

Topic: #

Analyse and Discuss Historical Photographs – A Selection of Public Funerals in Glasnevin Cemetery

Please note: This lesson focuses on photographs of a selection of public funerals in Glasnevin Cemetery. It has been designed for use with Senior Post-Primary classes.

■ Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Analyse a selection of photographs from the past.
- Discuss their opinions with the class.
- Compare their judgements against contextual information about each photograph.
- Develop an understanding of public funerals in history.
- Think critically about the advantages and challenges of using photographs as a primary source.
- Apply this approach to the analysis of other historical images.

The tradition of public funerals in Glasnevin Cemetery was established in the 19th century. The funerals of famous figures such as 'The Liberator' Daniel O'Connell and the 'Uncrowned King of Ireland' Charles Stewart Parnell attracted huge crowds to Dublin and to Glasnevin Cemetery.

Go to the Learning Portal Timeline and find the Map Hotspot on the O'Connell Circle. Here you find sketches, newspaper reports and other information about the funeral of Daniel O'Connell on 5 August 1847.



Image courtesy of the National Library of Ireland from the Illustrated London News. Crowds gather outside the home of Daniel O'Connell (Merrion Square, Dublin) on the day of his funeral.

■ Ideas to begin:

- Brainstorm: Ask students to think of memorable photographs in history (e.g. the US Moon Landings or the visit of President Kennedy to Ireland in the 1960s). Students could use their history books to identify examples in class or the teacher may wish to display examples to the class.
- Ask students to fill in this simple grid at the beginning of this topic and return to it at the end of the topic (can complete in copybooks).

■ Discussion points:

- What makes these images memorable?
- Is it the person?
- The location?
- The atmosphere?
- Is the content surprising or shocking perhaps?
- Is it the photograph itself? Perhaps it was staged or altered in some way?

When studying the past...

what are the advantages of using photographs as a primary source?	what are the challenges of using photographs as a primary source?
Pre-topic	
Post-topic	

■ Suggested Approach in Class

(Content will take more than one lesson to complete.)

Step 1. Divide the class into groups and assign specific tasks to each group member: Time-Keeper, Record-Keeper, Facilitator (to ensure that all students are part of the discussion) and Speaker.

Step 2. Analyse and discuss each of the images below. If possible, display the image and increase its size on a whiteboard and/or print copies for each group. To start, it may be beneficial for the teacher to choose one image and analyse this with the entire class - so students understand the approach. Students can then analyse the remaining images in groups.

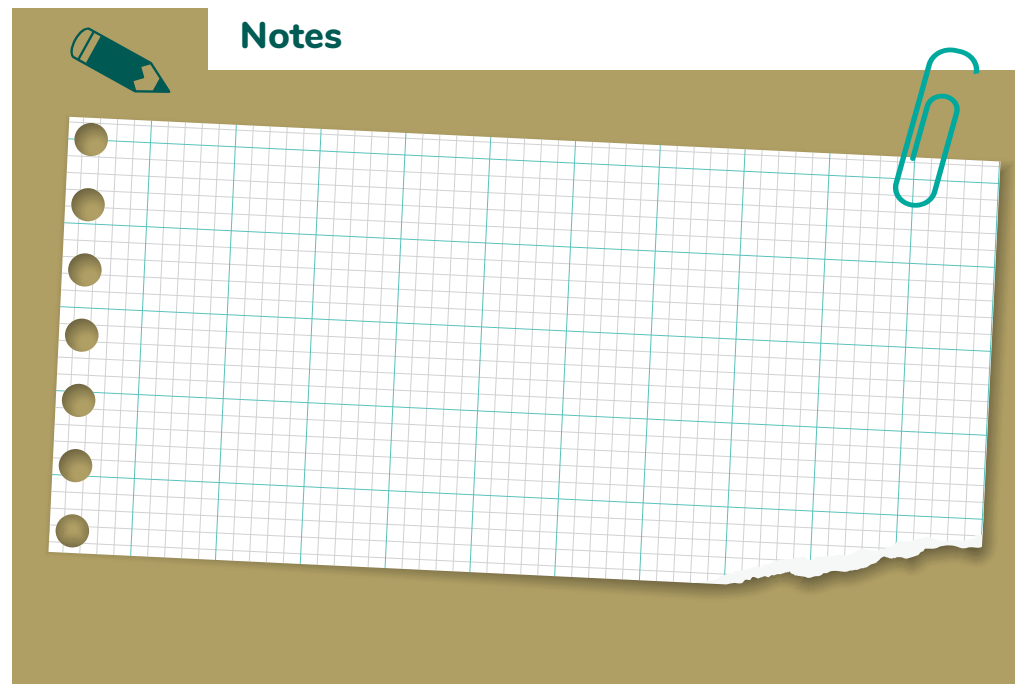
Step 3. After working through each photograph, allow time to receive feedback from each group and record student answers.

Step 4. Go to the 'Discover More' section (contains contextual information) at the end of the lesson to discover facts about each photograph and the historical figure in question. Were students on the right track with their analysis and opinions?

(You may want to work through all of the images at once and then go to the 'Discover More' section, or work through each image and the relevant contextual information one by one.)

Step 5. There are discussion prompts in the 'Discover More' section. These are for use after students have analysed the image and read the contextual information, otherwise it will reveal answers that students may reach independently.

Step 6. Complete the Reflection and Extension Activities below.



