

Letter to Samuel M. Peto, 21 June 1858

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[0001]

Zambesi river 21st 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^{ft} 7. and though at this time of a falling river we could get a channel never less than 12 ft [*xWe 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. Mrs L was obliged to
leave us at the Cape but fortunately
met Mr & Mrs 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 Mr Brock.
David Livingstone

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