large uprising in Dublin, and instead the Rebellion took the form of smaller, more isolated local uprisings in the counties of Wexford, Carlow, Kildare and Meath- all of which were poorly armed and organized.

Around 30-40,000 people were killed during the Rebellion, and following the Battle of Vinegar Hill in June of the same year, the United Irishmen were defeated in Ulster by the English.

Wolfe Tone was captured on board one of the French ships attempting to land at Donegal in 1798, and was quickly arrested, court martialled and sentenced to death. However, before execution he committed suicide in prison, making himself a martyr for the Irish Nationalist cause. Many further Nationalist excursions, particularly those of Young Ireland and Emmett’s Rising, were inspired by the work of Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen.

What were the key reasons for the Rebellion’s failure?

- Lack of popular support (this is true for most cases of Militant Irish Nationalism in the 19th century. Support fluctuated dramatically between different strands of Nationalism until DeValera and Collins combined forces under Sinn Fein in 1918 to create mass popular support for revolutionary nationalist ideals)
- Bad organisation
- Unpreparedness
- No clear leader established
- Wolfe Tone was not actually in Ireland when the rebellion was scheduled to happen
- Outnumbered by the British, who had much superior forces.
- Badly equipped
- Unable to keep information secret/ward out spies for the British
- No clear strategy or reason for involvement.

Many of the factors that contributed towards the failure of the 1798 Uprising actually appear as reasons for other downfalls of Revolutionary Nationalist campaigns in Ireland throughout the 19th century- a key example of continuity during this century.

What was the context for the Rebellion?

Religious

At the time, Catholicism was the majority religion in Ireland. The Protestant population was mainly concentrated in the North- particularly Ulster- having derived from the English and Scottish plantation of Ulster during the reign of James VI (fun fact, the Scottish accent actually contributed to the formation of the Northern Irish- and particularly Belfast- accent), but they still retained much control over the Catholic population. This phenomenon, combined with the general higher standard of life that the Protestants received over the Catholics, is known as the Protestant Ascendancy.

Catholics, Presbyterians and Quakers were currently subject to the Penal Laws, introduced in the 1660s, which banned them from taking any sort of public office or holding any position of power within the government. Moreover, they had to pay ‘tithes’ to the Anglican