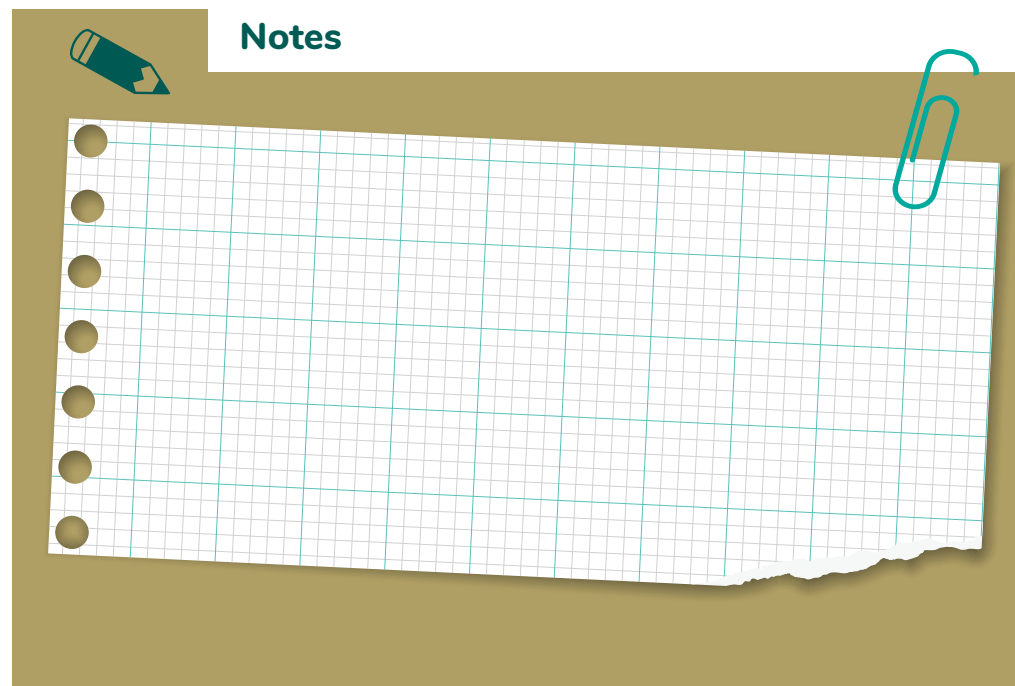
■ Reflection Activities (Post-topic)

- How were certain funerals used as public events? (Students might focus on the year (context) that the funeral occurred; what other notable events were taking place at this time? Why was the funeral organised as a public event? Did it provide an opportunity for people to gather and why?)
- Which historical figures were students most familiar with? Were any of the people discussed new to the class?
- Ask students to reflect on the types of information they were able to learn from the photographs. What information was absent or limited from the photographs?
- Students: Reflect on this topic and list 5 new pieces of information that you discovered about the past. Share this list with the class.

Extension Activities

Depending on the context and interests of the class, ask each student to choose a suitable historical photograph from the timeframe/category of:

- a. The Decade of Centenaries
 - b. World History
 - c. Irish History in general.
- Students will then analyse the image, using the approach outlined throughout these lessons, and present on their chosen historical photograph for 3-5 minutes in class.
 - Students should apply critical thinking to this task and highlight the benefits and challenges of using their chosen image as a source to investigate the past.
 - Contextual information should be included also as this will provide the class with a wider understanding of the chosen photograph.





Photograph 1: Image Dublin Cemeteries Trust



■ Photograph 1

Did You Know? The original photograph is black and white. In the lead up to the centenary of the pictured event, the original photograph was colourised by a specialist who researched every detail to ensure historical accuracy. Original uniforms were consulted where possible to ensure that all colours used were correct!

1. Describe what is happening at this funeral. At the moment the image was captured, what was the main event and/or focus of attention?
2. Examine the entire photograph. How many groups of people can you identify?

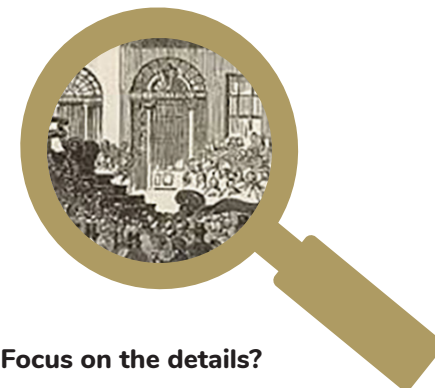
Hint: The men in the white coats worked as gravediggers in the cemetery.

3. What details do you notice about those gathered? Think about age, body language, facial expressions, the way they are dressed, etc. Does anything in this image surprise you?
4. Discuss the entire scene. Break down the image into its parts: Background, Middle Ground, and Foreground.
5. Why did the photographer capture this particular moment? What could have been the possible purpose for taking this photograph?
6. With no other evidence - apart from this visual source - what statements could you make about:
 - a. The person whose funeral it is?
 - b. The context of the time?
 - c. Approximately when (think of the century or decade) the photograph was taken?
 - d. You may want to make educated guesses about the identity or life of the person.

7. In your opinion, what are the advantages of using colourised images to study an event in the past? Do you think there are any challenges when using these images?
8. Do you have any questions about what you can see?



Look at the bigger picture



Focus on the details?



Look at:

- Background
- Middle ground
- Foreground

(Note: Each of the images that follow are similar in theme. However, there are differences between each image. These differences will help to reveal further details about the identity of each person in question.)



