Do you know...

...that the Bookbreakers Forum is currently developing a new set of bookbreaking runs?

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Solution to NSA-erotic No. 14

by "Sardonyx" (CRYPTOLOG, May 1978)


"Testing and checking always seem to create a climate where conservative attitudes prevail. Setting standards in anything, by its very nature, focuses on the minimum which is required to do the job rather than on excellence of performance."
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE ON ABNER

The article by [August 1977 CRYPTOLOG provided an excellent perspective of how the programmers viewed ABNER. Followup letter in the November 1977 CRYPTOLOG provided additional insights on the construction of the equipment. I believe it would be remiss not to cover at least a few points concerning some aspects of the equipment maintenance on the ABNER Serial 1 system.

When AFSA, NSA's predecessor at Arlington Hall Station, first determined in the very early 1950s that it was getting into the electronic computer arena, it was readily determined that there was no source of qualified engineering or electronic computer-maintenance personnel to be enticed into service at the Agency. In addition to hiring a few civilian electronic engineers and technicians, it was decided to attempt to get some expertise in this area by seeking military officers. A survey indicated that the training that came closest to meeting the Agency's requirements was given at the Ground Electronics (Radar) School at Keesler Air Force Base. A levy was placed on the USAF/AFSA for one officer in the top third of each of ten succeeding graduating classes. I was fortunate enough to be selected as the first officer from the first class. Upon arrival at Arlington Hall, I was assigned to the computer maintenance for ABNER. People like now Chief T2 (as well as all of whom are still at NSA), were old hands at ABNER maintenance, having already spent about 6 months working side by side with the development engineers and programmers in anticipation of the computer's becoming operational.

ABNER I, Serial 1, the first NSA application of "serial dynamic logic" circuitry, presented new problems for isolating malfunctions. The computer, including the consoles and peripherals, came close to being a maintenance nightmare. All of the electronic D.C. power supplies were of the laboratory type, with variable voltages. They were not overly stable and they generated a tremendous amount of heat. Electrosonic mercury delay lines were used for the 1024 words of memory (512 words per cabinet, or 64 delay lines per cabinet). The only pluggable components in the whole machine were the diode/resistor gates (there were 25,000 IN34 diodes) and the 6AN5 vacuum tubes that were used for digital pulse amplifiers. There were about 1500 6AN5s, all being used close to their design rating, and they had an MTBF that did not endear them to the maintenance personnel. More importantly, all the digital pulses were processed through various lengths of electronic delay lines. The latter were all wire-bound on very delicate metallic-plated fiberglass rods and hard-wired into the system. Likewise, all the pulse transformers were hard-wired into the system and when we were so fortunate as to locate a faulty delay line, pulse transformer, or diode isolating/gating circuitry, it took at least a half-hour or more to replace the suspect component if it was not a tube or a plug-in gate.

Perhaps more important than the hardware replacement problem was the fact that there were almost no electrical or software diagnostics for the machine. The R&D programmers had developed a few "exercise" routines, but the usual "maintenance" technique was to attempt to run an operational program and, when it didn't work, Maintenance was called in to see if we could find the trouble. This was the standard practice in other "computer laboratories" in the United States during this early computer era. Over a period of time, of course, we did develop some diagnostics. Many problems, however, occurred with the electromechanical input and output equipment and with the operations console itself. These faults would, of course, bring everything to a grinding halt, since then we could not even get data into or out of the machine. We were also hampered because the response time of the oscilloscopes was so slow that it was difficult to "see" some of the pulse trains, and delayed-sweep oscilloscopes were not yet in use.

When production operations started in 1952 there was no time allocated for preventive maintenance. All the maintenance time we were allowed was that necessary to correct faults. In general the machine was used during the day shift by the R&D personnel who were continuing to develop some facets of the equipment and, in some cases, to improve reliability.* During the evening shifts it was used by the programmers who were just developing some of the initial programs and the attempt was made during the midnight shift to run on an operational basis the few programs that worked. All three of these "customers" (the R&D engineers and programmers; the operational programmers; and the operators) provided a unique technical as well as human-relations challenge to the maintenance crew.

