

Q PALINDROMES

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The letter Q has always intrigued people. Words like 'bouquet', 'acquiesce' and 'quinquennial' seem to have an almost mystical quality. Formists struggle to include Q in pyramids and squares while pangrammatists always find it the most difficult letter to incorporate into their compositions. Of course the main problem is that the letter Q is almost invariably followed by a U (for exceptions, see the editor's article in the May 1976 *Word Ways*). This constraint has severely limited the scope of Q in most fields of wordplay, although there are some ingenious examples of its use, such as the amazing forms of Palmer Peterson exhibited in the May 1978 *Word Ways*.

Not surprisingly, this refractory letter appears only rarely in palindrome compilations, and there are in fact only a handful of rather obscure palindromic words beginning with Q. For the interest of readers I have listed below the small collection of Q palindromes recorded in my unfinished 'palindromicon'. Any additions to this select group would be most welcome.

- Q variant to the obsolete word 'cue', half a farthing (OED)
- QAAQ in 'Tell Qaa', a hill listed in the OSNG of Jordan
- QUUQ in 'Khawr Quuq', an inlet listed in the OSNG of Oman
- QABAAQ in 'Qabaaq Tepe', a populated place in Iran (OSNG Iran)
- QĀNĀQ the native name for the settlement of Thule in North-west Greenland (Times Atlas of the World)
- QAPAAQ in 'Qapaaq Tepe', a populated place in Iran (OSNG Iran)
- QAZAAQ variant of 'Kazakh', one of a Turkic people of Central Asia forming the basic population of Kazakhstan (OED Sup)
- QOROOQ the name of two populated places in Iran (OSNG Iran)
- QUDUUQ in 'Quduq Toba', a border town in Northern Afghanistan (Times Index Gazetteer)
- QURUUQ a mountain pass in Iran, just south of the Caspian Sea (Times Atlas of the World)
- QAZZĀQ a populated place in Iran (OSNG Iran)