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Blogs - 2020 - June

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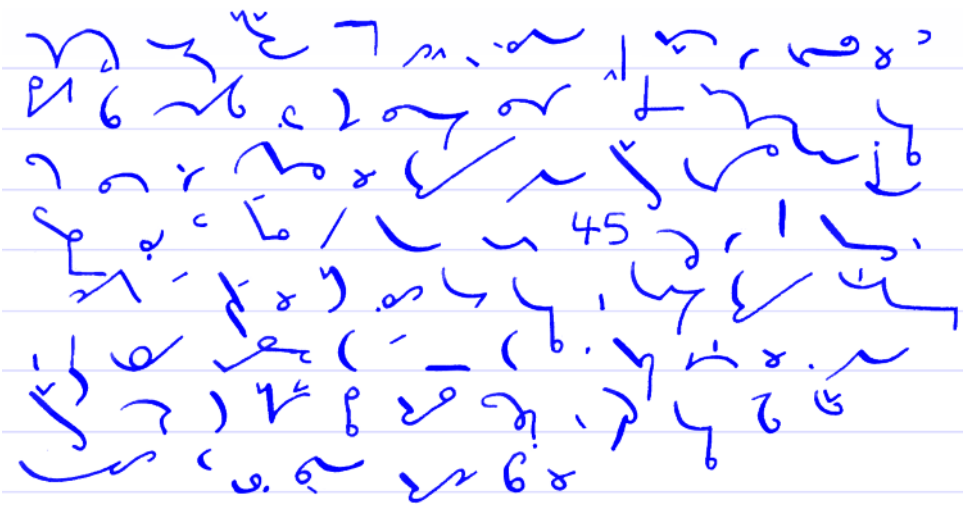
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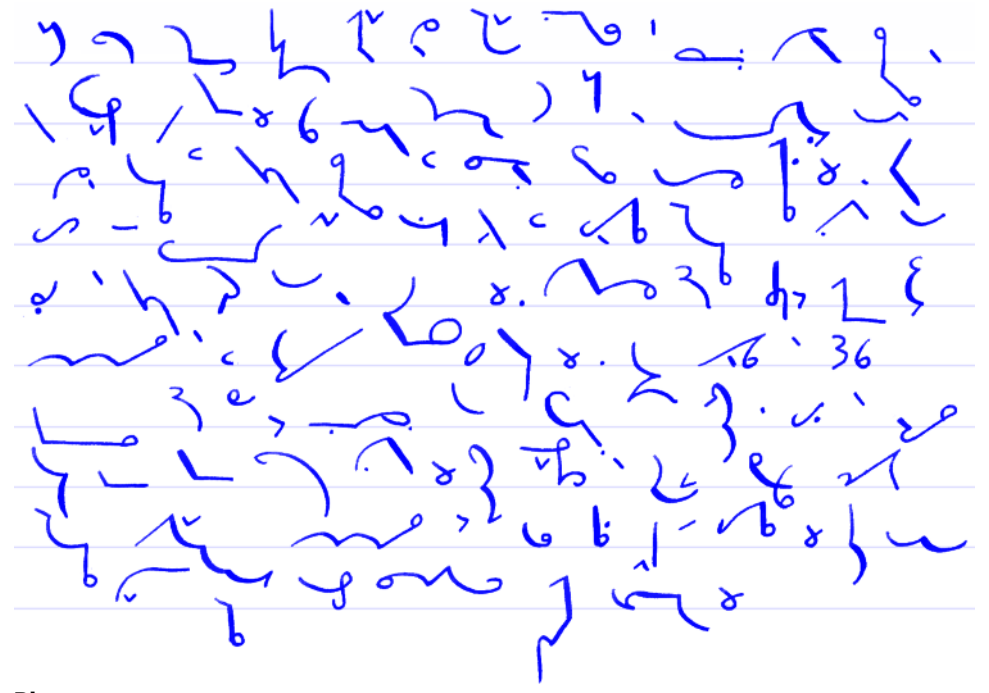


Photos

Earlier in the year, I finally got round to sorting out all my old photographs. What started this marathon effort was the seemingly small task of removing photos from some old albums. They were ring binder folders containing plastic sheets with pockets, which, being now 45 years old, had begun to warp and bubble. I was

concerned for the photos but fortunately they were unaffected, but it was necessary to rescue them and give them a better home. The ring binder method was ideal, as it is always frustrating to arrange photos and then find another one that needs slotting between the others.

Horizontal lines for writing a response to the text above.



Photos

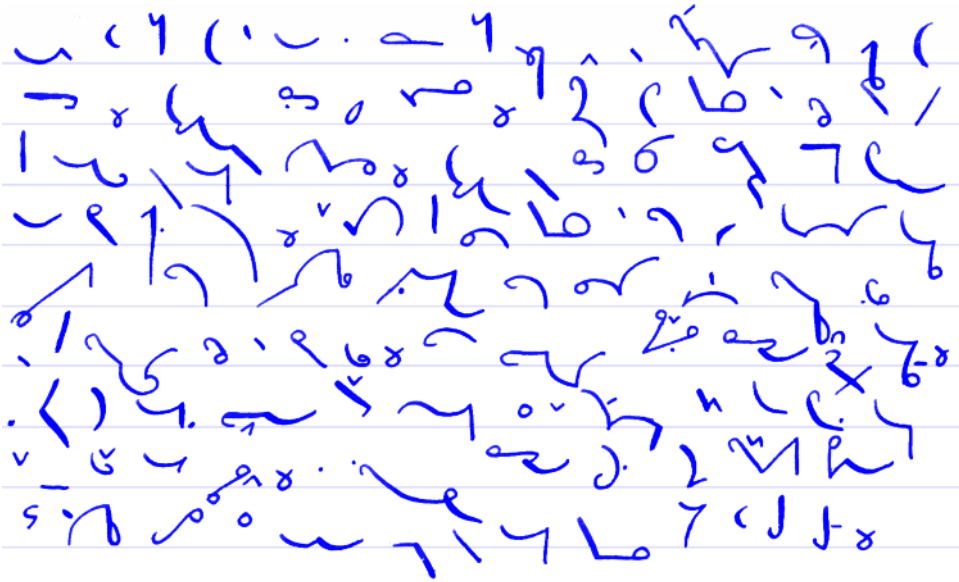
I was very organised at the time and typed lots* of tiny captions on sticky label strips to put alongside each pocket. These could not be removed, so I had to interleave the now loose photos with paper strips with scribbled place names and dates. The job went quite quickly and I ended up with wads of photos wrapped in sheets of paper, arranged in two shoeboxes. The albums were destroyed, and took with them the memories of when they were first bought. The film rolls of 36 pictures were sent to the chemist* for developing and there was

a wait of two weeks for them to come back from their lab. There was the excitement of seeing several months' worth of photos, reviving the memories of the events, days out and holidays. It was nothing like today's instant smartphone and digital photography.

* "lots" "masses" Always insert the vowel, as these are similar in outline and meaning

* "chemist" UK term = pharmacy, drug store

Horizontal lines for writing a response to the text above.



Photos

Now that I had them all in a stack I had to consider how to properly* store and display them again. They would have to be scanned first of course. There were* other boxes of prints, which had never been put into albums. They would have to be scanned as well, in order to be able to* get everything in subject and date order. I also had some boxes of very old family photos inherited from relatives, ranging from small home produced efforts to large professional prints of special events. More careful high res scanning would be required for those. The job was indeed growing by the minute, as I rummaged about for every photo I

could find in the house. A comprehensive scanning session was the priority, starting with the oldest ones, as nothing could be put into books until that had been done.