As time went on, things of course improved. The maintenance people still thought the
equipment was poorly designed; the programmers were probably the happiest of the lot; the R&D engineers were glad to get on to newer things; and the operations people suffered through with all of us. As Art Salemme wrote in the October 1977 NSA Newsletter, most of us lived in the Buckingham area and it was not uncommon to work on the machine for several hours at a time, come home and get something to eat (with logic equations and microseconds still going through our brains), and wander back down to work to see if we could try one more idea in the attempt to fix the machine. Maintenance down times of 4 to 8 hours were very common and on occasions lasted up to 4 or 5 days. This was not so much a reflection on the quality of maintenance personnel (I would like to think), as a reflection of the complexity of the design, the newness of the whole concept, and the absence of statistically reliable preventive maintenance procedures and software diagnostics. In many cases, whenever we were sure the input and output equipment and console were working, we would write down our own diagnostics to try and locate a sticky logic problem in the machine. As each new computer application program was written, it was not uncommon to find logic errors in either concept or wiring, even after the first year or two of operation.

After approximately a year of such interesting endeavors, I was considered qualified to become the maintenance chief on a special-purpose machine, DELLA, being constructed by R&D using the same type of digital logic and components (albeit with many more plug-in components used), that was expected to come into operations. DELLA was to be located at Nebraska Avenue and I soon began the joys of carpooling from Arlington to NSS and lost contact with ABNER just as it came into its own as a highly productive piece of computing/analytical equipment.

One of our regular contributors recently came across the following item in his files. It was written immediately after some directive came down about not publishing anything that sounded like a snap judgement. It was circulated widely at Arlington Hall Station (see the reference to the originating subelement within AFSA-242) and originally bore the fake classification "Top Secret Blurb."

Ed.

U/1 Unit, AFSA-242c3b5d4j7s45x(0)7 possibly behind "Iron Curtain"6 (date garbled) (X groups missing)

Traffic analysis evidence of a very tenuous nature faintly suggests the remote possibility that an unidentified unit, of undetermined echelon or type, may, in some manner, exist somewhere within Soviet Russia, or in that general vicinity.

The tentative existence of this headquarters, possibly a unit of undetermined echelon or type, is suggested by what is believed to be

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EO 1.4. (c) P.L. 86-36
NEVER AGAIN!

I'm not easily angered, and on those occasions when my face reddens and my hands tremble with the realization that something stupid, ridiculous, and unfair has occurred, I cool off rather quickly. But something happened more than a year ago, and even now, whenever I think of it, my face flushes and I find myself searching out appropriate epithets (to mutter to myself, of course).

You see, I believed in the system. I trusted it, even though I knew that many around me, although good and loyal members of the establishment, smiled condescendingly when I claimed that it was better to obey the letter and spirit of the regulations than to ignore them. Their condescension clearly conveyed the notion that they were too canny, too experienced in the ways of bureaucracy, to be taken in. A few came out and said that what I proposed to do was a mistake and that I would rue the day. Others merely shrugged their shoulders and said pityingly, "you'll see."

I had a file of papers, the only one of its kind, relating to an experiment which had been conducted in an attempt to improve our processing techniques. Without debating the merits of the original idea or of the experiment itself, which involved not only NSA, but ASA and AFSS as well, let me state that a lot of hard work went into it. After several years of research, training courses, TDY trips, field trials, and interagency correspondence, it was decided to call the experiment off. The records ended up in my safekeeping, and I felt certain that at some time in the future the issue would be revived.

I have always been aware of the heavy cost of filing cabinets and floor space, and I agreed that, if a safe alternative existed, I should not use files in my office to store this material. Besides, I might not be around when the files would be needed again. So I followed the rules and, in September 1967, entrusted the files to NSA's Archives, after carefully noting the contents, and marked them for "Indefinite Retention."

