

I was at the top of my form at cricket and played for Buffaloes in the first league and at Soccer played for the leading Club Crescents. To keep up to scratch in these games one has to of course attend practises regularly. As a matter of fact if you do not, no matter how good you are, you are dropped from the next match until you decide to attend practises regularly. Also one must keep fit.

There is nothing of any interest to write about for the next year or so excepting that I had become engaged to a girl by the name of Nellie Dodge. She had as a child suffered from Rhumatic fever and this left her with a wonky heart. It was however going to be a fairly long engagement by todays standards. In any case I was not yet earning enough to get married on and in those days it was not usual as today for the wife to work as well.

I had got on very well in the Passenger Department being second on a staff of six. In view of this I was asked if I would go to Beira Office to relieve their chief passenger man who was going overseas on six months no four months leave. It would however be six by the time I got up there and the time coming back. This was in 1923 and as I have mentioned it was to be for about six months but I had an idea that it would be for longer as, knowing that I had had experience in the East London Office of all departments, others would be sent on leave to be relieved by me. For that is exactly what happened for when Goodman, the man I was relieving got back their Accountant had to go on leave so I was kept to relieve him. Mind you I did not mind for there was an East Coast allowance of £15 a month.

I sailed from East London in the Guildford Castle for Beira. On the way we called in at Durban where I spent a pleasant evening with Peter Muil who was at one time Correspondence Clerk in East London. It was very nice meeting him as he was a most entertaining chap up to all sorts of pranks. and I well remember the occasion we were having a staff photo taken on Peters transfer to Durban. The photographer was writing down the names and when he came to Boosy- a Grmnw - he spelt his name out B O O S Y and one dot over the second O please. Next came Peter Muil- U I L with one dot over the 'I' please. Boosy was mad and would not break to Muil for years I believe even when he was transferred to the Durban Office with Muil as his assistant.

We stopped for the night in Lourenco Marques and I went ashore with some friends to have dinner at that famous hotel the Polana and then on to the Casino to watch the gambling. Not being a gambler I just enjoyed watching the Croupier taking in and paying out money. It was many years later that I again visited this Casino but of that later.

Well the Guildford eventually arrived off Beira- I say off because the ships anchored out at the mouth of the Busy river miles from the Port waiting for the pilot. Actually it is the mouth of two rivers Busy and Pongwe which joined near Beira. Though this estuary is very wide the channel up the river to Beira is very narrow and twisty as this channel is continually changing and there is no dredging done. It took us nearly an hour after taking on the pilot, to reach the actual harbour of abnherage for t here were no quays then. The ships anchored and lighters were used as in East London. Today this is quite a harbour with quays cranes etc.

On arrival I was met or rather we, for in Durban I had been joined by a young lad Saunders who was coming up as a junior clerk in the passenger department. by the chap I was relieving Goodman and Gerry England who was acting manager while the manager Cleghorn was away on leave.

Saunders was the son of a previous manager of the Beira office wher he died. There was also in this office another Saunders Charly the eldest son a born gambler who in later years got into alot of trouble not only with the Union Castle by whom he was eventually sacked and also other businesses he joined.

I think he might have been a very fine chap but had an unfortunate life. He was a very fine soldier gaining the M.C. and other decorations in France