

# Cant of the Empire

A Comprehensive Guide  
to the Slang, Jargon and  
Dulgar Argot of the Great  
Empire of Sigmar and its  
Glorious People

for the use of Students, Travellers  
and  
Educated Gentlemen of the Age



as Collected and Collated by Messers  
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with much grateful assistance from the folk on the BJ forums

## - A -

**All Gerhard Guntie's Fault:** My problem was caused by Dwarfs or Halflings, known disparagingly as stunties or runties. This phrase is used to disguise one's slurs lest said scapegoats hear, but must urbane Dwarfs and Halflings have figured this one out.

**Altdorf Chatter:** Rabble rousing.

**Altdorf Party:** A street riot.

**Altdorf Peculiar:** A heavy fog that periodically grinds the Imperial capital to a standstill.

**Altquarter Cheer:** Breaking wind, from the Altquatrter, a notoriously rough district of Middenheim.

**Araby Spice:** Lice, rhyming slang. Note also some in the Old World find the spice of Araby too hot and prickly!

**Averland Beef:** Thief, thieves tongue rhyming slang.

**Averland Herd:** Turd, rhyming slang

**Averland Shepherdess:** A woman of easy virtue or numerous, frequent and varied sexual relations. "You can go with Annie, but she's the Averland Shepherdess, mate".

## - B -

**Badger Doker:** Derogatory term for a woodsman, see also Goat Botherer.

**Baroness Ludmilla would approve:** A response to any lavish or gratuitous spending, Baroness Ludmilla is a lady at court in Middenheim who loves such conspicuous displays of wealth.

**Banger Boys:** Apprentices at the Imperial Gunnery School of Nuln. See also Keg Babies.

**Bear-botherers:** Rislemites.

**Bearded Elf:** A ridiculous person or thing, also the name of a tavern in Salzenmund.

**Beast of Brasthof:** Something Inprobable, "You saw the Elector in the Sleepy Goblind, yeah right, bet you saw the Beast of Brasthof an all." The Beast is a legendary creature with the body of a ferret, the head of a lynx and the claws of an eagle. It is said to roam the countryside outside Brasthof speaking backwards in the classical tongue.

**Beaten with a Calabheim Twig:** Drunk, a Calabheim twig is a large blackthorn cudgel, often seen during times of civil unrest and rioting.

**Bergsburg Deal:** An arrangement that is frequently on again-off again. Refers to the disputed status, location and description of the town of Bergsburg.

**(Big) Bertha:** A large and ill tempered woman. The original Big Bertha was a siege mortar forged in Nuln.

**Bigger than Sigmar's Hammer:** Very large or heavily built, usually of a person. Particularly refers to the statue of Sigmar in Altdorf where he is shown naked and heroically proportioned in the trouser department. As such, this can also have a more salacious interpretation.

**Bigger than Drachensfels:** Of a performance or event, extremely popular or exciting. Drachensfels is the highest selling opera ever performed.

**Big Smoke (The):** Common nickname for Nuln, because of its many forges.

**Black dog:** A Witch hunter.

**Blind Bitch(es), The:** Derena or Shallya, blind to the injustice or suffering going on in the world.

**Bog-trotter:** An Wastelander, see also Jann van Swampire.

**Booter:** A woman of easily-negotiated virtue. Refers to the negotiator not even needing to remove his boots before lying down. A two-booter or a hip-booter is more promiscuous than a normal (or one-) booter.

**Buckle hats:** Witch hunters, from their ubiquitous headgear.

**By powder or pike:** Whatever it takes to succeed. Originally military slang, but now in common use. "By powder or pike, we'll make this pub a success".

## - C -

**Cannon-stoker, cannoneer:** A homosexual man.

**Carroburg Throne:** A chamber pot, the free city of Carroburg is a centre of pottery.

**Carstein Cattle:** The undead, or residents of Sylbania.

**Carstein Claret:** Blood

**Challenge an ogre to an eating contest:** Going against an opponent or situation that cannot be won. See Trying to sail up Twin Falls.

**Chopping wood:** Masturbating.

**Clank Farmer:** A beggar, clank is popular slang for pennies.

**Clear as the Coast of Albion:** Not clear at all, Albion being renowned for its foggy shoreline.

**Cliff of Sighs:** Lies, rhyming slang, from the Cliff of Sighs in Middenheim.

**Cobblers:** Prostitutes. An allusion to them "shoeing" a part of the body.

**Cobbler's fitting:** To visit a prostitute.

**Come flood, feem or famine:** To endure, come what may. "We've stayed married these twenty years, come flood, feem or famine". Nobody knows what a feem is, but the term seems to have originated in the Wasteland.

