Waugh's *Decline and Fall*:
The Original Handwritten Manuscript with its Emendations
in the 1928 and the 1962 Editions

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The following analysis of Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall* (1928) reconstructs the wording of the Typescript which is believed to be no longer in existence. The many changes imposed on the handwritten manuscript by the original publisher may be classified into three areas, including those which may be considered to be of relatively minor significance as well as those which shall be shown to be significant variations from the manuscript.

0. There are (were) two manuscripts and two editions of Waugh's first novel *Decline and Fall*. The original handwritten manuscript (MS), the typescript (TS) which was brought to the publishers, Duckworth and to Chapman & Hall, the first edition published by Chapman & Hall in 1928 (FE) and the revised edition by the same publisher in 1962 (RE).

It is said that the typescript TS is no longer in existence. ³

In this article, I intend to speculate about the nature and degree of the changes which must have been made between manuscript MS and TS by comparing the MS to the two published editions.

1. I will begin by explaining how the first edition of Evelyn Waugh's first novel *Decline and Fall* was made public:

Evelyn Waugh brought the TS of this novel to Duckworth⁴ in May or early June, 1928.⁵ Reading the TS, the editor told him that there were some problems of delicacy, and that if he agreed to the editor's revision of the TS, Duckworth would publish his novel. But Evelyn did not comply with the editor's request because he was sure the revisions suggested by the editor would significantly changed the novel's character.

After the decision not to publish with Duckworth, Waugh rather unwillingly carried the manuscript three doors down Henrietta Street to another publisher, Chapman & Hall, to attempt to have his novel published. The Managing Director of the publisher, Arthur Waugh, who was Evelyn's father, was abroad at that time, but an editor, Ralph Straus, was entrusted with the decision as to whether a manuscript someone might bring to the publisher should be published or not during Arthur's absence. Thus, the acting chairman, Straus, read Waugh's typescript carefully

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and accepted it, suggesting a few amendments to him. Evelyn agreed to Straus’ suggestions and minor revisions were made by the editor.

Waugh’s first novel, Decline and Fall, was thus published in September, 1928.

In 1962, the revised edition RE of the novel was published, in which as Waugh explained in the preface, restored many of the emendations⁶ (my emphasis) from the TS that Straus had made in the first edition.

2. I have already described in an earlier article⁷ the changes made between the FE and RE of Decline and Fall. In that article, I concluded that differences between these two editions are ‘negligible’ as Waugh says in his preface to the RE. Many of them are in the spelling, such as to tonight / to-night, tomorrow / to-morrow, walking stick / walking-stick, station-master / station-master, dare say / daresay, Buda-Pest / Budapest; those in the propernames, Colonel Shybotham / Colonel Shybottom, Sir Alastair Digby-Vain-Trumpington / Sir Alastair-Digby-Vane-Trumpington; and those in the punctuation. Also some prudish Victorianisms were found in his work.⁸

Some representative samples of those ‘negligible’ differences are as follows:⁹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RE (Uniform Edition)</th>
<th>FE (Modern Penguin Classics)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 and aprons, pouring out tea.</td>
<td>76 and aprons pouring out tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93 and the Hope-Brownes, on</td>
<td>77 , and the Hope-Brownes; on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93, Flossie and two or three</td>
<td>77 , Flossie, and two or three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 she knelt at prayers,</td>
<td>78 she knelt at her prayers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 his sister</td>
<td>78 his sister-in-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 round</td>
<td>79 around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97 ‘Isn’t he divine?’</td>
<td>80 ‘Isn’t he divine!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97 ‘Used to cut the tent ropes,’</td>
<td>81 ‘Used to cut off the tent ropes,’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98 dare say</td>
<td>82 daresay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98 station-master</td>
<td>82 stationmaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99 ‘God bless my soul! Why not?’</td>
<td>82 ‘God bless my soul. Why not?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99 Blasphemy, it would</td>
<td>82 Blasphemy it would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99 Flankly, I regard this</td>
<td>82 Flankly I regard this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter X
101 fox-hunting
101 I also resented the references to
103 wedding bells
103 tonight
103 Mrs Roberts’
103 chimney-piece

