



# WILDFOTO

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*PhotoMail is an occasional picture newsletter for those with an interest in photography, nature and the environment, travel, Africa, Zambia, Zambian life and current affairs. And especially for those who just like looking at pictures.*

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The Story Behind the Pictures:

## LANDSCAPE AFRICA B&W:

### “The Pleasant Haunts of Men”

(David Livingstone, December 1866)

In this PhotoMail, some new landscape work in black & white featuring panoramic photography of remote Zambia. The work is from a trip to northern Zambia in 2014 which included a 'sleep rough' foot expedition half-way down the Muchinga Escarpment. This is a remote and extraordinarily beautiful wild place. And it has a story to tell of a famous visitor past:



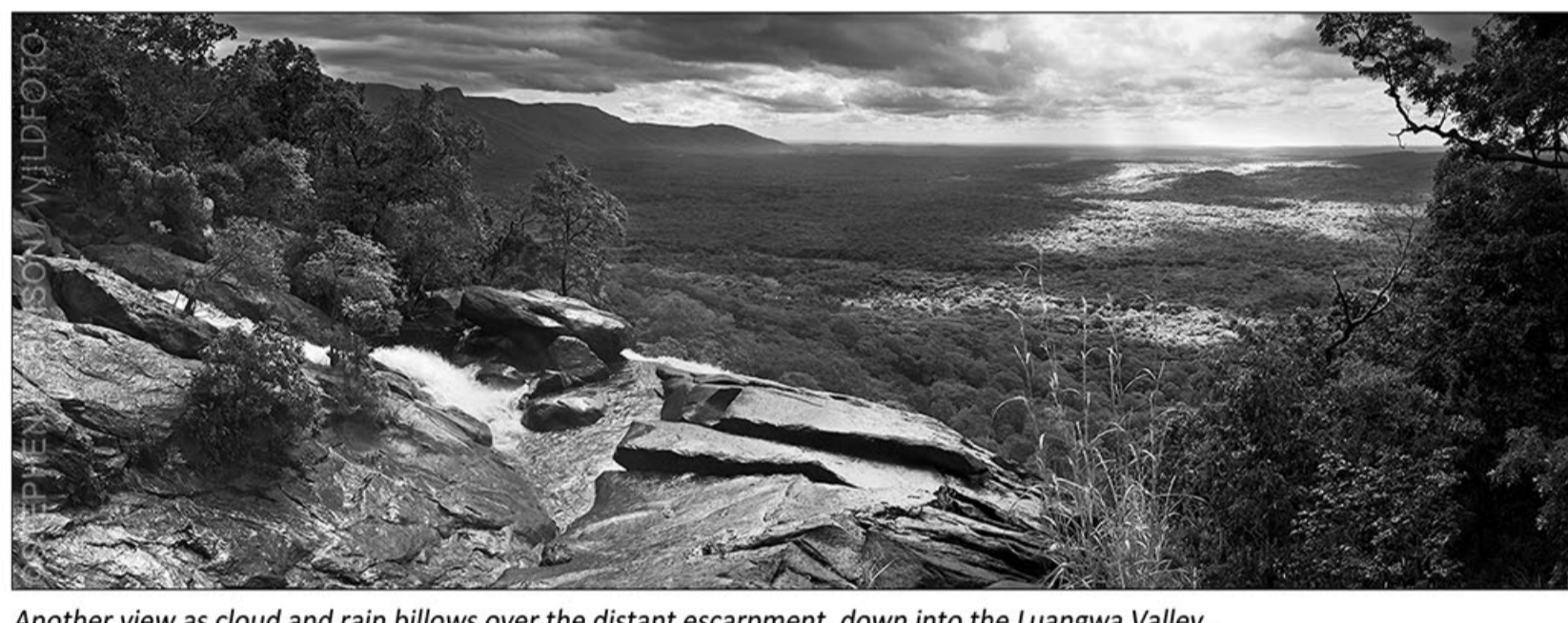
The panoramic view at dawn from the Mutinondo River as it tumbles down the Muchinga Escarpment, showing the wildcraft as it meanders Northwards forming the back-bone of Zambia, and overlooking the vast expanse of the Luangwa Valley far below.

In December 1866, the Scottish missionary & explorer, David Livingstone and his team traversed south central Africa, at the start of what was to be his final expedition. They climbed this precipitous escarpment, arriving on the great central African plateau in this area of what is now Northern Zambia.



A view from further down the Muchinga Escarpment.

The explorer and his team were half-starved and in poor condition after an arduous journey from the east coast of Africa. But Livingstone must have been relieved - later recording that he saw local women collecting several types of edible plants and a bountiful harvest of wild edible mushrooms - part of the rich natural harvest given perennially by the Miombo Woodland the regional forest type of these plateau lands.



Another view as cloud and rain billows over the distant escarpment, down into the Luangwa Valley.

