

National identity in Britain and Ireland, 1780–1840



National identity in Britain and Ireland, 1780–1840



OpenLearn

Free learning from
The Open University

About this free course

This free course is an adapted extract from the Open University course A225 *The British Isles and the modern world, 1789–1914*.

This version of the content may include video, images and interactive content that may not be optimised for your device.

You can experience this free course as it was originally designed on OpenLearn, the home of free learning from The Open University –

There you'll also be able to track your progress via your activity record, which you can use to demonstrate your learning.

Copyright © 2017 The Open University

Intellectual property

Unless otherwise stated, this resource is released under the terms of the Creative Commons Licence v4.0 http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en_GB. Within that The Open University interprets this licence in the following way: www.open.edu/openlearn/about-openlearn/frequently-asked-questions-on-openlearn. Copyright and rights falling outside the terms of the Creative Commons Licence are retained or controlled by The Open University. Please read the full text before using any of the content.

We believe the primary barrier to accessing high-quality educational experiences is cost, which is why we aim to publish as much free content as possible under an open licence. If it proves difficult to release content under our preferred Creative Commons licence (e.g. because we can't afford or gain the clearances or find suitable alternatives), we will still release the materials for free under a personal end-user licence.

This is because the learning experience will always be the same high quality offering and that should always be seen as positive – even if at times the licensing is different to Creative Commons.

When using the content you must attribute us (The Open University) (the OU) and any identified author in accordance with the terms of the Creative Commons Licence.

The Acknowledgements section is used to list, amongst other things, third party (Proprietary), licensed content which is not subject to Creative Commons licensing. Proprietary content must be used (retained) intact and in context to the content at all times.

The Acknowledgements section is also used to bring to your attention any other Special Restrictions which may apply to the content. For example there may be times when the Creative Commons Non-Commercial Sharealike licence does not apply to any of the content even if owned by us (The Open University). In these instances, unless stated otherwise, the content may be used for personal and non-commercial use.

We have also identified as Proprietary other material included in the content which is not subject to Creative Commons Licence. These are OU logos, trading names and may extend to certain photographic and video images and sound recordings and any other material as may be brought to your attention.

Unauthorised use of any of the content may constitute a breach of the terms and conditions and/or intellectual property laws.

We reserve the right to alter, amend or bring to an end any terms and conditions provided here without notice.

All rights falling outside the terms of the Creative Commons licence are retained or controlled by The Open University.

Head of Intellectual Property, The Open University

Contents

Introduction	5
Learning Outcomes	6
1 Uniting the kingdoms	7
1.1 Constitutional relations between Britain and Ireland up to 1782	9
1.2 Tension and rebellion	11
2 Britons and Britishness	16
2.1 Religion and national identity	17
3 Catholic emancipation	21
4 Parliamentary reform	24
5 Ireland and national identity	28
Conclusion	31
Keep on learning	32
Glossary	32
References	33
Acknowledgements	34

Introduction

In the 1780s there were two distinct, but connected, political entities to be found in the **British Isles**: the Kingdom of Ireland and the Kingdom of Great Britain. In January 1801, these kingdoms joined together to form a new state, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. However, political union did not necessarily mean that all of the people living in the British Isles suddenly felt that they had come together as ‘one nation’.

This free course, *National identity in Britain and Ireland, 1780–1840*, begins by looking at why and how the United Kingdom was formed in 1801. You will then explore the emergence of a British national identity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and evaluate the extent to which two popular political movements – opposition to Catholic emancipation and the parliamentary reform movement – helped to foster a shared sense of ‘Britishness’ among people living in the new state. Finally, as political developments in Ireland differed significantly from those in Britain, you will consider national identity as it emerged in an Irish context.

This OpenLearn course is an adapted extract from the Open University course [A225 *The British Isles and the modern world, 1789–1914*](#).

Learning Outcomes

After studying this course, you should be able to:

- understand how the concepts of 'nation' and 'nationalism' emerged during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries
- understand the processes that led to the formation of the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland
- understand what is meant by 'nation'
- understand what is meant by 'state'
- understand how national identities emerged and converged in nineteenth-century Britain.

1 Uniting the kingdoms

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was the result of the merging of separate states over a long period of time. By the late eighteenth century, the political and legal systems of England and Wales were completely integrated and elected representatives for both countries sat in the House of Commons at Westminster (Dickinson, 2007). Although Scotland and England shared the same monarch from 1603, the Kingdom of Scotland remained a distinct political entity with its own representative institution, the Parliament of Scotland, until 1707. That year, Scotland entered into a political union with England and Wales, creating a new state, the Kingdom of Great Britain. Thereafter, 45 Scottish representatives joined the ranks of English and Welsh MPs at the House of Commons. Scotland retained significant autonomy, however, with its own legal and educational systems and a distinct Presbyterian established church. This Kingdom of Great Britain existed until 1801, when Ireland entered into political union with England, Scotland and Wales.

Figure 1 provides some insight into the nature of this development. It shows a political cartoon published in 1799, when negotiations for a union between the Kingdom of Ireland and the Kingdom of Great Britain were underway. It depicts a group of men gathered together in what seems to be a marriage ceremony. In the centre right of the image you can see the 'couple', 'Paddy' (an Irishman) and 'Mr Bull' (an Englishman dressed in the clothing of an agricultural worker), both holding hats in their hands. To the left, a Scottish man, wearing a tartan sash, officiates the ceremony holding a book in which the words 'A History of Scotland' are visible. Meanwhile, an Englishman joins Paddy's and Mr Bull's hands, saying, 'whom I put together – let no man put asunder'. Another character is visible to the far left of the image, holding 'wet blankets' on which, just about visible, the words 'Tax on income' are written.



Figure 1 Isaac Cruikshank, *An Irish Union!*, 1799, colour etching. The caption at the bottom of the cartoon reads: 'If there be no great love in the beginning – yet heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance vide Shakespeare'. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division PC 1 – 9344 (A size)

Activity 1

This should take around 15 minutes.

Take a few minutes to look carefully at Figure 1, focusing particularly on the facial expressions of Paddy and Mr Bull. Don't forget also to read the image caption. Then answer the following question:

- What does this image seek to imply about the nature of the political union between Ireland and Britain?

Answer

This image depicts the political union as an arranged marriage between reluctant parties. Paddy looks angry or upset, whereas Mr Bull looks confused, as though he isn't quite sure what is happening. The figure to the far left holding 'wet blankets' is an indication that there may have been a financial motivation on the part of those arranging the marriage. The image caption reinforces the idea of an arranged marriage and raises concerns for the future of the union.

Figure 1 thus hints that the political union between Great Britain and Ireland did not result from a great 'love' between the two kingdoms, and the following subsection will consider why this was the case.

