

## Letter to Margaret Sewell, 14 July 1842

*Livingstone, David, 1813-1873*

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

[0001]

Kuruman alias Lattakoo 14<sup>th</sup> July  
1842

My very dear friend

I assure you I am very sorry to hear by your (4) letters that you have not got any of those which I have from time [to time] written you. I am afraid you have thought me unmindful of all that [you] have & are kindly doing for me. But I hope you recollected what I asked of you when parting, "that if at any time you did not receive letters you might be sure some good reason prevented me." this however is what I did not calculate upon, I only thought of being myself prevented from writing & not of defects in the transmission

I write again although I have nothing new to add more than I put in the one I wrote in the interior & sent about a month ago. I have a request to make however and I am sure that if you can with propriety you will gladly oblige me. I have an excellent friend here M<sup>r</sup> Edwards, a most worthy man and more useful among the Bechuanas than any one I know. He however is not ordained, came out as an artizan & schoolmaster, is an excellent workman & in connexion with M<sup>r</sup> Moffat used to do all the printing. Since M<sup>r</sup> Moffat's return to England He has been the sole pastor of the church & during these years more members have been added to the church than at any former period, and according to the testimony of M<sup>r</sup> Hamilton its affairs have been conducted by him with very great wisdom & prudence, now after having acted the part of a full missionary for 4 years & always as such in either one capacity or another it seems attempts have been made by some here & others at home to deprive him of the privilege of being anything more than a mere printer under M<sup>r</sup> Moffat, this mission is to be made a completely clannish affair (perhaps one of the reasons M<sup>rs</sup> M wanted to get me noosed down at Ashton) Now I am sure the Directors are not aware of the value of M<sup>r</sup> Edwards [0002]

as a missionary as they would not sanction his degradation if ~~M<sup>r</sup>~~ All I beg of you is if you think it consistent with propriety ~~to~~ if at any time in conversation with M<sup>r</sup> Tidman, to drop a remark expressive of my opinion of M<sup>r</sup> E. as a fellow labourer whom I much esteem & admire on account of his devotedness &c.

Of course it would not do to introduce the subject purposely for that object so that he could see what you were driving at But it might happen that the subject of this mission might be the theme of your conversation & then it could be done But you know better than I do about what is proper in the case. I write with freedom & I ask the favour because it is not for myself and the only way I can see in which I can help a truly efficient minister of the gospel I think it may be of importance to his cause that M<sup>r</sup> Tidman be acquainted with the opinions of one who has been in the house & witnessed both public & private conduct of the individual in question for nearly a twelve month Ho I say, you there sitting at your desk & reading this scrawl, you must pack up immediately, & come over here for I am going to marry you. It's no joke for M<sup>rs</sup> Ross has told the sisterhood here that I am in love with a young widow in London called M<sup>rs</sup> Sewell, so you are done for, for I say it is true, and I am sure you cant object. Remember your own text, "It is not good for man to be alone " there's scripture for it. Come along then, no delay. N.B. Dont forget baby linens please But I forgot we can tear up my old shirts for that purpose, then bring new shirts for me &c &c Don't be the death of me by refusing -

I have written M<sup>r</sup> MacLehose oftener I believe them than he will thank me for them, I was in the key for ~~with~~ writing one day & I gave him a regular sermon I am waiting with some anxiety to hear from him But I fear I wont be here to recieve any thing for some [0003]

months to come as I am again about to depart for the interior I am very much obliged to you for visiting my former home I am now a vagabond on the face of the earth & any where has to be a home for me But though it is only a bush at my head & a fire at my feet it is no sacrifice to me and that it is not is mainly owing to my having been cradled in a rough bed since infancy. I look back with both pleasure and gratitude to my early days and to no portion of them do I recur with fonder recollections than that in which those parents whom you saw witnessed me struggling almost to desperation in order to amass as much as kept soul & body together while attending classes in Glasgow. By toiling at manual labour through the day & at mental during a large portion of the night, I at length succeeded in getting two sessions at the college. A happy time it was & if I could begin life again, I should like to go through the very same struggles. Indeed when through the advice of friends I applied & told I was accepted by the L.M.S. I felt somewhat sorry that I could not continue in my career of independence and hard face without resisting what seemed to be the voice of Providence. I wish you had seen my sisters you [...]

have had a better opinion of them than you have of [...] me

I have got a letter from our excellent friend Watt  
He tells me of the love affair of Ingram. Better surely be a  
batchelor than go mad like him. I am happy to hear of  
the restoration of the health of M<sup>rs</sup> Mather, I imagined she was  
at home with you & was fearing your heart would have  
been filled with sorrow at receiving back a shattered remnant  
of the daughter you sent away. thanks to the Author  
of all good for his great compassion & kindness

I got a letter from M<sup>rs</sup> Paterson & one from the  
excellent man we became acquainted with in Rio Janeiro  
the Bible is beginning to cause a stir there, & during the week  
my friend wrote me a furious article had appeared in the  
public prints against all protestants in general & him  
in particular. It was very abusive & stated that the writer  
who by the bye is an archbishop is astonished to see with  
[0004]

what avidity all classes of the people whose ignorance is notorious  
& the priests who are if possible still more ignorant receive the  
bible from this missionary. My friend remarks neither priests  
nor people will thank him for the compliment. the most respectable  
people in Rio receive the word of God thankfully. I hope  
the time will soon come when the Brazilians will no longer  
be held in the bonds of superstition, I told M<sup>r</sup> Mac. this  
friend would gladly furnish papers for his magazine if he  
should only state to him his willingness to receive them  
but I dont know whether our dear Glasgow friend has  
received the letter which contained the information, M<sup>r</sup> I  
Spaulding tells me he has not yet heard from M<sup>r</sup> M.  
As this is a love letter you must if you please burn it immediately.  
Your letters are most acceptable Please write soon  
to your affectionate D. Livingston

Care of Rev<sup>d</sup> D<sup>r</sup> Phillip ~~Cape Town~~  
M<sup>rs</sup> Sewell  
57 Aldersgate Street  
London