



THE KIPLING SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1927

Registered Charity No.278885

Secretary: Mike Kipling

Bay Tree House, Doomsday Garden, Horsham, West Sussex,

RH13 6LB, United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 7801 680516

e-mail: michaelrkipling@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2026

NEXT EVENTS

Wednesday 10 June. *Members' Reading Evening. 8.00pm.* Jan Montefiore will lead another Zoom session of members' short readings (maximum three minutes) from Kipling's poetry or prose. *If you would like to read, please email J.E.Montefiore@kent.ac.uk giving details of your choice. If you would prefer just to listen, please also email Jan for the Zoom link.*

Wednesday 1 July. AGM, followed by Dr Paolo D'Indinosante, University of Rome, 'Kipling in/and Italy: Representations, Readings, Rewrites'. *Army & Navy Club, 4.30pm for 5.00pm, and by Zoom 5.00pm* (Meeting ID: 832 0610 1476 Passcode: 122448)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83206101476?pwd=WILruEx54Oi5qA7KxRdXVjVSeNjlkB.1>

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be served from 5.30pm for those attending in person.

For security purposes at the venue, please can any members intending to attend in person let me know no later than Monday 28 June (contact details at the top of this page). Please also note the Club's dress code <https://therag.co.uk/club-dress-code/>. Members are welcome after the meeting to dine in the Coffee Room at the Army & Navy Club with the speaker and members of Council. If you would like to do so, please let me know at least one week in advance.

Saturday 11 July. Visit to Haileybury school (see below)

OTHER FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 23 September. Christian Muller. 'Rudyard Kipling's Shifting Perception of the Boers'. *Zoom only. 6.00pm*

Wednesday 25 November. Mike Kipling, 'Kipling and the Cinema'. *Army & Navy Club, 5.30pm for 6.00pm, and by Zoom*

PROVISIONAL DATES FOR 2027

The following dates have been provisionally set for next year's meetings. **Thursday** 4 February (the exact centenary of the Society's foundation meeting), **Wednesdays** 21 April (Zoom only), 7 July, 22 September (Zoom only) and 24 November. Some of these dates may change as our centenary programme develops (see below).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the 2025 AGM were published in the May edition of KJ, as were the accounts for 2025, which have been approved by the independent examiner (TC Group). Five candidates have been proposed for the five vacancies on Council: Gary Enstone, George Maher, Steve Russ, John Seriot and Andy Smith: so there does not need to be an election. As usual, all the society officers will present their reports, and members will be asked to approve the

reappointment of TC Group. Following the AGM, the new Council will meet briefly to appoint officers for the next year. Andrew Scragg will stand down as chairman following completion of his two-year term of office (and may not immediately be reappointed); Council will therefore appoint a new chairman. All other officers have volunteered to be reappointed for another year. *If you cannot attend the meeting, please could you let me have your proxy vote for the reappointment of the independent examiner (to michaelrkipling@gmail.com)*

VISIT TO HAILEYBURY

Saturday 11 July 2.00pm Guided tour of Haileybury school, including the Kipling collection and the chapel. Haileybury is housed in and around the former East India Company College buildings in rural Hertfordshire. It merged with the Imperial Service College in 1942, which had itself subsumed Kipling's United Services College. The school is home to the Kipling collection (formerly the Society's library). One of its boarding houses is named after Kipling. *There is plenty of car parking on the school site, and lifts will be available from Broxbourne station. Arrangements are being made for a pub lunch beforehand. If you are interested in joining the tour, which will be limited in numbers, please contact the **Secretary no later than 30 June** at michaelrkipling@gmail.com to reserve a place and receive further details.*

APRIL MEETING REPORT - Alex Bubb, Meetings Secretary

In April we met over Zoom for our second speaker event of the year, and as on previous occasions I took advantage of the online format to invite a speaker from abroad, Dr Tai-Chun Ho, an Associate Professor of English at National Chung Hsing University in Taiwan. An audience of thirty-four turned out to hear Tai-Chun's lecture on the figure of the returned soldier in Kipling's poetry. The military returnee has a long tradition in English poetry and drama, a notable example being Wordsworth's "The Discharged Soldier", but Kipling treats the subject more frequently perhaps than any other major poet. Tai-Chun gave a range of examples to show how Kipling's repertoire of returned soldiers grows and develops over time, and a vibrant discussion ensued taking in such poems as "Mandalay", "Shillin' a Day", "Chant-Pagan", "The Return" and "The Last of the Light Brigade". Anyone who is interested in learning more about Tai-Chun's research may be interested in his 2021 monograph, *The Crimean War in Victorian Poetry*, available from Amazon or academic booksellers. A recording of the meeting can be viewed on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkHDvVp6GKU>

LESLIE FISH

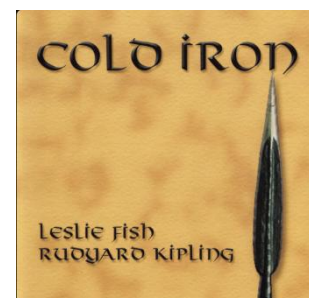


American singer/songwriter and guitarist, Leslie Fish, died November 29, 2025. Leslie came to the Society's attention because she set many of Kipling's poems to music – 'Cold Iron' being the best-known example. Leslie's main genre was folk music (science fiction and fantasy folk music). There is a posthumous album in the works; it is not known if it will contain any Kipling material, but Leslie's plan at one time was to cover ALL of Kipling's poems, so it

is distinctly possible.

