

DIARY OF WILLIAM STEVENSON: ELEPHANT HUNTER

**Journal of William John Stevenson when working for the
African Lakes Company, 1 July 1885 to 9 May 1886**

Hew Stevenson

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Sept 17

We saw another big tusk this morning and tried to buy it, but it was no use. The price asked was ridiculous and we could not come to terms. Chibisa was the seller. He is a dreadful creature to deal with. In the afternoon we discussed the treaties and the Chief seemed very willing to sign and to understand the position perfectly. After talking over it for about a couple of hours and answering his questions, he signed and Chibisa his brother and a head man called Chipembere signed as witnesses. Smith went down tonight with diarrhoea and Dan went down also with very bad dysentery. (Dan is one of Smith's boys and a teacher in the school at Bandawe).

Sept 18

I managed to buy the big tusk today but after a great deal of bother. I did not make such a bad bargain after all and got it under 6 shillings per lb. I am writing this on Monday afternoon because I have been very bad with ophthalmia in my left eye and it is almost impossible to write even now. I have not had a wink of sleep for the last two nights on account of the pain. Smithy was rather better today but had to stay in bed. Dan is very bad.

Sept 19

Smith all right but Dan is still very bad and we are very anxious about him. There was nothing done today. We have nothing left but white calico and they won't take it. We are off on Monday.

Sept 20 Sunday

We had service with the boys in the morning and an open air meeting in the evening which was well attended. Dan is a little better.

Monday Sept 21

We got off today about 12 o'clock & arrived at Kaliquembe's about 2 o'clock. The Chief gave us a wretched old tusk about 15 lbs and I had to give him a truss of blue, but I am going to put down half to treaties expenses as he got no present for signing. Dan was very ill again today & we decided to start

for the Loangwa River early in the morning and try and get there before the sun was very hot – distance 15 miles.

Sept 22

Started about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 4 in the morning and reached the Loangwa about 9 AM. There was a good moon and only dark $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before sunrise. We occupied our old camp and stayed there all day. Lions were seen on the other side during the night.

Sept 23

Started at daybreak for Mlenga and after a long march reached there about 3 o'clock. Dan could only go slowly and had to stop continually. We have four cases of dysentery and there is no doubt that Mwase's is unhealthy. I stalked 3 zebras after camping but missed them both shots. My left eye is still totally blind and I am getting very anxious about it – distance marched 22 miles.

Sept 24

Started about sunrise intending to camp for the night at a stream called the Liziwazi, but unfortunately when we got there we found it was perfectly dry except one or two stagnant pools in which the water was perfectly green. So we determined to push on to the Rokuro about 9 miles further on. We managed to get there about 1 hour before sundown pretty well tired out. We had done about $9\frac{1}{2}$ hours good marching and covered a good 25 miles. Poor Dan was very much done but bore up bravely.

Sept 25

Smith and I both had diarrhoea this morning but we managed to make a good early start. We both put our diarrhoea down to the same cause, viz. the chumanga ufa [maize flour] which we have been eating for the last week made into scones as our flour is quite done. In fact we are getting very short of provisions, no tea, sugar, flour. We got out of the wooded country into the Zipsha pretty early and immediately sighted two herds of buffalo, one of about 50 and the other about four times as large, also two rhinoceros. We all stalked the large herd and gave them a volley at about 200 yards. None were knocked over, but several went away evidently badly hit. I followed one cow into a sort of gully and killed her with a shot in the chest. All the others got away. The men had her cut up in a very short time and we pushed on to the Lipachi river where we tiffed [had *tiffin*, breakfast], and where we both suffered violently from diarrhoea, but we both felt rather better after some food. As we were going along in the afternoon we saw a large rhinoceros looking at us from a distance. I determined to have a shy at him, so I got my 12 bore rifle and stalked up to within 80 yards and let him have it behind the shoulder. He went down to the shot but was off down the hill like a rocket. I followed him and presently saw the head of a rhino sticking out from the foliage of a bush. I got to within about 40 yards and out he came. I gave him both barrels and one shot went through his shoulder and the other broke his

back. To my surprise a young one appeared on the scene and charged me and I had to shoot it. It was as big as a donkey. The one I killed first turned out to be a cow with good horns. The one I fired at and wounded first of all, I found out afterwards, went right on and got among the carriers and caused a general stampede showing a strong partiality for Smith who had to take refuge in a tree. The brute got clean away. We camped for the night at a stream called the Mapakesi about 2 miles on the lake side of where I killed the elephants on the way up. As provisions are very short we intend to march tomorrow though it is Sunday.

Sept 27 Sunday

We started this morning about the usual time. Smith was very bad with diarrhoea. I was much better. We pushed on passed Ruvilé nearly to the lake but I had to sit down & wait for Smith for nearly an hour. When Smith came up we determined to go on to the mouth of the Duambadzi River where I shot the hippos and stop there for the rest of the day and start along the Lake shore with the moon about 3 o'clock in the morning. We got to the Duambadzi about 12 o'clock and Smith was completely knocked up. I sent Vigerone to dig up the hippo teeth which we had buried and he came back with a long face to say that they had all been washed away by the waves except one. I told him he was a fool to put them so near the water. He said he did it because of the hyenas etc. It is very annoying.

Sept 28

We started with the moon nearly overhead (about 2 AM) and took the road along the Lake shore. In crossing the Duambadzi I got wet up to the neck as Vigerone who was carrying me put his foot into a deep hole. Smith was more fortunate and got over with a dry skin. We walked on the hard sand next the water as much as possible but in some places it was very soft and fatiguing – something like a ploughed field after a shower of rain. We were nearly run over by a couple of hippos who darted out of the reeds and passed within a couple of yards of me. I was about a yard in front of Smith, and I jumped back with some violence on to his pet corn which caused him a good deal of pain. We had no further adventures and passed Kowirwi on which we saw several fires burning which were probably Angoni. Soon we struck inland a little and reached Maromba's deserted village just at sunrise. We had breakfast and lay down & had a good sleep till about 11 o'clock when Smith determined to push on to Bandawe and I thought I would wait with the carriers and come on with the moon again. Smith started off and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon I moved on to Marenga-Masanga's and had a good tub and some dinner and went to sleep.

Sept 29

I was called when I thought I had only slept about 2 hours and off we went and in about 4 hours reached Kuka's village. There was no sign of the sun

rising so we sat down and waited and I went to sleep again. The boys said I slept for about 2 hours and when I woke the sun was just rising above the Lake. So off we started and reached Bandawe about 6 AM. There found Sutherland very ill from jaundice and Dr Scott not yet away by the steamer which had not returned from the North End. Goodrich is also here, having come up to try and persuade the Atonga that the treaties are all humbug. Stuart is also here having been most successful since we passed him on the Kuyu as he had killed no less than 20 elephants and some good tusks too. Bell is also here and his leg is a good deal better but by no means well. I got Dr Scott to look at my eye and he said the iris was adhering to the pupil and it would probably be a matter of some weeks before I could use it and I must keep in a dark room and not read or write. The steamer arrived about 3 o'clock in the afternoon bringing poor McEwan's tent for me from the North End. I had a capital mail from home and was in the middle of my letters when I was almost stunned by the news that Sutherland had just breathed his last. I don't think even Dr Scott expected it though he thought he was dangerously ill. Poor fellow. It was very, very hard lines as his time out here was within 18 days of being up, and he was making great preparations for going home. Of course the only thing to be done was to make a coffin and bury him at once. We buried him about 12 midnight by the light of the moon by the side of Oftidal who died here last year. There were present at the grave Dr Scott & John Smith of the Livingstonia Mission, also Goodrich, Stuart, Bell, Jos. Smith, F Morrison & myself and it was a very solemn sight and made a deep impression on me. Smith, Stuart & I slept in the dispensary but I could not sleep for the pain in my eye.

Sept 30

The steamer called this morning with Dr & Mrs Scott on board, also Goodrich and the Scott baby, all bound for Mandala to recruit their health. Goodrich is going on to Zanzibar to have two months leave and if Hawes comes out now he will go right home. Smith, Stuart, Bell and I are left at Bandawe in a state more or less of starvation as the steamer brought no provisions whatever for us. I will have to stop here for a few weeks until my eye is better (if it does get better) and have installed myself in the Manse, making the room as dark as possible.

