



Unit 4:

The Home Rule Crisis, 1912-1914

Junior Cycle Worksheets

THE HOME RULE CRISIS 1900-1914



1900

John Redmond elected leader of a reunited Irish Parliamentary Party which wants Home Rule for Ireland.

1906

General Election: Conservatives replaced by the Liberal party with a large majority in the House of Commons. Campbell Bannerman becomes Prime Minister.

1910

Two General Elections (January and December). The Liberals lose their majority and need the votes of the Irish nationalists and the Labour party to stay in power.

1911

The Parliament Act is passed reducing the power of the House of Lords. They can no longer stop (veto) a bill. Now they can only delay it for two years.

1904: The Ulster Unionist Council is formed

1905: Arthur Griffith establishes the Sinn Féin movement.

1908: H. H. Asquith becomes Prime Minister. Liberals introduce Old Age Pensions

1909: The Liberal's 'People's Budget' increasing taxes on the wealthy is rejected by the House of Lords.

9 April 1912

New Conservative leader Andrew Bonar Law pledges his party's support at a massive anti-Home Rule demonstration at Balmoral show-grounds.

Jan 1913

Formation of an Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) to fight the British government if Home Rule is introduced.

28 Sept 1912

Ulster Day: Thousands of men sign the 'Solemn League and Covenant' to state their objections to Home Rule. Women's Unionist Council organised a Women's Declaration

11 April 1912

Introduction of Third Home Rule Bill. It is likely to become law in two years

29 April 1912: In a speech at Blenheim Bonar Law agrees to support Ulster's use of force

September 1913: The Provisional Government of Ulster is set up

November 1913: Formation of the Irish Volunteer Force (IVF) to fight the government if Home Rule is not passed.

March 1914

Curragh Mutiny: British officers threaten to resign if asked by the government to fight against Ulster Unionists. The Government backs down.

Asquith's offer of temporary exclusion for parts of Ulster is rejected by Carson.

May 1914

Home Rule Bill passed in the Commons for the second time.

July 1914

Buckingham Palace Conference of 21-24 July breaks down when unionists and nationalists cannot agree over what territory to exclude from Home Rule. Threat of civil war.

August 1914

War: Britain declares war against Germany. Redmond commits the Volunteers to the protection of Irish shores.

18 Sept 1914

Home Rule Bill receives royal assent but is suspended for the duration of the war.



April: UVF Gun-running. Arms smuggled into Ulster from Germany. Met with no resistance. Cumann na mBan (Irishwomen's Council) is formed to support the IVF.

July: IVF Gun-running at Howth. Bachelor's Walk Incident - Army shoot into the crowds in Dublin. Civilian deaths infuriate nationalist Ireland.

9 Sept 1914: Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) decide to stage an uprising before the end of

20 Sept: Redmond's speech at Woodenbridge calling on Irishmen to fight for Britain led to a split in the IVF. The minority followed Eoin MacNeill and most would fight in the 1916 Rising.

UNIT 4: THE HOME RULE CRISIS, 1912-1914

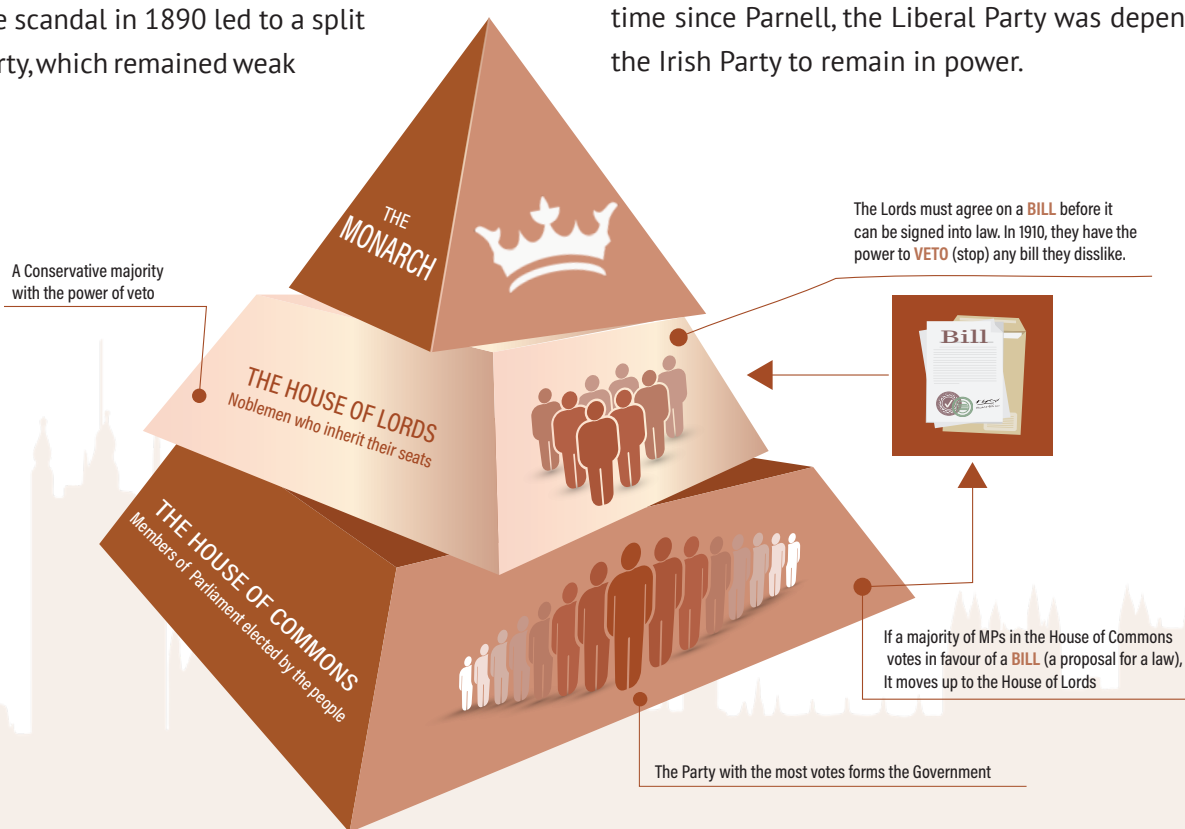
Background: In 1900 Ireland was part of the **British Empire**. Elected by the men in their **constituencies**, 103 Irish Members of Parliament (**MPs**) travelled to London to attend **British Parliament** in Westminster. In the 1870s all of the Irish MPs formed one group in order to strengthen the Irish voice in parliament. By the 1880s this group had become known as the **Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP)** and its main aim was to achieve **Home Rule** for Ireland. This meant that Ireland would remain part of the British Empire and recognise the king as head of state, but have its own parliament in Dublin. With the charismatic and organised **Charles Stewart Parnell** as its leader, the IPP (also known as the Home Rule Party) became a powerful force in politics.

In 1886 William Gladstone's **Liberal Party** needed IPP support in the **House of Commons** in order to remain in power. In exchange for the Irish MPs voting with the Liberals, Gladstone proposed the first **Home Rule bill**. It was defeated in the House of Commons and Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill in 1893 was **vetoed** by the House of Lords. Charles Stewart's involvement in a divorce scandal in 1890 led to a split in his party, which remained weak

and divided for a decade. The Home Rule party finally reunited in 1900 under the leadership of Wexford-born **John Redmond** but another Home Rule bill was very unlikely while the **Conservative Party** was in power.

Irish Nationalists became more optimistic in 1906 when their old allies won an overwhelming victory in the **general election**. This time, however, the Liberal Party had a **majority** in the House of Commons and did not need the votes of the Irish Party to remain in power.

Redmond's opportunity finally came in 1909 when the House of Lords used its **power of veto** to stop the Liberal party's budget of that year. Liberal Prime Minister **Herbert Asquith** called a general election, promising to 'clip the wings' of the House of Lords by getting rid of their veto. Knowing he might need the support of the IPP, Asquith promised to introduce a **third Home Rule Bill** if the Liberals were re-elected. Redmond responded by calling on Irish voters in the UK to support the Liberal Party. The results of the general elections of January and December 1910 were dramatic. For the first time since Parnell, the Liberal Party was dependent on the Irish Party to remain in power.





YOUR TASK

A group of American Students is visiting your school for a week. They are particularly interested in learning about the history of **PARTITION**: The division of Ireland into two parts, Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland.

Your class has been asked to make a short informative presentation about the politics in Ireland between 1900 and 1910.

Step 1: Your teacher will divide the class into groups of four. Each group will create a presentation for the American students. The presentation must contain four slides/sections

Part A) Nationalists and Unionists in Ireland in 1900

Part B) The reasons for Unionist opposition to Home Rule 1900

Part C) The structure of the British Parliament and the background to the 1910 general elections.

Part D) The different parties in Westminster in 1910, their leaders and alliances

Step 2: Each group should appoint a **chairperson** and a **slide master**.

Step 3: Working together as a group, complete the **three** worksheets on the next two pages of this workbook.

Step 4: The group chairperson will feed back your answers to the class.

Step 5: For homework, each group member will design **one** of the slides/sections of the presentation. You may reproduce the graphics in the worksheets or create designs of your own.

Remember, your audience has little knowledge of Irish history so your slides and verbal presentation should be clear and easy to understand.

Step 6: Once your design is complete, send it to the slide master who will knit the four designs together into one presentation.

Step 7: The group should rehearse together before presenting to the American students (*i.e the rest of the class*) who will assess each presentation as follows:

Criteria	Grade	Comment
Clarity of Presentation	/ 40	
Quality of Design	/ 40	
Evidence of Group Work	/ 20	

NATIONALISTS AND UNIONISTS IN IRELAND IN 1900

Unionists

Located mostly in

Mostly of the Religion

Were opposed to

Wanted

Mostly voted for the Party



Nationalists

Located mostly in

Mostly of the Religion

Were opposed to

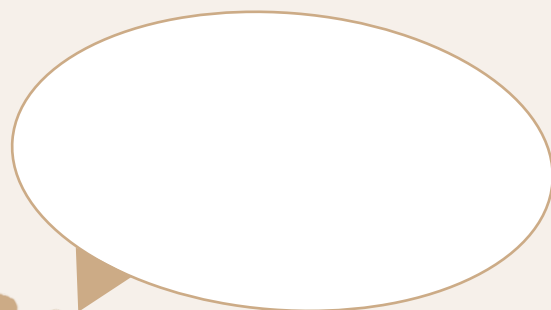
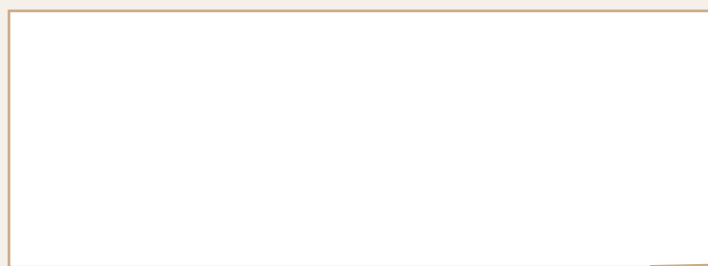
Wanted

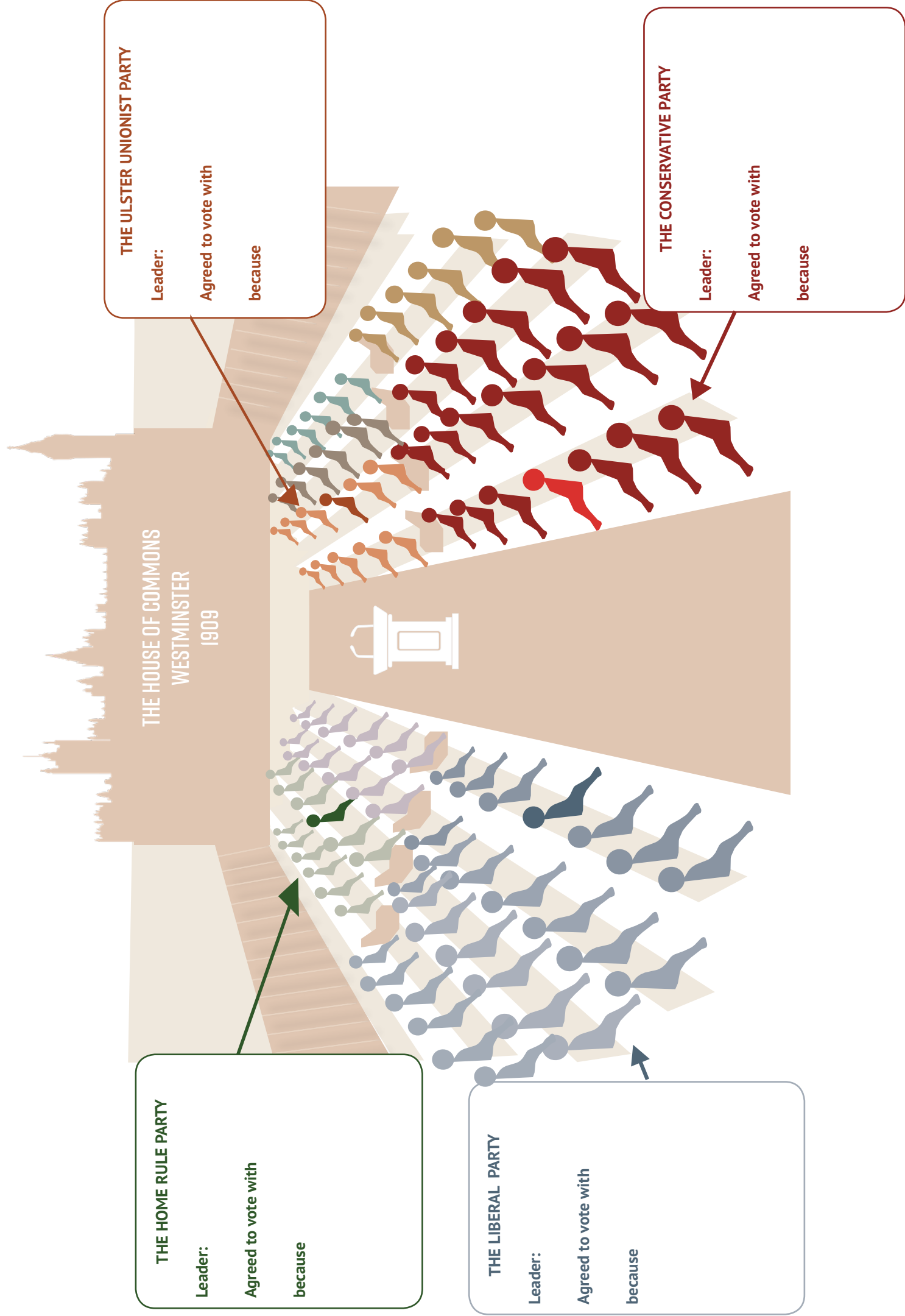
Mostly voted for the Party



HOME RULE IS

AND WE WILL NOT HAVE HOME RULE BECAUSE ...





