



The
KIPLING JOURNAL

Published quarterly by the

KIPLING SOCIETY



SEPTEMBER 1974

VOL XLI

No. 191

CONTENTS

NEWS AND NOTES.	2
By Roger Lancelyn Green	
KIPLING'S ARMY AND NAVY.	4
By J. H. McGivering	
TECHNIQUE AND THEME IN 'SOLDIERS THREE'	12
By Professor Robert Moss	
LETTER BAG.	16

THE KIPLING SOCIETY

THE Society was founded in 1927. Its first President was Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, C.B., C.S.I. ("Stalky") (1927-1946).

Members are invited to propose those of their friends who are interested in Rudyard Kipling's works for election to membership. The Hon. Secretary would be glad to hear from members overseas as to prospects of forming a Branch of the Society in their district.

THE KIPLING SOCIETY ADDRESS—

18, Northumberland Avenue, London, WC2N 5BJ (Tel. 01-930 6733).

Be sure to telephone before calling, as the office is not always open.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Home: £1.75. Overseas: £1.25. Junior (under 18): £0.75.
U.S.A.: Persons, \$5.00; Libraries, \$6.00.

THE KIPLING SOCIETY

Forthcoming Meetings

COUNCIL MEETINGS

At 50 Eaton Place, S.W.I, at 2 p.m.

Wednesday, 18th September, 1974 (after the A.G.M. at 2 p.m.).

Wednesday, 18th December, 1974.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 18th September, 1974, at 2 p.m.

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

At St. George's Club, 4 Wilton Mews, S.W.I, at 5.30 for 6 p.m.

Wednesday, 18th September, 1974. Mr. T. L. A. Daintith will introduce a recital of "Kipling on Record": his songs and verses as recorded by various performers.

Wednesday, 20th November, 1974. 'A Kipling Quiz, with special reference to his Poetry'. Set by Mr. J. H. McGivering.

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

We confirm that, owing among other things to the uncertain economic outlook, we shall not hold our usual Annual Luncheon this year. We still hope to be able to hold one in 1975.

THE KIPLING JOURNAL

published quarterly by

THE KIPLING SOCIETY

Vol. XLI No. 191

SEPTEMBER 1974

NEWS AND NOTES

'BAA, BAA, BLACK SHEEP' ON TELEVISION

Kipling has not always come off well in television adaptations of his stories, although one remembers a splendid dramatisation of 'The Eye of Allah' some years ago; but Granada's presentation of 'Baa, Baa, Black Sheep' on 21st April more than compensates for any previous deficiencies. This splendid and moving production adhered very faithfully to the story, most of the dialogue being virtually what Kipling wrote, though there were a few short extra scenes, notably of Punch at 'the terrible little day-school', which fitted in perfectly.

The performance received a considerable amount of Press coverage, all laudatory: 'Among the adult contributions to this harrowing chronicle Gillian Hawser made the children's real mother all affection and mis-givings', wrote Leonard Buckley in *The Times* (22nd April). 'Freddie Jones impinged briefly as the gentle, dying foster father. And against them came Eileen McCallum's Auntie Rosa, all the more forbidding because this was a woman not so much vicious as Victorian, not so much evil as misguided. It was finely done.

'This play, however, which was mounted with all Granada's sense of place and period belonged throughout to Max Harris as Punch. And under Mike Newell's direction, he never put a foot wrong. Whether the moment called for silent resistance, an outburst of violence or a speech of cold, childish logic, this stolid, tight-lipped eight-year-old was devastating from start to finish. Claudia Jessop was touching enough as his tiny puzzled sister. But as well as wringing our hearts this Punch could even reproduce the hint of arrogance we might have expected in a young sahib of India's past.'

Clive James in *The Observer* (28th April) sang much the same song of praise—but with an interesting variant. Sketching the plot rather from Auntie Rosa's point of view, he says: 'Foster-mother became aware that her young charge was not naturally disposed to obey God's bidding... The self-willed lad's touch of evil was particularly manifest in his urge to read popular fiction and in the buoyant workings of his ungovernable imagination. Curbs would need to be imposed. The foster-parents' own hideous child was encouraged to apply pressure. The rod was not spared. The whole school joined in the hunt. Finally the kid went psychomatically blind. When loving mother at last reappeared, it was clear that she was too late: her son had been turned from an ordinary laughing little boy into—Rudyard Kipling.

'There, of course, lay the rub. John Stuart Mill's barbaric education produced John Stuart Mill. As Auden once said, every child deserves as much neurosis as it can stand. It is probably a mistake to expend anger on the circumstances that help make great men what they are. Nevertheless,

it is possible to be outraged. The sheer *unfairness* of grown-ups picking on children is what gets you down. By the end of the programme the viewer was likely to find himself thoroughly regressive and demanding revenge in a piping treble—the kid's threat to burn the rotten house down was accompanied, where I was watching, by loud cheers'.

KIPLING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. Alex K. Smith sends an interesting article from an undated number of *The Scotsman* which draws on a volume called *War Impressions* (1901) by the artist Mortimer Menpes (1860-1938) who was war artist in South Africa in 1900 for the periodical *Black and White*. Besides drawings and descriptions of Winston Churchill, General Wavell and Conan Doyle, an excellent sketch of Kipling is reproduced. Menpes first met Kipling 'doing his best for a railway carriage-full of sick and disabled Tommies', and goes on to describe him: 'He has a startling face, rather pale features, black eyebrows tremendously developed, a black moustache, three blobs in vivid contrast to the pallid face, a face that attracted by its power, its strength and determination, keen, vivid, original. He lived much in the hospital. He would go into a ward, throw himself on a sick man's bed; and instantly he would be friends with that man, learning his history, getting at his life, sympathising with his troubles, laughing and joking, perhaps writing a letter for the wounded man'.

