

# (Il)legal Deposits

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## “Ulysses” and the Copyright Libraries

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### Abstract:

This article addresses an unexamined facet of the institutional history of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*: its accession in the closing months of 1922 into the holdings of the United Kingdom’s six copyright libraries. It charts when and how these accessions were made, and what they reveal about the marketing, circulation, and readership of Joyce’s novel in the United Kingdom at the height of its suppression. By examining the legislative conditions which rendered the legal deposit of *Ulysses* possible and desirable for Joyce in 1922, it offers a more nuanced sense of how Joyce and his contemporaries sought to infiltrate (and found themselves willingly assimilated into) a crucial institutional stronghold of Britain’s dominant cultural order. In doing so, it complicates traditional narratives of the clash between an autonomous avant-garde and a nebulously-conceived ‘censor’ by exploring the mediating role the copyright libraries and the mechanisms of legal deposit played in such disputes.

## (Il)legal Deposits: *Ulysses* and the Copyright Libraries

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*Remember your epiphanies written on green oval leaves, deeply deep, copies to be sent if you died to all the great libraries of the world, including Alexandria?*

- James Joyce, *Ulysses*

Almost every aspect of the publication history of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) has been subjected to scrutiny by literary critics, bibliographers, and book historians. However, one facet of what might be termed the institutional history of *Ulysses* has yet to receive any scholarly attention: its accession in the closing months of 1922 into the holdings of the United Kingdom's six copyright libraries.<sup>1</sup> Despite a concerted campaign by the Home Office, Post Office, Police, and Customs Authorities of Great Britain to suppress the novel, between November and December 1922 copies of the Egoist Press impression of *Ulysses* (published that October) were accepted and shelved under legal deposit by the British Museum, the Bodleian Library in Oxford, Cambridge University Library, the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh, the National Library of Wales, and Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>2</sup> This article offers a detailed account of when and how these accessions were made, and what they reveal about the marketing, circulation, and readership of Joyce's novel in the United Kingdom prior to its availability in a mass-market edition.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to acknowledge the diligence and generosity of the staff of the Bodleian Library, Weston Library, and the Bodleian Library Records Department, especially Oliver House and Theodora Boorman. I am grateful to Lynn Young at the British Library, Liam Sims at Cambridge University, Timothy Cutts at the National Library of Wales, Graham Hogg and Andrea Longson at the National Library of Scotland, and Helen McGinley at Trinity College, Dublin for the information and assistance they afforded me in the course of my research. I also wish to thank Patrick Kearney for sharing his as yet unpublished bibliographies of the Phi and the Arc and Chris Fletcher for bringing the Bodleian's copy of the second impression of *Ulysses* and the existence of the Phi collection to my attention. I am indebted to Giles Bergel and Anique Kruger for their comments on early versions of this article.

<sup>2</sup> Although the establishment of the Free State in December 1922 granted Ireland partial legislative independence from Britain, the conditions of copyright and legal deposit in the Free State remained subject to the terms of the United Kingdom's 1911 Copyright Act until the passage of the Irish Industrial and Commercial Property (Protection) Act in May 1927. The legal deposit of the Egoist Press impression of *Ulysses* and its accession to the holdings of the Library of Trinity College, Dublin were thus the product of British law, and, as such, references to 'Britain' and the 'United Kingdom' throughout this essay are taken to include Ireland.

<sup>3</sup> For a full shelfmark history of each copy, see Table 1.

<sup>3</sup> The first British trade edition of *Ulysses* was issued by Bodley Head in 1937. For a full publication history see: Jeri Johnson, 'Appendix B, *Ulysses*: Serialization and Editions,' in *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*, ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 740-1.

While much valuable critical work has been undertaken to problematise Joyce's semi-ironic self-presentation as a radically autonomous figure 'paring his fingernails' in divine indifference to the economic and intellectual fate of his novels, conventional accounts of the impact of censorship on the composition and dissemination of *Ulysses* have tended to focus on the novel's obscene aesthetic and limited edition format as strategies to circumvent and critique the mechanisms of Anglo-American literary censorship.<sup>4</sup> In such accounts little distinction is made between the legal regimes of the United Kingdom and the United States, and no suggestion is given that common ground might have existed between Joyce and the legal establishment of either nation. My aim in the present article is therefore twofold: first, to disentangle the novel's fate in Britain from the better-known saga of its American reception; second, to uncover the ways in which Joyce not only tolerated, but actively embraced the opportunities British copyright legislation afforded him to consolidate his novel's status as a financially and culturally valuable artefact. In doing so, I will complicate traditional narratives of the clash between a heroically autonomous modernist avant-garde and an equally monolithic 'censor' by exploring the mediating role the United Kingdom's copyright libraries and the mechanisms of legal deposit played in such disputes. The resulting analysis will treat Britain's copyright libraries as a distinct class of institution, operating at the vexed point of intersection between the institutions of literature, the academy, and the law. By paying attention to these institutions and to the legislative conditions which rendered the legal deposit of *Ulysses* in Britain not only possible, but desirable for Joyce in 1922, I hope to offer a more nuanced sense of the means by which Joyce and his contemporaries sought to infiltrate (and

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<sup>4</sup> James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, eds. John Paul Riquelme, Hans Walter Gabler, and Walter Hettche (New York: Norton, 2007), p. 189.

Prominent studies of the role contemporary Anglo-American obscenity legislation played in shaping the novel's composition and publication include:

Paul Vanderham, *James Joyce and Censorship: The Trials of 'Ulysses'* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

Lawrence Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (London: Yale University Press, 1998), Chapter 2.

Celia Marshik, *British Modernism and Censorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Chapter 4.

Rachel Potter, *Obscene Modernism: Literary Censorship and Experiment, 1900-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 61-71.

Kevin Birmingham, *The Most Dangerous Book: The Battle for James Joyce's 'Ulysses'* (London: Head of Zeus Ltd, 2014).

found themselves willingly assimilated into) a crucial institutional stronghold of Britain's dominant cultural order.

## The Egoist Press *Ulysses* and British Copyright

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To understand the significance of the legal deposit of the Egoist Press impression of *Ulysses* for Joyce and his supporters, it is first necessary to offer a brief sketch of the novel's composition and publication. *Ulysses* was composed by Joyce in Trieste, Zurich, and Paris between 1914 and 1922.<sup>5</sup> Its first 14 episodes appeared in serial form in Margaret Anderson's *Little Review* between March 1918 and December 1920, with four episodes appearing sporadically in Harriet Shaw Weaver's *Egoist* between January and December 1919.<sup>6</sup> On 21 February 1921 portions of the 'Nausicaa' episode published in the July-August 1920 issue of the *Little Review* were deemed obscene by a New York Court of Special Sessions and the prospect of legally publishing *Ulysses* in the United States disappeared at the stroke of a gavel.<sup>7</sup> Undeterred, Joyce continued to write, drastically expanding the novel's content and increasing its apparently obscene elements.<sup>8</sup> After the obscenity conviction prompted W.B. Huebsch to decline the novel on 8 April 1921, and a contingency plan involving John Rodker's Ovid Press fell through, the publication of *Ulysses* was eventually rendered possible by Sylvia Beach, who offered her Paris bookshop, Shakespeare and Company, as a publisher for Joyce's novel.<sup>9</sup> Beach proposed to publish *Ulysses* in a self-consciously 'deluxe' limited edition of 1000 copies, offered to readers on a private subscription model via a prospectus circulated in April 1921.<sup>10</sup> Beach enlisted the talents of Dijon-based printer Maurice Darantière who began setting the novel in the autumn of 1921, pulled the first placards for Joyce's approval (and, as it transpired, extensive revision) on 11 June 1921, and was still receiving corrections and

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Groden, *Ulysses in Progress* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, 'Appendix B', pp. 740-1.