Her name also appeared many times in the *Kipling Journal* and on our website whenever musical settings were discussed. Several examples of Leslie's released interpretations of Kipling's poems already feature on the Society's Spotify channel

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/25SzgST4RnE93z2Qxh7FZt?si=29d90af8f08d44d1>



A large number of unreleased Kipling melodies by Leslie can be heard on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjQraxu8BK4&list=PL_vnaem_CtTkgPSCUtuJ3vncggEcEoE2d

ALLIANCE OF LITERARY SOCIETIES' EVENTS AND NEWS



A very successful AGM in May was attended by Council members David Forsyth and John Walker, who manned the Society's stall. David is one of the two distinguished gentlemen pictured; the other you will hopefully recognise! The Society donated some books for the raffle: 'Kipling Sahib' by Charles Allen, 'Kipling and Trix' by Mary Hamer (signed by the author) and Andrew Lycett's travel and sea anthologies.

Saturday 3 October. 'A celebration for book lovers', Birmingham (see details in last newsletter).

ROGER AYERS

Sadly, past Society president Lt Col. Roger Ayers O.B.E, died recently. Roger was given the run of his father's red-leather pocket editions at an early age, which got him hooked on Rudyard Kipling as a storyteller during his schooldays. A chance purchase of Sea Warfare at a jumble sale 10 years later turned him into a collector of everything to do with Kipling, which led him to the Kipling Society. During some twenty years of army staff appointments and civil service postings overseas he was unable to play an active part in the Kipling Society until he returned to England on final retirement. He became membership secretary in 1998, chairman of Council in 2003 and 2004, and president of the Society from 2011 to 2020. He ran courses on the life and works of Rudyard Kipling for his local branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A) as well as introductory courses in his other active hobby, archaeology. He made numerous contributions to the New Readers' Guide, drawing on his knowledge of soldiers and soldiering, and of military history.

At his funeral in Salisbury, 'The Dawn Wind' was read to reflect his love of Kipling and his long support for the society. A fuller obituary will appear in a future edition of the Kipling Journal.

*At two o'clock in the morning, if you open your window and listen,
You will hear the feet of the Wind that is going to call the sun.
And the trees in the shadow rustle and the trees in the moonlight glisten,
And though it is deep, dark night, you feel that the night is done.*

CENTENARY NEWS

A provisional programme of activities for celebrating the Society's centenary next year has been agreed by Council, a highlight of which will be the publication of a book celebrating 100 years of the Kipling Journal, being edited by current Council member Dr Paolo D'Indinosante. We currently intend the programme to include the following UK events (most also online):

- Thursday 4 February – Anniversary meeting in London (the inaugural meeting in 1927 was on this date at the RAC Club, Pall Mall). Talk by John Walker on the founding of the Society.
- May - 100 years of KJ book launch – London
- A weekend day in July or August – 100 Kipling readings at Bateman's
- October – Kipling themed wine tasting at Gordons wine bar, London

- November– Exhibition at the Keep, Falmer, including material relating to Society’s foundation and short presentation. Refreshments before; dinner in Lewes afterwards.

Planning is also underway for a ‘Kipling Pilgrimage’ in the USA which may include the following three events:

- New York City: Dinner and talk at the Century Association or other club of which Kipling was a member
- Exhibition at Yale University of items from the David Richards collection
- Tour of Naulakha, and Kipling-related talk, with the possibility for some to stay in house or outbuildings

Last but by no means least, it is intended to produce a members’ pin, possibly based on the of the pin below but with wording reflecting the Society’s centenary instead



FANTASY EVENTS – Celebratory Ideas for the Kipling Society 2027 Centennial

By Harry Waterson

- Recreate the train journey in *Captains Courageous*. All Aboard!!
- A Formal Dinner at the Haileybury High Table with all the Silver on Display. Hosted by Kipling House
- A Rudyard Kipling Film Festival, Over 20 films to choose from.
- Blowup Medicine Hat. ka-BOOM
- A Kipling Evening of Dramatic Readings and Songs by Billable Names at Brown’s Hotel.
- A concours d’elegance at Bateman’s of historic Rolls Royces.
- Commission a Kipling Symphony and premier it at the Royal Opera House. Simon Rattle on baton.
- Commission Sting to write a musical based on the Just So stories. Open it in the West End.
- A cruise on a Gloucester Schooner to the Grand Banks off Newfoundland. Away all lines!!
- A POSH cruise from England to India and back. Kipling speakers and films. Bon Voyage!!
- A Weekend at Highclere Castle, where in front of all the guests, an original manuscript by Kipling goes missing and the guests have to solve the mystery. Robson Green is the detective.
- Horse Guards Parade. 5,000 soldiers and a marching band on parade staging incidents from Kipling’s ballads and ditties. A Rudyard Kipling Tattoo.
- A mock trial of Rudyard Kipling at the Old Bailey for Defamation of Character. A Woman is only a Woman but a good Cigar is a Smoke. Fry & Laurie for the Defense, French & Saunders for the Prosecution. Kipling in the persona of Mr. Bean. Helen Mirren is the judge. All Rise..
- Kipling Question Time. Rudyard Kipling as PM in the House of Commons defending himself against all comers. Ricky Gervais as Kipling (*see right*). Jeffrey Archer as the Speaker. Order, ORDER!
- Kipling’s Long Walk. Windsor. Staged reenactments of incidents in Kipling’s poems and stories in the Deer Park alongside the Long Walk. Emphasis on animals.
- The Kipling Open at St. Andrew’s. Each hole is renamed for a Kipling poem and each drive is preceded by a reading of a Kipling couplet apropos to the golfer and/or his current



