THE IRISH QUESTION

Early 20th century: separate Parliaments in Dublin and Belfast. Unionists (Protestants) and Republicans or Nationalists (Catholics).

Northern Ireland: Catholics are kept out of responsible positions and are not granted council houses by the Unionist authorities. The armed police and part-time policemen are Protestants.

1968: THE TROUBLES begin, with a civil rights movement after the black civil rights movement in the US.

1969: “People’s Democracy” march from Belfast to Londonderry attacked by Protestants; rioting in Belfast and Londonderry leads to British troops sent to ensure peace and ending up in representing the British control in Northern Ireland.

1971-75: internment without trial introduced against terrorism (IRA).

1972: civil rights march in Londonderry attacked by British troops, 13 people killed (Sunday, Bloody Sunday).

1976: a group of IRA prisoners claim special status – crimes for political reasons – and go on hunger strike; 10 die, the first one is BOBBY SANDS.

1979: Lord Mounbatten killed by IRA terrorists.

1985: British-Irish agreement, but IRA attacks go on.

December 1993: declaration affirming the right of self-determination for the people of Northern Ireland (British Prime Minister John Major and Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds).

31 August 1994: Sinn Fein announces cease-fire.

1996: more terrorist attacks in London.

1998: explosion of a car bomb in Omagh, Northern Ireland, 28 people killed and over 200 wounded.

December 1999: Queen Elizabeth II granted Executive power to the Northern Ireland Assembly in Belfast.
IRISH QUESTION

1536-1691 → arrival of English and Scottish Protestant settlers.
1536 → Henry VIII’s military campaigns
1649-53 → Oliver Cromwell’s conquest of Ireland
1801 → Act of Union, which joined the parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland into a single governing body based in Westminster.
1845-52 → potato famine or Great Famine, emigration: 1 million people died and a million more emigrated from Ireland to England and America.
1880s → Charles S. Parnell, a Nationalist leader, asks for Home Rule → the English Prime Minister William E. Gladstone (Liberal Party) introduces the Irish Home Rule Bill. The Conservatives reject it twice (1886, 1893).
1911 → the Liberals propose Home Rule on a federal basis, but the Ulster Protestants do not accept to be included in the plan and the Nationalists do not want the exclusion of Ulster. The Sinn Fein (Celtic for “ourselves alone”) is created.
1916 → Easter Rising, proclamation of an Irish Republic, execution of 16 rebels.
1918 → the Sinn Fein Party wins nearly all the seats except in Ulster at the elections; creation of an Irish Parliament in Dublin (the Dáil).
1921 → recognition of the Irish Free State within the British Commonwealth of Nations, without the Ulster territory, with the leadership of Eamon De Valera. Ulster has its local Parliament in Belfast.
1948 → proclamation of the Republic of Ireland (EIRE), no more within the Commonwealth.