<sup>7</sup> Vanderham, *James Joyce and Censorship*, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72-3.

<sup>9</sup> Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism*, pp. 45-9.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

additions from Joyce three days before publication.<sup>11</sup> *Ulysses* was formally published on 2 February 1922, when two copies of the novel were rushed on the morning express from Dijon to Paris so as to arrive in time for Joyce's fortieth birthday.<sup>12</sup>

The second impression was seen into print by Joyce's long-suffering patron Harriet Shaw Weaver, whose Egoist Press issued the novel on 12 October 1922 in a limited edition of 2000 numbered copies and 100 unnumbered copies, printed on 'handmade paper', and costing £2.2s.<sup>13</sup> While this impression was conceived as the first 'English edition' of Joyce's novel, its production and distribution remained a decidedly cosmopolitan affair. Copies were printed and bound in Dijon by Darantière using plates from the first impression.<sup>14</sup> Orders were handled by Weaver's 'Paris agent' John Rodker, who collaborated with former suffragette Iris Barry to develop a range of increasingly elaborate means to smuggle copies into England and the United States.<sup>15</sup> The second impression was marginally smaller in size than the first and included 8 pages of laid-in 'Errata', but was otherwise virtually identical in text and appearance to its predecessor.<sup>16</sup> Like Beach, Weaver offered the novel on a subscription model and, within four days of publication, the impression had sold out.<sup>17</sup> Significantly, its status as the first English impression of Joyce's novel also made it the first to be subject to the 'legal deposit' clauses of Britain's 1911 Copyright Act. These specified as a condition of copyright that a copy of 'every [new] book published in the United Kingdom' be delivered by the publisher 'to the trustees of the British Museum' within one month of publication.<sup>18</sup> They likewise required a publisher to forward copies, via a London depot,

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<sup>11</sup> Jeri Johnson. 'Composition and Publication History,' in *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*, ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. xlv.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce: New and Revised Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 524.

<sup>13</sup> John J. Slocum and Herbert Cahoon, *A Bibliography of James Joyce, 1882-1941* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1957), p. 26.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>15</sup> Birmingham, *The Most Dangerous Book*, pp. 245-7.

<sup>16</sup> Slocum and Cahoon, *A Bibliography*, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup> Jane Lidderdale and Mary Nicholson, *Dear Miss Weaver: Harriet Shaw Weaver 1876 – 1961* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p. 206.

<sup>18</sup> *Copyright Act, 1911* [Geo.6 5(1911) c.46], Section 15.1.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/1-2/46/enacted>, accessed 06 June 2015.

to the Bodleian Library in Oxford, Cambridge University Library, the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh, Trinity College, Dublin, and the National Library of Wales, if requested to do so in writing within one year of publication.<sup>19</sup>

Accounts of the history of legal deposit in Britain traditionally focus on its vexed position as a locus for debates over press regulation, publishers' property rights, and the 'advancement of learning'.<sup>20</sup> The primary agents in these accounts are the state, publishers, and the libraries, with legal deposit presented as either a means of pre-publication censorship, an unwarranted tax on the publishing industry, or a necessary condition of affordably supporting the academic life of the nation. This tendency to analyse legal deposit exclusively in the terms in which it was originally debated precludes an interrogation of the opportunities and impediments it may have presented to individual authors or specific texts. In the case of *Ulysses*, it conceals the ways in which legal deposit could be harnessed by authors such as Joyce as a legitimising instrument for works of otherwise questionable legal standing in the first decades of the twentieth century.

That *Ulysses* was in sore need of such legitimacy in Britain would have been immediately apparent to all those involved in its production and distribution. Censorship in the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was governed by the 1857 Obscene Publications Act (popularly known as 'Lord Campbell's Act') and Lord Chief Justice Cockburn's interpretation of this Act in the 1868 case of *Regina v. Hicklin* (the so-called 'Hicklin' Ruling).<sup>21</sup> Though Lord Campbell's Act neglected to offer a legal definition of obscenity, Cockburn's decision set a precedent which required legal officials to determine 'whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Section 15.2.

<sup>20</sup> Prominent studies include:

R.C. Barrington Partridge, *The History of the Legal Deposit of Books Throughout the British Empire: A thesis approved for the Honours Diploma of The Library Association* (London: The Library Association, 1938).

John Feather, 'The Legal Deposit of Books,' in *Publishing, Piracy and Politics: An Historical Study of Copyright in Britain* (London: Mansell, 1994), 97-121.

<sup>21</sup> Potter, *Obscene Modernism*, pp. 16-18.

influences, and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall'.<sup>22</sup> To say that *Ulysses*, with its abundant profanity, enthusiastic blasphemy, and explicitly rendered scenes of defecation, micurition, menstruation, masturbation, copulation, pre- and post-mortem ejaculation, flagellation, transvestism, and syphilitic infection, was an obvious target for such legislation would be a colossal understatement.

Nevertheless, because Joyce's novel never became the high-profile target of public outrage and state prosecution in Britain that it had been in the United States, it has been easy for commentators to overlook the extent to which the British legal establishment, with the Home Office in its vanguard, sought to suppress *Ulysses* and efface its author's name from British academic and cultural life. Though never formally tried for obscenity, between 1922 and 1936 the novel was the subject of a thoroughgoing and often insidiously effective set of legal restrictions within the United Kingdom. The first was the prohibition of its postal circulation by the Home Office on 1 December 1922.<sup>23</sup> The second was its seizure by British Customs officials at Croydon Aerodrome in accordance with Section 42 of the 1876 Customs Consolidation Act. This seizure, approved by the Assistant Undersecretary of State in consultation with the Director of Public Prosecutions on 22 December, was to be the first of many in a process which infamously culminated in the detention and destruction of 500 copies of the novel at Folkestone in Kent.<sup>24</sup> The Chief Constables of Britain's major cities were alerted to the novel's obscene status and obliged booksellers under their jurisdiction to inform them of any orders they received. Public libraries were employed as tools of surveillance, with one Stepney reader having a check placed on

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<sup>22</sup> Court of the Queen's Bench, *Regina v. Hicklin* 1868, (Wikisource), [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Regina\\_v.\\_Hicklin](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Regina_v._Hicklin), accessed 05 December 2014.

<sup>23</sup> 'Minutes' (H.O. 186.428/1)

The ban went unenforced until 27 March 1933 when a warrant was issued to detain and open packages containing *Ulysses*. This warrant remained in force until 13 November 1936 (GB 813. The Royal Mail Archive, Freeling House. POST 23/9). A copy of the Shakespeare and Company first impression (limitation number 859) detained during this period remains in the Archive of the British Postal Museum (GB 813. The Royal Mail Archive, Freeling House. POST 23/220). Its origins and seizure are discussed in:

'Davy Byrne's *Ulysses* for Bloomsday', The British Postal Museum & Archive, <https://postalheritage.wordpress.com/tag/ulysses/>, accessed 10 June 2015.

