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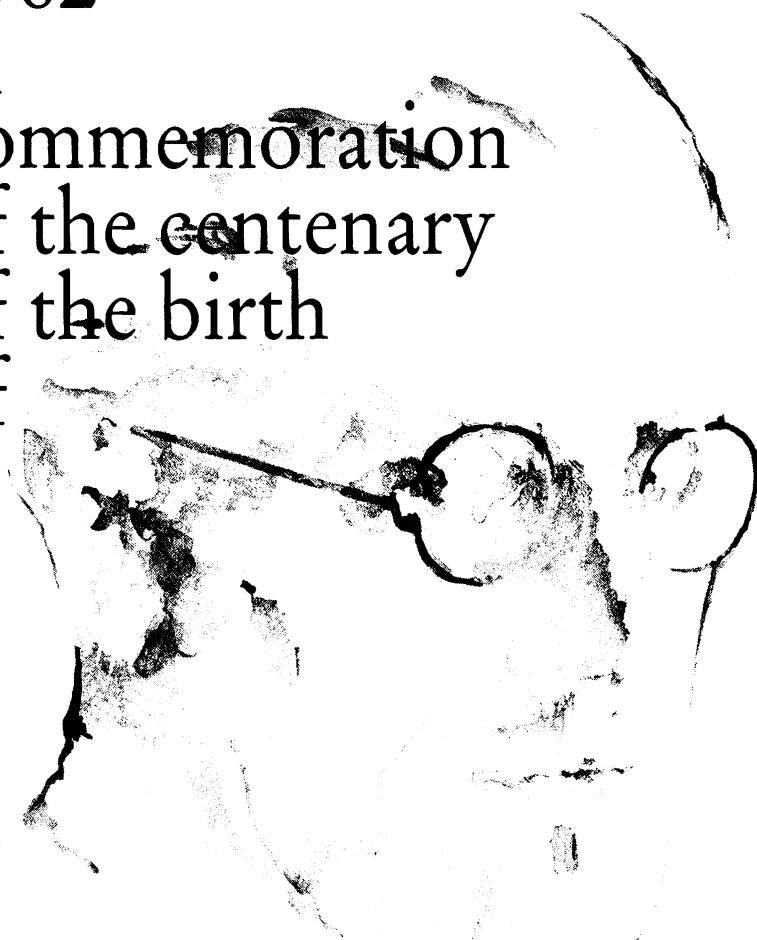
1982 —

in

commemoration  
of the centenary

of the birth

of



# JAMES JOYCE

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# CONTENTS

JOHANNES HEDBERG	7 Preface
BIRGIT BRAMSÅCK	9 Allusions to Yeats in <i>Stephen Hero</i> and <i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i>
JOHANNES HEDBERG	27 Some Notes on Language and Atmosphere in <i>Dubliners</i>
ULF DANTANUS	47 Joyce's Cloacal Clarity
TOMMY OLOFSSON	59 A Portrait of the Artist as a Flying Man
HANS WALTER GABLER	98 James Joyce as Author and Scribe: A Problem in Editing "Emmaeus"
MATS GELLERFELT	107 To Have Confidence in One's Language...
LIISA DAHL	121 On Translating Joyce into Finnish
GÖSTA WERNER	125 James Joyce, Manager of the First Cinema in Ireland
FRITZ SENN	137 Afterword
ANDERS RYBERG/ BENT WIBERG/ JOHANNES HEDBERG	141 Bibliography

## *Illustrations*

CHRISTER JAREN SKOG	5 The Nelson Pillar, and Joyce
	8 The Soul's incurable loneliness
	26 Gabriel could not listen while Mary Jane was playing...
	58 Nora Joyce? (See page 147)
	106 A way a lone...

## James Joyce as Author and Scribe: A Problem in Editing “Eumeus”\*

The preparation of the critical edition of *Ulysses* must begin with establishing the text of each chapter from the holograph of the *Rosenbach Manuscript* (*R*). For the most part this text is the only, and therefore the earliest, autograph notation of a complete chapter that we possess. Moreover, a chapter’s Rosenbach state always is, or represents, the authorial version of the text from which originated a chapter’s transmission into print, via a typescript. Either it is the immediate predecessor of that typescript, as is the case for “Eumeus”, or it is a collateral descendant of a lost final working draft, from which the typescript also derives.

