

# THE KIPLING SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1927

Registered Charity No.278885

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## CHAIRMAN'S NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2020

*'Only concerned when Death breaks loose/On a front of half a world.'*

### CANCELLATION OF EVENTS

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing corona virus pandemic, all three Society events planned for April have had to be cancelled: the Annual Luncheon (8<sup>th</sup>), the 'Kipling in the News' conference (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>) and the Stammers-Smith Lecture (22<sup>nd</sup>). Arrangements are being made for the conference to take place on October 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> and further details will be made available in due course. Council will be considering whether it will be possible to rearrange the lecture and/or the luncheon around the same time.

The next Society event would normally be the AGM on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July. Council will decide closer to the time whether this event will proceed.

### MEETING REPORT

At the February meeting, author Sara Le Fanu gave an excellent and well-illustrated presentation on Kipling and his work on *The Friend* newspaper during the Boer War, material covered in her book on Kipling, Conan Doyle and the perhaps less well-known Mary Kingsley, traveller, writer and wartime nurse. In the opinion of many attendees, it was the most interesting and well-informed presentation we had heard for quite some time.

### FUTURE MEETING DATES – hopefully!

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.

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you are currently in self-isolation or simply have more time on your hands, don’t forget to make full use of the Society’s on-line facilities.

First and foremost is the website, <http://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/index.html> where you can find:

- every edition of the Journal back to the Society’s foundation in 1927 (fully searchable)
- the New Reader’s Guide with the words of all of Kipling’s published poems and an increasing number of his unpublished one too, each accompanied by an expert commentary, as well as commentary on all his stories.
- Carrie Kipling’s diaries
- Kipling’s Motoring diaries
- Kipling’s speeches, newspaper articles and other sundry works
- Lots of articles about Kipling
- The latest Society News.

Please note that the last two years’ worth of the Journal and the two diaries are only accessible via the ‘For Members’ pages of the website. To access these, please use the User Name **kipmembers** and the Password **beetle**. *Previous individual user names and passwords no longer work.*

There’s also the the Mailbase, an e-mail list via which Kipling aficionados exchange views on a wide range of matters. It’s an ideal place to seek an answer for a Kipling-related matter that’s been bugging you. To participate, go to <https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=RUDYARD-KIPLING> and register.

You can also follow us on Facebook at [https://www.facebook.com/pg/kiplingsociety/about/?tab=page\\_info](https://www.facebook.com/pg/kiplingsociety/about/?tab=page_info) or on Twitter at @kiplingsociety.

Members who do not have access to the internet can take this opportunity to refamiliarise themselves with the Kipling works on their shelves and to revisit their back copies of *The Kipling Journal*.

#### NEW READERS GUIDE UPDATE –by John Radcliffe

For the New Readers' Guide, Philip Holberton and John Radcliffe have continued to add notes on the many poems Kipling wrote in India but did not later collect. They have drawn, of course, on the work of Andrew Rutherford in *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling* (Oxford 1986) and on Thomas Pinney's magisterial Cambridge Edition of *The Poems of Rudyard Kipling* (2013).

They have also added the text of the poems, many of which are interesting and entertaining. They throw a lively light on the concerns of Kipling's Anglo-Indian readers in the 1880s, and on his freedom to satirise the policies of the Government of India. See "Trial by Judge", "Lord Ripon's Reverie", and – for lighter relief – "Fair Play", and "A Missing Word".

