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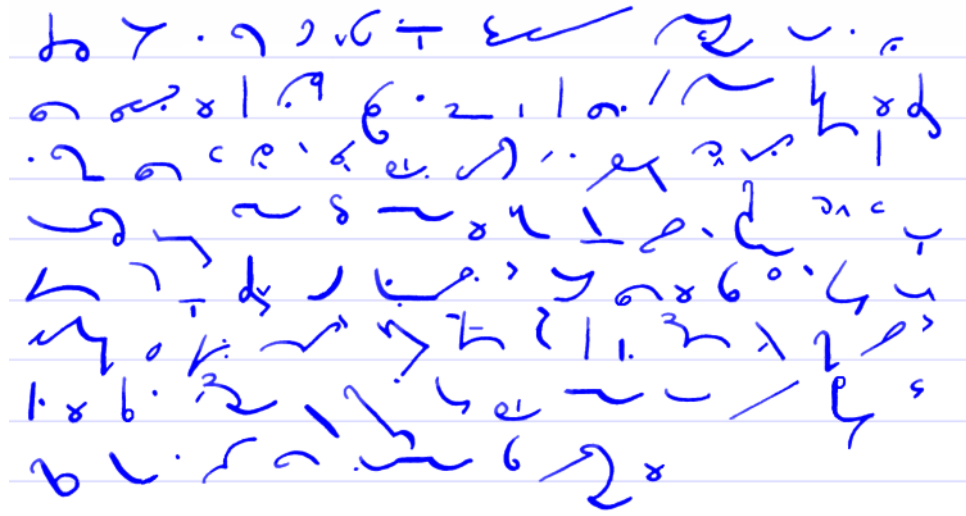
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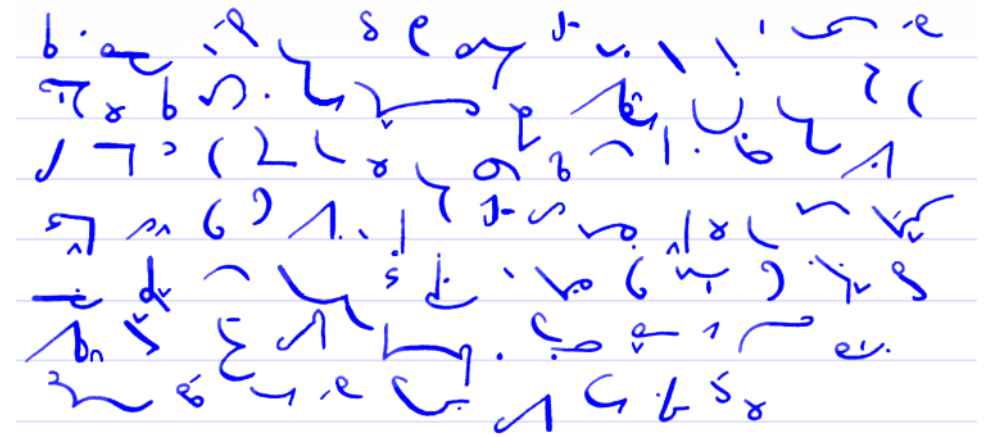
First Jumper Day

It seems only a very short while ago that we were languishing* in a late summer heatwave. It lasted less than* a week but it seemed much longer at the time. It has been a very good summer, with lots* of hot sunny weather and a reasonable amount of rain at intervals to keep the garden plants going. I have become used to travelling around with no jumper or coat, despite the usual vagaries of the English summer. This has all changed now and we have had the first chilly mornings of approaching autumn, although it did warm up during the rest of

the day. It is a warning to be prepared for the sun going in rather suddenly, with the breezes being a little more nagging than refreshing.

- * "languishing" Omits the hard G sound
- * "less than" Downward L in order to join the phrase
- * "lot" "masses" Always insert the vowel, as these are similar in outline and meaning

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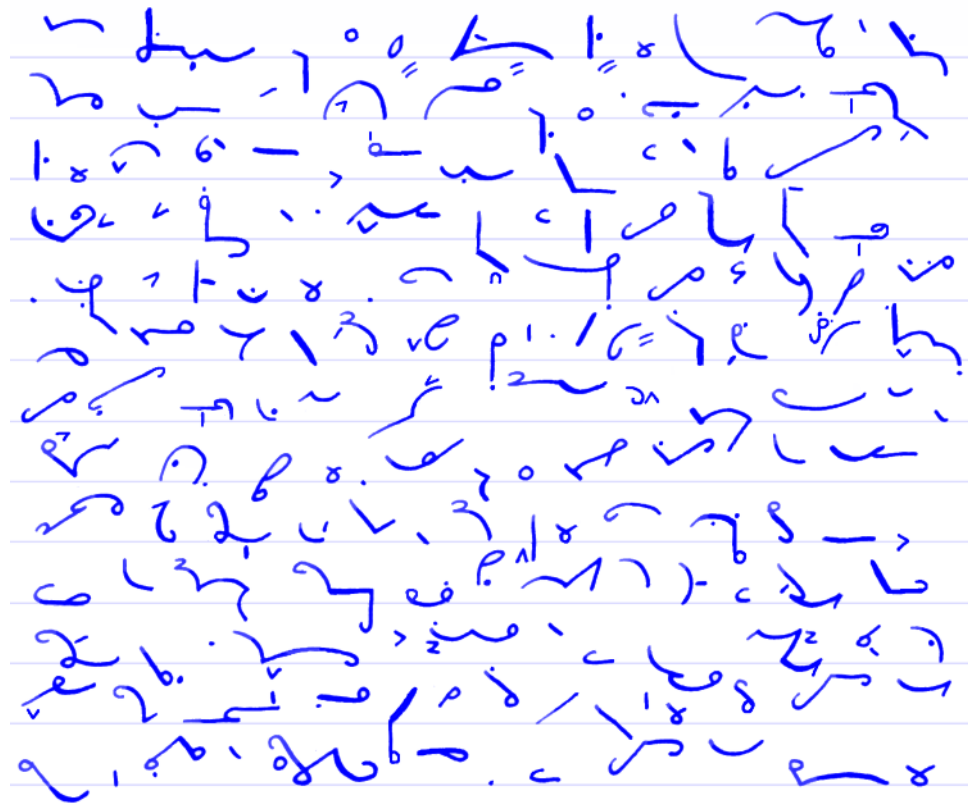
First Jumper Day

It is a signal to stop feeding the plants, as they certainly don't need to be putting on any more soft growth. It is also a reminder to start reducing the fish feeding, although they generally get what they ask for. If they swim towards me at a fast rate and crowd round, then they are ready to eat and don't want to miss out. If I am politely

ignored, despite my benevolence* with the container of pellets, then I know their appetite has been reduced by the falling water temperature, the overcast sky and the lack of sunny warming spots in the soft blanket weed along the edge of the pond.