1.1 Constitutional relations between Britain and Ireland up to 1782

From 1177 to 1541, the English monarch also held the title Lord of Ireland. In theory, this meant that the king of England ruled all of Ireland but, in practice, his authority was limited to certain areas. The Kingdom of Ireland was created in 1541 as part of wider efforts by Tudor authorities to gain firmer control of the country and introduce the Protestant Reformation (Smyth, 2001). While English authority was eventually extended over the entire island, the Reformation was limited in its impact. The Church of Ireland, the Protestant established church of the kingdom, was not supported by the bulk of the native population (the Gaelic Irish), or those of Anglo-Norman descent (a group sometimes described as the 'Old English'). Whereas the latter group had traditionally been the ruling elite of the country, due to their failure to abandon Catholicism they were replaced in this capacity by new Protestant settlers from Britain.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Parliament of the Kingdom of Ireland was a wholly Protestant assembly, very similar in terms of structure and procedure to that of Westminster. Three hundred elected representatives sat in the House of Commons in Dublin, while members of the aristocracy and Church of Ireland bishops sat in the House of Lords. For much of the century, the Irish Parliament can be regarded as subordinate to its Westminster counterpart. Poynings' Law (1494), a law that had evolved significantly over the course of the seventeenth century, meant that draft bills originating in Ireland had to receive the approval of the **Privy Council** in London before they could be put to Irish MPs. Furthermore, a Declaratory Act of 1720 saw the British Parliament claim the right to legislate for Ireland.

Although Irish MPs played a significant role in drafting legislation, Poynings' Law remained a grievance throughout the eighteenth century. Meanwhile, any British interference in Irish affairs, particularly efforts on the part of the Westminster assembly to legislate for Ireland directly, had the potential to stir up intense hostility from Ireland's exclusively Protestant political elite. This hostility intensified in the later eighteenth century, inspired by the rhetoric of the American (1776–1783) and French Revolutions (1789–1794).



Figure 2 Francis Wheatley, *The Irish House of Commons, 1780*, oil on canvas, 173 x 216 cm. Lotherton Hall, Leeds Museums and Galleries. Photo: © Leeds Museums and Galleries/Bridgeman Images

Figure 2 shows the chamber of the Irish House of Commons at College Green in Dublin, as depicted by Francis Wheatley (1747–1801). Standing in the foreground of the painting, to the bottom right, you can see the MP Henry Grattan (1746–1820), wearing a red coat. He is shown delivering a celebrated speech in April 1780 in which he called for the repeal of Poyning's Law and the Declaratory Act on the basis that only the 'King's most excellent Majesty, and the Lords and Commons of Ireland' had the power to make laws that bound Ireland (Madden, 1853, p. 51). He called on the authority of the **Magna Carta** and other freedoms guaranteed by the English **constitution** to support this claim.

Grattan had entered Parliament in 1775 and soon became leader of the 'patriot' interest, a group of opposition MPs in the Irish House of Commons. 'Patriotism', as it had developed in Ireland and elsewhere, was concerned with asserting the right of the people to be governed by their own elected representatives, to determine how taxes they paid were raised and spent, and to enjoy civil liberties. These rights and liberties were guaranteed by the 'mixed' English constitution, regarded by many contemporaries as the perfect balance between monarchical, aristocratic and democratic rule. The institutions of the monarchy, House of Lords and House of Commons represented each of these different forms of power within government.

From the point of view of Irish patriots, it was unconstitutional for British MPs to make laws for Ireland, or to restrict the authority exercised by the Irish Parliament, because they did not represent the interests of Irish people. In the 1780s, patriot MPs in the Irish Parliament gained considerable public support, most notably from the Volunteers, groups of local militia organised for home defence during the American Revolutionary War (1775–83). The red coat that Grattan is wearing in the painting in Figure 2 was a distinguishing

feature of the Volunteer uniform. You can also make out other MPs and observers, both male and female, wearing the uniform or colours of the Volunteers in the public gallery, giving some indication of popular support for the movement (O'Dowd, 2006).

Grattan and his supporters were ultimately successful in securing legislative independence for the Irish Parliament when, in 1782, Poyning's Law and the Declaratory Act were repealed.

1.2 Tension and rebellion

Legislative independence after 1782 put a strain on the relationship between Ireland and Great Britain as Irish patriot MPs called for further economic and political reforms (Bartlett, 2010). In addition to this groundswell of patriotic sentiment, more radical ideas were also emerging. In 1791 the Society of United Irishmen was established in Belfast and branches soon appeared elsewhere in Ireland too. At the outset, membership of the organisation was predominantly Protestant, but increasing numbers of Catholics came to participate in the movement (Dickson, 1999). Like other patriot societies in Ireland and Britain at this time, the United Irishmen were treated with suspicion by the government, and, after the French declaration of war on Britain in 1793, the organisation was suppressed.

Driven underground, its members came to advocate an independent Irish republic inspired by the French model, and in May 1798 took to arms. Despite a failed attempt to seize Dublin Castle, the centre of government in Ireland, the rebellion continued elsewhere in the **province** of Leinster, and also in Ulster (see Figure 3). On 22 August 1798, a French invasion in support of the rebellion landed at Killala, a port town on Ireland's west coast, sparking revolt in northern Connaught (Dickson, 1999). Although the 1798 rebellion was quickly suppressed, events in Ireland had posed a real and immediate threat to British security at a time of war.

