

# Capstones Shift: architectural impacts and legacies of the revolutionary period in Dublin

*Monday 24 April 1916. Easter Monday. Holiday. Golf all day. Sinn Fein rising in the city 12 noon.*

DIARY OF ERNEST J. ANTHONY, QUANTITY SURVEYOR (IAA PKS COLLECTION 77/I/D 93)

Capstones shift, nothing resettles right.

Telluric ash and fire-spores boil away.

SEAMUS HEANEY, 'ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN', DISTRICT AND CIRCLE, 2006

The early 20th-Century Irish revolutionary period left many legacies, not the least of which was its direct impact on buildings. From the loss of buildings destroyed to the debates about how to repair the city fabric and on to the rebuilding itself, there is ample scope to reflect on the physical impact of the Easter Rising, the War of Independence and the Civil War, on central Dublin in particular.

This exhibition draws on the holdings of the Irish Architectural Archive to focus on a selection of prominent Dublin buildings destroyed, or utterly changed, by the events of Easter 1916 and later. These buildings were central to myriad social, commercial, political and religious patterns of life. Their absence, or removal from use, would have had an immediate and disconcerting effect on the daily routines and interactions of thousands of ordinary Dubliners as they lived, moved, worked, prayed and entertained themselves in the post-Rising city: quotidian disruptions making unavoidable and unignorable the profound political phase-shift that had occurred.

Dublin was not the only place affected by the violent destruction of buildings. The centre of Cork was burned in December 1920, while over 275 country houses were attacked and destroyed between the start of the War of Independence and the end of the Civil War. But the shock of widespread building damage was first felt in Dublin and recurred more often, while the quality of many of the buildings destroyed, coupled with the fact that Dublin became the capital of the newly independent state, brought a particular intensity to the debates around loss and rebuilding.



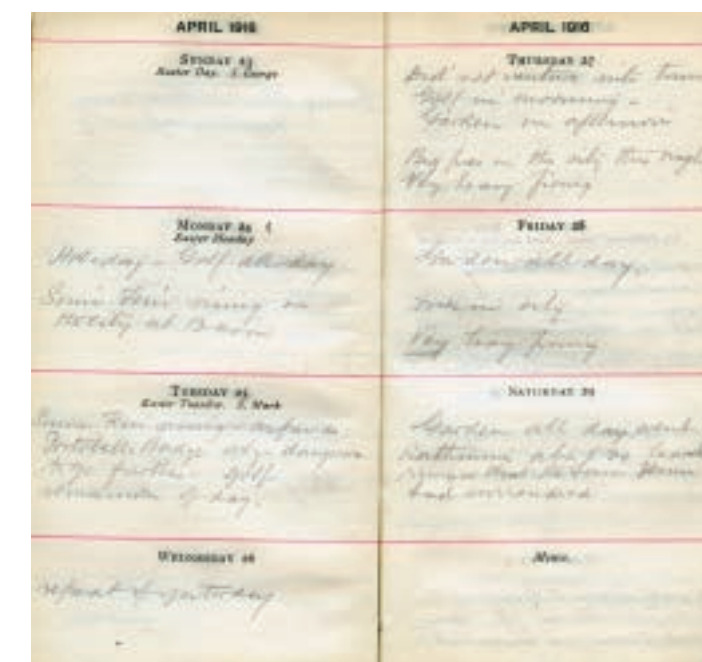
General view of O'Connell Street, Lower (Sackville Street, Lower, until 1924), c.1890  
IAA Photographic Collections 12/28V4



