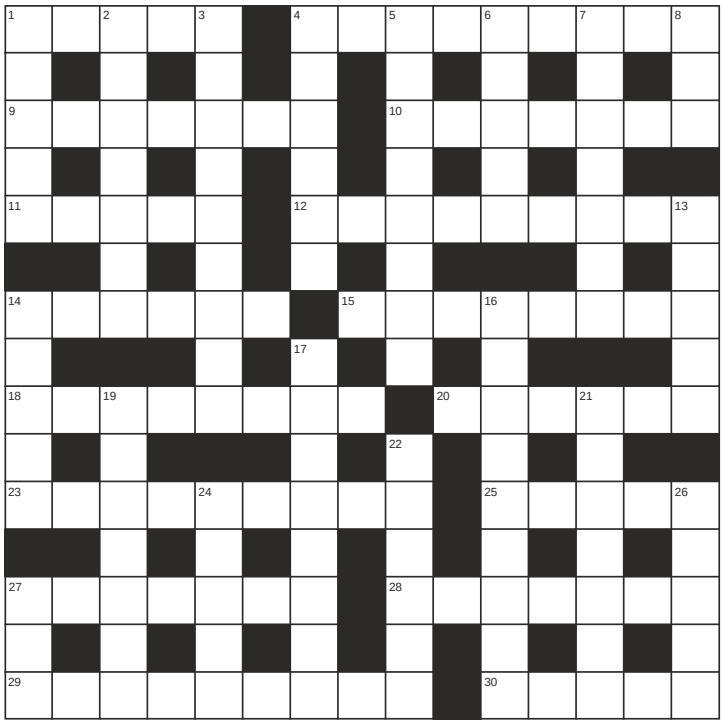
CROSSWORLD

FRANK PALMER's crossword is intended as a cosmopolitan challenge. Prizes will be awarded for the first five correct solutions opened. Solutions should be sent to: F. R. Palmer, 'Whitethorns', Roundabout Lane, Winnersh, Wokingham RG41 5AD, England, to arrive before 15 June 2001 (to allow for worldwide distribution). If you do not wish to cut up your copy of ET, a photocopy or other facsimile is acceptable. The prize for April–June is the 'Cambridge Learners Dictionary', 2001, £12.05, $17.95.

4, 14, 20, 30 across, 1, 4, 5, 24, 26 down are of a kind (not apparent from the clues).



Across

1. A timid creature having no time for a doctor of the law. (5)
4. A big gun, smart one, uncamouflaged. (9)
9. Play cricket, perhaps, getting hot, but, on return, finding a place to clean up. (7)
10. Audibly put you down too and after due time praise. (7)
11. In part, phony long artificial stuff. (5)
12. See, merger coming to grief reappears. (9)
14. Ruin can reveal a bird (6)
15. Square jug for South American bird. (8)
18. Bit of church getting hit with gale – it could be this. (8)
20. Female, I look for a woman in Melbourne. (6)
23. Praise and reveal the only one. (9)
25. See graduate make the sound of a crow or a parrot. (5)
27. Since the forties, mail's returned not sorted. (7)
28. Father's trail getting lost, to some degree. (7)
29. Expression of surprise with advertisements in journeys and places where they might be seen. (9)
30. Large bird? Not on your — ? Not so! (5)

Down

1. Dressin' a bird. (5)
2. A splendid guy in Sydney, showing courage and a bit of resourcefulness. (7)
3. Planning interior finish. (9)
4. Watch chain, one for English choirboy, perhaps, when growing up? (6)
5. Carriage would be cleaner with a bit of care. (8)
6. Working, partly, in sinuses. (2, 3)
7. Priest comes up with revolutionary periodical – a mixture. (7)
8. Disguise, perhaps, or, we're told, perish. (3)
13. ME country coming up with fresh air and sun. (5)
14. A long distance for a Roman soldier. (5)
16. Phone mere transient object? It could be. (9)
17. What is said about Ukraine showing eminence. (8)
19. Card game. May a celebrity demonstrate it? Endlessly! (7)
21. A chill is not long, surprisingly, in affecting a bone. (7)
22. Shoots at birds. (6)
24. Mason's son is well? Not entirely, unfortunately. (5)
26. Mural? That a pun, stupid. (5)
27. Standard fish. (3)

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LEXICON 1

What's that bird ?