Oct 1

Nothing occurred today except that Smith sent off carriers to the hills with the sad news of Sutherland's death.

Oct 2

Heard a rumour this evening that the Angoni had attacked Chikoko's Kraal (about 2 miles from here) and killed a lot of women & children.

Oct 3

Rumour confirmed. The Angoni attacked yesterday at sundown making a rush thro' Chikoko's Kraal and killing a few people. Unfortunately they met a band of women coming in from the gardens and of these they killed upwards of 40. They were pursued by the Atonga who succeeded in making up on two men whom they killed. It is cowardly raids like this which stamp the Angoni as the worst of savages who kill poor innocent women & children for the mere sake of shedding blood. But the white man here can do nothing because there are other white men on the hills in the Angoni Country who would most assuredly be killed in turn. It is time indeed that the farce of trying to civilize the Angoni was given up. They despise the white man more and more for his inaction and the first lesson they will learn will be taught them by rifle bullets and cold steel and I hope the day is not far off when their schooling will begin. One poor woman was brought here with 4 spear wounds in her back, one of them penetrating her lungs and coming out in front. Smith & I doctored her up as well as we could, but her case is hopeless. One sad point is her baby was on her back and the cowardly thrust which pierced its mother's body also severed the poor little creature's arm at the shoulder.

Oct 4

No more news of the Angoni, who probably never stopped running till they got into their own country. Stuart started today on a short trip in the Kowirwi direction.

Oct 5 Sunday

Small attendance at service today because the Atonga are drilling – rather late to be [illegible word].

Oct 6

I weighed the ivory today & found I had only got about 160 lbs. I thought I had far more but if you have no scales it is next door to impossible to tell the correct weight. You almost invariably overestimate. Stuart has about 800 lbs and if he goes on at this rate he will soon make his fortune. I have 80 lbs that I shot on the way to Mwasi's.

Oct 7

Nothing occurred today. I am resting my eye, neither reading nor writing and it is dreadfully slow work.

Oct 8

I began my home mail today but had to give it up.

Oct 9/Oct 13

My eye is gradually improving but the sight is not returning. Poor unfortunate Bell has got a blind eye too, and of course in his case it is the right one. He has most evil luck. McAllum came back on Friday (10th) looking all the better for his stay on the hills. He says Sutherland's death made a profound impression on the Angoni. I wish it would do them some good. On Sunday

(12th) there was a good attendance at service. Stuart came back yesterday (13th) having killed 3 elephants. He went nearly as far as the Duangwa river and saw plenty of spoor, but he was far too sick to hunt and had to give it up. He poisoned two lions, one of them a beauty but he was too ill even to take the claws. I had a visit from the Chiefs who wanted to know if John Moir expected to find them alive or dead when he came back from England. I told them they must wait. They signed with their eyes open and they must do the best they can if the Angoni attack them. I said my sympathies were entirely on their side and I hoped to do something for them soon.

Oct 13

But I warned them it was by no means certain that their petition would be accepted.

Oct 14

For the last week it has been most oppressive, 95° in the shade and we are fairly in for hot weather.

Oct 15/18

Absolutely nothing of importance has occurred. We are all at a standstill waiting for the steamer. Bell & Stuart are both going down to Blantyre. Bell's eye is very bad and he probably won't be able to use it for six or eight weeks. I cannot go out to hunt without provisions and there is absolutely nothing here. I have had one touch of fever but Stuart has been pretty bad. The men who went up to the North End with McEwen returned on Friday (16th) and report all well. All LMS [London Missionary Society] goods are d/d. On Saty 17th William came down from the hills with the mails as they could not get carriers to come down. All is well but Dawambe (Mombera's commander in chief) has quarrelled with the counsellors and is said to be "out" with a large army. We have had some difficulty in keeping William's Angoni carriers safe. The Atonga are clamouring for their blood. Feeling runs very strong just now and no wonder.

Oct 18 Sunday

There was a very large attendance at church today. The weather is stifling. I wish the rains would come. I forgot to mention that Monga, Stuart's boy, killed a large hippo last Thursday and we have made some nice shambuks [or shamboks – whips] out of the hide. The teeth are capital.

Oct 19 Monday

No steamer yet. Stuart and I are going out a few miles to shoot something. It is sickening waiting here. I have wasted nearly 3 weeks here now, though I don't believe my eye will stand the sun well yet and the right eye is slightly affected. I am making some bullets for the 12 bore. Stuart was so ill we had to give up our proposed expedition.

Oct 20

I was busy today making up my accounts & taking stock in the store. We all expect the steamer tomorrow.

Oct 21

Our expectations are fulfilled. The steamer arrived today about 11.30, reporting all well at Blantyre and Mandala. Crawshay, who has been hunting at Livingstonia & Leopard Bay & has killed 11 elephants, came by it. I don't know whether he is going to hunt here or not as he has had a good deal of fever and talks of returning by this steamer when it comes back from the North End. In the evening when we were all talking together in the Manse and reading our papers and mails we heard a row in the school. We rushed out to see what it was and found that some Atonga had got in, determined to do away with William's Angoni carriers. Smith knocked down one who was about to discharge an arrow and I got hold of another who was getting his flint lock ready and took it from him & blew away the priming. There were two chiefs there (Luka and Toshimbane) who were evidently at the bottom of it and threatened to stop all Atonga from working for the white man & evidently meant it. I don't altogether blame the Atonga because the Angoni have a most insolent bearing and ought to know better being in an enemy's country. Finally we got the disturbance quelled but the Atonga are in a dreadful state of irritation.

Oct 22

I had engaged 9 men to go to the Loangwa with me, but they never turned up. In fact there is no chance of getting any work done here until the feeling of irritation has blown over. So in a tremendous hurry I determined to go up with the steamer as far as Nkhata Bay (about two days march north of Bandawe) and try my luck there till the steamer came back. I borrowed four men from Bell. Stuart intended to come too but he could not get a single boy to take his loads. After a very rough passage we reached our destination about 12 o'clock and I sent my things ashore and the steamer boys cut wood. There are no people here now as they have all been killed or enslaved by the Angoni. I found in my hurry I had left many necessaries behind but Morrison kindly supplied all my wants.

23rd

The steamer sailed today and I sent my boys out to see if we could get some carriers, as we had seen some men fishing further down the coast, but there were only 3 men altogether and a few boys from Zintechi [Chintechi] and they could not leave their boats and nets. However they came up and brought some fish. My only plan is to pitch my tent here and make short expeditions in different directions.

Oct 24

Vigeronea & I & 3 of Bell's boys started today in a northerly direction & then struck in to the hills. We went a long way without seeing any spoor, but about 4 o'clock in the afternoon we found a place where some elephants had been feeding a short time before. We followed up the spoor and in about an hour saw them feeding among some high reeds in an open place in the bush. 1 bull, 2 cows and 2 calves. We got into the reeds and found we could see nothing but we could hear them quite distinctly. Luckily they were feeding in our direction and presently we saw the head of the great bull looming over the grass. It was such a tempting shot at the temple that I could not resist it. I gave it to him and down he went with a crash. The cows went off in the long grass and I had a snap shot at one but it was no good. Vigerona had fired at the bull the same time as I had, I discovered afterwards, and we found both shots in the right place. It took us nearly two hours and a half to cut out the tusks (about 25 pounders) and it was quite dark when we were ready to start for the Lake. I have now to relate one of the saddest scenes I ever saw and one that I shall never forget till the end of my life. We were struggling through the bush in the dark, Bell's 3 boys in front, Vigerona next and I last of all when suddenly I heard a report and a flash and Vigerona's gun flew back to my very feet. I shouted what is it, and he said only "mfute" [gun]. I then saw what he meant for one of the boys was lying on the ground. Poor, poor fellow, he was quite dead. The bullet had gone in at the back of his head and come out at the eye and then grazed the right arm of the man in front. Vigerona had been carrying the gun as natives generally do, muzzle forwards and the branch of a tree had caught the hammer and pulled it back but not quite to full cock, and then released it and the hammer had fallen with sufficient force to explode the charge. We had been so merry congratulating ourselves on our good fortune & then this dreadful calamity happened & one which might have been prevented if I had only told Vigerona to take out those cursed cartridges. We covered up the poor fellow as well as we could and then went on our way as sad a party of four as any in Africa. After wandering about for a long time we had to make up our minds to camp in the bush for the night for we had quite lost our bearings and there was no moon to guide us. So we camped & tried to sleep the weary night away. Nothing to eat, but luckily there was water near. I had not tasted food since about 11 o'clock.