#### MEMBERSHIP MATTERS – by Fiona Renshaw

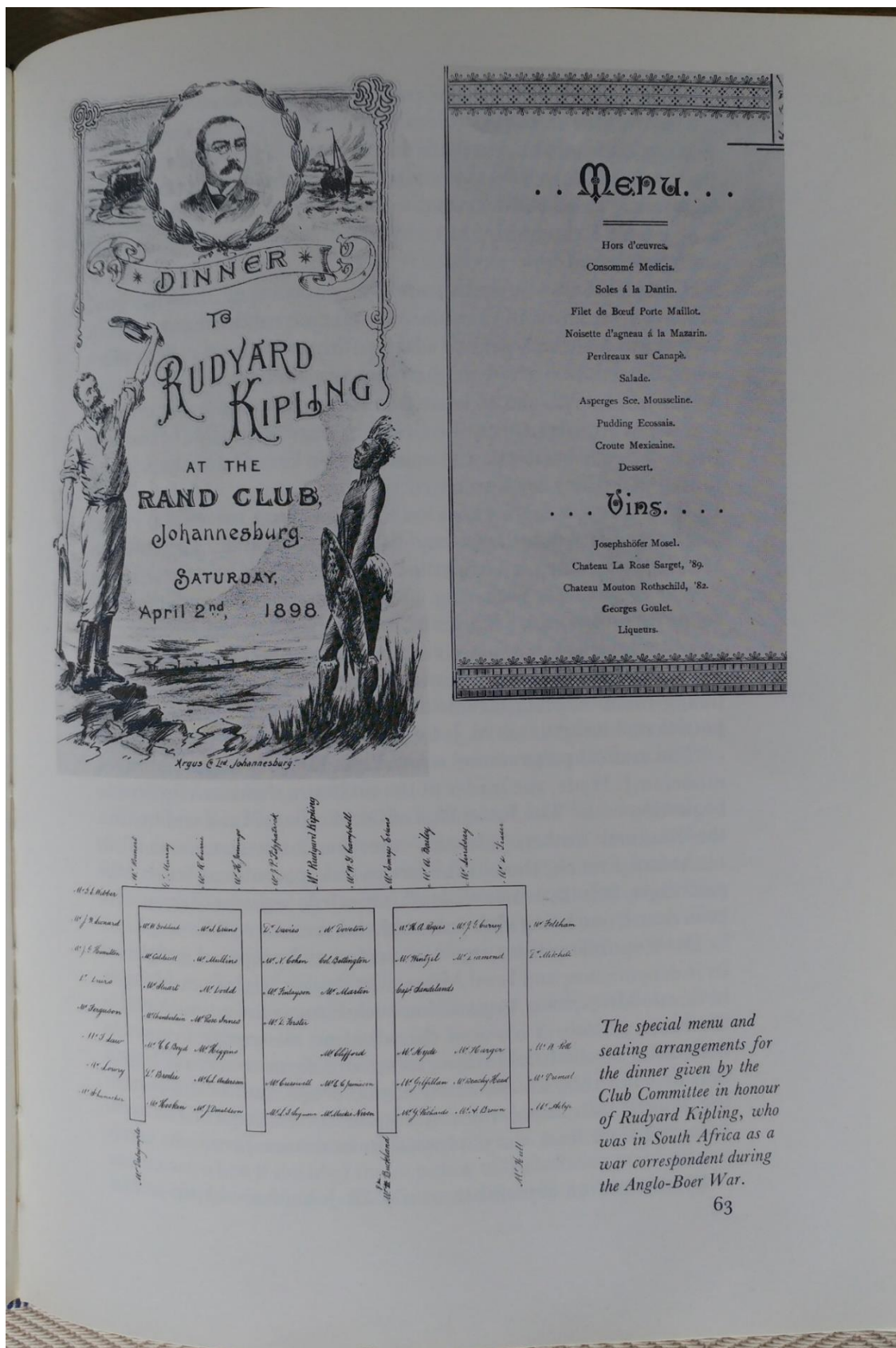
There is no need to worry if your membership is due for renewal during this time and you are unable to do so. *We will not cancel anyone's membership whilst the crisis is ongoing.*

If you have set up a **standing order** with your bank, your subscription will continue to be paid automatically. Those who normally pay by **cheque** can continue to do so, making the cheque out to 'The Kipling Society' and sending it to me at my home address (Keylands, Burwash, East Sussex TN19 7HP). Please note that cheques may not be lodged to our account for some weeks, so if you would prefer to wait before sending your cheque, I'd be grateful if you could inform me of this decision. Subscriptions can also be paid via **PayPal** from the Society's website or by **bank transfer** using the account details on the back page of all copies of *The Kipling Journal*.

