DICTIONARY SOUNDS

DARRYL FRANCIS
London, England

The onomatopoeic comic-book words exhibited by John McClellan in the August 1980 Word Ways are undeniably outlandish. However, it is worth noting that fact (dictionary words) can be just as odd as fiction (comic-book coinages). To prove my point, I have selected fifty words from the English Dictionary (two for each letter except X), all having something to do with interjections, cries, moaning, mumbling and so on. To me, the words on this list seem even stranger than many of the ones McClellan cites.

adee
alas-at-ever
blaflum
bonneswish
curtummox
curwurring
dthong
dundiefecken
edley-medley
eggtaggle
fialgrs
fwyee-ahha
gabbie-labbie
gweek-gwak
hoi
hollybuss
iky-piky
iulga
jidderty-jadderty
jurrie-worrieing
keup
killiemahon
lackanee
lalthdrum
munge-munge
murmell
naff
ninny-niawing
oieet
oob
parwhobble

ha!
exclamation of pity
nonsense, idle talk
rapidly
used of a heavy fall
murmuring, rumbling
a painful pulsation
a stunning blow
immodest conduct
confusedly
a peculiar noise made in speaking to a horse
confused talking
the noise or squeak of boots
(of the wind) to whistle
a tumult
an exclamation of surprise
the rapid motion of waves
moving irregularly
a growling noise like that made by a dog
to bark incessantly
confusion
alas!
noisy, foolish talk
to grumble in low, indistinct tones
to coo like an infant
to bark, to Yelp
whinning
a call to horses to turn to the right, away from the driver
to howl
to talk quickly
However, it odd as fiction and fifty words all having and so many of the

peet-peet-peet a call to turkeys
quaalk a heavy blow
quackle the noise made in choking
reemle-rammle a great noise
ric a call to pigs
scarnoghin a great noise
skeyld the sound of gentle wavelets or ripples breaking on the beach
thwang a severe blow
toots-toots an exclamation, especially of expostulation
ugg a call to a horse or plough-ox to turn toward the driver
uggin-woy to vomit
voke to make an effort to vomit
vumfra a heavy slap
wander an expression of bewilderment
whappet a blow with the hollow of the hand
yaalta an expression used to prevent a person doing something
yelly-hooing yelling
zemmies an exclamation of surprise
zieads an oath

This is the title of the second in a series of pattern word lists published by Raja Press in Norman, Oklahoma (the first volume, covering words of length 2 through 6, was reviewed in the November 1977 Word Ways, and a few copies are still available). Using the words in Webster's Seventh New Collegiate expanded to include variant forms (paid, pays, paying in addition to pay), this book groups approximately 38,000 words of 7 and 8 letters according to pattern:

1234321 deified, reviver, rotator
12334521 cinnamic, golliwog, pulleup, serrates, speedups, tommyrot
12344523 pressure, stellate

As the second line indicates, the computer ignores spaces in forming patterns. This is a most valuable resource for crypt-solvers and word-researchers, particularly in view of the fact that the more comprehensive Levine lists are no longer in print.

Copies are available for $11.70 postpaid from Richard V. Andree, 601 Elm Street, Room 423, Norman OK 73019 (the earlier volume costs $10.50).