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leader, *n.*¹

Pronunciation: Brit. /'liːdə/, U.S. /'lidər/

Forms: ME–15 **ledar(e, leder(e, (ME ledder, leeder, ME ledir, leedare), ME–16 Sc. leidar, leider, (15 ledair), 15– leader.**

Frequency (in current use):

Etymology: Old English *lédere*, < *lédan* LEAD *v.*¹ + -ER suffix¹.

I. One who leads.

1.

a. gen. in various senses of the vb.: One who conducts, precedes as a guide, leads a person by the hand or an animal by a cord, etc. Also with adverbs, as **leader-away, leader-on**, for which see the corresponding verbal phrases. *follow my leader*: see FOLLOW *v.* 1c.

a1300 *E.E. Psalter* liv. 14 Mi leder, and mi kowth sa gode.

c1374 CHAUCER *Troilus & Criseyde* IV. 1454 (1482) Oon thynketh þe bere But al a-nother thynketh his ledere.

1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) Matt. xv. 14 Thei ben blynde, and lederis of blynde men.

1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomew de Glanville *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (1495) XII. viii. 418 Curlewes haue guydes and ledars as cranes haue for they drede the goshawke.

?c1450 *Life St. Cuthbert* (1891) l. 5675 Withouten ledar nedit he [a man struck blind] To abyde behynd.

1487 (†a1380) J. BARBOUR *Bruce* (St. John's Cambr.) VII. 20 He suld ger Bath the sleuthhund & the ledar Tyne the sleuth men ger him ta.

1513 G. DOUGLAS tr. Virgil *Æneid* I. xi. 5 Blythlie following his ledair Achates.

1552 R. HULOET *Abcedarium Anglico Latinum* Leder awaye, *abductor*.

a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1623) III. ii. 2 You were wont to be a follower, but now you are a Leader.

1633 J. FORD *Broken Heart* I. ii. sig. B4 Without Reason; Voycing the Leader-on a Demi-god.

1667 MILTON *Paradise Lost* VI. 451 Leader to free Enjoyment of our right as Gods.

1697 DRYDEN tr. Virgil *Georgics* III, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 112 Ample Plains..Where oft the Flocks, without a Leader stray.

1839 DICKENS *Nicholas Nickleby* xiii. 112 Follow your leader, boys, and take pattern by Smike if you dare.

1861 J. EDMOND *Children's Church at Home* i. 17 Christ is..a leader to all that trust him.

†**b. One who has the charge of (animals).**

1495 *Act 11 Hen. VII c. 34 §4* The office of the Maistershippe of the leder of the Dere of the parke of Okeley.

†**c.** The driver of a vehicle. *Obs.*

a1400 (▶a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 21283 Bath wise and war es þat leder.

d. *dial.* A carter.

1497 in T. Dickson *Accts. Treasurer Scotl.* (1877) I. 355 Item, to the sand ledaris, xviijs.

1548 in J. D. Marwick *Extracts Rec. Burgh Edinb.* (1871) II. 141 That na maner of persouns ledares of burne tak [etc.].

1847 *Sheffield Indep.* (E.D.D.) A coal leader.

1887 D. DONALDSON *Jamieson's Sc. Dict.* Suppl. (at cited word) Until comparatively late years the occupation of water-carrier was followed by a large number of men and women, some carried by hand..; some by barrow..; and some by cart—those were the leaders.

1888 S. O. ADDY *Gloss. Words Sheffield* *Leader*, a carter. 'A coal leader'.

2. One who leads a body of armed men; a commander, a captain.

▶a1387 J. TREVISA tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (St. John's Cambr.) (1874) V. 217 The oost of þe Gothes was i-slawe in Thuscia, and here ledere Ragadasius was i-take.

a1400 (▶a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 7630 And of a thusand men o wal He made him [sc. David] ledder and marscal.

c1400 tr. *Secreta Secret, Gov. Lordsh.* 108–9 Off lederes off ostes and here ordinaunce..Folwe þanne vche comandour tene vicaires, & vche vicaire tene lederes, & vche ledere tene denys.

