

Maud woke me at 7am so went for a swim before breakfast in the rock pool-14 lengths-lovely, not cold. Several people around-they seem to rise with the sun. After breakfast we walked along the beach to the main shopping centre at the south end. Wanted fruit but poor selection at Checkers-and dear. Got a newspaper to catch up with events (we have no TV). A pontoon bridge has now been opened over the White Umfolozi, so it should be possible to reach the northern reserves; however we thought we should stay in Margate till over the weekend so booked the flat to the 20th, Monday. Some odd little bits of news in the paper; black council employees had been sacked because they took action to raise their wages to R55 per week (about £30); Jozini Dam has had the sluice gates fully opened to reduce the water level down to about 58% in case there should be further downpours; another cyclone is in the Mozambique channel but is said not to be heading for land. After lunch found a local fruit depot where we bought pineapple, grapefruit, peach and cucumber, then down to the pool again for a swim. A sea fret developed at dusk but later it was a clear moonlight night, and still warm

16/2/84 I developed stomach trouble during the night-some sort of gastritis-and this made me quite weary all day; however in the morning we visited Uvongo about 2kms north of Margate. Nice little beach but no bathing in the sea permitted because the shark nets were defective. Was going to try their rock pool when it threatened rain, so came back to the Manaba pool, only to find it emptied for cleaning-it will be refilled on tonight's high spring tide. Had a brief dip in the sea to revive me. Rested and read in the afternoon. The paper: the Eloff commission has reported on the enquiry into the South African Council of Churches (leading light Bishop Tutu); main findings are that most of its funds come from overseas (a lot from Scandinavian countries), that it has advocated a revolutionary policy towards reform in SA, including disinvestment to create discontent among the poorer sections, that it has sponsored anti-SA propaganda abroad, and that the banning of Bishop Tutu's visits abroad by confiscating his passport has been justified. The World Council of Churches came in for indirect criticism in that some of the funds for SACC were routed through it. Another interesting item is that the African National Congress (ANC), which is communist inspired, may shortly be prevented from using Mozambique as a base for attack on SA because of new negotiations between the two countries. And Attenborough has criticised SABC for its reports on his discussions with Mrs Mandella, Steve Biko's widow, and others; but if there was nothing ulterior is his motives why keep his plans secret, as he tried to? After tea we had a drink in the bar of the Palm Beach Hotel nearby; not exactly a hive of activity but at least we saw some TV. Mind you we were not impressed with this-the news was entirely SA politics ad nauseum, and a programme about the Holy Land was extremely vague and uninformative.

17/2/84 Much better, thank goodness. We walked along the beach and were surprised how high the spring tide had reached; it had swept the sand up and blocked the sea entrance to the lagoon. A bulldozer was working on the problem. Phoned the Natal Parks Board at Pietermaritzburg and were told that the Charters Creek and Mkuze reserves were now opened and accessible, but not Umfolozi. Booked accommodation from the 22nd, hoping that the cyclone Imboa would not come in from the east (still some doubt about this one). Got some money at Standard and our first film.

Pleased that the prints were quite good, as this was the first test of the new Kiron 28-85 lens. Returning we both had a swim in the rock pool, just refilled. Water not yet warmed up by the sun, but nice and refreshing. Met a young Scotsman in the pool (he noticed my ring) who is working in Germiston; he plans to return home in three years time as he doubts the political stability of the place in the long term. Some people, he says, are making sure of selling their houses now and moving into flats (rented) to be liquid when the time comes to go. He himself had been moving house at the time of the Soweto riots and had had great difficulty in selling his property in Capetown; he does not want to risk the experience again. After lunch we sunbathed on the beach at the flats, watching the rising tide breaking closer and closer to the dunes; the caretaker's wife joined us for a while (with her two wire-haired terriers) and said that this season the sea had encroached on the sand more than in the past, and had been generally rougher; she and her husband came here from Rhodesia (as so many seem to have done on this coast) and like it well; the humidity is only a problem in January and February. We also spoke to a young SA woman who said that on the 3pm news the cyclone Imboa was now turning to the Natal coast; the consequent sea swell was lifting the shark nets and was preventing bathing right down to Uvongo. Also there were typhoid cases reported in Durban (apparently there had already been an outbreak in Kwazulu). Which reminds me that along the Manaba beach there is a warning that the water may be infected with Cholera! In the evening went to the Lucien Hotel where there was a singsong going on in the bar, initiated largely by a young fellow called Murphy whose father came from Londonderry, and where we also spoke to a girl from Cork! The hotel manager (Peter Urin) heard us talking about Botswana and came over; he had managed the Marang Motel outside Francistown for a time and is hoping to go back to Botswana when plans to build a new hotel on the banks of the Chobe river near Kasane are fulfilled; at the moment the difficulty is to get an allocation of land from the Government. Now that the road is tarred right up to Kazungula he regards this area as having great potential, the road being, as he put it "the umbilical cord" for Zambia and points north. Any business started now should go a bomb. Also in the bar were a Salady and her Yugoslav husband.

