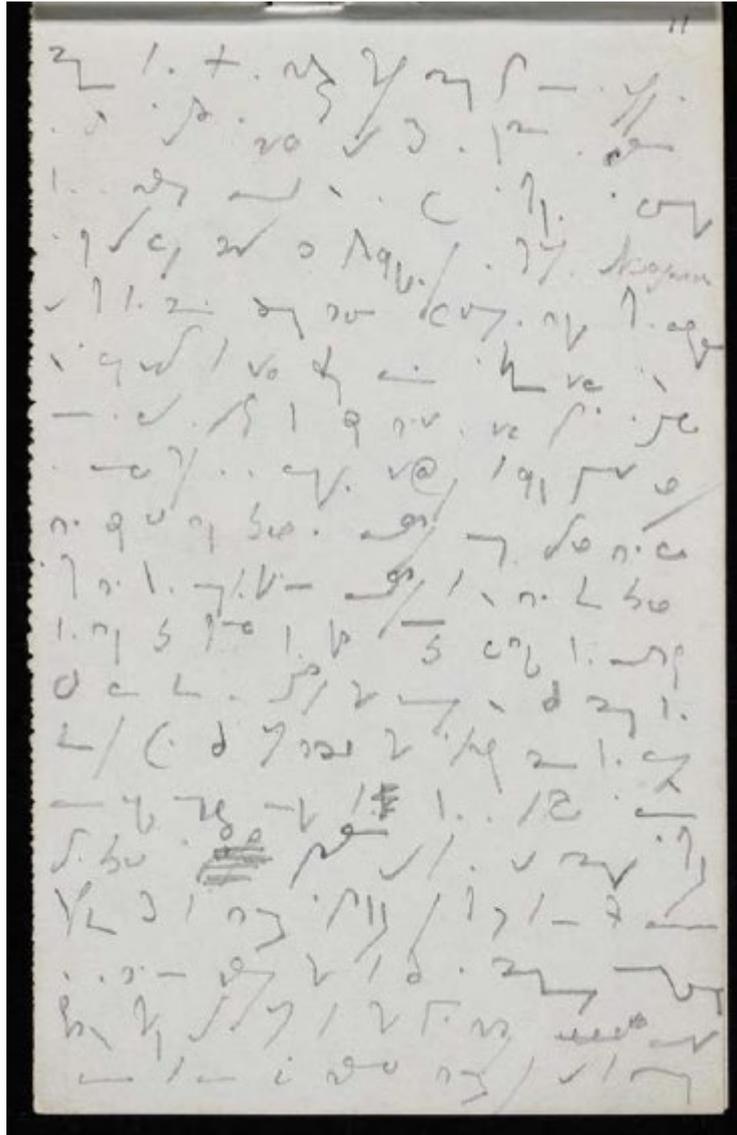


'Travelling' part II transcript

Our #SolveItDickens challenge for September 2022 was the second part of 'Travelling': a shorthand dictation exercise from the notebooks of Dickens's shorthand pupil, Arthur Stone, at the [Free Library of Philadelphia](#).



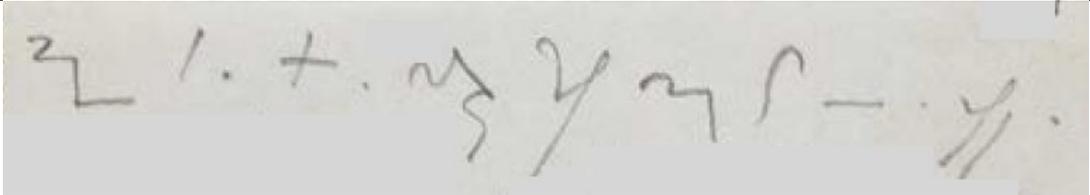
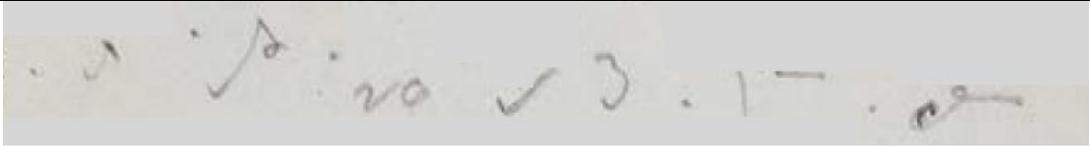
*Figure 1: Detail from the second page of a shorthand exercise titled 'Travelling'.
Image © The Free Library of Philadelphia [ref: cdc5890009]*