PAUL RASTALL brings together the names and naming of birds with some of the broad categories of English word-formation

JUST IMAGINE yourself landed in a previously little known country and you come across wonderful, hitherto unknown birds. What would you call them? Of course, if you are a scientist, one of your jobs would be a scientific classification by genus and species. But most people are not scientists and scientists need everyday names. What linguistic strategies do people use in naming for everyday purposes? Some of the older books on the history of English, e.g. Bradley's *Making of English* or Potter's *Our Language* listed such strategies of "word creation" – compounding, derivation, borrowing, loan translation, onomatopoiea, and so on. Bird names can serve as a case in point.

Of course, the explorer might decide to use the so-called "accidental gaps" (i.e., unused, but phonologically well-formed complexes) to name unfamiliar birds. Such a strategy is, in fact, a poor one. The burdens on the memory are too great. Was that little blur of brown feathers a *snert* or a *twug*? Speakers generally try to integrate new names into their linguistic map of experience. Only, perhaps, in the case of onomatopoiea is there such a use of sound potentialities (and they are related to our sense of hearing and, often, also quite conventional as representations of sounds). But onomatopoiea is not so common even in the names of birds known to our English-speaking explorer. *Cuckoo* and *chiffchaff* are examples, *twite* may be one, and it is thought that *whip-poorwill* is one which speakers really did create in imitation of the cry of the bird in America (see Müller, 1871, vol. 1, pp. 410–411). *Crow* and *raven* do not really fall into this category, contrary to some popular opinion, because the words are derived from clearly meaningful, Indo-European roots, and they are related to a wide range of vocabulary (again see Müller, 1871, pp. 410–411). Related to this is the strategy of naming the sound and describing the bird as the one that makes it, as in *whistler*, *babbler*.

Another strategy would be to borrow a word from a local language[1]. This has happened in the cases of *bulbul*, *coucal*, *malkoha*, *jacana*, *iora* and *munia* for birds of South-East Asia. In fact, *bulbul* is from Arabic and has been transported to the Malay peninsula and Borneo to name birds of the same family.

One obvious strategy is to identify birds as belonging to a familiar family and then to describe the bird through some peculiarity. Thus, we find *fruit dove*, *laughing thrush*, *black ibis*. Of course, the same method might be used with borrowed words also, as in *mangrove pitta*, *white-eyed munia*. It is interesting to consider what characteristics are typically used to distinguish birds. Again considering birds of the Malay peninsula and Borneo, we find the following possibilities.

- **Compounding in relation to appearance** – *white eye*, *frogmouth*, *forktail*, *hornbill*, *fireback* (with simple implicit metaphors).
- **Description by habitat** – *swamphen*, *mangrove pitta*, *leafbird*.
- **Description by regional occurrence** – *Bornean bristlehead*, *Javanese turtledove*, *Nicobar pigeon*.
- **Description by behaviour** – *spider hunter*, *flower pecker*, *bee-eater*, *bower bird* (from the constructions it erects to attract mates).

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- **Description by sound** – *laughing thrush*.
- **Description by colour** – *brown booby, crimson sunbird, black ibis*.
- **Description by size** – *great/lesser frigatebird*.
- **Association with a person** (perhaps the first describer) – *Bulwer's petrel, Schrenck's bittern, Raffles' malkoha*.
- **Association with a given food** – *fruit dove*.
- **Use of metaphor** – *booby, sunbird, frigatebird, fireback, Jesus bird, fairy bluebird, rhinoceros hornbill*.

Most of those metaphors are straightforward comparisons of observed features of colour or appearance. *Booby*, apparently, refers to the bird's original lack of fear of humans, which made it an easy prey for hungry sailors. *Frigatebird* involves an obvious comparison of the bird's shape and flight with a frigate skimming across the sea while hunting for prey. *Fairy bluebird* and *Jesus bird* are the only ones to show much imagination. The latter is a name for the *jacana*, which has widely spaced claws allowing it to walk on water. The naming of birds is generally far less imaginative than the naming of flowers (see Rastall, *ET*, 1996/2) and similar to the naming of animals in this respect.

Of course, quite complex, and somewhat amusing, combinations of the above strategies can be used in bird names – *whiskered tree swift, Chinese crested bittern, Jambu fruit dove, Sunda frogmouth, mangrove blue flycatcher*.

In fact, the strategies people have used for naming exotic birds are not very different from those used for naming familiar ones. While some are "opaque" – *finch, sparrow, swallow, thrush*, many fall into the same categories.

- **Description by sound** – *warbler*.
- **Description by habitat** – *garden/reed/sedge warbler, corn/reed bunting*.
- **Description by locality** – *Dartford warbler*.
- **Description by behaviour** – *flycatcher, tree creeper, woodpecker*.
- **Description by appearance** – *whitethroat, crossbill*.
- **Description by movement** – *wagtail*.
- **Description by colour** – *greenfinch, goldfinch*.
- **Metaphorical naming** – *blackcap, redpoll, bullfinch*.

