

THE KIPLING SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1927

Registered Charity No.278885

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CHAIRMAN'S NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2020

'If you would stay the plague, take and kill your rats'

DELAY TO JUNE EDITION OF KIPLING JOURNAL

As a consequence of practical difficulties arising from the 'lockdown', Jan Montefiore, the editor of the journal, now expects the June edition only to be posted to members in the third week of June rather than at the beginning of the month as usual. We apologise for this delay.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

The following dates have been set for the remainder of 2020. They are all Wednesdays:

- 1st July. AGM. Speakers Adrian Munsay and Vance Goodwin on their TV documentary 'Rudyard Kipling : A Secret Life' (illustrated with clips). Royal Over-Seas League. 16.30 for 17.00.
- 23rd September. Speaker Madeleine Horton 'Rethinking Rudyard Kipling: genre, Value and Reputation'. Royal Over-Seas League. 17.30 for 18.00.
- 11th November. Speaker Prof. Jan Montefiore 'War Graves, the Mayo assassination and Kipling's last Raj story The Debt'. Royal Over-Seas League. 17.30 for 18.00.

If it is not possible to meet in person for the AGM, we intend to hold it by videoconference. All matters requiring member approval will be circulated in advance and proxy votes sought from those unable to attend on-line. Further details will be provided in the next Newsletter.

UTTERLY TRIVIAL – spotted by Angela Eyre

Hopefully members will find the board game question below easy to answer. In case of a blank mind, the answer will be found at the end of this Newsletter.



COUNCIL VACANCIES

Four members of Council retire by rotation at the forthcoming AGM. So far, only two Society members have indicated they would like to stand for election. We urgently need two more volunteers in order that we have a full Council. The work-load is not onerous, with only five meetings a year, and a small amount of e-mail traffic in between. Please do contact me for a

preliminary chat if you might be at all interested in standing in what seems likely to be (as usual) an uncontested election.

KIPLING IN THE NEWS



This conference, arranged jointly by the Society and City University, will now take place on Thursday 29th and Friday 30th October 2020. The fee paid by those who had applied to attend on the original April date will be carried forward to the new dates unless a refund is requested. Further details at <https://www.city.ac.uk/events/2020/april/kipling-in-the-news-journalism-empire-and-decolonisation>

GRAFFITI AT BATEMAN'S

The National Trust recently had a graffiti survey carried out of Bateman's and Park Mill (by M J Champion Associates). The initials thought to have been carved by Kipling and his family in the stone of the entrance porch are well-known but a carving of his whole name was revealed elsewhere in the porch. These and a number of other interesting marks are illustrated below.



'Heavily eroded initials set within a deeply incised frame. No date. At least two of the sets of initials include the second letter 'K', perhaps indicating a relation to the Kipling family.'



'R. KIPLING. Lightly inscribed into the jamb of the inner doorway. The inscription is discrete, and difficult to make out unless in particular lighting conditions.'



'Garden grave marker for a pet of the Kipling family. Stone. Heavily weathered and lichen covered. Inscribed WOP.'



'Deeply inscribed swastika motif, located in the floor boards of the upper floor.'

MY BOY JACK

Jenny Douglas and her daughter Rebecca have produced a beautiful presentation of 'My Boy Jack' accompanied by the 'real time' construction of a sketch to illustrate the poem. This is part of a daily series they have produced since lockdown began, featuring many well-known poets, ancient and modern. 'If' and 'The Camel's Hump' also appear in the collection. I thoroughly recommend watching not just the Kipling poems but a great many more.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJGX8lqeFXQ>

KIPLING ON A QUICK LEARNING CURVE – by John Radcliffe

On October 18th 1882, a couple of months short of his seventeenth birthday, Kipling arrived in Bombay where he was born, moving among long-remembered sights and smells. He went up by train to Lahore to take up his job as Assistant Editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette*. He had edited the *United Services College Chronicle*, and so knew a little of printing and of the joys and perils of writing for critical readers. But this was a proper newspaper, the only daily paper of the Punjab, read by the civilians who governed the province and the soldiers who guarded it. As he wrote in *Something of Myself*, his Editor took him firmly in hand:

.. for three years or so I loathed him. He had to break me in, and I knew nothing. What he suffered on my account I cannot tell; but the little that I ever acquired of accuracy, the habit of trying at least to verify references, and some knack of sticking to desk-work, I owed wholly to Stephen Wheeler.



