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PERSONAL STUDY NOTES

THE GREAT LIVES OF MISSIONARY PIONEERS

DAVID LIVINGSTONE

Missionary-Explorer in Africa

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[1]*Christian History Magazine-Issue 56: David Livingstone: Missionary-explorer in Africa*. 1997. Christianity Today: Carol Stream, IL

Recommended Resources

David Livingstone, Missionary Explorer

To paraphrase the writer of Ecclesiastes, of the making of books about David Livingstone there is no end—they number over a hundred. The following are simply those we found most helpful in preparing the issue. Those without publishers are out-of-print but available through inter-library loan. In-print books may be ordered through Books Now at 800–962–6651 x1248 or at http://www.booksnow.com/christianhistory.htm.

About Livingstone

Pick a Livingstone you want to explore, and there is a biography written with that slant. Interested in a devout explorer? Try the *The Life of David Livingstone* by William G. Blakie (1905). Most modern treatments try to balance this older view, though they tend to undersell Livingstone's missionary ambition. Oliver Ransford explores the psychological makeup of the man in his *David Livingstone: The Dark Interior* (1978). George Martelli, in *Livingstone's River* (1969), focuses on the Zambezi Expedition, which leaves the reader with a more troubling view of the explorer. For a truly engaging and balanced biography, read *Livingstone* (Trafalgar Square, 1994) by novelist Tim Jeal.

By Livingstone

The three books Livingstone wrote still make for gripping reading, especially the first: *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (recently republished by Ayer Co.). His other two accounts are *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambezi and Its Tributaries (1865), and Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa: 1858–1873* (1875), edited by Horace Waller.

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To get a glimpse of the private Livingstone, you'll want to see two books edited by I. Schapera: *Livingstone's Private Journals (1851–1853) (1960) and David Livingstone: Family Letters (1841–1856)* (1959).

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Background

Mark R. Shaw's *The Kingdom of God in Africa: A Short History of African Christianity* (Baker Books, 1996) is a readable survey with the growth of the church the controlling theme. Elizabeth Isichei's *A History of Christianity in Africa* (Eerdman's, 1995) goes into a bit more depth. At 683 pages, Adrian Hastings's *The Church in Africa, 1450–1950* (Clarendon, 1994) is thicker still, though it keeps its focus on the last 500 years.

Milton Meltzer's *Slavery II: From the Renaissance to Today* is a well-written and illustrated overview of the topic. And for a fast-paced account of the post-Livingstone political history, see Thomas Pakenham's *The Scramble for Africa: The White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent from 1876 to 1912* (Random House, 1991).

Internet

Teachers may want to check out the *Chicago Science Explorers* page devoted to Livingstone (http://www.chias.org/www/edu/cse/folhome.html). It offers teaching guides for *In the Footsteps of Dr. Livingstone*, a video about the man (David Livingstone Wilson, the explorer's great grandson, in fact, recreates the journey in search of the source of the Nile) and the era.

The Africa Collection (http://pearl.amnh.org/collect/africa/africa.htm) is a virtual museum of the American Museum of Natural History, dating from 1869, showing samples of African art.

The Victoria Falls page (http://www.unicc.org/untpdc/incubator/zwe/tphar/vrz1000

e.htm), part of *Virtual Zimbabwe*, gives a fuller description (with pictures) of Livingstone's greatest discovery.

Finally, *Time.Gate: The Zanzibar Network* (http://www.timegate.demon.co.uk/note.htm) has a page called "Explorers and Empire Builders," which gives an overview of key figures in 1800s Africa.

Did You Know?

Little-known or remarkable facts about David Livingstone: missionary explorer

Though Livingstone is remembered as a missionary, only one-third of his 30 years in Africa were spent in the service of a mission board. Even during that time, he went his own way, often ignoring the advice and directives of colleagues and superiors.

Livingstone started life as did millions of other children in the industrial revolution: exploited by a society bereft of child labor laws. At age 10, he worked 14-hour days in a cotton factory, followed by two hours of night school. He grew up in a one-room tenement that overlooked the cotton mill where he worked.

With his first week's wages, Livingstone purchased a copy of Ruddiman's *Rudiments of Latin*. To break the tedium in the factory, he propped the book on the frame of his machine and studied while he worked.

Livingstone was determined to become a missionary to China but was prevented from doing so by the outbreak of the Opium War.

Livingstone closely connected mission work with social and economic progress. The only way to fight the slave trade in Africa, he said, was through "Christianity, Commerce, and Civilization."

From his earliest years in Africa, Livingstone was often critical of fellow missionaries. Soon after he arrived in the

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Cape Colony, he wrote, "The missionaries in the interior are, I am grieved to say, a sorry set.... I shall be glad when I get away into the region beyond—away from their envy and backbiting." He added that there was no more affection between them and himself than there was between his "riding ox and his grandmother."

Livingstone's penchant for exploring could not help but affect his family life. He and his wife, Mary, lived in the same house together only four of the seventeen years of their marriage.

When Mary Moffat, Livingstone's mother-in-law, heard that he had taken her daughter and grandchildren on another dangerous exploring expedition, she wrote him a stinging letter, signed, "I remain yours in great perturbation. M. Moffat."

Unlike his fellow explorers and traveling companions, Livingstone enjoyed relatively good health during his first years in Africa. He traversed the continent for a dozen years before he fell ill with "African fever." At that time, he experimented with the local witch doctors to test their healing powers but concluded, after being "smoked like a red-herring over green twigs" and put under their charms, that European medical practices were superior.

Livingstone was the first European to feast his eyes on the great Victoria Falls: "Five columns of smoke [i.e., mist] arose.... The whole scene was extremely beautiful; the banks and islands dotted over the river are adorned with sylvan vegetation of great variety and form ... scenes so lovely must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight."

During his first visit back to the British Isles (1856–1858), Livingstone became a national hero. He was awarded a gold medal from the Royal Geographical Society, an honorary doctorate from Oxford University, and a private audience with Queen Victoria. He was mobbed in the streets; when he attended church, chaos ensued as people climbed over pews to shake his hand.

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Livingstone is considered one of history's greatest explorers, but his last two expeditions failed in their chief aims: The Zambezi Expedition sought to discover a navigable river that cut across southern Africa, and in his final adventure, Livingstone sought to find the source of the Nile.

Though Livingstone did little traditional missionary work while he was alive, after his death, he inspired hundreds of men and women to give their lives for African missions. Mary Slessor, for example, decided to follow in the footsteps of her hero and, in 1875, arrived in Calabar (in present-day Nigeria). She quickly became a living legend as an explorer and evangelist—and vice counsel for the British Empire. Peter Cameron Scott, founder of the Africa Inland Mission, was inspired to return to Africa after his first mission failed when he read the inscription on Livingstone's tomb in Westminster Abbey: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring."

Ruth Tucker *is a member of the Christian History advisory board and the author of From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions (Zondervan, 1983) and Seasons of Motherhood (Victor, 1996).*

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Livingstone:

The Great Non-Missionary

It's okay not to be a missionary, mystic, or theologian. That's one message *Christian History* would like to communicate with this issue.

Church history is littered with theologians, from Athanasius to Augustine to Luther to Edwards. Our history is also filled with missionaries (from Patrick to Jim Elliot) and "mystics" (the super spiritual like Francis and Count Zinzendorf).

If you're going to make it into the history books, it seems, you'd better fit into this triad of callings.

But Livingstone doesn't. Not that historians haven't tried to make him fit. Early biographies, and even Livingstone himself, tried to pin "missionary" on his lapel.

He started out as a missionary, certainly. But he converted only one African his entire life, and that convert reverted to paganism. He established no hospitals, nor did he translate the Bible into a foreign tongue. Some missionary.

But he is famous for his explorations, which admittedly were partly motivated by cross-cultural compassion: he sought the end of African slavery. Yet it was his extraordinary discoveries (Lake Ngami, Victoria Falls) and his extraordinary courage (some would say recklessness) that left an indelible impression on the British public.

And that's good enough for us, which is why we call Livingstone an *explorer*. We're happy to add "missionary" to his moniker because of his early career and motives. But let the emphasis fall on *explorer*. We're saying that all

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manner of people with all manner of callings have made significant contributions to our Christian heritage.

Finding a useful editor

With this issue Ted Olsen joins the *Christian History* staff as assistant editor. He wrote "The Other Livingstone" (page 32) as a free-lancer, but once on staff, he kept coming up with great ideas, so we let him add "The Evil that Baffled Reformers" (page 24) and "Finding a Useful Wife" (page 31) to this issue's contributions.

Ted was raised all over the place: Maryland, Phoenix, Hawaii, Seattle, Denver. He managed to settle into Wheaton College for four years to earn a B. A. in political science and communications. Most recently he was an editorial resident in the news department of Christianity Today, our sister publication.

Ted has an eye for fascinating detail and a hand that composes engaging prose. I'd say we look forward to his contributions, but he's already made the magazine better!

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Discovering Livingstone

The man, the missionary, the explorer, the legend.

With four theatrical words, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?", which Henry Morton Stanley rehearsed in advance, David Livingstone became immortal. Stanley stayed with Livingstone for five months and then went off to England to write his bestseller, *How I Found Livingstone*. Livingstone, in the meantime, got lost again—in a swamp literally up to his neck. Within a year and a half, he died in a mud hut, kneeling beside his cot in prayer.

His African friends, former slaves he had freed, buried his heart under an mpundu tree 70 miles from the shore of Lake Bangweulu. Then they carried his body back to his own people, an 11-month journey through equatorial jungle and open seas.

All Britain wept. The whole civilized world wept. They gave him a 21-gun salute and a hero's funeral among the saints in Westminster Abbey. BROUGHT BY FAITHFUL HAND OVER LAND AND SEA, his tombstone reads, DAVID LIVINGSTONE: MISSIONARY, TRAVELLER, PHILANTHROPIST. FOR THIRTY YEARS HIS LIFE WAS SPENT IN AN UNWEARIED EFFORT TO EVANGELIZE THE NATIVE RACES, TO EXPLORE THE UNDISCOVERED SECRETS AND ABOLISH THE SLAVE TRADE. He was Mother Teresa, Neil Armstrong, and Abraham Lincoln rolled into one.

In the century and a quarter since his death, no missionary/explorer has been more constructed, deconstructed, psychoanalyzed ("a congenital manic depressive," says one scholar), and turned into a stained-glass saint. There are well over 100 books about him, and African cities bear his name.

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He was such an important figure that the history of southern Africa can be divided into B.L. (Before Livingstone) and A.L. (After Livingstone). When he arrived in 1841, Africa was as exotic as outer space, called the "Dark Continent" and the "White Man's Graveyard." Although the Portuguese, Dutch, and English were pushing into the interior, African maps had blank unexplored areas—no roads, no countries, no landmarks.

Livingstone helped redraw the maps, exploring what are now a dozen countries, including South Africa, Rwanda, Angola, and the Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). He is the stuff of legend, indeed.

But what can we presume about Livingstone today?

Latin on the run

Livingstone's birth became the foundation of the legend: he was born on March 19, 1813, in the grimy industrial town of Blantyre, eight miles from Glasgow. His family (parents Neil and Agnes, two brothers, and two sisters) lived in a one-room tenement. The central figure of his childhood was grandfather Neil (senior), who entranced the boy with stories of the olden days. (He had been a tenant farmer who had been evicted from Ulva, an island off the west coast of Scotland. Starting in the 1700s, the Anglo-Scottish gentry deliberately depopulated the countryside by evicting a million Scots, replacing them with vast sheep farms.)

