

**News3.** [A5 16pp in the printed version. *Underlined words and letters are in italics here.*)]

ONE STEP AHED.



## **The Simplified Spelling Society. Newsletter July 1983**

*Patron:* H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, K.G., K.T.

*Founded in 1908 with* William Archer, F.J. Furnivall, Israel Gollancz, A.W. Pollard *and* W.W. Skeat.

*Former Presidents:* Professor Daniel Jones, D.Phil., LL.D., M.A.:

Professor Gilbert Murray, O.M., D.C.L., D.Litt., F.B.A.: Sir I.J. Pitman. K.B.E., M.A.:

Professor W.W. Skeat, Lit.D., LL.D., D.C.L., Ph.D.

President: Professor John Downing.

Chairman: Mr. C. J. H. Jolly.

Hon. Secretary: Mr Stanley Gibbs, Staines.

Hon. Treasurer: Mr Laurie Fennelly, Southampton.

Hon. Public Relations Officer: Miss Mona Cross, Northampton.

## Contents

1. [Introduction, from the Chairman](#), Mr Chris Jolly.
2. [Notes from Minutes of the AGM](#).
3. [Extract from \*Orthographical Exercises.. etc. of 1829\*](#).
4. [Report of working party on choosing spelling reform](#).
5. [The Way Forward](#). Stanley Gibbs.
6. [Pronunciation System using Simplified Spelling](#). Gilbert Rae.
7. [Subsequent steps to SR-1, and The Spelling of \*th\*](#). Newell Tune.
8. [Changing the name of the Society](#). Alun Bye.
9. [Comments by members on the Constitution](#).
10. [Experiments on the benefit of spelling reforms for lerners](#).
11. [Spelling Day, September 30](#).

### Next Meeting

Sat. 17 Sept at 10.30 a.m. at Maria Fidelis Convent School, London. Committee meeting mainly discussing spelling reform and the ramifications of the American BETTS 'Big Four' proposals.

[Chris Jolly: see [Bulletins](#), [Journals](#), [Newsletters](#), [Media](#), [Books](#).]

## 1. Chairman's MESSAGE from Chris Jolly



The past year has been one of significant achievement in the Simplified Spelling Society. As a result I believe we are in a much better position to take forward the interests of us all in reforming English spelling. Let me briefly tell you the progress that has been made and the direction we plan to take in the future.

The constitution of a society such as ours may seem a simple administrative matter and indeed, in a way, it is. However the old constitution was very unsatisfactory, being both cumbersome and restrictive. The task of drawing up a new one was taken on very ably by Laurie Fennelly and we are very grateful to him for the clear and purposeful revision he produced. Following the postal ballot of members in February it is now the society's constitution.

In May of this year we had the Annual General Meeting. Stanley Gibbs continues as Secretary, Alun Bye as Vice Chairman and myself as Chairman. Mona Cross was elected to the new position of Public Relations Officer where her talents and energy for communication will be able to flourish. Her position as Treasurer has been taken by Laurie Fennelly and I'm glad to report that she leaves the society's financial balance in a healthy state.

After many years working for the Society Ralph Cropper has asked to be relieved of his responsibilities as a trustee. We are sorry to see him go and thank him for his support and efforts over the years. Mrs Elsie Oakensen has kindly agreed to take his place as one of three trustees who administer bequests.

For some time now the Society has been concerned that its name does not reflect its objectives and needs in the best way possible. You may have read Alun Bye's article in the [last issue of the Newsletter](#), (Item 5) and again he seeks your views on the possible alternatives.

At his visit last year the Society's President, Professor Downing, suggested that the Society focus on the small steps that get spelling reform under way, rather than trying to achieve a whole new system all in one leap. His suggestion was the development of a range of small steps, all of them independent of one another, so that people could select reforms and use them as they wished. A working party was set up consisting of Harry Cookson, Laurie Fennelly and myself and elsewhere in this issue to an outline report of the initial stages that have been proposed. It is a report for discussion and your comments are welcome.

