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SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 22 February 2012, 5.30 for 6 p.m. in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League. **Simon Heffer**, journalist and historian, on "Kipling: The Historical Context"

Wednesday 18 April 2012, 5.30 for 6 p.m. in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Fiona MacCarthy**, biographer of **Sir Edward Burne-Jones**, on Kipling and Burne-Jones.

Wednesday 2 May 2012, 12.30 for 1 p.m. in the Hall of India and Pakistan, Royal Over-Seas League. **The Society's Annual Luncheon**. **Mr David Marler** Chairman of the British Council Association: "Getting under the Skin of the Other – if you can." For details please see December flyer or contact Jane Keskar.

Wednesday 11 July 2012, 4.30 p.m. **Annual General Meeting** in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League. A complimentary tea will be served at 4.00 p.m. in the Wrench Room for members who inform the Secretary in advance. The talk (£5.30 for 6.00 p.m.) will be announced later.

Wednesday 12 September 2012, 5.30 for 6 p.m. in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League, **Dr Finn Fordham**, Royal Holloway College, University of London: "If I knew Ireland as well as R.K. seems to know India ..." Joyce's debts to Kipling.'

December 2011

JANE KESKAR & ANDREW LYCETT

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OUR NEW PRESIDENT

By SHARAD KESKAR

At the A.G.M., on 6 July 2011, we welcomed Lt-Colonel Roger Ayers as our new President. Any regret in bidding farewell to Sir John Chappie was mitigated by the fact that he remains a long standing member of our Society. Sir John had agreed to be our President, at short notice and, in spite of a diary full of pressing engagements, regularly attended our Council Meetings. He was an ever present help at a time when the Society, a registered charity, was pressured into proving its funds were being used for the benefit of the public. His wisdom and guidance were a reassuring and calming influence.

In his address, Sir John said that he came to Rudyard Kipling, like the young of his day, by being read the *Just So Stories* and *The Jungle Book*. The illustrations of the former made a deep impact on him. *Kim* and *Stalky & Co*, he added, took more careful reading, for although the latter book was intrinsically linked to Kipling's time at school it was not so relevant to life in Kipling House at the end of the Second World War. But earlier, in the Junior School of the Imperial Service College, in 1940, he discovered the reason he went there was because his grandmother had been a keen Kipling fan all her life and one of the original members of the Kipling Society when it was founded in 1927, with Dunsterville, *Stalky*, as first President. "I was also told that, when I was four years old, I had been at a British Academy event at which Kipling had been present. My real memory of this is vague, but I have a distinct impression of being introduced to him by my grandmother. Later on I became a fan of the *Barrack-Room Ballads*, *Plain Tales from the Hills* and *Soldier's Three*, *The Ballads* have stayed with me all my life. I knew most of them by heart. They were well known in the Army and some, such as "Screw-Guns" were sung regularly in the Mess at special party evenings.

"At Cambridge I got to know Charles Carrington, the noted Kipling scholar, who had taught at Haileybury. I was then interested in Music Hall tunes, which, it was said, Kipling had used as settings for his light verse. Carrington was fascinated by this and did much research into it. He gave me a long list, which unfortunately I have mislaid. Some of those Music Hall tunes remain well known but most have faded from use.

"About that time, in my late teens and early twenties, I started collecting Kipling books and other items. I don't know why. I already had a complete set of his published works, yet I scoured the second-hand book shops in Charing Cross Road, searching through endless trays and shelves to find something of interest. I picked up all the Indian

Railway editions of Kipling tales. Each of these paperbacks had two or three tales and sold for one Rupee. Later they were printed in England and sold for one shilling and sixpence. The good ones to find were those from India. They cost little, but we didn't have much pocket money in those days. Much later, when serving in Malaya and Singapore, I shared a room with a fellow officer and we regularly quoted Kipling verse – one line each alternately. We also did this as our after-dinner act.

"I joined the Kipling Society in 1954 and have been a member ever since. I was President of the Society for three years. I have never been a Kipling scholar, unlike many members whose knowledge is truly remarkable and, for me, of interest and fascinating.

"When we moved house a few years ago I donated my collection of Kipling books, articles etc to the Haileybury College archives. I hope this will be maintained and built up. The College owns one unpublished Kipling story. So I also hope it will have a reference library to record our most distinguished author."

In his acceptance speech, Lt-Colonel Roger Ayers said: "To find myself taking over as President from a Field-Marshal is a somewhat daunting experience but it does give me the great advantage of having a perfect example of how the role may best be carried out. As a Member of Council during Sir John's period in office I have noted, and also benefited from, his practical suggestions, his wise advice and his constant support. I hope that by following his example I can also continue to support the Council and the Society.

"Like Sir John. I was introduced to Kipling at an early age. In my case it was through my father, a headmaster of a Junior School in Westminster who, as a student, had bought the early volumes of the red-leather pocket edition as they were first published. I was just seven in 1939 when his school was evacuated from London on the outbreak of war and he left home saying: "You may now read those little red books, if you like". I think he meant *The Jungle Book* and *Puck* but I read them all and was hooked. They are still the basis of my collection, and it was through them that I chose a career in the army and also joined the Kipling Society.

"I greatly appreciate the honour done to me by the Council in electing me as President and I am ready to continue to serve the Society for as long as I am able."

Lt-Colonel Roger Ayers needs little introduction. His tall presence is a familiar sight to members who attend meetings, and our website users will have read many of his erudite commentaries, which reveal his profound authority on Kipling. Given, as he said, access to Kipling's works from an early age, they became a constant source of pleasure, interest and occasional puzzlement, and led to his choice of a career in

the army and in engineering. Consequently, in 1954, a year after being commissioned in the Royal Artillery from Sandhurst, Roger attended a long mechanical engineering course at the Royal Military College of Science. There he met and married Lesley.

Between tours at regimental duty, Roger had two of a technical nature, first at the Royal Armoured Corps Centre as an instructor on driving and maintenance of armoured vehicles, and two years as the Battery Captain of a radar trials battery, which also conducted trials on an early army reconnaissance drone system. A long Gunnery Staff Course was followed by a tour as an instructor at the Royal School of Artillery. Three years later, he was part of the team training the first units to be equipped with an operational drone system. Developed by Canada, Britain and Germany, it was the forerunner of those now employed in Afghanistan. This was followed by a posting to a training unit in Germany, where his job included supervision of the technical practice of these drone troops.

On returning to Britain and promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, he served two years as a staff officer in H.Q. Northern Ireland before being sent back to Germany, first to qualify as an interpreter, then to take up the post of British Liaison Officer to the artillery of the German Army, which was equipped with a number of weapon systems also in British use, including the same drone system. Three years with the German Army led to a complete change in his career. He was appointed the G5 staff officer for H.Q. 1st British Corps and responsible for the liaison between that H.Q. and the German home defence forces in planning for a possible war.

In 1987, Roger retired from the army to take up a very similar post as a civil servant in Germany, responsible for the day-to-day liaison between the Corps H.Q. and a number of other units, including an R.A.F. Station, and the German local government and police. This job, with echoes of the political officer of Kipling's day, lasted for seven years.

Rudyard Kipling remained a constant interest throughout but, like his early interest as a volunteer digger on archaeology sites, it was difficult to pursue when abroad, and he had to content himself with the Kipling Journal and, before the internet, frantic shopping trips round second-hand bookshops whenever in England.

Retirement enabled Roger to play an active part as Membership Secretary of the Society for ten years. He has also been Chairman of Council. He pursues his love of archaeology, digging every summer for the past 13 years with the University of Reading's 'Town Life Project' at Silchester. In addition, he is a regular guide at Salisbury Cathedral and takes tours in English or German. He also has a large family, which keeps him and Lesley very active.

THE NATIVE AS "(AN)OTHER" SELF
COLONIAL ANXIETY IN RUDYARD KIPLING'S
"THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING"

By DR BIDISHA BANERJEE

[Dr. Bidisha Banerjee is Assistant Professor of English at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. She has a M.A. in English from Claremont Graduate University and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. Bidisha's research and teaching interests include postcolonial studies, globality and transnationalism, diaspora and exile, postcolonial feminist fictions and theory and cultural studies. Some of her work on Indian diasporic fiction and film has appeared in journals such as the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Asian Cinema* and *Postcolonial Text*. – Ed.]

INTRODUCTION

Befitting McClure's definition of imperial adventure fiction, Rudyard Kipling's "The Man who would be King" (1889) "translates the basic imperial division of the world (metropolis and colonies or potential colonies) into a familiar romance division, with the West represented as a zone of relative order, security and secularity, the non-Western world as a zone of magic, mystery and disorder" (McClure, 8). It is a story about two adventurers, Peachey Carnehan and Daniel Dravot, who are able to become the kings of Kafiristan and rule over the natives, through a series of falsifications and fantastical events. The woman chosen to be Peachey's bride bites him in fear (for the natives believe the two men to be supernatural beings); the sight of the bleeding colonizer conveys to the natives the mortal condition of the two men. Peachey and Daniel are exposed for the tricksters they are and are viciously hunted down; Daniel dies and Peachey is able to escape to tell his story but only after he has endured unbearable torture and lost his mind.

It is evident from the story that at the ostensible level at least, Kipling is essentially sympathetic to the imperialistic ambitions of Peachey and Daniel. However, the question of colonialism in this story is further compounded by the fact that the natives of Kafiristan are fair-skinned and not unlike the self-proclaimed kings. The issue of racial othering and Homi Bhabha's notion of skin as the most visible of colonial fetishes, therefore, becomes an interesting one in the context of this text. It is also worthwhile to apply Bhabha's theory of mimicry to this story. It seems that the reverse of the process suggested by Bhabha is in operation here. Instead of the natives mimicking the colonizers, Daniel and Peachey attempt to assimilate with the natives, their efforts culminating with Daniel wanting to marry a Kafiristani woman, although they both agreed in their "contract", item 2, that they will not look at

any woman. Frantz Fanon has discussed the process of fragmentation under racial othering. The visibility of the racial and colonial other is at once a point of identity and at the same moment, of violent fragmentation of identity. It is interesting that the sharp disjunction between the European body and the body of the racial other does not exist in "The Man who would Be King". The colonialism of Dan and Peachey topples when the tenuous othering that they attempt to establish, collapses.

I wish to study some of these issues in relation to the story and arrive at certain conclusions about Kipling as a colonial writer. Are we to read this story as the critique of an imperialism that is not benevolent or is there a more subtle and acute critique of colonialism hidden in this fantastic tale? Can this story be read as a metaphor for the colonizer's anxiety or is it rather only a critique of the failure to establish progressive "beneficent" rule? If this is a self-conscious narrative of colonialism, then what are we to make of moments when the narrative runs into its own deconstruction such as Peachey's lapses of memory and his madness? Through an application of Homi Bhabha's theories of mimicry and stereotyping to this story, I will conclude that "The Man who would be King" can be read as a metaphor of the anxiety of the colonizer and it is not, as has often been suggested, a pro-imperialist fiction.

KIPLING'S DUAL VISION

Before I propose an alternate reading of Kipling's "The Man who would be King", let us look at the established readings of this story proposed by some Kipling scholars. Interestingly enough, much has been said about Kipling's framing device and the role of the narrator of the story – his liminal position (i.e. between the reader on the one hand and Dan and Peachey on the other) and his implied or suggested sympathy with the project of the adventurers. However, no mention has ever been made of the fact that the natives of Kafiristan are light skinned and frequently called "British" by the two men. The most prevalent interpretation of this story has been that it is a critique of a type of colonialism that is only self-serving and does not consider the interests of the colonized. Helen Pike Bauer writes, 'Peachey and Dan represent an attempt at Empire without the moral values that, to Kipling, validate that attempt. They lack commitment to the native population, to standards of justice, to honor. And the story reveals the fate of imperial designs without a moral center' (Pike Bauer, 40). In discussing the idea of moral authority in the story, Jeffrey Meyers, writes, 'The serious flaw of this story is that Kipling is essentially sympathetic to their imperialistic ambitions (that is, the need to replace native anarchy with British order), so that his criticism of their failure to establish progressive beneficent rule

and their lack of fidelity to the Law is never forcefully established' (Meyers, 723). Again, Tim Bascom writes, 'The fact of the matter is Kipling so firmly believed in the order the British Government gave to other nations that he insisted it was preferable to the 'disorder' which supposedly prevailed beforehand' (Bascom, 169). Thus these critics have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that Kipling's sympathy for the project of imperialism is so great that it reduces the harshness of his critique of a self-serving imperialism in this story.

However, as has been established by some critics of Kipling, his support for the British imperialist project in India was not unequivocal. His strong, emotional ties with India were always in conflict with his intellectual prejudice and colonialist sympathies. Kipling's early fiction records the struggle he experienced in representing on the one hand the people and landscape of India which attracted him and on the other, the colonial context in which he was ostensibly writing. This duality was a reflection of the duality that he experienced within himself – the duality between his Indian self and his English self. To his friend and editor, Kay Robinson, he writes,

Would you be astonished if I told you that I look forward to nothing but an Indian journalist's career? Why should I? My home's out here; my people are out here; all the friends I know are out here and all the interests I have are out here. Why should I go home? . . . I am deeply interested in the queer ways and works of the people of the land. I hunt and rummage among 'em . . . in search of strange things . . . I'm in love with the country and would sooner write about her than anything else. Wherefore let us depart our several ways in amity. You to Fleet Street (where I shall come when I die if I am good) and I to my own place where I find heat and smells of oils and spices, and puffs of temple incense and sweat, and darkness, and dirt and lust and cruelty, and, above all, things wonderful and fascinating innumerable. April 30, 1886 (Sullivan, 51).

These are the deeply personal words of a man who finds delight in the joyous variety and individuality of the Indian people. While his glorification of the 'heat and smells . . . sweat and darkness and dirt and lust and cruelty,' may seem problematically orientalist, his sense of comfort in and attachment to India, is undeniable.

In articulating this duality within himself, Kipling was influenced by the theory of racial typology according to which 'the world's population was divided into a finite number of racial types sharply distinguished from each other and existing in a condition of relative permanence despite intermixture' (McBratney, 79). A central principle

in typological thought was "linkage" or 'the binding together, through hereditary transmission, of measurable physical attributes with less easily measured mental capacities' (McBratney, 80). Linkage therefore, created the grounds for a differentiation of races that transcended the physical and extended to the moral, intellectual and spiritual domains as well. Thus, as McBratney suggests, the hitherto biological category of race now came to have a bearing upon the formation and understanding of culture and consequently we had a hierarchization of cultures by implication, with the Anglo-Saxon race at the apex and the "lower" races descending towards the bottom (McBratney, 80).

These ideas of racial typology were prevalent amongst the Anglo-Indian community to which Kipling belonged and he grappled with the idea of cultural identity in India in the midst of such a discourse. In his personal life and his work, Kipling 'rebelled against the particularist and hierarchical premises of racial typology' (McBratney, 81). Within the borders of the landscape in his writings we find the transgression of racial boundaries. The Manichean dichotomy between the races does not exist in the Kafiristan of Daniel Dravot and Peachey Carnehan.

In "The Man who would be King" there is the introduction of Freemasonry which, at first sight, seems merely a plot device (to suggest the trickery of Daniel and Peachey). However, Kipling was influenced by the philosophy of Freemasonry and it suggested to him free racial intercourse. As a young journalist, 'Kipling joined the Freemasons as a member of 'Lodge Hope and Perseverance 782 E.C.' in Lahore, an organization of which he remained a loyal member the rest of his life' (McBratney, 83). The philosophy of Freemasonry with its emphasis on universal brotherhood regardless of racial differences had a strong influence on him. Having thus established the background of Kipling's ideas on race, we can assume that the racial resemblance of colonizer and colonized in "The Man who would be King" is conscious and deliberate on his part.

As we begin to read Kipling's story, it has all the promise of a narrative of imperialism, a story that will give us the sharply divided world of the colonizer and the colonized. In keeping with this expectation, we are given the picture of the landscape of the Other quite early in the story: 'Native States were created by Providence in order to supply picturesque scenery, tigers and tall writing. They are the dark places of the earth, full of unimaginable cruelty, touching the Railway and the Telegraph on the one side, and on the other, the days of Harun-al-Raschid' (Kipling, 19). These words are spoken by the narrator of the story as he describes India; his words are typically representative of the colonizer's perspective which views the land of the colonized as a land of darkness, disorder and cruelty with any sign of progress being

a signpost of colonization. However, the Native Provinces described by the narrator of Kipling's story is not the locale of the story. The place where most of the action of the story is played out is a land called "Kafiristan" which is quite unlike what the narrator describes above. We are told that Kafiristan is a mountainous country where it often snows. Thus Kafiristan is set in contrast to India where the story begins. In contrast to the cool, mountainous Kafiristan is the sweltering heat of the Indian desert where the lowest the temperature gets is 84 degrees in the wee hours of the morning when 'a very tired man could set off to sleep ere the heat roused him again' (23).

The reader soon realizes that the contrast between India and Kafiristan is deliberate on the part of Kipling and very significant too. Once Peachey and Daniel are in Kafiristan they realize that the people there are just like them. Throughout Peachey's narrative about their adventures in Kafiristan, the similarities between the natives and the two British men are emphasized.² These people are not uncivilized like the natives in India; Peachey and Daniel even call them Englishmen several times:

'These men aren't niggers; they're English! Look at their eyes—look at their mouths. Look at the way they stand up. They sit on chairs in their own houses. They're the Lost Tribes, or something like it, and they've grown to be English' (Kipling, 23).

In fact, from the beginning of their adventure, Dan and Peachey make a deliberate attempt to look and behave like the natives of Kafiristan so that they do not face much resistance or opposition. When they set out on their journey from India to Kafiristan, Daniel and Peachey disguise themselves as a mad priest and his servant respectively. Once they are closer to Kafiristan, they change disguises and decide to dress as heathens, 'because the Kafirs didn't allow Mohammedans to talk to them' (Kipling, 36).

While describing their disguises to the narrator, Peachey says 'So we dressed betwixt and between . . .' (Kipling, 36). The use of the phrase "betwixt and between" is significant here; the colonial space delineated by Kipling in this story is one in which the hiatus between the colonizer and the colonized has been reduced to the bare minimum and in such an ambiguous space, the relations between the two are played out. The identity of the two men as colonizers is unstable from the beginning. They are adventurers, crooks and loafers. Such white men without regular employment or official positions 'were an anomaly and sometimes an embarrassment to India's tightly organized white enclaves, and were regarded as vagabonds probably given over to alcoholism and

liaisons with native women' (Paffard, 77). Emphasizing the colonials' desire to maintain a profile of racial superiority, Stoler writes that the migration of poor whites to the colonies was avoided and men of class and character were sent to 'safeguard the colonies against physical weakness, moral decay, and the inevitable degeneration that long residence in the colonies encouraged and the temptations that interracial domestic situations allowed' (Stoler, 358).