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

* Omission phrase "there (w)ere"

* "in order to be able to" As the "to" is omitted, the B stroke does not have to go through the line for "to be"



Photos

The slowness of the scanner was made up for by being able to do several at once*, as the photo setting could recognise the individual pictures and present them as separate files. While watching the scanner light travelling back and forth, I was considering how to organise them. One set would be holidays, other sets for family photos, and a separate folder for oversize. I wrote details on the back of every photo, the only reliable way to ensure that the information could never be lost. At last*,

everything would be safe from loss or damage, all information recorded and the entire collection easy to view whenever we wanted. It became a "fill-in" job over several weeks*.

* Omission phrases "at (w)uns" "several wee(k)s"

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



Photos

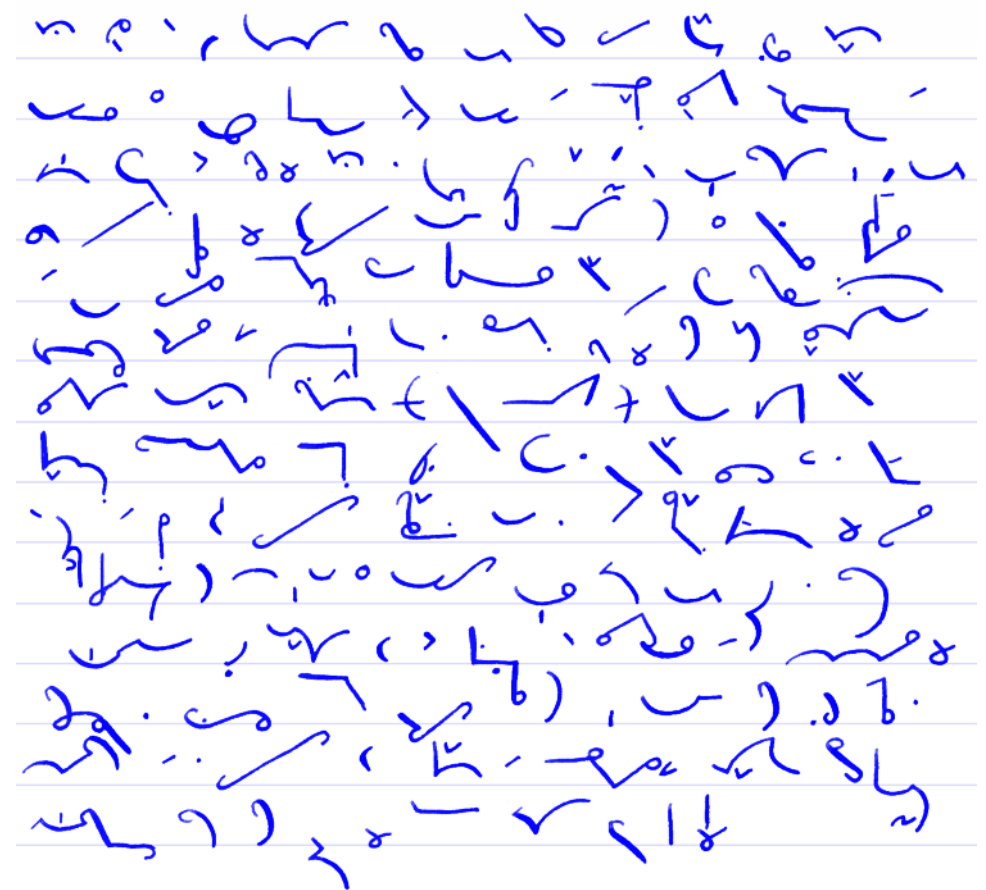
It was a relief to have the fragile and creased ancient photos safely captured, and they could now be viewed on the screen without disturbing the originals. I also had the huge fun of digitally removing all the dirty marks and white creases from some of them*, keeping the edited version as a separate file, with the original scan untouched. I revisited all the early years holidays in Cornwall, Devon and Wales*. There was a large collection covering the years after our move to our present house, and a detailed record of the creation of the garden, from totally overgrown*, to almost park like perfection, a slow journey of path

laying, trellis building, and shrub and apple tree planting, as well as several enlargements of the fish pond.

* Omission phrase "some (of) them" Note that "some other" uses doubling.

* "Wales" Special outline, to distinguish from place name "Wells" which uses the Wel stroke

* "overgrown "evergreen" Always insert the second vowel, as these both refer to the same subject



Photos

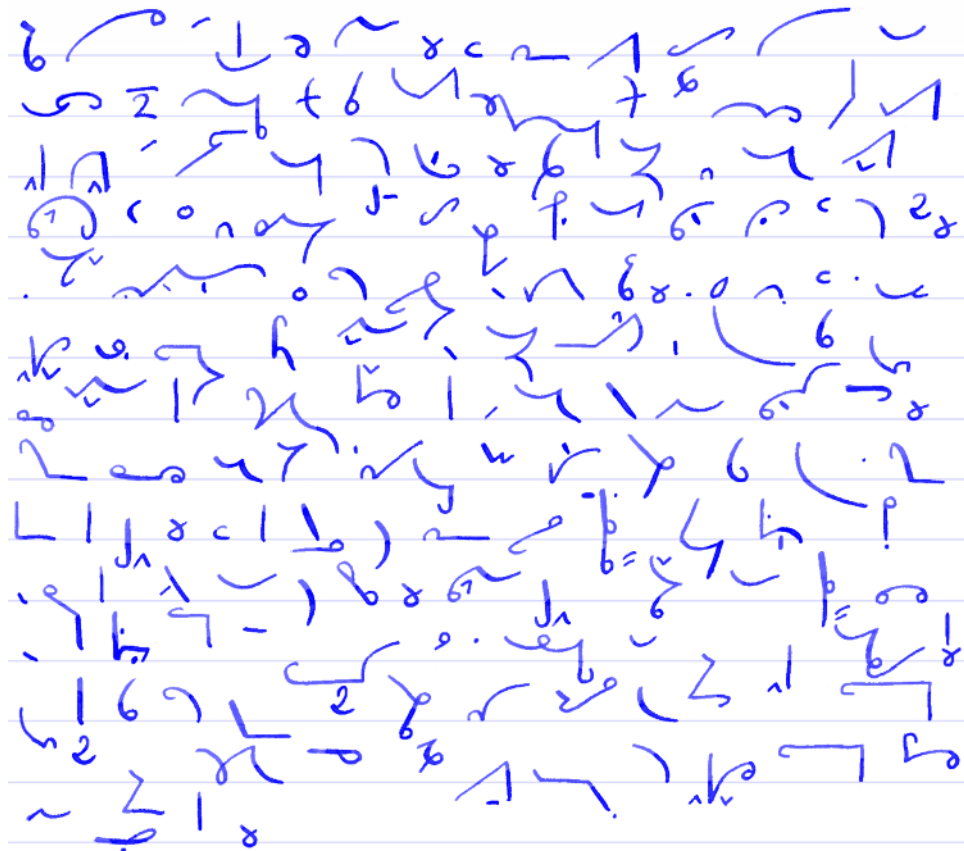
I met lots* of old family members, now passed away, via the efforts of my uncles as youngsters taking up the new and exciting hobby of photography and home developing* of the prints. I met a few children I ought to know very well* but who now seemed rather distant. They were, in fact*, actually us as babies, toddlers and young ones, captured in our adventures by our ever present amateur photographers, always on the look-out for a snapping opportunity. There I was, smiling happily in my pram (baby carriage), being held by admiring grandparents, getting chased along a beach by someone with a bucket of seawater, and sitting on that wonderful tricycle in a stripy jumper. Yes, it certainly

was me but not as anyone knows her now, she was a fresh unwritten sheet, entirely without all the decades of happenings and memories. There seems to be* an enormous gap between us, but in fact* there isn't, and it is a marvel and a wonder that time and experience of life has been continuous and unbroken from there to here. I can hardly believe it!