As you will be aware, the Simplified Spelling Society needs to tread the difficult path of seeking to bring about specific changes to English Spelling while encouraging discussion on the various alternatives possible. Many years ago *New Spelling* was officially adopted as the Society's preferred scheme for the reform of English spelling. There have been a few slight amendments to *New Spelling* over the years but the policy is still the same. In practice we actively encourage discussion on *all* possible schemes and more importantly on how to bring about *any* spelling reforms. It is my view that it is the small stages to get spelling reform under way that are the most important, though we should not lose sight of the final result desired.

A Society such as ours thrives on the interest and involvement of the members and we need to encourage that wherever we can. Committee Meetings are held every two months or so, in London, and any members who wished to come to a meeting would be most welcome. Please let Stanley Gibbs know if you would like to be kept in touch with the dates and have a map of how to get there. It is planned to invite outside speakers to meetings on occasions in the future so that we can benefit from their experience and discuss ideas with them.

In your own area you may find that there is an opportunity to talk to clubs or societies about spelling reform. It makes an excellent discussion subject. In addition, newspapers can sometimes be persuaded to carry an article, as Mona Cross found recently, very successfully. One of our most difficult problems is that even though people are broadly aware of how illogical English spelling is, they are just not aware of the concept of Spelling Reform. The subject has not been widely considered or discussed. Hence at this stage our most important task must be to get people to think seriously about it and the benefits it can bring.

*Editor's comments: Hints for speakers to clubs and societies*

Useful material as a basis for talks, discussions and stimulating 'Spelling Games' —

Sir James Pitman and John St.John. ALPHABETS AND READING. Pitman, London 1969.

From SPELLING PROGRESS BULLETIN: -

Elsie M. Oakensen, "Is spelling reform feasible'?" [Vol XX.2.1980](#), Item 3.

Valerie Yule, "Causes of illiteracy and recommendations for action" [XV 1975.4](#). Item 3

Valerie Yule, "Spelling and spelling reform, arguments pro and con", [Vol XVI.I.1976](#). Item 6

THE GAME'S UP! A little book of spelling games. V. Yule.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 2. from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held at Maria Fidelis Convent School, London, 7 May 1983.

*Elections.* All eight candidates were elected to serve one year — A. Bye, H. Cookson, M. Cross, L. Fennelly, C. Jolly, E. Oakensen, G. Rae, W.J. Reed.

*The Secretary's report.* Advertisements had cost about £26, and there had been some enquiries as a result.

*The Treasurer's report* showed a healthy balance. The 1984 subscription will remain at £5.

*Spelling Reform in the 1980s.* E. Cookson thought that local S.R. committees should be set up wherever possible. 'Pronunciation' was discussed and is to be placed on the next Committee agenda.

*Membership involvement* in the Newsletter is to be welcomed and an Asian member is being asked to contribute to the next issue.

*New name for the SSS* is discussed later on in this Newsletter. Suggestions included SPRINGLISH, Spelling Reform of English (A. Bye), and prefixing our title, "Spelling Reform, Simplified Spelling Society" (H. Cookson).

\* \* \* \* \*

*From the President, Professor John Downing, writing to the Chairman, Mr Jolly:*

"I heartily endorse both the new constitution and the statement of policies for the Simplified Spelling Society which the Committee has worked out. They represent a major step forward in the Society's work. Now we can face the public with confidence that we have practical common sense proposals that are worth considering. Please convey my opinion to the Committee and members. I cannot come to England in 1983, but am planning a visit in 1984... a lecture tour from 14th May to 3rd June.

\* \* \* \* \*



[Mona Cross: see [Journals](#), [Newsletters](#)]

## **From Miss Mona Cross,**

our new Public Relations Officer, and for so many years our unflagging and dedicated Treasurer:

"Dear members and interested people,

Greetings! Many thanks for your letters. If they were concerning details of reform, they are now being considered by Mr H. Cookson who in one of our special committee of three who prepare for our decisions on future Spelling Reform steps.