18/2/84 Woke at seven to find the rain teeming down and the wind strong; no wonder that during the night I had half roused to close the balcony door. Did some shopping for food and drink; most of Margate seemed to be doing the same thing. Heard the 11am news on the car radio; Imboa is heading south; Durban promenade was awash at high tide; the temporary Umfolozi causeway has had to be closed because of a rise in the river flow. Thought we'd better hire a TV for the flat to keep track of the weather. The rain and wind got worse in the afternoon; I went for a walk along the shore and got drenched; the high tide had eaten further into the dunes so that there was now a seven or eight foot drop to the surf and it was safer to keep away from the edge in case more fell. The TV news at eight o'clock said that both the pontoon bridge and the railway bridge across the Umfolozi had succumbed to the higher river flow caused by the fresh rains; back to square one! Three Indian women had been drowned at Tongaat beach - they had been swept away by high waves while praying on the shore.

The South Africans seem very pleased with the outcome of talks in Lusaka, hosted by Kenneth Kaunda, to halt military activity in Angola; hopefully SWAPO will be made to tow the line by Angola, but this remains to be seen: at the same time the talks in Maputo may lead to better relationships with Mozambique. All this may equally be just wishful thinking! Went to the Lucien bar for a beer and to hear how the "tube" race had fared in the rough weather. This race is on the river coming down through Oribi Gorge, shooting the rapids to the mouth of the Umzimkulu at Port Shepstone; the competitors use inflated car and tractor tubes and apart from getting to the finishing line the idea seems to be to consume as much beer on the way as possible. The race had taken place but there were some casualties and about nine people had not yet been accounted for. A good movie on TV-about the only decent programme we've seen.

19/2/84 The clouds have lifted and the wind only slight. Quite warm by 9am. Went to the morning service at this time at Manaba Wesleyan Church; informal gospel type meeting with American song books, including, incidentally "Softly and Tenderly". All white congregation except for one youngish man whom I took to be Indian, of striking appearance, who would have been well cast for the lead role in a film about Christ-eyes full of expression. Went to the rock pool for the rest of the morning (sea bathing prohibited). After a walk on the beach went there again in the afternoon; a man of English descent from Capetown said he intended settling at nearby Uvongo-he was waiting for a rented flat because he did not think it wise to put money into bricks and mortar in SA; sooner or later he thinks there will be trouble. In fact he was quite critical of the people here - everything, he says, is dictated by greed. Did packing in the evening in anticipation that we should head north tomorrow, although the news is not good-the Umfolozi pontoon has broken away in fresh floods and it is uncertain when it can be repaired. However, much as our Margate flat is so comfortable, we will go as far as Durban for two nights and be ready to travel to Charters Creek where we are booked on Wednesday; meanwhile we can check the car at Hertz, and stock up with food and drink for the reserves, and perhaps work out an alternative plan in case the Umfolozi is still impassable. Heavy rains and winds associated with Imboa have caused damage round Durban area, particularly at Pinetown. The sea overran the Durban promenade covering it with sand, also demolished the retaining wall and smashed a cafe. However Imboa is now headed south-eastwards out to sea. Another one called Haja has formed near Madagascar but does not pose a threat at the moment. It is the Madagascar meteorologists who name the cyclones because that's where they usually originate, and there is an alphabetical sequence of names to be followed. Until women's lib complained, the cyclones were given girls names!

