

Pitt Rivers Museum ms collections
Spencer papers Box 1a E Miscellaneous

Letter E1

St Johns College

Aug 17th / 80

Dear Spencer

I write to congratulate you most heartily on your well deserved success. It is a source of very great pleasure & gratification to myself that my first year of office at Owens should be closed by so signal a triumph on the part of one of my pupils.

With reference to your future career I cannot but think you would be unwise in choosing Oxford rather than Cambridge Natural Science holds a far higher position here than at Oxford. The teaching & the facilities for learning are much better here & the rewards are more numerous & quite as valuable.

Dr Foster and Mr Balfour are men who attract students from almost all parts of the world, & are moreover men who are practically unrepresented at Oxford.

We have here a large well organized medical school, which Oxford has not, while special arrangements exist to enable [insert] men [end insert] to combine their Natural Science & Medical Studies.

Mr Lankester (himself an Oxford man) who was much struck with your work, agreed with me that at the present moment Cambridge was the more suitable for you, especially if you have any intention of studying medicine.

Whatever you decide on I shall always be glad to hear of your progress & shall take a keen interest in your future successes.

I start for Norway in a day or two [end of scan of letter]

Letter E2

[University of London,
Burlington Gardens, W.]

Oct 23 1880

Sir

you cannot hold the Exhibition unless you comply strictly with the regulations which are sufficiently explicit. you must in order to satisfy the requirements present yourself for the 1st M B examinations within three years If you do not intend to do this you must renounce the Exhibition at once

I am Sir

your obedient servant

H N Moseley

W. Baldwin Spencer Esq

Letter E3

[The Owens College,
Manchester]

13/11/82

My dear Spencer,

You will be pleased to hear that my "name has been submitted to the Queen for appointment to the Chair of Nat. Hist. at Cork". Of course I ought to start as soon as I get the Royal Warrant, wh. is but a matter of days. Well, to get a substitute for a few weeks – till Xmas is no easy matter, when ~~as doing so~~ [insert] acting as such [end insert] gives no claim for the post, wh. will be duly advertised for. Hence in our perplexity we turn to you & ask if you can come over ~~as early~~ & relieve me as early as possible during the next fortnight. In asking you thus I have Dr Marshall's express sanction & approval – he will probably write tonight but I dont want to wait. [insert] Marshall [end insert] Ward will take my share of the evening Botany work, so that you wd only be under Marshall. Of course if this would really be detrimental to your studies we would not wish it; otherwise, I venture to appeal to your friendship, which has previously stood me in good stead. The pay would be at the rate of £50 the term I think, it ~~would~~ say 4 gns a week. If you can manage it wd you mind writing or wiring probable date of being here, without delay. I shall be glad – other things apart – of the opportunity of shaking hands with you before you go.

Yrs most faithfully

Marcus M Hartog

Letter E4

[The Owens College,
Manchester]

October 16th/ 82

Dear Spencer,

I am very pleased to hear that you can come. We can manage next week somehow or other, & I shall hope to see you on Saturday. Dr Hartog will be here till Wednesday morning, & for the other days I will get some of the senior students to help. You certainly must not lose your term

Moseley might like to know that the Demonstratorship of Zoology, which will henceforth be distinct from that of Botany, will be vacant shortly. The appointment will be made about Xmas.

Yours truly

A. Milnes Marshall

Letter E5

[The Owens College,
Manchester]

22/11/82

My dear Spencer,

As I've often remarked you're a brick & a trump. The classes are [illegible] Elem. Biol Tuesday & Thursday 10.30-1.30, 2-5 (Marshall relieves me at 1 to give me an hour. The men work with syllabuses and Walker knows everything about the Lab. Please keep up the receipt book, wh. you will find useful. Try borax car... [illegible]

In awful haste

Yrs

MMH

The screw will I believe be 5 gns a week – hooray for you.

