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Rudyard Kipling: The Making of a Reputation

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DPhil in English Literature

University of Sussex

August 2012

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

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DPHIL IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

RUDYARD KIPLING: THE MAKING OF A REPUTATION

SUMMARY

When Rudyard Kipling died in January 1936, the resulting national and international mourning indicated the popularity and enormous influence of his life and work. It demonstrated the esteem in which he was still held and the consequent longevity of his literary success. This thesis examines how Kipling established, maintained and protected his reputation, his purpose in doing so and considers if concern about his own ethnic purity was a central motivation for him in this regard. This thesis explores Kipling's preoccupation with the reputation of the enlisted man – or 'Tommy Atkins' figure – and his sympathy with the 'underdog' and discusses how recuperation of this denigrated image was instrumental in establishing and increasing Kipling's poetic and literary success. His intimate personal relationship and fascination with the enlisted man is investigated, especially in terms of Empire and the Great War and juxtaposed with discussion of Kipling's numerous elite, establishment military and political connections. His post-war link to the soldier is considered, including the powerful and enduring effects of the death of his son.

Exploration of Kipling's writing is undertaken using material from the University of Sussex Special Collections Kipling Archive, including Kipling's personal papers and correspondence which are referred to throughout and the six volume collection of Kipling's correspondence edited and published by Thomas Pinney. Additional, selective close-reading of his verse and prose illustrates arguments in the personal

papers and indicates that Kipling's literary reputation vindicated both himself and the image of the soldier. Work from poets contemporary with Kipling is used in context, to provide comparison and contrast. In addition to the main thesis, an appendix volume is in place to offer further exploration of the primary archive material.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge, with much gratitude, those individuals and staff of official bodies whose assistance throughout my research and subsequent writing has enabled the completion of this thesis. Information and assistance from these agencies has provided a primary source, inspiration and support for my writing.

My supervisor, Alistair Davies, has provided extensive, generous and patient support which has been invaluable, throughout this thesis. His kindness, encouragement, advice and feedback have facilitated my engagement with this project. During our supervisory meetings I have learned a great deal and his meticulous approach to both content and presentation has provided a clear framework within which to develop my writing.

My joint supervisor, Lindsay Smith, gave generous and helpful early supervision which provided guidance for the initial development of this thesis. Her encouragement and advice were also instrumental in developing a framework within which to write.

The primary archive material that I have used throughout my research is held in Special Collections at the University of Sussex Library. I would like to thank the staff-members of this department for their extensive, ongoing support and assistance throughout my entire year of study of the Kipling Archive Papers and at subsequent occasions of re-visiting the archive. In particular, I would like to express thanks to Fiona Courage, Special Collections Manager and Mass Observation Curator, for her initial and ongoing assistance with this project.

As a member of the graduate community I would like to thank Margaret Reynolds, formerly Graduate Centre Coordinator (now retired) and Laura Vellacott, for their help and advice throughout the writing of this thesis. Thanks also go to Penny King from the Student Progress and Assessment Office, for her advice and support in the completion and submission process.

I wish to thank John Stachiewicz, Head of Media and Publishing at the National Trust, who offered advice on issues of copyright and with whose kind permission I am able to make use of the Kipling Archive material in this thesis. I have endeavoured to contact all copyright holders. If I have inadvertently failed to do so, I will gladly acknowledge permission at the earliest opportunity.

In addition, I wish to thank the staff of the National Trust at Kipling's home Bateman's, who offered ongoing support with this project.

Final thanks go to my patient and supportive husband Paul, our children, Melanie, Lewis, Alex and Eleanor and my mother. Without their special encouragement this project would not have been completed. Their technical skills were also invaluable. I dedicate this thesis to them.

Introduction

When Rudyard Kipling died in 1936, he had an international reputation as an author and poet – arguably greater than any other English writer of the twentieth century. As an anonymous obituary in the *Times Literary Supplement* of January 25th 1936 states:

What verdict England of the future will pass upon England of the last years of Victoria and Edward VII, is uncertain, but it is incontestable that the age will always rank as one of the greatest in our history...And may one not dare to foresee that when, long hence, that age and its characteristics and products are called to mind, the name of Rudyard Kipling will come first to men's mouths when they talk of its most typical representatives?¹

The admiration that he received had lasted for decades. This thesis examines how and why he achieved such fame and explores the ways in which Kipling self-consciously generated, managed and maintained his own reputation and his possible reasons for doing so. An early letter hints at his intentions:

I did not come to England to write myself out at first starting...This seemeth to me the more perfect way. To go slowly and only do sufficient magazine work to enable me to rub along comfortably while I turn my attention to the novels and the books. A man can fritter himself away on piece work and be only but a very little the richer for it. Whereas if he holds his hand the money and what is of more importance the power of doing fresh and original work comes to him.²

Whilst commercial gain is clearly a motivation for him, of greater importance is the power of his work and the probable influence that would follow from its success. Judicious personal management of this power and influence would ensure that Kipling could maintain authority over the manner in which he was perceived. This thesis will not only demonstrate this, but I will also argue that he then uses this model of reputation-management to engage with his poetic and narrative subjects of choice. The specific example used for illustration is connected to Kipling's concerns about the

¹ N/A, ["Rudyard Kipling's Place in English Literature,[]"] *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 390.

² Rudyard Kipling, "To Caroline Taylor," 2 November 1889, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 1: 1872-89*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990a) 354-356.

image of the common soldier and the ways in which his recuperation and management of the ‘Tommy Atkins’ image reflects Kipling’s micro-management of his own.

Kipling’s significance when the obituary was published is illustrated by the pomp and ceremony which attended the interment of his ashes at Poets’ Corner, Westminster Abbey. Two days after Kipling’s death ‘his friend King George V had followed him to the grave’³ and therefore Westminster Abbey was in full preparation for the royal funeral. However ‘[i]f this meant that Rudyard’s obsequies were overshadowed, no-one attending the Abbey would have guessed it.’⁴ (Kipling’s funeral is discussed in depth with regard to the context of his fame, in Chapter 1.)

In my concern with the construction of a writer’s reputation, I will focus not only on reviews, commentaries and the extensive, six volume collection of Kipling’s correspondence edited and published by Thomas Pinney, but unusually I will also focus on the voluminous correspondence received by Kipling, which is held in the Kipling Archive at the University of Sussex. I will argue that in combination, all these sources reflect Kipling’s conscious management of his career, his consistent attentiveness to his audience and his shrewd exploitation of various modes of dissemination, from the popular press to the music hall. This thesis will engage in a close reading of his extensive correspondence, published and unpublished, sent and received. In addition, similar documents and diaries from members of his family and friends, which are also held at the University of Sussex Archive, will be used to add context and authority to the discussion. Illustrations are included for the same purpose. I have used an appendix to provide fuller versions of archival letters from which I quote more briefly in the body of my thesis.

³ Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 584.

⁴ Lycett 585.

In terms of chronological literary criticism and existing scholarship on the making of Kipling's reputation, magazine and newspaper reviews held in the Kipling Archive, several published essays, appropriate examples of Kipling's correspondence, the specific text *Kipling: The Critical Heritage* [1971], edited by Roger Lancelyn Green and other secondary resources provide evidence of the critical reception of Kipling's work throughout his lifetime. (*Kipling: The Critical Heritage* reviews the work chronologically, from an opening chapter in which Andrew Lang discusses the 1886 publication of *Departmental Ditties*, to a 1936 obituary from the *Times Literary Supplement*). This thesis will also use archival resources to augment the current state of critical knowledge by the close-reading and discussion of uncollected manuscript material, which illustrates through its volume and quality the breadth of Kipling's public reputation and the illustrious figures to whom he was connected, including King George V and other senior members of the Royal Family, Henry James, Mark Twain, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Cecil Rhodes.

Reinterpretation of Kipling's printed and manuscript correspondence, his personal papers and biographical material, is particularly affected by the discussion which begins in chapter 2, with regard to letters from Kipling's sister Trix Fleming, to their cousin, Stanley Baldwin. In her letters, dated March and April 1945, she comments on issues of racial identity. These are discussed in this thesis as one possible major motivation behind Kipling's manufacture and manipulation of his reputation and a dominant element driving his work. This is a crucial factor in the reinterpretation of existing reviews and press comment and a new interpretation of archive material. (Existing reviews may be re-examined in the light of archive review material, many volumes of which have been used in this thesis. Whilst this material has previously been published in newspapers and magazines, as a collection in volumes in the Kipling Archive it

offers an unrivalled breadth of review material in one location and is used as such in this thesis. I view the careful compilation and maintenance of the archival collection of cuttings as evidence of my overall thesis that Kipling was a manager of his own reputation. The existence of these apparently unsophisticated volumes illustrates the importance to Kipling and his family of his work and reputation. They were not destroyed with much of his other personal effects).

Starting from the overview of his position at his death, I will explore how and why Kipling's work achieved its immense popularity and its highly influential status. I will discuss the conflict between the public poet and the private person; Kipling and the media, in terms of his adoring fans; ideas of new journalism, the power it exerted and the ways in which he used it to become influential; popular culture; the music hall and the relationship with his work; his use of family connections and his position as 'poet of the bereaved' in Great Britain. I will examine the letters he received as a response to his work.

In the body of my thesis, I will examine the ways in which Kipling developed new interpretations of particular images, specifically that of the common soldier as the 'Tommy Atkins' figure and I will narrate the new portrayal and progress of this subject. I will discuss his attempts to recuperate the reputation of the enlisted man and explore to what extent this engaged with Kipling's personal requirements. Drawing upon unacknowledged aspects of Kipling's correspondence, I will suggest that Kipling's anxiety about his own racial identity engenders empathetic portrayals of Indians and of the soldier as 'other' and demonstrates his unusual sympathy towards them. Kipling's poetic and literary output is too extensive to allow exploration of every text. Therefore, I will give close attention to his poetry, with reference to some of his short stories. The primacy in the use of verse is for two further reasons. In 1886, Kipling published

the volume of poems *Departmental Ditties*. This received favourable reviews⁵ and allowed his writing to receive broader scrutiny. For example, as Andrew Lang states: '[t]here is a special variety of English *Vers de Société* namely the Anglo-Indian species. A quaint and amusing example of this literature has reached me, named *Departmental Ditties*....this is an excellent arrangement'.⁶ When the third edition of these poems was published, William Hunter commented that '[t]aken as a whole, his book gives hope of a new literary star of no mean magnitude rising in the east.'⁷ Two years later, although Kipling had established a reputation with his short stories published as *Plain Tales from the Hills* [1888], it was his poems and soldier imagery from *Barrack-Room Ballads* [1890] 'which aroused real enthusiasm'.⁸ There are many documents and letters in the archive, as well as within the letters published by Pinney, which confirm the reputation of Kipling's verse. Secondary sources will be used for additional context and a sense of the contemporary.

Kipling used the content and the manner of his writing to create specific imagery of chosen subjects. It is possible to trace, retrospectively from his death, the imagery that he produced and utilised. This does not signify the writing of a full biographical account of the poet, several fine examples of which already exist. (For example, Charles Carrington was authorised by Elsie Bambridge [Kipling] to begin work on her father's official biography *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* in the 1950s. They collaborated closely on examination of Kipling's papers and according to Carrington: 'her name should properly appear...as part-author').⁹ This thesis presents a discussion of Kipling's life through his writing and his documents and discusses the ways in which

⁵ Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 163.

⁶ Andrew Lang, "Andrew Lang Introduces Kipling's First Book," *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 34.

⁷ William Wilson Hunter, "Sir William Hunter on *Departmental Ditties*," *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 38.

⁸ Page 163.

⁹ Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986) 10.

he developed particular images of a subject to influence the ways in which the subject was ‘read’.

Even though Kipling was determined to destroy his papers, the material held in the University of Sussex Archive is vast (appendix 1) and forms the single, most important holding of his papers. There are other archives that hold Kipling-related material, including several which are not in the United Kingdom. With a broad requirement to collect, as far as possible, every Kipling letter or fragment in existence, Pinney was able to access ‘6300 letters in manuscript, copy, or printed form, drawn from 138 collections public and private, and from 135 printed sources’.¹⁰ These sources are of international origin and resulted in Pinney’s publication of six volumes of Kipling’s letters about which he states ‘[t]hough it aims to be generous and fully representative, this is a selected, not a “complete”, *Letters*.’¹¹ Therefore, I have drawn on Pinney for the letters sent from Kipling and manuscript texts for those letters received by him and held at Sussex. Also used in manuscript form are several letters from Kipling that Pinney has chosen to omit from his selection. Pinney’s contribution to Kipling scholarship is very important, but the selective omissions give equal importance to the archival material. Several letters outside his publications have raised interesting questions or statements, relevant to this thesis. (Even with an exhaustive study like Pinney’s additional and new material has been added to the archive since the publication of his edited volumes of letters). My reading of his letters reveals that Kipling deliberately used a combination of styles to embrace his wealth of topics. Moreover, in his writing, he fiercely defended his independent position on any subject: ‘he studiously avoided all attempts to associate him with any literary party or group. He would be his own man’.¹² As he comments:

¹⁰ Pinney (1990a) editorial and introduction xi.

¹¹ Pinney (1990a) xvi.

¹² Thomas Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 2: 1890-99* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990b) 3.

One heard men vastly one's seniors wasting energy and good oaths in recounting 'intrigues' against them, and of men who had 'their knife into' their work, or whom they themselves wished to 'knife'...It seemed best to stand clear of it all. For that reason, I have never directly or indirectly criticised any fellow-craftsman's output, or encouraged any man or woman to do so; nor have I approached any persons that they might be led to comment on my output. My acquaintance with my contemporaries has from first to last been very limited.¹³

This illustrates the nonconformist stance that Kipling often took in his portrayal of a particular image. He took great care to be precise in everything he wrote, in whichever genre he was using:

I made my own experiments in the weights, colours, perfumes, and attributes of words in relation to other words, either as read aloud so that they may hold the ear, or, scattered over the page, draw the eye. There is no line of my verse or prose which has not been mouthed till the tongue has made all smooth, and memory, after many recitals, has mechanically skipped the grosser superfluities.¹⁴

But Kipling was precise in more than just the content of his work. As we shall see, in weighing up the method and technique of his writing, he was equally fastidious in his choice of subject and in its depiction; the image that he portrayed of his subject being of great importance to him. However, his reputation and work gain additional resonance when viewed in the light of clear and conscious management of what Kipling wished to achieve:

[P]ublishers live in regal – nay imperial luxury. I begin to see now why authors were created and where go the profits that should rightly be theirs....I am just now being chased by several publishers....Just at present I reply with great sweetness that my engagements are *complet* and that they had better go and take a walk. Publishers are not used to being treated in this manner and they return to the charge like Jew hawkers with proffers of ready money down.¹⁵

¹³ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1964) 85.

¹⁴ Kipling (1964) 73.

¹⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "To Caroline Taylor," 2 November 1889, Pinney (1990a) 354-356.

Citing the Kipling Papers

This thesis draws extensively on Kipling's correspondence and other papers. The six volumes of letters published by Pinney and other published Kipling documents have provided a major source for this material, where a published letter or document does not vary significantly from either the original or its transcript in the Kipling Archive. Citations of these letters are to the Pinney volumes not the archive. However, the thesis also draws extensively on letters not included in Pinney and on unpublished correspondence *to* Kipling from diverse correspondents. (This is of particular importance in the material from Trix Fleming to Stanley Baldwin in chapter 2 touching upon issues of heritage).

In the absence of publication or to clarify a discrepancy, documents from the Archive have been consulted for which I have devised a system of citation. Each citation is referenced according to the labels on individual boxes or volumes. Immediately following a quotation from archive material is a reference in parentheses. This denotes the box or volume from which a file is obtained, followed by the file number, then document number from within the file. In the footnotes, the box topic will be given at first mention; following citations from the same box within that chapter will have an abbreviated box number.

Kipling was frequently unconventional and inaccurate in his use of lexis and syntax. These lexical and syntactical idiosyncrasies occurred in both handwritten and typed texts and throughout this thesis they are transcribed as found.

Chapter 1: Fame, Celebrity and Posterity

The Reputation of Kipling at His Death

In *Something of Myself* [1937], the posthumously published ‘fragment of autobiography begun, but neither completed or revised, in his old age’,¹⁶ Kipling questions how he achieved his success:

I embarked on *Rewards and Fairies*¹⁷ [1910]...in two minds. Stories a plenty I had to tell, but how many would be authentic and how many due to ‘induction’?...Among the verses in *Rewards* was one set called ‘If-’, which escaped from the book, and for a while ran about the world.¹⁸ (appendix 2).

(Brander Matthews comments in 1926 of this collection that ‘*Puck of Pook’s Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*, [are] that incomparable pair of volumes in which Kipling...[“]makes the past of English history live with such implicit learning as is the wonder of historians and such imaginative truth as is paralleled in literature only by the splendidly vagrant chronicle-histories of Shakespeare[”].’)¹⁹ Kipling’s comment engages with one reason why at his death, Kipling had attained his literary reputation: ‘[b]etween 1870 and 1900 the British Empire occupied four million square miles...[T]he British...govern[ed] nations far larger than Great Britain itself...thousands of miles from home, in dozens of different regions’.²⁰ Such government required an exchange of language to ensure understanding and imposition of order.²¹ This led to rapid international spread of English into a ‘world-wide’ language, which gave Kipling an expanding audience. Subsequent comment recognises

¹⁶ Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986) 46.

¹⁷ ‘This sequel to *Puck of Pook’s Hill* was published in London and New York in 1910.... The volume contains eleven stories, each accompanied by one or more poems (22 poems in all). All the stories except ‘Marlake Witches’ had appeared in various magazines in 1909 and 1910.’ Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 59.

¹⁸ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1964) 190.

¹⁹ Brander Matthews, “Brander Matthews on ‘Kipling’s Deeper Note’,” *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 338.

²⁰ Talia Schaffer, *Literature and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007) 481.

²¹ Schaffer 481.

another element in his success: ‘Once started, the mechanisation of the age made [the verses] snowball themselves in a way that startled me’.²² Rapid development of the popular press had occurred, caused by significant industrial developments from the mid-1860s onwards. Such changes occurred in many countries. For example, they were noted in Europe and in the United States: ‘the most likely explanation lies in the urbanization of these countries and in the speeding up of transport arrangements. Railways, which made the provisioning and the employment of large concentrated populations possible, also made possible the larger markets for newspapers’.²³ Kipling exploited the expansion of journalism. He remarks upon later utilisation of his work: ‘Schools, and places where they teach, took them for the suffering Young – which did me no good with the Young when I met them later.’²⁴ (His tone echoes his short story, ‘The Education of Otis Yeere’, published in ‘*The Week’s News* 10 and 17 March 1888’.²⁵ The narrator declares: ‘[this] might be an instructive tale to put into print for the benefit of the younger generation. The younger generation does not want instruction, being perfectly willing to instruct if anyone will listen to it’).²⁶

Kipling comments of his verses that: ‘[t]wenty-seven of the nations of the Earth translated them into their seven-and-twenty tongues, and printed them on every sort of fabric.’²⁷ Correspondence from W.S. Maugham illustrates this: ‘the King of Siam...told me that he had himself translated If into Siamese and a devil of a job he found it, he says, to get the rhythm and metre to his satisfaction’ (22/38 File 22/49 Un-numbered Document).²⁸ Language invites unity between people, as nations share the

²² Kipling (1964) 190.

²³ Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) 7.

²⁴ Kipling (1964) 190.

²⁵ Page 85.

²⁶ Rudyard Kipling, *The Man Who Would Be King and Other Stories* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994b)3.

²⁷ Kipling (1964) 190.

²⁸ W. S. Maugham, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 24 February [no year given]. 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General Verse.

same language such as English, or consensual use of several languages within the same country.²⁹ In Kipling's observation on the dissemination of his poems, both routes of unity apply, with consequent augmentation of readership and fame.

His retrospective comments illustrate several points. As self-critic³⁰ at the end of his life, he doubts his ability to write original and 'real' work. (Given the tenor of *Something of Myself* it is difficult to tell if he is honest or disingenuous about this, or about his surprise that the poems 'freed' themselves from the bounds of his writing, to become influential.) Another reason why Kipling's reflections about his work and success are puzzling is that he knew that eighteen years before the publication of *Rewards and Fairies*: '[w]hen he left England in 1892 Moberly Bell³¹ had told him that *The Times* would publish anything that he cared to submit...[L]ater he used *The Times* as a platform for the major poems which he designed to carry a message to his generation'.³² As he reflected on his life, he must have been aware of how dissemination of his work and press sources such as *The Times* had ensured its major impact. He deliberately employed such publication as a device to increase public access to his views, in terms of the number and range of readers (appendix 3). He used the press brilliantly and was fortunate that its development, through innovative technology, increased readership and geographical spread coincided with and contributed to the development of his career.

The press was powerful. The radical press had declined in importance after 1836 and the few titles that remained could exert influence through market dominance: 'In these

²⁹ Ernest Renan, "What Is a Nation?," *Nation and Narration* ed., Homi Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1999) 16.

³⁰ Reviews of *Something of Myself* are in a volume of cuttings. One review, from the *Birmingham Post* 16 Feb. 1937, states: 'Alike as man and as artist, Kipling now reveals himself as much more self-critical than one had suspected' (28/17, 1937, 1) 28/17-Reviews of Autobiography of Rudyard Kipling *Something of Myself* 1937.

³¹ C. F. Moberly Bell was *The Times* Editor (by 1897) Carrington (1986) 305.

³² Carrington (1986) 314.

publications were to be found...“the greatest combination and concentration of forces known in the intellectual world”. These newspapers, by impressing their prejudices immediately and simultaneously on many thousands of minds, possessed power of unprecedented magnitude. It was unsurprising that the public generally could have “no adequate conception of it”.³³ This was a potent tool for Kipling to employ. The press shaped ideas of Englishness and imperial identity with which Kipling was inextricably linked.³⁴ This is illustrated by correspondence from A. P. Watt who acted as an ‘intermediary between authors and publishers and editors...[and] believed he invented the concept of the literary agent’.³⁵ (He acted in this capacity for Kipling.)³⁶ He compliments Kipling in 1897: ‘Allow me to offer you congratulations on the appearance in today’s “Times” [sic] of your magnificent poem. It strikes the right note with regard to this Jubilee Celebration and will recall the nation to the source of its real strength. You are the only rightful heir to...Shakespeare, Milton, and Tennyson, our Laureate de facto!’ (22/38 File 22/49 Document A3).³⁷ (appendix 4). He reinforces Kipling’s literary credentials.

The press proposed and confirmed the nineteenth century Anglo-Saxon notion of assumed racial superiority. It was in prime position to inform, educate and influence its public. Newspapers were inexpensive and accessible with ‘the capacity of journalism to influence individuals, and to construct and interact with a public....[T]he elasticity of newspaper formats, and the polymorphic nature of news meant that descriptions of

³³ Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996) 98.

³⁴ On behalf of the Director of Education, Government House Suva, Fiji, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 22 May 1928: ‘[T]he Director of Education in this Administration has notified me of his wish to include the singing by the school children of all races in the Colony of “The Recessional” in the celebrations of Empire Day to be held at Suva’ (22/38 File 22/49 Document 16) 22/38.

³⁵ Charles Morgan, “The House of Macmillan (1843-1943),” *Kipling: Interviews and Recollections Volume 1*, ed., Harold Orel (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983) 127.

³⁶ Carrington (1986) 582.

³⁷ A[lexander] P[ollock] Watt, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 17 July 1897. 22/38.

events were encased within particular readings...readers would be getting a message'.³⁸ Since it was at the heart of the imperial English speaking world, it could dictate social, moral and cultural codes and reinforce them. Kipling used this, even in less widespread press publications, from his youthful days working in a newspaper office in India. He was employed on the staff at the *Civil and Military Gazette* in Lahore between 1882-1887³⁹:

I've got a new editor...Between the two of us we've been making the *Civil and Military Gazette* hum...Robinson gave me an absolutely free hand and consulted me about questions of "views" and "lines" and "policies" so that in his Consulship I got a greater insight into the higher workings of a paper than ever before.⁴⁰

Kipling knew that the press could provide a huge and diverse audience for his work and his views. But he disliked it, as he demonstrated to Sidney Low (1857-1932), Editor of the *St. James's Gazette*. Low offered to publish some of Kipling's work and wanted him to sign a contract with the newspaper. Kipling did not want to '[put] his head back in the old noose of journalism' and he 'refused in a brief poem of five stanzas'⁴¹ (appendix 5). He denigrates the popular press when he discusses the *Daily Mail* with his cousin, Stanley Baldwin in 1921: 'I've followed that lying sanitary towel the Daily Mail at intervals.' (11/38 File 11/3 Document D31).⁴² He felt threatened by its potentially destructive powers and as he clarifies in a letter to Baldwin in 1925, he believes that the press had the power to dictate and manipulate public opinion, either beneficially or detrimentally. Baldwin was Prime Minister and Kipling a representative of the War Graves Commission: '*My great fear in this matter*

³⁸ Jones 99.

³⁹ Carrington (1986) 15.

⁴⁰ Rudyard Kipling, "To Aunt Edith," 4-5 December 1886, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume I: 1872-89*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990a) 139-142.

⁴¹ Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 469.

⁴² Rudyard Kipling in Algiers, "To Stanley Baldwin," 17 March 1921 11/38-Correspondence Family.

is the Press. If the newspapers get possession of these facts, and, weaving them into the Imperial situation, as it exists at the present, raise the cry of the betrayal of the dead...they could make a very strong case, which they would exploit with infinite satisfaction'.⁴³ His resentment and wariness was not directed at the British press alone. He had experienced problems with American reporters too:

Reporters came from papers in Boston, which I presume believed itself to be civilised, and demanded interviews. I told them I had nothing to say. 'If ye hev'n't, guess we'll make ye say something.' So they went away and lied copiously, their orders being to 'get the story.' This was new to me at the time; but the press had not got into its full free stride of later years.⁴⁴

Kipling recognises that his audience would vary in its reception of his work in terms of age, nationality, gender, experience and beliefs of each reader and the ways in which the reader receives the writing. He acknowledges the importance that 'new technologies' held in terms of dissemination of his writing and the varied forms in which such technologies affected and would continue to affect, the presentation of his work (figs. 1, 2 & 3). Technology in the press had developed from at least two perspectives, in terms of newspaper content and production of the artefact. In 1868 the Press Association was established 'as a landmark in the development of the nineteenth-century newspaper press'.⁴⁵ It was the largest organisation of networked news-gathering: 'By co-operative arrangements the quality and range of news and features could be vastly extended.'⁴⁶ Concurrently, from the 1860s increasingly sophisticated mechanisation of newspaper production increased circulation in the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States. Brown comments that the increased

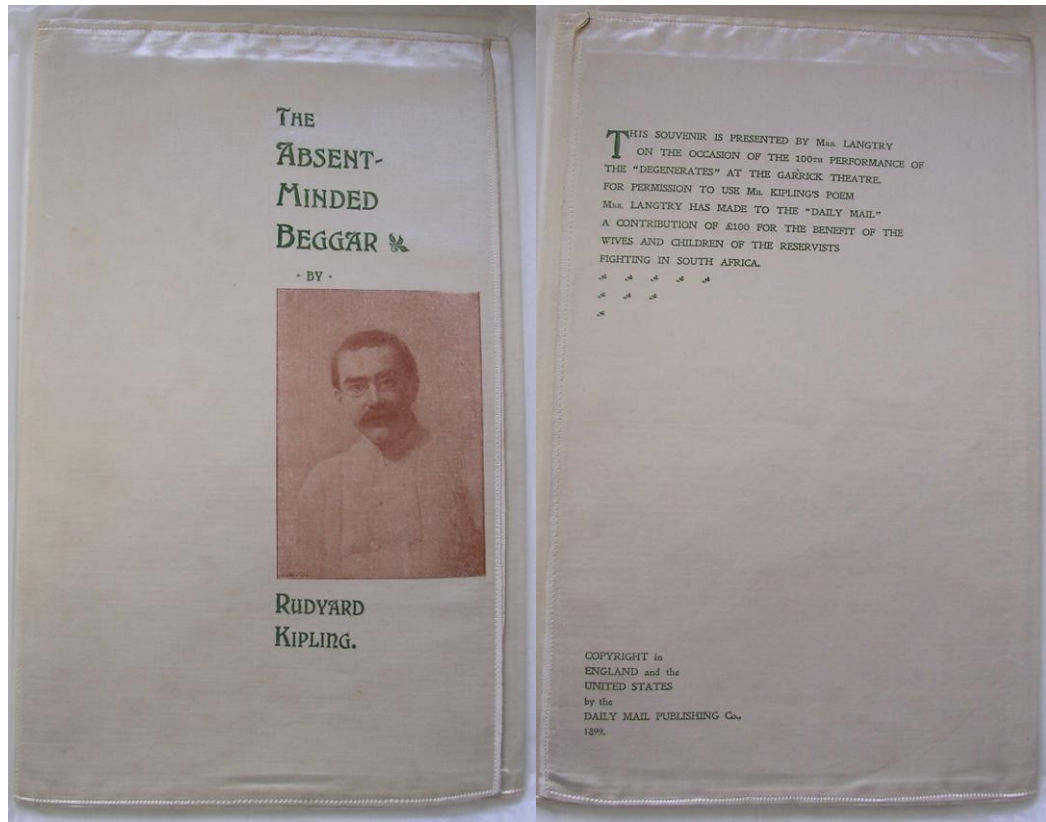
⁴³ Rudyard Kipling, "To Stanley Baldwin," 17 May 1925, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 5: 1920-30*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004b) 232-233.

⁴⁴ Kipling (1964) 113.

⁴⁵ Brown 112.

⁴⁶ Brown 112.

circulation encouraged technological advances.⁴⁷ From the earliest days of his writing, Kipling was astute enough to utilise these innovations to his advantage.



Figs. 1 and 2 Front and reverse covers of presentation copy on padded silk, of the poem, 'The Absent Minded Beggar' [1899] (30/38 File 30/1).⁴⁸ Note the dedication on the reverse cover (appendix 6). The poem was written by Kipling to raise funds for Boer War soldiers and families.

⁴⁷ Brown 8.

⁴⁸ 30/38-K/P: Printed Books Kipling

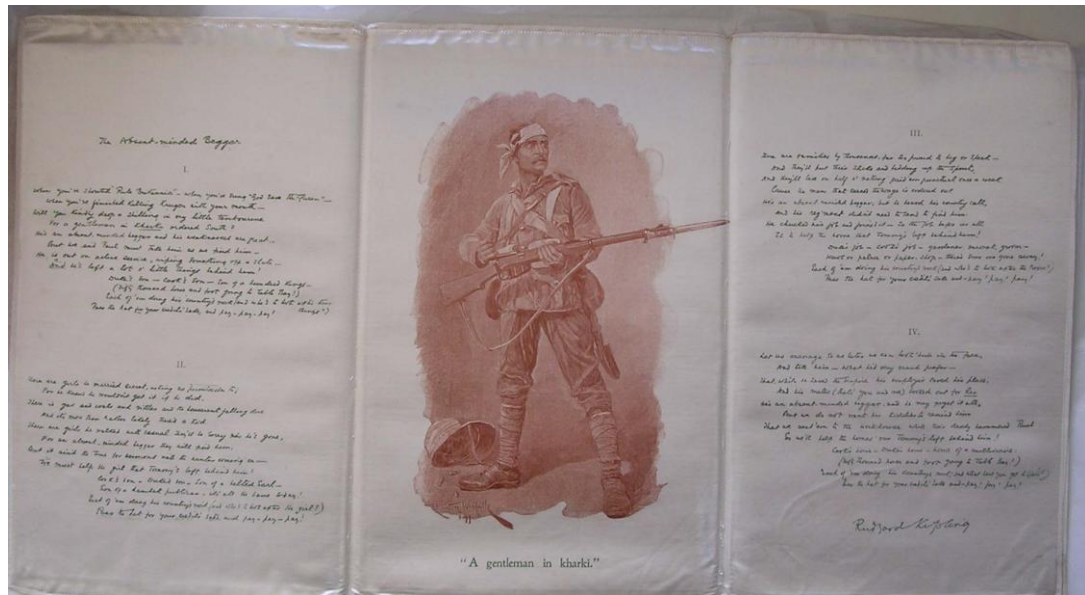


Fig. 3 Middle section of the presentation copy (30/38 File 30/1).

His autobiography acknowledges the huge national and international audience with which the poems in *Rewards and Fairies* engage and the world renown in which his work was ultimately held. Implicit is the idea that this audience represents all aspects of society, from the ordinary citizen to the influential figure. For example, the President of The United States, Woodrow Wilson 'wrote, through a mutual friend, to ask Rudyard for an autographed copy of "If-".'⁴⁹ Despite Kipling's apparent surprise, he intimates knowledge of an international reputation: 'Did I tell you that the Brazilian Government announced that one was to be treated in all respects like a crowned head, and that they began with some notion of paying my hotel bill?'⁵⁰ *Something of Myself* was written in the last year of Kipling's life. In January 1936, he died in the Middlesex Hospital, London, at the age of seventy. His 70th birthday was quietly celebrated at home, two weeks before his death. Kipling 'was engaged in redrafting his will and, when his birthday came...in a dark wet winter at 'Bateman's'...neither he nor Carrie was in a mood for jubilation'.⁵¹ However, the

⁴⁹ Carrington (1986) 516.

⁵⁰ Rudyard Kipling, "To Elsie Bambridge," 22-23 February 1927, Pinney (2004b) 348.

⁵¹ Carrington (1986) 580.

Kiplings were surprised by the attention the event received, including tributes from critics who ‘had ignored [his] existence for years’.⁵² His autobiography recognises the international renown in which he was now held.⁵³ National and international mourning took place, which affected all classes.⁵⁴

Two weeks after Kipling died, George Orwell wrote an article about him, for the *New English Weekly*. The article, entitled ‘On Kipling’s Death’, is Orwell’s obituary for Kipling: ‘[Rudyard Kipling] was the only popular English writer of this century who was not at the same time a thoroughly bad writer...[B]efore the war he had a prestige that is not even approached by any writer of today’.⁵⁵ Orwell’s article acknowledges Kipling’s enormous influence. A remark from President Wilson confirms this: ‘Tumulty has handed me your letter of November eleventh about Kipling’s poem, “If”. It is true that I have derived constant inspiration from that poem and have often conscientiously tried to live up to its standards’ (22/38 File 22/40 Document 4).⁵⁶ Kipling left as his legacy a vast body of writing, across several genres, which had been read by a huge number of national and international readers of every class and background. He was world famous and his success in poetry and literature covered an extremely lengthy chronological span, which encompassed several hegemonic perspectives.⁵⁷ This is confirmed in the article ‘Rudyard Kipling’ originally published

⁵² Carrington (1986) 580.

⁵³ 28/8-Stories and Poems 1930-1937 / Miscellaneous Cuttings 1891-1945 pages 79-88 are cuttings of 70th birthday tributes dated week beginning 30th December 1935. Sourced from at least five national daily papers, additional regional papers, five American publications, including the *New York Times*, the *Indian Press*, *Canadian Press* and *Paris-Soir*.

⁵⁴ 28/15 and 28/16-Rudyard Kipling Obituary Notices Volumes (I) and (II) January 1936. 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public Files 20/5, 20/6 and 20/7.

⁵⁵ George Orwell, “[On Kipling’s Death],” *The Collected Essays Journalism & Letters: George Orwell, Volume 1: An Age Like This 1920-1940*, eds., Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (Boston: Nonpareil Books, 2000) 159.

⁵⁶ Woodrow Wilson [President of the United States], “To Edward Bok, Academy of Music, Pennsylvania,” 15 November 1920 22/38.

⁵⁷ 28/11 contains reviews about Kipling and his work [1891-1895]. An undated, unidentified cutting states that by the period denoted by the volume, Kipling’s name was ‘familiar to two continents, and a considerable portion of a third’ (28/11, 1891-1895, 5) 28/11-Various Book Reviews and Articles etc. About Rudyard Kipling 1891-1895: Newspaper Cuttings.

in *Horizon*, in February 1942. Written by George Orwell, it defends Kipling against criticism from T.S. Eliot: 'Kipling is in the peculiar position of having been a by-word for fifty years. During five literary generations every enlightened person has despised him, and at the end of that time nine-tenths of those enlightened persons are forgotten and Kipling is in some sense still there'30).⁵⁸ As Orwell remarks of his own lifetime of changing literary tastes: 'I worshipped Kipling at thirteen, loathed him at seventeen, enjoyed him at twenty, despised him at twenty-five, and now again rather admire him'.⁵⁹ Kipling wrote on subjects which touched people at all levels and in a narrative form with which this disparate audience could engage. This is reflected in the outpouring of grief at his death, which prompted 'numerous tributes, to his teachings and his inspiration and to his literary genius and his laureateship of the Empire'.⁶⁰ (Many tributes are archived in Volumes 28/15 and 28/16 Rudyard Kipling Obituary Notices Volumes (I) and (II) January 1936).

One prestigious expression of condolence was a telegram from King George V and Queen Mary, to Caroline Kipling. It implies the primacy of Kipling's poetry: 'The King and I are grieved to hear of the death this morning of Mr Rudyard Kipling. We shall mourn him not only as a great national poet but as a personal friend of many years' (20/38 File 20/5 Document A2).⁶¹ The timing of this tribute is important since '[i]t was generally known that [the King], too, was dying'.⁶² The death took place two days later: "'The King has gone", it was said, "and taken his trumpeter with him".'⁶³ Harry Ricketts comments: '[t]hough inevitably overshadowed by George V's

⁵⁸ George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling," *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume 2: My Country Right or Left 1940-1943*, eds., Sonia Orwell & Ian Angus (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970) 215.

⁵⁹ Orwell (2000) 159.

⁶⁰ David Gilmour *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2003) 309.

⁶¹ King George V and Queen Mary, "To Caroline Kipling," at Brown's Hotel 18 January 1936 20/38.

⁶² Carrington (1986) 582.

⁶³ Gilmour 309.

passing...Kipling's death sent almost as many shockwaves round the world as his near-fatal illness had done in 1899. It symbolised an end.'⁶⁴ Noteworthy contemporaries such as General Sir Ian Hamilton viewed Kipling's death as an indication of 'the close of an era of European history: ["His death seems to me to place a full stop to the period when war was a romance and the expansion of the Empire a duty.["']⁶⁵ The illustrious international reputation enjoyed by Kipling is illustrated by a message from the Brazilian Ambassador to Caroline Kipling: 'In the name of my Government and my country where your husband was so widely known and admired and in my own name will you accept the expression of our deepest sympathy in your very sad bereavement'[sic] (20/38 File 20/5 Document A10).⁶⁶

National and international associations wrote and cabled to Caroline expressing their regret at Kipling's death: 'All the members of the Canadian Authors [sic] Association most earnestly sympathize in irreparable loss' (20/38 File 20/5 Document A8).⁶⁷ (appendix 7). The Disabled American Veterans Of The World War National Capital Chapter No. 2, Washington, tabled a resolution which read: 'death has stilled the pen of Rudyard Kipling, the poet, artist and seer who brought to great themes a pomp and glory that stamped them indelibly upon one's memory'(20/38 File 20/6 Document B25) (appendix 8).⁶⁸ The resolution closes: '[We] hereby join the people of the world in mourning the loss of one of the most shining figures of modern times' (20/38 File 20/6 Document B25).⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Harry Ricketts, *The Unforgiving Minute: A Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2000) 388.

⁶⁵ Ricketts 388.

⁶⁶ Regis Oliveira, "To Caroline Kipling," at Bateman's, Sussex [date illegible], 1936 20/38.

⁶⁷ The Canadian Authors' Association, represented by Howard Angus Kennedy, "To Caroline Kipling," at the Middlesex Hospital, London, 19 January 1936 20/38.

⁶⁸ Disabled American Veterans of The World War National Capital Chapter No. 2, Washington, a "Resolution in Tribute to The Renowned Poet, Rudyard Kipling, Who Died January 18 1936" 20/38.

⁶⁹ 20/38.

These tributes portray a sense of loss which encompasses Kipling as a man and his poetic and literary achievements. He is depicted as an icon of ‘nationhood’. Great Britain had lost its most influential apologist and ‘voice’ and the inspiration that Kipling provided in every sphere in which he worked. It is implied that subjects with which he has engaged, whether of national, international or personal importance, have been permanently enhanced. File 20/6 is letters and messages of condolence to Caroline Kipling from associations, clubs and notable organisations in Great Britain and around the world.

Personal letters of condolence flooded in. These cut across social and class barriers (appendix 9). It is expected that condolences to a widow would be of uniform vocabulary and presentation. However, the concept implied by these letters, that Kipling and his work occupied a position of predominance at his death for a vast and diverse audience of admirers is emphasised by the reaction of the national, international and regional press at that time. Newspapers offered articles, obituaries and quotations which extolled the virtue and talent of Kipling and his work. He was linked and favourably compared to other great national literary figures. Simultaneously, his empathy with ‘common man’ was emphasised. The title of an obituary from the *Daily Express* demonstrates these links, ‘Kipling, “Our Brother,” Laid To Rest Near The Dust of Dickens’. It states that: ‘He lies beneath the monument to the serene Addison. On the other side is the memorial to Oliver Goldsmith, with that celebrated epitaph written by Dr. Johnson in Latin, which, in English, fits Kipling – “*He attempted every style of writing and touched nothing without adorning it*” [sic]’ (28/16, 1936, 1).⁷⁰

An obituary from the *Daily Mail* denotes a public figure of influence and popularity, which echoes Orwell’s comments and those of other press sources. The term

⁷⁰ ‘Kipling, “Our Brother,” Laid To Rest Near The Dust of Dickens’ *Daily Express* 24 Jan. 1936 28/16 (II).

‘contemporary’, suggests that the newspaper felt that Kipling’s esteemed position was current at his death:

Poet and Prophet: With the deepest sorrow his countrymen will learn to-day of Mr. Rudyard Kipling’s death. As the greatest and most beloved figure in contemporary English literature his fame is secure...He taught England the meaning of Empire and the Empire the meaning of England (28/15, 1936, 5).⁷¹

In similar vein the *Daily Telegraph* published the article, ‘Kipling: Poet and Prophet of Empire’: ‘[o]ne of the great ones of the earth, one of the great masters of English prose and English verse, has died in Rudyard Kipling....His place is secure enough among the immortals without debate as to the order of precedence (28/15, 1936, 7).⁷² The titles and content of the three obituaries are overlaid with meaning about Kipling and his work. Coupling of the words ‘poet’ and ‘prophet’, as in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail* suggest a consensus about a visionary element to his writing, of Biblical and revelatory import, whilst connecting him to the contrasts of the literary great and the common man. The terms imply that the popular press believed that at his death Kipling still occupied the opposite spheres of private poetic narrator and public seer. The writing suggests that his position of greatness is unassailable and discourages comparative or controversial debate. Again, the primacy of his verse is suggested.

The *Daily Express* reverently describes the burial of Kipling’s ashes at Poets’ Corner, Westminster Abbey: ‘[H]is ashes w[ere] laid beside the remains of Thomas Hardy and Charles Dickens, a yard from Macaulay’ (28/16, 1936, 1).⁷³ Kipling’s son-in-law, George Bambridge, describes the scene: ‘Every seat in choir and lantern and both transepts were filled and the general public was admitted as well; thousands could not

⁷¹ ‘Poet and Prophet’ *Daily Mail* 18 Jan. 1936 28/15 (I).

⁷² ‘Kipling: Poet and Prophet of Empire’ *Daily Telegraph* 18 Jan. 1936 28/15 (I).

⁷³ ‘Kipling, “Our Brother,” Laid To Rest Near The Dust of Dickens’ *Daily Express* 24 Jan. 1936 28/16 (II).

obtain entry'.⁷⁴ (This illustrates Kipling's significance and prominence at the time of his death, since the congregation at the ceremony to inter his ashes could fill Westminster Abbey to overflowing, only a few days before the funeral of the King.) The style and timing of the ceremony and use of the names of British literary giants in this context add emphasis to the distinction and solemnity that such a place of interment would confer. At the same time, Westminster Abbey was preparing for the funeral of George V. It was therefore an honour, an indication of Royal connection and reward for a lifetime of 'devotion' that the Kipling ceremony was allowed to take place.⁷⁵

The contrasts between Kipling's public and private self are mirrored in the ceremonies which accompanied his death. The burial of his ashes was in a place of national distinction attended by an assembly of high-ranking and esteemed mourners. (The previous occasion of this kind had been the burial of Thomas Hardy 'who was borne to the grave by an escort of poets and dramatists. Not so was Kipling...the congregation consisted of men of action'.⁷⁶) A report, first published in the *Kipling Journal*, No. 37 (Mar 1936), lists some of the dignitaries present at the burial of Kipling's ashes. Some served in a dual role, for example the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, was first cousin to Kipling. The list of distinguished and titled mourners covers over one page of text, yet is described as 'a very condensed list of those who attended Kipling's funeral...[which has] merely tried to give...an idea of the esteem in which [Kipling] was held'.⁷⁷ Ricketts lists Kipling's pall-bearers as including 'Stanley Baldwin (still Prime Minister), Sir Roger Keyes (Admiral of the Fleet), Sir A Montgomery-Massingberd (Field Marshal), Sir Fabian Ware (editor and instigator of the Imperial

⁷⁴ Carrington (1986) 583.

⁷⁵ Carrington (1986) 582.

⁷⁶ Carrington (1986) 582.

⁷⁷ N/A, "Poets' Corner," *Kipling: Interviews and Recollections Volume 2*, ed., Harold Orel (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983) 389.

War Graves Commission), and H A Gwynne (editor of the *Morning Post*).⁷⁸ These were some of the notable ‘men of action’ to whom Carrington refers. They ‘reflected the imperial rather than the literary side of his career’.⁷⁹ The contrast between the ‘[s]ix...celebrated writers of the day [who] had helped to carry Hardy’s coffin in 1928’⁸⁰ and the men who carried Kipling’s coffin is marked. Even amongst the mourners at Kipling’s funeral there were few writers. The ‘distinguished congregation [consisted] of politicians, newspapermen, clergymen, ambassadors and other dignitaries that packed the Abbey for the service.’⁸¹ (Although Gilmour is possibly correct in his assertion that the congregation at Kipling’s funeral illustrates his imperial, rather than literary credentials, it is probable that the military and naval subject matter with which Kipling frequently engaged in his writing would have engaged these ‘men of action’ on a literary level as well).

However, having been awarded the honour of lying in state ‘in the mortuary chapel of the hospital, with a Union Jack as pall over the coffin’,⁸² his cremation was private. It was privacy of which Kipling would have approved: ‘It was learned to-day that Mr. Rudyard Kipling was cremated at Golders Green yesterday evening. There was a complete absence of ceremony, and few people were aware of the arrangement....There were no flowers. The plain coffin was covered by a Union Jack...No pomp, no ceremony...The Empire poet shunned publicity, and sought quiet and simplicity in life. There was peace and quiet at his passing’ (28/16, 1936, 2).⁸³ Despite having ‘[b]y his range of imperial experience and his anticipation of public moods...made himself an

⁷⁸ Ricketts 390.

⁷⁹ Gilmour 309.

⁸⁰ Ricketts 390.

⁸¹ Ricketts 390.

⁸² N/A 387.

⁸³ ‘Rudyard Kipling Cremated’ *Evening News* 21 Jan. 1936 28/16 (II).

essential figure for people who did not normally read poetry’⁸⁴ and spent a lifetime in the public eye, the uneasy relationship with the press, fame and his private and public selves remained until his death. It was a paradox that he sought privacy and anonymity, resenting intrusion, whilst using his writing to influence his peers, his readership and the general public: ‘I have always held the strongest objection to the circulation of personal details about men and women who happen to be in the public eye’.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the mood in January 1936 was to mourn a talented man of distinction, acknowledged as one of his nation’s major literary and visionary figures, who had attained a position of authority and predominance with the power to engender change, or underpin hegemonic ideals (appendix 10): ‘He was one of the makers of the Britain he leaves behind him. By the magic of his tales and verse he held in equal sway all the English-speaking peoples. But for his own country and its Empire he has been prophet as well as bard-faithful counsellor and guide in the paths of destiny’ (File Ad. 24).⁸⁶

Orwell remarks that Kipling’s popularity rested with the middle classes: ‘especially in Anglo-Indian families’.⁸⁷ Perhaps this was the case in the early days of Kipling’s career in India, but as his correspondence and obituaries indicate, his audience was ultimately greater and more inclusive. Orwell suggests that Kipling, his work and his influence were integral to an ongoing relationship with literature and society. He was ‘a sort of household god with whom one grew up and whom one took for granted whether one liked him or whether one did not’.⁸⁸ An obituary article published anonymously in the *Times Literary Supplement* on 25th January 1936, augments Orwell’s comment when it states that Kipling ‘was a national institution...and regarded

⁸⁴ Gilmour (x-introduction).

⁸⁵ Rudyard Kipling, “To Miss Fisher,” 14 August 1923, Pinney (2004b) 148-149.

⁸⁶ Un-cited, un-dated cutting from an American publication, presumably published during the week of 18th January 1936. (Box un-numbered) Additions 1-36/38-K/P.

⁸⁷ Orwell (2000) 159.

⁸⁸ Orwell (2000) 159.

as such by all the world.’⁸⁹ The article does not continue in such an adulatory tone as may be suggested by these opening words, but despite a pragmatic critique of Kipling and his writing it concludes ‘if, amid the work he leaves behind him, those juries of the future contrive, to catch a glimpse of the man himself, as his own time knew him, they must add to their verdict a rider that this was a great man as well as a great writer [*sic*]; and honourable and fearless and good.’⁹⁰ Perhaps these sentiments provide an insight into Kipling’s apparently cross-societal and cross-class popularity at the end of his life, which reflected and remembered that ‘[i]n his prime as an imperial bard, Kipling seemed to embody both the hopes and the fears of his countrymen....His was a voice that people loved not just because it articulated their thoughts but because it also managed to express their feelings and illuminate their lives.’⁹¹

Kipling’s Relationship to Fame and ‘Celebrity’

As has been demonstrated earlier in this chapter, Kipling attained great fame and influence through his work. The fame that he achieved and his consequent ‘celebrity’ status was partly as a result of his concern with the advancement and management of his own reputation. From the mid-twentieth to the early twenty first century the term ‘celebrity’ has denoted specific images, expectations, attainments and relationships with famous subjects: ‘celebrity [is] the attribution of glamorous or notorious status to an individual within the public sphere’.⁹² This is ‘mediated through...the assistance of cultural intermediaries...[who] concoct the public presentation of celebrity personalities’.⁹³ Cultural intermediaries is a ‘collective term for agents, publicists,

⁸⁹ N/A, [“]Rudyard Kipling’s Place in English Literature,[”] *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 384.

⁹⁰ N/A, [“]Rudyard Kipling’s Place in English Literature,[”] 392.

⁹¹ Gilmour 310.

⁹² Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001)10.

⁹³ Rojek 10.

marketing personnel, promoters, photographers and those devoted to the total physical appearance of the celebrity'.⁹⁴ The term has cultural currency, which has altered according to its chronology: 'modern celebrity [is] a symptom of a worrying cultural shift...that privileges the momentary, the visual and the sensational over the enduring, the written and the rational'.⁹⁵ Celebrities are defined as having an 'innate or natural quality...[or] charisma' and as the products of a process of commodification through media promotion and publicity.⁹⁶ Daniel Boorstin argued in 1961 that fame had changed from attainment through merit or talent, to fame as a result of 'hype and exhibitionism'.⁹⁷ He commented that 'the celebrity is a person who is well-known for their well-knownness'.⁹⁸

Public engagement with earlier ideas of celebrity was due to 'three major interrelated historical processes...the democratization of society...the decline in organized religion...[and] the commodification of everyday life'.⁹⁹ Rojek suggests that 'the transference of cultural capital to self-made men and women' began as early as the seventeenth century as Court life began to decline. From this point 'Celebrities replaced the monarchy as the new symbols of recognition and belonging, and as the belief in God waned, celebrities became immortal'.¹⁰⁰ Leo Braudy, author of *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and its History* [1997], argues that during the Middle Ages, the emergence of printing, increased urbanisation due to a huge increase in the population and portrayal of human rather than religious images altered the Western

⁹⁴ Rojek 11.

⁹⁵ Graeme Turner, *Understanding Celebrity* (London: Sage Publications, 2004) 4.

⁹⁶ Turner 4.

⁹⁷ Andrew Stark, "Stars Like Us," rev. of *Fame Junkies*, by Jake Halpern, *Times Literary Supplement* 4 May 2007: 32 (No. 5431).

⁹⁸ Turner 5.

⁹⁹ Rojek 13.

¹⁰⁰ Rojek 13.

interest in fame.¹⁰¹ It is interesting to note the early influence of printing and urbanisation on fame, since these two elements were later crucial to Kipling.

The term ‘celebrity’ was used to refer to him as early as 1890, when he was only twenty-five years of age, in an interview published as an article entitled ‘Celebrities at Home’. In a letter written in September 1888 Edmonia Hill, who became Kipling’s ‘main critic and confidante’¹⁰² for a time, mentions that Kipling told her about a ‘series of articles now coming out in an English paper’. Entitled ‘Celebrities at Home’, they were published in *World* magazine.¹⁰³ Even at this early date, as the article discusses the impact of his work, its language is as hyperbolic as his obituaries of 1936. Although it may not suggest that Kipling attains the ‘immortality’ of current celebrity, the interview argues that his creative output has:

Mr. Rudyard Kipling, the literary hero of the present hour, “the man who came from nowhere” as he himself remarks, and who a year ago was consciously nothing in the literary world, though even had he died then his works must have lived and spoken to posterity none the less (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).¹⁰⁴

The article implies disappointment, using Biblical allusion, that only enlightened members of his earliest, limited, largely Anglo-Indian audience recognised his prodigious talent from the first: ‘only now and then was an opinion expressed, and this by the most advanced spirits, that perchance they were entertaining an angel unawares.’¹⁰⁵ Not that his genius could be denied’ (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).¹⁰⁶ The article suggests that this situation is remedied by the date that ‘Celebrities at Home’ was

¹⁰¹ David Giles, *Illusions of Immortality* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000) 14.

¹⁰² Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 155.

¹⁰³ Edmonia Hill, “The Young Kipling,” *Kipling: Interviews and Recollections Volume 1*, ed., Harold Orel (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983) 95. This letter is cited as original publication in the *Atlantic Monthly* CLVII (Apr 1936).

¹⁰⁴ ‘Celebrities At Home’ *World* 2 Apr. 1890. 28/10-Various Book Reviews and Articles About Rudyard Kipling /Newspaper Cuttings 1888-1897.

¹⁰⁵ ‘Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it’ *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Heb. 13. 2.

¹⁰⁶ 28/10.

published. (In another context, Kipling acknowledges the inadequacy of his early audience. In his short story, ‘The Education of Otis Yeere’ [1888]¹⁰⁷, one of the main protagonists, Mrs Mallowe discusses the Anglo-Indians of her acquaintance: ‘There’s Colonel Blone, and General Grucher, and Sir Dugald Delane...All Heads of Departments, and all powerful...One by one, these men are worth something. Collectively, they’re just a mob of Anglo-Indians. Who cares for what Anglo-Indians say?’).¹⁰⁸

In several respects, the 1890 article’s connotation of ‘celebrity’ applies to Kipling in similar context to twenty-first century usage and contemporary theoretical application. For example, Talia Schaffer describes Kipling as ‘a celebrity when he was only in his twenties’.¹⁰⁹ However, she alludes to early ideas that Kipling’s attainment is due to merit. The 1890 article is adulatory, hyperbolic and exposes Kipling to public scrutiny. He is sensationalised, commodified¹¹⁰ and ‘read’ through media promotion and there is reflection on the rapid, unexpected nature of his success. Ideas of ‘special’ literary qualities or inherent talent are attributed to Kipling, a circumstance that continues throughout his life and this straddles the earlier and later definitions of celebrity: ‘Asked if he had always had the taste for writing, and meant to be an author, Mr. Kipling shrugs his shoulders expressively. “What else was I born for? The ink-pot was emptied into my veins and was bound to ooze out through my fingers” (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).¹¹¹ Kipling used the talents of an early ‘cultural intermediary’ in the form of Alexander Pollock Watt ‘the literary agent, who was [by 1890] at last getting his affairs in order’.¹¹² Watt enabled Kipling to engage with a new, emerging market.

¹⁰⁷ Page 85.

¹⁰⁸ Kipling (1994b) 7.

¹⁰⁹ Schaffer 485.

¹¹⁰ Turner 4.

¹¹¹ 28/10.

¹¹² Carrington (1986) 225.

Fortunately, his requirement for the services of Watt coincided with the inception of a role considered as indispensable by celebrities today.

In the same year as the ‘Celebrity’ article, the *Yorkshire Post* expressed similar sentiments about Kipling, his work and his meteoric rise to fame. Kipling was also judged favourably by some of his notable literary peers:

Mr. Rudyard Kipling, whom a twelvemonth ago probably few people had as much as heard of, is today acknowledged to be one of the most brilliant story writers and one of the greatest masters of English style now living. That fact has been generously placed on record by no less a judge than Mark Twain (28/10, 1888-1897, 68).¹¹³

(Mark Twain met Kipling in 1889-1890. Twain had: ‘a long interview with the twenty-four-year-old Rudyard Kipling, who had arrived uninvited at the great man’s home with a card reading simply “From Allahabad”. Kipling’s admiration – “He spoke on and I listened groveling [*sic*]” – was quickly reciprocated by Twain, who offered some rare praise of the younger man’s work’).¹¹⁴

A 1910 letter to Edmund Gosse responds to a request for Kipling to join and support ‘an “Academic Committee of English Letters” within the Royal Society of Literature’.¹¹⁵ He demonstrates that despite his fame and success, he would not judge a fellow writer such as Twain: ‘I am not a critic and to the best of my recollection have never directly or indirectly criticized the work of any man in my profession or associated myself with any body that has done so.’¹¹⁶ This is despite his belief that literary criticism is necessary to produce and maintain an outstanding body of English literary texts: ‘There is...urgent need in our calling of a Court of Appeal and Revision –

¹¹³ Untitled *Yorkshire Post* 6 Oct. 1890. 28/10.

¹¹⁴ John Bowen, “Perfect Liars,” rev. of *Mark Twain: The Complete Interviews*, ed. Gary Scharnhorst *Times Literary Supplement* 13th July 2007: 25 (No. 5441).

¹¹⁵ Thomas Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 3:1900-10* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1996) 424 n.1.

¹¹⁶ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmund Gosse,” 19 April 1910, Pinney (1996) 423-424.

a judicial body that can maintain and impose standards’).¹¹⁷ Kipling comments on the reception of his own work: ‘Speaking as a prisoner, or author, I desire the very best court that I can get – for my own sake, for the honour of my profession and the dignity and advancement of the English tongue.’¹¹⁸ In remarking that he is a ‘prisoner’ he feels bound by his gift and success. In his opinion literary criticism of his work, or that of others, echoes a legal process of weighing up evidence by a qualified body, before an accurate judgement can be given of its worth. This process is credible because it is under the auspices of the British establishment.

Kipling achieved the merit that contributed to celebrity status by rapidly producing a large body of highly successful published work¹¹⁹, with which huge numbers of his audience could engage:

Three authors during the last few years have awakened one morning and found themselves famous at an abnormally early age – Louis Stevenson, Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling...I hear that at present he is only twenty-four years old....Even if he were twice that age his talents would be remarkable, but as matters stand they look something akin to genius. (28/10, 1888-1897, 22).¹²⁰

Rider Haggard met Kipling in 1890, after Kipling’s return from India. They remained friends for the rest of their lives (appendix 11).¹²¹ In 1897 he praised Kipling’s poetic achievements: ‘I wish to offer you my congratulations on your poem in today’s Times [*sic*] which expresses very nobly what many of us feel but are unable to express...I do earnestly rejoice that a man has arisen who has the power to clothe these animating truths in fitting and influential words....I hope...you will live and have strength to

¹¹⁷ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmund Gosse,” 19 April 1910, Pinney (1996) 423-424.

¹¹⁸ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmund Gosse,” 19 April 1910, Pinney (1996) 423-424.

¹¹⁹ In July 1884, ‘The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows’ was his ‘first published short story’ in the *Civil & Military Gazette* Page 2.

¹²⁰ ‘A Leading Novelist’ *Liverpool Daily Post* an undated article. The date is 1889/1890 because Kipling is aged 24 years old. 28/10.

¹²¹ H. Rider Haggard, “My Friend Rudyard Kipling,” *Kipling: Interviews and Recollections Volume 1*, ed., Harold Orel (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983) 145.

preach more of such splendid sermons' (22/38 File 22/49 Document 9).¹²² Although Rider Haggard does not name the poem, he refers to 'Recessional' which was 'written for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897...and published in *The Times* that year....The poem – in which Kipling as poet adopts the role of guardian of the national spirit – solemnly admonishes England against forgetting her responsibilities and ethical identity'.¹²³ (This poem will be closely read in a subsequent chapter).

Kipling was celebrated, famous and a literary figure from an early age. His work and status were cross-cultural and held in common across all sectors of class and society, including connection to the Royal Family (appendix 12): '[A]s the most famous writer in the world, he had to sort a postbag stuffed with the petitions and manuscripts of "the helpless, the crank, the imbecile and the lazy", the less mad of them receiving dutiful but unvarnished replies'.¹²⁴ (appendix 13). The vast number of cuttings from newspapers and articles about Kipling indicated by the examples used in this chapter, comments from writers such as Twain, Rider Haggard, Orwell and Somerset Maugham and the tone of Kipling's obituaries combine to indicate that he can be read as a celebrity within a new understanding of an international man of letters. His rise was very rapid, yet his fame was forecast to be of long duration. The obituaries demonstrate that this forecast was accurate: 'As a canonical author, Kipling is unusual in having a large and admiring public that is outside university departments of English literature and, to some extent, detached from prevailing critical formulae and assumptions'.¹²⁵

From his earliest years as a writer gaining renown, Kipling's relationship with his public and the status that this brought was problematic for him. Occasionally, he

¹²² H. Rider Haggard in Norfolk, "To Rudyard Kipling," 17 July 1897 22/38.

¹²³ Francis O' Gorman, ed., *Victorian Poetry: An Annotated Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 650.

¹²⁴ Mick Imlah, "Cold Days For Elsie," rev. of *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volumes 5 & 6* ed., Thomas Pinney *Times Literary Supplement* 7 April 2006: 4 (No. 5375).

¹²⁵ John Coates, *The Day's Work: Kipling and the Idea of Sacrifice* (London: Associated University Presses, 1997) 13.

appears ambitious for success, as he illustrates in 1889: ‘An Australian paper offers me 5 guineas...for anything I choose to write. That’s pretty decent and might be thought over but I do want the American connection above all things and I mean to get it.’¹²⁶ In April 1890 he gave the *World* sufficient cooperation to publish the article, ‘Celebrities at Home’, as an insight into his life. But at times in the summer of 1889 he felt differently. He describes his feelings about an encounter with members of his American readership at two private functions. His attitude towards them is derogatory, dismissive and immature, although such immaturity reflects his age at the time; he was still only twenty four years old. It implies disillusionment with his burgeoning fame and a high level of self-criticism. He seems bemused at the rapidity of his ascent and extent of his influence: ‘Nothing has startled me more than the difference between “Young Kipling of the Pi” and “Rudyard Kipling the Indian Editor.” I own I enjoyed it while it lasts, but afterwards it is all dust and ashes in my mouth’.¹²⁷ A note added in 1924 by the recipient, comments: ‘Herewith the San Francisco letter of the early days...telling how R[udyard] K[ipling] felt at his first ovation...I think in his heart he feels just the same. Fame means nothing except for the moment’ (16/38 File 16/4 Document 60).¹²⁸

An encounter with his aristocratic English readership in 1890, four months before the publication of the *World* article, generates similar sentiments to those expressed in the June 1889 letter. Kipling is even more sarcastic and pejorative. He recognises the transient nature of the praise and mocks his own social position:

I went to tea in the “hoight av society” at a place in Stanhope Gate and was shown off to a lot of people. Among ’em three...backed me into a corner and stood over me pouring melted compliments into my throat.... And through it all I kept thinking to myself: – “Unless it happened that I was the fashion for the moment – to be treated like a purple monkey on

¹²⁶ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmonia Hill,” [early November] 1889, Pinney (1990a) 358-359.

¹²⁷ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmonia Hill,” 15-16 June 1889, Pinney (1990a) 317-318.

¹²⁸ 16/38-K/P: Correspondence: Hi-L.

a yellow stick for just so long as I amuse you, you'd let me die of want on your doorsteps".¹²⁹

Over the next decade Kipling continued the momentum of the previous ten years and wrote and published many of his most successful and popular books and verses. These included *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses* (1892), *The Jungle Book* (1894), *The Second Jungle Book* (1895), *Captains Courageous* (1897), *Stalky & Co.* (1899) and influential poems such as 'Recessional' (1897) (this important poem will be discussed in depth in a subsequent chapter) and 'The White Man's Burden' (1899).¹³⁰ But an inner conflict of public versus private self continued: 'celebrity status always implies a split between a private self and a public self' in which the public self is a conscious presentation which can mask and confuse the private self. This may be psychologically disturbing and can lead to the feeling of engulfment of the 'real' self by the manufactured self.¹³¹ This was intensified by personal tragedy in March 1899. (fig. 4). Caroline Kipling describes the culmination of the dreadful events: 'Mar 5 I saw Josephine 3 times today, morning and afternoon and at 10.30. p.m. for the last time. She was conscious and sent her love to "Daddy and all". 6. Josephine left us at 6.30 this morning.' (File Ads. 40 Document Ad. 40, 23) (appendix 14).¹³² Josephine was Kipling's eldest 'loveliest and favourite' child, born in 1892. She was only six years old when she died.¹³³

¹²⁹ Rudyard Kipling, "To Caroline Taylor," 2 January 1890, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 2: 1890-99*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan press Ltd, 1990b) 5.

¹³⁰ 'Published in *The Times*, 4 February 1899; collected in *The Five Nations* (1903)...The poem was addressed to the people of the United States, who were involved with Spain in a war over Cuba' Page 184.

¹³¹ Rojek 11.

¹³² (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

¹³³ Gilmour 141.

DEATH OF JOSEPHINE KIPLING.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

New York, Monday, 9 15 a.m.

Josephine, Mr. Kipling's elder daughter, died at 20 past six this morning at the residence of Miss Deforest, to which she was removed when first taken ill.

[The earlier reports received yesterday stated that the patient's condition was no longer critical, was indeed out of danger. Elsie Kipling's condition is satisfactory.]

Mr. Kipling slept naturally during the greater part of the night. He has not, as yet, taken any solid food, and it may be a week before he will be able to do so. Meanwhile he is subsisting entirely on beef extracts, milk, and other fluid nourishment.

It has been decided not to inform Mr. Kipling of his child's death for several days.

MESSAGE FROM THE KAISER.

Amongst the messages of sympathy one of Sunday's date was from the German Emperor. It was addressed to Mrs. Kipling, and read as follows:—"As an enthusiastic admirer of the unrivalled books of your husband, I am most anxious for news about his health. God grant that he may be spared to you and to all who are thankful to him for the soul-stirring way in which he has sung about the deeds of our great common race."

Fig. 4 Press notice announcing the death of Kipling's eldest daughter, Josephine – hand dated March 6th 1899.

Due to his own severe illness he was unaware of her death for several days.

(19/38 File 19/13 Document 9 (1) & 9 (4)).

Kipling's father describes the lasting effects that this tragedy had on the couple: '[they]...found going back to the Elms much harder and more painful than they had imagined. The house and garden are full of the lost child'. (1/38 File 1/9 Document 4).¹³⁴ Rudyard bitterly reflects in July 1899: 'Be thankful that you have never had a child to lose. I thought I knew something of what grief meant till that came to me. My "fame" never was of any use to me anyway, and now it seems more of an irony than ever.'¹³⁵

His cousin, Hugh Poynter, describes disturbing incidents relating to Kipling's celebrity status and its interference with his ordinary life. These incidents resemble

¹³⁴ John Lockwood Kipling, nicknamed 'The Buddha', "To Miss Norton," 22 July 1899 1/38-John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence.

¹³⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "To Edmonia Hill," 30 July 1899, Pinney (1990b) 375-376.

media and public behaviour common towards ‘celebrities’ today. They engendered a similar response: ‘Kipling was driven from Rottingdean, in Sussex, by the overwhelming attentions of the public, who came in carriage loads and bus loads from Brighton to catch a glimpse of him or peep through his garden gate’ (29/38 File 29/5 Un-numbered document).¹³⁶ Compelled to depart from Rottingdean: ‘on 10 June [1902] Rudyard’s solicitor cousin, George Macdonald, negotiated the purchase of the house called ‘Bateman’s’ [*sic*] at Burwash [East Sussex], with thirty-three acres of land’.¹³⁷ Five months later, Kipling gives a proud description of his new situation:

We left Rottingdean because Rottingdean was getting too populated... Then we discovered England which we had never done before.... and went to live in it. England is a wonderful land. It is the most marvellous of all foreign countries that I have ever been in. It is made up of trees and green fields and mud and the Gentry: and at last I’m one of the Gentry!¹³⁸

His new location offers him the seclusion that the pressures of celebrity status demands.

He adopts an interesting position. Fame and its trappings infuriate him, but the letter intimates that the opportunity to improve his social standing does not. This presents a paradox, since it is well documented that Kipling rejected official recognition from the British establishment on several occasions: ‘[He] was offered the Laureateship in 1895, but refused it. Kipling refused a knighthood in 1899 and the Order of Merit in 1922’.¹³⁹ This was due to his desire to express himself as he chose on any subject to his own timetable, unfettered by overt political loyalties.¹⁴⁰ Perhaps Kipling wished to embrace the concept of a Victorian country gentleman of means and his changed situation made this possible. Hugh Poynter implies this: ‘Kipling went to Bateman’s... There he lived

¹³⁶ ‘Rudyard Kipling a Personal Appreciation’ *Sydney Morning Herald* 25 Jan. 1936. 29/38-K/P: Loose Cuttings.

¹³⁷ Carrington (1986) 386.

¹³⁸ Rudyard Kipling, “To Charles Eliot Norton,” 30 November-8 December 1902, Pinney (1996) 113-115.

¹³⁹ R. T. Jones, ed., *The Collected Poems of Rudyard Kipling* (Ware: Wordsworth Poetry Library, 2001) v.

¹⁴⁰ Carrington (1986) 460.

the life of a writer and a country squire' (29/38 File 29/5 Un-numbered document).¹⁴¹ He never received any form of official title to augment his status largely, although not entirely, due to his personal choice (appendix 15). This exemplifies his public versus private conflict. It was inevitable that the eminent position attained by Kipling and his work would attract discussion of honours. However, there are indications that he was considered temperamentally and politically unsuitable for such distinctions, by those who would bestow them:

I don't think my Father [Prime Minister Asquith] ever offered R[udyard] K[ipling] the Laureateship...(tho' he did think of doing so)...The obvious choice was Kipling...What weighed with him was the very reason you (Lord Baldwin) give – that Kipling was inspired and could not write to order"...In 1913 Bridges was appointed by Asquith as being "more likely to write to order" and fall into line than R[udyard] K[ipling] who, it was thought would probably refuse again. In 1930 Ramsay Macdonald would not have thought R[udyard] K[ipling] possible nor would he have been allowed by his party to make the appointment (File Ads. 40 Document Ad. 40, H7).¹⁴²

The exception to Kipling's distaste for establishment recognition was academic honours, which he accepted. In 1907, Kipling described to his son events at Oxford, when Rudyard became a Doctor of Letters. Evidently Kipling enjoyed the ceremony, although there is discomfiture in the vivid and humorous description:

a splendid person in a gown would come in and lead away several of us...we who were left behind heard the roars of applause and shouting from a multitude in the distance – exactly like prisoners in a desert island hearing savages eating their companions. This was very fine....we could just see a figure all in gold...sitting high on a throne. That was the Chancellor of the University in his robes of office, sitting on his stately seat, ready to welcome the men who were getting their degrees.¹⁴³

A prestigious award was accepted in December 1907, when Kipling received the Nobel Prize for Literature: 'It was a very great honour....It was necessary to go to

¹⁴¹ 29/38.

¹⁴² Violet Bonham Carter, "To Lord Baldwin [?]," No date given. Adds 40/38.

¹⁴³ Rudyard Kipling, "To John Kipling," 27 June 1907, Pinney (1996) 242-244.

Stockholm. Even while we were on the sea, the old King of Sweden died. We reached the city...to find all the world in evening dress, the official mourning, which is curiously impressive. Next afternoon, the prize-winners were taken to be presented to the new King'.¹⁴⁴ (fig. 5).

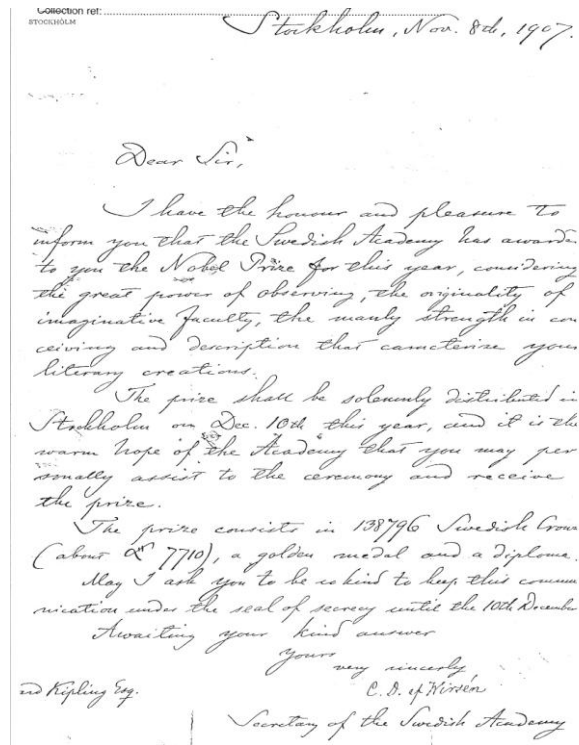


Fig. 5 Letter from the Swedish Academy informing Kipling of his Nobel Prize for Literature (20/38 File 20/24).

Despite his acceptance of the award he resents the intrusive public acclaim which accompanies it: 'This solemn injunction of secrecy on the part of the [Nobel Prize] Committee seems to be what Shakespeare called "a damned farce". I have already been decimated by agile Swedish journalists demanding locks of my golden hair and the bulk of the continental press has written articles on my virtuous life! Let us then thank God in a whisper that we live in Burwash'.¹⁴⁵ Twenty four years later he was also

¹⁴⁴ Thomas Pinney, ed., *Rudyard Kipling: Something of Myself and Other Autobiographical Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004a) 117.

¹⁴⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "To Colonel H.W. Feilden," [6] December 1907, Pinney (1996) 283. Pinney notes that Kipling has incorrectly dated this letter, since he sailed for Stockholm on the 7th December.

‘admitted...to full membership as Honorary Fellow of Magdalene [*sic*] College [Cambridge]’.¹⁴⁶

Inevitably during their lengthy residence at Bateman’s, whenever Kipling and his wife ventured from its seclusion, resented intrusions into their privacy were liable to occur. He complains about an encounter at the theatre:

[W]e went to Galsworthy’s new play “The Show”...and a U.S.A. person (female) next me attacked Mum when I went out to smoke, saying she had heard that I was some sort of eminent person and had certainly seen my photo in the mags and please would M. tell....[O]n my return the person attacked me and got no special satisfaction. They are beyond all known limits, those persons!¹⁴⁷

In letters to Lionel Dunsterville, Kipling demonstrates that elements of being famous were always anathema to him, including the success of his writing and the consequences of that success. Dunsterville ‘was an early worker for the formation of a Kipling Society, which...[Kipling] regarded with gloomy distaste...Since 1919...J.H.C. Brooking had been trying to bring enthusiasts for Kipling’s works together. In 1922 he persuaded...[Dunsterville] to lend a hand...A convening committee...met in 1923, but it was not till 1927 that the Society was formally constituted’.¹⁴⁸ Following its foundation Dunsterville ‘became the society’s first president’.¹⁴⁹ Kipling protests: ‘I’m blowed if I see why this society “has got to be.” All “poet” societies make the wretched godfather of ’em more ridiculous than he would be even naturally. Wait till I’m dead and then you can start up.’¹⁵⁰ Kipling’s objections to a society devoted solely to himself and his work remained over several years, although later correspondence recognises the difficulty of this stance. Included is a letter to Dunsterville implying that

¹⁴⁶ Carrington (1986) 561.

¹⁴⁷ Rudyard Kipling, “To Elsie Bambridge,” 4 July 1925, Pinney (2004b) 242-244.

¹⁴⁸ Carrington (1986) 566.

¹⁴⁹ Gilmour 286.

¹⁵⁰ Rudyard Kipling, “To Major-General Lionel Charles Dunsterville,” [19 December 1922], Pinney (2004b) 133.

Kipling, despite his objections, had attended a Kipling Society function. It proved to be as distasteful as he had suspected. One remark he makes is important: ‘when a man has given all that he has to give to the public in his work, he is the keener to keep for himself the little (and it is *very* little) that remains....[T]hough I know that you write in jest about “whims and foibles” – I explain in earnest how unutterably repugnant the whole thing is to me.’¹⁵¹ Coates discusses Kipling’s concerns: ‘Recent critics have stressed Kipling’s extreme reticence and his suppression of emotional material...The secretive Kipling must have had a great deal to hide and what he was concealing must certainly have stood in contradiction to what he seemed to be saying, to the surface of his art’.¹⁵² His work had attained fame and notoriety with almost no current, contemporary equivalent and in his lifetime he detested this. It is as if he wished that he could be completely detached from his body of work. One final letter is noteworthy. Written to Dunsterville, it suggests that Kipling, although not reconciled to the idea of a Kipling Society had become resigned to it: ‘It will be all right about the Society, on the lines that you send in & which I return. As you know I never pretended to like the idea but if its done it’s done’. (14/38 Files 14/51 & 14/52 Documents Un-numbered and 49).¹⁵³ It is difficult to judge the sincerity of his comments and whether this apparent resignation masked an element of gratification.

Kipling notes in *Something of Myself* that: ‘I had learned to distinguish between the peremptory notions of my Daemon, and the ‘carry over’ or induced electricity, which comes of what you might call mere ‘frictional’ writing’.¹⁵⁴ He describes his ‘Daemon’ as an inner voice which controls the quality and quantity of his creative output. In a

¹⁵¹ Rudyard Kipling, “To Major-General Lionel Charles Dunsterville,” 20 November 1927, Pinney (2004b) 393-394.

¹⁵² Coates 24.

¹⁵³ Rudyard Kipling, “To Lionel [Major-General Dunsterville],” 11 February 1931 14/38-K/P: Correspondence: A-D.

¹⁵⁴ Kipling (1964) 113.

review of the book, the *Times Literary Supplement* remarks: ‘These pages of autobiography are probably the last that we shall have from the pen of Rudyard Kipling...[There is] evidence here...of Kipling’s literary honesty... the refusal to “follow up a success,” which he declares was one of the clauses in his contract with his Daemon — “for by this sin fell Napoleon and a few others.”’ (28/17, 1937, 36).¹⁵⁵ Celebrity and fame were mainly unwelcome, because they celebrated something that he felt was undeserved, the possession of qualities and literary gifts that he considered inherent and not controlled by him.

