

Gerald was glad to see me back and have news of my holiday and what we were to do on the next. As there were no exams for us at the end of the year except just a prelim to our next year's studying for matric, we just looked forward to our next holiday - Christmas, which we were to spend in Kanye, the last there as my Dad was being transferred to Serowe as D.C. where he would again meet Chief Khama, who he had last had dealings with in his old village at Palapye. My Dad was one of the very few Civil Servants or Police Officers who acted as a D.C. without having passed his law. It was the experience he had had of Civil and native customs and laws. I had the same experience in the army being President of many Court Martials although not having passed a law exam. When I asked why I was told that they knew their men, and knew those who could use their brains and tact. After all, if a man is not guilty in your opinion you tell him so and he is free but if guilty in the army your finding and sentence has to be submitted to the law advisor who will confirm or reject the sentence. Sitting on these cases I found most interesting and shall mention one or two later.

We were fortunate in that Willie Surman was in Kanye for a while and had to go out on several trips on patrol and tax collecting and he always invited Gerald and I to accompany him. He was well known to the family as my mother had actually taught him in Basutoland there she met my Dad. On these trips, as it was the breeding season, everyone observed this in spite of there being no close season at that time - later this was introduced. All we shot for was the pot and when you are out on a trip with quite a big following of staff it must be kept boiling. The great thing is the old three-legged pot in which a stew is cooked. This is never cleaned out but one just keeps adding more meat. This is for the staff though we all enjoyed a nice stew out in the veld. We used to enjoy sitting round the big camp fire at night and listening to the various noises, calls of the jackals and hyenas, Reedbuck's whistles, the far away grunt of a lion on the hunt and various night birds. Sometimes we would hear the frightened chatter of monkeys probably being attacked by a leopard. Such a wonderful life that one wonders why one comes back to this humdrum town life. However, we must earn to live as we cannot all be outdoor men.

Having bid our old friends farewell once again we set off for East London doing that long train journey from Lobatsi which is where the Plumer Column camped before getting out in a south-westerly direction to relieve Mafeking. There had been a short sharp engagement at Lobatsi. Old Col Ellenberger had been detailed as guide and interpreter to Methuen on his trip through the Protectorate into the Union, or rather Cape, as it was. He mentions that at Lobatsi they were as usual warned that the Boers were about to shell their camp outside Lobatsi and all had to get under cover. He was sitting in a tent with four others drinking tea. He and three of the others immediately got up and rushed out but the last man, a lieut, said he was going to finish his tea. He was unfortunate, however, as he caught the full blast of the first shell. That was the only casualty they had there. His story of the relief is most interesting. After they crossed into the Colony and were making for Mafeking, Plumer was wounded in the arm and not being able to write, Ellenberger wrote out his

dispatches/