AN ADVENTURE INTO THE UNKNOWN

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For the dedicated logologist, it has always been an article of faith that every English word and name can be transposed into some other word or name, or into a cohesive group of words functioning as the equivalent of a single word or name, imparting a unified meaning, clearly and grammatically. For a word or name to defy transposition would be an act of treason, so to speak. With such defiance virtually unthinkable, the validity of the belief itself has never been put to an objective test.

Some years ago, I decided to subject that basic logological tenet to a critical test, by examining the names of the fifty states of the United States. Considered collectively, these names are as intransigent a set of words as one could ever encounter. Should it be possible to effect sensible transposals of all fifty state names, the credibility of the logological tenet would be established for all time to come.

My task has not been an easy one. Some names have resisted rearrangement almost fanatically, and I have repeatedly had to pause, even to retrace my steps. Yet, as the years have passed, more and more state names have succumbed to logological destiny. With a sense of deep fulfillment, I can now announce that all of the names have yielded their precious secret, validating the foundation stone of all logological endeavor.

An exhibit of the finest results achieved follows. Those transposals followed by an asterisk were originally discovered by another contributor to Word Ways, Darryl H. Francis of Hounslow, Middlesex, England.

ALABAMA - Taking our cue from the Old Testament, we choose to describe a heathen soothsayer as A BALAAM, which is as good a designation as any.

ALASKA - The Hawaiian Islands (note the contrast in locale) are the habitat of certain shrubs bearing large, edible, red fruit. These shrubs are called AKALAS.

ARIZONA - The Tropic of Cancer is not a state at all but a line of latitude whose name would seem to defy transposition.

ARKANSAS - Sanka was once the name of a warlike army, and it may be the equivalent of the name of this state.

CALIFORNIA - All have realized that the state of California has no sea relation because the name is derived from two Latin words.

COLORADO - Has some logologist been able to discover the duality of this name?

CONNECTICUT - Among the Indian languages is known along whose marches the state line of Connecticut.

DELAWARE - Formerly the state was known as the Dales or Daley's.

FLORIDA - Bottomless has been heard as a designation for this state.

GEORGIA - The gorge of the state is a geographical creation, carrying its name from an old word for a crevice in the earth.

HAWAIIA - The state has been designated as the Tropic of Cancer.

IDAHO - The Tropic of Cancer is not a state at all but a line of latitude whose name would seem to defy transposition.

ILLINOIS - A reference to as Illinois.

INDIANA -
ARIZONA - Here is a state that presents us with a choice. A native of the Azores is an AZORIAN*. The ZONARIA* are a group of mammals including the carnivores and certain ungulates.

ARKANSAS - Men such as the famous Hindu philosopher and theologian Sankara (or Shankara), who flourished A.D. 800, are known as SANKARAS. What else?

CALIFORNIA - It seems self-evident that the principal import of this state is AFRICAN OIL*, and that at least some of its residents have revived the ancient Roman Saturnalia under the updated name of the FORNICALIA.

COLORADO - Consistent with its role as a mining state, Colorado has something of a COAL ODOR about it (Colorado coal?).

CONNECTICUT - A coin in the form of a penny with indentations along its circumference is, naturally, a CUT-CENT COIN. This information comes to us through the courtesy of CONNIE C. CUTTE*, whose surname is not too common, though found in England.

DELAWARE - A relatively old word expressing the concept of "towards the sheltered side" is ALEEWARD. More currently, WEARDALE* is the name of a district in Durham, England.

FLORIDA - Secretly published maps of the state show a town at the bottom of Lake Okeechobee named OLDFAIR. Investigators have been hindered or FORLAID in their attempts to find the town.

GEORGIA - To comply with logological requirements, the town of Gorge, in Fremont County, Colorado, was transferred to Iowa, creating GORGE, IA. Since it had no population to begin with, ferrying its inhabitants to their new location in a light, airborne vehicle known as an AERO GIG was very easy.

HAWAII - The central motif of unity-consistency is maintained by transposing this state name into AWA + IHI. Each of the two words designates a fish of the Pacific Ocean.

IDAHO - The mystic East beckons to us, as we convert Idaho into ADHOI*, the name of a town in India, west of Ahmedabad, along the Tropic of Cancer.

ILLINOIS - The act of dashing or striking against something is referred to as ILLISION by the cognoscenti.

INDIANA - Is Indiana really formless? That is what its anagram,
ANIDIAN*, tells us!

