

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

NAULAKHA

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: NAULAKHA

Other Name/Site Number: Rudyard Kipling House

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Kipling Road; RR 1, Box 510 Not for publication:___

City/Town: Dummerston Vicinity:___

State: Vermont County: Windham Code: 025 Zip Code: 05301

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:___
Public-State:___
Public-Federal:___

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:___
Site:___
Structure:___
Object:___

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing
4
2
2
8

Noncontributing
buildings
sites
2 structures
objects
2 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 8

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

NAULAKHA

Page 2

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register _____

___ Determined eligible for the _____
National Register

___ Determined not eligible for the _____
National Register

___ Removed from the National Register _____

___ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

NAULAKHA**Page 3**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC: Domestic SUB: Single Dwelling

CURRENT: Work in Progress SUB:

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Shingle Style

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Stone
Walls: Shingle
Roof: Slate
Other: Chimneys--Brick

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Reflecting the eclectic background of its original owner and builder, the celebrated British author Rudyard Kipling, Naulakha is an unusual example of the Shingle Style. The house exhibits elements of Indian bungalow in the broad eaves, Kashmiri houseboat with an elaborate carved screen, and Mississippi riverboat in the overall shape. Described, indeed, as a ship by Kipling, Naulakha continues to "sail" across a Dummerston, Vermont hillside and command spectacular easterly views over a sloping meadow to the Connecticut River valley and the mountains of New Hampshire, including Mount Monadnock. The 2 ½-story house, as built in 1892-93, was a wood shingled, slab-sided, hip roofed building set on a prominent fieldstone foundation with a 2-story porch projecting from the south end. It was only one room deep with corridors and the only entrance along the uphill side, thus denying any prying eyes access to a room interior. Additions made by the subsequent owners on the northern and western elevations, and largely hidden from public view, had only a minor impact on the Kipling spaces within. Original architectural plans with some specifications and numerous historical photographs will enable the current owner to accurately restore Naulakha to its Kipling form and plan during 1992-93. Significant Kipling landscape features such as the tree-lined driveway and tennis court are clearly evident. The Kipling summerhouse, barn, ice house, and carriage house are also still present although only the latter has been in continuous usage since the estate was basically abandoned in 1942.

A Dummerston dirt road (now called Kipling Road) parallels the eastern boundary of the Naulakha estate. The grounds are entered near their northeastern corner through a pair of fieldstone pillars with iron gates that are decorated with *fleur de lis*.

NAULAKHA**Page 4**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

(Kipling spent an entire day watching workmen build this gate.¹) The graveled driveway sweeps between rows of white pines planted by Kipling to the original northern boundary at which point it curves back to the southwest. Along the way, it passes, in order, a greenhouse built by the Holbrook family in 1909, the Kipling barn with a 1908 Holbrook addition for an automobile (identified as "garage" on the survey plan), the original carriage house (identified as "cottage" on the survey plan), and the original ice house (identified as "shed" on the survey plan) before finally terminating at the west side of the main house.

Naulakha itself is a long 2 ½-story house oriented north/south across a hillside with the principal elevation facing due east. Rising from a fieldstone foundation which is pierced by "arrow slit" windows on the east, the house is shingled and features a molded belt course between first and second floors and two courses of sawtooth shingles at the window sill and meeting rail levels, respectively, of the second story. The hipped roof is broken by several dormers, two plain brick chimneys, and, on the west side, by two jerkinheaded narrow additions. The roof, originally wood-shingled, is now slate-covered.

Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of Rudyard Kipling's Naulakha is the plainness of the design. Only three features project from the box-like simplicity of the walls: 1) on the south end of the east elevation is a 2-story oriel window which is supported on two large, plain, granite corbels which extend from near the top of the foundation; 2) counter-balancing this window on the north end of the east elevation is a partially recessed, angled, small porch which is also supported by a pair of granite corbels; and 3) in the center west elevation is a *porte cochere*. A riverboat, too, has a boxy simplicity, and it was surely a riverboat that Kipling was thinking of when he referred to Naulakha as a ship: "The propeller, that is, the material provision of the furnace and kitchen, at the stern, and his own study, opening up on the roomy piazza looking to the south and east, at the bow."²

Naulakha was designed to blend into the hillside and, thus, in addition to the natural fieldstone foundation, it had a natural paint scheme of forest green and brown.

