A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man first published in 1916
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Introduction

The decade-long time span (1904–14) and nearly continent-spanning geography (Dublin/Trieste) announced at the end of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* only hints at James Joyce’s personal and artistic turmoil during the writing of this book. Having begun the work as *Stephen Hero* in Dublin in 1904 in the painful period following his mother’s death (13th August 1903) and prior to his meeting Nora Barnacle (June 1904) and their departure for the Continent, more or less for good (8th October 1904), Joyce wrote some twenty-six chapters of *Stephen Hero* before abandoning the novel in the summer of 1905, probably around the time of the birth of his first child, Giorgio (27th July). Beset by poverty and difficulties in getting his work published (his first book of poetry, *Chamber Music*, appeared in 1907 after considerable delay; the struggle to publish *Dubliners* began in 1905 and would not conclude until 1914), a discouraged Joyce probably did not return to *Stephen Hero* until 1908, when he began reworking it into what would eventually become *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

In 1909, Joyce gave portions of the novel-in-progress to one of his English-language students in Trieste, Ettore Schmitz (1861–1928), whose appreciation for the work seems to have meant a great deal to Joyce and served as a rare source of encouragement. Schmitz was a gifted author who had published two commercially unsuccessful novels under his pen name Italo Svevo in the 1890s (*Una vita* in 1892, *Senilità* in 1898), but had set aside his literary ambitions to manage his wife’s family’s business. Joyce admired Svevo’s work and must have seen the older man’s life as a warning. Joyce’s time was consumed by the ongoing

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1 Hans Walter Gabler has suggested an earlier starting point for *Stephen Hero*, proposing that it was begun in 1903. (See Gabler, ‘Introduction’, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler and Walter Hettche (New York: Routledge, 1993) and ‘The Rocky Road to *Ulysses*’ (Dublin: The National Library of Ireland Joyce Studies, 2004)). However, we feel the weight of evidence suggests a 1904 starting point.
travails of *Dubliners*, culminating in his final, futile visit to Ireland in 1912, and it was not until early 1914 and the intervention of Ezra Pound that *A Portrait*’s publication began to become a reality. Pound had asked W.B. Yeats whether he knew any young Irish writers in need of discovery; Yeats had mentioned Joyce. Hailing the novel as “damn fine stuff”, Pound arranged for its serialization in the periodical *The Egoist* in 1914–15. It was published in book form by B.W. Huebsch in New York in December 1916.

Italo Svevo wrote in 1927 that *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is “a kind of preface. Fate has assigned to it the place of a preface, a very notable preface, however, which has shown that it is able to live its own independent and glorious life”.² Given the centrality of *Ulysses* in Joyce’s work – indeed, in all of modern literature – it is probably inevitable that *A Portrait* is viewed and will continue to be viewed as prefatory to the later, larger work. T.S. Eliot thought that *A Portrait* was Joyce’s only novel, and that *Ulysses* left the genre of the novel behind.³ No matter where it is seen to fit within Joyce’s larger body of work, it is obvious that *A Portrait* lives “its own independent and glorious life” as one of the key modernist texts.

Joyce’s work on *A Portrait* extends back before *Stephen Hero* to early writings such as a brief autobiographical essay (of sorts) called ‘A Portrait of the Artist’ (1904).⁴ This essay version, about two thousand words in length, sets forth some of the themes that would occupy Joyce for the next decade and beyond. Other early components of *A Portrait* include Joyce’s Epiphanies and his 1903–4 Paris/Pola notebook, as well as the somewhat later Trieste notebook (1907–9).⁵ The Epiphanies are brief paragraphs or sketches containing some instant of revelation. A number of them made their way into *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait* (and, later, after they had long been believed lost, the Paris/Pola notebook surfaced in 2002 as part of a group of Joyce manuscripts acquired by the National Library of Ireland.

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³ See Eliot’s ‘Ulysses, Order, and Myth’.
⁴ Printed in Scholes and Kain’s *The Workshop of Daedalus* and in *Poems and Shorter Writings*. Both of these volumes, particularly the former, are significant compilations of source materials for *A Portrait*.
⁵ The Epiphanies and the notebooks are printed in *The Workshop of Daedalus*. The Epiphanies (but not the notebooks) appear in *Poems and Shorter Writings*. Long
The notebooks served as draft paper for the aesthetic theory Stephen Dedalus puts forth in Part 5 of A Portrait. They also served as a place for Joyce to record remarks and details about the various people whose alter egos would populate his writings. Another item in the Portrait dossier is a late Portrait fragment that corresponds, more or less, to the first chapter of Ulysses. The fragment shows the fluidity between the ending of A Portrait and the beginning of Ulysses. It also indicates that Joyce suffered from an uncertainty as to where or how to end his story. He solved the problem in A Portrait by cutting the Gordian knot. The series of diary entries gave the novel a conclusion without forcing him to “end” or resolve a plot that, after all, was based on his own life. This most self-referential, or self-reverential, of writers always wrote the book of himself. In Finnegans Wake he tells the tale of Shem the Penman, who wrote “inartistic portraits of himself” (182) using “the only foolscap available, his own body” (185).

The indefiniteness of the reader’s last glimpse of Stephen in A Portrait (and also in Ulysses) has contributed to some puzzlement over how to take him. Although most readers are likely to take Stephen as a more or less serious self-portrait, in some quarters the view has taken hold that he must be a sort of ironized figure. We do not accept that opinion. Even at an empirical level, it is hard to see why one would think that Joyce, whose first stories were published under the pen name Stephen Daedalus, who wrote ‘A Portrait of the Artist’ in 1904 and began a novel called Stephen Hero that year, would mean us to laugh at Stephen Dedalus. But more broadly, to admire A Portrait and yet reject sympathy for its protagonist (and only substantial character) seems too strange to us. No, Stephen is not a figure of fun. But it’s true that he only goes so far – until about age twenty-one, in fact, or, given his reappearance in Ulysses, until twenty-two. This is why Joyce wished people would bear in mind that this book is a portrait of the artist as a young man. One version of the knowing, “ironic” view is that, since Daedalus’s son was Icarus, ergo Stephen must be too. As appealing as such a deduction may be, it seems contrary to Joyce’s aims in this book and its successor. Stephen Dedalus’s appeal to his “old father” at the end of A Portrait reads as a heartfelt imprecation, with

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“Et ignotas animum dimittit in artes.”

