

Throughout history
ireland has been host
to much violence



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Henry VIII In the 1530's Henry VIII planned to divorce his first wife Katherine of Aragon as she could not provide him with a male heir only a girl (Mary). Consequently, Henry broke from the Roman Catholic Church as divorce was forbidden by Catholics, he changed the religion of England from Roman Catholic to Protestant and set up his own Protestant church in England. Worried by the threat of invasion from foreign Catholics who could use Ireland as a base, Henry decided to extend England's control over the Irish, most of the Irish had remained loyal to the Catholic Church when Henry became protestant.

Henry was also scared the Irish would revolt so he made himself king of Ireland and passed laws such as "... no person or persons ... shall be shaven above the ears or use any hair covering their upper lip" this law stopped the Irish growing a moustache and shaving their heads. Many more laws were passed like stopping the Irish dyeing their clothes with saffron (an orange dye). All these laws were passed to try to anglicise the Irish - to try to make the Irish so like the English that they would no longer be England's enemies.

This would make the Irish resentful as Henry was changing their whole way of life by passing unfair laws, changing their religion and ruling over their land for his own selfish reasons. Plantation The unrest in Ireland continued throughout the reign of Henry VIII and into the reign of Elizabeth I his daughter. In the 1550's many of the Irish Catholic Lords rebelled against Protestantism and English rule.

Elizabeth I was scared that Ireland would ally with England's Catholic enemies and attack or invade England , so she decided to take land from the

Irish Catholics and give it to Protestants who moved there, land was power and taking it from the Catholics helped Queen Elizabeth to rule over Ireland firmly. King James I who succeeded Elizabeth continued to do this throughout his reign too. This was bound to make the Catholic Irish nationalists resentful as the English Protestants were stealing their land, simply because they were Catholics.

This land would have probably been in the Catholics' families for generations and would be their whole livelihood. As they had inherited the land they would have expected to pass it on to their children to provide them with a livelihood. Violence and conflict in the 17th century In 1641 England was split by a civil war between King Charles I and Parliament. The Irish Catholics thought this would be a good time to rebel against Protestantism and English rule.

But by 1649 the English Civil War was over and Oliver Cromwell was sent to Ireland to stop the rebellion and the Catholic rebels, he did this very harshly cruelly killing both Catholic men and women. When the English soldiers captured the garrison town of Drogheda they ran wild and killed nearly 3000 people including 200 women. But Cromwell was not remorseful he spoke of the massacre as " the righteous judgements and mighty works of god". After Cromwell had crushed the rebellion he paid his soldiers with land taken from the Irish Catholics. Cromwell's actions caused much resentment with Irish nationalists.

Cromwell had callously ordered the killing of nearly 3000 innocent Irish Catholics including women and showed no mercy in doing so, and then stole

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their land to pay English soldiers that did this. Once again England's problems were to affect Ireland. In 1688 king James II lost the throne for trying to restore the Roman Catholic religion to England. He turned to Louis XIV of France and Ireland (both Catholic countries) for support. War soon broke out. A year later in 1689 James's army laid siege to the city of Londonderry, in Ulster, and trapped over 35, 000 protestants.

The commander of the English garrison, Robert Lundy, wanted to surrender but was stopped by the cities Protestant workers. Thousands died of disease and starvation. James and his army continued to attack more Protestant towns causing anger in Britain. By marriage to Mary the Queen of England, the Dutch William of Orange became the new king of England. William was James's son-in-law but unlike James, William was protestant and in 1690 William took his armies to Ireland to fight James and his Catholic allies.

William won great victories at the battle of the Boyne and at Aughrim, It was not long before James II and the catholic armies surrendered. William of Orange's victories over the Catholics are still celebrated today by the Irish Protestants of Ulster. They parade through the streets wearing orange. These marches cause a lot of friction in Ireland as they pass through Catholic areas and celebrate the Protestants' victory over the Catholics. This caused a lot of resentment in Ireland because the Catholics suffered terrible beatings at the hands of the Protestants and William of Orange.

The 'Orange marches' still cause anger and resentment today as the Protestants are celebrating their brutal victory over the Catholics these marches also pass through Catholic areas causing even more friction. The

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Potato Famine In 1846 Ireland's entire potato crop totally failed. With most of the Irish being peasant farmers who depended on the crop for food the blight hit Ireland hard, it was not long before food ran out and thousands began to die of starvation and disease. The Irish people, both Protestants and Catholics, were crying out for help.

The British people were shocked by what was happening in Ireland, Robert Peel the Prime Minister urged parliament to help but nothing was done. Britain's help came too late, a million people died in the potato famine. Many tried to escape the poverty and death by emigrating, most went to America (mainly New York) and some to Canada. Many Irish people thought that the famine could have been handled better or even avoided if the Irish people had been in charge, this played into the hands of the nationalists giving them great reason to want an independent country ruled by the Irish people.

This caused great resentment and anger in Ireland as they felt the rest of Britain did not do enough to help them when they most needed it. They accused Britain of taking but not giving and of using the Irish people. By giving help when it was needed, the British could have tried to win over the Irish people and make amends for the past. The British were the closest neighbours to Ireland and they would be the people most likely to be able to help. The lack of help from the British furthered the anger and resentment that was building up towards Britain.

The famine affected everyone, as over a million people died and many more emigrated, with all of Ireland in uproar how could Britain possibly restore relations with Ireland? The Easter Rising In 1916 England was at war with

Germany, many English troops were overseas and the Irish republicans who would not fight for England thought now would be an ideal time to rebel and seize power for themselves. On Easter Monday 1916 around 1600 of these republicans tried to take control in Dublin, about 100 men took over a post office on Sackville Street and made it their headquarters.

The Republicans then declared Ireland as an Independent Republic. Within 48 hours the Irish republicans were outnumbered 20 to 1 by English troops. After a week of fierce street fighting and with over 490 dead, including English soldiers, rebels and civilians, and with 2000 injured the British troops took control and captured many Irish rebels. At first most of the Irish were shocked and angry at the rebels, many thought that the violence was wrong.

But the public attitude soon changed once they heard that 77 of the rebels had been sentenced to death, the Irish Catholics were horrified. In the end only 15 of the ringleaders were actually executed, they became republican martyrs and their example is admired and remembered by extreme Nationalists today. The executions had helped to further the Nationalists cause and glorified their leaders. Britain's actions caused resentment because they killed all the nationalist leaders making them martyrs and brutally crushed the republican rebellion.

Although many Irish people disagreed with the actions taken by the rebels they were shocked that the British had sentenced them to death. The use of massive and brutal force against the rebels caused the Irish Nationalists to feel even more anger and resentment towards the British. The above incidents show that the Irish Nationalists' anger and resentment towards

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Britain is deep rooted and has been growing for generations. The British interference in Ireland dated back to Henry VIII and had grown in ruthlessness over the generations.

Resentment and Anger towards Britain would grow in the Irish Nationalists from their early childhood, as their parents would tell stories of how the British killed their relatives and took away their land and livelihoods. The British could have tried to win over the Irish people by helping them as close neighbours when they were starving through the Potato Famine, but the help was too little and too late and so caused more anger and resentment.

Although peace efforts have been made, the anger and resentment is so deep rooted that no clear ending to the conflict can be seen. Neither side can forget the past.