Here is a little game I played, involving the construction of fake 8x8 word squares. From a set of 37,000 eight-letter words, extract the commonest four-letter beginnings and four-letter endings. The commonest beginnings were over 251, fore 123, back 65, hand 60, outs 59, down 52, wood 52 and foot 51. The 89 commonest beginnings (down to cent, rock, rose, book, home, dist resi and others with 24 occurrences) yielded seven 4x4 squares; in fact, the first square was produced from the 30 commonest beginnings, and the second square from the 44 commonest.

PROP DISP DISC FISH POST PORT * = S,T
REVE INTE INTE OVER OVER
OVER STAR STAN STRA SEMI RE* I
PERI PERI CENT HEAD TRIP TRIP

With endings, things were different. It took 102 to produce a set of four 4x4 squares; enlarging the list to 114 resulted in eight.

IONS LINE * ATE * = L,N or R
OSIS ICA L AT OR
NITE NATE TONE
SSES ELED ERE + = D,R

Then came the hard part; make double 4x4 squares in which horizontals are beginnings and verticals are endings. This took 367 beginnings plus 341 endings to get one square. 440 beginnings plus 381 endings yielded the seven squares below.

BEAR BEST BEST RESO RAIL RAIN RAIN
UNITI UNSSI UNITI IRON INCI INCI INCI
SLEE SLEE SLEE SEMI SCAN SCAN SCAN
HYDR HYDR HYDR TREA TELE TELE TELE

And here, shades of Jeff Grant’s Scrabble game in the November 1991 Word Ways, is a fake (but plausible) 8x8 square.

PROPRIEST
REVEANCE
OVERICAL
PERILINE
RAILLIONS
INCIOSIS
SCANNITE
TELESSES