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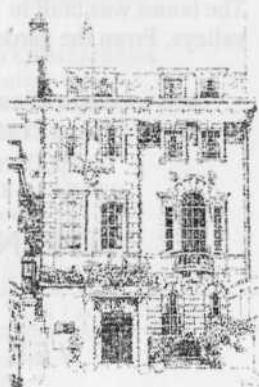
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SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 11 February 2009, 5.30 for 6 p.m., in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Professor Peter Havholm**, of Wooster College, Ohio, "Why the Academic Discussion of Kipling is not Academic".

Wednesday 8 April 2009, 5.30 for 6 p.m., in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Speaker to be announced**.

Wednesday 6 May 2009, 12.30 for 1 p.m., in the Hall of India and Pakistan, Royal Over-Seas League, **The Society's Annual Luncheon. Guest Speaker: Professor Richard Holmes, C.B.E., T.D., J.P.** on "Kipling's Soldiers". For details and advanced booking, see December flyer.

Wednesday 20 May 2009, 12 to 3 p.m. A special event at Sheffield University in the Humanities Research Institute, **Professor Daniel Karlin** and other speakers on "Actions and Reactions: Kipling's Edwardian Summer". Lunch will be available.

Wednesday 8 July 2009, 4.30 p.m., in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, the Society's **A.G.M.** after which (5.30 for 6 p.m.), **Professor Bart Moore-Gilbert**, of Goldsmith's College on "Kipling's Afterlives: Responses to Kipling's Work in Indian Literature".

December 2008

JANE KESKAR & ANDREW LYCETT

THE KIPLING JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL

A MINI-CONFERENCE IN SHEFFIELD – 2009

Next year sees the centenary of the publication of *Actions and Reactions*. To celebrate this, Prof Daniel Karlin of the School of English, University of Sheffield, is organising a mini-conference under the title "*Actions and Reactions: Kipling's Edwardian Summer*" which is to be held at the University on Wednesday 20 May 2009. The venue will be the Humanities Research Institute, Sheffield, from 12-3 p.m., and lunch will be available. Prof Karlin will be one of the speakers.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN CONFERENCE – 2009

This conference, "Kipling and the margins of Empire", will be held over four days in early September 2009 to mark the centenary of Rudyard Kipling's stay in Cape Town. It is hoped that the keynote address will be delivered by Prof. Njabulo Ndebele, one of South Africa's leading scholars and writers, and the programme includes performances, tours of the U.C.T. Kipling archive and the Cape coastline which Kipling knew.

The conference is being organised by Ms Tanya Barben who is the Librarian in Charge of Rare Books and Special Collections, and she can be contacted by email at tanya.barben@uct.ac.za, or by post at Rare Books & Special Collections, Level 1 Chancellor Oppenheimer Library, University of Cape Town, Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa.

TWO GHOST STORIES BY M.R. JAMES

We have been notified that there will be performances of two of M.R. James's ghost stories under the generic title of "Oh, whistle . . ." by R.M. Lloyd Parry in London over the Christmas period. The venue is the Baron's Court Theatre, The Curtain's Up Pub, 28a Comeragh Road, London W14 9HP (Box Office: 020 8932 4747) and the show runs from 9 December 2008 to 4 January 2009, starting at 8 p.m. The full ticket price is £12 or £10 for concessions. If ten or more members of the Society make up a Group, then they will all pay the concession price. There are no performances on Mondays nor on 25, 26 and 31 December, or 1 January.

Fred Lerner emailed the Kipling mailbase from the U.S.A. to say that he heard Robert Lloyd Parry tell some stories by M.R. James at the World Fantasy Convention last year, and he heartily recommends his performance to anyone within reach of London.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

Many members will have seen references and short quotes from articles and letters by Mrs Edmonia Hill, who with her husband Prof 'Alex' were Kipling's friends in Allahabad and travelling companions in 1889 from India to the U.S.A. and then to England, the journey that Kipling described in *From Sea to Sea*. Browsing the *Atlantic Monthly* website a few months ago I came across an article by David Barber "Who Was Kipling" at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200712u/kipling-flashback>.

The article itself is interesting, but even better it contains links to other articles that the *Atlantic Monthly* has published over the years about Kipling and his works, including reviews of *The Five Nations*, *'Captains Courageous'*, *Just So Stories*, and *Kim*. There is also the text of "The Disturber of Traffic" as originally published in the September 1891 issue of the magazine. However, for me, the most interesting link is to an article by Mrs Edmonia Hill published in the April 1936 issue as "The Young Kipling". It consists of extracts about Kipling from her letters and diaries of 1887 to 1889. Most of it is known of course, but it is still very interesting to read in its entirety, and if you want a short cut, the article can be found at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/193604/young-kipling>.

THE KIPLING LIBRARY SALE OF SURPLUS BOOKS

By JOHN WALKER

Our second list will be published in January 2009, giving a full description of each item with a suggested price.

Members may request the list, to be sent out by post on 14 January. All requests should go to the Honorary Librarian, John Walker, at 72, Millbank, Headcorn, Ashford, Kent TN27 9RG, or by email to jwawalker@gmail.com. Correspondence received will be acknowledged before 12 January, to ensure that no requests are missed.

Sales will be made based on orders received by 14 February, with allocation by lot, where there is more than one order for a book. It is hoped that this will ensure that all members have an equal opportunity to purchase these volumes.

THE SOCIETY CHANGES PRESIDENT

By Cdr ALASTAIR WILSON
(Chairman of Council)

It was with considerable regret that Council learned in July from George Engle that he thought it time to resign from the Presidency of your Society. After due consultation, we approached Field Marshal Sir John Chappie to ask if he would assume the Presidency, and it is with pleasure that we can say he has accepted.

Sir GEORGE ENGLE, K.C.B., Q.C.

There was a very adequate potted biography of George Engle in the December 2001 issue of the *Journal*. To summarise, his university career was interrupted by three years' service as a Gunner, 1945-48. After completion of a post-graduate year at Oxford, he read for the Bar, and after being called, practised for four years at the Chancery Bar. In 1957, he joined the Parliamentary Counsel's office as a legislative draftsman. (I hope George will not mind if I say that that calls to mind the Lord Chancellor in *Iolanthe*, whose skill in inserting the word 'not' in the appropriate place solved all the problems – and incidentally resulted in turning the House of Lords into fairies).

Having become a legal Civil Servant he steadily advanced to become the equivalent of Permanent Secretary, on the way being seconded to the Government of Nigeria for similar work in that country. He received the C.B. in 1976, and K.C.B. in 1983. He has published both literary and legal works, and has contributed articles to this *Journal* and notes to our present New Readers' Guide.

During his stint as Chairman of Council, he presided over our affairs with style, wit and wisdom: and when he moved on to become our President for seven years it was always a comfort to Council, and its Chairmen, to know that there was good counsel to be received from the President in time of need. We are particularly indebted to him for his overhaul of our Constitution, and the rewriting of the Rules of the Society.

We wish Sir George and Lady Engle a peaceful second retirement, and as good health as any of us have a right to expect as the years go by.

Field Marshal Sir JOHN CHAPPLE, G.C.B., C.B.E., D.L.

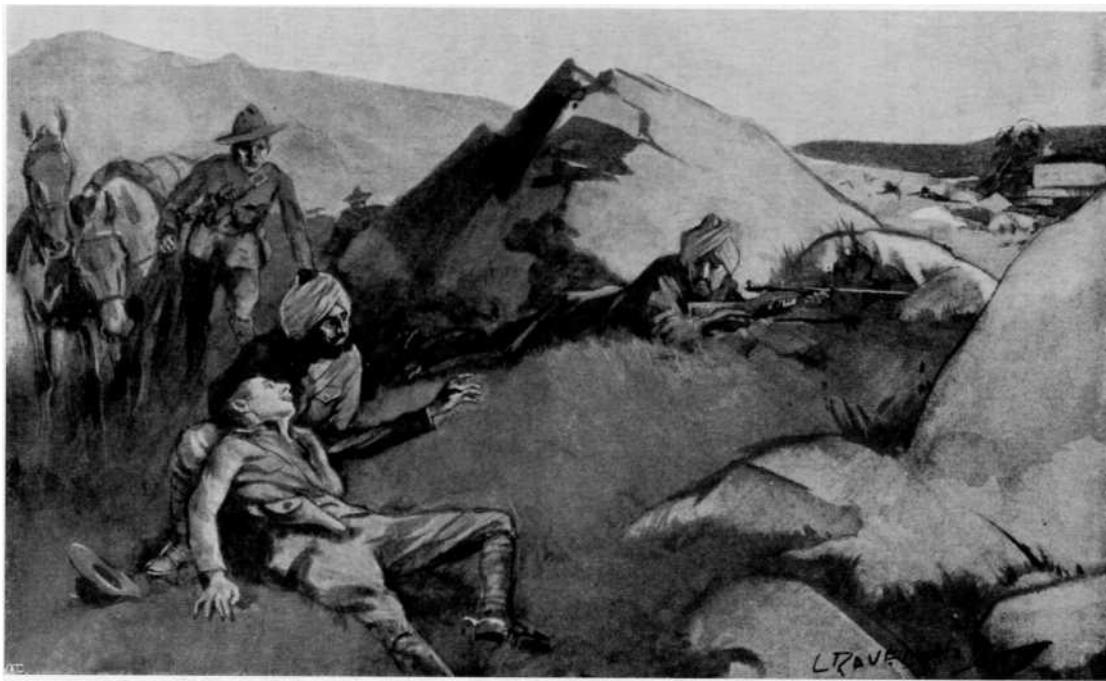
Council's regret at George Engle's resignation has been substantially tempered by Field Marshal John's speedy acceptance of the Presidency in his place.

One would not wish to make too much of the comparison, but it may be suggested that John Chappie has parallels to George Cottar in "The Brushwood Boy", in that he clearly is a 'thinking' soldier. He went to the Imperial Service College, descendant of the U.S.C., simply because Kipling had been at the U.S.C. And his grandmother – an early member of the Society – insisted on it. He then spent his time at Haileybury and I.S.C. in Kipling House.

He spent time during school holidays collecting Kipling's early editions in the Charing Cross Road, including all the Indian Railway Library editions. His collection of Kipling books and papers is now in the archive at his old school.

He took an M.A. at Trinity Cambridge before joining the Army in 1954, and subsequently had a year as a Service Fellow at Fitzwilliam College. His regimental career was with the 2nd Goorkhas, the regiment which features in "In the Presence", and he subsequently commanded the Gurkha Field Force before becoming Commander British Forces Hong Kong and Major-General, Brigade of Gurkhas. His subsequent career led him to the highest position an Army officer can aspire to, that of Chief of the General Staff, which position he filled quietly but effectively 1988-1992. This was the period which covered the end of the Cold War, the breaking up of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, as well as the First Gulf War. He was later Governor and C-in-C Gibraltar.

His other interests, as shown by his entry in *Who's Who*, are multi-farious; they include military history, and conservation (he is a past President of the Zoological Society), and he was Vice-Lord Lieutenant of London. He attends Society lectures regularly, usually tucking himself unobtrusively into the back left-hand corner of the Mountbatten room. The Society may count itself extremely fortunate that he has agreed to become our President.



"Be still. It is a Sahibs' War"

AN ILLUSTRATION TO "A SAHIBS' WAR" BY L. RAVEN-HILL
FROM THE *WINDSOR MAGAZINE*, DECEMBER 1901

ATTACKING THE BOERS IN THE STYLE OF KIPLING SAHIB

By K. ST JOHN DAMSTRA

[Dr Damstra inherited his name, Kim, from a Dominions Edition of Kipling's novel that is finely annotated by a grandmother who inspired his pleasure in English literature. At university he stayed in Smuts Hall, 500 m from Kipling's beloved Woolsack. He currently teaches science and maths in Norway where the heat of the Zambezi Valley still flows in his blood.

Full captions for the illustrations will be found at the end, just before the Notes. – *Ed.*]

In 1901 Rudyard Kipling wrote "A Sahibs' War",¹ a bitter short story set in South Africa during the Anglo-Boer War. It is filled with vindictive twists that vent Kipling's frustrations: frustration with anti-British propaganda on continental Europe; and frustration at the British public who were interfering in the management of the war when they had little idea that, during the previous year, the nature of warfare in South Africa, and subsequently throughout the world, had irrevocably changed. Nineteenth century morality was no longer appropriate for twentieth century guerrilla warfare. As a professional journalist Kipling attacked with his pen, creating another of his singularly savage tales for 'a popular magazine'.²

THE MESSAGE ON THE TOMBSTONE.

The story presents us with a puzzle. Cicely Palser Havelly suggests that there is a technical flaw with the ending.³ The writing loses its animation and momentum when Kipling introduces the full inscription of a tombstone that appears to contain unnecessary details. And why should Kipling single out not just a child, but a handicapped child, describing with delight the cruel preparation for this child's hanging. Why is this 'young man deprived of understanding' held culpable for the treacherous connivance that results in murder? A possible solution lies in understanding the state of the Anglo-Boer War in relation to British politics of 1901, picking up on important clues displayed on the tombstone, and reflecting on the use of reincarnation in Kipling's stories.

The narrative depends on the illusion of the voice: hearing a Sikh servant recount the death of his beloved British officer. Conveying atmosphere through colloquial dialect in this way was one of Kipling's strengths. In a letter to Edmonia Hill, Kipling states: 'Most of the Sahibs' War by the way was taken down from the mouth of a native officer up country during the war'.⁴ The ending then comes as a jolt when the reader is asked to look out for 'two very good [jest]s' on the

officer's tombstone. It is an unexpected change from the lively auditory rhythm of the Sikh to a flat visual inscription on the rock. Havelly reconciles the abrupt change by contrasting the difference between the official story as recorded on the tombstone with the Sikh's darker, virtually illegal oral history. In doing so she draws attention to a further anomaly: 'The tombstone names the Boer minister and his son – one barely a presence at all in [the Sikh's] narrative, the other a congenital idiot'. But it is upon this apparent anomaly that the story turns. The idiot and his father bear the names of a martyred Boer father and son. This vital clue requires knowledge of "The Great Trek" that occurred sixty years earlier during the heroic era that has provided an inexhaustible source of inspiration to subsequent generations of Afrikaners. These Boer heroes were once an integral part of the history syllabus in South Africa. Kipling's jest will become more obscure in a post-apartheid South Africa where the schoolbooks have necessarily been rewritten so that new ideologies replace the older forms of indoctrination.

KIPLING'S CHRONOLOGY 1898-1901

A clear chronology puts the story in context. Kipling visited Southern Africa in 1898, renewing his acquaintance with Cecil John Rhodes.⁶ In March 1899 the family was on holiday in America when their beloved six-year-old daughter, Josephine, died of a fever. By the time the second Anglo-Boer War broke out in October Kipling was back in England. He helped to form a volunteer company in the village of Rottingdean near Brighton and used his popularity to raise significant amounts of money for the cause by writing verses. In January 1900, together with his wife, Carrie, and two children, he sails for Cape Town where his fame opens doors everywhere. He uses this for the benefit of the wounded soldiers returning from the hinterland.