I have resigned as Honorary Treasurer so that I can devote my energy to the newly created position of "Public Relations Officer". As you, too, will be well aware, — few people know of us. Any ideas of yours as to how to 'spread the gospel' will be gladly received by me, and any co-operation you'll give will be welcomed. Last month a very tolerant and understanding reporter for our local paper, the CHRONICLE AND ECHO gave an excellent report about the Simplified Spelling Society and my work. As a result the BBC asked me if I could broadcast for Nationwide. Because of a change of venue to a town over a hundred miles away, this couldn't take place. I hope similar opportunity for publicity will arise for me, and for you. Why not?

Our new Treasurer is Mr Laurie Fennelly who lives in Southampton. He is a most pleasant and efficient committee member. In the past year he has dealt with the making of a good, currently valuable constitution and with the SR-1 etc. proposals. We are fortunate to have his services as Treasurer, and I myself am especially grateful to him.

The Auditors state that our monetary affairs are satisfactory. I will send you a copy of the relevant part of the Audit Account in the next News Bulletin.

We shall not be sending you any more free [SPELLING PROGRESS BULLETINS](#) because of the expense incurred, but they can be bought direct from Newell Tune, California, U.S.A., Subscription 5 U.S. dollars p.a.

I have been reading Newell Time's [SPELLING REFORM, A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF THE ADVANTAGES, EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS AND OBSTACLES TO ADOPTION](#). It seems to have in it something of everything I want to know. I recommend it to you. We sell it at the subsidised cost of £16. You can obtain a copy from our committee member Mr Alun Bye, Northampton. Cheques should be made out to the Simplified Spelling Society.

I should be grateful for any SSS books which you can spare and would refund your postage. I particularly want a copy of ALPHABETS AND READING, by Sir James Pitman K.B.E. and John St. John.

As a result of the CHRONICLE AND ECHO article on Spelling Simplification, I received on loan a little book from book collector Mr George Freeston. It's wellworn, dated 1829 but printed in 1824. Its title is ORTHOGRAPHICAL EXERCISES: IN A SERIES OF MORAL LETTERS etc. I send you a copy of an extract. The gentle moralising attitude of the writer James Alderson might make us smile. Yet the realisation that a hundred and fifty years later we have only just entered a time when the authorisation of spelling change has barely been considered, points to another moral.

You give so much of your time to working out the details of how we can help children and all who need to communicate in English. I'd be glad if you'd write to me about any ideas you have to popularise such a fine cause.

My best wishes to each one of you, all over the world.

Yours sincerely,  
Mona Cross.

As you will see from the News Letter, I have resigned as Treasurer, but I hope that you will still go on writing to me, particularly for the News Bulletin; and maybe you will write about publicity too.

I'd like to thank you all for the pleasure you've brought me during the eight years in which I've served as Treasurer. For that job I was told I would only have to sign some cheques. But that brought a link with members all over the world, and with people who, to me, are individuals and friends. I haven't met you all — but I feel as tho I had. So I send my thanks and my good wishes to you in your personal lives. May you be rewarded for all your efforts and allegiance to the Society by finding that we have created an enlightened and co-operative public. There's a high hope for 1983!

Yours sincerely, Mona Cross.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **3. EXTRACT FROM Orthographical Exercises in a Series of Moral Letters, etc.**

by the late James Alderson, revised and corrected by the Reverend Thomas Smith. London.  
Printed by (nine printers including Longman). On the cover is stamped "Jas Gibbs, Blisworth, 1829.