A 'BHABHABIAN' READING

In "The Other Question" Homi Bhabha writes. 'Skin as the key signifier of cultural and racial difference in the stereotype, is the most visible of fetishes, recognized as 'common knowledge' in a range of cultural, political and colonial discourses, and plays a public part in the racial drama that is enacted every day in colonial societies' (Bhabha, 78). This visibility of race as a signifier of discrimination is absent in Kipling's story and the construction of the Kafirs as a population of degenerate types based on their race is an impossibility.⁴ Therefore, one of the prime objectives of colonial discourse, namely the construction of the other as object of derision, which attempts to justify conquest and colonization, is absent in the story. As a consequence the fetishizing and stereotyping of the colonized by the colonizer cannot occur. However, in Bhabha's scheme there is a contrary side of the relationship between colonizer and colonized which gives rise to a "productive imbalance" (Bhabha, 67), the otherness of the colonizer is not simply an object of derision but also an object of desire. In colonial discourse, the disavowal of difference leads to a recognition that presents the other as entirely knowable. In the identification of the Imaginary relation there is always the alienating other (or mirror) which returns its image to the subject. Similarly in the relation between the colonizer and colonized, the native offers to the colonizer an object of self-reflection that is a point of identity as well as acutely alienating and terrifying in its disavowal of difference. It is this aspect of Bhabha's colonial discourse that is overemphasized in Kipling's story. Daniel and Peachey repeatedly insist on the similarity between them and the natives of Kafiristan in racial as well as cultural matters.

The colonial project of Daniel and Peachey falls apart when one of them (Daniel) attempts to become the native through marriage, by seeking 'a Queen to breed a King's son for the King. A Queen out of the strongest tribe, that'll make them your blood-brothers' (Kipling, 51). On the part of the colonizer, Daniel, the projection of the Self on to the "Other" has gone so far that he wants to be blood brothers with the "Other." This endeavour of course ends disastrously for both Daniel and Peachey as Daniel is bitten by the woman he chooses to marry and

his bleeding body signals their mortal status to the natives. Kipling is suggesting that the anxiety on the part of the colonized creates for an intense self-reflection so terrifying that ultimately cannot sustain the project of colonialism. It is significant that Daniel also loses his mind from the moment that he is bitten: 'Dan began to go mad in his head from that hour' (Kipling, 56). Thus the psychic and bodily fragmentation of the colonizer occurs simultaneously.

Bhabha discusses his theory of mimicry in the essay "Of Mimicry and Man." According to him. Colonial mimicry

is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same hut not quite*. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (Bhabha 1994, 86)

It may be said that the natives of Kafiristan and the two Englishmen are '*almost the same hut not quite*,' and Daniel and Peachey seek to merge the identities of the two making them one and the same. Bhabha also describes mimicry as 'a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power' (Bhabha: 1994, 86).

This process of mimicry works in a slightly different fashion in Kipling's story. During their journey to Kafiristan, Dan and Peachey assume disguises to make themselves look like the natives so that they are not recognized for the Englishmen they are. However, upon their arrival in Kafiristan, they realize that the Kafirs are not much unlike them in appearance. Since the sharp disjunction between the European body and the body of the racial other does not exist in this case, Daniel and Peachey now attempt to "appropriate the Other" by making the natives resemble them in any way possible. This attempt is most strikingly demonstrated in their act of renaming the natives: 'Then the Chiefs come round to shake hands, and they was so hairy and white and fair it was just shaking hands with old friends. We gave them names according as they was like men we had known in India—Billy Fish, Holly Dilworth, Pikky Kergan . . . and so on and so on' (Kipling. 44-45).⁵ Thus Daniel and Peachey attempt to create a class of mimic men.

Such a doubling of identity between the natives and the colonizers comes to represent Bhabha's '*partial presence*' (Bhabha 1994. 88) which according to Bhabha threatens the narcissistic demand of colonial authority. The desire on the part of Daniel and Peachey for the reduction in the hiatus between their own identities and that of the

natives 'reverses 'in part' the colonial appropriation by now producing a partial vision of the colonizer's presence; a gaze of otherness . . . which shatters the unity of man's being through which he extends his sovereignty' (Bhabha, 89). In other words, although Daniel and Peachey do not realize it, the more their identities merge with that of the Kafirs, the greater becomes the threat to their project of colonization. The process of mimicry continues till it reaches the point when complete identity is established between the natives and the Englishmen, for Daniel is discovered to be 'Neither God nor devil, but a man!' At this point we turn from mimicry to menace – to 'a difference that is almost total but not quite' (Bhabha, 91) for Daniel and Peachey are human like the natives but now they are firmly established as the colonial other or the oppressor. The identities that were being brought so precariously close together led to a threatening and terrifying self-reflection for the English adventurers whose selves are now violently split.

In another essay "Signs Taken for Wonders" Bhabha argues that the 'discovery of the English book establishes both a measure of mimesis and a mode of civil authority and order' (Bhabha, 107). But the colonial presence is ambivalent, because it is 'split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as difference and repetition' (Bhabha, 107). "Hybridity" is produced in the exercise of colonial power; it is the reversal of the process of colonial domination through disavowal (of colonial intervention). Once this hybridity is revealed, colonial power is seen to be something other than what it was previously assumed to be. If the English book is read as a product of colonial hybridity, then it no longer simply commands authority.

In discussing Bhabha's theory in the context of Kipling's story, we may substitute the English book, or the Bible, for the Masonic grid; Daniel and Peachey know the missing Master's Mark which the natives have no knowledge of and the revelation of this mark convinces the natives of the supernatural status of these two men. Bhabha writes, 'The acknowledgement of authority depends upon the immediate – unmediated – visibility of its rules of recognition' (Bhabha: 1994, 110) and the Mark represents to the native the authority of the two English men. Bhabha asserts that hybridity turns the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power: '. . . faced with the hybridity of its objects, the presence of power is revealed as something other than what its rules of recognition assert' (Bhabha, 112). Once again, this juncture is reached in "The Man who would be King" at the moment when Daniel is bitten by the native woman and begins to bleed. The earlier articulation of the God/Devil-Englishman equivalence is now destabilized so that the colonial authority of Daniel and Peachey is weakened and split.

According to Bhabha, 'The display of hybridity its peculiar 'replication' terrorizes authority with the ruse of recognition, its mimicry, its mockery' (Bhabha, 115). In order to reduce resistance from the Kafirs, the colonizers seek to establish such a "replication" between themselves and the natives and in this they are aided by the absence of racial difference. However, they are suddenly and violently made aware of the degeneracy of their imperialist project when the recognition between them and the natives becomes absolute. The natives are like them in more ways than they had imagined possible. The consequence of such a horrifying recognition can only be, in Kipling's scheme of things, madness and dismemberment as is demonstrated by the ultimate fate of Daniel and Peachey. Bhabha's theories on the discourse of colonialism therefore, suggest that the native is somehow in possession of colonial power, although his culture and economy are destroyed. The natives of Kafiristan in Kipling's story assert this power in the most crucial moment of the story.

THE COLONIZER BECOMES THE COLONIZED

As is evident from "The Man who would be King", the motives of Daniel and Peachey are not merely to colonize, loot and plunder Kafiristan, begin a dynasty and make a nation, or even an empire. Prompted by this motive Daniel wants to choose a wife from among the natives and begin a family. Of course the fact that the Kafir women are even more fair skinned than the Englishmen themselves, works in favour of Daniel's decision; however, such a decision on the part of the colonizer is unusual and significant in the colonial politics of the time.

In her study on race and gender in colonial cultures, "Making Empire Respectable", Laura Stoler suggests that the fear of racial contamination was widespread among the British who lived in the colonies. She quotes Maunier: '[Young colonial men] are often driven to seek a temporary companion among women of color; this is the path by which, as I shall presently show, contagion travels back and forth, contagion in all senses of the word' (Stoler, 356). The development of Eugenics in the latter part of the nineteenth century (when Kipling was writing), further fuelled such anxieties; Eugenic arguments asserted that poverty, vagrancy and promiscuity were class-linked biological traits tied directly to genetic material. Therefore interracial unions (metisage) and concubinage were regarded as the greatest dangers to racial purity and cultural identity (Stoler, 357).

In such a milieu, Kipling's decision to have the colonizer in his story not only marry a native woman but also begin a new dynasty out of this union, seems almost as fantastical as his tale. Not only were the children born of such unions not considered fit material for kingship, they

were, on the contrary, considered 'the fruits of regrettable weakness, physically marked and morally marred with the defaults and mediocre qualities of their [native] mothers' (Stoler, 360). Albeit the natives of Kafiristan are fair skinned, the Englishmen have no proof that they are of a superior race than the natives in India or in any of the other colonies. For Daniel to want to produce a line of "blood brothers" by union with a native woman would be considered morally degenerate and irresponsible. Why then does Kipling incorporate the possibility of such a union into his story? I would suggest that it is yet another way in which the boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized are sought to be transgressed in the story, only to realize that the Other is not really the Other but, in fact, "(an)other" image of the self.

The crucial moment of Kipling's story is reached when the native woman bites Daniel and the Kafirs realize the fraudulency of the two Englishmen. At this moment the boundary between the colonized and colonizer is simultaneously transgressed as well as erected. The native woman's contact with the white body of Daniel collapses the last vestiges of difference between the natives and the Englishmen. However, at the same time, by biting Daniel and making him bleed, the woman reveals him in the light of the colonial Other. It should be noted that both these actions are unwitting on the part of the woman for she perceives Daniel as God or the Devil until she bites him, and then he is human, like her.

The image of the woman biting Daniel might be considered representative of the bestial Other contaminating the superior white man, but critics like Scheick have interpreted it as defeat of the male colonizers by the dangerous female forces of the colonized:

The bite of a frightened, resistant young woman amounts to a death warrant for the two erstwhile imperialists. Her bite reveals the fraudulency of imperialist conventions, both in life and in fiction. In a sense, one might say that the intended's bite avenges all the subjugated and sacrificed women in romances such as Haggard's. (Scheick, 124)

In Edward Said's treatment of orientalist discourse, the sexual submission and possession of Oriental women by European men "Stands for the pattern of relative strength between East and West' (Said, 6). In this "male power fantasy," the Orient is penetrated, silenced and possessed (Said, 207). Although the "strapping wench" in Kipling's story represents an effeminized Orient, in her refusal to breed Daniel a son, the effeminization becomes an empowering one. The native woman not only disempowers the male colonial, but her action also leads to the

overthrow of his project of "penetration, silencing and possession." It can be argued that this moment in the story establishes the white man as the Other in its figuration of the split body of Daniel Dravot. This is only the first in a series of figures of mutilation of the white, imperialist body. The body of the white man becomes almost a grotesque spectacle as Peachey is crucified and Daniel decapitated. The concluding image of Daniel, the 'man who would be king' is indeed horrifying:

He [Peachey] . . . shook . . . on to my table—the dried, withered head of Daniel Dravot! The morning sun that had long been paling the lamps struck the red beard and blind sunken eyes; struck, too, a heavy circlet of gold studded with raw turquoises, that Carnehan placed tenderly on the battered temples.

'You behold now,' said Carnehan, 'the Emperor in his habit as he lived—the King of Kafiristan with his crown upon his head. Poor old Daniel that was a monarch once!' (Kipling, 60).

The colonizer has therefore, been put in the position of the colonized in order to reveal the true nature of colonization.

NARRATIVE FRACTURE

It is significant that during his narration Peachey often speaks of himself in the first as well as the third person: 'Peachey, Peachey Taliaferro, I tell you, Sir, in confidence as betwixt two friends, he lost his head, Sir. No he didn't neither' (Kipling, 59). This has been interpreted by critics as a sign of insanity. However, we can also interpret it as the disjunction in the identity of the colonizer. Peachey's identity is split; he has seen his own self-image in the natives and this has caused the rupture in his own identity. He now sees himself as an Other. He also often confuses himself and Daniel suggesting that any sense he had of the fixity of his identity as a colonizer has been eroded. The only thing now that can hold him and his story together is the look of the narrator of the story. Peachey repeatedly asks the Editor to look at him: 'Keep looking at me or maybe my words will all go to pieces. Keep looking at me in my eyes and don't say anything*' (Kipling. 35). The Editor, like Daniel and Peachey, is an Englishman and a representative of the colonizer in India. Peachey's identity as a colonizer is no longer stable and fixed; he has begun to see himself as an Other like the colonized. The colonizer's gaze fixes the colonized and likewise Peachey wants to be fixed in the gaze of the Editor. This is the only way that some fixity may be given to his fractured identity.

Much has been said about the insanity of Peachey and consequently of the authenticity of his story. I wish to argue that Peachey is a reliable

narrator for in his madness he has been reduced to the position of the Other and has attained a deeper insight into the true nature of things. According to Foucault. 'Madness in its ultimate form is man in immediate relation to his animality, without other reference, without any recourse' (Foucault, 74). The bestiality of the colonized that some might see in the figure of the native woman biting Daniel, is reflected here in the figure of the colonizer. The identities of difference that the colonizer chooses to distance himself from the colonized and establish him as the evil Other, have collapsed and come upon the colonizer himself.

The otherness of the colonials themselves was something that had entered the realm of imperial thought in the nineteenth century. As Stoler points out, in metropolitan France, a number of medical and sociological studies concluded that the colonial was 'a distinct and degenerate social type, with specific psychological and even physical characteristics' (Stoler, 358). Medical studies warned that colonials who stayed for prolonged periods of time in the colonies were 'in grave danger of overfatigue, of individual and racial degeneration, of physical breakdown (not just illness), of cultural contamination, and of neglect of the conventions of supremacy and agreement about what they were' (Stoler, 358-9). The figure of the crazed and battered Peachey suggests to the reader that for the colonial to become the Other is not contamination but rather a horrifying self-reflection.

CONCLUSION

Kipling's primary purpose in dissolving the racial divide between colonizer and colonized in "The Man who would be King" is to open up a margin of enquiry that causes a subversive slippage of identity and authority. He thus makes the boundaries of colonial positionality unstable, questioning the division of self and other, colonizer and colonized and the issue of colonial power. By eschewing the binary opposition between colonial self and colonized other and the Manichean dichotomy that is so necessary to sustain the structure of domination. Kipling critiques the imperialist project. In the ambivalent space of Kafiristan. boundaries of discrimination are transgressed and the positionality of colonizer and colonized destabilized. This enables Kipling to demonstrate the unstable nature of all such boundaries. By bringing the natives and the colonizers precariously close, and even interchanging their positions. Kipling suggests that colonization is a violent and despicable crime against one's own kind. This story not only questions the colonizer's lack of moral authority, but it can also be read as a metaphor of the colonizer's anxiety and a scathing critique of the project of imperialism.

NOTES

1. Kafiristan, now named Nuristan. is a mountainous country on the southern slopes of the Hindu Kush. It was independent until it was annexed by Afghanistan in 1895-96, and the Kafiristanis were forcibly converted to the Muslim religion.
2. According to the *Webster's Geographical Dictionary*. Kafiristan is 'inhabited by Kafirs, a small remnant of a very early Iranian people.' (527)
3. The *Hobson-Jobson* describes the word "kafir" (which appears under the entry for "Caffer, Caffre, Coffree") as 'a quasi proper name of the (more or less) fair, and non-Mohammedan, tribes of Hindu Kush, sometimes called more specifically the *Siahposh* or 'black robed Cafirs" (141). The word was also used in a disparaging sense by Mohammedans for Christians.
4. It is important to acknowledge that race in Kipling's story is defined by parameters other than skin colour. At the outset, the Kafirs are considered inferior to the British in relation to their culture. Also, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, race was often synonymous with nation. Vincent Cheng writes in his study on Joyce, race and empire, 'race was often equated with nation as well as type ... as a term that was interchangeable with concepts of both nation and ethnicity' (Cheng, 17). At the turn of the century when Kipling was writing, the English feelings of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority and of pride in the British Empire, were at their height. These feelings often coincided in a mutually reinforcing discourse of race and empire (Cheng, 17). Thus, although race is defined by parameters other than skin colour, for the purposes of this paper. I will focus on the invisibility of the racial barrier between the British adventurers and the people of Kafiristan.
5. It is worth noting that these names are not particularly British. However, they are more like the names of the British soldiers and unlike the names of the native Kafirs.

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MAROONED IN THE MALDIVES

By IAN BURNS

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I am grateful to the Society of Friends of the Fleet Air Arm Museum for their kind permission to reprint this article which first appeared in the *Jabberwock*. Ed. |

Rudyard Kipling used the bare bones of this tale in a short story "A flight of Fact" published in 1918, hiding the true purpose of the eventful flight. In his original headnote to the story Kipling wrote that 'Most of this tale actually happened during the war about the years 1916 or 1917.' My tale is also true, as true as records almost a century old will permit. Courtesy of the *Kipling Journal* No.290 (June 1999, pp.24—31) it can be told in part using the words of the principal actor, flight Sub-Lieutenant Gerald Duncan 'Guy' Smith, R.N.A.S.

During the First World War the Maldivian Islands were a long way from any active fighting front. Were it not for the German practice of using disguised merchant ships as commerce raiders they might have been completely undisturbed. S.M.S. *Wolf* (formerly the freighter *Wachtfels*) sailed from Kiel at the end of November 1916. A few months later she was operating in the Indian Ocean. Minefields were laid off the Cape of Good Hope, Colombo and Bombay and four merchant vessels were captured or sunk. During the height of the search for the raider. February to April 1917, over 50 British, French and Japanese warships were employed. These included an old battleship, cruisers, destroyers and sloops and a single seaplane carrier, H.M.S. *Raven*, with several Short 184 floatplanes and a single Sopwith Baby floatplane. *Wolf* eluded *Raven*, her floatplanes, and every other searcher to return safely to Germany at the end of February 1918. During a 451 day cruise *Wolf* had accounted for 14 ships totalling nearly 40,000 tons. They may not have found the raider, but the crew of one of *Raven's* Shorts had a extraordinary adventure, the subject of this tale.