- * "benevolence" Optional contraction

Blank lined area for writing notes or a response.



First Jumper Day

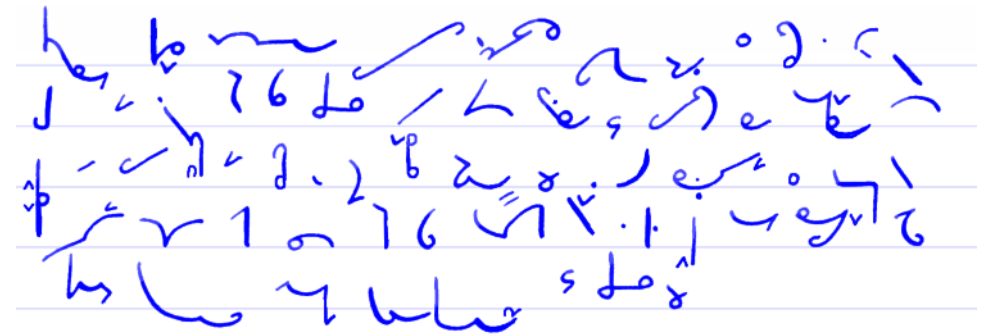
I am designating today as First Jumper Day. After months of bare arms, neck and lower legs, today is a grey rainy cover-up day. My thoughts go to the sock knitting book, with all its wonderful variations on the construction of a right-angled* tube, with different ways of doing the top cuffs, the instep and the toe end. The more interesting ones with the fancy stitch patterns must of course only be worn whilst sitting on a large well-padded sofa, constantly admiring one's yarn-covered feet and not really walking around too much, in order* not to spoil the lacy stitches. The answer to that is to use the pattern for ankle warmers, and then there is no foot part to wear out. More impetus has been given to the quest for warmth,

forgotten since last March or so, when opening the bag of frozen peas, a reminder of the annoyance of cold fingers, and enjoying the hot air rising from the cooker gas jets as the pans are put on. Plants awoken in spring but habits* of self-preservation against the cold awoken in September.

* "right-angled" Exceptional use of a halved Ray at the beginning of an outline, to enable a good join; normally full strokes Ray and T are used.

* "in order " Doubling to represent "order"

* "habits" "hobbies" Insert the vowel, as these are similar in outline and meaning



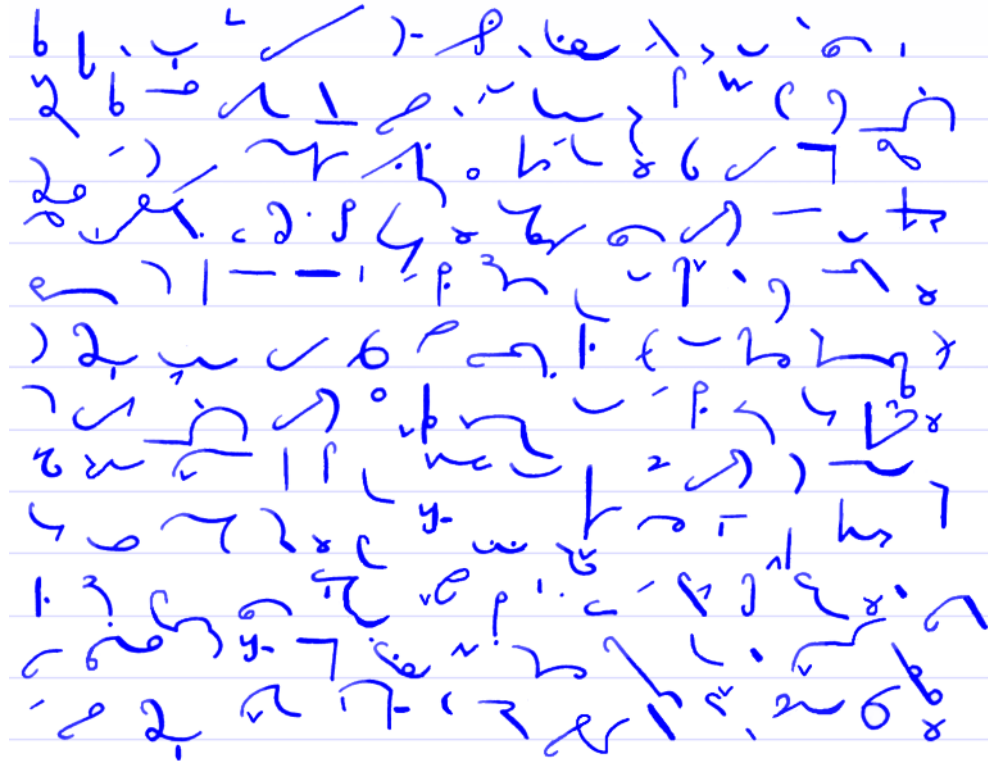
First Jumper Day

At present the delights of making winter warmers will have to wait, as there is a lot to be done on the computer, although those tasks are much more pleasant* when the weather is not enticing me outside and away on the trains to see the sights of London. The usual scenario is to get up really early and do some of it then,

followed by a day out in the sunshine, and then at the end of the afternoon and into the evening continuing with the tasks.

* "pleasant" "pleasing" Always insert the vowel, as these are similar in outline and meaning

Handwritten practice lines for shorthand, consisting of several horizontal lines.



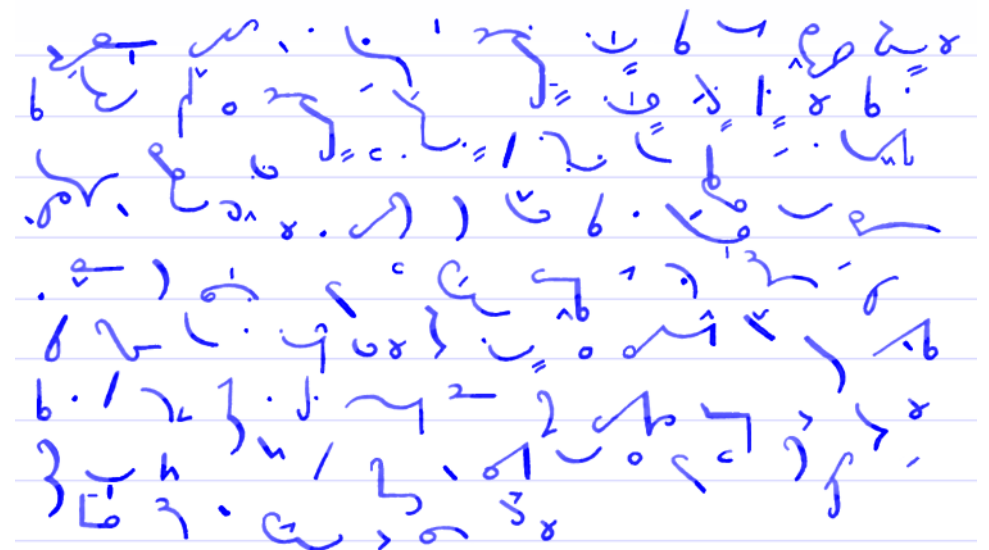
First Jumper Day

It is difficult to know why we are so resistant to facing up to the end of summer, but I suspect it is because we have become used to not having to think at all about the other three cooler seasons, and so our mental radar is turned off. Then we get surprised, most unreasonably, when there is a sudden change. In this country summer weather can end at the beginning of September or it can go on and stay warm, if not dry, all through October. So, there is no knowing whether this is the last carefree day (in terms of temperatures) or whether the cooler weather has decided to move in and stay here for the duration. On the other hand*, I would not like it at all if

