

eyes weren't open, and they couldn't really face the consequences of what they had done.²⁴

Qualified majority voting accomplished what it was supposed to do. The legislative programme identified by the White Paper was speedily accomplished, and the Single Market became a reality, at least insofar as goods are concerned – the Single Market for services has remained a work in progress, much to the occasional irritation of British politicians given the importance of services to the UK economy. The remaining capital controls between member states also came down, meaning that there were no restrictions on the ability to buy and sell financial products across borders – much to the benefit of the City of London. But symbolically, as the White Paper anticipated, the most visible consequence of the Single Market programme was the abolition of frontier controls. On 1 January 1993 these came down between the twelve member states of the European Communities – or the European Union as it was now called. That is another story to which we shall return later in this book.

One of the borders along which frontier controls were dismantled was that between Ireland and Northern Ireland, and it is to Ireland that we now must turn.

Ireland, Europe and the Good Friday Agreement

A French rugby commentator used to ask, when Les Bleus played against Ireland, 'What is the difference between the Irish and the British?' To which the answer was, 'The Irish are not British.' The joke is reminiscent of Samuel Beckett's famous reply to a French journalist who had asked him whether he was English: 'Au contraire.'

As a kid growing up in Brussels I became used to explaining to people that I wasn't in fact British, but Irish. At the same time, however, I began to see that there was a reason why they were confused. My British friends and I spoke the same language, ate the same food, had the same slightly agricultural approach to playing football, quite distinct from the way that the Dutch or Italian kids in the school practised the sport. Viewed from further afield the similarities no doubt seem even greater, and sometimes so is the confusion. A University College Dublin colleague of mine once told an elderly American lady that he was Irish – 'Ireland,' she replied. 'Is that the little one, or the top of the big one?'

It's hard for the Irish to see any upside to Brexit. One consolation, perhaps, may be that other Europeans will be less inclined to confuse our country with our next-door neighbour.

For although Britain and Ireland must seem similar in many respects when viewed from the continent or outside Europe we are actually two quite different countries, and this will become much more apparent to everyone after 2019.

Up until this point I have been guilty of systematic inaccuracy. If you haven't noticed, this is because everybody does it, and you are no doubt used to it. Until now, I have used the terms 'United Kingdom' and 'Britain' interchangeably, as if they were the same thing. But they are not: Britain, or Great Britain, refers to the island comprising England, Scotland and Wales. The state of which Britain is a part, on the other hand, is the United Kingdom of Great Britain *and* Northern Ireland. Similarly, I have systematically used the adjective 'British', since as far as I am aware there is no adjective corresponding to the proper noun 'the United Kingdom'.¹ But as George Orwell warned us, 'the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts.'² And you do have to wonder if this quirk of the English language, this linguistic tendency to confuse Britain and the United Kingdom, not only reflects but also helps to amplify the neglect of Northern Ireland in the British consciousness.

Northern Ireland barely got a mention in the Brexit campaign of 2016. Nor did Ireland more generally. Neither 'Ireland' nor 'Northern Ireland' merits an entry in the index of Tim Shipman's gripping and authoritative account of how the 2016 referendum was lost and won, and that is an accurate reflection of what happened.³ But if Ireland was irrelevant to Brexit before the referendum, it has turned out to be the central issue ever since. The Irish border question may lead the British government to eventually seek the softest of

all Brexits – a Brexit in name only, as some critics dismissively refer to it. Or it may lead to the hardest of all Brexits – a Brexit in which the UK crashes out of the European Union without any deal at all, and in default of its existing obligations to its former European partners. At the time of writing these words (September 2018) it is impossible to know what the outcome will be, but whatever the outcome the question of Ireland will have been central to the process of getting there.

Partition

Fortunately it is not necessary to recall the entire history of British involvement in Ireland in order to understand the main issues at stake today. A little bit of background is in order, however. The story begins in the late twelfth century, with the Norman invasions of Ireland. Since the invaders owed allegiance to the King of England, they are frequently referred to as Anglo-Norman, and the King eventually became known as the Lord of Ireland. The native Irish retained control over a large part of the island, however, and it was not until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the English (for at this stage we can definitely refer to them as English) established effective control over the country, and that the Lord of Ireland became its King.