The British Commander-in-Chief in South Africa was none other than Kipling's long-time hero, Lord Roberts, now almost seventy. Lord Roberts had been Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army between 1885 and 1893. This overlaps with the years Kipling was a reporter in India (1882 to 1889). In his memoir, *Something of Myself* Kipling recalls:

the proudest moment of my young life was when [as a reporter of twenty-two] I rode up Simla Mall beside him, [Lord Roberts] . . . while he asked me what the men thought about their accommodation, entertainment-rooms and the like. I told him, and he thanked me as gravely as though I had been a full Colonel.⁷

In February 1900 Rhodes finds himself trapped in the siege of Kimberley. Lord Roberts' troops outmanoeuvre the Boers and lift the siege. Rhodes returns to Cape Town where he sets Herbert Baker the task of designing a house for the Kipling family on his estate, Groot

Schuur. Rudyard then leaves Carrie in Cape Town with the children and the house plans. He travels to Bloemfontein, 'on Lord Roberts' order',⁸ and for two weeks in March 1900 is sub-editor for *The Friend*, a daily bilingual British propaganda newspaper. The 29th March sees Kipling 'attending' a formal battle near Karee Siding. Ten months will pass before Kipling's behaviour during this battle is questioned. In the meantime he returns to Rottingdean and spends the English summer completing what is considered his most successful full-length novel, *Kim*.¹⁰ In the few months that he is away from South Africa the nature of war changes forever. The large scale, set-piece battles of the nineteenth century give way to all the complexities of guerrilla warfare. The twentieth century has arrived, and Kipling will be the first serious writer to reflect on its new morality, through the eyes of a Sikh narrator.

"A Sahibs' War" confronts the politically sensitive issue of burning Boer farms and other buildings. Lord Roberts had adopted this as a policy of collective punishment¹¹. During 1900 the reported figures of farms burnt grew from 2 and 3 in June and July respectively, to 189 and 226 in October and November. The inhumanity of these acts provoked an outcry in the British House of Commons, so in November Lord Roberts had to revise the order: farms could only be burnt if some 'act of treachery' had been committed, such as when troops had been fired on from the house. In December only 6 houses were officially reported as having been burnt. Kipling records that during the war numbers 'were carefully minimised to save the English public from 'shock.'"¹² In September Lord Roberts sanctioned the establishments of concentration camps for the displaced Boers. The high death rate due to unhygienic conditions in the camps and the lack of food was to give the Liberal opposition even greater cause for outcry in 1901. Basic hygiene within the British camps was also poor. Kipling ascribed this to 'utter carelessness, officialdom, and ignorance'. Soldiers died from preventable typhoid and dysentery. But there was not just the Liberal opposition from within Britain to consider. On the continent the plight of the Boers was exploited for different but equally political reasons and it was into this wider conflict that Kipling was to be drawn.

On Christmas Day 1900, the Kiplings return to Cape Town and move into 'The Woolsack', their newly built house on the slopes of Devil's Peak. Within a month anti-British propaganda from the Swiss *La Tribune de Geneve* reports on the battle at Karee Siding. In this account 'Kipling and a group of officers are shot at as they pass a Boer farmhouse. The officers enter to find only women and children in the place; but on searching they discover a young man hiding under a bed. Without further inquiry, they make him mount a horse and ride for his life: then, at a distance of three hundred metres, they bring him down with their carbines'.¹³ In *Something of Myself* Kipling recalls 'a cutting

from an American paper, on information from Geneva' stating that in the house there were two men and three women. In the American version the women were hiding under the bed and all were given a hundred yards' start before being shot down as they ran.¹⁴

In later years Kipling said this allegation 'struck [him] as more comic than significant',¹⁵ but at the time it led him to write his own vindictive tale about burning a Boer farm, with a plot that carefully fulfilled Lord Roberts' most recent order. In "A Sahibs' War" Lord Roberts is referred to as the 'Jung-i-lat Sahib' who led the punitive expedition to Kabul in retribution for the murder of Sir Luis Cavagnari during the Afghan War of 1879-80. Kipling does not criticise Lord Roberts' orders, which were being modified due to political pressure from the British public. Instead Kipling uses the Sikh narrator to show how illogical it is to pretend to be fighting, not the Boer people, but 'a certain army, which army, in truth, was all the Boer-log,¹⁶ who, between them, did not wear enough of uniform to make a loin-cloth.'

At the beginning of the war there had been a tacit agreement between the British and Boer leadership that the conflict would be a 'white man's war'. Black people would be excluded from serving as armed soldiers. Queen Victoria disapproved of this gentleman's agreement, and so did Kipling. Despite their being white, Kipling considered the Boers the wrong 'race' (letter of 1901) to do any governing.¹⁷ Shamus O.D. Wade (Secretary to the Commonwealth Forces History Trust) shows that as the war progressed more and more black soldiers were involved on the British side although this was not officially acknowledged and was later covered up.¹⁸ Kipling may have been aware of what was happening, nevertheless "A Sahibs' War" projects the image of an honourable British officer upholding the idea of a 'white man's war'. Kipling defined sahib as 'a well born white man'.¹⁹ While placing his trust in oaths of neutrality taken by a non-combatant Boer family, he is ensnared in an ambush and shot dead. When his Indian servants plan a reprisal, the officer's ghost prevents them, reminding them that this is 'a Sahibs' war'. A month later the Sikh narrator returns to find that an Australian soldier 'had cut an inscription upon a great rock'. The climax of the story invites the reader to look out for 'two very good [jests]' in the inscription. Before the Sikh can begin to explain what he thinks is amusing, two significant names flash out of the page: Walter Decies Corbyn and Piet Uys, son of a Dirk Uys:

In Memory of
WALTER DECIES CORBYN
Late Captain 141st Punjab Cavalry
Traacherously shot near this place by

The connivance of the late
HENDRIK DIRK UYS
A Minister of God
Who thrice took the oath of neutrality
And Piet his son.

The name Walter Decies Corbyn hides within it the word Roberts. The name Walter means the 'ruler of the army'. Decies refers to someone who comes from the Decies, the county of Waterford in Ireland. The Roberts family were rooted in Waterford where they were well-known and contributed much to the city of Waterford. Corbyn means raven, referring to raven haired. We will see that Kipling identified the 'Jang-i-lat Sahib' (Lord Roberts) as having black hair. In whose memory is this named? Two months after the start of the war, in December 1899, the 27-year-old son of Lord Roberts, Frederick Hugh Sherston, was killed in the Battle of Colenso. He is shown also to have had black hair on the website of the National Army Museum, Chelsea. It is no surprise to hear from Umr Singh that Kurban Sahib was a baby 'twenty-seven years gone now'.

Who then is Piet Uys?

PIET UYS' CHRONOLOGY 1834-1838

At least seven Voortrekker leaders are household names in South Africa. Amongst them Piet Uys (1797-1838) stands alone in being able to represent precisely what "A Sahibs' War" sets out to condemn: those Boers who refused to be subjects of the British Empire but who, like the protagonists, collected '*purwanas* from three General-Sahibs, certifying that they were people of peace and goodwill.' The following account highlights the ways in which Piet Uys may be seen within the context of Kipling's story and so is obviously biased.

When the Boers considered mass emigration from the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope in the 1830s, it was necessary to reconnoitre the surrounding area for suitable land. The most successful of these 'commission treks' was led by Piet Uys in 1834.²⁰ Leaving the Colony required written permission from the Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, who would not have granted it for such a venture. So in the application by Piet Uys and three other farmers, they stated:

'desirous of proceeding beyond the limits of the colony for a few weeks for the purpose of trafficking with the bordering natives, [the applicants] beg that your Excellency may be pleased to grant them a permission so to do and that they pledge to conduct themselves with propriety in their journey.'

They asked the Civil Commissioner of Uitenhage to support their application. He duly wrote:

'The character and behaviour of [Piet Uys and the three other farmers], who are respected inhabitants of this Uitenhage district, is such that I have no hesitation in recommending that their request be granted.'

This is a *purwana*.

Having received permission they went, meeting with the chiefs of the Xhosa, the Pondo and Zulus, each time asking for land on which to settle. Under the impression that the Zulu leader, Dingane, may grant them some land, the party returned to the Colony with favourable reports of Natal. Reports reached the Governor that Piet Uys was thinking of quitting the Colony. In response Piet Uys sent a sworn deposition in June 1835 stating:

I swear as I shall [ascend] in the Day of Judgement, that [I have] never expressed any unfriendly feeling towards the government, nor was it our intention to return to Natal. It is true I have on more than one occasion said that if the British Government would take possession of that country, I would have no objection to go and reside there . . . I could form a large party, my intentions solely to assist in civilizing the savages.'

Within a month the Uys family found new grievances that would allow Piet to reverse the intentions of this deposition. Open conflict flared up between Piet's wife, Alida, and her former slaves who, the British now insisted, were no longer allowed to be whipped or beaten.²¹ Piet complained directly to the Governor and subsequently arranged a public meeting to discuss various grievances. In January 1836 the Governor petitioned the British Government on behalf of the farmers, but to no avail. In October 1836 Piet Uys sold his farm and went first to Cape Town where he became the only Trekker leader to receive the Governor's permission to leave the colony. His correspondence with the Governor functions as yet another *purwana*.

In April 1837 the Uys party of about 100 whites trekked northwards towards a group of about 5,000 who, in the meantime, had elected Piet Retief as 'governor and senior commander', a position Piet Uys refused to recognize. Despite his own intention to flee from British control, Piet Uys writes to the Governor in Cape Town to criticise Retief's rejection of British authority and to distance himself from Retief's views, ending with the valediction: "We have the honour to be, with the greatest

respect, Your Excellency's most humble and devoted servant". On behalf of the new Governor, Sir George Napier, Piet Uys received yet another *purwana* stating that "These assurances have proved very satisfactory to his Excellency". One cannot help feeling that the Boer's penchant for collecting *purwanas* was fuelled by the enthusiasm with which the British provided them.

Piet Uys was unimpressed when Retief led his party eastwards towards Natal and the Zulus. In a complex story of intrigue and double-crossing on both sides, Dingane allegedly promises Retief land if he returns cattle stolen by Sekonyela. Retief complies and in February 1838, so the story goes, he signs a treaty with Dingane. After the ceremony, Dingane orders the deaths of Retief and his entourage then sends out warriors to slaughter the unsuspecting laagers. Despite his disagreements with Retief, Piet Uys sets out to avenge the deaths by leading a commando that includes his 15-year-old son, Dirkie. Piet Uys is mortally wounded by a flying assegai and falls from his horse as the party flees. There are conflicting accounts of how his son dies. In the heroic version Dirkie, who was already out of danger, sees the impi warriors closing in on his father and turns his horse. He shouts "I will die with my father" and charges back, shooting Zulu warriors until he is overcome and stabbed to death. In South Africa the image of a young man with a rifle standing over his dying father is iconic. We will see that father/son relationships play a crucial role in "A Sahibs' War".

THE UYS STONE

One can only speculate on precisely what Kipling knew about Piet Uys. When he was sent to Bloemfontein he and Milner agreed that one of the newspaper's objectives was to help the Boers accept defeat and build a future under British rule.²² This would require some knowledge of the Boers. Kipling had a life-long interest in local museums. His father had been the curator of the Lahore Museum for many years. Kipling corresponded with Maria Wilman of the South African Museum, Cape Town.²³ When she became director of a new museum in Kimberley in 1908 Kipling commented "There is nothing in the museum at present so I suppose she'll have to run about the country stealing things".²⁴ In contrast to Kimberley, Bloemfontein had its own local museum. In 1900 their collection included a large and interesting artefact: The Uys Stone (figure 1). This slab has a remarkable similarity to the 'inscription upon a great rock' in Kipling's story. In the ironic words of the Sikh: "The Sahib should see this little work!"

The Uys Stone (Uysklip) is a sandstone block 1.35 m high and 0.64 m wide.²⁵ The engraving is now worn, all that is still possible to read states:

1837
KERKSPRUYT
J.J. UYS, G.S.



Fig. 1. THE UYS STONE

Jacobus Johannes Uys was the father of Piet Uys. The rock commemorates the first communion service held by the Voortrekkers north of the Orange River. The surrounding farmland and a nearby railway siding were later named Uysklip. Ian Uys reports that Dirkie's older brother, Koos, returned to the rock and added the year 1844.²⁶ In 1883 the Uys Stone was moved from Uysklip to the old Bloemfontein Museum (Die Eerste Raadsaal) in St George Street.²⁷ It was there when Kipling was in Bloemfontein in 1900.²⁸ In 1915 the stone was transferred to the new museum building in Aliwal Street. At present it lies at the Florisbad Research Station 45 km northwest of Bloemfontein.

It seems too much of a coincidence for the Uys Stone not to be linked to "A Sahibs' War". There is however no reference to the museum in the extracts from *The Friend* published in *War's Brighter Side*.²⁹ A visit to the local museum may be grist to the mill of a modern war correspondent but would have been out of place in 1901. Unless firmer evidence can be found in correspondence or elsewhere, it is just conjecture that Kipling had the Uys Stone in mind when he planned his story.

THE FATHER / SON INVERSION

Charles Carrington's biography states: "Throughout the [Anglo-Boer] war Rudyard showed admiration and even tenderness for the fighting 'burghers' on the veldt, but bitter, unrelenting hatred for the fawning non-combatants who betrayed each side in turn".³⁰ Although Piet Uys embraced many ideals of the Boers, he did not display their general resentment towards the British. For Kipling any hint of running with the hares while hunting with the hounds represented a disloyalty to be despised.

Later biographers are rather less generous than Carrington in expressing Kipling's "tenderness for the fighting 'burghers'". The powerfully emotive language of "A Sahibs' War" deliberately portrays the Boers as sub-human, effectively dehumanising the enemy. For a Victorian public that had a poor understanding of genetics, the inclusion of a handicapped individual implied moral degradation on the part of the parents. The Boer family consists of:

an old man [Hendrik Dirk Uys on the tombstone] with a white beard and a wart upon the left side of his neck; and a fat woman [his unnamed wife] with the eyes of a swine and the jowl of a swine; and a tall young man deprived of understanding [Piet Uys]. His head was hairless, no larger than an orange, and the pits of his nostrils were eaten away by a disease. He laughed and slavered and sported sportively before [the British officer].

Kipling inverts the father/son relationship of the original Piet and Dirk Uys, giving Piet the junior position. This inversion is mirrored in the narrative where the relative position of the Sikh 'servant' to his British officer is complicated but needs to be understood in order to follow the Sikh's plan for revenge. It is because he regards the officer as his son that the Sikh selects the Afrikaner's begotten son as a propitiatory ransom sacrifice. Although the Sikh had adopted the role of a servant, Kipling carefully details his true status in a lively interaction near the beginning. This status has been examined by Lt-Colonel Roger Ayers of the Kipling Society who writes:

"In order to follow a major thread in the story it is essential to understand the military rank and status of Umr Singh, a member of the high warrior-caste of the Sikhs. This is something it is almost impossible for today's reading public to recognise, but because of the publicity given to the Indian Army at the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897, especially to the imposing senior Indian Viceroy's Commissioned Officers of the units which took part in the Jubilee procession, it would have been clear to many of the British newspaper reading public, let alone those families with a connection with India or the Indian Army.