We continue to accept new members to the Society so please feel free to encourage anyone you know who might be interested in joining to get in touch with me via the website, by post or by email. They will be most welcome.

If you have any membership queries, please do not hesitate to contact me, by post at the above address or by email ([ksmemsec@outlook.com](mailto:ksmemsec@outlook.com)).

# KIPLING AT THE RAND CLUB 1898



From The History of The Rand Club

## FUTURE VACANCIES ON COUNCIL

At the AGM, four current members of Council will come to the end of their three-year term. Under the Society's rules, they will not be eligible to stand for immediate re-election. This is an excellent opportunity for members who have not been on Council before to step forward and begin to involve themselves in the running of the Society. Of course, former members of Council are equally welcome to return.

Council normally meets five times a year, in the late afternoon before speaker meetings at the Royal Over-Seas League. Unless you want to take on one of the honorary offices, this is the only commitment. If you're interested, please do contact me or any other member of Council for a preliminary discussion.

## A FISHY STORY

I visited *The Firs* near Worcester recently, Sir Edward Elgar's birthplace. As members will know, Elgar incorporated settings of four of Kipling's first world war naval poems in his song-cycle *The Fringes of the Fleet*, plus a fifth poem *Inside the Bar* by Sir Gilbert Parker.

On display at *The Firs* was the papier-mâché fish below, thought to be a souvenir prop from the 1917 stage production of the song-cycle.



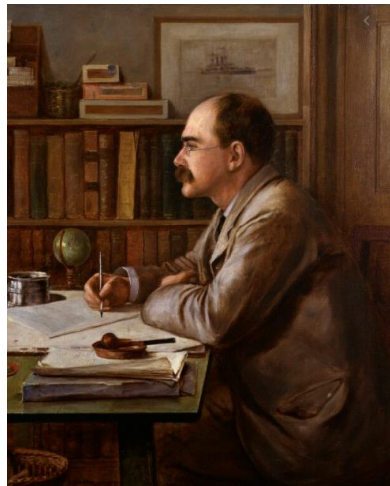
In the production, the curtain rose on a seaport scene, outside a public house, with the four baritones in rough-and-ready merchant-seamen's clothes, seated around a table. Kipling was not happy, apparently thinking it was too soon after John's death for him to be associated with song-making, so prevented any further performances after the end of 1917. Elgar commented "I fear the songs are doomed by R.K. he is perfectly stupid in his attitude".





Kipling and Elgar had been more in agreement in early 1914, when along with Roberts and Milner, they were signatories of the 'British Covenant' on Ulster opposing home rule for Ireland.

Another connection between Kipling and Elgar is that the latter had his portrait painted by Philip Burne-Jones, Kipling's cousin (as did both Rudyard and Carrie Kipling). Elgar's portrait hangs in the Worcester Guildhall, Kipling's in the National Portrait Gallery and Carrie's at *Bateman's*.



## STINGO

In 1890, when writing *On Greenhow Hill*, Kipling wrote made a rare reference to his Yorkshire ancestry when he wrote 'I want to make these people understand that it has been given to me to describe, when God chuses (sic), country village rusticity in the North whence I come; "for my birth and kin Ise (sic) Yorkshire and Stingo" '.<sup>1</sup>

"I'se Yorkshire and Stingo" is a clownish motto for Yorkshire quoted in E Cobham Brewer's *Readers Handbook of Famous Names in Fiction, Allusions, References, Proverbs, Plots, Stories, and Poems*, 'stingo' being a Yorkshire term for a strong, sharp beer. Brewer attributes the phrase to Michael Drayton's early 17<sup>th</sup> century 15,000 line geographical poem *Poly-Olbion*. Oddly, whilst I can find all of the other county mottoes Brewer attributes to Drayton, I cannot find this one in the on-line versions of *Poly-Olbion* I have looked at.

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Pinney, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Vol 2* (1990 University of Iowa Press ) p.16.

