talk to us face to face\*, and admire our smooth-flowing operations much more\* easily. We can truly say that we are no longer fishing in vain for new business and that the scales have been tipped very much in our favour. We do not now have to battle upstream against the flow and I can confirm that all our staff are tanked up, full of enthusiasm for the future and ready to dive in to all the new opportunities that we have for the improvement of our business.

- \* "questions" Optional contraction
- \* Omission phrases "much m(ore)" "face (to) face"

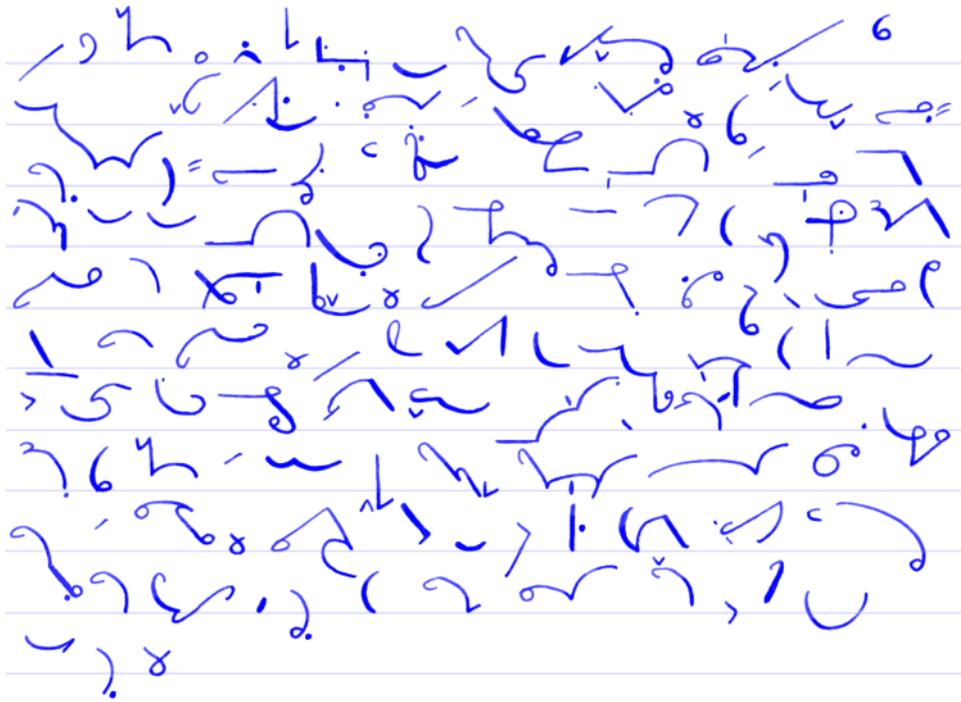


**Fishing For Business**

In reply\* to the many requests for further information\* on some of our new products, I have pleasure in enclosing several promotional photos. With reference \*to the Fashion Department, after careful consideration we decided to import some new variations on our usual stock and here are our colleagues tastefully demonstrating\* some of our latest lines in swimwear. The stripy pyjama look is very popular at the present time\*, being a simple, elegant and timeless design that flatters all figures. I can confirm that we are holding a large stock of this item in the warehouse, in anticipation of great demand over the summer season. The yellow and purple one-piece suit is our newest arrival, and here is sales assistant Fynn modelling it in one of our best showcase aquariums. If you are interested in obtaining this

particular outfit, we would suggest you purchase well in advance of your requirements, as this has to be specially ordered and imported from our suppliers overseas and it may at times be out of stock for brief periods.

- \* Omission phrases "In (re)ply" "further (informa)tion" "W(ith re)f(eren)ce (to) the"
- \* Omission phrase "at (the) present time". Best not to use this in the adverbial phrase "at the present" as it could equally be "at present", so not reliable
- \* "demonstrating" Omits the R
- \* "brief" Always insert the vowel, to differentiate it from "number of"



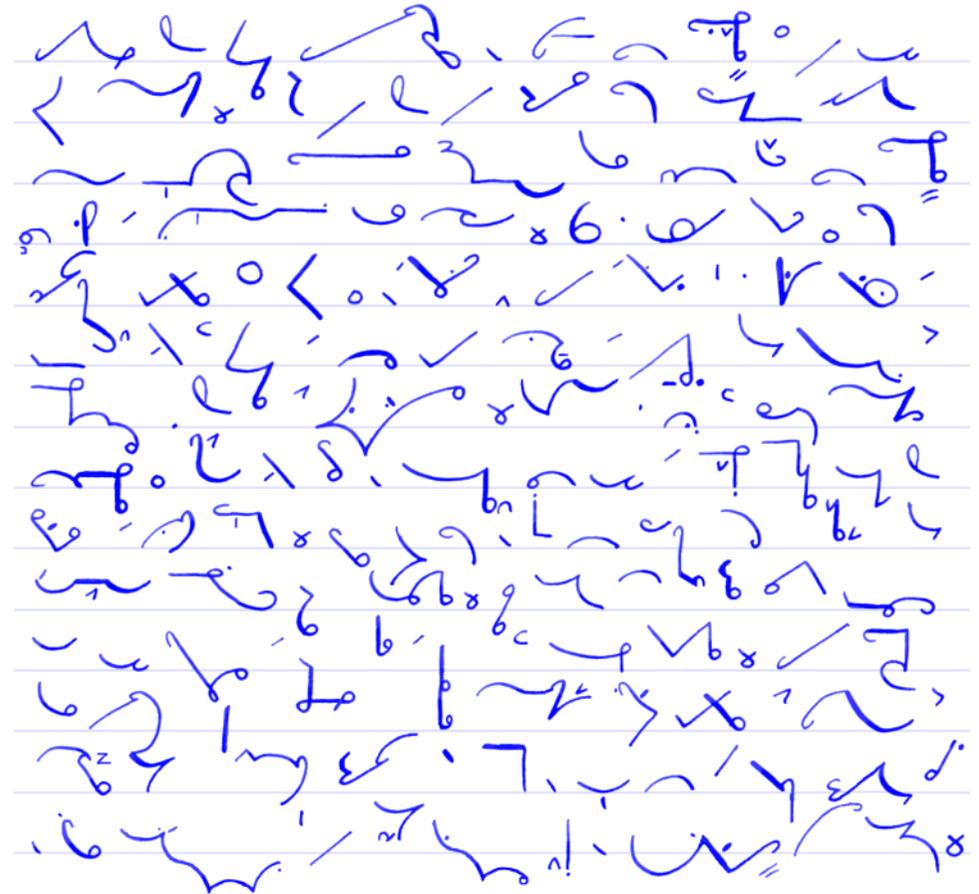
**Fishing For Business**

Our third item is aimed at the dedicated young professional who requires summer wear\* that is informal while retaining a smart and business-like appearance. These off-white crease-free easy-care shirts with contrasting collar and cuffs can be ordered in any colour combination, so that customers can match them to their existing wardrobe, uniforms or business logo design. We are expecting sales of these to increase as they become more well-known. Our staff already have invitations to model them at many of the national fashion exhibitions and will be gliding coolly to and fro amongst the visitors, wearing this item and

handing out the appropriate\* promotional material, as well as freebies and samples. Hopefully by the end of each day they will be awash with orders from everyone who sees them, from the small fry to the larger fish in the sea.