It may be remembered that one of these letters was published in facsimile in *The Strand Magazine* for June 1900 (Vol. XIX, p. 619)—from Lance-Corporal George Harris to his mother. At the end Kipling added '(Dictated R.K.)'. The above statements are true. Your son is coming on very well'. The letter was dated 'Feb. 24, 1900. Hospital train going to Cape Town'. George Harris had lost his right arm in the fighting at Paardeberg.

'FRAMED IN GRAY BRISTLES'

Several members have identified this quotation, for which Miss Sadie Balkind asked in the June 'Letter Bag'. It occurs on page 159 (Pocket and Uniform Editions) of *Plain Tales* in 'His Wedded Wife'—'Things seemed black indeed, and the Captains' wives peered under their eyebrows at the Senior Subaltern, and the Colonel's face set like the Day of Judgement framed in gray bristles, and no one spoke for a while'.

R.L.G.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome the following: UK: Miss B. Cave, Mrs. D. M. Wakely; Capt. I. H. S. Homersham; Messrs J. A. Hayward, Mumtaz Ahmed, A. R. Newman, A. C. Young. **France:** Mille A-D. DeVos. **Israel:** A. Scheyer. **Lebanon:** Prof. D. S. McLaren. **NZ:** A. C. Fuller. **Tasmania:** Morris Miller Liby. **USA:** Mrs. M. Feeley, Tennessee Univ. Liby., Chattanooga. **Victoria BC:** Miss I. Howard, W. Spiller.

KIPLING'S ARMY AND NAVY

By J. H. MCGIVERING

It is a measure of Kipling's humanity that he was, in a day when Jack was not as good as his master, to mix with all ranks so happily, and to present the results in such an agreeable manner. You will recall the daring way in which he made his Imperial Guard—officers and guardsmen—dine in the same room, although he did draw the line by having the formers' table up a step or two!

Rutherford makes something of this in his essay:—

(Kipling's) social standing is peculiar. He is involved with the private soldiers, but is not one with them. Nor is he a full member of the ruling classes—a representative of Authority. There is present always a strongly-felt class difference and the narrator is forced to hide his intimacy with the three from the officers with whom he associates . . . his position as a journalist seems to put him in the place of being able to communicate with all classes, without being wholly accepted by any of them.

Looking back on those stories, I get the impression that it is the soldiers who show most delicacy in social matters, who vanish when the Colonel appears—to save their friend embarrassment—and who admit him wholly to their friendship. It is possibly a little difficult at this distance and in this age ever to come to any particular conclusion. As, in any event, our author was writing fiction in order to entertain it does not matter much.

I propose to take the Army first, as this was Kipling's first love, and he wrote more prose and verse on this subject than the Navy. I have never been able to make up my mind which he does better—it is possible you may be able to assist me when we reach the Discussion.

On the whole, the soldiers have a pretty thin time, leaving a trail of graves behind them:

Whin the childher wasn't bornin', they was dying,
for, av our childher die like sheep in these days,
they died like flies thin. I lost me own little Shad ..

The Daughter of the Regiment

You will recall that the 'Rigiment' went up-country in an unwholesome season, and that the McKennas had lost five children in fourteen months. Two trains were provided for a six hundred mile journey, and there were no refreshments available.

Like the Intermediates, the men must have drunk from the rail-side ditches, and cholera was the result.

The cure is given elsewhere, cleverly wrapped up in the verse 'Municipal'

*"Why is my District death-rate low?"
Said Binks of Hezabad.*

where the impression is given that he made the City Elders flush their drains so that he would have a better chance if he were chased up one by an elephant again! If you detect an echo from *Utopia Ltd*, it is that quartet in the finale of act 1

Increase your army!
 Purify your Court
 Get up your steam and cut your canvas short!
 To speak on both sides teach your sluggish brains!
 Widen your thoroughfares, and flush your drains!

What a wonderful comic opera Kipling and Sullivan might have written! Such a pity they only produced one number—it was, however, a great success, which is as well, but it is a dreadful reflection on the system of running an army that made no provision for 'the little things they left behind'.

Bad administration and poor — or non-existent—logistics killed more of our people than the enemy ever did.

The soldier sings

. . . An' we'll never live to 'ear the cannon roar!
 The Large Birds of Prey
 They will carry us away,
 An' you'll never see your soldiers any more.
Birds of Prey March

Should our soldier survive, he can look forward to no less than a shilling a day (less stoppages) and on return home

They'll turn us out at Portsmouth wharf in cold
 an' wet an' rain,
 All wearin' Injian cotton kit, but we will not complain.
 They'll kill us of pneumonia—for that's their
 little way—
 But damn the chills and fever, men, we're goin'
 'ome today!

Troopin'

Having returned, he is further harrowed by the women-folk of those who did not return, as set forth in *Soldier, Soldier*—

The Dead they cannot rise, an' you'd better dry
 your eyes
 An' you'd best go look for a new love.

So, you may ask, why should anybody in his senses join an army that treated its people in such a way? Sheer economic necessity in the case of Edward Clay, who knew no other trade: (*Back to the Army Again*)

You will recall that he served six years, took his discharge and found that it would not do, so changed his name to William Parsons and tried again. On a happier note, we find a Gunner who is happy in the service—'Screw Guns' and another who certainly made the most of his time in Mandalay and wished to be taken back there—here is one of the reasons

. . . the longi—the ankle-length sarong-skirt caught and folded over to one side, and a filmy white jacket, waist-high, with long fitted sleeves, which is worn over a white camisole bodice edged with lace. The costume has not changed essentially in centuries . . . It must also be one of the most flattering and comfortable feminine get-ups ever invented. On the Burmese, with their high-hipped slender figures and smooth black hair, it looks ravishing.

