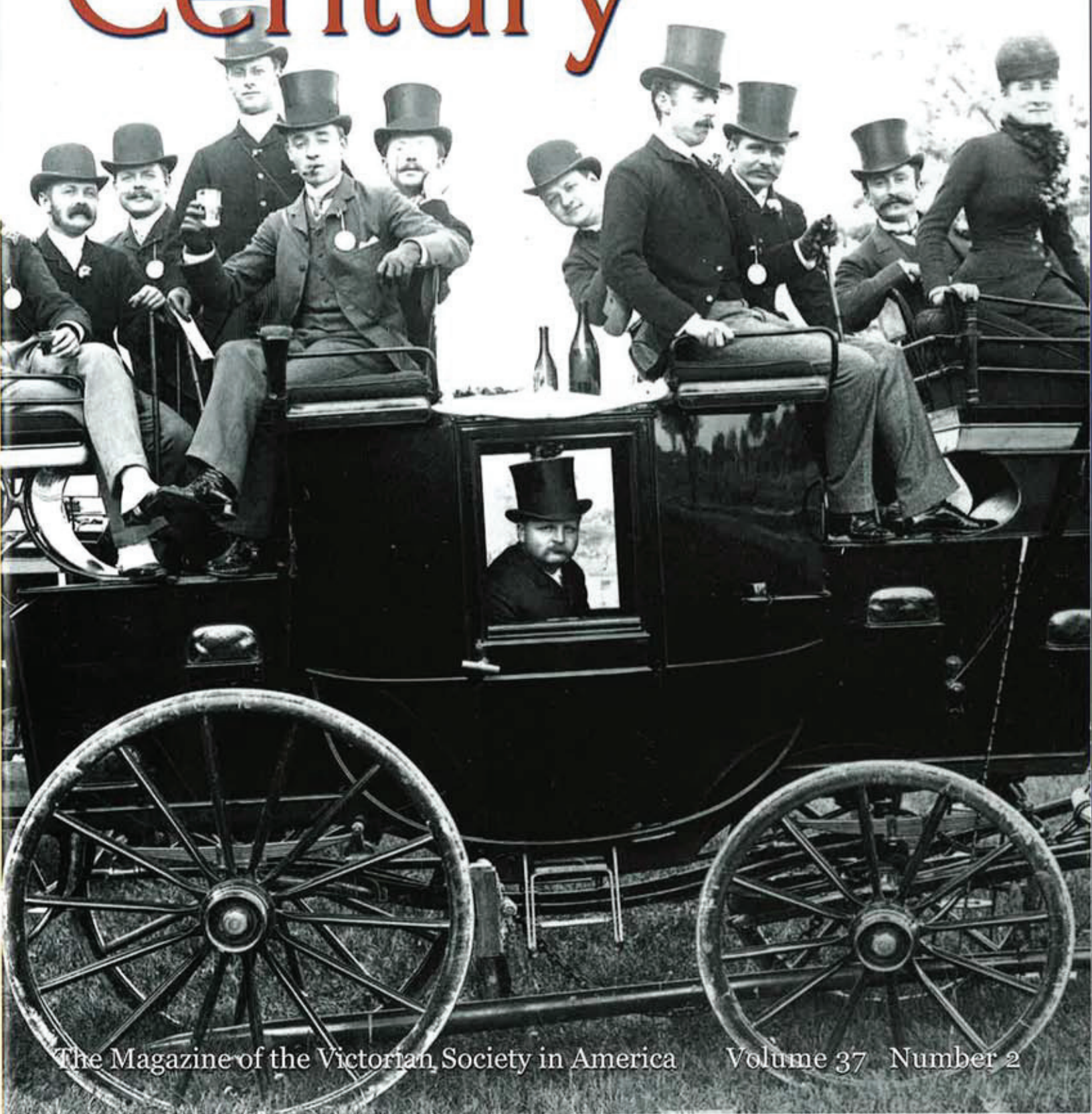


Nineteenth Century



The Bibliophilist



John Lockwood Kipling: Arts & Crafts in the Punjab and London

Julius Bryant and Susan Weber, editors.

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John Lockwood Kipling (1837-1911) was an English artist, architectural sculptor, designer, teacher, museum curator, preservationist, manager of international exhibitions, and writer who made his reputation in India during the era of the Raj. Now, for the first time, these many facets of his career are brought together and explored in depth in a new book, *John Lockwood Kipling: Arts & Crafts in the Punjab and London*. The publication of this book coincides with an exhibition that originated at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and will be shown at the Bard Graduate Center in New York City from September 15, 2017, to January 7, 2018. I had the privilege of being a peer reviewer for two chapters and have been thoroughly engrossed with this ambitious, interesting, and richly illustrated publication.

Kipling is a fascinating and complex figure—a ceramic modeler and designer of lower-middle class origins whose marriage to Alice Macdonald in 1865 placed him at the epicenter of the British Arts and Crafts movement; his new brothers-in-law included Edward Burne-Jones and Edward Poynter. The Kiplings then moved to India where their son, the famous author, Rudyard Kipling, was born. There, John Lockwood Kipling spent more than two decades working tirelessly at government art schools, first at the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy School of Art and Industry in Bombay (Mumbai) and then at the Mayo School of Art in Lahore.