'Guy' Smith travelled further than many to reach the Maldives. Born in England on 21 October 1894, he was in his mid-teens when the family moved to California. His father found work in the nascent movie

industry and young Guy may have trained as a telegrapher or wireless operator. On the outbreak of war Guy, with many other young expatriates, sought to join up and 'do his bit'. With this intention he took the train and ferry to Victoria in British Columbia where the family had relatives. Once there he wrote to the Canadian Department of Naval Service in Ottawa applying to join the Royal Naval Air Service.

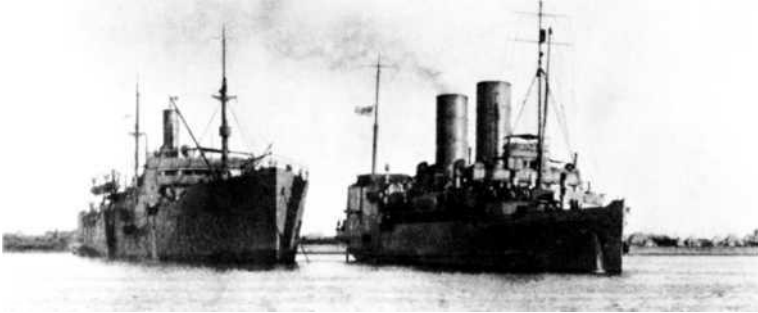
The R.N.A.S. recruiting procedure in Canada at the time required applicants to appear for an interview and medical examination at Ottawa or one of the naval bases located on the east and west coasts. If the applicant was judged suitable he was accepted as a Probationary Flight Sub-Lieutenant and, provided he had first obtained a pilot certificate from a flight school in either Canada or the U.S.A., sent on to the U.K. for service training. The cost of obtaining the certificate fell on the applicant, but partial reimbursement would be made following commissioning as a Temporary Flight Sub-Lieutenant.

Smith was interviewed and examined at Esquimalt, the Pacific coast base of the Royal Canadian Navy. Accepted as an R.N.A.S. candidate on 2 July he quickly returned to California, signing up at the Christofferson Flying School at Ocean Beach, San Francisco. Harry and Silas Christofferson were pioneer aviators, manufacturers and airline operators on the west coast. The school naturally used aircraft of their own design. Guy commenced training on 14 July and by 18 September was in Ottawa being sworn in as Probationary Flight Sub-Lieutenant. R.N.A.S., with seniority from 6 September 1915 (probably the date he passed his flying tests). He sailed for England by the months' end.

Once in England and in the 'system' Guy probably followed a typical training route. Learning to fly again, the military way, at the Central Flying School at Upavon. Then on to the Isle of Grain to convert to floatplanes. On completion of training his commission as Temporary Flight Sub-Lieutenant would be approved. Shortly after he was posted to join the East Indies and Egypt Seaplane Squadron at Port Said, Egypt, arriving in June 1916.

At this time the Squadron comprised four seaplane carriers, H.M.Ss. *Ben-my-Chree*, *Empress*, *Anne* and *Raven*. The first two were fully converted passenger ferries from the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company and the South Eastern and Chatham Railway respectively, equipped with hangars, workshops and defensive armament. The two latter were German prizes, *Aenne Riekmers* and *Rabenfels* respectively, which had received austere conversions in Egypt maintaining their aircraft in the open, or under canvas shelters, on the hold covers and had been given a token armament. *Empress* was based in the Aegean, a part of the fleet keeping watch on the Dardanelles. The remaining carriers operated out of Port Said where the Squadron had a base on an

island in the harbour. From Port Said the ships ranged throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, primarily along the Palestine coast, and through the Suez Canal into the Red Sea and Aden.

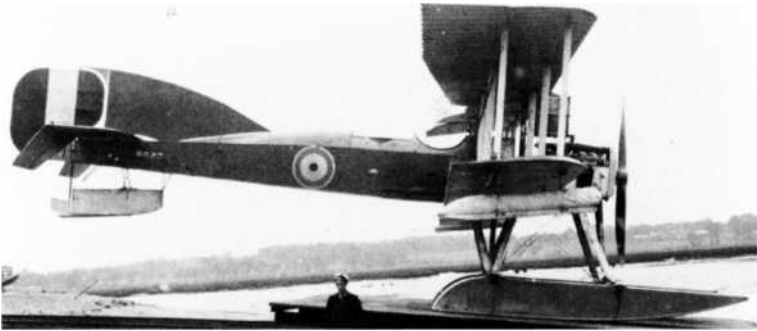


RAVEN (left) AND *BEN-MY-CHREE* (right) AT PORT SAID IN 1916

Aircrew and maintainers were based at the island and assigned to ships as required. The pilots were all R.N.A.S. personnel, but the Observers were a mix of army and naval officers. The floatplanes would be allocated as required, and available, to carriers. *Ben-my-Chree* could support up to three large, folding wing Short 184's and a couple of Sopwith Schneider/Baby single seaters², although she did crowd two Shorts and four Sopwiths aboard on at least one occasion. *Anne* rarely had more than two Shorts and the larger *Raven* three or four Shorts and Sopwiths aboard. As aircraft were always in demand and short supply a mechanic's job at the island was no sinecure.

Guy was soon put to work. During July and early August he was aboard *Raven* flying a Short on bombing and reconnaissance missions along the Palestine coast. On 25 August, still based on *Raven*, he took part in the Squadron's raid on the inland railway junction at El Afuleh. Six Shorts and four Sopwiths took part, a maximum effort by all three seaplane carriers. The floatplanes from *Raven*, including Guy and his observer Lt V. Millard, attacked a train steaming out of the station. They hit two of the coaches with small bombs, setting them on fire, and damaged the tracks with bigger bombs. The remaining floatplanes from *Anne* and *Ben-my-Chree* attacked the station and sidings. The station buildings were left burning, a locomotive and 14 carriages and trucks were destroyed or damaged and supplies burned or destroyed. After a brief rest at Port Said he joined *Anne* for an extended period of operations

in the Red Sea. Part way through, the aircrew and remaining floatplanes transferred to *Raven*, not returning to Port Said until late December. He returned just in time to join *Ben-my-Chree* and a raid on the railway bridge at Chicaldere, about 30 miles from the coast of the Gulf of Alexandretta.



A SHORT 184 (240hp SUNBEAM ENGINE) SIMILAR TO THE ONE
IN THE ARTICLE

The attack took place on 27 December. Flying a Short, with Capt .J. Wedgwood Benn as observer, Guy led three Sopwiths into the attack. Benn let his bomb go from 300 feet, narrowly missing one of the steel truss spans. Smith then banked the Short around a guard hut, permitting Benn to place a burst of tracer bullets into the guard tumbling out. Unused to tracer, the guards bolted back into the hut, upon which Benn put another burst through the thatched roof. With the guard thus discomfited the three Sopwith dropped their bombs causing minor damage to the embankment. Later attacks by two Shorts from *Raven* and a further flight from *Ben-my-Chree* succeeded in damaging the bridge itself, stopping traffic on the main supply route from Turkey to Palestine for several days whilst repairs were made.

The new year started badly for the Squadron. *Ben-my-Chree* was lost to gunfire on 9 January whilst at Castellorizo, a small island just off the Turkish south coast. *Empress* was recalled from the Aegean but required a refit before she could rejoin the Squadron. So, *Anne* and *Raven* struggled on alone. Guy rejoined *Anne* in February for some reconnaissance flights along the Palestine coast, including an aerial visit to Haifa. Then came the call to search for S.M.S. *Wolf*. *Raven*, loaded with several Short floatplanes and a single Sopwith, was sent to search for her. To provide big-gun support the French cruiser *Pothau* was to keep her company. *Raven* sailed from Port Said on 10 March, bound

initially for Aden then the Indian Ocean to fly searches in the Laccadive Island and Maldive Island chains, proceeding to Colombo as required for coaling. On 21 April, Guy and his observer Lt W.C.A. Meade were hoisted out on Short 8018 to conduct a reconnaissance flight of Ari Atoll located in the west of the Maldives archipelago. When they failed to return, *Raven* searched for two days before continuing the hunt for the raider. Smith and Meade, however, were not lost, merely marooned. The story of their adventures is told (with minor editing for clarity by G.H. Webb, C.M.G., O.B.E.) in letters Guy wrote to his father.

I suppose the Admiralty will have cabled you, which is a nuisance, as it will have caused you a lot of unnecessary worry. Of course there is no doubt of it, but that my observer and I were missing. . . We are quite safe now.

We started for flight about 4:15pm and I missed the ship on returning. The visibility was very bad. The clouds were thick and black and I don't think my compass was correct. My observer kept on pointing to things which he thought were the ship and as he had the glasses I followed his directions. We flew until it was dark and I managed to land alright. Then in the dark we taxied right on to a coral reef as we were trying to get on an island. We tried to get the machine off but failed so I fitted up a wireless station and sent our signals.

About 10.30 we floated off with the tide into deep water. I started up the engine and we taxied over to some other island, but kept on getting on to coral so we went up and down firing sign[al] lights to see the reefs, and finally got on the beach of an uninhabited island. It rained all night and we had no sleep.

It rained up to 3.30 the next afternoon. I made three ineffectual attempts to start up the engine, and had only one more start in my air bottle^t so I overhauled everything thoroughly, and started up. The machine did her full amount of revolutions. If it hadn't we would have been in a fix as we only had a few biscuits and a little water left. I climbed a palm tree and got a few coconuts. The natives from the other islands would not come near as they hadn't seen many whites before and never an aeroplane and so they were scared to death.

Well we flew for about an hour and a half trying to find the ship, and then my petrol ran out, and I landed near an inhabited island but my engine had stopped so I could not taxi up to it, and the wind blew us slowly away from it, so we tried to swim ashore without avail. Then we blew on to a coral reef again so we took the [emergency flotation] balloon out of the tail and swam to the island having first hailed a dhow^s which was too afraid to come up. Also the people on the island hid themselves.

It was about a mile to the island and took us about an hour to swim through shark-infested waters. When we got ashore we were all in, and after resting we had a look around, but although everything bore signs of life, and fires were alight, we could not find anybody, so we went to sleep in one of the huts. All we had was our shirts, and I had brought a water bottle.

In the night I was awakened by hearing some natives talking right in the entrance of our hut, and as I thought I had better say something in case they came in and trod on us, I said the only word I knew of their language, *Salaam*, and they jumped about three feet in the air and were off in the bushes in a second.

In the morning we got up and had a bathe, and each put on a native loin-cloth^o and had coconuts to eat, and then we went around the island to find the natives, but they had evidently been watching us, for as we went around one side of the island they went around the other, and took the only boat there and rowed away in it. We came back and found it gone, and were rather worried as we were feeling pretty rotten, and none of the natives on the dhows would come near, so we ransacked the huts for food. There was plenty of water, also coconuts and some chickens, so I killed a chicken with a stick, plucked and trussed it, and then boiled it.

In the meantime the observer had been hailing fishing-dhows that were passing the island, but they paid no attention, and I then went out and joined him. After waving our shirts for about two hours, one came close in and we swam out to it. This time I had only my shirt on, and my observer had none at all! As soon as we went on board they seemed to lose their fear, and gave us loin-cloths and stuff to eat, and betelnuts to chew.

I then directed them to go to the seaplane, which had drifted out to sea, and after much talking and waste of time eleven dhows lined up and took it to an inhabited island close by. When we reached the island there was a lot more talking, and we were taken to the village. After having some food we came out and had them haul the machine up on the beach.

We lived for several days there, sleeping in a shed with about fifty natives, and every evening we would have a concert, and one old fellow would sing a song, and then I would sing one. They made me sing at all times of the day and night. I nearly taught them to sing: "Hello, Hello, Who's Your Lady Friend?" We used to go swimming twice a day, but we always had a guard of from 20 to 50. One morning when all the men and women had collected around, and we had been singing and giving them electric shocks from the wireless out of the machine, I told my observer to show them his

false teeth. So he took them out, and they all ran away! I also made some dice to pass the time away.

It was very awkward not knowing a word of the language, and whenever I tried to go near the machine I was forcibly removed. Finally the head of the atoll arrived, and we were taken in a dhow to Male [capital of the Maldives] where we now are. They are treating us awfully well, giving us everything we can possibly need, and either tomorrow or the next day we leave for Colombo in a sailing vessel.

[The following is from a further letter, written after they had landed at Colombo on 6 May.]

We arrived at Colombo Sunday noon in a dhow from Male, dressed in gorgeous red uniforms and fezzes of officers of the Maldivian Army. We both had short beards, and as we walked up the gangway of the *Raven* and saluted at the top, nobody recognised us, and we nearly got to our cabins before someone finally did, and then we did have some reception. The Commanding Officer [Cdr C.R. Samson] was awfully pleased. They had give up all hope of us.

Raven collected the Short from one of the islands in the Male atoll later in May, finally returning to Port Said on 12 June.

After *Raven* returned to Port Said Guy may have taken some leave for we do not find any record of him until mid-July aboard *Empress* in the Gulf of Alexandretta. Then there is an even longer gap until October. During this period the remaining carriers were less active and he was probably employed flying anti-submarine patrols from the island base. He would also have learned of the award of the D.S.C. for "several valuable reconnaissances and bombing flights, obtaining important information and doing considerable damage to enemy organisations." His observer on the Maldives adventure, Lt Meade, was Mentioned in Dispatches at the same time.

About this time *Anne* was retired and returned to merchant service. To replace her, another converted merchant ship *City of Oxford* was assigned the Squadron. She had previously served as a dummy battleship (October 1914 to July 1915), and was then converted into a balloon tender. It was only a short step from balloon tender to seaplane carrier and the conversion was quickly completed, *City of Oxford* joining the Squadron in July 1917.

It was aboard *City of Oxford* we next find Guy, during late October and early November, flying spotting missions for monitors along the coast near Gaza and Askelon. The Squadron was coming to the end

of its existence. *Raven* returned to merchant service at the end of the year and *Empress* would shortly be dispatched to Gibraltar where her floatplanes were employed on anti-submarine duties until the end of the war. So, it fell to *City of Oxford* to conduct the final operations of the Squadron. With Guy aboard, she spent from 13 February to 29 March in the Red Sea. During that period her four Shorts made 58 flights and dropped fifty-two 65-lb and sixty-three 16-lb bombs – a very creditable swansong for the East Indies and Egypt Seaplane Squadron. On 1 April 1918, the R.N.A.S. and R.F.C. were amalgamated to form the Royal Air Force. This date also marked the effective end of the Squadron, *City of Oxford* and the few remaining floatplanes becoming part of the Egypt Group, R.A.F. At this point we also lose track of Guy.

The floatplanes on the island eventually became 431 Flight (later 269 Squadron), R.A.F., flying anti-submarine patrols along the Egyptian coast. What if any use was made of *City of Oxford* is unknown, but she was not decommissioned until 20 November 1918. It is probable that Guy remained with the Flight until the end of the war, attaining a final rank of Flight Lieutenant. After the war he returned to the U.S.A., and is believed to have married and had a son. During 1915 his father had bought land and opened a resort at Rio Nido on the Russian River in northern California. His father died in 1923 and Guy took over the reins and ran the resort until 1940.

If anyone can add to these bare bones I would be very grateful.

NOTES

1. For a complete history, see *Ben-my-Chree – Woman of my Heart* by Ian Burns. (Colin Huston, 2008).
2. The Short 184 was a large (63½ ft span) two seat reconnaissance, bombing and torpedo carrying floatplane. Powered by a 260hp Sunbeam engine it was the Royal Navy's WWI equivalent of the Fairey Swordfish. The Sopwith Schneider/Baby was a small single seater floatplane used for scouting (lighter) and bombing. Both aircraft served throughout the war.
3. Commissioned in 1897 *Pothau* was long past her best, but her two 194mm and fourteen 140mm guns were more than capable of overwhelming *Wolf*.
4. The Short's Sunbeam engine used compressed air to turn it over when starting.
5. Locally known as a *dhoni*, they were used throughout the islands. Modern versions, with diesel engines replacing the original single lateen sail, are used as water taxis between Male and the airport located on a separate island.
6. Guy is probably referring here to the *mundu* a wraparound cotton skirt that can be worn long or short.

KIPLING AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR 'DRESS REHEARSAL FOR ARMAGEDDON'?

By RODNEY ATWOOD

[The first essay that Dr Rodney Atwood supplied to us was published in *Journal* no.330 for March 2000 on "'Across our Fathers' Graves': Kipling and Field Marshal Earl Roberts". This was shortly after the publication of his book *The March to Kandahar*. His next book on "*Roberts and Kitchener in South Africa*" will have been launched a couple of months before this article appears (but after my writing these notes) and promises to be just as interesting. Ed. \

'As you know we went down to South Africa (Cape Town) for the winter, and there happened to be a bit of a war on...'

(Rudyard Kipling to Dr James Conland, 24 July 1900)

'Then came the South African War. . . [Kipling] helped his old friend, the private soldier, in every way he could find.'

(Kipling's obituary in *The Times*, 18 January 1936)

Kipling's part in Britain's South African War of 1899-1902 is not usually held to add lustre to his literary reputation, nor increase our respect for his views. His deep understanding of the peoples of India in all their colourful variety is contrasted with his attitude in South Africa. Here, it is said, he knew little more than your average imperialist and his attitude is simply one of identity with the white conquerors. More sympathetically Angus Wilson wrote that his being surrounded by a crowd of war correspondents, wives of distinguished serving officers and political observers stood between him and South African life itself. This atmosphere prevented his creative imagination from using his South African experience.¹ The war into which he threw himself so whole-heartedly is alleged to have 'punctured the bubble of Britain's reputation'. The defeats of 'Black Week' and the long-drawn-out guerrilla conflict fought by Lord Kitchener with concentration camps and farm-burning knocked the gilt off the Victorian age and exposed to European rivals the shallow hypocrisy and self-righteousness of the English. Continental newspapers vied with one another to praise the heroic Boer farmer defending his home against British soldiers in the pay of gold-grabbing Jewish capitalists.² Kipling's writing was of a part with this hypocrisy.

