A MINOR THESAURUS OF RURAL METAPHOR

by C.R. McPherson
Across the land, strong men of direct purpose told tall tales, and the language of these men was descriptive and not always delicate. But their meaning was made perfectly clear by the colorful metaphors that punctuated their everyday speech.

That their contribution to the better understanding of the American language not go forgotten, a few such phrases are recorded here.

This collection of picturesque speech owes its existence to many friends across the land.

Among them:

Roswell Miller
(New York)

Charles Gummy
(Delaware)

Jack Watkins
(Montana)

Ted Avery
(Pennsylvania)

These were men of purpose whose words were seldom misunderstood.
On Mental (physical) Agility (Ability)

He's a little short of a full load.
Don't seem he's rowing with both oars in the water.
He's driving with a couple of lights out.

Doesn't have the brains:
... to come in out of the rain.
... of little green grass hoppers.
... to pour piss out of a boot with the directions written on the heel.

So dumb: if he had a brain it would be lonesome.

... he can't tell shit from shinola.
... he couldn't tell his ass from a well.
... a hole in the ground.
... first base.

Did you go to school to get that way, or did it just come naturally?

Clumsy as a blind dog in a meat house.
Clumsy as a cub bear playing with his pether.
That fellow's about a half bubble off plumb.
As awkward as a cow caught in a rail-pile.

He's a few bricks short of a load.
Dumb as a cow looking at a barn door.

You're making about as much sense as if your tongue had poked a hole in your brain.

Crazy as a peach orchard boar.

Clumsy as a monkey trying to fuck a football.

He had diarrhea of the mouth and constipation of the brain.
Of Little Behinds

Looked like two pigs in a sack.
I'd like that swing on my back porch.

On Breeding

You can't make a silk purse out
of a sows ear.
No matter how you try, you can't
polish shit.
No matter how you try, you can't
polish a sneaker.
If it weren't for no class, she wouldn't
have none.
You can dress her up, but you can't
take her anywhere.
The only difference between him and
a bucket of shit is the bucket.
You can't make chicken salad
out of chicken shit.
His taste was all in his mouth.

On Being Busy

Busier than a bee romancing a buzz saw.

...than a one-armed paperhanger
with hives.

...than a cat covering shit
on a tin roof.
On The Admirable Subject of Breasts

Her tits were so big the sun never shown on her feet.

Her tits were so big she could throw her left one over her right shoulder and squirt milk up her ass.

She was flatter than a brown tick on a white dog

She was so skinny, she had to stand in the same place twice to cast a shadow.

On Anything Bad

That's bad enough to gag a magot.

Baldness

He was balder than a baby's ass.

On Catastrophe

Biggest mess I've seen since the chickens chased the dog through the sorghum vat.

On being Careful

... Like a porcupine making love — very, very carefully.

... As a gnat walking across an elephant's balls with sneakers on.
On Certainty

As sure as God made little green apples.
(And always)...Sure as shit!

On Commoness

Common as whale shit on the bottom of the ocean.
...as peter tracks on a blue serge suit.

On Confusion

Confused as a mosquito in a nudist camp.

On Being Full of Crap (Or packed Tight)

As full of crap as 5 pounds of shit in a 3 pound bag.

As full of shit as a Christmas goose.

You're so full of shit, your eyes are turning brown.

On Darkness

So dark it looks like it's gonna rain pitch forks and nigger babies.

Black as the inside of a nigger's pocket.

On Difficulty or Uselessness

...as setting mouse turds up endways.

...separating the fly shit from the pepper.
or...rat shit from the coffee beans.
On Drunkenness

You can bet he was sitting on a pink elephant
when he saw it.
High as a kite.
Drunk as a skunk.
Commode huggin' drunk.
My head's the size of a blue ribbon hog.
His eyes looked like piss-holes in the snow.
He'd drink anything that wasn't
too thick to chew.

Of Divorce

The screwing you get for the
screwing you got.