Letter E6

Powell's Creek

15.2.03 [1]

My dear Professor,

I must thank you for your welcome letter of Nov 14th and consider it is very good of you to write at all seeing you are so busy lecturing not to say any sliping [? sic] of your other activities

The lectures no doubt will bring back all the little incidents ...ing [illegible] or otherwise that occurred during your journey [3 words illegible]

A sister of Mr Kells is very interested in your trip and [2 words illegible] sends us clippings from the papers, and looks forward immensely for the publication of your book.

The book you kindly forwarded for Clara and Freddie reached us on the 4th of this month for which many thanks

They are both really pleased with them particularly Freddie who has read all the Green books

The morning following the arrival of [illegible] made Freddie was up before sunrise. I asked him why he was up so early He replied "Oh missis I have scarcely slept all night for thinking about [2 words illegible] Professor [word illegible] I have to read them so much" The History Geography etc are a [2 words illegible] books I ...ed [illegible] and feel almost as pleased as Freddie to have them tho he dares not [illegible] much with them as yet as at present we are without a cook and a great deal of my li... is taken up in culinary duties Which it [2 words illegible] to see this very hot weather [illegible] we have had very good rain and [2 words illegible] of a favourable season Still the heat is so [illegible] unbearable day and night.

In speaking about the books I omitted to thank you for the very pretty almanac you kindly sent me that also is a great amusement to Freddie

Mr Kell says he [illegible] rather surprised that your being so near you did not go to get the Ceep [?] and "Melba" still he is really glad you did not patronise the opposition Sunday School picnic where so many suffered from ptomaine poisoning or you might have had to resort to the [2 words illegible]

There is great excitement [2 words illegible] at Alice Springs at the Gold discovery at Winnekes depot hope their estimates will only be realised as South Australia is really in need of [illegible] of [2 words illegible] to make things go ahead
Not received any thing further re Mr Tate [illegible]
I believe [3 words illegible] is increased by [2 words illegible] of [2 words illegible]
You will have to excuse a scrawl letter as Ive post of Assistant Cook has been added to my [several words illegible]
With kind regards from us both to you and Mrs Spencer
I remain
Yours Sincerely
F.J. Kell
Mr Kell would like to know if the 2 cases you left here have arrived O.K.

Notes [1] The date appears to read 93 as the year but this cannot be true as it refers to activities that must have happened in 1902-3. it seems therefore that unlikely though it seems the date is in fact 1903 (Spencer only met people in central Australia in 1894).

Letter E7

Powells Creek

28.4.03

My dear Professor,

You will think me low in answering your last letter but it missed one letter by a few days consequently had to wait another six weeks hence the delay
I expect you are very pleased that the M.s. for your book is completed it must be a great relief off your mind and thankful to see it placed
With the exception of recording Xmas greetings from Mr. Gillen we have heard nothing [illegible] who has first returned from a trip I write was at Moonta & saw Mr. G. and states he is quite settled now again after his trip
Things are not very happy at the old spot (A.G.) [1] Mr. B. is not at all popular.
He is at present in Adelaide having taken Miss [illegible] (Mr Mc[illegible]'s young lady) home, so we feel sure there will be another aspirant for the matrimonial market ... rest of letter not transcribed as too illegible
Notes [1] Alice Springs, Mr B. is Bradshaw, Gillen's replacement at the Telegraph Station

Letter E8

Letter not transcribed as illegible

Letter E9

Crown Point Stn

10th Septr 1898

Dear Professor

By this mail we are sending you under parcel post 10 moles
You must think it very strange and want of courtesy on our part in not writing & thanking you for the case of Fruit sent last year – but we were all very busy at the time, preparing for a trip to Adelaide & sorry to say it was neglected.
You will see that we are in the same old dust hole, but glad to say, that we are shifting the station shortly to a much better spot at the junction of Finke & Goyder.
So far the season promises to be a good one, & it is to be hoped that drought will give us a rest
I am glad to report all well
With kindest regards from self & Mrs Ross
Yours very truly
A. Ross
Professor Spencer
University

