

This was in 1924 that I arrived back in East London and shortly after my return my fiancée Nellie Dodge and I had to make a decision on our marriage date as her mother was growing very feeble and her father ageing and she was thus not able to leave home having to look after the old people. We finally decided that it would be for the best if we got married and lived with her parents. About a year later her mother died and then it was that I decided to build my own home. The Union-Castle were very good to their staff with regard to housing loans and gave a full loan at 2½%. I bought a third of an acre in Cornwall Road Vincent on which I was to build. I had a very good friend who helped me draw up a plan, - it was rather a novel scheme as we would not require an architect. I doubt if this could happen today. First we decided on the rooms we should require and the size. Next we cut bits of paper to represent the rooms. Then by arranging them as we should require the rooms, passage etc, the full plan to scale was drawn. You would be surprised at the very good job we made of the plan. Next, I approached a builder who had been recommended, - the plan having been duly passed by the Cambridge Council. He asked for no Bills of Quantity etc. as today but was quite satisfied with the plan. Within two days he quoted me the cost of the building - £850 and the ground had cost me £150 so the total cost was £1000.

The Company had sanctioned a loan for the full amount, no security asked for excepting a small insurance of £200. I was to repay the loan at £7-10 a month. What more reasonable terms could one ask for.

The old chap sold his house in Gordon Road which was bond free for £1000 and came to live with us as did her brother. We settled down very comfortably and I got going with the garden which became quite a picture. It was hard work as we had to do all the digging etc. We had a wonderful show of roses - about fifty trees.

Here we were dependent on rain water and so had three 600 gallon tanks. Later Cambridge Municipality was supplied with water by East London. Pipes were put down each street and rather than get a plumber to instal our water, I bought the pipes and taps etc. and did the whole job in a couple of days. Yes, in those days we were not afraid of work.

While at Vincent my old Granny Enraght Mooney who had been living at the Kent Nursing Home, after her eldest son Frank - left to live in Jersey, came to stay with us. She was a dear old lady and was no trouble at all. She passed away in 1927. My wife who, as I have mentioned, suffered from heart trouble and passed away in 1929 and I decided to sell up, which I did. I sold the house and furniture for £1400 which left me a bit after refunding to the Company the balance owing to them. I now decided to apply for long leave to which I was entitled. This, if one travelled overseas was four months but if taken locally only two months. Well, I was not interested then in going to England, for which we were granted a free passage. I decided to go up to my old home in Serowe where my brother was then District Commissioner and my sister Madge and her husband Page-Wood lived. Later I would go on to Kasani, a Government outstation on the Chobe River in the Northern Bech. Protectorate where my Mother was living with my sister Bimbi and her husband Vivian Ellenberger, son of Colonel Ellenberger. He was stationed there as Commissioner of that area and also the Caprivi Strip which was at that time being administered by the Bech. Government.

I arrived at Palapye Road and was met by my Sister and her Husband and their young son aged four, Andrew, and they drove me to Serowe where I was to stay with them for three weeks or so before going on to Kasani.

I again met my brother Gerald, his wife and young daughter of 15 months, Elizabeth, today a mother of three children and married to Ron Myer, chief Railway Engineer at Uitenhage.

Gerald had married Helen Minchin, the daughter of the Government Attorney in Mafeking. Everyone was very kind and I was to have a very fine holiday.