OVID, Metamorphoses, VIII., 18.
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

I

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo. . . .

His father* told him that story:* his father looked at him through a glass:* he had a hairy face.

He was baby tuckoo. The moocow came down the road where Betty Byrne* lived: she sold lemon platt.*

O, the wild rose blossoms
On the little green place.*

He sang that song. That was his song.

O, the green* woth* botheth.

When you wet the bed first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother* put on the oilsheet.* That had the queer smell.

His mother had a nicer smell than his father. She played on the piano the sailor’s hornpipe* for him to dance. He danced:

Tralala lala,
Tralala tralaladdy,
Tralala lala,
Tralala lala.
Uncle Charles* and Dante* clapped. They were older than his father and mother but uncle Charles was older than Dante.

Dante had two brushes in her press.* The brush with the maroon velvet back was for Michael Davitt* and the brush with the green velvet back was for Parnell.* Dante gave him a cachou* every time he brought her a piece of tissue paper.

The Vances* lived in number seven. They had a different father and mother. They were Eileen’s father and mother. When they were grown up he was going to marry Eileen. He hid under the table. His mother said:

— O, Stephen will apologise.

Dante said:

— O, if not, the eagles will come and pull out his eyes.—

Pull out his eyes,
Apologise,
Apologise,
Pull out his eyes.
Apologise,
Pull out his eyes,
Pull out his eyes,
Apologise.*

* * * *

The wide playgrounds* were swarming with boys. All were shouting and the prefects* urged them on with strong cries. The evening air was pale and chilly and after every charge and thud of the footballers the greasy leather orb flew like a heavy bird through the grey light. He kept on the fringe of his line,* out of sight of his prefect, out of the reach of the rude feet, feigning to run now and then. He felt his body small and weak amid the throng of players and his eyes were weak and watery. Rody Kickham* was not like that: he would be captain of the third line all the fellows said.

Rody Kickham was a decent fellow but Nasty Roche* was a stink. Rody Kickham had greaves in his number* and a hamper in the refectory. Nasty Roche had big hands. He called the Friday pudding dog-in-the-blanket. And one day he had asked:
— What is your name?
Stephen had answered: Stephen Dedalus.*
Then Nasty Roche had said:
— What kind of a name is that?
And when Stephen had not been able to answer Nasty Roche had asked:
— What is your father?
Stephen had answered:
— A gentleman.
Then Nasty Roche had asked:
— Is he a magistrate?*
He crept about from point to point on the fringe of his line, making little runs now and then. But his hands were bluish with cold. He kept his hands in the side pockets of his belted grey suit. That was a belt round his pocket. And belt was also to give a fellow a belt. One day a fellow said to Cantwell:*  
— I’d give you such a belt in a second.
Cantwell had answered:
— Go and fight your match. Give Cecil Thunder* a belt. I’d like to see you. He’d give you a toe in the rump for yourself.
That was not a nice expression. His mother had told him not to speak with the rough boys in the college. Nice mother! The first day in the hall of the castle* when she had said goodbye she had put up her veil double to her nose to kiss him: and her nose and eyes were red. But he had pretended not to see that she was going to cry. She was a nice mother but she was not so nice when she cried. And his father had given him two five-shilling pieces for pocket money. And his father had told him if he wanted anything to write home to him and, whatever he did, never to peach* on a fellow. Then at the door of the castle the rector* had shaken hands with his father and mother, his soutane* fluttering in the breeze, and the car had driven off with his father and mother on it. They had cried to him from the car, waving their hands:
— Goodbye, Stephen, goodbye!
— Goodbye, Stephen, goodbye!
He was caught in the whirl of a scrimmage and, fearful of the flashing eyes and muddy boots, bent down to look through the legs. The fellows were struggling and groaning and their legs were rubbing and kicking
and stamping. Then Jack Lawton’s* yellow boots dodged out the ball and all the other boots and legs ran after. He ran after them a little way and then stopped. It was useless to run on. Soon they would be going home for the holidays. After supper in the study hall he would change the number pasted up inside his desk from seventyseven to seventysix.

It would be better to be in the study hall than out there in the cold. The sky was pale and cold but there were lights in the castle. He wondered from which window Hamilton Rowan* had thrown his hat on the haha* and had there been flowerbeds at that time under the windows. One day when he had been called to the castle the butler had shown him the marks of the soldiers’ slugs in the wood of the door* and had given him a piece of shortbread that the community* ate. It was nice and warm to see the lights in the castle. It was like something in a book. Perhaps Leicester Abbey* was like that. And there were nice sentences in Doctor Cornwell’s Spelling Book.* They were like poetry but they were only sentences to learn the spelling from.

_Wolsey died in Leicester Abbey_  
_Where the abbots buried him._  
_Canker is a disease of plants,_  
_Cancer one of animals._

It would be nice to lie on the hearthrug before the fire, leaning his head upon his hands, and think on those sentences. He shivered as if he had cold slimy water next his skin. That was mean of Wells* to shoulder him into the square ditch* because he would not swop his little snuffbox for Wells’s seasoned hacking chestnut,* the conqueror of forty. How cold and slimy the water had been! A fellow had once seen a big rat jump into the scum. Mother was sitting at the fire with Dante waiting for Brigid to bring in the tea. She had her feet on the fender and her jewelly slippers were so hot and they had such a lovely warm smell: Dante knew a lot of things. She had taught him where the Mozambique Channel* was and what was the longest river in America* and what was the name of the highest mountain in the moon.* Father Arnall* knew more than Dante because he was a priest but both his father and uncle Charles said that Dante was a clever woman and a wellread woman. And when Dante
made that noise after dinner and then put up her hand to her mouth: that was heartburn.

A voice cried far out on the playground:
— All in!

Then other voices cried from the lower and third lines:
— All in! All in!

