TRANSDELETED AND TRANSADDED PRESIDENTS

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Take the surnames of the US presidents. For each one, what is the longest transdeletion and what is the shortest transaddition? Jim Puder posed and answered these problems in the August 1998 Word Ways. The November 1998 Colloquy contained a healthy response to Puder’s article, improving on several of the words offered.

Suppose now the problem is restated, using not the presidents’ surnames but their first names and surnames together. Instead of NIXON, we have RICHARD NIXON. And just to make things a tad more challenging, let’s include multiple first names where these exist (such as RICHARD MILHOUS NIXON) and familiar names (thus, JIMMY CARTER as well as JAMES CARTER).

Transdeletions

Let’s look at the longest transdeletions first. In several cases, other words of the same transdeletion length could have been offered, but we have chosen to offer just one for each presidential name. For example, Andrew Jackson can be transdeleted to OCEANWARDS and SNECKDRAWN, as well as SNECKDRAWS. Note that there are three single-letter transdeletions in the list: DAHOMANS, NUT-GRASSES, MACERATERS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presidential Name</th>
<th>Longest Transdeletion (number of letters deleted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Adams</td>
<td>Dahomans (1) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Jefferson</td>
<td>freemasons (5) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Madison</td>
<td>seminomads (2) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Monroe</td>
<td>monomers (3) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Quincy Adams</td>
<td>daunomycins (4) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Jackson</td>
<td>sneckdraws (3) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Van Buren</td>
<td>unnarrative (3) Random House, 1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Harrison</td>
<td>Williamsonia (3) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Henry Harrison</td>
<td>millionnaires (7) Web 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Tyler</td>
<td>helotry (2) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Knox Polk</td>
<td>kakemonos (4) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Polk</td>
<td>plasome (2) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachary Taylor</td>
<td>catarrhal (4) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millard Fillmore</td>
<td>lamelliform (4) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Pierce</td>
<td>pincerlike (4) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Buchanan</td>
<td>macahubas (4) Chambers, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Lincoln</td>
<td>harmoniacal (3) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Johnson</td>
<td>wanderoos (4) Web 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulysses Grant</td>
<td>nut-grasses (1) Chambers, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulysses Simpson Grant</td>
<td>sportsmanliness (4) Web 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutherford Birchard Hayes</td>
<td>carbohydrates (10) Web 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you object to the WILLIAMSONIA transdeletion because of the common William element, substitute the slightly shorter RHINOLALIAS (Web 3). A particularly noteworthy transdeletion of DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER is WEST VIRGINIA. Note the longest transdeletion of WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON is the 2-N variant spelling MILLIONNAIRES.
Transadditions

What about transadditions of the presidential names? At the outset, this seemed like an impossible task. Could we realistically expect to find a transaddition of WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON, say? A more achievable target was to find a transaddition for one of the shorter name forms for a president. Furthermore, we widened our sights for acceptable words and terms, deciding to allow multi-word phrases, catchphrases, proverbs, song titles, quotations and lines from literary works, as long as they could be supported by reference sources.

George Washington
There’s a long, long trail awinding
The first line of a song written in 1913 by a British songwriter, Stoddard King (1889-1933), in Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, 1996

John Adams
Johnadreams
A dreamy, idle fellow, in Web 2

Thomas Jefferson
snatch from the jaws of death
A familiar-sounding phrase, meaning to save just in time, in Roget’s International Thesaurus (1922) Section 662

James Madison
social maladjustment
This term appears twice in OED illustrative quotations; see the 1909 quote at maladjustment and the 1912 quote at deviate

James Monroe
company sergeant-major
The senior warrant officer of a company, a term listed at company in the OED

Martin Van Buren
I am not a Virginian, but an American
A statement attributed to President John Adams, made in a debate in the Continental Congress in 1774, and recorded by Patrick Henry (1736-1799), in Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, 1996

William Harrison
An ill-favoured thing, sir, but mine own
A line spoken in Shakespeare’s As You Like It (Act 5, Scene 4, line 60), in Oxford Dictionary of Quotations

John Tyler
orthogonal trajectory
A type of mathematical curve, in Web 3.

