

Chapter 9: Scylla and Charybdis

The action: 2pm. Another tough chapter, because Stephen is center stage. He's in the Reading Room of the National Library chatting with a number of folks loosely associated with the Revival. Stephen is giving his theory about *Hamlet* and Shakespeare: though it is subtle, basically Stephen argues that the play should be interpreted autobiographically--look for his delineation of events and people in Shakespeare's life that tie into the play. (Does Stephen's theory have implications for how to read Joyce's novel?)

In *Aeolus* we saw Stephen interact with the journalists' world; what's his status in this, more literary, crowd? Buck Mulligan shows up, having come through the Museum, where he saw Bloom (who of course ducked in to avoid bumping into Boylan at the end of "Lestrygonians"). Bloom is in the library looking up an ad in a *Kilkenny* paper to use as a model for Alexander Keyes' new ad in the *Freeman's Journal*.



Reading Room in the National Library

This is a good chapter to try to gauge Stephen's general state of mind, just as we did with Bloom in "Lestrygonians." Bring to bear on this episode all of your conventional close-reading skills. Discover all you can about Stephen, what motivates him, what he seeks, what annoys him, etc.

A.E. (George Russell) is one of the leaders of the Celtic Revival, and he published Joyce's early stories in his agricultural weekly, *The Irish Homestead*. Stephen definitely knows and is known by A.E.: can you characterize their relationship?



George Russell