I made certain that I had the receipt, which gave the accession number and even the box or shelf number at the storage location. I was assured that I could retrieve the file when it would be needed.

Almost 10 years later, in April 1977 (you've already guessed, I'm sure), the subject did come up again, at high levels both within and outside the Agency, and so I proudly pulled out my receipt and called for the file. To my horror, I find that the entire file has been destroyed! It seems that "management" became concerned about the amount of material being kept in Indefinite Retention, and in 1971 (while I serving an overseas assignment) a group was charged with examin-
A complex analytic process that may have many blind alleys.

Is there a solution to this dilemma? I believe there is, at least to the specific questions that Wayne raised, and perhaps to facilitating all types of analysis. The solution I suggest is not a panacea nor is it new, but perhaps its time has finally come.

The Analyst's Scratch Pad

Almost unnoticed at NSA, the outside world has undergone a revolution in their approach to computer support. The day of the microcomputer has arrived. Not only have thousands of very small businesses begun using them, but heaven forbid -- even individuals are buying them, using them, and rapidly creating new applications on them. Oh, you say, these are all engineers and data systems people who want to take their work home with them as a hobby? Not so! None of the people I know who already have a personal computer or have ordered one is an engineer or a data systems professional. One of them is 72 years old and never programmed before -- he is creating a program to analyze the genetics of his cattle herd, and he doesn't think it's too late to learn to use computers.

Why is this happening? There are probably numerous reasons, among them the fact that very capable computers are becoming available at low cost (less than $800). But another reason relates to the desire expressed by Wayne -- to have contact with the material they are studying. These new computerists are really analysts who have discovered a powerful new scratch pad for their analytic wanderings. Their ranks are swelling at an incredible rate. So is the product of their labor.

Can any of this analytic-scratch-pad technology be applied to the problem described in Wayne's article? You bet it can! Computerists have found that the instantaneous nature of the computer can be very positive to human beings -- so they created timing loops that simulate human response. They found that endless listings of data befuddled humans -- so they created graphic presentations of the same data so that visual processes can be applied to problems. They encountered problems in handling mistakes in coding programs -- and created text and word processors to allow the easy manipulation of such data, much in the manner than a callsign analyst would love to be able to do.
Does NSA plan to provide such a capability to their analysts? No! At least not soon and perhaps not until most NSA analysts have a more useful capability at home than they have at work. This is one case where the bureaucratic process has developed a life cycle that far exceeds the cycle of development of new systems and capabilities and costs outside NSA. The budget for FY-80 is being built now and it will have us buying more of the large computer systems available last year or the year before. There is money for collection and for processing, but not for analytic support -- at least not the type of support Wayne and other analysts want!

Emotional response? Yes, it is emotional, but only because I think NSA is missing an opportunity. We have led the way in the design and application of computers to the analysis of seemingly unsolvable problems of cryptology. Now the rest of the world has caught fire with enthusiasm in extending the computer's usefulness. We ought to take advantage of this new impetus to extending human analytic capabilities.

MINNIE'S MINI:
FIVE YEARS LATER AND I STILL WANT IT!

My, my, how the years roll by! In the preceding article, Bill Crowell says that he would like to see personal-sized computers used at NSA. In the December 1973 issue of the B Group publication DRAGON SEEDS, of which she was the founding editor, Minnie M. Kenny said the same thing. That 1973 article is reproduced below, with a brief introductory word by Mrs. Kenny.

I definitely agree with Mr. Crowell, as my article in DRAGON SEEDS indicates. Mr. Crowell's article expressed very succinctly two points I tried to make to the ALBRECHT Group -- that an analyst must have contact with the materials he is studying and that the personal-sized minicomputers can be used as "powerful new scratch pads" and serve as catalysts for the development of new techniques and applications across the whole vista of cryptologic disciplines. Imagine! Desktop scopes with programmable keyboards and split-screen and scrolling capabilities! They're the answer to a SIGINT maiden's prayers.

