WUTHERING FLAPDOCKS! YET MORE BISOGRAMS

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A word in which no two letters are the same is often called an iso-
gram. In an article in the August 1998 Word Ways, Eric Chaikin coined
the term bisogram to identify word pairs in which no letter occurs more
than once. High-quality bisograms are essentially defined as those which
contain only uncapitalized unhyphenated unabbreviated words which are
listed in boldface type in Webster's Third; appropriate noun plurals and
verb tenses of such words may be inferred when they are not specified,
but other inflected forms (notably those adding -ly) may not be so
inferred. Gerund plurals also may not be inferred.

The best (and so far only) known high-quality 20-letter bisogram is
BLACKSMITH GUNPOWDERY, which was first reported by the editor in the
February 1977 Word Ways. In his August 1998 article, Eric Chaikin for
the first time presented some fifty high-quality 19-letter bisograms, and
additional examples have been reported in Word Ways since then. This
article, which summarizes the results of an unsystematic and incomplete
manual search of Webster's Third, slightly extends the roster of known
high-quality 19s and also introduces a listing of 18-letter bisograms.

But first, it should perhaps be mentioned that no new high-quality
20s were discovered in this search. The gunpowdery blacksmith, hump-
backedly frosting on a chill winter's day as he shoes a prongbuck ham-
fistedly and applies patchworks, defuzingly, to damaged artillery shells
(called throwbacks in the munitions trade), remains unrivaled in his
class (as well as outstanding in his field). Two near-bisograms which
would have been high-quality 20s had Webster's Third only spelled both
of their terms solidly are FLIGHT DECKS/JURYWOMAN and ZANTHOXY-
LUMS/BIRD PECK.

These thirteen new high-quality 19s were found (the second word of
each bisogram is written in lowercase):

AFTERSHOCK jumpingly GUNPOWDERY backshift, mahlstick
BACKGROUND phyletism HUCKSTERING amblypod
CARBETHOXYLS jumping PROCUMBENT gawkishly
EXHORTINGLY mudpacks PTERYGDUM blackfins
FLEXOGRAPHY disjunct WHITEFLY backgrounds, campgrounds
FURTHCOMING lazybeds

Among the near-misses, these would have been high-quality 19s had
not an inopportune space intervened in one of their terms: BAGY-
WRINKLE/JUMP SHOT, FETCHINGLY/SQUAWK BOX, FLIGHT DECK/JURYWOM-
AN and NEIGHBORLY/DUCK STAMP. And this quintet of 19s would be high-quality if inflections listed in Webster's Second were acceptable: AFTERSHOCK BUMPINGLY, PLAYWRIGHTS UNMOCKED, PROJECTINGLY BUM-MASH, SQUAWKINGLY BROTED and UNCOPYRIGHTED FLAMES.

I must confess to a certain fascination with the way in which nature often manages to contrive apt or picturesque word pairings in bisograms. At 20 letters, of course, there is the improbably apposite gunpowdery blacksmith, while at 19 letters we encounter Eric Chaikin's uncombed playwrights (whom we might imagine to be lying gawkishly procumbent on sofas by their typewriters), ungainly overflying humpbacks and even a dread huckstering ambyopod (a supposedly extinct elephant-like animal with both tusks and horns). But in this arena, at least, the longer bisograms appear to have nothing whatever on their 18-letter cousins. Among the several hundred examples of the latter that I have collected may be found the likes of frumping blockheads, naughty pickleworms, hulking mycobacters, flouting pachyderms, bumpkinly watchdogs, ladybugs' pitchwomen, extrabold chipmunks and goldback whiteumps, not to mention muzijk lycanthropes in squawky bedclothing who, deploying bushcraft, jokingly thumbscrew a stupefying blowhard to the tune of a thumbscrewing polka as greyhounds backflip with a jumbling aftershock and unmoved playwrights (dumbly stenographic after sniffing fuming carbethoxyls) unforgivably sketch a copyrighted junkman as he carts tumbledown hayricks and blighted fancyworks off in behowling dumpcarts to his backup goldsmithery near a whitefly campground which is a mere objurgated fliespeck amid the thumping dayflowers and wuthering flapdocks.

