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The opinions expressed by contributors are their own and are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Council of the Kipling Society.

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS OF THE KIPLING SOCIETY

Wednesday 1st July 2026 4.30 for 5pm in the Army & Navy Club and online: Annual General Meeting, followed by Dr Paolo D'Indinosante, University of Rome, speaking on "Kipling in/and Italy: Representations, Readings, Rewrites".

23 September 2026 Online only, 6pm: speaker tba

25 November 2026 5.30 for 6 pm in the Army and Navy Club and 6 pm online:
Mike Kipling 'Rudyard Kipling and the Cinema'

Please can members intending to attend meetings in person at the Army and Navy Club provide their names to the Secretary at least three days beforehand for security purposes. The Secretary's contact details are given at the front of this journal.

May 2026

Alex Bubb
(*Meetings Secretary*)

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EDITORIAL

After the obituary of our much missed Vice-President John Radcliffe, this number opens, unusually, with a lively dialogue between an enthusiast for *Captains Courageous* and a young grandson, who knows little about Kipling but is willing to learn. Their conversation, including an illuminating comparison of the book with the 1937 film, brings out the book's strengths. It is followed by Kipling's hymn to the beauty and power of the ocean, "The Sea and the Hills".

A sharp contrast follows in Simon Cooke's fascinating and justly titled article 'Chamber of Horrors', an account of the artist William Strang's gothic etchings illustrating Kipling's early stories, which turned his 'colonial' narratives into a haunting world of frightening visual images. Another take on Kipling's India is offered in Asif Ullah Khan's brief but lively discussion of the young Kipling's midnight trials on the road from Udaipur in 1887.

David Alan Richards explores the topic of Kipling and empire from a very different angle on in his richly detailed account of Herbert Baker and Rudyard Kipling, both hero-worshippers of Cecil Rhodes, collaborating on the Kimberley memorial commissioned by Rhodes and the Table Mountain statue commemorating him; with a coda on the 'Woolsack' house on the Groote Schuur estate designed by Baker in 1900 for the Kipling family's use. Kipling's last stay there was in 1908, but he never relinquished his tenancy, resisting Baker's move to make the Woolsack a residency for visiting artists.

Two more items follow: Andrew Scragg reviewing Nick Higham's book *Mavericks* on Dunsterforce, and 'Letters to the Editor' – a much longer item than usual, with three fascinating suggested answers to Kipling riddles, from Anthony Bainbridge and George Simmers on who wrote 'The Old Volunteer', and Athar Murtuza on the inspiration for the name 'Mowgli'. Last but not least are the Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting and the Society's Accounts for 2025.

OBITUARY

JOHN RADCLIFFE
9 JANUARY 1935 – 5 DECEMBER 2025

BY **JAN MONTEFIORE**

December 2025 was saddened for the Kipling Society by the death of John Radcliffe, creator and for many years Editor of the Society's website, Publicity Officer and General Editor of the online New Reader's Guide. After school at Cheltenham College, National Service and a Cambridge degree in History, he had a distinguished career at the BBC, where his achievements included masterminding the BBC's project for computer literacy in education. After his retirement, the Kipling Society benefited immensely from John's expertise, engaging personality and initiative. Having taught himself to use HTML software (his grandson Sidney recalls his 'massive HTML reference books'), John single-handedly designed and maintained the Kipling Society website, checking it nearly every day, stitching in new files individually, and adding new features: most recently, a directory of active Kipling researchers. Aware that he couldn't do this forever, he recruited Michael Wilcox to convert the vast hand-made website to Wordpress in 2021, and in 2023 handed over the Online Editorship to the admirable Ian Bell.

John's other great achievement was heading the online New Reader's Guide, bringing together a team of Kipling scholars including the late Lisa and Peter Lewis, John McGivering and Philip Holberton, to update Reginald Harbord's 8-volume *Reader's Guide to the Work of Rudyard Kipling* (1955–1970). Comprising all the major and many minor Kipling works, the NRG offers their texts, the dates and places of their first publication, explanatory notes and an introductory 'Background', summarising previous commentaries, often with a weblink. This gargantuan work of co-operative scholarship, enabled by John's deep knowledge of Kipling's writing, IT skills, experience of team leadership and can-do attitude, has proved an invaluable research tool for Kipling researchers worldwide, and we are forever in his debt. As Chair of the Society, he initiated the 2007 conference at the University of Kent, marking the centenary of Kipling's Nobel Prize, and he was the moving spirit of the 2013 Vermont 'Kipling in America' conference. He supported the 'Writing with Kipling' project initiated by Mary Hamer (2014–19), and at our group online readings of Kipling, he was present at every meeting until May 2025. As Editor of the *Kipling Journal*, I can't say how much I miss John's support. And his funeral in Golders Green, conducted by his family, showed how much, and by how many people, John was loved and valued.

A GRAND BANKS ROUTE IN PURSUIT OF LIVELIHOOD, RESCUE AND REFORM: RUDYARD KIPLING'S VOYAGE INTO COD-FISHING

BY **JOSEPH HOWARD COOPER**

[Following his tenure as *The New Yorker*'s editorial counsel (1976–1996), Joseph Cooper spent the next twenty years teaching writing and cinema history at several colleges. Retired, he's focused on picture-book storytelling via grandparent-grandchild dialogues. The manuscript for his forthcoming *How'd they do that? Grandparents answer questions about Pursuits and Routes* is the source for the following.]

Another rite of passage?
You'll see.

Ahh, a DVD. Cool.
We read the book to envision the characters in our mind's eyes, and to imagine how they sound as they speak, to our mind's ears.

Our mind's ears?
The writer tells us how the characters appear, how they sound, what they do. Then we see whether, or how, the moviemakers picked up on the writer's descriptions . . . It's interesting to compare the pictures and voices we imagined from reading the book with what we see and hear in the movie.

How about we watch the DVD first – so we actually see and hear the characters, for real. That way they'd already be in our mind's eyes and our mind's ears as we begin to read the book.
If you watch the movie first, will you read the book?

Am I under oath?
Hmm . . . Let's try it this way: This kid, in the book and the movie, is Harvey; he's on an ocean liner bound for Europe.

Rich?
Very, very rich – and spoiled; very spoiled.

Might be nice – hyper – No . . . Hypo, hypothetically. Yeah, that's the one. Yes, like wishful thinking.
Something like that, but more like something imagined to make a point. In the story, to make a point, Harvey has to be spoiled rich. In the novel,

he's fifteen years old. In the 1937 movie, ten. Probably something to do with casting a child star.

Probably rich, too, do ya think?
Back to the character, full of himself. In the book, he takes the dare to smoke a shiny black cigar. He boasts, "Take more 'n this to keel me over." [Kipling p. 7] In the movie, the stogie is replaced by his boast that he can consume six ice-cream sodas, all at a single sitting. In both versions, Harvey, sickened, staggers over wet decks to the nearest rail and falls over.

He's rescued by a –

by a mermaid and they live happily ever after.
Unconscious, he's rescued by a Portuguese dory fisherman and taken to a cod-fishing schooner. Harvey's ocean-liner stateroom was fully-upholstered, and equipped with hot water and a bathtub. Aboard the fishing schooner, he wonders why his "stateroom" has grown so small. His roommates, overhead, are black and yellow oilskins which, hanging, sway to and fro. He's been set down on "a piece of dingy ticking full of lumps and nubbles." [Kipling p. 10]

No fancy hotel sheets, I'll bet.
Correct, no sheets. In contrast to his ocean-liner stateroom, his schooner berth treated him to "water noises that ran by close to his ear", and "about him, beams creaked and whined." The schooner moved "like a colt at the end of a halter." [Kipling p. 10]

The kid, rich, I'm guessing he orders the captain to take him back to New York.
Good guess. Harvey claims his father can pay more than the creaky old boat and its crew are worth – several times over.

That probably didn't sit well with the skipper.
Right you are. Instead of servants, valets, butlers, and chauffeurs catering to his every whim and fancy, he's "extra-cargo" and will have to work to earn his keep.

The un-bratting begins.
Good one. For four months he has to work – something he's never had to do in his life. Think of the skipper of the schooner as the headmaster of a school.

The schooner as a school, I think I see where this is heading.
Good. The skipper's son is like an upperclassman tasked with showing Harvey the ropes.

Who's next?
The Portuguese dory fisherman, whose name is Manuel – think of him as Harvey's tutor and guidance counselor.

Reform school. Knock the snobbery out of him?
Nothing so harsh, even as Harvey has to do the work that would be expected of a deckhand.

So, not an Oliver Twist kind of thing.
No, no, no. He's treated like a member of the crew, no worse, and certainly no better.

How'd that go down?
Humbling. He has to help the skipper's son sluice the fish-cleaning tables and floorboards. He has to lug buckets of offal and backbones topside and heave those remains overboard and then swab the decks.

Before the end of the boat's fishing runs, he'll have to hoist cod with a pitchfork from sea-tossed dories onto the schooner's deck; he'll have to bait hooks with tantalizers such as shiny pieces of squid tentacle.

From the giant squid that harassed Nemo's Nautilus?
I don't think anyone has made that connection . . . Continuing with his transformation, Harvey will have to row a dory to help an experienced line-fisherman make the most of his haul and return safely to the schooner. He'll have to stand watch on deck, with a highly attentive and wary ear, in fog that blankets out sky and sea.

Lucky for me, Mom and Dad have this home-security system, so I don't have to stand watch.
Moving ahead: Thanks to friendly advice from the skipper's son, along with insights from Manuel, the dory fisherman, which soften the name-that-rope and what's-this-for demands from Long Jack, Harvey comes to admire the skipper who has managed to divine the undersea-world from "the point of view of a twenty-pound cod." [Kipling p. 35]

How'd he do that?
A sounding line, "greased-up good", brings up "sand, shell, sludge, or whatever might be inspected." Disko Troop fingers it and smells it, and renders judgment. When the skipper "thought of cod, he thought as a cod; and by some long-tested mixture of instinct, intuition, and experience, he moved the schooner to fish, as a blindfolded chess-player moves on the unseen board." [Kipling p. 70]

Got any more of those comparisons? Analogies?
At sea, a fishing dory is lifted a full twenty feet, "only to slide into a glassy pit beyond." Rudyard Kipling described the voyage as "nautical-mountain climbing." [Kipling p. 9]

Not bad, not bad. Got any more?
You bet. In many respects, the movie managed to depict Kipling's descriptions of how schooners related to their dories:

> "From every schooner, dories were dropping away like bees from a crowded hive. The clamour of voices, the rattling of ropes and blocks, and the splash of oars carried for miles across the heaving water. [Kipling p. 97]
>
> "The schooners rocked and dipped at a safe distance, like mother ducks watching their brood, while the dories behaved like mannerless ducklings." [Kipling p. 98]

When another fishing spot beckoned or the weather warned, the "ducklings" paddled home: "Each schooner in sight seemed to be drawing her dories towards her by invisible strings, and the oarsmen in the tiny boats were pulled back like clockwork toys." [Kipling p. 22]

Now that's – analogee-stic. With that I'm ready for the movie. We've got the DVD right here. You like the old movie, don't you?
I admire the camera work, for sure.

The movie, 1937, no CGI.
Thus my admiration.

The camera work, how'd they do what you say they did? I mean what Rudyard said they did – the dory ducklings.
Sea-borne camera crews knew what to look for, where and how to be positioned.

How'd they know? Just from the book?
They talked to fishing-schooner captains. They did research. Archives, historical societies in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Gloucester, Massachusetts. Photo albums from families of the men who fished from the dories launched from those schooners. Research for the "talkie movie" turned up old film footage from family reels and what seemed to be footage for a silent-movie production. [Cooper]

Those sea-borne cameras, along with archival film footage, captured what Kipling conveyed: fishing schooners "all bowing and curtseying one to the other." [Kipling p. 97]

Wait, the camera people, the movie director, the people who scope out locations, they took their cues from the book, from Kipling. Where, exactly how, did Kipling come to write such scenes?
Good question. Kipling thought back on such things when he wrote *Something of Myself*, which was published, from the unfinished manuscript, in 1937, the year after he died.

What'd he reveal?
Kipling tells us that on a visit to Gloucester, Massachusetts, he was steered to attend the annual memorial service remembering the men who perished from the cod-fishing schooner fleet. In *Something of Myself*, he tells us that "Gloucester was then the metropolis of the Grand Banks cod-fishing industry." [Kipling 1937 p. 76]

Okay, the Grand Banks info, please.
The watery shelf, or series of plateaus, lying southeast of Newfoundland. In Kipling's 1897 novel: *"*a triangle two hundred and fifty miles on each side – a waste of wallowing sea, cloaked with dank fog, vexed with gales, harried with drifting ice, scored by the tracks of reckless ocean liners, and dotted with the sails of the fishing fleet." [Kipling p. 70]

Rudyard Kipling, he's the guy who wrote about a panther, a bear, and an elephant who advise a boy who was raised by wolves, in a jungle, in India, where a fierce tiger roams.
Educated in England from a very early age*,* he set his *Jungle Books*, *Kim*, and many other stories in India. I believe *Captains Courageous* is Kipling's only novel set in North America.

How'd he do that?
A Vermont neighbor, James Conland, had served in the Gloucester fleet when he was young. Conland thought his writer-neighbor might be intrigued by the fishermen's lives. He took it upon himself to impose all sorts of details on Kipling.

I guess the Conland fellow wanted to see how Kipling would respond to lives outside India.
Could well be. Different scenery; different species of man and animal. In *Something of Myself*, Kipling recalls Conland poking around Gloucester, seeking out ex-shipmates or their kin.

Go ahead, my mind's ears are listening.
Conland immersed Kipling in the ways of the fishermen. Surely he was reliving some of his youth. Conland may also have been curious about

how Kipling would take to the sights, sounds, and smells of the harbor. From Kipling –

> "We assisted hospitable tug-masters to help haul three- and four-stick schooners all round the harbour; we boarded every craft that looked as if she might be useful, and we delighted ourselves to the limit of delight. Charts we got – old and new – and the crude implements of navigation such as they were employed off the Grand Banks; and a battered boat-compass, still a treasure with me." [Kipling 1937 pp. 76 – 77]

In *Captains Courageous*, Kipling gives readers an especially vivid "taste" of the gutting, salting, stacking, and stowing of the fresh-caught cod, which has Harvey – and readers like us – marvel at "the miraculous dexterity of it all." [Kipling p. 30]

How did Kipling learn that stuff?
He tells us in *Something of Myself* –

> "Conland, a doctor, took large cod and the appropriate knives with which they are prepared for the hold, and demonstrated anatomically and surgically so that I could make no mistake about treating them in print.
>
> "Old tales, too, he dug up, and the lists of dead and gone schooners whom he had loved, and I reveled in the profligate abundance of detail . . .
>
> "Yet the book was not all reportage. I wanted to see if I could catch and hold something of a rather beautiful localised American atmosphere that was already beginning to fade. Thanks to Conland, I came near this." [Kipling 1937 p. 77]

Okay, okay, DVD time.
Not so fast. The moviemakers departed from the book, egregiously, in the view of many actual schooner fishermen.

R-rated stuff? It's a black-and-white talkie from 1937. What could be so bad?
You'll find out – after you read the book. Nothing R-rated, only inauthentic drama toward the end.

Oh, come on, tell me. I promise not to tell anyone.
[sigh] For all the wonders and fidelity so well conveyed up to the point of the return voyage, screenwriters and filmmakers went Hollywood toward the end: They staged an America's-Cup-like yacht-racing duel

between two fishing schooners daring risky tacking for the glory of being first back to Gloucester. In the book, the skipper of Harvey's schooner warns against taking unnecessary chances. Kipling tells us that Disko sees "no sense in dares . . . Risk breeds recklessness, and when greed is added there are fine chances for every kind of accident in a crowded fleet." [Kipling p. 78]

In the film, out of foolish pride, the skipper responds to recklessness in kind by sailing full-tilt with a full cargo of fish in the hold. His homebound race leads to catastrophe and loss of life, which, according to one reviewer, "turns Harvey into a mawkish griever; and turns the film into a maudlin piece of tear-jerker bathos." [Cooper]

Mawkish, maudlin, bathos – who writes that kind of stuff? Here's the DVD, we can make our own judgments.
[Another sigh] Here's the deal: We read the book and then watch the movie.

Counteroffer: We watch the movie, and then we read the book. You've already let me in on most of the story. Let the movie people have their turn.
Counteroffer: We watch the movie but pause before the last twenty minutes. Then we read the book – start to finish. Then we watch the last twenty minutes of the film, if you still want to.

You think I'll bail on the last twenty minutes?
We'll see.

By the way, it was dawned on me – heh, Grandpa, that's one of your expressions.
I believe it is.

Well, it came to my head that the Portuguese dory fisherman, the kid's tutor and guidance-counselor, you said his name is Manuel.
Go on.

Yes, Manuel, the teacher type, guidance counselor, who taught Harvey about fishing and respect for life aboard a real fisherman's schooner. I saw the write-up on the back of the DVD case.
You peeked.

Well, yeah. So, Grandpa, am I supposed to think that Manuel, the Portuguese dory fisherman is to Harvey as Santiago, the Cuban skiff fisherman is to Manolin in "The Old Man the Sea"?

Well, both fishermen used hand lines. Might there be other parallels?
A comparison, maybe . . .

Ready for a movie.
Always.