Perhaps it was inevitable in a violent world that the larger of the two islands would eventually conquer the smaller. But the process was made even more violent by the divisions that appeared within Western Christianity following the Reformation, and by the fact that while Ireland remained Catholic, Britain for the most part did not. In the context of the wars of religion, which supplied the perceived need, and the

colonization of America that was happening at the same time, which supplied the model, it no doubt made sense for the Crown to expropriate Irish Catholic landowners in Ulster (the northernmost of the four historic provinces of Ireland), and grant their lands to English and Scottish Protestant settlers whose loyalty to the Protestant King was guaranteed. But this led to a society in which religious and national divisions coincided, and to a cycle of atrocities and counter-atrocities amplified by political turmoil in Britain itself – the English Civil War of the middle of the seventeenth century, and the overthrow of the Catholic King James by the Protestant (and Dutch) King William a few decades later. And this religious context also made it much more difficult for Ireland to ever be fully incorporated within the larger political unit. It may come as a surprise to the French, familiar with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, to learn that Protestants were also capable of being intolerant when they were in power, but in fact they were, and anti-Catholic legislation persisted in Ireland for many decades.⁴ Indeed, as noted earlier in this book, anti-Catholic prejudice, as opposed to legislation, survived in Britain well into the twentieth century and helped colour attitudes towards Europe.⁵ This cannot have helped in making the Catholic Irish accept rule from London as legitimate, and it presumably didn't help in getting their rulers to accept the Irish as their fellow nationals either.

In 1707 England and Scotland merged to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain.⁶ The monarch was now King both of the United Kingdom and (separately) of Ireland. This changed a century later: the American and French revolutions of 1776 and 1789 were followed in 1798 by a republican

revolution in Ireland, supported by France, that was suppressed only after a great deal of bloodshed. While the leadership of the revolution was notable for the way in which it incorporated both Catholics and Protestants, on the ground there were once again sectarian atrocities on both sides. Partly as a consequence of the revolution, on 1 January 1801 Ireland and Britain were merged to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. While Irish republicanism would continue to seek independence from Britain during the centuries that followed, it would eventually become a mostly Catholic phenomenon.

By the end of the nineteenth century an alternative strand of Irish nationalism had risen to the fore. Reformist rather than revolutionary, Home Rulers such as the Southern Protestant landowner Charles Stewart Parnell sought land reform, so that Irish tenant farmers could own their own land, and Home Rule, involving a limited degree of self-government for Ireland under the British Crown. Parnell's Irish Parliamentary Party became the dominant force in Irish nationalist politics, and by the second decade of the twentieth century seemed to be on the verge of achieving its aims. However, this prospect prompted the creation in 1912 of the Ulster Volunteers, a paramilitary force with strong Protestant support opposed to Home Rule.⁷ This in turn prompted the formation of the Irish Volunteers, some of whose members favoured Home Rule, and some of whom went further and supported the creation of an Irish Republic. Both the Ulster Volunteers and the Irish Volunteers imported arms into Ireland. The gathering crisis took on a potentially sinister constitutional nature when elements in the British Army made it clear that they

would not be prepared to act against the Ulster Volunteers, should the politicians in London order them to do so. Who knows what might have happened had the First World War not intervened – some feared a civil war. As it was, the wider war erupted in August 1914, and Parliament agreed to Home Rule on condition that this would only come into effect at the end of the war. The Ulster Volunteers offered their services to the British war effort, as did the majority of the Irish Volunteers. But a minority refused, among them a small group of republicans led by Patrick Pearse, who in 1916 staged an armed rebellion in Dublin.

It was understandable that in the midst of a world war such an act should have been suppressed without mercy. At the same time, one has to wonder whether artillery shells would have been used to suppress a revolt in a crowded city centre in Britain itself. When the leaders of the rising were executed, public sentiment became radicalised, and the republican Sinn Féin Party gradually took over from the old Irish Parliamentary Party as the voice of Irish nationalism. In the general election of December 1918 they swept to victory, winning 73 out of the 105 Irish seats. In Ulster, however, Protestant Unionists (that is to say, people seeking to retain the Union with Great Britain) won 23 out of 38 seats.

In January 1919 those Sinn Féin MPs who were able to attend (for several were in prison) attended the first meeting of the Dáil in Dublin, which issued a declaration of Irish independence. A guerrilla war ensued, fought by the Irish Republican Army (IRA)⁸ on behalf of the government that had been appointed by the Dáil. A mark of the radicalization that had occurred since 1916 is the fact that the fighters included some,

like my grandfather, who had previously fought on behalf of the British during the world war. A truce was declared in July 1921, and in December of that year a treaty was signed giving Ireland 'the same constitutional status in the Community of Nations known as the British Empire as the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa'.⁹ This was not the republic that had been hoped for, but it was a lot more than the Home Rule an earlier generation had aspired to. On 6 December 1922 the Irish Free State came into existence, and although the link with the British Empire and Crown survived, Ireland was effectively independent.

