



The Barnard Bulletin

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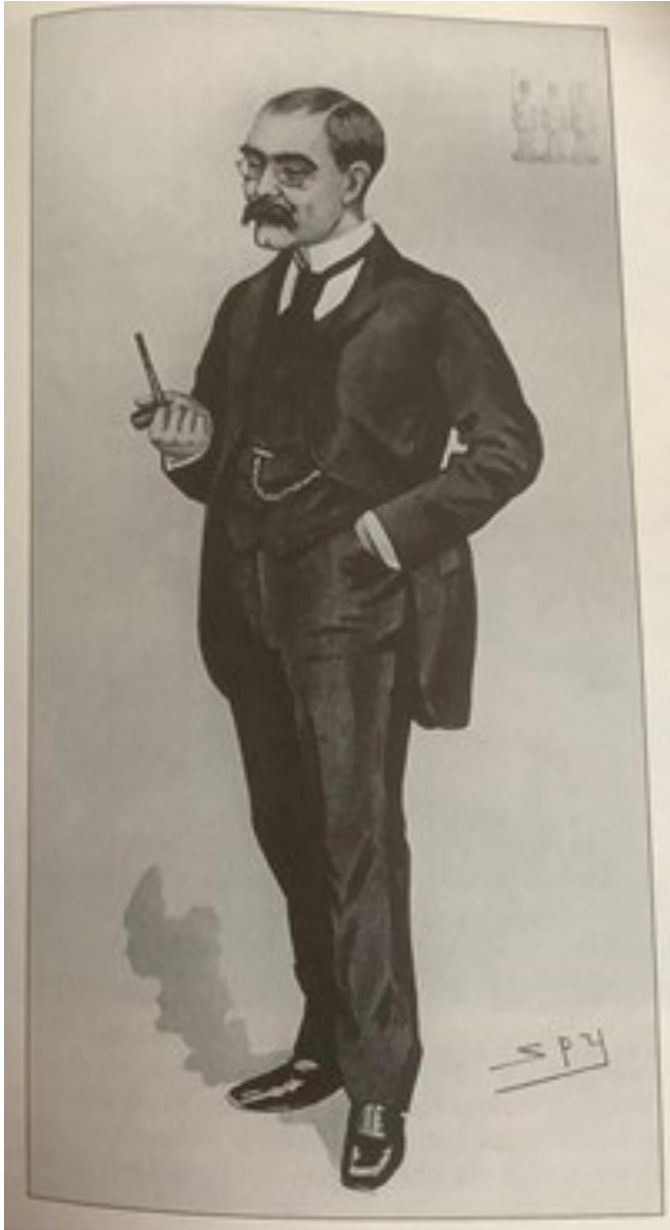
A VERMONT WRITER

BY MARGARET EDWARDS

This column is an offering of The Danforth Library in Barnard and a chance to introduce a Vermont writer who deserves wider renown.

Rudyard Kipling

1865 - 1936



Vanity Fair magazine drawing of Rudyard Kipling in 1894

Living in Vermont gave Kipling not just a physical but also a psychic distance from his native India. Nostalgia goaded him to recreate the warm, exotic land he knew so well. Beyond that, rural Vermont had its own particular charms, as Kipling acknowledged when he wrote to a friend in his first year, “The sun and the air and the light are good in this place and have made me healthy as never I was in my life...It’s three miles from anywhere and wondrous self-contained. No one can get at you...”

Not in any conventional sense is Rudyard Kipling “a Vermont writer.” When he first came to Vermont with his American wife, arriving on the evening of February 17, 1892, he was only 27. And yet, as they settled into what they both hoped would be their permanent home, Kipling’s astonishing, worldwide fame as an author felt close to a punishment. His plaintive joy was that “no one can get at you” here in the northern reaches of what was then a sparsely populated corner of New England. Even so, letters from everywhere on the globe addressed to Kipling poured by the hundreds into the Brattleboro post office. This tsunami of correspondence soon prompted the U.S. Postal Service to grant Kipling his own postal depot at the foot of his property.