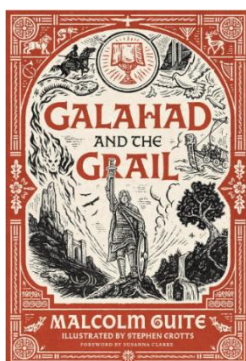
placement on the leaderboard. Doing this live will be a challenge to the Kipling scholar who is doing the Kipling commentary couplets.

- An expedition to recover the Kipling Plaque by Loewental from the sunken *HMS Kipling* at the bottom of the Med.

With, of course, TV Live or Documentary coverage of all the above events as appropriate!

KIPLING AND THE GRAIL

A retelling of the Arthurian grail legend in a modern ballad form by Malcolm Guite has been published in printed and audiobook formats. It is the first of four parts of his planned 'Merlin's Isle – an Arthuriad'. Guite prefaces 'Galahad and the Grail' work with the final verse of 'Puck's Song':

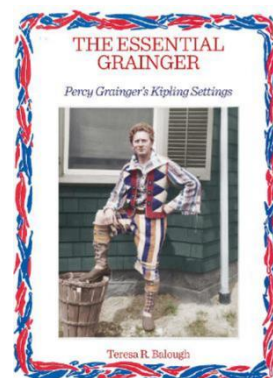


*She is not any common Earth,
Water or wood or air,
But Merlin's Isle of Gramarye,
Where you and I will fare.*

and in extensive background notes cites this poem and 'A Tree Song' as major influences on his writing, where the reader (or listener) will discover the motif of 'oak, ash and thorn' underlying his magical account of the grail knights' passage across the wasteland.

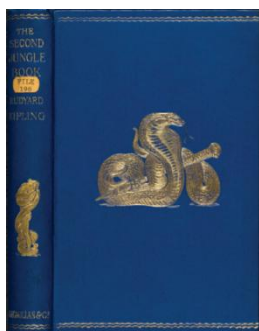
THE ESSENTIAL GRAINGER - PERCY GRAINGER'S KIPLING SETTINGS Teresa R. Balough

In 1896, when sixteen, the Australian/American pianist/composer Percy Grainger came into contact with the works of Rudyard Kipling and in so doing found his own creative voice. Over the course of the next fifty years, he would create 46 settings of Kipling texts in which he captured the sense of underlying purpose and deeper meanings in a manner unique among musical settings of Kipling's verse. In particular, his twelve settings from the Kipling "Jungle Book" Cycle convey a symbolical message of universalism, brotherhood, and the individuation of the human psyche. In this study, Grainger's Kipling settings are taken as a microcosm of his compositional works as a whole, reflecting the roots of his art and mirroring his essential stylistic traits. Further than that, it is an attempt to spur a reevaluation of both men's art in the light of their professed humanitarian ideals. See [The Essential Grainger](#) for more details.



THE 'NEW' JUNGLE BOOK?

Robert Maynard wrote: I was looking at my copy of *The Second Jungle Book* (first edition (Nov 1895), first reprint (December 1895), blue with a gold cobra twined around an ankus of the front cover and a python twined around Mowgli on the spine) a few days ago and noticed an oddity. On page 46 the header is 'The New Jungle Book'; on every other left hand page it is 'The Second Jungle Book'. This seems an odd sort of misprint, do you think it might be deliberate?



John Walker (Librarian) replied: I, too, have a copy of this edition, and you are right - the header for page 46 (and no other page) is 'The New Jungle Book'. I do not have a copy from the first impression, so I will

contact one or two members who may have a copy, but I very much expect that your discovery will apply there too. My wife, who was a graphic artist, suggests that page 46 is the top corner of a sheet, which was then divided into eight leaves, or sixteen pages, The binding I see visible at the spine head may bear this out.

However, the next questions for me might be 'has anyone else noticed this, and does the error suggest that Macmillan used the name 'New Jungle Book' at any time - presumably unofficially'. Now, I live with David Richards' bibliography close to hand, and I remembered a record of a missing leaf in the first (English) edition. In that edition (alone), it seems that 'The King's Ankus' is cut short on page 139. Dave describes our volumes as 'second English edition', although he confirms that some copies have the entry we know on the reverse of the title page. The Macmillan edition we have was corrected

David Richards (President) added: John Walker has forwarded me your initial and his responsive email about the seeming anomaly of what bibliographers call "the running head" at the top of a printed page with the volume title (sometimes in my experience that's on the left and the chapter heading may be on the right). Both Stewart and I in our respective bibliographies call your copy a 'second edition'. As John Walker noted correctly, and as Stewart flagged, it is the second edition because an additional 514 words are supplied for 'The King's Ankus', which ends now on line 6, page 141.