THE ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY

Leader:

Agreed to vote with

because

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Leader:

Agreed to vote with

because

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
WESTMINSTER
1909

THE LIBERAL PARTY

Leader:

Agreed to vote with

because

THE HOME RULE PARTY

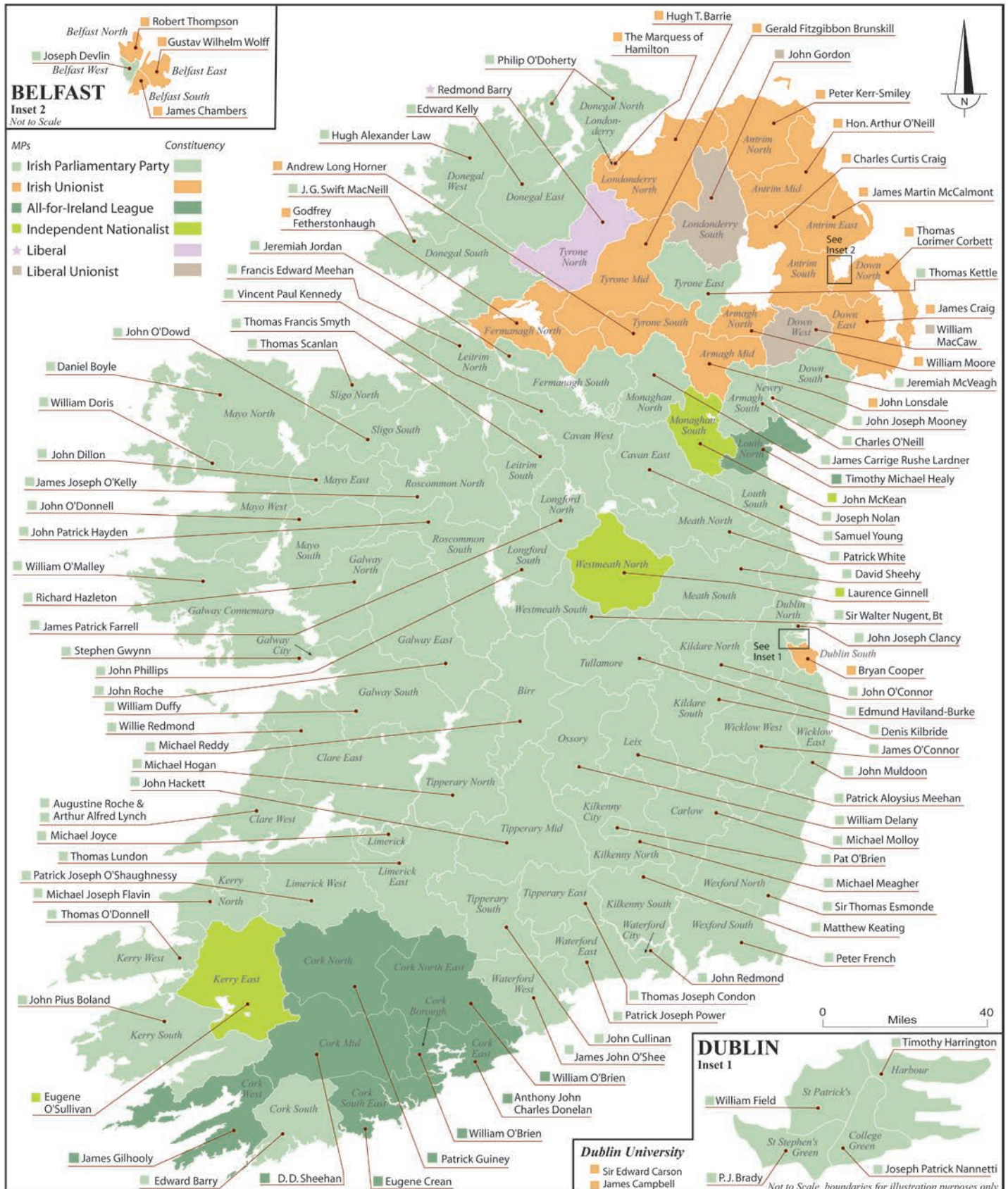
Leader:

Agreed to vote with

because

- Document A -

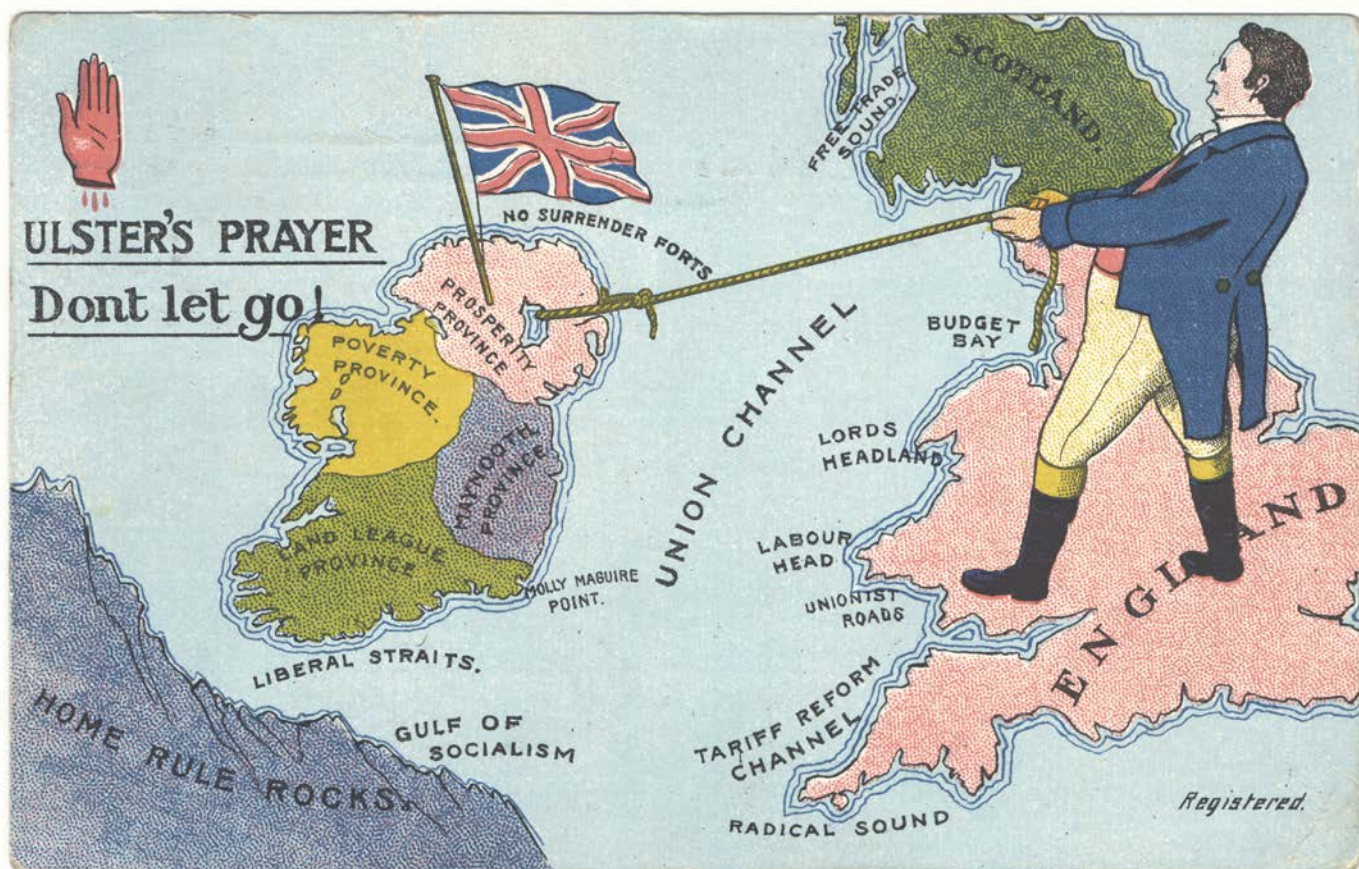
Map showing the candidates elected as Members of Parliament in each constituency in Ireland after the General Election in January 1910. The party affiliation of each elected MP is also shown



*The All-for-Ireland League (AFIL), was founded in 1909 by nationalist MP William O'Brien. Disapproving of the Irish Parliamentary Party's alliance with the Liberals, O'Brien aimed achieve Irish Home Rule through cooperation with unionists.

- Document B-

Unionist anti-Home Rule postcard with the caption Ulster's Prayer. Don't let go!



[Photo © National Museums Northern Ireland Collection Ulster Museum BELUM.W2011.1323]

- Document C -

Table showing the results of the December 1910 General Election

A party would need to win 336 seats out of a **total of 670 seats** to hold a majority in the House of Commons.

GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS DECEMBER 1910						
	NAME OF PARTY	PARTY LEADER	NO OF CANDIDATES STANDING FOR ELECTION	ELECTED CANDIDATES	SEATS GAINED OR LOST	% OF TOTAL SEATS
	Conservative	Arthur Balfour	548	271	- 1	40.4%
	Liberal	H. H. Asquith	467	272	- 2	40.6%
	Labour	Arthur Henderson	56	42	+ 2	6.3%
	Irish Parliamentary	John Redmond	81	74	+ 3	11%
	All for Ireland	William O’Brien	21	8	0	1.2%
	Independent Nationalist		4	2	- 1	0.3%
	Independent Conservative		4	1	0	0.1%
	Independent Labour		1	0	0	0
	Independent Liberal		1	0	- 1	0.1%
	Others		3	0	0	0

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Documents A-C

Document A

1. How many Independent Nationalists were elected in January 1910 and what were their names?

2. In what province did Irish Unionists have the strongest support in January 1910?

3. In what constituencies were (a) James Craig and (b) Edward Carson elected in January 1910?
(a) ----- (b) -----
4. What was the name of the candidate elected as an MP in the Mayo East constituency?

5. What were the names of the MPs elected in your own county in January 1910?

6. Overall, what does the map suggest about the popularity of Irish Parliamentary Party in Ireland in January 1910?

Document B

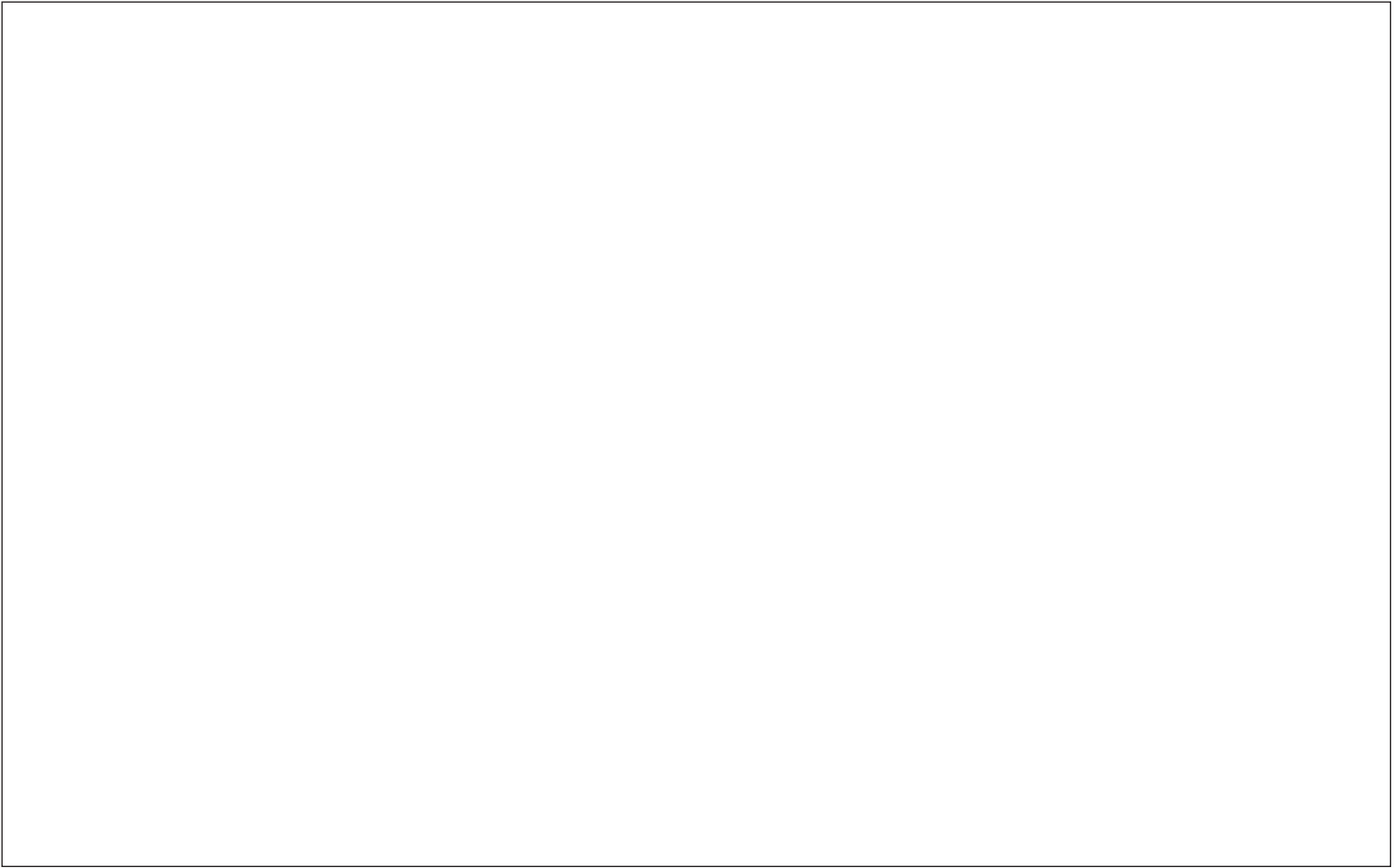
7. Why do you think the postcard was created in 1910?

