

Wickenburg

HEART EARTH, possible form

Wickenburg, March 7 postmark

10,000 words (50 ms pp.)

plotline: deciding whether to go back to Montana; Berneta for, Dad against?

through-line: Berneta's performance of letters

scene: night in the desert cabin

HEART EARTH--possible "imagining" scenes

Wickenburg
(write this in Arizona)

Wickenburg/desert cabin

--stray dog: do the scene w/ dialogue

--POW camp: escaped submariners

--noise outside: cow eating potato peels

B's letters: we were in W'burg area
March 5 (Mon) - March 26 (Mon), 1945
Dad in hospital 13th (Tue) - 18th (Sun); operation on 14th (Wed)

W'burg:

Sun, Th. Mar 27, '45 - p. 3, Congress notes:

"Last wk will be remembered for its rain, snow & cold. Yarnell Hill was well covered to foot w/ a blanket of snow, in spite of rain."

* - Mar. 8, Cong. notes: "snow still visible on Yarnell Hill... fell last Thurs"

Sun, Mar 8, '45 - p. 1 - "Opening of still another rail subdivision w. of city limits on Calif. highway - 3d to be projected etc. past few wks..." 16 a. into 50' x 150' lots

- last wk, 40 a. price

- Vista del Rio 20 a. sites, "many ingines ready. subdiv. from those who will like to bld ranch homes this as soon as bldg materials become avail."

- another p. 1 story: new trailer court being built

Mar. 22 - Valley Nat'l Bank, Phoenix, to open branch bank in W'burg

* Mar. 8, Yarnell notes: "On Th. Hill we visited of another snowstorm which cont'd thru. wk end. Sev'l carloads from valley came up to enjoy a day in snow. (Phoenix residents)"

(OVER)

Sun, Mar. 29 - "His interest aroused by increasing real estate activity
in W'burg, Joseph G. Rice, ~~pres~~ of Phx, pres. of First Fed'l
Savings & Loan ass'n ... came here Tues to investigate situation 1st-hand ..."

W'bung:

Seen masthead quotes J.B. Priestley, "famous English author & writer, in his autobiography, *Midnight on Desert*":

"W'bung ... has best winter climate to st., which means that it has ^{one} of best winter climates to world... A prophecy mo as transport becomes cheaper, cheaper, easier, W'bung district will become increasingly important, for a winter climate as good as smo will prove to be a better gold mine than Old Vulture."

See.

Mar. 22, p. 5 - "The world's trade north half of Mancipa Cnty for whole becomes in st. of Calif.; Harry Cole told Mgr Geo. Scott of H'an'pa Hotel... as he departed for his home in Keyser, W. Va. ... he will be back here next winter to soak up W'g sunshine & fill his lungs w/ wine which is called air & which jets so softly over Bradshaw into valley of H'pa."

W'bung

Sun, Mar. 8 - p. 3, Congress notes - "Pablo Moraley' goat ranch will start kidding Mar. 24. ... Too cold, rainy, snowy weather will not help - goat men @ kidding time."

- p. 4, Yarnell notes - "Clipped Sonells... shearing the hundreds of goats."

Mar. 8, at. Guest Ranches: incs Monte Vista, Remuda; Triangle W

" ", Where to Eat... & Where to Stay inc:

W'bung Auto Count

Bridge " "

(total of 7 auto or motor c(1))

10 cafes

some hotels, cabins, lodges

Mar. 15, p. 1 - Major on way over river "borrowed a glass @ Craig's Shell Station, climbed dn. r. bank & drank deeply from Haragampa!"

W'burg:

Sun index: 9/21/45 Dr. Floyd Brallian, local hosp. director, in serious condition after plane crash.

654-2649, Prescott Highway

W'bung

Sun, Mar 22 '45, Congress notes - "Snow is better on. Congress ~~range~~ range than it has been for yrs. Cool, cloudy weather, w/out wind, has helped grass to hold moisture."

Sun, Mar. 22 '45 - W'bung pool of Mohair clip abt 40,000 #.

Sun, Mar. 29 - Congress notes: "From activity of locating & bartering for gold mining claims and Congress one gets idea no gold will jump to unheard of prices after war."

W'burg:

- w. on rte 60, desert in level w/ mtns & buttes all around
- Saguaro cactuses - tallest growth
 - their spiky mittens
 - stubbling - buttes to - very top

W'burg Museum: among plants listed - ocotilla

~~Sonoran Desert Desert~~

- "Apacheia" (pale-white)

- dude ranches began in 1920's

my note: W'burg 1st discovered gold, then
discovered dudes (...the discovery of dudes)

At first the desert country must have looked raw
to my folks; no nap of sage as in their MT, no

timber-topped buttes (saguaro the tallest growth).

