## Rudyard Kipling

![Kipling in 1915](image)

### Born
Joseph Rudyard Kipling  
30 December 1865  
Bombay, Bombay Presidency, British India

### Died
18 January 1936 (aged 70)  
Middlesex Hospital, London, England, United Kingdom

### Resting place
Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey, London

### Occupation
Short story writer, novelist, poet, journalist

### Nationality
British

### Genre
Short story, novel, children's literature, poetry, travel literature, science fiction

### Notable works
- *The Jungle Book*
- *Just So Stories*
- *Kim*
- *Captains Courageous*
- "If—"
- "Gunga Din"
- "The White Man's Burden"

### Notable awards
- Nobel Prize in Literature  
  1907

### Spouse
Caroline Starr Balestier (m. 1892)
Joseph Rudyard Kipling, 30 December 1865 – 18 January 1936) was an English journalist, short-story writer, poet, and novelist.

Kipling's works of fiction include The Jungle Book (1894), Kim (1901), and many short stories, including "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888). His poems include "Mandalay" (1890), and "If—" (1910). He is regarded as a major innovator in the art of the short story; his children's books are classics of children's literature.

Kipling was one of the most popular writers in the United Kingdom, in both prose and verse, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1907, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, making him the first English-language writer to receive the prize.

Childhood (1865–1882)

Rudyard Kipling was born on 30 December 1865 in Bombay, in the Bombay Presidency of British India, to Alice Kipling (née MacDonald) and John Lockwood Kipling. Lockwood Kipling, a sculptor and pottery designer, was the Principal and Professor of Architectural Sculpture in Bombay.

John Lockwood and Alice had met in 1863 and courted at Staffordshire, England. They married, and moved to India in 1865.

Kipling's parents considered themselves Anglo-Indians (a term used in the 19th century for people of British origin living in India) and so too would their son. Complex issues of identity and national allegiance would become prominent features in his fiction.

Education in Britain

When he was five years old, he and his three-year-old sister Alice were taken to England to live with a couple who boarded children of British nationals who were serving in India. For the next six years the two children lived with the couple.

In his autobiography, published some 65 years later, Kipling recalled the stay with horror, cruelty and neglect.

In January 1878, Kipling was admitted to the United Services College a school founded to prepare boys for the British Army.
Return to India

He sailed for India on 20 September 1882 and arrived in Bombay on 18 October. He described this moment years later: "So, at sixteen years and nine months, but looking four or five years older I found myself at Bombay where I was born.

Early adult life (1882–1914)

Kipling spent a decade, from 1883-89 in India and Pakistan, working for local newspapers. During the summer of 1883, Kipling visited Shimla, a well-known hill station and the summer capital of British India. It was established practice for the Viceroy of India and the government to move to Simla for six months, and the town became a "centre of power as well as pleasure". Kipling's family became yearly visitors to Simla, He describes this time: "My month’s leave at Simla, or whatever Hill Station my people went to, was pure joy—every golden hour counted.

Return to London

He decided to use this money to make his way to London, the literary centre of the British Empire. On 9 March 1889, Kipling left India, travelling first to San Francisco via Rangoon, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan. Kipling was favourably impressed by Japan, writing that the Japanese were "gracious folk and fair manners".

In the course of this journey, he met Mark Twain in New York, and was deeply impressed. Twain was glad to welcome Kipling and had a two-hour conversation with him on trends in Anglo-American literature.

London

In London, Kipling had several stories accepted by magazines.

On 18 January 1892, Carrie Balestier (aged 29) and Rudyard Kipling (aged 26) were married in London.
United States
The couple settled upon a honeymoon that would take them first to the United States and then on to Japan. When they arrived in Japan, they discovered that their bank had failed. In the U.S they rented a small cottage.

The cover of *The Jungle Book* first edition, 1894.

It was here that the first dawning of the *Jungle Books* came to Kipling.

He produced, in addition to the *Jungle Books*, a collection of short stories (*The Day's Work*), a novel (*Captains Courageous*), and a profusion of poetry, including the volume *The Seven Seas*.

Life in New England
He met the British writer Arthur Conan Doyle, who brought his golf-club, stayed for two days, and gave Kipling an extended golf lesson.

In February 1896, Elsie Kipling was born, the couple's second daughter.

Kipling late in his life, portrait by Elliot & Fry.

Devon
By September 1896, the Kiplings were in Torquay, Devon, on the southwestern coast of England, in a hillside home overlooking the English Channel.

Kipling was now a famous man, and in the previous two or three years, had increasingly been making political pronouncements in his writings. The Kiplings had welcomed their first son, John, in August 1897.
In early 1898 the Kiplings travelled to South Africa for their winter holiday. With his new reputation as Poet of the Empire, Kipling was warmly received by some of the most influential politicians of the Cape Colony.