The players closed around, flushed and muddy, and he went among them, glad to go in. Rody Kickham held the ball by its greasy lace. A fellow asked him to give it one last: but he walked on without even answering the fellow. Simon Moonan* told him not to because the prefect was looking. The fellow turned to Simon Moonan and said:
— We all know why you speak. You are McGlade’s* suck.*

Suck was a queer word. The fellow called Simon Moonan that name because Simon Moonan used to tie the prefect’s false sleeves behind his back and the prefect used to let on to be angry. But the sound was ugly. Once he had washed his hands in the lavatory of the Wicklow Hotel* and his father pulled the stopper up by the chain after and the dirty water went down through the hole in the basin. And when it had all gone down slowly the hole in the basin had made a sound like that: suck. Only louder.

To remember that and the white look of the lavatory made him feel cold and then hot. There were two cocks that you turned and water came out: cold and hot. He felt cold and then a little hot: and he could see the names printed on the cocks. That was a very queer thing.

And the air in the corridor chilled him too. It was queer and wettish. But soon the gas would be lit and in burning it made a light noise like a little song. Always the same: and when the fellows stopped talking in the playroom you could hear it.

It was the hour for sums. Father Arnall wrote a hard sum on the board and then said:
— Now then, who will win? Go ahead, York! Go ahead, Lancaster!*  

Stephen tried his best but the sum was too hard and he felt confused. The little silk badge with the white rose on it that was pinned on the breast of his jacket began to flutter. He was no good at sums but he tried his best so that York might not lose. Father Arnall’s face looked very black but he was not in a wax:* he was laughing. Then Jack Lawton cracked his fingers and Father Arnall looked at his copybook and said:
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— Right. Bravo Lancaster! The red rose wins. Come on now, York! Forge ahead!

Jack Lawton looked over from his side. The little silk badge with the red rose on it looked very rich because he had a blue sailor top on. Stephen felt his own face red too, thinking of all the bets about who would get first place in elements,* Jack Lawton or he. Some weeks Jack Lawton got the card for first and some weeks he got the card for first. His white silk badge fluttered and fluttered as he worked at the next sum and heard Father Arnall’s voice. Then all his eagerness passed away and he felt his face quite cool. He thought his face must be white because it felt so cool. He could not get out the answer for the sum but it did not matter. White roses and red roses: those were beautiful colours to think of. And the cards for first place and second place and third place were beautiful colours too: pink and cream and lavender. Lavender and cream and pink roses were beautiful to think of. Perhaps a wild rose might be like those colours and he remembered the song about the wild rose blossoms on the little green place. But you could not have a green rose. But perhaps somewhere in the world you could.

The bell rang and then the classes began to file out of the rooms and along the corridors towards the refectory. He sat looking at the two prints of butter on his plate but could not eat the damp bread. The tablecloth was damp and limp. But he drank off the hot weak tea which the clumsy scullion,* girt with a white apron, poured into his cup. He wondered whether the scullion’s apron was damp too or whether all white things were cold and damp. Nasty Roche and Saurin* drank cocoa that their people sent them in tins. They said they could not drink the tea; that it was hogwash.* Their fathers were magistrates, the fellows said.

All the boys seemed to him very strange. They had all fathers and mothers and different clothes and voices. He longed to be at home and lay his head on his mother’s lap. But he could not: and so he longed for the play and study and prayers to be over and to be in bed.

He drank another cup of hot tea and Fleming* said:
— What’s up? Have you a pain or what’s up with you?
— I don’t know, Stephen said.
— Sick in your breadbasket,* Fleming said, because your face looks white. It will go away.
— O yes, Stephen said.

But he was not sick there. He thought that he was sick in his heart if you could be sick in that place. Fleming was very decent to ask him. He wanted to cry. He leaned his elbows on the table and shut and opened the flaps of his ears. Then he heard the noise of the refectory every time he opened the flaps of his ears. It made a roar like a train at night. And when he closed the flaps the roar was shut off like a train going into a tunnel. That night at Dalkey* the train had roared like that and then, when it went into the tunnel, the roar stopped. He closed his eyes and the train went on, roaring and then stopping; roaring again, stopping. It was nice to hear it roar and stop and then roar out of the tunnel again and then stop.

Then the higher line* fellows began to come down along the matting in the middle of the refectory, Paddy Rath* and Jimmy Magee and the Spaniard who was allowed to smoke cigars and the little Portuguese who wore the woolly cap. And then the lower line tables and the tables of the third line. And every single fellow had a different way of walking.

He sat in a corner of the playroom pretending to watch a game of dominos and once or twice he was able to hear for an instant the little song of the gas. The prefect was at the door with some boys and Simon Moonan was knotting his false sleeves. He was telling them something about Tullabeg.*

Then he went away from the door and Wells came over to Stephen and said:

— Tell us, Dedalus, do you kiss your mother before you go to bed?

Stephen answered:

— I do.

Wells turned to the other fellows and said:

— O, I say, here’s a fellow says he kisses his mother every night before he goes to bed.

The other fellows stopped their game and turned round, laughing. Stephen blushed under their eyes and said:

— I do not.

Wells said:

— O, I say, here’s a fellow says he doesn’t kiss his mother before he goes to bed.
They all laughed again. Stephen tried to laugh with them. He felt his whole body hot and confused in a moment. What was the right answer to the question? He had given two and still Wells laughed. But Wells must know the right answer for he was in third of grammar. He tried to think of Wells’s mother but he did not dare to raise his eyes to Wells’s face. He did not like Wells’s face. It was Wells who had shouldered him into the square ditch the day before because he would not swop his little snuffbox for Wells’s seasoned hacking chestnut, the conqueror of forty. It was a mean thing to do; all the fellows said it was. And how cold and slimy the water had been! And a fellow had once seen a big rat jump plop into the scum.

The cold slime of the ditch covered his whole body; and, when the bell rang for study and the lines filed out of the playrooms, he felt the cold air of the corridor and staircase inside his clothes. He still tried to think what was the right answer. Was it right to kiss his mother or wrong to kiss his mother? What did that mean, to kiss? You put your face up like that to say goodnight and then his mother put her face down. That was to kiss. His mother put her lips on his cheek; her lips were soft and they wetted his cheek; and they made a tiny little noise: kiss. Why did people do that with their two faces?

Sitting in the study hall he opened the lid of his desk and changed the number pasted up inside from seventyseven to seventysix. But the Christmas vacation was very far away: but one time it would come because the earth moved round always.