84 foxhunting
84 I also resented the reference to
86 wedding-bells
86 to-night
86 Mrs Roberts
87 chimney-piece
Waugh's *Decline and Fall:—*

104 sister
104 station-master
104 "Take my tip, old boy: never
105 'that doesn't necessarily make her more
    than thirty-three, does it?'
106 fire-place

87 sister-in-law
88 station-master
88 'Take my tip, old boy; never
88 'that doesn't necessarily make her more
    than thirty-one does it?'
89 fireplace

Of the minor changes made between the RE and the FE the following are slightly more significant than the above examples. Although the following changes¹⁰ are considered to be more significant, they are slight in comparison to other changes which will be described later.

**RE (Uniform Edition)**

page 14 'It reminds me of the communist rising in
Budapest when I was on the debt com-
mission.'
'I know,' said Mr Postlethwait.
Mr Sniggs's Hungarian reminiscences were
well known in Scone College.
17 *That* is indecency.

40 'I've been talking to the stationmaster
here,' he said, 'and if either of you ever
wants a woman, his sister...'

51 'Have you ever wondered what happens to
Dingy on Thursday evening?
'Good heavens, no.'
'Well, she's always out.'
'That doesn't seem very important.
Lonely wish she'd go out more often.'
'Yes, but Thursday in Philbrick's eve-
ing out.'
'You don't mean to suggest...'
'Well just you see. It's my opinion and
Brolly's that Dingy and Philbrick are
having an intrigue.'

**FE (Modern Penguin Classics)**

page 10 φ (There is no counterpart)
13 It is unseemly. It is more: it is indecent. In
fact, I am almost prepared to say that it is
flagrantly indecent.
30 'Feeling lonely? he said. 'I've been talking
to the stationmaster here, and if either of
you wants an introduction to a young
lady...'
40 'You know that man Philbrick. Well, I
think there's something odd about him.'
'I've no doubt of it.'
'It's not just that he's such a bad butler.
The servants are always ghastly here. But
I don't believe he's a butler at all.'
'I don't quite see what else he can be.'
'Well, have you ever know a butler with
a diamond tie-pin?'
'No, I don't think I have.'
'Well, Philbrick's got one, and a diamond
ring too. He showed them to Brolly.'
'It's not a bad idea,' said Paul. 'But Brolly thinks Philbrick has a wife in Australia.'

'Has Philbrick ever been to Australia?'

'That's what Brolly's not sure of but he says he looks as though he had and he once gave Tangent some Australian stamps. I'll tell you another thing. You know all those trunk calls the Doctor was talking about. It was Philbrick made them. That man never leaves the telephone day or night. If you ask me, there's something fishy about Philbrick.'

'I can well believe that.'

I dare say I need not particularize. I discerned Captain Grimes' weakness early in our acquaintance and a man of your intelligence and sensibility living at close quarters with him can scarcely have done otherwise also. But I had hoped, I had fondly hoped, that I might be spared the unpleasantness of a public denunciation.

'tell me this. About how much do you reckon to make out of this job, if you don't mind my asking?'

'Fuel,' said Professor Silenus. 'While the work is being done, the machine must be fed. After that let it stand idle or be set to other work. Why should I receive fuel when I am not working?'

'Peer's Sister-in-Law Mansion Builder refuses fee,'

Colossal great diamonds, Brolly says. Philbrick said he used to have bushels of diamonds and emeralds before the war, and that he used to eat off gold plate. We believe that he's a Russian prince in exile.'

'Generally speaking, Russians are not shy about using their titles, are they? Besides, he looks very English.'

'Yes, we thought of that, but Brolly said lots of Russians came to school in England before the war.

