Rudyard Kipling’s Letters to His Agents, A. P. Watt and Son, 1889–1899

Kipling, Rudyard, Pinney, Thomas

Published by ELT Press

Kipling, Rudyard and Thomas Pinney.
Rudyard Kipling’s Letters to His Agents, A. P. Watt and Son, 1889–1899.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/46197.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/46197

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=1808151
To A. S. Watt 8 January 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.
Jan. 8. 95

Dear Alick:

Your long letter of the 29th ult to hand yesterday.

I know that old trick about extracts from an author being supposed to help him along the flowery path of fame but I suppose that there is absolutely nothing to be done.

As regards the moribund Heineman and Balestier, will you get me what information you can about that firm and I think your precaution about letting them have the book of verses when they have paid by cheque is eminently wise.

In regard to the four poems you will see I have cabled “Rudyard.” They may as well go to Batcheller1 at the price you specify. I think we will not offer anything to the Century yet awhile. (They want a 3 number novelette with great yearnings). Let ’em have time to think what they need as Xmas things and will pay heavily when they want to boom their magazine.2 Between times they will pad up with cheap stuff. Henley3 has written me asking for verses and I have already told you that Harris4 of the S[aturday]. R[evue]. is after me with the same interest. Don’t try Henley but you might sound Verschoyle5 Harris’ subaltern.

I shall of course send Brett his copy as you request.

As regards the 6 books. The situation I take it is this. They will contain, on the English side, simply the old tales set before the public as such. Here they will have one or two new stories to hold the copyright.
Later when new stories have been made we will talk about a collection of Soldier Three tales.

Will you let me know by cable how much stands to my credit at the bank after the Wheeler note is met.

You seem to have done remarkably well with the Unqualified Pilot. *Proof for revision*, I pray you, as soon as possible.

As to the new Jungle book—let us pause. In confidence I am disgusted beyond measure with Alden’s illustrations and have written my father begging him to illustrate the new tales from end to end. In which case (if he agrees) I should expect to bear the expense of the drawings and MacM and the American publishers could divide the expense of reproductions. I shall do my best to get the book ready by October at the latest.

I think we had [to] fight the Century tooth and nail for twenty percent. Reduce the advance on their side to £250 if necessary and let us take 15% on the first 3000 copies. They are a hard firm the Century but we must not yield to them absolutely in this matter and you must remember that with the *Century* and *St Nick* their advertising costs ‘em very little. It would be a bad disadvantage not to have the *Century* publish the second vol. for both books sell each other.

As to the Birthday book I think 2/6 the right price and 5d a fair royalty per copy. I prefer to have no advance on the book. Advances are pretty but have the disadvantage of confusing accounts and I like to know where I stand. For this side 75c. is the best price and we must face a 10% royalty. If it sells at all it will sell by the cartload.

In regard to the *Ship that found herself* if *St Nick* write me direct I shall tell them that the matter has passed out of my hands.

I am consumed with envy, and Mrs Kipling is delighted, over the Bound Books. I never saw such crushed levant and such glorious inwards. They are locked up where I can’t get at them and they are entirely lovely.

As regards the *Graphic* I have a tale by me which needs a good deal of revision but I will do my best to get it. I can’t guarantee any time nor do I think that the Graphic will care for it. However I will send it on, as soon as it is ready for them to see on the clear understanding that
if they do not like it, they shall have first chance at the next tale that

This disposes of the week’s work. We are in the middle of a heavy
thaw and all nature runs at the nose.

Give my best regards to your father and with all wishes for a happy
new year from us both believe me my dear Alick

Yours ever sincerely
Rudyard Kipling.

Notes 8 January 1895

1. Irving Bacheller (1859–1950), founded the New York Press Syndicate in
1884; by 1895 he had already begun a successful career as a novelist and story writer
to which he soon devoted himself. The four poems are “The Liner She’s a Lady,”
“The Men that Fought at Minden,” “That Day,” and “The Miracles,” all of which
appeared in the new American Pocket Magazine from November 1894 to February
1895 (The Seven Seas). The magazine was edited by Bacheller.

2. The Century published “The Brushwood Boy,” December 1895 (The Day’s
Work).

3. W. E. Henley (1849–1903), poet and editor of the Scots Observer, in which the
early, sensation-making “Barrack-Room Ballads” appeared in 1890. RK had been
one of Henley’s circle of young writers in London, and remembered him as “kind,
generous, and a jewel of an editor” (Something of Myself, 82). Henley was now edit-
ing the New Review.

4. Frank Harris (1856–1931), successful London editor, notorious for his boast-
fully mendacious and scandalous style: a liar and lecher. RK called him “the one
human being that I could on no terms get on with” (Something of Myself, 83).

5. John Stuart Verschoyle (1853–1915), Frank Harris’s sub-editor first on the
Fortnightly Review and then on the Saturday Review; called a “discontented
32. Harris describes Verschoyle at length in Contemporary Portraits, 2nd Series (New

6. Illustrations by Cecil Aldin (1870–1935) for “How Fear Came” and “Letting
in the Jungle” in the Pall Mall Budget.

7. JLK illustrated the entire book, mostly with head-pieces, tail-pieces, and or-
namental initials, and is acknowledged on the title page: “Decorated by John Lock-
wood Kipling, C.I.E.”
To A. P. Watt 13 February 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.

Feb. 13. 1895

Dear Watt,

Yours of the 2nd to hand.