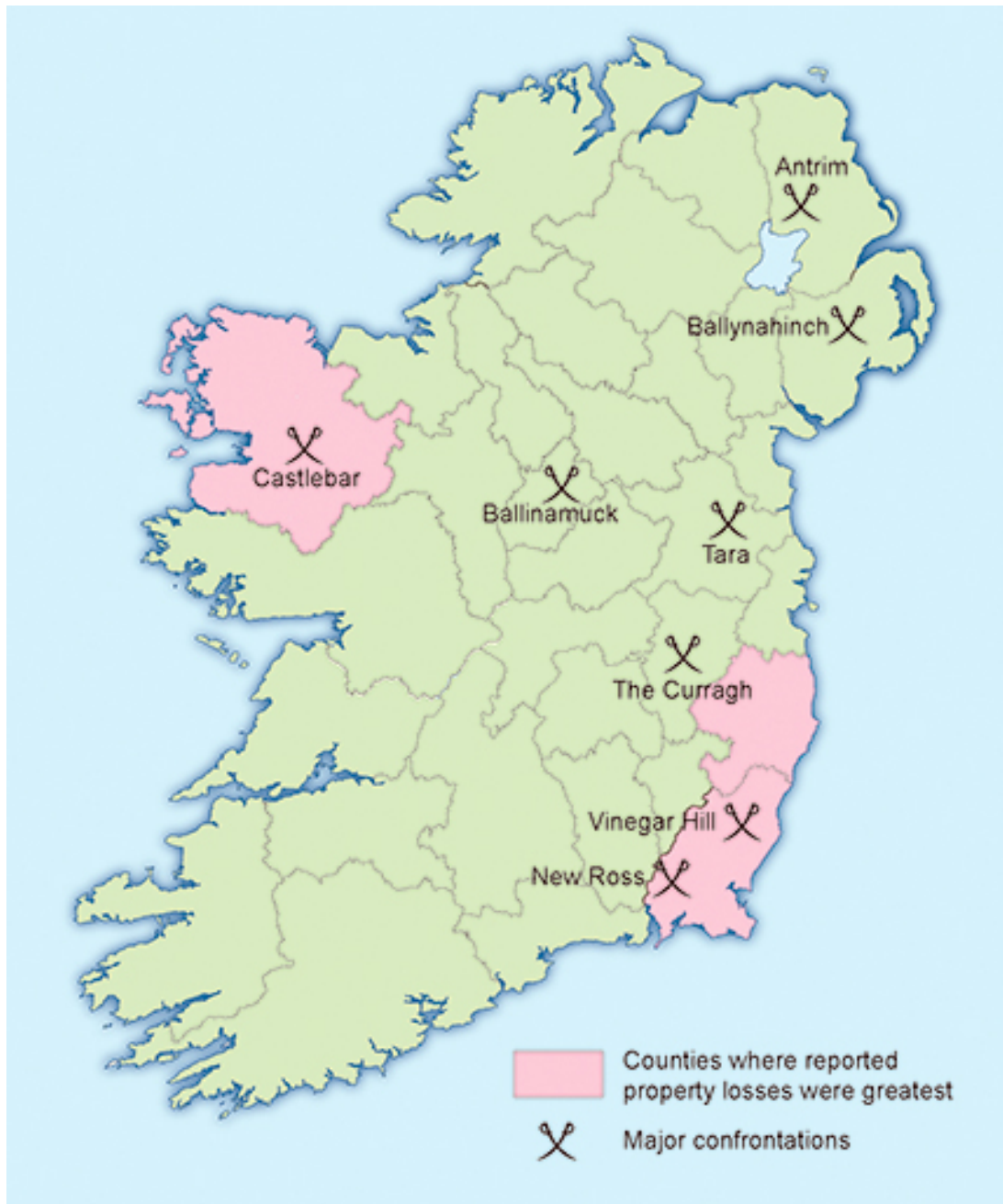


Figure 3 Map of Ireland in 1798, showing battle sites during the Irish Rebellion. Source: Dickson, 1999, p. 213

In response, the British prime minister, William Pitt the Younger, pressed for a union of the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland. He argued that Irish legislative independence, achieved by Grattan in 1782, was now a liability and a full political union was necessary for 'the Wealth, the Power, and the Stability, of the British Empire' (Pitt, 1799, p. 34). The measure was supported by the majority of British MPs but there was intense opposition on the part of Ireland's Protestant community. In January 1799, members of the Irish House of Commons rejected a bill for union by a narrow margin. Thereafter, the Irish government went to great efforts to persuade MPs to vote for the measure, even paying large bribes to some (Geoghegan, 2001). These efforts proved effective and ultimately the majority of MPs voted in favour of the union. On 28 March 1800, its terms were approved by both houses of the Irish Parliament and, on 1 January 1801, the union came into force, establishing the new state: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

While anti-union sentiment was evident in a landslide of pamphlets and newspaper articles produced by the Irish press during these years, many of those opposed to the union were not necessarily advocates of democratic, republican government – or opposed to maintaining a connection between Ireland and Britain. Activity 2 explores this seeming paradox further.

Activity 2

This should take around 30 minutes.

Look at the reading below, Hibernicus, *English Union is Ireland's Ruin! Or an Address to the Irish Nation* (1799). This is an extract from an anti-union pamphlet, written by an author using the pseudonym (a fictitious or fake name) 'Hibernicus'. A pamphlet was a short printed publication and a medium closely associated with political controversy.

Read the extract carefully, taking notes if required, and then answer the following questions:

- What arguments does the author offer against the union of Great Britain and Ireland?
- Do you think that the author wants to sever the connection between Great Britain and Ireland completely?
- Why do you think the author chose to use a pseudonym?

Extract from Hibernicus, *English union is Ireland's ruin! Or an address to the Irish Nation* (Dublin, 1799).

There cannot be a subject, my fellow-country-men, so well worth your attention, and so highly deserving your most serious consideration, as that of a legislative Union betwixt this Country and Great Britain.

We can now no longer doubt the intention of the Ministry in respect to this measure. – We cannot any longer doubt what their wishes and sentiments are with regard to it, they have given you something more than presumptive evidence of this their design; the rumours they are daily circulating amongst you, the Pamphlets they are sending amongst you, and the conversation of the Castle, which is but the echo of the British Minister's, amount to a plain declaration, that the Cabinet of England and the English Nation are determined to make the daring attempt, of robbing you of that Constitution, which your ancestors had long struggled for, which the Volunteers of Ireland at length obtained, and in defence of which, my countrymen, you yourselves have so lately risked both your lives and properties. What then, will Irishmen tamely submit that Constitution to be taken away from them, which their renowned forefathers looked up to, and considered as what was most valuable? Will Irishmen at the close of the eighteenth Century, give up their freedom and independence? Will Irishmen silently deliver up their civil, political and religious liberties? [pp. 5-6]

...

Be not too narrow sighted Englishmen, don't suffer yourselves to be imposed on by any language however specious, or by any promises however flattering. – Think not that Irishmen will ever submit to a Legislative Union. – The Irish Nation love and revere their gracious Sovereign and

Constitution. – You have had ample demonstration of our loyalty and attachment at different periods... – Irishmen have fought and conquered in defence of their King and Constitution, and will fight and conquer again in the same honourable cause. – Let me persuade you it will not finally be the interest, nor will it at any time be becoming the dignity of the English Nation even to wish to rob Ireland of her rights.– You may make the attempt, but I am confident you will be defeated, and what must for ever after be the state of the Irish mind? You say yourselves that we will one and all be for ever after jealous of Englishmen; or of any men who would presume to make Ireland dependent, and Irishmen slaves. – You little think that in endeavouring to subdue the spirit of liberty in this Country, you are destroying yourselves, and that for every act of violence you commit against Irish-men, you are but stabbing the English Constitution and planting daggers in the hearts of your own Countrymen. – The very idea of enforcing a legislative Union may be fatal to both countries. Suffer then the connexion to remain on its present footing. – We have shewn ourselves prompt and willing to support you in the war, our Parliament has very liberally granted you large supplies of men and money, the very sinews of war. – Why then Englishmen take away from us that Parliament which has favoured you in all your wishes, and supported you in all your designs? How shall we term such unkind treatment? Ingratitude at least, you yourselves will allow it to be, but I will tell you, it is something more than Ingratitude, I say it is treachery, it is robbery, it is a rapacity, it is tyranny on your side, towards a brave, frank, generous and free-spirited people. [pp. 11-12]

Answer

- The author suggests that the union is not necessary because the Irish people are loyal. In support of this point, references are made to Irishmen fighting in British wars to defend their 'King and Constitution', and to the Irish Parliament offering 'supplies of men and money' to help the British war effort. The author also argues that the union undermines fundamental rights and privileges guaranteed to the people by the constitution, and is therefore unjust.
- There is some evidence here to suggest that the author wants to maintain the connection between Britain and Ireland. For example, the 'Englishmen' are advised to 'suffer then the connexion to remain on its present footing'.
- It is possible that the author used a pseudonym because they feared prosecution for expressing such strong opinions.

Discussion

Don't worry if you thought that the author is calling for a complete separation between Britain and Ireland. The overall tone of this extract does give this impression. However, on close inspection you might notice that the author doesn't question the monarchy or existing representative institutions, but instead calls on Irishmen to defend the liberties and freedoms that they already have. Also, notice how the author associates Irish liberties with 'English' ones, arguing that any attempt to suppress Irish liberty would be 'stabbing the English Constitution', effectively an act of self-destruction.