\* "summer wear" Keep the S and R Hook clear, as this could begin to look like "swimwear" if not neatly written

\* "appropriate" Insert the diphone, and the first vowel in "proper", as these are similar in outline and meaning



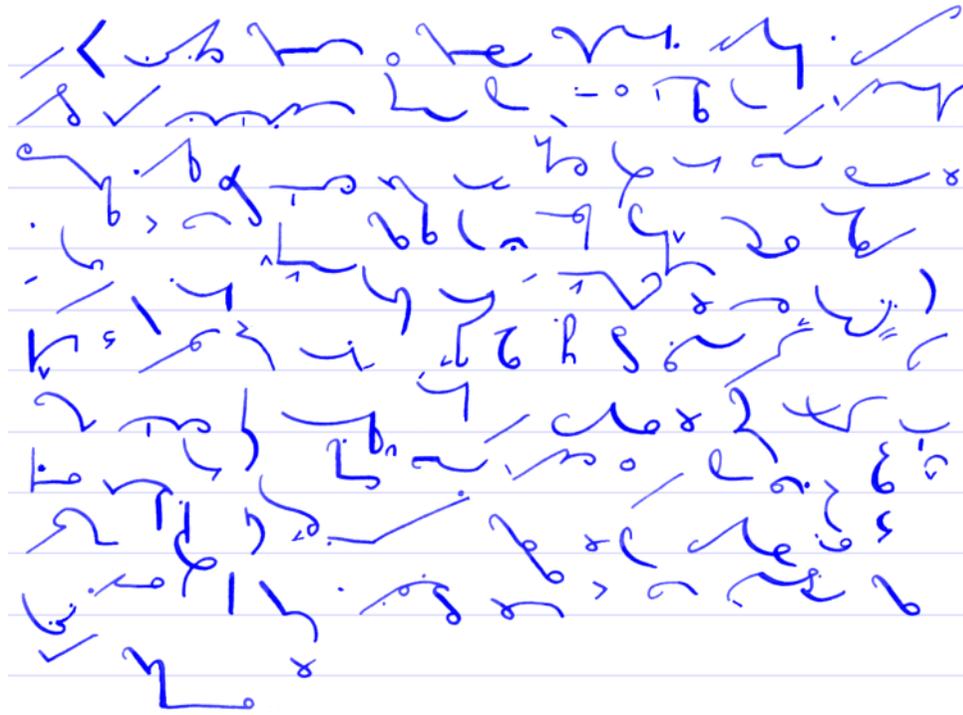
**Fishing For Business**

With reference to the\* staff changes, we are very pleased to welcome Mr Greysides as our new shop manager. Although our staff are always very energetic and we have many colourful characters working for us, you may find Mr Greysides somewhat staid and laconic in his manner. This is a necessary part of his very worthwhile contribution to our business, as his job is to observe how we operate on a daily basis, and to come up with changes and improvements to our methods and routines, for the benefit of the customers, the staff and the shareholders. Following a meeting with senior management, Mr Greysides is drawing up plans to introduce some new and exciting activities into the Staff Sports and Leisure Club. Please feel free to contact

him in order to\* contribute your own ideas for the ongoing expansion of these facilities. He has informed me that he is happy to examine any new proposals and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages with interested parties. We are grateful for his refreshingly different managerial approach to our business and the well-being of the employees, and I am sure that we will all get to know him much better when we have the chance to converse informally on our Annual Firm's Outing to Fishbourne later on in the year.

\* Omission phrases "W(ith re)f(eren)ce (to) the" "in ord(er) to"

\* "worthwhile" Optional contraction that omits the Ith stroke



**Fishing For Business**

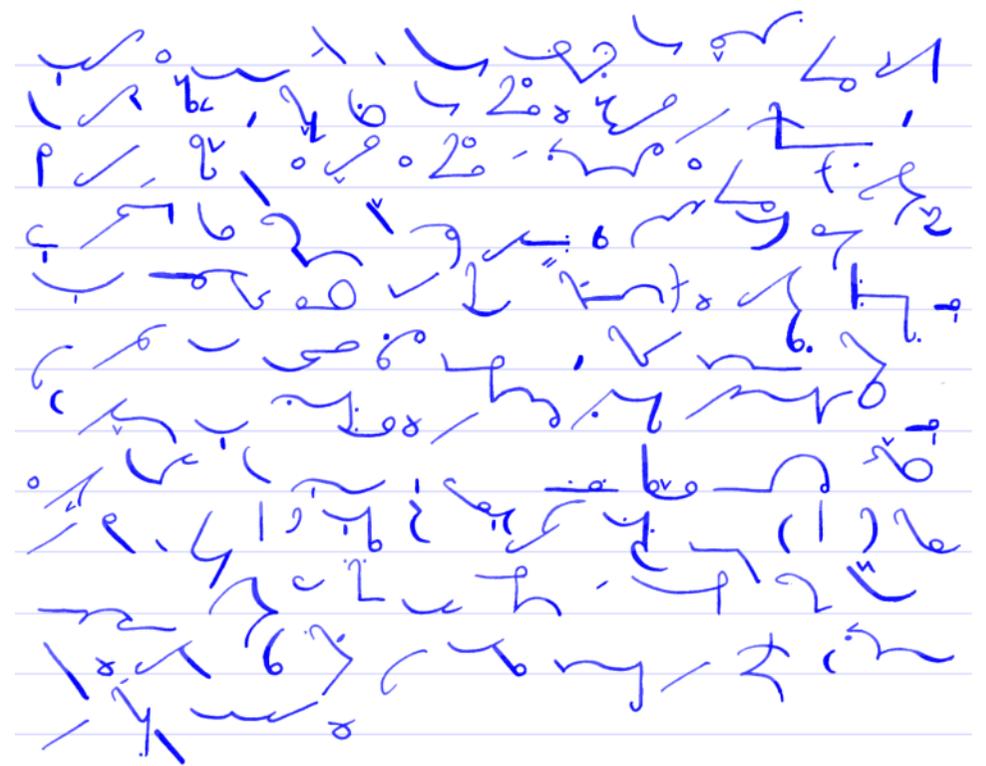
Our job enrichment programme is progressing very well indeed\*, and we have had a wonderful response to our memorandum asking staff to act as models for our ornamental sculptures artist who has been commissioned to produce new items for sale\* in the garden centre. A few of the more outgoing members have made extra overtime earnings in this way, and are to be commended for their initiative and co-operation. Miss Fishley was delighted with the result of her input, and this statue has been selling really well from the moment it was introduced onto our shelves. There were\* unfortunately\* no takers to model for the fierce dragon garden ornament, as our staff seemed to

think that this might reflect adversely on their career prospects. However, we have received\* comments that the finished articles do bear a resemblance to some of the more long-standing members of our Board of Directors\*.

\* Omission phrases "very (w)ell indeed" "There (w)ere" "we have (re)ceived" "Board (of) Directors" (board on its own is full strokes B and Rd)

\* "for sale" Downward L to make a good join

\* "unfortunately" Optional contraction



**Fishing For Business**

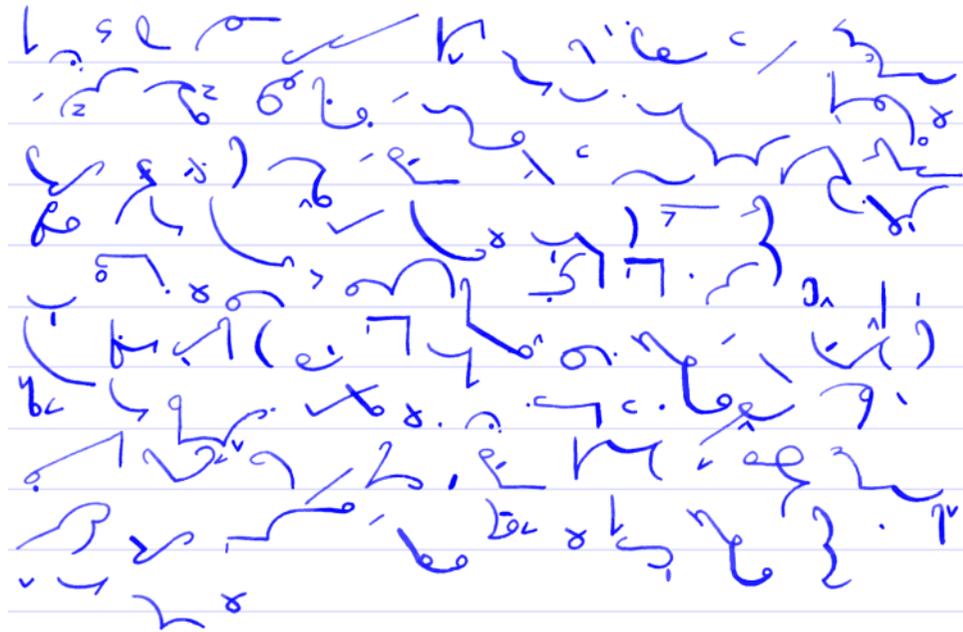
No-one is owning up to being the inspiration for the smiley chickens, but we do have one or two ideas who provided the faces for the sharks. I think it was our Managing Director\* who said we should strive to be as wise as sharks and harmless as chickens (a useful quote recorded for us verbatim by Mrs Wiggley who has learned the unusual skill of shorthand, another\* example of the success of our training programme). We think these decorative goods will result in increased sales to customers who prefer to make purchases that require no maintenance. Our range of ornamental goods is real value for money but please note that exact designs, colours and prices are subject to change at short

