

'Travelling' part III transcript

Our #SolveItDickens challenge for October 2022 was the final ten lines of 'Travelling': a three-page shorthand dictation exercise from the notebooks of Dickens's shorthand pupil, Arthur Stone, at the [Free Library of Philadelphia](https://www.free-library.org/).

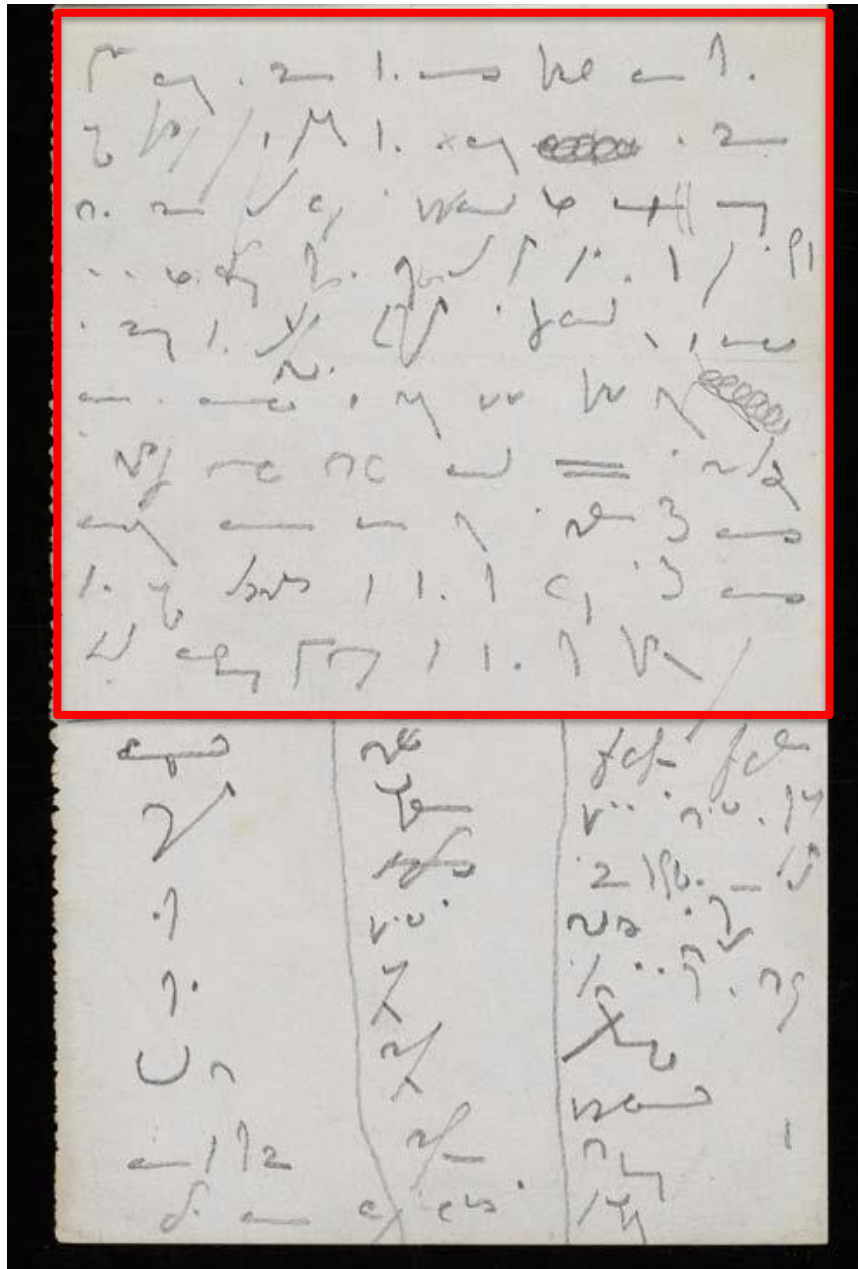
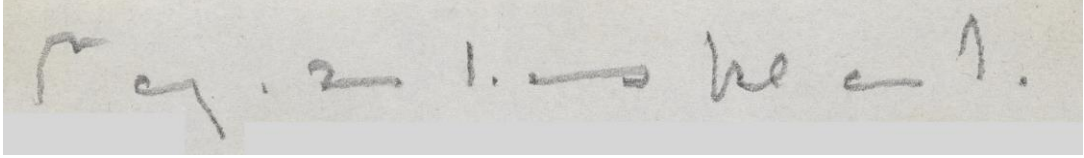
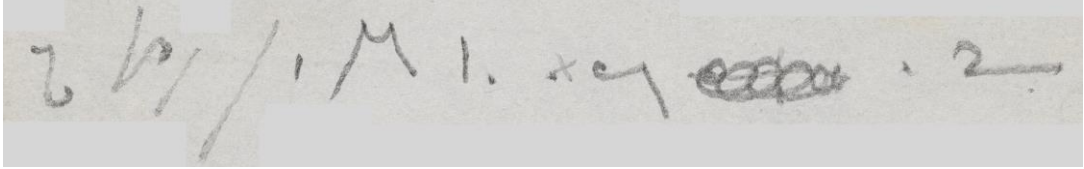
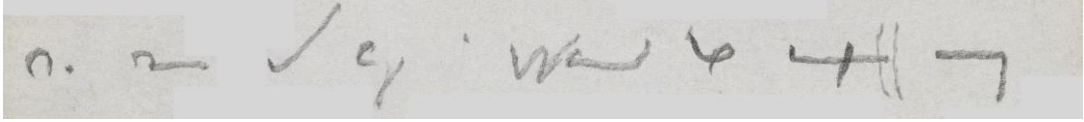
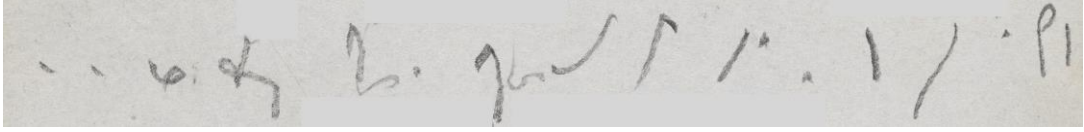
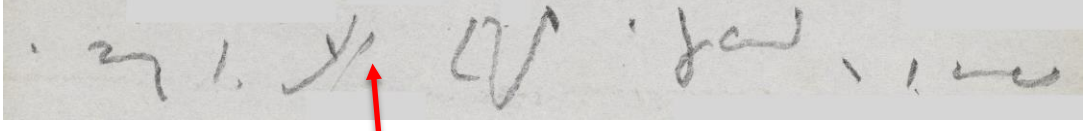
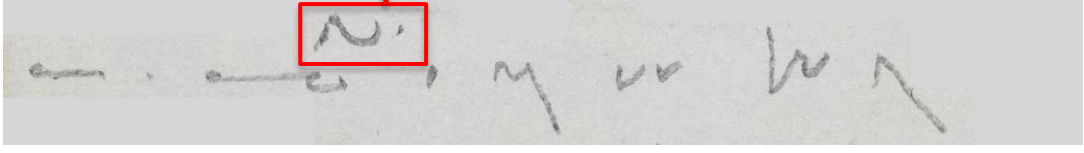


