

# Exploring Africa

An Exhibit of Maps and Travel Narratives

## ARCHIVED ONLINE EXHIBIT

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This exhibit was originally displayed February-April 1997 at the Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina.

Based on an exhibit by Patrick Scott

Original Hypertext by Jason A. Pierce

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## INTRODUCTION

This exhibit puts on display one of the hidden resources of Thomas Cooper Library's Special Collections, a selection from the many books of travel and exploration purchased for the original South Carolina College Library in the early and middle nineteenth century. The exhibition illustrates most of the major phases in the European exploration of Africa, from the late fifteenth century to the late nineteenth century.

The exhibition begins with a series of very beautiful Renaissance maps, showing the tracing of the African coastline in the late fifteenth century, by Portuguese seamen, and with the widely-translated early account of West Africa by the Arab scholar Leo Africanus. Included here are the magnificent facsimile of a fifteenth-century manuscript Ptolemy, purchased in 1983 from the John Shaw Billings Endowment, and Wilhelm Blaeu's famous map of Africa (1617). Also from the Renaissance is another Dutch engraver Theodor de Bry's 1598 map from his famous *Voyages*, kindly loaned for this exhibit by James P. Barrow, '62.

But the heart of the exhibit lies with the many early editions of the great names in the European exploration of the African interior—James Bruce, Mungo Park, Burckhardt, Clapperton, Laing, Caillie, Lander, and others. With many different motivations—adventure, fame, scientific curiosity, the hope of new wealth or trading opportunities, missionary ardor and anti-slavery zeal—the European explorers of Africa during the eighteenth and nineteenth century nonetheless form an extraordinary succession of individual bravery and visionary commitment. Many of the books and maps in which they recorded their quest remain both essential historical sources for African history and very beautiful examples of contemporary book production and engraving. Some items, alas, after long years originally on the open shelves of a college library, have been damaged or inappropriately repaired and now need professional conservation, but many are, at least internally, still pristine.

The last part of the exhibit, concerning Livingstone and Stanley, adds to the library's original collections some illustrated early editions recently donated by Dr. D. Strother Pope, along with his extensive collection of modern books on Africa, and includes brief reference to the literary legacy of African exploration in Joseph Conrad and Chinua Achebe.

This exhibit covers a very wide range of materials and a broad historical span, and its preparation has correspondingly relied on help and advice from outside the department's staff. The planning of the exhibit, and review of available materials, was helped by Prof. Ronald Atkinson, of the Department of History, and Prof. Allen Bushong, of the Department of Geography, who also assisted with some of the reference literature in historical cartography. The department is grateful also for the interest in the exhibit shown by colleagues in African Studies and African-American Studies. Roger Mortimer helped identify early maps of Africa in Special Collections. David McQuillan and Ross Taylor of the Map Library made available older maps from their holdings. Paul Schultz assisted in the mounting of the exhibit.

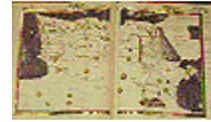
## AFRICA BEFORE EUROPEAN EXPLORATION

"Description Quartae Tabulae Africanae"  
from Claudius Ptolemaeus, fl. 2nd cent. A.D.

### **Cosmographia**

Facsimile of Vatican Library MS. Urb. Lat. 277 (Codices e vaticanis selecti, no. LIII); no. 59 of 550 copies

Zurich: Belser Verlag; New York: Johnson Reprint for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983.



Well into the Renaissance period, the major influence in European ideas of Africa remained such classical sources as the Greek historian Herodotus, the Roman natural historian Pliny, and the Alexandrian geographer and astronomer Ptolemy. Manuscripts and early printed versions of Ptolemy's **Geography**, whether in the original Greek or, as here, in Latin translation, normally reproduced his twenty-seven original maps of the ancient world, including four of (north) Africa. This magnificent manuscript was written at Florence in 1472 for Federigo de Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino; the original is in the Vatican library. The fourth map of Africa, shown here (ff. 99v-100r), illustrates how pre-Renaissance European knowledge about Africa was essentially limited to the Mediterranean coast and the lower Nile.

*Purchased in 1983 from the John Shaw Billings Endowment Fund.*

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Giovanni Leo Africanus, ca. 1492-ca. 1550

### **Ioannis Leonis Africanae descriptio IX. lib.**

In Ramusio, Giovanni Battista, 1485-1557

**Primo volume, & quarta edizione delle navigationi et viaggi raccolto . . . & con molti vaghidiscorsi, da lui in molti luoghi dichiarato, & illustrato. Nel quale si contengono la descrizione dell'Africa, & del paese del Prete Ianni, con varij viaggi . . .**

In Venetia, Nella stamperia de Givnti, 1588.



During the later medieval period, Arab travelers had greater contact with inland Africa than did Europeans. In Renaissance Europe, the most influential of the Arab historians of Africa was this author, known to his European readers as Leo Africanus, born in Granada and originally named al-Hassan ibn Muhammad. Shortly after the Spanish conquest in 1492, his wealthy family moved to Morocco, and the young al-Hassan traveled widely throughout the Arab world, including visits to Timbuktu and the sub-Saharan empires of Mali and Bornu. Captured by Italian pirates off Tunisia in 1518, he was presented as a slave to the Medici pope Leo X, who freed him, baptized him Leo, and set him on a new career in Italy as a teacher of Arabic and African historian. His great work was originally written in Italian, first published by Ramusio in Italian in 1550 and included in his great collection of voyages, as displayed here.