Letter E10

Alice Springs

March 15th 1900

Dear Professor

By this mail I am sending you some animals which have been bottled at Barrow Creek for some time thinking there may possible be some thing new amongst them. If there is any thing in the way of Information etc which I can collect for you at any time dont be afraid to drop me a line. The place very dull now the Gillen family have gone. Not quite used to the new people yet. I found tree graves of several native dogs round Barrow Creek dont know if you have heard of that before. A large number of your old friends (native) have died since you were here Some of the Southern germs carting whooping cough Influenza etc up this way soon makes short work of them. Season very dry. Trust yourself & family are quite well. Kind
Regards
Yours Sincerely
Jno. A. Besley [first part of signature illegible]

Letter E11

Oodnadatta

8th July 1900

Dear Professor

Your letter dated 4 July duly to hand --

I will accept your offer of £20 for the moles &c and note your remarks on same I have a few more in spirits which if you wish I will keep and send them to you later on or would you like to have them at once --

You will please find inclosed [sic] Invoice of stores sent to Cowle I have sent him a duplicate account --

Drought is still raging in these part & stock of all kinds are getting very poor --

My chances of seeing Melbourne within the next year or so is very slight, but when I do I will not forget your kind invitation.

I am glad to say that both wife & Family are having the best of health but business is very slow -- With kindest regards from both

I am Dear Professor

Yours very truly

A. Ross

To

Professor Baldwin

Spencer

Letter E12

[St John's College,

Cambridge]

Dec. 3. 1900

Dear Prof. Spencer

Dr. Haddon has asked me to write to you in connection with your proposed expedition which I am very glad you are able to undertake.

Haddon tells me that he has already mentioned the genealogical method I had in Torres Straits. I hope that the paper will be published shortly when I will send you a copy; in the meantime I send you a proof of [insert] the specimen [end insert] genealogy. In Murray Island & M... I was able to collect genealogies including practically everyone on the islands & found it a very useful method of collecting ~~informa~~ statistics about social customs & also about such matters as average number of children, etc. ~~It was a~~ I am afraid, however, that it is less suitable for Australia, ~~which~~ than for smaller isolated communities like those of Torres Straits. It was also especially simple there in that many of the customs were more or less things of the past & much too difficult to prove satisfactorily in any other way.

I am also very much interested in the senses & especially in vision. I am sending you a small parcel, containing Cards for testing acuteness of vision & sets of papers for collecting colour vocabularies.

The former I have found by far the most satisfactory method of testing acuteness of vision & have used it for a few Australians. The problem is to find the greatest distances at which the position of the E can be recognized (I adopt 8 times in 10 as a standard) The native can show the position of the E by holding up to their E provided by [illegible] or better still by using the large E which I also send [2 words crossed out] portion on a board with a nail below to show the position to the investigator.

In connection with this, I should be very glad if you would let me know if Dr. Eylmann (mentioned [2 words illegible] on p. 24 of your book has published his work). I am very interested to know what method he used.

The other thing I am sending is a collection of colour papers which are the same as those which I used for collecting the ~~coloured~~ ^{mat} colour names in Torres Straits & elsewhere. I always collected the names independently from a number of different natives & then compared the results & ignored any discrepancies. In the Australian [illegible] then collected, there were a very limited number of names which were used with any degree of unanimity & consistency, although others were used by some individuals. I am also greatly interested in the derivation of [2 words illegible] and was able to trace the source of nearly every name used in Torres Straits.

I am still more interested in [illegible] & should be very glad if you would test the natives with H... 's [illegible] which you would no doubt get in Melbourne. The words are also extremely useful for w... names as they give one a large variety of shade & tint

I am very sorry that my work on these subjects is not yet published as it is impossible to say all that I should like to in the space of a letter, but if you would make any of the observations, they would be extremely valuable. [illegible] of other series is much more difficult. The best instrument for taking hardness of hearing is Politzer's Hörmesser. In any of the tests, it is [illegible] to test all the Europeans you can get hold of under exactly the same conditions (ie of illumination, clearness of atmosphere, etc)

I hope that you will have every success – we shall all look forward to ~~you~~ hearing your results
yours sincerely
W.H.R. Rivers

Letter E12a

[C. Winnecke

Licensed Surveyor

Agent and Broker

32 & 33, Eagle Chambers,

Pirie Street,

Adelaide]