We came up with an idea: why not hang a tape drive on that modified PDP-8 called the COPE terminal, boosting its memory by 4K, and declare our independence from Central Control? No way!! We got bottled up in channels and buried under paperwork.

That's when I began dreaming of desk-top terminals for CA applications. Can't you imagine a user-controlled system of minicomputers, say one master and three slaves with an interchangeable hierarchy (to eliminate service interruption when there's a malfunction), and a terminal on each analyst's desk? Why, you'd hardly need cross-section paper and pencils!

One day I stumbled across several idle CRTs. I was nosing around down in C at the time. I had to have them. Hooked up to one of the general processors, they'd make an adequate substitute for my dream system. I lost out again. I could pirate the terminals but I couldn't "bootleg" the hook-ups.

About this time, R came on the scene touting minicomputers with blisters. They were developing interactive CA applications. And they wooed me with the promise of the realization of my dream. We formed a committee which formed a study group which formed into teams which inspected CA processes in B. The results were published in a huge compendium called the ALBRECHT Study, but... I still want a mini!

It seems like ages ago when it all began. We were still at FANX and had just experienced the nine hundred and ninety-ninth power outage. No COPE, no RYE, no 6700, no nothing!!! To top it all off, it wasn't even raining. Now what kind of Providence was that?
A. Escort

B. "-------- of Texas" (2 wds)

C. Loathed

D. Born

E. Genus of snakes comprising the anaconda

F. "If I hadda knowed that you'da wanted to of went, I'da seed that "---------------------" (cited in H. L. Mencken's The American Language) (6 wds)

G. It sometimes takes people a long time to learn that there's no such thing as "--------" (2 wds)

H. Ballet by Word L (2 wds)

I. Bury

J. "Alice's "--------"

K. American revolutionary figure (1741-1801) (2 wds)

L. American composer (1900- ) (2 wds)

M. Lizard-like animal, found in water or damp places

N. Capital of one of the Soviet republics

O. Beloved

P. Civil War general; commanded Confederate left in Battle of Gettysburg

Q. Decrease

R. Clumsy

S. Type of roof

T. Get the better of

U. Extend

V. In children's games, the player whom the other players oppose

W. The Indian who brought the first electric power line to his tribe's communal outhouse was the first person ever to wire "---------------------" (5 wds)
X. Ballet set to music by Chopin (2 wds)

Y. G. K. ---------- (1874-1936)

Z. Excel

Z₁. Great quantity

Z₂. "Creme de ------"

Z₃. Interrogatory interjection

Z₄. "Blue ---"

Z₅. Teased good-naturedly

(Solution next month)

June 78 * CRYPTOLOG * Page 13
Never underestimate the power of the press, even if it only has a negative effect. In the May 1976 issue of CRYPTOLOG I had an article on the "language problem" within NSA and, if I had known then what I know now, I would not have submitted it, for matters have now gone from bad to worse.

In the article I suggested that the language problem might well be solved if Agency powers-that-be would see fit to reward good linguists with tangible items like promotions. Evidently the article struck a nerve, for disparity between linguist promotions and those for others, such as electronic engineers, has increased.

But what about the latest solution to the "language problem" -- hiring high school graduates to be trained as linguists? It will be quite some time before the results of this move can be evaluated, so I am in no position to state positively that it will not work. Still, I find it difficult to be optimistic, for I have been around long enough to remember the similar experiment with high school students back in the 1960s. Surely M3 has figures showing how many were trained and what became of them. If memory serves me right, there were few who completed the program and I have no way of knowing how many, if any, are still with the Agency and in language work.

Still, let us assume that the exercise will be completely successful. Then, why don't we hire high school graduates to be trained as engineers or mathematicians? After all, if it would work for one skill, it ought to work for all. Somehow I doubt that those who hire mathematicians and engineers would allow that to happen.

So, how did it happen for linguists? I can only suspect that what I said in the earlier article continues to hold. Those who make decisions about linguistic capability are not linguists and they remain convinced that it takes little to become one. I would think that the fiasco of President Carter's interpreter in Poland might disabuse them of that notion.

