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شبهه شبيهه شبيهه -

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۱۸۳۰ء میں پیدائش ہوئی

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Handwritten shorthand symbols: a series of strokes including a checkmark-like shape, a vertical line with a dot, and various curved and straight lines.

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A series of horizontal lines for writing practice, consisting of 15 parallel lines.

Portraits

In August we visited the National Portrait Gallery in central London. It is located behind the National Gallery which faces onto Trafalgar Square, and is the rear part of that building. In our searches for places of interest, we seemed to have overlooked these large and important institutions and so we felt it was time to correct that. As born and bred Londoners, we could not possibly allow visitors from all over the world* to be better acquainted with our national art treasures than we were. A portrait is a drawing, painting, depiction or description of a person, but the term most often refers to a painting showing their* face and figure. The word comes from the Latin "draw forth" and this is certainly one of the chief aims of the portrait. They are designed to draw forth the person's character, achievements*, position in society, history and ambitions.

e started on the top floor where the older paintings are displayed, as those are the ones that most clearly adhere to that objective, and are without exception realistic representations. I like to see exactly what the person looked like and, of course, as they did not have photographs then, paintings and statues were the only likenesses that could be achieved. However, one must bear in mind* that there would have been* enhancements* to their apparent health, vigour, bearing and good looks. There is a delicate balance that the artist must observe between faithful representation and pleasing the patron. The artist Gilbert Stuart is supposed to have said what was on his mind when his client was dissatisfied* with a portrait of his wife, "You brought me a potato and you expect a peach!"

It is good that one can go right up to the paintings to inspect all the details of their execution, as they are behind glass in their frames, and I find it very interesting to see the minute detail in which most of them are painted. Every fold of clothing, every loop and stitch of fine lace, every hair on their head and the twinkle in their eyes is painted with the finest of strokes*. A long-sighted artist would certainly not have been able to carry on such a trade, although with advancing years the master painter would work on the face and have his apprentices complete the clothing, the various objects that tell their story, and the background or scenery.

I especially liked the draft painting of William Wilberforce, the Member of Parliament who, after 20 years of constant effort and work, successfully achieved the passing of the Slave Trade Act 1807. The painting is by Sir Thomas Lawrence. His soft kind eyes look out of the canvas and they seem to speak volumes, entreating the viewer to open their eyes to the slaves' suffering and the injustices, and to support his mission to bring it to an end. I am sure his facial* expression would have been* quite different when arguing the case in Parliament, with more determination, strength and resolve.

This portrait of Samuel Pepys* painted by John Hayls* in 1666 is easily recognised. He kept his diary for nine years as a young man, using Thomas Shelton's shorthand. He was a naval administrator for the Admiralty and a Member of Parliament. Shorthand has been used by many to obscure and keep private their diaries and documents, but it must be* remembered that longhand writing, as you now know only too well, is unbearably slow and laborious, and shorthand is the easiest and quickest way to record one's thoughts. It also saved on expensive paper, which was not the cheap and abundant disposable resource* that we enjoy nowadays.

Portraits

Amongst all the glorious portrayals of kings, queens and other famous personages, I was interested to see a painting of John Loudon McAdam, painted by an unknown artist in 1830. He was a civil engineer and road* surveyor who in 1811 brought to the attention of Parliament the bad state of the roads. He invented a superior method of road construction, using layers of compacted stones, called macadamisation* which was widely adopted* and was an important element in the development* of Britain as a commercial and industrial nation. This was later improved by the invention of tarmacadam, or tarmac*, by the addition of cement, tar, bitumen, resin, pitch or asphalt. I wonder whether these various names for the processes would have been* different if John McAdam's surname had been something less easy to pronounce and make other words from.

After a few hours one gets picture overload, and so we left the gallery and found a seat by the river where we could eat our sandwiches. None of those people in the portraits would recognise what the City of London* has become, and I wondered what they would make of it. It has become an alien landscape full of strangely dressed people, noise and weird wheeled and flying machines. I am sure most of them would enjoy having a look around and certainly Samuel Pepys would have a grand time writing about it in his diary. (849 words)