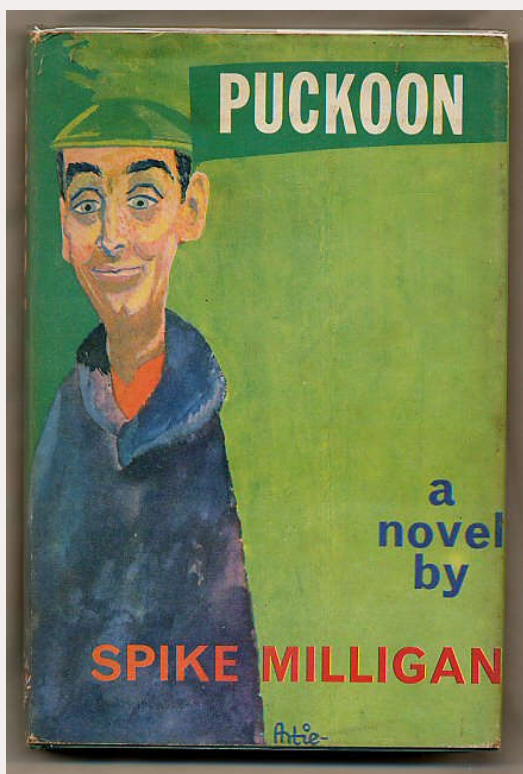


## *Puckoon*

**A003.01 First edition, 1963**



The Foreword.

*This damn book nearly drove me mad. I started it in 1958 and doodled with it for 4 years. I don't think I could go through it all again, therefore, as this will be my first and last novel, I would like to thank those who helped me get it finished. First I want to thank me, then Paddy my wife; without her, for certain reasons, this book would never have been completed. I also thank my family for eternal encouragement, Harry Edgington my old army pal, who cheered me up when I was down, Gordon Lansborough who told me the novel was funny when I thought it wasn't, my three children, Laura, Sean and Silé, who think I'm good "all the time". To Patrick Ford, the man who sold me good wine, Mrs. Jolly who typed it, to Artie who painted the cover portrait, and the human race for being the butt of all my jokes.*

*SPIKE MILLIGAN,  
S.S. Canberra,  
Indian Ocean.*

Spike may have been working on material for all three of his first books at the same time which was not an unusual way for him to work.

**Author:** Spike Milligan

**Dedication:** None but the foreword reads like a dedication.

**Publication Details:** Anthony Blond, London, October 1963. (Scudamore, 1985) (BNB, 2012)

**Format:** Hardback

**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan (TAM) i.e. Terence Alan Milligan,

**Cover Design:** Cover painting by Artie.

**Identifier:** ISBN: 0218512651 ISBN-13: 978-0218512656 BNB: GB6316596

**Physical Description:** 152 pp Green cloth boards with gilt lettering to spine, 203 x 135 x 20 mm. 241 gm.

## **More on Puckoon**

*Puckoon* is the book that Milligan is most famous for. First published in 1963 it is still in print today by Penguin. It features on many people's funniest book lists and laugh out loud moments.

This, his first novel or full length book, was four years in the making and challenged Milligan. His prose writing was very much in its beginnings so he was feeling his way somewhat. He credited many people for their encouragement during the writing of the novel.

Here he was, writing an Irish novel having never been to Ireland himself. His father was Irish but had left when he was 16 and had not returned.

The book was published by Anthony Blond, not Spike's usual publisher. Spike was in Australia when final publishing arrangements were made. Spike had left the arrangements to another person at Associated London Scripts. He was upset and somewhat embarrassed that

the person who got him into writing, Denis Dobson, had not been the one to publish his novel. This disappointment must have been made quite acute as the novel became highly successful.

Initial reviews were varied, some scathing, some in praise, some on the fence. The reading public however loved it and sales took off. Blond reprinted the book in the same month it was published. The paperback edition from Penguin came out in 1965. There have been numerous paperback reprints. Listed in one of my copies is 'reprinted 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973 (twice), 1974 (three times), 1975, 1976 (twice), 1977, 1978, 1980 (twice), 1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1988.' That is 26 reprints to 1988. Penguin has stopped listing the reprints in the books in the shops now.

