

A HOLLOW CROSS

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The construction of forms (crossword puzzles in geometric shapes) was a popular pastime among puzzlers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; scores of examples are given in A Key to Puzzledom (New York: William W. Delaney), published in 1906. More recently, the late Palmer Peterson of Lennox, South Dakota, exhibited a Hollow Diamond in the May 1971 Word Ways.

The form below does not appear in A Key to Puzzledom, although its inverse, the Cushion Square, does. Note that each of the interlocked five-by-five squares has the same letter-sequences in corresponding rows and columns. This symmetry imposes strong constraints on the four thirteen-letter entries, as nine letters at one end of each horizontal entry must match nine letters at the other end of one of the vertical entries. As it was impossible to find single words fulfilling these conditions, two-word phrases (non-dictionary) were used instead.

			F	O	R	E	S						
			O	N	E	S	T						
			R	E	C	T	O						
			E	S	T	O	P						
R	A	T	E	S	T	O	P	P	A	G	E	S	
A	D	U	L	T					A	B	E	A	M
T	U	N	E	R					G	E	E	S	E
E	L	E	N	A					E	A	S	E	L
S	T	R	A	N	G	E	R	S	M	E	L	L	
			G	A	V	O	T						
			E	V	I	T	A						
			R	O	T	O	R						
			S	T	A	R	T						

A challenge to the reader: if the symmetry condition on the five-by-five squares is eliminated, can one construct a Hollow Cross with 28 different five-letter words and 4 different thirteen-letter words?