

Letter to Arthur Tidman, 8 November 1853

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[0001]

Linyanti 8th November
1853

Rev^d D^r Tidman

Dear Sir

By a letter dated September last

I informed you of my intention to proceed Westward in order to open up a way to the coast. I was then waiting for rains and as these have now commenced I leave this on the 10th currt. I have altered my mind with respect to the route which I intend to try. We sent men to the Westward in order to examine if there is any strip of country free of tsetse in that direction - their report was unfavourable. I then resolved to go on the trail of the Mambari but the slave merchant signalized his departure by seizing two men and a woman as slaves. The Makololo assembeled immediately and compelled him to unchain the captives This affair made me alter my resolution ^ again for if I followed his footsteps the different tribes through which we have to pass would naturally believe me to be of the same clan. Indeed knowing what my precursors had done, I should not feel very respectable to myself. I therefore intend going up the river Leeambye to the point at which we turned in August and then ascend the Leeba to the people called Balonda and proceed westward ~~on foot~~ by land. The chief has lent me his own canoe

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and as I was unable to take a horse to the Barotse country on account of the tsetse at this season biting by night as well as by day Sekeletu placed four riding oxen at my service, These are now in that country so I hope to get on. I go in the canoe from this down the Chobe to the confluence. Then up the Leeambye and Leeba till we reach the falls reported to exist on that river. The canoe will be sent back and we must do the best we can beyond. I leave in company with Barotse people alone. The people we brought from Kuruman have

been rendered useless by fever, so I send them
back. I am again through God's mercy and kindness
quite recovered from the effects of that disease. I
think I am getting rid of intermittent too and
if spared will impart some knowledge of Christ
to many who never before heard his blessed name
There are many and very large tribes in the direction
in which we go. All are sitting in darkness and
the shadow of death. I hope God will in mercy
permit me to establish the gospel somewhere
in this region, and that I may live to see
the double influence of the spirit of commerce
and Christianity employed to stay the bitter fountain
of African misery

In the sketch enclosed in my last I neglected
to mention that the ridges noted therein only shew
the commencement of lands not usually inundated
There are very large tracts of country beyond these which
are annually flooded either wholly or partially. The

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Leeambye is not the only source of the waters of inundation
the reports of intelligent natives lead me to believe that
the Bashukulompo or Maninché river - The Loeti - the Kabompo
the Makoma and Leeambye are all branches, (of one
river), leaving and returning to the parent stream in
a remarkably level country
[sketch map including R Zambesi R Chobe R Leeba Loeti Kabompo Makoma R Maninché
Londa Barotse Sesheké]
this ideal sketch
will perhaps enable
you to understand
my meaning. the
dotted lines at the
top may be the
situation of an immense river or of very numerous
branches each pouring out vast quantities of water
you will percieve also that the country is peculiar
and will require a modification perhaps of our pla[...][n]
of operation therein. In no other country is ther[...][e]
such a large surface of land annually inundated as
in this

My letter of September contained three enclosures
for M^{rs} Livingston. It contained full information
respecting the visit to the Barotse, this opportunity
of transmitting letters was unexpected but though I had
written fully before I thought it well to let you
know of the alteration of my plans. and that I
am on the point of starting

I am
Affectionately Yours
David Livingston

P.S.

As Sesheké is only about 7 days on foot from the Maninché

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and the falls of Mosioatunya may be avoided by sailing down
that river into the Zambesi this may be a good path down to
the East Coast. I mention this in case of my being cut off.

D.L.

Care of Rev^d W. Thompson

Cape Town

Prepaid

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