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Giovanni Leo Africanus, ca. 1492-ca. 1550

### **Ioannis Leonis Africanae descriptio IX. lib. absoluta**

Leyden: Elzevir, 1632.



Leo's work was soon translated, first from Italian into Latin in 1556, into French the same year, and into English in 1600. Shown here is the Latin text, in the convenient travel-size edition put out by the Dutch firm of Elzevir in Leyden.

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Samuel Purchas, 1577?-1626

**Haklyvtvs posthumus or Pvrchas his Pilgrimes. Contayning a history of the world, in sea voyages, & lande-truells, by Englishmen and others. . .**

London: Printed by W. Stansby for H. Fetherstone, 1625.

4 v. illus. (incl. maps) fold. maps. 32 cm.



Shown here, with the title-page, is an excerpt from the English version of Leo Africanus, originally translated by J. Pory in 1600, and then included in the first volume of the best-known English collection of sea-voyages, Purchas his Pilgrimes.

Click on the image to read Africanus's account of his visit to the West African king of Mali, and to the "great village" of Timbuktu.

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Lorenz Fries, c. 1485-?1532, after Martin Waldseemuller, 1475-?1522

"Tabu. Nova. Partis. Aphri" [c. 1525]

in Claudius Ptolemaeus Alexandrinus, fl. 2nd century; Michael Servetus, ed.

**Geographicae e Narrationis. Libri Octo**

Lyons: Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel, 1535.



During the fifteenth century, under the influence of Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), Portuguese seamen had been steadily venturing down the west African coastline, past Sierra Leone, Cape Verde, the Gulf of Guinea, and the Congo, until in 1487 Bartholomew Diaz was blown round the southern tip of Africa, holding out the Good Hope of a sea-route to India, accomplished by Vasco da Gama in 1497-1499. Clearly Ptolemy's maps needed updating. The first printed edition of Ptolemy's **Geography** was printed in Venice, Italy, in 1477, and very shortly afterwards, in Florence in 1482, an edition was issued with the first modern additions. This beautiful French-printed folio edition uses the second of two woodcut maps of Africa by the pioneering cartographer Martin Waldseemuller, originally published in Strasbourg in 1513, showing the familiar coastal outline, but with only conjecture as to the interior; this edition uses the block recut in 1522 following Waldseemuller's death by the Alsace physician Lorenz Fries.

## PORTUGUESE DISCOVERIES AND DUTCH MAP-MAKERS

Theodor Johann de Bry, c. 1527-1598, and Johann Israel de Bry

"Tabula hanc Aegypti"

in Philip Pigafetta, 1533-1604; Augustus Reinius, transl.

**Vera descriptio regni Africani, quod tam incolis quam Lusitanis Congus appellatur** [de Bry's **Lesser Voyages**, part one]

Frankfurt: Wolfgang Richter, 1598.



The Frankfurt engraver Theodor de Bry issued two major series of exploration narratives, with fine illustrations and beautiful, now very rare, maps. The University is fortunate to possess a set of de Bry's **Greater Voyages** (1590-1630), with the accounts of voyages to North and South America, but does not own his second series, the **Lesser Voyages** (1598-1628), which prints voyages to Africa, India and the Far East; the set displayed here has been generously loaned by a University of South Carolina alumnus, Mr. James P. Barrow. Early Portuguese penetration of the African interior was long underestimated, and this map of southern Africa, inserted in the first account, derived from that of the Portuguese explorer Duarte Lopez as redrawn by the Italian geographer Filippo Pigafetta, is notable for including much more realistic detail about inland Africa interior (notably the existence of large lakes). Lopez had first gone to Africa in 1578. The map's dedication, referring to the empire of "John the Presbyter, King of the Congo and surrounding regions," draws attention to longstanding European fascination with the legendary Prester John.

*On loan from James P. Barrow, Class of '62.*

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Theodor Johann de Bry, c. 1527-1598, and Johann Israel de Bry

"Plate IV: The Famous Marketplace in Cabo Corso"

in **Icones seu verae vivaere praesentationes omnium . . . in aurifero Guineae littore** [de Bry's **Lesser Voyages**, part seven]

Frankfurt: Wolfgang Richter, 1603.



Theodor de Bry's original inspiration for the **Voyages** had been the Englishman John White's illustrations for Harriot's account of Sir Walter Raleigh's voyage to Virginia (London, 1588), and both of de Bry's series included engravings of people, dress and places described in the narrative accounts. This plate, with its detailed annotation keyed to letters on each group of market traders, testifies to the developed African trading economy encountered by Portuguese explorers such as Lopes. "Cabo Corso" was the Portuguese name for the low bank of slate that protected the landing place at their major settlement on the Gold Coast (hence the later English corruption of Cape Castle).

*On loan from James P. Barrow, Class of '62.*

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Jacob Hondius, 1563-1612

"Hondius his Map of Africa"

from Samuel Purchas, **Haklvytvs posthumus or Pvrchas his Pilgrimes**

London: Printed by W. Stansby for H. Fetherstone, 1625.



Jacob Hondius and his son fled from Holland to London in 1584, to escape religious persecution, and their re-engravings of Mercator's projection, together with original maps, became among the most frequently reprinted of the early 17th century. This volume was one of the original books from South Carolina College, now needing preservation work.