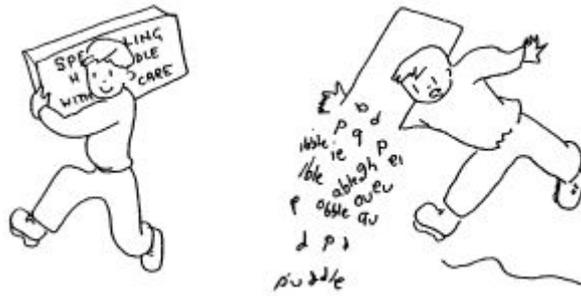
"My deer sun, I resevd yoor lettur and am delited with the karaktur yoo giv me ov yoor yung frend. You (sic) describe him az being affabl, oblijing, komplezant; as (sic) wun hoo plezes all, and with hoom all ar plezed. Yoor warm and anemated kkommendashuns make me hope that yoo see thozе ameabl kwolletes in ther tru lite, that you will ende vur to imetate so good an egzampl and to let the koppe ekwal if possebl, the orijenal.

There iz nuthing we awt more to inkurridje in ourselvz and uthurs than good-natshure. Wer this kwollete in more jeneral yuse.. the paths ov life, too oftn strowd with thorns, wood be kuvurd with rozes.

*Comment by Mona Cross:* As you will see, the reformer tried to spell phonetically, occasionally missed out unpronounced letters as we would for SR-1, and is inconsistent. Some spelling schemes tried out in the nineteen-eighties show exactly the same characteristics.

Where do you think this well-worn 'Spelling Reform' book could have been used?

\* \* \* \* \*



## 4. Choose your own spelling reforms

A report from the working party of Laurie Fennelly, Harry Cookson and Chris Jolly — a working party established as a result of the initiative of Professor John Downing.

It has been our aim to produce and publicise a number of separate reforms for spelling that people could use on a 'help yourself' basis. The proposals have not been finalised yet and a fuller report will be made later. At this stage we simply provide an outline for discussion. Each reform will be independent of the others. There will be no implication that people should be using all of them at once or even that they should select from them in any particular order. The reforms will each stand on their own for individuals to choose from as they wish.

Several good proposals have already been made by other reforms along these lines. Our intention has been to acknowledge and draw on these ideas while adding some original ideas of our own. The most important innovation we feel able to make is to introduce reforms based on the t.o. *spellings* of words, rather than their *pronunciations*. A few examples will make this clear.

Take the popular suggestion of reforming the spelling of *ph* as in *photo*. If this becomes a reform of all *f sounds* it needs to include the reform of words like *cough* and *laugh* — a worthy idea but complex if carried out this way. On the other hand if it is the reform of all *ph spellings* then it needs to include the reform of words like *nephew* and *shepherd* where *ph* is not, or not always, pronounced *f*. To insist that the reform applies only when the spelling *ph* is pronounced *f* is to make it dependent on *two* factors instead of *one*, an unnecessary complication and one that would be very confusing in more complex reforms.

Reforms based on *spelling* in t.o. have three distinct advantages,

1. Dialect differences cause very much less confusion, if any.
2. Specific letter clusters, e.g. *ph* are very much easier to notice than specific pronunciations, e.g. *f*. This is important when we come to write in a reformed spelling — any reformed spelling — and need to notice where to use the reform.
3. When *reading* in a reformed spelling we may need help in identifying a letter, e.g. *fase*, *fobia*, especially if there is no context to guide us. Reforms based on *spelling* can provide a link back to the original spelling in t.o. It is suggested that a designation such as *SR-ph* be used to identify a text where *ph* spellings have been reformed. Armed with this knowledge, a reader would be able to work back from *fase* to *phase* and from *fobia* to *phobia*.

The complete pattern of reforms being considered is therefore a mix from several sources:

The first is the long-standing SR-1 proposal of Harry Lindgren, a proposal that is gaining increasing acceptance. This is the suggestion that the letter *e* is used for the sound of *e* as in *bet*. Hence *meny*, *frend*, etc.

The second proposals are those of Ayb Citron. These include the suggested removal of the final *e* in common words where it is not necessary. Hence *hav*, *liv*, *giv*, *ar*, etc.

Finally there are the fresh proposals being made here. Two examples are given below to help make them clearer. They are reforms of the letter clusters *sc* and *augh*.

