

**Daniel J. Danielsen (1871–1916):  
The Faeroese who Changed History in the Congo**

Óli Jacobsen

This paper is a brief biography of Daniel Jacob Danielsen (1871–1916) from the Faeroe Islands, the tiny archipelago between Scotland and Iceland.<sup>1</sup> It has been known in the islands that Danielson, as he is named in English texts, was the first Faeroese missionary outside the islands, and that he was working in the Congo in the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> It has also been known that Danielson was involved in some way investigating the cruelty in the Congo at the time. But as Danielson died in 1916, he has been nearly forgotten. There is some material about his evangelistic work in the Faeroes, but there is nearly nothing about his involvement in the Congo.<sup>3</sup>

On his headstone is written *Virkaði i Congo 1901–1903 / Ein óræddur hermaður Harrans* [‘Served in the Congo 1901–03 / A fearless soldier of the Lord’] I was interested to know about him, but with no sources it was quite impossible. But eventually I got a clue—Sir Roger Casement.<sup>4</sup> Casement (1864–1916) was the British consul in the Congo and in 1903 undertook, on behalf of the British government, a survey of the alleged atrocities in the Congo. Danielson assisted Casement as the captain and engineer on the mission boat, Casement hired for the purpose.<sup>5</sup>

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1. A brief account of the Faeroes can be found in Tórður Jóansson, ‘The Brethren in the Faeroes: Some Contexts for Growth’, *BHR*, 6 (2010), pp.54–73.

2. Sigurd Berghamar, *...men Gud gav vøkst* (Tórshavn, 1992), p.220.

3. Jens av Reyni, *Vejen* (Tórshavn, 1941), pp.5–6.

4. Séamas Ó Siocháin, *Roger Casement, Imperialist, Rebel, Revolutionary* (Dublin 2007); Casement was, of course, eventually executed by the British government for his involvement in the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916.

5. Séamas Ó Siocháin and Michael O’Sullivan (eds), *The Eyes of Another Race: Roger Casement’s Congo Report and 1903 Diary* (Dublin, 2003), p.167.



I obtained the report from that survey in which a part of Danielson's role is described. Subsequently I found the rest of the history from different archives in UK,<sup>6</sup> which disclosed a fantastic history—completely unknown until now. The result was a book, *Dollin: Havnarmaðurin, sum broytti heimssøguna* (2010), the subtitle of which translates into English as the subtitle of this paper. To allow non-Faeroese speakers to access Danielson's story, the book has a detailed summary in English and all the captions for the illustrations are also in English.<sup>7</sup> In this paper I will summarise this history as comprehensively as possible.

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6. University of Edinburgh, Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, Regions Beyond Missionary Union Archive, CSCNWW33, Congo Balolo Mission Minutes [hereafter CBMM]; London School of Economics, E. D. Morel papers, MOREL/F1-18 [hereafter EDMP]; *Echoes of Service*, vols 30–32 (1901–1903).

7. Óli Jacobsen, *Dollin: Havnarmaðurin sum broytti heimssøguna* [*Dollin: The Faroese who changed history in the Congo*] (Tjørnustova, Tórshavn, 2010).

### **Who was Danielson?**

Daniel Jacob Danielsen grew up in Tórshavn in the Faeroe Islands. His mother Sigrid went as a young woman to Copenhagen. She was, incidentally, a paternal aunt of Victor Danielsen, a well-known Brethren evangelist in the Faeroes.<sup>8</sup> In 1871 she gave birth to a son without being married. The boy was named Ludvig Daniel Jacob. Ludvig is recorded as the name of his father, but he never knew him or used that name. Dollin was his petname and/or an abbreviation of Daniel Jacob. Fairly soon mother and son returned to the Faeroes and Sigrid married in 1874.

Daniel was a rather wild fellow and at the age of 18 he went to Scotland to be trained as an engineer. After that he became something of a globetrotter; we know for sure that he had been in South Africa,<sup>9</sup> and that he had sailed on ships taking emigrants to America. Although he had a Christian upbringing, he distanced himself from religion of every kind; but in 1897 he became radically converted after an open-air service in Glasgow at which he had heard the witness of a Christian worker. After the service Danielson and another man from the open-air service went to the meeting hall not far away. In an article describing his conversion he states the question he put to his new companion: 'I asked whether there was a minister there, but he said, that all the children of God were ministers and sons and daughters of God.' 2–300 people were present in the hall, and here Danielson was converted.<sup>10</sup> After his

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8. Jóansson, 'The Brethren', p.70.

9. *Echoes of Service*, vol. 33 (1904), p 184.

10. As Alexander Galbraith, a prominent leader in revivalist circles in Glasgow, was the principal individual in the Christian meeting through which Danielson was converted, most probably Danielson was converted through the Seamen's Bethel in Eaglesham St., Glasgow, which was a member of the Glasgow Evangelistic Association, a federation of mission halls. Mission halls had a similar ethos to the Brethren, but maintained closer links with the institutional church and leaving a denomination was not a prerequisite of membership.

conversion he worked with the Seamen's Mission in Glasgow for a while.<sup>11</sup>

### **Congo missionary**

After some time, Danielson spent a year at Harley College, the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Mission (ELI), to prepare for his work as a missionary in the Congo.<sup>12</sup> The ELI had been founded in 1873 by Henry and Fanny Grattan Guinness, who had been for a while members of the Brethren in Dublin, and it offered a vocational training and a wide-ranging educational curriculum to teach cross-cultural ministry skills. The students learned to 'live by faith'.<sup>13</sup> Subsequently Danielson joined the Congo Balolo Mission (CBM), which had been founded in 1888 by an Irish Baptist missionary, John McKittrick, with the support of the Guinness's son Harry Grattan Guinness (1861–1915), a doctor, who was by then in charge of the ELI.<sup>14</sup> The CBM employed Danielson as an engineer and as *de facto* captain on their mission boats on the upper River Congo.

Having been approved as a missionary at a meeting of the CBM on 28 February 1901, Danielson left for the Congo on 11 April and was stationed at Bonginda, roughly a thousand miles up the Congo River.<sup>15</sup> We know a little about his work as a missionary. In *The Regions Beyond*, the monthly magazine of the mission, can be found

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11. Danielsen family papers, A. W. Sloan, 'D. J. Danielsen, trúboðari [missionary] / F. 25. Juni 1871 / D. 18. Oktob. 1916 / Fyrsti færoyski "heidningamissionerur" [The first Faeroese "missionary to the heathen"]', unpublished MS, n.d.; my translation. It is Sloan who cites Galbraith as the leading individual (see previous note).

12. *Naade og Sandhed*, No. 11, November 1916.

13. Joseph F. Conley, *Drumbeats that Changed the World: A History of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union and the West Indies Mission 1873–1999* (Pasadena, CA, 2000), pp.37–40.

