

Resure sent
Some time by return
mail

let.

(23)

Miss Springs

14th July 1896

My dear Spencer

When this reaches you
in your snug University quarters
I shall be plodding along
somewhere between Barrow &
Denants Coast. I hope to leave
here on the 17th & shall
be away for six weeks.
I cannot say that I am
looking forward to the trip
with any degree of pleasure
& if it were not for the
chance of gaining interesting
Anthrop: informants and some
new beads I fancy I should
feel inclined to postpone it.

20 Feb
indefinitely, these trips are no
novelty to me I have had
too many of them & with
increasing age I am losing my
old taste for roaming through
the desert wastes of Central Asia.
I do wish you could be with
me that country is totally
unexplored from a zoological
point of view, my present plan
is to stay a week at each
place & the whole of my spare
time will be devoted to
digging information out of
the Niggers, while the men
are engaged anthropologizing I
shall have the women scouring
the country for beasts & my
luck should be very bad indeed
if I am not able to fill

The tin Ischall has a couple
of Niggers with me on the
journey & at each camp we
shall have a good amount of
specimens Besley is now at
the Barren where he is to
remain until I can induce
them to send up another man
from Terra, while I am at
the Penant he will have the
Niggers out hunting, Ischall
take plenty of spirits with
me so as to be able to
have some at each Station -
What an Ass I was to throw
away those daggers & what a
still greater Ass I was to have
thrown away about half a dozen
since, I am sending you the
skull & feet of one this mail

25
I will try to get some whole
in time for next mail. The
mail's contribution consists of
some Phas mac Con Pedane, a
Snake which the Niggers call
Ocharla ^{I think it is a deaf adder} supposed to be very
poisonous & a lizard or two,
since those lizards, Storasi, turned
out to be known I despair of
getting ~~any new~~ anything new
here. My second trip to the
Mission Station enabled me to
compile a table of relationships
of the Swatcha which I hope
to send you together with the
Kefliche & Marcamonga next mail
the Swatcha table does not
differ much from the Aranta
I am taking it to Barrow first
where there is an intelligent

Switchea man in the employ of
the police from whom I hope
to get fuller information, he
is under an obligation to me
as I sent him to Port Augusta
gaol some years ago for cattle
killing & thus converted him into
a respectable member of the
Police force. Some time up just
after last mail left & when
he told me that, subject
to receiving instructions to assist
you, he intended meeting you
at the Charlotte with four
Camels I at once said yes,
he was in great form & is
looking forward to having a
good months ride you in
the Geo Gies he brought back
no end of Charing a electric

some stone he has swooped
down on several of their store
houses & made a clean sweep
of everything he could lay
his hands on. I was of course
glad to get the Steels but
I know ^{with} what great concern
the Niggers will feel their loss
& I have asked him not
to do any more robbing
unless in the way of punishment
for various offences such
as calling the King &c. - he is then
& he tells me he suffers a
great deal from insomnia rarely
sleeping for more than three or
four hours a night. I don't think
the life he is leading is at all
good for him, he simply stew
in his own juice next after

& month after month living almost
 entirely with Niggers with whom
 he rarely exchanges a word
 he appears to me to be cultivating
 a bitter cynicism which is
 any thing but attractive in
 young a man. A month with
 you will do him a world of
 good even if your society
 does tend to accentuate his already
 conservative tendencies, he wants
 thoroughly rousing, out there no
 one even thinks of differing from
 him when he comes in here
 our first hour or two together
 is very peaceful & amiable after
 that we get on to controversial
 matters & you can imagine the
 result. I enjoy his all too brief
 visits immensely but I don't think

I could live with him. He is
hateful & honest as steel & has
plenty of ability but is as
cantankerous & fanciful as an
old Indian Colonel whose liver
is in a chronic state of
irritation. Minicade sent me
his maps this mail they are
splendidly done his journal would
be out three weeks after he
wrote in the form of a Parliamentary
paper & would afterwards be
issued in book form, he is
using a number of my photos,
he tells me he received the
offer to lead Calcutta Expedition
but was already engaged to
take command of another Expedition
Syndicate of English Capitalists
have taken up large tobacco