Although 18-letter bisograms are far more abundant than 19s, they are still relatively uncommon, and may therefore be of some interest. In the list of 444 Websterian 18s which follows, all of the words (including a few in which plurals or tenses have been inferred) are Webster's Third except for the asterisked words, which may be found in Webster's Second.

| AFTERSHOCK | BUMPINGLY* AFTERSHOW bumpkinly, jumpingly | BLACKSMITHERY found, pound, undog, wound | BLACKTONGUE shrimpy |
| AFTERSHOCK | BUMPINGLY* BUMPISHLY bump, slumping, jumbling, plumbing | BUMPINGLY* BUMPISHLY bump, slumping, jumbling, plumbing | BUMPISHLY* BUMPISHLY bump, slumping, jumbling, plumbing |
| AMBROTYPE/S | DUCKLING, DUCKWING | AMBROTYPE/S DUCKLING, DUCKWING | AMBROTYPE/S DUCKLING, DUCKWING |
| BACKFLIPS | ENWROUGHT | BACKFLIPS ENWROUGHT | BACKFLIPS ENWROUGHT |
| BACKFLOWS | EXTRUDING | BACKFLOWS EXTRUDING | BACKFLOWS EXTRUDING |
| BACKSWORDING | ZYTHUM | BACKSWORD/ING DUPLEX | BACKSWORD/ING DUPLEX |
| BACKSWORD/ING | DUPLEX | BACKSWORD/ING DUPLEX | BACKSWORD/ING DUPLEX |
| BACKVELDS | INWROUGHT | BACKVELDS INWROUGHT | BACKVELDS INWROUGHT |
| BARODYNAMIC | KLEPHTS, ZESTFUL | BARODYNAMIC KLEPHTS, ZESTFUL | BARODYNAMIC KLEPHTS, ZESTFUL |
| BATCHWISE | MUNKYDOM | BATCHWISE MUNKYDOM | BATCHWISE MUNKYDOM |
| BATHYSEIZY | WRONGFUL | BATHYSEIZY WRONGFUL | BATHYSEIZY WRONGFUL |
| BECOMINGLY | UPDRAFTS | BECOMINGLY UPDRAFTS | BECOMINGLY UPDRAFTS |
| BEDCLOTHING | SQUAWKY | BEDCLOTHING SQUAWKY | BEDCLOTHING SQUAWKY |
| BEHOWLING | DUMP CARTS | BEHOWLING DUMP CARTS | BEHOWLING DUMP CARTS |
| BLACKSMITH | UNFORGED* | BLACKSMITH UNFORGED* | BLACKSMITH UNFORGED* |