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Jacob Hondius, 1563-1612

"Hondius his Map of Congo"

from Samuel Purchas, **Haklvytvs posthumus or Pvrchas his Pilgrimes**

London: Printed by W. Stansby for H. Fetherstone, 1625.



This map of the Congo illustrates the Lopez Congo account, here made available in yet another translation, for English readers. The many placenames both on the coast and inland testify to the international and exploratory nature of precolonial contact with coastal Africa and to European recognition of existing African power structures.

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Jeronimo Lobo, 1596?-1678; Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784, transl.

**A voyage to Abyssinia. . . . From the French**

London: A. Bettesworth, and C. Hitch, 1735.



Portuguese penetration of Africa ran down the east coast as well as the west, and the ancient civilization of Ethiopia held a special fascination. King Joao II, avid for knowledge of Prester John, sent envoys to Ethiopia as early as the 1490s, and subsequently, in the 1540s, the Portuguese gave military aid to the Ethiopian emperor and court against Muslim invasion. In 1625 the emperor declared himself Catholic. This chatty account by a Portuguese Jesuit missionary, who visited Ethiopia in 1625-1634, lay unpublished in a Lisbon monastery until rescued by the French scholar Joachim LeGrand in 1728; it was LeGrand's version that, translated into English, became the first published book of the young scholar Samuel Johnson (for which he earned 5 pounds); in Lobo, Johnson wrote approvingly, are "no romantick absurdities . . . here are no Hottentots without Religion, Polity, or Articulate Language." Twenty-five years later, Johnson was to make Ethiopia the setting for his philosophical novel **Rasselas** (1759).

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Willem Janzoon Blaeu, 1571-1638

"Africae Nova Descriptio"

in **Afrique, qui est la troisieme partie de la Geographie Baluiane, livre unique** [bound with vol. XII: Espagne of Joan Blaeu's **Le grand atlas**]

Amsterdam: chez Jean Blaeu, 1667.



This decorative hand-colored copperplate engraving is among the earlier work of one of the best-known early seventeenth century Dutch map-makers, Willem Blaeu, and was originally prepared in 1617 for his series of maps of the continents. Subsequently, the plate was reused in his own **Atlantis Appendix** (1630), and in his son Joan's great series the **Atlas Maior**, with different editions with text in

various languages (1662-1672). Among its inland features, note the westward direction of the river Niger.

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Willem Bosman

**A new and accurate description of the coast of Guinea, divided into the Gold, the Slave, and the Ivory Coasts . . . with a particular account of the rise, progress and present condition of all the European settlements upon that coast; and the just measures for improving the several branches of the Guinea trade. To which is prefix'd, an exact map of the whole coast of Guinea, that was not in the original**

London: J. Knapton, 1705.



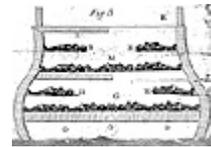
The immediate appearance in both English and French of this book, only a year after its initial Dutch publication, is a sign of the growing multinational involvement in the coastal trade of West Africa. Its author, the Dutchman Willem Bosman, had spent fourteen years trading on the West African Guinea coast before writing this account. The foldout map mentioned on the English title-page indicates the increased number and variety of coastal European settlements by the early 18th century; it was engraved by the emigre Dutch cartographer, Herman Moll (fl. 1678-1732), who moved to London about 1680, and who had recently produced a much larger map of Africa (c. 1700) with inset views of various coastal forts and castles.

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Thomas Clarkson, 1760-1846

**The history of the rise, progress, and accomplishment of the abolition of the African slave-trade by the British parliament**

2 vols. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1808.



In his account of the lengthy British parliamentary agitation for the abolition of the Atlantic slave-trade, Clarkson records that this well-known plan and section of a typical slave-ship, originally published in 1788 and "designed to give spectators an idea of the sufferings of the Africans in the Middle Passage" across the Atlantic, "seemed to make an instantaneous impression of horror on all who saw it, and . . . was therefore very instrumental in serving the cause of the injured Africans." Slavery itself was not abolished in the British empire till 1833, but in the early and mid-19th century, much European exploration in Africa would be justified by the aim of reaching inland slaving centers to end the trade there also.

*Donated by Richard Wingate Lloyd, Camden.*

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**Olaudah Equiano (Gustavus Vassa), 1745?-1797**

Some of the most important sources of information about precolonial African society are the writings of ex-slaves such as Olaudah Equiano. Equiano, an Igbo from the eastern part of Nigeria, was taken when he was ten by local slavers and sold down to the coast. After a period in the West Indies and the United States, mostly working as a seaman, he was freed in 1766, at the age of twenty-one, and eventually settled in Britain, where he



attempted, unsuccessfully, to return to Africa with the first group of freed slaves at the Sierra Leone settlement. The early chapters of his autobiography, first published in 1789 and several times reprinted, give one of the fullest pictures of traditional Igbo life before Chinua Achebe's novels nearly 200 years later.

## EXPLORATION FROM THE CAPE TO THE NILE

Anders Sparrman, 1748-1820

**A voyage to the Cape of Good Hope : towards the Antarctic polar circle, and round the world: but chiefly into the country of the Hottentots and Caffres, from the year 1772 to 1776 . . . from the Swedish original. With plates . . .**

2 vols. London: G. G. J. & J. Robinson, 1786.