On the following day, however, Northern Ireland exercised its right under the treaty to opt out of the new Irish state and remain part of the United Kingdom: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was now the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The terms 'Northern Ireland' and 'Ulster' are sometimes used interchangeably, but as in the case of 'Britain' and 'United Kingdom' this is inaccurate. Northern Ireland only comprises six of the nine counties of Ulster, the six being chosen on the grounds that they were the largest subsection of Ulster that could be relied upon to have a durable Protestant, and hence Unionist, majority. (Catholics only made up 34.4 per cent of the population in the six counties in question in 1911.)¹⁰ Northern Ireland thus defined had its origins in the aftermath of the war, when the British government tried to figure out a way of implementing the Home Rule it had promised in 1914. Given the pre-war tensions between Irish and Ulster Volunteers, and the strong objection by Ulster Protestants to being included in a

Home Rule Ireland governed from Dublin, the solution (embodied in the 1920 Government of Ireland Act) was to set up two Home Rule Parliaments, one for Northern Ireland in Belfast and the other for the rest of the island in Dublin. Home Rule for Northern Ireland came into effect in May 1921, at which stage the island became effectively partitioned into two jurisdictions.

The political divide between North and South widened with the establishment of the Irish Free State in December 1922: the frontier between them was no longer internal to the United Kingdom but an international one. And the border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State was given a physical form on 1 April 1923 when the Irish Free State left the UK customs union, regaining control over its own tariffs and excise duties. Customs posts immediately appeared along the frontier. It was an April Fool's joke that would last seventy years.¹¹

Ireland After Partition

South and west of the new border (for we should always remember that the northernmost county in Ireland, Donegal, is in Ulster but not in Northern Ireland – see Map 10.1 in Chapter 10) – constitutional change occurred fairly quickly. The leaders of the new state, who had in many cases been involved in a guerrilla war against the British Crown just a few years previously, set about making Irish independence a reality. At the same time, they accepted the Dominion status accorded to the Irish Free State under the treaty, and participated in the imperial conferences that we encountered in Chapter 2. The British King remained the head of state, just

as in Australia, Canada or New Zealand. This continued link to the Crown prompted a vicious civil war in 1922 and 1923, with both Sinn Féin and the IRA splitting over the question of whether or not to accept the Treaty. The war was eventually won by the pro-treaty side, whose army became the official National Army of the Irish Free State; the losing side's armed forces retained the label 'IRA', and the IRA continued to exist after the civil war as an illegal organization regarding itself as the sole rightful heir of those who had fought in 1916 and the War of Independence.

Many of the new states that emerged in the aftermath of the First World War started life as democracies but soon became authoritarian. Ireland is an honourable exception. In 1932 the party representing the anti-treaty forces that had been defeated in the Civil War, Fianna Fáil, came to power and remained there for the next sixteen years. Neither the army nor the police force, which had fought and won a brutal war against their new rulers less than a decade previously, opposed the transfer of power, which occurred smoothly. The new Irish leader, Éamon de Valera, proceeded to dismantle most of the links with the British Crown. In 1936 he deleted the references to the King in the constitution of the Irish Free State: the only role now played by the monarch related to such diplomatic formalities as the presentation of diplomatic credentials and the signing of treaties. The following year a new constitution replaced the King with a directly elected President as head of state, and the name of the state was changed to Ireland, the name by which it is still known today. Since the British King continued to fulfil the diplomatic functions referred to above, there was some ambiguity about who the Irish head of state

really was. In 1948, however, Ireland ended this uncertainty by unilaterally declaring itself to be a republic, thus formalizing what had in fact been the case for the previous twelve years.¹² The last vestigial role of the King was now extinguished, and Ireland left the British Commonwealth.

In response, the British government passed the Ireland Act of 1949. This recognized the legitimacy of what had happened, but also stated that 'the Republic of Ireland is not a foreign country for the purposes of any law in force in any part of the United Kingdom'. The result has been that Irish citizens resident in the UK have always enjoyed privileged conditions there, even prior to the two countries joining the EC in 1973, for example being able to vote in all UK elections.¹³ The fact that we Irish can also complain about being accorded these privileges, on the grounds that the British ought to recognize our foreign-ness but don't, is of course an extra bonus.