* "lots" "masses" Always insert the vowel as these are similar in outline and meaning

* "developing" The contraction is for the noun "development" but safe to use for the verb as well

* Omission phrases "very (w)ell" "in (f)act" "there seems (to) be"



Short Letters 19

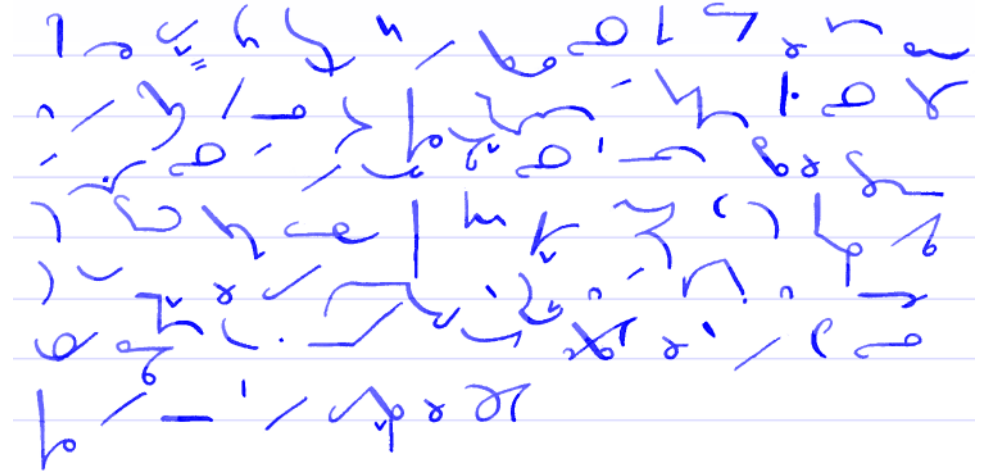
All these letters are one hundred words long. When you can read one letter in no more than two and a half* minutes (which is 40 words per minute), that is the moment at which to read out loud and record into your phone. This will ensure you never write slower than that, as you certainly don't want to start and stay in the slow lane with your shorthand. The online metronome* is very useful to help with this. The first meeting with a new outline needs careful, deliberate writing to ensure accuracy, but after those few seconds of writing it three or four* times, it should never be written slowly again. Practise segments individually until you are confident about the whole passage, then, after a break, take it down. When it becomes easy, you can use Audacity's

Change Tempo setting to speed it up in easy steps. Slowing down files in Audacity seems to degrade the quality quite quickly, and is an incentive not to chicken out in this way! If you do this from book shorthand passages, you will always have correct shorthand to check yourself against, and that is the route to keeping your outlines correct at all times and not guessed at. (206 words)

* "two and a half" See theory website Vocabulary Numbers, Fractions

* <https://www.metronomeonline.com> also <https://www.online-stopwatch.com/online-clock>

* "three or four" Using Ray to make the join



Short Letters 19

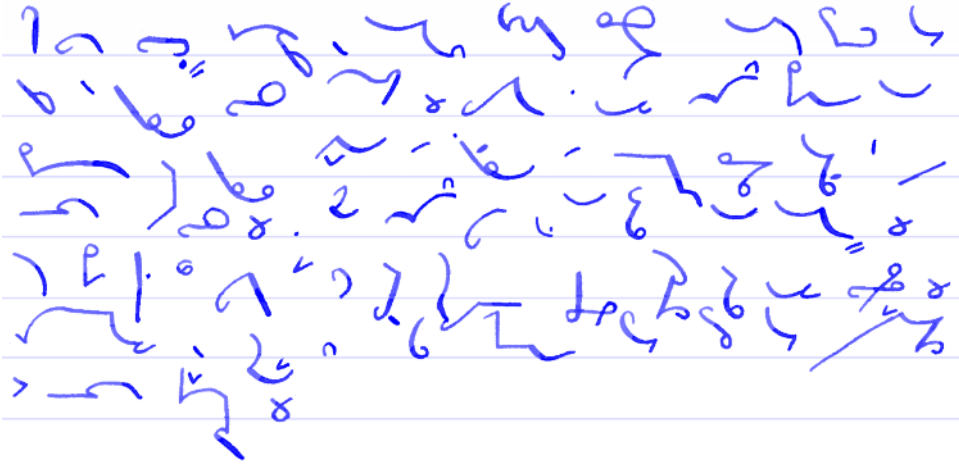
Dear Miss White, Thank you for your enquiry about our business courses at the college. I am sending you our brochure which gives full details of full time* and part time day courses, postal and email courses, and our new online courses on commercial subjects. Please make your application before the closing date at the end of July and ensure that your deposit reaches us in good time. We look forward*

to seeing you and helping you gain the necessary skills for a career in the business world. All our other course details are given on our website. Yours sincerely (100 words)

* "full time" Halving to represent the T of "time"

* Omission phrase "look fo(r)ward"

Blank lined area for notes or practice.



Short Letters 19

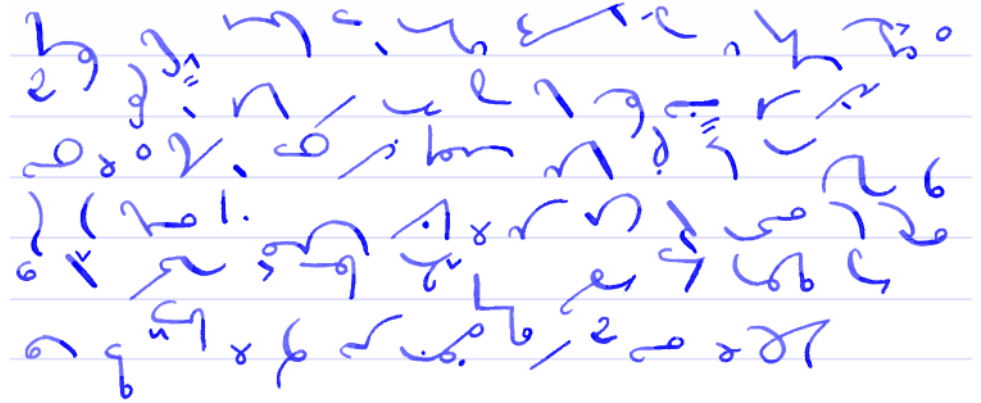
Dear Mr Green, I am pleased to inform you that you have been successful in your application for the post of business courses manager. We have a new module starting in September to teach business writing and composing, and keyboard skills, for those on our commercial courses. The shorthand module will fit in with this in November*. Your start date with us will be on the 3rd of June, so that we can discuss the arrangement* of these new course requirements. I look forward* to seeing you then and talking over the plans for the

rearrangement of the commercial timetable. (100 words)

* "November" Months do not normally need caps mark, but it is helpful here, as this contraction is the same outline as "never", also a time word

* "arrangement" Yoou can also use Ar intersected for this word, where it would be clear

* Omission phrase "look fo(r)ward"



