

“I did what I thought was right and I stand by it.”
Countess Constance Markievicz (BMH CD 9/2/6)

Women in Easter Week

- 1. Abstract:** In this lesson plan students will use a participant’s account to deepen their understanding of women's involvement during the Rising, and of the events of Easter Week. Students will investigate the language of contemporary documents with regard to women. In one exercise, they will cross-reference two different types of sources while analysing their combined impact.
- 2. Theme:** Female participation.
- 3. Estimated no. of classes:** 4
- 4. Subjects:** History, English
- 5. Toolkit:**
 - a. Projector
 - b. Internet connection
 - c. Computer
- 6. Learning Aims/Objectives:**
 - a. To analyse a participant's account to deepen understanding of the events of Easter Week and women's involvement.
 - b. To investigate the language of contemporary documents with regard to women.
 - c. To cross-reference two different types of sources and to analyse their combined impact.
 - d. To develop transcription skills
- 7. Advance Preparation Required:**
 - a. Teacher should read the relevant documents (Mary Reynolds An t-Óglach account, Brigadier Lowe letter, Countess Markievicz court martial transcript, Margaret Skinnider’s pension application - see Materials Needed sections ‘a’, ‘b’, ‘d’ and ‘e’) to familiarize themselves with the content
 - b. Teacher should familiarize themselves with the image of Pearse’s surrender with Elizabeth O’Farrell, and its context (see Materials Needed section ‘c’)
 - i. The original image shows Pearse surrendering to Brigadier Lowe accompanied by Nurse Elizabeth O’Farrell. O’Farrell is standing to the right of Pearse, mostly obscured by him, although her feet, bottom of her skirt and cape/coat is visible. The original image was edited to remove O’Farrell’s feet and skirt, however part of her cape/coat was left. The edited image was published in *The Daily Sketch*, along with the title ‘Surrender: First Photographs’.
 - c. Teacher should check that the [Military Archives](#), [Bureau of Military History](#) and [Letters of 1916](#) websites are whitelisted and familiarize themselves with the navigation and search tools (see Materials Needed sections ‘b’ and ‘f’).

8. Methodology:

a. Exercise One:

- i. Divide students into groups depending on class size
- ii. Groups read the [An t-Óglach account](#) of female participation in the G.P.O during Easter Week written by Miss Reynolds in 1926 (see Materials Needed section 'a')
- iii. Depending on the time available, in their groups students must come up with either a number of comprehension questions or questions which focus on the role of women during Easter Week based on the text
- iv. The questions should be written and on a separate sheet the group should record what they believe to be the correct answer
- v. The groups swap questions and each must answer another group's questions
- vi. The answers are then returned to the group which wrote them and students correct each other's work
- vii. Teacher leads a quick discussion on the exercise
 1. Were there any questions that were very difficult to answer?
 2. Were there any questions you couldn't answer?
 3. What did you learn?

b. Exercise Two:

- i. As a follow on or homework exercise:
 1. Show students the transcript of Markievicz court martial (see Materials Needed section 'd') where her charge is commuted to penal servitude on the basis of her sex
 - a. Using the knowledge they have gained about female participation in the nationalist movement and Easter Week students must write a short paragraph stating if and why they think women should have been treated differently to the men of Easter Week
 - b. [Margaret Skinnider's pension record](#) (see Materials Needed section 'e') could also be used
 - i. Skinnider was initially denied a pension in 1924 based solely on her gender. She would later be granted one under the 1934 Act.

c. Exercise Three:

- i. Place the [image of Pearse's surrender with Elizabeth O'Farrell](#) and the image of [Brigadier Lowe's letter regarding Pearse's surrender](#) on the projector (see Materials Needed sections 'b' and 'c')
- ii. Students must produce a piece of creative writing based on these two documents

1. Task: You are Elizabeth O'Farrell; you must write your response to these documents either as part of the text of a personal letter to a friend/relative or as an open letter to a newspaper.
- iii. If you have access to a computer lab:
 1. Students could access both of the necessary documents online
 2. Computers could be used for additional research to add to their creative writing piece
- d. **Exercise 4:**
 - i. Students get back into same groups as per exercise one
 - ii. Students are given a Garrison roll and asked to identify and record the names of women who signed the roll.
 1. Task: Students create a new class roll showing just the female names. A scribe in each group is nominated and writes the names up on a central roll which is hung up on the classroom wall.
 2. A homework task could be for students to find out more about one of the women named on the roll they studied and produce a brief biographical sketch outlining their 1916 involvement. Internet access to www.bureauofmilitaryhistory and www.militaryarchives.ie would enable the homework task. A number of women associated with each Garrison, who are documented in pension files are suggested below.

Assessment:

- e. Exercise one can assess student ability to generate and answer questions based on the Reynold's An tOglach account.
- f. Exercise two can be assessed for critical thinking, understanding of the arguments for and against women being treated differently to the men of Easter 1916, and appropriate use of source material.
- g. Exercise three can be assessed for writing style and form, appropriate use of source material, empathy and quality of written language.
- h. Exercise four can be assessed for ability to work collaboratively and creation of a presentation which uses source material appropriately.

9. Material Needed:

- a. Link to Mary Reynolds account from An t-Óglach 1926 (PDF pages 5-7):
 - i. http://antoglach.militaryarchives.ie/PDF/1926_03_27_Vol_4_No11_An%20t-Oglac-11.pdf
- b. Brigadier Lowe letter regarding Pearce's surrender:
 - i. <http://dh.tcd.ie/letters1916/diyhistory/items/show/1104>
- c. Elizabeth O'Farrell image:
 - i. http://source.southdublinlibraries.ie/bitstream/10599/10028/3/wm_17Padraig_PearseSurrenders.jpg
- d. Transcript from court martial of Countess Markievicz:
 - i. [C.D. 9/2/6](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/1916/article-1307261/Countess-Markievicz-1916.html)

- e. Margaret Skinnider Pension Application (page. 21):
 - i. http://mspcsearch.militaryarchives.ie/docs/files//PDF_Pensions/R1/1P724MARGARETSKINNIDER/W1P724MARGARETSKINNIDER.pdf
- f. Garrison rolls
 - i. [Marrowbone Lane Garrison](#)
 - ii. [Ashbourne Garrison](#)
 - iii. [City Hall Garrison](#)
 - iv. [Four Courts Garrison](#)
 - v. [GPO Garrison](#)
 - vi. [Stephen's Green Garrison](#)
- g. Pension files
 - i. [Lily Mary O'Brennan \(Marrowbone Lane Garrison\)](#)
 - ii. [Monica Lawless \(nee Fleming\) - Ashbourne Garrison](#)
 - iii. [Bessie Kelly - City Hall](#)
 - iv. [Maire Carron - Four courts Garrison](#)
 - v. [Maire \(Maura\) O'Neill - GPO Garrison](#)
 - vi. [Margaret Joyce - Stephen's Green Garrison](#)