The British Government's Ireland Act also guaranteed that 'in no event will Northern Ireland or any part thereof cease to be part of His Majesty's dominions and of the United Kingdom without the consent of the Parliament of Northern Ireland.' This guarantee to Unionists was in direct contrast with the 1937 Irish Constitution, which asserted that 'The national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and the territorial seas.' This territorial dispute would last for a further 50 years, and was a source of constant tension between Ireland and the UK. The tension even spilled over into the way the two states referred to each other. Unlike other countries, the UK referred to Ireland (the state, as opposed to the island) as 'the Republic of Ireland', while Ireland was

reluctant to use the term 'Northern Ireland', and by extension 'the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland', preferring to use 'Great Britain' instead. It was only after the 1998 Good Friday (or Belfast) Agreement that the two states finally started calling each other by their official names.¹⁴

Northern Ireland: From Partition to the Good Friday Agreement

Political development in Northern Ireland was much slower, or if you prefer, the institutional framework set up there in 1921 was much more stable: the Northern Irish Home Rule Parliament established in that year survived for a full 50 years. Northern Ireland largely governed itself, but in a society that was divided along religious lines, and in which religion and political affiliation coincided almost perfectly, this was a mixed blessing. Politics was defined by the issue of the Irish border, with Protestants almost invariably favouring its retention, and Catholics almost always opposed to it – hence the linguistic tendency to use the terms 'Protestant' and 'Unionist', and 'Catholic' and 'Nationalist', interchangeably. There was, almost inevitably, severe sectarian violence in the early 1920s coinciding with the violence on the rest of the island, and while this eventually faded away the society that emerged was deeply divided along religious lines. With demography guaranteeing a Protestant Unionist majority, the Catholic minority faced discrimination in employment and housing.¹⁵ In 1971 the unemployment rate among Catholics was 17.3 per cent, as opposed to 7.6 per cent for the rest of the population.¹⁶

The 1960s saw a thaw in North-South relations, with

meetings between the Irish Taoiseach Seán Lemass and the Northern Irish Prime Minister Terence O'Neill, and proposals for cross-border cooperation. However, the decade also saw the emergence of a Northern Irish civil rights campaign modelling itself on what was happening in America at the time, which began actively protesting against anti-Catholic discrimination. It included not only representatives of the non-sectarian political left, as well as some young Unionists, but also Irish republicans (the term 'republican' in the Northern Irish context denoting at that time more militant nationalists associated with the IRA). As my colleague Seán Pasetta says, 'The leaders of these organizations emphasized their non-sectarian credentials, but whether the bulk of their supporters shared this view is questionable.'¹⁷

One of my earliest memories of television is the images of one of these civil rights demonstrations being brutally attacked by the Northern Irish police. My father told me that it was very serious, and he was right. The year 1969 saw the widespread eruption of violence in Northern Ireland; the Irish Taoiseach called (unsuccessfully) for United Nations intervention, and refugee camps were set up on the southern side of the border. The British Army was sent to the province to keep the peace, initially being welcomed by the Catholic population; the IRA split, with the Provisional IRA becoming the dominant faction and embarking on a murderous terrorist campaign targeting the security forces, Protestant civilians and Catholics deemed to be disloyal to the cause. That in turn prompted the introduction of internment without trial and other measures by the security forces, alienating many Catholics. Loyalist terrorists ('loyalist' being the Protestant

equivalent of 'republican') targeted their republican opposite numbers as well as the Catholic population more generally. Ian Paisley, who had led the opposition to the civil rights movement, founded the radical Democratic Unionist Party in 1971. In 1972 British paratroopers shot 28 unarmed civilians in Derry, of whom fourteen eventually died, and a mob in Dublin burned down the British Embassy in response.

Those were just some of the early highlights of 'The Troubles', as they were known, and there were many more to come. The violence lasted until 1998, and continued sporadically thereafter. Between 1969 and 1998, 3,489 people were killed: 59 per cent by republican terrorists, 29 per cent by loyalist terrorists, and 10 per cent by the British security forces. The violence reached both the British mainland and the Irish Republic: there were 125 deaths in the former, and 116 in the latter. Eighteen were killed on the European mainland.¹⁸ The British Royal family lost Prince Charles's great-uncle and godfather, Lord Mountbatten, murdered by the IRA in 1979; Margaret Thatcher lost her colleague and friend Airey Neave, a British Member of Parliament, in the same year. An attempt to murder her in 1984, at the Conservative Party conference in Brighton, led to the deaths of five people connected with the party, including yet another MP, Anthony Berry, and permanently disabled the wife of Norman Tebbit, a prominent British Cabinet Minister. In Ireland Senator Billy Fox was murdered in 1974, the same year that a series of coordinated bombs in central Dublin and Monaghan killed 33 civilians, including a woman who was nine months pregnant. For the political classes in both countries, the Troubles were personal.