There is something gentle and flower-like about Burmese women. Their gentleness comes from within; the flower quality is in their physical make-up. It is the poise of the little head on its long stem of neck tilted back by the weight of the chignon and decked with gold combs and flowers. It is the narrow, delicate hands and feet, and above all, in the grace of their walk. To see them in the street is to watch a flower-garden in motion. I was to see many more individually beautiful women among the Siamese and Chinese, but none who gave a more general impression of beauty than the Burmese; they were so small, so elegant..²

One can see the man's point!

It seems that all this army stuff was news to the British public—as Eliot says

Kipling . . . undoubtedly felt that the professional ranker and his officers too were unappreciated by their peaceful countrymen at home, and that in the treatment of the soldier and the discharged soldier there was often less than social justice: but his concern was to make the soldier known, not to idealise him.³

Even Orwell seems to approve, for once, when he maintains that Kipling's is the only literary picture of nineteenth-century Anglo-India, but he is obliged to call it 'tawdry and shallow' and to qualify his faintish praise by going on to say

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.⁴

That does not sound like the man who wrote 'They' or the 'Just-So' stories does it? One gets the feeling that Orwell is occasionally a little carried away with his anti-establishment or whatever may be the fashionable expression, and has made the mistake of believing every word of Kipling's that he has come across—for instance, he says when Kipling describes a British soldier beating a "nigger" with a cleaning-rod in order to get money out of him, he is acting merely as a reporter and does not necessarily approve what he describes.⁵

Well, I believe that poor old Orwell has missed the whole point of *Loot!* It has got to be a joke! The idea of the upright and moral Kipling seriously sitting down to compose advice (in verse) on how to go about looting is too ludicrous for words.

I incline to the opinion that Kipling was better at junior officers than he was at generals and so on—Duff Cooper believed that Shakespeare was better at N.C.O.s for the simple reason that he (W.S.) had been one himself: well, Kipling was never an officer, junior or otherwise, but he surely met more of the former than the latter. I am open to argument on this, especially when you consider the former commanding officer of one of the regiments that took part in the engagement in *The Horse Marines* (he was Moorshed's uncle, and I take it that he was a retired general).

I cannot refrain from telling you of the occasion when Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener of Khartoum inspected the Second Battalion of the Irish Guards on 13th August 1915: he had been appointed Colonel-

in-Chief after the death of Lord Roberts and was to be photographed with the officers afterwards. John Kipling—very smart—was standing on a form in the back row and noticed a grease-spot on the Field-Marshal's cap, so he remarked to his neighbour in a loud voice

I told you, Rupert, that Kitchener would never make
a guardsman.⁶

The Rolls was waiting to take them to Bateman's after the photograph which was just as well, as they were able to make a quick get-away! That was the last time John Kipling saw his home.

Here is another opportunity to refute the unconsidered and plain ignorant statements of those who aver that Rudyard Kipling was never under fire, for we find him in France the same month—August 1915—that his son was lost.⁷

The Irish Guards in the Great War can be considered a monument to him and the other brave men who did not return.

On a lighter note, and returning to the earlier Indian stories, it is made very clear that life was not all champagne and skittles for the officers either—look at Bobby Wick and the Boy in *Thrown away* to quote only two.⁸ It is something of a relief to turn to the verse and laugh at Lieutenant-General Bangs (a most immoral man) Ahasuerus Jenkins and 'The Shut-Eye Sentry' only to be brought up with a round turn by 'Danny Deever'—Masson may well have cried "Here's Literature at last!" as he waved his Scots Observer of 22nd February 1890, but it is pretty grim stuff all the same.

As can only be expected, most of the Indian stories have a certain amount of bloodshed in them—death is always waiting in the wings and occasionally appears to civilians as well as soldiers, in the ordinary course of events. Look at *A Death in the Camp*, which, for me at any rate, has the stamp of authenticity about it.

That must have—and in fact did—make the people at home who knew so little about their Empire sit up and take notice! And yet, as our author makes Helder observe, it must not be overdone—look now upon this picture

a flushed, dishevelled, bedevilled scallawag, with his
helmet at the back of his head, and the living fear of
death in his eye, and the blood oozing out of a cut over
his ankle-bone.

The Light That Failed Chap 3

and I put him into a lovely red coat without a speck on it.

That is Art. I polished his boots—observe the high
light on the toe That is Art . . .

ib

It is indeed.

And so, unlike the latter, all Kipling's soldiers are drawn from life, and like the papers that went to Mrs. Hauksbee by mistake, show things stripped of lacquer and paint and guardrails. There were, as we know, those who found it too strong for their delicate digestions, and indeed, still do: but when one considers some publications of recent years, where the most intimate functions are set forth in detail, or enacted in public one may feel that perhaps Kipling is not so bad after all!

I do not propose to say much about Mulvaney—those who enjoy his stories will need no encouragement, and it will only irritate those who do not! Anyway it has all been said before; I will just glance for a moment at

Her Majesty's Servants and 'Parade-Song of the Camp-Animals'. The former being an exercise somewhat in the manner of *A Walking Delegate* and the latter charming verses that go to good tunes. Both show an amazing grip of what I suppose must be called animal psychology, and which, for all I know, may be perfectly correct, even if the creatures *are* given human emotions. (Don't forget that Kipling had a kindish word even for 'The Hyaenas')

As a child I was charmed by the two former, and still am, though not for all the same reasons—do you appreciate that this is not only a picture of an Army that has gone forever? Our Army in India? It is also a picture of the transport that was available to Hannibal!

He conquered the best part of the known world with the aid of the animals that Kipling shows us—those servants of Queen Victoria who helped to build a bigger Empire than Hannibal ever knew.

The cost of maintaining this Empire is set forth by Kipling in, for example, 'Gunga Din', 'The Absent-Minded Beggar', 'The Sea-Wife' and some others.