14. Conley, *Drumbeats*, pp.72–4; a brief history of the CBM can be found at <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo-Balolo\\_Mission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo-Balolo_Mission)>, accessed October 2012; cf., Matthew Doherty, 'The Congo Balolo Mission and the Indigenous Christian Community: The Agency of Locals', in Amanda Barry *et al.* (eds), *Evangelists of Empire?: Missionaries in Colonial History*, [online text] Melbourne: University of Melbourne Scholarship Research Centre, 2008, <<http://msp.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/shs/missions>>, accessed October 2012.

15. CBMM, 28 February 1901.

the following notes about Danielson written by Revd William Douglas Armstrong, the leader of the mission in Bonginda:

*November 1901:* The last Congo mail, despatched August 6, reports all well and work going on as usual. It tells about the safe arrival of Mr. Danielson at Bonginda in the middle of July. He is a Danish brother from the Faroe [*sic*] Islands. While for the present his help will be chiefly felt in the steamer work. He looks forward to preaching the Gospel as soon as he shall have acquired the language.<sup>16</sup>

*June 1902:* Our Danish Brother is proving himself a real acquisition. He makes things most comfortable for his passengers. We are very thankful for him. The *Pioneer* quite outdoes her old self in his hands.<sup>17</sup>

*July 1903:* The Christian men often go down on Sundays and hold meetings, so that they get three services a week. The itinerating work suffers somewhat from the fact that I am the only one able to undertake it. However, when the engineers are here, Mr. Danielson kindly takes the morning service week about, and leaves me free to make excursions. I have in this way been able to go out three times lately.<sup>18</sup>

According to Faroese sources, Danielson was well known for his sense of humour, and this characteristic of his was a great help in various disputes among the locals.<sup>19</sup> Obviously he must have been linguistically gifted, as he was quite soon able to speak with the locals, and therefore also was able to act as an interpreter. He also had battles with the native shamans, then regarded as ‘witch doctors’, to stop their work.<sup>20</sup>

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16. *The Regions Beyond [hereafter RB]*, (1901), p 309.

17. *Ibid.* (1902), p 179.

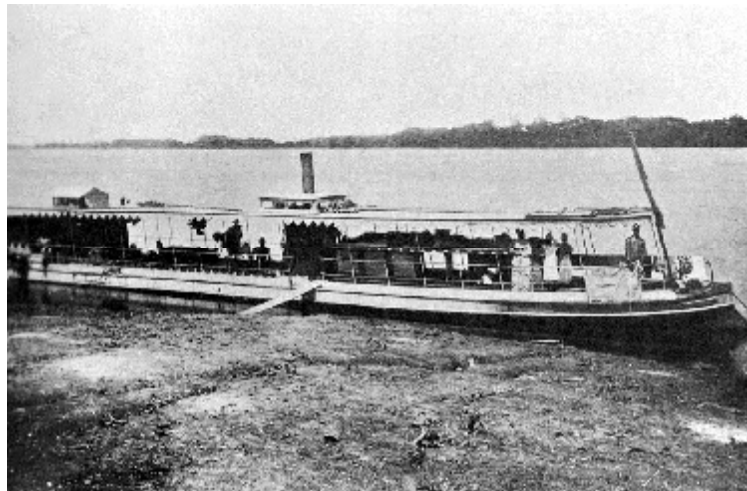
18. *Ibid.*, (1903), p.207; see also ‘A Day on the “Pioneer”’, *RB*, quoted in Jacobsen, *Dollin*, p.30.

19. Sloan, ‘Danielsen, trúboðari’.

20. *Ibid.*

Unfortunately Danielson also had a quick temper. It became clear among his fellow missionaries that there were negative feelings towards him. The first concrete evidence of this is that in 1902 the CBM in London recorded charges against Danielson of flogging locals and of putting them in the stocks when they failed to bring sufficient supplies of wood to fuel the steam engines' boilers. Furthermore he was accused of taking the crews' relatives as hostages from the same motive.

The headquarters of the Mission in London took this very seriously and decided to investigate the matter fully. It was taken up at a Conference on 4 September 1902 where the members of the Council and missionaries on leave were present,<sup>21</sup> and at a meeting of the CBM council on 28 May 1903, it was decided to call Danielson back to England. What is surprising about Danielson's recall was that in particular it was based on assertions from a Mr Sawyers who was a carpenter missionary. Around the same time Sawyers was dismissed from the Mission for incompetence. In addition to the assertions of Sawyers, Danielson was accused by Mr Black who was an engineer on the Mission's ships. He also caused problems to the Mission and at its meeting on the 5 February 1903 the Council persuaded Black to attend Bible college where, in addition to other items, he would be 'helped by contact with other men to overcome that particular element in his character which has hitherto made it difficult for him to get on with his brethren in the field.'<sup>22</sup> Black came back later to the Congo, but it is surprising that such a serious decision as the recall of a missionary had been taken



The American Baptist Missionary Union steamer *Henry Reed* which was used by Casement for his expedition. Danielson was the skipper and engineer on board.  
Photograph: American Baptist Historical Society

exaggerated.<sup>23</sup> It was about that time Danielson met Roger Casement, who needed an engineer for the steamer *Henry Reed*. Casement wanted to use transport that was independent of the Belgian authorities, and for that reason he hired SS *Henry Reed* from the American Baptist Missionary Union which had taken over the work in the lower Congo that had been commenced by volunteers from the ELI.<sup>24</sup> On Friday 17 July 1903 Danielson was hired as an engineer, which in reality also meant that he was the captain.

In *The Eyes of Another Race* (2003), which reprints Casement's report and publishes his diary for 1903, this dramatic journey has been described in such a way that the cruelty towards the locals is fully documented.<sup>25</sup> The most infamous symbol of cruelty was 'cut hands'. The soldiers of the *Force Publique* were equipped with cartridges in exchange for an equivalent number of right hands from slaughtered 'enemies'. If there were not sufficient cartridges, hands were cut off living, and innocent, people. This is the reason for the many photographs from this period showing numerous one-handed people.

There is no doubt that Danielson and Casement got on well with each other. Several times Casement complimented Danielson for his skills in running the ship, but he also occasionally mentioned Danielson's quick temper, which from time to time was uncomfortable for the crew. It is also evident from Casement's diaries and report that Danielson assisted him with his survey.<sup>26</sup>

Séamas Ó Siocháin gives the following evaluation of Danielson:

Given the State's monopoly of river transport and the likelihood of its monitoring or controlling his movements, access to independent transport was a crucial element in Casement's probings. The *Henry Reed* allowed him to avoid a degree of surveillance and to go to

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23. CBMM, 24 September 1903: the board of the CBM was informed about the decision at a meeting on this date, but the decision must have been taken when Danielson was hired by Casement 17 July.

24. Conley, *Drumbeats*, pp.61, 66–8.

25. Ó Siocháin and O'Sullivan (eds), *The Eyes*, pp.49–177.

26. Ó Siocháin and O'Sullivan (eds), *The Eyes*, pp.167–72.

places which would have been otherwise difficult to reach or even inaccessible (Lake Mantumba, the tributary at Ifomi). A sympathetic and competent engineer (effectively captain) was vital to the enterprise; Danielson provided this expertise.

