

*the rise of* NATIONALISM *and* UNIONISM *in* IRELAND



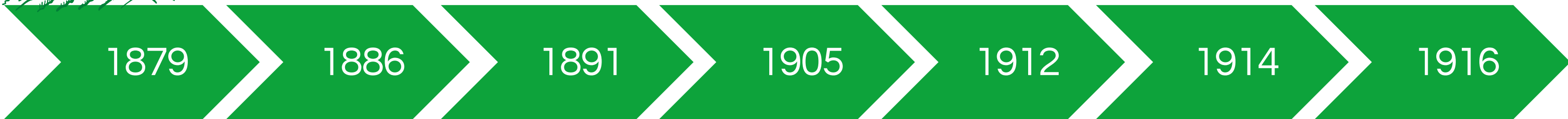
# THE RISE OF NATIONALISM AND UNIONISM IN IRELAND



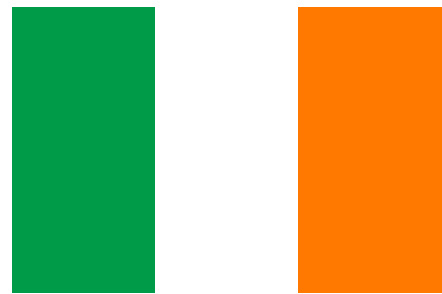
**The First Home Rule Bill** fails to pass the House of Commons

**Sinn Féin** is founded by **Arthur Griffiths**

**Home Rule is suspended** due to the outbreak of **World War I**

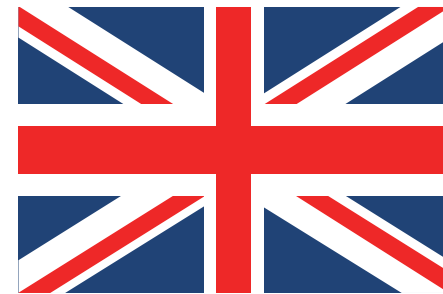


**Land War** begins in Ireland



**Charles Stewart Parnell** dies and the **Second Home Rule Bill** fails to pass the House of Lord

**Solemn League and Covenant** is signed by Unionists



**Easter Rising** takes place in Dublin and Cork, ending in failure



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# Learning Outcomes

**2.2 INVESTIGATE** the role and significance of two leaders involved in the parliamentary tradition in Irish politics

**2.4 EXAMINE** the rise and impact of nationalism and unionism in Ireland, including key events between 1911 and 1923

**2.5 IDENTIFY** the causes, course and consequences of the Northern Ireland Troubles and their impact on North-South and Anglo-Irish relations

**1.7 DEVELOP** historical judgements based on evidence about personalities, issues and events in the past, showing awareness of historical significance

**1.8 INVESTIGATE** a repository of historical evidence such as a museum, library, heritage centre, digital or other archive or exhibition

**1.9 DEMONSTRATE** awareness of the significance of the history of Ireland and of Europe and the wider world across various dimensions, including political, social, economic, religious, cultural and scientific dimensions

**1.10 DEMONSTRATE** chronological awareness by creating and maintaining timelines to locate personalities, issues and events in their appropriate historical eras



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# Introduction

In Ireland, the three decades between 1884 and 1914 were a time of great change. Political ideas such as **Home Rule** were prominent during this time. The years 1910-1914 saw the passing of the Third Home Rule Bill, followed by the Home Rule crisis. **World War I** broke out in 1914, suspending Home Rule and leading about a quarter of a million Irishmen, both nationalist and Unionist, to fight on Britain's side.