I do, however, cherish that story quoted by Ralph (page 112/2) where Kipling is supposed to have heard the 'Beggar' played on a barrel-organ and expressed his wish to shoot the man who wrote it, were it not suicide! It was not a very great compliment to Sullivan, though.

A paper like this, however, cannot even attempt to do justice to the army verse, some of which cannot be read—by me at any rate—with a dry eye. One interesting point about 'The Widow at Windsor' comes to mind here—the singer appreciates that he is a member of a world-wide organisation, and I am always reminded of that scene in *The Courting of Dinah Shadd* when the narrator (who may or may not be Kipling) reflects on the proportion of Empire that is supported by the feet of one private soldier.

I can also see some of those men as the fathers and grandfathers of Bairnsfather's Old Bill—born grumbling and yet—somewhat against their own better judgement—inclined to make the best of a bad job. I also remember the households who still mourn the dead of 1914-1918, as can be seen by the 'In Memoriam' notices that still appear in the papers. I do not propose to dwell on this, but do you recall that 'Epitaph . . .'

My son was killed while laughing at some jest.

I would I knew

What it was . . .

So, Ladies and Gentlemen, Kipling has shewn us soldiers for some forty years: most of them are what veterans of a later war would call 'good types', and most of them take their pleasures like gentlemen. The critics have naturally tried to read a lot into this work—perhaps more than our author put in, when they ask if he was in love with the idea of an army where one man gave the orders and others obeyed. Perhaps he was, but it is very difficult to envisage any other kind of army! Privilege in the army? Perhaps, but as Mr. Macmillan observes somewhere, it was (and is) the privilege of being shot at!

With the possible exception of *The Brushwood Boy* all the soldiers seem to be real people, but funnily enough, they all seem to be Victorian soldiers, even if they wear the uniforms of King Edward, King George or Maximus!

One real soldier who met Kipling in South Africa was the young

Edgar Wallace, of the Medical Staff Corps and formerly of the Royal West Kent Regiment. He was serving in South Africa in 1898 and, at a farewell dinner in March, Kipling gave him some very good advice, which needless to say, neither of them took!

For God's sake (said Kipling) don't take to Literature as a profession. Literature is a splendid mistress, but a bad wife!¹¹

Wallace went on to write soldier verse—the concert platforms were not big enough to hold all the reciters and singers, but *The Saturday Review* said somewhat tartly of Wallace that

his observation of human nature was something obscured by a cloud of dropped aspirates.¹²

A young soldier who was also an occasional contributor to the *Pioneer* had views on religion that seem to agree with others we have heard

If you are the recipient of a message which cheers your heart and fortifies your soul, which promises you reunion with those you have loved in a world of larger opportunity and wider sympathies, why should you worry about the shape or colour of the travel-stained envelope . . .?¹³

On more mundane matters, he sheds some light on ill-feeling between regiments—the 4th and 19th Hussars were not on good terms owing to an unfavourable remark attributed to a member of the former regiment when they took over a barracks from the latter: this happened some thirty years before Churchill was writing, and while the officers were not very bothered about it, the troops were as well-informed and angry as if it had happened a week or so ago!

So, from real—or nearly real—soldiers, to some who might have been: *The Army of a Dream*. I have touched on this elsewhere, but did not mention 'The Song of the Old Guard' with which it appears in *Traffics and Discoveries*.

We will have horrified those who considered dressing-up to be the most essential part of military duties. Times have certainly changed. Only last November I joined up for a week's naval training and found myself in the country near Salisbury with a mixed bag of mainly Regular soldiers and airmen. Walking across from the lecture hall to the coffee-room at stand-easy I had naturally put on my cap, done up my jacket, put my pipe in my pocket and left my hands out. What should I find but two majors and a colonel walking with me—no belts, no caps, hands in pockets and smoking! It was the kind of establishment where there did not seem to be any ship's company, so we were not setting a bad example to the troops. When I remarked on this odd behaviour, my new friends blandly agreed that it was wrong, and that they would not do it at Sandhurst or Chelsea, but it mattered not in the country!

A last look at the soldiers—*The Janeites*; this is not only an interesting and amusing story that might almost be true (or, at any rate, should have been) but one that gives no less than four of Kipling's 'in-groups'—not a phrase I like, but I regret I do not know a synonym. We have the Masons, the Army, Humberstall's unit and the society of the title. In fact, on reflection, there is a fifth clique, if you will, in that story—the Law.

So much, then, for some of Kipling's Army: his soldiers drink, steal dogs and sell them for beer-money, chase other men's wives, live and die

in battle and in peace. On the whole, as I have said, they have a rotten time, but I believe we can agree with McTurk's remark in *The United Idolaters* where he paraphrases what he believes to be Ruskin

if you do anything with your whole heart, Ruskin says,
you always pull off something dam'-fine.

I fear we cannot say the same for our author's Royal Marines: apart from ' "Soldier an' Sailor Too" ' his Marines are wooden-faced, and a little unlikely. One can only conclude that he did not have the pleasure of meeting that fine Corps, and it is his loss and ours.

And now, the sailors: Kipling came to them later in life—it seems to have been about 1897—the beginning of the Rottingdean period—and, rightly or wrongly he gives them a happier time than his soldiers. Here are no harrowing tales of drink, disease and death, but jolly romps ashore and afloat where motor-cars and disguised torpedo-boats (both fairly new weapons) are made to perform for our entertainment.

It would, of course, be difficult for a civilian of Kipling's age (he was 32 in 1897) and standing to meet sailors on the same easy footing that he enjoyed with the soldiers in India when he was a young reporter. Sailors are, moreover usually in ships and dockyards, which are not open to the public as a rule. The only way to meet sailors on their own ground is to go to sea, which is just what he did. But he still had a handicap—he was the guest of Captain Bayly. The word would soon go round that 'the gent in specs' was a chum of the old man's and he would be treated accordingly. As we know, the gulf between quarter deck and lower deck was even wider in those days, and while our author would naturally have the freedom of the ship, some of the gold braid would have rubbed off onto him, and the sailors would not be as free and easy as the soldiers had been in the days when he was a young reporter. For this reason we are not given such rounded pictures of the sailors, who would have been on their best behaviour, yet probably treating him with that semi-tolerant suspicion reserved for new officers they do not know.