1488 (▶c1478) HARY *Actis & Deidis Schir William Wallace* (Adv.) (1968–9) IV. l. 143 Our leidar is gayne. Amang our fays he is set him allayne.

a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Henry VI, Pt. 1* (1623) I. i. 143 A worthy Leader, wanting ayd, Vnto his dastard foe-men is betray'd.

1665 T. MANLEY tr. H. Grotius *De Rebus Belgicis* 715 Sir Horace Vere..performed the duty, both of a good Leader and Souldier.

1828 SCOTT *Fair Maid of Perth* xii, in *Chron. Canongate* 2nd Ser. I. 314 All this day..they will gather to their leader's standard.

1848 H. H. WILSON *Hist. Brit. India 1805–35* III. i. 20 Detachments of troops were..sent..to secure the leaders.

3.

a. One who guides others in action or opinion; one who takes the lead in any business, enterprise, or movement; one who is 'followed' by disciples or adherents; the chief of a sect or party. †In early use

occasionally a chieftain, governor.

Leader of the House of Commons: the member of the government who has the official initiative in the proceedings of the House; (see also quot. 1964^v); frequently *ellipt.* as **Leader of the House**; so **Leader of the House of Lords (or of the Upper House)**.

- 1489 (†a1380) J. BARBOUR *Bruce* (Adv.) III. 660 Angus..wes.. lord and ledar off Kyntyrr.
- 1495 *Act 11 Hen. VII* c. 7 The seid..principall or principallis leder or leders that unlauffully cause the seid people to gedre or rise.
- 1532 T. MORE *Confut. Tyndale* in *Wks.* 515/2 The leaders and maisters of the christen fayth.
- 1552 ABP. J. HAMILTON *Catech.* I. vii. f. 19^v To be ledar, techar, and direckar of the same kirk.
- 1596 J. DALRYMPLE tr. J. Leslie *Hist. Scotl.* (1895) II. 213 For his brotheris caus he was cheif leider of the ring.
- 1666 W. TEMPLE *Let. to Sir W. Godolphin* in *Wks.* (1713) II. 18 The Duke of Albuquerque you will find..no great Leader in Council or Business.
- 1721 SWIFT *Let. to Young Gentleman* 11 Demosthenes and Cicero..each of them a Leader..in a popular State.
- 1828 I. D'ISRAELI *Comm. Life Charles I* II. xi. 269 A genius so commanding and so turbulent, was fitted to be the leader of a party.
- 1835 *Ann. Reg. 1834* Hist. Europe 335/2 It was requisite to find a new chancellor of the Exchequer, and a new leader of the House of Commons.
- 1841–4 R. W. EMERSON *Manners* in *Wks.* (1906) I. 208 If the people should destroy class after class, until two men only were left, one of these would be the leader.
- 1852 B. DISRAELI *Ld. G. Bentinck* xx. 397 The government abandoned this..project..scarcely with decency, for the leader of the house of lords was eulogizing its virtues..at the moment it was cast away by the chancellor of the exchequer.
- 1852 LD. PALMERSTON *Let.* 24 Dec. in J. Russell *Later Corr.* (1925) II. xx. 119 If the extensive duties of Leader of the House of Commons can be performed without salary why should any public officer have any?
- 1855 LD. PALMERSTON *Let.* 7 Feb. in Queen Victoria *Letts.* (1907) III. xxiv. 131 Proposed cabinet... Organ of the Government or Leader of the House of Lords. Marquis of Lansdowne.
- 1868 C. D. YONGE *Life 2nd Earl of Liverpool* I. iv. 145 According to the usage of that day, when the Prime Minister was a Commoner, the Home Secretary, if a peer, was the leader of the Upper House.
- 1869 A. TODD *On Parl. Govt. in Eng.* II. iv. 323 The leader of the House of Commons is at liberty to arrange the order of business appointed for government nights as he thinks fit.
- 1874 J. R. GREEN *Short Hist. Eng. People* viii. §5. 500 The leaders in the country party..were thrown into prison.
- 1883 J. A. FROUDE *Short Stud.* IV. II. ii. 187 Circumstances independent of himself could alone have raised him into a leader of a party.
- 1908 A. E. STEINTHAL tr. J. Redlich *Procedure House of Commons* I. 120 The name and function of the chief member of the Government in the House of Commons, the Leader of the House.
- 1964 L. A. ABRAHAM & S. C. HAWTREY *Parl. Dict.* (ed. 2) 111 The term 'Leader of the House' was originally applied to the chief spokesman for the Government in the House of Commons when the Prime Minister was a member of the House of Lords.
- 1964 L. A. ABRAHAM & S. C. HAWTREY *Parl. Dict.* (ed. 2) 111 The Leader of the House receives no

