

History of Monuments

O'Connell Street Area



Commissioned by Dublin City Council

Archive

Consultants

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Introduction

This report was commissioned by the Archaeology and Heritage Office of Dublin City Council, in November 2003, as part of the overall conservation plan for the O'Connell Street Area. The report traces the history of nine monuments in the area, identifying their national significance and concludes with a summary of their current condition. At the time of writing the report, the O'Connell Street area was undergoing major re-construction of paving and street surface as well as preparation for the LUAS tram system. Therefore, some of the monuments were inaccessible.

Methodology

The main sources for this report were City Archives, Irish Builder, Freeman's Journal and published material. Interviews were also carried out with staff of S.I.P.T.U., D.C.C.B.A., Garda Archives and Dr. Marjorie FitzGibbon. A concise approach has been taken to ensure brevity. More detailed discussions on each monument may be found in the bibliography listed. Photographs were taken using a digital Canon IXUS 400 and a Canon EOS 30. The document software is Word XP. Information is stored on a CD Rom and also issued in hard copy.

Consultation Process

The parties involved in the consultation process include Dublin City Council, OPW and Archive Consultants. Implementation of a conservation plan will require further consultation with specialist stone and sculpture conservators. Co-financing the conservation programme will also involve consultation with the Office of Public Works, S.I.P.T.U. and the Retired Garda Association.

Background

The monuments which are the subject of this report are a group of tangible artefacts. The story they tell is not just that of one individual's struggle and achievements celebrated in enduring form and matter, but a story which spans a nation's epic and indefatigable struggle to regain autonomy, a story which conveys the single-minded pursuit of civic, urban and social evolution, justice and personal courage. The memorial to these achievements varies according to the time in which the commission was made, leading from the expressly figurative embellished with unashamed national symbolism to the representational and global aspirational.

Historical Context

Sackville Street was redeveloped in the 1740's by Luke Gardiner. One of its finest aspects was a tree-planted walk, 48 feet wide which occupied the centre of Sackville Street and which set the scale for what is now central Dublin.¹ The street was later extended by the Wide Streets Commissioners in the 1780s when Lower Sackville Street was created and Carlisle Bridge was constructed. Over the following decades, the iconography embodied in its monuments continued to evolve parallel with the political and cultural context of the nineteenth-century city. For the display of prominent monuments the area from College Green on to Carlisle Bridge and down the main thoroughfare of Sackville Street was the inevitable axis. It is this area which forms the focus of the report.

Rationale

The Integrated Development Plan for O'Connell Street has as its principal goal the restoration of O'Connell Street as the main street of Ireland – a *'welcoming, safe and quality maintained street environment of which Dublin and Ireland can be consistently proud.'* An integral part of the revitalisation and enhancement of the new street plan will be the cleaning and conservation of the monuments.

The O'Connell Monument

Artist	John Henry Foley
Date	1882
Dimension	1260 cm
Material	Bronze figures Granite plinth
Commission	Dublin Corporation



The decision to commemorate Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847) with a monument in Sackville Street was an important move away from commemorating only members of the Castle administration or the British royal family. Although, at around the same time a monument to Prince Albert was also planned and the Dublin City committee, chaired by the lord mayor, had been recognised by Queen Victoria as the official committee. By April 1862, five months before John Gray inaugurated the appeal for subscriptions of the O'Connell monument, over £2,000 had been collected for the Albert monument in Dublin alone.²

The origins of the O'Connell monument project date back to 1847 when, after his funeral, a fund was promoted by several newspapers and the Hierarchy authorised church door collections³. The O'Connell Monument Committee was established following a public meeting in the Prince of Wales Hotel on Sackville Street⁴. The committee adopted the resolution that, 'the monument would be to O'Connell in his whole character and career, from the cradle to the grave so as to embrace the whole nation.'⁵

With £8,362 already banked, the two-ton Dalkey granite foundation stone was laid on 8 August 1864 by Lord Mayor Peter Paul McSwiney. The ceremony to lay the foundation stone marked the first stage in what was to become a dominant landmark and an overt political statement, the occasion brought thousands on to the streets of the capital.⁶

The procession moved through the streets from Merrion Square to Sackville Street, led by the committee member, Sir John Gray, and were addressed by the Lord Mayor, Peter Paul MacSwiney, who observed that:

“The people of Ireland meet today to honour the man whose matchless genius won Emancipation, and whose fearless hand struck off the fetters whereby six millions of his country men were held in bondage in their own land.... Casting off the hopelessness of despair, the Irish people today rise above their afflictions, and by their chosen representatives their delegated deputies, and their myriad hosts, assemble in this metropolis and signalise their return to the active duties of national existence, by rendering homage to the dead and by pledging themselves to the principles of him who still lives and reigns in the hearts of the emancipated people.”⁷

With the foundation stone in place, a competition for the design of the sculpture was initiated by Dublin Corporation, who had now taken over responsibility for the monument. However, Sir John Gray was also requested to consult the sculptor John Henry Foley whose Irish-born but non-resident status stirred up many debates led by the Irish builder, ‘*we most emphatically*

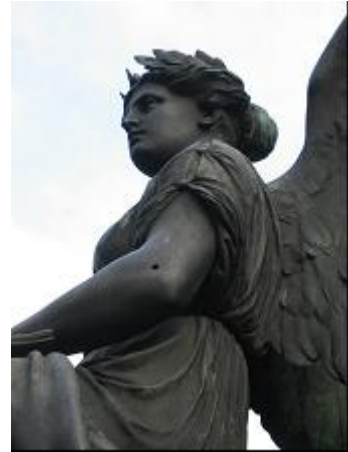
*protest against sending £10,000 out of the country for the execution of an undertaking which, above all others, should be thoroughly national, and as the monument originated from Irish hearts, so it should be sculptured by none other than Irish hands.'*⁸

The competition went ahead along with the negotiations with Foley and the closing date was set for 1 January 1865, by which time sixty designs were received and were described in the Irish Builder and exhibited in the City Hall. All were rejected by the committee and after a further competition they were still unable to recommend any design for adoption. Foley was again consulted and a concession was made to popular opinion by requesting that a resident Irish sculptor would assist him in designing subsidiary figures, a request to which he did not agree but conceded in having an Irish architect submit designs which he may incorporate into his project⁹. None of the three submitted were considered suitable and Foley went ahead on his own protracted project¹⁰.

In August 1871 Foley presented a progress report to the Corporation and explained that owing to illness and pressure of work, the progress of the monument had been delayed and he envisaged completion by the centenary in 1875. Foley died in 1874 so the monument was not ready in time. His assistant, Thomas Brock, was formally commissioned in June 1878 to complete the monument.

The sculptural composition formed three sections, a statue of O'Connell at the top, a frieze in the middle – at the centre of which was represented the

'Maid of Erin', her right hand raised pointing to O'Connell, her liberator, and in her left hand the 1829 Act of Catholic Emancipation. Nearly thirty more figures symbolise the Church, the professions, the arts, the trades and the peasantry. At the base are four winged victories, each of which represented the virtues attributed to O'Connell – patriotism, courage, eloquence and fidelity. There is evidence of bullet holes in two of the victories, a legacy of 1916-1922. The overall height of the monument is 40 feet, the bronze statue of O'Connell wrapped in his cloak is 12 feet high.



The figure of O'Connell was ready for unveiling at the head of Sackville Street on 15 August 1882, which was also the centenary of the Volunteer Movement and the occasion of the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition in the Rotunda Gardens, bringing thousands from the provinces. The monument was unveiled at one o'clock to a *'mighty roar.....from ten thousand throats when the veil fell at the Lord Mayor's signal'*. *The committee delivered the statue over to the care of the corporation which the Lord Mayor accepted with a few brief remarks, and 'with a quick touch withdrew the covering from the Herculean figure of O'Connell. At that instant the sun suddenly opened its beams through the drenching rain and gloriously lighted up the Monument and the crowded platform.'*¹¹

William Smith O'Brien

Artist	Thomas Farrell
Date	1870
Dimension	Figure: 10 feet Plinth: 366cm x 163 cm
Materials	Figure and pedestal: Sicilian White Marble Plinth: Granite
Commission	Paid for by public subscription



While the foundation stone for the O'Connell monument was laid in 1864 and not completed until 1882, the intervening period saw a number of other luminaries commemorated in prominent locations. The statues to Oliver Goldsmith in 1864 and Edmund Burke in 1868, both placed on the front lawn of Trinity College, were politically neutral and unanimously praised as great works of art by John Henry Foley.

However, the statue dedicated to William Smith O'Brien (1803-1864) a leader of the doomed rebellion of 1848, was the first monument erected in Dublin to commemorate an individual who had stood for armed resistance to British rule. O'Brien was also a descendant of the Protestant nobility who traced his lineage back to Brian Boru.