In regard to the Century’s offer for the new Jungle book I think you may close. We shan’t be able to get better terms I imagine and what you say about their facilities for advertising and the like is very true. What will MacM’s terms be?

I am exhorting and entreating my father to illustrate as quickly as he can and should be much obliged if you would send him all the 4 stories of the P.M.G. which have already appeared.

His address is

Villa Il Gioiello

quarto Fiorentino

Castello

Italy.¹

I note what you say in regard to the poems which seems to me very satisfactory. By the way in regard to the American rights of the Jungle Tales Batcheler seems to sell ’em to McClure who, after syndicating, uses ’em for his magazine. I have no doubt B. makes McClure pay well for the privilege.

I have had a note of apology from Bok in regard to his statements about you as a literary agent but I don’t see any desire on his part to make a public confession.
Barr wants badly a sea-tale for the Idler. It has occurred to me that “The Ship that Found herself” might be more his style than St Nick’s and I have suggested that he asks you to look at it.²

I should be glad if when money accumulates you could send over a draft for £50 or a £100. Isn’t there an O.B.C. Feb. dividend coming along in the near future.³

With all regards

Very sincerely as ever

Rudyard Kipling

Notes 13 February 1895

1. RK’s parents were in Florence for the winter.
2. See 25 November 1894.
3. A payment from the Oriental Bank Company was received on 3 May 1895 (CK Diary).

To A. S. Watt 10 April 1895

ALS

Naulakha. / Brattleboro. / Vermont.
Ap. 10. 1895

Dear Alick

Yours of the 20th ult followed us to New York¹ arriving as one might say between the pauses of conversation with your Father who looks very fit and well and is doing cartloads of business with the publishers.² All the publishers are feasting him and lunching him and making much of him and he seems to be enjoying it hugely.

I saw the notice of the demise of the P.M. Budget³ and naturally assumed that the greater included the less and that the Gazette must cease to appear. Therefore I wired to your father in New York in hot haste, but your letter explains it all and I shall go on and deliver my other two tales with a serene mind.⁴
By all means [word illegible] the [most of name heavily inked out] is a good chap but I don’t think he is weighed down to the earth with a Bank account.

And that reminds me, I have handed over all the O.B.C. forms which you sent me to your father who holds, as you know, a cast-steel power of attorney and I should be glad of the draft sent out to me as soon as may be. Many thanks for the MacM. accts.

So far no proofs of the P.M. poems have turned up. I will when I get them return them at once. Thanks for the letters and receipts.

The above comes later [3 lines have been inked out]. We’ll finish business first.

Herewith I am sending the pass book for the London and Midland.

I had a most delightful dinner at the Dows’s five (what is the plural of Dows) at 70th Street where I met your father and sister. She is ridiculously like you. Incidentally they told me things and she showed me a photograph and I heard things and that is why we both send you our very best and warmest congratulations. Matrimony, as you will discover, is about six times more complicated than running the affairs of six hundred female authoresses (all Marie Corellis) but it is a noble and noteworthy institution and I know from what I know of you that you will make her very happy. Therefore “Bless you my children.” I only hope we shall be the other side when the marriage comes off. Let us know how things are going and when you purpose to be married and perhaps you (your father came secretly) will come over and bide under our roof a while.

You’ve got to come to America and you might as well do it on your honeymoon as any other time. All this I know is quite unofficially [sic] but my heart warms to you and I only hope you’ll be half as happy as I’ve been. If it is in order please present my respectful salaams to her and—though this will not impress her in the least—tell her I’ve about as high an opinion of her fiancé as of any man I know.

Yours congratulatingly

Rudyard.
Notes  10 April 1895

1. According to CK’s Diary they left for New York on 25 February and went on to Washington, D.C., the next day, where they remained until 6 April before returning to New York. They went back to Brattleboro on 9 April.

2. While they were in Washington, D.C., “Mr. Watt has come down from N. York to see Rud” (CK Diary, 1 April 1895). But RK evidently saw Watt in New York as well.

3. The Pall Mall Budget disappears from Willing’s Press Guide in 1896, though it continued to appear up to the end of 1895. Its sister publications, the Pall Mall Gazette and the Pall Mall Magazine continued publication.


5. Not identified.

6. A. S.Watt married Lesley Anderson in this year.

7. Marie Corelli (1855–1924), pseudonym of Mary Mackay, author of highly popular and extravagant melodramas, was one of A. P. Watt’s clients.

To A. P. Watt  17 April 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.

Ap. 17. 1895

Dear Watt

Very many thanks for your letter. Yes, we had better accept Walker’s $6000 for the 12 letters conditional on my going to India because at the last some unforeseen thing might turn up to delay me and I want him to understand that if I go I shall write the letters not that I am going in order to write the letters.¹

Also, I should like good arrangements in the contract made for the payment of the money. Say one fourth of the sum before the delivery of the fourth letter—one fourth before the delivery of the sixth and so on—or something of that kind. It was like him not to tell me of the double publication which he intends. Also in the contract I must have it clear that neither my titles nor my copy are touched. He can advertize
the letters under any caption he pleases but he musn’t play with my headings.

I have not as yet sent on the other two P. M. Jungle tales but hope to be able to do so about the end of the month.² If I go to India I shall leave here about the middle of August for England and I shall pass my Jungle book proofs before that date.

Have the four original P[all]. M[all]. G[azette]. tales by me and shall revise them at once. Shall I send them to the Century or to MacM?

In regard to the new poem³ I should make a stand for the same price as for McAndrews Hymn inasmuch as that poem attracted a good deal of attention and also they buy all the serial rights. I can let them see it when it’s ready.