The novel was originally longer than the published version. Spike agonised over what to include and what not to. He actually had his father burn some chapters he had written. Something he regretted later. (Behan, 1988)

He said in the foreword that he would never write another novel again. He did. His next full length book was *Adolf Hitler: My Part in his Downfall* in 1971, and then there were to be twenty two more full length books.

There are numerous editions of *Puckoon* including a second hardback and two German language editions, hardback and soft cover.

Irish author Dominic Behan published a biography of Spike in 1988 and discusses how Spike was able to write an Irish novel without having been to Ireland. Spike was to write two more Irish novels, *The Looney* (1987) and *The Murphy* (2000).

Another feature of *Puckoon* is that the characters sometimes talk directly to the reader. Spike did use this device in other pieces of writing.

## A003.02 Penguin edition, 1965

**Publication Details:** Penguin Books Ltd., October 1965.

**Format:** Mass market paperback

**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan (TAM),

**Cover Design:** Spike Milligan, author's photo by Flair Photography

**Identifier:** ISBN 10, 0140023747 ISBN 13, 9780140023749

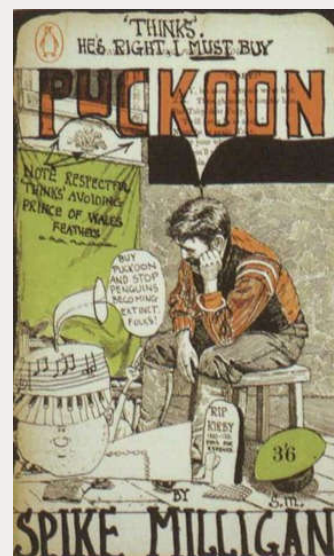
**Physical Description:** 155 pp, 180 x 110 x 8 mm. 87 mm 12mo.

**Publication Price:** 3/6

At the time the paperback version of *Puckoon* was published Penguin was in strong competition with Pan and Corgi in the paperback market. They appointed a new Fiction Art Director, Alan Aldridge and he moved the artwork for its covers in a new direction. His mantra was that the cover was about the title not Penguin. The covers were important in marketing and became posters for the book and were designed to demand attention in face-forward displays.

The *Puckoon* cover was one of the early covers produced in this new environment where the presence of Penguin is reduced to its logo. Spike was its designer. The cover remained the same, with only minor variations for almost fifty years, since 1965. It was still in print in 2012. In September of 2014 a new edition with a new cover was released by Penguin.

The ISBN of the mass market paperback edition has remained the same throughout its production.



### A003.03 New Penguin Impression, 1973

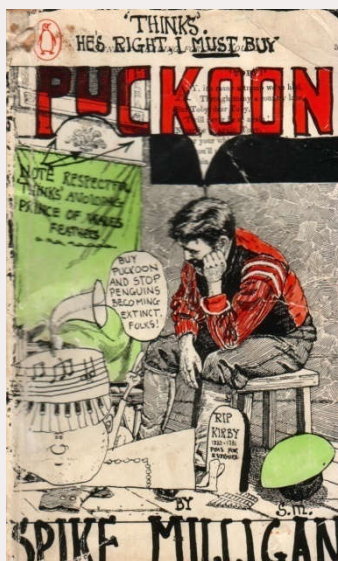
**Publication Details:** Penguin Books Ltd., January 25, 1973 Described as a New Impression edition and then changed to Re-issue edition (Amazon UK)

**Format:** Mass market paperback  
**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan (TAM),

**Cover Design:** Spike Milligan, author's photo by Flair Photography

**Identifier:** ISBN 10, 0140023747  
ISBN 13, 9780140023749

**Physical Description:** 155pp, ill., 180 x 110 x 10 mm 12mo.



The publisher's bio of Spike Milligan incorrectly gives his birth date as 1919. This bio continued to be used uncorrected for some time in Spike's Penguin books. It was still incorrect in the Michael Joseph *Puckoon* edition of 1986 but was corrected in the 1988 birthday Penguin edition.

