

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 otherwise 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. M^{rs} L was obliged to leave us at the Cape but fortunately met M^r & M^{rs} 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 M^r Brock.
David Livingstone

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