

FLF: plan B, plan A

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 13 Dec 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3674>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 13 Dec 2002, 15:49

Roy quoted and wrote:

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).

I could agree with that but for Whitten's ages--real and apparent--at two critical stages. The first is his self-stated age (60-70) at the time of the HC interview. But he looks so much like the 82-year-old the four lived with for a few days in 1983 that they all recognize him immediately, but hadn't recognized him shortly before then as the 53-year-old general. The HC Free has undergone at least ten years of hard living somewhere, somewhen. And he claims not to know from his own personal experience that any version of himself has gone to the Lewis & Clark expedition.

I don't see the contention yet. "Ten years of hard living" (in 1807-1819) -- check. "Has not yet gone on Lewis & Clark expedition" (1804-1806) -- check.

Unless he's lying, for no reason I can see, then this 60-something-year-old man will have to start using a gizmo to go back in time in order to merge with younger versions of himself, to make himself both look and feel younger. Which leads to the second critical stage. Because the first item in Wolfe's timeline states that the Ben Free who joined up with L. & C. *looked* younger than 60, whereas Free-in-the-cockpit looked older than 60. But Wolfe also states that he was in fact age 60 at the time he joined L. & C. That's the problem; either Free was wrong about his current age at the time of the HC interview, or Wolfe made a mistake somewhere, either in the text or the timeline. (I know of two mistakes in the timeline, but they are minor and don't really affect the chronology.)

Still no contention visible to me: "Designated implosion zone for rejuvenation treatment prior to rigors of L&C expedition" (in 1807-1819) -- check.

To be clear: I think that Whitten, after an unknown period of time (years?) while he continued to work for the OSS and look for Ben Free, when he decided to desert, used the portable gizmo to travel to January 24, 1983, from whatever time period he was then in. He had deduced where Free's "ticket" was, just as the text says, and used it.

Okay, so you are back to Plan A, that we were working at before:

When Whitten "disappears" on January 22 (the "second time") he doesn't implode (so HC Whitten is correct that duffle coat has not imploded), he just goes into the past (say 1943-1951) via the portable gizmo and manages to age seven years (the numbers look good) completing

his investigation on how he is Ben Free.

Then he gizmos ahead from HC 1951 to HC 1983 in order to do the interview with the four.

After the interview, he shuttles down to the ground (same flight with Ozzie?) and deserts on January 24, leaving for the 19th century. Having aged seven years in two calendar days.

=mantis=

Roy C. Lackey — 14 Dec 2002, 07:45 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis wrote:

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Okay, I understand your reasoning. It's based primarily on this paragraph:

"If you're wondering where the general is now, let me assure you he's gone. Not vanished because I'm here, but gone to a better time, taking his portable gizmo with him. He deduced the location of Free's 'ticket' you see, and carried the one he'd brought from nineteen forty-two through it."

The problem I have had with this is that I assumed Whitten's second disappearance--despite what HC Free said above--was involuntary (because the four had just spoken to Whitten on the ground, what, an hour before they saw Free on HC?), and that the scenario Free outlined above fit that of the last date of the timeline, which took place two days after he said it. The penultimate date in the timeline states that Whitten "vanishes" again, which is the exact terminology used to describe his disappearance a week earlier. That implies that he "imploded", to use your term, not that he simply used a gizmo to go somewhen else. Tricky Wolfe.

For all this to work out, though, requires several things to happen very quickly after the B-17 took off. Whitten had to figure out exactly where Free's "ticket" was, make the decision to use it, collect his portable gizmo, and get to Free's ruined house with it before midnight and before Ben Free showed up on HC. He didn't have much time to do it in. He also had to have used the gizmo in the ruined house twice, which isn't in the timeline. Tricky, tricky. But it works.

It's still debatable where (when) Whitten went when he used Free's ticket that night. With the gizmo secreted in a wall, the controls couldn't be reached. It had to be set to a fixed date or span of years, more likely the latter. Free said, above, that Whitten used the wall gizmo, not the portable, that night. That would send him back to the 19th century, I think, not somewhere between 1943-1951. And the HC Free was bearded and too grizzled to have been spending much of his recent past with the conveniences of modern civilization.

So his personal chronology still needs some work. The spans of years given in Wolfe's timeline total about 68 years, plus the "several years" (four?) he lived in the house equal about 72. He

was age 82 when he died, so there are about 10 years to account for, as I see it.

-Roy