Kipling himself described Naulakha thus:

Ninety feet was the length of it and thirty the width, on a high foundation of solid mortared rocks which gave us an airy and a skunk-proof basement. The rest was

¹ Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling--His Life and Work*. London, England: Macmillan London Ltd., 1955; Penguin Books, 1986, pp. 287-288.

² Howard C. Rice, *Rudyard Kipling in New England*, Brattleboro: The Book Cellar, 1951. p. 16.

wood, shingled, roof and sides, with dull green hand-split shingles, and the windows were lavish and wide....³

The Kiplings' almost obsessive desire for privacy led them to place the only house entrance on the west, out of the view from any spot on the public road. The *porte cochere* protects the central entrance which still features the Kiplings' Dutch door with a large top-light. The most significant Holbrook changes are visible on this side: on the north and south ends of this west elevation, narrow full-height additions, cantilevered for more space at the second and attic stories, and carrying jerkinhead roofs, were put on in 1912 and 1915 respectively. Added onto the north elevation in 1912 was a 2-story porch which matches the original porch on the south end of the house.

A further Holbrook addition was a rustic deck on the east which was butted up to the main house and which was poorly maintained. In autumn of 1992, it was removed for safety and aesthetic reasons.

The Holbrook additions to the west and north elevations, though minor in their impact on Kipling interior spaces, altered the boxy simplicity of the original house and, hence, its ship-like feel. It is the intention of the current owner to remove these additions.

The wood-shingled roof of the Kipling Naulakha was also a distinctive feature with its broad shady eaves reminiscent of an Indian bungalow. A recessed gutter further distinguished the roof. When the original wood shingles were replaced by slate in 1912, this gutter was simply slated over. At the same time, the two original narrow and canted dormers on the east were moved further north and south respectively; their original locations were then filled with larger dormers similar to the original, outer dormers on the west. Single dormers, similar to the two original eastern dormers, were added to the north and south elevations at this time as well. The west side still has its three, original dormers: the central dormer with a Palladian inspired window is gabled; the outer dormers are hip roofed with a large, central, 1/1 sash window flanked by smaller, single-pane windows on canted sides.

The interior of Naulakha is described by Kipling himself in a letter of January 29-February 1, 1893:

Josephine [the first Kipling child] will spend her summer to come I hope in a hammock in the covered verandah at the south end of the house. You will see from the picture that her nursery--the bay window in the second story and running back the whole depth of

³ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself*, London, England: Macmillan and Co., Limited. pp. 114-115.

the house--gives onto a second piazza where she can nearly always get out. My work room is the room below; next on the right is Carrie's. Next (the big open window thing) is a loggia which can be entirely opened: next is the dining room, and then a little overhung verandah to play in.

The kitchen is the last room at the north. Above it are the servants' quarters: next going S. a guest room: then the bathroom (that is what I am most interested in. I never had a bathroom to meet my views yet) next our room and then the nursery. Overhead there will be a clear run of 70 feet of attic that we can use for the most delightful rooms as we want them.⁴

As with the exterior of the house, the predominant characteristic of the interior is simplicity. With the exception of the chestnut-paneled entry hall, the yellow pine dado in the northern, servants' end, and walls of built-in bookcases in Rudyard Kipling's study, the walls are plastered and painted with earth tones. Lockwood Kipling added a decorative plaster leaf near the door leading to Rudyard Kipling's study, and a decorative plaster animal scene in the nursery on the second floor. All the principal rooms have brick fireplaces, although the house does still contain the original coal-fired "octopus" furnace (which will be left in place but not be used). The most decorative feature in the house is found in the oriel window in Rudyard's study: an ornately carved screen of shisham wood either from or based on a Kashmiri houseboat.