AT GRANDPA'S, TWO WEEKS LATER

I didn't like the way the movie ended . . . the last twenty minutes.
And the book?

Better. I liked the book's ending better.
Thinking back on the voyage, the four months at sea, anything particularly memorable – a description you read and then re-read?

Well, yes, the way Disko Troop thinks like a cod; how he finds good fishing by thinking like a codfish. The book's due for return to the library this Tuesday, so I marked the page.
I like the bookmark. Proof you read the book, this far.

All the way to the end, Grandpa, I read all the way.
I believe you, just teasing. I, too, favored that description of Disko Troop's uncanny acumen . . .

Un – can – nee? Ack – u – man?
As to Disko, an experienced perception and insight which was not evident to other fishing-schooner captains. That would be the acumen. The mystery or superpower – that would be the uncanny part.

Never thought of Disko with super powers.
But unlike those Transformer cards.

Disko had courage, and strength, I guess, but no fire power . . . Did Rudyard have uncanny acumen? I mean, here's a description, I think you probably like, a lot:

> "The low-sided schooner was naturally on most intimate terms with her surroundings. They saw little of the horizon save when she topped a swell; and usually she was elbowing, fidgeting, and coaxing her steadfast way through gray, gray-blue, or black hollows laced across and across with streaks of shivering foam; or rubbing herself caressingly along the flank of some bigger water-hill . . ." [Kipling p. 111]

What are you doin'?
Reaching for my copy – with its under-linings . . . See, it's where you placed your bookmark . . . And just a bit further on, we hear, see, and sense what Kipling had Harvey hear, see, and sense:

> ". . . the splendid upheaval of the red sunrise, the folding and packing away of the morning mists . . . the salty glare and blaze of noon; the kiss of rain falling over thousands of dead, flat square miles; the chilly blackening of everything at day's end; and the million wrinkles of the sea under the moonlight, when the jib-boom solemnly poked at the low stars . . ." [Kipling p. 111]

Is that what you saw when you were on that windjammer, way back in your ye olde days of yore?
I saw a red sunrise, often. I don't recall any "kissing" rain. A chilly day's end, yes. Moonlight, yes. Stars, oh my, yes. But I didn't have Kipling's words for what came with a sunrise: "the folding and packing away of the morning mists." And I didn't have Kipling's words for sounds at sea. Kipling has Harvey and crew making careful note of the peril signaled by "the unmelodious tooting of a foot-powered foghorn – a machine whose note is as that of a consumptive elephant." [Kipling p. 78]

Kipling probably knew something about elephants from his time in India.
No doubt. Somehow, he acquired the vocabulary to record quite a variety of sounds and sensations – on the sea as well as in a jungle. I just happen to have underlined a few seagoing sounds:

> ". . . every square inch of the schooner was singing its own tune . . . Up and up the foc'sle climbed, yearning and surging and quivering, and then, with a clear, sickle-like swoop, came down into the seas. Harvey could hear the flaring bows cut and squelch, and there was a pause ere the divided waters came down on the deck above, like a volley of buckshot . . ." [Kipling p. 53]
>
> "The jaws of the booms whined against the masts, and the sheets creaked, and the sails filled with roaring . . ." [Kipling p. 112]
>
> "The hours struck clear in the cabin; the nosing bows slapped and scuffled with the seas; the foc'sle stove-pipe hissed and sputtered as the spray caught it . . . [Kipling p. 51]

Harvey had become what Manuel calls a "feesherman" . . . Do you think Harvey would want to learn how to think like a codfish?
No, but he's now aware enough to recognize talent and skill when he

sees them. Smart enough to appreciate, even admire, another's work skill.

And acumen?
Even uncanny acumen. Not something AI is likely to deliver.

Grandpa, ya know there's AI that would probably, probably could find fish faster and better than Disko Troop. All that hard work. And chancy, too.
We already know that the Grand Banks and other once-plentiful waters have been fished-out by motorized trawlers deploying mile-long drift nets.

Spare boats going there. Less time wasted.
I suppose . . . But something more than fish has been lost. There was art and a kind humanity when fishing was done from dories rowed back to a schooner which gathered wind in her sails. I don't expect AI will create wind . . . but I could be mistaken. Still, being out on the water, working, is what transformed the obnoxious, privileged, entitled Harvey Cheyne.

Grandpa, you're into the ye olde days-of-yore.
Safe harbors for me. The perils were real and were addressed with human knowledge and courage. Will what's left of human knowledge know how to deal with the unforeseen perils of AI? Will there be the intelligence and courage to put the genie back in the bottle?

Make things easier, faster.
Would AI have made Harvey Cheyne more aware of real work? make him reliably productive?

Spare him some pain at the hands of Long Jack.
A hostile work environment, in today's thinking. But can AI be as instructive and as interesting as Long Jack's hands-on regimens?

> "For an hour, Long Jack walked his prey up and down, teaching, as he said, 'things at sea that ivry man must know, blind, dhrunk, or asleep.'. . ."There's good an' just reason for ivry rope aboard, or else 'twould be overboard. D' ye follow me? Tis dollars an' cents I'm puttin' into your pocket . . . so that fwhin ye've filled out ye can ship from Boston to Cuba an' tell thim Long Jack larned you. Now I'll chase ye around a piece, callin' the ropes, an' you'll lay your hand on thim as I call." [Kipling pp. 44–46]

Harvey could open his iPad connect to Starlink and bring up diagrams of all the ropes and rigs he'd need to learn.
Well, okay, but he wouldn't actually be touching them, feeling them, in the dark, in heavy fog, or in a storm, with the on-deck sure hands-on certainty he acquired by being instructed – most personally – on deck, by Long Jack. And, assuming he could connect to the internet, and assuming the connection brought him to just the right set of ropes and rigs, and assuming he was able to memorize them all, would he know what to do with them?

Harvey was a quick learner, it seems.
Assuming he had an iPad and Starlink – and a good internet connection – as smart as he seems to have been, can any screen compare with what Harvey absorbed, and the way he absorbed it? . . . I'm reminded – I'm turning back to it – yes, I'm reminded that on the very first page of the story, one of the men in the ocean-liner's smoking-room declares, prophesizes, that, despite his bravado, Harvey's "education isn't begun yet." [Kipling p. 5]

I guess Kipling made up a story to, uh, like, fill the prophecy.
Aboard a cod-fishing schooner, as a working member of the crew, rather than as a pampered guest on an ocean-liner, Harvey fulfilled the prophecy:

> "Harvey was taking in knowledge of new things at each pore and hard health with every gulp of the good air." [Kipling p. 77]

Better, right?
Maybe. I'll let you know.

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THE SEA AND THE HILLS

BY **RUDYARD KIPLING**

Who hath desired the Sea? — the sight of salt water unbounded —
The heave and the halt and the hurl and the crash of the comber wind-hounded?
The sleek-barrelled swell before storm, grey, foamless, enormous, and growing
Stark calm on the lap of the Line or the crazy-eyed hurricane blowing—
His Sea in no showing the same — his Sea and the same 'neath each showing:
His Sea as she slackens or thrills?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise — hillmen desire their Hills!

Who hath desired the Sea? — the immense and contemptuous surges?
The shudder, the stumble, the swerve, as the star-stabbing bowsprit emerges?
The orderly clouds of the Trades, the ridged, roaring sapphire thereunder —
Unheralded cliff-haunting flaws and the headsail's low-volleying thunder —
His Sea in no wonder the same — his Sea and the same through each wonder:
His Sea as she rages or stills?
So and no otherwise — so and no otherwise — hillmen desire their Hills.

Who hath desired the Sea? Her menaces swift as her mercies?
The in-rolling walls of the fog and the silver-winged breeze that disperses?
The unstable mined berg going South and the calvings and groans that declare it —
White water half-guessed overside and the moon breaking timely to bare it —
His Sea as his fathers have dared — his Sea as his children shall dare it:
His Sea as she serves him or kills?
So and no otherwise — so and no otherwise—hillmen desire their Hills.

Who hath desired the Sea? Her excellent loneliness rather
Than forecourts of kings, and her outermost pits than the streets where men gather
Inland, among dust, under trees — inland where the slayer may slay him
Inland, out of reach of her arms, and the bosom whereon he must lay Him —
His Sea from the first that betrayed—at the last that shall never betray him:
His Sea that his being fulfils?
So and no otherwise — so and no otherwise — hillmen desire their Hills.

"A CHAMBER OF HORRORS": WILLIAM STRANG'S ILLUSTRATIONS FOR KIPLING'S COLONIAL SHORT STORIES

BY **SIMON COOKE**

[Dr Simon Cooke worked for the Universities of Birmingham and Coventry and is now the Senior Editor of the Victorian Web and the Editor of *Illustration* magazine. He has published widely on the books arts, Sensationalism, Dickens, Gothic and the Per-Raphaelites. His latest book, *Illustrating the Victorian Supernatural*, appeared in 2025.]

Kipling's work was extensively illustrated in his own lifetime, with several artists providing visual interpretations of his texts. Among the most distinguished of these editions was *The Jungle Book* (1903), with designs by Maurice and Edward Detmold; others include *A Song of the English* (1909) pictured by William Heath Robinson, *They* (1905) by F. W. Townsend, and *Songs of the Sea* (1927), with visual accompaniments by Donald Maxwell. It is also important to note that pictorial readings of Kipling's tales were a family affair: the author's father, John Lockwood Kipling, illustrated *Kim* (1901), and Rudyard embellished his own text, in a series of bold and imposing designs, in his *Just So Stories* (1902).[1] Each montage provides its own focus, and all of the artists use their illustrations to enrich and illuminate the reader's understanding of the texts.

Yet these pictorial series have rarely been the subject of detailed modern criticism, and much remains to be discovered, analysed, and evaluated. A fascinating response that demands close attention, and one I shall consider here, is William Strang's *A Series of Thirty Etchings … Illustrating Subjects from the Writings of Rudyard Kipling*.[2] Published by Macmillan in 1901 in a small edition of just 100 copies, this work presents imposing visual interpretations of some of the author's stories, and is purely a picture-book. There is no text to encourage the process of interactive checking as usually happens in bimodal texts, and the subjects are only identified by captions. In this sense, the album was intended as a piece in which all of the work is done by the finely worked etchings, each of which is a personal, poetic and extremely powerful response to aspects of Kipling's tales. Tellingly, the artist did not consult with the author (whom he used as the subject of two etched portraits),[3] chose the stories for himself and exercised his artistic freedom to focus on themes which most corresponded with his own range of interests as a practitioner who was primarily known for his depiction of the grotesque and unsettling in the manner of his French master, Alphonse Legros.[4]

Strang certainly highlights the gruesome elements in Kipling's writing. As Gordon Ray observes, Strang foregrounds "the strain of cruelty and violence that dominates"[5] many of the author's tales. Uninterested in "prettier things"[6] and mainly concerned with the "gruesome and ghastly,"[7] Strang had a "downright passion for ugliness"[8] and provides an effective pictorial translation of Kipling's Gothicism.

Strang concentrates on the "weird" and "pathetic"[9] aspects of Kipling's Indian stories. Kipling critiques the complexities of the colonial experience as he explores two dissonant cultures in collision, and Strang likewise provides a visual representation, in the words of R. E. D. Sketchley, of the "clash of racial and national … characteristics."[10] Indeed, the author and artist are closely linked in their interpretation of the colonial project as a nightmare in which the imperial white man is entangled in a menacing culture that poses both physical and psychological threats and seems to engulf the British occupiers in an alien world of brutal violence and madness. "East of Suez," Kipling famously remarks, the "supervision" of the English gives way to "the power of Gods and Devils" and "unnecessary horrors" ("The Mark of the Beast" *Collected Stories*, 293). The artist confronts us with these terrors.

Strang's starting point is Kipling's Indian milieu, visualizing the author's iconography of animals and costumes as signs of a troubling racial difference. This contrast is especially carried forward in his portraits of the native Indians and the British. Strang suggests the strangeness of the imperial encounter by dressing the representatives of each culture in radically different costumes. In "The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes" (*Thirty Etchings*, plate 20), for instance, he highlights the contrast between the Indians imprisoned in the isolated crater, who are dressed in loin cloths, and the western dress of the narrator: the Indians' garments suggest their primitivism and degradation, while Jukes's attire symbolises his status as one of the rational "superior races." But it is more often the case that the Indians' clothing is a sign of threat and menacing Otherness. Strang visualizes what at the time of publication would have been regarded as "exotic" attire but infuses those clothes with a dream-like unfamiliarity. In the first illustration for "The Man Who Would be King" (plate 18), he dresses Peachey Carnehan's tormentors in a strange headgear – a turban and a range of hats that owe more to the imagination than reality. In this design and in all of the others the Indians are dressed in weird costumes to suggest their inexplicable character, and it is noticeable that in "Beyond the Pale" (plate 25, fig. 1), Strang highlights the oddness of Trejago's flirtation with Bisesa by detailing his *boorka*, which he adopts as a disguise. Enwrapped in his robes to symbolize his immersion in a foreign culture, Trejago transgresses the limits of the colonial transaction; as Kipling puts it "his is the story of a man who wilfully stepped beyond the safe

limits of decent everyday society, and paid for it heavily," having failed to acknowledge that "the White [must] go to the White and the Black to the Black." The result, otherwise, is "trouble" (*Collected Stories*, 17) represented by Bisesa's mutilation. Trejago thought he was protected from prying eyes by adopting a native costume, but it only immerses him in the horrors of a culture that is beyond his comprehension and leads to his near destruction.

The Indians' clothes therein connotate their sinister character, and Strang develops Kipling's focus on foreign Otherness by visualizing the colonized in grotesque terms. Indeed, all of the non-British figures are represented as racial stereotypes – ugly, menacing and discordant. "The Mutiny of the Mavericks" embodies this approach, with the Indian who slays Mulcahy being depicted as a hook-nosed monster (plate 5, fig. 2), while in "The Man who would be King" (plate 18) Strang endows Carnehan's executioners with distorted, mask-like faces that act as signs of their inhumane, bestial personalities.

It is not, however, just a matter of humankind. Strang further visualizes the threat of the foreign Other in the form of his nightmarish treatment of Kipling's animals. Two elephants appear ("Moti Guj" and "My Lord the Elephant," plates 12 & 22) along with the "old mugger," the crocodile in "The Undertakers" (plate 15) and the ape in "Bertran and Bibi" (plate 7). Strang represents each of these as monsters; although the pachyderm in "Moti Guj" is purely described as virtuous, the artist endows it with a menacing hugeness. Parallel distortions are applied to Bibi, to the elephant "my lord" and to the "old mugger," which is characterized as an eyeless semi-dinosaur, a bogey-creature about to snatch the child.

Strang's representation of Kipling's India is in this sense a grotesque compendium of threats: the native characters are ugly and have ugly characters with their outer forms connoting their corrupt natures, their clothes connote the weird and sinister, and the animals are part of a dislocated menagerie that bespeaks of nightmare. Even the landscapes are strange, always appearing not as lush and verdant, but in the manner of all of Strang's settings in his other work as claustrophobic, "wind-bitten"[11] and arid spaces in which the action is compressed into the foreground. These elements establish the tone of Strang's interpretation. However, at the heart of his reading is his focus on the unsettling encounters that epitomize Kipling's treatment of cultural dissonance and conflict.

In each of these events Strang intensifies the horror of the moment, infusing the author's descriptions with a grotesque intensity. In "The Mutiny of the Mavericks" (plate 5, fig. 2) Kipling details Mulcahy's moment of death in a piece of journalistic writing: "the straight-held blade went home through his defenceless breast and his body pitched

forward" (Kipling Society text). In Strang's illustration, however, that moment is shown with brutal directness as the artist modifies the description, showing Mulcahy falling backward, his collapsing body being placed in contrast with the upright stance of his Indian killer. Strang also amplifies the moment by depicting the agonised expression on Mulcahy's face – so forming another contrast with the implacability of the enemy facing him – and by emphasising the "straight-held blade," which is placed at the centre of the composition and is shown at the very moment when it enters Mulcahy's chest. The pointed lines of the soldiers' bayonets and the expressionistic, angular delineation of the background lines further reinforce the sense of jaggedness that is focused in the outstretched blade.