Key discovery. Livingstone was less impressed with many of his early discoveries than he was with this one: that central Africa contained a vast network of rivers, which could become a key to stopping the slave trade.

When David was a child, his father started his own business as a door-to-door tea salesman, so the room was constantly fragrant with the smell of tea.

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At age 10, David went to work in the cotton mill, clambering under gigantic, steam-driven machines to fix broken threads. After 14 hours of labor that exhausted most children, Livingstone attended classes for another two hours. He was so entranced with books that he spent his first pay on a Latin grammar. He propped the book on a machine, and each time he passed it, he read a line or two. In this way, he managed to learn Latin and Greek, and plowed through Virgil, Horace, and a stack of theological tomes. His father, a Calvinist Congregationalist who distributed tracts as he sold tea, disapproved of "trashy novels" (a title he bestowed on any nonreligious literature) and science books. The only escapism David was allowed were travel books like *Robinson Crusoe*.

Though his father condemned science as ungodly, David's life was changed by the writings of Thomas Dick, an eccentric Scottish theologian and amateur astronomer who proclaimed both science and religion revealed the complexities of God's world. After reading one book, Livingstone later wrote, "Immediately I accepted salvation by Christ and vowed to devote my life to his service."

Two years later, after reading an appeal from Karl Gützlaff (see Hudson Taylor, issue 52 of Christian History, page 35) for medical missionaries to China, Livingstone seized the opportunity. Not only could he merge scientific study and Christian service, he could also appease his father, who would not let him become a doctor unless it was for a religious purpose. At age 23, with no formal education, he registered in Anderson's College in Glasgow, where he studied medicine, theology, and science. A year later, he applied to the interdenominational London Missionary Society (LMS).

By then, however, the door to China was slammed shut by the Opium War, leaving Livingstone looking for a new mission frontier. Within six months, he met Robert Moffat, a veteran missionary of southern Africa, who enchanted him with tales of his remote station, glowing in the morning

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sun with "the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary had been before."

"Animal pleasure of traveling"

The newly ordained medical doctor set out for South Africa in December 1840, little realizing he would be gone 16 years. The voyage, via Brazil, was so rough the little sailing ship was tossed like "a ship in a fit of epilepsy." Three months later, he arrived in Cape Town, the main British colony, and set out immediately in an ox cart for Robert Moffat's station in Kuruman, 600 miles north.

After 25 years of patient work, Moffat had created a miniature Zion on the edge of the Kalahari Desert. He had built a dam and planted fruit trees. With its stone church and neat rows of houses, Kuruman was reminiscent of a village in Scotland.

Unfortunately the "smoke of a thousand villages" was an exaggeration. Moffat had fewer than 40 converts, half of whom were backsliders, and the surrounding area was as unpopulated as the Scottish Highlands. Livingstone was disappointed at the prospects. Within a month, accompanied by a fellow missionary, Livingstone made his first of three exploratory tours, 500 miles northeast into southern Africa.

For ten years, Livingstone tried to be a conventional missionary. He opened a string of stations in "the regions beyond," where he settled down to station life, teaching school and superintending the garden. After four years of bachelor life, he married the boss's daughter, Mary Moffat.

From the beginning, Livingstone showed signs of restlessness. After his only convert decided to return to polygamy, Livingstone felt more called than ever to explore. "The mere animal pleasure of traveling in a wild unexplored country is very great," he wrote. "Brisk exercise imparts elasticity to the muscles, fresh and healthy blood circulates

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through the brain, the mind works well, the eye is clear, the step is firm."

During his first term in South Africa, Livingstone made some of the most prodigious—and most dangerous—explorations of the nineteenth century. His object was to open a "Missionary Road"—"God's Highway," he also called it—1,500 miles north into the interior. In 1849 his team became the first recorded Europeans to reach Lake Nagami, "the lake beyond the [Kalahari] desert," earning him a gold medal from the Royal Geographical Society. He was accompanied by William Cotton Oswell, a wealthy soldier and big-game hunter.

On many of these early trips he took his wife. Mary was born in Africa and was used to the hardships of pioneer missionaries—but not the sort of hardships Livingstone would put her through. Her newborn baby died after they had wandered through the Kalahari Desert for a month with limited water. In 1852, after seven years of marriage, Livingstone escorted Mary and the children to Cape Town, his first visit to "civilization" in 11 years. He put them on the boat to Britain, and did not see them again for four years. (Though often separated from her husband for years at a time, Mary gave birth to six children in their 17 years of marriage.)

On these early journeys, Livingstone's interpersonal quirks were already apparent. He had the singular inability to get along with other Westerners. He fought with missionaries, fellow explorers, assistants, and (later) his brother Charles. He held grudges for years. He had the temperament of a book-reading loner, emotionally inarticulate except when he exploded with Scottish rage. He held little patience for the attitudes of missionaries with "miserably contracted minds" who had absorbed "the colonial mentality" regarding the natives. When Livingstone spoke out against racial intolerance, white Afrikaners tried to drive him out, burning his station and stealing his animals.

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Though alienated from the whites, the natives loved his common touch, his rough paternalism, and his curiosity. They also thought he might protect them or supply them with guns. More than most Europeans, Livingstone talked to them with respect, Scottish laird to African chief. Some explorers took as many as 150 porters when they traveled; Livingstone traveled with 30 or fewer.

After Livingstone sent his family to Scotland, he made an epic, three-year trip from coast to coast, reputedly the first European to do so.

"REASONABLE" AFRICANS. While other Europeans beat and berated Africans, Livingstone treated his hosts with decorum. Tribes usually reciprocated by treating him like a visiting dignitary. "Africans are not by any means unreasonable," he wrote. "I think unreasonableness is more a heredity disease in Europe."

On this trip, he was introduced to the 1,700-mile-long Zambezi, the twenty-sixth longest river in the world. It starts in the equatorial jungle of Angola and the Republic of the Congo, 600 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, and bisects the continent. As it cuts through the Rift Valley, it boils over falls and thunders down cauldrons deeper than the Grand Canyon until it disgorges into the Indian Ocean.

During this trip, he reached Victoria Falls, his most awe-inspiring discovery. It was like being back in the mill at Blantyre, with God's steam machines thundering and pulsating, the wild water sending off sparks like "bits of steel when burned in oxygen." The scene was "so lovely," he later wrote, that it "must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight."

River of human misery

Despite its beauty, the Zambezi was a river of human misery, the original "heart of darkness." It linked the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, the main suppliers of slaves for Brazil, who in turn sold to Cuba and

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the United States. Women and children, prisoners of war, and the survivors of famine were captured in the interior and shipped to the coast. Livingstone frequently encountered parties of 50 to 100, chained and shackled, each yoked with a handle that extended behind their backs.

Livingstone had a number of motives for his vast peregrinations. For one, he was planting the British flag, extending the borders of the Empire—though the British government repeatedly told him it had no interest in creating African colonies. But in Livingstone's mind, if Britain could drive a wedge through the upper Zambezi, it would have a chain of colonies up the spine of Africa, from South Africa, through Uganda and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, clear up to Egypt (which was then a British protectorate).

Livingstone was always on the lookout for fertile, well-watered high land—with no tsetse flies or malaria—where he could transplant a colony of pious Scot peasants. He meticulously recorded the natural resources, coal and mineral deposits, forest and animal life, anything that might attract settlers.

Yet Livingstone's primary desire was to expose the slave trade and end it by cutting it off at the source. The strongest weapon, he believed, was Christian commercial civilization. He hoped to replace the "inefficient" slave economy with a capitalist economy: buying and selling goods, like beeswax and ivory, instead of people. The tribes were more than willing to engage in "legitimate commerce." In fact, Livingstone partially financed his trips by trading goods from one native state to another: guns for bronze, bronze for elephant tusks, tusks for slaves (whom he escorted to safety and set free), arriving at the coast with cart-loads of ivory left over.

Eventually, Livingstone believed, this mercantile economy would be transformed into a "progressive" agricultural economy of cotton, coffee, and sugar, and based on people working for wages.

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The queen's cows

In December 1856, having completed his cross-continental journey, wracked by pain and malarial fever, barely able to rise from his bed, David Livingstone arrived in a dispirited England. For three years, the country had been mired in the Crimean War, a horrible nightmare that produced the tragedy of the Light Brigade ("Half a league, half a league, half a league onward, all in the valley of Death rode the six hundred…."). England desperately needed heroes, and Livingstone fit the bill.

He was given medals and an honorary doctorate from Oxford. When he had a private audience with Queen Victoria, he delighted her with an amusing story of an African chief who asked, "If the queen of England is so rich, how many cows does she have?"

Seizing the moment, Livingstone wrote his first manifesto, a 400-page book called *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*. It is still an important source for reconstructing the precolonial history of Africa. It was an immediate bestseller, selling 70,000 copies. As historian Timothy Holmes says in Journey to Livingstone (1993), it had something for everyone: "The Christian's faith in God is strengthened by the author's very survival of every imaginable danger. The abolitionist is inspired by the prospect of stopping the slave trade. Medical men are intrigued by Livingstone's approach to disease and the value of his treatment for fever."

Livingstone made more than 120 times his £100 annual LMS salary from the royalties, which he used for his family and his expeditions. That was just as well, for Livingstone's relations with the lms soured during his furlough. The society, though admiring his feats, felt he should take up more settled work, like his father-in-law, Moffat. He claimed his explorations were "missionary travels," and he was preparing God's Highway for those who followed.

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Livingstone and the LMS finally split over his role in a new mission south of the Zambezi. The lms wanted him to shepherd the group, but Livingstone would agree only to help the missionaries cross the river.

Through the influence of his friends in the scientific and religious communities, the government appointed him leader of a "voyage of discovery upon the Zambezi," at a cost of £5,000.

In March 1858, with the cheers of England ringing in their ears, the Zambezi Expedition set sail with Livingstone, his pregnant wife, Mary, and child, his brother Charles, two sailors, an engineer, artist, geologist, and a doctor/botanist.

They were to navigate upriver in a brass-and-mahogany steamboat (as in the movie *The African Queen*), from the mouth to Victoria Falls, a thousand miles inland, where they would establish a mission station of the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). Among their tons of supplies, they carried a prefabricated iron house, which they hoped to erect there.

The *Ma Robert* ("Robert's Mother," the Makololo's name for Mary Livingstone) was state-of-the-art technology but proved too frail for the expedition. Besides using too much wood, it leaked horribly after repeatedly running aground on sandbars.

Like Moffat's tale of smoke from a thousand villages, Livingstone stretched the truth about the Zambezi to his correspondents back home, minimizing the dangers and pushing his men beyond human endurance. When they reached a 30-foot waterfall, he waved his hand, as if to wish it away, and said, "That's not supposed to be there." Mary, who had just given birth to her sixth child, died in 1862 beside the river, only one of several lives claimed on the voyage.