In the case of the naming of native birds, there are some interesting cases of hidden complexity and folk etymology. There is hidden complexity in the linguistic fossils – *skylark/woodlark* (where *lark* is derived from O.E. *laverock* (= "small bird") and is historically unrelated to the verb *lark* (= play)); *redstart* (Mod. E. *start* < O.E. *steort* = "tail"); *redpoll* (*poll* = "head"); *redshank* (*shank* = "leg", as in the idiom *shanks's pony* = "on foot"); *fieldfare* < O.E. *feldefare* related to Germanic *faren*, "to journey" and of course *felde* would have been understood as "open land"); *whinchat* (*whin* = "gorse/furze" + *chat* = "talk"); *nightingale* (< *gala*, "call", "night-caller"); *chaffinch* (*chaff* = "husk"). *Barbet* comes from French *barbet*, "little beard" referring to the tufts around the bird's bill. The folk etymology involved in *wheatear* is well known, where there was confusion of O.E. *hvit* ("white") with *wheat* after the Great English Vowel Shift had shifted [hvi:t] to [hwait]and hence there was a reinterpretation of *ers* ("rump") with the seemingly rational *ear*[2].

One other interesting feature of the naming of native birds has been the use of baptismal names in association with (or even replacing) the bird name (noted by Weekley, 1912, pp. 36–8). Such is the case in *jackdaw*, *robin* (for *redbreast*), *martin* (perhaps associated with Martinmas), *petrel* (*Sankt Peters Vogel* in German), *Tom tit*, *Dicky bird*, *hobby* (< M.E. *hobyn*, related to *Robin*), *magpie* (where *mag* is related to a diminutive of *Margaret*) and *parrot* (related to *Pierrot*). One should note that it is necessary to approach some of the older etymologies (for instance in Trench, 1856, p. 204) with some caution. *Owl*, *howlet* and *howl* are only very distantly related and *hawk* (< O.E. *heafoc*) does not appear to be related to *havoc* (<Anglo-French *havok*) despite a near homonymy, while there is only a possibility that *dabchick* is related to *dap-* as a variant of *dip*.

Bird names, it seems, have generally been integrated into the vocabulary much more through description than by means of metaphors, and the descriptions have of course focussed on the most striking distinguishing features, while retaining as much that is familiar as possible from existing names. □

Notes

1 It is interesting to note the coincidence of *pipit* in English (= "finch") with *pipit* in Malay (= "sparrow").

2 While our ancestors were generally very observ-

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ant of nature, it is noteworthy that the redwing does not have a red wing. Its wings are grey-brown, its body parts below the wing are red, and there are flashes of red when the bird is in flight, which perhaps give the impression of red wings.

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SNIPPETS 2

The interminable Internet

The following extract is from *Observer* (Spring 2000), the newsletter of the East-West Center on the campus of the University of Hawaii, Honolulu. It is taken from a report on a speech by Vinton G. Cerf, 'widely known as a "father of the Internet".'

> Cerf regards the activity around the Internet today as analogous to a gold rush. "Two things that are worth remembering about gold rushes, one of them is the people who make money in a gold rush are not necessarily the people looking for gold," he said. "People that actually make money in the gold rush reliably are the ones who sell picks and shovels and pans to the other people who are looking for gold." The telecommunications industry has been selling "the equivalent of electronic picks and shovels to the rest of the industry that's looking for gold on the Internet."
>
> The number of Internet users has been multiplying rapidly, he noted, citing 50 million users in about 200 countries in 1997 and 276 million users in as many as 246 countries today. Just under half of the users are in North America.
>
> **Internet users worldwide,** in millions
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | North America | 135.06 |
> | Europe | 71.99 |
> | Asia/Pacific | 54.90 |
> | Latin America | 8.79 |
> | Africa | 2.46 |
> | Middle East | 1.29 |
>
> By the end of the decade, Cerf projected that number will grow to about half the people in the world or about 3 billion. At the same time as the industry evolves, he anticipates the cost of access and equipment dropping. What might not be affordable today, will be affordable tomorrow.