Actually it was a kind of jungle of spiky, spiny growth (name and describe plants?)

- barbed country

barrel cactus

blue lupin

staghorn cactus

yucca

palo verde tree

re-do?

~~green~~ (penthouse) colonies of mistletoe in the big cottonwoods along the Has*pa.

~~Along the Hassayampa riverbed, low canopy of mesquite and then higher canopy of cottonwoods.~~

~~We pose for pictures under the arms-up saguaros, wary of wild-groping ocotillas...~~

~~* (Did my parent w/ shadow begin here?)~~

~~silver tops of (leafless?) cottonwoods mottled with green mistletoe... Frightwig trees...~~

~~silver light along the Hassayampa riverbed...~~

~~Witchy riverbottoms
(rivercourses)...~~

~~quail crying (at Has'pa preserve)...~~

~~- cottonwoods like 70' high sagelbrush (Brooding no?)~~

~~- Mary H. Doll, ranger, Saguaro Nat'l Monument (East), Tucson,
cd verify my material on desert growth.~~

~~- desert scrub is lowest - in - elevation~~

~~- saguaro scabs~~

It lay there (in the future), (Arizona's, Phoenix's growth, prosperity)...

was already underway

straight-up

~~Water~~ not only ran uphill toward money, it was made to do impossibilities like fakirs' rope tricks.

Follow the money.

(houses)

~~Toss~~ a doorknob on the desert and it sprouted into a subdivision.

~~We~~ abstained (from western booms of the past 100 years) (except for the alum'm plant wages).

~~Back~~ to being Montana Bedouins.

~~The~~ western booms pooled in the oasis (metroasis) cities...

~~The~~ sky wasn't turquoise over W'burg that March.

~~Talk~~ about cliffdwelling: LA-Phoenix-etc. have been hung on concrete face of dams and aqueducts.

~~The~~ biting light of the desert...

metrosprawlitan

OVER

Marilyn re-do

Imagining Wickenburg:

I have been with her to town, to the Safeway, the drugstore, the post office (letter from Grandma), W'burg busier than WSS--3 major highways coming in...

W'burg a major intersection--the Phoenix highway, the California highway, the Prescott highway (?), and not least, from overhead, the slanting ~~rain~~ ^(axis) of the sun. Parallel parking, which is newfangled to both her and Dad. (Does she pull around to a sidestreet, looking for an easier space?)

Uses ration coupons, mine as well as hers.

People from Phoenix pass through--stopping for coffee, beer?--on their way to see snow on Yarnell Hill; incredible to us that anybody would drive that distance, any distance, to look at snow. *(and has spent her entire life on them)*

She doesn't like bad ~~road~~ roads, and at least the one from the desert cabin is sandier than muddy.

Buys film @ drugstore; she and Dad have always taken shots of where they are; we seem more anchored in 00 (what phot'c prints are made of) than in actual geography.

Letters to mail, to ^{emails con} Wally, to Grandma--Hazel? Bud & Alma? Sends film in to be developed.

While Dad was in hospital, we stayed at rooming house $\frac{1}{2}$ mi. out of town; I had a sandpile to dig in. As we'd earlier "moved in" to the desert cabin, our belongings must have straddled two places again.

OVER

~~We~~ were migrants who didn't see ourselves that way; didn't admit it, except in B's letters...

W'burg a sun-toasted town...

At the cabin, when noise in the night is heard: unarmed in Arizona.

None of it (W'burg) was spa ^{stints} living for us.

Dudes paid good money for hours of the horseback life my folks were born into.

~~Life~~ clings where it can in the desert: mistletoe in tops of cottonwoods, cliff dwellings up stone faces...

~~Inner~~ workings of a family: like inside of a clock?

If she sensed that~~x~~ (we didn't have enough money to compete in postwar AZ) then, the future more than bore her out. Land boom then in W'burg, but... W'burg stayed ~~W~~burg, while Phoenix became P\$H\$O\$E\$N\$I\$X (better: Phoeni\$).