There was a picture of the earth on the first page of his geography: a big ball in the middle of clouds. Fleming had a box of crayons and one night during free study he had coloured the earth green and the clouds maroon. That was like the two brushes in Dante’s press, the brush with the green velvet back for Parnell and the brush with the maroon velvet back for Michael Davitt. But he had not told Fleming to colour them those colours. Fleming had done it himself.

He opened the geography to study the lesson; but he could not learn the names of places in America. Still they were all different places that had different names. They were all in different countries and the countries were in continents and the continents were in the world and the world was in the universe.
He turned to the flyleaf of the geography and read what he had written there: himself, his name and where he was.

*Stephen Dedalus*
*Class of Elements*
*Clongowes Wood College*
*Sallins*
*County Kildare*
*Ireland*
*Europe*
*The World*
*The Universe*

That was in his writing; and Fleming one night for a cod* had written on the opposite page:

*Stephen Dedalus is my name,*
*Ireland is my nation.*
*Clongowes is my dwellingplace*
*And heaven my expectation.*

He read the verses backwards but then they were not poetry. Then he read the flyleaf from the bottom to the top till he came to his own name. That was he: and he read down the page again. What was after the universe? Nothing. But was there anything round the universe to show where it stopped before the nothing place began? It could not be a wall but there could be a thin thin line there all round everything. It was very big to think about everything and everywhere. Only God could do that. He tried to think what a big thought that must be but he could only think of God. God was God’s name just as his name was Stephen. *Dieu* was the French for God and that was God’s name too; and when anyone prayed to God and said Dieu then God knew at once that it was a French person that was praying. But though there were different names for God in all the different languages in the world and God understood what all the people who prayed said in their different languages still God remained always the same God and God’s real name was God.
It made him very tired to think that way. It made him feel his head very big. He turned over the flyleaf and looked wearily at the green round earth in the middle of the maroon clouds. He wondered which was right, to be for the green or for the maroon, because Dante had ripped the green velvet back off the brush that was for Parnell one day with her scissors and had told him that Parnell was a bad man. He wondered if they were arguing at home about that. That was called politics. There were two sides in it: Dante was on one side and his father and Mr Casey* were on the other side but his mother and uncle Charles were on no side. Every day there was something in the paper about it.*

It pained him that he did not know what politics meant and that he did not know where the universe ended. He felt small and weak. When would he be like the fellows in poetry and rhetoric? They had big voices and big boots and they studied trigonometry. That was very far away. First came the vacation and then the next term and then vacation again and then again another term and then again the vacation. It was like a train going in and out of tunnels and that was like the noise of the boys eating in the refectory when you opened and closed the flaps of the ears. Term, vacation; tunnel, out; noise, stop. How far away it was! It was better to go to bed to sleep. Only prayers in the chapel and then bed. He shivered and yawned. It would be lovely in bed after the sheets got a bit hot. First they were so cold to get into. He shivered to think how cold they were first. But then they got hot and then he could sleep. It was lovely to be tired. He yawned again. Night prayers and then bed: he shivered and wanted to yawn. It would be lovely in a few minutes. He felt a warm glow creeping up from the cold shivering sheets, warmer and warmer till he felt warm all over, ever so warm and yet he shivered a little and still wanted to yawn.

The bell rang for night prayers* and he filed out of the study hall after the others and down the staircase and along the corridors to the chapel. The corridors were darkly lit and the chapel was darkly lit. Soon all would be dark and sleeping. There was cold night air in the chapel and the marbles were the colour the sea was at night. The sea was cold day and night: but it was colder at night. It was cold and dark under the seawall beside his father’s house.* But the kettle would be on the hob to make punch.
The prefect of the chapel prayed above his head and his memory knew the responses:

\[
\begin{align*}
O \text{ Lord, open our lips} \\
\text{And our mouths shall announce Thy praise.} \\
\text{Incline unto our aid, O God!} \\
O \text{ Lord, make haste to help us!}\end{align*}
\]

There was a cold night smell in the chapel. But it was a holy smell. It was not like the smell of the old peasants who knelt at the back of the chapel at Sunday mass. That was a smell of air and rain and turf and corduroy. But they were very holy peasants. They breathed behind him on his neck and sighed as they prayed. They lived in Clane, a fellow said: there were little cottages there and he had seen a woman standing at the halfdoor of a cottage with a child in her arms, as the cars had come past from Sallins. It would be lovely to sleep for one night in that cottage before the fire of smoking turf, in the dark lit by the fire, in the warm dark, breathing the smell of the peasants, air and rain and turf and corduroy. But, O, the road there between the trees was dark! You would be lost in the dark. It made him afraid to think of how it was.

He heard the voice of the prefect of the chapel saying the last prayer. He prayed it too against the dark outside under the trees.

\[
\text{Visit, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this habitation and drive away from it all the snares of the enemy. May Thy holy angels dwell herein to preserve us in peace and may Thy blessing be always upon us through Christ our Lord. Amen.}\]

His fingers trembled as he undressed himself in the dormitory. He told his fingers to hurry up. He had to undress and then kneel and say his own prayers and be in bed before the gas was lowered so that he might not go to hell when he died. He rolled his stockings off and put on his nightshirt quickly and knelt trembling at his bedside and repeated his prayers quickly, fearing that the gas would go down. He felt his shoulders shaking as he murmured:
God bless my father and my mother and spare them to me!
God bless my little brothers and sisters and spare them to me!
God bless Dante and uncle Charles and spare them to me!

He blessed himself and climbed quickly into bed and, tucking the end of the nightshirt under his feet, curled himself together under the cold white sheets, shaking and trembling. But he would not go to hell when he died; and the shaking would stop. A voice bade the boys in the dormitory goodnight. He peered out for an instant over the coverlet and saw the yellow curtains round and before his bed that shut him off on all sides. The light was lowered quietly.

The prefect’s shoes went away. Where? Down the staircase and along the corridors or to his room at the end? He saw the dark. Was it true about the black dog that walked there at night with eyes as big as carriagelamps? They said it was the ghost of a murderer. A long shiver of fear flowed over his body. He saw the dark entrance hall of the castle. Old servants in old dress were in the ironingroom above the staircase. It was long ago. The old servants were quiet. There was a fire there but the hall was still dark. A figure came up the staircase from the hall. He wore the white cloak of a marshal;* his face was pale and strange; he held his hand pressed to his side. He looked out of strange eyes at the old servants. They looked at him and saw their master’s face and cloak and knew that he had received his deathwound. But only the dark was where they looked: only dark silent air. Their master had received his deathwound on the battlefield of Prague far away over the sea. He was standing on the field; his hand was pressed to his side; his face was pale and strange and he wore the white cloak of a marshal.