notice, although we will endeavour to keep them at their present economical level in order to\* attract new custom and interest from the buying public. We believe this approach will enable us to maintain our market share\* without harming our profitability in any way.

\* "Managing Director" "market share" Write the intersection first, in the order the words are spoken

\* "another" Helpful to insert the vowel, to help with smooth reading back

\* Omission phrase "in ord(er to)"



**Fishing For Business**

At the meeting with the staff last week\*, we were delighted to have the opportunity of conversing with our hardworking and loyal employees, as well as the trainees and internees, in an informal atmosphere. Everyone boldly opened their mouths and spoke up with many helpful and practical suggestions for the future of our venture. Nobody was coy and there was absolutely no carping. Some of the smaller contributors occasionally got a little drowned out, but after testing the water

they soon got into the swim of proceedings and put forth their ideas for the streamlining of our business. The meeting concluded with a rousing message of hearty appreciation from our Chairman, who spoke at length on the successful working relationship between colleagues and business associates. At the conclusion of proceedings, there was not a dry eye in the room.

\* Omission phrase "last (w)EEK"

Blank lined area for notes or practice.



**Fishing For Business**

We are now in the early planning stages of our next Team Building Day, and I duly enclose our staff attendance form. I would request that you\* fill this in and return it to the administration\* department at your earliest convenience. Your immediate attention to this matter would be greatly appreciated. Please let them know if you have any special ideas, suggestions or requirements. They will be contacting those attending nearer the date so that the necessary arrangements can be made in regard to\* accommodation and catering. I

look forward\* to meeting with you all at that event and if I can be of any further help in any way, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me, either by phone, text, email or in writing. Yours most sincerely, Mr Waters, Personnel Manager (1342 words)

\* Omission phrases "I would reques(t) that you" "in (re)gard (to)" "I look fo(r)ward"

\* "administration" Omits the R

Blank lined area for notes or practice.





Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper. The notes are dense and cover approximately the top half of the page. The shorthand appears to be Pitman's shorthand, with various symbols and strokes used to represent words and phrases. The text is written in a cursive style, with many loops and flourishes. The notes are organized into several lines, with some words appearing to be written in a larger, more prominent style than others. The overall appearance is that of a personal shorthand dictionary or a collection of notes for a specific topic.

Blank lined paper for writing.

**Hot Weather Cold Water**

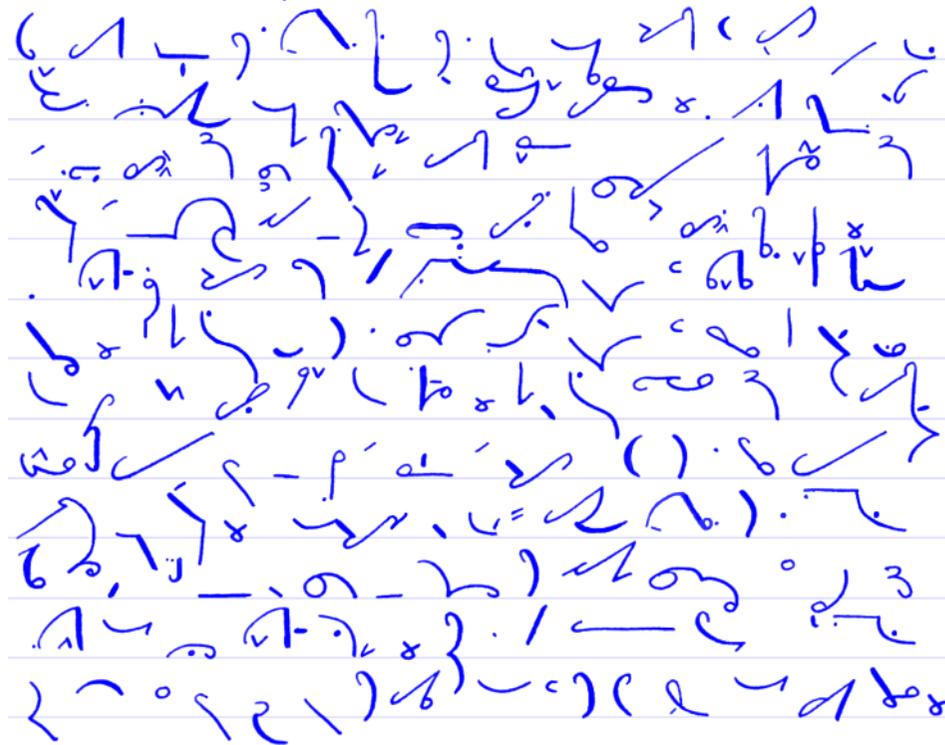
When I was at primary school, we used to walk home through Hornfair Park in Charlton, London, and past the lido, that wonderful repository of enormous quantities of cold fresh water. On a hot summer day I would long to go in and join in with the raucous shrieks and splashing sounds that I could hear wafting over the high perimeter wall. Sometimes my Mum had brought along our swimwear\* so that we could spend the remainder of the afternoon there, after school. On really hot sweltering days, there was always a long queue but I was very happy to join it, knowing what pleasures were to come. The cost was a few pennies, and once through the entrance turnstile we went immediately to the changing cubicles. We then took our clothes and other belongings to the storage area counter where they put them in a

Blank lined paper for writing.

metal cage-type crate, with a large compartment for clothes, and a separate pocket for shoes. The crates were stashed on long shelves and the staff gave out in exchange a round plastic numbered\* token on a loop of string, which people generally wore round their necks or wound round their wrists.

\* "swimwear" It is the W stroke that goes through the line, hence the unusual placement of the M stroke

\* "numbered" Both present and past tenses would make sense here, so use the optional short dash through the last stroke, to signify past tense in a short form or contraction that has no other method to show the difference



**Hot Weather Cold Water**

Then we had to go through a lobby, treading through a few inches of water that washed our feet, finally emerging into the brilliant sunshine once again\*. The red brick wall and concrete surroundings were somewhat drab, but the water, sky, swimwear and towels were bright and colourful, and we could see the green waving tops of the surrounding trees outside. The lido consisted of one very large rectangular pool with slides and diving boards. At the far end was a small shallow pool with steps at both ends for children, about waist-high for adults. At the two far corners were waterfall fountains, where people could sit and soak and between them was a place where

refreshments could be bought. In between the two foot-washing lobbies was a café and those who had not\* come to swim could remain there and watch the swimmers, as shoes were not allowed in the main lido area. There was a large clock over the café, especially important as people would have put their watches in with their other stuff in the storage baskets.

