

Has Ireland always been Britain's enemy?

Since the discovery of Ireland and its invasion in the 12th century by the Normans, Irish and British relations have been divided between cooperation and conflicts, by the will of Irish people to be independent from the British crown and the will of domination wanted by the monarchy. The history of Ireland is marked by conflicts which changed the relations between the two countries. So, one can wonder if Ireland has always been Britain's enemy.

Firstly, England and Ireland, are two longtime antagonists. Since Ireland was invaded by England more than eight centuries ago, Ireland has suffered from war, religious conflict, and political division. This encounter has left a profound legacy in Irish culture and even landscape.

Ireland suffered the Norman invasion that started in the late 12th century. The Normans were hungry for land and glory, Ireland seemed to offer both. A war between Britain and Normans lasted for 4 centuries ended in the 15th century with a little part of Ireland being controlled by Britain, "The Pale", but the country was still under the Britain crown.



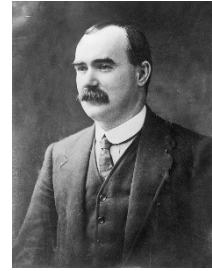
In the year 1509, Henry VIII became the king of England. Being a protestant, he forced everybody to be protestant as well, even in mainly catholic which he ruthlessly invaded, destroying monasteries and churches. In the 16th century, he issued the Act of Supremacy establishing an Anglican Church in Ireland under the name of the Church of Ireland, an attempt to "anglicize" Ireland since most of the Irish people spoke Gaelic (the native language of Irish people) by ordering the Bible to be written in English and the church services to be spoken in English as well. This plan was to make the Irish people more obedient to the British rule since they did not see themselves as British subjects. The conquest of Ireland was complete in the year 1601 after the Battle of Kinsale which led many Celts to leave Ireland for other countries. Penal laws against Catholics were introduced excluding them from holding public office, entering professions, teaching, owning firearms, restricting their ownership of property and inheritance of land and outlawing Catholic clergy.

A civil war started in the British Isles in 1648, Olivier Cromwell became king and stopped these rebellions. In Ireland, half of the population was killed or reduced into slavery. Catholics were persecuted or expelled from the kingdom. Inspired by the French Revolution, in 1798 Celts tried a rebellion and massacred traitors. 30,000 people died but the rebellion failed.



During the Great Famine from 1845 to 1852, British stole Ireland's main food resources, causing deadly starvation, forced emigration and rebellion around the country.

In April 1916, a nationalist rebellion resulted in the proclamation of Irish Independence, following the passage of a Home Rule Bill intended to grant the right to self-government in Ireland in 1914. Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army staged an armed Rebellion in Dublin and proclaimed Ireland's independence. The Easter Rebellion was defeated after several days of fighting. The execution of several of its leaders like James Connolly alienated Irish public opinion against British rule. In 1918, Eamon de Valera set up the first independent parliament in Dublin, causing a war between the Irish republican army and the British army from 1919 to 1921. This War of Independence ended with the signing of the Anglo-Irish treaty in December 1921, which divided the country into two: the independent Irish Free State and six counties in Ulster which remained within the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland. A civil war followed for 2 years opposing pro and anti-Treatyists as it didn't provide full independence. The second Irish Constitution was enacted by people in 1937, which made Ireland become a Republic in 1949 that ended the links with the British Monarchy.



Relations between England and Ireland have been marked by conflicts due to conquest, religious issues and independence movements. Nonetheless, England also contributed to the development of Ireland. Despite wars, cooperation also linked Ireland and England.



The British crown allowed the development of Ireland since the beginning of its invasion. Indeed, after the Norman invasion and the integration of Ireland in the British territory, the crown allowed the installation of plantations in the 10th century. It developed farming in the country with the construction of many farmlands on Irish soil.

The English revolt of 1641 inspired Irish people to rebellion. Relations between the two peoples have become friendlier and echoes of the revolt are hearing Irish. The English rebellion with the abolition of monarchy and the establishment of a republic, the Commonwealth of England, initiated by Oliver Cromwell was the signal of the Irish rebellion. The Union Act after the rebellion of 1601 allowed Ireland to formally become part of the United Kingdom, also entailing the suppression of taxes.

Cooperation between the two countries existed during World War Two. Even if Ireland was neutral, numbers of Irish citizens fought in Allied forces with the British army.

Nowadays, Ireland and England are both two members of UNO and develop relations based on mutual aid and friendship.

The flow of goods and services between both economies amounts to 1 billion euros every week. There is collaboration in the development and commercialization of related technologies like Ireland supporting the Northern Ireland Executive in its objective of rebalancing the economy with the all-Ireland Single Electricity Market and collaboration for preserving and protecting the Common Travel Area was created.

There is collaboration between third-level colleges, research institutes and business sectors increase the benefits of investment in research and development, and they work together on immigration issues, and to combat potential vulnerabilities from terrorism, illegal immigration and organized crime.

To conclude, Ireland had for a long time a relation of armed conflicts with England, due to domination and religion issues but despite everything, these close enemies also have common positive projects.



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