Walking Made Easy

By Douglas Milton

This little glossary arose from a telephone conversation with Liana Burgess, during which she mentioned that although she loved the Enderby books she'd always been slightly puzzled by Easy Walker's slang in *Enderby Outside*. I've heard the same complaint from others to whom I've introduced Burgess through his most enduring character, so I thought some sort of mini-dictionary might be useful. Some of the idioms - as earthy and colourful as anything in Burgess - are true examples of Australian or Strine, while others may be derived from Eric Partridge's Slang Dictionary, my copy of which has, damn it all, disappeared from my shelves, but the majority would seem to be the delightful inventions of the man himself. I owe to Andrew Biswell the information that Burgess reviewed a

dictionary of Australian slang round about the same time as he was working on Enderby Outside

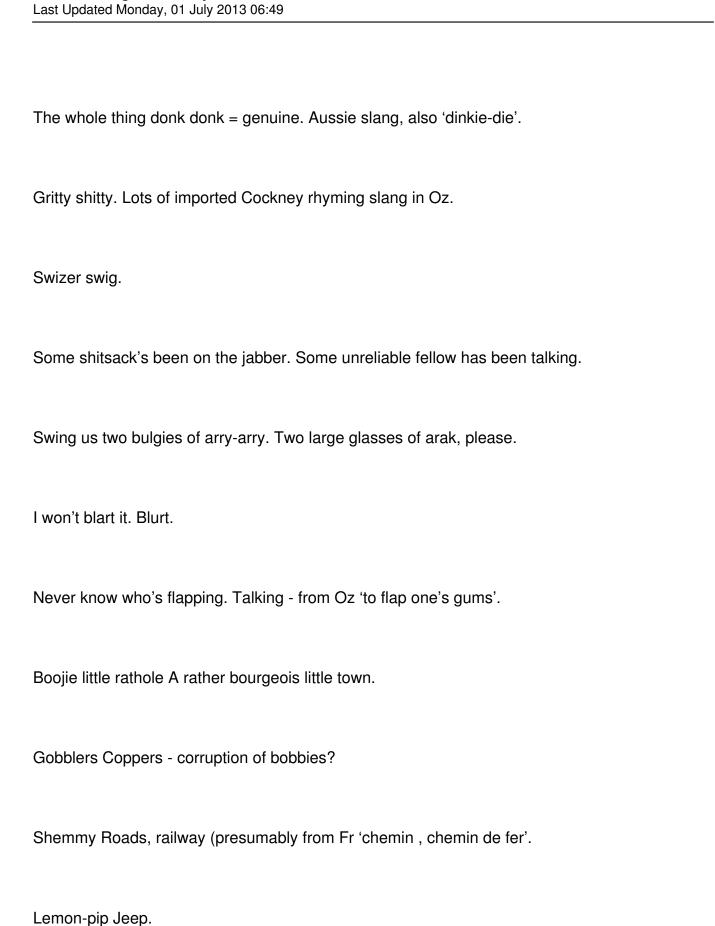
. Books under review were grist to Burgess's mill, and nothing was wasted on him. It's instructive, for instance, to compare a list of the books he covered for the Observer with the contents of Earthly Powers

