TWO HUNDRED EIGHT-SQUARES?

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In his article "More Quality Word Squares" in the February 1988 issue of Word Ways, Dmitri Borgmann exhibited the four finest eight-by-eight word squares known to him. The first example is clearly the best of those shown, as the others all resort to two-word terms which rather detract from their standing.

The example on the left is a slight modification of an eight-square originally published in 1902 by Charles B. Stewart. It employs the best of those shown, as the others all resort to two-word terms which rather detract from their standing.

The two squares below would rank on a par with the "Agaricus" square in my opinion.

The example on the right was constructed by Darryl Francis, and uses solid-form words from Webster's Second Edition. The square is in the Second.

I recently discovered a set of base words which has proved incredibly fertile in producing eight-squares. Exhibited here are sixteen variant squares which all use essentially the same base.

The example on the left is a slight modification of an eight-square originally published in 1902 by Charles B. Stewart. It employs all solid-form words from Webster's Second Edition. The square on the right was constructed by Darryl Francis, and uses solid-form words from Webster's Third Edition, except REDELESS, which is in the Second.

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A finest eight-squares is clearly the word terms

"Agaricus"

It employs solid-LESS, which proved in-

and here are some base.

- PAPALIST
- METALIST
- FINALIST
- MEDALIST
- ADUATOR
- EMAFATOR
- ISOLATOR
- EMULATOR
- PUTATIVE
- TAXATIVE
- NOTATIVE
- DURATIVE
- ALANINES
- ANAXONES
- ALANINES
- ALANINES
- LATINERS
- LATIONERS
- LATINERS
- LATINERS
- ITINERAL
- ITINERAL
- ITINERAL
- ITINERAL
- SEVERANE
- SOVERANE
- SOVERANE
- SOVERANE
- TRESSLET
- TRESSLET
- TRESSLET
- TRESSLET
- VOTALIST
- MODALIST
- MORALIST
- MURALIST
- OPINATOR
- OXIDATOR
- OZONATOR
- OPERATOR
- CITATIVE
- DILATIVE
- ROTATIVE
- REGITIVE
- ANAXONES
- ADAMINES
- ANAXONES
- ARICINES
- LATINERS
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A few of the terms may be unfamiliar. AMARINES, ALANINES, AMI-
DINES, and ARICINES are chemical compounds; LATINERS are inter-
preters; ITINERAL is an obsolete synonym for itinerant; SEVERANE
and SOVERANE are early forms of sovereign; EUCARIST is a reformed
spelling of eucharist; a UDAMETER is a rain-gauge; a NAVALIST
is a supporter of naval interests; a SOLARIST is one who interprets
ancient legends as being based on sun-worship; an OXIMETER meas-
ures oxidized haemoglobin in the blood; a GOMARIST is a supporter
of the Dutch Calvinist Francis Gomar; a TOTITIVE is a type of
mathematical integer; a BONAVIST is a hyacinth bean; ANAXONES
are types of nerve cells; LATINERS are brass-workers; ADAMINES
are kinds of mineral; and REGITIVE means governing. All words
can be found in either Webster's Second Edition or the Oxford Eng-
lish Dictionary, except VITATIVE, pertaining to the preservation
of life, which is in Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary.

What is remarkable about the base is its flexibility. TRESSLET
can be replaced by TRESSLES or TRESSLED, and SEVERANE by SEYER-
ATE, an obsolete form of separate, or SEVERALE, an early spelling
of several. Throughout the squares many other exchanges are pos-
sible, for example NOTATIVE/NOVATIVE, UDAMETER/UKAMETER, MODA-
LIST/SODALIST, ARICINES/ARIBINES, ODOMETER/OROMETER, MEDALIST/
PEDALIST, MORALIST/CORALIST, and so on. It is likely that if ev-
ery avenue were explored and every permutation recorded it would
result in a total of over two hundred eight-by-eight word squares.
Would anyone like to take on the challenge?