The most striking feature of the interior is the spectacular easterly view from all the rooms. The two central first floor rooms have large picture windows with the unique characteristic that they lift up entirely into the walls to let in the outdoors. All the other windows have large paned, 1/1 sash windows which Kipling described as "lavish and wide."⁵

The most significant alterations to Kipling space made by the Holbrooks were the removal of the central loggia and the conversion of the Kipling kitchen into a study with the switch of the kitchen to the basement. Other than these changes, the Holbrook additions were primarily outside the Kipling space, that is, they were joined onto the original hallways which ran along the west side of the house. When changes were made, the Holbrooks used parts of the original structure in the additions as much as possible. Thus windows, for example, were re-used.

⁴ Thomas Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, Volume 2: 1890-1899, Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990. p. 89.

⁵ Kipling, *Something of Myself*, p. 115.

NAULAKHA**Page 7**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The loggia was a special room for the Kiplings. As Rudyard Kipling said: "The joy of the house is the loggia with the ten foot window that slides up bodily and lets all the woods and mountains in upon you in a flood."⁶ The window still remains, and the pocket doors and panels which were in storage will be reinstalled in their Kipling-period configuration.

A singular feature of the original Naulakha was the approach to Rudyard Kipling's study. Visitors were forced to go through Carrie Kipling's study to reach the great man. So effective was she in protecting Rudyard's privacy that her room became known as the dragon's lair. With the removal of the loggia walls, Carrie Kipling's study became part of a large central entertainment area.

The desire for privacy was not just reflected in the broad setback from the road, or the high foundation, or the single entrance of Naulakha, but through interior design features such as the dragon's lair as well. As mentioned, hallways ran along the uphill side of the house, and thus offered little to view to any trespassers on the hillside to the west. As Kipling's study was at the end of the house, no hallway offered such protection. The solution was to build bookcases just over head height in front of the windows on the west wall and to glaze the top with Tiffany-stained glass. These bookcases and the stained glass have been removed, but fragments of the stained glass are still extant.

Rudyard Kipling's study in the prow of his "ship" contained other distinctive features. The carved shisham screen in the east oriel window was described above. In applied script to the brickwork over the fireplace, Lockwood Kipling, Rudyard Kipling's father who ran an arts and crafts school in India, wrote the following words from the Gospel of John: "The night cometh when no man can work." The only change to the room today is at the west where the room was extended approximately four feet in 1915; the original windows and central bookcase were retained.

The Kiplings are known to have taken to England their books, carpets, and certain framed pictures. However, virtually all of the Kipling furniture for the study, loggia, dining room, master bedroom, guest bedroom, and the attic remains in the house. Only two pieces remain in Carrie's study. The furniture in the servants' quarters may well have been purchased by the Kiplings, as it is of the period, but records for this have not been discovered. Oil lamps, pictures, plumbing fixtures, vases, tea trolley, etc. are all identifiable from Kipling photographs or other records. Plaster casts by Lockwood Kipling, and two casts which were gifts of Joel Chandler Harris, still decorate the house.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

NAULAKHA**Page 8**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Following are the descriptions of the other buildings and significant landscape features on the estate which are numbered and keyed to the attached survey plan. [See Figure #1] As can be seen on the attached survey map, four buildings which are part of the estate as purchased by The Landmark Trust (current owner) are not on the original Kipling acreage. These buildings are lettered and described for informational purposes only and are not part of the nominated property. Unless otherwise noted, the numbered properties were constructed during the Kipling's tenure. The buildings and landscape features are described in order from the entrance of the estate.

A) The long, low greenhouse was built by the Holbrook family in 1909. It has a high brick foundation and is oriented north and south. It is entered through a bracketed doorway in the south gable of the glass house; at the north end is a 1-story, shingled, gable-roofed shed which contains a boiler in the cellar and tool closets above.