<sup>24</sup> Birmingham, *The Most Dangerous Book*, pp. 252-53.

his mail for requesting that his local branch acquire a copy.<sup>25</sup> Scarcely a month after the Egoist Press had issued the novel Harriet Shaw Weaver reported the presence of a ‘solitary detective’ keeping watch outside her London home.<sup>26</sup> Confronted with this array of tacit and explicit censorious opposition, the legal deposit requirements incumbent upon an English impression of the novel would have offered an invaluable opportunity to eschew the intellectually and economically ghettoising label of obscenity and at least partially circumvent the very real threat of suppression by clothing *Ulysses* in the scholarly, cultural, and quasi-legal authority of six of the United Kingdom’s most prominent academic libraries. This is not to imply that the possibility of legal deposit was necessarily a deciding factor in prompting the Egoist Press to issue *Ulysses*, but instead to recognise the ways in which Joyce and his supporters took advantage of a specific and fortuitous set of legal circumstances which had only recently come into existence in the United Kingdom.

A comparison of the mechanisms of American and British copyright is instructive in this regard. As Paul K. Saint-Amour has noted, America’s 1909 Copyright Act ‘interlocked with obscenity laws to compound the powers of state censorship’ by denying obscene English-language works published overseas the status of intellectual property and requiring that they be set, printed, and bound exclusively in the United States.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, the United Kingdom’s 1911 Copyright Act had no such manufacturing restrictions, extending copyright to any work authored by a British citizen or resident and published by a British firm.<sup>28</sup> Thus, although the second impression would

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<sup>25</sup> The matter was brought to the attention of the Home Office on 22 September 1926 by V.B. Bateson, a Stepney Town Clerk who desired clarification concerning the novel’s obscene status before responding to the request. When pressed by the police to reveal the identity of the resident in question, Bateson explained that he had been prohibited from revealing their identity by a librarian whom he exasperatedly identifies as ‘an Oxford university man’ and a ‘red hot socialist’, who claimed to have read the book. While no indication is given if the librarian in question had encountered *Ulysses* while at the University, this incident offers some suggestion of the student audience which *Ulysses* may have enjoyed at Oxford.

V.B. Bateson to W. Horwood, 22 September 1926 (P.R.O. MEPO 390 210/PB/365).

C. Chapman to Chief Inspector [name unknown], 12 October 1926 (P.R.O. MEPO 390 210/PB/365).

<sup>26</sup> Stuart Gilbert, ed. *Letters of James Joyce* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), p. 193.

<sup>27</sup> Paul K. Saint-Amour, *The Copyrights: Intellectual Property and the Literary Imagination* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 161.

<sup>28</sup> *Copyright Act*, 1911, Section 1.1:b.

be printed in Dijon using plates from the original typesetting and distributed via a 'Paris agent', its Egoist Press imprint and Joyce's Irish birth nevertheless qualified it for full British copyright protection and secured its status as an English edition. This state of affairs was rendered possible through Britain's 1886 accession to the Berne Convention, an international copyright agreement which enforced the principle of 'national treatment' among its signatories, ensuring that 'each member of the union afford[ed] the same copyright protection to the nationals of other members as it afford[ed] to its own nationals'.<sup>29</sup> Unlike the protectionist stance of America – which served only to compound the novel's perceived obscenity – Britain's membership of a European copyright community afforded Joyce the opportunity not only to protect his intellectual property but, in so doing, to secure his novel entry into Britain's six most prestigious libraries through the mechanisms of legal deposit. *Ulysses* thus benefited from a state of affairs which had not existed in Britain prior to 1911, and the significance of which in the evolution and dissemination of European modernism is only beginning to be recognised by critics.

#### Dressing in Borrowed Robes: *Ulysses* at the British Museum Library and the Bodleian

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The first legal deposit copy of *Ulysses* arrived at the British Museum and received its accession stamp on 16 November 1922, a date confirmed by the records of the Museum's Copyright Receipt Office.<sup>30</sup> These records reveal that the copy was despatched by John Rodker via the London address of his Ovid Press (4 Took's Court EC4) with Volumes 4 and 7 of *The Memoirs of Casanova di Seingalt*, published under his Casanova Society imprint.<sup>31</sup> In contrast to standard accounts of the distribution of the novel in England, which emphasise Harriet Shaw Weaver's personal handling

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<sup>29</sup> Fiona Macmillan, 'Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works,' in *The New Oxford Companion to Law* (Oxford Reference, 2009), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199290543.001.0001/acref-9780199290543-e-153>, accessed 09 June 2015.

<sup>30</sup> Copyright Receipt Office, 'Receipt No. 81149 (16 November),' *Duplicate Receipts, 13 November – 27 November 1922*, (British Library Corporate Archives, DH14/899).

<sup>31</sup> Copyright Receipt Office, 'Receipt Nos. 81150 and 81151 (16 November),' *Ibid.*

Rodker's address is confirmed by an Ovid Press advertisement in: *Broom: An International Magazine of the Arts*, 3.1 (August 1922), p. 80.

of London orders, these receipts offer further evidence of Rodker's direct role in the distribution and institutionalisation of *Ulysses*.<sup>32</sup> They likewise challenge the critical tendency to isolate *Ulysses* in accounts of its reception and circulation, demonstrating the kinds of literary company Joyce's novel was keeping at this time.

In its present condition, the British Library's copy is bound in brown half morocco with buff cloth boards.<sup>33</sup> The British Museum crest appears in gilt tooling on its obverse, and its author ('Joyce'), title, and publication details ('London 1922') are tooled in gilt on its spine. Its pages have been opened and the deckle edges cut and lightly stippled in bronze. The copy offers no evidence as to when it was bound. However, a stamp on the British Library's identically-bound copy of the Shakespeare & Company first impression dates its binding to 1925, which would suggest a comparable date for the second impression.<sup>34</sup> The most striking feature of this binding is the extent to which it has effaced the novel's most distinctive (and potentially incriminating) bibliographical features, substituting a standardised British Museum livery for its iconic blue and white colour-scheme and cutting its deckle edges so as to diminish its 'deluxe' affect. This binding thus serves to strip *Ulysses* of the most conspicuous evidence of its Parisian 'private edition' origins, which it replaces with a veneer of institutional uniformity.

However, this legitimacy was far from assured, as is reflected in the manuscript pencil notation on the fly title which records the volume's original pressmark: 'P.C.22.b.6'. The 'P.C.' prefix of the pressmark locates the copy in the British Museum's 'private case,' the library's restricted collection for works of an apparently obscene nature.<sup>35</sup> The private case has its origins in a locked press in the office of the Keeper of Printed books which was being used to store erotic, libellous, and obscene publications at least as early as 1836.<sup>36</sup> The collection grew principally

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<sup>32</sup> See Ellmann, *James Joyce*, pp. 505-6 and Lidderdale and Nicholson, *Dear Miss Weaver*, p. 207.

<sup>33</sup> Current pressmark: British Library, C116.g.18.

<sup>34</sup> British Library, C.116.g.17.

<sup>35</sup> Paul James Cross, 'The Private Case: A History,' in *The Library of the British Museum: Retrospective Essays on the Department of Printed Books*, ed. P.R. Harris (London: The British Library, 1991), pp. 202; 205; 226; 212.