Photograph 2



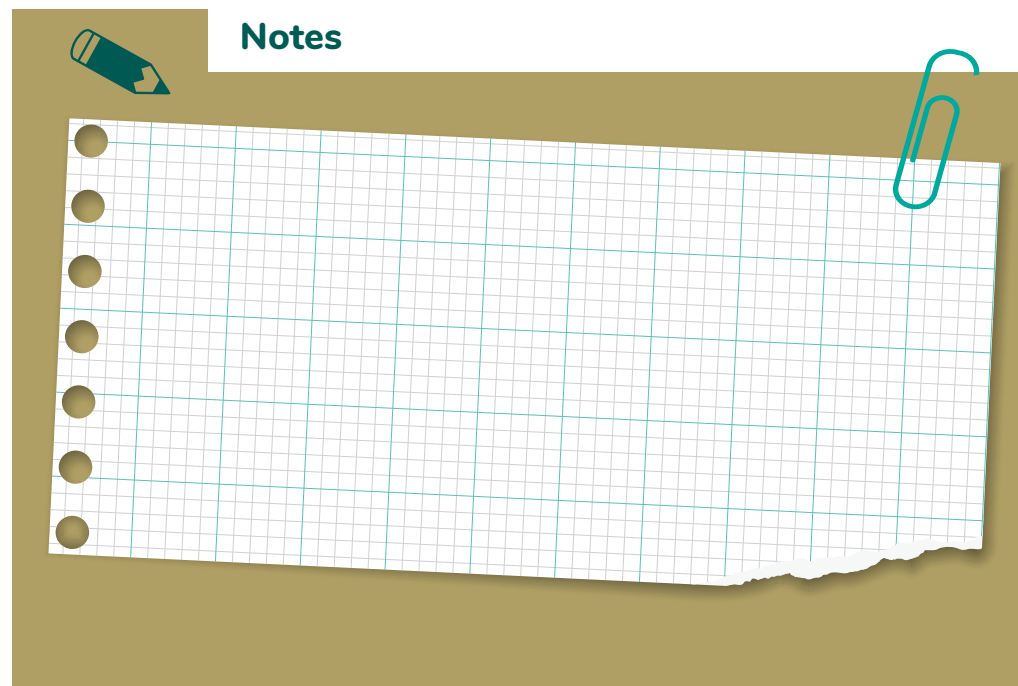
Image courtesy of the
National Library of
Ireland

■ Photograph 2

1. Describe what is happening at this funeral. At the moment the image was captured, what was the main event and/or focus of attention?
2. Examine the entire photograph. How many groups of people can you identify?

Hint: The men in the white coats worked as gravediggers in the cemetery.

3. Discuss the entire scene. Break down the image into its parts: Background, Middle Ground, and Foreground.
4. What details do you notice about those gathered?
 - Think about their age, body language, facial expressions, the way they are dressed, etc.
 - Does anything in this image surprise you?
5. In your opinion, why did the photographer capture this particular moment?
6. With no other evidence - apart from this visual source - what statements could you make about:
 - a. The person whose funeral it is?
 - b. The context of the time?
 - c. Approximately when (think of the century or decade) the photograph was taken?
 - d. You may want to make educated guesses about the identity or life of the person.
7. Do you have any questions about what you can see?