Short Letters 19

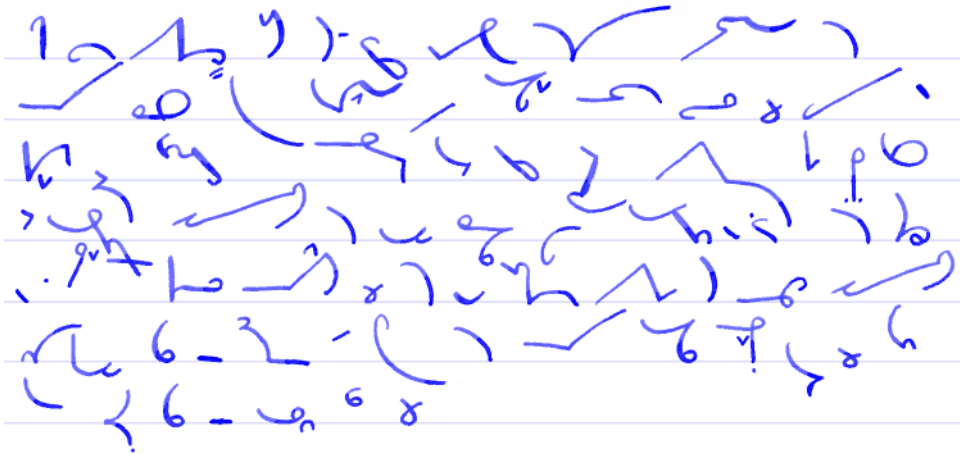
Dear Mrs Brown, I am very glad to inform you that we are able to offer you part time employment as shorthand assistant, to help our new staff member Mrs Gray who will run the courses. As there are two classes running at the same time*, you will be assisting her in leading these, so that they progress at a similar rate. You will also be able to increase your earnings with us by recording all the extra online dictations, using the college facilities over the summer when it is quieter. This will* greatly

enhance* our shorthand course. Yours sincerely (100 words)

* "at the same time" Halving to represent the T of "time"

* "enhance" Note the circle of the Hay is kept in its correct direction

* "this will" Downward L in order to join the phrase

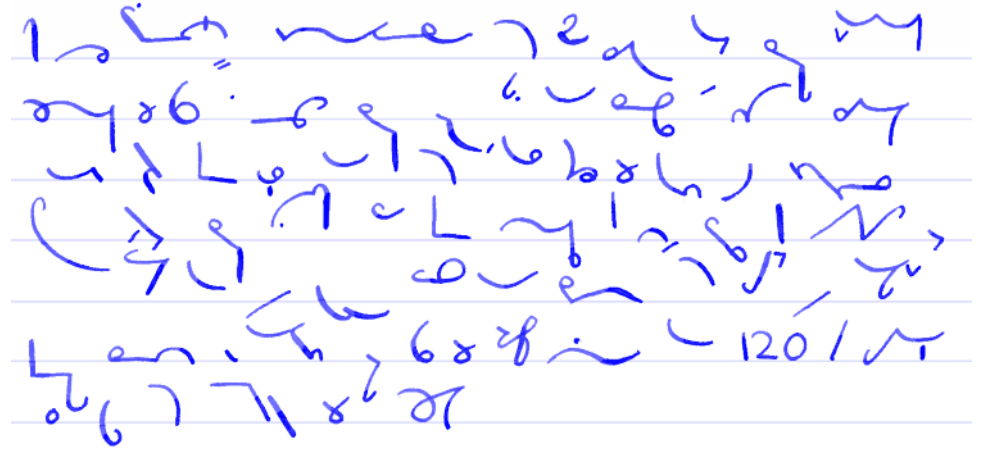


Short Letters 19

Dear Mr Redman, I was so pleased to receive your letter regarding your career success, after following our online commercial course. We are all delighted to hear that you have been accepted for the post of junior reporter at the city offices of the newspaper company, and we are sure

your new skills will enable you to complete your assignments to a high degree of accuracy. Your end of term report was excellent and we are sure you will continue this good work, and further your career in this exciting field. Thank you for sharing this good news with us. (100 words)

Blank lined area for writing a response to the letter.



Short Letters 19

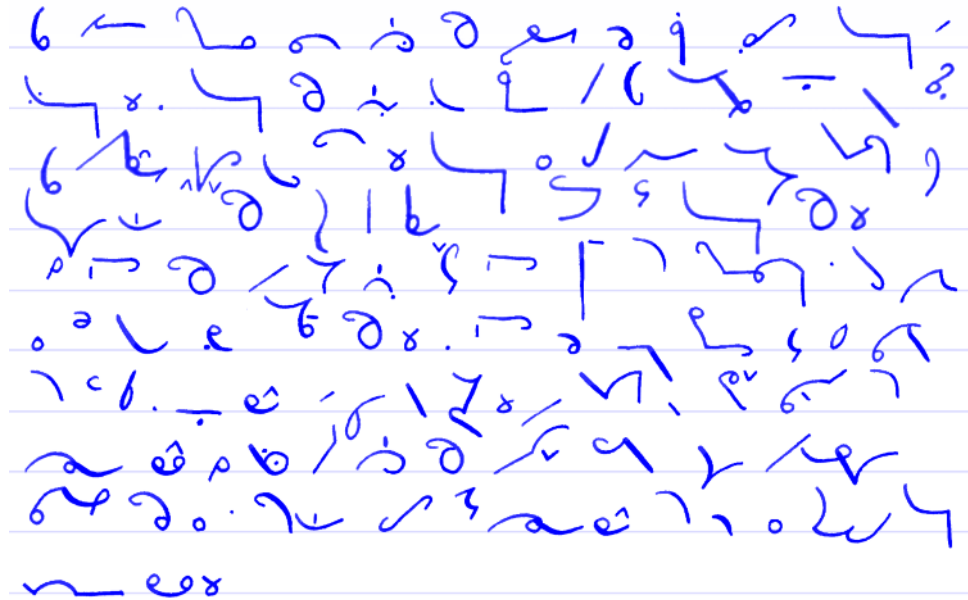
Dear Miss Blackmore, I am enclosing your shorthand certificate for the speed of 90 words a minute*. This is an excellent speed to have achieved in six months and you will certainly now be able to take notes in your office assignments. If you wish to progress further up the speed ladder, in order to* take minutes at meetings, please do return to the college for our evening classes in September, or join our online dictation

scheme, to enable you to achieve this. I would suggest aiming for 120*, which we know is within your capability. Yours sincerely (100 words) (Total 906 words)

* Omission phrases "words (a) minute" "in ord(er to)"

* "120" Counted as three words for this passage

Blank lined area for writing a response to the letter.



