

O'Connell Bridge and Sackville Street in ruins in the aftermath of the Easter Rising

Senior Cycle Activities

There is an old saying, "A picture is worth ten thousand words?"

Very few photographs were taken in Sackville Street while the fighting took place during the 1916 Rising. After the fighting finished, a large number of photographs were taken by professional and amateur photographers to document the condition of the centre of Dublin after the fighting. They gave a graphic and dramatic indication of the destruction and devastation caused by the violence.

Once a photograph is taken, it instantly changes the present into the past, and provides an important window into the past. A visual image is sometimes easier to interpret than a written document, and allows us to speculate on the significance of the events shown. A viewer of the image can make their own conclusions on the meaning and impact of the picture, bringing the viewer close to the action of the image. The impact of this picture is improved by the photographer taking his picture from the top floor of a building on Aston Quay, on the south side of the river Liffey.

Questions and Activities

1. Identify physical features within the picture that have survived the week of fighting.
2. What do they tell us about life in Dublin before the Rising?
3. Look for buildings, advertisements, and statues.
4. Where can you find evidence of military activity in the picture?
(look at the clustering of people, and at various corners)
5. Why are the majority of people gathering on the left hand side of Sackville Street?
6. How many different modes of transport can you locate in the picture?
7. Dublin had an extensive tram system, but there are no trams to be seen. What evidence can you see of tram tracks. Can you locate the electric wires used to power the trams?

Activity:

Write a report from the point of view of a newspaper journalist describing the condition of the area, and the reactions of the individuals, after the Rising.

Activity:

Look at these two postcards that shows Sackville Street before and after the Rising.

One is taken from the [same perspective](http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000041268) (<http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000041268>) as the photograph use above, and the other is a postcard that shows Sackville Street [before and after](http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000554055) (<http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000554055>) the Rising. Use the magnifying button to examine the features in detail.

Identify three significant elements that are present in the earlier scene that is not to be seen in the post-Rising scene.

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