

Australian

Well... ehm... not so much a Queenslander from a Victorian, although some people could, but I think that I can pick a country person from a city person: in fact we met some people in... Italy I think it was, and I was pretty sure they came from the country and I was right: they speak slower, ... so you probably think I speak slowly but country people speak even slower.

Cockney

In Poplar...

My dad came from Wapping and my mom came from Poplar. My dad was one of 11 kids... and Wapping in them days really was one of the poorest parts of London. I mean they really didn't have shoes on their feet. I'm talking about 70 years ago now. Erm... and Poplar was... sli... just slightly a cut above Wapping; erm... you was either East End respectable or you was sort of East End villain, and my family was respectable on both sides.

But my father had a very tough time because his father died when he was 19, leaving him the only one working to bring up eleven brothers... 10 brothers and sisters and on a Thursday night he'd sometimes go home and the youngest two would be crying in the corner and he'd say "what's the matter with them, ma?" "Oh, well, Harry, you know it's Thursday night, and you don't get paid till tomorrow" and they literally didn't have any food in the house.

Received Pronunciation & Scottish readings

One day last year, when I was driving back to work after I'd had lunch, I had an amazing and unforgettable experience: it must have been 2 o'clock, or perhaps a quarter of an hour later, a quarter past 2; it was an incredible thing really.

I was sitting there at the steering-wheel of my new car waiting for the lights to change, when all of a sudden the car started to shake this way and that, rocking from side to side, throwing me backwards and forwards, up and down. I felt as if I was riding a bucking horse. Worse than that, some mysterious spirit or hostile force seemed to be venting its vast fury upon the earth. And the noise! There was a kind of deep groaning and horrible, awesome grinding which seemed to fill the air.

And then, a short while after, the whole paroxysm had stopped, just as suddenly. Everything was calm and smooth again, quiet and peaceful once more. I put my foot down, just a gentle pressure on the accelerator - or the gas pedal, as it's known in America - and drove off. Everything was utterly normal once more. So then, was this some very local and momentary earth tremor which had struck us? Or, I asked myself, was it a supernatural visitation, some fiery storm of diabolical wrath?

Or was it rather, merely that I drunk a double vodka or two during my lunch?