

Letter to John Washington, 15 May 1862

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Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Shupanga 15th May 1862

Dear Captain Washington

In prospect of our Johanna leaving in the end of February and our getting up to the cataracts I took two Thomas Magrath & George from the Gorgon for the Lady and one leading stoker James with one 1st class stoker Michael - also one ordinary seaman.

Whitehead believing that they be necessary for the safety of vessel till fresh Johanna men whom I have applied to M^r H. M. Consul should arrive. considered that we could scarcely on in the transport of the sections some men on whom we depend. With a view to aid

M^r Rae in any breakages that might in the overland passage I took

William Macleod an excellent smith Augustus Waldman a cooper on the passage to the Cape .e. seven whites instead of six men. The latter we have unable to send away though they to serve but one year as a trial we expect a ship after 20th currt to them

[0002]

In consequence of our long detention in the lowlands and the fact that of the men have in spite of everything vile Portuguese spirits we have had unusual amount of sickness and smallest quantity of work as the . Wheatcroft an inveterate old disrated by Captain Wilson before he , and for drunkenness and most disgusting M^r Young I reduced him to single , and will hand him over to the next that calls. Nolan - always sick & when for a day or so he is put off list - has never done well in any he has been in. He must go with Wheatcroft.

David Gwilliam our other Quartermaster been a most useful hardworking - has had very fair health and never himself but got drink and as

M^r Hardisty compelled King always to in attendance on him doing or nothing. Gwilliam like an fool used foul language to Hardisty way of standing up for the oppressed - foul and disgusting epithets and hold of Hardisty by the beard. H. naturally struck him to free himself evidence is quite conclusive against

Gwilliam and I am obliged to hand off as the Captain may advise for martial. I am sorry to part with as away from drink he is invaluable

[0003]

John Hutchins Q^r Master has been a long with us & generally very well behaved he has had dysentery twice the last time so severely that though is working active medical opinion says it not be just to the man to keep longer. He must be invalided

William Rowe has been leading stoker storekeeper - drove the Ma Robert M^r Rae left and kept our stores the strictest honesty. His services been very valuable. When M^r came with the Pioneer I hoped follow my work chiefly on shore M^r M. did what could be done in ship. I looked to Rowe to manage domestic affairs ashore and con-the storekeeper's salary of £150 that view. Now, that a person his probity would be extremely to us at either the upper lower end of the cataracts I am to find that he wishes to go home dont think it well to detain him. His in the navy is nearly out and he of a pain in his side from pleurisy long before he came to us. offers to come out when free the navy but I shall not require then.

If the Johanna men come we get on very well without Wheatcroft

[0004]

Nolan and Waldman - but two seem to be necessary of Gwilliam and Hutchins

M^r Rae says a common stoker will him as well as Rowe. We shall with Whitehead too to reduce Europeans as low as possible Johanna [men] never get fever. We had so much insubordination [during] these last three months - and it is inexcusable as M^r Young a thorough disciplinarian and sharply after them. I com-to the Governor of Quillimane the Portuguese officer at Kongone converting what his calls a custom into a grog shop, and he him and referred the to the Governor General of .

Magrath promises to turn out a good man and so does Goldsmith exchanged with John Neil A. B. the smith is a capital and a good steady man John Reid is equally deserving one ever took anything like the amount labour off my hands as M^r Young.

[0005]

I mentioned in a letter which went the Gorgon in April the strange turn in M^r Hardisty's conduct, and foresaw he would make himself as disagreeable possible till he got away. It was so from his previous mode of that I felt confounded by it. It is plain now, you had gauranteed him twelve months only, but forgot to let me . At the end of that time he had the engines to go thoroughly out of & wished to have done with them. of telling me so, he tried to provoke by impertinence at table before Captain [& his officers] - going quite out of his way even, contradict me when he was taking no other in the conversation. I took no notice it, except as I told you, agreeing with captains wish to tell the Admiral & let him another engineer. Well, hoping to be out of the delta I gladly accepted the offered by the officers of the Gorgon to & help us up the cataracts M^r said that ten tons of coals were for our purpose - but unknown me had the feed pump broken in , and he had two men pumping cold water into the boilers in February. caused a great waste of fuel - till M^r H. lying asleep on the Engine I asked what was the matter with engines that we could not go more than 1/2 a mile an hour - "Its the list over" said and soon after went into the [sick] list - to Meller I think I am going to have fever.

[0006] asked M^r Rae to go down and he soon made speed increase, mended the pump pin was broken in about three hours saved the poor fellows the unmerciful of pumping. M^r Rae has told me

since I found out the state of the engines he never in his life saw engines a worse state. The packing the different parts had never been renewed, the nuts were screwed home. "He not like to interfere" Well we were days down at the sea during whole of which time M^r Hardisty absolutely nothing. We towed out brig Hetty Ellen, and when on the middle the bar the engines failed us for a and we were nearly in the breakers. we returned he took off the cover the ~~condenser~~[air pump] and going down on the day I saw the plunger packing with 1/4 inch sand all coloured by rubbing on the inside of the brass . It [namely the inside of the air pump [...]] was grievously worn away. [...] had not been packed 20 months, and air had been in instead of water - the consequence the old packing was like tinder and to be picked out with a knife, the India rubber valves were burned up and would not act. No then we could not get away the Delta - [...] In time] I loaded her rather heavily than when we took three to get up to Shupanga, and we up in three days. She drew

[0007] five feet too. We went down again took all the remaining things of the ~~Pione~~ Nyassa - were again as deep and [purposely] a list too from using one bunker's exclusively for a while. We did distance in three days of ten hours and but for the loss of a good day by searching for a passage the channel had changed, would done it in about 24 hours steaming ten tons of coals were expended in the case when we were a little over the distance to Shupanga -

then the of purchasing wood - and it was enormous for we had send up to Shupanga for our fuel

& hire canoes to bring it down. Four in the Delta where we should have been more than a week entailed an unusual amount of upon us. Fever & dysentery never left us till now, but with no fatality except which has darkened all my . I have said nothing nor I say aught of harshness to M^r . He behaved well up to the that unknown to me he felt unequal to managing the . He never had charge except as a third Engineer in navy.

If we had not ran aground in the sand would not have in then - the fault may therefore

[0008] traced to what cannot be avoided a river where the channel shifts the pump ought on touching to be at once, and the boiler by the donkey engine. Instead which the pump was allowed to till it was choked by sand & - [the donkey E. being idle]. Then as M^r H. said the sand work itself out of the ~~condenser~~[air pump] instead of taking it out himself allowed the materials to be worn damaged. I trust you will not me wrong in letting him . With him it is a perpetual attempt thwart M^r Young by keeping the stokers away from every work. When we are going he about the deck the whole day,

& never goes below to the Engines - while I write he sits washing clothes. M^r Rae ill of dysentery the Lady Nyassa standing still nearly ready for launching - four stokers kept out of the way I know not what. A parcel tools was bought by M^r James of Glasgow & sent to the for M^r Rae. M^r H. will lend them even. I am not to quarrel with anyone I feel it rather hard to have the hindered in this way. I am &

David Livingstone