20/2/84 Pouring down when we had early tea at 6.30am, but it cleared in time for us to load up the car. Some further rain on the 130kms to Durban, but the city was dry. Checked in at the Impala Flats, which are dowdy compared with Margate, but passable and convenient for a night or two. Consulted the AA technical officer about the tachometer. According to him most instruments over record both speed and distance; complete accuracy is impossible so manufacturers tend to protect the motorist by erring on the side of over-recording speed-and as a direct consequence, distance also.

How convenient for the car hirers who charge by the Kilometres on the the instrument! As your speed increases so does the discrepancy between actual and recorded distance. The AA would test the tachometer free if necessary but it was suggested that I first see what concession Hertz were prepared to offer. It took some negotiation with the young manager to achieve results. He had never heard of cars over-recording the mileage, a statement he repeated on challenge; which did not endear him to me since I had to assume that he was lying; all he could do was to exchange the car. What about the excess kms already recorded? He questioned calculations! Eventually he came round to the position that he would credit me with an estimated 15% excess (150 kms) and change the car. Was quite concerned when I deferred a decision on that. Checked again with the AA and on their advice settled with Hertz as offered. The fresh Corolla is an improvement on the last; let's hope the tachometer is. By now it was late afternoon so we were glad to have a beer at the terrace of the Four Seasons Hotel, then go back to the flat to relax. The Umfolozi pontoon has still not been repaired.

21/2/84 Started with rain, which recurred during the day, but never too persistent. Visited Durban's replica of Belfast's City Hall and felt quite at home; it houses a fine wild life museum, which we toured, and an Art Gallery for which we didn't have time. Stocked up with food and drink, in hope, for the Reserves. In between inspected the sea front and were surprised how far the sea had encroached on the promenade, which was still closed to traffic while the sand clearance continued. Native women selling beadwork and leather and basketwork on the front, also Durban's famous colourful rickshaws plying for trade. Had to call again at Hertz to finalise the arrangements; the young manager was positively effusive; I had sensed a softening of attitude yesterday towards the end of our discussions but shall never know whether this has occurred because (a) I had let him off the hook by accepting his offer when I could have got more by being awkward, or (b) he had discovered that I was a tourist from abroad at a rather late stage when filling in the forms, or (c) equally he had found that I was from Northern Ireland and ought to be humoured! Listened carefully to the evening radio and TV news but not a bit about the Umfolozi bridge; plenty of discussion on the talks in Maputo and Lusaka, and about the maize deficit which will cost SA up to a Billion rands in importing meal in the coming year. A day of atonement and of prayer has been called for tomorrow in aid of the drought-stricken areas.

22/2/84 Maud roused and we were having early tea before 6.30am. The heavy cloud has gone and the day is dry. By 8.30 we had checked out our flat and reclaimed the R20 held against breakages etc. Not that the black woman supervisor did more than a perfunctory examination of the inventory; in fact she seemed almost too ready to say everything was in order. Anyway we were quite glad to leave because the flat had seemed stuffier and more decrepit by the hour; and sea bathing is prohibited due to loss of many of the shark nets. So with the sun shining through we set off north up the N2 and by 11.45 had covered the 220kms to the Umfolozi, with a break for coffee at (literally) the only roadside refreshment place in that distance, being the Forest Inn Hotel at Mtunzini about 140 kms out of Durban. Not that the lush green hills