Danielson performed his role effectively. On a couple of occasions, recorded in his diary, Casement was critical of specific actions of Danielson's, but these actions did not threaten to undermine the main enterprise. It became clear to me when analysing Casement's up-river movements how heavy his reliance was on missionary groups; Danielson was one part of this reliance.<sup>27</sup>

### **Starting a campaign in Britain**

After the end of his mission with Casement, Danielson returned to England where he arrived about 10 October 1903. It seems likely that Danielson was animated by a desire to do something immediately to raise awareness in the UK of the situation in the Congo. From the material we have in the Faeroes,<sup>28</sup> we can conclude that he wrote letters from the Congo to the British authorities regarding the situation, and that after returning to England he probably had a meeting with Henry Farnell, an official of the foreign secretary, Lord Lansdowne, to discuss this matter.

We certainly know that the Foreign Office (FO) was at least aware of Danielson and he was intended by them to play a role in the Congo campaign. As early as 24 November 1903, before the arrival of Casement, the FO considered Casement's report had better be published first, after which Danielson could follow up with more effect. Henry Fox Bourne, another Congo Reform campaigner who had visited the FO, wrote to Edmund Morel, a crucial figure in the Congo campaign, regarding Danielson: 'It [i.e the FO] does not object to use being made of his other information—indeed would

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27. Séamas Ó Siocháin e-mail to the writer. I had regular contact with Séamas Ó Siocháin, a lecturer at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, while writing my biography. The editorial material of *The Eyes of Another Race* confirms this assessment of Danielson's role.

28. Sloan, 'Danielsen, trúboðari'.



like it be done by way of keeping up public interest in the movement, which I really believe it is eager to promote'.<sup>29</sup>

That was also what Danielson did. He was eager to force the CBM to start a Congo campaign immediately and obviously appealed to the mission to do so. At a meeting on the 22 October 1903, the Congo Council of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU), the new name of the CBM, concluded: 'It was unanimously decided to await the arrival of Mr. Casement—the British Consul to the Congo—before using the information brought home by Mr. Danielson of recent atrocities and the continued maladministration of the Congo State.'<sup>30</sup>

To evaluate the role of Danielson in the establishment of the Congo Reform Campaign (CRC), it is essential to document the position of the CBM in relation to the Belgian authorities. Dr Harry Grattan Guinness, the leader of the CBM, was early aware of the atrocities in the Congo. The question had been raised at a meeting of the Congo Council on 24 June 1896. The minutes from that meeting state:

An important communication from Mr. Sjöblom was received and presented to the Council, and it was decided that a communication should be made to the Congo Secretary in Brussels on the subject, making a clear statement as to the facts of Congo atrocities at all of the varied Mission Stations.<sup>31</sup>

The Revd E. J. Sjöblom from Sweden, and another former ELI student, had been one of the first missionaries to publicly criticise

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29. Henry Fox Bourne to E. D. Morel 24 November 1903, quoted in Ruth M. Slade, *English Missionaries and the Beginning of the Anti-Congolese Campaign in England (Brussels, 1955)*, p. 69. Cf. E. D. Morel to Herbert Ward, 10 November 1903: 'Grattan Guinness of the CBM has some terrible information. The Foreign Office seems to desire all the pressure from public opinion they can get. Between ourselves, Farnall—the man in charge of those things at F.O. is rather pessimistic about the amount of information we are getting from Congo—said to me: "If you drop the Congo question, be sure the government will drop it."', EDMP, F10, quoted in Slade, *English Missionaries*, p.69.

30. CBMM, 22 October 1903.

31. CBMM, 24 June 1896.

the Congo State. In addition to Danielson he is the only Scandinavian who is known to have publicly opposed the rule of the Congo. Guinness had been so moved with the horror of the situation that he went to Brussels in 1896 where he met King Leopold.<sup>32</sup> He was then able to fully present the ghastly facts of the case to His Majesty. But his argument was more economic than humanitarian. He later wrote:

I further enlarged on the suicidal policy, pursued by so many of the State agents, of "killing the goose that lays the golden egg," for, as I explained, only the native can work in such a climate. The King seemed greatly interested and pained by what I had to say, and subsequently humanitarian recommendations were sent to the Congo, with the effect that, of recent years, as our missionaries are concerned, the smoked [i.e. cut] hands are entirely a matter of the past.<sup>33</sup>

This topic was again on the agenda of the CBM council on the 24 September 1896:

The proposed reforms by the Free State Government were discussed and the Council noted with pleasure that Mr. Grenfell, Mr. Bentley and Dr. Sims together with one of the Roman Catholic missionaries have been appointed to investigate any case of oppression of the natives or cruelty on the part of the State officials that may be reported to them, such investigations to be reported to the Government.<sup>34</sup>

*The editors of The Eyes of Another Race* reach the following conclusion on the above-mentioned investigation:

Stung by the mounting criticism, Leopold reacted by setting up, in September 1896, the Commission for the protection of the Natives with six members, three Catholic and three Protestant missionaries

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32. *RB*, April 1903, p. 134.

33. *Ibid.*

34. CBMM, 24 September 1896; in fact there were three RC missionaries investigating.

(including the prominent British Baptists, George Grenfell and William Bentley). With its members stationed far apart, however, and not given any transport or administrative support, the Commission remained a paper entity. Atrocity stories continued.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, David Lagergren writes in *Mission and State in the Congo* (1970):

This desire to appease is most clearly exemplified by Guinness. Because of his eagerness to expand his mission, there were times when he maintained a continuous contact with Brussels and Antwerp. On these occasions he did not neglect to point out how well the authorities and the missions were now working together in the field.<sup>36</sup>

In this connection it is of interest to read the following in Kevin Grant's *A Civilised Savagery* (2005):

Morel and Fox Bourne realized that they needed British missionaries to testify against the Congo Free State in order to persuade the British public and, in turn, the government to take up their case. Morel approached the BMS [i.e. Baptist Missionary Society] in 1901 and was rebuffed in light of its effort to win approval from the Congo Free State for further expansion into the Congo interior.

In 1902, Morel approached Guinness at the Congo Balolo Mission who confirmed that slavery and atrocities were occurring in the Congo; and Guinness explained that the British government was not likely to intervene, so any public protest by his missionaries would only undermine their long term evangelical goals. Within a year however, the Congo Balolo Mission had given up hope that the Congo Free State would permit expansion, and Guinness allied himself with Morel despite their ideological differences.<sup>37</sup>

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35. Séamas Ó Siocháin and Michael O'Sullivan, 'General Introduction', in *idem* (eds), *The Eyes*, pp.6-7.

36. David Lagergren, *Mission and State in the Congo*, (Uppsala 1970), p.267.

37. Kevin Grant, *A Civilised Savagery: Britain and the New Slaveries in Africa, 1884-1926* (New York & London, 2005), p.51; Conley, *Drumbeats*, p.84, gives a similar explanation for Guinness's initial silence.