#### SR-sc

1. sc - s Scene - sene, science - sience, crescent - cresent.
2. sc - sk Scare - skare, describe - deskribe, disc - disk, sceptic - skeptic.
3. sc - sh Crescendo - creshendo, fascist - fashist.

#### SR: aughc

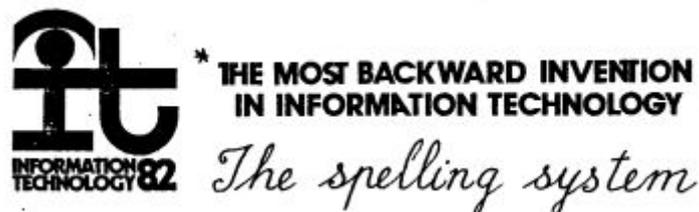
1. augh - af Draught - draft, laugh - laf (cf: daft, staff, after)
2. augh - au Caught - caut, fraught - fraut, daughter - dauter, haughty - hauty
3. augh - aw Taught - tawt (to avoid a homograf with *taut*. cf law, saw, crawl)

Spelling reform needs fresh ideas to encourage individuals to use reformed spellings and to think about the subject. Increasingly this is happening and the intention of the working party is to help this process take place.

*Chris Jolly*

(Editor's comment: The working party will, it is hoped, later be considering the approach being tested in Valerie Yule's reserch with lerners and skild readers "*When in dout, leave it out*" as in words taken from this page:-

knowledge, would, back, considered, therefore, sources, the, friend, are, examples, below, scene, seience, Creseent, staff, caught, fraught, daughter, haughty, taught, reformed, will, approach..)



\*\*\*\*\*

from Mr Stanley Gibbs:

[Stanley Gibbs: see [Journals](#), [Newsletters](#), [Leaflet](#)]

## 5. The Way Forward

During the past few months I have been reconsidering matters of the Society's policy. Most of our members are unaware of the occasional murmurs of dissent which arise; dissent with the details of Nue Spelling and dissent with the order of the 'stages' of reform which are to be taken.

It seems to me that after 75 years of existence the SSS should have a set scheme, and at least some idea of the method of achieving the use of it. At the same time, the Society must show respect for, and allow for the differences of opinion which arise mostly in the conflict between the fonemic considerations and the attractions of present-day usage. All through my 16 years of membership the following matters of dissent have repeatedly cropped up: - *th* v *thh* and *dh*; *guud food* v *good fuud*; *meni* v *meny*; *lieon* v *lion*. I propose now that the SSS should show magnanimity to all members by having i) preferred, ii) alternative spellings.

I am suggesting that the 'preferred' spelling should be *dh-th*; *guud food*; *meni*; *lieon*. I believe that these spellings are the result of the rigorous application of the principles under which Nue Spelling was created.

Having attempted to solve the Nue Spelling problems, I am convinced that an official recognition should be afforded to the several well-thought-out schemes which have been sent to us for approval. I am thinking particularly of Walter Gassner's and Axel Wijk's systems, which although founded on different criteria, are nevertheless scholarly and soundly constructed schemes.

I make no apology for referring yet again to the American 'Big Four'. These need to be put in order of urgency and importance. My own suggestion for this order is as follows:

1. Spell the short *e* sound with an *e*.
2. Respell all the *ough* and *augh* words.
3. Drop the final *e* in words where the resultant spelling becomes fonemic and unambiguous.
4. Replace *ph* with *f* where the sound is *f*.

Nos. 1–3 deal with misleading spellings. No. 4 is easy to operate and brings English into line with other European languages.

Of these reforms No 3 is liable to cause us most headaches. *Gon*, *shon*, *liv*, *hav* are simple to understand, but *trouble*, *where*, *there*, *please* are rather problematic. However, with the two restrictions being enforced, "Are the resultant spellings fonemic and unambiguous?" these and other such words could be dealt with effectively.

Provided that we can understand the ramifications of the "Big Four" and solve the problems as they are seen, we may well prevent nit-picking by our critics.

With a well-thought-out policy and the firm resolve to implement it, we will be able to present our policy to the government when the time is ripe.