With our united best wishes for a prosperous voyage for yourself and your daughter believe me dear Watt

Yours always sincerely and gratefully

Rudyard Kipling

Notes  17 April 1895

1. John Brisben Walker (1847–1931), owner and editor of Cosmopolitan. He hoped to get a series of letters from India from RK; though RK flirted with the idea, he soon decided not to undertake the commission. RK proposed the series in a letter to Walker of 15 March 1895; he would write “a set of twelve letters describing the land from the point of view of the man to whom it means ‘home’“ (Letters, II: 176).


3. Probably “The Song of the Banjo,” New Review, June 1895. RK is reported as “working at Song of the Banjo” on 25 May 1894, and as finishing the poem on 14 April 1895 (CK Diary).

To A. S. Watt  19 April 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.

Ap. 19. ’95

Dear Alick—
Many thanks for yours of the 6<sup>th</sup> inst containing, inter alia, collections extracted with a corkscrew from Sheard. Why is it that there is such an amount of crime of that kind in music and the drama? (I don’t allude to Oscar<sup>1</sup> but to theatrical managers). You always seemed to have bad trouble with Sheard. Thanks for the M.S.S. of *Good Hunting* returned.<sup>2</sup>

Damn those collections of favourite authors! “Tommy” has been quoted so often that I can’t in decency refuse but I won’t have my pet tale lifted into a compendium. I am entirely of your way of thinking. Tell the Cody man that *The Story of a King*<sup>3</sup> is bespoke for another collection—You need not tell him it is the Macmillan two vol. Edition: only see that he doesn’t have it. I return the letter for you to answer.

On mature consideration I think we’ll get back “the Leaves from a Winter note book” and add a lot of fresh stuff to it.<sup>4</sup> I don’t care to let it go to the Windsor anyhow and I think I see my way to making it much better. Therefore tell them that we won’t deal and send me the typed copy as soon as may be.

All right about the P[all].M[all].G[azette]. I am going ahead with the other two tales.

Your esteemed Parent from what I can gather seems to have been having a “high old time” over here. All the publishers have been feasting him and he has been sitting quiet and taking it all in for future consumption. He has fixed a rather big deal for me with the man who runs the *Cosmopolitan* and if he can come through the affair without having a row with John Brisbane Walker (owner of the said *Cosmop*) I shall admire him more than ever if that is possible.

Did I tell you John Lane and Le Gallienne were over here a few weeks syne?<sup>5</sup> Both of ’em are amusing persons but I could not get out of Lane what he was here for? Do you know?

We are very busy getting the garden ready for the Spring and live in dirt over our shoe tops. The last three days have been cloudless, from 65°–70° in the shade and not a leaf on the trees. Forget not to send me drafts when the funds in bank grow over £100, and believe me

Yours always sincerely

Rudyard Kipling

You must come over
Notes 19 April 1895

1. Oscar Wilde had been arrested and imprisoned on 5 April.

2. The title under which “Red Dog” was originally published. The title was changed when the story was collected in the *Second Jungle Book*. The return of the manuscript is perhaps evidence that CK was now collecting them. It is now among the manuscripts presented by the Kiplings to the British Library.


4. See 20 January 1894, n.5.

5. John Lane (1854–1925), publisher under the “Bodley Head” imprint and of the *Yellow Book*; Richard Le Gallienne (1866–1947), poet and critic, associated with Lane at the Bodley Head. Le Gallienne wrote a grudging study of RK, published by Lane as *Rudyard Kipling: A Criticism*, 1900. RK is called a writer of “good second-class poems” and of “reactionary” stories marred by brutality.

To A. S. Watt 5 May 1895

*ALS*

*Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.*

May: 5: 1895.

Dear Alick—

Many thanks for your letter with draft for $1700—and also for O.B.C. collections. By the way the Century have sent me a cheque for *Jungle book* dividends direct—$2000 in all. You had better deduct your percentage from something else somewhere else because I have invested every penny of the money.

I have corrected proofs both of the verses and the Maltese cat,¹ and am returning you the same by this mail. The other copy shall go to Bacheller.

As to the *Jungle book* for the blind that was done in America.² I don’t know which particular society did it; but you can get a copy I believe from the *Century*. It may be worth while to note that the raised type is some peculiar patent or other—all dots and squares—not raised letters merely.

As to Macmillans selling in India on reduced royalty I am quite willing. I don’t think much of Appleton’s powers of selling books—perhaps they will retrieve themselves when they handle the poems.
Please send me spare copies of “How Fear came to the Jungle” and “The Miracle of Purun Bhagat” as I wish to revise them for the jungle book. I have no news from your pater yet of the contract with the Century for this book being signed and I shan’t send ’em the copy till I know it is.

Very sincerely yours
Rudyard Kipling

P.S. A persistent man by the name of Clayton Johns will be writing to you asking for leave to publish a musical setting to The seals lullaby and Wolf song of the Seeonee pack. I referred him to you because I wanted him shut up once and for all. So, be magisterial and tell him that other arrangements have been made, without specifying what you have or have not done; and without alluding to me at all.

He is an awful fraud for he has been publishing settings, I believe, without my leave; and he is simply trying to put this thing through by hook or by crook.

Notes  5 May 1895

1. Pall Mall Gazette, 26, 27 June 1895 (The Day’s Work). RK originally intended the story as “No. 1 of the new series of Jungle Tales” but did not follow up the idea (to Watt, 31 January 1895: Letters, II: 172).

