

1801-1847

Chapter 15

*i*RELAND *i*n THE 1800*s*

Strand Two: The History of Ireland

IRELAND UNDER THE UNION

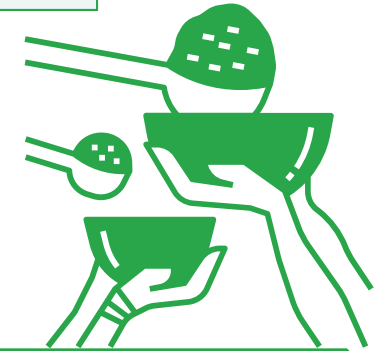
2.2 INVESTIGATE the role and significance of two leaders involved in the parliamentary tradition in Irish politics



Sir Robert Peel becomes home secretary while **Daniel O'Connell** is elected to Westminster

Repeal Campaign is led by **Daniel O'Connell** but failed.

The Great Famine begins in Ireland as the **first blight** causes the **potato crop** fails



1823

1828

1829

1840

1843

1845

1847

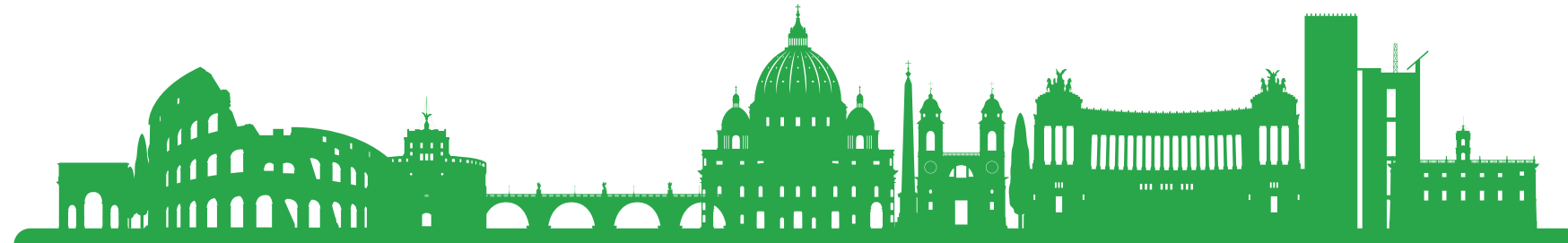


The Catholic Association is founded

Roman Catholic Emancipation is led by **Daniel O'Connell** and is passed.

Clontarf Meeting is called off by **O'Connell** to prevent British forces killing his followers.

Daniel O'Connell dies in Italy and is returned to Ireland for burial in **Glasnevin Cemetery**



Learning Outcomes

- **2.2 INVESTIGATE** the role and significance of **two** leaders involved in the parliamentary tradition in Irish politics
 - First Leader – Daniel O’Connell
 - Second Leader – Charles Stewart Parnell
- **1.2 CONSIDER** contentious or controversial issues in history from more than one perspective and **DISCUSS** the historical roots of a contentious or controversial issue or theme in the contemporary world
- **1.3 APPRECIATE** their cultural inheritance through recognising historically significant places and buildings and discussing why historical personalities, events and issues are commemorated

Introduction

After the 1800 Act of Union, Britain and Ireland were united under one government in Westminster for the first time. The two islands were very different, however. Ireland was primarily an agricultural economy with many small farmers, most of whom were tenants of landlords. Britain, on the other hand, was a rapidly industrialising country as the Industrial Revolution began, introducing faster means of production and transport. In response to the Act of Union, Irish nationalists fought campaigns seeking full equality for Catholics and the restoration of an Irish parliament. In the early half of the 19th century bore witness to Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator.

15.1: *Life* in IRELAND in the 1800s

Ireland after the Act of Union

From 1801 to 1841, the population of the island had reached 8.2 million, up from 5.5 million. While some parts of Ireland were industrialised such as Belfast and Dublin but not to the same extent as Britain. Ireland did not have coal (to power factories) or iron resources and did not use steam engines to the extent that Britain did. Nonetheless, Ireland did have railways and canals for the transportation of people and goods. Ulster had a successful **textiles industries** particularly *linen*. Irish lace and linen was considered the best in the world as well as a flourishing, rising **shipbuilding industry**. Dublin's industry was primarily wool and Guinness. Most of rural Ireland's exports to Britain went through Dublin port.

Life in Belfast and Dublin

Life was difficult for the poorest people in Dublin, Belfast and other Irish cities.