Oct 25 Sunday

At last day broke and steering by the sun, we struck a path which finally led us right into Nkata Bay where Fredo & the other boy rushed out to meet us with great glee, thinking we had been killed by the Angoni. I dressed the other man's arm, who is a brother of the one who was killed. Then I had something to eat and lay down & slept heavily all afternoon.

Oct 26

Vigerona & two other boys went today to bury the poor fellow properly. I intended to go but I have a severe pain in my left groin which makes walking almost unbearable. Oh this dreadful climate. It makes a strong man as timid as a little child about the slightest pain or ailment especially if it is situated in his breadbasket!! The boys returned and say they found the body quite undisturbed. Vigerona who seems now to take the whole matter very coolly, had a shot at a hippo in the bay but missed it.

Oct 27

I was in great pain all day today and couldn't move from my bed. I sent Vigerona out to look for elephants but as I expected he saw nothing.

Oct 28/Oct 30

For the next 3 days I suffered great agony. My left groin swelled up to an enormous size and I could neither eat nor drink. The boys went out to hunt but saw nothing. Perhaps they didn't go far because I could not stir out of my tent to see what they were doing. On Friday morning (30th) the steamer arrived, and Morrison came ashore. I told him about the boy being shot and we examined the gun and he quite agreed with me in my theory of the accident especially as we found the little catch of the safety grip was broken. I managed to get on board with difficulty and found Smith up for the first time after a pretty bad fever which he caught at Karongas. We reached Bandawe about 4-30 after a very good passage but the steamer was very heavily laden with men and cattle and made but slow progress. Smith sent down a note to me saying that they had found out a lot of things which Vigerona had stolen and I forbade him to go ashore. I met them all on the beach. Crawshay was ill from fever & bilious attack. Bell, Stuart, McAllum & Smith were all well. I told Bell about his boy being shot and he seemed to feel it more on his own account than on the boy's which rather disgusted me. Jumbé is here with about 2,000 men with guns. He had been on his way to attack Chigo to Zintechi [Chinteché] but having got as far as Tslukokos his courage deserted him and he sent word up to Smith that he had come to settle the mirandu [discussion] between Chigo and Kangomo relative to the death of the latter's heir to the Chieftanship.

Oct 30

He asked Smith to put him up and I found him installed in the Big Room at the Manse with about 20 wives & a horrible smell. It was quite impossible for me to occupy the same room in consequence so I got a bed put up in the dispensary. I told Smith my symptoms & he thought it was a hernia or something of the sort and promised to send off to the hills next day for [Dr.] Elmslie first thing.

Oct 31

Steamer sailed early this morning for the other side, having on board Stuart (for Mandala) & Crawshay (for home) sick? He hasn't stood the climate very long. 12 carriers went off to the hills today with Dan & Napoleon to fetch Elmslie. Jumbé is still here. Smith & he are capital friends and he says he only wants a wife of his that Chigo has got and he will go back to Kota-Kota.

Nov 1 Sunday

Smith rode over to Zintechi [Chintechi] today and saw Chigo. He denied that he had got Jumbé's wife and said he was quite ready to fight Jumbé if he came and was altogether very independent but quite friendly. He blames Jumbé for coming on a peaceful errand with 2,000 armed men. Said that he was the kaporo (slave) of Mandala and would do what Mandala told him. Smith expressed his disappointment & pointed out that he was acting in direct contradiction to Mandala's wishes & command & came away.

Nov 2

The woman arrived at Bandawe early this morning & was handed over to Jumbé. Chigo had changed his mind in the night. Jumbé came to see me today. He is a pleasant old rascal & very kind & considerate, altogether very superior to Mwaze or any chief I have seen yet.

Nov 3

Thank God, I felt a little better today and I think the swelling has begun to go down. I was dreadfully anxious about myself. I will be thankful when Elmslie arrives. I bought a tusk from Jumbé this afternoon from my bed. It weighed 38 lbs & I gave about 5/- per lb for it. Smith has given him a lot of provisions etc and I feel bound to do the same for the honour of the Company.

Nov 4

Elmslie arrived this evening and at once put my mind at rest, saying that I could not have done better than lie still as I was doing & everything was going on as well as could be expected. All I wanted was rest. He has made a most wonderfully quick journey, doing the sixty odd miles in two days & I can't say how much I am indebted to him. He left William [or Williams?] very ill with fever and bilious attack. He fears he had broken some small vessel in his head as he is rather cracked. The Angoni are dancing and we may expect a war party down here soon headed by Dawambi, Omtwara & Mpirembé. Mombéra is quiet.

Nov 5

Jumbé is going away on Saturday morning. He is very anxious that Kangomo should go with him but I don't see how it can be managed. Tomorrow is the Mahomedan Sabbath & Saturday is the first day of the new moon so he has fixed on Saturday.

Nov 6

I gave Jumbé a lot of stuff today & he has given me a silver knife as a pledge that he will give me a 35lb tusk when the steamer goes to Kota. I am still getting a little better and the swelling is going down. Bell is seedy, I think from pure want of exercise.

Nov 7

Jumbé off this morning. Smith went with him as far as Luka's to see him off the premises. Chigo sent a cow this morning and said he was sorry he had told lies. I am still keeping better.

Novr 8th Sunday

Small attendance at service today. Dr Elmslie & Smith spoke. I had to keep in bed today because the swelling began to increase again after being up yesterday.

Novr 9

A man came from Zintechi [Chintechi] today and said he had some ivory to sell, but I have no white calico or sheeting to buy it with though I have lots of handkerchiefs and brass wire. We heard distant thunder and saw rain on the hills today but there was none here. I think the rains will soon begin in earnest. Still in bed. Dr Elmslie says I ought to keep quite quiet for a week or so. It is very miserable.

Novr 10/15 Sunday

Nothing of consequence has occurred this week. Dr Elmslie has made me stay in bed the whole week & I am not better yet. I thought the swelling would have gone down long ago; there is nothing but rest for it. Dr E can't get carriers to go up to the hills because we have heard that Dawambi is "out" and they can't come down without a white man. So he is going to wait till the steamer comes in which it ought to do sometime this week, probably either Wednesday or Saturday. Bell is ill with rheumatism and general weakness & will most likely go down with us when the steamer returns to Blantyre. No rains yet. They are now a fortnight later than last year. On Thursday there was an Angoni scare but it turned out to be Tokiguro's & Katandika's people having a free fight. Fortunately nobody was seriously hurt, a few cracks with ndodos [or zibonga – knobkerries] being the only damage. Large attendance on Sunday. McAllum conducted service.

Monday Novr 16th

Continual rumours of Angoni being "out" but nothing confirmed. I was bust today making preparations for going down to Mandala, getting a few things packed up. I will have no great stock to leave.

Tuesday Nov 17

I took off my pyjamahs today for the first time & donned knickerbockers as I had to go to the store and take stock. I am all ready to go if the steamer comes tomorrow. 2 men came from Zintechi today to ask me to go and help them

fight the Angoni if they should happen to come. They are all ready for an attack up there. Chigo, Kangoma, Chinudsi, Chinyarta & Gnombo. Of course I just told them that I couldn't interfere just now until the Kulatas [letters, documents or treaties] were signed & sent back from England. They went away seemingly much disappointed. We expect the steamer tomorrow.

Wednesday Nov 18

We expected the steamer today but she did not come. But in the evening a man came from Bana who had been fishing down there and said that she was cutting wood there and would be here tomorrow. Bell was very ill today and seemed to be suffering great pain. He goes down with me this time and the change of air may do him good. I have got all my things packed and ready to start and I shall be thankful when we get off.