salary as such... His chief responsibility is for planning and supervising the Government's legislative programme, and in particular for the arrangement..of the business of the House.

1964 L. A. ABRAHAM & S. C. HAWTREY *Parl. Dict.* (ed. 2) 112 The Leader of the House of Lords is the chief spokesman for the Government in that House.

1974 *Guardian* 30 Apr. 1/4 A statement from Mr Short, Leader of the House, on the registration of interests is promised later this week, but there are deep differences between the parties over whether the register should be compulsory or voluntary.

1974 *Guardian* 30 Apr. 1/4 A promised personal statement by Mr Short, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the House of Commons, was delayed by several hours last night.

†**b.** Phrases. **leader of laws**: one who has power in the state, a ruler.

leader of hail: a guide to salvation. *Obs.*

c1400 (þ?c1380) *Cleanness* l. 1307 He..hatz..þe lederes of her lawe layd to þe grounde.

c1440 *York Myst.* xxx. 55 O leder of lawis.

c1480 (þa1400) *St. Peter* 674 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) I. 26 And þu [Paul], dere brothir, far wele ay..lledar of heile and saweoure.

a1605 A. MONTGOMERIE *Sonnets* (1887) xxi. 1 My lords, late lads, nou leiders of our lauis.

c. A counsel who 'leads' (see LEAD *v.*¹ 16) in the conduct of a case before the court; a barrister whose status (in England, that of a King's Counsel) entitles him to 'lead'. Also, the senior counsel of a circuit.

1856 W. COLLINS *Rogue's Life* v He had engaged the leader of the circuit to defend me.

1878 W. W. R. BALL *Student's Guide to Bar* 44 At the trial itself he will generally have a 'leader' on whom the conduct of the case will wholly depend.

1883 J. H. SLATER *Guide Legal Prof.* 17 Queen's Counsel are usually termed 'Leaders', and they sit in front of the utter Barristers, whom they are said to 'lead' in any particular case in which both are engaged.

d. The foremost or most eminent member (of a profession); also, in wider sense, a person of eminent position and influence.

1858 O. W. HOLMES *Autocrat of Breakfast-table* v. 138 Judges, mayors..leaders in science..were represented in that meeting.

1884 *Illustr. London News* 1 Nov. 410/3 Here is Mr. F. Archer, the leader of his profession.

e. *spec.* as a rendering of German *Führer*, Italian *Duce*, or Spanish *Caudillo*: the head of an authoritarian state. Usually with capital initial. Also *transf.* (in quot. 1934 applied to the leader of the British Fascists, Sir Oswald Mosley).

- 1918 W. H. HUDSON *Far Away & Long Ago* viii. 130 The greatest and most interesting of all the South American Caudillos or leaders.
- 1934 H. G. WELLS *Exper. in Autobiogr.* II. ix. 783 Quite a quantity of pleasant boys and nice young men.. were acting as ushers, selling idiotic songs about their glorious Leader.
- 1937 A. HUXLEY *Ends & Means* i. 2 The twentieth [century] has already witnessed..the emergence of the sheep-like social man and the god-like Leader.
- 1939 S. SPENDER tr. E. Toller *Pastor Hall* I. 48 I've never spoken a word against the Leader.
- 1952 A. BULLOCK *Hitler* iii. 123 There was persistent..grumbling at the amount of money the Leader and his friends took out of Party funds for their own expenses.
- 1960 H. SETON-WATSON *Neither War nor Peace* viii. 226 The head of the government was the Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, who was also Leader (*Führer*) of the party, and on the death of President Hindenburg in 1934 replaced him as Head of State with the title of Leader of the German Nation.