But the greatest number of victims was in Northern

Ireland itself: 3,232 in the 30 years from 1969 to 1998 inclusive. The population of Northern Ireland in 1971 was 1.5 million, as compared with a metropolitan French population in the same year of 51.3 million.¹⁹ 3,232 deaths in Northern Ireland was thus equivalent to more than 110,000 deaths in France, or ten murders a day, every day, for 30 years. For decades TV news largely consisted of murders, condemnations by politicians and clergymen, funerals and court cases. It is what we all grew up with, even those of us fortunate enough (as far as we were concerned) to live south of the border. It was a devastating, traumatic conflict that overshadowed everything else on the island.

The Good Friday Agreement

There were several attempts by the British and Irish governments to find a political solution to the conflict, beginning as early as 1973 when the Sunningdale Agreement was signed. This proposed a new Northern Ireland Assembly, to be elected by proportional representation rather than the British first past the post system, so as to ensure the fair representation of both communities. A power-sharing executive was to be established, with representatives of both the nationalist and unionist communities, and North-South institutions were to be established: 'a Council of Ministers with executive and harmonizing functions and a consultative role, and a Consultative Assembly with advisory and review functions'.²⁰ The Irish government 'fully accepted and solemnly declared that there could be no change in the status of Northern Ireland until a majority of the people of Northern Ireland desired a change in that status', while the British government stated that 'If in

the future the majority of the people of Northern Ireland should indicate a wish to become part of a united Ireland, the British Government would support that wish.' The agreement collapsed the following year, however, following opposition from many Unionist politicians, strikes and violence.

The years passed, and the violence continued, but beneath the surface relations between British and Irish politicians were slowly being transformed as a result of the two countries' membership of the EC from 1973 onwards. Ministers met regularly in Brussels when attending meetings of the Council of Ministers; the British Prime Minister and Irish Taoiseach met regularly at meetings of the European Council. The two countries discovered that they had many interests in common, and despite continuing tensions over Northern Ireland learned to cooperate with each other on a wide range of issues. Whereas before 1973 the two states had had what a former Irish Taoiseach described as a 'bilateral unequal relationship, which had all the difficulties that go with any bilateral unequal relationship, whether in a family, between states or between businesses', the relationship became normalized in the decades that followed. To take just one example, no British Prime Minister had visited Dublin before 1973, but this changed very soon thereafter. As the Irish Ambassador to London told the British House of Lords European Union Committee in 2016,

There are probably 25 meetings taking place today at various levels in Brussels. At each meeting, there will be a British delegation and an Irish delegation. In most cases, they will probably have a word together in advance or

afterwards. They might have a discussion about the rugby or whatever other topic. Friendships and connections have been developed over the past 40 years.²¹

The Committee's conclusion that 'Common EU membership has been a vital ingredient in the positive transformation of UK-Irish relations in recent years, and in helping lay the groundwork for the development of the peace process' is almost universally shared.

But European integration also helped change facts on the ground. The customs frontiers that had been set up in April 1923 did not come down in 1965, when Ireland and the UK signed the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement and agreed to abolish most tariffs on each other's products: as we saw in Chapter 3, a free trade area still requires customs controls. While Ireland had agreed to reduce its tariffs on imports of British goods, it had not agreed to reduce its tariffs on imports from elsewhere. Customs inspectors therefore still needed to distinguish between imports of British and Australian lamb, for example.

My colleague John FitzGerald tells the story of how an Irish delegation to London in the 1960s therefore requested that British goods exported to Ireland be clearly labelled as 'Made in Britain', or words to that effect. The British Cabinet Minister Denis Healey asked, with some irritation, whether he was supposed to stamp 'Made in Britain' on the balls of every bullock shipped to Ireland, to which the Irish Minister's retort was that bullocks don't have balls.²² The anecdote is pedagogical in multiple ways, and provides us with an early illustration of a technological solution to border frictions

that – with the best will in the world – could never have worked. To repeat, since the point is often misunderstood, mere free trade areas always and necessarily involve border checks, to ensure that goods from third countries are not given the preferential treatment enjoyed by countries party to the agreement.