8. What do you think is the main message of the postcard? Explain your answer.

9. In December 1909 Herbert Asquith promised to introduce a new Home Rule Bill if the Liberal party was re-elected. Using the template on the next page, design a **propaganda postcard** to convince the Irish voters in the UK to support the Liberal Party.

Remember, the postcard should have a clear message, a catchy slogan, and simple, persuasive imagery.

PROPAGANDA POSTCARD

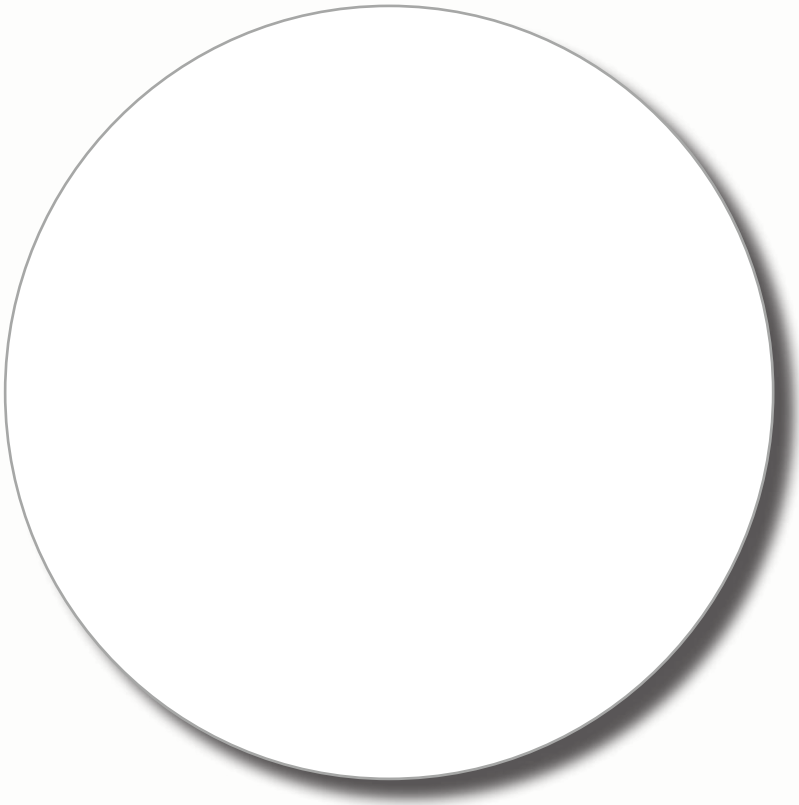


Document C

10. Using the numbers in the table, explain why the Irish Parliamentary Party was in a powerful position in Westminster after the December 1910 general election.

11. In the circle provided, draw a simple pie chart showing the percentage of total seats (votes) held by each of the groups below in December 1910.

-  Conservative
-  Liberal
-  Irish Nationalist
-  Labour
-  All Independents



Edited Extract from the *Evening Herald*, 31 March 1912

Just a few days before the introduction of the Third Home Rule Bill, a vast crowd gathered in O'Connell Street to applaud John Redmond's triumph.

EVENING HERALD

[No. 78 Vol. 21

DUBLIN, SUNDAY, MARCH 31st, 1912

[ONE HALFPENNY]

HOME RULE MUSTER IN DUBLIN

TO-DAYS'S INSPIRING
SPECTACLE IN
DUBLIN

MAMMOTH DEMONSTRATION

SCENES IN THE STREETS OF
THE IRISH METROPOLIS

"HOME RULE FOR IRELAND", THE
WATCHWORD FOR
VAST CROWDS

THE mighty gathering that thronged the proudest thoroughfare of the nation's capital must have numbered considerably over a quarter of a million ...

The platform ... measuring 40 ft by 27 ... on which the Irish party was to speak - situated on the south side of the Parnell monument - was possibly the most elaborate ever created in Dublin ... The other three platforms - at the Father Matthew Statue, the end of Middle Abbey Street and at the O'Connell Monument - were of similar design but somewhat smaller.

From early morning hundreds of street traders were selling 'Home Rule Badges' of many designs and various slogans, also flags, programmes and mementos of the day, and were largely patronised by the public so that the aspect of the street soon gave an unmistakable indication of the motive of the day's excitement.

The accents of North, South, East and West could be heard in the hurrying throng, every man of whom wore a badge indicating the town or district and organisation to which he belonged ...

The muster of the students was a notable one. The University Colleges of Dublin, Cork and Galway, the College of Science, King's Inn and the Solicitor's Apprentices had their meeting place at Earlsfort Terrace at one o'clock and made a brave show as, headed by



A VIEW OF THE GATHERING OVER O'CONNELL BRIDGE TO NELSON'S PILLAR AT YESTERDAY'S DEMONSTRATION

the St James' Band, they marched to their special platform at the O'Connell monument.

At two o'clock at the Mansion House the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress received Messrs. John Redmond, John Dillon, WM Redmond and Joseph Devlin, the principal speakers of the day ... After the reception the procession was formed to march to the platforms, the whole route being densely packed. Interspersed with the carriages were many representatives of ... the United Irish League, Land and Labour Association members and the Gaelic League ... On a house in O'Connell Street were the words "Irishwomen want the Vote and the Home Rule Bill" ... Mrs Sheehy Skeffington could be seen distributing suffragette literature ...

The excitement reached its zenith in College Green when the noble buildings of the old parliament house came in sight of the procession, and the hopes that the near future will see them once more the home of an Irish Legislature [Parliament] found expression in a spontaneous burst of cheering.

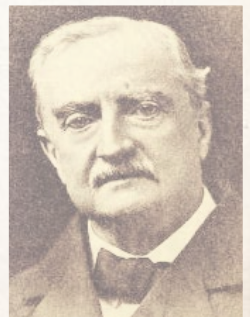
The crowd of people was at its thickest

around the Parnell Monument where the Irish leader was to speak on the coming Home Rule Bill.

MR REDMOND'S SPEECH ON IRELAND'S HOUR OF TRIUMPH

'No words of mine', he said, 'can add to the splendour, and, I would say, to the solemnity of this occasion ...' "We will have our Parliament sitting in College Green sooner than the most ... man in this crowd believes ... go back, therefore, fellow countrymen, go back after this meeting to your homes with high and confident hearts. ... Amid the applause of the whole world ... Ireland is about to come into her own again

- (cheers) -
is about, at
long last to
receive the
reward of a
generation of
self-sacrifice!



Edited Extract from *The Spectator* - a weekly British conservative magazine first published in 1828
On 9 April 1912 about 100,000 unionists marched from Belfast with banners and bands to the Balmoral show-grounds.

The Spectator

No. 4372

WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, APRIL 13th, 1912

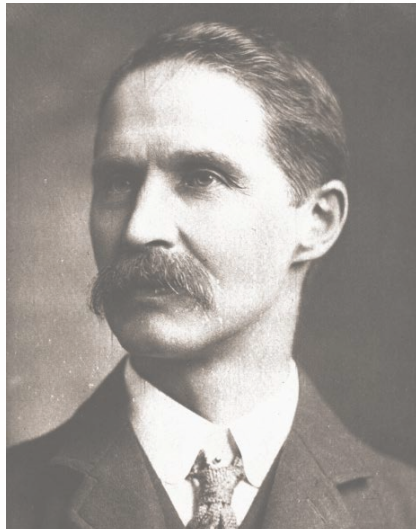
[ONE PENNY]

THE BELFAST MEETING

The Unionist demonstration held at Balmoral near Belfast on Tuesday was great, not merely in numbers, but in the temper and purpose of the demonstrators. Contingents from all quarters of Ireland, including Cork, Kerry and Clare took part in the procession of 100,000 men, four miles in length, who marched past Mr. Bonar Law, as many more were gathered in the Balmoral ground and as many more, again, lined the route ... We have been assured by those who were present that no newspaper account has rendered justice to the impressiveness of the scene.

At the recent Home Rule demonstration in Dublin ... the Union Jack was insulted and its presence apologised for. At Belfast the flag was in evidence throughout ... Sir Edward Carson, who presided at the principal platform, invited all present to raise their hands and repeat after him, "Never under any circumstances will we submit to Home Rule", an appeal answered at once in a mighty and unanimous shout.

Mr. Bonar Law said that he came as leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons to assure Ulster that they regarded the cause of Ulster Unionists not as theirs alone, but as the cause of the Empire, and would do all they could to defeat a conspiracy as treacherous as had ever been formed against the life of a great nation ... "Ireland", he continued, "was not and never had been a nation - there were two peoples in Ireland - and Ulster made no claim except that it should not be deprived of its birthright."



CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADER,
ANDREW BONAR LAW

NEWS OF THE WEEK

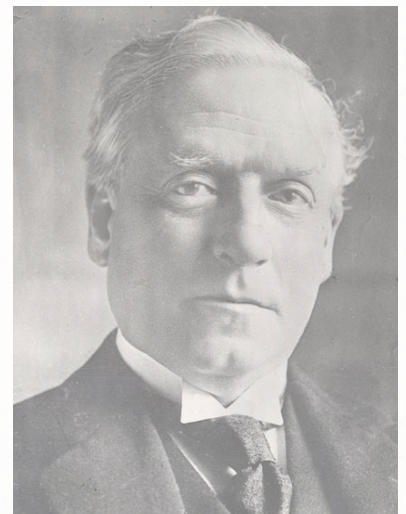
ON Thursday Mr. Asquith introduced what we do not hesitate to describe as the most unjust, unworkable, insincere [Home Rule Bill] ... We desire to insist here that the Bill is cowardly as well as foolish ... The Government are playing the part of a man entrusted with the work of guarding a door beset by enemies. He refuses to let them in at once, but provides them with a large bag of gold and, at the same time, hands them out a crow-bar amply strong enough to break down the door. That is the Government's idea of preserving the Union and safeguarding the integrity of the United Kingdom ...

Those counties of North-East Ulster in which the Protestants form the local majority will never submit to the rule of a Dublin Parliament - and a Dublin Executive.

THE MAIN POINTS OF MR ASQUITH'S HOME RULE BILL

- The Irish Parliament is to consist of a Senate of 40 members and a House of Commons of 164 members.
- The Irish Parliament will have no control over foreign affairs, defence, taxation or overseas trade.
- 42 Irish MPs are to be present at Westminster to represent Ireland in matters of taxation.
- The Lord Lieutenant will be the nominal head of state and have the power either to veto a Bill passed by the Irish Parliament or to postpone assent.

Mr. Redmond declared his Party would accept the Bill, which he characterised as "a great measure".



LIBERAL PRIME-MINISTER,
HERBERT HENRY ASQUITH



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Documents D - E

Document D

1. How did the *Evening Herald* reporter know that people from all over Ireland attended the gathering in O'Connell Street?
.....
.....
2. Why was there such excitement in O'Connell Street on 31 March 1912?
.....
.....
3. Do you think that the article and the photograph in the *Evening Herald* captures this excitement? Explain your answer by referring to Document D.
.....
.....
.....

Document E

4. In your own words, explain why Mr Andrew Bonar Law was present at Balmoral on 9 April 1912?
.....
.....
.....
5. Find **3** pieces of evidence in the *Spectator* article that show the writer's bias **against** Home Rule.
.....
.....
.....



6a. Design a badge that might have been sold at either the Home Rule rally or the Unionist Meeting at Balmoral in 1912.

or

6b. Imagine that you were present at the Home Rule rally in O'Connell Street in March 1912. Based on the evidence in Doc D, write a short diary entry describing the events of the day.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT

In August 1912, newspapers announced that Saturday, 28 September was to be 'Ulster Day' when Unionists would sign a solemn and binding oath to resist Home Rule. Unionist leaders understood that such an oath would help to maintain order and convince public opinion of Unionist solidarity and determination.

On 28 September 1912, the workers at Belfast's shipyards and factories abandoned their posts to attend church before congregating with a crowd up to 250,000 men from all classes of unionism at the City Hall to sign the Covenant. At midday, when the church services finished, Edward Carson and other Unionist leaders walked the short distance between the Ulster Hall and the City Hall where they signed the Covenant. Marshalls then admitted groups of 500 men at a time to sign the copies of the Covenant.