O how cold and strange it was to think of that! All the dark was cold and strange. There were pale strange faces there, great eyes like carriagelamps. They were the ghosts of murderers, the figures of marshals who had received their deathwound on battlefields far away over the sea. What did they wish to say that their faces were so strange?

Visit, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this habitation and drive away from it all . . .
PART I

Going home for the holidays! That would be lovely: the fellows had told him. Getting up on the cars in the early wintry morning outside the door of the castle. The cars were rolling on the gravel. Cheers for the rector! Hurray! Hurray! Hurray!

The cars drove past the chapel and all caps were raised. They drove merrily along the country roads. The drivers pointed with their whips to Bodenstown.* The fellows cheered. They passed the farmhouse of the Jolly Farmer. Cheer after cheer after cheer. Through Clane they drove, cheering and cheered. The peasant women stood at the halfdoors, the men stood here and there. The lovely smell there was in the wintry air: the smell of Clane: rain and wintry air and turf smouldering and corduroy.

The train was full of fellows: a long long chocolate train* with cream facings. The guards went to and fro opening, closing, locking, unlocking the doors. They were men in dark blue and silver; they had silvery whistles and their keys made a quick music: click, click: click, click, click.

And the train raced on over the flat lands and past the Hill of Allen.* The telegraphpoles were passing, passing. The train went on and on. It knew. There were lanterns in the hall of his father’s house and ropes of green branches. There were holly and ivy round the pierglass* and holly and ivy, green and red, twined round the chandeliers. There were red holly and green ivy round the old portraits on the walls. Holly and ivy for him and for Christmas.

Lovely . . .

All the people. Welcome home, Stephen! Noises of welcome. His mother kissed him. Was that right? His father was a marshal now: higher than a magistrate. Welcome home, Stephen!

Noises . . .

There was a noise of curtainrings running back along the rods, of water being splashed in the basins. There was a noise of rising and dressing and washing in the dormitory: a noise of clapping of hands as the prefect went up and down telling the fellows to look sharp. A pale sunlight showed the yellow curtains drawn back, the tossed beds. His bed was very hot and his face and body were very hot.

He got up and sat on the side of his bed. He was weak. He tried to pull on his stocking. It had a horrid rough feel. The sunlight was queer and cold.
Fleming said:
— Are you not well?
He did not know; and Fleming said:
— Get back into bed. I’ll tell McGlade you’re not well.
— He’s sick.
— Who is?
— Tell McGlade.
— Get back into bed.
— Is he sick?
A fellow held his arms while he loosened the stocking clinging to his foot and climbed back into the hot bed.
He crouched down between the sheets, glad of their tepid glow. He heard the fellows talk among themselves about him as they dressed for mass. It was a mean thing to do, to shoulder him into the square ditch, they were saying.
Then their voices ceased; they had gone. A voice at his bed said:
— Dedalus, don’t spy* on us, sure you won’t?
Wells’s face was there. He looked at it and saw that Wells was afraid.
— I didn’t mean to. Sure you won’t?
His father had told him, whatever he did, never to peach on a fellow. He shook his head and answered no and felt glad.
Wells said:
— I didn’t mean to, honour bright.* It was only for cod. I’m sorry.
The face and the voice went away. Sorry because he was afraid. Afraid that it was some disease. Canker was a disease of plants and cancer one of animals: or another different. That was a long time ago then out on the playgrounds in the evening light, creeping from point to point on the fringe of his line, a heavy bird flying low through the grey light. Leicester Abbey lit up. Wolsey died there. The abbots buried him themselves.
It was not Wells’s face, it was the prefect’s. He was not foxing.* No, no: he was sick really. He was not foxing. And he felt the prefect’s hand on his forehead; and he felt his forehead warm and damp against the prefect’s cold damp hand. That was the way a rat felt, slimy and damp and cold. Every rat had two eyes to look out of. Sleek slimy coats, little little feet tucked up to jump, black slimy eyes to look out of. They could understand how to jump. But the minds of rats could not understand
trigonometry. When they were dead they lay on their sides. Their coats
dried then. They were only dead things.

The prefect was there again and it was his voice that was saying that
he was to get up, that Father Minister* had said he was to get up and
dress and go to the infirmary. And while he was dressing himself as
quickly as he could the prefect said:
— We must pack off to Brother Michael* because we have the
collywobbles!*  

He was very decent to say that. That was all to make him laugh. But
he could not laugh because his cheeks and lips were all shivery: and then
the prefect had to laugh by himself.

The prefect cried:
— Quick march! Hayfoot! Strawfoot!*

They went together down the staircase and along the corridor and past
the bath.* As he passed the door he remembered with a vague fear the
warm turfcoloured bogwater, the warm moist air, the noise of plunges,
the smell of the towels, like medicine.

Brother Michael was standing at the door of the infirmary and from
the door of the dark cabinet on his right came a smell like medicine.
That came from the bottles on the shelves. The prefect spoke to Brother
Michael and Brother Michael answered and called the prefect sir. He
had reddish hair mixed with grey and a queer look. It was queer that
he would always be a brother. It was queer too that you could not call
him sir because he was a brother and had a different kind of look. Was
he not holy enough or why could he not catch up on the others?

There were two beds in the room and in one bed there was a fellow:
and when they went in he called out:
— Hello! It’s young Dedalus! What’s up?
— The sky is up, Brother Michael said.

