

ABOUT

Introduction

Books often lead us to other books. A great work of literature propels a reader outside of itself and into other literary worlds. The fiction of James Joyce has led readers to explore the streets of Dublin and the books that they contain. Joyce's characters read and discuss books. In an effort to find our own place in the Hibernian metropolis, we as readers want to join the conversations about these volumes. When the young protagonist of "Araby" discovers the musty, yellowed volumes left behind by a former tenant, a priest who had died on the premise, Joyce's readers, like the young hero, have only the paper-covered copies of *The Abbot*, *The Devout Communicant*, and *The Memoirs of Vidocq* to interpret this ghostly presence. Although Walter Scott's novels are widely available, few student libraries—or university collections, for that matter—have the nineteenth and early twentieth century editions of Pacificus Baker and Eugène François Vidocq similar to the ones read by Joyce as a young man. *Dubliners Bookshelf* offers a digital space to explore these books.

Joyce knew libraries and how to use them, and furthermore, he sent friends and acquaintances into the stacks of public and private libraries to track down the bits and pieces of information that texture his works. Dublin itself had a wide selection of libraries. When the first story of *Dubliners* was published in 1904, the National Library of Ireland had been open for fourteen years. Joyce was part of the first generation of Irish men and women to use the space and its books. The physical space of the library resonates in Joyce's literary imagination. In the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode of *Ulysses*, the reading room of the National Library accommodates Stephen's literary discourses and Bloom's workday research. Marsh's Library, Ireland's first public library founded in 1701, provided the space and resources for Dubliners to satisfy their curiosities, pursue intellectual projects, and find pleasure in reading. Amidst its eighteenth-century grandeur, the young Joyce encountered dark oak shelves with hand-carved, painted gables containing the leather-bound books of antiquity and modernity. In *Stephen Hero*, this library introduces Stephen to the works of the *Tre Corone*, Franciscan philosophers, and W. B. Yeats. In a more informal setting, the Capel Street Lending Library also kept the young Joyce boys well supplied in books. *Dubliners Bookshelf* is an attempt to build upon the librarious institutions that have supported Joyce scholars and readers in the past by creating a digital repository for the books that Joyce found sufficiently interesting to write about. By presenting the books of *Dubliners*, this project suggests the continuities and possibilities inherent in the transition from physical libraries to digital repositories.

When book titles appear in a work of fiction they have a metonymic function, pointing to the linguistic content and bibliographic details of the work. Joyce suggests a wide range of associations by writing very specific books into his fiction. These instances force a consideration of how books function in fiction. Do fictional books—by the fact of being contained in a book—have a special status as material and linguistic objects? In *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce declares Shaun to be "strikingly brainy and well letterread in yourshelves" (FW 425). This seems to be

the condition of being studied in the books on one's shelves but also being an interpreter of the self. As a companion to Joyce's *yourshelves*, the texts of *Dubliners Bookshelf* might be thought of as *bookselves*. This term denotes three different ways in which the books in this collection might be of interest to the reader of Joyce. First, it points to the ways in which we see ourselves through books. The man who accosts the boys at the end of "An Encounter" defines himself as a bookworm and uses this association with books in an attempt to connect with the narrator of the story (*D* 25). Being a reader is a significant part of his identity, and at times, books are a means of attaining his desires. Second, the term *bookselves* points to the ways in which identities are reflected through the organization of books. The logic of our libraries can reflect the ways in which we organize and narrate our lives. In "A Painful Case," James Duffy's room "bore witness of the orderliness of his mind" and his bookshelves are all carefully sorted according to bulk. The bookshelves are indicative of Duffy's aspirations toward what he imagines is a neat and orderly life. Third, books have a kind of selfhood that grows through the personal and material associations that accumulate around a text within a fictional work. These books can become characters in their own right because of the roles they play in driving the narrative of the stories. For instance, the three books that the narrator of "Araby" inherits from the dead priest create opaque but provocative interpretive paths for the reader. Scott's *The Abbot* offers insights into the character of the priest and the boy who finds the volume, but the way in which we read *The Abbot* is also altered because of the role it plays in Joyce's story. These modes of intertextuality ask us to think about how books, both in their linguistic and bibliographic content, function in a text such as *Dubliners*.