On The Entrepreneur

Crooked as a snake's back in a wagon rut.
Not afraid of work - he can lie right down
beside it and go to sleep.
He's got some Tennessee beach property
to sell real cheap.
I wouldn't trust him in the outhouse
with a muzzle on.
Lower than a snake's belly in a wagon rut.
So crooked he'd steal the pennies
off a dead man's eyes.

On Fear

Shaking like a dog passing prune pits.
He had his balls to the wall.
On Frustration

Frustrated as a half-fucked fox in a forest fire.

On Having Fun

I never had so much fun with my clothes on.
Having more fun than a mosquito in a blood bank.
Having more fun than a mosquito
in a nudist camp.

On Gaiety

Queerer than Dick's hat band.

On Being Happy

Happy as a pig in shit.
...as a clam at high tide.
...as a cat in the creamery.
Grinning like a cheshire cat.
A shit-eating grin.
Looked like a cat that just swallowed the canary.
Couldn't have been more tickled if she'd swallowed a feather duster.

On Hunger

So hungry I could eat the ass end of a dead skunk.
Hungrier than a moth on a nylon sweater.
Hungry as a woodpecker with a headache.
On Self Importance

Thinks he's stud duck in the church.
Thinks he shits ice cream.

On Life Itself

Firmly fucked by the fickle finger of fate.
Sliding down the razor blade of life.
Doomed by the dangling dong of destiny.
You win some, you lose some, and you play some in the mud.
You win some, you lose some, but you always suit up.
Life is a weary pilgrimage.
It's a weary world, and we're all wee worms.
Caught a splinter sliding down the bannister of life.
Caught between a rock and a hard place.
Duller than dish water.

On Marksmanship

 Couldn't hit the broad side of a barn.
   ...the barn door from inside.
   ...a bull in the ass with a bucket of bird shot.
   ...a bull in the ass with a banjo.
   ...couldn't hit a cow in the tit with a tin cup.

On Meanness

Meaner than cat shit.
Meaner than a turpentine cat.
On Newspapers

As dead as yesterday's news.
Only thing yesterday's newspaper is good for is to wrap today's garbage in.
Some newspapers look like they're printed with mud on rubber rollers.
Fish wrappers.

On Nervousness

As nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs.
...as a bastard at a family reunion.
...as a whore in church.
...as a cat on a hot tin roof.
...as a pregnant nun.

On Growing Old

Old is when it's try weakly instead of tri-weekly.
Old is when hope doesn't triumph over experience.
I thought I felt bad 'til I saw you.

To Do With The Outhouse

I've got to pee so bad I'm seeing yellow.
...so bad my back teeth are floating.
...so bad I can gargle.
I've got to go where the king goes on foot.
On Persistence (Hanging On)

Hanging on like grim death to a nigger's heel.

...like grim death to a dead nigger.

Of Perception

Hind sight is always 20-20.

(Management's) 20-20 tunnel vision.

On Practicality (Possibility)

That's about as likely as a hog laying eggs.

As much chance as a Chinaman in hell.

...as a snowball in hell.

Of Pregnancy

Pregnant girl - Took something seriously that was poked at her in fun.

- Couldn't take a joke.

- Had a bun in the oven.

Looked like she'd swallowed a watermelon.

On Reproduction

The sights you see when you haven't got a gun.

Shoot it before it reproduces.

Shot on the wall and hatched by the sun.
On The Rural Life

Watch'a do in Arkansas? - watch the moths fly into the ESSO sign.

Sit on the court house steps and listen to the grass grow.

He lived so far back in the hills, they had to pump in the sunshine.

So far out back they got the Saturday night opry Sunday morning.

On Reality

So real you could feel the fuzz on the picture of a peach.

On salesmanship

He could sell an icebox to an Eskimo.

...bobby pins to a bald headed witch.

On sadness

Sad as a bride with her period.

When smooth Or Shiny

Shiny as a nigger's heel.

