MOR E ACCIDENTAL TAUTONYMS

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Curl’d minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words! ~ Matthew Arnold

log•o•dae•da•ly...: arbitrary or capricious coinage of words ~ Merriam-Webster

Tautonyms—i.e., words, phrases, etc. whose spelling is tautological—are of two kinds: terms such as froufrou and Pago Pago, which were fashioned from two or more identical subunits, and terms such as hotshots and valval, which were not. In the first group, tautological spelling is automatic, while in the second group its occurrence is a matter of chance. The term “heterologous tautonyms” (heterologous means “consisting of different elements”) might be a good name for the latter group, were it not for the fact that some of its members (e.g., testes, tsetse) appear to be unitary in structure, and not compounds at all. In the November 2008 Word Ways, Jeff Grant dubbed the second group “accidental tautonyms” in his article of the same name, in which he listed some five dozen existing or coined examples of such words. The present article, which proposes to take up where Grant’s leaves off in the coinage of “accidental” tautonyms, is indebted to him for both its topic and for his nicely apt name for these interesting artifacts.

In his article, Grant remarked that readers could surely add to his list of examples of accidental tautonyms, and such is indeed the case. On the logical premise that if dozens of examples were good, hundreds more can be no worse, this paper considerably augments his collection. There are some significant differences in our approaches, however. For one, whereas Grant’s listing encompasses everything from dictionary-attested terms to his personal coinages, mine restricts itself to more or less novel coinages, eschewing any words known by me to be entries in any print dictionary. This was done, in part, to avoid having to deal with definitions, which would not only have immensely bloated the article but which are also, in my opinion, generally superfluous in the case of logological coinages. After all, who needs another’s assistance to imagine fitting definitions for speciously-formulated words that have no established meanings and which were not coined in response to any real need? Readers can doubtless shift well enough for themselves in this regard, the only caveat being that where a word element has more than one meaning, its intended meaning may sometimes be a less common one. In the coinage prigsprigs, for example, “prig” is meant to refer to the thief or pilferer of British slang; hence, a “prigsprig” might plausibly be, say, some small wooden implement of a kind typically used by thieves.

In the course of inventing such coinages, one encounters no scarcity of potential lexical building blocks; the trick is to find combinations that make some sort of semantic sense. Having found such a combination, the next question is how it ought to be written—solidly, or with a hyphen, or simply left as two words. Although solid constructions were always preferred, there were nonetheless several cases in which hyphens seemed requisite, and a great many others in which no joining together at all seemed justified. Consequently, the following listing is divided into three major categories: solidly-written tautonyms, hyphenated tautonyms, and tautonymic phrases.
A. Solidly-Written Tautonyms

(In this list, strict alphabetical order is sometimes ignored in order to permit uninflected forms to appear before their inflected variants. The asterisked words were all previously noted in Jeff Grant’s Nov. 2008 *Word Ways* article, “Accidental Tautonyms.”)