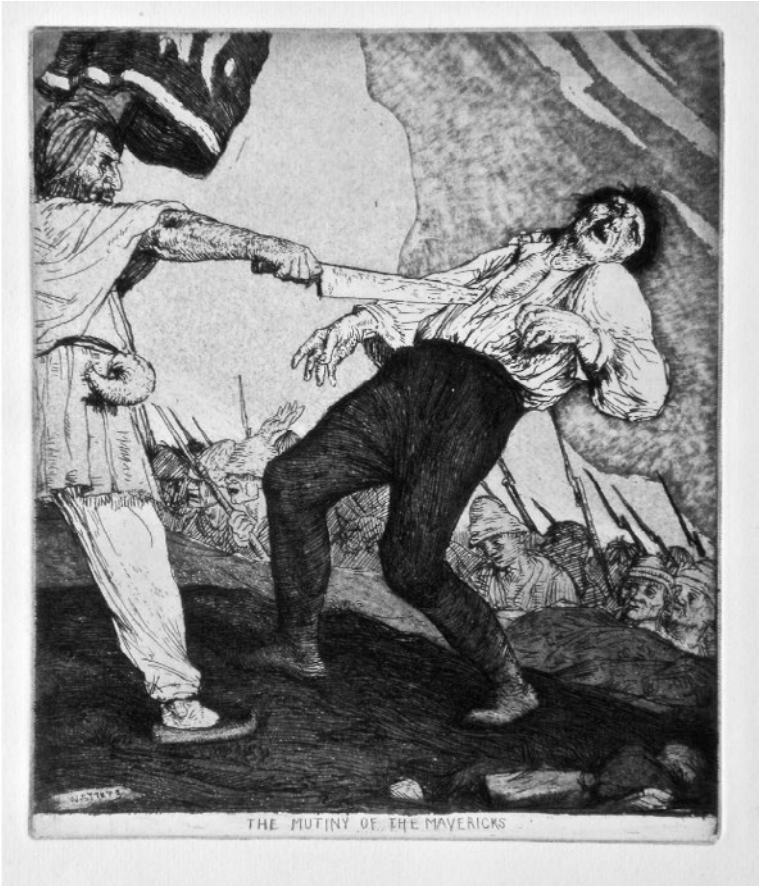

Fig. 1 "The Mutiny of the Mavericks"

Strang's enhancement of Kipling's horror is similarly presented in his treatment of "Beyond the Pale" (plate 25, fig.1). Again, the author only gives the barest details of Trejago's meeting with the mutilated Bisesa, noting how "From the black dark [she] held out her arms into the moonlight. Both hands had been cut off at the wrists, and the stumps were nearly healed" (*Collected Stories*, 22). In Strang's design, conversely, the emphasis is on the grotesquerie of the amputation – the ends of the arms are black and far from healed, and the sobbing Bisesa is represented with her head downwards and her face concealed in a distortion that makes her appear more like a deformed monster than a grieving woman.

Strang does not include Kipling's other detail of the blade that goes into Trejago's groin – an attempted castration to match the mutilation of his lover – but the overall effect is one of alienating strangeness that recalls the diseased, violent imagery of Goya as much as that of Legros. Goya's *Heroic Feat!* from *The Disasters of War* (1814) depicts dismembered bodies hanging in a tree, a grotesque image that surely influenced the brutal way in which Bisesa's mutilation is depicted (fig. 2). Goya's

Fig. 2 "Beyond the Pale"

They Do Not Want To, which shows a woman about to stab a French soldier assaulting a woman, can similarly be viewed as a source for the violent event in "The Mutiny of the Mavericks" (fig. 1). Legros, likewise, provides a rich source of imagery for the artist's student. Strang's convulsive tableaux closely resemble Legros's compositions and recreate Legros's emphasis on suffering, both psychological and physical. In particular, Strang pays homage to grim etchings such as *The Fire* and *The Plague in Rome* (1875). In the first of these the figures are convulsed by terror, and in the second the focus is on the weakness of the human body – both concerns that are explored in Strang's Kipling series. In Strang's work, as in the work of Goya and Legros, the mutability of the flesh is always to the fore.

This "morbid fascination"[12] is registered in all of the artist's visualized characters, but it is particularly applied to the suffering of the British and acts, in strict accordance with Kipling, as a metaphor connoting the deathly impact of Indian culture on its imperial masters. Strang highlights this theme by focusing, quite literally, on dead, dying, or tormented bodies that surround the colonists and constantly remind them of their mortality. Images include the crucifixion and decapitation in "The Man Who Would be King" (plates 18, 19), the stabbing in "The Mavericks" (plate 5, fig. 2), and the corpses in "The Return of Imray" (plate 11) and "The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes" (plate 20). Other bodies appear in "Suddhoo" (this time a fake prostration, as part of a bogus ritual, plate 26), in the form of the fever-ridden Englishman in "Lispeth" (plate 27) and in the leper's body in "The Mark of the Beast" (plate 3, fig. 3). In each of these Strang places the horizontal figures in the foreground to stress the bare facts of death and suffering: the personae in the stories are forced to contemplate the bodies and the viewer is placed in close proximity too. Moreover, it is noticeable how Strang's characters barely stand up straight, but crouch, slouch, lean over, or otherwise diverge from the vertical. Borne down by their troubles, their postures provide a graphic representation of the weight of their experiences and act as physical signs of psychological discordance in a foreign land. Like all artists with expressionistic tendences, Strang deploys the physical body as a malleable site of feeling. This device gives an added, dramatic intensity to Kipling's mapping of his characters' anguish.

Cultural dissonance and the impact of the Other are given their most intense formulation in the etchings for "The Mark of the Beast" (plate 3, fig. 3) and "A Matter of Fact" (plate 24, fig. 4). In the first of these Strang focuses on the moment when the narrator and Strickland torture the "Silver man" (*Collected Stories*, 302), as they try to make him "cure" (304) their colleague Fleete, who has been contaminated by the leper's unknown, foreign power and is reduced to the status of

a snarling creature, a "wolf, not … a man," a "beast" making "beast noises" (301). Strang suggests the weird inexplicability of that power by representing the leper as a monstrously indeterminate form, presenting his face as a skull-like blank, with no hair and sockets for eyes. The artist also suggests the narrator's fear as he recoils in horror, forming a strong contrast with Strickland's purposefulness as he stands over the figure holding the heated gun-barrels.

Strang develops Kipling's implication that the British characters have been overwhelmed by, and immersed in, the magical consciousness of the Indian Other: in torturing the leper they comply with the

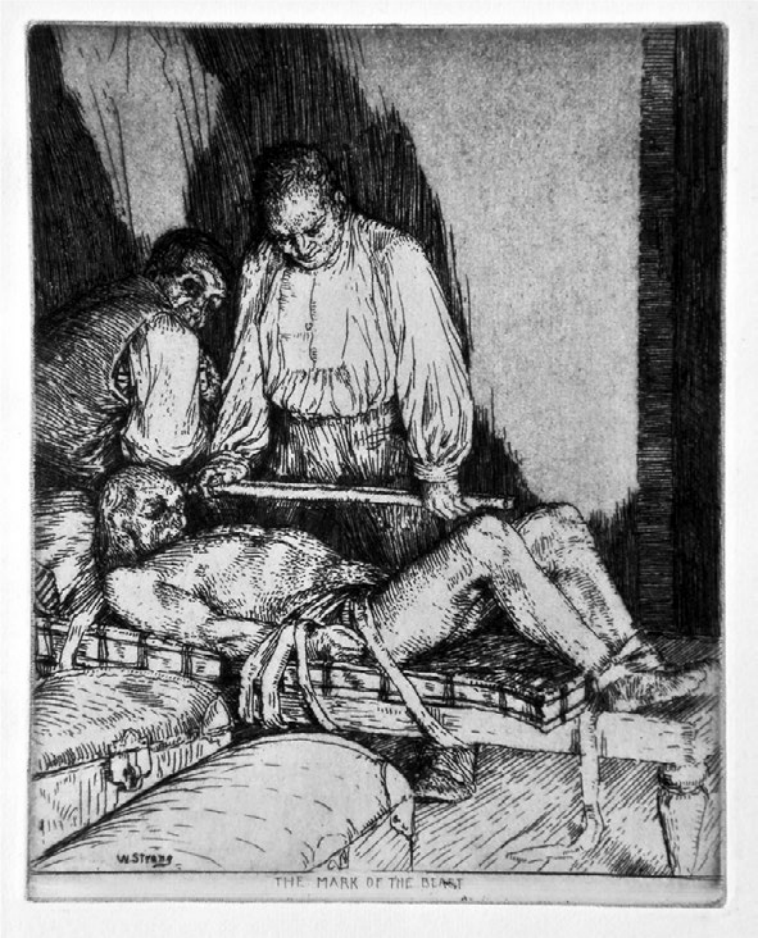

Fig 3 "The Mark of the Beast"

idea that the magic is real, a spell to be "cured" or resolved, rather than a medical condition that can rationally be explained and treated as hydrophobia (301). Supposedly "civilized" westerners, they *believe* in the potency of the alien culture, and partake of it, a situation Strang amplifies by deploying *chiaroscuro* in the form of the ominous shadows that flicker behind the two British characters. This device suggests their febrile, fearful state of mind as they struggle to contemplate the unknown, but, more than this, aligns them with the metaphorical darkness of the irrational and reduces them to the same level as the "natives." The narrator believes Fleete has been "bewitched" (302) and as they are about to torture the leper they act as if they were dealing with a "witch" (304). Kipling places his characters in this position, and Strang emphasises their status as creatures of darkness – a status ironically heightened by contrasting them with the figure of the leper, who is placed in light.

We can see, in short, how Strang visualizes Kipling's exploration of the contaminating influence of the foreign Otherness. Emphasising, again, the Gothic elements in Kipling's writing, Strang provides an unsettling vision of the incomprehensible that defies rational explanation – and powerfully suggests the unknowability of Indian superstition and the power of an unknowable culture. As Sketchley remarks, the author and artist provide a view of India which is far from benign and "is not the India of which plain tales can be told."[13]

Strang illustrates other, non-Indian tales as well. Perhaps the strangest of these is "A Matter of Fact" (plate 24, fig. 4). Though not about the British Raj, the story does involve an encounter between western knowledge and the non-western unknown as a group of journalists witness the death of a mysterious sea-monster on a trip to Madagascar. Kipling details the dying animal and its mate in some detail as the narrator looks on in transfixed horror:

> It was not human, and it certainly not an animal, for it did not belong to the earth as known to man. The mouth was open … and there was no sign of teeth within the mouth. But the horror of the face lay in the eyes, for these were sightless – white, in sockets as white as white as scraped bone, and blind … The two Things met – the one untouched and the other in its death-throe – male and female, we said, the female coming to the male … The Thing was so helpless, and, save for his mate, so alone (*Strange Tales*, 163).

The event is both "monstrous and indecent" something "No human eye should have beheld" (165) and Strang presents an image that both parallels and extends the author's gruesome description. He reproduces the detail of the couple's sightless eyes and bony whiteness, but

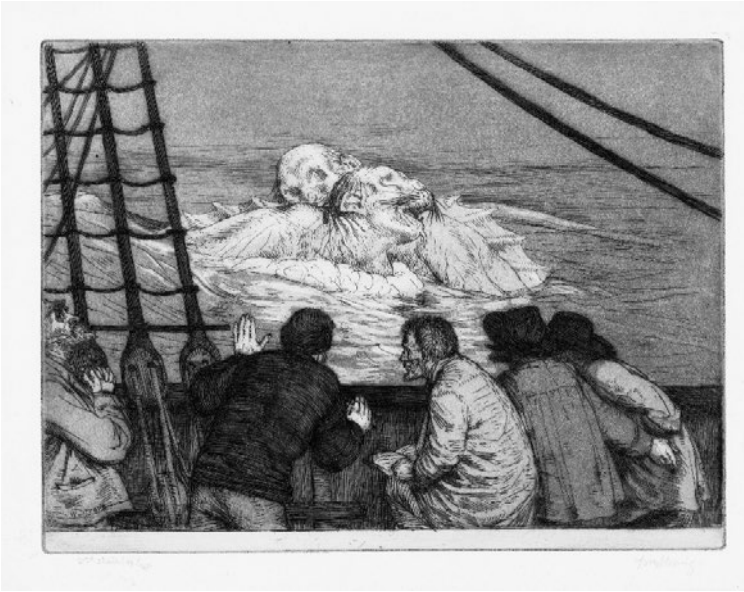

Fig 4 "A Matter of Fact'

he anthropomorphizes the faces to make them seem skull-like, near-versions of humanity, providing the male with whiskers that evoke a sea-lion's face and might also be read, according to Ray, as the author's profile.[14] Neither man nor beast, the effect is one of confusion as Strang presents an image (like that of Fleete) that defies conceptualization.

It is all "A Matter of Fact" yet is anything but factual as reality is confounded; the observers, whom Strang endows with upraised hands, look on in astonishment, and the viewer is forced to contemplate an existence that lies outside western canons of science. Indeed, in this story Kipling and Strang present an emblematic sign of the imperial white man's fundamental failure to deal with the inexplicability of foreign cultures, with the sea-monsters standing as a symbol of all that is unknown and threatening about the imperial experience. European cultures may impose traditional structures – the volcano explosion that kills the monster takes place in a busy shipping-lane of trading vessels – but a deeper, monstrous reality is concealed within those structures and emerges, as in all of the Indian stories, to challenge Eurocentric epistemologies.

Strang's series of etchings might thus be described as a response to Kipling's stories which privilege his evocation of imperial anxiety and add numerous inflections of the artist's own. Kipling's tales are bleakly

unsettling and Strang's dark etchings are highly mannered distillations, essentially supercharged versions of the author's crises of anguish and fear. As Ray observes, Strang's work must finally be viewed as a "a chamber of horrors"[15], which reveal the psychological depth of Kipling's textual originals and, as such, must be viewed as a significant contribution to our understandings of his writing.

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_____ "The Mutiny of the Mavericks" (1891). Reproduced on the Kipling Society Website: https://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/tale/the-mutiny-of-the-mavericks.htm

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NOTES

1 For Rudyard Kipling's illustrations for the *Just So Stories,* see *Victorian Web*: https://victorianweb.org/art/illustration/kipling/index.html (with commentaries).

2 William Strang (1859–1921) was a celebrated Scottish painter, illustrator and print-maker. His series of Kipling prints (1901) was followed by two other books in the same format: one illustrating *Don Quixote* (London: Macmillan, 1902) and one *The Pilgrim's Progress* (New York: Fenno, 1904). All three are in Strang's morose style and must have had limited appeal among the book-buying public of the time. Literature on Strang's life and work is quite extensive; a modern reconsideration is Samuel Shaw's "William Strang," *The Yellow Nineties* 2.0 https://1890s.ca/wp-content/uploads/strang_bio.pdf

3 The opening design of Strang's series for Kipling is an image of the author as a puppeteer, with his creations represented as puppets. He also did a free-standing print which Kipling mentions in a letter to Sidney Law (24/Nov/1897), noting how "Strang has given me no end of an aquiline nose in his etching" (*The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, edited by Thomas Pinney. Vol. 2., London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p. 318). Strang did a number of other literary portraits; subjects included Tennyson, Hardy and Stevenson.

4 For discussion of Strang's relationship with Legros, see F. Weitenkampf, "The Art of William Strang," *The English Illustrated Magazine* 9 (1890–91), p. 187; A. H. Hind, *A Short History of Engraving and Etching* (London: Constable, 1908), p. 330.

5 Gordon N. Ray, *The Illustrator and the Book in England from 1790 to 1914* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1976), p. 169.
6 William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories* (New York: Coward–McCann, 1931), p. 34.
7 "William Strang, Etcher," *Glasgow Evening Post* (3 March 1893), p. 557.
8 Laurence Binyon, introductory essay in *William Strang: a Catalogue of His Etched Work* (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1906), p. xii.
9 Frederick Wedmore, "Frank Short and William Strang," *The English Illustrated Magazine* 9 (1890 –91), p. 460.
10 R.E. D. Sketchley, *English Book Illustration of Today* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Trübner, 1903), p. 59.
11 R. S. McColl, "William Strang," *The Saturday Review* 87 (1899), p. 396.
12 "William Strang," *Glasgow Evening Post*, p. 557.
13 Sketchley, *English Illustration of Today*, p. 59.
14 Ray, *The Illustrator and the Book in England*, p. 169.
15 Ibid.

RUDYARD KIPLING AND THE HEAVILY ARMED THAKUR

BY **ASIF ULLAH KHAN**

[Asif Ullah Khan is a seasoned journalist with an extensive career spanning senior editorial leadership roles at both Indian and international news organizations. Currently based in Jaipur, he is a regular contributor to **The Diplomat**, **The Brussels Times**, and the **Millennium Post**.]

In 1887, 22-year-old Rudyard Kipling must have been one of the highest paid journalists in India when he was transferred from the *Civil and Military Gazette* in Lahore to the *Pioneer* in Allahabad to explore the length and breadth of Rajputana, now Rajasthan, on a princely salary of Rs 600 a month and paid railway expenses.

During his travels December 1887 to February 1888, Kipling wrote 19 articles titled 'Letters of Marque'. A letter of marque was a commission issued by a belligerent state to a private person permitting him to employ his vessel as a ship of war, or privateer—Kipling's joky figure for reporting from the semi-independent states of India. On his solitary journey, Kipling zig-zagged Rajputana by several modes of transport. He arrived in Jaipur from Agra by rail, went to Udaipur on a tonga-carriage, by tonga and elephant to Chitor. From Chitor, he took a train for Ajmer, and for Jodhpur, he travelled by rail and horseback.