- Overcrowding became a serious problem, with many tentaments being built that were unsanitary while also leading to one, sometimes two families living in just one room.
- Diseases such as **typhoid**, **cholera**, **smallpox**, **scarlet fever** and **tuberculosis** were common. Infant death rates were also high.
- Adults and children both worked in factories and on the docks to make enough money to support their families. It was common to work from 5.30 am until 8pm, six days a week, with only Sundays off.
- Employment was casual, competition was high for jobs so it meant low wages.
- Fighting and drinking were popular past-times leading to a high crime.



Life in rural Ireland in the 1800s

In 1841, over 70% of Ireland's population was still living in the countryside on farms whereas the majority of Britain's population lived in towns and cities. Ireland's population had doubled in under a century. Reasons for this increase included:

- The Irish tended to marry young and have large families.
- Enclosure, improvements to farming, and new machinery produced more food than before.

Ireland exported livestock, such as cattle, and grain to Britain. There was no real effort to industrialise Ireland the way Britain was industrialised at the time. It was claimed that Britain would work better if Ireland produced the food to feed both islands and Britain did the same with industrialised goods.

Most land was owned by landowners who were descendants of the planters. The Irish rented and farmed this land. Irish people rented and farmed this land, growing crops to feed to feed their families and pay their rent. Most farmers in Ireland were tenant farmers. There were two types:

- **Large farmers** were farmers who rented more than 30 acres. They were able to hire help to work the land. Their diet consisted of meat, milk, potatoes and vegetables.
- **Small famers** were farmers who rented between five and 30 acres. They subdivided their land amongst all their sons. Their diet consisted of potatoes and milk.

Poorer people worked as labourers. **Cottiers** were labourers who rented one acre from a farmer. They usually paid their rent by working for the farmer. They had a one-room thatched cottage and grew potatoes. In 1845, there were one million Irish cottiers – including their families, that made up 4 million people; HALF THE POPULATION!



Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



Checkpoint pg. 169 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. By how much did Ireland's population grow between 1801 and 1841?
2. How were Belfast and Dublin different from the rest of the island?
3. Name two examples of industries that were strong in Ireland in the 1800s.
4. How did this overcrowding affect people's lives? What problems did they face?
5. Give two reasons why Ireland's population doubled in under a century.
6. What was the difference between a large farmer and a small farmer?
7. What was a cottier?