1) The wood framed, shingled barn with slate roof is comprised of two blocks; the original, north block is 1½ stories with a ventilating octagonal cupola and a full cellar with a grade entrance on the north end. To the south is a gabled addition of 1908. The original portion still retains its horse stalls and tack room.

2) The carriage barn is a 1½-story, wood shingled, slated and hip-roofed building with dormers. Although originally constructed as a barn with living quarters for the coachman upstairs, this building was converted entirely to servants' quarters and somewhat enlarged by the Holbrooks.

3) The wood-shingled, gable-roofed shed, which is now used for tool storage, was constructed originally as the icehouse for the Kiplings. It is built into the bank beside the drive.

B) The gable-roofed, wood-shingled single car garage was built to serve the former carriage barn when it was converted to living quarters.

The grounds immediate to Naulakha, though largely untended for 50 years, still provide numerous clues to the original layout. The large meadow to the east of the house is still grassland bounded on the east, along the road, by maturing trees planted by the Kiplings as a screen for privacy.

4) Immediately south of the house, the paths of the small formal garden are clearly visible, and the two concrete planters of the Kiplings' still decorate the start of the long garden path. This path stretches to the "summer house" at the southern property boundary (which is also the Brattleboro/Dummerston boundary). It was once an open path bordered by shrubs, but is now more of a tunnel through rhododendron bushes planted nearly a century ago.

NAULAKHA**Page 9**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

5) Above the garden to the southwest is the Holbrook swimming pool (non-contributing) which was fed from a water tank housed in a square, shingled building ("D" on the map) located just uphill. The top of this tank house is an open porch with simple posts supporting a wood-shingled hip roof. Due north is the shed-roofed, wood shingled, dual bath house ("C" on the map) with changing rooms for both men and women. (Neither the tank house nor the bath house are located within the proposed NHL boundary.) The in-ground, concrete swimming pool is protected on the west by a slate wall with a central granite water spout; the north and south ends are protected by curved slate walls while the east is open to the majestic views.

6) On the original site of the Kipling's so-called summer house, the Holbrooks constructed a pergola (non-contributing). Constructed on a polygonal, flagstoned terrace, the pergola is comprised of six, concrete-rendered Doric columns aligned in a curve facing the northeast, supporting a rustic arbor, and joining a pair of end pavilions which are themselves constructed of slate with round-arched openings supporting wood-shingled jerkinhead roofs. Nestled behind the arbor, and protected by stone walls to the south and west, are a marble table and bench.

7) The Kipling "summer house" is, in fact, a small (only eight feet in diameter), octagonal gazebo-like structure with shingled half walls and bracketed posts supporting a wood-shingled roof. It is now located near the Kiplings' clay tennis court to the east of the pergola.

8) The clay tennis court has returned to grass but still retains its net posts and the tall posts for the screen around the court; in storage are the original net and boundary tapes.

9) Northwest of the pergola is a stone terrace with the remains of a brick and iron oven for summer picnics; it is uncertain whether this is a Kipling or Holbrook landscape feature.

Many of the hillsides visible from Naulakha in the days of the Kiplings were open meadow but are now grown to forest again. The hillside behind the house is now totally forested also. Only a scattering of houses are visible even today. The Naulakha estate, despite some changes over nearly a century, is still predominantly and clearly the former home of Rudyard Kipling. As stated in the National Register nomination of 1978:

To Kipling, Naulakha came to symbolize all the positive qualities of rural Vermont, with its peacefulness and solitude, which have attracted writers and artists to the state for years.⁷

⁷ John Dumville, Naulakha National Register Nomination, 1978. Section 7.

NAULAKHA**Page 10**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

It is because so much of Rudyard Kipling's Naulakha remains intact that the decision to remove the Holbrook additions has been made. On the first floor these additions consist of an approximately four foot extension westward of the verandah and Rudyard Kipling's study and a similar extension to the former Kipling kitchen. Additionally, a tiny half bath was added to the west of the rear entrance hall to Kipling's study. The original windows, cabinet work, and paneling were to a large extent reused by the Holbrooks and will be used again in the restoration.