He was a fellow out of the third of grammar and, while Stephen was
undressing, he asked Brother Michael to bring him a round of buttered
toast.
— Ah, do! he said.
— Butter you up! said Brother Michael. You’ll get your walking papers
in the morning when the doctor comes.
— Will I? the fellow said. I’m not well yet.
Notes

p. xi, *Et ignotas animum dimittit in artes*: “He sets his mind at work upon unknown arts” (Latin) – Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (Loeb Classical Library, p. 419; tr. Frank Justus Miller). Note that the correct line number is 188 rather than 18; this error remained uncorrected until 1964. The phrase appears during the passage in which Daedalus, in exile in Crete, prepares the wings by which he and his son Icarus will attempt to escape.


p. 1, *that story*: Joyce’s father, John Stanislaus, wrote to him on 31st January 1931: “I wonder do you recollect the old days in Brighton Square, when you were Babie Tuckoo, and I used to take you out in the Square and tell you all about the moo-cow that used to come down from the mountain and take little boys across?” (*Letters* iii, p. 212). This seems to suggest that John Stanislaus never read *A Portrait*.

p. 1, *glass*: An eyeglass or monocle.

p. 1, *Betty Byrne*: An Elizabeth Byrne, grocer, was located on Main Street in Bray, near where the Joyces lived 1887–91 (1891 *Thom’s*, p. 1577), though context suggests that the opening of the book is set in Rathgar, where Joyce was born.

p. 1, *lemon platt*: “A flat sugar-stick, flavoured with lemon” (*OED*).

p. 1, *O, the wild rose blossoms / On the little green place*: After the popular and maudlin ballad ‘Lilly Dale’ (1852) by American H.S. Thompson: “Oh! Lilly, sweet Lilly, dear Lilly Dale, / Now the wild rose blossoms o’er her little green grave, / ’Neath the trees in the flow’ry vale.” (See www.james-joyce-music.com/songb_06_composer.html and dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sheetmusic/id/23237.)

p. 1, *green*: Joyce wrote “geen” in his manuscript. Gabler’s edition of *A Portrait* was the first to print it as such.

p. 1, *His mother*: Stephen’s mother Mary Dedalus is based on May (Mary Jane) Joyce (née Murray, 1859–1903).

p. 1, *oilsheet*: That is, a waterproof sheet made of oilcloth.
p. 1, **sailor's hornpipe**: A popular and familiar traditional tune, known to
many since the 1930s as Popeye the Sailor’s tune. In general, it is a dance
“once particularly associated with mariners [that] was accompanied by a
tune played on the hornpipe” (Brewer’s).

p. 2, **Uncle Charles**: Based on John Joyce’s maternal uncle and godfather

p. 2, **Dante**: “Dante” (Mrs Riordan) was based on Elizabeth Hearn
Conway, possibly a distant relative of John Joyce. She was governess,
teacher and godmother to the young James Joyce. Stanislaus Joyce writes
that her name probably comes from James’s “childish mispronunciation
of Auntie” (My Brother’s Keeper, p. 7). She died in Dublin on 16th
November 1896.

p. 2, **press**: “A large (usually shelved) cupboard, esp. one placed in a recess
in the wall, for holding linen, clothes, books, etc.” (OED).

p. 2, **Michael Davitt**: Michael Davitt (1846–1906), Irish revolutionary and
politician. With Parnell he formed the National Land League in 1879; the
two later fell out the issue of the nationalization of land ownership, which
Davitt advocated and Parnell opposed.

p. 2, **Parnell**: Charles Stewart Parnell (1846–91), the head of the Irish
Parliamentary Party (1875–1890) and the de-facto leader of efforts for land
reform and Home Rule for Ireland. See Robert Kee, The Laurel and the Ivy:
The Story of Charles Stewart Parnell and Irish Nationalism (London: Hamish
Hamilton, 1993).

p. 2, **cachou**: “A sweetmeat, generally in the form of a pill, made of cashew
nut, extract of liquorice, etc.” (OED).

p. 2, **Vances**: The Vance family lived in 4 Martello Terrace in Bray when the
Joyces lived in no. 1. Mr Vance, a chemist and Protestant, was from Cork.
See Vivien Igoe, James Joyce’s Dublin Houses and Nora Barnacle’s Galway

p. 2, **O, Stephen will apologise… Apologise**: This section is taken almost
verbatim from the first of Joyce’s Epiphanies (see Scholes & Kain, The
Workshop of Daedalus, p. 11). The epiphany identifies the setting as “the
parLOUR of the house in Martello Terrace” in Bray.

p. 2, **playgrounds**: The scene has shifted to the Jesuit-run boarding school
Clongowes Wood College, Sallins, County Kildare, less than an hour’s train
ride from Dublin (see Kevin Sullivan, Joyce Among the Jesuits (New York:
Columbia University Press, 1958) and Bruce Bradley, James Joyce’s Schooldays
(Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1982)).

p. 2, **prefects**: At Clongowes, those whom Joyce calls prefects were the
scholastics – Jesuits in training, mostly in their twenties (Bradley, “At School

p. 2, line: The boys at Clongowes were organized into three divisions or lines, “[t]o prevent bullying, and for the better formation of character… each with its own grounds perfectly distinct” (Clongowes prospectus, quoted in Sullivan, p. 231). The youngest students were in the third line.


p. 2, *Nasty Roche*: Based on Christopher Roche, b. 1877, Clongowes 1888–92 (Bradley, pp. 19, 21).

p. 2, *greaves in his number*: That is, shinguards in his locker to wear for playing cricket – Kickham was a skilled cricketer (Bradley, p. 20).

p. 3, *Stephen Dedalus*: Stephen’s last name was “Daedalus” in *Stephen Hero*, Joyce’s first attempt to write his story. “Stephen Daedalus” was also Joyce’s *nom de plume* for his first fictional publication (‘The Sisters’, in *The Irish Homestead* newspaper) and in some of his early letters. Daedalus was the master inventor of Greek myth who created the labyrinth on Crete and crafted wings for himself and his son Icarus. His story is told in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.

p. 3, *magistrate*: Can refer to a judicial officer or “any subordinate officer with executive power within the state” (*OED*).


p. 3, *castle*: The main building at Clongowes, a fifteenth-century castle partly destroyed by Cromwell’s forces in the 1640s and rebuilt in the eighteenth century.

p. 3, *peach*: “To inform on” (*OED*).

p. 3, *rector*: The rector was Fr. John Conmee, SJ (1847–1910). In addition to his prominent role in the first chapter of *A Portrait*, Conmee reappears in Chapter 10 (“Wandering Rocks”) of *Ulysses*. Conmee attended Clongowes (1864–67) and served as its prefect of studies (1881–85) and rector (1885–91). He later served as superior of St Francis Xavier’s Church in Dublin and became provincial of the Irish province in 1905 (*DIB*).