\* Omission phrase "wu(n)s again"

\* "had not" This is the official outline, but it is probably quicker to write the two separate outlines, than to go back and put in the dots

---

---

---

---



**Hot Weather Cold Water**

The ideal place to position our towels was near to the shallow end, but away from the edge and its dripping wet traffic and splashes from people jumping in. People were lying about everywhere, apparently enjoying being cooked from below by the hot paving and from above by the sun. I was perplexed by people's desire to lounge about like this, as to my mind the whole purpose was to play in the water and not

sit on the hard concrete for a single minute of our time there. They were obviously either warming up again or resting, a concept that eludes a child full of excitement and enthusiasm to take advantage of limited time in this watery heaven. Outside people would lounge on the grass and that was more understandable to me.

---

---

---

---

---

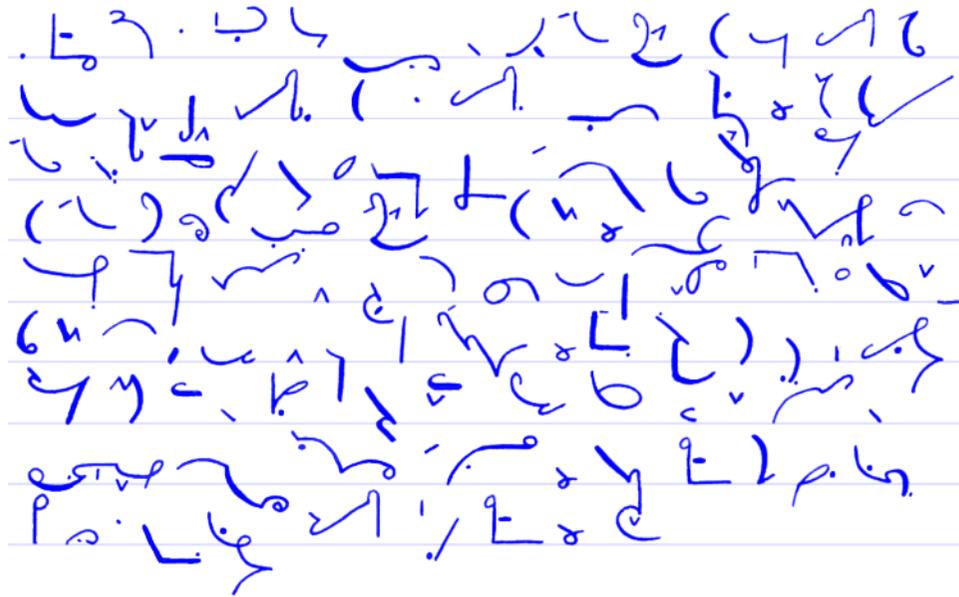
---

---

---

---

---



**Hot Weather Cold Water**

The tokens were an occasion for the young men to show off, throwing them into the water and then having to dive down to retrieve them, a watery game of dare. I think they were often competing against each other to be the first to get the disk, and maybe even boisterously snatching them off their friends' necks and throwing them about. Meanwhile, I pursued\* the more interesting activity of learning how to float or swim in different styles, copying as best I could those about me who knew how to do it properly\*. Doggy paddling was easy but wasteful of energy and I was glad to at last\* be able to glide forward faster

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

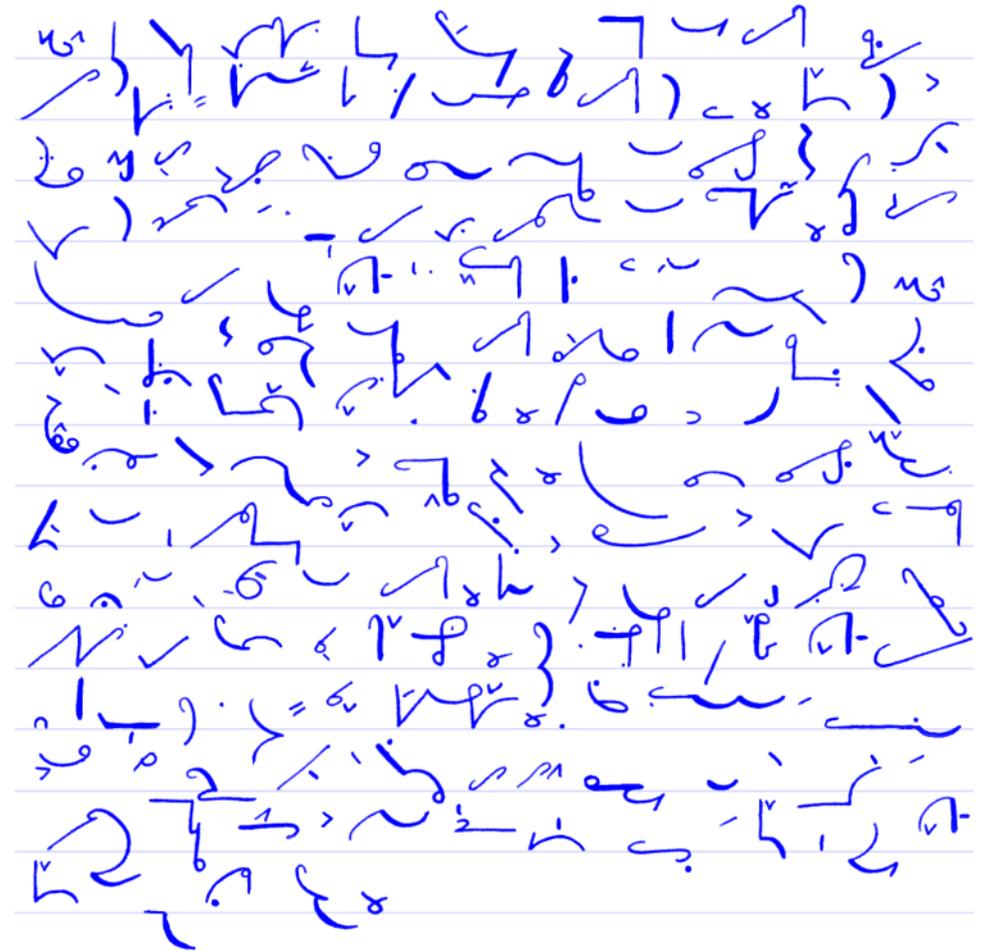
\_\_\_\_\_

when I learned to synchronise the movements of arms and legs. Butterfly stroke was the least favourite, as it meant a big faceful of water on each stroke.

\* "pursued" Note that the outline for "pursue" has a stroke S

\* "properly" Insert the first vowel, and the diphone in "appropriately" as these are similar in outline and meaning