Ships are more crowded than cantonments, and private meetings impossible on a messdeck.

With those handicaps, I think you will agree with me that Kipling did a remarkably good job—there are some slips, but they are not important: for instance, it is unlikely that potatoes would be peeled in the main galley of H.M.S. *Archimandrite*—they would be peeled in the messes by the 'cooks of the mess' when they prepared the dinners, which would then be brought up to the galley to be cooked.

Likewise, Retallick would not have fisted out the mess-pork while all these extraordinary evolutions were going on. You know as well as I do that pork is only served on Christmas Day and on Sundays: this entertainment for Antonio would not have been laid on on a Sunday, as it would have interfered with Divisions and Church.

And the Chief Cook would not issue the meat anyway—that is the job of the Butcher, at the Beef Screen.

I would not like you to get the impression that the Naval stories are not true to type, however: he managed to capture a certain semi-humorous understated matter-of-factness that I found when I first joined thirty-odd years ago, and still find when I rejoin for Reserve training. For a man who came to the Navy rather late in life he did very well indeed.

From the Navy to motoring is a very natural step for us though others might find it difficult to follow: I recently re-read *Steam Tactics* for

amusement and for this paper and was struck by Pyecroft's reference to Saul—he obviously was well brought up—and looked up I Samuel ix 1 to refresh my memory. Kish (with an i) was the father of Saul, and I read on to verse 3

And the asses of Kish, Saul's father were lost.
And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of
the servants with thee, and arise, go seek those
asses.

And that poses another question—which came into Kipling's mind first, the story or the character of Kysh (with a y) who went out with Salmon his engineer to look for the three fatheads who had kidnapped a policeman?

You may not look upon the Navy—or any of the Armed Services as a source of folklore, and I must say I had not given it much thought until I remembered some of the stories I heard when I was a young seaman—not all of them fit to repeat before this audience! Anyway, my instructors all wore the ribbons of the '14 War, *their* instructors may well have worn those of South Africa, and so back, as it were, until we come to the original Nobby Clarke, who was, you will recall, Able Seaman, Leading Hand and Commander!¹⁴

Not forgetting, of course, the other George Robey!¹⁵

That is not so far-fetched when you consider that there has been a Guard at the Tower of London every night since it was built, and if you go back far enough in the Garrison at Colchester you will go even further. There is, moreover, a tradition of oral instruction in the services, where whatever fashionable training manual is in force is learned by heart and recited to the squad, class or whatever. I well recall the Parade Officer standing near our class, with his lips moving in time with those of our Petty Officer. If the latter stopped in mid-speech he had to go back to the beginning again!

There may, then, be some truth in the theory that our tactics go back to Hannibal, and those of the Germans to Alexander.

So much, then, for some of Kipling's soldiers and sailors: he may have told us what he wanted to hear, and he may have led us from one plausible premise to another until we have reached the very end of the garden: on the whole it is entertaining and, possibly, instructive.

Those of you who were born in barracks, cantonments or quarters will be able to tell me how true it all is—I incline to the view that true or not, it should have been!

NOTES

1. J. H. Fenwick 'Soldiers Three' in *Kipling's Mind and Art*: ed. Andrew Rutherford. Oliver & Boyd Ltd 1964
2. Ira J. Morris *My East Was Gorgeous*, Hutchinson 1958 pp. 57/58.
3. *A Choice of Kipling's Verse*, T. S. Eliot Faber p 27
4. *Kipling and the Critics* p 78; 5 *ib* p 74
6. *Voyage Not Completed*: Rupert Grayson p 70. Macmillan 1969
7. Carrington, p 434/5
8. *Only a Subaltern*
9. *The Light that Failed*; 10 *ib*
11. 'Edgar Wallace' Margaret Lane. Hamish Hamilton edition of 1964; 12 *ib*
- 13 *My Early Life*, Winston S. Churchill p 126
- 14 *The First Sailor*
- 15 *The Magic Square*

TECHNIQUE AND THEME IN SOLDIERS THREE

By ROBERT MOSS

The job of categorizing the rather extensive body of critical writing on Kipling has been undertaken by Elliot Gilbert in his introduction to *Kipling and the Critics*, a collection of essays by different commentators. Gilbert perceives three major traditions in Kipling scholarship: (1) those who damn Kipling for his right-wing politics; (2) those who praise him for the same reason (and, more significantly), those who defend, without necessarily excusing, his political convictions); and (3) those who focus on the aesthetic aspects of Kipling's work. It is evident from Gilbert's own work on Kipling that he favours the third approach. His recent *The Good Kipling* is clearly allied with such aesthetically-orientated studies as Bonamy Dobrée's chapter on Kipling in *The Lamp and the Lute*, J. M. S. Tompkins' *The Art of Rudyard Kipling* and most of the essays in Andrew Rutherford's *Kipling's Mind and Art*. The point of view represented by these works—Gilbert's included—is a highly attractive one to students of Kipling. While it would be foolish and arbitrary to try to close the door on other approaches to Kipling, those that focus on his art probably offer the widest range of fresh scholarly possibilities. The socio-political dimensions of his work have been subjected to withering scrutiny for over half a century now.