covered largely by sugar cane, were unpopulated; far from it, but the native centres were off the line of the new highway. The many rivers flowing to the sea from Zululand were full, and some, like the Tugela, still carrying sand and soil from the flooding. Still we were quite unprepared for the devastation at Umfolozi. Where the road crossed the river bed is hemmed in on the south by high ground and rock and although there is a small flood plain on the north side it was not enough to prevent the build up of water which swept away the bridge and covered the north shoreland with deep silt. The river span is about 150 yards, across which a causeway has been constructed, leaving a gap of some 40 yards to be spanned by an Army pontoon bridge; this was the section which had itself come adrift in the Imboa floods and had only been restored (we discovered) last night. Part of the causeway surface was very wet and had been rutted by heavy vehicles, so our Corolla was scraping mud; still, we made it, which we had no idea whether we might when we set off this morning. After that it was plain sailing to Charters Creek; the last few kms to the reserve were dirt but passable; our total trip for the day was 270kms and we arrived at 1.30pm. The car instrument agreed almost exactly with the map distance! Charters Creek has 16 thatched rondavels but the first night only three were occupied; according to one of the other occupants this was extremely unusual as the camp is normally well booked up by fishermen—the floods have deterred people from attempting the trip. This particular man had tried to get here three days earlier, and had had to wait at the Umfolozi and had then motored 500kms round by Vryheid to reach the camp; so we were lucky! The increased level of Lake St Lucia is a disadvantage for fishing; it means that most of the water is fresh, having come down from the three rivers which feed the lake, whereas the sea fish prefer to stay nearer the salt water at the estuary; nevertheless the man had caught a salmon today, and other fish. The water is now lapping the foot of the bank on which the camp stands, whereas before the floods there was a flat shore along which one could walk to the fisherman's jetty—now the only way is round by dirt road through the bush. The official launch is not making trips on the lake because it is too dangerous—all the marker poles are submerged, but private boats are free to take the risk. On the way into the camp we had seen bush-pig and out walking we saw duiker; just offshore there were several hippo wallowing; otherwise the reserve is very quiet. A breeze from the north-east kept the day pleasant, and it was a relief to get away from Durban's humidity. Toasted Jill's birthday in the evening.

23/2/84 Chatted to the Warden and his wife; he noticed my ring—he sits in a Scottish Lodge at Mtubatuba; his wife showed us their garden containing avocado, guava and mango trees and presented us with fruit of the first two. Around lunchtime there was great excitement among the black boys—they had spotted a big crocodile swimming just below the camp, saw this and a large hippo also close to the bank. Tried one of the nature trails through woodland but disappointed as we saw only duiker and large butterflies, though admittedly these were marvellous colours. Two girls arrived in camp after motoring down from Swazi; they had had to come via Nerston and Piet Retief because the Big Bend road is without a bridge across the Pongola; even then they had to detour part of the way at Candover and Mkuzi. The Warden had mentioned this also but said Mkuzi Reserve is accessible

24/2/84 Had another chat with the warden Raibenheimer and his wife. He is a PM of St Lucia 1336 which comes under the Province of Natal. Exchanged sight of our PM jewels. During the last war he served in North Africa and Italy but stated bluntly that so far as South Africans were concerned they might as well not have bothered as all that their country got in return was a kick up the rear! Sadly true. They also criticised the UK for deserting the African colonies and letting the "badies" take over. Nevertheless they did visit UK last year. Did the nature trail again, this time with the benefit of the leaflet guide identifying such things as White Stinkwood, nest of the cocktail ant, rosy thorn, knobwood etc. The brushwood in the forest is quite thick so it is difficult to spot game before it has had warning of your approach and vanished; but we did get glimpses of duiker and bushbuck. A colony of vervet monkey screamed angrily away through the treetops as we approached. Maud was on edge in case we should encounter hippo, of which one is warned, but during the day they are usually in the lake so the risk is small; still it can happen, but not this time to us. The camp became busier with weekenders, but still not full. Those that arrived brought their power boats for fishing, but today the breeze again blew up and made the water too choppy for comfort. One game fisherman waded in from the shore to cast his line, notwithstanding the agitated warnings of a black worker about crocodile. Everything is now clear for travelling to Mkuse tomorrow; let's hope we this time leave intact for when we left Margate we were minus a plastic bag of tinned foodstuffs and from Durban we were missing two litre bottles of soft drinks! Don't know who to blame for this except the apartment staffs. Since we arrived in Charters Creek the water level has dropped some twelve or eighteen inches; there has been further rain but only light. Didn't see any hippo at the camp at night or other game, just frogs, grasshoppers and a three inch snail!