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USAGE

IN versus *ON* revisited

TIM CONNELL enquires into the adventures of two prepositions whose idiomatic usages are altogether too close for comfort

When I first looked at the way in which the uses of *in* and *on* are changing (see *ET*57 [15.1], Jan 99) the only advice I could give in an increasingly confused situation was "hang on in there". Things do not appear to have improved significantly since then, though some patterns are emerging:

IN parliament but ON the floor of the House

"Labour is ahead on the polls," Roy Hattersley assured us a few years ago in a BBC Radio 4 broadcast, 16 Sep 95). But in 1992 Labour fell when the election was *on* the last lap (and the Tories, quite arguably, were *in* turmoil and *on* their last legs). Whether or not the government of the day has its finger *on* the pulse, and whether Tony Blair really is *in* touch or not, we can read that "Three ministers went *on* message this week to tell universities and colleges to get vocational" (*Times Higher Educational Supplement* [*THES*] 6: 11.98, p.3).

ON station but not always IN the right place

> Customers are reminded that smoking is not permitted *on* any part of the Underground
> — Tube announcement, Surbiton Station, Greater London, 14.6.00).

> Wait *in* Gate 5
> — announcement at UK departures at London's Heathrow Airport.

This announcement seems to have overlapped with "please wait *in* the departure lounge". People are likely to say goodbye to friends *at* passport control, but would they not wait for friends *in* International Arrivals?

The lack of a standard use or response soon becomes evident to the traveller.

> Left at lights *into* Douglas Street, left *onto* Waterloo Street, turn right *into* Pitt Street
> — Printed directions for the Glasgow Forte Posthouse Hotel.

ON the strength but IN the directory

Where people work is none too clear nowadays, and universities fail to provide a lead:

> She is *on* the Linguistics Department faculty
> — In "About the Author", Deborah Tannen, *The Argument Culture*, Virago 1998.

It is quite likely that American usage is having an effect *on* the choice in Britain between *in* and *on* (*on and off the team*, in preference to *in* and *out of* is a prime example). But the situation seems to have been no clearer in times past:

> Dr Owen Tuby, lecturer *on* English Literature in India and the Far East.
> — J. B. Priestley, in *London End*, 1968, Heinemann 2-vol edition 1976, p.356.

> SIade, now lecturer *on* Applied Mathematics at Greenwich to Engineers, is a very clever man but his English is of the strangest" [the slightly quaint view of none other than Admiral Sir Edward Charlton, writing in a private letter in 1889].
> — 15 Oct 1889, in E. Urban "Ned's Navy", *Airlife* 1998 p. 58. TD library 359.3.

Is there a clash here with "lecturing *on* Keats" as opposed to be a lecturer in a department and hence "lecturer *in* English language"?

ON board but IN the same boat

We're all *in* the same boat if not everyone is *on* board. Cargo of course, can be swung *in* board. A ship coming to the aid of another has it *in* tow. One ship being pulled along by another is *under* tow. The sign *on* the back of a car being

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towed, however, will more likely say "*on* tow". (cf. *The Times English Guide & Usage*, Times Newspapers, 1992, p. 20.)

The phrase *On the docks* was used in a report covering the 60th anniversary of Dunkirk at Dover (BBC Radio 4, Jan 00). *On* the quayside, perhaps, but *in* port, *in* the harbour – and *at* anchor. Which is possibly why we heard, "She stepped ashore *on* Sydney Harbour" in a report *on* BBC Radio 4 *about* the Olympics,(0710, 29 Sep 00).

Is it IN the guidebook or ON the map?

A hundred years *on* your high street.
— Slogan at Woolworths, Oct 99.

There are still weapons *on* the street of Belfast.
— BBC Radio 4 News, 12 Sep 98.

Diamonds found *on* Emerald Isle.
— *Daily Telegraph*, 14 Apr 99.

A thousand years ago the Vikings established a settlement *on* Greenland.
— *Financial Times* 13 Jul 99.

An advert (*THES*,14.4.00) for an external development unit manager, as part of the University of the Highlands and Islands Project, states that the post will be "based *on* Benbecula", (a relatively small Hebridean island).

ON May Day but IN the merry month of May

Getting to the station *in* time does not necessarily mean that the train will leave *on* time. Note also:

You will be expected to spend some time interviewing prisoners and participating *on* Board panels.
— Advert, *The Times*, for the Chairman of the Parole Board, 8 Jan 00.

Prisoners *on* parole, of course, might find themselves *in* limbo waiting for their case to be heard (and it could even be heard *in camera*). The magistrates sitting *on* the bench might find themselves sitting *in* judgement and quite possibly participating *in* a decision, though the Liberal Lord Tope spoke about working *on* the new London Assembly (BBC Radio 4, 5 May 00). People might well work *on* plans for working *on* a project, but members would normally expect to sit *in* an Assembly, though *on* a committee or working party. If a fact-finding tour is coming up, however, they might hope to be included *in* the party – though of course they may find in the end that they are not *on* the list.