Slick as a dick.

Smooth (bare) as a baby's behind.
To Do with Size

Small as the nit on the nut of a gnat.
You can't tell the depth of the well by
the handle on the pump.

Them mosquitos were so big they could stand
flat footed and fuck a full grown turkey.

Like a sailor with a hard-on yelling,
"raise the draw bridge!"

Not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a barn
door, but 'twill do.

On Sexuality

Of a young lass - If she's old enough to bleed,
she's old enough to butcher.

Screwing her was like pushing a marshmallow
into a parking meter.

... like pushing a pencil into the Holland Tunnel.

He's so horny, he'd screw a snake
if someone would hold it.

She made everything below your
belt jump up and do back flips.

She had an ass like a bumble bee.

She was finger lickin' good.

She was so good she could suck a tennis
ball through a garden hose.

Or As In Slippery

Slippery as an eel in a vaseline jar.

Slick as a wet dick

Slipped through like shit through a goose.
On social security

Social Security is like giving nuts to a squirrel that's lost its teeth.

As In Being soft

Soft as a wet kleenex.
Silky as a sow's ear.
Limp as a wet dick.

On speed

That nigger ran so fast, it was like he was being chased by a white sheet.
He moved so fast he left burnt rubber on my windshield.

And subtlety

Subtle as the pee in swimming.

On The success Of A Remark (Or The Lack Of It)

That went over like a dead horse in the bath tub.
...like a lead zeppelin.
...like a turd in a punch-bowl.

On surprise

I'll be dipped; in doggie doo.
...in shit.
As surprising as a fart with a lump in it.
On The subject Of Tedium

Tediws (finicky) (hopeless)
as separating the fly specks from the mouse turds.
as separating the mouse turds from the pepper.
as separating the rat shit from the coffee beans.

On temperature

Hotter than a three dollar .45.
Hot enough to burn the hair off a tortoise.
So bad (hot) it would raise a blister
on a rawhide boot.
Cold enough to freeze the tits off a nun.
Cold as a well digger's ass.
Sweatin' like a nigger at an August election.
Colder than a witch's tit in a brass bra.
Colder than a whores heart.

On Thick And Thin

The meat was sliced so thin it only
had one side.
If he carved the meat any thinner,
he'd have to lather it.
She was as poor as a snake.

On the Circumstance Of Being Tight

Tighter than a bull's ass tied up
up with a loggin' chain.
Tighter than a bull's ass in fly time.
On Trust

Letting him hold the money is like putting a monkey in charge of the bananas.

On The Subject Of Ugliness

If she ever gave birth, I wouldn't want one of the puppies.

Your face is so dirty it looks like you've been suckin' on an old sow.

Ugly as a hedge fence after a hail storm.

Scratched up (looked) like a Jackass that had been eating brambles through a barbed wire fence.

Looked like he'd been shot on the barn wall and hatched by the sun.

She looked like she'd chased a fart through a barrel of nails.

So ugly, when she stood on the beach the waves rolled back to the ocean.

Looked like she was left over from the Indian war.

Best part of him ran down his mother's leg.

Looked like he'd just lost a fight with an ice pick.

On The Quality Of Usefulness (Or Lack Thereof)

About as useless as balls on a priest.

...as tits on a tom cat. ...as tits on a boar pig.

...as a side saddle on a cow. ...as tits on a nun.

I wouldn't give a pint of cold piss for the whole thing.

He's a pimple on the prick of progress.

Useless as a fart in a high wind.
Of War And Peace

War is hell, but the horrors of peace may soon be over.

War is hell, but the price of peace is prohibitive.

On weightlessness

As light as a popcorn fart.

On Rain (And Other Weather)

If this rain keeps up, it won’t come down.

Think this rain will ever stop? Always has.

Think the rain will hurt the rhubarb? Not if it comes in cans.

Raining as hard as a tall cow pissing through a brush pile.