**Corpse Dodger:** An inhabitant of Eastern Stirland, from its proximity to Sylbania.

**Couronian Quarters:** To sleep in the stables, or next to your horse for warmth. A reference to the so-called 'horse lovers' of the Bretonian province of Couronne.

## Racial Disparagement - Dwarfs

**Angry Children** - Elven insult, likening the Dwarfen drudge-keeping habit to a childish tantrum. The Gods help the elf who uses this in earshot of a Dwarf. Also Stubborn Children, or Childish Ones.

**Beard-biters** - a reference to their facial hair. Also beard-breathers, sometimes shortened to just beards or beardies.

**Candle-heads** - a reference to mining.

**Helmet-heads** - a reference to mining, not battle-helms.

**Mud-suckers** - a reference to their underground life. Also what dwarfs call skaven, making the insult worse.

**Sigmar's little helpers** - a reference to Sigmar's honoured bond with the Dwarfen race

**Stunties** - a height reference.

**Crabby:** Nickname for Inhabitants of the coast of Nordland, "Ay old Crabby Schmitt, moved here to Krudenwald ten year ago, still keeps on about the state of the Imperial Fleet." From the Sea of Claws.

## - D -

**Deep in the Drakwald (without a sword):** To be in dire straits or very unlikely to succeed or come through. "Well, with the bridge gone we're really deep in the Drakwald".

**Dinning on Dreckstrasser:** In financial trouble, from Dreckstrasser the nickname for any poor or rundown part of town.

**Docker's Hook:** Look, thieves tongue rhyming slang, "I'll just have a quick dockers and make sure the cost is clear".

**Dog-botherers:** Priests of Ulric.

**Doing opera for Ostlanders:** To provide something of which the receiver would likely have no understanding or appreciation

**Doom-writer:** Someone who enjoys their sexual partners to be very young (ie before they have had their Doom-ing foretold).

**Drunk as a map-maker:** Very drunk indeed. Refers to the reputation of Empire maps to be enormously inaccurate. Also mad as, stupid as.

**Dwarfen Courage:** Alcohol. Also Rislev Courage, Tilean Courage.

**Dwarfen Handshake:** An unbreakable agreement.

**Dwarf's Grudge:** A judge, rhyming slang.

## - E -

**Ear-stroker, ear-sucker:** A person who is overly-enamoured of, or overly-ingratiating towards elves.

**Elector of Solland:** A missing person, originally a match expression.

**Emmanuelle's Inn:** The Iron Tower Prison in Nuln.

**Enjoys Esmerelda's Cooking:** A human who visits the Halfling brothels. By extension, an insult aimed at any human who is over-friendly with Halflings. "Y' can't trust Harry, he enjoys Esmerelda's cooking a bit too much, if y' unnerstan'."

**Estalian Dox:** Syphilis.

## - F -

**Fatter than a Mootland Quartermaster:** Very fat, stereotype of halflings.

**Faster than a Wuppertal Whittler:** Very fast, the town of Wuppertal in Aderland is renowned for its wood-work.

**Face like Tybalt:** Glum or dour expression, from Mornan Tybalt the famously humourless Imperial Chancellor.

**Flogging a zombie:** Pursuing something pointless, or seeking something that cannot be given. "You can beat me all you want, but you're just flogging a zombie - I just ain't got the karls!"

**Free pie costs a penny:** Nothing is ever free. Refers to halfling street wares driving those who eat them to the privy.

**Friends of Ludwig:** Halflings. Emperor Ludwig the Fat granted the halflings of the Moot a royal charter in 1010JC.

## - G -

**Get fitted for a shoe:** To visit a prostitute. See cobbler's fitting.

**Goat botherer:** Derogatory nickname for a rustic. Also a nickname for Count Boris Todbringer due to his long running feud with the Beastman Rhazrak One-Eye.

**Goose-food:** Military slang for a young or foolish soldier. Often shortened to goosers.

**Goblin-cake:** a turd, usually one found in the street.

**Goldlickers:** Merchants, priests of Handrich.

**Guntie's Auntie(s):** Any person or group acting for equal rights, support etc for Dwarfs or Halflings. "We was gonna hire some Halflings to do it, but we got a blast from the Guntie's Aunties."