The date chosen for the unveiling of his monument was 26 December 1870. As he had been a revolutionary nationalist, the statue of Smith O'Brien broke the sculptural mould in the capital. The occasion was a significant one for it marked:

“the first time for 70 years that a monument had been erected in a public place in Dublin to honour an Irishman whose title to that honour was

that he devoted his life to the Irish national cause (cheers). In other countries it is such men only that received the honour of a public monument, but in this city there were statues to the men who had served and loved England, and did not care for Ireland. As to this country, it had been held that it was treason to love her, and death to defend her. The monuments which had been erected till now have been rather monuments of this haughty mastery of the English people and our servility and helplessness. A favourable change took place recently. Ireland had ventured to erect statues to Moore, Goldsmith and Burke, whose genius was Irish and whose sympathies also were mainly Irish. Though these men loved Ireland, and their memories were thus commemorated, none of them ever exposed themselves to the danger of imprisonment or transportation for life for Ireland. There stood the statue of a man who 22 years ago, was sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered for his love of Ireland. (Cheers)".¹²

O'Brien had been sentenced to death for high treason resulting from his part in the insurrection of 1848. After his death in 1868 a committee was formed to gather subscriptions and organise the erection of a monument in his honour and,

"To this undertaking men widely differing in their political and religious sentiments have subscribed, desiring to testify their respect for the noble and honourable character of our distinguished country man, whose unselfish devotion to, and sacrifices for, Ireland had never been questioned even by the sternest critics or severest censors."¹³

The committee was led by John Martin and John Blake Dillon, both of whom had been caught up in the radical politics of the mid-nineteenth century and shared O'Brien's belief in physical force. Dublin Corporation granted permission for the site at the junction of Sackville Street and D'Olier Street in 1867. The committee commissioned one of the most prominent sculptors of the day, Thomas Farrell RHA of Lower Gloucester Street, to sculpt the figure of O'Brien.¹⁴ He sculpted the figure in marble in an *'ordinary frock coat, high buttoned waistcoat and pantaloons, all of which are treated with the most commendable taste and skill. There is not the slightest approach to stiffness in the pose which is most easy and natural.'*¹⁵

O'Brien is depicted in a resolute stance, arms folded, weight borne on one leg in a manner of a man at ease with his leadership. The statue was unveiled on 27 December 1870 with this inscription:

William Smith O'Brien
born 17th October 1803,
sentenced to death for high treason
on the 9th October 1848.
Died 16th June 1864.

Processions were prohibited by the authorities, because of O'Brien's politics. It did not deter the masses from assembling and from bands taking up their positions and playing through the proceedings. These displays of nationalism signalled a change in the sculptural composition of the city which would be

further reinforced with the monument to Henry Grattan at College Green in 1876.

By 1929 traffic congestion on O'Connell Bridge was such that it was recommended by the Streets Section of Dublin Corporation that the O'Brien statue be removed from its location to a site near the centre of O'Connell Street approximately twenty feet south of the junction with Lower Abbey Street.¹⁶



O'Brien statue under protective cover during construction of LUAS (tram) lines in October 2003



Archive photograph of O'Brien statue

Sir John Gray

Artist	Thomas Farrell
Date:	1879
Dimension	Entire: 26 feet Figure: 11 feet Plinth: 610 x 198 cm
Materials	Figure and pedestal: Sicilian white marble Plinth: Granite
Commission	Paid for by public subscription



The broadly nationalist display at the unveiling of the William Smith O'Brien monument was further reinforced by the unveiling of a statue dedicated to the nationalist MP, Sir John Gray (1815-1875) in 1879.

Gray died in 1875 and little time was spared in establishing a committee to erect a statue to the man who, as chairman of the Dublin Corporation waterworks committee from 1863 until his death, played a key role in the introduction of a water supply to Dublin from the Vartry Works in County Wicklow in 1868.

A site for the monument was granted by the Corporation in 1877 on Sackville Street close to the Abbey Street offices of the Freeman's Journal of which he was owner.

Again, Thomas Farrell was approached by the monument committee to create a memorial. He represented Gray *'in the guise of a Victorian gentleman, complete with open coat, confident stance and a serious yet kindly expression'*.¹⁷ The monument did not turn out as originally planned. Initially, it had been designed with a representation of Ireland, complete with harp, on the

right hand side of the pedestal and incorporated broken fetters to represent the legislative and social wrongs from which the country had been rescued. There was also to have been a figure of patriotism. The necessity of erecting the monument without delay, however, resulted in the statue featuring the figure of Gray alone.