It must have been quite risky for a 22-year-old 'white man' to travel through the 'native' lands where people could hardly speak English (once 'for six days' he 'had no white face with me.'[1]) The most interesting incident Kipling encountered in Rajputana occurred during his night journey to Udaipur across 70 miles of scrub-land. He was travelling in a two-wheel mail-tonga, one of whose wheels broke down in the middle of the night. The soldier escorting them galloped off in search of help from a travelling 'Thakur' [landowner]. Then:

> The driver looked East and West and said: 'I, too, will go and see if the tonga can be found, for the Sirkar's dak [Government mail] cannot stop. Meantime, O Sahib, do you take care of the mails—one bag and one bag of parcels.' So he ran swiftly into the haze of the moonlight and was lost, and the Englishman was left alone in charge of Her Majesty's mails, two unhappy ponies, and a lop-sided tonga. He … reflected that all his trouble was his own fault for wandering into Native States undesirous of Englishmen.
>
> The ponies coughed dolorously from time to time, but they could not lift the weight of a dead silence that seemed to be crushing the earth. After an interval measurable by centuries, sowar, driver,

> and the Thakur's tonga reappeared; the latter full to the brim and bubbling over with humanity and bedding. 'We will now,' said the driver, not deigning to notice the Englishman who had been on guard over the mails, 'put the Sirkar's mail into this tonga and go forward.' Amiable heathen! He was going—he said so—to leave the Englishman to wait in the Sahara, for certainly thirty hours and perhaps forty-eight. Tongas are scarce on the Udaipur road … Seating himself upon the parcels-bag, the Englishman cried in what was intended to be a very terrible voice, but the silence soaked it up and left only a thin trickle of sound, that anyone who touched the bags would be hit with a stick, several times, over the head. The bags were the only link between him and the civilisation he had so rashly foregone. And there was a pause.[2]

The hapless white man manages to hitch a lift (together with the mail-bags) from a reluctant, heavily-armed Thakur for an eight-hour journey, during which the men in the tonga address each other as 'Sahib' and 'Hazoor' ['Sir'], but their unwanted passenger is disrespectfully called 'thou,' and squashed for hours by a burly Rajput whose revolver, which in the British-ruled territory would be an illegal possession for a 'native', is humiliatingly 'printing … the chequer-work of its handle on his [Kipling's] right hip' [3]

Such hardships brought him fame; when Kipling returned to his office, he was shocked to find his name emblazoned on railway hoardings. Despising metropolitan celebrity (unlike journalists today), he complained to his cousin: 'When I came out of the wilderness, having touched the edge of the Great Indian Desert, and seen many wonderful and awful things, I found the railway stations blazing my name [...] If you had your name placarded up and down 2,200 miles of line and written big in every newspaper in India and were yourself invited to dinner parties for people to look at you and ask "how do you write those—er—things?" you wouldn't feel happy.'[4]

NOTES

1 Kipling to Margaret Burne-Jones, 25 January 1888, *Letters of Rudyard Kipling Vol. 1:1872–1899* ed. Thomas C. Pinney, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2004, p. 151

2 Kipling 'Showing How Her Majesty's Mail's Went to Udaipur', 'Letter of Marque' VI (*Pioneer* 3 January 1888), *From Sea to Sea: Letters of Travel* vol 1 (London: Macmillan 1899), p. 49.

3 Kipling, *ibid*,

4 To Margaret Burne-Jones, *Letters of Rudyard Kipling vol 1*, pp. 151–2

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

May 2026

NEW MEMBERS

It is my great pleasure to publicly welcome and introduce the following members who have joined the Kipling Society in recent months:

Ms. Saira AGA *(London, UK)*
Dr. Andy FEAR *(Tyne and Wear, UK)*
Mr. Tim POWER *(West Yorkshire, UK)*
Mr. Jonathan RANGER *(West Sussex, UK)*
Mr. John SHERWOOD *(Pennsylvania, USA)*
Mr. Alan TAGLIANETTI *(New York, USA)*
Mrs. Liz WILLIAMS *(Essex, UK)*

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If your subscription will not be renewed when it falls due, I would greatly appreciate a short message to that effect in order to keep our membership records up to date. I can be contacted by post (Keylands, Burwash, East Sussex TN19 7HP, UK) or by email (ksmemsec@outlook.com).

Fiona Renshaw
Membership Secretary

REVERING AND REMEMBERING THE COLOSSUS: CECIL RHODES, HERBERT BAKER AND RUDYARD KIPLING

BY **DAVID ALAN RICHARDS**

[David Alan Richards is President of the Kipling Society and editor of the definitive *Rudyard Kipling: A Bibliography* (2010)

Cecil Rhodes' favourite poet Rudyard Kipling (whose works were in the library of his house Groote Schuur),[1] his mining engineer the American John Hays Hammond, and his architect the Englishman Herbert Baker (later knighted) all declared him the "biggest" man they had ever known.[2] When the diamond and gold-mining magnate incorporated his British South Africa Company (Chartered) in 1889, he consolidated territory equal to the combined areas of the British Isles, France, Prussia, Austria, and Spain.[3] Alfred Milner, the Governor of Cape Colony and High Commissioner of South Africa from 1897 to 1905, also greatly admired Rhodes,[4] who had become the only Englishman to have two countries (Northern and Southern Rhodesia) named after him.[5] All four men would have agreed that the word Colossus, first bestowed on Rhodes in 1892 in Edward Sambourne's famous *Punch* cartoon "The Rhodes Colossus," was fitting. The cartoon's title punned on the classical Colossus of Rhodes, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world: a massive bronze statue of the sun god Helios erected on the island of Rhodes in 282 BC, before being toppled by an earthquake after sixty years.[6] The cartoon depicts its subject as a giant standing astride the African continent, one foot on the Cape and the other on Cairo, holding a telegraph line in outstretched hands.

Fig 1. The Rhodes Colossus

More than any other single individual, Rhodes is connected, according to Tanya Barben, with "the history of capitalism, exploitation, possession and colonial expansion in southern Africa", and the various adjectives of personal characteristics

applied to him include "vain, boyish, untrustworthy, cynical, imperial, manipulative, contradictory, enigmatic, unscrupulous, dishonest, money-grubbing, persuasive, and deceitful."[7] Sarah LeFanu writes that Rhodes was also "charismatic, a shrewd negotiator, and a man of considerable physical courage,"[8] capable of inspiring intense admiration and loyalty in South African political colleagues like Leander Starr Jameson and Hammond – and, of course, Rudyard Kipling. Although in 1891 Kipling[9] glimpsed Rhodes in a Cape Town restaurant, and had written of him in 1892 as "one of the adventurers and captains courageous of old, "[10] the two men did not meet until 2 April 1897, at a dinner party in London given by Moberly Bell, editor of *The Times*, whose guests included Alfred Milner, shortly to be confirmed as Governor of the Cape Colony.[11] On Kipling's subsequent visits to Cape Town they became close, and Kipling's hero-worship of Rhodes as an empire-maker is well attested. After getting to know Hayes Hammond on the *S.S. Dunvegan Castle* in January 1898 on its way to Cape Town, he wrote to his friend:

> I wish to goodness you could give me a small hint as to how, with my pen, I could continue to do the most good to Rhodes in his fight "South under." Sometimes I think an interview—and sometimes a poem would be best but I'm blowed if I precisely know. Please enlighten me.[12]

In October 1898 , the *Liverpool Daily Post's* article "A Great Man on a Great Man" reported the editor's questions and Kipling's answers:

> His beau ideal, or at all events his present day idol, was Mr. Rhodes. What did he think of him? The greatest of living men. Wasn't it a rather sordid sort of greatness, all having to do with the making of money. Sordid? A man worth millions who doesn't spend more than £600 a year on himself? There he lived in a poor, never-finished place, keeping free and easy open house….My next question: Has Mr. Rhodes, in a public sense, any morals? "Tut!" says the other great man: "he's making an empire.…The best ideal is to spread civilization, and make an empire doing it."[13]

Kipling had tried to write a poem for Rhodes, but did not compose one until his hero died on 26 March 1902, aged 48.[14] His elegy for his now-deceased idol, initially titled "The Burial", praises Rhodes in superhuman terms. Far above ordinary monarchs, he is an "immense and brooding" creator of "unimagined empires" to come:

> There, till the vision he foresaw
> Splendid and whole arise,

And unimagined Empires draw
To council 'neath his skies,
The immense and brooding Spirit still
Shall quicken and control.
Living he was the land, and dead,
His soul shall be her soul![15]

This poem was read by Kipling at a private evening ceremony at Rhodes's home Groote Schuur, and again – by Frank Rhodes, not Kipling, who feared breaking down if called upon to read it—days later as the body was lowered into the grave hewn from the gigantic single boulder which constitutes the entire great hill at the summit of World's View in the Matopo Hills, near Bulawayo in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). He was devasted by Rhodes' death; as he wrote to his friend Edmonia Hill:

> It seems absurd to speak of my own petty loss in the face of this great public calamity, but I feel as though half the horizon of my life has dropped away. He was always a close friend of mine—and there was so much to do.[16]

For both Kipling and Baker, Rhodes was an inspirational figure, and not less so after his death. Baker recalled looking in the dying Rhodes's eyes, "read[ing] there the inspiring message of sympathy, trust, and a call to myself, and to all of us, to carry on his own work enlightened by the gleams of his torch along the paths he had opened out to us."[17] Kipling in old age wrote to him in 1934 that "I don't think anyone who did not actually come across Him with some intimacy of detail can ever realize what He was. It was his Presence that had Power."[18] According to Andrew Lycett, "Rudyard convinced himself of his duty to promote his dead friend's agenda for southern Africa,"[19] but became disillusioned after the landslide election in 1905 of a Liberal government which regarded mining interests as responsible for the Boer War. The Conservative dream of a British-dominated South Africa died, much to Kipling's chagrin, and after his last visit in 1908 he never returned to South Africa. His main contribution to perpetuating the memory of Rhodes was his work for the Rhodes scholarship programme, which he came to see as the "greatest of all his works."[20] His relationship with the Rhodes Trust, established to administer the program of scholarships to Oxford founded by Rhodes, could, however, be thorny. After the death of Earl Grey in 1917 and at the invitation of Jameson, he had been invited to become a trustee (his wife Carrie's diary recorded that it was "a bit of work he would like more than any else)."[21] He angrily resigned in 1925 in protest of the appointment of Philip Kerr, later Lord Lothian, formerly one of the young administrators

who worked under Milner in South Africa, as secretary to the Trust because of Kerr's failure to fight in the First World War and because he was "committed to policies [of federalism] which are not parallel to those of the Trust" [of Rhodes, in Kipling's view].[22] While a Trustee, he also spent time in 1921 "trying to tidy up" the disappointing manuscript of the biography of Jameson which the Rhodes Trustees had commissioned.[23] (The other Trustees showed no enthusiasm for a proposal that he should write a life of Rhodes.[24]) It seems that Lothian (and possibly Baker) may have taken mild revenge for Kipling's testy resignation. Around the dome of Rhodes House, a "squared rubble" mansion in Oxford designed by Baker and opened in May 1929, to provide a central headquarters for the Rhodes Trust,[25] is inscribed in gilded Greek capital letters the sentence from Aristotle, "The utmost good of man is the virtuous activity of the soul throughout his life;"[26] but there is no Kipling quotation on the walls, no portrait and no room dedicated to him.[27] This omission is the more striking in that Rhodes himself deeply admired Kipling, who, Rhodes was to say, "has done more than any other since Disraeli to show the world that the British race is sound at core and that rust or dry rot are strangers to it."[28]

Nevertheless in 1938, two years after Kipling's death, Baker sent to Lord Lothian, then the Secretary to the Rhodes Trust established to administer the program of scholarships to Oxford founded by Rhodes, "all the letters from Kipling that are about Cecil Rhodes. I suppose you will include them with the one sent you on 14th February in the Rhodesiana at Rhodes House [at Oxford University]."[29] Baker knew Kipling well; their correspondence, stretching from 22 November 1900 to 13 January 1934 , documents a collaboration which spanned more than thirty years celebrating their mutual association with Rhodes. The architectural historian, G. A. Bremner, has written that "Baker may fairly be described as the most imperially minded of British architects, not just of the period but in history….In this regard Baker was the architectural equivalent of Rudyard Kipling, a man he knew, admired, corresponded with, and even designed a house for."[30] A sentence in Baker's 1934 letter to his friend Lionel Curtis (another member of Milner's Kindergarten) declaring his personal goal "to carry on the ideals of Rhodes and all the big men I have met in S[outh] Africa,"[31] shows the same yearning to promote Rhodes's imperialist vision as Kipling had expressed in his 1898 letter to Hammond. Kipling and Baker, mutually inspired by Rhodes's vision, labored after his early death, to advance it by commemorative monuments designed by Baker and inscribed with Kipling's words.

KIPLING, BAKER AND MEMORIALS

Architect and poet collaborated on the grand monument "To the Honoured Dead" at Kimberley, promoted by Rhodes who had himself

been trapped at the Siege of Kimberley (October 1899 – February 1900).[32] An architectural historian has argued that Rhodes's interest in architecture was not purely aesthetic: "Rhodes hoped that as Pericles, Hadrian, the popes of the Renaissance and Napoleon had achieved immortality through architecture, so might he too ensure it for himself."[33] Baker himself "was enthralled with the promise of crystallising in stone the soul and spirit of a great Empire."[34] He sent Kipling his first design for the Kimberley War Memorial (now the Honoured Dead Memorial enclosing the remains of twenty-seven soldiers), based on the so-called "tomb of Romulus" on Rome's Alban Hills, with a sketch of two *metae* [cones] on a pedestal. This Kipling found "immensely good," symbolizing among other things "the two races Dutch and English ris[ing] side by side from a common and solid foundation." Baker later noted that his friend had correctly intuited that "we [Baker and Kipling] thought these [twinned cones on a high solid base] would express Rhodes's political 'goal' of the alliance of the two races in South Africa;"[35] (neither man paid attention to South Africa's Blacks). The memorial committee chaired by Rhodes rejected this design, to Kipling's regret .[36] Baker, financed by Rhodes to visit sites in Greece, Egypt, Italy, Sicily and the Near East for four months in 1900, designed the final version, based on the Nereid Monument at Xanthos in Lycia (modern-day Turkey). [37]

Both Kipling and his father Lockwood, who stayed with his son's family in the Woolsack in 1902, contributed to Baker's final design. Rudyard provided the six-line epitaph—his first major war memorial work, and almost certainly approved by Rhodes—which was carved in a recess in the walls of the base, under Baker's signature serpentine:

> This for a charge to our children,
> In sign of the price we paid,
> The price we paid for freedom,
> That comes unsoiled to your hand.
> Read, revere, and uncover, for here are the victors laid,
> They who died for the city, being sons of the land.[38]

Lockwood Kipling executed a large pictorial relief, his last known work of public sculpture, showing "Long Cecil," the 28.1 pounder gun named in Rhodes's honor, designed and manufactured in the workshops of De Beers during the siege of Kimberley. He also designed the tablet of text with his son's verses, and the memorial's other bronze reliefs.[39] After Long Cecil was used as the gun carriage for Rhodes's funeral procession down Adderly Street to St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town, it was mounted on its stylobate in front of the memorial, aimed down the valley.[40] Rhodes donated a large sum of money for the erection of the memorial, but did not live to see its consecration on

28 November 1904.[41] Rudyard praised it to Baker: "a wonderful bit of work."[42]

The "Honoured Dead" memorial at Kimberley was dwarfed, however, by the memorial to Rhodes himself, the climax of the Baker-Kipling collaboration. Baker's chosen site was on the slopes of Table Mountain, among the silver trees and pines, with views on both sides of the peninsula, where Rhodes had sat to enjoy his panoramic views to the north, south and east. Kipling was a member of the memorial committee;[43] Baker wrote that the author "went every year to the Woolsack and watched the [memorial] building and the sculpture as it grew" (they also met in Johannesburg during the Kiplings' annual South Africa sojourns).[44] Within the memorial building, both men wanted a bust of Rhodes. While home in England in 1904, Baker chose John Macallan Swan, an English painter and sculptor. Kipling approved, writing on 29 July 1905 that he

> saw Swan (with Jameson) when I went to London in May and vastly approved of his semi-geometrical, wholly feline lions. I think myself he has *just* caught the weight, bulk, and gravity which is wanted. Also, I was much and specially pleased, with his rude study for the Rhodes head. So all that is to the good. I'm dashed if I now know *what* I want exactly for the centre of the memorial—whether a just and magnificent blank or the bust. I still fear defilement of any image that may be put up there.[45]

The finished bust of Rhodes was installed behind the temple columns, above the last stanza from Kipling's "The Burial":

> The immense and brooding Spirit still
> Shall quicken and control.
> Living he was the land, and dead,
> His soul shall be her soul![46]

Baker sent him a tracing of the "proposed temple," and on his Woolsack notepaper dated 9 February 1905, Kipling reported that he and Baker's local architectural firm partner Francis Masey had been up to the various sites. In his lifetime, Groote Schuur's owner had continued buying up farms, as opportunity arose, on the lower mountain slopes between his house under Devil's Peak all along the lower slopes of Table Mountain up to the city's edge, and much land round the back of Devil's Peak and Table Mountain, so there was vast acreage from which to choose.[47]

Rudyard disliked the idea of a gigantic statue of Rhodes on the Lion's Head, the peak of the steep ridge between Table Mountain and

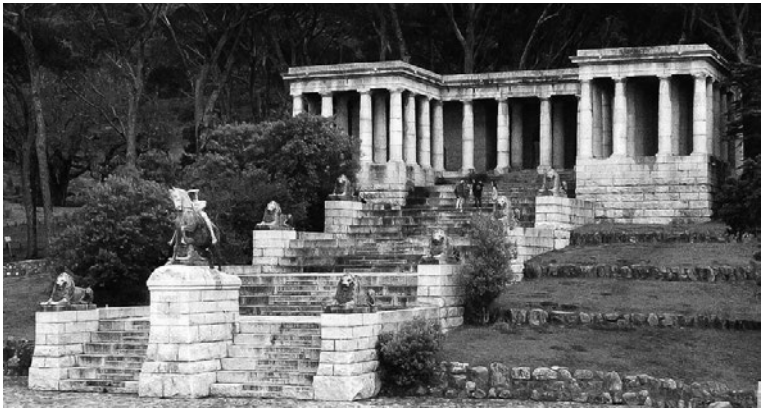

Fig. 2 Rhodes Memorial, Cape Town (Wikimedia)

the sea, which had been advocated by the 4th Earl Grey. The Lion's Head had featured in Kipling's "Song of the Cities" (1893), a fifteen-quatrain round trip of Empire cities from Bombay to Auckland, invoking "Empire to the Northward: Aye! one land | From Lion's Head to the Line!" [i.e the Equator]: words later inscribed on a seated bronze of Rhodes overlooking the University of Cape Town's rugby fields (removed in 2015).[48] Baker successfully lobbied for Rhodes's favorite spot on his former estate on Devil's Peak.[49]