The re-evaluation of Kipling's writing along aesthetic lines has produced a considerable amount of excavation into *Kim*, *The Jungle Books* and certain stories (e.g., 'Mrs. Bathurst', 'Without Benefit of Clergy') that are particularly compatible to the modern temperament. But Kipling—whatever his occasional failings of sensibility and insight may have been—was seldom less than a fervent craftsman. Surprisingly few of his works are wholly unrewarding from a technical viewpoint. *Soldiers Three*, for example, though a callow work of juvenilia in many ways, is strikingly advanced in some of its techniques. In Kipling's mature short stories, he is especially adept at blending two or three different tales. Consider the ingeniously interwoven plot strands in some of the Stalky stories, such as 'A Little Prep'. In *Soldiers Three*, one sees Kipling making his way quickly in that direction. There is a two-in-one arrangement beneath several of the titles—two stories tied together by unity of character or situation. 'The Courting of Dinah Shadd' is a good example of one of these unions. In the same way, the long prologue in 'His Private Honour', a diffuse account of army training procedures, is grafted onto the story of Ortheris' wounded pride. Closely related to the "double-decker" story technique is the so-called framing device, which Kipling was always fond of. There are minor frames in 'With the Main Guard' and 'My Lord the Elephant', where Kipling simply begins in one setting and returns to it when the tale is completed. In others, the frame is more elaborate, creating a story-within-a-story. For instance, 'Black Jack' concerns itself both with Mulvaney's humiliation at Mullins' hands and with the attempted murder of O'Hara. The frame and the main story reinforce one another. The same is true of 'Love-O'-Women,' where the parallels between the tragedy of Mackie and Sergeant Raines and that of Larry Tighe are carefully drawn.

From a technical perspective, *Soldiers Three* has a prophetic quality that reaches behind the realm of Kipling's own work, though the particular stories are often unsuccessful. 'Love-O-Women' opens brilliantly with a gripping snapshot of the murder itself—Kipling deliberately suppresses any information about motive or background in order to give a vivid, disordered glimpse of the crime. Then he jumps ahead quickly to the trial and slowly the pieces begin to fall into place. The technical (even narrative) similarities to *Lord Jim* are striking; it seems hard to deny the possibility of direct influence. Conrad was, after all, well aware of Kipling's work. One is also struck by Kipling's use of rapidly shifting perspectives, another favourite Conradian ploy, in 'Krishna Mulvaney'. There the narrator gets the story in bits and scraps from different sources.

Kipling's technical expertise in this volume shows to best advantage in 'On Greenhow Hill'* a surprisingly subtle and delicate effort, considering the rough company in which one finds it (it is preceded by 'With the Main Guard' and followed by 'His Private Honour'). Here the frame deals with Ortheris' obsessive efforts to annihilate a deserter who is lurking in the vicinity. Kipling establishes his basic themes and symbols before we leave the first part of the frame. The military code is given the sort of absolutist cast one expects from Kipling: the deserter has put himself beyond the pale and must be exterminated—everyone is agreed on that. In fact, Kipling goes so far as to announce that "the desire of slaughter lay heavy upon them [Mulvaney and his friends]". Still, we are always made to feel that Ortheris views the problem of the deserter with special intensity, that there is a bit too much of the killer in him even for Kipling. Ortheris is known for his "almost passionate devotion to his rifle, which . . . he was supposed to kiss every night before turning in." By contrast, Learoyd recognizes the possibility of a mitigating motive in the deserter's action, an impulse originating in the less rigid civilian sphere. A little earlier Kipling has introduced a flower motif that recurs throughout the story. Its first appearance is certainly meant as a counterweight to Ortheris' homicidal leanings: "He [Ortheris] buried his nose in a clump of scentless white violets." It further serves to augur the soft, feminine side of the tale. As Ortheris concentrates on his deadly business, Kipling gently steers Learoyd into an account of the lost love of his youth, Liza Roantree. The Yorkshireman speculates that "there was a lass tewed up" with the deserter's flight.

The story within the story is set in the Yorkshire region of Learoyd's youth. Restricting himself to Learoyd's voice, Kipling nevertheless manages to convey a vivid sense of place:

Rumbolds Moor stands up ower Skipton town, an' Greenhow Hill stands up ower Pately Brig. I reckon you've never heard tell o' Greenhow Hill, but yon bit o' bare stuff, if there was nobbut a white road windin', is like it; strangely like. Moors an' moors an' moors, wi' never a tree for shelter, an' gray houses wi' flagstone rooves, and pewits cryin', an' a windhover goin' to and fro just like the kites.

Ambivalence is the guiding force in Learoyd's story. The poor chapel folk accept Learoyd, but only because Liza does; when she contracts her fatal illness his status with them begins to plummet. In like fashion, his relationship with the church and with the Methodist preacher is marked by tension. He joins the parish under Liza's influence, but his commitment to religion is slender and cannot survive her death. When

asked about his degree of enthusiasm for the Methodist services—does he feel it?—he replies, "An' sometimes I thought I did, and then again I thought I didn't, an' how was that?" Learoyd clings to a symbol of his old, explosive, fighting nature, the dog Blast. The other parishioners disapprove of course.

Learoyd's relationship with the minister, Reverend Amos Barraclough, is the most complex and interesting in the story. Barraclough is the antithesis of the lumbering, semi-literate, slow-talking Learoyd, "a little white-faced chap, wi' a voice as 'u'd wile a bird off an a bush, and a way o' layin' hold a folk as made them think they'd never had a live man for a friend before." As Learoyd's rival for Liza, Barraclough seems destined to be the object of the Yorkshireman's wrath; but the preacher, unexpectedly, is motivated by a sincere desire to effect Learoyd's salvation. This, combined with his warmth and sense of brotherhood, generates a wrenching conflict in Learoyd: "I liked him as well or better as any man I'd ever seen i' the one way, and yet I hated him wi' all my heart F t'other, and we watched each other like a cat and mouse, but civil as you please, for I was bound to be fair with him." When the two descend into the lead mines, Learoyd's conflict reaches its climax. In the symbolic darkness beneath the earth, he feels the seductive pull of evil: "Long as it was daylight we were good friends, but when we got fair into the dark . . . I feeled downright wicked." The opportunities to do away with Barraclough, whom he suspects to be secretly engaged to Liza, seem limitless. But the minister's physical frailty belies his strength of character and personality, his complete fearlessness (I saw he were afraid o'naught . . ."). Barraclough easily defeats Learoyd's attempt on his life, not by muscle or cunning, but simply by greater spiritual force. (He is helped, too, by the information he is able to reveal about Liza's failing health). Finally it is the minister who steadies his massive friend: "And that weak little man pulled me further back and set me again' him, and talked it all over quiet and still . . ."