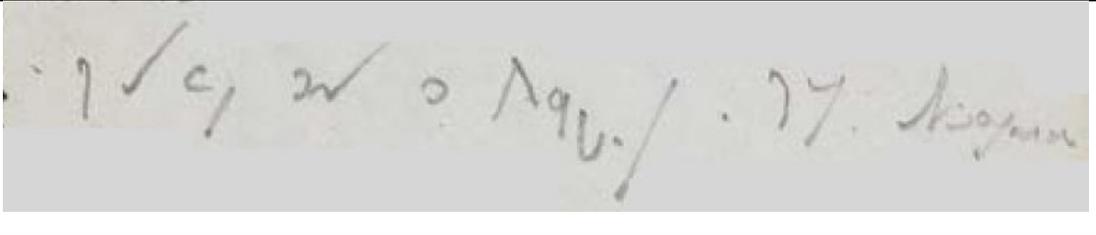
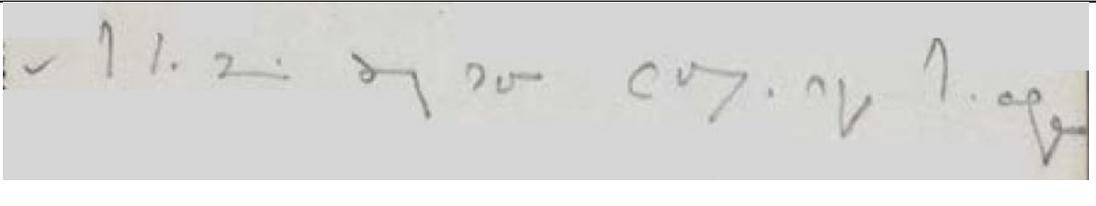
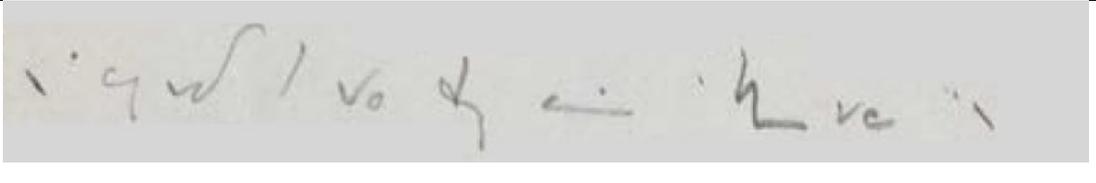
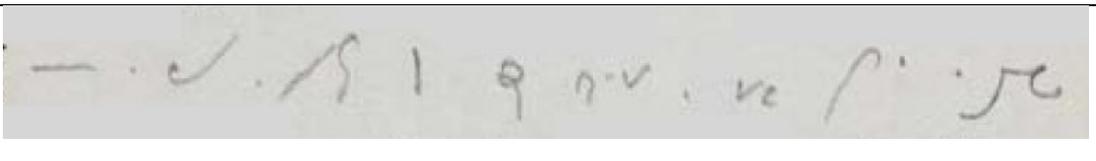
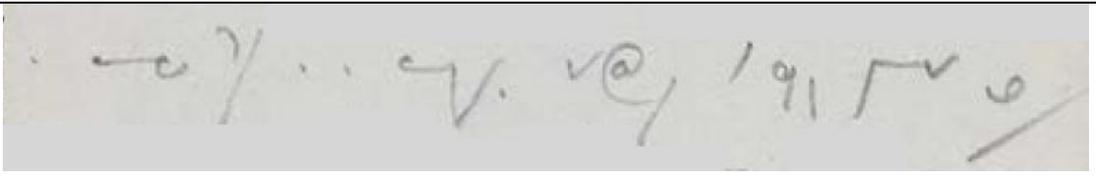
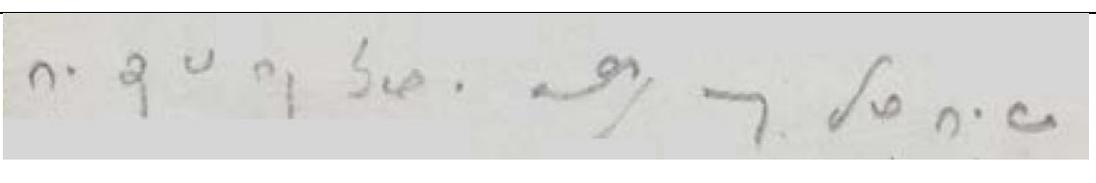
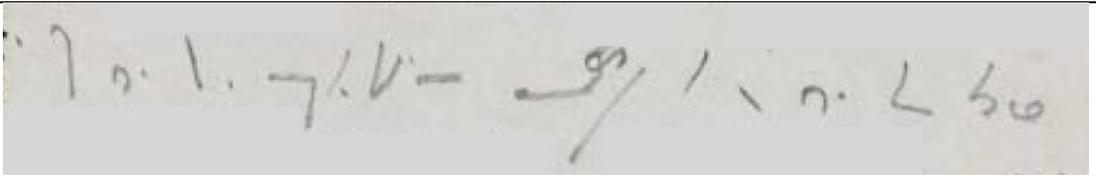
Many thanks and congratulations to our dedicated Dickens Decoders, who produced an almost complete solution for this page, transcribing **46 words** for the first time in the process! 'Travelling' part II also gives us some helpful context for how this shorthand dictation exercise might continue – which is the subject of our [current #SolveItDickens challenge](#) for October.