The last question was also a little tricky. Authors and publishers did not enjoy 'free speech' at this time. Those who published controversial political views, or challenged government actions, in words or writing, could be prosecuted by the state for 'sedition'.

Authors often sought to avoid prosecution by using a pseudonym. The pseudonym in this case is also significant: *Hibernia* is the Latin word for Ireland, and 'Hibernicus' means 'of or pertaining to the Irish people'.

Although England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales had long shared a monarch, in 1801, for the first time in their history, all four nations of the British Isles were united as one political entity, with one Parliament. Of course the boundaries of the new state, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, encompassed a variety of cultural, religious and regional differences. With all of these divisions between, and within, each of the four countries that made up the new state, could all of the people of the British Isles come to think of themselves as one people, or one nation? Section 2 will explore this question further.

2 Britons and Britishness

The term 'state' generally refers to a form of political organisation governing a defined territory, embodied in a range of different institutions. The 'nation' is quite a different concept. Most scholars would agree that this abstract term refers to a group of people, a society, or a community who perceive common bonds between themselves. Indeed, the political scientist Benedict Anderson (1936–2015) famously described the nation as an 'imagined community' – a community that exists in the minds of its members (Anderson, 2006). While 'states' can be created regardless of the wishes of their inhabitants (by autocratic rulers, for example), 'nations' require the involvement (or at least the acquiescence) of their members.

Leaving Ireland aside for the time being, the historian Linda Colley (2003) has provided one of the most compelling descriptions of a British national identity that emerged among people living in England, Wales and Scotland during this period. For Colley, British identity did not result from a 'blending' or the 'integration and homogenisation of disparate cultures', but was instead 'superimposed' over a variety of regional and national identities (Colley, 2003, p. 6). In other words, 'Britishness' was an identity that could exist alongside 'Welshness', 'Englishness' or 'Scottishness'. Colley goes on to explain that war and religion provided common causes for people living in England, Wales and Scotland during the period.

Successive wars against France, including the War of the Grand Alliance (1688–97), the War of Spanish Succession (1702–13), the War of Austrian Succession (1740–48), the Seven Years' War (1756–63), the American Revolutionary War (1775–83), and the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793–1815) played a key role in the 'invention' of a British national identity. France was not only a threat to the state; it also seemed to represent everything that Britain was *not*. Until 1789, France was a Roman Catholic country governed by an absolute monarch. After the revolution, the country appeared to move too far in the opposite direction towards democracy and republicanism. In contrast to these extremes, Great Britain was a Protestant state, with a Protestant people and a Protestant monarch, and its constitution offered a balance of monarchical, aristocratic and democratic government. Shared participation and successes in war, trade and empire bolstered this common sense of national identity among the people of England, Scotland and Wales, particularly as these successes were interpreted as clear signs of God's favour for the Protestant nation (Colley, 2003). Like Anderson, Colley sees the nation as a modern development, and suggests that the press, as well as popular political movements, played an important role in spreading the idea of Britishness throughout the island of Great Britain (Colley, 2003).

You will have noted the strong connection between Protestantism and Britishness in Colley's definition of national sentiment at this time. However, you might be wondering about adherents of other faiths who lived within the boundaries of the state. Colley explains their position as follows: 'Self-evidently, the Protestant construction of British identity involved the unprivileging of minorities who would not conform [to Protestantism]: the Catholic community, most Highland Scots before 1745, and supporters of the exiled Stuart dynasty, those men and women who were not allowed to be British so others could be' (Colley, 2003, p. 53).

This is a good example of an instance where the 'state' and 'nation' are not fully compatible. Although Catholics lived within the boundaries of the state, the United Kingdom, they were not necessarily recognised as members of the British nation.

2.1 Religion and national identity

As Colley suggests, minorities (or in Ireland's case, the majority) who did not conform to Protestantism were not recognised as part of the British nation. Indeed, since the sixteenth century, various laws had restricted the ability of people who did not conform to the established churches of Britain and Ireland to participate in civil, military and political life. This was because if a person refused to conform to the religion of the state, their loyalty to that state was seen to be open to question. The terms 'dissenter' or 'Nonconformist' were often used to describe people (such as Roman Catholics and certain Protestant groups, including Baptists, Methodists and Quakers) who fitted into this category. While dissenting Protestants were permitted greater involvement in political affairs as the eighteenth century progressed, Roman Catholics remained subject to a range of penal laws for much of the century (Dickinson, 2007).

Although the idea of discriminating against a group of people on the basis of their religion was becoming increasingly difficult to justify, it was the need to recruit men into the British armed forces that proved to be the driving force behind Catholic relief efforts in the late eighteenth century. Legislation had long been in place to prevent Catholic military service, but in practice thousands of Catholics from Scotland and Ireland had served in British armed conflicts. By the 1770s, there emerged a growing body of opinion that removing the laws that prevented them from doing so legally would encourage further recruitment (Colley, 2003). It was for this specific purpose that the first Catholic relief acts were passed in the Irish Parliament in 1774 and the British Parliament in 1778.

However, not everyone in the United Kingdom was pleased with these developments. In 1780, a member of the British Parliament, Lord George Gordon (1751–1793), began to stir up public support for repeal of the British Catholic Relief Act of 1778. To achieve this aim, Gordon established a new society called the Protestant Association. This organisation quickly won a great deal of public support and, on 2 June 1780, Gordon led a crowd of 40,000–60,000 people to the House of Commons to submit a petition calling for the repeal of the Act (Jones, 2013, p. 80). Details of that event, and the rioting in London that ensued, were reported in numerous pamphlets, newspapers, monthly and annual periodicals.

Activity 3

This should take around 30 minutes.

Read the following extract from a newspaper report printed in the *London Evening Post*, one of the most popular newspapers at the time (with a circulation of about 4000–4500). The report outlines the outbreak of anti-Catholic rioting in London. Remember that newspaper reports are not impartial; this activity will help you to develop your abilities to recognise the bias and political sympathies of the author. Please note that contemporaries frequently referred to Roman Catholics as 'Papists' and their religion as 'Popery', both terms derived from the title of the head of the church.

As you read the extract, jot down some bullet points or notes in response to the following questions:

- What is the author's attitude to Roman Catholicism?

- Who are the protesters described in the reading? What identities (religious, national or otherwise) are attributed to them here? Are these identities compatible?

Extract from *London Evening Post*, 1 June 1780

Yesterday morning, pursuant to a resolution of the Protestant Association, the Protestants of the city of London, Westminster, and Southward, met in St. George's Fields, where Lord George Gordon joined them about eleven o'clock. Between eleven and twelve they set out (six—a—breast) over London Bridge, through Cornhill and the city, to the amount of about fifty thousand men, to the House of Commons with the Protestant Petition, against the bill passed last session in favour of the Roman Catholics, which was carried on a man's head, where Lord George Gordon presented it. They made a noble appearance, and marched in a very peaceable and quiet manner. It is supposed to be the largest petition ever presented to a British House of Parliament.