On the second floor, the cantilevered Holbrook additions include a tiny bedroom and full bath off of the south end of the Kipling hallway and a bedroom off of the north end. In the attic, the Holbrook modifications created additional storage space and a bathroom. The Holbrook north porch is a superfluous addition to an east facing house in Vermont where only a very few days of the year would justify its use.

The original Kipling dormers were designed to provide light to a central attic play area which included a pool table. The Holbrook dormers basically added light to what were dead storage spaces for the Kiplings.

By late 1993, Naulakha will again be the singular ship of Rudyard Kipling. The removal of the additions on the north and west, and the dormers on the north, south, and east, will have surprisingly little impact on the interior layout. The principal rooms of Naulakha remain overwhelmingly Kipling: layout, walls, and ceilings. Based on the original architectural drawings and numerous historical photographs, the restoration will be accurate and complete.

The remaining buildings and structures on the Naulakha estate will receive differing treatments. Dummerston zoning laws require the demolition of the Holbrook greenhouse. The Holbrook cross-gabled addition at the south end of the Kipling barn required only a minor modification to the original barn roof; the ground floor of the original barn remains complete. This Holbrook addition was poorly designed and suffers severe water penetration through the south and west walls; this has also caused damage to the southwest corner of the original barn. This incentive to remove the Holbrook addition becomes overwhelming when coupled with the fact that the original horse stalls for Nip and Tuck (the Kipling horses) and the tack room remain, and the barn still houses the Kipling sleigh.

The original carriage barn is recognizable but altered in function. It will be restored at some point in the future, but it is at present occupied.

The Holbrook bathhouse and water tank house will be retained but not repaired. The swimming pool may be retained as an emergency supply of water in case of fire as town water supplies are

NAULAKHA**Page 11**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

non-existent. The Holbrook pergola and Kipling summerhouse will be repaired. The garden layout of the Kiplings will be restored.⁸

Though altered early this century and largely abandoned since 1942, Rudyard Kipling's Naulakha estate remains as a powerful statement of the man. From its simple entrance gate, along the landscaped drive, to the main house and gardens, Naulakha still reveals the Vermont that Kipling loved and the design that was his own.

⁸ The eight contributing resources include four buildings (the main house, the barn, the carriage barn, and the shed), two sites (the garden and the stone foundation), and two structures (the tennis court and gazebo, or "summer house"). The two non-contributing resources within the proposed NHL boundary are the pool and the pergola.

NAULAKHA**Page 12**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National

Register Criteria: A B X C X D

Criteria Considerations

(Exceptions): A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria: 2

NHL Theme(s): XIX. Literature
A. Poetry

XIX. Literature
B. Fiction
1. Novel

Areas of Significance: Literature, Architecture

Period of Significance: 1892-1896

Significant Dates: 1893

Significant Person(s): Kipling, Rudyard

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Marshall, Henry Rutgers

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Naulakha is nationally--even internationally--significant as the former home of Rudyard Kipling from 1893-1896, the first author in the English language to win the Nobel Prize for literature and one of the most renowned authors of the last one hundred years. It is the only property built by him and was the site of some of his most celebrated writing including *The Jungle Books*, *Captains Courageous*, *A Day's Work*, and *The Seven Seas*. *Kim* and *The Just So Stories* were also spawned in Vermont but completed in England. Henry Rutgers Marshall was the architect for Naulakha, but it is clear that Kipling had a large hand in the design, for building the house and laying out the estate gave him "a life-long taste for playing with timber, stone, concrete and such delightful things."¹ The house is in the American Shingle Style, but carries elements based on Kipling's years in India, thus making it a unique cross-cultural statement. The importance of the

¹ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself*, London, England: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1937, p. 116.