The chapter manuscripts in *R* are never first drafts, but authorial copies from earlier papers. In writing out fair copies, as he did for most chapters assembled in *R*, Joyce was both author and scribe. As author, he was composing and revising, not suspending the creative process even when ‘merely’ copying. But as scribe, he copied, making mistakes from inattention and oversight, like the rest of us. It may safely be assumed that the chance of inattention to the act of copying rose in proportion to the degree of involvement in the continued composition and revision.

The first step in establishing an edition text is therefore to scrutinize the Rosenbach Manuscript critically for scribal oversights. For “Eumeus”, this takes on an interesting aspect because here we actually possess a document—let us call it “Proto-Eumeus” (*P-E*)—which collation reveals to be the immediate antecedent of *R* for two extended chapter sections. The document in question, which therefore is a (fragmentary) pre-faircopy final working draft, is a copybook in the Buffalo collection, V.A.21 in Peter Spielberg’s classification (reproduced in vol. 15 of *The James Joyce Archive*).

\*References to *Ulysses* are to the Bodley Head/Random House editions. If a “Proto-Eumeus” (see further on) wording is not specifically indicated, the text as quoted is that of the Rosenbach Manuscript. I have used Danis Rose’s working transcription of the Joyce copybook to be found in the Buffalo Collection, known as V.A. 21. Prepared for the *Ulysses* edition in progress, it has greatly facilitated this analysis.

*P-E*, p. 1 and *R*, p. 13 commence identically (but for one comma) in mid-sentence of a paragraph conclusion: “message evidently(,) as he took particular notice” (*U* 722/626). *P-E section A* extends to the middle of the copybook’s page 19, ending “lovemaking in Irish. £200, though less, damages.” (cf. *U* 752/648) *P-E section B* is immediately joined on, though there is an unmistakable hiatus in the text as well as a change in the handwriting and the width of the text column half-way down *P-E*, p. 19. The apparent new paragraph, “Whereas no photo could . . .” corresponds to line 1 on p. 40 of *R*, which however, though identically worded, is the conclusion of a paragraph from the preceding *R* page (cf *U* 759/653).

In *R*, clearly, Joyce joined together the continuous chapter text from this and another (or more than one other) draft source in alternation. No antecedent is extant for *R, section I* (pp. 1—12). *R, section II* (pp. 13—35, line 29), derives from *P-E, section A* (copybook rectos 1—19). No antecedent, again, exists for *R, section III* (p. 35, line 29, to p. 39, bottom). *R, Section IV* (pp. 40—54), corresponds to *P-E, section B* (copybook rectos 19—23 and, in reverse order of the leaves, versos 23—19).

*P-E* is clearly itself not a first, but a final draft of its sections. Apart from the reversal into the versos at the end, it extends basically over the rectos of the copybook leaves, according to Joyce’s usual writing habits; and it is characterized as a copy of lost antecedent material not only by a fluent (and fairly legible) inscription in ink, but also by occasional obvious transcription errors. These may be identified with the help of *R*, which, though on the whole of course representing a revisional development, usually repairs defective sense and grammar in the *P-E* text it retains. At the same time, *P-E* is a working draft with a multitude of internal revisions and additions crammed between the lines, written in the margins or placed on facing or preceding versos of the copybook leaves.

In faircopying *R sections II and IV* from *P-E sections A and B*, Joyce was meticulous, generally, in piecing together the continuous chapter text, incorporating the revisions and additions. Evidently careful not to lose material, he crossed out in *P-E* what he had copied. In the course of the faircopying, he often changed the order and modified the phrasing of the textual elements in *P-E*; frequently he further expanded the text. Occasionally—as in the instance of the return of the sailorman from relieving himself outside the cabmen’s shelter (cf. V.A.21, p. 11, *Archive* p. 343; *U* 740/639)—it appears that he had trouble in deciphering his own handwriting and consequently recomposed a passage.

