



# THE KIPLING SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1927

Registered Charity No.278885

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## NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2022

### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Society will be held on Wednesday 9 February in the Wrench room at the Royal Over-Seas League, Park Place, London, SW1 at 6.00pm: "One Spot Beloved Over All", a talk in which Richard Howell will present his research on the development of the Bateman's estate and how the Kiplings built up their landholdings. Coffee/tea and biscuits will be served from 5.30pm.

*Whilst we hope to welcome as many members as possible in person, the meeting will also be accessible via Zoom on the following link. <https://roehampton-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/83897905700?pwd=RWxkT1RaQVpYaVBFaGFvaGlaSFaVUT09>  
Passcode: 395548. Meeting ID: 838 9790 5700.*

*Those attending in person are invited to join Council and the speaker for drinks and dinner in a private room at ROSL after the meeting. If you would like to do so, please let the Secretary know in advance by one of the means at the top of this newsletter. Places are limited, so please apply early so as not to be disappointed.*

### FUTURE MEETINGS

- Wednesday 13 April 6.00pm. 'Our Kipling Treasures'. In this online only meeting, members are invited to show and share stories about any rare editions of Kipling, and any manuscripts, photographs, ephemera or Kipling memorabilia in their private possession. Discussion will be led by our Librarian, John Walker, who will demonstrate some of the most interesting items in the Society's Library at Haileybury College. *If you have treasures you would like to show, please email Alex Bubb ([alex\\_bubb@hotmail.com](mailto:alex_bubb@hotmail.com)) so that he can draw up a rota of participants.*
- Wednesday 6 July. 4.30pm for 5.00pm. AGM. Royal Over-Seas League and online. Speaker TBA
- Wednesday 21 September – Online only meeting broadcast from Bateman's, which is expected to take the form of a narrated tour of the rooms and garden.
- Wednesday 16 November - TBA

### NOVEMBER MEETING – Alex Bubb

On the 10th of November we convened our second "hybrid" meeting in the Wrench Room at the Royal Over-seas League in London, and listened to a stimulating lecture from one of our youngest members, Madeleine Horton, who recently completed a Master's degree in English

Literature at Oxford. Madeleine's title was "Rethinking Rudyard Kipling: Genre, Value, and Reputation", and she spoke about Kipling's place in the modern curriculum and why his writings still have the potential to interest and engage today's students.

### **IS THERE ANY DEMAND FOR AN ANNUAL LUNCHEON? - Jan Montefiore**

Only 8 members attended our joint dinner with the Honourable Artillery Company on 7th June 2021, when Prof. Ian Beckett spoke on 'Kipling's Army'. This was doubtless due to Covid constraints, but in any case, attendance at the Annual Luncheon has been in decline since 2014 and 2015 (80 guests), to 47 guests in 2016, 53 in 2017, 55 in 2018, and in 2019 just 40, including the speaker and 6 invitees. The Army & Navy Club, where we held the Luncheon in 2018 and 2019 because the Hall of India at the Royal Over Seas League had become prohibitively expensive, priced a 2-course meal at £60 per head. Given the subsequent general increase in prices, the price would probably be higher in 2022, and this would further depress demand.

The Council of the Kipling Society has therefore decided that the Annual Luncheon can only continue if at least 40 members of the Society are willing to commit themselves well in advance. Any member who wishes the Society to hold a Luncheon in May 2022 and is prepared to pay over £60 for the pleasure, should email our Secretary Mike Kipling at [michaelrkipling@gmail.com](mailto:michaelrkipling@gmail.com) not later than 31 January 2021 (to leave time to book a speaker), stating their firm intention to attend.

### **DECEMBER READINGS**

On December 8th we had another successful and enjoyable session of Kipling readings, arranged and introduced by Jan Montefiore. The evening was enlivened by songs from Alex Bubb, and from Meredith Dixon outside her local library in Hartford Alabama, determined to find an internet connection. As ever we had readers from many countries including the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway, and France, and Harry Ricketts in Wellington, New Zealand in the small hours of the morning. If participants or other members would like to hear a recording of the event, please contact [johnrad@btinternet.com](mailto:johnrad@btinternet.com) for the link on Google Drive.