... they marched in four divisions to Old Palace-yard, in the following order. – London division first, which consisted of near 20,000 persons: these were succeeded by the Westminster division: after them came the division of the Borough of Southwark, and the fourth division, consisting of the Scotch, resident in London, preceded by a bagpipe playing, brought up the rear. The Archbishop of York passing along Parliament-street in his coach, at the time the procession was in motion, was much hooted by the populace, who seemed determined to stand up for their religious rights against the introduction of Popery, and resolved to defend themselves at all hazards from the pernicious effects of a religion subversive of all liberty, inimical to all purity of morals, begotten by fraud on superstition, and teeming with absurdity, persecution, and the most diabolical cruelty. It was a glorious and most affecting spectacle to see such numbers of our fellow citizens advancing in the cause of Protestantism...

...His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester; Dukes of Devonshire, Richmond, Roxburgh, Earl of Shelburne, Lord Camden, the Bishop of Peterborough, and many other patriotic noblemen, had their carriages conducted with great respect and honour to the door of the House. Several of the Ministerial Lords were treated very roughly.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, when desired to continue to espouse the Protestant cause, nobly replied, "Gentlemen, while I have life I will espouse the cause of the Protestant religion and British liberty."

...Lord George Germain was treated with great severity; he had porter thrown in his face, but as he came to the House, before the mob became outrageous, he escaped without further injury.

Answer

- The author has a negative attitude towards Catholicism, claiming (for example) that 'Popery' threatens liberty and morals and was born out of superstition and 'diabolical cruelty'.

- The protesters are identified at the outset by their religion. They are Protestants defending their 'religious rights'. There are some references to national identity here, too, though. A division of the Protestant Association is described as the 'Scotch, resident in London' who were 'preceded by a bagpipe playing' as they marched. Later in the extract, a quote from Prince William Henry, the Duke of Gloucester (1743–1805), expresses his support for 'the cause of the Protestant religion and British liberty'. Based on this article, we could conclude that the protesters are Protestant in religion; residents of London; English and Scottish, British; and anti-Catholic. All of these identities appear to be entirely compatible with one another.

Discussion

The language used in this newspaper report to describe Roman Catholics is very negative. While this kind of language may seem surprising to modern readers, it was not at all unusual to find such sentiments expressed in English-language publications from this period, from newspapers to the Book of Common Prayer. The notion that Roman Catholicism was 'superstitious' in nature stemmed from the idea that Catholics held beliefs and engaged in religious practices that had no basis in the Bible. Various wars with France, a country led by an **absolute monarch**, over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries meant that Catholicism was also particularly associated with 'slavery', 'tyranny' and 'arbitrary power'.

As you will have gathered, the orderly procession to the Houses of Parliament to present the 'Protestant Petition' descended into rioting, depicted in Figure 4 below. The riots continued for a week during which over 700 people are thought to have been killed. Although the violence was focused in London, anti-Catholic unrest was evident in other British cities, too. In fact, reaction to the relief legislation had been so strong in Scotland that the measure had not been imposed there. Although the first Catholic Relief Acts were promoted by the government for quite practical reasons, the Gordon Riots show us that by introducing Catholic relief measures at a time when Britain was at war with France, the government was seen to be undermining what it meant to be British for a great number of people.



Figure 4 Unknown artist, *An Exact Representation of the Burning, Plundering and Destruction of Newgate by the Rioters, on the Memorable 7th of June 1780, 1781*, engraving, 31 x 44 cm. British Museum, London 1880, 1113.4252. Photo: © Trustees of the British Museum. The rioters attacked Newgate Prison with a view to freeing fellow rioters who had been arrested and imprisoned there.

3 Catholic emancipation

Despite at times intense opposition, more Catholic Relief Acts were passed by the Irish Parliament in 1778 and 1782, but the major breakthrough came in 1793 when Irish Catholics were granted freedom of worship and admission to most civil offices.

Furthermore, Roman Catholic men in Ireland who met the same qualifications as their Protestant counterparts were permitted to vote in public elections (Dickson, 1999). Significant changes had been evident in Britain too and, in 1791, an extensive English Relief Act permitted Catholics to practise law and granted them the freedom to practise their religion without penalty. However, Catholics in Britain and Ireland could not yet sit in Parliament, and Catholics in Britain could not yet vote.

Calls for the provision of full civil rights for Catholics – or Catholic emancipation - gathered pace in the early nineteenth century but widespread public opposition remained evident across Britain. Societies such as the Protestant ‘Brunswick Clubs’ were established to organise opposition, mass meetings were held throughout England, Scotland and Wales, and hundreds of petitions were submitted to Parliament urging MPs to reject the ‘Catholic claims’. To some degree, this ‘no-Popery’ movement may have reflected British anxieties surrounding the recent influx of Irish immigrants into the country, the result of an economic slump in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. Reports of the popular movement in favour of parliamentary reform underway in Ireland also fed into escalating British opposition to the measure. However, Colley asserts that such factors do not fully explain the scale of the movement against Catholic emancipation in Britain. Instead, she points to evidence indicative of a strong sense of British identity among supporters of the movement and argues that these people ‘saw themselves, quite consciously, as being part of a native tradition of resistance to Catholicism which stretched back for centuries and which seemed, indeed, to be timeless’ (Colley, 2003, p. 330).

Activity 4

This should take around 15 minutes.

Look at the reading below. This is an extract from a Welsh newspaper of the period. Don't be surprised if you encounter a few unfamiliar terms – this is common with historical primary sources – just refer to a dictionary to clarify any terms you don't recognise.

Read the extract carefully and then answer the following question:

- What evidence do you find in this reading to support Colley's view that there was a strong sense of British identity among 'no-Popery' campaigners?

Extract from *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 16th October 1828

Ancient Britons – The present circumstances of Ireland, are such as to demand the utmost wisdom and prudence on the part of our rulers – the prompt and decided expression of protestant feeling – and the prayers of every lover of truth, that the black cloud which overhangs that fine country may not burst upon it. What has brought Ireland to its present state? Popery. Popery, not accompanied by rigorous penal laws, as formerly – popery, not ground down by persecution or pursued by relentless fury – but popery,

conciliated, courted, caressed, encouraged by promises... Has the reformation ceased to be a blessing? Has popery ceased to be a curse?...

Ancient Britons – I have exercised the liberty of a subject under our protestant constitution, (of which I would say *esto perpetua*, let it ever exist) and set before you some important facts relative to Ireland and the popish question. Weigh them well. See what is your duty at this trying moment, and act accordingly. Let not Wales be silent when a nation's voice should be lifted up by petition, in defence of Protestantism against popery. – Shew that you value the bible of the blessed God, by resisting the power that would rob you of its light – of its instruction – and of its consolations. Wickliff.

Answer

In this extract the author addresses readers as 'Ancient Britons', and so seems to be speaking to fellow nationals. The author also makes references to the Protestant Reformation and discusses the threat posed by Roman Catholicism at some length, arguing that Catholics seek power and will not be satisfied 'until a favourable opportunity present itself, of attempting the rescue of Great Britain out of the hands of [Protestant] *heretics*'. Colley suggests that anti-Catholic sentiment was a feature of 'Britishness', and there is evidence of that in this reading.

Discussion

At first glance, it certainly seems as though the author is invoking a sense of British national identity that 'stretched back for centuries'. However, some Welsh people saw themselves as descendants of the original settlers of the British Isles, the 'Ancient Britons'. So this article can also be seen as an appeal to the Welsh people specifically, rather than Britons in general.

