

Then his father moved from Bombay to Lahore where he was promoted to Curator of the Museum. He found a job for Rudyard on one of the English-language newspapers there. Rud was only sixteen.

He was worked hard by his chief. Though assistant editor, Rud was reporter, compositor and printer as well. Somehow he found time to make friends with men of the British Regiments stationed there, inspiring books like "Soldiers Three".

Without his other Indian experiences there would have been no "Jungle Book" or "Kim".

When Rudyard returned to England he achieved great success as a writer, but this was overshadowed by tragedy. He's already lost his adored first-born, Josephine, but then heard his seventeen year old son John had been killed at the Battle of Loos in World War One.

Kipling had foreseen the war, warning his countrymen many times to stop considering themselves invulnerable and neglecting their defences.

In his lament for John, "The Children", he writes:

*That flesh we had nursed from the first in all cleanliness was given
To corruption unveiled and assailed by the malice of Heaven –
By the heart-shaking jests of Decay where it lolled on the wires –
To be blanched or gay-painted by fumes – to be cindered by fires –
To be senselessly tossed and retossed in stale mutilation
From crater to crater. For this we shall take expiation.
But who shall return the children?*

In the last decade of his life, Rudyard again wrote foretelling the coming of World War Two. In his "The Storm Cone", he writes:

*This is the midnight – let no star
Delude us – dawn is very far:
This is the tempest long foretold –
Slow to make head but sure to hold.*

*Stand by! The lull 'twixt blast and blast
Signals the storm is near, not past;
And worse than present jeopardy
May our forlorn tomorrow be.*

Rudyard didn't live to see it.

David Fernon

Dear Ann, This takes about 5 minutes to read. It could be cut back if you want to include it.
Lana