

I WROTE UP THIS DITTY, AND SANGED IT NICE AN' PRETTY

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I do not believe that the following class of words (if it even is a class) has yet been described: verbs, the simple past tense of which is also homonymous with, or at least homophonous with, the simple present tense of a different verb. Take, for example, the verb "to ban," which, in the past, is "banned," homophonous with "band," the past tense of which is "banded." [ban :: banned/band :: banded] These verbs can be said to have a sort of double past tense, though it hardly need stop there. For instance, a similar chain, beginning with the verb "to fine," would look as such: [fine :: fined/find :: found/found :: founded] Thus, "to fine" has a *triple* past tense, because "to find," the second link in the chain, is a member of this class of words in its own right. The obvious write-up of this new and interesting lexicographic classification is a country/western song:

On the farm, it wasn't easy to aspire to high class:
I wanted my own *salon*, but my only client was an ass.
I gave that donkey a pony-tail, and still she wasn't sated,
for she brayed, even as she was braided.

I let my son drink brandy, even swig his own malt liquor,
but caffeine gives him headaches, and it makes me even sicker.
When I found him at the carafe, I tell you, I was plumb astounded,
and, even as he ground, he was grounded.*

*(Now, he didn't like that punishment, and it got him a little sore;
as soon as he was out of there, he wanted coffee more.
I caught him at the café, working tables (so deluded!),
and all the time he brewed, he brooded.)

Chickens don't live long afore they're fried and served with sauces,
but I'll be durned if they don't seem to understand their losses.
I've never met a chicken didn't know where she was headed,
tho', no later than they're bred, they end up breaded.

I won't forget the summer I adopted dear old Nat,
the only sheepdog I ever saw who was blind as a vampire bat.
His ears perked up when a sheep ran off, and that's how he's alerted:
he heard, and so he herded.

Rabbits get in gardens, sure as crackers get in parrots,
and I set up steel traps, because I won't replant those carrots.
But when I find the traps have sprung and they've escaped, then I'm astounded:
even tightly bound, they bounded.

(Et cetera, und so weiter, and so on)

Pairs and triplets not used, due to matters of space and vestiges of dignity:

[ball :: balled/bald :: balded]
[bear :: bore/bore :: bored/board :: boarded]
[break :: broke/broke :: broked]
[bus :: bussed/bust :: busted]
[discuss :: discussed/disgust :: disgusted]
[drive :: drove/drove :: droved]
[fall :: fell/fell :: felled]
[feel :: felt/felt :: felted]
[gill :: gilled/gild :: gilded]
[guy :: guyed/guide :: guided]
[hie :: hied/hide :: hid]
[hole :: holed/hold :: held]
[knee :: kneed//need/knead :: needed/kneaded]
[lead :: led/lead :: leaded]
[lie :: lay/lay :: laid]
[lure :: lured/lord :: lorded]
[mine :: mined/mind :: minded]
[miss :: missed/mist :: misted]
[muss :: mused/must :: (had to?)]
[pace :: paced/paste :: pasted]
[rent :: rent/rent :: rented]
[see :: saw/saw :: sawed]
[send :: sent/scent :: scented]
[smell :: smelt/smelt :: smelted]
[tear :: tore/tour :: toured]
[truss :: trussed/trust :: trusted]
[wear :: wore/war :: warred/ward :: warded]
[whore :: whored/hoard :: hoarded]
[will :: would/wood :: wooded]
[wine/whine :: wined/whined//wind :: wound|wound :: wounded]*

*Without allowing homographic relation, this would still be a qualifying double past tense word chain, but the final link is worth including.

Also deserving mention are the myriad almost-pairs, such as those based upon “flow,” “glow,” “hose,” “play,” “pose,” “slay,” “sue,” etc., as well as, trivially, any verb whose past tense is homonymous or homophonous with itself, such as “bet,” “fit,” “hit,” “pet,” “rid,” etc. ■