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

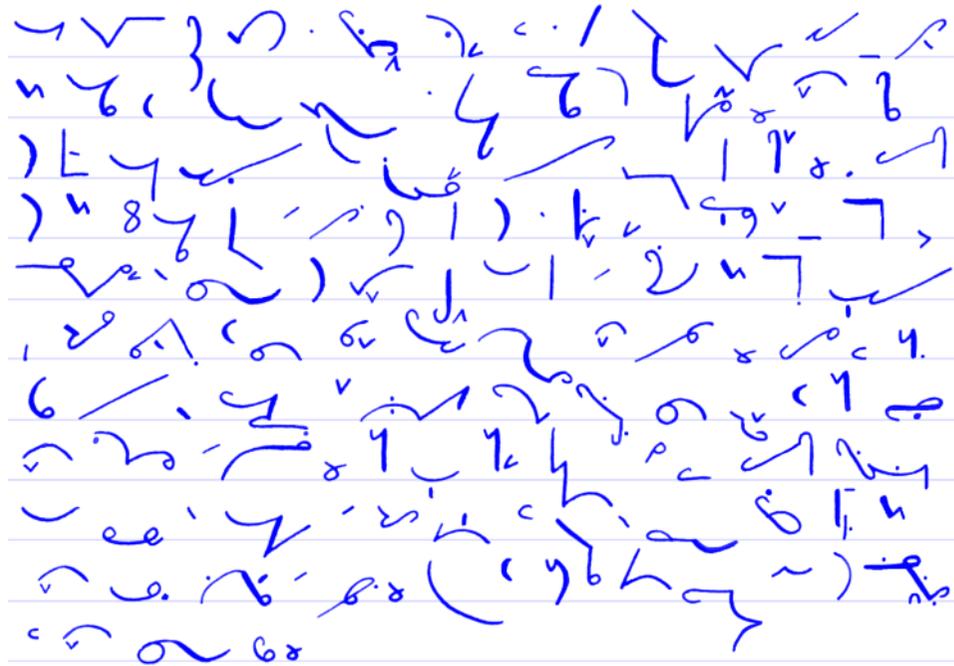


**Hot Weather Cold Water**

I found it was better to literally take the plunge, to just get in the water straight away rather than dilly-dallying at the edge in case the water was cold. Time was of the essence and I did not want to waste precious swimming minutes in hesitation, although the children's shallow pool was warmer and a good way to let oneself in gradually\*. On one afternoon we visited the lido on a quieter day, with not many people there, and I found to my dismay that the smooth undisturbed water surface had long streaky shapes of thousands of dead blackfly lining the edges. Such things would usually be masked by the movement of the crowds of people. After some hesitation, I

finally jumped in but restricted my playing to the centre of the pool, with extra efforts made not to swallow any water. At the end of each visit, we did not relish the prospect of returning to our former hot dry existence. There was an exit at each side of the lido, where you had to go through a full-height turnstile. The fast clanging and clicking noise as the vertical row of bars went round signalled the end of cool and refreshing activities and the beginning of the long walk home, clean and tired, but wishing the lido time could have lasted forever.

\* "gradually" Not using halving, so as not

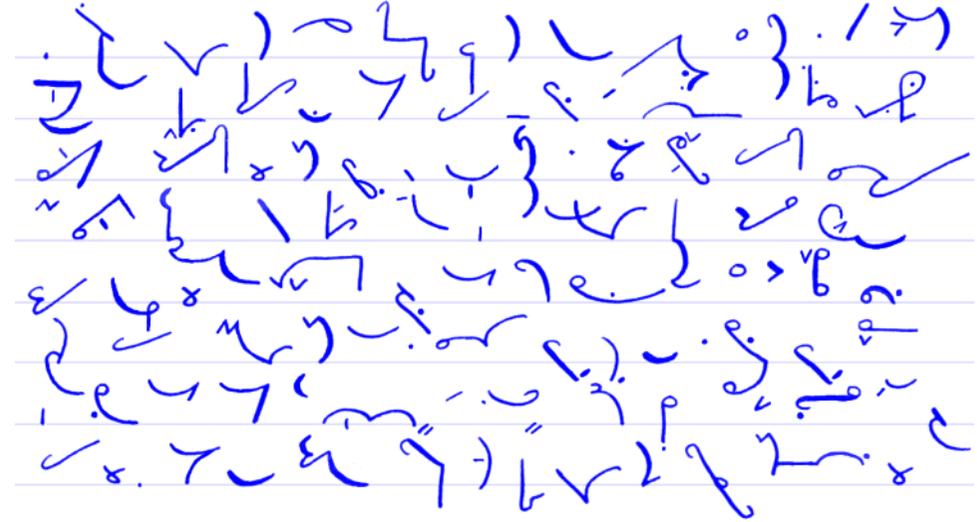


**Hot Weather Cold Water**

In the park there was also a playground area with a large paddling pool, and we could run about in this without having to bring a change of clothes or towels. My dress was tucked into underwear for convenience rather than to keep it dry. The water was about eight inches deep, and running through it was a delight, but the closest I could get to the experience of swimming was to lie down in it and thrash about, getting nowhere but always hoping that some slight forward movement might

result. Once when I did this rather too energetically, I emerged from the pretend swim to find that I had grazed my arms and legs. I had no idea at the time, as the cold water prevented any sensation of injury, and I went home with bits of sticking plaster dotted about my knees, elbows and wrists. After that I was much more\* careful and not so exuberant with my swimming efforts.

\* Omission phrase "much m(ore)"

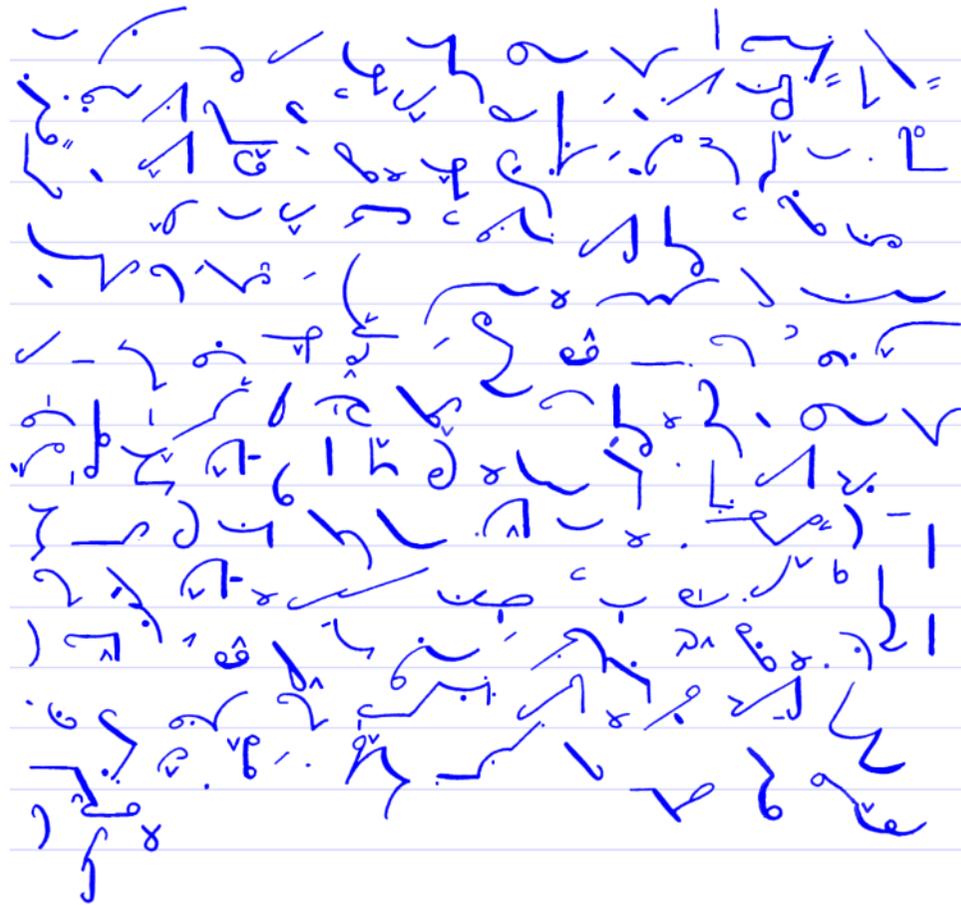


**Hot Weather Cold Water**

The paddling pool was most attractive when it was being refilled, as there was a large noisy gushing outlet at one end in which we could play and make attempts to resist the surge of water. I was pleased to know that there was an endless supply of water somewhere, and I hoped that it would never be turned off, but unfortunately\* it was not always flowing when we visited. I liked to play in the very centre, as all the

sides seemed so far away and I felt I was in a small blue sea under a spacious blue sky, but safe in the knowledge that Mum and Nan were sitting on the grass not too far away. The only thing that would have brought us out of the pool was the prospect of ice-cream.