There is an old cliche, "You get what you pay for." For years those who make decisions about hiring for the Agency have managed to use that cliche as a lever to have engineers and scientific personnel hired at higher grades or at higher levels within grades. Now, to use another cliche, "The rich will get richer and the poor will get poorer." Linguists will enter at the lowest possible grades and will be competing with those who are being hired many grades above them, with little -- actually, no -- hope of ever catching up. This will be a self-perpetuating situation, for the time will come when only engineers and scientists will have high enough grades to be considered for appointment to senior management positions and they will continue to make the decisions affecting linguists.

If I sound bitter, it is only because I am. Our product, so dependent upon the efforts of linguists, is bound to suffer as senior linguists leave, and I do not see anything but a downhill trend in the years ahead if the present policies remain unchanged. You do get what you pay for!
lanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch. It is undoubtedly the longest place name in the world, and it hangs over the train station of this village in Anglesey, North Wales, only a few miles distant from the village of Llanfairfechan, where I stayed in the summer of 1977. The name means "St. Mary's Church, in a hollow of white hazel, close to a rapid whirlpool and St. Tysilio's Church, and near a red cave." (It is usually mercifully abbreviated to Llanfair P. G.)

I had come to Wales to learn more about the Welsh language and to collect materials in that language. Later I would go north to Scotland and try to do the same with Gaelic. The events that led to this pilgrimage, and what I discovered there, are the topic of this article.

Before discussing the difficulties that a student of Welsh encounters (using words of more manageable length than the one above), I would like to say a few words about Celtic in general.

We have witnessed a revival of interest in Celtic (pronounced "Kel-tick," not "Sel-tick" -- there is no c pronounced as s in any Celtic language) studies in recent years. As I looked for the reasons behind this upsurge in interest, I came up with several possible ones:

- the Roots search, not limited to blacks, but involving people of all ethnic groups;
- increased publicity. In May 1977 National Geographic published a beautifully illustrated article on the Celts by Merle Severy, including a map of Celtic Europe.

The map shows that there were Celtic settlements as remote as present-day Turkey, where the Galatians lived. (St. Paul wrote an epistle to the Galatians and it eventually became part of the New Testament.)

There is also a greater awareness of Celtic language (and mythology) because of the tremendous success of J. R. R. Tolkien's books. The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings, and, more recently, The Silmarillion draw upon the wellspring of Icelandic and Celtic lore. Tolkien liked Welsh better than any other language, and used it as a basis for many of the words in his artificial languages. As people became aware of his sources, their own interests in these subjects were stimulated.

- Another reason for the revival of interest is that the field has not been overworked. There is still plenty to do. In my own field of Hebrew -- especially in the area of the Bible -- scholars have gone over the same ground many times with a fine-toothed comb. But with Celtic the situation is just the opposite. Dr. Robert Meyer of Catholic University, in Washington, once said that every time he "puts down his spade," as it were, he comes up with something new.

- Last but not least, one may mention the conflict in Northern Ireland, which has called attention to all things Irish.

My own interest in Celtic languages can be traced at least in part to a chance remark made by Agency linguist John Murphy. He pointed out that in many ways Irish resembles Hebrew and the other Semitic languages in its structure. Some scholars had actually gone so far as to suggest
that the insular Celtic languages had been influenced by some Afro-Asiatic substratum. John Murphy referred to such features as a "construct state" and conjugated prepositions. Later on, when I took Dr. Meyer's course in Old Irish, I was able to spot more similarities, in addition to the ones John Murphy had mentioned. Here are some examples, taken from the "Scela Mucce Meic Datho" (The Story of Mac Datho's Pig):

Construct State

Old Irish: "Ailbe ainm in chon." "Ailbe was the name of the dog," lit. "Ailbe name the dog," exactly parallel to "Ailbe shem ha-kelev" if we were to translate it into Hebrew.