Deserving “wider renown” is the simple fact that the much-celebrated Rudyard Kipling, who could have lived anywhere in the world, chose Vermont. And had events gone his way, he might have stayed here (as he said and wrote he planned to do) until the end of his days. His wife, Carrie Balestier, whom he had met and married in London, came from Brattleboro. Her inclination to settle near her family, plus the great view of Mt. Monadnock from a piece of property for sale, clinched their decision. They called the home they designed and built there in 1893 Naulakha (roughly translated from Hindi as “gemstone”).



An architect’s rendering of Naulakha, which still exists unchanged in 2022, is full of its original furnishings.

“Just because the cat had her kittens in the oven, that don’t make ‘em muffins” so goes an old folk saying. And just because Rudyard Kipling wrote both volumes of *The Jungle Books* in a house he had built near the town of Brattleboro, Vermont, this did not mean his famous tales, inspired by colonial India, had anything to do with the Green Mountains. Yet where else could the author have found such creative solitude to prompt a deep immersion in his imagination?

This big sturdy house, grey-shingled and south-facing, bore more resemblance to a rich man’s bungalow in Lahore than to Vermont’s steep-roofed farm houses countryside or the elegant brick mansions of its towns.

Cont. next page - Kipling

Kipling - Cont. from previous page

Naulakha was eccentric and designed to be so, for Kipling and his wife had no intention of fitting in. They dressed for dinner, as if they were living in a large city, and they kept live-in servants, most of whom they imported from England. By contrast, "Rud" (as he was called by his wife and close friends) would sometimes go into town wearing his rough work clothes and a battered, broad-brimmed hat—for he loved doing farm chores as a distraction from the hours he spent at his desk writing. Town gossips happily disparaged Carrie's snooty putting on airs, while also declaring their shock at seeing world-famous Kipling inappropriately dressed as a laborer.

While the new house was being built, the Kiplings moved into a small rental nearby that they called Bliss Cottage. It was there that Carrie gave birth to their first child, Josephine. In his autobiography, *Something of Myself*, published in 1936, Kipling was to write how she had been born "in three-foot of snow on the night of 29th December, 1892. Her Mother's birthday being the 31st and mine the 30th of the same month, we congratulated her on her sense of the fitness of things...."

*...Snow upon the window sill,
Frost upon the pane.
Baby wakes & winks & then
Goes to sleep again.*

*Winter comes across the field
And the snowdrift flies—
Trouble in America
Baby wakes & cries.*

*Oh the white wreath in the hedge!
Little Baby cares
When she hears her mother bring
Dinner up the stairs.*

*What care we for driving wind,
Snow or winter's wrath?—
Cyclones in America
Baby's in her bath.*

*Twilight falls across the snow;
Windows glimmer red—
Silence in America
Baby goes to bed.*

The birth of his daughter thrilled Kipling, and at about the same time his idea for *The Jungle Books* took shape. He wrote in a letter: "The workroom in the Bliss Cottage was seven feet by eight, and from December to April, the snow lay level with its window-sill. It chanced that I had written a tale about Indian Forestry work, which included a boy who had been brought up by wolves. In the stillness, and suspense, of that winter of '92 some memory of the Masonic Lions of my childhood's magazine, and a phrase in Haggard's *Nada the Lily*, combined with the echo of this tale. After blocking out the main idea in my head, the pen took charge, and I watched it begin to write stories about Mowgli and the animals, which later grew into the two *Jungle Books*."

The tale of the Indian boy Mowgli, snatched as a toddler from his parents by a talking tiger and raised by a pack of talking wolves, might seem preposterous except that the author gives such meticulous attention to these characters and to the setting. Young Mowgli is blessed with several protectors: Baloo the bear, Akela the Father Wolf, Mother Wolf, Ka the python, and an elegant Black Panther named Bagheera. Each animal has a distinct personality and speaks the language of the King James Bible. The plot is pure melodrama, but the action throughout is mesmerizing. The author's mastery of this material is a special gift. He writes compelling fight scenes, and his knowledge of Indian life and of jungle animals seems boundless.