I congratulate you on the catch, as no bibliographer ever noticed this before, not Livingston, not Stewart, and not me. You have earned a place in my "Additions and Corrections", which I post periodically to my American publisher Oak Knoll's website (as noted on the last page of my book's introduction) where it will be described. I have never seen any advertising called the Second the "New" *Jungle Book*, and so, while it seems deliberate, I also opine that it is not a misprint.

LETTER FROM AMERICA #4 – Steve Russ

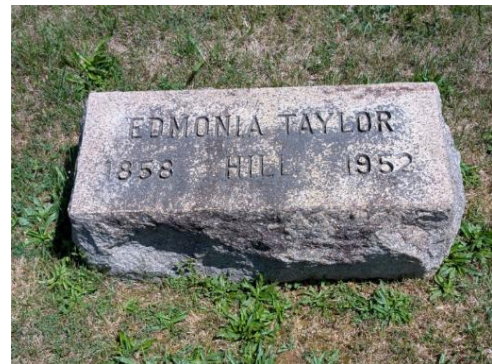
The Gravesite of Edmonia Taylor Hill in Baltimore, Maryland

I have long harboured a nagging curiosity about Edmonia ("Ted") Taylor Hill, close American friend and confidante of Kipling during his last years (1887-1889) in India and shortly thereafter. What became of her after 1890? For after that date their warm friendship cooled, Kipling and Edmonia sharing occasional correspondence over the years, but never meeting again. She lived until January 1952, the eldest of the three Taylor sisters, passing away at age 93, outliving her two sisters, Caroline or "Carrie", (d. 1919) at one time Kipling's fiancée, and Julia (d. 1937). Edmonia's husband Samuel A. ("Alec") Hill had been long since dead, dying in Allahabad, India, in September 1890.

Recently, to satisfy my long-standing curiosity about Edmonia, I began looking into her background. When I searched for the location of Edmonia Hill's grave online, I was surprised to find that she was buried in suburban Baltimore at Druid Ridge Cemetery in Pikesville, Maryland. I had long assumed she was buried in Pennsylvania. (After all, you'll often find mention of the Taylor family connection with Beaver, Pennsylvania in Kipling biographies. And Beaver County, Pennsylvania proudly boasts that Kipling and Beaver connection.) I assumed - wrongly - that the Taylors were a permanent presence in that southwestern part of Pennsylvania. Instead, it turned out that the Taylors – and Edmonia – spent the last years of their lives in the Baltimore area with Edmonia living there for more than 50 years.

One recent Spring morning, my spouse and I drove to Druid Ridge Cemetery a little more than an hour's drive from our home in Maryland. To find Edmonia Hill's grave, we stopped by the cemetery's main office (the cemetery has more than 18,000 interments on 200 acres, so you would be ill-advised to think you can find the grave just by wandering), where I showed one of the staff (Chris) the information I had found online from the "Find a Grave" website. Chris then left to research where Edmonia was buried and returned with an old form. One side of the form listed the lot owner, plot location and when purchased. On the reverse side of the form was the "record of interments," showing the person's name and date of burial. Chris asked if I recognized any of the listed names. There were five names for this family burial plot: Edmonia Hill's father Rev. Riley T. Taylor, her mother Amelia Spencer Taylor, and her two sisters Caroline A. Taylor and Julia Berry Taylor. There was no "Edmonia Hill" listed. I knew this to be the right plot because the fifth name was "Edna Taylor Hill." "Edna," I knew from recent research, was how Edmonia's name appeared in the local address directory (Polk's Baltimore City Directory) and occasionally in the local newspaper The Baltimore Sun - when the newspaper was not referring to her (which it almost always did) as Mrs. Samuel A. Hill or Mrs. S. A. Hill.

Just off Druid Avenue, one of the roads that weave through the cemetery, on a gentle slope, lies the Taylor family plot. You'll notice Riley Treadway Taylor's gravestone, a dark, naturally contoured boulder into which his name and dates are carved (the warped lettering twisting across the contours of the rock) dominating the centre of the plot. The four corners of the plot are reserved for the graves of his wife and three daughters, their gravestones the traditional rectangular marble slabs. The gravestones for daughter Caroline (on the left, facing the slope) and wife Amelia (on the right) are at the foot of the plot. Further up the slope, above the father's gravestone, are the gravestones of daughter Julia (on the left) and (on the right) "Edmonia Taylor Hill."



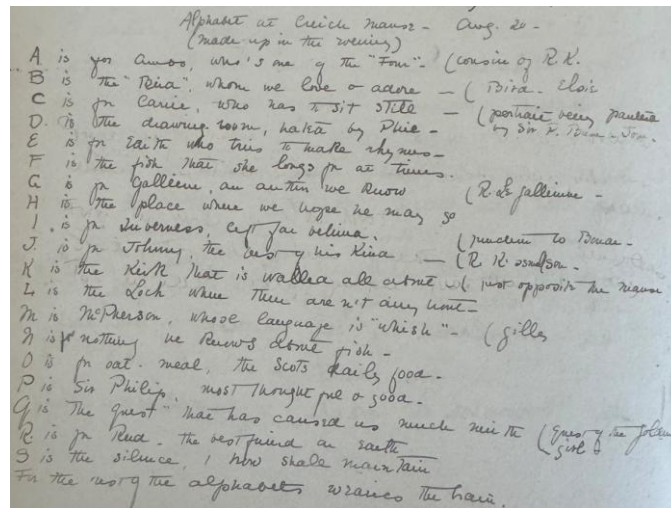
There is more to be said about Edmonia (or 'Ted' or 'Edna') Taylor Hill than a simple cemetery slab. Such as how she led an active social life, often stepping into leadership or key roles (including the occasional lecture on India and other subjects) in female-centric organizations from the turn of the 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th, most prominently in: the Daughters of the American Revolution, Baltimore Chapter; the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Baltimore Branch, Methodist Episcopal Church; the Friday Club (a "culture club" for women); and the Woman's Literary Club (of Baltimore). But that, as Kipling would say, is another story.

