

Letter to John Washington, 24 March 1862

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[0001]

Kongone 24th March

1862

Dear Captain Washington

It is clear that we must look out for a new Engineer. Hardistey is determined to get away by a quarrel. the first appearance of the wish occured when we came down to the East Luabo lately. there is a bank called By M^r Inglis in his late survey an "inner bar" we ran aground on it at low ebb, and resolved just to wait till the flow. I told M^r Hardisty to have steam ready at that time and when she began to float all were at their posts [but] him - not knowing this I simply called down

[0002]

"a turn astern" and off she came - Having anchored a quarter of a mile from the spot to cut wood & wait for a man of war. Hardisty came aft to the quarter deck and demanded "Did you give orders for the engines to go without a calling of me." I replied yes I gave orders to you to have the steam ready and did not know till now that you were not at your duty. "Well I wish you to get another engineer if you are going to treat me that way." I told him that he was guilty of the impertinence because he thought himself indispensable - and an hour afterwards he came and apologized. I would not have referred to this but it is evident that he had made a mistake in his action then, and has gone to work more systematically since to make himself a nuisance, in order to get away. We failed to carry 35 tons. It is quite true she was top heavy and listed over often, but we left Johanna as deep and had 26 tons of coals - & nearly all the mission gear on deck yet came up to Shupanga with wood in 2 days of 20 hours steaming - now

we took over three weeks though half the way we had coals
We took out 5 tons and dismissed the paddle box boats
yet could barely stem the current in parts four and a half knots
We could barely make one knot over the ground though
going in the shoal parts out of the current. Her speed ought
to be at least 8 or say seven. Well even that would
give about 3 over the ground, but every one saw
the Engines were not properly worked and I suppose
some of the 6 officers of the Gorgon had let M^r H.
know what he thought. We came several times

[0003]

to a stand still, and observing M^r
H. sitting on deck quietly smoking
I asked him what was the matter
with the engines - "Its the list over"
was the reply. He then went into
the engine room and made
them go better. An hour afterwards
the same thing occurred & I saw
M^r Hardisty lying on the engine
sky lights asleep. I asked him
why he did not attend to the
engines. He went down again &
an hour after he went on the
sick list! M^r Rae then screwed
up the packing of the cylinders &
mended the feed pump which
unknown to me had been
left broken all the time we were
lying waiting at Luabo and
while loading in the Kongone -
and the speed was increased by
four revolutions per minute
of course pumping in cold
water had been so much loss
of fuel. M^r Rae suspected

[0004]

that a certain valve was not
working - but Hardisty soon
came out of the sick list &
we were reduced to our former
speed. When we resolved to
unload a deal of tinkering
took place in the engine
room - and knowing the
engineer to be very touchy
I refrained examining
what was done. But we
came down to the Kongone

from [above Mazaro] in 8 or 9 hours
shewing a speed or at
least six knots - 10 with
the current over the ground.
And then M^r Hardisty came
and said "I wish an
inspection of the engines
and as you are dissatisfied
with me send me home "

[0005]

This after the tinkering and after I had carefully
abstained from saying a word to him. I replied
that I had been disappointed at not getting up
and receiving the assistance of the officers & men
who had come with us, but had never uttered
a word of dissatisfaction to him. I confess that
I felt it but never expressed it, or shewed it.

He has since set up his back against M^r
Young and answers him in the most impertinent
way, for instance, Hardisty had placed several
bags of charcoal on the boiler casing and M^r Y.
in giving the whole ship a thorough cleaning &
white washing asked me if he might place some
small boxes of shot on them till he found a better
place. I replied yes. When Hardisty saw that he
came and bawled out before Captain Wilson
and his officers to me, that "he had received
orders (I suppose he meant from you) not to
allow anything there. And if you dont allow
me my position in the ship, send me home,
Captain Washington guaranteed me here only
one year." &c &c &c." of course I adhered to
what I had allowed M^r Young to do feeling
sure that you had given no such orders &
no one else had a right to give any. He has
also sat at table contradicting everything he can
say a word against - no one replies - and has
besides tried to create disturbance with M^r Rae
by the falsehood that he has been asked to put

[0006]

the Lady Nyassa together

Captain Wilson who has
been a witness of his impertinence
says that he will tell the
admiral and another engineer
will be sent up. I see plainly
that matters with Hardisty
will get worse & worse - and
will be glad if another is sent

by the admiral who will be
amenable to naval discipline
because while Hardisty is
here I shall make him do his
duty though it be by bread &
water or leaving him on an
island. He expects that he
must get a years pay whenever
he leaves - if that is the case it
ought to be altered. He has taken
to this course of conduct entirely
unprovoked & in the opinion of
us all is inexcusable

David Livingstone