Scholarly writing on Kipling appeared in the late 1970s and 1980s with important works by Partha Mitter, Mahrukh Tarapor, and Mildred Archer. Kipling's biography by Arthur Ankers was published in 1988. In the 2000s, Kipling appeared in postcolonial scholarship, notably in publications by Peter H. Hoffenberg, Tim Barringer, and Arindam Dutta. In my own work of that decade, I placed Kipling in the context of his friendship with Lockwood de Forest, the American business partner of Louis Comfort Tiffany who revived Indian woodcarving traditions for Gilded Age patrons. Against this backdrop of growing interest, it became clear that a new assessment of Kipling's legacy was overdue.

Although Rudyard Kipling destroyed most of his father's private papers shortly after his death, the amount of material that has survived is striking. This new book is certain to be the definitive source of information on Kipling, detailing a wealth of new research. It also gives a personal and ground-level view of the complex intersection of the British Arts and Crafts movement and art production in Victorian-era India. In her preface, Deborah Swallow introduces

Kipling as a thought-provoking case study because he illuminates the idealism of the Arts and Crafts era and its paradoxes, especially in India. Kipling was thoroughly impressed by the beauty of India's arts, and his encouragement of India's artists was no doubt sincere. At the same time, his efforts were part of a larger project of British colonialism in India, with its pressures and constraints. It is also clear that Kipling's personal experiences were not easy—his low social status amongst the British in India, the loss of children, illness, and the constant need to supplement the family income are made evident. Likewise, his sometimes-contradictory attitudes toward life in India are expressed in his dry wit.

The book is organized in a loosely chronological fashion with most chapters focused on a specific aspect of Kipling's life and art. This thematic approach results in repeating timelines, but establishes each of Kipling's many specific areas of accomplishment in England and India. The book begins with a succinct history of the South Kensington Museum and its relationship to Indian art. Attention then turns to Kipling's biography, followed by detailed chapters on his many pursuits. This segues to a chapter on Alice Kipling, followed by discussions on Kipling's post-India projects, and the book concludes with an assessment of Kipling's influence.

Julius Bryant writes the introduction, highlighting key characters beside Kipling that influenced the larger history of the Arts and Crafts movement as it played out in India, notably John Ruskin, George Birdwood, William Morris, Owen Jones, and later E.B. Havell. Bryant discusses the positive reception of Indian art at the Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations in 1851 and the founding of the South Kensington Museum, along with a parallel school of industrial arts. This phase of British enthusiasm for Indian design was short-lived. After the Sepoy Revolt of 1857-58, which resulted in the establishment of the British Raj, Ruskin shifted from being an early admirer of Indian arts to being a vocal detractor. Still, with Kipling's involvement, British India continued to be represented at international exhibitions, and the South Kensington Museum evolved into the Victoria and Albert Museum, which still maintains collections of historical and traditional Indian arts. Bryant's next chapter examines Kipling's personality, along with his career versatility as he moved from London to Bombay as an agent of the British Indian empire, a decision seemingly guided by the opportunity for upward mobility rather than the desire to render public service.

Christopher Marsden provides background on Kipling's early training in ceramic sculpture in Staffordshire and London. In the next three chapters, Bryant discusses Kipling's architectural sculpture, his contributions to architectural projects, and his designs for decorative arts and dresses, highlighting work done in India and England. He also includes Kipling's relationship with Lockwood de Forest. Catherine Arburthnott focuses on Kipling's designs for the 1877 Imperial Assemblage in Delhi, a celebration of Queen Victoria's new role as Empress of India.

Sandra Kemp illuminates Kipling's achievements as curator and collector at the Lahore Museum, as well as his published journalism, and Susan Weber addresses Kipling's involvement with the international exhibitions movement. Peter Hoffenberg then examines Kipling's participation in *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, which began its run in 1884 in London as a vehicle for promoting the preservation of Indian arts and crafts.

Barbara Bryant argues the importance of Alice Kipling and her family ties to the English Pre-Raphaelites as key factor in

shaping Kipling's ambitions and the decision to go to India. As the focus shifts to Kipling's life after India, Elizabeth James draws attention to Kipling's book illustrations, Sandra Kemp writes on his relationship with Rudyard, and Julius Bryant examines Kipling's royal commissions for design at Bagshot Park and the Durbar Hall at Osborne House in collaboration with Bhai Ram Singh. Finally, Nadhra Shahbaz Khan covers the impact of industrial art education in the Punjab, and Abigail McGowan concludes by showing how some of the ideas of Kipling's era have continued to resonate across time.

This book provides a comprehensive overview of Kipling's cross-cultural world and a plethora of new research. At 600 pages, 700 color illustrations, 37 black and white illustrations, and a full apparatus of footnotes, bibliography, and index, it is a hefty tome that can be enjoyed by the casual reader, and will be treasured by scholars and specialists.

Reviewed by Roberta A. Mayer
