



# THE LAST SEPTEMBER

## HISTORICAL CONTEXTS FOR *THE LAST SEPTEMBER*

- Twofold purpose:
  - Introduction to Irish history in the 1920s
  - To suggest how the events represented in the film might be viewed in 1999

## HISTORICAL CONTEXTS FOR *THE LAST SEPTEMBER*

- British subject versus Irish citizen
- The Easter Rising, Dublin 1916
- The 1919–1921 War: the First Troubles
- Partition treaty, 1922: Ulster → Northern Ireland; rest of the island → the Irish Free State

## RESULTS OF THE FIRST TROUBLES

- Embittered Anglo-Irish relations
- Treaty signed December 1921 → partition → disappointment on both sides
- The Second Troubles 1960s–1990s

NOTES ON *THE LAST SEPTEMBER*

Deborah Warner, 1999

IRELAND



NORTHERN  
IRELAND

- The film takes place in 1920; set in County Cork
- The Ascendancy and the Anglo-Irish
- Heritage Films and the Big House genre
- The “national romance”
- Heritage films in the 1990s

# THE LAST SEPTEMBER

## Key characters (and the actors who play them)

- Sir Richard Naylor (*Michael Gambon*)
- Lady Myra Naylor (*Maggie Smith*)
- Lois Farquar, Sir Richard's niece (*Keeley Hawes*)
- Laurence Carstairs, Lady Naylor's nephew (*Jonathan Slinger*)
- Marda Norton, a family friend (*Fiona Shaw*)
- Hugo Montmorency, a family friend (*Lambert Wilson*)
- Francie Montmorency, Hugo's wife (*Jane Birkin*)
- Capt. Gerald Colthurst, British army captain (*David Tennant*)
- Capt. Daventry, Gerald's colleague (*Richard Roxburgh*)
- Peter Connolly, a rebel (*Gary Lydon*)
- Livvy Connolly, Peter's sister and Lois's friend (*Emily Nagle*)

## VIEWING NOTES

- How does the setting of the Big House symbolize the relationship between the Anglo-Irish and the Irish?
- How do the Naylor's view Ireland's political situation in 1920?
- What do children in movies **always** represent?
- Consider Lois's character arc in relation to the "national romance"
- Remember that Lois is a Catholic
- Shots of obscured vision
- Shots through Lois's spyglass: distant *and* intimate





LET'S WATCH THE MOVIE

## KEY ISSUES

- “colonial ambivalence” and dual identities
- ELS shots of the Big House: why?
- Social isolation versus self-sufficiency
- The national romance versus the Irish rebel
- Parse the title
- The Church, the family, history and the personal past
- Social class