Abruptly Livingstone changed his plan: the UMCAwould establish a colony of freed slaves in the cool, fertile valley of

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the Shire River, believed to be free of malaria. It flows into the Zambezi from Lake Nyasa (now Lake Malawi), the second largest lake in Africa. Unfortunately a tribal war was creating havoc in the area, and a severe drought and Arab slave traders from the north were depopulating the land. The Zambezi Expedition, a nightmare from the beginning, now got worse (see "The Other Livingstone," page 32). Finally in 1864, the British government, which had no interest in "forcing steamers up cataracts," recalled Livingstone.

Carried through a swamp

He reached London sick and dispirited but brought himself back into the public eye with his book *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambezi and its Tributaries*.

A year later, he was on his way back to Africa again, this time leading an expedition sponsored by the Royal Geographical Society and wealthy friends.

"I would not consent to go simply as a geographer," he emphasized, but as biographer Tim Jeal wrote, "It would be hard to judge whether the search for the Nile's source or his desire to expose the slave trade was his dominant motive."

The source of the Nile was the great geographical puzzle of the day. But more important to Livingstone was the possibility of proving that the Bible was true by tracing the African roots of Judaism and Christianity. He believed ancient Egypt was a black culture connected to central Africa through the Nile and its tributaries. He drew similarities between ancient Coptic and the modern languages of South Africa. "One of my waking dreams," he wrote, "is that the legendary tales about Moses coming up into Inner Ethiopia with Merr, his foster-mother, and founding a city which he called in her honor 'Meroe' may have a substratum of fact."

With no white companions, Livingstone set out with 30 porters, Indian soldiers, boys from a government school for freed African slaves, and locally recruited men. They

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deserted almost immediately, leaving only a few faithful servants. Among the faithful were Chuma and Susi, whom he had freed ten years before. The deserters spread a rumor that Livingstone had been murdered, and expeditions were sent to find him.

For two years he simply disappeared, without a letter or scrap of information. He reported later that he had been so ill he could not even lift a pen, but he was able to read the Bible straight through four times. Livingstone's disappearance fascinated the public as much as Amelia Earhart's a few generations later.

When American journalist Henry Stanley found Livingstone, the news exploded in England and America. Papers carried special editions devoted to the famous meeting. In August 1872, in precarious health, Livingstone shook Stanley's hand and set out on his final journey. By October his health was failing. (He would never find the source of the Nile, missing it by some 200 miles.) In January he had to be carried through a swamp that came up to "Susi's mouth, and wetted my seat and legs.... When [my porter] sank into a deep elephant's footprint, he required two to lift him." They traveled only a mile and a half a day.

"It is not all pleasure, this exploration," he wrote. On May 1, 1873, at age 60, Livingstone, who had evaded death so many times, finally lost the battle. Chuma and Susi, preparing the body for burial, found a blood clot several inches long obstructing his small intestine and evidence that his death had been hastened by severe hemorrhoidal bleeding. They wrapped his body in calico and dried it in the sun to preserve it for the long trip back "home."

Saint of the Empire

Within ten years, the Africa Livingstone knew was gone forever. One month after his death, the British forced the Sultan of Zanzibar to close the largest slave market on the east coast of Africa. Meanwhile, near Moffat's original station of Kuruman, acres of diamonds were found—the

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largest gold and diamond deposits in the world. This discovery set off the "scramble for Africa," and independent African and Afrikaner states were conquered and carved into British, Portuguese, French, German, and Belgian colonies. Under empire builders like Cecil Rhodes, after whom Rhodesia was named (now Zambia and Zimbabwe), and De Boers (the diamond cartel), the British were wildly successful, creating colonies from South Africa to Egypt.

For a generation and more, Livingstone was "the Saint of the British Empire." Biographies poured forth and rarely mentioned his less congenial traits. The man and the legend inspired generations of men and women, like Alexander Mackay and Mary Slessor, to dedicated missions work throughout Africa.

During the anti-colonial 1960s, Livingstone was debunked: he made only one certified convert, who later backslid; he explored few areas not already traveled by others; he freed few slaves; he treated his colleagues horribly; he traveled with Arab slave traders; his family life was in shambles—in short, to many he embodied the "White Man's Burden" mentality.

Nonetheless, at a time when countries are being renamed and statues are being toppled, Livingstone has not fallen. Despite modern Africans' animosity toward other Europeans, such as Cecil Rhodes, Livingstone endures as a heroic legend. Rhodesia has long since purged its name, but the cities of Livingstone (Zambia) and Livingstonia (Malawi) keep the explorer's appellation with pride.

Furthermore, the capital of Malawi, Blantyre, was named for Livingstone's birthplace. And Livingstone's massive bronze statue still points to the world's largest waterfall, Victoria Falls.

In 1996, among his own people, the National Portrait Gallery in London mounted an exhibit that honored the man and the "Livingstone industry" that created this larger-than-life legend. He is the man who introduced Africa to the

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English-speaking world, and as much as any individual in its history, transformed it, for ill and for good.

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Creatures Great and Small and Annoying

Dr. Livingstone was also a meticulous scientist.

Along with his surgical kit and medicine chest, David Livingstone always carried a microscope and sextant—with which he observed God's creation with awe and wonder. In his writings, he described his discoveries with a lively sense of imagination.

"The birds of the tropics have been described as generally wanting in power of song," he said, comparing them to English song birds. The bird chorus "is not so harmonious and sounded always as if the birds were singing in a foreign tongue.… The mokwa reza gives forth a screaming set of notes like our blackbird when disturbed, then concludes with what the natives say is 'pula, pula' (rain, rain), but is more like 'weep, weep, weep.'

"These African birds have not been wanting in song," he concluded, "they have only lacked poets to sing their praises."

Wild animals great and small figure prominently in his journals and books: rampaging rhinoceroses and drowsy hippopotamuses, wise ants and savage alligators. But of the hundreds of species he cataloged, he seemed particularly fascinated with three (not including the lion).

TERRIBLE TSETSE. The little fly that attacked oxen, cattle, and horses with such devastating consequences. Livingstone described one infected animal's brain, saying it looked "as if a quantity of soap-bubbles were scattered over it, or a dishonest, awkward butcher had been trying to make it look fat."

Elephants appear in two forms in Livingstone's writings: alive and dead. They shout and trumpet from the riverside

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at the steamship going by, all very reminiscent of Huckleberry Finn along the Mississippi. Dead, they appear as a commodity of commerce: ivory. One "elephant was rather small, as is common in this hot central region," he wrote. It yielded only 256 pounds of ivory.

In the savanna land, even worse than the mosquito was the tsetse fly, "a perfect pest," which Livingstone put on the cover of his first edition of *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*. The tsetse flies love the smell of oxen, cattle, and horses. They can decimate a herd or caravan in a matter of days, injecting a poison like tiny scorpions.

Anyone who has spent a summer in the north woods will sympathize with his hatred for the tiny mosquito. Livingstone was subject to recurrent bouts of "the fever" or malaria—27 by one historian's count—which he described in precise medical detail. He was one of the first to make the connection between mosquitoes and malaria (although he blamed the marshy breeding areas, not the insects), and pioneered the use of quinine as a treatment.

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David in the Lion's Den

Livingstone seemed unimpressed by the great cats—even after being attacked by one.

David Livingstone once wrote, "The first person who ascribed noble qualities to the lion seems to have been followed by the rest of mankind as sheep follow that one which has the bell, or as a string of geese does the leader." The puffed-up majestic lions, he said, looked like "old women in nightcaps."

But perhaps the explorer's deflations masked a deeper fear, for at the beginning of his career he was badly mauled by one of the beasts. He never tired of telling the story, and each time he embroidered it and made it more heroic, until one could almost see the hand of God protecting Daniel in the lions' den.

No pain or terror

The village of Mabotsa, near Robert Moffat's Kuruman station, was troubled by lions when Livingstone arrived there in 1844. They killed so many cattle, the lions were thought to be bewitched. Livingstone encouraged the villagers to join him in hunting the lion. As they came upon a pride of lions resting on a rock, Livingstone gave the largest male both barrels of his shotgun.

"He is shot! He is shot!" the villagers cried. But while Livingstone reloaded, he saw the lion's tail erected in anger. The beast sprang on him.

"Growling horribly close, he shook me as a terrier dog does a rat," he wrote.

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"The shock produced a stupor similar to that which seems to be felt by a mouse after the first grip of the cat. It caused a sort of dreaminess, in which there is no sense of pain nor feeling of terror."

An elderly convert from Kuruman named Mebalwe grabbed a rifle from another native and shot, but his weapon misfired. The lion jumped off of Livingstone and attacked Mebalwe's thigh. As the beast sank its teeth into the shoulder of another native, the life drained from its eyes, and it suddenly dropped dead to the jungle floor. The attack left Livingstone's arm shattered. But after he regained his composure, he reset the humerus himself.

"I had on a tartan jacket on the occasion," he concludes, and he credited good Scottish woolens with saving the day, because they wiped up the animal's "virus" and fought off infection.

Though the attack lasted only a few moments, it had lasting consequences. While he was recuperating in Kuruman, Livingstone proposed to Mary Moffat.

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On Expedition in Africa

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The explorer encounters an exotic continent.

If David Livingstone hadn't become an explorer, he could easily have made a good living at writing. His descriptions of Africa are some of the best English prose. The following are but brief, condensed excerpts of the 1858 Harper & Brothers edition (732 pages) of Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa.

Faces in the barks of trees

In the deep, dark forests near each village, you see idols intended to represent the human head or a lion, or a crooked stick smeared with medicine, or simply a small pot of medicine in a little shed, or miniature huts with little mounds of earth in them. But in the darker recesses we meet with human faces cut in the bark of trees, the outlines of which, with the beards, closely resemble those seen on Egyptian monuments. Frequent cuts are made on the trees along all the paths, and offerings of small pieces of manioc roots or ears of maize are placed on branches.

There are also to be seen every few miles heaps of sticks, which are treated in cairn fashion, by every one throwing a small branch to the heap in passing; or a few sticks are placed on the path, and each passer-by turns from his course and forms a sudden bend in the road to one side.

It seems as if their minds were ever in doubt and dread in these gloomy recesses of the forest, and that they were striving to propitiate, by their offerings, some superior beings residing there.

Oozing poison

Feeling something running across my forehead as I was falling asleep, I put up the hand to wipe it off and was

sharply stung both on the hand and head; the pain was very acute. On obtaining a light, we found that it had been inflicted by a light-colored spider, about half an inch in length, and one of the men having crushed it with his fingers, I had no opportunity of examining whether the pain had been produced by poison from a sting or from its mandibles. No remedy was applied, and the pain ceased in about two hours.

Extortion

While at the ford of the Dasai, we were subjected to a trick, of which we had been forewarned by the people of Shinte. A knife had been dropped by one of Kangenke's people in order to entrap my men; it was put down near our encampment, as if lost, the owner in the meantime watching till one of my men picked it up.

Nothing was said until our party was divided, one half on this, and the other on that bank of the river. Then the charge was made to me that one of my men had stolen a knife. Certain of my people's honesty, I desired the man, who was making a great noise, to search the luggage for it; the unlucky lad who had taken the bait then came forward and confessed that he had the knife in a basket, which was already taken over the river.

When it was returned, the owner would not receive it back unless accompanied with a fine. The lad offered beads, but these were refused with scorn. A shell hanging round his neck, similar to that which Shinte had given me, was the object demanded, and the victim of the trick, as we all knew it to be, was obliged to part with his costly ornament. I could not save him from the loss.