+ly

Phoenixized

W'burg -

extreme lengths of shadows, @ 5 p.m. in flat light of desert
(on Stanton rd, 1/24/91)

- like giant cactuses; by raising arms, make shadows like cactuses?
- flash forward: me watching car cancels being shot in "golden moment"

3 Feb. '91, n. of Phoenix driving toward Oak Cre Canyon:

morning light (9-9:30) on landforms: each butte, hill, peak seems to be rec'g its own light (unlike single mass of Rockies or other Mnt. mtns). Each distance, angle, shadow-casting outline here makes individual "texture" of light: starkly clear wh. limestone (? check AZ Roadside Geology) in foreground, darkly shadowed butte beyond it, + pearly-lit & shadowed hills & peaks in ranks beyond.

- juggling light?

--the calibrated light (different on each landform)

--the thorn halos of saguaros with morning or evening light behind them

--saguaros the blind sentinels

--~~saguaros~~, ~~ocotillos~~, agave: all hieroglyphics to us

Heart Earth

choose desert-life details to work with in AZ scenes, especially Wickenburg:
birds, cactus, Southwestern light, geology...

--the ha ha laugh of a Gambel's quail in the bush; the yapping of gila woodpecker
(even the birdsounds had an edge to them, the derisive ha ha...and the scolding yap..)

--the superintendence of roadrunners

✓
No reason why they shouldn't. (No goddamn reason why they should, either,
the genetic grumble in me, still daily amazed at the American genius for
unnecessary entertainment.

unload w/ a rear *snooty*
(I can hear my father the first time a dude uttered something snooty

to him: [Ye can take your fancy-ass self and...]) Nor can I quite see

him turning herdsman on the other local version of flocks. (Goats? Mohair?)

W'burg revisit, 3/11/91

- 9:45 a.m., on Stanton road: dust haze to west, against Vulture Mtns; Carol can smell dust; says if must smelled clean, that wd be ~~smell~~ - alt more a sensation than an odor.
- Vulture Pk + Mtns are hazed silver-gray
- entry wd dust up
- the cottonwoods now a ~~delirious~~ delirious green (along the Hassayampa)
- this time of year, the desert on a splurge, binge of growth (water binge, from rain of week or two ago)
- possible sentence: after the grandiloquent Rockies, the mtns wavering up from all horizons here looked ~~ashen~~ ashen, dumpy. (But then a certain light wd take them and...)
- ocotillos sprouting leaves between wicked barbs (in pic of me and my mother)

- wicks of thorn.

furlough

(our Arizona winter turned out to be...)

... if nothing else

furloughed from PKX...

I am assaying yet. (use in connection with asking Dad of every rock in
Ariz. desert, Is this gold?)

Cabin scene?
miner "

They moved through our lives, more name than person, (~~W~~ Mulligan John etc.)...
to most people of town...

--sheepherders?

--hay hands

- link to working. car for funerals

Heart

- my folks' custom of washing the car in creek - wading in w/ pants rolled up, dress tucked up - before attending a funeral.
- I cd use zmo as a movie-like seq ce, describing process, 2 of them, Ford coupe, gravel-bottom creek crossing (Smith R. @ Loophole? the up name of crk @ Stewart ranch), entry & weather - a carefully realized scene.
- (If Sky ever becomes a movie, zmo cd be opening scene w/ titles.)

The Editorial Notebook

Wood Men

For most Americans, what is happening in Azerbaijan might as well be occurring on the moon's dark side. TV presents a montage of people slain in an ethnic civil war, of shouting demonstrators and Soviet troops under attack. It all tends to be boiled down to a religious conflict between Muslim Azerbaijanis and Christian Armenians.

No doubt religious fanaticism plays a part in the house-by-house pogrom in which Armenians have been marked for death in Baku, capital of the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. But the resentments and fears have more complex sources; they spring from the haunted past of nations trapped in one of history's bloodiest crossroads.

One block to understanding is that few books are available in English that portray life in Azerbaijan from within. A rare exception is a poetic novel published in 1971, "Ali and Nino," by Kurban Said. Now more than a curiosity, it imparts humanity to the day's headlines.

"We were a mixed lot," it begins, "we forty schoolboys who were having a geography lesson one hot afternoon in the Imperial Russian Humanistic High School of Baku, Transcaucasia: thirty Mohammedans, four Armenians, two Poles, three Sectarians and one Russian."

Their professor then speaks: "Some scholars look on the area south of the Caucasian mountains as belonging to Asia, while others, in view of Transcaucasia's cultural evolution, believe that this country should be part of Europe. It can therefore be said, my children, that it is partly your responsibility as to whether our town should belong to progressive Europe or to reactionary Asia."