2. The Vermont Phoenix, the Brattleboro paper, for 11 January 1895, reported that the Jungle Book “has been selected for publication as a book for the blind.”

3. Settings of “The Seal’s Lullaby” and “Hunting-Song of the Seeonee Pack” by Clayton Johns are listed in Richards, Bibliography, but only as MSS in the New York Public Library. Johns (1857–1932) was a pianist, composer, and teacher in Boston and London. He published over a hundred songs.

To A. P. Watt  19 May 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.

May: 19. 95

Dear Watt (or since I have letters from father and son to acknowledge I should say)
Dear Watts:

I have to acknowledge with many thanks draft for $400 by a letter of May 4. together with news of Sheard whose tale \textit{sic} Alick seems to be twisting, and “Tommy” and “The Man who would be King.”

In regard to \textit{The new Jungle book}, this week should see the 3\textsuperscript{rd} tale off to you and ere the end of the month I hope to send the last. I fancy the 3\textsuperscript{rd} tale, an Esquimaux one, will be a little bit beyond the pater’s power of illustration.\textsuperscript{1} I hope you will keep him up to the time mark in whatever work he undertakes. Above all things don’t let him fall behind hand.

The Century are bothering me for copy of the new Jungle book and I don’t know yet whether you have fixed up the contract between us.

\textit{Please} send me copies of \textit{How Fear came to the Jungle} and \textit{The Miracle of Purun Bhagat}.

I have an idea that you will not find all clear sailing with John Brisbane Walker. He is a queer fish—almost as queer as Bok whose letter I see has a little scandalized you. The reason is this. Bok begged me indirectly, not so much for a Tale as for a piece. My price should be his price he wrote and having a longish love tale by me I responded cheerfully “Certainly. By all means. $140 per 1000 and you to take the tale \textit{as it stands}.”\textsuperscript{2} Bok paid me for every single word in the tale. I never expected he’d come to the scratch or I should have put the price $20 per thousand higher. However, after having accepted the tale he tells me that they have an editorial rule forbidding the mention of intoxicating liquors in their fiction. I have given him a piece of my mind on the subject of buying tales first and trying to alter them later and he has backed down and said that he is sorry he spoke.\textsuperscript{3}

Now, he is much more sorry that he has given such a price for so long a tale and, as I can see, is trying desperately to hedge by selling European rights to you. I don’t see myself that you need pick his chestnuts out of the fire for him if he chooses to pay fancy prices. Write him that you can’t do anything to a tale that \textit{Mr Kipling hasn’t put through your hands in the first instance} and see what he’ll make of that. The tale is a decent tale but it has no very strong points in it and E.W.B. is going to advertize it through the length and the breadth of the land. His correspondence with me on the subject of how to advertize in a proper key
is simply priceless. But I fancy the management of the Ladies’ Home Journal do not approve of his paying what he did for it.

The Century have been very keen, as the enclosed letter will show, to get a promise of some kind from me. The news that J. Brisbane Walker has made an arrangement with me seems to have spurred them up. Hence Gilder’s letter. Did they say anything to you about this? because they began to write to me soon after you left. We have no long novels coming but this is a useful letter to keep. You will take note that Gilder and not Johnson⁴ writes it, so that shows they are in earnest. I shall write nothing in reply except to hope that they are well and happy.

I very much hope to have the verse book ready in another three or four months and my concern in the Jungle book ceases when the 4th story is off my hands. If my Father keeps to time the book should be amply ready in November.

In haste to catch a suddenly outgoing mail

Yours ever sincerely

Rudyard Kipling

Notes 19 May 1895


3. At the end of “William the Conqueror,” when the worst of the famine is over, the hero has a “good whisky and soda” and the group, including the two women, “drank one whole bottle of champagne, hot, because there was no ice” (224). The “piece of my mind” is RK’s letter to Bok of 11 May 1895: “Had you hinted at the existence of office rules I should never have sent you a M.S. for inspection, because my one theory in regard to my work is that writing to order means loss of power, loss of belief in the actuality of the tale and ultimately loss of self-respect to the writer” (Letters, II: 186).

3. Robert Underwood Johnson (1853–1937), then associate editor, later editor, of the Century Magazine.
To A. S. Watt  5 June 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.

June. 5. 95

Dear Alick

I have to acknowledge yours of the 18th ult. enclosing draft for $4363.65 for the which many thanks,. It is a long letter but mercifully there are no knotty questions in it.

As regards Mr. Leopold Lindau who I am sure is an Ebrew Jew and his views on translations and the losses he incurs, do exactly what seems to you best in the matter.1 Only I know that trick of having bad losses over one volume only to get the next at reduced rates.

Thanks for press cuttings enclosures and the like.

Now for your letter of the 25th ult.

I return herewith the MacM. and Century agreements (signed) for the Jungle Book and would notify you that in response to the latter’s almost tearful demand for a “dummy” to make up and put into their travellers’ hands I have sent into them copy of the first five tales of the JB.2 There will be eight altogether—the new P.M.G. tales omitting the Maltese Cat which is not meant for babes. They (the Century) will send me double proofs which I purpose to send over to MacM. They haven’t heard from you about illustrations.