Confusion between parallel usages

It is possible that confusion rises from a clash between comparable phrases with slightly different usage:

This is a special safety announcement. Please do not ride bikes *on* the station.
— announcement at Surbiton Station, Surrey, 14 Jan 00.

Passengers could be *on* the platform perhaps, but *in* the station surely, and men could be working *on* an oil rig, even if someone claims to be working *in* the oil industry.

"All the best on your retirement" they say at the leaving do, but an obituary notice might well report that "*In* retirement he took up golf". Of course, you might write "Best Wishes" *in* the card (if it is big enough, or folded) but office gossip might suggest that someone else's retirement is *on* the cards.

The proposal which is *in* the pipeline may not yet be *on* the table. If it's *in* the diary, it may as well go *on* the agenda, though the item will not be presented until everything is *in* place. But what do I hear *on* Radio 4? "They did the fieldwork before the report was *on* place" (Minister for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, 1 Jun 00).

Well, they said it

Examples abound in literature to illustrate the uncertainty which surrounds correct usage. Thus we can read:

I have gone to Church voluntarily *on* the week day but few times in my Life.
— Dr Johnson 23 Sep 1771. In Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Oxford 1934/79 p. 67.

When I returned, about my usual hour, she was once more *on* the gallery."
— Robert Louis Stevenson in "Olalla", Wordsworth Classics, *Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde and Other tales and Fables*. London 1993, p. 162.

Thomas Hardy records in 1903:

I fear I shall have to stick to the old bike, for one reason (apart from expense) I get exercise on it, while *on* a motor one gets chills and tooth-ache.
— Quoted in J. Fowles and J. Draper, 1984, *Thomas Hardy's England*, Bloomsbury p. 154.

George Bernard Shaw always referred to being

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on a car, though *in* the earliest models of the sort seen *in* the London-to-Brighton rally) people were perched *up on* them rather more than *in*. (Would you in fact put yourself *in* for the rally, or would you simply want to go *on* one?). J. B. Priestly wrote *Midnight on the Desert* in 1937 as the outcome of a family holiday in Arizona, describing it as "a chapter of autobiography":

> Young Mike Mickley is supposed to be *on* our team.
> — In *Out of Town*, 1968, Heinemann 2-vol. edition, 1976, p. 138.

Just leave it out

Confusion is such that the temptation is to omit *in* completely – which does actually happen. No less an authority than Betty Radice comments on a book "which was translated very well by B. Flower and E. Rosenbaum about 1950". [In S. Hare, ed. *Penguin Portrait*, Penguin 1995, p. 305.]

This may, however, be no more than a slightly terse form of writing, as it crops up elsewhere:

> About 1830 they were moved to what is now Oklahoma... About two centuries ago they merged with the neighbouring Sak [...] tribe.
> — K. Katzner, *The Languages of the World*, Routledge 1986, pp 272–3..

Such a usage is apparent even in an erudite work: *From Script to Print*, published in 1945 by H. J. Chaytor, is so erudite in fact that no translations are given for references in Latin or mediaeval French, (not to mention Provençal, Catalan and Spanish):

> Jehan Makaraume, a Walloon, who wrote about the middle of the thirteenth century, produced a verse translation of the Bible.
> — In H. J. Chaytor, *From Script to Print*, (1945) Sidgwick & Jackson 1966 page 123.

This creates the ambiguity as to whether Marakaume had the thirteenth century as a subject or a time-frame.

When in doubt, sleep on it

So, what advice can be given to the student of language? Keep *on* the alert, even *on* the *qui vive*, but try to stay *in* touch with what is going *on in* the language. And remember that working *in* English is not the same as working *on* your English... □

SNIPPETS 4

An over-queued message

```
Subj:       Mail System Error - Returned Mail
Date:       17-Apr-99 23:21:49 GMT Daylight Time
From:       Postmaster@vantage. britcoun.or.th (Mail)
To:         Scotsway@aol.com

This Message was undeliverable due to the following
reason:

Your message was not delivered because the destination
computer was not reachable within the allowed queue
period. The amount of time a message is queued before
it is returned depends on local configuration
parameters.

Most likely there is a network problem that prevented
delivery, but it is also possible that the computer is
turned off, or does not have a mail system running
right now.
```


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OED update

The following sections are a composite selection from the *Oxford English Dictionary News* (2:15, Dec 2000) and other more recent information

Editorial

The production of historical dictionaries is a long and arduous process. Samuel Johnson devoted a large part of his writing life to his Dictionary, and James Murray died before his great 12-volume history of English was completed.