Young Ali Khan Shirvanshir, offspring of a noble Muslim family, votes for Asia. His Asia is intensely felt: a place of magic where honor and tradition matter far more than science and motorcars. Yet Ali falls heedlessly in

2570

NVT, Jan. 29, '90

and Desert Men

rotten Book s Azerbaijan

love with Nino, a Georgian. Their courtship and marriage take place against the tumult of the Russian Revolution, Azerbaijan's brief interlude as an independent republic and the Soviet takeover in 1920.

For Azerbaijanis, as for other Caucasian peoples, history is a succession of calamities in which all allies prove faithless. Linked by Shiite faith to Iran and by language to Turkey, Azerbaijanis felt abandoned by both after the Czar seized Baku in 1813. Defeat breeds despair and confusion, the more so since many Azerbaijanis found themselves ineluctably drawn, like Ali in the novel, to their Christian neighbors.

At one point, a Georgian sage remarks to Ali: "You have the soul of the desert man. Maybe that is the one real division between men: wood men and desert men... The woods are full of questions. Only the desert does not ask, does not give, and does not promise anything... The desert man — I can see him — has but one face and knows but one truth, and that truth fulfills him. The wood man has many faces. The fanatic comes from the desert, the creator from the woods. Maybe that is the main difference between East and West."

And tellingly, the disputed Armenian enclave of Karabakh, which Ali visits, is to him a forested Eden.

"Ali and Nino" was mysteriously published in Vienna in 1937. A plausible theory is that Kurban Said is the pseudonym of a leading Azerbaijani writer, Yusuf Vezir, who served as chief of protocol in the short-lived independent republic proclaimed in 1918. He vanished in the 1930's, a presumed victim of Stalin's purges. His story sadly distills the tears of things for all the Caucasian peoples trapped in the same dark maelstrom.

KARL E. MEYER

poetry of light in the Southwest (Matisse in Morocco: vivid colors came into
his painting)

in the cottony half-sleep

(me, waking up to commotion outside the desert cabin?)

(in AZ) no thunder of armload of wood into woodbox ("filling the woodbox");

smaller wood, mesquite? *twiggy*

No lights winked in the night (except the candled sky)

1945 was a whetted time, a blade year...

synchronous (war events that coincided with our own)

fevertime (the war, Phoenix booming)

The first bug smush of spring.

on windshield

I lived for print, as if I were the end of the sentence being read.

Life clings where it can in the desert: mistletoe in the tops
of cottonwoods, cliffdwellings up stone faces.

Talk about cliffdwellings: Los Angeles, Phoenix, etc.
have been hung on the concrete face of dams and aquaducts.

Green (penthouse) colonies of mistletoe in the big cottonwoods
along the river.

Wibung scene?

Water not only ran uphill toward money, it was made to do straight-up impossibilities like fakirs-rope tricks.

- referring to Phoenix

The biting light of the desert.

The sky wasn't turquoise over Wickenburg that March.

The western booms pooled in the oasis cities.

the broody mood of...

I was in a broody mood (Wickenburg hospital?)

Triple solitaire, now, (the three of us in the desert cabin? in the Bridgers?)

what our three silences wove between us... (used in Sky? it's from a Lady filecard)

--use a variant of some kind, something different than "silences"?

Heart Earth

W'burg re-visit, 3/4/91

- mtns had ashen, gaunt(?) (spilled onto horizon @ random); dumpy
- stiff wind in smoky entry, evening feels it (see # below)

vegetation near Stanton:

- creosote (loop^{gangly}, higher than my head); tiny cotton balls on them. (after blooming?)
- prickly pear (notably sprawling variety, w 2" spines)
- palo verde (green ~~thick~~ bluish) the green blush of palo verde
- saguaros on hills
- (to us, all of it like giant gaunt sage)
- scruboak mesquite
- ~~creosote~~ ^{wobbling} ~~wobbling~~ wobble-topped
- ~~creosote~~ ^{wobbling} ~~wobbling~~ collapsing in - desert wind

In a stiff wind in this country everything galloped, the tops of creosote bushes wobbling, the palo verde and mesquite arustle, dust haze between us and the mtns...

Wilburg pic:

- Harogpa /d plain, 14-16
- #17, Trading Post, Congruo A Z
- #18, shacks,
- #19, typical small wash; patterns of "delta"
- #20 - sand banks along rd to Stanton, like MT snowbanks
- #21 - min'g (Lost Dutchman Min'g Ass'n) @ Stanton; lkg
 to'd Vulture Mtns
- #22 - Lost ~~D~~ Dutchman
- #23 - light on creosote
- #31 - clumps of prickly pear on sidehill nr Stanton

So, that wartime

~~That~~ autumn we brought our hopes to Arizona.

