In the February 9th entry of his entertaining book, An Almanac of Words at Play (Clarkson N. Potter, 1975), Willard Espy described his bafflement when his daughter brought home a slim book of French poetry, Mots d’Heures: Gousses, Rames. At least it looked French, but he could make neither head nor tail of the verses inside. Only when he tried reading them aloud did he realize that there was a familiar ring to them: Mother Goose Rhymes!

Mother Goose Rhymes can be paraphrased in other ways. Toronto is an international city; a recent press release wished its citizens Happy New Year in 64 different tongues. This diversity is portrayed in its telephone directory, 1604 pages of polyglot surnames out of which the following poems have been constructed (save for an occasional a, and or the). Just to show that the linguistic riches of this book are far from exhausted, I have constructed one poem in two different ways.

Ryder Cocke Hosse
Turban Berry Crosse
Tuzzi Affan Leddy
Oppinga Wye Torres
Rings Anna Fynn Gersh
Annabelle Sanna Towes
Furr Shi Shallouf Music
Ware Evert Shi Ghosh.

Barr Barre Black Shipp
Haff Yew Anney Wool
Yetts Herr, Yetts Herr
Three Baggs Voll
Wan Farr Darr Master
Won Forder Dame
An Wun Varder Littleboys
Watt Lief Sinne Allain.

Jack Spratt Codd Ita Knowe Fatte
Hitz Wyver Codd Ita Noll Ean
Anso Bett Wynn Ditto Offen
Thayer Lick Turr Platte Kleane.

JAY AMES
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

NYMO RHYMES
Merrie Merry Quaint Caunt Ririe
Howe Dussiaulme Garden Groh
Witt Silver Belson Cockell Schells
and Pretty Mayes Allin Arro.

Jaques Angell
Wenn Opper Hill
Topicha Payler Watter
Jaques Fell Down
Ann Brooke Hiss Crown
Angell Kamm Tumber Linn Affe Tarr.

Singer Songer Sikka Spence
a Puckett Fuller Wry
Forrin Twinney Black Birze
Beckett Inner Pye
Wenner Pye Wass Opal
the Beers Spick Annis Singh
Nowe Wasson Datta Dainty Dische
Toussaint Bee Forder King?

Zinga Zunka Garson Spenst
Pock Effs Fowler Aye
Farrand Wenn Ablack Burss
Becki Tinney Pye
Wenher Pyne Watts Appin
Tee Busby Gann Tosh Ing
Noh Wax Sindal Adeney Ting
Tuzex Bee Ford Durkin?

Little Jack Horner
Hoe Sattin Acorn Knerr
Eaton Niece Christmas Pye
When Heap Putt Innis Thumm
Anto Kautz Appel Lum
Ena Hedd Watte Good Boye Amm El.

Liddle Mses Muffitt
Saa Tonner Tufford
Eaton Herr Corzon Waye
Winn Alongo Kammer Spyra
Unda Sathe Down Beese Eldher
Ann Frydman Mies Murphy Taw Way.