Kipling indicates Umr Singh's rank by a series of clues which would have given a general idea of his status to many readers and an exact indication to those with knowledge of the Indian Army. They are:

Umr Singh is a Sikh in a (fictitious) Punjab Cavalry regiment;
He is an old man;
His uniform is made of a superior cloth;
His uniform bears the marks of a silver chain worn on the breast and of the Order of British India;
He was a Lance-Duffadar (lance-corporal) 27 years before the story;
Just before he left India he had been of that rank for which a chair was brought when he went to speak with his Colonel.

With this information, Umr Singh would have been as senior as it was possible for a Sikh cavalryman to get, that is, a Rissaldar or Rissaldar Major. Figure 2 is a copy of a water-colour by Chater Paul Chater, a little-known but very competent and accurate painter, of such an officer in the full-dress uniform of 1902. A photograph of Rissaldar Nadir Khan, 9th Bengal Lancers (a Sikh regiment), who attended the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in

London, appeared in the *Navy and Army Illustrated* of 27 December 1897 wearing just such a uniform. The silver chain hanging from the cross-belt on the breast can be seen clearly. The active-service uniforms of the cavalry regiments of the Indian Army were khaki by 1896, but the rank badges and accoutrements remained the same.

Figure 3 is a painting of an equally senior Sikh officer, this time in the infantry, but one which shows him wearing the Order of British India, the medal of which, whether worn at the neck or on the breast, had a uniquely shaped scalloped edge. If it had left a mark on a faded uniform, it might well have been recognisable. This picture also shows quite clearly the seniority, even the venerability, of such a man as Umr Singh. Kipling stresses this by the



Fig. 2. 9th BENGAL LANCERS

Fig. 3. 15th LUDHINA SIKHS

series of clues, in particular the Order of British India, because it was important to the story.

Why was it so important? I believe it was for two reasons. Firstly, to give the greatest possible weight to the words condemning the "Sahibs' War" policy which Kipling puts into Umr Singh's mouth. Secondly, to make clear the nature and strength of the father-son relationship between Umr Singh and Kurban Sahib so that the reason for the nature of Umr Singh's planned revenge is plain – a son for a son – as is just how much he sacrificed when he obeyed the ghost of Kurban Sahib and gave it up."

The much older Sikh had known the officer as a boy. Instead of a paternalistic servant/master role, the Sikh states that 'when we were alone he called me Father, and I called him Son'. The Sikh's plan for revenge was to hang the Boer child and let the mother live so that she would experience the pain he felt at having lost what was for him, a son. This is made explicit when the Sikh says that though the woman had more years to live than he, his grief was greater. Kipling understood such grief, having lost his own Josephine.

In history and in Kipling's story Dirk is 'barely a presence' and the emphasis falls on Piet. Kipling has transformed an imposing leader into this genetically handicapped 'young man deprived of understanding'. Piet Uys was blond (fair) with a shaggy beard. As a humiliation his hair has been removed. 'The idiot' is hairless, surrounded by a landscape where even the hill is 'all hairy with bushes'. Kipling also reduces his head to 'no larger than an orange' and disfigures his nose. At first sight it appears that Kipling has simply caricatured Piet Uys and that this is the literary version of a Punch cartoon. But there is a deeper side to it.

THE WHEEL OF THINGS

The juxtaposition of Kipling's activities in the Boer War and his work on *Kim* during the English summer of 1900 is significant. Kim is a resourceful Irish orphan living foot-loose in India. He becomes the disciple of a Tibetan lama whose quest is to free himself from the Wheel of Things, a symbol for the recurrent cycle of birth, death and rebirth. He is recruited into the Great Game of imperial espionage. As is typical of Kipling's work, *Kim* and "A Sahibs' War" have a number of links. The 'big war' that is thought to have brought Kim's father out from Ireland was the Afghan War already mentioned, in which Lord Roberts led the expedition to Kabul.³¹ According to Peter Hopkirk, Lord Roberts is the 'Jang-i-lat Sahib' in *Kim*.³² Hiding in the dark Kim sees a 'black-haired man, erect as an arrow', getting out of a landau. He overhears him giving orders for a war with an army of eight thousand.

Kim uses this information to enhance his status as a soothsayer and at one point even mimics the man's gestures.

More relevant to understanding "A Sahibs' War" is the central theme in *Kim* of reincarnation. Kipling had been familiar with reincarnation while in India and it reoccurs in a number of his short stories, including "The Finest Story in the World", "Wireless", "On the Gate: A Tale of '16", and "Uncovenanted Mercies".³³ Time and again in *Kim* the lama shows how all lives can be seen in relation to past lives. A murderer or a soul that has done great evil may be 're-born as a rat, or a snake under the eaves—a worm in the belly of the most mean beast'. Each of these 'is upon the Wheel as we are—a life ascending or descending—very far from deliverance.' A virtuous woman who is an inordinate talker is described as having 'many, many millions of lives before her'. The lama suggests 'Perhaps I was once a Sahib', and he is 'certain the Keeper of the Images in the [Lahore Museum] was in past life a very wise Abbot' (an indirect reference to Kipling's father).

It implies that what Kipling intended in "A Sahibs' War" is not simply a caricature of Piet Uys. His rage at deceitful anti-British propaganda of 1901 and his 'bitter, unrelenting hatred' for anyone he considered to have betrayed both sides, results in him reincarnating the soul of the Boer martyr into the body of 'the idiot with the shrivelled head'.³⁴

Kipling's specifically selecting a 'young man deprived of understanding' makes more sense if it is seen as vindictive punishment for a soul that has already been condemned within the Wheel of Things for its actions as a Boer. Instead of the tombstone being a technical flaw, its deeper jests are shared between Kipling and the reader. The irony is enhanced by the fact that the Sikh who transmits the story is unaware of this sting.

This article tries to understand Kipling's narrative rather than to condone or condemn its message. As Walter Allen said of another of Kipling's short stories: 'The whole thing is nasty, but nasty in a typically Kiplingesque way'.³⁵ Unravelling hidden meanings within a text is exciting, but it must not crowd out other interpretations. British readers in 1901 may have been ignorant of Piet Uys and the Uys Stone. They may have accepted the jests suggested by the Sikh as being amusing. Meaning does not exist exclusively within the text itself, but rather in the minds of the various readers through the ages, each with his or her own background and experience. It would be interesting to know the extent to which Kipling's views of the Boers mirrored public perceptions. Or did he succeed in moulding them?

CAPTIONS

- Fig. 1: The Uys Stone photographed at the Florisbad Research Station. It is just such a stone that is described in "A Sahibs' War". (Photo courtesy of the National Museum, Bloemfontein)
- Fig. 2: Painting by Chater Paul Chater of an officer from the 9th Bengal Lancers (Hodsons Horse), 1902. This shows the silver chain worn on the breast; in the narrative a chain like this has left a black mark on the Sikh's uniform. (From *An Assemblage of Indian Army Soldiers & Uniforms from the original paintings of the late Chater Paul Chater*, written and edited by Michael Glover, Perpetua Press, London 1973.) [Despite several attempts we have been unable to locate the copyright holder of this work. – Ed.]
- Fig. 3: Painting by Chater Paul Chater of an officer from the 15th Ludhina Sikhs of 1908 wearing the Order of the British India around his neck. (From *An Assemblage of Indian Army Soldiers & Uniforms from the original paintings of the late Chater Paul Chater*, written and edited by Michael Glover, Perpetua Press, London 1973.) [Despite several attempts we have been unable to locate the copyright holder of this work. – Ed.]

NOTES

1. Rudyard Kipling, "A Sahibs' War", first published December 1901, reprinted in Rudyard Kipling, *War Stories and Poems* (Oxford: OUP, World's Classics, 1990), pp. 163-180.
2. Thomas Pinney (ed.), *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling. Vol.3: 1900-10* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p.80.
3. Cicely Palser Havelly, 'Kipling: "A Sahibs' War"', in *A319: Literature in the Modern World: Block 4 Literature and Ideology* (Milton Keynes: The Open University, 1991), pp. 15-28.
4. Thomas Pinney (ed.), *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling. Vol.3: 1900-10* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p.180.
5. Cicely Palser Havelly, ' "A Sahibs' War": Reflections on Kipling's "Compellingly Unpleasant Story" ', *Kipling Journal*, No. 272 (1994), pp. 12-22.
6. Autobiographical details from Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Work*, Revised edition (London: Macmillan, 1978, first publ. 1955), and Angus Wilson, *The Strange Ride of Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Works* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1977).
7. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For my Friends Known and Unknown* (first published 1936 (London: Penguin, 1987), p.66.
8. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For my Friends Known and Unknown* (first published 1936 (London: Penguin, 1987), p.123.
9. Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London: Macdonald & Co, 1982), p.375.
10. Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*, first published 1901 (London: Penguin, 1987).
11. Unless otherwise stated, most historical details from Trewhella Cameron (editor), *An Illustrated History of South Africa* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1986).
12. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For my Friends Known and Unknown* (first published 1936 (London: Penguin, 1987), p.125.
13. Thomas Pinney, 'Notes', in: Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For my Friends Known and Unknown* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

14. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For my Friends Known and Unknown* (first published 1936 (London: Penguin, 1987), p.128.
15. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself: For my Friends Known and Unknown* (first published 1936 (London: Penguin, 1987), p.128.
16. Kipling's word Boer-log carries with it the Afrikaans word for the war: *oorlog*.
17. Kingsley Amis, *Rudyard Kipling and his world* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), p.95.
18. Shamus O.D. Wade, "Letters to the Editor: 'A Sahibs' War'", *Kipling Journal*, No. 273 (1995), pp.53-55.
19. Thomas Pinney (ed.), *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling. Vol.3: 1900-10* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p.173.
20. Ian Uys, *Rearguard: The Life and Times of Piet Uys* (Knysna: Fortress Publishers, 1998).
21. Five years earlier female slaves could be whipped or beaten. Since the abolition of slavery, insubordinate female workers were to be confined to stocks. Alida considered that this only punished herself, because she was then 'deprived of the services of her apprentice'. Alida suffered the indignity of being dragged to court by a worker, but the charge was dismissed and the worker punished with hard labour and the stocks.
22. Renee Durbach, *Kipling's South Africa* (Cape Town: Chameleon Press, 1988), p.50.
23. Thomas Pinney (ed.), *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling. Vol.3: 1900-10* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), pp.186-7.
24. Thomas Pinney (ed.), *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling. Vol.3: 1900-10* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p.307.
25. I am indebted to Marianna Botes of the National Museum, Bloemfontein, for taking the time to find relevant literature and, with the help of the staff at Florisbad Research Station, photographing the Uys Stone.
Renier, 'Stop van Myne', *Die Volksblad*, 2/08/1951.
C.J.P. le Roux, *Die Uysklip, Voortrekkermuseum Vrystaat*, No. 4. Undated.
26. Ian Uys, *Rearguard: The Life and Times of Piet Uys* (Knysna: Fortress Publishers, 1998), p.206.
27. Renier, 'Stop van Myne', *Die Volksblad*, 2/08/1951.
28. Unfortunately the earliest visitor's book in the Bloemfontein Museum only dates back to 1940.
29. Julian Ralph, *War's Brighter Side: The story of "The Friend" newspaper edited by the correspondents with Lord Roberts's forces, March-April, 1900* (New York: D. Appleton and Co, 1901).
30. Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Work*, Revised edition (London: Macmillan, 1978, first publ. 1955), p.372.
31. Edward Said, 'Notes', in: Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (London: Penguin, 1987), p.352.
32. Peter Hopkirk, *Quest for Kim: In Search of Kipling's Great Game* (London: John Murray, 1996), pp.98-100.
33. Sandra Kemp, *Kipling's Hidden Narratives* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).
34. As a minor technical point, in order for Kipling's Minister of God to be the soul of Dirk Uys, the Minister's birth cannot precede the murder of 1838. This means that the 'old man with a white beard and a wart upon the left side of his neck' was not more than 63. It is possible, although he may be slightly prematurely aged.
35. Walter Allen, *The Short Story in English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p.62.

OBITUARY
JOHN F. SLATER, MA.
(1928-2008)

By JOHN WALKER

John Slater's many friends will have been saddened by the news of his death, on 5 September 2008, at the age of 79. Our sincere sympathy goes to his family.

John was a very supportive member of the Kipling Society, and served on the Council for six years. Having taken over the honorary post of Librarian in 1999, he established the cataloguing system that is still used, and gained a well-deserved reputation as a pain-staking researcher, and a reliable source of information and advice. He joined the New Readers' Guide steering committee, when it was established by George Webb in 2002, and contributed in many ways to its work, until very recently.

John's background enabled him to speak with quiet authority on a wide range of subjects. After Dulwich College and Oundle, he read History at Clare College, Cambridge, and went on to the Sorbonne. He became a printer and publisher, and played a leading role in the development of computerized type setting.

The production of the *Journal* has benefited greatly from John's expertise and advice. He led the successful search for a new printer at the end of 2002 which has resulted in significant savings for the Society.

We shall miss his ready helpfulness on such a huge variety of questions, and the depth of his understanding; but most of all, we shall miss a friend whose conversation and correspondence were both enjoyable and illuminating, whose scholarship was wide and deep, and with whom it was a pleasure to share insights.

It is understood that John has remembered the Society in his will, with a substantial legacy. We propose to establish an Essay Prize for Sixth Forms, in his memory.

"MRS. BATHURST" – A SEQUEL?

By ALASTAIR WILSON

[Cdr Wilson is currently Chairman of Council, and is also deeply involved in the work on the NRG. He has written the General Article on "Kipling and the Royal Navy", as well as annotating the Pycroft stories, most of the stories in *The Day's Work*, the articles in *Sea Warfare*, and virtually all of the stories with any nautical content. He is also very generous in helping others with maritime questions. As he explains, this article flows from his NRG work. – Ed.]

The story which follows is pure fiction, and suggested itself to me while I was preparing the New Readers' Guide notes for that most-discussed tale, "Mrs. Bathurst". Because of my Naval background, I wondered what would have been the sequel on board H.M.S. Hierophant, when Pycroft returned on board. As part of those notes, I suggested a fictional series of events, based on the circumstances as Kipling had revealed them to us, which I believe would have inevitably followed his reporting of Mr Vickery's death to the authorities on board his ship. I took that sequel no further than the return of the Hierophant to Devonport some two-and-a-half years after the tale was told in the brake-van at Glengariff siding, alongside Simon's Bay.

However, I had enjoyed myself so much in dreaming it up, that I thought those of our members who do not use our web-site might also be amused by the fiction, so I have topped and tailed it to tell how the final solution to the problems of "Mrs. Bathurst" came to be revealed. Remember, you read it here first!