25/2/84 Presented with morning tea at the usual time of 6.30 and were packed and leaving the camp at 8.30. On the road to Hluhluwe village passed fruit sellers at native stands; lovely pineapples. The shops at Hluhluwe were poor and expensive; however we got enough to last us in Mkuzi, and a good cup of coffee at the Holiday Inn. This one is comparatively small, catering mainly for visitors to the surrounding game reserves who want home comforts. About 30kms north of Hluhluwe we left the N2 at the dirt road to Mkuzi reserve and were pleasantly surprised that there were only a few bad spots on the 40kms. Here and there at watercourses the road had been rebuilt after a fashion and twice there was still a shallow flow across the road. By midday we had completed the drive of 120kms in all, and reported to the Mkuzi warden. He said only one track in the reserve was closed—the one along the Mkuzi river which is one of the boundaries of the park. When this river had overflowed it had devastated a band of country $1\frac{1}{2}$ kms wide in which all vegetation had been ruined. The game had not been badly affected though some monkeys and baboon were lost because the main flood came at night when they were resting in the trees and swept away. Just coming into the reserve we had seen a good herd of springbok. Rested in the afternoon. It is dark by 6.30 and without radio or TV and wandering around both dangerous and prohibited, reading is the main pastime. Have finished Laurens van der Post's "Lost World of the Kalahari" and have started "Gold! Gold! Gold!" by Eric Rosenthal, being the story of the Johannesburg Gold Rush but

embracing earlier history of mining for metals and diamonds.

26/2/84 As yesterday the sky is somewhat overcast. After consulting the warden's wife we selected one of the dirt tracks through the bush, but in spite of travelling slowly and stopping for periods we saw little game—two solitary Nyala bucks, some impala, and monkeys. However at a pool near the road we spotted three animals resting in the shade which we couldn't identify; if they were warthog or bushpig they were exceptionally large; or they might have been rhino; in spite of watching them through the binoculars for several minutes we could not get a clear view and after a while they retreated into the bush. Went on to Nsumu Pan, being part of the river system and saw what the warden's wife meant when she said "even our trees are thatched"; the flood water had lifted the reeds to such a height that they had come to rest on the tree tops and some trees, particularly the umbrella thorns looked like thatched huts. On returning saw a nyala family near the Bube hide but at the hide itself only tortoise, impala and monkey; disappointing. Tried again in the afternoon but no luck—until we got back to camp, where a duiker was feeding unperturbed near the huts.

27/2/84 Before dawn this morning looked out of the window and a small deer strolling past skirted our patio. Much later we set off down Beacon "road". Saw nothing for 10kms except five beautiful roller type birds with yellow throat, black neckband, and the most delicate green breast; can't remember ever seeing them before. Then we turned onto the loop path and were rewarded by three large giraffe straddling our route, then by eight vultures sat like undertakers on the bare arms of a dead tree, and then, to make our day, by four black rhino about forty yards off the path; the two largest, which we think were ma and pa, gave us a long hard look, but returned to grazing. Took some photos then cruised quietly past. On the way back there were tortoise on the road and in the bush impala and nyala. Stopped at the hide—only one wildebeest and a raucous hadedah—a crane like bird. Nearer to the camp a warthog crossed the road ahead. At the camp shop we mentioned the animals we couldn't identify yesterday and it was decided that they were almost certainly bushpigs—not often seen here. Did another run of 20kms later in the day but all the animals seemed to be having siesta except two impala bucks.