From the above contrastive study, we can see what Waugh describes in the preface to the RE as the 'negligible' changes made between the FE and the RE.

3. Next, I would like to make a comparison between the RE and the MS (now at the Harry Ransom Center).

We can find of course many differences such as punctuation, indentation, small letters/capital
letters, etc. But I shall not touch on them.

The differences found between the RE and the MS can be roughly classified into three areas.\(^{12}\)

(1) Chapter Titles (2) Proper Names (3) The Endings of the last two chapters.


(2) Proper Names: (RE) Bundle / (MS) Wallop, Round / Crump, Best-Chetwynde / Chetwynde, Tangent / Water, Cwmpyddyg (place name in Wales) / Llandudno, Circumference / Coddington, Sidebotham / Rumble, Lady Circumference / Lady Christendom, Church and Gargoyle (name of the scholastic agent) / Goodchild and Ruttey, etc.

(3) The Endings of the Last Two Chapters: Differences can be seen here and there between the RE and the MS, but notable changes can be seen in the endings of the last two chapters. There exist at the end of Chapter VII in the RE which cannot be found in the MS.\(^{13}\)

[The last part of Chapter VII]

Some months later Paul returned to Scone College after the absence of little more than a year. His death, though depriving him of his certificates, left him his knowledge. He sat successfully for Smalls and Matriculation and entered his old college once more, wearing a commoner’s gown and a heavy cavalry moustache. This and his natural diffidence formed a complete disguise. Nobody recognized him. After much doubt and deliberation he retained the name of Pennyfeather, explaining to the Chaplain that he had, he believed, had a distant cousin at Scone a short time ago.

‘He came to a very sad end,’ said and Chaplain, ‘a wild young man.’

‘He was a very distant cousin,’ said Paul hastily.

‘Yes, yes, I am sure he was. There is no resemblance between you. He was a thoroughly degenerate type, I am afraid.’
Paul’s scout also remembered the name.

‘There used to be another Mr Pennyfeather on this staircase once,’ he said, ‘a very queer gentleman indeed. Would you believe it, sir, he used to take off all his clothes and go out and dance in the quad at night. Nice quiet gentleman, too, he was, except for his dancing. He must have been a little queer in his head, I suppose. I don’t know what became of him. They say he died in prison.’ Then he proceeded to tell Paul about an Annamese student who had attempted to buy one of the Senior Tutor’s daughters.

On the second Sunday of term the Chaplain asked Paul to breakfast. ‘It’s a sad thing,’ he said, ‘the way that the Varsity breakfast — “brekker” we used to call it in my day — is dying out. People haven’t time for it. Always off to lectures at nine o’clock, except on Sundays. Have another kidney, won’t you?’

There was another don present, called Mr Sniggs, who addressed the Chaplain rather superciliously, Paul thought, as ‘Padre’.

There was also an undergraduate from another college, a theological student called Stubbs, a grave young man with a quiet voice and with carefully formed opinions. He had a little argument with Mr Sniggs about the plans for rebuilding the Bodleian. Paul supported him.

Next day Paul found Stubbs’ card on his table, the corner turned up. Paul went to Hertford to call on Stubbs, but found him out. He left his card, the corner turned up. Two days later a little note came from Hertford:

_Dear Pennyfeather,_

_I wonder if you would care to come to tea next Tuesday, to meet the College Secretary of the League of Nations Union and the Chaplain of the Oxford prison. It would be so nice if you could._

Paul went and ate honey buns and anchovy toast. He liked the ugly, subdued little College, and he liked Stubbs.

As term went on Paul and Stubbs took to going for walks together, over Mesopotamia to Old Marston and Beckley. One afternoon, quite light-hearted at the fresh weather, and their long walk, and their tea, Stubbs signed _Randal Cantuar_ in the visitors’ book.

Paul rejoined the League of Nations Union and the O.S.C.U. On one occasion he and Stubbs and some other friends went to the prison to visit the criminals there and sing part-songs to them.