<sup>36</sup> R.F. Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library, 1753-1973* (London: The British Library, 1998), p. 92.

through the bequests of figures such as the bibliophile Henry Spencer Ashbee, who willed his library of erotica to the British Museum in 1900, with its contents swelling from approximately twenty-seven books in 1850 to four-hundred and ninety-eight books in 1905, and two-thousand and one by 1939.<sup>37</sup> For most of its existence the private case constituted a ‘secret’ collection, whose contents were not listed in the Library’s General Catalogue until 1964.<sup>38</sup> In his 1966 book-length study of the private case Peter Fryer offers an anecdotal account of its contemporary access conditions, describing his attempt to view a sexological study by Iwan Bloch in 1961.<sup>39</sup> Fryer’s request slip was returned to him with a note instructing him to ‘please see [the] superintendent’, a library official who interviewed him regarding the nature and purposes of his request and assessed the validity of his scholarly credentials.<sup>40</sup> Following the interview Fryer’s application slip was again returned to him, informing him that the requested volume was now available in the north library, ‘a reading room for those who want to consult rare and otherwise valuable books’, where he was ‘asked to sit at the table immediately under the eyes of the attendants’.<sup>41</sup> This system of supervised access in a rare books reading room following a written application and interview was standard practice for private case materials throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, only coming to an end in February 1981.<sup>42</sup>

A report submitted to the management of the Bodleian by Stephen Wright, Assistant Secretary to the Librarian, following a fact-finding visit to the British Museum on 4 January 1938 offers fresh insights into the theories and practices shaping the private case at that time.<sup>43</sup> Wright emphasises the ‘vagueness and inconsistency’ that govern the classification and accessibility of works in the private case, the handling of which appears ‘more lax’ than the practice of either the

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<sup>37</sup> Cross, ‘The Private Case’, pp. 205, 226, 212.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>39</sup> Peter Fryer, *Private Case – Public Scandal* (London: Seckler and Warburg, 1966), p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>42</sup> Cross, ‘The Private Case’, p. 225.

<sup>43</sup> S.J. Wright, ‘SUMMARY OF CONVERSATION WITH THE KEEPER OF PRINTED BOOKS, THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE READING ROOM AND OTHER [*sic*] OFFICIALS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM ON TUESDAY, 4 JANUARY 1938’, 8 January 1938, (Bodleian Library Records, 590/2: Φ 1937-1949).

Bodleian or Cambridge. Significantly, Wright emphasises that ‘moral considerations are not taken into account as a rule’ and that ‘preservation of the book rather than of readers’ morals is the guiding factor’ of private case accessions. This is particularly the case for books ‘with indecent or physiological illustrations’, which ‘are apt to be mutilated or stolen’, and ‘[v]ery obscene books which are privately printed, or are of antiquarian value’, the condition of which necessitates their careful preservation. These last remarks would seem to explain the presence of *Ulysses* in the private case, demonstrating the ways in which its ‘limited edition’ format placed it in an ambivalent position of simultaneous prestige and circumscription which the British Museum Library could only imperfectly accommodate.

What Wright’s remarks suggest is the extent to which modernist *enfants terribles* such as *Ulysses* which found themselves preserved in the restricted collections of Britain’s copyright libraries, far from existing in subversive opposition to the British intellectual establishment, were in fact beneficiaries of the growing professionalisation of librarianship in the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>44</sup> The Library Association’s 1898 Royal Charter (which conferred upon the organisation the exclusive right to issue qualifications in librarianship) and its 1909 decision to link its recently revised examination system to a register of professional members inaugurated what Ian Cornelius has termed a period of ‘professional establishment’ in the decades following 1920, a process exemplified by the founding of the United Kingdom’s first full-time school of librarianship at University College, London in 1919.<sup>45</sup> This increasingly formalised process of training and assessment, which required that candidates demonstrate their knowledge of literary history,

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<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of this trend in relation to the Bodleian’s acquisition of D.H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928) and its efforts to protect Norah C. James’s *Sleeveless Errand* (1929) see: Lloyd Houston, ‘Towards a History of the Phi Collection, 1882-1945’, *Bodleian Library Record*, 28.2 (October 2015), 179-94.

<sup>45</sup> Ian Cornelius, ‘The Interpretation of Professional Development in Librarianship since 1850’, in Alistair Black and Peter Hoare, eds. *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland, Volume 3: 1850-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 525-33, p. 525.  
Gerald Bramley, *Apprentice to Graduate: A History of Library Education in the United Kingdom* (London: Clive Bingley, 1981), pp. 28-35, 65-85.

elements of practical bibliography, classification, cataloguing, library history and organisation, and practical library administration, introduced and inculcated models of expertise and value not strictly consonant with those either of the academia or the law.<sup>46</sup> Where the ‘Hicklin ruling’ required legal officials to determine whether a work would ‘corrupt and deprave’ those into whose hands it fell, the British Museum Library’s regulations required only that its staff consider how great a threat the hands in question posed to a volume’s continued survival.

The ambivalent status of Joyce’s novel is echoed by the location of the private case itself during the period in which it housed *Ulysses*. According to Paul Cross, between c.1900 and 1984 the private case was located in the Arch Room, the home of the British Museum’s collections of early printed books.<sup>47</sup> This fact is also recorded by Fryer, who describes a 1962 official guide to the Library which contains a labelled photograph of ‘the Arch Room housing incunabula’.<sup>48</sup> Fryer highlights the guide’s decorous failure to mention that the room ‘also houses about five thousand erotic and sexological works... including what might be called the cream of the world’s pornography’.<sup>49</sup> What Fryer’s account emphasises, and what the Library guide attempts to elide, is the proximity of culturally and financially valuable medieval and early modern codices to a veritable pornucopia of obscene materials which the British Museum sought to protect and, with due circumspection, make available to the public. As in the case of its binding, *Ulysses* thus occupied a grey area of unstable legitimacy within the British Museum which appears to have accorded closely with Joyce’s own view of the novel.

On one level, the arrival of the Egoist Press *Ulysses* at the British Museum simply reflects John Rodker’s prudent desire to comply with British copyright legislation in order to secure Joyce’s claims to intellectual property. However, for Joyce, the legal deposit of *Ulysses* represented an

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<sup>46</sup> Bramley, *Apprentice to Graduate*, p. 26.

<sup>47</sup> Cross, ‘The Private Case’, pp. 209, 225.

<sup>48</sup> Fryer, *Private Case*, p. 9.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

important manoeuvre in a larger strategy to inflate and consolidate the cultural and economic capital of his novel.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, it was not Joyce's first attempt to ensure a copy of *Ulysses* reached the British Museum. From the moment of its first publication Joyce was concerned with tracking demand for the novel in Britain's principal libraries, with the British Museum proving a particular focus for his attention. It is first mentioned in a letter to Robert McAlmon, written nine days after the publication of the Shakespeare and Company first impression, in which Joyce playfully notes that the 'British Museum ordered a copy and so did the *Times* so that I advise you to go to confession for the last day cannot be far off'.<sup>51</sup> Joyce's jocoserious scrutiny of the British Museum continues in a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver of 20 March 1922 in which he enquires if it is 'possible to find out diplomatically whether there is a copy of *Ulysses* in the British Museum Library'.<sup>52</sup> Joyce explains that he asks because two orders have arrived from the Museum apparently simultaneously, one 'from the Greek manuscripts department', which he concedes 'may have been private', and another which has been 'transmitted by a bookseller'.<sup>53</sup> Joyce emphasises that if 'they have no copy [he] shall present one'.<sup>54</sup> A search of the card index for this period in the Department of Greece and Rome at the British Library reveals no mention of *Ulysses*, suggesting either that Joyce's reference to the 'Greek manuscripts department' was made in jest, or, as Joyce himself insinuates, that the order in question had been made by a member of British Museum staff who exploited the legitimacy their position conferred to secure a copy of the novel for their 'private' collection. Whatever its origins, the remark reflects Joyce's implicit desire to position *Ulysses* within the same institutional framework and on an equal footing of cultural and artefactual significance with Britain's national holdings of classical texts. He was however correct to assert that the British Museum had ordered a copy (limitation number 739) through Librairie Honoré Champion of 5

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<sup>50</sup> For an account of Joyce's role in the marketing of *Ulysses*, see: Catherine Turner, *Marketing Modernism between the Two World Wars* (Amherst & Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003).

