

STANLEY, HENRY MORTON (1841-1904)

Born John Rowlands in 1841 in Denbigh, Wales, Stanley was the son of a farmer who died shortly after his birth. He lived with his maternal grandfather until his death in 1847, after which he suffered ill-treatment in St. Asaph's workhouse until he ran away in May 1856 to live with a series of relatives. Working as a pupil-teacher, a haberdasher and a butcher, in 1859 Stanley eventually sailed from Liverpool to Louisiana as a cabin-boy. He became known as Henry Morton Stanley after he found work with a merchant of the same name who treated him as his own son. Enlisting in the Dixie Grays in 1861, one year later he was imprisoned at the battle of Shiloh. Eventually Stanley was released and thought unfit for active service, so returned briefly to England, before enlisting with the US Navy in 1863. He decided to become a journalist in the wake of the American civil war. Stanley began his career in journalism in 1865 as a staff writer for *The Globe* (St. Louis). Two years later, he was special correspondent for the *Missouri Democrat*, reporting General Hancock's expedition against the Indians until 1858. He then began writing for the *New York Herald* as their special correspondent with the British forces fighting against Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia in 1868, as well as other events that same year, including the rebellion in Crete and the rebellion in Spain of 1868-9. He joined the search for David Livingstone in 1869 in great secrecy as he hoped for a scoop. Stanley, and his party of nearly 200 men, reached Zanzibar on 6 January 1871 and discovered Dr Livingstone in the village of Ujiji around 10 November 1871 where he offered his greeting made famous by his 1872 *How I Found Livingstone*; 'Dr Livingstone, I presume?'. The two men shared a bottle of champagne and became fast friends. They explored the northern shores of Lake Tanganyika together where they found that the lake was not the source of the Nile. At Tabora they parted ways on 14 March 1872, and Stanley returned to London with Livingstone's journals and letters. Though his account *How I Found Livingstone* was extremely popular, Stanley received much criticism and ridicule for his geographical and geological inaccuracies and was particularly attacked for being neither a scientist nor a gentleman. Despite his attempts to suppress his humble roots, Stanley's parentage and childhood secrets soon became the focus of scandalous press reports; often partially fuelled by his fiery responses to what he perceived as the unfairness of the press. Stanley continued with his special correspondence, reporting Viscount Wolseley's Ashanti campaign in 1873, and his travels from 1874 to 1877 to investigate the validity of John Hanning Speke's claim that Lake Victoria Nyanza was the source of the Nile, publishing his observations in *The Daily Telegraph*. Stanley took on some important diplomatic roles in later life, such as his 1887 trip to Africa to assist in establishing a British protectorate in East Equatorial Africa. He was celebrated on his return and received honorary degrees from Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh, before embarking on a lecturing tour of Australia, New Zealand and the United States. In 1892, Stanley was renaturalised as a British subject, and embarked on a political career, unsuccessfully running as the MP for North Lambeth in 1892, and eventually being elected from 1895-1900. Stanley was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Bath in 1899, but suffered from many serious illnesses in his later years and eventually suffered a stroke in April 1903, dying one year later on 10 May 1904. He was not buried beside Livingstone in Westminster Abbey according to his wishes; the dean refused this honour due to Stanley's divisive reputation. Instead, Stanley's funeral service was held in the Abbey before he was buried in the Pirbright churchyard near his country home. **AD**

References:

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