Nov 19 Thursday

The steamer arrived this morning about 11 AM with Dr Cross & Mr Rollo, newcomers to the Livingstonia mission. Mr Rollo is to take the place of Smith as teacher and he is also to look after the garden at Kandi in as far as he can. Dr Cross is probably going to start a new station in Chikuru country if possible. They have brought two ponies from Natal which are to be used on the road transit to the hills. There was some difficulty getting the ponies out of the steamer. We put grass down in the hold and gradually raised them up to the level of the top. Then Rollo got a long rope and tied it to the head stall of the first one (the steamer was lying about 15 yds from the beach right below the school near Chimbano's village) and we forced him overboard, Rollo keeping hold of the end of the rope and guiding him round the bow of the steamer till his feet touched bottom, and then he chucked the rope to those on shore but the end fell short and the people set up a great shout which frightened the pony and he turned round & struck out for the middle of the lake. Morrison got the boat out as fast as he could and pursued & captured him. Meantime the other one was safely landed. We all went for our mails as fast as possible and I had a fairly satisfactory one but it also contained a most insolent letter from Dr Scott about Vigerona's stealing and accusing me of abuse of hospitality with many other stupid remarks which only show his want of breeding but for which nevertheless I intend he shall apologise to me in person. I went on board the steamer today and slept there at night and I also got all my things on board. I left my calico and stuff in the store and I will get it if I ever come back here which I hope I never may.

Nov 20th Friday

We did not start today but in the afternoon we had a farewell spread and a musical evening and left to get on board the steamer about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11. I got too much [illegible word] and felt rather ill.

Novr 21st Saturday

Steamer left this morning in calm weather about 5 AM to cross over to Dikomo. We had not gone half way when it began to blow from the south and the sea got up. But presently we got into a thunderstorm and it rained so heavily that the sea was beaten down quite flat. The rain flooded the canvas house aft, which is far from being watertight and wet all our beds & blankets and made us very uncomfortable altogether. It is a shame there isn't a wooden house out yet considering that it was ordered 14 months ago. Somebody will catch their death of a chill this rainy season if something isn't done. The rain stopped about 2 pm when we arrived at Dikomo. Bellingham (Univ. Mission) who is stationed here is very well & has finished his house which the rain of yesterday proved to be quite watertight.

Nov 22nd Saturday

Wet again this morning. Smith & I who were sleeping on deck had to make a bolt for it early in the morning but we escaped all right with half a wetting. Bell seems to be much better for the voyage in the steamer and has only had one twinge of sciatica so far.

Nov 23 Monday

Left this morning about 5 o'clock and soon afterwards it began to rain again with thunder & lightening, but towards midday it cleared up. We had a strong south wind and heavy swell and reached our destination, a small bay about six miles south of Loséwa's kraal about 5 o'clock at night, fine night.

Nov 24 Tuesday

We stopped here all day cutting wood. Smith & I went ashore and we discovered a beautiful glen quite shaded over with trees with a clear limpid stream running through it where we sat and read most of the day. Bell is much better.

Nov 25 Wednesday

We made an early start this morning and after a splendid run reached Livingstonia about 2 pm. All were well. In the evening I tried a blue phantom minnow trolling from the boat along the shore. I only got two good fish, one about one lb & another about 2½ lbs. They are like perch without the orange fins and stripes and are very good to eat, tasting something like a mackerel & something like a whiting.

Nov 26 Thursday

I tried the phantom again this morning and had much better sport for I got 8 beauties in about an hour, 2 of them about 3 lbs a piece. We started about nine o'clock and immediately it began to rain but cleared after we got through the pass and we had a fine run and anchored for the night in Pamalombé. We heard in passing Mponda's that there was war going on about the succession and soon afterwards we passed Mponda's father's village in flames. We heard that he had been killed in the fight. We were told by the people not to anchor

for the night in the river, but to go on as they would be firing across & might hit us so we went on to Pamalombé.

Nov 27 Friday

Made an early start after a quiet night and after a quick run reached Matope about 4 pm. Morrison said he thought the river had risen about six inches since he went up owing to the heavy showers. Tonight there was a most extraordinary shower of meteors or aerolites in the skies which lasted for several hours, some of the meteors being very brilliant and leaving quite a track of fire which lasted several seconds. It was a beautiful sight and was enhanced by the continual flashing of the lightning in the west. The natives said it indicated the death of some great chief.

Nov 28 Saturday

Very warm day. In the morning we got our baggage ashore and in the afternoon Morrison went a short trip on the other side of the river to see if he could get some game, and I tried this side, more with the idea of having a walk than anything else. Joe Smith came with me. We had not gone a mile when we saw a small herd of waterbuck and after a successful stalk I killed one. We sent back Morrison's boy Matonga to the village about a mile off to tell the boys to take in the meat, and went on a little further. We came back in about an hour and found Matonga had never turned up. Morrison had come back & had killed a hartebeast. We got anxious about the boy and sent out men to look for him but they returned late at night without having seen anything of him and one & all were of the same opinion, namely that he had been carried off by some of Pembe's people who had been lurking about. We held a council of war & determined to muster our forces and go and look for him. With the steamer boys & Bell's 10 boys we mustered over 20 strong, all armed with breech-loaders of every conceivable make from my .295 rook rifle to a 4 bore elephant gun. We determined to start at daylight on Sunday and take our blankets & some provisions with us in case we should be out a day or two. Robinson of the Universities Mission joined us.

Sunday Nov 29

We were all up and ready by cock-crow and just as we were starting who should appear but the truant himself led by Tshigaro the Chief. He had lost his way and instead of going down to the river he had gone right away towards the mountains & had wandered about all night. He was found by the women in the gardens this morning. We were very glad to see him but were naturally rather angry at his stupidity. I can't conceive how anybody could make such a stupid mistake. We disbanded our forces and returned to breakfast with a sharpened appetite. We all went to morning prayer at the Universities Mission Church. Mr Swinney preached a short advent sermon. I grilled some capital steaks of hartebeast meat & it really was something like beef. In fact it was the best meat I have tasted in the country.

Monday Nov 30

Bell started for Mandala this morning having propitiated Tshigaro with a foreleg of my buck unknown to me & got men to carry his baggage. I must wait till carriers come down.

Tuesday Dec 1st

Very warm day. Stuart came back from Mandala this morning bringing a door with him and he is going to build a house at Bandawe quite apart from the mission station so that in future we will be beholden to them for nothing. In the morning I helped Morrison with some repairs in the small dinghy. (In the afternoon we went across to the other side and had a fairly successful stalk. I shot two waterbuck but Morrison & Smith were unsuccessful – Monday). Hamilton & McIlwain of the Blantyre mission put in an appearance in the afternoon having been away on a walking tour to Zomba's & coming round by Pimbés. They arrived at Matope pretty well tired out. Hamilton especially suffering from a blistered heel. I sent off a good many of my loads this afternoon & will only take what is needful for my journey tomorrow. Hamilton will accompany me as he can't go on further because of his blistered heel.

Wed Dec 2nd

Started about 9.30 AM & made the march to the Lorangwe (15 miles) in about 4½ hours. We tiffed [had tiffin – breakfast] there and rested an hour & a half then started for the Lunzu which we reached about an hour & a half before sunset meeting Dr Scott & his wife & baby on their way down to the Ilala. I had a fairly satisfactory apology & explanation from Dr Scott who it seems has been misinformed by Smith to a great extent. We slept at the Lunzu.

Thursday [line missing from damaged page]

I was scarcely respectable as my clothes were all torn & patched so I wanted to sneak in by the back way, but Hedderwick [Hetherwick] was sitting in the verandah of the manse & called me in and gave us some milk which was very nice indeed. I went on to the store and had a good breakfast and a tub and then went up to call on Moir & I had a most pleasant welcome and was installed in great comfort and splendour in Mr John Moir's room. Vigerona has escaped from his prison & has gone right away. I am sorry to say he has escaped from the punishment he deserved, but the Consul delayed it too long.

Friday Decr 4

I had a most splendid sleep last night & feel tremendously refreshed. I went to call on the Blantyre folks today and had a thorough rest. When Mr Rollo was here he discovered a well and Haggart & Mr F Moir improved upon the discovery & constructed a well of brick and filtered the water through sand & stone & led it through [. . .] about 20 ft whence [. . .] reservoir. [various words

and about last third of page missing] capital fellow and just the man for the work.

Decr 6th Sunday

Went to Blantyre church twice & lunched with Miss Walker. The mails are dreadfully overdue and there must be something wrong. The Lady has gone to Tungalane to refit but the mails were to have been sent up by the pinnace which has never arrived.