ablesables  
addlesaddles  
addlersaddlers  
alesales  
amplesamples  
anklerankler  
aperaper  
arksarks  
augersaugers  
aursaurs  
azorazor  
cabscabs  
cadscads  
Calderscalders  
camscams  
campscamps  
camperscampers  
canscans*  
cannerscanners  
capescapes*  
carscars  
carescares  
carerscarers  
carpscars  
Catherscathers  
centscents  
centerscenters  
coldscolds  
conescones  
coopscoops*  
cooperscoopers  
copescopes  
coperscopers  
copingscoping  
corescores  
corerscorers  
cornerscorners  
Cotscots  
cowscows  
cowlscowls  
cragscrags  
crapescrapes  
crapscrapers  
crapperscrapers  
crawlerscrawlerls  
crawlingscrawlings  
creakscreaks  
creakingscreakings  
creamingscreamings  
creedcreeds  
crewscrews*  
crimmerscimppers  
Cubascubas  
cuffscurfs*  
cufferscuffers  
cufngscuffings  
cuttlerscuttlers  
deedsdee*  
edateateas  
edaterseaters  
edatingseatings  
eclipseclips  
electorslectorls  
Euroneuron  
eyseyeseducerseducers  
electionselections  
electorselectors  
Euroneuron  
eversowers  
extradextrad*  
haclleshakles  
haclleshakles*  
haclshak*  
hackshacks*  
hackshackers  
haclshad  
haftshafts  
haftshafters  
hagshags*  
hakeshakes  
hammershammers  
hamshams  
hameshames  
hardshards  
harshsharings  
harpshars  
harpsharpershapers  
havenshavens  
hayshays  
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hellershellers  
hellshells  
hemichemic  
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hillshills  
hipships*  
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hitshitters  
hiveshives  
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hockershockers  
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holesholes  
hootshoots  
hootershooters  
hootingshootings  
hopshops*  
hoppershoppers  
hornshorns  
hoelshovels  
huntshunts  
huntershunters  
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hushershushers  
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kidskids*  
ladderskidders  
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kinskins  
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lackslacks*  
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nubsnubs
nubbingsnubbings
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pattererspatterers
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pewspews
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pikespikes
pikerspikers
pilespiles
pillspills
pinspins
pinnerspinners
pinespines
pitspits
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poonspoons
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porespores
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portersporters
potspots*
potterspotters
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pratsprats
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prayingsprayings
prigsprigs
printsprints*
printingsprintings
punkspunks
puttersputters
putteringsputterings
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quidsquids
quintsquints
quiresquires
quirtsquirtqs
quirtersquirters
reprep*
retterette*
tabstabs	abelstablers
tabletable*
tackstacks
tackerstackers
taggerstaggerers	akeoutstakeouts	akerstakers	alkstalks	alkerstalkers	alkingstalkings	allstalls	ampstamps	artstarts	teamsteams	seedsteeds
ternsters	ickstickers*
tickerstickers
tickingstickings
ticklerstickleklers	iffstiffs	illerstillers	illingstillings	illstilts	inkerstinkers	interstinters
tintingstintings
tipplerstipplers
tonestones*
tonerstoners	toolstools	opperstoppers
toppingstopings	owerstowers
towingstowings	ainstrains	ainerstrainers	ainingstrainings	apstraps
trapperstrappers	appingstrappings	rikesstrikes*
trikerstrickers	ikingstrikings	ripestripes
tripperstrippers
B. Hyphenated Tautonyms

Abbé-rager
age-rager
Aide-raider
Ain’t-saints
Almoner-salmoners
Angle-dangled
Co-decode
Ducat-educate

Eigne-deigned
Eigne-reigner
Erne-derned
Ice-diced
Ouse-doused
Ouse-rouser
Owl-yowly
Pa-yowly

Pier-spiers
Pepsi-apepsia
Raft-ingrafting
Rain-ingraining
Ross-ingrossing
Scape-escapee
Scurriers-currier
Slavers-laver

Slobbers-lobber
Squirters-quiter
Strollers-troller
Taxi-ataxia
Then-Athena
Uke-duked
Ulf-ingulfing
Ur-church

C. Tautonymic Phrases

Tautonymic phrases, which are nearly always “accidental” in nature, are a fascinating tribe. In the sampling of this engaging genre that follows, the sample is divided into four categories: general phrases, anthroponomic phrases, affix-enabled phrases, and short tautonymic sentences.

1. General Phrases

Ace racer
Ampler samplers
A lay, à la Malayalam
A star dastard
Bay abaya
Caring scarings
Cat scats
Chilling schillings
colder scolders
Coot scoots
cute scutes
Dappled apple
dewed ewe
diced ice
dim, aged image
drilled rille
Edited it

Educating seductions
Elude deluded
Enate senates
Ever severs
Gauntleting aunt let in hearing shearings
Hooting “Shootings!”
Iberian Siberians
Icily Sicily’s
Idle sidles
I.e., died
Ill sills
Insect-sin sects
Inverse sin-verse
Irenic sirencics
Lake slakes
Lapel ape

Limps in, glimpsing
Lither slithers
Liver slivers
Low-down slowdowns
Lusher slurshers
Mash-up smashups
Milk-warm ilk-war
Nob snobs
Often softens
Oft-good softgoods
Older solders
Opec kopeck
Our ours
Ouse souses
Palling spillings
Peck specks
Pending spendings
Pie spies
Pindling spindlings
Pink spinks
Pit-fire spitfires
Pope epopee
Pout spouts
“Putterer!” sputterers
Putter sputters
Quint squints
Rawer awe
Sarawak’s Arawak
Saudi’s Audi
Sauger’s auger
Saxon’s axon
Scabs’ cab
Scamps’ camp
Scants cant

Wiperswipers
Wiping swipings
Wishing wishers
Wishing wishings
Woo-swoons
Wordswords
Wordersworders
Woundswounds
2. Anthroponomic Phrases

