



Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

Handwritten shorthand symbols on a blue-lined background.

مکملہ جملہ . اے اے اے اے اے

مکملہ جملہ . اے اے اے اے اے

مکملہ جملہ . اے اے اے اے اے

مکملہ جملہ . اے اے اے اے اے

مکملہ جملہ . اے اے اے اے اے

مکملہ جملہ . اے اے اے اے اے

## Streams

In the suburb where I live, we have several streams with narrow parkland and wooded areas alongside. Some of them are easy to see and find, and others are somewhat hidden, just accompanying a wooded footpath between back gardens and housing areas, with only a small unassuming entrance on the main road to give a clue to the shady greenery beyond. Sometimes the streams disappear into small short culverts and reappear further along. The stream is not so much lost as invisible for a few metres or longer, but, having viewed the online map, one can be confident that it will re-emerge after a few minutes' walk. The streams in my area of south east London join either the Ravensbourne, discharging into the Thames at Deptford, which is just east of Greenwich, or the Darent which flows to Dartford to the east and into the Thames estuary. Many of them come and go from view, as they travel under buildings and roads, but there is nowadays more of an effort made to open them up where possible and create small park and wildlife areas, in order to improve the local amenities.

London has many lost rivers, tributaries of the Thames. The most well-known is the Fleet, after which Fleet Street is named, and this name is also a metonym or verbal shorthand for the British press, which was originally based in that area. As with many rivers in London, the Fleet became an open sewer as the population increased and at one point was called Fleet Ditch, carrying in addition a foul mixture of butcher's offal, dead animals and other detritus. It spent a short time as a canal with wharves, and then finally became a drainage channel, gradually being covered over as London grew. The Fleet flows from Hampstead Heath through Camden, King's Cross and Clerkenwell, and its final outfall can still be seen beneath the north pier of Blackfriars Bridge.

As travel has been restricted at the present time, I have made a point of looking more closely at my local parks, woodlands, ponds and streams. It is easy to overlook the nearby places of interest in the quest for new places further afield. I pretended to myself that I lived in the farthest opposite part of London and that I had scoured the map for distant green spaces to visit. The parks "on my doorstep" suddenly looked like good destinations to aim for and my appreciation of them increased, as the necessity decreased for packed lunches and changes of train in the crowded city centre. I can say to myself, I wish I had this lovely place in my area and if I lived nearby I would go and see it all the time, every warm and sunny day, with no delay in getting there. Then I can remind myself that I do in fact live here, and so all its charms are more closely observed and appreciated. In addition there is no need to get on the train before rush hour begins.

My local stream rises from the pond in the park, runs under the roadway for a short distance and then appears from a tunnel as a shallow and clear watercourse. It has a bed of pebbles with a few sandy patches and no muddy parts at all, and a fair number of small weirs.

These always fascinate me, they are only a foot or so high, but the foaming water curls back on itself, with the result that floating rubbish such as footballs or plastic bottles bob endlessly at the base of the step, and never get swept downstream. One can watch for ages hoping that the poor old football gets released from its treadmill, but that never happens. Very low water may reduce the turbulence to allow the stray items to escape their foam trap and they would end up gathering at some snagging point further along, a calm corner away from the eddies or piling up behind a fallen branch.

## Streams

The riverside park ends where the stream enters a large tunnel, flowing between industrial areas for a while and inaccessible to walkers from that point. This walk takes a couple of hours, lingering at the weirs, waterfalls and water bird areas, and stopping to identify woodland plants and birds. If the fine weather has faded, we can take the shorter straight route back home along the main road. The river continues northwards, passing through various parks and suburban villages, joining with others, and finally flowing into the Thames estuary where it becomes part of the North Sea. Who knows where my modest contribution to the Thames will end up, mixed into the seawater and travelling around the world, having started here in my local duck pond. (794 words)