Nor did border controls come down from 1973 onwards, when both Ireland and the UK joined the EEC and its customs union. As we saw in Chapter 5, there were still physical barriers to trade at borders between member states because of the technical and fiscal barriers that made frontier controls essential. But with the advent of the Single Market these controls were no longer necessary, and on 1 January 1993 they were, as already stated, eliminated across the European Union. At this stage, the only remaining checkpoints at border crossings between Northern Ireland and the Republic were those that were necessary for security reasons. If those security reasons were to vanish, there would be no need for a visible border at all.

By now a variety of informal talks were ongoing regarding how to end the violence. The Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, negotiated by Garrett FitzGerald and Margaret Thatcher, had already given Dublin an advisory role in Northern Ireland while recognizing that Irish unity could only come about with the consent of the people of Northern Ireland. It also promoted cross-border cooperation in a number of areas including security.²³ The Downing Street Declaration, issued by John Major and Albert Reynolds in 1993, was another important step forward. It noted that 'the development of Europe will, of itself, require new approaches to serve interests common

to both parts of the island of Ireland, and to Ireland and the United Kingdom as partners in the European Union.' The Irish government agreed that it would, 'as part of a balanced constitutional accommodation, put forward and support proposals for change in the Irish Constitution which would fully reflect the principle of consent in Northern Ireland'. The British government, for its part, reiterated that it had 'no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland' and that it was 'for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish'.²⁴

By 1997 Tony Blair was in Downing Street, and Sinn Féin, the political wing of the Provisional IRA, was involved in official multi-party talks in Belfast concerning the future of Northern Ireland.²⁵ The resulting agreement, signed on Good Friday 1998, and brokered with the active involvement of the American government, was a triumph of what diplomats call constructive ambiguity.²⁶ Ireland dropped its territorial claim to Northern Ireland, and the corresponding articles of the Irish constitution were amended following a referendum. The UK recognized that the constitutional status of Northern Ireland was a matter solely for the people of the island of Ireland. Both sides agreed that any change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland could only come about with the consent of the people of Northern Ireland. Both political traditions in Northern Ireland were to be regarded as equally legitimate, and all born in Northern Ireland had the right

'to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose'. In practice this meant that they had the right to both Irish and British citizenship, and could choose to carry either one or both of the two passports in question.

There were three institutional 'strands' to the agreement. The first concerned Northern Ireland itself: a Northern Ireland assembly was established, to be elected by proportional representation, and a power-sharing executive representing both political communities was to manage the internal affairs of Northern Ireland. A series of safeguards was put in place to guarantee fairness and respect for human rights. The second strand established a North-South Ministerial Council to cooperate on a variety of cross-border and all-Ireland issues. And the third strand set up a British-Irish Council, including representatives of both governments and of the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, as well as representatives from the Isle of Man and Channel Islands. In this manner, the identities of all were given institutional form: both those for whom the entire island of Ireland was a natural political unit, and those for whom the East-West links between Britain and Ireland were of paramount importance.

The Provisional IRA and various loyalist terrorist groups agreed to disarm, and eventually did so after several delays and accompanying political crises. Prisoners who were members of organizations maintaining ceasefires were released - in many cases these were people who had been convicted of serious terrorist offences including murder. This was obviously extremely difficult for many victims to accept. But

against the injustice of this aspect of the agreement has to be set the end of large-scale political violence in Northern Ireland, and the many lives that have been saved as a result.

The remaining security checkpoints between North and South were eventually removed, and the Irish border became essentially invisible. As I have been emphasizing, this was thanks not only to the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement, but to the European Union's customs union and Single Market. The Good Friday Agreement guaranteed that people living in Northern Ireland who felt themselves to be Irish could be Irish, and that this was entirely legitimate. The border, moreover, was now largely irrelevant in people's lives. In such circumstances, what did it matter if the Republic had dropped its constitutional claim to the North? What did it matter if the North remained *de jure* a part of the United Kingdom?

