-GRY REVISITED

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Over the years, much has been written in Word Ways about words and names ending in the three letters -gry. Since these same three letters can also be arranged in five other ways, I wondered whether any words existed that ended with these. A hunt through the Oxford English Dictionary turned up some items of interest.

GYR The OED appears to contain only two words ending in this combination—egyr and kongyr.

Egyr is a 14-15 century obsolete variant spelling of the adjective “eager”. The OED has three illustrative quotations with this spelling, including 1485 MALORY Arthur i. xiv (1817) With an egyr countenance.

Kongyr appears as a main entry in the OED, where it is given as an obsolete variant of “conger”, a large species of eel. Yet, turning to the entry itself, there is no obvious sign of kongyr—there’s kunger, cungyre and various others. I suspect that the editors of the OED overlooked inclusion of kongyr at “conger”, rather than kongyr being an error for something else.

RGY There are lots of words ending with these letters. The commoner ones include allergy, clergy, energy, lethargy, liturgy, metallurgy, orgy and synergy. None of these really needs any definition here. A not-so-common example, obvious in meaning, is icebery.

RYG The OED has just one example of a word ending with this combination: carryg.

Carryg is a 15th century obsolete variant spelling of “carrack”, a large ship of burden, also fitted for warfare. The OED lists numerous alternative spellings, only a few of which are instanced in illustrative quotations.

YGR There don’t appear to be any English words in the OED ending with these letters. Yet there are several more or less familiar words that have these letters appearing within the word, including babygrow, brachygraphy, hygrometer, playground and polygraph.

YRG There don’t appear to be any English words in the OED ending with these letters. Yet, there are a few words, none common, which have these three letters appearing within the word, including pyrgocephalic (tower-headed), pyrgopolinize (to swagger), skyragliard (a wild or dissipated fellow) and wyrgyne (an obsolete Scots spelling of “virgin”).

Can readers fill any of the gaps?