The first permanent settlement at the Cape was established by the Dutch only in 1652, but because of its strategic location on the sea-route to India it was frequently described in early travel books. The Swedish scholar Sparrman gives one of the first accounts of the South African interior, and, as a fellow-countryman of the great Linnaeus, gave special attention to botanic description. Subsequently he traveled also in West Africa.

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Francois Le Vaillant, 1753-1824

**New travels into the interior parts of Africa, by the way of the Cape of Good Hope, in the years 1783, 84 and 85. Translated from the French of Le Vaillant. Illustrated with a map, delineating the route of his present and former travels, and with twenty-two other copper-plates.**

London : Printed for G.G. and J. Robinson, 1796.



The first part of Le Vaillant's **Travels** had appeared in French as early as 1790, and was immediately pirated and translated into English and German. This long-delayed second part describes the French occupation of the Cape and, like other visitors such as Lady Anne Barnard, describes the obligatory climb up Table Mountain, shown in this copperplate foldout.

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Sir John Barrow, 1764-1848

**An account of travels into the interior of southern Africa, in the years 1797 and 1798: including cursory observations on the geology and geography of the southern part of that continent; the natural history of such objects as occurred in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; and sketches of the physical and moral characters of the various tribes of inhabitants surrounding the settlement of the Cape of Good Hope. To which is annexed, a description of the present state, population, and produce of that extensive colony; with a map constructed entirely from actual observations made in the course of the travels.**

2 vols. London, Printed by A. Strahan for T. Cadell, jun. and W. Davies, 1801-1804.



During the Napoleonic wars, Barrow had accompanied the British military governor Lord Macartney to the Cape as his private secretary, and had been sent out into the interior on the double mission of reconciling the Kaffirs and the Boer settlers and of obtaining fuller geographical information, traveling over a thousand miles on horse and foot. His original intent of settling at the Cape as "a country gentleman of South Africa" was frustrated by the peace of Amiens in 1802, which returned the colony to the French. Barrow subsequently became second secretary to the Admiralty. It was Barrow who in 1830 proposed the formation of the Royal Geographical Society. The foldout map displayed here illustrates

the military importance that the British attributed to possession of the Cape.  
*From the collection of the Winyah Indigo Library Society, Georgetown.*

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William Macintosh, 18th cent.

**Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa: describing characters, customs, manners, laws, and productions of nature and art: containing various remarks on the political and commercial interests of Great Britain**

3rd ed. 2 vols. Dublin: Charles Lodge, [1782].

*Autograph signature of Charles Pinckney, New York, Jan. 10, 1786, inside the upper cover of each volume.*



This book, written as a series of discursive letters on political issues from a traveler to the East who calls at the Cape, critiques British policy in the east and records also the maneuverings of the Dutch East India Company, caught between the competing strategic ambitions of the French and English. The opening criticisms of British colonial policy towards America, and the international political perspective, may be what caused the South Carolinian Charles Pinckney (1757-1824) to purchase the book, while in New York as a delegate to the Congress of the Confederation.

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Samuel Daniell, 1775-1811

**Sketches representing the native tribes, animals, and scenery of southern Africa, from drawings made by the late Mr. Samuel Daniell**

London: William Daniell, 1820.



Europeans were continually astonished by the different fauna and peoples of the Cape. This magnificent book of contemporary engravings, engraved by William Daniell from pencil drawings made in South Africa by his brother, contains forty-five engravings, each accompanied by explanatory letterpress extracted from John Barrow or Samuel Daniell's mentor, Dr. Somerville. The Duyker, Duiker or Ducker shown here (Daniell uses all three spellings) was so named from its mode of getting close to the ground to hide under the bushes.

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Allen Francis Gardiner

**Narrative of a journey to the Zoolu country, in South Africa**

London: William Crofts, 1836.



Gardiner was a British naval captain who hoped "to open a way whereby the ministers of the gospel might find access to the Zoolu nation." The focus of this journal, interspersed with original religious poetry and covering just over a year's missionary exploration in Natal from late 1834 to early 1836, is overwhelmingly anthropological, as in this chromolithographic frontispiece, rather than botanical or geographical as with earlier narratives.

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James Bruce of Kinnaird, 1730-1794

**Travels to discover the source of the Nile, in the years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772,**



**and 1773**

5 vols. Edinburgh: G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1790.

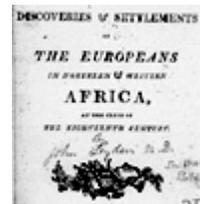
James Bruce, a striking figure, 6' 4" tall with red hair, was the wealthy son of a Scottish landowner and a former British consul in Algiers. In 1768, he set out from Cairo, in Arab dress, with letters of introduction from the Patriarch of Alexandria, to trace the source of the (Blue) Nile into the Ethiopian highlands (a quest he fulfilled). He was immediately embroiled in the violent internal feuds of the Ethiopian court, though his patrician bearing won him appointment as commander of the household cavalry. Traveling back through Rome, Paris and London, after his adventures, Bruce was a sensation; he claimed with typical hyperbole that his discoveries filled "a great chasm in the history of the Universe." His five-volume account, prepared for publication many years after he returned to Scotland, reads like a novel, and included much information about natural history; contemporary experts found it dated and grudgingly accepted his self-glorification, it remains, in Richard Garnett's phrase, "the epic of African travel."

