The Beatles themselves would have known of the famous greeting, if not been familiar with at least the outlines of the story behind it.

That the greeting – once publicly known – became a joke would have appealed to their sense of humour; one can certianly imaging John Lennon putting his own spin it.

Regardless of whether they read any of Livingstone’s writings, the Beatles would also have appreciated Livingstone’s own ability to turn a good phrase.

When on his arduous final journey (1866-1873), and indeed near the end of his life due to a variety of ailments including heavy anal bleeding, Livingstone wrote: “It’s not all pleasure this exploration.”

Likewise, during his disasterous second expedition to Africa (1858-1864), when hemmed in by a variety of impediments, Livingstone responded by saying, “I am prepared to go anywhere provided it be forward.

However, he could also be very serious, as when it came to religion and his relationship with God: “I am a missionary, heart and soul. God had an only Son, and He was a missionary and a physician. A poor, poor imitation I am or wish to be. In this service I hope to live, and in it I wish to die.”

During his own time, Livingstone also succeed in capturing the public imagination through his own story of rising from poverty by detemination and by focusing on education as a little boy in the mills of Blantyre, Scotland:

"My reading while at work was carried on by placing the book on a portion of the spinning-jenny, so that I could catch sentence after sentence as I passed at my work; I thus kept up a pretty constant study undisturbed by the roar of the machinery."

And through his writings about slavery in Africa:

“I once saw a party in the slave yoke singing merrily & thought my these fellows have taken to it kindly […] I asked the cause of their mirth & was told that they laughed at the idea ‘of coming back after death and haunting & killing those who had sold them.’”

In the nineteenth-century, when travel was not as easy as it is today, such writings played an important role in raising social awareness in places like Britain and the US about far-away locations, particularly outside of Europe.

Indeed, Livingstone first came to widespread notice because of his travels.

Early in his career, after 10-odd years as a missionary in southern Africa (1841-52), Livingstone made one of the most celebrated mid-Victorian journeys.

In the span of four years (1852-56), with only a small group of African attendants, he traveled from the interior of southern Africa to the west coast, then all the way back across the continent to the east coast.

This was the first documented case of a European achieving this feat.

Livingstone’s narrative of the expedition, *Missionary Travels and Researches in Southern Africa* (1857), quickly emerged as a best-selller while the public, while Livingstone himself became a celebrity with audience clamoring to hear speeches about his travels.

Livingstone inspired contemporaries with his vision of combining Christianity, commerce, and civilization as a means of linking socities in the interior of Africa with world trade, while using rivers, such as the Zambezi or Nile Rivers, as “highways” into that interior.

Or, as he put it, "I view the end of the geographical feat as the beginning of the missionary enterprise."

He also enthralled readers with stories of his travels, including his “discovery” for Europeans of Victorian Falls (Africans living anywhere near the falls, of course, already knew about them), which Livingstone described as "the most wonderful sight I had witnessed in Africa" and which he detailed in some of the most memorable passages in *Missionary Travels*:

“I peered down into a large rent which had been made from bank to bank of the broad Zambesi, and saw that a stream of a thousand yards broad leaped down a hundred feet, and then became suddenly compressed into a space of fifteen or twenty yards."

For his efforts as an abolitionist and missionary, Livingstone today continues to be remembered favorably in many parts of southern Africa.

Among historians and other scholars, Livingstone’s legacy proves challenging.

For instance, his writings on Arabs and Islam read poorly today to say the least, but Livingstone was also far in advance of many contemporaries, including many rival explorers, in recognizing the Africans he encountered while traveling on the continent as equals.

He stated his opinions about Africans simply and, in doing so, made his point forcefully: “After long observation, I came to the conclusion that they are just such a strange mixture of good and evil as men are everywhere else.”

Nonetheless, scholars hold Livingstone’s original writings, particularly his unedited manuscripts, in high regard.

These manuscripts number into the thousands of pages and contain unique information on almost every aspect of nineteenth-century life imaginable in southern, central, and eastern Africa.

The manuscripts are particularly notable because of the information contained on the many Africans and African ethnic groups with whom Livingstone interacted on the continent and whose names and stories might otherwise be lost to history.

Recent international collaboration among specialists and the use of cutting-edge technology has now also ensured that Livingstone’s writings are more accessible than ever through Livingstone Online (http://livingstoneonline.org/), a digital museum and library dedicated to the explorer’s written and visual legacies.

Massive digitization projects

Spectral imaging technology