...as a tall cow pissing on a flat rock.

On being welcome

As welcome as ants at a picnic.

...as a bastard at a family reunion.

On Passing wind

What died?

An empty house is better than a bad tenant.
On women

She looks like a chicken that backed into a windstorm (lawnmower).

Taming her would be like putting socks on a rooster.

If she had all the pricks sticking out of her that she's had stuck in her, she'd look like a porcupine.

She was hollering so loud she could have made a train take a dirt road.

She looked as if she'd been rode hard and put away wet.

The totally Meaningless (And Always Useful)

No thanks, I just had my socks pressed.

No matter how fast a fish swims, he never sweats.

If a frog had wings, he wouldn't bump his belly.

Why don't chickens piss?

Murder will out if the ducks let it out.

For Toasting

Here's looking up your whole family.

Here's to the bee and the butterfly - Said the bee to the beautiful butterfly, "Oh come and live with me."

Said the butterfly to the buzzing bee, "Oh that could never be For I am a beautiful butterfly, And you're just a son of a B."

A toast to all my friends who're here, No matter where you're from; May the best days you've ever had Be worse than your worst to come.
Here’s to it and to it again, and if I get to it and Don’t do it, may I never get to it again.

Here’s to the lovely lady dressed in black: When she smiles, she smiles so sweet, She makes things stand that have no feet.

Friends may come, and friends may go - Friendships peter out, you know. But here’s to us through thick or thin - Peter out or peter in.

**Generally Miscellaneous**

This whole place has gone to hell: in a hack . . . and back . . . in a hand bag . . . a hand cart . . . in a three wheeled cart.

Definition of a wild goose: ½” off center.

You bet your sweet Aspidistra.

If the foo shits, wear it.

Modesty is the opiate of the mediocre.

In answer to a child’s endless questions - “Making winnernossles for green pigs.”

He’s got a hand full of gimmie, and a mouth full of much obliged.

He took off, straight as an Indian ever went to shit.

I promise to do it the second Tuesday of next week.

I’ll kick your ass up around your ears for a brown collar.

Shit in your hat, and pull it down over your ears for brown curls.

I wouldn’t touch that with a fork.

I wouldn’t touch that with a 10-foot pole.
An addendum to "A Minor Theasaurus of Rural Metaphor"

On Mental Ability
He’s rowing with one oar.
The butter fell off his biscuit a ways back.
His sheetrock don’t fit the studs.
He skims milk from the bottom up.

On Frustration
Frustrated as a half fucked fox in a forest fire.
Like trying to fertilize a field with a fart.
Like trying to grill a steak on the pilot light.

On Hunger
The pasture was grazed down so bad, a grasshopper had to bring lunch.

On Life Itself
Like pushing a chain up the road.

On Growing Old
Old... When the cabbage stalk won’t hold up the head.

On The Rural Life (In Arkansas)
He could fall into a pig sty and come up President of the Hogs.

On Sadness
As crestfallen as a dried pear.

Or as in Slippery
Slicker than snot on a doorknob.

Subtlety
As peeing in your blue serge suit.

Tedium
She could talk a glass eyeball to sleep.
She’s like a brook -- noisy and shallow.

Weather
Raining hard enough to strangle a toad.
TV snow warning --- Stay off the roads, the ditches are full.

On Women
I wouldn’t touch her with a vaccinated crowbar.
When she walked away, it looked like two pigs in a wrestling in a sack.

Phone 870 449 5223          x 870-449-342          Email: crmcp@hotmail.com
In General
As still as a cat in the milkhouse.
Why does the carpenter carry a level in the pickup gun rack??
To tell when he has a flat tire.

And finally another toast——

May your bleeding piles annoy you——
May corns adorn your feet——
My crabs as big as horses
rest upon your balls and eat.

And when you’re old and worried
and a syphilitic wreck,
may your spine slide through your asshole
and snap your fucking neck!!!!

Regards, McP

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