



## Early days of English rule

The Norman invasion of Ireland in the late 12th Century marked the beginning of 700 years of shared history between neighbouring islands separated, at their furthest, by about 150 miles.

The English Crown did not assert full control of Ireland until 1541, when the Irish Parliament bestowed the title of King of Ireland on Henry VIII after an uprising by the Earl of Kildare threatened regal hegemony.

The arrival of thousands of Protestant settlers from England and Scotland displaced many of the existing Catholic landholders and sowed the seeds for centuries of on-off sectarian and military conflict.

Wars in the middle and end of the 17th Century cemented the Protestant ascendancy, with William of Orange's victory over James II in the Battle of Boyne in 1690 both celebrated and mourned to this day. The Irish Parliament was abolished in 1801, with Ireland becoming a part of the new United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland under the Act of Union.

The Great Potato Famine of the 1840s, in which a million people are estimated to have died and led a further two million to emigrate, is regarded by many as a turning point in relations between the countries.

(Source : <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-26883211>)