ANIL writes: “Thanks to Susan Thorpe (06-226) for adding two more good acrograms (I’m sure: Is! and walk[s] out on someone: woos [antonym]). I agree with her about standards, but standards can be subjective, as evidenced by the fact that I found her other three acrogram offerings sub-standard and wouldn’t have used them myself. As well, different standards apply to different endeavours. Word Ways is full of forced palindromes, for example. Anacrograms too are much more difficult than anagrams, as explained in my first article in the series. Longer acrograms (unrearranged acrostics, called “acronyms” in the second article) are most difficult, as illustrated with the forced examples, judged on relevance and/or amusement rather than structural elegance. (Can she or readers find one unforced acrogram of a longer idiom or quotation?) I was most astonished by her question “to what end?” do I rearrange the letters as a way of using longer quotes. The end is linguistic recreation! Does she think her endless lists of letter patterns serve some other end? And if I didn’t rearrange the letters they wouldn’t be “an-acrograms” (anagrams of acrostics), merely “acrograms”, as coined above. Her dismissive claim that “most” of these were also forced I leave to each reader to judge. Apparently the editor didn’t find them unacceptable. But I did admittedly apply a looser standard there than I do in my Definitive Anagrams series, for example, because of the greater difficult.”

ANIL also writes: “Eric Iverson (04-280) and (quoting) Battus give two new letter-structural bases for lipogramming, Euler-path and junction-node topology. Here is another, a classical topology division of the Times New Roman alphabet, assuming all lines to have thickness:

1. one loop: AabDdeOoPgQqR
2. two loops: Bg (g goes to class 1 if of a different type, g)
3. one solid, no loops: CeEFGHhJJkLmMmrSrStTuVvWwXxYyZz
4. two solids: ij.

In lower case, class 3 has the most members but only one vowel, u (plus y and w), while class 1 has three vowels and may be nearly as productive despite the limited number of consonants. But in capitals, class 3 has three vowels and group 1 but two, so class 3 would be most productive for all-capital lipograms. Groups 2 and 3 are obviously useless unless joined with the other two (Bind, jogs) or played round robin with each of the other classes in turn (Bade, BEGINNING, jig; idea, Big, virus). Another possibility for constrained writing is to require some mixing – no word from just one group. But this would be a very minor constraint in lower case, disallowing only twenty or thirty of the most common words, so perhaps require every word above a certain length (2, 3, 4 or 5) to mix three classes, meaning nearly every word would have to contain an i or a g.”

Rex Gooch comments: “Anil is not 100% correct. When young, I used an AZERTY typewriter because of German letters and general scientific use. For many years more recently I used a US / Arabic PC keyboard.”

Darryl Francis corresponds: “Jerry, I know you have a love of dictionaries, and that you have an extensive collection of them. But did you know that your name is in the Oxford English Dictionary?”
I searched the full text of the OED for “Jeremiah Farrell” and found that your namesake occurs in just one entry, WHITEFOOT.

One of the definitions for WHITEFOOT is: “A member of a secret society in Ireland who committed murders and outrages about 1832. Pl. whitefeet (also irreg. used attrib.)”

One of the illustrative quotations that appears for this meaning is: “1832 Boston Herald 6 Mar. 2 An armed party of Whitefeet paid the third visit to the house of the long-threatened Jeremiah Farrell.”

Neat, huh?"

**D. Weinberger** writes: “WordWays – “The Journal of Recreational Linguistics” – continues to get harder to read thanks to computers. A typical article treats words as collections of letters and tries to find ones that meet some odd constraint. Typical articles used to be about word pyramids and hyphenated words whose letters immediately before and after the hyphen cover every possible pairing. But now that word lists are computerized, the best of the WordWaysians have to come up with challenges that would not only stump a human but come close to stumping computers....

Some I can follow, though. Eric Iverson, for example, publishes a list of words made only with letters with diagonals in them, from akavit to zanu. He finishes with a list of the longest words without any diagonal letters, starting with bioelectricities. And Darryl Francis lists all 300 tube stations in London and tries to find something interesting about their names. For example, did you know that Bond Street transadds to deobstruent and sober-tinted? I didn’t!

An article by Will Nediger speculates that Douglas Adams took his fascination with the number 42 from Lewis Carroll. And my son and I particularly enjoyed Fender Tucker’s list of 11 heterograms placed in perfectly ambiguous sentences, such as:

> After breaking into the Sherriff of Nottingham’s armory, the flamboyant actor/thief Robin Hood took a bow.”

**Sir Jeremy Morse** sent the following: “(1) It is extraordinary how much of the alphabet these small nursery rhymes employ, particularly if we forget JQXZ. Going through them in the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, I found the most economical to be “Pease Pudding Hot” (15 letters) and the least economical “Pussy-Cat, Pussy-Cat” and “There was a Crooked Man” (both 23 letters). (2) Going from STALK to MARS via STARK-STAR-BOAR-BOAS-BAAS-BARS reduces the number of steps to 21. (3) Perhaps Dave Silverman was starting from Sherlock Holmes’s famous incident of the dog not barking in the night, which Chesterton ingeniously varied in one of his Father Brown stories.”