The interview on special terms
with certain mineral rights
& it is for one of these
syndicates. Wisniewski expects to
go. I have told him
repeatedly that in my opinion
he would be wise to smooth over
matters with Horn & have his
journal & maps published with the
other words of the Expedition & I
have pointed out the sentences
in his present course which made
it patent to all the world that
there has been a quarrel but
nothing about of an apology
from Horn would show him I don't
see that the Govt are to blame
for publishing his journal & he is
an old Govt Officer they are
only too glad to get the word of

(2)

his traps & it is quite possible
that they are under the impression
Horn would not publish, in
fact he did decline to publish
the map in the first instance of
I remember rightly - I can quite
understand Irving being a
demon on the proofs from what
I saw of his manuscript, it was
so crowded with erasures &
emendations that he must have
written with infinite pains &
very slowly. I am most anxiously
looking forward to seeing the
volume just to see what he has
made of it all. I have not
heard from him for two weeks
but he sent me an apologetic
note a few days ago its rather
significant that the break in

Correspondence only began when
 his paper was completed. He
 no longer required information
 Geology Brown who is now at
 Barron Creek is very ~~rather~~ ~~new~~
 old Yale who has certainly not
 treated him fairly & there is likely
 to be a wordy war between
 the two rock experts, the geology
 volume aroused while Brown
 was sleeping with me & at
 once handed it to him, he
 seems to think that the best
 man of the two, by the way
 what is Matt doing at home studying
 geology? I am glad last mail's
 notes pleased you but I must
 confess that it is just a trifle
 depressing to think that our work
 is only a "splendid confirmation" of

that done by Howell Wilson.
The usual budget goes to you and
this mail some errors are
corrected. I shall be very anxious
to ~~see~~ know what you think
of the marriage ceremony note
I must confess that it staggered
me to find that the Uudatta
& Ipininna men also took
part - at the Mission Station
I found one Herbyway Ubra &
two Glen Helen women who
had been recently undergone
the ceremony & I have traced
the custom as far South as
Crown Point & no doubt it
extends further. It exists too
in the Kytiche with the
difference that women perform
the actual operations - ~~the~~

(4)

(23)

Does this point back to a time when there was something approaching to promiscuity? The notes on Erathippa will I feel sure interest you very much & I shall be curious to know what you make of it all. I think you know that some of the Coastal tribes in the NT do not circumcise or labrincise - The Glen Helen Hornbury Owen Springs & Kallunga people do exchange labras occasionally at big Corrobories & the same thing is done at Barrow fields & I have no doubt it was done here years ago although I cannot get these people to admit it a curious custom of men at times labras being taken off to attend

(11)

at the Corroboree grounds every day during the course of a Corroboree. At Barron Creek different women are told off each day in fact the women seem to take it in turns. Corroborees often last for a fortnight & during this time the men always stay about the Corroboree ground preparing decorative material - these men have connected with the women. I have had some Kytiche men & one woman on the anthropometrical expedition for the last three months. I shall of course enquire into the matter at Barron Creek & report further as I may but in the meantime I shall be glad to know what you think of it.

I am afraid we shall never discover genuine promiscuity amongst any of these tribes - does such a thing exist amongst any savage people? I have never believed that it existed amongst the Swiches but I did not think that they approach to it more closely than the Arunta they certainly have no class names & ~~the~~ I have not been able to discover any marriage restrictions with regard to Totems, while on the subject of Totems I must tell you that certain restrictions of a limited nature exist amongst the Arunta about eating the food represented by the Totem - these restrictions appear to be confined to the

Short period after the performance
of *intetchama* when those who
belong to the Totem only eat and
sparingly of the totem article
whether it be animal or vegetable
The *Udnwungeta* men or women
for instance will not hunt for
the quabs for some weeks after
the ceremony & they will not
eat the quabs until fully grown.
The *Sime* men will not kill *Sime*
for a certain time & so on
The *Udnwungeta* before being eaten
is always roasted dried & powdered
up, sometimes after the *intetchama*
when the harvest of quabs appears
all hands go in search & the quabs
are cooked & brought in to the
Alavumpu who after drying in
the Sun pounds them up & having