Decr 7th Monday

Began putting the gun room in order. It is in a dreadful mess, everything mixed up together and will take days to get into order.

Decr 8 Tuesday

Working at the gun room. Captain Callaghan of the Univ. Mis. Has come from Matope on his way home, very sick.

Decr 9 Wedny

Still at the gun room. This evening we had music at Mandala House & I played the banjo & pipes to the amusement of the company. Mrs Fred Moir & I had a duet, banjo & piano. She plays beautifully. It is a great treat to hear some nice music.

Decr 10 Thurs

I have nearly finished the gun room now & have got into something like decent order. There are a lot of the guns broken. The country is greatly in need of rain. The people say it is because the Consul's flag is flying & the rain won't come till he pulls it down.

Decr 11 Friday

Hawes is off to Zomba today & perhaps the rain will come now that the flag is down. It is indeed high time. There is positively nothing to eat.

Saty Decr 12

Curiously enough the rain did come last night in a very heavy shower which has done a great deal of good. Mr Moir & I are doing an hour's gardening every morning before breakfast and the little patch of ground at the west corner of Mandala House is to be planted with vegetables which will be very convenient and nice. We all went over to Blantyre this afternoon for croquet and a tea fight. I tried my hand at both but made a much better figure at the tea than I did at the croquet.

Sunday Decr 13

There was a lot of very heavy rain today and it has given the country a thorough soaking which ought to do for the next fortnight or so. In the evening it cleared up a little and we went over to Blantyre to Church. No signs of the mail yet. Something must have happened or else the boat has never started. The steamer ought to be due soon.

Monday Decr 14

I went down to the shore today to help Millie with the checking of the ledger posting. There is some mistake in it. In the afternoon I went out to see if I could get anything to shoot. In a ten mile walk I managed to secure 1 brace of Franklins, or Kwalé as the natives call them, and one quail. Game seems to be very scarce here. I only saw one guinea-fowl.

Tuesday Decr 15

News was brought in today that elephants had been seen about 25 miles out in the bush in the eastern or Mlangé [Mlanje, now Mulanje] direction. Mr Moir thought I might try my luck though we hadn't very much hope of success. We managed to get together about 10 men and they took my loads out as far as the other end of Zochi [Soche] where I was to send back men for the rest of my things. Haggart accompanied me. We left Mandala about half past three and reached Zochi about 5 pm. I sent back three men to bring my tent and bedding which had been left behind. Then I tried to buy some food for the men but it was very scarce and I could only get a few pumpkins and cucumbers. We put up in an unfinished hut and when the men came back with my tent we spread it over the top and it was lucky we did so because it began to rain in the night.

Wednesday Decr 16th

We got up very early and I arranged with the chief for the hire of 6 men to carry my loads. I gave him a small present and arranged with the men for a chirundo [chirundu, kikoi] (4 yds) each if we slept in the bush two nights and killed an elephant. We managed to get off about 7 AM and crossed the plain to another mountain called Mlabué where we breakfasted. We got a little more food from the people here which they would not take calico for but presented to the men. After resting about an hour we went right on eastwards and crossed a very pretty stream. Almost immediately afterwards we came upon the fresh spoor of four elephants which had just crossed the path. We followed it and had not gone a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile before we sighted them, but they were down on our left and had got our wind and were making off as fast as they could. We followed them for about 6 miles and just as I was giving up hope, we came upon them all standing under a tree. We crept round and got to within about 50 yards of them when they saw us. I ran forward and gave both barrels to the biggest which was moving away broadside on, the others turned tail on. The big fellow staggered and then Haggart fired and on he went. We followed up and found him lying dead about 100 yards further on. We heard the others breaking through the cover and we ran after them but the grass was so long I could make no progress and I only got one chance at another fellow about 100 yards off but my gun missed fire and they got clean away. I sent two boys after them but it was no use. We went to look at the big fellow we had killed & found he had only one tusk, but it was a big one. He had 8 old

bullet wounds in him. Presently the rest of the carriers came up and we camped close by.

Thursday Decr 17

I set the boys to cut out his tusk this morning and took four of them and Haggart and I went for a hunt to see if we could get any more. We found that elephants had been within 200 yards of the camp during the night and we followed their spoor for about 15 miles but as we saw we were not gaining on them in the least, we gave it up and returned to camp pretty well tired out. We found hundreds of natives had arrived and the elephant was almost all cut up. I had sent word to Mandala in the morning and expected boys over from there to cut meat for the station. So I drove all the strangers off and kept the remainder for them.

Friday Decr 18

We started for Mandala at 6.30 am and arrived there after a pleasant walk about 2 pm. I think the distance is about 25 miles. We weighed the tusk and found it to be exactly 83 lbs. I only wish it had had two of them.

Saty Decr 19

I did not go over to Blantyre today but went to try and get some partridges, but saw nothing but some pigeons. I had a bad headache in the evening and turned in early.

Sunday Decr 20

I lay in bed today and didn't go to church. My head, thanks to the kind treatment of Mrs Moir, is much better and my eyes for which I feared at first are all right.

Monday Decr 21

The Ilala is in after one of the shortest trips on record, 16 days to the North End and back. Smith and Morrison will be here tomorrow. I am all right again.

Tuesday Decr 22

Morrison & Smith only got as far as Blantyre. The latter has fever and we have had to send a machilla for him. They are stopping the night with McIlwain and Duncan.

Wed Decr 23

The mail arrived from the south today. The Pioneer (a small boat) has arrived from Maruru and McFadyen brought the mail up. Hawes also came in from Zomba today. News up till 8th October in home letters.

Thurs Decr 24

All busy reading mails today. We are a large party at Mandala and all go over to spend Xmas at Blantyre tomorrow. We are F & Mrs Moir, Dr & Mrs Haggart, Consul Hawes, Lindsay, Smillie, McFadyen, Morrison, Smith, Bell & myself – 12 in all.

Friday Decr 25

Xmas day has broken hot and clear sunshine. Heat 92° in the shade. We had a breakfast party at Mandala House. Then we all went over to Blantyre in time for a one o'clock dinner. After dinner we had cricket, croquet, and I managed to get up a set of lawn tennis though the ground was rather rough and not quite big enough. We had afternoon tea at the different houses (I went to Miss Walker's). Then service and all home by 9 pm. I sat up chatting with Hawes at the Consulate till 11 pm.

Decr 26 Saty

Hawes had fever today, the result of yesterday's dissipation, but all the rest of us were none the worse and we all went for a picnic down the Mudi [stream].

Decr 27 Sunday

A little rain today but nothing to speak of. Went to Blantyre church in the evening.

Decr 28 Monday

McFadyen went back to Katunga's today. I began making a tennis court to the right rear of Mandala House, levelling up the ground etc etc. Hawes is no better. Morrison is looking up the guns & Smith is down with fever.

Decr 29 Tuesday

Still working at the tennis court and writing home letters. Hawes & Smith are both much better but McIlwain & Hamilton are both down at Blantyre.

Decr 30 Wednesday

McIlwain is seriously ill. He has had 5 attacks of fever and feels very weak. Hamilton is better. The tennis court is getting on nicely.

Decr 31 Thursday

This is the last day of '85. Poor McIlwain is very ill indeed. He had more fever today. Hawes, Bell & I are going to sit up and see the New Year in. Captain Callaghan went down the river today on his way home. He is taking home some curios for me. Barring my eye I am in capital health and spirits.

18861 Jany Friday

Spent a quiet New Year . . . very pleasant dinner . . . Hawes astonished us all . . . exhibitions of Thought reading . . . McIlwain is still very ill.

2 Jany Saty

Mr Moir took some photographs but it was very wet. The rain seems to have thoroughly set in again.

3 Jany Sunday

Very wet today again. McIlwain is a little better.

4 Jany Monday

The Lady Nyassa is not up yet. Morrison & Smith are waiting here till she brings up mails & loads.

5 Jany Tuesday

Still very wet. I sat up with McIlwain last night. He is much better and almost out of danger.

6 Jany Wednesday

I am going down to Matope to hunt for a month and then I am going on to the North End of Nyassa to try my luck there. I engaged some men today. I will probably start next Monday. Still very wet.