I knew in detail what the weather was going to do for the next month or two. However, I don't intend to find myself caught out at the end of the day, wearing flimsy summer clothing whilst sitting on a cold and blowy train platform. All will be well as long as I don't get complacent and I remain prepared for all likely possibilities*, and, yes, there is no life motto that cannot be usefully applied to shorthand writing* as well. (726 words)

* Omission phrase "on the oth(er ha)nd" "short(hand) writing"

* "possibilities" Optional contraction



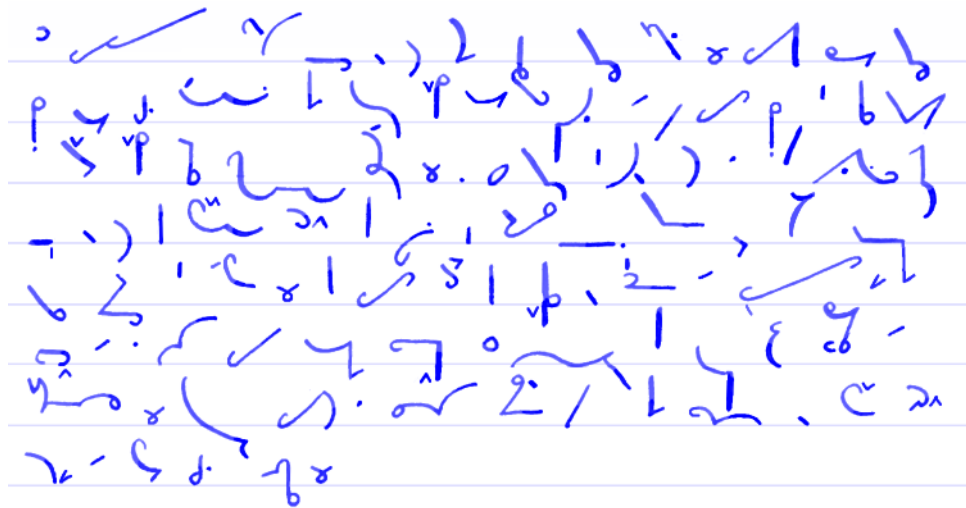
Wimbledon Common

Two weeks ago* we went to a fair on Wimbledon Common which is in the south west of London. Its official* title is Wimbledon and Putney Commons Open Day. It is a fairly substantial event, with a large arena for displays and a variety of stalls all around. The weather was fine, which is a bonus in September, the sky was summery blue with fluffy clouds, and the air warm and still, just perfect for a community event. Although the Common is surrounded

by busy roads, it is a large area, and it was a ten minute walk through the woodland to get to the field. There was no doubt about which direction to head in, as people with their children and dogs were all flowing to the same point.

* Omission phrase "two wee(k)s ago"

* "official" Insert the first vowel, so it does not look like "final"

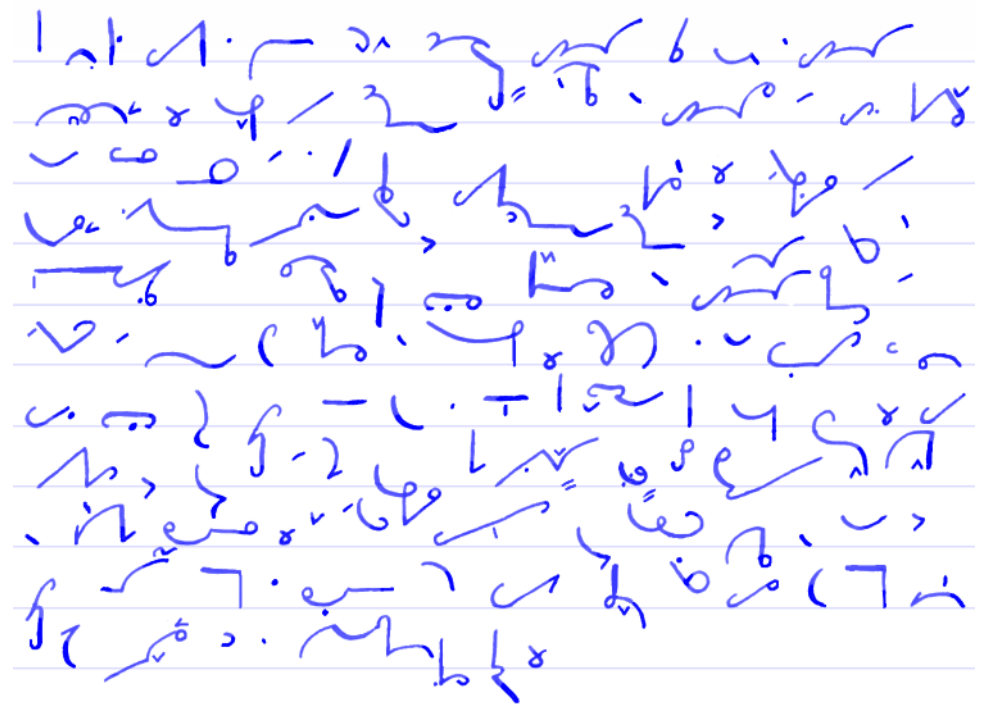


Wimbledon Common

What we were particularly keen to see was the display of birds of prey. We had seen the birds sitting under the tent awning at the far side, in the shade and each one sitting on its perch by the side of its drinking saucer. The first bird on show was a large raven, and it was good to see it flying around at will, but always coming

back to the handler to get the piece of chicken on offer. At one point it decided to walk and wander on the ground and a little way into the crowd, as many people had food with them, sandwiches and ice creams. After that we saw a small hawk, which had the freedom to fly around the area and over the tents and trees.

Horizontal lines for taking notes.