James Joyce and the Publishing of *Dubliners*

Publishing *Dubliners* was no easy feat, and Joyce told his side of the story in "A Curious History." First published on January 15th in the *Egoist*, Joyce's open letter and correspondence with Ezra Pound sought to describe "the present conditions of authorship in England and Ireland." It detailed a lengthy attempt to see an uncensored *Dubliners* in print. London publisher Grant Richards first accepted the collection in 1906, but later could not publish the volume because his printer refused to set up certain passages. British laws held both publisher and printer responsible for anything considered libelous or obscene. The Dublin firm Maunsell and Co. solicited the manuscript, and in 1909 signed a contract with Joyce. However, Maunsell also requested changes, especially regarding a passage in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" about the late King Edward VII. Joyce allowed these changes with the hope that a restored edition might be possible in the future. He signed a new contract with Maunsell, but in the end, their printers would not deliver the printed pages. They broke up the type and destroyed the finished copies. Crestfallen, Joyce returned to the continent carrying one set of proofs that he managed to obtain from the publishers.

Joyce tried other publishers such as Martin Secker and Elkin Mathews but received similar rejections. In 1913 Joyce wrote again to Richards. During the intervening years, censorship in the London market had eased enough that Richards decided to take a chance on the book once again. On 15 June 1914, Grant Richards delivered *Dubliners* to the reading public in a simple

maroon morocco bound volume in a print-run of 1,250. The book lacks any overtly ornate touches, and its calm appearance masks the struggles its author had in bringing it to publication.

Joyce's difficulties in publishing *Dubliners* were not unique. Many authors suffered under the economic and legal conditions of the publishing industry of the time. Richards himself wrote a short story that was censored for its "strong language" (*Memoirs of a Misspent Youth* 319), and his publishing firm went bankrupt in 1905 and again in 1926.

Grant Richards, Publisher

Above all, Grant Richards was a man of taste. Sporting his distinctive monocle, he enjoyed fine wine, food, and clothing. His memoirs reveal that he had a strong sense of propriety and a great appreciation for literature. This can be seen in his ever polite responses to Joyce's increasing hostility; however, he did seem to have a habit of misplacing manuscripts along with other occasional lapses in his business practices.

Joyce's writings tell one side of the publishing world at the beginning of the twentieth century; however, his tale of righteous indignation and the rights of authorship laid out in "A Curious History," "Gas from a Burner," and elsewhere give a limited perspective on what it meant to publish books during this period. Joyce, whose grudges and literary invectives had intensity and style, writes from the perspective of the beleaguered author fighting against philistinism, censorship, legal constrictions, and general cowardice and stupidity. Joyce levels attacks at Richards, George Roberts, John Falconer, and others. There is no doubt that the road to publication was long and frustrating to Joyce, and to the twenty-first-century reader of *Dubliners* the objections to the text seem small indeed. However, an examination of the literary business and the specifics of Richards's enterprise at the time reveal the many forces, players, and institutions that collaborate to produce a published volume.

The year of *Dubliners*'s publication also saw the first issues of *The Little Review* and *Blast*. George Moore finished his controversial memoir with the final volume *Vale*, and *The Egoist* began the serialization of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Joyce's account of the publishing of *Dubliners* gives the impression that his manuscript is the only literary event happening at Richards's firm. During 1914 Richards published around fifty books and managed a sizable backlog of previously published titles. These volumes exhibited a diversity of design and subject matter. Books on photography, travel, art, business, and children's books mingled with the works of fiction, poetry, and criticism that made Richards's lasting reputation. In 1914 alone he introduced titles such as *The Boys' Book of Pets*, *Vistas in Sicily*, *Air, water, and food, from a sanitary standpoint*, *A Renaissance courtesy-book*, *Saturday with my camera*, *How to be Happy in Business*, and *The Gourmet's Guide to London*. Along with these lesser known nonfiction titles, he also published his own novel *Caviar* and works by T. Sturge Moore, Frank Harris, and many others.