On 9 February 1905, Kipling advised Baker to design the approach as a terraced avenue coming up from the Mowbray Road, "between lions",[50] referencing the eight bronze lions by Swan in four pairs flanking the steps at intervals leading up to the monument. The letter includes a sketch of the "Temple and the Image…equally beholden from the Cape Town and the suburb side." The "Image" down the slope from the "Temple" in Rudyard's silhouette-like drawing in solid black, with the distant hills lightly outlined to the right, was an allegorical statue of horse and rider by the English sculptor George Frederic Watts, titled by its creator "Physical Energy" and given by the artist "out of affection and admiration for the genius of Cecil Rhodes … the last great Englishman of his type,'[51] portrayed facing north, "a horse reined in from full gallop, with its rider scanning the distance…as an emblem of energy and outlook that had been characteristic of Rhodes."[52]

Rudyard was not enthusiastic "but I can see that it is far better than the risk of a colossal error in bronze" (another dismissal of Grey's proposal). Baker's annotation records that Kipling "supported me in placing Watts' Energy here instead of on the Zambesi, as was first suggested," with verses that now are found inscribed on the Rhodes Memorial:

As tho' again—yea, even once again
We should rewelcome to the stewardship
The Rider with the loose flung bridle-rein
And chance plucked twig for whip

The down-turned hat brim and the eyes beneath
Alert, devouring—and the imperious hand
Ordaining matters swiftly to bequeath
Perfect the work he planned.[53]

Recommending that Baker cut his "avenues of approach" through the pine woods and "you have the pilgrim tuned to the proper note before he has gone a hundred yards", Rudyard commented further on the architect's sketch:

> Of course, being florid in my tastes, I should like against the dark green [of the mountainside], a vermilion entablature: and columns sheathed at the base in bronze—after the insolent Egyptian fashion. Something that to the vulgar suggested Cape to Cairo, and to others—other things. No need to make it Dutch. Make it [African] Continental.[54]

Kipling would not have included himself and Baker among the vulgar, but neither had forgotten their hero's vision of Cape to Cairo.

On 5 November 1905 Kipling wrote Baker again, "Just a line, overtaking my last, to say that Swan sent me a note asking me to come to see the lion which was getting finished….I am more than pleased the beast is neither Egyptian, nor monolithic, nor diagrammatic (which is what I feared) but an original and characteristic creation with enough of the lion in his anatomy to interest and enough of the heavy Egyptian convention of squareness to impress….I especially admired the beast's effect from the front." The middle of the second sheet sports a rough sketch by the author of the sculptor's lion in profile, featuring an arrow pointing to "a curious tense curve" in its haunch which made it "much fiercer."[55] Kipling wrote to Baker in Johannesburg from the Woolsack on 1 January 1907.

> We have the Rhodes Memorial as it were under our wing—seeing it so close to us—and the more I see the more am I delighted with the austerity and weight of the conception. As to the bust my father [Lockwood] might know of a man—he spoke of a rising young sculptor the other day….The idea of the central descent of steps is new to me…but I own its most attractive….My opulent [taste?] fairly leans to gilded sphinxes and the lions of King Solomon on the steps. Gilding at any [right?] moment here to offset all that solemnity

> of the grey stone. I am intensely interested to get the details of the roof to the temple which [your local partner] Masey tells me to be granite and a foot thick! [56]

Rudyard wrote again on 25 January 1907:[57]

> I specially like the sweep and descent of the steps. I think, too, that Swan's lions will be noble when they are in place. Can you tell me about when it is expected to complete and to open or dedicate it—so I may do my best to prepare some sort of inscription.[58] Please let me know what your ideas are on inscriptions and *where* in or on the building the actual lettering will be carved. You were going to send me a drawing of it. (emphasis in original)

On 4 February 1908 he sent Baker his two inscriptions for the memorial:

> To the spirit and life work of Cecil John Rhodes who loved and served South Africa.
>
> The immense and brooding spirit still
> Shall quicken and control.
> Living he was the land and dead
> His soul shall be her soul.[59]

His letter continued: "In using the quotation from my verses unaltered my hope is that those who go up to the memorial may come down from the mountain with perhaps more strength and belief. That is what monuments & memorials are for."[60] That afternoon at "2: p.m.", he wrote again "overtaking my last", recording triumphantly that Jameson has "well approved of the inscription, 'So that's all right!....I hope the lettering will be as plain as plain can be and deeply ineffaceable."[61]

But Kipling was increasingly disaffected from South Africa. In late March 1908, he wrote from the Woolsack to Lord Milner that Baker

"finds very little work to be done and talked of going home—permanently. You see how unfailingly the Dutch publicly uproot the best elements," complaining that he himself was "heartsick and discouraged." [62]

The Rhodes Memorial was not inaugurated until 5 July 1912, with Lord Grey officiating at the opening, unveiling the bust of Rhodes while hundreds of Cape doves were released from cages on the roof to circle in the sky as the gathering, led by an African choir, sang "God Save the King".[63] Kipling, too disgusted at Afrikaner political dominance to revisit the country after 1908, was not present.

The Rhodes Memorial has not fared well in the present century. In 2001, the entire sculpture was drenched in blood-red paint, only seven years into the democracy brought into being by Nelson Mandela. In mid-July 2020 during a powerful overnight storm, the 176 lb bronze head was roughly decapitated from the neck of the massive bust with an angle grinder. Everything from the chin up was gone, only Rhodes' left cheek remaining, still leaning improbably on the palm of his hand. Since 2014, the nose has been chopped away seven times.[64] The huge structure itself, sketched in profile with its equestrian statue on the forecourt below, is today gloomy, dilapidated, and hidden by the trees.[65]

Kipling resumed collaboration with Baker after the First World War, when both men served on the Imperial War Graves Commission. Baker designed the Indian Memorial at Neuve Chapelle, at the dedication of which on 7 October 1927 Kipling delivered a speech on behalf of the Commission.[66] Baker also designed another large cemetery, at Passchendaele, including the blockhouses called Tynecot by the Northumberland regiments, one of which is inscribed with large bronze letters in words suggested by Kipling, "This was the Tynecot blockhouse."[67] For these and other war memorials, Kipling's cousin Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin recommended Baker for a knighthood.[68] He also designed the Winchester War Memorial (1925), much admired by Kipling, who wrote to Baker: "I think—indeed I know that so far as my own experience goes, it is incomparably the best of all the War Memorials."[69]

BAKER, THE KIPLINGS AND THE WOOLSACK

Baker also designed a house for his friend. On 7 March 1900, Rhodes invited Rudyard and Carrie Kipling for lunch at his house Groote Schurr ('Big Barn') with Baker, whom he asked to build a house for the couple in the same Cape Dutch style as he had rebuilt Rhodes's house after a fire two years earlier.[70] Rhodes told the architect "'not to be mean,' which implied that, though he called it a 'cottage,' I was to spare no expense in making the small house strong and beautiful."[71] On Christmas Day 1900 the Kiplings were taken to their new South African home, a one storey whitewashed house, with shutters and heavy doors of oiled teak, built around a smallish colonnaded open court,[72] where the Kipling family would stay from January to March until 1908. It was separated from Groote Schuur only fifteen minutes' walk away by a dell filled with hydrangeas. Rudyard wrote that it was "a perfect Dutch house full of old Dutch things, with a long narrow garden in front and with Table Mountain arising out of our back yard. It's an enchanting spot, called Woolsack, because it has always been the highest seat on the mountain side."[73] (It was actually named after an earlier house on the estate, jokingly called after a neighboring farm known as the

Wolmunster (a sample of wool.)[74] In his letter to Rhodes written in April 1901 when the Kiplings' first summer at the Woolsack drew to an end, Rudyard wrote: "We've been walking round the garden in the starlight and saying things about you that would look absurd on paper."[75] It clearly was an 'enchanting spot'; the diary of Lionel Curtis for 25 August 1901 records that he "Lunched with Baker at Rondebosch. He took us to see a house he had designed built by Rhodes for Kipling. It is even better than the Government House's cottage and in the most perfect situation overlooking the isthmus to the Hex Mountains."[76]

In later life, some tensions developed between the friends. Baker wanted Kipling to provide material for his first book *Cecil Rhodes by his Architect* (1932), with mixed success. Kipling wrote on 15 December 1932, "Rhodes did talk to me about things he was keen about; but…[a]t this distance of time, I couldn't trust my memory to reproduce accurately, and there is always a tendency after long lapse of time, to embroider and to say what one thought he was trying to say."[77] But Baker's typewritten "Notes on talk with Kipling on Rhodes in December, 1932," record that "Kipling further described Rhodes's character as being in some ways 'child-like' in its simplicity and with a "feminine" intuition'."[78] But when in May 1933 he asked Kipling if he might quote extracts from Rudyard's letter of 1900, "he refused to let me publish it."[79]

There were also disagreements about the use to which The Woolsack, which the Kiplings never revisited after 1908, should be put. Baker wrote to Kipling on 18 December 1928 "When I was designing it he [Rhodes] always talked of it to me as a home for 'poets and artists' who might visit South Africa. Then later when it was building, he said he was giving it to you."[80] Rhodes may have had had an early notion of an artists' residence; Baker recollected him saying, "If they live in beautiful surroundings they will be better able to interpret through their art the beauty and grandeur of the country."[81] The 1900 luncheon party took place a year after the Kiplings' first child Josephine died, with that grief still heavy on his visitors, so perhaps Rhodes impulsively declared that this house would be theirs to use whenever they visited South Africa.[82] Baker persisted, and on 13 November 1930, put forward "scheme" for the Woolsack's future for ultimate transmission to the Rhodes Trust, the University of Cape Town, and the Department of Education:

> I am very anxious that this public spirited intention of Rhodes should be rewarded while others as well as myself are alive to bear witness, and that some plan should be considered for perpetuating his wishes and generosity to South Africans in the future….The scheme suggested is that Rhodes' words "poets and artists" should be interpreted liberally in "general culture" as I believe he would

> have wished; it was his way to crystallize great thoughts into a few words….As Mr. Kipling has not yet been consulted the subject this should be treated as confidential.[83]

Baker did later raise the subject during his visit on 15 December 1932, during which Kipling reviewed his "Notes on Rhodes." On 23 December, Kipling complained to his daughter Elsie:

> He wants me to give up the Woolsack so that "some tired artists, writer or musician" can go down there, and add to the uplift of South Africa by giving lectures on uplifting subjects or composing sonatas—all to the honor and glory of Rhodes's name … Translated, this means some sort of soft billet for some pet of the Trustees—probably a pink Bolshie. Herbert Baker is *not* a trustee [of the Rhodes Trust], and the Trustees have not written to me about it. I declined with a certain amount of directness. What they do after I die is not my affair, but this poppy-cock about "inspiration etc." makes me sickish.[84]

The irritation persisted, and on 13 January 1933, Kipling wrote candidly to his old friend: "I think there is no dispute that the Woolsack was to be mine for life."[85] A month later Baker repeated in a letter to E. T. Millar what he had recently learned as hearsay from Sir James G. McDonald, Rhodes's erstwhile business associate, that "Kipling has always been very sticky about the Woolsack. Between ourselves Rhodes latterly found him rather trying."[86] Some commentators have called out Kipling's stubbornness and lack of generosity regarding surrendering the Woolsack in his last decades,[87] without reflecting on the secret maneuvers of the architect—who had shortly after Rhodes's death at his seaside cottage been gifted it by Cecil's sister[88]—to oust the author from his life estate house while simultaneously asking him for editorial advice. Kipling's stubbornness is understandable; having resigned from the Rhodes Trust in dismay at its perceived direction away from devotion to its donor, he clung fiercely to his last connection to the Colossus, the grace-and-favor house he had ordered for him to be built near Rhodes's own Baker-designed home.

NOTES

1 See Gordon Le Sueur's memoir *Cecil Rhodes: The Man and His Work* (London: John Murray, 1913): "He did not care at all for poetry, but he had nearly all Kipling's works in his library." 47–48

2 Hammond, *The Autobiography of John Hays Hammond* (New York: Farrar & Reinhart, 1938), p. 215, "I admire Rhodes immensely—Biggest man I have ever

met—as we 'Yankees' say." . 215; Baker, Herbert, *Cecil Rhodes by his Architect* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934) 78, 175; Kipling, reported in *The Times*, 22 November 1927; reprinted in Pinney, *Rudyard Kipling's Uncollected Speeches* (University of North Carolina Press at Greensboro: ELT Press, 2008), p. 117.

3 Hammond, John Hays, *Autobiography* p. 228.

4 See Milner in 1897 on "Rhodes, who is a really *big* man" (emphasis in original). Headlam ed. *The Milner Papers, South Africa, 1897–1899* p. 7.

5 Rhodesia (in 1980 renamed Zimbabwe) the first nation-state to be established in Africa, was named by the British South Africa Company in 1895. Blake, Robert, *History of Rhodesia* pp. 114, 181.

6 Harvey, *Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1973 p, 363

7 Barben, Tanya, "'By Rock and Heath and Pine: Rudyard Kipling: Rudyard Kipling and the University of Cape Town: Part I", *Quarterly Bulletin of the National Library*, vol. 57, n. 2, February 2003, p. 58.

8 Le Fanu, Sarah, *Something of Themselves: Kipling, Kingsley, Conan Doyle and the Anglo-Boer War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), p. 91.

9 Durbach, René, *Kipling's South Africa* (Diep River, SA, Chameleon Press, 1988) p. 12.

10 Kipling, "From Tideway to Tideway" (1892), chapter 7, collected in *Letters of Travel 1892–1913* (London: Macmillan, 1920), p. 87.

11 Lycett, p. 294. In February 1898, after arriving in Cape Town, Kipling was invited to dine at Government House with Milner (a facsimile of Rudyard' s response is found in Durbach, p. 22).

12 Kipling to Hammond, January 1898 David Alan Richards Kipling Collection, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University: dated *after* Rhodes's humiliation by the Jameson Raid and the convictions of Hammond and Jameson.

13 *Liverpool Daily Post*, reprinted in *The African Review*, 22 October 1898, p. 134, more fully excerpted in Davidson, pp. 327–329.

14 Rees extracts of Carrie's diary for 2 April 1902 ("Rees extracts", now at University of Sussex) reads; "Rud digs at verses for C.J.R. all day." There was an earlier attempt to write verses about Rhodes (Lycett, pp. 292–293): according to Carrie Kipling's diary for 27 February 1897: "Rud writing verses on Mr. Rhodes. Never published."

15 Kipling 'The Burial,' published in *The Times* 9 April 1902 as 'C.J. Rhodes'; Pinney ed. *Cambridge Edition of the Poetry of Rudyard Kipling*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 514

16 Kipling to Edmonia Hill, 8 April 1892, Thomas Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling, Volume 3, 1900–10* (Iowa, Iowa University Press, 1996), p. 87. "So little done, so much to do" were according to Baker (p. 123) Rhodes's last words.

17 Baker, *Architecture & Personalities* (London: Country Life Limited, 1944), p. 125

18 Kipling to Baker, 17 March 1934, Sussex University, Kipling Papers 14/7 and quoted in *Architecture*, p. 28.

19 Lycett, p. 343.

20 Carrie Kipling to Baker, 25 November n.d., Kipling Papers, University of Sussex, 14/7. The Rhodes Scholarship is the most famous educational award in the English-speaking world and the most prestigious student award in the United States.