\* "unfortunately" Optional contraction



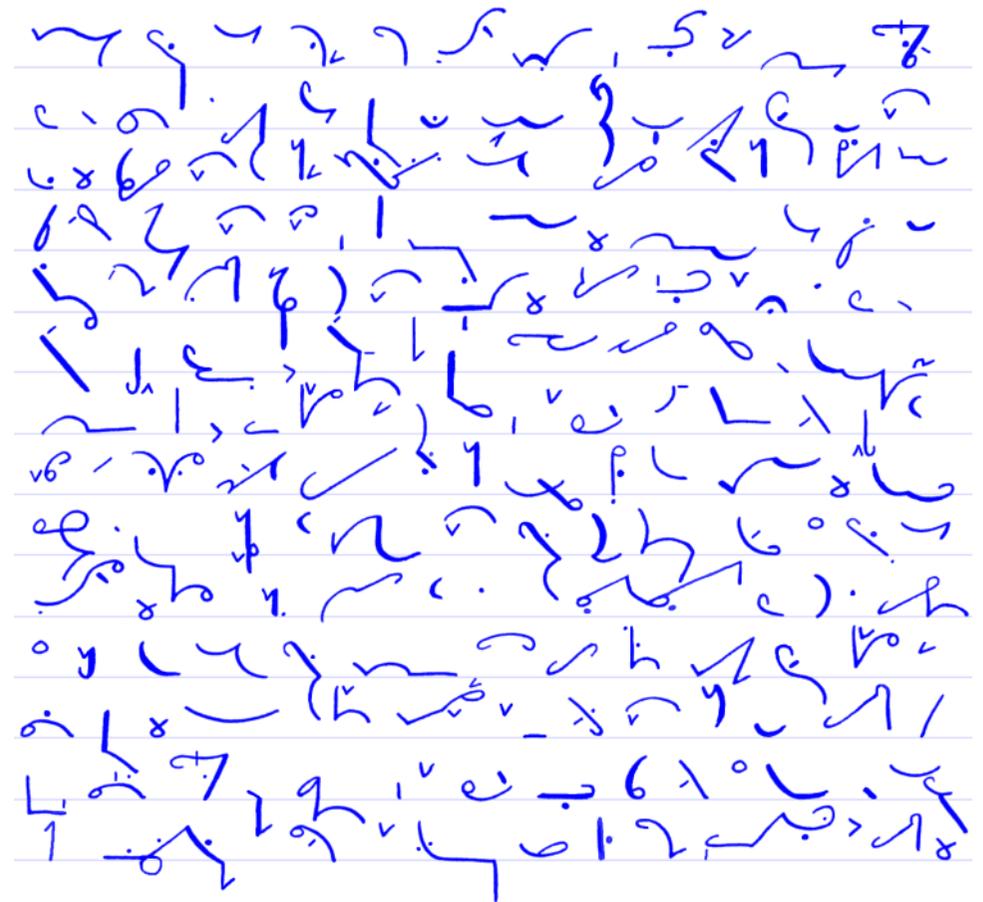
**Hot Weather Cold Water**

In later years we visited the indoor swimming pool at Greenwich Public Baths, a smart red brick building with white stone detail, and two arched entrances at the top of two wide flights of steps. Inside, the floor and walls were tiled in a dark Victorian style in white and green, with heavy wooden doors with brass fittings, all very opulent and theatrical\* looking. Immediately upon entering we could hear the same excited shouts and splashing sounds coming from what seemed like some distance but really just muffled behind more doors. There were\* two swimming pool halls but unlike the lido, these had timed sessions. Having bought a ticket, we had to wait until the current

session ended before being allowed in. The experience was quite different from the open-air lido. We were enclosed with no sun shining on us, it was not so crowded and the sounds bounced off the ceiling and reverberated around the space. The air had a faint bleachy smell from the chlorinated water. Rows of wooden changing cubicles lined the sides, and a high level gallery above could be used by those supervising their children.

\* "theatrical" Retains the doubling of "theatre" for convenience

\* Omission phrase "there (w)ere"

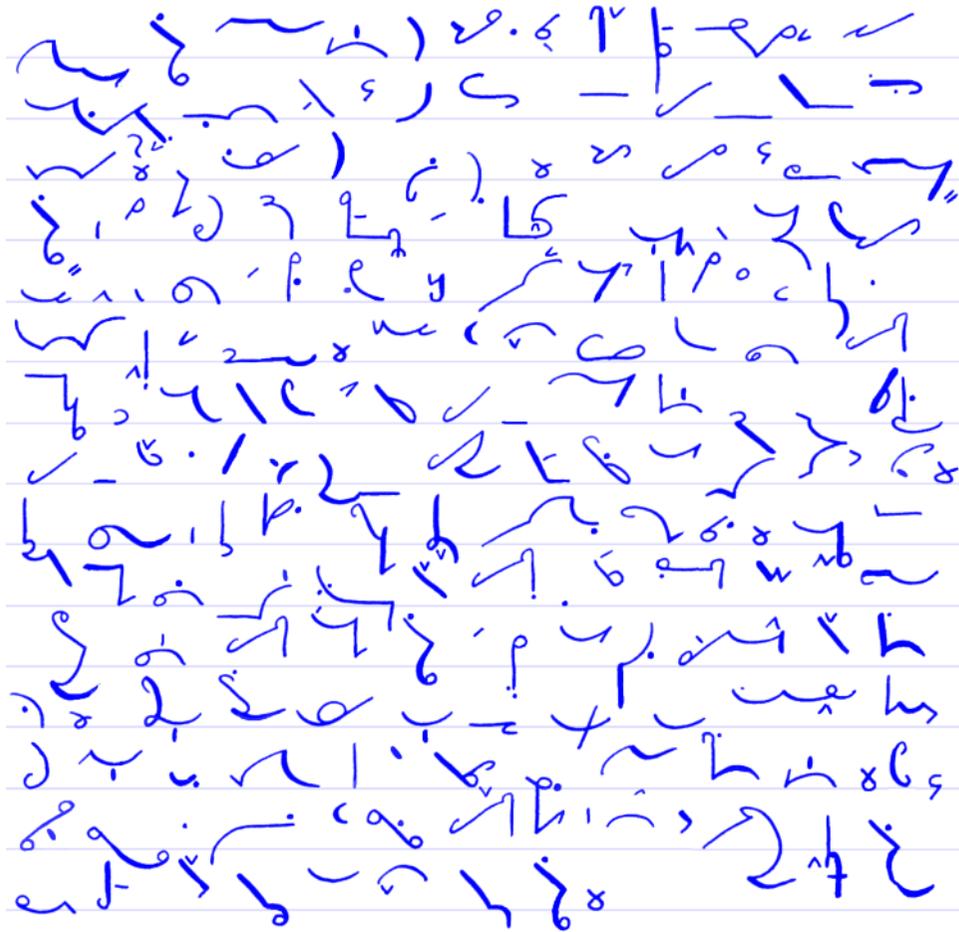


**Hot Weather Cold Water**

I mainly played in the area from shallow to middle, but occasionally I would make the courageous effort to swim a width over the deep end, knowing that there was no reachable floor under my feet. This was my idea of bravery, in that once I had started, I could not just stop and change my mind, but had to keep going. Making for the steel hand bars or the ladder on the other side\* was my goal. On one occasion I made an effort to bob down vertically to the bottom at the deepest corner, and was surprised to eventually make it to the cold tiles on the "seabed" but I soon shot back up out of that silent and airless world where I had no business staying for too long. Having been

successful a few times, I decided that holding my breath was not so much fun as playing in the shallows. I did learn that a half-hearted effort was a waste of time\*, as I did not have enough breath to make more than one attempt to reach the floor tiles on the same dip. Another time I realised I could open my eyes under water, which took some courage to do the first time, but I soon gave this up as being too uncomfortable and it exacerbated the sore eye effect next day from the chlorination of the water.