\* \* \* \* \*

from Mr Gilbert Rae

[Gilbert Rae: see [Journal 2](#) Item 9, [News 7](#) Item 9]

## 6. Pronunciation System using Simplified Spelling

The Penguin English Dictionary 3rd edition, which is the current edition, continues to use a simplified spelling system for making pronunciation clear. Its Pronunciation Guide explains, "A system of phonetic spelling is used which consists of letters and groups of letters, the pronunciation of which is already familiar to the reader." It is in fact a kind of synthetic simplified spelling. Mr. W.S. Aitken M.A. devised and applied this system.

The basic method employed is the 'regularization' method of simplifying spelling extolled by Axel Wijk. It could be called 'Standardization'. Obviously it is a good idea.

It might be asked why the Aitken-Penguin system of phonetic spelling is not used as an alternative English spelling for general use. The answer is that it lacks an important attribute for this purpose. The visual connection between it and the current spelling is often non-existent, because the meanings are different, e.g. 'l' represents I, AYE and EYE; and 'kayk' does not look like CAKE. It destroys the roots by which many people can guess the meaning of words. For pronunciation only, these objections do not exist. It should be mentioned that this dictionary does not give derivations.

Another difficulty would arise if Aitken's phonetic pronunciation were used as an alternative English spelling. He does not make any distinction between words spelt differently, but sounding the same (homophones), e.g. *right*, *wright*, *rite* and *write* are all RIt. Capital R means that it must be pronounced properly. Capital I means that it must be pronounced as a long vowel. For pronunciation only, this scheme is eminently suitable.

Having given in the Pronunciation Table the various normal sounds of English letters, it is found necessary to follow 'received' pronunciation and complicate matters by adding a modified sound for the letter R, and 11 examples of different vowels when followed by the letter R. This is not simplifying either pronunciation or spelling. It is complicating them both beyond reason. Surely simplification demands pronouncing all the letters as standard in the main part of the Pronunciation table. This is not Mr Aitken's fault of course.

'Received' Pronunciation, or whatever else it may be called, is found in practice to be that given in the four best English dictionaries. It also includes some 'Received Mispronunciation'! For example, 'fuchs-ia', a name given by botanists to a South American plant and flower, is mispronounced "fewsha". Other English dictionaries are slightly more botanical by pronouncing the 'i' in 'fewshia' as they do in 'dahlia' and 'forsythia'. In this example, it must be admitted that 'fewshia' sounds much more pleasant than the German original.

Letters E and I when functioning as retroactive accents are a mad idea and should be abolished. Mr Aitken does just that. MADE and MAID for example both become 'mayd'. QUITE becomes 'kwlt'. It is astonishing that there are Englishmen who are unaware that accent-letters exist. When mentioned to one man, he just laughed and laughed. Finally he said, "You can't tell me that letters can be accents". He was then told to look at the words MADE and QUITE, knock off the silent Es

and observe the results. Unfortunately one can always find exceptions to every rule in the English language. That's what makes it difficult.

As 'everybody' knows, the letters E and I also act as softening accents with the two consonants C and G (sometimes).

GET (get): *Hard G*: GILL (gil) breathing organ of a fish.

GEM (jem): *Soft G*: GILL (jil) ¼ pint of liquid.

Aitken makes the G always hard, and substitutes letter J for soft G. Likewise, he abolishes soft C, replacing it by S, and S is always sibilant, e.g. PLACID becomes 'placid'. Voiced S is replaced by Z.

These changes must be made before certain other words can be changed, e.g. AGAIN to be pronounced as 'agen' with hard G. In this case Mr Aitken gives the alternative pronunciation as 'agayn'. In short, the functions of E and I as accents must be eliminated.

Mr W.S. Aitken has produced a practical and ingenious pronunciation system, using only the letters of the English alphabet. It is very useful to English people, and fascinating to those who are interested in simplified spelling, revealing phonetic details perhaps not previously appreciated.