A gift to wordplay from lexicographers is the useful word *anthroponomy*, “a branch of onomastics that consists of the study of personal names.” Short anthroponomic tautonymic phrases tend to be either characterizers (“doled Ole”) or possession-noters (“Diana’s Indiana sin”):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaming Amin</th>
<th>Hartish Artis</th>
<th>Lamed Alameda</th>
<th>Rasher Ashe</th>
<th>Rio-diner Iodine</th>
<th>Rover Ove</th>
<th>Smyrna’s Myrna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gelding Eldin</td>
<td>Hellish Ellis</td>
<td>Randier Andie</td>
<td>Readier Eadie</td>
<td>Staggers Tagger</td>
<td>Stealer’s Tarter</td>
<td>Swaggers Swaggers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardish Ardis</td>
<td>Hennish Ennis</td>
<td>Rangier Angie</td>
<td>Ringer Inge</td>
<td>Smarter’s Smarter</td>
<td>Stealer’s Stealer</td>
<td>Swaggers Swaggers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sally’s ally</th>
<th>Shakespear’s*</th>
<th>Sid’s id</th>
<th>Smart Ian’s</th>
<th>Spock’s pock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sap Ron’s apron</td>
<td>Hake-spear</td>
<td>Silly Ria’s</td>
<td>Martian</td>
<td>Stan’s tan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sargent’s argent</td>
<td>Shaw’s “Haw!”</td>
<td>Illyria</td>
<td>Speke’s peke</td>
<td>Stanfield’s tan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxe’s axe</td>
<td>Sheppard’s hep</td>
<td>Skip’s kip</td>
<td>Spike’s kip</td>
<td>Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schiller’s chiller</td>
<td>Pard</td>
<td>Sloan’s loan</td>
<td>Spence’s pence</td>
<td>Swen’s wen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One of several known spellings of his name
3. **Affix-Enabled Phrases**

“Hi! I’m Mick in Gimmicking here at the G’s-R-Us Emporium, and I’d like to invite you to bring the missus and come on down to G’s-R-Us and meet me and some of our other friendly staff, such as... Arden in Gardening, Inger in Gingering, her kin in Gherkining, Ladd in Glad-ding, Nash in Gnashing, old Smith in Goldsmithing, Oral in Goraling (mind the gorals, they’re testy), Raft in Grafting, Ray in Graying, Rip in Griping, “String” in G-Stringing and many more, including (if you’re the dilatory type) our congenial collections guru, Unsel in Gunseling!

“And just between us, while you’re on the premises, you really ought to take a peek at the... ash in Gashing, asp in Gasping, ass in Gassing, “ear” shift in Gearshifting, host in Ghosting, lass in Glassing, lobal fish in Global Fishing, lory in Glorying, loss in Glossing, offer in Goffering, old brick in Goldbricking, rat in Grating, rout in Grouting, “riffing” room in Griffin-Grooming, rift in Grifting, rump in Grumping, runt in Grunting, umbo in Gumboing and—the rest of our merchandise always looks a lot better after you’ve seen it—utter slop in Gutter-Sloping!

“And if you’ve brought the kids along, why, there’s plenty here to keep them entertained! If nothing else, they can... lean in Gleaning, low in Glowing, listen in Glistening for a slight in Gas-lighting, litter in Glittering, loom in Glooming, lower in Glowering, rant in Granting, rap Nel in Grapneling, rasp in Gasping, row in Growing, ravel in Gravel... [Click!]

Notice, in the foregoing, the profusion of -ing suffixes; -ing, like a number of other affixes, can be exploited to generate an entire family of tautonymic phrases. Here are some other examples of such affix-enabled tautonymic phrase (and sometimes sentence) families:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>ad-</em></th>
<th><em>dis-</em></th>
<th><em>ex-</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sad diction’s addiction</td>
<td>charge discharged?</td>
<td>expert sex perts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad dresser’s addresser</td>
<td>courage discouraged?</td>
<td>extent sextants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad mission’s admission</td>
<td>gorge disgorged?</td>
<td>sex-changer’s exchanger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad mixture’s admixture</td>
<td>“like” disliked?</td>
<td>sex-citation’s excitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad option’s adoption</td>
<td>tribute distributed?</td>
<td>sex-poses exposé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad verb’s adverb</td>
<td>Em Bodie disembodied?</td>
<td>sex-tract’s extract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-ism: Oral is moralism. Ental is mentalism. *Old*, avian, is Moldavianism! A “niche” is Manicheism?