Although there was a significant campaign against Catholic emancipation, the cause was not without its advocates in Britain. For instance, Parliament received many petitions in favour of the measure from all over the island, and certain printed publications also promoted it. It is also worth noting that appeals to British national sentiment were not the exclusive domain of those who harboured anti-Catholic sentiment. To give just one example, during debates on the issue in the House of Commons, Ralph Leycester (1764–1835), MP for Shaftesbury, argued that emancipation was 'a measure of justice, of policy, of charity. It was not an English measure, nor a Scotch measure, nor an Irish measure – it was a British measure. It was not a Protestant measure, nor a Popish measure – it was a Christian measure' (quoted in Ditchfield, 2003, p.76). You can see here that appeals to the idea of 'Britain' and 'Britishness' could be used by both sides to add a sense of legitimacy to their claims.

The campaign for Catholic emancipation proved successful in 1829, when a Catholic relief bill was passed granting Roman Catholic men the right to sit in Parliament, to vote and to enter all but the highest public offices. In contrast to the response to the Catholic Relief Act of 1778, which had led to violence in London, no major riots took place in 1829, no Catholic property appeared to have been destroyed, and no one was killed. Some historians suggest that this is evidence that Britons were becoming more tolerant, whereas others note that the measure had been government-led (and, in part, a response to events in Ireland that you'll study in Section 5).



Figure 5 William Heath, Quacks from Church St. Dr Arther and his Man Bob giving John Bull a Bolus, April 1829, coloured etching, 26 x 37 cm. Published by T. McLean, London. Wellcome Library, London, no. 12224i. Reproduced under Creative Commons Attribution only licence CC BY 4.0 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

The idea that Catholic emancipation had been forced on the British population against their better judgement is reflected in Figure 5. It shows John Bull being held down by Robert Peel, the home secretary. The Duke of Wellington, the prime minister, shoves a piece of paper with the words 'Catholic Emancipation' written on it down John Bull's throat. As this is happening, John Bull calls out, 'Murder! If you get it down it will ruin my constitution'. Wellington assures John Bull that once he swallows the paper, he will be 'quite a different man'.

This particular cartoon satirises the idea that Catholic emancipation was a breach of the 'Protestant constitution', a popular cry of those opposed to the measure, represented here by the John Bull character. Indeed, 'no-Popery' campaigners represented Catholic emancipation as unconstitutional on the basis that Catholicism, so closely associated in the public imagination with 'slavery', 'tyranny' and 'arbitrary power', was simply incompatible with British laws and liberties. Of course, the idea, suggested in the cartoon that John Bull would be a 'different man' once he had swallowed Catholic emancipation is thought-provoking. If Protestantism and Britishness had been synonymous up to this point, what was to become of 'Britishness' now that Catholics had been granted a measure of equality? The next section will consider the movement towards electoral reform, which can be seen as a further factor in the ongoing formation of British national identity.

4 Parliamentary reform

During the 1820s a national movement to reform the representative system of the United Kingdom gathered pace, culminating in Britain with the Reform Act of 1832, often regarded as one of the most important political events of the nineteenth century (Phillips and Wetherell, 1995). Before this Act, few people in Britain were able to vote. Only adult males had the right to vote. Even then, there were several other obstacles to voting. For instance, the right to vote, or franchise, was linked to the value of property a person owned or rented. Even if a man was qualified to vote, many elections were not contested and, if they were, they were often subject to manipulation by landed interests. Meanwhile, Scotland and Wales were under-represented in Parliament.

The various shortcomings of the electoral system were clear to observers in the eighteenth century. If you take a look at Figure 6 you will see one of a series of four well-known paintings by William Hogarth (1697–1764) depicting an election held in Oxfordshire in 1754. This painting shows voters going on to a stage – the polling station – to publicly declare their choice of candidates. You might notice that in the background of the painting, a carriage bearing the Union flag and carrying Britannia, a female personification of Great Britain, has collapsed.



Figure 6 William Hogarth, *The Election III: The Polling*, 1754, oil on canvas, 102 x 127 cm. Sir John Soane's Museum, London. Photo: © Courtesy of the Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum/Bridgeman Images

By the early nineteenth century, the situation seemed to have deteriorated further. As the population had expanded in emerging British industrial cities, the number of seats those

areas could return to Parliament came to have no relationship to the size of their population (Phillips and Wetherell, 1995). Calls for the reform of the electoral system in the 1790s were inspired by radical new ideas about popular sovereignty and democracy. Although such radicalism was effectively suppressed by the government in that decade through a combination of press censorship and coercion, towards the end of the Napoleonic Wars economic distress and dissatisfaction with government actions, such as the Corn Laws (1815), helped to revive public interest in the issue of parliamentary reform (Evans, 1999). Reformers organised mass meetings, petitioning campaigns, and appeals to the wider public in print.



Figure 7 Reform banner, 1832. Burrell Collection, Glasgow. Photo: © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums and Libraries Collections. The phrase 'Britain's sons shall aye be free' appears above the ship and 'Free Trade to all the world' below it.



Figure 8 Ceramic jug commemorating the Reform Act of 1832, c.1832. Stockport Museums. Photo: copyright and courtesy of Stockport Museums

Activity 5

Spend no more than 30 minutes on this.

In this activity you will analyse two primary sources related to the electoral reform movement. These are a banner carried in demonstrations in Glasgow in favour of electoral reform (Figure 7) and a mass-produced jug commemorating the passage of the Reform Act in June 1832 (Figure 8). Material (physical) objects are important primary sources for historians, so this activity will help you to develop your ability to analyse this type of source. Look at each image carefully, jotting down anything you notice as interesting or unusual.

Then answer the following questions:

- Can you identify symbols of Britishness evident in Figures 7 and 8?
- Why do you think that people campaigning for political reform used symbols of this nature?

Answer

- Scottish thistles are evident to the left of Figure 7, with English roses to the right, and shamrocks symbolising Ireland in the centre. I hope you read the image caption too! You'll have noted that the banner also proclaimed 'Britain's sons shall aye be free': another appeal to British sentiment.

In Figure 8 you can see Britannia seated by a shield decorated with the Union flag, and a lion, shamrocks, thistles, leeks and roses also adorn the piece.

- By appealing to a shared sense of British identity, campaigners for reform were able to present their cause as a 'national' movement, and one that was compatible with the British constitution and British liberties. This helped the movement to attract support from a wide range of people.

Early reform measures in Parliament had faltered due to the strength of Tory opposition. However, in the wake of the general election of 1832, the Whigs, led by Lord Charles Grey (1764–1845, prime minister 1830–34), who had promoted the measure in Parliament, secured a firm majority in the House of Commons. This meant the Reform Bill easily passed through the Commons, but the measure continued to be blocked by the House of Lords. As frustration grew outside of Parliament, rioting broke out in a number of British cities. It was against the background of escalating public unrest that the Lords finally approved the measure. The Reform Bill received the royal assent on 7 June 1832 and separate Reform Acts were subsequently passed for Ireland and Scotland (Phillips and Wetherell, 1995).