21 Carrie Kipling, Rees extracts, entry for 27 August 1917.
22 Amery, Leo, *The Leo Amery Diaries 1896–1929*, ed. J. Barnes and D. Nicholson (London: Hutchinson, 1980), p. 415.
23 Kipling had attempted revision in July and August 1921 of Ian Colvin's subsidized two-volume biography *The Life of Jameson* [London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1922]), before he and Milner decided that it needed rewriting altogether, and Kipling found a publisher: Richards, David Alan, *Rudyard Kipling: A Bibliography* (Newark, DE and London: Oak Knoll Press and the British Library, 2020), B*l*25, p. 470; Kenney, Anthony, ed., *The History of the Rhodes Trust 1902–1999* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 26 n. 104.
24 Kenney, p. 37. An undated draft of Colvin's biography of Jameson is at Oxford's Bodleian Library in the "Supplemental Collections relating to Cecil John Rhodes": Clarke, p. 275.
25 Zeigler, p. 8.
26 As translated by Baker, *Cecil Rhodes*, p. 12, and in the original Greek and fuller English translation in *Rhodes House Opened*, p. 8.
27 Rhodes House contains one of only four manuscript copies of "C. J. Rhodes", and the original of Kipling's February 1905 letter to Baker containing the poem "Vision of Cecil Rhodes": Richards, David Alan, "Kipling and the Rhodes Scholars," *The Kipling* Journal, Vol. 36, No. 345, March 2012, pp. 34–35. Following Kipling's death, the Rhodes Trustees wrote Carrie Kipling on 21 February 1936 that they had passed a motion at their meeting that week [18 February 1936] expressing profound regret at his passing, noting that "they have always felt deep appreciation of the work which he did for so many years to help establish the Rhodes Scholarship System according to the terms of Mr. Cecil Rhodes's Will." Rhodes Trust File 2536.
28 McDonald, J. G., *Rhodes: A Life* (London: Philip Allan & Co. Ltd.1927), p. 337. In an 1877 essay, according to McDonald, p. 36, Rhodes at age 24 declared "I contend that we [English] are the first race in the world, and the more of it we inhabit, the better it is for the human race."
29 Rhodes Papers: MSS Afr. s8, pp. 11–39, Bodleian Library [hereinafter, "RP"]. The MSS include Baker's own notes about the correspondence and its context from the recipient's viewpoint. The author expresses his gratitude to Professor G. A. Bremner for providing a copy of the entire RP file for his use.
30 Bremner R.A., *Building Greater Britain: Architecture, Imperialism and the Edwardian Baroque Revival* (New Haven, London, Yale University Press, 2022) pp. 123–124.
31 Herbert Baker to Lionel Curtis (2 April 1934), Lionel Curtis Archive, Bodleian Library, Oxford: MS Curtis 96, fol. 19, quoted in Bremner, p. 126.
32 Bremner, pp. 198–201.
33 Greig, Doreen E., *Herbert Baker in South Africa* (Cape Town, SA, Purnell, 1970) p. 100.
34 *The South African Architectural Record*, "In Memoriam, Sir Herbert Baker", July 1946, p. 174.
35 Baker, p. 37
36 Kipling to Rhodes, 14 April 1901, Pinney, *Letters*, *Volume 3*, pp. 47–48.
37 Lunderstadt, Steve, *The King of Diamonds: Cecil John Rhodes His Life in Kimberley* (Kimberley: Kimberley Marketing and Promotions, 2002), p. 125;

Greig, pp. 101–103, and Bremner, pp. 127 (on Rhodes-financed tour of ancient sites) and 198–201.

38 "Kimberley", in Pinney, *Cambridge Edition*, p. 1370.

39 Bryant, Julius, "Kipling as a Sculptor". In Julius Bryant and Susan Weber, editors, *John Lockwood Kipling: Arts & Crafts in the Punjab and London* (New Haven and London: Bard Graduate Center Gallery and Yale University Press, 2017), pp. 101 and figs. 4.45, 4.46, and p. 105, notes 60 and 61.

40 The procession is pictured in *The Late Honourable Cecil John Rhodes Doctor of Civil Laws, Member of H.M. Privy Council, Member of the Legislative Assembly of Cape Colony A Chronicle of the Funeral Ceremonies from Muizenberg to the Matapos, March-April 1902* (Cape Town: Cape Times Limited Printers, 1905), which at p. 58 also contains the first South African book printing of "The Burial", titled "C.J.R.".

41 Lunderstadt, p. 125.

42 Caroline Kipling quoting her husband in Baker, *Architecture and Personalities*, p. 38.

43 Pinney, *Letters, Volume 4*, pp. 205–206, n. 2.

44 RP, not in Pinney. Baker had been summoned in 1901 by Milner to his headquarters in Johannesburg to give "architectural advice" for the "new colonies" and so in 1902 went to live there, buying the land for Stonehouse with Lionel Curtis: Keath, p. 94.

45 RP. Kipling of course feared defilement by early twentieth-century Boers, not twenty-first century citizens of the Republic of South Africa.

46 The words "The immense and brooding spirit" were once to be found on the £1 and £5 currency notes in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

47 Muir, p. 12; Rotberg, p. 381 records that, having paid £200 for the house, Rhodes then for £60,000 acquired the 1500 adjoining acres along and on the steep slope of Table Mountain, a protected estate that still stretches from the shoulder of the mountain all the way to the botanical gardens at Kirstenbosch and beyond.

48 Pérez-Peña, Richard, "No More Border Limits for Rhodes Scholars", *New York Times*, 20 February 2018, p. A5. A movement at the University under the slogan "Rhodes Must Fall" galvanized protests across South Africa, drawing attention to persistent racial inequalities in the country's higher education system: Chan, Sewall, "Rhodes Scholarship Program to Expand", *New York Times*, 2 June 2016.

49 On Lion's Head it would have been Cape Town's very own Colossus "so that it might be seen not only by all Capetown [*sic*] but by the incoming ships": Grey, quoted in Wittenberg, Herman, "Rhodes Memorial: On the Aesthetics and Politics of Colonial Culture" , in L. Nas and L. Marx, eds., *Inter Action 2* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1994), p. 223.

50 Kipling in Pinney *Letters, Volume 3*, pp. 177–179

51 From Watts's letter to *The Times*, 5 July 1902.

52 Durbach, p. 95. Rotberg, p. 649: "In 1898 Earl Grey prevailed upon Watts to make the face of the rider resemble Rhodes. Watts took Grey to the statue and said, 'Well, that is Rhodes.'"

53 Included in *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Definitive Edition* (London, December 1940), p. 210, as "Rhodes Memorial, Table Mountain", and quoted in Baker, *Cecil Rhodes*, p. 131, six years before Kipling's book with his permission, along with further excerpts from Rudyard's letter.

54 Kipling to Baker (see note 50).
55 RP, not in Pinney.
56 RP, not in Pinney.
57 Kipling to Baker, 25 January 1907, Pinney, ed., *Letters, Volume 3*, p. 230.
58 The Rhodes Memorial holds *three* Kipling texts: the lines titled "Rhodes Memorial, Table Mountain" the stanza from "The Burial" under the bronze head of Rhodes and an inscription reading: "To the Spirit and life work of Cecil John Rhodes who loved and served South Africa", which Baker in *Cecil Rhodes* (at p. 131) describes as "cut deep in great letters in the granite wall of the temple".
59 Pinney, Thomas, ed., *Cambridge Edition*, pp. 514–15. In a file note dated 15 December 1932, RP, Baker parsed Kipling's "Inscription" sheet with this: "The final inscription cut into the granite on the wall above; and the verses on the pedsetal [*sic*] below the Head of Rhodes."
60 RP, not in Pinney, with the inscription and Kipling's hope quoted from the letter in Baker, *Cecil Rhodes*, p. 131, and again in Baker's *Architecture*, p. 40.
61 RP, not in Pinney, emphasis in original.
62 Kipling to Alfred Milner, Pinney, ed., *Letters, Volume 3,* pp. 310–314.
63 Barben, p. 118, and Keath, p. 196.
64 Davids, Nadia, "The Beheading of Rhodes in Cape Town", *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 12 December 2020, https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-beheading-of-Rhodes-in-cape-town/. The update to the article notes that on 29 September 2020 the statue was repaired and the head restored by the Friends of the Rhodes Memorial. The statue of Rhodes facing north with hand outstretched, by Henry Pegram in Cape Town's Company Gardens, is also in disrepair: Thomas, Anthony, *Rhodes* (London: BBC Books, 1996), p. 16.
65 Le Fanu, *Talking to the Dead: Travels of a Biographer* (Clevedon, Silverwood Press, 2023), pp. 128–129. Conversely, by 2023, the Oxford-based Rhodes Trust's net worth exceeded GB£546 million : Clarke, p. 270.
66 Baker, *Architecture*, p. 91, and Richards, *Bibliography*, B80, on *Neuve Chapelle India's Memorial in France 1914–1918*, pp. 414–415. Kipling collected his remarks on this occasion in *A Book of Words* (1928) as "Our Indian Troops in France."
67 Baker, *Architecture*, p. 91.
68 Baker, *Architecture*, p. 95.
69 Kipling to Baker, n.d., but after its dedication on 31 March 1924, *Architecture*, p. 97.
70 Roberts, Brian, *Cecil Rhodes: Flawed Colossus* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1987), p. 151; Rotberg, Robert I., *The Founder: Cecil Rhodes and the Pursuit of Power* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 380–381 (Rotberg was himself a Rhodes Scholar).
71 Baker, *Architecture*, p. 34.
72 Le Fanu, *Something of Themselves,* p. 311.
73 Carpenter, Lucille Russell, *Rudyard Kipling: A Friendly Profile*, p. 63, quoting from an undated letter from Kipling to Dr. James Conland (his old Vermont friend and his wife Carrie's obstetrician), now in Carpenter's husband's Kipling Collection in the Library of Congress.
74 Muir, p. 12.
75 RP, quoted in Durbach, p. 68.
76 Curtis, Lionel, *With Milner in South Africa* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1951), p. 250.

77 RP, not in Pinney
78 RP, not in Pinney.
79 RP, not in Pinney.
80 Kipling Papers, University of Sussex, 21/29 (E. 12
81 Baker, *Cecil Rhodes*, pp. 44–45.
82 See LeFanu, *Something of Themselves* p. 211
83 [Herbert Baker], *Memorandum: "The Woolsack" 13 November 1930* ("Woolsack File" from the Benfield Cabinet, Administrative Archives, University of Cape Town). Baker's "scheme" failed for lack of funding, and on Kipling's death the Woolsack reverted to the South African government (Barben, p. 127). Now a post-graduate residence, it can be viewed through a locked gate: Le Fanu, *Talking to the Dead*, p. 30.
84 Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling, Volume 6: 1931–36* (Iowa, Iowa University Press, 2004), p. 147.
85 Pinney, ed., *Letters of Rudyard Kipling, Volume 6,* p. 147.
86 Baker to E. T. Millar, 13 February 1933, Rhodes Trust, File 2179.
87 See, Barben, p. 125, citing other authors' judgments on Kipling's seeming lack of kindness and coldness.
88 Baker, p. 373; Milner spent a fortnight there in April 1902: *Milner Papers,* p. 414. After a period of neglect and decay, it has been restored as a museum: Maylam, pp. 57–58.

BOOK REVIEW

BY **ANDREW SCRAGG**

Mavericks: Empire, Oil, Revolution and the Forgotten Battle of World War One by Nick Higham, Bloomsbury, 2025 (ISBN 97815266770130) £25.00

Beetle in *Stalky and Co* says: "India is full of Stalkies … and the surprises will begin when there is really a big row on … Just imagine Stalky let loose on the south side of Europe with a sufficiency of Sikhs and a reasonable prospect of loot. Consider it quietly." Nick Higham, former BBC correspondent and historian, has done just that in his book *Mavericks: Empire, Oil, Revolution and the Forgotten Battle of World War*, focusing on the little-known Great War struggle for Baku. Now in Azerbaijan, this in 1918 was part of the Ottoman Empire, situated on the west coast of the Caspian Sea, the principal inland water in Central Asia, then the centre of conflict between Turkey and Russia. When, following the 1917 revolution, Russia made a separate peace with Germany and the Central Powers, Baku became strategically important for Britain and its allies, who needed its oil and feared both that Germany might take it, and that Turks and Germans might cross the Caspian Sea, potentially forcing their way to Afghanistan and India.

A small group of British troops, called Dunsterforce, was created under the command of Brigadier General Lionel Dunsterville (the basis, as we all know, for Kipling's character 'Stalky') to make the difficult crossing of Persia and Azerbaijan and to take control of Baku. Linked to this small band were a number of eccentric, daredevil soldiers, diplomats and spies, including Ranald MacDonell, a Scottish aristocrat and diplomat, Edward Noel, an adventure seeker, traveller and spy, Toby Rawlinson, another aristocratic traveller and soldier as well as brilliant inventor, particularly of armaments, and Reginald Teague-Jones, traveller, linguist and master spy. Through the stories of these men, Higham explores the fighting in Baku, the tensions between the British War Office and India Office, and the relationship of Britain and her allies to the Bolsheviks and the new Soviet Russia.

Despite the heroism of the British troops, the attempt by Dunsterforce to take and hold Baku was ultimately a failure, and Dunsterville was the focus for blame. Official reports claimed he was the wrong man for the job and that he had lobbied the War Office to get the role, distorting facts to suit his case. The force itself was far too small. Dunsterville thought that once he was there, he could strong-arm the British into sending him more troops; but these never came, weakening his authority with local militias. His task was to encourage these groups to fight with

the British against the Turks, taking on the role formerly done by the Russians, but he found no enthusiasm; the locals fought badly, if at all. However, Higham shows that Dunsterville's actions did keep the Turks and Germans from crossing the Caspian Sea, and prevented the German military from gaining much needed oil in the last weeks of the war.

The scene is set well; Higham focuses tightly on the war in Central Asia, so we are not bombarded with extraneous detail. The book is well written and engaging. The author has a good, rounded knowledge of his subject; and as he acknowledges, he has written for the general reader, so footnotes are kept to a minimum, but are relevant and highlight his use of many primary sources. The bibliography is extensive for anyone who wishes to follow up. Higham has researched the main characters and events well, and he cross-references and critically analyses his sources to be as accurate as possible. He enriches his main narrative with anecdotes (for example:when in Enzeli Dunsterville would ride daily with the British Military Attaché, Major Sir Walter Barttelot, who was conducting an affair with the wife of the Vice Consul; and a few months later, Barttelot was murdered in his bed). Higham conveys well how these leaders saw the war as an exotic adventure in the John Buchan mode; he also shows how in their reports and books, they (particularly Teague-Jones) are unreliable witnesses, frequently changing dates, places and companions to their own advantage. He clearly feels an ambivalent attraction to these characters, admiring their bravery and resourcefulness but also pointing out that they were (unsurprisingly at the time) imperialists to whom the needs of Empire – in this case, ruling Baku – mattered more than the lives of subjugated peoples. He is also scathing about Teague-Jones's anti-Semitism – common at the time but appalling today.

Mavericks is an interesting, entertaining read offering a new perspective on the Great War and the types of soldiers, diplomats and spies who were engaged in its prosecution. I had always thought Buchan's depiction of Hannay, Blenkiron and Sandy Arbuthnot in *Greenmantle* was a little far-fetched, but now I am not so sure. The book offers an interesting analysis of Dunsterville, showing a complex military man – humanitarian, adventurous, courageous, determined; above all a maverick in the Stalky mould. Expanding the account given in Dunsterville's memoir *Stalky's Adventures*, it will be of interest to many members of the Kipling Society and I heartily recommend it. If you want to know more about Dunsterforce, Nick Higham's fascinating talk to the Kipling Society in February is available on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hq7TDQuyloU.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'THE OLD VOLUNTEER' AGAIN
From Anthony Bainbridge

It strikes me that Elisabeth Blumenberg (*Kipling Journal*, January 2026) is only half convinced that Max Beerbohm was the author of the hoax published by *The Times* in May 1918. For myself, I doubt John Felstiner has truly identified the author. Max Beerbohm's literary sense would not have allowed him to get away with skimpy work – and he would surely have produced a masterpiece of deception. Among the several other suspects his name was not mentioned during the speculations in 1918 or later.

The Times of London published in 1977 two articles by their archivist Gordon Phillips. The first, on August 1st, carried the title, 'The literary hoax that fooled The Thunderer and did Kipling down.' The article reproduced a facsimile of the manuscript of 'The Old Volunteer' as it had been published in the edition of May 27th 1918, and described at length the initial reaction by the editorial team, led at that time by D S Freeman, standing in for Geoffrey Dawson who was on holiday. Freeman himself had doubts about the authenticity of the piece, and before authorising publication had had the signature compared with that on a recent letter from Kipling to Dawson. Even so the two signatures (which are reproduced in Phillips's article) show little similarity. Kipling, in his autobiography *Something of Myself*, published twenty years later, writes acidly of the event.

When the hoax became known Dawson sent an apology to Kipling and launched an investigation; he wanted it to be known that he personally had left no stone unturned. He may well have been doubly concerned to exonerate Kipling, who was by then beginning to move his allegiance to *The Morning Post*. *The Times* was still smarting from the impact of the Parnell hoax in the 1880s, when a putative letter by Charles Stewart Parnell condoning the 1882 Phoenix Park Murders was proved to be a forgery; so it is hardly surprising that the Kipling forgery was taken so seriously. The Head of Special Branch at Scotland Yard took the lead, and a private detective did a lot of prowling around. Kipling himself offered four ideas – 'a German, a Jew, an Irishman or a Quaker'. Just who these four might be can only be guessed, but in his article Phillips lists E. V. Lucas, Percival Landon, Israel Zangwill and Ian Colvin as potential suspects, no doubt picking up ideas floated back in 1918.

Kipling suspected his old friend Ian Colvin, great leader-writer for *The Morning Post*, as did *The Times* and Scotland Yard. His handwriting

bore a striking resemblance to that of the hoax; and he had almost certainly been involved in an earlier (unsuccessful) hoax, the subject of Gordon Phillips's second article on August 27th 1977 ('A leg-pull on *The Times* which didn't come off'). On May 18th 1918 *The Times* had somewhat hesitantly presented to the world two lost Keats sonnets, barely a month after the *Times Literary Supplement* had printed three previously unpublished pieces of verse, also by Keats. Both publishing scoops had been guided and advised by Sir Sydney Colvin (no relation to Ian Colvin), who was then working on the first of his several books on Keats and whose background notes to both sets of finds gave authenticity. It was later revealed that a group of friends led by Ian Colvin had procured suitably dated notepaper, drafted some suitable correspondence as a frame to the sonnets, brought in a skilled counterfeiter to simulate the poet's handwriting, and tucked the resulting creation away in the pages of a book which had been purchased by a London bookseller in Leipzig in about 1875. This obliging bookseller would sooner or later bring the work to the attention of the country's foremost Keats scholar.