Liza's relations with Learoyd are more conventional and she herself is an idealized, rather than a realistic portrait of womanhood. She is almost without physical identity (Kipling offers no description of her) and no one exhibits even the most faintly carnal desires toward her. We are intended to view her as an angelic creation (her ethereal hymn singing is stressed) who exists solely to induce spiritual aspirations in the men around her. Indeed, her sickness itself seems symbolic of her alienation from the corporeal world. She is too spiritual to live. Her death is nearly as symbolic as Milly Theale's in *Wings of the Dove*.

One of the many gratifying aspects of 'On Greenhow Hill' is Kipling's willingness to acknowledge the greater ambiguity of civilian life; this brings some much needed grayness into a world of black and white. Nothing is as clear-cut or unmistakable in the Yorkshire highlands as it is on the battlegrounds of India. The chapel folk are humble parishioners, yet proud and arrogant in their way; upright and moral, yet hypocritical. The preacher is Learoyd's enemy and his best friend, his religious counsellor and his unintentional tormentor. The fine-drawn ambiguities culminate in Learoyd's realization, as he describes his abortive attempt at murder, that "it's none so easy to kill a man like yon." He is referring of course to Ortheris' victim-to-be; this highlights one of Kipling's main objectives in the story: to balance the simplicity of military killing against its more complex civilian version.

In terms of technique, Kipling enriches his story by carrying through the motifs and differing perspectives he has established in the beginning. The flower imagery, for instance, is omnipresent. In recollecting his violent plans against the blameless Barraclough, Learoyd "rooted up the innocent violets." And when his story is done, he "threw away the wilted clump of white violets," as he has tried to throw away the memory they signify. Finally Ortheris brings his fierce watch to a lethal conclusion and "the deserter . . . pitched forward, rolled down a red rock, and lay very still, with his face in a clump of blue gentians . . ." This unites the two themes of love and death skillfully. The attitudes expounded by the soldiers are handled with equal deftness; they are set against one another in a carefully revelatory fashion. Learoyd's memories of unhappy romance make him more sympathetic toward the deserter, as do Mulvaney's. Ortheris, on the other hand, denounces such sentimentality ferociously. The implication is surely that he remembers his own near-desertion, in which a girl was the partial cause, in 'Madness of Private Ortheris.' By eliminating the errant soldier he is killing the deserter in himself. In keeping with this design, Mulvaney responds compassionately to the news of Liza's illness, while Ortheris is shown "muttering ribaldry."

Other examples of such contrasts are not hard to find. Learoyd's remarks about Methodism spark a discussion of religion. Mulvaney favours the Catholic church because of its freedom from schisms and its reliance on system, discipline and hierarchy. Learoyd, on the other hand, had found his way into a Protestant sect that lays greater emphasis on democratic procedures and on evangelicism. Ortheris, however, is entirely removed from any religious promptings: "Wot's the use o' worritin' 'bout these things?" He worships only death:

" 'Ere's my chaplain," he said, and made the venomous black-headed bullet bow like a marionette. "E's goin' to teach a man all about which is which, an' wot's true . . ."

Ortheris' limitations are the subject of other contrasts as well. He sneers at the singing and performing of the music-minded Methodists, though both Learoyd and Mulvaney approve. Ortheris' idea of art, which is revealed at the end, is a blasphemy of all artistic effort, with its fundamental life-giving qualities. When he has killed the deserter, Ortheris stares "across the valley with the smile of an artist who looks on the completed work."

'On Greenhow Hill' occurs midway through *Soldiers Three*, but, as many critics have noted, if the arrangements of the tales were qualitative, it ought properly to come at the end. In a volume in which Kipling displays striking flashes of technical sophistication, 'Greenhow' is the only story in which the fusion of technique and theme is close to perfect.

*Note: "I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness—particularly where my remarks on 'On Greenhow Hill' are concerned—to J. H. Fenwick's excellent essay on *Soldiers Three* in Andrew Rutherford's collection, *Kipling's Mind and Art*."

LETTER BAG

"LESSER BREEDS WITHOUT THE LAW"

In the June issue of the *Journal* for 1972, both Elliott Gilbert and Prof: C. E. Carrington denigrate the allegedly notorious phrase given above. Why? Is this on purely aesthetic grounds, or can it be due to a shrinking from "The simple central truth that stings the mob to boo, the priest to ban."

To me, this is one of Kipling's most concise and telling epigrams. It could indeed be a contemptuous and galling phrase to those to whom it applies, but none the less accurate for that. I take "the Law" to mean the ordinary disciplines of civilised peoples. I have lived and worked for many years alongside those who haven't got it; and I know exactly what Kipling meant; I could name some notorious living examples too. Whether it jars on the reader or not, it is not a false note.

One can learn a great deal from Kipling who so admirably expressed his knowledge of men and things. What springs to the mind is that astonishing prophetic allegory "The Mother Hive" of which much has already come to pass. Compare also "The 'eathen in 'is blindness...'", " 'Oo dont obey no orders Unless they is 'is own . . . All along 'o abbynay, kul and hazar-ho . . ."

Unfortunately few politicians seem to read anthropology or genetics, or even Plato's Republic, and are determined to meddle in matters outside their proper province. Kipling was an enemy to such, of whom there are too many now alive and virulent.

