

The Carrington and Rees Extracts
From the diaries of
Caroline Kipling

1930

Book 6 - 1930

2 Jan. To London. Elsie and George at Claridges..

*It would seem that Elsie and George's money problems were over – see entries for 31 Aug. and **Aug. 31 1926**. Staying at Claridges (another of London's major luxury hotels, much patronised by royalty) was not cheap.*

3 Jan. To see the Italian pictures.

5 Jan. Rud at a dog-poem for *The Woman in his Life*, published some time ago.
I have a bad fall.

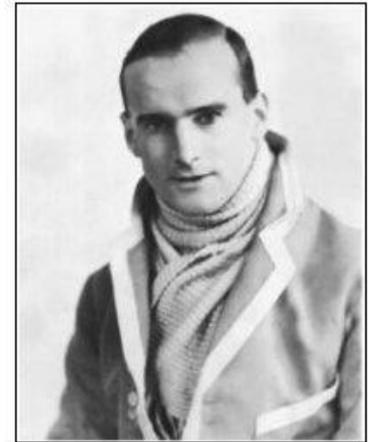


We hear no more about the aftermath of the fall. The Woman in his Life had been published fifteen months previously, in McCall's magazine, and was collected in Limits and Renewals in 1932, where the story was topped and tailed by two poems, 'Dinah in Heaven' and 'Four Feet'.

6 Jan. Mr. Sherriff, playwright, calls.

Mr. Sherriff was Robert C Sherriff (1896-1975) whose play 'Journey's End', based on his experience on the Western Front, 1915-1918, was now on in London, where it ran for two years.

He later wrote further plays, novels and film scripts.



R C Sherriff

9 Jan. Home.

22 Jan. His second dog story.

This, we assume, was 'The Great Play Hunt', published later this year in Thy Servant a Dog,

29 Jan. Rud helps Stan B. with his Dickens speech.

Stan B. was his cousin, Stanley Baldwin, He had been Conservative Prime-Minister, but had lost office after the General Election of May 1929. see Index.

4 Feb. To Bath

Feb. 4 We leave by motor for Bath

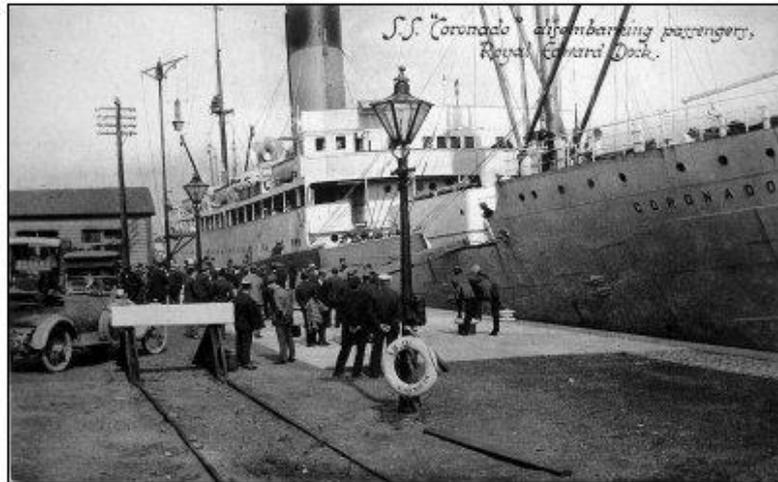
They spent a day in Bath, before motoring the 20-odd miles to Avonmouth docks, to embark for their trip to the West Indies.

6. Feb. They take ship at Avonmouth, the *Coronado*.
Helen Hardinge goes with them.

The voyage uneventful. [Rud finds it too uninteresting](#). He works at his dog story. Constant talks with the passengers. A nephew of Col. Feilden is on board.

Colonel Feilden – see Index – had been their neighbour and friend in Burwash.

Feb. 6 Leave after an early lunch for Avonmouth and our boat, the *Coronado*.



SS Coronado at Avonmouth

They were intending to visit the West Indies, and travelled on a 'banana boat', one of Elders and Fyffe's cargo-liners which ran back and forth from the UK to the West Indies, and whose prime purpose was to transport bananas for the UK market. Bananas being sensitive fruit, they had to run to a schedule and so they also carried a few passengers (12 was a typical complement: above that number various extra facilities had to be provided).

Feb. 19 I have been dazed with pain in my eyes and just above them, and dreary with nothing I can do. I can neither read nor write

(A full page of diary, nevertheless)

We assume that the preceding note is by Douglas Rees himself

20 Feb. Jamaica (?) Refused an invite to stay at Govt. House. In the West Indies. (Carrie remarks that she can neither read nor write. Her eyesight is failing rapidly.)

