

It is strange, at least I find it so, that the first long swallow of the beer is the best, after that it is just a case of finishing. Yes that first long swallow.

Then we had dinner and it is wonderful what the cook can do out in the veld. Even in the pouring rain they always manage to get a good meal cooked.

Well, after a very fine dinner we all retired for the night. We had no sooner got into bed when Lorna said: "What was that creepy noise?" "Oh!" I said, "Just an old cowardly Jackal, perhaps startled by something, has scurried behind the nearest bush and then stood to bark his alarm, his Staccato Yaps splitting the night, then silence. See."

The next day we took time to do a bit of bird shooting round the native lands a short way off and then in the afternoon trekked back to Serowe. We did see more Koodoo but I said I had shot one and that was enough for me.

On our return to Serowe we were able to give venison and birds to some of the people and the remainder of the Koodoo and Impala we cut into strips and soaked in brine and salt over night and the next day hung up to dry. We were experts at cutting up strips of biltong, cutting out all the sinews so that one had pure meat. The biltong one buys has 20% sinew which you cannot chew and so there is so much waste for which you pay far too much.

Well, we had had a most enjoyable holiday and so now we motored, or rather were motored, to Palapye Road by Kissie to entrain for Lobatsi where we were to spend a couple of days with my sister Bimbi and her husband Vivian Ellenberger. He was acting District Commissioner of the Lobatsi area and the strip of Baralong territory down the Molopo River. It was very cold here too but we were very comfortable in the attached rondavel. The first day Lorna and I spent the day on the Lobatsi Dam doing some painting. The next day Vivian took us down to Ramathlabana where he had a meeting with some of the Baralong Tribe. When marking out the boundaries in the early days no thought was given as the boundaries of the various tribes. Here at Ramathlabana the Baralong tribe was split, the main portion being in the Colony (Mafeking) and the balance in the Protectorate.

After the meeting we drove along and had a look at those wonderful Society bird's nests. You must have seen pictures of them, a great big pile of grass housing some hundred nests which must have taken years to build. We then went on to Korwe Flats where years earlier we had some very fine shooting but today I believe the place has been shot out. There were hundreds of Springbak and duiker and stembuck, of birds there were any amount, guinea fowl, pheasant, and the old noisy Korhaan which would rise and make a terrific noise with his Ka Ka Ka Ka and the wings outstretched land like a helicopter. There were several vleis but these were dry and there were only a few duck right in the middle where, on account of the thick grass and mud they were safe. We did not even see the usual wild geese.

It was through this area that Plumers Column, with Grandad Ellenburger, as guide and interpreter to Plumer went to the relief of Mafeking. That is of course another story of which I have a tape recording of the old man's story. Most Most interesting.

We now did a short train journey of 45 miles to Mafeking where we were to spend a few days with my brother, Gerald, and his wife Helen. He was at the time acting Resident Commissioner, a post which he should have held as he was probably one of the most respected Civil Servants in the Protectorate. Instead they imported men from abroad who knew nothing of the local natives and conditions. I have been told by so many that he was a man who would do his best to help if you were in trouble but he stood no crook work. One well known farmer on the Molopo told me that he thought so much of him that he named one of his farms Geraldine. An honour which I can only match with a street, "Geoff Nettelton", in East London, named after me out of respect for my services in many ways.

It was bitterly cold /