Checkpoint pg. 169 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

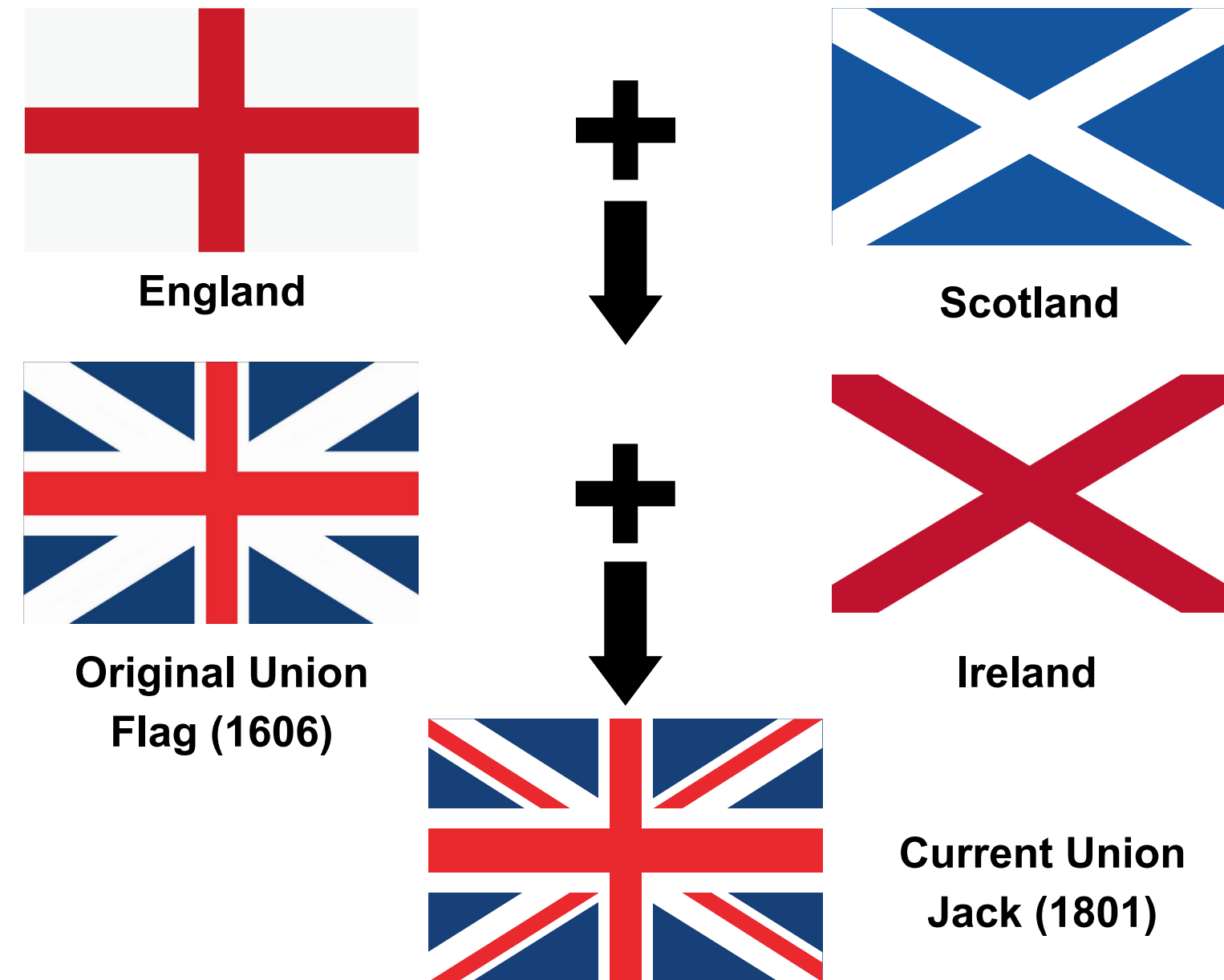
1. Ireland's population grew from 5.5 million to 8.2 million = an increase of 2.7 million.
2. Belfast and Dublin differed from the rest of the island because they had some industry.
3. Any two of: linen, lace or shipbuilding around Belfast; wool, weaving or Guinness's brewery in Dublin.
4. Some of Ireland's rapidly rising population had migrated to the cities to seek work. People lived in large tenement buildings in the centres, sometimes two families to a room. Conditions were unsanitary; sewage sometimes overflowed into water sources; disease spread easily; people worked hard for long hours, for low pay, with no job security; drinking, gambling and fighting were common and the crime rate was high.
5. The Irish tended to marry young and have large families. Enclosure and other improvements to farming methods arrived in Ireland, as in Britain, and the new machinery produced more food than before.
6. A large farmer rented more than 30 acres, whereas a small farmer rented between five and 30 acres.
7. Cottier: a labourer who rented one acre from a farmer.

15.12 : *politics in 1800s Ireland*

The government of Ireland

The Act of Union (1801) removed the Irish Parliament from Dublin. 100 Irish MPs would now sit in the **House of Commons in Westminster** while 32 **Lords** would sit in the **House of Lords**. Laws passed in London applied to the islands of Great Britain and Ireland.

The government of Ireland was based in Dublin Castle. The head of the Irish government was the **Chief Secretary** who spent most of his time in London. The British monarchy (King or Queen) was represented by the **Lord Lieutenant**.



'The Catholic Question'

The biggest political issue in Ireland at the time was **the Catholic Question**. Catholics supported the Act of Union as the British government promised to abolish the last of Penal Laws and Catholic emancipation. However as all MPs had to swear an oath recognising the King of England as the head of Church, no Catholic could become an MP as they could not swear this oath (Pope is the head of the Church). Catholics also resented paying tithes to the Church of Ireland. With the rise of the Catholic middle class, **Daniel O'Connell** became the champion for the campaign of Catholic Emancipation.

Checkpoint pg. 170 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. How many Irish MPs represented Ireland in Westminster?
2. What was Catholic emancipation?
3. Why were Catholics unhappy in Ireland after the Act of Union?

1533: DANIEL O'CONNELL, 'THE LIBERATOR', 1775-1847

Parliamentary tradition is the use of peaceful political means to achieve political change. For example, in attempts to achieve Irish independence, the **Home Rule Bill** and the **Repeal Campaign** belong to parliamentary tradition while the **1798 Rebellion** and the **1916 Easter Rising** belong to physical force tradition.

Early Life



Daniel O'Connell was born in 1775 in Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry. He was born into a wealthy, Catholic middle-class family. He grew up among the tenant farmers of his uncle's lands and learned both Irish and English. Like most well-off Catholic families, he was sent to France to get a university education as Catholics were not permitted to attend Trinity College Dublin. His time in Paris overlapped with the reign of Terror in the French Revolution, when thousands of people were executed for supposedly being enemies of the revolution. O'Connell returned to Ireland with a **hatred of political violence**. He supported the aims of the **United Irishmen** in the **1798 Rebellion** but rejected their use of violence.