↑
We weren't the only ones who . . . , that wartime.

By happenstance,

(C. Prescotts ?)

...the Sixteen country's total population of about ⁷~~6~~, here in AZ were 5 of us.

FDR?

whose

His every word came out wearing epaulets.

- listening to him o. radio?

- Pres. in perpetuity

silver tops of (leafless) cottonwoods mottled with green mistletoe

We pose for pictures under the arms-up saguaros, wary of wild-groping ocotillas...

(Did my fascination with shadows begin here?)

Along the Hassayampa riverbed, low canopy of mesquite and then higher canopy of cottonwoods.

witchy riverbottoms (rivercourse)

Frightwig trees

silver light along the Hassayampa riverbed...

quail crying (at Hassayampa Preserve)

saguaro scabs

scabbed saguaros

cottonwoods like seventy-foot-high sagebrush

winter

used?

this weave of day goes on

a week, two.

the sun etches (shadows)

the desert as a pottery landscape: the three of us as figures on that pottery?

stately

The stately Prescotts...

Here (in AZ) they knew none 70...

The sign language of weather

at Stewart ranch, I couldn't be kept indoors, always wanting to be out; at Alzona Park, according to Anna I hovered, clung to my mother; the desert cabin, then, as regained outdoors for me?

Wickburg

curve of fingers (resting) on back like mountain profile

(two persons in bed, ~~in~~ one holding the other)

(I have been married twice as long as they managed to be.)

AZ

vicar (use geofgraphically? descption of cactuses?)

her sailor brother is all too clear that we have traded predicament in ^{depression}
Montana for predicament in Arizona. Wartime is fraught enough anyway,
but my parents and the five-year-old dirtmover that was me had pinballed
our way ~~2000 miles~~ down through the West 0000 miles, ration books
straining from gas station to gas station along U.S. 89, ^{toward} to a defense
plant job for my father, ^{in Phoenix,} to a new climate for my mother's asthma. Now
here our journey had deposited us, under the lenient sun of Southwest
winter instead of the snows of Montana,

Heart Earth

desert scrub

saguaro scabs

shadowbowls (shadowpatches on hills and mtns in desert light)

can feel the desert temperature changing (subtracting) degree by degree at evening
(throughout the day?)

the spiky mittens of saguaros (to my boy's eye)

where every plant can sting

saguaros fat with rain (that moist winter, taking moisture into their accordion
pleats)

ocotillo-

joshua-yucca-cholla-who knew what alla.

changed in March '92 revise:

Make you think your appendix had a terrible sense of timing, too, if you were my father trying to take it easy in that uneasy desert spring.

Like that bit of profile cast longingly onto the cabin when he took our picture,
Allan was the human extension (shadow) of a story.

From the ^{time} ~~moment~~ after I was big enough to ^{toddle} ~~walk~~, I possessed a dog

of my own. He maybe simply occurred, adopted out to my folks by some hard-to-say-no-to friend with a plethora of pups. But a German shepherd was not my parents' usual kind of whim. Chances are he was intentional, playmate compensation ^{to} ~~for~~ me after the doctor's verdict that I was the only child my parents dared have. For four years Pup and I were ~~a~~

hyperic twin
imprisoned?

[canine-human alloy,] a duo unto ourselves there at the Stewart place.

urn: desert scene, the three of us as if baked onto ~~xx~~ urn, vase

W'burg re-visit 3/11/91

W'burg Sun, Apr 7, '77: Allen C. Prescott, d. of h't attack en route to W'burg by Sun City accompanied by his grand-nephew. b. Helena, 1896, visitor here for past 36 years. Services Apr 7, burial in family plot in Helena.

- Winifred A Prescott of Big Fork, MT, died Dec. 18 in Cam'ty Hosp'l here. reinterred in fam plot Dec. 23 ... "1st came to W'burg back in '40's"
(W'burg Sun, Dec. 26, '88)

Prescott 1/28/91 (P'tt to Grand Canyon)

- red hot light, n. of P'tt @ dawn
- whopping plateaus (Cocconino?) & low forest that we'd have been near to my folks
- earlier, approaching P'tt: windy red over. mtns - up big Yarnell Hill - from W. burg desert to more western tn of P'tt
- climb of road, like vast stairsteps, n. from P'tt toward Wms.
- near Wms. thick pine forest begins (cypress in NF along rd too?)
- Wms (7620 elevation); mal'd pktn in flat bowl
- " : strip tn of auto courts in '65?

Montana houses we'd lived in (such as Stewart ranch) were log with rhinking;
Southwest, we saw adobe.