p. 3, *soutane*: “A long buttoned gown or frock, with sleeves, forming the ordinary outer garment of Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, and worn under the vestments in religious services” (*OED*).


p. 4, *Hamilton Rowan*: Rowan (1757–1834) was a friend of Wolfe Tone and member of the Society of United Irishmen, outlawed in 1794 by the British,
resulting in Rowan’s arrest and imprisonment in Dublin. He escaped and is said to have hidden at Clongowes (Sullivan, p. 20).

p. 4, *haha*: A “boundary to a garden, pleasure-ground, or park, of such a kind as not to interrupt the view from within, and not to be seen till closely approached; consisting of a trench, the inner side of which is perpendicular and faced with stone, the outer sloping and turfed” (*OED*).

p. 4, *the marks of the soldiers’ slugs in the wood of the door*: “Circumstantial tradition or legend still points to the bullet-holes in the mahogany front door of the Round Room in the castle, and connects them with Hamilton Rowan’s escape from the British military forces, the escape that was aided by his throwing his hat out of the library window as he dashed into hiding in the north-east tower chamber” (*Clongowes Record*, p. 49).

p. 4, *community*: That is, the Jesuit faculty who were resident in the castle.


p. 4, *Doctor Cornwell’s Spelling Book*: James Cornwell, *Spelling for Beginners: A Method of Teaching Spelling and Reading at the Same Time* (London, 1870). The sample sentences are taken nearly verbatim (“abbot” rather than “abbots”) from the book (pp. 48, 49).


p. 4, *square ditch*: This was “an idling stream near the main college buildings” (Bradley 2004, p. 157).

p. 4, *hacking chestnut*: In the game of conkers, horse chestnuts are threaded onto strings and swung to crack one against another. In some versions of the game, the winning chestnut accumulates the total victories of the loser.


p. 4, *longest river in America*: The Mississippi and the Missouri are the two longest rivers in the US. The Missouri is slightly longer, but it is a tributary of the Mississippi.

p. 4, *the highest mountain of the moon*: By the early twentieth century it was estimated that the highest of the lunar mountains was Newton, around 7,500 metres (*EB* 11th edn., s.v. “Moon”).


A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

p. 5, McGlade’s: Based on Andrew Macardle (see Bradley, pp. 37–40; “At School Together in Conmee’s Time”, p. 10).
p. 5, suck: “A sycophant; esp. a schoolboy who curries favour with teachers” (OED).
p. 5, Wicklow Hotel: At 6, 7, 8 Wicklow St. in Dublin (1901 Thom’s, p. 1550).
p. 5, Go ahead, York! Go ahead, Lancaster!: York and Lancaster were the factions in the fifteenth-century Wars of the Roses between the English houses of York (white rose) and Lancaster (red), ultimately resulting in the triumph of the Lancastrian Henry Tudor. Fr. Power, the model for Fr. Arnall, arranged just such intra-class competitions (see Bradley, pp. 41–43, including photo showing York and Lancaster banners).
p. 5, wax: “A fit of anger” (OED).
p. 6, elements: “The most rudimentary stage of the teaching programme in many Jesuit and certain Roman Catholic schools” (OED). Clongowes was divided into grades as follows (in ascending order): Elements, Rudiments, Grammar III, Grammar II, Grammar I, Poetry, Rhetoric (The Clongowes Record, p. 97).
p. 6, scullion: “A domestic servant of the lowest rank in a household who performed the menial offices of the kitchen” (OED).
p. 6, Saurin: Michael Saurin, Clongowes 1887–93. His father was indeed a magistrate – a Justice of the Peace (Bradley, pp. 19, 22).
p. 6, bogwash: “Any liquid for drinking that is of very poor quality” (OED).
p. 6, Fleming: Perhaps based on Aloysius Fleming, an older student at Clongowes nearly ten years Joyce’s senior (Bradley, p. 26).
p. 6, breadbasket: Slang for the stomach (OED).
p. 7, Dalkey: Town on Dublin Bay about 13 km south of central Dublin.
p. 7, higher line: Consisting of boys ages fifteen to eighteen (Bradley, p. 27).
p. 7, Paddy Rath… the little Portuguese: Paddy Rath, Clongowes 1886–91, and Jimmy Magee, Clongowes 1889–92, are identified by their actual names. “The Spaniard” was José Araña y Lupardo, Clongowes 1890–92; “the little Portuguese”: Francisco da Silva Ruas, Clongowes 1891–93 (Bradley, pp. 30–32).
p. 7, Tullabeg: St Stanislaus College, Tullabeg, County Offaly (then King’s County), like Clongowes, a Jesuit boarding school; founded in 1818, in 1886 it was amalgamated into Clongowes (Clongowes Record, pp. 146–49).
p. 9, Sallins: Village on the Grand Canal and stop on the Great Southern and Western Railway (Dublin to Cork), about 8 km south of Clongowes.
p. 9, cod: A joke (OED).
p. 9, Stephen Dedalus is my name… And heaven my expectation: A version of a known “flyleaf rhyme” (see Fanny D. Bergen, ‘Flyleaf Rhymes...

p. 10, *Mr Casey*: Mr Casey is based on the real-life John Kelly, originally from Bantry and later of Tralee, who served prison time for his Fenianism and Land League activism. An ardent supporter of Parnell, he died in 1896 and is buried in Glasnevin Cemetery near Parnell (see Stanislaus Joyce, *My Brother’s Keeper*, pp. 12–15, also Fintan Lane, ‘The Parnellite Connection: Daniel John Hishon and the Joyces’, *James Joyce Quarterly* 37.1–2 (Fall 1999–Winter 2000), pp. 225–28). Stanislaus Joyce wrote of him that “his great expectations for my brother were hardly outdone even by my father” (MBK, pp. 13–14).

p. 10, *Every day there was something in the paper about it*: This paragraph situates the action in the initial period of the “Parnell Split”, beginning with the 17th November 1890 divorce decree granted to Capt. William O’Shea, in which Parnell was named as co-respondent, based on his long-standing affair with Katherine “Kitty” O’Shea. The revelations brought forward in the divorce trial exposed Parnell to widespread ridicule and criticism and calls for him to step down as leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party. The split was made a formal reality when, on 6th December 1890, after days of intense debate in Committee Room 15 of the House of Commons, forty-four members of the party (out of seventy-three) walked out. (See Frank Callanan, *The Parnell Split, 1890–91* (Syracuse University Press, 1992).)