Catholic Emancipation

O'Connell became a barrister (lawyer). In 1811, he founded the **Catholic Board** to campaign for Catholic Emancipation with limited results. 1823 saw him founding the **Catholic Association** which campaigned for: end of tithe payments, rights for tenant farmers and Catholic Emancipation. It was a mass membership organisation. The membership fee - Catholic Rent (one penny a month, collected at church gates) - was low enough to be affordable to all but the poorest. This money funded the Campaign, supported pro-emancipation MPs, paid the legal costs of those arrested for campaigning and paid for publicity material.

In 1828, O'Connell stood in Co. Clare for election to Westminster. He won the seat but refused to take the parliamentary oath and was unable to take his seat. The British Prime Minister, the **Duke of Wellington** (only British PM to have been born in Ireland) feared another rebellion. Westminster passed the **Emancipation Act in 1829**, allowing O'Connell to take his seat. It was O'Connell's greatest achievement and led to him being known as **the Liberator**. **King George IV** referred to him as **the King of Ireland**, such was O'Connell's popularity and power after emancipation.

The fight for repeal

During the 1830s, O'Connell campaigned inside and outside Westminster for the abolition of tithe payments. In 1838, he managed to get them lowered and paid to landlords instead of the Church of Ireland. He was elected the first Lord Mayor of Dublin.

In 1830, the **Repeal Association** to campaign for the abolition of the Act of Union and the restoration of the Irish Parliament, while the British monarch remaining as king or queen of Ireland. He used his previous tactics: people a Repeal Rent to support the campaign.

There was little support for repeal in Britain and at the end of the 1830s, O'Connell started organising **monster meetings** all over Ireland with over 100,000 people attending. The British government grew concerned that these meetings would lead to rebellion and banned one such meeting at Clontarf was banned in 1843. Many of O'Connell's called off the meeting. This led to a split in the movement, with younger members setting up the **Young Irelanders**, who wanted an all-Ireland struggle for independence and democratic reform.



Death and legacy

Just as the **Great Famine** began in 1845, O'Connell's health began to fail. His last speech in the House of Commons in February 1847 was an impassioned plea for help for the Irish people dying of starvation. He died on a pilgrimage to Rome in May 1847.

O'Connell's approach to political action – rejecting the use of force and relying on mass organisation of people – influenced people like **Mahatma Gandhi** and **Martin Luther King** during the 20th Century. He was also an inspiration to the American campaigner for the abolition of slavery in the USA, Frederick Douglass, who said of O'Connell; *"I have heard many speakers within the last four years - speakers of the first order; but I confess, I have never heard one by whom I was more completely captivated than by Mr O'Connell."*

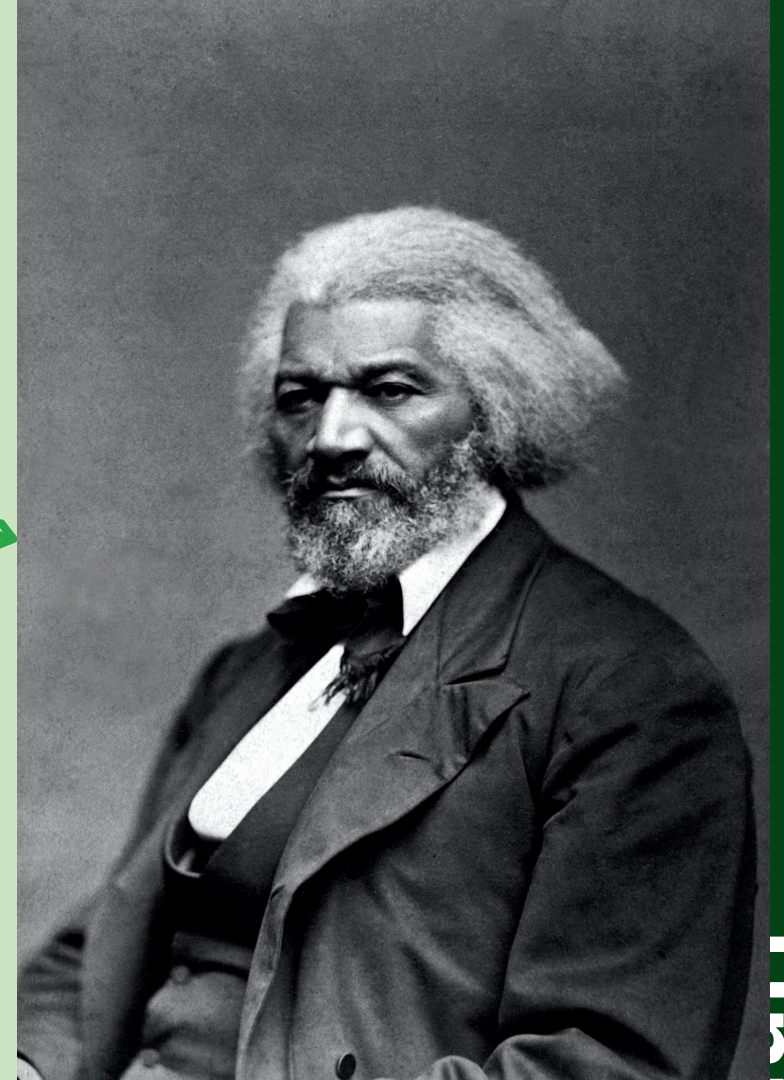
In Ireland, the rejection of violence was also presented in politics like people like **Charles Stewart Parnell**, **John Redmond** and **John Hume**. **William Gladstone**, British Prime Minister in 1870s and 1880s, described O'Connell as *"the greatest popular leader the world has ever seen"*.



