

FAULKNER PRAISES JAMES JOYCE

William Faulkner

(1897-1962)

"I was a tramp then, and I didn't--I wasn't interested in literature nor literary people. They were--I was--there at the same time. I knew Joyce, I knew of Joyce, and I would go to some effort to go to the cafe that he inhabited to look at him. But that was the only literary man that I remember seeing in Europe in those days...I read *Ulysses* in the middle 20's and I had been scribbling for several years....When I read Joyce and Proust it is possible that my career as a writer was already fixed, so that there was no chance for it to be influenced other than in the tricks of the trade....You should approach Joyce's *Ulysses* as the illiterate Baptist preacher approaches the Old Testament: with faith....I have read *Ulysses* once. It is interesting, but I probably did not like it, for I never went back to it. One goes back to the books one likes....James Joyce was one of the great men of my time. He was electrocuted by the divine fire. He, Thomas Mann, were the great writers of my time. He was probably--might have been the greatest."

Paris Review interview