

Alice Springs
10th Sept 1899

My dear Spencer

I have just seen the Mamma
safely packed up & have arranged
for Mrs. to take it down on the
mail. Hallett who is going down
will look after it on the road
& deliver it to Stewart at
Oodnadatta whence it will go
on to you by rail. I could not
withstand the mute appeal of
that sketch & at once sent for
& employed John the Rat Rat &
Nosey Bob who readily undertook
the job - Mrs. particular Mamma belongs
to the Illatā (big pig faced burrowing
rat) of Lympills on the Finke

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It represents an old man Illata
this peccaniny - by parcels
post I have sent a Tin containing
beasts they were also a small bottle
containing Udivoring ita grub in
Iraella stages - The Udivoring ita like
all other grubs is commonly
called Wetchetty The word does
not belong to this locality & has
been imported from the South
it is a caterpillar from 1 1/4 to
1 1/2 inches in length & finally turns
into a grey moth - a common looking
insect at present unobtainable as
are the Caterpillars which are only
found in good seasons for a
short time after rains - The Caterpillar
goes onto the ground to Uchagua
then Iraella & finally Maegna or
moth - Thanks for your splendid
letter I enjoyed reading it very

truth, do you know I think you
 have done me an injustice in
 saying that I had informed you
 the Junta did not find their
 acts I do not remember ever holding
 such an opinion & indeed I have
 a distinct recollection of an
 argument upon this subject which
 occurred between myself & some
 members of the Horn Septⁿ who insisted
 that these people did not find
 their acts - however I have gone in
 to the matter very fully during
 the last few months & now there is
 not a shadow of a doubt about
 it - the relationship notes are simply
 splendid - you have got a magnificent
 grasp of the whole far better than
 I have & you have written it with
 your usual lucidity. I have gone
 through every line carefully & you

will find a few trifling errors
corrected in the ~~large~~ badge of
Notes - There is one other error that
I forgot to mention last week in
the Kurlantcha notes you state that
the Raulchama would not be killed
if detected, This does not occur
in my notes here & it is not
correct, the Raulchama would be killed
just as readily as any other man -
I don't feel in the least up to
tell you nothing today; little Balfour
has had a serious illness through browsing
upon a mixture of raw cauliflower &
almonds & we have had very little
rest for the last week, he is now
recovering - The Copy of Nations
containing the Ingorawa paper has not
come to hand was it posted?
I am anxious to see it in
Cold print, probably some of the

Australian papers would be glad
 to republish it as Nature has
 such a limited circulation out here
 I wrote last mail asking what
 I should do with the negatives &
 thanking me for my "valuable contributions"
 to his paper, he made no reference
 to our work except to say that you
 had told him that you were "very
 successful on his late trip he is certainly
 a splendid worker" he says he will
 be returning to England in January
 would like to know if I am likely to
 be in town before he leaves - I have asked
 him to send the negatives on to you -
 In a recent paper I read a private
 letter from a missionary in the New
 Hebrides to a clergyman in Adelaide in
 which the paragraph occurs - "A young chief,
 Namuti, who is one of the two that I believe
 to be sincere in their profession of faith, whom
 we

Mr Gray will no doubt remember, came to
me just the day before yesterday with
all the Sacred Stones that had come
to him as chief. These consist of stones
for making various kinds of fish come
into the bay, & of others for making
pegs numerous. Namuli said he would
not keep them any longer, because he
now believed that they were of no use, &
he intended to hold to the teaching of
God that all these things in future
I did not even know that he had them
in his possession till he brought them to
me of his own accord" - What do
you think of this - Cheeringa surely!