Why was his involvement in this imperialist war so whole-hearted? Like many intelligent countrymen, he sensed that 'the British century' was passing, that the Empire would not last forever. "The White Man's

Burden" was a call to the great English-speaking republic across the Atlantic, its economy rapidly making it a world colossus, to take its share of spreading civilisation across the globe. In the case of South Africa international developments coincided with personal motives. Kipling's biographers point to the tragic death of his beloved daughter Josephine in New York in March 1899 as providing the impetus for his involvement in the South African War. By unceasing activity he might forget his loss and stifle the pain in his heart. Travel to South Africa in the English winter would restore his own health. 'I'm glad I did not die last year,' he wrote from Cape Town in April 1900 as he found a new purpose in life.

By the outbreak of war in October 1899, he was no stranger to South Africa. He had stopped off at the Cape during his voyage to Australia in 1891, and had spent the months of January to April 1898 there, at the invitation of Cecil Rhodes. During this visit he had met the architect Herbert Baker and the Rand millionaire Sir Abe Bailey. He took 'the wonderful north-bound train' to Matabeleland, touring Bulawayo on a hired bicycle with yet another figure of the Empire, the railway engineer Sir Charles Metcalfe.

Kipling's interest dovetailed with a shift of British imperial strategy at the end of the nineteenth century. While India remained one of the twin centres of British strength, a changing world led her statesmen to look to Africa with its great natural wealth.³ The Suez Canal and the Cape were the two lifelines of empire, the routes to India. In South Africa Britain claimed paramount authority and trusteeship; there she came into conflict against a white race with a Biblical sense of their identity and superiority. The Boers regarded native peoples as 'kaffirs' (the Arab name for infidels). Their republics established after the Great Trek of 1837-45 were independent of British rule in the Cape and Natal, an independence reaffirmed by the Boer victory at Majuba in 1881. Future conflict might have been averted had not the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand reshaped the Transvaal and brought thousands of non-Dutch but white *Uitlanders*, mainly mine-workers, threatening to swamp the Boers. *Uitlanders*, literally 'outlanders' were regarded as somewhere between interloper and barbarian. Transvaal President Paul Kruger's detestation of them was epitomised by his opening salutation of an address given at Krugersdorp on the west Rand: 'Burghers, friends, thieves, murderers, newcomers, and others.' The *Uitlanders* were a thorn in his side, but also produced the Transvaal's transforming wealth. From a failing, bankrupt state it became the economic powerhouse of the region. The plotting of Cecil Rhodes with *Uitlander* leaders and the disastrous Jameson Raid of 1896 was a watershed in Anglo-Boer relations, greatly increasing tension. To a patriotic British public.

Rhodes and Jameson's wickedness was far outweighed by Boer injustice towards British citizens working in the Rand and by the Kaiser's congratulatory telegram sent to Kruger. In the minds of many, both Boer and Briton, it made war probable. Britain's High Commissioner in South Africa Alfred Milner, as totally unlike Kruger as a man could be, thought 'Krugerism' justified war if it could not be overthrown by political pressure. The British cabinet by contrast thought that in a crisis the Boers would back down as Kruger had over the 'Drifts crisis'. Only in mid-September 1899 did they find themselves staring war in the face, and ordered Field Marshal Lord Wolseley, the commander-in-chief, to prepare mobilisation. Reinforcements were sent, but the British garrisons in South Africa remained outnumbered. Historians like Thomas Pakenham depict Britain launching an aggressive war. In fact Kruger started the fighting, and only after initial defeats and loss of prestige did the British adopt the aim of 'unconditional surrender' borrowed from General Grant in the American Civil War.⁴ The Transvaal President had armed his state with German Mauser rifles, Krupp 75-mm field guns and French Creusot 155-mm 'Long Toms' and stockpiled ammunition in preparation for a second round of the conflict which the Boers had won triumphantly in 1881. When asked by the Prime Minister of Natal the object of his enormous armaments, he replied, 'Oh, Kaffirs, Kaffirs – and such-like objects.'⁵ The newly elected Orange Free State President Marthinus Steyn, a Dutch Afrikaner nationalist who stood for close ties with Transvaal, joined in a mutual alliance. On 9 October Kruger sent Britain an ultimatum which no world power could accept after staking so much on defending her citizens' rights. In forty-eight hours it expired and he launched his commandos into Cape Colony and Natal. The timing of the ultimatum was crucial, when further British reinforcements had yet to arrive and when spring grass would sustain Boer ponies.⁶

Kipling followed events closely, as one would expect of a former newspaperman. His visit to South Africa in early 1898 had already formed his views of the Boers: 'The racial twist of the Dutch . . . was to exploit everything they could which was being done for them, to put every obstacle in the way of any sort of development, and to take all the cash they could squeeze out of it. . .'⁷ Alfred Milner was disappointed not to have met Kipling on his journey and thought they would have become friends, but aptly summed up what the poet learnt: 'Well, I fancy he saw a lot, and I am very glad he saw through that utter imposture, the simple-minded Boer patriot, dear to the imagination of British Radicals. . . . The Boer has his strong points, but the *political Boer* is an awful humbug, for every crying out that he is being oppressed and plotted against, where, as a matter of fact he has got his foot well planted

on the necks of his neighbours and means to trample on them as long as he can. . . ."⁸ This view is echoed by the historian Richard Shannon: 'Kruger's republic was ruled by a narrow-minded Calvinist oligarchy whose mentality had more in common with the seventeenth than the nineteenth century. Its treatment of the blacks was brutal even by South African standards. Its attitude to the gold-grubbing *Uitlanders* of the Rand was an unsavoury mixture of greed and hypocrisy. Transvaaler hatred of the British was notorious and they cultivated apocalyptic visions of a South Africa purged of the pestilential British presence.'"⁹

As tension increased Kipling's poem "The Old Issue" in *The Times* of 29 September attacked Kruger. He compared the struggle for the rights of British citizens in South Africa with that for liberties enshrined in Magna Carta. He believed that Boer objectives were not merely independence, but 'of wanting to sweep the English into the sea, to lick their own nigger and to govern South Africa with a gun instead of a ballot box.'¹⁰ Jan Smuts provided this pan-South African programme. He saw the British Empire as a ramshackle structure based upon prestige and moral intimidation rather than military strength. Boer victories and subversion among the empire's peoples would shake the structure. Smuts wrote a passionate indictment of the British record in South Africa, *A Century of Wrong*, and proposed that the Boers should conquer Natal before reinforcements arrived. Defeat in South Africa could breed subversion elsewhere, so the British would not dare to withdraw troops from India and Egypt. Smuts thought with Russian help an uprising could be fomented in India.¹¹ Kipling's "The Old Issue" instead of seeming 'unintelligible to a modern reader, steeped in the propaganda of the anti-imperialists',¹² is a clear indictment of Kruger's policies:

He shall mark our goings, question whence we came.
Set his guards about us, . . .

He shall take our tribute; . . .
He shall change our gold for arms—arms we may not bear.

He shall break his Judges if they cross his word;
He shall rule above the Law calling on the Lord.

The *Uitlanders* paid the taxes which enriched the Transvaal government, but had no political rights and were restricted in movement. Boer control of labour and liquor laws on the Rand, of the dynamite monopoly and of the railways hindered development of the mines which required more sophisticated equipment and methods as they went deeper. A Boer policeman had shot dead a mineworker Tom

Edgar allegedly resisting arrest, and the investigating Boer magistrate congratulated the policeman. Kruger had dismissed Chief Justice Kotze who disagreed with him. He invoked scripture to show the Boers as the chosen people, the Old Testament Israelites surrounded by enemies. David Gilmour quotes Kipling writing after the war, predicting the rise of Apartheid: 'We put them [the Boers] into a position to uphold and expand their primitive lust for racial domination.'¹³ "The Old Issue" 's view of Kruger was savage but acute:

Cruel in the shadow, crafty in the sun,
Far beyond his borders shall his teachings run.

Sloven, sullen, savage, secret, uncontrolled.
Laying on a new land evil of the old—

From support for Britain's war aims. Kipling moved on to helping her soldiers. She ran her empire on the cheap. Tommy Atkins served for a shilling a day. Niall Ferguson writes how inexpensive the Empire was to defend, a defence budget of just over £40 million in 1898, British rule in India costing little more than 1% of Indian net domestic product.¹⁴ So proper care and special treats might be scarce for Tommy. "The Absent-Minded Beggar" proved the most successful single piece of charitable work in history, raising £340,000 for 'comforts' for the troops heading for Table Bay. It was first published in the *Daily Mail*, 31 October 1899. Sir Arthur Sullivan set it to music two weeks later, 'to a tune guaranteed to pull teeth out of barrel-organs.'¹⁵ Some of the fund was spent on pipe tobacco, 'Hignett's True Affection', which could also be chewed. In South Africa Kipling was treated with well-merited respect by the Army. 'My telegrams were given priority by sweating R.E. sergeants from all sorts of congested depots. My seat in the train was kept for me by British Bayonets in their shirt-sleeves. My small baggage was fought for and servilely carried by Colonial details, who are not normally meek, and I was *persona grattissima* at certain Wynberg Hospitals where the nurses found I was good for pyjamas.' He finished his account by the funny story of taking a bale of pyjamas to the wrong nurse, loudly announcing, 'Sister, I have got your pyjamas.' She was not amused.¹⁶

Kipling and his family had left England for South Africa in January 1900, arriving at Cape Town on 5 February. The next day he had an hour's talk with Lord Roberts, who with his chief of staff Kitchener was about to launch a decisive offensive towards Kimberley. Among the officers Roberts brought with him was the most brilliant of staff college lecturers. Colonel G.F.R. Henderson, known to his students as

'Baloo the Bear' after the wise teacher of Kipling's Mowgli. Roberts in his awareness of the press strikes a modern note. In South Africa there was a point to this. Newspapers distributed on commando had an important impact on combatants' morale, reassuring the Boers that their cause was just and noble in the sight of God and encouraging continued resistance."¹⁸ Roberts's propaganda could counter this. It may well be, as Lord Birkenhead suggests, that on his last night before leaving to take command in the field, he discussed with Kipling setting up a newspaper for the troops.¹⁸

The relief of Kimberley, the capture of Piet Cronje's force of 4000 Boers at Paardeberg on the Modder River and the occupation of the Orange Free State capital Bloemfontein marked the first weeks of Roberts's campaign (11 February-13 March 1900). It was a complete reversal of the fortunes of war, an end to the bull-headed attacks of 'Black Week'. A soldier of the Bedfordshire Regiment told his wife: 'I think we have a great man in Lord Roberts. Since he has been in the country everything seems to go better & I trust it may continue to do so.' Kipling would have heard such comments.¹⁹ In mid-March at Bloemfontein with the help of his press censor Colonel Eddie Stanley, later the Earl of Derby, Roberts established the *Friend* as an English-language newspaper to replace Boer papers he had closed down. Julian Ralph, one of the *Friend's* correspondents, wrote a cheerful account of this newspaper in *War's Brighter Side*. The *Friend* welcomed Kipling with a leading article praising him for having 'contributed more than anyone perhaps towards the consolidation of the British Empire' and for his unique ability 'to translate to the world the true inwardness of the Tommy's character'. He was co-author of a declaration of British principles, 'prompt and equal justice for all men', a logical sequel to his denunciation of Kruger in "The Old Issue". At the end of March 1900 he spoke at a dinner for Roberts and Milner at Bloemfontein, ironically praising Kruger as the man who had called the British back to their imperial duties. Roberts spoke of Kipling's reputation in the army: 'There is one among you who has a special claim on the hearts of the soldiers, my friend Rudyard Kipling. I can assure him that of all those who watched anxiously for good news during his recent severe illness [in New York], none were more interested than the soldiers, amongst whom his name is a household word.'²⁰

Among the distinguished writers on the staff of the *Friend* was Arthur Conan Doyle who like Kipling enthusiastically supported the British cause in South Africa, and later defended British aims in *The War in South Africa: its Cause and Conduct*. Conan Doyle had hoped to serve in the army, but it was as a volunteer doctor as well as a writer that he made his contribution. 'Enteric fever' (typhoid) was endemic in South

Africa. There had been an epidemic at the siege of Ladysmith causing the deaths of 450 with many others invalided home. Men in Roberts's army were already falling ill before they began drinking 'dead horse soup' from a polluted River Modder. His stay in Bloemfontein saw the worst outbreak of the war with 8000 cases. Kipling wrote angrily: 'Our own utter carelessness, officialdom and ignorance were responsible for much of the death-rate.' He mentioned the poor siting of latrines and tired staff officers ordering columns to encamp on the former sites of hospitals where the germs of enteric remained. According to one of the best accounts, an unpublished thesis. Roberts was in part responsible by keeping the Principal Medical Officer in the dark about his secret advance to surprise Cronje.²¹ However it is untrue to say he neglected nurses: his wife had started Indian Army nursing, and his correspondence is full of requests for more, against the conservatism of the Army Medical Corps. Kipling much admired the nurses' work and wrote a moving poem "The Dirge of the Dead Sisters":

Who recalls the twilight and the ranged tents in order
(Violet peaks uplifted through the crystal evening air?)
And the clink of iron teacups and the piteous, noble laughter,
And the faces of the Sisters with the dust upon their hair? . . .

(When the days were torment and the nights were clouded terror,
When the Powers of Darkness had dominion on our soul—
When we fled consuming through the Seven Hells of Fever,
These put out their hands to us and healed and made us whole.)

The second verse may have echoes of his own nearly fatal illness in New York in 1899.

Roberts's repeated requests for more nurses were successful. There were some seventy-five employed before the end of February. By mid-April there were 500, and by July 900, with 7000 orderlies and about 1000 medical officers, a remarkable feat of improvisation by an R.A.M.C. caught initially unprepared. In this the commander-in-chief supported the corps.²²

Kipling's short story "A Burgher of the Free State" describes a Bloemfontein newspaper as he imagined it before and just after Roberts's arrival there. The old Scots newspaperman who served as his narrator has a good knowledge of the sorts of things an intelligent listener would have learnt in Cape Town and Bloemfontein: the consumption of tinned food, coffee drinking instead of English tea, Transvaal certainty of beating the *Rooineks*, exaggerated stories of Boer victories, Dutch preachers or *Predikants* keeping up morale, Kruger's

expectation of foreign intervention. The point of the story, however, that the Boers tried to raise the Basuto against the British, is almost certainly wrong. Some 10,000 black *agterryers*, 'after-riders', served with the commandos, but overwhelmingly it was the British who used blacks in increasing numbers as the war went on.²³

From Bloemfontein Kipling had his first experience of battle. On 28 March he and the staff of the *Friend* were taken to see a skirmish at Karee Siding twelve miles to the north, which gave him insight into modern war c.1900. When British guns fired, 'a small piece of hanging woodland filled and fumed with our shrapnel much as a man's moustache fills with cigarette'. There were 'nasty little one-pounder' pom-poms firing belts of ten rounds in quick succession (usually jamming on the sixth), neat trenches, the men extended over 'an enormous pale landscape' which swallowed up seven thousand 'without a sign, along a front of seven miles.'²⁴ The clumsiness of British tactics drew some acid comments: 'The Boers hit us just as hard and just as often as they knew how; and we advanced against 'em as if they were street rioters we didn't want to hurt. . . we are the biggest fools in the way that we wage war, that this century has produced.'²⁵ These reflections produced a memorable sentence in his bitter short story, "A Sahibs' War": 'It was a war of fools armed with the weapons of magicians.'

Few modern readers like this story much, with its account of Boer treachery and British (or rather Australian) vengeance, but it reflects the experience of imperial soldiers in that war. While there was respect for the courage of fighting burghers, there was contempt for treachery and misdeeds: the looting of northern Natal, the treatment of *Uitlander* refugees driven from the goldfields, abuse of the white flag, firing on Red Cross wagons and the use of exploding 'dum-dum' bullets. At the battle of Doom Kop, for example, all the Gordon Highlanders' dead in a magnificent charge over the Boer position were killed by exploding bullets.²⁶ Roberts tried to deal with misuse of white flags by courts-martial, writing to Milner, 30 April 1900. 'I have already tried a well-to-do man near [here] at whose farm a soldier was shot by the Boers, who had the white flag flying on his roof, and who had taken his oath to remain neutral. The Court Martial sentenced him to one year's imprisonment and confiscation of his property.'²⁷ Private Tucker of the 60th Rifles describes an incident in July 1900, which fits the pattern of Kipling's story: "... our Canadian Cavalry experienced the Boer treachery of the white flag. Some of these men advanced to a farmhouse, which was flying the white flag, and when within fifty yards, two Boers came out and gave themselves up (or gave signs that they would) so our Canadian friends advanced and soon got a volley from some more Boers, killing one and wounding two others . . .'²⁸

"A Sahibs' War" has been well analysed in the *Kipling Journal*. What seems to us deplorable exultation of vengeance was to Kipling a frequent experience on the veldt and may indeed have been based on the words of an Indian cavalryman.²⁹ The British government had decided that they would not employ Indian Army regiments in a 'White Man's or 'Sahibs' War'. Nonetheless, there were Indian participants aplenty: 1677 Indian soldiers and 9065 Indian followers from the subcontinent and some 1600 living in South Africa serving in the Ambulance Corps. At the start of Kipling's story the high-caste Sikh cavalryman Umr Singh angrily says on boarding a train, 'Do not herd me with these black Kaffirs'. This assumes a tragic irony when one reads that in the Boer ambush of Colonel Benson's column at Tweebosch 'the whole Indian and Kaffir establishment of the Field Veterinary Hospital were butchered [by the Boers]. One Farrier Sergeant of Indian Native Cavalry and two Indian Veterinary Assistants, all carrying no arms, were ruthlessly shot dead after the surrender, and nine Hospital Kaffirs were either killed in action or murdered later.'³⁰

Umr Singh as an experienced cavalryman well versed in 'horse-mastership' (care of horses) noted that the British Army 'used horses as a courtesan uses oil: with both hands'. Less than half of over 500,000 horses shipped to South Africa survived the war.³¹

Kipling was not in South Africa for the next phase of Roberts's offensive, the advance on the Transvaal capital. As the columns of infantry left Bloemfontein on 1 May they sang a popular song, "Marching to Pretoria". A young cavalryman, Lieutenant March Phillips, drew a wonderful picture of the level plain streaked with gauzy mist, the cloudless sky above, 'big ambulance wagons with huge white covers nodding one behind the other, naval twelve pounders with ten-oxen teams and sailors swinging merrily alongside, infantry marching with the indescribable regular undulation of masses of drilled men, reminding one of the ripple of a centipede's legs'. The perspiring men marched at ease with helmets on the side to shelter their eyes from the sun, rifles with butt-ends over shoulders. When a halt was called they greeted it with relief, flinging off heavy accoutrements, lighting pipes, pulling out old scraps of newspapers or just stretching on the grass. At the end of May the weather got colder. Captain Walter Congreve on Roberts's staff wrote: 'Men on the march are an extraordinary sight now, some with old socks on their hands to keep them warm, many with Balaclava caps under their helmets, trousers of all sorts picked up on the road or bought to replace the worn out ones.' Kipling heard about the march from participants. His poem "Boots" with its subtitle "(Infantry Columns of the Earlier War)" echoes Lord Roberts's statement after the war that the infantry's marching was unsurpassed.³²

We're foot—slog—slog—slog—sloggin' over Africa!
 Foot—foot—foot—foot—sloggin' over Africa—
 (Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up and down again!)
 There's no discharge in the war!