Wheeler was not interested in creative writing, of prose, still less poetry. The young Kipling had to get down to the daily unremitting grind of sub-editing, in the service of a paper which was the main daily source of news for its readers. He found it fascinating, the need to be more accurate than the native press, the fine judgements of one's editorial line, the prestige conferred by news from distant campaigns, the value of stories of the strange and unexpected, and the process of cutting and pasting stories from elsewhere.

Less than twelve weeks after his arrival, he wrote this parody of "The Pious Editor's Creed" by the American poet James Russell Lowell. He never collected it, but you may find it interesting as evidence of his capacity to learn extremely fast.

The Pious Sub's Creed

I do believe in Afghan wars
■ (As far away as Peshin is)
I love to stick them in because
■ Deception most refreshin' is.
And thirteen hundred copies mean,
■ Just thirteen hundred lies you see,
And other papers think we've been
■ No end informed and wise you see.

I do believe in 'frontier news'
■ At least *cum grano salis*,
As giving scope to Wheeler's views
■ Who my eternal pal is
And anything conducive to
■ A 'scrap' with 'frontier gup' in it
Would make us most abusive to
■ All papers less well up in it.

I do believe in Earthquake shakes
■ And tickets compliment'ry
The one at least a column makes
■ The other free-seat entry.
If any foolish Briton du'st
■ Loose captives from captivity
I do believe each journal must
■ Incontinently give it he.

I do believe in tiger skins
■ From fourteen feet to twenty
At least when for my many sins
■ Mail items aren't in plenty.

I do believe the C.M.G.
■ The type of all perfection
And other papers mostly be
■ In need of much correction
I do believe the native press
■ A sink of all that vicious is,
And each 'babu 'in English dress
■ A 'darn side' too officious is.

I do believe the British Press
■ Are censors of morality
Collectively, but none the less
■ Imply their deep rascality.
I do believe commandments ten
■ To keep one should endeavour
At least, all unofficial men
■ But viceroys—hardly ever.

I do believe in 'monster' leaps
■ By 'liliputian' horses
And dig out 'flying shots' in heaps
■ From 'most authentic sources'

I do believe the scissors are
■ The world's most sure foundation
And pasting paragraphs by far
■ The finest occupation,
I do believe that naught too low
■ Or high for daily grist is—
I think the Bible's true—I know
■ *The Indian Civil List is.*

COUNCIL NEWS

Council met on 22 April by Zoom videoconference. This worked very well. Amongst the matters discussed were:

- A generous legacy of £1,000 was left to us by the late John McGivering (obituary KJ 381, March 2020), which we decided should be used to fund an adult essay/creative writing prize. More details will be announce in the future.
- A new membership category for students will be introduced from July 2020. For £10p.a., such members will only have on-line access to the *Kipling Journal* but will have all the other benefits of membership.
- A decision was made that Carrie Kipling's Diaries and the Motoring Diaries would remain on the members' pages for a period of two years from July 2020. Any future material of this nature produced by the Society would also remain 'members only' for two years.

- A joint event with the Honourable Artillery Company in Summer 2021. This will include a talk on ‘Tommy Atkins’ and be followed by dinner. More details will be provided later in the year.

A SHORT HISTORY OF BATEMAN’S – PART 2

In part 1, I described how Bateman’s was occupied from 1652 until 1687 by Joseph and Alice Newington, Alice being the niece of Burwash lawyer William Langham.