#### **Kipling and the Himalayas**

**Martin Powell** The Sea and the Hills

**Tonie Holt** Arithmetic on the Frontier

**Pamela Morgan** opening of 'The Ballad of the King's Jest'

#### **Animals and humans**

**Christopher Morrison** His Apologies

**Elodie Raimbault** From 'How the Whale got his Throat' in *Just So Stories*

**Jan Montefiore** – From 'How the Rhinoceros got his Skin' (up to the *Sloka*)

**Alda Milner-Barry**: From 'The Cat that Walked'

**Valmai Holt** I keep six honest serving men

#### **Kipling and the English**

**Tim Connell** Saxon and Norman.

**Mike Kipling** The English Way

**George Simmers** The Sons of the Suburbs

### **Kipling at sea**

**Guy Liardet** From 'The Devil and the Deep Sea': the bomb wrecking the engine.

### **Kipling the satirist**

**Fred Lerner** His Disciple

**Andrew Scragg** Lollius

### **Songs from the Puck books**

**John Seriot** Song of the Red War-Boat

**Meredith Dixon** Song of the Men's Side (sung)

**Alex Bubb** Poor honest men (sung)

### **Mid-winter**

**John Radcliffe** Beginning of 'Friendly Brook'

**Jan Montefiore (for Alastair Wilson)** Eddi's Service

**Harry Ricketts** end of "The Tree of Justice" and 'A Carol'

### **MEREDITH DIXON: A REFLECTION - Jan Montefiore**

I am very sad to report the loss of Kipling Society member Meredith Dixon, who was killed in a car crash on 16 December. Meredith was a lively and very well-informed Kipling enthusiast, and a much valued member of the Kipling Society JISMAIL discussion group to which she contributed many fascinating ideas, most recently on 'Carnifex' in the poem 'The Undertaker's Horse.' She was a constant and excellent reader in the Kipling readings on Zoom which I've been chairing since autumn 2020. Her choices were always original, and she liked to discuss them with me beforehand, something we both enjoyed. She mentioned that as in her youth she'd been trained to sing, she might sing a setting of 'Song of the Men's Side' at our last session in December, and I said that sounded splendid. So it was. She missed a lot of this session because her house Wi-Fi being down, but undaunted she managed to join us outside the public library of her home town (which naturally wouldn't let her sing inside, and quite right too as she said), and she wowed us all. It is very sad to know that this was Meredith's swan-song, and we won't hear her again or talk with her on screen or by email. She will be much missed by Society member, and we treasure her memory as an intelligent and generous colleague.

### **RUDYARD KIPLING - A MAN OF LETTERS**

Our Chairman, Jan Montefiore, was recently invited to present one of a series of short videos on 'Literary Lives', focussing on material at the UK National Archives. In Kipling's case, this relates to the military records relating to the search for his son John after the battle of Loos and other items relating to the First World War. You can view the six-minute video at [Video | The National Archives](#), where similar items on J B Priestly and Aphra Behn can be found.

### **COINCIDENCES IN THE CAREERS OF RUDYARD KIPLING AND BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER Part 6 – Tonie and Valmai Holt**

On 27 April 1915 Bairnsfather suffered severe shell shock during a gas attack near Ypres and he was sent back to Blighty. Whilst in hospital his relationship with *The Bystander* was sealed. He produced weekly cartoons for the magazine, the powerful figure of 'Old Bill', the indomitable old soldier who became world famous, was born and early in 1916 a special

collection of his weekly drawings was published under the title '*Fragments From France*'. It was an amazing success, both in the trenches at the Front and in the Home Front, selling 300,000 copies. Soon more editions of *Fragments* followed, the cartoons were reproduced as postcards, on all manner of china pieces, he wrote for theatrical reviews, featuring Old Bill and his fame spread throughout the Dominions and the United States. Yet questions were raised in the House about his "degraded" images of the British soldier. The public loved Bruce's cartoons and the honest rascals of soldiers he depicted. By the end of 1916 The War Office too recognised the role that Old Bill and his companions played in keeping up morale back at home, as well as in the trenches, and appointed him 'Officer Cartoonist' in the Intelligence Department and wondered how his works might be used as propaganda. He was sent to France where his depiction of *le Poilu* was greatly appreciated.