In 1958, I was young Lieutenant, serving in H.M.S. *Watchful*, a converted World War II Motor Launch, used for Fishery Patrol duties in the English Channel. She was a tiny craft, with a crew of only twelve: the Captain and me; the Petty Officer Coxswain; a Mechanician 2nd class (very much the equivalent of Bai-Jove Judson's Mr Davies); a Leading Electrical Mechanic; a Telegraphist and two Stoker Mechanics and three Able or Ordinary Seamen.

Among the seamen was a young Ordinary Seaman, a national serviceman, named Hepburn. One night, he and I had the middle watch together, as we made our way across Lyme Bay at about eleven knots on our way from Portland to Brixham. One of us had the wheel, the other kept a look-out. In so small a ship, under such circumstances, there was no gulf between officer and rating: we were much of an age, and his education had been no worse than mine indeed, he had a university place to go to when he completed his national service.

On this particular night, we got to talking about families. I told him how I had been marked down for the Navy from birth almost, having four previous generations of my mother's family as middle-ranking Naval officers from the Napoleonic wars, throughout the rest of the 19th century. Hepburn replied that he too, came from an old Naval family: his father had been a Leading Seaman in H.M.S. *Courageous* and had been lost when she was sunk in 1939, a week before his birth. Hepburn added that his grandfather, who had acted as a father to him, had also been in the Navy – a retired Chief Petty Officer; while his grandmother's father was also in the Navy – a Warrant Officer who had died in curious circumstances in South Africa, at the time of the Boer War, or just after. I said 'Oh, how were they curious, then?' and Hepburn replied, 'Well, Sir, it's quite a story – if you're really interested, I've got it all written down by my Godfather, who knew my great-grandfather: they were in the same ship at the time my great-grandfather disappeared. If you like, I'll bring it back next time I go home on week-end leave.'

In fact, he brought it to me two days later, when we were alongside in Plymouth. It was in the dog-watches, and the Captain had gone up to the Barracks for a bath (our on-board facilities didn't even run to a shower), when he came down the companion-way to our tiny ward-room, knocked on the door and came in, clutching an old sailor's ditty-box. He put it down on the table and said, 'Here's that bit of paper I told you about, Sir'. He opened the box, took out a folded and creased wad of paper, and gave it to me. I thanked him, said I would take great care of it, and return it to him as soon as I'd read it. It was more than a bit of paper: it ran to four sides of foolscap, and was written in a neat board school copperplate. There was a superscription on the outside of the paper: "For my Godson, Leading Seaman George Hepburn, from his Godfather, Emanuel Pycroft, Torpedo Coxswain, Royal Navy".

The name struck me straight away – I'd read Kipling's stories all my life, and my father, another Kipling enthusiast, had given me a set of the Macmillan pocket edition when I was one year old (the model railway syndrome, I suspect). I'd only recently read the Pycroft tales on the recommendation of my own grandfather, and had struggled with "Mrs. Bathurst". I could never understand how it was that the Gunner had persuaded his Captain to let him go up country.

I poured myself a drink, and sat down to read, but I'd got no further than the heading when I sat up, almost knocking over my drink, it read:

"The events leading up to the death of Warrant Officer Mark Vickery, Royal Navy, in Matabeleland, 2nd March 1903, by Emanuel Pycroft, formerly a Torpedo Coxswain in the Royal Navy". Below was a date, 3rd July, 1939.

The first paragraph started, "George, now that you're 25, I think you should know how it happened that your grandfather, your mother's father, came to die in the bush in Matabeleland, which is called Southern Rhodesia now."

I read on:

"I was shipmates with him in the old *Forte*, in a commission on the Cape Station – I think they call it the South Atlantic station now – in 1902-05. I was a Petty Officer Torpedoman, and he was the Gunner, and in the normal way, we wouldn't have rubbed up much against each other, but somehow, one day in the Dogs, round about St. Helena on our way south, we got to yarning and it transpired he'd recently completed a commission on the Australia station, and we found we'd both visited some of the same places. A couple of months later, we were in Cape Town and one evening I met him outside the Circus, and he took me in to see a film, because he was sure there was a woman in it we'd both of us been acquainted with in New Zealand. In fact, I reckoned then that he'd been more than a bit acquainted with her but that was none of my business. That evening, in Cape Town, he was fair sweating with emotion, and it was clear she meant more than just something to him. In fact, he insisted that I come with him to the same show five nights in all, and each night, after the show, he'd walk from pub to pub, pouring beer and Cape brandy down his throat and mine like there was no tomorrow.

After that, the circus moved on, and the next thing I knew was that, a couple of days later, he was detailed off to go up country, to Bloemfontein, to make some arrangements about some Navy ammunition up there. I took him ashore in the cutter, and I reckoned he wasn't himself at all. He spoke to me – something about his wife who'd just died, and that was the last I ever saw of him. That was round about the New Year of '03.

He didn't come back, and the galley packet said that he'd been murdered up in Bloemfontein. Nobody thought too much of it – the Warrants kept themselves to themselves in that ship, and he wasn't specially popular – nor unpopular, either, but no-one particularly missed him. But, knowing the state of his mind, I couldn't help but wonder.

And then, about four months later, I was ashore with an old friend, a Red Marine called Pritchard, and we were looking for a quiet place to down a couple of beers he'd been given. We found a parked brakevan, down at Glengariff siding, by the beach. And in it was that writer man, Rudyard Kipling, and a railway chap called Hooper. So we all sat and drank our beer, and got yarning. You probably know that Mr Kipling – he died a couple of years ago, just before the old King -

wrote a couple of tales about some times we had together in Guzz, and in the summer manoeuvres at home in '97 or '98: and he wrote up what me and Pritch and this Hooper put together – we were talking about women and men, and how women could drive men to do things quite unlike their normal selves.

Anyway, the end of the afternoon came when Hooper told us how he'd found, about a month before – so that would have been in early March '03 – a couple of bodies, struck dead by lightning about a hundred miles north-west by north from Bulawayo. He described them, and it was clear from the tattoos, and other things, that one of them was your grandfather. We left it there – there wasn't any more to tell – and later that Mr Kipling wrote it up very cleverly for a magazine. He used our names in his story but he changed the names of our ships – he called the *Forte*, the *Hierophant*, and he called Pritch's ship, the old *Barracouta*, the *Agaric*. That didn't much matter, because the magazine he put the story in was quite a posh one, a literary one, and you didn't see many of them in the wardroom, much less on the messdeck.

Well, the story he told was only half the story – and you can read it in the book he put it in – in fact, you ought to read it (though he makes me out to be less educated than I reckon I am), because what I'm going to tell you now takes up from where Mr Kipling stopped. The book's called *Traffics and Discoveries*.

We went back, the four of us, to Simon's Town in the brake-van, with me just sitting quiet and thoughtful. At Simon's Town we went our own ways – Pritchard back to the *Barracouta*, me to the *Forte* in dry dock, Hooper to carry on picking up the broken-down wagons to make up into a train for Cape Town, while Mr Kipling went to call on the Admiral, who was an acquaintance of his – to enquire when the *Peridot* would be returning. But before I left the van, I said to Hooper; 'I'm going to have to say something about this on board, and maybe they'll want to ask you about it'.

Back on board, I went down to the after cabin-flat, and knocked on the Torpedo Lieutenant's cabin door: 'Can I have a word with you, Sir? It's about Mr Vickery'.

Our conversation went something like this (remember, I'm writing this about 35 years after it happened, but I can remember it almost like yesterday).

'Mr Vickery? What do you know about him?'

I believe he's dead, Sir.'

'How do you know that? All we know is that he's gone missing after going up to Bloemfontein – the police are still searching for him.'

'Yes, Sir, I know, but I met this Mr Hooper while I was ashore this afternoon: he's some sort of inspector on the railway, and he's just

come back from up-country – Matabeleland. We got to yarning over a beer or two, and he told us that he'd recently – about four weeks ago – found a corpse by the side of the line on the way up to the Falls, which had Mr Vickery's tattoos: he'd been struck by lightning, Sir. He was very positive about it.'

'You're sure? Well, you'd better come and tell the Commander.'

So, off we go to the Commander, and much the same conversation follows, and the Commander asks:

'This Mr Hooper – how did you come to meet him, and can you contact him again?'

I said, 'Well, Sir, he's by way of being an acquaintance of this Mr Kipling, the writer chap, who I've met a couple of times before, and who's staying at Admiralty House at the moment.'

'Well,' says the Commander, 'We'll need to get hold of him to swear an affidavit, or something. I'm going to tell the Captain about this. Torps, I don't think you need to concern yourself any more about this at the moment. Pyecroft, you come with me.'

We went aft to the cuddy, and the Commander knocks on the door, and goes in, leaving me waiting in the flat outside. After five minutes, the Captain's steward comes out, and says to the Royal Marine key-board sentry, 'Pass the word for the Captain's Clerk', then to me 'They want you inside'.

The Captain says to me:

'The Commander tells me that you believe that Mr Vickery is dead: and I understand you were coxswain of the cutter that took him ashore the night he left for Bloemfontein. How did he seem that evening? The police up at Bloemfontein have found no trace of him, and they believed that he must have been set upon and robbed and murdered, the day after he finished overseeing the loading of that ammunition.'

Then his Clerk, a young Paymaster Sub Lieutenant, comes in and the Captain asks him:

'Scratch, when did we last hear from the Bloemfontein police about Mr Vickery?'

'About six weeks ago, Sir, just before we sailed for Tristan.'

'And what did they say?'

'Just that they had no trace of him – he'd sealed the truck after completion of loading on 5th January, and given the consignment notes to the Station-Master. The Station-Master said that Mr Vickery had also remarked that he'd probably see him the next day, because he intended to take the Cape Mail the next evening, but the Station-Master never saw him, nor did anyone else. And they asked at the rooms where he'd been

lodging. His landlady said he'd paid his shot and left the next morning, the 6th. He hadn't got much baggage, and he took it all with him.'

'And. . .?'

'Well, Sir, the Cape Mail leaves Bloemfontein about 6 p.m., so he'd have had all day to kick his heels, but they could find no-one who remembered seeing him, and they could only suppose he'd been attacked by some black *skellums*, for his gear and money. They thought his body might have been burnt – there is nearly always a bonfire going, somewhere in that section – there's quite a lot of new building going on.'

'Was he in uniform?'

'Oh, yes, Sir – he was travelling on duty, and the police confirmed he'd been wearing uniform while he was in the goods yard with the ammunition trucks.'

'Well, it looks as though he's been burnt, all right. It seems his body has been found up beyond Bulawayo, struck by lightning. We'll have to report to the Admiral for the Admiralty: and who's his nearest relative?'

'He changed his next-of-kin shortly before Christmas – it seems his wife died at the end of last year, and his daughter is now his nearest relative. I think he said she was working in a Plymouth draper's shop, living with the other girls over the shop, Sir.'

'Right, well, first things first: we'll need some sort of affidavit from the railway chappie .. what's his name ...?'

'Hooper, Sir', says the Commander.

'Yes, him. Scratch, I want you to go ashore and see the Admiral's Secretary or Flag Lieutenant to find out how we can contact Mr Kipling. You can follow that up, find him, explain, if necessary, why we want to contact Hooper, and then find Hooper and arrange for him to come out here to swear to what he found and did with the remains. Make sure the Secretary is fully in the picture – I don't want the Admiral complaining that he didn't know what was going on.'

The Captain goes on:

'When that's done, then we will have to make a formal report of Vickery's death, enclosing Hooper's affidavit, for the Admiral, and I must write to the daughter.'

'Right, Scratch, you'd better get off now – you ought to catch the Admiral's staff before they shift for dinner – and I want you to chase up Mr Kipling first thing tomorrow.'

All this time, I'd been making myself small in a corner of the Captain's cabin, but the Captain saw me as his clerk left the cuddy, and says:

'Right, Pyecroft, carry on. You did quite right in informing Lieutenant Bellairs: thank you. Commander, stay behind, will you.'

The Commander and me both said, 'Aye, aye, Sir', and I slid out of the cabin door, and listened – and I see Lamson, the Captain's Cox'n, poke his head out of the pantry next to the Captain's cabin.

'What's going on, Pye?

'Let me in to the pantry, and I'll tell you'.

Lamson drew himself back, and I squeezed into the pantry. I put my finger to my lips, and mouthed 'Shhh.' Then I reached behind to the hatch from the pantry into the Captain's dining cabin, next to the day cabin, where the Captain and Commander were talking. I quietly slid the hatch open, and the voices came more loudly. Lamson turned to the Leading Steward who had also been in the pantry and said sharply, 'Here, you, hop it!' So the Leading Steward hopped it, sucking his teeth as he left the pantry.

I beckoned to Lamson, and we both leaned forward to hear what was being said in the cuddy.

We heard the Captain say:

'Well, here's a pickle. What the h*ll was Vickery doing up there – always assuming that it was him? How are we going to explain that without revealing that he'd run?'

The Commander replied;

'Well, Sir, I'm not precisely sure what tale you pitched to the Admiral's staff to allow him to go to Bloemfontein in the first place, I'm afraid.'

'Well, I told 'em more or less what Vickery told me – that there was a major discrepancy in our ammunition accounts, left over from the last commission, but that he knew there was ammunition left up at Bloemfontein from the war, and that if he could be authorised to fetch it, he could square the commissary storeman up there – no one would know that the naval brigade hadn't expended a couple of hundred more rounds than they actually had. Then, when the trucks reached the dock-yard, before being shunted into the Armament Depot, he would organise a working party to remove the number we needed to square the books, and no-one would be any the wiser. When the trucks arrived without him, I got Mr Hargreaves, the Gunner (T), to check Vickery's ammunition accounts – he said there was nothing wrong with them.'

'Ah!' said the Commander, 'There's more in this than meets the eye! It looks very much as though Vickery had made up his mind to go absent before he left – he must have had some purpose in heading north. Is there any way we can explain that?'

'I can't think of any reason. If we could have said he was struck by lightning near Bloemfontein, we might be able to get away with it, but

we cannot ask Hooper to swear an affidavit and perjure himself at the same time – and anyway, it 'ud get found out. No, I think I'll have tell C-in-C what we've discovered – that Vickery 'told me a tale' for reasons unknown, that he went on the run – presumably for the same reason – and . . .'

The Commander broke in;

'Sorry, Sir, but I've just thought – does C-in-C have to report the *exact* circumstances to the Admiralty? Won't it be sufficient to "regret to report the death of Mr M. Vickery, Gunner, Royal Navy, of H.M.S. *Forte*, while on detached duty at Bloemfontein. An affidavit as to finding and identifying his body has been received from Mr Hooper, Inspector, Cape Government Railways"? Won't that do? We don't actually say *where* he was found, nor is there any need to forward the actual affidavit to the Admiralty: we just say that there is one.'

The Captain thought for a moment, then;

'We.e.ell, if I can square the Admiral's Secretary, we will probably get away with it. We'll have to make sure that the date we give as his death matches the date we marked him as absent in the ship's books.'

And that is how it was quietly dealt with. Mr Hooper came down to Simon's Town two days later, and swore an affidavit as to finding the bodies of the two tramps, and the identification marks on one of them. He gave the correct date, 2nd March, and gave the correct place, at milepost 941/2 from Bulawayo, on the Victoria Falls line. The official report was duly rendered to C-in-C, and in turn forwarded to the Admiralty, in the terms that the Commander had suggested and without a copy of the affidavit. It happened that C-in-C was very much concerned with the political aftermath of Joe Chamberlain's visit to the Cape that autumn, and didn't worry too much about what his Secretary asked him to sign.

