

After this short holiday we returned to our studies as we were to write our Junior Certificate Exam at the end of the term. We were to get in some very good cricket at Selborne had now entered the first league to play against Buffaloes, Bohemians, Albions and King. My strong point in cricket was bowling - slow to medium and I became quite a good spin and googly adept. My batting was erratic but I made an occasional by hitting and getting runs quickly. Before leaving for Gaberones and the Christmas holidays we wrote our exams and both my brother and I managed to pass. I was lucky in getting the bare minimum of 75 out of 300 for Latin - a subject I hated and was very poor at.

Off we set for Gaberones again, on that long tedious journey. The trains seemed to spend hours at the various junctions, Naaupoort, Stormberg and De Aar waiting for connections. In Kimberley we again spent the day with the Bleazbys who I have mentioned earlier. We first met them at Silipeng, a trading station a short distance out of Francistown, when my Dad was relieving there. We spent a week with them and often went into the store to watch the natives buying. I remember one day they were very pleased because they had taken a record amount of £8 for the day. Today that would hardly buy one a good meal. The places I have mentioned through which we passed on these journeys, Naaupoort, Rosmead, etc are all places of which I have written about in my research for the Kaffrarian Rifles History during the Anglo Boer War. It was round about these areas that our troops chased Boer Commandos of Denis Reitz, van Deventer, Smuts, Hertzog and others - some of whom fought with us during the 1914/18 war.

Well, we eventually arrived at Gaberones but we were not going to have so much shooting as, although there was no close season for shooting, it was observed to the extent that we only shot for the pot when out camping. Duck shooting, however, is permitted and we had a couple of good outings after duck. One place was outside some good vleis some distance out of Gaberones. At these pans there was very good shooting and we had a nice party, Col Ellenberger and his family, the doctor Macrae who I will mention again some time later when I met him as a ship's doctor and I was on my honeymoon in 1932. Here we had to wade through the shallow pans covered with beautiful water lillies. The duck went from one pan to another and to prevent them landing on one of the pans we stationed old Dr Macrae there as he was not keen on walking. However, we noticed that they still landed there and we eventually found that the doctor had settled down and fallen asleep instead of firing at the duck.

It was here that I first found a Tucan nest. These hornbills find a hollow tree trunk in which they put a few bits of grass and then the hen settles in to do the necessary laying and the male bird seals her in with mud. She stops there until the young are ready to fly out. In the meantime the poor old man has to feed her through an opening and later the young as well. You should see the state of the male, starving himself until he is nothing but skin and bones. I climbed up the big tree and tried to see what was inside but without luck and I did not want to dig the old hen out. They were no doubt relieved when we left.

Duck/