In November 1916 Bruce wrote a book entitled *Bullets and Billets* describing his life at the Front, which received great acclaim – except in *The Literary Supplement* of the *Times*, which grumbled, 'We regret unfeignedly that when the Empire laughs we must remain dumb... we know a battalion where a soldier such as Captain Bairnsfather takes as his type would most summarily dealt with. Nothing so quickly lowers morale as slovenliness and nothing is more difficult to check than the gradual degeneration due to trench life.' Nevertheless, his theatrical (and film) work increased into 1917 and it was at this stage of his fame that, as described above, he was sent to the Italian Front. By now he was an international celebrity and almost overcome by his work. Yet, when the Americans came into the War in 1918 and Bruce was asked to visit their soldiers in Alsace-Lorraine, he soon delighted in the relaxed enthusiasm of the Doughboys and declared that now the Americans had entered the war 'I knew that Germany did not have a chance.'

By the time the Armistice had been declared in November 1918 Bruce had also visited Australia and the USA, where he was to become a frequent visitor after the War.

On 29 January 1919, General Sir Ian Hamilton presided at one of Bruce's lectures which would visit 20 major towns. He described Bairnsfather as 'a great asset ... the man who had relieved the strain of war, who had drawn a smile from sadness itself by his skill in poking fun at tragedy. We might still need him to cheer us.' He added that Bruce was 'the man who made the Empire life in its darkest hour.'

One of the highlights of his life was to meet, at another of his lectures at Bath, his great hero, Rudyard Kipling, who had asked to meet Bruce after the show. He was delighted at the great man's comment, 'Bloody good'.

His acclaim and popularity, which grew until well after the war was over, continued in the inter-war years with films, lectures, articles, books and other international events. It was renewed by the outbreak of WW2 when the War Office asked him to draw a recruiting poster and it seemed that Old Bill had made a comeback, with many magazine and newspaper articles, books, including his autobiography '*Wide Canvas*' (which, like Rudyard's, was not very self-revelatory) and films like '*Old Bill & Son*' with John Mills, directed by Alexander Korda.

Interest in the UK died down, however, but early in 1942 Bruce was appointed 'Official Cartoonist to the American Forces in Europe'. He was greatly appreciated by the Yanks, with whom he worked in Northern Ireland (where Eleanor Roosevelt 'got the biggest laugh of her visit' at one of Bruce's cartoons) and then at 305<sup>th</sup> Bomber Group of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force at Chelveston where Colonel – later General – Curtis Le May, was a great admirer and where he painted bombers' noses and drew large murals on the wall of the Officers' Mess. He drew for *Stars and Stripes*, *Life* and *Colliers* and was popular in the States where, after the War, he did

many lecture tours. Gradually, however, Bruce's international career waned, and he returned to his first love – painting watercolour landscapes and making ever rarer contributions to newspapers and magazines until his death on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1959.

Yet, despite all his accomplishments, his major contribution to world-wide morale mainly during WW1 but also during WW2, and the undying love of the common man in the UK, Bruce never received any official recognition by the British Government. Ignoring the universal love of his humorous, stoical, scruffy, realistic WW1 characters, drawn in the trenches, he was not appreciated by the Establishment. This was demonstrated in 1981 by the Keeper of the Art Department of the Imperial War Museum when we proposed a major exhibition of his work – 'I do not feel that Bairnsfather's work merits an exhibition on the scale you are suggesting. If, as *The Guardian* states, "Critics have ...honoured him with faint praise", the reason is, in my view, because his work is of sentimental interest but dubious artistic value.' No comment...

There is little doubt that, in his final rather sad and lonely years, Bairnsfather, who in earlier days was known as 'the man who won the war' and 'the world's most famous cartoonist', was



*Bruce Bairnsfather c 1917.*

hurt by the lack of official recognition. We made many, many attempts over the years to rectify this omission, with some success, e.g. the Blue Plaque that we had erected in 1980 on his old studio in No 1 Stirling Street, unveiled by his daughter Mrs Barbara Littlejohn and attended by 16 year old Mark Warby who also continues actively to publicise Bairnsfather (see <https://www.brucebairnsfather.org.uk/>). Exhibitions and lectures continued to keep Bruce in the limelight, and in 2003 we erected a plaque on the rebuilt cottage in St Yvon where Bairnsfather drew his first cartoon. In 2014 we mounted a petition to get national recognition and finally, in 2015 we received partial success. Thanks to the stoic efforts of Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Lord Astor of Haver (the Representative of the MOD in the House of Lords) wrote, 'I have no doubt about the contributions Bruce Bairnsfather's work made to the war effort a hundred years ago ... I am pleased to offer my own recognition to the contribution that Bruce Bairnsfather made by his work.'