Verb-Subject-Object Word Order

Old Irish: "Indicean in u Luigniu huill." "The dog defended all Leinster," lit. "Defended the dog Leinster all-of-it." In classical Hebrew one would say, "Vayagen ha-kelev 'ai Leinster kullah," preserving the same word order. Such an order is unusual in a European language.

Conjugated Prepositions

The Old Irish word for "with" is lu. Conjugated with pronoun suffixes, this becomes leim, lat, leis, etc. In Hebrew and Arabic, most prepositions can likewise be conjugated.

Anticipatory construction for genitive

This feature is shared by both Old Irish and Aramaic. (Late Hebrew has it as a result of Aramaic influence.) Old Irish: "Ba lán Nóiriu dha atairceas in chon." "Ireland was full of the fame of the dog," lit. "Was full Ireland of his fame of the dog." Cf. Modern Hebrew: "Kalbō šel ha-'Ts," lit. "his-dog of the man," = "the dog of the man," "the man's dog."

Yet, from a lexical standpoint, the theory that insular Celtic had some kind of Semitic influence -- say, from the Phoenicians -- finds no support. Aside from a few chance resemblances, there is no trace of it. One thinks readily of the Arabic loan-words in Spanish, Turkish, or Persian; the Spanish words in Basque; or the enormous influence exerted on English by Norse (from which even our third person th- pronouns were borrowed). The fact that nothing like this can be seen in Celtic makes its connection with Hebrew very doubtful.

I should now like to give an overview of the Celtic languages, both living and extinct, before concentrating on Welsh and Gaelic to "take their pulse," as it were, to determine where they are healthy and where not, and what is being done to keep them alive.

The Celtic languages can be divided into two groups: insular and continental (see Fig. 1). The continental Celtic languages were once very widespread over the European continent, but little is known about them. Caesar wrote about the Gauls, and there are some Gaulic inscriptions, but little else remains.

Fig. 1

The insular branch is divided into K-Celtic (Q-Celtic) and P-Celtic because of a split that occurred from the Indo-European consonant *kw-. In Irish the labialization was lost, so that only the k sound remained; cf. the Irish word for "head," aem, as in the name Kennedy, which literally means "ugly head." In Welsh, on the other hand, the word for "head" is pen as in "penguin," which literally means "white head."

Both Manx and Cornish are extinct. The last Cornish speaker is reported to have been a fisherwoman named Dolly Pantreath of Mousehole (pronounced moose'l), who died in 1789. Another researcher, however, has claimed that its last speakers were Cornish miners who took part in the California gold rush of 1849.

As for Manx, there were still four persons alive in 1954 who spoke that language, and they were very elderly at the time, so we may safely assume that Manx too is by now a dead language.

Turning to Gaelic, we find a living language, but you may have to go out of your way to hear it spoken.

In Edinburgh I attended a Gaelic church service on a Sunday afternoon at the Highland Tolbooth St. John's Church. The people were most friendly; they bade me "a hundred thousand welcomes," or "Cuide mite fa'ite," as they say in Gaelic, and I made the acquaintance of a kilted gentleman and his wife who put me in touch with the right organizations and publishing houses, so that I could acquire more Gaelic materials. The chap had even studied a bit of Hebrew, as it turned out, so we found that we had some other common ground and hit it off very nicely right from the start.

At his recommendation I visited the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh. School was out for the summer and they were operating on a skeleton crew, but the visit turned out to be worthwhile nonetheless. I learned that they had recorded thousands of
hours of Gaelic speech on tape and that they publish an attractive bilingual magazine, Tochar (Dowry). It appears 3 times a year and costs only 40 p an issue. Here you can find stories, songs, and traditions from the school's archives.

There is also a publishing house called "Gairm" (Word) which prints books and manuals in and about Gaelic (see bibliography).

A complete Gaelic course is available on tape from National Extension College in Cambridge, England, for about $50.00, and a number of other tuitional aids are available on both disks and cassettes (see bibliography).