Of the other books that Richards published in the same year as *Dubliners*, Robert Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, a portrait of working-class life in England, is the best remembered. Born a Dubliner, Tressell left Ireland in 1886, worked as a sign painter and decorator in South Africa and later relocated to England in 1901 where he became increasingly involved with socialist politics and later wrote *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* as an attack on the injustices of capitalism and the living conditions of the impoverished. Much like Joyce, Tressell struggled to secure a publisher for the long novel that he completed in 1910. A year after completing the novel, he died while trying to emigrate to Canada, and the novel remained unpublished. His eighteen-year-old daughter Kathleen kept the manuscript, and it came into Richards hands through a mutual friend and writer Jessie Pope, who later edited the novel. Richards recognized the book as “damnably subversive, but it was extraordinarily real” (*Author Hunting* 280). Like Joyce, Tressell's book found his way into Richards's catalog in 1914 despite the struggles of authorship in a hostile publishing world.

When he entered the publishing world in 1897, Richards modeled his business and aesthetic on some of the great publishers of the period. He looked to the models offered by Macmillan, William Heinemann, and John Lane, who produced quality books from promising authors (*Author Hunting* 30). By 1914, he had published authors such as George Bernard Shaw, Grant Allen, A.E. Housman, G.K. Chesterton, George Paston, Arnold Bennett, Frank Norris, and an anthology edited by Alice Meynell.

When Richards first received the manuscript for *Dubliners* in 1905 he decided to publish the collection under a number of terms that would protect him financially. He wrote to Joyce saying,

I have read it myself on behalf of this house, and think very highly of it indeed: but I do not see that it has any of those selling qualities for which a publisher has naturally to look. Judged, indeed, from that standpoint, it has the qualities which do not help a book: it is about Ireland, and it is always said that books about Ireland do not sell; and it is a collection of short stories. (qtd. in Robert Scholes, “Grant Richards to James Joyce,” *Studies in Bibliography* 16 (1962): 143).

Richards had previously bet on Irish material. He published Shan F. Bullock's *Irish Pastorals* (1901), Thomas Wallace Russell's *Ireland and the Empire: A Review, 1800-1900* (1901), William O'Connor Morris's *Present Irish Questions* (1901), and Filson Young's *Ireland at the Cross Roads: An Essay in Explanation* (1904). He respected Joyce's work, but nevertheless, worked toward his firm's solvency in the matter.

Joyce thought little of the objections made by Richards, but while Joyce cared about the integrity of his art and the economics of putting food on the table, Richards had to think about the health of his business and his own financial circumstances. As a preface to his memoir on literary publishing, Richards quotes a letter from Shaw about the business and appreciation of literature:

You should call your book *The Tragedy of a Publisher who Allowed Himself to Fall in Love with Literature*. The publisher who does that, like the picture dealer who likes pictures or the schoolmistress who gets fond of her pupils, is foredoomed. A certain connoisseurship in the public taste is indispensable; but the slightest uncommercial bias in choosing between say, Bridges' 'Testament of Beauty' and a telephone directory is fatal . . . (*Author Hunting* n.p.)

Richards admits to a number of instances where he passed on a good book much to his regret. He declined to publish J.M. Synge's *The Aran Islands* and Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. Particularly when it came to friends and long-time authors associated with his house, this necessary eye toward profit came with great difficulty. For instance, Richards published the early books of John Masefield, but in 1909 he declined to publish Masefield's latest play, *The Tragedy of Pompey the Great*. This decision prompted Richards to reflect on the hard decisions and mistakes he made in his trade:

To tell the truth, I had allowed my ledgers to influence me. It was a folly. No publisher worthy of his job, if he has any money left in his banking account, will, if he can help it, allow an author whose work he respects and admires to go elsewhere. In the long run things will come right—and even if they don't—well, he will have the happiness and satisfaction of having been true to his own taste and of having on his shelves good books of which he is proud rather than rubbish which he has acquired in the mistaken belief that he knows what the public wants. (*Author Hunting* 228-229).

