

Field Diary XVII, 9 April-27 April 1873

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[0001]

[0002]

XVII

Moselabamba S of
Gonda - chite one day off

[0003]

[0004]

XVII.

9th April 1873 - at R.
Monikazi or Munikazi

copied = from XVI =
5th April 1873 March from
Kabinga's on Chambeze
luggage in canoes &
men on land = We
punted on flood 6 ft
deep with many
anthills all about
covered with trees -
course SSE - for 5 miles
to across R. Lolingela
sluggish & of 300 yards

6th Leave in the
same way, but men
were sent from Kabinga
to steal the canoes

[0005]

which we paid his
brother Matipa for
handsomely - a stupid
drummer beat the
alarm by which we
were called inland
and found the main
body of people gone on
By this the party was
separated and we
pulled & punted 6 or
7 hours S - W - in great
difficulty as the fisher[-]
men we saw refused
to shew us where the
deep water lay - The
whole country South
of the Lake was covered
with water thickly dotted
over with Lotus leaves
and rushes - It has a
greenish appearance
and it might be well

[0006]

to shew the spaces
annually flooded by a
broad wavy band 20
30 and even 40 miles
out from the permanent
banks coloured light
green - the broad
Estuaries of 50 or
more miles into
which the rivers
form themselves
might be coloured
blue, but it is quite
impossible at
present to tell where

land ends & Lake
begins - It is all
"water water everywhere"
and seems to be
kept from flowing
quickly off by the

[0007]

narrow bed of the
Luapula which has
perpendicular banks
worn deep down in
New red sandstone -
It is the Nile apparently
enacting its inundations
even at its sources -
The amount of water
spread over the country
constantly excites my
wonder - it is prodigious
Many of the anthills
are cultivated and
covered with dura
pumpkins = beans -
maize but the waters
yield food plenteously
in fish and Lotus
roots - a species of
wild rice grows but
the people dont need or
know it -

[0008]

A party of fishermen
fled from us - but by
coaxing we got them
to shews deep water -
they then shewed us
an islet about 30 yds
square without wood
& desired us to sleep
there - we went on
and they decamped
Pitiless pelting showers
wet everything but
near sunset we saw
two fishermen paddling
quickly off from an

anthill with a hut &
plenty of fish and some
fire wood - there we
spent the night and
watched by turns lest
thieves should come
and haul away
our canoes & goods
Heavy rain = and

[0009]

one canoe sank and
wet everything in her
The leaks in her had
been stopped with clay
and a man sleeping
near the stern had
displaced these frail
shores - Did not touch
the fish and cannot
conjecture who has
inspired fear in all
the inhabitants

7th Went on SW &
saw two men who
guided us to the river
Munikazi which
forms a connecting
link between the river
Lotingela and
the Lolotikila about
the Southern borders
of the flood - men
were hunting and

[0010]

we passed near large
herds of antelopes
which made a rushing
plunging sound as
they ran & sprang
away among the
water - a lion had

wandered in this ? ; [...]
world of water and
anthills, and roared
night & morning as
if very much dis-
-gusted and we could
sympathize with
him - the men took
us to near the Munikazi
and left us well pleased
with the payment at
a broad bank of
shallow water near
the river at which we
had to unload and
haul - The natives

[0011]

beating a drum on our
East made us believe
them to be our party &
some thought that
they heard two shots
This misled us &
we went towards them
through Papyrus
Tall rushes - Arums
and grass till tired
out and took refuge
on an anthill for the
night - lion roaring
We were lost in stiff
grassy prairies -
from three to four
feet deep - of water - 5 hours

Fired again in the
stillness of night
but recieved no
answer - so on the
8th we sent a
small canoe at

[0012]

daybreak to ask for

information and
guides from the
drummer village =
Two came and they
too thought that our
party was on the East
but in that direction
the water was about
15 inches in spots &
three feet in others
which caused constant
dragging of the large
canoe all day and
at last unloading
at another branch of
the Monikazi with
a village of friendly
people where we slept
5 hours E & by S

All hands at the large
canoe could move
her only a few

[0013]

feet - rushes Papyrus
Arums - wild rice
and stiff aquatic
grasses - putting all
their strength to her
she stopped at every
haul with a jerk as
if in bank of adhesive
plaster - Measured
the crown of a Papyrus
plant or palm
3 feet across horizon[-]
tally and stalk 8 feet
in height - Hundreds
of a large dark grey
hairy caterpillar have
cleared off the rushes
nearly in spots &
now live on each
other - they can
make only the smallest
progress by swimming