7 Jany Thursday

I have got a man as capitao called Karonga. He used to be head gardener at Blantyre and was employed by [Consul] Foote during the Fenwick [trader and hunter] and Chipatula row as a messenger to and from Ramakukan [Makololo chief]. He is not much of a hunter but he seems to be a very good boy & understands English a little.

Friday 8th Jany

Engaged two hunters today, Eulaja & Makonda. The former was out with Bell, the latter was with Fred Moir at the North End. They were both with me when I killed the big elephant last month. I also got hold of Pulley's old cook Kasimba which is a comfort as my own boy Fredo has had to go home sick. I was also busy helping Hawes with his arrangements for the afternoon party tomorrow.

Saturday 9 Jany

The Consul had his party today which was a great success.

Sunday 10 Jany

The mail arrived today from the lower river with date from home up to Octr 30th. There is no word of the Lady Nyassa. The mail came up in a boat belonging to the Universities Mission called "The Rebecca". It has come out to replace the one that was burnt at Matope.

Monday 11 Jany

Morrison, Smith and I all started this afternoon for Matope. We made the Gunzu before sundown and we all slept in the tent. It rained cats and dogs in the night but fortunately none came through.

Tuesday 12 Jany

Continued our journey to Matope which we reached without adventure about 4 pm. There is no food to be bought here for the boys.

Wednesday 13 Jany

Went out this afternoon to try and get a buck for my boys. I soon fell in with a herd of waterbuck which I stalked and knocked over one with the right and wounded another with the left which I followed but did not get. Morrison sails tomorrow and I am going to Pimbé or Nsapa with him.

Thursday Jany 14

We sailed today about 12 o'clock. I went past Pimbés as I had heard that there were a lot of elephants near Nsapa and Morrison put me ashore at a

small village about 2 hours beyond Pimbés on the right bank of the river. The chief's name is Akupinda. The steamer bought a lot of stuff and went on its way next morning.

Friday Jany 15

I tried to buy food for my boys today but the steamer seems to have bought it all. The people promise to bring in more this afternoon so I gave each of the boys a yard of cloth and told them to try and buy as much as possible as I want to be off to the interior. From native report there seem to have been plenty of elephants about here a week ago, but they have all cleared. I went out about 11 o'clock with Eulaja & Makonda and saw plenty of sign some days old. We saw no fresh spoor though we went out a long way & didn't get back till dark. Saw plenty of other game such as zebra, waterbuck, hartebeast, buffalo (a great many) & swalé.

Saturday Jany 16

Started with all the boys today for the bush. We got hold of a guide and went inland all day but saw no sign but heaps of game. Camped on a river called Rivé Rivé in a place where somebody called Faulkner killed an elephant long ago. Tom Macquinto has been hunting here, but has left now.

Sunday Jany 17

Stopped in the same camp. Some people arrived and said there were elephant to the SW where I will go tomorrow.

Monday 18 Jany

Left camp this morning early, crossed the Rivé-Rivé, went in a SW direction but saw no sign of elephant. I stalked & shot 3 zebras out of a herd as food for the boys. At lunch-time I interviewed Eulaja & Makonda and their opinion was that we should get back to the Shiré and try the other side. We turned back to the East again, were caught in a dreadful shower which lasted about an hour and converted the bush into a swamp. In fact where we were trying to shelter the water rose about 18 inches and soaked everything, bed, blankets, portmanteau, food, everything was wringing wet. We went on, recrossed the Rivé-rivé which was now a raging torrent and reached the river bank about 7 pm at Janesso's village, hallooed across for a boat & he sent over his big canoe which took us all over in two trips.. We were followed by a hippo which would have attacked us but I gave him his quietus. Chief most civil.

Tuesday 19 Jany

Had a wretched night, everything wet. Got hold of a man as a guide and went out in the Northern or Zomba direction leaving the tent at Janesso's. Was out all day and saw nothing though we went nearly to the source of the Danjala river. Close to the village on the way back I shot two fine waterbuck and a swalé. Found all my things nice and dry.

Wednesday 20 Jany

Last night it rained and thundered for several hours. The rain was something dreadful. It has flooded me out again. Everything was floating about in the tent even though there was a trench round it. It is dreadful work. All my things are spoiled and all my clothes wet. The portmanteau was full of water. The Sanjala came down in flood and has flattened all Janesso's chumaya [chimanga]. It is impossible to hunt just now. The rain stopped about noon and I got my things taken out of the tent and the tent shifted to a higher place.

Thursday Jany 21

Rain, rain, rain, nothing but rain. I am not going away from here till it stops as it is too much of a good thing to get one's things soaked as I have more than once a week. I can't get them dry.

Friday Jany 22

Rain rain rain. Capital weather for fishing. I have got a dreadful cold from sleeping in mouldy blankets.

Saturday Jany 23

I had got everything ready for a hunt today and we were just going to start when down came the rain and we thought we would wait till it stopped. Well it hadn't stopped when I went to bed at 9 pm. It does not fall in drops but in sheets. I have not had on a dry shirt since Monday. I don't mind betting a yard of calico that tomorrow is a fine day because it is Sunday.

Sunday Jany 24

Of course it is. At least it is up till now (10 AM) but I see the clouds coming again. I hope to get off tomorrow again.

Jany 25 Monday

I would have lost my yard of calico because it poured again yesterday afternoon. However I got underway this morning and crossed the Danjala with all my carriers and went away in a southerly direction. I had a couple of guides from Janesso's. About midday we crossed the Ntipi river and shortly afterwards we were caught in a dreadful shower. We foolishly took shelter in a dry watercourse and had not been there 10 minutes when I heard a roar & a rush behind us, and down came a stream about 3 feet deep of red muddy water which scattered loads & men all over the place. We picked up the pieces by degrees. Of course everything was soaked & covered about an inch thick with red mud. We could only grin and bear it and tramped on through the rain. About two pm we crossed the spoor of a large elephant that had passed in the morning. We followed it up; about dusk we were getting close and I told Kalonga to stop behind & pitch the tent and I would go on with the hunting. We got within quarter of a mile of the elephants when we came to a place where they had recrossed the Ntipi and we could not follow them. The water was roaring and rushing over the stones & was about 7 feet deep at the

very edge. We sounded it with a bamboo. There was nothing for it but to return to the tent.

Jan 26 Tuesday

I started again on the spoor first thing in the morning. There had been no rain in the night and the river had fallen greatly but it still took the men up to the chin. We followed the spoor all day till about 3 pm. It began to rain again about noon and at 3 pm there was a foot or so of water all over the ground and it obliterated all traces of the spoor. My two guides ran away soon after and we had nothing left to do but to make for the foot of the hills, intending to cross over to Zomba next day.

Wednesday Jany 27

We started at daybreak to climb the hills this morning, it still raining heavily. After a severe climb and losing ourselves two or three times in the mist, we reached Chumlumbi village where I secured a guide and finally reached Zomba about 6.30 pm where I found Buchanan, his brother & Henderson. They were most kind & I got my blankets and things put to the furnace fire & soon the blankets were dry so at last I had a night's sleep in dry blankets.

Thursday Jany 28

Henderson left for Blantyre this morning & during blinks of sunshine I managed to get my things dry. Buchanan is busy at his sugar just now but it is rather late in the season to be making sugar & nearly all his oxen are knocked up. However the sugar he is making is a fine brown quality. His coffee looks very well indeed.

Friday Jany 29

Tremendous rain again today. I have decided to wait till Monday before I start for Mandala. I find there are no elephants on this side of the hills.

Saturday Jany 30

Rain again very bad.

Sunday Jany 31

Had service with the boys. Went for a walk with the Buchanans in the afternoon but we got caught in a shower & soaked through. The scenery about Zomba is lovely & very extensive. From the back of Buchanan's house you can see Malanje [Mlanje / Mulanje], Cherazulo [Chiradzulo], Dirandé [Ndirande] & a host of other hills & Lake Shirwa with her rocky inlet in the middle. In front you have Zomba Hill with the waterfall dashing down over the rocks. Just now it is especially grand.

Monday Feby 1st

Started for Blantyre after breakfast. We had some difficulty in crossing the Likangala as it was in flood but managed it without accident. Made pretty good pace & made the Mitumbé about 19 miles from Blantyre where we slept.