Wimbledon Common

At midday we had a look around Wimbledon windmill, which is now a windmill museum. Inside are working models* of windmills and wind turbines in glass cases, and a large display of woodworking tools. Upstairs are various artefacts relating to the work of the mill, pieces of cogwheels*, samples of different grains, diagrams of windmill construction and operation, and many other items of interest. There is also a hand quern with some wheat grain so that children can have a go* at grinding it into flour. We returned to the field, and saw the visitors at the Reptile Events stand, as they were allowed to hold the snakes. I often wonder if the fascination leads to any of the children actually getting a snake or

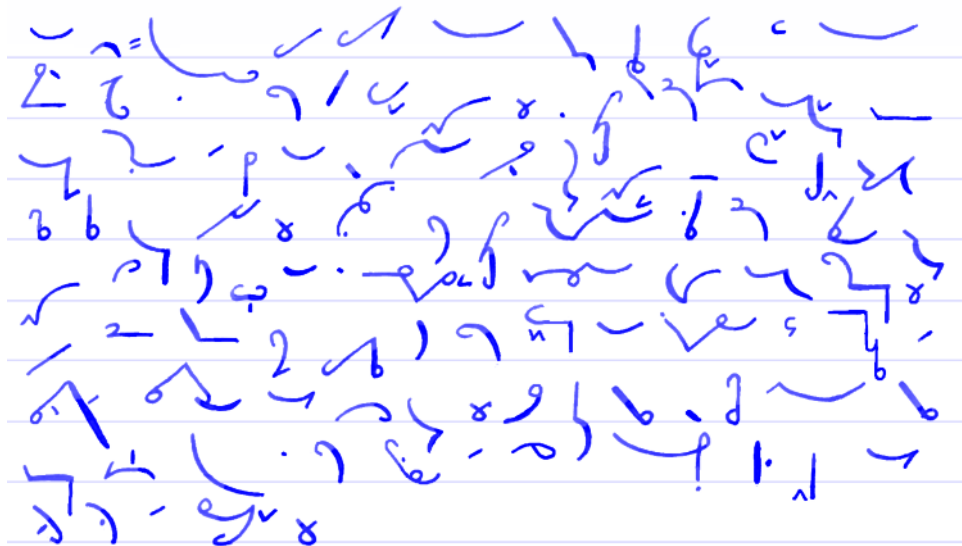
whether the desire passes once they get home and they realise what a long-term commitment it would be.

* "models" Outline follows the form of the verb, written thus to enable the other verb forms, likewise "mettle". Nouns and adjectives like "medal" "metal" "modal" used the halved MD stroke and stroke L.

* "cogwheels" The outline has the Hway stroke, as it is not possible to form the Hwel stroke here

* "have a go" Inserting the vowel in "go" is helpful here, as the word is being used as a noun

Horizontal lines for taking notes.



Wimbledon Common

In mid-afternoon we watched another bird display, this time with another hawk, and then a very large white owl*. The children were invited to come into the arena and sit in two long rows, so that the owl could fly down between them towards its food reward*. Lastly three children of varying ages were chosen to have the owl land on their gloved hand, an experience I am certain they will never forget. Our walk back through the woods was very quiet, in comparison with the activities and hubbub happening in the main field. As usual, it was bus, two trains and another bus to get

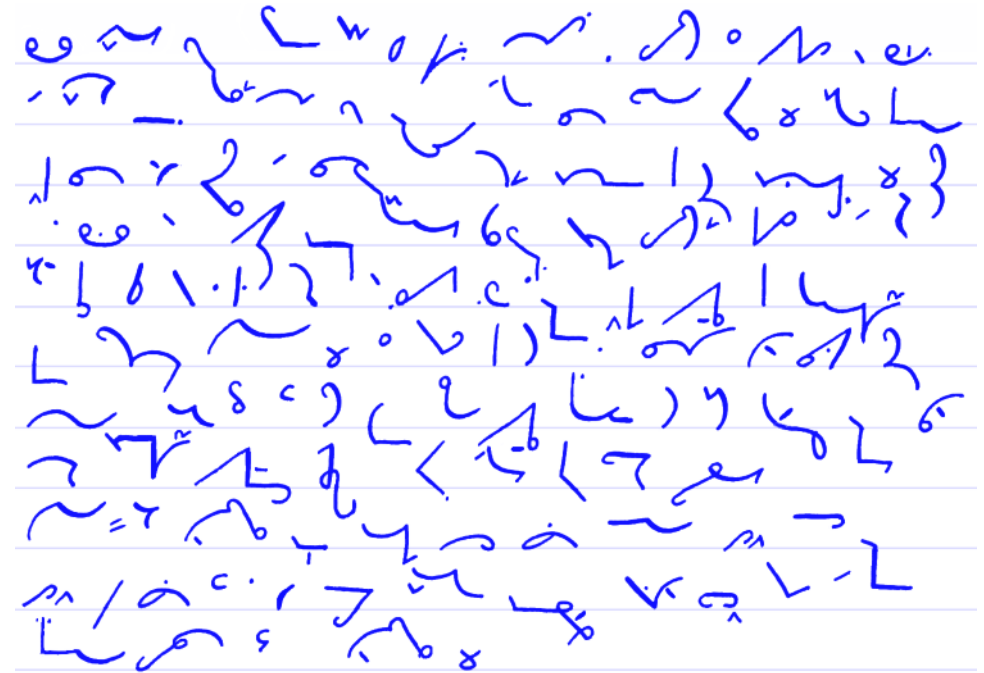
home, after a very delightful and interesting day out in the open air and sunshine. (821 words)

* "owl" Special outline with the third place diphthong at the beginning of the stroke, to enable the join

* Omission phrase "betwee(n) them"

* "lastly" Omits tshe T

* "reward" The suffix "-ward" omits the R



Last Minute Garden

Since writing the previous blog about the first chilly morning, the weather has returned to sunny and mild, giving me the opportunity to finish off some garden jobs. I have been taking out some old shrubs and simplifying the area to make it easier to maintain. There was a sense of urgency* to get this completed before the weather turns and although I thought it would just be a day or two of concerted effort to dig out the roots, it eventually took very much* longer. As part of it was a small low hedge, there were many individual plants with their thick roots tangled, so I was forced to take the slow method of gradual reduction and destruction, chopping off the top growth, using the long handled

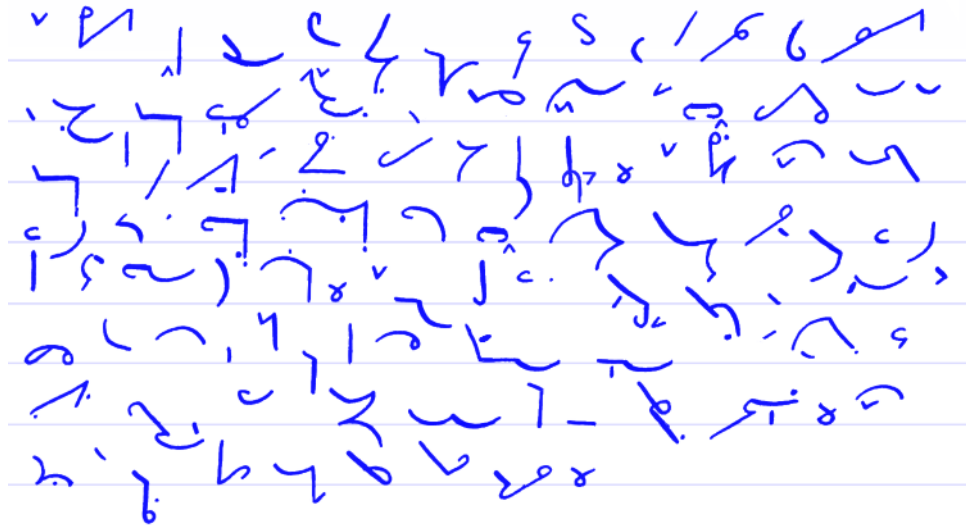
loppers* to cut into the main stem, going round again to dig round each stem with an old kitchen knife to expose the below ground part and attacking once more* with the loppers.