It is paradoxical that part of Kipling’s dislike of celebrity and antagonism towards it, was because of the concept of an ‘innate or natural quality’¹⁵⁶ in a famous subject. Instead of cultivating and capitalising on such a quality, Kipling dismisses it, arguing that if a quality is ‘natural’ then the fame it attracts is worthless, since the host is merely a channel or catalyst. If a subject is born with a ‘gift’, in what way could use of this be a credit to that subject? Rider Haggard describes a visit to Kipling in 1918: ‘I commented on the fact that he at any rate had wide fame...He thrust the idea away with a gesture of disgust. ‘What is it worth?’...Moreover he went on to show that anything any of us did well was no credit to us; that it came from somewhere else, that we were, in fact, only telephone wires’.¹⁵⁷ (appendix 16). Occasionally, Kipling and Caroline enjoyed the privileges that fame, prominent family and social relationships brought to them. His celebrated position allowed him to exploit pleasant social opportunities, but this was the exception rather than the rule: ‘Thanks to your hospitality in every way

¹⁵⁵ *Times Literary Supplement* 20 Feb. 1937: a review of *Something of Myself* 28/17.

¹⁵⁶ Turner 4.

¹⁵⁷ Lilius Rider Haggard, “Kipling’s Advice to Rider Haggard,” *Kipling: Interviews and Recollections Volume I*, ed., Harold Orel (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983) 149.

and at every turn the Coronation was for Carrie and me made most delightfully easy...we found your name opened all doors'.¹⁵⁸

Kipling attained an unprecedented level of fame, celebrity and success during his lifetime. He could claim relationships with some of the most important political and artistic figures of his day. In addition to the letters in this chapter which indicate many influential correspondents, he numbered amongst his friends and acquaintances such diverse individuals as Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Milner, High Commissioner to South Africa, Sir Arthur Sullivan and Lord Kitchener. Kipling mocked such impressive biographical material: 'Lord! Lord! What a work of wonder is a man's life – after he is dead. I don't think any of us could recognize our own biographies if we read 'em. Which increases my respect for the Recording Angel' (17/38 File 17/14 Document 66/71).¹⁵⁹ It was not only the necessity for privacy but '[w]ith a view to frustrating biography, he set about the destruction of many of his own papers, and those of his parents, and wrote an autobiography almost comically deficient in its description of his life events'.¹⁶⁰ Kipling's success was due to a culmination of crucial factors, several of which have been explored in this chapter. The mechanisation of the press guaranteed new and additional circulation, with increasing geographical spread. This ensured that the press had greater influence and these major factors combined in the dissemination of his work and his consequent fame. Due to his early background as an 'insider', he knew the ways in which the press could be used to his advantage.

Also, English had become a world-wide language and levels of literacy were being addressed. Late nineteenth-century attention to literacy was rooted in the idea that

¹⁵⁸ Rudyard Kipling, "To Stanley Baldwin," [23 June 1911], *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 4: 1911-19*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1999) 36-37.

¹⁵⁹ Rudyard Kipling, "To Mr. Norton," 5 December 1900, 17/38-K/P: Correspondence: M-Unidentified Addressees.

¹⁶⁰ Jad Adams, *Kipling* (London: Haus Books, 2005)1.

countries with high levels of illiteracy were considered to be essentially backward: 'By 1880 the 'developed' world consisted overwhelmingly of countries or regions in which the majority of the male and increasingly the female population was literate'.¹⁶¹ By the late nineteenth century '[m]ass education...was...secured in the developed countries by increasingly universal primary schooling by or under the supervision of states'.¹⁶² Raised standards of literacy, Kipling's ability to address audiences of different social levels and his unconventional background ensured his engagement with a vast audience, including a non-English audience. His family became influential and well-connected. His unconventional upbringing gave him the curiosity and access to material which provided subjects that were well received by his audience and ensured that he attained fame and became the 'apostle of the empire, the embodiment of imperial aspiration, and...the prophet of national decline'.¹⁶³ Such heritage also generated curiosity in the 'exotic' in terms of himself and his work.

Undoubtedly, he had the inherent, indefinable characteristics of 'celebrity' and there were major elements of good fortune in his career, since he took advantage of favourable circumstances. The idea that luck was part of Kipling's success is implied in an article published in 1937, in the *Cambridge Review*:

When the fictitious legend of the "naughty nineties" is forgotten, Kipling's works...will be quarried for the materials from which a truer description of that age can be constructed; for the secret of his astonishing career is his exposition of the dominant mood of the period between the 1887 Jubilee and the 1906 Election. It would be worth while for some social historian to explain how this ill-educated, sharp-eyed boy, from a third-rate newspaper office in an up-country Indian town, first laid bare the workings of the Empire to a nation in an expansionist mood; then provided the age of world-exploitation with brilliantly effective propaganda; then finally retired to his own acres (28/17, 1937, 3).¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914* (London: Abacus, 2003) 24.

¹⁶² Hobsbawm 25.

¹⁶³ Gilmour x.

¹⁶⁴ *Cambridge Review* 23 Apr. 1937. 28/17.

A memoir, written more than forty years after Kipling's death, illustrates the intensity of the fame that he eschewed:

Most of his correspondence was interesting. People seemed to write to him on every conceivable subject from all over the world, especially the United States...Countless requests came for his autograph. He would sign these by the hundred at a time, to be sent out when required: if return postage had been received. The letters that I particularly recall were one asking him to rewrite the Psalms, and the other comparing him to Shakespeare to the detriment of Shakespeare. The first he did not feel qualified to do and with the second he did not agree...Many people think of R.K as arrogant, but in my personal dealings with him he displayed the humility which is an attribute of really great men (File Ad. 8).¹⁶⁵

This chapter has begun the task of exploring the ways in which Kipling began to generate and maintain his reputation. He provides evidence in his letters that he is aware of his inherent talent for writing and that fame, influence and popularity are transient. These concepts provide early motivation for him to begin a process of building a reputation that would endure. Without doubt, his initial journalistic apprenticeship in India provided him with his earliest skills and tools in this regard. His correspondence makes it clear that he observes and understands the ways in which the press, expanded through newly available technologies, could be used to shape the ideas of a vast, diverse and impressionable audience. His deliberate manipulation of the press and of his audience allows him to present himself and his work in whichever light he chooses. Both Adams and Coates comment that he maintained rigorous control over as many aspects of his life story as he could. By the end of his life the reviews and correspondence used throughout this chapter indicate that he is firmly part of the establishment, even if as Orwell remarks, Kipling is despised by the enlightened.

¹⁶⁵ This is a memoir of working at Bateman's, signed by Cecily Nicholson. She joined Kipling's staff at Bateman's in 1932 as secretary to Caroline Kipling, since Caroline undertook the secretarial duties of her husband. Miss Nicholson remarks that 'Almost all the work came to me through Mrs. K., hardly anything coming direct from R.K. It entailed a vast amount of correspondence and the typing of all R.K.'s prose and verse'. It is noted as written in August 1978. (Box un-numbered) Adds 1-36/38.

Chapter 2: Kipling's Early Influences

Family, India, Empire and Early Success

The previous chapter examined the level of fame and influence attained by Kipling in his lifetime. This chapter explores the early factors which inspired and shaped Kipling's creative output and underpinned his later reputation. In 1891, Kipling's father wrote: 'don't you think, when one employs a distinguished author to write for one, he might have combed out the sentences and put a little more elegance and art into it?' (1/38 File 1/2 un-numbered document).¹⁶⁶ The comment disguises the close, lifelong relationship between father and son and ignores the profound effect that John Lockwood Kipling had on Rudyard and his work. As the younger Kipling remarks in a letter written after his father's death in 1911: 'my father was more to me than most men are to their sons: and now that I have no one to talk or to write to I find myself desolate.'¹⁶⁷ An article about Rudyard from 1890, confirms his affection for his father: 'All I have, all I am, I owe entirely to him' (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).¹⁶⁸ The article adds 'indeed it is very evident that the success which has come to him is most highly valued for the sake of the people it will so deeply please.' (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).¹⁶⁹ The positive influence of his father provided an integral component to Kipling's early work. This was acknowledged in public discussion of the young man: '[The] creator of Terence Mulvaney was born and brought up in an atmosphere of literature and art...[H]e had barely entered his teens when it became apparent that he was a boy of no ordinary gifts....some of his verses, printed when he was fourteen, manifested an extraordinary command of language, and a precocious...insight into the recesses, not

¹⁶⁶ John Lockwood Kipling, "To Mr. Deforest," 31 March 1891 1/38-John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence.

¹⁶⁷ Rudyard Kipling, "To Edmonia Hill," 10 February 1911, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 4: 1911-19*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1999) 12-13.

¹⁶⁸ 'Celebrities At Home' *World* 2 Apr. 1890. 28/10-Various Book Reviews and Articles About Rudyard Kipling /Newspaper Cuttings 1888-1897.

¹⁶⁹ 28/10.

always the most pleasant, of the human heart' (28/11, 1891-1895, 1).¹⁷⁰ The importance of Kipling's poems is inferred and the article alludes to three of his major characters, in his earliest soldier portrayals. In the tale 'The Three Musketeers', first published in the *Civil & Military Gazette* on the 11th March 1887 and in *Plain Tales from the Hills* in 1888,¹⁷¹ Mulvaney and his friends Ortheris and Learoyd are described by the narrator as 'Privates in B Company of a Line Regiment, and personal friends of mine. Collectively, I think...they are the worst men in the regiment so far as genial blackguardism goes'.¹⁷² (An anonymous review of *Plain Tales from the Hills*, published in the *Saturday Review* of 9th June 1888 states: 'Mr. Kipling knows and appreciates the English in India, and is a born story-teller and a man of humour into the bargain'.¹⁷³ 'The Three Musketeers' is the first appearance of these soldier-characters about whom there are eighteen tales, four in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, seven in *Soldiers Three* [1888], three in *Life's Handicap* [1891], three in *Many Inventions* [1893], and one in *Actions and Reactions* [1909].)¹⁷⁴ Even at this stage there is sympathetic imagery of the enlisted man.

His father provided criticism of Kipling's writing, although John Lockwood doubts his critical abilities: 'I am too near, too little of a judge and too personally interested in his eager, vivid life to do much' (1/38 File 1/1 Un-numbered document).¹⁷⁵ The comment illustrates the importance of close family relationships: 'Ruddy let me see your note on his *City of Dreadful Night* [1885]¹⁷⁶ and I was delighted to mark your advice. His

¹⁷⁰ *Echo* 31 Jan. 1891 [?] 28/11-Various Book Reviews And Articles Etc. About Rudyard Kipling 1891-1895: Newspaper Cuttings.

¹⁷¹ Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 128.

¹⁷² Rudyard Kipling, *Plain Tales from the Hills*, ed., Andrew Rutherford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 53.

¹⁷³ N/A, "Plain Tales from the Hills Reaches England," *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 36.

¹⁷⁴ Page 128.

¹⁷⁵ John Lockwood Kipling, "To Margaret Burne-Jones," 10 [?] October 1885 1/38.

¹⁷⁶ This story was published in the '*Civil & Military Gazette*, 10 September 1885; *Life's Handicap* (1891)' Page 77.

Chief gives similar counsel, but where you gently suggest, that unsympathetic one snarls....The temptations to vulgar smartness, to over emphasis and other vices are tremendous....anything from you or his aunt would sink deep....some of us here hesitate to express opinions and we talk in the plainest, frankest way. So the truest kindness is to speak and spare not' (1/38 File 1/1 Un-numbered document).¹⁷⁷ Maternal rapport provided encouragement and criticism and the *Echo* of 31st January 1891 [?] discusses Kipling's alleged description of his mother:

If there be anything in heredity, Mr. Rudyard Kipling is an example of it. Who is the "wittiest woman in India" to whom he dedicates one of his books? Why, of course, his mother as everybody from Bombay to Lahore and Simla is well aware. It is not filial love and admiration alone that have prompted the words we have quoted (28/11, 1891-1895, 1).¹⁷⁸

(Andrew Rutherford denies that it is his mother to whom Kipling refers: 'it has often been asserted, notably by Kipling's sister Trix, that this dedication was addressed to their mother, who was indeed well known for her ready wit and gift of repartee. Trix was, however, an unreliable witness in her old age, and it is now established beyond doubt that the dedication was addressed to the wife of Major F.C. Burton of the 1st Bengal Cavalry'. Mrs. Burton provided the model for Mrs. Hauksbee, a formidable and recurring character in several of the tales.)¹⁷⁹ These important relationships extended from Kipling's close family to distant contacts and influences, both relatives and friends. For example, Kipling was linked to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood because 'his mother...belonged to the pre-Raphaelite circle [*sic*] and was on terms of friendship with the Morris and the Rossetti as well as with her brother-in-law, Burne-Jones'.¹⁸⁰ These friendships still existed during Kipling's early life.

¹⁷⁷ J/L/K, "To M/B/J," 1/38.

¹⁷⁸ *Echo* 31 Jan. 1891 [?] 28/11.

¹⁷⁹ Kipling (2001) 252.

¹⁸⁰ Charles Carrington, ed., *The Complete Barrack-Room Ballads of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1973) 4.

John Lockwood's remark implies parental pride and acknowledges that Rudyard had earned fame based in his literary output. Writing to Edith Plowden (appendix 17), John Lockwood comments:

I sent you a copy of the boy's Departmental Ditties. This queer demi official docket turned out very successfully...and he had the satisfaction of hearing all sorts of complimentary things. Lord Dufferin,¹⁸¹ ... professed to be greatly struck by the unconscious qualities of combination of satire with youth [?] and delicacy also with what he calls our boy's "infallible ear" for rhythm and cadence (1/38 File 1/10 Un-numbered document).¹⁸²

'On 9 February 1886 Kipling began a series of lightly satiric verses on official English life in India, published at irregular intervals in the *C[ivil and] M[ilitary] G[azette]*...under the title of "Departmental Ditties." In them Kipling could show off that knowing familiarity with official life and all its weaknesses.'¹⁸³ The original publication of the series was in the *Gazette* from 5 February to 13 April [1886]. Later the poems appeared in an anonymously published volume *Departmental Ditties*, in Lahore. A subsequent Calcutta edition had Kipling's name on the title page.¹⁸⁴ This marked some of the earliest public successes of Kipling's verse:

In '85 I began a series of tales in the *Civil and Military Gazette* which were called *Plain Tales from the Hills*. They came in when and as padding was needed. In '86 also I published a collection of newspaper verses on Anglo-Indian life, called *Departmental Ditties*, which, dealing with things known and suffered by many people were well received....These things were making for me the beginnings of a name even unto Bengal.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Dufferin arrived in India in 1884 to take up the post of Viceroy Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986) 94.

¹⁸² John Lockwood Kipling, "To Miss E. Plowden," 1884/1885[?] 1/38. The date 1884 is erased, but a note (of unknown authorship) suggests that the date is 1886, since the letter mentions 'Departmental Ditties'.

¹⁸³ Thomas Pinney & David Alan Richards, eds., *Kipling and His First Publisher: Correspondence of Rudyard Kipling with Thacker, Spink & Co. 1886-1890* (High Wycombe: Rivendale Press, 2001) 2.

¹⁸⁴ Page 3.

¹⁸⁵ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1964) 68.

Correspondence to his Aunt highlights these comments and underlines the precociousness of his talent and how, from the beginning of his serious writing, this was connected to his newspaper work. He indicates an ambivalent and disdainful attitude towards his readers:

I'm here at Simla...as Special Correspondent for the Civil and Military Gazette. I told you that for my work at the Durbar they raised my screw to £420 English or £35 a month....I try to give my paper as near to £40 a month of editorial notes; reviews; articles and social Simla letters....I have been working on Indian stories for other papers – notably the *Pioneer* which has professed its willingness to take anything I might choose to send. I've sent them a mixed assortment of verses; and some prose stuff. All of which have taken the public's somewhat dense soul and been largely quoted....Also the *Calcutta Review* has written very sweetly about a poem of mine – in blank verse – which appears in the August number...Like the Quarterlies the C[alcutta] R[eview] isn't much read but it gives one a certain amount of prestige to have a foot in it.¹⁸⁶

In April 1885 following his success as a Special Correspondent, Kipling was sent by the *Civil and Military Gazette* to write a series of reports on the 'much trumpeted meeting between the Amir [Abdurrahman of Afganistan] and the new Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. The encounter...had been elevated to the status of a durbar'.¹⁸⁷ The letter to his Aunt acknowledges that at this chronological moment [1885], his literary and poetic writing is integral and dependent upon his journalistic output and extensive geographical reach of the popular press. His tone suggests that he is aware of his burgeoning success and fame and that he requires a suitable reward. He grasped the importance of this concept by the time he returned to England in 1889:

A business day...about...royalties....As the 4th Edition of the D[eartmental] D[itties]...will be out in a fortnight I shall begin the new year a little better than I had hoped. Everything connected with the Railway Series (fig. 6) appears to have been infamously mismanaged, but it's a consolation to learn that one book at least will be got ready. You've no idea of the demand for it in England...Monday also brought

¹⁸⁶ Rudyard Kipling, "To Edith Macdonald," 30 July-1 August 1885, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 1: 1872-89*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990a) 81-85.

¹⁸⁷ Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 104.

me a letter from James Payne demanding short stories for the *Cornhill*....My system is simple – the shorter the yarn the longer the price. And I get it!¹⁸⁸.

(Emile Edward Moreau was the senior partner at A. G. [sic] Wheeler & Co., who published the *Pioneer*. He ‘was responsible for putting Kipling on the international map. It was Moreau, never acknowledged by Kipling, who proposed that he should publish some of the newspaper stories in book form...Sampson Low published these books, which had designs by Lockwood, in England in 1890’.¹⁸⁹ During 1888, the *Pioneer* of Allahabad, issued seven booklets, in paper wrappers, of short collections of Kipling tales. Each booklet cost one rupee and the series ran under the title of the *Indian Railway Library*. Later, the booklets were revised and reissued as collections.¹⁹⁰ Sampson Low & Co. was the English publisher of the *Indian Railway Library*. The company published a two volume collection in London in 1892.)¹⁹¹



Fig. 6 Cover illustration for *The Story of the Gadsbys*, No. 2 of the *Indian Railway Library* Series (3/38 File 3/5).

¹⁸⁸ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmonia Hill,” 3-25 December 1889, Pinney (1990a) 369-378. The letter is sub-headed: ‘The Diary of a Bad boy (Sadly interrupted)’.

¹⁸⁹ Martin Seymour-Smith, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Macdonald Queen Anne Press, 1989) 91.

¹⁹⁰ Page 42.

¹⁹¹ Page 42.

A second letter to his aunt, written in December 1886 seventeen months after the first, discusses the rapid progress he has made in terms of professional and literary development. He appreciates that his journalism, whilst still important as a source of income, is less significant to his career. This December letter is less pejorative about his newly acquired readership. Previously, Kipling made scathing remarks about them to his Indian publishers, Thacker, Spink and Co.: ‘The Anglo-Indian public are mostly fools and lazy. They want a book shoved under their noses and brought to their very doors before they will take the trouble to buy it’.¹⁹² By December he writes:

I wrote a set of twelve rhymes, bad rhymes and cheaply cynical, dealing with Anglo-Indian life in the Plains and these were added to others and christened “Departmental Ditties and other Verses” and sent out into the world in a cover imitating an official docket...The little booklet just hit the taste of the Anglo-Indian public for it told them about what they knew. The first 500 copies sold off like smoke in less than a month and I got some lively reviews comparing me to Mortimer Collins, Lowell and all sorts of people whose shoes-latchets I am not worthy to unloose.¹⁹³

(Kipling’s final remark recalls the words of John the Baptist: ‘There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.’)¹⁹⁴ The knowledge of his Anglo-Indian readership about a subject in the verses is shown in ‘The Story of Uriah’. The poem was ‘a thinly disguised version of a topical scandal’,¹⁹⁵ which discusses Jack Barrett:

Jack Barrett went to Quetta
Because they told him to....
Jack Barrett died at Quetta
Ere the next month’s pay he drew....

¹⁹² Rudyard Kipling at Lahore, “To Thacker, Spink And Co.,” 19 August 1886 Pinney & Richards 18.

¹⁹³ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edith Macdonald,” 4-5 December 1886, Pinney (1990a) 139-142.

¹⁹⁴ *The Holy Bible Authorised King James Version*, Mark. 1.7.

¹⁹⁵ Harry Ricketts, *The Unforgiving Minute: A Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2000) 90.

And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him
 Five lively months at most...
 And, when the Last Great Bugle Call
 Adown the Hurnai throbs...
 I shouldn't like to be the man,
 Who sent Jack Barrett there.¹⁹⁶

Kipling acknowledges the opportunism of his verses. His pleasure in the reception of his work is cynical:

I had the book published by a Calcutta firm as a book...*Vanity Fair* reviewed it....Thacker Spink and Co write to say that the second edition is nearly exhausted. Seeing how small the reading public out here is, this is not so small as it looks. The Viceroy and divers others great people have written and said all sorts of sweet things to me about the book and, best of all, a Bombay paper devoted a column and a half to proving that my verse was no great shakes after all and that I had better choke off for a couple of years; being still an infant and of mean understanding. I was mistrustful of the praise but when the abuse began I made no sort of doubt I had builded better than I knew....the fact remains that I have made a mark.¹⁹⁷

Later, *Vanity Fair* published an insightful review of Kipling's early writing. Although undated, the extract is archived amongst newspaper and magazine articles from 1890 and can be presumed to be of that year. It states: 'We do not think that the life of British soldiers has ever been treated with such truth and drollery and tenderness...We do not know who this unknown young man may be, but we prophesy that he will take a high place amongst humourists in England' (28/10, 1888-1897, 77).¹⁹⁸ This provides evidence of Kipling's empathetic and positive early soldier portraits.

¹⁹⁶ Rudyard Kipling, *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses* (London: George Newnes Ltd, 1899) 17. The poem alludes to Uriah the Hittite, husband of Bathsheba. Uriah was sent to his death in battle by King David, after the King slept with Bathsheba *The Holy Bible New International Version*, 2 Sam. 11, 2-17.

¹⁹⁷ Rudyard Kipling, "To Edith Macdonald," 4-5 December 1886, Pinney (1990a) 139-142.

¹⁹⁸ 28/10.

In *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses* '[Kipling] concentrated on a new theme, adultery and other forms of unfaithfulness' and other types of treacherous behaviour explored in the text.¹⁹⁹ With only one exception, the poems are 'comic in tone but serious in undertone...[written]...“with a purpose and for a moral end”',²⁰⁰ including criticism of the endemic official corruption which existed at the time. This is Kipling's earliest attempt to publicly engage his poetry in discussion of a 'private' topic and dictate a new and potentially unpopular attitude to a rapidly increasing readership. In these first years of functioning as a public poet he occupied the moral high ground. He had begun to undertake a role later attributed to him in a broader context as 'one of the most important functions of the poet, — [sic] the function of interpreter to the nation'.²⁰¹ His poetry engaged with difficult and contentious cultural, social, historical and political topics and translated them into a specific 'reading' for his audience. This is powerful, since it allows Kipling's individual interpretation and imagery to be disguised as a broader critique and to be adopted as such. His increasingly influential poetry could instruct the nation. An example of this is Kipling's recuperation of the image of the enlisted man and identification with the common soldier. However, his approach, similarly used in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, was not always appreciated: 'An ass of a man writes from London saying that he is going to review my last book in the Daily Telegraph — that was a week ago — and asking me whether I am afraid of being slated...Another loon has sent me an anonymous letter complaining of the “flagrant immorality” of the P[lain] T[ales] and asking me where I suppose that I shall go to

¹⁹⁹ David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2002) 34.

²⁰⁰ Gilmour 25.

²⁰¹ 'Mr Kipling's Hymn' *The Spectator* 24 July 1897 (28/14, 1894-1946, 1) 28/14-Miscellaneous Cuttings About Rudyard Kipling and His Works 1894-1946 Cartoons etc.

when I die. I think that I shall write: – I’ve made my own arrangements” or better still leave him alone in his glory over a Lost Soul.’²⁰²

The initial literary success that Kipling enjoyed stemmed from this work for the Anglo-Indian press. Although Kipling acknowledges this, it is not recognised widely: ‘It is sometimes overlooked that Rudyard Kipling...began his writing career as a journalist in India. From 1882-1889, he worked as an assistant editor for the *Lahore Civil and Military Gazette*...In November 1887, having established his talents as a journalist, he was transferred to the larger, more influential sister newspaper at Allahabad, the *Pioneer*, for which he worked as an assistant editor and special reporter’.²⁰³ Publishing a newspaper meant that he could acquire the expertise required to produce it, hone his literary skills, use it to disseminate his work and engage with the difficulties of having to rapidly produce work to a strict deadline, in a challenging environment:

Kay Robinson goes on leave on the 5th of next month. That means I have to go up and nurse the baby – the *Civil & Military* for a month, returning to this hole about the middle of June....You never had to “run” a daily rag alone – for which be joyful. Tisn’t quite as amusing as stoking a P&O liner in the Red Sea but it’s a good deal hotter and combines excitement with education.²⁰⁴

Journalism provided an initial and ongoing ‘springboard’ for his achievements, as his father acknowledges. He notes that fortuitous timing has played an integral part (appendix 18):

His mother is putting in a book the press notices of his work and it is giving an amazing volume....an odd thing is happening; – owing to the recent developments and organising of journalism, syndicates and what not, each new boom is more portentous, more wide-spread and more voluminous in print than the last and it will be literally true that in one

²⁰² Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmonia Hill,” 19-21 May 1888, Pinney (1990a) 182-188.

²⁰³ John McBratney, ““Strange Medley[s]”: Ambiguities of Role, Purpose and Representation in Kipling’s *From Sea to Sea*” in *Negotiating India in the Nineteenth Century Media* eds., David Finkelstein & Douglas M. Peers (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 2000) 164.

²⁰⁴ Rudyard Kipling, “To Edmonia Hill,” [22] April [1888], Pinney (1990a) 157-159.

year this youngster will have had more said about his work, over a wider extent of the world's surface than some of the greatest of England's writers in their whole lives. Much of this, of course, is merely mechanical, the result of the wholesale spread of journalism and the centralising tendencies of it (1/38 File 1/10 Un-numbered documents).²⁰⁵

John Lockwood indicates the beginnings of a dynamic cultural and literary period, as a direct result of press expansion. This was the main key to Rudyard's success. Corresponding in 1888, Rudyard discusses the genesis of his literary output and acknowledges that his body of work in India was an essential element in the establishment of his reputation as he began to write on public themes. Even though he recognises his enhanced opportunities, he seems disappointed with his work despite its success: 'I am just now overtaken with an immense discontent and dissatisfaction with all that I have turned out and the Plain Tales have put the coping upon my unrest. They are horrid bad and I feel that they should ha' been so much better.'²⁰⁶

Whilst personal connections and working for the press offered opportunities to Kipling, of equal consequence were the circumstances and locations in which he wrote. The 'multiple exile may become a citizen of the world, able to function adequately in a number of cultures and enjoy what each has to offer...or discover that he does not belong anywhere, or to any group of people'.²⁰⁷ W.J. Lohman considers Kipling to be a 'multiple exile', since his early life was marked by several familial geographical and cultural shifts and his later life by major shifts of his own choosing which had a direct impact on Kipling's writing. An example of this is shown in 'The City of Dreadful Night', published in the *Civil & Military Gazette* in September 1885 and in *Life's*

²⁰⁵ John Lockwood Kipling in London, "To Miss E. Plowden," Autumn 1890 1/38.

²⁰⁶ Rudyard Kipling, "To Margaret Burne-Jones," 25 January-24 March 1888, Pinney (1990a) 149-156.

²⁰⁷ W. J. Lohman Jr., *The Culture Shocks of Rudyard Kipling* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1990) 221.

Handicap in 1891.²⁰⁸ (In 1874, James Thomson had published a poem, ‘The City of Dreadful Night’. This ‘key poem...defin[ed] the new urban experience of the great Victorian city as godless and hopeless.’²⁰⁹ The tenor of Kipling’s descriptions echoes this earlier work.) A visit to the city of Lahore is the subject of this tale: ‘[D]id I not, one month ago, spend one weary weary night on the great minar of the mosque of Wazir Khan, looking down upon the heat tortured city of Lahore and seventy thousand men and women sleeping in the moonlight; and did I not write a description of my night’s vigil and christen it “The City of Dreadful Night”.’²¹⁰ Kipling crafts his observations into a sensory, experiential depiction:

A stifling hot blast from the mouth of the Delhi Gate nearly ends my resolution of entering the City of Dreadful Night...It is a compound of all evil savours, animal and vegetable, that a walled city can brew in a day and a night. The temperature within the motionless groves of plantain and orange-trees outside the city walls seems chilly by comparison. The high house-walls are still radiating heat savagely...[T]urn to look on the City of Dreadful Night...this spectacle of sleeping thousands in the moonlight and in the shadow of the Moon.²¹¹

The narrative indicates several things. The speaker is an outsider, literally and metaphorically, as he is not inside the sleeping city but must reluctantly enter it. It is evidently not his home and his alienation is obvious. He is the only one who appears to be awake. The vocabulary is pejorative, for example the heat from the city is ‘stifling’ and the smells are ‘evil savours’. This emphasises feelings of ‘foreignness’. This extract illustrates that Kipling is an exile, but with local knowledge that implies intimacy. Kipling’s readers were waiting for writing of such skill: ‘Tales of India dominated hard-cover fiction aimed at a specifically elite audiences...South Asia

²⁰⁸ Page 77.

²⁰⁹ Francis O’ Gorman, ed., *Victorian Poetry: An Annotated Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 394.

²¹⁰ Rudyard Kipling, “To Margaret Burne-Jones,” [27] September 1885, Pinney (1990a) 88-96.

²¹¹ Rudyard Kipling, *The Mark of The Beast and Other Fantastical Tales*, ed., Stephen Jones (London: Gollancz, 2006) 11.

awaited the artistry of Kipling to bring it home to the middle-class reader'.²¹² An article, probably written in 1891 confirms this and explains to his readership the importance of the diverse influences:

Literature was his field, and the course of things had ordained that he must enter it through the door of India ...For the seven years' work that lay before him he could not have been more fortunately situated than in Lahore. First, there were the parental presence [*sic*], knowledge, talent, guidance...Then the locality. Lahore is the rendezvous of more nationalities, races, castes, tribes, than can be counted on one's fingers (28/11, 1891-1895, 1).²¹³

The article compliments Kipling and emphasises the influence of John Lockwood: 'The Fates ruled that Mr. Kipling, the younger, should be the Bret Harte, or the Mark Twain, of India. In other circumstances, the Fates might have reserved that distinction for Mr. Kipling the elder, for he too knows India well, and is a writer of exceptional accomplishments and grace'(28/11, 1891-1895, 1).²¹⁴ By the date of the article Kipling's sympathetic soldier portraits are admired and present in verse form, with the publication of the important *Barrack-Room Ballads*. These were soldierly poems, some of which 'had been printed in Henley's *Scots Observer*...on 22 February 1890'.²¹⁵ *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses* was first published as a volume in 1892.²¹⁶ (In 1891-2, Lionel Johnson comments that '[t]he ["Barrack-Room Ballads"] are fine and true...these Ballads give a picture of life and character more estimable and praiseworthy for many rugged virtues of generosity, endurance, heartiness, and simplicity, than are the lives and characters of many ["gentlemen of England, who stay at home at ease"].')²¹⁷ The *Echo* article comments:

²¹² Kelly Boyd, "'Half-Caste Bob' or Race and Caste in the Late Victorian Boys' Story Paper" in *Negotiating India in the Nineteenth Century Media* eds., David Finkelstein & Douglas M. Peers (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 2000) 63.

²¹³ *Echo* 31 Jan. 1891 [?]. 28/11.

²¹⁴ 28/11.

²¹⁵ Page 163.

²¹⁶ Page 161.

²¹⁷ Lionel Johnson, "Three Reviews by Lionel Johnson," *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) Pp 98.

three or four miles off, in his patent barracks at Meean Meer, is Private Thomas Atkins, whom the soul of Mr. Rudyard Kipling loveth²¹⁸ ...[s]o that Lahore, to say nothing of the numerous localities besides which Mr. Kipling must have visited in the course of his Indian life, must have afforded him about as many types of men as he cared to study (28/11, 1891-1895, 1).²¹⁹

John Lockwood indicates dismay at the success of his son's writing, but recognises his critical limitations. He encourages criticism from others in order to assist in the refinement and improvement of Rudyard's work: 'I hoped somebody would rap his knuckles for the unwholesomeness of the phantom 'rickshaw [*sic*]²²⁰ & the coarseness of the Tragedy of teeth [*sic*]²²¹ ...But the Indian Press has given him only praise and his knuckles await a rapping.' (1/38 File 1/1 Un-numbered document).²²² George Orwell makes a cutting observation about Kipling that echoes the expression of John Lockwood: 'Tawdry and shallow though it is, Kipling's is the only literary picture that we possess of nineteenth-century Anglo-India, and he could only make it because he was just coarse enough to be able to exist and keep his mouth shut in clubs and regimental messes'.²²³

A letter to Kay Robinson, who from June 1886 was 'on secondment from the *Pioneer*' as temporary Editor in charge of the *Civil & Military Gazette* in Lahore²²⁴ emphasises the point made by John McBratney that initial success was due to the influence, spread

²¹⁸ This expression is used by Kipling in at least one of his *Plain Tales from the Hills*. In 'The Madness of Private Ortheris' the narrator muses that he 'thought a good deal over Ortheris in particular, and my friend Private Thomas Atkins whom I love, in general' Kipling (2001) 214. This story was published in *Plain Tales from the Hills* in 1888 Page 103.

²¹⁹ 28/11.

²²⁰ Published as part of *Quartette* in 1885 and revised for republication in *The Phantom Rickshaw* in 1888 Page 115.

²²¹ 'A Tragedy of Teeth' was '[p]ublished in *Quartette* on 19 December 1885. Uncollected' Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Early Verse By Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889: Unpublished, Uncollected & Rarely Collected Poems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 302. This work is not discussed by Kipling's major biographers and is not in Norman Page.

²²² John Lockwood Kipling, "To Margaret Burne-Jones," 10 [?] October 1885 1/38.

²²³ George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling," *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume 2: My Country Right or Left 1940-1943*, eds., Sonia Orwell & Ian Angus (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970) 219.

²²⁴ Lycett 136.

and popularity of the press as well as the skills that Kipling had learned and honed. He embraces his first journalistic appointment: ‘Would you be astonished if I told you that I look forward to nothing but an Indian journalist’s career?...Recollect that at present I serve in my own stud for Rs 400 a month. Where could a colt get Rs 400 for his services on a home farm?’²²⁵ He acknowledges the apprenticeship that working for the newspaper has given him and his previous inexperience:

I was brought out of the stockyard on trust. Bitted, mouthed and broken to saddle polo and harness on spec....I shall begin to pay for my breaking in a few years....Then there is my personal and purely unprofessional gratitude to the gang who selected me, which gives the gang a further right to my services – for as long a time in fact as they may choose to retain them. London journalism...is a great and grand thing but it seems to me...that out here one lives and writes more in the centre of history with one’s hands on everything than in a land where by reason of its hugeness every one is on the outskirts of everything; watching ministers, policies and financiers from afar.²²⁶

(Later Kipling was ‘incensed’ at the suggestion that he put ‘his literary work before his duties in the office...“The whole settlement and routine of the old rag...from the end of the leader to the beginning of the advertisements is in my hands and mine only”.’)²²⁷ John Lockwood agrees that the hard-won ‘apprenticeship’ would augment other factors to guide, shape and encourage his son and avoid unwelcome distractions:

Ruddy is well and is getting on well – having mastered the details of his work in a very short time. His chief Mr Wheeler is very tetchy and irritable and by dint of his exercises in patience and forbearance – the boy is in training for heaven as well as for Editorship. I am sure he is better here than anywhere else where there are no music-hall ditties to pick up...young persons to philander about with, and a great many other negatives of this most wholesome description (1/38 File 1/10 Un-numbered document).²²⁸

²²⁵ Rudyard Kipling, “To E. K. Robinson,” 30 April 1886, Pinney (1990a) 125-130.

²²⁶ Rudyard Kipling, “To E. K. Robinson,” 30 April 1886, Pinney (1990a) 125-130.

²²⁷ Ricketts 87.

²²⁸ John Kipling at Lahore, “To Miss E. Plowden,” 1883. 1/38. Attributed to John Kipling, this is one sheet only and describes ‘Ruddy’s work in the first years at Lahore’.

Stephen Wheeler, editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette* met Rudyard in London in early 1882 and offered Kipling a job as assistant editor. However, by 1883 ‘he and his editor...did not get on...in age, temperament and outlook the two were poles apart...Wheeler went out of his way to give his deputy a hard time’.²²⁹ Whatever the difficulties this all ensured that ‘Kipling’s works do offer a clear and sensitive picture of the English community in late nineteenth-century India’ which is worthwhile, because it discusses ‘the limits and possibilities of life under conditions different from our own...[H]e was an accurate reporter of the commonplace and therefore capable of giving a faithful account of life as he saw it’.²³⁰ Of importance is Kipling’s representation of lower class, ordinary subjects.

Inheritance, Issues of Racial Identity and Personal Reputation

Despite apparent influence, Kipling and his sister Alice (Trix), were not born into a family possessed of wealth or influence. Their mother, Alice and her sisters were ‘the Macdonald sisters – four women who were the mothers of Stanley Baldwin and Rudyard Kipling and the wives of Edward Burne-Jones and Edward Poynter’.²³¹ Altogether, seven Macdonald children survived into adulthood.²³² The siblings ‘were not the children of privilege. Their father had been a Methodist preacher, middle class by virtue of his calling...but without either the income to support a family in comfortable middle-class style or the approbation of society which membership in the more socially acceptable Church of England would have brought’.²³³ These four women were typically Victorian, viewed in terms of the famous and influential men

²²⁹ Ricketts 56.

²³⁰ Lohman 1.

²³¹ Judith Flanders, *A Circle of Sisters* (London: Penguin Books, 2002) 3.

²³² Lycett 12.

²³³ Flanders 3.

who intersected their lives.²³⁴ An example of this is an article from 1891. Published in the *Echo*, initially it compliments Alice as a discrete talent: ‘Mrs. Kipling’s contributions in prose and verse are amongst the brightest things in Anglo-Indian journalism’ (28/11, 1891-1895, 1).²³⁵ This relates to autumn 1885, when ‘life...was dominated by the apparently innocuous process of compiling, with Trix and his parents, a Christmas collection of stories and poems...— a collection of Indian stories published as some sort of supplement to the Old Rag [the *Civil and Military Gazette*]’.²³⁶ Rudyard considered that the Christmas collection would encourage people to take an interest in the paper,²³⁷ as indeed it did. As he remarks to his aunt: ‘By this time a copy of *Quartette* should have reached you. Has the mother told you that the Indian Press have reviewed it most favourably — said all manner of sweet and gushing things — and that if all goes well we shall get another out next year.’²³⁸ As Rudyard’s critic, the appearance of the annual did not please John Lockwood: ‘One test of success here is frequent quotation by other papers. And the boy is much quoted — also it is not always his best work that goes the round. I was (personally) sorry that *Quartette* came out, but he had set himself to it so eagerly one didn’t like to baulk him’ (1/38 File 1/1 Un-numbered document).²³⁹ (fig. 7)

²³⁴ Flanders 3.

²³⁵ *Echo* 31 Jan. 1891 [?] 28/11.

²³⁶ Ricketts 76.

²³⁷ Ricketts 76.

²³⁸ Rudyard Kipling, “To Louisa Baldwin,” 24 January 1886, Pinney (1990a) 113-114.

²³⁹ John Lockwood Kipling, “To Margaret Burne-Jones,” 10 [?] October 1885 1/38.



Fig. 7 Cover of *Quartette*, noted in the Kipling Papers as 'Quartette: the Christmas Annual of the Civil & Military Gazette by Four Anglo-Indian Writers. Lahore: *Civil and Military Gazette Press*, 1885. Inscribed 'Rudyard Kipling' (30/38 File 30/17).

Unfortunately, the *Echo*'s appreciative initial remark about Alice and her work is spoiled by the succeeding sentence: 'She comes of a clever family – one of her sisters is married to Mr. Burne-Jones' (28/11, 1891-1895, 1).²⁴⁰ There is acknowledgement of Alice's artistic achievements, but it is coupled with the idea that the intelligence of the sisters is enhanced by association and that it is simply 'an interesting fact...not an important one'²⁴¹ that the men who allied themselves with the Macdonald women attained greatness and high repute. These influential, close relatives and their circle had direct political, social and artistic influence on Rudyard. For example '[h]aving a close relation as Prime Minister revived Rudyard's interest in day-to-day politics'.²⁴²

The Burne-Jones connection was important to Kipling. Burne-Jones was part of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and particularly associated with 'designer and writer William Morris [who] had been his closest friend of all since they were together at

²⁴⁰ 28/11.

²⁴¹ Flanders xvii.

²⁴² Lycett 534.

Oxford University'.²⁴³ Morris, [1824-1896] was '[b]y the age of forty-three...a successful interior designer...a noted poet, who, together with his friend the architect Phillip Webb, had also revolutionized British architecture...[and] in mid-life...became intensely active in politics'.²⁴⁴ The social circles in which Burne-Jones moved ensured that '[e]ven with Uncle Ned on best behaviour, young Rudyard could not avoid the heady whiff of high Bohemianism and bookish intellectualism that exuded from the members of this Burne-Jones circle'.²⁴⁵

The artistic talent of Alice qualified her to critique her son's work. Kipling recognises his mother's impact on his earliest writing, although he implies conflict between them: 'Mother was at hand, with now and then some shrivelling comment that infuriated me...It was she, indeed, who had collected and privately printed verses written at school up to my sixteenth year, which I faithfully sent out' (28/8, 1930-1937 & 1891-1945, 76).²⁴⁶ Lohman indicates that during the earliest phase of his life, Kipling was encouraged to produce literary and poetic compositions, for an indulgent and select audience of friends and relatives, many of whom were from a literary, artistic or politically influential background. In time, this extended to his school, where '[t]he school paper seems to have been resurrected for his particular benefit'.²⁴⁷ (In 1881, Cormell ['Crom'] Price, Headmaster of the United Services College, Westward Ho! relaunched the school journal, the *United Services College Chronicle*, with Kipling as editor. He 'wrote three-quarters of it, sub-edited it, corrected proofs, and took the deepest interest in its production').²⁴⁸ Trix Fleming indicates that the annoyance at his mother extended further than resentment of criticism and that he was less sanguine

²⁴³ Josceline Dimbleby, *A Profound Secret* (London: Black Swan, 2005) 138.

²⁴⁴ Stephen Coleman & Paddy O'Sullivan, eds., *William Morris & News From Nowhere: A Vision for Our Time* (Bideford: Green Books, 1990) 15.

²⁴⁵ Lycett 42.

²⁴⁶ 28/8-Stories and Poems 1930-1937/Miscellaneous Cuttings 1891-1945. Extract from *Something of Myself: The Author's Daemon*, published as an article dated 9th February 1937.

²⁴⁷ Lohman 68.

²⁴⁸ Carrington (1986) 68.

about his mother's collection and publication of his work than he implies. It is an early intimation of a clash between Kipling's ideas of the private and public voice and foreshadows his ambivalent attitude to fame and celebrity:

I know all about Schoolboy Lyrics...Mrs Kipling wanted her boy's clever verses preserved in a permanent form... Mr Kipling – always a little doubtful – thought it unnecessary – of course the boy was clever – but it would be a pity if he got a swelled head. Ruddy knew nothing of the matter, and only saw one of the little books when he came out to Lahore. Then – Mother told me long after – he was very angry – told her she had taken and made use of something he needed and valued – and sulked for two days (32/38 File 32/24 Un-numbered Document).²⁴⁹

(The unusual third person perspective of this letter is bitter. It is difficult to determine whether this is sibling resentment in terms of work, family relationships, or both.)

The solid background of John Lockwood Kipling is the probable source of his prudent and penetrating attitude towards Rudyard's writing and subject matter, since Kipling's paternal grandfather was also a Methodist minister.²⁵⁰ Kipling claims this stoical, practical family tradition when he describes his father as 'My father with his sage Yorkshire outlook and wisdom'.²⁵¹ He juxtaposes this description with that of his mother as 'all Celt and three-parts fire'.²⁵² Kipling seems happy to have his Yorkshire connections identified in principle 'so long as he was not required to assume that identity. He was not happy...to be identified as a Celt. Celtishness suggested affinities with Lloyd George, or Irish nationalists'.²⁵³ John Lockwood embodied the worthy and pragmatic qualities of his genealogy. He was described by his brother-in-law, Frederic (fig. 8), as 'skilful and experienced in arts and crafts and well versed in literature, but his general knowledge was exceedingly wide, and behind it all was a mind of distinct

²⁴⁹ Trix Fleming, "To Elsie [Bambridge]," 11 April 1942 32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling's Children.

²⁵⁰ Lycett 9.

²⁵¹ Lycett 9.

²⁵² Lycett 9.

²⁵³ Gilmour 4.

originality, interested in almost everything...He was a man of another order altogether from those around me (3/38 File 3/15).²⁵⁴



Fig. 8 Sketch of Frederic Macdonald – John Lockwood Kipling drawings and illustrations (2/38 File 2/3).

John Lockwood provided for Rudyard the role model and source of artistic inspiration that he extols in the letters which discuss his father. It was Fred who introduced John Lockwood to the Macdonald family ‘including the forceful but so far unfulfilled Alice’.²⁵⁵ Following their marriage in 1865, the newlyweds departed for India on the 12th of April. (Georgiana Burne-Jones writing in 1865 discusses the wedding of Alice to John Lockwood Kipling: ‘[I]n March [1865] the marriage of my sister Alice with Mr. John Lockwood Kipling before he went out to India took place very quietly from our house....our parents trembled at sending a daughter into the same risk, but the appointment was to Bombay...and seemed so exactly suited to John Kipling’s talents and taste, that they refused to take the responsibility of urging him to remain in England.’)²⁵⁶ This began the events which would influence their son’s fame and success: ‘[d]uring [the period between 1884-1889] as a journalist in Anglo-India

²⁵⁴ 3/38-John Lockwood Kipling Sketch Books. Extract from an article entitled, ‘As A Tale That Is Told’, by Frederic W. Macdonald [1842-1928].

²⁵⁵ Lycett 18.

²⁵⁶ Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones* (London: The Macmillan Company/Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1906) Vol. 1, 290.

[Kipling's] writing took its particular shape not only as a result of his adjustment to the requirements of an Anglo-Indian audience, but as a result of his growing awareness of the political and cultural relationship between Britain and India.²⁵⁷ That relationship and the work that emerged from it was inevitably one of 'primary identification with the colonizing power'.²⁵⁸

In 1945, Kipling's sister wrote with accompanying documents²⁵⁹ to their cousin, Stanley Baldwin (appendix 19). At the time she was a 77 year old widow living in Edinburgh (1/38 File 1/20 Un-numbered document).²⁶⁰ Her papers supply biographical data, as she discusses her family history in India and a chronology of her father. Her contextual comments allow insight into the characters of her brother and parents, the relationship between them and the results of that relationship. Additional papers offer similar enlightenment (appendix 20). For example, sisterly criticism is evident in a later letter to Baldwin:

[Rudyard] was about as spoilt as he could be when we came home in 1871 – Six & a half years old & he had never been taught to read! I don't know what the parents were thinking of – or how he escaped learning – He & I were taught together by auntie – & I learnt first – aged four! And he was not naughty or wilful at lessons – when he saw the point of it he lapped it up eagerly – but he hadn't been taught!! (1/38 File 1/20 Un-numbered document).²⁶¹

(This criticism relates to when the Kipling children were living at the place that he referred to as 'the House of Desolation'.²⁶² In late 1871, following a period of six months leave from his post abroad, John and Alice Kipling returned to India, leaving

²⁵⁷ Mark Paffard, *Kipling's Indian Fiction* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989) 32.

²⁵⁸ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back* (London: Routledge, 2003) 4.

²⁵⁹ The documents in 1/38 relate to another file in 3/38. 3/38 File 3/19 is documented as John Lockwood Kipling typed notes by his daughter, Mrs Fleming [1945], prepared for Lord Baldwin for the Dictionary of National Biography. These notes are heavily edited with some references removed.

²⁶⁰ 1/38.

²⁶¹ Trix Fleming, "To Cousin Stan [Baldwin]," 11 April 1945 1/38 & (3/38 File 3/19).

²⁶² Lycett 34.

their children in the care of Captain Pryse and Sarah Holloway and their son, Henry [Harry], at Lorne Lodge, Southsea.²⁶³ It is this interval and her, to whom Trix refers. Authoritative biographers of Kipling, such as Carrington, Gilmour and Lycett, cite the effects of this unhappy episode as a crucial influence on Kipling and his work).

Trix discusses two influences on Kipling's work. Firstly, the cultural shifts which were a substantial element in the content, growth and success of Rudyard's writing, due to the differences engendered by such shifts. For example, his time at Lorne Lodge represents one of his earliest geographical moves. The main discussion between Trix and Baldwin relates to the return to India. Lohman argues that his concept of 'culture shock',²⁶⁴ is an important factor in the life and creative output of Kipling. This phenomena relates to experiencing the trauma of removal from a familiar culture into an alien one: 'its dynamics explain why a person who is suddenly removed...to a new and strange...[environment]...usually exhibits symptoms of disequilibrium, anxiety, depression, hostility, and over-identification.'²⁶⁵ Kipling 'idealiz[ed] a land where, on his own evidence, he had suffered intensely in body and soul.'²⁶⁶ This is ascribed to the experience of 'culture shock', to which according to Lohman, Kipling was exposed to on at least eight occasions, as an unconscious by-product of the moves between India, England, the United States and South Africa.

The origins of the influential geographical shifts undertaken by the Kipling family are described in the letter from Trix to Stanley Baldwin:

Father was sent to school when he was seven...I do not know who discovered his talent for drawing [fig. 9] and sent him to S[outh] Kensington – where he was soon an “outstanding student”...[H]e was offered the task of creating an Art School in Bombay...& a few years later...he went to Lahore to work another miracle there....Please [*sic*] emphasise that it would be difficult to find two families more free from

²⁶³ Lycett 34.

²⁶⁴ Lohman 6.

²⁶⁵ Lohman 6.

²⁶⁶ Lohman 5.

‘Kipling’s first readers in Britain felt that, through his stories, they were gaining a tremendous insight into Indian life. His work may have surprised and even shocked them at times, but the main effect of his stories was to supply a wealth of illustration to the generally rather vague ideas about India that they possessed.’²⁶⁹ He could express and reinforce his ideas from an atypical and unique perspective. This was a bonus which contributed to his success. The conflicting cultural influences, his own early, extrinsic, Anglo-Indian affinities merged with the irresistible desire to write for an audience. He comments on the primacy of his poetry: ‘[T]he mere act of writing was, and always has been, a physical pleasure to me. This made it easier to throw away anything that did not turn out well...Verse, naturally, came first’ (28/8, 1930-1937 & 1891-1945, 76).²⁷⁰ An extract from *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses* illustrates satisfaction for the reader in descriptions of the unknown and exotic which, when combined with foreign and unfamiliar lexis, captures the imagination and generates exciting narrative. In ‘A Legend of the Foreign Office.’, Kipling writes (with original punctuation, spacing and use of capital letters):

RUSTUM BEG of Kolazai—slightly backward Native
State —

Lusted for a C.S.I.—so began to sanitate.

Built a Gaol and Hospital—nearly built a City drain—

Till his faithful subjects all thought their ruler was insane....

Roused his Secretariat to a fine Mahratta²⁷¹ fury,

By a Hookum²⁷² hinting at supervision of *dasturi*;²⁷³

²⁶⁹ Paffard 1.

²⁷⁰ 28/8.

²⁷¹ The 1892 edition contains a glossary for English readers, which notes this as ‘the name of a famous Hindu race.’ Rudyard Kipling, *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses* (Calcutta, London & Bombay: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1892) 124.

²⁷² This is ‘an order, command.’ Kipling (1892) 123.

²⁷³ Kipling (1892) 8. *Dasturi* is not defined.

The poem is comic and patronising. There is reassurance in the implied superiority of the British reader over the native subject in terms of behaviour, intelligence and moral code, which legitimises Empire. Above everything is the narrative and sharing of the story, which offers the greatest fulfilment for the reader. From the narrative a picture of India emerges which, despite its obvious bias, depicts an unfamiliar land and people.

Similarly, in his short tale, 'My Own True Ghost Story', Kipling extends exotic subjects to engage with the Victorian preoccupation with death, much as he had done from his earliest days as a writer and correspondent. He uses death as a theme for several articles, including one which compares the experiences of bereavement in India and Great Britain. Entitled, 'A Death in the Camp', it was published in the *Civil and Military Gazette* in January 1980 (appendix 21). Transient and uncertain as life was in Victorian England, his article suggests that there is a level of 'romance', order and system which attends life and death in England, which is utterly absent for the Anglo-Indian. He expresses the idea of a common, almost habitual immediacy of death on the sub-continent, which is both alien and startling for the Victorian reader. It is living within India itself that creates such a precarious existence, with the Anglo-Indian apparently living in a continual struggle against both place and circumstance. Again, there is the idea of the pre-eminence of 'Englishness'.

In a society with growing and sustained interest in the supernatural and the occult, any discussion of death and its capriciousness would generate curiosity and interest, especially when it was interwoven with alien cultures, religion and concepts. As Maureen Moran states:

As religion gradually lost its authority, 'doubt' for some Victorians became a permanent spiritual state...Some sustained hope in the supernatural and the afterlife by seizing on spiritualism and similar occult practices...[N]ot even the proven existence of out-and-out fraudsters could dissuade many people from investing money and faith in the theatrics of table-rapping, séances, automatic writing and

mesmerism to make contact with the ‘other’ side...Eminent members of the establishment and the scientific community, including Alfred Tennyson, John Ruskin...William Gladstone, and [sic]...Sigmund Freud, supported the Society for Psychical Research, founded in 1882 for the scientific investigation of occult phenomena.²⁷⁴

‘My Own True Ghost Story’, amongst other tales, engages with that concept. The narrator appears to be relating a terrifying, personal experience, although even this has imperial connotations: ‘No native ghost has yet been authentically reported to have frightened an Englishman; but many English ghosts have scared the life out of both white and black’.²⁷⁵ Kipling writes that:

[n]early every other station in India owns a ghost. There are said to be two at Simla, not counting the woman who blows the bellows at Syree...Mussoorie has a house haunted of [sic] a very lively Thing; a White Lady is supposed to do night-watchman round a house in Lahore; Dalhousie says that one of her houses ‘repeats’ on autumn evenings all the incidents of a horrible horse-and-precipice accident.²⁷⁶

However, having presented such promising, eerie material to his readers, on this occasion he then offers an ordinary, factual explanation for the ‘ghostly’ encounter of the narrator. In other tales such as, ‘The Solid Muldoon’²⁷⁷ the ghostly element remains throughout.

One emphasis in Trix Fleming’s earlier, March 1945, letter to Baldwin is crucial. Potentially, it is the second important influence on the motivation, style and subject matter of Kipling’s work, as well as on his attitudes to the societies with which the Kipling family was connected, both in India and England. This second influence engages with the idea that:

²⁷⁴ Maureen Moran, *Victorian Literature and Culture* (London: Continuum, 2006) 31.

²⁷⁵ ‘My Own True Ghost Story’ Kipling (2006) 122, was published in *The Week’s News* on the 25th February 1888 Page 110.

²⁷⁶ Kipling (2006) 122.

²⁷⁷ This was published in *The Week’s News* on the 2nd of June 1888 and later that same year in *Soldiers Three* Page 121.

[t]owards the end of the nineteenth century many affluent and educated people, influenced by developments in medical, biological and psychiatric sciences, became convinced that destitution, insanity and criminality – even homosexuality and hysteria – were symptoms of the degeneration of the human race, through the determinism of heredity. Such theories seemed to provide plausible explanations for disturbing social changes, and new insights into human character and morality.²⁷⁸

Trix underlines her plea to Baldwin that he emphasise the lack of any specific ‘link’ between either branch of the family and the Indian sub-continent. This relates to two particular topics within the correspondence between them. Both topics involve the reputation of the Kipling family and their position in Anglo-Indian society. Of importance in her writing is the hint of impurity and all that would be implied by this when ‘[t]he persistent grip of degeneration on late nineteenth-century culture derived essentially from the fear of what was repressed...major emphas[es] of degeneration – from the discourses of reversion and atavism, the ‘up-cropping’ of the ‘bestial’, the fear of the ‘other’ – which so preyed on the first and second generation of post-Darwinians.²⁷⁹ In parallel was the *fin de siècle* obsession with the concepts of ‘phobias of decline and invasion’²⁸⁰ which found a voice in anti-semitism and racism. The more serious of the two subjects is alluded to in the revised notes that Trix composes for her cousin.²⁸¹ In the unedited letters and documents she states:

Uncle Henry Macdonald passed brilliantly into the Indian Civil [*sic*] – but refused to take up his appointment when Miss Peggy Passingham – to whom he was engaged jilted him – That is not enough to account for the 4 annas in the rueful legend of duskiness – or the “black blood” slander of later years – Rud used to laugh at this – but a strange American woman gripped me in an opera box once & rubbed my bare neck so hard with her black gloved hand that red streaks followed it – “Oh – it doesn’t come off” – she said in a disappointed voice looking at her glove – “you see everyone said your brother had black blood – so

²⁷⁸ William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel 1880-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) Foreword.

²⁷⁹ Greenslade 9.

²⁸⁰ Greenslade 9.

²⁸¹ ‘T’/F, “To S/[B],” (Mar.) 1/38 & 3/38.

when I saw you sitting there – looking so white – I thought I must just see! I have never been so angry – And in 1914 a woman in a London hotel where I was staying – trumpeted abroad that R[udyard] K[ipling] was an “old Eurasian” – & Mrs. Fleming’s complexion meant nothing for “lots of Afghans had blue eyes & there was always liquid powder” – Its [*sic*]an ugly legend but spite [*sic*] of the Kipling Society it still crops up – together with “R[udyard] K[ipling]’s attempts to enter Simla society” – How can you enter what you belong to? Jealousy started it (1/38 File 1/20 & 3/38 File 3/19 Un-numbered documents).²⁸²

Her comments to Baldwin indicate the approach that she wishes him to take with these rumours: ‘I am so glad to hear from Elsie [Bambridge *neé* Kipling] that you are “doing” Rud in the D[ictionary] [of] N[ational] B[iography] – Please mention and destroy the ‘black blood’ – and the ‘below the salt legends’²⁸³ which still lift hydra heads at times – Its [*sic*] ugly lying & should be done away with – not ignored’ (1/38 File 1/20 & 3/38 File 3/19 Un-numbered documents).²⁸⁴ Kipling comments on the persistent rumour at the end of his life. His seems amused at and dismissive of the gossip:

You may be interested to learn...that I am a half-caste. It appears that my father “though an Englishman” married “an Indian woman.”...[T]his “50% of black blood” explains my “super-Jingoism and habit of insulting Germany.” I am patriotic so as to make people overlook the fact that I’m not white....The next time I meet my cousin (S[tanley].B[aldwin].) I’m going to ask him what he knows about *his* mother’s “non Aryan blood”; she having been my Mother’s sister.”²⁸⁵

(Lycett comments on vague rumours of a family scandal when he describes events in which Kipling’s daughter was involved in 1948. She was presented with a first draft copy of the manuscript of the biography of her father by Lord Birkenhead, who had been engaged to write the project. She was most displeased and ‘wrote with growing

²⁸² 1/38 & 3/38. A continuation of the attachment.

²⁸³ ‘To sit above the salt.’ Def. *Brewer’s Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. 15th ed. 1995. To sit in a place of distinction. Formerly the family ‘saler’ (salt cellar) was of massive silver, and placed in the middle of the table. Persons of distinction sat above the ‘saler’, i.e. between it and the head of the table, while dependants and inferior guests sat below.

²⁸⁴ ‘T’/F, “To S/[B].” (Mar.) 1/38 & 3/38.

²⁸⁵ Rudyard Kipling, “To Colonel C.E. Hughes,” 27 July 1935, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 6: 1931-36*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004c) 380-382.

offensiveness, culminating in a letter which one of the partners of Lewis & Lewis who acted for [Lord Birkenhead]...described as “one of the most disgraceful he had ever seen in his professional career”²⁸⁶ Lycett speculates on whether the biographer had ‘unearthed some dark family secret’²⁸⁷ One element can be added to the speculation and it relates to Lord Birkenhead and his biography. One of the additions files of the Kipling Papers contains extracts from what remains of Caroline Kipling’s diary. Most of the entries are brief and mundane notes of the various daily events of the couple, but after page 111, dated August 1 1935 there is merely an index. The first entry is interesting: ‘1865 General Ancestry and absence of black blood’ (File Ads. 40 Document Ad. 40).²⁸⁸ This is not commented on in any way.

Kipling’s narrative may have inadvertently added to the controversy and confirmed suspicions such as those of the American woman with whom Trix had to deal whilst at the opera. For example in the tale, ‘Lispeth’ [1886], the subject of the title is ‘the daughter of Sonoo, a Hill-man of the Himalayas...[who] grew very lovely...[with] a Greek face...of a pale, ivory colour’.²⁸⁹ (‘Lispeth’ was published in the *Civil and Military Gazette* on 29 November 1886 and in *Plain Tales from the Hills* in 1888).²⁹⁰ Despite her heritage, she looks as classically European as Trix. In the story ‘The Man Who Would Be King’ [1888], the two main protagonists, Dravot and Carnehan, journey to Kafiristan where the natives they encounter are described as ‘fair men – fairer than you or me – with yellow hair and remarkable [*sic*] well built’.²⁹¹ Whether as Trix suggests, the rumours grew out of jealousy or from another motivation, the insinuation is that the moral reputations of the Kipling and Macdonald families were not beyond

²⁸⁶ Lycett 588.

²⁸⁷ Lycett 589.

²⁸⁸ (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

²⁸⁹ Kipling (2001) 7.

²⁹⁰ Page 101.

²⁹¹ Rudyard Kipling, *The Man Who Would Be King and Other Stories* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994b) 129. Published in *The Phantom Rickshaw* in 1888 Page 105.

reproach. It is unclear as to whether her parents were aware of this shadowy slander, or precisely when and how the ‘black blood’ was supposed to have entered the family. Her letter hints that it is connected with Henry Macdonald [1835-1891].²⁹² The rumours were in circulation from at least his generation. The mysterious 1865 diary index concurs with this timeframe. However, his decision not to join the Indian Civil Service was due to ‘the health risks – ...and the political uncertainties that still affected the country eight years after the mutiny’.²⁹³ Since Trix’s comments disavow Indian connections the ‘black blood’ can be supposed to be of Indian origin. It is curious that she suggests that Rudyard appears unconcerned about these allegations. The great indignation on this subject with which she is troubled lasts her entire life. It remains so great that her letter requests a rebuttal by her influential cousin. It is hard to imagine that Kipling could ignore a racial slur and its implications on him and his family. Social status, whilst important, could not compare to insinuations of racial inferiority. Perhaps Kipling felt a need for vindication.

Equally disturbing to Trix is the second implication in the letter, that the Kiplings’ undeservedly occupied their position in Anglo-Indian society and that they were social climbers in their early days in India:

Quite lately some one – grubbing among old Indian newspapers proclaimed as a discovery that as R[udyard] K[ipling] and his sister both acted in Simla they must have been members of the exclusive Amateur Dramatic Co. – there – & therefore must have moved in the upper circles – Of course we did – of course we went everywhere – Lord Dufferin put us on the Govt House “Free List” – which meant invites to all the balls & dances – & at homes – & many dinners – instead of one – every season in Simla – And Lord Roberts²⁹⁴ did the same & so did our own Punjab L[ocal] G[overnor?] – Lord Dufferin’s saying that “Dullness & Mrs Kipling were never in the same room together” – brought us many a pleasant invitation – & I assure you that it is entirely

²⁹² Lycett 12.

²⁹³ Lycett 21.

²⁹⁴ Field Marshal Frederick Sleigh Roberts, 1st Earl was appointed as General Roberts, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army in 1885 Lycett 108.

your poor cousin's own fault that she was not left that dreary thing a widowed courtesy countess [*sic*]after Ladysmith – But if R[udyard] K[ipling] & his family were living in the bazaar & sneaking stealthily – how did I ever meet Lord Clandeboyne & how did he have the opportunity of proposing to me in /86 & /87 – ?
(1/38 File 1/20 & 3/38 File 3/19 Un-numbered documents).²⁹⁵

(It was the intervention of Lord Dufferin, who became Viceroy of India at the end of 1884,²⁹⁶ which enabled the family to integrate into the higher echelons of Anglo-Indian life, since '[t]he Kiplings did not rank very highly in the hierarchy of Simla society until Lord Dufferin put them on his hospitality list'.²⁹⁷ This was because even though he was a member of the Indian Civil Service '[John Lockwood's] posting as an art teacher was ungraded, without statutory pension rights, and therefore lowly in both the imperial scheme of things and – an important factor in Bombay – the social pecking order'.²⁹⁸ The relationship between Dufferin and the Kipling family was close, since Kipling's father was an art tutor to Dufferin's daughter and the two men enjoyed 'talking...about art'.²⁹⁹ Importantly, Dufferin 'also appreciated their son's verses').³⁰⁰ This gave the young Kipling an early opportunity to engage with members of the hegemony with whom he had the closest contact and the offer of many social opportunities. This implies a greater and more powerful audience for his writing and poetry than Kipling might have anticipated. The annoyance Trix feels at the situation and the inference about her family is palpable from the tone and content of her letter to Baldwin. It is worth considering that it is written in 1945, nine years after Kipling's death and she suggests that the reputation of her family still needs restoration and is under negative scrutiny at the time of her writing. The rumours which she refutes

²⁹⁵ 1/38 & 3/38.

²⁹⁶ Carrington (1986) 94.

²⁹⁷ Gilmour 31.

²⁹⁸ Lycett 9.

²⁹⁹ Gilmour 31.

³⁰⁰ Gilmour 32.

contribute to circumstances in which Rudyard was not always considered to be quite a gentleman. Her indignant letter suggests that their societal position was occasionally challenged. Despite her claim that Kipling was dismissive of the gossip, it could have been a major catalyst for him in his work. Possibly in his early years, one of the reasons why Kipling embraced the idea of becoming a writer and a public figure was to compensate for his implied lack of social standing and doubtful heritage.

Lohman contends that the most successful method of analysis of literature begins with ‘an examination of the man’s own life’:³⁰¹

a discovery of how he responded to the events of his life and how he arrived at the interpretations which he gave them should provide the soundest answer to the question of what he believed...[and]...also reveal what matters were of most concern to him...and give us the raw material...of his art.³⁰²

If Lohman is correct, then the numerous and unusual life influences that were a feature for Kipling would add dimensions to his beliefs and experience and to his writing. In reading Kipling the current, contemporary audience should recognise that it is presented with a pen-portrait of ‘life as he saw it’, including ‘the dark side of man’ and that from his earliest work Kipling explores the essential concepts of the meaning of life, or indeed whether such a thing exists.³⁰³ For example in ‘The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows’, his first published short story (on 26 September 1884 in the *Civil & Military Gazette*), the narrative ‘deal[s] with the moral collapse of Europeans or Eurasians in Asia’.³⁰⁴ The ‘dark side’ of the individual is explored in ‘The Post That Fitted.’ one of the *Departmental Ditties*, in which gross deception is employed for personal gain.

Juxtaposed with his attempts at an honest depiction of his subjects was Kipling as a ‘propagandist, or at least advocate, [which] he certainly was’. Kipling employs a

³⁰¹ Lohman 4.

³⁰² Lohman 5.

³⁰³ Lohman 1.

³⁰⁴ Page 91.

‘missionary zeal’³⁰⁵ in his texts. This suggests an intention to educate and influence a profound philosophical shift, almost a religious conversion, in those who read them. This philosophical adjustment is intended to engender practical change. The risk was that this approach which implies elements of prejudice, distortion and imbalance, might distance him from the hegemonic influence that he sought to embrace and reduce, rather than enhance, his social or literary status. He is aware of the pitfalls of his tactics. He suggests that although his writing could be a catalyst with the capacity to galvanise the reader into appropriate action, it requires careful composition and editing to ensure that its message is not obscured or rejected. He recognises the disadvantages of youthfulness, in an era when wisdom, experience and age were considered almost indivisible: ‘The danger of course specially with a young writer lies in overstating the case. This must be guarded against by rigorous checking and pruning; for however powerful the press may be at home, it is infinitely more powerful out here where a paper can be suppressed at any moment.’³⁰⁶

What Lohman posits as the greatest difficulty for the subject in a state of ‘culture shock’, is the inability to access elements of the new culture because it is alien to them. There are difficulties with a ‘lack of familiarity with a multitude of details known to his hosts, his subsequent inability to follow their arguments, and his incapacity to make his own reasoning understood’.³⁰⁷ The communication process between individuals of different cultural backgrounds falters in the absence of common cultural currency, experience and referents and subjects will exhibit a reaction to this. This is dictated by such factors as their personality, experience, the chronology of events, or the actual reason for the displacement from their original environment.³⁰⁸ It is interesting to

³⁰⁵ Lohman 2.

³⁰⁶ Rudyard Kipling, “To Margaret Burne-Jones,” [27] September 1885, Pinney (1990a) 88-96.

³⁰⁷ Lohman 9.

³⁰⁸ Lohman 10.

examine the relationship between Kipling and the multiplicity of cultures with which he engaged. He was in close proximity to varied cultures that he could access and potentially influence. As Lohman argues concurrent with existing ‘inside’ these cultures, due to his parentage he was also ‘outside’ the culture in which he was living. His writing interpreted this dual experience for the consumption of his audience. Of key importance is whether the contradictory circumstances of concurrent alienation and integration allowed Kipling more, or less influence. As an ‘alien’, engagement was without allegiance to specific ideology. This allows a level of restraint to be removed and his analytical ‘voice’ to be accepted because of his external status. Conversely, his ‘foreignness’ excluded Kipling from any right to comment on hegemonic or societal concerns, since he was an ‘outsider’. What is certain is that these cultural engagements gave him a wealth of subject material with which to work. Although she seems not to believe this, the uncomfortable topics discussed in the letter and notes between ‘Trix’ and Stanley Baldwin may have caused Kipling to feel the double isolation of being excluded from his own culture as well, despite his ties to the establishment through close family and friends. It may even be *because* of these important links that a feeling of exclusion was possible. It is unlikely that as he grew up, Rudyard was unaware of implications of inferiority. Fame, due to inherent talent, would have provided him with considerable psychological and material compensation.

In later life, comments from Trix resent her brother’s influence on the presentation of her family’s biography: ‘How wonderful to see that black M.S. book again!...I’m so glad it has escaped the frenzy of burning any letters or papers connected with his youth – (& mine too – alas!) which possessed him directly after Mother’s death’ (32/38 File 32/24 Un-numbered Document).³⁰⁹ This destruction was not viewed lightly, as these

³⁰⁹ Trix Fleming, “To Elsie Bambridge,” 15 June 1940 32/38.

remarks suggest. Although she recognised that it was characteristic of Rudyard to destroy anything that intruded upon his ideas of privacy and family, his sister saw in his actions ‘a way of ensuring that only his reading of their family history would survive’.³¹⁰ This seems paranoid, especially since Trix suffered from mental instability throughout her life. (In autumn 1898 she returned from India and ‘immediately plunged into a catatonic state that would today be diagnosed as schizophrenia’.)³¹¹ Nevertheless it was probably true: ‘[p]eople do not destroy such documents just for the sake of it: they destroy them because they feel they contain something discreditable – either to the writer, or, sometimes, to others mentioned’.³¹² (One other aspect of Trix’s annoyance is worth mention. Her resentment at the destruction indicates conflict, which echoes the disagreements between Kipling and his mother about her unauthorised publication of his early poems. Given his stated closeness with his father, a familial gender divide is implied.)

The unstable condition of Trix may have provided further impetus for Kipling to elevate the reputation of his family. In the late Victorian era interest in genealogy was rapidly developing in the parallel spheres of the historical origins of the family and concern about the decay of family lineage:

Francis Galton, statistician and cousin to Darwin, pioneered research into the question of which families were ‘naturally fated to decay and which to thrive’. In a *Fortnightly Review* article in 1883 (the same year in which he first put forward the science of ‘eugenics’) he proposed the opening of medical family registers which might ‘throw light on the physiological cause of the rise and decay of families, and consequently that of races’.³¹³

According to Greenslade ‘[t]he penalties attached to the taking of unwarranted spontaneous sexual pleasure was a commonplace of late Victorian writing on hereditary

³¹⁰ Flanders 318.

³¹¹ Lycett 315.

³¹² Seymour-Smith 253.

³¹³ Greenslade 152.

determinism'.³¹⁴ Syphilis caused particular anxiety at this time, especially since it was widely and erroneously believed to be an inherited condition.³¹⁵ A tragic consequence of the 'inheritance' of syphilis was madness. The nature of the rumour that Trix is so anxious for her cousin to refute insinuates this type of decay, implying the taint of 'black blood' and potentially madness and degeneration from an inappropriate sexual liaison.

The idea that Kipling was unconcerned, or even amused, at rumours that his family had some inter-racial connection seems to be confirmed by unqualified comments in a letter from him, written to his son in 1915:

I went down to St. Leonards to see old Mademoiselle and Rider Haggard...She was immensely interested in your career. "But why" said she "is he in the Irish Guards?"³¹⁶ I explained that our family blood was "prudently mixed" in view of all international contingencies and that there was some Irish in the strain'
(13 (1-7)/38 File 13/7 Document 304).³¹⁷

This sanguine remark does not reflect the true feelings of Kipling: 'Rudyard must have bristled at the prospect of his son serving with a 'race' he had denounced only a few months earlier'.³¹⁸ Lycett comments that '[t]he more Rudyard was aware of Ireland, the more vitriolic he became about 'the Celt' – a position which was understandable, given his political point of view, but odd, since his mother and sister both valued their Celtic heritage so highly.'³¹⁹ (Noel Ignatiev, author of *How the Irish Became White* [Routledge 1995], argues that 'at one point the Irish were known as "white Negroes"

³¹⁴ Greenslade 164.

³¹⁵ Greenslade 164.

³¹⁶ John Kipling reported for duty with the Irish Guards at Warley Barracks, on 14th September 1914 Carrington (1986) 498.

³¹⁷ Rudyard Kipling at Bateman's, "To John Kipling," 24 March 1915 13 (1-7)/38-K/P: Correspondence: Kiplings.

³¹⁸ Lycett 447.

³¹⁹ Lycett 373.

and black people were referred to as “smoked Irish”...[These terms] reflected the scorn and disdain with which both were regarded’.)³²⁰

However his true feelings about hybridity in race and culture appear more accurately reflected in the narrative of some of his earliest writing, than in either his own correspondence, or the letter by Trix. In ‘Beyond the Pale’ [1888],³²¹ the narrator has a clear attitude towards the mixing of different racial groups: ‘A MAN [*sic*] should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste, race, and breed’.³²² Mark Paffard states that:

Kipling need[s] to identify himself with his community,...more especially when he was writing about the ‘native’ underworld, with which respectable people had no contact. He was in a particularly vulnerable position both as a very young man in a world where seniority was important, and as a mere journalist...The narrator who warns that ‘A man should...keep to his own caste [etc.]’ is very clearly claiming a measure of self-protection.³²³

As well as self-preservation, the introduction to the tale demonstrates that the narrator believes it is preferable and possible to define an individual’s caste and culture as a discrete entity. The nature of the gossip to which Trix alludes adds weight to Paffard’s assertion that it was essential to Kipling to be categorised as belonging to the right ‘set’, in the society in which he and his family lived. The opening of ‘Beyond The Pale’ indicates that Kipling emphasises distinct racial separation. This may be conscious, or unconscious. Kipling’s narrative continues with a declaration that segregation in a community is the correct order of behaviour. He emphasises this moral judgement with his syntax: ‘Let the White go to the White and the Black to the Black. Then whatever trouble falls is in the ordinary course of things – neither sudden, alien, nor unexpected. This is the story of a man who wilfully stepped beyond the safe limits of decent

³²⁰ Danny Postel, ‘Z Magazine: An Interview with Noel Ignatiev,’ *Race Traitor: Journal of the New Abolitionism* (1997), 11 September 2008 <<http://racetraitor.org/zmagazineinterview.pdf>> .

³²¹ First published in *Plain Tales from the Hills* collection, January 1888 Page 36.

³²² Kipling (2001) 127.

³²³ Paffard 37.

everyday society, and paid for it heavily.’³²⁴ Kipling would know that simple ideas of the partition of race within a country and cross-culturally, as he advocates in his tale, were not possible. The division between ‘white’ and ‘black’ races could not be into discrete categories as his narrative demands. There is the question of degrees of ‘blackness’ and religious and tribal categorisation:

[t]he races of the north are the ‘proud and warlike’ Afghans and Sikhs; those of the south are servile, Dravidian (negroid) rather than Aryan... It is the highest castes... and... northerners in general, who approximate most closely to the white man: ‘The lower the caste the nearer does its type come to the blackness and stumpy figure of the Dravidian.’ The Aryans who invaded India from the north and founded the Mughal dynasty are compared to the Norsemen and Normans of Europe.³²⁵

He recognises this in his poem, ‘Fuzzy Wuzzy’, ‘published in the *Scots Observer*’ on the 15th March 1890 and later collected in *Barrack-Room Ballads* [1892].³²⁶ The subject of the poem is the ‘Sudanese tribes [who] were formidable adversaries at close quarters’.³²⁷ It is patronising and imperialistic: ‘You’re a pore benighted ’eathen but a first-class/ fightin’ man;’³²⁸ and designates differences in status between different African tribes ‘The Paythan an’ the Zulu an’ Burmese;/ But the Fuzzy was the finest o’ the lot.’³²⁹

‘Beyond The Pale’ is a cautionary tale, in which the main protagonist, Trejago, accidentally meets a lonely, young, secluded native widow and they embark upon a clandestine relationship. To maintain an appearance of normality and hide his secret affair, Trejago pays attention to a lady within his own circle of acquaintance. His native lover discovers this and in the ensuing confrontation the narrator defines the differences between occidental and oriental sensibilities, behaviour and social position:

³²⁴ Kipling (2001) 127.

³²⁵ Paffard 11.

³²⁶ Page 177.

³²⁷ Carrington (1973) 160.

³²⁸ Carrington (1973) 54.

³²⁹ Carrington (1973) 54.

