

FLF: The 3 Whittens of 1983 (again)

The Urth list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 12 Dec 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3668>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 12 Dec 2002, 15:33

Roy wrote:

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They talk about ferrying diplomats, politicians, and millionaires. Because of the initial 1942-1952 project, their shuttle work was presumably almost entirely in this ten year period. That is, from 1942 to years 1943-1952. But they also took Whitten & Co. to 1982.

And who gave the orders?

It would have to be the Whitten the four interview in HC.

Ignoring that, given that HC is abandoned, how would the three have contacted the shuttle crew of whatever year they went to?

They don't have to contact anyone: Whitten knows where in time the door leads. Whitten calls their taxi B-17 for them so that it takes off in 1942 and arrives just in time.

They had to go to the past (HC couldn't keep aloft much longer; it was aging badly), in order for them to merge with their earlier selves. They couldn't go too far back; the women were only in their twenties.

I agree.

But the bigger problem is Whitten's second disappearance. According to Wolfe's timeline, Whitten vanished on Friday, January 14, 1983, when Free made his last return to his house. Free was murdered on the following Friday, the 21st, and Whitten reappeared after a week's absence. Kip reported to Whitten after killing Free. Both she and Whitten were present at the airfield later that night, after each of the boarders had undergone their 'trials'. The four talked to Whitten; he was there when they went aboard the B-17. The shuttle reached HC about midnight. In the early-morning hours of Saturday, the 22nd of January, 1983, they spoke to 60-70-year-old Free in the cockpit of HC. He was already there, waiting for them. That's the problem--how did he get there?

Since there can't be two versions of the same person at the same time, for Free to have been present on HC on the 22nd, Whitten had to have vanished a second time *after* the B-17 took off. The timeline states that he did vanish, but doesn't explain how Free came to be aboard HC when the B-17 got there. How could Free be both on HC and on the ground as Whitten? The obvious answer is that Free reached HC from another time, another shuttle flight, and arrived on HC only after the B-17 left the airfield with the four boarders. He couldn't have been on HC while the four talked to Whitten on the ground. And I don't think he got there *after* the four arrived; not enough time had passed since the four arrived for the shuttle to land and return to HC with another passenger. Besides, if Whitten had vanished again so soon, there would have been pandemonium on the ground. The trouble with the obvious answer is Free's age.

When Whitten deserted on the 24th, he was necessarily less than 60 years old. He was always clean-shaven. Free, according to Dr. Makee, sometimes was clean-shaven, sometimes had a beard. After he deserted the OSS, Whitten no longer had free access to the gizmo on HC, or the cooperation of the organization. After spending so many years on the frontier, he had aged too much to ever go back to the OSS and resume his role as the general. That's part of what he meant about it being too late for him to use his "ticket" back to the HC. So, how did a bearded, 60-70-year-old Free ever get aboard a shuttle in another time to get up to the HC to meet the four boarders?

On December 3, I wrote a tentative section of timeline:

1983 -- Whitten (age 53?) deserts, becomes Ben Free. [Jan 24]

1807-1818 -- Ben Free lives in the frontier (ageing 7 years in 11 years?), with vacations in 1979-1982.

1983 -- Ben Free/Whitten interviewed in High Country by the four?

1803 -- Ben Free "aged 60 but looks younger" joins the Lewis & Clark expedition (1804-1806).

1806 -- At the end of the expedition (all in realtime, so age = age+3), Free travels to 1819.

1819 -- Free gathers up his treasures and leaves for 1983.

1983 -- Free arrives/Whitten disappears (another alloying for Free?) [Jan 14]

I have also described two time-travel circuits: the one on the ground for 1803-1983 (using the portable gizmo, sometimes in the house) and the one in the air for 1942-1983.

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I'm not sure where the text supports your claim that:

After he deserted the OSS, Whitten no longer had free access to the gizmo on HC, or the cooperation of the organization.

It is tricky to block a guy for deserting when he has gone back through time. If Kip and Robin are in on it, they wouldn't pass any information to deny Whitten access. (I don't think we have any clue as to where in time Kip and Robin and the other members of the team end up.)

Whitten age 53 knew that some unauthorized time-tripping was going on and feared mischief or sabotage within the organization: the principal suspect became the mysterious Ben Free. Whitten then learned he would/will become Ben Free, with the further implication that he would be doing all the shady time-tripping.

=mantis=

Roy C. Lackey — 12 Dec 2002, 21:56 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis quoted and wrote:

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They were warming up the plane's engines at the time the four were being collected at the airfield (end of ch. 51, beginning of ch. 54). So, the crew started out from 1983, and they had to know it. The airfield was adjacent to the airport; the jetliners taking off and landing were a dead give-away. Besides, we know that they had to stay in 1983 to pick up Barnes, which they did.

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That won't work. The "biological-age 60 Whitten", who looks younger than that, has necessarily already deserted. He went to 1803 and the Lewis & Clark expedition. The 60-70 year old Free (who looked so much like the 82 year old that the four knew that they immediately recognized him) who conducted the cockpit interview didn't know where his younger self went--he only **hoped** he had joined L. & C. I'm so confused.

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It just stands to reason that the organization wasn't going to help the renegade they were looking for.

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I don't think Kip was in on it. It was Whitten's disappearance that set her off to find and murder Free. She wanted her daddy back at any cost, even if it meant killing his older self. I don't see her having a change of heart three days later. Whitten didn't just leave, he *deserted*. That was his second disappearance *after* Free was killed. She would assume his desertion was just another disappearance attributable to the time-traveling monkey business of the mysterious renegade known as Ben Free. At least that's how I see it.

-Roy

Michael Andre-Driussi — 13 Dec 2002, 01:07 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy quoted me and wrote:

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My timeline fragment shows that the 53-year-old deserter did =not= go straight back to 1803, he went back to 1807. Maybe he did this to acclimitize himself to 19th century life before going on the 1803 expedition.

I suspect that HC interview Whitten is the one who is about to go to 1803, after having lived 7 years of experience in 1807-1818 (with vacations in 1979-1982).

That is, the three Whittens of 1983 are:

- 1) Buck Whitten (age 53) duffle coat/prior to desertion.
- 2)Free Whitten (age 60-something) High Country interview/years after desertion but still prior to Lewis & Clark.
- 3) Ben Free (age 80-something?) after Lewis & Clark, with cataracts and shot dead in 1983.

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But Roy, if I understand it correctly, Whitten is the one (and likely the =only= one) who detected some shadowy time-travel going on: people were disappearing from HC, and he figured they were travelling one-way to places where the gizmo did not exist (pre-1942, post-198n). There is no Chief at OSS HQ who said, "Buck, go into tomorrow and find the renegade! We will lock down everything the moment you leave and we expect you back a half-hour later, even if the job takes you decades." Whitten & team travelled to 1982 in order to get technological goodies ("Dick Tracy" stuff to them) for their own organization. Buck Whitten is the chief investigator in the field, in the future. Buck Whitten is also the master time-traveller. When Buck discovers that he himself will become Ben Free, we know from the other example (his first folding in 1942) he is not one to try and mess with history.

And the organization isn't looking for a renegade, as far as I can tell.

If your guess about stranding all the other team members in 1983 is correct, even better: how would OSS High Command 1942 ever find out who the renegade was? The information cannot travel against the timestream. Oddities show up in realtime, just like before, with more people coming and mainly going than Whitten can account for (July/August 1942? His headcount of HC in 1952?), until he assembles the team and goes to 1982, two days after his supposed trip to 1952 (he did not really go the second time) . . .

Yes, it is circular. Of course!

=mantis=