You will find some interesting matters
in this mails notes. I am hoping that
at long last we have got to bed work
as to regard origin of Iwuntungya & how
man descended from the alcheringa
ancestors - the note dealing with this is

Very brief but it represents some awful
 mauling some real hard graft and
 an expenditure in bad language which
 it will take 50 years of penitence to
 wipe out - Yes I remember your theory
 as to the Alchonga man this Churinga &
 I was not at all surprised when I found out
 that you had borrowed on my gravel, you
 have so often been right in looking ahead
 that I have come to regard your theories with
 the greatest respect but in the matter of
 taking the Tolens article you are off the track
 altogether - You will find amongst the notes
 sufficient material to show conclusively that
 the Tolens is not eaten freely & that at certain
 times it is scarcely & not eaten at all, if it
 had appeared upon the scene a few hundred
 years later I think the vegetation would have
 disappeared altogether - I have gone most
 carefully into this matter. I have been up to
 my neck & overhead in work since the mail

arrived & shall not have time to take
haenags of Churinga or paid Negaluro
in time for this mail - You must
have nearly as many wooden Churinga
as I have could you not get better
kivets there - I think now for that
The concentric circles are a derivation from
the spiral which is clearly discernible
on some of the shells - My wife is strongly
imposed with the idea that we shall have
you with us for Christmas again, she says
she feels sure that we shall get a note
some day saying that you are coming. I
would like it above all things but I
afraid it is not possible, Mrs Spencer I
know would not like it & it would require
the courage of a martyr to leave the
cozy quarters you depict in your last
letter where are you living? I do hope
the tramanga will get through safely it
is a rather delicate concern to cart about

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In the case you will find a small bag
of Ardashah to replace any that gets
shaken off in transit - Your collection
must indeed look well. I envy you
the green neutral tinted wall an
wharvesome which I shall never
be able to afford - Next mail I'll send
you some things including

Othnebatanum acarnum & *cinna*
so have to find them up this
mail. I rec'd a nice little addition
to my collection the other day
dully bag of Hungarian skin containing
a lot of string things & a set-
tens in number - of Arungulha
Shah's bones a dainty little lot
which evidently belonged to some
old villain - They were dropped by
Negos who were being chased for
cattle killing - I'd send them to you
to examine but if you ever get

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into that small case you could never
bring yourself to part with them -
I am especially rich in arungquetha
sticks & can let you have a couple
of the Irumtucanga sort ~~and~~ if you
want more. I have not been able to
get out to the places mentioned in
my last letter there being no water at
either place - Sterling has not said
anything more about his proposal &
quite agree with you that if
the work is to be done simply
by people who are interested in
the diggers without trying amongst
them & possessing their entire confidence
it will be valuable - You know from
our own experience how extremely
difficult it is to make any headway
when you are amongst them &
possess their confidence - With respect
to Temple Poron I am not very

hopeful that I could do much more
 out there in a week or two, in
 the first place I don't know a
 word of the language & the Puggon
 know very little of me except that
 I have committed a few of these
 numbers to jail. I might run out
 here for a week after rain falls
 so let me know precisely what
 information it is that you require
 - Of one thing we are certain that is
 the total absence of class system &
 another thing the absence of Mores
 restrictions both of which escaped
 Stirling - We cannot show exactly how
 they regulate marriages but we do know
 that the choice of a wife is not
 restricted as it is in the Arunta
 - the relationships forms are on all
 fours or awaly so but I do not
 think they extend beyond certain

to caelidus - I think we have got
much further than Sterling did
although he had Coote on the spot
to assist him - Marton has been
with us again & the next days
is a visit which will be out
later than Christmas he will bring
in a medicine man who is about
the most intelligent Nigger on
Pease & I'll either buy or get
something out of him - After
much weary waiting the Station
Master at Williams Creek has
arranged for an intelligent hater
to come & spread me on Sunday
when I hope to settle definitely
about the lotus intermarriages. If
the outcome results in anything
satisfactory I'll get Byrne to
enclose a memo in his letter
I have also written Keape asking

fine
 to get the information & to enable
 him to understand what I want. I
 have given him a lot of information
 about the organization of the "Wapemona"
 "Of course you know so so re" of
 course he does not - I have made no great
 effort to acquire this language but I am
 picking it up gradually & understand it
 much better than I can talk it, it's a
 fair brace of a language - by the way
 when asking for translations please say
 where the terms are used - Wümpa
 for instance, which means bad smelling, I
 can't find anywhere in my notes - whenever
 I can translate a term or words used I
 do so - You will find amongst the
 photos one of a man holding a
 spear in which the flint shows out
 fairly well, this was the only one out
 of three negatives in which the flint
 was clearly discernible - Women never go
 about