\* Omission phrases "on the oth(er) side" "was(te of) time"

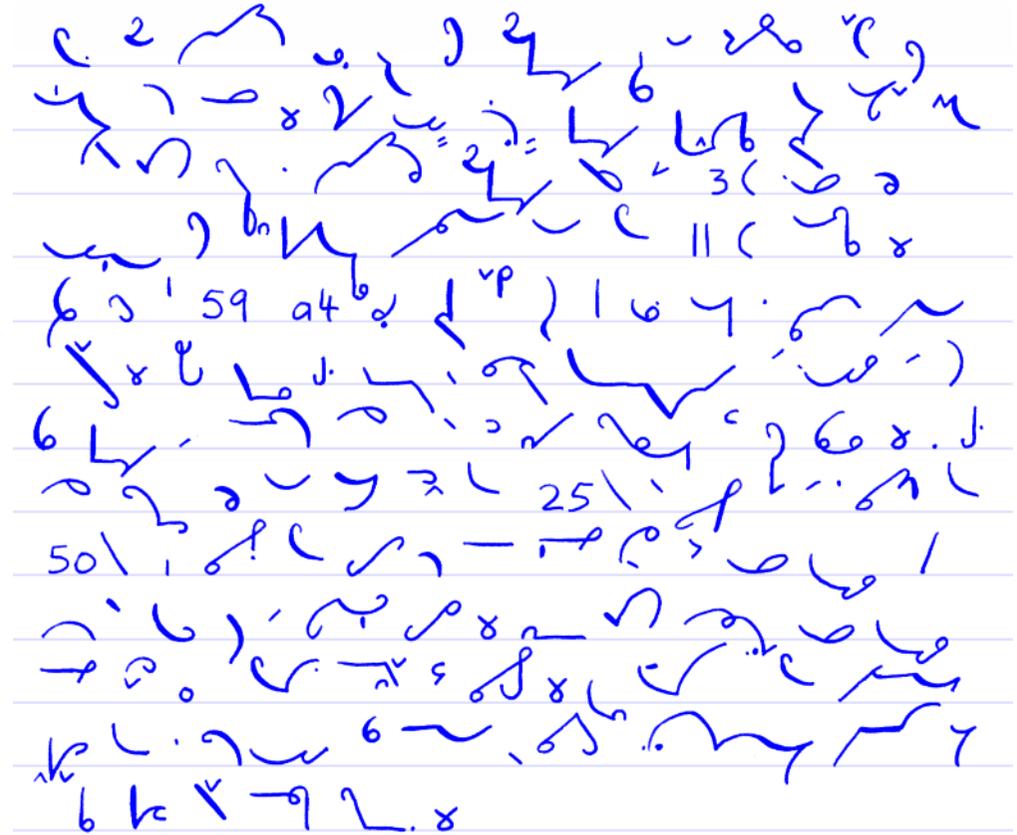


**Hot Weather Cold Water**

Leaving the baths and going home was always a hot, dry, dusty experience and we invariably came up with the usual question\* "Can we come back again tomorrow?" to which the answer was "We'll see." I went once with the school to Greenwich Baths but as the sessions were structured and educational, no doubt to ensure everyone knew how to swim and stay safe, I did not really enjoy it as much as when it was a family outing on the weekend. I knew that my quest for summer water activities would never be over, and the best we could manage at home would be to fill the largest container we could find, a large old zinc washing

bucket, placed in the middle of the lawn. It would not be swimming but it would at least provide the desired relief from the heat. Nowadays, I can get the same cool effect by watering the pots scattered about the garden, splashing some water onto the paths, and sitting in the shade surrounded by damp air. There is no planning necessary, no queue, no charge, no announcement at the end of the session, and no need to leave it all behind to start the long tramp home. Other than when the hose springs a leak that sprays water on me, all the refreshing outdoor bathing is now done by the birds in my bird baths. (2275 words)

\* "question" Optional contraction



**Free Shorthand Dictionary**

**(This article has been rewritten 3 June 2021)**

Every shorthand learner needs to have their own shorthand dictionary but this is not always possible\*, either through unavailability\* or cost. There are New Era dictionary downloads available online, and I have also produced a learner's shorthand dictionary based on the 3,000 commonest words, including their derivatives, resulting in over 11,000 entries. This will\* print on 59 A4\* sheets, double-sided, so that it fits into a slim ring binder. Instruction books tend to keep to simple vocabulary and common words, and so this dictionary should cover most of what you are presented with throughout the lessons. The ten most frequent words in English account for 25%\* of usage, and a hundred for 50%\*, but hesitating over one word can

cause the loss of the next few words which may all have been easy and well-known ones. You can also mishear the next few words because the mind is overly occupied with the hesitation. If you falter over recalling the outline for a very common word, that is going to happen alarmingly regularly, until it is dealt with by extra practising.

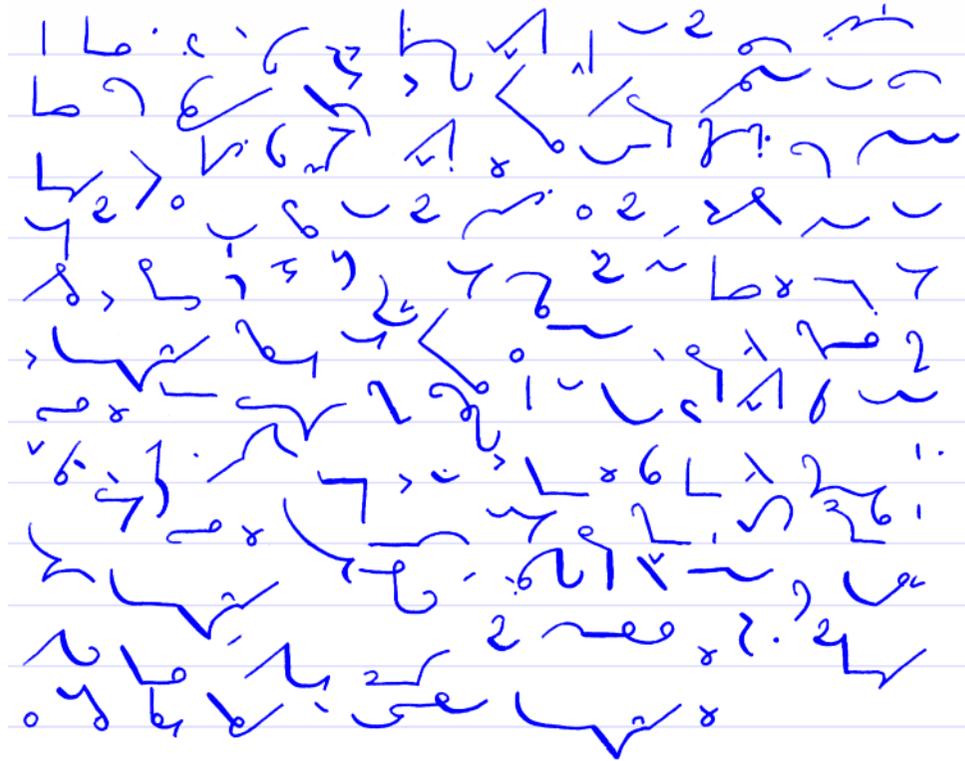
\* Omission phrase "always poss(ible)"

\* "unavailability" The downward L remains, even though a vowel follows, as "available" and "valuable" are distinguishing outlines

\* "A4" Use lower case when writing longhand

\* "25% 50%" After numerals use P stroke, after outlines for the numbers use the full outline for "per cent"





**Free Shorthand Dictionary**

It takes an effort of will to avoid the temptation\* to write out in shorthand some random text from elsewhere\*, before all the chapters are completed, resulting in more dictionary page turning than actual writing. In fact\*, transliterating from longhand into shorthand has no place in shorthand learning, as shorthand should always be written in response to the spoken word, and with the eyes seeing only images of shorthand and not text. Keeping only to the vocabulary presented in the chapters is going to speed up progress through the course. I can clearly remember the frustration at not being able to write just anything I chose to and it was a relief to get to the end of the book. This took up three months on a full time\* college course.