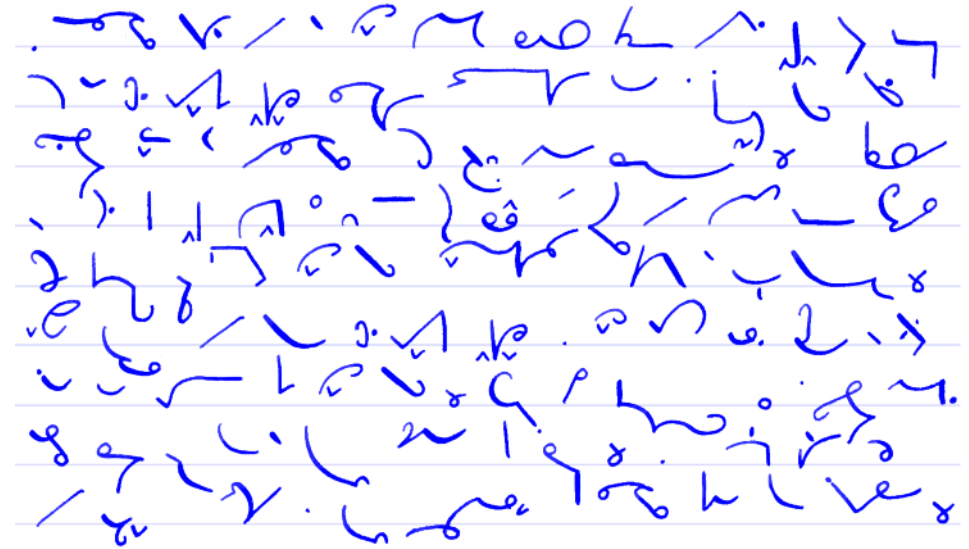
Facts And Cons

This article practises some omission phrases using the words consider, concern, fact and effect. The "fact" phrases omit the F stroke, which then enables the K to be halved, thus reducing the outline even more. Effect is generally written in full, apart from three fairly common phrases, so that it does not clash with the "fact" phrases. As the "con" phrases are only omitting either the Con Dot or proximity, a pen lift is what is being saved in those phrases. The "con" words could be spoken

without the first syllable, or with just the Kay sound, and still be intelligible. Our ability to supply slurred or missing sounds is the basis on which omission phrases rely in order to be* easily recognisable, as long as the phrase is a very common one and that the missing sound or word is essential for it to make sense.

* "in order to be" As the "to" is omitted, the B stroke does not have to go through the line for "to be"

Blank lined writing area for practice.



Facts And Cons

The examples below are all line length sentences, which you can repeat down the page to get your hand trained to write the outlines smoothly and correctly, in a continuous even paced graceful glide that resembles your own beautifully written signature. It is necessary to say it out loud as you go, so that sounds and shapes are learned together, otherwise there is the temptation* to just copy the line above mindlessly, which will be of no benefit. Whilst fingers are being trained to write outlines, the mind also needs training to

obey the command not to look at the line above. Developing such determination is a useful and indeed indispensable skill to have for all future shorthand writing* at speed. The omitted whole words are underlined, and there are a few miscellaneous samples at the end for comparison.

* "temptation" Omits the lightly-sounded P, therefore M not Imp stroke

* Omission phrase "short(hand) writing"

Blank lined writing area for practice.



Facts And Cons

I will consider your request to be invited to the next board meeting.

The officers will consider the case at the next council meeting.

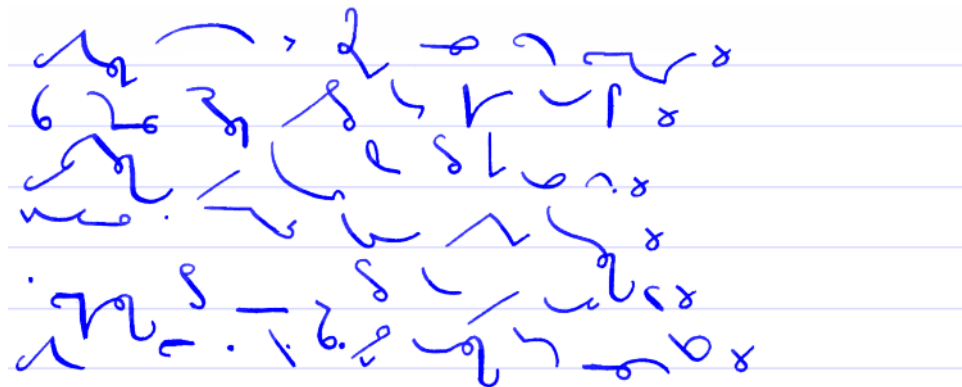
They may consider* taking the time to learn something completely new.

You may consider* what will happen if you take this course of action.

I have considered your suggestion about going on the commercial course.

We have had discussions to consider the new factory building proposals.

* "may consider" Note that the words "must consider" have to be written as full separate outlines



Facts And Cons

We have considered the matter of the transport costs very carefully.

This organisation cannot be considered responsible for the delay in delivery.

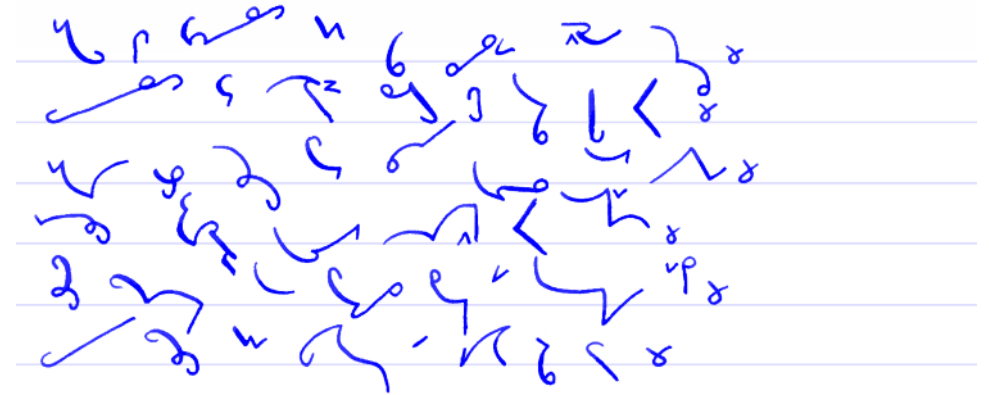
We will be considering our future staff plans at the next meeting.

I enclose a copy of the financial report for your consideration.

A great deal of consideration has been given to these* plans for our new building.

We have agreed a pay rise in consideration of your exam passes.

* "to these" Always insert the vowel in "those, these" when out of position in a phrase



Facts And Cons

I have been told that you are concerned about these serious accounting errors.

We are concerned that the employee has not been trained for this difficult job.

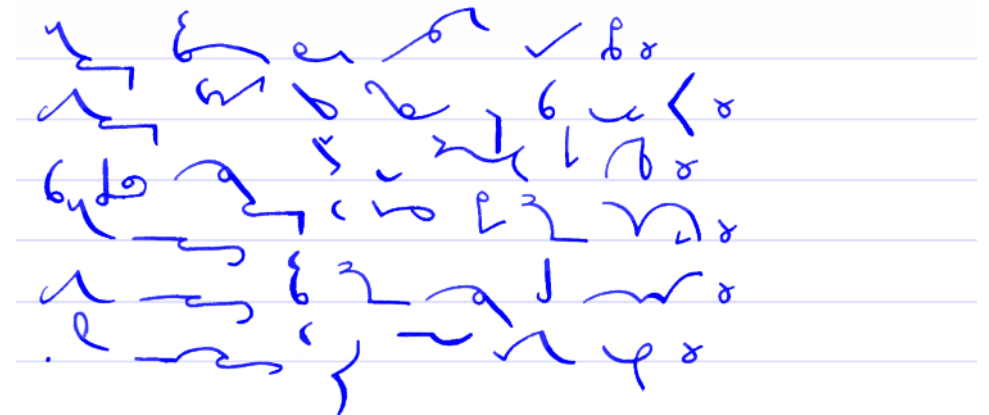
I fully understand your concern over the salary figures in the report.

I am concerned that they will not be able to finish the mailout job in time.

They are concerned very much* for everyone's safety on the factory site.

We are very concerned about the welfare and health of these people.

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



Facts And Cons

I have concluded that this matter is now resolved to our satisfaction.

We have concluded that you are the best person to do this new job.