* "urgency" Omits the N

* "very much" Includes the M in order to join the phrase

* Omission phrase "wu(n)s more"

* "loppers" are a cutting tool for thick branches, hence the long handles to apply the force to the blades



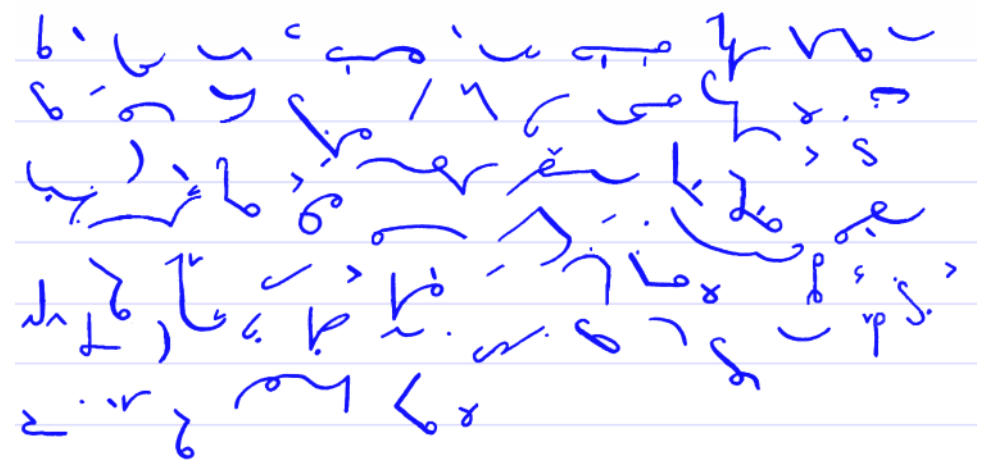
Last Minute Garden

I started out bending over gently to deal with each plant, without much result, then resorted to kneeling to get closer, and finally to almost lying on the ground, weapons in hand, to get at each root and hack away until it was destroyed. I startled my neighbour when she heard a greeting emanating from ground level, beneath the rose bush, when she had thought the

garden was empty. I could have done with an obedient beaver to gnaw all the stems for me, but I had to do it myself, poking, cutting and lopping with the ratchet pruner, in order to* ensure nothing of it could possibly regrow. My estimate of two days turned into the best part of two weeks.

* Omission phrase "in ord(er to)"

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Last Minute Garden

It is all finished now, with clumps of new crocus and daffodil bulbs in place, and some English bluebells which I hope will increase over time. The grand finale was two trips to the municipal recycling depot to dispose of the plant material, as well as some other* rubbish, and an afternoon hosing down the paths and tidying away all the tools and empty* bags. Satisfaction with the completion of the task was achieved at last* and not a wintry blast or blizzard in sight to call a halt to these last-minute* jobs.

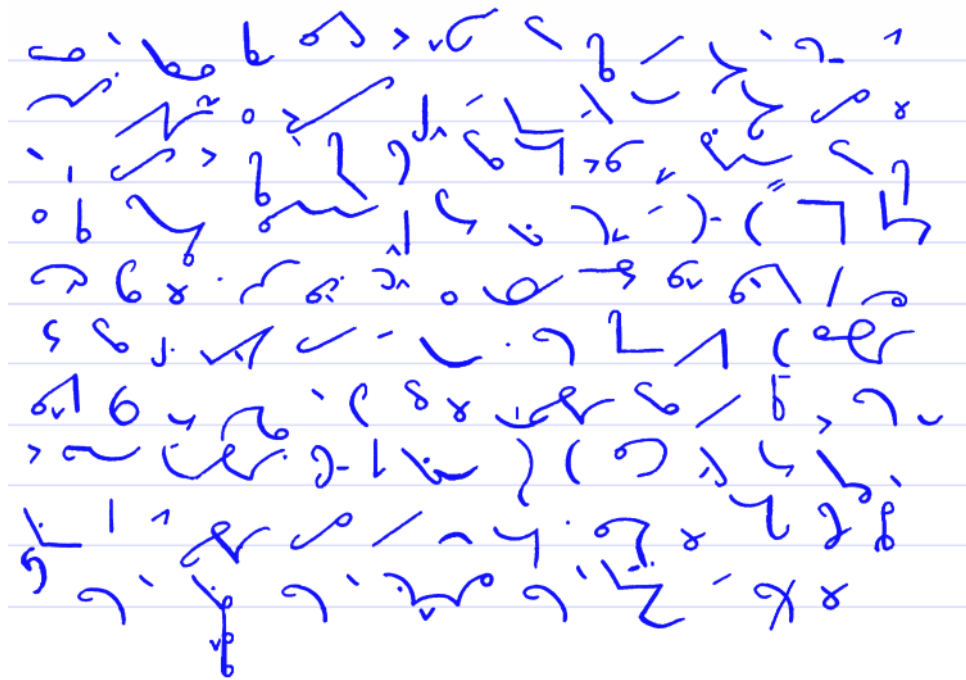
* "some other" Using doubling to represent "other"

* "empty" Helpful to insert the first vowel, as in this context it could be misread as "muddy"

* "at last" "at least" Always insert the vowel, to differentiate

* Omission phrase "las(t)-minute"

Blank lined area for notes or additional text.