house is augmented by the continued presence of much of Kipling's furniture and possessions from his American days including the "Red Phaeton" sleigh, his golf clubs and tennis equipment, much furniture, and even some family photographs. His father, John Lockwood Kipling, who directed an arts and crafts school and the Museum in Lahore, India (now Pakistan), also made a contribution to the house during an 1893 visit; he enriched the house with decorative plaster work, the curtain design, and even the bookplate that Rudyard used throughout his life. The estate also contains the Kipling barn, carriage barn, summerhouse, icehouse, and tennis court; the Kipling garden plan can also be easily deciphered in the undergrowth. Despite some alterations by the subsequent owners, Naulakha remains clearly Rudyard Kipling's creation.

Rudyard Kipling was born in India in 1865, to English parents living in Bombay. He received his education at an English boarding school before returning to India to work as a reporter. After a trip across America in 1889, Kipling returned to England where he met Wolcott Balestier, an American writer and publishing agent. The two became fast friends and co-authored *The Naulakha, A Story of West and East* (Note the incorrect spelling of Naulakha in the title, an error made by Wolcott and retained by Kipling for the book after his friend's death.). After Wolcott's sudden death in December of 1891, Rudyard married his friend's sister, Caroline Starr Balestier.

While on their honeymoon trip, in the winter of 1892, the Kiplings visited Caroline's family in Brattleboro, Vermont. Rudyard was so deeply impressed with the countryside, "beautiful beyond expression"², that he and Carrie acquired just over 11 acres from Beatty Balestier, Carrie's other brother. After a brief visit, the Kiplings resumed their honeymoon voyage and got as far as Japan when their bank collapsed. They thereupon returned to Vermont and arrived by midsummer.

The Kiplings rented a small house known as Bliss Cottage (after the owner Mrs. Lyman G. Bliss) which was a short distance south of their own property. They hired as architect of their house-to-be a friend of the Balestier family, Henry Rutgers Marshall. In addition to his work on Naulakha, H.R. Marshall was chiefly known for his designs for the library at Rutgers University in New Jersey, the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, buildings at the Brierly School in New York City, and numerous residences in New York and New England.

By autumn, excavations for the foundation of Naulakha were underway. An article in "The Critic" in January 1893, referred to Mr. Kipling's house as "The Crow's Nest"; only later did the

² Howard C. Rice, *Rudyard Kipling in New England*, Brattleboro: The Book Cellar, 1951. p. 13.

house receive the appellation "Naulakha", after the fabulous Indian jewel described in Kipling's and Wolcott Balestier's novel.

The months spent at Bliss Cottage were very happy ones for the Kiplings. Here their first child, Josephine, was born, and here Rudyard began the first Jungle Book. According to Charles Carrington, the official family biographer, however, "Rudyard did not produce much written work in his honeymoon year. . .Mostly, he was occupied with making a home for Carrie and the baby. . ." ³ Bliss Cottage, though still extant, has been relocated across the road from its original location and extensively remodeled.

In August of 1893, Naulakha was ready for the Kiplings. In a letter of August 27, 1893, Rudyard exclaimed to his cousin Margaret Mackail:

Sweet lady--ho! ho! You mustn't expect me to be rational just now because we've but a week since moved into our new house and it is as a toy and a delight... You can't imagine the bliss of getting into a place where you can turn round, unless you've spent a twelvemonth in a shanty [note that this is a reference to Bliss Cottage] one atop of the other...Then there is the delight of real doors that shut and cupboards where you want 'em; and built in bookcases and the like that make us very happy. So far we have found no mistake in our new dwelling and that is good because we made it for ourselves. ⁴

The Kiplings were very happy at Naulakha. Rudyard was very prolific and completed, wrote, and/or started many of his best loved works. The second Kipling daughter, Elsie, was born here.

Kipling loved the Vermont countryside and often hiked the hills. In the winter he used his snowshoes or the skis given to him by Arthur Conan Doyle. His golf games around Naulakha are nearly legend with a partner writing of two mile shots down snow-custed hills! Yet all was not perfect in Vermont.