No, I can't understand the objection to a phrase which fits like a glove.

D. W. BISHOPP

TOMMY ATKINS

By the usual five-cent coincidence, shortly after reading in the proofs of the June *Journal* that the myth of the origin of the name "Tommy Atkins" had finally been disposed of, or words to that effect, I chanced on an article by Robert Graves entitled "The Search for Thomas Atkins" (1945), stating that the name first appeared in a War Office order on 31st August 1815, which is to be found on page 78 of *A Collection of Orders, Regulations, etc.* as follows:

Form of a Soldier's Book in the Infantry when filled up.
Description, service, etc., of THOMAS ATKINS, Private
No. 6 Company, 1st battalion, 23rd Regiment of Foot.
Where born: Parish of Odiham, Hants. Bounty: £6.

Received: THOMAS ATKINS. X his mark.

Robert Graves then proceeds to a series of deductions supporting not unreasonably the supposition that Thomas Atkins of Odiham was in fact the batman or body-servant of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Calvert, G.C.B., who was Adjutant General of the Army at that time. "His august eye must have been the last to scrutinize and pass the Order."

The exact nature of the discarded myth is not stated, but the above is sufficient evidence to convince me that the version I have believed for fifty years and more is correct.

P. W. INWOOD

THE ARMY IN INDIA

In the current issue of the Journal you ask members to let you know of any form of punishment in the Army which was savage. Flogging went on in the British Army until it was Officially abolished by the Army Discipline Act of 1881. In 1782 Colonel Joseph Wall flogged a Sergeant to death for a crime of which he was proved innocent. I have an informative book in my reference library which details the various form of torture inflicted on the offenders against discipline these were 'The Wooden Horse', a contraption of wood in the form of a triangle and shaped like a horse with the apex of one of the triangles serving as the saddle. The man was tied on to this saddle and the whole was dragged over very uneven ground. Another pleasantry indulged in was the 'Whirligig', a round cage in which the prisoner was made to stand with hands and feet secured, while an officer whirled the cage at a tremendous speed causing the victim to vomit and collapse. Another form of torture was that known as 'Running the Gauntlet' where a man's own comrades formed two ranks facing and the victim had to run—slowly—through the ranks while his comrades belted him. Perhaps the worst punishment of all was that inflicted on the 'Triangle'. The angle was formed by three Halberds, and the man was stripped stark naked and tied securely to the Triangle by his outstretched arms and wide open legs. Two of his comrades, but more often an officer, did the flogging. Death often intervened as in the case of that Colonel mentioned at the beginning of this letter.

One other little matter concerns the roses. The 5th Foot was mentioned, and it was said that the 5th were not a Minden Regiment. Every member of the 5th is well aware of that fact. The only roses worn by the 5th are those worn on St. George's Day and they are Red and White. The Hackle of the Regiment being in the same colours with the red uppermost.

CHAS. A. COLLINSON, K.O.S.G.

OBITUARY

Mr. W. G. B. Maitland—We are sorry to report that Mr. Maitland died on 30th July last aged 76. He was a distinguished member of our Society in several ways. He was the seventy-fifth member to join (KJ No. 1), he was a keen collector of Kiplingiana (KJ 128), he was our Hon. Librarian for thirty years (KJs innumerable), and last but not least he was educated at the United Services College—not while still at Westward Ho!, but before "United" became "Imperial" (KJ 27 p 69 and photo opp. p 90).—A. E. B. P.

The Kipling Society

Founded in 1927 by J. H. C. BROOKING, M.I.E.E.

President:

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Cobham, K.G., P.C., G.C.M.G., T.D., LL.D.

Vice-Presidents:

The Rt. Hon. the Earl Baldwin of Bewdley	P. W. Inwood
Mrs. George Bambridge	Sir Archie Michaelis, Australia
Professor C. E. Carrington, M.C.	Carl T. Naumburg, U.S.A.
E. D. W. Chaplin	Miss A. M. Punch
Professor Bonamy Dobrée, O.B.E.	F. E. Winmill
J. R. Dunlap, U.S.A.	

COUNCIL:

Chairman: R/Adml. P. W. Brock, C.B. D.S.O.

Deputy Chairman: W. H. Greenwood

S. W. Alexander, M.B.E.	R. E. Harbord (permanent)
Lt.-Col. A. E. Bagwell Purefoy	P. A. Mortimer
R/Adml. P. W. Brock, C.B., D.S.O.	J. H. McGivering
Cmdr. C. H. Drage	Philip Randall
T. L. A. Daintith	Mrs. G. H. Shelford
Roger Lancelyn Green, B.LITT., M.A.	Dr. T. H. Whittington
W. H. Greenwood	

Hon. Treasurer: P. A. Mortimer.

Hon. Librarian: J. H. McGivering

Hon. Editor:

Roger Lancelyn Green, B.LITT., M.A.

Hon. Secretary:

Lt.-Col. A. E. Bagwell Purefoy

Subscriptions Secretary: T. L. A. Daintith

Hon. Auditors:

Milne, Gregg and Turnbull

Asst. Secretary & Librarian:

Mrs. P. Crosby

Hon. Solicitor: Philip Randall

Meetings Secretary: T. L. A. Daintith

Office:

18 Northumberland Avenue, London, WC2N 5BJ

Tel.: 01-930-6733

Melbourne Branch:

President:

J. V. Carlson

Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. Ivy Morton

Victoria, B.C. Branch (Canada):

President: Mrs. D. A. Copeland.

Vice-President: Mrs. C. Fairhead.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. A. R. Cornwell, 5 Chown Place, Victoria, B.C.

Hon. Secretary, U.S.A.

Joseph R. Dunlap, 420 Riverside Drive, Apt 12G, New York, NY 10025