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John Leyden, 1775-1811

**A historical & philosophical sketch of the discoveries & settlements of the Europeans in northern & western Africa at the close of the eighteenth century**

Edinburgh: J. Moir for T. Brown and J. Symington and Vernor & Hood, 1799.



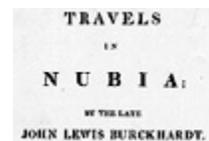
This anonymous publication testified to the growing interest in African exploration, by providing a reasonably-priced summary of the expensive, lavishly-illustrated recent books by Bruce, Park and others. It was written by the Scottish physician, orientalist, poet, and ballad-collector John Leyden. Leyden never himself went to Africa, but after his early death, his collaborator, Walter Scott, wrote that Leyden found, in the history of Africa, "much to enchant an imagination that loved to dwell upon the grand, the marvellous, the romantic."

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John Lewis Burckhardt, 1784-1817

**Travels in Nubia . . . Published by the Association for promoting the discovery of the interior parts of Africa. With maps, &c**

London: John Murray, 1819.



The African Association, whose influential membership was headed by Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society, was founded in 1788 and sponsored a series of important explorations over the next forty years. With the Association's support, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, a Swiss emigre educated at Leipzig and Gottingen, studied Arabic at Cambridge before traveling south from Cairo through Nubia disguised as a Turkish trader, and then, to avoid duplicating Bruce's route, joining up with a group of pilgrims to the holy places of Mecca and Medina. He died quite suddenly, back in Cairo, as he was making plans to travel with another pilgrim caravan down to West Africa.

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Henry Salt, 1780-1827

**A voyage to Abyssinia, and travels into the interior of that country, executed under the orders of the British government, in the years 1809 and 1810**



Philadelphia: M. Carey, and Wells and Lilly, 1816.

The ancient Christian civilization of Ethiopia continued to fascinate Europeans, as these facsimile inscriptions indicate. Henry Salt, a physician's son from Lichfield who had first visited the war-torn country under private patronage in 1805, returned as a quasi-official envoy under Canning's sponsorship in 1809-10, marching up from the Red Sea coast with an escort of 160 bearers, to explore trade and diplomatic links with the Abyssinian emperor Welde Selassie. Little came of the mission for the government, but Salt earned over 1000 pounds for the first edition of this book, and an appointment in 1815 as consul-general to Egypt.

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### **Map of part of Abyssinia**

from Henry Salt, **A voyage to Abyssinia, and travels into the interior of that country, executed under the orders of the British government, in the years 1809 and 1810**  
Philadelphia: M. Carey, and Wells and Lilly, 1816.



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George Waddington, 1793-1869, and Rev. Barnard Hanbury

### **Journal of a visit to some parts of Ethiopia**

London: John Murray, 1822.

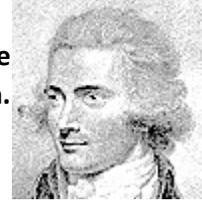


The two Cambridge friends who coauthored this lavish book had met in Venice in 1820, gone on together to Alexandria, and decided, almost on a whim, to join a caravan down the Nile valley. Their frontispiece map conveniently shows the earlier travels of the Frenchman C. J. Poncet in the 1680s, Bruce in the 1760s and 1770s, and most recently of Burckhardt. Waddington, fellow of Trinity College, subsequently became Dean of Durham. The coauthors' antiquarian bent is clearly shown by an appendix reconciling their own observations with the descriptions in Ptolemy.

## WEST AFRICA, THE NIGER, AND THE QUEST FOR TIMBUKTU

Mungo Park, 1771-1806; James Rennell, 1742-1830

**Travels in the interior districts of Africa : performed under the direction and patronage of the African Association, in the years 1795, 1796, and 1797. By Mungo Park, surgeon. With an appendix containing geographical illustrations of Africa. By Major Rennell**  
3rd ed. London: W. Bulmer, 1799.



*Bookplate of Louis D. Tiemann.*

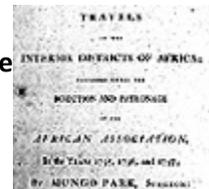
Park, a farmer's son from the Scottish borders who studied medicine at Edinburgh, set out from the Gambia in late 1795, on foot, with one servant, to trace the course of the fabled river Niger. Ill-prepared and eventually destitute, he suffered hair-raising hardships and persecution as well as receiving great kindness from some Africans, but he was able to establish the eastward flow of the Niger, and this became an immediate bestseller, with three editions within a year: it has never been out of print since. On his second expedition in 1805, a larger-scale government-sponsored effort, Park planned with substantial military support to take boat-building supplies overland from the west coast, build boats and sail down the Niger to its source; disease decimated his companions, and Park himself drowned trying to evade capture after a fight with the inhabitants at Bussa, hundreds of miles downstream. His journal for the first part of the trip was later published, with a postscript from his African servant Isaaco. Park's silver-mounted walking-stick survives in Nigeria, as the staff of office of the Emirs of Yauri.

*Donated from the library of Alfred Chapin Rogers by Mrs. Elizabeth F. Pyne.*

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Mungo Park, 1771-1806; James Rennell, 1742-1830

**Travels in the interior districts of Africa: performed under the direction and patronage of the African association, in the years 1795, 1796, and 1797; by Mungo Park, surgeon: with an appendix, containing geographical illustrations of Africa: by Major Rennell**



Philadelphia: from the London quarto edition by James Humphreys: And Sold by him, at No. 106, South Side of Market-Street, 1800.