We—can—stick—out—'unger, thirst, an' weariness.
 But—not—not—not—not the chronic sight of 'em—
 Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again.
 An' there's no discharge in the war!

I—'ave—marched—six—weeks in 'Ell an' certify
 It—is—not—fire—devils dark or anything
 But boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again.
 An' there's no discharge in the war!

Few poems so closely convey a soldier's experience and the poet's sympathetic understanding. Julian Ralph recalled that Kipling was like a comrade when he talked to a private soldier, 'and talk to them he did. Jack tar, colonial, regular and Pathan', (one might add Sikh sowar or cavalryman). Most of his writings about South Africa were gathered in the volume *The Five Nations*. These were Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa. The solidarity of Empire delighted Kipling. Australia sent 17,000 men, Canada 8,500, New Zealand 6,000; other colonies contingents. During the war Australia became a new Commonwealth, the separate provinces being united. In praise Kipling wrote "The Young Queen" and "Lichtenberg", the latter suggested by a chance remark of an Australian soldier. Although barred from 'a Sahib's war', Indian princes raised money and dispatched horses 'to help conquer the enemies of the Great White Queen'.³³

Kipling had returned to England in March 1900, but came back again to South Africa each winter, December to April in both 1900-1 and 1901-2. In England he finished *Kim* and set up a local rifle club. In South Africa the Kiplings stayed at 'The Woolsack', the house Cecil Rhodes had built for them. On 6 April 1901. Reuter's chief correspondent H.A. 'Taffy' Gwynne had lunch with Kipling and 'Two of the dearest little children in the world', presumably Elsie and John. Kipling recited what he had written, and Gwynne recorded: 'One beautiful poem, "the bridge guard" perfectly lovely. "The sahib's war" a story. What marvellous work for this Empire he is doing. . . .'³⁴ On the death of Rhodes on 26 March 1902 Kipling wrote a poetic tribute, "The Burial". Roberts had turned the tide and occupied Boer capitals, but his forecast of a war's end was eighteen months premature. In those last eighteen months the British fought a drawn-out guerrilla campaign, expensive

and in some quarters of Britain unpopular. Kipling's writings about this phase reflect the elusiveness of Boer commandos, especially Christiaan De Wet, as in "Ubique":

Ubique means 'They've caught De Wet, an' now we shan't be long.'

Ubique means 'I much regret, the beggar's goin' strong!'¹³⁵

Kitchener eventually wore down the commandos by clearing the veldt, burning farms and herding the population into internment camps, dubbed by two radical M.P.s 'concentration camps' after the *campos de reconcentrado* of Spain's campaign against Cuban rebels. Poor British army staff work meant these were as badly run as the hospitals had been at first. Thousands of Boer women and children died, mainly of a measles epidemic. Only when Milner and his young men took over the camps was the illness arrested, conditions were improved and so many schools set up that more Boer children were being educated by the war's end than before it. The British had a moral blindness towards events in these camps, from Kitchener's ignoring the suffering, although he did visit to recruit his 'National Scouts' (Boers fighting for the British), to John Buchan who thought they became 'health resorts', to Kipling who wrote, 'We charged ourselves step by step with the care and maintenance of all Boerdom—women and children included. Whence horrible tales of our atrocities in the concentration camps.' The military justification for removing the families was that Boer farms were bases providing fresh horses, food, ammunition, intelligence weapons for the commandos. There is some evidence that Boer leaders preferred to have their families under British control than wandering the veldt.³⁶

Kitchener's blockhouse lines were part of his strategy. Originally to protect the railways, they had been extended until by the end of 1901 great areas were criss-crossed. The new design by Major Spring Rice was a virtual fortress easy to construct: two layers of circular corrugated iron, the gap between filled with earth and later hard shingle, protected with sandbags. Some 8,000 were built with 3,700 miles of barbed wire, enclosing 31,000 square miles, garrisoned by 50,000 British troops and 16,000 African auxiliaries. Flora Shaw, the colonial editor of *The Times*, described these lines in an article published on 25 February 1902. Passengers on trains passing between barbed-wire entanglements and pegged-out fences saw blockhouse succeeding blockhouse, each one home for eight or ten men. Whitewashed stones marked a path to the railway, the edge of a garden, the name of a battalion or regiment. A block-house of the Gloucesters had a life-size peacock with spread tail ingeniously worked in broken bottle glass, with the stamps of mineral

water-bottles forming the eyes of the tail. Khaki-clad dummies appealed to passengers for 'Newspapers, please'. From every blockhouse as a train passed there was a rush to the line in hopes of gifts of cigarettes, newspapers, chocolate, fruit and many small luxuries.³⁷

Dr Helen Goethals describes the poem about blockhouse duty. "Bridge-Guard in the Karroo", as 'vintage Kipling'. He knew well the role the railway played in supporting Roberts's advance to Pretoria and Kitchener's anti-guerrilla campaign, and the ceaseless attempts by commandos to blow up bridges and derail trains. The poem catches the expectation of waiting for a train and the eager rush for news:

... we feel the far track humming.
 And we see her headlight plain.
 And we gather and wait her coming—
 The wonderful north-bound train.

Quick, ere the gift escape us!
 Out of the darkness we reach
 For a handful of week-old papers
 And a mouthful of human speech.

So we return to our places,
 As out on the bridge she rolls;
 And the darkness covers our faces,
 And the darkness re-enters our souls.

Christiaan De Wet, the brilliant commando leader, thought the blockhouses were the work of a 'blockhead' and derided their ineffectiveness, but he was wrong. In *The Times* of 5 June 1901, publishing the poem, the editorial drew attention to the heavy burden which fell on 'details guarding the line' and the need for more mounted troops. Soon these horsemen would be led by the men who commanded Britain's First World War armies, French, Haig, Allenby, Rawlinson, Plumer. Kitchener's relentless 'drives', the use of black scouts to lead the columns at first light to commando laagers and the lines of blockhouses to seal off Boer escapes wore down the commandos. At Vereeniging he wisely offered favourable terms and the chance for the Boer "*bittereinders*" to keep their pride. Peace was made at the end of May 1902.³⁸

If Kipling's South African war writing seems ambiguous and contradictory, this partly reflects his own 'two separate sides to my head', partly the British Army's ambiguity in admiring its enemies despite 'slim' Boer tricks, and disliking the 'Jew-burgers' of the Rand. His lack of sympathy with inmates of the camps contrasts with poems such as

'Joubert' on the death of the Transvaal's first commandant-general and 'Piet' in which Tommy reflects that it was no good hating those he was paid to kill. Kipling was not however ambiguous in believing that the Army (and his countrymen) needed a tremendous shake-up. His private letters and his public writing show this. The British army with its glib assumption of a short war and its numerical superiority had seemed an incompetent bully, the fighting force of the world's greatest empire unable to subdue two Lilliputian republics. This view has some truth, but is superficial. At first the commandos had a numerical superiority. If one accepts the young Winston Churchill's view that 'the individual Boer, mounted in suitable country, is worth from three to five regular soldiers', the odds are further to the Boer advantage. Comparison of the British campaign in South Africa with those of other colonial powers like France in Madagascar or later 'people's wars' like the Americans" in Vietnam is to British advantage. The distinguished military historian Professor Michael Howard observed in his 1971 Ford Lectures: 'seventy years' further experience of insurgency and counter-insurgency in warfare may lead us to wonder, not that Lord Kitchener's pacification campaign took so long and involved some incidental [*sic*] brutalities, but that it did not take still longer and involve yet more'. On closer examination the brave Boer commandos do not emerge with clean hands: every ambush of a British column was accompanied by a cold-blooded massacre of black drivers, and the bodies of black scouts murdered on the veldt were left unburied as a warning to others. Liberal admiration for the Boers strikes an ironic note now in view of their narrow bigotry and the apartheid state which they later established."

Thousands of British soldiers at war's end returned to 'Ackneystadt' and 'Thamesfontein' and many others places, and gathered up the threads of life in 'awful old England again.'" There follow two themes for the student of Kipling. Firstly, was peace 'betrayed' by Kitchener's compromise and by the generous settlement of millions of pounds to the Boers for rebuilding? The conventional view is that British policy entrenched Afrikaner supremacy. The Boers lost the war, but won the peace. Certainly successive British governments both Unionist and Liberal abandoned any attempt to enforce voting rights for blacks and Cape coloureds. Kipling's literary equivalent, in the words of Angus Wilson, is that 'in his South African work, the black people of the land are scarcely there at all'. Milner with his 'kindergarten' of young and enthusiastic disciples set about the tasks of anglicisation and industrialisation. He did not establish a sufficiently large English population to secure the kind of South Africa he wanted. In March 1905 he resigned his posts and returned to England to see the Unionists (mostly Conservatives) crash to defeat. This was to Kipling a terrible blow. The

Liberal grant of self-government to the Boers seemed to him the end of all Rhodes's and Milner's dreams of English dominance. Nonetheless, Milner's rebuilding after the war, his railway infrastructure and his industrialisation laid the basis of the future South Africa, a very different country from Kruger's rural paradise. As the social reformer Violet Markham wrote in 1913: "the new South Africa is in the main [Milner's] monument and opponents who repudiate his views continue to build on the foundations he laid..." Kipling had foreshadowed her words in "The Pro-Consuls" published in *The Times*, 22 July 1905

They that dig foundations deep.
Fit for realms to rise upon.
Little honour do they reap
Of their generation...

Doubted are they, and defamed
By the tongues their act set free,
While they quicken, tend and raise
Power that must their power displace....

Any scruples the Liberals may have had over the rights of blacks were dissolved in the pleasure of humiliating Milner as their chief jingo bogey-man. A furious motion of censure against him was passed in the Commons on 21 May 1906. The Lords took up the challenge and repudiated it.⁴¹

British concessions to the Afrikaners, however, ensured that South Africa supported Britain in two world wars and protected 'the life-line of empire' round the Cape. It was not Kipling but one of Milner's young men, the author John Buchan, who recorded South Africa's contribution to the British Empire's military effort in 1914-1918. Former commando leaders Botha and Smuts led the Volk as Britain's ally into a war against Germany, stamping out in its early weeks a revolt led by some of their pro-German former comrades-in-arms. Buchan became the historian of the South African brigade fighting on the Western Front and proudly recorded how it sacrificed itself three times in crucial battles to preserve the British front, most notably at Delville Wood. There in 1926 the widow of former Boer commando leader, British field marshal and South African Premier Louis Botha unveiled the South African war memorial as 'an inspiration to all that is good and noble in human action and devotion, and in national unity of heart and endeavour'. The brigade was one-third of Dutch descent, men who had fought against Britain in 1899-1902 but for her in 1914-1918. Denys Reitz, author of *Commando* and a Boer *bittereinder*, became a colonel

in the British army and commanded one of its oldest regiments, the Royal Scots Fusiliers.⁴² Praising the peace of Vereeniging on the death of Smuts in 1950 Winston Churchill ignored the rights of blacks in South Africa for Britain's strategic gain: 'No act of reconciliation after a bitter struggle has ever produced so rich a harvest in good will or effects that lasted so long upon affairs.'⁴³

The second theme is British Army reform. Was the war a 'first-class dress parade for Armageddon' as junior officers told the poet? Kipling, partly because of his friendship with Roberts, was at first involved. The army seemed to come out of the South African War wanting in almost every aspect. Kipling's view that British overconfidence had led to blunders in the war is of a piece with his "Recessional" theme, that hubris would be punished. Both during and after the war Kipling believed the British had 'had no end of a lesson'. His short stories, "Folly Bridge", "The Outsider" and "The Way that he Took" reflect British incompetence. In "The Captive" the American arms dealer tells his captors, '[The Boers] fought to kill and, by what I could make out, the British fought to be killed.'⁴⁴ In "The Lesson" Kipling lamented,

Not on a single issue, or in one direction or twain.
But conclusively, comprehensively, and several times and again.
Were all our most holy illusions, knocked higher than Gilderoy's
kite.
We have had a jolly good lesson, and it serves us jolly well right!

For reform Kipling looked to his friend Lord Roberts, now commander-in-chief. To shake up his countrymen Roberts turned to Kipling. In December 1901, the field marshal wrote to the poet: 'If you are in favour of compulsory service for home defence would it be possible to write some stirring lines to bring home to the public the danger of allowing ourselves to be a second time in the same risky position without any properly trained troops in the country.' Carrie Kipling noted in her diary that the letter was received on 3 December and that on the 4 Rudyard was composing 'conscription verses'. "The Islanders" was published on 3 January 1902.⁴⁵

Then were the judgements loosened; then was your shame
revealed.
At the hands of a little people, few but apt in the field. . . .

Then ye returned to your trinkets; then ye contented your souls
With the flannelled fools at the wicket or the muddied oafs at
the goals.

Kipling asked *TheTimes* editor Moberley Bell to back him with an editorial. On 4 January Bell wrote that he hoped the verses would prove a ringing call to action. 'There is much that touches the consciences of us all in the stern and stinging rebuke addressed to his "Islanders" by one who has given the noblest expression to the pride and to the duty of Empire.' Letters to the editor in succeeding days vied in the force of their differing views. Mr W.J. Ford wished 'to protest most strongly against such an expression as flannelled fools'; famous cricketers had laid down their lives or lost sons in South Africa. The headmaster of Loretto insisted that some of his sportsmen passed into the army with flying colours. While disliking Kipling's phrase 'flannelled fools', he agreed with universal military service, the point of the poem and of Roberts's original request. Most letters took this appeal seriously. T. Miller Maguire wrote: 'I am not a fervent admirer of all Mr Rudyard Kipling's works, and I have often protested against the spirit which applies the phrase 'Tommies' to our soldiers, and the notion that these all speak the language of the London slums,' but he accepted that schoolboy athleticism was achieved at the cost of other qualities. 'An Islander' whose letter appeared on 9 January, wrote, 'All honour is due to Mr Kipling for sounding loud the trumpet of warning, and I hope the notes will ring from end to end of the Empire.'⁴⁶

Despite this support, there was to be no national service. 'Compulsory military service' was wrong for 'a free people' as one newspaper stated. Politically it was unacceptable to both parties. However, reforms between 1902 and 1914, especially the creation of a six-division British Expeditionary Force for the continent, prepared the army for war. Not until Kitchener called for volunteers in 1914 was Kipling's effect on a whole generation felt, if we may believe Charles Carrington. Carrington was inspired particularly by the courage of Parnesius and Pertinax "On the Great Wall" in *Puck of Pook's Hill*, and asserted that many others were likewise spurred to action.⁴⁷ The new Kitchener armies were the embodiment of Kipling's story "The Army of a Dream". He had imagined falling asleep in his club and being told of a rising up of men of all types, artisans, cricketers, schoolboy, to military service, which they enjoy as much as organised games. When the dreamer awoke it was to the realisation that those capable of fulfilling it had died at Sannah's Post and other ambushes in South Africa. In the years before 1914 Lord Roberts and the National Service League waged an untiring although ultimately unsuccessful battle for military service. Kipling and Roberts's dream came true in the vision of a man whom Kipling did not much like when he met him in Egypt: Field Marshal Lord Kitchener of Khartoum. Kitchener's breadth of vision, which made him more than the 'fatted pharaoh in spurs' whom Kipling

described, enabled him to see into Boer minds at Vereeniging and to envisage how the Great War had to be waged. Readers of the *Kipling Journal* will associate Kitchener's New Armies with the disasters of Loos, where Kipling's son died, and the first day of the Somme. Others see "The Army of a Dream" as dreary propaganda posing as a short story. But it was the men of Kitchener's New Armies who epitomised the spirit of Kipling's story. They overcame initially chaotic organisation, improvised barracks, obsolete rifles and even broomsticks for training, all-too-often by outdated Colonel Blimps and Sergeant Blimps. This new army learnt the terrible lessons of industrial war. particularly the use of artillery and combining infantry, guns, engineers, tanks and aircraft in the all-arms battle. In 1918, with magnificent Canadian and Australian divisions and increasing numbers of Americans, they advanced to victory. As the now much-reviled Haig's recent biographer (no admirer) writes, '[D]espite his misjudgements, from 8 August to 11 November Haig had commanded the largest army the British Empire was ever to put in the field (about 1.8 million men) through an uninterrupted series of the greatest land victories in British history.'⁴⁸

When those victories were won, they came too late for Kipling, for whom Armistice Day brought no joy, only private grief and sadness for a son lost with so many others.⁴⁹

NOTES

I have made much use of the Kipling Society's on-line "Readers' Guide" especially John Radcliffe's notes on Kipling's story "A Burgher of the Free State" and two articles in the *Kipling Journal* (henceforth "KJ"): Dr Helen Goethals, "Poetry and Power: Rudyard Kipling and the War in South Africa 1899-1902." K.I. no.316 (Dec. 2005) pp.8-23 and K. St John Damstra, "Attacking the Boers in the Style of Kipling Sahib", KJ, no.329 (Dec. 2008), pp.11-25.