### A003.04 Penguin US edition, 1976

**Publication Details:** Penguin (Non-Classics), 24 June 1976 (Penguin Group (USA), 2014)

**Format:** Mass market paperback

**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan (TAM),

**Cover Design:** Spike Milligan, author's photo by Flair Photography

**Identifier:** ISBN 10, 0140023747 ISBN 13, 9780140023749

**Physical Description:** 155pp, ill., 180 x 110 x 10 mm, 12mo.

The covers of these all mass paperback editions are similar with some minor variations. In the 1973 edition the price of 3'6 is removed. There are minor changes to the back cover too.

Details in the blurb change but not the incorrect year of his birth.

The Publication date is from the Penguin USA website (since removed). Amazon.com has a date of 1 June 1976.

### A003.05 Michael Joseph new hardback edition, 1977

**Publication Details:** Michael Joseph Ltd., London in association with M. and J. Hobbs, Walton-on-Thames 25 July 1977. (BNB, 2012) (OPENISBN, 2012)

**Format:** Hardback

**Illustrations:** uncredited, some were used by Spike in other books?

**Cover Design:** Les Lawrence

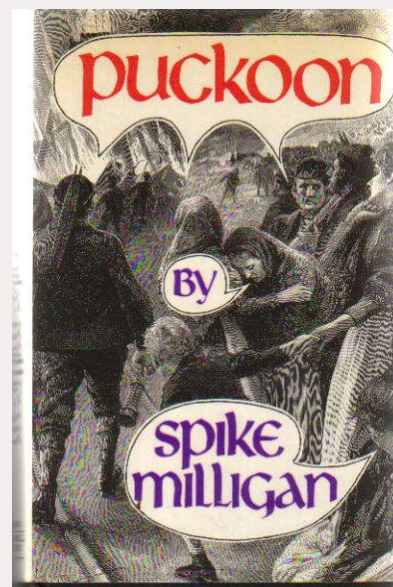
**Identifier:** ISBN-10: 0718112717 ISBN-13: 978-0718112714 BNB: GB7720650

**Physical Description:** 164pp, ill. ; 205 x 137 x 20 mm 8vo.

**Publication Price:** £3.95

Described as a new edition, it has different type face and illustrations to the original hardback edition. It is more accurately a First Thus edition.

Spike's comments on the inside dust jacket that nothing has changed except the illustrations and a new light bulb on the landing. Spike has used old pen and ink illustrations and provided his own captions.





### A003.06 New Penguin impression, 1983

**Publication Details:** Penguin Books Ltd. 01/04/1983 (Penguin Books Australia , 2015)

**Format:** Mass Market paperback

**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan (TAM),

**Cover Design:** Spike Milligan, author's photo by Flair Photography

**Identifier:** ISBN-10:0140023747 ISBN-13: 9780140023749

**Physical Description:** 155pp, ill., 180 x 110 x 10 mm, 12mo.

### A003.07 New Penguin Special Birthday Edition, 1988

**Publication Details:**

Penguin Books Ltd.,

April 7, 1988

(isbndb.com)

**Format:** B format

paperback'

**Illustrations:** Spike

Milligan

**Cover Design:** Spike

Milligan

**Identifier:** ISBN-10:

0140111344 ISBN-13:

9780140111347

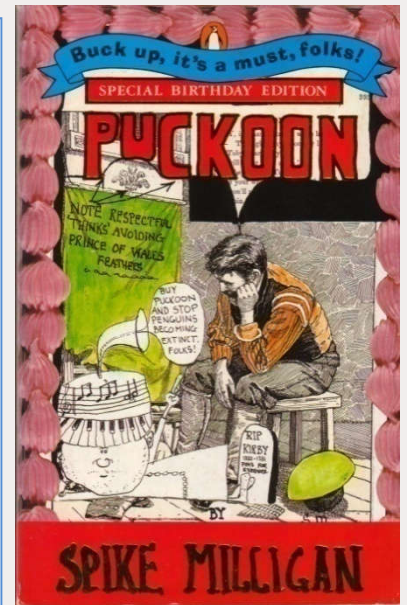
**Physical Description:**

155 pp, 198 x 128 x 13

mm 156 gm.