I felt annoyed at the imposition, but the order we invariably followed in crossing a river forced me to submit. The head of the party remained to be ferried over last; so, if I had not come to terms, I would have been (as I always was in crossing rivers which we could not swim) completely in the power of the enemy.

Charming the demons

There was a procession and service of the mass in the cathedral [in Loanda]; and, wishing to show my [African] men a place of worship, I took them to the church, which now serves as the chief one of the [Roman Catholic] see of Angola and Congo.

There is an impression on some minds that a gorgeous ritual is better calculated to inspire devotional feelings than the simple forms of the Protestant worship. But here the frequent genuflexions, changing of positions, burning of incense, with the priests' back turned to the people, the laughing, talking, and manifest irreverence of the singers, with firing of guns, etc., did not convey to the minds of my men the idea of adoration. I overheard them, in talking to each other, remark that "they had seen the white men charming their demons," a phrase identical with one they had used when seeing the Balonda beating drums before their idols.

Dancing and mourning

The chief recreations of the natives of Angola are marriages and funerals. When a young woman is about to be married, she is placed in a hut alone and anointed with various unguents, and many incantations are employed in order to secure good fortune and fruitfulness.

Here, as almost everywhere in the south, the height of good fortune is to bear sons. They often leave a husband altogether if they have daughters only. In their dances, when anyone may wish to deride another, in the accompanying song a line is introduced, "So-and-so has no children and never will get any." She feels the insult so keenly that it is not uncommon for her to rush away and commit suicide.

After some days, the bride elect is taken to another hut, and adorned with all the richest clothing and ornaments that the relatives can either lend or borrow. She is then placed

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in a public situation, saluted as a lady, and presents made by all her acquaintances are placed around her. After this she is taken to the residence of her husband, where she has a hut for herself, and becomes one of several wives, for polygamy is general. Dancing, feasting, and drinking on such occasions are prolonged for several days.

In cases of death the body is kept several days, and there is a grand concourse of both sexes, with beating of drums, dances, and debauchery, kept up with feasting, etc., according to the means of the relatives. The great ambition of many of the blacks of Angola is to give their friends an expensive funeral. Often, when one is asked to sell a pig, he replies, "I am keeping it in case of the death of any of my friends." A pig is usually slaughtered and eaten on the last day of the ceremonies, and its head thrown into the nearest stream or river.

A native will sometimes appear intoxicated on these occasions, and, if blamed for his intemperance, will reply, "Why! my mother is dead!" as if he thought it a sufficient justification. The expense of funerals is so heavy that often years elapse before they can defray them.

Bites like sparks of fire

During our stay at Tala Mungongo, our attention was attracted to a species of red ant which infests different parts of this country. It is remarkably fond of animal food. The commandant of the village having slaughtered a cow, slaves were obliged to sit up the whole night, burning fires of straw around the meat, to prevent them from devouring most of it.

These ants are frequently met with in numbers like a small army. At a little distance, they appear as a brownish-red band, two or three inches wide, stretched across the path, all eagerly pressing on in one direction. If a person happens to tread upon them, they rush up his legs and bite with surprising vigor.

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The first time I encountered this by no means contemptible enemy was near Cassange. My attention being taken up in viewing the distant landscape, I accidentally stepped upon one of their nests. Not an instant seemed to elapse before a simultaneous attack was made on various unprotected parts, up the trousers from below, and on my neck and breast above. The bites of these furies were like sparks of fire, and there was no retreat. I jumped about for a second or two, then in desperation tore off all my clothing, and rubbed and picked them off seriatim as quickly as possible.

Ugh! they would make the most lethargic mortal look alive. Fortunately, no one observed this encounter, or word might have been taken back to the village that I had become mad.

Headhunters

The father of Moyara was a powerful chief, but the son now sits among the ruins of the town, with four or five wives and very few people. At his hamlet, a number of stakes are planted in the ground, and I counted 54 human skulls hung on their points. These were Matebele, who, unable to approach Sebituane on the island of Loyéla, had returned sick and famishing. Moyara's father took advantage of their reduced condition, and after putting them to death, mounted their heads in the Batoka fashion. The old man who perpetrated this deed now lies in the middle of his son's huts, with a lot of rotten ivory over his grave.

When looking at these skulls, I remarked to Moyara that many of them were those of mere boys. He assented readily, and pointed them out as such. I asked why his father had killed boys.

"To show his fierceness," was the answer.

"Is it fierceness to kill boys?"

"Yes; they had no business here."

When I told him that this probably would insure his own death if the Matebele came again, he replied, "When I hear of their coming, I shall hide the bones."

He was evidently proud of these trophies of his father's ferocity, and I was assured by other Batoka that few strangers ever returned from a visit to this quarter. If a man wished to curry favor with a Batoka chief, he ascertained when a stranger was about to leave, and waylaid him at a distance from the town, and when he brought his head back to the chief, it was mounted as a trophy, the different chiefs vying with each other as to which should mount the greatest number of skulls in his village.

Unholy rollers

The chief of Monze came to us on Sunday morning, wrapped in a large cloth and rolled himself about in the dust, screaming, "Kina bomba," as they all do. The sight of great naked men wallowing on the ground, though intended to do me honor, was always very painful; it made me feel thankful that my lot had been cast in such different circumstances.

One of his wives accompanied him; she would have been comely if her teeth had been spared; she had a little battle-axe in her hand, and helped her husband to scream. She was much excited, for she had never seen a white man before.

Gospel tears

There [in Kuruman] a man scorned to shed a tear. It would have been *tlolo*, or "transgression." Weeping, such as Dr. Kane describes among the Esquimaux, is therefore quite unknown in that country.

But I have witnessed instances like this: Baba, a mighty hunter—the interpreter who accompanied Captain Harris, and who was ultimately killed by a rhinoceros—sat listening to the gospel in the church at Kuruman, and the gracious

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words of Christ, made to touch his heart, evidently by the Holy Spirit, melted him into tears; I have seen him and others sink down to the ground weeping.

When Baba was lying mangled by the furious beast which tore him off his horse, he shed no tear but quietly prayed as long as he was conscious. If these Batoka ever become like him, and they may, the influence that effects it must be divine.

Lie-detectors

As we came away from Monina's village, a witch doctor, who had been sent for, arrived, and all Monina's wives went forth into the fields that morning fasting. There they would be compelled to drink an infusion of a plant named goho, [which] is performed in this way.

When a man suspects that any of his wives has bewitched him, he sends for the witch doctor, and all the wives go forth into the field and remain fasting till that person has made an infusion of the plant. They all drink it, each one holding up her hand to heaven in attestation of her innocence. Those who vomit it are considered innocent, while those whom it purges are pronounced guilty and put to death by burning. The innocent return to their homes and slaughter a cock as a thank offering to their guardian spirits.

The practice of ordeal is common among all the Negro nations north of the Zambezi. The slightest imputation makes them eagerly desire the test; they are conscious of being innocent, and have the fullest faith in the muavi detecting the guilty alone; hence they go willingly, and even eagerly, to drink it. The Barotse, for instance, pour the medicine down the throat of a cock or of a dog, and judge of the innocence or guilt of the person accused according to the vomiting or purging of the animal.

I happened to mention to my own men the water-test for witches formerly in use in Scotland: the supposed witch, being bound hand and foot, was thrown into a pool; if she

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floated, she was considered guilty, taken out, and burned. But if she sank and was drowned, she was pronounced innocent. The wisdom of my ancestors excited as much wonder in their minds as their custom did in mine.

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The Evil that Baffled Reformers

African slavery thwarted every effort to eradicate it.

When David Livingstone landed in the Cape Colony in 1841, he did so in the midst of British anti-slavery euphoria. Britain had abolished slavery throughout the empire only eight years earlier, and as his ship sailed down Africa's coast, he saw the patrols—a sixth of the great British navy—scouting the Atlantic in search of slave smugglers.

Those smugglers who made it through, mainly bound for Cuba, Brazil, and the southern U. S., still carried 60,000 slaves annually, but the number was down by over half from a few years earlier. Although by 1842 almost all major seafaring nations had officially outlawed the trade, in practice they turned a blind eye to its continuation. Slavery was simply too profitable to abandon altogether. A slave bought for $10 in Africa could sell for as much as $600 in Cuba.

By the early 1850s, Britain had nearly obliterated all slave trading from the Portuguese territories Angola and Mozambique, which were among the most notorious. When the American Civil War ended, and the U. S. zealously joined Britain in fighting the trade, the end of African slavery around the world seemed to be in sight.

Loopholes and Catch-22

Livingstone, on the other hand, knew military action alone could not sufficiently stanch the slave trade. While studying in London in 1840, Livingstone had listened to Thomas Fowell Buxton support "legitimate commerce" in western Africa as the only means to end slavery. Finance was the best weapon in the crusade. Until Livingstone, however, Buxton's ideas were merely academic. No

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"legitimate" traders could possibly penetrate the interior of the continent.

In the late 1850s and early 1860s, French plantation owners on Indian Ocean islands started buying slaves from Mozambique, and the dying trade found new life facing east. Loopholes made trading even easier than it was on the west coast. Laws allowing the exportation of slaves by land nullified other restrictions. In fact, Mozambique prohibited anyone from interfering with slave traders.

Livingstone's early, well-publicized attacks on slavery focused almost wholly on the Atlantic, European trade. This was to be expected, as this was the kind of slavery best known to the British. But as the explorer continued to run into slave caravans, he noted they weren't going west at all, but east.

By 1861 he also noticed the Portuguese traders he encountered were becoming outnumbered by Arabs.

Arabs had been taking African slaves since the time of Christ but not on a large scale for the nineteenth century. While as many as one-third of the slaves sent through Mozambique went to the French plantations, the remainder were now being sent to Turkey, Iraq, Arabia, and Persia. Most sold for $100 (ten times the buying price), but attractive young girls, sold as concubines to harems, regularly fetched as much as $500.

Livingstone recognized the African Catch-22: the only thing that could stop African slavery was "legitimate commerce," which required extensive exploration and the zealous westernizing of the natives. However, the deeper into Africa Livingstone explored and civilized, the more access he gave the slave traders. Then, as the slave trade increased, both exploring and converting Africa became more difficult.

"The slave trade must be suppressed as the first great step to any mission," he wrote. "That baffles every effort."

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Furthermore, Livingstone could count on little help from his country when it came to ending the Indian Ocean slave trade with the vigor it used in the Atlantic. Britain had never been involved in that part of the world's slave trade and thus felt no moral obligation to end it. In addition, England was on good terms with the governments in eastern Africa and had no desire to risk these delicate relationships.

Tilting the balance

Nonetheless Livingstone had the last word. His final journeys were spent as much writing about the horrors of the Arab slave trade as they were looking for the source of the Nile. In 1871 the House of Commons set up a committee to review the east African slave trade and possible British intrusion.

Livingstone's dispatches (with those of John Kirk and Sir Bartle Frere, the governor of Bombay) tilted the balance. By the end of 1872, the government sought the emancipation of all slaves, whether in Britain's sphere of influence or otherwise. Among its first steps was to threaten the sultan of Zanzibar with a naval blockade if he did not close the slave market forever. He complied, albeit reluctantly.

Livingstone, however, never got to celebrate the news. He had died only 35 days before the sultan's signing of the agreement.