Tuesday Feby 2

Started with the lark and reached Blantyre about 1 pm. Found Bell had never started and finally ensconced myself in my old room at Mandala house. Fred Moir is down the river in the Lady & will probably be back by the end of the week. Last has arrived here.

Feby 3rd to 28th

I lost my journal at this period but found it again stowed away in the office at Mandala. I will not give a day to day recital of what has happened but a resumé of the principal events. Two or three days after I came back to Mandala the Ilala returned and brought the sad news of Rollo's death in Angoni land. He died on the last day of the year. This makes the seventh European death in our small community in 1885 – rather a large proportion I think. The steamer also brought down Scott & his wife and child on their way home, and Stuart who has come into a fortune and is going home to claim it. McAllum is on his way home too. Stuart has had wonderful luck with the elephants and has killed 33 in the last month & has about 1400 lbs of ivory with him. Monteith is also down from the North End to get his books settled with a lot of ivory. Morrison picked up a Portuguese at Mackanjwa's [Makanjiras's] on the East side of the Lake who started with Serpa Pinto from Zanzibar on a geographical expedition. According to his story Serpa Pinto was so ill he had to go back to Zanzibar. Lieut. Cordozo which is his name brought the expedition as far as the Lake. He seemed to be in great distress and Morrison advanced him some calico and gave him a passage to Mandala. He expected to get an advance of £200 from the Coy. to enable him to proceed to Têté but of course this was out of the question as he has not a letter of credit or any document of any kind. Besides Moir told him there was famine at Têté and that rice was 15 rupees a panya (40 lbs). So he had to be content with a truss or two of calico and he is going to take his men overland to Quillimane and call at Mandala on the way. Stuart and I went out for a hunt but without success, and I started for Matope along with Monteith en route for the Ilala to take us to Karonga's and arrived there on the 28th of February.

Mch 1

Morrison & Smith had the steamer ready to start at noon today and we made a good trip, sleeping at Baleme's beyond Mapa.

Mch 2

Reached Mponda's today. I shot some duck off the steamer on the way up.

Mch 3

Reached Livingstonia at noon. Had a ripping bathe. Tried the phantom minnow in the evening and got a capital basket.

Mch 4

Too rough to start today. Fished again in the evening. Heavy rain.

Mch 5

Started today. Just outside Livingstonia a north wind rose & we shipped a great deal of water. Cargo all wet. Had to run into Rifu for shelter.

Mch 6

Still rough but towards midday it calmed down so we started and ran all night till 12 am and anchored in Bona

Mch 7 Sunday

Lovely day.

Mch 8 Monday

Left about 1 o'clock after wooding and reached Bandawé about 6 pm. Went on shore and saw Cross & Smith both very well. Smith goes home when the steamer returns. Bain takes his place for the time being.

Mch 9 Tuesday

Started about noon and reached NKatu [Nkata] bay in 3 hours and 40 minutes.

Mch 10 Wednesday

Reached Ruarwé where we wooded. Had a splendid bathe.

Mch 11 Thursday

Left at midnight & reached Karonga's today at 1 pm. Bain & Nicholl were on the beach to meet us. They are the only two men in the country whom I have not yet seen, and I saw them both at the same time. This is a very pretty place indeed, in fact the prettiest I have yet seen. I got my tent pitched under a big tree near the station and the boys slept round me. Had a capital bathe in the lake in the afternoon.

March 12 Friday

Tried to buy some food for my boys but found it difficult because food is scarce on account of the want of rain. Steamer left early.

March 13 Saty

I shall have to give up my idea of a trip to Deep Bay just now because, as there are no people there & no food to buy here, it will be impossible to feed one's boys. I am going to try Manjawara's & Medusa's country where there has been lots of rain and therefore probably there is lots of food.

Sunday Mch 14

The rain came this evening with a vengeance & wind & thunder too. It was a perfect cyclone. My tent was flooded & nearly blown down. I had to get out of bed & make tracks for the house where I remained for the rest of the night.

Monday March 15

A fine bright morning again. I engaged two Sokilis as guides and will be off tomorrow. Nicholl & I have had a bathe every day. It is splendid. I am getting quite an adept at the native dodge of swimming under water. There was another storm tonight but I was all right in the house.

Tuesday March 16

I got off this afternoon about 3 o'clock and went as far as Karonga's village where I remained for the night. The chief was quite drunk & though I gave him a good present he did not give me a single thing in exchange.

Wednesday March 17

Started this morning and crossed the Rokuro [Rukuru] which was up to my armpits. We reached Cherapula's village about two pm where we stopped for the day. I gave Cherapula a present and in the evening he came and brought me some milk which seems to be the only thing they give for presents here.

Thurs March 18

Left Cherapula's and marched all night till we reached the Songwé river which was in flood & which also swarms with crocodiles. I got hold of a small canoe from some woodcutters & had crossed 3 lots in safety but the canoe upset on the 4th trip & Chipelepele, one of the carriers, fell out in the middle & his load went to the bottom. He reached the bank in safety but all my cartridges which formed his load are lying in about 7 foot of water. The other fellows in the boat managed to stick to it & saved a couple of guns & my box of clothes & medicines. The rest of us all crossed in safety. I went on to Medyusa's village, saw the chief & camped just in time for down came the rain.

Friday Mch 19

Sent off Chipelepele with a letter to Monteith to send me on some more cartridges and calico. Gave the chief a present & got the things in my tin box dried.

Sat Mch 20

Went out this morning with two of Medyasa's sons & killed a buffalo & a bawale antelope. I wounded several other buffalo, but I had nothing but my Express which is rather small for them. I find that 'Muskate' mojosn[?] is the standard by which everything is calculated out here and so far I think I have proved myself up to it.

Sund Mch 21

Told the people I would not buy anything today because it was Sunday & I wanted to be quiet. In the evening the chief brought a bullock as a present, but I told him to bring it back next morning.

Monday Mch 22

Chipelepele returned today with a fresh supply of cartridges and some natives also returned the old magazine which they had managed to fish up from the river. I gave them a fathom apiece and they went away quite satisfied. I went out to try and get another buffalo but did not see any. I shot a spur-winged goose with my rifle. I killed the bullock & the men cut it up and ate it.

Tuesday Mch 23

Started this morning and crossed the Chiwira in a canoe without accident making 7 trips. We had an exceedingly hot march across the plain and reached Manjawara's village about 2 pm. Saw the chief and he showed me where to pitch my tent. In the evening I gave him a present and he was quite pleased, but they are awful people for begging. If you happen to look at a man he asks you for calico and certainly some of them require it.

Wednesday Mch 23

Mosquitos very bad last night. I wanted to shoot this morning but the chief brought a bullock and asked me to stop the day. I did so. I am awfully bothered with sickness among my men, especially the Ajawa [Yao]. They are all sick except one. The Chief said he would send a man with me to show me where the elephants are. There are some Arabs here who have killed two elephants in Mankenja's country but when he heard I was coming he told them to take themselves off.

Thurs Mch 25

Left Manjawara's this morning and crossed another plain and reached Mankenja's about midday. I waited under a large tree in the village while Tengo (one of my boys) went to call the chief. He was away a long time and when he returned, he brought a son of the late chief with him. He died since Moir was here. The present man is an invalid and could not come. However the son did the needful and gave me a house to sleep in and four houses for my boys. By the time I was installed it was quite dark and the mosquitos awful. I gave a present to the Chief's son to take to him and gladly got under my curtain.

Friday Mch 26

Started this morning for the foot of the Livingstone Mountains leaving the loads in the village. Crossed the same river twice in the most rickety of canoes, after that waded over a plain about 4 miles across, sometimes up to the shoulders in water. At once we found plenty of elephant sign and followed up some of the night before. Towards 3 pm we were getting quite close to them, but they got our wind and made off. Did not reach home till about 11 pm thoroughly worn out.

Saty 27 Mch

Natural consequence of yesterday's expedition. Felt seedy today and did not go out. I am going to move my camp close to the hills on Monday so as to be handy for elephants. Last night the Sokilis broke into the boys' hut and stole 3 fathoms of calico & 2 spears.

Sunday Mch 28

The Chief sent a bullock today. I laid my mirando [mirandu] before him yesterday & he returned some of the calico.