But to hear Gaelic spoken freely and naturally, one must go to the islands, to a place such as Harris on the Isle of Lewis, so far north that it never gets dark in the summertime, and where people are not subjected to as much English influence. Even television has not made great inroads among the people as yet, for the reception is poor in this region. A great deal of linguistic and sociological research is being conducted on these people. For example, a book was published in 1977 by Kenneth MacKinnon, Language, Education and Social Processes in a Gaelic Community. If you are interested in such minute details as the percentage of male Gaelic speakers using the formal second-person pronoun sibh to their wives (p. 19) or a poll that asks of the Harris community, "Do girls tend to keep their Gaelic in use better than boys?" (p. 163), then this is the place to turn to.

But in many ways Gaelic is losing ground.

Gaelic broadcasting, already infrequent, has recently been cut back even more by the BBC, causing an uproar among Gaelic supporters. An appeal was made to the BBC and a final decision is pending.

Welsh

When we turn our attention to Welsh, the picture has a rosier, healthier look about it. Here we are dealing with a much larger number of speakers -- perhaps around 2 million -- and their firm resolve to keep the language going. Welsh is also easier than Gaelic in that it is more "phonetic" (it is pronounced just about as it is written, while Gaelic is like English in that its spelling includes silent letters, etc.). Radio and TV programs abound; I was able to tape a number of broadcasts during my stay in Wales.

But there is a difficulty in learning Welsh: the initial mutations. Most languages with which we are familiar introduce changes at the end of the word (the declensions and conjugations of Latin or Russian, for example). Now imagine a language in which the word changes at the beginning. How would you ever find it in the dictionary? You couldn't, of course, unless you knew something about the grammar! There is an excellent example of this in the name of the village where I stayed -- Llanfairfechan. Now, Llanfairfechan means literally "Little Church of St. Mary's." Llan is "church" or "parish," a feminine noun. Fair is really Fair (Mary), but after Fair the m changes to f. And the word fechan can be found in the dictionary only under its masculine form byghan, "small." This is known as the soft mutation.

Besides the soft mutation there is a nasal mutation involving six consonants:

- Labial: b → m
- Dental: d → n
- Palatal: g → ng
- Unvoiced: p → mh
- Voiced: t → nh
- Velar: c → ngh

This generally happens after the words fy ("my") and yn ("in"). Thus, pen, "head," but fy when, "my head."

Finally, there is a spirant mutation affecting the consonants s, p, and t. This occurs after the word for "her," s, e.g. et phem, "her head." (To use an English example, "peasant" would become "her pheasant"!)

But aside from this difficulty there is really no problem. The English loan words abound, and the imprint of English is profound in other respects as well; once, in a child's story, I came across the words Oedd Pwyll mewn piaul, "Pwyll was in a pickle," describing one of the characters (Pwyll, hero of the First Branch of the Mabinogion) who had gotten himself into some difficulty. This is hardly the sort of thing that one would expect to find in the original Mabinogion, or in any other writing true to the Welsh spirit!

There are also several Welsh newspapers (such as Y Herald Cymraeg), indicating that here again the situation is healthier than for Gaelic, which only has an occasional page or column in an English-language newspaper published in the Hebrides.

It is also easier to find Welsh books. There is, for example, a set of Welsh comic books, designed to teach the language and make it seem like fun; and, though some of the humor is ribald and one senses that beer-drinking must be an important part of the culture, the comic books are nonetheless an effective medium for the acquisition of the colloquial language. There are also graded readers to help one along after he has mastered the rudiments of the language (see bibliography). I was even able to pick up attractive children's books such as Alice in Wonderland and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The story of Snow White with its Disneyesque illustrations takes place between the Welsh village of Llanfair y Lli and Llanfair y Llwyn. It was also possible to pick up an excellent Welsh dictionary at a very reasonable price, in contrast to the Gaelic one which cost £8 and which I therefore decided to postpone buying.