Much that is written about Oriental passion and impulsiveness is exaggerated and compiled at second-hand, but a little of it is true; and when an Englishman finds that little, it is quite as startling as any passion in his own proper life. Bisesa raged and stormed, and finally threatened to kill herself if Trejago did not at once drop the alien *Memsahib*³³⁰ who had come between them. Trejago tried to explain, and to show her that she did not understand these things from a Western standpoint.³³¹

She sends her lover away, declaring ‘I am only a black girl...and the widow of a black man’.³³² Kipling adds in his description of her that she is in fact not black but ‘fairer than bar gold in the Mint’.³³³ Trejago returns, to discover that their relationship has been uncovered and that Bisesa has been brutally punished. Since she is unable, or too afraid, to warn him of impending danger he barely escapes with his life. For Trejago, the legacy of the attack is a limp, so it is difficult to sympathise with the narrator’s original assertion that Trejago is the character who pays heavily for this tragedy. The assumption is that his severe punishment is not physical, but emotional and societal. The narrative comment that discussion of the inherent nature of the ‘oriental’ is mostly unreliable and unfair, initially suggests that a sympathetic ‘reading’ of the ‘native’ is possible. This illusion is dispelled by intimations of imperial and racial superiority within the tale: ‘The project of making India ‘truly British’ was one in which, in general, the British never seriously believed. The imposition of a Western infrastructure...under the Raj took place alongside a basic conviction that Indians would never...assimilate Western culture, the ‘superiority’ of which seemed obvious to almost every British observer.’³³⁴ This assumed supremacy is demonstrated by several perspectives such as Bisesa’s pejorative comments about herself and her late husband,

³³⁰ ‘Memsahib’ Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995, described as a nineteenth century Indian term of respect for a European married woman.

³³¹ Kipling (2001) 131.

³³² Kipling (2001) 131.

³³³ Kipling (2001) 131.

³³⁴ Paffard 95.

the description of her hyperbolic behaviour and the insinuation that such behaviour is unreasonable, the idea that Trejago has a ‘proper’ western life, with its more appropriate viewpoints and the absolute brutality of the outcome. Most obvious is the idea that she could have no understanding of the vital Occidental perspective. The story proposes that cross-cultural relationships are at best, risky and undesirable and at worst taboo.

Similar ideas of the unsuitability of inter-racial relationships are explored by Kipling in an earlier tale, although with a less physically traumatic ending for the ‘heroine’. In the story of ‘Lispeth’, the titular protagonist lives in the capacity of servant and companion to the wife of the Chaplain of Kotgarh. She embraces Christianity and falls in love with an Englishman. When he journeys back to England, Lispeth waits for him to return to India and marry her. After three months the Chaplain’s wife informs her that:

the Englishman had only promised his love to keep her quiet — that he had never meant anything, and that it was wrong and improper of Lispeth to think of marriage with an Englishman, who was of a superior clay...Lispeth was silent...for a little time; then she went out down the valley, and returned in the dress of a Hill-girl — infamously dirty...“I am going back to my own people,” said she. “You have killed Lispeth”.³³⁵

Regardless of her attempts at assimilation to western culture and custom, Lispeth is still unworthy, even though she is both devoted and faithful. There is no suggestion that the behaviour of either Lispeth’s supposed suitor, or the wife of the Chaplain, is anything other than appropriate and reasonable. Suvir Kaul argues that ‘[i]n Kipling’s oeuvre, Lisbeth [*sic*] is memorable as a reminder of the damage that can result from relationships that cross colonial divides of race and power’.³³⁶ Whilst this is true, the fate of Bisesa is a considerably more effective and graphic example. (The character of

³³⁵ Kipling (2001) 10.

³³⁶ Suvir Kaul, “*Kim*, or How to Be Young, Male, and British in Kipling’s India,” *Kim*, ed. Zohreh T. Sullivan (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2002) 432.

‘Lispeth’ returns in Kipling’s novel, *Kim* (1901), as ‘the Woman of Shamlegh’.³³⁷ She assists Kim and the Lama on their journey and relates to them her perspective on the events at Kotgarh.³³⁸ Kaul suggests that the reuse of the character in the later novel implies ‘the enduring fear and fascination such a figure had for Kipling in particular and perhaps the colonial imagination in general’.³³⁹ It is interesting to speculate as to why Kipling might be so fascinated by such a cross-cultural figure.)

One other paradox is worth discussion and is illustrated by events in ‘Beyond The Pale’. Initial communication between Trejago and Bisesa is through the medium of a coded message:

Next morning, as he was driving to office, an old woman threw a packet into his dogcart. In the packet was the half of a broken glass-bangle, one flower of the blood-red *dhak*, a pinch of *bhusa* or cattle-food, and eleven cardamoms. That packet was a letter... Trejago knew far too much about these things, as I have said. No Englishman should be able to translate object-letters. But Trejago spread all the trifles on the lid of his office-box and began to puzzle them out.³⁴⁰

This is not the only occasion on which Kipling cautions against fraternisation and the inherent knowledge that this would generate ‘[t]hough Kipling has often been described as unusually knowledgeable about native life, his early work contains many warnings about the dangers of too much familiarity’.³⁴¹ The narrator deciphers the meaning of the ‘object-letter’, piece by piece, for the reader. This includes not only the universally known symbols: ‘[a] broken glass-bangle stands for a Hindu widow all India over’,³⁴² but the more obtuse as well: ‘The flower of the *dhak* means diversely ‘desire,’ ‘come,’ ‘write,’ or ‘danger,’ according to the other things with it’.³⁴³ Peter Morey discusses the

³³⁷ Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (London: Penguin Books, 1994a) 336.

³³⁸ Kipling (1994a) 350.

³³⁹ Kaul 432.

³⁴⁰ Kipling (2001) 128.

³⁴¹ Paffard 26.

³⁴² Kipling (2001) 128.

³⁴³ Kipling (2001) 128.

paradox of a narrator who criticises the inherent local, 'native' knowledge of the character, whilst displaying that knowledge himself: '[d]espite his socially sanctioned statement in the opening paragraph: ["A man should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste"] [etc]...it appears that the narrator too has a transgressive knowledge of the Other which call into question his position as a champion of Anglo-India's binarist values.'³⁴⁴ By displaying how intimately they can interpret cultural ciphers Trejago, the narrator and Kipling step beyond knowledge as a tool and into 'the kind of emotional and intellectual assimilation which serves to undermine carefully constructed racial hierarchies'.³⁴⁵ They are at risk of appearing to 'go native'³⁴⁶ to the detriment of all. For Kipling shadowed by rumour, this is perilous since despite the predication of white supremacy, underlying sympathy for Bisesa is unavoidable as a victim of two cultures and two men. This is augmented by the 'whiteness' of her description. Lispeth too is a victim for whom sympathy is engendered, despite racial differences.

His poems engage with these sentiments as well. For example, 'Gunga Din', published 'in the *Scots Observer*, 7 June 1890' and collected in *Barrack-Room Ballads* in 1892, became a hugely popular 'recitation-piece familiar to millions.'³⁴⁷ The poem was '[b]ased upon the story of Juma, water-carrier to the Frontier Force regiment of The Guides at the siege of Delhi, July 1857. He was selected...as the bravest man in the regiment'.³⁴⁸ Whilst the language is as patronising and implicitly racist as 'Fuzzy Wuzzy': 'Of all them blackfaced crew/ The finest man I knew',³⁴⁹ the honourable character and bravery of Gunga Din is unquestionable: 'An' 'e didn't seem to know the

³⁴⁴ Peter Morey, *Fictions of India: Narrative and Power* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000) 22.

³⁴⁵ Morey 22.

³⁴⁶ 'To go native.' Def. *Brewer's Concise Phrase and Fable*. 2000 ed. To abandon civilized ways and to share the life and habits of a more primitive society.

³⁴⁷ Page 177.

³⁴⁸ Carrington (1973) 160.

³⁴⁹ Carrington (1973) 51.

use o' fear.'³⁵⁰ His work ethic is outstanding: "'E would dot an' carry one/ Till the longest day was done;'³⁵¹ He saves the life of the speaker, at the cost of his own:

An' he plugged me where I bled,...
 'E carried me away
 To where a dooli lay,
 An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
 'E put me safe inside,
 An' just before 'e died'.³⁵²

Most interesting of all is that Gunga Din attains an honorary white status, which is earned through deeds and emphasised by the punctuation: 'An' for all 'is dirty 'ide/ 'E was white, clear white, inside/ When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire!'.³⁵³ Despite its overt racism and white supremacy this may have been a contentious point for Kipling's early audience and completely undermines the idea of discrete racial identities. It demonstrates that appearances can be deceptive. In 'Fuzzy Wuzzy', the bravery of the Sudanese 'knocked us 'oller.'³⁵⁴ The tactics of the British Imperial forces are deemed to be unjust: 'We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't 'ardly fair;'³⁵⁵ (The 'Martini' is a 'breechloading rifle of the 1880s' accurate over long range).³⁵⁶ Such sympathy and appreciation of the 'other' undermines racial, patriarchal and Victorian constructions. Rather than sympathy, Kipling displays empathy due to the indeterminacy of his own position.

Morey contends that confusion generated by the ambiguity of the narrator's position 'is an early example of Kipling's experimentation with the problematic narrator figure,

³⁵⁰ Carrington (1973) 52.

³⁵¹ Carrington (1973) 52.

³⁵² Carrington (1973) 53.

³⁵³ Carrington (1973) 53.

³⁵⁴ Carrington (1973) 55.

³⁵⁵ Carrington (1973) 55.

³⁵⁶ Carrington (1973) 21.

which becomes such a feature of both the Anglo-Indian and later fiction'.³⁵⁷ He suggests that with this ambiguity Kipling creates a division between the narrative and authorial voices. The narrator extols separatism whilst demonstrating a level of integration; such integration appears a complete contrast to Kipling's own sentiments. This is simply an attempt to add a variety of 'different narrative voices and positions...[and that] Kipling does not seek a constant authoritative and authorial standpoint'.³⁵⁸ The difficulty with this argument is that even if this was Kipling's intention, any detractor who wished to undermine his social or familial position could demonstrate that the author possesses the prohibited knowledge for which Trejago is censured. This exposes Kipling to accusations of hypocrisy. The major paradox is that comprehensive translation of the object-letter by the narrator is a deliberate and curious act by Kipling, given the unequivocal opinions applied to the narrator on such intimate knowledge of local custom. It is not necessary for an extensive interpretation to be included. If Kipling had omitted the interpretation, the plot would have been unaffected, since Trejago would have unravelled the puzzle and his subsequent actions would have informed the reader as to the meaning of his 'object-letter'. It is possible that some of Kipling's readership would recognise his use of innovative technique but by disclosure of his knowledge he risked further censure, of the type abhorred by Trix, as an interloper.

Between December 1900 and November 1901, almost seventeen years after his first story was published, Kipling's novel *Kim* was serialised in both *McClure's Magazine* and *Cassell's Magazine*. It was published in book form in 1901, simultaneously in England and the United States.³⁵⁹ Ricketts states that *Kim* was well received initially and that Kipling was considered to have regained the initiative in his writing 'even in

³⁵⁷ Morey 23.

³⁵⁸ Morey 23.

³⁵⁹ Page 152.

the early stages of serialisation',³⁶⁰ before publication of the book. When it did appear as a novel the 'reviews were glowing'.³⁶¹ For example in *Blackwood's Magazine*, *Kim* was reviewed as having 'fascination, almost magic, in every page of the delightful volume'.³⁶² Similarly, William Morton Payne notes that:

Mr Kipling's new novel is a story of the India that he knows so well – a story entirely without love – making or other sentimental interest of the conventional sort, yet singularly enthralling...It is needless to say that few Europeans understand the working of the Oriental mind as Mr. Kipling understands them, and far fewer have his gift of imparting the understanding to their readers'.³⁶³

Of great importance is the mention of the novel in an overall review of Kipling's work at his nomination for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907: 'Among the large number of Kipling's creations, *Kim* (1901) deserves special notice, for in the delineation of the Buddhist priest...there is an elevated diction as well as a tenderness and charm which are otherwise unusual traits in this dashing writer's style.'³⁶⁴ Kipling remarks upon the success of the book in a letter written shortly after its publication:

I got a dear sweet letter from Mr Norton t'other day about *Kim* at which he is pleased. *Very* pleased. I have grown in my boots since the reading because praise from Norton is not what you might call as common as some other things: and he does not say a thing for any sake of the mere saying. Likewise Henry James liked it!³⁶⁵

³⁶⁰ Ricketts 273.

³⁶¹ Ricketts 273.

³⁶² J.H. Millar, "A 'New Kipling'," *Kim*, ed., Zohreh T. Sullivan (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2002) 283. This review is noted as originating in *Blackwood's Magazine*, December 1901 pp.793-95.

³⁶³ William Morton Payne, "Mr. Kipling's Enthralling New Novel," *Kim*, ed., Zohreh T. Sullivan (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2002) 284. This review is noted as from 'Recent Fiction,' *The Dial* 31 (November 16, 1901): 368.

³⁶⁴ Nobel Prize Committee, "The Nobel Prize for Literature, 1907," *Kim*, ed., Zohreh T. Sullivan (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2002) 293. This is noted as having been written by C.D. Wirsén, Permanent Secretary of the Swedish Academy.

³⁶⁵ Rudyard Kipling at Rottingdean, "To Sarah Orne Jewett," 25 November 1901, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 3: 1900-10*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1996) 78.

Lycett concurs with the view of *Kim* posited by Ricketts. He states that '[a]s soon as he read [*Kim*], Henry James was thrilled that Rudyard had again tackled something commensurate with his talents'.³⁶⁶

According to Edward Said, the work 'occupies a very special place in the development of the English novel and in late Victorian society'.³⁶⁷ Within this context Said does not qualify, or explain, exactly what he means by this, except to remark that the picture that the novel paints of India 'exists in a deeply antithetical relationship with the development of the movement for Indian independence'³⁶⁸ and that in his view they should be interpreted simultaneously, in order to experience the differences and the reality of empire. Elsewhere, Said offers an explanation for *Kim's* special status when he states that 'in novels like *Kim*...Kipling's White Man [*sic*], as an idea, a persona, a style of being, seems to have served many Britishers while they were abroad...[F]or the Britisher who circulated amongst Indians, Africans, or Arabs there was also the certain knowledge that he belonged to, and could draw upon the empirical and spiritual reserves of, a long tradition of executive responsibility towards the colored [*sic*] races'.³⁶⁹ Said argues that the novel reinforces sentiments such as those already expressed by Kipling in his poem, 'The White Man's Burden',³⁷⁰ in which he exhorts those who believe in the unequivocal obligations and benefits of imperialism to:

Take up the White Man's burden—
Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile

³⁶⁶ Lycett 332.

³⁶⁷ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994) 36.

³⁶⁸ Said (1994) 36.

³⁶⁹ Edward W. Said, "The Discourse of the Orient," *Literature in the Modern World: Critical Essays and Documents*, ed., Dennis Walder (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 240.

³⁷⁰ 'Published in *The Times*, 4 February 1899; collected in *The Five Nations* (1903)...The poem was addressed to the people of the United States, who were involved with Spain in a war over Cuba' Page 184.

To serve your captives' need; (1-4).³⁷¹

Said suggests that the novel legitimises empire for the late Victorian and early post-Victorian reader and emphasises the moral responsibilities to the 'native' that are engendered by imperial conquest and aspiration.)

The narrative of *Kim* illustrates how to engage directly with conflicting allegiances. It justifies apparent racial hybridity, which helps to avoid accusations of hypocrisy that Kipling might face, or a mis-reading of his standpoint. Since Kipling does not question inherent white supremacy and advocates a strict delineation of race, then author and eponymous hero embody this. In comparison they remain unequivocally English, with the attendant raft of connotations and expectations. Ultimately, despite their affinities to empire and the English nation and race, to some extent they are also 'outsiders'. At the end of the novel as Kim recovers from an illness, he is briefly disorientated and ponders: 'I am Kim. I am Kim. And what is Kim?'.³⁷² Kim's tone is unhappy, as he wrestles with his identities. He has an anxiety of origin that reflects that experienced by his creator, despite Trix's stated beliefs. As Noel Annan argues, in a comment that is as true for Kipling in his life as for Kim in the novel:

[T]he hierarchy of religion and life which is implicit in every description of Indian or English society allots a place to each character which he is compelled to occupy. Born white, Kim can no more become an Indian than the Lama can reverse the Wheel of Life and become a merchant...Kim has to discover the exact slot into which his own tiny personality must fit in the bewildering variety of human beings who pass their transitory lives in the Indian sub-continent.³⁷³

From his earliest writing and throughout his life and work, Kipling was a victim of the scrutiny, fantasy and judgement of others. The personal tensions created by this are

³⁷¹ Rudyard Kipling, *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Definitive Edition* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982) 323.

³⁷² Kipling (1994a) 374.

³⁷³ Noel Annan, "Kipling's Place in the History of Ideas," *Kim*, ed., Zohreh T. Sullivan (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2002) 326.

evident in *Kim*. Whilst the metamorphic elements of the novel allow the eponymous hero to assume a variety of identities, he can hide his true identity as well. Criticism of Kipling varied in its accuracy and acceptability. An example of early scrutiny and implied criticism was published in *The Times* in 1890, eleven years before the publication of *Kim*:

Many of the stories which he has lately published in the English magazines...show a distinct advance in artistic power on any of those he published in India, and the volume called "Departmental Ditties," clever and bright as it is, is in no respect on the same level as certain verses which have appeared with and without his name during the present year in British periodicals. Even so, we are far from asserting that Mr. Kipling has yet made any claim to a place in the first rank of contemporary writers. He has given evidence of a knowledge of Indian life which would be extraordinary in any writer and is phenomenal in one so young. He has shown a truly remarkable power of telling a story dramatically and vividly. He has written a number of amusing occasional verses, not without point and sting....[T]he question in which the rapidly-growing number of his readers are now most interested is the question whether he possesses staying power...it is to be hoped he will not write himself out. Modern magazines and their eager editors are a dangerous snare in the way of a bright, clever, and versatile writer, who knows that he has caught the public taste (28/10, 1888-1897, 1).³⁷⁴

The article is negative in its appraisal of Kipling's potential and work. Samuel Hynes is judgemental of the author: 'In the last years of Victoria's reign [Kipling] was the acknowledged Voice of the Empire...But the century turned...[and] [i]n the years just before the war his public statements on the Irish question were so inflammatory that the question was raised in the House of Commons whether Kipling should be prosecuted for sedition. By this time Kipling was no longer the Voice of Empire but the snapping and snarling voice of an old Tory dog.'³⁷⁵ In common with his creator, Kim undergoes harsh judgement. He believes that his closest mentor and travelling companion, the Lama, misinterprets his actions and the motives behind them: 'Kim controlled himself

³⁷⁴ 'Mr. Rudyard Kipling's Writings' *The Times* 25 Mar. 1890 28/10.

³⁷⁵ Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn Of Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968)

with an effort beyond his years. Not more than any other youngster did he like to eat dirt or to be misjudged, but he saw himself in a cleft stick'.³⁷⁶ Kipling too may have judged himself to be misunderstood. He uses his work to display an intimate knowledge of Indian culture and society, whilst criticising the depth of such perception himself. Perhaps he could warrant his knowledge if it was deemed to be in the service of empire. By assimilation, or assuming a role, he could justify his writing as engendering greater cultural understanding or awareness. From his earliest work he espouses the ideals of a discrete racial identity and white supremacy, even though his sister intimates that their own background may be under scrutiny. Despite Trix's assertion that Kipling did not care about the slurs upon him and his family, perhaps a major factor in his impetus to be an early success was to justify himself and compensate for any real or imagined lack of social status and consequence. This may have been the spur for his ultra-English and imperialist perspectives. His writing was full of contradiction and tension as he wrote about contentious subjects such as the 'other' and common men, yet he wanted literary recognition for his work. As T.S. Eliot remarks in 1948:

[T]he account of a man's writings should be considerably more than an account of their success or failure, and of the fluctuations of the author's reputation during his lifetime. And I am aware that many of Kipling's stories and verses have to be understood in relation to some public issue which occasioned them. The literary critic has to take account of a writer's life, for any light that it may throw upon his writings, and for any help that the study of his life may give, in promoting an understanding and appreciation of these writings. The biographer, on the other hand, should study the writings, with a modicum at least of literary appreciation, for the light they throw on the man (32/38 File 32/29 Un-numbered document).³⁷⁷

³⁷⁶ Kipling (1994a) 279.

³⁷⁷ T.S. Eliot, "To A.P. Watt," 11 September 1948 32/38. Relates to discussion of the Lord Birkenhead biography.

Kipling's family members, especially his father, were crucial in the production, development and criticism of his work, which Eliot suggests needs to be taken into account by any literary critic. It is acknowledged in the 'Celebrities at Home' article [1890]:

The name of Rudyard Kipling has been a household word in the Punjab and North-West Provinces, and is almost equally well known through the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. Rarely a day passed but something of his pen appeared in the daily papers, the Pioneer, or Civil and Military Gazette;...Not that his genius could be denied, only it was thought that having found its outlet in the portrayal of Anglo-Indian and native Indian life, it must henceforth be devoted to those subjects which would also in all probability prove to be of purely local interest....His best training for the arena has been in his home intercourse; for, coming of a gifted family...he has lived in a pleasant atmosphere of wit and artistic taste, and has also been able to command never-failing sympathy and help (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).³⁷⁸

The influences in Kipling's early life and work combined with an irresistible desire to write for an audience. From his earliest work that audience was cross-cultural, since it espoused not only his Anglo-Indian acquaintance, but also Indian and other international, English speaking readers. He reached out to a new 'ordinary' audience who were not of a leisured class and he utilised the modern technologies available to do so. This chapter begins with a discussion of early correspondence between Kipling, his father and other close relatives in his family. Since Kipling requested, received and valued familial critique of his writing and in particular the opinion of John Lockwood, it is evident that the way in which his early work was perceived was important to him. It was entirely within his grasp to shape these perceptions and the ways in which they influenced his reputation. As early as 1885, one of the letters to his Aunt implies pleasure in the prestige he has already attained through local, Indian newspaper

³⁷⁸ 'Celebrities at Home' *World* 2 Apr. 1890. 28/10.

publication. Subsequent correspondence indicates that his pleasure did not diminish as his success grew.

There are several important factors shown in this chapter which require consideration. Kipling was indebted to his father and wished to please him, whilst he appears to be in at least some level of conflict with his mother. He sought suitable financial reward for his work and he was willing to use topical and local knowledge to his advantage in this regard. However as Orwell indicates, Kipling was cautious within his own Anglo-Indian community about the ways in which he presented himself. His 1886 letter to Aunt Edith Macdonald particularly highlights this type of manipulative behaviour. He took the moral high ground in his writing, whilst documenting morally abhorrent behaviour, which he then used as his subject matter. Of most importance in this chapter is Kipling's need to reinvent himself because of the geographical shifts which dislocated his feelings of 'belonging'. At the same time, it can be seen that Kipling had an inherent feeling of racial anxiety, in an era when any questions over heritage and any hints of degeneracy would be catastrophic. These two concepts provide the greatest motivators for Kipling to ensure that any 'reading' of his reputation was on his terms, framed entirely within perspectives dictated by him. Given his commercial achievements across all sectors of society with his work during this period, his strategies appear to have been successful.

Chapter 3: Kipling and Language

Linguistic Rigour in Kipling's Writing

Previous chapters in this thesis have explored the early development of Kipling's reputation and its longevity. This chapter examines the role of his precise use of language and the way in which this usage attributed to his later reputation and writing. In 1890, the author of the article 'Celebrities At Home' wrote: '[s]ince [Kipling's] success he has given to his work the same minute elaboration as before, speaking every word aloud that he may better judge of its fitness' (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).³⁷⁹ Over forty years later in 1931, Kipling informs Trix that 'I've done...my new book of tales for the spring. So far 14 stories *and* 17 poems. The last give me most bother because one is always touching and retouching 'em: so I am minded to make a vow *not* to mess with 'em any more'.³⁸⁰ He refers to *Limits and Renewals* '[p]ublished in London and New York in 1932'³⁸¹ and he indicates the importance to him of perfecting his verse. These two statements, separated by decades, imply that Kipling always retained a sense of perfectionism. He revised and edited his work until it attained a form ready for publication. Cecily Nicholson, secretary at Bateman's,³⁸² confirms his preoccupation with detail when she remarks in her 1978 memoir: 'He was writing stories, articles and verses all the time....I would often type the same piece over and over again while he revised and polished it....[I]t gave me some insight into how his mind was working and into his craftsmanship. Sometimes he would put a piece on one side for weeks and then start working on it again' (File Ad. 8).³⁸³ His behaviour borders on obsession, with several possible motives. Firstly, the reader would respond to a text from which all

³⁷⁹ 'Celebrities At Home' *World* 2nd Apr. 1890. 28/10-Various Book Reviews and Articles About Rudyard Kipling/Newspaper Cuttings 1887-1897.

³⁸⁰ Rudyard Kipling, "To Mrs J.M. Fleming," [12 October 1931], *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 6: 1931-36*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004c) 61.

³⁸¹ Kipling's last collection of stories which ultimately contained fourteen stories and nineteen poems Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 62.

³⁸² Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 571.

³⁸³ (Box un-numbered) Additions 1-36/38-K/P.

potential flaws had been removed, as far as possible. Repeated revision ensured that Kipling directed his reader towards his intended meanings. Secondly, his specific lexical and syntactical choices, combined with the use of dialect, might dictate the type of reader who would engage with his work. Finally relating to the last point, Kipling may have been prescribing the image of himself, as a man who was willing and able to engage across all sectors of society.

Such meticulous scrutiny of his writing began with his earliest work. This is exemplified by a collection of manuscript books held at the University of Sussex Kipling Archive: ‘there are several important notebook collections of [Kipling’s] early verses....Four such notebooks...do in fact survive, three in the Kipling Papers at Sussex and one in the Berg Collection in the New York Public Library’.³⁸⁴ Rutherford notes that ‘[i]n *Schooldays with Kipling* Beresford refers frequently to Gigger’s practice of copying his poems into “Russia-leather, gilt-edged, cream-laid MS. Books”’.³⁸⁵ (As the only boy at the United Services College who wore spectacles, Kipling was given the nickname of ‘Gigger’ or Gig-lamps’).³⁸⁶ The attractive description of the manuscript books does not correspond to their current state (appendix 22). Many of the handwritten poems bear evidence of revisions, erasures and comments about them by the young writer. Kipling also experiments with dialect. For example ‘The Trouble of Curtiss Who Lodged in the Basement’,³⁸⁷ written in 1882, demonstrates the extent of Kipling’s early linguistic rigour (appendix 23). Carrington maintains that it was only in maturity that Kipling revised and edited his writing: ‘his juvenile pieces...were

³⁸⁴ Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 23.

³⁸⁵ Rutherford 23.

³⁸⁶ Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986) 59.

³⁸⁷ Noted in the MS. book as Poem 40. Some poems are typed up in file 24/65. These are easier to read (24/38 File 24/65 Un-numbered document) 24/38-K/P: Literary Manuscripts.

sometimes dashed off in an afternoon to fill an odd column in his newspaper.³⁸⁸ Whilst this is true of some verses, the notebooks and 'Celebrities at Home' article offer evidence to the contrary. Kipling is scathing in a critique of his poem. A year later he comments that he 'thought this perfection when I wrote it – forcible grand and all the rest. In straining after effect I overdid the thing, neglected the womans life Shamefully and shamelessly and mixed my few grains of wheat with so much chaff that the whole affair has been hopelessly spoilt. Moral Don't write like that again till I am older' 4/4/83 (24/38 Files 24/1, 24/2 and 24/3).³⁸⁹

Previous discussion demonstrates the critical input of friends and family into Kipling's work. He implies that his experience at the United Services College [1878-1882] was an early catalyst for his linguistic pedantry:

My main interest as I grew older was C –, my English and Classics Master³⁹⁰Under him I came to feel that words could be used as weapons...One learns more from a good scholar in a rage than from a score of lucid and laborious drudges; and to be made the butt of one's companions in full form is no bad preparation for later experiences.³⁹¹

Examination of Kipling's work illustrates his diligent attention to form and expression. This is apparent in his choice of style and lexis with which he produces and strengthens specific images and in representation of his characters: '[w]hether using standard English or dialect, most of Kipling's characters are given a distinctive manner of speech which he indicates by vocabulary and word order'.³⁹² Kipling enhances the authenticity of his writing by appearing to incorporate genuine accent and dialect, the foundation of which was his development of 'a personal system of phonetics from his study of the

³⁸⁸ Charles Carrington, ed., *The Complete Barrack-Room Ballads of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1973) 13.

³⁸⁹ 24/38.

³⁹⁰ 'C' was William Carr Crofts [1846-1912] Carrington (1986) 65.

³⁹¹ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1964) 31.

³⁹² Carrington (1973) 14.

private soldier, slum dweller and music-hall coster.’³⁹³ Since this authenticity is apparent throughout many of his texts which provides a vast amount of material, close examination in this chapter of this technique is within the parameters of Kipling’s working-class ‘soldier-speech’. (There is brief discussion of Kipling’s use of the Indian dialect in chapter 2, with regard to the tale ‘Beyond the Pale’ and several poems. The linguistic usage of the eponymous hero of *Kim* also merits brief mention. In his earliest years in India ‘[t]here came a point when kitchen Hindustani was so much the lad’s [Kipling’s] first tongue that he had to be reminded to speak English when he was presented to his parents’.³⁹⁴ Not only does this illustrate how similar was the early experience of author and creation in terms of late consciousness of heritage, but it also gives Kim’s character added authenticity by emulating this early personal experience. For Kim to speak entirely in ‘kitchen’ Hindustani would have denied the novel to the majority of the intended audience, but clever use of phrasing and occasional ‘native’ words gives a flavour of that effect. For example, as when Kim carefully negotiates the cost of a rail journey for himself and the Lama: ‘The price is so much. The small money in return is just so much. I know the ways of the *te-rain* [*sic*]...Never did yogi need *chela* as thou dost’.³⁹⁵ This echoes earlier work, such as the poems of *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses*³⁹⁶ in which Kipling uses the technique of writing in a style and dialect to encourage empathy of the reader to his characters. Examination of the American dialect in this chapter is absent, since although he enthused in 1888 that American was ‘[“]the one language I have long and ardently desired to learn[”]’,³⁹⁷ by 1889 he declared that American ‘[“]speech is not sweet to listen to – ’specially the

³⁹³ P.J. Keating, *The Working Classes in Victorian Fiction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971) 260.

³⁹⁴ Lycett 31.

³⁹⁵ Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (London: Penguin Books, 1994a) 41.

³⁹⁶ *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses* was first published as a volume in 1892 Page 161: ‘Individual poems had [previously] been printed in Henley’s *Scot’s Observer*...on 22 February 1890’ Page 163.

³⁹⁷ Lycett 155.

women's.["] In his pieces for the *Pioneer* he confirmed his distaste for Americans' language'.³⁹⁸)

Examples of Kipling's soldier-dialect are found in dialogue passages in *Soldiers Three* [1888] (fig. 10). This was the first title in the *Indian Railway Library* series. The seven booklets of the series ('[t]he first six of [which] were by Kipling'³⁹⁹), each had between four and nine stories, with *Soldiers Three* containing seven. Six of these 'had already appeared in *The Week's News* during 1888. A second edition appeared in Allahabad in 1888, an English edition in 1890, and an American edition in the latter year'.⁴⁰⁰

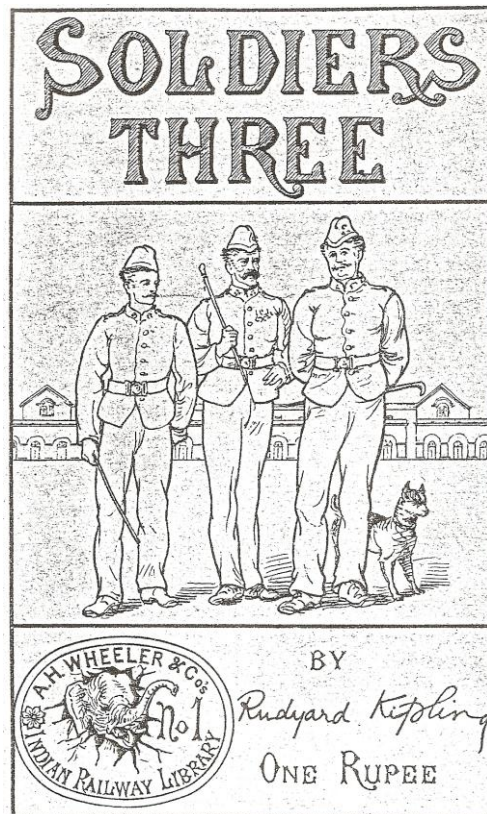


Fig. 10 Cover illustration for *Soldiers Three*, No. 1 of the *Indian Railway Library* Series (4/38 File 4/8).

In the 1950 edition used in this chapter, the stories combine into one volume, published as *Soldiers Three and Other Stories*. (This 1950 edition is the result of several earlier

³⁹⁸ Lycett 176.

³⁹⁹ Page 42

⁴⁰⁰ Page 42.

revisions and subsequent publication of collections, by Kipling and his publishers. The first three booklets were revised by Kipling and ‘later conflated in a collection published in two volumes and comprising 24 stories; the fourth, fifth and sixth booklets...formed another collection...The two-volume collection was published in London in 1892 by Sampson Low...under the title *Soldiers Three, The Story of the Gadsbys, In Black and White*. It was reissued by Macmillan in London and New York in 1895’.⁴⁰¹ Following three further Macmillan reprints and an *Edition de Luxe* in 1897, Macmillan published the collection as the first Uniform Edition, under the title *Soldiers Three and Other Stories* and sub-titled *Soldiers Three, The Story of the Gadsbys and In Black and White* in 1899⁴⁰²).

The 1950 collection is a chapter by chapter narrative of three regular soldiers of the British Army in India: ‘[a] collection of stories setting forth certain passages in the lives and adventures of Privates Terence Mulvaney, Stanley Ortheris and John Learoyd’.⁴⁰³ The privates are an Irishman, a Londoner and a Yorkshireman, respectively. These characters demonstrate Kipling’s ‘acquaint[ance] with the English working classes in India.’⁴⁰⁴ The corollary of such a relationship was Kipling’s ability to ‘suitably represent the mood of the sociologically realistic nineties.’⁴⁰⁵

From the first appearance of his three soldier protagonists, Kipling writes their spoken words phonetically to represent the dialect and accent appropriate to the speaker: ‘[i]n his first story of barrack life (‘The Three Musketeers’, March 1887) Kipling made his Irishman, Mulvaney, his Yorkshireman, Learoyd, and his Londoner, Ortheris, talk appropriately, using local words, grammatical forms, and sounds rendered in an amateur

⁴⁰¹ Page 42.

⁴⁰² Rudyard Kipling, *Soldiers Three and Other Stories: Soldiers Three, The Story of the Gadsbys, In Black and White* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1899) n/p.

⁴⁰³ Rudyard Kipling, *Soldiers Three and Other Stories* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1950) n/p.

⁴⁰⁴ Keating 141.

⁴⁰⁵ Keating 141.

phonetic spelling that was already conventional.’⁴⁰⁶ (Kipling’s relationship with the soldier and his imagery of this figure will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. It is his use of ‘common speech’ and colloquialism as a linguistic technique to portray particular social groupings, which is crucial here.) When Kipling uses this approach in his poetry ‘[it] brings a working-class voice speaking non-standard English into the poetry of the 1890s’.⁴⁰⁷ The ordinary soldier as subject is divorced from official opinions and positions and ‘recovers one of the potentially lost perspectives of imperial history’s common scenes’.⁴⁰⁸ This is equally true in Kipling’s prose. His writing supplies the supposedly most vulgar elements of society with opportunities to speak for themselves and to be heard outside their own class. Using the ‘voice’ of the soldier in this way echoes the idea that Kipling speaks outside the appropriate category of society to which he might be assigned. Keating argues that ‘[i]t is Rudyard Kipling who bring-about [*sic*] a complete break with convention and provides English fiction with a new cockney archetype.’⁴⁰⁹ Kipling must have been confident that his audience would judge his work as a serious attempt at empathy and not read into his poetry and other writing elements of satire, mockery or parody. (Kipling’s confidence was probably not misplaced, since his ‘only slum story...had shown that it was possible to write about working-class characters in a working-class environment without presenting their words and actions in middle-class terms.’⁴¹⁰) Conversely, Kipling ran a risk that his some of his readership might assign him to the class for whom he appeared to speak.

Paradoxically, the technique Kipling uses to deliver accent, dialect, regional diversity and class adds clarity *and* confusion to the reading of the text. For example in *Soldiers*

⁴⁰⁶ Carrington (1973) 14.

⁴⁰⁷ Francis O’ Gorman, ed., *Victorian Poetry: An Annotated Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 644.

⁴⁰⁸ O’ Gorman 644.

⁴⁰⁹ Keating 140.

⁴¹⁰ Keating 151. The story to which Keating refers is ‘The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot’ [1890] Keating 150.

Three and Other Stories and the 1890 *Barrack-Room Ballads* the confused syntax, phonetic representation of the strong dialect and poor vocabulary of the soldiers depicts a common, enlisted man with few pretensions of education or intellect. Kipling ensures that the reader understands the humble origins of his subjects. He ‘fully understood the necessity for the working man to express himself in his own language.’⁴¹¹ Nevertheless Mulvaney, Ortheris, Learoyd and the speaker-narrators of poems such as ‘Tommy’, ‘The Widow at Windsor’ and ‘Oonts’ are positively represented in the narrative whether they speak themselves, or are narrated by the external Kiplingesque figure who considers the men as his friends. By ‘hearing’ the voices of the men, it is more difficult for the reader to project a pejorative image of them. (Keating argues that the ‘use of phonetics to indicate the sound of a cockney voice’⁴¹² is the ‘most influential single aspect of Tommy Atkins’s presentation’⁴¹³ in the *Barrack-Room Ballads*. Kipling’s combination of ‘speech rhythms, aided by a music-hall song beat, are used to create that perky sense of all-knowing self-sufficiency which had long been an important part of the cockney’s personality’⁴¹⁴).

However, lengthy narrative in colloquial vocabulary which must be deciphered phonetically, detracts from the overall understanding of either a poem or story. For example ‘Oonts’⁴¹⁵, published in the *Scots Observer* on March 22nd 1890,⁴¹⁶ begins with the line: ‘Wot makes the soldier’s ’eart to penk, wot makes ’im to perspire?’⁴¹⁷ A more complicated example is taken from the chapter ‘The God from The Machine’, when Mulvaney discusses attempts to dishonour the daughter of the Colonel of the Regiment in which he serves: ‘[s]o he wint menowdherin’, and minandherin’, an’ blanandherin’

⁴¹¹ Keating 165.

⁴¹² Keating 161.

⁴¹³ Keating 161.

⁴¹⁴ Keating 161.

⁴¹⁵ ‘Oont’ is Hindustani for camel Carrington (1973) 158.

⁴¹⁶ Carrington (1973) 158.

⁴¹⁷ Carrington (1973) 43.

roun' an' about the Colonel's daughter, an' she, poor innocent, lookin' at him'.⁴¹⁸ This must be read carefully to elicit any meaning. The attempt at authenticity is distracting. According to some critics, Kipling's use of the vernacular as a linguistic technique fails, since it lacks verisimilitude:

Most readers may enjoy, or, more likely, imagine they enjoy, the use of dialect...in *Soldiers Three*. Nowadays Kipling connoisseurs...have their doubts....This use of dialect, in poetry as well as prose, seems initially to be a brilliant tour de force. But it becomes tiresome: as close examination makes immediately apparent, it is not authentic. It is a fictional model bearing little relation to these vernaculars....Kipling never did understand Cockney, Yorkshire or Irish, although he came up with a very creditable (and patronising) imitation. However, the necessary effort...of translating from the pseudo-vernacular into English makes the reader pause. This directs his attention to the sense. In that way it amounts to a useful and clever device.⁴¹⁹

For Seymour-Smith the sole achievement of Kipling's use of the vernacular is to reduce the speed of reader engagement with the text, which augments understanding of the writing. The audience is directed towards components of the original dialect and a 'flavour' of another element of society, or class, with which they might be unfamiliar.

In February 1942, Orwell makes pejorative observations relating to Kipling's poems *Barrack-Room Ballads*, in his *Horizon* article. Keating states that the composition of these ballads was 'inspired by Kipling's association with the London working classes, and which established [another] new ["realistic"] cockney archetype – Tommy Atkins'.⁴²⁰ Page states that on publication the poems 'aroused real enthusiasm – partly, no doubt, because its author had by the time of its publication already risen to fame on account of his short stories. Even before the volume appeared in 1892, individual poems had been printed in Henley's *Scots Observer* (later *National Observer*), beginning resoundingly with 'Danny Deever' on 22 February 1890, and had attracted

⁴¹⁸ Kipling (1950) 7.

⁴¹⁹ Martin Seymour-Smith, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Macdonald Queen Anne Press, 1989) 91.

⁴²⁰ Keating 142.

widespread attention'.⁴²¹ (Arthur T. Quiller-Couch infers that 'Danny Deeever' and the poems in *Barrack-Room Ballads* are successful in large part because of Kipling's use of lexis: 'the *Barrack Room* [sic] volume does indeed contain verse for which ["splendid"] is the only term – so radiantly it glitters with incrustations of barbaric words. It has genius in it, of course, in the grim effectiveness (for instance) of 'Danny Deeever'.')⁴²² Another important element in the success and enthusiastic reception of the *Barrack-Room Ballads* is Kipling's clever use of the ballad genre. The tradition of ballad composition dates from the early 14th century, with renewed interest in the form in the 18th century.⁴²³ The ballad was 'originally a song intended as an accompaniment to a dance', which evolved into a simple or popular song 'often...attacking persons or institutions.'⁴²⁴ Subsequently the genre developed into 'a single, spirited poem in short stanzas, in which some popular story is graphically narrated'.⁴²⁵ The narrative element is essential, since this engages with the Victorian practice of public and private recitation and music hall performance. The '[“]folk-art of the late-Victorians was the popular song with a strong melody, a simple rhythm, and a chorus...Everyone joined in, and everyone knew some dozens of songs[”]'.⁴²⁶ This illustrates one of the most appealing, socially cohesive elements of the ballad form, for poet and audience. In places of entertainment such as music halls and pubs and in schools and homes, poetry could be memorised, recited and sung. This ensured a greater audience than was possible for prose writing: '[i]n the music halls [Kipling] found the strength and vitality that he searched for in vain in other areas of English life. It would be difficult to over-

⁴²¹ Page 163.

⁴²² Arthur T. Quiller-Couch, "Quiller-Couch on Kipling's Verse," *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 175.

⁴²³ Margaret Drabble, ed., *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 61.

⁴²⁴ Drabble 60.

⁴²⁵ Drabble 60.

⁴²⁶ Malvern van Wyk Smith, *Drummer Hodge: The Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) 192.

estimate the influence of the music hall on Kipling's mind and work'.⁴²⁷ The simple, appealing and 'singable' form of ballads guaranteed wide and enthusiastic dissemination. It is evident in *Barrack-Room Ballads* that Kipling was conscious of these factors and constructed his poems accordingly. An illustration of this is 'Belts' (first published in the *Scots Observer* in July 1890)⁴²⁸ the seven stanzas employ repetition of the five line chorus:

For it was:— 'Belts, belts, belts, an' that's one for you!'
 An' it was 'Belts, belts, belts, an' that's done for you!'
 O buckle an' tongue
 Was the song that we sung
 From Harrison's down to the Park!⁴²⁹

The only variation is within the three word introduction to the chorus. Such repetition and alliteration commits the ballad to memory. The predominance of a popular ballad engendered commercial success, prolific exposure and wide public recognition and influence. By the late Victorian period of the Boer War '[m]uch of the poetry...written by or about men at the front falls into the cadences of the popular recitational ballads and music hall tunes of the time.'⁴³⁰ Foremost of these was the 'iambic quatrain of the border ballad...or a simplified version of it...[d]eveloped during the nineteenth century into a veritable cult'.⁴³¹ This form of 'simple narrative ballad was the most readily available mode for Tommy poets.'⁴³² It seems certain that Kipling's soldier-ballads were influential in this arena. Paradoxically for him, there was risk in using the ballad form with its popular, 'common' appeal, since this may have fed any speculation about his class and heritage.

⁴²⁷ Keating 152.

⁴²⁸ Carrington (1973) 156.

⁴²⁹ Carrington (1973) 36.

⁴³⁰ Van Wyk Smith 158.

⁴³¹ Van Wyk Smith 158.

⁴³² Van Wyk Smith 159.

His ballads are ‘dramatic monologues, or occasionally dialogues, recited in character...in a language that is appropriate....Most of the speakers use the vernacular of the London working class which Kipling was the first author to treat as a dialect with a right to be taken seriously’.⁴³³ Keating remarks that there are ‘several important points about Kipling’s use of Cockney. First, it is not treated as corrupt Standard English, but as a dialect in its own right....Secondly, it is not phoneticized in order to make the reader laugh....Thirdly, the transliteration is consistent throughout.’⁴³⁴ This is important since ‘Victorian lyrics exercised significant cultural influence, particularly in the construction of gender identities’.⁴³⁵ Kipling’s verse could generate engagement with social identity. The Victorians were fascinated with exploring the human personality, so dramatic verse, especially dramatic monologue, was of particular interest.⁴³⁶ Typically, Kipling’s ballads were ‘set to music and sung...recited, quoted, copied, anthologized...[and]...translated’.⁴³⁷ They exploited the ‘idiom of music hall, street ballad, and barrack room’.⁴³⁸ They were published ‘month by month, [as] a series of verses about British soldiers...The thirteen original soldier pieces first appeared between February and July 1890, in the *Scots Observer*, a literary weekly edited by W.E. Henley, a great patron of young writers....Kipling’s ballads attracted an immediate attention from the critics.’⁴³⁹ The serial publication of the soldier poems probably contributed to their success, since the reader could learn and share an individual ballad prior to publication of the next one. (An example of the *Barrack-Room Ballads* collection will be examined within this chapter in terms of language.

⁴³³ Carrington (1973) 9.

⁴³⁴ Keating 261.

⁴³⁵ Maureen Moran, *Victorian Literature and Culture* (London: Continuum, 2006) 71.

⁴³⁶ Moran 73.

⁴³⁷ Carrington (1973) 2.

⁴³⁸ Van Wyk Smith 27.

⁴³⁹ Carrington (1973) 1.

Other examples will be used extensively in a succeeding chapter, which relates directly to the image of the soldier in Kipling's writing.)

Although Orwell's 1942 article on Kipling is cutting in its observations of his work, it begins by acknowledging the primacy of his soldier-verse: 'If one examines his best and most representative work, his soldier poems, especially *Barrack Room Ballads*, one notices that what more than anything else spoils them is an underlying air of patronage'.⁴⁴⁰ This impression of patronage may have been deliberately constructed by Kipling, in order to distance himself from his subjects. Orwell detects underlying evidence of genuine affection for the soldier, although his comments imply class contrast: 'Kipling idealizes the army officer, especially the junior officer'.⁴⁴¹ Orwell refutes Keating's arguments with regard to Kipling's authenticity entirely, when Orwell indicates that the lexis and syntax that Kipling uses to demonstrate his affection is fatally flawed: 'the private soldier, though lovable and romantic, has to be a comic. He is always made to speak in a sort of stylised cockney, not very broad but with all the aitches and final g's carefully omitted. Very often the result is as embarrassing as the humorous recitation at a Church social'.⁴⁴² The line: '[“]What are the bugles blowin' for?[”]' said Files-on-Parade.'⁴⁴³ from the ballad 'Danny Deeever' illustrates Orwell's observation.

There is merit in Seymour-Smith and Orwell's arguments. This is illustrated by linguistic comparison of Kipling's description, from one of his *Barrack-Room Ballads*, of the imminent execution of Danny Deeever [from 'Danny Deeever', 1890] with the

⁴⁴⁰ George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling," *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume 2: My Country Right or Left 1940-1943*, eds., Sonia Orwell & Ian Angus (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970) 220.

⁴⁴¹ Orwell (1970) 220.

⁴⁴² Orwell (1970) 220.

⁴⁴³ Carrington (1973) 59.

burial of Drummer Hodge [1899],⁴⁴⁴ in the poem of that name by Thomas Hardy. (The latter poem will receive extensive reading across several chapters of this thesis, with appropriate perspectives and context added in each section). These two characters are different in many ways. Prior to the events of the poem, Danny Deeever appears to be a seasoned soldier of bravery and worth since he has attained a rank from which he has now been demoted because of his crime. Drummer Hodge is an inexperienced youth. Deeever is a soldier in the British colonial army in Anglo-India, Hodge is killed in the conflict of the Second Boer War. Deeever has been charged, tried and sentenced for a serious misdemeanour which results in his execution. The tragedy of battle is inferred in Drummer Hodge's death, which gives it a status denied to the death of Danny Deeever. Drummer Hodge 'serves as one image of the Boer War soldier – uncouth, uneducated, fighting for an unknown cause'.⁴⁴⁵ Despite the differences between the two characters van Wyk Smith suggests here that Drummer Hodge occupies a similar social space, class and level of linguistic attainment as Danny Deeever and the speaker in that ballad. All could be described and narrated in a similar style. However, the two poets choose different versions of narrative about their characters. Kipling writes:

‘I’m dreading what I’ve got to watch,’ the Colour-Sergeant
said.

For they’re hanging’ Danny Deeever, you can
hear the Dead March play,
The regiment’s in ‘ollow square—they’re hangin’
him to-day;
They’ve taken of his buttons off an’ cut his
Stripes away,

⁴⁴⁴ '[F]irst published in *Literature*, 25 November 1899...[it] is set during the second Anglo-Boer War' (1899-1902) O' Gorman 511.

⁴⁴⁵ Van Wyk Smith 4.

An' they're hangin' Danny Deeever in the
mornin'.⁴⁴⁶

In contrast, Hardy is elegant and economical in his narrative when he states of his character:

They throw in Drummer Hodge, to rest
Uncoffined – just as found:
His landmark is a kopje⁴⁴⁷ – crest
That breaks the veldt⁴⁴⁸ around;
And foreign constellations west
Each night above his mound.⁴⁴⁹

As Orwell argues, Kipling's simple expedient of omitting a letter to mimic an accent does not work. There is little else in 'Danny Deeever' to indicate the register, pronunciation and tone of the narrator, except the syntactical shift of 'taken of his buttons off', so the 'dialect' becomes a distraction, rather than a tool to engender an authentic atmosphere. This is countered by Keating's fourth observation on Kipling's use of Cockney that 'by concentrating on a consistent use of only one or two important cockney [*sic*] characteristics...Kipling succeeded both in capturing the sound of a cockney voice and in making it comprehensible to the general reader.'⁴⁵⁰ However, Seymour-Smith might argue that what it succeeds in doing is clarifying to the audience the social status and lack of education of the narrator, even if it fails accurately to depict his geographic or demographic origins.

Hardy is more successful in creating a believable picture, in terms of language. He uses exotic yet appropriate vocabulary, which when it is combined with the simplicity of the rest of the stanza contrasts to convey the starkness, brutality and 'foreignness' of

⁴⁴⁶ Carrington (1973) 59. Note the inconsistent dialect in this edition.

⁴⁴⁷ Noted as 'in South Africa, small hill' O' Gorman 511.

⁴⁴⁸ Noted as 'in South Africa, plain' O'Gorman 511.

⁴⁴⁹ O'Gorman 511.

⁴⁵⁰ Keating 261.

Drummer Hodge's unceremonious burial. Kipling fails to do this in his description of an equally stark military event. The implications of Drummer Hodge's low class and social standing are obvious. There is nothing in the stanza to distract from a 'pen portrait' that can be imagined. It is ironic that the effects employed to add verisimilitude in Kipling's poem generate a feeling of falsehood and make it more difficult of the two to access.

There are questions raised about Kipling's use of dialect and accent in the light of the criticisms of Seymour-Smith and Orwell. Similar sentiments to those expressed by them had been encountered by Kipling at an early stage of his career. However, Kipling was assiduous in his choice of vocabulary and its usage. He forcefully counters the charges that he is inauthentic and that his use of dialect detracts from his writing: 'the long-haired literati of the Savile Club are swearing that I "invented" my soldier talk in Soldiers Three. Seeing that not one of these critters has been within earshot of a barrack, I am naturally wrath.'⁴⁵¹ (The Savile Club in Piccadilly opened in 1874 and Kipling was introduced to dining there by 'his mentor Andrew Lang'. It was the haunt of London's 'top journalists, writers and publishers').⁴⁵² It is difficult to imagine that Kipling was unaware that the vernacular dialogue of his characters might be inaccurate, but this letter suggests that this was the case. Gilmour agrees with Keating when he argues that Kipling gained his insights into the lives of the enlisted men through close association with them, as he visited and talked to them in their barracks. He was introduced to 'the regimental sergeant-major with the explanation that Kipling had "an idea for turning out something new in writing about military life by getting into direct

⁴⁵¹ Rudyard Kipling, "To Edmonia Hill," [early November 1889], *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 1: 1872-89*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990a) 358.

⁴⁵² Lycett 190.

touch with Tommy Atkins himself”.⁴⁵³ By his introduction of the common soldier to literary text, in appearance, attitude and language Kipling was lauded as having discovered ““Tommy Atkins” as a hero of realistic romance’.⁴⁵⁴ Close contact engendered a feeling of intimate knowledge and veracity in representing the culture and language of the men. Correspondence from an ‘old soldier’ to Kipling’s daughter Elsie, in 1950, reinforces Kipling’s belief in his own precision:

It was in the days when I was a very young soldier that I first read “Soldiers Three” and then re-read them to my room-mates in barracks....They were just amazed at his marvellous insight into their lives and marvelled still more how he got at it (32/38 File 32/25 Un-numbered document).⁴⁵⁵

Elsie Bambridge felt the need to respond to this letter in the hope that it would add to a defence of her father’s work:

I am hoping to have a biography of my Father written before long, and I wondered if you would allow me either to quote your description of your first introduction to “Soldiers Three” and of your reading it to your room-mates; or to refer to this episode giving your name in connection with it? So many critics now say that the men depicted in those stories bore no resemblance to the soldiers of those days, that I feel your first-hand evidence of the reaction of some soldiers would be convincing (32/38 File 32/25 Un-numbered document).⁴⁵⁶

Even though it is unlikely, Kipling may have been unaware of the type of error attributed to him by critics such as Seymour-Smith. Carrington suggests that such criticism is unjust and inaccurate since Kipling was tapping a vein of linguistic heritage: ‘Mulvaney’s Irish brogue harked back to the eighteenth century, and had been spoken by Thackeray’s Mrs O’Dowd in *Vanity Fair*. Learoyd’s north-country speech was not

⁴⁵³ David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2003) 44.

⁴⁵⁴ Carrington (1973) 2.

⁴⁵⁵ C.J. Payne, “To Mrs [Elsie] Bambridge,” 9 January 1950 32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling’s Children. The language and content of this letter closely echo an undated, anonymous article entitled ‘Rudyard Kipling: An Appreciation by a Humble Disciple’ [No date] 27/38-K/P: Lists-Personalia. It is likely that Payne was the author of both.

⁴⁵⁶ Mrs Elsie Bambridge, “To C.J. Payne,” 2 July 1951 32/38.

unlike that of Tennyson's "northern farmer".⁴⁵⁷ There is an admission that 'Ortheris introduced a new dialect into serious literature'.⁴⁵⁸ Despite Kipling's intimation that there was contemporary criticism of his linguistic usage, perhaps it was at a minor level and has only become more vocal with posthumous, modern examination and criticism of his texts. Orwell's barbed comments are completely repudiated by the arguments put forward by Keating and when Carrington agrees that '[a]s Peter Keating demonstrates, in his *Working Classes in Victorian Literature* [sic]⁴⁵⁹ (1971), Kipling was the first writer to use the London vernacular for other than comic effect'.⁴⁶⁰ Since Kipling evaluates the use of every word, his employment of the vernacular is another tool. It integrates him socially with lower class elements of his audience; he is judged as 'one of them'. If he recognised any inaccuracy he may have chosen to use it anyway for this purpose. Conversely in this context, Kipling could deliberately use linguistic and dialectal imprecision as a technique. Those educated enough to recognise this would realise that he could not be from that lower social class and so his status would be maintained. It is a paradox that despite his diligence he seems so much in error, especially when it is apparent that he did have a huge amount of contact with the soldiers. In a sense then, he *did* invent his 'soldier talk'.

There needs to be consideration of whether readers contemporaneous with Kipling could more easily interpret his texts and how many of them embraced similar criticisms of his linguistic techniques to more current critics. This is especially the case with his poems and stories at first publication in India, since the original audience may have been familiar with the lives, personalities and origins of privates such as those denoted by Mulvaney *et al.* The translation of colloquial language which was common currency

⁴⁵⁷ Carrington (1973) 14.

⁴⁵⁸ Carrington (1973) 14.

⁴⁵⁹ The correct title of this Keating text is *The Working Classes in Victorian Fiction*.

⁴⁶⁰ Carrington (1973) 14.

between them was probably without difficulty for those readers. However, his eventual contemporary readership was vast and it is important to determine whether the narrative language was unclear, or unacceptable to them. Lycett indicates that this was not the case, since the reception of ‘Danny Deeever’ was hugely successful:

David Masson, the usually undemonstrative Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Edinburgh University...danc[e] before his astonished students, waving the paper and exclaiming, ‘Here’s Literature! Here’s Literature at last!’...[T]he ballad has been praised not only by Masson, but by fellow poets, ranging from W.B. Yeats...to T.S. Eliot, who called it ‘technically (as well as in content) remarkable’...[I]t was ‘Danny Deeever’ that made [Will] Henley – and the rest of the literary world – sit up’.⁴⁶¹

The praise showered on the poem is comprehensive. The enthusiastic responses emanate from the academic, literary, critical and popular arenas. Of particular importance are the responses of fellow poets. An article in *The Morning Post*, published at the time of Kipling’s death, agrees with Masson’s sentiments. In contrast to Orwell and Seymour-Smith and in agreement with Keating, it suggests that it is the *use* of dialect, accent and colloquialism that engenders authenticity in Kipling’s poems:

In his “Barrack-Room Ballads” Kipling’s strange and arresting poetic genius was first revealed...Long before they were gathered into a book, these irrepressible ballads had sunk themselves into the nation’s remembrance...[T]o convince such as hesitated of the reality of it all, these ballads were written in the living language of the crowded canteen. They were wrought of the very sweat and dust of English speech (File Ad 24 Un-numbered document).⁴⁶²

Carrington states that Kipling was ‘firmly placed as a star in the literary galaxy by a leader writer for *The Times* (25 March 1890) – now known to be Mr Humphrey Ward – who compared Kipling with Maupassant’.⁴⁶³ He claims that Oscar Wilde and Henry James gave enthusiastic approbation to Kipling’s ballads, James remarking that he

⁴⁶¹ Lycett 204.

⁴⁶² ‘Mr. Rudyard Kipling: Poet, Prophet and Remembrancer of Empire; The Most Eminent Englishman of His Day’ *The Morning Post* 18 Jan. 1936 Adds 1-36/38.

⁴⁶³ Carrington (1973) 2.

‘never arranges or glosses or falsifies, but goes straight for the common and the characteristic’. Inevitably, with the paradox that always accompanies Kipling, Wilde praises the vulgarity of the writing and James later comments that Kipling ‘has come down steadily from the simple in subject to the more simple’.⁴⁶⁴ However, taken in context Wilde’s comment is not as pejorative as it appears, since Kipling’s ‘vulgarity’ is an inherent element of ‘reading life by superb flashes’.⁴⁶⁵ These contemporary critics imply that it is largely the language and its use in work such as *Barrack-Room Ballads* and *Soldiers Three* that offers the reader the idea of an accurate and cross-cultural text. Kipling enables a great number of readers to feel that his work is accessible to them and ‘speaks’ directly to them in their own ‘voice’, as well as giving insight to those outside the social grouping. This ensures that Kipling is a literary figure who is popular across all sectors of class and society. Models such as Terence Mulvaney reached out to a target audience who began with the Anglo-English and then stretched to all classes in an imperial structure: ‘Christopher Hitchens...in a recent *Atlantic Monthly* essay, lauds Kipling’s “fruitful contradictions” as the source of his transcendence of class divisions: “His entire success as a bard derived from the ability to shift between Low and High Church, so to speak. He was a hit with the troops and the gallery...but he was also...the chosen poet of the royal family and the *Times*”’.⁴⁶⁶ Kipling’s writing and language engages with a shared cross-cultural discourse and culture of writing, as maintained by Paul Fussell. He has no doubt about the importance of literature in the absence of other media, in the period leading up to and including the Great War: ‘[i]n 1914...amusement was largely found in language formally arranged, either in books and periodicals or at the theater [*sic*] and music

⁴⁶⁴ Carrington (1973) 2.

⁴⁶⁵ Carrington (1973) 2.

⁴⁶⁶ John Kucich, *Imperial Masochism: British Fiction, Fantasy, and Social Class* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007) 137.

hall'.⁴⁶⁷ Literature, in conjunction with personal and public discourse, was dominant in a way which it is now difficult to imagine.⁴⁶⁸

Jonathan Rose indicates that one catalyst for this predominance of literature and consequent literacy was '[u]ndenominational Board schools [which] proliferated after the Education Act of 1870. English literature became their most widely taught subject, especially after 1882, when reading from Shakespeare, Milton, Defoe, and other "standard authors" were mandated for higher grades.'⁴⁶⁹ He stresses the importance of the Victorian and Edwardian Mutual Improvement Societies, each of which he describes as 'a friendly society devoted to education'.⁴⁷⁰ These omnipresent societies were crucial in the delivery of adult education and literacy.⁴⁷¹ (Initially and for many years, women were excluded from this circle and it was not until the late nineteenth century that they were able to join in with what Rose determines as 'mutual improvement activities').⁴⁷² Samuel Smiles and his notions of self help, published in 1859 in a text under that title, also played a significant role in developing Victorian adult literacy. According to Rose '*Self-Help* (1859) sold a quarter million copies by the end of the century and was translated into all the major European and Asian languages. The volume grew out of lectures delivered to a Leeds mutual improvement society in 1845'.⁴⁷³ Smiles believed that the working class 'would raise its educational and economic standards through its own cooperative efforts'.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁶⁷ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977) 158.

⁴⁶⁸ Fussell 158.

⁴⁶⁹ Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) 33.

⁴⁷⁰ Rose 58.

⁴⁷¹ Rose 58.

⁴⁷² Rose 73.

⁴⁷³ Rose 68.

⁴⁷⁴ Rose 68.

By the late nineteenth century public libraries had begun to expand and replace the working men's libraries which had preceded them.⁴⁷⁵ According to Rose, the progress of Victorian literacy and engagement with literature and the language of literature was chronological and evolutionary, with mutual improvement at its heart. An important point in this context is that it was largely driven by the working class itself and resulted in a huge adult audience of literary readers:

It is sometimes argued that the working-class pursuit of education was an accommodation to middle-class values, a capitulation to bourgeois cultural hegemony. Actually, it represented the return of the repressed. "Knowledge is Power" may strike us as a naïve Victorian slogan, but it was embraced passionately by generations of working-class radicals who were denied both.⁴⁷⁶

This was an expanding audience whom Kipling could strive to engage and entertain, which offers one explanation of his determination to utilise a language with which these audience members could identify.

(Improvements in working class literacy and interest in all forms of text were not universally popular. The church, in particular, saw engagement with secular literature as a threatening distraction: '[t]hose with predominantly working-class congregations, such as the Baptists and Primitive Methodists, tended to be the most hostile'.⁴⁷⁷ Secular texts and works of fiction liberated both the imagination and personal awareness. Neither was believed by the church to be helpful within the broader context of society.)⁴⁷⁸ Kipling's language of poetry and other writing threatened from both contexts at once. Not only did it give awareness and a voice to those who did not have one and to others who might feel themselves to be unrepresented but, principally in his

⁴⁷⁵ Rose 73.

⁴⁷⁶ Rose 23.

⁴⁷⁷ Rose 31.

⁴⁷⁸ Rose 35.

Indian writing, it gave huge opportunities to engage the imagination through exotic imagery, subjects and unfamiliar language.

Fussell maintains that the study models and systems that had been put in place, such as the ‘National Home Reading Union’⁴⁷⁹ allowed those further down the social scale to attain greater goals than might otherwise have been possible. This ensured that ‘[there was] established an atmosphere of public respect for literature unique in modern times’.⁴⁸⁰ Everyone read the Bible, Shakespeare, several of the major poets and some of those who were less well known. Kipling’s working class audience was potentially enormous. The general popularity of his verse and prose, across the various formats in which it appeared, indicates that this audience considered that the vernacular verse was a genuine expression of sentiment, rather than ironic text. It appears that the writing and the language used within it was received as a genuine attempt at engagement between a representative of one social grouping towards another. During his lifetime Kipling recognised the potency and influence of every form of the written word. But he could do more than engage with his public in terms of writing, or producing literary text. As *The Morning Post* argues: ‘[a]s with the poetry of Burns, so with Rudyard Kipling’s – it is the dialect verse which seems most likely to become in future centuries the daily bread of men’s imaginations’ (File Ad. 24 Un-numbered document).⁴⁸¹ He had access to the ‘codes’ of shared cultural currency and he crossed the barriers of social class through his use of language and dialect. Kucich states that ‘Rutherford warned readers to suspend their biases against Kipling’s jingoism and not to dismiss him “contemptuously” or “hysterically”: “Here, after all, we have the last English author to appeal to readers of all social classes and all cultural groups...and the last poet

⁴⁷⁹ Fussell 157.

⁴⁸⁰ Fussell 157.

⁴⁸¹ ‘Mr. Rudyard Kipling: Poet, Prophet and Remembrancer of Empire; The Most Eminent Englishman of His Day’ *The Morning Post* 18 Jan. 1936 Adds 1-36/38.

to command a mass audience””.⁴⁸² The implications of this comment, in terms of Kipling’s influence and commercial and literary success, are enormous. Both high and low cultures were accessible to him and he used them both.

This chapter examines Kipling’s particular use of language and the ways in which this engages with the generation and maintenance of his reputation. Cecily Nicholson illustrates the obsessive perfectionism and linguistic rigour, first learned at school, which Kipling applied to all of his writing. He attracts criticism from both Orwell and Seymour-Smith that despite his rigour, his use of linguistic techniques detracts from his verse and prose, due to a lack of veracity. However it is evident in this chapter that not all critics agree with them and he refuted a similar suggestion of inauthenticity, made whilst he was writing in India.

Keating demonstrates that Kipling, by engaging with the popular and well-known traditions of the ballad genre and utilising the speech patterns and lexis of the Cockney voice, creates a realistic picture of an under-represented group, the common soldier. Kipling generates an image of the soldier as a vivid and vital figure and gives these men a voice of their own. This was a successful strategy, since his diverse readers included literary figures such as Henry James and Oscar Wilde, members of the Royal Family and a vast audience of working-class readers, including his soldier-subjects. Generally, these readers embraced Kipling’s linguistic usage and through their engagement with his specific choice of lexis, syntax, dialect and form, Kipling directed their ‘reading’ of poet and subject.

⁴⁸² Kucich 137.

Chapter 4: Kipling and ‘Tommy Atkins’

Representing the Soldier

Concurrent with his efforts to establish and protect his own reputation, Kipling chose to address the abhorrent reputation of the serving soldier who was generally vilified in Victorian society. This chapter will examine the ways in which Kipling undertook this task and addressed the issues of rejuvenating the image of these under-represented men. When he read *Barrack Room Ballads*, Private George Housman, soldier brother of the poet, A. E. Housman, declared of Kipling that “‘There never was such a man...who understands “Tommy Atkins” in the rough, as he does””.⁴⁸³ (A. E. Housman wrote a ‘series of poems which was eventually published as *A Shropshire Lad* in 1896.’⁴⁸⁴ With its ‘themes of rural life, the military, death, and unrequited love’,⁴⁸⁵ it was not commercially successful until the Second Boer War. The poems ‘concern hale young men relishing work, sport, the tavern and the pursuit of sweethearts, but ready to be tempted away to seek glory, and face death, in the army.’⁴⁸⁶ *A Shropshire Lad* engages with the ‘homoerotic motif in Great War writing’⁴⁸⁷ with ‘the theme of beautiful suffering lads, for which the war sanctioned an expression more overt than ever before.’⁴⁸⁸ Fussell states that ‘[p]erhaps Housman’s greatest contribution to the war was the word *lad*, to which his poems had given the meaning “a beautiful brave doomed boy.”’⁴⁸⁹ The success of the verses coincided with Housman’s intense grief following the death of his brother Herbert (George) at the front. This gave ‘a poignant edge’ to his

⁴⁸³ David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2003) 44.

⁴⁸⁴ Goff, Alice., Liachowitz, Claire., Reed, Charles., & Young, Amanda., “A.E. Housman (1895-1936).” A. E. Housman Papers May 2007. 23 November 2010
<<http://www.brynmawr.edu/library/speccoll/guides/aealousman.shtml>>n/p.

⁴⁸⁵ Goff *et al* n/p.

⁴⁸⁶ A. E. Housman, *The Collected Poems of A. E. Housman* (Ware: Wordsworth Poetry Library, 2005) 11.

⁴⁸⁷ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977) 280.

⁴⁸⁸ Fussell 282.

⁴⁸⁹ Fussell 282.

poetry.⁴⁹⁰ Like Kipling, Housman admires the enlisted man but his admiration is mediated through homoeroticism and the melancholy of lost youth and life.) Correspondence to Kipling provides evidence of Private Housman's assertion: '[C]ongratulations on your return to health, some of us were sorely afraid that Tommy Atkins was going to lose one of his best chums...I think I am perfectly safe in saying that the Army (Indian & at Home) is to a man right glad to hear such reassuring news as we heard in to days [sic] Civil & Military Gazette' (19/38 File 19/3 Document 32/40).⁴⁹¹

The term 'Tommy Atkins' denotes the British enlisted soldier. The nickname 'probably originated in a War Office publication of 1815 which showed how a Soldier's Book should be made out, and gave Pte [sic] Thomas Atkins as its example. Some have suggested that the Duke of Wellington suggested the name himself, in memory of a soldier in his regiment who had been killed in Flanders in 1794.'⁴⁹² By the '1880s the expression 'Tommy Atkins' was in wide use to describe the prototypical British soldier...[and] [d]uring the First World War the nickname was widespread', despite being prohibited by senior officers.⁴⁹³ Although unpopular with its recipients, their commanding officers, or the army as an institution, the name persisted. The enlisted men felt 'patronised by it, and its English implication grated on Scots, Irishmen and Welshmen'.⁴⁹⁴ However, its use indicates 'how a more affectionate attitude to the soldier was beginning to make itself felt',⁴⁹⁵ despite continuing pervasive tensions. A

⁴⁹⁰ N/A. "The Poetry of the Boer War." n/d 23 November 2010 <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~www_se/personal/pvm/HardyBWar/poetry.html>n/p.

⁴⁹¹ Reginald Tharle [?] Hughes, Sergeant 4th Dragoon Guards at Cavalry Barracks, Rawul pindi [sic], "To Rudyard Kipling," 5 March 1899 19/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private.

⁴⁹² Holmes, Richard. "Towards A Standing Army." *BBC – History Trail – Wars & Conflict* March 2002. 19 January 2006 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cgi-bin/history/renderplain.pl?file=/history/lj/warslj/army_01.s...> 6.

⁴⁹³ Richard Holmes, *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918* (London: Harper Perennial, 2005)xv.

⁴⁹⁴ Holmes (2005) xvi.

⁴⁹⁵ Holmes (March 2002) 6.

change in attitude was necessary since '[t]he British tradition was not favourable to soldiers; ever since Cromwell's day, hostility to a standing army had been an underlying factor in British politics'.⁴⁹⁶ However, the new critique of the soldier was ambivalent because '[i]n the 1880s...enthusiastic support for the British soldier abroad was not matched by any great enthusiasm for the army at home'.⁴⁹⁷

The *Boston Transcript* agrees with Housman's assessment of Kipling's sentiments towards the enlisted man:

[A]mong the best work of our time, is found in "The Barrack-Room Ballads." No rarer, more convincing instance of what pure sympathy may work, in insight and in revelation, has been given to our time than these rough rhymes in which is laid bare the heart, the ambitions, the essential life of the common soldier....There is no attempt at idealizing Tommy Atkins; he speaks for himself (28/10, 1888-1897, 80).⁴⁹⁸

This article affirms the primacy of Kipling's verse, which offers a new and inviting reading of the enlisted man. He presents a 'realistic' image that is truly representative. This was one of the earliest positive readings of a soldier of the lower ranks and classes. It is only partly accurate, since it is an image as Kipling saw it, mediated through his personal views, knowledge, experience and inferred racial sympathies. An 1885 article by Kipling, (probably published in the *Civil and Military Gazette*, as 'Simla Notes' from its 'own correspondent'), intimates the method by which he collected information about this favourite subject and how this informed his impressions of 'Tommy Atkins':

[A] traveller in search of information and cooler climate, came across the bugler of a mule battery. The bugler had seen any amount of hard service in Egypt and the Soudan, and being a genuine Tommy Atkins was thirsty. At the end of his second gallon of beer, he consented to be pumped about his past exploits and experiences....[T]his was the history of the great and glorious Egyptian campaign, which will redound to the

⁴⁹⁶ Charles Carrington, ed., *The Complete Barrack-Room Ballads Of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1973) 5.

⁴⁹⁷ John Peck, *War, the Army and Victorian Literature* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1998) 141.

⁴⁹⁸ Untitled Article *Boston Transcript*, 1890/1891[?]. 28/10-Various Book Reviews and Articles About Rudyard Kipling/Newspaper Cuttings 1888-1897.

lasting glory of England...as told by one who had taken an active part in it. "The flies was awful!" He had been in three general engagements, and had seen his comrades fall on every side; but those flies impressed him most (28/2, 1885, 5).⁴⁹⁹

The *Boston Transcript* and Kipling's writing posit the idea that a soldier should no longer be regarded in the pejorative terms that historically had been attributed to him. This is because despite appearances, he experiences and reflects the minutiae of everyday existence and he has inherently honourable core values. Importantly, these values are associated with nationhood: 'A central point about the Victorian army is that its officers were drawn almost exclusively from the ranks of the aristocracy and gentry, whereas the common soldiers were the lowest of the low'.⁵⁰⁰ The view the army had of itself and its men was 'stubbornly committed to ideas that had been defined during the era of the Napoleonic Wars....This applies both to strategy and to the social composition and attitudes'.⁵⁰¹ Adherence to Wellington's principles engendered 'the idea of a service elite',⁵⁰² and enthusiasm for heroism. The heroics did not generally involve the enlisted man and so he remained unrepresented. The preferred style of Victorian poetry engaged with this notion. For example, in Alfred (Lord) Tennyson's 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', [f]irst published in *The Examiner* 9 December 1854',⁵⁰³ the reader recognises that the cavalry is engaged in heroic exploits. These are depicted as a 'larger-than-life pageant'.⁵⁰⁴ This automatically excludes the lowly infantry. Tim Kendall remarks that Tennyson's poem was a response to a report in *The Times*. This form of experiential war poetry 'had become possible because the Crimean

⁴⁹⁹ Dated 11 Jul 1885. 28/2-Album-Articles and Poems by Rudyard Kipling 1885.

⁵⁰⁰ Peck 12.

⁵⁰¹ Peck 11.

⁵⁰² Peck 12.

⁵⁰³ Valentine Cunningham, ed., *The Victorians: An Anthology of Poetry and Poetics* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2000) 264.

⁵⁰⁴ Peck 19.

War was the first to be covered by reporters and photographers'.⁵⁰⁵ The burgeoning press influence and geographical spread of war reporting echoes the general expansion of the press, discussed by John Lockwood Kipling in relation to the dissemination of his son's writing.

The thrust of Peck's book relates to the Army and Victorian literature: '[the] lowly status of common soldiers probably contributed to the infrequency of their appearance in Victorian novels...But the most remarkable development in this area is Kipling's short stories with their entirely fresh, and politically very significant, emphasis on the regular fighting man.'⁵⁰⁶ However, this argument applies to the context of Victorian poetry. Kipling used his innovative *Barrack-Room Ballads* to engage with these under-represented men: 'Victorian Britain did not have to like soldiers since it could easily ignore them'.⁵⁰⁷ The *Boston Transcript* article challenges the Victorian attitude and encourages the audience to embrace Kipling's new portrayal. As DeGroot explains: 'when necessity dictated that the army be integrated into society, along came Tommy Atkins'.⁵⁰⁸ However, the article is sentimental, idealistic and patronising. The army did not welcome representation as 'Tommy Atkins'. Ironically, this is the image chosen to be adopted by society. As such it presents a cause of tension, despite the fact that adoption of 'Tommy Atkins' might be supposed to produce the opposite effect. DeGroot suggests that the image is a convenient, yet counterfeit tool, which allows the unpalatable realities of the enlisted man to be more easily assimilated into a social order within which he has no obvious place.

Despite the assertion of the article, Tommy Atkins does not speak for himself, since his 'voice' and representation is interpreted through Kipling. The first problem with

⁵⁰⁵ Tim Kendall, *Modern English War Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 26.

⁵⁰⁶ Peck 13.

⁵⁰⁷ Gerard J. DeGroot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War* (London: Longman, 1998) 161.

⁵⁰⁸ DeGroot 161.

this is that he had no personal military experience. Secondly, the article refers to the *Barrack-Room Ballads* as ‘rough rhymes’.⁵⁰⁹ It suggests that it is their roughness that depicts the essence of the common soldier and his motivation. But this argument does not recognise that the rough quality is demonstrated through the language and that the linguistic ‘voice’ has only the appearance of verisimilitude. For example, the line ‘Don’t call your Martini a cross-eyed old bitch’,⁵¹⁰ taken from the ballad ‘The Young British Soldier’, (first published in the *Scots Observer* on 28th June 1890)⁵¹¹ engages accurately because it has military jargon. However, the line that precedes it: ‘[w]hen ’arf of your bullets fly wide in the ditch’⁵¹² contains the linguistic fallibility that has already been discussed in this thesis. Omitting a consonant and phonetically depicting a dialect does not engender accuracy or veracity. Gilmour suggests that the impetus for Kipling’s writing of the soldier and his life, was Kipling’s desire to recuperate the reputation of the individual enlisted man, which he thought to be ‘so unfair that he resolved to do something about it’.⁵¹³ He successfully achieved this goal: ‘[t]he achievement of Kipling – or, at any rate, the achievement that makes him a key figure in the history of militarism – is that he re-establishes a link between the lives and values of the military and the lives and values of the people as a whole. Indeed, Kipling puts society back at one with the army for the first time since Waterloo.’⁵¹⁴

Positive representations of the soldier began in Kipling’s writing in the mid 1880s: ‘About once a year Wheeler [editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette*] allowed him to act as a special correspondent reporting an important public event outside Lahore’.⁵¹⁵ In this role Kipling discusses Tommy Atkins, who is depicted as loyal, disciplined but

⁵⁰⁹ Untitled Article *Boston Transcript*, 1890/1891[?]. 28/10.

⁵¹⁰ Carrington (1973) 35.

⁵¹¹ Carrington (1973) 156.

⁵¹² Carrington (1973) 35.

⁵¹³ Gilmour 49.

⁵¹⁴ Peck 141.

