

Dubliners

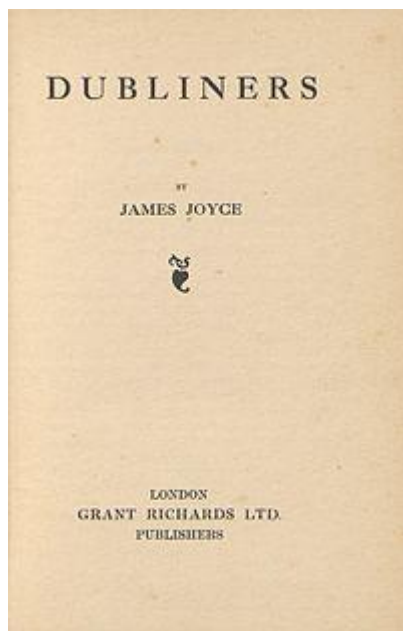
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For the Irish folk band, see [The Dubliners](#).

For the people from Dublin, see [Irish people](#).

Dubliners



The title page of the first edition in 1914 of *Dubliners*.

Author(s)	James Joyce
Language	English
Genre(s)	Short Story
Publisher	Grant Richards Ltd. , London
Publication date	June, 1914
Media type	Print (Hardback & Paperback) and Audio book
Pages	Approx. 160 pages
ISBN	0-486-26870-5
OCLC Number	23211235
Dewey Decimal	823/.912 20
LC Classification	PR6019.O9 D8 1991
Followed by	A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916)

Dubliners is a collection of 15 short stories by [James Joyce](#), first published in 1914. They were meant to be a naturalistic depiction of [Irish middle class](#) life in and around [Dublin](#) in the early years of the 20th century.

The stories were written when [Irish nationalism](#) was at its peak, and a search for a national identity and purpose was raging; at a crossroads of history and culture, [Ireland](#) was jolted by various converging ideas and influences. They centre on Joyce's idea of an [epiphany](#): a moment where a character experiences self-understanding or illumination. Many of the characters in *Dubliners* later appear in minor roles in Joyce's novel *Ulysses*.^[1] The initial stories in the collection are narrated by child protagonists, and as the stories continue, they deal with the lives and concerns of progressively older people. This is in line with Joyce's tripartite division of the collection into childhood, adolescence, and maturity.

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[\[edit\]](#) Publication history

Between 1905, when Joyce first sent a manuscript to a publisher, and 1914, when the book was finally published, Joyce submitted the book 18 times to a total of 15 publishers. The book's publishing history is a harrowing tale of persistence in the face of frustration. The London house of Grant Richards agreed to publish it in 1905. However, their printer refused to set one of the stories (*[Two Gallants](#)*), and Richards then began to press Joyce to remove a number of other passages which he claimed the printer also refused to set. Joyce protested, but eventually did agree to some of the requested changes. However, Richards eventually backed out of the deal. Joyce thereupon resubmitted the manuscript to other publishers, and about three years later (1909) he found a willing candidate in Maunsel and Roberts of Dublin. However, a similar controversy developed and Maunsel too eventually refused to publish, even threatening to sue Joyce for printing costs already incurred. Joyce offered to pay the printing costs himself if the sheets were turned over to him and he were allowed to complete the job elsewhere and distribute the book, but when Joyce arrived at the printer's they refused to surrender the sheets, and burned them the next day. Joyce managed to save one copy which he obtained "by ruse". He then returned to submitting the manuscript to other publishers, and in 1914 Grant Richards once again agreed to publish the book, using the [page proofs](#) saved from Maunsel as [copy](#). The book was finally published in June 1914.^[2]