1. Angus Wilson, *The Strange Ride of Rudyard Kipling* (London, 1979), pp.286-7. Wilson does think South Africa contributed two of the best *Just So Stories*, "How the Leopard Got its Spots" and "The Elephant's Child".
2. J.A.S. Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: the Close of the Nineteenth Century*. (London, 1946), p.269.
3. The factors driving British involvement are explored in Ronald Robinson. John Gallagher and Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians: the Official Mind of Imperialism* (London, 1965).
4. G.H.L. Le May, *The Afrikaners: an Historical Interpretation*. (Oxford, 1995). p. 111.
5. Cecil Headlam. ed.. *The Milner Papers* (2 vols, London. 1931 and 1933). I. p.58.
6. For the war's causes see Iain Smith. *The Origins of the South African War 1899-1902* (London & New York. 1996) and for the timing of the ultimatum Roland Oliver's review of Thomas Pakenham's *Boer War* in *The Times Literary Supplement*, no. 4001, 23 November. 1979 p. 33. Even knowledgeable writers Lord Birkenhead

- (p.204) Charles Carrington (p.359) refer to Britain declaring war. when it was the other way round. The Transvaal ultimatum expired on the 11th and fighting began on the 12th at Kraipaan with the Boer attack and capture of an armoured train. Deneys Reitz, *Commando: a Boer Journal of the Boer War* (London. 1948). pp.24 and 29 makes it clear that young Boers were confident of victory.
7. Rudyard Kipling. *Something of Myself* (London, 1937) p. ITS. Henceforth 'SOM'.
 8. Headlam. *Milner Papers*. I. p.240.
 9. R. Shannon. *The Crisis of Imperialism 1865-1915* (London. 1974). pp.325-6.
 10. Quoted in David Gilmour. *The Long Recessional: the Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London, 2002). p. 144.
 11. W.K. Hancock & J. van der Poel. *Selections from the Smuts Papers*. I (Cambridge. 1966). pp.322-3. Once war started. Boer commandos lost the initiative against Natal by sitting down to besiege the garrisons of Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking.
 12. Charles Carrington. *Rudyard Kipling: his Life and Work* (London, 1955). p.302.
 13. SOM. p.97 also quoted Gilmour. *Long Recessional*, p.145. Leo Amery, ed.. *The Times History of the War in South Africa*. (7 volumes. 1900-1909). I. pp. 108 et seq gives details of the shooting of the *Uitlander* Tom Edgar and the chief justice's dismissal. Boers hostile to Kruger thought there could still be negotiation rather than war; see *The War Memoirs of Commandant Ludwig Krause 1899-1900* (CapeTown. 1996). p.1. Mary Hamer's statement on the Kipling Society website that Britain 'was reviled by liberal thinkers all over the world' is strictly not true. 'England must not fail," wrote Mark Twain, 'it would mean an inundation of Russian and German political degradations . . . and a sort of Middle Age night and slavery which would last till Christ comes again. Even when wrong—and she is wrong—England must be upheld.' His words reflected progressive American support for the champion of free elections and free parliaments against Boer obscurantism. Americans of Irish descent who had gained little from British parliaments took the opposite position. On public opinion: see D. Lowry, "When the World Loved the Boers". *History Today*, vol.49 (5), May 1999, pp.43-50 and D. Nash, "The Boer War and its Humanitarian Critics", *ibid.* vol.49 (6), June. 1999, pp.42-9; M.D. Branch. "British Society and the War", in Warwick. *The South African War: the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*. (Harlow. Essex, 1980), p.210-238; U.S. Wilson. "The United States and the War", *ibid.* pp.320-9.
 14. Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London, 2003). pp.215 and 245.
 15. "Absent-Minded Beggar" Conference at Bristol University, June, 2010; SOM, p.150 and *Daily Mail*, 14 November 1899. p.3. Not all soldiers' wives were delighted to receive 'Absent-Minded Beggar' charity: see "Mrs Tommy Atkins on the Situation" in M. Van Wyk Smith. *Drummer Hodge: the Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War IS99 1902*(Oxford, 1978). p.110.
 16. SOM, p.151.
 17. "Baloo the Bear": Lawrence James, *Imperial Warrior: the Life and Times of Field Marshal Viscount Allenby 1861-1936* (London. 1993). p.24; commandos and the press: Fransjohan Pretorius. "Boer Propaganda during the South African War of 1899-1902", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol.37, issue 3 (2009). pp.399-419.
 18. Lord Birkenhead, *Rudyard Kipling* (New York. 1978), p.207.
 19. Bedford County Record Office.. OR1243/12a. letter from Bloemfontein. 4 April 1900. For the brilliance of Roberts's campaign see Andre Wessels in *Victoria's*

- Generals*, edited by Steven Corvi and Ian Beckett (Barnsley, 2009), pp.184—9 and Leopold Scholtz. *Why the Boers Lost the War* (Basingstoke. Hants.. 2005). pp.58-61.
20. SOM, pp.152-3; Gilmour, *Long Recessional*, p.148 Andre Wessels. *Lord Roberts and the War in South Africa 1899-1902* (Stroud, Glos. 2000). p.65. Sadly for admirers of Kipling (and Roberts) 'equal rights for all men' did nothing for those of blacks.
 21. SOM. p. 155: M.S. Stone. M.S.. "The Victorian Army: Health, Hospitals and Social Conditions as Encountered by British Troops during the South African War. 1899—1902." Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. London University. 1992.
 22. My figures differ slightly from those given by Mary Hamer in the "Readers' Guide". They are based on Roberts's correspondence in the National Archives. WO108/238, vol.1, pp.5, 9, 11, all January 1900; the Wellcome Library, RAMC 2094 Diary of Surgeon-General. Sir W.D. Wilson. P.M.O, in South Africa 8 Nov 1899 to 19 April 1901, pp.41 -2; The Report of the Royal Commission on the Care of Sick and Wounded, p.30; and Amery, *The Times History*. IV. pp.522-3.
 23. The role of black participants is now widely known. The pioneer in this field was Peter Warwick. For a good introduction see his article "Black People and the War". pp.186-210 in the book which he has edited, *The South African liar* (footnote 13 above).
 24. SOM. p.158.
 25. Letter to Dr James Conland quoted in both Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling*, pp. 314-5 and Birkenhead. *Rudyard Kipling*, pp.211-2.
 26. Professor Edward Spiers speaking at "The Absent-Minded Beggar" conference and the same author's *The Victorian Soldier in Africa* (Manchester and New York. 2004). p.169. Accusation and counter-accusation flew back and forth about exploding bullets. 'Lodi' Krause maintained the British were first, but admitted both sides used them. See *War Memoirs of Commandant Ludwig Krause*, p. 127.
 27. Headlam, *Milner Papers*, II. p.80.
 28. Pamela Todd and David Fordham, ed.. *Private Tucker's Boer War Diary. The Transvaal War of 1899. 1900. 1901 & 1902 with the Natal Field Forces* (London, 1980). pp.116-7. To say that Kipling's attitude of vengeance towards a treacherous foe in "A Sahibs' War" is prefigured in his earlier poem about Burma "The Grave of the Hundred Dead" in *Departmental Ditties* may not make it any more appealing to modern sensibilities.
 29. Kipling told Edmonia Hill in a letter of 1905 that most of the story 'was taken down from the mouth of a native officer up country during the war'. David Page in KJ no 324 (Dec. 2007), p.60. See St John Damstra, "Attacking the Boers" for a stimulating interpretation. The writer suggests that 'Kurban Sahib', the young officer killed in the ambush, is meant to symbolise Lt the Hon. Freddie Roberts, the Field Marshal's son, mortally wounded in an attempt to rescue the guns at Colenso. The author mentions Peter Hopkirk's identification of a commander-in-chief or 'Jang-i-lat Sahib' with black hair as Lord Roberts in support of his thesis. Kipling had described Roberts in an earlier poem "One Viceroy Resigns" as 'red-faced and white-haired'. Kaori Nagai, *Empire of Analogies* (Cork. 2006). pp. 108-9 also identifies the story with Roberts and his son.
 30. Figures of Indian participants from Shamus O.D. Wade in KJ 273. March 1995; Marquis of Anglesey. *A History of the British Cavalry. 1816-1919*. (5 volumes. London. 1973-1986). iv. p.270. Also Frederick Smith. *Veterinary History of the South African War*. (London. 1919). p. 213 and Amery, *Times History*, V. p.507.

31. In the foreword to Gen Smith's *Veterinary History of the War in South Africa*, p.iv. Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood wrote: 'It is . . . a disgrace to Great Britain that during the war in South Africa we lost, mainly by insufficient feeding and over-work, 325,000 horses. 51,000 mules, and 195,000 oxen, each of the latter averaging £20 in value. As a race we are not good horsemasters.'
32. L. March Phillips, *With Rimington*. (London. 1902). pp.112-3: Royal Greenjackets Museum. Winchester. Hants: diary of Captain Walter Congreve, October 1899 to July 1900. entry of 29 May 1900: Roberts's testimony to the Elgin Commission (1903).
33. Amery. *Times History*. 111. pp.23-47; H.H.S. Pearse, *The History of Lumsden's Horse* (London. 1903). p.25. Carrington. *Kipling*, pp.325-6 writes appreciatively of 'Lichtenberg'. Kaori Nagai. *Empire of Analogies* takes the idea of Kipling and the empire agreeing on 'the Five Nations', the White Dominions, further by connecting it to Ireland. With an Irishman Roberts commanding her armies and Irish soldiers fighting courageously on the veldt, the Queen sanctioned the wearing of the shamrock on St Patrick's Day by Irish regiments and the founding of a regiment of Irish Guards.
34. Bodleian Library, Oxford. Ms Gwynne dep.29: Diaries.
35. "Ubique" is of course the motto of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, who in this phase contributed Mounted Men to the mobile columns chasing Boer commandos.
36. K. Surridge "Lord Kitchener and the South African War 1899-1902". *Soldiers of the Queen* no. 101, June 2000, p.25 on Kitchener's tendency to ignore unpalatable facts; John Buchan, *Memory Hold the Door* (London, 1954, orig. publ. 1940). p.112: Kipling quoted by Birkenhead, p.215; for Boer leaders preferring the women and children to be in camps see Andre Wessels. ed., "Lord Kitchener and the War in South Africa 1899-1902" (Army Records Society. Stroud. Glos. 2006). pp.81. 99-100, 153, 174. In black camps whose purpose as labour camps along the railway was different over 17,000 died according to the researches of Dr Lowell Kessler.
37. *The Times*, 25 Feb 1902, "The Orange River Colony", p.4; see also *Private Tucker's Diary*, p.184 and J.C. Welch, "The block house line". *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Review*, vol.83 (2005). p.105. April 1901.
38. See Goethals, "Poetry and Power" cited above. For Kitchener's campaign see Andre Wessels. *Lord Kitchener and the War in South Africa 1899-1902* (Army Records Society. Stroud. Glos., 2006). Also Dennis Judd & Keith Surridge. *The Boer War* (London. 2002). De Wet's "blockhead" comments are in his *Three Years War* (London. 1903), p.340 and assessed Thomas Pakenham, *Boer War* (London, 1979). pp.341 and 346. *The Times* editorial of 5 June 1901 is on p.9.
39. W.S. Churchill. *My Early Life* (London.. 1930). p.316; Howard quoted by K. Jeffrey, "The Impact of the South African War on Imperial Defence", in D. Lowry. *The South African War Reappraised* (Manchester & New York, 1900. Shooting black drivers and scouts, see *inter alia*, Lt Col Sir John Rankin. *A Subaltern's fetters to his Wife* (London. 1930. orig. Publ. 1901). p.2()3; H.W. Wilson. *After Pretoria: the Guerrilla War* (2 volumes, London, 1902) I, p.4()1; National Army Museum, Roberts papers. 7101-23-61/22. Rawlinson to Roberts. 28 August 1901; Reitz. *On Commando*, pp.294-5.
40. cf. Kipling poems "The Return" and "Chant-Pagan".
41. Kipling's "The Pro-Consults" is by tradition a eulogy of Milner (see *New York Times*. 22 July 1905). and by inference a criticism of Kitchener's compromising peace. John

- Ratcliffe and John Walker pointed out to me that, as so often with Kipling, the truth is more elusive. See B. Moore-Gilbert, *Kipling and Orientalism* (London, 1986), pp.176-9. Violet Markham is quoted at the head of a seminal article on the effect of Milner's reforms by Simla Marks and Stanley Trapido, "Lord Milner and the South African State". *History. Workshop Journal* (1979). Shannon. *Crisis of Imperialism*. p.388 for 'chief jingo bogeyman'.
42. Le May, *Afrikaners*, p.139; foreword by Smuts to Reitz's *Commando: Reitz. So Outspan* (London. 1943). *Memory Hold the Door* (London, 1940), pp.119-121 and William Philpott, *Bloody Victory: the Sacrifice on the Somme*. (London. 2010). pp.9 and 251 from which the words of the dedication speech are quoted.
 43. It is true that in 1961 South Africa left the Commonwealth and established a racist republic. But as the twentieth century approached its close, white minority rule, which seemed so firmly entrenched, was swept away. Increasing violence in the black townships threatened to reduce South Africa to anarchy. P.W. Botha ordered the release of Nelson Mandela, leader of the ANC 'people's struggle'. In 1994 the 'new South Africa' came into existence without civil war or a final stand in the laager of white supremacy. See Le May. *Afrikaners*, passim.
 44. "The Captive" like "A Sahibs* War" is in *Traffics and Discoveries*.
 45. Elizabeth Talbot-Rice, " 'Bobs' ". KJ no.252 (Dec. 1989). p.32.
 46. *The Times*. 6 Jan, p.4; 7 Jan 1902, p.10; "The Islanders" published on 9 January thought the poem 'splendid' and those opposing it 'greater alarmists' than Kipling. On the whole readers of *The Times* appear favourable.
 47. C. Carrington, *A Subaltern's War* (London, orig. publ. 1929). Of course Kipling was not the only influence on patriotic volunteers; indeed, the immediate appeal was by that other 'K' of empire. Kitchener.
 48. Andrew Lycett. *Rudyard Kipling* (London, 1999), p.359 for "The Army of a Dream" and pp.438,455-6 and 463 for Kipling's ubiquitous influence, even with Germans, in 1914, and p.426 for 'fatted pharaoh'. For the new armies Peter Simkins. *Kitchener's Army: the Raising of the New Armies 1914-1916* (Manchester University Press, 1988); J.P. Harris. *Douglas Haig and the First World War*. (Cambridge, 2008), p.516 and Gary Mead, *The*
 49. Thomas Pinney, ed.. *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling* (6 volumes. Basingstoke, 1990-2004) IV, p.520.

PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN IN "THE CHURCH THAT WAS AT ANTIOCH"

By JOHN COATES

[The first article by Dr Coates that we published in the *Journal* was in September 1978 and since then there have been a whole series, the most recent of which was printed in the March 2008 issue (No.325, pp.33-49) on "The Uses of Ritual in Kipling's Masonic Stories". - Ed.]

Interesting for several reasons, "The Church that was at Antioch" offers a number of ways in which it may be approached. The most obvious of these involves placing the story in the context of Kipling's interest in St. Paul. In some ways puzzling and vexatious, Paul was in Kipling's eyes a figure of undeniable importance and absorbing interest to whom he returned, offering, on each occasion, different perceptions. Paul was a man of contradictions, whose personality both attracted and repelled; whose religious mission led humanity in a new direction, in a manner which left Kipling both admiring and doubtful.

As well as appearing in "The Church that was at Antioch", published in *London Magazine* (August, 1929), Paul is the central figure in "The Manner of Men" which Kipling placed in the same periodical a year later (September, 1930). Both stories were later reprinted in Kipling's last collection *Limits and Renewals* (1932). When they appeared in book form, Kipling placed one poem "The Disciple" after the first story and a second "At His Execution" after the second. In both sets of verses, Kipling offered fresh material on which to form a verdict about Paul's character and the consequences of his actions. Much earlier, "Gallio's Song", placed after "Little Foxes" in *Actions and Reactions* (1904), recalls the refusal of Seneca's brother, the governor of Achaia, to consider the case the Jews had brought against St. Paul (*Acts*, 12-17) since it was a purely religious matter and of no concern to him. This earlier poem throws light on one of the subjects of "The Church that was at Antioch", the attitude of the Roman authorities to religious disputes among those they ruled.

By setting his narrative in "The Church that was at Antioch" in the context of a sympathetic account of the Roman authorities administrative problems in dealing with the new faith. Kipling adopts an unusual and fruitful approach. In the later 1920's the public would have been likely to form their views of early Christianity in the Roman Empire, from best-sellers such as Lew Wallace's *Ben Hur* (1880) and Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis* (1896) both of which had recently been made into popular films. *Quo Vadis* had appeared in the cinema in 1912

and in a second version in 1925 (Kipling, who took a keen interest in film and regularly took the *Kinematographic and Lantern Weekly* was enthusiastic about 'Fred Niblo's action-packed *Ben Hur* which he saw twice in 1927'). These novels, and even more their film versions, offered pictures of the Roman world as decaying and depraved and of Christianity as a new light in its darkness. Pagan corruption, embodied in *Quo Vadis*' version of the Court of Nero or in the evil nature of Ben Hur's former friend Messala, stands in utter contrast to the beauty and truth of the new religion. In one scene of Sienkiewicz's novel, recreated with relish and lavish effects by the film-makers, showers of roses fall upon 'drunken consuls, senators, knights, philosophers and well-born ladies... rolling towards the abyss, in a state of utter, though flower-bedecked debauchery'.² The purity and holiness of Christianity, emphasised in the hugely popular Hollywood epic, *The King of Kings* (1927) must have looked simply as the chance for a ruined pagan world to recover its sanity.

A few authors debunked the prevalent reverence. In one of Oscar Wilde's dinner-table anecdotes, the emperor Nero decides to persecute the Christians because two individuals from the provinces called 'Peter and Paul or some unheard of names like that' block the traffic with their miracles and even perform them in his back garden. "The Procurator of Judaea" (1892) by Anatole France, has Pontius Pilate, in retirement, discussing morality, philosophy and incidents from his own career in detail with a friend. When his companion mentions Jesus Christ, however, Pilate cannot call him to mind.

In exploring the subject of Paul in Antioch, Kipling rejects both reverence and iconoclasm. Instead, he wishes to conjure up the actualities of the scene Christianity encountered; the Roman world's day-to-day priorities and whatever accommodations convenience encouraged it to make with the new religion. (Convenience is a potent but underrated motive in human affairs, as Kipling recognised). Spiritual conflicts, like those between paganism and Christianity would have been refracted through the medium of mundane practicalities, administrative procedures and the work routines of a complex political organism. Rather than an undifferentiated decadence, Christianity would also have encountered sharply differing philosophies within the Roman world which, besides, was undergoing spiritual transformation through spreading Eastern cults, such as those of Isis and, later, Mithras.

The epigraph to "The Church that was at Antioch", from Paul's *Epistle to the Galatians*, reminds us of the revolution within Christianity, when Mosaic dietary requirements were dispensed with, at Paul's insistence. This was the moment at which the followers of Jesus ceased to be a Jewish sect and became a new religion. Kipling makes a subtle point

by following this reference to a revolution, the consequences of which are still felt, with a sketch of the family problems, domestic details and professional activities of two Roman officials. For them, as yet, one of the greatest changes in the ancient world hardly impinges and when they encounter it they do not understand its significance.