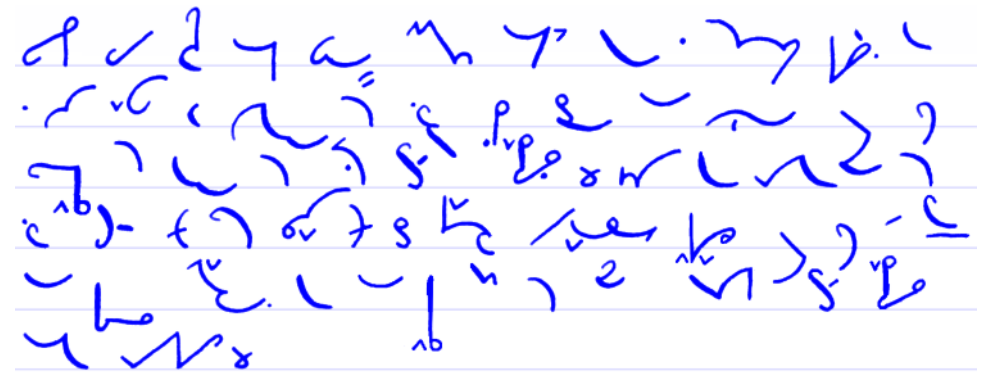
Last Minute Garden

Close of business does not happen all the while the apple trees are full of fruit, and the morning ritual is to wander down and pick up any fallen ones. All but one of the trees drop their apples onto soil, but the Spartan apple tree has its branches hanging out over the paved area, and so they get damaged more than the others. A little hunting around is necessary because of the slight slope, which means that the apples tend to roll away and, being a very dark red, they successfully hide themselves under the leaves of other plants. Unusable apples are tossed to the very end of the

garden, forcefully thrown at the paving so that they smash open, for the birds to peck* at, and the usable ones are made into a smoothie. In addition there is the satisfaction that they are free of pesticides, free of airmiles, free of packaging and free of charge*. (759 words)

* "peck" Insert the vowel, to prevent misreading as "pick" which would also make sense

* "free of charge" Stroke Chay can be intersected for "charge" in common phrases



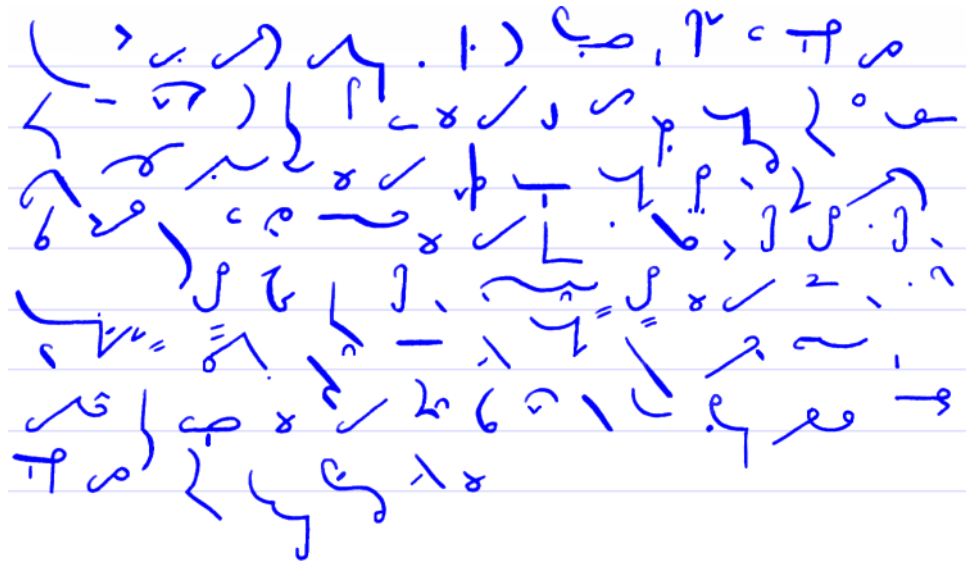
Diary Day 4 - Tower Bridge

Yesterday we travelled into London, and I hope* you enjoy being an armchair tourist for a little while, without leaving your comfortable seat, spending any money, pushing through crowds or having your hair blown sideways*. But you will have to leave your comfort zone (very slightly), spend time and effort* recognising the outlines, push through and overcome any difficulties and finally have any doubts

about your shorthand ability blown sideways, never to return.

* Omission phrases "I (h)ope you" "time (and) effort"

* "sideways" Always insert the vowel in words ending "-ways" and "-wise" to differentiate, as they generally have the same meaning

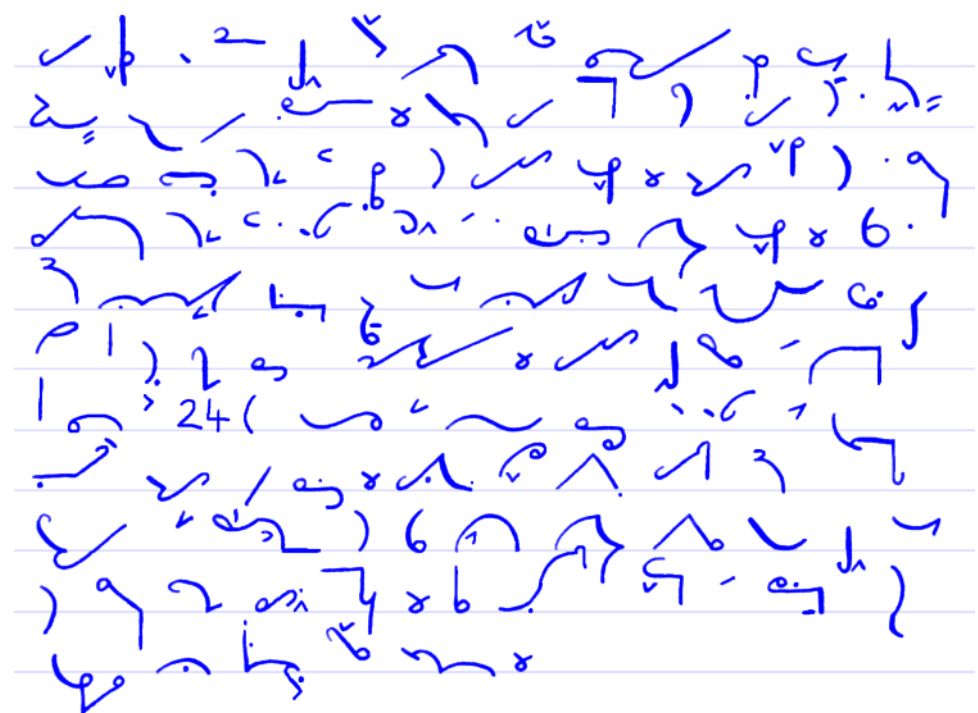


Diary Day 4 - Tower Bridge

After all the wet weather we have had, the* day was overcast but dry, with gusty winds which were quite mild, so it was not at all cold. We did not* want to stay indoors, especially as next week* will be mostly* rainy. We decided to go into the city to see the river which is always busy with lots going on. We took a bus to the train station, a train to Victoria Station, and then the tube train to Monument* Station. We walked to a particular building hoping to be able to go up onto the public roof garden, but we found it was closed. We assumed this might be for safety reasons because of the gusty winds, especially fifteen floors up.