IOWA - Our travels take us even further East, into the Territory of New Guinea. We finally drop anchor in AWIO* Bay, along the southern coast of New Britain.

KANSAS - This time, it is the Soviet Union that calls out to us in a twofold manner: KASSAN* is a town southwest of Samarkand, in Uzbekistan; ASANSK* is a town northeast of Krasnoyarsk, in western Siberia.

KENTUCKY - The haunt of our good friend, KNUT C. KEY, has always been in the Bluegrass State.

LOUISIANA - Knut's girl friend, Alain, once gambled the entire state against him in a poker game. When she lost, all he obtained was ALAIN'S IOU for Louisiana.

MAINE - This state name can be transposed into numerous words and names. The most common word is AMINE, an organic compound. The most interesting name is MENAI* Strait. On that strait in Wales is Anglesey Island, and on that island is a town the name of which is spelled with 58 letters.

MARYLAND - Near the western coast of Australia there stands a hill 1230 feet high: MARLANDY* Hill. Perched at its summit we find a wizened old man: DR. LAYMAN (a name affording an interesting contrast, if you stop to think about it!).

MASSACHUSETTS - Have you noticed the hairy upper lips of Russian news agency representatives? These are TASS MUSTACHES, of course! Certain specific states which chasms find themselves occupying, incidentally, are known as CHASM STATUSES*.

MICHIGAN - There go the bells again, A-CHIMING all day long . . .

MINNESOTA - Like a chameleon, this name can twist itself into many forms, the most elegant transposal being into NOMINATES. Other rearrangements include MAINSTONE*, a town in Shropshire, England; ANTIMONES, metaphysical contrarieties; MONTANISE, to adhere to Montanism, in ecclesiastical history; ANTIMASON, the antimatter counterpart of the meson, a subatomic particle; MINNEOTAS*, towns such as Minneota, in Lyon County, Minnesota; VAN-NITOSE, a kind of levulose; MOST INANE, the superlative form of the adjective inane; and NONSAMITE, any material not the heavy silk fabric called samite.
MISSISSIPPI - The word ipseity is defined as selfhood. In analogy to the word solipsism, there must exist the alternative form ipsism. (As a matter of fact, it does exist, given in medical dictionaries with a somewhat different meaning.) One way of intensifying the meaning of a word in English is to double the first part of it—consider examples such as supersuperior, great-great-grandfather, and the late late show on TV. Accordingly, we discover that conditions of super-selfhood are known as IPSI-IPSISMS.

MISSOURI - That form of the worship of Osiris now running rampant among members of the upper class in Great Britain is coming to be called O OSIRISM. Some of the worshipers have crossed the ocean and founded the stellar community of SIRIUS, MO.

MONTANA - This state was apparently first settled by emigrants from MANATON®, a town in Devonshire, England.

NEBRASKA - There is an ecclesiastical district in southeast Devonshire by the name of BRANKSEA®. It would appear that the name of our state was derived from the name of this district by transpositional conditions of super-selfhood are known as IPSI-IPSISMS.

NEVADA - The careful of transpositions to which this state name lends itself includes VENADA, another name for the pudu, a deer; VEGA, a term for sensation in Buddhism; and ADAVEN, a community in Nye County, Nevada which can be combined with the state name to produce a 12-letter palindrome: Adaven, Nevada.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - During her recent trip to London, HERMINE P. SHAW examined SERAPHIM-HEWN® statues in what might be called an EPHRAIM-SHEWN museum; that is, the guide who conducted her on a tour through the museum was named Ephraim.

NEW JERSEY - Does J. R. SWEENEY live in New Jersey? If he does, and if he has been seen by the Jewish population of that state, we can refer to him as JEWRY-SEEN®.

NEW MEXICO - Should we walk down the street and meet an undetermined number of women substituting for icemen, we might have to describe them as II XII ICEWOMEN.

NEW YORK - An old form of the past participle of the verb wreak, now occupied by the word wrought, is Y-WROKEN®. If this seems too esoteric, consider the word KEY-WORN: worn out by overuse of a key, said of keyholes. So saith ROY KEWN®, anyway.
NORTH CAROLINA - Can you visualize NORA 1. CHARLTON holding aloft A LOCRIAN THORN? If you can, then you will also understand why ornithologists need a word defined as "relating to sensuality in birds". That word is, of course, ORNITHOCARNAL.

NORTH DAKOTA - This state is the legal residence of one DORA K. HATTON.