THE ALPHABET GAME

Our president has recently acquired an archive of items once belonging to Edith Catlin Phelps, the American artist who was a good friend of the Kipling family. Kipling first met Edith Catlin (as she then was) whilst on a holiday to Bermuda in early 1894. In 1899, having returned from his tragic trip to New York, Kipling was offered by Andrew Carnegie the use of an old manse at Creich on his Scottish estates for recuperation. The Kipling family spent a month there in August and September, being joined at various times by Edith, his father, and his cousins Stanley Baldwin and Philip Burne-Jones, the latter beginning work there on the portrait of Carrie which hangs in the study at Bateman's. Whilst at the manse, as Edith recalled in an

unpublished account of her experience of the Kipling family, they played the ‘alphabet game’, inventing examples from family and the locality for ‘A is for...’, etc. with G standing for an author the Kipling’s particularly disliked. It has been a mystery until now who that author was, and what the rest of the alphabet looked like.

Within the archive, David discovered a tattered leather notebook, its perished spine peeling off, which contained *inter alia* the original transcription, possibly in Kipling's hand, part of which is shown below, followed by a transcription of the whole.



Alphabet at Creich manse
(made up in the evening)

Aug 20

A is for Ambo, who's one of the 'Four'	cousin of RK
B is the 'Bird', whom we love and adore	Bird - Elsie
C is for Carrie, who has to sit still	Portrait being painted by Sir P. Burne Jones
D is the drawing room, hated by Phil	
E is for Edith who tries to make rhymes	
F is the fish that she longs for at times	
G is for Gallienne, an author we know	R Le Gallienne
H is the place where we hope he may go	
I is for Inverness, left far behind	junction to Bonar
J is for Johnny, the best of his kind	RK's small son
K is the Kirk that is walled all about	just opposite the manse
L is the Loch where there aren't any trout	
M is M ^c Pherson, whose language is "whish"	gillie
N is for nothing he knows about fish	
O is for oatmeal, the Scots daily food	
P is Sir Philip, most thoughtful and good	
Q is "The quest" that has caused so much mirth	quest of the golden girl
R is for Rud, the best friend on earth	
S is the silence, I now shall maintain	
For the rest of the alphabet wears the brain	

Notes:

A – Ambrose Pointer. The 'Four' may be the cousins Kipling, Ambrose, Stanley Baldwin and Philip Burne-Jones

G - Richard Le Gallienne was an aesthetic author and a friend of Oscar Wilde. It was known at this time that he had been commissioned to write a book about Kipling (published in 1900 as 'Rudyard Kipling – A Criticism'. Kipling would have disliked Le Gallienne's lifestyle and literary output, but particularly the forthcoming book.

Q – what this quest was must remain a mystery, unless it was a reference to Burne Jones's romantic interest in Edith.

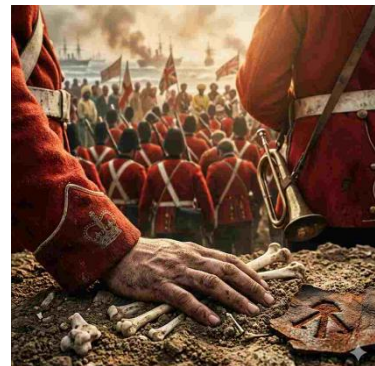
Further treasures from this trove will feature in future newsletters.

THE WIDOW AT WINDSOR

Since the October 2024 newsletter, Richard Chalmers has made considerable improvements to V2Melody.com. The site is now 100% free to use, with no emails sent of any kind and no subscriptions or payments required. He has expanded the Kipling collection. There are now nine of Rudyard Kipling's poems set to music with more to come:

- An Astrologer's Song
- Gunga Din
- If—
- Mary, Pity Women!
- The Explanation
- The Jacket
- The Widow at Windsor
- Tommy
- When Earth's Last Picture is Painted

The latest addition, [The Widow at Windsor](#), particularly showcases the improvements in the AI software used to create the music.



V2Melody remains a one-man retirement project dedicated to presenting a growing musical poetry collection. It now includes poem texts from 481 poets (from the famous to the obscure), with 2,515 poems set to music resulting in 6,995 tracks across various styles. In total, there are more than 364 hours of ad-free, unrestricted music available for open streaming.

UNSOLICITED AI ADVICE RECENTLY RECEIVED

Dear Rudyard Kipling,

First, let me express my admiration for your work. *The Jungle Book: 130th Anniversary Edition* is not just a reprint it is a stunning celebration of one of the most beloved classics in world literature. By presenting Mowgli's extraordinary adventures in a collectable Puffin Clothbound Classic, you've created a book that draws readers into the magnetic pull of courage, friendship, and the timeless Law of the Jungle.