As regards John Brisben Walker his views and contracts: the point I especially wanted your parent to guard against was the certainty of my going to India. There may be all sorts of things to turn up to keep me from the tour and I don’t want J.B.W. to advertise in a hurry. But I am pleased that you get civil letters out of him. There is a dark rumour this side the water that he has about got to the end of his money. You see he’s a silver-mine owner and silver is about played out as a metal. His losses are very heavy (supposedly) and they say he is banking on the chances of the next election, which will be fought on the free-silver issue, to pull through.3

By the way the Century (confound ’em!) are coming to me about illustrations for the J. B. I don’t want to carry on correspondence with all their men so I pray you to take ’em in hand and tell them what is
going to be done. Keep far enough in advance of ’em so that they won’t bother me because I am going to be busy.

“Quiquern” the third of the P.M.G. tales should be in your hands by now and the last tale goes off I hope within the next ten days.

What you say about Levett-Yeats and Marston is vastly interesting and has been attended to.

Now attend to me.

The Critic edited by relatives of R. W. Gilder who is Editor of the Century has in its issue of the 25th ultimo a page column of foolish notes about the Literary Agent. You will have seen it I presume ere this. They were written by Jeanette Gilder who (this is in confidence of course) tried to be my American literary agent. Asked my wife for her influence in that direction! Now as you well know I loathe newspaper correspondence but this thing was so openly and so meanly a wipe at you that I broke my custom and sent ’em a letter of mild correction, naming no names but just stating a few facts. That letter should appear in the Critic of next week—June 9th I think and will be sent to you.

I particularly do not wish to be mixed up in the asinine correspondence etc. that is now going on in the Daily Chronicle because a lot of it is piffle and idleness. At the same time I do not see why this letter should not serve, in England as well as in America, for a weapon on our side. Therefore if it is quoted in any paper in England—say the Author or the Daily Chronicle I shall not object. Verbum sap,

The Critic on this side is beginning what may be eventually a rather nasty opposition to the L[iterary]. A[gent]. Or rather the L.A[lexander]. P[ollock].W[att]. and a word spoken by me early should be useful. It seems to me that your best attitude in regard to the affair would be a masterly inactivity but of that you are the best judge. You will note that I charge no commission.

All congratulations in regard to the Balfour feather in your cap. The next years, I warn you, will see a whole brood of cheap and very nasty literary agents who will work evil.

Ever yours sincerely,

Rudyard Kipling
P.S. Please send a copy of each poem of mine as it is published, for filing. The Song of the Banjo in the New Review was a present to Henley who likes such things. I don’t.

Notes 5 June 1895


2. RK sent this material with a letter to Charles Chichester, of the Century, 3 June 1895, saying that the new book was to be called “The Other Jungle book” and that “I may wish to put in short verse headings at the beginning of the tales” (ALS, Tyler Collection, Yale).

3. In the presidential election of 1896 Bryan, the free silver candidate, was defeated by McKinley. None of the biographical accounts of Walker that I have seen mentions a silver mine; he had a remarkably diversified career as a soldier, editor, manufacturer, developer, etc.

4. Sidney Kilmer Levett-Yeats, of the Indian Civil Service and a writer of fiction for which he was called “one of the imitators of Mr. Rudyard Kipling” (Westminster Review, January 1894). RK had known him in Lahore (to Robert Underwood Johnson, 14 December 1895: Letters, II: 220). Levett-Yeats’s Honour of Savelli was published by Marston’s company, Sampson Low, in 1895. Levett-Yeats was one of Watt’s clients.


6. The letter, 31 May 1895, addressed to “The Lounger” column in The Critic, was published on 15 June. It describes in detail the many services rendered by the literary agent, in refutation of The Critic’s claim that the agent did little beside collect his percentage (Letters, II: 190–91).

7. RK must mean not a correspondence but two long articles on the subject of literary agency in the Daily Chronicle, 20 and 25 May. Edmund Gosse, in a speech to the Publishers’ Association on 26 April had declared that “great authors by their unbridled greediness are killing the goose on which they all live.” Prompted by this, the Chronicle first interviewed W. M. Colles, Watt’s competitor in literary agency, and next Hall Caine, both interviews of course defending the role of the agent. Watt is not mentioned in the first interview but in the second “men like A. P. Watt” are said to have increased the earnings of authors. Clippings of the interviews were probably among those “press cuttings” that RK thanks Watt for at the head of this letter, perhaps accompanied by the suggestion that RK respond to them.

8. Arthur James Balfour, 1st Earl Balfour, published The Foundations of Belief in 1895; he was one of Watt’s clients.
To A. P. Watt 13 June 1895

AL

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.

June. 13. 95

Dear Watt:

I am sending by this mail corrected proofs of “Good Hunting” for the P.M.G. together with typed copy of The Spring Running the last of the new P.M.G. tales; and, though I say it that shouldn’t, by no means one of the worst.

My cable will have advised you by this time I cannot go to India this winter. I find the state of my wife’s health is such that I can neither take her with me nor leave her behind, and so the idea must fall through. I am the more content to let it go inasmuch as I feel in my bones that sooner or later there would have been an unpleasantness with John Brisben Walker: nor do I think that he is financially over-sound. Of course there is no sort of necessity to tell him the reason of my change of plans. I was careful to allow for a possible loophole and I should merely explain that Mr. Kipling found it impossible to go. The Critic has not yet published my letter about literary agents so I fancy they are waiting for a while to get evidence on the other side. [closing and signature cut away]

To A. P. Watt 15 June 1895

ALS

Naulkha / Brattleboro / Vermont.