4. One who leads a choir or band of dancers, musicians, or singers.

leader of praise (Sc.) = PRECENTOR *n.*

- 1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 238/1 Leader of a daunce, *auant dancevr.*
- 1600 SHAKESPEARE *Much Ado about Nothing* II. i. 141 Wee must follow the leaders .
- 1786 T. BUSBY *Compl. Dict. Music* Leader, a performer who in a concert takes the principal violin, receives the time and style of the several movements from the conductor, and communicates them to the rest of the band.
- 1859 J. M. JEPHSON & L. REEVE *Narr. Walking Tour Brittany* xvi. 269 The leader, as in our village churches, was evidently a person of immense importance.
- 1892 *Glasgow Herald* 22 Apr. 2/2 Leader of Praise Wanted.
- 1900 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* July 51/1 The leader trills ahead in runs and shakes up and down the scale.

5. Among Methodists, the presiding member of a 'class' (see CLASS *n.*

12b). Usually **class-leader**.

- 1743 WESLEY *Nat. United Societies in Wks.* (1872) VIII. 270 There are about twelve persons in every class; one of whom is styled the Leader.
- 1791 J. HAMPSON *Mem. J. Wesley* III. 82 Each society is divided into companies of ten or fifteen, called classes; each of which regularly meets the leader once a week.

6.

a. The first man in a file, one in the front rank, one of the foremost in a moving body. In *Surveying*, the foremost carrier of the chain.

- 1604 C. EDMONDES *Maner of Mod. Training in Observ. Cæsars Comm.* II. 130 Euery one is especially to acknowledge his leader or foremost man to be the author of all his motions.

- 1616 J. BINGHAM tr. *Ælian Tactiks* v. 42 Hee, that leadeth the file, who is also called the file-leader.
- 1622 H. PEACHAM *Compl. Gentleman* (1634) 240 The men in the File are to be distinguished by the names of Leaders, Bringers up and Middle-men.
- 1796 *Instr. & Regulations Cavalry* 26 The file leaders preserve such distances as they ought from which ever hand they are to dress to.
- 1809 W. IRVING *Hist. N.Y.* (1861) 135 Most people require a..file-leader.
- 1857 T. HUGHES *Tom Brown's School Days* I. vii. 165 The leaders are busy making casts into the fields on the left and right.
- 1860 J. TYNDALL *Glaciers of Alps* I. xxv. 188 Another person was sent forward, who drew himself up by the rope which was attached to the leader.

b. One of the front horses in a team, or the front horse in a tandem.

- 1699 B. E. *New Dict. Canting Crew* Leaders..the Fore-horses in Coaches and Teams.
- 1785 W. COWPER *Tirocinium* in *Task* 254 With pack-horse constancy we keep the road..True to the jingling of our leader's bells.
- 1825 W. HONE *Every-day Bk.* (1826) I. 1191 He was a capital horse, the off-leader.
- 1859 DICKENS *Tale of Two Cities* I. ii. 3 The near leader violently shook his head.
- 1885 J. RUSKIN *Præterita* I. vi. 182 If the horses were young..there was a postillion for the leaders also.

7.

a. Cards. The first player in a round; also, one who 'leads' from a particular suit.

- 1677 G. MIEGE *New Dict. French & Eng.* II. sig. Dd4^v/2 A leader, in Cards, *celui que jouë le premier*.
- 1742 E. HOYLE *Whist* (1763) 45 If the Leader of that Suit or his Partner have the long Trump.
- 1876 A. CAMPBELL-WALKER *Correct Card* Gloss. p. xii *Leader*, the first to play each round.

b. Curling. The first player: cf. LEAD *n.*² 5a.

- 1789 D. DAVIDSON *Thoughts Seasons* 166 Next Robin o' Mains, a leader good, Close to the witter drew.