Dec 18 1900

My dear Spencer

I was very pleased on my return from Tarcoola yesterday to peruse your letter, I wish very much that I had met you here, but this being denied me, I now wish you every possible success and also a pleasant trip. I wish I could have gone with you I would have done my best to be of some use. You ask me if I could suggest any likely localities worth your while to visit, there are two where I think you and Gillen would find some things of great interest one is the tribes that frequent the Buchanan river, they are without a doubt, the most perfectly (physically) developed blacks I have seen, equal if not superior on an average to the Caucasian then there is another tribe on the Sandover North East about 200 miles of Alice Springs, I saw that many of them with small pox marks and as this is a numerous tribe it extends over a large area, they have no connection with the Barrow Creek or Queensland tribes and their language so my black boy [insert] 'Mick' [end insert] told me differs entirely for [sic] those of the tribes with which he was acquainted, then again there is an interesting point to clear up in this region, on the south side of the Sandover I first discovered an old dray track, this was seen again 10 years afterwards still distinctly visible, such marks may last 50 years in this country, the track was very old when I say [sic] it in 1878 or 1879 but I feel sure it is still visible I followed it without any difficulty and finally could trace its course on my map for over 200 miles, Attention to other work prevented me from solving the riddle at that time I do not know if Dr Leichard [sic Leichhardt] had a vehicle, but I think not. I once questioned Baron von Muller [sic Mueller] but he too, although considered the best authority confessed to me that he was uncertain on this point now this track was travelling westward I saw it about 50 miles (at its [insert] furthest [end insert] western point) west of the Queensland Boundary in Latitude 21 [degrees] 50 [insert] Longitude 137.10 [end insert] and I last observed it on the Bunday a tributary of the Sandover in Latitude 22.20 Longitude 135.5 a rumour of which Gillen may know something reached me when north east of Alice Springs that a party of white men had perished and that the horses had died in the shafts of the dray somewhere in the direction in which I last saw the track it was a two wheeled dray without a brake – in crossing the small streamlets running into the main River the marks on the eastern side were only faint

while those on the western side were always deeply indented, thus I could tell its [insert] travelling [end insert] direction etc and think it must have been during a rainy or good season. Wishing you and Gillen every success and a pleasant and prosperous trip and with kindest regards to you both Believe me Yours very sincerely
Chas Winnecke
If I can do anything for you please command me

Letter 12b
[Buckhold Hill
Pangbourne
Berks]
replied 203/03
21 Dec 1902
My dear Sir,

It would be a great kindness if you would give me any information on the following points.
(1) The entymological import of the terms Nakrakia & Mulyonuika, Mathhurie & Kiraraura, & Panunga, Purula, Kumara, Appungerta, Umbitchaua, Ungalla, Uknaria, Bulthara.
(2) As to the term Ipniunna in your glossary you give only "grandmother on the mother's side" on p. 72 of your book "If I am a Panunga, all my Ipniunna men & women are Upuaria" on p 75 Ungalla [insert] U... [illegible] [end insert] are I presume Panunga p. 244 The Ipniunna men & women belong to the sub class into which the novice's children will pass & if the novice is Panunga they are Appungerta note is wrong
I can't make out all these
(3) AT the various initiations of Arunta boys, are they initiated into any of the classes Panunga Purula etc?
yours sincerely
Ernest Crawley

Letter E13
Geological Survey Office
Perth WA
2 March 1903
Dear Sir

Allow me to introduce myself to you, as one interested in aboriginal matters
I have been collecting inform regarding the use of the carved dancing boards among the Central tribes here, and as Prof Spencer mentioned in his account of the Horn Exped that you would probably publish some further information regarding these articles "Churinga" I would be glad to know if you have done so as I purpose sending the result of my enquiries to one of the scientific societies it would be desirable to be posted up as to what has been done to date by others. These boards here range up to 13 ft long when they are carried by two men one at each end in their corroborees I have photos of a [illegible] but have not actually send them used otherwise

Some of the smaller ones have snake patterns, but I think that they must have been originally phallic symbols as the snake and phallus have always been associated in the primitive world wide cult. I have not heard of the boards being used for rain making here, but it may be to lend importance to this or other purposes.