Eaten a little himself. he distributes
the remainder amongst the
different Camps - the use of
the Naama Triana at the
marriage ceremony was entirely new
to me & is a most interesting
discovery - there must be hundreds
of little things of this sort
yet unknown to us but every
month adds something to our
knowledge & I hope by the time
you arrive here we shall have
pretty well reached the bottom
of things. I am glad you will
be able to put my Horn
controversial charges the errors in
it have worried me a good
deal if there is one thing more
than another that I would like
to get a reputation for it is

for accuracy. I should like to think
that these last notes would
have been without your assistance.
We are as you say an excellent
combination & indispensable to each
other & I feel sure we shall
or rather you will produce a work
which will be of great interest
& considerable value to Antiquaries.
I wish your duties & inclinations
would have permitted you to come
up in the winter months when
we could have spent our evenings
over a cosy fire & a bottle good
Whisky. The weather will be so hot
when you are here that we shall
not be able to stay in the house
at night but nevertheless I think
we shall be able to do an immense
amount of work - I often wish when

tied in an anthropological knot that
 you were here to appeal to. I
 am returning the Wapanna label
 by this mail have gone over it
 carefully & you will now find
 everything runs smoothly. Certainly
 the Arunta look upon the Luricha
 as an inferior people on account
 of their not possessing classes
 you could not hurt the feelings
 of an Arunta man more than
 by calling him Luricha. I have
 an idea that the absence of class
 names does not prevail throughout
 the whole of the ^{also} spread the
 Luricha language but is confined
 to the groups in the Parpe
 Dorroo Country. Do they return
 from the Barroo I hope to be
 able to say something definite about

Their marriage system - I am
inclined to think they are an
inferior people their weapons
appear to be rudely, more primitive
the country they inhabit is almost
destitute of game - asked at the
Mission Station if it was wrong
to marry a sister in blood they
said yes but it was sometimes
done - apparently they could marry
the sister of any other man
although their table of relationships
would not lead one to believe so
The Arunta consider the Kestene
(Warraung) superior to the
Luritcha but it is not clear
whether they think the Warraung
superior - at the mission I
the Luritcha appear to me to be
treated with good natured contempt.

Contempt the Arunta laugh
at ~~them~~ & chaff them about
their marriage systems - I cannot
discover the existence of a belief
that in ^{the} past times the Luritcha
had slaves & lost them - the
tribe who speak the Luritcha
language must be about one
of the largest in Australia
for the Niggers here tell me
that the same language is
spoken by blacks west of Port
Augusta - Empire Downs men whom
I sent to go a few years ago
were able to talk with blacks
they met at Port Augusta - Very
few Arunta men can speak the
Luritcha tongue - I have not been
able to find one even at the
Mission Station - Here the Niggers

(2)

language is understood by
nearly all the ~~old~~ people
When a Lurichia comes to visit
the Wamta he has to learn
the latter language & now
them they puzzle me & I
doubt whether we shall ever
succeed in learning much
about them. I have got Mr
Steklov on the job he
having a fair knowledge of
the Wamta language should be
able to learn something shortly.
With reference to the origin
of Althera previously incorrectly
termed Quapara Althera I have
not been able to shake the
natives in their statement about
them originating in the North
My enquiries have proved that

at any rate three of the Altheida
 tribes which I am acquainted
 were some years ago performed
 by the Kytiche at Beaver Creek
 & are no longer performed there
 I am still enquiring & labor
 on will furnish you with
 the Kytiche & Warramunga account -
 "What about the words" etc I
 have never yet been able to
 find out the meaning of any
 of these ~~Altheida~~ chants & I am
 doubtful whether they use words
 in their Altheida - as to how
 they imagine the *orunturinga* *quapara*
 to be imparted - they believe
 that the *orunturinga* actually
 perform the *quapara* in the presence
 of the individual to whom they
 wish to impart it - They furnish

a full rehearsal on fact for
his special benefit - men so
privileged are looked upon with
the greatest respect - I have not
yet done much with the old
roman so far I have worked
very guardedly - In your letter
you say you have just been
going over the tables of class
names in the "Chitricia" this
should be "Ispira" not Chitricia
which means foreigners generally
it is from the "Ispira"
that these people have bagged
the 8 classes - Yes getting at
the "why" of things is utterly
hopeless the eternal alcheringa
is always cropping up, when
driven into a corner they always
take refuge in the alcheringa word

(9)

(23)