The granite pedestal was laid on 1 May 1879 and the statue was unveiled by Archbishop McHaie¹⁸ on 24 June 1879 with the inscription:

'Erected by public subscription to Sir John Gray Knt. MD JP, Proprietor of The Freeman's Journal; MP for Kilkenny City, Chairman of the Dublin Corporation Water Works Committee 1863 to 1875 During which period pre-eminently through his exertions the Vartry water supply was introduced to city and suburbs Born July 13 1815 Died April 9 1875.'

Fr Theobald Mathew

Artist	Mary Redmond
Date	1891
Dimensions	Life size figure on plinth
Materials	Limestone
Commission	Public Subscription



A further step in the evolving iconography of Dublin's streetscape was taken with the erection of a statue of the Apostle of Temperance, the Capuchin Friar, Fr Theobald Mathew (1790 -1856) in 1890, 36 years after John Henry Foley's sculpture in Cork was unveiled. The Cork monument was erected at a cost of £900 and brought an estimated 100,000 people on to the streets.

The Fr. Mathew Centenary Committee comprised Sir Charles Cameron, A. J. Nicholls, LLB, George Noble Plunkett, Henry Wigham (Hon. Sec.). As with the Cork committee which included the Protestant, F.B. Beamish and the Catholic mayor of Cork, John Maguire (also the owner of the Cork Examiner), the Dublin committee epitomised the non-Sectarian stance taken by Fr. Mathew himself. The friar had ministered in Cork but had lead a nationwide campaign for temperance, promoting a moral crusade that paralleled the political crusade of O'Connell in the 1840's.

The Dublin monument was sculpted by Mary Redmond and the foundation stone was laid on 18 October 1890, the centenary of Fr. Mathew's birthday. The friar is presented in the costume of a late nineteenth-century priest,

surtout, belted with a rope and hung with rosary beads, arms raised in benison.

After Dublin Corporation granted permission for the Sackville Street site a motion was passed which requested that:

*'The council approve of the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor publishing a proclamation to the citizens of Dublin for a general public holiday to be kept by them during Monday 13, for the due celebration of the Father Mathew memorial proceedings upon that day, and especially that all houses licensed of the sale of intoxicating liquors be kept closed.'*¹⁹

The motion was ruled out of order, however as it did not appear on the summons of the meeting, although, the Lord Mayor did point out that while the council could not compel anyone to close his house, *'no doubt the expression of opinion in favour of the proposals would have due effect'*. The monument was formally unveiled three years later with a simple inscription,

'The Apostle of Temperance, Centenary Statue, 1890, 1893, unveiled'.

Charles Stewart Parnell

Artist	Augustus Saint-Gaudens
Date	1911
Dimensions	Figure 240cm, pillar 900cm
Materials	Figure: Bronze Pillar: Ashlar granite
Commission	Paid for by public subscription



Sackville Street was also to be the location for one of the last sculptural initiatives in the city before independence when, in 1899, the foundation stone was laid for a monument dedicated to Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-1891).

On 3 January 1882 a resolution was passed by Dublin City Council to grant the freedom of the city to Parnell. Later that year, on 15 August 1882 Parnell arrived at the unveiling ceremony for the O'Connell Monument accompanying the archbishop in his ceremonial carriage. A scene which would seem unlikely as subsequent events in Parnell's personal life unfolded.

The plan for the Parnell monument was instigated by John Redmond (who succeeded Parnell as leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party) partly as a symbolic gesture to honour the 'uncrowned king of Ireland' and to consolidate his aspiration to reunite the constitutionalists under his own leadership. The monument would be funded through the efforts of a voluntary body, the Parnell Committee founded in 1898. The committee was chaired by Lord Mayor Daniel Tallon, other members were Count Plunkett, Dr. J.E. Kenny, John Redmond, MP, Thomas Baker (manager of the Irish Independent) and the Hon. Edward

Blake, MP²⁰. The address of the committee was 39 Upper Sackville Street where the offices of the United Irish League were recorded. It was first proposed to place the monument on the site of the Thomas Moore statue, which they offered to remove elsewhere at their own expense.²¹ The City Council refused to grant this site however and directed that the monument be erected on a site near the Rotunda Hospital,²² where it now stands in answer the O'Connell statue at the south end and terminates the parade of nationalist statues on the primary thoroughfare of the capital.