The principle governing the editing must be that *R*, from which in turn the chapter's transmission into print began, represents Joyce's final intention in continuous holograph inscription of the chapter text. Where *R* departs from *P-E*, so the rule should be, it overrides the text of *P-E*. But in practice, the case is not always clear-cut. Being itself a copy, *R* must be scrutinized for transcriptional errors. For sections *II* and *IV*, these may be identified with the help of *P-E*. But the critical task is to distinguish intended revisions from unintended copying mistakes or oversights. In the first instance, it is again cases of defective grammar and sense that arouse editorial suspicion. But, for this particular episode, the issue is of course complicated by the chapter style which espouses inconsequential grammar and elliptical, if not defective, sense. Nevertheless, critical judgement may lead to the restoration of a number of readings from *P-E*:

14.39	adhering to his adventures.	( <i>R</i> adventure.)	(U725/628)
22.35	those jarvies <i>wanting</i> news from abroad	( <i>R</i> : waiting)	(U735/636)
24.8	and <i>then</i> the others got on to talking	( <i>R</i> : <missing>)	(U737/637)
24.34	ha was <i>afraid</i> his collision bulkhead would give way	( <i>R</i> : <missing>; restored in proof)	(U738/638)
25.24	the watcher of the corporation <i>stones</i>	( <i>R</i> : <missing>)	(U739/639)
26.3	There were wrecks and <i>wreckers</i>	( <i>R</i> : wrecks and wrecks=original <i>P-E</i> , but rev. there to . . . wreckers)	(U740/639)
26.27	Lot's wife's arse	( <i>R</i> : wife; restored in proof)	(U741/640)
27.1	there was <i>that</i> colonel Everard	( <i>R</i> : <missing>)	(U741/640)
28.49	nicknamed Skin-the- <i>Goat</i> ,	( <i>R</i> : Skin-the, restored in proof)	(U744/642)
30.32	compared with America. <i>Turkey</i> .	( <i>R</i> : Turks.)	(U746/644)
33.18	he <i>felt</i> it was his interest	( <i>R</i> left; error corr. in typescript.)	(U750/646)
34.41	Cornelius <i>T.</i> Kelleher	( <i>R</i> : <missing>)	(U751/647)
34.42	<i>L Boom</i>	( <i>R</i> : <i>L.</i> Boom; see also <i>R</i> , next paragraph)	(U751/647)
35.16	Rightaway- <i>Theale</i>	( <i>R</i> : -Thrale)	(U752/648)
40.35	splash page of gutterpress	( <i>R</i> : letterpress)	(U760/654)
41.15	<i>erstwhile</i>	( <i>R</i> : ertswhile; clear error corr. by typist)	(U761/654)
42.2	On the other <i>hand</i>	( <i>R</i> : had; clear error corr. by typist)	(U762/655)
43.21	he had a sneaking <i>sympathy</i> for those same ultra ideas	( <i>R</i> : <missing>; closely recaptured in proof as 'regard')	(U764/656)

45.42	English watering resorts packed with <i>hydros</i> and theatres (perhaps the full phrase from <i>P-E</i> should be restored: <i>hydros</i> and seaside theatres)	( <i>R</i> : insert from <i>P-E</i> apparently misplaced)	( <i>U</i> 767/658)
47.5	to the effect that the amount <i>was</i> forthcoming	( <i>R</i> : as; restored in proof)	( <i>U</i> 768/660)
49.10	which . . . he <i>had</i> heard . . . on yesterday	( <i>R</i> : <missing>)	( <i>U</i> 770/661)
49.17	Stephen . . . said he didn't <i>sing it</i>	( <i>R</i> : <missing>)	( <i>U</i> 771/661)
50.8	Bloom looked at <i>the</i> head of a horse	( <i>R</i> : a; restored in proof)	( <i>U</i> 771/662)
51.28	Johannes Jeep (in roman)	( <i>R</i> : underlined for italics)	( <i>U</i> 773/663)

It seems clear that, in these 24 instances, grammar and sense in *R* are defective even by “Eumeus” standards, and that the emendations restore text of Joyce, the author, which was impinged on by Joyce, the scribe. Looking ahead to the published text we find that seven of the 24 emendations indeed anticipate authorial repair of the errors in proof; two more were set right by the typist in copying *R*.

