

It was indeed a tedious journey and on the way, where a bridge had been blown up, a side track was laid crossing the river on a causeway. Here, many people walked and entrained again across the river, the Modder. My mother and her little tribe remained in the compartment.

We eventually passed through Kimberley, Vryburg and Mafeking - this was after the siege - the town being relieved on the 17th May, a day which, for years, was declared a holiday and on which were held the annual sports. We eventually arrived at Gaberones station which consisted only of a small station building and a couple of iron sheds. Here we were met by the local Resident, Mr Jules Ellenberger, a young man in his early thirties and now living - Colonel Ellenberger - in Salisbury at the age of 102. He is, however, very feeble and blind but still drawing his pension which he has done for the last fifty-one years, that is for a longer period than he worked. He has been a very fine friend to me. This old man, a thorough gentleman of the old type, was born in a cave at Masatese in Basutoland in 1871 - a cave in which his father, a French Missionary and his family lived from 1865 to 1885. This old cave is still preserved as of historical interest. He joined the Colonial Service at Gaberones as a Junior Clerk and retired as Resident Commissioner of the Protectorate in 1927 and was given the Hon title of Colonel. As a matter of interest he is still paying premiums on an insurance policy for £600 which he took out in 1890.

From the station we were driven to the Ellenbergers house - the Residency - where we were to stay for a while until my Dad, who was away on patrol with the armoured train, returned. It was about three miles along a very sandy road which twisted and turned through a very well wooded country. This was our first experience of bush country of which we were to see plenty in the years ahead. There was any amount of game in the country and as we drove along this dusty road we suddenly came on half a dozen birds feeding in the road. These we were told were Schrimpy, a small type of partridge. They are excellent game birds, about twice the size of a quail.

On arrival at the house we were met by Mrs Ellenberger, Aunt Fan, to everyone, and enjoyed our first real meal for some days. Bacon and eggs after porridge, and we kids did tuck in, even the youngest, Bimbi who was now able to feed herself slowly. Here we were to stay until our house way down among some miniature kopjes was ready as it had to be thoroughly cleaned up after the Griffiths had left.

Gaberones is the capital of the Southern Protectorate and at that time consisted only of a few houses, stables, police barracks, jail, Court House and a small hospital run by Dr McRae. But today as the capital of the independent state of Botswana it has grown. There are large administrative buildings, private residences, shops, hotel etc. In fact, it has grown into quite a large town where the bush has been cleared. In our time we depended on a well for water; today the old Notwani river has a dam built on it and here enough water is stored during the rainy season to supply the villiage with all the water wanted and run a power plant which supplies all the lighting, central heating etc. Yes, a fine town, I believe now, and they even have Boagwin Pools