Owing to the split in the party over the O'Shea case, the ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone on 8 October 1899²³, was marred by a conspicuous absence of most of the I.P.P., city and county magistrates, as well as Roman Catholic bishops and clergy, proceedings were also marred by heckling from extreme nationalists against Redmond's weak plea for unity²⁴. Financial support was going to be hard come by in Ireland and Redmond was forced to tour America with a representative of the Parnell monument committee to raise funds.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens²⁵, an Irish-born sculptor and the most eminent in the art of public monuments in the United States, accepted the commission. It was however to prove a protracted project. The demand for Saint-Gaudens' work in America was such that completion of the Parnell project would be fraught with delays. At around the same time he was working on the equestrian statue of General Sherman (1903, New York).

For the Parnell monument, he made a scale replica of the buildings and square in Dublin and also a full scale model of the monument in wood in a field near his studio²⁶. In 1904 there was a disastrous fire in his studio and only the head of the statue was saved. He appears to have been bitten by the nationalist zeal and is quoted as saying '*More than all the rest of my losses in the fire I regret, as an Irishman, the loss of the Parnell statue.*'²⁷ Saint-Gaudens planned a monument which would integrate sculpture and architecture. The original concept of a bronze figure of about 8 feet high placed by a bronze table was to be set against a 30 foot pyramid. As this form was already utilised in the Wellington monument obelisk, Saint-Gaudens and the architect Henry Bacon proposed a triangular shaft almost double the height of the original. Saint-Gaudens developed a detailed picture of Parnell from photographs, cartoons and accounts of his habits, the clothes he wore and his demeanour. He indicated to Redmond that the entire monument should be '*as simple, impressive and austere as possible, in keeping with the character of the Irish cause as well as of Parnell.*'

He finally presented Parnell in what he considered a noble and calm manner, depicted in an open frock coat, with one hand resting on a table and the other extended dramatically as if making a point at a parliamentary debate. In an incongruous gesture to the neo-classical programme of decoration on the nearby Rotunda, the base of the monument is decorated in swags and bucrania, resulting in an odd proximity of ox-skulls to Parnell's feet.

The shaft of the monument is constructed in undecorated ashlar granite. The stone was described in an article in *The Irish Architect and Craftsman* as

Shantalla granite from Galway with an “inlaid trefoil of Barna granite embracing the base and pedestal”.²⁸ The names of the thirty-two counties and provinces on bronze plaques around the base were part of an earlier scheme for the four-sided pyramid, representing the four provinces and were retained for the revised triangular shaft.

There is a stark contrast between the presentation of Parnell and O’Connell, the former does not symbolically rise above political structures, but tries to find a new form of expression, accessible to the people in the location of the figure.

Redmond chose a passage from one of the more extreme Parnell speeches for the inscription, ‘...no man has the right to say to his country, “thus far shalt thou go and no further” and we have never attempted to fix the ne plus ultra to the progress of Ireland’s nationhood, and we never shall’.

On 1 October 1911²⁹, the monument was unveiled to large crowds, many of whom had been absent from the foundation stone ceremony, but there were also strikes and marches indicating the unrest to follow.

In June 1913, John Redmond, as Secretary to the Parnell Monument Committee, wrote to the City Council requesting the council to take the Monument into their charge, ‘....on behalf of the Citizens of Dublin....’³⁰ The Council agreed to this request and since then, the Parnell Monument has been in the care of the Corporation of Dublin.

The inscription on the monument reads:

To Charles Stewart Parnell

No Man has a right to fix the
Boundary to the march of a nation
No man has a right
To say to his country
Thus far shalt thou
Go and no further
We have never
Attempted to fix
The ne-plus-ultra
To the progress of
Ireland's nationhood
And we never shall

At the base of the statue the Irish inscription reads:

*Go roimhigid Dia
Éire da Clainn*

James Larkin

Artist	Oisín Kelly
Date	1979
Dimensions	Figure: Life Size Plinth: 122 x 457 cm
Materials	Figure: Bronze Pedestal: Granite
Commission	General Executive Committee of Workers Union of Ireland



The statue of Jim Larkin (1876-1947) was only the second commemorative figurative monument to be erected in O'Connell Street in the twentieth century. The other was the Parnell Monument in 1911. Famously, George Bernard Shaw had said of Larkin that he was the greatest Irishman since Parnell.

The development of figurative sculpture during the twentieth century in Irish commissions is epitomised in this dynamic pose sculpted by Oisín Kelly (1915-1981). Larkin is frozen in time, his oratorical prowess expressed in outspread arms in a skyward appeal to the masses to raise themselves from the tyranny of their employers.