-ist: Error is terrorist. Reason is treasonist. Hither is thitherist. Ravi sat— he *is*, Travis, a theist!

Both with and without a preceding apostrophe, the suffix -s seems endlessly productive of tautonymic words, phrases and sentences; as may have been noticed, in fact, the great majority of the examples cited in this article employ it. Here are some slightly longer [-s]-enabled tautograms:

A do-sa-do’s a dos-a-dos. “Do... as pirates may do!” aspirates May. Hiding, izzards hid in *gizzards*. Lacedaemonian simps, lace daemon Ian’s imps!

Now goggle... snowgoggles! peckulation speculations “Proximate’s” *approximate*, sap! sin-tractability’s intractability Sir, rationality’s *irrationality*! Sir, religion’s *irreligion*!

Sir, responsibility’s irresponsibility! strikebreakers’ trike-breaker (“Sunder stands, understand?”) trike-breaking strikebreakings U.S. pension suspensions witch-back switchbacks
4. **Short Tautonymic Sentences**

One might define "short" tautonymic sentences as those that consist of a single parent word or phrase plus one or more smaller words that were dissected from it, with nothing more added.

Add in gadding.
Allie dallied.
Amble, rambler!
Andy *is* handyish...
Angles *sang* less?
Anita’s *amanita*, Sam!
Ankles sank less.
“Annotate!” Dan notated.
“Antidote, Dan?” Ti doted.
“Apostle rap,” ostler?
Apperceive *rap*, perceiver!
Apt, O raptor!
Ashe dashed.
Carve *scarves*?
Dante “lioped,” antelope?
Den raged, enraged.
Den silaged ensilage.
Di eaddied.
Diluted, I lute.
Diseased is ease.
Dispraised is praise.
Eat heath!
Educe, reducer!
Egress, O regressor!
Eject, O rejector!
Elapse, relapser!
Evolve, revolver!
Evulse, revulser!
Hammer shammers!
Hank shanks.
Hark—sharks!
Have shaves.
Heave sheaves.
Herein, *she* reins.
Hi, Ohio!
Hough thought.
Humph, ump!
I am *Stam’s*!
Ignore “signores.”
Incur sin, curs!
*Ireland*, sir—elands?
Isabelle *is* a belle!

Is Grace disgraced?
Is Honoré dishonored?
I’ve dived.
Kate skates?
Laps elapse.
Lass, work in glassworking.
Lumber slumbers.
Nip, pet, snippets.
No piano, Pia?
Ob sore?
Ob sobs!
Opinion *so* pinions!
Oregano, Regan?
“Overcharge!” Dover charged.
Oviedo vied.
O, we’re *dowered*?
Palls *appall*, sap!
Parents apparent, sap?
Peals *appeal*, sap!
Pears “appear,” sap?
Portions *apportion*, sap!
Poses *appose*, sap!
Praises *appraise*, sap!
Prizes *apprize*, sap!
Probate *approbate*, sap!
Remit, eremite!
Rob *later*, oblate!
Rout rager outrage!
Sad Aden’s a den.
“Sad”—age’s adage?
Saddling’s addling.
Sad duces adduce.
Sad judges adjudge.
Sad ministers administer.
Sad verse’s adverse.
Safire’s afire!
Sages age.
Sailing’s ailing.
Sap aches, Apache!
Sap an age’s apanage!
Saturn’s a turn.
*Scarsdale’s* cars, Dale?

Scurvy’s curvy.
Seven’s even?
Sex acts exact.
Sexists exist.
Sex or cists, exorcist?
Sheldon’s held on.
Sherman’s her man!
Sherwood’s “her” wood?
She’s *he*?
Shipmates hip, mate?
Shovers hover.
Shun Gary’s Hungary.
Sin-flames inflame.
Sin-snares insnare.
Sin’s *in*!
Sinter censors, intercessor!
Sinter lopers, interloper!
Sir, Ma’s “Irma.”
Slacking’s *lacking*?
Slagging’s lagging.
Slingers linger.
Slogans, Logan?
Smelts *melt*?
Smews mew?
Smolts molt?
Snicks nick!
Snowdrifts now drift.
So *dense’s* Odense!
So lives Olive.
Sonya’s *on ya*!
Spatterdocks patter dock.
Spotters potter.
Staking’s taking.
Stalks *talk*?
Stampers tamper.
Strumpets trumpet.
Tingles sting less.
Tinkles stink less.
Unedible dun Ed I...bled.
Us, hush?
“Val” is *medievalism*, Edie!
Yearly, earl.