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David Livingstone,

Missionary Explorer

Early Life

1813 Livingstone born on March 19 in Blantyre, Scotland

1823 Starts work in cotton mill

1838 Accepted by London Missionary Society (LMS) for work in China

1839 Start of Opium War (which lasts until 1842) makes China missions impracticable

1840 Chance meeting with Robert Moffat in London persuades Livingstone to work in Africa; qualifies as doctor, ordained as minister, and sails for South Africa

1841 Reaches Cape Town; travels to Moffat's station in Kuruman

1845 Marries Mary Moffat

First Journeys

1847–52 Founds several mission stations, ending with Kolobeng

1849 Trip to Lake Ngami with William Cotton Oswell earns him fame in Britain

1851 Reaches upper Zambezi River for the first time

1852 Mary takes children to England

1853–6 Crosses southern Africa from coast to coast

1856 Returns to England and receives a hero's welcome—and the gold medal from the Royal Geographic Society

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1857 Publishes *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*; leaves the LMS

Zambezi Expedition

1858 Zambezi Expedition sets sail; initial objectives abandoned by the end of the year

1859 Livingstone reaches Lake Nyasa

1862 Mary joins her husband on the Zambezi and dies almost immediately

1863 Zambezi Expedition and Universities Mission are recalled; Livingstone sails 2,500 miles to India to get a good price for his ship

1864 Son, Robert, dies of wounds fighting for the Union in the American Civil War days before he turns 19.

1865 Livingstone publishes *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambezi and its Tributaries*

Last Journey

1866–73 On his last journey, tries (unsuccessfully) to find the source of the Nile

1871 Meets Henry M. Stanley

May 1873 Dies near Lake Bangweulu (Zambia); African companions take his body to Bagamoyo on the coast, a nine-month journey, and then to England

1874 Buried in Westminster Abbey; The Last Journals published

Other Events

1815 Napoleon defeated at Waterloo

Britain suppresses Boer uprising in Cape Town (South Africa)

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1830 Joseph Smith founds Mormon church

1833 Britain passes Emancipation Act: all slaves in British colonies freed

1835 P.T. Barnum begins career with exhibition of "George Washington's nurse," whom he says is 160 years old

1839 First baseball game played in Cooperstown, N.Y.

1850 14 percent of U.S. population (23 million) are slaves

1853 Cecil Rhodes born

1858 English explorers Richard Burton and John Speke discover Lake Tanganyika and Lake Victoria Nyanza

1859 Darwin publishes *Origin of Species*

1861–65 American Civil War

1869 Suez Canal opened

Thousands of prospectors flood South Africa in search of gold and gems

1874 British gain control of Gold Coast (Ghana)

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The Man with Three "Wives"

Though Livingstone loved his family, he spent little time with them.

In the 1940s, a British district officer in Tabora, in what is now central Tanzania, found the local people still told stories about Livingstone, who had spent six months there before setting out on his last journey.

An old man said, "My father used to say that Livingstone was like a man that had three wives, and yet none of them were women. One was a river. The river they call the Nile. The second was the struggle against slavery. The third, religion."

By the time Livingstone had reached Tabora, his true wife was long dead. But local tradition recognized, with great insight, the conflict between his passion for exploration and the demands of family life. "He was a holy man," the Arab Taboran said. "A little mad, but yet a holy man."

"Tearing out my bowels"

Livingstone's marriage to Mary Moffat in 1845 began as a purely unromantic, utilitarian venture. Livingstone had decided that he needed a wife to help him in his missionary work. Mary, at 23, wanted to have a home of her own and expected to be part of a missionary establishment like that of her parents. At the remote Kuruman mission station, both had a limited choice of marriage partners.

Livingstone was hardly ecstatic about his new bride, describing her as "a plain, common-sense woman, not a romantic. Mine is a matter-of-fact lady, a little, thick, black-haired girl, sturdy and all I want."

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In time, however, he grew to love her deeply. He was to write her, "I never show my feelings, but I can say truly, my dearest, that I loved you when I married you and the longer I lived with you, I loved you the better."

After several false starts at starting mission stations, they settled among the BaKwena and began raising a family. Mary expected to stay in one place, as her parents did at Kuruman. But Livingstone loved exploring, and Mary and the children usually followed. The journeys proved to be full of dangers and hardships, including days without water. On the first trek, Mary fell seriously ill and their newborn daughter died.

Upon learning of the second of these expeditions, his mother-in-law wrote in protest, "O Livingstone, what do you mean? Was it not enough that you lost one lovely babe, and scarcely saved the other, while the mother came home threatened with paralysis?"

Livingstone realized his planned journey across Africa would be too rough on Mary and their children, of whom the eldest was six. There were four living children now. So he sent them to Britain, intending that they stay at his parents' home in Scotland. (It is unclear why they did not go to her parents in Kuruman.)

He expected their separation to last two years, and planned for his family to live on his meager missionary salary. He felt the parting from wife and children profoundly, writing, "The act of orphanising my children, which now becomes painfully near, will be like tearing out my bowels, for they will all forget me."

Loneliness of the long-distance wife

The separation stretched to four-and-a-half years. It proved impracticable for Mary and four children to stay in his parents' little cottage. The families fell out, and Mary led a wandering life with the children, staying in boarding houses. Stress and loneliness led to a drinking problem,

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which continued until she died. This only compounded her poverty, and when she became seriously ill in 1854, she could not even pay for medical care.

Mary begged her husband to return, but he refused. Instead the reply came back, "Hope you give much of your time to the children. You will be sorry if you don't. Give my love and kisses to them all.… I have nothing worth writing, having no news. I write only because you will be anxious to hear from me."

They were finally reunited when Livingstone returned to England in 1856. Mary expressed her delight in a poem:

Do you think I would reproach you with the sorrows that I bore?

Since the sorrow is all over, how I have you here once more.

And there's nothing but the gladness, and the love within my heart.

And the hope so sweet and certain that again we'll never part.

When Livingstone's *Missionary Travels and Researches* sold well, the burden of poverty was lifted from his family for the first time, and he was able to buy a house. But now he found himself constantly writing and lecturing. When he returned to Africa in 1858, he wrote his son Robert, "While I was in England, I was so busy that I could not enjoy much the company of my children."

Playful in private

Livingstone planned to take Mary and William (the youngest child) with him on the Zambezi Expedition. Though observers questioned the wisdom of Mary's presence on such a potentially dangerous expedition, she steadfastly refused to stay behind again. The older children, Robert, Agnes, and Tom, remained in the care of friends

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and relatives in Britain, supported by the proceeds of *Missionary Travels*.

Almost immediately after setting sail, however, Mary discovered she was pregnant again. She went first to Kuruman, then back to Scotland, where she left 6-year-old William Oswell and the new baby, Anna Mary, with Livingstone's relatives. As soon as she could, she rejoined her husband. She lasted only three months on the Zambezi before she died of malarial fever. In her delirium, she spoke constantly about her children. She lies in Africa still, under a baobab tree.

Livingstone was heartbroken, not only because of her death but because hardships and disappointments had undermined her religious faith and had alienated her from the missionary enterprise. He feared for her salvation but was consoled when he found a prayer among her papers: "Accept me, Lord, as I am, and make me such as thou wouldst have me be."

For his part, Livingstone's memories were happy ones. He wrote, "In our intercourse in private, there was more than what would be thought by some a decorous amount of merriment and play. I said to her a few days before her fatal illness, "We old bodies ought now to be more sober, and not to play so much. 'Oh no,' said she, 'you must always be as playful as you have always been.' "

Her death led him to reflect on his shortcomings as a husband and father and brought him closer to his children. He began writing them more often, but he still did not want to settle down in Britain.

In 1864 Livingstone returned to Britain for the last time. His brother suggested he marry a wealthy widow and settle down to write books. Instead, entrusting his children to the care of friends, he returned to Africa on a journey of exploration from which he did not return.

The fate of the children

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In Africa, though, he worried about his children's welfare. His sons, unfortunately, died young, but all his children turned out well.

Tom, whose health was always delicate, worked in business in Egypt; he died in 1876, at the age of 27. William Oswell (he was called by both names) studied medicine and practiced in Trinidad, where he died in 1892 at 41. Anna Mary married a missionary and lived until 1939. Livingstone's favorite, Agnes, who married a Scottish businessman, died in 1912.

Robert had been regarded as a problem child; he ran away from school and ended up in America, where he was impressed into the Union army. He died a prisoner at the age of 18. At an earlier stage, Livingstone had written, "I cannot free myself from blame in his having so little of fatherly care." But Robert's last letter, in which he mentions he changed his name lest he disgrace his famous father, casts him in an attractive light. "I have never hurt anyone knowingly in battle," he wrote, "[and] have always fired high."

Missionaries and seamen

Many today criticize Livingstone's family arrangements. Yet all married nineteenth-century missionaries (and missionaries today, for that matter) struggled to reconcile the needs of their families with the demands of their vocation. Livingstone often pointed out that this was also true of seamen and others.

Those who sustained family life most successfully did so by devoting less time to missions and more time to growing fruit and vegetables and creating a stable home life.

Robert Moffat, Livingstone's father-in-law, planted flourishing irrigated gardens and orchards at his Kuruman mission, admitting he had more fruit trees than Christians. He and his wife raised a large, healthy family, and his life's work lay especially in translating the Bible into Tswana.

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Livingstone was aware of the hardships he imposed on his family. He once wrote that he wished he could start over, and that he would have done better to remain celibate, like the Jesuits. Though he wanted more time with his family, he always returned to Africa—to find one more river, to free one more slave, to live out what he believed was his highest calling.

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Finding a Useful Wife

Bachelor Livingstone's unromantic stroll into marriage.

Although romance was far less a factor in marriage for nineteenth-century couples than it is today, the unmarried Livingstone seemed even less romantic than most.

Before he married, he prided himself on his celibacy and singleness. When his London Missionary Society (LMS) application asked simply for his marital status, for example, Livingstone wrote a mammoth reply: "Unmarried; under no engagement related to marriage, never made proposals of marriage, nor conducted myself so to any woman as to cause her to suspect that I intended anything related to marriage."

Livingstone was not against marriage as an institution. He simply believed it was something best left to others. The only reason he would marry, he wrote a friend, would be to further his cause. "But whether my usefulness will be augmented by getting a wife," he wrote, "I really don't know."

Pressed to marry

While he lived in a missionary community, however, the issue refused to be left alone. Letters from friends back home pressed him to marry and were often accompanied by baby clothes!

One missionary couple tried to get Livingstone interested in their daughter, but he showed no interest. Unsatisfied and incredulous, the couple zealously gathered information about his female correspondents, going so far as to open his mail. They were particularly concerned about a Mrs. Sewell, whom they suspected was a young widow hoarding

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Livingstone's affections, and withheld his letters to her. In truth she was an elderly woman who ran the London boarding house Livingstone had stayed in.

Though single male missionaries were often suspected by married ones of "carrying on" with the natives, Livingstone persisted in singleness, even more so given what he felt were his options.

"Daughters of missionaries have miserably contracted minds," he wrote, "colonial ladies worse and worse. There's no outlet for me when I think of getting married but that of sending home an advertisement in the *Evangelical Magazine*."

Doing his duty

Gradually Livingstone became convinced a wife would help him in his missionary work. Not only would she run a school but she would assuage (unfounded) suspicions some had about his relations with African women.