‘It opens the mind,’ said Stubbs, ‘to see all sides of life. How those unfortunate men appreciated our singing!’

One day in Blackwell’s bookshop Paul found a stout volume, which, the assistant told him, was rapidly becoming a best-seller. It was called _Mother Wales_, by Augustus Fagan. Paul bought it and took it back with him. Stubbs had already read it.

‘Most illuminating,’ he said. ‘The Hospital statistics are terrible. Do You think it would be a good idea to organize a joint debate with Jesus on the subject?’ The book was dedicated ‘_To my wife, a wedding present_’. It was eloquently written. When he had read it Paul put it on his shelves
next to Dean Stanley's *Eastern Church*.

One other incident recalled momentarily Paul's past life.

One day, at the beginning of his second year, as Paul and Stubbs were bicycling down the High as from one lecture to another, they nearly ran into an open Rolls-Royce that swung out of Oriel Street at a dangerous speed. In the back, a heavy fur rug over his knees, sat Philbrick. He turned round as he passed and waved a gloved hand to Paul over the hood.

'Hullo!' he said; 'hullo! How are you? Come and look me up one day. I'm living on the river — Skindle's.

Then the car disappeared down the High Steet, and Paul went on to his lecture.

'Who was your opulent friend?' asked Stubbs, rather impressed.

'Arnold Bennett,' said Paul.

'I thought I knew his face,' said Stubbs.

Then the lecturer came in, arranged his papers and began a lucid exposition of the heresies of the second century. There was a bishop in Bithynia, Paul learned, who had denied the Divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, the existence of good, the legality of marriage, and the validity of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction! How right they had been to condemn him! (The RE, pp. 245–248).

According to my decipherment, the same part in the MS for the above quoted is as follows:

Some months later Paul successfully passed Smalls and Matriculation and entered Scone College once more as a undergraduate. No one recognized him and after a few days he shaved of the moustache which had never suited him very well. He had quite expected this; people ( * ; a word cannot be deciphered) rarely did recognized him, even at the shops were he bought his books and ties. His scout remembered the name. 'There used to another Mr Pennyfeather on this staircase once' he said. 'a very queer gentleman. He used to take off all his clothes and go out and dance in the quad at night, sir, if you'd believe it. I don't know what became of him. They say he died in prison.' 'Nice quiet gentleman, too, except for his dancing. Must have been a little queer in his head, I suppose, we have a lot like that here one time and another' and he proceeded to tell Paul about a Siamese student who had attempted to buy one of the senior tutor's daughters.

On the second Sunday of term the Chaplain asked him to tea. They got on very well. There was another theological student there, a grave young man with a quiet voice called Stubbs. He and Paul called on ( * ) of often after that and went for a walk across Mesopotamia through Old Marston to Beckley where they had tea, and Stubbs quite light hearted at the fresh winter weather and their long walk, signed 'Randal Cantuar' in the visitor's book.

As the term went on Paul used often to visit Stubbs at about ten o'clock in the evening when their work for the day was over and they made cocoa together, ate chocoholate (*sic*) biscuits. Stubbs even invited Paul to join The League of Nations Union and took him one afternoon in company with the chaplain and several members of the O.S.C.U. to visit the criminals in the prison.
'It opens one's mind' said Stubbs, 'to see all sides of life.' (transcribed from the MS, p. 29 by me)

[The last part of Epilogue]

'Yes, I remember,' said Paul.

'Funny how things happen. You used to teach me the organ; d'you remember?'

'Yes, I remember,' said Paul.

'And then Margot Metroland wanted to marry you; d'you remember?'

'Yes,' said Paul.

'And then you went to prison, and Alastir – that's Margot Metroland's young man – and Metroland – that's her husband – got you out; d'you remember?'

'Yet,' said Paul, 'I remember.'

'And here we are talking to one another like this, up here, after all that! Funny, isn't it?'