Larkin also played a significant role in the Easter Rising, although he was in America at the time. It was from the militancy of his Irish Transport and General Workers Union, that the Irish Citizen Army formed from the volunteer force to combat the police brutality against workers during the Lockout of 1913.

The inscriptions engraved on the base of the monument proclaim his message:

The great appear great because we are on our knees. Let us rise!

Ní uasal aon uasal ach sinne bheith íseal. Éirimis!

Le grands ne sont grands que parce que nous sommes à genoux.

Levons-nous!

The slogan '*The great appear great to us, only because we are on our knees. Let us Rise*' appeared on the masthead of the Workers' Republic, the organ of the Irish Socialist Republican Party, published in Dublin between 1896 and 1903. The I.S.R.P. was founded by James Connolly when he came to Ireland in 1896, at the age of twenty eight. An Irish version of the slogan was also given on the masthead as '*Is dóigh linn gur mór iad na daoine móra mar atámaoid féin ar ár nglúnaibh. Eirghimis.*'

The slogan is usually attributed to Camille Desmoulins (1760-1794), the French revolutionary and one time friend of Robespierre, who was beheaded on 2 April 1794. It was used by the *Journal des Révolutions de Paris*, which was published from 1789 and edited by Louis-Marie Prudhomme. While Desmoulins was associated with the Journal, and it ceased publication after his death, the slogan has also been attributed to the editor, Prudhomme³¹.

The Irish text on the monument is by Seán MacRéamoinn. On the west side of the base of the Larkin monument there is a quotation from the poem *Jim Larkin* by Patrick Kavanagh, first published in the Bell (editor Peadar O'Donnell) in March 1947.

And Tyranny trampled them in Dublin's gutter

Until Jim Larkin came along and cried

The call of Freedom and the call of Pride

*And Slavery crept to its hands and knees
And Nineteen Thirteen cheered from out the utter
Degradation of their miseries.*

On the east side of the monument there is a quotation from *Drums under the Windows* by Sean O'Casey:

"...He talked to the workers, spoke as only Jim Larkin could speak, not for an assignation with peace, dark obedience, or placid resignation, but trumpet-tongued of resistance to wrong, discontent with leering poverty, and defiance of any power strutting out to stand in the way of their march onward".

Unveiling the statue of Larkin on 15 June 1979, the President of Ireland, Dr Patrick Hillery, said:

"It is not often in the history of a capital city that the occasion arises for the unveiling of a monument in its principal thoroughfare. This is such an occasion.

Larkin is one of the great men of our race, whose courage and dedication to the task which he set himself will always be remembered. At home and abroad he blazed a trail, rousing by his burning zeal and concern with their lot the poor and the oppressed, inspiring in the hope and confidence in their own ability to mould their future.

In his assaults on oppression and exploitation, Jim Larkin often used barbed words. Indeed he might also have directed harsh words at our

commemorating him in granite and bronze. One feels that he would have wished to be remembered rather in the hearts and minds of men and women. And assuredly, his memory will forever live in the respect and affection of our people.

In the ages to come it will stand, as a work of art raised to the memory of a great man who spent his energies and talents and in the cause of his fellowman, an inspiration to all who gaze upon it to strive on behalf of their brothers everywhere”.

The statue is referred to in Thomas Kinsella’s poem ‘To the Coffee Shop’:

*Under Larkin with his iron arms on high,
Conducting everybody
In all directions, up off our knees.*

Larkin’s year of birth as originally engraved on the monument was 1876. It was not until 1980 that the historian C. Desmond Greaves established that Larkin was born in 1874. The correct date has since been substituted.

When the Federated Workers Union of Ireland was amalgamated into S.I.P.T.U. all property in their ownership was transferred. Therefore, the Larkin monument is the property of S.I.P.T.U.³²

The Spire of Dublin

Artist	Ian Ritchie Architects
Date	2003
Dimensions	12000 cm
Materials	Rolled stainless steel sheet and Kilkenny black marble
Commission	Dublin Corporation



In 1966 the Irish Government planned to have a celebration to commemorate the 1916 Rising. The main parade was to march up O'Connell Street but the Nelson monument (1809), symbol of Empire rule, was still in place. It hardly seemed appropriate to celebrate freedom under the shadow of symbolic oppression. It was a rather monolithic symbol to remove without causing an international incident. In the event, any diplomatic action was forestalled by the intervention of republican explosives.