<sup>51</sup> Gilbert, ed. *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 181.

<sup>52</sup> Richard Ellmann, ed. *Letters of James Joyce*, Vol. II (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 62.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

Quai Malaquais, Paris, at a cost of 150 Francs. It was dispatched by Champion on 10 March 1922, arriving at the Museum on 2 June, and was shelved at pressmark P.C.22.b.4.<sup>55</sup> Its shelving in the private case, which placed *Ulysses* under lock and key within feet of the earliest printed books in England, thus appears to offer a particularly apt reflection of Joyce's contradictory vision of *Ulysses* as an apocalyptic threat to cultural canons ('the last day cannot be far off') which he nevertheless desired to place at their centre.

Joyce's sense of the cultural validation conferred by institutions such as the British Museum is emphasised in a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver of 22 October 1922, in which he outlines the contents of a vituperative response he had dictated to Shane Leslie's recently published critique of *Ulysses* in the *Quarterly Review*. Leslie's review had opened with a string of reflections on the incriminating bibliographical features of Joyce's novel, noting that it had been 'printed at Dijon' (implying that no English printer was prepared to accept the legal risks of setting the novel) and 'published in Paris at an excessive price' (reflecting its publisher's desire to evade British obscenity legislation and deter a general readership) in a format 'whose resemblance in size and colour to the London Telephone Book must make it a danger to the unsuspecting'.<sup>56</sup> On this basis Leslie had reflected that 'it is doubtful if the British Museum possesses a copy, as the book apparently could not be printed in England, and no copy could fall by law to the great national collection'.<sup>57</sup> Joyce was incensed, dictating a letter to Leslie in Sylvia Beach's name 'stating for his information that copies had been presented to Trinity and the National Library and acknowledged with thanks', emphasising 'that the British Museum ordered and paid for a copy,' and ending 'with a brief

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<sup>55</sup> Department of Printed Books, *Acquisition Invoices, 4 October 1922 – 13 June 1922* (British Library Corporate Archives, DH5/102).

<sup>56</sup> Shane Leslie, 'Ulysses', *Quarterly Review*, ccxxxvii (October 1922), p. 219.

Although sardonic in tone, Leslie's reading of the bibliographic codes of the Shakespeare and Company first impression is essentially accurate. As Rachel Potter has noted, the decision to publish *Ulysses* in France in a 'deluxe' limited edition was a pragmatic response to the novel's 1921 American obscenity prosecution, which had rendered the publication of a mass-market edition of Joyce's novel in the United States a legal risk which publishers like Huebsch were unwilling to take. However, this decision necessarily situated *Ulysses* in uncomfortable proximity to an established and lucrative continental tradition of English-language erotic publishing, which employed subscription lists to circumvent Anglo-American obscenity legislation and customs restrictions. See Potter, *Obscene Modernism*, pp. 61-71.

<sup>57</sup> Leslie, 'Ulysses', p. 219.

mention of the second edition'.<sup>58</sup> It is perhaps no coincidence that in a letter of 17 November 1922, less than a month after issuing this rebuttal, Joyce is to be found carefully instructing Harriet Shaw Weaver on the legal deposit of the newly-published Egoist Press impression: 'I think copies ought to be sent to the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh and to the Bodleian, Oxford with 'Presented to the ——— by the Publisher' in your handwriting'.<sup>59</sup> Joyce's desire for the inscription to appear in Weaver's handwriting is consistent with his tendency to elide evidence of his interest in the economic and political fate of his novels, even as he attempted to micromanage their marketing and distribution.<sup>60</sup> None of the legal deposit copies of the Egoist Press edition bear Joyce's suggested inscription, as they had been dispatched to the British Museum and the Legal Deposit Agency by Rodker several days prior to the arrival of Joyce's letter. Nevertheless, Joyce's choice of libraries offers further evidence of his awareness that copyright libraries, as institutions whose legal deposit responsibilities required them to mediate constantly between the conflicting demands of the law, the academy, and the literary marketplace, could play a crucial role in expunging the air of impropriety which Leslie detects in every aspect of the novel's bibliographical presentation. Indeed, his choice of inscription may be read as a manoeuvre designed to transcend the implicit legitimacy of legal deposit in favour of a scenario in which the libraries appeared to have gratefully accepted his novel, rather than having merely claimed it as their legal due.

Joyce's strategy appears to have met with at least partial success upon the novel's arrival at the National Library of Wales and Trinity College, Dublin, both of which placed their legal deposit

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<sup>58</sup> Gilbert, ed. *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 189.

Inscribed copies of *Ulysses* had indeed been presented to the National Library of Ireland (NLI: LO 9336) and Trinity College, Dublin (TCD Special Collections, Press K.1.2) in March 1922 where they were received with gratitude. Joyce was right to be anxious about Leslie's review, which prompted the Home Office to open its first file on *Ulysses* (H.O. 186.428/1) in November 1922 and which continued to shape official opinion on the novel in Britain well into the 1930s. For the full text of Beach's letter, see:

Melissa Banta and Oscar A. Silverman, eds. *James Joyce's Letters to Sylvia Beach, 1921-1940* (Oxford: Plantin Publishers, 1990), pp. 14-15.

<sup>59</sup> Gilbert, ed. *Letters*, Vol. I, pp. 194-5.

<sup>60</sup> For a discussion of this aspect of Joyce's public persona, see Marshik, *British Modernism and Censorship*, Chapter 4.

copies on open shelves.<sup>61</sup> However, as the immaculate condition of Trinity's copy (the pages of which remain unopened) indicates, though legal deposit could gain *Ulysses* entry into the copyright libraries, it could not guarantee the novel a willing readership. The novel's ambiguous institutional positioning reasserted itself in Edinburgh, where the Faculty of Advocates transferred its legal deposit copy from its initial open shelfmark to the restricted 'Res. Cabinet' at some point prior to 1925.<sup>62</sup> Thus, as in the case of the British Museum, legal deposit seems to have been incapable of wholly securing the legitimacy Joyce sought for *Ulysses*.

In compliance with Joyce's wishes, an unnumbered copy of the second impression arrived at the Bodleian under legal deposit on 19 December 1922.<sup>63</sup> It was bound according to contemporary house style, in blue half morocco and blue cloth covers, with its author ('J. Joyce'), title, and year of publication tooled in gilt on the spine.<sup>64</sup> Its initial shelfmark is recorded in pencil at the foot of its obverse paper wrapper as 'Φ.d.127'. This shelfmark may be assumed to predate its binding, the flyleaf of which bears chronological pencil notations of its subsequent shelfmarks.<sup>65</sup> Tipped in to the fly-title is a manuscript publication history of the first edition of *Ulysses*, which cites a 'copy with the imprint "Shakespeare and Company... Paris, 1926"' as its source. This bibliography, although difficult to date precisely, was evidently composed before the publication of Slocum and Cahoon's *A Bibliography of James Joyce, 1882-1941* in 1953, indicating that the staff of the Bodleian had come to regard Joyce's novel as an object of bibliographical scrutiny prior to the emergence of formal scholarship on the subject, and perhaps as early as 1926.<sup>66</sup>

The 'Φ' prefix of its initial shelfmark indicates that it was placed in the punningly titled Phi (Fie!) collection, the Bodleian's equivalent to the private case. The Phi collection does not feature

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<sup>61</sup> The copy at the National Library of Wales bears a 6 December 1922 accession stamp. Trinity College, Dublin's copy bears a 'December 1922' pencil notation on its fly title. For a full description of each copy see Table 1.