The Captain wrote to Miss Vickery, and also to a Naval Charity, reporting the circumstances of Miss Vickery being left an orphan, and the charity gave her a grant of fifty pounds.

And the *Hierophant* completed her commission on the Cape station, and returned to Devonport in October 1905. Her arrival went unnoticed – the naval pages of the *Western Morning News* were full of the keel-laying the day previously of H.M.S. *Dreadnought*.

Two days after our arrival, I suggested to the Torpedo Officer that I should trace Miss Vickery, and return the few personal belongings that Vickery had left behind him. The Torpedo Officer agreed, and so I went off to the address given by the ship's office writer as being Vickery's wife's (that's your grandma, God rest her) last address. I spoke to the landlady, who told me that Edna Vickery (your mum) had

a job as a shop assistant in Dingle's, in the haberdashery department. And there I found her, after an embarrassing ten minutes among the corsets.

Her supervisor allowed her to have ten minutes off, and to use his office. I explained that I had a bag containing a few mementoes of her father – his sword, his hair brushes, a photograph of her mother and herself, a pair of tortoise-shell cufflinks from the Seychelles, and a silver-plated candle-stick from his cabin. She thanked me, and said;

'Of course, I never really knew him much: the most I saw him was for about two years when I was nine or ten when he was in a torpedo boat based here in Plymouth – he came home about every other night, and he helped me with my school work, but then he was sent out to Australia, and almost as soon as he came home, he was sent to your ship, and out to South Africa. It was pretty dreadful when Mum died, but our vicar's wife got me this job. It was quite funny though – sometime that summer that Dad went away and when Mum was about six months gone, there was a lady called one day – she spoke a bit funny – sort of like from London, but I don't know. She knocked, and asked if Mr Vickery lived here, and Mum said 'Yes, I'm his wife, can I help you, he's not here.' 'Oh!' she said, sort of surprised, I think I must have been given the wrong address – my Mr Vickery isn't married. I'm so sorry to have troubled you'. And that was that: she walked away – but I saw her go down the street to the park at the bottom, and she sat down there and pulled a hankie out of her reticule, and I think she was crying. But that was the last I saw of her.'

And that was how I came to know your Mum, and I kept in touch with her, and when she got married, I was invited to the wedding – your Dad had been a young LTO in a destroyer I was coxswain of – the *Nubian*, back in the year '11 – the old King's Coronation year.

And now she's dead, you're married, and I shan't be around for much longer, so I thought I'd better set down what happened – better that someone should know the truth as near as we'll ever get it, than leave it as a mystery.

I'm sure as I can be that your granddad and this Mrs. Bathurst were married (after a fashion) in New Zealand. Why he did it, I just do not know. So far as I know, your grandma was a good wife to him, but he'd been separated from her for too much of their married life, and he was reaching that age – well, I saw an article in the *Western* by one of these Freudian chaps, who said men get what he called the 'male menopause'. I don't know, I'm sure. But when he dragged me round the streets of Cape Town five nights in a row after seeing her in the same

newsreel, I began to put two and two together with what he'd said to me at sea earlier, and it was clear that he was certain sure that she had come to England to find him. Well, there'd have been a right old to-do if she did find him.

He couldn't bear the thought of what would happen if she did catch up with him, and he'd just heard that your Mum had died, and I reckon it just drove him over the edge. He decided to go on the run, and start again somewhere – I don't think he saw beyond the next couple of weeks or so. I remember Pritch saying something to Hooper when we were in that brake-van, about the effect some women could have on a man – he said something about a man goes crazy – or just saves himself. Well, your grandpa met that kind of woman, but couldn't save himself. I think he did go crazy.

I reckon that when the film moved on from Cape Town, it was a mixture of guilt – for betraying your grandma, for cheating Mrs. B, and perhaps for what your mum would have thought of all these shenanigans – and a wish to see her on the film again, which made him go to the captain with a tale about fixing the ammunition accounts, and going up to Bloemfontein – and the captain bought it. If it had come out that the accounts were in a mess, even if it was something left over from the last commission, it wouldn't do him, your grandpa, any good, but no more would it the captain – who always carries the can. So the captain went ashore to square the Admiral's staff, and that was all right.

I was the last person from the old *Forte* to see your grandpa, when I took him ashore to catch the evening train into Cape Town, before taking the night mail up-country. I knew something was up, because he said to me 'Remember that I am not a murderer, because my lawful wife died in childbed six weeks after I came out. That much I am clear of.' I didn't think much to the remark, until he didn't come back, and they reckoned he'd been murdered in Bloemfontein. But I got to thinking, and I reckoned he'd done one of those disappearing tricks, so that he could start another life – like that story Mr Conan Doyle tells about Sherlock Holmes and the Norwood builder.

Here's how I see it. When he'd finished the job up at Bloemfontein – and that caused us a problem, too, because there wasn't anything wrong with the ammunition accounts, and instead of being 200 rounds of four-point-seven ammunition short, we now had 200 rounds too many: I think we 'lost' them next time we did our quarterly gun-layers' firings – as I say, when he'd finished, I think he just found a quiet corner to change into some old clothes, and burnt the rest. And then he made his way north via De Aar to Jo'burg, probably like one of these American hoboes you see at the cinema. He could have lost himself in the mines there, but there would have been too many police about, and

the risk was too great – remember he thought this Mrs. B. was looking for him, and he couldn't face the thought of being had up on a charge of bigamy, and going to prison. So he decided to go on north to one of the railway construction camps on the line which was being built from Bulawayo, up to the Victoria Falls, and on in to the copper-mining country. He picked up another tramping man – perhaps on the Reef – and they were on their way to the head of rail and the construction camp. And on their way there, they were caught in a tropical storm, and were struck by lightning. Hooper found them soon afterwards and described to us, in that brake-van at Glengariff, how he'd done it, and the tattoos which I knew were your grandpa's: and, although I never saw them, I'm certain sure that he had your grandpa's false teeth in his waistcoat pocket while he was telling the story, but he never showed them to us.

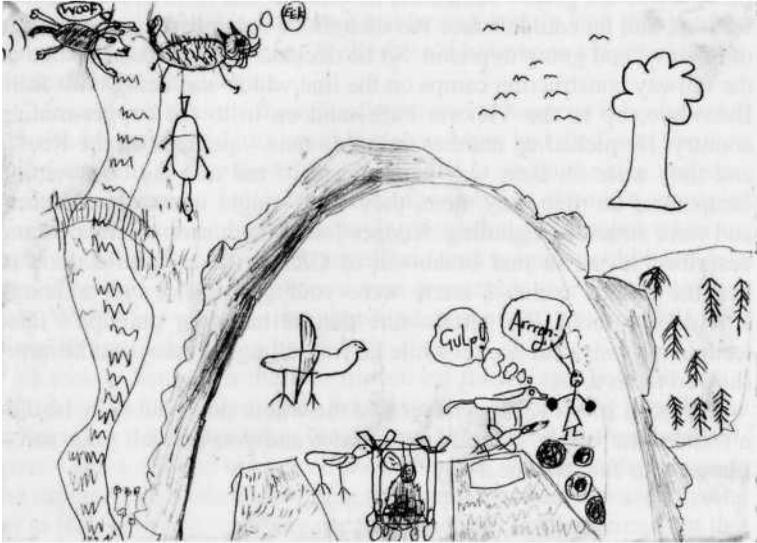
So that's it. Mr Kipling never told the whole story, but then, he didn't know the whole story. Now you do, and you can tell your son –

I hope your first will be a boy."

HON. SECRETARY – CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS

Jane Keskar, our Hon. Secretary, thanks to a moribund PC has been compelled to change her email address. She can now be contacted at:

jmkeskar@btinternet.com



This is a picture of the cave and the animals in the story. Inside the cave you will see baskets with eggs in. Above that there is the woman shouting at the fox with the dead hen by his feet. The ham is dangling from a long pole above the fire – the problem is, the woman couldn't find long enough sticks with Y-shaped ends, so the ham is dangling too low on the fire.

The flying chicken is about to try to roost on the bar hanging across. You will see the dog chasing the cat over the river and knocking over the poor cow who is trying to graze.

Next to the cave is a small patch of plants the woman has planted. The bumpy bits round the cave are rocks. — BEN.

HOW THE FOX GOT A BUSHY TAIL OR

Why The Fox Eats Only One Then Kills Everything Else In Sight . . .

By MAURICE PENNANCE

WITH ILLUSTRATION BY BENJAMIN PENNANCE

[Mr Pennance explained to me how this charming story came into being. He has been reading the *Just So Stories* to his son, Ben, to their joint pleasure. But, their Best Beloved hens have recently been suffering from the depredations of Mr Fox, and so this Kiplingesque story was written to take some of the sting out of the tragedy. – Ed.]

Surprised, Oh Best Beloved? I should say so! Me too. I have returned, but briefly, to tell you the story of how this came about.

Well, hear and attend and listen then, for this also befell and behappened and became and was. It's just that I forgot to tell you at the time.

Do you remember, Oh Best Beloved, the Wild Horse stamping with his wild foot in the Wild Wet Woods saying, 'O my Friends and O my Enemies, why have the Man and the Woman made that great light in that great Cave, and what harm will it do us?'

Those of you that had a proper childhood will remember this. The Dog thought it was good and was particularly attracted to the smell of roast mutton and offered to go and look and even asked the Cat to accompany him. The Cat, having more wiles than the Dog had the good sense to say: 'Nenni! I am the Cat who walks by himself, and all places are alike to me. I will not come.'

All in turn and in good order, and despite Cat's misgivings, the Dog and the Horse and the Cow and the Sheep and the Pig and the Hen all gave of their wildness to the Man and the Woman in return for shelter from the bitter winds or a place by the fire and some scraps from the table or a nosegay of hay or some fresh pasture. And so it went.

Until one bitterly cold winter in the wet windy wildness when the Fox, hungry and cold, came to the door of the Cave.

'Go away', said the Woman.

I am hungry and cold', retorted the Fox, 'can I not in turn make a deal with you as have the Dog and the Horse and the Cat?'

'What have you to offer?' asked the Woman doubtfully.

Fox scanned the comfy looking cave with his wishful wily eyes. He saw the warming fire and the sheepskin rugs spread before it; he saw the salted hams hanging to dry from the ceiling and licked his lips; he saw a rack of big brown eggs on a rock ledge; he saw the baby teasing the Cat with a ball of wool and laughing delightedly; he saw an IKEA flat pack lying unopened on the cave floor.

'Hmmm.' mused the Fox. 'Maybe I could help you put that together?'

'Oh really!' exclaimed the woman. 'Using your tail as an Allen key I suppose?'

'Well, what do the others do then?' queried the Fox, shaking the icicles from his fur.

'Horse and Dog help the Man hunt; Hen lays the fine fresh eggs; Sheep gives us the curly wurly wool to clothe us from the wet windy wildness and keep us warm at night; Cow gives us the wonderful white milk to grow the baby and make Wensleydale cheese; Cat makes the baby laugh but he is allowed to Walk by Himself.'

'As I said to the Cat,' continued the Woman, 'go back to the Wild Wet Woods for we have no more need of friends or servants in our cave.'

I am neither friend nor servant,' said the Fox, becoming angry. 'How are you off for enemies?'

'Are you threatening me?' asked the Woman with a glint in her eye.

I was told you were wise and beautiful,' said the Fox, 'beautiful you most certainly are but I am not so sure about the wise bit. At least you could let me have a bash at assembling that flat pack.'

'Go on then,' replied the Woman, taking her Magic blade-bone from a shelf. I hate putting those things together. If you succeed you may sit with the Cat by the fire drinking the warm white milk, if you fail, you must return to the wet wild wood forever.'

Do you see, Oh Best Beloved? It was hardly fair, the Fox tore the box to bits but then the diagrams were really complicated and the retaining bolts would not line up properly and some of the holes were in the wrong place and indeed, handling an Allen key with teeth or tail is Just So . . .

After a time the Fox admitted defeat and the Woman held the Magic blade-bone and made the singing Magic once more to return the Fox to the Wild Wet Windy Woods for ever and ever.

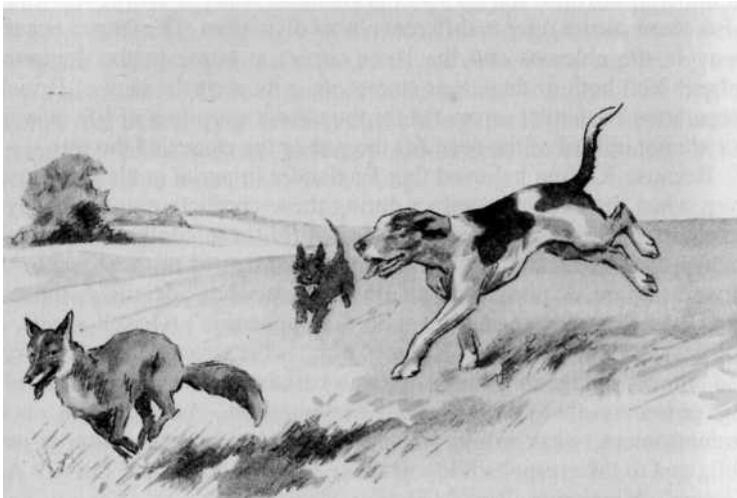
The Fox became extremely angry at this and, because he was still hungry, snatched the Fat Hen between his teeth on the way out. The Woman saw this and, dropping the Magic blade-bone, she flung herself forward and grabbed onto the Fox's tail as hard as ever she could. The Fox pulled and pulled, Oh Best Beloved, as best he could, and the Woman held on tight as tight as best she could, and to this day you will see that the tail of the Fox is all bushy at one end and this is because the Woman held on so very tight while the Fox pulled his hardest.

At length, the Woman was obliged to let go and the bushy tailed Fox ran swiftly towards the Wild Wet Woods.

'We are enemies forever!' shouted the Woman after the Fox. 'Forevermore will Man and Sons of Man and Dog and Sons of Dog and Horse and Sons of Horse hunt you down and chase you until an unspeakable death shall befall Fox and Sons of Fox . . . at least up until the Labour Government's Hunting Act of 2004 . . . a long way off mind you.'

Fox stopped by the edge of the Wild Wet Windy Woods and dropping the Hen for a moment, screamed back. 'So be it, henceforth shall Fox and Son of Fox kill not just the one to sate our hunger, but ALL that we are able to kill that live in the light of your cave . . . and the Hunting Act of 2004 won't make one jot of difference . . . hah . . . ner ner ne ner ner!'

And thus it was and so it has been ever since Oh Best Beloved. Do you see?