It sometimes seems that the infinite complexity of the language defies any attempt to capture it in a finite time. Work began on the current revision of the *OED* in the mid-1990s, coinciding with an unprecedented burgeoning of computerized resources. While this technology has assisted the editorial process in many ways, it has brought with it the release of vast electronic archives of literary material which have to be taken into account during the revision process. No wonder the editors often feel they're running to stay in the same place, although there is no doubt that this embarrassment of riches is reflected in the enhanced quality of the revised *OED* text. But even given this inevitable expansion of the task, the preparation of the *OED* proceeds at a surprisingly swift pace by the standards of other historical dictionaries, as Edmund Weiner demonstrates below.

In addition to the electronic resources already mentioned, traditional printed sources continue to play a major role in the compilation of the *OED*. One such text is the recently published inventories of King Henry VIII. This treasure trove of sixteenth-century royal artefacts has been painstakingly read for the Dictionary by Jane Griffiths, who provides a fascinating insight into the contents of Henry's wardrobes, cupboards, and drawers.

Bernadette Paton, Newsletter Editor and Principal Editor, *Oxford English Dictionary*

The OED and its cousins

EDMUND WEINER,
Principal Philologist, *OED*

People quite often ask whether there are dictionaries like the *OED* for other languages. There certainly are. Dictionaries akin to the *OED* exist for several major world languages, and varieties of English itself are also enshrined in specialist dictionaries.

The OED, in fact, is a member – arguably the foremost member – of a distinguished genre, the historical dictionary. Historical dictionaries trace the story of each word through all its different meanings, uses, and constructions, from its earliest known appearance onwards. They illustrate each meaning with a set of dated examples, again from the earliest found to the latest or one of the most recent, and give in some detail the background of each word before it appeared in the language and the written and spoken forms it has had through its history.

There are two subgenres: the regional dictionary and the period dictionary. English is well supplied with both. Examples of the former are the *Dictionary of Canadianisms*, the *Australian National Dictionary*, and the *Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles*: these cover the language specific to a region, and exclude the general vocabulary. Examples of the latter are the *Middle English Dictionary*, now nearing completion after three quarters of a century, and the *Dictionary of Old English*; these cover the two periods of English preceding modern English (circa 1500 onwards).

The Scots language has dictionaries which combine both attributes: the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (founded by one of the original *OED* editors, William Craigie, in 1931, and due for completion in the near future) and the *Scottish National Dictionary* (finished in 1976), whose line of demarcation is at 1700. There are a number of dictionaries of medieval Latin in progress in different countries; another Oxford-based project is the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*. Medieval periods of major languages, such as

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French and (High) German, also have their own dictionaries.

Inevitably because of their breadth and depth of coverage, historical dictionaries take much longer to compile than ordinary desk or collegiate dictionaries. The First Edition of the *OED* had a 45-year publishing history, while its total period of compilation was over 70 years; figures for its two Supplements are 15 and 29. One of the fastest projects was the very authoritative *Trésor de la Langue Francaise*, which took only 24 years to publish and 34 to compile, even though its text is about 30 million words. *The Deutsches Wörterbuch*, initiated by the brothers Grimm of fairy-tale fame, took 101 years to publish and the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* took 135. Many others are still in progress; for example the *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* at the University of Wales, begun in 1921 and now into the letter T. Such projects are a challenge to manage and fund, and staff size (and hence publishing progress) can vary greatly from one project to another.

The *OED* is in the unusual position of now undergoing a complete revision and updating. It has had the great good fortune that each stage – First Edition, Supplement, Second Edition, and online publication of the revised edition – has been rapid when compared to some of its cousins. The project is favoured by having so many regional and period dictionaries to draw on, so that the full geographical and historical scope of the language can be more easily covered. It was the first to be published electronically (CD-ROM and now online), though not the first to move its editorial processes to computer. And it enjoys the advantage of having been compiled according to principles and styles that have remained relatively consistent and have not required major rethinking. But this is not to exclude the possibility that its shape may need to evolve to meet the requirements of 21st century users!

Florence conference

JOHN SIMPSON, Chief Editor, *OED*

European lexicographers converged on an elegant Medici palace, home of the Accademia della Crusca, in Florence in early July 2000 to attend a conference entitled 'La Lessicografia Storica e i Grandi Dizionari Lingue Europee', hosted by the Opera del Vocabolario Italiano (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche).