II. A thing which leads.

8.

a. gen.

- c1290 *S. Eng. Leg.* I. 33/124 Þe steorre gan softe to glide forth, also it were þene way to teche... Þe Abbot Anourede his ledare.
- c1450 tr. Thomas à Kempis *De Imitatione Christi* III. lxi. 143 Þe crosse is þe lif of a gode monke, & þe leder to paradise.

1581 R. MULCASTER *Positions* Ep. Ded. sig. ij^v It is an argument which craueth consideration, bycause it is the leader to a further consequence.

b. colloq. A remark or question intended to lead conversation (cf. FEELER *n.* 5a).

1882 C. E. L. RIDDELL *Prince of Wales's Garden-party* 34 'And what did you make of them over the dish of tea?' suggested the young man as a leader.

c. Comm. (orig. U.S.) = LEADING ARTICLE *n.* 2 cf. *loss leader n.* at LOSS *n.*¹ Compounds.

1851 C. CIST *Sketches & Statistics Cincinnati* xv. 319 These articles [sc. sugar, molasses, coffee, etc.] are the leaders, as they are called, in commercial transactions, with the west.

1888 *Chicago Tribune* 29 Apr. 4/7 Goods advertised and sold below cost are technically known as 'leaders'.

1889 *Pop. Sci. Monthly* Mar. 622 A new rival may inflict severe loss..through cutting the price of a staple below cost, and making it what is called a 'leader'.

1895 *Critic* 6 Apr. 263/1 In several Sixth Avenue houses, new books by popular writers have long been used as 'leaders'—the technical name, I believe, for goods sold at little or no profit, sometimes even at a loss, for the sake of drawing customers, with a view of getting them to buy other wares as well.

1963 'R. FINDLATER' *What are Writers Worth?* 14 Most [paperback] firms produce about a dozen titles every month..at the summit the 'leader'—the smash-hit novel on which the selling machine is focused.

1967 *Times Rev. Industry* Feb. 31/1 Establishing new products is both costly and hazardous..while old leaders tend to decline over the years.

1972 *Lebende Sprachen* 17 34/1 US leader—BE/US loss leader, BE leading article.

9. In a tree or shrub: The shoot which grows at the apex of the stem, or of a principal branch; also, a bine.

1572 L. MASCALL tr. in *Bk. Plant & Graffe Trees* 80 Ye shal neuer leaue aboue two, or three leaders at the heade of any principall braunch.

1822 J. C. LOUDON *Encycl. Gardening* III. I. 808 Retain a competent supply of side-shoots, with a good leader to each mother-branch.

1880 R. JEFFERIES *Round about Great Estate* 89 The leaders of the black bryony..twist around each other.

1892 *Gardeners' Chron.* 27 Aug. 242/1 The trees are allowed to waste their energies in the formation of a plurality of leaders at the top.

10. A tendon. (Cf. GUIDE *n.* 10, GUIDER *n.* 2c.)

- 1708 J. C. *Compl. Collier* 7 in T. Nourse *Mistery of Husbandry Discover'd* (ed. 3) Cutting their Leaders and Nerves.
- 1740 H. BRACKEN *Farriery Improv'd* (ed. 2) II. i. 22 What the common People call Leaders or Sinews.
- 1854 R. OWEN *Skel. & Teeth in Orr's Circle Sci.: Org. Nature* I. 163 The leaders of the leg-muscles in the turkey.
- 1891 *Daily News* 4 Sept. 3/7 In his second performance he severed one of the leaders of his thigh.

11.**a.** In agricultural drainage: a main drain.

- 1844 *Jrnl. Royal Agric. Soc.* 5 I. 9 One of the drains that enter the leader.

b. A tributary.

- 1853 G. JOHNSTON *Terra Lindisfarnensis* I. 15 The leaders to these burns are, in some places, called sykes.

12. = LEADING ARTICLE *n.* 1.

