

THE EVOLUTION OF A TRANSPOSAL SET

DARRYL FRANCIS

Mitcham, Surrey, England

During its two decades of existence, *Word Ways* has presented transposals in one form or another in almost every issue. These are invariably presented as a given set of words which are mutually transposable, with no description of how they were discovered. I thought it might be worthwhile to examine in more detail than usual how a set of transposals can evolve.

I took as my starting point the straightforward pair DELAYER and LAYERED. It isn't difficult to discover the 'easy' third transposal RELAYED. These three are very well documented. Thus:

DELAYER E2

RELAYED WE

DELAYER and RELAYED NU

DELAYER, RELAYED and LAYERED BA, CH, CU, E1, HU

(These transposal dictionaries are more fully identified at the end of this article.)

No other sources of transposals (or anagrams) contains any other words made up from the letters ADEELRY. Yet, over the past few weeks I have unearthed a further six transposals. Let's look at them in the order which I discovered them.

1. The first additional transposal I became aware of was RYE-DALE. This is the name of a place in the Scottish county of Kir-cudbrightshire, listed in Bartholomew's Gazetteer of the British Isles, but it also exists as the name of a street in south London. The commercial telephone directory for London (1988) also lists a company with the name of RYEDALE Trucks.

2. The second additional transposal is EARDLEY. This appears as a surname eleven times in the current (1989) London telephone directory, and it also appears as a surname in Albert Hyamson's Dictionary of Universal Biography. EARDLEY also appears as part of the placename EARDLEY End, which is in the county of Staffordshire, again in Bartholomew's Gazetteer of the British Isles. Finally, EARDLEY exists as the name of several streets in London.

3. The third additional transposal which I stumbled on was ARD-ELEY. This is the name of a place in Hertfordshire, given in Bartholomew. I came across this name by chance, rather than by methodical research. It is the name of a small village close to the town of Ware, in Hertfordshire, where my company has a large training centre.

4. The fourth and fifth additional transposals were discovered more or less at the same time. I had decided to search for obsolete variant spellings of **dearly** in The Oxford English Dictionary. I found two: **DEARLEY** appears as part of a 1606 Shakespeare quotation under the first **dearly**, and **DEARLYE** appears in a 1550 quotation by the writer Crowley, again under the first **dearly**.

5. Discovery number six was **YEARLED**. This is the past participle of the verb **yearl**. This is a variant form of **arle**, to bind by payment of money, which is shown in The English Dialect Dictionary.

These are the only six additional transposals I have found so far. I have searched for others, but have failed to find any. I had, for example, hoped to find **DEALERY**, perhaps meaning 'the world of dealers' or maybe as part of the phrase **NEW DEALERY**, an alternative to **New Dealism**, but neither **DEALERY** nor **NEW DEALERY** could be found anywhere. I have attempted to track down the word **LEADY-ER** (rather than the obvious **leadier**) as a comparative form of the adjective **leady**; it occurred to me that since **leady** was a fairly recent word, then some newspaper article somewhere might spell out **LEADY-ER** to better 'explain' it to its readers. No joy, though. I sought **DERAYLE** as an obsolete variant of **derail**. Again, no luck. Since the earliest English language reference in the OED for **derail** is dated 1852, all variant spellings of **rail** had disappeared before **derail** came into use. One possibility which I never had high hopes for was **DARYLEE**. I hypothesized that the names **Daryl** and **Lee** might have been joined together to form a girl's name **DARYLEE**. I checked various sources but all to no avail. Various other combinations I searched for were: **YEAR-ELD** (a variant of **year-old?**), **READELY** (an obsolete form of **readily?**), **YEARLDLE** (a variant of **yodel?**), and **RALEYED** (an obsolete form of **rallied?**). I could go on...

Can anyone add examples to my **ADEERLY** list? Or perhaps take another group of transposals, which is well-documented yet incomplete, and extend it in the same way?

LIST OF REFERENCES

- BA The Wordbook, by Mike Baron and Jere Guin (Wordbooks & Listmats, Albuquerque, 1988)
- CH Chambers Anagrams (Chambers, Edinburgh, 1985)
- CU The Anagram Dictionary, by Michael Curl (Hale, London, 1982)
- E1 The Longman Anagram Dictionary, by R L Edwards (Longman, Essex, 1985)
- E2 The Crossword Anagram Dictionary, by R L Edwards (Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1978)
- HU The Dictionary of Anagrams, by Samuel Hunter (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1982)
- NU The Nuttall Dictionary of Anagrams (Warne, London, ca 1937)
- WE The Word Game Winning Dictionary, by Bruce Wetterau (New American Library, New York, 1980)