I gave a presentation on 'The Oxford English Dictionary on the Web': other contributors included Dr Fons Moerdijk, editor of the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, Professor Bernard Quemada, of the *Trésor de la Langue Française*, and Dr Michael Schlaefer of the *Deutsches Wörterbuch*.

The conference was also an opportunity for senior lexicographers to discuss a proposal by the Opera del Vocabolario Italiano that a European network of 'national language' dictionaries be set up, involving the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *Trésor de la Langue Française*, the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, the *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini*, and other great national and international dictionary projects. The proposal for a European network is still under discussion, but it is hoped that if realized it would facilitate greater communication and exchange between scholars associated with these projects, perhaps by means of conferences, a joint web site, and joint publications.

A 20-year, £35 million revision project

By September, as a continuation of the 20-year, £35 million revision of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, launched online at www.oed.com in March this year, 3000 revised and updated entries will have been added to the dictionary. Within the 3000 new and revised entries, 850 words and meanings are completely new. The revised section of the *OED Online* runs from *M* to *march stone*, and includes words and meanings from all over the English-speaking world, from all branches of the arts and sciences, sport and leisure, as well as plenty of slang and street language.

Millions more have access to the *OED*

In March 2000 the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* was launched online, inspiring discussion and debate on the future of the English language world-wide. Demand for access to

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the site, available by subscription, continues to be enormous. More than 3000 institutions world-wide are already online, with many more in the pipeline. Well over 30 million people now have greater access than ever before to the history and meaning of the words they read and use.

New words from the revised edition of *OED Online*

mail bomber, *managementese*, *Manc* (Mancunian), *mang* (to beg), *manga* (Japanese genre of comic books), *Mansion House speech*, *Marburg virus*, *marching season*, *mall rat* (young person who frequents a shopping mall in a gang),

English-speakers world-wide now helping to created *The Oxford English Dictionary*

Huge response to 'Appeal for new words for the *Oxford English Dictionary*'

More than 5,000 new word contributions received.

One year ago, John Simpson, current editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, reissued James Murray's appeal for new words for the *OED* first made 120 years ago. More than 5,000 examples of new words, new senses of old words, earlier and later quotation evidence have since flooded into the *OED* offices in Oxford. These nuggets of word information have come from as far apart as Canada and New Zealand, covering almost every country in the English-speaking world. The editor says: 'These new contributions have been a goldmine. I look forward to receiving more contributions, and renew my appeal by asking everyone who has useful information to contact us at www.oed.com.'

ankle Hollywood slang, to be forced to resign or be fired while apparently leaving a job of one's own free will
bar a million Australian dollars
blag tricking companies into disclosing confidential information over the phone
blatt private e-mail unintentionally sent to a public Internet forum or mailing list
Bo Dereks bonds due to mature in the year 2010; based on her character in the movie 10
bungalow new use in Singapore and Malaysia to mean (large, usually more than one-storey) detached house
cats and dogs risky stocks without a proven track record
countrypolitan the merging of US country music and pop styles
cracker a computer hacker with criminal intentions
cyberpal friend contacted over the net
cyberturf Internet stamping ground
double-double Canadian usage, two creams and two sugars in coffee
e-mail bomb email that wrecks computer systems
fuhgeddaboudit! humorous way of expressing cliche
globo-cop international policing and patrolling often performed by USA
hyperpolysyllabicsesquipedalianist a person who enjoys using long words
jones for or **jonesing** to want desperately
mockumentary documentary about specially created band or act
net decade or **net ten** first ten years of the 21st century
old hide wealthy woman who might prove useful
omphaloskepsis to contemplate one's navel or waste time
perverb the combining of two proverbs into one, e.g.: 'A bird in the hand waits for no man'
pink collar non-professional employment in areas traditionally limited to women – e.g. secretary, waitress, beautician..
political shibai Hawaiian usage from the Japanese, political shamming
republicrat person who has the combined political philosophy of a US Republican and Democrat
script kiddies young computer whizzkid hackers or cracker
sesquilingual the ability to speak one and a half languages
snack boy US slang for single young man
SOW squeals on wheels, derogatory name in Canada for a police motorcyclist
spuge to ejaculate
walking in tall corn making big bucks/money

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mainstream education, *make my day!*, *make-out*, *makeover*, and many more.

What revision means

Entries for every one of the three-quarters of a million terms contained in the *OED* are currently being updated and rewritten as part of the revision process. 2.4 million quotations illustrating how the words and phrases have been used during the last thousand years are being checked, and many more added, by more than 300 editors and advisers working on the first revision of the *OED* undertaken since it was originally completed in 1928.

Why begin at 'M'?