Monday March 29

Left this morning under the guidance of the Chief's son for another village close to the thick bush. Arrived after a very hot march about 2 pm. The chief gave me the same house that Fred Moir stopped in when he was here 3 years ago. It is quite watertight and very clean as all Sokili houses are. The boys have got houses all round.

Tuesday March 30

Rained all night but cleared off a little this morning. Went out in a Northerly direction. We had not been out more than two hours before we heard elephants feeding in a swamp. We went in after them but could scarcely fight our way through the reeds which were about 30 feet high and as thick as a man's leg. We got quite close to them but before I could get a shot they heard us & were off. We ran them till dusk and altho we sighted them 3 times we never got a chance as they always kept our wind. Got home late.

Wednes March 31

Rained all day & night. Impossible to hunt.

Thursday April 1

Rained incessantly all day & night. The plain is several feet deep in water.

Friday April 2nd

Rained harder than ever. It is very miserable stopping here with nothing to read and nobody to talk to. The plain is 6 ft under water & there will be no proper hunting till the water runs off. The place is steaming with damp & the banana trees are covered with snails. Nothing feels properly dry.

Saty April 3rd

I sent off 8 men today under Tshapapa to return as best they can to Karonga's to bring on my mails etc when the steamer comes and 3 of them to return at once with fresh supplies of tea & sugar which are finished. In the afternoon went down with fever, the first this year.

Sunday April 4

Bad fever all day. Stopped in bed. Still pouring. Am also bothered with boils on my left knee. Monday April 5

Still fever but was better in the afternoon. Sent Karonga out as it did not rain much but he saw nothing. Rained again at night.

Tuesday April 6

Rather a fine day. I have quite got over my fever but the boils are still bothering me. I sent out Karonga again but he saw nothing. The elephants have all gone back to the hills. He says he waded most of the day up to the waist in water. The swamp where we heard the elephants the other day is about 10 feet deep.

Wednes April 7

I went out myself today as the morning was fine. Went north towards the mountains till we were stopped by a flooded stream which we could not

cross. It came on to rain very hard. We tried the Easterly direction but were again stopped. I knocked over an eland cow with my Express. Turned home which we reached very late. We had literally to feel our way it was so dark.

Thurs April 8

Very wet. Did not go out. Boils pretty bad.

Friday April 9

Three men I sent to Karonga's returned today with tea & sugar. The others are waiting for the steamer. They give a very bad report of the road. They had to cross no less than 8 rivers in canoes & the rest of the road very bad. My single 8 bore gun was stolen out of the Atongas' house last night. The thieves made a hole in the house a foot square & took out the gun within 9 inches (measured) of the head of the man who had charge of it & yet he never heard them. I gave him a thrashing for his carelessness. I sent off Tengo to the Chief first thing to tell him. He was in a dreadful state about it and ordered a search to be made in the houses of all the villagers. After searching some time the gun was found hidden under some old mats in a house at the other end of the village. Of course the owner was not at home. The Chief was very civil and promised to send a bullock on Monday. I gave him 3 fathoms of cloth. He told me all the cloth I had given him before had been stolen from his hut.

Saty April 10

Rain again today. Did nothing.

Sunday April 11

Had a visit from 29 of the Chief's wives who all expected a present but I thought it was rather too much of a good thing, so asked for the chief. 11 said they were chief so I gave them each about 3 inches of calico with which they were quite pleased & brought me a pot of pombé.

Mon Apr 12

Very wet again today. Mankenja sent the bullock as he promised.

Tues Apr 13

Went out again today to see if I could get a shot at elephant. Tramped the whole day but saw nothing but a water buck which I shot. Had to come through a lot of water on the way home.

Wed Apr 14

Felt very sick today. Went down with fever in the afternoon.

Thurs Apr 15/Monday Apr 19

Have been very ill indeed with jaundice & bilious fever. It is a great pity all my medicines were spoiled in the water. My quinine is all mouldy, and I had nothing but a bottle of citrate of magnesia which was a great comfort but is now finished. If the men would only return with my mails I would move out of this at once. I am awfully pulled down & feel very weak. I got up yesterday for the first time. Mankenja had a mirandu with his people asking

them why they dared to steal the white man's guns. They sent me another bullock as compensation.

Tues 20/Sunday 25

Still nothing but rain. I have sent off two men to Karonga's to see what is keeping back the steamer. When Tshapapa returns I will clear out of this as fast as I can. I am still very seedy & weak & can't get rid of my sickness.

Monday April 26

I determined to have another try in the plain for elephants as I had heard rumours of their having eaten the potatoes belonging to a village further down the plain. Started early and managed to cross the plain though the water in some places was shoulder-deep. We saw no spoor. When about 14 miles away from home I felt fever coming on and we turned back. I took fever and ague very bad and after tottering along some distance I had to give it up. We crossed fresh spoor & I sent Karonga & Kalimbuka on it and took easy stages home, but we lost our way in the reeds and water and I got so weak the boys had to carry me. When we at last got back I fainted & Lisboa put me to bed. Towards morning fever abated but terrible sickness came on which lasted for 4 days during which I don't remember eating anything. Weather all the time very wet.

Friday April 30

Manage to crawl out of bed & eat some arrowroot – dreadfully weak & bilious. Last of the medicines.

Saturday

Tshapapa returned this evening from Karonga's bringing letters from Monteith & Nicoll advising me to return there at once and they had sent all my men back to bring me on. They think that the steamer has been docked at Matope and that Morrison is putting up the new deck house. I questioned Tshapapa about the road & he said it was almost impassable between here and the Songwé and the plain was about shoulder deep.

Sunday May 2

Wrote letters to Monteith telling him it was impossible for me to walk there but asking him to tell Morrison to bring the steamer up to the Lumbashi when it came & that I would join it there. Today the rain was something fearful – one continual sheet the whole day long.

Monday May 3

Rained dreadfully all night too. Was very ill again. Sent off 3 messengers to Karonga's with letters. They returned about midday & said the path to Manjawara's was overhead in water & that all the lower village where I was before is flooded and the people are going about waist deep in water. I sent them back to the Chief to beg for a canoe in which to cross the plain because it is absolutely essential that I should communicate with Karonga for I am nearly out of calico & I have a lot of mouths to fill – also I want medicines.

Tues May 4

The men have not returned so I conclude they have got a boat which is a comfort. The other boys came across an elephant which had been dead about a week when out woodcutting and took his tusks, about 10 lb apiece – it is always something. Better a little today.

Wed May 5

More terrible rain last night. All the people are in great distress from the floods. The damp is awful. I have two men down with ague.

Thurs May 6

I hear that a great many of the people in the lower village had left and gone to the hills as their houses are flooded. It will be a serious matter for me if the rain does not stop soon as it will be quite impossible to get food for the men. I was almost flooded last night. There is a pool of water about 3 feet deep about 15 ft from my door.

Friday May 7

Very little rain last night, but the plain here is still deep under water. I shot 8 guinea fowl with my rook rifle today. They are all in the trees.

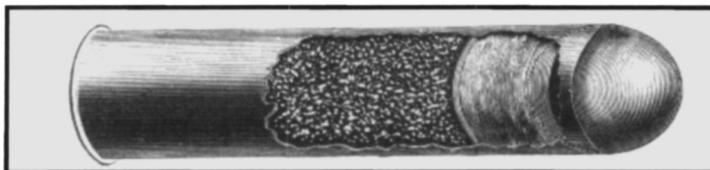
Sat May 8

Again we had a fine night and saw the new moon for the first time. I shot some more guinea fowl. Felt seedy again towards night.

Sunday May 9

Again pretty good night but I am sorry to say it is raining as hard as ever just now (in the afternoon it shows no sign of stopping). The Chief sent me his umbrella to mend today & I heard that my boys got off in a canoe all right on Tuesday morning.

William Stevenson's Journal ends.

Editors' notes:

An 8 bore brass-cased elephant gun cartridge

From the mid to late 19th century heavy, large-bore guns ranging from 12 bore up to 8 bore were considered essential for most Big Game hunting. The 'kick' the shooter experienced firing such guns was impressive and could break a shoulder or cheekbone if the gun was improperly held. Generally lighter and more accurate Double Express rifles with calibres up to .577 gradually superseded large-bore guns which consequentially fell from use.