An astute reader might have noticed that the second letter of each line of the two sonnets spells out *The Morning Post before The Times.* But in the event the bookseller spilled the beans and the whole story became a laughable Fleet Street event. The links to the 'Old Volunteer' story, and to *Dayspring Mishandled,* are obvious. While Ian Colvin's role in the Keats affair was now acknowledged, he had denied any role in the 'Old Volunteer' hoax. Although he had been linked by Kipling himself to the Keats hoax, and his literary skills were widely known, and his handwriting bore striking similarities to that of the hoaxer, his fervent denial was nevertheless accepted by Scotland Yard and by Dawson himself. In September 1977, *The Times* published a letter in which I drew attention to the hoax described in detail by Kipling in 'Dayspring Mishandled,' and linked it to the 'Old Volunteer' story of May 1918. I did not offer an opinion on the source of the forgery; nor had I realised at that stage that the detailed planning in the Colvin Keats hoax resembled in many features the process described by Kipling in his tale. I exchanged correspondence with Phillips and we merely wondered between ourselves whether Kipling had been the guilty party. Fortuitously we have in the same issue of the *Kipling Journal* the detailed analysis by George Simmers of *Dayspring Mishandled*. I have little doubt that Kipling based his story on the narrative of the Keats hoax in May 1918, and copied the technique.

In 1945 G. M. Young raised the matter again in a letter to Robin Barrington-Ward, Dawson's successor as editor of *The Times*. Surprisingly, as he had not been previously involved in the case 27 years earlier, Barrington-Ward assured him, apparently after consulting

with former members of staff, that no suspicion existed of Kipling's responsibility for the hoax. But perhaps 'he doth protest too much', given that by then he was writing well after the event.

We know that Kipling enjoyed planning and describing deceptions and revenges – called 'farces' by Philip Mason – for example, 'The Village that Voted...' and 'Brugglesmith,' not to mention *Stalky & Co*. Gordon Phillips himself, both in his articles and in his letter to me, speculated that Kipling might have been the source. To me this seemed and seems not unlikely. When all other suspects have so far failed to be positively identified, then, as Sherlock Holmes might have said, 'what remains must be the truth.'

Anthony Bainbridge
Codford, Wiltshire

From George Simmers

Elisabeth Blumenberg's discovery of the Beerbohm attribution of 'The Old Volunteer' in John Felstiner's *The Lies of Art* is intriguing, but not entirely convincing. Felstiner's book offers as evidence a footnote locating the manuscript in 'UCLA: Box 959, #5' This refers to the Beerbohm papers in the Charles E. Young Research Library at the University College of Los Angeles, described on the archive's website as a holograph manuscript: 'A parody of a poem by Rudyard Kipling, one foolscap autograph page, with a pen-and-ink sketch of "The Times" head-piece, dated Monday, May 27th, 1918.' Attached is a clipping of the newspaper's retraction. That addition of the drawing of the newspaper's masthead makes it surely look less like a poet's draft of his parody than like an amused Beerbohm's copying out of a curiosity of literature, post-publication.

It is well-known that Max Beerbohm disapproved of Kipling, whom he thought misused his undoubted genius: 'The schoolboy, the bounder and the brute – these three types have surely never found a more brilliant expression of themselves than in R.K.' (to Holbrook Jackson, *Letters of Max Beerbohm:1892–1956* edited by Rupert Hart-Davis: Oxford University Press, 1988, 9). Beerbohm published several caricatures and parodies of Kipling, mostly very accurate and effective. He did not, however, automatically grab every opportunity to lambast him.

In 1915, Edith Wharton asked Beerbohm to contribute a drawing to a book she was compiling for a war charity, and she suggested that Kipling might be a suitable subject. He replied: 'I wish I could have done the Kipling theme: a beautiful opportunity, but not one to be taken by me. For several reasons – too complicated and tedious to be explained in a letter – I would rather not have a fling at Kipling. I must leave his behaviour to be punished in the next world.' (*Letters*

of Max Beerbohm, 101). 'Several reasons' is an obscure phrase, but these reasons almost certainly include the fact that by a self-denying ordinance Beerbohm refrained from using his caricaturist's skills on the subject of the war. Though he felt strongly in favour of the war effort, writes David Cecil, 'he did have the sense that his was not the kind of art appropriate to the Armageddon of the twentieth century.' (David Cecil, *Max, A Biography,* Constable, 1964, 336). He asked for the exhibition of caricatures planned for April 1915 to be 'indefinitely postponed' because they would seem trivial at such a time; later he refused a cabinet minister's request to produce wartime propaganda cartoons. It seems most unlikely that he would have broken his rule to write a Kipling parody caricaturing an old man's willingness to volunteer.

But if Beerbohm didn't write it, why would a holograph manuscript of this poem be in his archive? The answer is, that making mock artefacts was how he amused himself. He spent much time doctoring the books in his own library, adding absurd inscriptions, or improving photographs (making G.B. Shaw look like the devil, for example). One can easily imagine him picturing with pleasure Kipling's annoyance at having this inept and sentimental poem attributed to him. Putting it beneath a fake *Times* masthead emphasises the unsuitability of such poor work being printed in that newspaper – though he may also be giving expression to his low opinion of *The Times* which in 1915 he had described as 'appallingly Northcliffed – everything cut up into snippets, with idiotic head-lines' (Beerbohm, *Letters to Reggie Turner*, Rupert Hart-Davis, 1964, 241). But his mock artefacts were for the amusement of himself and a few friends; there is no record of his indulging in practical jokes like the submission of a fake poem to a newspaper.

The most likely explanation for the existence and publication of this poem is that it was written by an amateur versifier who, finding his efforts (of which he thought highly) universally rejected, thought: 'I bet if the name Rudyard Kipling was attached to them, they'd be accepted by *The Times*'. And he was proved right.

George Simmers
Huddersfield.

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME "MOWGLI"
From Athar Murtuza

Rudyard Kipling wrote in "Author's Notes on the Names in the Jungle Book" (*Sussex Edition of the Works of Rudyard Kipling vol* 12) that he made up the name MOWGLI, and that "it does not mean 'frog' in any language I know of. It is pronounced Mowglee (accent on the Mow)", which rhymes with 'cow'." Yet the name phonetically resembles that of

the dynasty which used Lahore as their capital during most of the 225 years of their rule on the subcontinent, and I contend that it suggests Kipling's familiarity with the monuments present in Lahore, largely built by the Mughal kings. That Kipling was impressed by Mughal monuments can be seen in his lyrical description of the Taj Mahal, greatest of all Mughal monuments in the sub-continent, in *Letters of Marque* I, which relates seeing from the train

> the Taj wrapped in the mists of the morning … Then as the train sped forward, and the mists shifted, and the sun shone upon the mists, the Taj took a hundred new shapes, each perfect and each beyond description. It was the Ivory Gate through which all good dreams come; it was the realisation of the gleaming halls of dawn that Tennyson sings of; it was veritably the "aspiration fixed," the "sigh made stone" of a lesser poet; and over and above concrete comparisons, it seemed the embodiment of all things pure, all things holy, and all things unhappy. That was the mystery of the building. It may be that the mists wrought the witchery, and that the Taj seen in the dry sunlight is only, as guidebooks say, a noble structure. The Englishman could not tell and has made a vow that he will never go nearer the spot, for fear of breaking the charm of the unearthly pavilions.

The monuments in Lahore, though not as awesome as the Taj Mahal, are in the same league: notably the Shalimar Garden (which owes its existence to the Emperor Shah Jahan), where according to Andrew Lycett, Kipling joined his fellow British Indians in moonlit picnics. As he "began to find out more about Lahore's Mughal Heritage, Rudyard was inspired to delve further into local history and culture" (*Rudyard Kipling* p. 129), and "hired a native teacher to give him an hour's Urdu lesson each morning and, under the guidance of his father, he began to study Persian [*Farsi*]." Kipling was thus clearly familiar with the Mughul dynasty. Moreover, there is an Urdu word *Mughlai* [sometimes pronounced as *Mughli*], used to describe fashion and cuisine linked with the name of the dynasty (Wikipedia has a good essay on this: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mughlai_cuisine.) It is quite likely that the word would also have been in use in Lahore when Kipling lived there, to refer to the Mughal monuments as well as cultural items such as cuisine and clothing styles.

This note documents Lahore in Kipling, but as to Kipling in Lahore, I cannot say much. I arrived in the US on a Pakistani passport back in 1961, and last saw the city during a flight break in 1970, when engine delays allowed me to take a taxi past Zam-Zammah, also known as "Kim's Gun.". I was born in the Princely State of Hyderabad, of which

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt wrote in *India Under Ripon: A Private Diary,* "Compared with [British-ruled] Madras, it is as Paris to a decayed watering-place. Instead of the squalid back streets and the pauper population of native Madras, Hyderabad is like a great flower bed, crowded with men and women in bright dresses and with a fine cheerful air of independence, more Arab than Indian." Blunt's book is well worth reading to get a view of the Viceroy Ripon very unlike Kipling's portrayal.

Athar Murtuza
Austin, Texas

THE KIPLING SOCIETY MINUTES OF THE 98TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 2 July 2025 at the Army & Navy Club and by Zoom videoconference

25 members of the Society attended.The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence
Apologies were received from Mary Hamer, Christopher Morrison, Rupert Vaughan-Spruce and a number of other members.

2. Confirmation of the minutes of the 97th AGM 3 July 2024.
The minutes were separately published in the May 2025 edition of *The Kipling Journal*. They were accepted and signed as a true record.

3. Reports from the Honorary Officers for 2024–25

Chairman – Andrew Scragg
I am pleased to report that this has been a good year for the Kipling Society.

Membership is slightly down on last year, but still high compared to other, similar societies. We have been investigating methods of encouraging new members through social media, an area which I am sure will feature strongly in the future.

The transfer of ownership of the Society's library to Haileybury has been successfully achieved and the collection is accessible and its future secure. We are working with the new archivist there and further developing digitisation of the collection to enable improved access.

The Society has settled into its new meetings home, The Army and Navy Club, which is proving economic, welcoming and accessible, and the IT arrangements mean that we can zoom meetings to and encourage participation by members from around the world. We have continued our programme of lectures with a varied range including Jan Montefiore discussing the story 'The Finest Story in the World', Kipling at Brown's Hotel in London and the restoration plans for Naulakha in Vermont – all well received, recorded and available via the website. Jan has also continued to organise zoom based readings of Kipling's works twice a year. By adjusting start times, we have been able to make it easier for readers from around the globe (New Zealand, America, Europe) to participate, reflecting the global nature of our membership. The variety of the material read, and quality of the readings remains high.

The website continues to be revised and improved and usage increases. The site (as I am sure you will have seen) is brighter and more easily accessible. By expanding opportunities for members to submit their own readings of Kipling's work we are looking to encourage greater member participation and enjoyment of the site.

The *Kipling Journal* has transitioned from a four-times a year publication to three times a year, making it easier for the editor to prepare the content. There has been no lessening of the quality of submissions or published articles and no adverse feedback regarding the changes to the timing of issues.

These show that we continue to meet the aims of the Society, and I am sure that the officers responsible for these aspects will add more detail in their reports. I would like to thank all of them for their hard work for the Society, which makes my life a lot easier.

Council has received a number of enquiries and requests for support or guidance on Kipling related matters – including from a writer based in Germany who is working on a sequel to *The Jungle Book* asking for feedback on his early chapters, all of whom received positive, constructive criticism.

Kipling continues to be in the news and the Society was approached for press comment when the A P Watt archive, including the galley prints of *The Jungle Book,* were presented to Cambridge University and saved for future scholarly research and when a 1902 sound recording of Taylor Holmes' increasingly tortured rendition of 'Boots' was used as part of the trailer for the film *28 Years Later*. These, I feel, reflect the facts that Kipling remains an important global writer and that the Society is seen as the source for authoritative comment on matters related to him.

The largest piece of work which Council has undertaken this year was the delivery of the 2025 Alliance of Literary Societies Annual General meeting. This took place on 16 – 18 May at the University of Sussex in Brighton and was a great success. There were around 70 delegates representing many societies (some more than one). The Friday evening meal gave an opportunity to meet other delegates informally (and take part in the quiz – part of which was a Kipling related round, and I am pleased that those members of the Society who took part were not disgraced!). The actual AGM took place on the Saturday and featured an introduction from Jim Naughtie, President of the ALS; the morning session consisted of two talks on Kipling related themes by Alex and myself, followed by lunch and the ALS AGM; the afternoon was completed by sessions relating more generally to literary societies, including lengthy discussions of online content and encouraging broader membership. There was a formal meal in the evening and on Sunday delegates could attend conducted tours to Bateman's or Rottingdean. Feedback from delegates has been very positive, praising the content

(showing aspects of Kipling which many had not seen before) and the overall organisation of the weekend. Congratulations to the subcommittee – particularly Mike and Fiona – who worked hard to plan the weekend (and ran the event over the weekend, responding positively to the challenges of the days) and all those involved in the delivery of the weekend as speakers, stall holders and tour guides – their hard work made it the success it was and helped to shape the positive image the ALS has of the Kipling Society.

I would like to formally thank all the members of Council for their commitment to the Society, for their hard work and time. Without the contributions and skills of the members of Council the Society could not function, let alone develop as it is. There are no elections to Council this year, but if anyone is interested in joining in the future, please let us know – I am sure that we can arrange for you to get an insight into what is involved, and I look forward to next year's Council elections and seeing some younger, but equally enthusiastic candidates coming forward.

Treasurer – Mike Kipling

The accounts for 2024 were published in the May 2025 edition of the Kipling Journal. The accounts have been approved by the Independent Financial Examiner, Harry Waterson, whom I would particularly like to thank for stepping back into the role for one further year. For future years, Council have selected accountants TC Group to perform this role and seek approval of this at this AGM. The annual cost will be £750 + VAT

Reserves decreased by around £1,600, which was largely due to deposits paid to the venue and restaurants for the ALS AGM. Two years' web maintenance fees were also paid in the same financial year. Excluding the impact of these two factors, ordinary income exceeded expenses by around £1,000. Although subscription income was lower than in 2023 despite the increase in rates, this is mainly due to incidence around the year-end. Receipts were higher than in 2022.

Net assets decreased substantially, due to the value of the library books donated to Haileybury College. Excluding this, the value of other net assets increased by around £2,500, as a consequence of the excess of normal income over expenditure and significantly higher accrued interest on our term deposit accounts.

A small school prize of £100 with £7 delivery costs were met from the John Slater Essay Competition Fund. No charge was made to Eileen Stamers-Smith Memorial Lecture Fund.

The ALS AGM was run at a net cost of under £600 to the Society's funds, which was at the lower end of Council's expectations.

The Society's investments are currently held in two charity term accounts with United Trust Bank, maturing in 2026 and 2027.

There have been no material changes since 31 December 2024

Membership Secretary – Fiona Renshaw

The slow decline in membership numbers has continued for the third year in a row since the marked 'Covid surge' experienced between 2020 and 2022. As a result, the numbers of current individual (363) and corporate (53) members are now lower than pre-pandemic levels, though it appears that the Kipling Society is not alone among literary societies in experiencing this drop.

Three further emerging trends in membership are worth mentioning. First, the reduced-rate non-student online membership option introduced in January 2024 has proved popular with both new and existing members; we currently have 33 such members. Second, increasing numbers of departing members have subscribed for quite short periods, typically between one and three years. Third, most members renew their subscriptions with little or no prompting from the Membership Secretary, but some require several reminders before renewing or resigning (or indeed declining to respond, in which case they are removed from our lists).

New individual members continue to approach us almost exclusively via the website while the bulk of our corporate members (mainly university and public libraries) organise their respective memberships via the EBSCO and Harrassowitz subscription agencies. Our current membership body is composed of individual (87%) and corporate (13%) members, based in 19 countries world-wide. Two thirds (67%) of our individual members reside in the UK and just over half (53%) of our corporate members are located in North America.

Current membership numbers

The total membership of the Society currently stands at **416**, a decrease of 5 when compared with this time last year.

Individual members: As of 24 June, there were **363** individual members, a net decrease of four overall since my report to last year's AGM. In the intervening 12 months, we have welcomed 40 new members and a total of 44 existing members have left the Society or been removed from our list of members for a variety of reasons. We currently have 43 online members, 10 of whom are students.

Corporate members: The current total is **53**, a decrease of one since last year's AGM, owing to the failure of the University of Illinois to renew its subscription for 2025.

Payment of subscriptions

Most members pay their membership fees on time and at the new rate introduced at the beginning of last year, which is much appreciated. Those who do not are sent gentle reminders by email or post, with the option of moving to online membership if they don't wish to pay the

higher rate. Most individual members pay by standing order or PayPal (41% and 35% respectively), while 13% pay by cheque/check and 6%% by bank transfer. Almost 60% of corporate members pay by bank transfer via subscription agencies.

Renewal reminders are printed on the address labels of individual members' copies of *The Kipling Journal* when their subscription is due for renewal. Student and online members receive a renewal reminder by email. I appreciate being informed if a subscription will be or has been cancelled, as this helps keep our membership records up to date.