The secret name is the name
of a dead warrior & these old
names are supposed to have
come down from the alchemists
I agree with you that the
fact of their using the names
of dead warriors seems to
imply that in some way the
deeds of the great dead are
handed on and I have an
idea that when a young man
is taken to the store house
& given his secret name some
sort of recital takes place, he
is probably told of the deeds
of the individual whose name
he takes. I am not quite sure
of my ground yet but
hope to be able to say something
definite about this subject next

mail - A great deal of singing
takes place at the Store house when
the Churinga names are conferred
I am aware that Mr. Howell
is a firm believer in the
message sticks & I have no doubt
he has good grounds for his
belief but still I don't believe
that here or elsewhere there is
such a thing as a stick which is
intended to convey a certain definite
message such as might be
contained in a letter. I believe that
the so called message sticks
which are said to exist elsewhere
are merely ~~poor~~ sticks which
have been invested with a certain
sacred significance such as
that possessed by the Churinga
- time alone can tell whether I

am right or not but in the
 meantime I know that you
 will hold me guilty of
 sacrilege, perhaps worse, for
 presuming to doubt the authenticity
 of Bonnets information - When you
 look me over in error as you
 often do I always draw comfort
 from the thought of Bonnets & the
 message stick! Now dont lose
 your temper & dont pray dont
 think that I am prejudiced I
 admit my errors candidly & shall
 continue to do so being like yourself
 only anxious to get at the bed
 rock of truth - By the way I see
 that Constable Welshire who has
 lately been in Adelaide has been
 exhibiting a "message stick" which
 has "always" sent round amongst

the natives to warn them of
my approach" This is a jumble
from the newspaper report
what absolute rot it is & yet I
dare say it will be greedily swallowed
by all who have ever heard of
the message sticks fallacy Verb: Sap
as good old French would say
I will just add that Stirling has
gone miles higher in my
opinion since I learnt from you
that he had avoided all reference
to the subject in face of the
fact that he had been presented
with "message sticks" - I don't think
they have any means of keeping
a record of time or of anything
else I have made wide enquiry
upon this subject, at one time I
thought the Churinga might be

8

23

intend as records but I soon
found out that I was wrong
So far I have not learnt anything
of interest about the Aviacorta
Totem but as I shall have large
numbers of beads here for blankets
&c during the next few months
I may be able to find out
something - There is a common
fly (amcinga) totem & rubbing
the eyes with the Churunga of
that totem is supposed to cure &
prevent 'banged eyes' - I am
sending you a few photos this
mail was pleased to find
that you had the others carefully
packed between cardboard - Bring
the big Camera up by all means
if you can carry it, he may be
able to get some good pictures

In a few months I hope to
get pictures of Udaivungela
inteteuma which should be very
interesting there are some curious
customs connected with this ceremony
which will have to be noted
for instance after the ceremony is
completed the men return to
camp in the evening some of the
women are allowed to leave their
camps they must lie down all
night and must not urinate - the
same law applies to the Mulyarinda
i.e. the Kamara & Pama (a few who
are not of the Udaivungela Totawa)
I have for a long time been told
on the part of a big ceremony
called Engtiara which is
performed at various places & at
long intervals throughout the whole

Tribes. At this ceremony Chuwings
 from all parts of the country
 are brought together. The
 performance extends over many
 days & the visitors attend from
 hundreds of miles around. During
 the proceedings the young
 men are not allowed to visit
 their women & towards the
 end a large pit is dug in
 which a large fire is made
 the fire after burning down is
 covered with a thick coating of
 green bushes on the top of
 which all the young men
 are thrown. This causes them to
 perspire very freely & the smoke
 nearly chokes them. Men who
 have undergone this ceremony

are known as Euleara - I cannot
translate the term. They are
supposed to be strengthened made
hardly natural having to quarrelling -
it is evidently a very important
ceremony & one in which the
whole tribe takes part - during the
whole of the proceedings men are
not allowed to have intercourse
with their women, some of the
old men visit the hbras camp
daily to procure bushes tobacco.