Even in the course of the writing out of the fair copy, Joyce repeatedly caught himself in unintentionally departing from *P-E*. Touching up in numerous points of detail a sentence which read: “—Ay, ay, the sailor sighed again, more cheerfully this time with a kind of a smile for a brief duration in the direction of the last questioner.” to become in *R*: “—Ay, ay, sighed again the sailor, more cheerily this time with some sort of a half smile for a brief duration only of the questioner about the number” (*U* 730/632), he missed the phrase ‘in the direction’ and hastened to reinsert it between the lines in the fair copy. The example illustrates concisely how attention to the mechanical act of copying becomes deflected by the writer’s concentration on the continuing creative development of the text. ‘Interference’ of this kind may increase when the scribe hits upon some manifest grammatical impossibility in *P-E* such as “The sailor grimaced, chewing, in a way that might be read one way or the other be yes, ay or no.” He cuts the knot by abbreviating the phrase to “in a way that might be yes, ay or no.” Yet, though the sentence is now correct, it has all but lost the original notion of the appeal in the sailor’s grimace to an interpreting beholder. So, on authorial second thoughts, this is restored: “in a way that might be read as yes, ay or no.” (*U* 726/629)

All observation of Joyce in the act writing and rewriting points to the fact that, while he was constantly concerned with developing his text by expanding and stylistically improving it, he endeavoured to retain details of the narrative and its phrasing once articu-

lated. This consideration is critically important in the scrutiny of a group of omissions from *P-E* which, not signalled in *R* by disturbances of grammar or sense, could in no way be recaptured without the existence of *P-E*. In a relationship of draft and fair copy dominantly characterized by textual revision and modification, their place—if they are to have a place in *R*, too, that is, if it was Joyce the scribe who inadvertently omitted the words and phrases in question—is in invariant contexts. For critical editorial treatment, this is a sufficiently formal category of definition for the editor to deal with the group of variants as a whole, as he must.

Words and phrases that have fallen out of invariant contexts in the transfer of the text from *P-E* to *R* are the following:

- 15.22 towards where Skin-the-Goat, alias the keeper, *not turning a hair*, was drawing spurts of liquid from his boiler (*R+*) affair (+).
- \*20.49 —Has been? [*P-E*: objected Mr Bloom] the more experienced of the two objected, sticking to his original point *with a smile of disbelief*. I'm not so sure about that. (U 733/634)
- 21.11 Mr Bloom thought well to stir or try to (*R+*) the (+) clotted sugar from the bottom of *Stephen's cup* and reflected . . . (U 733/634)
- 24.54 [*P-E*: uncork and have a good long] and uncork it or unscrew and take a good old swig out of it *in the street q.t.* The irrepressible Bloom . . . (U 739/638)
- 29.50 It's [*P-E*: absurd] a patent absurdity to hate people because (*R*: 745/643) they live round the corner and speak another [*P-E*: language] vernacular, *in the next house* so to speak.
- 30.5 All those wretched quarrels, (*R+*) in his humble opinion, (+) (U 746/643) stirring up bad blood, *from some bump of combativeness or gland of* [*P-E*: the] some kind,
- \*32.18 he brought to mind instances of cultured fellows *a bit too precious* that promised so brilliantly (U 748/645)
- \*34.12 So to change the subject he read about [*P-E*: funerals] Dignam R.I.P. which, he reflected, was anything but a [*P-E*: good] gay sendoff. *Or a change of address anyway.* (U 751/647)
- 35.19 Betting 5 to 4 on Zinfandel. 20 to 1 Throwaway (off). (U 752/648)  
*Sceptre a shade heavier, 5 to 4 on Zinfandel, 20 to 1 Throwaway (off).* Throwaway and Zinfandel stood close order.
- 40.5 and leave the [*P-E*: photo] likeness there *a minute or so* on the plea he. (restoration in proof: *for a very few minutes*). (U 759/653)
- 41.30 His hat (Parnell's) *a silk one* was inadvertently knocked off (U 761/654)
- \*43.22 For instance when the evicted tenants question bulked largely in [*P-E*: the public] people's mind though not contributing a copper to the cause or pinning his faith (*R+*) absolutely (+) to its dictums [*P-E*: absolutely,] he [*P-E*: was] in principle [*P-E*: in] (*R+*) att all events was (R+) at all events was in thorough (+) sympathy with peasant possession (U 764/656)
- \*44.48 [*P-E*: probably] it was highly likely some [*P-E*: mermaid] sponger's bawdyhouse of retired beauties *where age was no bar off* Sheriff street lower would be the best clue (U 766/658)