⁵¹⁵ Gilmour 26.

unappreciated: ‘The sun...could hardly have been appreciated by helmeted Thomas Atkins, who was forced to face its rays without stirring for some two or three hours, exclusive of the time that he had taken tramping from Khanna’ (28/1, 1884-1886, 29).⁵¹⁶ Comment on the effect of ‘the sun’ emphasises the social exclusion of the lowly soldier and the alien, hostile environment in which he undertakes his military duties. Another early journalistic offering, on this occasion as the newspaper’s ‘own correspondent’, generates sympathy for the regular soldier. It offers a positive portrayal of the professionalism and tenacity of the enlisted man, in the tedious and challenging circumstances of military life in India:

Unless rain falls, I dare prophecy that the manoeuvres which are to impress Abdur Rahman Khan, and drive Thomas Atkins to despair...will be eclipsed and blotted out...by the all pervading dust. But the dust is not allowed to interfere with “soldiering” in the barrack room sense of the word....All bright metal gun, gear as spotless as elbow grease can make them...and, once more Thomas Atkins keeping watch and ward in the pitiless sun (28/1, 1884-1886, 9).⁵¹⁷

Kipling’s compassion for the men is racially inclusive. Whilst Thomas Atkins with his overt Englishness is driven to despair, the quarters for *all* the men are inadequate and unsuitable. The personal requirements of every soldier are subsumed beneath the necessities of service and imperial spectacle.

The desire to rejuvenate ideas of the common soldier may have come from Kipling’s early experiences. He was sent as a boarder to the United Services College, Westward Ho! in 1878. It was a suitably priced school which ‘catered particularly for the sons of serving army and navy officers’.⁵¹⁸ His parents recognised that he required urgent improvements to his education, even though they were under financial constraints:

⁵¹⁶ ‘The Rawalpindi Durbar’ [‘from our Special Correspondent’] *Civil and Military Gazette* 8 Apr. 28/1-Articles And Verses 1884 -1886.

⁵¹⁷ ‘The Rawal Pindi Camp’ [‘from our own correspondent’] *Civil and Military Gazette* 21 Mar. 28/1.

⁵¹⁸ Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 51.

The education Ruddy had so far received had been rudimentary. The best that the Kipling's finances had been able to run to had been a day school in Southsea which prepared boys for entry into the Royal Navy. However, in 1874 an advertisement had appeared in the *Pioneer*...It gave notice of the opening of a private school on the west coast of England set up by a consortium of retired Indian Army officers with the specific aim of providing an inexpensive, no-frills education for boys intending to go on to the officer-training academies but unable to afford the fees of military-oriented public schools.⁵¹⁹

Although it was not intended that Kipling should eventually enlist in the Army, one attraction of the school was Cornell Price, the Headmaster. He was known to Kipling's mother 'as a friend of her brother Harry...in the early 1850s'.⁵²⁰ Price also had an Indian connection. He had been 'a master at Haileybury College, a school long associated with India through its original role as the East India Company's training school for its administrators'.⁵²¹ Despite probable establishment loyalties, Price was 'a committed radical and a follower of the Pre-Raphaelite group'.⁵²² This connected to Alice Kipling's earliest friendships and influences. Lycett and Allen imply that considerations of cost, elements of the non-traditional education established by Price and his presence as Headmaster were the factors that encouraged Alice Kipling to make serious enquiries about the school and then undertake Rudyard's enrolment there. This was despite the fact that at the College '[p]reparing boys for 'the big race that led into the English Army' remained the primary aim of the school'.⁵²³

Kipling endured a fraught first term during which he wrote to his mother constantly. In an urgent response she remarks to Price "'It is the roughness of the lads he seems to feel most'".⁵²⁴ The bullying at the heart of the problem continued beyond that first term

⁵¹⁹ Charles Allen, *Kipling Sahib: India and the Making of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Abacus, 2008) 95.

⁵²⁰ Lycett 52.

⁵²¹ Allen 94.

⁵²² Allen 94.

⁵²³ Lycett 53.

⁵²⁴ Gilmour 11.

and throughout ‘his early years’.⁵²⁵ Alice acknowledges her son’s difficulties when she comments to Price that ‘the boy is different from most boys’.⁵²⁶ These differences were physical and mental and generated problems for Kipling. An illustration of this is that he was the only boy in the entire school who wore spectacles.⁵²⁷ Kipling was ‘useless at games’.⁵²⁸ These two factors alone would make life challenging for a boy in an establishment with military tendencies. Alice writes to Price that ‘[t]he lad has a great deal that is feminine in his nature and a little sympathy – from any quarter – will reconcile him to his changed life’.⁵²⁹ Unfortunately, when this is combined with her admission that Kipling found the other boys to be ‘rough’ it depicts a weak, feminised, snobbish individualist, a ‘Headmaster’s pet’, with whom the other pupils had nothing in common. This is acknowledged by Kipling’s former schoolfriend, Lionel Dunsterville: ‘[w]ith very few exceptions, of whom Kipling was one, we were all sons of officers of the Navy or Army, so we represented a more or less homogenous type, but that fact merely accentuated the individuality of those who diverged from type’.⁵³⁰ As in other life circumstances, at a school which promoted ideas of a professional military career Kipling was an outsider within. He could watch his schoolfellows at the college and subsequently as they joined the military or other services in India, become ‘fully paid-up members of a select community [which] conferred power and privilege that would always be denied him’.⁵³¹ This unattainable goal may have generated some of his interest and idealism about the army and the common soldier. Allen claims that ‘part of him longed to be admitted to membership, to be one of the pack’.⁵³²

⁵²⁵ Lycett 54.

⁵²⁶ Lycett 54.

⁵²⁷ Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986) 59.

⁵²⁸ Allen 95.

⁵²⁹ Allen 95.

⁵³⁰ Allen 95.

⁵³¹ Allen 103.

⁵³² Allen 103.

A factor relating directly to his education may have encouraged him to embrace Tommy Atkins in his writing. He was schooled with and observed the ‘rough lads’ who would later enter into armed service, albeit as senior ranks. His close association with them and bullying at their hands, may have generated sympathy for their future subordinates who would be in a similarly powerless position. In the presence of service families he would have been familiar with the unflattering reputations of the men who served in the lower echelons of the army. Even at his young age, he could witness and judge for himself the unfairness and prejudice of elements of the class-ridden bureaucracy that ruled the Victorian military. Perhaps these were factors that drove Kipling to redress the balance for Tommy Atkins. Holmes argues that the unfairness which Kipling sought to address was the result of historical unease between the army and British society. This was reinforced by the belief held by the Duke of Wellington that ‘*all* regular soldiers were “the scum of the earth, enlisted for drink”’.⁵³³ The men themselves did little to dispel this perception: ‘this fellowship of professional fighters...rejected the proprieties and inhibitions of Victorian society’.⁵³⁴

Despite Kipling’s intention to restore the image of the soldier, his discussion of an unsavoury reputation is illustrated in a poem published in the *Civil and Military Gazette* on 29 September 1884. The poem has the ‘signature [“]E.M.[”]’ and is ‘[u]ncollected, but included in Scrapbook 1’.⁵³⁵ (The index of the Kipling Archive Volume 28/1, 1884-1886, describes the poem as collected only in pirated editions.) ‘The Story of Tommy’ describes the behaviour of a young soldier who, under the influence of alcohol, kills a native servant and is tried and hanged for the crime. The poem responds

⁵³³ Holmes (2005) 118.

⁵³⁴ Carrington (1973) 5.

⁵³⁵ Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 257.

to 'frequent reports in the Anglo-Indian press of shooting incidents involving British soldiers'.⁵³⁶ The entire poem is reproduced below according to Rutherford:

THE STORY OF TOMMY

This is the story of Tommy, aged twenty and drunk in his cot;
Marvellous drunk was Tommy, and the night was marvellous hot;
And the fever had held him all day, till Tommy was told by his 'chum'
That the worst of fevers would yield to a couple of 'goes' of rum.—
So he drank till the bare plain rocked 'neath his regulation boots,
And kept the liquor in place with a dozen *bazar* cheroots.

Marvellous hot was the night (hot as they make 'em in June),
Merrily came the mosquito and cheered his soul with a tune,
Over the nose of Tommy softly the punkah swept.
But coolies are only human, and somehow that coolie slept.—
Sweating and swearing profusely, dizzy and dazed with his smoke—
Mad with the drink and the fever, Tommy, aged twenty, awoke.

"Zor se kencho you soor!" Never an answering wench
Peacefully slumbered the coolie, "Kencho you budzard, kench!"
Three times Tommy had called him; gaily he slumbered on.
In at the barrack-room windows softly the moonbeams shone.
Gleamed on a polished belt-jag—gleamed on a barrel brown,
Stuck in a rack, and inviting Tommy to take 'em down

Only an arm's length away, swaddled in paper and twine
Ten regulation "pickets"—if you subtract one, nine.
Tommy has settled that question as "Little Jack Horner" of yore,
Clutches the smooth brown barrel, staggers across the floor.
Only a tug at the lever, only a jerk of the thumb,
Now for the last temptation. Query. Will Tommy succumb?

Mistily muses Tommy—finger laid on the trigger:—
"Ain't it a bloomin' lark to frighten a blasted nigger?"
"Now fur [sic] to wake up the soor!" Never a sign from the coolie.
Tommy has shouldered the rifle—strives to present it duly.
Little night-owls are chuckling. Loudly the collie respires,
Laughing aloud as he does so, Tommy, aged twenty, fires.

Merrily hiccupped Tommy, when they locked him up in the dark.
Tried to explain to the Guard how it was only a "lark"
Didn't remember at trial aught that he did or said,
Wherefore was justly ordained to be "hanged by the neck till dead."
Waited a couple of weeks, while the padris came and harangued,
Then, in the Central Jail, Tommy aged twenty, was hanged.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁶ Rutherford 257.

⁵³⁷ Rutherford 257.

Close reading of the poem, with its ‘subtitle [“]A Story Without A Moral[”]’⁵³⁸ intimates a more sympathetic interpretation of the soldier-subject than initially appears. In declaring the poem to be ‘without a moral’ the speaker narrates events, whilst distancing himself from judgement. It differs from notions of a *soldier* without morals, which might have been the subtext, with a predictable interpretation. Extenuating circumstances are given in the narrative, including the youth of the soldier. He is badly advised by a comrade who, as the punctuation implies, is a troublemaker. He has endured the intolerable heat, fever and ‘foreignness’ of an Indian day and this is the catalyst for his over-indulgence and consequent disastrous behaviour. In the second stanza the arrival of mosquitoes adds to his discomfort. The native ‘coolie’ has fallen asleep and neglects his duties of cooling the room in which ‘Tommy’ is sleeping. The racist undertones implied here are echoed in stanzas 3 and 5 which indicate the contempt and low worth in which the young soldier holds the native servant: ‘Mistily muses Tommy—finger laid on the trigger:—/ [“]Ain’t it a bloomin’ lark to frighten a blasted nigger?/ Now for to wake up the *soor!*[”] Never a sign from the coolie.’⁵³⁹ The climate, native fauna and lowly servant are in an apparent conspiracy against him as he labours in an alien environment. The inanimate moonbeams and the young man’s weapon share the blame in the circumstances:

In at the barrack-room windows softly the moonbeams shone.
Gleamed on a polished belt-jag—gleamed on a barrel brown,
Stuck in a rack, and inviting Tommy to take ’em down.⁵⁴⁰

Even the army practice ‘of requiring soldiers always to be in possession of ball cartridges’⁵⁴¹ is culpable: ‘Only an arm’s length away, swaddled in paper and twine,/

⁵³⁸ Rutherford 257.

⁵³⁹ Rutherford 258.

⁵⁴⁰ Rutherford 258.

Ten regulation ‘pickets’—if you subtract one, nine.’⁵⁴² Ultimately, although the young ‘Tommy’ is ‘justly ordained to be [“]hanged by the neck till dead[”].’⁵⁴³ the inference is that he is a misguided victim of circumstance who is not entirely responsible for his actions.

Holmes discusses several explanations for the enduring friction between society and the army. Partly, it occurred because historically the army comprised of volunteers who were not representative of all sectors of society. (The only exception to this was during the two World Wars and the period immediately following World War Two.)⁵⁴⁴ This argument is based on class. He attributes antagonism to several causes: ‘[t]he army takes money from the public purse, and military expenditure is often criticised in peacetime; it is the most serious means of coercion available to the state [and] military service imposes restrictions on individual liberties’.⁵⁴⁵ Many men would abhor the idea of having to surrender their personal freedom and identity and were only ‘driven to enlist by sheer hardship’.⁵⁴⁶ These points illustrate areas of potential conflict. The suggestion that the army can be a coercive government tool, with consequent loss or restriction of civil liberties, exacerbates ideas of tension between the army and society. Individuals in a society under military influence at the direction of the state may deem that the behaviour of the army is inappropriate, undisciplined, unnecessarily brutal or unlawful. (The Boer War chapter of this thesis explores controversies surrounding soldiers in that conflict and the societal consequences in Great Britain). Holmes indicates additional, serious contentious factors between the military and civilian population, when he states that ‘soldiers themselves...do not always fit comfortably

⁵⁴¹ Rutherford 257.

⁵⁴² Rutherford 258.

⁵⁴³ Rutherford 258.

⁵⁴⁴ Holmes (March 2002) 1.

⁵⁴⁵ Holmes (March 2002) 1.

⁵⁴⁶ Holmes (March 2002) 1.

into the community'.⁵⁴⁷ Kipling suggests in his poem, 'Tommy': '[p]ublished in the *Scots Observer*, 1 March 1890 [and] collected in *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892)',⁵⁴⁸ that it is the bias and unrealistic expectations of 'the community' that lie at the heart of the difficulties:

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no
blackguards too,
But single men in barracks, most remarkable like you;
An' if sometimes our conduct isn't all your fancy paints,
Why, single men in barracks don't grow into plaster saints.⁵⁴⁹

The soldier-narrator wants recognition that he is not a paragon, or a villain. His behaviour is not exemplary, but it reflects that of young men of similar social standing and this is unacknowledged. Furthermore, he seeks realisation that the repression of barrack life causes and compounds the difficulties with which the enlisted man must deal. Holmes' comment about fitting into the community implies types of behaviour broadly considered to be aberrant. He observes that: '[t]he fact that many Regular soldiers came from the dregs of society and had enlisted because they could not find work outside the army encouraged many commentators to look upon them with disdain. In 1700 a London broadsheet, *The Spy*, declared that the red coat...was beloved of two sorts of vermin, lice and prostitutes.'⁵⁵⁰ (Wherever soldiers were present in large numbers, such as in garrison towns, there was also a large number of prostitutes in evidence: 'the Contagious Diseases Act of 1864, which vainly sought to control venereal disease by medical inspection and compulsory treatment, covered towns like Aldershot, Colchester and Woolwich in England and Cork in Ireland.')⁵⁵¹

⁵⁴⁷ Holmes (March 2002) 1.

⁵⁴⁸ Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 184.

⁵⁴⁹ Carrington (1973) 32.

⁵⁵⁰ Holmes (March 2002) 4.

⁵⁵¹ Holmes (2005) 117.

More abhorrent to Victorian society was other sexual behaviour in which some soldiers indulged: '[a] raid on the Bull in Bullen Court, just off the Strand, in 1830, revealed the use of an upstairs room by men who had picked up soldiers in Horse Guards Parade. Other cases around this time involved soldiers at the Knightsbridge Barracks'.⁵⁵² Whether or not sexual activity deemed by the Victorians to be misbehaviour was widespread, once any incident became public and acknowledged as true then Victorian society would make moral judgements about the military based upon it. These would exacerbate other stereotypes and prejudices that existed.

In 'Tommy', Kipling criticises hypocritical prejudice against the soldier. He writes that 'I went into a theatre as sober as could be,/ They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me'.⁵⁵³ This makes the obvious point that a misbehaving civilian is more welcome than a well behaved soldier. Ironically, this is even in a less socially acceptable environment such as a theatre. As Daniel Karlin remarks: 'The generic 'Tommy' of *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892) is a social derelict; he is not 'working-class' and is indeed despised by all ranks of respectable society; if he is not low in one sense, he is so in another, a 'gentlemen-ranker' who has fallen from his social position through crime or debauchery'.⁵⁵⁴ (Karlin's comment alludes to Kipling's poem 'Gentleman-Rankers', published in *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses* in 1892,⁵⁵⁵ which offers another 'soldierly' narrative voice. This is the disgraced English gentleman who enlists in the army. From this invidious position the narrator laments: '[w]e have done with Hope and Honour, we are lost to Love and Truth,/ We are dropping down the

⁵⁵² Matt Cook, *London and the Culture of Homosexuality, 1885-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 13.

⁵⁵³ Carrington (1973) 32.

⁵⁵⁴ Daniel Karlin, "From Dark Defile To Gethsemane: Rudyard Kipling's War Poetry," *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry*, ed., Tim Kendall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 55.

⁵⁵⁵ Carrington (1973) vii.

ladder rung by rung’.)⁵⁵⁶ Most censorious of all in ‘Tommy’ is the narrator’s reproach to his audience: ‘makin’ mock o’ uniforms that guard you while you sleep’.⁵⁵⁷ As George Orwell comments ‘[i]t would be difficult to hit off the one-eyed pacifism of the English in fewer words’.⁵⁵⁸

The image of the British enlisted soldier in India was also in need of regeneration: ‘the British ‘Tommyes’ [were], a new low caste in caste-ridden India, recruited from the lowest of unskilled labourers’.⁵⁵⁹ Kipling’s poetic restoration includes this group. In ‘The Young British Soldier’ [1890], an old soldier offers advice to raw recruits about the circumstances, difficulties and expectations of military life in India. (Rashna B. Singh argues that this poem and another Kipling poem, ‘Arithmetic on the Frontier’ [1886]: ‘reveal a clear-sighted understanding of what war is really about and are, in their way, as anti-heroic as the more famous anti-war poems of Wilfred Owen, although the wars in question...are the Afghan wars.’)⁵⁶⁰ The first two lines appear to be stereotypical criticisms of the new soldiers: ‘When the ’arf-made recruity goes out to the East/ ’E acts like a babe an’ ’e drinks like a beast’.⁵⁶¹ However, the term ‘’arf-made recruity’ criticises poor military training, preparation or equipment that these men may receive. Although the suggestion that they will ‘drink like a beast’ indicates brutishness and a lack of self control, it hints at poor discipline and barrack management in allowing the recruit to behave in this way. The inherent dangers of a new life in the army are apparent:

⁵⁵⁶ Rudyard Kipling, *The Definitive Edition of Rudyard Kipling’s Verse* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982) 425.

⁵⁵⁷ Carrington (1973) 32.

⁵⁵⁸ George Orwell, “Rudyard Kipling,” *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume 2: My Country Right or Left 1940-1943*, eds., Sonia Orwell & Ian Angus (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970) 218.

⁵⁵⁹ Carrington (1973) 5.

⁵⁶⁰ Rashna B. Singh, “Kipling’s Other Burden: Counter-Narrating Empire,” *Kipling and Beyond: Patriotism, Globalisation and Postcolonialism*, eds., Caroline Rooney & Kaori Nagai (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 104.

⁵⁶¹ Carrington (1973) 33.

When the cholera comes — as it will past a doubt —
 Keep out of the wet and don't go on the shout,
 For the sickness gets in as the liquor dies out,
 An' it crumples the young British soldier.
 Crum-, crum-, crumples the soldier...

But the worst o' your foes is the sun over'ead:
 You *must* wear your 'elmet for all that is said:
 If 'e finds you uncovered 'e'll knock you down dead.⁵⁶²

The poem encourages the audience to acknowledge tough physical challenges faced daily by the men, for example the inevitable arrival of a deadly disease. The recruits have little resistance and no preventive measures to fight it. Unrestrained off-duty behaviour exacerbates its effects. The likelihood of dying is underlined by the repetition within the last line which emphasises the suddenness and rapidity of death. It suggests that the man who undertakes such an arduous life needs great reserves of inner strength and determination in an environment where even the natural elements are alien and threatening. By stanza nine there are vivid descriptions of conditions under fire and the bravery required to continue in battle: 'Don't look nor take 'eed at the man that is struck,/ Be thankful you're livin', and trust to your luck'.⁵⁶³ This is heroism, but not just in the senior ranks. The Victorian reader is encouraged to acknowledge that officers engaged in fighting an enemy, did not engage alone. They were supported by enlisted men of lower social and military status, who fought alongside them and whose behaviour was expected to be courageous and could be recognised as such. In some instances, the Tommy fought when the officer could not. The line: '[i]f your officer's dead' acknowledges that soldiers must continue to follow their orders and engage the

⁵⁶² Carrington (1973) 34.

⁵⁶³ Carrington (1973) 35.

enemy, despite any eventuality. Furthermore, in this poem the heroism is narrated from the perspective of the campaigner. It is not a reported account, by more senior officers, of brave deeds undertaken. The conclusion is a brutal scene: 'When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,/ And the women come out to cut up what remains,/ Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains'.⁵⁶⁴ The gender significance of the predatory women is crucial and lies at the heart of reader's revulsion at 'the other'. As women, their actions emphasise the cruelty of a barbaric enemy who must be faced and subverts the concept of patriarchy and ideas of female delicacy with which the Victorian reader would be familiar. The soldiers are at the mercy of 'savages' who eschew a swift execution, in favour of torturing the men to death. No justification for the women's actions is given. This emphasises the bravery of the men and the risks that they take. It demonstrates that the soldier, of any rank or background, must be ready to make level-headed choices, however desperate those choices might be. To a society which considered the human subject of this poem as worthless and degenerate, these ideas must have been astounding. With this poem (fig. 11) and its depiction of a brave death in barbaric circumstances, Kipling vindicates his poetic subjects. Despite their faults they are willing to sacrifice everything for Queen and empire. As the old soldier exhorts, at death they are to 'Go, go, go like a soldier,/ So-oldier *of* the Queen!'.⁵⁶⁵ Kipling's poem invites his readers to reconsider their derogatory opinions. Despite all the difficulties in the relationship between the military and the civilian population which have caused great antagonism, Kipling seeks a complete re-evaluation.

⁵⁶⁴ Carrington (1973) 35.

⁵⁶⁵ Carrington (1973) 35.



Fig. 11 A new interpretation of the Kipling poem in the *Guardian Weekly*.⁵⁶⁶

Kipling highlights the ambivalent nature of the relationship between society and the soldier and the hypocrisy that this demonstrates. His eponymous narrator discusses this ambivalence in 'Tommy':

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
 'Tommy, wait outside';
 But it's 'Special train for Atkins' when the
 trooper's on the tide,...

While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
 'Tommy, fall be'ind,'
 But it's 'Please to walk in front, sir,' when there's
 trouble in the wind.⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁶ Steve Bell, cartoon, *Guardian Weekly* 27 February – 5 March 2009: Volume 180 No. 11.

⁵⁶⁷ Carrington (1973) 32.

Kipling was not alone in exploring the soldier, or military life, as a subject for poetry. However, the *World* article of 1890 indicates his original approach: '[n]o one hitherto has attempted to treat Tommy Atkins as a separate human entity, instead of the eight-hundredth or nine-hundredth component part of a whole' (28/10, 1888-1897, 3).⁵⁶⁸ Kipling gave Tommy Atkins a separate identity and an individual voice, despite the limitations and inaccuracies of this representation.

Contemporary Comparisons of Representations of the Soldier

The *Boston Transcript* article of 1890/91 argues that an important function of *Barrack-Room Ballads* is in accurately articulating what the common soldier expresses and experiences. It is important to compare other representations of the soldier, contemporary with those of Kipling, to determine if this argument is correct. Sir Henry Newbolt [1862-1938] is described as a 'kind of nautical Kipling' and the 'quintessential poet of Empire'.⁵⁶⁹ Two of Newbolt's poems are interesting in this respect. The first is 'Drake's Drum', originally published by Andrew Lang in *St James' Gazette* in 1896. In 1897 the poem appeared with eleven other poems in *Admirals All*. (Given the publication date of 'Drake's Drum' and the contemporary popularity of *Barrack-Room Ballads* it can be inferred that Newbolt read Kipling's verse.) Newbolt's verses were so popular that twenty one editions were sold in two years.⁵⁷⁰

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
 Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
 An'dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶⁸ 'Celebrities At Home' *World* 2 Apr. 1890. 28/10.

⁵⁶⁹ Cunningham 1011.

⁵⁷⁰ Cunningham 1011.

⁵⁷¹ Cunningham 1011.

The narrator speaks with a strong regional accent reflecting that of Drake himself.⁵⁷² He depicts Drake and engages with him in a refrain, repeated in all three stanzas, questioning Drake as to his whereabouts. The emulation of the Devonian accent of both men in this poem, in which Newbolt uses similar problematic literary devices to Kipling, seems equally counterfeit. Where this poem differs from Kipling's representations of Tommy Atkins is that although the narrator is a sailor of similar common heritage, the man does not speak about himself. There is no representation of his life and experiences, or those of any individual of similar social standing. It is the affairs and aspirations of Drake and his engagement in imperial enterprise, which is of concern here. The narrator is merely a vehicle to drive the narrative subject forward. As the subject, Drake mediates the implied adventurousness, heroism and nostalgia for home. In the three stanzas he is represented as an omnipresent national hero, able to transcend time and reappear, at his nation's behest, when his country needs him. In the second stanza Drake speaks for himself:

‘Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago.’⁵⁷³

His presence in the narrative allows Victorian readers to embrace a heritage of pride in the state and project it onto their own schemes for national advancement, embodied in celebration of a hero, not a common man. It seems apparent from the poem that Drake's heroic figure requires no support, or assistance from reinforcements. A clue to the direction of the poem is given by the title of the collection from which it comes, *Admirals All*.

⁵⁷² Cunningham 1011.

⁵⁷³ Cunningham 1011.

The second poem for discussion is ‘Vitai Lampada’ [1897],⁵⁷⁴ from the same collection as ‘Drake’s Drum’. Just as the second Boer War was concluding ‘in 1902 an army chaplain...drew attention to the therapeutic effects of quoting Newbolt’s ‘Vitai Lampada’ to soldiers at the front’.⁵⁷⁵ Apparently no matter in what circumstances the individual soldier might find himself, including facing imminent death, the soldier would be ‘nerved and cheered “to play the game”, against all odds’.⁵⁷⁶ This was because ‘[i]n the double-think of the times military aggression was equated with Christian self-sacrifice and the heroism of ancient warriors. These ideas were fostered through teaching in schools – especially public schools’.⁵⁷⁷ Although it is interesting to speculate about the measurement of these therapeutic effects and question the incredible idea that such an effect is possible, there is some evidence in support which relates to Kipling’s own work. A vague, but relevant letter was sent to Kipling in 1925. The correspondent states that ‘I raised my younger brother on your stories and he carried the ideals you gave him into the war and they helped him do his task and brought him through clean and strong’ (22/38 File 22/2 /Document 54).⁵⁷⁸

Newbolt loved the idea of ‘militaristic heroism’ which he ‘absorbed in his days at school.’ His poem engages with the popular Victorian concept of hero worship and imperial conquest.⁵⁷⁹ The over-arching idea throughout ‘Vitai Lampada’ is that war can be compared to a game of cricket, with rules and gentlemanly behaviour: ‘[t]here’s a breathless hush in the Close to-night –/ Ten to make and the match to win’.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁴ Cunningham 1012.

⁵⁷⁵ Malvern van Wyk Smith *Drummer Hodge: The Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) 1.

⁵⁷⁶ Van Wyk Smith 1.

⁵⁷⁷ David Roberts, ed., *Minds at War: The Poetry and Experience of the First World War* (Burgess Hill: Saxon Books, 2005) 19.

⁵⁷⁸ Belle Kant in Sausalito, California, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 9 September 1925 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

⁵⁷⁹ Roberts 19.

⁵⁸⁰ Cunningham 1012.

(Newbolt was educated at Clifton College⁵⁸¹, where the ‘close’ was situated). This metaphor was common currency to the Victorian audience: ‘Ruskin...saw conflict as morally beneficial [“]First, the great justification of this game [war] is that it truly, when well played, determines *who is the best man*; who is the highest bred, the most self-denying, the most fearless...You cannot test these qualities wholly, unless there is a clear possibility of the struggle ending in death[”].’⁵⁸² The ‘match’ is concluding under difficult circumstances and victory is not assured: ‘[a] bumping pitch and a blinding light,/ An hour to play and the last man in’.⁵⁸³ Loyalty and adherence to the ‘team’ and its goals are the qualities required, with selfish ambition of a soldier’s personal glory laid aside: ‘it’s not for the sake of a ribboned coat,/ Or the selfish hope of a season’s fame’.⁵⁸⁴ The importance of winning the ‘match’ is only part of the imagery; obediently ‘playing’, with observance of appropriate etiquette indoctrinated into the ‘team member’ by a superior ‘team member’, is of equal if not more importance. Such disciplined ‘play’ is within a context of tradition and orderly rules of engagement. Newbolt sanitises the brutality of the scenes by employing this extended metaphor. However, the narrative of ‘Vitai Lampada’ evokes in the second stanza a similar picture to that of the narrator who discusses the Afghan Plains, in Kipling’s ‘The Young British Soldier’. At this point the first four lines of ‘Vitai Lampada’ discard the metaphor and embrace realism as Newbolt portrays despair and defeat as the ‘game’ becomes a lost battle and ‘the regiment blind with dust and smoke’ face ‘[t]he river of death’.⁵⁸⁵ The lines: ‘sand of the desert is sodden red, —/Red with the wreck of

⁵⁸¹ Cunningham 1011.

⁵⁸² Ralph Pite, “‘Graver Things...Braver Things’: Hardy’s War Poetry,” *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry*, ed., Tim Kendall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 55.

⁵⁸³ Cunningham 1012.

⁵⁸⁴ Cunningham 1012.

⁵⁸⁵ Cunningham 1012.

a square that broke; –’,⁵⁸⁶ indicate a bloody rout in which equipment and discipline has failed. The commanding officer has also been killed: ‘[t]he Gatling’s jammed and the Colonel dead’.⁵⁸⁷ This echoes the images of Kipling’s more savage poem: ‘[i]f your officer’s dead and the sergeants look white’.⁵⁸⁸

There is then a contrast between events in this element of the two narratives. Kipling’s narrator, recognising the danger of the situation, offers pragmatic advice born out of personal experience. His counsel to his audience is that they need to ‘wait for supports like a soldier’.⁵⁸⁹ If this strategy fails and they find themselves helpless in the face of mortal danger, he exhorts them to end their own lives before the enemy combatants and their adherents butcher them.

This is not advice reflected by Newbolt’s narrative. Each of Newbolt’s stanzas end with the invocation to ‘Play up! play up! and play the game!’.⁵⁹⁰ The punctuation emphasises the sentiment, the intention of which is obvious. The regiment must continue to take the fight to the enemy, despite the cost, to the very last man. This declamation is always made by a figure with a suitably aristocratic or social status. Although in the second stanza this is a schoolboy, he attends an appropriately elite institution. In the first stanza, there is focus on Newbolt’s concept of continued confrontation in the face of annihilation. It may be assumed that it is the ‘last man in’ who receives his Captain’s encouragement ‘[b]ut his Captain’s hand on his shoulder smote/ ‘Play up! play up! and play the game!’.⁵⁹¹ The ‘Captain’ is either within the context of a school team, or a senior army officer. It is *his* motivation which gives courage and moral assurance that continuing the fight, despite overwhelming odds and

⁵⁸⁶ Cunningham 1012.

⁵⁸⁷ Cunningham 1012.

⁵⁸⁸ Carrington (1973) 35.

⁵⁸⁹ Carrington (1973) 35.

⁵⁹⁰ Cunningham 1012.

⁵⁹¹ Cunningham 1012.

certain death, is the only course. The second stanza shifts perspective and there is no obvious narrative subject. The situation for the regiment is desperate, but there is inspiration in the 'voice' of a disembodied childhood memory: '[b]ut the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks'.⁵⁹² This is a schoolboy in whom the terms 'honour' and 'England' have been inculcated as unassailable values during privileged schooldays, with their emphasis on country and empire. His education and heritage ensure that he upholds the honourable military traditions without question:

This is the word that year by year,
 While in her place the school is set,
 Every one of her sons must hear,
 And none that hears it dare forget.⁵⁹³

Newbolt's Captain and schoolboy represent the ruling class. From their elevated status in society and in the army, they have the power and moral authority to galvanise their men into courageous action. It is this which enables the remnants of the officers to continue to drive the men forward. Without their example Newbolt implies that heroic endeavour would not be undertaken. They provide an appropriate role model for the Victorian audience. The nature of that audience seems apparent. Using a Latin title, ideas of Greek heroics and employing the device of cricket as a metaphor indicates exclusion of the lower class.

The contrast to Kipling's representation is stark. His narrative 'hero' is a low-ranking old campaigner. Despite his inferior social standing and uncomfortable practical advice, loyalty to the regiment remains as incontestable for him as for Newbolt's subjects: '[r]emember it's ruin to run from a fight:/ So take open order, lie down, and sit

⁵⁹² Cunningham 1012.

⁵⁹³ Cunningham 1012.

tight'.⁵⁹⁴ This ordinary soldier argues in common with an equivalent narrator in a different Kipling poem, 'The Widow at Windsor', that the underprivileged, enlisted men would willingly die in the 'barbarious wars!'⁵⁹⁵ undertaken on behalf of their monarch and her empire. ('The Widow at Windsor' was 'first printed in the *Scots Observer* 26 April 1890, as ["Sons of the Widow"]').⁵⁹⁶ Their bravery does not require the obligatory presence of those of senior rank. This is a role model too, but one with which the Victorian reader would be uncomfortable. It challenges the social mores upon which their society was based. Later, an army veteran discusses Kipling's portrayals within his military prose: 'I cannot help but think how the Victorians must have raised their eye-brows at some of Mulvaney's adventures and yarns....[T]hey were portraits of the soldiers of those days, and the later generations are able to visualize the type and tough qualities of the lads who made Old England what she used to be' (27/38 File 27/17 Un-numbered Document).⁵⁹⁷ This comment is equally appropriate in discussion of Kipling's verse. It is the vocalisation of this calibre of ordinary men as subject that sets Kipling's military poetry and fiction apart: '[a]s one of the many popular and rather self-conscious eulogies of the 1890s on the rise of the 'common' soldier put it:...["The average soldier belongs to the inarticulate class. It is not that, like the 'needy knife-grinder' of Canning's squib, he has 'no story to tell'; he cannot tell it["]'.⁵⁹⁸ Furthermore, Kipling's military poems and stories had the potential to enlarge his audience to include a new, lower class reader throughout the whole empire. This was the vast number of imperial soldiers; the very soldiers whom he portrays. As the veteran continues in his 'appreciation' of Kipling:

⁵⁹⁴ Carrington (1973) 35.

⁵⁹⁵ Carrington (1973) 30.

⁵⁹⁶ Carrington (1973) 155.

⁵⁹⁷ 'Rudyard Kipling: An Appreciation by a Humble Disciple' [No date] 27/38-K/P: Lists-Personalia. Undated, un-named typed document. The language and content closely echo correspondence from C.J. Payne to Elsie Bambridge dated 9 January 1950 (32/38 File 32/25 Un-numbered document) 32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling's Children. It is likely that Payne was the author of both.

⁵⁹⁸ Van Wyk Smith 3.

It was in the first year of this century that I first became acquainted with Kipling's "Soldiers Three". At the time, I was a very young gunner, and the stories of these three soldiers so impressed me that I re-read them to my room-mates in barracks. Many of them had served in India... They were all amazed at Rudyard Kipling's knowledge of army life and his astounding insight into their lives, still more how he got at it. For no other author has ever, up to that period, attempted to write of Thomas A. from an intimate angle, let alone understand him. The troops even suggested that he must have served in the army to have acquired such intimate knowledge (27/38 File 27/17 Un-numbered Document).⁵⁹⁹

One of the reasons behind the literary interest of soldiers was that 'the men who went to South Africa in 1899 were the products of several decades of universal literacy and franchise'.⁶⁰⁰ These men are indicative of Kipling's potential new readership worldwide. The veteran soldier demonstrates the dissemination of Kipling's writing to a large 'popular' audience: 'those who knew the Punjab were amazed at R[udyard] K[ipling]'s knowledge and powers of observation.... We even started singing those lines of his which were set to music. 'On the road to Mandalay' was first favourite. It was sung in barrack-rooms, canteens, and at regimental concerts. And it was quite the most popular waltz tune at dances' (27/38 File 27/17 Un-numbered Document).⁶⁰¹

It is useful to examine further poems by Thomas Hardy to continue the comparison between Kipling's representations of the soldier and that of other poets: 'Hardy paid attention to only three wars in his poetry – the Napoleonic Wars between 1805 and 1815, the Boer War, and the Great War of 1914-18. But the longest poem he wrote, and the literary achievement of which he felt proudest, concerned itself entirely with war.'⁶⁰² (The long poem is '*The Dynasts*, an enormous work of nineteen acts and 131 scenes... a conscious experiment with a controversial mixed form that he called ["epic-

⁵⁹⁹ 27/38.

⁶⁰⁰ Van Wyk Smith 3.

⁶⁰¹ 27/38.

⁶⁰² Harold Orel, *The Final Years of Thomas Hardy, 1912-1928* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1976) 124.

drama[”]’).⁶⁰³ Since Hardy’s discussion of combat is within a particular perspective and historical periods of interest to him, it is likely that the general combatant is discussed within similar constraints. Hardy had a life-long detestation of war.⁶⁰⁴ Evidence for this is found in his poem ‘Embarcation’, published in the *Daily Chronicle* on October 25th 1899, under the title ‘The Departure’.⁶⁰⁵ In it he despondently states:

Vaster battalions press for further strands,
To argue in the selfsame bloody mode
Which this late age of thought, and pact, and code,
Still fails to mend.⁶⁰⁶

Pite argues that ‘still fails to mend’ reflects Hardy’s resignation, rather than criticism.⁶⁰⁷ However, at times war interested Hardy as a subject: ‘between the late 1890s and the end of the First World War...he became visibly preoccupied with contemporary and historical wars’.⁶⁰⁸ Some of Hardy’s interest stems from his status as ‘a non-combatant – not born during the Napoleonic Wars, too young for the Crimean War, and far too old for the wars at the end of the century’.⁶⁰⁹ This non-combatant status was shared with Kipling and Newbolt. Hardy felt a fear of inadequacy, since his bravery and mettle had never been tested: ‘[w]ar for Hardy possessed...a fatal glamour that revealed a psychological need. Having that need revealed could be destructive...but the need for heroism could not be denied’.⁶¹⁰ These sentiments are found in Kipling as well. But concepts of heroism require a hero and it is the representation of Hardy’s soldier

⁶⁰³ Orel 124.

⁶⁰⁴ Orel 125.

⁶⁰⁵ James Gibson, ed., *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001) 958.

⁶⁰⁶ Gibson 86.

⁶⁰⁷ Pite 40.

⁶⁰⁸ Pite 35.

⁶⁰⁹ Pite 37.

⁶¹⁰ Pite 39.

‘heroes’ and combatants that needs to be explored.⁶¹¹ Hardy’s depictions are problematic since: ‘Hardy’s Boer War poetry shows little interest in soldiers until they die’.⁶¹² The men are ‘tragic figures in Hardy’s work, tramping gloomily to their inevitable fates’.⁶¹³ Kendall makes direct comparisons between Kipling and Hardy’s soldier representations, in which ‘Kipling’s sympathy for the soldier is found to be superior to Hardy’s’.⁶¹⁴ Instead of Kipling’s descriptions which include discussion of the commonplace, prosaic, ‘everydayness’ of the soldier, Kendall argues that Hardy’s soldiers are given only ‘a posthumous voice’.⁶¹⁵

During late 1899 Hardy wrote eleven poems ‘that dealt with the Boer War’.⁶¹⁶ ‘Embarcation’ is included in this series. They appeared ‘in newspapers and periodicals: the *Daily Chronicle*, *The Graphic*, *Literature*, *Westminster Gazette*, *The Sphere*, the *Cornhill*...His choice of outlet shows that he was making a decisive attempt to speak to the nation’.⁶¹⁷ Several of these war poems ‘were prompted, [Hardy] said, by particular losses known to him’.⁶¹⁸ This engages with the gloomy perspective suggested by Kendall. Two years later, the poems were published as a set in a collection, *Poems of the Past and the Present*.⁶¹⁹ Several of these poems make relevant subjects of comparison with Kipling’s soldier’ depictions in the *Barrack-Room Ballads*. ‘Drummer Hodge’ has been examined previously, when its linguistic representation of a common soldier was compared to Kipling’s writing. The poem receives brief discussion here in a different context. (The reason for brevity is a lengthy and

⁶¹¹ A review of Kendall’s *Modern English War Poetry* suggests that it ‘describes its purview as a “tradition of witness”, beginning with the Boer War poetry of the non-combatants Rudyard Kipling and Thomas Hardy’ Jeremy Noel-Tod, “Rearguard Actions,” rev. of *Modern English War Poetry*, by Tim Kendall, *Times Literary Supplement* 20 July 2007: 31 (No. 5442).

⁶¹² Kendall 26.

⁶¹³ Kendall 26.

⁶¹⁴ Noel-Tod (2007) 31.

⁶¹⁵ Kendall 26.

⁶¹⁶ Orel 130.

⁶¹⁷ Pite 40.

⁶¹⁸ Pite 42.

⁶¹⁹ Orel 130.

authoritative close-reading by Orel and Pite. Discussion of their influential arguments about the poem would be repetitious.) However, there is one point that deserves mention. Hardy uses the name ‘Drummer Hodge’ with deliberate purpose. (In early editions the title was ‘The Dead Drummer’).⁶²⁰ The name contains a similar social, generic meaning to ‘Tommy Atkins’, because it is the name given by Hardy ‘to a stereotype of a country bumpkin, who “hangs his head or looks sheepish when spoken to, and thinks Lunnon [*sic*] a place paved with gold.”’.⁶²¹ But when Kipling writes about the Tommy it is an affectionate nickname. He confers a persuasive reading of the soldier and implies particular, often positive, attributes by its usage. These seem absent in Hardy’s interpretation especially since, as Kendall argues of all the poet’s representations, it is typical that Hodge is already dead. Use of the term ‘bumpkin’ with its relationship to ‘Drummer Hodge’ is unflattering since it suggests ignorance, unintelligence and gullibility. In the context of this poem ‘Drummer Hodge’ is a pejorative stereotype. This idea is borne out in stanza two:

Young Hodge the Drummer never knew —
 Fresh from his Wessex home —
 The meaning of the broad Karoo,⁶²²
 The Bush, the dusty loam,
 And why uprose to nightly view
 Strange stars amid the gloam.⁶²³

The stanza suggests that the young drummer is an English rustic at heart, newly arrived in South Africa, with no concept of the surroundings in which he finds himself and

⁶²⁰ Gibson 958.

⁶²¹ Orel 131.

⁶²² ‘[I]n South Africa, barren tract of soil comprising extensive, elevated and arid plateaux’ Francis O’ Gorman, ed., *Victorian Poetry: An Annotated Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 512.

⁶²³ Gibson 91.

insufficient intellect or education to engage with their unfamiliarity. The ambiguity of the word ‘fresh’ with its additional implication of unworldliness and innocence, when combined with the word ‘youth’, emphasises the inexperience and unimportance of Drummer Hodge. Hodge is a non-entity, insignificant in both life and death: ‘[w]ho in England cares if such a “pitiable picture known as Hodge” finds in South Africa an ignominious funeral[?]’.⁶²⁴ A response to this question is supplied by Kipling’s writing. Unlike Kipling’s ‘Young British Soldier’, there is no evidence that Hodge has had the benefit of the experiential advice of a seasoned campaigner. Kipling’s narrator grasps the opportunity to advise his recruits and possibly avoid the waste of life that is apparent in Hardy’s poem: ‘Now all you recruities what’s drafted to-day,/ You shut up your rag-box an’ ’ark to my lay’.⁶²⁵ The ‘old soldier’ *is* shown to care and this implies that the audience also needs to care about these young men. The sympathetic reading, which can be detected even in Kipling’s fatally-flawed protagonist in ‘The Story of Tommy’, or either of the narrators in ‘Tommy’ or ‘The Young British Soldier’, seems absent in Hardy’s depiction of an ill-fated, ignorant soldier similarly struggling in a foreign land.

In the poems, ‘The Widow at Windsor’ [1890], ‘Embarcation’ and ‘Departure’, Kipling and Hardy share some common discourse. Pite states that ‘Embarcation’, originally published under the title ‘Departure’ in 1899, links to a later sonnet entitled ‘Departure’ [1891] as companion pieces which suggest ‘a conscious riposte on Hardy’s part to the pro-war writing he was surrounded by’.⁶²⁶ Surprisingly, an equivalent sentiment by Kipling is evident as his narrator declares in one of several, similar refrains ‘(Poor beggars!—it’s always they guns!)’.⁶²⁷ In these poetic narratives, both

⁶²⁴ Orel 131.

⁶²⁵ Carrington (1973) 34.

⁶²⁶ Pite 40.

⁶²⁷ Carrington (1973) 30.

poets reflect the might of empire and the uncomfortable situation of the enlisted men. This is expressed through two very different narrative voices.

In a customary dialect, Kipling's narrator addresses the reader. He compares the power of Victoria, her imperial crown and the hierarchical society in which these exist, to the relative powerlessness of the soldiers who undertake the commands given in the Queen's name:

'Ave you 'eard o' the Widow at Windsor
 With a hairy⁶²⁸ gold crown on 'er 'ead?
 She 'as ships on the foam—she 'as millions at 'ome,
 An' she pays us poor beggars in red.⁶²⁹

(The 'widow' is Queen Victoria. Despite rumours to the contrary, the Queen was not offended by this poem.)⁶³⁰ Stanza two declaims that 'alf o' Creation she owns'.⁶³¹ This territorial possession is gained, as the poem informs the reader, with the lives of the serving soldier: 'we've salted it down with our bones./ (Poor beggars!—it's blue with our bones!)'.⁶³² Kipling invites the reader to recognise the significant sacrifice made for imperial expansion.

The imagery that Hardy uses demonstrates the late Victorian tendency to 'define themselves by their cultural heritage',⁶³³ in acknowledgement of the ancient historical and cultural strata from which their society emerged:

Here, where Vespasian's legions struck the sands,
 And Cerdic with his Saxons entered in,

⁶²⁸ 'Hairy' is used for emphasis and is taken as a probable euphemism for 'bloody' Carrington (1973) 155.

⁶²⁹ Carrington (1973) 30.

⁶³⁰ Carrington (1973) 155.

⁶³¹ Carrington (1973) 30.

⁶³² Carrington (1973) 30.

⁶³³ Maureen Moran, *Victorian Literature and Culture* (London: Continuum, 2006) 21.

And Henry's army leapt afloat to win
 Convincing triumphs over neighbour lands.⁶³⁴

These lines echo Kipling's statement on the hierarchical nature of combat. Hardy's expression describes equally bloody consequences: 'Vaster battalions press for further strands,/ To argue in the selfsame bloody mode'.⁶³⁵ However, by avoiding colloquialism and dialect this seems more eloquent. (The 'elevated lexicon' which is apparent in some of Hardy's Boer War poems is indicative of an officer's point of view). Due to this, the portrayal of the fighting and the serving soldier becomes more remote. The language of Hardy's stanza is polished and literary which obscures the meaning, assumes that the allusions to heroic or historic military figures will be understood and addresses a less diverse, more educated audience than Kipling's poem. Despite their relative literacy it is unlikely that a common, serving soldier would engage with the sophisticated tenor of Hardy's poems. There is a feeling of immediacy and reality engendered by Kipling, which is absent in Hardy. Kipling engages the reader in a dialogue with his soldier. Both first and second person narrative is used: 'For 'er sentries we stand by the sea an' the land',⁶³⁶ as he constructs an 'eye witness' account. The ordinary soldier as an individual is the focus. In common with most of the *Barrack-Room Ballads*, Kipling's portrayal of the soldier and the circumstances in which he must live, fight and die are direct and personal. Hardy's expression reads as an erudite comment about combat, with no sense of individualism. For example, in 'Embarcation' the men are referred to as 'bands' who 'deckward tramp'.⁶³⁷ His

⁶³⁴ Gibson 86.

⁶³⁵ Gibson 87.

⁶³⁶ Carrington (1973) 31.

⁶³⁷ Gibson 86.

references in 'Departure' are to 'mounting men' and 'lives like these,/ That are as puppets'.⁶³⁸

Each stanza of 'The Widow at Windsor' contains three refrains. For example, stanza one concludes: 'O' Missis Victorier's sons./ (Poor beggars! Victorier's sons!'.⁶³⁹ In each case, the fifth, tenth and fifteenth lines of the stanzas echo and reinforce the sentiments of the preceding lines. For instance, the second refrain of stanza two emphasises the imperative behind the fighting 'When the Widow at Windsor says 'Stop'!/ (Poor beggars!—we're sent to say 'Stop'!'.⁶⁴⁰ Conquest for and defence of the empire is the overriding requirement that the soldiers must undertake, at any cost. The poem criticises the societal *status quo*. Although Kipling's vernacular might be inaccurate, its use and the repetition in the refrain generate an appearance of truth and constantly reinforce his imagery. *Barrack-Room Ballads* and their characterisations were widely praised. Although flawed, his soldiers seemed vital, real and alive. They had experiences to share which did not inevitably lead to death.

Hardy's more limited scope of military subject with emphasis in his poems of the unavoidably tragic consequences of military action, is reflected within Kipling's *Barrack-Room Ballads*. However as usual, Kipling is pragmatic as his narrator states: 'Ere's all they desire, an' if they require/ A speedy return to their 'ome./ (Poor beggars! — they'll never see 'ome!'.⁶⁴¹ In contrast, Hardy romanticises his soldiers' tragic deaths by his lexical and syntactical choices. In 'Embarcation' for example, he states: 'as each host draws out upon the sea/ Beyond which lies the tragical To-be'.⁶⁴² In 'Departure' he enquires 'How long, O striving Teutons, Slavs, and Gaels/ Must your

⁶³⁸ Gibson 87.

⁶³⁹ Carrington (1973) 30.

⁶⁴⁰ Carrington (1973) 30.

⁶⁴¹ Carrington (1973) 31.

⁶⁴² Gibson 86.

wroth reasonings trade on lives like these[?]'.⁶⁴³ The families left behind in 'Embarcation' complete the tragic picture of the men as they 'wave white hands and smile,/ As if they knew not that they weep the while'.⁶⁴⁴ In 'Departure' there is the '[k]een sense of severance everywhere'.⁶⁴⁵ Overall, there is an elegiac quality to the descriptions which, given Hardy's preoccupation with the death of the enlisted man, is unsurprising.

In the 'Song of the Soldiers' Wives and Sweethearts',⁶⁴⁶ Hardy explores the return of soldiers to their loved ones. It 'exults in the return of the Household Cavalry...[but] breathes an atmosphere of regret that they ever had to go away':⁶⁴⁷ 'And now you are nearing home again,/ Dears, home again'.⁶⁴⁸ Its subject compares to Kipling's poem 'Soldier, Soldier', published in the *Scots Observer* on 12 Apr. 1890,⁶⁴⁹ in which those who return offer pragmatic advice to the waiting women. Hardy's use of the first person plural throughout: 'And we who love them cling to them'⁶⁵⁰ and the second person in all but the first stanza: 'Which took you far away from us'⁶⁵¹ engenders intimacy. The reader is part of the anxious group who awaits the arrival of the surviving men. In stanza three, the impression is that the reader is an intrinsic element of the dialogue between the narrator and these men: 'Some told us we should meet no more'.⁶⁵² Despite this intimacy, the poem seems as lyrical as Orel suggests. This lyricism engenders a distance between subject and audience. Hardy's lexical and syntactical choices romanticise the discourse and by extension, the subject 'No more to

⁶⁴³ Gibson 86.

⁶⁴⁴ Gibson 86.

⁶⁴⁵ Gibson 86.

⁶⁴⁶ A lyric poem, one of the Boer War collection, *Poems of the Past and the Present* Orel 130.

⁶⁴⁷ Orel 130.

⁶⁴⁸ Gibson 97.

⁶⁴⁹ Carrington (1973) 162.

⁶⁵⁰ Gibson 96.

⁶⁵¹ Gibson 97.

⁶⁵² Gibson 97.

range and roam again/ As at that bygone time?'.⁶⁵³ In addition, several times throughout the poem, the expressions used by Hardy exclude a lower-class audience. For example, in the final stanza the narrator exclaims 'Dawn, hold not long the day from us,/ But quicken it to prime!'.⁶⁵⁴

Kipling's narrative in 'Soldier, Soldier' offers an unequivocal contrast. In ten stanzas it presents a dialogue between a returning combatant and a waiting 'sweetheart'. In all but stanzas two and ten the dialogue is interrogative. The soldier is questioned by the woman: 'Soldier, soldier come from the wars,/ Why don't you march with my true love?'.⁶⁵⁵ He offers prosaic replies to his interlocutor, for example 'We're fresh from off the ship an' 'e's maybe give the slip'.⁶⁵⁶ The differing stanzas present forceful statements from the soldier to the woman and offer brutal, practical advice: 'Best go look for a new love,/ The dead they cannot rise, an' you'd better dry your eyes'.⁶⁵⁷ By the ninth stanza the opportunistic soldier tells the woman plainly that when she has stopped grieving for her lost love she had 'best take me for your true love'.⁶⁵⁸ In 'Soldier, Soldier' the woman is offered an expedient, working-class solution. Importantly, the way in which Kipling constructs and presents the poem, the structure of the dialogue and his use of the ballad form appear anchored in a reality of the working-class, enlisted man which eludes Hardy. It is important to recognise that these comparisons of Kipling's representations of the soldier, to those of Hardy and Newbolt's poetry, are chronologically significant and specific. The *Barrack-Room Ballads* portray some of his earliest depictions of combatants. They are not the complete picture. Some of his later poems offer a different framework. Thus, the Boer

⁶⁵³ Gibson 96.

⁶⁵⁴ Gibson 97.

⁶⁵⁵ Carrington (1973) 62.

⁶⁵⁶ Carrington (1973) 62.

⁶⁵⁷ Carrington (1973) 62.

⁶⁵⁸ Carrington (1973) 64.

War soldier, as depicted in ‘The Absent-Minded Beggar’ and Kipling’s later imagery when his poems discuss The Great War, will be explored in succeeding chapters.

This chapter compares the imagery in Kipling’s early poetry to that of other influential poets. Importantly, similar imagery of the common soldier exists within Kipling’s prose. In 1888, the publishers of the *Pioneer* of Allahabad, issued seven booklets of short collections of Kipling’s tales which had as the first title in the series, *Soldiers Three*.⁶⁵⁹ A cutting from *The Globe* indicates apparent veracity in Kipling’s representation of his soldier protagonists from this and other tales, Mulvaney, Ortheris and Learoyd: ‘The real Tommy Atkins has never been so accurately, yet picturesquely, limned as in these, and other, stories by Mr. Kipling, and “Soldiers Three” may be strongly recommended to the appreciative reader’ (28/10, 1888-1897, 22).⁶⁶⁰ These tales precede the publication of several of his soldier poems, for example, ‘Tommy’ and ‘The Widow at Windsor’ [spring 1890] by less than two years. (The poems were collected into the volume *Barrack-Room Ballads* in 1892).⁶⁶¹ Essentially the subject is the same. The prose purports to offer a realistic and lively representation of the ordinary, serving soldier. An undated article in the *Naval and Military Argus* is specific. (The presence of the article in Volume 28/10 indicates a similar date to the previously discussed ‘Celebrities At Home’ article):

The military novelist has at last appeared.... the author who can describe the virtues and foibles of Tommy Atkins and his superiors in a plain, unvarnished manner on the one hand, and with the skill of the true novelist on the other hand. Mr. Kipling...has justified his right to be termed *the* military novelist...There are no shams in the characters delineated; they are, as it were, real living men
(28/10, 1888-1897, 25).⁶⁶²

⁶⁵⁹ Page 42.

⁶⁶⁰ Untitled *The Globe* undated 28/10.

⁶⁶¹ Carrington (1973) 155.

⁶⁶² Untitled *Naval and Military Argus* 28/10.

The article offers evidence that despite inaccuracies these representations seem as original and convincing to his audience as his later *Barrack-Room Ballads*. It is likely that *Soldiers Three* provided a model for his subsequent imagery and those enthusiastic readers of his prose were drawn to the poems. Importantly, the tales were entertaining and eminently ‘readable’. The *Liverpool Daily Post* enthuses: ‘the man Mr. Kipling has studied most completely, and knows down to his boots, is the Irish soldier in India. His “Soldiers Three” is dedicated to “that very strong man T. Atkins, private of the line,” and with great propriety, for never has the life of the common soldier been so well described’ (28/10, 1888-1897, 22).⁶⁶³ Crucially, Kipling’s fictional representations of ‘T. Atkins’ embodied in the characters of Mulvaney, Ortheris and Learoyd and echoed in their poetic counterparts, emerge as essentially honourable men, who exist at the bottom of a judgemental and hierarchical system. Their methodology is suspect, but there is an underlying sense of honour, loyalty and pride in their regiment. This applies not only to the regiment in which they currently serve, but those to which they may have been attached formerly. Other soldiers depicted throughout the tales and poems are of similar mould. They are undoubtedly rascals, but they are brave and loyal. The stories are moral too. Serious miscreants ultimately receive their just desserts, either at the hands of the trio, or through the vengeance of another character with a score to settle. Kipling balances his representation by depicting the less palatable side of his protagonists. This portrayal of the unsavoury elements of their character engenders realism and counteracts the type of sentimentality in military fiction that is so despised in the *Naval and Military Argus*:

In barricks or out av it...an Irish rig’mint is the divil an’ more. ’Tis only fit for a young man wid eddicated fisteses...My first rig’mint was Irish-Faynians an’ rebils to the heart...an’ *so* they fought for the Widdy betther than most bein’ contrairy...They was the Black Tyrone. You’ve

⁶⁶³ Untitled *Liverpool Daily Post* Undated 28/10. An undated article written by ‘a leading novelist’. The date is assumed to be 1890 because Kipling is described as 24 years old.

heard av thim, sorr?’ ...I knew the Black Tyrone for the choicest collection of unmitigated blackguards, dog-stealers, robbers of hen-roosts, assaulters of innocent citizens, and recklessly daring heroes in the Army List.⁶⁶⁴

Unfortunately, the use of extensive ‘dialect’ and syntactical idiosyncrasies detracts from the meaning of this extract. However, the narrator concludes this section of the narrative which adds coherence and avoids an accusation that in the dialogue, Kipling is indulging in a different type of sentimentality.

The underlying affection and admiration with which Kipling holds the soldiers is evident as he purports to give a balanced picture. These men are portrayed as victims of their own poverty and ignorance, not villains. It is the lack of education and linguistic accomplishment that makes the soldier unable to express himself successfully. This leads to frustration which results in aberrant behaviour. Kipling criticises a society which expects the impossible goal of the soldier who is to safeguard Crown and Empire and the person and lifestyle of the civilian using whatever means are available, whilst maintaining the rules of polite society. His writing emerges from deliberate interaction with the subject, which contributed to its popularity: ‘I came to the conclusion that R[udyard] K[ipling] must have been a good mixer to have gained such confidence with the prototypes of the three boozing chums [Mulvaney, Ortheris and Learoyd], and that his companionship must have been very intimate to have obtained such copy for his stories.’ (27/38 File 27/17 Un-numbered Document).⁶⁶⁵ The ease with which his texts could be transposed to other media ensured that the significance of his representation was not lost to wider audiences. Kipling attempted to directly influence broadly held and entrenched beliefs across the divisions of culture and class.

⁶⁶⁴ Rudyard Kipling, *Soldiers Three and Other Stories* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1950) 59.

⁶⁶⁵ 27/38.

There is one viewpoint that requires examination in this discussion of Kipling's soldier representations. It is the idea that the portrayals and the influences felt and given were mimetic. Kendall remarks that Sir George Younghusband stated, in 1917: 'I myself had served for many years with soldiers, but had never heard the words or expressions that Rudyard Kipling's soldiers used...But sure enough, a few years after, the soldiers thought, and talked, and expressed themselves exactly like Rudyard Kipling had taught them in his stories...Kipling made the modern soldier.'⁶⁶⁶ Gilmour argues that because they emulated what they read, Kipling moulded the soldiers.⁶⁶⁷ Obviously, the enlisted men and Kipling's new concepts did not exist in isolation from one another. From the beginning he welcomed soldiers as an essential part of his readership. The dissemination of the ideas and 'pen-portraits' between the subjects and then to wider society could be the only outcome. Possibly, the 'Tommy Atkins' who emerged from Kipling's literary and poetic language became a reality, accepted and emulated by those who read about him. However, such an idea is refuted by one of his soldier readers:

At the time "Soldiers Three" and "Barrack Room Ballads" were published, certain literary gentlemen said – and there still are those who say, that R[udyard] K[ipling] 'laid the color [*sic*] on with a shovel' when describing his subjects....But none of these men of letters and critics had ever worn a grey-back shirt and lived in a barrack-room – so how would they know? Had they experienced this way of life I have no doubt they would have found how true and accurate R[udyard] K[ipling's] description and stories of these Victorian soldiers were (27/38 File 27/17 Un-numbered Document).⁶⁶⁸

The portrayal of an image, especially one as contentious as the soldier, is selective and overlaid socially and culturally by centuries of meaning which can be 'read' in many ways. This is true regardless of the historical period in which the 'reading' takes place. These meanings are inherently immeasurable. However, each new interpretation offers

⁶⁶⁶ Kendall 27.

⁶⁶⁷ Gilmour 50.

⁶⁶⁸ 27/38.

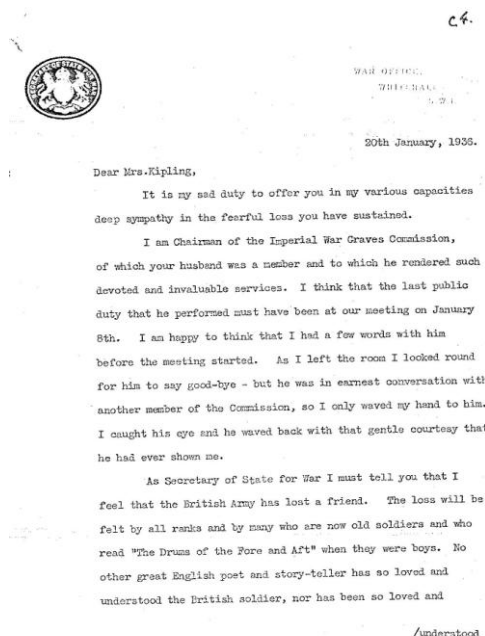
additional currency for reinterpretation, which may be influential in re-shaping the consciousness. There is a multiplicity of images and discourses at play in British society within which all these images function. Kipling endeavoured with his *Barrack-Room Ballads* and soldierly tales to reconfigure the image of the imperial soldier in order to recuperate a social group whom, he felt, had not been dealt with fairly. Undoubtedly, other motives were in play. These included commercial inducements, the idea of extending his readership and adding to his literary prowess. But the effect and influence of Kipling's newly discovered character of 'Tommy Atkins', with its essentially positive attributes, can be traced directly to the literature and poetry of the Great War and beyond.

This chapter illustrates Kipling's identification with one of his favourite subjects, the enlisted man. According to correspondence and magazine articles he became the 'best chum' of the soldier. As a consequence he greatly enlarged his audience to include the lower class reader and the imperial soldier throughout the empire, with concomitant commercial success and reward. This chapter also shows that the socially derelict soldier was rejuvenated by Kipling with an individual, realistic and worthwhile identity: Tommy Atkins. From his school years Kipling was different from those around him, schooled in a minor public school with military leanings and surrounded by fellow-pupils destined for armed service. Presenting a realistic depiction of the enlisted man added substance, moral conventionality and veracity to Kipling's representation of himself.

Chapter 5: Kipling and the Boer War Soldier

Representation in *The Five Nations*

The previous chapter discussed Kipling's unique representation and recuperation of soldier imagery in his early writing. This reinterpretation of the enlisted man gave Victorian society a new portrayal of a contentious subject. These early depictions and those within Kipling's later publications mainly received a favourable reception, as indicated by obituary comments in 1936: '[t]hose who remember the early 'Nineties will never forget the sensation which Kipling made when he revealed the British soldier to a British nation which for decades had neglected him. Kipling did more for the soldier-man than all the politicians' (28/15, 1936, 7).⁶⁶⁹ Duff Cooper, Chairman of the Imperial War Graves Commission, wrote in 1936 (fig. 12): 'As Secretary of State for War I must tell you that I feel that the British Army has lost a friend....No other great English poet and story-teller has so loved and understood the British soldier, nor has been so loved and understood by him' (20/38 File 20/7 Document C4).⁶⁷⁰



⁶⁶⁹ 'Kipling: Poet and Prophet of Empire' *Daily Telegraph* 18 Jan. 1936. 28/15-Rudyard Kipling Obituary Notices Volume (I) January 1936.

⁶⁷⁰ Duff Cooper, "To Caroline Kipling" 20 January 1936 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public.

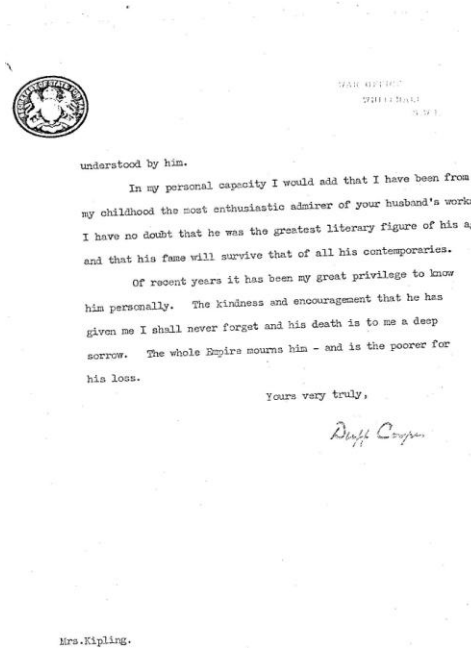


Fig. 12 Letter from Duff Cooper written in 1936 (20/38 File 20/7 Document C4).⁶⁷¹

In his 1942 article in *Horizon*, George Orwell implies hypocrisy in Kipling's writing about the soldier: '[h]ow far does Kipling really identify himself with the administrators, soldiers and engineers whose praises he sings? Not so completely as is sometimes assumed'.⁶⁷² Orwell suggests that the subjects would recognise the lack of authenticity in Kipling's work and criticise it: 'Can one imagine any private soldier, in the nineties or now, reading *Barrack Room Ballads* and feeling that here was a writer who spoke for him?'.⁶⁷³ Orwell's observations are inaccurate. The article, 'Rudyard Kipling: An Appreciation by a Humble Disciple' [undated],⁶⁷⁴ extracts from which have been examined in this thesis, indicates that Kipling's soldier readership *did* perceive him as a writer who accurately spoke for them. Part of the difference in Orwell's perception lies in the fifty year gap between the publication of Kipling's *Barrack-Room*

⁶⁷¹ D/C, "To C/K," 20/38.

⁶⁷² George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling," *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume 2: My Country Right or Left 1940-1943*, eds., Sonia Orwell & Ian Angus (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970) 218.

⁶⁷³ Orwell (1970) 221.

⁶⁷⁴ 'Rudyard Kipling: An Appreciation by a Humble Disciple' [No date] 27/38-K/P: Lists-Personalia.

Ballads and Orwell's interpretation of them. This includes recognition of a different audience, with twentieth century expectations. Orwell's own expectations altered over time. Another factor is that Orwell writes in the middle years of the Second World War. By this time a radically different picture of the enlisted man has emerged. The volunteer and conscript status of combatants during the conflicts of the twentieth century ensured replacement of the Victorian disapprobation of the soldier. He became respectable because he was 'everyman', or any man fit enough to fight. By the year of the *Horizon* article the perceived characteristics of the soldier had changed. The corollary to this was recuperation of the reputation of the Tommy. Orwell's prejudiced views must be assessed in this context. Despite his censure, Orwell acknowledges the debt that enlisted men owe to Kipling: 'it remains true that he has far more interest in the common soldier, far more anxiety that he should get a fair deal than most of the 'liberals' of his day or our own. He sees that the soldier is neglected, meanly underpaid and hypocritically despised by the people whose incomes he safeguards'.⁶⁷⁵ Orwell interprets Kipling's representation of the soldier as a challenge to the social conscience.

This chapter continues to examine Kipling's soldier imagery. It explores his later representations of soldiers, during the Boer War period. The historical and political context of this war and its consequences were a crucial element in his writing and an influence on the content of his collected Boer War poems, *The Five Nations*, published in 1903 a year after the Anglo-Boer War ended.⁶⁷⁶ The Boer War 'was unique in scale and significance. It was a 'little war' which involved the whole nation'.⁶⁷⁷ Price argues that as the nineteenth century ended Britain was racked with doubt over its economic, military and political supremacy. The Boer War [1899-1902] 'served for a time as the

⁶⁷⁵ Orwell (1970) 221

⁶⁷⁶ Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 170.

⁶⁷⁷ Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class: Working-Class Attitudes and Reactions to the Boer War 1899-1902* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972) 1.

focus for all the fears that many Britons had about their country's future'.⁶⁷⁸ The Boers were seen as troublemakers and so the war generated an exaggerated level of patriotism. (In justification of the war, popular literature demonised the Boers as 'dirty, corrupt, immoral and shifty....It was believed that they were at a lower stage of evolution').⁶⁷⁹ The war 'provided the finest excuse for England to throw aside traditional reserve and loudly prove that her people were still the finest race on earth'.⁶⁸⁰ (Concurrently: 'middle-class Radicals...opposed the Boer war [*sic*]'.⁶⁸¹ However, this opposition lacked the organisation and focus that would have made it effective.⁶⁸² Working-class reaction was complex and eschewed 'a simple and mindless jingoism'.⁶⁸³ Although there were 'far more vocal anti-imperialists among the working classes than vocal imperialists',⁶⁸⁴ their apathy towards political engagement ensured that their critical voices were not heard. Price's arguments about societal attitudes seem contradictory. He suggests an upsurge of patriotism was evident, whilst hinting that considerable cohesive opposition to the hostilities existed.)

The Anglo-Boer War, with its conflicting political attitudes and moral uncertainties, began in 1899. Almost a decade had passed since Kipling had published *Barrack-Room Ballads*. During those ten years he embraced the soldier portrayal. In 1896 he published *The Seven Seas*.⁶⁸⁵ These were soldier ballads which continued the theme of 'India and its army'⁶⁸⁶ in the style of *Barrack-Room Ballads*. Whilst the collection contains 'a fresh series of [""]barrack-room ballads [*sic*]["]', it also includes poems with

⁶⁷⁸ Price 1.

⁶⁷⁹ Price 12.

⁶⁸⁰ Price 1.

⁶⁸¹ Price 5.

⁶⁸² Price 14.

⁶⁸³ Price 89.

⁶⁸⁴ Price 89.

⁶⁸⁵ Page 5.

⁶⁸⁶ Page 169.

a new emphasis.⁶⁸⁷ The publication coincided with the aftermath of the abortive ‘Jameson Raid’ and the poems must have been written during the southern African political turmoil, ‘Rhodesian’ machinations and imperial uncertainties of the 1890s. In Cecil Rhodes, Kipling saw a visionary who ‘was striving on a huge scale to implement [Kipling’s] own ideas of work and Empire.’⁶⁸⁸ These elements introduced powerful and irresistible influences into Kipling’s life and work. The new poems were aimed at an imperial audience.⁶⁸⁹ They deviate from soldier portrayals into ‘poems with titles that evoked the communal, oral tradition: ‘The Song of the English’, ‘The Song of the Sons’’.⁶⁹⁰ Kipling’s writing was *previously* aimed at an imperial audience; as a readership geographically situated within the empire and beyond. Some of his commercial success hinged on the huge number of readers at his command, across several continents. Although not within the British Empire, this included a substantial audience in the United States. The poetry was now aimed differently at his audience. The new thrust of the writing was towards an evaluation of imperial achievements, the potential for further imperial acquisitions and the essence of ‘Englishness’ and its consequences.

When Kipling published his Boer War collection *The Five Nations* [1903],⁶⁹¹ even the title continues the new perspectives in his verse evident in the *The Seven Seas*. His 1903 volume contains soldier representations embedded in imperialist discourse as ‘two voices. One is the reflective, personal voice...the other the public, ‘official’ voice of ‘The White Man’s Burden’, ‘The Islanders’ and ‘Recessional’’.⁶⁹² The new ‘voices’

⁶⁸⁷ Harry Ricketts, *The Unforgiving Minute: A Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2000) Pp 227.

⁶⁸⁸ Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999) 293.

⁶⁸⁹ Ricketts 228.

⁶⁹⁰ Ricketts 227.

⁶⁹¹ Page 170.

⁶⁹² Page 170.

indicate Kipling's writing as a national, imperial and racial representative.⁶⁹³ (Jad Adams refers to 'The White Man's Burden', 'The Islanders' and 'Recessional' as among Kipling's 'most strident imperial verse'.⁶⁹⁴ In championing white supremacy, 'Englishness' and imperialism Kipling now spoke to a reduced audience.⁶⁹⁵ Adams and Ricketts assert that the early part of the twentieth century saw a decline in the popularity of Kipling's writing.⁶⁹⁶ In Britain, this occurred 'in the decade or so before the First World War'⁶⁹⁷ and continued beyond this date. This is illustrated by the article, 'People Who Can't Read Kipling', published in 1928 by A. Corbett-Smith. It demonstrates that by that year Kipling's work is not common currency within a broad audience, as in the 1890s: 'I appeal to Mr. Kipling to entrust his work to the Peoples of England and of the British Commonwealth, by whom it is virtually unknown.' (22/38 File 22/3 /Document 9).⁶⁹⁸ (appendix 24). This decline was not universal: 'while Kipling's literary stock was plummeting in English artistic circles, it was steadily rising on the continent').⁶⁹⁹

Orwell assesses a similar point. He compares society in the Boer War era and 1942, when his article is written: '[T]he nineteenth-century imperialist outlook and the modern gangster outlook are two different things. Kipling belongs very definitely to the period 1885-1902'.⁷⁰⁰ He caustically assesses Kipling's decline in popularity: 'The Great War and its aftermath embittered him, but he shows little sign of having learned anything from any event later than the Boer War. He was the prophet of British Imperialism in its expansionist phase...and also the unofficial historian of the British

⁶⁹³ Page 170.

⁶⁹⁴ Jad Adams, *Kipling* (London: Haus Books, 2005) 157.

⁶⁹⁵ Adams 157.

⁶⁹⁶ Adams 157.

⁶⁹⁷ Ricketts 282.

⁶⁹⁸ 'People Who Can't Read Kipling' *The Sunday Express* 30 Dec. 1928 22/38-K/P: Correspondence-Literary General/Verse.

⁶⁹⁹ Ricketts 283.

⁷⁰⁰ Orwell (1970) 217.

army, the old mercenary army which began to change its shape in 1914.⁷⁰¹ There is a consequence to this perceived decrease in popularity. It signifies engagement with a more limited, less approving readership. Previous representations of Tommy Atkins had reached a huge, appreciative audience. This offered opportunities to influence societal opinions. Kipling's earlier portrayals changed and improved the image of the soldier. Inevitably a smaller, less favourable audience may not engender similar results. There is a further risk. If Kipling is in disagreement with his readers, then his championship of the enlisted man may cause alienation of the subject. Discussion of Kipling's *fin de siècle* imperialism is essential to a close-reading of soldier representations in his later work. Most criticism relating to Kipling and his writing is mediated through the now unacceptable strident imperial beliefs that he demonstrates and readers' responses to them. However, such discussion is problematic. Full exploration would overwhelm this thesis, since the subject has been scrutinised so closely. Therefore to avoid repetition, Kipling's imperial philosophies will be explored within the confines of their influence on the poems and representations in *The Five Nations*. His opinions of empire at that time and the effects of his friendship with Rhodes provide context for Kipling's portrayal and reading of the Boer War soldier subject. In *The Five Nations*, soldier portraits are embedded in overt imperial discourse, through the content of the collection and the narrative of the poems.

Page and Adams declare 'Recessional' to be one of the most overt of Kipling's imperial poems. Singh states that together with 'White Man's Burden' the two poems 'have been crucial in establishing Rudyard Kipling's reputation as the de facto poet laureate [*sic*] of the British Empire.'⁷⁰² In later years Kipling forgets, or is unwilling to

⁷⁰¹ Orwell (1970) 217.

⁷⁰² Rashna B. Singh, "Kipling's Other Burden: Counter-Narrating Empire," *Kipling and Beyond: Patriotism, Globalisation and Postcolonialism*, eds., Caroline Rooney & Kaori Nagai (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 101.

acknowledge the sentiments behind his writing: ‘Recessional’ was written close on forty years ago, and I can’t remember that there was anything in my mind at the time except to write it’ (14/38 Files 14/51 & 14/52 Documents Un-numbered and 54).⁷⁰³ The poem is examined as an imperial poem, which ‘celebrates the sacrosanct nature of the civilising mission and chastises those who cheapen it through [“]tumult[”] and [“]shouting[”]’.⁷⁰⁴ It has been included in *The Five Nations* collection since the first edition in 1903. It was originally published in *The Times* on the 17th of July 1897, for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.⁷⁰⁵ (appendix 25). (The poem is subtitled ‘1897’ and ‘[a]ccording to the manuscript...the original title was ‘After’).’⁷⁰⁶ In the first edition of *The Five Nations*, ‘Recessional’ is the final poem in the collection and is indexed as one of the ‘Service Songs’, the rest of which explore the topic of the enlisted man and his experiences. This positioning illustrates the concept of embedment. Kipling’s ‘Service Songs’ explore ‘the way combatants had been changed by what they experienced during the Anglo-Boer War’.⁷⁰⁷ An understanding of those experiences is mediated through the location and meaning of ‘Recessional’.⁷⁰⁸ On publication ‘Recessional’ generated ‘an excess of patriotic fervour’,⁷⁰⁹ some of which originated in the connection of the poem to the Diamond Jubilee and the British enjoyment of regal grand occasion. The link to this occasion is one major reason why critics argue that it has emphatic imperial connotations. For example, the first stanza declaims: ‘Lord of our far-flung battle-line,/ Beneath whose awful Hand we hold/ Dominion over palm and

⁷⁰³ Rudyard Kipling, “To Lionel [General Dunsterville],” 11 April 1935 14/38-K/P: Correspondence: A-D.

⁷⁰⁴ Singh 101.

⁷⁰⁵ Page 181.

⁷⁰⁶ Page 182.

⁷⁰⁷ Hamer, Mary. “Recessional (1897).” January 2008. 13 October 2009
<http://www.kipling.org.uk/rg_recess1_p.htm> 2.

⁷⁰⁸ Hamer 2.