What had actually happened is as follows. On 5 February 1903 the Congo Administration had appeared on the agenda at the meeting of the Congo Council of the CBM. There was a request from Edmund Morel, in which he requested that the Council would place at his disposal the information in their hands with reference to the treatment of natives by the State. It was decided that Guinness should conduct interviews with the relevant persons (after which the Council would place our

information.  
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February 1903.  
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Mola and Yuko who Casement and Danielson met in Ikoko on 29 July 1903. It is almost certain that Danielson is the photographer.  
Photograph: Anti-Slavery International

The matter of Congo Atrocities was again considered and it was felt that the time had arrived for us to make some statement relative to them. Dr. Guinness was therefore, asked to kindly undertake to write an article for publication in the *Regions Beyond* stating clearly our present position and future policy regarding the above.<sup>39</sup>

It is probable that this step had been an excuse for not giving Morel the material he had asked for. The article, however, was published in *The Regions Beyond* in April 1903.<sup>40</sup> It is quite moderate. It admits the atrocities, but places the main responsibility for them on the local sentries and not on the authorities and absolutely not on King Leopold. Up to this point it appears that Guinness had been treading carefully in order to avoid causing offence.<sup>41</sup>

#### **Danielson and Morel**

That was the situation until the arrival of Danielson who had little patience to wait for Casement who was expected to arrive in England at the beginning of December. Danielson started his campaign right away at the beginning of November. Soon afterwards, Danielson and Edmund Morel (1873–1924), another key figure in this history, commenced a correspondence.<sup>42</sup> Morel worked for the Elder Dempster Shipping Company, which served the Congo from the UK and Belgium. He had observed that the ships brought home valuables such as ivory and rubber and only carried out weapons and luxury for the whites. He concluded that what went on in the Congo was in the reality slavery. He resigned from his job and in 1900 started campaigning against the rule of King Leopold II in the Congo.

His first step was to gather all the information he could from the Congo and he wrote a large number of articles. In 1903 the weekly magazine *West African Mail* was established, which, for example, in

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39. *Ibid*, 26 February 1903.

40. *RB*, April 1903, pp. 131–136.

41. Cf. the identical conclusion in the quotation from Grant, *A Civilised Savagery*, and from Conley, *Drumbeats*, at n.37 above.

42. Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston, 1998), pp. 177–181.

that year alone, consisted of a thousand pages, and in addition he wrote many more relevant materials, including books and thousands of letters.<sup>43</sup> Danielson took steps to contact Morel as we can see in the latter's answer of 17 November 1903. In his letter Morel also had helpful advice:

You mention that on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> inst, you were speaking before 4 or 5,000 people in Edinburgh. I wish it were possible (I speak with all respect) to infuse into your missionaries some notion of how to get at the ear of the public in connection with a matter of this kind. Now who knows what you said to those 4 or 5,000 people? Not a soul outside your immediate audience. But if you had had press representatives there, your words would have been reproduced all over the country. The thing is to get these statements into the paper, and to rouse public opinion. If they are not got into the papers, public opinion will never be roused, and the whole agitation, I assert deliberately, depends for its success upon maintaining unimpaired and connected interest on the part of public opinion; that can only be done through the press, and I don't think you gentlemen realise the fact sufficiently. Now if you like to give me a short summary of what you said in connection with Congo maladministration before those 4 or 5,000 people, I will publish it in my paper; and do, the next time you are speaking, arrange to have representatives of the press present. What I am writing you now I have said verbally to Dr. Grattan Guinness. This battle must be fought with a continuous systematic attack; not by a short attack and then a retreat to consider the next step, but blow after blow, that is the only way to keep up sustained public interest. Needless to say I shall be grateful and pleased for any information you may give me at any time on this subject, whether you write from Africa or from Europe.<sup>44</sup>

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43. EDMP, CA3225; cf. Conley, *Drumbeats*, p.83.

44. EDMP, F10/8, Letter Book, f437-439, Edmund Morel to H. [sic] J. Danielson, 17 November 1903; the truth of Morel's observation can be seen in the absence of reports of Danielson's meetings of late 1903 in the Edinburgh press; the first note of agitation over the Congo in the Edinburgh newspaper, *The Scotsman*, was on 2 February 1904, p.4i, by which time the campaign had moved to Glasgow.

Danielson followed the advice from Morel immediately as can be seen from articles in the newspapers and journals. *The West African Mail* had already on 27 November 1903 carried the following article:

### **CONGO STATE**

#### **WILL EUROPE AWAKE TOO LATE?**

#### **Mr D. J. Danielson on the Congo Horror.**

“EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD IN THE RUBBER DISTRICTS—A SLAVE!”  
WILL THEY KILL US BEFORE THEY GO AWAY?

#### **Special to the West African Mail**

*(From a Correspondent)*

Mr. D. J. Danielson, who is attached to the Regions Beyond Missionary Society, in the Congo, has in the course of the last few weeks addressed several meetings in Edinburgh on the subject of Congo State misrule. On one occasion three thousand people assembled at the Synod Hall to hear Mr. Danielson speak.

In the course of his speech at the Synod Hall, Mr. Danielson denounced in the strongest language the abominable oppression to which the Congo natives are subjected. The rubber trade—if it should be called trade—declared Mr. Danielson, was rapidly killing off the natives, and would end in the virtual extermination of all the Congo races, whom the Congo State was able to get in the grip. A Free State by name, it was a Slave state in fact. Mr. Danielson explained that he had just come home from the Congo. He had been living for upwards of two years in the Upper Congo, in one of the rubber districts where the Belgian Concessionaires were carrying on their atrocious rubber traffic with the help of the State officers, for concessionaires and State worked hand in hand. Mr Danielson went on to say that he had personally witnessed the commitment of abominable deeds, and had on several occasions prevented the Belgians and their soldiers from perpetrating outrages upon men and women. He had photos in his possession illustrating these atrocities upon the natives, atrocities perpetrated this very year, and arising from the rubber extortion. It had been said, that the

#### **CUTTING OFF OF NATIVES' HANDS**

was done by Congo State soldiers to account for the number of cartridges they expended—one hand for each cartridge. But he thought the chief purpose of these mutilations was to strike terror

into the natives to show them what they had to expect if they failed to satisfy the white man's demands for rubber, rations and other taxes. "It is a daily sight," said Mr Danielson "to see

#### WOMEN TIED UP AS HOSTAGES

and kept sometimes for many weeks—tied up with strong rope so that they shall not manage to steal away to their homes."

Mr Danielson further asserted that every man, woman and child in the rubber districts of Congo State was "kept a slave, and a slave of the lowest order," and that the natives were far better off before King Leopold had anything to do with the country. "The cry of the natives," continued Mr Danielson, was "When will the white rubber collectors be satisfied? When will they have enough rubber? When will they leave our country, and leave us in peace?"

"WILL THEY KILL US ALL BEFORE THEY GO AWAY?"

These were questions said Mr Danielson, frequently asked, and how could they be answered?

"Several natives," declared Mr Danielson, "asked me before I left for home, if I could tell their bad circumstances to the good white men in the far-off country, and ask them to help and to deliver them from their taskmasters." "With God's help," continued the speaker, "I will tell everyone I can of this terrible slavery which is carried out in the Congo State. If this atrocious Administration goes on much longer, in a few years' time whole districts will have become entirely and absolutely depopulated. Then Europe will awake. But it will be too late."