In this illustration for volume I of *The Jungle Books*, Mowgli carries the hide of Shere Kahn to the Council Rock.

Indeed Kipling's powers of description are unrivaled, and the quotation below is a random sample:

*Herding in India is one of the laziest things in the world. The cattle move and crunch, and lie down, and move on again, and they do not even low. They only grunt, and the buffaloes very seldom say anything, but get down into the muddy pools one after another, and work their way into the mud till only their noses and staring china-blue eyes show above the surface, and there they lie like logs. The sun makes the rocks dance in the heat, and the herd-children hear one kite (never any more) whistling almost out of sight overhead, and they know that if they died, or a cow died, that kite would sweep down, and the next kite miles away would see him drop and would follow, and the next, and the next, and almost before they were dead there would be a score of hungry kits come out of nowhere. Then the herd-children sleep and wake and sleep again, and weave little baskets of dried grass and put grasshoppers in them; or catch two praying-mantises and make them fight; or string a necklace of red and black jungle-nuts; or watch a lizard basking on a rock, or a snake hunting a frog near the wallows. Then they sing long, long songs with odd native quavers at the end of them, and the day seems longer than most people's whole lives... [from *The Jungle Book*, vol. I]*

In some of his letters to friends, Kipling would complain of the native Vermonters, derisively calling them "aborigines" and deploring their lack of ambition and their slovenly ways. He joked that life in Vermont was "barbarism with telephones." Even so, he remained enchanted by the place. Scott Murray, author of *Rudyard*

Cont. next page - Kipling

Kipling - Cont. from previous page

Kipling in Vermont (1997), summarizes how Kipling slowly relented and relaxed:

For the first time in his life Kipling felt truly at home somewhere. He had loved Bombay, the city of his birth and early years, but once uprooted he had never gone back to live there. Lahore and Allahabad had been little more than living quarters while he worked twelve hours a day on the newspapers and developed his skills. Nor had London been home to him, with its island-bound laboring classes and snobbish intellectuals who could not understand this Anglo-Indian. [page 61]

Kipling's deep appreciation of Vermont often moved him to eloquence. He was as captivated as any tourist by the dramatic change of color in the fall's foliage. Here is what he wrote to a friend:

A little maple began it, flaming blood-red of a sudden where he stood against the dark green of a pine-belt. Next morning there was an answering signal from the swamp where the sumacs grow. Three days later, the hill-sides as fast as the eye could range were afire, and the roads paved with crimson and gold. Then a wet wind blew, and ruined all the uniforms of that gorgeous army; and the oaks, who had held themselves in reserve, buckled on their dull and bronzed cuirasses and stood it out stiffly to the last blown leaf, till nothing remained but pencil-shadings of bare boughs, and one could see into the most private heart of the woods.

So what could possibly put an end to this idyllic life? The American newspapers became increasingly bother-

LOCAL CRYPTOGRAM

A cryptogram is a code in which one letter is substituted for another. For example, the word "Church" could be written BWMSBW. The letter B would be the letter C and would be so throughout the entire message. In this message H = E. The solution is found by trial and error. The CRYPTOGRAM answer is on the last page.

KIS, KIS, HUHQGTHNHQH, PFS
 FLW RIDW VFXNHD SHHA KIS,
 KIS, HUHQGTHNHQH, PFS NLT
 WN H XPQD SVS DVFJ.
 WQPXWLQD AIOOHS, PFS KIS
 TPD WNQLTF BQLK TNHHOD
 DAVFFVFZ TVOS. LIQ LFOG
 NLAH TPD QPVF WNHF DIF WL
 ZHW WNPW SVQW QLPS SQVHS.

some, eager to stir up something negative to say and bending over backwards in efforts to bring the celebrated author down a peg or two. Carrie was portrayed as a "dragon" for her ferocious attempts to keep her husband safe from distractions. Both the press and the neighbors became more and more inquisitive, while some of the hired help couldn't be trusted. Below is a drawing made from a photograph that was surreptitiously snapped by a worker on the premises and quickly sold. It shows the world-famous writer pushing a wheelbarrow.



