to be a missionary? Hiding in your fancy house, terrified that the people you'd pledged to help might shoot you in the head?[27]

Lapsley's concerns were reinforced when he later encountered refugees from Grenfell's steamship *Peace* who were disoriented and starving. "According to the refugees, they had run off after being starved and then whipped," writes Kennedy. "Without enough rations, the *Peace* had become a floating torture chamber with hungry white men beating even hungrier black men."[28]

Grenfell, like many missionaries before and since, was in over his head. The dangers were real. That he had intentionally gone to Africa to torture the native people for his own benefit is an accusation that no serious historian would make. But it would be difficult to make the case that he was a true *friend* of Africa. He found himself caught between hostile Africans and the imperialistic power of Belgium's King Leopold, who viewed the Congo as his private domain. Grenfell's private maps and notes, and later his steamboat, were confiscated. His years in the Congo corresponded with the increasing atrocities against Africans—atrocities that were happening all around him. But "he was not willing to go public with what he knew, or even to protect the villages against encroaching State men," writes Kennedy. "It's no wonder some of the Africans wanted him dead."[29]

Despite these circumstances, Grenfell continued on in his missionary work, supervising the Baptist missions in the Congo for twenty years—with surprising success in later years. In 1902 he wrote: "You will be glad to know that here at Bolobo, shorthanded as we are, we are not without evidence of progress and blessing. People are more willing to hear, and give heed to the message they have so long slighted. In fact, many are professing to have given their hearts to the Lord Jesus, and there are signs of good times coming." Growth did continue, and soon there was a need for a larger chapel. He told of how twenty years before he had been driven off by spears, but now was greeted with the singing of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."[30]

Though Grenfell was prevented by the Belgian government from completing a network of mission stations linking up with stations of the Church Missionary Society from the east, he continued to do pioneer work until his death from African fever in 1906.

After thirty years in Africa, Grenfell left behind a mixed legacy. Although he "had seen firsthand the full range of abuses, including Leopold's state employees buying chained slaves," he was mostly silent. In a letter home, he wrote that he was hesitant to "publicly question the action of the State."[31] There would be others, however, who would take a stand against this Mafia-like lawlessness. Among them was an African-American missionary whose writings drew the world's attention to this holocaust claiming an estimated ten million lives.

William Sheppard

A missionary overlooked in most mission histories has been William Sheppard, a black American who went to the Congo in 1890 as a missionary sponsored by the Southern Presbyterians. He was part of a broader plan of "recruiting missionaries from the African race," which coincided with the "back-to-Africa" movement engineered primarily by Southern whites. But whites were not the only ones attracted by the prospect of black missionaries in Africa. Returning to the land of their ancestors had long captured the imagination of many African Americans.

Born in Virginia at the end of the Civil War, Sheppard had the rare fortune of acquiring a good education, first at Virginia's Hampton Institute and later in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, at the Colored Theological Seminary. He became a Presbyterian minister and served

congregations in Montgomery and Atlanta, and then applied to the Southern Presbyterian Church for an appointment as a missionary in Africa. "For two years the Presbyterians put Sheppard on hold," writes Adam Hochschild. "Church authorities wouldn't let him go to Africa unless a white man was available to be his superior."[32] Samuel Lapsley, also a Presbyterian minister and a descendent of slave owners, agreed to serve in that position—the younger directing the older.

After surveying the prospects for mission work, the two made plans to establish a mission post far north on the Kasai River. They worked well together, and Lapsley spoke highly of his partner: "The Bateke think there is nobody like 'Mundele Ndom,' the black white man, as they call Sheppard…. His temper is bright and even—really a man of unusual graces and strong points of character" and "a born trader."[33] The partnership was short-lived, however. In 1892 Lapsley, emaciated from African fever, journeyed downriver to the capital city. He never returned. When he learned of his partner's death two months later, Sheppard went into the forest "to pour out my soul's great grief."[34]

"Sheppard continued to thrive," according to Hochschild. "Unlike other missionaries, generally a pretty somber-looking lot, in photographs Sheppard seems to be enjoying himself." When pictured with native people, "He has the distinct look of a football coach showing off a winning team."[35]

Because of his contagious personality and sophisticated style—and his black skin—Sheppard suddenly found himself a dignitary among native Africans, welcomed as the returned spirit of a deceased king. He was the first outsider to obtain an audience with the intimidating Kuba king, Kot aMvweeky II, who received the stranger into his court. "Servants spread leopard skins for him to walk on whenever he approached the king, who sat on an ivory throne and wore a crown of beads and feathers." Of the Kuba tribe, Sheppard wrote: "They are the finest looking race I had seen in Africa, dignified, graceful, courageous, honest, with an open smiling countenance and really hospitable. Their knowledge of weaving, embroidery, wood carving and smelting was the highest in equatorial Africa."[36]

On furlough, Sheppard was also a celebrity. In London he lectured at Exeter Hall and was granted the honor of becoming a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. Back in the United States, he visited with President Grover Cleveland and later Theodore Roosevelt and spoke at Princeton while Woodrow Wilson was president. During his first home leave he married Lucy Gantt, a teacher he had known during his student days. She gave birth to two children who survived, both of whom were raised by family back in the States.