FROM AN ILLUSTRATION BY G.L. STAMPA FOR "THE GREAT PLAY HUNT"
(*THY SERVANT A DOG* told by BOOTS, edited by
RUDYARD KIPLING, 1930)

ON KIPLING'S AMBIVALENCE TOWARDS WAR IN "MARY POSTGATE"

By JAMIE PARIS

[Jamie Paris is an MA candidate at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan. His thesis, entitled "Kipling and Custodial Masculinity", deals with men who take responsibility for ensuring the human flourishing of others. In the autumn of 2008 Mr Paris will begin his Doctorate in English at the University of British Columbia.

He tells me that this paper has been improved by the guidance and support of Dr. Susan Johnston. – *Ed.*]

Rudyard Kipling has a striking ambivalence towards war that is clearest in his short stories "The Drums of the Fore and Aft" and "Mary Postgate". These stories refer to different conflicts. The former is about an Imperial skirmish and the latter is about the onset of World War One. Also, these stories refer to different places of conflict. The former occurs away in the colonies and the latter occurs at home in the domestic sphere. Yet, both of these war stories are critical of the lack of British preparation for battle, sorrowful for the unnecessary loss of life in war, but are not critical of the need for the war or the causes of the war.

Because Kipling believed that England's Imperial goals were just, even when the English conduct during these conflicts was not always just, Kipling was not critical of the need for these conflicts, the ideological reasons for fighting these wars or the causes of these wars. As Orwell argued, Kipling was a Conservative who "identified himself with the ruling power and not with the opposition" (Orwell xxvii), a political trait that, although it places him on the wrong side of history, had "the advantage of giving Kipling a certain grip on reality. The ruling power is always faced with the question, 'In such and such circumstances, what would you do?', whereas the opposition is not obligated to take responsibility or make any real decisions" (xxvii). As Kipling's biographer, David Gilmour, argues

Kipling lived the first half of his life in the reign of Queen Victoria. He was a child of her Empire – and of imperial self-confidence. As a young man in India, he neither questioned British rule nor suspected its impermanence. While he recognized its absurdities – and mocked them in his work – he became convinced that it was a force for good, a conviction that grew after he left the Subcontinent at the age of 23 and travelled to other territories of the Empire. He incarnated the Victorian sense of imperial mission and preached its merits to an audience he found exasperatingly inattentive, (x)¹

Kipling is what Isobel Armstrong calls a conservative poet. Armstrong reads the Victorian period as a time of great change and sees two major groups of poets: progressives and conservatives. Armstrong argues that "[a]s cultural and intellectual change became progressively more apparent, two traditions of poetry developed, one exploring various strategies for democratic, radical writing, the other developing in different forms, a conservative poetry" (ix). Kipling is a conservative in the way that Armstrong uses the term, but he is also a vocal critic of the means the British used to pursue their interests. Kipling did agree with what German philosopher of war Carl von Clausewitz in *On War* calls "the political object" of the wars even if he did not agree with the means used to attain these political ends.³

Although the political ends of the imperial skirmishes are often hard to discern in Kipling, they tend to come out of a concern for the well-being of the colonial subject. In saying that Kipling is concerned with the well-being of the Indian subject, I do not want to imply that he is not a culturalist. The rightful dominance of English culture is never in doubt for Kipling, nor are the duties and obligations implied by having a dominant culture, so he does not question the right of the English to rule and their duty to civilise. As Said argues, Kipling did not understand that India was an "unhappy subservient to imperialism" (23). Said goes on to argue that, for Kipling,

it was India's best destiny to be ruled by England. The trouble is that if one reads Kipling not simply as an 'imperial minstrel' (which he wasn't) but as someone who had read Frantz Fanon, met Gandhi, absorbed their lessons, but had remained stubbornly unconvinced by both, then one seriously distorts the defining context in which Kipling wrote, and which he refines, elaborates, illuminates. There *were* no appreciable deterrents to the imperialist worldview held by Kipling. (23-24).

If nothing else, Said, as a foundational post-colonial critic, reminds us to avoid anachronistic criticisms of Kipling that assume he knew the theoretical problems we are now having with colonialism, understood them, and decided to follow through on the "White Man's Burden" after all. The defining context of Kipling's imperial writing was made clear in a letter to Margaret Burne-Jones on 28 November 1885, where Kipling assures his beloved "Wop of Albion" that the English do, in fact, care about the welfare of the natives (96). Kipling declares that

If you had met some of the men I know you would cross out the sentence [asking if the English cared for the welfare of the natives]

and weep. What else are we working in the country for. For what else do the best men of the Commission die from overwork, and disease, if not to keep the people alive in the first place and healthy in the second. We spend our best men on the country like water and if ever a foreign country was made better through "the blood of martyrs" India is that country. I couldn't now tell you what the men one knows are doing but you can read for yourself if you will how Englishmen have laboured and died for the peoples of the country. . . . Yes the English in India do do a little for the benefit of the natives and small thanks they get. (98)

Kipling has a passionate attachment for India, her people, and the men who are fighting for her as thankless martyrs. The ends of the colonial project, for Kipling, were the fulfilling of an obligation to serve and protect the peoples of the new world.

The ambivalence towards war appears in Kipling's work because of the tension of agreeing with the ends of a conflict while providing a critique of the means used to attain the ends. This essay will concentrate on the domestic war story "Mary Postgate" as an example of the ways that Kipling, as a conservative poet, was critiquing the British attitude towards the realities of Empire and war. "Postgate" both shows the cost of war within England's borders and presents an ambivalent attitude towards the effects of war on its eponymous protagonist. In this story, "there came a war which, unlike all wars that Mary could remember, did not stay decently outside England and in the newspapers, but intruded on the lives of people whom she knew" (614). The reader is asked to follow the slow process of Mary learning to hate the Germans, to the point where she refuses to aid what may be a German soldier who is badly injured in her yard after watching the brutal death of a small girl that he may have caused. In this essay, what I want to know is how Kipling's ambivalence towards matters of war in "Postgate" functions.

I am going to analyse this story in terms of the function of Mary's ambivalence because I want to avoid the error that Orwell identified of using Kipling as a by-word (xvii). For example, Norman Page, a Kipling apologist, refers to Kipling as someone who, "rather than idealizing or celebrating the fact that Victoria ruled a large proportion of the Earth's surface, compels us to confront the human cost [of war] in specific, dramatic and disturbing detail" (168). In contrast, Granville Flicks, someone who uses Kipling as a by-word for the evils of pro-war poets, sees Kipling as the primary example of the pro-war writers (201). Tricia Lootens also recognizes the ambiguity in Kipling's work, but sees Kipling as a pro-war poet who dreamed "of a British warrior-

empire" (237). Armstrong is critical of Kipling's popularity and thinks of him as a "cunning demotic [populist]" (481) linking her critical approach to the Kipling-as-propagandist critics and making and highlighting that her central criticism of his work is that he does not provide a radical critique of the war. For Armstrong, Kipling's criticism of the British war effort is less important than the fact that he "celebrates the resilience of the common soldier" in works like the *Barrack-Room Ballads* (481). Her criticism of Kipling is similar to a Marxist criticism of the benevolent factory owner who actually takes care of his workers and by doing so prolongs the reign of industrial-capitalist states. The factory owner is really serving his own best interest while only ostensibly worrying about the interest of the people who work for him. The problem with this line of thought is that some factory owners may do this but we do not know that they all do. For Armstrong, Kipling's portrait of soldiers coping with the conditions they were placed in while serving the Empire diverts energy away from the "real" issue of the English government using working class citizens as soldiers engaged in conflicts they may not fully understand. The Kipling-as-propagandist critics tend to recognize the ambiguity in his works, but they resolve it either by relating it to his remorse over his son's death, as Tracy Bilsing does, or by seeing the ambiguity in a story like "Postgate" as an example of Kipling's interest in the consequences of atrocity propaganda for domestic populations, in the way that Gordon Williams does (271). The problem with *ad hominum* approaches to Kipling is that they do not explain the function ambivalence serves in Kipling's text because they try to explain its cause.

By thinking about Kipling's work as a critique of Empire, I am attempting to recover his works from critics who seem to only talk about his writings as a means to an end. Kipling's work, while not radical, was important as a clear, consistent, critique. A critique of war can be productive even if it is not radical. Kipling scholars have missed the benefits of Kipling's conservative critique of Empire because they have not looked at what he is doing but at what they would have liked him to do.

POSTGATE AND AMBIVALENCE

In looking at recent criticism of "Mary Postgate," Williams' reading allows us to see that the central anxiety of the work is the effect of war on the domestic front. However, what it does not deal with are the complexities of gender roles in domestic wars. As such, it misses a good deal of the function of the critique of war on the domestic front. As Williams argues, Mary, at the time she encounters Dr. Hennis and before she encounters what may be a German soldier,

has seen Edna's body ripped to pieces in what is declared an accident, but which she construes to be a German bombing outrage. Dr. Hennis explains it as the result of the father's badly rotted stable collapsing. But is he fulfilling his role as special constable with scrupulous objectivity, or lying in an attempt to spare the woman's feelings? Uncertainties and ambiguities remain. (273)

This reading, while highlighting the ambiguity of the facts of Edna's death, does not take into account the complex gender relations that occur when a war moves into the domestic space. As Kipling's Tommy narrator reminds us in "The Young British Soldier",

When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,
And the women come out to cut up what remains,
Jest roll on your rifle and blow out your brains
An' go to your Gawd like a soldier.

(Kipling *Rudyard Kipling's Verse* 416-418).

Part of the uncertainty of Mary's reaction is that she is learning to hate and it is by hating that she will take up "her work" in the story ("Mary Postgate" 628).

The work Mary must do is analogous to the work done by the Afghan women because both groups are women performing their rights within the Law as they see it.³ According to Kipling's narrator of *The Jungle Book*, "The Law of the Jungle . . . never orders anything without a reason" and within this text, all of these reasons have to do with the maintenance of social order and practices. For example, when mother wolf claims Mowgli as hers, she does so based on the rights of the mother within the Law of the Jungle (Kipling, *The Jungle Book* 5-10). Within Kipling's work, a character's rights within the Law are often based on their caste, class, race, gender or religion. The fact that the women of Afghanistan are going to "cut up what remains" is not seen, in this poem, as morally indefensible because the act arises within the practices of a war. What would be acceptable within one given set of practices and institutions, like a war, would not be acceptable in another in Kipling's oeuvre.

In fact, for Kipling, the women of Afghanistan are women within the Law and are part of the moral "We" referred to in "We and They". In this poem, as in the *Jungle Books*, the line between who is part of the "We" and who is part of the "They" is seen in terms of moral laws, and not in terms of customs. That "We eat kitcheny food. / We have doors that latch" (25-26) and that "They drink milk or blood, / Under an open thatch" (27-28) is a surface or cultural difference in the poem. The

more pressing difference between people in Kipling's work is between moral people and immoral people.⁴ The poem ends by suggesting that

All good people agree,
And all good people say,
All nice people, like Us, are We
And everyone else is They:
But if you cross over the sea,
Instead of over the way,
You may end by (think of it!) looking on We
As only a sort of They!

(Kipling *Rudyard Kipling's Verse* 763-64).

The women of Afghanistan, even though they undertake an action that is distasteful, are still part of the "All nice people" and as such are still people within the Law and part of the We. Mary, through learning to hate, is learning to take up her work as a woman within the Law in a specific historical and social situation. By allowing the soldier to die she is performing a function that is "natural" but distasteful for women to perform during domestic invasions.

It is helpful, in tracing how the function of the ambiguity in this story highlights the different gender roles in war to think of Dr. Hennis as a sportsman and Mary as a woman who has to move from the subject position of being a *mother*, an act she symbolically performs with the burning of Wynn's things, to the subject position of being a woman of the war within the Law. Although Mary is not technically Wynn's biological *mother* but his adoptive mother, this does not imply that the bonds of motherhood between child and adopted mother are not important. In fact, Mary is not even Wynn's guardian, a position Miss Fowler occupies, but Mary did see to his education and "grieved or rejoiced over half-term reports" (614). If we take Mother Wolf, from *The Jungle Book*, as an example of motherhood in Kipling, we can see that Mother Wolf feels an attachment both to her biological children and to her adoptive child, Mowgli. In this way, motherhood exists in the performative act of claiming the child as your own when coupled with the actions of performing the rights and duties implied by taking on that relationship to another person in Kipling's work. It is possible to have biological mothers and fathers who do not take on these responsibilities to the child, and to have adoptive parents who do. Moreover, it is possible to have "mothers" who do not take on the performative act of claiming the child as their own, but still perform the tasks of being a mother. Being a mother is not a matter of biology – it is a matter of performing your duties to another person who you take on as your child.

In referring to Mary as Wynn's *mother*, I am arguing that she has taken up the responsibilities of being a mother to Wynn, and not that she has occupied the subject position of guardian or biological mother.

Through the burning of Wynn's childhood possessions, Mary is no longer Wynn's *mother*, insofar as she has discarded the duties and obligations of that subject position, but a woman of the Nation and her energy and attention move from taking care of and mourning Wynn to being a woman who is of the war. As military historian Michael Howard argues, during the 19th century, Europeans stopped seeing the army as a group of professional men, and they began to see the act of war as something the Nation engaged in and that all the members of the Nation had a role in fighting. As Howard argues, the technological, administrative, and ideological changes of the 19th century "made possible something which only a very clear-sighted prophet had foreseen might be necessary and even fewer had believed would be possible: the total mobilization of all the resources of society for a prolonged struggle lasting for years" (127). While Howard is referring explicitly to things like industrial resources, economic, and administrative resources of the Nation (including the rising economic production of women as workers during the war), in this story the total mobilization of resources is also the special task of women's hatred and cruelty towards invading soldiers.

For Mary, part of accepting her "work" is learning to trust her own experience at a time of war instead of trusting the reports of others, especially Dr. Hennis, who exists as a representative of the way that English men can deny the realities of war by assuming that both sides will play by the rules. When Dr. Hennis comes to her to tell her about the accident, he says that "I wanted to tell you that the accident at the 'Royal Oak' was due to Gerritt's stable tumbling down. It's been dangerous for a long time. It ought to have been condemned" (Kipling, "Postgate" 624). In Dr. Hennis' account, the human cost of war is muted. He does not talk about the body of the nine-year-old child being "ripped and shredded" (623) or "a child's shriek dying into a wail" (622) because he is more concerned with the facts of the war than with the human effects of an act of war. Moreover, in rebuttal to Williams, when we think of how protection works in this story, it is the women who feel a need to protect Miss Fowler from knowing about the little girl's death because "Her heart is so irritable in this weather" (623), and not men who take up the position of protecting women. Dr. Hennis was present when it was decided that they should not tell Miss Fowler, and he "looked on her admiringly as he packed up his bag" (632), so it does not make sense that he would feel a need to protect a woman from the truth after he had just admired how strong she had been in the face of

adversity. Instead of protecting women, he is looking for facts to protect himself.