#### "MORAL AND MATERIAL REGENERATION"

Mr Danielson reiterated that the curse of the whole business was the rubber taxes. The natives often told him that in the old days they used to have some happy days, even when actual cannibalism reigned unchecked, but that since the rubber collectors have come in to the country, they had not one happy day. They were living in misery, slavery and poverty, a prey to sickness and disease—a poor, miserable people that once used to be so prosperous.

#### ENGLAND'S DUTY

"We preach to the people the Love of God. They ask us, Why does He then allow these men to ill-treat us like this? Why does He not deliver us from these tyrants? I say, how can we answer these



reasonable questions? May this country, which God has made so great, help these outraged natives; The Congo races are fine races, but they are being decimated and destroyed.”<sup>45</sup>

This article gives a very clear impression of the way Danielson was arguing. Furthermore he was a very charismatic speaker. Later in the Faeroes at his evangelistic services both he and his audience would be overcome with sobbing.<sup>46</sup> It is not quite clear how he used the photographs he had brought home from the Congo which included images of mutilated children as well as the peoples of the region, landscapes, and missionary activities. But we know that he had lantern lectures in the Faeroe Islands a few months later, and he used those photographs in his meetings in the UK, undoubtedly also as lantern lectures. And they, of course, also had their effect on the audience.<sup>47</sup>

It is also of interest, that on 7 December 1903 *The Daily Mirror*, just after the arrival of Casement in England, published an article about his survey. In this article the unidentified ‘An Englishman’, who had been with Casement, was cited as follows: ‘The most terrible slavery exist. The administration is atrocious, and if there is no speedy intervention, it will be too late.’ The ‘Englishman’ can only be Danielson.<sup>48</sup> Danielson and Casement were in touch immediately from Casement’s arrival in England, and in addition the identification can be made from the dates of the letters Danielson sent to Casement.<sup>49</sup>

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45. EDMP, CA3225; the Synod Hall, Edinburgh, belonged to the United Presbyterian Church. In Morel’s papers I found a few more articles with the same message. But as Danielson had a number of meetings in different towns there may be something in print about those. There had at least been an interview with *Daily Record* and *Mail of Glasgow*. Any additional information is still welcome.

46. *Echoes of Service*, 34 (1905), p.104.

47. See Appendix below.

48 If we compare the message of the ‘Englishman’ with the article in the *West African Mail* the message is the same and even crucial wording is identical: if nobody interferes ‘it will be too late.’ There can be little doubt that the ‘Englishman’ is Danielson.

49. Jacobsen, *Dollin*, pp.78–9; EDMP, F5/3.

### **Danielson changes Guinness**

As has already been seen, on 22 October 1903 the Congo Council refused Danielson's request for immediate action, as they preferred to wait for Casement's arrival. As noted above, the CBM was like other missionary societies, very much in doubt whether it should oppose in public the authorities in Congo; but when Danielson had had his first mass meetings in Edinburgh on 7 and 8 November, the attitude of the Mission changed immediately, as can be seen in a letter Morel wrote a few days after these public meetings: 'I have had a long talk with Guinness. I think the alliance established now between us will be productive of good results to all concerned.'<sup>50</sup>

Already at their board meeting on 26 November 1903 the Congo Council decided on 'a series of mass meetings to be held in the main cities in the UK. The Council very heartily agreed to this programme being carried out.'<sup>51</sup> Guinness had already had his first meeting the day before in Bristol; and that was still before the arrival of Casement in England, for which the Council earlier had agreed to wait. This demonstrates a considerable change in the Mission's position. According to the letters from Morel to Danielson, by now there was no difficulty in Morel getting the material he wanted from the CBM and from Danielson. We can assume, that as Danielson had just arrived from the Congo, and had travelled extensively around the country, his material had been quite up to date. Therefore it was especially relevant. Ruth Slade, in her book *English Missionaries and the Beginning of the Anti-Congolese Campaign in England* (1955) has arrived at the same conclusion regarding Danielson's role:

Having found that the British consul had been accompanied during a good part of his tour of investigation by the CBM missionary, Danielson, Morel was hoping to anticipate the Casement report by an account of the conditions they had found, to reinforce the

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50. Morel to Ward, 10 November 1903, quoted in Slade, *English Missionaries*, p.68.

51. CBMM, 26 November 1903.

information from Weeks [i.e. a Baptist missionary] which he had already made public.

Guinness was unsure of the wisdom of publication before the official report from Casement appeared, but after several weeks of persuasion it seemed to Morel that he was ready to cooperate, and Morel himself was convinced of the importance of the public interest which may thus be aroused, in its effect on the government. Morel wrote directly to Danielson, urging him to use his influence with Guinness, and stressing the importance of publicity and speed. The CBM Council had been stirred to action after hearing the story Danielson had to tell them on his return to England, and at its meeting on 26 November decided to publish a booklet of missionary evidence on conditions in the Congo State, and to arrange a series of mass meetings in the leading cities of England.<sup>52</sup>

This is completely in accordance with the view outlined above that Danielson really achieved the change of the position of the CBM.

### **The Congo Reform Association**

The Congo Reform Association (CRA) was founded on 23 March 1904, giving the Congo Reform Movement a formal platform to work from. The CRA started a campaign throughout the UK and also the USA, where Guinness personally presented its case against the administration of the Congo to President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907.<sup>53</sup> It held hundreds of meetings at which photographs of the Congo atrocities were displayed and which had a great effect on their audiences.<sup>54</sup> Two very active members in the campaign were the missionary couple Alice and John Harris, also from the CBM. They participated in many of the CRA meetings in Britain, and also in the USA.<sup>55</sup> The result of this campaign was increasing pressure on an

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52. Ruth Slade, *English Missionaries*, pp. 68–9. The initial silence of missionaries to moral outrages in Angola is also noted by Tim Grass in 'Brethren and the Saó Tomé Cocoa Slavery Controversy: The Role of Charles A. Swan (1861–1934)', *BHR*, 4/2 (2007), pp.110–13.

53. Conley, *Drumbeats*, p.87.

54. Hochschild, *Leopold's Ghost*, p.216

55. *Ibid.*, pp.241–2.

unwilling King Leopold to give up his sovereignty over the Congo. In 1908 he finally relented, and the Congo became the responsibility of the Belgian state. The situation in the Congo changed gradually and in 1913 the CRA found the improvement sufficient to warrant disbanding the organisation.<sup>56</sup>

In March 1904, Danielson had paid a visit to the Faeroe Islands where he reported on the situation in the Congo. He had meetings in different places in the Faeroes, where the audiences had the opportunity to see a 'series of slides showing nature and human life in the Congolese state and most of all the behaviour of the regime of horror that is caused by the capitalistic Belgian interests in the state.'<sup>57</sup>

#### **Back to the Congo or not?**

Throughout 1904 Danielson lived with the uncertainty of whether or not he would be allowed to return to the Congo where there was considerable disagreement among his colleagues on this question, of which the Council of the Mission was aware. He was accused, for example, by his missionary colleague W. D. Armstrong of his 'utter unreliability of statement.' This assertion seems to contradict earlier reports from Armstrong in *The Regions Beyond* about how useful Danielson was to the mission station where Armstrong was the leader. One example is that Danielson was the only one of the engineers who could replace him in preaching at services at the station.<sup>58</sup> It should be noted, however, that in the course of my research, I have not found any examples of 'unreliability' in Danielson's statements about the atrocities in Congo. Armstrong's statement is, it seems to me, an unfair attempt to discredit Danielson.