- * "had, the" Not phrased with the tick, as there is a pause
- * "we did not" Not phrased, to differentiate from "we do not"
- * Omission phrase "ne(k)s(t w)eek"
- * "mostly" Omits the T
- * "Monument" Using the termination "-nt" as a "-ment" stroke would not join. The U diphthong sign remains with the stroke N, as there is a spoken M after it.

Horizontal lines for writing notes.



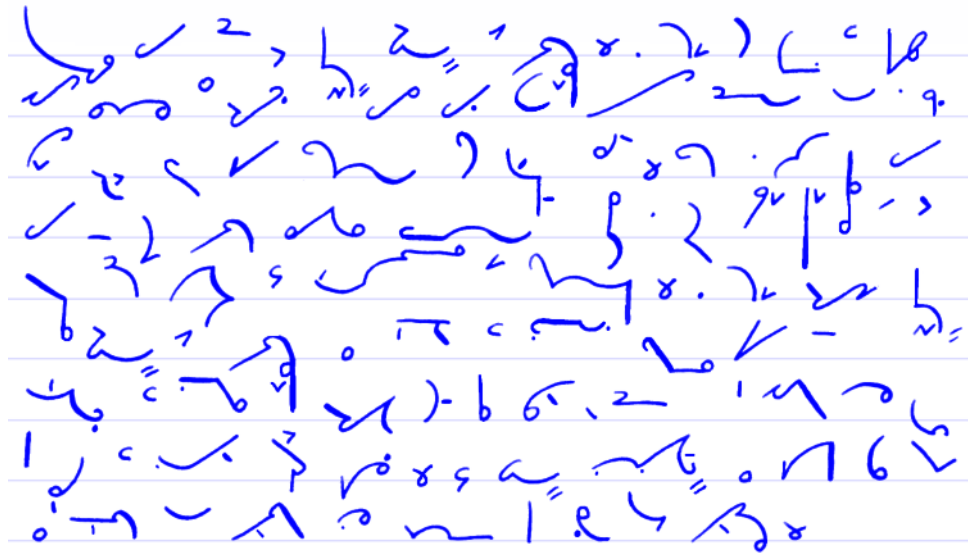
Diary Day 4 - Tower Bridge

We decided to walk down by the river and find somewhere to sit* near the Tower of London, to have our snack. Before we got there, we saw an enclosed green area with seats, so we went inside. To one side was a separate circular area with a wall around and a sunken level inside. This is a war memorial dedicated to those in the merchant navy and fishing fleets who had been lost at sea during the Second World War. We went down the steps and looked at some of the 24,000 names on the many

sections of wall and the figurative carvings between each section. Wavy lines representing water were everywhere on the stonework so this lower level represents being down in the sea, separate from the surrounding activity. It is sheltered, quiet and secluded so that visitors may contemplate the price of freedom.

- * "sit" Always insert the vowel in "sit" "seat" "stay" and derivatives, as they are the same outline and close in meaning

Horizontal lines for writing notes.



Diary Day 4 - Tower Bridge

Afterwards we walked to the Tower of London and the riverside. The area was thick with tourists, and one sometimes has to weave one's way along rather than walking in a straight line, to avoid people who are framing their photo shots. From a little distance away, we could* see the river surface gleaming, as it was an especially* high tide and all the boats were level with the onlookers* on the promenade. The area between the Tower of London and the riverside is cobbled with granite bricks which are quite uneven with gaps between them*, so it is slow to walk on, and would be impossible if you had shoes with narrow pointed heels. When the London Marathon

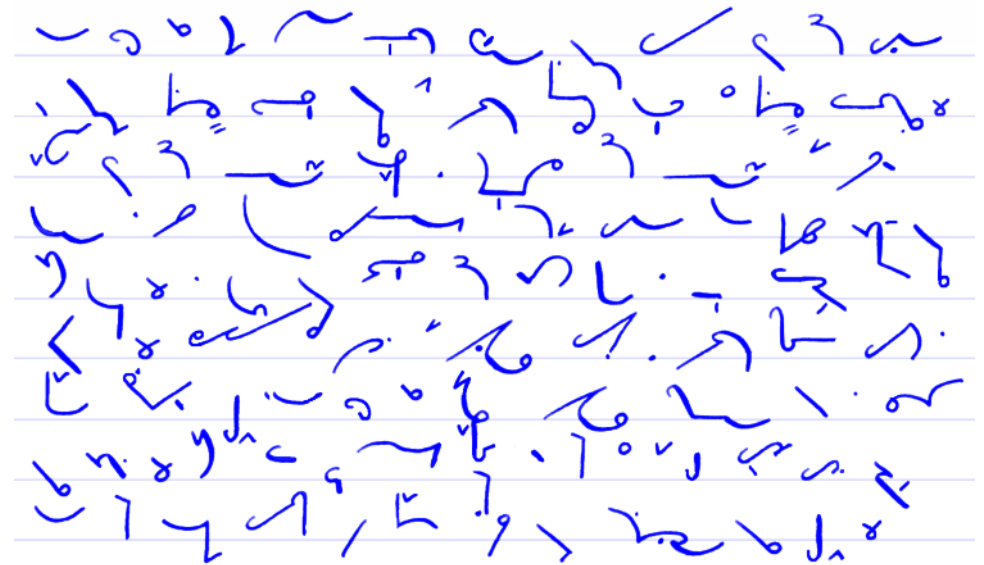
is held, this part is covered in rubber mats to make it safe for the runners.

* "We could" The outline for "could" is generally not phrased, so that it it not misread as "can"

* "especially" The short form covers both versions but it is always in order to add a stroke L for "-ly" if it is felt necessary to avoid ambiguity

* "onlookers" Not using a downward L after the N, in order to join the last stroke

* Omission phrase "betwee(n) them"



Diary Day 4 - Tower Bridge

In front of us was the long covered floating pier where people were waiting to board the Thames cruise boats and the river taxis* known as Thames Clippers. While the people were queuing inside, the seagulls were queuing on the roof, having a rest after circling* the area waiting for tourists to drop* bits of their food. A few pigeons and crows were also doing a good clean-up job. As we were leaning on the railings watching the river traffic, we saw a tiny sparrow down in front of us, on the other side of the* railings, breaking up a small piece of bread. I was glad when he managed to eat all of it, as I did not want