Gilbert Rae.

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

from Dr. Newell W. Tune:  
[Newell Tune: Editor [Bulletins](#), [Anthology](#)]

## 7. Subsequent steps to SR-1

I realise that there have been some people who disagree about the priorities in SR-x and would prefer that SR-1 be either *f* for *ph* or dropping the unnecessary silent terminal *e*. But Lindgren's SR-1 is already fairly well established, so we should not change that. The responses to my questionnaire unanimously agreed upon *f* for *ph* as SR-2, and the majority agreed on SR-3 to be dropping the unnecessary silent terminal *e* when it wrongly indicates the previous vowel is sounded long, as in *hav*, *giv*, etc. No agreement was possible on subsequent steps.

### The spelling of th

A century ago when reformers were not as well informed on fonetics as we are today, they thought that because *t* and *d* were cognate pairs, *dh* would be a good digraf to represent the voiced *th*-sound, leaving the unvoiced *th*-sound to be represented by *th*, but they did no research to see how this would affect the printed page. Dewey showed that the voiced *th*-sound was 4 times as frequent on the printed page, hence made too many changes. *T* and *V* are also cognate pairs, yet no one has ever suggested that *vh* would be a satisfactory symbol for either *th*-sound. Both *dh* and *vh* would suggest a wrong sound, the kind that teachers want to eradicate from local dialects. Nor is *f* the same as *fh* any more than *t* is the same as *th*. A digraf represents a totally different sound than its component letters, viz. *c* plus *h* does not have the sound of *ch*.

I can see that England has a problem with dialectics as well as we on the East coast and the deep South of U.S.A. I could live with either *f* or *thh*, whichever the SSS was able to agree upon. The important point is to come to an agreement on one system to present a united front to enquirers about spelling reform. By accepting *thh*, the SSS would then be in total agreement with Dewey's World English. New Spelling has two bad faults that Americans would not accept. Dewey pointed them out to the SSS on several occasions. That is why the American Society and the SSS parted company. Finally the *guud-food* symbolisation was accepted but the *dh* symbol was not discarded, although discredited by Dan Jones, Pitman, Dewey and myself.

References: Dewey on "The best means of representing the *th* sounds, and my similar article on this subject. Tune in the [Winter 1981 Issue of Spelling Progress Bulletin](#) Item 5 on SR-2 thru SR-8.

*Comment* from Valerie Yule: I think that research would demonstrate that introducing written distinctions between the two *th* sounds is unnecessary except for foreigners learning English without oral lessons, and would cause more difficulties for learners and users, not only Welshmen.

\* \* \* \* \*

from Mr. Alun Bye

[Alun Bye: see [Bulletin](#), [Journals](#), [News 2](#) Item 5]

## 8. Changing the name of the Society

There have been many responses to my earlier suggestion for changing the name of the Simplified Spelling Society. Most have been generally in favour of a change, with only one response totally against. All of the favourable responses have agreed on the need for the title to begin with the word SPELLING, as this aids accessibility when searching for the name through alphabetical lists.

There is also general agreement that the word REFORM is a good substitute for SIMPLIFIED, and that the title should begin with the words: SPELLING REFORM. The greatest controversy has arisen over the third word of the title. I had suggested INTERNATIONAL because of our international links, but several objectors have pointed out that the inclusion in the title implies that we are concerned to reform the spelling of all languages as well as English.

Despite my initial claim that the word SOCIETY is a meaningless appendage, I have been persuaded that it at least contains no misleading information, and by its use it serves two purposes:

- a) provides a link with the present title, and
- b) it is less likely to be inferred that there might now exist in England two (possibly rival) organizations devoted to spelling reform.

I have therefore accepted that a more appropriate title would be SPELLING REFORM SOCIETY. At the AGM there seemed to be general agreement on the need for a new title, and that SPELLING REFORM SOCIETY would be generally acceptable. It would however be valuable to have other members' views on

- a) the desirability of a change
- b) any other suggested titles.