Where Dr. Hennis can rationalize the things that are going on around him, Mary is in the position described in Kipling's poem "The Beginnings" of slowly coming to hate because of what she is seeing around her. As the speaker of the poem points out, the hate "was not preached to the crowd, / It was not taught by the state. / No man spoke it aloud, / When the English began to hate." (*Verse 673*) This poem is not an incitement to hate, but a reflection of what Kipling saw as the British being under-prepared for the domestic realities of war. Mary did not need propaganda to hate the Germans in the same way that some women do not need inducement to see babies as cute or in the same way that some men do not need to be told to work to raise a family: we do these things because it is natural to do them even if how we do them is a product of our culture. Even in the absence of propaganda, Mary would have come to hate the Germans because they had some responsibility for the death of her *son* and because of the horror of the act that she thinks they committed. If we want to say that propaganda can cause emotions, we would also have to be able to say that it could have caused Mary to love the Germans. But could she have, if we consider what she had seen? The feelings produced by the actions of an invading army will always have more of an impact than what is said about the army.

The hate Mary has for the Germans is a personal realization of the wrongness of the other side that is necessary for the domestic resolve needed to win a war. When Mary questions Dr. Hennis about the explosion, he gives the rather unsatisfactory response that "[y]ou might have been misled by the beams snapping. I've been looking at 'em. They were dry-rotted through and through. Of course, as they broke, they would make a noise just like a gun." (624) Although Mary says "yes" politely to this, her yes is punctuated by a question mark, implying that the reply was somehow not satisfactory for her. There is something almost too reasonable about Dr. Hennis' response to the catastrophic events – his response seems to deny the human side of the tragic event so that it can privilege a rational explanation over the emotional effect of the girl's death. He recognizes that Mary is unsatisfied with his response by saying "[p]oor little Edna was playing underneath it" . . . and that and the tiles cut her to pieces, you see?" (624) The function of the phrase "you see" in this case is that Dr. Hennis is asking Mary if she will go along with the story, and not if she understands the story. Dr. Hennis could not be as sure about what happened and he is offering a noble lie, in the Platonic sense of the term, to Mary. After all, if the death of the girl was caused by someone's error, it would

have been fair play and not an atrocious act committed by an invading army. As someone who needs to see his enemy as basically just, he would prefer to see the Germans as a people within the Law who will be engaged in what is referred to in the *Jungle Books* as "good hunting". By "good hunting," I am referring to the implicit concept in Kipling's work where considerate violence can exist within the rules. As an illustration, over-hunting game would not be good hunting, where killing for food would be.

Dr. Hennis represents an archetype of the kind of character who would have exasperated Kipling by his unwillingness to see the evil of the invading army by assuming that they were good hunters. Thus, when Mary replies to Dr. Hennis "I saw it" . . . "I heard it too" (624) she is saying something like "no, I do not see and I am not willing to go along with your story because it rationalizes the unforgivable loss of a little girl's life." Thus, we see the change in Dr. Hennis' tone (624) and his pleading with her not to say anything that might "stir up people unless—" (624). The "unless—" that is not spoken is an "unless your theory of events proves to be true". With this there is an unspoken acknowledgment that Dr. Hennis is not as sure about the events as he would like to be but is not willing to deal with the idea that the British might not be fighting a war against another people within the Law because he is unprepared to fight against bad sports. His story, although it is a good theory and answers all of the major questions in a sportsman-like way, is not compelling because it does not take into account the possibility that the Germans would have been willing to kill the little girl.

Even with these problems of the Dr. Hennis account of events, Mary is willing to go along with his story and suppress her feelings about the girl's death until Miss Fowler "told her that a couple of aeroplanes had passed half an hour ago" (624). Mary does not trust the report of a man but does trust the report of another woman. This minor moment of her willingness to reject a man's theory for the anecdotal evidence given by a woman is a reflection of her own rejection of the male soldier's cries for help based on her own intuition. Mary does not react strongly to this new bit of evidence, but this can be explained by her previous assertion that they ought not to tell Miss Fowler about Edna. Instead, she engages in woman's work by going down to the garden with the paraffin to finish the burning of her *son's* belongings.

During the burning, the narrator refers to the place of burning as a sanctuary, and to the noise that cannot be identified as a "profaning" of the sanctuary. The soldier, whoever he is, did not intend to profane the sacred place. In matters of profaning the sacred, intention to act is not a prerequisite for guilt: the soldier's presence is a profaning of the

sacred and he must be punished for it. As the fire went up and the possessions of her *son* were burned, she was enjoying a sublime moment of mourning and thought "[h]ow Wynn would have loved this!" (625). Her statement of elation seems to mask the fundamental inexpressibility of the combination of dealing with her *son's* death and the association of the death of the little girl.

For Mary, ordinary life has ceased to exist. She feels a pain that she cannot express, in part, because the way that war had been discussed in England before the invasion did not prepare her for her "work" during the invasion. The push within English thought to rationalize everything, including pain and death, does not prepare a woman to deal with the emotional trauma of seeing friends and neighbours die in a war. One of the ways that we deal with what we cannot express is through the use of the sacred. We cannot express the pain of the death of a loved one, so we have a funeral to use the healing powers of a sacred space at times of inexpressible pain. In times of war, when one trauma is piled onto another, the need for sacred spaces is far greater and the sin of profaning them is far worse. In this case, the sin is not against "God" but against "the Law."

It is the accumulation of forces caused by the inexpressible pain that necessitates Mary's lashing out at the pilot in the same way that the previously mentioned Afghan women must lash out at the men who have been wounded on the battle field: it is their right as women who are dealing with a pain that cannot be expressed and has no other outlet.⁵ The officer in the tree is clearly in pain and for a moment Mary thinks that it might not be the pain of an Other, a They, but of someone who is like Wynn (625). We put a lot of work into trying to understand the pain of someone who is like us, but we do not put the same work into trying to understand and have empathy for the pain of someone who is foreign to us. The narrator of "Postgate" tells the reader that the soldier in the tree was dressed

in a uniform something like Wynn's, with a flap buttoned across the chest. For an instant, she had some idea that it might be one of the young flying men she had men at the funeral. But, their heads were dark and glossy. This man's was as pale as a baby's, and so closely cropped that she could see the disgusting pinky skin beneath. (625)

He is different from the soldiers she knows in appearance, but it is when he addresses her in broken English that she loses any will to aid him or to be empathetic with his pain. He calls out to her as " 'Laty! Laty! Laty! " and we are told that "[t]here was no doubt as to his nationality" (626). Yet, the lack of doubt begs two questions: who had

no doubt about his nationality and what is his nationality? At this point, the soldier could be French or German, one an ally and part of the "We" and the other an enemy and part of the "They".

As to the first question, the fact that the soldier is profaning this sacred place and doing so in broken English allows Mary to characterize him as a "bloody pagan" (627). Moreover, if this was, as Tracy Bilsing argues, a work where "Kipling was [using] the image of the militant woman in his propagandizing characterization of Mary Postgate as an example of what the civilian must do in the advent of war" (Bilsing 79), you would think that Kipling would have been clear about the nationality of the soldier in the tree, as he would not be suggesting, to the militant woman his propaganda is apparently creating, that she should kill allies who are wounded. If we are trying to understand what a woman's work is in this story, it is important that we do not know the nationality of the soldier, and that, the justness or injustice of Mary's action does not depend on who the soldier is, but on the things he did. This work is not propaganda, in Bilsing's sense of the work as a "devious and [manipulative] . . . manufactured lie" (74), nor is it propaganda in the strongly put definition of propaganda as "the presentation of information in an emotionally appealing manner for a purpose that is not candidly announced and in support of a view we would probably debate" (cited in Bilsing 96), but an immanent critique of war and the ways that the British were unprepared for the realities of domestic national war.⁶

Mary is willing to see the soldier as an ally, even if he is not English, and she knows from Wynn that it is "possible for people to fall out of aeroplanes" (626). Yet, the tipping point for Mary is that

. . . she could see a pistol case at his belt—and Mary loathed pistols. Months ago, after reading certain Belgian reports together, she and Miss Fowler had had dealings with one—a huge revolver with flat-nosed bullets, which latter, Wynn said, were forbidden by the rules of war to be used against civilised enemies. (626)

The implication is not that the pilot has an illegal weapon, but that, through no fault of his own, he has brought a weapon into a sacred place. Considering that Mary already cannot cry over the death of her *son* because "[i]t only makes me angry with the Germans" (619) and considering how willing she and Nurse Eden were to see the airplane that fell as belonging to the "filthy pigs" (623), we can see that the process of dehumanizing the Germans was already well underway for her before she had decided that this pilot was not like her Wynn but an Other whose pain she is unwilling to understand because the Other is now unclean and uncivilized.

Thus, when the soldier cries out for "Le médecin!", Mary either does not know that he is speaking French, assumes that he is speaking French just to get what he wants and not because it is his language, or she does not see his speaking French as proof that he is like the "We". Thus, she replies to him in German, the language of the uncivilized enemy—"Nein! . . . Ich haben der todt Kinder gesehn." (627). As the head continued to groan for a doctor, Mary continued the process of Othering the suffering soldier in her yard by saying " 'Stop that! . . . Stop that, you bloody pagan!'" (627). By calling the soldier a pagan she is dehumanizing him – he is no longer civilized and as such he is the proper target of the weapon.

The Germans, in this way, are symbolically linked to the Bandar-Log of *The Jungle Book*. The Bandar-Log are "the people without a Law—the eaters of everything" (36) in the jungle. We are told in *The Jungle Book* that "[t]hey are very many, evil, dirty, shameless" (37). Moreover, they are clearly the Other of the jungle and Baloo does not even teach Mowgli their talk. Baloo tells Mowgli that

I have taught thee all the Law of the Jungle for all the peoples of the Jungle—except the Monkey-Folk who live in the trees. They have no law. They are outcasts. They have no speech of their own, but use the stolen words which they overhear when they listen, and peep, and wait up above in the branches. Their way is not our way.' (37)

In the terms of this essay, the Bandar-Log are profane and not part of the "We".

Moreover, as people without the Law, the Bandar-Log's actions cannot be understood within the logic of the Law. I do not see this as a vilification of the Germans, as that would imply that Kipling had a knowledge of the Germans as sportsmen and was speaking of them as a people without the Law to incite hate in the British. Instead, I think that Kipling's directedness is towards what he perceives to be the truth, just as Mary's directedness is.⁷ To vilify something, I would have to know it was good and make a pragmatic choice to describe it as evil. However, if I think someone is evil and I describe them as such, I am not vilifying them but describing them. It may be that both Kipling and Mary are wrong, but there is a world of difference between speech acts that are wrong but are trying to describe the truth and speech acts that are wrong and are trying to intentionally misrepresent the truth.

That the foreign pilot does not speak her language, and that he appears to jump between languages, which implies he does not have a language, and that he brings a pistol into a sacred space, each

contributes towards Mary's implicating him as the pilot who killed the little girl. Or, if he is not responsible for the actual act of killing the girl, he becomes a scapegoat for the guilt of the pilot who killed a little girl by going outside the law.

As a woman, Mary "had seen death more than once" (627) and had no trouble watching "It" die. She does not panic when "It" is in the tree, but waits for "It" to die, worried only that "[i]f It did not die before [tea time], she would be soaked and would have to change." (628) Through calling the soldier "It" instead of "him" Mary has both de-gendered the soldier, making him someone who is not a *son* of someone but something else, and she has placed him beyond the pale. It is this othering that allows her to do her work in the story.

In the death sequence, Kipling is contrasting the "advanced views" of "woman's work in the world" (628) characterized by social phenomena like the women's suffragette movement with this more primal task. Mary embraces the work as hers. We are told that

[t]his . . . was *her* work—work which no man, least of all Dr. Hennis, would ever have done. A man, at such a crisis, would be what Wynn called a 'sportsman'; would leave everything to fetch help, and would certainly bring It into the house. Now a woman's business was to make a happy home for—for a husband and children. Failing these—it was not a thing one should allow one's mind to dwell upon—but——(628)

Her work is not just the burning of Wynn's things; it is also to watch the slow death of the soldier without going for aid, without rationalizing that the soldier deserved aid, and to allow him to have his painful death for profaning her sacred space. The poem "We and They" begins with the family of "Father, Mother, and Me," (11) with the Me of this sentence being the child. Kipling is articulating the fundamental task of a woman in the war: when there is not a war, it is the task of a woman to build families but when her space is invaded, it is her right and duty to punish those who would dare profane her space.

Kipling is speaking to a primal duty under the Law for women in a way that is similar to Greek tragic poets attempts to articulate truths about human nature. For example, in Sophocles' *Antigone*, when the title character is compelled to bury her brother she does not follow customs but acts according to the Law because she feels that it is her duty. In a post-feminist age, it might not be popular to think that women have work that they ought to do at times of war, just as it may not be comfortable to read a Greek tragedy about a woman who thought that it was her duty as a sister to bury her brother. Yet there is

something compelling about the idea that these women have tasks to do that they could perform better than men because they were women in these three disparate societies.⁸

The problem with Kipling's depiction of woman's wartime tasks might not only be that it is hard for people with modern sensibilities to agree that the task of women is the inhumane treatment of the enemy soldier, but the speculative possibility that Mary has an orgasm while waiting for him to die. Orwell reminds us that there is something ugly about Kipling's writing in general and this would be a time when Kipling shows the underside of the realities of war; yet, that Mary's taking up the task of woman has sexual implications is plausible. As war historian Paul Fussell argues, there is something sexual about war and the metaphors used to describe the activities of war lets us see this. He notes that we use term like assault, impact, thrust, and penetration when describing military attacks (Fussell 270). Moreover, he argues that "[w]ar and sexuality are linked in more literal ways as well. That a successful campaign promises rape as well as looting has been understood for the beginning" (270).⁹ It is the right of the women to kill the men found injured on the soil, in part, because the women know that, if those men had won the day, many of the women would have been raped. Thus, as we have Mary leaning on a hot poker and ceasing to think while she

gave herself up to feel. Her long pleasure was broken by a sound that she had waited for in agony several times during her life. She leaned forward and listened, smiling. There could be no mistake. She closed her eyes and drank it in. Once it ceased abruptly. ("Postgate" 628).

The image is disturbing and it speaks to the lack of mental preparation women in London had for the war and its impact on their lives. This story is more of a warning story than a propaganda story, and its ambiguity about war has more to do with the difficulties of the realities of the war for women than it has to do with Kipling's support for warfare.

READING WAR JUSTLY

It is always tempting to read against Kipling because he is a by-word for so many things we do not like about the Victorian era and Empire. Moreover, he is a by-word for these things because he believed in them to the best of our knowledge. As Gilmour tells us, "Kipling's great sorrow, a friend believed, was that his poor eyesight prevented him from joining the Army." (42) Kipling wanted to fight because he believed in

Empire and he is hard to read because he is not a purely instrumental thinker: for Kipling, Empire was an end in itself.

Part of the hermeneutic task of reading a thinker who sees the world differently in an ethical way is to try to understand the Other first and to read against the text only after struggling to understand. I have given the kind of reading I have of "Mary Postgate" because I thought I would learn more by struggling to understand the function of ambivalence towards war than I would have by reading against the text. Even if I am part of a generation of academics who are jaded I still want to be open to new ideas, especially ones that, at a gut level, I find unsettling, like the idea that women might have a task to do under the Law in domestic wars. In this way, I had to develop an ambivalence towards Kipling's depictions of war before I could read the function of ambivalence in Kipling's writings about war.