Mr Prinsep the Chief Protector of Aborigines has been very lethargic in his treatment of [insert] the blacks [illegible] [end insert] his Depmt I have been urging him to form Refuges within reach of medical advice & help for the blacks & extend them as funds allow. He favours the exclusion of the blacks from the towns of the chief white centres of population, but to do this, without prior provision for their wants would be cruel & unjust. His idea is to prevent the prostitn of the gins & consequent disease.

Would you tell me whether there is any other similar appointment as yours in SA or Australia [insert] excepting Mr Roth in Queensland [end insert] and how is yours provided for, There is some talk of the Federal Govmt taking over the whole management of the Aborigines Do you know anything of this? Have you seen my memoir of the Rock Carvings of Port Jackson, if not I will have much pleasure in sending you a copy

I am expecting to be away for a few [insert] 4 [end insert] months to England after 1st June so that I hope that you will let me hear from you before I leave.

I will be very glad to hear from you however at any time. I hold the post of Assist Govt Geologist here the work takes me a good deal amongst the blacks at times

I am

Yours faithfully
W.D. Campbell
Gillen Esqr

Letter E14

Burrundie

16th March 03

My dear Professor

Your most welcome letter to hand of 28 January 1903 I was very pleased indeed to hear from you and that you are well and hard at work

I have had several letters from our friend Mr Gillen, he is again settled and quite happy in his paradise Moonta.

I often look back with pleasant thoughts of the few months we had of each others company at Borrooloola

I am pleased to hear that you admit that your prolonged stay at Borrooloola had its advantages, for instance where if you did not want to work you need not, please remember that a good thirst can always be got up, but no Beer obtainable to quench it.

Re the 6 Bottles of XXX & 1 of lime juice part of the former arrived OK needless to say the lime juice came to hand perfectly intact from old McLeod arrived in a very morbid state the following morning will it [sic] easier for you to imagine than for me to describe the condition of the Borrooloola Resident

I think I left some of its lime juice for the benefit of my predecessor [sic] Mr Power he arrived here by the [illegible] on the 7th March 1902.

I am greatly pleased that Chance has got the Distinction [illegible] he is a good man but unless when he can get Liquor

I must thank you for kindly seeing Burrough & Williams again they communicated with me we found that the mistake was mine I addressed my order to Melbourne instead of Sydney the matter was immediately rectified and the order fine

Mr Gore is quite a Robinson Crusoe on his island his arm got all right again but it has still got a hard callous feeling right round the forearm I consider he was a most fortunate man in getting off so well as he did in my quiet moments I often think how much the poor unfortunate man must have suffered and its relief we all felt when he breathed his last.

Re the Box of Cigars dont trouble about them some day I may find my way down to Melbourne I shall then call and remind you of them

I shall now give you a short account of myself since you last saw me on my arrival in Pol... I got married, and on the 20 January 03 I was presented with a son & now both Mrs Stott & babe are doing well

I trust that you found yours all in the best of health on your return home

I remain yours faithfully

R. Stott

Letter E15

replied June 2.03

[Buckhold Hill

Pangbourne

Berks]

2 April 1903

My dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your letter. May I trespass again on your kindness?

(1) As to the "preparation" of the Australian bride – have you come across any native explanation of it?

(2) Do you know of any facts that might point to a previous custom of incest between father & daughter? Are there any special rules of avoidance between father & daughter? or any thing to show previous strained relations between father & son due to jealousy about use of the daughters of a family (Mr Atkinson's theory, about to be published by Mr Lang)?

Thank you for your notes in criticism. As to fear of danger from the first act of sexual intercourse, I suppose it to be sub-conscious

It is very kind of you to ask Mr Roth to send his paper. I look forward to your new book.
Yours sincerely
A.E. Crawley

Letter E16
Peake Station
Warrina
S.A.
2nd November / 03
Dear Professor

Yours, very welcome, of the 1st Oct. safely to hand. As I have been a month away from the Peake (in Adelaide) I could not answer.