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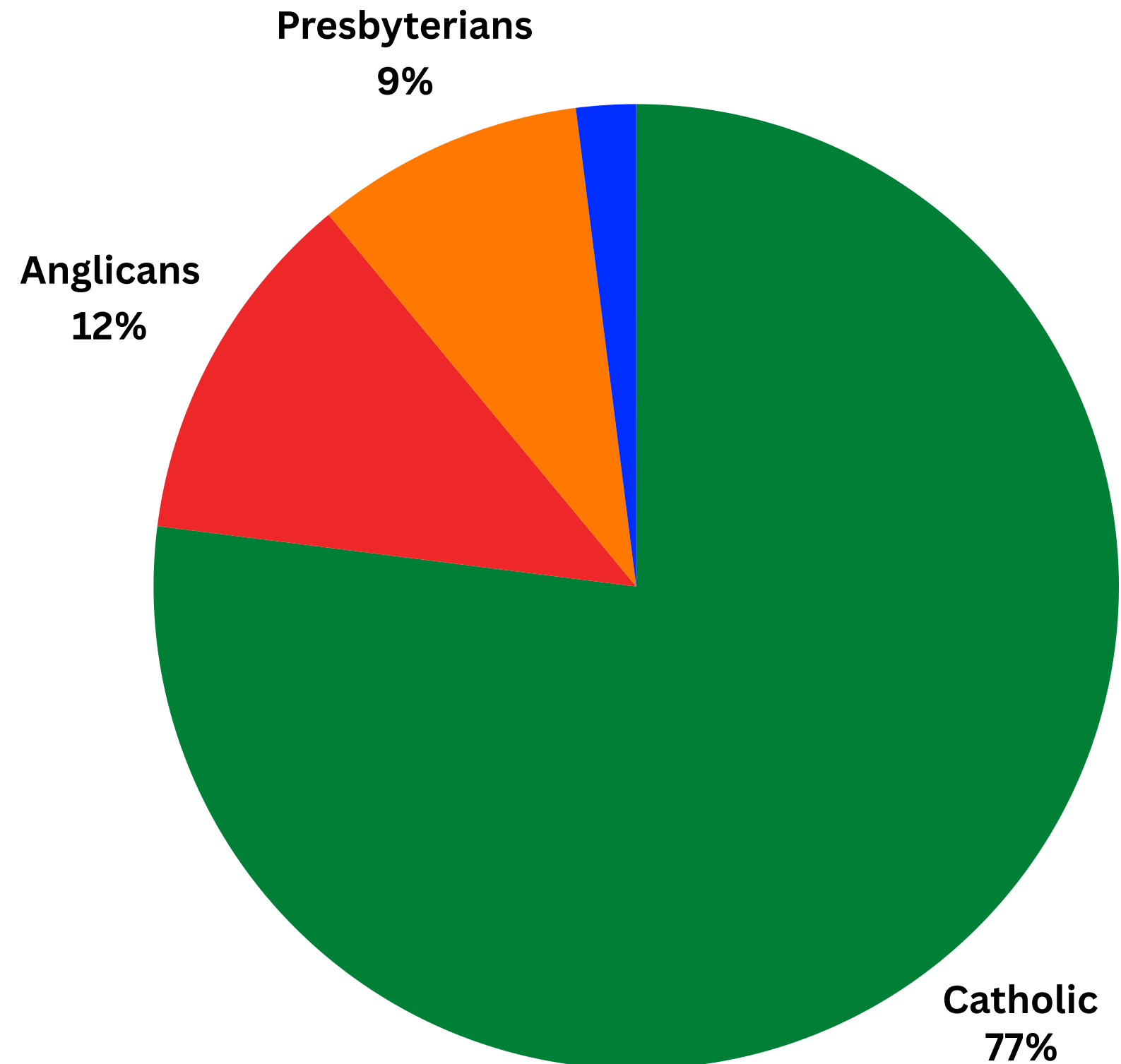
# 19.1: A *divided* CULTURE: *north* AND *south*

# Ireland - A Divided Island

The main religious denominations on the island of Ireland in the late 19th Century were:

- **Catholics** – 77%
- **Anglicans** (Church of Ireland: Protestant) – 12%
- **Presbyterians** (dissenters: Protestant) – 9%
- Other Protestant faiths (**Quakers, Baptists, Methodists** ) – 2%

The **South of Ireland** was mainly **Catholic** – **89.6%** of the population. The **North of Ireland** had a slight **Protestant** majority – **56.33%**



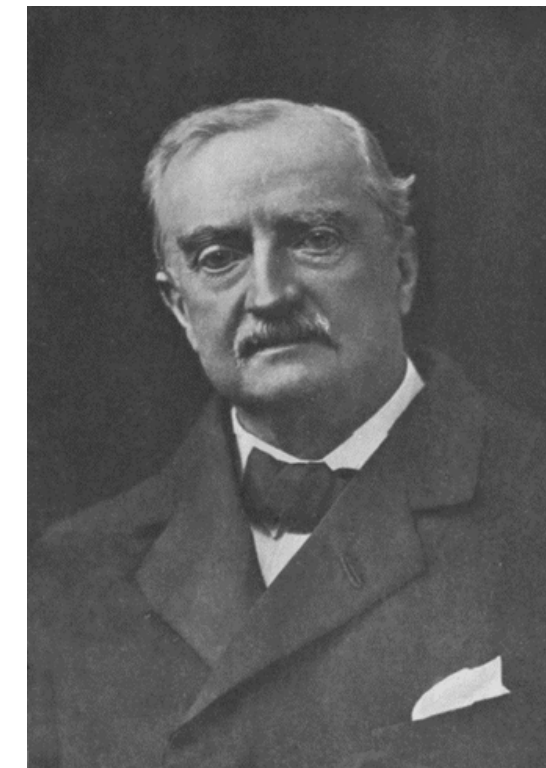
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# Political Divisions - Nationalists

An **Irish nationalist** is someone who believes that the Irish people are their own **nation**. At this time there were two types of nationalist; **Constitutional (moderate) nationalists** and **Radical (extreme) nationalists**.

