

## Letter to John Washington, 22 July 1862

*Livingstone, David, 1813-1873*

Published by Livingstone Online ([livingstoneonline.org](http://livingstoneonline.org))

[0001]

East Luabo 22 July 1862

My Dear Captain Washington

I have given a set of bills to S<sup>r</sup> José Mellitaô Nunes of Quillimane for £42.10. dated 29<sup>th</sup> May. Book 812. bill 2. and another set for £51.10 dated 15<sup>th</sup> July book 812. bill n<sup>o</sup> 3. (both at Par.) to Senhor Manoel de Lima Vianna.

The amount given to M<sup>r</sup> Nunes was for 2 bales of calico and 40 bags of rice. To Vianna for 1 bale of calico - 15 sheep, some bags of rice - canoe and native hire to bring wood and coals in our attempts to carry up Lady Nyassa's sections and to bring away our goods from Tette. Also £10 for two small casks of wine at £5 each. I still owe him a little for fresh meat &c. Our detention so long down here has been most expensive though I have exercised the utmost economy. You may understand the difference of expense here and up the Shire. Here we have to pay £1 for a sheep there we get one for 2 shillings worth of calico. Having much sickness we had to hire natives and paying them at the rate of 6<sup>d</sup> per day in calico a great deal of that has been spent. Rae had dysentery and I had to

[0002]

to take him down to the Kongone to breathe sea air. When we went on purpose to meet a ship with a new Johanna crew & provisions something had occurred to prevent Captain Oldfield from fulfilling his promise of sending one at the appointed time. So we went up about 12<sup>th</sup> June. Launched the Lady Nyassa broadside on, and put everything into her - the ways were palm trees - and we were ready to go up the river but no Johanna men arriving and no provisions, we must go in search of them to Johanna.

In coming down we ran aground three times though we had a boat sounding ahead. This leads me to think that we had better go to the Rovuma & spend the two months which must intervene before the river rises in November in boat exploration of that river in preference to threading our way up the Zambesi & Shire at low water - but I shall let you know definitely from Johanna.

I was very unwilling to believe that M<sup>r</sup> Hardisty had so shamelessly neglected his duty as I now see he has done. The paddle shaft brasses gave way at Rovuma from sheer neglect, and caused the engine to shake so that the nails came out of the copper sheeting below. M<sup>r</sup> Rae put glands on and secured them and us from a general smash. Hardisty said to him that he [Rae] would by touching them let himself in for a month's work. Rae finished [0003]

them in 2 1/2 days and is going to make new ones of Lignum vitae which is coming into fashion now. The Rudder was cracked & Rae proposed putting bands on it. Hardisty went about saying in his nasty way to the men that M<sup>r</sup> Rae might as well pump ship on it as try to mend it. He made it stronger than ever in exactly two days. The boss of the paddle wheel was broken in going up Shire by striking against the bank. We were at Chibisa's from the beginning of July to the 15<sup>th</sup> November. Hardisty excused himself by say our forge would not heat the plate sufficiently to bend it for a patch. I got another forge, and a smith from the Gorgon bent the plate, but still it was unmended. I asked Hardisty how long he would require to put on the plate. three weeks, but he also said publicly that he was not to be expected to mend anything that broke. He had done more in that way than he ever intended - "An engineer is not expected to work as a tradesman" &c. Rae mended the whole thing now become much worse by neglect in two days. When just about finishing this job though Hardisty had been going about trying by talk to make Rae give it up in disgust he came

to me and said that he felt well enough to work; I replied, "I shall not require your services anymore" and he replied "Thank you". Rae has behaved nobly all through. He said to me, Captain Washington asked me if I were willing to do anything in my power to help the expedition, and I replied yes, and [0004]

I always have been so but I dont like to hear Hardisty talking in the way he is doing to the men. To put a stop to it I relieved him from all charge in the way I mention about the beginning of this month. I hear that he has made a drawing of the way he tied up the wheel in order to utter the monstrous falsehood that he was prevented by me from mending it. I shall give you the evidence of the stokers to the contrary without letting him know. The only thing I prevented him meddling with was the condensor, as he wished to send it down to the Cape to be brazed. M<sup>r</sup> Rae & Macleod fitted & brazed all the pipes requiring to be fitted, and it is to be put in today. the air pump will require to be rebored as Hardisty left the sand when once in to "wash out again"! If M<sup>r</sup> Penn recommended this man he has little regard for his really splendid engines. The leading stoker King is a far better engineer than Hardisty. He allowed everything to go wrong when a very little care would have kept all right.

