

South Africa



Contract was for Anglo-American Gold and they
Were deadly serious about the warning.



The office trailer near the town of Potchefstroom



The Orange Free State looks a lot like Kansas



With strange-looking horses



Chickens the size of horses



Enormously deep gold mines



And effing cobras *everywhere!*



A pretty launderette with strange *mzungu*



I wanted personal services but had to settle for a haircut from Mama Elizabeth



Trains of all kinds in SA



A puffer belly pushing ore cars to a processing mill



And coming back, balls to the wall!



Steam train boneyard in Klerksdorp



Grande Dame in her senescence



Vibroseis in SA would be boring as hell except for all the damn snakes, three men electrocuting themselves, and being caught in a taxi driver riot



Vibe jobs are like being married and having kids while helicopter jobs are like finding a hot young lover two or three times a year – exciting



And, for some idea of how dangerous underground gold mining is, here is a sign at Anglo-American Mining Ltd's Mine #11



But another beautiful, beautiful country in a beautiful and exciting life!



Evening sun disc through the trees



Typical non-agricultural terrain - thorn trees and outcrop of quartzite rock that includes occasional veins of gold



A *kopje* (head) of quartzite rock



When the gold is removed from the slurry it is then pumped into enormous settling ponds that we had to cross with our seismic cables and phones



The settling ponds are contained by enormous walls (1) a hundred feet tall, or more



A lake of arsenic-laden mud to slog through – another seismic life bonus



Another benefit for working for CGG - meeting a real range of people on the crews - an Algerian and a Brit



Abandoned *Vertrekker* homestead, exterior, made of home-fired brick and thatch



Interior



Outbuilding (cobra heaven)



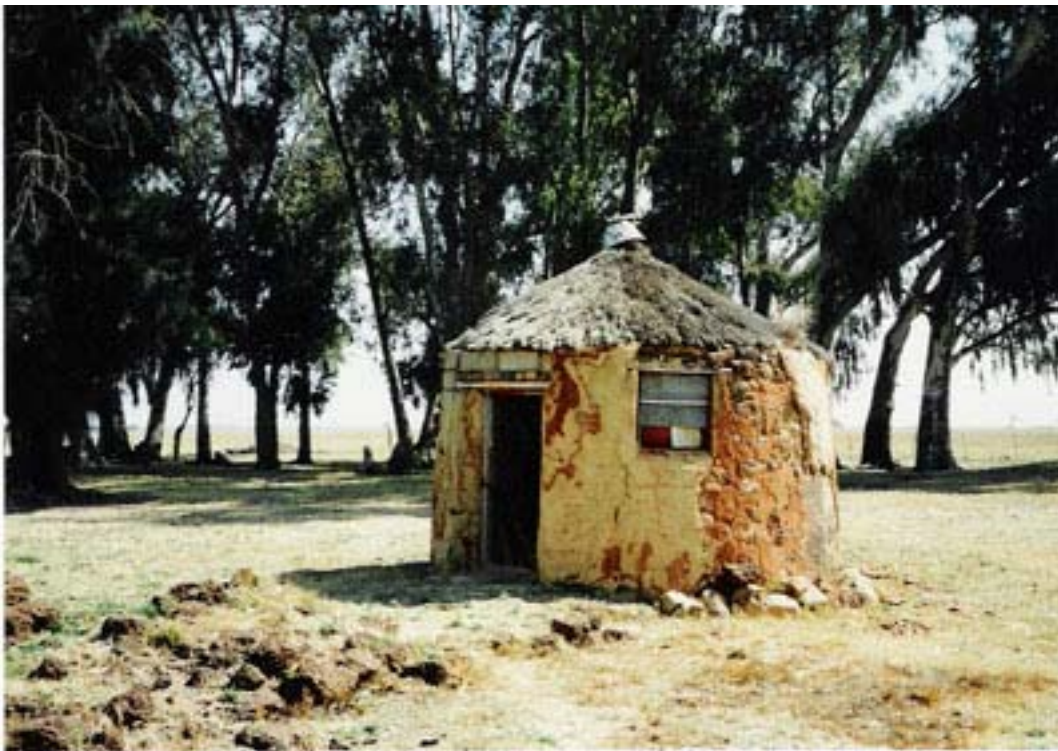
Cactus tree (native) and Eucalyptus tree (non-native) existing side-by-side, which makes a nice metaphor



White pioneer effort being reclaimed by native termites, cactus and wire grass



Another visual metaphor, if I may



Occupied homestead "cabin"



"Modern" homestead: I used to give this couple rides to church on Sundays in Klerksdorf



Another house, this one with magical signs on the stucco, invocations and supplices to the god of a new South Africa



A Compagnie General du Geophysique - *A 'voir!*
You guys are the best