- \*45.11 he [*P-E*: chuckled inwardly] inwardly chuckled over his gentle repartee to the blood and [*P-E*: iron] ounz champion (U 766/658)
- 45.27 You can't drink that stuff. Do you like cocoa? Wait. I'll just pay this (*R+*) lot (+). (U 766/658)
- 47.39 The only thing is to walk [+proof: then you'll feel a different man]. Come. It's not far. Lean on me. (U 769/660)
- 49.14 sung to perfection, [*P-E*: in fact,] a capital study of the number (*R+*) in fact (+). (U 771/661)
- 51.9 He looked . . . at the sideface of Stephen, image of his mother, (*U 773/663*) which was not quite the same as the usual *handsome* blackguard type they had an [*P-E*: incurable] insatiable hankering after

As will be seen from the list, 'invariance' is sometimes a matter of critical interpretation. We have deemed the modifications indicated—the replacements of the *P-E* readings given in square brackets by the subsequent wordings in *R*, and the *R* additions, enclosed between (*R+*) . . . (+), to the text common to *P-E* and *R*—as in each case not in a critical sense constituting an altered context for the words and phrases under consideration. (The asterisks will be discussed below.)

A few counter-examples may serve as a test for the differentiating quality of our criterion of invariance. In the change from *P-E* "there was always the offchance of a Dannyman *informer* turning queen's evidence to *divulge the names of his accomplices* like Denis Carey" to *R* (28.34) "there always being the offchance of a Dannyman turning Queen's evidence or King's now like Denis Carey," (*U 743/642*), the dropping of a word and a phrase appears interrelated, one mutually constituting an altered context for the other, which renders the omissions systematic, and therefore presumably intentional. Thereby, the modification of the added "or King's now," which by itself would not determine the case, strengthens the decision against possible readmission of word or phrase. Still more clearly, in the sentence towards the end "Even more he liked an old German song of Johannes Jeep in which you saw the clear sea and heard the *wooing* voices of the sirens, sweet, false and cruel," the tightening and precision achieved in the *R* (51.28) revision to ". . . of Johannes Jeep about the clear sea and the voices of sirens, sweet murderer's of men." forbids a recapturing of 'wooing voices.'

In an act of critical editing, moreover, which endeavours to constitute *R* as the firm authorial basis ultimately of the text as published, the criterion of invariance as applied to the question of how to treat the *P-E* readings omitted from *R* must of course be extended to the revisional development of the text beyond *R*. It may well have been partly by mistake, for instance, that Joyce did