In its final form the Reform Act of 1832 increased the electorate in England and Wales from around 366,000 to around 650,000, which was about 18 per cent of the total adult male population. Fifty-six boroughs that had few voters or were controlled by landed interests (so-called 'rotten boroughs') were disenfranchised. Thirty small boroughs had the number of seats they could return to Parliament halved. Some of those parliamentary seats were redistributed among counties and urban centres where the population had grown significantly over the previous decades, particularly in the north of England and the Midlands. Wales gained five parliamentary seats and in Scotland eight new boroughs were created, existing boroughs were enlarged, and the electorate was increased from about 5000 to about 65,000 (Colley, 2003). In some ways, the Reform Act of 1832 can be regarded as a victory for a new form of Britishness focused on defending the rights and freedoms guaranteed to the people of the nation by the British constitution. This 'national identity' can be seen to have united the interests of vast numbers of English, Scottish and Welsh people, and a wide range of groups within British society, including radicals and the working classes, behind a single cause.

However, not everyone living in the United Kingdom could enjoy the spoils of this victory. The Reform Act mainly benefited the middle classes. The vast majority of adult males, and indeed the vast majority of working-class men in Britain's industrial towns, were still not able to vote as they did not meet the required property qualifications. Furthermore, voting still took place in public, women were still disenfranchised, and Scotland remained under-represented in Westminster. Meanwhile, the Irish electorate had actually been reduced in size due to concerns about the dangers of popular politics in the country.

5 Ireland and national identity

If the period to 1840 was a time when nationalists elsewhere in Europe sought to overthrow existing governmental structures, it might be argued that national sentiment in England, Scotland and Wales had been successfully channelled into 'British' calls for peaceful constitutional reform. A similar process occurred in Ireland, although the circumstances were very different. For a range of reasons (including the admittance of Irish Catholics to the franchise in 1793, and the abolition of rotten boroughs after the Union), the cause of electoral reform did not have the same sense of urgency and did not command the support of the masses in Ireland in the same way that it did in Britain. Instead, however, the movement in favour of Catholic emancipation became *the* central focus of both popular politics, and national sentiment, in an Irish context.

After 1800, many Irish Protestants, including members of loyalist or conservative associations, who had been vocal in their opposition to the Union, quickly reconciled themselves to the idea, and even began to embrace a new 'British' identity. That said, some Protestants never embraced the Union. Robert Emmet (1778–1803), for example, supported by the remnants of the United Irishmen, staged a short-lived rebellion in 1803. Meanwhile some Irish MPs, such as Henry Grattan, whom you encountered in Section 1, continued to call for repeal of the Union and supported Catholic calls for further relief legislation in Westminster after 1801. As for Ireland's Roman Catholic community, at the time of the Union the British government had successfully courted their support for the measure by leading them to believe that Catholic emancipation would be introduced in its immediate aftermath. However, a range of internal and external pressures on the British government, including intense opposition from the king and cabinet ministers, had meant that that emancipation had not been introduced at the time (Geoghegan, 2001). This development can be seen to have seriously undermined the extent to which a 'British' national identity could ever take root among the majority of people living in early nineteenth-century Ireland.

From the 1810s, the movement in favour of Catholic emancipation in Ireland gathered pace, under the leadership of a Roman Catholic barrister, Daniel O'Connell (1775–1847, depicted in Figure 9). In 1823, O'Connell and Richard Lalor Sheil (1791–1851) founded the Catholic Association, an organisation that was remarkably successful in gaining support across the social spectrum in Ireland, from landed Catholics and the middle classes, to the illiterate, Irish speakers and the poor. By 1829, the association had well over 3 million members. The organisation coordinated the movement in favour of Catholic emancipation in Ireland by organising a range of peaceful political activities, including petitioning campaigns, open-air 'monster' meetings and appeals to the public and politicians through the press, even arranging a 'Catholic census' in 1825 to highlight the numerical disparity between Protestants and Catholics in the country. In the general election of 1826, O'Connell was elected MP for County Clare by a huge majority but, as a Roman Catholic, he was not permitted to take his seat in Parliament. Public agitation in favour of emancipation intensified in Ireland hereafter, and concern grew in Britain that the country might descend into rebellion.



Figure 9 Statue of Daniel O'Connell. The monument was completed in 1882 and it stands on O'Connell Street, Dublin. The female figure, 'Maid of Erin', at the centre of the frieze (bottom centre of the image) points upward to O'Connell with one hand and holds the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 in the other. O'Connell was often referred to as the 'Emancipator', or the 'Liberator', for his role in the movement for Catholic emancipation in Ireland. Photo: © Atlaspix/Alamy

However, the movement for Catholic emancipation in Ireland was not revolutionary, republican or radical in its aims. Indeed, it can be seen as a movement for the greater representation of Roman Catholics *within* the United Kingdom. O'Connell was an advocate of non-violent political reform along British liberal lines and although he had been an opponent of the legislative Union between Ireland and Britain, he did not want the two countries to sever ties completely, but instead remain united through the institution of monarchy. It is notable, however, that O'Connell's supporters did not necessarily share these views. Indeed, an emerging sense of Irish national identity, specifically an Irish Catholic national identity, was evident among many Irish proponents of the campaign for Catholic emancipation (Hoppen, 1999).

In the years that followed the passage of the Catholic Relief Act of 1829, O'Connell and his Repeal Association, founded in 1830, went on to lead a mass political movement calling for the repeal of the Union and the restoration of the Irish Parliament, pursuing many of the same peaceful tactics as the Catholic Association. In 1842, three members of the Repeal Association, Charles Gavan Duffy (1816–1903), Thomas Davis (1814–1845) and John Blake Dillon (1814–1866), established a weekly newspaper entitled *The Nation* in the hope of directing 'the popular mind and the sympathies of educated men of all parties to the great end of nationality ... a nationality which may embrace Protestant,

Catholic, and Dissenter' (quoted in Sillard, 1908, pp. 3–4). The newspaper soon attained a readership of over 10,000 people and helped to create support for O'Connell's repeal movement (Bartlett, 2010).

From 1830 to 1836, another campaign of civil disobedience emerged in Ireland, in this case agitating for the removal of **tithes**, a payment made for the upkeep of the Protestant Church of Ireland. Although this campaign was one punctuated with violent episodes, it was not until the late 1840s that a more radical, violent, revolutionary strand of Irish nationalism came to the fore once again when the 'Young Irelanders' – a group very closely associated with *The Nation* newspaper – split from the Repeal Association. Although radical Irish nationalism did not pose a serious threat to the political cohesion of the United Kingdom until later in the nineteenth century, the development of both national identity and popular politics in Ireland was already very different from that unfolding in the rest of Britain.

Conclusion

In this free course, *National identity in Britain and Ireland, 1780–1840*, you have considered the formation of a new state, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. You have also analysed the emergence of ‘nations’ and ‘national identity’ in the **modern period** in general, and the role that national identity played in British and Irish popular politics during the period.

You have seen that ‘Britishness’ was a national, or rather supranational identity that could mean many different things to many different people. It was also an identity that could be, and was, embraced by people living in England, Scotland and Wales, and one that had an appeal across religious, linguistic, class and political divisions. For Colley (2003), defending the ‘liberties’ guaranteed to the people by the constitution was at the heart of British national identity after Catholic emancipation was achieved in 1829. Although the period after the Union saw a distinct national identity emerge in Ireland, a widespread interest in the liberties guaranteed by the British constitution remained discernible in Irish popular politics at this time. Overall, you have seen that in the cases of both Britain and Ireland, the bulk of the people of the United Kingdom were endeavouring to make their voices heard within the existing political system. In both countries, similar activities – petitioning, the formation of political organisations, appeals to the public through print, and peaceful public protests – were employed to achieve political and social reform.

