

## Letter to John Washington, 17 March 1862

*Livingstone, David, 1813-1873*

Published by Livingstone Online ([livingstoneonline.org](http://livingstoneonline.org))

[0001]

Kongone 17<sup>th</sup> March

1862

Captain Wilson returned to Shupanga on the Evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> bringing the sad news that the bishop and M<sup>r</sup> Burrup are dead. A new route from Ruo to the Mission station was found necessary as the Pioneer could not well go up to Chibisa's the bishop wished to come down in Nov<sup>r</sup> & explore from Ruo upwards but continual rains induced me to object very strongly to his going as he would certainly have been knocked up & he had only one man

[0002]

with him - ~~subsequently he~~  
It was well he yielded for we were detained 6 weeks with a marsh on each side of us long before we came to the Ruo. Subsequently he sent Scudamore & Procter to explore and they went away Eastwards to the Melanje mountains instead of Southwards as I directed. I told the bishop that Mount Clarendon must be kept well on his left but they must have had it on their right. A chief attacked and plundered them and the bishop called some

Makalolo who remained  
at Chibisa's instead of going  
home as I directed them

[0003]

went & attacked the plundering  
chief & burned his village  
the Makololo took away  
his goats. Afraid to go further  
among that tribe (he was at  
the source of the Ruo) he  
returned & with Burrup  
came down Shire to  
meet his sister & M<sup>rs</sup> Burrup  
who were coming up in  
the Pioneer - canoe was  
overturned we suppose  
in an eddy - bedding &  
medicine [tea coffee &c &c] lost - came on  
[in wet clothes & devoured by myriad of mosquitoes] to Ruo a fortnight after  
the time appointed. We  
looked out  
for them two  
days a mile above Ruo  
and enquired among the  
natives but no word of  
them so we passed Ruo  
on the day they ought to have

[0004]

been there - but to resume  
the narrative - after the  
canoe accident they came  
to the Ruo - were kindly treated  
but fever attacked the bishop  
and without treatment or  
medicine died. He left his  
station with diarrhoea - & it  
never left him. Burrup too  
labouring under diarrhoea  
returned to the mission &  
died - they have had much  
diarrhoea & dysentery among  
their people 20 or 30 of the  
children have died. the  
bishop is a great loss - &  
I fear the effect in England  
will be sorely against us  
all. Burrup & he were the  
strongest of the party and  
neither could believe that

aught would hurt them  
the bishop wrote in a letter

[0005]  
to the Cape that the "Pills were  
worse than the disease". In this joke we see that he  
thought little of it, and we now  
mourn his loss in con-  
sequence. All loved him  
he was very amiable,  
too much so I fear to be  
a leader of men as we  
find them. A new head must be sent out at once  
or the mission will break  
up. There are differences  
among the missionaries  
which I will not conceal  
from you, which can  
be dealt with only by  
an authoritative head.  
There is no one to fill a  
bishops place. the

[0006]  
romance of the thing has  
passed away and hard  
prosaic work does not go  
down nearly so well. Indeed  
some seem to have come  
out merely to make a good  
thing of it by book writing

We have received 20 boxes  
of preserved meats from  
the Ariel" a great help as  
now that it is known  
we are in want we must  
pay enormously for every  
thing. £1. per sheep for  
instance the regular price  
being four shillings. Captain  
Oldfield has arranged for  
our Johanna crew to be  
sent to us in May next.  
We are putting Lady Nyassa

[0007]  
together at Shupanga and  
hope to tow her up in June  
to the cataracts.

We take 2 mules from  
the mission - making our  
number four - I have asked  
Admiral Walker to send up  
10 oxen if he is sending a  
coal vessel up. We  
have no tsetse except at  
Shamo and we pass that  
in the cold season and  
will escape the bite - calico  
getting very low but I shall  
buy some from the  
Portuguese

Important

the Governor General of  
Mosambique went up a  
few months since to  
Zanzibar and tried to induce  
the Sultan to consent to

[0008]

Rovuma being called the  
Portuguese boundary - but  
the Sultan being instructed by  
our excellent consul Rigby  
said "No Cape Delgado is our  
boundary". Finding himself  
frustrated he made a commercial  
treaty & returned to Mosambique.  
Rovuma is therefore ours.  
I have asked the Foreign Office  
if possession ought to be  
taken in name of Her Majesty  
of our discoveries. Can you  
do anything by way of  
clenching the boundary to  
Cape Delgado? Admiral  
Walker might send boats up  
while we are working with  
our steamer.

Major Secard is made  
commandant of Mazaro &  
Shire! His watch has arrived  
Portuguese all kind as usual

[0009]

no one said aught about  
our liberating the captives.

Major Secard from whose  
slaves we took 84 captives  
gave us three sheep &  
two boxes of biscuits  
first time we met and  
he has now sent down  
for an additional  
supply of medicine to  
that I gave them.

I see that Du Chaillu's  
birds have been bought  
so D<sup>r</sup> Kirk's birds had  
better not be disturbed  
till he comes home  
himself = I should like  
authority to send my  
brother home - his  
time having expired

[0010]  
Please give D<sup>r</sup> MacWilliam  
a copy of the treatment  
and post mortem of  
the carpenter as enclosed  
in another letter - D<sup>r</sup>  
Meller goes to the Cape for  
change of air on account  
of enlarged spleen and  
remittent fever. He is  
an invaluable man.  
£2 14 the proceeds of the  
sale of the carpenters  
clothes were sent to  
the flag ship  
to pay for  
the slops he drew.

M<sup>r</sup> Rae bought a  
good carpenter & joiner  
from Glasgow called

[0011]  
John Reid. I enclose a  
request to pay part of  
his salary to his Father  
in the way that may  
be most convenient

Captain Wilson & his  
officers have been most

kind and obliging - they  
hoped to be able to  
help to land the Hull  
ashore at the cataracts  
which would have  
been a great lift to  
us. I cannot believe  
that the Pioneer cannot  
carry 35 tons list or no  
list - but she must  
have an engineer

[0012]  
who does not leave the  
driving entirely to the  
stokers. I have not  
written to the Admiral  
about it - but have  
desired Captain Wilson  
to report what he saw  
and heard.

this goes by way  
of Mauritius in the brig  
Hetty Ellen that brought  
the Lady of the Lake.

We are all well - thanks  
to Him who rules over all  
Several have had fever -  
I send to the Cape for wine  
for quinine - I think that  
the stimulus to the stomach in  
the morning does good

David Livingstone