- 1837 *Southern Lit. Messenger* 3 418/2 The Editor thus commenceth his leader.
- 1838 DICKENS *Let.* 23 Dec. (1965) I. 475 I was very much obliged indeed to you for the paper. I. was greatly amused with the 'leader'.
- 1844 B. DISRAELI *Coningsby* I. II. vi. 216 Give me a man who can write a leader.
- 1847 LD. HOUGHTON *Let.* 30 Nov. in T. W. Reid *Life Ld. Houghton* (1890) I. ix. 401 You can get..a file of the *Times*, the commercial leaders of which you should get up.
- 1862 J. SKELTON *Nugæ Criticæ* xi. 482 He thought a page of Clarendon as pleasant historical reading as a leader in the *Times*.
- 1892 B. MATTHEWS *Americanisms & Briticisms* 22 An American..calls that an 'editorial' which the Englishman calls a 'leader'.

13. *Mining.***a.** A drain or stream that by its colour indicates the presence of minerals.

- 1809 A. HENRY *Trav. & Adventures Canada* 231 A green-coloured water, which tinged iron of a copper-colour, issued from the hill; and this the miners called a leader.

b. (See quot. 1846.)

- 1846 W. E. BROCKETT *J. T. Brockett's Gloss. North Country Words* (ed. 3) *Leader*, a small band of coal connecting the portions of a coal-seam detached by a dyke, and following which, leads the

miner to the seam again.

c. A small and insignificant vein, which leads to or indicates the proximity of a larger and better.

- 1855 J. R. LEIFCHILD *Cornwall: Mines & Miners* 95 Frequently the prevailing mineral runs continuously through the lode for considerable lengths and depths, forming what is called the leader.
- 1880 C. C. ADLEY *Rep. Pioneer Mining Co.* 2 Oct. 1 Two strong veins or leaders carrying copper ore have been crossed.
- 1890 *Goldfields of Victoria* 16 The prospects of the mine have improved, two auriferous leaders having been cut.
- 1900 *Daily News* 19 June 3/2 One or two tunnels had been drawn..on small leaders and..diamonds had been discovered.

14. *Fireworks and Gunnery.* A quick match enclosed in a paper tube for the purpose of conveying fire rapidly. Also *attrib.*, as **leader pipe** (see quot.).

- 1859 F. A. GRIFFITHS *Artillerist's Man.* (1862) 60 Lay a leader of quick match along the bore.
- 1859 F. A. GRIFFITHS *Artillerist's Man.* (1862) 282.
- 1878 T. KENTISH *Pyrotechn. Treas.* 103 Leader Pipes. These are for piping quickmatch.

15. *Fishing. (U.S.)*

a. The end portion of a reel-line, consisting of gut, and having the snells of the fly-hooks attached to it; a casting-line.

- 1859 J. R. BARTLETT *Dict. Americanisms* (ed. 2) *Leader*, a length of finely twisted hair, gut, or grass, for attaching an angler's hook to the line; a bottom. Called also a Snell.
- 1885 *Harper's Mag.* Apr. 777/1 The flies are attached to a leader, or, as our English brethren term it, a casting-line.

b. 'A net so placed as to intercept fish and lead them into a pound, weir, trap-net, etc.' (E. H. Knight *Pract. Dict. Mech.* Suppl. 1884).

16. *Machinery.*

a. (See quotes.)

- 1805 D. BREWSTER in *Ferguson's Lect. Mech.* (new ed.) II. 82 In a combination of wheels that which is acted upon by the power, or by some other wheel is called a leader.
- 1825 'J. NICHOLSON' *Operative Mechanic* 21 When speaking of the action of wheel-work in general,

the wheel which acts as a mover is called the *leader*, and the one upon which it acts the *follower*.

1895 *Mod. Steam Engine* 58 The wheels of a locomotive are called—1st, *leaders* or leading-wheels.

b. *U.S.* = *leading-block n.*

c. ‘A principal furrow leading from the eye to the skirt of a mill-stone’
(1875 E. H. Knight *Pract. Dict. Mech.* s.v. *Millstone*).

d. ‘One of the long vertical timbers guiding the ram of a pile-driver car’
(Funk's *Stand. Dict.*).