A total of 218,206 Ulstermen, and a further 19,162 Ulstermen living outside the province signed the Covenant. The Ulster Women's Unionist Council developed a declaration to be signed by 234,046 women in support of the Covenant. They pledged to associate themselves "with the men of Ulster in their uncompromising opposition to the Home Rule Bill now before Parliament".



SATURDAY HERALD

DUBLIN, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1912

ULSTER DAY

Signing of the Covenant

TO-DAY'S SCENES

The Northern capital up to noon presented the appearance of the Sabbath Day ... There had been some misgivings as to the weather, but the streets were flooded with sunshine, and there was a sufficiently fresh wind to rustle the decorative displays, of which there were long and charming vistas. From the facade of the City Hall an enormous Union Jack spread its ample folds, the fine dome forming an imposing background.

All the Unionist business houses were closed down ... and church bells were chiming from 9 o'clock in the morning, calling loyalists to pray before they commit themselves to the signing of the "Solemn League and Covenant". The principal service of the day was held at the Ulster Hall. Sir Edward Carson came on the platform with his standard bearers, who carried the flag ... which is supposed to be 222 years old [and] carried at the Battle of the Boyne.

Sir Edward's appearance was greeted with applause from the gallery, which was immediately suppressed, those on the platform calling for silence ... They were face to face, he said, with a great religious and political issue which might involve the destruction of their liberties and the peace of Ireland. Headed by the Boyne flag, and accompanied by a bodyguard of 200, Sir Edward Carson, marched from the Ulster Hall to the City Hall through the streets filled with cheering crowds.

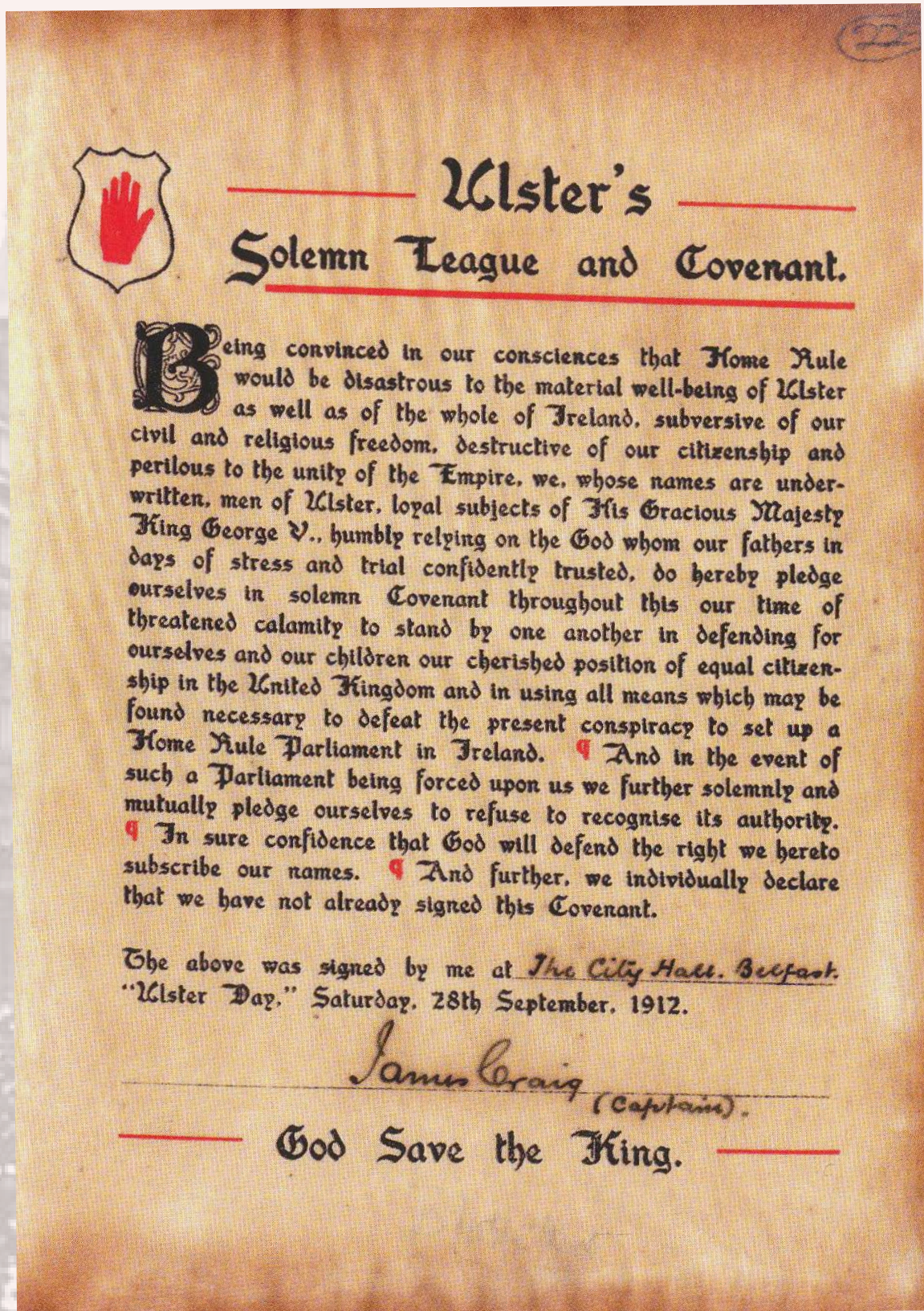
On arrival at the City Hall shortly after noon, Sir Edward Carson was received by the Lord Mayor and the Unionist members of the Corporation, all garbed in their robes of office ... In the marble, pillared hall, the central position was occupied by a round table draped with crimson and covered by the Union Jack, while the corridors, right and left, had long lines of wooden desks where copies of the Covenant forms were placed for signature.

Sir Edward, approaching it with an air of dramatic solemnity, signed the document at 12.15 p.m. with the silver fountain pen presented to him at last night's remarkable anti-Home Rule gathering. From the centre of the dome hung a huge electric lamp, which enabled the photographers to snapshot each of the Unionist leaders as they came to the table ...

From this onward the main thoroughfares were densely crowded. Bands paraded Royal Avenue and the majority of those abroad sported Union Jacks and Orange badges. The procession marched four deep, with military precision. The various sections were under the charge of a marshal, who shouted his orders in military language. The tram traffic in the centre of the city was entirely suspended. Hundreds of people watched the march from windows and housetops.

Belfast, Saturday.

Souvenir parchment of the *Solemn League and Covenant* signed by James Craig



[Photo: Public Records Office of Northern Ireland, D1496/3]



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Documents F-H

Documents F and G

1. According to the Covenant, in what ways would Home Rule prove 'disastrous' to Unionists?

2. What pledges (promises) did the men of Ulster make when they signed the Covenant?

3. Can you find **3** pieces of evidence in the *Saturday Herald* article that prove the Unionist leaders were aware of the importance of symbols.

Document H

4. In what Ulster county was support for the Covenant at its highest?

5. In what Ulster counties did more women than men pledge their opposition to Home Rule?

6. What do the maps suggest about the level of opposition of Home Rule in Ulster?

YOUR TASK

You are an Ulster Unionist. The principal of a school in Kerry has asked you to give a short speech to history students about why you signed the Covenant in September 1912.

Using the information in Documents E-H in this workbook, prepare a draft of your speech using the template on the previous page.

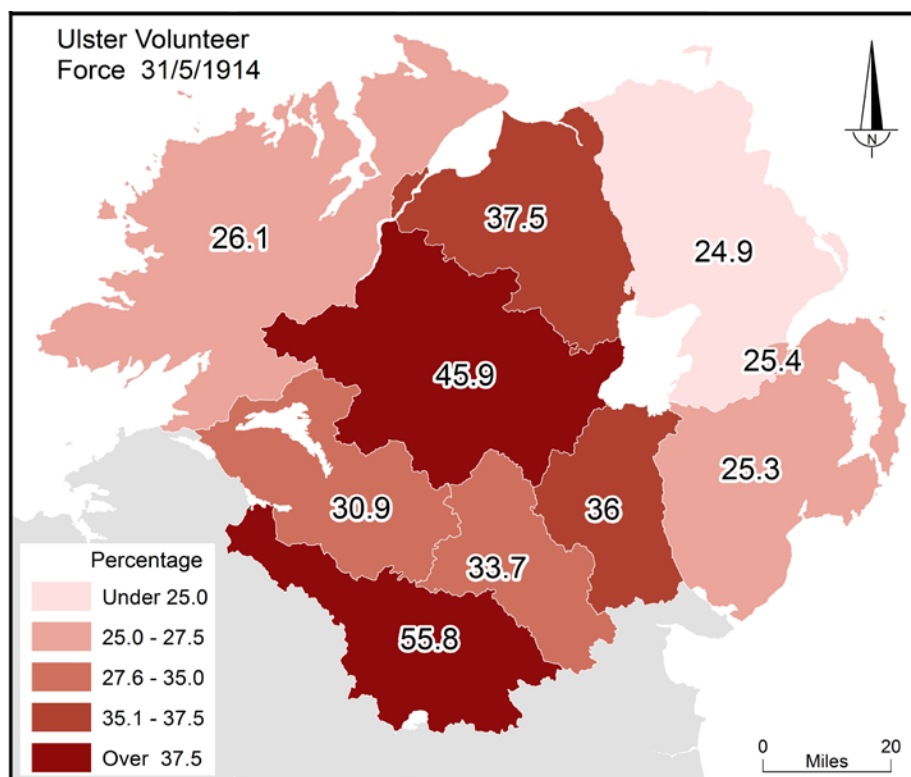
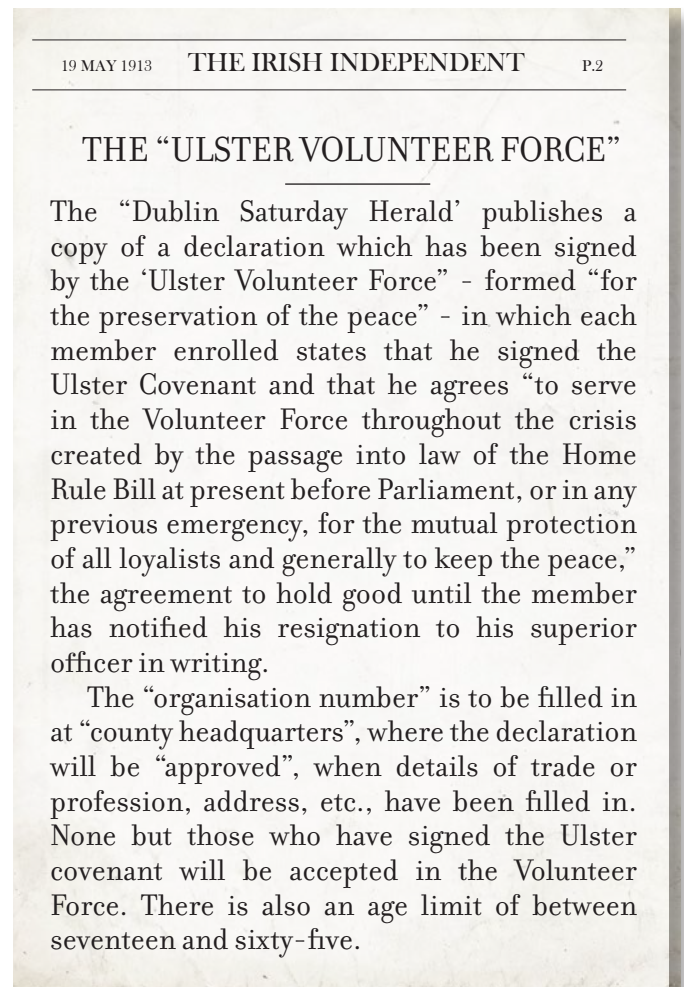
THE ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE

- Document I -

January 1913 saw the formal establishment of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) to fight against any attempt to introduce Home Rule. UVF units were formed in many parts of Ulster in the early months of the year. In June retired British army officer, Lieutenant General Sir George Richardson, established a UVF headquarters at the Old Town Hall in Belfast.

By the end of February 1914 approximately 90,000 men had enrolled in the UVF. Thirty thousand of these belonged to the Belfast battalions. County Down and County Antrim provided the next largest contingents, both with around 11,000 men, while the smallest regiments were from Cavan and Monaghan with just over 2,000 men each. The UVF reached its peak strength of 100,000 in the summer of 1914.

In February 1914 the Inspector General reported that 'the volunteers are being instructed and trained in the use of arms in drill halls and private grounds to which the police have no access'. The UVF was an impressive force by the summer of 1914 and following the Larne gunrunning of April 1914, it possessed a large number of relatively modern military rifles.



- Document J -

Maps showing the membership of the Ulster Volunteer Force in May 1914 as percentage of the non-Catholic population of each county in Ulster

Edited Extract from Bureau of Military History Witness Statement submitted on 25 March 1959
by northern nationalist and Home Rule supporter, Kevin O'Sheil who was a student in Trinity College in 1912

In 1912, the year of the Asquith Home Rule Bill, Irish Nationalists were full of optimism ... John Redmond's prestige never stood higher. He was regarded as the Irish Moses who had led his people out of bondage and was about to lead them into the promised land ... The gun, as a means of obtaining the national objective, was almost, but not quite as dead as the dodo ... Yes, we were all Home Rulers in Ireland in those days, and nothing more than Home Rulers. It was a strange paradox that, at the very point in history when Irish nationalism appeared to have turned its back on physical force forever, Irish Unionism had wholeheartedly embraced it and clasped it to his bosom....