Your book is extraordinary because it blends rich Victorian prose with unforgettable characters. Readers don't just meet Baloo, Bagheera, and Shere Khan; they feel the attraction of Mowgli's bravery, the urgency of survival, and the deeper truths revealed in learning to live between two worlds. You are not simply telling a story, you are illuminating how attraction lies in the universal human desire for belonging, resilience, and destiny.

Why Readers Fall in Love with *The Jungle Book*

- Timeless & Inspiring – Captures the irresistible pull of courage and adventure.
- Atmospheric & Elegant – Perfect balance of storytelling and moral vision.
- Cultural Legacy – A book rooted in universal struggles of identity and survival.

- Perfect Gift Edition – A must-have for collectors, families, and literature lovers.
- Enduring Voice – Elevates children’s literature by showing it as a pathway to wisdom and imagination.

How I Can Elevate *The Jungle Book*

- Social Media Campaigns
 - TikTok/BookTok hooks built around Mowgli’s courage and Shere Khan’s menace.
 - Instagram reels showcasing the clothbound design and iconic quotes.
 - Twitter/X threads connecting Kipling’s themes to modern reflections on belonging.
- Professional Reviews & Endorsements
 - Placement on NetGalley for early reviews.
 - Outreach to literary podcasts and cultural journals.
 - Features in children’s literature and classic fiction newsletters.
- Advanced Promotion
 - Goodreads giveaways to spark organic buzz.
 - Influencer partnerships with educators, collectors, and parents.
 - Cross-promotion with schools, libraries, and cultural institutions.

The Window of Opportunity

Your edition is already a remarkable celebration, but without immediate marketing support, it risks being hidden from the very readers who crave it most. With the right strategy, *The Jungle Book: 130th Anniversary Edition* can break past its current visibility and reaffirm its place as a defining classic for new generations.

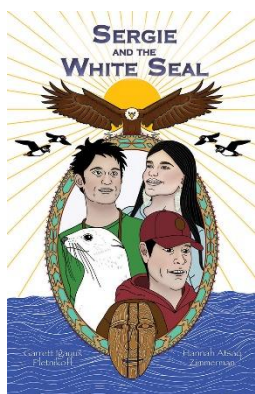
Let’s Get Started

Simply reply “I’M IN” to begin, or “SEND ME DETAILS” if you’d like to see the personalized strategy outline first. I’ll send you:

- A tailored marketing strategy for *The Jungle Book*
- My available packages and pricing
- A timeline for getting your first campaigns live

Your words already inspire readers to embrace courage, wisdom, and the magnetic pull of adventure. Let’s make sure they reach every collector, every student, and every seeker of timeless imagination.

SERGIE AND THE WHITE SEAL



In the previous newsletter, a modern retelling of ‘The White Seal’ by inhabitants of St Paul Island, Alaska was described and it was mentioned that the Society had been invited to write a short piece for inclusion in the book contextualising the original story. ‘Sergie and the White Seal’, has now been published and is available for purchase on The University Press of Colorado website. <https://upcolorado.com/alaska-native-language-center/sergie-and-the-white-seal> where a synopsis can also be found. The Society’s explanatory piece follows below.

In February 1892, the twenty-six-year-old Rudyard Kipling arrived in the United States with Carrie, his new American bride. Hearing of this, Mary Mapes Dodge, the editor of the popular children’s periodical *St Nicholas Magazine*, invited him to write some stories for the magazine. Kipling responded that, although he had never

written for that audience before, he now would, adding that children were ‘a peculiar People with the strongest views on what they like and dislike’. He had, he said, one advantage—he had himself been a *St Nicholas* reader since childhood. It was not until October, however, that he sent his first story to Mrs Dodge, entitled ‘The Potted Princess’.

In the interim, Kipling and Carrie had travelled by steamer to Japan, intending a long honeymoon circumnavigating the world westwards. However, the collapse of the bank holding most of their savings necessitated the curtailment of these plans. Awaiting passage back to the United States at Yokohama, Kipling met a veteran seal hunter ‘who in a previous life burned galleons with Drake ... a ruler of men on the high seas, and an inveterate gambler against Death’ who told him much of the trade. One fruit of this encounter was ‘The Rhyme of the Three Sealers’, which, whilst primarily telling of the violent competition between three captains for the best hunting grounds, refers to the Pribilof Islands in these evocative lines:

Ever they hear the floe-pack clear, and the blast of the old bull-whale,
And the deep seal-roar that beats off-shore above the loudest gale.
Ever they wait the winter’s hate as the thundering boorga calls,
Where northward look they to St. George, and westward to St. Paul’s.

Kipling had started to write the poem whilst in Japan, and its first thirteen lines were published in November 1892, although the much longer whole was not published until late the following year.

Four consecutive editions of *St Nicholas Magazine*, around the end of 1892 contained Kipling stories, including ‘Mowgli’s Brothers’, which introduced Akela, Baloo and Bagheera - and Mowgli himself - to the world’s children. In 1893, interspersed with other work, Kipling continued to write for children, producing ‘Tiger! Tiger!’ about the death of Shere Khan, and the story of the brave little mongoose ‘Rikki-Tikki-Tavi’. The ‘The White Seal’, however, which was completed in May 1892, was not specifically targeted at a juvenile readership. Instead, it appeared in August in a British conservative periodical, the *National Review*, although it later joined the other stories in *The Jungle Book* in 1894.