In Webster's Second, the asterisked words are found, pound, undog, wound, blacksmithery found, pound, undog, wound, blacktongue shrimpy, bucketing hydroflap, swordplay, bucketing/s flaxdrop, mold warp, bucksaw grimthorped, providently, bulwarks hypnotized, phytogenic, pythogenic, bumpingly* aftershow, headstock, headworks, rockshaft, shoecraft, shortcake, whet rocks, bumpkinly forthgaze, overwatch, shoecraft, watchdogs, bushcraft deploying, exploding, bysmalith unfrocked, campfights unworked.
CARBETHOXY dumpling, flumping slumping
CARBETHOXYL dumpling, jumping,
CARBETHOXYLS duping, fuming,
fuzing, juiking, puking
CHIPMUNKS afterbody, extrabold*,
goldwater, waterfowl
CHIPMUNK/S afterblow, afterglow,
battfowler*, dayflower
CHOKEDAMPS blurning
CHOKESTRAP fumbling, jumbling
CHOKINGLY drumbeats
CLERGYWOMAN tubfish
COMPLEXIFY draughts, kvutzahs,
stunkard
COMPLEXING barukhzy, futharks,
kvutzahs, yawshrub
COMPUTABLY gherkins
CONFIGURATED lymphs
CONTRAPLEX dumbfish
COPIGMENTS barukhzy
COPYRIGHTABLE dunks, funks,
junks, munds
COPYRIGHTED junkman
CRYPTOGAM knivesful
DAYFLOWERS thumping
DAYFLOWER/S mutchkin
DEATHWORMS buckling, plucking
DEMULSIFY patchwork, throwback
DEPLUMING backsword, backworts,
boschvark, rockshaft, throwback
DERMATOGRAPHIC bunk, buns,
busk, funk, junk, knub, nubs,
snub, sunk
DERMATOGRAPHICALS bun, fub, fun,
nub
DERMATOPSY buckling
DEUTSCHMARK blowing, bowling,
flowing, fowling, jowling,
plowing, wolfing
DEVOURING schmaltszy
DOUBLETHINKS crampy
DRUMBEAT/ING shylock
DUPLEXING backworts, boschvark,
rockshaft, throwback
DUPLEXITY boschvark, chamfrons
DYSTROPHIC fugleman
EMBLAZING ductworks
EXACTINGLY jodhpurs
EXCUSPATING droshky
EXHORTINGLY backups, bucksaw,
mudpack
EXPANSIBLY* ductwork
FANCYWORKS blighted
FANCYWORK/S multiped
FECUNDITY lampworks
FLAMMOUTHED cryings
FLAUGHTBRED smoking, spoking
FLEXOGRAPHY muziks
FLUKEWORMS batching, patching,
yachting
FLUSKERING matchbox
FLYWEIGHT/S backdrop
FORMIDABLY ketchups
FRUMPING blockheds, deathblows,
headblocks
FRUMPISHLY backdown, downbeat,
downtake, takedown
FUMEWORTS* hackingly
FURTHCOMING bespawl, bywalks,
lazybed
FURZECHEAT goldspink
FURZECHEATS bodingly, bowingly,
dopingly, jokingly, mopingly*,
movingly
GAVELKIND/S wrymouth
GOLDENBACK frumish
GOLDENBACKS furmity
GOLDENBACK/S triumph
GOLDSMITHERY backup
GOWPENFUL dithyramb, yardstick
GOWPENFUL/S birthday, jackbird
GREYHOUND/S backflip
GUNPOWDERY blackish, jackfish,
jawsmith
GUNPOWDER/Y schmaltsz
HUMPBACK defrosting, destroying,
fosterling, toweringly, wrestingly*
HUMPBACKED frostin, jostling,
loftings, strongly, strowing
HUMPBACKS flowering, longevity,
overlying, revolting
HYPANDRIUM fetlocks
IMPOUNDERABLY skutch
JACKFRUIT/S phlegmon
JUDGESHIP workmanly
JUMPINGLY backword, backworts,
boschvark, headstock, headworks,
rockshaft, shoecraft, shortcake,
showbread, throwback, waterbosh,
whetrocks
JURYWOMAN stepchild
JURYWOMEN backflips, backlight, backshift
JUXTAPOSED cymbling
JUXTAPOSING freckly
KHIDMUTGAR convexly
KYMOGRAPHIC blunted, bundles, unblest, zestful
LADYFINGER buckshot, campshot
LAZYBED/S quickthorn
LEXIGRAPHY bundocks
LUMBERJACK fishpond, pondfish, township
LYCANTHROPE/S muzjik
MUBANKS hypergolic, xerophytic
MUDLARKS phytopgenic, pythogenic
MUDPACKS hoveringly, neighborly
MUSKFLOWER batching, patching, yachting