During a meeting on the 26 January it was noted in the minute book of the Congo Council of the RBMU 'that the engineers Wallbaum and Steel threaten resignation if Danielson returned. Best

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56. *Ibid.*, pp.273–4.

57. *Tingakrossur*, 9 mars 1904; this source is a Faeroese newspaper; my translation.

58. Cf. the quotation at n.18 above.

therefore to recommend Danielson to resign'.<sup>59</sup> On 17 May 1904 Danielson was again on the Congo Council's agenda, and this time he was pressing for a conclusion on his future within the mission, and he also informed the Council 'of his intention to get married during the coming week.'<sup>60</sup> After very carefully considering the matter, it was unanimously agreed that the Council could not decide anything further regarding him and his future connection with the Mission until they heard from the Field Committee in answer to the letters that had been sent out asking them for a full report.

The Council did not see its way to agreeing to his immediate marriage. They felt that should the Field Committee express itself as desirous of his return there would then be time enough for them to consider the case of his fiancée. Although they could not prohibit his marriage, they felt that should it take place, it would complicate matters somewhat. The view of the Mission was understandable. Any wife was considered as a member of the staff and had therefore to be accepted by the RBMU. Danielson, however, did not take any notice of the Council's opinions on the matter, and in May 1904 he married Lina Niclasen, the daughter of Faeroese parents living in Leith, the seaport of Edinburgh.

At a meeting on the 14 June 1904, the Congo Council reached its conclusions on Danielson's future. Its minutes state:

- (i) The majority of the members of the Field Committee are opposed to his return;
- (ii) That should he be sent back, friction in the Engineering Department would only be perpetuated and;
- (iii) That he was not a persona grata with State; therefore not going back to the Congo.

The Council unanimously agreed that apart from his incompatibility in temperament there was nothing against Mr Danielson and that if desired they would willingly recommend him

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59. *CBMM*, 26 January 1904.

60. *Ibid.*, 17 May 1904.

as a conscientious worker, first-class mechanic and an earnest Christian.<sup>61</sup>

What seemed to settle the matter once and for all was when Danielson was declared *persona non grata* by the Belgian authorities. He knew too much about what happened in the Congo and he was now known as an opponent to the rule of King Leopold II's regime. After this the CBM made the decision that they would support Danielson wherever he could find work. The result was his return to his native Faeroe Islands, and the Mission decided to pay his fare of £10.<sup>62</sup>

Danielson and his wife Lina took up residence in the islands in late 1904 where they started evangelism in different places. They established new assemblies known as the Plymouth Brethren in many villages.<sup>63</sup> It was said of Danielson that he was rather harsh in his preaching, at least to begin with. They settled in Tórshavn and their home became a local meeting place for the young people in the assembly. The young people were fascinated by all the African things that decorated the house.<sup>64</sup>

On the death of Danielson *Echoes of Service* reported:

Mr. Danielsen [*sic*] was a native of the Faeroe Islands, but was for some years employed by the Congo Balolo Mission in an engineering capacity. Dr. and Mrs. Guinness esteemed him highly, but circumstances led to his return to the Faeroe Islands in 1904, after his marriage. At that time there were no assemblies of believers except in Tórshavn, although much seed sowing had been long carried by our brother Sloan. Mr. Danielsen henceforth devoted himself to gospel work in his native land.

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61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*, 6 October 1904.

63. For an account in English of Danielson's career as a Brethren evangelist, cf. Fred Kelling, *Fisherman of Faeroe: William Gibson Sloan* (Göta, Faeroe Islands, 1993), pp.182–194; for a comprehensive survey in English of Brethren history in the islands, cf. Tórður Jóansson, *Brethren in the Faroes* (Tórshavn, 2012).

64. *Echoes of Service* is my main source to describe the evangelistic activity of Danielson in the Faeroe Islands. The reports are, of course, in English and are available on my website: <olijacobsen.fo>.

He had suffered from fever in Africa, and the result of this, together with his experiences in the work, seem to have been the cause of his last illness. His heart became affected, and he went, with his wife, to Denmark for treatment. He almost passed away in the hospital there, but to the surprise of all, revived a little, and the doctors, being unable to do more for him, advised him to return home, as he greatly desired. The voyage occupied eleven days, and the weather was rough, so his condition rapidly deteriorated. The captain and officers did all they could for him, and a brother from Faroe, who was travelling by the same boat attended him night and day throughout the voyage. On arrival at Tórshavn he was carried to his home, and the first afternoon he was able to converse, seeming rather better. In the evening his mind wandered and from then he was only to converse for small moments. Early the second morning he said, "Take me by hand, for now I am ready." A moment or two later he said, "Behold, He cometh," lifted up his eyes and passed away.

A large company of friends, both from town and country, followed his body to the grave with twenty-four taking turns in bearing the coffin, while seven brethren bore testimony to his work and faithfulness to God, and the gospel was preached to the hundred present. Mrs. Danielsen is wonderfully sustained by God, but should be remembered in prayer.<sup>65</sup>

Danielson is buried beside his mother-in-law, who apparently moved back to the Faeroes at the same time as Danielson and his wife. Unfortunately, there is virtually no material left behind by Danielson in the Faeroes. The couple had no children. Lina had been involved in the missionary work of her husband, singing and playing an organ. She left the Faeroes for Scotland around 1920, and she remarried a butcher named John Smith. She died in 1937, 58 years old. There is no-one left to answer questions.

### **Conclusion**

The Congo Reform Movement, according to Adam Hochschild in *King Leopold's Ghost* (1998), the most comprehensive book about Leopold's Congo, had two enduring legacies. It left a large amount

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65. *Echoes of Service*, vol. 45 (November 1916), p.400.

of archive material and a tradition of ‘a human capacity for outrage at pain inflicted on another human being’.<sup>66</sup> On the whole Grant’s assessment in *A Civilised Savagery* is very much in accordance with the conclusion in my biography about Danielson’s role in the CRM. There were two main partners in the CRM and the later Congo Reform Association. There was one secular partner, primarily represented by Edmund Morel, and there was a missionary/Christian partner represented by the Balolo Mission and Dr Guinness who represented the Mission. These partners were indispensable to each other. The missionaries provided the CRA with information about the atrocities in Congo and Morel was the great communicator. It is, however, evident that it was Danielson who took the initiative and who succeeded in convincing the CBM to become actively involved in the Congo question. When the mission hesitated, Danielson started his campaign of meetings alone that resulted in the change in the Mission’s attitude.