So, just as Kipling is regarded as the epitome of Jingo-ism and an 'Imperialist' and his work is now often shunned, so Bairnsfather was branded as a 'Cartoonist', rather than an 'Artist' and his work was underestimated. Despite this criticism and denigration, those of us who have grown up with, and/or have thoroughly researched, these two giants in their field, will continue to enjoy and admire their work.

## **KIPLING IN 'INDIA'**

Not every Indian English language newspaper was pro-Kipling, and his political story 'The Enlightenment of Paget MP' unsurprisingly met with disfavour in 'India', the pro-Congress publication.

# INDIA

A Journal for the Discussion of Indian Affairs.

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[TERMINING ANNUAL]

No. 13. Vol. I.]

OCTOBER 31, 1890.

[PRICE PER COPY, 2d., or 4sp.  
[YEARLY, POST FREE, 2s. 6d.]

So much has been said in the Indian papers and in many English journals respecting Mr. Rudyard Kipling's article in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*, in which every good thought and every noble action and effort towards a better condition of things politically and socially on the part of the Indian community is held up to scorn, that nothing need be further said in this issue of *India* than that the article is one of which any honest man should be ashamed. A passage from the *Scottish Leader's* trenchant treatment of the Kipling slanders may, however, be profitably quoted. That journal, in a leading article, says:—"The 'object lessons' are about as candidly selected as the texts in a Jesuit's thesis, and as to the dicta it is painful to have to state that the civil servant, who carries on Mr. Kipling's ingenuous argument, does not habitually speak the truth. One or two illustrations will serve. The feebly ratiocinative Pagett, clay in the hands of his potter, alludes to the malversation of famine funds; whereupon the Indian civil servant answers that 'there was never a special famine fund raised by special taxation and put by as in a box. No sane administrator would dream of such a thing.' Famine funds, according to this authority, are merely surpluses which finance ministers propose to apply in a certain way, but cannot always succeed in so applying. And the pliable Pagett answereth him not again. We regret we cannot oblige Mr. Kipling in the same way. The statement quoted is, as it stands, simply a gross falsehood. In the very last case protested against, a famine fund was raised by special taxation on a solemn promise that it would be properly applied; that solemn promise was re-affirmed by Lord Lytton when doubts were expressed; and finally the money was misappropriated. And that was not a unique case. Now, Mr. Kipling either knew the facts or he did not. The former hypothesis is inadmissible, for it would make him out a wilful liar, and a foolish one to boot, since he must have known he would be exposed. We must, therefore, decide that he is grossly, disgracefully, ignorant, of the facts with which he deals—this while posing before the public as one of the 'knowists', an ex-official pooh-poohing the ignorance and credulity of Mr. Bradlaugh and the Radicals at home. Again, Mr. Kipling, who is nothing if not a sentimentalist, introduces on his scene a hysterical and sentimental American lady doctor, who states for him that the Hindu reformers are desirous of votes for themselves but entirely averse to doing away with the abuses of their family life. Now, at the very time that Mr. Kipling's paper was being written or printed, some of the Hindu reformers were passionately pleading in the English press for the repeal of the Anglo-Indian laws which gratuitously sanction some of the worst abuses of Indian life—laws which Mr. Kipling's fellow officials were making no attempt to get rid of. There is a severe legal maxim that a witness proved false on one head is to be suspected false on all. We will not say that of Mr. Kipling; but we must needs say that he is a pretentious sciolist, who seeks by mere bounce and blague to outface better Indianists than himself. He would do well to confine himself to such Indian tasks as the versified biography of Potiphar Gubbins, C.E., and the construction of sentimental tales."