Photograph 3

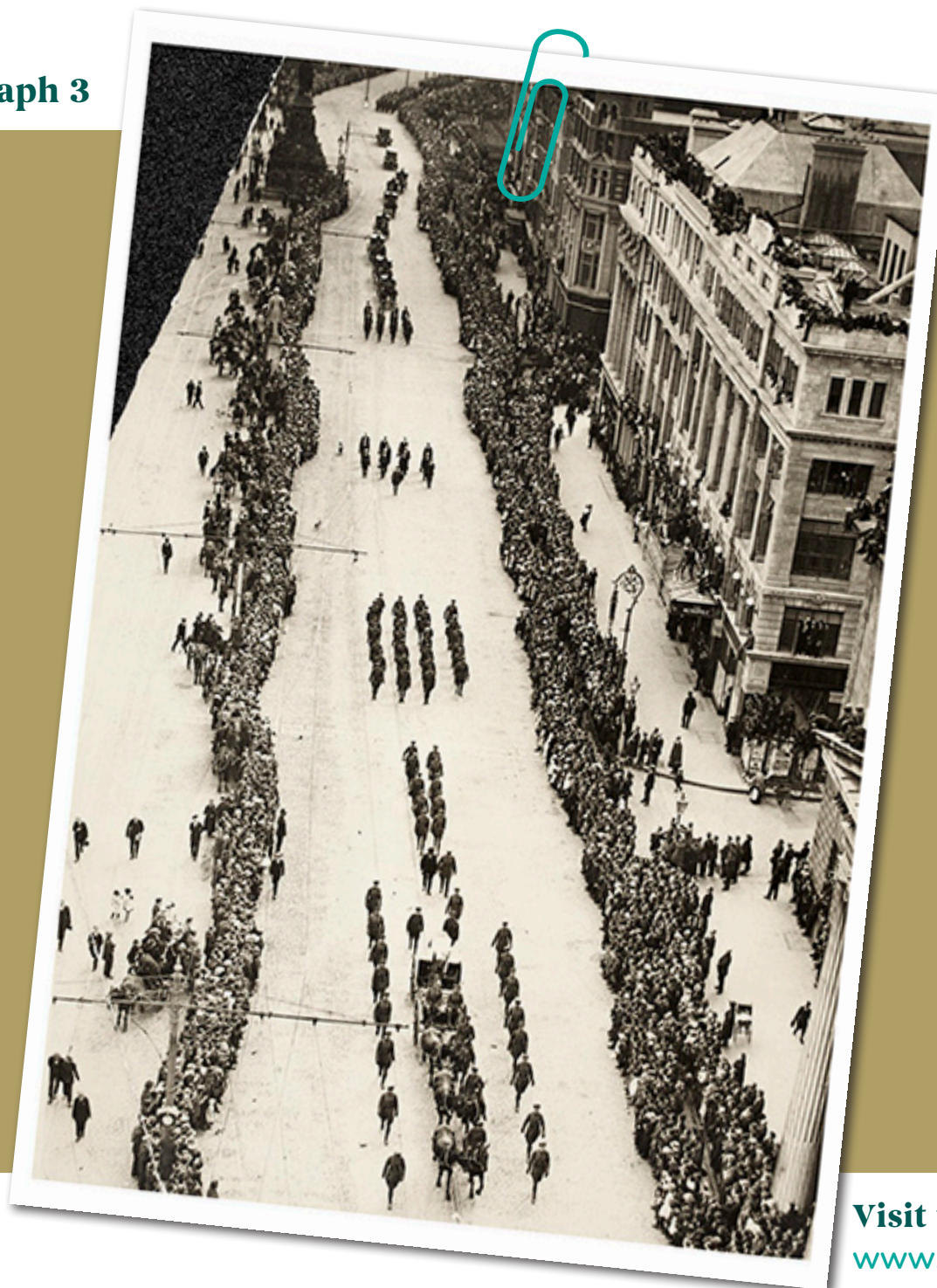


Image courtesy of
the National Library
of Ireland

EXPERIENCE
Clasnevin
IRELAND'S NATIONAL CEMETERY

Visit the Learning Portal:
www.glasnevin.crossculture.ie

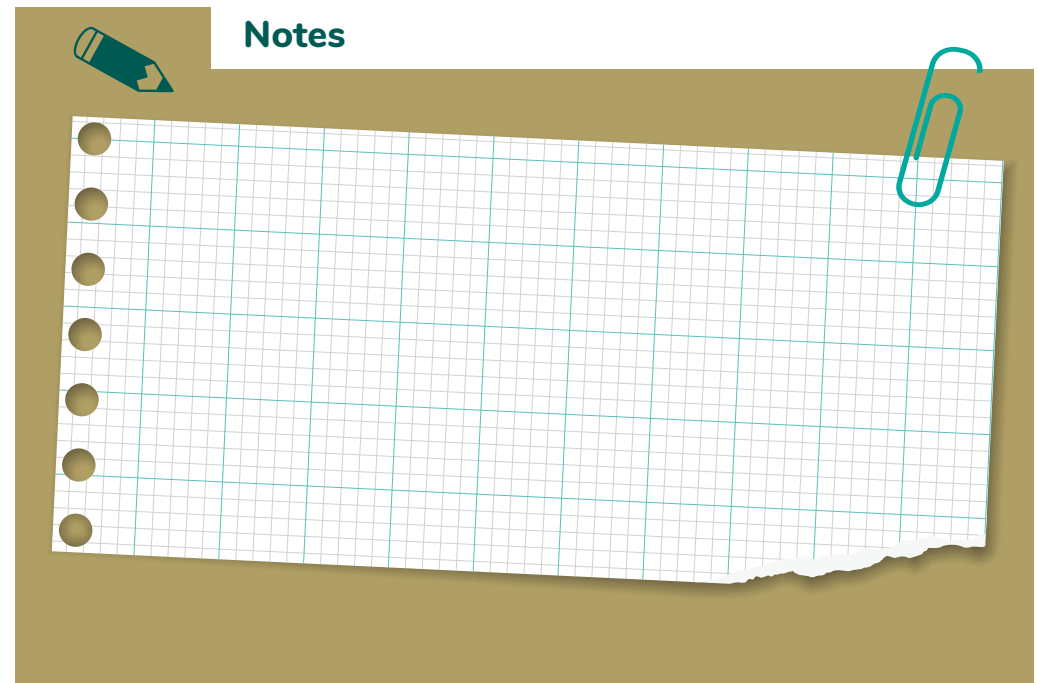
■ Photograph 3

1. Describe what is happening at this funeral. At the moment the image was captured, what was the main event and/or focus of attention?
2. Discuss the entire scene. Break down the image into its parts: Background, Middle Ground, and Foreground.
3. Examine the entire photograph. Are there different groups of people gathered?
4. What details do you notice about those gathered?
 - Think about their body language, how they are spread out, the way they are dressed, etc.
 - Does anything in this image surprise you?
5. Identify the location. The section of the building that is partly visible on the right hand side of the photograph will help you with this. (Also look closely at the roof!)

Hint: 6 years before this image was taken, the headquarters of the 1916 Rising were located in that building.

6. Why did the photographer capture this particular moment and location? How do you think this angle was captured?
7. With no other evidence - apart from this visual source - what statements could you make about:
 - a. The person whose funeral it is?
 - b. The context of the time?

- c. Approximately when the photograph was taken?
- d. You may want to make educated guesses about the identity or life of the person.
8. Do you have any questions about what you can see?