The opening of the story is an excellent example of Kipling's pointillist technique in his later writing, a method of presenting small pieces of information to build up a complex picture. Each detail relates to others that are offered, presenting a fact or encouraging an inference which forms part of a broader scheme. It is a narrative style which, at the same time, offers readers a task and gives them a pleasure in satisfactorily performing it.

The story's decisive opening words 'His mother' notes a formidable background presence in the life of the young officer, Valens. Her capacity and readiness to interfere ('decided he was doing himself no good' and 'get him seconded for civil duty in Antioch') suggests the pressure her son may have been under. His uncle's remark 'that sister-in-law of mine...never remembers me till she wants something' adds to the impression of a difficult, not particularly likeable person. This 'devout and well-born Roman widow' (83) makes demands and wields influence. Religious conservatism is part of her motive for interfering with her son's life. She 'follows the old school, of course—the home worships, and the strict Latin Trinity' (84), not recognising any Gods, apart from Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. The phrase 'home worships' is significant. Perhaps Valens' mother likes the household shrine because it is something through which she can control her son and bind him to her. As the eldest male (presumably) it would have been his duty, with her in attendance, to perform the sacrifices and rituals in their home. Deftly, Kipling makes a point often missed in fictional accounts of pagan Rome and Christianity. Independently of the new faith, the Roman world was diverse and changing.

However, her son may have been 'doing himself no good' in other ways in Constantinople. We later learn that while there he bought a slave-girl, who has become his devoted lover. The reader can only infer what part this played in the devout widow's motives and actions. However, there is a suggestion that she resents her son's living his own life sexually as much as she dislikes his choice of a new religion. As Valens lies dying, after being stabbed, his uncle asks Paul and Peter 'what I'm to tell his mother?' His lover's angry reaction suggests a back-story of jealousy and possessiveness on his mother's part: " 'What has she to do with him?' the slave-girl cried 'He is mine mine!'" (99).

The picture Kipling builds up of the pressures Valens has encountered helps to explain the characteristics the young man displays in the

story. Secretiveness, efficiency, correctness and an adroit management of the relation between his inner and outer worlds have become Valens' techniques for dealing with his situation. His reaction to the enforced posting his mother arranged ('Valens obeyed as a son and as a young man keen to see life' (83)) suggests that he has learned to conform outwardly while cheerfully getting the best from the situation. Without mentioning her beforehand to his uncle, he has brought his girl-friend along with him to Antioch and, without drawing attention to it, is also pursuing his faith in Mithras.

Kipling had a long-standing interest in the faith to which Valens had converted. Parnesius, the Centurion of the Thirtieth, who guards Hadrian's Wall in *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906) was a follower of Mithras. This earlier fictional use of this religion shows a lightly worn but accurate knowledge. "A Song to Mithras", for example, links the god to each of the four quarters of the day. Morning, Noontide, Sunset and Midnight. It connects Mithraism especially to the military ('Mithras, also a soldier') to a high ethical standard involving loyalty ("Keep us true to our vows') and continence ('Keep us pure till the dawn'). Mithraism is also a tolerant faith, ready to accommodate other religious beliefs and practices ('Many roads thou hast fashioned: all of them lead to the light'). The setting sun and its return at dawn are an image of Mithras 'descending immortal, immortal to rise again'.⁵

In *Puck of Pook's Hill*, Kipling's version of Mithraism follows the account given in Franz Cumont's *The Mysteries of Mithra* which appeared in French in 1900 and in an English translation three years later. It remained the main authority on the subject throughout Kipling's life. Cumont emphasises the significance of the number four in Mithraism ('The Supreme God drives a chariot drawn by four steeds which turns ceaselessly round in a fixed circle'. This 'cosmic quadriga' lies behind all the phenomena of nature." Hence, the significance of the day being divided into four in Kipling's poem. For Cumont, Mithraism was 'predominantly a religion of soldiers', popular in the armies guarding the 'perpetually menaced' northern frontiers of the empire (Cumont, 40). The keynotes of Mithraic ethics were an ideal of 'perfect purity', a 'resistance to sensuality' (Cumont, 141) which verged on asceticism and loyalty to the emperor (Cumont, 101). (The latter is echoed in 'keep us true to our vows' in "A Song to Mithras"). Kipling also follows Cumont in making Mithraism tolerant of other faiths. Unlike early Christianity, 'unrelentingly antagonistic to idolatry in any form', the followers of 'the young Sun-god' sought to conciliate paganism by 'a series of adaptations and compromises' (Cumont, 197). In Cumont's account, Mithraists certainly saw many roads leading to light, to which they were prepared to accommodate themselves.

Apparently well-versed in the facts about Mithraism, Kipling chose in "The Church that was at Antioch". to make deliberate departures from them. In this story he makes Mithraism appear in the Roman Empire earlier than Cumont had stated. According to *The Mysteries of Mithra*, the worship of Mithras 'spread under the Flavians' (69-96 A.D.) and was not established in Rome until the end of the first century (Cumont, 37). It would have been unlikely that Mithraists would have been present in Byzantium or Antioch around 50 A.D. as Kipling's story asserts or that, more significantly, Christianity would have been taking doctrines and rituals from Mithraism, as Valens claims. However, Kipling makes clear in *Something of Myself* that he set an imaginative grasp of essential truth about the past far higher than a 'painstaking and meritorious piece of work, overloaded with verified references'. Historical fiction might be punctilious about dates and still have 'about as much feeling to it as a walking stick'. The truth Kipling aimed at involved understanding and bringing to life the inner meaning, the emotional and psychological shape of the past. To achieve this, facts recorded in text-books might be modified or even sacrificed.

Rather than criticising Kipling's departure from facts given in accounts like Cumont's (of which he was almost certainly aware) it is more useful to ask what were his purposes in making such changes. By setting Mithraism back in time before Christianity ('There isn't a ceremony or symbol they haven't stolen from the Mithras ritual' (84)) Kipling gives Valens, who makes this complaint, a faith of enhanced dignity and significance. Importantly, Valens has already experienced a sacramental meal and can bring his own knowledge and understanding to the young Christian community's problems over communal eating.

Kipling's manipulation of dates in "The Church at Antioch" has another purpose. It points up the fact that Christianity entered a Roman world which was already undergoing religious change in which new cults offering salvation, knowledge of the meaning of life and relief from pain were superseding the official deities.* (If Mithraism came later than Christianity, the worship of Cybele, Isis, Serapis, the mysteries of Eleusis and Gnosticism preceded it). By emphasising this fact. Kipling is able to offer a distinctive view of the role of St. Paul and of Christianity. (In this connection, it is worth noting that Valens' mother removes him from 'free-thinking Constantinople', when, of course. Byzantium would not have had that name until 330 A.D. However, this is less likely to be "a slip" (282), as one editor calls it. than a deliberate reminder that Rome was in the process of changing into something else, moving from the Olympian Gods to unworldly, mystical religions).

One of Kipling's purposes in describing the relationship between Valens and his uncle Sergius and in showing the contrast between them

is to suggest the varieties of, and changes, within Roman paganism. Lightly sketched, Sergius is a vivid character who embodies one set of Roman values. Valens' quotation from one of his uncle's favourite tags is a useful clue: "And 'Let night also have her well-earned hymn' as uncle 'ud say" (97). The line Sergius likes to repeat is from *The Odes of Horace*, Book III, XXVIII. In this poem Horace invites one of his girl-friends Lyde to celebrate the feast-day of Neptune with song and wine, ending the evening with love-making: *dicetur merita Nox quoque nenia.*⁹ (Kipling had earlier referred to this ode in a poem "A Recantation", written in 1917, in which he retracts his adverse verdict on a music hall performer his son John had liked. The poem is subtitled "To Lyde of the Music Halls"¹⁰). Kipling's affection for Horace and imitations of his verse are well-known.

In "The Church that was at Antioch", the Prefect's liking for, and frequent quotation from, the Roman poet are meant to indicate his values. Horace's best known poems fall into two categories; serious invocations to public duty and self-sacrifice, when these are required, and celebrations of leisure hours given over to drinking and love, as the best answer to the brevity of life. Kipling had already drawn on Horace's more serious side in "Regulus", (1917) the school story based on the Roman general's calmly going to meet his fate in Odes III, V.

In "The Church that was at Antioch", Sergius combines both sides of the Horatian approach to life. Valens' uncle is a tough, efficient and relatively humane administrator. (The twelve lashes he has inflicted on a rioter is mild by Roman standards). His nickname 'Father Serga' suggests the way in which his troops and the local population regard him.

It is natural to him to try to get to know, and to deal with Paul by following an official interview with another 'in the cool, awning covered courtyard, with drinks and *hors-d'oeuvre*' (89-90). Over his own 'strong cup' (93), Sergius repeats a half-remembered quotation from Callimachos' elegy for Heracleitos, perhaps significantly altering 'we ran the sun down with talk'" to 'we drank the long, long Eastern day out together' (93). Gently and obliquely, it is suggested that, in his after-hours relaxation, 'Father Serga' grows a little muzzy-headed. His evening talks to his nephew are 'discursive' and 'studded with kitchen Greek and out of date Roman society verses' (87). Significantly, too, he is grateful to Paul for recommending a doctor who understands his 'tumid liver' (93). (The fact that Sergius serves wine 'all but unmixed' (93) might have caused a few raised eyebrows in the ancient world where it was customary to dilute it. Herodotus suggests that the Spartan King Cleomenes 'acquired the habit of taking wine without water – and went off his head in consequence').¹²

It is worth noting the way in which Sergius sets about establishing a rapport with his nephew. He cheerfully accepts the fact that Valens has brought a slave-girl with him ('Oh, I shan't interfere with your private arrangements'). He assures the young man that he is not 'the uncle with the rough tongue' (83). The comment is interesting. Probably Valens' mother has had an ally in her own brother in making disapproving comments on her son's style of living (It might seem that Valens' love-life contradicts the Mithraic stress on purity. However, while respectable Romans would have seen adultery with the wife of a citizen or the seduction of a free-born virgin, as disgraceful, a relationship with one's slave would for them have been unproblematic¹³).

Sergius builds up a relationship with his nephew by the assumption of a shared masculine nature and values, dismissing the interference of Valens' mother with 'Just like a woman' (84). He reclaims the young man for his, Sergius' side of the family ('You *are* like your father' (83)) and assures him that 'it's good to see a sample of the old stock again!' (85). The Prefect's approach shows an instinct for what has been causing Valens' difficulty and for how this can be dealt with. Although affection for his nephew clearly influences the way Sergius talks to him, he is, above all concerned to establish a good working relationship; to ensure that he and his nephew can collaborate effectively in policing Antioch.

Their preliminary discussion reveals their different attitudes to religion. For Valens, the recent convert, his faith has been a transforming spiritual experience. ('What I learned in Byzant squared with what I saw in the Fifteenth' (84)). The word "squared" hints at an analogy between Mithraism and the Freemasonry into which Kipling had been inducted when young and in which he maintained an interest. Both the Masons and the followers of Mithras were offered enlightenment and moral aspiration in a bond of exclusively male comradeship.

For Sergius, religion is of no concern except when it becomes an administrative problem. He would have approved of Gallio's attitude. The Prefect's objection to 'fancy religions' is that they 'mostly meet after dark and that means more work for the police'. As 'a soldier's religion', however, Mithraism is acceptable even if, originating in Persia, 'it comes from outside' (84). Later, there is a hint of Sergius' own philosophy of life when he remarks that 'there's no lying about in secluded parks for *us!*' (89). This, presumably, is what he would prefer to do, if he could. It is, of course, a reference to Epicureanism, often called the "philosophy of the Garden" from the secluded grounds in Athens in which, from 306 B.C., "Epicurus taught his doctrines of detachment and the quiet enjoyment of life.

Sergius' view of religion as a purely administrative affair is analogous to the practice of the British in India after 1857-8. Recognising that the rebellion of those years had originated, partly in fears by sections of the population that they would be forcibly converted to Christianity, the government curtailed missionary activity. Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858 ordered British officials to refrain from interfering with Indian beliefs or rituals 'on the pain of Our Highest Displeasure'.¹⁵ (Kipling's early story "The Mark of the Beast" involves a supernatural punishment for those who insult native religion but also states that "there was a section in the Indian Penal Code which exactly met Fleete's offence").¹⁶

Kipling's recollections of the later nineteenth century Raj's caution over religious issues may inform his understanding of Roman imperial attitudes towards similar problems. However, there is enough support in classical sources for Sergius' low-key, businesslike response to the doctrinal practices and quarrels of subject peoples. The Emperor Trajan's response to Pliny the Younger is well-known. When Pliny, as Governor of Bithynia, asks him what he should do about the new sect of Christians, Trajan replied that they 'must not be hunted down', should be pardoned if they sacrificed to the gods and that anonymous accusations against them should be ignored.¹⁷ Both his own experience and his reading of history suggested to Kipling that empires worked better if they adopted a hands-off attitude to religion.

For Sergius, the religious disputes of conquered peoples may even be useful, as long as one does not get involved in them. ('So long as they fight each other, we've only to keep the ring'). It is a worthwhile technique to 'divide and rule—especially with Hebrews' (84). The one thing to avoid is being drawn into religious quarrels and trying to please one side at the expense of the other. As Sergius remarks, Pontius Pilate, 'one of our governors tried that game down-coast—for the sake of peace—some years ago. He didn't get it' (86).

The Prefect's view of his province is disabused: 'Anything can happen in Syria' (84). It is an unstable, fractious mixture of races, religions and cultures whose population, devious and untrustworthy, excel in manipulating Rome's laws or regulations in order to pursue their feuds. Kipling's version of Antioch has features which resemble the Calcutta he portrayed in "The City of Dreadful Night" the article, part of which Kipling reworked to form a story "'The City of Dreadful Night' " in *Life's Handicap*. The 'race-course gang trying to collect or evade some bets on recent chariot races' (85) whom the Roman police encounter recalls the gang of Chinese gamblers the British patrol interrupts in a Calcutta back-street. Valens is introduced to the 'thieves and prostitutes' quarters' (85) and later takes a short cut through 'an

alley, where light ladies leaned out of windows and laughed* (98). The observer in "The City of Dreadful Night" is taken down a dark street of 'shamelessly open doors, wherein women stand and lounge and mutter and whisper to each other'.¹⁸ The urban sprawl of Antioch offers many opportunities for criminals to escape. After Valens spares the Cilician who tried to stab him, the man 'vanished like a trout in the dark' (89). The Jew who succeeds in fatally wounding the young officer 'vanished like a bat' and 'there was not even the echo of a footfall for clue' (98). In "The City of Dreadful Night" the Calcutta police show the visitor places where no European is safe among 'houses with their breakneck staircases, the hundred courtyards and winding passages . . . specially built for crime of every kind'.¹⁹

As he did in creating Sergius' attitude as an administrator to religion, Kipling portrays an Antioch which draws on memories of British India and historical material from the classical world. Drawing on ancient historians, Gibbon's picture of Antioch makes the city sound at least as problematic as it seemed to the Roman administrators of Kipling's story: 'The lively licentiousness of the Greeks was blended with the hereditary softness of the Syrians' in a manner which 'announced the universal corruption of the capital of the east'.²⁰ Kipling's procedures in "The Church that was at Antioch" throws light on how he fed and kindled his imagination.

In a few pages, Kipling has given his readers a more variegated and convincing picture of the Roman world than many historical novels, with their simple moral contrasts between paganism and Christianity, had sought to offer. It is refreshing as well as plausible to be shown Romans concerned with family issues and the day-to-day work of running an empire; as well-meaning, efficient functionaries rather than as two-dimensional figures, sinking into decadence as they participate in their current orgy or plan the next one.

Two narrative strands in "The Church that was at Antioch" give the story an added depth, preventing us from viewing the great change which overtakes the ancient world in terms of a straightforward moral or psychological dichotomy. On one level, Kipling's tale is that of a familiar colonial tragedy, the casual death of a worthwhile young officer whose years of training, aspirations and future of service are wiped in some skirmish or 'incident'. Valens' death offers a variant of the wastage of valuable lives described in "Arithmetic on the Frontier":

A scrimmage in a Border Station—
 A canter down some dark defile—
 Two thousand pounds of education
 Drops to a ten-rupee jezail—²¹

Valens shows religious seriousness, dutifulness, human warmth and a wish to do his best but, throughout the story, Kipling keeps reminding us of the young soldier's vulnerability. There are continued hints that Valens is overconfident and somewhat naïve; slight weaknesses that, in Antioch, are all he needs to lose his life. When he asks about the possibility of ambushes: 'Are we given to that sort of thing here?' (83) his uncle mildly rebukes him: 'You make yourself at home early. No. We are not. . .' (84). Sent out on police tours around the city, 'between his uncle's discursive evening talk' and 'the confidences of his lictors at all hours, he fancied he understood Antioch' (87). 'Fancied', of course, is the significant word. Valens knows much less than he imagines about this ancient version of "The City of Dreadful Night". The same point is emphasised when, after a disturbance, Valens tells Barnabas, Paul's deputy in Antioch, that the Christians should not use their hall until their leaders have returned and adds 'you don't know Antioch as I do'. Valens' lictors follow him home 'grinning' and his uncle 'grinned also'. Their amusement suggests that both his guards and Sergius see him as someone with a great deal to learn. When Valens announces that the riot over dietary requirements 'was worked up by Synagogue Jews sent from Jerusalem', Sergius replies 'You *don't* say so?' and assures him 'you'll make a Police Officer yet' (89). Immediately before he is murdered, Valens makes another and fatal mistake. 'Knowing his own quarter' (as he supposes) the young man, as he went on duty, thought that 'his uncle's precautions had been excessive' (96).

Valens' murder by an agent of Paul's enemies among the Temple authorities in Jerusalem is a calculated act of provocation intended to turn the Roman authorities against the Christians. It is a killing carefully planned beforehand. When voices on the outskirts of the crowd surrounding the Christian's hall break into the insulting song 'Pickled Fish', they are suppressed, before Valens can speak by someone crying, 'Quiet there, or you'll get your pickle before your fish' (97). The murderer is not yet ready to strike and needs to manufacture an opportunity to separate Valens from his guards.