Beatty Balestier lived just opposite the Naulakha drive. As Howard Rice said in *Rudyard Kipling in New England*, "[Beatty] was charming, gallant, hail fellow well met, but also quick-tempered,

³ Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling--His Life and Work*, London, England: Macmillan London Ltd., 1955; Penguin Books, 1986, p. 255.

⁴ Thomas Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, Volume 2: 1890-1899, Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990. pp. 105-106.

intemperate, and improvident, so that there had been frequent clashes between the two households."⁵

In May of 1896, the feud erupted when Beatty confronted Rudyard on the road and threatened physical violence. Kipling responded by filing charges. The resultant hearing became a public circus as reporters, long denied access to Kipling, saw a chance to get even. According to *The Vermont Phoenix* of May 15, 1896:

This has been fame's little week for Brattleboro, all because of a family row that was aired in court, and one of the persons involved happened to be Rudyard Kipling, the eminent novelist. Thither have come newspaper writers who concocted descriptions that did not describe, and who drew illustrations that did not illustrate. The writers and the "artists" were here to get a sensation, and the material was worked for all it was worth.⁶

Despite this exceedingly unpleasant situation and the brutal invasion of their treasured privacy, the Kiplings apparently had no intention of leaving Vermont at this time. In fact, Rudyard wrote to William Dean Howells in June of 1896, "I don't think quite of quitting the land permanently. It is hard to go from where one has raised one's kids, and builded a wall and digged a well and planted a tree."⁷

This feeling had obviously tempered by August, and rather than face a grand jury in September and the hordes of reporters who would be sure to cover it, Kipling left with his family for England--never to return to Naulakha as it turned out (Caroline Kipling returned once more to Naulakha in 1899).

Both Rudyard and Carrie wrote to friends of their longings for Vermont and Naulakha. Their coachman, Matthew Howard, was kept on as caretaker for the estate and all was maintained for the Kiplings possible return. The attempt to return in 1899 was met with disaster when the family came down with pneumonia after a rough sea crossing. Rudyard was expected to die, but he recovered only to be told that Josephine, his favorite child, had died. Again the Kiplings departed America and they never returned.

Naulakha was finally sold in 1903 to a friend of the Kiplings, Mary Cabot, although it was her sister Grace and brother-in-law Frederick Holbrook who lived at Naulakha. Ownership passed to

⁵ Rice, *Rudyard Kipling in New England*, p. 39.

⁶ "A Family Row That Was Heard Around The World," *The Vermont Phoenix*, May 15, 1896, p. 4.

⁷ Pinney, ed., *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling*, Volume 2: 1890-1899, pp. 243-244.

the son of Grace and Frederick, and it stayed in the Holbrook family until 1992 when it was sold to The Landmark Trust (U.S.A.).

Much of Rudyard Kipling is evoked at Naulakha. Despite additions put on by the Holbrooks, Naulakha remains the only house built by one of the pre-eminent authors in the English language. As such, it tells much about him: his playfulness, his love of the natural world, his near obsession with privacy, and his multi-cultural background. That the majority of the Kipling furnishings remain with the house allows a rare opportunity to understand the man.

It was with the literary output of his Vermont years that Rudyard Kipling secured his fame and eminent position in English literature. *The Jungle Books*, *Captains Courageous*, *Kim*, and *The Just So Stories* rank among the most popular books of the most popular English author of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. According to the *Boston Post* of January 18, 1936, in an obituary entitled "Kipling Giant of Literature":

Nearly 200,000 copies of his books are sold yearly in England, and 100,000 in the United States--a best-seller record year after year that shames all but the most sensational of the newly published books.