28/2/84 Decided to go on a walkabout with one of the Park's Rangers—Maud opted out! For a fee of R3 one is led by the ranger through the bush, hopefully to see more of the game. I, being the only sucker this morning, was put in charge of the black ranger Hlonipa, complete with his rifle. A Zulu approaching sixty with greying hair and beard, a scout hat, and a fierce glint in his eyes, he inspired more fear in me than any thought of the animals. He was said not to speak English though I think this was out of pride rather than ignorance. For the first hour of padding through the bush (we started at 8.20am) we exchanged no more than grunts; we need not have been silent for sake of the game because in that time we saw only two nyala bucks. Our path from the camp descended towards the Mkuzi river and soon we arrived at areas which had been flooded, well before we reached the normal river bed. In one of these muddy places the ranger took me to a thicket in which there was a dead rhino, still only partly decomposed or eaten by carrion, and the horns intact. Nearby were also impala horns, but no skeleton. At the river itself the ranger relaxed enough to tell me that on the far bank was a Bantu reserve on which all the mealie had been destroyed (later I learned that some of it was his and intended to feed his fourteen children); the flood torrent

had obviously been horrific; the course of the river was now flanked by huge sandbanks and scattered with large uprooted trees; as Hlonipa said in his limited English "too much water". After a while we rejoined one of the car tracks which was still under repair from the floods and began to head back; by this time the sun was very strong and I was glad to call a rest in the shade of a tree; but soon the ranger struck through the bush again and we arrived back at the dead rhino. Hlonipa removed the two rhino horns—they came away easily from the rotting flesh which now stank—and between us we carried them the rest of the way back to camp. The large front horn, which we took in turns, must have weighed about a stone, and the smaller one perhaps four pounds; how on earth the animal supports these on the end of his nose is a small miracle! Unfortunately I saw no further trace of the impala horns, which I would have liked to get. At the camp office there was some concern, first at the smell which we both now radiated, and then at the fact that there was a dead rhino of which nothing had been known; Hlonipa was told to report all the details to the field staff. Apparently the Parks Board impounds all rhino horns at Pietermaritzburg and does not allow them to be sold, notwithstanding that they are valuable and highly prized as an aphrodisiac. It is bound by the code of some organisation to which it belongs; so they just rot. After lunch, preceded by a thorough soaking for myself, we bought a hippo handbag, gents buffalo hide shoes, and an elephant carved from verdite, at the camp shop. Then took the loop road again; amused by a family of baboon playing round a bush pool, and saw giraffe zebra and impala plus some attractive birds (including a small hawk feeding on prey in the road. The wardens are called Damerill; they did not seem particularly concerned about what would happen to Zululand; at one time it was a separate British protectorate, and if Chief Bhutolesi accepts will once again be Kwazulu, with the same independence as say Transkei. There is a political hitch because the zulus think they are better off without independence and in any case an argument has to be settled whether part of Zululand is to be ceded to Swaziland—that northern territory which would give Swazi access to the sea at Cosi Bay. The wardens are much more interested in the plan which will extend the game reserve down to Lake St Lucia, making an area of reserverivalling Kruger. In order to achieve this both white farmers and blacks will have to be resettled.

29/2/84 Mentioned to Mrs Damerill that when walking yesterday I had seen stones on the road with deep blue centres. She thought they would be amethyst; gravel was brought in for road surfacing from the surrounding country which did yield semi-precious stones; however no geological specimens were allowed to be taken from the park! So we set off, minus amethyst, from the camp towards Mkuzi village. Just out of the reserve one is in a native area and when we stopped for photos we were besieged by youngsters for money; two boys emerged from a nearby stream in the altogether! Two girls also bathing topless came to the car. At Mkuzi we had coffee at the Ghost Mountain Inn, named after a mountain above the village made famous by Rider Haggard in one of his novels (he worked at Mkuzi). Because of flood damage the main N2 road was being detoured so from the camp there were nearly 80kms of dirt before we reached tar near Magudu, much of it mountainous and rough. Got a good view of the Jozini Dam but couldn't get to see the flood area of the Pongola river. Decided that we would take the Vryheid road rather than Piet Retief, and travelled some magnificent hill country past Louwsburg (a small "dorp") before reaching Vryheid—a thriving town supported by nearby coal mines.

The sun shone strongly all day so by the time we reached Vryheid at 3pm we were quite tired; however a cup of tea at the President Hotel revived us enough to try for Utrecht where we found the Grand Hotel quite attractive and reasonable-not grand in our terms but comfortable with good food, the building being the typical small town arrangement of bedrooms in separate blocks, all on ground level. Our total run for the day was 291kms. Odd news from Harare-Mugabe says that the country's civil servants are allowed to be political and support his party.