[\[edit\]](#) The stories

- [*The Sisters*](#) – After the priest Father Flynn dies, a young boy who was close to him and his family deal with it only superficially.
- [*An Encounter*](#) – Two schoolboys playing truant encounter an elderly man.
- [*Araby*](#) – A boy falls in love with the sister of his friend, but fails in his quest to buy her a worthy gift from the Araby bazaar.
- [*Eveline*](#) – A young woman abandons her plans to leave Ireland with a sailor.
- [*After the Race*](#) – College student Jimmy Doyle tries to fit in with his wealthy friends.
- [*Two Gallants*](#) – Two con men, [*Lenahan and Corley*](#), find a maid who is willing to steal from her employer.
- [*The Boarding House*](#) – Mrs. Mooney successfully manoeuvres her daughter Polly into an upwardly mobile marriage with her lodger Mr. Doran.
- [*A Little Cloud*](#) – [*Little Chandler*](#)'s dinner with his old friend [*Ignatius Gallaher*](#) casts fresh light on his own failed literary dreams. The story reflects also on Chandler's mood upon realizing his baby son has replaced him as the centre of his wife's affections.
- [*Counterparts*](#) – Farrington, a lumbering alcoholic [*scrivener*](#), takes out his frustration in pubs and on his son Tom.
- [*Clay*](#) – The old maid Maria, a laundress, celebrates Halloween with her former foster child Joe Donnelly and his family.
- [*A Painful Case*](#) – Mr. Duffy rebuffs Mrs. Sinico, then four years later realizes he has condemned her to loneliness and death.
- [*Ivy Day in the Committee Room*](#) – Minor politicians fail to live up to the memory of [*Charles Stewart Parnell*](#).
- [*A Mother*](#) – Mrs. Kearney tries to win a place of pride for her daughter, Kathleen, in the Irish cultural movement, by starring her in a series of concerts, but ultimately fails.
- [*Grace*](#) – After Mr. Kernan injures himself falling down the stairs in a bar, his friends try to reform him through Catholicism.
- [*The Dead*](#) – [*Gabriel Conroy*](#) attends a party, and later, as he speaks with his wife, has an [*epiphany*](#) about the nature of life and death. At 15–16,000 words this story has also been classified as a [*novella*](#). *The Dead* was adapted [*into a film*](#) by [*John Huston*](#), written for the screen by his son [*Tony*](#) and starring his daughter [*Anjelica*](#) as Mrs. Conroy.

[[edit](#)] Style

In *Dubliners* Joyce rarely uses [*hyperbole*](#) or emotive language, relying on simplicity and close detail to create a realistic setting. This ties the reader's understanding of people to their environments. He does not tell readers what to think, rather they are left to come to their own conclusions; this is evident when contrasted with the moral judgements displayed by earlier writers such as [*Charles Dickens*](#). This frequently leads to a lack of traditional dramatic resolution within the stories.

It has been argued (by [*Hugh Kenner*](#) in *Joyce's Voices*, among others)^[3] that Joyce often allows his narrative voice to gravitate towards the voice of a textual character. For example, the opening line of 'The Dead' reads "Lily, the caretaker's daughter, was literally run off her feet." She is not, in this instance, "literally" run off her feet, and neither would Joyce have thought so; rather, the narrative lends itself to a misuse of language typical of the character being described.

Joyce often uses descriptions from the characters' point of view, although he very rarely writes in the first person. This can be seen in [Eveline](#), when Joyce writes, "Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne". Here, Joyce employs an [empirical](#) perspective in his description of characters and events; an understanding of characters' personalities is often gained through an analysis of their possessions. The first paragraph of [A Painful Case](#) is an example of this style, as well as Joyce's use of global to local description of the character's possessions. Joyce also employs parodies of other writing styles; part of *A Painful Case* is written as a newspaper story, and part of [Grace](#) is written as a sermon. This stylistic motif may also be seen in *Ulysses* (for example, in the [Aeolus](#) episode, which is written in a newspaper style), and is indicative of a sort of blending of narrative with textual circumstances.

The collection as a whole displays an overall plan, beginning with stories of youth and progressing in age to culminate in [The Dead](#). Great emphasis is laid upon the specific geographic details of Dublin, details to which a reader with a knowledge of the area would be able to directly relate. The multiple perspectives presented throughout the collection serve to contrast the characters in Dublin at this time.

[[edit](#)] Media adaptations

- In 1987 John Huston's film setting of "The Dead" was released.
- In 1999 a short film adaptation of "[Araby](#)" was produced and directed by Dennis Courtney.^[4]
- In 2000, a [Tony Award](#)-winning musical adaptation of "The Dead" was written by Richard Nelson and Shaun Davey, directed by Richard Nelson.

[[edit](#)] Further reading

General

- [Ellmann, Richard](#). *James Joyce*. Oxford University Press, 1959, revised edition 1983.
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