*Signature of Thomas McGehee, 1810.*

It is noteworthy that this first American edition of Mungo Park's Travels was printed in Philadelphia, perhaps because of links to the English Quaker involvement in the anti-slavery movement.

*Donated by Dr. D. Strother Pope.*

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Robert Adams

**The narrative of Robert Adams, a sailor, who was wrecked on the western coast of Africa, in the year 1810, was detained three years in slavery by the Arabs of the Great Desert, and resided several months in the City of Tombuctoo. With a map, notes and an appendix**

London, J. Murray, 1816.



This narrative is representative of several volumes in the Thomas Cooper collection, written by shipwrecked sailors who had been taken captive in Moslem areas of West Africa. Adams, an American sailor picked up destitute in London using an assumed name to evade reimpressionment in the British navy, at first excited considerable skepticism from Sir Joseph Banks and other Africanists, perhaps in part because he was less enthusiastic about Timbuktu than al-Shabeni had been, but the consensus soon came to be that the core of his tale was genuine, and that the story taken down and edited here, by Samuel Cock of the African Committee, does indeed give the a firsthand account from the first European to return from Timbuktu.

Ibn Batuta, 1304-1377; Samuel Lee, 1783-1852, tr.

**The travels of Ibn Batuta / translated from the abridged Arabic manuscript copies, preserved in the Public Library of Cambridge. With notes, illustrative of the history, geography, botany, antiquities, &c. occuring throughout the work, by the Rev. Samuel Lee**

Oriental Translation Fund Publications ; 1.

London : Printed for the Oriental translation committee, and sold by J. Murray <etc.>, 1829.



The early 19th-century quest for Timbuktu renewed European interest in older Arabic travel accounts. Ibn Batuta's narrative, starting as a pilgrimage from Morocco to Mecca, records an amazing series of travels onwards through Central Asia, to India and possibly China. In separate trips, he also visited Spain and West Africa, before dictating this account on his return home in 1357. The polyglot orientalist Samuel Lee, a former carpenter's apprentice from Shropshire who taught himself Latin, Greek and Hebrew from secondhand bookstalls, entered Cambridge University at age thirty, and within six years became professor of Arabic en route to the more prestigious regius chair in Hebrew.

### Map of Africa

from John McQueen, 1778-1870, **A Geographical and Commercial View of North Central Africa**

Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1821.



This map, which was published after Park's second expedition, but well before the explorations of Clapperton or Lander, postulates the outflow of the Niger into the Bight of Benin. McQueen had first proposed his theory some five years earlier, but it would not be conclusively demonstrated until the report of Richard and John Lander nearly ten years later.

Dixon Denham; Hugh Clapperton, 1788-1827; and Walter Oudney  
**Narrative of travels and discoveries in Northern and Central Africa, in the years 1822, 1823, and 1824, . . . extending across the Great Desert to the tenth degree of northern latitude, and from Kouka in Bornou, to Sackatoo, the capital of the Felatah empire**  
 2nd ed. 2 vols. London: John Murray, 1826.



What is nearly always known as "Clapperton's first expedition," after the Scottish half-pay naval captain who accomplished most of what got done, had in fact started as a government commission to Dr.

Walter Oudney, an Edinburgh M.D. recently appointed to the rather imaginative post of "consul at Bornu." Traveling across the Sahara from Tripoli to Lake Chad, then still seriously proposed as the outflow of the Niger, they split off from their prickly army colleague Major Denham (who nonetheless got first title-page credit for their report). After Oudney's death, Clapperton traveled on alone to the great Hausa cities of Kano and Sokoto, seat of Sultan Bello's Fulani empire. On his return to London, Clapperton was immediately asked to set out again, this time to go northwards from the coast, but on this second expedition, the Sultan was less accommodating, and Clapperton died in Sokoto without gaining the trade treaty for which he had hoped, and it was left to his servant Richard Lander to prepare an account of the second journey.

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**Portraits of Captain Clapperton and Major Denham**

from John Frost, **The Book of Travels in Africa from the Earliest Times**  
New York: Appleton, 1847.



**Sultan Bello's Map of Sokoto and Central Africa**

from Denham, Clapperton, and Lander, **Narrative of discoveries in Northern and Central Africa**  
London: John Murray, 1826.



In 1817, the scholarly Sultan Bello had succeeded his father as Sultan of Sokoto, the centre of the huge Fulani empire established over the previous decade in the Jihad led by Usman dan Fodio.

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Alexander Gordon Laing, 1793-1826

**Travels in the Timannee, Kooranko, and Soolima countries in Western Africa**

London: John Murray, 1825.



In the 1820s, an intense rivalry developed between the French and British over the West African interior, symbolized by the substantial cash prize of 2000 francs offered in 1824 by the French Geographical Society for the first expedition to return from Timbuktu. Perhaps the saddest episode of the subsequent international race was the story of Major Gordon Laing. Laing, yet another Scottish-born explorer, an army officer with the Royal African Corps in Sierra Leone, had actually succeeded in reaching the city, though no one in Europe knew it till much later; setting out in 1825 from Tripoli across the Sahara, he had entered Timbuktu on August 18th, 1826, but had been killed shortly after leaving the city, in late

September. Shown here is Laing's first book, recording his earlier explorations inland from Freetown in 1822 into the Mandingo interior, the manuscript of which he had, when setting out for Timbuktu, left behind in London to be prepared for publication by a friend.