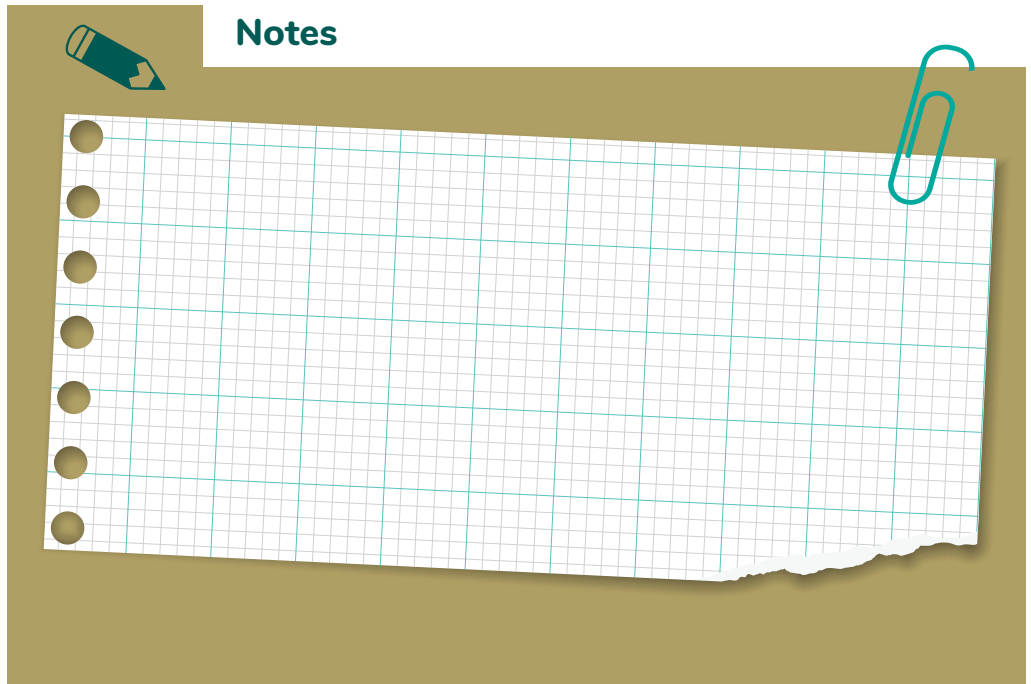
Photograph 4



Image courtesy of
the NMI Historical
Collections Online
Website.

■ Photograph 4

1. Describe what is happening at this funeral. At the moment the image was captured, what was the main event and/or focus of attention?
2. Examine the entire photograph. How many groups of people can you identify?
3. Do you recognise any specific people?
4. Discuss the entire scene. Break down the image into its parts: Background, Middle Ground, and Foreground.
5. What details do you notice about those gathered?
 - Think about their age, body language, facial expressions, the way they are dressed, etc.
 - Does anything in this image surprise you?
6. Why did the photographer capture this particular moment?
7. With no other evidence - apart from this visual source - what statements could you make about:
 - a. The person whose funeral it is?
 - b. The context of the time?
 - c. Approximately when the photograph was taken?
 - d. You may want to make educated guesses about the identity or life of the person.
8. Do you have any questions about what you can see?



■ Discover More

Below you will discover more about each of the photographs above and about the historical figure in question. Teachers - Use this information to check the general accuracy of student responses to each photograph.

■ Photograph 1

Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa was born in Rosscarbery, Co. Cork in 1831. He lived through the Great Irish Famine and lost his father to Famine Fever in 1847. Soon after his father's death, the family emigrated to America while the young O'Donovan Rossa stayed in Cork.

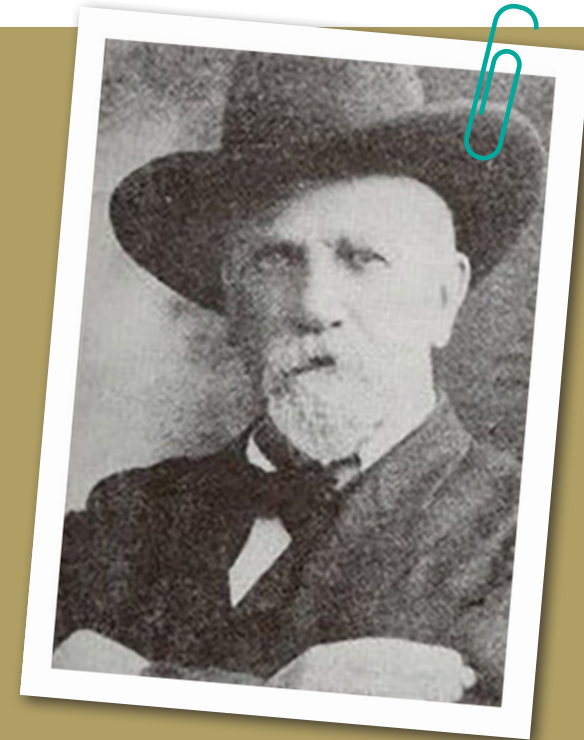
In 1856, he was a founding member of the Phoenix National and Literary Society whose aim was 'the liberation of Ireland by force of arms'. O'Donovan Rossa soon became part of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) which was established around this time.

In 1865, O'Donovan Rossa was accused of plotting a Fenian rebellion. He was placed on trial for high treason and was sentenced to penal servitude for life. While in prison in England, he was successful in a by-election in Tipperary and won a seat in the British Parliament. However, the result was judged invalid as he was a convicted prisoner.