In closing, in this reading I have been able to make a contribution to Kipling criticism that challenges the emergent hegemonic critical reception of his work. This reading has shifted away from "reading against the text" and has tried to understand what Kipling was trying to do in his work by dealing with the function of ambivalence towards war in the short story "Mary Postgate". At stake in this reversal is a question of how problematic authors like Kipling ought to be read. I have read Kipling as an important commentator on the lack of English preparation for war, and as someone who has something to say about women's duties within a domestic war. This is not to say that Kipling's view is not problematic, and I have been critical of him at times. It is to say that we have to be careful when making an anachronistic critical reading of Kipling not to miss what he is doing positively in order to privilege what he is either not doing or cannot do. Kipling studies, and to a lesser extent Conrad studies, need this reversal of polarities if it wants to avoid being a study about the study of these authors and wants to continue being a study of these authors. My work is a first step towards this necessary reversal of polarities and towards a just reading of Kipling. In my understanding of the concept of a "just reading," I am indebted to Sharon Marcus' methodological statement that her book would "attend to what texts make manifest on their surface" as opposed to reading "what texts do not or cannot say".(3) In this Wittgensteinian approach to textual criticism, I have tried to avoid privileging theory over the text while still giving a theoretically rich reading of Kipling that takes into account the context of the text and my reception of the text. In doing so, my work has demonstrated through example that you can be theoretical without being critically anachronistic, and you can be theoretical without primarily reading against the text.

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NOTES

1. In some ways, Gilmour's reading of Kipling is analogous to Edward Said's argument that "Kipling could no more have questioned [the difference between white and Indian men], and the right of the white European to rule, than he would have argued with the Himalayas" (10). For Said and Gilmour, Kipling is a product of his time, and his political views are shaped by the political realities of his time. Kipling could not have given a radical critique of Empire because this critique was unthinkable for him. However, that does not imply that Kipling was not critical of the means used to sustain the Empire.
2. In Clausewitz's *On War*, it is possible to schismatise the political reasons for the war from the means by which the political objectives are carried out. In Kipling's writings, an analysis of the justness of the means of carrying out a political policy tends to begin by looking at how the soldiers are treated and used as means to an end.
3. The Law is an odd concept within Kipling. I have taken it to mean the superstructure of moral rules that supersede cultural differences or personal prejudices. It would be the sets of things that all "civilized" peoples agree with and try to act upon.
4. I want to be clear that the distinction is between moral and immoral people and not between civilized and uncivilized people. I can be civilized within a culture and still not be moral because I am not within the Law. Yet, I can be uncivilized within a culture but be moral because I am within the Law. As an illustration, when Shere Khan wants to eat Mowgli at the beginning of *The Jungle Book*, he is within the Law because he is technically allowed to kill one man every year according to the Old Law, but the way he goes about trying to kill Mowgli is uncivilized. For example, Father Wolf argues that Shere Khan has no right " 'to change his quarters without due warning. He will frighten every head of game within ten miles, and I—I have to kill for two, these days.' " (Kipling 3) Shere Khan is a moral atomist in a jungle community of moral holiest – he is more concerned with himself and his needs than the health of the community. For instance, when Father and Mother Wolf explain why they are keeping Mowgli, Shere Khan says " 'Ye choose and ye do not choose! What talk is this of choosing?' " (Kipling 7). While the wolves are willing to work within the Law to get what they want because doing so benefits everyone, Shere Khan wants

to work by the rule of "might makes right" except when working within the Law gets him what he wants. In *The Second Jungle Book*, for example, Shere Khan notes that he killed a man during a time of famine and drought " 'for choice—not for food' " (11) because of an old right he has under the Jungle Law. As a character, Shere Khan is immoral, within a culture and exists inside and outside the Law.

5. There is no clear evidence in the story that the pilot in Mary's back yard came from the plane that Miss Fowler heard.
6. If we read propaganda as this kind of speech act, it would seem that all political speech acts are a form of propaganda. In fact, would we not have to say that the "I have a Dream" speech of Martin Luther King would be propaganda by this standard? Clearly, even though this later definition of propaganda is more robust, a clearer definition of propaganda is needed that can distinguish between the kind of literature the Nazis and Americans produced during World War Two to glorify their efforts and the kind of speech acts Gandhi and King performed to aid their people.
7. By "directedness", I mean that his orientation and gaze are directed towards ascertaining the truth of the situation, and not towards other ends; in using this term, I am implying that our directedness determines how we see things. For example, if my directedness is towards gender relations in the story, I will tend to see the story in terms of gender relations.
8. I do not want to be taken as saying that biology is destiny for these women. Instead, I want to say that there are duties attached to the successful performance of a subject position within any society. As Butler argues in *Bodies that Matter*, "performativity is not a singular 'act', for it is always a reiteration of a norm or a set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires act like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition" (12). Unlike Butler, I do not want to say that these "norms" are arbitrary, but that they represent, at times, ethical duties that are attached to our subject positions and that we perform in accordance with the Law. For example, that the rich should donate to the poor is not just a "norm" needed to perform the subject position of being rich in a capitalist society, but an ethical duty that comes with occupying the subject position of being rich.
9. It is possible that we have misread the direction of war and sex metaphors such that war does not use sex metaphors, but that sex uses war metaphors. However, I think that the more plausible reading is that there is, at very least, a connection between the metaphors of war and the metaphors of sex.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

NEW MEMBERS

Prof Harish Trivedi (*Delhi, India*)
Qing Xie (*Shanghai, China*)
Dr T. Lockie (*London, SE1*)
Dr G. Schmigalle (*Karlsruhe, Germany*)
Mr E. Berthelsen (*Fano, Denmark*)
Mrs M. Muir (*Richmond, Surrey*)
Mr C.T.F. Short (*Bristol, Somerset*)
Mr P. Cook, B.A. (*Bristol, Somerset*)
Prof B. Livesley (*Oxford, Oxfordshire*)
Mrs H. Craig, L.R.A.M. (*Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire*)
Mr R.V. Tanner (*Highworth, Wiltshire*)
Mr R. Hollinghurst & Mrs V. Hollinghurst-Daniel (*Richmond, Surrey*)
Mr W. Morgan (*Virginia, U.S.A.*)
Ms K. Matsumoto (*Tokyo, Japan*)

STANDING ORDERS

Members are asked to review their standing order mandates and check against this year's new rates, which have been published in recent editions of the *Kipling Journal* and can be found on the back cover of this issue.

NEW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Members are reminded of the new membership secretary;

Mr John Lambert
31 Brookside
Billericay
Essex
CM11 1DT
United Kingdom

e-mail: john.lambertl@btinternet.com

John Lambert, Membership Secretary

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"THE ABSENT-MINDED BEGGAR'S APOLOGY"

From: Mr Shamus O.D. Wade, 37 Davis Road, Acton, London W3 7SE.

Dear Sir,

In a Letter to you which was printed in the March 2003 *Journal* (No.305, p.64), I asked if anyone knew the full version of "The Absent-Minded Beggar's Reply" written in 1900 by Colour-Sergeant J. Sheldon Redding of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and also if anyone knew anything about him.

To my surprise and delight I was contacted earlier this year by Malcolm Redding, the grandson of Colour-Sergeant Redding, who had come across my letter on the internet. The poem is actually titled "The Absent-Minded Beggar's Apology" and Mr Redding sent me a copy of the complete poem which runs to thirteen stanzas. He also told me that he possessed all thirty-five of his grandfather's poems, handwritten in an Army Exercise Book, as well as his Boer War Medals.

Mr Redding has created a family history website with a page devoted to his grandfather which can be accessed at:

http://www.reddings.org.uk/page_Redding%20J%20Sheldon.html

Yours sincerely
SHAMUS O.D. WADE

P.S. For those like me, who do not understand websites or the internet, I will gladly send all thirteen stanzas in a good old-fashioned envelope.

DID PYECROFT HAVE A SOUTH AFRICAN LADY-FRIEND?

From: Cdr A.J.W. Wilson RN, Jolyon, Salthill Road, Fishbourne, Chichester PO19 3PY

Dear Sir,

I pose this question as a result of some recent work on the story "Steam Tactics" for the New Readers' Guide (NRG).

Reggie Harbord's printed *Readers' Guide* of the 1960s contains the text of an Introductory Letter which appeared in the *Windsor Magazine* in December 1902, as a preface to "Steam Tactics". This marked Petty Officer Emanuel Pyecroft's introduction to Kipling's readers because, although the first four tales appear in chronological order in *Traffics and Discoveries* (published in October 1904), "Steam Tactics", the third in the series, was the first to appear.

The Introductory Letter (the full text of which will appear in the NRG) was not included with the tales in *Traffics and Discoveries*, presumably because Kipling thought that the preamble to "The Bonds of Discipline" was a sufficient introduction to Pyecroft. The letter is headed:

To P.O. Emanuel Pyecroft

Cape Station: H.M.S. *Postulant*.

and starts: 'This should reach you about the time you turn over to the *Hierophant* at Zanzibar.'

It will be recalled that Pyecroft was serving in the *Postulant* at the time he revealed to the Kipling-narrator the events that had occurred in H.M.S. *Archimandrite*, on her way to a commission on the Cape station (its full name was 'Cape of Good Hope and West Africa station'). The telling of the tale in Mr. Wessel's Devonport pub occurred about three years after the events in the *Archimandrite*. (Pyecroft had 'transferred to the *Postulant* six months back' [p.41, Macmillan standard editions], presumably at the end of a two-to-three year commission in the *Archimandrite*).

We learn from the Introductory Letter that Pyecroft is in the course of serving another commission on the Cape station 'back-to-back'. (It could be that the occasion which brought Pyecroft within Kipling's orbit for the first time – "I'm in charge o' the cutter. Our wardroom is dinin' ashore *en masse*." was a farewell dinner prior to sailing for the Cape).

It appears that the crew of the *Postulant* is about to turn over to the *Hierophant* at Zanzibar. This was a not infrequent practice in the late Victorian era. Rather than bring a ship 6,000 miles or so home to recommission her with a new crew, the new crew would take an elderly ship out of reserve, steam her out to some convenient port on their new station and there turn over to the ship to be recommissioned, whose former crew would then steam the reserve ship back to England, where she would relapse into reserve.

Why Zanzibar? Zanzibar was the northern limit of the Cape station on the east coast of Africa, and the *Hierophant* could have come up from the Cape, 'on her lawful occasions' to meet the *Postulant*, which would have come out via the Suez canal and Aden. The only problem is that, at the start of Mrs. Bathurst, it is apparent that the *Hierophant* has just come from England, with Pyecroft and Vickery in her (I'd never come across him till I come out in the *Hierophant* just now. . . 'E spoke to me once or twice about Auckland and Mrs. B. on the voyage out'). The only circumstances to fit the 'facts' are that Pyecroft has done two successive commissions in the *Hierophant* on the Cape station. After going out in the *Postulant*, he did a full commission in *Hierophant*, brought her back to England where she was refitted and then sent out again to the Cape. (Having recommissioned once 'on station', she would probably be brought back next time to do a more thorough refit than the dockyard at Simon's Town could undertake).

Thus, Pyecroft has done three successive commissions on the Cape station. It is this circumstance which is unusual. At that time, naval ratings went from ship to ship with a minimum of leave in between, and

very few courses in the specialist schools. Drafting (the allocation of men to ships) was in the hands of the Drafting Commander in each of the General Depots in the three home ports, assisted by one or two Masters-at-Arms (senior Chief Petty Officers) and a few clerks. There was no set policy not to send men back to the same station, but the odds on its happening were long (men with families would hope for a commission at home, where there would be opportunities to see their families, and 'draftie' would try to alternate foreign commissions with 'home' ones).

But, it was possible to 'bend' the odds a bit. A couple of judicious half-crowns slipped into the right palm could achieve the desired draft. Had Pyecroft done something like this? If so, what was the attraction of South Africa? Did he have a lady-friend in Simon's Town? We shall never know.

Yours faithfully
ALASTAIR WILSON

"THE APPEAL"

From: Dr Philip Holberton, 1645 Hickeys Creek Road, Willawarrin, NSW 2440,

Dear Sir,

Introducing his article "The Tragedy of Rudyard Kipling" in the September *Journal* (No.283), Fred Lerner quotes Kipling's "The Appeal", and worries that he has disregarded Kipling's wishes by reading his published letters.

The first verse has the lines:

*LET ME LIE QUIET IN THAT NIGHT
WHICH SHALL BE YOURS ANON.*

I do not see how reading his letters can disturb Kipling's quiet. I understand these lines to mean that he did not wish his spirit to be disturbed and called up by spiritualists and mediums. But did Kipling have any faith in spiritualism? He certainly damns it in another poem, "En-dor":

*Oh, the road to En-dor is the oldest road
And the craziest road of all!
Straight it runs to the Witch's abode,
As it did in the days of Saul,
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store
For such as go down on the road to En-Dor!*

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP HOLBERTON

ABOUT THE KIPLING SOCIETY

The Kipling Society is for anyone interested in the prose and verse, and the life and times, of Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936). It is one of the most active and enduring literary societies in Britain and, as the only one which focuses on Kipling and his place in English Literature, attracts a world-wide membership. (Details from the Society's web-site and membership forms from the **Membership Secretary, Kipling Society, 31 Brookside, Billericay, Essex CM11 1DT**. The forms quote the minimum annual subscription rates. Some members contribute a little more.)

The Society is a Registered Charity and a voluntary, non-profit-making organisation. Its activities, which are controlled by a Council and run by the Secretary and honorary officials, include:

- maintaining a specialised Library in **City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB**,
- answering enquiries from the public (schools, publishers, writers and the media), and providing speakers on request,
- arranging a regular programme of lectures, and a formal Annual Luncheon with a Guest Speaker,
- running the web-site at **www.kipling.org.uk** for members of the Society and anyone else around the world with an interest in the life and work of Rudyard Kipling,
- and publishing the *Kipling Journal*, every quarter.

The *Journal* of the Society aims to entertain and inform. It is sent to subscribing paying members all over the world free of charge. This includes libraries, English Faculties, and 'Journal – only' members. Since 1927, the *Journal* has published important items by Kipling, not readily found elsewhere, valuable historical information, and literary comment by authorities in their field. By not being wholly academic, the *Journal* is representative of Kipling, whose own diverse interests and versatile talent covered a wide range of literary writing – letters, travel, prose and verse. For the serious scholar of Kipling, who cannot afford to overlook the *Journal*, a comprehensive index of the entire run since 1927 is available online to members or in our Library. Apply to: **The Librarian, Kipling Society, 72 Millbank, Headcorn, Ashford, Kent TN27 9RG, England or email to jwawalker@gmail.com**

The Editor of the *Kipling Journal* publishes membership news, Society events, and the texts of talks given by invited speakers. In addition, he is happy to receive letters and articles from readers. These may be edited and publication is not guaranteed. Letters of crisp comment, under 1000 words, and articles between 1000 – 4000 are especially welcome. Write to: **The Editor, Kipling Journal, 32 Merton Road, Harrow HA2 0AB, England or email to davpag@yahoo.co.uk**