to I at least I havent seen any,
Carrying a petchie on the head & one
child sitting astride the shoulders & another
across the hip - when carrying two children
the petchie is carried under the arms
as in one of the pictures by this man
- the two girls in the ~~pe~~ same picture
are rather good looking but perfect
little spitfires for a week they were
fighting every day until both were
horribly battered about I ~~had~~ to stop
them on two or three occasions but
the quarrel always broke out again
next day until I, in my character
of medicine man, had this little
trick - taking out a lump of sugar I
sang over it & powdered some on
to the head of each girl & then
dividing the remainder in two halves
made them hold it in their mouths
until dissolved. I then struck each

a slap on the back of the neck
 & told them that if the quarrel
 was resumed they would be dead
 in a month, since then there has
 been no quarrel & I have had two
 applications for the ^{ilyima} ~~segare~~ treatment
 the old Okwirabata was greatly
 impressed when he heard about it -
 If the missionaries heard this they'd
 set the dogs on to me the next time
 I visited Nromamabang = the Peggos are
 greatly concerned about Letts Jack's illness
 & the Okwirabata & another blind eyed old
 rascal interviewed me yesterday about
 bringing up a great medicine man who
 has just arrived from the Bunt district -
 I declined politely, pointing out that I was
 not a great Rallowara & referred them to
 the Drombawinga for a character. Since
 then the old Ketchin Lubra has interviewed
 the wife & told her that the old man

knows exactly what Jack is suffering
from that on a previous occasion when
Brian was ill he came to our bedroom
door & extracted the bone ~~from~~ through
the keyhole - delighted to hear that the
latter Baron Cued sat in new Medway
will hunt up information about & try
to get some more as soon as possible
I am out of Spirits of Wine but have
a bottle half of of the other stuff, it
is hopeless trying to fill the big
collecting box in a season like the
present, we are suffering from drought
& unless rain falls within three months
our sheep will be uncatchable - The
Bulletin In total says that you
are to succeed McCoy at the Museum
is this so? pray look to that whale
- and don't give your collection to
the institution. I was amused to read
Welshes remarks about the Chewing

which you got from Mrs. Berley, they are
 characteristic of the man, the net-probably
 was traded from the South where
 bags & nets were made in years
 gone by. The trader also made nets of
 grass fibers. I have one which I think
 you saw, in fact I'm not sure that
 I didn't give it to you. It's a little
 depressing to think that the book will
 have such a very limited circulation.
 I am still hopeful though that you
 will turn out to be right & I right.
 This country will take about a dozen
 copies & you are trading it in such
 an attractive form that I shall be
 very much surprised if it doesn't
 command a large sale. The illustrations
 if they go on a free hand, must
 sell it. Would you like to send
 some Chewmiga home to Oxford or
 to the Anthrop people, if so please
 out

half a dozen or more send them
home in our joint names - Was
it a great piece of luck that no
one else ever thought of working
out these stones They always had
a peculiar fascination for me &
I shudder to think how little I would
have got to know about them
without your guiding brain - your
seething brain - I wonder it would
have suited abt of old Sterling
or Eylesmann had got in ahead of
us - by the way Eylesmann has only
just reached St. Domingo where he is
totally unknown They wired me for
a description of him the other day
for purposes of identification & to enable
him to operate on his banding eye
- Next mail I will send you the
tool used for making chewing - pair
bow of opium with incisors left in