Meetings Secretary – Alex Bubb

I am glad to report another excellent year of events at the Kipling Society. Our autumn programme began with the screening of the third of the excellent documentary films we have produced based on walking tours taking place during the preceding spring. Following the success of the tours, and films based on those tours, at Bateman's and Rottingdean, the third of our productions focussed on the village of Burwash that lies beyond the gate of Bateman's. Among the landmarks covered were the parish church, the home of Kipling's friend Colonel Feilden (seen from the outside), the old quarry where Kipling family amateur theatricals were staged, and the fully operational historic water mill.

In November, our own Jan Montefiore spoke to us about one of Kipling's most puzzling and enigmatic short stories, '"The Finest Story in the World"', leading to the kind of deep, extended discussion of a single work that is only possible in such a forum as ours, where we gather together readers who are deeply conversant in all parts of the Kipling canon. No less entertaining, February's talk focussed on an aspect of Kipling's life rather than his work: namely, his long relationship with Brown's Hotel, where he invariably stayed whenever in London. Our speaker was Andy Williamson, an expert on London hotels and the West End in general, who explained to us why this hotel, respectable but less opulent than its ritzier neighbours, afforded Kipling the privacy and discrete service he valued. In April, we were online-only as usual and welcomed a speaker from the United States. As Executive Director of the Landmark Trust USA, Susan McMahon is in charge of Naulakha, the home Kipling built for his family in Vermont, and she laid out in detail the renovation plans the Trust has for the historic property.

In addition, May saw the culmination of two years' worth of careful planning, when the Kipling Society hosted the AGM of the Alliance of Literary Societies at Sussex University. Talks were given by myself, Andrew Scragg, Dominic Edwardes of the Trollope Society and Tim Pye, chief librarian at the National Trust, and the event was accounted a great success by the roughly eighty people who attended.

Finally, we are looking forward to a talk in a few minutes' time from a long-established member, Mark Paffard, who has come from North Wales to speak to us on his recent book, *Conservative Belief and the Imagination in Kipling's Fiction*.

Librarian – John Walker

The Kipling Society Library is now formally part of the Archive collection at Haileybury, and our association with the college has been warmly welcomed by the new Master, Eugene du Toit. A donation is now a common necessity for the collections owned by individuals and by charities; security, storage, conservation and restoration becoming the responsibility of the College. Full access remains available by arrangement with me or with the Archivist at Haileybury.

With the centenary of the Society in mind for 2027, items from the Society's own history are being sorted so that past records such as correspondence, minutes of meetings, etc. are stored separately. The Society will continue to acquire important new publications and historic material to donate to the library; and surplus books were offered to members this year in a 'Library Sale' online.

In fact, the chief change for us has been that Dr Toby Parker left his post as Archivist at Haileybury in late 2024, and our contact is now Dr Samuel Koon, who is also Head of Classics. We have already struck up a very positive working relationship, and Dr Koon is keen to make the resources in our collection a part of teaching at the school. Already we learn of a Lower Sixth student who, with guidance from Dr Koon and Miss Sparrow, presented an essay on the works of Kipling as an entry for the highly competitive Rex Nettleford Essay Prize. This encourages Sixth Form pupils to engage with the legacies of colonialism. Receiving a commendation, she was invited to attend the annual lecture at Oriel College, Oxford, and there formally received her commendation and was invited to dine afterwards at High Table.

Sam himself shared details of a session with a Removes class (year nine) who were challenged to 'imitate the poetic style of Rudyard Kipling'. They worked with examples such as 'On Fort Duty', 'Ave Imperatrix' and 'If-' from *United Services Chronicle.* The aim was "'to deepen their critical understanding of Kipling by exploring the meanings and critical debates on Kipling's presentation of imperialism in 'The White Man's Burden' and 'On the Road to Mandalay'".

A programme of scanning to digital storage was begun last year by Dr Parker, so that fragile documents can be accessed without damage. We are very grateful to Dr Parker, who, as Honorary Archivist to the Society, offered both support and advice. We are pleased that he has agreed to continue as an Honorary Member of the Society.

Research and support:
Almost all questions and information for the Librarian continue to arrive by email, or though Facebook and Instagram. As ever, they range from standard appeals for help in identifying and selling books bequeathed by relatives to fascinating insights into Kipling's literary and domestic life. A perfect example this year has been a veritable flurry of questions and insights about 'Frater Kipling' the Freemason.

Journal Editor – Jan Montefiore
The *Kipling Journal* has, unusually, run two themed issues since last year's AGM. No. 399, September 2024, 'Kipling and the Classics', featured Susan Treggiari and Harry Ricketts on Horace, and Kipling's own darkly comic fable 'The Pleasure Cruise' (1933), modelled on Lucian's 'Dialogues of the Dead', warning that forgetfulness of the Great War dead and failure to rearm would leave Britain helpless against future attack. No. 401, May 2025, was themed on 'Kipling and Engineering' to celebrate the centenary of Kipling composing the Ritual of the Calling of the Engineer and Iron Ring Ceremony in 1925 for Canadian engineers about to enter their profession. This featured an article by Evann Yakabuski, a professional engineer from Ontario, on the history of the Ritual and the IRC. Both these themed issues were warmly received by members.

The varied contents of No. 400, January 2025 included the two winning entries in the John McGivering Competition 2024 for stories on the theme of food and drink inspired by Kipling, for which the submission window had been moved to July and August. This changed timing proved to be a mistake, as very few entries were submitted. So for the John McGivering Competition 2025, for poems on the Sea in relation to Kipling's life and or works, the submission window has been moved back to March and April as before, with excellent results (40 entries). The four winning entries will appear in number 402. This will appear a month later than usual because, just as I was starting on the final edits, I broke an arm badly on May 31st this year, and was too ill to work during the month of June. With help from an editorial assistant, financially supported by the Society, I should be able to send printer-ready copy to the printers by the deadline of 30 July for No. 402 to reach members by 1st October 2025.

I am most grateful to Andrew Scragg, Fiona Renshaw and Mike Kipling for their generous support at a difficult time. I also thank the *Kipling Journal* referees, especially Harry Ricketts, for reviewing recent submissions for the journal, and Adrian Morris and his colleagues at our new printers Henry Ling of Dorchester for being constantly helpful and efficient.

On-line Editor – Ian Bell

The website continues to be well used. In the 12 months to 1st June 2025, 1,358,686 pages were viewed, an increase of 26% over the previous year. This is an average of 3700 views a day. A comprehensive breakdown of "Viewing Figures" is now always available on the homepage. An interesting extra insight from Google Analytics shows that website usage for the year was 57% by mobile, 40% laptop, 3% tablet.

The Homepage was quite drastically redesigned early in the year to create a brighter and more interesting welcome for visitors and potential members. The latest feature being Mary Hamer's "Story of the Month" which has now been running for 8 months. However, Google Analytics shows little interest by visitors or members in these "engagement items" on the homepage (about 10 views or less a week each) and they are now under review.

A new Society YouTube Channel was created this year to store videos used on the Society website. This was necessary so that multi-editors could manage it. By the time of this AGM we may have passed the 100 subscribers barrier.

New website pages have been created to record the History of the John McGivering Writing Competition, and to recapture the "Diversity of Kipling" event staged in 2017.

Within the website, the task of extending the online page numbers for the tales to accompany NRG notes has been completed; poems with more than 5 verses now usually have the verses numbered, and the Booklist is kept up-to-date by our chairman Andrew Scragg. There is still some way to go in ensuring that all pages are mobile-phone friendly. We are also seeking volunteers to commence building a thematic list of the poems to match that already available for the tales.

Steven Russ from Maryland, USA – a member since 1985 and a retired archivist, is now also at work on the site since May, presently combing through the NRG notes on the text and background pages accompanying the tales for errors and omissions. He is a very welcomed addition to the society's honorary workforce.

Facebook by John Walker

The Society's Facebook page, together with an Instagram feed, continues to offer a weekly choice from Kipling's verse, with an introductory note from the Librarian. The selection is made from the Cambridge Edition vol III as well as the Definitive Edition. After well over three hundred weeks, we have still only repeated two examples – both by special request. For the most recent week, a total of 130 people had clicked on the link within the first twenty-four hours, according to Facebook analysis. Details of zoom access for the talk at our AGM were made available, without a booking link.

Dominic Edwardes, of the Alliance of Literary Societies showed us by example how we could find new members for the Society with relatively little expenditure through online advertising, offering access to future online events, subject to registration by submitting contact details. We are very grateful to Dominic.

Bateman's Liaison Officer – David Forsyth

It has been a busy year at Bateman's. Visitor numbers are almost back to pre-Covid levels, perhaps boosted by voucher schemes promoted by other organisations. Bateman's is very sympathetic to the National Trust policy of providing entertainment for children, facilitating visits by the whole family and hopefully instilling the Trust's values in them, encouraging subsequent membership. One of the principal attractions of volunteering is the contact with so many fascinating people from around the world. Just this week I met a young New Zealand visitor who is a close friend of the family of one of our Vice Presidents, Professor Harry Ricketts, who is himself based in that country.

The Bateman's second-hand bookshop continues to be a great success, selling on donations of Kipling books from private library disposals as well as high quality general interest books. This income is much appreciated as the need for restoration of the now significantly elderly artefacts is a constant necessity.

Perhaps the most significant acquisition this year has been the wedding present of a canteen of cutlery from Edmund Gosse with an inlaid silver plaque inscribed 'Caroline Balestier and Joseph Rudyard Kipling'- a rare and formal use of his proper name – 'Wedding 18th January 1892.' Rudyard was, of course, to die on that day 44 years later. The Kipling Society made a donation toward its cost.

The refurbished Exhibition Room was opened earlier this year to general acclaim. Reorganised under general headings and supplemented by several items from the conservation suite it gives a significant insight into Kipling's life and times. Whereas in the past visitors tended to transit the room quickly, now it is the most crowded.

The four-poster bed has been transferred from the West Bedroom to what had been furnished for over a decade as 'John's room' but is now restored as the Kipling's bedroom. The May Morris embroidery has been relocated here from the Parlour.

The ALS AGM was much enhanced by a presentation of items from Bateman's, curated by Hannah Miles, the Collections and House Manager there. On the following day, there was a tour for attendees of the Bateman's house, gardens and mill which was much appreciate, including privileged access to the conservation store.

The Detmold twins, who were eminent Victorian book illustrators, produced a set of 16 plates for some early editions of the Jungle Books.

One of these, ‘Kaa the python’ was acquired on loan from the Natural History Museum. It was sent back for conservation, to be returned to Bateman’s on completion to join the recently purchased ‘Return of the buffalo herd’. Unfortunately, a bureaucratic issue has delayed the reunion. Bateman’s is also anticipating a spectacular new arrival. I have been sworn to secrecy, so my lips are sealed. You will just have to await the next annual report.

4. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner
TC Group was proposed as Independent Financial Examiner. This was agreed unanimously.

5. Any Other Business
There was no other business.

Andrew Scragg
Chairman

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

The Accounts for the year to 31 December 2025 which follow have been prepared under the simplified format as the Society qualifies as a Small Charity under the Charity Commission's rules. These accounts have been scrutinised by the Society's Independent Financial Examiner.

KIPLING SOCIETY YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
Bank balances at 1 January		59,352		60,928
Income received in the year				
Subscriptions and donations	14,514		13,669	
Conferences	7,185		0	
Competition entry fees	210		37	
Bank Interest	3,228		505	
Tax refund on subscriptions	1,179		1,107	
Sundry income	94		597	
Total Income received		26,410		15,915
Deduct : Expenses paid in the Year				
Printing and despatch of Journal	8,124		8,105	
Meetings	2,130		2,250	
Conferences	6,441		1,376	
Administration	817		632	
Web-site expenses	1,266		2,444	
Bank/PayPal charges	365		290	
Foreign Exchange Adjustment	-2		31	
Sundry Expenses	532		422	
Donations and grants	1,041		1,250	
Prizes	550		557	
Library purchases	402		134	
Total Expenditure		-21,666		-17,491
Bank balances at 31 December		64,096		59,352

KIPLING SOCIETY YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

		2025 £		2024 £
RESERVES				
General Reserve		43,989		38,860
John Slater Essay Competition Fund		2,642		2,642
Eileen Stamers-Smith Memorial Lecture Fund		17,465		17,850
		64,096		59,352
Represented by Bank Balances:				
-Current Account	£5,131		£7,576	
-Deposit Accounts	£58,047		£51,000	
-Foreign Currency Accounts	£708		£655	
-PayPal Account	£210		£121	
	£64,096		£59,352	
Debtors and prepayments		3,168		5,142
Total Assets		67,264		64,494
Deduct: Liabilities - creditors		0		0
Net assets at 31 December		67,264		64,494

Signed on behalf of the trustees by:

Andrew Scragg (Chairman) Mike Kipling (Treasurer)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1) A small amount of subscription income has been received in advance, but this figure has not been included under 'Creditors' as subscriptions received are not refundable.
2) Income tax recoverable on amounts which UK members have paid under Gift Aid is reclaimed annually following the end of the year. A claim was made in respect of 2024 was made in 2025. The expected recovery in respect of 2025 has been included under 'Debtors'.
3) At the end of 2025, the Society had £58,047 on deposit with United Trust Bank. Accrued interest of £1,916 has been included under 'Debtors'.
4) Payments for reimbursements of administration costs, book purchases and expenses of meetings and conferences were made during the year to the Trustees: Ian Bell £36, Alex Bubb £485, David Forsyth £50, Mike Kipling £2,050, Jan Montefiore £277, Fiona Renshaw £210 and John Walker £424.
5) The following donations were made: €607.5 (£541.15) to the Croatian Philological Association to part-fund the publication of Kipling translations, and £500 to Haileybury school towards the upkeep of the Kipling collection (formerly the Society's library). Also, £50 was donated to the

Gurkha Trust in lieu of one of the prizes in the 2025 writing competition (included under Prizes) and items included under 'Library purchases' were donated to Haileybury School.

6) No charge was made to the John Slater Essay Competition Fund (for children's essays)
7) The Eileen Stamers-Smith Memorial Lecture Fund was charged with the 2025 lecturer's expenses.
8) The Society has no material fixed assets.

ABOUT THE KIPLING SOCIETY

The Kipling Society is for anyone interested in the writing and the life and times of Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936). Founded in 1927, it is one of the most active and enduring literary societies in Britain, and as the only one which focuses on Kipling and his place in English Literature, attracts a world-wide membership.

We publish the *Kipling Journal* three times a year, and five electronic newsletters. We hold five members' meetings each year in central London and/or online, where speakers address a wide range of topics relating to Kipling's life and work. We also organise online group readings of favourite Kipling poems and prose, and every year we run a writing competition.

Our comprehensive website www.kiplingsociety.co.uk provides direct access to all of Kipling's 350+ stories and 900+ published and unpublished poems, supported by background, text notes, and selected criticisms. The full run of over 400 back numbers of the *Journal* can be read in PDF format. All this material can be keyword searched. Access to the most recent two years of the *Journal* and other edited material is only available to members.

We curate a YouTube channel which hosts recordings of talks at our meetings and members' performances of Kipling's works. A Spotify channel includes a mix of Kipling's poems set to music and music inspired by his writing. There is also an e-mail discussion forum, and a Facebook and Instagram presence.

The Kipling Library at Haileybury College, Hertfordshire, offers all of Kipling's published work, including rare and unauthorised editions, selections and translations. Biography and criticism is well covered, as is the British Army and the contemporary politics of India. The collection also includes albums of press cuttings, photographs, ephemera, and a full run of the Kipling Journal. Access to the library is subject to the college's visitor policy. Appointments for visits can be arranged by contacting the Society's Librarian, John Walker, on jwawalker@gmail.com.

You can join the Society via our website or through the Membership Secretary. Her contact details and our subscription rates can be found on the back cover of this journal.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Ordinary members: UK £33 (£31 if paying by standing order)
Europe £42 or €48
Rest of the World (surface mail) £42 or US$52
Rest of the World (airmail) £49 or US$60

On-line only members (worldwide): Students £11, €12 or US$14
(no paper copy of *The Kipling Journal*) Other £21, €24 or US$27

A second member at the same address: £10, €11 or US$12
(ordinary members: no additional paper journal)

Universities & Libraries: As Ordinary members plus £2, €2 or US$2

Renewal dates appear on the address label of *The Kipling Journal* for those currently receiving paper copies. Otherwise, you will receive a renewal reminder email or letter from the Membership Secretary.

Payment by cheque/check or bank transfer:
Please send the revised amount when you renew your subscription in 2026. Cheques/checks in pounds, US dollar or euros are accepted and should be made payable to 'The Kipling Society'. Payment by bank transfer can be made to the Society's account at Lloyds TSB, Old Bond Street, London, using our International Bank Account Number (IBAN) **GB18LOYD30962400114978** and the Bank Identity Code (BIC) **LOYDGB21014**.

Payment by Standing Order (UK members):
Please contact your bank to amend your current standing order. For many banks, this can be done by on-line banking. Alternatively, you may request a form from the Membership Secretary to complete and send to your bank. If you would like to move to paying by standing order, please contact me.

Payment by PayPal:
Subscriptions can be paid via the PayPal button on the Society's website.

Moving to On-line only membership:
Ordinary members who no longer wish to receive a paper copy of the Kipling Journal can opt to become On-line only members. If you would like to make this change, please notify me before your next renewal date and then pay the appropriate lower subscription rate.

Fiona Renshaw, Membership Secretary, can be contacted
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