After serving six years, O'Donovan Rossa, along with four other Fenians, was released under the agreement that they would not return to Ireland or to any part of the United Kingdom until the end of their original sentences. He travelled to New York and was part of the Irish Republican movement there. O'Donovan Rossa and others organised a dynamite campaign which resulted in bombings in London and other locations in Britain. In later years, he did return to Ireland and toured the country to inform audiences of his years in prison.

O'Donovan Rossa died in St. Vincent's Hospital, Staten Island, New York, at the age of 84. On hearing the news of his death, senior IRB member, Thomas Clarke, sent a telegram with a clear message - 'Send his body home at once'. Plans were at an early stage for a Rising in Ireland and the death of O'Donovan Rossa presented an opportunity for republicans to gather in Dublin.

The funeral committee (organised by Clarke, who worked alongside John Devoy in America) featured many well-known figures and some including Arthur Griffith, The O' Rahilly, and Cathal Brugha were buried alongside O'Donovan Rossa during the decade that followed. The funeral took place on 1 August 1915. O'Donovan Rossa lay in state for several days in City Hall and on the day of his burial special trains ran from all over Ireland. The funeral was very much a managed event, overseen by Clarke and the IRB.



Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa

Many organisations were involved including: the Irish Volunteers, the National Volunteers, Cumann na mBan, and the Irish Citizen Army. It is estimated that 50,000 people lined the streets of Dublin, as thousands walked in the funeral procession which was managed by Thomas MacDonagh.

The *Irish Times* stated that 'the funeral came into College Green about 3 o'clock, headed by a body of Volunteers with the St. James' Band. And that it 'was nearing 6 o'clock when the hearse passed through the main gates of Glasnevin Cemetery.' Huge numbers gathered at Glasnevin Cemetery.

The funeral committee oversaw admittance by ticket. Clarke chose Patrick Pearse to deliver the graveside oration as part of the 'new generation' of republicans. Dressed in the Irish Volunteer's uniform, Pearse delivered a famous speech which ended with the lines, 'They have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.' The Easter Rising began within the year.

Fenian: Broadly speaking, the term Fenian was used in the 19th century to refer to Irish Republican groups, at the centre of which were the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) and Clan na Gael in America.

Note: The colourised photograph appeared on the front page of *The Irish Examiner* on 1 August 2015. Why was it published on this date?

■ Discuss

How accurate were your answers and judgements about Photograph 1?

Perhaps you said for question:

No. 1: There was a speech being delivered.

No. 2: Did you pick out the military uniforms and the St. James' Band?

No. 6: There was interest in this funeral due to the large and varied crowd and therefore the person was well known.

No. 7: Advantages of colourised photographs include a more vivid insight into a specific moment in time, provides more detail, etc. Challenges include asking if the colours that were chosen for the image are true to the time and the event?

■ Photograph 2

Thomas Ashe was born in 1885 in Co. Kerry. He trained as a teacher and was principal of Corduff National School in Lusk, Co. Dublin. Ashe was a native Irish speaker and was very interested in Irish culture; he was active in the Gaelic League. Ashe joined the Irish Volunteers in 1913 at their inaugural meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, and he was also a member of the IRB.

During the 1916 Rising, Ashe commanded the 5th (Fingal) Battalion of the Irish Volunteers in Ashbourne, Co. Meath. He was arrested and was court-martialled on the same day as Éamon de Valera. Both men were sentenced to death. Later, their sentences were commuted to penal servitude for life and they became surviving senior leaders of the Rising. While in Lewes prison, England, Ashe wrote the poem, *Let Me Carry Your Cross for Ireland* Lord. He was released in the general amnesty of republican prisoners in June 1917 and 4,000 people gathered in Kerry to welcome back Ashe and fellow Kerryman, Austin Stack.¹

However, Ashe was arrested again in August. After delivering a speech in Co. Longford, he was arrested for trying to 'cause disaffection'. Republican prisoners in Mountjoy demanded to be treated as political prisoners (not as criminal prisoners). These demands were not met and Ashe, along with others, began a hunger strike in the prison on 20 September 1917. Ashe was forcibly fed by prison authorities and died from his treatment on 25 September 1917. He was 32 years old.

The funeral of Thomas Ashe, on 30 September, was an important moment for republican organisations, and demonstrations were held in the city. His was the first public funeral to take place in the aftermath of the 1916 Rising and there were many similarities to the organised funeral of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, which had occurred only two years earlier.

The organisation of Ashe's funeral came as the republican movement were regrouping after the Rising and it presented an opportunity to showcase this reorganisation. Thousands joined his funeral procession including: Irish Volunteers, Trade Unionists, the Irish Citizen Army, and Cumann na mBan.

'The cortège took a roundabout route to Glasnevin so that it passed sites associated with the patriot dead – up at High Street, it passed Tailors hall where Wolfe Tone and United Irishmen met prior to the United Irish 1798 rebellion, and up through Thomas St. where it passed the site of execution of Robert Emmet, whose failed rebellion in 1803 was still remembered in song and story.