<sup>62</sup> See Table 1.

<sup>63</sup> *Invoices of Books and Pamphlets Acquired Under the Copyright Act of 1911: 1922-1925* (Bodleian Library Records, b.176.)

<sup>64</sup> *Staff Manual, 1923* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1923), p. 49.

<sup>65</sup> See Table 1.

<sup>66</sup> Slocum and Cahoon are only cited on the reverse of the bibliography in a pencil notation composed in a different hand.

in any of the major published histories of the Bodleian.<sup>67</sup> However, its origins appear to reside in a statute passed by E.W.B. Nicholson, Bodley's Librarian, at a Curators' meeting in April 1882.<sup>68</sup> Documentary evidence of its administration is largely confined to two uncatalogued Library Records files, '590/1: Φ 1910-1943' and '590/2: Φ 1937-1949', from which it is possible to recover a sense of how access to texts like *Ulysses* was governed in the first decades of the twentieth century. A letter dated 3 December 1937 from Stephen Wright addressed to the Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum describes the contents of the Phi as 'a rather heterogeneous collection' including '[o]bscene literature [...] ranging from certain translations of Petronius and the Arabian Nights to Ulysses and Lady Chatterley's Lover [*sic.*]'. It is significant to note that *Ulysses* is here used by Wright as a yardstick for contemporary literary obscenity, serving as one of the boundaries within which he situates the contents of the Phi. Wright claims that such works are only 'given out to readers whose moral character [the Library staff] consider sufficiently irreproachable', though 'undergraduates and doubtful applicants are required to produce convincing evidence of their good faith'.<sup>69</sup>

The earliest evidence of the access procedures for Phi materials contained in '590/1: Φ 1910-1943' comes in the form of a printed request slip dated 24 May 1912, from which it is possible to infer the transactions necessary for readers to view a volume from the Phi collection at this time. The slip has been completed in pencil by an undergraduate named 'D. Matthews' who requests 'Φ.f.31', a 1731 edition of *The Works of the Earls of Rochester, Roscommon, and Dorset*. Matthews would have been able to locate this shelfmark using the Bodleian's General Catalogue, which, unlike its

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<sup>67</sup> Standard accounts include:

W.D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library Oxford: Second Edition* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1984).

Edmund Craster, *History of the Bodleian, 1845-1945* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1981).

Gregory Walker, Mary Clapinson, and Lesley Forbes, eds., *The Bodleian Library: A Subject Guide to the Collections* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2004).

Mary Clapinson, *A Brief History of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2015).

For a discussion of the origins, contents, and administration of the Phi Collection see Houston, 'Towards a History of the Phi Collection, 1882-1945.'

<sup>68</sup> 'Curators' Acta – Saturday, April 29, 1882,' *Minutes of Curators' Meetings, Nov. 8 1876 – Dec. 5 1887*, (Bodleian Library Records: d.15).

<sup>69</sup> S.J. Wright to W.A. Marsden, 3 December 1937, (Bodleian Library Records, 590/2: Φ 1937-1949).

British Museum equivalent, listed the library's restricted contents.<sup>70</sup> The undergraduate's request slip was returned to him on the same day with a pencil notation from Bodley's Librarian, Falconer Madan, informing him that it was 'not a book ordinarily to be given out'. Undeterred, Matthews enlisted the support of R.J.E. Tiddy, fellow of Trinity College and recently appointed lecturer in the nascent Honours School of English, who, on 28 May, informed Madan in black ink on the reverse of the slip that 'Mr. Matthews should most certainly be allowed the book'.<sup>71</sup> The requested volume would have been presented to Matthews and subsequently retrieved from him by a Senior Assistant, as 'boys' (adolescent apprentices employed by the Bodleian) were prohibited from handling Phi materials.<sup>72</sup> The earlier of the two Library Records files (590/1: Φ 1910-1943) contains twenty-six such letters and notes of support from tutors dating from 1912 to 1943, asserting the moral 'fitness' and academic 'seriousness' of their students, and endorsing their requests to access Phi materials.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> This supposition is borne out by the first Phi handlist (Bodleian Library Records, d. 786.), which is dated 'Jan. 30 1892' in Nicholson's hand, and which was to remain in use until 1927. Nicholson records at the foot of the handlist's title page that any work marked with an asterisk 'is not entered in the General Catalogue' and that a 'slip catalogue of those excluded books' is kept 'at the end of Φ.c'. On this basis, it may logically be inferred that the majority of Phi titles were listed in the library's General Catalogues, a theory confirmed by the Bodleian's Pre-1920 Catalogue: Bodleian Library. *The Bodleian Library Pre-1920 Catalogue of Printed Books (Windows)*. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1997. CD.

<sup>71</sup> Michael Heaney, 'Tiddy, Reginald John Elliott (1880–1916),' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Online Edition, ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/57228>, accessed 09 June 2015.

D.J. Palmer, 'English,' in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. VII*, eds. M.G. Brock and M.C. Curthoys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 411.

<sup>72</sup> *Staff Manual*, p. 40.

<sup>73</sup> Significantly, only four of these letters of support concern female students, whose requests often precipitate lengthy discussions between their academic referee and Bodley's Librarian over the suitability of the materials in question for women. These exchanges are typically only brought to a close when the exasperated tutor unequivocally asserts that the reader in question is an 'Advanced Student' of 'mature age' whose 'morals won't suffer!' While the paternalism with which succeeding Librarians greeted such requests is undoubtedly a product of prevailing patriarchal constructions of femininity as a state of naïve innocence, it also reflects the extent to which, by the early twentieth century, the institutional practices of libraries such as the Bodleian were designed to mediate between the competing and often conflicting claims of contemporary academia and British obscenity legislation. Read in this light, the reluctance of figures such as Falconer Madan and Arthur Cowley to offer female readers access to Phi materials is born of their awareness of the Bodleian's role – and, by extension, legal liability – in regulating into whose hands obscene publications may fall. However, the fact that successive Librarians were prepared, on the basis of suitably verified academic credentials, to permit these women access to legally obscene material suggests their recognition of schemes of value not reducible to contemporary legal codes or prevalent social mores.

F.F. Urquhart to F. Madan, 26 September 1917, (Bodleian Library Records, 590/1: Φ 1910-1943).

C.M.S. Burrows to A.E. Cowley, 9 April 1926, (Bodleian Library Records, 590/1: Φ 1910-1943).

For a full discussion of the Bodleian's handling of women's Phi requests and the legal tradition which informed it, see Houston, 'Towards a History of the Phi Collection'.