The first section of the *OED* to come under editorial scrutiny in the complete revision is 'M' . It might seem strange to start in the middle of the dictionary but there is a good reason. At the end of the nineteenth century, when editorial work began on the First Edition of the Dictionary, Sir James Murray was only slowly evolving an editorial style. As such, work on the letter 'A' was far less consistent than work completed later on. So today's editors decided to begin at M, continuing through the alphabet until all sections are completely revised.

Helping the *OED* find English's forgotten words

As new words are being added, so older ones fade out of the language. Words are never removed from the *OED*, which is a record of the English language throughout its history, but, if they become uncommon or disused, are instead labelled 'rare' or even 'obsolete'. Here are a few examples of words from the *OED* revision that are no longer in common use, and the last date for which the *OED* has an example of use in print. *OED* editors would value information from anyone who has evidence that these words are alive and still being used, and especially, appearing in print.

malagrugrous Scottish word meaning dismal; last record in print, 1884.
mank or **to mank** Northern English word, particularly Lancastrian, for a trick or practical joke; last record in print, 1880.
mant Scottish, Northern Irish, and Northern English word meaning to stammer or stutter, last record in print, 1935.
maizel Cornish and Northern (particularly Lake District) word for to stupefy or bewilder; last record in print, 1869.
mampus Dorset and Gloucestershire word for heap or lump; last record in print, 1904.

Men defined

Tracking the language shows us how attitudes are changing. Important words under scrutiny in the newly revised *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (see elsewhere for details of the *OED* revision) are *man*, and *male*. Whilst capturing the new man for posterity, entries have also been rewritten to include words and phrases that would make today's man unrecognizable to those who first created the *OED* 120 years ago, such as *male stripper*, *man's world*, *a man's eye view*, *men's movement*; and *men's work*. But men are also under attack, there is *male-bashing*, *male rape*, *man-hating*, and men have become the quarry in a *manhunt* by predatory women. Traditional male values still exist – you can be *a man among men* and there are things you have to be *man enough* to do. In Black English 'man' is an expression of approval as in *you da man!*, *my man*, and *my main man*. Other manly expressions new to the *OED* are *male pattern baldness*, *man of the match*, *man-mark*, and *man* (as a member of a sporting team). And then there are the men who aren't necessarily male: *the man in the street* and *the man on the Clapham Omnibus*, *the man in the boat* (clitoris), *man-bites-dog* (bizarre news story), *men in black*, and *mantee* (lesbian with a butch manner).

From *alpha geek* to *zeros* – the first new words of 200

Recording new words is an important part of the job of *OED* editors. Some of the following may be the words of the moment – they may never catch on in print, and could disappear forever. But some will have staying power. Look out for them in future online updates of the *OED*.

alpha geek top techie
apotemnophilia the desire to become an amputee
beenz e-currency
blamestorming group discussion of where the blame lies
bless! short for 'bless him/her'
buildering building-climbing
buff-brush factor retailing theory that women

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are more likely to buy goods if they can bend over them without brushing the merchandise behind them

category killer market dominator; genre-defying TV show

cobot collaborative robot – ones that don't crash into one another!

craic (Irish English) fun, amusement

crowd-surf to get passed over the heads of the crowd at a rock concert

cyberchondria condition suffered by over-anxious visitors to the NHS's new website

cyberslacking personal use of employer's Intemet access

empty suit a nobody, a spare part – originally mafia slang

feck from Father Ted, now widely used

give it up for introducing a band or celebrity

Internet Addiction Disorder the first Y2K malaise?

irritainment annoying but compulsive viewing

joined-up government integrated approach to governing

kiasu (Singaporean English) scared to lose

no-mates as affixed to Billy or Norman – friendless person

Oftot regulatory body for nurseries

watercooler TV TV with enough reach to be discussed at the watercooler at work the next day – particularly U.S. □

Hardy Perennial

Thomas Hardy's noblest deed
Is found not in his prose
Although his books make quite a read
As everybody knows

It's elsewhere that he did us proud
For in his choice of MADDING
To supplement 'Far from the crowd'
He wasn't adding padding

For with this act old Tom conferred
A new lease of prosperity
Upon a much-endangered word
And saved it for posterity

So novelists, adopt a word
Preserve it in your title
Before you find it's been interred
Promote its functions vital

And then some day it may repay
You for your generosity
And give your work a rare cachet
Of learnèd curiosity

For on such words you can depend
And though at times they're tardy
They'll pop up like a long-lost friend
Perennial and hardy

Roger Berry,
Lingnan University, Hong Kong

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