As one travels the motorways, one sees Welsh signs everywhere. In the June 25, 1977
issue of The Economist in an article entitled
"How Bilingual Was My Valley," we are told
that the government is spending £10 million
to cover Wales with bilingual signs. The
article goes on to say: 

"The Welsh Language Society's long ef
forts at direct action -- raids on tele
vision transmitters, bonfires of English
language documents and sit-ins -- have
resulted in the Welsh population receiving
dual-language versions of all kinds of of
ficial forms, from driver's licenses to
telephone bills, with even the p for pence
translated into c for ceiniogau."

So it appears that an all-out effort is
being made for Welsh. In contrast to a tiny
corner devoted to Gaelic books at a Scottish
book seller's, one finds entire shops in Wales
that specialize in Welsh books. In one such
shop in Caernarvon the owner, Mr. Eric Jones,
told me that after all the tourists go home at
the end of August, one hardly hears a word of
English spoken in the town until they return
in April.

Here, then, is a field that has much to of
fer the language student. Whether one delves
into the medieval or modern phase of Celtic,
there is a wealth of interesting literature.
It is a field that is not overcrowded and
in which much basic work remains to be done.
But when one looks at those universities in
the United States that offer Celtic languages,
one finds that there are only two American
universities that have Celtic departments:
Harvard University and Catholic University
(Dr. Robert T. Meyer, of Catholic, is the only
Professor Emeritus of Celtic languages in
the country). Elsewhere, Celtic languages are
offered within the departments of English or
Modern Languages, as is the case at the
University of Texas, for example.

Catholic University has an outstanding Celtic
collection, having absorbed the libraries of
Professor Joseph Dunn and Major William B. S.
Smith. These include a complete set of the
Revue celtique and the rare Annales de Bretagne.
But the department has remained small due to
the shortage of money (they have a $50,000 en
dowment fund, the annual interest from which
comes to only $3000 or so.) People are attracted
to the course for a variety of reasons -- some
are medievalists or majors in English or
linguistics. A small number are actually major
ing in Celtic. And then there are people like
myself -- people already established in some
field who, through a series of circumstances,
have caught the Celtic fever and enjoy the
subject as a pleasant and rewarding pastime.

Readers who would like to receive a copy
of the bibliography prepared by

can get one by writing to: CRYPTOLOG, Fl,
or by calling the editor on 52366.
How do you like our new logo? As mentioned in last month's News of the CAA, the winning entry was sent in by [redacted]. We had hoped to have a professionally drawn version of it for this month's issue, but we were late in asking Graphics to do it for us. In the meantime, to appease your curiosity, here it is, in a version based on the winner's original sketch. In case you don't know why you like it so much, Hugh explains that "The design is the basic monogram based on Classic Roman Capitals, arranged to give an impression of breadth and upward motion."

**Monthly Meetings**

The CAA is on the move again, in all its breadth and upward motion! Our board meets once a month, usually around the end of the month, but the exact time and room change from one month to another. But the meetings are open to all, members or others. If you want to come try and look us over before deciding whether to associate with the likes of us, please do so. We won't even swear you to secrecy about all the wild things that go on at the meetings. If you're afraid to come alone, bring a friend. Where and when? To tell you the truth, as I write this (in April) I don't really know. But as you read this (in June), you can find out. Just check with your nearest CAA member, or with any of the CAA Board members listed below. Or, if you're already a member, watch for the notices arriving in your in-basket.

**Meet the CAA Secretary!**

[Redacted] is currently Secretary of the CAA. She came to an early predecessor of NSA as a French linguist but was shunted to cryptanalysis, where she has dwelt happily ever since. Her assignments have covered problems that are now handled in A, B, and G; she has held technical management positions at section, branch, division, and office staff levels; and she now heads the Cryptanalysis Division in the National Cryptologic School. She is a member of the Crypto-Linguistics Association and of the CAA Special Interest Group on Cryptologic History. She is also an EEO Counselor, President of the Patuxent Business and Professional Women's Club and editor of its Newsletter; the former editor of the WIN (Women in NSA) Newsletter; former Cryptanalysis Editor of CRYPTOLOG, and Rewrite Editor of its predecessor Dragon Seeds.