I would be happy to accept these, and would present all correspondence at the next committee meeting.

\* \* \* \* \*



\* \* \* \* \*

## 9. Comments from Members on the Constitution

R. Baker, Southampton. "I'm a bit worried about the power of the largely unaccountable Vice-Presidents" (elected for life).

J. Brummell. "I would prefer 'simplification' rather than 'reform' para A2."

A. Citron, Michigan. "I suggest that (Section B on membership line 1) be changed to 'Membership is open to any person or organization interested in furthering..' I commend the Committee on an excellent job.

C. Cook. New York "I found the Proposed Constitution to be fair and easily understood".

S. Eustace, London. "The 1977 Constitution gave outlying members a voice in the Society's affairs. It was not 'cumbersome' but extremely simple. My innovation, the bankers' order system, has been overlooked."

E Gregerson, New York. A2. "One aim should be to provide some record and guide to English pronunciation. The Constitution should be written in 'Stage 1'."

C. Kleber, Michigan. "Excellent!"

R. Lung, Scarborough. "The Secretary should be an elected official as should be the Treasurer, but the Treasurer should be acceptable first to the Committee. Too much expense has been lavished on constitutional matters. Elections should be done by the single transferable vote. The restriction on 'five Vice-Presidents' (D1) is unwarranted, it shuts the door on securing more distinguished people to lend their names to our cause."

M. Cross, Northampton. "The Treasurer should be appointed for 2 years. E2 should be worded, 'A copy of the statement of account, will be sent to all members annually.' F5. Overseas members should be asked in the Winter Newsletter to send in nominations for the Committee. The present 21 days are inadequate."

N. Tune, Hollywood. "Nothing is said about free membership for the over 65s. Nothing is said about sponsoring any particular reform. This should be debated and decided 'Yes' or 'no' by the Officers and Committee."

\* \* \* \* \*

[Valerie Yule: see [Bulletins](#), [Anthology](#), [Quarterly](#), [Journals](#), [Newsletters](#), [Personal Views](#) 10 & 16, [Media](#), [Books](#).]

## 10. Experiments on the benefit of spelling reforms for learners

Teachers interested in testing out whether some spelling reforms would actually make a difference to learners are asked to contact Valerie Yule, Department of Psychology, University of Aberdeen.

One aspect of the experiments is finding out whether pupils reading text with surplus letters omitted can then make an immediate transition to reading present elaborate spelling and understand its structure better in learning to spell themselves.

One teacher already reports that her pupils 'enjoyed it all immensely and were often surprised and excited that they found it so easy.' She also found the feedback and recommendations about words that individual children made on the findings were useful and helped a backward child with motivation too.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 11. SEPTEMBER 30 spelling watchers day

This year's Competition for Spelling Day is for the best collection of SPELLING JOKES

Collect cartoons, limericks, quips, riddles, anecdotes, and make up your own.

Prizes for the best individual collections:

10 SPELLING GAMESBOOKS, 10 CARTOON MEMO BOOKLETS

Prize for the best school collection: TEACH YOURSELF TO SPELL BOOKLET

Closing date October 30 1983. The usual competition rules apply. Entries will only be returned if accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, and it is understood that all jokes are free for inclusion in the SPELLING JOKEBOOK that is being compiled in aid of literacy research.

Send entries to the SPELLING JOKES COMPETITION 1983, Old Aberdeen, Scotland.

Thirty days hath September  
Spelling Reform to remember

Sound i:

*pretty, busy, women, give, sieve, build, rhythm, bicycle, carriage, myth, infinitum*

SPELLING WATCHERS AND SPELLING SPOTTERS — look around you on Spelling Day — for misspelled signs, simplified spellings, signs, trademarks, new words, children's writing, spelling in national newspapers.

Find out about people who cannot read, reform in other languages, changes in English spelling — and practice some Spelling Reform yourself. Have a special study of Spelling at school — and University —

\* \* \* \* \*



SPELLING'S  
FUNNY  
ALRIGHT