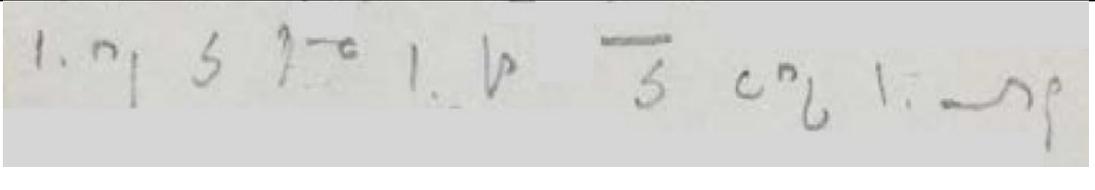
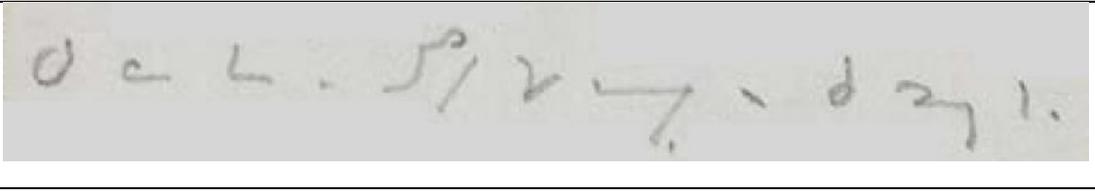
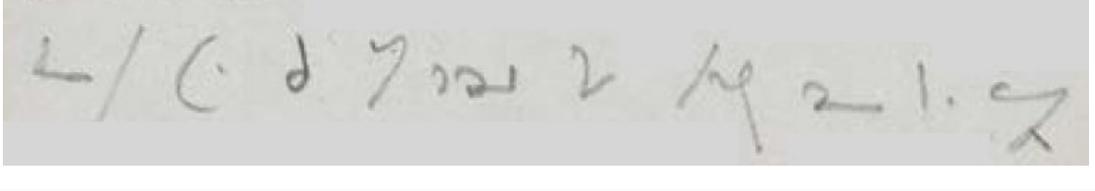
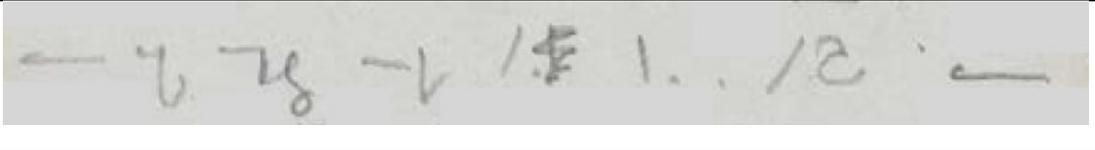
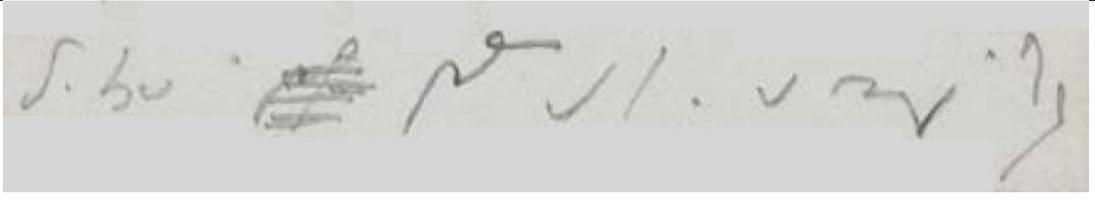
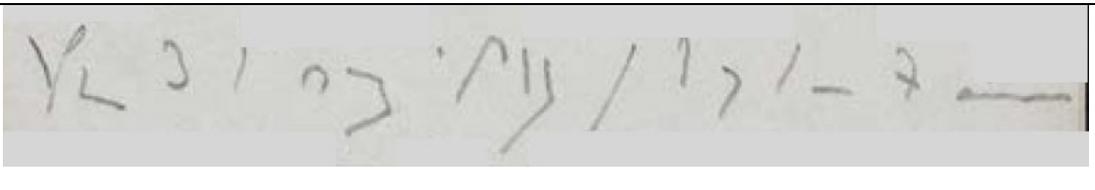
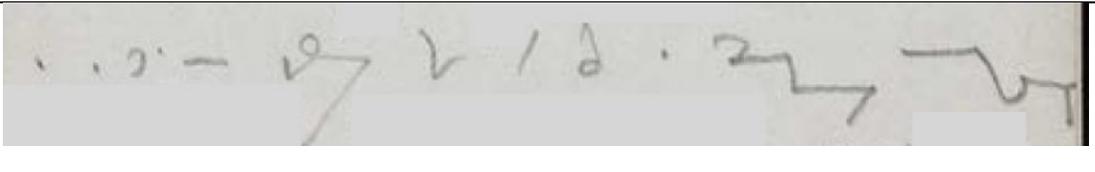
Text of 'Travelling' part I