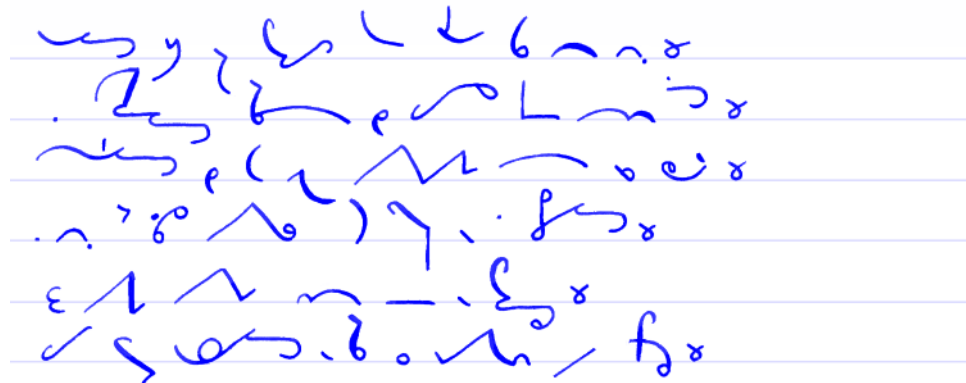
These discussions must be* concluded by the end of the month at the latest.

I have come to the conclusion that I must start work earlier.

We have come to the conclusion that this work must be* done immediately.

The staff came to the conclusion that she was going to leave next month*.

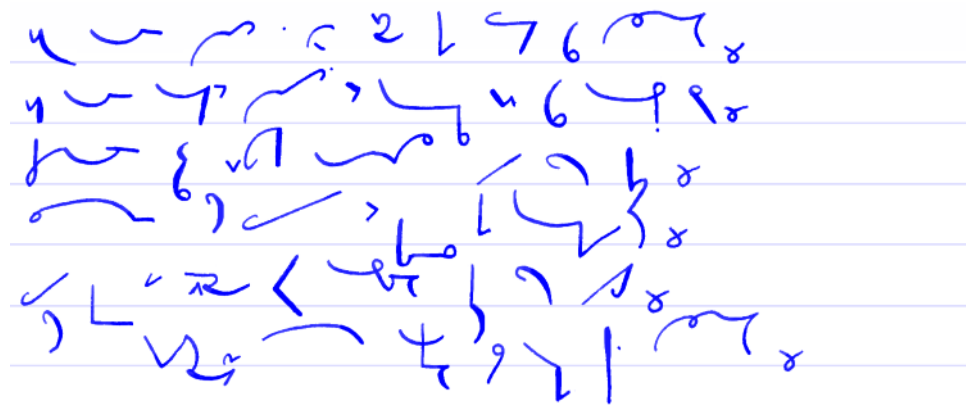
* Omission phrases "mus(t) be" "ne(k)s(t mon)th"



Facts And Cons

In conclusion I wish to thank everyone for attending this important meeting.
 The logical conclusion of this matter is that we must take immediate action.
 My own conclusion is that they should have reported the matter to us sooner.

The meeting of the sales representatives was brought to a satisfactory conclusion.
 When you read the report, you may come to other conclusions.
 We believe the necessary conclusion to all this is to review our delivery arrangements.

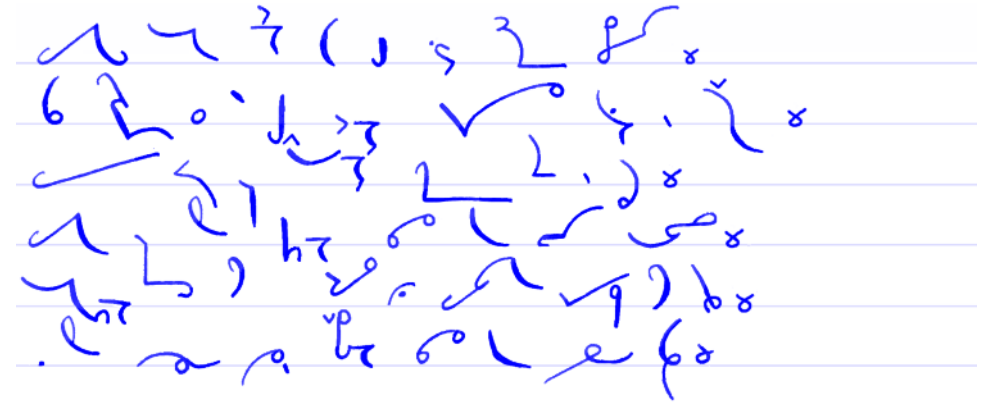


Facts And Cons

I have in fact learned a lot of shorthand at the college this last month*.
 I did in fact enjoy learning all the facts about this interesting subject.
 It is a well-known fact that these wild animals are very dangerous.
 As a matter of fact, they are aware of the difficulties at the factory.

We took on the accounting job, in spite of the fact that it was very urgent.
 They are pursuing the matter, notwithstanding the fact that he paid the debt last month*.

* Omission phrase "las(t) month"



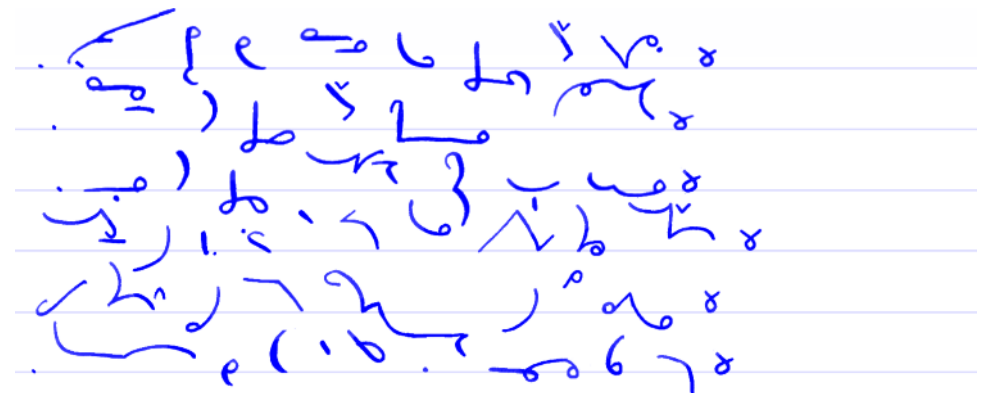
Facts And Cons

We have been informed of the fact that they did not complete the work satisfactorily.
 This problem is all down to the fact that the builders failed to arrive.
 We are here today owing to the fact that the director asked to see us.

In view of the fact that they are always late, we will have to reconsider their position.
 The staff must not* lose sight of the fact that sales have risen this month*.

* Omission phrases "mus(t) not" "las(t) month"

We have to take on staff due to the fact that sales have greatly increased.

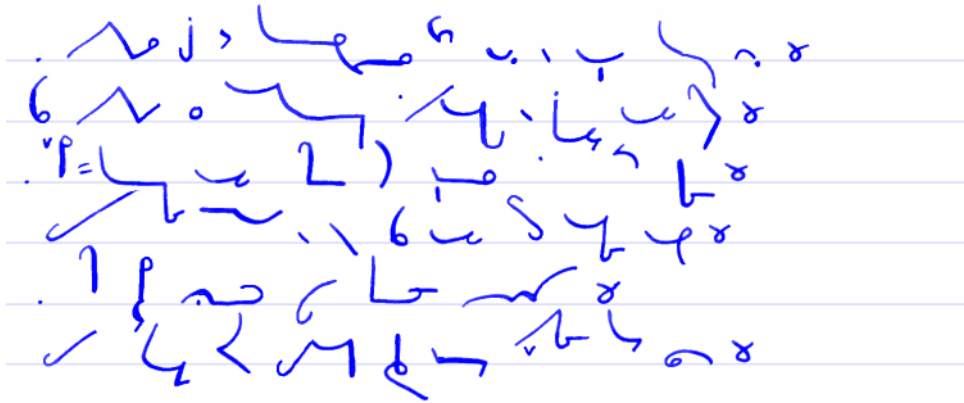


Facts And Cons

The lawyer said that several significant facts have been discovered by the police.
 The significance of the fact was discussed by the directors last month*.
 The case was dismissed in the light of the fact that there was no evidence.
 In point of fact she did complete all her office report assignments in time.