Rudyard Kipling doing farm work at Naulakha.

Then there was the matter of Carrie's brother Beatty Balestier, who had become a bushel of thorns in the Kiplings' rosebush. By nature, he was "a wastrel and spend-thrift, swaggerer, blusterer, idler, hard drinker, hard liver." This description comes from a man who befriended Beatty and truly liked him. Frederic F. Van de Water, author of *Rudyard Kipling's Vermont Feud* (1891), meant to vindicate the scandal-plagued Beatty.

Matters between brother and sister had been cordial at first while Carrie and Rud were living at Bliss Cottage. They were glad to purchase land from Beatty and hire him as the overseer for the construction of Naulakha. But then the troubles began, for Beatty had the bad habit of skimming money meant for the workers and lining his own pockets. Furthermore, when drunk, he was quick to anger and to voice threats. Beatty's wife Mai became infuriated with Carrie, who deemed their little Marjorie too undisciplined and rowdy to play with her polite cousin Josephine.

Because the tension between the two families became more and more extreme, no local was in the least surprised when their mutual antagonism pushed them all into a courtroom battle. There all the charges and counter-charges, all the greed and pettiness were made public. Newspaper editors were delighted to give the sordid spectacle top billing. The feud was excruciating to Kipling whose privacy had been ruined.

Kipling - Cont. from previous page

Before a judgment was reached, the Kipling family bolted. They left Naulakha in August 1896 with almost no good-byes. They shut the house, dismissed the servants, and packed for a long trip. After four years in the beloved home that was supposed to be their refuge forever, Carrie, Josephine and Rud traveled to England and settled there. The fact that they left so hurriedly and never returned may explain why Naulakha, now open as a shrine to the author, is eerily kept "just as it was." The atmosphere of the past remains intact, as if the Kipling family still lives there.

During his four years of living in Vermont, Rudyard Kipling had been amazingly productive. From that short era he published *Many Inventions* (1893), *The Jungle Book* (1894), *The Second Jungle Book* (1895), *The Seven Seas* (1896), and *Captains Courageous* (1897).

In England, Carrie gave birth to another daughter and then to a son. Kipling's writing continued unabated, and his literary reputation reached new heights. His estate in Kent pleased him; it too still survives and is open to the public. He was awarded the first Nobel prize given to an author writing in English. After his death, his ashes were buried in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

But two dreadful losses made Kipling a man whom no one could envy. He lost his darling Josephine, just 7 years old, when they both caught pneumonia on an 1899 trip to New York City. And his son, John, obeying his father's wish that he enlist, was killed in the first year of World War I.



Josephine Kipling seated on a tiger skin at Naulakah in 1895.

The Charles B. Danforth Library owns a copy of each of these books of fiction by Rudyard Kipling: *Kim* (1901), *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1886), *The Complete Stalky & Company* (1899), and a modern selection of his stories entitled *Tales of East & West*. *The Jungle Books (I and II)* and *The Just-So Stories* are on order.

DANFORTH LIBRARY NEWS

Hours: Wed: 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Sat: 10:00 a.m. to Noon

Have you missed *Vermont Life* magazine? Now is your chance to look back. Middlebury College has digitized the collection. You can find it here:

[Vermont Life Magazine : Free Texts : Free Download, Borrow and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)

New Books at Danforth

Contemporary Fiction

Violeta, by Isabel Allende

RECITATIF: A Story by Toni Morrison; Morrison's only short story published in 1983 and reissued in 2022

The Midnight Library, by Matt Haig

The All of It, by Jeannette Haien (1986)

Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf (1925)

Waiting for the Barbarians, by J. M. Coetzee (1980)

Fire on the Mountain, by Anita Desai (1977)

Children

Watercress, by Jason Chin and Andrea Wang; Caldecott Medal 4-8 years

Memoir

The Liar's Club, by Mary Karr (1995)

Fierce Attachments, by Vivian Gornick (1987)

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly: A Memoir of Life in Death, by Jean-Dominique Bauby

Trustees: *Berna Donlon, Margaret Edwards, Judy Maynes, Susan McNulty, and Ellen Miles*

Contact: 1-802-234-9408 (during open hours, or email: charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com)

MOON LIGHTING FARM CSA SHARES

Moonlighting Farm is offering market shares this year! These shares will work like credit for all vegetables at the Barnard townhall market stand or any other farmers markets the farm participate in.