I got several from an old fellow
 out at Mr. Hay & sat with him
 for half an hour while he was
 making a Churinga - terribly slow work
 I was too - Note I know two
 Churinga more carefully made than
 the one one in hair covering
 which I gave you - Note again - A
 man was killed at Bonds Springs
 a few weeks ago for taking as wife
 a woman - Unama to him - who had not
 performed the final ceremony of
 Umpitchima at her husband's grave
 his great offence was that he threw
 away the Chimurilya which she was
 making - No fear of a serimmage breaking
 up the Engowra if it once starts going
 here. & I stand daily. If I see get them
 thoroughly well in hand & could stop
 anything of that sort quietly - Eldintwa
 Rat Rat & several of the Southern Puggers

including some from Uadiwa are
here & anxious to hold another
Ingnura but I have almost decided
to veto it - meantime they are
performing abmoawa ceremonies
which of course I am recording
with the Camera - by Jove this abmoawa
beg is a great throw in for the
old men & for their wives to for
they also have to be separately
provided with Sibrasawa - you
will find the initiatory notes
further extended & corrected (damn)
& some good notes on making
of medicine men - the wit eye
Certainly does exist in some form
or other amongst the Northons
Iperia but I have not been able
to get any information about it
except that ^{some men} they have the power
of closing their eyes & projecting

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arungquilha by looking at people
they wish to injure - What induced
you to ask me by voice if totems
were ever changed. if that were
possible it would upset a great part
of our work - the question staggered me
& I lost no time in getting to work
on it soon found that they were as
I thought unchangeable - in fact the old
men laughed at the idea although
alcheringa ^{did so in 1 or 2 instances reversed} ~~was~~ to show everything was
possible - ^{4th} I think the cannibalism of
far back generations can be safely assumed
this continual reference to men living upon
these totem ^{is} ~~is~~ ^{scarcely} points back to
cannibalism. I am returning Natural Science
with the manuscript you have every
reason to be pleased with these remarks
about the Narratives - Pray don't forget
to send me Nature if you can't get
it in Melbourne and some Boobies.

1. send home for it. It was not possible to take a picture of the actual killing of the Strawberry boy it was done after dark as it always is so that there is no hope of getting the real thing. I couldn't stand the uncertainty at all because I never could depend upon getting a picture in the middle of the plate - that confounded little instrument nearly turned me grey. By this mail I got up a new Thornton piece of shutter which will give an exposure down to 80th part of a second. I'm sorry to say your old shutter is quite worn out - With this new shutter I could have got the Kangaroos crowding on to the Wurlpa splendidly - Have you discussed recent notes with Horrett & Pison too? What do they think of them? I apologise for the tin pot in *Orbita* it escaped

my notice the Negatives is not a good
 one - Do you know that Fondeur appears
 to have gone out of the market altogether
 I have not been able to procure any since
 you left here & am doing all my work
 with Melol - Please make out a complete
 list of all Negatives you require - if
 you want one of Navramunga this
 year get Sterling to go & get it
 - I think there are two - from Baker
 & Rouse who still hold alot of my
 Negatives unless Sterling has taken charge
 of them - I suppose you'll rage around
 because the Oulther pictures are not
 better but the light was atrocious &
 I was fortunate to get pictures at all
 under the Circumstances - I took a plate
 of the operation but there was nothing
 on it - of course it had to be taken
 simultaneously & just after daylight
 it is impossible to get pictures without
 some exposure

- Do not make any use of the Chambers
pellar legend it is garbled the mans
name was not Rectipeta. I have a
ceremony connected with the hadrons
& will send picture with corrections
next mail - Stirling certainly wont work
with me if his idea is carried out
unless you feel disposed to sever the
partnership - even then I dont think I
could work with him - rightly or wrongly
probably wrongly Ie got it into my head
that I know more about this sort of work
& ~~that~~ how to sift it than Stirling does
& having this feeling I couldnt work with
him: I dont think it would be conceded
for you to say that you & I should be
sent out for Horne & Fison have already
publicly spoken of our work as the best
of its sort & we have the advantage of
having a splendid starting point & a
wide acquaintance with the vessels in the

Interior. Someone has, for some months, been
sending me the Sydney Anthro journal but
I notice that it has stopped this mail.