There was in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries a prominent inn called *The Yorkshire Stingo* on the Marylebone Road in London. A beer of that name is still brewed today by Samuel Smith of Tadcaster.



Kipling had used almost the identical phrase once before. “A’m Yorkshire and Stingo” says one of the characters in *An Unequal Match*, describing a Simla amateur actor’s attempt at dialect.<sup>2</sup>

## A SHORT HISTORY OF BATEMAN’S – PART 1

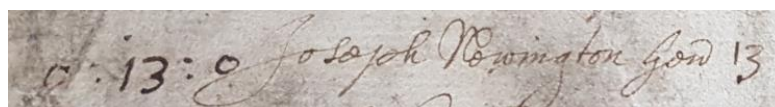
For a house with the date 1634 so clearly inscribed over its front door, surprisingly little is known for sure about the early history of Kipling’s beloved *Bateman’s*. As far as I can discover, the first mention of the name was not until 1716, when Burwash parish land tax records show Thomas or James Lawrence due to pay twenty-five shillings for ‘Batemens Place’.

We are, however, fortunate that tax accounts for Burwash stretch back to 1673 and were drawn up in a largely unchanging geographical order, enabling it to be deduced that the previous occupants of the property were John Brittan (1688-1715), Alice Newington (1687) and Joseph Newington (up to 1686).



Who were these people? Alice Newington was the niece and heir of a Burwash lawyer and landowner, William Langham. Shortly after Langham’s death in 1652, she had married Joseph Newington. Property which she had inherited from her uncle was settled upon her by Newington, meaning that it would remain hers to bequeath on her death.

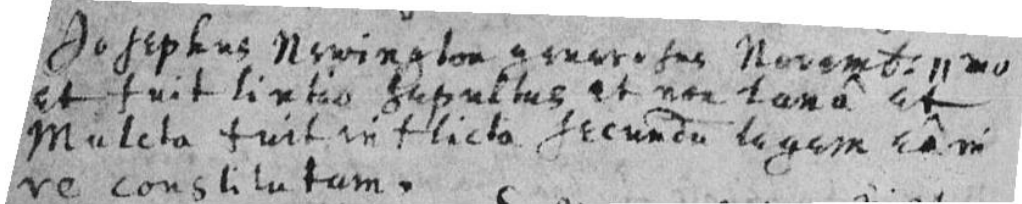
Newington paid 13 shillings hearth tax around 1665 at one shilling per hearth. This was the largest amount in the parish. The occupant of *Holmshurst*, the other Jacobean mansion in Burwash, paid ten shillings, so this seems to confirm that Newington was living at *Bateman’s* – and explains all those chimneys!



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<sup>2</sup> Thomas Pinney, *The Causes of Humanity and Other Stories* (Cambridge 2019) p. 261.

Newington died in 1685 and the Burwash parish register notes that he was buried in linen rather than wool and that a fine had been paid as a consequence. At this time, it was a requirement to be buried in wool as a measure to support England's staple trade. It was a sign of wealth and status to cock a snook at the law and pay the very sizeable fine of £5 to be laid to rest in linen instead - something one might imagine a later resident of *Bateman's* to have wanted done had he been living then.



Widow Alice died in 1687 (also paying the price to be buried in linen), leaving the property to an under-age great-nephew also called Joseph Newington, but although John Brittan, a cousin on her mother's side who had worked for her and her late husband, remained living in the property. The younger Joseph Newington came of age around 1700 and subsequently sold the property to wealthy Burwash timber merchant John Butler. Butler allowed Brittan to remain in the property until his death in 1715, after which the Lawrences moved in.

*In the next Newsletter, I will delve into William Langham's life and consider how likely it is that he was the builder of Bateman's.*

## FINALLY - STALKY ON THE SMALL SCREEN

In the 1980s, the BBC made a six-part serial of stories from *Stalky & Co.* Having just watched them for the first time, I can heartily recommend the DVD for filling up a few idle hours.



There is a trailer for this series at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sASJjL3BKEE> and you can buy your own copy at <https://www.ebay.co.uk/p/1162121322?iid=202828729670>. Other sources are available....

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