Nevertheless, Danielson has not been even mentioned in the histories of the Congo Reform Campaign. Morel does not mention him in his book *King Leopold’s Rule in Africa*, which was published in 1904, although during its preparation he drew upon photographic and other evidence that Danielson possessed.<sup>67</sup> In the preface he wrote that ‘Dr. Guinness started a series of public lectures early this year [i.e. 1904], drawing large audiences.’<sup>68</sup> It is puzzling how Morel could have omitted Danielson in his books when the evidence is there in his own correspondence as to who started those lectures ahead of Guinness. In 1906 Morel published his most famous book about the Congo, *Red Rubber*, which has been reprinted several times. Morel now also omitted to mention Guinness and the Congo Balolo Mission. They had, in fact, had a key role both in the Congo Reform Campaign and as a co-founder of the Congo Reform

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66. Hochschild, *Leopold’s Ghost*, pp. 304, 305

67. Cf. Jacobsen, *Dollin*, pp.186–7.

68. Edmund Morel, *King Leopold’s Rule in Africa* (London, 1904), p. xv; in fact it was in 1903 the meetings started.



Association. Morel was a committed moral crusader, but he seldom liked sharing too much of the limelight.<sup>69</sup>

Neither have I found anything in the publications of the CBM about the role of Danielson. At the beginning of 1904 the RBMU published a booklet *Congo Slavery* by Henry Grattan Guinness. Its aim was to present the role of the CBM in the Congo campaign, but Danielson is not mentioned at all. Later, in 1908, the RBMU published the booklet *The Congo Crises also* by Harry Grattan Guinness. Danielson was again not mentioned. The silence is difficult to understand, especially, as we have seen, *Echoes of Service* stated that 'Dr. and Mrs. Guinness esteemed him highly.'<sup>70</sup> Consequently, perhaps, the most recent history of the RBMU, *Drumbeats that Changed the World* (2000) fails to mention Danielson. Furthermore, David Lagergren refers to the charges against Danielson, noted earlier in this paper, and he also mentions that the Mission took up those charges,<sup>71</sup> but he fails to state that the Mission found Danielson not guilty. Neither does he mention the role of Danielson in the Congo Campaign whereas he mentions others such as John Harris. That seems to be very unfair, especially as Lagergren used Ruth Slade as a source, and she indicates clearly the connection between Danielson and Morel and the Congo campaign. Ruth Slade is the only subsequent historian that has even mentioned the role of Danielson in the Congo Reform Campaign after his return to England. Espen Waehle, a Norwegian Congo specialist and one of my sources, describes Danielson as an 'unsung hero.'<sup>72</sup> That is completely right.

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69. Hochschild, *Leopold's Ghost*, p. 274.

70. Cf. n.65 above.

71. Lagergren, *Mission and State*, pp.279–80.

72. Espen Waehle, e-mail to the writer.

**Appendix:**  
**Evangelicals, Atrocity Photographs and Danielson**

On 9 March 1904 *Tingakrossur*, one of the principal Faeroese newspapers, carried an announcement: ‘Tonight, Wednesday, and on Saturday at 8pm the missionary D. J. Danielson will show slides in the Club’s Theatre from the Congolese state, photographs taken by himself’. The same edition of the paper gave a report detailing what the audience might expect: ‘Among these slides—more than 80 in total—there are some taken directly of the locals in the Congo, who have had their right hands cut off by the tyrannical Belgians and their soldiers ...’.<sup>73</sup>

There is no doubt that the lantern lectures had an important effect in the Congo Reform Campaign as Kevin Grant writes:

Guinness focused upon the savagery of the Congo Free State, realizing its betrayal of humanity through the display of atrocity photographs. These photographs were contextualized with what missionaries later called “horror narratives”: descriptions of the events that preceded and caused the alleged atrocity, the process through which the atrocity was committed, and the aftermath of the event. As Guinness commented to Morel: “Some of the slides are immensely effective.”<sup>74</sup>

However, Grant notes that he was unable to find a list of the specific images that Guinness used in his lecture series, and assumes they were by Armstrong who had joined Casement at the very end of his survey.<sup>75</sup>

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73. *Tingakrossur*, 9 mars 1904; Sloan, ‘Danielsen, trúboðari’, p.3: ‘In 1904 Danielson visited the Faeroe Islands. He had lectures about his missionary work in the Congo in connection with slides he had taken there. On those photos could be seen Africans the Belgians had cut the hands off or somehow had mutilated’; my translations.

74. Grant, *A Civilised Savagery*, p.57.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

This is probably wrong. From all the information we have it is very likely that those photographs are by Danielson and that he brought them home from Congo about 10 October 1903. It is obvious from the correspondence between Morel and Danielson that there has been a discussion between Morel, Guinness and Danielson how his photographs should be used.<sup>76</sup> Grant writes furthermore that Casement brought the photographs with him to England where they would circulate in books and lantern-slide lectures to be powerful images of the misgovernment in the Congo.<sup>77</sup>

Casement arrived on 1 December and Danielson's photographs were discussed and probably used in Britain before Casement's arrival.<sup>78</sup> Grant also writes that Guinness began a series of lectures entitled 'A Reign of Terror on the Congo' in November 1903 'drawing thousands of people with the promise of lantern slides.'<sup>79</sup> That was still before Armstrong's photographs had arrived in Britain according to Grant himself. There are clear indications, however, that the first photographs used in the Congo campaign and also by Guinness, came from Danielson and were taken by him. It is therefore likely that also in this matter he was ahead of others in the campaign.

Sharon Sliwinski, in a paper on the use of photographs in the outrage over the Congo, writes that CRA was the first humanitarian movement to use atrocity photographs as a central tool. But Sliwinski is also uncertain about the origin of the photographs. This is evident from her description of two cases from the Casement Report about the mutilation of two boys. One was named Epondo. In

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76. Jacobsen, *Dollin*, pp. 185–187; the correspondence is dated 17 and 26 November and 16 December 1903: EDMP, F10/8f437–439; f532; f598; f678.

77. Grant, *A Civilised Savagery*, p.57.

78. Cf. EDMP, Morel to Danielson, 17 November, and Morel to Mr Guinness, copied to Danielson, 16 December 1903, quoted in Jacobsen, *Dollin*, pp.183–4, 186–7.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 60.



