

# Letter to John Washington

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[0001]

Rovuma Bay

5<sup>th</sup> March 1861

Dear Captain Washington

We have been  
here eight days waiting  
for H.M.S. Lyra with  
coals - cannot  
what detains her as  
we expected her on the  
1<sup>st</sup> and Captain Oldfield  
is not the man to  
delay without cause.

Rovuma promises  
fairly. A very large  
deep bay. he

[0002]

river's mouth a mile  
wide, and no bar.  
M<sup>r</sup> May got no  
bottom at seventeen  
fathoms across the  
mouth. An immense  
body of water rushes  
out. We went up  
some eight miles in  
the boat and found  
it to be in full flood .  
High land begins  
about that distance  
from the mouth  
so we seem to have  
a very short delta .

[0003]

It [(country)] is well wooded &  
many snags shew  
that character higher  
up. People speak

the same language  
as at Senna (nearly)  
so we shall get on.  
We expect the Bishop  
by Lyra. He agreed,  
not without a pang,  
to postpone landing  
in Africa for three  
months. This takes  
him over the three  
most unhealthy into  
the three most healthy

[0004]  
months of the year and  
should Rovuma  
answer our expectations  
he will make his  
settlement there & so  
will we quite away  
from Portuguese  
pretensions. Had we  
taken them up to  
Murchison's Cataracts  
it would have been  
subjecting them to  
the risk run by the  
Linyanti mission .  
His (the bishop's) luggage  
& some of his people  
are landed at Johanna

[0005]  
as soon as we see  
that there is a pathway  
to Nyassa we go  
to examine it while the  
Pioneer goes to Johanna  
to bring the whole  
party. We believe the  
language may be  
studied there as it is  
said to be the Makoa  
dialect. We like  
what we have seen  
of the bishop and  
his party very much  
and rejoice much  
to see them as the

[0006]

first installment of  
a mission destined  
I hope to do great good  
in Africa .

I have to beg you  
to correct a mistake  
into which I fell in  
the prescription of our  
famous Fever Powder .  
We went over to the  
N.W. to examine  
whether a creek shown  
in the chart as a  
mouth were really so.  
It opens into the bay

[0007]  
near its northern extremity  
but it is simply a creek,  
there is a mouth more  
to the N.W. - no doubt as  
we got into a goodly  
stream of fresh water  
by going S.W. and  
went all day without  
regaining the main  
stream [in the West] of Rovuma  
sleeping in the boat  
I waked & recollected  
that I had given the  
proportion of calomel  
which ought to have  
been Rhubarb &  
should you send the

[0008]  
enclosed to D<sup>r</sup> MacWilliam  
this mistake will be  
corrected .

M<sup>r</sup> May knows his  
work and I am right  
glad of the prospect  
of getting at last  
to mine. We cannot  
part with our white  
crew, and a month  
in the river will be  
no great risk. We  
promise them double

pay while in the river. I keep  
Rowe as he is of great  
use to us ashore.

David Livingstone

6 March Lyra in sight

Should Rovuma not prove favourable we  
can go back to Shire & in the healthiest time .