In November 2014 I wrote to Larry Lambe outlining my thoughts on the project as they were then:

*My piece for the exhibition is still in the incubation stage.*

*I might have an image for you by next spring.*

*Here are a few preoccupations that might inform the work:*

My father was born in Melbourne Australia, where his (Irish) parents were living at the time in January 1917 - so he was conceived in 1916 (possibly during the 1916 rising!)

My maternal grandfather went to fight, from Dublin, in the first world war, together with two brothers and his best friend.

He was gassed, and invalided out, and as a result survived the war. His brothers and friend were killed. He married the fiancé of his best friend.

These events - from my perspective - were momentous!

I still have a book about the rising, which was distributed to every secondary school student in Ireland in 1966.

I went to a school run by Quakers and was there in 1966.

My history teacher, Eileen Webster, who was herself a Quaker and a pacifist, was quite disapproving of the militaristic fervour of much of the official 1916-66 commemorations (as she was of the American efforts in Vietnam at the time).

In relation to the events of 1916, she was horrified by the murder of the suffragist and pacifist Francis Sheehy-Skeffington.

(The very first lecture I attended in TCD in 1969, where I studied history, was given by his and Hanna’s son Senator Owen Sheehy-Skeffington, I was interested to read, this week that their granddaughter, Dr. Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington of NUI Galway, won a case against the university for discrimination against female academics.)

I am reading Roy Foster’s ‘Vivid Faces’. Some of the ‘players’ he writes about had high hopes for social change, the liberation of women and the loosening of clerical control - which as we know were disappointed.

I am enthralled by the brilliant graphic visions of Berlin and ‘city’ life made by George Grosz. I might ‘quote’ some of those he made in 1916.

I am re-reading some poems by Paddy Galvin: (In the words of words of Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, (Kali in Cork, Cyphers 76) poems about ‘the sheer wild strangeness of urban life’.

 I am not sure how I’ll put all this together, but the piece is likely to include a fragment of a map of Dublin as it was in 1916 showing the wanderings of Sheehy-Skeffington, during the rising, and his murder - probably drawn in a way that quotes George Grosz; It is also likely to include a reference to my paternal grandfather returning with his family from Australia, and my maternal grandfather and World War 1.

I completed *‘Farther away and nearer still’* in May 2015.

*David Lilburn*