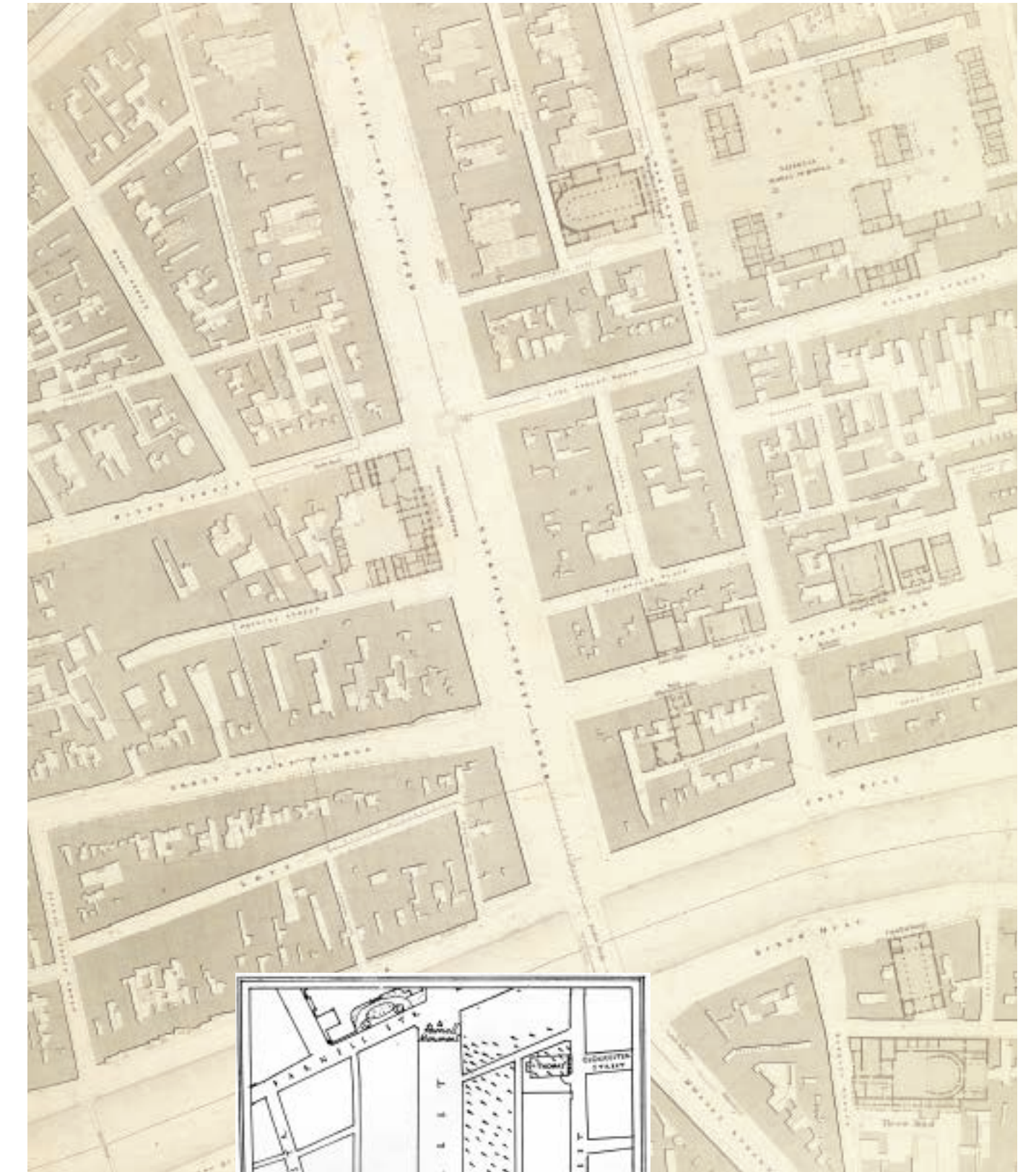
General view of O'Connell Street, Lower, May 1916  
IAA Westropp Collection, 96/57 Vol. 10 p. 46 1



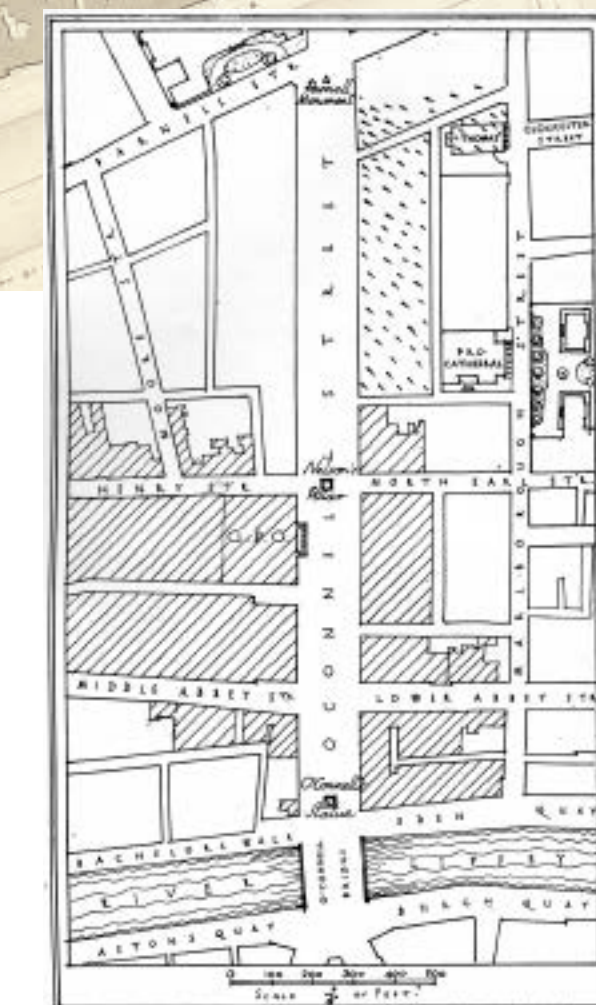
Main hall, Castle Bernard, Co. Cork, 1921  
IAA Photographic Collections 19/57Y1



Diary of Ernest J. Anthony, Quantity Surveyor  
IAA PKS Collection 77/I/D 93



ABOVE: OS map of O'Connell Street, 1866



LEFT: Map showing destroyed areas, 1916 and 1922  
Dublin of the Future, Civics Institute of Ireland, 1922