1/3/84 Had a brief look at Utrecht shopping centre, such as it is, and got some cash at Standard, before leaving for Johannesburg at 9am. Drove through mountains to Volksrust-the road reaches 1780 metres at Iaing's Nek. Volksrust larger than Utrecht and quite pleasant; then to Standerton for coffee, and the roadside near Balfour for picnic lunch. En route we had listened to the car radio, including a special music session for St. Davids day-Harry Secombe, Land of my Fathers and all that. After lunch we were glad we were on the last leg of our journey because it had become unbearably hot and on the high veld there is precious little shade from the burning sun. Reached the Jacaranda shortly after 2pm, had a bath and a reviver, then strolled to Hillbrow. No post from home, but the bookings for Kruger have been confirmed. News in the paper repeats what we were told at Mkuzi-that the Parks Boards have 655 rhino horns (now surely 657!) which they cannot sell because SA has signed the Convention on International Trade in endangered species. Other rather more disturbing news is that in Zimbabwe some black teachers in Matabeleland who were not Ndebele speaking (and therefore not locals) had been mutilated by having ears and noses and lips cut, presumably by Nkomo supporters; at the same time atrocities are alleged against the Matabeles by Mugabe's troops. Once again our ideas of going to visit the Zimbabwe ruins are fading. Mind you South Africa itself is not free from peculiar types of violence; three ritual murders have just been reported. Lightning struck a native school, killing a pupil. It was said that a man had called the "fire", whereupon he was accused of witchcraft, and attacked by the villagers and burned to death in a motorcar; the same treatment followed for his wife and another relative. Does segregation perpetuate this sort of belief and action; or does the latter justify segregation?

2/3/84 The change in altitude and climate from the coast seemed to affect our sleep. However we started making plans as to a date for return home and what to do meantime. Were able to get earlier bookings for Kruger from 12th March, seeing that we are unlikely to get to Zimbabwe; booked a flight provisionally for 25th March. I had a swim at Hillbrow indoor pool in the afternoon and then in the evening Maud repeated history by spraining her ankle! We were watching TV in the lounge but I had had to take a seat away from Maud; she dropped asleep and on waking couldn't see me so went to see if I was at the car and the bi-focals did it again-she tripped at the causeway. I had not noticed her departure from the lounge so knew nothing until paged on the inter-comm. By this time Maud was in the bedroom being attended by a fireman (!) and a lady who had seen her fall. Both seemed to know first aid and were applying ice packs to the ankle. That seemed about as much as could be done but we were advised to go to the hospital in the morning.

3/3/84 Did so; Johannesburg General Hospital is not far away and the main struggle was getting Maud down to the car. Once at the hospital there was no problem; it is modern, well-staffed and equipped. For the

princely fee of R10 (the standard charge according to income group) Maud was examined by doctor and Xray taken. No bones broken thank goodness. Then an adhesive support bandage was applied and crutches provided. So now Maud looks as though she has been in World War III or at least in Namibia. To cap it all she went and fell with the crutches and all as we were re-entering the hotel; no further damage but shaken; discovered the crutches needed lengthening a bit and once that was done she manages alright, but finds it hard work. Anyway it means that for some days she has to rest the leg as much as possible. So there we are! At least it should be recovered enough to tackle the journey home on the 25th so we confirmed the tickets and arranged with Hertz to keep the car till that date. Whereas in Durban Hertz had quoted 14c per extra km Hillbrow tried to charge me 22c! It took a bit of haggling and a reference to the rates quoted to me by the rival concern Budget to persuade them to stick to 14c for they argued that the terms given at Durban were far too generous; it seems to me that they are complete chancers, prepared to try it on until they meet consumer resistance, then give in without a blush. By this time it was after one o'clock and all the bottle stores were closed till Monday; not wishing to face the weekend without some sustenance (the hotel is not licenced) I nipped into another hotel bar, came out with two uncapped beers, and resealed them with sellotape! Maud rested, I had a swim, and we watched TV in the evening.
4/3/84