While the important legislation you have studied in this course – the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 and the Reform Act of 1832 – can be seen to have helped to make the United Kingdom a more inclusive and ‘democratic’ state, you will have noticed that there remained notable divisions between different groups of people living in the state.

This OpenLearn course is an adapted extract from the Open University course [A225 *The British Isles and the modern world, 1789–1914*](#)

Keep on learning



Study another free course

There are more than **800 courses on OpenLearn** for you to choose from on a range of subjects.

Find out more about all our [free courses](#).

Take your studies further

Find out more about studying with The Open University by [visiting our online prospectus](#).

If you are new to university study, you may be interested in our [Access Courses](#) or [Certificates](#).

What's new from OpenLearn?

[Sign up to our newsletter](#) or view a sample.

For reference, full URLs to pages listed above:

OpenLearn – www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses

Visiting our online prospectus – www.open.ac.uk/courses

Access Courses – www.open.ac.uk/courses/do-it/access

Certificates – www.open.ac.uk/courses/certificates-he

Newsletter –

www.open.edu/openlearn/about-openlearn/subscribe-the-openlearn-newsletter

Glossary

Absolute monarch

a king or queen who has unrestricted power over government and the people of a given state.

British Isles

this is a contentious term but it is used here as a strictly geographical term to describe the archipelago lying off the coast of North West Europe which includes the island of Ireland, island of Great Britain, and adjacent small islands.

Constitution

often 'a constitution' is a document setting out the fundamental principles by which a state is governed. For instance Ireland, America and France have codified (written) constitutions. The United Kingdom does not have a written constitution. In this case, the term constitution refers to the existing body of laws, court judgments and conventions.

Magna Carta

the 'great charter' of English liberties granted by King John (1167–1216, reigned 1199–1216) in 1215.

Modern period

a term used by historians to describe the period from the mid-eighteenth century to the early twentieth century.

Privy Council

a group of senior ministers advising the monarch, serving a similar function as the cabinet today.

Provinces (Ireland)

there are four provinces in Ireland: Connaught (*Connacht*), Munster (*an Mhumhain*), Leinster (*Laighin*) and Ulster (*Ulaidh*).

Tithes

a form of tax for the support of the church or clergy.

References

- Anderson, B. (2006) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn, London, Verso.
- Bartlett, T. (2010) *Ireland: A History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Colley, L. (2003) *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837*, new edn, London, Pimlico.
- Dickinson, H. T. (ed.) (2007) *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*[Online], Oxford, Blackwell. Available at Blackwell Reference Online, DOI 10.1111/b.9780631218371.2002.x (Accessed 10 February 2017).
- Dickson, D. (1999) *New Foundations Ireland 1660–1800*, 2nd edn, Dublin, Irish Academic Press.
- Ditchfield, G. M. (2003) 'Church, parliament and national identity, c.1770–c.1830', in Hoppit, J. (ed.) *Parliaments, Nations and Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1660–1850*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, pp. 64–82.
- Evans, E. J. (1999) *Parliamentary Reform in Britain, c. 1770–1918*, Abingdon, Routledge.
- Geoghegan, P.(2001) *The Irish Act of Union: A Study in High Politics, 1798–1801*, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan.

- Hibernicus (1799) *English union is Ireland's ruin! Or an address to the Irish Nation*, Dublin, ESTC T73023, pp. 5–12
- Hoppen, K. (1999) 'Riding a tiger: Daniel O'Connell, reform, and popular politics in Ireland, 1800–1847', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. 100, pp. 121–43.
- Jones, B. (2013) "'In Favour of Popery": patriotism, Protestantism, and the Gordon Riots in the revolutionary British Atlantic', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 79–102.
- Jones, C. and MacLeod, W. (2007) 'Standards and differences: languages in Scotland, 1707–1918', in Manning, S (ed.) *Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1918)*, vol. 2: , Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, pp. 21–32.
- London Evening Post (1780), *London Evening Post*, 1–3 June.
- Madden, D. (1853) *The Speeches of the Right Hon. Henry Grattan*, Dublin, James Duffy and Sons.
- Moseley, J. (2009) 'The technologies of printing', in Suarez, M. F. and Turner, M. L. (eds) *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 5: 1695–1830, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 161–99.
- North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality (1828) 'Catholic emancipation: third letter to the people of Wales', *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 16 October [Online]. Available at <http://newspapers.library.wales/view/4458935/4458937/10/catholic%20emancipation> (Accessed 9 March 2017).
- Ó Ciosáin, N. (2004–6) 'Print and Irish, 1570–1900: an exception among the Celtic languages?', *Radharc*, vols. 5–7, pp. 73–106.
- Ó Cuív, B. (2009) 'Irish language and literature', in Moody, T. W. and Vaughan, W. E. (eds) *New History of Ireland, Vol. 4: Eighteenth Century Ireland 1691–1800*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 374–423.
- O'Dowd, M. (2006) 'Women and patriotism in eighteenth-century Ireland', *History Ireland*, vol. 14, no. 5, pp. 25–30.
- Phillips, J. A. and Wetherell, C. (1995) 'The Great Reform Act of 1832 and the political modernization of England', *American Historical Review*, vol. 100, no. 2, pp. 411–36.
- Pitt, W. (1799) *Speech of the Right Honourable William Pitt, in the House of Commons*, 31 January, 5th edn, London, J. Wright.
- Sillard, P.A. (1908) *Life of John Mitchel*, Dublin, James Duffy & Co.
- Smyth, J. (2001) *Making the United Kingdom*, London, Longman.

Acknowledgements

This free course was written by Suzanne Forbes.

Except for third party materials and otherwise stated (see [terms and conditions](#)), this content is made available under a

[Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 Licence](#).

The material acknowledged below is Proprietary and used under licence (not subject to Creative Commons Licence). Grateful acknowledgement is made to the following sources for permission to reproduce material in this free course:

Images

Course image: Unknown creator, Mrs Pope as Britannia, hand-coloured etching with tinsel additions, 27 x 23cm. Published by M & M Skelt, London, c.1838. Victoria & Albert Museum, London S.21-1981. Photo: © Victoria & Albert Museum / Bridgeman Images.

Figure 1: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division

Figure 2: Photo: © Leeds Museums and Galleries/Bridgeman Images

Figure 4: Photo: © Trustees of the British Museum

Figure 5: Reproduced under Creative Commons Attribution only licence CC BY 4.0

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Figure 6: Photo: © Courtesy of the Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum/Bridgeman Images

Figure 7: Photo: © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums and Libraries Collections.

Figure 8: Photo: copyright and courtesy of Stockport Museums

Figure 9: Photo: © Atlaspix/Alamy

Every effort has been made to contact copyright owners. If any have been inadvertently overlooked, the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangements at the first opportunity.

Don't miss out

If reading this text has inspired you to learn more, you may be interested in joining the millions of people who discover our free learning resources and qualifications by visiting The Open University – www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses.