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Greenwich Part 5

Queen's House, Old Royal Naval College, Painted Chapel, Painted Hall, Greenwich Town, St Alfege Church

Word count:

Dates as 2 words - 1945 = nineteen forty-five

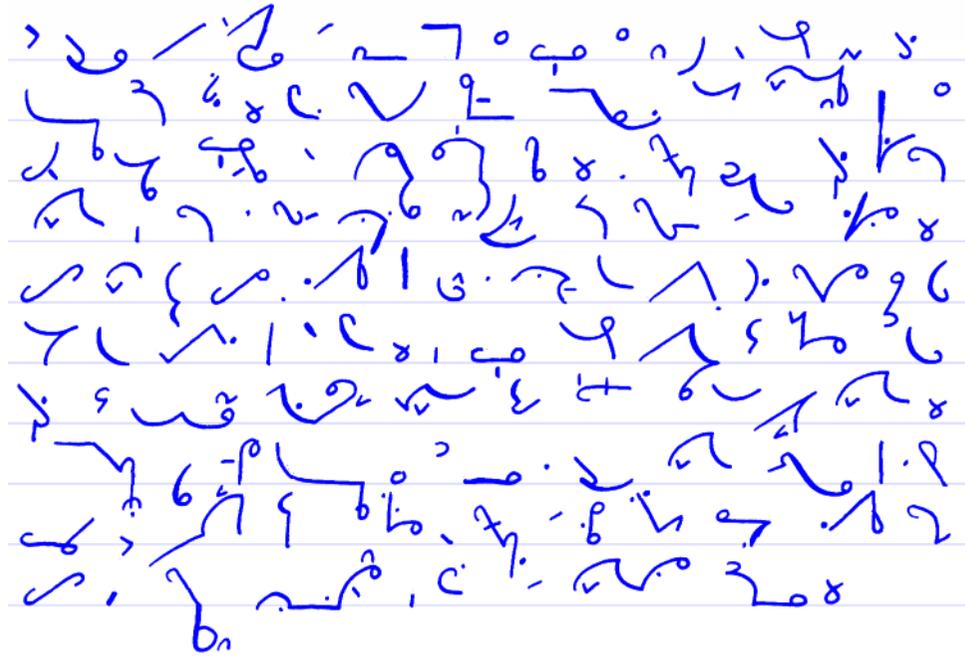
Monarchs as 3 words - Henry VIII = Henry The Eighth

Some hyphenated words counted as 2 = boat-shaped

Paragraph numbers not included

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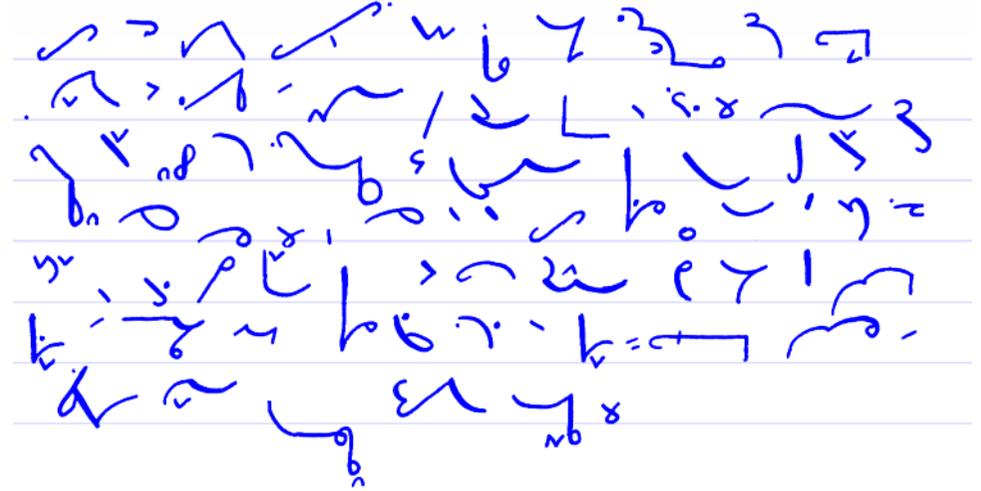


76. All the paintings are originals and you can get as close as you wish to inspect how the paint effects were achieved. Every brush stroke can be seen in the minutest detail, as shown in these close-ups of Elizabeth's sumptuous* dress. The portrait would not have been painted from life, but from an approved image, showing her perfect and ageless. One might think that once the artist had found a method for representing, say, pearls, he would then only have to repeat it all over. But close

inspection reveals that the items have been painted with the nuances and variations of lighting that would occur in real life. Capturing these subtle effects is what gives a painting life and brings it a step closer to the reality that it attempts to portray, and sets apart the skilled artist from one who produces meticulous but flat and lifeless works.

* "sumptuous" Omits the P sound

Handwritten lines for notes.



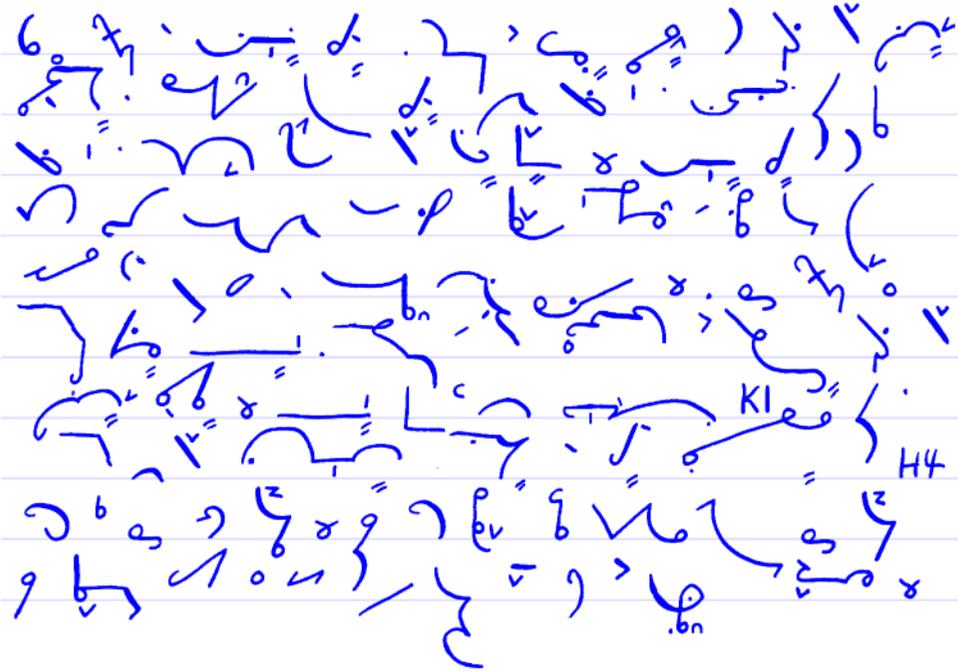
77. One cannot help wondering about the conditions in which the artworks were created, the life of the artist and how long each painting took to complete. Many would have been* produced by students or apprentices, with the finishing details being done by the master himself. But most of all, one is in awe of their acute eyesight to paint such tiny details, all the more astounding as they only had limited

daylight and candles, and not the vast array of daylight-corrected lamps and adjustable lighting fixtures* that we have nowadays.

* Omission phrase "would (have) been"

* "fixtures" In the singular, the U diphthong is written through the end of the stroke

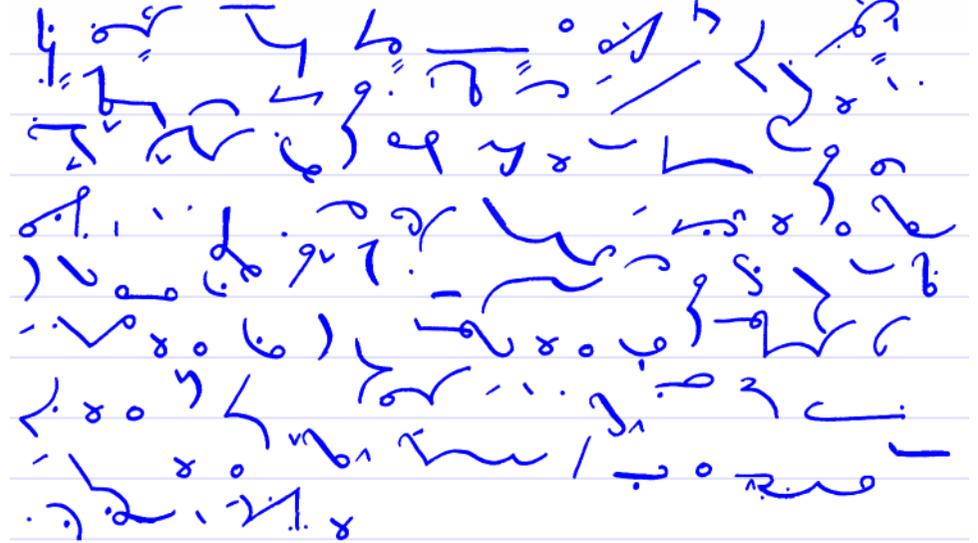
Handwritten lines for notes.



78. This portrait of Inigo Jones, the architect of the Queen's House, was painted by William Hogarth a century after Jones lived, based on an engraving, which was itself based on an earlier drawing by Van Dyck. Inigo Jones was also greatly involved in stage design, costumes and sets for the theatre, and was thought to be the first to introduce movable scenery. The second portrait is Captain James Cook, the explorer and cartographer of the Pacific Ocean*, painted by William Hodges. Cook

took with him chronometer K1, which was a copy made by Larcum Kendall of John Harrison's H4 version, on his second and third voyages. He was very satisfied with its performance and after the second voyage he described the watch as "our faithful guide through all the vicissitudes of climates."

* "Pacific Ocean" Using Shun Hook for "ocean"; similarly "Atlantic Ocean"



79. David Samwell* accompanied James Cook as surgeon on board the* ship Resolution, and described him: "He was a modest man, and rather bashful; of an agreeable lively conversation, sensible and intelligent. In temper he was somewhat hasty, but of a disposition the most friendly, benevolent and humane*. His person was above six feet high: and, though a good looking man, he was plain both in dress and appearance. His face was full of expression: his nose extremely well shaped: his eyes, which were* small and of a brown cast, were quick and piercing; his

eyebrows* prominent, which gave his countenance altogether an air of austerity."

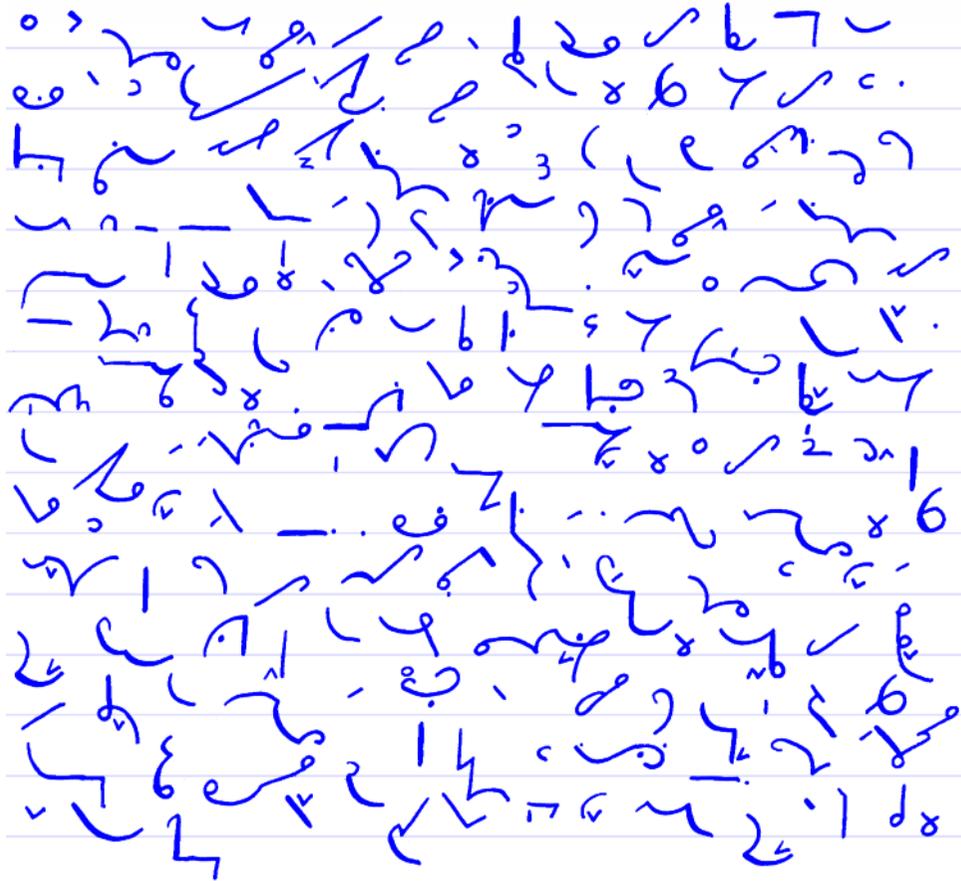
* Samwell" Essential to insert the vowels, as "Samuel" is similar

* "on board the" On its own "board" is written with full strokes B + Rd

* "humane" on the line, and "human" above the line, in order to distinguish. It helps to think of these two outlines as following their second vowel.

* "eyebrows" The singular has the final diphthong joined to the stroke

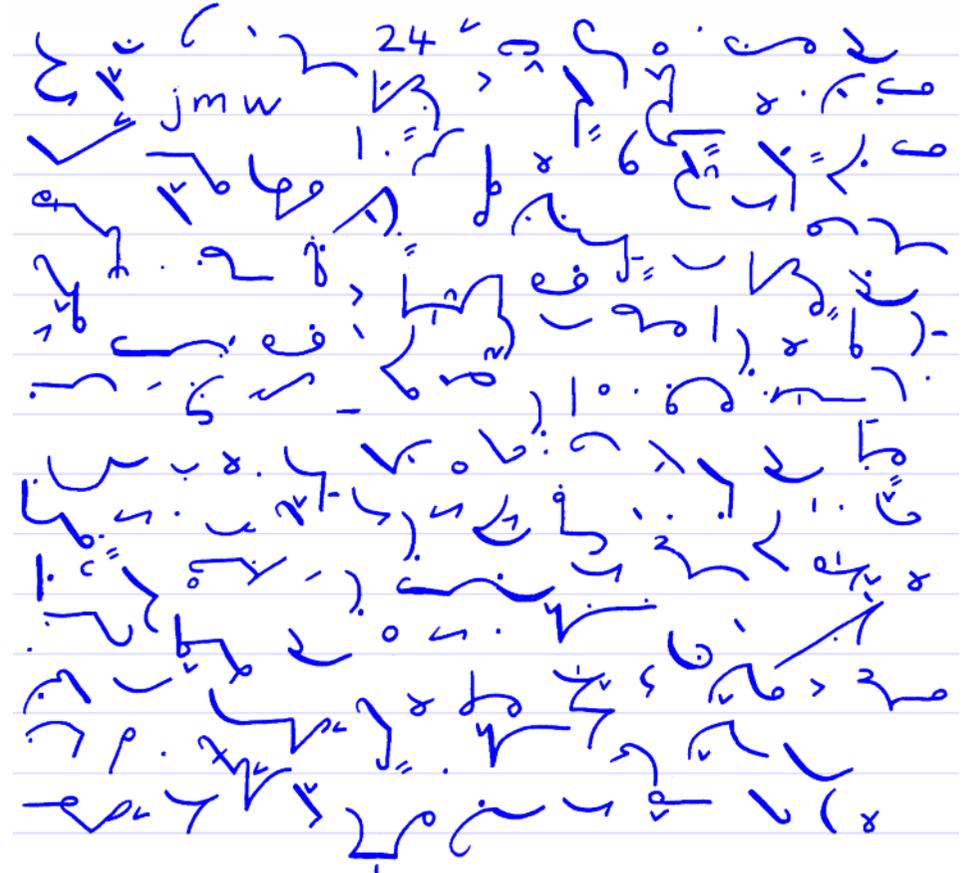
* Omission phrase "which (w)ere"



80. As all the rooms in the house are used to display paintings, one does not get any sense of what they were originally used for. This is the only one with a decorated ceiling and was the royal bedroom. What would you think if, several hundred years from now, you could come back and see people trailing through your house and bedroom, looking at paintings! To preserve all the artwork the lighting level is minimal and one can assume that it would have been* even less in its day, with the only illumination being by a multitude of candles. The gilded parts in such decorations were designed not only for richness and opulence, but also to catch the candle-light. As one

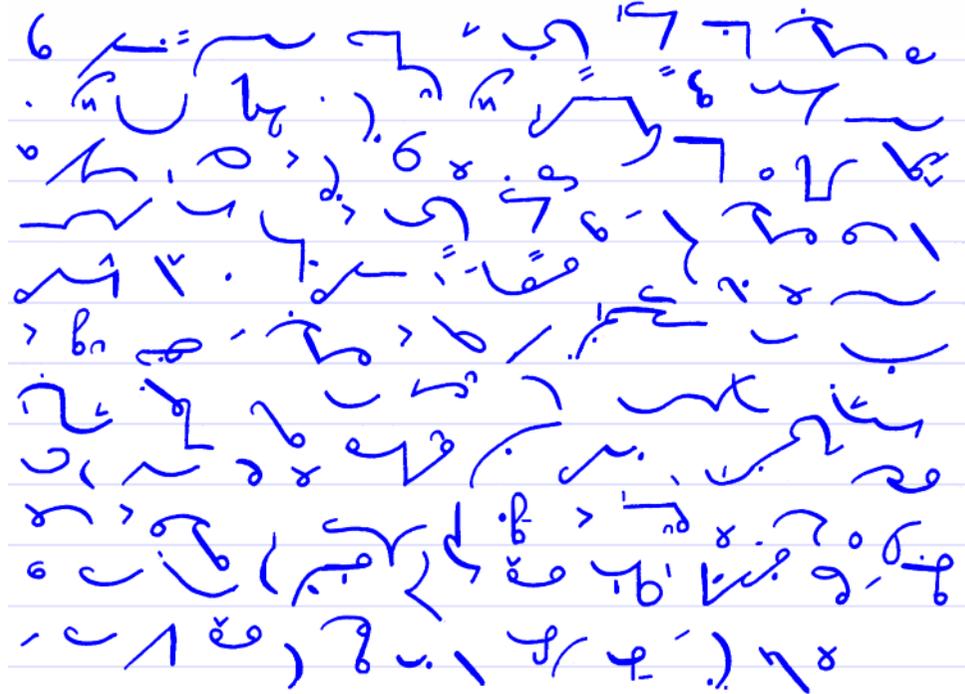
walked around, different parts would light up, giving the scenes depth and an impression of movement. This is entirely different from our own modern habit of flooding rooms with light and seeing everything laid out for inspection simultaneously. Nowadays we satisfy our desire for movement and narration of stories through video, but I believe this is the effect that these sceneries would have had at the time, with animation coming from the observer's eye being directed by whichever part caught the light, and never seeing all of it at once.

* Omission phrase "that it would (have) been"



81. Filling the end wall of Room 24 on the ground floor is an enormous painting by J M W Turner of the Battle of Trafalgar. A low glass barrier keeps visitors at a little distance. This beautiful boat-shaped glass sculpture by Rosie Leventon in the same room provides a stark contrast to the tumultuous scenes in Turner's painting and the gloomy scenes of ships in storms at sea. It is so calm and elegant, and one could almost see it as a sailor's hammock or a

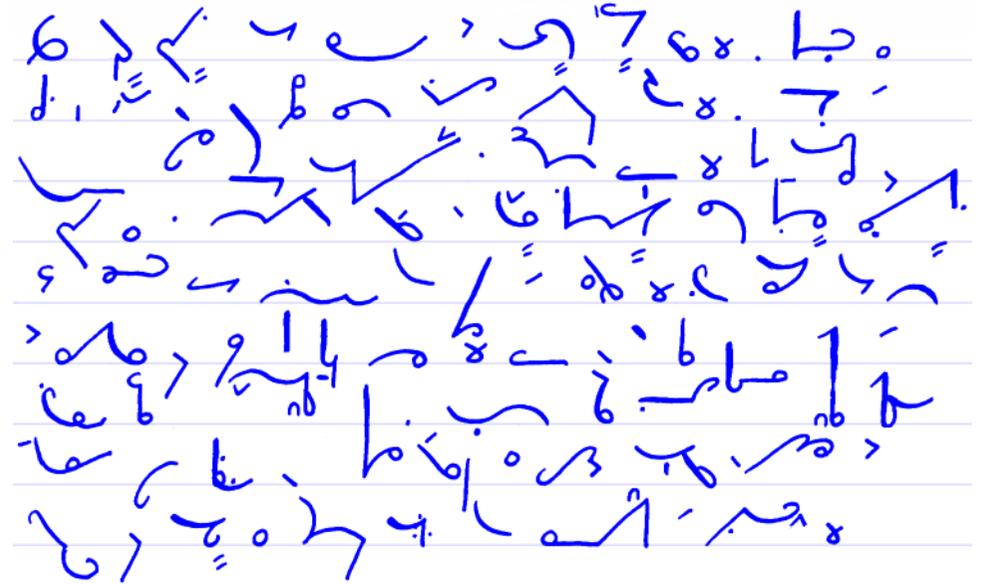
fishing net. The photo below is part of a more upbeat painting, Thomas Danby's "A new bride for the sea" showing construction of a ship on a fine day, with both carpentry and sea gleaming in the warm sunlight. The caption describes the painting as "an idyllic vision of rural labour in Victorian Britain". It seems unlikely that the lives of the workers matched such a portrayal, the idyllic and free life being experienced only by the seagulls wheeling in the sky above them.



84. This regal-looking creature on the Naval College gate emblem is not a lionfish, and definitely not a sea lion, but we can be sure that he is not only king of his realm, but master of the seas as well. The second gate is directly behind the camera in the photo of the Naval College buildings, and both emblems seem to be surrounded by a circle of officer's gold braid. Many of the statues, crests and emblems of the past are allegorical in nature, embodying abstract principles in human* or animal form, conveying the information without

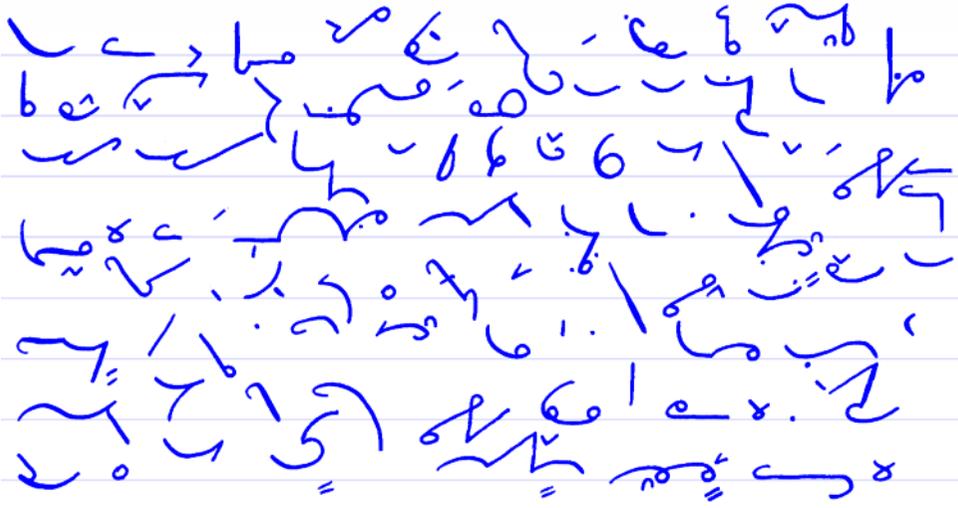
written words. Centuries later we need to unravel the meanings of some of the symbols but they clearly advertise the status of the occupants. The method is still with us today in our company logos, shop signs, notices on doorways, stairs and exits, and in our road signs, whose messages need to be instantly understood and easy to remember.

* "human" Above the line, to distinguish from "humane"



85. This is the Painted Chapel in the centre of the Naval College buildings. The decoration is dense, but not too busy as it is the same pattern repeated all over. The gilding and pink walls give the interior a warm glow. At the entrance to the chapel is a marble bust of Vice Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy, with the inscription: "Eminent for judgement and self-possession; ever

anxious for the improvement of the service, to which he had devoted himself; equal to all its difficulties and duties, and conversant with its minutest details, the name of this gallant and distinguished officer will descend to posterity, as one of the noblest ornaments of the profession, to which England is so much indebted for security and renown."



86. Being equal to the difficulties of one's chosen profession and conversant with its minutest details does sound like the path to excellence and success in any endeavour, for anyone, anywhere, at any time, not just those who find themselves in the public eye and historical figures. Cold and colourless marble effigies have an inhuman* quality, and I prefer to show here his portrait on the public house inn-sign* in Greenwich, which puts a more human* face on a famous name that many people only remember from their* history lessons at

Horizontal lines for writing notes.

school. The original painting is in the National Maritime Museum's collection.

- * "inhuman" Insert the last vowel, to distinguish it from "inhumane". Being less frequent, this pair do not have the benefit of a pair of distinguishing outlines.
- * "inn-sign" Written as separate outlines, to distinguish from "ensign"
- * "human" See note above para
- * "from their" Doubling to represent "their"

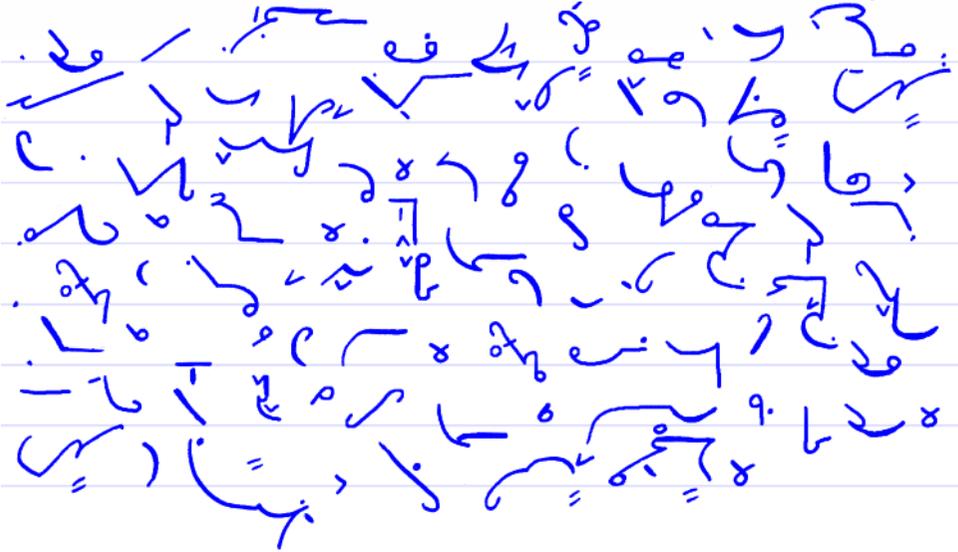


87. The Painted Hall is located across the square from the chapel, and was intended to be the dining area for the pensioner seamen living at the Hospital, but it was considered too magnificent for this purpose* and became instead an attraction for tourists. From 1824 to 1936 it housed the National Gallery of Naval Art. The Hall is approached by a flight of grey marble steps and the floor throughout is black, white and grey marble. Several wheeled mirror trolleys are placed along its length

Horizontal lines for writing notes.

so that visitors can admire the ceilings in comfort, and these do appear to be magnifying, so the details are easily made out. At the rear of the Hall is a plaque commemorating those Americans who volunteered to serve as sea officers in the Royal Navy in the Second World War "when the fate of Great Britain and the cause of freedom hung in the balance."