Evidence of only one attempt to access *Ulysses* is recorded in ‘590/1: Φ 1910-1943’. It was made by Gordon Lampman Knapp, a twenty-two-year-old American ‘Non-Collegiate undergraduate’ who had come to Oxford from Leland Stanford University in 1925 to undertake ‘special study in English Literature’.<sup>74</sup> The details of Knapp’s request are recorded in an unaddressed manuscript note of recommendation signed by James Bernard Baker, the Censor for the Non-Collegiate delegation, who endorses the young man as a ‘genuine and serious student’. It is written on ‘Non-Collegiate Buildings’ letter-head, and bears manuscript pencil notations (presumably made by a librarian) recording its subject (‘Joyce. Ulysses.’) and date of receipt (12 June 1926). Knapp’s Non-Collegiate status numbers him among a body of students who were unable or unwilling to pay the prohibitive fees necessary for College membership and who, as a result, enjoyed a relatively autonomous position within the University.<sup>75</sup> In this regard Knapp is an oddly appropriate reader for Joyce’s novel, sharing its liminal position with regard to the academic structures of Oxford. Baker’s reference to ‘special study’ and Knapp’s American academic background suggest that he was a ‘Special Student’ reading for a B.Litt., a research degree akin to a modern Master’s.<sup>76</sup> As such, his request to view *Ulysses* suggests that, within four years of its publication, Joyce’s novel was being treated as an administratively sanctioned object of academic scrutiny by Oxford’s emergent Faculty of English.<sup>77</sup> However, as another request for access to *Ulysses* made in 1926 reveals, the British government was firmly committed to denying Joyce’s novel precisely this kind of position within the academy.

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<sup>74</sup> Margaret and Derek Davies, *Creating St Catherine’s College* (Oxford: St Catherine’s College, 1997), p. 5.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>77</sup> Neither Oxford nor Leland Stanford possess copies of any dissertation or thesis Knapp may have produced during his time at either institution, making it impossible to confirm his motives in requesting *Ulysses*, or to identify the nature or focus of his engagement with Joyce’s work. Indeed, the fact that Knapp sought access to the novel at the tail end of Trinity term (the final term of the academic year and the conclusion of his time at Oxford) may indicate that the request was born of a personal desire to take advantage of the opportunity the Bodleian afforded to peruse a scandalous novel which he would have been less likely to encounter in the United States. Intriguingly, the Alumni Directory of Leland Stanford contains no record of Knapp, suggesting that he did not officially graduate, and, as such, may not have completed or submitted a dissertation. I am indebted to Tim Noakes, Head of Public Services at Leland Stanford, for this information.

Joyce of Arc: *Ulysses* at Cambridge

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In July 1926, while still in the early stages of his career as an academic at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, F.R. Leavis approached the well-known local booksellers Galloway & Porter in the hope of procuring a copy of *Ulysses* for a forthcoming lecture in a series entitled ‘Modern Problems of Criticism’, scheduled to begin in Michaelmas term 1926.<sup>78</sup> On 17 July 1926 Charles Porter addressed a letter to the Chief Constable of Cambridge, for the attention of the Home Office, requesting permission to import two copies of the novel: one for Leavis and another to be ‘placed in a suitable library connected with the University’ for the use of ‘students attending this course’ (a fact which an evidently disconcerted Home Office reader highlighted in blue crayon).<sup>79</sup> This letter was forwarded by the Chief Constable and received by the Home Office on 19 July 1926, which duly opened a file on the subject (‘H.O. 186.428/7’).

From the outset, Leavis’s request was deemed ‘alarming’ by the Home Office. In the ‘Minutes’ of the file the Undersecretary of State records his doubts as to the ‘suitability’ of *Ulysses* ‘for the education of the boy and girl undergraduates’. He notes that the ‘introduction of obscene literature into Oxford and Cambridge... has been handled – and admirably handled – by the Director’ of Public Prosecutions, Sir Archibald Bodkin, to whom he refers the file.<sup>80</sup> Bodkin responded by addressing a confidential letter to the Chief Constable of Cambridge, instructing him to ascertain ‘who and what Dr. F.R. Leavis of Emmanuel College is’, what position he holds, and whether his lectures have been formally advertised.<sup>81</sup> Following the Chief Constable’s detailed reply, Bodkin addressed the first of several letters to Dr A.C. Seward, Vice Chancellor of the

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<sup>78</sup> P.R.O. 144/20071/57006.

For ease of reference, Home Office files are cited parenthetically by their original H.O. numbers. For a narrative summary of the contents of the H.O. *Ulysses* files see:

Carmello Medina Casado, ‘Sifting through Censorship: The British Home Office “Ulysses” Files (1922-1936),’ *James Joyce Quarterly*, 37.3/4 (Spring-Summer 2000), 479-508.

I have used Casado’s account to verify my own transcription of certain handwritten documents and to confirm the identities of officials and their correspondents. For Leavis’s account of these events see:

F.R. Leavis, ‘Freedom to Read,’ *Times Literary Supplement*, 3192 (3 May 1963), 325.

<sup>79</sup> C. Porter to R.J. Pearson, 17 July 1926, (H.O. 186.428/7).

<sup>80</sup> ‘Minutes’, (H.O. 186.428/7).

<sup>81</sup> A.H. Bodkin to R.J. Pearson, 24 July 1926, (H.O. 186.428/7).

University. In it, Bodkin summarises the situation to date, emphasising with alarm that the lectures will be ‘open to men and women in their first and second years’. While acknowledging himself to be no ‘~~scrutiniser~~ critic’ of what he supposes may be termed ‘literature’, Bodkin inveighs against *Ulysses* as a voluminous and incomprehensible compendium of obscenity, containing ‘many passages’ so ‘indecent’ as to be ‘entirely unsuitable to bring to the specific attention of any person of either sex’. Bodkin concludes ominously that should any further attempt be made to procure a copy of the novel he shall be forced to consider ‘prompt criminal proceedings’.<sup>82</sup> Seward’s response on 5 August is brief, describing a meeting with Leavis in which he was informed that ‘critiques of the book’ had appeared in reputable academic journals and that it had been ‘quoted with approval’ in the *Times Literary Supplement*. He notes in passing that Leavis had already ‘referred to the book in his lectures’, a remark which prompted a marginal exclamation mark from an incredulous Home Office official.<sup>83</sup> Bodkin, clearly dissatisfied with Seward’s response, addressed the Vice Chancellor again the following day, asserting that he found it ‘astonishing that the book could have in any manner been introduced into University lectures’. He explains in no uncertain terms the basis for his opposition to the discussion of *Ulysses* in any academic context:

What I am concerned with is to prevent any knowledge of this book “Ulysses” spreading amongst University students of either sex. Knowledge of it may awake curiosity, and curiosity may lead to possibly successful efforts to obtain it.

His letter concludes with an open threat to the Vice Chancellor and the University, noting that, should he be forced to take legal action against any student attempting to acquire the book, ‘the source from which knowledge of the book arose will be known, and the publicity will hardly tend to increase the reputation of the University, or the subject matter of its lectures’.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> A.H. Bodkin to A.C. Seward, 31 July 1926, (H.O. 186.428/7).

Bodkin had in fact only read the final forty pages (the ‘Penelope’ episode) of the copy of *Ulysses* seized at Croydon Aerodrome in December 1922, which he believed to be ‘composed by a more or less illiterate vulgar woman’ and to contain ‘a great deal of unmitigated filth and obscenity’. See ‘Minutes’, (H.O. 186.428/2).

<sup>83</sup> A.C. Seward to A.H. Bodkin, 5 August 1926, (H.O. 186.428/7).

<sup>84</sup> A.H. Bodkin to A.C. Seward, 6 August 1926, (H.O. 186.428/7).

