

## Letter to John Washington, 25 March 1860

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[0001]

Latest

Mazaro, Zambesi 25<sup>th</sup> March

1860

My Dear Captain Washington

After waiting 23 days at Kongone Harbour we left on the 14<sup>th</sup> currt for Mazaro in order to get M<sup>r</sup> Rae conveyed by this route to Quilimane. The river being full now we might have gone near Quilimane by one of the canals off the Luabo - but our vessel has 35 patches held on by over 60 bolts in her bottom and without wind we cannot make more than 1/4 knot an hour. She is without cargo too and certainly have not a ton with crew and everything else. Everything is in the Pinnace yet you cant see the waterline. It is very doubtful indeed if she ever reaches Tette as she has scores of minute holes all over which entail constant watching & labour. We abandon her at Tette if she does not abandon us before that. Never was Expedition crippled and belaboured as we have been by trusting the Niger Philanthropist.

No ship having called I am hopelessly in the dark as a new ship. One we shall have either by public or private means. Our prospects seem to me brighter than ever though I try to divert the whole of any sanguine tinge.

[0002]

I long to hear what you think of them from a cool business point of view. One thing, should the Bann or another vessel be given, we ought to have a pennon and a couple of respectable guns, not for fighting but for respect. the Portuguese look on us with great jealousy this is much increased of late by some English

forcing commerce up the river at Delagoa Bay  
and they think we mean to do the same here.  
I have requested Lord John Russell to try and get  
freedom of trade on this river or at least on  
those parts never used by the Portuguese as the  
Luabo below Mazaro & the Shire. If not this  
then let us work it out quietly without  
troubling the Portuguese, but for this we  
would require to be able to say that we are  
a man of war. They make much of my  
being consul for Quilimane only. I say nothing  
of course of my being accredited to other tribes  
beyond their dominion. Nothing is said to me,  
but as much as possible to my companions  
by way of sounding them or drawing me into a  
discussion. With a soil and climate far superior  
to Natal they do nothing but peddle in ivory  
I think we ought to try the Rovuma if we  
cannot get free trade here. 1000 feet must be  
accounted for along that river to the sea but  
the fall may be in a shorter space than the 35  
miles of the Shire and it is happily beyond

[0003]

Portuguese claims.

The river is now magnificent  
just as Captain Gordon described  
it "more like an inland sea  
than a river". By the way the  
chart of Baines above Senna  
is what is never seen. the  
great expanse of water is what  
always strikes the eye and he  
acknowledged that his sketch  
was not its actual appearance  
but what ought to be in instead  
of the sand banks in mere lines as  
compared with the water. I did  
not suggest alteration as I considered  
it would be near the truth to give  
it as bad as it ever can become  
for its low water. For two years  
past it has been fordable in two  
places. this never occurred according  
to the Portuguese before. All my com-  
panions are well & well tired of the  
slow movement up David Livingstone