**Constitutional nationalists** wanted to see the re-establishment of a parliament in Ireland by achieving it through political means. The **Home Rule Party**, founded by **Isaac Butt** in 1874, was the largest nationalist political party. They wanted **Home Rule**: Ireland would have its own parliament in Dublin to govern local affairs while still being part of the United Kingdom. The leaders of the Home Rule Party (later renamed the **Irish Parliamentary Party**) in this period were: **Charles Stewart Parnell** and **John Redmond**.

**Radical nationalists** wanted full independence from Britain, using force if necessary. Many of these radical nationalists belong to the **Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB)**. The IRB was founded in 1858 by James Stephens and the members were known as the '**Fenians**'. They wanted to achieve a **republic**; a country not ruled by a monarch but instead ruled by its citizens who choose their representatives.



# Political Divisions - Unionists

The majority of Irish Protestants were Unionist in their politics. A **Unionist** is someone who wants Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom with Britain. Unionism is particularly strong in the north-east of the island, where there was a large Protestant population. They believed that '**Home Rule is Rome Rule**' – meaning that they would be discriminated against as there would be a Catholic majority in Dublin.

Unionists also feared that trade in the north could be badly affected by Home Rule. The shipbuilding and linen industries relied heavily on free access to the British market without any taxes on their exports. **The Unionist Party** was founded in 1905. Their leaders were: **Colonel Edward Saunderson, Walter Hume Long** and **Edward Carson**.





# Land Ownership

The **Penal Laws** (from 1600s until 1829) and the **Plantations** meant that few Irish Catholics owned land – most were poor tenants or unskilled labourers. The **Protestant Ascendancy** owned most of the land in Ireland. **The Great Famine** (1845-1850) had a disproportionate impact on Irish Catholics. It reduced the number of cottiers and small farmers while allowing a new group of middle-class Catholic farmers to acquire bigger farms. In the late 1800s, discontentment with this situation and with British rule would emerge in a rise in **political agitation**.



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# Checkpoint pg. 202 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. What percentage of the population on the island of Ireland in the late nineteenth century were Catholic, Anglican or Presbyterian?
2. Explain the terms: *Irish nationalist*, *republic* and *unionists*.
3. Give one example of a radical nationalist organisation.
4. Explain the term *Home Rule*.
5. Give two reasons why unionists opposed Home Rule.
6. Name one leader of the Unionist Party.



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# Checkpoint pg. 202 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