As time passed, Sheppard encountered the increasingly terrible toll exacted by cruelties of colonialism, specifically, the rubber plunderers who had now moved into the Kasai River basin that was rich in rubber. Although he would later be acclaimed for publicizing the atrocities, he initially was reticent about challenging the white man's rule in the Congo. Pushed by his new mission director, however, he was assigned to go right into the heart of the rubber plundering. Here he pretended to be an official inspecting the work of the African agents. What he found was worse than he could have imagined. The dead and dying were everywhere, and further evidence of King Leopold's stranglehold on the country was offered by way of the grisly tradition of hand-collecting: "Malumba led Sheppard to a fire, outfitted with a grill. On top of it lay eighty-one right hands. Sheppard knew the exact number because he counted them."[37]

Sheppard's written reports and articles shattered the complacency of Americans and Europeans, and his role in exposing the atrocities was viewed as a threat by the powerful rubber racketeers. In a move to intimidate him and anyone else who would dare speak out, he was sued for libel. In the end he was vindicated, but more importantly, the court case helped bring the matter to the world's attention. Under the headlines AMERICAN NEGRO

HERO OF CONGO AND FIRST TO INFORM WORLD OF CONGO ABUSES, the *Boston Herald* wrote, “Dr. Sheppard has not only stood before kings, but he has also stood against them. In pursuit of his mission of serving his race in its native land, this son of a slave … has dared to withstand all the power of Leopold.”[38]

For all his fame and celebrity, Sheppard’s life was not without controversy and scandal. Following the libel trial, he was forced to step down as a missionary and return to America because of adulterous affairs with African women, one resulting in the birth of a son. He confessed these affairs in a written statement, and after a time of probation, he returned to the ministry, initially as a traveling speaker and later settling in Louisville as the pastor of a small Presbyterian congregation, where his wife led the choir and conducted children’s ministries.

Alexander Mackay

While Grenfell and the Baptists were penetrating Africa from the west, the Church Missionary Society (CMS, an arm of the Anglican Church) was moving from the east in an effort to fulfill Stanley’s dream of spanning the continent with Christian mission stations. Johann Ludwig Krapf, a German Lutheran, was the first great CMS missionary to have this dream. He was one of many Lutherans from Germany who filled the ranks of the CMS when few Englishmen were willing to make the necessary sacrifices. Long before Stanley’s expedition, Krapf pioneered Protestant missions on the east coast. In 1844, after being driven out of Ethiopia, he founded a station at Mombasa on the Kenya coast, a victory that was overshadowed by the death of his wife and baby. Krapf continued in pioneer missionary work for more than twenty years, making some notable discoveries but never realizing his dream of spanning Africa with the gospel.

The most noted missionary commissioned to the east coast by the CMS was Alexander Mackay, who arrived in Africa in 1876, a year and a half after the arrival of Grenfell on the west coast. Mackay was a well-educated Scot, an engineer by profession but a jack-of-all-trades with a keen mind for linguistics and theology. He was one of eight missionaries sent out by the CMS in 1876 in response to Stanley’s rousing challenge to the Christian world that King Mtesa of Uganda had requested missionaries.

As the leader of this team of missionaries, Mackay felt an awesome responsibility, but his farewell message reflected the courageous determination such a venture required : “I want to remind the committee that within six months they will probably hear that some one of us is dead. Yes, is it at all likely that eight Englishmen should start for Central Africa and all be alive six months after? One of us at least—it may be I—will surely fall before that. When the news comes, do not be cast down, but send someone else immediately to take the vacant place.”[39] Mackay’s words were still ringing in the directors’ ears when the news came that one of the eight had died. Five of them succumbed to the African graveyard in the first year, and by the end of the second year, Mackay was the only one left.

Though at times Mackay was at the point of death, he refused to give up. By 1878, two years after his arrival, he had constructed (with the help of African labor) a 230-mile road from the coast to Lake Victoria. But there was no joyous welcome. He arrived shortly after the murder of two fellow missionaries, and the rest of his colleagues had all left due to ill-health.

On reaching Lake Victoria, Mackay constructed a boat and then crossed the lake to Entebbe, where he met with King Mtesa. While Mtesa and his people welcomed him, there was opposition to his presence from other sectors—particularly Roman Catholics and Muslims. Mtesa himself was an unsavory character who almost daily executed his subjects for trivial offenses and allegedly had the largest store of wives of any man in history. With