After that came not only speed practice but also work on vocabulary extension and consolidation, by going through various revision books and reading the weekly shorthand magazines. Although a shorthand dictionary is indispensable, it is not the best way\* of increasing vocabulary.

- \* "temptation" Omits the P, therefore M stroke not Imp
- \* "elsewhere" Downward L in order to join the next stroke
- \* Omission phrases "in (f)act" "bes(t) way"
- \* "full time" Halving to represent the T of "time"

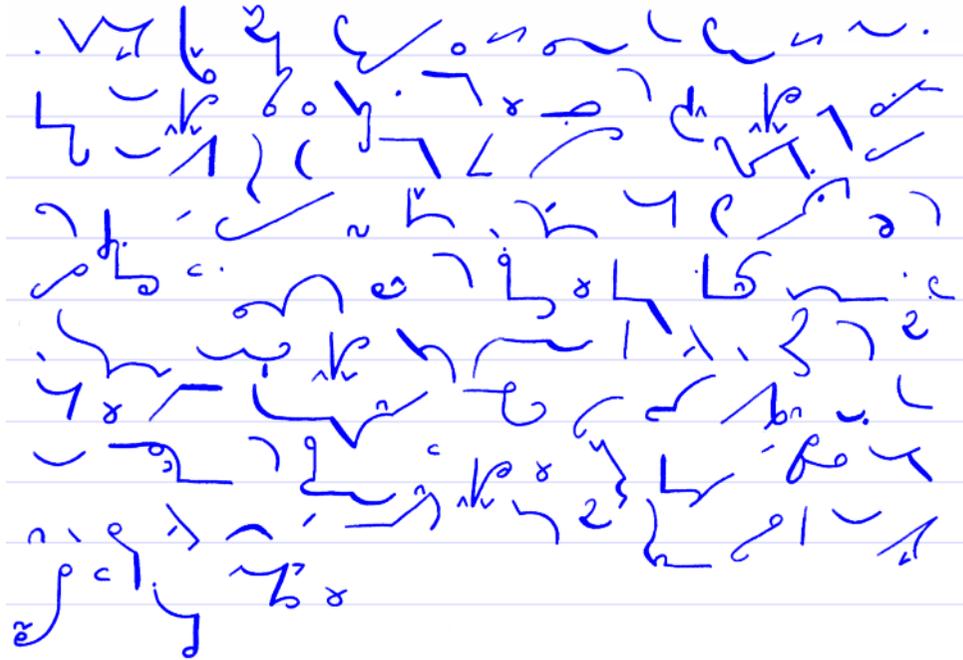


**Free Shorthand Dictionary**

Having looked up an outline, it is necessary to ensure it does not then escape again. In my early days of learning, I would often check some outline then forget it a short time\* later, and had the annoyance of having to look it up again. If you keep a shorthand pad especially for this purpose, you can write the outline in the margin and leave a line or two blank, for later practising. You only have to dive into the dictionary once for each new word, and you can go back over previous pad pages for revision from time to time\*. I would not recommend writing the longhand alongside it, as that defeats the object and wastes your time. Alternatively you can write them

in the pad as a plain list and do the practising on a separate pad so that you have the original list as a reusable resource. You could\* take a few photos of those pages on your phone, for reviewing whilst you are away from your study materials.

- \* "short time" The halving is doing duty for both T sounds
- \* Omission phrase "from time (to) time" using halving for the two T sounds
- \* "you could" Not phrased, so it does not look like "you can"

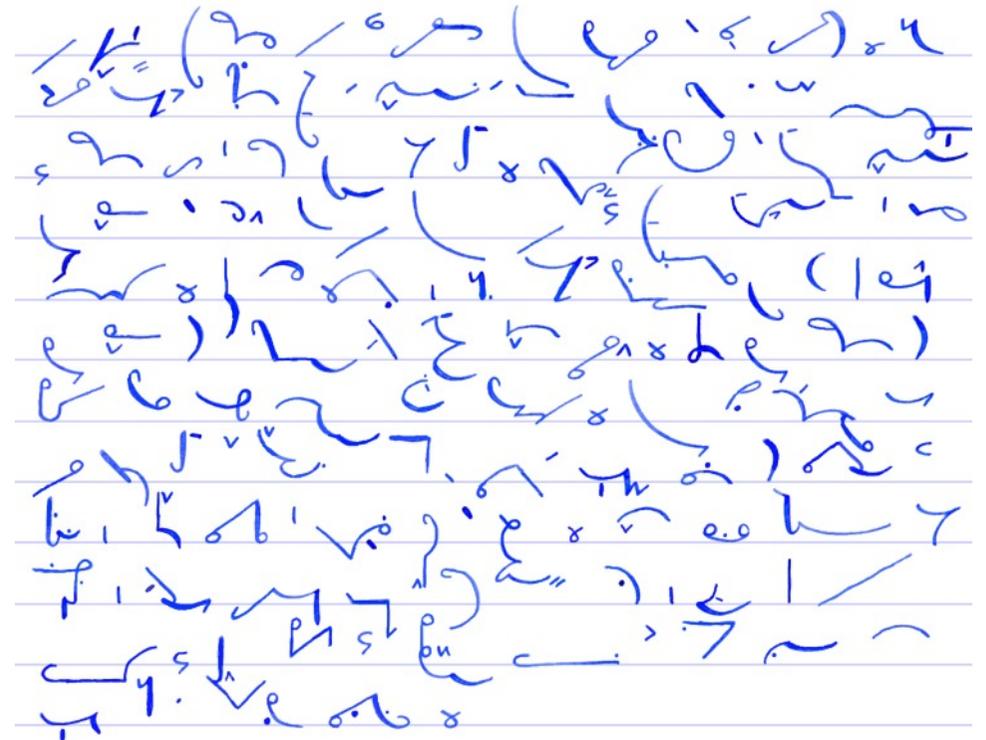


**Free Shorthand Dictionary**

The perennial advice of shorthand teachers everywhere is "Something For Everything" and in a dictation any outline is better than a gap. Guessed or doubtful\* outlines should be circled in red, so that they can be checked later on, preferably away from distractions and where you have time to roam onto other related words or ones with a similar sound or construction. It can be educational\* to make an effort to form the unknown outline before looking it up, to sharpen your shorthand knowledge. Regular vocabulary extension will greatly reduce the need for any guesswork or struggling with outlines. I hope that the\*

<https://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/downloads.htm#3000-dictionary>

<https://www.long-live-pitmans-shorthand.org.uk/links.htm#shorthand-books>



**July Thunderstorms**

Our July thunderstorms are with us once again\*, after several weeks\* of hot weather. I have always enjoyed the drama of thunder and lightning\* and I can vividly remember a night many years ago when the storm went on from evening until dawn. Brilliant flashes of forked lightning filled the sky all around for hour after hour, with the thunderclaps\* following on almost immediately. It was impossible to sleep, but I did enjoy the spectacle, even though it sounded as if the sky was breaking up and falling on my house. It seemed as if the storm was stationary over us, instead of moving along over the country. After the last rumbles in the hours before dawn, I finally got to sleep and no doubt the same was happening with deafened but tired heads on pillows throughout all of South London\*. My sense of adventure only extended to opening the window to get the

fresh air but shutting it rather quickly when the downpour started, with the satisfying click of the catch letting me know that I had a safe haven.

\* Omission phrase "wu(n)s again" "several wee(k)s"

\* "lightning" is the noun referring to the flash; "lightening" is the verb (present participle) and has a different outline, based on "lighten" = L + Tn + Stroke Ing

\* "thunderclaps" Note both the N and L hooks are included between the strokes

\* "London" Downward L for convenience as it is a common and well-known place name. The outline for the similar "linden" has upward L + N + Dn, according to normal theory rules