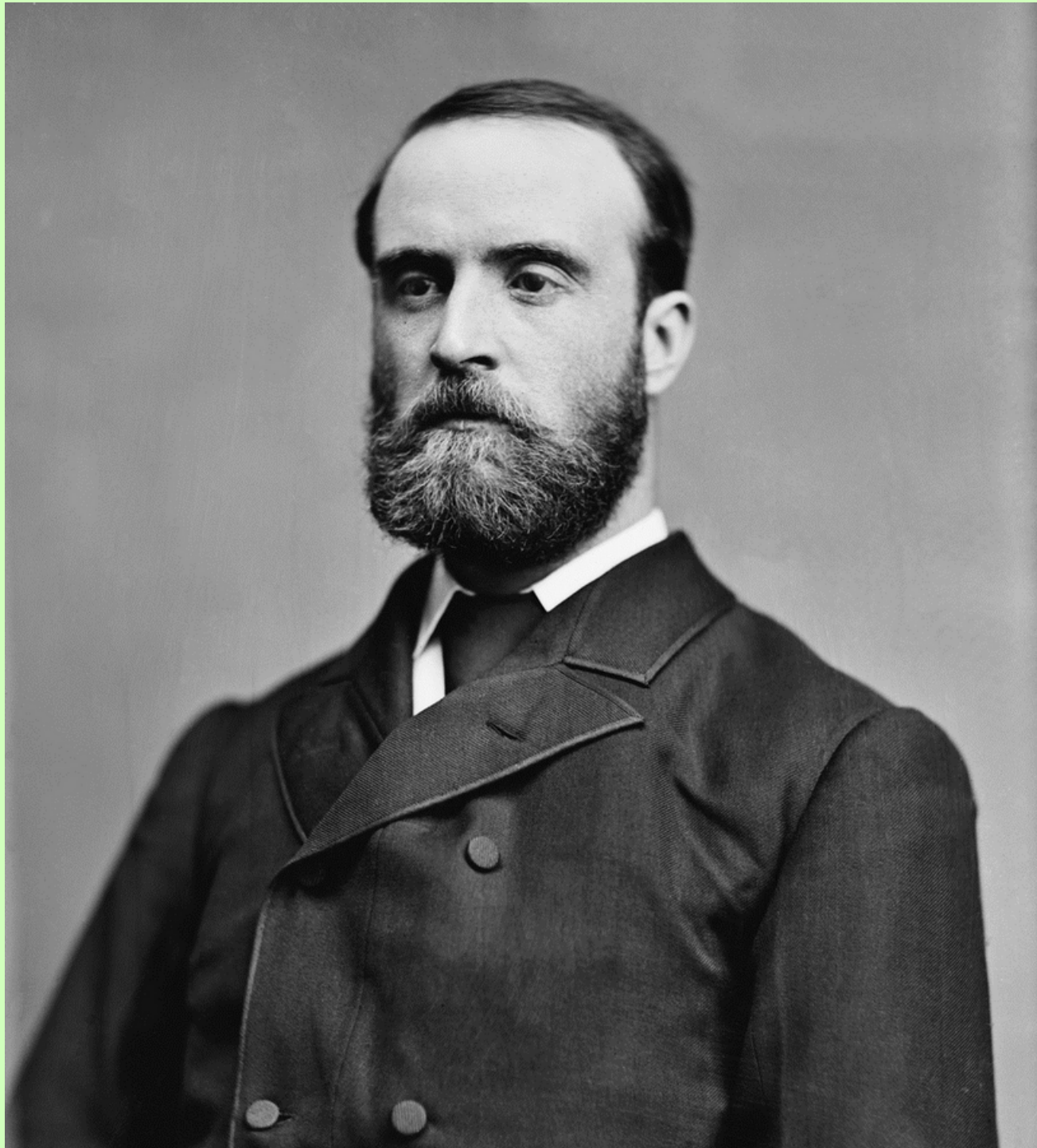
1. Catholics – 77% of the population; Anglicans – 12%; Presbyterians – 9%.
2. Irish nationalist: someone who believes that the Irish people are their own nation; Republic: a country not ruled by a monarch, but instead ruled by its citizens, who choose their representatives; Unionist: someone who wants Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom with Britain.
3. The IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood), also known as the Fenians.
4. Home Rule: Ireland would have its own parliament in Dublin to govern local affairs, such as education and health, while Westminster could still control trade and foreign affairs. Ireland would still be part of the United Kingdom.
5. Unionists believed that 'Home Rule is Rome Rule' – that they would be discriminated against as Protestants if there were a Catholic-majority parliament in Dublin. Unionists also feared that trade in the north could be badly affected by Home Rule.
6. Any one of: Edward Carson; Walter Hume Long; Edward Saunderson.



# 19.2: *Charles* STEWART PARNELL, 1846-1891

"The Uncrowned King of Ireland"

# Early Life



Charles Stewart Parnell was born on 27th June 1846 in Avondale, Co. Wicklow. His family were **Anglo-Irish** Protestant landowners. He studied at Cambridge University but never completed his studies. He was elected to parliament in 1875 as a member of the Home Rule Party in a Meath by-election.

# Parnell and the Home Rule Party

Parnell had links with the Fenians and agreed with their method of **parliamentary obstruction** – the deliberate interference with the progress of legislation. For example, making very long speeches to delay the passage of laws through parliament. Some Home Rule Party members distrusted Parnell because of his Fenian links.