⁷⁰⁹ Page 181.

pine—'.⁷¹⁰ This illustrates British imperial endeavour and reinforces belief in the revelation and execution of divine purpose: 'Mr. Kipling has performed one of the most important functions of the poet, — the [*sic*] function of interpreter to the nation. He has revealed certain aspects of the national life, and made our people understand themselves' (28/14, 1894-1946, 1).⁷¹¹ This is the interpretation for Richard Harding Davis, who patriotically responds to 'Recessional' the day following its publication. He believes that 'Recessional' confirms Kipling as a prime advocate and representative of imperialism: 'If there was one man who made the world know what the colonies were and who taught them first to spell Empire it was Rudyard Kipling and as the Elisabethean [*sic*] Era always suggests Shakespeare...so Victoria will be known as the one who was Queen when Rudyard Kipling wrote of the British Empire' (22/38 File 22/49 Document A2).⁷¹²

Evidence for enthusiasm for the poem is in correspondence to Kipling in the week following its publication: 'I thank you for the high pleasure we all had in reading your noble "Recessional". It has struck everybody — not merely the critical people — as the one utterance of the year worthwhile. Lord Coventry...ran across the street to talk to me about it' (22/38 File 22/49 /Document A18).⁷¹³ Close reading of 'Recessional' highlights the contradictions of its patriotic reception, whilst indicating a reason for its inclusion in the 'Service Songs' section of *The Five Nations*. The first four lines of stanza one could be read as explicit patriotic sentiments. However, the stanza concludes with a two line refrain repeated in two other stanzas, one line of which is present in a fourth 'Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,/ Lest we forget—lest we

⁷¹⁰ Rudyard Kipling, *The Five Nations* (London: Methuen and Co., 1903) 214.

⁷¹¹ 'Mr Kipling's Hymn' *The Spectator* 24 July 1897 28/14-Miscellaneous Cuttings About Rudyard Kipling and His Works 1894-1946 Cartoons etc.

⁷¹² Richard Harding Davis, "To Rudyard Kipling," 18 July 1897 22/38.

⁷¹³ John Hay, "To Rudyard Kipling," 26 July 1897 22/38.

forget!'.⁷¹⁴ An exclamation mark emphasises the interpretation. Whilst 'be with us yet' indicates belief in a divine presence with the nation: 'Lest we forget!'⁷¹⁵ implies other sentiments, such as a requirement for national humility. This is echoed in the opening lines of the fourth stanza which chides: 'If, drunk with sight of power, we loose/ Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe'.⁷¹⁶ Paradoxically, juxtaposed against these are the imperialistic, racist and contradictory lines: 'Such boastings as the Gentiles use,/ Or lesser breeds without the Law—'.⁷¹⁷ (Hamer argues that '[i]t is extremely unlikely that Kipling subscribed to any form of orthodox religious belief'. However, she suggests that he understood the importance of religious writings and texts to those who did believe).⁷¹⁸ In stanza three Kipling declares:

Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!.⁷¹⁹

His allusion to the Biblical cities of Nineveh and Tyre is significant, since both are admonished for the unacceptable practices of their people by a censorious God. (The book of Nahum is a vision of the prophet, Nahum the Elkoshite, describing 'the Lord's anger against Nineveh'.⁷²⁰ Verse 8 states that '[H]e will make an end of Nineveh'.⁷²¹ Chapters 26, 27 and 28 of the book of Ezekiel are a lament and two prophecies about the city of Tyre, its destruction and that of its King: 'the Sovereign Lord says: I am

⁷¹⁴ Kipling (1903) 214.

⁷¹⁵ Kipling (1903) 214.

⁷¹⁶ Kipling (1903) 215.

⁷¹⁷ Kipling (1903) 215.

⁷¹⁸ Hamer 2.

⁷¹⁹ Kipling (1903) 214.

⁷²⁰ *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Nah. 1. 1.

⁷²¹ *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Nah. 1. 8.

against you, O Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you'.⁷²² The warning in verse 27 is particularly relevant to the English: "'Who was ever silenced like Tyre,/ surrounded by the sea?'"⁷²³) The refrain is a supplication and warning against provoking righteous anger from God. This is a caution *against* the hubris of national expansionism and conceit. Page considers it ironic that a poem which warns against the pride of imperial power should largely be regarded as 'jingoistic and imperialistic'.⁷²⁴ This seems particularly true when the final stanza of the poem concludes: 'For frantic boast and foolish word—/ Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!'.⁷²⁵ However, the punctuation and capitalisation within the concluding line is ambiguous and contradictory. God's forgiveness for nationalist vanity is enjoined whilst hypocritically, Kipling implies that the privileged position of the English is to be maintained. Lycett explains the contradiction: '[Kipling] was conducting an internal debate — working out his own complicated view of the nature of democracy. On the one hand he had been apprehensive about the popular patriotism associated with the Jubilee; on the other he could sense...that the future belonged to the common man'.⁷²⁶ Rayne Kruger argues that with British imperial powers at their zenith during the late Victorian era, *The Times* published 'Recessional' as a 'warning against vainglory'.⁷²⁷ However, it was the enthusiasm of the British public that propagated the imperial elements in the poem and the 'raucous bursting energy of the multitude was not to be gainsaid'.⁷²⁸

⁷²² *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Ezek 26.3.

⁷²³ *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Ezek 27. 32.

⁷²⁴ Page 182.

⁷²⁵ Kipling (1903) 215.

⁷²⁶ Lycett 300.

⁷²⁷ Rayne Kruger, *Good-bye Dolly Gray: The Story of the Boer War* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1959) 39.

⁷²⁸ Kruger 39.

The placement of ‘Recessional’ within the ‘Service Songs’, combined with a reading of the poem which engages with academic arguments, implies covert criticism of imperial purpose, with its unavoidable requirement for sacrifice, such as when ‘our navies melt away’ and ‘[t]he captains and the kings depart.’⁷²⁹ The victims of nationalism and imperial venture are the enlisted men, who undertake the inevitable military and naval engagements. By juxtaposing ‘Recessional’ with the other poems, the meaning determines the necessity to remember who pays the imperial price. A letter written several days after the poem’s original, Jubilee publication, highlights the contradictions within the reading of ‘Recessional’: ‘Once more you have struck the right note: the note which so many of us wished to hear, and yet which was never sounded in the great chorus of thanksgiving...which has given rise from all parts of the Empire’ (22/38 File 22/49 Document A13).⁷³⁰ This implies that the empire and its subjects agree with his interpretation of Kipling’s sentiments. The letter concludes: ‘It is true, and is a truth never to be lost sight of or forgotten that it is the heart of man which is the life and strength of the nation. I have not your power to express my thoughts, but every line of your hymn⁷³¹ goes right home to my conscience’ (22/38 File 22/49 Document A13).⁷³² This suggests that the poem is a patriotic celebration of the attainments and longevity of a Head of State and her subjects *and* recognition of the need for gratitude to God. This is the interpretation and hope of one of Kipling’s admirers:

‘Not by might not by strength but by my spirit saith the Lord’ and a Joshua with a ram’s horn⁷³³ may yet bring destruction upon all our vaunted strength if we put our trust simply in our arms and ships and not

⁷²⁹ Kipling (1903) 214.

⁷³⁰ H. O. Arnold Foster, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 21 July 1897 22/38.

⁷³¹ ‘Hymn’ Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995 a Christian song of praise sung to God or a saint.

⁷³² H/O/A/F, “To R/K,” 22/38.

⁷³³ The correspondent alludes to the fall of Jericho in the book of Joshua. *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Josh. 6.4.

in the Lord of Hosts, the God of truth. Feeling deeply the truth of this I heartily echo your own ‘Amen’ and express gratitude for your timely and poetic warning (22/38 File 22/49 Document A10).⁷³⁴

As the correspondent comments, the poem ends with the word ‘Amen’,⁷³⁵ or ‘so be it!’. This emphasises a prayer-like context, with which he engages.⁷³⁶ It is use and connotation of words such as ‘hymn’ and ‘Amen’ which shifts the perceived meaning. When combined with a specific interpretation of the title ‘Recessional’,⁷³⁷ the poem becomes a metaphor for the nation’s imperial endeavour. Kipling proposes its interpretation as a song to accompany withdrawal from strident imperial enterprise. It re-engages with Britain’s religious foundations and argues for national humility. A letter from H. Rider Haggard supports this:

My own belief is that it is just because the English people from the beginnings of their history ...have not “forgotten” that they have been permitted to grow so great....I believe that there is less danger of such forgetfulness today than there was five and twenty years ago when scientific discoveries and criticism of religion and the Bible turned the heads of so many clever people....I hope...you will live and have strength to preach more of such splendid sermons (22/38 File 22/49 Document 9).⁷³⁸

Significantly, Rider Haggard writes of the ‘sermon’ that Kipling has delivered. He hints at the widespread belief that the English are a nation chosen by God for imperial greatness. Certainly, some of Kipling’s audience engaged with the religious, rather than imperial, aspects of the poem. *The Spectator* summarises these sentiments:

In his Jubilee “Recessional,” ...[Kipling] has touched the heart of the nation deeply, and touched it to deep issues. His poem has moved his fellow – countrymen...by the simplest, the sternest, and the most direct appeal which men are capable of feeling. Mr. Kipling’s new verses

⁷³⁴ F. Cowley, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 19 July 1897 22/38.

⁷³⁵ Kipling (1903) 215.

⁷³⁶ ‘Amen’ Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995 described as ‘so be it!’ a term used at the end of a prayer or religious statement.

⁷³⁷ ‘Recessional’ Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995 a hymn sung as the clergy and choir withdraw from the chancel as a church service concludes.

⁷³⁸ H. Rider Haggard in Norfolk, “To the Editor, [*The Times*]” 17 July 1897 22/38.

... speak almost solely to the religious sentiment of the nation... It is here, indeed, that Mr. Kipling's genius is visible. He realised that if the nation's heart was to be moved to the full, it could only be on the religious side... The poet might have the insight required to see that the nation could only be adequately touched by the religious appeal, and yet be unable to make that appeal. Mr. Kipling has not failed in this. (28/14, 1894-1946, 1).⁷³⁹

The article suggests that 'Recessional' indicates Kipling's use of a new way to portray ideas of empire and the moral imperative that accompanies such ideas. This new, 'religious' way conflicts with Page and Adams' assertions of imperial stridency and at times, Page contradicts his own arguments. For example, when he states that Kipling writes as an 'imperial and racial representative',⁷⁴⁰ whilst simultaneously warning against imperialism.⁷⁴¹

Price indicates at least two important factors to be considered in a discussion of soldier portraits by the end of the Boer War. Soldiers during and prior to the nineteenth century had a dire reputation. Kipling addresses this in his *Barrack-Room Ballads*. By the time *The Five Nations* was published the nature of the combatant had begun to change, due to volunteer recruitment: '[v]olunteering was... specifically related to the South African conflict'.⁷⁴² This influenced societal perceptions of the soldier because 'volunteer companies raised or formed for the specific purpose of the war were regarded by contemporaries as being illustrative of the classless nature of the patriotic response to England in need'.⁷⁴³ Price argues that '[n]ot only did volunteers tend to be better paid than the ordinary soldier, but they also attracted men of a "better class"'.⁷⁴⁴ He remarks that 'the Boer War has sometimes been called the "last gentleman's

⁷³⁹ 'Mr. Kipling' Hymn' *The Spectator* 24th July 1897 28/14.

⁷⁴⁰ Page 170.

⁷⁴¹ Page 182.

⁷⁴² Price 180.

⁷⁴³ Price 179.

⁷⁴⁴ Price 179.

war”’.⁷⁴⁵ To society, the perception of the ‘modern’ combatant had shifted from rogue, to ‘everyman’.

The second factor, which contradicts assertions of gentlemanliness, is the cruelty with which the Boer War was executed upon non-combatants. This was ‘the ruthless British treatment of the fighters’ families, which threatened “to decimate the race”’.⁷⁴⁶ Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener undertook ‘a scorched-earth policy’, whilst ‘Boer women and children were taken to concentration camps, which were widely criticised within Britain and subject to withering attack abroad’.⁷⁴⁷ Presumably as an unintended consequence, in these camps ‘[s]ome 28,000 people died’,⁷⁴⁸ the majority of whom were children. (Unfortunately, Kipling seems unsympathetic to the plight of these Boers: ‘[w]e are looking after their wives and kids so they have nothing to worry about’).⁷⁴⁹ Whilst the public was dismayed by news of ‘brutalities now being perpetrated in South Africa’,⁷⁵⁰ it did not wish British soldiers to be held responsible for those actions. This attitude was particularly true of the working class.⁷⁵¹ Perhaps reluctance to apportion blame directly to the soldiers resulted from the altered demographic of the army, caused by the volunteers. Those who imagined that the army was more noble due to the influx of ordinary men just like themselves, might balk at the idea that such men would commit morally reprehensible acts. Price suggests that some felt unable to criticise the working class soldier because ‘[t]he association between the institution and the class was too close for them to do so’⁷⁵² and it implied an assault on

⁷⁴⁵ Price 181.

⁷⁴⁶ Feroz Yasamee, “Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz and the Boer War” *The International Impact of the Boer War*, ed., Keith Wilson (Chesham: Acumen, 2001) 202.

⁷⁴⁷ Adams Pp132.

⁷⁴⁸ Adams 133.

⁷⁴⁹ Adams 133.

⁷⁵⁰ Price 86.

⁷⁵¹ Price Pp85.

⁷⁵² Price 87.

the class itself. The uneasy compromise reached by Boer War critics was criticism of government' policy, which implied but did not state criticism of the men.⁷⁵³

These contentious moral and political uncertainties, combined with a dichotomy about the perception of a soldier and his behaviour, provided the backdrop for publication of *The Five Nations* collection. The 'Service Songs' section of *The Five Nations* consists of 15 'soldier' poems and 'Recessional'. Kipling's imperial context has been established. The soldier portrayals in the poems will be compared with one another and with the writing of Thomas Hardy, A.E. Housman and the poems of W.E. Henley, from his collection of eleven poems published in 1900, *For England's Sake: Verses and Songs in Time of War*. Henley was the imperialist Editor of the *Scots Observer* who met Kipling in 1889. Kipling's first contribution to the paper was his poem 'The Explanation' published in February 1889.⁷⁵⁴ Henley's writing 'stridently insist[s] on the supremacy of the British race and empire'.⁷⁵⁵ This is illustrated by the second stanza of his poem 'Pro Rege Nostro':⁷⁵⁶

Where shall the watchful Sun,
England, my England,
Match the master-work you've done,
England, my own?⁷⁵⁷

His Boer War poetry was written at the end of his life when the war 'brought to a head the obsession with national and cultural degeneracy that activated him during the 1890s'.⁷⁵⁸

⁷⁵³ Price 86.

⁷⁵⁴ Lycett 204.

⁷⁵⁵ Malvern van Wyk Smith, *Drummer Hodge: The Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) 41.

⁷⁵⁶ William Ernest Henley, *For England's Sake: Verses and Songs in Time of War* (London: David Nutt, 1900) 6.

⁷⁵⁷ Henley 6.

⁷⁵⁸ Van Wyk Smith 42.

Throughout the war, Kipling had direct and indirect contact with the troops to draw upon for his soldier representations. As Caroline Kipling notes: ‘1899 Oct 23 Rottingdean Rud excited and worried over the troops at the front in Africa....⁷⁵⁹ A bad night on Rud’s part with anxiety over the troops’ (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 24).⁷⁵⁹ Later, they journey to South Africa and Carrie’s diary entries become more specific about his interaction with his subjects. The entries indicate Kipling’s celebrity, illustrious connections and appreciation of his verse. He is a significant figure who offers support to the men (appendix 26). There is evidence of regular and increasingly intimate contact between Kipling and the soldiers. It echoes the relationships that he enjoyed with the enlisted soldiers in India. Some men may have been old acquaintances from the sub-continent, or their military successors, since ‘several divisions had sailed directly from India as reinforcements’.⁷⁶⁰ A letter from Kipling’s father acknowledges the bond between his son and the men and shows that, as in India, Rudyard had the connections and opportunities to engage with senior military figures as well: ‘Rud and his off to Capetown....[g]oodness knows what he will do, – but I know in some way he will be worth much to our forces before he returns...He will certainly go to the Wynberg hospitals and yarn with the men...[H]e will have much colloquing [*sic*] with Lord Roberts and will doubtless make Lord Kitchener’s acquaintance’ (1/38 File 1/9 Document 8).⁷⁶¹

In 1901 Kipling corresponds with a soldier whom he met on a hospital visit. He demonstrates great concern about the recipient:

I don’t know whether you will remember that almost 15 months ago I met you in No.1 or No. 2 hospital a little while after those Colesberg swine had shot you...A man I know...has put me on to your address. He wants to send you a book of my stories and wants me to write my name

⁷⁵⁹ (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

⁷⁶⁰ Lycett 321.

⁷⁶¹ John Lockwood Kipling, [nicknamed ‘The Buddha’], “To Miss Norton,” 5 February 1900 1/38-K/P: John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence.

in it. So I have done it and take advantage at the same time to send you a line on my own account trusting that you are coming along all right. They tell me that you are feeling your wound still a good deal – so you needn't bother yourself to answer this.
(File Ad. 5 Un-numbered document).⁷⁶²

Caroline Kipling's diary entries combined with evidence from letters, indicate the level of personal contact which Kipling undertook with the soldier in South Africa. The men portrayed in *The Five Nations* are a new model of the enlisted man, partly because of their volunteer and post-*Barrack-Room Ballad* status. As before, Kipling could claim that his poetry was written with personal knowledge, adding to perceptions of its authenticity. He had an eye-witness perspective of South Africa.

Kipling's father discusses the motivation of the soldier. If his son deemed it to be accurate, it adds to Rudyard's interpretation of the Boer War combatant:

[W]hatever may happen there the war must go on for the people at large will have it so... You said you couldn't bear to be in Capetown with the sounds of battle in your ears & armed men going away to die for their country. But [*sic*] the soldier likes it, – it is the finest & most exciting sport in the world, – “the hunting of man”... All our wounded have only one wish – to go back again [*sic*]. (1/38 File 1/9 Document 8).⁷⁶³

One interpretation of these comments is disturbing. It suggests an approach to military engagement which dehumanises the enemy and transforms it into ‘prey’, deserving of no better treatment than an animal. It maintains that the soldier finds pleasure in such pursuit. When combined with notions of imperial superiority, there are unpalatable racist implications. However, this connotation ignores the implied nobility of the hunter figure and the instinctive nature of the hunt. These are honourable principles to which John Lockwood might allude. One of the ‘Service Songs’ suggests that Kipling refutes his father's argument that all enlisted men are desperate to fight. It indicates

⁷⁶² Rudyard Kipling, “To Mr. Parker,” 4 June 1901 (Box un-numbered) Additions 1-36/38-K/P.

⁷⁶³ J/L/K, “To [Miss] /N,” 1/38.

Kipling's belief that this idea is too general. 'Wilful-Missing': '[o]ne of the suite of sixteen 'Service Songs' which close *The Five Nations*',⁷⁶⁴ is a first person narrative of nine stanzas. The reader is addressed directly: 'You may 'ave read a bullet laid us low'.⁷⁶⁵ It is unclear whether this narrative is aimed at a universal readership, or intended as a personal engagement with family, friends or prior acquaintances. The poem explores the position of the deserter. It does not justify such a man and accepts that justification might be poorly received: 'Gawd knows we all 'ad reasons which were fair;/ But other people might not judge 'em so'.⁷⁶⁶ Hamer suggests that Kipling's choice of title is less condemnatory than 'Deserter' might have been.⁷⁶⁷ The narrative voice shifts to personal engagement in stanzas six and seven, when the narrator speaks directly to abandoned spouses and families: 'We might 'ave been your lovers long ago,/ 'Usbands or children'.⁷⁶⁸ The decision to abdicate military and personal duties is irreversible and permanent in the eyes of the soldier-narrator. A neglected spouse must move on: 'Marry again, and we will not say no,/ Nor come to bastardise the kids you bear'.⁷⁶⁹ Although Kipling uses his customary artificial dialect, its use is less pronounced in this poem. It is restricted to the infrequent omission of individual letters and occasional syntactical irregularities such as: 'That we was gathered in 'with reverent care''.⁷⁷⁰ This enables the reader to interpret the text easily, without the distraction of 'translation'. In the first stanza the narrator informs the reader that:

There is a world outside the one you know,
To which for curiousness 'Ell can't compare—

⁷⁶⁴ Hamer, Mary. "Wilful-Missing (1903)." January 2008. 13 October 2009
<http://www.kipling.org.uk/rg_wilfulmissing1_p.htm> 1.

⁷⁶⁵ Kipling (1903) 204.

⁷⁶⁶ Kipling (1903) 205.

⁷⁶⁷ Hamer 1.

⁷⁶⁸ Kipling (1903) 205.

⁷⁶⁹ Kipling (1903) 205.

⁷⁷⁰ Kipling (1903) 204.

It is the place where 'wilful-missings' go,
As we can testify, for we are there.⁷⁷¹

In this context Kipling uses 'curiousness'⁷⁷² to connote strangeness, or unfamiliarity. The soldier-narrator feels excluded from the society in which his reader exists. Even though it is his own choice, he is in an unfamiliar and unpleasant world.

The mention of 'Ell' suggests potential judgment, but whether this is self-judgment, or that of the 'reader' is unclear. The final stanza indicates that if spectator judgment is proffered, it is inherently unfair since '[w]hat man can size or weigh another's woe?'.⁷⁷³ What might disturb Kipling's audience is that this self-willed soldier-narrator is not the vagabond figure of the nineteenth century combatant, but a common man and a volunteer, who has been forced to endure 'some things too bitter 'ard to bear'.⁷⁷⁴ The narrator begins stanza four: 'We might 'ave seen our chance to cut the show-'.⁷⁷⁵ The line could imply cowardice, but Hamer insists that it discusses those who choose to walk away from conflict, rather than being fearful of it. This is a combatant who decides 'to leave a former life behind'.⁷⁷⁶ He deliberately discards his 'Name, number, record, an' begin[s] elsewhere-'.⁷⁷⁷ The use of the caesura to end the first and second lines of stanza four, suggests that Kipling is directing his audience to pause and reflect on what is inferred. The same technique is used a further twelve times, in particular in the fourth stanza when Kipling writes that by neglecting to fight, the 'not too late-lamented foe' can claim only one enemy fatality: 'One funeral-private-British-for 'is

⁷⁷¹ Kipling (1903) 204.

⁷⁷² 'Curiousness' Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995 derived from 'Curious'. One meaning is determined as interesting because of oddness or novelty; strange; unexpected.

⁷⁷³ Kipling (1903) 205.

⁷⁷⁴ Kipling (1903) 205.

⁷⁷⁵ Kipling (1903) 204.

⁷⁷⁶ Hamer 1.

⁷⁷⁷ Kipling (1903) 204.

share'.⁷⁷⁸ The use of the pauses here engenders a military and funereal pace to the line. This assists in portraying the image. The implication is that the decision to disengage from military action means that only one family suffers the pain and loss of bereavement. One soldier's death represents the rest: 'Our death (an' burial) settles all we owe'.⁷⁷⁹ The narrator is being disingenuous. Since the deserter's family believes that he is dead the feeling of loss is the same. This speaker contrasts with Henley's 'breed of mighty men'.⁷⁸⁰ They are an elite of whom Henley asks '[w]hat is there I would not do,/ England my own?'.⁷⁸¹

The sentiments of Kipling's speaker are echoed in Thomas Hardy's poem, 'The Sick-Battle God', from his collection *Poems of the Past and the Present*. Hardy's god 'rarely gladdens champions now;/ They do and dare, but tensely – pale of brow'.⁷⁸² The impression is of a reluctant soldier, whose 'Battle-god is god no more'.⁷⁸³ Hardy's men are elegiac, Kipling's narrator remains pragmatic. Hardy and Kipling engage with the portrayal of an enlisted man who recognises the injustice of what he is required to do. This is especially true of a volunteer, drawn from his everyday life into exceptional and arduous circumstances of which he has no prior experience. Despite the title of his poem, Kipling suggests that not all of the deserters have wilfully relinquished their duties. In stanza five the narrator declares:

We may 'ave took it yonder in the Low
 Bush-veldt that sends men stragglin' unaware
 Among the Kaffirs, till their columns go,
 An' they are left past call or count or care.⁷⁸⁴

⁷⁷⁸ Kipling (1903) 204.

⁷⁷⁹ Kipling (1903) 205.

⁷⁸⁰ Henley 6.

⁷⁸¹ Henley 6.

⁷⁸² James Gibson, ed., *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001) 99.

⁷⁸³ Gibson 99.

⁷⁸⁴ Kipling (1903) 205.

Kipling hints, not for the first time in his writing, that it is neglect in the duty of care either by a unit or by the army, which causes the soldiers' aberrant behaviour. He implies that the alien environment in which these men find themselves cut adrift partly determines their subsequent act of desertion. Including a poem with this subject in the collection is interesting because, in common with poems such as 'Tommy' from *Barrack-Room Ballads*, it engenders unexpected sympathy for an antipathetic subject. It rejuvenates another aspect of Tommy Atkins. It is sympathy born out of Kipling's personal encounters: 'Some day, indeed, it is not too much to hope, we may even have an efficient army. About half the men I ever knew seem to have been killed and the other half are wounded.'⁷⁸⁵

A.E. Housman reflects Hardy's melancholy belief that 'soldiers who go to war are doomed to perish'.⁷⁸⁶ In Housman's three stanza poem 'Astronomy' he writes: 'I will sit me down and weep/ For bones in Africa.'⁷⁸⁷ The third stanza concludes: '[a]t night over the ground where he/ Is buried'.⁷⁸⁸ The soldier subject is anonymous and unrecognised: 'For pay and medals, name and rank,/ Things that he has not found'.⁷⁸⁹ The pragmatism, camaraderie and 'realism' of Kipling are eschewed. In common with 'Drummer Hodge' there is a depressing contrast between 'the vastness of the cosmos with the aspirations of one glory-hungry soldier'.⁷⁹⁰ Housman is 'obsess[ed] with early, violent death'.⁷⁹¹ One example is 'The Day of Battle', from *A Shropshire Lad*. This poem responds to 'Wilful-Missing'. The speaker questions: 'Fly I would, for who

⁷⁸⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "To Charles Eliot Norton," 15 January 1900, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 3: 1900-10*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1996) 10-11.

⁷⁸⁶ A. E. Housman, *The Collected Poems of A. E. Housman* (Ware: Wordsworth Poetry Library, 2005) 11.

⁷⁸⁷ Housman 96.

⁷⁸⁸ Housman 96.

⁷⁸⁹ Housman 96.

⁷⁹⁰ N/A. "The Poetry of the Boer War." n/d 23 November 2010 <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~www_se/personal/pvm/HardyBWar/poetry.html>n/p.

⁷⁹¹ Housman 17.

would not?/ 'Tis sure no pleasure to be shot.'⁷⁹² In the third stanza the speaker acknowledges the likely judgement upon such an action: 'cowards' funerals, when they come,/ Are not wept so well at home.'⁷⁹³ He gives as stark an account as any of Kipling's of the expected outcome of remaining at his post: 'take the bullet in your brain.'⁷⁹⁴ Michael Irwin remarks that: '[l]iterally read, *A Shropshire Lad* is pessimistic to the point of necrophilia.'⁷⁹⁵

'Chant-Pagan', (subtitled 'English Irregular: '99-02'), is the poem with which the 'Service Songs' section of *The Five Nations* commences. The collection, *The Five Nations*, begins with a five stanza, italicised 'Dedication'. An italicised, three stanza, untitled poem preceding 'Chant-Pagan' undertakes the same role for the 'Service Songs'. It is a companion piece to 'Chant-Pagan', since it describes the combatant and his place in post-war society: '*Tommy*' you was when it began, /But now that it is o'er/ You shall be called *The Service Man*'.⁷⁹⁶ The subtitle to 'Chant-pagan' indicates that the narrator is probably a Boer War volunteer, not a regular soldier. The poem has six irregular stanzas, reflecting the irregular status of the narrator, who reminisces in the first person. The narrative is reflective and indicates disillusionment in the now ex-combatant:

I will arise an' get 'ence;—
I will trek South and make sure
If it's only my fancy or not
That the sunshine of England is pale.
And the breezes of England are stale,
An' there's somethin' gone small with the lot;⁷⁹⁷

⁷⁹² Housman 71.

⁷⁹³ Housman 71.

⁷⁹⁴ Housman 71.

⁷⁹⁵ Housman 11.

⁷⁹⁶ Kipling (1903) 158.

⁷⁹⁷ Kipling (1903) 162.

He has volunteered for and fought in a war, which has affected him profoundly: 'Me that 'ave been what I've been,/ Me that 'ave gone where I've gone,/ Me that 'ave seen what I've seen—'.⁷⁹⁸ The repetition of 'Me that'⁷⁹⁹ in every stanza indicates how personal Kipling intends this meditation to appear. Kipling portrays a soldier whose post-Boer War contemplation indicates that he has defended his country and empire in war and now believes that the effort may not have been worthwhile. The soldier intends to return to England to confirm whether this belief is true. Kendall implies that this reflects Kipling's own doubts. As the poet writes after the Boer War: '[e]very thing we have – church school and craft – has, so to speak, been challenged to show cause why it should continue on the old unthinking hide-bound lines'.⁸⁰⁰ Class distinction and discrimination play a part in the soldier's ruminations: ''Ow can I ever take on/ With awful old England again,/...the parson an' 'gentry' between,/ An' touchin' my 'at when we meet—'.⁸⁰¹ Kipling's soldier questions the justice of returning to the subservience of his working-class status and asks himself if this is something he could undertake.

His lament continues as he feels subjugated, or treated childishly: 'I am takin' some letters almost/ As much as a mile, to the post,/ An' [“]mind you come back with the change!["]/ Me!'.⁸⁰² He wishes to transform his life and the society which gives it context. He recognises the difficulty of this, due to the societal traditions in place: 'An' I'm rollin' 'is lawns for the Squire,/ Me!'.⁸⁰³ To create a better life for himself, he must challenge these cultural mores and endure the difficulties engendered by such an action. As Rose states: 'Educated people commonly (though by no means universally) found

⁷⁹⁸ Kipling (1903) 159.

⁷⁹⁹ Kipling (1903) 159.

⁸⁰⁰ Tim Kendall, *Modern English War Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 32.

⁸⁰¹ Kipling (1903) 159.

⁸⁰² Kipling (1903) 160.

⁸⁰³ Kipling (1903) 160.

something profoundly menacing in the efforts of working people to educate themselves and write for themselves....[C]ulture was a force for equality and was destructive of ideology, including the ideology supporting the British class structure.’⁸⁰⁴ In this poem Kipling celebrates the combatant who has ‘survived [his] generals’ stupidity’.⁸⁰⁵ The soldier-narrator questions why he should be expected to re-embrace his underprivileged position, when experience has shown him the falsity of intellectual or hegemonic superiority in an hierarchical society. This foreshadows the ‘lions-led-by-donkeys’ sentiments of the Great War. As Kendall argues: ‘even if their prophecies go unheeded, the poems of *The Five Nations* do their duty for their country, attacking failures and shortcomings in the hierarchies of power in ways which Great War poets would have ample reason to repeat’.⁸⁰⁶ (Kendall discusses Kipling’s poem ‘Stellenbosh’ which ‘expresses an appalled disdain for the generals whose incompetence prolongs the war and wastes the courage of their young charges’).⁸⁰⁷

In contrast Henley’s first person narrator in his poem, ‘A New Song to an Old Tune’, dated March 1900 in the collection *For England’s Sake: Verses and Songs in the Time of War*, suggests that the combatant should not question personal sacrifice for the sake of England and her enterprises. It is evidence of the strident imperialism that Van Wyk Smith maintains is an integral element in Henley’s work:

What if the best of our wages be
An empty sleeve, a stiff-set knee,
A crutch for the rest of life—who cares,
So long as the One Flag floats and dares?

⁸⁰⁴ Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) 20.

⁸⁰⁵ Lycett 352.

⁸⁰⁶ Kendall 32.

⁸⁰⁷ Kendall 32.

So long as the One Race dares and grows?
 Death—what is death but God’s own rose?⁸⁰⁸

Henley’s combatant is to regard amputation or death as appropriate. The stanza implies that suffering for country is to be disregarded by the victim: ‘A crutch for the rest of life—who cares,/ So long as the One Flag floats and dares?’.⁸⁰⁹ More disturbing is the idea posited by these lines that perhaps society need not care either. Henley’s combatant represents a tool with which to undertake the work of empire building and defence. There is no suggestion that the imperial *status quo*, or the human price exacted to maintain it, needs challenging. The poem is composed of three stanzas, each concluding with the italicised refrain ‘*Over the hills and far away!*’.⁸¹⁰ The refrain fulfils several roles. Henley’s refashioning of the traditional song, ‘Tom, the Piper’s Son’⁸¹¹ links to country, tradition and heritage. The refrain emphasises that link. The poem is a recruitment call: ‘Come where the bugles of England play,/ *Over the hills and far away!*’.⁸¹² The reader is encouraged to take up arms in imperial struggles, the ‘foreignness’ of which are implied by the refrain. The whole poem evokes childhood, particularly the refrain with its repetition and song-like qualities. This arouses subtle notions of adult guidance towards enlisting in the fighting. In Henley’s poem, those who volunteer are drawn from throughout Britain: ‘Sons of Shannon, Tamar, Trent,/ Men of the Lothians, men of Kent’.⁸¹³ He targets his intended recruits democratically, as they abandon their lives and current employment: ‘Mates of the net, the mine, the

⁸⁰⁸ Henley 16.

⁸⁰⁹ Henley 16.

⁸¹⁰ Henley 15.

⁸¹¹ One anonymous source suggests this rhyme is about the son of a Scottish bagpipe player and based on Celtic legend. N/A. “Tom He Was a Piper’s Son Nursery Rhyme Lyrics: Origins and History.” 10 November 2009 <<http://www.rhymes.org.uk/a106-tom-he-was-pipers-son.htm>>. Another source states that the verse is a nonsense rhyme, with an embedded moral for children. It alludes to the son of any piper in the British Army and is probably 18th century. N/A. “Tom, Tom the Piper’s Son: Lyrics.” 10 November 2009<http://www.famousquotes.me.uk/nursery_rhymes/tom_tom_the_pipers_son.htm>.

⁸¹² Henley 15.

⁸¹³ Henley 15.

fire,/ Lads of desk and wheel and loom,/ Noble and trader, squire and groom'.⁸¹⁴ Those men born in distant imperial locations are also encouraged to enlist:

Southern Cross and Polar Star—
Here are the Britains bred afar;
Serry, O serry them, fierce and keen,
Under the flag of the Empress-Queen.⁸¹⁵

The stanza indicates that it is the duty of every man to subsume his own concerns beneath those of the empire.

Henley's poem, 'Remonstrance' [1899], responds to the notions in Kipling's 'Chant-Pagan' that the combatant-narrator doubts that England is the force it once was. Henley's narrator challenges the reader: 'Where is our ancient pride of heart?'.⁸¹⁶ As Newbolt invokes the heroic figure of Drake in 'Drake's Drum', so Henley revisits concepts of old national glories:

Ours is the race
That tore the Spaniard's ruff,
That flung the Dutchman by the breech,
The Frenchman by the scruff;⁸¹⁷

In this three stanza poem, the narrator reproves those who doubt the continuing greatness of imperial Britain. The remonstrance of the title is marked in the first stanza:

Hitch, blunder, check—
Each is *a new disaster*,
And it is who shall bleat and scrawl
The feebler and the faster.⁸¹⁸

⁸¹⁴ Henley 15.

⁸¹⁵ Henley 15.

⁸¹⁶ Henley 2.

⁸¹⁷ Henley 2.

⁸¹⁸ Henley 2.

The final two lines of the stanza challenge those involved in the combat and society at large: 'Who but would marvel how we came/ If this were all we are?'.⁸¹⁹ He bolsters the resolve of the combatant.

Another of Kipling's 'Service Songs' provides a realistic portrayal of the subject that is romanticised by Henley's hyperbolic tone and use of language. In contrast to the idealisation of victories over Spaniard, Dutchman or Frenchman, the eight stanzas of 'Boots' emphasise the repetition, drudgery, danger and relentlessness of combat and those who endure it. Portrayed in the first person, the men must go '—slog—slog—slog—sloggin' over Africa!/ Foot—foot—foot—foot—sloggin' over Africa—'.⁸²⁰ Dreary repetitive language depicts the tedium preceding episodes of fearful or mortal combat. Recurrent use of the dash in the first three lines of every stanza such as 'Count—count—count—count—the bullets in the bandoliers',⁸²¹ serves several functions. It engenders a rhythm which emulates the pace of marching in formation. It forces the reader to give pace to their engagement with the poem and emphasises the monotony of the soldier's existence in South Africa. Kipling avoids overt use of dialect, choosing merely to omit individual letters. This allows his verse to be easily interpreted. The final stanza indicates the weariness of the soldier, as Kipling spaces the speech of the narrator using the dash: 'I—'ave—marched—six—weeks in 'Ell an' certify/ It—is—not—fire—devils dark or anything/ But boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again'.⁸²² Despite the sentiments of 'Wilful-Missing', the narrators of 'Boots' believe that there is no escape from their dilemma: 'There's no discharge in the war!'.⁸²³ Life is intense and arduous:

⁸¹⁹ Henley 2.

⁸²⁰ Kipling (1903) 185.

⁸²¹ Kipling (1903) 186.

⁸²² Kipling (1903) 187.

⁸²³ Kipling (1903) 185.

‘Seven—six—eleven—five—nine—an’-twenty mile to-day—’⁸²⁴ – and when not engaged in combat the soldier must battle the monotony of his existence: ‘Don’t—don’t—don’t—don’t—look at what’s in front of you/ (Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin’ up an’ down again)’.⁸²⁵ The poem sympathises with the enlisted man and recognises the false picture of glorious endeavour engendered by poetry such as Henley’s.

Kipling’s ‘Service Songs’ in *The Five Nations* re-engage with the recuperation of the image of the Tommy, which he began in the *Barrack-Room Ballads*. The previous portraits remain but alongside them are new concepts, the Boer War soldier-subject as a volunteer and soldier portraits embedded in imperial discourse, through the content of the collection and the narrative of the poems. Although ‘[s]oldiers and their verse, and the poetry of war have been studied seriously and extensively as far as the two great wars of the twentieth century are concerned’,⁸²⁶ other poems from other wars are largely neglected. Recuperation of the soldier-image because of ‘wide-ranging Victorian changes in attitude towards the army, the soldier...[and]...the volunteer’,⁸²⁷ was instrumental in the development of ‘war poetry’, in addition to development engendered by conventional responses to the brutality and death. These arguments suggest that for Victorian readers, the image of the soldier is recuperated within Boer War poetry. This change in attitude was connected to ‘the rise of democracy and universal education’.⁸²⁸ Another factor must be included in discussion of portrayals of soldiers in the Boer War. Van Wyk Smith states that by 1899, due to increased levels of literacy in the lower classes, for the first time the Boer War soldier could represent himself in poetry and prose. This writing often took the form of ‘war correspondence’,

⁸²⁴ Kipling (1903) 185.

⁸²⁵ Kipling (1903) 185.

⁸²⁶ Van Wyk Smith 1.

⁸²⁷ Van Wyk Smith 2.

⁸²⁸ Van Wyk Smith 3.

in which the individual described everyday life on and off the battlefield.⁸²⁹ The literate soldier audience of the Boer War generated poets whose ‘overwhelming indebtedness to Kipling signalled the extent to which literature had previously neglected the experiences of private soldiers’.⁸³⁰ In the ‘Service Songs’ Kipling continues into the twentieth century his positive imagery of the soldier, with which he hoped that society and the combatant might engage. A letter written in 1922 suggests success in this latter regard: ‘I read your Service Songs before the war with joy, but after putting in nine months in France with American Expeditionary Forces in the Infantry, I rediscovered them and now I recognise their intrinsic worth. As we used to say in the Platoon, “He knew the Game.” Than which there is no higher praise....You who know soldiers will understand’ (22/38 File 22/2 /Document 40).⁸³¹

The Absent-Minded Beggar

In late 1899, Kipling’s father wrote about a Boer War poem which his son had published in October of that year, at the outbreak of the war.⁸³² The poem is not included in *The Five Nations* collection (fig 13): ‘Rud nearly worried to death by interrupting letters and callers. His last copy of verses – “The Absent Minded Beggar” – a rhymed invitation to subscribe to a Soldiers’ wives and children fund, is the most talked of thing of the hour’ (1/38 File 1/9 Document 6).⁸³³ The poem was a fund-raising effort for the families of Boer War combatants.

⁸²⁹ Van Wyk Smith 4.

⁸³⁰ Kendall 27.

⁸³¹ Brooks Bradbury in New York, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 17 June 1922 22/38.

⁸³² Page 175.

⁸³³ John Lockwood Kipling in Tisbury, West Salisbury, “To Miss Norton,” 21 November 1899 1/38.

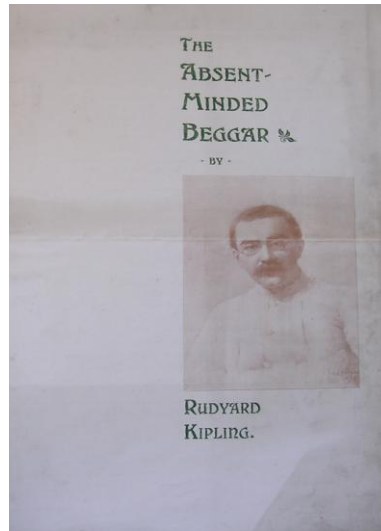


Fig. 13 Title page to 'The Absent Minded Beggar' Ad.1.⁸³⁴

Kipling describes the purpose of the poem: 'Money was wanted to procure small comforts for the troops at the Front and, to this end, the Daily Mail started what must have been a very early 'stunt.' It was agreed that I should ask the public for subscriptions. That paper charged itself with the rest.'⁸³⁵ He is less sanguine in 1900: 'I've raked in a little cash for my men. It's the first time I ever set out of malice aforethought to sell my name for every blessed cent it would fetch'.⁸³⁶ Kipling notes that 'Anybody could do what they chose with the result...on condition that they turned in all fees and profits to the main account – 'The Absent-minded Beggar Fund' – which closed at about a quarter of a million'.⁸³⁷ The idea of reproducing the poem in any format was enthusiastically received: 'J. McG. Stewart notes that "Handkerchiefs, pillow cases, plates, tobacco jars, ash trays, cigarette packages, etc., were produced bearing all or part of the poem"'.⁸³⁸ Kipling's father is satisfied with the result of his

⁸³⁴ 'The Absent Minded Beggar' c.1900. This printed facsimile was a gift to the Kipling Archive in October 1977, from Miss B. Porter. Adds 1-36/38.

⁸³⁵ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1964) 150.

⁸³⁶ Rudyard Kipling, "To Charles Eliot Norton," 15 January 1900, Pinney (1996) 10-11.

⁸³⁷ Kipling (1964) 150. See the original documents for this in 28/8, 1930-1937 & 1891-1945, 73. 28/8-Stories and Poems 1930-1937 /Miscellaneous Cuttings 1891-1945.

⁸³⁸ Page 175.

son's endeavours, although he is ambivalent about the role undertaken by the main publicists and sponsors of the work:

The *Daily Mail* has most ingeniously, rather tiresomely and very generously boomed, puffed and auctioned every saleable detail of it...the ever growing, industriously pushed Snow-ball has earned £10,000 – (not dollars) for the fund!...[T]he result is so splendid that it is easy to forgive the fuss of the queer, extraneous mechanism that has been at work (1/38 File 1/9 Document 6).⁸³⁹

The *Daily Mail* itself was unapologetic in pursuing its objectives. Its aim was to generate as much money as it could, as rapidly as possible (appendix 27). Kipling discusses the musical adaptation of his work: 'My verses ('The Absent-minded Beggar) had some elements of direct appeal but, as was pointed out, lacked 'poetry.' Sir Arthur Sullivan wedded the words to a tune guaranteed to pull teeth out of barrel-organs'.⁸⁴⁰ (Brian Mattinson discusses Kipling's work set to music. By 2003 'over 260 composers are linked with some 300 titles', with '[n]o less than fifty three tunes...associated with the great hymn "Recessional"').⁸⁴¹ The result of this collaboration was performed as part of a music hall benefit concert on behalf of the Boer War troops and their wives. ('Music Hall began around the middle of the nineteenth century in the industrial centres of Britain and the capital, London'. Its roots lay in a desire for local publicans to increase revenue spent in their premises by persuading customers to stay longer, with the provision of entertainment).⁸⁴² It was reviewed in an undated cutting sourced from the *Daily Mail*, or the *Daily Chronicle*: 'It has not been often that the greatest of English writers and the greatest of English musicians have joined inspiring words and stirring melody in a song which expresses the heart-feeling of the entire nation' (28/6,

⁸³⁹ J/L/K, "To [Miss] N," 1/38.

⁸⁴⁰ Kipling (1964) 150.

⁸⁴¹ Mattinson, Brian. "Kipling and Music: 'The Tunes That Mean So Much.'" Musical Settings of Rudyard Kipling Jan 2003. 19 January 2006 <http://www.kipling.org.uk/rg_music1_p.htm> Pp 6.

⁸⁴² Dagmar Kift, *The Victorian Music hall: Culture, Class and Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 1.

1899-1902; 37).⁸⁴³ Kipling must have been delighted at this reception for his work, not only for the monetary benefit.

His autobiography implies fascination with the music hall. Often, as part of his daily routine when he was living in Embankment Chambers, London in 1889, Kipling would ‘step out to eat at one of the restaurants down the street, calling in on his way home at Gatti’s Music-Hall, where fourpence bought admission’.⁸⁴⁴ As well as enjoying the music-hall experience as entertainment, it provided raw material for his work. He undertook journalistic observations of his fellow revellers, especially serving soldiers. (Lycett argues that Kipling was actively searching for new material to use from his visits in 1889 and that ‘he was wondering if London needed “a poet of the Music Halls”’.⁸⁴⁵ Importantly ‘[t]he music-halls encouraged Rudyard to develop his bluff Mulvaney soldier...into the engaging Tommy Atkins of his *Barrack-Room Ballads* – one important difference being that the latter was more aware of his role as a tool of Empire’.)⁸⁴⁶ When Kipling encountered these working class companions ‘he romantically hoped [that they] would put him in touch with contemporary Britain’.⁸⁴⁷ Dagmar Kift’s description of a music-hall audience indicates that its character was of sufficiently diverse assembly to do so: ‘Visits to the halls had a collective character. They were seen as “monster convivial parties”...involving “multitudes of men and women”’.⁸⁴⁸ These groups were close friends, workmates, neighbours and families, including young children and babies.

⁸⁴³ 28/6-Miscellaneous South African War 1899-1902.

⁸⁴⁴ Lycett Pp 186.

⁸⁴⁵ Lycett 188.

⁸⁴⁶ Lycett 188.

⁸⁴⁷ Lycett 188.

⁸⁴⁸ Kift 72.

By the last decade of the nineteenth century the music halls had ‘developed into variety theatres catering to all classes of society’.⁸⁴⁹ Up until that time, the audience was mainly working and occasionally lower middle class. The music hall was ‘a vital element in working class culture because it catered mainly for the working classes and played an important part in their everyday life’.⁸⁵⁰ Kipling was fascinated by this ‘vibrant working-class culture’.⁸⁵¹ He observed as his subjects met ‘for companionship and entertainment without outside interference; [at] a place where social trends and values could be presented and commented on by performers and audiences alike, and where social identities were shaped’.⁸⁵² Remodelling social identities embraces Kipling’s recuperation of the soldier-subject. Through later performances of work such as ‘The Absent-Minded Beggar’, the music hall became an institution of mediation for the soldier-portrait. With such close identification with the lower classes, an inevitable consequence was that ‘[t]he halls made a mockery of middle-class interpretations of ‘Victorian values’ and set up their own alternatives in opposition’.⁸⁵³ The natural corollary was that the clash of values meant that ‘the halls were at the centre of passionate social and political disputes’.⁸⁵⁴ Original and potentially unflattering new perspectives provided a space in which traditional Victorian imagery might be reinterpreted. This could include the rejuvenation of Tommy Atkins, in his personification of every soldier. This is especially true when, as in the Boer War period, the soldier may well be a volunteer and drawn from the working-class social groups that made up the music hall audience.

⁸⁴⁹ Kift 2.

⁸⁵⁰ Kift 2.

⁸⁵¹ Lycett 188.

⁸⁵² Kift 2.

⁸⁵³ Kift 2.

⁸⁵⁴ Kift 2.

Later and current social historians regard the music hall as rooted in popular, or mass culture rather than in class. Kift argues that most recent research into the medium: ‘has concentrated on...the music hall as a popular mode of expression: its language and meaning and the relationship between text and audience...Popular art is considered as central here, since it created social identities of self and other and formed a sense of belonging to a specific community and culture.’⁸⁵⁵ This comment could not be more germane in this context. Given its reception, ‘The Absent-Minded Beggar’ could be deemed as ‘popular’ in the music hall sphere and central to the creation of Kipling’s new representation of the soldier identity. Kipling’s interest in the music halls had spanned at least a decade by the time ‘The Absent-Minded Beggar’ was performed. Page notes its great success and remarks that ‘[i]t is unashamedly propagandist, toughly unsentimental, ironic and reproachful towards patriotic words unbacked by deeds’.⁸⁵⁶ It offers another aspect to Kipling’s soldier-portrayals and would have been a pertinent and appropriate topic for the working class, music hall audience. Since the poem was presented in so many other formats, it crossed additional social boundaries and reached those for whom attendance at a music hall concert was anathema, or indeed impossible. For example, a serving soldier writes from Ladysmith in 1900: ‘I haven’t yet read the Absent Minded Beggar, but we all hope to read it soon or perhaps to tune our quavering voices to Sullivan’s music’ (22/38 File 22/27 / Document 49).⁸⁵⁷

Archived cuttings from an undated review from either the *Daily Mail*, or the *Daily Chronicle* describe the audience for the performance of the work at which ‘Sir Arthur Sullivan personally conducted the orchestra’:

it has not been often that a music-hall audience has been so completely representative of the nation. Every grade of English society was

⁸⁵⁵ Kift 5.

⁸⁵⁶ Page 175.

⁸⁵⁷ A friend on active service in Ladysmith, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 20th November 1900 22/38.

represented in the house...People of every degree, but all having in common the passionate patriotism to which Kipling has given voice and the enthusiasm to do their part by the wives and children of the men who are “all of them doing their country’s work” (28/6, 1899-1902, 37).⁸⁵⁸

The headlines of this review contain hyperbolic language such as the ‘Extraordinary Scene At The Alhambra’ and the ‘Magnificent Reception of Sir Arthur Sullivan’ (28/6, 1899-1902, 37).⁸⁵⁹ The responses of the audience were to the four stanza, interrogative narrative. It asks whether, when they have overcome their patriotic and nationalistic fervour: ‘When you’ve shouted “Rule Britannia,” when you’ve/ sung “God Save the Queen,”/ When you’ve finished killing Kruger with your mouth’ they will match words to deeds and ‘kindly drop a shilling in my little tambourine’.⁸⁶⁰ The description of the performance indicates that Sullivan agreed with Kipling’s sentiments:

[i]t is to a soldier strain that Sir Arthur has set Mr. Kipling’s words – a soldier strain, yet with a certain indescribable touch of feeling which goes with the pleading sense of the verse. Then in the refrain the theme takes a swing and a lift which immediately captured the audience. They already knew the words by heart, and immediately they captured the tune, and even after the first verse the entire house took up the chorus. A great scene of enthusiasm followed the last repetition of the refrain...Then the house cheered for “Tommy Atkins” (28/6, 1899-1902, 37).⁸⁶¹

The soldier figure of this poem is loyal and dutiful. In an interesting use of noun, presumably not intended to be ironic, he is ‘a gentleman in khaki ordered South’.⁸⁶² In common with earlier Tommy Atkins representations, he remains an imperfect figure with ‘girls he married secret, asking no permission to’ and ‘more than rather likely there’s a kid’.⁸⁶³ The faults of the combatant are subsumed under his patriotism. He is

⁸⁵⁸ 28/6.

⁸⁵⁹ 28/6.

⁸⁶⁰ Rudyard Kipling, *Rudyard Kipling’s Verse: Definitive Edition* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982) 459.

⁸⁶¹ 28/6.

⁸⁶² Kipling (1982) 459.

⁸⁶³ Kipling (1982) 459.

‘out on active service’⁸⁶⁴(fig. 14). Whilst it is likely that some enthusiasm of the audience is generated and sustained from the camaraderie and patriotism of the convivial atmosphere of the music hall, it is fascinating to note that the crowd ‘cheered for “Tommy Atkins”’(28/6, 1899-1902, 37).⁸⁶⁵ This indicates progress from the early Victorian imagery of the wastrel-soldier.



Fig 14 A ‘gentleman in khaki ordered South’, from ‘The Absent Minded Beggar’
Ad.1.⁸⁶⁶

The democratic, volunteer status of the soldier is indicated by the refrain ‘Duke’s son—cook’s son—son of a hundred kings—’.⁸⁶⁷ Although the refrain alters in the four stanzas in terms of designated ‘son’, its repetitive nature remains and emphasises the concept of a common, classless, national purpose. An example from stanza two illustrates how

⁸⁶⁴ Kipling (1982) 459.

⁸⁶⁵ 28/6.

⁸⁶⁶ Adds 1-36/38.

⁸⁶⁷ Kipling (1982) 459.

prominent is this idea: 'Cook's son—Duke's son—son of a belted Earl—/ Son of a Lambeth publican—it's all the same to-day!'⁸⁶⁸ Every one of the men is 'doing his country's work'.⁸⁶⁹

In stanza two, the reader is enjoined not to criticise this Boer War Tommy Atkins: 'it ain't the time for sermons with the winter coming on'.⁸⁷⁰ Instead, the reader is to offer practical support for him and his family. Each stanza ends with the declamation 'pay—pay—pay!'.⁸⁷¹ Kipling's use of the exclamation mark draws attention to the line, presumably to encourage greater funds. Stanza three indicates the volunteer status of the men and the diverse backgrounds from which they come: '[H]e heard his country call,/ And his reg'ment didn't need to send to find him!'.⁸⁷² This model of a soldier is a hard-working breadwinner for his family: 'He chucked his job and joined it'.⁸⁷³ Those families and dependents left behind are numbered as 'families by thousands, far too proud to beg or speak'.⁸⁷⁴ They are not an undeserving underclass, too feckless to help themselves. They are independent and courageous, deserving of assistance because they do not claim it as a right. Kipling's command to his fellow citizens is 'the job before us all/ Is to help the home that Tommy's left behind him!'.⁸⁷⁵ This is a new stage in Kipling's recuperation of the soldier-portrait. In previous portrayals he criticises the views held by society and seeks to change them. He remarks upon the lack of societal care for his soldier-subject. 'The Absent-Minded Beggar' goes further because it requires active engagement between combatant and citizen. They are to

⁸⁶⁸ Kipling (1982) 460.

⁸⁶⁹ Kipling (1982) 459.

⁸⁷⁰ Kipling (1982) 459.

⁸⁷¹ Kipling (1982) 459.

⁸⁷² Kipling (1982) 460.

⁸⁷³ Kipling (1982) 460.

⁸⁷⁴ Kipling (1982) 460.

⁸⁷⁵ Kipling (1982) 460.

assist the soldier, because as a volunteer he is one of them and undertaking unpleasant, imperial tasks on their behalf. As stanza four states:

Let us manage so as, later, we can look him in the face,
 And tell him—what he'd very much prefer—
 That, while he saved the Empire, his employer saved his
 place,
 And his mates (that's you and me) looked out for *her*.⁸⁷⁶

Kipling succeeded in his aim of bringing to the attention of his readership the Boer War soldier-figure. Correspondence from Sir Arthur Sullivan indicates that he found the collaboration to be successful (appendix 28). In 'The Absent-Minded Beggar', Kipling uses a memorable and popular verse to inspire change and sympathy. Taken in conjunction with his 'Service Songs' he influences the portrayal of the soldier, but within an imperial context. The new ideas of societal compassion that he sought for the soldier are juxtaposed against his own. As a letter in 1935 suggests, he genuinely cares for his soldier-subject:

They told me you had been laid aside since the Boar War. That is a cruel long time to suffer, I pray hard that it will be made up to you later.... my reason for writing to you is to send you 3 Silver Tree Leaves with my name on them....If you come across another old soldier of that War you can give him one of them for luck. Keep the others for yourself (17/38 File 17/33 un-numbered document).⁸⁷⁷

However, despite this obvious preoccupation with the soldier and his image, the validity of the Boer War is not in doubt for Kipling:

We are very busy here trying to organize a volunteer corps. It's rather uphill work for the govt in spite of the war seem about as stiff-necked and slow to move as ever, but we hope after being----- allowed to spend our own money to get some good results after all. The war is going to do untold good to our army; and it has the merit of being the

⁸⁷⁶ Kipling (1982) 460.

⁸⁷⁷ Rudyard Kipling, "To Sergeant Stringer," 14 November 1935 17/38-K/P: Correspondence: M-Unidentified Addressees.

one war that has been directly fought on the plain issue of elementary political freedom for all white men....It's very funny to hear our critics telling us that we are done for & finished as a power – whereas we haven't yet begun to make war to any purpose. England is slowly waking up to her possibilities and when the war is ended will be a different land (14/38 File 14/46 Document VII).⁸⁷⁸

This chapter examines Kipling's new approach to his soldier-subject, with his perceived reputation as 'friend of the army' and his interest in the experience of soldiering. He knew the soldier and enjoyed direct contact with enlisted men. He could justify and humanise them, offering a realistic portrait of army life. Moreover, the Boer War verses discussed above placed the volunteer soldier within an overt imperial discourse. This appealed to a broad audience of readers who espoused the idea of an imperial Britain. Whilst the Boer War collection of verses appealed to the combatant and to his imperial audience and gave him commercial success, his additional stridency alienated liberals who disapproved of his imperialism. However despite criticism, much of his readership remained.

⁸⁷⁸ Rudyard Kipling, "To Lock and Meta [Lockwood De Forest and his wife]," 15 January 1900 14/38.

Chapter 6: Kipling and the Great War Soldier

Depicting ‘Tommy Atkins’ in the Great War

An essential element in Kipling’s writing was the recuperation of the image of the soldier. This chapter discusses Kipling’s imagery of the Great War combatant status of the enlisted man, based upon his previous representations of the British imperial and Boer War soldiers. This relates to the succeeding chapter which explores the soldiers’ depiction following death in combat. The concepts of live and dead combatants are inextricably linked in the Great War on a previously unparalleled scale, because ‘[i]n a rush, with the war, family history and national history came together in unprecedented ways’.⁸⁷⁹ The Boer War provided the first volunteer soldiers. Now, all of society was concerned in the welfare of the soldier because of these cross-class, nationwide volunteers and conscripts. Kipling’s Boer War benefit poem, ‘The Absent-Minded Beggar’ [1899], had presaged this idea in four stanzas which included the lines: ‘Duke’s job—cook’s job—gardener, baronet, groom,/ Mews or palace or paper-shop, there’s someone gone/ away!/ Each of ’em doing his country’s work’.⁸⁸⁰ The natural corollary of inclusive military service was that not only was the imagery of the soldier important, but *every death* was also of consequence. This required an appropriate, reverend and national response.

Helen Tripp argues of the Tommy Atkins figure that ‘the immense expansion in both the size of the army and public awareness of and ownership in its deeds meant that between 1914-18 his name attained a greater significance and depth of meaning’.⁸⁸¹ It

⁸⁷⁹ Jay Winter, “Forms of Kinship and Remembrance in the Aftermath of the Great War” in *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* eds., Jay Winter & Emmanuel Sivan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000b) 40.

⁸⁸⁰ Rudyard Kipling, *Rudyard Kipling’s Verse: Definitive Edition* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982) 460.

⁸⁸¹ Helen Tripp, “Mr Punch and Tommy Atkins: British Soldiers’ Social Identity During the First World War,” *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History* 4 (2002), 19 February 2009 <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/history/documents/4._tripp_mr_punch_and_tommy_atkins.pdf> 1.

was because the ordinary man enlisted for service that his action engendered public interest and concern in his subsequent experience. The imagery generated though this will be explored. The collection of poetry used in this exploration is Kipling's, *The Years Between*, published in 1919. This poetry is a 'quirky mixture of the emotional, cerebral and propagandist'.⁸⁸² David Gilmour states that *The Years Between* was regarded by Kipling as 'his most important collection'.⁸⁸³ In the context of this chapter, the 1919 publication date is as significant as the content. In the first edition a link to the Tommy Atkins of the Great War is made by use of an ink sketch of a resting soldier, reading and smoking. This image is on the dust jacket and the title page (fig. 15).

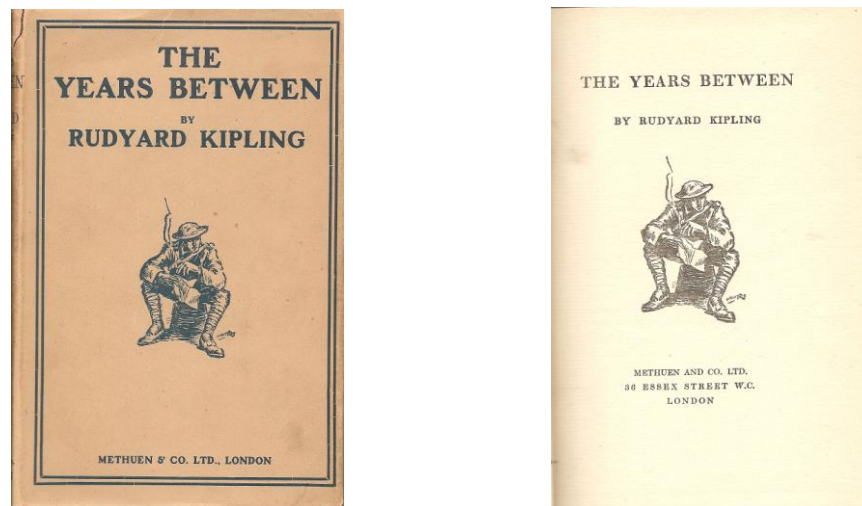


Fig. 15 Image of dust jacket and title page for *The Years Between* (1st edition).

Tripp believes that, although explorations of the differences between real soldiers and their representations have been undertaken by recent historians, the portrayal of Tommy Atkins in the Great War has been largely ignored.⁸⁸⁴ This reflects circumstances in 2002, the year in which her essay was published. However in 2005, Richard Holmes

⁸⁸² Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999) 471.

⁸⁸³ David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2003) x.

⁸⁸⁴ Tripp 1.

published *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918*.⁸⁸⁵ He explores aspects of the Tommy Atkins figure in wartime discussed by Tripp. However, Tripp offers the pertinent point that ‘[i]t has...yet to be fully considered that the “Tommy Atkins” so unquestioningly referred to in popular and academic histories was an artificial construct of wartime society’.⁸⁸⁶ Her essay seeks to prove the validity of this argument. Its importance lies in the idea that societal perceptions of the war provided a catalyst for development of the constructed Tommy Atkins figure.

Early depictions of Tommy Atkins were based partly on the restored imagery of the soldier that Kipling had generated throughout the previous decades. Kipling ‘encouraged a whole generation of officers to behave like the officers he admired. There is even a suggestion that although soldiers did not actually sound like Kipling when he wrote about them, they did soon afterwards’.⁸⁸⁷ Kipling provided foundations for the imagery of the Great War Tommy Atkins.

Thus several elements, some of which were new, converged to influence the wartime representation of the Tommy. By the beginning of the conflict Kipling had regenerated the soldier’s image, providing a sympathetic model with which many people engaged. Rapid growth in the numbers of enlisted men from every sector of society guaranteed a broad and sympathetic audience-‘reader’. The subsequent deaths of so many of these men sanctified them and ensured widespread ‘reading’ of their lives and actions, which was mediated and filtered through this loss.

Samuel Hynes suggests one of the new elements from which representation of the Great War soldier emerged, the combatant himself. From this source, two diametrically opposed representations are possible: ‘[t]he new soldiers came to war believing that

⁸⁸⁵ Richard Holmes, *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front 1914-1918* (London: Harper Perennial, 2005).

⁸⁸⁶ Tripp 1.

⁸⁸⁷ Richard Holmes, ‘Kipling’s Soldiers’ *Kipling Journal* 83.333 (Sept 2009): 22-29. This article was originally given as an address by Professor Holmes to the Kipling Society Annual Luncheon, 2009.

individual wills would have a role there, that what a man did – his decisions, his actions – would affect whether he lived or died.’⁸⁸⁸ It is the combatant’s unknowing approach to the war which is important. If each man enters the conflict with a belief in self-determination, ignorant of the circumstances that he might face, then this affects his self-portrayal. He does not expect to be merely a victim of fate. He may maintain that he is attempting an heroic undertaking. Kipling’s poem, ‘The Covenant’ [1914], illustrates this attitude: ‘We thought we ranked above the chance of ill./ Others might fall, not we, for we were wise’.⁸⁸⁹ (This poem was first published in Belfast, in ‘a special issue of *The Covenanter* magazine’ on the 20th May 1914. It illustrated Kipling’s opposition to the Irish Home Rule Bill.⁸⁹⁰ However, its inclusion later in *The Years Between* collection permits this Great War reading as a combatant’s narrative voice). The majority of these enlisted men emerged from cross-societal, or familial, backgrounds within which they were held in esteem, or affection. This too would influence the way in which they would represent themselves and offers a positive aspect to the self-portrayal of the Tommy in war.

Hynes argues that belief that the individual enlisted man could shape events was misplaced, because the industrialised and random weaponry used removed any chance of the soldier having power over his own destiny. His death was arbitrary and he was anonymous to his opponent.⁸⁹¹ For the combatant ‘[d]eath in war was no longer a fate you chose, for your cause or your country...it was something done to you, an accident, as impersonal as a plague’.⁸⁹² Such anonymity conflicts with notions of heroism. The absent civilian in ignorance, could romanticise the fighting and death of the soldier

⁸⁸⁸ Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers’ Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War* (London: Pimlico, 1998) 56.

⁸⁸⁹ Rudyard Kipling, *The Years Between* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1919) 13.

⁸⁹⁰ Lycett 440.

⁸⁹¹ Hynes (1998) 56.

⁸⁹² Hynes (1998) 70.

attributing heroic, noble circumstances to their actions and subsequent demise. This comforting scenario was denied to the eyewitness-combatant, as he observed and experienced mechanised carnage: '[m]en found themselves to be driven cogs in vast, insensitive, impersonal machines, stripped of will, morality, and dignity'.⁸⁹³ As Santanu Das observes: '[w]hat was traumatically modern about the war...was its mechanized nature: the triumph of material over men, the invisibility of the enemy and randomness of death...[L]ife now depended on the arbitrary direction of a shell, robbing the soldiers of any sense of agency or purpose.'⁸⁹⁴ War-time writing demonstrates that this conflict profoundly affected the men and influenced the combatant's self-portrayal. This offers the second, oppositional self-representation for the Tommy, evidenced by the prolific number of war poems, poets, writing and writers.

A review of Great War writing demonstrates how difficult it is to discover representations of the soldier-combatant, from any source, which are not intimately connected to the devastation, death and perceptions of 'martyrdom' wrought by the war. This is true of poetry and other writing, written and published from the earliest days of the conflict. Poems that emulate commonplace soldierly descriptions such as within *Barrack-Room Ballads* appear not to exist. Earlier portrayals of soldiers including many by Kipling, are within the martial, rather than war poetry genre. These depictions are not necessarily of combatants engaged in the processes of war with its ever-present risk of death, but soldiers who embrace a military lifestyle which despite its detrimental implications, may be satisfying. The difference is marked, particularly in the Great War. Fussell comments that Siegfried Sassoon observed 'that "[t]he man who really endured the [Great] War at its worst was everlastingly differentiated from

⁸⁹³ David Roberts, ed., *Minds at War: The Poetry and Experience of the First World War* (Burgess Hill: Saxon Books, 2005) 10.

⁸⁹⁴ Santanu Das, 'War Poetry and the Realm of the Senses: Owen and Rosenberg,' *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry*, ed., Tim Kendall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 75.

everyone except his fellow soldiers[']'.⁸⁹⁵ His depiction would be similarly differentiated.

In 'characteristic First World War verse...the body of the individual soldier is used to challenge the abstract heroism of the epic: poetry is refashioned as missives from the trenches'.⁸⁹⁶ Das implies that the portrayal of the soldier is overwhelmed by depiction of the horrific conflict. As Vivien Noakes states '[a]s the Great War progressed, war poetry as a genre underwent profound change'.⁸⁹⁷ Inevitably, reader response to this transformed genre and that which it portrayed underwent similar changes.

This engages with the now seen as apocryphal notion that soldiers took with them to war the romanticised poetry of Rupert Brooke and emerged as readers of the realism of Wilfred Owen. (De Groot and Stallworthy underline the mythical nature of this. According to De Groot: 'Rupert Brooke's romantic poetry was already old-fashioned at the time it was written'.⁸⁹⁸ Stallworthy states that before Owen's death in 1918 '[h]e lived to see only five [poems] in print').⁸⁹⁹ Brooke's sonnet 'The Soldier' [1915], evokes romantic imagery of death: 'If I should die/ think only this of me/ That there's some corner of a foreign field/ That is forever England',⁹⁰⁰ (fig. 16) and acknowledges that the ultimate sacrifice might be required. Hynes argues that men entered into combat with unrealistic ideals of self-determination, heroism, nobility of cause and glorification in death.

⁸⁹⁵ Tim Kendall, *Modern English War Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 42.

⁸⁹⁶ Das 77.

⁸⁹⁷ Vivien Noakes, 'War Poetry, Or the Poetry of War? Isaac Rosenberg, David Jones, Ivor Gurney,' *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry*, ed., Tim Kendall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 174.

⁸⁹⁸ Gerard J. DeGroot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War* (London: Longman Ltd., 1996) 244.

⁸⁹⁹ Jon Stallworthy, ed., *The Poems of Wilfred Owen* (London: Chatto & Windus Ltd., 1998) xix.

⁹⁰⁰ Geoffrey Keynes, ed., *Rupert Brooke: The Poetical Works* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970).



Fig. 16 Text from Brooke's 'The Soldier' on an Imperial war grave.

It is important to introduce another element in the portrayal of the soldiers and the opinions of the nation during the conflict. Rutherford and Roberts suggest that the nation wished to identify itself with imagery such as Brooke's. A 'cultural movement began to emerge which claimed to reveal a ["true England"]', largely composed of 'writers preoccupied with rural life'.⁹⁰¹ This group included G.K. Chesterton, Thomas Hardy, Edward Thomas, A.E. Housman, John Masefield and Rupert Brooke. The 'nostalgia in their poetry and prose'⁹⁰² and the acclamation with which Brooke's sonnet series was received, indicates regret 'for a passing life of rural peace and solidity [and] testified to a general disenchantment with everyday life.'⁹⁰³ Rutherford discusses the writing which emanated from the group: '[t]he symbolic geography they constructed of England as an Arcadian idyll gave a renewed political shape and meaning to

⁹⁰¹ Jonathan Rutherford, *Forever England: Reflections on Masculinity and Empire* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1997) 51.

⁹⁰² Rutherford (1997) 51.

⁹⁰³ Rutherford (1997) 51.

Englishness.’⁹⁰⁴ The Great War conflict was framed within the concept of imperial endeavour, defence of the empire and nation and ideals of ‘Englishness’. The important element of this is the idea of a rural idyll. This depiction of England, or Englishness, had little or no parallel with reality, because it omitted notions of England as a nation with huge centres of industry and concomitant urbanisation. Rutherford states that Edwardian society used ‘rural England as a symbol of the country’s unchanging essence.’⁹⁰⁵ This is limited enough in expression. However, it was combined with ‘[t]heir images and discourses of England and Englishness [which] originated in the rural narratives of the [“]South Country[”]; the cottages, meadows, woodlands and green rolling hills and hedgerows of Kent, Sussex and Surrey.’⁹⁰⁶ The representation of the nation was confined to a small, geographically specific area of countryside.

Therefore, huge numbers of men who enlisted in the Great War were prepared to defend and die for an idealised notion of England of which they had no experience. As well as those from industrialised centres, this included men whose heritage was not even English, or politics imperial: ‘[i]n Britain, which had experienced considerable social conflict during the decade preceding the war, the concept of [“]nation[”] proved a particularly effective rallying cry and unifying force.’⁹⁰⁷ The falsity of dying for an imperial England that most of the troops had never and would never know was unrecognised. At the heart of this discussion is the importance of empire and perceptions of English identity, defence of which was part of the psyche of the soldier, his self-portrayal and his representation by others in the Great War period. (The cultural expression of Englishness is a contested notion between academics, because there are so many variants of Englishness. However the pastoral expression of the

⁹⁰⁴ Rutherford (1997) 51.

⁹⁰⁵ Rutherford (1997) 51.

⁹⁰⁶ Rutherford (1997) 51.

⁹⁰⁷ George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 5.

Great War by poets and writers evokes for many one of the most powerful ideas of it.)⁹⁰⁸

Noakes suggests that '[y]ears of attrition in which men endured subhuman conditions...affected not only the bodies and minds but also the souls of those who witnessed and experienced it.'⁹⁰⁹ It is the unrelenting nature of the conflict, combined with shocking and costly campaigns to which Noakes refers. For example, a major impetus for change that influenced perspectives on the home-front and the battlefield was the brutal and futile Somme offensive of July 1916. This summer campaign with recruits from 'Kitchener's New [Volunteer] Armies'⁹¹⁰ was to be decisive. The 'attempt to break through the German lines by means of a massive infantry assault'⁹¹¹ resulted in carnage. As Gilbert comments: '[t]he fact that 20,000 British soldiers were killed on the first day of the Battle of the Somme is often recalled with horror.'⁹¹² The effects of these deaths of volunteer soldiers on a previously unimaginable scale (the average was deemed to be 20,000 deaths over a four-day period during the war),⁹¹³ was represented by a changing poetic and literary output with adjustments in the depictions of the soldier-combatant.

Tripp is cautious in her discussion of the image of the ordinary soldier that emerged during and after the war. She believes it to be from a biased source, since it is 'a representation formulated from middle-class attitudes and perceptions'.⁹¹⁴ These middle-class interpretations of Tommy Atkins were observational; lower-class soldiers

⁹⁰⁸ In addition to Rutherford and Robb, other texts which explore the implication of pastoral as motivation include Martin Stephen, *The Price of Pity: Poetry, History and Myth in the Great War* (London: Leo Cooper, 1996), Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1998) and Edna Longney, "War Pastorals," *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry*, ed., Tim Kendall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)Pp 461.

⁹⁰⁹ Noakes 174.

⁹¹⁰ Martin Gilbert, *First World War* (London: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1995) 216.

⁹¹¹ Gilbert 258.

⁹¹² Gilbert 541.

⁹¹³ Gilbert 541.

⁹¹⁴ Tripp 1.

observed and defined by their officers or middle-class counterparts, or presumed depictions by the non-combatant who has certain expectations of the behaviour of a lower-class Tommy.

Winter believes that '[t]he soldier-poet was in the end a romantic figure'.⁹¹⁵ This divides the soldiers into the commonplace, lower-class combatant as subject and the soldier who fights and writes. If Tripp is accurate, then the latter is middle class. His work reports and analyses all his observations and experiences, that which is experienced by his fellow soldiers and depictions of these men. As witness and narrator, he emerges from a social class whose writing and imagery provides the 'foundations of contemporary understandings'⁹¹⁶ about Tommy Atkins. This understanding includes experiential material that is unavailable to poets and writers such as Kipling, Hardy, Newbolt or Henley. The soldier-poet 'was the upholder of moral values, the truth-teller *par excellence*, the man who faced fear and death and spoke about them to the yet unknowing world'.⁹¹⁷ Tripp evidences 'the wealth of material written by the officer class as opposed to the number of texts readily available by men who served as private soldiers'.⁹¹⁸ She implies that it is partly the *quantity* of written material that makes the middle-class representation so dominant.

An examination of the poetic imagery of the war gives weight to her assertion. Kipling is representative of such appropriation. From the beginning, his influential portrayals emerged from a higher social standing than his soldier-subject. He undertook to share their company and reflect their lives and experiences, but he was not of their class. Given his influence in generating the image of Tommy Atkins he is a major, earlier culprit in the appropriation of the 'social identity' of the soldier by the

⁹¹⁵ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press/Canto, 2000a) 221.

⁹¹⁶ Tripp 1.

⁹¹⁷ Winter (2000a) 221.

⁹¹⁸ Tripp 1.

middle classes. Such domination of the enlisted soldier figure describes the situation as it had been for a long period of time. Tripp suggests that opposing characteristics were attributed to Tommy Atkins and that his image became a ‘mythologized’,⁹¹⁹ social construction, removed from the real soldier. Kipling can be accused of already engaging in such myth-making, for example with the use of inaccurate, or fake, dialect.

During the conflict ‘there were...times of ordinary war, when men performed their routine duties and nobody attacked and nobody died. Sometimes they felt moments of peace, enjoyed small pleasures, noticed and recorded a fine day...They saw and felt the horrors too; of course they did. But locally, and [*sic*] intermittently. Nobody lived at that pitch continuously.’⁹²⁰ In the periods when there was little or no conflict, the men found normality in their existence. This gave time to reflect and comment upon themselves and their fellow soldiers. Hynes suggests another reason why elements of normality might prevail: ‘in the trenches, civilians would lead civilians’.⁹²¹ This too influences the image of the combatant. To his soldier-companions, he is no longer perceived as the nineteenth century semi-vagrant, or an officer of a higher social class. Even to himself, he and his fellow soldiers represent ‘everyman’ in a ‘citizen-army’.

Tripp’s advances another aspect of the depiction of Tommy Atkins that requires mention. Her discussion of Great War imagery of the Tommy is by ‘a deconstruction of his popular iconography’.⁹²² She argues that ‘to understand how, why and with what result the social identity of ‘Tommy’ was appropriated by the middle-classes requires an analysis based upon a popular media pertaining to this social group.’⁹²³ Evidence is provided in the ‘narratives and descriptions contained within the wealth of literature

⁹¹⁹ Tripp 1.

⁹²⁰ Hynes (1998) 55.

⁹²¹ Hynes (1998) 43.

⁹²² Tripp 1.

⁹²³ Tripp 1.

produced during, or in response to, the Great War.⁹²⁴ Of this writing, the source that she believes to have been neglected is:

the stories, editorials and images of *Punch*, or the *London Charivari*⁹²⁵... This magazine, first published in July 1841 by Lemon and Mayhew, had initially reflected its creator's liberal ideals, and took a radical stance towards politics and authority. However, by the war years, *Punch* had shed its radicalism... and was primarily aimed at and purchased by the middle-classes. Its pages reveal a complex interplay between textual and visual analysis, news and commentary, contributed and commissioned features, which reveal not only a representation of middle-class understandings of 'Tommy', but also a discursive dialogue between the contradictory contentions and concerns of *Punch's* contributors.⁹²⁶

Alongside the representations of Tommy Atkins in *Punch* (fig. 17) and 'prolific appearances in the genre of advertising and adventure stories, he appeared as ["Old Bill"] in the drawings of Bruce Bairnsfather [*sic*], published in *The Bystander*' (fig. 18), which attained great popularity within the working class.⁹²⁷ This was a British, weekly, tabloid magazine. It featured sketches, short stories, reviews and topical material: '[p]ublished from Fleet Street, it was established in 1903 and ran until 1940 when it merged with Tatler'.⁹²⁸ On the 24th November 1915, *The Bystander* used a Bairnsfather' drawing in a special Christmas issue. It was a sell-out and enlisted men identified with the Bairnsfather' characters. Following this success in January 1916, forty-one Bairnsfather' drawings from the weekly magazine were published as *Fragments From France*. In total, *Fragments From France* appeared as a further eight new publications, the last in 1919.⁹²⁹ It is interesting to note the inclination of the combatant to engage with these soldierly representations. This illustrates the new,

⁹²⁴ Tripp 1.

⁹²⁵ This is the title of the publication. It was 'commonly referred to, both in the text itself and contemporary comment, merely as *Punch*' Tripp 15.

⁹²⁶ Tripp 1.

⁹²⁷ Tripp 2.

⁹²⁸ "Bruce Bairnsfather and Old Bill: Fragments From France," ed., J. Bristow, 2004, 9 February 2010 <<http://www.olebill.zoomshare.com/2.html>>

⁹²⁹ Bristow n.p.

multi-faceted imagery of Tommy Atkins that included Kipling's portrayals and augmented them. However a social divide is implied in this engagement, since Bristow comments that it was the enlisted men who embraced a working-class publication.



COMPANY OFFICER (DURING A LULL IN A PUSH): "WE DO
LOOK A RAGGED LOT OF SCARECROWS, DON'T WE,
SERGEANT?"
SERGEANT: "YES, SIR. I OFTEN THINKS TO MYSELF WHAT A
JOB WE'RE GOING TO HAVE GETTIN' MEN TRAINED UP TO
PEACE PITCH AGAIN AFTER THE WAR."

Fig. 17 Jennis, G., 'Unititled' in *Punch* 26.06.1918 p.404.⁹³⁰



Fig. 18 Bairnsfather [sic], B.,
"The Bystander's" *More Fragments from France*
(London, 1916).⁹³¹

Tripp concludes that the post-war 'representations of and elaborations upon the national character and social significance of 'Tommy Atkins' declined rapidly'.⁹³² She argues that:

⁹³⁰ Tripp 12.

⁹³¹ Tripp 11.

From an analysis of *Punch*, it may be contended that ‘Tommy Atkins’ had no independent character or voice, only the characteristics that the ‘nation’, or the purported ‘voices of the nation’ ascribed to him. Accordingly, ‘Tommy’ became a ‘mascot’ of the First World War, a plastic, versatile puppet who, in the hands of different cartoonists and writers, could be moulded to elucidate and give agency to matters of military, social, and national importance.⁹³³

She suggests that by the end of the war, Tommy Atkins is little more than a propaganda tool. To some extent, this might always have been the case. Kipling uses his depictions to shape societal opinion.

This chapter presents additional factors which influence the depiction of the Great War combatant. What is apparent is the breadth of the multi-faceted dialogue that had emerged. Kipling’s earlier recuperation of the soldier image was now rivalled by and combined with a number of other narratives, across other media, to an unprecedented extent. Some of the contributory narrative models were not new; however, they were presented with more depth. For the contemporary, early twentieth century audience, the Great War Tommy Atkins figure could be read from multiple perspectives. Therefore as this chapter examines Kipling’s soldier imagery, his wartime representations can be increasingly contrasted with other portrayals, not all of which emanate from the poetic and literary genres.

Examination of several poems in *The Years Between*, indicates that elegiac qualities noted as an overarching element of Hardy’s writing about the soldier become evident in Kipling’s 1919 collection. Kipling’s soldiers too are doomed and ‘tramping gloomily’ to an unavoidable demise.⁹³⁴ For example in Kipling’s poem, ‘Gethsemane’, even the title is a Biblical allusion to the events immediately preceding the crucifixion. (No specific date is attributed to this poem in *The Years Between*. The *Definitive Edition* of

⁹³² Tripp 10.

⁹³³ Tripp 10.

⁹³⁴ Kendall 26.

Kipling's poems notes that it was written between 1914-1918.)⁹³⁵ The poem infers unjust death of the 'innocent' enlisted man, who dies for the perceived 'sins' of others. His death has a redemptive quality for society. The allusion continues with the normality of military life in which: '[t]he officer sat on the chair,/ The men lay on the grass,/ And all the time we halted there' juxtaposed with a first person narrative, in which the Christ-like speaker states: 'I prayed my cup might pass—'.⁹³⁶ This petition is enacted in 'Picardy' which symbolises the Garden of Gethsemane.⁹³⁷ As with Christ, for the soldier-petitioner the 'cup' remains as he declares that '[i]t didn't pass—it didn't pass—/ It didn't pass from me.'⁹³⁸ Unlike Christ, this 'cup' represents desolation, hopelessness and death with no covenant of subsequent resurrection, or divine glory. The perceived redemptive qualities of the death are through the subject's total extinction.

The repeated use of the caesura and the refrain compels the reader to recognise that this is a soldier who does not desire to fight, or to die. Christ pleads with God⁹³⁹ and the implication is that the soldier too appeals to a 'higher authority'. In common with Christ, the intransigent will of this omnipotent authority compels the soldier to confront a terrifying fate and horrific death when: 'It didn't pass from me./ I drank it when we met the gas'.⁹⁴⁰ Kipling's previously practical representations of the soldier become bleak, as he embraces a fundamental and symbolic religious narrative of unselfish sacrifice and resurrection, one of the most important tenets of the Christian faith. The lexis and syntax engage with standard English and combine with absence of dialect or

⁹³⁵ Kipling (1982) 98.

⁹³⁶ Kipling (1919) 85.

⁹³⁷ 'Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."' *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Matt. 26.36.

⁹³⁸ Kipling (1919) 86.

⁹³⁹ '[H]e fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."' *The Holy Bible New International Version*, Matt. 26.39.

⁹⁴⁰ Kipling (1919) 86.

accent which might distract from the concept. The normalities of soldierly existence within the *Barrack-Room Ballads* and *The Five Nations* are supplanted.

It is paradoxical that Hardy's poem, 'Men Who March Away' [1914], embraces Kiplingesque sentiments, just as Kipling's Great War soldier verse engages with Hardy's dismal imagery. This seems particularly true under the original, animated title of publication in *The Times*, 'Song of the Soldiers'.⁹⁴¹ In the five stanza, first-person narrative the speaker declares:

In our heart of hearts believing
 Victory crowns the just,
 And that braggarts must
 Surely bite the dust.⁹⁴²

Whilst the rhyme and the concluding line are unsatisfactory, in representing the soldier the personal nature of the speaker's imperial and military sentiments is explicit. Hardy's soldier evokes volunteers who 'well see what we are doing'.⁹⁴³ The motives of these men are clear to them, whilst others who witness their departure are criticised as 'some may not see—/ Dalliers as they be—'.⁹⁴⁴ In echoes of Newbolt's 'Drake's Drum'[1896], the speaker believes of himself and his comrades that 'England's need are we;'.⁹⁴⁵ This is a proud combatant, one of the willing 'Men who march away'.⁹⁴⁶ The speaker challenges the observer:

Is it a purblind prank, O think you,

Friend with the musing eye,

⁹⁴¹ This was 5 Sept. 1914 Ian McNaghten Parsons, ed., *Men Who March Away: Poems of the First World War* (London: The Hogarth Press/Chatto & Windus Ltd., 1987) 32.

⁹⁴² Parsons 32.

⁹⁴³ Parsons 32.

⁹⁴⁴ Parsons 32.

⁹⁴⁵ Parsons 32.

⁹⁴⁶ Parsons 32.

Who watch us stepping by
 With doubt and dolorous sigh?
 Can much pondering so hoodwink you!⁹⁴⁷

Here it is the witness to the departure of the men, not the volunteer, who feels the weight of inevitable fate. In stanza four, far from requiring that the ‘cup’ of grief and fear be removed, Hardy’s combatants ‘Press we to the field ungrieving’.⁹⁴⁸ The stanza continues with the declaration that since ‘Victory crowns the just.’, the speaker is able to ‘[leave] all that here can win us’.⁹⁴⁹ For the speaker, the morality of the cause overrides the attraction of home. These sentiments within the five stanzas answer the question posed twice as the poem begins: ‘What of the faith and fire within us/ Men who march away?’.⁹⁵⁰ Hardy enquires about their level of commitment and bravery. He receives an unequivocally positive response. His soldiers are ‘men who are brave and strong’,⁹⁵¹ not men who beg for release.

Some of Kipling’s early war poetry requires discussion here. He published the poem, ‘For All We Have And Are’ in *The Times* on the 2 September 1914.⁹⁵² It later appeared in *The Years Between* collection. He exhorts the reader to ‘Stand up and take the war,’ because ‘The Hun is at the gate!’⁹⁵³ Even the title prompts preservation of society as it is known to Kipling and his readers. This continues into the first stanza: ‘For all we have and are,/ For all our children’s fate’.⁹⁵⁴ Individuals need to recognise their part: ‘[o]nly ourselves remain/ To face the naked days’ as the nation fights against a resolute enemy: ‘Once more the nations go/ To meet and break and bind/ A crazed and driven

⁹⁴⁷ Parsons 32.

⁹⁴⁸ Parsons 32.

⁹⁴⁹ Parsons Pp 32.

⁹⁵⁰ Parsons 32.

⁹⁵¹ Dominic Hibberd and John Onions, eds., *The Winter of the World: Poems of the Great War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd., 2008) 7.

⁹⁵² Hibberd and Onions 9.

⁹⁵³ Kipling (1919) 21.

⁹⁵⁴ Kipling (1919) 21.

foe'.⁹⁵⁵ It is significant that this poem precedes 'Gethsemane', both chronologically and within *The Years Between* collection. This explains the apparent contradiction of sentiment.

Kipling's Great War representation of the serving soldier developed marked differences to his previous portrayals. This is important as it indicates a shift in perspective. Undoubtedly this shift was due to the personal tragedy of the loss of his son John, in 1915. This will be discussed in the next chapter. It also indicates that Kipling and society at large acknowledged the dreadful circumstances in which the soldier was forced to exist and die: '[b]ecause the war on the Western Front was stationary most of the time, the dead were densely and continuously present on the front lines; troops lived in a world of corpses'.⁹⁵⁶ (fig. 19).



Fig. 19 Remains of a trench system at Hill 62, Sanctuary Wood.

From the earliest days of the conflict men had to contend with the 'first sight of the dead [a]s a fundamental part of the soldiers' tale, being as it is the extreme case of

⁹⁵⁵ Kipling (1919) 22.

⁹⁵⁶ Hynes (1998) 68.

war's unfamiliarity for civilian soldiers'.⁹⁵⁷ As such circumstances became public knowledge and combined with lengthy lists of casualties and death, Kipling's continued engagement with Tommy Atkins was mediated through the influence of the posthumous soldier figure. It is engagement with the image of the Great War soldier in death, within the context of this lethal imperial conflict that remains to be explored.

This chapter explores the shift in perspective of the reputation of the enlisted man and the subsequent effect on Kipling's own reputation. During the Great War, the soldier became linked to everyman and to every family history as the number of volunteer soldiers within an expanding army increased rapidly. Cross-societal concern about the soldier emerged and Kipling engaged with this. Tripp argues that Tommy Atkins is a constructed image and a propaganda tool used to great effect to shape public opinion. She also discusses the multi-faceted and competitive representation of the soldier with which Kipling had to contend during this era. However, whilst he too was guilty of appropriation of the Tommy Atkins image, he wrote with an inherent sympathy for the combatant who experienced the new savagery of the Great War which differentiated them from other, previous combatants. Presumably commercial motives were of some concern to Kipling: the 'everyman-soldier' would be absorbed by an appreciative audience. However, his overwhelming sympathy for the soldier is self-evident. His own reputation and that of the soldier became inextricably linked to such an extent that, as has been proposed, the soldier-subject mimicked Kipling's writing.

⁹⁵⁷ Hynes (1998) 67.

Chapter 7: Poet of the Bereaved

The ‘Cult of the Fallen Soldier’⁹⁵⁸: Tommy Atkins in Death

The intensity and barbarity of the Great War ensured that representation of the soldier figure became inter-connected with new consideration of the enlisted man as ‘everyman’ and deep emotions of personal and national loss. The dead soldier, during and after the 1914-18 war, occupied a new sphere in the national consciousness in ‘the cult of the fallen soldier’⁹⁵⁹. Previously ‘the common soldier was for the most part treated as part of an anonymous collectivity....[T]he First World War changed all that, giving equal honor to all of the dead.’⁹⁶⁰ The volunteer and conscript soldiers emanated from and represented ‘everyman’, with a special status given to the dead: ‘[a]ll over Europe in the interwar years, people had to live with the shadow of war. The dead were there, in one way or another, living among the living’.⁹⁶¹ In 1920, a bereaved couple thanked Kipling for his endeavours on their behalf: ‘We beg to tender our sincerest thanks for the Kindness [*sic*] and trouble you have taken regarding the additional inscription on the headstone of our son’s grave.’ (21/38 File 21/3 /Document C).⁹⁶² Kipling’s feelings of bereavement were intense. He described bereavement as ‘the woe that never seemed to end, “the immortal woe”’.⁹⁶³ His empathy enabled engagement with the couple and with the broader societal perspective.⁹⁶⁴ In 1917, King George V ‘requested Rudyard’s help in redrafting his letters to bereaved families of

⁹⁵⁸ George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) 80.

⁹⁵⁹ Mosse 80.

⁹⁶⁰ Mosse 49.

⁹⁶¹ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press/Canto, 2000a) 144.

⁹⁶² Mr and Mrs A.W. Weller, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 10 August 1920 21/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Public.

⁹⁶³ William B. Dillingham, *Rudyard Kipling: Hell and Heroism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 101.

⁹⁶⁴ Dillingham 101.

servicemen.’⁹⁶⁵ The previous ‘wording was considered [“]very bald[”], according to Lord Derby at the War Office’.⁹⁶⁶ This is illustrated by correspondence to Kipling:

At the present time when a letter goes to the next of kin of anybody who has been killed, the wording is very bald....One wants to put in something to the effect that the person to whom he is writing should be told that “he whose loss you mourn died in the noblest of causes and that the Country will be ever grateful to him for the sacrifice he has made” (21/38 File 21/11 /Document M1).⁹⁶⁷

Kipling could provide language that was appropriate, as part of a new perspective on the deceased soldier.

According to Edmund Blunden, in his introduction to Philip Longworth’s history of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission⁹⁶⁸, prior to the nineteenth century the burial and remembrance of any ordinary soldier who fell in battle was an unceremonious exercise. Blunden cites the battle of Waterloo: ‘little was done there [in commemoration] and...Thackeray indignantly commented: the ordinary soldier had been “shovelled into a hole...and so forgotten”’.⁹⁶⁹ Hardy reflects this in his poem, ‘Drummer Hodge’. The place of the dead, enlisted soldier was as lowly as his position in life in Victorian society.

Similar compassion for the bereaved that Kipling displays in his writing during and after the Great War period, appears in his earliest work. For example, bereavement is explored in ‘The Grave of the Hundred Head’, from the ‘other verses’ section of the *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses*, published in 1886. (Its review in *Longman’s*

⁹⁶⁵ Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 485.

⁹⁶⁶ Lycett 485.

⁹⁶⁷ Lord Derby at the War Office/ Graves Commission, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 21 November 1917 21/38.

⁹⁶⁸ Published in 2003, *The Unending Vigil: A History of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission* is the only published history of the C.W.G.C. (originally the Imperial War Graves Commission). Other unpublished sources include letters at the Maidenhead headquarters of the Commission and correspondence between Kipling and Fabian Ware in the Kipling Archive at the University of Sussex.

⁹⁶⁹ Philip Longworth, *The Unending Vigil: A History Of The Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 2003) xx.

Magazine was the first that Kipling had ever received in a British periodical).⁹⁷⁰ The poem discusses the death of a young Subaltern⁹⁷¹ in combat. He is mourned by the Indian regiment under his command: ‘the men of the First Shikaris’.⁹⁷² The poem is imperialistic and can be read on several levels, only some of which apply here. It draws upon the expectations of the Anglo-Indian audience, as in the portrayal of the vengeful savagery of the indigenous troops who ‘[s]houted and smote and slew,/...[and] Butchered the folk who flew’.⁹⁷³ However simultaneously, the language portrays honour, fidelity, justice and deep bereavement. The Indian soldiers: ‘men of an alien race—’ are combatants who ‘wept for their dead Lieutenant’.⁹⁷⁴ They then ‘made a [cenotaph]⁹⁷⁵ in his honour’.⁹⁷⁶ The grief of the men is profound and affects their future actions.

The first stanza repeats as the last and provides a crucial aspect to the poem. The stanzas depict the ‘*widow in sleepy Chester/ Who weeps for her only son*’.⁹⁷⁷ The repetition emphasises the mother’s grief. Further weight is added because the stanzas are italicised. The poignant imagery foreshadows the tragedy of the Great War, when unprecedented numbers of families confronted untimely bereavements. In common with the ‘*widow in sleepy Chester*’,⁹⁷⁸ mourning by these families occurs without a body or the possibility of funeral rites. Mediated through a post-Great War reading, the

⁹⁷⁰ Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985)163.

⁹⁷¹ ‘Subaltern’ Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995 a commissioned officer below the rank of Captain in certain armies esp[ecially] the British.

⁹⁷² Rudyard Kipling, *Departmental Ditties And Other Verses* (London: George Newnes Ltd., 1899) 83.

⁹⁷³ Rudyard Kipling, *Departmental Ditties And Other Verses* (Calcutta, London & Bombay: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1892) 83.

⁹⁷⁴ Kipling (1892) 83.

⁹⁷⁵ Kipling uses the word ‘*samādh*’. The glossary in the 1892 edition notes the term as ‘cenotaph’. The translation is inaccurate, since according to the poem the monument was ‘[a] mark for his resting place.’ Kipling (1892) 83. ‘Cenotaph’ Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995 is a monument honouring a dead person or persons buried elsewhere.

⁹⁷⁶ Kipling (1892) 83.

⁹⁷⁷ Kipling (1899) 83.

⁹⁷⁸ Kipling (1899) 83.

geographical location of the ‘widow’⁹⁷⁹ has significance, since it epitomises an idyllic, peaceful England. This emphasises the unforeseen nature of the sacrifice of the enlisted everyman-Tommy. (In the period between publication of ‘The Grave of the Hundred Head’ and the Great War, the death of enlisted men was discussed by Kipling in other poems. For example, in “‘Soldier, Soldier” (1890) [*sic*], “the dead they cannot rise,” and as he argued in “The Bees and the Flies” (1909) [*sic*] with some of the most repelling imagery to be found in any of his works, only decay...follows death’.)⁹⁸⁰

Kipling’s role within the War Graves Commission is discussed later. It ‘kept vividly before him the sheer magnitude of Britain’s loss of life in the war and fed his already obsessive concern with death and with the hell that the bereaved must endure’.⁹⁸¹ Kipling acknowledges that such ‘hell’ was not merely a British concern. Death of the Indian combatant is explored in the poem, ‘Mesopotamia’ [1917],⁹⁸² in *The Years Between*. The strong sentiments of the poem are illustrated by Lycett’s comment that it was offered to the *Daily Telegraph* however, the newspaper deemed the poem to be ‘too hard-hitting and it was printed by the *Morning Post* in July [1917]’.⁹⁸³ Evidence of Kipling’s personal interest in the Indian combatant is in a letter written by him in 1915. He enjoys a visit to wounded Indian troops: ‘I’ve been down at Brighton looking at the Indian wounded and having a lovely time with the Punjabis. The little *Larrai* [noted by Pinney as ‘fighting’ – Kipling originally noted it as ‘battle’] has filled them with great respect for the manners of sahibs when they fight.’⁹⁸⁴ (appendix 29).

‘Mesopotamia’ is Kipling’s angry and independent response to reports into ‘the military reverses which culminated in General Townshend’s surrender to the Turkish

⁹⁷⁹ Kipling (1899) 83.

⁹⁸⁰ Dillingham 157.

⁹⁸¹ Dillingham 147.

⁹⁸² Rudyard Kipling, *The Years Between* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1919) 65.

⁹⁸³ Lycett 470.

⁹⁸⁴ Rudyard Kipling, “To Colonel Lionel Charles Dunsterville,” 24 February 1915, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 4: 1911-19*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1999) 286-287.

army at Kut-el-Amara in early 1915.⁹⁸⁵ The surrender resulted in ‘a veritable death march...[in which] [t]he soldiers captured at Kut, nearly twelve thousand in all, British and Indian alike, were marched northward without any concern whatsoever for their well-being, or for their helpless status as prisoners-of-war.’⁹⁸⁶ The knowledge of this catastrophe and the treatment meted out to the men infuriated Kipling who ‘was incensed at the incompetence of the responsible authorities in Simla, which had caused the unnecessary deaths of thousands of Indian troops’.⁹⁸⁷

In the first of the six stanzas of ‘Mesopotamia’, Kipling’s description of the combatant reflects his admiration of them. They are ‘resolute,...young,/...eager and whole-hearted’.⁹⁸⁸ Stanza two depicts them as ‘strong men/ coldly slain’ and indicates injustice and neglect of soldiers who were ‘[i]n sight of help denied from day to day’.⁹⁸⁹ The colon at the end of this line emphasises his point, by creating a break in the reading. Lycett comments that Kipling ‘attacked the generals [“]who left them thriftily to die in their own dung[”]’.⁹⁹⁰ In a damning indictment of those in charge, Kipling asks in stanza three: ‘But the idle-minded overlings who quibbled while they died,/ Shall they thrust for high employments as of old?’⁹⁹¹ In stanza four the condemnation continues: ‘[h]ow softly but how swiftly they have sidled back to power’.⁹⁹² In the following, closing line a rhetorical question infers a conspiracy: ‘By the favour and contrivance of their kind?’⁹⁹³ The first three stanzas depict the soldier-subject in the first two lines and criticise the authorities in the third and fourth. The three remaining stanzas are concerned with vitriolic judgements of the ‘slothfulness that wasted and the arrogance/

⁹⁸⁵ Lycett 470.

⁹⁸⁶ Martin Gilbert, *First World War* (London: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1995) 247.

⁹⁸⁷ Lycett 470.

⁹⁸⁸ Kipling (1919) 65.

⁹⁸⁹ Kipling (1919) 65.

⁹⁹⁰ Lycett 470.

⁹⁹¹ Kipling (1919) 66.

⁹⁹² Kipling (1919) 66.

⁹⁹³ Kipling (1919) 66.

that slew'.⁹⁹⁴ Kipling's fury is evident in a poem depicting betrayal of the men by an uncaring elite, whose experience following the surrender was in such contrast to the enlisted soldiers. His concern remained as the war years receded. In 1927, Kipling informed General Dunsterville: 'I was at the unveiling of the Memorial to the Indian missing and dead at Neuve Chapelle the other day;'.⁹⁹⁵ (fig. 20).



Fig. 20 The Indian Monument at Neuve Chapelle.

(One dilemma facing Kipling as his writing denounced the establishment and its policies, was that he appears condemned through establishment and imperial association.)

One aspect of 'Mesopotamia' is that it could be a close reading of Tommy Atkins and criticism of his treatment. For example, in Kipling's opening part-line: 'They shall not return to us'.⁹⁹⁶ If Kipling's poem is examined without the appropriate context, background or even title, it is difficult to agree with Lycett's assertion that the Indian

⁹⁹⁴ Kipling (1919) 67.

⁹⁹⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "To Major General Lionel Charles Dunsterville," 20 November 1927, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 5: 1920-30*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004b) 393-394.

⁹⁹⁶ Kipling (1919) 65.

Army combatant alone is the victim-subject. British troops were also casualties of the appalling treatment. As Gilbert illustrates, a higher proportion of British Tommies died on the forced marches following the surrender. Probably, Kipling had these men in mind as he composed his poem. A careless reading of the ambiguous beginning of the final stanza, in which Kipling states that ‘their death could not/ undo—/ The shame that they have laid upon our race:’⁹⁹⁷ hints at criticism of a non-British subject, but by recombining the lines within the poem the subject remains the military and political leadership.

Dillingham states that ‘Angus Wilson argues that Kipling’s experience with the devastating impact of grief can be traced as far back as the death of a younger brother in 1870 and to that of Captain Holloway in 1874’⁹⁹⁸ and that this illustrates the intense feelings of bereavement that Kipling felt throughout his lifetime. In addition to the deaths of his parents in 1910 and 1911, Kipling suffered the traumatic losses of his eldest daughter, Josephine in 1899 and his son John, in 1915. The cause and impact of John Kipling’s death is of great concern to this chapter.

On the 28th April 1920, Kipling spoke at the unveiling of the War Memorial near to his home at Bateman’s. The sincerity and depth of his feelings are undoubted: ‘We all know grief cannot be cheated. It must run its natural course. But after the first pain of our sorrow has abated there is consolation in the thought that all the world lies under the same grief as ours — as all the world does’ (28/9, 1907-1935, 34).⁹⁹⁹ This implies Kipling’s belief in a universal bond of bereavement that would engender societal and international empathy. He recognises the sacrifice of the combatant: ‘[T]he men who saved us paid a heavy price’ (28/9, 1907-1935, 34).¹⁰⁰⁰ However, his preoccupation is

⁹⁹⁷ Kipling (1919) 67.

⁹⁹⁸ Dillingham 101.

⁹⁹⁹ 28/9-Speeches 1907-1935.

¹⁰⁰⁰ 28/9.

not solely with their deaths. His speech acknowledges the unprecedented conditions endured by these men during active service and suggests that depicting such circumstances is impossible: 'No words can give any idea of the life they lived during the war...[and] there is a danger that in the many present concerns of peace we may neglect to learn and understand the full stretch of their heroism and the unequalled endurance that was the background to their heroism' (28/9, 1907-1935, 34).¹⁰⁰¹ The second half of his speech is poignant and addresses Kipling's concerns with the dangers of national amnesia regarding the soldier, as the events of the war and the role of the enlisted man within it became part of history. The sentiments are personal, yet his speech echoes the refrain, 'Lest we forget',¹⁰⁰² from 'Recessional' [1897], as a warning to society. He reinforces this idea: 'When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come what mean these stones, they will surely let their children know how the mercy of God and the bravery of their own dead saved England' (28/9, 1907-1935, 34).¹⁰⁰³

The location of the memorial is a constant, visible reminder: 'It seems to me wise...that the memorial should have been placed in the spot where it stands' (28/9, 1907-1935, 34).¹⁰⁰⁴ He argues that 'it is specially right that this generation and its successors on going in and out of the house of God should step a little out of the smooth path to pay reverence and homage to those who offered themselves as a sacrifice for their own land' (28/9, 1907-1935, 34).¹⁰⁰⁵ The presence of the memorial assures continuity of remembrance, the most essential element of which is remembrance of the Tommy.

¹⁰⁰¹ 28/9.

¹⁰⁰² Rudyard Kipling, *The Five Nations* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1903) 214.

¹⁰⁰³ 28/9.

¹⁰⁰⁴ 28/9.

¹⁰⁰⁵ 28/9.

The Enlistment and Death of John Kipling

In 1936, Hugh Poynter wrote an obituary about his cousin, Rudyard. Published over twenty years after John Kipling's death, it reminds Kipling's audience that the impetus behind his obsession with the dead soldier was driven by personal loss: 'On my commenting on the loveliness of his Elizabethan home and garden [Bateman's is Jacobean], and all that had made for success, [Kipling] said sadly, "Ghosts; all full of ghosts."' (29/38 File 29/5 Un-numbered document).¹⁰⁰⁶ The article emphasises the centrality of John's death: 'Of late years Kipling's health had been failing...It is sad to think that his later years were overshadowed with gloom. Physical pain, and the loss of his only son,...which he found hard to accept, all troubled a mind of extraordinary sensitiveness' (29/38 File 29/5 Un-numbered document).¹⁰⁰⁷

The circumstances of John Kipling's enlistment, service and death are discussed in all of Kipling's major biographies. These factors are so crucial to a post-war reading of Kipling and his work that mention is made in many lesser biographies, articles and addresses. In most works, the period prior to John's death, as well as post-bereavement, receives scrutiny. This is for at least two reasons. Firstly, from the outbreak of war Kipling's imperial and national affinities convinced him actively to persuade men to enlist. In these early days Kipling was energetic: 'He made speeches;...he urged Curzon, the Chancellor of Oxford, to close down the university and give its undergraduates military training'.¹⁰⁰⁸ Even though recruitment numbers were vast, the absence of conscription annoyed him because 'the voluntary system allowed the ["shirkers"]...to enjoy a ["good time with the other fellows' jobs and the

¹⁰⁰⁶ 'Rudyard Kipling a Personal Appreciation' *Sydney Morning Herald* 25 Jan. 1936. 29/38-K/P: Loose Cuttings.

¹⁰⁰⁷ 29/38.

¹⁰⁰⁸ David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2003)249.

other fellows' girls[']'.¹⁰⁰⁹ John did not die until the autumn of 1915, so in the first year of the war Kipling's fervour to recruit was not overshadowed by his loss.

Kipling was helping to create the new everyman-Tommy Atkins figure, just as his previous work had created other influential depictions of the soldier. The language he uses in this Great War recruitment drive engages with the positive, heroic portrait of the soldier that he had previously attempted. As he states in the fourth stanza of his 1914 poem, 'For All We Have and Are':

No easy hope or lies
Shall bring us to our goal,
But iron sacrifice
Of body, will, and soul.
There is but one task for all—
One life for each to give.¹⁰¹⁰

The pauses generated by the punctuation used to end the last three lines here, indicate the consideration that Kipling requires for ideas of the volunteer's noble sacrifice.

This leads to the second reason for interest in the pre-death period. Kipling's son was caught up in the intense recruitment. This included pressure from his father. As Caroline Kipling justifies to her mother, when asked how she found the fortitude to allow John to enlist: 'There is nothing else to do. The world must be saved from the German who will worse than kill us all if he is allowed a chance and one can't let one's friends' and neighbours' sons be killed in order to save us and our son'.¹⁰¹¹ This justification required great resolution by Caroline. She and her mother were American and as yet the war did not engage the American military as a whole. Probably, both women resented John's forthcoming involvement in this 'foreign' conflict, especially

¹⁰⁰⁹ Gilmour 249.

¹⁰¹⁰ Kipling (1919) 23.

¹⁰¹¹ Lycett 455.

given the apprehensions that they must have experienced regarding his fate. Caroline implies concealed resentment by juxtaposition of the terms ‘one’ and ‘us’ when she discusses the probable deaths of her young acquaintances. She distances the sons of others by her terminology, whilst drawing her own son into an intimate family circle.

Days after war broke out Kipling returned from holiday and ‘his first priority was to arrange a commission for his son, who was not quite 17’.¹⁰¹² John failed the medical examination: ‘I took John over to Maidstone yesterday (for commission) and they turned him down for eyes. Past as physically fit in every other way.’¹⁰¹³ (This failure was not the first. The previous year, in an attempt to embark on a military career, the boy had unsuccessfully undergone a similar examination: ‘he had inherited his father’s bad eye-sight. Kipling...hoped that his son might fool the examiners by wearing pince-nez rather than glasses’.)¹⁰¹⁴ Although Kipling’s physical inadequacies precluded his enlistment in the armed forces, because ‘Army life...had an indelible attraction for him, and where he himself had failed to tread he destined his son, John, to follow’.¹⁰¹⁵ Despite having witnessed John’s abortive attempts to enlist, Kipling believed that ‘[t]he Hun was at the gate, and the youth of England must answer the call’.¹⁰¹⁶ Convinced that the ‘Army was being pedantic, he then approached the aged Lord Roberts, who obliged him by obtaining a commission for John in the Irish Guards’.¹⁰¹⁷ Lord Roberts writes to Kipling in September 1914: ‘I will gladly nominate John for the Irish Guards if that Regiment will suit him. I ask, because I am not sure whether you would like to have [?] him the Guards [*sic*]. – If you would rather not, no doubt I could get him

¹⁰¹² Gilmour 248.

¹⁰¹³ Rudyard Kipling, “To H. A. Gwynne,” 18 August 1914, Pinney (1999) 252-252.

¹⁰¹⁴ Gilmour 249.

¹⁰¹⁵ Harry D. Potter, ‘Rudyard Kipling and the First World War’ *Kipling Journal* 74.296 (Dec 2000): 19-43. This was originally given as a lecture to the Kipling Society in London, April 2000.

¹⁰¹⁶ Potter 22.

¹⁰¹⁷ Gilmour 249.

nominated for some other Regiment' (18/38 File 18/2 Document 11) (appendix 30).¹⁰¹⁸

The Kiplings must have felt concern over John after all, a brutal war was underway and the boy was about to engage in it. However, Kipling's pride in his military son was palpable. A letter written a month after the war began, gives insight into his feelings. It demonstrates Kipling's voyeuristic delight in John's new military experience and the young man's involvement with his subordinates:

Saturday came John in full canonicals...It was a changed John in many respects but all delightful. A grave and serious John with an adorable smile and many stories of "his" men...The Irish Guards I gather are racially and incurably mad – which of course suits J[ohn] down to the ground...I am immensely pleased with our boy.¹⁰¹⁹ (fig. 21)



Fig. 21 John Kipling in 'full canonicals'— the uniform of the Irish Guards.

¹⁰¹⁸ Lord Roberts at Englemere, Ascot, "To Rudyard Kipling," 2 September 1914 18/38-K/P: Correspondence: Personal and Social-General.

¹⁰¹⁹ Rudyard Kipling, "To Elsie Kipling," 28 September 1914, Pinney (1999) 257-258.

Kipling's terminology regarding John's 'men' is interesting. From the military perspective, his description that they are all 'racially and incurably mad' suggests soldiers whose bravery borders on the reckless. Conversely, if Kipling is not using irony, then he excludes these soldiers from his positive portrayals of Tommy Atkins and his comment is racist and hostile. (The latter reading is possible since '[t]he more Rudyard was aware of Ireland, the more vitriolic he became about ["the Celt"]'.¹⁰²⁰ Kipling suggests an harmonious relationship between his son and his subordinates, which implies that John did not share his father's opinion. However, Kipling does not state the origin of his pejorative description, so it is possible that it came from John.)

His admiration of his son is exemplified by a later note: '[J]ust in with news of John's final inspection and the success of it...I am very proud' (13 (8-20)/ 38 File 13/17 and 13/18 Documents 211 & A.6).¹⁰²¹ Kipling ensures that John understands his feelings, as letters dated spring and summer 1915 indicate. In the first, Kipling shows preoccupation with the progress of the conflict and the unpalatable circumstances of John's military life: 'as I lay awake wrestling with "conflicting reports from various channels" I reviewed the facts and surroundings of your present life – how damnably and unrelievedly dull the surroundings were and what a wet and grey & muddy and depressing existence it was in itself' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 300).¹⁰²² Kipling illustrates his pride in John's endurance. Of note is Kipling's determination to communicate immediately with his son: 'I felt exceedingly proud of the way you'd stuck it without yapping. So I made a resolve that I'd write and tell you so in the morning' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 300).¹⁰²³ Kipling empathetically compares

¹⁰²⁰ Lycett 373.

¹⁰²¹ Rudyard Kipling [at Hotel Ritz, Paris], "To Carrie [Kipling]," 15 August 1915 13 (8-20)/38-K/P: Correspondence: Kipling.

¹⁰²² Rudyard Kipling at Bateman's, "To John Kipling," 4 March 1915 13 (1-7)/38-K/P: Correspondence: Kiplings.

¹⁰²³ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38.

his own youthful experiences with those of John, recognising that John faces the difficulties of no immediately available family support:

Young as I was when I began, and hard as my work was in that climate, I did not have to live absolutely alone...But you have had to face a certain discomfort...plus a certain loneliness of the spirit which is awfully hard to bear; and a certain sense of isolation which, as I remember, almost frightens a young man (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 300).¹⁰²⁴

Kipling reinforces the pride that he feels, using an allusion to racial superiority: '[a]nd you have stood it like a white man and a son to be proud of' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 300).¹⁰²⁵ Given his political and imperial affinities, the phraseology of his compliment to John is unsurprising. The letter hints at the relationship between father and son: 'I haven't said much about it, but I've noticed it, and I think I can feel pretty well what is passing in your mind' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 300).¹⁰²⁶ This suggests both distance and intimacy between them. Distance is created when his opinions are withheld from John. However, he believes them to be close enough to determine what John is thinking. Kipling's conclusion returns to empathy and personal comparison, but he seems naïve. Whilst he alludes to difficult circumstances in his youth and expects John to recognise 'fellow-feeling', the young man was embroiled in the most destructive war the world had ever seen. He may not have been in France, but undoubtedly the military reverses experienced by the British and burgeoning casualty lists were well known. Kipling's remarks, though well-meant and fatherly, are crass:

It is an experience that you have got to go through by yourself...but it maybe some help to know that another man has had to face something of the same sort (I mean loneliness plus news of a pal's death: plus dirt plus a general feeling that the world is a wicked place which it isn't) and respects you for the way you are taking your dose (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 300).¹⁰²⁷

¹⁰²⁴ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38

¹⁰²⁵ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38.

¹⁰²⁶ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/ 38.

¹⁰²⁷ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38.

The subsequent, July letter is complimentary and encouraging, partly because this was the vicarious fulfilment of one of Kipling's dreams. Statements of pride are coupled with underlying tenderness. Kipling comments to his son that '[i]t is not the mere fact of your having been in the Brigade for a year that has made you what you are.' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 293).¹⁰²⁸ John's volunteer status is another source of compliments, coupled with his success in the army: 'It is because you deliberately went into it for a purpose and gave yourself up to the job of becoming a good officer'. (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 293).¹⁰²⁹ This was balm for latent feelings of inadequacy on the part of his father. John has proved his commitment and determination and he is favourably compared to his peers: 'Lots of men,...go into the Brigade for a year and haven't made anything but a bloody show of themselves.' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 293).¹⁰³⁰ Kipling reinforces his impression of John's success, professionalism and resolution in the face of unpleasant circumstances: 'You went in and you stuck it out without a whimper through that foul winter, and you shouldered any responsibility that was going and you laid yourself out to know and understand both your men and your profession.' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 293).¹⁰³¹ His final comment is poignant, given the fate of the young man. It reflects the universal sentiment felt by parents that their child has superior attributes: 'We are both more proud of you than words can say. It's a record that can't be beaten' (13 (1-7)/ 38 File 13/7 Document 293).¹⁰³²

Whilst Kipling's correspondence and biographical material imply that Kipling forced John into army life, this is not a fair, or complete picture: '[f]or the Kiplings, father and

¹⁰²⁸ Rudyard Kipling at Bateman's, "To John Kipling," 6 July 1915 13 (1-7)/ 38.

¹⁰²⁹ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38.

¹⁰³⁰ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38.

¹⁰³¹ R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38.

¹⁰³² R/K, "To J/K," 13 (1-7)/38.

son, this was a righteous war against a vile foe'.¹⁰³³ As Rudyard comments: 'I believe my boy's battalion goes out before long. We are sending troops across pretty thick. The Holy British Public have at last realized that this is Bloody War and it's impressing 'em.'¹⁰³⁴ In common with thousands of naïve young men who rushed to enlist: 'John...wanted to join up. This was not just a matter of parental pressure: it was the whole atmosphere of the time. Boys wanted to go: it was often their parents who had misgivings'.¹⁰³⁵ In the year-long period prior to his bereavement, Kipling felt overwhelming pride in his country's fighting men, representatives of the newly embellished Tommy Atkins figure, whom he had helped to create: 'the new K[itchener] armies are a breed apart — extraordinarily interesting and, as far as I can see, extraordinarily good.'¹⁰³⁶ Therefore, any reading of Kipling in this frantic period prior to John's death is mediated through the intensity with which Kipling encouraged enlistment, generally and for his son and his enthusiasm for the figure that the recruit represented.

Most biographers remark upon the profound emotions experienced by the Kiplings, at their son's death. Lycett states that 'Dorothy Ponton, one of Elsie's pre-war governesses, returned to Bateman's as secretary in early 1919'.¹⁰³⁷ She remarked upon '[“]insidious changes in the family[”]' and 'the toll that the war (and John's death) had taken, individually and collectively'.¹⁰³⁸ Caroline Kipling's diary entries illustrate this:

Oct 2 [1915] John: A telegram from the War Office to say John is "missing"...Sep 27 John's Day. 29. John was wounded and left in a building surrounded a few minutes later by Germans on the late afternoon of Monday (27th) Oct 5. A letter from Col Buller, John's Col

¹⁰³³ Potter 22.

¹⁰³⁴ Rudyard Kipling, "To Colonel Lionel Charles Dunsterville," 5 May 1915, Pinney (1999) 301-302.

¹⁰³⁵ Potter 22.

¹⁰³⁶ Rudyard Kipling, "To Colonel Lionel Charles Dunsterville," 5 May 1915, Pinney (1999) 301-302.

¹⁰³⁷ Lycett 488.

¹⁰³⁸ Lycett 488.

to tell us John was wounded fighting in the open with his men, Captain Cuthbert leading but one man out of the lot returned alive as far as is known (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 66).¹⁰³⁹

This entry, in common with others, must have been exceedingly painful for Caroline to write (appendix 31).

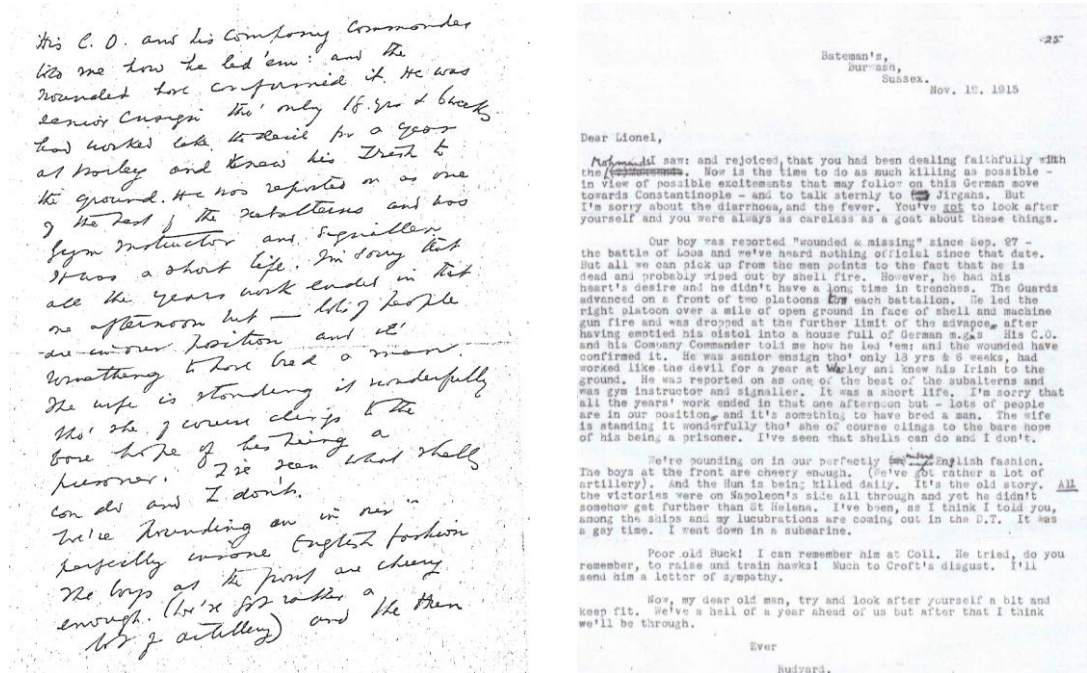
Kipling's correspondence for this period is equally significant, although it appears more pragmatic and illustrative of his heroic perspective of the combatant and the war. For example, in the first of three letters composed days after John was posted missing, Kipling writes: 'I don't expect there is much hope for my boy and the little that is left doesn't bear thinking of. However, I hear that he finished well – encouraging his men &c under machine gun fire' (17/38 File 17/45 Documents 803 & XXXIII.6).¹⁰⁴⁰ The final sentence underlines his bellicose attitude towards the conflict, his belief in the justness of its cause and recognition of the necessities of material sacrifice. Juxtaposed against this are the words and phrases which betray his private anguish. His reference to 'my boy' evokes an intimate relationship with a child. He cannot endure the torment of imagining the circumstances of John's death. Both the perspectives evident in this first example reappear in the next letter, sent the following month: 'He was senior ensign tho' only 18 yrs and 6 weeks...I'm sorry that all the years work ended in that one afternoon'.¹⁰⁴¹ Pride in John's officer status is evident. In contrast is the discernable regret that the nurture of John, undertaken over the former eighteen years, has now prematurely ended. One point of ambiguity requires discussion, since it engages with ideas of imperial demands versus parental sensitivities, one of the intellectual conflicts suffered by Kipling. This ambiguity is examined from a different perspective in appendix 1, but requires additional discussion because of its crucial

¹⁰³⁹ (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Rudyard Kipling, "To H.G. Tuite," 8 October 1915 17/38-K/P: Correspondence: M-Unidentified Addressees.

¹⁰⁴¹ Rudyard Kipling, "To Colonel Lionel Charles Dunsterville," 12 November 1915, Pinney (1999) 344-345.

nature. As reproduced in the quotation, an apostrophe is absent from the comment 'years work' in the original letter and in Pinney (figs 22 and 23). An apostrophe is added in the transcript, removing doubt about whether Kipling is writing about John's military, pre-embarcation year's work of training and preparation at Warley, or the years' work of bringing up his son. The alteration favours the latter interpretation, as does much of the evidence explored in this chapter.



Figs. 22 and 23 Rudyard Kipling at Batemans, "To General Lionel Dunsterville", November 12th 1915. Letter and transcript (14/38 Files 14/51 & 14/52 Documents Un-numbered and 25).

However, this connotation cannot remain unchallenged since other correspondence casts doubt over this reading. The undated transcript of a letter from D.C. Ponton¹⁰⁴² states:

I met him a few days after his boy had been posted as "wounded and missing"...Mr. Kipling had no inclination to appeal for sympathy. All he said was, "The boy had reached the supreme moment of his life, what would it avail him to outlive that?" And the father concentrated himself not on revenge, but on writing words that would comfort the bereaved and warn the world against making too easy conditions with a ruthless

¹⁰⁴² See appendix 1 and 32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling's Children.

enemy. This showed the Kipling with a strong sense of duty and a deep love of his country (32/38 File 32/6 Document A).¹⁰⁴³

This indicates that despite profound grief, Kipling accedes to John's death as an imperial necessity, which deserves praise. This infers personal detachment, implied by Kipling's language, tone and structure and points to his engagement with duty to empire and country. His comment about his son's military status is important. It exemplifies the idea that a soldier's death, though tragic, is demanded by the necessities of the war. This reinforces the noble and sacrificial characteristics of the Tommy Atkins figure, conceived by Kipling as he experienced the Great War.

In the third letter written the following year, Kipling writes again about John. His feelings of loss are still great, but framed within imperial sacrifice and concepts of the noble Tommy. Kipling intimately discusses his son, whilst solace is found in John's military success: 'We have had no news of our boy since Sep. 27. (Loos) and there can be little doubt that he is dead. But he finished well. He led the right leading platoon of the Irish Guards in the Guard's advance — further than any one went. That's our consolation' (15/38 Files 15/6 & 15/7 & 15/8 Documents 15/165 & 16 & 15/165).¹⁰⁴⁴

Following John's disappearance, an immediate search for him was initiated by the Kiplings and others, on their behalf. This was for news of the young man as a wounded prisoner, or confirmation of his death and location of his body. It is the subject of poignant diary entries of his mother:

[Oct] 6. Mr. Gwynne promises to try for news through the Roman Catholics in Germany by way of Sir Edmund Talbot....17. Busy at my desk with correspondence about John's men and the hope of finding something from wounded men....Constant and steady investigation has

¹⁰⁴³ 32/38.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Rudyard Kipling, "To Duckworth Ford," 3 February 1916 15/38-K/P: Correspondence: F-Ha.

gone on and always we just miss seeing the man who could tell us (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 66).¹⁰⁴⁵ (appendix 32).

For the Kiplings the year draws to a harrowing close: ‘Dec 25 Burwash: Christmas Day but to us a name only. We give no presents and in no way consider the day John not being with us’ (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 66).¹⁰⁴⁶ Their lives were further blighted by unsympathetic correspondents who ‘wrote to him gloating over the death as the just reward for a man who had pushed the cause of militarism so vociferously before the war.’¹⁰⁴⁷ There is little improvement in their perspective by the following year. The concluding line of an extract from Caroline Kipling’s diary is noteworthy:

1916 Jun 5 London: News of Lord Kitchener being drowned comes by wire in the p.m. Rud and I to St Pauls to the Kitchener Memorial Service and in the afternoon with Elsie to the evening service at the Abbey. We get seats in the choir and are in sight of the Irish Guards Platoon and hear the Recessional sung for the first time. A heart breaking day (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 69).¹⁰⁴⁸

The final pertinent entry for this period indicates how profoundly the couple were affected: ‘1918 Nov 11 Burwash: We are all waiting for the news of the armistice. 12. The great news comes....13. Rud and I feel as never before what it means now the war is over to face the world to be remade without a son’ (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 76).¹⁰⁴⁹ Potter states that ‘[Kipling] never got over the loss’ although he argues that Kipling thought the sacrifice was ‘necessary’.¹⁰⁵⁰ He asserts that ‘dying *pro patria* [was] a notion Kipling never forsook’.¹⁰⁵¹ It is this which ‘marks Kipling’s distinction from the other war poets and war veterans’.¹⁰⁵²

¹⁰⁴⁵ Adds 40/38.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Adds 40/38.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Martin Stephen, *The Price of Pity: Poetry, History and Myth in the Great War* (London: Leo Cooper, 1996) 160.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Adds 40/38.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Adds 40/38.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Potter 24.

¹⁰⁵¹ Potter 26.

¹⁰⁵² Potter 26.

Though Potter's assertion may be correct, it seems likely that the corollary of Kipling's jingoistic enthusiasm, its consequences and the cost to John, was guilt. The additional deaths of so many enlisted men and their officers may have aggravated the depth of this emotion. Stephen argues that 'Kipling's guilt is understandable'.¹⁰⁵³ He suggests that 'some of [Kipling's] best war poetry is produced from the tension between that guilt and his essentially right-wing attitude to the war.'¹⁰⁵⁴ Stephen adds further reasons for culpability: 'Kipling's war poetry also confirms the findings of a book such as Hynes's *A War Imagined* that those at home became disillusioned with the war and it was the soldiers at the front who remained patriotic'.¹⁰⁵⁵ This was the only way in which the soldiers could justify the reasons for enduring the conditions and conflict.¹⁰⁵⁶ (Elizabeth Vandiver refutes Stephen's claim: 'however appealing this construction of a repentant Kipling is to modern readers, it is almost undoubtedly anachronistic and inaccurate, since there is strong evidence that Kipling never changed his mind about the righteousness of war.')¹⁰⁵⁷

Potter indicates his belief in Kipling's possible feelings of culpability when he observes that '[i]t is often said that the nearest Kipling came to self-recrimination was in...[one] of his "Epitaphs" – headed "Common Form"'.¹⁰⁵⁸ Under the heading 'Epitaphs', thirteen pages of *The Years Between* are devoted to thirty one separate epitaph-poems, of which one is 'Common Form'. As with several others this consists of a single, two line stanza: 'If any question why we died,/ Tell them, because our fathers lied.'¹⁰⁵⁹ This is the contrition to which Potter alludes. There is another reading of this 'Epitaph'. In the period prior to the Great War, Germany embarked on an

¹⁰⁵³ Stephen 162.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Stephen 162.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Stephen 162.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Stephen 162.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Elizabeth Vandiver, *Stand in the Trench, Achilles: Classical Reception in British Poetry of the Great War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 17.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Potter 25.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Kipling (1919) 141.

extensive rearmament programme. The German Chief of Staff stated in February 1913 that ‘[“]a European war is bound to come sooner or later, in which the issue will be one of a struggle between Germandom and Slavdom[”]’.¹⁰⁶⁰ Preparation for this war was ‘[“]the duty of all states which are the champions of Germanic ideas and culture[”]’.¹⁰⁶¹ Diplomacy to counter this military growth was largely ineffectual.¹⁰⁶² The failure to repress the German challenge engages with this interpretation of the ‘Epitaph’. The ‘lies’ of the ‘fathers’ represent the older generation who failed to respond rapidly or appropriately enough to the increasing German military threat. Vandiver describes the poem as ‘uneasily ambiguous’¹⁰⁶³ and she suggests another interpretation. She argues that it is ‘tempting’ to read the poem as ‘a piercing repudiation by the Empire’s bard of the Empire’s latest war.’¹⁰⁶⁴ However: ‘Hibberd and Onions assert that: [“]Kipling was a consistent “hawk” himself, and the actual target of “Common Form” must be the “doves” who had, in his opinion, failed to warn and arm the country before August 1914[”]’.¹⁰⁶⁵ Therefore, ‘Common Form’ demonstrates that ‘Kipling regarded the attempts to avoid war undertaken by the pre-1914 Liberal government very much as many Britons in 1945 regarded Neville Chamberlain’s efforts to [“]appease[”] Hitler.’¹⁰⁶⁶ This interpretation extends the idea that ‘Common Form’ only criticises the inadequate repression of German militarism and argues that Kipling advocated aggressive British preparedness for conflict: ‘[r]ead in context, ‘Common Form’ seems to deliver a clear message; the [“]lie[”] told by the fathers was the claim that war could be avoided.’¹⁰⁶⁷

¹⁰⁶⁰ Gilbert 9.

¹⁰⁶¹ Gilbert 9.

¹⁰⁶² Gilbert 9.

¹⁰⁶³ Vandiver 15.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Vandiver 16.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Vandiver 17.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Vandiver 17.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Vandiver 20.

Of curiosity in the first edition of the collection is the location of the ‘Epitaphs’ section, which Kipling chose himself. (The dust jacket states: ‘[t]his little book...contains a selection by Mr. Kipling from his volumes of verse’.¹⁰⁶⁸) The 1911 poem, ‘The Female of the Species’ precedes the ‘Epitaphs’. Following them is the 1909 poem, ‘The City of Brass’. Immediately succeeding this and as the final poem in the collection is ‘Justice’ [1918]. This is an undisguised poem of judgement, which is an ‘indictment of Germany’,¹⁰⁶⁹ written in October 1918. The ‘stern, unforgiving message was syndicated to 200 newspapers around the world’.¹⁰⁷⁰

The first of six stanzas begins with the italicised lines ‘*Across a world where all men grieve/ And grieving strive the more*’.¹⁰⁷¹ The discussion of grief continues with the line: ‘*Our dead on every shore*’.¹⁰⁷² The caesura ensures that the reader pauses to consider the implications of this statement. There is evidence of guilt in the lines which end the stanza: ‘*If we have parley with the foe,/ The load our sons must bear*’.¹⁰⁷³ The appearance and the expression of this first stanza separate it from the remaining five. It describes the result of the hubris of those who will be judged. In other words as stanza three states, the overarching pride of ‘A people and their King/ Through ancient sin grown strong,’ who ‘feared no reckoning’ and who ‘Would set no bound to wrong’,¹⁰⁷⁴ has resulted in the unprecedented number of deaths in the war. There is no doubt that the ‘people’ in question is the Germans whose ‘hour is past’.¹⁰⁷⁵ They are judged for their actions: ‘For agony and spoil/ Of nations beat to dust,’ and their methods: ‘For poisoned air and tortured soil/...[and] shuddering waters’.¹⁰⁷⁶ By placing the powerful

¹⁰⁶⁸ Kipling (1919).

¹⁰⁶⁹ Lycett 485.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Lycett 486.

¹⁰⁷¹ Kipling (1919) 156.

¹⁰⁷² Kipling (1919) 156.

¹⁰⁷³ Kipling (1919) 156.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Kipling (1919) 157.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Kipling (1919) 157.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Kipling (1919) 157.

‘Epitaphs’ and ‘Justice’ as they appear, some of the dramatic effect is lost. Not closing the collection with the ‘Epitaphs’, or placing them immediately prior to ‘Justice’ detracts from their impact. The latter configuration would have been formidable.

The burden of death affects all Kipling’s post-bereavement writing and soldier portraits. Intermixed with this is the anger that characterises the poem, ‘Mesopotamia’. The mismanagement of the war against which he had railed in that poem, continues: ‘[f]or Kipling it was not war that killed Englishmen, but incompetence and parsimony. Military incompetence and political ineptitude, if they had not caused the death of his son, had hastened it’.¹⁰⁷⁷ Whilst discussion of John and his fate is personal to Kipling, it illustrates the broader concept that on every societal level the destiny of the volunteers of the Great War held a special importance.

A letter from Kipling to his daughter, written in the last decade of his life, gives insight into the grief-fuelled perspectives that haunted him fifteen years after John’s death. Kipling and his wife ‘went to Arras for the dedication, on 4 August, of the memorial at Dud Corner, Loos, to the missing dead – including John Kipling’.¹⁰⁷⁸ (fig. 24).



¹⁰⁷⁷ Potter 24.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Pinney (2004b) 557.

Fig. 24 Cemetery at Dud Corner and Loos Memorial to the Missing. John Kipling is commemorated here. Kipling intended to speak at the occasion, but he ‘was overcome by emotion and had to give up the speech’.¹⁰⁷⁹ The closing line of this extract is evidence for this:

[W]e did not get soaked at the Memorial service at Loos, tho’ the sky blackened and many of the newly planted young trees were blown over. Barring that the wind snatched the words out of all speakers’ mouths, the affair was a great success. The Battalion sent two buglers... The wind was dead in their teeth. They stood at the far end of the Cemetery... and instead of echoing as it usually does, between the high walls of the Cemetery, the call was softened down – with a most amazing and unearthly effect – just like ghosts. Pure accident of course and could never be duplicated but the effect was – well, we’ll say moving beyond words.¹⁰⁸⁰

It is impossible to examine any of the poems in *The Years Between* collection and their representation of Tommy Atkins without recognition of the influence of Kipling’s bereavement, his possible feelings of guilt and his anger at the incompetence of the military hierarchy. This includes the discrete ‘Epitaphs’ collection.

The poem, ‘My Boy Jack’ was first published in the *Daily Telegraph*, during 1916.¹⁰⁸¹ It epitomises Kipling’s post-bereavement engagement with the Tommy Atkins figure, personally and within society. For example, the speaker is told that the young man ‘*did not shame his kind—*’.¹⁰⁸² This may be fellow combatants, representatives of his class, or his family. The use of the long dash to conclude and italic script emphasise this sentiment.

In the four stanza poem, the speaker awaits news of a son: ‘[“]Have you news of my boy Jack?["”]’.¹⁰⁸³ The boy is named and connected to family and society. The speaker expects a response which signifies that the person to whom the question is directed may know and be concerned about the fate of the young man. Four questions about the

¹⁰⁷⁹ Pinney (2004b) 557.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Rudyard Kipling, “To Elsie Bambridge,” 4 August 1930, Pinney (2004b) 556-557.

¹⁰⁸¹ Lycett 465.

¹⁰⁸² Kipling (1919) 61.

¹⁰⁸³ Kipling (1919) 61.

missing boy are asked throughout the poem and the replies are repetitive and italicised. For example, stanza one states: ‘[“]When d’you think that he’ll come back?[/”]’/ *Not with this wind blowing, and this tide*’.¹⁰⁸⁴ This underlines his absence. Use of an interrogative format and italics indicates a differing narrative voice and emphasises the impression of dialogue. This encourages intimacy within the poem, through the implied proximity of speaker and listener and the use of imagined dialogue adds to the intensity of the emotions expressed. Since unlike some of Kipling’s other verse, the lexis and syntax do not allude to any social group, or geographical location, such dialogue might take place with anyone. This might be an individual of corresponding societal status, a similarly bereaved relative, or an authoritative figure, perhaps someone of a superior class. Engagement also occurs between the speaker and Kipling’s readers, who represented every level within society. Kipling reflects upon the personal experience of bereavement and opens this concept to public scrutiny. He indicates cross-societal understanding of the price that has been paid by the deceased and his family. Additional verisimilitude and connectedness are present by naming the boy and locating him within the family circle. The poignant relevance of such personal experience to Kipling is obvious.

The repetitive responses within the poem are important. In stanza two the reply echoes the response of the first stanza: ‘*Not this tide./ For what is sunk will hardly swim,/ Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.*’¹⁰⁸⁵ Stanza three continues a similar refrain: ‘*None this tide,/ Nor any tide,/...Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.*’¹⁰⁸⁶ The repetition, coupled with poignant questions such as ‘[“]Has any one else had word of him?[/”]’¹⁰⁸⁷, emulates the bewilderment and search for answers by the

¹⁰⁸⁴ Kipling (1919) 61.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Kipling (1919) 61.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Kipling (1919) 61.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Kipling (1919) 61.

bereaved. It mirrors the distress of those mentally overwhelmed by their loss. This is particularly true when a relative vanishes entirely, as occurred when all traces of hundreds of thousands of Great War soldiers were eradicated. Even those whose bodies were buried had effectively disappeared, because of the Government's policy of non-repatriation of the dead. The mourners represented a vast number of people, from every social background, grieving concurrently. (The treatment of the dead will be dealt with in detail later.)

The idea reinforced by the anonymous responses is that not only the bereaved parent cares about this loss. Stanza three considers the personal and familial sacrifice in the death of the boy, as the speaker asks: '[“]Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?[”]'.¹⁰⁸⁸ The sacrifice is acknowledged in the replies. The speaker is exhorted to '*hold your head up all the more,/...Because he was the son you bore,/ And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!*'.¹⁰⁸⁹ There is societal comprehension of the sacrifice. This is not a nameless corpse for whom Hardy demands recognition and remembrance, but a precious individual whose death Kipling mediates through pride in the boy's actions. Thus, the poem is crucial to Kipling's personal experience.

Whilst there is no evidence that Kipling ever referred to his son by the nickname, 'Jack' and John Kipling served in the army, not the navy, the emotional sentiments of the poem, combined with the date of publication indicates its personal nature. The concepts are too close to Kipling's own experience to be coincidental. The poem is 'ostensibly the lament of a mother who had lost her child at sea'.¹⁰⁹⁰ Given the challenge of composing such a poem, Kipling probably chose not to portray a bereaved father of a soldier lost in the trenches, because the piece would have been so emotionally charged that it would have been impossible for him to write it. Other

¹⁰⁸⁸ Kipling (1919) 61.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Kipling (1919) 62.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Lycett 465.

symbolic notions may have influenced Kipling's choice of subject. Each of the four stanzas concludes with a variation of a refrain: '*Not with this wind blowing, and this tide./...Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.*'¹⁰⁹¹ The bleakness of this imagery seems augmented by the concept of a loss at sea. There can be no hope for the discovery of remains, or repatriation of a body. Despite the different situation of John's death, this is a scenario with which Kipling can engage. In addition, there is metaphorical impact in the language and construction of this refrain, with the 'wind' and 'tide' representative of the inflexibility of political and hegemonic thought.

A clue to the intimacy of the poem is the title. The dead son is referred to as 'My Boy',¹⁰⁹² the phrase echoed throughout Kipling's letters. There is a close relationship between the bereaved parent and the dead child. This is a private emotion, framed within a bigger picture. The parent is haunted by the loss. There is recognition that grief, whilst it may abate a little, will remain a permanent feature of the life experience of the speaker. Kipling intends the reader to reflect upon this in every line. This is evident by the use of punctuation such as question marks, full stops and commas, which create a break as each line concludes. The concept of placing the deceased within the family circle has been discussed earlier in this chapter in terms of the societal perspective. It is no less relevant to the personal perspective of Kipling. Each of the first three stanzas begins with a question. For example in stanza one: 'Have you news of my boy Jack?'¹⁰⁹³ Caroline Kipling's diary demonstrates that these were actual questions asked by the couple from the moment that John vanished. This implies catharsis for Kipling in writing the poem.

'My Boy Jack' is not the only poem that explores the intense pain and desolation felt by Kipling. Kipling 'commemorated [John] in 'A Nativity', a poem interpolating the

¹⁰⁹¹ Kipling (1919) 61.

¹⁰⁹² Kipling (1919) 61.

¹⁰⁹³ Kipling (1919) 61.

birth and death of Christ with the despair of a grieving mother who knows not where her son [“]is laid[”].¹⁰⁹⁴ *The Years Between* states that this was published in 1916. Again, distance from the poet is given by the gender of the bereaved parent.

The construction of the poem is complex, reflecting the profound nature of the emotions with which it deals. In appearance it is five stanzas of equal length. Each stanza is composed of two quatrains, linked in the middle by a refrain in parentheses. The refrain repeats either the last two words, or the final word of the line that precedes it. For example, in stanza one the refrain is ‘(With mine! With mine!)’.¹⁰⁹⁵ Stanza two echoes this with: ‘(To me! To me!)’.¹⁰⁹⁶ Stanza three states: ‘And took Him when He died./ (He died! He Died!)’.¹⁰⁹⁷ This repetitive construction, particularly in these first three stanzas, reinforces the intimacy of Kipling’s feelings. There is a relatively strict rhyming pattern which restrains the poem. This emphasises the anguish of the speaker.

Each stanza refers to Christian iconography or Biblical allusion. These are italicised throughout:

The Babe was laid in the Manger
Between the gentle kine—
All safe from cold and danger—
 ‘But it was not so with mine. [sic].’¹⁰⁹⁸

Choice of the word ‘Babe’ implies youthful innocence and a requirement for protection. The stanzas are completed with the allusions juxtaposed with comment as conversation, from the bereaved mother: ‘*The Sign of the Promise given—*/ [“]But there comes no sign to me./ (To me! To me!)’.¹⁰⁹⁹ The conversation is not italicised which differentiates it

¹⁰⁹⁴ Gilmour 258.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Kipling (1919) 52.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Kipling (1919) 52.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Kipling (1919) 53.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Kipling (1919) 52.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Kipling (1919) 52.

from the religious elements. The continued use of punctuation to slow the pace and add weight and emotion to the imagery is almost excessive, particularly with the use of dashes and exclamation marks in every stanza.

Although the gender of the parent separates Kipling from the subject, this is not extended to the reader who views the interjected statements of the speaker as engagement in personal conversation, rather than narrative. This technique augments the communication of ideas between speaker and reader. For example in stanza one: ‘The waiting mother prayed./ [“]For I know not how he fell,’.¹¹⁰⁰ The latter line betrays Kipling’s anguish and uncertainty. This echoes across the first four stanzas as each one ends with a variation on the theme of ‘There was none to tend him or mark,/ And I know not how he fell.[”]’.¹¹⁰¹ Poignantly, in the sixth line of the second stanza the speaker cries: ‘[“]My child died in the dark./ Is it well with the child, is it well?’.¹¹⁰² (This refrain in the poem recalls the words of Elisha to the Shunammite woman in 2 Kings. On the death of her son, whose birth Elisha had prophesied, she seeks Elisha who restores the boy to life. When he first sees the woman approach, Elisha instructs his servant to run and ask her: ‘*is it well with the child?*’).¹¹⁰³ Kipling’s emphasis of the word ‘My’ cannot be accidental. Also of importance is the term ‘child’ which re-emphasises the notion of protection and vulnerability.

Elements of this poem reflect the Biblical allusion of Kipling’s poem, ‘Gethsemane’. ‘A Nativity’ conflates two iconic and significant Christian events, the birth and crucifixion of Christ. This is illustrated in the first stanza: ‘*The Babe was laid in the Manger*’, whilst the third begins: ‘*The Cross was raised on high;*’.¹¹⁰⁴ ‘Gethsemane’ also includes imagery of the crucifixion. However in ‘A Nativity’, the Biblical

¹¹⁰⁰ Kipling (1919) 52.

¹¹⁰¹ Kipling (1919) 53.

¹¹⁰² Kipling (1919) 53.

¹¹⁰³ *The Holy Bible Authorised King James Version*, 2 Kings. 4.8-37.

¹¹⁰⁴ Kipling (1919) 53.

allusions and descriptions of Christian icons are in the third person, rather than the first, as in 'Gethsemane'. The bereaved mother of 'A Nativity' poses a tragic figure and she is described in stanza one as 'waiting', in stanza three as 'griev[ing]', in stanza four as 'broken' and finally in stanza five as 'steadfast'.¹¹⁰⁵ These words indicate the phases through which Kipling passed and that is probably why he chose to use them.

The final stanza revisits Kipling's idea of a necessary sacrifice, in a personal and broad sense. In the final quatrain the mother states:

'But I know for Whom he fell'—
The steadfast mother smiled.
'Is it well with the child—is it well?
It is well—it is well with the child!'¹¹⁰⁶

(Despite the death of her son, the final line is the response to Elisha of the Shunammite woman.)¹¹⁰⁷ The capitalisation of the word 'Whom', indicates its importance and given the other contextual evidence in the poem, suggests that the young man has died for a Godly cause. However when relocated in the line, the mother acknowledges that her son has died for her and for the benefit of the society in which he was born. She has received an answer to her questioning prayers: '[“]Is it well with the child, is it well?[”]'.¹¹⁰⁸ All is now 'well' with her son, because they both perceive the greater good. The anonymous young combatant, with his lonely death and unknown location of his body, represents John Kipling and all the Tommy Atkins figures.

Two of the 'Epitaphs' offer a relevant postscript. The first, 'An Only Son', states 'I have slain none except my Mother. She/ (Blessing her slayer) died of grief for me.'¹¹⁰⁹ The second is 'A Son' in which Kipling writes 'My son was killed while laughing at

¹¹⁰⁵ Kipling (1919) Pp 52.

¹¹⁰⁶ Kipling (1919) 54.

¹¹⁰⁷ *The Holy Bible Authorised King James Version*, 2 Kings. 4.26.

¹¹⁰⁸ Kipling (1919) 52.

¹¹⁰⁹ Kipling (1919) 135.

some jest. I/ would I knew/ What it was, and it might serve me in a time when/ jests are few.’¹¹¹⁰ Although simple in terms of structure, lexis and syntax, the sentiments of these epitaphs are searing and reflect not only the ambivalence of Kipling’s own sense of loss, but that of society.

As a man of considerable literary stature and a bereaved parent, Kipling received much public and private sympathy and condolence for his loss. In Box 19 of the Kipling Collection at the University of Sussex, almost the entire file 19/15 is letters of sympathy regarding the disappearance and death of John. These include letters from ordinary correspondents and the famous, including Rider Haggard and Edward Carson. Theodore Roosevelt wrote to the Kiplings in October 1915: ‘From the papers I can not tell what has befallen your son. I earnestly hope he has been found and is all right....[W]hile I would mourn with his mother and with you it would be the mourning that goes with respect and admiration, for there are so many things worse than death’. (19/38 File 19/15 Document A10).¹¹¹¹ Presumably, Roosevelt hints at the dreadful prospect of John being a prisoner-of-war, or not having fulfilled his duties as a combatant. (Whilst there is no doubt that Roosevelt’s sympathies in 1915 were sincere, his later empathy with the Kipling’s must have been augmented after the death of his own son Quentin, in July 1918.)¹¹¹² Another letter written in October 1915, acknowledges the public and private dilemma facing those who mourned the dead of the war: ‘I hope, you may find some small comfort in the thought that your boy died the noblest of deaths for his country. Mingled with one’s sorrow is the tremendous pride of the sacrifice they have made of their young lives in the highest cause.’ (19/38 File

¹¹¹⁰ Kipling (1919) 135.

¹¹¹¹ Theodore Roosevelt, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 10 October 1915 19/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private.

¹¹¹² Gilbert 441.

19/15 Document A12).¹¹¹³ The letter suggests that pride in John as he relates to Tommy Atkins and the patriotic notion that to serve one's country was mandatory, could offset the overwhelming sense of loss. Expanding his personal ideas on this subject to engage with the societal picture, gave Kipling the opportunity to develop another concept of the portrayal of the Tommy.

A letter from Kipling to his friend André Chevrillon elucidates Kipling's views on these points. He compares the nobility of combat to the untenable position of the non-combatant:

The choice was given us: – “Offer yourselves as a sacrifice for mankind or perish in the spirit”. Through the great goodness of God we chose the sacrifice....Now, for one horrible moment, imagine yourself a Neutral to whom also a choice has been given – not, necessarily, to add his proper body to the oblation but merely to give or withhold his word of approval on the sacrifice.¹¹¹⁴

The letter appeals to Chevrillon to examine his own conscience and give opinions on the matter of military abstention:

[I]n order to exist upon any terms with yourself, in order to keep your sanity and belief in some sort of moral order, you would be constrained to discover, or invent and, having done so, to reiterate to yourself *any* statement, any excuse, *any* form of words which would allow you to feign to yourself that your abstention had been justified.¹¹¹⁵

Kipling analyses his insight into the motivation for those who have remained outside the combative status. He concludes this section of the letter with a damning indictment of the non-combatant: ‘It is a circle of torture in which the Neutral must continue to revolve for the simple reason that if he escapes from it – he knows himself as he is: and that is knowledge which no self-respecting neutral permits himself to acquire.’¹¹¹⁶ The

¹¹¹³ Beatrice [?], “To Rudyard Kipling,” 14 October 1915 19/38.

¹¹¹⁴ Rudyard Kipling, “To André Chevrillon,” 22 June 1916, Pinney (1999) 378-382.

¹¹¹⁵ Rudyard Kipling, “To André Chevrillon,” 22 June 1916, Pinney (1999) 378-382.

¹¹¹⁶ Rudyard Kipling, “To André Chevrillon,” 22 June 1916, Pinney (1999) 378-382.

final paragraphs return to Kipling's feelings of bereavement and give his friend an indication of the toll that John's death has taken:

Meantime my personal heart is heavy for as the year turns round and dates and days repeat themselves one is dragged back to the past of last year and that is not pleasant. We are a very large band now – we parents who do not know where our dead are laid: and I think, it is that indignity which moves us as deeply as anything. Never believe again, that the English do not know how to hate: It was a long lesson and we were slow learners but we have our teaching by heart at last.¹¹¹⁷

There is bitterness and doubt in the legitimacy of the costs of the war dead in these final comments. Included in this is absolute hatred of the enemy. This is reinforced in an unpleasant letter written by Kipling in 1916: 'I almost begin to hope that when we have done with him there will be very little Hun left....There is a legend that a man can get as much as eight days no. 2 field punishment if his officer sees him killing Huns. On the other hand the officer doesn't look too hard or too long' (14/38 Files 14/51 & 14/52 Documents Un-numbered and 27).¹¹¹⁸ (One of Kipling's short stories engages with these sentiments. In September 1915, 'Mary Postgate' was concurrently published in *Century Magazine* and *Nash's Magazine*.¹¹¹⁹ The narrative describes a 'middle-aged, unimaginative and deeply repressed'¹¹²⁰ woman who suffers the bereavement of her surrogate son. Later as she burns his possessions, she encounters a German airman who has just carried out a devastating local bombing raid. Following this act he 'had fallen from his plane and was now dying.'¹¹²¹ In the shocking conclusion to the tale: 'Mary, tending the bonfire, watched with mounting pleasure as the German slowly died.'¹¹²²).

¹¹¹⁷ Rudyard Kipling, "To André Chevrillon," 22 June 1916, Pinney (1999) 378-382.

¹¹¹⁸ Rudyard Kipling, "To Lionel [General Dunsterville]," 11 September 1916 14/38-K/P:

Correspondence: A-D.

¹¹¹⁹ Later included in the volume *A Diversity of Creatures* published in 1917. Page 106.

¹¹²⁰ Harry Ricketts, *The Unforgiving Minute: A Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2000) 318.

¹¹²¹ Ricketts 318.

¹¹²² Ricketts 318.

Propaganda issued by the Department of Information, created in February 1917 in order to aim ‘more vigorous and strident propaganda’¹¹²³ at the general public, inflamed sentiment such as Kipling’s. This propaganda was not necessarily true or even based on the truth and was part of the British Government’s attempt to counter the rising tide of criticism of the war brought about by ‘horrifying casualties, continued military stalemate, rising prices, and food shortages.’¹¹²⁴ Public credence was given to the stories because ‘when questions were asked in Parliament about especially egregious stories, such as the notorious German corpse factory reported in the *Times*, the government declined to refute what it knew to be false.’¹¹²⁵ Strong public belief in this form of propaganda was useful on three counts. Firstly, it allowed the Government to promote the continuation of the war as a just fight against a barbarous enemy. Secondly, it served to ennoble further the image of Tommy Atkins as a valiant and sacrificial figure, opposed by a brutal adversary. Lastly in the soldiers themselves, belief in a righteous conflict engendered endurance of the conditions in which they were forced to live and fight.

Unsavoury and scandalous though Kipling’s sentiments and the attendant propaganda appear, such detestation of the Germans is echoed in correspondence received by Kipling in late 1918. It agrees with him and praises ‘Justice’ [1918], a poem which embodies ‘[t]he spirit of unreconciled hatred’¹¹²⁶ against the enemy. The letter states: ‘I want to tell you how...greatly I admire ‘Justice’...it puts in the most concise and telling form everything that all of us feel towards that unspeakable race [Germany] and would

¹¹²³ George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 119.

¹¹²⁴ Robb 119.

¹¹²⁵ Mark Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda: British Narrative From 1900 to 1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006) 131.

¹¹²⁶ Daniel Karlin, “From Dark Defile To Gethsemane: Rudyard Kipling’s War Poetry,” *The Oxford Handbook of British and Irish War Poetry*, ed., Tim Kendall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 66.

express in words – if only we had the genius to do it.’ (22/38 File 22/44 /Document 14).¹¹²⁷

The selection of work from *The Years Between* that has been closely read, combined with the content of several letters, demonstrates that Kipling continued to depict the combatant in the favourable light that had begun with his early work. Kipling’s new aspects of the Tommy were the volunteer and ‘everyman’ status, combined with his nobility of sacrifice for his family, country and empire and the terrible effects of that sacrifice on those who remained. Implicit in this is the need to contrast the noble English soldier as superior to his uncivilised German counterpart. Kipling could use these ideas to address his own needs and those of others and determine how the Tommy would be remembered. The remaining section of this chapter examines this last concept and explores Kipling’s involvement with the memorialisation of the Tommy Atkins figure.

Memorialising the Soldier

Fussell illustrates the reverence accorded by society to the dead combatant of the Great War due to their prior civilian status and because this war had altered for ever the generally held precepts of the ways in which war should proceed: ‘It was technology that had made the war different: science had created more powerful weapons...but it had also created stronger defenses against them.’¹¹²⁸ The Tommy Atkins figure fought in the gap between these concepts. Fussell remarks that: ‘[w]riting in the *Daily Mirror* on November 22, 1916, W. Beach Thomas managed to assert that the dead British soldier even lies on the battlefield in a special way bespeaking his moral superiority:

¹¹²⁷ [?] Guthrie at Grosvenor Square, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 25 October 1918 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

¹¹²⁸ Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers’ Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War* (London: Pimlico, 1998) 56.

“Even as he lies on the field he looks more quietly faithful, more simply steadfast than others.”¹¹²⁹ This encomium continues with similar hyperbole, even suggesting that the corpse ‘looks especially modest and gentlemanly’.¹¹³⁰ This indicates a zenith in the portrayal of Tommy Atkins, when in a popular media source he is distinguished even as he lies dead. It also illustrates manipulation in the remembrance of him.