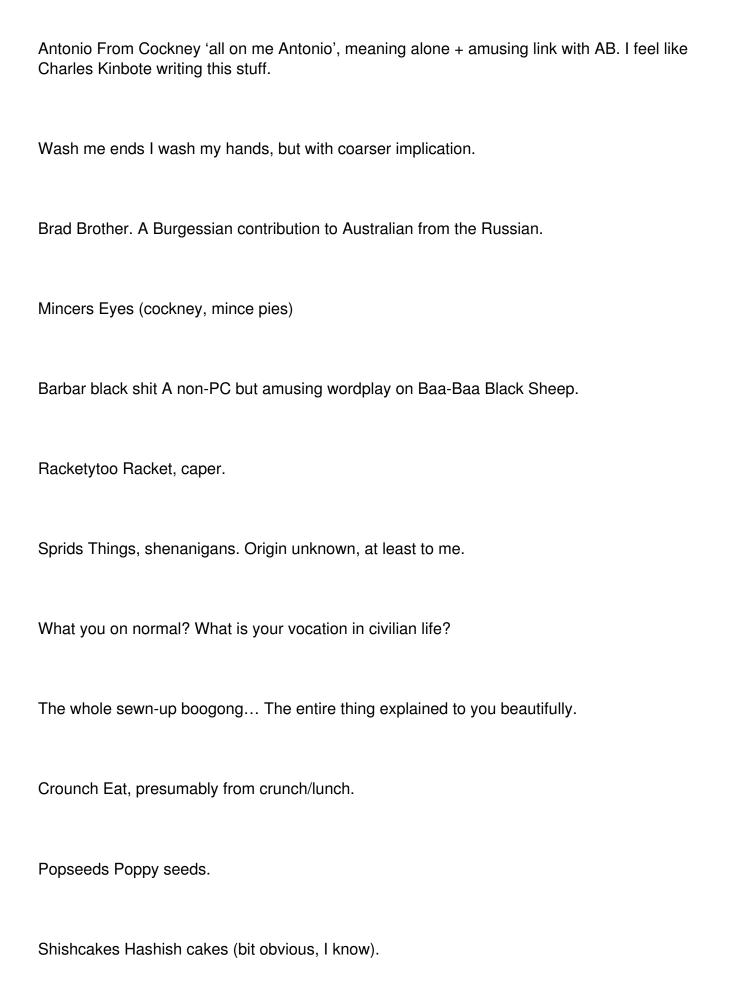
, to name but one, and it's guite possible that Easy Walker sprang, larger than life and twice as hilarious, from those same pages.

This glossary is far from complete, and many of my translations are guesswork. If any *Newslett* er

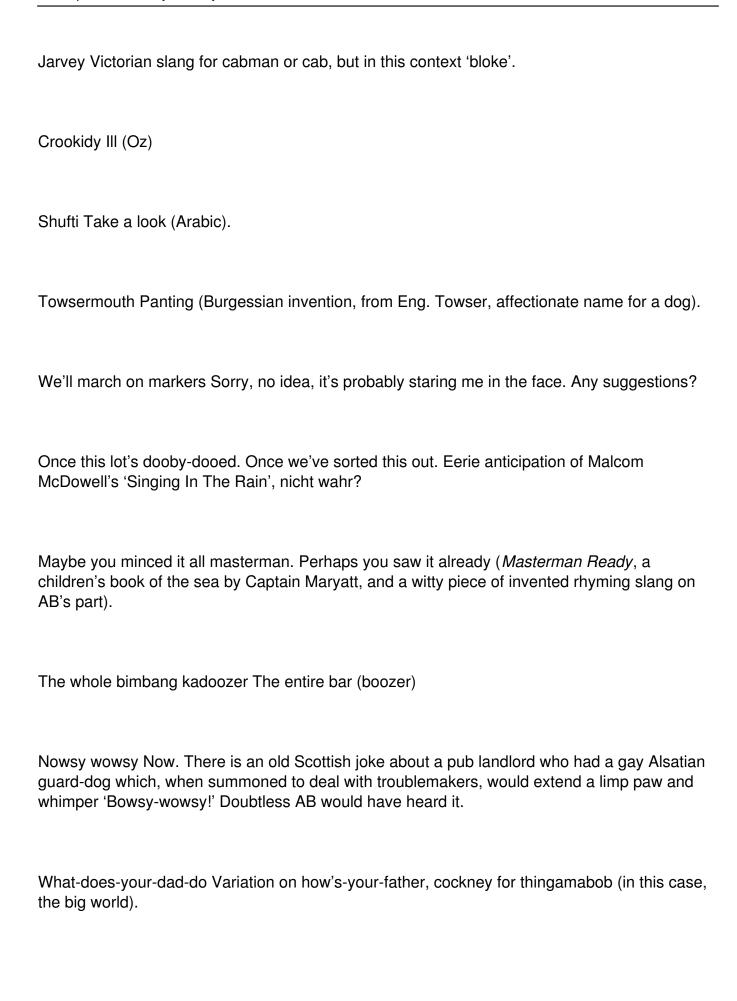
readers can come up with more convincing ones, so much the better. Now clap your mincers on this lot, brads.