Thanks very much. To one of my temper it is an absolute delight to receive a letter that is 'meant'. Dear old Gillen also wrote a very characteristic letter. Good old chap. Good type of a good Australian. I had a big fight in Adelaide, and, acting on the advice of the manager of the Bank of N.S. Wales I decided to keep on the partnership – only my power is greater Still I mistrust the individual

For the sake of my wife & bairns I hope the future is assured – in a moderate degree. My wife returned with me – leaving the children in Adelaide We are employing a second [illegible] man Camping out sitting & driving about together

It is a good thing to put one self will do it [sic]

Those cigars you sent me, I was not able to finish. The doctor forbid smoking, but asked not [illegible] me to leave off [illegible] in moderation. Nothing very serious – only like many others – I have left [insert] without [end insert] my life behind me – in the bush. That is to say, that the actual hardship & privation endured, [illegible] back, have left their mark. & I am "older" than I should be. This is as it may be – but I hope for many years of delight & pleasure in watching the growth of my children & in the protecting of same.

I may possibly come to Melbourne before long. One never knows where "station" matters will take one to – and I [illegible] – that with the [illegible] assistance – we may have a mild "boom" yet. I hope it will "lead me to fortune". Thanks for the [illegible] They are very good & the blacks – "Donkey" & co. are looked upon by their dark acquaintances as quite men of [illegible]

I shall not easily forget your visit to these parts, & [insert] would [end insert] much like to see you here again – but that is not likely. Best wishes

Yrs sincerely
E.C. Kempe
Professor Baldwin Spencer,
Melbourne.

Letter E17
[Darley,
Armada]
University
Melbourne
22.4.14

My dear Marett,

Many thanks for your letter. I have been so busy since my return that I have not as yet been able to finally fix up the map of distribution of Australian tribes known to me. It will I hope come next mail.

As to publication I have no doubt but that we can manage that our here. I will try & get the Federal government to undertake it & have little doubt but that they will.

I am trying to get a grant from the Gov. for the expenses of Miss Bayley & shall probably be able to tell you the result before you leave England.

We are in the thick of making arrangements for the visit of the Association and as Sec. for Victoria my time is fully occupied.

Macmillans tell me that it is useless to try & publish a 'serious' book before the early autumn, so, to my regret my book will not appear before you leave England. I am rather sorry because it contains some material which would have been useful when we are discussing Australian anthropology.

I very much enjoyed my short stay in Oxford & am at present feeling as if I had got switched off into a 'backwater'.

Kindest regards to yourself & Mrs Marett

Yours very sincerely

W. Baldwin Spencer

Letter E18

[Strand Palace Hotel,

Strand,

London W.C.2]

24.6.27

My dear Dr Marett,

Many thanks for your letter. I am very sorry to say that the Exeter dinner is not possible. I have a long standing engagement made in Australia to be in Antwerp to meet a steamer which has most perversely broken down en route from that benighted part of the world & so I shall be out of England & shall be thankful if I can get to the Lincoln Quincentenary.

Anyhow I hope to see you in Oxford soon when I shall be staying with Balfour.

At present my time is fully occupied with proof correcting. I sent Macmillans home a new book entitled "The Arunta – a study of a Stone Age People" & thought it better to come & see it through the press as sending out proofs to & returning them from Australia is a lengthy process & not so satisfactory as when one can come into personal contact with the printer. It contains a fairly complete account of a typical Australian -- or at least Central Aust. -- tribe & will I think be useful to students. It contains also a good deal of new material.

Many thanks for the lecture. I am delighted with your polite remarks about Eliot Smith – you dealt with him rather too gently. Of all 'bounders' he is the most bumptious. There is of course much that is fruitful in this 'diffusion' idea but he & Perry are simply obsessed with it & seem to have become incapable of dispassionate judgment. I confess, somewhat with bated breath, that Rivers "Melanesians" is to me most unsatisfactory & leaves me hopelessly bewildered.

He was doubtless an excellent psychologist but I cannot regard him as a great ethnologist.

Kindest regards. I will hope to see you soon.

Yours very sincerely

W. Baldwin Spencer

Transcribed by Alison Petch June 2015