16th Received a letter from
Coxley last night in which he
informs me that he is bringing
in a Luritcha prisoner whom he
has arrested for cattle stealing
& I know the fugger, he is about
the most intelligent Luritcha I

(9)

(2)

have met & if he is guilty - I
should much like to sentence
him to do his term & for
imprisonment in my den; what
a splendid chance it would be,
he could not receive greater
punishment than to be under
my close examination for six
months - the pity of it is that
I am afraid such a sentence
would be illegal, if only I
had a few thousands to my
credit I should feel inclined to
take the risk, it seems to me to
be flying in the face of Providence
to send such a man to Portugal
Angola or any other place
so useful here. He did 6 months in
gaol some years ago & learnt to speak
English fairly well while there - the pity of it

(P)

Conde says he wants to see me and
particularly about your trip. Before
he's definitely decided to go for
three months leave in September
& I shall probably send Field
to take charge during his absence
I fancy he will go straight on
to Melbourne see you & then on
to the Western fields in which
he is greatly interested. Between
ourselves I shall not be at all
surprised if he remains in the West
he is cut out for a training
man & would I think do well
if he once got fairly on his
legs. I hate the idea of his
leaving the line where we have
been for so many years close
friends & I am trying hard to
get the Government to give him

Substantial promotion, in writing to my Wife, his Sister, this mail he said he was most anxious to know if it was true that I wore feathers in my hair & went about with a bone in my nose (!) in the approved style of the Braves I have arranged with him to send me a Charlotteigger by Camels due here about the time I shall return, so if there are any questions referring particularly to the lower Braves, please let me have them by return mail, the man I am getting up is one who has mixed a great deal with the Wapanna He should pick out a lot of informants

I could not get our Wrappan
man to come up they don't care
about - coming so far from their
Country - I am looking forward
to receiving the Narrator's volume
& quite expect it to be the
piece of the Horn Sepan basket
you simply cannot keep writing
well. Sometimes drop across
one of your articles in the
Abstraktion ^{opert} which I receive
occasionally. Why on earth - I was
called away & quite forget what
I was going to say but it was
something in the way of reflections
upon some Scientists who are too
technical to be understood by
individuals like myself - If Corle
has anything of importance to
communicate I will add a line

Tomorrow this epistle is already
 too long I never seem to know
 when to stop when writing to
 you - Note small Ten contains
 three layers two of which I
 don't remember sending before +
 one plus that almost led in
 colour -

18th boat arrived this morning
 & with a pang which I feel
 still I was obliged to
 commit the prisoner "Friday"
 to gaol for six months hard
 - After the court proceedings were
 finished I took him to my
 den where for three quarters
 of an hour I questioned
 him closely when suddenly
 to my horror he reeled &
 fell up against the back.

Tracher to whom he was
chained I quietly thrust
him into the open air where
I administered some sal
volatile after swallowing which
he fainted & did not rally
for about half an hour.
Some made characteristic remarks
about the questions being
worse than the sentence but
this did not deter me from
laughing him again this
afternoon when I went through
the table of relationships &
various other matters I am
more than ever convinced that
they have no class system
& the totems most certainly
do not regulate the marriages

Combs says in case anything
 should arise to prevent his
 meeting you at the Charlotte
 your best plan would be to
 come straight on here. I have
 reason to believe that the Govt
 will offer to assist you but
 cannot say more just now.
 Combs suggests that you should
 send half your collecting gear
 to the Charlotte the remainder
 on here there is no necessity
 to send anything in the
 way of rations having perhaps
 some tinned meat - although
 I hardly think this will be
 necessary - He expected to have
 to take the prisoners down but
 Kelly (Souths successor) volunteered
 to do it so C returns at once

to Ilamwata he has just
left after spending the day
with us, my teetotal dad seems
to hurt him a great deal
he looks upon it as a sure
sign of degeneration & appears
to have got it into his head
that I & had given Whiskey had
become forsooth my wife objected
to it !! This riled the little
wife when she heard it -
Now tell me what you think of
those Puritan people this fellow
says it is wrong to marry a
Sister in blood but that some
of his tribe have done so. They
can marry any woman outside
their own family & they do
Speak to their Mothers in law

Don't leave a sheet of your
 letter behind next mail
 please convey my kind
 regards to Mr Spencer & love
 to the little chaps.

Slia the

Yours faithfully

J. J. J.

This case has delayed me two
 days I start in the morning
 72f

I'll French in sleep hunting
 for that word