The period 1898–1910 was crucial in the history of South Africa and included the Second Boer War (1899–1902), the peace treaty, and the 1910 formation of the Union of South Africa. Back in England, Kipling wrote poetry in support of the British cause in the Boer War.

'Peak of career'

In 1907, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature after having been nominated in that year professor at the University of Oxford. The prize citation said: "In consideration of the power of observation, originality of imagination, virility of ideas and remarkable talent for narration which characterize the creations of this world-famous author." Nobel prizes had been established in 1901 and Kipling was the first English-language recipient. At the award ceremony in Stockholm on 10 December 1907, the Permanent Secretary of the Swedish Academy, Carl David af Wirsén, praised both Kipling and three centuries of English literature:

The Swedish Academy, in awarding the Nobel Prize in Literature to Rudyard Kipling, desires to pay a tribute of homage to the literature of England.

Freemasonry

Kipling became a Freemason in 1885. He was initiated into Hope and Perseverance Lodge No. 782 in Lahore. Kipling received the three degrees of Craft Masonry.

Kipling so loved his masonic experience that he memorialised its ideals in his famous poem, "The Mother Lodge", and used the fraternity and its symbols as vital plot devices in his novella, The Man Who Would Be King.

First World War (1914–18)[edit]

At the beginning of World War I Kipling wrote poems which supported the UK's war aims of restoring Belgium after that kingdom had been occupied by Germany together with more generalised statements that Britain was standing up for the cause of good. In September 1914, Kipling was asked by the British government to write propaganda, an offer that he immediately accepted. Kipling's stories were very popular with the British people during the war with his themes being glorifying the British military as the place for heroic men to be, German atrocities against Belgian civilians and the stories of women being brutalized by a horrific war unleashed by Germany, yet surviving and triumphing in spite of their suffering.

Kipling's son John was killed in action in the First World War, at age 18. John had initially wanted to join the Royal Navy, but having had his application turned down after a failed medical examination due to poor eyesight, he opted to apply for military service as an Army officer. John Kipling was last seen stumbling through the mud blindly, screaming in agony after an exploding shell had ripped his face apart.

Kipling became friends with a French soldier named Maurice Hammoneau whose life had been saved in the First World War when his copy of Kim, which he had in his left breast pocket, stopped a bullet. Hammoneau presented Kipling with the book (with bullet still embedded) and his Croix de Guerre as a token of gratitude.
After the war (1918–1936)

Partly in response to John's death, Kipling joined Sir Fabian Ware's Imperial War Graves Commission, the group responsible for the garden-like British war graves dotted along the former Western Front and all the other locations around the world where troops of the British Empire lie buried. His most significant contribution to the project was his selection of the biblical phrase "Their Name Liveth For Evermore" (Ecclesiasticus 44.14, KJV) found on the Stones of Remembrance in larger war cemeteries and his suggestion of the phrase "Known unto God" for the gravestones of unidentified servicemen. He chose the inscription "The Glorious Dead" on the Cenotaph, Whitehall, London. He also wrote a two-volume history of the Irish Guards, his son's regiment, that was published in 1923 and is considered to be one of the finest examples of regimental history.

After the war, Kipling was skeptical about the Fourteen Points and the League of Nations, but he had great hopes that the United States would abandon isolationism and that the post-war world would be dominated by an Anglo-French-American alliance.

Kipling hoped that Theodore Roosevelt would once again become president.

Kipling repeatedly warned against revising the Treaty of Versailles in Germany's favour, which he predicted would lead to a new world war.

Kipling's views were on the right and though he admired Benito Mussolini to a certain extent for a time in the 1920s, Kipling was against fascism, he called Mussolini a dangerous egomaniac.
A left-facing swastika in 1911, a symbol of good luck.

Many older editions of Rudyard Kipling's books have a swastika printed on their covers associated with a picture of an elephant carrying a lotus flower, reflecting the influence of Indian culture. Kipling's use of the swastika was based on the Indian sun symbol conferring good luck and the Sanskrit word meaning "fortunate" or "well-being"

He used the swastika symbol in both right- and left-facing orientations, and it was in general use at the time.

Once the Nazis came to power and usurped the swastika, Kipling ordered that it should no longer adorn his books.

Death

On the night of 12 January 1936, Kipling suffered a haemorrhage in his small intestine. He underwent surgery, but died less than a week later on 18 January 1936 at the age of 70 of a perforated duodenal ulcer.

His ashes were buried in Poets' Corner, part of the South Transept of Westminster Abbey, next to the graves of Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy.

In 2010 the International Astronomical Union approved that a crater on the planet Mercury would be named after Kipling.

In 2012, an extinct species of crocodile, Goniopholis kiplingi, was named in his honour, "in recognition for his enthusiasm for natural sciences".