

## COLLOQUY

*Webster's Dictionary defines colloquy as mutual discourse. Readers are encouraged to submit additions, corrections, and comments about earlier articles appearing in **Word Ways**. Comments received at least one month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.*

Harry Partridge wishes to correct the May Colloquy comment on Stiffkey, Schjelderup, and Meux (containing silent F, J, and X, respectively); these were, indeed, surnames rather than placenames. A much more common silent-X example is Devereux, definitely found in Great Britain. Darryl Francis adds Rievaulx ("reevo") and Priedeaux ("priddo"), both in the BBC Pronouncing Dictionary of British Names.

The May 1988 Kickshaws asserted that "Lew Archer was a hard-boiled detective in the novel The Maltese Falcon." Detective-fiction buffs Vernon MacLaren and Judith Bagai pointed out that the detective was really Sam Spade; Lew Archer was a Ross MacDonald character in The Moving Target, The Drowning Pool, etc. Sam Spade's murdered partner was named Miles Archer, whose surname is the source of Lew Archer's; MacDonald's hero is metaphorically Sam Spade's partner.

Darryl Francis mined an earlier edition of the Rand McNally Commercial Atlas and Marketing Guide, plus the Century Cyclopeda, for 44 additional Z-names of populated places in the United States to add to "Facing the End": Zana, Zeru, Zornville AL; Zeniff AZ; Zaca, Zucker CA; Zapato, Zangs Spur CO; Zolfo FL; Zachry GA; Zella, Zoro, Zyba KS; Zilpo KY; Zipp IN; Zenorsville, Zacharys IA; Zippel MN; Zelleria, Zilpha MS; Zebra, Zeitonia, Zig, Zincite, Zodiac, Zwanzig MO; Zimmer NB; Zelda NV; Zealand NH; Zorah NC; Zanesville North, Zoar Station OH; Zaners, Zanmore, Zehner, Zions Church Station, Zions Grove PA; Zoan SC; Zickrick, Zieback, Ziskov SD; Zach TN; Zion Mills VA; Zeda WI.

Harry Partridge writes of the May Kickshaws "The New Age Baby Book sounds like a pretty damned mixed-up collection. Even I know that Taro and Saburo (for sons 1 and 3) are suffixes, i.e., Momotaro, Kinzaburo, etc. A lot of the other exotic names sound fishy to me." The book, however, does exist.

Jeremy Morse extends Kyle Corbin's research on minimal word ladders in the May **Word Ways** with a four-letter word ladder which uses all the letters of the alphabet in a minimal 22 steps: FOXY, FOGY, BOGY, BONY, BONE, BANE, CANE, PANE, VANE, WANE, MANE,

MARE, MARL, MAIL, HALL, JAIL, SAIL, SAID, SKID, SKIT, SUIT, QUIT, QUIZ. It would be more challenging to do this with five-letter or six-letter words. He also proposes the restriction that the noncrashing words at the ends of a minimal word ladder be joined by changing first the first letter, then the second letter, and so on. His six-letter example: SHOCKS, CHOCKS, CROCKS, CRACKS, CRANKS, CRANES, CRANED.

The editor found a minimal word ladder of nine-letter words: CANCERATE, CANCERITE, CANCERINE, CANCERING, CANTERING, BANTERING, BATTERING, BATTENING, BATTONING, BUTTONING. Batton is an obsolete variant of baton, listed below the line in Webster's Second; cancerite is not in the Second, but is listed in Webster's First, the unabridged Funk & Wagnalls, and the Century Dictionary. It would be nice to find a solution fully in Webster's Second and Third.

PYREXIA In "The Word Calculator" in the May **Word Ways**, David  
LUNATE Morice challenged readers to come up with a letter-shift  
CLERK pyramid of the seventh level. Using only Webster's Col-  
PYRE legiate, Kyle Corbin constructed the example given at  
RAT the left. He conjectures that the reuse of the letters  
OX PYRE might be avoided by going to Webster's Unabridged.  
A

Judith Bagai notes that the Dutch historian cited in "Exuberance, A Motivation for Language" is listed as Johan Huizinga in the Merriam-Webster Biographical Dictionary.

Harry Partridge footnotes the editor's May 1986 article "Gary Gray, Meet Edna Dean" with the name Clay Lacy which he believes has some position in the public eye. He wonders whether Clell Vellella, a Florida museum curator, is the champion L-name.

Yet another "Tudor Nomenclature" entry! Maxey Brooke saw restrooms labeled Pa's Friends and Ma's Friends in The Country Kitchen in Evergreen, Colorado.

Darryl Francis adds KSAR, a variant of CZAR in Webster's Second and Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary, to Borgmann's "A Tribute to Greatness" in the February **Word Ways**. The OED also contains ZARR, CZAAR, CZARR as 17th-century variant spellings.