17. Printing. A line of dots or dashes to guide the eye in letterpress.

1824 J. JOHNSON *Typographia* II. iii. 59 Full points are sometimes used as *leaders* in tables of contents.

1871 *Amer. Encycl. Printing* 269/2 *Leaders* (... or ---), these consist of two or three dots, similar to full points, cast on one type, to the em body; there are also two or three em *leaders*, the number of dots being multiplied according to their length. Hyphen-faced leaders are also made (----).

18. Sc. and U.S. A pipe to conduct water.

1875 in E. H. Knight *Pract. Dict. Mech.*

1890 A. LOWSON *John Guidfellow* xix. 161 The name ‘Spout’ was derived from a spout, stroupe, or *leader*, that was inserted into the bank..leading the water which ran [etc.].

19. U.S. A guiding ring in an animal's nose. (*Cent. Dict.*)

20. Cinematogr. and Tape Recording. A short length of blank or uncoated film or tape attached at the beginning or end of a reel for purposes of threading or identification.

1917 C. N. BENNETT *Guide to Kinematogr.* xi. 185 Refrain from..cutting or punching holes in the film *leaders*.

1960 J. M. LLOYD *All-in-One Tape Recorder Bk.* (ed. 4) v. 63 The inside and outside *leaders* are usually of different colours.

1969 J. ELLIOT *Duel* III. ii. 233 She went to..learn the mysteries of..opticals and *leaders* and parallel and printing sync.

1969 D. N. WOOD *On Tape* vii. 82 This brings me to the other main use of the *leader* tape—to act as a

title... It is possible to use a chinagraph pencil on the tape itself, but it is much better to use leaders for this purpose.

21. Meteorol. In full, **leader stroke**. A preliminary stroke of lightning that ionizes the path taken by the much brighter return stroke that follows.

- 1934 SCHONLAND & COLLENS in *Proc. Royal Soc. A.* **143** 657 These preliminary downward strokes will be referred to as leader strokes and the upward strokes which follow them will be called main strokes.
- 1934 SCHONLAND & COLLENS in *Proc. Royal Soc. A.* **143** 657 Sometimes the leader is so faint that a portion only of the track can be seen.
- 1937 *Jrnl. Inst. Electr. Engin.* **131** 6/2 Immediately the stepped leader stroke reaches the earth the..return stroke begins to travel..from earth to cloud.
- 1937 *Jrnl. Inst. Electr. Engin.* **131** 6/2 The leaders to the second and subsequent strokes of a flash usually travel from cloud to ground in a single flight.
- 1963 *Meteorol. Gloss.* (Meteorol. Office) (ed. 4) 154 Leader strokes directed upwards from ground to cloud may predominate in the case of very high structures.
- 1966 *McGraw-Hill Encycl. Sci. & Technol.* (rev. ed.) VII. 510/1 Cloud-to-cloud strokes also involve a step leader and main return stroke.

COMPOUNDS

C1. General *attrib.*

a. (In sense 3e.)

leader-principle *n.*

- 1940 'G. ORWELL' *Crit. Ess.* (1951) 80 The absence of the leader-principle. There is no central dominating character.

leader-worship *n.*

- 1940 'G. ORWELL' *Crit. Ess.* (1951) 83 More bloodshed, more leader-worship.

b. (In sense 6b.)

leader-mule *n.*

- 1890 L. C. D'OYLE *Notches* 108 Not forgetting..to bestow an occasional cut upon the leader-mules.

c. (In sense 12.)

leader-column *n.*

1897 *Daily News* 3 June 5/4 The problem set in our leader columns the other day.

leader-note *n.***leader-page** *n.*

1932 J. BUCHAN *Gap in Curtain* i. 54 Each of us must concentrate on one particular part to which his special interest was pledged—Tavanger on the first City page, for example, Mayot on the leader page, [etc.].

1938 *Observer* 9 Jan. 5/1 (*adv.*) Eugene Lyons..Assignment in Utopia..‘A moving and truthful account...’—Malcolm Muggeridge (*D. Telegraph*, leader-page article).

leader-writer *n.*

1882 C. PEBODY *Eng. Journalism* xix. 144 It is as a leader-writer and special correspondent that he will be best remembered.