## A 'KING'S ANKUS' PRECURSOR

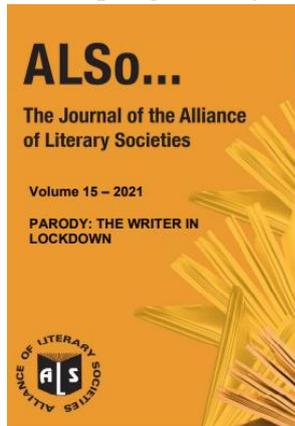
It has been suggested that 'The King's Ankus' in *The Second Jungle Book* was based on Chaucer's 'Pardoner's Tale'. Others have pointed out the similarity with one of the *Jatakas*, moral stories which tell of the Buddha's previous incarnations. The latter are still popular in India today, as illustrated by a comic-book representation of the Jataka on which 'The King's Ankus' was most probably based.



Thanks to Sarah Shaw, whose article on the *Jatakas* will appear in a future edition of *The Kipling Journal*.

## PARODY – THE WRITER IN LOCKDOWN

The Kipling Society is a member of the Alliance of Literary Societies. Its latest journal



contains parodies of many well-known authors as they might have written during the Covid lockdowns, from Johnson to Ted Hughes vis Housman and Wodehouse. Here is Here is Dr Johnson as related by Phil Jones “One of these persons appeared, unbidden [on TV], last evening, calling himself Johnson (aforenamed Boris). No kin of mine: my father, Michael, would have thrashed him for the whelp that he is. He is a fellow of wild appearance and loose speech. I recall nothing distinctly of what he spoke and he did not leave a pleasing impression. *Tempora deteriora fiunt*. He is a mean fellow of scant acquaintanceship with the Latin tongue, his pronunciation being that of an untutored schoolboy. I am informed that he is something in Government”. The journal can be read on this link

<https://allianceofliterarysocieties.files.wordpress.com/2021/08/also-2021-final.pdf>

## MANUSCRIPT JUNGLE BOOK

SP Books has collaborated with the British Library to release the first-ever edition of Rudyard Kipling’s manuscript of *The Jungle Book*, which contains the author’s never before seen original illustrations. I wondered if you’d be interested in including this in your quarterly journal and email discussion group? If of interest we may be able to offer a discount to your readers as well.

SP Books are releasing the original manuscript of Rudyard Kipling’s *The Jungle Book* for the very first time, which has been preserved by the British Library since bequeathed by Caroline Kipling on her death in 1940.



While some of his manuscripts have disappeared, quantities of notebooks, corrected proofs, sketches and drawings in the hand of people close to Kipling, have survived. At the end of the 1890s, Kipling, crowned with literary success, and aware of the value of these documents, with the help of his wife Caroline, collected them in groups which they donated to leading libraries and universities. Thanks to the British Library and SP Books, the public can now experience Rudyard Kipling’s creative process up close for the very first time.

Written in the 1890's, the manuscript consists of 173 separate sheets containing the stories of both *The Jungle Book* and *The Second Jungle Book*. It reveals Kipling's striking drawings of characters and animals, reminding us of the clarity of the images passing through the writer's mind as he worked. Also included are the verses and songs that appear at the beginning and end of each story, including the 'Parade-Song of the Camp- Animals', 'Rikki-Tikki-Tavi', 'Road Song of the Bandar-Log' and many more.

The manuscript also reveals subtle differences from the final printed version. The title, 'Her Majesty's Servants' was originally 'The Servants of the Queen' (32), while 'Red Dog' was 'The Little People of the Rocks' (73). Kipling also recast some stories so they appear twice, for example 'Quiquern' (106 and 116) and 'The King's Ankus' (87 and 96). A few words crossed out, with others written in, are also evidence of Kipling's care for precision and rhythm.

What is most notable is Kipling's urgency in writing. He is seen to have added scrawled instructions for layout or typography, enigmatic numerical calculations, lists of deleted titles, a surprising 'Urgent' on P.69, and even a 'To be typewritten as soon as possible. RK' on P.111. The story 'Toomai of the Elephants' seemed to be the hardest to write down, with the largest number of corrections, done in red pencil.

Please find a press release attached and images available [here](#).

#### AND FINALLY....



Nov 11

Toomey & Co. Auctio...

William Hair Haseler Victorian Match  
Safe / Vesta

\$200