- * "for this purpose" Optional intersection

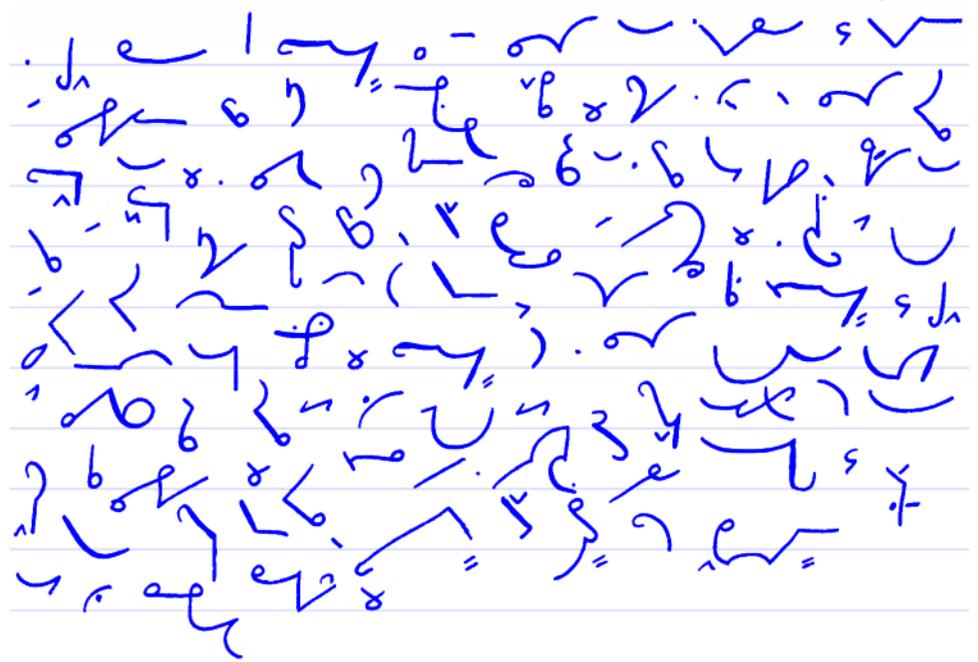


88. The paintings are allegorical scenes showing the Protestant* succession of English monarchs and were painted in the Italian baroque style by Sir James Thornhill over a period of 19 years. Here he is, thanking visitors for their donations to the conservation of his work. The cut-out figure has been skilfully painted copying the self-portrait that appears on the right-hand side of the very end wall, and creatively

providing the back of his coat and his other leg. Self-portraits sneaked into larger paintings can often be identified as being the one figure who is looking straight out of the painting. Thornhill was father-in-law to the painter William Hogarth.

* "Protestant" This outline cannot be fully vocalised, the middle E vowel cannot be shown

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, corresponding to the text on page 89.



89. The town centre at Greenwich is quite small, in comparison with the park and historical buildings on their extensive* sites. There are a lot of small shops crowded in. The heavy through traffic means that this is not a place for the tourist to stroll in peace and quiet, but there are plenty of places to buy souvenirs and refreshments. The tavern and the fish and chip shop make me think back to the early days of Greenwich, when the town first came into existence.

Greenwich was a small fishing village and the services of these establishments – ale and fish – would have been provided in one form or another throughout its history. Chips of course are a relatively recent introduction, with the potato being brought back to Europe by the Spanish from South America in the late 16th century.

* "extensive" "expansive" Keep the T and P clearly at their correct angle, as these two are similar in meaning

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, corresponding to the text on page 88.

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, including the number 1012.

90. St Alfège* Church is to the west of the town centre. St Alfège was the Archbishop* of Canterbury. Viking raids had become a regular scourge and in 1012 Danish Vikings moored at Greenwich and stayed for three years. They raided the area without mercy and sacked the town of Canterbury. They took Alfège hostage and imprisoned him at Greenwich. The townsfolk could not pay the

ransom, and Alfège would not permit any ransom to be paid for his release, and so the Danes eventually killed him. The first church was reputedly built on the location of his murder.

- * "Alfège" Sometimes spelled "Alphege"
- * "Archbishop" Optional contraction

Horizontal lines for writing practice.

Handwritten shorthand notes in blue ink on lined paper, including the numbers 1290, 1710, and 1969-72.

91. The church was rebuilt in 1290, and in 1710 it collapsed during a storm, as the structure had been undermined and weakened by excavations for burials*. The present-day building is the third church and was designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor. Alfège also gave his name to St Alfège's Hospital at the bottom of Vanbrugh Hill, although the buildings started off as a workhouse and infirmary for paupers and the sick. It was demolished and rebuilt as

Greenwich District Hospital between 1969 and 1972. This closed in 2001* and was demolished in 2006* for residential redevelopment. (2607 words)

- * "burial" Special outline with upward L, to help distinguish it from "birth"
- * "2001, 2006" Long slash to represent the current century, arbitrary sign with no phonetic value

Horizontal lines for writing practice.