'Yes, it is rather.

'Paul, do you remember a thing you said once at the Ritz – Alastair was there – that's Margot Metroland's young man, you know – d'you remember? I was rather tight then too. You said, "Fortune, a much-maligned lady". D'you remember that?'

'Yes,' said Paul, 'I remember.'

'Good old Paul! I knew you would. Let's drink to that now; shall we? How did it go? Damn, I've forgotten it. Never mind. I wish I didn't feel so ill.'

'You drink too much, Peter.'

'Oh, damn, what else is there to do? You going to be a clergyman, Paul?'

'Yes.'

'Damned funny that. You know you ought never to have got mixed up with me and Metroland. May I have another drink?'

'Time you went to bed, Peter, don't you think?'

'Yes, I suppose it is. Didn't mind my coming in, did you? After all, you used to teach me the organ; d'you remember? Thanks for the whisky!'

So Peter went out, and Paul settled down again in his chair. So the ascetic Ebionites used turn towards Jerusalem when they prayed. Paul made a note of it. Quite right to suppress them. Then he turned out the light and went into his bedroom to sleep. (The RE, pp. 251–252)

The following is the counterpart of the above quoted part in the MS deciphered by me:

// 'Yes I remember' said Paul. // 'Funny how things happen. You used to teach me the organ. do (sic) you remember? // Yes I remember,' said Paul. // 'And then Margot Avonfortt wanted to marry you. do (sic) you remember? // 'Yes said Paul. // 'And then you went to prison and Alastair that's Margot Avonfortts lover and Avonfortt, that's her husband, got you out, do (sic) you remember? // 'Yes' said Paul. 'I remember.' // And here we are talking to one another like this, up here, after all that. Funny isn't it? // 'Yes it is rather' // 'Paul do you remember a thing you said once – at the
Ritz - Alastair was there, that's Margot Avonfortt's lover you know - do (sic) you remember. I was rather tight then too. You said 'Fortune, a much maligned lady.' do (sic) you remember that? // 'Yes' said Paul, 'I remember. // 'Good old Paul, I knew you would. Lets (sic) drink to that now, shall we. How did it go. Damn I've forgotten it. Never mind. I wish I didn't feel so ill.' // 'Time you went to bed' // 'Yes I suppose it is. Didn't mind my coming in, did you? After all you used to teach me the organ, d'you remember? Thanks for the whisky.'

So Peter went out and Paul settled down again in his chair. (transcribed literally from the MS, p. 31 by me).

4. From the above contrastive analysis, it is reasonable to assume that the RE must reflect the wording of the TS, thus giving evidence of the considerable modifications imposed on the original manuscript MS.

Notes:

1. This article is based upon my previous articles, "Waugh's Decline and Fall: The 'Negligible' Differences between the 1962 and the 1928 Editions" (Bulletin of Nihon Taiiku University, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 33–46) and "The Considerable Changes Made between the Autographed Manuscript and the Typescript in Waugh's Decline and Fall" (Bulletin of Nihon Taiiku University, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 217–224), and includes significant citations from them both.

2. We have one more edition of this novel, so called 'American edition'. I shall not touch on this edition in this article.

3. This assertion is common to number of sources including Martin Stannard, Evelyn Waugh: The Early Years 1903–1933 (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1986, p. 152). Furthermore, I have a letter from Peters, Fraser & Dunlop which represents the estate of Evelyn Waugh stating that: "Neither we, the publishers here, nor the family have the original typescript of DECLINE & FALL."

4. Waugh published his first literary criticism, Rossetti: His Life and Works (1928) from this publisher.


8. Ibid., pp. 45–46

9. Ibid., p. 38.

10. Ibid., p. 34, 35, 36, 39, 40.

11. The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center Library of the University of Texas at Austin.


13. Ibid., p. 219. The title of Chapter VII of the RE is the same as that of Chapter VI of the MS.