We assume she is capable, from the fact that she has the certificates.
 The fact of the matter is that they all passed the exams this year.

* Omission phrase "las(t) month"



Facts And Cons

The reports contain all the facts and figures that you need to know for your meeting.

This report is in effect a recommendation to continue the new project.

The side-effect* of the new drug was to cause a heart defect*.

We are going to put this new plan into effect next month*.

The doctor said that the medication will take effect immediately.

We changed the shop window display to give the right effect for the summer. (995 words)

* "side-effect" In full, so it cannot be misread as "defect"

* Omission phrase "ne(k)s(t mon)th"

Blank lined paper for writing.

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper. The notes are dense and cover approximately 12 lines of the page. The shorthand symbols are complex and stylized, characteristic of Pitman's shorthand. Some symbols include loops, curves, and straight lines, often with small dots or dashes. The notes appear to be a transcription of a speech, given the context of the adjacent page.

Blank lined paper for taking notes, consisting of 12 horizontal lines.

Andy's Speech

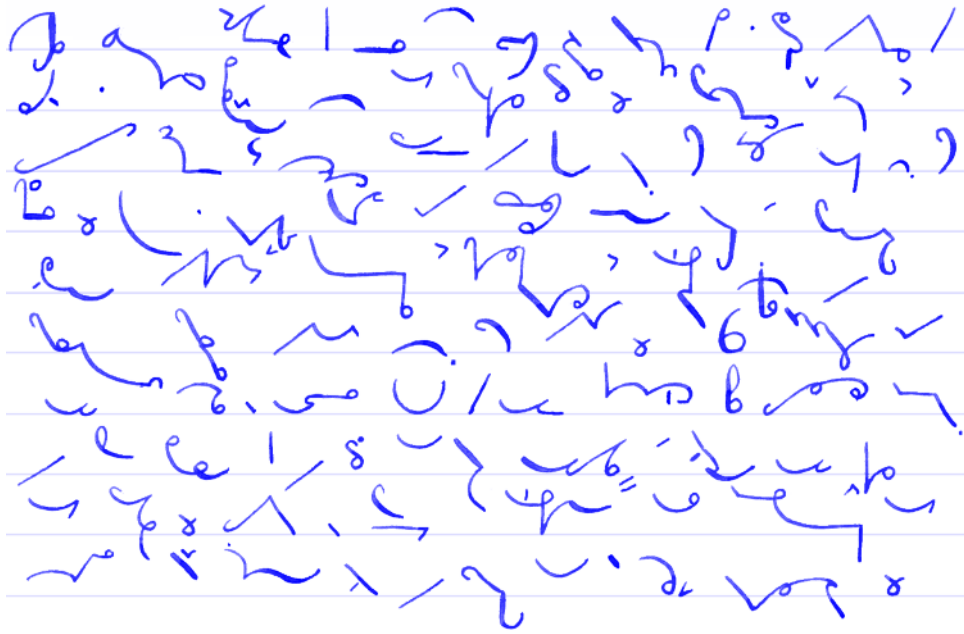
I think we have another cliché devotee on our hands, whom our fictional shorthand whizz Fraser has had to record verbatim at a board meeting. Although clichés are often ridiculed and clearly do not belong in a crisp business-like printed report, they do have a friendly relaxed quality to them when spoken, as everyone can enjoy the game of anticipating the second and third words before they have been uttered. This can be a serious trap, though, for the unwary shorthand writer*, if what is said does not match the expected version, so it is essential to pay close attention to the exact words used. For the speaker they take up extra seconds that slows down the delivery and gives them a little extra thinking time. Clichés do a good job of emphasising the point by repeating the meaning, contrasting the meaning, or forming pairs that just belong together to

Blank lined paper for taking notes, consisting of 12 horizontal lines.

neatly complete the description. Let's call our effusive speaker Andy, as that is the word that is being omitted in all these phrases, except for a few in the last paragraph. As there are so many of them* in his speech, his audience might have wondered whether the subject was actually being covered, or maybe his lack of more precise vocabulary is just being covered over with verbal space fillers. It is possible that some of them* "rested their eyes" during the meeting, only waking at the end to join in thanking him for his presentation.

* Omission phrases "short(hand) writer" "some (of) them"

* "many of them" Include the Tick The, and use just the Three stroke for the omission phrase "many oth(er)"



Andy's Speech

Ladies and gentlemen, First and foremost* I would like to say that* it gives me great pleasure to place before you such a splendid report and accounts*, which shows a satisfying improvement in the profit and loss balance. Over and over again* I hear of the wonderful work that the men and women in our company are doing, putting their heart and soul into meeting their targets. After a period of the value of our stocks and shares going up and down, and every now and then suffering right and left the effects of the trials and tribulations of the unstable market conditions, our present and future prospects are now improving very rapidly. This is all part and parcel of our new methods to increase efficiency, which include time and motion studies, ways and means of keeping our staff safe and sound,

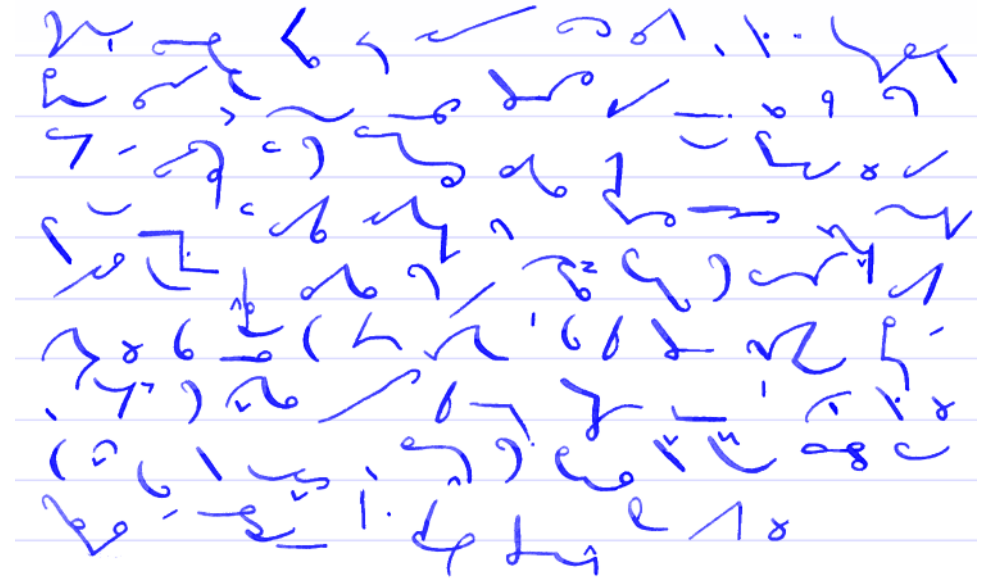
at our plants in both England and Wales*, and opening new outlets in the north and south. We hope* to overcome the unsettling influence of cause and effect in the markets by ramping up our production in all areas, pure and simple.

