

IRELAND: FIGHT FOR FREEDOM PART 1

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We are starting off in the early years of 1798, just pre 1800s, the big thing that happened here was we had a huge rebellion where tens of thousands of peasants, not soldiers, rebelled under their leader Wolfetone. This rebellion took place all over Ireland, and when tens of thousands of Irish men and women stood together, though they fought very hard; but 30, 000 Irish lives were lost over the four months, we lost that rebellion. However, what did happen after this rebellion was, British took Ireland under the union of Great Britain, so no longer was Ireland simply a farm land designed to feed the British in England, now Ireland was part of the Union of Great Britain and with the beginning of the 1800s, Great Britain focused on spreading the British Empire as far as it can go; out to the West Indies, Africa, South America. Now that Ireland was part of Great Britain fully, we were part of that, we can see middle class Irish men becoming officers in the British armies in the West Indies and Africa. So we're in a peculiar situation now because not too long ago in this history we were slaves, mistreated, malnourished; and now we suddenly treated with a little respect and commanding younger British soldiers. Yet, still in every Irishman's heart, there's still this yearning for freedom, knowing that being part of the Imperial project as a whole was overall a betrayal to the state. Back in Ireland, things weren't going well. With the expansion of the British Empire, the rich, wealthy merchants, company owners, textile owners that had enriched Dublin with import and export trade, were now trading in worldwide; in Africa and Australia. Dublin declined. The beautiful Georgian housing that had once been filled with the English Lords and servants, were now tenement housing for many families living under the one roof, with many people living in the one room! There then came the Potato famine in 1845-1851, now this was 6 years when the primarily food source, which were potatoes, grew rotten. This was called the Potato Blight, to keep it simple the Potato Blight took the lives of approximately one million people. One million people died of starvation, because the primary food source were potatoes. The average family would have been approx. 9-10 children because a child was likely not to survive and children were needed to work

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the farm land and grow the family, obviously. However many people immigrated over to America, approximately 1.7 million. This meant that the Irish population in New York, Manhattan area was huge! The 1855 census tells was that one quarter of Manhattan's population were Irish born, meaning they had travelled over from Ireland to the states. Now the Americans have a psyche, you know there revolution been done, and they had a psyche of a 'can do' attitude, that we're all born free, born equal, and we Irish clung to that, we were inspired by it! Those people that travelled to the states in 1845-1851 during the Potato Blight, they went over not we the knowledge that they'll stay in America forever, but rather they would travel to get money to send to their families until the Potato Blight was over. While the Irish were over there, they were inspired by the Americans. This was ultimately what they wanted Ireland to become; a Republic, a free nation. This lead to, in 1858, the formation of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Dublin which openly supported Irish language, Irish sports, Irish culture, and was a mild secret forefront for Irish independence. Over in New York, there was the Fenian Brotherhood, a Fenian is an Irish term for a son of the free, and the Fenian Brotherhood were extremely important leading up to the Rising, being a communication point between New York and Dublin. By 1860, in Dublin with had small parliament acting out of Dublin, the British empire were at war all over the world, in New York we had a large standing point with having a quarter of Manhattan's population and in Dublin, well Dublin was getting ready to do something that hadn't been done in 750 years; we were going to defeat the English and create an Irish Republic.

Note: This is spoken English and spoken grammar, the script reflects the story telling style.