In the beginning, however, the general attitude of Nationalists to [the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)] was one of ridicule, if not of contempt. They felt it would soon fizzle out, and, anyhow, that if it, by any stretch of imagination, became serious, the Liberal Government would not tolerate it but would promptly suppress it. The ridicule was understandable, for I confess it was rather amusing and fantastic to see adult men, so consciously "grim and dour" tramping along the Ulster roads and lanes, garbed in solemn bowler hats and "Sunday-go-to-meeting" blue serge suits (the original uniform), carrying ridiculous wooden guns across their shoulders ...

[By the summer of 1912] the U.V.F. had grown considerably in numbers. In my small town of Omagh, as soon as the shops closed, one would see groups of men making their way to yards, squares and greens and fields to undergo instruction in drill and "the arts of war" ... As the days and months rolled by and the U.V.F., under virtually protected conditions, continued to expand and develop and, above all, to acquire considerable supplies of arms and ammunition ... Also, they were being, bit by bit, got into uniform - a kind of brown material cut like the British tunic with brown trousers and puttees ... Side by side with the progress of that force, there were clear signs of weakening by the Government on the Home Rule issue, with much talking about partition and the need for compromise ... Irish Nationalism, especially young Irish Nationalism, began to grow uneasy and restless ...

By September [1913], the original feeling of contempt for the U.V.F. "playboys" was passing, or, rather, being transferred to the Government, and their own Nationalist leaders, whilst something very like admiration was taking its place. Whether it was a colossal bluff or not, the fact was becoming clearer and clearer to the young Nationalists that those U.V.F. fellows were achieving things, and that the Nationalists were losing what little they had achieved.

[Source: Bureau of Military History W.S. 1770, Part 3: (Commissioner Kevin R. O'Sheil, B.L.)]

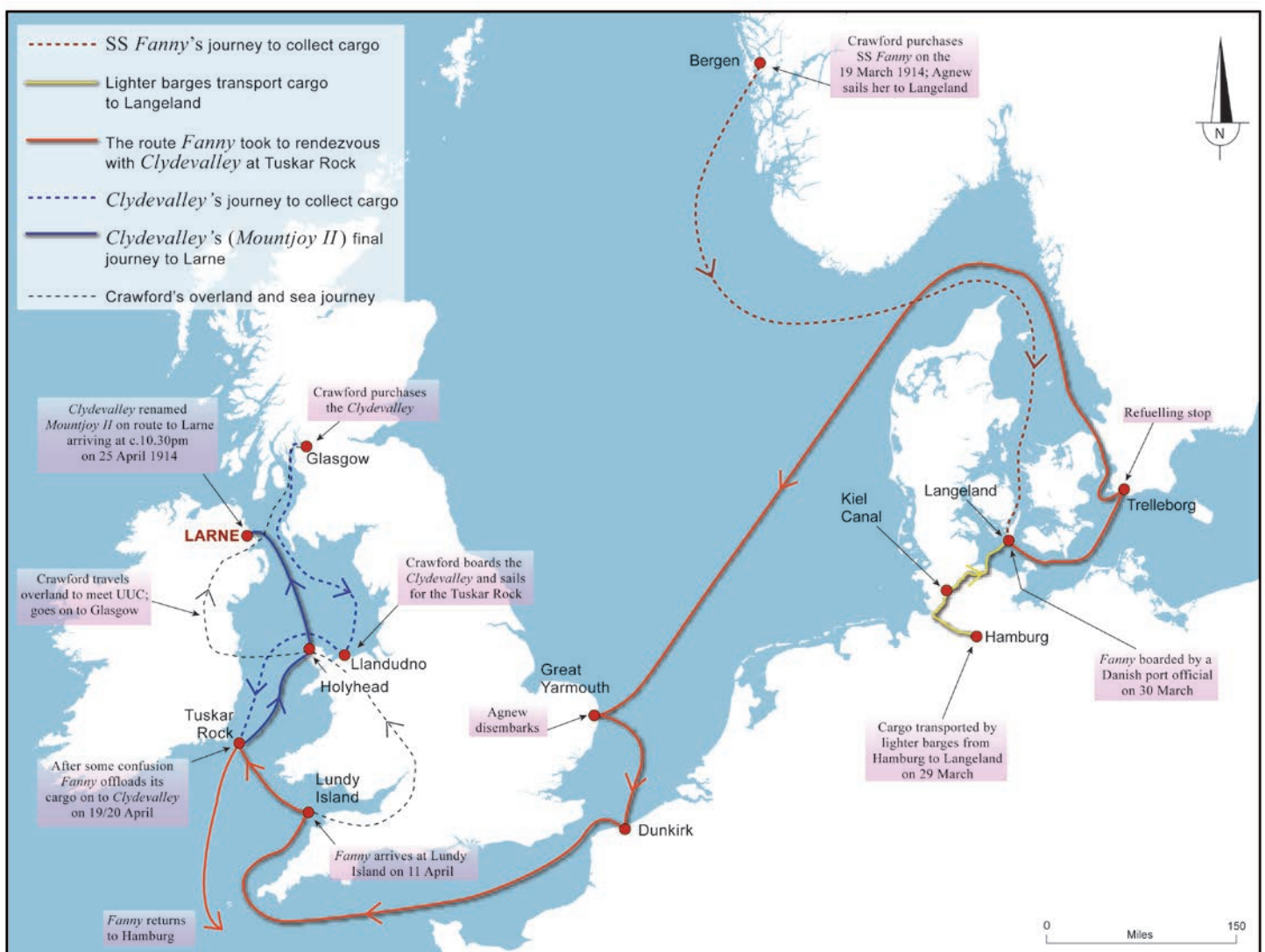
UVF GUNRUNNING

The arming of the Ulster Volunteer Force in the spring of 1914 escalated the Irish Home Rule Crisis. With the approval of Carson and the Ulster Unionist Council, UVF Director of Ordnance, Major F. H. Crawford purchased 25,000 rifles and 3 million rounds of ammunition from an arms dealer in Hamburg. These were loaded onto a Norwegian vessel the *SS Fanny* on 2 April 1914 and the cargo was transferred to a British registered ship, the *SS Clyde Valley* on 20 April.

On the night of 24 April 1914, the disguised arms ship *SS Clyde Valley* docked in the small port of Larne, north of Belfast. Hundreds of Ulster Volunteers were mobilised for the meticulously-planned operation. They sealed off the harbour and moving quickly before daylight, they removed the arms to pre-arranged dumps around Ulster. Their speed prevented any interference from police if the government had decided to act.

- Document L -

Map showing the routes of the ships used to transport arms for the UVF from Germany to Larne in 1914





PRICE ONE PENNY

At Belfast the interest of the police appears to have been diverted to the Musgrave channel, where it was generally expected that a steamer carrying arms would arrive. About 10 o'clock a large force of Volunteers was marched down to the quay and remained there until 4 o'clock in the morning, when the hatches of a steamer were removed in the presence of the Customs and police officers. To their astonishment, and even to the surprise of some of the Volunteer officers who were not in on the secret, the cargo was found to contain nothing more dangerous than 60 tons of bunker coal, lumps of which were carried off by those present as souvenirs ... The attention of the authorities had been successfully occupied while the arms were being unloaded elsewhere.



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Documents I-K

1. According to the *Irish Independent* article, what were the two requirements for joining the Ulster Volunteers?

2. By signing the declaration, what did the newly enrolled members of the UVF agree to do? (*Doc I*)

3. In May 1914 what two Ulster counties had the highest percentage of Ulster Volunteers?

4. According to Kevin O'Sheil, why did Irish nationalists not take the Ulster Volunteers seriously in the beginning?

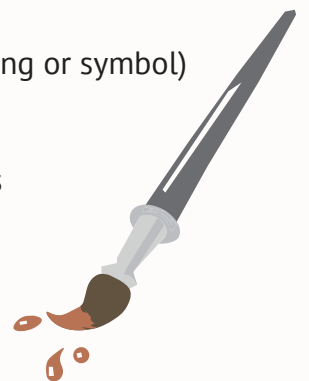
5. Give **three** reasons why Kevin O'Sheil had changed his mind by September 1913.

6. Use the map, (*Doc J*) to identify the Ulster county with the lowest membership of the UVF in 1914. Design a propaganda poster encouraging the men of that Ulster county to join the Volunteers.

The poster should include:



- ☐ At least one image (this may be a photograph, drawing or symbol)
- ☐ A strong statement/slogan in large font
- ☐ Two persuasive reasons to join the Ulster Volunteers







COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Documents L & M

7. Based on the evidence in the map, where did Major Crawford purchase the *SS Fanny* in March 1914?

8. Where was the cargo of arms and ammunition transferred from the *SS Fanny* to the *Clydevalley*?

9. According to the *Skibbereen Eagle*, how was the *Clydevalley* disguised?

10. Based on your reading of the up-to-date map, can you find any inaccuracies in the article?

11. Identify **three** pieces of evidence in the newspaper article and/or the map that proves that the UVF gun running was carefully planned.

- (1) -----

- (2) -----

- (3) -----

YOUR TASK:

UVF Director of Ordnance, Major F. H. Crawford has employed you and one other researcher to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the planned strategy for the gunrunning mission in April 1914.

Working in pairs, use the evidence in Documents L and M to complete the S.W.O.T Analysis Template on the next page.

A SWOT analysis is a planning method that weighs up the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats** of a project.



THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS


- Document N -

Shortly after the publication of 'The North Began', in An Claidheamh Soluis, Eoin MacNeill was approached by Bulmer Hobson, a member of the Supreme Council of the of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). Hobson asked the UCD professor if he would preside at a committee meeting to discuss the formation of a volunteer body. On 11 November 1913 ten men gathered in Wynn's Hotel, Abbey Street in Dublin where it was decided to hold a public recruiting meeting for a body to be called Óglaigh na hÉireann (Irish Volunteers). The aim of the movement was 'to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to the whole people of Ireland'.

Shortly after 8pm on 25 November 1913, the doors of the largest meeting room in the Rotunda were opened to the crowd of thousands who had gathered outside. Seán T. O'Kelly chaired the meeting and Patrick Pearse and Seán MacDermott were among the principal speakers. Eoin MacNeill opened proceedings and invited the men of Ireland to form a 'united and disciplined body of freemen'.


When the speeches were finished the stewards went among the crowds distributing enrolment forms. That night over 3,000 men enlisted, and the Irish Volunteers was born.

- Document O -

ROINN  COSANTA.
BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.
STATEMENT BY WITNESS
DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 993

Witness: Mr. Justice Cahir Davitt, son of Michael Davitt

I remember that some hundred or more students formed up in Stephen's Green and marched to the Rotunda ... My impression is that most of us left quite unenthusiastic and unconvinced that the Volunteer movement was either necessary or advisable... I had no shred of "military ambition" and no desire to "play at soldiers". There were, however, also reasons which seemed sound enough. The Home Rule struggle had reached a critical stage ... One military force, the Ulster Volunteers, were making things sufficiently troublesome; another and possibly a rival force could only complicate matters ... When in the course of time and events the Irish Party were more or less forced to "take up" the movement and to give it their official blessing a veritable fever for volunteering swept the country.

ROINN  COSANTA.
BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.
STATEMENT BY WITNESS
DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 51

Witness: Bulmer Hobson, Member Supreme Council IRB

The arrangements for the meeting in the Rotunda were made by me. I went to the then Lord Mayor, Lorcan Sherlock, and asked him for the use of the Mansion House. He refused. I then engaged the ... Rotunda Rink, a large temporary building in the grounds of the Rotunda Gardens. The Rink was then the biggest hall in Dublin ... In addition to the 4,000 people inside the hall a crowd of about 3,000 were unable to gain admission. The path from Cavendish Row down to the entrance of the hall was a steep slope and we were much afraid that the pressure of people would smash in the doors which had been closed. Traffic in Cavendish Row was blocked by the crowds, and McDermott and some others went out and addressed them. ... I decided not to speak as I was looked upon by many people as being very extreme.

Following the meeting at the Rotunda, separatists around the country formed local branches of the paramilitary organisation. The Irish Volunteers attracted followers of Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association as well as members of the IRB. By February 1914 Volunteer units had been established in many of the major towns and cities and a membership of the Irish Volunteers was approximately 26,000.

The Volunteers welcomed a burst of new members in the spring and summer when the Home Rule Crisis escalated following the Larne gun-running and the Curragh Mutiny. On 26 July 1914, 900 Mauser rifles and 29,000 rounds of ammunition landed at Howth, Co Dublin and distributed to Volunteer Units across the country. That summer a uniform consisting of grey-green tunic and trousers, a brown leather bandolier, puttees, and a peaked cap or soft slouched hat was also adopted. By August the strength of the Irish Volunteers stood at approximately 182,000, but events in Europe would fracture the organisation.

(a) Edited Extract from the Volunteer Manifesto, drafted by Eoin MacNeill and accepted at the first meeting of the Irish Volunteers at the Rotunda on 25 November 1913. (b) The enrolment form for the new Volunteer Movement

(a)

MANIFESTO OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS

At a time when legislative proposals, universally confessed to be of vital concern for the future of Ireland, have been put forward, and are awaiting decision, a plan has been deliberately adopted by one of the great English political parties ... to make the display of military force and the menace of armed violence the determining factor in the future relations between this country and Great Britain ...

Are we to rest inactive, in the hope that the course of politics in Great Britain may save us from the degradation openly threatened against us? ... In a crisis of this kind, the duty of safeguarding our rights is our duty first and foremost ... If ever in history a people could say that an opportunity was given them by God's will to make an honest and manly stand for their rights, that opportunity is given us to-day.