**Image Dublin
Cemeteries Trust.**

¹ C.J. Woods and William Murphy, Thomas Ashe, in *The Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <https://www.dib.ie/biography/ashe-thomas-tomas-aghas-a0247>



Back onto the Quays it would pass near the Four Courts and, onto O'Connell St, it passed the GPO, important sites for the 1916 Rising. The message here was of Ashe, now in his turn, joining the pantheon of martyred patriots for Irish freedom.²

The death of Ashe saw an outpouring of support for the republican cause. Thousands filed past his coffin as he lay in state in City Hall and it is estimated the 30 - 40,000 people lined the streets of Dublin for his funeral. On 1 October, *The Irish Independent* stated that, 'Dublin was yesterday a city of almost universal mourning for the late Mr. Thomas Ashe.' Many newspapers of the day also commented on the 'military precision' with which the day was organised.

The procession made its way to Glasnevin Cemetery and a volley of gunshots was fired over the grave of Thomas Ashe. The oration was delivered by 27 year old Michael Collins who told the gathered crowds, 'Nothing additional remains to be said. That volley which we have just heard is the only speech which is proper to make above the grave of a dead Fenian'.

■ Discuss



How accurate were your answers and judgements about Photograph 2?

Perhaps you said for question:

No. 1: There was a gunshot volley being delivered.

No. 3: Did you pick out the crowds and those standing on monuments in the background to get a better view?

No. 6: There was interest in this funeral due to the large and varied crowd and therefore the person was well known. Judging by the uniforms, this person was involved with a military organisation, etc.

² Dr. Mary McAuliffe, 'Carrying a cross for Ireland: Thomas Ashe in profile', <https://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/index.php/articles/carrying-a-cross-for-ireland-thomas-ashe-in-profile>

■ Photograph 3

Michael Collins was born in 1890 in Woodfield, Clonakilty, Co. Cork, the youngest of eight children. At the age of 16, he emigrated to work in London and joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood in 1909.

It is said that fellow Corkman, Sam Maguire, swore Collins into the IRB. In London, Collins was active in the Gaelic League and the GAA. He became a member of the Irish Volunteer Force and returned to Ireland for the 1916 Rising. He acted as an aide-de-camp (military assistant) to Joseph Plunkett in the G.P.O.

After the Rising, Collins was arrested and sent to Frongoch prison camp in Wales; it was here that he emerged as an influential leader. Once released, Collins began reorganising the IRB and the Irish Volunteers (soon to be known as the IRA). In the 1918 General Election, he was elected to represent Cork South. Sinn Féin followed a policy of abstentionism and established the First Dáil on 21 January 1919. In the First Dáil, Collins served as Minister of Home Affairs and later as Minister of Finance.

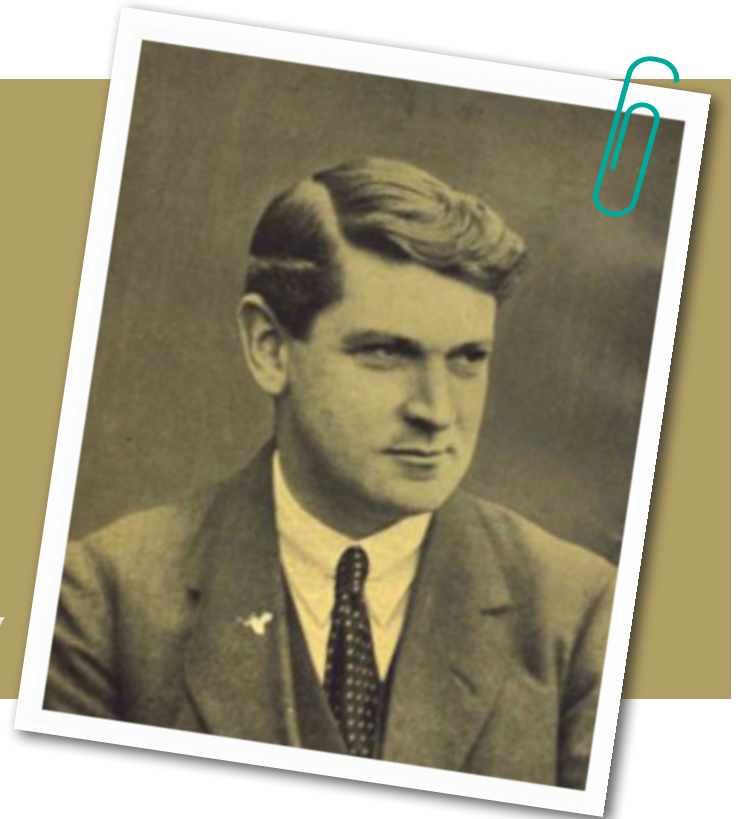
During the War of Independence, Collins was Director of Intelligence for the Irish Republican Army (IRA). He organised weapons and a system of spies. The war was fought using guerrilla warfare - in the form of flying columns - against British forces. Collins put together the 'Squad', a group of trained gunmen whose aim was to target British spies and intelligence efforts in Ireland.

A truce was called on 11 July 1921 and Collins was selected as one of the delegates to attend negotiations in London with the British Government. The Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed on 6 December 1921. Collins saw the Treaty as a stepping stone to further independence. As the delegates returned to Ireland he was reported to have said, 'I have signed my own death warrant'.

Divisions between those who were pro-Treaty and those who were anti-Treaty intensified and the Irish Civil War began in June 1922. Collins became Commander-in-Chief of the National Army of the Irish Free State. On 22 August 1922, Michael Collins, while travelling with a military column, was ambushed at the village of Béal na mBláth (the mouth of the flowers) on the road from Bandon to Cork city. Michael Collins was shot and killed. He was 31 years old.