[0014]

or rather wriggling
in the water - their
motion is that of a
watch spring thrown
down and dilating &
contracting

9th after two hours
threading the very
winding deep channel
of this southern
branch of Munikazi
we came to where
our party had crossed
it and gone on to
Gandochite a chief
on the Lolotikila -
men were all done
up so hired a man
to call our men to
take the loads but
he was stopped by
his relations in the
way saying "you

[0015]

ought to have one of
the travellers own
people with you" - He
returned but did not
tell us plainly or truly
till this morning

10th the headman
of the village explained
and we sent two of our
men who had a night's
rest with the turn
again of yesterday

(I am pale bloodless
and weak from bleeding
profusely ever since
the 31st March = last
an artery gives off
a copious stream
and takes away my
strength = Oh how I
long to be permitted
by the Overpower to
finish my work -)

[0016]

Pollux 100 ° - 5' 20' 10th April
10 April
[Map of star positions with degrees and rough locations.]
Munikazi R

[0017]

Munikazi R 11th April 1873
Bar. 6 AM
25.80
26.05
[68 ° .5
clear
calm]
25.59

9 AM clear
25.85
25..05
[74°]
25.62

12th cross Munikazi
about 100 or 130 yds broad
and deep = great loss of
Haema made ^ me so weak
I could scarcely walk but
tottered along nearly two
hours then lay down
quite done = cooked coffee =
our last = & went on
but in an hour was

compelled to lie down =
very unwilling to be
carried but on being
pressed allowed the men
to help me along by
relays to Chinama
where much cultivation
is carried on = camped in
garden of Dura S. 3½

[0018]

13th April 1873 found
that we had slept on the
right bank of the Loitikila
a sluggish marshy
looking river = very
winding but here going
about S.W. country
All so very flat all the
rivers down here are
of necessity tortuous
fish & other food abundan-
-dant - people civil &
reasonable - they usually
partake largely of the
character of the chief &
this one Gando chite is
polite - sky clearing
& South East wind is
the lower stratum
now - It is the dry
season well begun
73 inches is a higher
rain fall than has

[0019]

been observed anywhere
else = even in Northern
Manyuema it was
lower in inches than
here far South on the
watershed = In fact
this is the very heaviest
rainfall known in
these latitudes = between
50 & 60 in the maximum
one sees intermin-

grassy prairies with
lines of trees occupying
quarters of miles in
breadth & then to give
way to Buga or prairie
again - the Buga is
flooded annually
but its vegetation is
dry land grasses =
Other Bugas extend
out from the Lake

[0020]

10 - 20 - 30 or even
40 miles and are
known by aquatic
vegetation Lotus -
papyrus = arums -
rushes of different
species and many
kinds of purely
aquatic subaqueous
plants that send up
their flowers only to
fructify in the sun
and then sink to
ripen, one bunch after
another, others with
great cabbage looking
leaves seem to remain
at the bottom always
the young of fish
swarm and bob in
and out from the
leaves = a species

[0021]

of soft moss grows
on most plants and
seems to be good
fodder for fishes
fitted by hooked or
turned up noses to
guide it into their
maws = one species
of fish has the lower
jaw turned down into

a hook which enables
the animal to hold
the mouth close to the
plant as it glides up
or down sucking ^ in all
its soft pulpy food -
The superabundance
of gelatinous nutriment
makes the swarmer
increase in bulk with
extraordinary rapidity

[0022]
13th April 1873 Cont^d

and make the food
supply of the people plen-
-teous = the numbers
of fish caught by weirs
baskets, and nets now
as the waters decline
are prodigious = They
feel the element becom[-]
-ing insufficient for
comfort and retire
from one buga to
another towards the
Lake, and the narrower
parts are duly prepared
by weirs to take ad-
-vantage of their neces[-]
-sities the suns heat
seems to oppress
them & force them to
flee

[0023]

With the South East
aerial current comes
heat, and sultriness -
a blanket is scarcely
needed until the early
hours of the morning =
and here, after the
turtle doves and cocks

give out their warn-
-ing calls to the watchful,
the fish eagle lifts
up his remarkable voice
It is pitched on a high
falsetto key - very
loud, and seems as
if he were calling
to someone in the
other world = once
heard his weird un-
earthly voice can
never be forgotten
It sticks to one through life

[0024]