1888 W. BESANT *Inner House* 3 No news came. This was especially hard on the leader-writers.

1940 *Manch. Guardian Weekly* 22 Mar. 228 But now it is stated in Berlin that Mr. Kuusinen ‘has been promoted to be a leader-writer on an obscure provincial paper’.

C2.

leader board *n.* orig. *U.S.* a score-board, esp. at a golf-course, on which the names, etc., of the leading competitors are displayed.

1970 *Golf Digest* Aug. 40/3 Last year there were not enough leader boards and scoreboards at the PGA.

1986 *Sunday Express Mag.* 9 Nov. 79/1 The maverick of the golf course. That phrase summed up Severiano Ballesteros when he first appeared on the leader boards.

leader-pipe *n.* = sense 18.

1868 *Putnam's Mag.* Jan. 2 Then, without stay or stopping, My first and last eaves-dropping, By leader-pipe I sped.

leader stroke *n.* (see sense 21).**leader tape** *n.* uncoated tape intended for use as a leader on a reel of

magnetic tape; a length of tape so used.

- 1960 J. M. LLOYD *All-in-One Tape Recorder Bk.* (ed. 4) v. 64 Leader tape is transparent and is shiny on both sides.
- 1962 A. NISBETT *Technique Sound Studio* vi. 107 A leader tape (giving summarized details of the contents) and a trailer (several feet of coloured tape to give a visual indication of the end) may be cut on to the recording.
- 1971 *Hi-Fi Sound* Feb. 42 (advt.) We also carry a full range of Accessories, Leader Tape, Empty Spools, Splicing Tape etc.

DRAFT ADDITIONS 1997

Comm. A share that is leading the movement of prices on a stock exchange; more generally, a leading economic indicator.

- 1938 *New Statesman* 30 Apr. 750/1 Oil shares were banged in the 'Street' on Tuesday night, the leaders falling by about 5s.
- 1965 *Financial Times* 2 Jan. 1 (*in figure*) Leaders and Laggards. Percentage Change in 1964.
- 1971 WEBSTER Add. Leader,..an economic indicator..that more often than not shows a change in direction before a corresponding change in the state of the economy.
- 1976 *Liverpool Echo* 7 Dec. 18/1 Leaders edged forward, but most had to struggle to hold the higher positions.
- 1990 *European Investor* May 35/1 For the moment, we believe it is safe to stay with the leaders with high earnings visibility such as AIB, CRH and FII-Fyffes.

DRAFT ADDITIONS JUNE 2001

Leader of the Opposition *n. Polit.* (in a multi-party democracy) the person leading the principal party in opposition to the government; (*spec.* in the United Kingdom) the MP chosen to lead the largest opposition party in the House of Commons.

- 1771 'JUNIUS' *Stat Nominis Umbra* (1772) II. liv. 235 I am a partizan of the great leader of the opposition.
- 1836 W. DUNLAP *Mem. Water Drinker* I. i. 18 He [sc. Pitt] was the leader of the opposition in parliament.
- 1884 *Manch. Examiner* 27 Aug. 5/2 The Leader of the Opposition would hardly go to Oban on a stumping expedition.
- 1915 S. PHILLIPS *Armageddon* iii. 54 On Tuesday night the leader of the Opposition engaged in personal

conflict with the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

- 1959 *Cape Times* 4 Feb. 1/1 Mr. Ray Stockil yesterday announced his intention to retire as Leader of the Opposition in the Southern Rhodesia Parliament.
- 1991 *Hindu (Madras)* 6 Dec. 1/6 In 1988, the then Speaker, Niaz Hussain, had refused to accept Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav as the Leader of the Opposition after a split in the Lok Dal which was reduced to a minority but had claimed the support of the left parties and the Janata Party.
- 1999 *Guardian* (Electronic ed.) 7 Feb. Since William Hague became Leader of the Opposition, it has been fashionable to compare him with Neil Kinnock.
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