As the Undersecretary of State's paternalistic reference to 'boy and girl undergraduates' emphasises, the Home Office principally objected to Leavis's lectures on the grounds of their audience, whose youth and gender were believed to render them susceptible to the corrupting influence of Joyce's novel. However, at a deeper level, what Bodkin shared with Joyce was an acute awareness of the ways in which academic institutions like Cambridge and its libraries could serve to publicise and legitimise works which had been deemed obscene by the state. It is this awareness which underpins Bodkin's threat to leak the University's role in encouraging undergraduates to purchase *Ulysses*, in which the resulting negative publicity is presented as more damaging than any potential legal action. Though this debacle has been discussed by several critics, including Leavis himself, one crucial irony has hitherto gone unnoticed: even as Bodkin threatened its Vice Chancellor with legal action and a smear campaign, Cambridge University Library contained not one, but two copies of the second impression of *Ulysses*.<sup>85</sup> The first of these had arrived under legal deposit on 19 December 1922, and was placed at shelfmark Arc.b.92.4 in Cambridge's *Arcana* collection.<sup>86</sup> Like its counterparts in the British Museum and the Bodleian, Cambridge's first copy of *Ulysses* was thus sequestered in the library's restricted holdings.<sup>87</sup> It was joined in the Arc on 25 February 1924 by a second copy of the second impression (limitation number 654), which was bound at some point that year in dark blue quarter morocco and blue pasteboard covers by local binders 'Gray & Son'.<sup>88</sup> As at the British Museum and the Bodleian, these copies could only be viewed with 'the permission of the Librarian or his deputy' in the 'Anderson Room', a 'reading room reserved for [consulting] MSS, Incunabula' and other rare books.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Discussions include Leavis, 'Freedom to Read', p. 325; Casado, 'Sifting through Censorship'; Marshik, *British Modernism and Censorship*, pp. 160-61; and Birmingham, *The Most Dangerous Book*, pp. 262-66.

<sup>86</sup> The copy remains unbound. A pencil notation at the foot of its obverse paper wrapper records its shelfmark.

<sup>87</sup> As with the Phi, the history of the Arc has received scant scholarly attention, although Liam Sims discusses its origins, development, and contents in:

Liam Sims, "'Scandalous and libellous books': the origins of the 'Arc' collection at Cambridge University Library", *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, XV.4 (2015), 625-646.

<sup>88</sup> The absence of provenance marks renders the origins of this edition unclear and thus a valuable focus for future research.

<sup>89</sup> H.C. Stanford to Stephen Wright, 4 December 1937, (Bodleian Library Records, 590/2: Φ 1937-1949).

The fate of *Ulysses* in Cambridge emphasises both the advantages and limitations of legal deposit as a legitimising instrument for authors like Joyce. As in the case of the British Museum and the Bodleian, the legal deposit of the novel in Cambridge could not wholly divest *Ulysses* of its perceived obscenity. However, precisely because of this illicit status, even as one of the University's tutors was being threatened with prosecution for proposing it as an object of study, Joyce's novel was being made available to readers in the same institutional space as Cambridge's rarest, most fragile, and most consecrated holdings of manuscripts and early printed books. Thus, as in London and Oxford, the very liminality of Joyce's novel saw it delivered into the University's cultural holy-of-holies, where its obscenity ensured that it was, in both contradictory senses of the word, sanctioned. This ambiguous process of institutional naturalisation remains ironically inscribed in the access restrictions which still govern the six legal deposit copies, all but one of which reside in the rare books collections of their respective libraries.<sup>90</sup> To call up these copies it remains necessary to complete a written application to a senior librarian, providing evidence of suitable academic credentials and outlining the scholarly purposes for which the work is required. As such, the legal deposit of the second impression of *Ulysses* may be said to have not only anticipated but actively engineered the novel's status as a valuable artefact worthy of preservation and study. As the case of *Ulysses* suggests, an examination of the legal deposit history of legally obscene modernist works in Britain affords a valuable opportunity to complicate traditional accounts of the movement's innate iconoclasm by tracing the more complex and reciprocal relationships which legal deposit facilitated between avant-garde authors and the United Kingdom's oldest and most prestigious libraries.

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<sup>90</sup> The copy in the National Library of Wales remains at its original open shelfmark. See Table 1.

**Table 1:** Shelfmark Histories (1922 – Present Day)

| Library                         | Impression               | Pressmark / Shelfmark | Date Assigned | Limitation Number | Binding / Condition   | Binding Date |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|---|--------------|
| British Museum                  | 1st (S & C, 1922)        | P.C.22.b.4            | 02/06/1922    | 739               | Brown half morocco and buff cloth covers, opened, cut, stippled, blue wrappers retained | 1925         |
|                                 |                          | C.116.g.17            | c.1964-1989   |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          |                       |               |                   |   |              |
|                                 | 2nd (Egoist Press, 1922) | P.C.22.b.6            | 16/11/1922    | Unnumbered        | Brown half morocco and buff cloth covers, opened, cut, stippled, blue wrappers retained | c. 1925      |
|                                 |                          | C.116.g.18            | c.1964-1989   |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          |                       |               |                   |   |              |
| Bodleian                        | 2nd (Egoist Press, 1922) | Φ.d.127               | 19/12/1922    | Unnumbered        | Blue half morocco and blue cloth covers, opened, uncut, blue wrappers retained          | Unknown      |
|                                 |                          | Arch.Bodl.D. d.180    | c.1940        |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          | Arch.D. d.17          |               |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          | Arch.AA.d.198         | c. 2001       |                   |   |              |
| Cambridge                       | 2nd (Egoist Press, 1922) | Arc.b.92.4            | 19/12/1922    | Unnumbered        | Unbound (original paper wrappers, opened, uncut)  | NA           |
|                                 |                          |                       |               |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          | Arc.b.92.3            | 25/02/1924    | 654               | Dark blue quarter morocco and blue pasteboard covers, opened                            | 1924         |
| Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh | 2nd (Egoist Press, 1922) | T.148.b               | 22/12/1922    | Unnumbered        | Dark blue buckram, opened, uncut  | Unknown      |
|                                 |                          | Ref. Cabinet          | c. 1923       |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          | L.181.g               | post-1925     |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          | FB.m.811              | c. 2003       |                   |   |              |
|                                 |                          |                       |               |                   |   |              |

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|                                  |                                 |                     |                    |                   |   |           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---|-----------|
| <b>Trinity College, Dublin</b>   | 1st (S & C, 1922)               | Press K.1.2         |                    | Unnumbered        | Black cloth, spine lettered direct in gold, blue wrappers retained. Manuscript inscription on front flyleaf: "Presented to Trinity College, Dublin by the Publisher March 24th 1922 Paris". | 1922      |
|                                  |                                 |                     |                    |                   |   |           |
|                                  | <b>2nd (Egoist Press, 1922)</b> | <b>Press K.1.3</b>  | <b>[?]/12/1922</b> | <b>1478</b>       | <b>Unbound (original paper wrappers, unopened)</b>  | <b>NA</b> |
|                                  |                                 |                     |                    |                   |   |           |
| <b>National Library of Wales</b> | <b>2nd (Egoist Press, 1922)</b> | <b>PR756082 U47</b> | <b>06/12/1922</b>  | <b>Unnumbered</b> | <b>Unbound (original paper wrappers, opened)</b>  | <b>NA</b> |

**Note:** This table offers a shelfmark history and bibliographical description for each copy of *Ulysses* to which reference is made above. For ease of reference, the six legal deposit copies have been highlighted in bold.

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