In 1918, *The Times* reflected on Kipling’s suitability to strengthen the resolution of the nation. This was in encouraging ideas of reconstruction and acknowledging that the entire nation was in a state of mourning:

Happy the nation, the Empire, that in its fateful hour has a voice to “nerve its heart,” to remind it that it has been, what it is, to tell it to endure. The prophet, the poet, who can do this, is an asset of price beyond rubies, is worth an army corps. Such an asset the British Empire, nay, the English-speaking race, possesses today in Mr. Rudyard Kipling (28/14, 1894-1946, 4).¹¹³¹

The extract suggests that Kipling’s is a voice to which attention would be paid. In addition to ‘nerving’ the nation and empire to its circumstances and perceived misfortunes, he could develop and influence the depiction of the dead combatant.

Kipling was instrumental in commemorating the dead soldier and his work with the Imperial War Graves Commission was central to this: ‘[o]ne way he felt he could come to terms with the war was to pursue what he now saw as a sacred task of creating fitting memorials for the men who had lost their lives’.¹¹³² Remembrance of John was essential to this process. Both elements are illustrated by an obituary article, published in 1936:

Mr. Rudyard Kipling is to be buried in Westminster Abbey....A beautiful wreath of flowers in memory of Rudyard Kipling’s only son,

¹¹²⁹ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977) 175.

¹¹³⁰ Fussell 175.

¹¹³¹ ‘The Poet-Prophet of the Empire’ *The Times* 1 May 1918 28/14-Miscellaneous Cuttings About Rudyard Kipling and His Works 1894-1946 Cartoons etc.

¹¹³² Lycett 488.

Lieutenant John Kipling, of the Irish Guards...was laid yesterday on the memorial tablet in Loos Cemetery...The ceremony concluded with the sounding of the Last Post....Rudyard Kipling himself was one of the first members of the War Graves Commission and it was he who chose the words that are carved on the gravestones in every British war cemetery in France, "Their name liveth for evermore"¹¹³³ (fig. 25). Two years ago...Mr. Kipling endowed the War Graves Commission with a fund (appendix 33) so that every evening at sundown, for eternity, the Last Post should be sounded before his son's tombstone (28/15, 1936, 60).¹¹³⁴



Fig. 25 Kipling's text from *Ecclesiasticus* at The Indian Monument.

Recording of information about the British war dead began in the earliest days of the conflict. Longworth states that in September 1914, a British Red Cross unit under the leadership of Fabian Ware, went to North East France. Although its principal task was

¹¹³³ These words were chosen by Kipling from the Book of Ecclesiasticus Lycett 501. 'Ecclesiasticus' Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995 one of the books of the Apocrypha, written around 180 B.C. 'Apocrypha' Def. *Collins English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. 1995, the 14 books included as an appendix to the Old Testament in the Septuagint and the Vulgate but not included in the Hebrew canon. They are not printed in the Protestant versions of the Bible.

¹¹³⁴ 'Poet's Corner Burial: Loos Cemetery Tribute To Soldier Son' *Glasgow Record* 20 Jan. 1936 28/15-Rudyard Kipling. Obituary Notices (I) January 1936.

to find and tend to the wounded, the unit ‘began to collect evidence about the British dead’¹¹³⁵ such as the location and identity of bodies. Ware and his unit ‘became more and more interested in the care of the graves themselves and in maintaining their inscriptions’.¹¹³⁶ Longworth notes that Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, a Red Cross Medical Assessor, visited Béthune Cemetery with Ware in October 1914. According to Ware, after this visit Stewart suggested that the unit should become involved in the recording, registration and maintenance of grave sites. Stewart also ‘committed the Red Cross to paying for more durable inscriptions...and to provide the means for marking and registering all the British graves the Unit could find’.¹¹³⁷

Ware needed to include the Army in his work and he approached General Macready, Adjutant General to the British Expeditionary Force ‘to persuade him of the importance of registering and marking British Graves’.¹¹³⁸ Macready felt that formation of a dedicated organisation was the only solution and this would embrace the developing ‘urgen[t]...public demand at home that the graves should not be neglected.’¹¹³⁹ This seems an obvious concern for relatives whose loved ones had enlisted and then vanished. These relatives could have no impact on the condition in which any grave was maintained and so naturally would press forcefully for the creation of a body which could undertake this role. Macready designated Ware’s Unit as the most suitable to undertake and fulfil the difficult task:

On 2nd March 1915, Ware wrote to the Red Cross...informing them that the Mobile Unit had been “officially recognised as the only organisation authorised to deal with the question of the locality, marking and registration of the graves of the British officers and men” in France, and was to operate under the title of the “Graves Registration Commission [G.R.C.]”.¹¹⁴⁰

¹¹³⁵ Longworth 1.

¹¹³⁶ Longworth 2.

¹¹³⁷ Longworth 3.

¹¹³⁸ Longworth 5.

¹¹³⁹ Longworth 6.

¹¹⁴⁰ Longworth 6.

The creation of the G.R.C. began a systematic documentation of the graves of the war dead. Even General Haig recognised the crucial nature of the work, suggesting that it had ‘sentimental...moral...[and] symbolic value’,¹¹⁴¹ to the individual soldier and civilian, as well as the nation at large. His comment acknowledges how important ideas of national and personal commemoration of Tommy Atkins had become and how distant was the concept of a ‘Hardyesque’ approach to burial and memorialisation.

The difficulties of staffing and working in a combat zone independent of the Army, concerned Ware: ‘[O]n 6th September 1915, Macready recommended...that the G.R.C. “be placed on a proper footing as a part of His Majesty’s forces”’.¹¹⁴² As the war and the work of Ware continued, there was recognition of ‘the new and democratic mood which was taking hold of the Army’.¹¹⁴³ This embraced ideas of comradeship in arms and in death ‘that ignored all barriers of class, position or rank’.¹¹⁴⁴ This was a new departure from the hierarchical entrenchment of the pre-war military. It translated into an ethos of equality in the war cemeteries, where there is no distinction between the grave of a Tommy and that of a senior officer (fig. 26).



¹¹⁴¹ Longworth 7.

¹¹⁴² Longworth 10.

¹¹⁴³ Longworth 13.

¹¹⁴⁴ Longworth 14.



Fig. 26 Tyne Cot Cemetery which demonstrate the democratic nature of the graves. It has the largest number of burials of any Commonwealth cemetery of either war.

Although there was an increasing demand from the public as the war progressed and the lists of the dead grew, Ware wanted to avoid the repatriation of bodies, especially given the ‘difficulties of treating impartially the claims advanced by persons of different social standing’.¹¹⁴⁵ What concerned Ware was that in an abandonment of the democratic approach wealthier, more powerful figures would return the bodies of their loved ones to the United Kingdom. This would be impossible for the many families of more straitened means. Ware made the decision that after the war there should be set in place ‘a completely new organisation to care for the graves...a body that...would be permanent, executive...and have its own staff...[and that] the new body must...be...imperial’.¹¹⁴⁶ At Ware’s suggestion, the Prince of Wales ‘wrote to the Prime Minister suggesting that an imperial graves organisation be constituted under Royal Charter’.¹¹⁴⁷ (appendix 34) Having received royal assent to the Draft Charter ‘[t]he War Graves Commission had come into being’.¹¹⁴⁸ The Commission believed

¹¹⁴⁵ Longworth 14.

¹¹⁴⁶ Longworth Pp23.

¹¹⁴⁷ Longworth 25.

¹¹⁴⁸ Longworth 25.

themselves to be “as representative of every political view and social class as it is possible for any body to be”¹¹⁴⁹.

In addition to the official members of the Commission, there was a facility for the appointment of a further eight commissioners one of whom was Kipling. Longworth argues that Kipling’s inclusion was firstly, because he was ‘the most famous writer of the time’¹¹⁵⁰ and secondly because he had lost a son in action. He was asked to join the I.W.G.C. in September 1917 in a letter and confidential memo from Fabian Ware: ‘I am instructed by the Secretary of State for War to ask if you would be willing to serve on the Imperial War Graves Commission and would agree to your name being submitted for appointment by Royal Warrant as a Member of the Commission’ (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B.1).¹¹⁵¹ Kipling’s soldier portraits and engagement with the enlisted man added an important element to the portrayal of the dead combatant.

Kipling’s acceptance of this position and the exhausting work that it would entail is confirmed in a letter of acknowledgement, dated 21st September 1917, by a representative of the War Office: ‘you have kindly consented to accept a place on the proposed IWGC, and I feel I must send you one word to say how glad I am’ (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B.2).¹¹⁵² Kipling is sent the Royal Warrant and appointed officially on 27th October 1917. Kipling’s fitness for his later role in choosing, on behalf of the Commission, the most appropriate words for the memorial stones did not receive universal approval: ‘the cantankerous Lord Hugh Cecil questioned Rudyard’s bona fides for this job since he was [“]not a known religious man[”].¹¹⁵³ Whilst Cecil’s statement is true in that Kipling did not practise observance of a recognised religion, his

¹¹⁴⁹ Longworth 30.

¹¹⁵⁰ Longworth 29.

¹¹⁵¹ Fabian Ware, Director of Graves Registration and Enquiries at the War Office [I.W.G.C], “To Rudyard Kipling,” 5 September 1917 21/38.

¹¹⁵² [Fabian Ware?] Representative of the War Office, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 21 September 1917 21/38.

¹¹⁵³ Lycett 501.

use of religious figures in the poems discussed within this thesis shows that Kipling's intimate knowledge of the Bible and other religious texts was formidable.

Lord Cecil's comment proved irrelevant, since although Kipling did not embrace personal religious practice, his biography gave him unique qualification to fulfil the role of I.W.G.C 'wordsmith'. As Longworth states, as the cemeteries developed there was a requirement for diverse religious beliefs to be taken into account in the architectural artefacts and the graves themselves. Kipling knew this and made accommodation for it: '[t]he quotation from *Ecclesiasticus* that Kipling chose... "Their name liveth for evermore" – deliberately omitted a previous phrase which might have offended Hindus'.¹¹⁵⁴ The preceding phrase is: 'Their bodies are buried in peace;'.¹¹⁵⁵ This phraseology would have been offensive because the custom of Hindus is to cremate their dead.¹¹⁵⁶

The Commission struggled to advance the delicate work that it had undertaken: 'They had to set their own standards. What form of commemoration should be adopted?...They must find a balance between the public interest and private right.'¹¹⁵⁷ However, despite difficulties in decision-making, one element was quickly agreed by the Commission. The democratic ethos of the cemeteries was now officially the standard: 'there was to be "no distinction...between officers and men lying in the same cemeteries in the form or nature of the memorials"'.¹¹⁵⁸ This maintained the idea of a common sacrifice in a common cause.

According to Longworth, Kipling approved of the idea that each gravestone should bear the appropriate regimental insignia of the soldier buried there. As he told his

¹¹⁵⁴ Longworth 37.

¹¹⁵⁵ Rank, Tom. "Literary Connections: First World War Memorial Passages and Poems: Their Name Liveth for Evermore: Ecclesiasticus 44: 1-15," (2008), 24 June 2010
<http://www.literaryconnections.co.uk/resources/memorial_passages.html>3.

¹¹⁵⁶ William Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty, Delhi, 1857* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007) 24.

¹¹⁵⁷ Longworth Pp30.

¹¹⁵⁸ Longworth 33.

fellow Commissioners: ‘both officers and men desired “distinctive regimental headstone which could be identified in every quarter of the world where a soldier of their regiment may be buried....[For]...when a man is once in the Service, it is for his regiment that he works, with his regiment that he dies, and in his death he wishes to be remembered as one of the regiment”’.¹¹⁵⁹

The graves of the unknown were to be ‘marked with a headstone...[and]...some remark in their honour.’¹¹⁶⁰ Longworth indicates the difficulty with which Kipling produced the device: “A soldier of the Great War...Known unto God”.¹¹⁶¹ Any identification on a grave was only given after careful and thorough verification: ‘[t]he Commission aimed to be scrupulously precise’.¹¹⁶² Where a grave had disappeared in further battles, or an exact site had been forgotten ‘or there was doubt as to which, of...two graves belonged to which of two men...the Commission was anxious to make a full commemoration....Hence the formulae “Known to be buried in this cemetery” or “Buried near this spot”, or, in the case of graves lost or destroyed...Kipling’s...motto “Their glory shall not be blotted out”’.¹¹⁶³ A final personal touch was to be added by the relatives of the deceased, in the form of an ‘inscription or text for the headstone’.¹¹⁶⁴

Commemoration of the missing was one of the greatest problems the Commission faced: ‘[t]he missing dead had an equal right to remembrance, the anonymous grave an equal right to honour’.¹¹⁶⁵ But difficulties arose in ‘determining who they were, of the high proportion of the war dead that they formed, of whether the memorials should be...connected with general battlefield memorials...[and]...of where they should be

¹¹⁵⁹ Longworth 35.

¹¹⁶⁰ Longworth 43.

¹¹⁶¹ Longworth 43.

¹¹⁶² Longworth 43.

¹¹⁶³ Longworth 44.

¹¹⁶⁴ Longworth 44.

¹¹⁶⁵ Longworth 43.

sited'.¹¹⁶⁶ This latter problem was close to Kipling's heart after the loss of his son at Loos, especially since John's body was not found during Kipling's lifetime.

By May 1922, visitors such as Kipling were joined by '[m]ore exalted visitors...to pay homage in the half-finished cemeteries of France and Flanders...King George V and Queen Mary'.¹¹⁶⁷ Even so, commemoration of the missing 'had hardly begun'.¹¹⁶⁸ This was because the form of commemoration for them was undecided: 'Kipling's exposition of the Commission's policy, in *The Graves of the Fallen*, merely gave assurance "that the dead who have no known resting place will be made equal with the others. The result was a flood of letters... "panicking", as Kipling put it, "to know what will be done about the missing dead".¹¹⁶⁹ Kipling, in agreement with Ware, was against the idea of commemorating the missing with what he termed to be "'false graves"'¹¹⁷⁰ such as a headstone, where no body existed. Kipling also supported, in contradiction to his previous preference for commemoration by regiment, a proposal for commemoration by 'geographical basis...[because]... "The "regiment" to the temporary army means practically nothing while the "place" means everything'.¹¹⁷¹ John Kipling is commemorated on a tablet on the walls of the memorial at Dud Corner, within sight of the battlefield on which he died.

In May 1920, William Burdett-Coutts, Member of Parliament 'for Westminster...[and] the Commission's main parliamentary voice', quoted a letter of Kipling's to help defeat a vote of censure against the Commission: 'You see we shall never have any grave to go to. Our boy was missing at Loos....I wish some of the people who are making this trouble realised how more than fortunate they are to have a

¹¹⁶⁶ Longworth 43.

¹¹⁶⁷ Longworth 79.

¹¹⁶⁸ Longworth 82.

¹¹⁶⁹ Longworth 82.

¹¹⁷⁰ Longworth 83.

¹¹⁷¹ Longworth 85.

name on a headstone in a named place'.¹¹⁷² Burdett-Coutts, Kipling and the new Commission' Chairman, Winston Churchill, were responding to criticism of the Commission, initiated by relatives of the dead and the press.¹¹⁷³ Members of the Commission recognised how difficult it would be for bereaved members of the public to accept some of the recommendations put forward. Unfortunately however, the relationship of the Commission with the bereaved became extremely tense as it continued to enforce its ideas of democracy in death. By early 1919 '[i]t was all-out war on the Commission.'¹¹⁷⁴

It is evident that Kipling was highly influential in this furore, since Churchill asked him to address 'a meeting of service members of the Commons'¹¹⁷⁵ in order to engender support for the more controversial policies of the Commission and attempt to stem a growing tide of opposition against it and its aims. Kipling 'now buoyed with first-hand knowledge of conditions in the field...address[ed] a meeting of one hundred and fifty MPs who had served in the war...This helped rally support'.¹¹⁷⁶ In the end, it was not the literary importance of Kipling but the circumstances of his personal loss which provided the most influential factor.¹¹⁷⁷ By 1919, throughout the world: 'in all...there were to be 580,000 identified and 180,000 unidentified graves, and 530,000 men whose graves were not known – the million and more British dead of the Great War'.¹¹⁷⁸ All of these were commemorated, in part, by language and sentiments chosen by Kipling. This provided a culmination of his work to represent Tommy Atkins. Concurrently, the work of the Commission came to fruition. This was not without

¹¹⁷² Lycett 501.

¹¹⁷³ Lycett 501.

¹¹⁷⁴ Longworth 48.

¹¹⁷⁵ Longworth 51.

¹¹⁷⁶ Lycett 501.

¹¹⁷⁷ Longworth 52.

¹¹⁷⁸ Longworth 56.

difficulties in all aspects of the design, cost and structure, which according to Longworth required patient and lengthy negotiation over a period of several months.

Three model cemeteries provided a pattern for all and registration of the graves formed a crucial element of the enterprise. However, this did not supply sufficient information for bereaved relatives who began visiting the cemeteries in large numbers.¹¹⁷⁹

It was soon realised that many a relative was crossing the Channel without making previous enquiries...[about the location of a grave]....Kipling, a frequent visitor to France, looking in vain for the grave of his son, had seen many bereaved relatives wandering, confused, distressed and helpless from cemetery to cemetery. He pressed for a proper system of local enquiry offices and in September 1920 persuaded the Commission to allocate £4,500 for this purpose.¹¹⁸⁰

Lycett confirms the impression given by Longworth that Kipling spent a great deal of time in France. This was not only in the personal odyssey of searching for John but also in official, Commission work: ‘after more than two years’ involvement with the War Graves Commission, Rudyard wanted to see its work at first hand’.¹¹⁸¹ He began to visit the I.W.G.C. cemeteries (appendix 35). For example, throughout 1920, Kipling travelled extensively covering ‘nearly 1,500 miles...[whilst]...visiting some thirty cemeteries’.¹¹⁸² He reported that ‘[a]t Rouen he was struck by “the extraordinary beauty of the cemetery...and the almost heartbroken thankfulness of the relatives of the dead who were there”’.¹¹⁸³ In addition to the poetry that has been discussed, evidence of the effect that this had on him is given by his short story ‘The Gardener’.¹¹⁸⁴ Norman Page states that following a visit to Rouen cemetery in 1925 and discussion

¹¹⁷⁹ Longworth 78.

¹¹⁸⁰ Longworth 78.

¹¹⁸¹ Lycett 501.

¹¹⁸² Longworth 79.

¹¹⁸³ Longworth 79.

¹¹⁸⁴ ‘The Gardener’ was published in *McCall’s Magazine* in April 1926, *Strand Magazine* in May 1926 and *Debts and Credits* in 1926 Page 89.

with the Head Gardener there, Kipling began the work '[t]hat same evening'.¹¹⁸⁵ The subject of the narrative is an unmarried Englishwoman who visits the military cemetery in France in which her adoptive 'nephew', actually her son, is buried. When she is at first unable to find the grave the gardener (whom the reader recognises as Christ) directs her.¹¹⁸⁶ Page comments that this is an allusion to John. 20.15.¹¹⁸⁷ Despite Kipling's continued use in this story of the female subject perspective in the expression of grief, there can be no doubt that the narrative was personal. This illustrates the importance that he gave to the duty of cemetery visits served both in an individual and general capacity. He ensured that proper attention and remembrance were paid to the British Tommy killed in the war, whether or not he had a known grave. This could serve as proxy for his own son.

Kipling describes a proposed visit to cemeteries in France: 'I may put in a little time among the cemeteries again. And that reminds me to ask you to get some photoes of the Guards Cemetery at Bayonne and send them to me. I want to get those cemeteries under the control of the Imperial War Graves Commission if I can.'¹¹⁸⁸ He is anxious to ensure that the uniformity of memorial is maintained under the auspices of the Commission's guidelines. (Inspection of the international work with which the Commission was involved was one reason for the extensive travel noted by Longworth).

Inspection of memorials closer to home received equal attention from Kipling: 'We...went...to Winchester for lunch and to see the Baker War Memorial...to the dead Wykehamists....[T]his is quite the most exquisite beautiful, powerful and moving thing

¹¹⁸⁵ Page 90.

¹¹⁸⁶ Page 90.

¹¹⁸⁷ "'Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.'" *The Holy Bible New International Version*, John. 20.15.

¹¹⁸⁸ Rudyard Kipling, "To George Bambridge," 6 March 1921, Pinney (2004b) 58-59.

that has ever been done in that line.’¹¹⁸⁹ Kipling emphasises his appreciation of the memorial in a letter to Herbert Baker (appendix 36). Interestingly, his appreciation for the Baker War Memorial is absent in his discussion of the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, the memorial which represents national remembrance:

the unknown warrior’s tombstone delight me not – either in the lettering or the inscription. It looks as if Queen Alexandra and the Archbishop of Canterbury had had a night out together over it and that all the texts they had compromised upon had been added (like sampler work) all along the edges, unspeakably common!.¹¹⁹⁰

Visits to the cemeteries took a mental toll on Kipling. In correspondence with Rider Haggard he remarks: ‘[“]One never gets over the shock of this Dead Sea of arrested lives[”]’.¹¹⁹¹ Nevertheless by 1923, Kipling describes the work of the Commission as “the biggest single bit of work since any of the Pharoahs” adding, “and they only worked in their own country”.¹¹⁹² His writing was an essential element of that work. Through the I.W.G.C, the memorialisation of the dead Tommy Atkins figure had become a national institution, with the influence of Kipling at its core. Alongside this, his poetry continued to be viewed as pertinent:

What a wonderful poem – I do feel that thousands of eyes must have softened with pain as they read...thousands of hearts must have felt he is [*original emphasis*] helping us – he knows...the hand holding their hand – the wonderful sense of someone who not only understands but can say it for them...[M]ay...the intense gratitude that is flowing out to you from the stricken and dumb sufferers help you just a little (22/38 File 22/26 /Document 17).¹¹⁹³

¹¹⁸⁹ Rudyard Kipling, “To Elsie Bambridge,” 5 October 1925, Pinney (2004b) 265-267.

¹¹⁹⁰ Rudyard Kipling, “To Elsie Bambridge,” 19 July 1922, Pinney (2004b) 122-125.

¹¹⁹¹ Lycett 529.

¹¹⁹² Longworth 126.

¹¹⁹³ S.W. Colefax at Argyll House, 211 King’s Road, Chelsea, “To Rudyard Kipling,” [No Date]

The representation of Tommy Atkins built upon ideas that Kipling had engendered from the previous century and the early years of the twentieth century. However, in post-war Britain the figure of the soldier was now also a noble and sacrificial victim.

Perhaps the exertions on behalf of the Commission were cathartic for Kipling, or he felt that whatever he could not undertake for his own son, could be undertaken on behalf of someone else. Correspondence illustrates how great his feelings of loss remain, in the years following John's death: 'I'll do the best I can for the Inscription that you want...But I'm afraid I'm no good for unveiling Memorials to the dead – it cuts a bit too near.'¹¹⁹⁴ Kipling believed in the work of the Imperial War Graves Commission from its inception. His personal exertions on its behalf, are overwhelming evidence of this. Also apparent is his belief that the work was successful, despite opposition to many of its aims. As he writes in 1928: 'The Graves of the fallen in France are nearly all finished, and, though I say it who should not, the Cemeteries from Ypres to the end of our line look well and peaceful.'¹¹⁹⁵

The development of military cemeteries across Europe was a result of 'the unprecedented number of fallen during the First World War'.¹¹⁹⁶ If Mosse is accurate in asserting that post Great War military cemeteries occupied an exalted position, then Kipling's engagement with the war graves could only augment his status. The image of Tommy Atkins and his subsequent memorialisation was appropriated by the bereaved. He came to represent an ideal of flawless, sanctified soldierly perfection, not reflected in reality. It is impossible that every combatant could fulfil the heroic roles attributed to them. Discussions of the Great War soldier-figure invariably engage with the 'lions-led-by-donkeys' portrayal, which historically speaking is inaccurate and unfair. The poems of Kipling, including several of those in *The Years Between* collection and his

¹¹⁹⁴ Rudyard Kipling, "To H.A. Gwynne," 21 September 1928, Pinney (2004b) 453.

¹¹⁹⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "To [Harry Parker]," 17 April 1928, Pinney (2004b) 423-425.

¹¹⁹⁶ Mosse 81.

linguistic contributions to the work of the Commission, must be regarded as influential in this respect. Concomitant with this image of the unblemished soldier-hero was the knowledge that those who remained were consumed by a perpetual grief and guilt, which required recognition. Some later work, for example Kipling's 1923 poem 'London Stone,' written 'to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the armistice',¹¹⁹⁷ illustrates this. It exposes the raw emotions of the bereaved as they continue to mourn. The eight stanza poem is searing as it asks in stanza five:

Where's our help, from Earth or Heaven.
 (Grieving—grieving!)
 To comfort us for what we've given,
 And only gained the grieving?¹¹⁹⁸

The penultimate and final lines of this stanza question whether the sacrifice of Tommy Atkins was too great a cost. Every stanza repeats the phrase in parentheses '(Grieving—grieving!)'¹¹⁹⁹ which emphasises both the process and the personal loss. The grief which 'must last our whole lives through?' can only be endured through empathy with others: "*As I suffer, so do you.*" / That may ease the grieving.'¹²⁰⁰

Kipling began his depiction of Tommy Atkins to rejuvenate the position of the enlisted man in society. The work with the Imperial War Graves Commission was the pinnacle of that effort. Finally, the Tommy figure was no longer derided as worthless. Undoubtedly, this was partly because the new Tommy was representative of 'everyman'. For Kipling, this included his son. The Tommy's image, underpinned by Kipling's noble language, had itself acquired nobility and was purified by the individual

¹¹⁹⁷ Lycett 519.

¹¹⁹⁸ Rudyard Kipling, *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Definitive Edition* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982) 804.

¹¹⁹⁹ Rudyard Kipling (1982) 804.

¹²⁰⁰ Rudyard Kipling (1982) 804.

sacrifice that the soldiers undertook. Kipling's position had shifted from champion of the enlisted man to poet of the bereaved.

During the Great War, because the men who had enlisted were representative of every sector of society, the soldier figure emerged into a new cultural and memorial space of national loss. As volunteers, soldiers held special importance because they were ordinary men. There was an essential requirement for memorials and remembrance of the lost men and a fear that without such an undertaking there would be subsequent national amnesia about the events of the war.

In May 1918 *The Times* stated that Kipling's was a voice to which attention would be paid, in consequence of his literary reputation and his status as a celebrity and international man of letters. Moreover, his personal loss and sacrifice could be representative of all. He engaged with a new audience of grieving relatives, to whom his poetry and writing could open up the concept of bereavement for public scrutiny. His letter to André Chevrillon illustrates Kipling's belief in the necessity of patriotic sacrifice and righteous conflict and his position of bereaved parent allowed him to disseminate this comforting idea to other parents in the same position. The corollary of this was his involvement with the Imperial War Graves Commission. Again, the extent to which he contributed in terms of appropriate language for the memorials and later as an inspector of graves, was from the dual perspective of literary heavyweight and bereaved parent. This was an unintended influence on his reputation. Whereas throughout his life he had set out to develop and maintain his status, the loss of his son had thrust additional, unsought for pressure on him to be a voice for another sector of society who would find it difficult to speak for themselves, the dead and bereaved of the Great War.

Conclusion

This thesis examines the genesis and development of Rudyard Kipling's celebrated literary and personal reputation, which spanned five decades until his death in 1936 and the factors at work to construct and maintain that reputation. Jan Montefiore acknowledges the extent of Kipling's influence when she states that '[a]t the peak of his reputation in 1895, Kipling became an international celebrity of a kind previously unknown in Victorian England'.¹²⁰¹ Whilst her comment indicates the decline that was suffered in his influence in later years, the examination of his life and close-reading of his work and correspondence undertaken during this thesis demonstrate that despite this apparent decline, he remained a very powerful figure until his death. This thesis argues that personal management of his reputation was a crucial element in maintaining such life-long power and influence.

Chapter 1 begins the discussion on this subject, using as evidence the multiple, international obituaries and correspondence found in Volumes 28/15 – Obituary Notices (I) January 1936 and 28/16 – Obituary Notices (II) January 1936 in the Kipling Archive. According to a further, anonymous obituary in the *Times Literary Supplement* he was regarded as 'a national institution' all over the world, despite his 'literary activity [having been] slight for many years'.¹²⁰² This hints towards a notion of *management* of his reputation, since he could not place life-long reliance entirely on his writing to maintain his influence, as the popularity of his work began to diminish. Paradoxically, the anonymous obituarist states that: '[s]eldom had a famous national institution been the object of more hostile criticism; some of it, indeed, unfair and marred by lack of understanding, yet some of it damaging enough'.¹²⁰³ In chapter 1 of

¹²⁰¹ Jan Montefiore, *Rudyard Kipling* (Tavistock: Northcote House Publishers Ltd, 2007) 124.

¹²⁰² N/A, ["Rudyard Kipling's Place in English Literature,"] *Kipling: The Critical Heritage*, ed., Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) 384.

¹²⁰³ N/A ["Rudyard Kipling's Place in English Literature,"] 384.

this thesis, George Orwell's remarks confirm this idea, whilst concurrently exploring the conundrum of Kipling's apparent, continued authority after almost 50 years.

Montefiore argues that he 'owed the scale of his success as an internationally famous and discussed writer not only to his own talent, great as it was, but to the existence of an expanding publishing industry circulating its products world wide at the moment when he began to make his career as a London-based professional writer in 1889'.¹²⁰⁴ Kipling's father, John Lockwood confirms this in correspondence that is explored in chapter 2. His letter notes the dynamism of the cultural period and the entire chapter looks at how Rudyard became successful, the level of his success and his further great good-fortune, also explored in chapter 1, that the inception of the role of literary agent should coincide with Kipling's recognition that such an intermediary would be a necessary, additional tool for the management of his career.

Part of Kipling's self-management is discussed in chapter 2 in the earliest themes with which he engaged, for example, in his 1888 *Plain Tales from the Hills*. The unknown obituarist comments that 'in those early days he was the mouthpiece of classes and types that were not themselves vocal and had long lacked a chronicler. India, with its heat and dust, its diversities of creed and caste was suddenly brought to the door of the stay-at-home Englishman.'¹²⁰⁵ Portrayal of this under-represented group was Kipling's choice.

His familiarity with his chosen subjects continued into later years, even as those subjects changed. Chapter 4 of this thesis illustrates Kipling's intimate knowledge of the army. For example on page 120 which states that having read *Barrack Room Ballads*, A. E. Housman's soldier brother, George declares of Kipling that "There never was such a man...who understands "Tommy Atkins" in the rough, as he

¹²⁰⁴ Montefiore 124.

¹²⁰⁵ N/A ["Rudyard Kipling's Place in English Literature,"] 385.

does”’.¹²⁰⁶ In the Boer War chapter 5, it is shown that soldiers believed that Kipling knew them: ‘I read your Service Songs before the war with joy, but after putting in nine months in France with American Expeditionary Forces in the Infantry, I rediscovered them and now I recognise their intrinsic worth. As we used to say in the Platoon, “He knew the Game.” Than which there is no higher praise....You who know soldiers will understand’ (22/38 File 22/2 /Document 40).¹²⁰⁷

Since Kipling had the foresight to explore topics that he knew intimately and had experienced, additional verisimilitude could be found in his writing with which his readers heartily engaged. In addition, he used linguistic tools such as dialect and accent to add effect. The result was a huge readership which included the Anglo-Indian community, armchair English travellers, members of the armed forces (including the navy, an aspect not explored in this project) and enthusiastic readers across all aspects of society. Finally, chapter 7 examines his management of a role which was thrust upon him by tragic circumstance, spokesman of the bereaved. As a Commissioner for the Imperial War Graves Commission he could ensure that the memorialisation of the dead soldier was appropriate, timely and managed effectively. This included defending the IWGC itself against powerful detractors of its purposes. At least part of his defence owed its success to his reputation as ‘friend’ to the combatant.

Chapter 2 of this thesis explores a new aspect or insight into why Kipling may have so assiduously fostered specific self-imagery. This is an insight into his possible racial anxiety, which seems to have been unnoticed by critics and biographers and aspects of which are deliberately brought to the attention of Kipling’s cousin, Stanley Baldwin.

¹²⁰⁶ David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2003) 44.

¹²⁰⁷ Brooks Bradbury in New York, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 17 June 1922 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

Kipling's sister, Trix, hints that even at an early age on private publication of his work, *Schoolboy Lyrics*, Kipling reacted furiously. Later, she bemoans the wholesale destruction by her brother of family papers and suggests that this was undertaken so that any future 'reading' of Kipling and his family would be from his personal perspective. The obituarist of the *Times Literary Supplement* gives evidence of Kipling's personal authority over his own output. The obituary states in discussion of his work that '[m]ore of Kipling will go down to posterity than the fastidious literary critic is prepared to pass. The flaws are those of a great and original craftsman; in the most faulty productions there is power; one feels everywhere in them the grip of a strong hand.'¹²⁰⁸ This 'strong hand' is visible in all aspects of his writing, including his personal papers and correspondence and in discussion of his methods and aims. It confirms his self-management of his work and life. This thesis argues that in part, use of this determination is to combat Kipling's conscious and unconscious anxieties in relation to race and heritage.

This thesis has examined and deconstructed Kipling's correspondence and papers to explore the building of his status, because the letters reflect the ways in which he self-consciously 'micro-managed' the making of his reputation whilst confirming at the same time, as evidenced by fan letters from presidents, ambassadors, kings and members of a vast readership that his reputation was colossal.

¹²⁰⁸ N/A ["Rudyard Kipling's Place in English Literature,"] 389.

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University of Sussex Special Collections: Kipling Papers (SxMs38)

(Referenced according to labels on individual box/volume)

Boxes

1/38-John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence

2/38-Drawings/Sketches

3/38-John Lockwood Kipling Sketch Books

4/38-Kipling Papers [K/P]: Copyright

11/38-Correspondence Family

13 (1-7)/38-K/P: Correspondence: Kiplings

13 (8-20)/38-K/P: Correspondence: Kipling

14/38-K/P: Correspondence: A-D

15/38-K/P: Correspondence: F-Ha

16/38-K/P: Correspondence: Hi-L

17/38-K/P: Correspondence: M-Unidentified

Addressees

18/38-Correspondence: Personal and Social-General

19/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private

20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-
Public

21/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Public

22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-
Verse

23/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary Other
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24/38-K/P: Literary Manuscripts

25/38-K/P: Literary manuscripts

27/38-K/P: Lists-Personalia

29/38-K/P: Loose Cuttings

30/38-K/P: Printed Books Kipling

32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling's Children

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28/1-Rudyard Kipling Articles and Verses 1884-1886

28/2-Album-Articles and Poems by Rudyard Kipling 1885

28/3-Articles and Poems by Rudyard Kipling 1886-1887

28/6-Miscellaneous South African War 1899-1902

28/7-Stories, Poems and Articles Newspaper Cuttings 1910-1930

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28/10-Various Book Reviews and Articles about Rudyard Kipling
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Ad. 24 Kipling, R. (Un-numbered Box) Additions 1-36/38-K/P

Ad. 31 Kipling, R. (Un-numbered Box) Additions 1-36/38-K/P

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Rudyard Kipling: The Making of a Reputation
Appendix

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DPhil in English Literature

University of Sussex

August 2012

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Appendix 1: The University of Sussex Kipling Archive

In *Archives In Education* [1995], Ian Coulson and Anne Crawford state that the ‘main concern of archivists and the principal purpose of...record office[s] is the preservation of original documents’.¹ The book discusses archival material in teaching, but its arguments also have a broader context. For example, that the use of ‘letters or diary accounts distinguish between a fact and a point of view and how attitudes and circumstances can influence an individual’s interpretation of historical events’.² It specifically discusses the role of local and national record offices, yet the notion of preservation is espoused within the fabric and context of all archives. An archive allows the collection, centralisation, conservation, restoration, retrieval, dissemination and interpretation of surviving historical documents and artefacts. Those which are too precious, or fragile, to be available in the public domain may be carefully conserved and stored. Post conservation and prior to storage, it may possible for expert conservators to copy the information that is contained within the artefacts. These reproductions are then available for research, preventing loss of the information. These texts may be re-examined from a contemporary perspective, with the advantage of an ‘overview’ provided by chronological distance and the possible existence of more recent, relevant, additional material. The provision of central archival storage and retrieval should allow ready access to the materials to be explored.

The composition and structure of an archive dedicated to the personal and public papers of any individual is specific, or exclusive in nature. Whilst it must fulfil all the criteria already, generally stated, to ensure the overall preservation of artefacts and data, there must be an additional personal and to some extent memorial function, which may not be in the terms of reference of a more general archive. Such a dedicated collection

¹ Ian Coulson and Anne Crawford, eds., *Archives In Education* (London: Public Records Office Publications, 1995) 4.

² Coulson and Crawford 3.

can provide a specific perspective of that person, since there is an opportunity for the subject themselves to ‘speak’ through their personal papers. Of course, the subject is mediated through other perspectives, that of other contributors to the archive, the archivists, who may be selective in the content of a collection, or choose to arrange the material to give a specific viewpoint and those researchers who read and utilise archive material. Nonetheless, it may be the closest that it is possible to come to actual engagement with a subject, after his or her death.

The University of Sussex Kipling Archive at Falmer is the repository for the major portion of the papers, correspondence and manuscripts that relate to the life and work of Rudyard Kipling. It is one of several Special Collections held at the University site. The history of the Kipling Archive is detailed on the University of Sussex Special Collections Website.³ The website and the corresponding catalogue⁴ state that:

The Kipling Archive was deposited at the University of Sussex by the National Trust in 1978. The papers were accumulated by Rudyard Kipling, his wife Carrie [Caroline] and their daughter Elsie Bambridge. Elsie was Kipling’s only surviving descendant and, with the help of Kipling’s former secretary Cecily Nicholson, she began to sort the documents she had inherited. To ease the task of the official biographer, Mrs Bambridge regained possession of further letters in the sale-room and had copies made of others which remained in private hands. When she died in 1976, a childless widow, Wimpole Hall (her Cambridgeshire home) and its archive passed to the National Trust.⁵

The archive is extensive and described in the catalogue and on the website as an: ‘incomparable resource’. This is a justifiable claim, since the large amount of material available in the Collection relates to Kipling’s entire career. (In addition to the Main Kipling Collection, there is a series of additional boxes and seventeen other related

³ ‘Introduction,’ University of Sussex Library Special Collections Kipling Archive 6 March 2007 <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/speccoll/collection_introductions/kipling.html>. The other elements of the Kipling Archive can be accessed via links.

⁴ Neil Parkinson, ed., *Poets and Polymaths: Special Collections at The University of Sussex* (Brighton: University of Sussex, 2002).

⁵ ‘Archival History,’ University of Sussex Library Special Collections Kipling Archive 6 March 2007 <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/speccoll/collection_descriptions/kipling.html>.

collections, purchased by the University, at a date later than the relocation of the Main Collection. Details can be found in the catalogue).⁶ This career spanned more than five decades, since from his earliest years Kipling was a prolific writer.⁷ It also encompasses many areas of his personal and family life: 'Three generations of Kiplings are represented, as the Archive also contains papers relating to Rudyard's father, John Lockwood Kipling, and his three children, Josephine, John and Elsie'.⁸ Also included, in the additional papers, is a set of letters between Caroline Kipling and her mother, which 'record the personal life of the Kipling's, including the military career and early death of John Kipling (1897-1915), their only son',⁹ as well as correspondence with other, more distant family members.¹⁰

The Kipling Archive contains a range of materials, in addition to personal and public letters, both to and from Kipling. This includes a substantial body of correspondence with official bodies and with influential, famous and public figures of the day, some of whom were colleagues and acquaintances. To each category he corresponded frequently and at length. In addition to the renowned array of published texts and poems, there are manuscripts, notebooks, music, albums of family photographs, sketch books, personal memorabilia, examples of early publications, printed and official papers and volumes of cuttings, which detail Kipling's career progress, major life events and death. The website notes that the contents of the Archive illustrate '[t]he truly international career (Lahore, South Africa, Vermont, East Sussex[sic]) of a writer

⁶ Parkinson (2002).

⁷ Kipling began work on the staff of the *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore in 1882. Prior to this his *Schoolboy Lyrics* were privately printed in 1881. He was working on the autobiographical *Something of Myself* at the time of his death in 1936. It was published posthumously in 1937. Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986) 15.

⁸ 'Introduction,' 6 March 2007.

⁹ 'Introduction,' 6 March 2007. Parkinson (2002). Caroline Kipling's letters to her mother are held as a later part of the collection, as microfilm in the Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Letters.

¹⁰ The Macdonald and Baldwin Papers are later, separate additions which contain material made by and concerning the extended Kipling family.

at work in momentous times'.¹¹ Thomas Pinney has edited and published a series of collections of the letters of Kipling, principally using the Sussex Archive. As he remarks: '[a]s a letter writer...he is copious, he is various, and he is always interesting... his letters exhibit the same abilities as his more carefully planned and frequently revised work for publication...[they] evoke Kipling's alert and lively interest in the world around him.'¹²

Access to the Kipling Collection is simple, in that no special permission is required to view much of the material, by appointment. The main Collection is stored in 33 identical, consecutively numbered and indexed boxes. There are further identical boxes, which are mainly un-numbered, containing Addition Files 1-40. The indexing of the boxes is topical. For example, boxes 1-3¹³ relate to the correspondence, drawing and sketches of John Lockwood Kipling. Boxes 11-23¹⁴ relate entirely to correspondence to and from the Kiplings and their family, personal and public. Each box contains a set of numbered light brown folders. These are the document files. Each of these files contains a varying number of documents, or artefacts. For example, Box 20/38¹⁵ contains files 20/12-14, 20/16 & 20/17, 20/19-22, 20/24, & 20/26-/28, which are full of documents relating to specific international honours which were offered, or awarded, to Kipling. File 20/19 is letters and Post Office telegraphs relating to an offer of membership to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in November 1899. File 20/16 contains a letter relating to the offer of an Honorary Degree from the University of Paris, in July 1921. Some of the files are personal and intrusive. For example, an entire file is dedicated to one document on the topic of the chronic ill health that

¹¹ 'Introduction,' 6 March 2007.

¹² Thomas Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 1: 1872-89* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1990a) vii.

¹³ 1/38-John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence. 2/38-Drawings/Sketches of John Lockwood Kipling and 3/38-John Lockwood Kipling Sketch Books.

¹⁴ See Bibliography for the full description of these Kipling Archive resources.

¹⁵ 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public.

eventually killed Kipling. It is a copy of a typed, chronological, clinical history of his illnesses, as copied from the diaries of his wife, Caroline (Carrie), between 1915 and his death in 1936. Undated, although known to be typed shortly after his death, it states: 'For twenty-years Mr. Rudyard Kipling suffered from duodenal ulcer. He endured constant and often acute pain, sicknesses, haemorrhages and ultimately perforation, when he died' (25/38 File 25/14 Document D).¹⁶ The document lists consultations with 14 doctors and 4 surgeons throughout this last illness.

In the additions section, two files are of particular interest. In Box Adds 26 (2), (noted as Ad. 26) Files 2/3, 2/7, 2/10, 2/12, are individual photographs of the three Kipling children, Josephine, Elsie and John and a pocket Kodak 6" x 9" black embossed, landscape photograph album, with the Kipling insignia (figs. 27 and 28). This contains a large number of early family photographs.

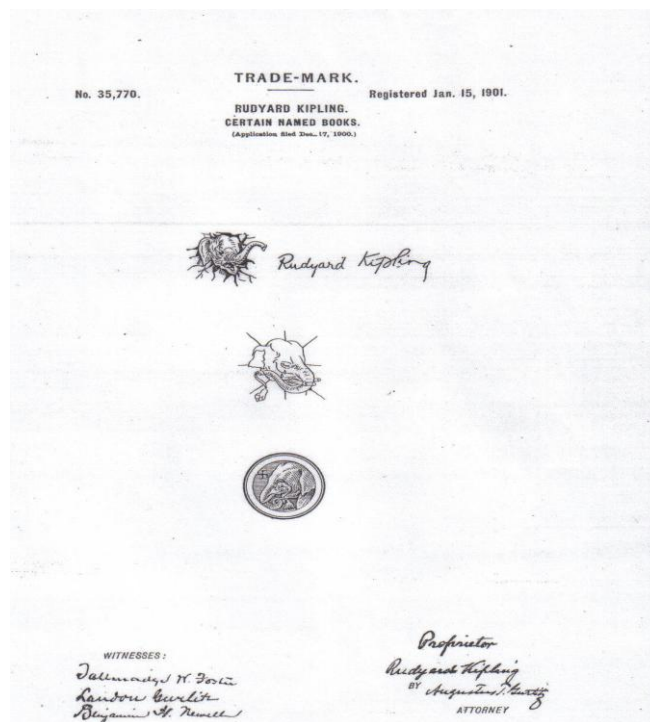


Fig. 27 Kipling Trademark at the United States Patent Office. Described by Kipling as having been used by him, in these formats, since December 1888 (4/38 File 4/9).

¹⁶ 25/38-K/P: Literary Manuscripts.



Fig. 28 Cover to the Kipling Archive Catalogue at the University of Sussex. The insignia appears on many Kipling papers, both published and unpublished.

The second file of note in this section is Ads 40, in particular Document Ad. 40. This is a plain blue book with the inscription, Rudyard Kipling, on the front cover, dated London 1946-1948. The book contains extracts from Caroline Kipling's diary 'copied from the originals at Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire, 1946-1948 by Douglas Rees for Lord Birkenhead',¹⁷ with summaries of letters from, or about, Rudyard Kipling. At times, it gives a further insight and Caroline's perspective on an event, letter or statement, given by Kipling in his own papers. The diary includes an annual comment, written by him, at the close of each year. It is noted in the introduction that:

The following pages are the carbon copies of summaries made for the Earl of Birkenhead...while collecting material for the official biography of Rudyard Kipling. As the majority of these are of a confidential nature this book must on no account be sold at any time whatsoever. Some of the extracts, many of them in fact, are copyright to Kipling's literary

¹⁷ 'Catalogue,' University of Sussex Library Special Collections Kipling Papers 18 September 2008 <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/speccoll/collection_catalogues/kipling.html>

legatee and therefore sale of this book might lead to infringement of copyright (File Ads. 40 Document Ad. 40).¹⁸

In addition to the boxes there is a series of 18 volumes of cuttings, articles, verses, stories and speeches which relate to Kipling and a further three volumes of similar material which relate to his father, John Lockwood Kipling. These vary greatly in both appearance and contents. For example, Volume 28/2¹⁹ is an album of 48 pages, which has thick, brown, woven covers, with an ornate decoration of a framed, classical, Grecian style, female figure in relief on the front. The word 'Album' is written and decorated after the style of illuminated text and handwritten on this cover is the title *Articles Poems by R.K. Vol. 2 1885*. The articles and poems are pasted in, dated by hand and each page is numbered by hand, in pencil. Attached to the inside flyleaf is a handwritten index and the inside of the cover has the Kipling insignia (see fig. 28). The album is in an outer protective box of thick, brown linen effect card noted on the Kipling Archive Catalogue website²⁰ as being 10 1/2" x 8 1/2". It is just slightly smaller than the box.

Volume 28/3²¹ is a much larger book, at 17 1/2" x 11 1/2", with 151 pages. It appears to be more luxurious, being a bound volume in burgundy and plum leather. The spine, wrap around and corners are burgundy edged in gold. The spine has five decorative cross pieces, also edged in gold. *Rudyard Kipling His Book* is written in gold lettering on the front, with 1886-1887, Vol. 3 written in hand, also on the front. The inside cover has the Kipling insignia pasted on it. The flyleaf has a handwritten index of cuttings, of which at least 15 of those indexed are poems published in *Departmental Ditties* (1886).

¹⁸ (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

¹⁹ 28/2-Album-Articles and Poems by Rudyard Kipling 1885.

²⁰ 'Catalogue,' 15 March 2007. These articles are noted as having been published in *The Pioneer*, 1885.

²¹ 28/3-Articles and Poems by Rudyard Kipling 1886-1887.

In his autobiography, *Something of Myself*, Kipling describes these as ‘a collection of newspaper verses on Anglo-Indian life...dealing with things known and suffered by many people’.²² Several pages have been roughly removed from the beginning of the book and the remaining pages are rather mottled and a little damaged. There is hand dating of several articles. The articles and poems are pasted into the book.

In contrast, Volume 28/9²³ is slightly smaller at 15” X 11” and is in poor condition. It is made of thick card covered by thin leather and the corners and badly damaged spine are in burgundy leather with no edging. *Newspaper Cuttings* is written in gold lettering and *Speeches 1907-1935* is written by hand. There is no Kipling insignia and the contents are alphabetically indexed by hand. There is a hand-written note of which speeches are collected in which published books.²⁴

Three volumes referenced as Volumes 28/19, 28/20, & 28/21 are press cuttings from when John Lockwood Kipling was a regular correspondent for the *Pioneer* newspaper, in India, between 1870-73, 1873-77 & 1877-97. The quantity of material carefully gathered and arranged in the 18 books, is an indication of the fond interest evinced by Kipling’s family in his career and success. The other three volumes indicate a similar level of interest in the newspaper work of his father. They vary greatly in both appearance and contents.

There are two particularly interesting volumes in this set.²⁵ They are filled with pasted cuttings of notices from the international, national and local press. What is noteworthy in these two, large scrap-books²⁶ is the high level of international and national interest

²² Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For My Friends Known and Unknown* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1964) 68.

²³ 28/9-Speeches 1907-1935.

²⁴ N. B. In the web Catalogue, there are two volumes of cuttings indexed as 28/9. ‘Catalogue,’ 15 March 2007. In the actual collection, the volume, *Stories and Poems 1930-1937 /Miscellaneous Cuttings 1891-1945* Volume 8 is referenced as 28/8.

²⁵ 28/15 and 28/16 Rudyard Kipling Obituary Notices Volumes (I) and (II) January 1936.

²⁶ Both volumes are noted in the Catalogue as being 161/2” x 121/2” and 98 and 99 pages. ‘Catalogue,’ 15 March 2007.

that was displayed in Kipling at his death. The handwritten index, which is pasted onto the flyleaf of Volume II, denotes a huge number of cuttings in a ledger-like book which is hand numbered to 99 pages. These include numerous U.S., French and national and regional U.K. papers. Also included are the German, Indian, Canadian, Belgian, Rumanian, Moroccan, Italian, Swiss, Australian, Malayan, Maltese, Algerian and Dutch Press, as well as contributions from the 'Dominions' and from Luxembourg. They offer a remarkable insight into the influential position that was held by Kipling in 1936, the year that he died.

Working with the different types of documents in the Kipling Archive is not without difficulty. The amount of material held in the Collection means that it took over a year of regular visits to read through it all. Many of the documents have been photocopied which makes them much easier to handle, since there are no additional precautions required as there would be in handling the originals. If it was required, as for example when Files 24/1-24/4 were examined, it was possible to request access to the original documents. These files are manuscript notebooks of verses, in either Kipling's hand or that of his mother and father. It was difficult to determine the chronology of the works from the photocopies alone, as well as some of the copies being of poor quality. In addition, the poems are numbered in his own hand, according to Kipling's own, rather quirky system. It is unclear whether the numbers relate to pages or poems, although the former seems likely. Reading the original manuscripts added clarity and allowed the alterations to the poems to be tracked, chronologically.

Much of the correspondence, from many sources, is handwritten. This was often difficult to read, Kipling being one of the more challenging writers to interpret. At times, comments and words in his handwriting were completely indecipherable, becoming even less legible as he aged. As Kipling notes himself, relating to his early

writing career: ‘Mem. In future alter the formation of my w’s which are printed as double o’s: thus giving wild appearances to innocent words’ (16/38 File 16/5 Document 82).²⁷ Sometimes, he added comments to the borders and edges of his letters, which obscured elements of the text (figs. 29 and 30).

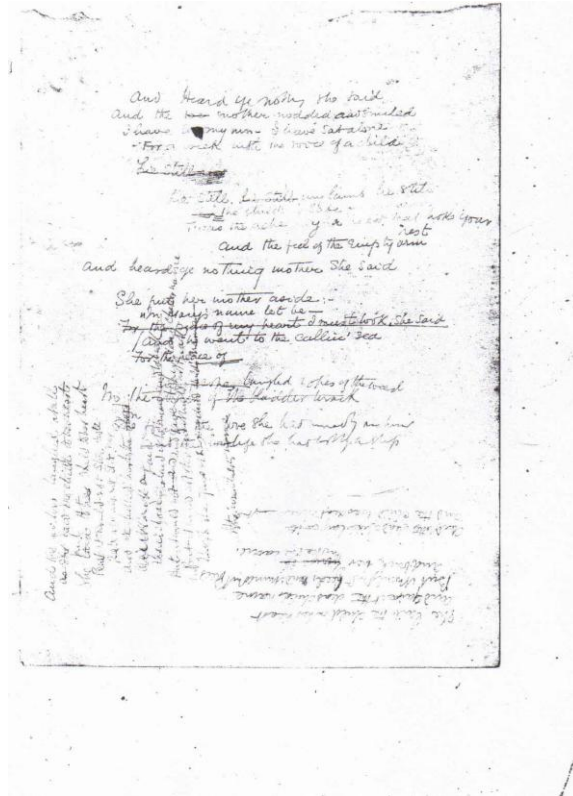


Fig. 29 Part of a file of handwritten versions of ‘The Gift of The Sea’ (24/38 File 24/23). Note the difficulty in reading the handwriting and the corrections, erasures and writing of one verse over another.

²⁷ Rudyard Kipling at Embankment Chambers, Villiers Street The Strand, London, “To Mrs Edmonia Hill,” in Allahabad, India, 18 November 1889. 16/38-K/P: Correspondence Hi-L.

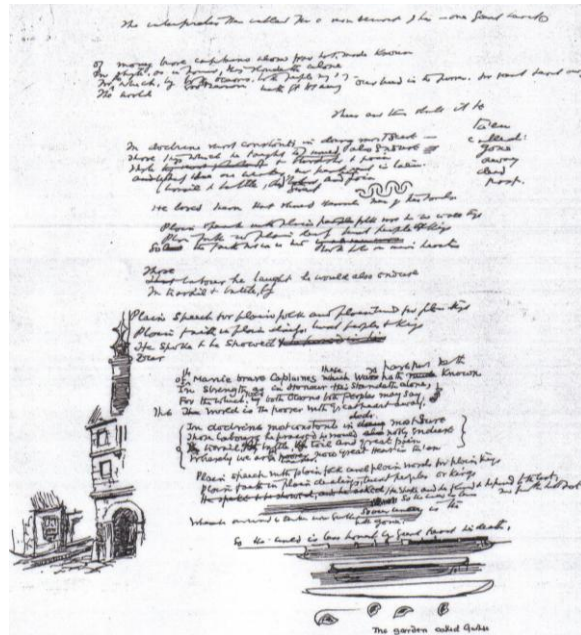


Fig. 30 Part of a file of handwritten and illustrated versions of 'Great Heart'. Also included in the file are pen and ink drawings, independent of the poems (24/38 File 24/27).

Kipling notes of his writing in 1915:

As to handwriting, I sprawl in dust and ashes, because I've had my own punishment. It's one of my correspondents who writes absolutely the foulest fists that ever was and I've had to puzzle and swear my way through his infernal communications for weeks past. The wife stands by and reads me Moral Lectures saying: — "Ah! Now You see what it means!" I do! I'm sorry. Bad writing is a Crime besides being an Insolence and an Outrage and a Waste of Time.²⁸ (figs. 31 and 32).

²⁸ Rudyard Kipling, "To C. R. L Fletcher," 10 April 1915, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 4: 1911-19*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1999) 295-296. Fletcher was 'the Oxford historian with whom [Kipling] had collaborated in a *History of England* for schools' [1911] Carrington (1986) 553.

15 April 10 1915

April 10. 1915.

Dear Fletcher

as to handwriting I sprawl in dust and ashes. because I've had my own punishment. It's one of my correspondents who writes absolutely the foulest fists that ever was and I've had to puzzle and sweat my way through his infernal communications for weeks past. The wife stands by and reads me Moral lectures saying: "Ah! Now you see what it means!" I do! I'm sorry. Bad writing is a Crime besides being an insolence and an outrage and a waste of Time. I am full of the zeal of the convert. We're up for the week-end to meet my boy who has a night off. I thought I told you John got a commission in The Irish Guards

Brown's Hotel,
London, W. 1.

April 10. 1915.

Dear Fletcher,

As to handwriting I sprawl in dust and ashes, because I've had my own punishment. It's one of my correspondents who writes absolutely the foulest fists that ever was, and I've had to puzzle and sweat my way through his infernal communications for weeks past. The wife stands by and reads me Moral Lectures saying: "Ah! Now you see what it means!" I do! I'm sorry. Bad writing is a Crime besides being an insolence and an outrage and a waste of Time. I am full of the zeal of the convert.

We're up for the week-end to meet my boy who has a night off. I thought I told you John got a commission in the Irish Guards last September, about three weeks after his seventeenth birthday. Since then he has learned what work means and has liked both it and his Irish. He's at Warley in Brentwood which isn't a gay place and he is, or was, Senior Ensign. It's an amazing world! Of course I skated off the Eton question - after you'd clubbed me over the head with a loaded stick. (By the way I've turned in the facts you gave me about the College to a man who needed enlightenment and they have eased his mind.) But you did defend Lyttleton. You said in effect "the prisoner is guilty but violently insane" - or words to that effect. And, as I said, I call that a very efficient defence. Glad you told me about L.'s "scholastic attainments". I'd hate to think that he was accurate about anything.

Your deep and welling affection for Cambridge reminds me of what Roosevelt wrote me about Wilson a few months ago. "He comes of a Virginian family no member of which took any part in the fighting on either side during our Civil War." I have a notion that I may have written you this before, but it is a beautiful sentence.

In my spare times at Bath I've been reading Jane Austen and the more I read the more I admire and respect and do reverence. What are your views? When she looks straight at a man or a woman she is greater than those who were alive with her - by a whole head. Greater than Charles; greater than Walter; with a more delicate hand and a keener scalpel. I have suspected it for a long time but, like my friend the South African millionaire who discovered the Bible in my presence, in his thirtieth year, now I am sure.

Figs. 31 and 32 Rudyard Kipling at Brown's Hotel, London, "To C. R. L. Fletcher", April 10th 1915. Letter and transcript (15/38 File 15/4 Document 15).

This may explain why some of the material has been transcribed, as well as copied. For example, in box 13 (8-20), all files in section 8-16 are the typed transcripts of the photocopies and original letters of box 13 (1-7). From 13/17 onwards, the photocopies and transcripts are next to each other in the same box.²⁹ But this too has caused some difficulties. The transcriptions are not always accurately performed and alterations are made from the original text, for example when Kipling writes: '[t]he Hotel Brighton, where they never admit that I am, is a very present refuge in times of trouble'.³⁰ The transcription notes the word 'present' as 'pleasant', even though 'present' is actually quite clear. 'Pleasant' is of course still a word which is correct in this usage and it reads better anyway. The error could be deemed to be quite minor.

However, this is not always the case. The difficulties of working from originals, photocopies and transcripts where corrections are made by other researchers and archivists, can be illustrated by the example of one of the most poignant letters of the whole collection. In it Kipling writes:

Our boy was reported "wounded & missing" since Sep. 27 – the battle of Loos and we've heard nothing official since that date...He was senior ensign tho' only 18 years and 6 weeks, had worked like the devil for a year at Warley...I'm sorry that all the years [*sic*] work ended in that one afternoon...The wife is standing it wonderfully tho' she of course clings to the bare hope of his being a prisoner.³¹

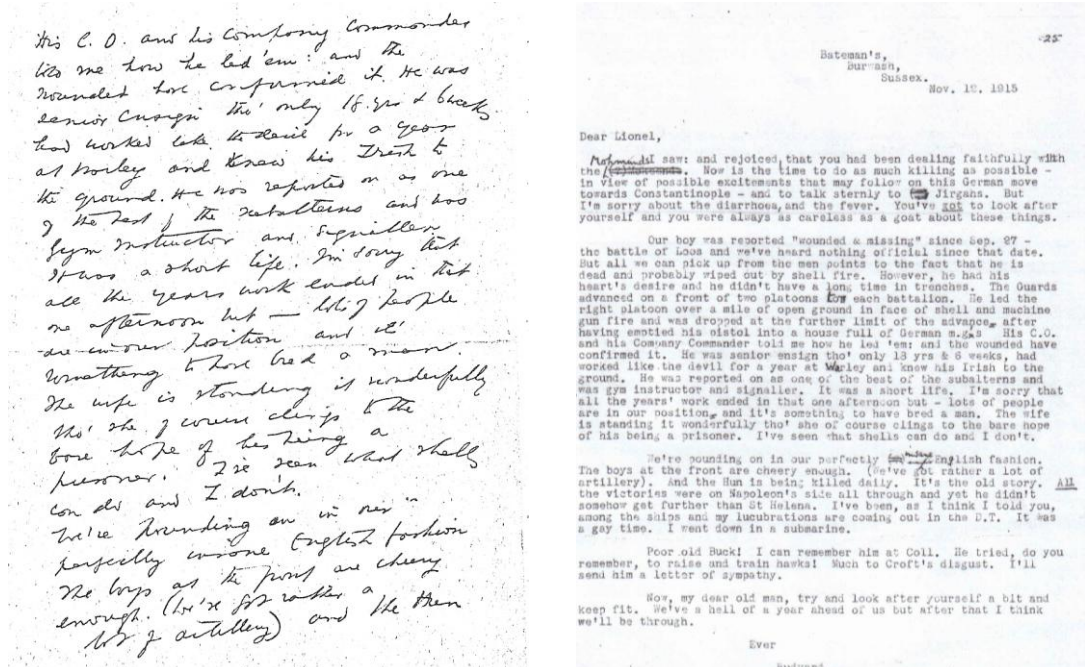
The comment 'years work' is clearly *without* apostrophe in the photocopy of the original (Pinney also publishes the letter in this form). An apostrophe is added in the transcript, which gets rid of the ambiguity of whether Kipling is writing about a military

²⁹ 13 (1-7)/38 and 13 (8-20)/38-K/P: Correspondence: Kiplings.

³⁰ Rudyard Kipling, "To Caroline and Elsie Kipling," 23 August 1915, Pinney (1999) 333-335. 13 (8-20)/38. Files 13/17 and 13/18 are photocopies of the original, handwritten letters. File A.14 is the accompanying transcript.

³¹ Rudyard Kipling, "To Colonel Lionel Charles Dunsterville," 12 November 1915, Pinney (1999) 344-345.

year's work at Warley, or the years' work of the entire life and upbringing of John. The alteration clearly indicates the latter interpretation (figs. 22 and 23 – see also chapter 7).



Figs. 22 and 23 Rudyard Kipling at Batemans, "To General Lionel Dunsterville", November 12th 1915. Letter and transcript (14/38 Files 14/51 & 14/52 Documents Un-numbered and 25).

Logic suggests that the assumption made in the transcript is correct. However, other correspondence in the files casts doubt over this interpretation:

I met him a few days after his boy had been posted as "wounded and missing"...Mr. Kipling had no inclination to appeal for sympathy. All he said was, "The boy had reached the supreme moment of his life, what would it avail him to outlive that?" And the father concentrated himself not on revenge, but on writing words that would comfort the bereaved and warn the world against making too easy conditions with a ruthless enemy. This showed the Kipling with a strong sense of duty and a deep love of his country (32/38 File 32/6 Document A).³²

(This is a response to a lecture given and publicised (in the *Daily Telegraph*, July 31st & *Daily Mirror* July 29th) in July 1936 by Oliver Baldwin, second cousin to Kipling.

³² This is taken from the photocopy of a transcript of a letter from D.C. Ponton, former tutor to Elsie. No date is given. 32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling's Children.

Baldwin purported to have known Kipling well after the death of John, the war and in his latter years. Baldwin was attempting to make claims about his cousin. These are mentioned in Ponton's letter: 'In September, 1915, his son was posted as missing at the Battle of Loos. From this date Kipling became an entirely different man. All the lovely side of his nature died in him. Broken by the loss of his son in the war, Kipling concentrated himself in revenge' (32/38 File 32/6 Document A).³³

However improbable it seems to a current, contemporary reader, there is a possibility, suggested by this latter correspondence, that Kipling did mean the single year of training. Thus, by inaccurate reproduction the role of the transcript has been altered from reporting to interpreting the data that it seeks to reproduce. There is further ambiguity in the final sentence of the letter to Lionel Dunsterville: 'We've a hell of a year ahead of us but after that I think we'll be through.'³⁴ It is unclear whether Kipling is referring to the coming year for himself and Carrie, or the war, its course and the English nation and its power of endurance. If it is a personal reference then one year seems rather brief, if grieving for an only son. Again, logic suggests that Kipling is referring to the war. However, the interpretation of that sentence may be made in the light of the absent, or added, apostrophe, which although it appears to be a minute physical alteration, may be crucial in directing a possible reading of the personality and character of Kipling. Other errors and omissions in transcription may not be so easy to determine. (This important letter receives close reading and discussion in chapter 7 – Poet of the Bereaved).

With some documents it is easy to see why errors have occurred. In copying a word which is totally illegible, there has been an attempt at a 'best guess' at what that word may be. This is open to the individual interpretation of any researcher, or biographer,

³³ 32/38.

³⁴ Rudyard Kipling, "To Colonel Lionel Charles Dunsterville," 12 November 1915, Pinney (1999) 344-345.

who uses the Archive. Kipling began using a typewriter in later life, which did help close reading of his correspondence. However, his typing was indifferent at times, with errors in punctuation, spelling and grammar: ‘After all, why shouldn’t I inflict some of my own typing on you? It’s a good deal clearer than my own hand of write.’³⁵ Of course these could be easily read. However, they may still require a level of interpretation since Kipling does not often correct them.

It is astounding to consider the huge amount of manuscript material that is still available to examine at the Archive. As Pinney observes ‘Kipling was a determined destroyer of personal papers, animated by a fierce resentment of the fact that his privacy was always subject to invasion...Kipling’s destructions included most of the letters sent to him’.³⁶ Kipling had commented on this subject as early as 1925: ‘There is nothing sadder, I think than going through the papers of a man of mind & vigour – after his death. One comes across such an immense amount of work set out & not done: and one sees bits of his real self in the queerest places.’ (15/38 Files 15/4 & 15/5 Documents 41/827 & 42).³⁷

³⁵ Rudyard Kipling, “To H. A. Gwynne,” 20-21 March 1926, *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling Volume 5: 1920-30*, ed. Thomas Pinney (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004b) 278-281.

³⁶ Pinney, (1990a) editorial and introduction xi.

³⁷ Rudyard Kipling at Batemans, “To C.R .L. Fletcher,” 18 September 1925 15/38-K/P: Correspondence F-Ha.

Appendix 2: Manuscript Gift of *Rewards and Fairies*

On behalf of the Syndics of the University Library I may say that we should be proud indeed to accept the MS of *Rewards and Fairies* which you so kindly offer us. Certainly I will see that your wishes are respected; that no public announcement is made of the present; and that nobody except myself has any access to it, at least during your lifetime, and that no collating is ever to be permitted. (I might mention that it is on these terms that we hold a [*sic*] MS of the late Lord Tennyson's (23/38 File 23/24 Un-numbered document).¹

¹ B. F. Scholfield at the University Library, Cambridge, "To Rudyard Kipling," 9 July 1926 23/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary Other Works-Other Writers etc.

Appendix 3: Admiration of 'Recessional'

You will see by this morning's Times that we fulfilled our happy commission yesterday, and I sigh with contentment to think of your splendid hymn [Recessional] spreading over the world by tonight. It seems to me to be a perfect piece of work and a beautiful, and what more is wanted? Uncle Ned and Phil join in admiration and delight' (22/38 File 22/49 Document 19)¹

¹ Aunt Georgiana [Georgie] Burne-Jones, "To Rudyard Kipling," 17 July 1897 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

Appendix 4: ‘Recessional’ and Imperial Fame

Another overt and early link between Kipling, ideas of Englishness and imperial affinities is expressed in a letter sent to him in September 1897:

I thought you might care to know that your noble hymn “A Recessional” [*sic*] was sung for the first time in South Africa in St. Mary’s Collegiate Church...at the church parade, held...for the Volunteer returnees from active service at the close of the Langberg campaign (22/38 File 22/49 /Document A23).¹

¹ A.T. Wingman, Senior Chaplain to the Colonial Forces in South Africa, “To Rudyard Kipling,” September 1897 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

Appendix 5: Poem About the Press

According to Rutherford: ‘[t]he following stanza is preserved in a letter from Low in the Library of Congress in which he says it comes from [“]an unpublished poem of 40 lines[”]’.¹ Kipling’s views are clear:

There is gold in the News they call Daily,
 There is pence [*sic*] in the sheets of Pall Mall,
 But I whistle in front of them gaily
 And softly consign them to — well,
 If *you*, Sir, had suffered my anguish
 Alone, ’neath [*sic*] a tropical sun,
 You’d let every newspaper languish,
 Ere making a contract with one.²

¹ Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 469.

² Rutherford 469.

Appendix 6: Silk Copy of ‘The Absent Minded Beggar’

In Box 30/38-K/P: Printed Books Kipling File 30/1 is a presentation copy, printed on padded silk, of the poem, ‘The Absent Minded Beggar’. In triptych format, with a sepia image of, ‘A Gentleman in Khaki’, between verses II and III. There is a dedication: ‘This souvenir is presented by Mrs. Langtry on the occasion of the 100th performance of the “Degenerates” at the Garrick Theatre. For permission to use Mr. Kipling’s poem Mrs. Langtry has made to the “Daily Mail” [*sic*] a contribution of £100 for the benefit of the wives and children of the reservists fighting in South Africa’. Daily Mail Publishing Co. copyright 1899.

Kipling discusses the purpose of the poem in *Something of Myself* in the chapter on the Boer War. The extract is pasted into one of the books of cuttings:

Money was wanted to procure small comforts for the troops at the front, and, [*sic*] to this end, “The Daily Mail” started what must have been a very early “stunt”. It was agreed that I should ask the public for subscriptions. That paper charged itself with the rest.¹

¹ (28/8, 1930-1937 & 1891-1945, 73) 28/8 Stories and Poems 1930-1937 /Miscellaneous Cuttings 1891-1945.

Appendix 7: Canadian Authors' Tribute

National and international associations wrote and cabled to Caroline, to express their regret at Kipling's death:

All the members of the Canadian Authors [*sic*] Association most earnestly sympathize [*sic*] in irreparable loss Stop With homage to the greatest master of the English tongue and gratitude to the inspired and inspiring spokesman of the Empires [*sic*] soul we unite personal love for the man of great warm heart he lives on immortal in hearts of kindred millions (20/38 File 20/5 Document A8).¹

¹ The Canadian Authors' Association, represented by Howard Angus Kennedy, "To Caroline Kipling," at the Middlesex Hospital, London, 19 January 1936 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public.

Appendix 8: Posthumous Tribute to Kipling

Amongst the national and international associations which wrote and cabled to Caroline Kipling to express their regret at her husband's death was The Disabled American Veterans of the World War National Capital Chapter No.2, Washington. They tabled a resolution which read:

Whereas, death has stilled the pen of Rudyard Kipling, the poet, artist and seer who brought to great themes a pomp and glory that stamped them indelibly upon one's memory; and

Whereas, Rudyard Kipling, fascinated the world with his depiction of life and scenes throughout the far-flung borders of the British Empire, particularly in India and the Orient; and

Whereas, Rudyard Kipling, through his association with and friendship for the British soldier, had sympathy for the man in the ranks and understood him far beyond the scope of the average citizen; and

Whereas, Rudyard Kipling's tales of soldier life delighted the military man and won the hearts of all who ever marched to the beat of drums and answered the call of bugles; therefore, be it

Resolved: That National Capital Chapter, No. 2, Disabled American Veterans of the World War, does hereby join the people of the world in mourning the loss of one of the most shining figures of modern times (20/38 File 20/6 Document B25).¹

¹ Disabled American Veterans of The World War National Capital Chapter No. 2, Washington, a "Resolution in Tribute to The Renowned Poet, Rudyard Kipling, Who Died January 18 1936" 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public. This tribute is attached to a photocopy of a letter from J.M. Troutbeck, representing the Foreign Office on behalf of Mr. Secretary Eden.

Appendix 9: Personal Condolences to Caroline Kipling

Be assured of my very deep sympathy in the great loss that has overtaken you in the passing of your beloved husband it is blessed to remember that in his great poetic works he has left to the world the highest and noblest teachings for the inspiration of the heart of man [*sic*]
(20/38 File 20/5 Document A7).¹

¹ Evangeline Booth, "To Caroline Kipling," at Bateman's, Sussex 18 January 1936 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public. This is a Post Office Telegraph with no punctuation.

Appendix 10: Obituary Article About Kipling

We deeply regret to announce the death early on Saturday morning of Mr. Rudyard Kipling. He died at 12.10 in Middlesex Hospital, London...The mind goes back to 1898, when he was lying so gravely ill in New York that there seemed small chance of his recovery. Many will remember the public anxiety, the general distress and those bulletins, posted up two or three times a day, so urgent was the demand for news hopeful or bad. It marked the highest point of his popular renown in England and America. For English-speaking peoples, he then represented in literature the deep instincts of their race...He was one of the makers of the Britain he leaves behind him. By the magic of his tales and verse he held in equal sway all the English-speaking peoples. But for his own country and its Empire he has been prophet as well as bard-faithful counsellor and guide in the paths of destiny. His kindling genius made England to herself more true, renewing her fibres of constancy and courage. In so far as her spirit was ready for the greatest ordeal that ever beset her, it was muchly [*sic*] due to his untiring gospel of faith and endeavour (File Ad. 24).¹

¹ An un-cited and un-dated cutting from an American publication. It can be presumed to have been published during the week of 18th January 1936. File Ad. 24 (Box un-numbered) Additions 1-36/38-K/P.

Appendix 11: Journal Extract of H. Rider Haggard

EXTRACT FROM RIDER HAGGARD'S JOURNAL

May 22nd, 1913.

... Most of the day I have spent with the Kiplings at Batemans. Rudyard is not well. I thought him looking better when I arrived but when he came to see me off at the gate I noticed how thin and aged and worn he is. Elsie says he varies much. He suffers from fits of pain in his inside but he told me that although there is "something" there, X-ray examinations show that there is no cancer or tumour or anything of that sort. I hope and pray that this is so. Seated together in his study in the old house at Bateman's, we had a most interesting four hours together while he riddled about with fishing tackle with which he tries to catch trout in the brook. There are two men left living in the world with whom I am in supreme sympathy, Theodore Roosevelt and Rudyard Kipling. The rest, such as Theophilus Shepstone and Andrew Lang have gone. What did we talk of? So many things that it is difficult to summarise them. Chiefly they had to do with the soul and the fate of man. Rudyard, apparently, cannot make up his mind about these things. On one point, however, he is perfectly clear. I happened to remark that I thought that this world was one of the hells. He replied that he did not think he was certain of it. He went on to show that it had every attribute of hell, doubt, fear, pain, struggle, bereavement, almost irresistible temptations springing from the nature with which we are clothed, physical and mental suffering, etc., etc., ending in the worst fate that man can devise for man, Execution! As for the future he is inclined to let the matter drift. He said what he has often said to me before, that what he wants is a "good long rest". I asked him if he wished for extinction and could contemplate without dismay separation eternal from all he loved - John for instance. He replied that he was never happier than when he knew that as a child his boy was asleep in the next room - why therefore should he mind it in the grave, or words to that effect. I pushed the subject and found that he does not really want to go out, only to rest. I pointed out that his notion was futile since if he "rested" for a million years or for a minute, it would make no difference to him in a state of unconsciousness, should he awake after all. Here he agreed. The upshot of it is that he is no unbeliever, only like the rest of us, one who knows nothing and therefore cannot understand.

(Like myself he has an active faith in the existence of a personal devil and thinks (I gathered) that much which is set down to God, is really attributable to that personality who at present cannot be controlled even by God, at least not altogether. He holds that the story of Pharaoh is being repeated in the case of the Germans. God is "hardening" their heart, to their ultimate destruction. His humility is very striking. We were talking of our failings. I said that what grew on me from day to day was a sense of my own utter insufficiency, of complete humiliation both in the case of those

Fig. 33 This is hand noted as one extract from the diaries of Rider Haggard. The extracts were paraphrased in 'The Cloak That I Left' by Lilius Rider Haggard (15/38 File 15/16).¹

¹ 15/38-Kipling Papers Correspondence: F-Ha.

Appendix 12: Royal Connections

I know that you take an interest in this hospital...and I am now going to ask you if you will be good enough to help me in my effort...If you would kindly write a poem dealing with the purpose my brother had before him and concluding with an appeal to all to come forward and help...I could arrange for its insertion in every newspaper in the U[nited] K[ingdom]. It would I feel sure, induce many to contribute (22/38 File 22/1 Document 2).¹

Alexander George had taken up the fundraising work of his late brother at the Middlesex Hospital and may well have had in mind the successful fund raising relating to “The Absent-Minded Beggar”. Kipling replies within three days:

There is nothing I should value more highly than to be associated in the manner you suggest with the work to which the late Prince Francis of Teck dedicated himself. Unfortunately in my case the making of verses if they are to be worthy and effective does not depend on my desire, however keen, to do them, but on whether the verses offer themselves in my mind. I know that other writers do not suffer from my disability, which I regret the more since it deprives me of the power of commanding my pen in a service which so greatly appeals to me (14/38 File 14/1 Un-numbered document).²

¹ Alexander George of Teck at Windsor Castle, “To Rudyard Kipling, at Bateman’s” 7 November 1910 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

² Rudyard Kipling, “To Alexander George of Teck” 10 November 1910: 14/38 K/P: Correspondence: A-D.

Appendix 13: Begging Letter

A letter from a former Royal Navy Petty Officer, written in response to publication of a photograph of Kipling in the *Sunday Pictorial*, illustrates the unwelcome correspondence that Kipling received:

I am taking the liberty to ask you to make up a few lines of poetry about hot pias [*sic*] and tripe...I was broken in the war and...the British legion as [*sic*] set me up with a stall to sell hot pias [*sic*], tripe etc...[a]nd I thought a few lines from you would help me along
(22/38 File 22/26 Document 31).¹

¹ A former Royal Navy Petty Officer, "To Rudyard Kipling," 3 June 1923 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

Appendix 14: The Death of Josephine

Caroline Kipling's diary entries relate to the death of her daughter in 1899. At the same time her husband was extremely ill with pneumonia:¹

1899 Feb 21 New York Rud too ill to get up. Dr. Jameway comes at 8.30 and says inflammation in one lung 22 An anxious night and more anxious day. Rud. so good and patient, sleeps much...23 Temperature lower but less sleep and more restlessness...Josephine a high temperature and fever in the night. Dr. McDonald fears complications and I take her to Julia de Forest and leave her – a moment of conscious agony to stand out from the average...Mar 5 I saw Josephine 3 times today, morning an afternoon and at 1030p.m. for the last time. She was conscious and sent her love to "Daddy and all". 6. Josephine left us at 6.30 this morning (File Ads. 40 Document Ad. 40, 23).²

Kipling's mother Alice [1837-1910], writes of the tragic death of her grandchild to her younger sister, Georgiana Burne-Jones [1840-1920]:³

There has come a telegram from New York – telling us that little Josephine died this morning at 6.20. The apple of her father's eye – the delight of his heart! How will he bear it?...In the letter which I asked Margaret to send on to you – Carrie makes no mention of Josephine being ill – except from whooping cough – but from the moment I knew the poor child had pneumonia I have been afraid. The dear – bright – pretty child...happy years and now a memory only! You know how Rud adored her. She was just becoming companionable – and when he came to say goodbye to me the day before they sailed on this ill-omened voyage he told me anecdotes of hers. Anxiety for him begins to tear my heart again – he did not know of her illness – and now he will have to know this' (19/38 File 19/9 Document 3).⁴

Kipling's father discusses the event with Miss Plowden who was 'a close friend of...[Alice Macdonald] and all her sisters':⁵

Rud is so different, and yet so intensely human. Nobody ever grieved so much for anything as he for the loss of Josephine – and nobody save

¹ Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 311.