p. 10, *night prayers*: Occurring around 9 p.m. (Sullivan, p. 55).

p. 10, *the seawall beside his father’s house*: That is, the house at Martello Terrace, on the water in Bray.

p. 11, *O Lord, open our lips… O Lord, make haste to help us*: A form of a prayer from the Order for Matins in the Divine Office; the lines are spoken alternately by the priest and the congregation. See, for example, the form in *The Roman Breviary* (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1879), p. 2. Matins can be said “at any hour after the sun has begun to decline, and an ordinary practice is to do so late in the afternoon” (ibid.).

p. 11, *smell of the old peasants*: In *Stephen Hero*, an older Stephen recalls this smell in less pleasant terms: “The carriage smelt strongly of peasants, an odour the debasing humanity of which Stephen remembered to have perceived in the little chapel of Clongowes on the morning of his first communion” (p. 238).

p. 11, *Clane*: Town on the Liffey in northern County Kildare, 3 km south of Clongowes.

p. 11, *Visit, we beseech Thee… through Christ our Lord. Amen*: Form of a familiar evening prayer: “Visit, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this habitation, and
drive far from it all snares of the enemy: let Thine holy angels dwell herein, to keep us in peace; and may Thy blessing be always upon us. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Thy Son…” (The Roman Breviary (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1879), p. 176).

p. 12, He wore the white cloak of a marshal: From 1667 until 1814, Clongowes was owned by the Browne family. Maximilian Ulysses, Count von Browne, Baron of Camus and Mountany (1705–57), the Austrian-born son of an Irish exile, served as a field marshal in the service of Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa and died in 1757 at the Battle of Prague, during the Seven Years’ War (EB 11th).

p. 13, Bodenstown: Located about 6 km south of Clongowes, between Clane and Sallins, and best known as the resting place of Irish revolutionary Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763–98).

p. 13, chocolate train: Padraic Colum recalled being told (c.1904) by “one of the coterie that included Joyce and Gogarty” that Joyce was writing a novel, and his “informant added an example of the writing: ‘the chocolate-colored train’” (Our Friend James Joyce, pp. 38–39).

p. 13, Hill of Allen: 206 metres high, the hill “is rendered conspicuous by a tall pillar on its summit. This hill gives name to the Bog of Allen” (P.W. Joyce et al., Atlas and Cyclopedia of Ireland (New York: Murphy & McCarthy, 1900), s.v. Kildare).

p. 13, pierglass: “A large mirror, originally one fitted in the space between two windows, or over a chimney piece” (OED).

p. 14, spy: That is, betray; note that “Spy Wednesday” is “in Irish use, the Wednesday before Easter (in allusion, it is said, to Judas)” (OED).

p. 14, honour bright: “Used as an expression of, or interrogatively as an appeal to, one’s honour or sincerity” (OED).


p. 15, Father Minister: According to Bradley, “[t]he procedure followed by Stephen’s prefect, according to which Fr Minister’s permission was needed before the boy could go to the infirmary, corresponds exactly to what the ‘Rules’ prescribed in the matter” (p. 59).


p. 15, collywobbles: “A disordered state of the stomach characterized by rumbling in the intestines; diarrhea with stomach-ache” (OED). In Joyce’s manuscript and in editions following Chester G. Anderson’s, this is followed by: “Terrible thing to have the collywobbles! How we wobble when we have the collywobbles!”

p. 15, Hayfoot! Strawfoot!: Marching orders meaning: right, left, “[i]n allusion to the alleged use of hay and straw to enable a rustic recruit to distinguish the right foot from the left” (OED).
p. 15, *bath*: That is, the swimming pool (see photo in Bradley, p. 54).

p. 16, *Little*: Stanislaus Little, Clongowes 1886–90, died on 10th December 1890, at Clongowes, where his funeral was held and where he is buried in the community’s cemetery (Bradley, pp. 63–65). He was sixteen years old. See George Little, ‘James Joyce and Little’s Death’, *James Joyce Quarterly* 4.4 (Summer 1967).

p. 16, *cope*: “A vestment of silk or other material resembling a long cloak made of a semicircular piece of cloth, worn by ecclesiastics in processions, also at Vespers, and on some other occasions” (*OED*).

p. 16, *catafalque*: “A stage or platform, erected by way of honour in a church to receive the coffin or effigy of a deceased personage” (*OED*).


p. 17, *beeftea*: “The juice of beef extracted by prolonged simmering in a very little water, used as a nutritious food for invalids” (*OED*).

p. 18, *Athy is the town in the county Kildare*: Athy is about 70 km south-west of Clongowes in County Kildare. In 1891 the population was 4,886 (1901 *Thom’s*, p. 1097).

p. 18, *his granduncle… there fifty years before*: Daniel O’Connell (1775–1847) earned the nickname “The Liberator” because of his leadership in gaining passage of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. Joyce’s family claimed a connection to O’Connell through James’s paternal grandmother Ellen (O’Connell) Joyce (Ellmann, p. 12). Both Ellmann (p. 27) and Jackson & Costello (p. 152) repeat the story that Joyce’s grand uncle had presented an address to O’Connell when a student at Clongowes in the 1840s, but apparently their source is simply this reference in *A Portrait*. *The Clongowes Record* lists several O’Connells from Cork who attended the school in the 1840s, so the story may well be true.

p. 18, *blue coats with brass buttons… and caps of rabbitskin*: *The Clongowes Record* states that the earliest Clongowes costume was “a cap made of rabbitskin, a blue cloth coat with brass buttons, yellow cassimere waistcoat and corduroy trousers” (p. 111).

p. 18, *drank beer*: *The Clongowes Record* lists “bread and beer” as part of the boys’ daily “recreation” in the early decades of the school (pp. 65–68).

p. 18, *Father Arnall was reading out of the book*: Absent in this text are the words “a legend”: hence, “Father Arnall was reading a legend out of the book” (see Gabler, ‘Historical Collation’, p. 313).