## - H -

**Hammerheads:** Priests of Sigmar.

**Happy as a Halfling:** Extremely happy or contented, racial stereotype.

**Hat-boy:** A young male prostitute or sexual companion. Comes from the battlefield tradition of electors and captains having a young equerry standing by to hold their elaborate hats when the fighting was joined.

**Have a go on the dunking stool:** To have sexual intercourse, particularly with a well-travelled woman, or prostitute. Can also refer to the woman in question. "Ayup, that's Sonja, we all had a go on that dunking stool when we was younger."

## - J -

**Jabber'ed My Wocky:** Surprised or flabbergasted, "Well thats jabber'ed my wocky, that has."

**Jailer's Jibe:** A bribe, thieves tongue rhyming slang.

**Jake, Three-Legged Jake:** A mutant, Three-Legged Jake is a villainous mutant who appears in a children fairy tale.

**Jann van Swampfire:** Derogatory nickname for someone from Marienburg or the Wasteland.

### Racial Disparagement - Halflings

**Apfel-dandies** - a reference to the town of Apfel in the Moot.

**Bumpers** - because they are often bumped into.

**Knee-pads** - a play on footpads, implying that all Halflings are thieves.

**Muckers** - because where's there's muck there's halflings.

**Mumpers** - origin unknown, probably a corruption of the previous.

**Runties** - particularly popular term due to it rhyming with stunties.

**Youngest, The** - Elven term for Halflings.

- R -

**Reg Babies:** Students at the Imperial Gunnery School of Nuln, from the kegs of gunpowder used there. See also Banger Boys.

**Risley Lover:** A man who spends more time concentrating on his own "weapon" than his partner, if he even has one.

**Risley Tart:** To break wind, rhyming slang

- L -

**Lamplighters:** Prostitutes. Often shortened to lampers.

**Leave a gift for Taal:** To relieve oneself outdoors.

**Like'ly as Ratmen:** Impossible, everyone knows the skaven don't exist.

**Like sails on a steam tank:** Something that is totally useless or unnecessary.

**Like Sending Timber to Drakwald:** A pointless task.

**Longer than Rothnikson's saga:** Something that is very long, from the Rothnikson cycle of poems.

**Lost in the Mountains:** A transgression or event which is unlikely to have consequences or draw punishment, because it is so far removed from authority or society. "Well, we left Nuln with twenty prisoners. If we lose a few on the road, well, that'll be lost in the mountains, eh?"

**Ludwig:** A hat, Ludwig the Fat, rhyming slang.

- M -

**Magnus' Jollies:** The Colleges of Magic, founded by Magnus the Pious and still major objects of mistrust.

**Magnus' Madmen:** Wizards

**Make the moons rise early:** To have sexual intercourse. Hence also moonrising.

**Mamma Klara's chickens:** Seaman's term for seagulls, origin unknown.

**Mannan's Blood:** Rum.

**Moneylender:** Homosexual, rhyming slang

**Morr's Cradle:** The Gallows.

**Morr's Maidens:** Crows or ravens.

**Morr's Man:** A grave digger.

**Mystery Man:** A lunatic, one too much under the influence of Geheimstag, the Day of Mystery.

Racial Disparagement -  
Elves

**Pointy ears,** pointies - due to their pointy ears.

**Stick-boys,** leafers - due to their affiliation with the woods.

**Twigs** - an allusion to the woodlands and Elves' thinner physiques.

- N -

**Naggerman:** A beggar or rogue who pretends to be ill, sickly or wounded to help his cause. Possibly a corruption of Nagash's Man, ie a necromancer, healing his wounds miraculously.

**Nuckly's Chance:** No chance at all. From a bawdy poem in which Nuckly Sacksucker, a love-struck goblin, tries to woo the Duchess of Talabecland.

**Nulner Handshake:** A knee to the groin.

**Nurky's Bucket:** A tavern privy, even more smelly than a normal one.

- O -

**Older than a Dead Elf:** Something that very old or that has been around forever

**Old Hob's learning:** Common sense.

**Old Muddy One-Eye.** Legendary cyclopean swamp dwelling bogeyman, "If you dont go to bed this instant Old Muddy One Eye will come and gobble you up." Similar to Bat-Backed Dieter and Old Hairy Rat Nose.