Of his potential brides, Mary Moffat offered Livingstone the best opportunity to pursue his missionary calling. She had lived 19 of her 23 years in Africa, and, unlike many other missionary daughters, did not see marriage as a ticket home to England. Beauty was certainly not an issue for him. To friends he once described Mary as "African in complexion, [with] a stout stumpy body."

Things other than love or looks loomed larger in his mind. He wrote his mother, "My wife is amiable and good tempered, and my new connections pious, which you know to be the best certificate of character."

And when it came to announcing his engagement to the LMS, his British reserve went out of control: "Various considerations connected with this new sphere of labor, and which to you need not be specified in detail, having led me to the conclusion that it was my duty to enter into the marriage relation, I have made the necessary arrangement

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for union with Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Moffat, in the beginning of January 1845."

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The Other Livingstone

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The same traits that led the explorer to greatness, led him into the Zambezi disaster.

By 1858 seven years had passed since Livingstone first saw the great Zambezi River, and for seven years, Livingstone had eagerly anticipated a second exploration of its vast waters. As in all his travels, his immediate goal was to open a route to Africa's interior.

"If Christian missionaries and Christian merchants can remain throughout the year in the interior of the continent," he wrote, "the slave trader will be driven out of the market."

This was the legacy Livingstone craved, and this river—500 yards wide, 1,000 miles from the sea—would be the greatest tool imaginable.

Instead the expedition turned into his greatest disaster. Livingstone was considered a national hero when he left on his Zambezi Expedition; when he returned, he was thought a madman and a failure. "We were promised cotton, sugar, and indigo, and of course we get none," lamented the *Times*. "We were promised converts to the gospel, and not a one has been made."

What happened on this infamous expedition reveals a recurring irony in the study of great people. In this case, the qualities in Livingstone that brought him success—his singlemindedness, his courage, his stubborn perseverence—also led him into his biggest failure.

Wrong river

The two-year expedition was funded by the British government. Accompanying Livingstone were naval officer Norman Bedingfield, a zealous abolitionist; young geologist Richard Thornton; John Kirk, medical officer; Thomas

Baines, storekeeper; George Rae, the Scottish engineer of the ship; and Charles Livingstone, David's brother, who, as a clergyman, was to be the expedition's "moral agent."

The expedition's troubles began almost immediately. When the party arrived at what appeared to be the mouth of the Zambezi (a river Livingstone called "God's Highway"), Livingstone was too sick, tired, and drugged to enjoy the moment. Two weeks would pass before a passing trader informed the expedition they were not on the Zambezi but a small river just south of their goal.

The party made its way to the Zambezi and started up the river on the *HMS Pearl*. Immediately the ship became stuck, and Bedingfield, a senior officer in the Royal Navy, began arguing procedure with the *Pearl's* captain. When Livingstone arbitrarily sided against his second-in-command, Bedingfield offered his first letter of resignation.

With the river falling 10 inches a day, the *Pearl* ran aground again and again. So on an island a mere 50 miles from the ocean, the party unloaded their goods and their "portable" steam ship, dubbed the *Ma Robert* (to pass difficult stretches of the river, it had been designed to be taken apart and reassembled). That's when another argument between the captain and Bedingfield broke out.

Livingstone blamed the row on bowel trouble (an ailment he faulted for many problems) and suggested Bedingfield try a laxative. Bedingfield said the advice "had been better addressed to a child" and tendered his resignation—this time for good. (The squabble was followed by a flurry of letters from Livingstone to England, absolving himself of any blame and accusing Bedingfield of, among other misdeeds, insubordination, cowardice, and refusing to work on Sundays.)

In the meantime, Livingstone, knowing every moment spent in the Zambezi's delta was an open invitation to malaria, headed for Tete, the village he visited in 1856, to set up a base. With his glut of supplies, however, that

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required several trips up and down a difficult 250-mile stretch.

Just getting to what was supposed to be the starting point of the expedition, then, took four months. And the expedition had already lost one member.

Between a rapid and a cataract

Livingstone's next step was to explore the Kebrabasa Rapids (now Cabora Bassa). Leaving his brother in charge at Tete, Livingstone, Kirk, and Rae set out for the gorge. At the second rapid, however, their launch was swung around and hit a rock, gashing a hole into the port bow.

Shaken, the men opted to survey the rapids by land. But with each rapid more dangerous than the last, "God's Highway" had reached a dead end.

Livingstone returned to Tete and wrote, "Things look dark for our enterprise. This Kebrabasa is what I never expected. No hint of its nature ever reached my ears."

Though more ground reconnaissance only confirmed these fears, Livingstone remained hopeful: perhaps, with a different water craft, at flood stage, when most waterfalls would be completely submerged, he could surmount the gorge. But even he recognized this would be risky.

The impatient Livingstone, however, refused to wait for the Zambezi to rise. Instead he decided to explore the Shire River, which joined the Zambezi 100 miles from the sea.

Livingstone quickly began to believe the Shire offered even better access to Africa's interior. The Shire began 80 yards wide and only broadened upstream. And the natives, though suspicious of his expedition, were not hostile. The Maganja, who had a reputation as belligerent and dangerous, were even willing to trade.

Again geography put a halt to his plans. The party reached a series of cataracts (which Livingstone named

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Murchison Falls) that could not be passed. So it was back to the Zambezi to see once more if the Kebrabasa Rapids were passable yet. They weren't.

Then it was back to the Shire. Then back to Tete and to more personnel problems.

His brother Charles had accused Thornton of being lazy, and Baines, of stealing. Livingstone naturally believed his brother, but it is now clear that Charles (like his brother) was prone to making false reports about those with whom he disagreed. Livingstone ended up dismissing two of his best men on what turned out to be false charges.

With his ever-shrinking crew, Livingstone returned to the Shire again, this time to find its source—the immense Lake Nyasa (now Lake Malawi). If a steamer could be taken apart, put back together just upstream from the cataracts, and placed on Lake Nyasa, Livingstone could create his dream: an English colony in the center of Africa that would stanch the slave trade.

Yet now it was not geography, personnel problems, nor poor management but the Portuguese who stood in the way: following in Livingstone's tracks, they had laid claim to key sections of the Shire. Livingstone was forced to look for another way to the great lake.

He put his hopes now in a third river, the Rovuma, which lay 1,000 miles north of the Zambezi's mouth.

Tossed like twigs

The Rovuma, however, would have to wait, for Livingstone had a promise to keep. On his previous expedition, he had brought the Makololo tribe to Tete from their homeland, rescuing them from slavers. At the time, he promised them that upon his return to Africa, he would lead them back to their home. It was this promise, in fact, that had pushed him to return to Africa so quickly. So back to the Zambezi he went.

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Escorting the Makololo was a long, relatively uneventful journey. On the way, however, Livingstone found that slave traders routinely claimed to be his children to gain favor and cheap slaves. Livingstone was horrified, not only at the suggestion of illicit behavior but more importantly this: the country he had opened in order to stop the slave trade had become a highway for it: "We were made the unwilling instruments of extending the slave trade.... Had we not been under obligations to return with the Makololo to their own country, we should have left the Zambezi."

When he arrived at Sesheke, Livingstone was more desperate than ever to prove the Zambezi navigable. He obtained canoes, and he navigated from Victoria Falls to the Kebrabasa Rapids without incident. But Livingstone wanted to show he could descend the gorge, too. When he tried, the canoes were tossed like twigs in the whitewater. His men were somehow able to swim to shore safely and recover the canoes.

"We now left the river and proceeded on foot," Livingstone later recounted, "sorry we had not done so the day before."

Personnel issues surfaced again, this time with his brother, Charles. "He seems to let out in a moment of irritation a long pent-up feeling," he wrote. "In going up with us now he is useless.... He often expected me to be his assistant instead of him acting as mine."

In fact, Charles almost got himself killed after he kicked a Makololo chief while arguing with his brother. The chief, inches from plunging a spear into the minister's chest, only stopped at David's request.

Still seething from the slave traders' exploitation of his travels and discouraged by his experience at the Kebrabasa Gorge (amazingly, he still maintained it would be navigable with a powerful steamer), Livingstone returned to Tete ready to write off the Zambezi altogether, concentrating his efforts on Lake Nyasa.

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"We have kept the faith with the Makololo," he said, and then admitted in disappointment, "though we have done little else."

Missionary mess

Livingstone naturally did not share his pessimism with the English government. Instead he encouraged his country to lay claim to the Nyasa area, portraying the valley as an Eden awaiting residents.

At the time, the government had no interest in creating and maintaining a colony in central Africa, but it supported Livingstone's plans to explore Nyasa and his desire to establish a mission near the lake. So it sent a new boat to replace the Ma Robert along with a staff for the mission.

The staff that arrived included five Africans picked up from the Cape of Good Hope, a bishop, three clergymen, and two laborers. Each of the Europeans had been inspired by Livingstone's famous Cambridge address, which pleaded for more missionaries to Africa. But Livingstone commented, "It was a puzzle to know what to do with so many men." For Livingstone, a natural loner, this crowd was too much.

On the other hand, the missionaries' awe for Livingstone was quickly diminished when they discovered he had greatly exaggerated the livability of the Shire valley.

And when the missionaries became enmeshed in inter-tribal warfare (in an attempt to free slaves), Livingstone's work of building relationships with tribes was undone. To every tribe of the area, it would appear the group had taken sides.

Death toll

This news was compounded by word that more people were coming to the mission at Magomero, including Livingstone's wife, Mary, and two other women. The land was far too harsh for the English women, but Livingstone

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had written so kindly of the Shire valley that they thought it safe to come. Now Livingstone's troubles multiplied.

Livingstone took a handful of men to meet the women's ship, but the canoe carrying the bishop and another missionary capsized, soaking the men. Weak and ill, with no medicine or change of clothing, both men died.

Meanwhile the missionaries who remained in Magomero were struck by famine and disease.

Livingstone, upon greeting his wife, was met with rumors of a tryst between her and another arriving missionary. The rumors were untrue, and Livingstone never really believed them. (The idea of a handsome, 30-year-old missionary pursuing a married woman known for being "coarse, vulgar" and obese, is highly unlikely. The missionary had only sought to calm Mary down during her drunken bouts of hysteria.) But the stories weakened Mary Livingstone's spirit while the jungle weakened her body. Three months later, she was dead.

Mary's death was immediately followed by word that the missionaries had fled Magomero upon word that tribal warfare was on the rise.

Then the waters of the Shire receded so much, it would be impossible to ascend them for another six months.

Desperate to get away from the situation, Livingstone left to explore the Rovuma River but found the river far too shallow to navigate.

When he returned to the Shire, Livingstone discovered that a steady drought meant not only famine but also too little water to head upstream. Furthermore, two more members of the mission had died, and the others were almost out of food. Kirk and Charles Livingstone asked to be released. Now only six whites remained.

The singleminded Livingstone still believed all could be saved if he could just get a steamer on Lake Nyasa. He

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never got the chance. Just before leaving for the lake to get provisions for the group, the mission's new bishop arrived carrying a letter from the British government.

The letter said the expedition was being recalled.

For better or worse?

In one respect, the news came as a relief. By being recalled, Livingstone did not need to concede defeat—though it is unlikely he would have done so.

As he packed his supplies, he was told the new bishop was pulling the mission off the mainland. Livingstone knew immediately that natives would now be much worse off because the Portuguese would simply exploit for the slave trade areas Livingstone had opened.

