

Letter to John Washington, 10 October 1859

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

We found the southern edge of Zomba 6600 - a peak 8 or 10 miles off must be eight thousand. Air delightfully cool, water delicious & plenty of it
D^r Kirk botanized up a peach a mile from our camp 500 ft. more (or 7000 say)

(I)

Murchison's Cataract

10th Oct^r 1859

My Dear Captain Washington

we have traced this

river up to its point of departure from
Lake Nyinyesi or as we heard it
called there Nyassa and found
that there are only thirty miles [(say 33)] of
cataract and the river is placid
up to 14° 25' S. where Nyassa
begins. We abandoned our intention
of going up the Ruo when we
found that M^r Laird's precious
Punt was in a sinking state:
Funnel, Furnace, Deck &
Bottom went shaky simultaneously
so it would have been unadvisable
to be encamped near the border
tribes about Ruo. We came on to
Chibisa's taking nearly a month
to do what an ordinary steamer
would have done & what we can
do (with the current) in three
days. We proceeded over land
to Zomba & then descended

[0002]

We must have a steamer capable of being unscrewed here & carried 30 miles. No more Macgregor Laird shams please.

into the Shire valley & followed the river
up to the Nyassa. It was the hottest
season of the year - the "smokes" from
the burning of thousands of acres
of tall grass = a broiling hot London
fog if you can imagine such a

thing. We were 37 in all D^r Kirk M^r
C. Livingstone, M^r Rae & 33 Makololo
all were delighted with the country & no
wonder for it is mountainous &
every few miles we had streams of
delicious cool water. It was Londa
again. A great deal of cotton is cultivated
and indeed the Lake region opens up
the finest cotton & sugar country in the
world. Remember please when I
say so that I invariably discouraged
the formation of any company or
other speculation, but the time
has come when with calm deliberation
I can say there is a glorious prospect
for both Africa and England. No
matter what you have done there is
now an opportunity for you doing
more than ever, for, the two Lakes
Shirwa (which means simply - (Great
water) or Tamandua and
Nyinyesi or Nyassa lie parallel to
the East coast and all the slave
trade of Anghozia & Mosambique

[0003]

We hope to send off Thornton - disease, laziness, Baines - theft
He has stolen a great deal & given away to Portuguese ticket of leave men
public property & provisions
I stopped Baines pay on 30 July, but think anything on hand of his
ought to be stopped till he accounts for stolen goods

from the Interior crosses these Lakes
or rather crosses Shire and then goes
along the partition between them - Tamandua
extreme length is about 90 miles
Nyinyesi no one could tell more than
after months to the North it turned
round into the sea. We met a
large slaving party from Cazembes
country & bought fine specimens of
Malachite from them. When they
knew we were English they evaporated
by night They had a great many
slaves and elephants tusks. Now
lawful commerce would eat out
that traffic ere long, but it must
be untrammelled by Portuguese
restrictions and I now give you
the points about which you will

probably be consulted.

The Kongone or as it is sometimes called Nyangalüe was quite unknown to the Portuguese and lately when we went down to meet the "Persian" slaves were sent to follow & report on where we had found a navigable bar. This though we had given plans of it they knew Melambe six miles west of it but not Kongone

[0004]

Not a line from you yet I am &c Ever Yours David Livingstone

Then, the Governor General of Mosambique sent for a half cast called Paul Mariano a few months ago to ask him if the Zambesi really entered the sea at the Luabo! & shewed him my map. And again a slave from Senna our interpreter in last journey was sent for to Mosambique to be pumped by His Excellency as to where we had been. The Shire being wholly unknown to them except 3 miles at its mouth. All is English discovery exactly as in the Niger and all the right or Southern bank which at Shupanga they farm is paid tribute for by the Portuguese to the Natives. From Kongone up to this is all English discovery & ought to be free for the Portuguese line of discovery ran from Sofala to Senna and then across the country to Quilimane

M^r Candido denied to D^r Kirk that he had told me of his having been to Nyanja. then reasserted to me that he had been there & pointed to it, N. N. W. of Tette. That he punted 36 hours under cabbage palms - quite soft. If he had seen a Lake at all it was Not Nyassa for it is deep & has no cabbages & it is N. E. instead of N. N. W. of Tette