

were berthed - some two abreast. It was a fine sight to see these ships - about a dozen - which were discharging their cargoes of war material, sundry other items and mules. The latter were from the Argentine, much larger than our local ones. Yes, this was a port very much used during the war. We arrived at the riverbank, the Buffalo, at about where the old temporary bridge was but there was no bridge only a pontoon on which we had to cross. This pontoon could take a waggon and span of oxen. The turn of our cab came and onto the pontoon we were driven to then be pulled across the river, about three hundred yards, two or three boys pulling on a wire hauler. It was slow work but we eventually got across and off we drove along a dusty road. In those days the road did not go up the hill as today, but along the river bank, where today there are Railway sheds etc. Some distance along the bank the road led up an incline and along past Fort Glamorgan, now a prison for prisoners with long terms, I think. These are now used to gradually dig away the bank of the river - a quarry for stone. Fort Glamorgan was originally Fort Buffalo but the name was changed as there was a Fort Buffalo on the Kei River built during the Kaffir wars. I was not at that time interested in old forts so cannot tell you much about it.

We eventually arrived at my Grandparents' house where we received a warm welcome. It was a nice wood and iron house with a very fine sea view - not as today when all those West Bank houses have their view obscured by the railway marshalling yards. I well remember the house had three wooden steps leading to the small garden where there were two banana trees.

The river was not widened as it is today but had a short retaining wall on the East Bank and the short portion of the present break wall. The Orient beach was twice the width it is today as the present short pier halved the beach but up to that the river was widened to make what is commonly known to the shipping world as the turning basin with a berth long enough to berth three ships - only two when the large mail ships are in harbour. Of the turning basin and the other scheme to enlarge the harbour I will mention later in these memoirs as I don't want to get too far ahead.

We used to amuse ourselves playing about on the rocks and fishing with pin hook for bullies and other small fish. At the foot of the break wall there was rather a nice little beach where we used to bathe. For a treat we were taken over to the East Bank to do some shopping and to get there we were rowed across by a native in a boat and for this I think there was a small charge - probably about a penny each for children and threepence for grown-ups. The little beach I have mentioned was always known as Barry's Bight as a pilot by that name once ran a ship aground there. Today of course with the harbour enlargements that beach has gone but Lorna, my wife, some years ago, used to come across to the West Bank to bathe on that very quiet beach. I remember on one occasion some youngsters amused themselves tying my shoe-laces expecting me to chase them but in this they were disappointed as we just walked quietly away taking no notice of them.

Well after a few weeks the time for us to depart came and off we set for the station to catch the train for that long journey to Cape Town in the Bush Boat.