

The British domination of Ireland begins in the 12th Century with the Anglo-Norman invasion.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, Scottish and English "planters" colonise parts of the island, largely in the north. This begins the Protestant tradition there.

1690: The Battle of the Boyne on July 12. William of Orange defeats James II and establishes a Protestant ascendancy in Ireland.

1800: The Act of Union establishes Ireland as a province of England. The century sees continuing pressure in the south for limited self-government or Home Rule, but the Protestants in the north resist this. (There are several uprisings including those led by Wolfe Tone in 1798; Robert Emmet in 1803; Young Irelanders in 1848; and the Fenians of 1867.)

1905: Sinn Fein is established.

1914: London offers Home Rule to Ireland but the unionists in the north oppose this. In the south, the Volunteers are formed to defend Home Rule.

1916: Southern republicans stage the Easter Rising and read the Declaration of the Republic outside Dublin's General Post Office. 1918: The republicans set up a revolutionary Dail, or Parliament, in Dublin. The Volunteers become known as the Irish Republican Army.

1920: Britain passes the Government of Ireland Act, which partitions the country under separate "Home Rule" parliaments in Dublin and Belfast. The IRA keeps fighting for independence.

1921: The Anglo-Irish Treaty is signed following a truce between the parties. The Stormont parliament outside Belfast begins operating for the northern counties.

1922 The Irish Free State is established and covers 26 of the 32 counties of the island. The new province of Northern Ireland is formed from six of the nine counties of Ulster.

1925: The Ireland/Northern Ireland boundary is confirmed.

1949: The Irish Free State becomes a republic and leaves the Commonwealth.

1969: British troops are called into Northern Ireland after civil disturbances break out following opposition to the civil rights movement. There is growing support for the IRA.

1972: Britain suspends and later closes Stormont, thus replacing "devolution" with Direct Rule from London.

1974: Ulster Workers' Council strike destroys efforts to develop power-sharing arrangements.

1982: A Northern Ireland Assembly is set up but fails to gain support and is abandoned four years later.

1985: The Anglo-Irish Agreement (or Hillsborough agreement) is signed by the British and Irish governments and sets up a structure for discussions between the two governments. The northern unionists reject the agreement.

1991: A series of meetings under the "political talks process" is launched to pursue three issues requiring settlement – internal structures in Northern Ireland-, the relationship between Belfast and Dublin; and the relationship between Dublin and London. Former Australian Governor-General Sir Ninian Stephen chairs one set of talks. The talks end in November 1992, achieving little.

1994 IRA and Loyalist paramilitary groups announce ceasefire

1996 Canary Wharf bombings end IRA ceasefire.

1997 IRA resumes 1994 ceasefire.

1998 Good Friday agreement signed by all but Democratic Unionist Party led by Ian Paisley.

1998 Omagh bombing kills 31 and dashes euphoria.(Who was really responsible?)

1999 Power sharing Government meets for first time.

2000 IRA commits to putting arms "beyond use".