To drill, to learn the use of arms, to acquire the habit of concerted disciplined action, to form a citizen army from a population now at the mercy of almost any organised aggression, this beyond all doubt, is a programme that appeals to all Ireland, but especially to the young of Ireland. We begin at once in Dublin, and we are confident that the movement will be taken up without delay all over the country. Public opinion has already, and quite spontaneously, formed itself into an eager desire for the establishment of the Irish Volunteers.

The object proposed for the Irish Volunteers is to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland. Their duties will be defensive and protective, and they will not contemplate either aggression or domination. Their ranks are open to all able-bodied Irishmen, without distinction of creed, politics or social grade ... There will also be work for women to do, and there are signs that the women of Ireland, true to their record, are especially enthusiastic for the success of the Irish Volunteers...

In the name of National Unity, of National dignity, of National and individual Liberty, of manly citizenship, we appeal to our countrymen to accept without hesitation the opportunity that has been granted them to join the ranks of the Irish Volunteers, and to make the movement now begun not unworthy of the historic title it has adopted.

(b)

ÓGLÁIG NA HÉIREANN - Irish Volunteers

OBJECTS

1. To secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland.
2. To train, discipline and equip for this purpose an Irish Volunteer Force.
3. To unite in the service of Ireland, Irishmen of every creed and of every party and class.

ENROLMENT FORM TO BE SIGNED BY ALL IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

I, the undersigned, desire to be enrolled for service in Ireland as a member of the Irish Volunteer Force. I subscribe to the constitution of the Irish Volunteers, and pledge my willing obedience to every article of it. I declare that in joining the Irish Volunteer Force I set before myself the stated objects of the Irish Volunteers, and no others.

Name

Address

City or District

Date

Edited extract from a front-page article in **Cork Examiner** describing the dramatic events at the inaugural meeting of the **Irish Volunteers in Cork City Hall on 14 December 1913**

Despite the disruption caused by a group of pro-Redmond Ancient Order of Hibernians, over 500 men enrolled in the new organisation that night. J.J. Walsh later mused, *'Such was the blood-baptism of the Volunteers in what up to then we were pleased to call Rebel Cork.'*

The Cork Examiner.

No. 18,974

MONDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 15, 1913

PRICE - ONE PENNY

IRISH VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT. MEETING IN CORK.

PLATFORM CHARGED
EXTRAORDINARY SCENES

CHAIRMAN INJURED.

The public meeting [was] held last night in the City Hall, Cork, "to form a Cork City Corps of the Irish Volunteers." ... The Hall, floor and galleries, was packed to its utmost limits by a crowd, the overwhelming bulk of which was composed of young men. Mr. J. J. Walsh, President, Cork County Board Gaelic Athletic Association, occupied the chair, and amongst those on the platform were Sir Roger Casement, Professor Owen McNeill, Dublin and Liam de Roiste of the Gaelic League ...

The Chairman said they had assembled that night to initiate the Irish Volunteers in the city ... They were aware of its triumph in Dublin; Kilkenny had unfurled its banner, and their true friends, "The Kingdom" had embraced its standard. Corkmen had nothing exceptional to boast of, but to give them their due they had never been lacking in the fight for Freedom or the fight for anything else.

Professor MacNeill said ... he wished to speak to them as a North East Ulster man, and as a Scotch Irishman, and he desired to pay a tribute to Ulster men who did not agree with him in religion or in politics ... The action of Sir Edward Carson's Volunteers in taking steps to preserve what they considered their freedom was action that deserved the commendation of every Irishman.



UNDATED IRISH VOLUNTEER EVENT, CORK CITY HALL.
[PHOTO: © IRISH EXAMINER]

A Voice: "They will be met half way by us." Professor McNeill — It is they that have broken the ice, for our ship to pass through. It is they who have opened the way for us; it is they who have set the model and the standard of public duty for us. We stand in no fear of them, and they stand in no fear of us ... Again there were interruptions ... and for a few moments the speaker could not proceed. Voices were raised all through the hall, and people rose in their seats.

Resuming, Professor McNeill said ... The action of the Ulster Volunteers, interpret it as they would, was the very essence of nationalism. They had declared that whatever English political parties might say, they intended to have their own way in their own country, and that was his definition of nationalism ...

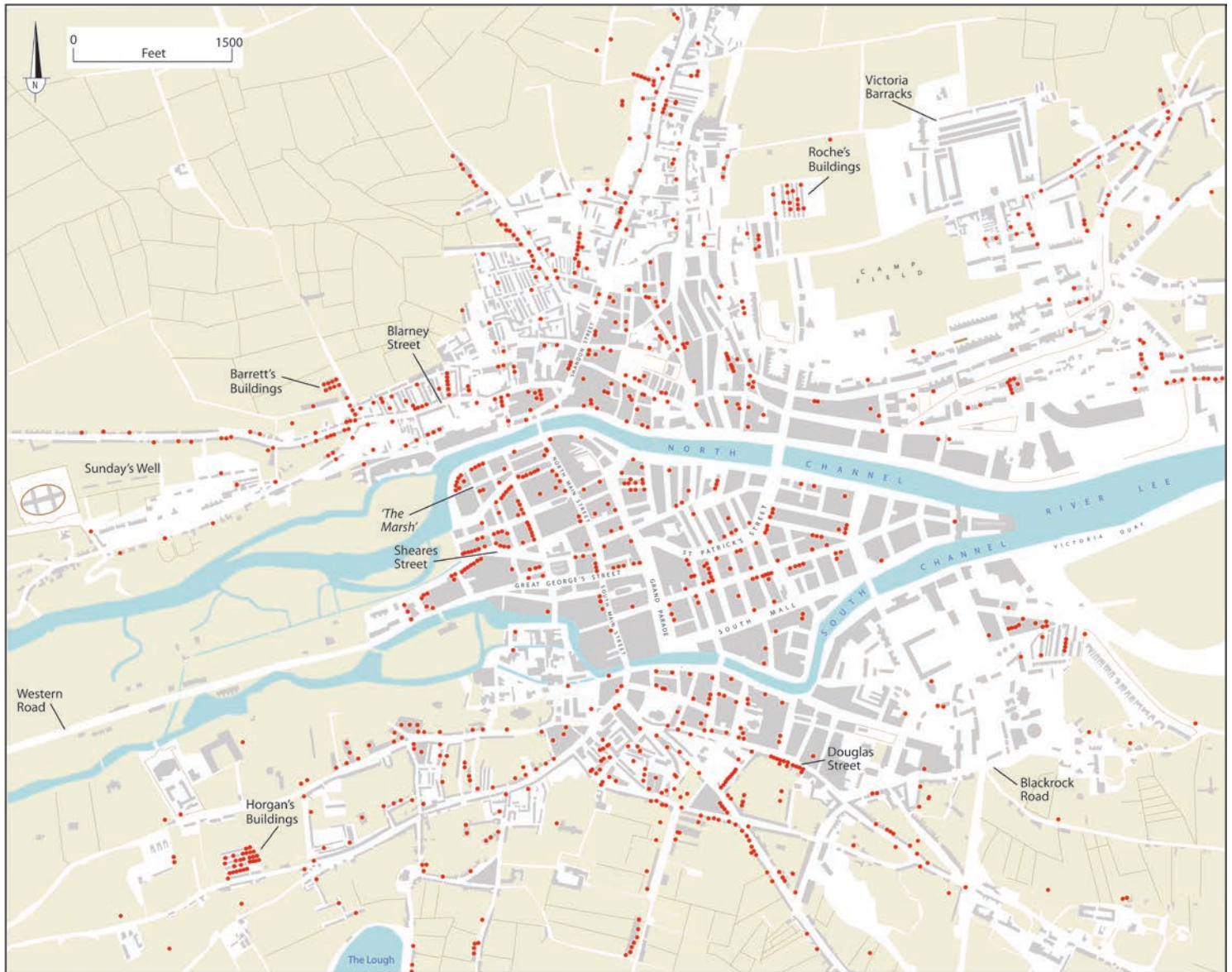
And now, said the speaker, I ask you to do as the young men of Galway did—Catholics and Nationalists alike—I ask you to give three cheers for Sir Edward Carson's Volunteers ... This request was indignantly refused by the audience, who groaned and booed while Professor McNeill waved his right hand in the air as if to raise the cheer. From all parts of the hall came peremptory cries of "shut up," "sit down." ...

When Mr. John Horgan, T.C., called for cheers for John Redmond, the people rose at once and cheered with enthusiasm for several minutes, but Professor McNeill kept standing on the platform, and this incensed the meeting. Those in the front seats jumped on to the stage, and the Chairman and those with him were soon put out of their places. A general scuffle took place, and men were pushed over chairs, and the Chairman's table was broken and thrown down to the body of the hall. A free fight seemed imminent there until the refrain of *A Nation Once Again* was started. In this, the audience joined with enthusiasm and there were more cheers for Redmond.



- Document R -

Map of the Home Addresses of Cork City's Irish Volunteers in mid-1914



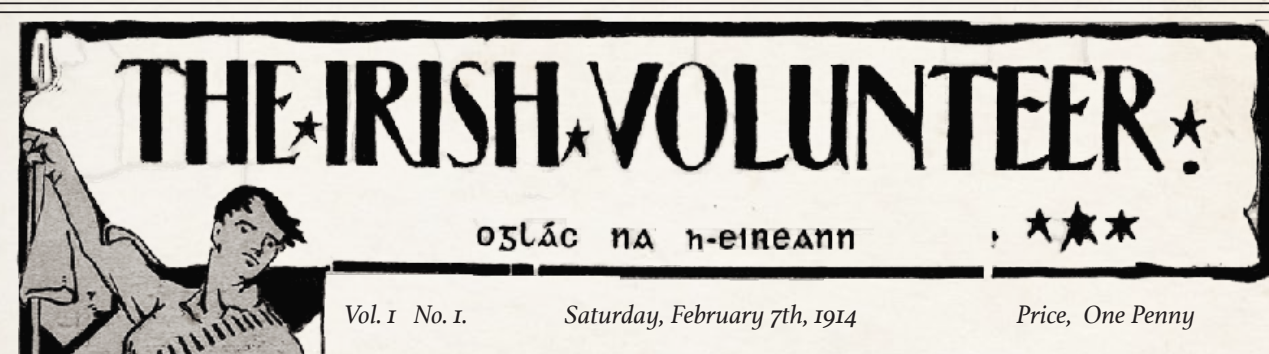
CAPTION: Cork City's Irish Volunteers in mid-1914 reflected a healthy cross-section of 'respectable' working-class and lower-middle-class Catholic society. Over half of the Cork Volunteers were either skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled workers. Clerks and small shopkeepers also featured among the Volunteers, comprising 18 per cent of the total. Their strength can be seen in concentrations in the small working-class houses and modest homes in places like Blarney Street, Fair Lane, Sheares Street, Horgan's Buildings and Douglas Street. Far fewer middle- and upper-class Catholics joined the movement (professionals and merchants combined comprised just 10 per cent of the total),

as seen by the scarcity of members in the affluent suburbs of Sunday's Well, Blackrock Road and the Western Road. University College, Cork students as well as residents associated with the British army also avoided the Irish Volunteers. The poorest labourers in the city likewise did not participate in Volunteers activities, with their absence notable in the tenements of 'The Marsh' area near Bachelor's Quay, and in the poor working-class area of Gillabbeey Street, near St Fin Barre's Cathedral. Overall, one can describe the Irish Volunteers at this time as appealing to those Catholics with steady jobs but possessing only modest incomes and social standing.

[Source: Cork City and County Archives, de Róisite Papers]

Edited extracts from *The Irish Volunteer*, first printed on 7th February 1914

Edited by Lawrence de Lacey, the journal was used to communicate new regulations and instructions to Volunteer units. Articles included 'Hints on Bayonet Training' and 'Notes from Headquarters'. The Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers had by now established a headquarters in Dublin at 206, Great Brunswick St, and took responsibility for all matters affecting the movement.



FROM THE OUTPOST.

The Movement Spreads

The Volunteer movement is marching. Ranks have been formed, and with steady step and to the music of Ireland's soul the first move has been made on the road to achieve its destiny: The military maps show our troops spreading through the length and breadth of the land. A regiment here, a flanking party there ...

Advance guards wait in the towns from Wexford to Donegal, and scouts have mapped the way to every village and reported the possibilities of success in every hamlet. In a week or a month maybe, city, town and hamlet will alike be filled with our troops. Only sedition in the ranks can prevent ultimate success. And that is unthinkable. The old spirit of Nationality that has never died in Ireland has kindled again at the prospect of soldiers' work, and recruits everywhere are waiting impatiently to get the order to join the ranks.

Uniforms

The question of uniforms has not so far been decided upon, but a sub-committee has been appointed by the Provisional Committee to deal with the matter. And simple as it seems, the question is a little difficult to solve satisfactorily. In some quarters it has been suggested that the various regiments should go back to the 1782 movement for the colours at least, if not the actual cut of the military

dress, and while this idea has not met with much favour, neither has the suggestion of a simple coloured blouse with ordinary trousers and leggings. Then there is the question of whether all Volunteers should wear a similarly coloured uniform, or will the cut alone be decided upon and the colour left to the taste of the regiments in different districts? ... However, this too is a question that will be decided at an early date.

Arms

The recent proclamation prohibiting the importation of arms into Ireland has for the immediate present been a disadvantage, though ultimately it may prove to have been a blessing in disguise. Whether it was aimed at the National Volunteers or not, its operation has handicapped the movement

slightly in its initial stage.