In the long run, Livingstone's legacy helped prompt the British government to step in and put a stop to the African slave trade. But in the meantime, Livingstone was left to roll over in his mind a statement he had made some 13 years earlier: "The natives always become much worse somehow after contact with the Europeans."

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Pioneers & Pallbearers

Those closest to the remarkable explorer were often remarkable themselves.

Robert and Mary Moffat

(1795–1883) (1795–1871)

Pioneer in-laws

Though Livingstone's name is most often attached with the opening of Africa for missions, in many ways, it was Robert and Mary Moffat who provided the scaffold, 50 years in the making, upon which later missionary successes were built.

Born in Ormiston, Scotland, Robert was raised in a Presbyterian home, but the faith didn't take at first. He "ran off to sea" for a time and at 14, became apprenticed to a gardener. At 19 he underwent a spiritual rebirth, and a year later heard a message by a London Missionary Society director. Soon after, he applied to the society and eventually was accepted for service. In 1816 he sailed for Cape Town.

Meanwhile he had taken up with Mary Smith, the daughter of his employer. She too wanted to be a missionary, but her parents forbade her marriage for more than three years before allowing her to travel to South Africa to wed Robert.

Disillusioned with "confused and deplorable and awful" missionaries in the Cape Colony, the Moffats moved in 1825 to the Kuruman mission station, which would later be Livingstone's first home. After several years of vainly attempting to communicate in the rudimentary trading language called Cape Dutch, Robert began what was to be his finest legacy: translating Scripture and spiritual training texts into Tswana.

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Even after 29 years of effort, Robert knew his version was imperfect, especially when the natives asked why Paul had demanded to be armed with guns! In addition, there were no Tswana words for many Christian concepts. Moffat translated the word sin into cow dung, and the word for *holiness* he used usually meant "a nice fat ox or cow."

The paths of Livingstone and the Moffats first crossed in 1840 when Robert secured Livingstone for the work at the mission. "Perhaps," wrote Moffat biographer E.W. Smith, "Livingstone and Moffat agreed better than any two men in the field."

Livingstone's relationship with Robert's wife was not as positive, especially after he married their daughter, also named Mary. Ironically the elder Mary, whose parents had vehemently opposed her move to Africa, repeatedly chided Livingstone for risking her daughter's life by taking her further into the continent. The elder Mary lived in Africa for 50 years, then died a few months after returning to England when she and Robert retired.

"He was the father and pioneer of South African mission work" concludes one official biographer. Regarding his wife, Mary, it adds, "For fifty years [she] shared all her husband's hardships and trials," and when discussing their impact on that region, adds, "Her name must be associated with his."

Charles Livingstone

(1821–1873)

Ineffectual "General Assistant"

"I am at a loss how to treat him," wrote David Livingstone about his brother, eight years his junior. These words summarize the frustration Charles engendered among the seven men who constituted the ill-fated Zambezi Expedition.

He had worked in the same cotton factory as young David and, like his brother, used what little free time he

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could spare for education. Feeling a call to missions, he emigrated to America to get ministerial training.

He pastored in, coincidentally, Livingstone County, New York, and later traveled to England on a leave of absence (likely due to a nervous breakdown). Though he had not seen his brother for years, David asked Charles to join him on the Zambezi Expedition.

His official title was "General Assistant and 'moral agent,' " and his unofficial duties included photography (which he knew little about) and personal assistance to David. However, "As an assistant he has been of no value," wrote David in his journal. "Photography very unsatisfactory…. Meteorological observations not creditable, and writing the journal in arrears."

Charles returned home (the last expedition member to leave his brother) after contracting dysentery and rejoined his family in America. He eventually reconciled with his brother and returned to England to assist in the publication of *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambezi and its Tributaries*. David, through his clout, solicited for Charles an appointment to a consulship on the west coast of Africa. There he died of fever.

Sechele

(c. 1815?-1892)

Livingstone's only convert

Sechele was an African chief with uncommon understanding of Livingstone. And since Livingstone was uncommonly keen on the ways of the African, it is not surprising that these two forged a fast friendship.

They first met after Livingstone arrived at Kuruman in 1841. "You startle me," said the Bakwena chief upon hearing Livingstone's first instructions in the Christian faith. "These words make all my bones to shake." But Sechele became antagonistic when Livingstone associated with a

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Bakwena rebel, and he dropped not-so-subtle hints about Livingstone's personal security. When the chief's only child fell ill, Livingstone successfully treated her, and the antagonism melted.

In 1846 Livingstone accepted the chief's invitation to move to his village, Chonuane, roughly 200 miles northeast of Kuruman. Sechele's intelligence impressed Livingstone. "He acquired the alphabet on the first day of my residence at Chonuane," he wrote. "He was by no means an ordinary specimen of the people, for I never went into the town but I was pressed to hear him read some chapter of the Bible. Isaiah was a great favorite with him."

As a drought pressed upon the village, Sechele, "who declared he would cleave to us wherever we went," followed Livingstone's lead and transplanted his village 40 miles west to the banks of the Kolobeng. The chief became increasingly devoted to Christianity and volunteered to construct a school and church.

"I wish to build a house for God," he said, "who is the defense of my town."

As the town built up over many months in the dry, tsetse-infested region, Sechele "continued to profess to his people his full conviction of the truth of Christianity." Livingstone, however, was not willing to allow the converted chief full church membership until he put away his "superfluous wives" and practiced monogamy. It took three hard-fought years, but Sechele relented and sent his other wives back to their families.

He was baptized in September 1848, much to the hot displeasure of his people. Work in the village stopped, women stayed at home, and a large meeting was called to discuss the problem. Sechele responded by telling the villagers, in Livingstone's words, "if they wished to kill him, to do so immediately."

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In March of the following year, though, Livingstone entered this in his journal: "Symptoms of pregnancy discovered in Mokokon [one of Sechele's ex-wives]. Enquired of Sechele. Confessed he had been twice with her.... He shews much sorrow for his sin. Cut him off for a season."

He wrote to Moffat that the pain caused by Sechele's backsliding "fell on my soul like drops of aqua fortis on an ulcerated surface." It was also a catalyst for moving on, forsaking the life of a resident missionary for that of an explorer.

Sechele slowly drifted out of the doctor's life, though they stayed in touch, and at least from Sechele's view, remained good friends. In one letter's salutation the chief writes the doctor, "Friend of my heart's love and of all the confidence of my heart, I am Sechele."

John Kirk

(1832–1922)

Friend with private reservations

The governor of South Africa was considering Kirk for a post and was trying to get Livingstone to reveal some hidden deficiency in his friend. "I replied, in terms that I need not repeat," Livingstone wrote, "that I knew no defect of character." Livingstone was speaking truly about his long-time friend.

This friendship prompted Kirk to join Livingstone on the Zambezi Expedition, where Kirk served as medical officer and botanist. The entire expedition party seemed to be on great terms with Kirk, except for the hostile Charles Livingstone. "As for Dr. Kirk," wrote Bishop Mackenzie, "we are the greatest possible cronies." When Kirk's two-year term was up, in fact, Livingstone was able to cajole him into staying on. The ties between the older and younger man seemed to tighten.

Recent scholarship, however, has highlighted Kirk's secret thoughts. At various points, he became furious with Livingstone's leadership. Privately, Kirk at one point said, "I can come to no other conclusion than that Dr. L. is out of his mind." At another point, in disgust he threw a copy of Livingstone's *Missionary Travels* into the river.

Just prior to Kirk's departure for home, Livingstone came down with a nasty case of dysentery. Although worn out and homesick, Kirk stayed and nursed Livingstone back to health, probably saving his life. Years later Livingstone lobbied for Kirk's appointment to various government posts. Between 1866 and 1887, he served as vice-consul, assistant political agent, consul general, and political agent in Zanzibar, where he worked diligently to end the slave trade.

Charles Mackenzie

(1825–1862)

Armed bishop

Mackenzie "arrived in East Africa with a crozier [bishop's staff] in one hand and a rifle in the other." His short life (he died at age 37) is a tribute to that unsure mixture of charismatic leadership and youthful impetuosity.

Charles possessed a winsome character: at once gentle, brave, just, and compassionate. His athletic prowess, good looks, and muscular build seemed ideal for ministry in adverse conditions. But his first appointment, as priest in the Cape city of Durban, only allowed him to exercise clerical duties.

In 1859 he returned to England and attended Livingstone's famous Cambridge lecture, where the explorer cried out for missionaries to Africa's interior. The next day, the Bishop of Oxford invited Mackenzie to head the first expedition of the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). He sailed for Cape Town, and on New Year's

Day 1861, he was ordained the first Church of England missionary bishop in the region.

At the mouth of the Kongone River, the bishop met Livingstone with awe. "He is an excellent fellow," Mackenzie said, "and I have no fear of any difficulty at any time arising between us." But difficulties did indeed arise, as they did among all the members of the Zambezi Expedition. They were only the beginning of the difficulties the mission soon encountered.

Unable to navigate the river due to a meager water level, the missionaries returned to the mouth, where they all came down with fever. Trying the Shire River instead, they came upon a slave caravan. The choice was made, after prayer and debate, to free the slaves, which was accomplished with almost no resistance. Mackenzie was presented with an instant congregation of some 84 liberated and grateful Manganja (among them was Livingstone's later companion Chuma).

Mackenzie and his "children" accepted the Manganja tribe's invitation to live among them, though he was soon asked to help the Manganja fight against their enemies, the Ajawa. How could he refuse and see those he loved carried away into slavery? The domino process had begun. The attack commenced and peace-talking, though attempted, could not stop the poison arrows from flying at Mackenzie and Livingstone. As the bishop threw the doctor a rifle, Livingstone fired at a human for his first time.

The missionaries routed the Ajawa, killing six. They finished the job by setting fire to the Ajawa village. The die had been cast.

Soon the missionaries felt like sitting ducks, waiting for the Ajawa retaliation. Panicky, they decided to take the initiative and made two offensive attacks. Livingstone, away at Lake Nyasa at the time, was horrified at this news.

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Hearing that his sister was coming up from Cape Town, Mackenzie and a fellow-missionary went to meet them. Unfortunately the rain was incessant and their canoe overturned. Without food or medicine, feverish and hungry, they put up on an island in the river. Hoping to rendezvous with Livingstone and Mackenzie's sister, the two lived in a gloomy and damp hut offered by the local chief. Depression mounted as the rendezvous was hopelessly delayed. They passed the time translating *Romans* into Greek. Diarrhea worsened for both; Livingstone's steamer was nowhere to be seen. Mackenzie slowly slipped into coma and died.

James Chuma and Abdullah Susi

(1850–1882) (?–1891)

Faithful servants

As an 11-year-old boy, Chuma, along with the men, women, and children of his village, were captured by Portuguese slave-traders. Their hands were tied together as they were marched to the coast. On the way, the slave caravan ran into David Livingstone (on his Zambezi Expedition in 1861), who negotiated for their release. Chuma immediately attached himself to Bishop Mackenzie's UMCA mission.

Abdullah Susi, a native of Shupanga near the Zambezi delta, joined the Zambezi Expedition in 1863 as a woodcutter. He also later worked for the UMCA and became an integral part of Livingstone's fateful Nile expedition.