not copy invariantly from *P-E* “Ex quibus, Stephen mumbled, their eyes conversing, *all alone to himself*, Christus or Bloom his name is.” But looking over what he had written (*R* 29.33): “Ex quibus, Stephen mumbled, their two or four eyes conversing, Christus or Bloom his name is,” he did not reinsert the omitted phrase from *P-E* which was before him or close at hand, but instead revised to: “Ex quibus, Stephen mumbled *in a noncommittal accent*,” (*U* 745/643), shifting, though slightly, the communicative quality of Stephen’s mumble. The revision alters the context, cancelling out any continued validity of the omitted phrase. Similarly, the comment on the watchers’ reaction to the sailor’s demonstration of Antonio tattooed on his chest, “the curious effect excited [*P-E*, 1st level: general] (*P-E*+) the general and unaffected(+) admiration of all” appears intentionally revised to (*R* 18.16) “excited the unaffected admiration of everybody;” and, lest we still feel tempted to restore the over-redundancy of ‘general and,’ ‘unaffected’ is in proof once more changed to ‘unreserved’ (*U* 729/631). But it seems remarkable that these are the only two clear instances in which the contexts of *R* omissions of *P-E* words or phrases undergo faircopy or post-faircopy alterations. If otherwise our critical distinction of variance and invariance of context holds, there is nothing in the texture of the writing to prevent the filling from *P-E* of the lacunae in invariant contexts which the *P-E:R* comparison reveals. The issue becomes reduced entirely to a question of judgement on the reason for the lacunae: do they represent authorial commissions, or indeed scribal omissions? No grounds exist, of course, for adjudicating the cases individually. A subsidiary rule—which may conform or run counter to the general one of *R* precedence over *P-E*—must be formulated from recurring features and then applied equally to all readings of the group as defined.

Such features are bibliographical and compositional. Neither are common to all, and some cases are unaffected by either. Nevertheless, it is a recurrent bibliographical feature (the instances are asterisked in our list) that the omitted words or phrases were interlinear or marginal insertions in *P-E*, liable to have been missed in the copying; and it is a recurrent compositional feature that the textual lacunae were sensed or identified by Joyce at subsequent stages of the textual development. In one remarkable instance, this leads to the repair of what in retrospect is revealed as a defective reading in *P-E*. At first sight, the change from *P-E*: “To which absorbing echo answered when” to *R* (46.14) “To which echo answered why” seems to make enough sense (since there is less apparent sense in an ‘absorbing echo’) to be authorially

intended. But the later revisional repletion of the lacuna with the phrase “absorbing piece of intelligence” (*U* 767/659) may well at long distance restore an original wording only fragmentarily copied into *P-E*. In two further instances, the attempt to fill in the lacunae results in readings of the published text which would seem to cancel out their original *P-E* alternatives (“with a gurgling noise” for 24.54 “in the street q.t.” and “for a very few minutes” replacing 40.5 “a minute or so”). But this does not obviate our overriding decision, arrived at by the course of argument here developed, to consider the omissions from *P-E* in invariant contexts as scribal errors in *R*, to be amended in an edited text.

It is in three instances, mainly, that this leads to a critically appreciable textual difference. Reinserting into Bloom’s reading of the racecourse report the long sentence which for the most part repeats previous wording results in a linguistic enactment of what the narrative terms Bloom’s reading “in fits and starts.” Two further restorations, more importantly, achieve a subtle change in characterization. Bloom appears the bolder for vaunting, in the face of Stephen’s jesuitical proof of the existence of a supernatural God, his own agnosticism “with a smile of disbelief.” And it is with courage, as well as with an openness not shown in his silent plotting of the adjournment to 7 Eccles street which we know, that he asks “Do you like cocoa?” He takes the chance of a refusal which might prematurely end their encounter.

Far from being mechanical, the changes thus editorially wrought on the text carry critical weight. Their defence lies in the conception of textual editing as a discipline of literary criticism. Founded on logical argument to sift and evaluate bibliographical and documentary evidence from which it derives stringent rules of procedure, its contribution to literary studies is greater than that of merely purveying safe texts. To provide texts of high accuracy, unbiased, exhaustively documented and historically well founded, is no doubt an editor’s immediate priority. But to the degree that critical considerations enter into even the minutest details of editorial decision, the outcome of each editing process is also always situated in an ongoing critical discourse. It is the rule-finding of a discipline as well as the constant interplay of the large and the small concerns of criticism which we hope to have demonstrated in this brief discussion of a very specific editorial problem posed by the “Eumeus” chapter of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*.