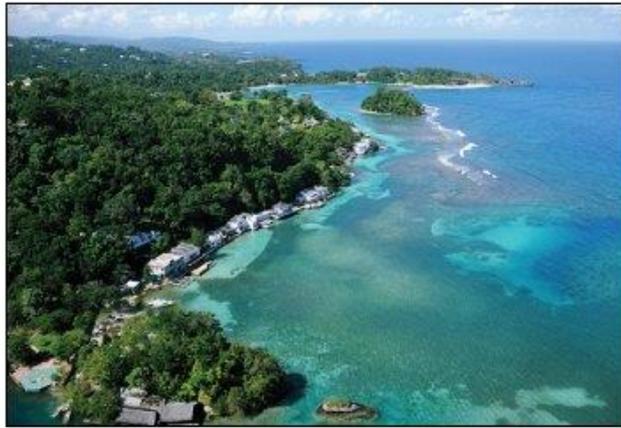
Feb. 20 We make fast at 8 a.m. The Governor's A.D.C. to meet us.

25 Feb. To the opening of the Legislative Assembly.' **Very hot.**

28 Feb. Leave for Port Antonio, Jamaica.

Feb. 28 Leave for Antono (?)

Port Antonio is a resort on the north coast of Jamaica.



Port Antonio

2 Mar. Ill. Rud works on a dog story and nurses me.
(No further entry for 1930)

Mar.2 Ill. Rud works on a dog story and nurses me.

(The next entry after Mar. 2 is Jun. 15)

Carrie complained of stomach pains and was diagnosed as having appendicitis (possibly no more than a 'grumbling appendix', since the doctors in attendance did not want to perform an appendectomy). With Carrie getting better, the Kiplings hoped to carry on with their holiday tour, and continued on their next leg to Bermuda.

However, Carrie's recovery did not continue and she was sent straight to hospital on arrival at Bermuda. She was sufficiently recovered by the end of March to join Kipling in their hotel and actually started to take part in events (a lunch at the Governor's on 13 April) but she then developed a bladder infection and was hospitalised again where she remained for the next three weeks.

At the end of the first week in May she was able to join him at the boarding house in which he was staying, finally leaving Bermuda to travel home via Montreal – there were no

*direct passenger steamers from Bermuda to Britain.
They spent four days in Montreal, and Carrie's sister
Josephine and her family visited them*

*LYCETT, p. 557-8 gives a succinct account of this period,
including the comments of Helen Hardinge, with whom Carrie
("an impossible patient") fell out, resulting in her leaving
them (and anyway, the holiday was no longer a holiday).*

*But Kipling's correspondence with Elsie gives a blow-by-blow
account of these stressful months (PINNEY, **Letters**, Vol. 5, pp.
521-4, (from Kingston); pp. 524-7 and 527-8 (from Port
Antonio); pp. 528-31, 533-4 and 537-8 (from Hotel
Bermudiana, Bermuda); pp. 538-40 and 540-2 (from the
hospital); pp 543-4, 545-6 and 548-50 (from the guest house
where Kipling and later Carrie stayed) and finally p 552 (from
Montreal) give a far more complete picture than Carrie's
diaries could have done.*

They returned from Montreal on the CPR liner *Duchess of Bedford*, arriving in Liverpool on 15 June and going to London on the same day, and on to Bateman's two days later.

June 15 Arrive in Liverpool a.m. and at Brown's at 3 p.m. Sir John Bland-Sutton comes in the evening to make sure I'm alive.

June 16 To be X-rayed in a.m. To the Bland-Suttons for dinner.

(This is the last entry for the year.)

Kipling's correspondence suggests that they stayed at Bateman's for the rest of the year, with the exception of a trip to France in late July/early August, when they visited Elsie and George in Paris, and attended the dedication of a memorial to the unknown dead at Loos.

*But there is a suggestion in a letter to George Bambridge (PINNEY, **Letters**, Vol. 5, pp. 581-3) that Carrie had, in fact, had her appendix removed, presumably some time during the summer, and probably by Sir John Bland-Sutton. Kipling wrote: **I am glad your appended-valet is mending** (a footnote explains that "one of Elsie's servants had had an emergency appendectomy") and Kipling continues **"Mother says from her couch of pain – "Silly ass, not to have got rid of it as I did."***

Of course, this might only mean that she is suggesting that his appendicitis might have been cured by bed-rest and judicious diet, as hers had been: but an operation might have explained Carrie's failure to keep up her diary.

There was one last sadness for the Kiplings this year – in December, Kipling reported to Elsie that his Aberdeen terrier, 'Wop' (the original of 'Boots' in Thy Servant a Dog) had died.



[C.K./C.C./D.R.//A.J.W./J.R.]

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