June. 15. 95

Dear Watt

Her Imperial Majesty (God bless her!) has pursued me into this wilderness with the enclosed Schedule D—1 of which perhaps you may have heard. Will you please settle it fairly for me and I enclose my letter to the Critic in regard to the Literary agent. Of course I might have said a great deal more but that’s enough to show what side I am on.

Ever yours sincerely

Rudyard Kipling
Note 15 June 1895

1. An income tax form.

To A. S. Watt 25 June 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.
June. 25. 95

Dear Alick

Yours of the 8th enclosing a statement of Methuen’s accounts to hand; to which I say excellent. Now in regard to the Colonial Edition of the forthcoming book of verses, I shall, as usual, put myself entirely in your hands. I suppose it does not affect the English sales or the royalties paid in England and if you think it will be a matter of gain to us in the Colonies by all means make it so. It is so entirely a matter wherein your professional knowledge (vide my letter in the Critic) comes into play that I do not see how I can suggest anything. By the way that Critic letter is making a hum. It will spoke Collis’s wheel for one thing.¹

I agree with you on the “strangeness” of publishers not paying their accounts on time. Vide also my letter in the Critic.² Merely as a bill-agent I maintain that a literary agent (even an agent who simply confines himself to dunning pubs.) would be worth his 10%; but this is precisely what those damned fools don’t see.

Now as regards the Devil and the Deep Sea. I did not know that Waugh³ had anything to do with Batcheller’s syndicate. McClure I do not pretend to admire but he is miles above Waugh as a business man. Therefore I propose now that we have shown our wounded pride for about a year, we return to McClure. Make him humble and make him realize his great good fortune. He’s an unscrupulous devil as ever was but very amusing, and I think he’ll behave in future. So we’ll kiss and be friends.

Both the last two new Jungle tales should be in your hands long ere this reaches you.

I am sending to you as I receive it from the Century revised copy of the New Jungle book for MacM. They seem to be in the deuce of a
hurry and I am not sorry to get it off my hands. It ought to be a better book than the first.

I have to acknowledge with many thanks your later letter with draft for £100 (English) and news about Bok. Let him fend for himself. He has paid enough for my tale to make him mourn all the days of his life.

Yours always sincerely
Rudyard Kipling

Notes 25 June 1895
1. William Morris Colles (1855–1926), lawyer and journalist, established the Authors’ Syndicate in 1889 and developed a career as a literary agent. He was one of Watt’s earliest competitors, though without anything like Watt’s success. I cannot explain how RK’s letter defending literary agency could “spoke Collis’s wheel.”

2. Among the important jobs of the agent listed in RK’s letter is that of “collecting monies when they fall due,” a job “which most men in my profession hate” (Letters, II: 190).

3. Arthur Waugh (1866–1943) had been Wolcott Balestier’s assistant in the London office of the John W. Lovell Co., where RK would have known him familiarly. He was later chairman of the publishing firm of Chapman and Hall and the father of Alec and Evelyn Waugh.

To A. S. Watt 30 July 1895

ALS

Tisbury.1
July 30. ’95

Dear Alick

Herewith I send a tale which is not by me but by someone else,2 and I want you to do your best with it even to taking off your coat and going about in your shirtsleeves. I profess no opinion and I venture not to point out any path. There is a place for most things and I hope you’ll find one for this.
The initials are coming on handsomely. MacM. seem to have stopped sending me proofs and they have not come to the end of the King’s Ankus yet.

Very sincerely ever
Rudyard.

Notes 30 July 1895

1. They sailed from Hoboken on 6 July to Southampton; in England they shuttled between London and Tisbury and returned from Southampton, 14 August (CK Diary; Rees Extracts).
2. Not identified.
3. JLK’s ornamental initials for the Second Jungle Book: see 8 January 1895.

To A. S. Watt 30 July [1895]

ALS

Tisbury.

July 30.

Dear Alick

Many thanks for Bok his letter. I don’t see why I should meet him but I’ve told him when we come to town I shall be happy to do so.¹

Please let me know my balance in the bank on the 1st of August, sending it down here.

Please make the P.M.G. send me proofs of Quiquern and The Spring Running as soon as possible. I have ample time to do them down here.

Yours ever
Rudyard Kipling

P.S. Of course if I write American tales Bok will have to get ’em through you if he wants ’em: but when I do American tales understand clearly that they go for the longest price there is; because they are going to make a sensation which will be cheap at any price. As far as I know I’m not yet ready to write ’em.
Note 30 July 1895

1. RK’s letter to Bok on this day proposes that they meet at Brown’s Hotel after 9 August (30 July 1895: ALS, Library of Congress). At Brown’s RK and CK had “same room as when we were married” (CK Diary, 9 August).

To A. P. Watt 13 August 1895

ALS

Brown’s Hotel, / London.W. / (Dover St & Albemarle St)
Aug. 13. 95

Dear Watt:

I am sending herewith proofs (for Century and Pall Mall) of The Spring Running, the last of the tales of the 2nd Jungle book. Will you please forward them and say to the Century people that they’ll oblige me by sending proofs urgent to Brattleboro direct.

We leave tomorrow morn and this brings you and Alick our united best regards and good wishes.

Ever yours sincerely
Rudyard Kipling

P.S. At the last moment Mrs. K. slips in this bill which has just arrived. Will you please arrange it and don’t bother to send a receipt.

R K

To A. P. Watt 23 September 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Brattleboro / Vermont.
Sep. 23. ’95

Dear Watt,

I am in receipt of yours enclosing Ellis J. Wynne’s letter.¹ Him I have referred back to you. It is only necessary to say that I most entirely agree with your view of the case, and do not at all approve of the promiscuous publishing of my verses with musical settings in magazines.

