

## Letter to Samuel M. Peto, 21 June 1858

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[0001]

Zambesi river 21<sup>st</sup> June

1858

Dear Sir Morton

We have been for more than a month exploring the delta of this river in order to find a safe entrance, and having succeeded beyond our expectations after giving up hopes of entering by the Lualio as recommended by Captain Parker we find it prudent to send away the Pearl and go up in the steam Launch Ma Robert. The Pearl draws

[0002]

9<sup>ft</sup> 7. and though at this time of a falling river we could get a channel never less than 12 ft [*We have long reaches of four or six miles of from 5 to 7 fathoms then a crossing of 12 ft. but it has to be searched for*] as we were specially charged not to risk her detention in the river we have set up the iron house on an island about 40 miles from the sea and when all our goods are in it the Pearl will be sent off to Ceylon. We shall take them up to Tete by successive trips and the iron house last of all. Now if we had a ship, (paddle) of four or five feet such as you offered to build we could even now go with ease up to Tete. I gave you estimate to

[0003]

Captain Washington and he took a copy and desired me to apply to the Foreign

Office for such a vessel and he  
will I am sure second the application.  
But these matters are generally put into  
Macgregor Laird's hands in this  
way. He writes to Washington an  
official letter telling what kind of  
vessel he thinks best for such an  
expedition and it saves the great  
folks the trouble of thinking the  
job is at once handed over to  
him. By this mail I apply for  
the vessel described by you and  
I earnestly hope it will be put  
into your hands for I am sure  
you do the work efficiently and  
con amore. I don't know whether  
you are acquainted with Washington

[0004]  
if so you would hear how my proposition  
is viewed and might assist me other-  
wise by your influence with the higher  
officials.

the first news we got of the Portuguese  
was that they had been expelled the  
country by the natives. this alters  
the aspect of affairs in the river for  
me - but as it happened before we  
came we cannot be blamed for  
what the Portuguese call rebellion  
I visited a party of the rebels at Mazaro  
and though about 200 appeared well  
armed ready to dispute our progress  
on my calling out that we were  
English they raised a shout of joy  
and at once ran off to bring  
bananas & fowls for sale. We have  
had no fever. M<sup>rs</sup> L was obliged to  
leave us at the Cape but fortunately  
met M<sup>r</sup> & M<sup>rs</sup> Moffat there and will after  
her confinement join us by coming overland

Sorry I did not get Havelock's life before leaving  
My kindest salutations to Lady Peto, Aunt Helen  
and M<sup>r</sup> Brock.  
David Livingstone

I have referred to your offer in my dispatch &  
told Lord Malmesbury that a copy is with Washington