Every man who has a spark of the Volunteer spirit loves a rifle, and apart from their use as a weapon in war, the possession of a rifle rouses the enthusiasm of most recruits. At the same time, anything like the wholesale purchase of the rifles would have been folly, and the proclamation, perhaps prevented that. ... There must be quite enough rifles for drill purposes and small batches of Volunteers could be drilled in the various halls with borrowed rifles. But for the present everything must be [secondary] to the building up of the movement itself, getting the men into it, seeing that they are properly disciplined and drilled, and then when they are ready and when the need arises, procuring rifles will not present so much difficulty.



IRISH VOLUNTEERS MARCH IN KILLARNEY, CO KERRY

Formed on 28 November 1913, the Killarney branch of the Irish Volunteers was perhaps the first unit organised outside of Dublin. [Photo: © Irish Examiner]

Excerpts from a selection of Bureau of Military History Witness Statements describing early Volunteer training and organisation



BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S.....46.....

Witness: Patrick P. Twomey, Kilmona Coy., Co Cork

The men paid 3d a week into a fund for the purchase of equipment. Out of this fund we purchased haversacks, bandoliers, belts and puttees ... We held three parades a week from the start ... Some of the Sunday marches were for the purpose of recruiting for the Volunteers. On one of those we went to Mourneabbey - 7 miles. ... There was a field day at Blarney one Sunday at which Terence MacSwiney was present ... Six men from the Company, including myself, took part in the shooting Competition at Carrigtwohill in 1915.



BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S.....157.....

Witness: Joseph O'Connor, A Coy, 1st Battalion, Dublin

The great trouble with us was the scarcity of money. The men had to pay threepence a week towards the cost of rent and light [for the drill hall...] They had to pay for their own rifle ammunition and equipment. In addition to that the Companies had to form a Company Fund to provide themselves with such things as first aid field dressings, stretchers, signalling flags and lamps and a reserve of ammunition, and where possible, training tools, i.e. picks and shovels. The sacrifices made at the time, both by officers and men, were very great, and of course, it was the desire of every officer or Volunteer to have a uniform of what he considered to be the first Army of Ireland for years.



BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S.....1,612.....

Witness: Peter McDonnell, Connemara Brigade

Drill instruction was given by T. Tarmey, Westport, who had been a boxing and drill instructor in the British Army. He travelled by horse and car from Westport every Sunday a distance of 20 miles for two months, until he was replaced by Martin McDonnell ... Some time in March I was elected as Company Captain ... British Army drill books had now been acquired, and given to the officers who, after study, were able to act as instructors at the usual Sunday parades. As there were no arms in the company, we made wooden guns for the purpose of arms drill.



BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S.....208.....

Witness: John M. MacCarthy, Kilfinane Coy., Limerick

The Volunteer movement became my primary and practically whole-time occupation from the date of the formation of the first Volunteer unit in Kilfinane. This would have been at the end of 1913 or in the opening months of 1914. Ex British Army [officers] acted as drill instructors and took charge of the parades. These were invariably well-attended, practically all the adult male population of the locality having joined the organisation. Instruction was confined to close-order and extended-order drill, some signalling instruction, arms drill (with wooden "guns"), route marches and one - perhaps two - ineffective attempts at a very minor form of tactical exercise. By military standards it was all very futile, even silly, but there was no lack of earnestness or enthusiasm.



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Documents N - T

1. According to Bulmer Hobson how many people attended the meeting at the Rotunda on 25 November 1913? (*Doc N*)

2. Why did Bulmer Hobson decide not to address the crowd at the Rotunda? (*Doc N*)

3. What reasons does Cahir Davitt give for not joining the Volunteers on 25 November 1913? (*Doc O*)

4. In Cahir Davitt's opinion, what significant event led to a 'fever of volunteering' in Ireland? (*Doc O*)

5. According to the Manifesto of the Irish Volunteers what are the (a) aims and (b) duties of the organisation? (*Doc Pa*)

(a) -----

(b) -----

6. Do you consider the Manifesto of the Irish Volunteers to be a good example of persuasive writing? Give two reasons for your answer with reference to the text. (*Doc Pa*)

7. Can you identify any similarities between the content of the Volunteer Enrollment Form (*Doc Pb*) and the text of the entrance ticket to the founding meeting of the Irish Volunteers in Cork City? (*Doc Q*)

8. According to the article in the *Cork Examiner*, what other counties in Ireland established units of the Irish Volunteers before December 1913? (*Doc Q*)



9. What part of Eoin MacNeill's speech in Cork City Hall angered the members of the pro-Redmond Ancient Order of Hibernians in the crowd? (*Doc Q*)

10. What stopped a 'free fight' from happening in Cork City Hall and can you suggest why? (*Doc Q*)

11. What important information do we learn about the type of people who joined the volunteers by mapping the home addresses of the Cork city members in May 1914? (*Doc R*)

12. Can you suggest one reason why the 'poorest labourers in Cork City' may not have participated in Volunteer activities? (*Doc R*)

13. Is there any evidence in the map to support the statement that "residents associated with the British army also avoided the Irish Volunteers"? (*Doc R*)

14. From your study of the articles in *The Irish Volunteer* (*Doc S*) and the Witness Statements (*Doc T*) identify two difficulties faced by the Volunteers during the early days of the movement.

15. Identify the **tone** of the article entitled 'The Movement Spreads' in the *Irish Volunteer*, and give two reasons for your answer with reference to the text? (*Doc S*)

16. Based on the articles in the *Irish Volunteer*, list the priorities of the Irish Volunteer movement in February 1914 in order of importance? (*Doc S*)

- (1) -----
(2) -----
(3) -----
(4) -----



17. According to Patrick P. Twomey's witness statement, what was the purpose of the Sunday marches? (Doc T)

18. According to the witness statements, who were the drill instructors in the early Volunteer units and can you suggest why this may have been the case? (Doc T)

19. For a historian of the early years of the Irish Volunteer Movement, which of the sources N-T would prove most valuable as a source of information. Explain your answer with reference to at least two of the documents.

YOUR TASK:

20 (a). You are an officer in a Volunteer Company in your own county. You have been asked by Lawrence de Lacey, editor of the *Irish Volunteer* to submit an article for its next edition on Valentine's Day 1914. Conduct some research into the Volunteer Movement in your own county before writing your article

The article should include:

- ☐ A positive and encouraging tone similar to the articles in Doc S
- ☐ At least two facts about the development of the Volunteer Movement in your county and, if possible, about a particular company
- ☐ Any information about particular members of the Volunteers in your county
- ☐ An appropriate image or map

OR



20 (b). The author of a new book on the history of the Irish Volunteers has asked you to write a foreword. Begin by explaining why writing the history of the Volunteer movement is so important. The remainder of the foreword should outline why the Volunteers were formed in 1913 and the development of the movement before the outbreak of the first world war.

HOWTH GUNRUNNING

Shortly before noon on 26 July 1914, the *Asgard* sailed out from behind Lambay Island and made its way towards the small port of Howth. On board the handsome two-masted yacht were London-born novelist and nationalist sympathiser, Erskine Childers and his wife Molly, Mary Spring-Rice, a British aviator and two Donegal fishermen. They carried a cargo of 900 single-shot German Mauser rifles and 29,000 rounds of ammunition to arm the Irish Volunteers.

The operation began in May 1914 when Childers and Darrell Figgis negotiated the purchase of 1,500 rifles and 49,000 rounds of ammunition from a Hamburg-based munitions firm. Distracted by false intelligence reports of an arms shipment on board an Irish fishing trawler, the British Navy missed the *Asgard* as it sailed out from Conway on the Welsh coast on 3 July. Nine days later, the consignment of arms was transferred from a

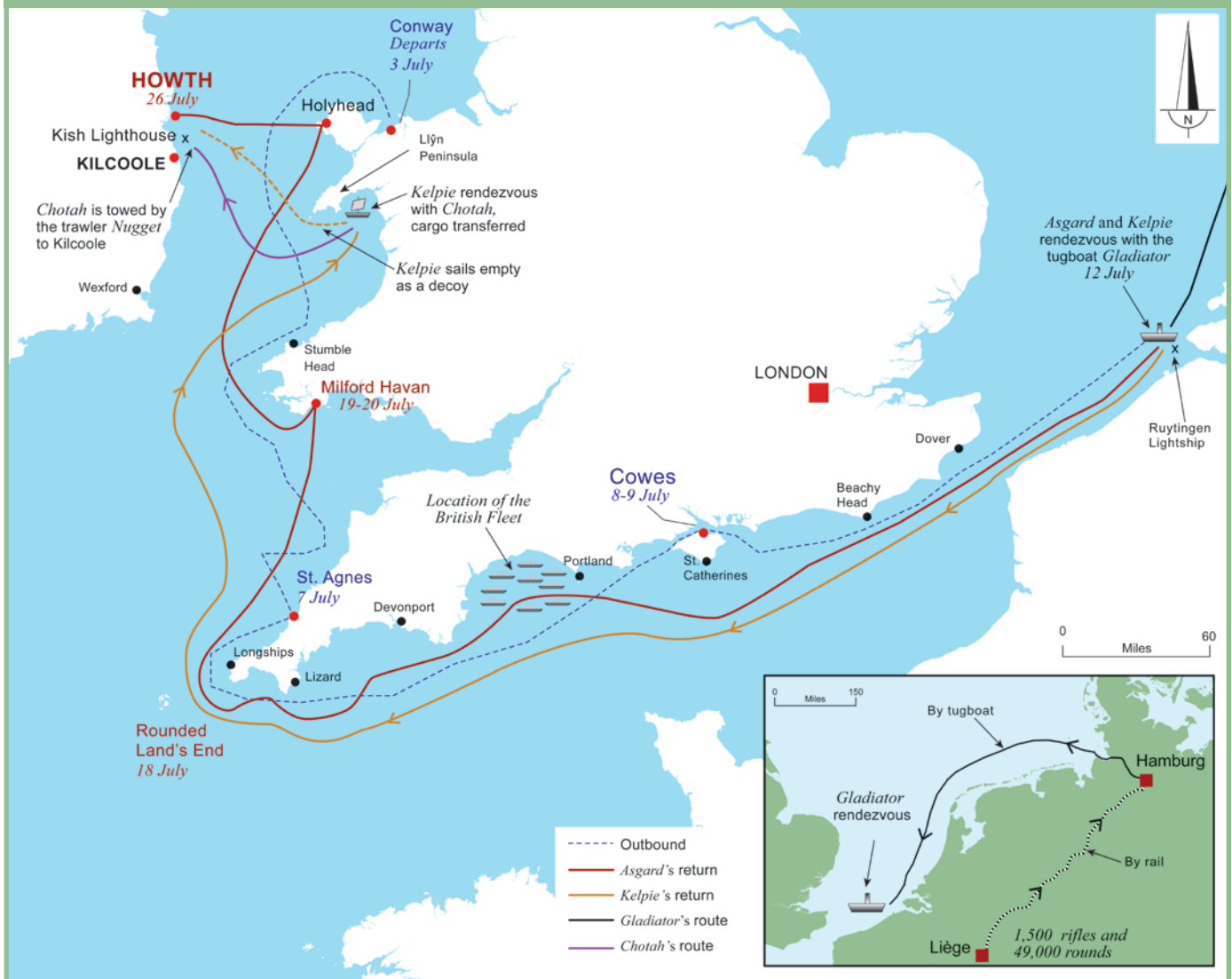
German tug-boat onto the *Asgard* and Connor O'Brien's smaller craft the *Kelpie* in the middle of the North Sea, before both set sail on separate routes for Ireland.

The Irish Volunteers' landing at Howth was different to the Ulster Volunteer Force's (UVF) Larne gunrunning, in three significant ways: John Redmond and the Irish Party leadership were unaware of the arms importation, which was organised primarily by the Irish Republican Brotherhood in conjunction with a flinty band of wealthy Liberal supporters; the weapons comprised only a fraction of the UVF's imported arsenal; and finally (and perhaps most importantly), Dublin Castle attempted to prevent the Howth landing, in contrast with its inactivity at Larne. At Howth about 900 single-shot 1871 German Mauser rifles with ammunition were brought ashore at daylight from the sailing yacht *Asgard*. These rifles were carried to

Dublin by roughly 1,000 Volunteers mobilised for the operation.

One group of Volunteers was stopped on the Malahide Road by police and British Army troops. After a brief skirmish, the Irish Volunteers managed to escape with most of their new weapons. Angry Dubliners heckled and stoned the returning soldiers, who fired into a crowd at Bachelor's Walk Quay near Dublin city centre, killing three and wounding thirty-seven. Dublin Castle's aggressiveness outraged Irish nationalists. In the meantime, the *Kelpie* had transferred its cargo to the engine-powered *Chotah*, skippered by Sir Thomas Myles. Hampered by a split in her main sail off the coast of Wales, Eoin MacNeill sent a fishing boat called *The Nugget* to help land the remaining 600 rifles and 16,000 rounds of ammunition at Kilcoole, County Wicklow on 1 August 1914.

- Document U - Map of the Howth Gun Running July 1914



LISTENING SKILLS

On an episode of the History Show first broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1 on Sunday 15 June 2014, presenter Myles Dungan discusses the Howth gun running and the diaries of Mary Spring Rice with historians Conor Mulvagh and Tommy Graham.

Listen to the podcast and answer the questions that follow:

PART 1:

1. What was the name of the yacht used to bring the guns into Howth?
.....
2. Why are the diaries of Mary Spring Rice a valuable source for historians of Irish history?
.....
3. Who first suggested the idea of using pleasure yachts to transport the arms from Germany?
.....
4. Give two reasons why the Volunteers decided to arm in 1914?
.....
5. What were the main differences between the guns brought into Larne and those brought into Howth?
.....
6. How many new recruits were coming into the Irish Volunteers every week by July 1914?
.....