You can purchase a share in any amount that works for you and you will get 10% additional credit (a \$200 share will purchase \$220 of produce). You can also arrange a pickup during the week if you can't make it to the market. Contact moonlightingfarm@gmail.com

RACE AROUND THE LAKE

Registration is now open for BarnArts' annual Race Around the Lake 2022

The RACE AROUND THE LAKE will be held in accordance with any pending State rules regarding such events. The 5K and 10K races will take place on Sunday, May 22, 2022, at Silver Lake State Park, at 250 North Road, Barnard. An alternative Start/Finish area is available, if we need it.

Event information:

Registration/Check-in will begin at 9am.

The 10K Race begins at 10:30am and the 5K Race begins at 11am

The planned post-race activities include: the Chef's Table, live music, and a Fun Run from 11:30-12:30.

The awards ceremony is to begin at 12 noon

Adults: \$35, 12 & under: \$20 (Through May 15)

More info and Registration sign up at:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/VT/Barnard/BarnArtsRaceAroundtheLake>

All funds raised directly support our Youth Programming and make this summer's Summer Youth Theater camp possible!

BarnArts Center for the Arts

PO Box 41

Barnard, VT 05031

www.barnarts.org

info@barnarts.org

802-234-1645 (voice mail)

For tickets and more information, visit www.barnarts.org

BARNARD MATTERS 2022

SILVER LAKE PROGRESSIVE CLUB SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

Thank you to all who have donated to this years fund drive.

Barnard's Silver Lake Progressive Club's tradition is to award scholarships to Barnard and East Barnard high-school seniors who are continuing their education. Since 1986, the club has awarded thousands of dollars to deserving students: 46 recipients so far!

In previous years the funding for our scholarship was raised on town meeting day at the luncheon during town meeting. This year in our fundraising for scholarships is online at [Barnard Matters 2022](#).

If you prefer, you may send a check (payable to the Silver Lake Progressive Club) to:

Silver Lake Progressive Club

c/o Barbara Kelley

3134 Stage Road

South Pomfret, VT 05067

Contact Barbara Kelley for more information: 802-457-2719 or bKelley321@gmail.com

With many thanks,

Members of The Silver Lake Progressive Club

Judy Maynes

Barnard, Vt 05031

Email: judy.maynes@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICES

Due to heavy mud, Bowman Road from Tower Road to Royalton Tpke will be closed at least through Monday, March 21, 2022.

Rob Ramrath, Town Administrator

The Barnard Selectboard and the Highway Foreman are aware of the problems with the roads. This is an exceptional mud event, and there is very little that can be done until the roads either freeze or dry out. Heavy trucks are not immune to the mud. Even areas of our roads that will support your standard passenger car may not support a truck, even if it is only carrying a partial load. We are advising all residents that live on dirt roads not to drive over areas of the road that cannot support the weight of your car.

Barnard Board of Selectboard

GEORGE IS ONCE AGAIN DOING HIS LATE SEASON FISHING ON THE LAKE

For those who are new in town: The dummy on the lake is named George. It's a long standing Barnard tradition. We call it the "Guess George's Fate" Contest. Place your bets at the BGS as to what day/time he is going to fall through the ice. \$5 per bet or 5 for \$20. Winner gets half, the other half goes to Barnard Helping Hands. Have fun!

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

OPENS APRIL 1ST AT THE GRANGE

PERFORMANCES

April 1, 2, 7, 8 & 9 at 7:30 pm

April 3 & 10 at 2:00 pm

Post-show discussion moderated by WISE with the cast and director following the April 3 performance

TICKETS:

\$20 Adults

\$15 Students

LOCATION:

The Grange Theatre

65 Stage Rd, South Pomfret, VT

More information can be found [here](#).