The most significant reason Valens is killed lies in his own nature; in his readiness to look for the best in others and in his trust that fairness and good treatment will work in all situations. In fact, they often do. Valens, for example, spares the Cilician who tries to kill him since he was trying to avenge his brother who died ambushing the Romans: 'We'll call it even throws' (89). The man makes no further attempt on Valens' life.

The young officer dies as a result of a kindly impulse and a moment of inattention. When the Christians have succeeded in composing their differences by accepting Paul's view that they are free from Mosaic

dietary requirements, Valens is irritated on the Apostle's behalf by a 'young pest' stealing behind them and "playing 'Pickled Fish' on some sort of desert bag-pipe". Not wanting Paul's happiness spoiled ('You shan't be mocked on this great night of yours. Paulus' (98)) he sends his lictors back a few paces to drive the brat away. When he is momentarily without protection the murderer stabs him. Valens' death is at one with his life. His human sympathy for the feelings even of an alien figure like Paul is cognate with the spiritual questing which, leads him to 'want more' (84) than official Roman religion can give.

In spite of its brevity, "The Church that was at Antioch", suggests the complexity and disparate qualities of the pagan world Christianity challenged. Sergius' combination of professional dutifulness with after hours Horatian relaxation and Valens' longing for depth, meaning and transcendence, found in one of the new religious cults from the east, suggest the contradictions of a society which contains them both. In the contrasting figures of Peter and Paul, Kipling suggests that Christianity, too, contains divergences.

Kipling's portrait of St. Paul has two striking features: a certainty as to why the Apostle is of commanding significance and an ambivalence about Paul's nature. Kipling gives, withholds and (in a second story, "The Manner of Men") restores sympathy to Paul in a manner which suggests the writer's inner uncertainty. That quandary throws light upon a conflict between two of Kipling's own deepest impulses. It also gives an alertness and tension to his writing on the subject of Paul which adds to its distinction. By not foreclosing the issues in a bland hagiography, Kipling presents a far more human and intriguing figure.

"The Church that was at Antioch" sums up Paul's revolutionary role in Sergius' remark that 'anyone can become a Christian' (85). As a distinguished historian of the classical world puts it, not for Paul 'the easy assumption . . . that all is a matter of historical traditions and backgrounds'. Instead of this view 'prevalent in the rest of the Greco-Roman world', the Apostle insisted on 'total change',²² involving a breaking down of barriers. The effect of this new attitude appears in Paul's exchanges with Valens. The young officer is reluctant to discuss what he thinks of 'us Christians' (90) and 'our food disputes' (91), except as a matter of public order. Drawn out by Paul about how the Mithraists manage their communal feasts, he is 'a little ashamed of having spoken of his faith'. Paul, by contrast is more than ready to discuss his, button-holing the young man ("listen a minute") and then throwing himself into 'a curious tale about the God of the Christians' (91). There is sharp difference between Mithraism, practiced in secret by small groups of soldiers and the new faith through which Paul intends to 'change the whole world' (92). (It is generally accepted that the success of

Christianity was due, in substantial measure, to, its ready admission of women and slaves).

Paul is quick to seize on the spiritual insights of Mithraism and, by incorporating them into Christianity, to strengthen the doctrines he wishes to preach. When Valens quotes from 'the old Ritual' of his faith the saying that 'Gods do not make laws. They change men's hearts', Paul at once appropriates the teaching as 'the utter Doctrine itself' (91). The incident marks the difference between old pagan and new Christian attitudes. Spiritual experiences in the ancient world (as opposed to the ceremonies of Roman official religion) were often carefully guarded. Like the Eleusinian mysteries, the teachings of Orphism and the Gnostics or Valens' Mithraism. they were preserved by oaths of secrecy from the multitude who were unworthy of them. By its strict dietary requirements and practice of circumcision. Judaism had, in general, a similar exclusivity.

Realising the possibility of 'outside work' (92) as a fisher of souls. Paul adopts an emotional directness, ready to engage with anyone; to discover what concerns them, drawing from them things they keep private. With a show of interest, he asks Valens, as a Roman officer, what was his best day's march, 'and, before he knew, Valens was reeling off his mileage'. 'Before he knew' is the key phrase. Paul breaks down barriers on a personal as well as a religious level. He has an instinct for what will win over those with whom he deals. Making Sergius a 'camel kit' for his 'desert tours', recommending a Greek doctor who can deal with the effects of the Prefect's drinking and being careful to recall the Centurion Cornelius, his first gentile convert who was one of Sergius' early colleagues and his 'prime companion', are typical of Paul's tactics.

Along with inquisitiveness and charm, Paul displays an energy in persuading others which borders on bullying. He drives through Peter's doubts: 'We have broken with the whole law of Moses. We live in and by and through our God only. Else we are nothing' (94). At one point, characteristically, he 'turned from Petrus, whom he had been soothing tenderly, and resumed in his natural, hardish voice' (93). His tenderness and human warmth are not insincere, although he is capable of exploiting them. They overlie but do not cancel out Paul's capacity for hardness. He displays this in forcing his troubled, inarticulate colleague to accept his version of what the new religion should be: 'This time you will say precisely what is meant. . . you dare not deny this?' (94).

The main reason for Kipling's doubts about Paul lies in this breaking down of personal and communal barriers, intrusion into private worlds and appropriation of their language, values and mysteries which the new gospel entails. C.S. Lewis' comments on the significance for

Kipling of the 'inner ring'¹³ is a permanently useful critical truism. Most readers would recognise how important in Kipling's fiction, are the charmed circles or professional brotherhoods sharing the exhilarations of comradeship, communal know ledge or the code-words of some skill or mystery. For Kipling, the 'inner ring' offered a focus in which to explore some of the themes which most mattered to him: duty, service, social bonding, tradition and the duties or sacrifices imposed upon elite groups. In attacking the "inner rings" of the ancient world, St. Paul challenged values Kipling still cherished and the spirit of Apostle unleashed remained a threat to values from which the writer drew sustenance.

Yet, along with what Kipling suspected. Paul also embodied for him the imaginative sympathy on which he based his art. Paul possessed, in abundance, that faculty of emotional identification and capacity to grasp and sympathise with the salient characteristics of other lives which informed Kipling's writing. His claim that

I saw nought common on Thy Earth

was amply justified in the range of his fictional understanding of the beliefs, values, philosophies and ways of living of others, however remote:

*I would go without shirt or shoe,
Friend, tobacco or bread,
Sooner than lose for a minute the two
Separate sides of my head!*¹⁴

For Kipling, the capacity to think or feel outside of rigid categories; to make imaginative leaps into other worlds was the food of life, as well as writing.

Paul's emotional flexibility, his skill in getting into the minds of strangers, and that adaptability with which "The Church that was at Antioch" endows him were close to Kipling's own practices. They gave him the means by which, in his writing, 'an episode or a gesture can be charged with an illustrative significance which will lay bare a way of life'.¹⁵

For Kipling, Paul is a genius with a touch of vulgarity, a spiritual populariser, broadcasting what was known but kept secret; direct in his emotional appeal to all he meets, a breaker down of reserves and reticence. Paul invades the private worlds or circles of the initiated in which, throughout the ancient Greek and Roman world, the elite sought enlightenment. Ethically. Paul's teachings are not new. Their kinship with the Mithraist arcana, recognised by Valens. is admitted by Paul himself. What is new is the violent emotional directness and

universalism of appeal Paul infuses into the teachings. Kipling admits the force of this spirit which will change the religious sensibility of the ancient world but, as the poem which follows "The Church that was at Antioch", "The Disciple", his misgivings are as powerful as his admiration. The disciple – one such as Paul is one

*Who shall change the Charter
Who shall split the Trust (101)*

By divulging a tradition of breaking the bounds of a small fellowship, Paul changes gnosis for the few, who preserve their traditions, rites and formulae into salvation open to the world. But, Kipling implies, for this great achievement there is a price to be paid, in some coarsening, distortion or loss of power and mystery.

However, Kipling shared and understood Paul's faculty of imaginative sympathy, his capacity to draw out the essence of other human beings and to be all things to all men. Paul troubled him as a religious teacher because (perhaps necessarily and inevitably) he threatened the 'inner rings' Kipling held dear. At the same time, Paul disquieted Kipling for another, more intimate reason. He sensed how close was the Apostle's approach to his own as an artist and how both might exact a similar cost. The poem "At His execution" which follows the second Paul story "The Manner of Men" expresses the fear of the religious teacher and the imaginative writer that, in embracing other lives, they may lose their own identities:

*I was made all things to all men,
But now my course is done—
And now is my reward—
Ah, Christ, when I stand at Thy Throne
With those I have drawn to the Lord,
Restore me to my self again! (185)*

For Kipling, as for Paul, imaginative identification with others is linked to helping them. Earlier in his writing career he had prayed

Take not that vision from my ken—
Oh; whatsoe'er may spoil or speed.
Help me to need no aid from men
That I may help such men as need!²⁶

One effect of his work, he hoped, would be to lead others better to understand or to bear their lives. The more favourable version of Paul.

in "The Manner of Men", has the apostle approaching others as an artist and psychologist. Discovering the inner griefs of two sailors with whom he shared the voyage which ended in shipwreck near Malta. Paul provides ways to alleviate the bereavement of one and the fears of the other.

The great religious change which "The Church that was at Antioch" explores depends, in that story, on a complex personal chemistry. Old and new. paganism and Christianity meet, and the latter is set on the road to success, in part, by the decency and insights of the world over which it is to triumph. (At the same time, in Sergius' drinking and Valens' purchase of a slave girl for his sexual needs, there are hints of the limitations of paganism). St. Paul's energy, his new kind of emotional openness and his eagerness to break down traditional barriers benefit from the practices of the Roman authorities he encounters. Roman law and policing are indispensable to the survival of the new movement. Sergius' benign interpretation of his role, refusal to be played upon by factions within the populace for their own ends or to let harmless individuals incriminate themselves prevent Christianity from being extinguished at the moment of its inception. Almost as crucially, Paul draws on the spiritual insights of Valens' Mithraism to reinforce his own interpretation of the Christian message.

Seeing the rise of Christianity as inevitable and beneficial. Kipling nevertheless strikes a note of warning. At the Church, during the final crucial debate about clean and unclean food, things proceed smoothly until a group of Christians launch into a 'rather explosive hymn' (96). The words quoted from this suggest that the new faith, when it comes to power, will not be as easy-going as Uncle Serga:

'Enthroned above Caesar and Judge of the Earth!
We wait on thy coming—oh tarry not long!
As the Kings of the Sunrise
Drew sword at Thy Birth.
So we arm in this midnight of insult and wrong!' (96)

Kipling's version of St. Paul contains winning and persuasive traits, prophetic of a new spiritual direction. At the same time, Paul displays an invasiveness and some of that quest for dominance expressed more nakedly in the Christian hymn. The final incident of "The Church that was at Antioch" embodies Kipling's understanding of Paul's strengths and weaknesses and offers the last of the layers of meaning in the story. As Valens lies dying, he deflects his uncle's anger from both Christians and Jews ("The Cilician did it! For his brother! He said it' (99)) and then begs Sergius not to be hard on the Cilician and his friends, whom

he probably assumes Sergius will not now be able to capture ("They get worked up. . . . They don't know what they are doing" (99)). The echo of Christ's words on the Cross rouses Paul: " 'What hinders that we should baptize him?' Paul answered promptly": 'Promptly' is eloquent of Paul's avidity, with the best of motives, to seize opportunities for advancing his cause; for permeating and taking over whatever may be of use to the new Christian faith. He does not ask Valens whether he wishes to be baptized or to remain in the Mithraic faith he has chosen and to which he is devoted. Paul's zeal reaches the borderline of presumption and spiritual bullying.

Up to this point the Peter who rebukes his fellow Apostle has been a less than impressive figure. Troubled and uncertain about giving up Jewish dietary laws, where Paul is all passionate conviction, he is inarticulate and quick to take offence ('Do *you* too twit me with my accent'? (92)). This 'large, fleshy man with eyes that see nothing' (90) has never recovered from having, out of fear on the night of His arrest, three times denied Christ. Guilt and self-torment fuel his bewilderment at the role assigned to him ('I denied Him. . . . And He said—He said I was the Rock on which His Church should stand' (94)). At the same time his doubts and self-reproach have taken him to a deeper level of spiritual understanding than Paul has achieved. In Valens' dying act of forgiveness, he recognises a state of goodness which needs no further intermediaries: 'Think you that one who has spoken Those Words needs such as *we* are to certify him to any God?' (100)).

Unusual in film or fiction of its time for a readiness to engage sympathetically with pagan Rome, "The Church that was at Antioch" offers a subtle and original interpretation of the relation between old and new types of religious feeling. By creating Paul in the way that he did, Kipling shows a readiness to question what he cherished, even those 'inner rings' so central to his emotional life. At the same time, he explores his reservations about the new force which is to change the ancient world and about the man who unleashes it. The tensions and unresolved contradictions within this fictional St. Paul make him one of Kipling's most intriguing characters.

NOTES

1. Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling*. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), p.536.
2. Henryk Sienkiewicz. *Quo Vadis* (1896; trans (J. Hogarth. (London: J.M. Dent. 1941). pp.59 60.
3. *Table Talk Oscar Wilde*, ed. Thomas Wright, (London: Cassell. 2000). p.123.
4. Rudyard Kipling. *Limits and Renewals* (1932: repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1987); p.83. Subsequent references in parenthesis are to this edition.

5. Rudyard Kipling, *Puck of Pook's Hill*. (1906; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p.148.
6. Franz Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, (1900; trans T.J. McCormack, New York: Dover. 1956). p.116. Subsequent references in parenthesis.
7. Rudyard Kipling. *Something of Myself* (1937; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 177), p.140.
8. One of the most influential accounts of this process, published shortly before Kipling's story, is to be found in chapter IV of Gilbert Murray's *Five Stages of Greek Religion* (1925). "The Failure of Nerve".
9. *The Odes of Horace*, trans. James Michie. (1964; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1967). p.210.
10. *Rudyard Kipling's Verse Definitive Edition*, (1940; repr. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1977). pp.369-370.
11. *The Greek Anthology*. (1973; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1981). p.93. Kipling would, of course, have known Cory's version "They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead".
12. Herodotus. *The Histories*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1954). p.389.
13. Robin Lane Fox, *The Classical World*, (London: Allan Lane. 2005). p.449.
14. *The Epicurean Philosophers*. Ed. John Gaskin, (London: J.M. Dent. 1995), p.xlii.
15. John Keay. *A History of India*. (London: Harper Collins, 2000). p.445.
16. Rudyard Kipling. *Life's Handicap*. (1891; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987). p.198.
17. *The Letters of Pliny the Younger*, trans. Betty Radice, (Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1963). p.295.
18. Rudyard Kipling, "City of Dreadful Night" (1885; repr. *The Works of Rudyard Kipling*, New York: Walter J. Black, N. D.), p.740.
19. *The Works of Rudyard Kipling*, p.741.
20. Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, (1776-1788 repr. London: The Folio Society. 1985). Vol III. p.139.
21. *Rudyard Kipling's Verse Definitive Edition*, p.45.
22. Michael Grant, *Saint Paul*. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 1976), p. 197.
23. C.S. Lewis, *Selected Literary Essays*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1969), p.248.
24. *The Definitive Edition of Rudyard Kipling's Verse*, pp.587-588.
25. J.M.S. Tompkins, *The Art of Rudyard Kipling*, (1959; repr. London: Methuen, 1965), p.238.
26. "My New Cut Ashlar", *Rudyard Kipling's Verse Definitive Edition*, pp.5-11-512.

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Please advise me of any changes of address, including e-mail if applicable and also any termination of membership would be appreciated.

John Lambert, Hon. Membership Secretary

A BIRTH REPORTED IN *THE TIMES*

Whilst idly trawling through the archive of *The Times* (London) for any Kipling mentions, I came across the following notice of a birth in the issue of Friday, 9 February 1866:

On the 30th Dec., on the Esplanade, Bombay, the wife of J. Lockwood Kipling, Esq., of a son.

All of the other children were reported as having been born "at" somewhere, even the two girls who precede and follow Kipling, one at Shanghai and one at Calcutta.

Charles Allen, in his recent book *Kipling Sahib*, gives an excellent description in Chapter I of the situation in Bombay for new arrivals in late 1865, whilst J.L. Kipling's phrase "on the Esplanade" encapsulates the whole matter. – *Ed.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"AL-JIWAN" AND "Z.54.R.A."

Extracts from a letter by *Mr Omer Tarin, Ahabottabad, Pakistan.*

Dear Sir,

I would like to make some comments on Prof Pinney's March 2011 article, as a student of Persian literature and as a student of Indian military history, as follows:-

- a) I think Kipling's pseudonym "Al-Jiwan" (properly 'Jawan') most probably refers to *youth*, a *young man* though Kipling wrongly uses the Arabic 'AT (the) with it; essentially, he's calling himself "The Youth". "The Young Man". The concept of [peerless] 'pearl' is a secondary (adj.) meaning, too, but that, in Persian classical poetry/literature is generally with reference to Youth itself, a treasure or pearl beyond compare. In Persian, 'Jawan' also has connotations of a *gallant* young man, a *chivalrous* youth i.e. linked to the traditional Islamic concept of *Jawanmardi Jiwanmardi* (*Futtuwah* in Arabic) encompassing a whole system of chivalry, rather like medieval chivalry/knighthood in the West.
- b) "Z.54.RA" seems to me to be more like one of the classification tattoos imprinted on the hindquarters of remount mules and horses, than any human or mechanical classification! If you look at the old photographs/pictures of mountain battery mules etc., you can normally see these *brands* on them, that are very similar. Although the Royal Artillery is no more, here, this sort of classification is still used by the Army Remounts Corps in Pakistan. However, this needs to be looked into in detail. Possibly a dash of 'Kiplingesque' humour at work?

Yours truly
OMER TARIN

NEWS FROM THE BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

David Alan Richards has just told me of a previously unknown collection of Kipling material that has been acquired by the Beinecke Library at Yale. It comes from the widow of the descendant of Kipling's literary agent A. P. Watt. This trove includes 93 manuscripts, including the first typescript of *Kim*, and the manuscripts of most of the stories comprising *Mine Own People*, about 100 copyright or first edition pamphlets, and the author's correspondence with the Watt father and son who acted as his literary agents over 60 years of commercial and social relationships. Dave Richards has offered to write an article for us about it. – *Ed.*

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