13 April 1872 Cont^d

We were four hours
in being ferried over
the Loitikila, or Lolo-
-tikila in four small
canoes and then 2
hours S-W- down its
left bank to another
river where our camp
had been formed -
sent over a present
to the headman and
a man returned with
the information that
he was ill at another
vil - but his wife
would seek canoes
tomorrow to trans-
-port us over and
set us on our way
to Muawzabanza

[0025]

South West and
over Lolotikila again

14th at a branch of the
Lolotikila clear sky

25.90

26.11

[7AM

66 °]

25.70

AM 9 =

29.93

[9 AM

71 °

clear

windy]

26.14

25.71

3 PM

25.90

[80 °

clear

windy]

26.10

25.68

15th cross Loitikila
again where it is only 50
yards by canoes = and
went S.W. an hour
I being very weak had to
be carried a part of the
way and glad of resting
flow copiously
last night, woman
wife of chief gave a
present of a goat & maize

[0026]

16th April 1873 - Went
S.W. 2½ hours and
crossed the Lombatwa R
of 100 yards = neck deep
and flowing fast in
aquatic vegetation
Papyrus &c W. into the

Loitikila = In all about
S.W = 3

17th a tremendous rain
after dark burst all
our now rotten tent
to shreds - Went on at
6-35 for 3 hours = &
I who was suffering
severely all night had to
rest - got water near the
surface by digging in
yellow sand - three hills
now appear in distance
course S.W 3¾ to a

[0027]

village on Kazya R
A Nyassa man declared
that his father had
brought the heavy rain
of 16th on us - we crossed
three sponges

18th on leaving the
vil on Kazya we
forded it & found it
70 yards broad - waist
to breast deep all over
a large weir spanned
& we went on the
lower side of that -
much Papyrus & other
aquatic plants in it -
the fish retiring now
with the falling waters
are guided into the
rush cones set for
them - crossed two
large sponges and

[0028]

I was forced to stop at

a village after SW 2
Ill all night = very = but
remembered that the
bleeding & most other
ailments in this land
are forms of fever took
two scruple doses of
quinine & stopped it
quite =

19th a fine bracing
S.E breeze kept me
on the donkey across
a broad sponge and
over flats of white
sandy soil, and
much cultivation for
an hour and a half
When we stopped at a
large village on the right
bank of and
men went over to the
chief Muanzabamba

[0029]

to ask canoes to cross
tomorrow = I am excessive[-]
ly weak & but for the
donkey could not move
a hundred yards = It
is not all pleasure
this exploration - the
Lavusi hills are a
relief to the eye in
this flat upland
their forms shew an
igneous origin = the
R. Kazya comes
from them and goes
direct into the Lake =
no observations
now owing to great
weakness = I can
scarcely hold the
pencil & my stick
is a burden = Tent
gone the men build

a good hut for me &
the luggage SW - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$

[0030]

20th April 1873 = S. service
cross over the ^ sponge Moenda
for food & to be near the
headman of these parts
Muanzabamba - I am
excessively weak =
vil R Moenda ^ sponge 7 AM 25.88
[66 °
clouds
high]
26.12
25.70
cross Lukolu in a canoe
R. is about 30 yds broad
very deep and flowing
in marshes - 2 knots
from SSE to NNW
into Lake

21st Tried to ride but was
forced to lie down and
they carried me back to
vil. exhausted

22^d carried in Kitanda
over Buga SW 2 $\frac{1}{4}$

[0031]

23^d D° 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
24 D° 1.
25th D° 1
26th Do 2 $\frac{1}{2}$

to Kalungo Mofus
total 33 ° = 8 $\frac{1}{4}$

27 knocked up quite
and remain = recover
sent to buy milch
goats - We are on the
banks of R Molilamo

[0032]

half scrople.

[0033]

11 o,cloak.__ night 28th. April

In the chest was found
about a shilling and
half, and in another chest
his hat, 1 watch, and 2
small boxes of measuring
instrument and ~~on~~ in each box
there was one. 1 com-
pass, 3 other kind of mea-
suring instrument;
4 other kind of measur[-]
ing instrument.
And in other chest 3
~~and half~~ and half drachmas

[0034]

[0035]

Nyemela = Tsessébe
Konze = Hartebeest
Dope = Wildebeest
Nyumbo = gnu

Kopa = Gando chite =

Lavusi Hills 3 S of
vil Mueze R Kazya
comes from them - is
70 yards broad = waist
& breast deep now &
has a strong weir right
across

[0036]

[Annotated insert from the Stirling University Conservation Project from 1986.]

[0037]

[0038]