Langham’s death in 1652 must have been sudden, for he did not have time to make a will (at that time, wills were almost always made on the death-bed). Being childless, his freehold properties descended by law through the line of his eldest brother to Alice, who may well have



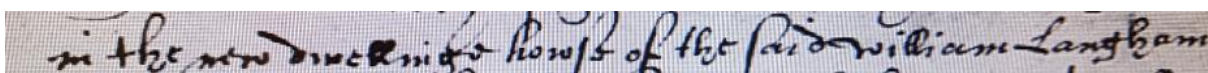
been living with him at Bateman’s. Langham’s widow, incidentally, subsequently married a Culpeper, a Sussex name which will be familiar to members from ‘A Doctor of Medicine’.

Bateman’s was probably amongst the properties Alice inherited. In an indenture of 1787, the property is described as being known as Batemans, Lanebridge, Merihams or Highland. ‘Merihams’ was one of the properties settled on Alice following her

marriage, which were almost certainly those she inherited from Langham. ‘Highland’ had been acquired by Joseph Newington from a cousin and was left to Alice in his will. Its name suggests that it formed the upper part of the present estate. The name ‘Lanebridge’ does not appear until the early 18th century, when it seems to have been an alternative to Bateman’s as the name for the whole estate.

Historic building experts who have examined the external fabric of Bateman’s believe that there was probably an earlier house on the site, part of which was retained in 1634 when most of what is today’s house was most probably built. The remnants of the older house were later demolished when what is the present kitchen was added later in the 17th century. But was William Langham responsible for the new build or did he acquire it later?

Langham himself had arrived in Burwash around 1625, having lived previously in Battle. In 1619 he had married Constance, the daughter of Thomas Hepden, the owner of Burwash forge. The only reference to Langham’s actual place of residence is in a bond of 1639 which is described as repayable to him at ‘his new house in Burwash’. It is debatable whether this could be a reference to a Bateman’s which had been reconstructed some five years earlier.



There is an alternative possibility. In 1638, Langham was appointed a joint trustee of the estate of Thomas Hepden, his nephew, to whom Burwash forge had by then passed. Langham was made responsible for the forge and other properties during the minority of John Hepden, his great-nephew, who was aged only one when his father died. It is possible that the bond refers

to one of these properties, which could be Bateman's. Thomas Hepden, however, refers in his will to living at a house in 'Burwash Town', a description which would not really fit Bateman's. So the hunt for the builder of Bateman's continues.

Next time. The Hepdens and Burwash Forge

KIPLING'S MOTORING DIARIES – by Alastair Wilson

Most of us are aware that Kipling never kept a day-by-day journal, but that Carrie did: and that the Extracts from those diaries made by, or on behalf of, the two 'official' biographers, Carrington and Birkenhead, are the only first-hand evidence of what the Kiplings did, on a day-by-day basis, throughout their lives together. As an aside, it would seem that, where Carrington paraphrased the contents of Carrie's diaries, the ones made by Rees for Birkenhead consist very largely of Carrie's own entries – they are 'extracts' in that they are not every word she wrote.



1910 Rolls Royce Silver Ghost

But when, from 1911 onwards, the Kiplings made extensive motor tours in England, France, and Belgium, sometimes twice a year, he did keep his own journal, and these have come down to us, among the Kipling Collection at the Keep, the University of Sussex's Archives, at Falmer, near Brighton. They were first transcribed (thank

goodness) from Kipling's own, rather crabbed, handwriting by some unknown hero(ine)(s), probably a Society member or a member of the Archives' staff. And John Radcliffe and I have been re-transcribing, annotating and illustrating them and placing them on the Members' portion of our web-site, where all can access them.

I have found them of great interest as illustrations of how the rich travelled – and make no mistake, Kipling was rich – not mega-rich, but rich enough to be classified as a 'bloated plutocrat' by some of the wilder spirits of the political left wing. Throughout the period, his car was a Rolls-Royce, chauffeur-driven, usually one of the smaller variants, and in many cases a landaulet body by a coachbuilder. In a landaulet, the passenger compartment is enclosed, but the chauffeur is in the open, but at least with a windscreen. His cars were always called either 'the Duchess' or 'Esmeralda'. Neither Kipling nor Carrie ever learned to drive a car, though both had driven horses in the USA, at Naulakha. But Kipling frequently did the navigating.