What, other than the old sea-dog’s yarns in Yokohama, had led to Kipling writing a story about seal hunting at time particular time? A clue is in the 1893 version of the story, which ends:

Now there are two great countries squabbling to find out which of the two shall kill seals off the island of St Paul’s, in the Behring Sea; and while they are squabbling news has come in that the seal-catch is small. It will get smaller and smaller, till at last the two countries will be left with nothing to argue about. Limmershin told me. Isn’t it simple when you know all about it?

This was a reference to a long-standing dispute between Britain and the United States over oceanic sealing rights in the Bering Sea, which was being determined by an arbitration tribunal in Paris at the time Kipling was writing the story. It had featured prominently in the international press, so would have been known to Kipling, an avid follower of Anglo-American politics, as well as to many contemporary adult readers of the story. On the story’s reappearance in *The Jungle Book* the following year, Kipling removed this ending: not only was it unsuited for a children’s book, but it was outdated, since the tribunal had delivered its ruling just a few weeks after the original publication of ‘The White Seal’.

'The White Seal' was well-received by most critics, one of whom wrote that Kipling 'knows his seal as if by instinct'. Kipling had never visited the Bering Sea, although from the decks of steamers crossing between Yokohama and Vancouver he may have seen the distinctively rigged sealing vessels, which in one piece of contemporary journalism he termed 'bat-winged'. He had, though, studied others' books, particularly *The Seal Islands of Alaska* by Henry W. Elliott, and used his journalistic skills to weave their facts into his story.



For *The Jungle Book*, Kipling bookended the story between two new poems, the beautiful 'Seal Lullaby' and the mournful 'Lukannon', the latter offering none of the hope of survival that we see in the story itself ('The beaches of Lukannon shall know their sons no more'). This has led at least one modern commentator to interpret the seals' journey to a perfect beach, revealed to Kotick by the long-extinct (Steller's) Sea Cow, not as a messiah-led exodus to an earthly paradise, but rather as an allegory of death and passage to a paradisaical after-life. Whether or not Kipling had this intention in 1893, his concerns about over-hunting elsewhere in the globe are clear from the story, as is his fear that this would happen also in the Pribilof Islands unless there was some form of intervention. The story was almost certainly published too late to have influenced the arbitration, which was not in any case concerned with the culls on the islands themselves.

The Aleut characters whose job it is to slaughter the seals are treated without sympathy, Kipling possibly not being aware of the full extent of U.S. colonial control over them or considering it irrelevant to the story. His derogatory descriptions of them were typical of nineteenth-century imperialist attitudes to indigenous populations, which are found in Kipling's and his contemporaries' writings of the period. Anxious as he was for the environment, Kipling does not appear to have considered the role indigenous people, with their centuries of knowledge, might play in its preservation. This should not lead us to disregard the ecological message of the tale, nor should it prevent us from enjoying Kipling's wonderful storytelling. But we should acknowledge this history, and, from an editorial point of view, we might reasonably want to protect today's child readers from his most overt casual racism.

Following up on that last point, Council have decided that paragraph 6 of the Society's [derogatory language policy](#) will be extended to the offensive descriptions of Aleuts in the original story mentioned in the previous newsletter. So, "Kerick Booterin turned nearly white under his oil and smoke, for he was an Aleut, and Aleuts are not clean people" has been replaced with "Kerick Booterin, who was an Aleut, turned pale under his oil and smoke". and "a couple of black-haired men with flat red faces" with "a couple of black-haired men". The message 'This story has been edited to remove some offensive wording, as we specifically recommend it for young people' has been added ([Kipling for young readers](#)).

POETRY IN THE GARDEN

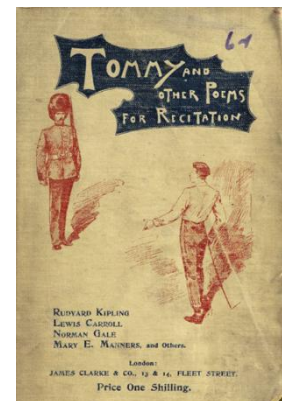
This summer, join the volunteers at Bateman's to celebrate Rudyard Kipling's poems by sitting back, enjoying the garden and listening to a selection of the author's much-loved poetry and verse. Dates: July 26, 27, 30, & 31 August 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21 23, 24, 27, 28, 30, & 31. Drop-in 20–30 min readings at 11.45am, 12.45pm, 13.45pm & 2.45pm (Readings on 16 August will be First World War themed as part of [WW1 Weekend at Bateman's](#)).

IMPERIAL WISDOM, MODERN WARFARE – KIPLING’S LESSONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY – Major Laurence Thomson

PART 3 - THE SOLDIER’S PLACE IN BRITISH SOCIETY

The SDR calls for a “whole-of-society” approach to national security.¹ It recognises that resilience in the face of sophisticated and complex threats depends upon the integration of civil, military and government capabilities. Yet this ambition must confront a persistent emotional and cultural divide between those who serve and the society they defend. This is not a new phenomenon. Kipling writing in ‘Tommy’ (1890) exposed the schizophrenic nature of British attitudes to its military personnel. The poem’s oft-repeated refrain captures how soldiers – then as now – can be celebrated in war one day, then sidelined in peace the next:

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' Chuck him out, the brute!"
But it's "Saviour of 'is country" when the guns begin to shoot;
An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;
An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool - you bet that Tommy sees!