Before Henry Morton Stanley stood face-to-face with Livingstone in Ujiji, he met Chuma and Susi, Livingstone's "front men."

Pushing through the crowd, Stanley heard a polite voice in English greet him. "How do you do, sir!" Stanley turned sharply and saw a man whom he described as having the blackest of faces, yet animated and joyous.

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"Who the deuce are you?" Stanley asked.

"I am the servant of Dr. Livingstone," Susi replied.

Chuma and Susi worked with Livingstone until his last hour and beyond. They insisted, in spite of ridicule and doubt, that his body be taken to Britain for burial. They embalmed the body and buried his heart. Then, with a small band of followers, they dutifully bore their *Bwana* (master) to England. The trip from Chitambo to England took almost a year, and after their arrival, they helped reconstruct Livingstone's final days for posterity.

As a result of their faithfulness, the names of Chuma and Susi captivated the imaginations of the British as the Livingstone myth burgeoned in the late 1800s.

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[2]*Christian History Magazine-Issue 56: David Livingstone: Missionary-explorer in Africa*. 1997. Christianity Today: Carol Stream, IL

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Accidental Missionary

Henry Stanley did more than find Livingstone—he followed him.

Find out Livingstone, and get what news you can relating to his discoveries."

With this terse command, the owner of the New York *Herald* sent his most tenacious young reporter, Henry Stanley, plunging into the wild heart of the Dark Continent. The *Herald* hoped the story would sell papers by drawing on readers' curiosity about the legendary David Livingstone. Stanley signed on for the sake of adventure, prestige, and journalistic duty—but not for the sake of the gospel.

Stanley (born John Rowlands) was not cast in a missionary mold. Both his father and mother abandoned him before his first birthday, leaving him in the cold care of reluctant relatives.

At 15 he came to America, where he acquired his second name from a wealthy American merchant, Henry Stanley, who showed kindness to the boy and soon adopted him as a son.

Stanley fought in the Civil War (first for the South, then the North). He discovered his gifts as a reporter through writing accounts of the battles he experienced, and later moved to New York to write professionally.

Once in Africa, Stanley was swindled by his native guides, threatened by belligerent kings, and brought "to the verge of the grave" by dysentery. No encouraging news of Livingstone's whereabouts offset these trials, and Stanley fought cynicism and depression. "Is this Dr. David Livingstone a myth?" he cried in one dispatch. "Is there such a person living? If so, where is he?"

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"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

The best reports Stanley could collect placed Livingstone at Ujiji, a city on the northeast coast of Lake Tanganyika. As Stanley's men marched, unsure if they would find Livingstone alive, dead, or not at all, several deserted. Tribal leaders demanded tribute at every turn, and Livingstone's letter carrier never appeared for a scheduled meeting.

Finally, two months after Stanley had admitted his hopelessness, the party reached the village. They celebrated their final march with horn blasts and cannon muskets, which thoroughly frightened the residents of Ujiji. In the confusion, Stanley heard a voice shouting, in English, "How do you do, sir!"

One of Livingstone's servants had been sent to meet the man marching under the American flag. Livingstone was alive and waiting for his well-traveled visitor. At the first sight of the gray-bearded man in a navy cap and red woolen jacket, Stanley was tempted to run up and shake hands with him. However, he was concerned about his own image and a little worried that the explorer would disdain such a demonstration in front of an Arab and native crowd. Instead he offered his famous, stuffy salutation:

"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

"Yes," the explorer answered. "You have brought me new life."

Stanley described Livingstone as a "truly pious man—a man deeply imbued with real religious instincts. His religion … is of the true, practical kind, never losing a chance to manifest itself in a quiet, practical way—never demonstrative or loud. It is always at work, if not in deed, by shining example."

Livingstone's tacit evangelism touched Stanley, who had arrived in Africa "as prejudiced against religion as the worst infidel in London." Livingstone had truly left all to follow

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Christ, and his model of dedication converted Stanley. After Livingstone's death, Stanley stepped up to continue his fantastic voyages.

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Controversial career

When Stanley returned to Africa in 1874, he aimed to further Livingstone's investigation of potentially navigable rivers, not merely to get a good story but in hopes that such a river would bring the gospel to the continent's interior.

Like Livingstone, Stanley was more considerate of the Africans than were the vast majority of his white peers. He never labeled the Africans "savages" or "brutes," nor did he take advantage of them. He detested the slave trade. The young white men sent to oversee the Congo after Stanley's brief tenure as its administrator derided him for his "Negrophilia." Stanley's practice was to treat the Africans with civility, unless he judged them to be hindering his divine work. Only then did he turn violent, contributing to his African name *Bula Matari*: "The Breaker of Rocks."

Take, for example, his encounter with the residents of the island of Bumbire in August, 1875. They had tormented and detained Stanley earlier, and when he returned to Lake Victoria, he made war against them. His men paddled their canoes up to the island and opened fire on its residents, killing 42 and wounding 100. This "work of punishment" received full treatment in a *Herald* dispatch.

Stanley soon gained a reputation as the most ruthless explorer of his age, but he did not deserve the ignominy. Most explorers left ugly episodes out of their accounts, and their whitewashing made Stanley, who freely described his exploits, appear darker.

The pen is mightier

Stanley achieved unquestionable success in one respect: recruiting missionaries. In a dispatch published jointly by the *Herald* and the British *Daily Telegraph*, he jubilantly

reported he had nearly converted the previously Muslim king of Uganda, opening that country's door wide for Christianity: "But, O that some pious, practical missionary would come here! What a field and a harvest ripe for the sickle of the gospel!"

The enthusiasm of Uganda's king fell short of Stanley's hope, but the response of Victorian Christians exceeded expectations. Missionaries sailed in by the hundreds as new agencies rushed into Stanley's world, and Livingstone's work flowed on.

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Great White Father

After Livingstone opened Africa, Western missionaries moved in by the thousands. Did they hurt or help Africans?

A play performed at the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Nairobi in 1975 depicted the three main oppressors of Africa. First on stage was an Arab slave-trader, who stole the Africans' bodies. Next came the European colonialist, thief of the Africans' land. Finally the wcc depicted a Christian missionary, who took the Africans' culture.

Modern historical scholarship has been harshly critical of "colonial missionaries." That Christianity was an agent of colonialism is so widely assumed, it has become, in the words of Brian Stanley, "one of the unquestioned orthodoxies of general historical knowledge."

Why the negative reaction? The benefits of the missionaries' involvement are obvious: hospitals, schools, colleges, commercial ventures, abolition of slavery, development projects, literacy programs, and improved agricultural methods. But the benefits came at a cost.

Partners in crime

Early missionaries to Africa are most frequently faulted for collaborating with colonial powers. The missionary and colonial administrator were viewed as partners in crime.

Some missionaries were so elated by the added security and development promised by colonial overlords, they crossed the boundaries of Christian morality to advance the colonialist cause. In 1888 Charles Helm of the London Missionary Society deliberately cheated the Ndebele king Lobengula out of his land by mistranslating a crucial

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document from South African businessmen working with Cecil Rhodes.

Critics sometimes blame the doctrine of providence: if God brought civilization to Africa at the same moment he was sending his gospel, missionaries reasoned, then should not the missionary work with the colonial government rather than oppose it?

It is not hard to find statements by missionaries supporting colonial intrusion. Johann Krapf, the first missionary to eastern Africa, openly supported British intrusion into Ethiopia. Livingstone too hoped to plant the Union Jack in Africa, writing before his Zambezi Expedition: "All this ostensible machinery has for its ostensible object … the promotion of civilization, but I hope it may result in an English colony in the healthy highlands of central Africa."

On the other hand, missionaries also believed God had given them the opportunity to use their position to sensitize others about the injustices of colonialism.

Missionary criticisms of colonialism are also easy to come by. Alexander Mackay, a Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionary in Uganda, faulted the colonial policy of his own government: "In former years, the universal aim was to steal the African from Africa. Today the determination of Europe is to steal Africa from the African."

Patronizing parents

Though Henry Venn, secretary of the CMS, had insisted early in the 1800s that African churches should be self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating, by the end of the century, this vision had been lost.

In the famous case of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Nigeria, the first African bishop of the Anglican church, white missionaries undermined his authority and wrongly discredited his work. After his resignation, he was replaced by a white missionary.

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As colonialism advanced, the spirit of paternalism replaced the older strategy of Africanization. New missionaries to South Africa were told, "Here we don't shake hands with Africans." For many the African was the child who needed to be brought along slowly before power could be shared.

While unbiblical paternalism is a historical fact, beyond it lay a plan for discipleship. The concept allows a period of tutelage under a "master"—but only as a step to empowering the disciple to leadership. Even the most paternalistic missionaries believed in training nationals for evangelism and church planting.

As churches grew, the missionary was forced to recognize the competence of the African convert. From the ranks of these African faithful came the future leaders of African Christianity. The Christian concept of discipleship thus transformed early paternalism into the empowerment of the African.

Revolutionary schools

Part of the paradox of the missionaries' paternalism was evident in their ubiquitous schools. After the Phelps-Stokes commission surveyed British Africa in the 1920s, it recommended the British government work through the missionary schools to educate the African. Though British policy (unlike French and Belgian) sought to raise educational standards, the suspicion persists that the curriculums of these schools were dominated by a narrow pietism and rigid biblicism calculated to maintain the status quo. In short, the schools were instruments of oppression.

But why did so many of Africa's political leaders come from mission schools? From the halls of "narrow pietism" came the leaders of Africa's first wave of independence in the 1960s. Among them were Julius Nyere, a Roman Catholic convert who became the first president of Tanzania; Jomo Kenyatta, the first prime minister and president of Kenya, who had run away from home to

become a resident pupil at the mission; and Kenneth Kaunda, the son of teachers and leader of Zambia's independence movement.

How could narrow-minded missionaries be agents of social liberation? Central to both their message and that of revolutionaries was the coming kingdom of Christ. No earthly government or culture was absolute or eternal, including the colonial powers. Roland Oliver, author of *The African Experience*, concludes that many of the doctrines in missionary school curriculums "were in themselves revolutionary and egalitarian influences."

Mine is better than yours

Some critics claim missionaries' zealous belief in Christ's lordship made them "almost incapable of seeing anything positive and valuable in the life and culture of the African." The "Christian" civilization of the Western world, they argue, deepened the missionary's sense of cultural superiority.

Armed with these convictions, the missionary engaged in an aggressive evangelism that some believe may have irreparably damaged traditional African culture. To some, missionary Christianity was little more than "imperialism at prayer."

But in truth, not only did missionaries often soften the blow of cultural disruption of colonial overlords, they also transformed African culture for the better by translating the Scriptures into the native languages.

These vernacular translations helped tribes value their culture even more: God so valued their culture, he had put his very words and those of his divine Son into the tribe's own language. A new confidence in one's culture, and the divine acceptance of that culture's most treasured possession—its language—gave birth to liberation movements around the continent.

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Nineteenth-century missionaries to Africa deserve many of the criticisms leveled against them. But deeper than the faults lies a great paradox, first expressed by perhaps the greatest of missionaries, Paul: he boasted about his weaknesses because it was through weakness that the power of God was best shown.

Livingstone and his missionary colleagues would have undoubtedly agreed.

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[3]*Christian History Magazine-Issue 56: David Livingstone: Missionary-explorer in Africa*. 1997. Christianity Today: Carol Stream, IL

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