Photographs from Mark Twain's *King Leopold's Soliloquy* (1905). They have been taken in at least two different places, Ikoko and Bonginda. As Danielson was the only photographer present in both, it is very likely that he has taken at least some of them. Note the use of the white blankets to highlight the maiming.

that case Armstrong is said to have taken the photograph, and this could be correct as this happened close to Bonginda where Armstrong was the leader of the CBM mission station. The other case, however, is Mola Ekulite, whose both hands were mutilated. Lewinski writes:

The photograph, a copy of which Casement included in his original report, shows Mola seated sideways on a modern-style chair. Another child with a similar injury, Yoka, stands next to him ... The author of the photograph is unnamed; however, Casement's report refers to Reverend W. D. Armstrong as having produced the photograph of Epondo, as well as images of several others victims and it seems plausible that Armstrong also took the photograph of Mola.<sup>80</sup>

As far as the present writer is aware, Casement does not refer to Armstrong as the photographer, but Morel does in his *King Leopold's Rule*,<sup>81</sup> the same book where he completely ignores the significant role of Danielson in the Congo Reform Campaign. The photographs Morel attributes to Armstrong are all from Bonginda. But Casement met Mola on 29 July at the mission station of the American Baptist Missionary Union in Ikoko, while Armstrong was the leader of the CBM station in Bonginda quite a distance further up the river. It is very unlikely that Armstrong had been in Ikoko for the reasons stated above, and he is not mentioned in Casement's diary entries in Ikoko. It was on 24 August on the way up the river that Casement arrived in Bonginda, and where he met Armstrong probably for the first time. But his survey of the atrocities in Bonginda took place on the way down the river on 7 September.

But Danielson was in Ikoko. Therefore it is probable that he took that photograph. One proof, which has been used to identify photographs taken by Armstrong, is that he was known to instruct

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80. Sharon Sliwinski, 'The Childhood of Human Rights: The Kodak on the Congo', *Journal of Visual Culture*, vol. 5/3 (December 2006), pp. 334, 338, 340 <[http://tps.jkdweb.biz/sites/default/files/uploads/Sliwinski\\_Kodak\\_Congo.pdf](http://tps.jkdweb.biz/sites/default/files/uploads/Sliwinski_Kodak_Congo.pdf)>, accessed October 2012.

81. Morel, *King Leopold's Rule*, pp.375–7.

each of his subjects to wrap a white cloth around himself to create a 'backdrop' for the mutilated limb. But Danielson was probably the first photographer using that 'trick' in Ikoko a month earlier. It could therefore be he who took the similar photographs, for which Armstrong has been honoured. Furthermore, Mark Twain in *King Leopold's Soliloquy* (1905) has nine photographs, all of them with white cloth wrapped around them. One of them is of Mola. But there are two others sitting apparently in the same chair as Mola.<sup>82</sup> That means that at least three of the photographs have been taken in Ikoko and they cannot have been taken by Armstrong. Danielson, on the other hand, could have taken them all.

There is at least uncertainty about photographers. I have seen three photographers mentioned having taken the photograph of Mola and Yuko. For two of them it is nearly impossible according to dates in the diary and report of Casement. For the third it is unlikely.<sup>83</sup> Grant writes:

Although there is no documentary evidence that explains Armstrong's objectives in taking these photos, it is at least certain that he wanted to publicize them in Britain. Missionary organisations had long since promoted their work in Britain through lantern lectures, so it would have been reasonable for a missionary to convey criticism of an imperial regime through photographs as well. But, one may ask, why did not Armstrong or other missionaries distribute "atrocities photos" earlier? It is possible that this was a new idea proposed by Casement, but it is also likely that Armstrong came upon the idea while watching Casement interpret the mutilated bodies of Africans as decisive proof of the state's brutality.<sup>84</sup>

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82. Mark Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy. A Defence of his Congo Rule* (Boston, 1905), pp.40–1. The title, like the 'soliloquy', is, of course, ironical.

83. Cf. the website of John Edwin Mason, a lecturer in African history and the history of photography at the University of Virginia. Mason labels the photographs reproduced from Mark Twain's pamphlet as having been taken c.1905 by Alice Harris and W. D. Armstrong. The truth is that they were taken in 1903 before Harris started taking atrocity photographs, and Armstrong, at least was not alone taking those photographs. <[http://johnedwinmason.typepad.com/john\\_edwin\\_mason\\_photogra/2012/05/belgian-congo-ale.html](http://johnedwinmason.typepad.com/john_edwin_mason_photogra/2012/05/belgian-congo-ale.html)>, accessed November 2012.

84. Grant, *A Civilised Savagery*, p.58.

Grant confirms that all the speculation about Armstrong and the photographs are based on the ‘non-existence’ of Danielson in the attempt to find the originator of the photographs. If Danielson and his role in this matter had been known the conclusion would probably have been quite another. A further example of this can be found in a lecture in 2007 by T. Jack Thompson, the Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh. He states that certain photographs of mutilated children are ‘almost certainly’ taken by Armstrong. At the end of his paper there is a list of sources for the photographs he has reproduced. For two of them he states: ‘unattributed; probably Rev. W. D. Armstrong’.<sup>85</sup> Thompson’s assumption is clearly based on the lack of knowledge concerning any other photographer in 1903 than Armstrong.<sup>86</sup>

Adam Hochschild displays in *King Leopold’s Ghost* his lack of knowledge of the Danielson’s photographs when he writes: ‘Starting in 1906, the returned Baptist missionaries the Reverend John Harris and his wife, Alice Seeley Harris—she has taken nearly all the photographs Morel used—began working full time for the mission.’<sup>87</sup> That was at least not the case in 1903, when the Congo Reform Campaign started. While the HARRISES, according to Hochschild, used sixty photos in their lantern lectures we know that Danielson used eighty photographs. However, Hochschild does not mention the campaign prior to the foundation of CRA in 23 March 1904, which was started by Danielson and later taken up by

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85. T. Jack Thompson, ‘Capturing the Image: African Missionary Photography as Enslavement and Liberation’, Day Associates Lecture, June 29 2007, Yale University Divinity School, New Haven, CT, pp.17, 26, <<http://www.library.yale.edu/div/pub/CapturingtheImage.pdf>>, accessed October 2012.

86. Thompson, however, does mention the role in 1899 of the African-American Presbyterian missionary William Henry Sheppard in being probably the earliest of all missionaries to take Congo atrocity photographs, albeit from a different region; Thompson, ‘Capturing the Image’, p.18.

87. Hochschild, *Leopold’s Ghost*, p.216.

Guinness. This is an obvious gap in the known history of the Congo Reform Movement which this paper tries to fill.

Any misattribution of their source might also be due to a misunderstanding. One example is the photograph of Epondo. There are two very different photographs of him, both in the background and clothing. *The Regions Beyond* states one of them was taken by another CBM missionary, H. M. Whiteside. But this is impossible as he was not present when Casement met Epondo. But Danielson and Armstrong were present. Therefore it is likely that both of them took photographs of Epondo. But as for the photographs in general, it is a question whether photographs 'taken' by Armstrong really are by Danielson.

The lantern slides Danielson used have not been identified. But it seems the photographs taken by the CBM missionaries have been given to the Anti-Slavery International in London which now has the copyright to them, and this probably also has happened to any photographs by Danielson. It is likely, therefore, that Danielson, in addition to having started the Congo Campaign, also was a pioneer in lantern lectures in that campaign with the profound effect that had on the audiences. That is what makes him truly historic!<sup>88</sup>

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88. This paper does not contain the whole history, and while writing it I found a lot of fresh material. Others may know more. If so, I would be happy to be informed by e-mail. Write to: [olijacobsen@olivant.fo](mailto:olijacobsen@olivant.fo).