1. I suppose the mere act of travelling (is) not very likely to open
2. a man's mind or amend (and) enlarge his spirit if he
3. be conceited and shut up within himself and his own good opinion
4. of himself in the beginning. As it would be of small advantage to
5. a man to live in a house with 10,000 windows
6. if he never looked out of one of them, so a man who
7. goes around the world constantly shut up in his own self-
8. satisfactions and prejudices can get very little out of it. Indeed, it
9. may be said of such people that they cannot see anything for themselves.
10. They are always in their own way. They themselves are the obstacle,
- always
11. interposed between their own mental state and the subject. Without
12. reflection and abstraction from self, it may be questioned whether any
13. tangible subject in the universe is capable of producing a very
14. beneficial effect on the mind. Mount Vesuvio, for
15. example, is a vast and always changing mass of fire and cinders.
16. There is nothing much more remarkable in that ipso facto than
17. there would be in a gigantic gas works, as it is when a man
18. ____ himself to consider that the action he beholds in that

'Travelling' part II transcript

Line no.	
1	
	mountain is the action of prodigious forces pent up in the recesses of
2	
	the earth and heaving and working there from the dawn of creation
3	
	to the present hour that the importance and beauty and grandeur

4	
	of what he sees impress him adequately . The falls of Niagara
5	
	are but so many thousand million gallons of water but the consideration
6	
	that a great river is throwing itself over a certain rock and that
7	
	in the course of ages it must weather/wear the rock away and change
8	
	the whole face of the country thereabouts is quite another thing .
9	
	We must all put something of ourselves into everything we see
10	
	and if we do not so train ourselves so that we have something

11	
	to put some bank to draw upon some capital to invest
12	
	nothing can have the charms for us that it is meant/wont to
13	
	have. Consequently, it is always possible for civilised men to conceive
14	
	how little interesting nature is to the savage and how
15	
	very small an appreciation he has of her wonders and beauties
16	
	distanced from his wants and appetities. But this is in fact one
17	
	of the main reasons for his being the monotonous, indolent

18	
	stupid brute he always is for any purpose other
19	
	than his own immediate personal wants. He/There is yet

Professor Bowles's Notes on the Transcription

line 3 the big c shape can stand for a lot of things (*circumstance, constituent, god, good, important, importance, see, sea*); "good" or "God" are possible, but in this context I think "importance" is a better fit, especially with a word like "grandeur".

line 4 a lot of you wrote "impresses" but I think it is "impress"; the subject is plural so the grammar doesn't require a third person singular <s> ending; the long tail is a double <s>; "impresses" would have a long tail and then another right-slanted line.

line 7 "weather" and "wear" are both possible here.

line 10 "so that" or "as though"? The shorthand isn't quite right for either of these - "so" needs a dot which isn't there and "though" needs a dot which isn't there! In the context "so that" seems to me to makes more sense.

line 11 I don't really understand the second character; it looks like the "put" we have already seen in line 9 but it needs something after it, e.g. "something to put **in**, some bank to draw upon, some capital to invest". Another possibility is that there was hesitancy in the dictation and the "great dictator" didn't finish the phrasal verb - "something to put-some bank to draw on". Is that likely?

line 12 Like most of you I read it as "are meant to" but one of you rather ingeniously wrote "are wont to", which is indeed possible. So we can't rule that out.

line 13 I think it is "civilised men" (plural) as there is no dot for the article

line 15 I am going with "her" rather than "their" or "its".

I think it is "wonders" (plural); there is a small tail on the final <r> and it fits with the plural of "beauties".

line 16 I am going with "distanced" though I am not 100% convinced; I read it as <d>+<stand>+<s>+<d>.

line 17 Congratulations to Frances T on finding "monotonous". Like all of you, I was convinced that it was to do with "mountains" because we have already seen

them (Vesuvius) and are discussing the power of nature. So I was really scratching my head. It just shows how you really have to concentrate on the immediate verbal context (indolent, stupid brute) when you are stuck on a character.

line 19 The Roman <i> character is "immediate".



The Dickens Code is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council