

## Letter to Henry [Keppel?], 7 March 1861

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[0001]

H.M.S.Pioneer

in Rovuma Bay

7<sup>th</sup> March

1861.

Private

Dear Sir Henry

I feel very  
much pleased to find  
from M<sup>r</sup> May that  
you are disposed to  
continue the kind  
and very valuable  
assistance rendered  
from time to time  
by your predecessor  
to this Expedition.

[0002]

And though my feeling  
partakes very much  
of Lord Brougham's  
definition of gratitude  
namely "a lively anticipation  
of future favours" I can  
promise truly that  
anything you can  
conveniently do for us  
will be duly appreciated

We entered this  
bay on the 25<sup>th</sup> ULT. the  
river promises fairly -  
there is no bar and  
M<sup>r</sup> May in sounding  
across the mouth

[0003]

found no bottom with  
seventeen fathoms. We

went up about eight  
miles in the boat,  
and found high  
land beginning  
there this shews  
a very short delta.

One has to go 150 miles  
up the Zambesi  
before coming to  
such an altitude  
though this is only  
some 300 feet - the  
land is well wooded  
and the number of  
[0004]

snags seems to say  
that it is so farther  
up, the river is a  
mile wide at the  
main entrance but  
a large body of water  
is let off into the  
left bank eight or  
nine miles up and  
probably finds its  
way into the sea  
to the North of the  
sandy ~~high-land~~ island  
at the North end  
of the bay. We found  
the mass of water -  
meandering among mangroves  
[0005]

We have been waiting  
ten days for the Lyra  
with coals & provisions  
We cannot concieve  
what detains her  
as Captain Oldfield,  
like all the officers  
who have rendered  
us services entered  
so heartily into the  
work it must be  
something beyond  
his control - this  
delay is to us very  
greivous as we  
[0006]

are losing the period  
of flood in the river.

Our object in trying  
the Rovuma is to get  
an entrance into the  
interior of Eastern  
Africa exterior to the  
Portuguese claims. If  
we get up so far  
as to have an overland  
route from it to  
Lake Nyassa we shall  
prefer it though  
treble the distance  
of that required to  
pass Murchison's  
[0007]

cataracts on the Shire,  
because here we have  
a safe entrance  
from the sea, and  
we are away from  
Portuguese pretensions,  
the Portuguese Govern-  
ment sent out  
orders to render the  
Expedition every  
aid, but there is a  
general impression  
in the country, that  
with the public  
orders there came  
secret instructions  
[0008]

as omnibus people  
say - "tonurse us."  
they have besides an  
inveterate proneness  
either connive at or  
engage in the slave  
trade Partly to get  
the mission away from  
Portuguese and partly to  
pass the three most  
unhealthy months of the  
year I recommended  
the bishop to postpone  
landing in Africa - the  
"Pioneer" will return to  
Johanna for his party  
as soon as we explore  
Rovuma D. Livingstone