PART 2:

7. Where did the returning Volunteers meet a police barricade on their homeward journey?
.....
8. Why did the King's Own Scottish Borderers open fire on Bachelor's Walk?
.....
9. How many were killed and how many wounded on Bachelor's Walk?
.....
10. What was the significance of the Bachelor's Walk Incident?
.....



Edited Extracts from the diary kept by nationalist activist Mary Spring Rice while on board the *Asgard*

SUNDAY 12 JULY 1914 -

As the tug came up Darrell Figgis called from her deck that Conor had taken 600 rifles and 20,000 rounds of ammunition [on the Kelpie]. 'He's left you 900 and 29,000 rounds', he shouted. We looked at each other. Could we even take them? We had only counted on 750, and they looked enormous, each thickly done up in straw. However before we could say 'knife', we were all at work unloading. It was a perfect night, quite calm, the tug looked black and huge alongside us. Her deck was full of German sailors who jabbered away and looked curiously at us as they passed down the big canvas bales to Pat and Duggan on our deck.

I found myself in the saloon with Mr Gordon, Pat passing us down rifles through the skylight, and we packing them in, butts at the end and barrels in the centre, as fast as we could ... It was fearfully hot work; they were fairly heavy and thick with grease which made them horrible to handle. Gradually, however, the pile grew and presently the saloon was half full, level with the table ...

Personally, I felt rather nervous as to the effect the tremendous extra weight would have on the yacht in bad weather, but Erskine's one thought was to take everything.



As we toiled away, I heard them saying that we had drifted right down near Ruytigen. The people there must have wondered what on earth we were doing, but there was no time to alter our position, only try to finish it before it got light, and a faint glimmer of dawn was beginning to show as we [worked] feverishly to get them in. Molly put pieces of chocolate literally into our mouths as we worked and that kept us going till about 2 a.m. [when] the last box was heaved on deck.

SUNDAY 26 JULY 1914 --

We had, of course, no news from the Provisional Committee for three weeks, and perhaps no Volunteers were coming down at all. We had to get in and out of Howth harbour with the high tide so there wasn't much time for delays. As we got nearer I went down and cleared out the guns in our bunk, thinking as I laboured at them that if we had to put out again with them still on board what a dreary job it would be stowing them all back again. We were close by when I finished and there was Howth pier plainly visible, and Molly gazing to see if any Volunteers could be seen. We all felt very doubtful about them for we [didn't] think it was too rough for the boat to come out, and were afraid something had happened to make them give up the whole thing. However, as my red skirt was to be the signal, I stood well up on deck.

It was no easy matter with a fresh breeze to lower the sails at just the right moment to run alongside the quay, when minutes might be so precious. Molly took the helm and Erskine and the men got the sails down, and joy, oh joy! there was a group of men on the pier-head to catch the rope. Duggan was a bit late throwing the warp and we shot on past the pier-head. But the men got hold of the rope and hauled her back alongside. A quarter to one, up to time to the minute, and a long line of Volunteers were marching down the quay. There was Mr Gordon on the pier-head and, of course, the inevitable Figgis. Then things began to move. At first there was a fearful scramble among the men on the shore for the rifles as they were handed up, then Erskine stopped the delivery until he got hold of someone in command and some sort of order was restored. Molly and I and Mr Gordon stood by the mizzen and looked at the scene; it all seemed like a dream, we had talked of this moment so often during the voyage.

Edited Extract from the Bureau of Military History Witness Statement (#1763) submitted on 5 March 1952 by IRB member, prominent Sinn Fein activist and future President of Ireland, Sean T. O'Kelly

I got back to Dublin on Wednesday evening and reported to Tom Clarke. The first job I was given to tackle was to arrange for the funeral of a man named Pidgeon who was one of those who had been shot by the British Military at Bachelors' Walk. He was not shot dead, but died of his wounds some days afterwards in hospital. I remember visiting his home which was close to St. Patrick's Cathedral. His wife kept a small shop I remember, but I think he himself was a printer by trade ...

The next task that was given to me was to take charge of another landing of arms which was to take place on the Saturday after the Howth gun running ... I left Dublin by train on Saturday evening [1 August 1914] about 7 o'clock [with] three or four well-known I.R.B. men ... When we arrived at Kilcoole we found many others assembled there including Cathal Brugha, Bulmer Hobson, Seán Fitzgibbon [and] Liam Mellows ... About one hundred of the Fianna were mobilised, and under the charge of Mellows were given the job of scouting the Kilcoole area ... I remember being struck by the alertness and the efficiency of these young lads ... I do not now remember exactly the number of men I had at my disposal, but I am sure it must have been about fifty, most of whom arrived at Kilcoole by bicycle, all of them Dublin Volunteer's or I.R.B. men ...

Sir Thomas Myles's yacht carrying the guns arrived safely and with the aid of the smaller local boats we unloaded the guns and ammunition ... The [guns] were packed in straw in bundles of I think five or six and we undid them from the straw and carried them to the waiting lorry. This operation took us some hours. I think we did not leave the strand or the vicinity of the railway station until about 5 o'clock in the morning I sat on the top of the lorry and had five or six others with me, all armed with revolvers and our instructions were not to let the guns or ammunition be seized by the police at any cost ...

When we reached Little Bray ... the back axle broke and we were left with our load on the road about 6.30 in the morning. We were in a quandry ... the driver of the lorry suggested that, as he knew one or two of the occupants of the cottages, ... he should ask them to store the guns and ammunition in their back-yards until we could make arrangements for their distribution. To this suggestion some of the families in the houses agreed and ... we were, to our relief, enthusiastically assisted by some of the men up from those cottages Some of the women too took a hand in carrying the guns and storing them in their back-yards.

In the meantime I had dispatched two of our motor cycle escort with all speed to St. Enda's (Pearse's School) to summon the motorists who were assembled there to come to Little Bray. ... I am glad to say that within an hour the motorists were speedily arriving ... and we had the whole place cleared and the motor-cars dispatched without anybody arriving on the scene.

[Source: Bureau of Military History W.S. 1763, Vol 1, (His Excellency, Seán T. O'Kelly,)]



COMPREHENSION, CRITICISM AND COMPARISON QUESTIONS

Documents U- W

1. Based on the information in the map (U) explain how the arms and ammunition were transported from Leige to Hamburg to be collected by the *Gladiator*?

2. Using the information in the map, list the main events of the Irish Volunteer gunrunning in chronological order. (Doc U)

3 July: -----

3. What type of information can Doc (V) provide about the gunrunning that the map cannot?

4. Can you identify the different emotions expressed in Spring Rice's diary entry of 16 July 1914? Refer to the text in your answer.

5. What was the first task given to Sean T O'Kelly after he returned to Dublin? (Doc W)

6. Based on Sean T O'Kelly's account, choose three adjectives to describe the atmosphere in Little Bray on the night of the Kilcolle gun running.

7. The diary and witness statement (Doc V) and (Doc W) are both personal accounts of the Irish Volunteers gunrunning operation. As a historian of the period, which of the two accounts would you consider more valuable as a historical source? Explain your answer with reference to both.



SHORT ESSAY QUESTION: *Examine the rise and impact of nationalism and unionism between 1911 and 1914*

Define Key Words: **Nationalism**

Define Key Words: **Unionism**

Key events between **1911-1914** which led to **the rise** of nationalism and unionism in Ireland

What was the **impact** (effect) of the rise of nationalism and unionism in Ireland, 1911-1914?

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

**Examine the rise and impact
of nationalism and unionism
between 1911 and 1914**

Paragraph 3

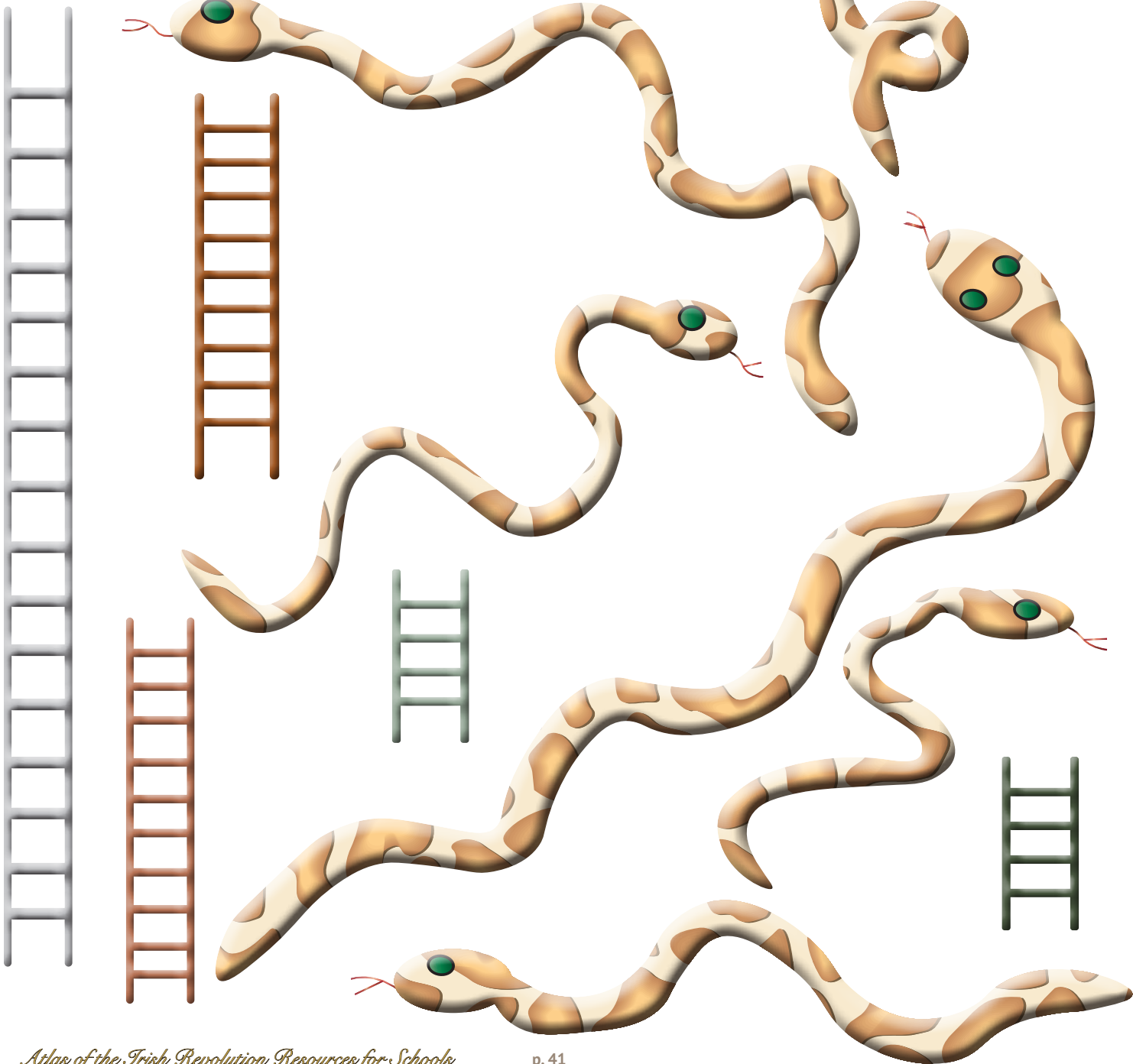
Paragraph 4


Home Rule Snakes & Ladders



What you need.

1. The empty board, ideally printed on A3 paper
2. A scissors and glue
3. Cut out the 4-5 snakes and the 4-5 ladders below (or you could draw your own).
4. Dice



100		99		98		97		95		94		93		91
81			84		96		86		87		89		92	
	80	79		83		77		76		74		73		71
61		62		63		64		65		67		68		70
60			59		58		57		56		54		53	
	41		42		43		44		46		47		49	
		40		39		38		37				48		50
21				23		24		26				33		31
			22		25		27		28					30
	20	19		18		17		16		14		13		
1	START			3		4		5		6		8		11
														10



Home Rule Snakes & Ladders



Rules of the Game

- The game of Home Rule Snakes and Ladders is for 2 or more players and is played on a board with 100 squares numbered 1 to 100
- Play begins on square number 1 which at the bottom left hand corner of the board. This square represents the year 1886 when Gladstone introduced the First Home Rule Bill for Ireland
- Play finishes on square 100 at the top left hand corner. This square represents 18 September 1914 when Home Rule was placed on the statute books
- Players take turns to roll a dice and move along the number of squares rolled
- If a player lands on a square at the base of a ladder, then they automatically advance their position by moving up to the top of the ladder
- If a player lands on a square at the head of a snake then the player must automatically follow down to the tail of the snake thereby losing position
- The winner is the player who is first to land on square number 100. You must roll the exact number needed to land on 100

Making the Board:

- Before play begins, students should work in groups of four to create the playing board
- The Irish Parliamentary Party encountered many favourable events and many obstacles on the road to achieving Home Rule for Ireland. Make a list of 4-6 events that you would consider **favourable** to the Irish Parliamentary Party
- Next, put this list into chronological order
- Write your events into random squares on the board, moving from the bottom to the top, placing the earliest event nearest to the bottom of the board
- As these are fortunate events, you should place the base of the ladders into these 'favourable' squares
- Next make a list of 4-6 events on the road to Home Rule that you would consider **obstacles** to John Redmond on the road to Home Rule and put the list into chronological order
- Write these obstacles into different random squares on the board, again moving from the bottom to the top placing the earliest event nearest to the bottom of the board
- As these are obstacles, you should place the head of the snake into the obstacle squares
- Remember, the more fortunate the event, the longer the ladder. Similarly, the bigger the obstacle, the bigger the snake!