Always sincerely
Rudyard Kipling
Note 23 September 1895

1. All that I can find of Ellis J. Wynne is that he published a poem called “Life and Death” in the Yellow Book, October 1895.

To A. P. Watt 27 September 1895

ALS

Naulakha / Waite / Windham Co. / Vermont.

Sep. 27. 95

Dear Watt:

I enclose herewith cover of this (Oct) Cosmopolitan in which you will see that my tale “The Spring Running” has been damnably transmogrified into a sort of newspaper sub-heading—“Mowgli leaves the jungle Forever.” Now I am red-hot angry about this. The fraud in the case is that that silver mining idiot Walker sent me the proofs under the proper title but changed it later without my knowledge.

McClure did the same thing over “The legs of Sister Ursula.”

Now you must make it a stipulation in all the contracts that my titles are not to be devilled up by these damned Yanks. Also write to Walker and pitch it in hot. I certainly shan’t take any trouble to write any special matter for him this winter. But please make it a rule in all American tales in future that my titles are not to be interfered with under any circumstances.

Yours very wrathfully

Rudyard Kipling

Note 27 September 1895

1. RK had succeeded in his effort to obtain a post office near Naulakha so that he would not have to go into Brattleboro for his mail. It was set up in the farmhouse owned by the Waite family, with Mrs Waite as the postmistress, and began operation in September. See Letters, II: 187, 199. RK has lined out “Brattleboro” in the letterhead and substituted “Waite/Windham Co.”

2. The title under which the story appeared in Cosmopolitan.

3. Whatever change McClure may have made, it does not appear in the story as published in McClure’s Magazine, March 1894, where the title is “The Legs of Sister Ursula.”
To A. P. Watt   11 November 1895

_ALS_

_Naulakha. / Waite / Windham Co./ Vermont._

Nov: 11. 95

Dear Watt,

Many thanks for yours of the 26th ult with draft for $486.10 and acknowledgement on the part of the Govt of my New Zealand insurance. Fisher Unwin’s letter is very fine indeed and I hope he won’t be too much for _Cosmopolis_ and that _Cosmopolis_ won’t be too much for him.¹

I haven’t any 10,000th tale in hand or as far as I can see on the horizon because I am now busy with my verses and I will bear Bacheller’s demand in mind. Are he and McClure bidding against one another?

Yours very sincerely

Rudyard Kipling.

---

**Note 11 November 1895**

¹. Fisher Unwin (1848–1936), founded the publishing house bearing his name in 1882; _Cosmopolis: An International Review_, a monthly magazine published by Unwin from 1896. It included work in French, German, and Russian as well as in English. RK’s “Slaves of the Lamp” was published in the April 1897 number.

---

To A. P. Watt   1 December 1895

_ALS_

_Naulakha. / Waite / Vermont._

1: xii. 1895

Dear Watt:

I have to acknowledge with many thanks yours of the 16th ult enclosing draft for £100 and telling me that Macm. are manufacturing the colonial editions of my books.

I do not see the sense of spoiling the present good sale of either Jungle book by running it into the colonies on the cheap. In three or four years, as you yourself hint, it might be advisable but it is not now.

In regard to _Heinemann and Balestier_, I agree with you. They can have the Jungle book after they have paid the cheque for £100 and they
had better settle up within the month because we do not wish to hang in the wind too long.

By the way what has happened about our row with Sheard and his series of Barrack room ballads dedicated to Lord Roberts.¹ We were in the thick of that dispute when we left England and I can’t remember that anything further has transpired as the papers say.

And now for what may be a big slice of business. Scribners of New York yesterday insisted in sending up here their “Mister Doubleday” business manager of the magazine with a proposition.² They want to issue in ten vols. boxed at $20 a complete edition de luxe, to be sold by subscription only of all my books. They assure me that it will in no way interfere with regular sales of books published by Brett; Appleton and the Century (of course the scheme is for this side the water only) and will be uniform with their present Stevenson and their projected Barrie.³ Their notion is that they settle with the various publishers in America—they feel convinced that they can—and throw out an offer of 15%, volunteering also to pay well if my father will do frontispieces to each vol.⁴ “Our Mister Doubleday” is so acutely anxious to do business with Mr. Rudyard Kipling and has so large an objection to Mr. A.P. Watt that I am convinced it would be bad for his health to deal with the said A.P.W. He talks of 3000 sets for a certain sale of $60,000 which seems rather fine. There may be a good deal of money in it.⁵ I want you to turn it over in your mind and tell me what you think of it. I have given you all the facts of the case. It doesn’t seem to me that Brett or Appletons specially will be pleased with the notion. But consider.

I should be glad to get over the rest of the Stevenson when you get a chance.

With best regards from us both

Yours ever

Rudyard Kipling

P.S. What has happened to “bread upon the waters.” I don’t see it in the Xmas Graphic.⁶

P.P.S. “Our Mister Doubleday” also said that Scribners would be willing to make an advance.

Notes ¹ 1 December 1895

2. Frank Nelson Doubleday (1862–1934), publisher. Doubleday became one of RK's few friends from among the publishers; it was RK who christened Doubleday “Effendi” (after his initials), the name he went by thereafter among his friends and associates. Doubleday left Scribners in 1897 to found his own publishing firm, first in partnership with S.S. McClure. Doubleday and McClure became RK's American publishers in 1898; the firm went through a series of partnerships and name changes but remained RK's American publishers. Doubleday’s proposition to RK was for what became the Outward Bound Edition of RK's works, published in 36 volumes from 1897 to 1937. RK always regarded this edition as special: “it was the first collected one formed and my plan for it has always been to make it in its own particular way a perfect edition” (to Charles Scribner, 13 May 1920: *Letters*, V: 19).