A young man called Campbell with Tod & Macgregor is said by M<sup>r</sup> Rae to be a good hand. I knew him in my younger days. At present we shall do well with King and you might increase his salary if you think it right. Rae takes the superintendence. Reid and Macleod are excellent and willing workmen.

[0005] When we came down in May Hardisty was at death's door and had that baffling symptom continued vomiting which in the case of my poor wife rendered our remedies unavailing. D<sup>r</sup> Kirk & M<sup>r</sup> C Livingstone had been sent to Tette for our luggage, and I had medical

charge. Meller being at the Cape on sick leave. A blister put on the stomach to relieve vomiting filled with serum as dark as bile and he became deeply jaundiced - 20 grains of calomel as a last effort brought away immense quantities of bile and saved him with however severe salivation from cold afterwards. I mention this purely medical subject to you as I expect to be blamed for as in my heart I believe the saving of his life.

We cut wood at the Luabo at that time and went out over this bar, it being quite smooth, [2 1/2 fathoms] and came in by the Kongone. When on the sea she steamed with ease eight knots, and Rae says were her engines lifted a foot or a foot and a half she would give a much higher rate than she did on the trial trip -

If we could get a dozen draught oxen from the Cape we would transport the steamer at about 20 miles per day [0006]  
They cost about £10 each. The two mules died at Shupanga and I propose to use other two which were brought for the mission. Shupanga we find new from the Portuguese is particularly unhealthy they might have told us sooner. They say not even pigs can live there. There are no tsetse and none at the cataracts either. We never had so much sickness before. We cured the fever quickly but it returned again & again to the same patient. It was like treating patients in ill drained or overcrowded dwellings and we could not get away from the lowlands. We have good health at present and it is now winter, and as the Johanna men scarcely ever suffer we shall trust more to them than to Europeans.

A Lieutenant Burlton about whom I wrote to you in April last, stating that I did not require his services, did not wait for my answer to himself to the same effect, but came

up to Quillimane by the Pantaloon  
He brought no letter from the Admiral,  
and nothing from you though he had  
applied to you a long time ago. I still  
think that in the river we do not  
require a naval officer, and have  
[0007]

told him so but give him a passage to  
Johanna. Even with M<sup>r</sup> Young the  
gunner we get less work out of the  
men than when we had no naval officer  
aboard. He however does about three times  
more than M<sup>r</sup> Gedye did.

M<sup>r</sup> Thornton has joined us again  
after having been to Kilimanjaro  
with the Baron von Decken. He has  
a boat of his own, and goes to  
examine some rocks at Gorongozo  
having inscriptions on them. He will  
go on with us on the Lake & geologize there  
M<sup>r</sup> Cooley is about as far out in  
his structures of Rebman as he  
was about the Zambesi above the  
Victoria Falls. Thornton thinks that  
Rebman was correct.

The missionaries have retired  
down to Chibisa's - but will soon  
move up again as the lowlands  
will never do for them. No ~~sanitary~~  
sanitary regulations were made at  
their first residence and deposits  
from 200 people make the place  
a very "pest hole" The bishop and Burrup  
were ill before they started and braved  
the wet and damp of the shire marshes  
[0008]  
with the sad result you already know.  
We could not in consequence of our  
engineers culpable negligence get away  
to the Highlands. The Portuguese acting on  
our suggestions send their troops at  
once up to Tette and save nearly all  
while formerly by keeping them at  
Quillimane and Senna they lost  
nearly the whole.

We have to pay and part with Waldman  
a German carpenter who is the laziest  
mortal I ever met with - and the

pay of the present Johanna crew  
is due - Our 7 inch hawser and  
one of the 5 inches came out half  
rotten from being stowed under the  
provisions - the 7 inch parted when  
towing the brig in and we took one  
from the brig which will be in  
the accounts of the Gorgon, as  
also some biscuit. The brasses,  
Kingstons &c. sent have never  
come - but may with the ale be at  
the Cape. I regret the delay to which we  
have been compelled. It has been sore  
against the grain & utterly beyond my  
control. Many & hearty thanks for all  
your kind and prompt attention to our  
wants Yours affectionately D. Livingstone