OHIO - As in the case of Hawaii, we have succeeded in adhering to the overriding unity-consistency motif with IO! HO! Both words are interjections expressing triumph.

OKLAHOMA - We ask you to ratify the expression LOOK! A HAM! Superficially, this resembles a sentence, but we prefer to think of the vocative introductory portion simply as intensifying the meaning of the noun substitute a ham.

OREGON - One who has the determination to go on in the face of adversity is either an ONGOER (compare onlooker) or a GOER-ON (compare hanger-on). More prosaically, ORGONE is the name of a vital energy held to pervade nature and to be accumulable for use by the human body by sitting in a specially designed box (see Webster's Third Edition).

PENNSYLVANIA - Did you ever hear of a plastic floor covering so thin that it quivers like a leaf? We call it AN ASPEN VINYL.

PUERTO RICO - The forward-looking logologist anticipates entry of Puerto Rico into the Union as its fifty-first state, and has already converted the name into TOP COURIER, an honorary title bestowed on imperial messengers in ancient Rome.

RHODE ISLAND - If HLDA D. ROSEN lives in Rhode Island, she must know that it is a SHOAL-RIDDEN land, especially the district around OLD SHERIDAN, a town shown on the same secret maps that have given us Oldfair, Florida. In a different vein, it seems perfectly logical that the correlative of a foot soldier is a HAND SOLDIER.

SOUTH CAROLINA - If there is a song entitled "South Carolina" -- and there may well be one -- would you say that a LAOTIAN CHORUS singing it would constitute A RASH LOCU TION?

SOUTH DAKOTA - This state symbolizes the wise, old owl, in the form of A HOOT AT DUSK.

TENNESSEE - That special brand of common sense peculiar to teenagers is known as TEEN SENSE. Those endowed with it describe...
young birds placed in nests as ENNESTEES.

TEXAS - The simplest transposal of this name is into TAXES. Far more elegantly, we have SEXTA, a feminine first name.

UTAH - An old word for height is HAUT. It would be more interesting if it meant A HUT. The 23rd letter of the Hebrew alphabet, usually designated taw or taw, is also called THAU.

VERMONT - Any man whose name is Victor Merton will, undoubtedly, wish to sign it as V. MERTON, and to have it so listed in the telephone directory. During his stay in London, the Italian-English music composer Matthias Vento must surely have been addressed as MR. VENTO.

WISCONSIN - Since Wisconsin is the Dairy State, it is fitting to think about its cattle population. The puritanical view holds that, without benefit of clergy, what the state has is COWS IN SIN.

WYOMING - Taking the word y-wroken previously mentioned in connection with New York as our model, we see in Wyoming the present participle Y-MOWING. Such, at any rate, is the claim of our informant, IO M. GWYN.

There is a mathematical principle to the effect that the part cannot be greater than the whole. Accordingly, if we have been able to transpose each of the state names, we must be able to do the same for the name of the nation as a whole.

It has long been known that the UNITED STATES transposes into TESTUDINATES (turtles). Not as well known is the fact that AMERICA is a transposal of MACAIRE. Saint Macaire was the Archbishop of Antioch around the turn of the current millennium, dying in the year 1012. America may also be likened, at least logologically, to A CRI-
MEA and even to A MERCIA. Finally, we discover, to our absolute astonishment and dismay, that the message COLUMBIA has for us is: LO! I'M CUBA! (Note our comments regarding vocative introductions under the heading of Oklahoma.)

Some readers of this summary may be able to improve on a few of the examples included. It is suggested that they send all improvements to the editor for future publication.

QUERY

Old Doc came even nearer, revealing gold dentures, smiling grimly. "You understand, Delbert, that the extra assistance each hour requires seven, not two, operators," said Doc. "Can't this stop permanently?"

Before reading further, the reader is invited to discover what very unusual characteristic the above paragraph possesses. Specifically, can you make any prediction about the next word? Is Delbert likely to agree to Doc's question? In the February 1970 issue of Word Ways, Darryl Francis constructed word chains running through the alphabet from A to Z (ab, bac, cod, de, ...); however, I know of no word chain in a literary format, as attempted above. I believe it is harder to write prose of this type than prose omitting a common letter (i.e., a lipogram). Literary word chains in which the last two letters of one word equal the first two letters of the next word should be decidedly more difficult to construct. Perhaps some reader will submit a short logological article to Word Ways which is also a literary word chain.

"Yes," said Delbert, taking great time enlightening good Doc Carey, "Yes, surely."