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Alfred Tennyson, 1809-1892

**Timbuctoo, a poem which obtained the Chancellor's Medal . . . in Prolusiones  
Academicae praemiis annuis dignatae**

Cambridge: John Smith, 1829.



In 1828-29, interest in West Africa was such that even the set topic of the Cambridge University poetry prize was Timbuctoo. The winner was the future poet laureate Tennyson, then an undergraduate at Trinity College, and, as this conclusion to his poem shows, he was not sure that he really wanted accurate knowledge of Timbuctoo, because then the mystery and glamour would be dispersed. Click on the image for an excerpt of Tennyson's "Timbuctoo".

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Rene Caillie, 1799-1838

**Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo; and across the Great Desert, to Morocco,  
performed in the years 1824-1828**

2 vols. London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830.



It was a young Frenchman, Rene Caillie, living in French Senegal, who, disguised as a pilgrim returning from Mecca who had escaped from capture by Europeans, traded and begged his way inland, armed only with an umbrella, till on April 20th 1828 he reached the fabled city, "of whose population, civilization and trade with the Soudan such exaggerated notions have prevailed." He found "nothing but a mass of ill-looking houses, built of earth," situated "in an immense plain of white sand." Ironically, he was able to obtain full details of Gordon Laing's murder two years earlier, before travelling home in caravan across the Sahara to Morocco and a triumphant welcome in Paris. Significantly, this English translation of Caillie's account appeared with the imprint of two publishers better known for issuing fashionable novels.

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**Timbuktu in 1827**

reproduced from Rene Caillie, **Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo**  
London: Colburn and Bentley, 1830.



This is the picture, impressive though it may seem, that finally disillusioned Europeans about the long-fabled wonders of the West African city.

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Friedrick Konrad Hornemann

**The journal of Frederick Horneman's travels . . . in Africa in the years 1797-8**

London: G. and W. Nicol, 1802.



Hornemann, a German theological student from Gottingen, was another of the African

Association's proteges in the late 1790s, last heard of in January 1800, as he set out in disguise across the Sahara, aiming for Bornu. This wonderful map is valuable for showing, not only the clustering of previous European exploration around the two rivers, the Nile and the Niger, but also the then-current theory about the Niger's course, that it terminated inland in lake Chad.

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Richard Lander, 1804-1834; John Lander, 1807-1839

**Journal of an expedition to explore the course and termination of the Niger, with a narrative of a voyage down that river to its termination**

2 vols. New York, J. & J. Harper, 1832-37.



The Cornishman Richard Lander, Clapperton's sole surviving companion from his second expedition, had returned to West Africa with his brother John, to prove finally the lower course of the river Niger, as it turned south to flow down into the delta region in the bight of Benin. This hideously-rebound little volume, an early American reprint, is displayed for its frontispiece map, at last depicting the Niger's course correctly

## CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA, AND THE LEGACY OF EXPLORATION

David Livingstone, 1813-1873

**Missionary travels and researches in South Africa; including a sketch of sixteen years' residence in the interior of Africa, and a journey from the Cape of Good Hope to Loanda, on the west coast; thence across the continent, down the river Zambesi, to the eastern ocean. . . . With portrait; maps by Arrowsmith; and numerous illustrations**

London: John Murray, 1857.

*Heraldic bookplate of William Edwards.*



The most famous of the Victorian African explorers, David Livingstone, a shopkeeper's son from Blantyre, Scotland, had qualified in medicine from Glasgow University and sailed for southern Africa with the London Missionary Society in 1840. Over the next years, he steadily pushed his base northward into central Africa, until in 1851 he reached the Zambesi. Sending his wife and family home, he set out on an extraordinary series of travels through what was still Arab slave-trading territory, until he eventually marched his porters down the Zambesi valley towards the east coast, and in 1855 discovered the Falls of Shongwe, illustrated here; these he admiringly described as seeming to "exceed in size the falls of the Clyde at Stonebyres," and renamed in honor of the British queen.

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Sir Samuel White Baker, 1821-1893

**The Albert N'yanza, great basin of the Nile, and explorations of the Nile sources**

2 vols. London: Macmillan, 1867.

Aside from Livingstone himself, the mid-nineteenth century European exploration of East and Central Africa involved three significant English explorers: Sir Richard Burton (1821-1890), the translator of the unexpurgated **Arabian Nights** and discoverer of Lake Tanganyika; John Hanning Speke (1827-1864), originally Burton's second-in-command, discoverer of Lake Victoria Nyanza and of the landlocked kingdom of Uganda; and Samuel Baker, whose book is displayed here. Baker, a west-country landowner traveling independently with his wife, set out on Speke's suggestion to find another great lake to the west, which he would name after Queen Victoria's recently-deceased prince consort, Lake Albert Nyanza, and which completed geographic knowledge of the sources of the White Nile. Sir Ronald Murchison, for whom Baker named the falls illustrated here, was president of the Royal Geographical Society.



Henry Morton Stanley, 1841-1904

**How I found Livingstone: travels, adventures and discoveries in Central Africa: including an account of four months' residence with Dr. Livingstone. . . . With maps and illustrations after drawings by the author**

New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co.; Boston, G. M. Smith & Co., 1872.