4. JLK illustrated 18 volumes of the edition with 36 clay plaques in bas-relief that were photographed for reproduction.

5. Doubleday writes that, though he “would not dare to say now how many hundreds of thousands of volumes have been sold” [of the Outward Bound Edition] “I am sure that Mr. Kipling must have made several hundred thousand dollars and the Scribners certainly did not suffer.” See *The Memoirs of a Publisher* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1972), 22.

6. It appeared in the Christmas number of the *Graphic*: see 19 September 1896.

To A. P. Watt 16 December 1895

*ALS*

*Naulakha* / Waite / Vermont.

Dec. 16. 1895.

Dear Watt

I have to acknowledge, with many thanks, draft for £600. I have sent my father’s draft for £100 in full payment of both the Centuries and MacM’s contribution towards the Jungle-book pictures. So that account is settled.

I am sending herewith
Cholera Camp
Soldier and Sailor too
The 'Eathen
Bill 'Awkins

four new barrack room ballads, two of which I know to be first class and the other two are not bad. It seems to me—but you of course are the best judge being on the spot—that they had better be offered to the P.M.G. and all should be got out before April if possible as I now hope to have the book of verses ready for next midsummer.¹

The XIXth Century duly reached me and I read both articles.² The thing that impresses me, as I do not think it impresses you, is the damned impertinence of men who tell a man how he may or may not regulate his own business. If I owned three £30 houses in the East End (which I don’t, thank God) people would think me a fool if I did not leave the collection of rents, repairs etc. in the hands of a competent legal representative who could draw up the leases. But, if I see fit to use a man of business in the mechanism of a much bigger property, I am told my action is unseemly. I am sick of this. Never before have I heard the name of Fisher Unwin’s head bottle-washer who started the discussion and I don’t think Besant did well to notice the critter, even if he did air his views in the XIXth Century. Let us preserve a massive silence. I know to what extent you and Alick are loathed this side of the water, and I can quite see why; but as I explained to a man the other day who was confiding to me the catalogue of your literary sins:—“If Mr Watt stood well with certain firms of my acquaintance it would be my duty to myself to get a new agent at once.” This rather flabbergasted him. Will you please send me over a copy of the Idler containing The Ship that Found herself ³ as I can’t find it here and also a copy of the December or November Badminton Magazine, which has an article on skis. Conan Doyle sent a pair last year and I am getting a great deal of fun out of them. They are like gigantic wooden skates but I want to know the tricks of making them.

With best Christmas wishes from us both to you and Alick and your daughter and renewed thanks for another prosperous year well ended believe me, my dear Watt
Very sincerely yours
Rudyard Kipling.

Notes  16 December 1895


2. T. Werner Laurie, “Author, Agent, and Publisher,” Nineteenth Century, November 1895, 850–55, attacks the literary agent as a “parasite … an unpleasant excrescence on literature, and one who is doing it incalculable harm” (851–52). Besant’s reply is “The Literary Agent,” Nineteenth Century, December 1895, 979–86. Besant defends Watt by name, and quotes from RK’s letter of 13 September 1892 (published in Letters Addressed to A. P. Watt, 1894) thanking Watt for his “skill, care, and foresight.” T. Werner Laurie (1866–1944), at this time Unwin’s manager, later established his own publishing firm.

3. See 25 November 1894 and n.7.

To A. P. Watt  24 December 1895

ALS

Naulakha. / Waite / Windham Co./ Vermont.

Dec: 24. 95.

Dear Watt

Yours of the 11th inst. just to hand. I enclose signed income tax form herewith, and also a list of poems which I expect to include in my next book of verse.

I fancied I had already expressed willingness to sell the continental rights of the Jungle book to Heinemann, provided he paid.¹ The birthday book I understand is practically completed and should be in your hands in the spring. It’s of course hopelessly too late for this year.

Yes: please send Mr Norton Longman my guinea as subscription to the copyright association.²

I see that I have gradually accumulated a stock of short stories which have not yet been published in book form. I don’t think most of them are good enough for that kind of dress and should be very loth to enter
into any arrangements for a volume in the Autumn. After the publication of the book of verses I purpose to shut off the tap.

Will you please till further notice hold for me on the English side all monies that may be paid to my account. As to Batcheller I have nothing by me but I will keep his 10,000 word story request in mind.

I have nothing ready for Walker. I must get my verses done before I move to anything else.

That I think covers the present situation.

Very sincerely ever
Rudyard Kipling

Notes 24 December 1895

1. See 1 December 1895.

2. Thomas Norton Longman (1849–1930), the fifth of that name in the succession of Longmans in the publishing house of that name. The Copyright Association, founded in 1872, was a publishers’ organization but in matters of copyright worked with the Society of Authors.

3. A few of RK’s yet-uncollected stories appeared in *The Day’s Work*, 1898, but another half dozen or so—“My Great and Only,” “The Last Relief,” “The Legs of Sister Ursula” and others—though all collected at one time or another in such miscellanies as the *One Volume Kipling* (1928) or the uncollected prose volumes of the Sussex Edition, never appeared in the main sequence of RK’s short-story volumes.