Would anyone care to locate a real-life Ucker to lend verisimilitude to "Nomen Est Omen"? Harry Partridge notes an Ucker Lake and an Ucker River in Germany, and has come across the name Uecker. "There is doubtless, indubitably, zweifelsohne an Ucker out there."

Judith Bagai writes "I do protest [George Scheetz's] 'I doth protest' [in the May 1988 Colloquy] since 'doth' be third person singular and I be first." Elsewhere in this issue, Harry Partridge discusses in some detail the legitimacy of Dave Morice's coinage unSherlock which George Scheetz was protesting.

Darryl Francis is surprised that Dmitri Borgmann missed JUSTIFI-  
 ABLE HOMICIDE, a phrase in Webster's Third, in his February ar-  
 ticle "Death: A Logological Perspective".

A citation for a new AEGINRST transposal, studied by Dmitri Borg-  
 mann in the November 1976 *Word Ways: Time Magazine* (December  
 21, 1987, page 38) referred to the inhabitants of Tigre, a province  
 of Ethiopia, as TIGREANS.

Darryl Francis notes that ABCOTT, the name of a place in south  
 Shropshire, on the River Clun, eight miles northwest of Ludlow,  
 should be added to "The ABCs of Logology" in the February issue.  
 The name can be found in the John Bartholomew Gazetteer of the  
 British Isles, probably the most extensive listing of British place-  
 names.

Harry Partridge wonders how Allen Walker Read could have over-  
 looked the slight modification of CONNECTICUT that describes a fe-  
 male resident of easy virtue residing in that state (Grant Bohun,  
 "Hypocoristic State Terminology and Nasal Infixation in State Names"  
*Benedicta LX* (1984), p. 831).

Randolph Waller took umbrage at Matthew Franklin's "Dream Se-  
 quence": "How surprising that *Word Ways* ends up grinding the  
 same political axe as our larger media! 'Dream Sequence' (current  
 issue) was the all-time low with its 'whimsically' implied call  
 for the death of Edwin Meese. Funny, I can't picture you printing  
 a death wish for Jesse Jackson or, say, Teddy Kennedy...Many  
 thanks for the enjoyment *Word Ways* has afforded in its less ten-  
 dentious pages."

Lee Sallows footnotes the limerick articles in the February and  
 May 1980 issues of *Word Ways* with the following logological speci-  
 mens:

When a palindrome-writer I knew  
 Went out hunting for wild kangaroo,  
 As his weapon let fly  
 Came a foreshortened cry  
 Which began, "B-O-O-M-E-R-A-N-G-N-A-R-E-M-O-O...!"

At the Limerick prison for debtors,  
 "I Ode U" wrote a poet in fetters;  
 Did he get his words mixed?  
 No, his sentence was fixed  
 At one hundred and twenty-six letters.

The latter limerick contains, of course, exactly 126 letters.

Jeff Grant notes that the word UNDERWHELMED, proposed in Hau-  
 gaard's "Lexicographers' Lib," can be found in the OED Supplement  
 with first citation dated 1956. To underwhelm is "to leave unim-  
 pressed, to arouse little or no interest in."

Responding to Bruce Pyne's article elsewhere in this issue, Faith Eckler provides an update on "The Electronic Speller" in the May issue. The longest words in her typewriter's memory appear to be DISINTERESTEDNESS, ELECTROCARDIOGRAM, INDISTINGUISHABLE, and INTERDEPARTMENTAL (length 17); CHARACTERISTICALLY and INTERCOMMUNICATION (length 18); and ELECTROMAGNETICALLY and INTERDENOMINATIONAL (length 19). Curiously, ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAM (found by Pyne) is not present. Also, her typewriter has at least one hyphenated word: TOP-NOTCH. Recently, she noticed a curious anomaly: DADDY is in the typewriter memory, but not MOMMY. So much for motherhood!

Robert Mattingly responded to "The Electronic Speller" by noting that he uses his electronic speller to catch typos rather than check spelling. He believes that he already knows how to spell all the fifty thousand words included in its vocabulary (plus another fifty thousand not included). Is this an unusually high passive vocabulary?

Jeff Grant proposes the following minimal word-ladder of nine-letter words: STELLATED, STELLATES, STELLITES, STALLITES, STARLITES, STARLINES, STARLINGS, SNARLINGS, GNARLINGS, GNARRINGS. All words can be found in the OED except for STARLITES, the plural of a word in Webster's Second, and STARLINES, enterprises named 'Starline' such as a distributing agency, a dishwasher supply firm, and a service company listed in New Zealand telephone directories.