This duality persists today; as does the soldiers awareness of it. The need for an Armed Forces Covenant commitment to ensure “those who serve or have served... should not be disadvantaged because of their service” is itself an acknowledgement that such disparities exist.² That said, it is a tangible measure by the British Government in a multi-pronged approach to rehabilitate the Armed Force’s image in society. An approach much needed in light of declining public trust in institutions,³ broader societal disengagement and apathy following failed campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq.⁴

From the soldier’s perspective, the gulf can feel even wider. In ‘Chant-Pagan’ (1919), Kipling gives voice to the alienation of a returning veteran who is struggling to reconcile the intensity of his service experiences with civilian life:

“Me that 'ave been what I've been -
Me that 'ave gone where I've gone -
Me that 'ave seen what I've seen -
'Ow can I ever take on
With awful old England again”

This sentiment resonates today, not only amongst British veterans (regardless of whether they have seen combat or not) but other nationalities in contemporary conflicts. There is growing evidence⁵ that many Ukrainian soldiers returning from the front lines are struggling to reintegrate back into civilian life, likewise their Russian adversaries.⁶ The challenge is not simply one of employment or housing but of cultural reintegration. Often, they report feeling emotionally and culturally disconnected, being apart from a society they feel has carried on without them. There is much promise in the launch of Project VALOUR, a £50 million government sponsored national veteran support initiative, that promises “to improve the

¹ Ministry of Defence, *Strategic Defence Review 2025*.

² Ministry of Defence, *Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty covering the United Kingdom*, (HMG, Nov 22), p. 7.

³ Lily Gibbs and Natasha Mutsebi, ‘Trust, public engagement and UK Parliament’, *UK Parliament Post*, No. 66, (HMG, 21 May 25).

⁴ Elise Uberoi and Neil Johnston, ‘Political disengagement in the UK: Who is disengaged?’, *Parliamentary Research Briefing*, (HOC Library, 21 Nov 22).

⁵ Iryna Dobrohorska, *Reintegration Ukraine’s Veterans: Challenges and Policy Responses*, (GMF, Apr 25).

⁶ Anastasia Tenisheva, ‘Russia faces a fraught homecoming for hundreds of thousands of Ukraine War veterans’, *The Moscow Times*, (19 Sep 25).

coordination of services at a national, regional and local level to ensure that veterans receive the support they need”.⁷ One imagines Kipling would have been supportive.

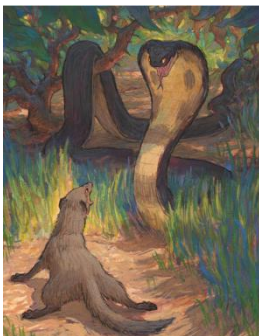
PART 4 - IF YOU CAN THINK, AND NOT MAKE THOUGHTS YOUR AIM...



The UK is pivoting its Armed Forces from expeditionary campaigning to deterrence and warfighting readiness to meet the ambition of the Strategic Defence Review 2025 (SDR 25). It is a landmark shift and the Armed Forces are accelerating towards becoming “a more lethal, integrated force” that has internalised the lessons of modern warfare from Ukraine and adapted ready for future conflict. Yet beneath the surface of political rhetoric and proud investment announcements lies a deeper challenge: how does Britain prepare the human, ethical and institutional foundations of its military power? Without historical context and a sense of perspective this challenge risks feeling like a race of mortal peril, against an unpredictable clock, without a finish line.

For the British Army, Kipling has much to say that carries direct implications for its dual-track ambition of modernisation and transformation. Foremost amongst them for the soldier. As force and command structures change in response to the conditions of modern war, so the moral and social conditions of service will change. Kipling’s lesson is that the soldier is not merely an instrument of policy but a central component of warfighting readiness. They demand consideration and attention concomitant with any military capability.

A NEW ILLUSTRATED RIKKI



This is the story of the great war that Rikki-tikki-tavi fought single-handed, through the bathrooms of the big bungalow in Segowlee cantonment. Darzee, the tailor-bird, helped him, and Chuchundra, the musk-rat, who never comes out into the middle of the floor, but always creeps round by the wall, gave him advice; but Rikki-tikki did the real fighting.



A new edition of the classic *Jungle Book* story with 24 wonderful illustrations by Forrest Dickison can be pre-ordered from US publisher Canonball Books (‘where Stories are Soul Food’) <https://rikki.canonballbooks.com/>. It would make an ideal present to introduce young folk to Kipling.

... AND FINALLY

In the last newsletter, we challenged readers to identify this mysterious iron object from Bateman’s. It is a pipe kiln, used to clean and dry clay tobacco pipes for reuse, commonly found in 18th century inns and taverns. It would be filled with pipes and placed in a hot oven, removing the foul residue of smoking.



⁷ Office of Veterans’ Affairs, ‘VALOUR: Information and Next Steps’ (gov.uk, 4 Jul 25).