**Old Wilhelm:** Lower class term for a watchman, origin unknown.

**Only cost me an apple and an egg:** Not expensive.

**On the gobbo:** Of men, to be looking for (typically physically-focussed) female companionship. Shortened from on the goblin hunt.

**Orc-bait:** An inhabitant of Sudenland, dating from Gorbard Ironclaw's destruction of Solland.

**Ostland Kiss:** Headbutt, the denizens of Ostland are notoriously hard headed.

**Outrider:** A male who is sexually adventurous, experienced or insatiable.

- P -

**Pallet Davanne, the:** Sexual intercourse.

**Pie Shop Commandos:** Halfling militia.

**Pistolier:** A homosexual man. Also, a man who is inexperienced sexually (and thus not yet become an outrider). May mean both at once. See cannon-stoker.

**Pitwife:** An ugly, brawny or otherwise unattractive woman (and thus suitable only to marry an ugly pitfighter). By extension, a homosexual woman, a woman not of easy virtue or any woman who rejects the speaker.

**Play Hide the Halfling:** To have sexual intercourse.

**Plughohl's Patient:** A dead or dying man, Waldermar Plughohl was a notoriously inept surgeon attached to the 2nd Weissenland Halbadiers.

**Princess Kattarin:** A woman of not-easily-negotiated virtue. A reference to Tzarina Kattarin of Kisleb, who dwells in an ice-palace. Opposite of a Booter.

**Private War:** Somebody else's business, or something that cannot be helped.

**Pulling the Dwarf's Beard:** Acting in a foolish or insolent manner.

**Put some gold in the poor boy:** To urinate

- Q -

**Queer as Oskar's Sausage:** Very strange. Oskar was a legendary butcher who, it is said, could make a sausage out of just about anything.

- R -

**Ranald's Chairty:** Money made through illicit means.

**Ranald's Daughter:** A prostitute.

**Ranald's Picture Book:** A deck of playing cards.

**Rhogyarrk's Logic:** The application of extreme violence to solve even the most trivial problem, from the famed ogre mercenary of the same name.

**Rhya's darning:** That time of the month. Also Darning with the red thread, Rowing the Red Reik, Woman's wounds.

**Rhya's pillows:** Poetic term for female breasts. Also Rhya's dumplings.

**Riding the Griffon:** Talking nonsense, usually boastfully. May also refer to someone hallucinating, in a mynd-root haze or being mad. See also Selling the Silber Sausage.

**Riverwoman:** A homosexual woman, an allusion to women bathing together in the river.

**Runes of Ranald:** Dice.

- S -

**Schlupfrig Jack:** A popular card game. As is Tilean Queens.

**Scone of Destiny:** Any much sought after and possibly mythical item, "A barrel of Bugman's XXXXXX, that's like finding the Scone of Destiny.", from a halfling legend but now in common use.

**Screeching like Cackelfar:** Making a lot of noise, from the star sign Cackelfar the Cockerel.

**Seamstresses:** Prostitutes. Hence also to get a seam mended

**Sea-weeds:** Tileans or Estalians, particularly those who are traders from the sea. Also (stronger) sea-scum.

**Selling the Silber Sausage:** Putting on airs or making outlandish claims. "He claims he was at the Battle of Wolfenburg, but he's just selling the silver sausage" See also pulling the dwarf's beard and riding the Griffon

**Shining Like Mannan's Match:** Someone who is very unintelligent. Mannan's Match was a lighthouse on the coast of Nordland that collapsed shortly after it's construction.



**Short crowd:** An entertainer's term for an audience short on cash. Therefore also a term for a political crowd short on power.

**Sigmar's Hammer:** The slammer/gaol, theives tongue rhyming slang. Also, in Altdorf, the male member, referring to the naked and heroically proportioned statue of the God near the palace. "Get your hands of your hammers, boys, there's work to be done!"

**Smooth as Gunter's Grass:** Very smooth or stylish, from the expensive brand of pipe weed.

**Solkan's Bracelets:** Handcuffs, no longer a term in general use.

**Snotlings in the Cellar:** An unforeseen or oft-ignored problem, due to its small size; see also Trolls in the pantry.

**Spielmeister:** An aspect of Randal often evoked by wandering adventurers, "Oh Spielmeister! That's just great, the barge has sunk and we've gotta be in Altdorf by noon".

**Sophonia's choice:** A difficult decision, Sophonia was a handmaiden of Shallya who renounced her immortality to marry a mortal.

