



PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday, 12th January 2016

National Library of Ireland announces partnership with Google's 1916 virtual experience

The [National Library of Ireland \(NLI\)](#) has today (12.01.16) announced its partnership with the Google Cultural Institute's 1916 virtual tour 'Dublin Rising 1916-2016', as part of the Ireland 2016 centenary programme. [Dublin Rising 1916-2016](#) is a virtual city streets tour exploring the iconic places, people and stories of 100 years ago, narrated by actor Colin Farrell and featuring exhibitions from six prestigious cultural institutions. The virtual tour was launched at an event in Dublin this evening by An Taoiseach Enda Kenny, TD and the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys, TD.

As well as bringing viewers worldwide to parts of Dublin synonymous with the Rising, the interactive Google Street View tour also offers unique access to important historical and cultural resource material. The visitors will stop at city centre locations as they are today, hear what happened there and click to explore photos, stories and witness statements from the Dublin of 1916. The aim of the experience is to enable anyone, anywhere to participate in the 1916 Centenary.

Google's new virtual experience has been created in partnership with leading Irish cultural institutions, including the National Library of Ireland, Military Archives, Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, the Abbey Theatre, the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College Dublin Library alongside Century Ireland.

As part of the experience, the NLI has shared two special items from the online collections:

- Joseph Plunkett's notebook, kept throughout the Easter Rising from his position in the General Post Office. The journal captures the drama and intensity of revolution from the inside;
- Draft of the notice of the rebel surrender, signed by Patrick Pearse on Saturday, 20 April 1916. The ability to zoom in on the image makes it easier to read the writing, which is pencil on cardboard.

In October 2013, the NLI was the first cultural institution in Ireland to partner with the [Google Cultural Institute](#), which collaborates with hundreds of museums, art galleries and archives around the world. The Institute aims to make important cultural material available and accessible to everyone, and to digitally preserve this material in order to educate and inspire future generations. Initially, three of the NLI's photographic exhibitions were hosted - [Power and Privilege: The Big House in Ireland](#); [Witness to War](#); and [Dubliners](#).

Commenting on the announcement, Dr Sandra Collins, Director of the NLI, said: "The National Library's holdings constitute the most comprehensive collection of Irish documentary material in the world, and we are continually collecting and preserving for now and the future. Our existing partnership with the Google Cultural Institute has helped us to share these wonderful treasures with audiences worldwide. The Library recognises the value in partnerships with digital innovators such as Google, in order to enhance global access to our collections. Combining digital innovation with our nation's cultural and social heritage allows us to share the story of 1916 with the world."

Paul Shovlin, Chair of the National Library's Board, added: "At the heart of this wonderful partnership with the Google Cultural Institute, and indeed the National Library's 2016 programme, is our core mission: collecting and making available and accessible Irish memory and heritage for people everywhere around the world. In 1916, the National Library was an intellectual and social hub at the heart of Ireland and is proud to take its place in the centenary events 100 years later, through a programme built around our unparalleled collections."

NLI's 2016 Programme

At the launch of its 2016 Programme, as part of Ireland 2016 with the support of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the NLI recently announced a unique digital repository of personal papers and photographs that tell the story of the momentous events of 1916.

In addition to the 70,000 digital images already available through the NLI's online catalogue, the digitised personal papers and photographs of the seven signatories of the 1916 Proclamation will all be available online by April 2016. The full collection of Ceannt, Clarke and Connolly's papers are already available to the public, free of charge at catalogue.nli.ie.

Katherine McSharry, Head of Outreach and the person responsible for the 1916 programme at the National Library, noted: "The National Library plays a fundamental role in helping us to connect and remember our past. Our 2016 programme has been developed to make the stories of 1916 accessible to all and we are delighted to partner with the Google Cultural Institute in highlighting two fascinating items from our collection related to Plunkett and Pearse, revealing the immediacy of history in greater detail than ever before."

The NLI will hold a series of free events and activities throughout 2016 to mark the centenary commemorations of the Easter Rising. Highlights of the NLI's 2016 programme include:

- 'Inspiration Proclamation': a series of public interviews with major figures on themes of the Proclamation and their relevance for Ireland in 2016 and beyond;
- 'Readings from the Rising', a series of performances of literary work accompanied by music and staged throughout our historic buildings;
- School workshops and talks to help visitors trace their ancestors in this period.

The NLI will also offer a series of curated perspectives on 1916 onsite at the National Library's buildings on Kildare Street and in Temple Bar, Dublin 2 and online. These include 'Rising': a flagship photographic exhibition in the National Photographic Archive, and 'Signatories': an exhibition in the NLI's Kildare Street building, which will present selected documents related to the seven signatories.

Details of the NLI's full 2016 programme of events, from exhibitions and public events to major digitisation projects, are available on the NLI's website www.nli.ie.

The Dublin Rising 1916-2016 Tour can be accessed at: <https://dublinrising.withgoogle.com>.

For more information visit www.nli.ie.

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Note to Editors

- Interviews available on request.
- The dedicated hashtag for the launch of the virtual tour 'Dublin Rising 1916-2016' is #DublinRising
- The dedicated hashtag for the NLI's programme of events to mark 1916 is #MyNLI1916
- In February 2016, the NLI will issue the material related to Seán MacDiarmada and Thomas MacDonagh, concluding with the papers of Patrick Pearse and Joseph Plunkett in March 2016.

About the NLI: The mission of the National Library of Ireland is to collect, preserve, promote and make accessible the documentary and intellectual record of the life of Ireland and to contribute to the provision of access to the larger universe of recorded knowledge. It is open, free of charge, to all those who wish to consult the collections. The Office of the Chief Herald in Kildare Street and the National Photographic Archive in Temple Bar are both part of the National Library. Further information is available at www.nli.ie, @NLIreland.