The diaries cover the period 1911-26. There are one or two tours for which no diary (if there was one) survives, but when he was writing he wrote daily. Some of the material is in note form, but there are one of two bits of his best travel writing. (His description of the travails that he and Elsie had in northern France, one Sunday at church time, is splendid. The current Duchess had got thoroughly bogged in (or rather, off) a country road - they were cemetery visiting for the IWGC – so he and Elsie tried to cajole draught horses out of the local village).

And they serve to remind us of the perils of long(ish)-distance motoring, in the days before roads were made up and tar-macadam-ed. Punctures were frequent in the days before WW1 – road surfaces had flints and horse-shoe nails and other detritus which were death to the tyres and inner tubes of those days. French roads were particularly bad (anyone who has read the

novels of Dornford Yates will recall some of his characters' encounters with pot-holed French roads in the 1920s). Nor was there much in the way of sign-posts, so a good map was essential, and a competent map-reader.

He remarked frequently on the hotels at which they stayed (nearly all personally owned by the *patron* in those days – no chains) and the goodness or vileness ('vile' was a favourite word) of the *déj.* or dinner they had and the availability of baths and hot water for them. (It was not until 1926 that they met a hotel which actually had two of its rooms with en-suite bathroom). And many of his tours in the '20s involved 'inspections' of Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission cemeteries, and contain details of their progress towards being the havens of peace which they are today.

John and I have spent a fruitful, and in my case (and I hope his) enjoyable and rewarding – best part of ten years - transcribing and annotating both Carrie's and the Motoring Diaries. We've nearly finished, and I, for one will be lost.

*The diaries are accessible via the 'For Members' pages of the website. To access these, please use the User Name **kipmembers** and the Password **beetle**.*

RUDYARD'S KIDLING

Under the above heading, the *Winnipeg Daily Tribune* of 18 January 1893 published the following extracts from US newspaper coverage of Josephine's arrival.

Hereafter Mr. Kipling will have more weeping in his stories. He is a papa now. —Toledo Blade.

Rudyard Kipling's bouncing baby is one American institution at which he will not sneer.—Washington Post.

Rudyard Kipling's baby is detracting a great deal of attention these days from baby Ruth.—Cleveland world.

The Kipling baby hasn't any name as yet. Rudyard is reported to be doing quite as well as anybody could expect.—Boston Globe.

Now that the Kipling baby has arrived, Rudyard Kipling, who has been proud and perhaps petulant to the reporter in view of the prospect, may unbend.—Kansas City Star.

Rudyard Kipling's baby seems to be the lion of the hour in New England. Now that he has an American for a daughter he must regret that he criticised America so sharply.—Detroit Free Press.

Rudyard Kipling has added "another story" to his collection. Rudyard Kipling's baby girl was born in this country. Just think of Rud's singing midnight lullabies to a mere American baby!—Memphis Appeal-Avalanche.

Soon after the announcement that Rudyard Kipling had become the father of a bouncing baby girl came the publication of his last story, "My Lord the Elephant." Can it be that Rudyard has two elephants on his hands at once?—Atlanta Journal.

Does Rud Kipling sing a lullaby like this to his kid?

Here's to you, chubby wubby,
In your old home in Vermont;
You're a blarsted little Yankee,
But I guess that doesn't count.
—Memphis Appeal-Avalanche.

THE KIPLING SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

David Watts, chair of the Kipling Society of Australia, writes to say that, like us, they have had to cancel their meetings. However, Naren, their editor and Treasurer, came up with the idea of getting members to state their favourite poems, and then defend them. This was done by email, but with the over 70's confined to home, the vast majority of them could take part.

Poems they have discussed so far include Chant Pagan, Pucks Song, Gypsy Trail, Danny Deever, The Last Suttee and Our Lady of Sackcloth.



.... AND FINALLY

A somewhat anachronistic cover design!



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Trivial Pursuit Answer: 'If you can meet with triumph and disaster / And treat those two imposters just the same' can be found inscribed above the players' entrance to Centre Court at Wimbledon.

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