On the cover it is listed as a Special Birthday Edition, it could be the book's birthday as it was then 25 years old. It was actually to celebrate Spike's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, he was born on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1918. Spike's birth year was at last corrected in the blurb on the inside

On the copyright page is proudly proclaimed, Reprinted with a new Foreword 1988. The new foreword is largely Spike's protestations at having to write another 600 words and then he was asked for another drawing which he has supplied evidently quite reluctantly too.



### A003.08 German hardback edition, 1994

**Publication Details:** Haffmans Verlag (1994)

**Format:** Hardback

**Language:** German

**Translator:** Arnd Kösling

**Illustrations:** Not illustrated

**Cover Design:** Volker Kriegal using a classic cartoon from the 'Punch'

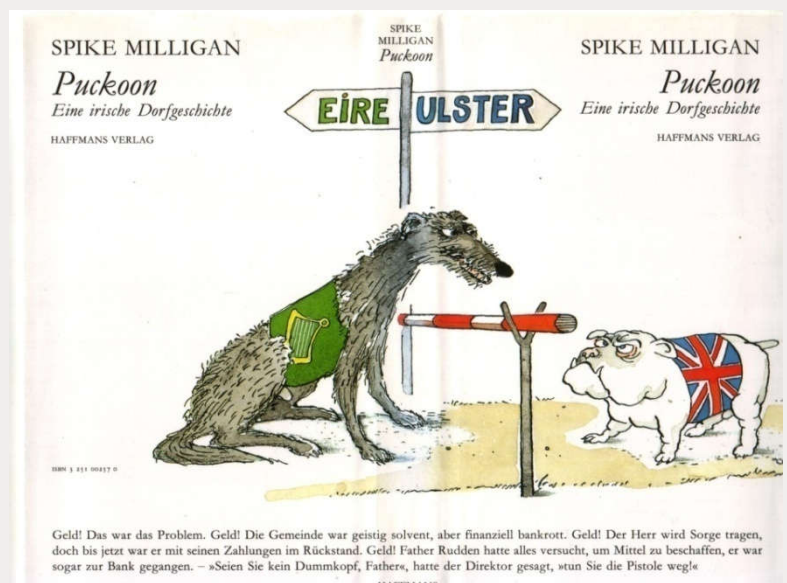
**Identifier:** ISBN-10: 3251002570

ISBN-13: 978-3251002573

**Physical Description:** 154 pages, 185 x 114 x 17 mm. 217 gm.

This book is a delightful little volume, well bound, feels good in the hand, and has a page ribbon.

Unfortunately it is not illustrated apart from the dust jacket. The cover illustration flows to the back cover like many of Spike's covers.



### A003.09 German paperback edition, 1998

**Publication Details:** Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München, (Dtv) (January 1, 1998) (isbndb.com)

**Format:** Mass Market paperback

**Language:** German

**Illustrations:** Not illustrated

**Cover Design:** Volker Kriegal using a classic cartoon from the 'Punch'

**Identifier:** ISBN-10: 3423200928 ISBN-13: 978-3423200929

**Physical Description:** 160 pages, 190 x 120 x 14 cm. 176 gm.



### A003.10 New Penguin impression, 1999

**Publication Details:** Penguin Books, 1<sup>st</sup> June 1999 (isbndb.com)

**Format:** Mass market paperback

**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan (TAM),

**Cover Design:** Spike Milligan, author's photo by Flair Photography

**Identifier:** ISBN- 10: 0140023747 ISBN-13:9780140023749

**Physical Description:** 155pp, ill., 180 x 110 x 10 mm 12mo.



The cover of this 1999 edition is another variation on the original paperback edition's cover, two colours only.