The rise of an assertive and increasingly well-educated Catholic middle class may have been uncomfortable for many Unionists, but the Good Friday Agreement was good news for them too. The percentage of the Northern Irish population that was Catholic had declined from 33.5 per cent in 1926 to 28 per cent in 1981, but it then started to rise dramatically: to 38.4 per cent in 1991, 40.3 per cent in 2001, and 45.1 per cent in 2011. Demographers began to discuss the day when the majority of the Northern Irish population would be Catholic. But with the peace process more and more Catholics decided that they were comfortable living in Northern Ireland, whether as Irish citizens or not. And sociologists began to track the rise of a new 'Northern Irish' identity, distinct from either Britishness or Irishness. In the 2011 Census

just 11 per cent of Catholics identified themselves as 'British only', as compared with 67 per cent of Protestants.²⁷ But 11 per cent is greater than zero, and a further 28 per cent of Catholics identified themselves as 'Northern Irish only'.²⁸ Demography, it seemed, might not be destiny: perhaps Northern Ireland, which had been constructed with the specific aim of ensuring a Protestant majority, might survive that majority's demise.

The European Union did not solve the Northern Irish conflict: powerful forces internal to that society were pushing all sides towards a political resolution. But the fact that both the UK and Ireland were members of the European Union was crucial in providing the context in which the conflict was eventually solved. As we have seen, it was absolutely essential in normalizing relationships between the two states involved, namely Ireland and the United Kingdom. It was also crucial in eliminating border controls, which in turn made it much easier for Northern nationalists to accept a solution in which they were still residents (but not necessarily citizens) of the United Kingdom. As the former Taoiseach John Bruton said in 2016,

the fact that at the moment we are both members of the European Union means that there is effectively no border in terms of a barrier within the island of Ireland. That creates opportunities for people not to feel isolated. A sense of isolation in terms of being disregarded or in a permanent minority lay behind some of the very aggressive tactics that were adopted by republicans and indeed at times by loyalists as well.²⁹

accomplice in the exporting country (that recoups export VAT from the government); when the time comes for them to pay their import VAT they have vanished. Eventually the goods can be re-exported back to the original country (and perhaps the original firm), with export VAT being reclaimed, and then the carousel can recommence. See for example Crawford et al. (2010).

22. See <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/voting-system/qualified-majority/>.
23. Article 18.2.
24. Young (1999), p. 338.

CHAPTER 6: IRELAND, EUROPE AND THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

1. Unless you consider the abbreviation 'UK' to be an adjective.
2. 'Politics and the English Language', 1946. Widely available online, for example at <https://archive.org/details/PoliticsAndTheEnglishLanguage>.
3. Shipman (2017).
4. Which helps to explain the presence of Irish colleges in many European cities, including Paris, whose function was to educate Irish Catholics. The Parisian college, on the rue des Irlandais, is now an Irish cultural centre.
5. See note 26 in Chapter 4.
6. Wales and England had previously been united in 1536.
7. In 1913 the militias were organized into the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).
8. A rebranding of the Irish Volunteers.
9. A facsimile of the treaty is available at <http://treaty.nationalarchives.ie/the-treaty/>.
10. The Northern Ireland Census 1991, Religion Report, available at <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/census/1991/religion-report.pdf>. Another option would have been to choose only the four Ulster counties with Protestant majorities, while yet another would have been to choose all of Ulster. The actual solution led to a substantial Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, and a small Protestant minority in the Irish Free State.
11. Leary (2016), p. 125.
12. The declaration came unexpectedly when the Irish Taoiseach, John A. Costello, was on an official visit to Canada, and there has been speculation over the years about why it happened. When I was a graduate student at Harvard in the 1980s the distinguished Irish Studies Professor

John Kelleher, who had been there at the time, gave me the Cambridge Massachusetts explanation. Costello apparently visited Harvard before going to Canada, and was shown the Irish book collection in Widener Library. Unfortunately, the idiosyncratic cataloguing system used there shelved (and for all I know still shelves) Irish-related history books under the bookmark 'Br': Br for Britain. The librarians realized that this might be provocative, and got a workman to do up a sign with an 'Ir' bookmark for the occasion. Unfortunately, he only arrived to nail it up on the shelves while the Taoiseach was being shown around, and offence was duly taken. And the rest, according to Kelleher, was history.