MYXOBACTERS hulking
OBJURGATED flyspeck
OBSERVANCY mightful
OVERFLIGHT/S mudbank, mudpack
OVERFLING buckwash, hackbuts, humpback, mudpacks
OXYWELDING buckstay, humpback, pushcart
OXYWELDINGS buckram
OXYWELDING/S bumtrap, futhark, hackbut
PACHYDERMS flouting
PADLOCKING thumber
PATCHWORKED fluming, fluxing
PATHFINDERS baxomly
PHAGOCYTIZED flunks
PHLEBOGRAM disjunct
PHYMATIC underblows, underflows
PICKLEWORMS naughty
PINCHGUT/S dayflower, mayflower
PITCHFORKS unblamed, unglazed
PITCHWOMEN ladybugs
PLAYRIGHT uncombed, unmocked*
PLAWRIGHTS dockmen, jukebox, unboxed, unmoved
PROFUNDITY jacklegs
PROGNATHISM buckled
PROJECTINGLY* squawk
PSEUDONYM backlight, jacklight
PTERYGODUM blackfin, blackish, jackfish
PUNCTIFORM lazybeds, skewbald
QUESTINGLY backdrop
SCHEMINGLY zubrowka
SYOKEFARTHING duply
SPHYGMIC unwordable, unworkable
SQUAWKINGLY* botched, botcher frothed, potherb, project, torched
STENOGRAPHIC dumbly, jumbly
STUPEFYING blowhard, holdback
SUBJECTIFY markdown
SUBVERTING flapdock
THORNFUL* zweibacks
THUMBLINGS copyread
THUMBROPS fadingly, wakingly*, wavelingly
THUMBSCREW dopingly, jokingly, pyingado, pyinkado, wakingly*, wavelingly
THUMBSCREWING flaky, polka
THUMPINGLY bedrocks, casework, jackrods
THWACKINGLY* deforms, devours
TRUMPING blockheads, headblocks
TUMBLEDOWN crayfish, graphics, grayfish, hayricks, jackfish
UNBEWITCH flaxdrops
UNBLIGHTED paroxysm
UNCOPYRIGHTED* balks, balms, blaws, flabs, flams, flaws, lambs, jams, wakfs, waqfs, walks, whams
UNDERPITCH folkways
UNDERSTOCK gawblimy
UNFORGIVABLY sketch
UNFORMED backlights, jacklights
UNPROVED backlights, campfights, jacklights
UPHOLSTERY backwind, wingback
VETCHWORM daubingly, quakingly
VEXINGLY patchworks, throwbacks, touchmarks
WATERBUCKS dopingly, hopefully, mopingly*, movingly
WAVERINGLY buckshot, campshot
WHETROCKS plumbagin, pylangium
WHIPSOCKET gurdy man
WHITEFLY background, campground
WHITERUMP/S backdown, goldback
WORKPLACES thumbing
WRACKFUL hypnotized, hypnotizes
WUTHERING flapdocks
How many high-quality long bisograms are there, altogether, in Webster's Third? In the absence of a scientific sampling only seat-of-the-pants estimates are possible, but based upon perceived frequencies of occurrence I would guess that probably just the one 20, around ninety 19s, and perhaps fifteen hundred 18s are to be found there. If the last figure is approximately correct, then my experience of finding about eight 17s (which I did not record) for every 18 which turned up suggests a total population of 17s in Webster' Third of roughly twelve thousand.

What about the possibility of superlong bisograms? If the search is expanded beyond Webster' Third, can the English lexicon supply instances of 21-letter or longer bisograms? This would seem a fairly unlikely prospect, but even so it is not necessarily an impossible one, as the following examples employing several remotely-plausible coined words may demonstrate:

"I suppose we ROCKSHAFT workers are somewhat promiscuous," Tom said BEDJUMPINGLY.

"Is this how you swing a BACKSWORD?" Tom asked FEZTHUMPINGLY.

After failing on his twentieth attempt to FEZJUMP BACKSWORDINGLY, the novice saber dancer was thoroughly JUMPVEXT.

These are 21- and 22-letter faux bisograms; is it possible to cobble up a 23?