Livingstone later described this still uniquely beautiful and wild place in his diary:

*"I shall make this beautiful land better known...It will become the 'pleasant haunts of men'. It is impossible to describe its rich luxuriance..."*



A view looking back up at one of the Mutinondo River's many waterfalls as it tumbles down the escarpment.

Sadly, such happy experiences were to prove very rare in Livingstone's final expedition.

He was to fail in his obsession and objective of finding the source of the Nile and was to spend the next 6 years largely out of contact, when he was considered either dead or missing. Only one of his 44 written dispatches sent to Zanzibar were delivered.

He was plagued by ill-health, and in June 1871, was horrified when he witnessed a massacre of some 300 to 400 slaves at a slave market at Nyangwe in the Congo. Livingstone "the Abolitionist" must have been severely conflicted by such an experience, because he was heavily reliant on Arab-Swahili slave traders, such as the infamous Tippu Tip, for supplies and help with his ill-health. In fact, necessity had dictated that he had to regularly befriend and travel with such traders.

Livingstone was 'found' by the American newspaperman, Henry Morton Stanley, in November 1871 at Ujiji, but he refused Stanley's pleadings that he should abandon his expedition and return to Britain. By now Livingstone's health had deteriorated further and it is thought his judgement was becoming increasingly impaired.

In 2010 a previously unknown letter from Livingstone was made public. It is addressed to Horace Waller, an anti-slavery activist, and in it Livingstone wrote:

*"I am terribly knocked up but this for your eye only...Doubtful if I live to see you again."*

In 1873, aged 60, Livingstone died at Chitambo's Village, Illala in what is now Northern Zambia, from malaria & dysentery. His faithful assistants and guides Chuma & Susi (James Chuma & Abdullah Susi) buried his heart, intestines and internal organs beneath an Mvule (Iroko) tree. They embalmed his body in salt and folded Livingstone's legs back to make a shorter load, and then carried it to the East African coast. This was a remarkable trek of herculean endurance - a distance of over 1000miles (1600km) and taking some 5 months - and a testament to the fact that such guides and assistants are very much the unsung heroes of this era of exploration in Africa.

Livingstone's remains were then shipped to London via Southampton. His body was left to lie in repose at the Royal Geographic Society before burial at Westminster Abbey.

Fine Art Prints of the above photography were first exhibited at the SPIRIT OF THE LAND Exhibition at Kalumbila in North Western Province Zambia in October of this year (see PhotoMail No.8-2015).

A further limited number of prints are available in the Christmas sale referred to below. To reserve a print, please email me at wildfoto@wildfotoafrica.com

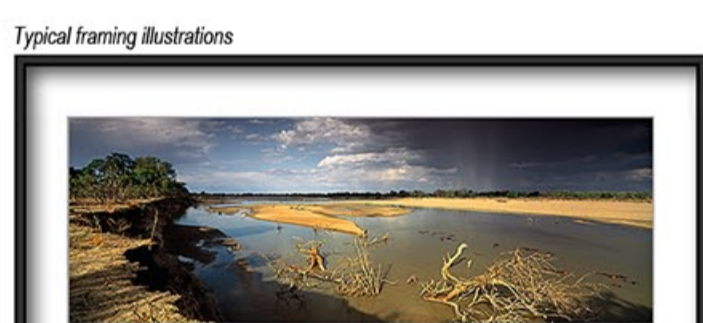
## GIVE A BIT OF WILD ZAMBIA THIS CHRISTMAS

FROM

### SPIRIT OF THE LAND

PANORAMIC AFRICA

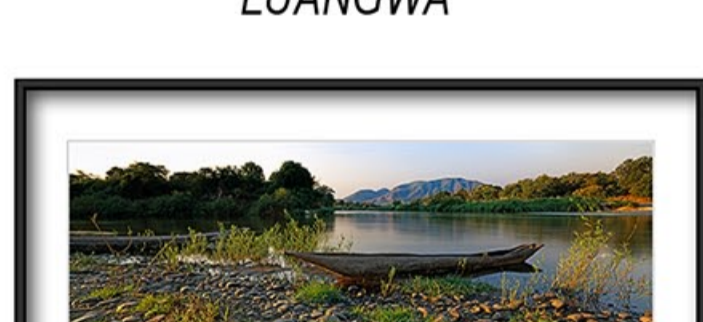
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### PHOTOGRAPHER FOR HIRE

Stephen Robison is a photographer operating from his Zambia base. He undertakes photo assignment work in the corporate, industrial, mining, donor-aid project and environmental fields, including the production of photo based communications, advertising and promotional media. Medium format panoramic photography and aerial work are specialities.

This commercial work supports his nature photography speciality, including landscape, environment, conservation and wildlife work - and including his well-known panoramic photography project and exhibitions on the remote landscape, peoples and environment of Zambia.

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