His American publishers, Doubleday, Doran, have sold 3,500,000 copies in the 40 years they have been his agents. The "Jungle Book" [sic] is his best seller on this side of the Atlantic. More than 250,000 copies have been distributed.⁸

The Nobel Prize attested to the literary merit of Kipling's works. People such as Mark Twain, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Henry James attested to his genius. After Shakespeare, Rudyard Kipling is one of the most quoted of English authors as a glance at any book of quotations will show. Upon Kipling's death, the *Times of London* said of him:

Posterity, whatever it may have to say of his opinions, can never fail to laud that achievement in self-expression as one of the most singular in English literature and English thought.⁹

⁸ "Kipling Giant of Literature," *Boston Post*, January 18, 1936, p. 5.

⁹ *Times of London* quoted in "World Mourns Kipling Death, Many Tributes," *Boston Evening Transcript*, January 18, 1936, part 1, obit.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- "A Family Row That Was Heard Around The World." *The Vermont Phoenix*, 15 May 1896.
- Carrington, Charles. *Rudyard Kipling--His Life and Work*. London, England: Macmillan London Ltd., 1955; Penguin Books, 1986.
- Chittenden, Elizabeth F. "The Outsider." *Yankee*, May, 1973.
- Fido, Martin. *Rudyard Kipling*. New York: The Viking Press, 1974.
- "Kipling Giant of Literature." *Boston Post*, 18 January 1936.
- Kipling, Rudyard. *Something of Myself*. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1937.
- Pinney, Thomas, ed. *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling; Volume 2: 1890-99*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990.
- Rice, Howard C. *Rudyard Kipling in New England*. Brattleboro: The Book Cellar, 1951.
- Rice, Howard C. "Kipling's Winters in Vermont." *Up Country*, February, 1974.
- Rice, Howard C. "Rudyard Kipling's House in Vermont." *Vermont Life*, Spring, 1952.
- Stoddard, Charles Warren. "Rudyard Kipling at Naulakha." *National Magazine*, June, 1905, pp.259-263.
- "Tales of Kipling." *The Boston Sunday Globe*, Sunday, 18 March 1894.
- Van de Water, Frederic R. *Rudyard Kipling's Vermont Feud*. Rutland, Vermont: Academy Books, 1981.
- The Vermonter*, April, 1899. "Rudyard Kipling in Vermont."
- "World Mourns Kipling Death, Many Tributes." *Boston Evening Transcript*, 18 January, 1936, part 1, obit.
- "Yankee Romance is Lost Chapter of Kipling's Life." *Boston Sunday Post*, 19 January 1936.
- Brattleboro, Vermont. The Landmark Trust (formerly the Holbrook Family personal collection).
- Marlboro, Vermont. Marlboro College. Howard C. Rice Papers.

NAULAKHA**Page 18**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository): **Marlboro College; Landmark Trust**

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Approximately 11 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A	18 698780	4752340
	B	18 698900	4752340
	C	18 699000	4752040
	D	18 698780	4752040

Verbal Boundary Description:

With three slight modifications, the boundary of the nominated property is the same as the boundary of the two land parcels transferred to Caroline Kipling in 1892, as depicted on the attached survey plan. To exclude small portions of noncontributing buildings which straddle the 1892 boundary line, the NHL boundary deviates from the historic northern boundary to follow the southern side of the greenhouse (marked "A" on the map), and the western boundary is modified to follow the eastern side of the Water Tank Building (marked "D" on the map). Finally, the original western boundary is slightly modified to allow the southwest corner of the Cottage (marked "2" on the map) to fall completely within the NHL boundary.

The two parcels were purchased by Caroline Kipling from Beatty and Mai Balestier on March 21, 1892, and recorded and described in Book 17 of Dummerston Land Records located in the office of the Town Clerk of Dummerston, Vermont.

NAULAKHA**Page 19**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Boundary Justification:

With the exception of three slight modifications to account for buildings which straddle the historic land boundary (see above), this is the land upon which Rudyard and Caroline Kipling built their Vermont estate and which they owned until November 19, 1903.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: David C. Tansey, Architectural Historian
The Landmark Trust (U.S.A.)
Kipling Road; RR1, Box 510
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

Telephone: 802/257-7783

Date: April 1993