Where is Watt? It struck me that he might
be sending it. How are those pictures you
took of me with the beads turn out
you haven't sent me a copy - my
pictures are delightfully mounted - yours
& mine - in a big album while yours are
I suppose vegetating in a pigeon hole
- I think you have a little stone cutting
knife amongst the things I gave you if
not please let me know. The Awltha is done
with a flint flake - a palino quartz traded
in from the Hay locality where I saw
a splendid outcrop & clear indications that
knives and flints had been chipped at the
spot for hundreds of years - I am starting
a couple of old guns on a Chemwilya
& it will reach you in time - you have the
real thing - announced - in the bones of I sent

P

you long ago - I don't remember the black
trouble better you got here but will try to
get some for French to whom please
remember me most kindly it is distressing
to hear that his writing is getting worse I
didn't think that possible - You will
remember a conversation we had with the
Kegons about lotens eating at the Ingward
when a man of the Awaruta lotens said
he could eat anything at any time - it turns
out that he is Awaruta of Elonda (Wardonia
lecharitae) & can only eat the fruit sparingly
I took him some one day & he would eat
it - Iati is a mean old dog & you are
singularly generous if you forgive such a
glaring breach of good faith. I didn't think
him capable of that sort of thing & it is
disgusting to think that a man in his
position would stoop so low. When I meet him
again I'll tell him what I think about it, if
I get a fair chance to broach the subject

I should like much to have seen old Byrne when he heard this, whatever you may do he will never forgive the old Savage - Savage in very truth - I don't think it would be necessary to use Horn map if Wernicke does the work the one now being compiled by him & Zoology Brown would be better for our purpose. I know that he is eager to fix it up & he would do it so well that I do not think we could do better than accept his offer - I am not troubling him this winter although he wrote last mail saying the R Geog. Society in recognizing the Horn work had given me great praise, is this so? he tried to procure a copy - to send to me but they were not to be got in La. - In a part there is no doubt about the killing of that man out Tempe way from your letter I gather that Cowles has told you of his epist with Martin. I has discussed affair with both of

of them & I am afraid our mutual
friend is most at fault, he is a
very peculiar fellow & he allows his
tongue a license which some men, real
good fellows too, will not tolerate. I
am very sorry about the whole thing
because they are both real good fellows.
I'm sure you would like Martin &
I have written strongly to Corle since
his return pointing out the absurdity of
the whole thing & begging him not to
let it go any further - Martin went
there some weeks ago on his return
from here & Corle gave him a freezing
reception so much so that Martin no
longer calls at Illamarta - he speaks
in generous terms of Corle & has done
a great deal to make things comfortable
for him at Illamarta - to report to
the Churinga a man now believes that
his Churinga ^{at times} contains his spirit, his yenda.

It is only the spirit of the dead that
 is called Althana - I would give £50, poor
 as I am, if I could have one little
 week with you to discuss the Churings
 & other things I think we are fairly on
 the road & if there is any hitch it is
 owing to my incapacity for lucid
 explanation - You say it sounds presumptuous
 to question my last notes - Thank the Lord
 that you did question them & I hope that
 you will never hesitate to do so when you feel
 that ~~we~~ we are not on solid ground -

Sacred Churings does not please me but -
 I can offer no substitute for the word Sacred
 Did I tell you in a previous letter that
 Byrnes had recd substantial promotion?
 Now I must close I'm afraid you will
 find this a cross than usually dignified
 letter I am happy and out of sorts -

Your girls must be growing apace
 you have not told me how they looked

upon their return from England. I
 was delighted to learn that the Irish
 Members would not take part in the
 Jubilee proceedings Pellons speech was
 magnificent it was more than that it was
 generous he did full justice to the great
 Empire ⁱⁿ of which he is proud to be a
 unit, to the splendid qualities of
 the English as a nation &c —
 but what they are going on, you'd only
 laugh, so good night I mean the my
 kind regards to Mrs Spencer & tell her
 that if you do run up at some time
 we shall take the greatest care of you

Yours ever sincerely
 J. J.

Queensland Members are paying me
 nice little divvies —