* "first and foremost" This could also be written "first fost", with just F and Stee Loop instead of the whole outline

* Omission phrases "I would like (to) s(ay) that" "rep(ort and) accounts" "we (h)ope"

* "over and over again" The second "over" is reversed in order to make a good join

* "Wales" Special outline, to distinguish it from the town of Wells which uses the Wel stroke

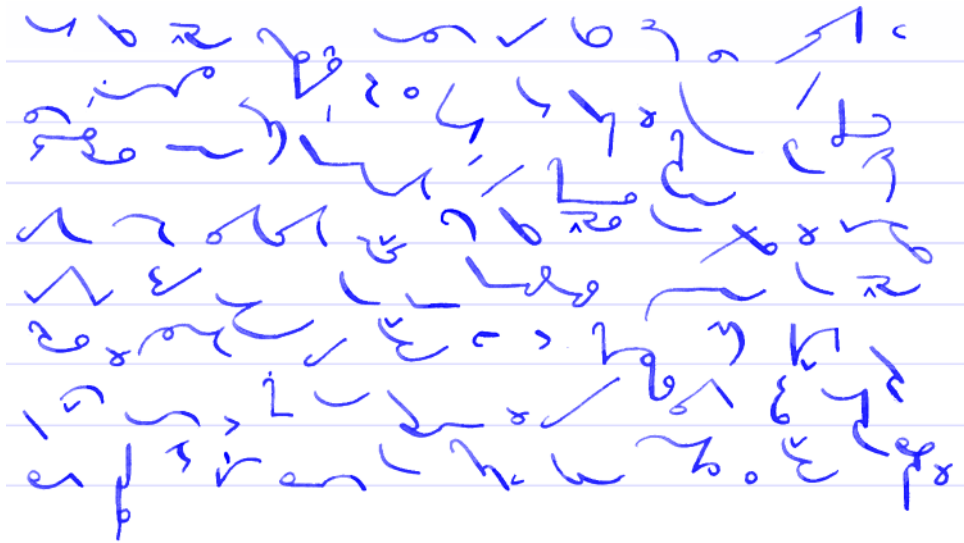


Andy's Speech

There are no grace and favour jobs here, and we are more than happy to pay a fair and reasonable starting salary to the many excellent boys and girls* who are coming to us straight from college and university with their qualifications, certificates and diplomas in black and white. We believe in give and take with wages, and we have had the opportunity again and again to provide monetary rewards for outstanding service from our employees, over and above their normal wage level. This gives them much

more* to live on than just basic board and lodging, as it were*, and to enjoy their lives rather than just keeping body and soul together on low pay. They might even be inclined to secure their savings by buying stocks and bonds in our prosperous and expanding company at a generously discounted staff rate.

* Omission phrases "boys (and) gi(r)ls" "much mo(re)" "as it (w)ere"



Andy's Speech

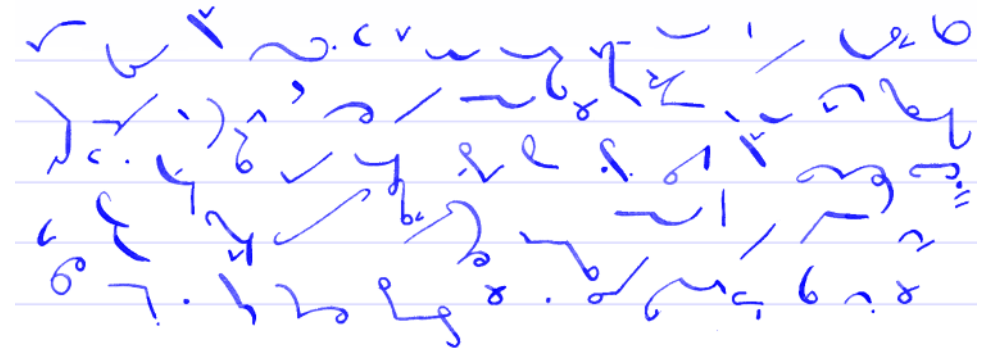
In the past, accounting procedures in some of our offices were somewhat rough and ready, with some anomalies here and there, but all that has changed for the better. After much discussion and correspondence going back and forth, and our directors travelling over land and sea, we have moved heaven and earth to find the very best accountants for our business. I am pleased to report that we no longer have to go backwards and forwards* looking for accounting partners. Last month* we finally agreed all the terms and conditions, and I was delighted to be able to put my name to

the contract in pen and ink. We are happy that this endeavour is now done and dusted, and that the whole scheme for appropriate* financial management is finally signed, sealed and delivered.

* "forwards" Omits the first R when in a phrase

* Omission phrase "las(t) month"

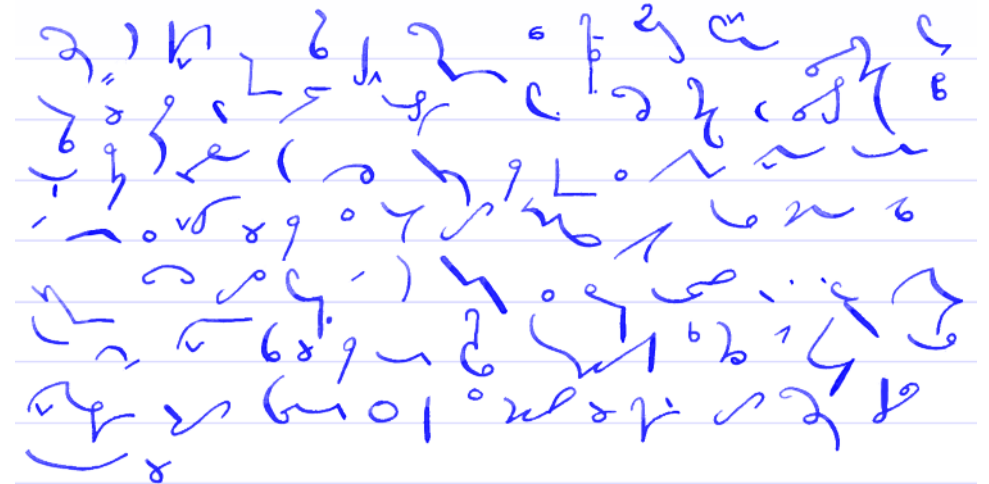
* "appropriate" Insert the diphone, and the first vowel in "proper", as these are similar in outline and meaning



Andy's Speech

I will finish by mentioning that I intend now and then to drop in on our various offices up and down the country to see how all the improvements are going. I would like to end my presentation with a vote of thanks to our industrious support staff, ably

headed by Mr and Mrs Green, who have over and over provided wonderful refreshments to keep us going at our regular meetings, as well as keeping the board rooms spick and span. The Secretary will now conclude this meeting.



Andy's Speech

Fraser was delighted to take all this down verbatim, with his trusty* shorthand pen flying hither AND thither over the pages. He was able to record instantly every phrase there AND then without hesitation, as he is no stranger to using them himself, before he took his report writing in hand and improved his style. He has only one hard AND fast rule for his shorthand writing* and that is to practise more than once every day and so, by AND by, his speed increased to a comfortable level for

meetings like this. He now travels far AND wide on his assignments, and the change in his lifestyle between then AND now is as different as east AND west. Truly*, one phraser deserves another. (918 words)

* "trusty" Insert final vowel, as "trusted" would also make sense

* Omission phrase "short(hand) writing"

* "truly" "utterly" Helpful to insert the vowel in these