

"from selecting from the other sources or abbreviating them where necessary."  
 (The Old Test. Its Origins and Composition, p. 78) But if the redactor  
 "abbreviated" his sources he did not preserve a continuous document.

J. E. Wright states "We do not know E as a complete source but mainly as a supplementation of J, and Frank M. Cross, Jr. has argued persuasively that P can no longer be proved to be anything more than an editing and supplementing of JE." ("Exodus" in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible).

This is the critics' dilemma. If the redactor takes care to avoid anything that might degrade the Fathers in the eyes of the reader and he never says anything critical of Abraham, Jacob, and Noah then the redactor must have picked what he wanted and left out a lot that he did not want included. On the other hand ~~if~~ it is contended that the compiler was scrupulously impartial and did not tamper with or seek to harmonize divergent traditions. Either the compiler and redactor has been busy smoothing over discrepancies (Skinner, Genesis, p. 417n) or "he had no intention of rewriting all the traditions to make them fit into a smoothly consistent theological system. In fact he permitted theological archaisms to stand." (B. W. Anderson, 1966 ed., p. 167).