13. The legislation is available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/12-13-14/41/enacted>.
14. For a fascinating account of these 'word wars' see Mary Daly's 'Ireland: The Politics of Nomenclature', available at http://www.these-islands.co.uk/publications/1279/ireland_the_politics_of_nomenclature.aspx.
15. There is good evidence for occupational segmentation, which was one important driver of inequality: as late as 1992 only 5 per cent of the workforce at Harland and Wolff, the famous shipbuilding company, was Catholic (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/2861269.stm). While there are few good empirical studies of discrimination *per se*, there is anecdotal evidence of discrimination when it came to hiring and promotions.
16. Based on Table 8 in the 1971 Northern Irish Census's Religion Tables, available at <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/1971-census-religion-tables.PDF>.
17. Pašeta (2003), p. 110.
18. All figures are calculated based on the Sutton Index of Deaths; the cross-tabulations are available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/sutton/crosstabs.html>.
19. <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/serie/000067671>.
20. The text of the agreement is available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/sunningdale/agreement.htm>.
21. The quotations are taken from the said committee's report, available at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/lddeucom/76/7607.htm>.
22. The minister in question being Paddy Hillery.
23. The text of the Anglo-Irish Agreement is available at <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebstimedia/treatyseries/uploads/documents/treaties/docs/198502.pdf>.
24. The text of the Declaration is available at <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebstimedia/ourrolesandpolicies/northernireland/peace-process--joint-declaration-1993.pdf>.

25. You will recall that Sinn Féin was also the name of the party that swept to victory in the 1918 general election and achieved independence subsequently. The Sinn Féin politicians who accepted the treaty founded Cumann na nGaedhal, which subsequently merged with other smaller groupings to form Fine Gael, the party currently (September 2018) in power in Dublin. Those who did not, but who eventually entered Dáil Éireann in the 1920s under Éamon de Valera, formed the Fianna Fáil party as we have already seen.
26. The text of the Good Friday Agreement is available at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/agreement.htm>.
27. I am using the Census's 'Classification 1', and excluding respondents who identified themselves as having in whole or in part another EU identity (i.e. an EU identity other than British or Irish). The data are available at [http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011_Winzip/2011/DC2238N1%20\(a\).ZIP](http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011_Winzip/2011/DC2238N1%20(a).ZIP).
28. In contrast, only 2 per cent of Protestants defined themselves as 'Irish only', and 16 per cent as 'Northern Irish only'. The percentage of Protestants defining themselves as Irish declined during the Troubles: as might have been expected, violence led to a hardening of attitudes making a political settlement harder to find. 55% of Catholics defined themselves as 'Irish only'.
29. <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/european-union-committee/brexit-ukirish-relations/oral/42544.html>.
30. https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ideucom/76/7607.htm#_idTextAnchor069.
31. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-42412972>.

CHAPTER 7: EUROPE AND THE IRISH ECONOMIC MIRACLE

1. This chapter is in large part an abbreviated version of O'Rourke (2017), which was itself a revised version of a lecture delivered on 11 November 2016 at the NUIG National Conference entitled '1916–2016: The Promise and Challenge of National Sovereignty'.
2. The data are available at www.cso.ie, Key Table E2001.
3. For a similar discussion, see Ó Gráda (1997), pp. 2–4.
4. I document this at great length in O'Rourke (2017).
5. Neary and Ó Gráda (1991); O'Rourke (1991).
6. Ó Gráda (1997), pp. 21–5.

7. O'Rourke (2017) also discusses the recurrent balance of payments crises of the period, a problem that Ireland shared with the UK and other former British colonies.
8. Clemens and Williamson (2004).
9. In light of recent controversies it is interesting to note that this soon figured as a potential concern on the radar screens of foreign governments, appearing to be potentially in breach of the OEEC ban on artificial aids to exporters. The OEEC approved the initiative, however, since it seemed to signal a growing outward orientation on the part of the Irish government (Barry and O'Mahony, 2016).
10. de la Escosura and Sanz (1996), pp. 369–70.
11. Costa et al. (2016), pp. 308–9.
12. Paavonen (2004).
13. Freris (1986), pp. 201–2.
14. The classic reference remains Maher (1986). On the history of Ireland's subsequent membership of the EU, see for example Laffan and O'Mahony (2008).
15. Freris (1986), pp. 171–2.
16. Kopsidis and Ivanov (2017), p. 108.
17. Ferreira da Silva (2016). According to the same author, the inflow in 1961 was as high as the total inflow experienced during the entire 1950s.
18. Barry and Bradley (1997), p. 1809.
19. Recall that EFTA aimed not only to dismantle industrial tariffs between its own member states, but eventually to negotiate tariff reductions vis-à-vis the EEC as well.
20. Which is when reliable GDP estimates for Wales and Northern Ireland become available.
21. See Chapter 5 and Ó Gráda and O'Rourke (1996).
22. Campos et al. (2014).
23. Katzenstein (1985).
24. Ó Gráda and O'Rourke (2000).

CHAPTER 8: BREXIT

1. Young (1999), p. 483.
2. The speech is available at <https://www.margarethatcher.org/document/113686>.
3. Young (1999), p. 479.