² (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

³ Lycett (un-numbered page).

⁴ Alice Kipling [*née* Macdonald] at Tisbury, "To Georgie [Georgiana Burne-Jones]," Mon: Evening 6 March 1899 19/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private.

⁵ Arthur Windham Baldwin, "The Unfading Genius of Rudyard Kipling (1)," *Kipling: Interviews and Recollections Volume 2*, ed. Harold Orel (Totowa: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983) 299.

perhaps Alice &, I has [*sic*] ever heard a word about it. I used to get licked at school for what the Head used to call stoical apathy – It wasn't altogether apathy, – and Rud, though full of nerves, has more than a touch of the Kipling reticence – or I don't quite know what it is' (1/38 File 1/10 Un-numbered documents).⁶

The file from which this letter comes is listed as letters to Miss E. Plowden from Alice and John Kipling 1880-1910. Kipling's father also describes to another family friend the lasting effects that this tragedy has on the couple:

[they]...found going back to the Elms much harder and more painful than they had imagined. The house and garden are full of the lost child and poor Rud told his mother how he saw her when a door opened, when a space was vacant at table, – coming out of every green dark corner of the garden – radiant and – heartbreaking. They can talk of her however, which is much, for Carrie has hitherto been stone-dumb. But to Mrs K. she softened and broke forth and they had long discourse, mingling their tears as women may and mothers must (1/38 File 1/9 Document 4).⁷

⁶ John Lockwood Kipling, "To Edith Plowden," 17 July 1908 1/38-John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence.

⁷ John Lockwood Kipling, under the nickname of 'The Buddha', "To Miss Norton," 22 July 1899 1/38.

Appendix 15: Discussion of Honours for Kipling

This appendix details various correspondence, telegraphs, diary entries of Kipling and Caroline and files at the University of Sussex Kipling Archive, which relate to offers of specific honours to Kipling, both in the United Kingdom and abroad.

Correspondence:

An undated photocopy of a draft letter from Elsie Bambridge gives an overview of Kipling's position on the issue of honours:

In 1892 the Laureateship fell vacant on the death of Lord Tennyson, and it was not till 1895 that Alfred Austen was appointed. Lord Salisbury had thought of R[udyard] K[ipling] for the job etc...and Arthur Balfour was most insistent that R[udyard K[ipling] be sounded on the subject. The answer was (as it was to all such offers) that he "thought he could be of more use to the country and do better work if he were free to write as he chose" (32/38 File 32/21 Document N1).¹

A selection of official correspondence adds detail to this overview, beginning with the offer of a K.C.M.G. in 1903:

I have reason to believe that, if you were disposed to accept that honour, the King would be pleased to confer on you the K.C.M.G. It could not in my opinion and in that of the Secretary of the Colonies be better bestowed: and I am certain that the English speaking world are, in this matter, of our mind. Your admirable literary gifts have not merely resulted in pleasure to innumerable readers; they have made the citizens of this widely scattered Empire known to each other as they never were known before – It is no small thing to have infused in to so many dwellers in the narrow routine of everyday work, some flash of that sympathetic insight into the ways of other men in other climes which you [?] in so abundant a measure (20/38 File 20/10 Document K1).²

I have to thank you for your letter of yesterday and to assure you of my entire appreciation of the honour you propose, as well as of the more than flattering terms in which you propose it. But I find my position has not changed since '99 when Lord Salisbury was kind enough to offer me a somewhat similar distinction, and that such honours must continue outside my scheme of things (20/38 File 20/10 Document K3).³

¹ 32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling's Children.

² Arthur Balfour at 10 Downing Street, "To Rudyard Kipling," 6 November 1903 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public.

³ Rudyard Kipling, "To Mr. Balfour," undated, but can be presumed to be 7 November 1903 20/38.

This second letter is a photocopy of an unsigned, undated letter, in a file marked K—offer of KCMG in 20/38-K/P:Correspondence: Topical Private-Public. It has a salutation to Mr. Balfour. It is a response to document K1, which is a letter from Balfour at 10 Downing Street to Kipling, dated 6th November 1903.

Correspondence between Lord Stamfordham and Kipling eighteen years later explores similar themes:

I am commanded by the King to inform you that it will give His Majesty much pleasure to confer upon you the Order of Merit – in recognition of the eminent services you have rendered to the Science of Literature and of the almost unique estimation with which your works are regarded throughout the British Empire (20/38 File 20/11 Document M1).⁴

In reply to your letter of the 15th the fact that the King has been pleased to signify his approval of my services to literature will be to me the great honour of my life. But as regards the conferment upon me of the special honour suggested, I would ask you, while presenting my humble and loyal duty to H.M. to pray that His Majesty may be graciously pleased to hold me excused (20/38 File 20/11 Document M2).⁵

These are photocopies of a typed letter from Stamfordham and a handwritten letter from Kipling. In 1924, Stamfordham broaches the subject of honours with Kipling again:

Although I have before me your charming letter of the 17th December, 1921, I write on behalf of my Sovereign to say that His Majesty has heard indirectly that there is an idea that perhaps you might now be disposed to view differently the communication I then made – that it would give the King much pleasure to confer upon you the Order of Merit for the reasons which I mentioned in my letter of the 15th December, 1921 (20/38 File 20/11 Document M6).⁶

On this occasion, Kipling's cousin Stanley Baldwin is also involved in the discussion: 'Would you care for an O.M.? I gather from what you once told me that you wouldn't. But I don't want to leave office without putting it to you. Of course, it is in the King's

⁴ Lord Stamfordham at Buckingham Palace, "To Rudyard Kipling," 15 December 1921 20/38.

⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "To Lord Stamfordham," 17 December 1921 20/38.

⁶ Lord Stamfordham at Buckingham Palace, "To Rudyard Kipling," 18 January 1924 20/38.

gift alone and I could only suggest it unofficially' (20/38 File 20/11 Document M7).⁷

These are photocopies of a typed private letter from Lord Stamfordham and a handwritten (MS) letter from Stanley Baldwin. Kipling's response is unchanged:

I deeply regret that any such report as you allude to in your letter of the 18th, should have reached the King. When you were good enough to see me at the Palace, two years ago, I explained, more fully than one could in writing, the reasons that prompted my action at the time. My work, makes it unnecessary, I hope, that I should protest my devotion and loyalty to the King and the Empire but, as I ventured to tell you in our talk, I am convinced that whatever I may be able to do toward these ends in the troublous future ahead, will be best and most serviceably carried through without acknowledgement in the public eye. My rewards for what I may have done in the past are great indeed, since my Sovereign has thought, once and again, to honour me so markedly for it. Will you then present my most humble duty and gratitude to His Majesty and, of your kindness lay before him my motive in praying to be excused (20/38 File 20/11 Document M9).⁸

Stamfordham responds: 'The King has read your letter of the 21st instant: and desires me to say how much he appreciates the disinterested spirit that has led you to adhere to your previous decision, the reasons for which His Majesty quite understands' (20/38 File 20/11 Document M10).⁹ These are photocopies of a handwritten letter from Rudyard Kipling and a typed letter from Lord Stamfordham.

Information in File Additions 40 gives a postscript to the discussion of honours. On this occasion, the post of Poet Laureate:

I don't think my Father [Prime Minister Asquith] ever offered R[udyard] K[ipling] the Laureateship, in fact I am practically sure he didn't (tho' [sic] he did think of doing so). The vacancy occurred when we were on the Admiralty Yacht and I remember very well my Father discussing the problem with me. The obvious choice was Kipling... What weighed with him was the very reason you (Lord Baldwin) give – that Kipling was inspired and could not write to order"... In 1913 Bridges was appointed by Asquith as being "more likely to write to order" and fall into line than R[udyard] K[ipling] who, it was thought would probably refuse again. In 1930 Ramsay Macdonald would not have thought

⁷ Stan [Stanley] Baldwin, "To Rudyard Kipling," 18 January 1924 20/38.

⁸ Rudyard Kipling at Bateman's, "To Lord Stamfordham," 21 January 1924 20/38.

⁹ Lord Stamfordham at Buckingham Palace, "To Rudyard Kipling," 23 January 1924 20/38.

R[udyard] K[ipling] possible nor would he have been allowed by his party to make the appointment (File Ads. 40-Documents Ad. 40, H7).¹⁰

This file is noted in the introduction as: ‘The following pages are the carbon copies of summaries made for the Earl of Birkenhead...while collecting material for the official biography of Rudyard Kipling.’ Page H7 can be found in the end section of Miscellaneous Kipling References Honours and Awards – Poet Laureateship. This is an extract from the letter. File Ad. 40 (box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

University of Sussex Archive Files:

Box 20/38 File 20/11 20/12 & 20/13 & 20/14 & 20/16 & 20/17 & 20/19 & 20/20 & 20/21 & 20/22 *20/24* & 20/26 & 20/27 & 20/28 all contain documents which relate to specific honours offered to Kipling by academic institutions both in the United Kingdom and abroad.

- 20/11 Documents M11 & M12-a file which details the full events of the Order of Merit correspondence
- 20/12 Letter relating to offer of Honorary Degree, McGill University: April 1899
- 20/13 Letter relating to offer of Honorary Degree, Durham: March 1907
- 20/14 Letter relating to offer of Doctor of Letters, Oxford: May 1907
- 20/16 Letter relating to offer of Honorary Degree, University of Paris: July 1921
- 20/17 Letter relating to offer of Honorary Degree, University of Strasbourg: November 1921
- 20/19 Letters and Post Office Telegraphs relating to offer of Membership of American Academy of Arts and Sciences: November 1899

¹⁰ Violet Bonham Carter, “To Lord Baldwin [?],” No date given. File Ad. 40 (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

- 20/20 Handwritten letters relating to Honourable Freedom Stationers' Company: May 1925
- 20/21-Handwritten letters relating to Honorary Fellowship of Magdalene College, Cambridge: March 1932
- 20/22-Copies of handwritten and typed letters relating to membership of the Institut de France: June 1933
- 20/24-Nobel Prize letter: November 8th 1907
- 20/26-Typed copies of typed letters relating to honour (medal) conferred/proposed by the *Société Nationale d'Acclimatation*. No date given
- 20/27-Copies of handwritten and typed letters relating to the Royal Society of Literature Gold Medal Award: November 1925
- 20/28-One typed letter, relating to the International Mark Twain Society-Silver Medal: October 20th 1930
- 23/30-Documents relating to McGill University presentation: April 22nd 1927

Diary Entries

Entries from this diary are copied from the section marked 'Carrie Kipling Diaries' and retain the original format, punctuation and spelling. The book is catalogued as (File Ads. 40 Document Ad. 40:

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1899 Dec 14 Rottingdean Lord Salisbury's secretary comes down to offer Rud a K.C.B. which he declines feeling he can do his work better without it. We are much pleased to be offered it however.

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1903 Nov 7 Burwash: Mr Balfour writes to ask if he may propose R's name for a K.C.M.G. A letter of appreciation – he will call it backed by the approval of one Mr Littleton, recently made Colonial Secretary. Rud declines. Evidently title conferring is as slack as other Government business and they know nothing about the K.C.B. of '99.

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1917 May 28 Burwash: Stan Baldwin comes from Bonar Law informally to say the Prime Minister will give Rud pretty much any honour he will accept. Rud says he will not accept any. June 6. Rud to the House of Commons to see Stan Baldwin. He hears a rumour at his Clubs that his name is on the list of Knights on the new Order of the Empire and sees Bonar Laws' Secretary as B-L is away ill, Secretary assures him his name will not be sent in without consulting him and Rud warns him it must not be. July 1. Our day starts with a letter from the Secretary of the new order, Companions of Honour, saying Rud's name is down. They have not consulted Rud and he wires to say so and adds he does not intend to accept. He also wires B-L to the same effect. July 3 Bonar Law telegraphs he has seen to the matter of taking Rud's name off the list of the new order, Companions of Honour.

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1921 Dec 16 Burwash: Rud looks over the letters and with characteristic lack of interest passes over one from the Lord Privy Seal's Office which is a proposal sent by the King through Lord Stamfordham that Rud accepts an O.M. (Order of Merit) in recognition of his services to literature and the "almost unique position his works occupy in the Empire". A quaint letter. Rud I think however will keep to his idea of not accepting honours though this time it would seem to come direct from the King. 17. Rud decides he can not accept the O.M. offered by the King and writes his letter.

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1922 Jan 14 Burwash: Rud is greatly upset by a wire, the second from newspapers, about his refusal of the O.M. No word have we said to any one and our disgust at its being let out, we suppose by the Govt, [*sic*] is great. 17. A letter from Lord Stamfordham to say he is responsible for the newspapers [*sic*] announcement that the O.M. was offered to Rud by the King. An amazing thing.

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1924 Jan 19 Bateman's: A letter from Stamfordham offering Rud the O.M. is a difficulty. 20. Rud writes to Lord Stamfordham declining the O.M. for the second time. 21. Letter from Stan Baldwin offering Rud an O.M. or rather to propose it to the King "in whose gift it alone is" Rud declines.

In an interesting reflection on these events, as part of the obituary notices of 1936, a cutting from an unnamed American publication suggested that the lack of official recognition was largely due to spite, envy and revenge on the part of many members of the establishment:

For many years Kipling has been rated in world esteem as one of England's greatest. As long ago as 1907, when it meant more than it does now, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. But though England eagerly read everything he wrote, no tokens of appreciation other than financial fell his way. Because of the royal [*sic*] family's grudge, inferior men, one after another, were lifted past him to the post of laureate [*sic*]. Sharp in his criticism of political shams and expediencies, the customary honors [*sic*] of the various "orders" of knighthood, and the prospect of ultimate peerage all were withheld from him by British party leaders' (28/16, 1936, 47).¹¹

The allusion to a Royal grudge stems from '[a] persistent rumour...at an early date that Kipling's candidature...[for the January 1896 Laureateship] had been vetoed by Queen Victoria, who took offence at his ballad on 'The Widow at Windsor'. No evidence has been adduced for this story except a letter (which...cannot be authentic) in an American library.'¹² The rumour also ignores the close friendship between Kipling and George V.

¹¹ 28/16 Rudyard Kipling Obituary Notices Volume (II), January 1936.

¹² Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986)

Appendix 16: Kipling and Talent

The point of view that Kipling displays to Rider Haggard is illustrated by a letter sent to Theodore Dunham in 1936, only eight days before Kipling's rather unexpected death. Dunham was married to Josephine, the sister of Caroline Kipling:

Man is unknown – as unknown as the internal combustion engine every detail of which is explicable except the nature of the spark that causes the mixture to explode. So it may be with us. We seem to be set in a revolving universe from which we draw some sort of power – for 25,000 days or so. Then, either we are removed from the cycle of the Power or the Power removes itself from us, by a series of processes which men of science and research give names to. And that was all the astrologers of old arrived at. Man, they said, was composed of “Hormones” which Hormones were due to or affected by, the “influence of the Stars” – i.e. powers inconceivably beyond our imagination but the Source of all Creation and all modifications of the created... It seems to me that – his appliances and mechanisms apart – man has been pretty much what he always has been: – “an imperfectly denatured animal intermittently subject to the unpredictable reactions of an unlocated spiritual area.” He, like the Universe will continue to go round and round, not necessarily upward, if there be any direction in infinite Space and time (97-251 R-1 PO5).¹

This is microfilm of a handwritten letter from Kipling commenting on the book *Man the Unknown* by Carrel, which Dunham had sent to him. The Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers are additions to the main Kipling Collection and are comprised of correspondence between Rudyard, Caroline and members of the Balestier family, in particular Caroline's mother. The papers were archived by Wolcott B. Dunham Jr. on 29th March 1994.

¹ Rudyard Kipling at Bateman's, “To Theodore Dunham,” 8 January 1936 Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers (2 microfilms): Accession No. SxMs 68: Ref *96m-53 Kipling, Rudyard Letters to Mrs Balestier Reel 1.

Appendix 17: John Lockwood Writes to Edith Plowden

Letters between John Lockwood Kipling and Edith Plowden were exchanged over a period of thirty years, so John Lockwood could remark with enthusiasm and admiration in 1910 that:

We are expecting Rud today. Macmillans have collected a huge sheaf of reviews of his new book¹ and, [sic] take 'em bye [sic] & large they are little more than a chorus of praise. The Sat:[sic] Review isn't pleased and some others make judicious reservations, but when one notice condemns a yarn or a set of verses, the next one takes up...precisely that yarn & those verses for commendation (1/38 File 1/10 Un-numbered document).²

Given the comment in the letter and the publication date, this may well have been one of the last occasions on which Kipling saw his mother, who died on 22nd November 1910.³ This entire file is listed as letters to Miss E. Plowden from both Alice and John Kipling 1880-1910. All the letters are transcribed in full in (1/38 File 1/11).

¹ This is likely to be *Rewards and Fairies*, published in London and New York in November 1910 and which was the sequel to *Puck of Pook's Hill* Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 59.

² John Lockwood Kipling, "To Edith [Plowden]," 3 November 1910 1/38 John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence.

³ Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 410.

Appendix 18: John Lockwood on the Spread of Kipling's Work

In next month's "Contemporary" will be a paper over which we have collaborated –but this is a secret – "The Enlightenments of Pagett, M.P."¹ He also has a story in next month's Macmillan 'On Greenhow Hill'.² His mother is putting in a book the press notices of his work and it is giving an amazing volume. The Americans think much more of him than the English and that is saying a great deal. And an odd thing is happening; – owing to the recent developments and organising of journalism, syndicates and what not, each new boom is more portentous, more wide-spread and more voluminous in print than the last and it will be literally true that in one year this youngster will have had more said about his work, over a wider extent of the world's surface than some of the greatest of England's writers in their whole lives. Much of this, of course, is merely mechanical, the result of the wholesale spread of journalism and the centralising tendencies of it. He has kept his head wonderfully, steadfastly refused to go into society and seems to care for naught much but his work, his mother and a very few friends (1/38 File 1/10 Un-numbered documents).³

Volume 28/10 in the Kipling Papers is an example of the type of volume discussed here. It is one of the smaller books at 9" x 7" and is made of thick card covered by dark blue material. It has an ornately embossed surround in black on front and back covers. 'Newspaper Cuttings' is embossed across the front cover, with Various Book Reviews and Articles About R[udyard] K[ipling] 1888-1897 Volume 10, handwritten across the front. The Kipling insignia is pasted to the inside front cover. The fly leaf has Newspaper Cuttings printed on it as well as the name of publisher and place of publication. There is an alphabetical index, with contents hand-written, to include the publication in which the reviews and articles were published. In common with other volumes of this type in the collection, the pages are hand-numbered.

¹ The September 1890 issue of *Contemporary Review* published this story. This 'joint effort...satirised the posturings of a parliamentarian who backed the Indian National Congress without knowing the first thing about India' Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) 218. The tale is related to an earlier poem, 'Pagett, M.P.' Rudyard Kipling, *Departmental Ditties and Other Verses* (Calcutta, London & Bombay: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1892) 60.

² This tale was published in *Harper's Magazine* on 23 Aug. 1890 and in *Macmillan's Magazine* in September 1890 Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 113. According to Andrew Lycett this was an earlier father and son collaboration which 'drew on...[John Lockwood's] recollections of Yorkshire customs and dialect to re-create the stark, primitive world of rural Methodism' Lycett 217.

³ John Lockwood Kipling in London, "To Miss E. Plowden," Autumn 1890 1/38-John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence.

Appendix 19: Trix Writes to Stanley Baldwin

In this letter from Trix Fleming to her cousin Stanley Baldwin, she discusses the various topics relating to her family that she finds disturbing.

FROM MRS. J. M. FLEMING, 6 WEST COATES, EDINBURGH, 12.

March 27th 1945

My dear Stanley -

I am so glad to hear from Elsie that you are "doing" Rud in the D. H. B. I enclose her with all I know about Grandfather -

Please mention & destroy the 'black blood' - & the 'beloved salt' legends which still lift Hydra heads at times - It's ugly lying & should be done away with - not ignored -

Little lately some one - grubbing among old Indian newspapers proclaimed as a discovery that as R. H. & his sister both acted in Simla - they must have been members of the exclusive Amateur Dramatic Co - there - & therefore must have moved in the upper circles - Of course we did - of course we went every where - Lord Dufferin put us on the "Goot House" "Free List" - which meant invites to all the balls & dances - & at homes - & many dinners - instead of one - every season in Simla -

dead hen was - I find it so hard not to write to you. I enjoy writing -

Trix
Cousin

And And Roberts did the same & so did our
 own Punjab. & G- And Duffin's
 saying that "Dullness" & his liking were never
 in the same room together - brought us many a
 pleasant invitation - & I assure you that it is
 entirely your poor cousins own fault that she was
 not left that dreary thing a widowed, countless
 countless after dadysmiths - But if R.R. & his
 family were living in the bagan & sneaking stealthily
 into Society - how did I ever meet And Clendinning
 & how did he have the opportunity of proposing
 to me in 1886 & 1887?
 This has been a long & rather dreadful winter here - but
 now we have daffodils & sunshine - & darling Margaret
 wrote me a light letter lately - I am so grieved to
 hear of the sorrow that has come to Margaret & the
 grief to Anna - it is terrible for you all -
 I annoy my doctor by weighing 101 lbs & losing about a
 stone yearly - but I feel so well & walk 5 miles with
 pleasure - & eat like an angel - so what does it
 matter - if I look like an ecorchée? I'm lucky to be able
 to keep my house & the same servants - 21 years - but
 it's very poor fun to be a widow - & 77 years is an open
 large helping of life - & my husband's dearest niece has just
 died in the early 50s - leaving husband & family shattered -
 she was a darling soul - & seems less

II

FROM MRS. J. M. FLEMING, 6 WEST COATES, EDINBURGH, 12.

His full length portrait in Boulton tiles was still to be seen on an outer wall in the garden front of the V. & A. Museum - three years ago - As money had to be earned he set ambition aside & found a situation in the Potteries - & was designing dinner plates when Uncle Fred first made grins at him -

and - that's how it all began -

The Indian Mutiny had only been over 7 years when he was offered the task of creating an Art School in Bombay - & the Macdonald father & mother were frightened at the thought of funds!

"than Alia" - young such danger in fun funds! As I remember Sir P. C. D. recommended father as "one of his best boys" - & a few years later another old student took father's place in Bombay when he went to Lahore to work another miracle there -

Mr. John Griffiths -

It would be difficult to find two families more full from any link in connection with India than the Macdonalds & the Griffiths - Of course Uncle Henry Macdonald passed brilliantly into the Indian Civil - but refused

To take up his appointment when Miss Peggy
 Passingham - to whom he was engaged killed him -
 That is not enough to account for the 4 annas in
 the rupee legend of duskiness - or the "black
 blood" standard of later years - Red used to
 laugh at this - but a strange American woman
 gripped me in an opera box once & rubbed
 my bare neck so hard with her black gloved
 hand that red streaks followed it -
 "Oh - it doesn't come off" she said in a disappointed
 voice looking at her glove - "you see everyone
 said your brother had black blood - so when I
 saw you sitting there - looking so white - I thought I
 must just see." I have never been so angry -

And in 1914 a woman in a London hotel where I
 was staying - trumpeted abroad that R. K. was an
 "old Eurasian" - a Mrs. Fleming's complexion meant
 nothing for "lots of Cyprians had blue eyes &
 there was always liquid powder" -
 It's an ugly legend but spite of the Kipling
 Society it still crops up - Together with R. K.'s attempts
 to enter Simla society - How can you enter what
 you belong to? Jealousy started it -
 A. M. F.

Fig. 34 Letter from Trix Fleming to Stanley Baldwin (1/38 File 1/120).¹

¹ Trix Fleming in Edinburgh, "To Stanley [Baldwin]," 27 March 1945 1/38-John Lockwood Kipling Correspondence & 3/38-John Lockwood Kipling Sketch Books.

Appendix 20: Trix Discusses Kipling

A letter from Trix Fleming written in 1940 to her niece Elsie, clarifies and judges samples of text. It is a physical comparison between the work of father and son:

My expert verdict is that all the writing is Ruddy's – though I'm not surprised you take it to be my Father's – As a boy he copied Father's writing till it became his own...As years went on Father's writing was unchanged while Ruddy's became quite different & all his own...All the comments I think are Ruddy's – very like him – at that age – when the youth of 18 or 19 was trying to sit coldly in judgment on his own schoolboy verses (32/38 File 32/24 Un-numbered Document).¹

The letter suggests adulation, since Kipling was willing to expend considerable time and effort in reproducing his father's handwriting. The marked differentiation of later years indicates the independence and confidence he gained as his success grew.

¹ Trix Fleming, "To Elsie Bambridge," 15 June 1940 32/38-K/P: Papers of Kipling's Children.

Appendix 21: Writing About the Exotic and Death in Prose

He uses death as a theme for several articles, including one which compares the experiences of bereavement in India and Great Britain. Entitled, ‘A Death In The Camp’, it discusses the death of:

One Englishman in London...a man nearly seventy years old, engaged in the business of an architect, and immensely respected...[H]e was tended by his own kith and kin, dying with his head on his wife’s breast, his hand in his only son’s hand, without any thought of their possible poverty to vex him...You have described such dying as a god might envy and a King might pay half his ransom to make certain of . Wait till you have seen men, strong men of thirty five, with little children, die at two days’ notice, penniless and alone...wait till you have seen the young girl die within a fortnight of the wedding; or the lover within three days of his marriage; or the mother an hour – sixty little minutes – before her son can come to her side; wait till you hesitate before handling your daily newspaper for fear of reading of the death of some young man that you have dined with, drank with, shot with, lent money to and borrowed money from...till you dare not hope for the death of an old man, but when you are strongest, count up the tale of your acquaintances and friends, wondering how many will be alive six months hence.¹ Wait till you have heard men calling in the death hour on kin that cannot come; till you have dined with a man one night and seen him buried on the next. Then you can begin to whimper about “loneliness and change and desolation”....“And do you mean to say,” drawled a young gentleman, “that there is any society in which that sort of holocaust goes on?”...“I do,” said I. “It’s not society. It’s life.” (28/4 1887-1897, 151).²

¹ The tale, ‘At The End of The Passage’, discusses four friends who meet each week to play cards. The host, Hummil, checks beforehand on every occasion that each remains alive. They believe that ‘[t]here are very many places in the East where it is not good or kind to let your acquaintances drop out of sight even for one short week’ Rudyard Kipling, *The Mark of the Beast and Other Fantastical Tales*, ed. Stephen Jones (London: Gollancz, 2006) 239. This story was published in the *Boston Herald* on 20 July 1890, *Lippincott’s Magazine*, August 1890, *Mine Own People* in 1891 and *Life’s Handicap* in 1891 Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1985) 66.

² ‘A Death in the Camp’ *Civil & Military Gazette* Wednesday 29th January 1890. 28/4 Stories, Poems and Articles 1887-1897.

Appendix 22: The MS Poetry Books

The MS. notebooks are catalogued as:

- 24/1 Poems [1881-82] Notebook 5x3in. Ms pp75. Contains 52 verses by R.K in his own hand.
- 24/2 [Poems 1881-82] Notebook 8x 6 1/2 in. Ms pp[1-59]. Contains 28 verses by RK in the hand of JLK or Mrs. Kipling. Twenty one? Of these verses appear in poems [1881-82]above.
- 24/3 [Poems 1882-84]. Notebook 9x7 in. Ms pp51-161. Contains 58 verses by RK in his own hand. Twenty five? Of these appear in poems [1881-82].
- 24/4 [Poems 1882-84]. Notebook 9x7in. Ms pp51-161. Photographic copy.¹

A large number of Kipling's early poems survive in manuscript – mostly [*sic*] in holograph versions, but some in transcriptions by other hands – while [*sic*] some have been preserved in typescript copies. Many are to be found among the Kipling Papers in the University of Sussex Library; many are located in other libraries in Britain, Canada, and the United States; while some of those which have figured in sales catalogues remain, presumably, in private hands.²

On inspection the three M.S. Books can be described as follows 1) a small, thin pocket sized black leather bound book, approximately 4" x 2 1/2". It has gold border edging back and front and on the spine. Inside front and back covers are glossy, multi-coloured, thin card. Poems are mainly dated, but the appearance of the writing, pen and ink seems to indicate the date as an addition rather than original exercise. 2) A second book, which is slightly larger approximately 6" by 5". It has a black leather spine and corners and black thick card covers, which are lightly embossed. It is a little damaged but generally in good condition. It is lined with glossy, multi-coloured paper, the pattern of which is continued onto the edges of the pages. It is much more like the note-

¹ 'Catalogue,' University of Sussex Library Special Collections Kipling Papers 18 September 2008 <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/speccoll/collection_catalogues/Kipling.html>.

² Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 23.

book of a child or young student. It is approximately one third full of verse and with several revisions of other verse. There is a pasted copy of 'Ave Imperatrix' in this book which has been published in a newspaper and the inscription is United Services College, Westward Ho! 3) The third notebook is similar in size and style to the second, larger book. It is much more fragile and has considerable damage to the spine and to the inside covers. It is blue-black and appears to be bound in fine leather with an embossed gold border around all edges back and front and detailing on the spine. There is a lining as book two. It is rather scuffed and appears well used. The poems throughout are corrected, annotated and with additional critical and amusing comments. In this notebook the poems are given additional geographical locations (of writing) e.g. Rottingean, Paris and Lahore. Dating has the appearance of having been included on the day of writing, with the same ink and pen appearance. Corrections, notes, annotations and comments are mainly in different inks, colours and pens, hinting at revisions later, rather than immediate commentaries. In these books, many of the handwritten poems bear evidence of revisions, erasures and personal comments. For example 'The Trouble of Curtiss Who Lodged in the Basement',³ written in 1882, demonstrates the extent of Kipling's early linguistic rigour. In the MS. book it is noted as Poem 40. Some of the poems are also typed up in file 24/65. These copies are easier to read (24/38 File 24/65 Un-numbered document)⁴

³ 'Holograph version in Notebook 1, dated 7 March 1882, with note at end 'A bad case of typhus'. Another holograph version in Notebook 3, with the same date; [*sic*] and transcribed version in Notebook 2.' Rutherford 122.

⁴ 24/38-K/P: Literary Manuscripts

Appendix 23: Discussion of MS Poem and Language

The subject of the poem is the death of a woman, presumed to be the wife of the speaker. Her husband mourns the death, counts the cost to the living and discusses the afterlife and whether ‘Lottie’ will be waiting for him. The original title appears to be the ‘Folly’ of Curtiss, which implies culpability. This is crossed through in the notebook referred to by Rutherford as Notebook 1 (24/38 Files 24/1, 24/2 and 24/3).¹ As this poem and others are revised across the notebooks, there are changes to words, phrases, grammar and punctuation. Kipling also experiments with dialect. Reproduced below is stanza 16² of the poem as it appeared and was then reworked across the manuscript books. The modifications are indicated by the use of bold font and colour with bold font:

Lottie? (!) The heart of our nomad life? (? **Omitted**)

Madcap girl with the reckless tongue? (? **Omitted**)

That her? (**no emphasis**) Why should she die so young [*sic*] (? **Added**)

Scarcely passed (**changed**) (**stepped**) from the child to the wife (**girl**
erased – child added)

Old in the wit that our head-race brings (**this line erased completely**)

But oh! So sweet, so loving, so ready –

(**But oh! So loveable, quick and ready**)

(**But oh so sweet, so (loving erased) bright and ready**)

Younger than I but she kept me steady

Through (**Thro**’) a year of trouble and buffetings

(**Throughout a year of buffetings**)

(24/38 Files 24/1, 24/2 and 24/3).³

¹ 24/38-K/P: Literary Manuscripts.

² Rutherford publishes this as stanzas 16 and 17 ‘Lottie? The heart of our nomad life?/ Madcap girl with the reckless tongue?/ *That* her? - Why should she die so young/ Scarcely passed from the child to the wife?/ Old in the wit that our headrace brings, / But oh! so [*sic*] sweet, so loving, so ready -/ Younger than I but she kept me steady/ Through a year of trouble and buffetings’ Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Early Verse by Rudyard Kipling 1879-1889* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 125.

³ 24/38-K/P.

Although the variations appear straightforward they add emphasis and reader engagement to the text. For example, in one version the title changes half way through to 'lived'. The simple alteration of 'lived' to 'lodged' suggests impermanence and indicates an uncertain, nomadic, impoverished lifestyle for the speaker. The reader is directed to a statement of class in relation to Curtiss. He is a mere tenant in the most inferior part of the house. At the end of line 1, the question mark changes a narrative statement into an invitation for the reader to consider whether 'Lottie' is the mainstay of an itinerant lifestyle. The same technique in the following line asks the reader to make a value judgement on the character and actions of the young woman. At the beginning of line 3, the melodramatic underlining (this emphasis is italicised in the published text)⁴ dehumanises 'Lottie' and dictates the possible level of horror and revulsion felt by the reader. This augments the impression given in line 1 by the use of her name and single punctuation mark, that her mortal remains are in a state of deterioration. More unpleasant connotations can be applied depending on the punctuation used. The entire poem with revisions is reproduced below:

Poem 40 – 'The Trouble Of Curtiss Who Lodged In The Basement'
dated March 7th 1882

Ever so little to shew [*sic*] for it
And I shouldn't have cared but I haven't a thing
Excepting her battered turquoise ring
And my finger's so thick it's too small to fit

Nothing to shew [*sic*] for all the (**my**) sorrow
And I – Good God! I am here by myself (**no !**)
With those two watch pockets over our (**the**) shelf (**up by our**)
I must take the red one down tomorrow

⁴ Rutherford 125.

I wonder why she went so fast
 I'm sure she ought to have lived a while
 For the doctor said, with his sawdust (**sawdust erased**) smile
 "She's bound to go – but a week she'll last"

I shouldn't ha' (**have**) (**have**) minded, if only I'd known –
 But it (**I [sic]**) happened so suddenly – just the gasp
 And then – she was holding me tight in her clasp (**grasp**)

N.B. – typed notes 24/65 say 'light in her clasp'

The jaw went down, and she fell like a stone.

What came next after the stillness?
 Oh! t[T]ea, on a tray, with cups for two
 You see they thought that she'd pull through (**emphasis removed/added**
 – **depends which book came first**)
 And we'd always taken it so I her illness.

(**And**) That upset me Lord knows why
 When the slavey (**servant**) left and shut the door
 I gulped a bit, and I drop't (**dropped**) (**dropped**) on the floor
 But my throat was so hot I couldn't cry

And then (**came**) the business next morning and all
 The hideous wrangling over the price
 "For "three pun [*sic*] ten, you can do it nice [*sic*]
 "But there's ten bob more for the use of the pall"

"And (**there's**) three bob more if you 'as (**takes**) the bell, [*sic*]
 (**And three bob more for the bell if you take it**)
 "An'[d] (**And**) then there's the land; we manages that (**no emphasis**)
 And then theres [*sic*] the crape what goes (**to go**) (**to go**) round your 'at
 (**hat**) (**hat**)

And then theres [*sic*] the parsons [*sic*] fees as well (**punctuation corrected**)

(The worse [*sic*] (**worst**) (**worst**) of it is you can't escape
The (**This**) detail after a loved one dies,
But (**You**) (**You**) must quit at once, gird loins and rise
To haggle for feathers and nails and crape) [*sic*]

“We'll manage it all”. God! W(**w**) (**w**)hat did I care
As he preached in a (**'a' omitted**) (**'a' omitted**) dreary monotone
Of the different merits of different stone
And asked when the men should come and where [*sic*]

A wholesale business-mercantile
To the gilt-head letter — nails hammered in
(**To the last gilt letter — nails hammered in**)
(**To the gilt nails that they hammer in — last erased before gilt. Name inserted before nails**)
A matter of money — who cared a pin
Or thought of my Lottie (**Dottie corrected to Lottie**) all the while! [*sic*]

Why is it so? What's (**Whats**) the good of it all?
(**Why need it have been at all, at all** [*sic*])
I'd ha' (**have**) (**have**) kept her alive if they'd let me try
And she — what need to make her die?
(**What was the need to make her die**) [*sic*]
(**What was the need to make her die**) [*sic*]
God of the Pestilence! answer my call! [*sic*] (**exclamation marks added**)

Surely our (**this**) God is a little blind —
or a little careless maybe — p(**P**)erhaps
He is out of the reach of those awful taps

On the shelf (**shell**) that are driving me out of my mind

All so horrible! All so strange! (**! Omitted**)

She can't have altered to this so quickly! (**exclamation omitted**)

(**exclamation omitted**)

Her colour was always a little sickly

But what a change! Oh what a change!

The straight, lax lines by the curve of the lips

The stretched wax skin where no colour lingers

The blackening tips of her little fingers,

And the hollow under the finger tips

Lottie? (**!**) The heart of our nomad life? (**? Omitted**)

Madcap girl with the reckless tongue? (**? Omitted**)

That her? (**no emphasis**) Why should she die so young [*sic*] (**? Added**)

Scarcely passed (**changed**) (**stepped**) from the child to the wife (**girl
erased – child added**)

Old in the wit that our head – race brings (**this line erased completely**)

But oh! So sweet, so loving, so ready –

(**But oh! So loveable, quick and ready**)

(**But oh so sweet, so (loving erased) bright and ready**)

Younger than I but she kept me steady

Through (**Thro'**) a year of trouble and buffetings

(**Throughout a year of buffetings**)

And she's somewhere apart and away (**far**) from me

Flown like a wild bird out of my hand

There's (**There's**) (**Theres**) the pain – can you understand

How it (**must**) feels and what it must be

I (To) (To) think of our councils, her head on my breast
 And the cash book balanced somehow or other
 With plenty of kisses deficits to smother? (? Omitted)
 (Foolish of course — but we liked it best) (brackets omitted) (brackets
 omitted)

And then our evening strolls and (and omitted) our talks
 On the benches facing the Serpentine,
 Retold the old story, her hand in mine
 While darkness settled down on (over) (over) the walks

Went over (back on) the year that joined us two
 Step by step slowly, so slowly
 Till night hid the lapping waters (water) wholly
 And I felt her ulster damp with the dew
 (And the rings of gas-lights flared in view)
 (And the ring of lamp light burst to view)

Now — (— omitted) just nothing and worse than that
 For the room is full of the clothes she wore
 There's her corset lying about on the floor
 (Theres her corset lying about on the floor)
 With (And) her knowing, brown little sealskin hat.

**But the step, and the laugh and the eye are gone —
 These things proclaim (are crying) (are crying) the fact aloud
 While the sun glares (stares) in from (thro') the grey smoke cloud,
 Lest I miss the bed (couch) that she lay upon. — (— omitted)

**What days those were — and now they're (are) over.
 (What days we lived and now they are over)
 I could (might) work like a slave before t'was light
 All through (thro') the day and half the night

But then – I’m (t’would be) (t’would be) Curtiss not Lottie’s lover

****These verses are changed over in this notebook**

Peace for her, (–) I suppose (suppose) so. F(f)(f)or me,

What peace is there, except the lull

After a (the) storm has blown to its full

And the sodden corpses come out of the sea

There’s (Theres) one thought strikes as the worst of it

The years will heal the scar they made

And fix (mark) (mark) it, a youthful escapade (“a youthful escapade”)

When I’m older – (– omitted) (– omitted) and wiser a little bit

Nothing is fixed – the newer (hope – erased here) day

Smothers the dead one. New interests crowd

(with little breathing space (mourning time) allowed) (brackets omitted)

To take the edge of our (my – erased) grief away

What have I (What’s) (Whats [sic]) to keep me out of the pit,

Now you are gone – (?) What chance for me

To make my life as it used to be

With you, sole arbitress of it [sic]

Oh Girl(–) wife I was the world to you!

How (What) will it be when we meet again,

You (,) stamped with my seal, that you remain

For ever (Just) as loving, as (as omitted) (as omitted and inserted) sweet and true. [sic]

And I, with the hand some alien she

Presses in fire over the first

Maybe – (,) or else (the last and worst) (the last and worse)

My (**The**) passion frittered utterly

Through a dozen channels of later loves

No one single, or perfect or clean –

How could (**dare**) I face you oh (**O**) my Queen

when we meet again if fate approves. [*sic*]

(**when next we meet if our fate approves**)

(**when we meet again if our fate approves**)

(**But**) I think you would put out your arms as of old

With that odd, quick (**quick odd**) gesture draw my face

Down on your breast (**to your breast**) (**to your breast**) in a strict
embrace

And keep it there till the (**my**) tale was told

And after it all you would turn your head

To the bar – “This man was a god (**God**) (**God**) to me

Even as Thou (**thou**) art – set (**Let**) (**let**) him free

Seeing he stood for a time (**space**) in thy stead”

What am I raving of? There you lie (**omit ? there**)

And now you are (**you’re**) going – I shan’t go (**I dare not go**)

I loved you too much in life you know

To follow up to the cemetery

You shall be Lottie, (–)(–) a little worn

And very silent, (–)(–) a little pale

Nothing more – what would it avail

If I walked behind you – where you are borne? [*sic*] (**omit –**)

(**If I saw the place where you will be borne?**)

You shall be Lottie, so fast asleep,

That you will not wake ’though I kiss you now

(That you do not smile when I kiss you now)

Once, twice, thrice — lips, eyes and brow
And give you our marriage lines to keep

Rest in Peace (!) (!) — God bless you (!)(!)- Goodnight
And another (**again a**) kiss before the screw
Comes to sunder me from you
And the top-board shuts your face from sight (**omit —**)

The bitterest wrench of it all is near — (**here**)
Up till (**to**) now it was nothing — but (**omit —**)
God have mercy! I(**i**) (**i**)t's shut, it's shut
And they're going to take it away from here

Help me someone! Let it bide! (**You shall be erased**)
Open it only once again —
I'm (**am**) perfectly well, I can bear the pain,
I'll swear (**am sure**) (**I'm sure**) that a camphor bag slipped inside

A great love spilt and to shew [*sic*] for it —
Nothing — the white face (**woman**) (**woman**) there is quiet
While the first floor children continue their riot
And my head is aching fit to split
(24/38 Files 24/1, 24/2 and 24/3).⁵

⁵ 24/38.

Appendix 24: A. Corbett-Smith Article

I appeal to Mr. Kipling to entrust his work to the Peoples of England and of the British Commonwealth, by whom it is virtually unknown.

“What,” you exclaim.[*sic*] “Unknown? *Rudyard Kipling?* [*original emphasis*] Nonsense!” Very well. I beg that you will apply a simple test for yourself. Go among...the real folk...and ask...what Rudyard Kipling has written, what he stands for and what is his message.[*sic*]...there are thirty odd volumes of stories, poems, travel pictures, essays and addresses. And [*sic*] this inexhaustible national treasure-house of entertainment (in the finest sense of the word) is virtually closed to the very folk for whom the author’s strongest and most appealing message is surely intended. And [*sic*] that message is of the English Scene, of its fragrance, its immemorial tradition and continuity, and of the men who have upheld and fostered that tradition about the world....Mr. Kipling...is a great leader. His name carries incomparable weight. His creed may...be a narrow one, but, above all else, it is English to the backbone. He has mirrored the English at work as no other author, living or dead, has done...he has set before us, for our help and guidance, the imperishable tradition of our race (22/38 File 22/3 /Document 9).¹

22/38-File 22/3 is a complete file relating to cheap editions of Kipling poems and prose. It contains an original article entitled “Entrust Your Work To The People!” – An Appeal to Mr. Rudyard Kipling, written by A. Corbett-Smith. The article suggests ‘recitals of Kipling stories, poem and songs all over the world’. It is condensed for newspaper publication with its most extreme hyperbole removed from the original, for example, “To hear Mr. Kipling speak of England is...a rock, towering and impregnable, four-square to heaven, against an ocean of decadence...and pitiful mediocrity....Mr. Kipling’s work, by its very character and genius, has now, become something above and beyond its creator....It belong to the nation’ (22/38 File 22/3 /Document 9). Also included in the file is a letter which begins “No, I fear that we cannot “leave you alone” (22/38 File 22/3 /Document 9).²

¹ ‘People Who Can’t Read Kipling’ *The Sunday Express* 30 Dec. 1928 22/38-Kipling Papers Correspondence: Literary General Verse. The appeal follows an article published the previous week in the newspaper entitled ‘The Disappearance Of Rudyard Kipling’.

² A. Corbett-Smith, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 30 December 1928 22/38.

Appendix 25: The Story of ‘Recessional’

We publish to-day one of the strangest stories about a famous poem that ever was heard. On reading that Kipling threw his first draft of “Recessional” into the wastepaper [*sic*] basket, any ordinary man will marvel first at the genius which could throw such a poem off, and next at the critical power which could throw it away. He thought it not worth keeping. Keeping, with Rudyard Kipling, always meant keeping for future revision and improvement’ (28/14, 1894-1946, 3).¹

The original story which deals with the incident is recorded in the cutting ““Recessional” A Famous Poem’s Escape’ also in *The Times* on that date and present in this archive volume. The rescuer of the poem is stated as Sara Norton, who was staying with the Kiplings and who salvaged his poem from the waste-paper basket. Her father, Charles Eliot Norton, was an American scholar and friend. (Andrew Lycett deems this story to be unlikely, since he states that Miss Norton was not there when Kipling wrote the poem).²

¹ ‘The Story of “Recessional”’ *The Times* 20 Dec. 1937 28/14 Miscellaneous Cuttings About Rudyard Kipling and His Works 1894-1946 Cartoons etc.

² Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999) 299.

Appendix 26: Caroline Kipling's Diary – Troops in South Africa

1900 Feb 12 South Africa: Rud [*sic*] sees Sir Alfred Milner about a wire he sends to the Times [*sic*] for more troops 13. Rud [*sic*] spends a long morning at No. 2 Hospital and talks to over 200 men. 16 News at breakfast of relief of Kimberley. Rud [*sic*] goes to No. 3 Hospital 17. Rud [*sic*] goes to the Hospitals. 18. We wind bandages. 20 Rud [*sic*] goes to a concert for the amusement of the wounded men in Nos [*sic*] 1 & 2 Hospitals. He recites some verses within and is most splendidly cheered. (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 26).¹

¹ (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

Appendix 27: Daily Mail Discussion of ‘The Absent Minded Beggar’

We have secured for publication some spirited verses by Mr. Rudyard Kipling dealing with a phase of the war which cannot be over-emphasised at the moment. For this poem the “Daily Mail” offered Mr. Kipling £250, but he most generously declined to accept payment, asking us to hand over the money to some fund for the wives and children of Reservists who have been called to action in South Africa... We have no desire to keep the verses for exclusive publication in the “Daily Mail”, and we shall be glad to sell the right of publication to any London or provincial journals that may care to pay five guineas each for the right to use them... All money so received, together with the £250, will be handed to the fund in Mr. Kipling’s name... In addition we shall allow the verses, which will make a good ringing song, to be set to music,¹ and we are prepared to treat for the singing and music rights. Any fees so received will also be given to the Reservists’ Fund (28/6, 1899-1902, 36-40).²

In a letter written in 1900, Caroline Kipling confirms that her husband had given over all authority and interest in the poem to the *Daily Mail*, although she seems to state that he received payment for it: ‘I have asked Mr. Watt to send you an authentic copy of the Absent Minded Beggar, but you understand that Mr. Kipling has no more right or interest in it than he has in Tennyson’s Maud, He [sic] sold it outright, with every right he possessed to the Daily Mail’ (4/38 File 4/5 Un-numbered document).³

The subsequent music hall benefit concert on behalf of the Boer War troops and their wives was enthusiastically reviewed in a cutting sourced either from the *Daily Mail*, or the *Daily Chronicle*. The source is undated:

“The Absent-minded Beggar” made a scene at the Alhambra Theatre last night the like of which it would be hard to recall. Mr. Kipling’s “Daily Mail” poem as set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan was given for the first time, and the great theatre found itself all too small to hold the crowd

¹ Kipling’s verse was set to music on many occasions: ‘I am sending you my setting of your fine poem which was sung in the Pageant of Parliament at the Albert Hall last July... I wish to thank you very sincerely for your kindness and generosity with regard to the publication of the musical settings. Everyone was delighted and thrilled at the poem and the words seemed to inspire the chorus’ R. Quilter, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 19 September 1934 (22/38 File 22/26 /Document 48) 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

² ‘The Absent-Minded Beggar’ *Daily Mail* 31 Oct. 1899. 28/6 Miscellaneous South African War 1899-1902.

³ Caroline Kipling at The Elms, Rottingdean, “To A.J.Gurlitz,” 26 November 1900 4/38-K/P: Copyright.

which assembled...It has not been often that the greatest of English writers and the greatest of English musicians have joined inspiring words and stirring melody in a song which expresses the heart-feeling of the entire nation....Nor was it only at the Alhambra that the "Absent-minded Beggar" [*sic*] set the pulses of the public throbbing. At the Tivoli, the Oxford, and the Canterbury music halls the poem was given as a recitation...Altogether not less than 15,000 people must last night have listened to the reading and the singing of Kipling's verses (28/6 1899-1902; 37).⁴

⁴ 28/6.

Appendix 28: Review of ‘The Absent Minded Beggar’

Sullivan indicates that he wishes to repeat the setting of a Kipling poem to music, apparently for more overt imperial and inspirational purposes:

The war goes on. The martial spirit of the nations must be kept alive, and enthusiasm not allowed to flag. These sonorous sentences,...mean “have you got any words for me to set”? [*sic*] I have often thought that a sort of Evening Hymn for Soldiers in camp – not so severe and majestic as the “Hymn before the battle” but simple with a little tenderness in it, would be a thing soldiers would like
(22/38 File 22/26 /Un-numbered document).¹

It appears that Kipling was successful in his aim of bringing to the attention of his readership the Boer War soldier-figure. A review states:

Really it is impossible to tell, and at the same time to preserve a proper appearance of moderation, the plain story of the hold which the “Absent-minded Beggar” [*sic*] has taken on the minds of the British people. It is extraordinary, amazing – any adjective you like to select...For just think! It is a poem which in every circumstance of its production represents the strongest elements of the national life. Written by Rudyard Kipling, who, of all writers, has known best how to strike the vibrant chords of the nation’s sentiment, it voices that thought of our duty towards our soldiers which is in every English mind to-day; set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan, master of English melody, published by the “Daily Mail,” which, with whatever measure of success may be allowed to it, has set itself to give encouragement and expression to the intense Imperialist enthusiasm which is at the bottom of every true British heart...is it, then, after all, so very wonderful that “The Absent-minded Beggar” has attained its enormous vogue?...In theatres, music halls, masonic [*sic*] lodges, clubs, concerts, at meetings of friendly societies, at annual dinners, at parish meetings, at private at-homes, in barracks and schools, even in churches and chapels, the call to “Pay, pay, pay!” is being responded to (28/6, 1899-1902, 37).²

¹ Sir Arthur Sullivan at Shepperton, “To Rudyard Kipling,” 3 May 1900 22/38-K/P: Correspondence: Literary General-Verse.

² 28/6 Miscellaneous South African War 1899-1902.

Appendix 29: Letters of Caroline Kipling

Evidence of the personal interest that Kipling had in the Indian combatant during the Great War is supplied in a letter from Caroline Kipling to her mother written in January 1915:

Rud wanted to go and see the Indian wounded who are in hospital and convalescent houses in Brighton...Rud delighted in his visit and all the lame and halt [?] who could walk followed him to the motor car in the hope of a little talk. Not that they knew who he was but that they rejoiced to have some one talk their language (97-251 R-1 PO5).¹

¹ Caroline Kipling at Bateman's, "To Anna Balestier," 23 January 1915 Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers (2 microfilms): 68: Ref *96m-53 Kipling, Rudyard Letters to Mrs Balestier Reel 1. This is microfilm of a handwritten letter from Caroline Kipling to her mother. The Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers are additions to the main Kipling Collection and are comprised of correspondence between Rudyard, Caroline and members of the Balestier family, in particular Caroline's mother. The papers were archived by Wolcott B. Dunham Jr. on 29th March 1994.

Appendix 30: An Account of John's Entry Into the Army

Caroline Kipling traces the course of events in her diary. Her entries are preceded by her husband's laconic note: '1914 Aug 4 Incidentally Armageddon begins. England declares war on Germany' (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 64).¹ Caroline continues: 'Aug 12 Burwash: John's Commission antedated to take effect from today.' She describes the young man's medical difficulties: 'Aug 17 Burwash: John's 17th birthday. Rud [*sic*] takes him first to Hastings then to Maidstone about his commission but they will not have him because of his eyes.' There is subsequent resolution: 'Sept 2. Rud and John to town to see about John's commission. Decided to ask Lord Roberts for nomination. 10. Rud to town to meet Lord Roberts at the Irish Guards H.Q. The Colonel says John is to report at once for duty.' From the 11th of August, the diary explains that John is fully involved with his preparations to join his regiment: '11. John orders his uniform. 12. John's commission given today antedated later to Aug 15th. 14. John has his uniform tried on, joins us at Brown's for lunch, leaving directly after for Warley Barracks where he joins his Regiment, the Irish Guards' (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 64).² Two summer entries for 1915 complete the picture: '1915 Jul 6 Burwash: Letter from John to say his C.O. has told him he is to go to France in August, directly he is 18. Aug 15 Burwash: John leaves at noon for Warley. He looks very straight and smart and brave and young as he turned at the top of the stairs to say "Send my love to Dad-o"' (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 66)³

The Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers are additions to the main Kipling Collection and are comprised of correspondence between Rudyard, Caroline and members of the Balestier family, in particular Caroline's mother. The letters are held on two microfilms and referenced as Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers (2 microfilms): Accession No.

¹ (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

² Additions 40/38.

³ Additions 40/38.

SxMs 68: Ref *96m-53 Kipling, Rudyard Letters to Mrs Balestier Reel 1. (Caroline's sister Josephine married Dr. Theodore Dunham. These papers were archived by Wolcott B. Dunham Jr. in March (29th) 1994). Below are extracts from a series of handwritten letters in this collection, from Caroline Kipling to her mother:

1) John joins his regiment on Monday but does not go on foreign service I hope until after Xmas.⁴

2) I have been busy all day at my desk trying with the help of my excellent Miss Chamberlain to put Johns [*sic*] affairs in order...John has a hair cut to manage and a good hours [*sic*] work at his tailor for his uniform and then we plan all to lunch together and he leaves for Brentwood where his regiment is training. He has a small room for himself a col-bed and mattress brings his sheets and blankets and said the Col. "a pillow if he cares for such things". I hope he will prove strong enough for the job. Rud thinks it may be a good thing for him. At any rate he goes from the stiff life of a public school which means much. I hope we shall be able to see him from time to time when he can get here and come to town. He is only 40 minutes from London.⁵

3) Our excitement is two letters from John telling of his duties and his uniform he had no voice left when he wrote as he had been put to drill 20 recruits and his voice was not up to the strain. You see he has done a lot of very real soldiering at school where they are trained properly in army drill and shooting by army men and he did it every term for his four years so he has a start at his new trade...I hope to motor over to spend the day with lady Atkins and see her children. It will be a relief to see people young as his children are to be safe from the far reaching hand of this devastating [*sic*] war...I cant [*sic*] hope for much rest – I shall have a quiet time now both children are away and though missing them sadly it may be a sort of rest.⁶

4) John wired yesterday to say he would come home this afternoon for a 24 hour visit and this greatly cheered Rud. He has decided on a train that does not exist but all the same he is coming and we shall hear all the things he has not written...John looked so nice in his uniform. Nothing impresses me as much as to see English Officers in uniform in the streets...John had a cold but looked well and seemed happy and keen about his work: but its [*sic*] sad to think of the young people of all Europe and the British Empire with this awful damper of sadness pressing down upon them.⁷

⁴ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To Dearest Mother," 11th September [undated but in a series written in 1914].

⁵ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," 13th September 1914.

⁶ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," 18th September 1914.

⁷ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," 26th September 1914.

5) We had a happy xmas [*sic*] spite of everything and the children enjoyed their small presents and after a mid day dinner we drove to Chirkley to spend the night with the Aitkins as that was within John's prescribed distance from the barracks which Batemans was not... The recruiting is all we want it to be and the Armies themselves are splendid and nothing short of perfect efficiency is thought of before men are allowed to go to France and when they get there they are put into a training camp at Harve and moved up to the front by degrees all weaklings being kept back, if any have escaped the keen eyes over here. The lack of all feaverish [*sic*] excitement is a great help and until history is written no one will realize [*sic*] what we have done.⁸

6) Elsie and Rud did all they set out to do yesterday... They had John for tea and dinner and he reports there is an excellent chance of his regiment being removed to barracks in London. It will be better in some ways but not so good in others.⁹

7) John has to be in town and as always I fear and dread what his next orders will be and make the most of what times we can get with him. We hear from a source not possible to disbelieve that our prisoners in Germany are underfed without warm clothing and badly treated which is an added burden.¹⁰

8) There are changes in John's regiment –some of the older men are going out to France and as always we wonder when his turn will come he thinks soon: but one can't tell and can only wait [?] events the most difficult thing of all.¹¹

⁸ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," [dated as] Rud's birthday 1914.

⁹ Carrie Kipling, "To mother," 6th January 1915.

¹⁰ Carrie Kipling at Batemans, "To mother," 7th February 1915.

¹¹ Carrie Kipling at Brown's, "To mother," 28th March

Appendix 31: Caroline Kipling Writes About the Loss of John

All the letters in this appendix are handwritten and from Caroline Kipling to her mother. They are held in the Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers and are referenced as Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers (2 microfilms): Accession No. SxMs 68: Ref *96m-53 Kipling, Rudyard Letters to Mrs Balestier Reel:

1) No more news about John The Guards [*sic*] Brigade will be in the next fight and the reserves now at their base Havre will I suppose be moved up and then fresh men will be sent out to build up the reserve at Havre meantime we wait and everything changes in a day.¹

2) Johns [*sic*] regiment suffered more than I knew 18 officers killed and wounded in one fight. So he wrote he was under orders for the front. Of course that does not mean he will go of course [*sic*] only it does mean the arrangement for field kit and so on and I am so uncertain and anxious. — One is really harassed day and night now.²

3) John has not written for a week and we are a bit troubled for fear he is not well at worst or over worked at best and are keen for the post. Rud was away two days last-week and goes away again on Wednesday and will be more or less away all next month doing a bit of work...Mr Doubleday telegraphed to ask if he could put the articles France at war [*sic*] into a pamphlet...Every nation in the world has translated it and we are pleased America is interested too.³

4) John writes of heat and dust — long marches and trench digging and a great longing for a bath. They went into their new quarters on Tuesday and I hope will have a little let up. He says they only have 2 hours off their feet in the day which included the time they are at meals. When he is in the trenches proper he will have more rest, though more strain.⁴

5) Rud came home late Saturday night and was heavy with a liver chill yesterday. He had slept in a different ship every night during the week and had travelled every day...[He] had to talk and meet people all the time...John has been in the firing line as forces we know since Saturday. We have this mid day a letter from him written Thursday evening I think. He says “we have been marching for 48 hours to take up our position (they continued until Friday night to march I suppose) the heat and dust is dreadful so we march at night”. He was just awake after 4 hours sleep on the brick floor of a farm house. He says they have had to abandon a lot of their kit — which makes him sad and asks me to post him tooth

¹ Carrie Kipling at Brown's, “To mother,” 2nd May 1915.

² Carrie Kipling at Batemans, “To mother,” 2nd June 1915.

³ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, “To mother,” 20th September 1915.

⁴ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, “To mother,” 23rd September 1915.

brushes when I can... We think John is at La Basse where the fighting is heaviest but the Guards Division is bound to be where the heavy work is being done.⁵

6) I have no news to send you except the enclosed. Rud and I are both agreed that John was not left in the building he went to bind up his wound if his men in their retreat used it, went through it. I think he would have been taken along with his men and shot with the others – only one man out of the 200 returned. The Prince of Wales who belongs to John's Division is going to help sift the matter and we have asked the American Ambassador in Berlin to see if he can discover if he is in hospital – but they have told us for a long time Gerrard is slack and a German sympathizer [*sic*] at heart so he may not bother though I believe Washington may ask him – Meantime Rud and I are distressed because since the telegrams come in hourly from India Canada Australia South Africa [*sic*] that the news would come to you through a newspaper. You will like the letter from his Col. Its [*sic*] a nice picture – the gallant boy with his men leading and encouraging them and the Col. Under whom he was trained wrote Rud he was a most excellent officer. We do not grudge him for a second: it would have been intolerable to have had him do otherwise than take his part –; but the anxiety is almost beyond bearing. One knows how the Germans treat prisoners only too well.⁶

7) [A]fter I had read and read letters I went into the garden and worked there...to my great help... There are thousands of letters which must in part at least be answered and the telegrams are easy to deal with... Your letter of Sept 27th John's day came on Friday with its enclosure from Josephine... a telegram from General French at headquarters in France yesterday seemed to us to read as if we had retaken the bit of ground we were trying for when John was wounded and if that is the case they may find some trace of him and the next days may bring us some news.⁷

8) We hear today from Berlin the letter coming via the American Ambassador... that if John is alive wounded and a prisoner it may well be two months before the Germans will give them any information. The wounded are kept in Belgium and they never report until they are well enough to go to a Prisoners [*sic*] Camp in Germany. Of course we send them word at once. So there is nothing for it but to sit on our grid and be turned from side to side hunting here for confirmation and waiting to hear from Germany. The recent murder of Miss Cavell does not exactly make one feel easy.⁸

⁵ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," 27th September 1915.

⁶ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," 7th October 1915.

⁷ Carrie Kipling at Burwash, "To mother," 11th October 1915.

⁸ Carrie Kipling, "To [incomplete with no salutation or date]," Noted as being sent to Josephine and dated either 27th October 1915, or 20th March 1916. Three letters are found together in one envelope.

9) Yesterday...Rud and Elsie went to Brighton –Rud to see three men in Johns [*sic*] Battalion. One wounded in the jaw gave us a little help and said what another man ha said that he saw him at one time in the fight crawl up under a window from which the Germans were firing and shoot at the men who were working the machine guns. The Germans could not get him except with their [?] which was what he used...One must go on but its [*sic*] pretty difficult at times and impossible they should find John's body if he has been killed. Yet we still hope for news. We heard yesterday there was a Lance Corporal from Johns [*sic*] platoon in hospital...and wait to see him. A young Irishman with such a nice face about 24...wounded in three places the afternoon John was wounded. He said John was all right when he was taken back to the dressing station. He told us he had been in his platoon always and had never seen him down hearted and when he lead [*sic*] them into action 5 paces ahead you would have thought they were just going on parade...He was so evidently devoted to "Mr Kipling" it was charming to talk to him.⁹

10) [W]e go to town tomorrow to see one of Johns [*sic*] fellow officers home on 4 days [*sic*] leave it might so well with better luck have been our boy. Still no news and yet if he is wounded presumed [Killed the? – the letter edge at this point is torn] Germans must know it only they won't tell.¹⁰

11) I am enclosing an account of a German prison, its [*sic*] the same prison where the soldier we met...spent nearly a year and of which he wrote an account. When one imagines ones [*sic*] son in such a prison its [*sic*] best by far to believe him dead. – and when one knows this state of things went on for 10 months before the American Ambassador took any steps to reprise the German Govt. one realizes [*sic*] how helpless we feel having the wellfare [*sic*] of our prisoners in his hands.¹¹

12) Xmas can never be anything to Rud and me again but a day of repression of sorrow for the sake of those about us, and we mean to start this year and do a very little for Elsie's [*sic*] sake.¹²

13) The King and Queen have during the War invariably sent messages of sympathy to the nearest relative of those who have lost their lives in the service of their Country. In cases of doubt however, Their Majesties have refrained from sending any message, always hoping that the report might not be true. The King and Queen have now heard with deep regret that the death of your son, Lieut: J. Kipling, is presumed to have taken place in 1915, and I am commanded to convey to you the expression of Their Majesties' sympathy with you in your sorrow, and to assure you that during the long months of uncertainty Their Majesties' thoughts

⁹ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's "To mother," 27th October 1915[?].

¹⁰ Carrie Kipling at Batemans, "To her mother," [undated, but in the December 1914/ January 1915 sequence]. However, a handwritten additional note states that it is probably 1915 based on the paper used. Also, the content indicates a late 1915 date.

¹¹ Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," 12th April 1916.

¹² Carrie Kipling at Bateman's, "To mother," 19th November 1916.

have been constantly with you and those who have been called upon to endure this exceptional burden of anxiety (19/38 File 19/15 Document A15).¹³

¹³ [On behalf of King George V at Buckingham Palace], "To Rudyard Kipling," 4th July 1919. 19/38 K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private.

Appendix 32: Searching for John

[Oct] 6. Mr. Gwynne promises to try for news through the Roman Catholics in Germany by way of Sir Edmund Talbot. 11. We went to a hospital near Hythe so see [*sic*] a L/Cpl called Refler in John's platoon. 17. Busy at my desk with correspondence about John's men and the hope of finding something from wounded men....19. Rud and I to town to see Mrs Fowler who is helping to hunt up men in John's platoon. Rud goes to three hospitals. One says he saw John shot in the neck just before they fell back after which he was wounded. Nov 9. Major Vessey, John's Adjutant, says John was his best Ensign and that he never gave him a job that he did not do well after he understood. 15. 7 weeks to a day since John was last seen and still no news. Constant and steady investigation has gone on and always we just miss seeing the man who could tell us (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 66).¹

1) I have been told that Lce-Corporal P. Daly (2645) 2nd Irish Guards is, or has been a patient in your hospital. He was wounded in the same action as that in which my son 2nd Lieutenant Kipling was reported missing, and I have written to him by this post asking him for any information that he can give me. I should be very grateful if you also would question him on the subject as he might tell you more fully than he would write me. What I want to know is whether Corp. Daly saw my son wounded: and, if so, how near Corp. Daly was to my son when my son was hit (File Ads. 31).²

The following letters are from the Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers referenced as:

Kipling-Balestier-Dunham Papers (2 microfilms): Accession No. SxMs 68: Ref *96m-53 Kipling, Rudyard Letters to Mrs Balestier Reel 1.

2) Your son was in my Coy. In command of No. 5 Platoon. I intended to write to you before and tell you as far as possible the course of events on the 27th September on the day the 2nd Bn. Irish Guards made the attack on the Chalk Pit Wood...We occupied an old German trench on the night of the 26th which had been taken a day or two previously. At mid-day we were told that we would attack a small wood about 1 mile in a N.E. direction at 4 p.m to dig ourselves in on the far side and give covering fire...No. 2 and 3 Coys were ordered to attack, No. 1 and 4 being in support...Your son led the Platoon in extended order from No. 2 Coy. We were shelled most of the way but remained in this formation till we reached the wood...The 2 leading Platoons charged through the wood and when I got through with the remaining platoons of my Coy. they were already digging themselves in...at his time we were under machine guns and casualties were getting numerous...Two of my men

¹ Ad. 40 Kipling, Mrs R. (Carrie) (Box un-numbered) Additions 40/38-K/P.

² Rudyard Kipling at Bateman's, "To Miss Amy Willes S.R.N. Matron of the Connaught Hospital, Aldershot," 25th October 1915 Ad. 31 Kipling, R. (Box un-numbered) Additions 1-36/38-K/P.

say they saw your son limping just by the Red house [*sic*] and one said he saw him fall and somebody run to his assistance, probably his orderly who is also missing. The Platoon Segt. of No. 5 however tells me your son did not go up to the Red house [*sic*] but remained with the remainder of the 2nd Bn. Digging themselves in...but I think the former story more probably the correct one, and I am very hopeful that he is a prisoner...Your son behaved with great gallantry and coolness and handled his men splendidly. I trust that your great anxiety may be allayed by definite news of his safety soon.³

3) May a brother officer of your son intrude on your great trouble and send you a few words of what will be I am afraid very inadequate sympathy. I should so much like to be able to increase the hope that he is alive. I was in his Company and took part in the advance on the 27th but I never saw him again as far as I remember after we had gone through Chalk Pit Wood. All possible evidence has I know been collected and sifted and it will have already reached you. What I want to tell you now is how well he led his men that afternoon without any hesitation or faltering though it was his first time in action. What that mean I know for I have been out here many months, myself. I was close behind and saw his platoon crossing the open for nearly a mile under shell and machine gun fire without a break or bend in the line, it was a grand sight, but as I say after he reached the wood I did not see him again, but with the greatest pluck and courage he led his men on further and was in fact mixed up with Scotts [*sic*] Guards when he was last seen. It is my most earnest hope that he will still be found alive but if it should prove otherwise pray accept my deepest and most sincere sympathy. Your loss is indeed irreparable and the Irish Guards have lost a brave and useful officer.⁴

Caroline Kipling's diary entries for 1917 show that the couple became obsessed with the task of assimilating all the details of their son's demise:

1917 Oct 4 John: A letter from Oliver Baldwin who has talked to an I.G. Sgt. who says he saw John shot in the temple and put him in a shell hole. He says what four others of John's platoon have said — that John was shooting Germans in the Farm House with his revolver. Dec 12. I finish packing and preparing papers for Rud's interview with Sgt [*sic*] Farrell and Cpl [*sic*] about John. They convince Rud that John was shot through the head on 27th at 6.30 p.m. and carried by Sgt [*sic*] Farrell to a shell hole on the left of the edge of Chalk Pit Wood and was there seen later by Cpl [*sic*] Franklin (File Ads 40 Document Ad. 40, 73).⁵

³ John B. Bird in the trenches, "To Rudyard Kipling," 12th October 1915.

⁴ Frank Witts, 2nd Battalion Irish Guards, "To Rudyard Kipling," 14th October 1915.

⁵ Adds 40/38.

Appendix 33: The 'Last Post' at the Menin Gate

1) We Belgians will never forget that it is thanks to the munificent gift of your illustrious husband that the Last Post is sounded every day at the Menin Gate at Ypres, and also that this beautiful thought was prompted by the heroic sacrifice of your son, John, who gave his life in the Great War (20/38 File 20/7 Document C14).¹

2) I have the pleasure to inform you that the Burgomaster, Aldermen and Corporation of the town of Ypres decided, at their session of the 5th of this month, to give the name of RUDYARD KIPLING to one of the avenues... This avenue has been chosen by preference because it leads to the British Memorial at the Menin Gate, where every evening takes place the imposing ceremony of the sounding of the Last Post (20/38 File 20/7 Document B28).²

¹ E. de Cartier, Belgian Ambassador in London, "To Carrie Kipling," 19 January 1936 20/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Private-Public.

² E. de Cartier, Belgian Ambassador in London, "To Carrie Kipling," 21 May 1936 20/38.

Appendix 34: The Inception of the Imperial War Graves Commission [IWGC]

Details of the Draft Royal Charter and a copy of the Draft Charter itself can be found in Box 21 of the Kipling Papers. The draft of a Charter of Incorporation of the Imperial War Graves Commission was dated the 1st of May 1917. This draft was presented before King George V in Council a few days later, on the 10th of May, for his approval and to be passed: ‘under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom’ (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B.1).¹ As Document B.1. states:

10th May 1917 at Court at Buckingham Palace in the presence of the King George V:

There was this day read at the Board a letter from Mr. Secretary Long, dated the 1st day of May, 1917, transmitting the Draft of a Charter of Incorporation to be granted to “The Imperial War Graves Commission”[I.W.G.C.]:

His Majesty [*original emphasis and layout*], having taken the said Draft Charter into consideration, was pleased, by and with the advice of His Privy Council, to approve thereof (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B.1).²

The draft states in ‘Section III. The Members of the Commission’ that ‘the Members of the Commission shall consist of...such other persons, not exceeding the number of eight in all, as may from time to time be appointed Members of the Commission by Royal Warrant under the Sign Manual of the Sovereign’ (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B.1).³

¹ 21/38-K/P: Correspondence: Topical Public.

² 21/38.

³ 21/38.

AT THE COURT AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE,

The 10th day of May, 1917.

PRESENT,

THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
IN COUNCIL.

WHEREAS there was this day read at the Board a letter from Mr. Secretary Long, dated the 1st day of May, 1917, transmitting the Draft of a Charter of Incorporation to be granted to "The Imperial War Graves Commission":

HIS MAJESTY, having taken the said Draft Charter into consideration, was pleased, by and with the advice of His Privy Council, to approve thereof, and to order, as it is hereby ordered, that the Right Honourable Sir George Cave, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, do cause a Warrant to be prepared for His Majesty's Royal Signature, for passing under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom a Charter in conformity with the said Draft, which is hereunto annexed.

J. C. LEDLIE.

Fig. 35 A copy of the Declaration of the Royal Charter of Incorporation of the Imperial War Graves Commission as presented before King George V's Council on the 10th of May 1917 (21/38 File 21/3 Document B1).

George the Fifth, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India ; To all to whom these presents shall come greeting :

Whereas it has been represented to Us by Our most dearly beloved son, Edward, Prince of Wales, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, that the establishment and organization of a permanent Imperial Body charged with the duty of caring for the graves of officers and men of Our military and naval forces raised in all parts of Our Empire who have fallen, or may fall, in the present War, and have been, or may be, buried either in foreign countries or in Our dominions, would, by honouring and perpetuating the memory of their common sacrifice, tend to keep alive the ideals for the maintenance and defence of which they have laid down their lives, to strengthen the bonds of union between all classes and races in Our dominions, and to promote a feeling of common citizenship and of loyalty and devotion to Us and to the Empire of which they are subjects :

And whereas the Government of the French Republic has made generous provision by law for the grant in perpetuity of land for the graves of all officers and men buried in France belonging to the forces of all foreign States fighting in alliance with the forces of the said Republic, and negotiations are now proceeding, or will hereafter be instituted, on Our behalf with the Governments of other foreign States for similar grants of land for the graves of officers and men of Our said forces who have been, or may be, buried in Belgium, in the Gallipoli Peninsula, in Mesopotamia, in parts of Africa not within Our dominions, or in any other foreign territory :

And whereas the objects intended to be promoted by this Our charter have hitherto formed the care of Our Army Council and of a Committee appointed by the Lords Commissioners of Our Treasury, of which Our said dearly beloved son, the Prince of Wales, is the President :

And whereas application has been made to Us by Our said dearly beloved son, the Prince of Wales, to incorporate himself and the persons from time to time holding the several offices hereinafter named, and all other persons who may become members of the said Body as hereinafter provided :

Now know ye that we, being desirous of promoting the establishment and organization of the said Body, have by Our royal prerogative and of Our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion given and granted, and by this Our charter for Us, Our heirs and successors do hereby give and grant that—

Our said most dearly beloved son, Edward, Prince of Wales, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter ;

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Fig. 36 A copy of the Draft Royal Charter of Incorporation of the Imperial War Graves Commission as presented before King George V's Council on the 10th of May 1917 (21/38 File 21/3 Document B1).

Appendix 35: Visiting the Cemeteries

As Kipling notes in an extract from a series of articles, published in 1933:

My duties as one of the British Imperial War Graves Commission took me for the next few years over the devastated areas....At first, the Commission's great camions...would push out into oceans of weeds to discover where lay the rough cemeteries of the early years. They would be guided sometimes by voices out of the earth or from beneath indistinguishable bivouacs, saying: "Monsiuer [*sic*], this was Flers"....In...places, the peasant women sold butter and eggs to our searchers for the dead, and religiously cheated them at every small turn. Then they would give up half a day in which they might have continued their practices to gather and walk five miles with flowers to lay on some grave of our people. Equally devout in both duties [*sic*]. After all, mankind is but made of earth and water; and our hearts, like muddy streams, cleanse themselves as they go forward (28/8, 1930-1937/ 1891-1945, 38).¹

Correspondence with Fabian Ware illustrates how seriously Kipling, despite his personal health problems, undertook the ongoing task of visiting the cemeteries. The first of these illustrates Kipling's continued linguistic contribution:

Everything is going very well about the tour on the 11th-13th May....We shall have the unveiling ceremony at Terlinctum and it is agreed that a short speech [by the Ambassador] should be made. I have to submit a speech for him....Have you any ideas as to the sort of thing we ought to get him to say?...Whatever we send in they will probably knock about, but we may be able to get in something that really matters (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B5).²

Ware's comments indicate his belief that Kipling has the ability to compose a eulogy that is appropriate, moving, sincere and most importantly will enhance the remembrance of the dead soldiers.

Ware writes a second letter on the same day, which confirms his faith in Kipling's abilities: 'With altogether minor alterations the speech is approved – they can hardly

¹ 'Souvenirs of France VI' *The Daily Telegraph* 13-17 Mar. and 20-22 Mar. 1933 *Revue des deux mondes* March 1933. 28/8 Stories and Poems 1930-1937/ Miscellaneous Cuttings 1891-1945.

² Fabian Ware, "To Rudyard Kipling," 28 March 1922 21/38-Kipling Papers Correspondence: Topical Public.

find enough words to say how beautiful they think it' (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B6).³

He continues in another, undated letter relating to the visit:

[t]he visit to Meerut Cemetery will be at 11.30 on Saturday morning. If you were able to join Arthur Browne and the India Office representative...it would help, as we have not enough interest shewn [*sic*] in Indians by Commissioners with special knowledge (21/38 File 21/3 /Document B8).⁴

This shows the importance of Kipling's personal history in connection with the work of the I.W.G.C.

³ F/W, "To R/K," (28 March 1922) 21/38.

⁴ Fabian Ware, "To Rudyard Kipling," [?] 1922 21/38.

Appendix 36: Appreciation of the Baker War Memorial

We were at Winchester the day before yesterday: being there of [*sic*] purpose to see your war memorial. A perfectly clear, Italian-skyed day and no one except a small party of schoolgirls about the place – and through the far end a framed picture of the boys playing against the background of a wall...[I]t was about as perfect a setting as one could wish. And the thing itself is as near perfection to my mind as human work can be – in all ways and under all considerations. One could see, when one had admired, how it will weather and how it will arrange itself a hundred years hence. Not being any sort of expert in harmony, proportion and so forth, I hadn't anything to do except to delight in it wholeheartedly – the colour, the idea, the balance, the lay out of the whole thing and the air that flooded it and the sun that adorned it...I think – indeed I know that so far as my own experience goes, it is incomparably the best of all the war memorials. There is a damnable word called “significance” – which one is forced to use now and again. But you'll understand when I say that, over and above all, it is significance itself: and I am writing...just to thank you for the joy you've given me
(14/38 File 14/7 & 14/8 Documents (un-numbered) & 21).¹

It is quite probable that the proximity of Winchester College and its young students to the Baker Memorial intensified Kipling's appraisal of its significance.

¹ Rudyard Kipling at Golden Bay Hotel, Westward Ho!, “To [Herbert] Baker,” 5 October 1925 14/38-Kipling Papers Correspondence: A-D.