THE AEILNORST PROBLEM

Darryl Francis
Mitcham, Surrey, England

The August 1989 issue of Word Ways offered Dmitri Borgmann's article "The ACEINORST Transposal Problem". In that article, Dmitri asked if the nine-letter group AEILNORST could produce more transposals than the ACEINORST group. Dmitri began by offering six transposals from various collegiate dictionaries: ORIENTALS, ORLEANIST, RELATIONS, SEROTINAL, TENSORIAL, and TIROLEANS.

The short answer to Dmitri's poser: No, AEILNORST is not more productive than ACEINORST. However, rather than just leaving it there, I thought it might be worthwhile to offer the AEILNORST transposals which I am aware of. Perhaps other readers can add to my small collection.

I have used various dictionary sources, listed at the end of the article. Note that I have been as liberal as Dmitri in offering non-dictionary terms, in order to make the comparison a fair one!

Solid AEILNORST Transposals

ALETORNIS a genus of extinct Tertiary birds from the Eocene period of Wyoming Territory (CD)
ATELORNIS a genus of Magadascan ground-rollers, birds which feed on worms (CD)
LAIRSTONE a Scottish word for a gravestone (W3)
LARSONITE an inhabitant of Larson, communities in North Dakota and Montreal (coinage)
LATNEIRO the plural of LATNEIRO (EH)
LORENTIA a genus of plants found in the southwestern United States and Mexico (WL)
ROTALINES certain protozoans, more precisely yet obscurely defined in the dictionary (FW)
TERNIOLES the plural of TERNIOLE, a genus of plants found in Ceylon and parts of India (WL)
TORNELIAS the plural of TORNELIA, a genus of plants found in Mexico and tropical South America (WL)
TRIOLENAS the plural of TRIOLENA, a genus of plants found in Mexico (WL)

Broken AEILNORST Transposals

EAST LORIN the eastern part of the lake of LORIN, in Canada (TI)
LEAST IRON the opposite of most iron, a superlative form of the adjective iron (shown as such in many dictionaries) (coinage)
NEIL ASTOR a named individual, not immediately locatable in any
telephone directory (coinage)

N. E. ORTALIS  the north-eastern part of the town of ORTALIS, Somalia (TI)

N. REALITOS  the northern part of the town of REALITOS, in Duval County, Texas (RC)

SALERNO, IT.  the city of SALERNO in Italy (TI)

S. E. ANTRIOL  the south-eastern part of the town of ANTRIOL, a town on the island of Bonaire, part of the Lesser Antilles in the West Indies (TI)

S. E. RAILTON  the south-eastern part of the town of RAILTON, on the Australian island of Tasmania (TI)

I have managed to expand Dmitri's original set of six AEILNORST transposals to 24. Can anyone improve on this total?

Another fecund nine-letter group is AEINMORST. I shall be offering my collection of transposals based on these letters in a later issue of Word Ways -- but perhaps readers would like to start looking for AEINMORST transposals now!

LIST OF REFERENCES

CD The Century Dictionary, 6 Volumes, 1889-1891

EH Leslie Dunkling, English House Names, The Names Society, 1971

FW Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary of the English Language (Unabridged Edition), 1945


T1 The Times Index-Gazetteer of the World, London, 1965


W3 Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, 1981