**Steam-tank:** Masturbate, rhyming slang. "Whatchoo doin' in there, havin' a steam?"

**Stinks Worse Than Hattie's Jakes:** Smelly indeed, from the privies at Frau Hattie's tavern The Carry On. See also Nurky's Bucket.

**Stirpiker:** A footpad. The Stirpiker is renowned for sneaking up on its victims and quickly vanishing.

**Stuck with a Saratosa Needle:** To be stabbed with a knife, from Saratosa, city of pirates and cut-throats.

**Sunk my Barge:** Ruined my plans, thrown things askew. "I was gonna go fishing but this rain really sunk my barge"

**Sutthos:** Those from the south, ie Tilean and Estalians. "They told me they'd pay me back but y' can't trust them sutthos, I always say."

## - T -

**Telling truths to Derena:** Doing what does not need to be done, or has already been done many times before.

**Templar of Randal:** A fantastic con-artist, especially a Naggerman

**Templar of Shallya:** A coward.

**There was more lost at Grootscher Marsh:** Worse things have happened, from the famous battle.

**They don't like it up 'em:** Originally the battle cry of the 1st Nuln pike detachment, now a popular drinking toast.

**Thicker than Taal's beard:** Very dense or stupid.

**Tilean Bargain:** A swindle or con, stereotype of the Tilean character.

**Tilean Chickadees:** Priests of Myrmidia, a reference to their yellow

## Racial Disparagement - Humans

**Shorts** - Elven expression, short for short-lived ones. Humans often mistake this as an Elven way of mocking Dwarfs or Halflings.

**Sky-heads** - Dwarf insult, mocking Humans for living on the surface and being weak-minded. Also sometimes cloud-heads or moon-heads.

**Slim** - Halfling slang for Humans, taken directly from the Ogre word for Human, showing yet again the inexplicable link between Ogres and Halflings.

**Soreheads** - used by Dwarfs and Halflings because the tall Humans hit their heads a lot.

**Tainted Ones, The** - Elven reference to the Chaos taint on humanity. Not considered insulting by Elves, but can be inflected that way. Also Cursed Ones, Lost Ones, Wild Ones.

**Tallies** - Halfling slang for Humans. They consider it respectful (or as respectful as Halflings get).

robes and their lack of battle experience.

**Tilean Trollope, The:** The Goddess Myrmídia.

**Tree-lovers:** Priests of Taal.

**Troll's Armpits:** A foul, smelly place. See also Nurky's Bucket.

**Trolls in the pantry:** a problem so large it cannot be avoided. Often begins as snotlings in the cellar

**Trying to sail up the Twin Falls:** Trying to do the impossible. "Well, you can ask the boss for a day off, but it's like sailing up the Twin Falls!"

**Tuppenny Whores:** Priest of Morr. Refers to the two coins placed over the eyes of the dead by said priests.

**Twin Falls:** Testicles, rhyming slang.

**Tybalt Handshake:** A weak handshake, named for Mornan Tybalt who lost his thumbs in the Altdorf Window Riots. Hence also, a shaky deal, one which is unlikely to be seen through.

## - U -

**Upright Citizens:** Prostitutes. From the "tuppenny upright", a cheap and fast service they provide.

**Urskoy Water:** Rvas, from the Urskoy river along which it is often transported.

**Ulric's Planks:** Skis.

**Ulric's Mantle:** A thick blanket of snow.

## - D -

**Disit confession:** To go to the privy. Also visit the confessor.

## - W -

**Weeping Women, The:** The female gods of Rhya, Shallya and Verena. A term of disparagement for things not related to men's business such as trade or war, or a complaint that is seen as trivial or "soft". "Oh, so you're tired of shovelling dung, are y' boy? Well, go tell the Weeping Women about it, then get back to work."

**Weissblitzen'ed:** Very drunk, Weissblitzen is a potent form of cider brewed in Stírland.

**Went Down Like a Schweinkopf Barge:** Something that was not very popular. The barges of Wallís Schweinkopf had a tendency to sink.

**Wicking:** Masturbating.

**Working Like a Halfling:** Slacking off, relaxing or sleeping, racial stereotype.

**Wounds front:** Died in battle, or fighting. Can be metaphorical. "Well, we tried everything, and we lost, but at least we went out wounds front". Opposite is wounds behind - to be assassinated.