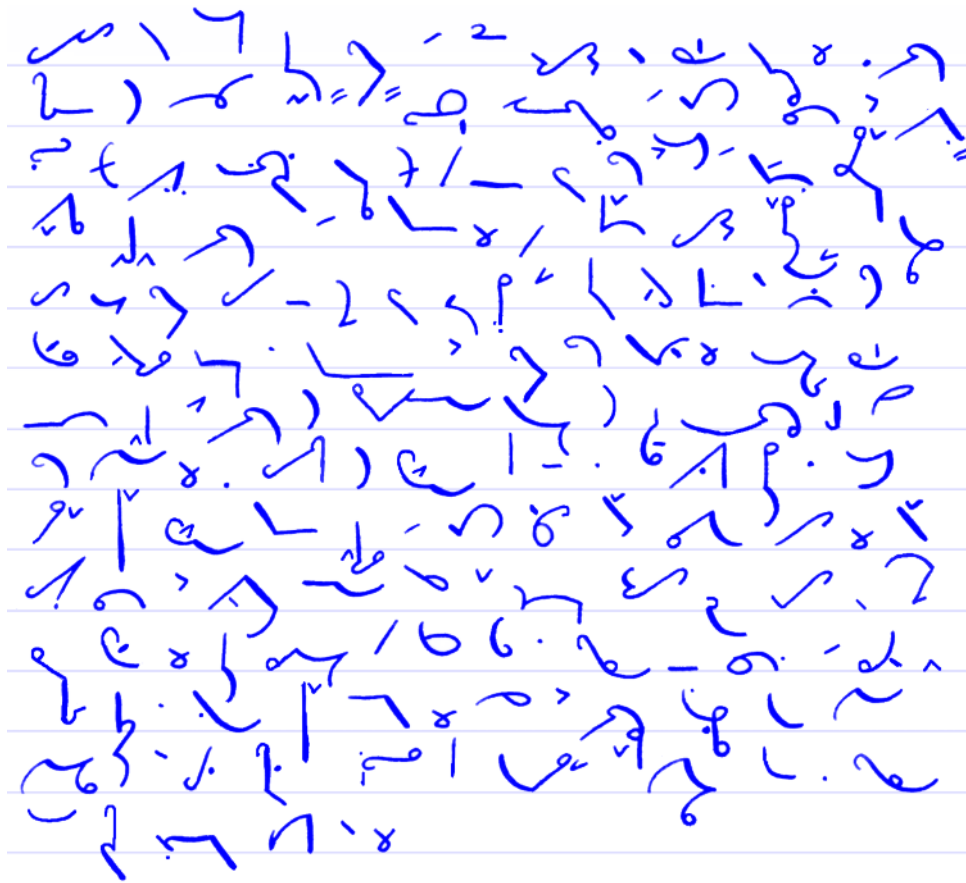
the wind to blow any of it into the water each time he put the remaining piece down.

* "taxis" Retains the stroke S of the singular

* "circling" Keep the K stroke proper length, so that it does not look like "circulating" and this latter outline is best vocalised with the A vowel, to ensure correct reading

* "drop" Helpful to insert the vowel, as "drip " could make sense in some contexts

* Omission phrase "on the oth(er) side of the"

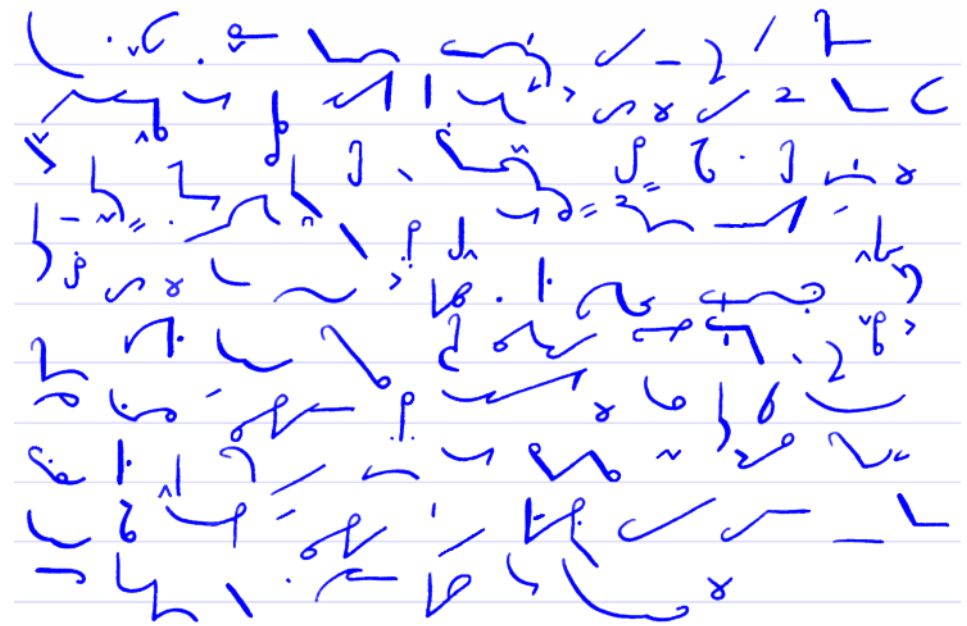


Diary Day 4 - Tower Bridge

We went up onto Tower Bridge and walked to one of the two stone piers. The river traffic was mostly* cruises and clippers, and also some of the RIB craft (rigid* inflatable boats), which give people very noisy and bumpy high speed rides down the river and back. Each time one of the sight-seeing vessels went under the bridge, we could* see the people, who were sitting on the top open deck, all aim their phones upwards to get a picture of the bridge from below. Now and then the* sun came out and the river was sparkling beneath us, but those intervals did not last very long. The water was flowing at quite a rate as it was an unusually* high tide flowing back outwards and also swollen by the heavy rain. By watching some of the rubbish going past I estimated that one would have

to run to match the speed of the flow. It was certainly much faster than a person could swim and shows how dangerous an ebbing tide can be. Most of the riverside façades have long lengths of chain draped across at various levels for a person in trouble to grab hold of.

- * "mostly" Omits the T
- * "rigid" Insert the second vowel, so it does not look like "ridged"
- * "We could" The outline for "could" is generally not phrased, so that it it not misread as "can"
- * Omission phrase "now (and) then the"
- * "unusually" The short form covers both versions but it is always in order to add a stroke L for "-ly" if it is felt necessary to avoid ambiguity



Diary Day 4 - Tower Bridge

After a while the sky became gloomier, we could see the much darker rain clouds in the distance and we had had enough of the wind. We walked back along by the Tower and took the tube train to Blackfriars Station and then a train home. It was quite a relief to be sitting down in the warm carriage and out of the constant wind. For many of the tourists, the day will have been the culmination of their dream holiday, having perhaps travelled half way across the globe, to see the sights of the most famous and historical city in the world*. For us, it was just another pleasant* day out from our home in the suburbs, and I always appreciate having all this interest

and history on our doorstep, where we can come back again at any time, to be a "local tourist" for the afternoon. (963 words)

* Omission phrase "in (the) world" Longer versions of this phrase are best avoided, as sometimes both versions, with or without "the", could make sense, bearing in mind that "world" can also be used as an adjective. Check carefully before adopting any particular version of a "world" omission phrase.

* "pleasant" Helpful to insert the vowel in this and in "pleasing" as they are similar in outline and meaning