Although he decided to drop *Dubliners* the first time around, Richards gave the collection a second chance in a London market that had eased its moral objections considerably over the interim. *Dubliners* received reasonably good reviews, but the book did not sell well. Neither Richards nor Joyce made much off the edition. However, Richards bet on Joyce once again in publishing the first edition of *Exiles* in 1918.

The Texts and Editorial Note

The possibility of condensing the architecture of physical libraries--their stone and oak, leather and paper--into the digital ether is enticing. The concentration of all knowledge into a relatively small space has been an enduring human endeavor, and digital technologies have once again reignited this passion for universal collecting. Google Books and the Digital Public Library of America testify to this drive toward large-scale acquisition--the "mega-meta-macro library" as Robert Darnton described it ("Jefferson's Taper"). However, digital technology can also be harnessed for the specific-personal-micro library. This archive could be smaller than a library, in fact, maybe only a single shelf that contains a carefully-curated set of texts. In the case of the *Dubliners* Bookshelf, the initial collecting and organizing was imagined by Joyce. Here the

dream is not comprehensive knowledge, but a very particular path through the massive world of print at the end of the nineteenth century

The goal of *Dubliners Bookshelf* is to collect and archive the books Joyce explicitly writes about in *Dubliners*. For the purposes of this project, three primary types of books have been selected: 1) Works explicitly mentioned in the text of *Dubliners*. For example, Little Chandler's copy of Byron's *Hours of Idleness* in "A Little Cloud" or Mr. Duffy's volumes of Nietzsche in "A Painful Case"; 2) Works which appear in the advertisements for the first edition. Grant Richards supplies a short list of books from his catalog on the page facing the title page. These books have been included not because Joyce selected them, but because they give insight into Richards's publishing habits and have become connected to Joyce's stories through this practical association; 3) The first edition of *Dubliners*, published by Grant Richards in 1914, is included so that readers can examine its layout and typography along with the stories as they appeared initially as a collection. This is not a definitive collection of all of the printed texts to which Joyce alludes, but rather it is a collection of books that have physical and linguistic presences in the text. Ephemera and periodicals also appear in Joyce's stories. For instance, the boys magazines in "An Encounter" and Bob Doran's weekly copy of *Reynolds Magazine* had different functions within the print ecology of Dublin. Many of these works can be found in digital repositories and microfilm facsimiles for those wishing to read larger runs of these publications. There are also many subtle allusions in the book to various authors and works of literature. Readers can find the sources of these brief mentions in resources such as Don Gifford's *Joyce Annotated: Notes for Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1982).

In all cases, an effort has been made to identify and digitize editions that Joyce would have most likely encountered. In some instances, identification is rather straightforward, especially if only one edition of the book had been printed or bibliographic details given by Joyce allow us to positively identify the volume. The descriptive catalog of Joyce's Trieste library gives a sense of the books Joyce had in his possession at the end of his life, giving us a starting point for thinking about what titles and types of books he might have encountered as a young man. In the absence of other clues, I have selected editions which circulated in *fin de siecle* Dublin, choosing publishers and titles available in the bookstalls and libraries of Ireland.

The digital facsimiles used here have been chosen from the massive wealth of digitized books that have accumulated over the last decade. The Internet Archive provides a stable platform for the longterm sustainability of these digital texts, and all of the resources within *Dubliners Bookshelf* can be located there. The texts can be read in the native application provided here or the texts can be downloaded in a series of formats by following the links to the appropriate Internet Archive page for each book.

Each book is accompanied by a short essay that places the book within the context of Joyce's life and works, and the print culture of Dublin more broadly. They are meant to be impressionistic rather than narrowly descriptive or interpretive pieces. The aim of these essays is to offer a way into the texts that allows the reader to come to their own conclusions about the ways in which

these books function within Joyce's fictional world and the history of publishing and reading. *Dubliners Bookshelf* creates a network of texts that the reader can approach in their entirety, rather than in brief summaries or cursory descriptions.

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