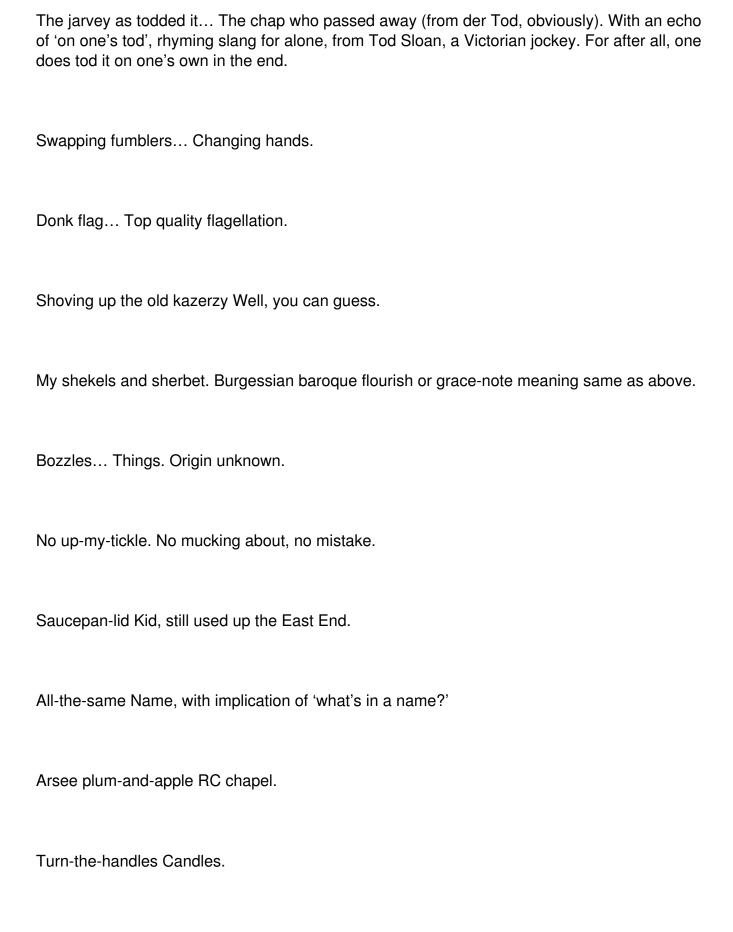
You skirted? You got the big drop on? Are you mad? (Origin unknown)





Marhum a.k.a. mahjoun, toffee laced with hashish, deceptively strong and much favoured by William Burroughs in his Tangiers days.
Jalooty Sorry, no idea. Sounds like Arabic. By the way, did you know that you can find 'lobscowse', one of Burgess's favourite Northern dishes, in Arabic dictionaries? Some Liverpudlian sailor must have left the recipe behind. I thought you might like to know that.
Mazooma for pozzy Money for Papa. Possible reference to Pozzo in Waiting for Godot.
Poor old reticule Jocular for poor old bag.
Dunny Australian outdoor toilet. There is a classic Oz humourous book on the subject of dunnygaspers called The Specialist, never been out of print.
Bert Bloke.
Pongalorum Stink, pong.
Zook Nose, mouth? Wish I had an Arabic dictionary to hand.
Gooled up Eaten up, snapped up (spelt 'ghouled up' later in book)
A pompey One would think 'a dishful', but Pompey is English slang term for Portsmouth, so possibly a mouthful?





Sling-your-hooks books

I like Easy Walker - one of the uncomplicated life-enhancers who take life as it comes. See also

Nabby Adams and Greg Gregson in Beard's Roman Women.