James Polk
Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskij
A seaport town on the Kamchatka Peninsula, usually spelled without the final J (Webster’s Geographical Dictionary) or with a final IY (Times Index Gazetteer), but spelled as above on various websites

Franklin Pierce
rocket-firing plane
Difficult to track down. There is a website devoted to the US B-29 Superfortress which uses this term.

Abraham Lincoln
Un ballo in Maschera

Andrew Johnson
But headlong joy is ever on the wing

Ulysses Grant
suspensory ligament
An anatomical term of various specific meanings, in Web 3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rutherford Hayes</td>
<td>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester Alan Arthur</td>
<td>The Walrus and the Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester Arthur</td>
<td>Charterhouse Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grover Cleveland</td>
<td>every cloud has a silver lining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodore Roosevelt</td>
<td>never let the sun go down on your anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Taft</td>
<td>water-plantain family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodrow Wilson</td>
<td>within two whoops and a holler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Harding</td>
<td>the straight and narrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin Coolidge</td>
<td>Vocalic or strong declension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert Hoover</td>
<td>Somewhere over the rainbow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry S Truman</td>
<td>Chinese restaurant syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Truman</td>
<td>four-part harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwight Eisenhower</td>
<td>Braehead, Wigtownshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Kennedy</td>
<td>The Golden Journey to Samarkand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyndon Johnson</td>
<td>A Long Day’s Journey into Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Nixon</td>
<td>Oxford English Dictionary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Grover Cleveland, every cloud has a silver lining: A familiar proverb, in an illustrative quotation dated 1965 at *ice* in the OED.

Theodore Roosevelt, never let the sun go down on your anger: A homily, a plain practical piece of advice offered to couples, which can be found on Internet websites.


Woodrow Wilson, within two whoops and a holler: A phrase meaning “close, nearby”. Though this precise form could not be found in a reference source or on the Internet, the shorter form “two whoops and a holler” can be found on a website.

Warren Harding, the straight and narrow: The way of propriety and rectitude, listed at *straight and narrow* in Web 3.

Calvin Coolidge, Vocalic or strong declension: A phrase appearing in A.S. Cook’s translation of *Sievers’ Old English Grammar*, published in 1887, in an illustrative quotation at *vocalic* in the OED.


Harry S Truman, Chinese restaurant syndrome: A group of adverse physical symptoms, in Web 3.

Harry Truman, four-part harmony: A musical term used in the definition of *compressed score* (at the main entry *compressed*) in the OED.

Dwight Eisenhower, Braehead, Wigtownshire: Braehead is a village lying about 2 miles south of the town of Wigton, in the Scots country of Wigtownshire, in Great Britain Road Atlas, Geographica, 1972.


Gerald Ford
Artful Dodger; large-fronded
The Artful Dodger is the name of a dexterous thief in Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*, in Web 2. Large-fronded is an undefined adjective appearing under *large*, in Web 2

James Carter
American Judas tree
Another name for the redbud, a tree of eastern North America, in Web 3

James Earl Carter
Patriarchate of Jerusalem
A one-time independent church in the Orthodox Church, in Web 2

Jimmy Carter
Uniform Code of Military Justice
The code of justice which governs the lives of all members of the US military, commonly found on websites (33,000 hits for this term)

Ronald Reagan
intergradational; Gregorian calendar
Intergradational is an adjective, meaning “pertaining to an intermediate or transitional form”, in Web 3. The Gregorian calendar is the one used in the USA and Great Britain, in Web 3

Ronald Wilson Reagan
There’s a long, long trail awinding
See the reference for George Washington, above

Bill Clinton
noncallability
This noun is listed but not defined in Web 2 (a bond is noncallable if it cannot be redeemed by its issuer before its stated date)

George Bush
South Greensburg
The name of a borough in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, 26 miles east-southeast of Pittsburgh, in Webster’s Geographical Dictionary

George Walker Bush
My library was dukedom large enough
A line appearing in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* (Act 1, Scene 2, line 109), Oxford Dictionary of Quotations

Presidents for which no transadditions were found include Andrew Jackson, Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, James Buchanan, James Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley and Franklin Roosevelt.

Can Word Ways readers find transadditions for any of the unconquered US presidents’ names? Or find printed references for the Internet items? Or offer improvements on any of the transadditions offered here?