The spot lay bare until 2003 when The Spire was erected. The debate in the intervening years as to what should replace Nelson's Pillar as Dublin's landmark meeting place has been much documented. A short-lived lateral sculpture by Edward Delaney, privately sponsored, entitled Anna Livia occupied the vicinity of the pillar for some years in the latter part of the twentieth-century. It seems that this was no replacement for the pillar and the debate raged on until the competition process to commemorate the new millennium was won by Ian Ritchie Architects for the *Monument of Light* or more officially, *The Spire of Dublin*.

For full details of The Spire project see www.dublincity.ie/spire/htm

James Joyce

Artist	Marjorie FitzGibbon
Date	1990
Dimensions	8 feet
Materials	Bronze
Commission	The North Earl Street Business Association and The Dublin City Centre Business Association



In 1980 the Dublin City Centre Business Association commenced discussions with the Streets Department of Dublin Corporation about a plan to pedestrianise some of the retail streets of Dublin. Their initial proposals met with a negative response. However, within a few years the familiar multicoloured and patterned paving was ubiquitous. First, Henry Street then Liffey Street and on to south of the river Liffey at Lemon Street and Grafton Street. There are extensive plans to further pedestrianise areas of central Dublin under the 1999 Dublin City Development Plan.

With the success of the removal of cars from these shopping streets, the Business Association pressed for further pedestrianisation and North Earl Street was targeted. A committee was set up comprising local traders and publicans, lead by Arthur Walls, then chairman of Clerys, to commission a sculptor to mark the success of the completed North Earl Street plan. Walls was said to have been a distant relative of Joyce, and indeed the committee appropriated the writer as one of their own for the purposes of the monument

as they viewed him as a local retailer due to his short stint as manager of the nearby Volta Cinema.

There was no competition held for the commission and Marjorie FitzGibbon³³, a prolific sculptor specialising in bronze works was requested to submit a maquette for consideration. The committee was unanimous in its approval of the work and the monument was complete within ten months. The sculpture was forged at the Arts Bronze Foundry and the total cost was in the region of IR£20,000. The height of the plinth for the Joyce sculpture was the only cause of debate within the committee, but consensus prevailed on a low base which would allow the figure of Joyce to be in line with passersby. The inscription indicates that the sculpture was presented to Dublin Corporation and is therefore now in their ownership. It reads:

*James Joyce
1802 – 1941/ Unveiled/ By the Right Honourable
The Lord Mayor of Dublin
Alderman Senator Sean Haughey
On Bloomsday 1990
Presented to the City
By the
North Earl Street Business Association
And the DCCBA*



Marjorie FitzGibbon with Tom Coffey (DCCBA) on right

Padraig Sheahan

Architect	W P O'Neill
Sculptor	W. Harrison & Sons
Date	1906
Dimension	500cm base to top of cross
Materials	Limestone and Granite
Commission	Dublin Metropolitan Police
Location	Junction of Hawkins Street and Burgh Quay



The monument to Constable Patrick Sheahan is located at the junction of Burgh Quay on the south side of the river Liffey and Hawkins Street. It currently stands in the centre of a pedestrian island.

The monument differs from the others in this report as a non-figurative commemoration of a person and an event. Its design is a combination of gothic revival and celtic motifs. The base is a three-stepped granite plinth above which rises a four-sided carved limestone font-style structure, surmounted by a celtic cross. The columns and panels are honed from pink polished granite and sculpted limestone shamrocks form part of the decorative symbolism.

While this monument marks the site of a local tragedy, the reports from the time signify the provincial and national grief. The singular bravery of the policeman and the dignity of the municipal worker carrying out his job reverberated through the city and country. Sheahan was a native of Glin, Co. Limerick and rather a colossus of a man at 29 years of age, 6'4", weighing 18

stone. On Saturday, 6 May, 1905, Constable Patrick Sheahan was on duty at O'Connell Bridge, he had volunteered that afternoon to cover for a colleague. The tragic incident which would end his life was not his first act of bravery, he had saved the lives of an elderly couple, both of whom he had carried from a tumbling building in Townsend Street and had wrestled with a runaway bull in nearby Grafton Street. The workman he tried to save at Burgh Quay was already dead at the bottom of the manhole when a newsboy, Christopher Nolan, ran for Sheahan's help. When he disappeared down the manhole, two other men followed and were also overcome by gas, one was Tom Rochford, a clerk of works with City Corporation. A third man, Kevin Fitzpatrick, a hackney driver, tied a rope around himself and lowered himself down, managing to rescue the unconscious men, but Sheahan and John Fleming were already dead.

Constable Sheahan's funeral procession included the mounted troop from the Dublin Metropolitan Police, in full dress uniform, contingents from the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Dublin City Fire Brigade and Dublin United Tramways, who escorted the hearse drawn by four white plumed horses. His remains were taken to Limerick where his frail mother waited on the platform accompanied by an R.I.C. guard of honour, from where he was taken to Kilfergus cemetery at Glin. John Fleming, aged 42 left a widow and nine children.

The monument is inscribed on the west face in Irish and on the east face in English, the English inscription reads:

This memorial
Was erected in memory of
Patrick Sheahan
a constable in the
Dublin Metropolitan Police Force who
lost his life in the 6th day of March 1905
in a noble and self-sacrificing effort
to rescue John Fleming who had in the
discharge of his duties descended the
main sewer close by this spot and was
overcome by sewer gas. It was also
intended to commemorate the bravery
of a number of other citizens who also
descended the sewer to assist in rescuing
the beforementioned, thereby risking their
lives to save those of their fellow men.

On the North face of the monument the inscription reads: Erected by the/
Mansion House Committee/1906/ Right Honourable Joseph Hutchinson, Lord
Mayor/ William Nolan, Chairman/ John Irwin J.P. Ald./ Edmund Hutchinson/
Hon. Secs./ W.P.O'Neill Arch./ W. Harrison & Sons / *Sculptors*

The portrait of Constable Sheahan which
hangs in Pearse Street Garda Station



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For and on behalf of archive consultancy:

Deirdre Conroy M.A.

28 November 2003

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- ¹ Craig, M., Dublin 1660-1860, Dublin 1980, p.104
- ² Dublin Builder, 1 April, 1862. This became the focal group with others such as the Dublin County Committee and the Arts Society committee joining 'in the hope that all Ireland may join to make the subscriptions worthy of the country'.
- ³ For over 20 years Canon John O'Hanlon acted as honorary secretary of the O'Connell monument committee, and received donations on its behalf.
- ⁴ The records of the O'Connell Monument Committee are held at Dublin City Archives, see MSCh 6/1 and 6/2.
- ⁵ Freeman's Journal, 9 Aug., 1864
- ⁶ *ibid.*
- ⁷ *ibid.* p.7
- ⁸ Irish Builder, 1 July, 1864, p.125
- ⁹ *ibid.* 15 Apr 1866 p.95
- ¹⁰ *ibid.* 1 Aug 1866, p.190 and 15 Aug 1866 p. 207
- ¹¹ Freeman's Journal 16 August, 1882
- ¹² The Irish Times, 27 Dec., 1870
- ¹³ Irish Builder, 15 Oct. 1867, p. 276
- ¹⁴ Farrell, along with John Henry Foley was among the most prominent of Dublin' sculptors in the latter half of the nineteenth century. He also sculpted the memorials dedicated to Sir John Gray (1879), Alexander McDonnell (1878) and Sir Robert Stewart (1898).
- ¹⁵ Irish Builder, 1 Oct. 1867, p.262
- ¹⁶ Report No. 107, Streets Section, Dublin Corporation, 1929
- ¹⁷ Freeman's Journal, 25 June, 1879.
- ¹⁸ Dublin Builder, 1 July, 1879
- ¹⁹ Minutes, 1890, No.s 125, 154, 203 and RPDCD, 1890, vol. II, no. 62.
- ²⁰ Redmond Papers, MS 15, 167(2), National Library of Ireland
- ²¹ Minutes, 1899
- ²² Minutes, 1899, p.260
- ²³ Minutes, 1899, p. 346
- ²⁴ Daily Nation, 9 October, 1899
- ²⁵ Augustus Saint-Gaudens was born in Dublin in 1848 and taken by his parents to the U.S. when he was 6 months old
- ²⁶ Rothery, Sean, 'Parnell Monument: Ireland and American Beaux Arts' Irish Arts Review, pp.55-57
- ²⁷ New York Daily News
- ²⁸ Irish Architect, (30 September 1911), p.495
- ²⁹ Minutes, 1911, pp 441-42
- ³⁰ Minutes, 1913, pp 327-28
- ³¹ Nevin, D. Lion of the Fold., p. 365
- ³² Confirmed by Manus O'Riordain, Head of Research, SIPTU
- ³³ Now Dr FitzGibbon, she was born in Nevada in 1930 and became an Irish citizen in 1971. Her work is still in demand and in late 2003 she was engaged on a commission of Lord Edward Fitzgerald for Blackrock village.