

of Alice Springs

5<sup>th</sup> Dec 1896

My dear Spencer

It is fortunate that you will not expect an Anthrop budget this mail, since my poor Brother's sudden death I have been feeling too depressed to do any work, & though my interest in the work is in no way abated I feel restless & unwell & out of touch with the place - as soon as the mail clears out I will however get to work in earnest & before your arrival I hope to add much to the information already collected

Our Engraving is I think going  
to be a great success. Huggins  
has already arrived from  
Mc-Burwell Herby & the  
Mission Station & many more  
will turn up before next  
mail. The only thing that  
is troubling me is how I am  
to feed the beggars. They  
are corroborating almost daily  
tightly. Sacred ceremonies are  
being performed about once  
a week - some of which I  
have photographed, others I shall  
get before you arrive here.

As it is doubtful whether your  
photo material will reach here  
by next mail time, I think you  
had better bring a few plates  
with you - I visited you a day

(25)

or two ago to bring Magnus: ribbon  
as I thought it likely that  
you would want to get  
some night pictures in a  
Ceremony of this sort it would  
be hopeless attempting to  
persuade the blacks to dress  
up or go through any part  
of the Ceremonies. Specially  
during the day time. There  
will be no difficulty about  
you seeing everything, you are  
my Weteeya Hood and beval  
Stirling in this month letter  
says he would much like to  
accompany you but in view  
of his approaching English trip  
it is impossible, in writing to  
him I kiss you for the first time  
since my return, much loved

my anthropological work. I  
said that during the last year  
I have been doing a steady grind,  
that my contribution to the  
Horn Exp<sup>ts</sup> only touched the  
outer fringe of the whole question  
& in view of later work  
appeared very insignificant - He  
is going to put up for the  
Anthropological Society & has offered  
to put me up & I have asked  
him to do so provided the fees  
are not too stiff - I am eagerly  
looking forward to your arrival  
& hope to keep you with us  
until after Christmas - Cowle has  
recently returned from the George  
Gee Range where there has been  
no rain worth mentioning for  
eighteen months, in working to

me he says that he intends  
 to take you away about a week  
 before tmas but unless some  
 facts I dont see what you  
 can gain by shortening your  
 stay here where you could be  
 profitably employed for the  
 whole term of your holiday -  
 there would not be much pleasure  
 in travelling about the western  
 country in the heat of  
 summer - in any case, dont make  
 any arrangements with him to meet  
 you ~~too~~, unless after your arrival,  
 the police here would send a  
 dragoon out to him at any time  
 so that you could let him know  
 to a day when to meet you - I  
 has an idea, & I hope it will turn  
 out correct, that once you settle

down to words in fact my  
dear you will not care  
to leave until the expiration  
of your holiday is close at  
hand. I thought it best to  
reserve a seat for you at  
once in the mail as they  
cannot take more than two  
passengers owing to the  
bulky parcels port - there is  
nothing but you can bring  
up for us thanks - You need  
not trouble to provide yourself  
with a tent fly or mosquito net  
I can provide these things here  
& by this mail I am sending  
to Mr Hewitt a piece of  
American leather for a camp  
sheet, he will hand it to you  
on arrival, it struck me that

in the hurry of leaving by  
 mail you might forget to  
 provide yourself with this  
 necessary article. I would  
 send a fly too but it is  
 hardly likely that you will  
 get rain on the road - the  
 [Engraver] company mis began  
 the day after you arrived here  
 last at least a week - if we  
 are to see everything that goes  
 on it will be necessary for  
 us to live at the camp - a  
 death or a serious war amongst  
 them at this juncture would  
 break up the whole thing a  
 calamity which may the Lord  
 in his infinite wisdom forbid -  
 bring a framing frame & some  
 paper for your large plates

Now I must conclude I in  
do hope nothing will  
turn up to prevent  
your coming I shall  
not feel quite sure  
of your visit I hear  
of your arrival at  
Podnadatta. I hope  
the trip will not run  
too much out of you  
provide yourself with a  
good hat & now with  
best wishes

Believe me  
Yrs ever sincerely

Wm. Pitt