### A003.11 New Penguin impression, 2014

**Publication Details:** Penguin Books, 4<sup>th</sup> Sep. 2014.

**Format:** B format Paperback

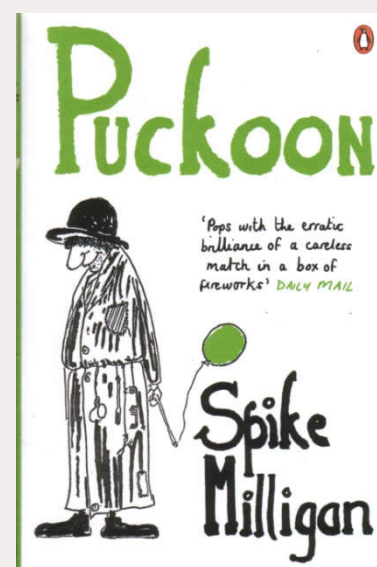
**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan

**Cover Design:** not credited

**Identifier:** ISBN- 10: 0140023747 ISBN-13: 9780140023749 BNB: GBB467540

**Physical Description:** 160 pages, 155pp, ill., 198 x 129 x 10 mm.

**Publication Price:** £8.99



The cover of this edition is a complete change and not another variation of the original paperback as previous editions have been. This edition's cover, two colours only and features a Milligan sketch from the story. The cover design is in the same style of the 2012 editions of Spike's seven war memoirs.

There appears to be a change in the cover, my copy bought soon after release has "Puckoon" prominent, later editions have 'Spike Milligan' prominent as shown for the eBook version.

The ISBN remains the same as the first penguin mass market paperback edition.

### A003.12 Penguin eBook edition, 2014

**Publication Details:** Penguin Books, 11<sup>th</sup> Sep. 2014.

**Format:** eBook

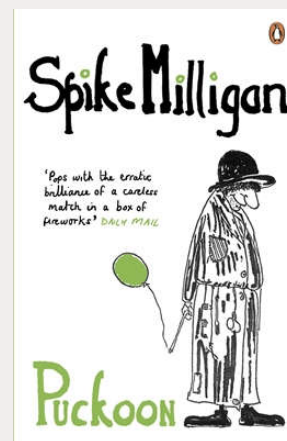
**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan

**Cover Design:** not credited

**Identifier:** ISBN- ISBN-13: 9780241971376

**Physical Description:** 160 pages, 155pp, ill.,

**Publication Price:** £5.99



### A003.13 Pakvn (Iranian version), 2014

**Publication Details:** Charm Publishing Company, Tehran, Iran 2014.

**Format:** Paperback

**Language:** Persian (Farsi)

**Translator:** M. Vessey

**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan

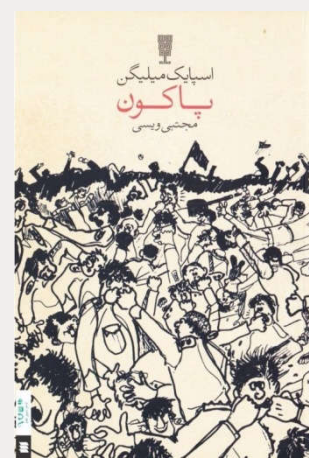
**Cover Design:** not credited

**Circulation:** 1,000 copies

**Identifier:** [6007192156](#) ISBN-13: 9786007192153

**Physical Description:** 167 pages,

**Publication Price:** 110,000 Iran rials (approx \$4.60 Aus)



### A003.14 Pakun (Russian language version), 2015

**Publication Details:** Dodo Press, 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 2015.

**Format:** Paperback

**Language:** Russian

**Translator:** Shashi Martynova

**Illustrations:** Spike Milligan

**Cover Design:** not credited

**Identifier:** ISBN- 10: 5905409110 ISBN-13: 9785905409110

**Physical Description:** 208 pages,

**Publication Price:** 300 rub. (approx \$7.00 Aus)



I am still to see a copy of these last two editions. They seem to be genuine but it is surprising to see them on the market.

## **Other media**

- Braille edition, The Royal Blind Society of New South Wales has produced a Braille edition.  
2 v. of interline braille.
- 1980 Record, Puckoon, Spike Milligan reading from his book. EMI stereo SCX 6630
- 2001 Film, Puckoon [based on the novel - Spike was not well enough to appear in it]