Image courtesy of
the National Library
of Ireland



Collins' body was brought to Dublin by ship and lay in state for three days in Dublin City Hall. His funeral took place on 28 August and it is estimated that 300,000 people lined the streets of Dublin.

The funeral procession departed the Pro-Cathedral at 12.30, a horse drawn gun carriage carried the coffin. The roads outside Glasnevin Cemetery were thronged with people as the funeral procession arrived shortly after three o'clock. In many parts of the city, work (with the exception of essential services), was suspended and businesses in different parts of the country closed as memorial masses took place.

The firing party fired three volleys and the graveside oration was delivered by General Richard Mulcahy. *The Irish Independent* reported that the funeral procession was three miles long and that the funeral was an 'Unparalleled Tribute' and the 'Greatest Pageant of Sorrow Ever Seen in Dublin'.³

You can watch a recording of scenes from the funeral on
<https://www.britishpathe.com/video/funeral-of-michael-collins>

■ Discuss

How accurate were your answers and judgements about Photograph 3?

Perhaps you said for question:

- No. 1:** The carriage was carrying the coffin and leading the funeral procession.
- No. 2:** Did you notice people on the roofs of buildings in the background and middle ground?
- No. 5:** Did you identify one of the buildings as the G.P.O.? Therefore, making the location O'Connell St., Dublin.
- No. 7:** There was interest in this funeral due to the large and varied crowd and therefore the person was well known. Judging by the uniforms this person was involved with a military organisation, etc.

³ *The Irish Independent*, 30 August, 1922.

■ Photograph 4

Constance Gore Booth was born in London in 1868. Her family were Anglo-Irish landowners with their residence at Lissadell House in Co. Sligo. Constance was educated by a governess and spent her childhood between England and Ireland. She was deeply interested in art and as an adult persuaded her family to allow her to study Art.

It was around this time that she became involved in the suffrage movement and presided over a meeting of the Sligo Women's Suffrage Society in 1896.⁴ Whilst studying in Paris, she met a Polish count called Casimir Dunin-Markievicz. They married in London and later settled in Dublin, where Constance became interested in nationalist politics and social issues.

She joined Sinn Féin in 1908 and was a member of Inghinidhe na hÉireann which later merged with Cumann na mBan. In 1909 she co-founded Na Fianna Éireann, a nationalist scouting organisation for boys.

During the 1913 Lockout, Markievicz ran a soup kitchen in Liberty Hall to aid struggling families. As a member of the Irish Citizen Army, she was second in command at St. Stephen's Green and the College of Surgeons during the 1916 Rising. She was also President of Cumann na mBan at this time. As a leading figure in the Rising, Markievicz was sentenced to death but her sentence was changed to penal servitude for life. She was released in the General Amnesty for republican prisoners in June 1917.

In 1918, Markievicz was accused of being part of the 'German Plot', and was arrested again. Whilst in prison, she stood as a Sinn Féin candidate in the 1918 General Election and was elected for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin City. Following Sinn Féin's policy of abstentionism, she did not take her seat, but was the first woman ever elected to the British Parliament.

⁴ Senia Paseta, Constance Georgine Markievicz, in The Dictionary of Irish Biography, <https://www.dib.ie/biography/markievicz-constance-georgine-a5452>

Countess Markievicz was released from prison in March 1919 and became the Minister for Labour in the First Dáil. As was the case for other ministers, Markievicz was on the run during this time and served two jail sentences - one in Dublin and one in Cork.

Markievicz opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty and was actively involved in the Irish Civil War. She also toured America to gather support for the Anti-Treaty side. She was successful in the General Election of 1923. However, along with other republicans, she refused to take the oath of allegiance to the British King and so could not sit as a member of the Dáil. She was arrested for republican activities in November 1923 and led a hunger strike in prison.



Image courtesy of
the National Library
of Ireland



Fianna Fáil was established by Éamon de Valera in 1926. Markievicz joined the new party and was elected in the 1927 General Election. However, shortly afterwards, after some years of illness, she was admitted to hospital and died on 15 July 1927. She was 59 years old. It was reported that when she died those present included, 'Count Markievicz, his son, Mr. de Valera, Mrs. Sheehy-Skeffington and some other friends.'⁵

Countess Markievicz's coffin was brought to the Rotunda in Dublin on Saturday 16 July. 'The funeral procession was of large proportions and was participated in by many public representatives, labour bodies being strongly in evidence.' She was not given a state funeral by the Irish Free State. She lay in state in the Rotunda overnight and was taken to Glasnevin Cemetery on the following day, accompanied by members of Na Fianna carrying wreaths.

The gravediggers' burial rules stated that no burials could occur on a Sunday. Therefore, the coffin was placed in a vault next to the O'Connell Tower and the burial took place on the following day.

The oration was delivered by Éamon de Valera and it began with the following, 'Madame Markievicz is gone from us; Madame, the friend of the toiler, the lover of the poor. Ease and station she put aside, and took the hard way of service with the weak and downtrodden.'⁶

■ Discuss

How accurate were your answers and judgements about Photograph 4?

Perhaps you said for question:

No. 1: People are gathered to lay wreaths.

No. 3: Did you recognise Éamon de Valera?

No. 5: Did you notice that some of those gathered were younger than expected in age? These figures were members of Na Fianna Éireann, which was established by Countess Markievicz.

⁵ *The Irish Independent*, 15 July 1927.

⁶ *The Irish Independent*, 19 July 1927.