Figure 1: The third page of a shorthand exercise titled 'Travelling', followed by some unrelated(?) shorthand notes. We are focusing on the top half of the page (marked by the red box). Image © The Free Library of Philadelphia [ref: cdc5890009]

Many thanks and congratulations to our dedicated Dickens Decoders, who produced an almost complete solution for this page, transcribing **13 new words** for the first time in the process! These new discoveries are credited on our [Roll of Honour](#).

Check out the line-by-line transcript below. You can also read the complete text on pp. 4-5.

'Travelling' part III transcript

Line no.	
1	
	another kind of man to whom travelling can be of
2	
	little service. I allude to the kind of man
3	
	who, when he sees a remarkable thing, thinks not
4	
	of the thing itself but of what he shall/should say of it. A state
5	
	of mind so excessively selfish and despicable that I think
6	

	on the whole I would rather travel with
7	
	a ???? young Whig or even a prejudiced
8	
	old one than with a person from whom
9	
	so little improvement is to be got and from whom
10	
	such constant annoyance is to be derived.

Professor Bowles's notes on the transcription

Line 4 The symbol can stand for "shall" or "should" and both are possible in this context.

Line 5 "disagreeable" or "despicable"? It depends if you read it as <ds> or <dsp>.

There is a similar character in an early letter by Dickens where it is read as dsp+ch = <dispatch>. So I think our character is dsp+c+able.

"I think" is very difficult to read because there is a misleading dot after the first vertical line.

Line 5/6 "excessively". I am afraid I pasted the wandering "vely" symbol into l.6 not l.5 (see the red box and arrow). Apologies for that. Well done to those of you who spotted it.

Line 7 I really have no idea what to make of the second character. Your suggestions were "promising", "vivacious" and "embarrassing". The context suggests that the adjective refers to a traveller who would not be good company, e.g "I would rather go on a trip with my worst enemy than with Donald Trump". So I suspect it has a negative connotation like "prejudiced".

"Whig" foxed most of us. Well done to the ones who go it!

‘Travelling’ (almost) complete

Part I (line-by-line transcript with shorthand available [here](#))

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

Part II (line-by-line transcript with shorthand available [here](#))

mountain is the action of prodigious forces pent up in the recesses of the earth and heaving and working there from the dawn of creation to the present hour that the importance and beauty and grandeur of what he sees impress him adequately. The falls of Niagara are but so many thousand million gallons of water but the consideration

that a great river is throwing itself over a certain rock and that in the course of ages it must weather/wear the rock away and change the whole face of the country thereabouts is quite another thing. We must all put something of ourselves into everything we see and if we do not so train ourselves so that we have something to put some bank to draw upon some capital to invest nothing can have the charms for us that it is meant/wont to have. Consequently, it is always possible for civilised men to conceive how little interesting nature is to the savage and how very small an appreciation he has of her wonders and beauties distanced from his wants and appetites. But this is in fact one of the main reasons for his being the monotonous, indolent stupid brute he always is for any purpose other than his own immediate personal wants. There is yet

Part III

another kind of man to whom travelling can be of little service. I allude to the kind of man who, when he sees a remarkable thing, thinks not of the thing itself but of what he shall/should say of it. A state of mind so excessively selfish and despicable that I think on the whole I would rather travel with a ____ young Whig or even a prejudiced old one than with a person from whom so little improvement is to be got and from whom such constant annoyance is to be derived.



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