Mahatma Gandhi



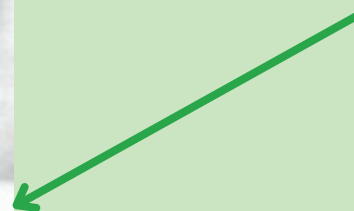
Frederick Douglass



Frederick Douglass



Martin Luther King Jr



Checkpoint pg. 173 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. How did the French Revolution influence O'Connell?
2. How did the Catholic Association campaign for emancipation?
3. What happened in 1828?
4. How did the British government respond to O'Connell's election? Why did they do this?
5. What were monster meetings? Why was the British government afraid of them?
6. How did O'Connell respond to the banning of the Clontarf meeting? What impact did this have on the Repeal movement?
7. What was O'Connell's legacy and impact on (a) Ireland; and (b) the rest of the world?

15.4: SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have learned that...

- Limited industrialisation took place around Dublin and Belfast. Most of the country remained rural and most farmers were small landholders who rented from landlords.
- Factories brought thousands of people to work in the cities, where they lived in cramped and dirty conditions. They worked long hours for low pay and were susceptible to many diseases because of poor sanitation and diet.
- Catholics were excluded from sitting in parliament. Daniel O'Connell led the successful campaign for Catholic Emancipation in 1828, using mass protests and peaceful campaigning.
- However, he failed to achieve the repeal of the Union in the 1840s.

Reflecting on... Ireland in the 1800s

It is difficult not to see O'Connell's failure to achieve repeal of the Union as a missed opportunity in Irish history. His commitment to peaceful means was in stark contrast to those who went before him in the United Irishmen and those who came after him in the various Irish Republican movements. The failure of non-violent mass protest convinced many of the next generation that the only solution to Ireland's problems lay with the gun.

SEC Examination Questions

Project

Guidelines:

1. **Length:** The depth of your project should reflect about 2-3 weeks of work.
2. **Sources:** Use at least three different sources for your research. These can be books, scholarly articles, or reputable online resources.
3. **Citations:** All information and images that are not your own should be properly cited.
4. **Mediums:** You may choose to present your project in one of the following ways:
 - **Poster:** Your poster should be informative and visually engaging.
 - **Minecraft or Lego Model:** If choosing this option, please also include a brief report explaining your model.
 - **Painting/Drawing:** Your artwork should be accompanied by a description.
 - **Recycled Materials:** Create your model using recycled materials and provide an explanation of your creative process.

Assessment:

Your projects will be assessed based on:

1. Research and Content
2. Creativity and Presentation
3. Understanding of Context
4. Adherence to Guidelines

Project

Historical Sites

O'Connell Monument, Dublin, Republic of Ireland
Derrynane House, Caherdaniel, County Kerry
Emancipation Stone, Dunmanway, County Cork
Clongowes Wood College Chapel, Clane, County
Kildare
Palace of Westminster, London, England

Historical Figures

Daniel O'Connell
Henry Grattan
Robert Peel
Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington
John Keogh
Richard Lalor Sheil
Sir Francis Burdett
Bishop James Doyle
William Cobbett
Edward Cooke