After the **Missionary Travels** that made him famous, Dr. Livingstone became more and more an explorer, rather than a missionary. His eagerness to end the Central African (Arab) slave-trade led to a government-sponsored expedition (1858-63), that took him up the Zambesi, to discover Lake Nyasa, but

he found European companions frustrating. For his third great journey, starting in 1866, he traveled only with Africans, and simply disappeared from European view. In March 1871, the Welsh-born New York journalist H. M. Stanley set out from Zanzibar on a lavishly-funded but initially secret trip to find the famous explorer, which he did by the shores of Lake Tanganyika, that November. His report of their meeting, and the words he used to greet him, were headline news around the world, and Stanley immediately became the popular idea of an African explorer.

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**Portrait of David Livingstone and Livingstone's last journal entry before his death in 1873**

reproduced from **The last journals of David Livingstone, in Central Africa, from 1865 to his death / continued by a narrative of his last moments and sufferings obtained from his faithful servants Chuma and Susi**

2 vols. London : J. Murray, 1880.

*Signature of Francis Carbutt, 1890, and Charles Buffet.*

to know what happened  
with our own eyes  
sent to my mother  
quite well on the  
banks of the Malakani



Though he had been ill and without supplies when Stanley found him, Livingstone expected his researches in the Nile basin to take a further two years, and declined to return with his rescuer. Just over a year later, in April 1872, still pushing onwards, he was dead from dysentery. Remarkably, his African servants embalmed the body and carried it, with his journals and other effects, through hostile territory for a journey of over a thousand miles, down to the British consul at the coast. It took them nine months. He was buried as a national hero in Westminster Abbey, early in 1874.

*Gift of Dr. D. Strother Pope.*

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Henry Morton Stanley, 1841-1904

**Through the dark continent: or, The sources of the Nile around the great lakes of equatorial Africa and down the Livingstone river to the Atlantic ocean. . . . With ten maps and one hundred and fifty woodcuts**

2 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1878.



By the time of this book's publication, the previously-blank areas on the African map were beginning to be filled in, and Stanley's subtitle seems to promise little new to his readers, yet the memorable title and pictorial cover of the volume indicate the dominant role that Stanley's image of Africa would come to exercise in late 19th century Europe and America.

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**Stanley and Africa : also, the travels, adventures, and discoveries of Captain John H. Speke, Captain Richard F. Burton, Captain James W. Grant, Sir Samuel and Lady Baker, and other distinguished explorers**

London and New York : Walter Scott, 1890.



This volume, and its glamorous colored frontispiece, is a good example of how the explorers' original accounts were summarized and repackaged for a popular readership.

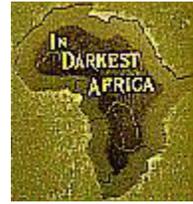
*Gift of Dr. D. Strother Pope.*

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Henry Morton Stanley, 1841-1904

**In darkest Africa; or, The quest, rescue, and retreat of Emin, governor of Equatoria. . . .  
With two steel engravings, and one hundred and fifty illus. and maps.**

2 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1890.



After the success of his quest for Livingstone, Stanley became a professional explorer, commanding large-scale armed expeditions throughout Central and East Africa on behalf of the increasingly-interventionist colonial powers. Twice he journeyed through the Congo basin, to clear the way for King Leopold's ambitions of a Belgian sphere of influence in the heart of Africa. This book recounts his fourth major expedition, which helped to ensure British influence over Uganda. He returned to Britain and was elected to Parliament in the mid-1890s, but fame was not the same as honor; on his death in 1904, he was refused burial in Westminster Abbey with Livingstone.

*Gift of Dr. D. Strother Pope.*

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Henry Stanley, 1841-1904

**The Congo and the founding of its free state; a story of work and exploration. . . . With over one hundred full-page and smaller illustrations, two large maps, and several smaller ones**

2 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1885.



The end of the period covered by this exhibition saw the European powers, great and small, engaged in the "Scramble for Africa," ruthless competition in the decade following the Berlin Congress (1884-85) to map out the continent into exclusive areas of colonial influence. Stanley had been involved from the start with Belgian commercial ambitions over the Congo basin. This fascinating book describes the company that administered the so-called Free State and eulogizes the rather miscellaneous group of adventurers, of several nationalities, who made careers as the company's agents. In 1908, international outrage at the company's exploitation of forced labor led to a formal Belgian takeover of the colony.

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Cameron Chesterfield Alleyne

**Gold Coast at a Glance**

New York: Hunt, 1931.



This book attests to on-going interest in Africa by African-Americans. The U.S.-based African Methodist Episcopal Church, Zion, had conducted mission work in the Gold Coast Colony (now Ghana) since 1880, and in 1924 Alleyne had become the first A.M.E. Zion bishop to be resident there. "In prophetic voice, the writer pictures an enlightened and Christianized Africa taking her place in the sun beside the other great peoples of the world" (preface).

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Chinua Achebe, b. 1920

**Things fall apart**

London: Heinemann, 1959.



The first modern African novel to achieve a lasting international reputation, Achebe's tragic story of the immediate pre-colonial period among the Igbo of eastern Nigeria provides a deliberate counterpoint to then-conventional European accounts of the coming of colonialism, and Achebe's concluding image, of the colonial administrator efficiently drafting his official report on another culture's tragedy, contrasts ironically with Conrad's Mr. Kurtz.

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