THE PLANNING COMMISSION meets on the Monday prior to the first Wednesday of every month at 7 PM in the Town Office.

BARNARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION meets the second Monday of the month, 7:00pm, Town Hall.

BEES MEETINGS are held at 6:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the library at the school.

DANFORTH LIBRARY HOURS: Wednesdays 3:00 - 5:00 p.m., Saturdays 10:00 a.m. to Noon. ECFiber Wi-Fi access available .

SELECTBOARD meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Town offices at 7:00pm.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, Rob Ramrath, selectboard@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, Rob Ramrath, zoning@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

TOWN CLERK office hours are Monday & Tuesday, 8:00am-3:30pm. Public access is restricted. Call 234-9211 for an appointment.

THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at the Barnard Town Hall as necessary.

THE BARNARD ENERGY COMMITTEE meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm at the Town Hall

YOGA CLASSES offered at Danforth Library, Mondays 9:00am - 10:30am with Amanda Anderson. Classes are by donation; for more information contact Amanda@innerliftyoga.com. Yoga Classes are also offered on Thursdays from 9-10:30 with Beth Umba. Contact Beth at: bethumba@gmail.com.

BARNARD GENERAL STORE, Monday-Saturday: 7am-7pm, Sundays: 8am-6pm.
<https://www.facebook.com/barnardgeneralstore>

BARNARD LISTSERV: to subscribe please send an email to: barnard-subscribe@lists.vitalcommunities.org

RECYCLING Click [here](#) for Hours and Regulations

THE BARNARD INN is running a "Feeding Neighbors & Sustaining Community" campaign. Purchase an e-Gift Card and in turn the chefs will feed neighbors. Whole chicken dinners (serves 4-6) and individual sized meals to help feed Vermonters in need. Thank you and please stay safe. E-Gift Cards are available at www.barnardinn.com.

ECFIBER Governing Board meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm in 012 Oakes Hall, Vermont Law School. More information at <https://www.ecfiber.net/>

HISTORICAL SOCIETY Programs to be announced. Questions? Email: historicalbarnard1761@gmail.com

BARNARTS EVENTS

SUMMER YOUTH THEATER

Registration for Seussical, a production of BarnArts Summer Youth Theater, is open. BarnArts Summer Youth Theater 2022 registration is limited to 30 youths, and priority is given to returning families. Space is very limited. Please complete the [Summer Youth Theater Registration Form](#) and mail to BarnArts with the registration fee of \$450 (fee after May 1st is \$500).

Our Summer Youth Theater registration refund policy is posted on our website (full refund before May 1, 50% before June 1). Payment to BarnArts can also now be made to BarnArts through VENMO: BarnArts@barnarts. 4-digit cell phone code: 5354. This registration form is to hold your child's place.

A full packet with more forms and details will be available in July. This is a community theater program and building a full theatrical production from the ground up is an exciting, but big commitment. Some parental involvement is required.

During the 3-week camp, youth will take on characters, learn songs and dancing, and prepare for the full-scale production to be held at the Barnard Town Hall with original staging, costuming, choreography and a live band! Our team of theater professionals will teach, guide and inspire your kids. Daily schedule includes a mid-morning snack and a long break for lunch, supervised outdoors at the Barnard Academy.

Camp Dates: July 18-Aug 7

Performance Weekend: Aug 5-7

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:30am-3:30pm

Camp Location: Barnard Academy

Performances: Barnard Town Hall Aug 5, 6, & 7

For more info go to:

<http://www.barnarts.org/mainstage/seussical/>

PO Box 41

Barnard, VT 05031

info@barnarts.org

802-234-1645 (voice mail)

www.barnarts.org

CRYPTOGRAM ANSWER

Mud, mud, everywhere, and not just inches deep
Mud, mud, everywhere, and how the cars did sink.
Tractors pulled, and mud was thrown from wheels
spinning wild.
Our only hope was rain then sun to get that dirt road
dried.

WCSU SCHOOL CALENDAR

Apr 6, 2 Hour Delayed Start (students)

Apr 11-15, Spring Recess (school closed)

May 4, 2 Hour Delayed Start (students)