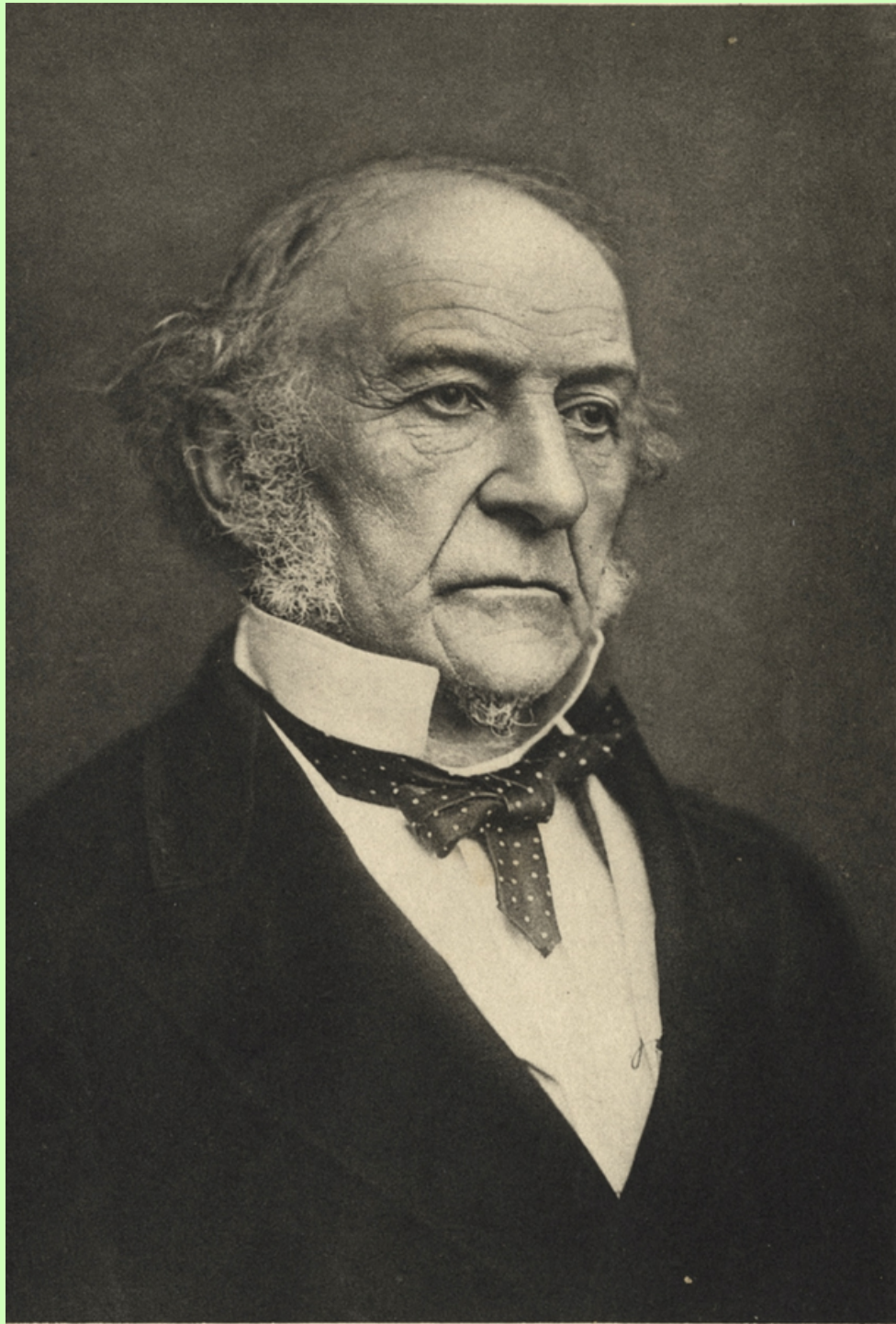
Parnell's popularity rose because he tried to solve the 'Land Question'. With Fenians such as Michael Davitt and John Devoy, Parnell formed an organisation known as the '**Land League**'. The main goal was to get the British government to provide loans to tenant farmers so that they could **buy their farms**. In the meantime, he wanted to achieve **lower rents** and **prevent evictions**. This was popular amongst Catholic Irish farmers who had suffered during the Great Famine. The Home Rule Party benefited from Parnell's efforts and won 63 seats in the General Election of 1880 – and thus allowing Parnell to win leadership of the party.

To persuade the British government to bring in the reforms about land in Ireland, Parnell used **political agitation**. This was to encourage people to form local groups to demand better treatment; e.g. refusing to pay rent or co-operate with local landlords.



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# Kilmainham Gaol and Treaty



In 1881, Parnell was sent to **Kilmainham Goal** for his political agitation and public speeches. Upon his arrest, violent protests broke out across the country forcing British Prime Minister, **William Gladstone**, to reach an agreement with Parnell.

May 1882 saw Parnell and Gladstone sign the **Kilmainham Treaty** – giving tenants access to land courts and help with rent payment. Parnell also agreed to condemn violence. This was a victory for Parnell and the Home Rule Party

Four days after the Treaty was signed, a group of extreme IRB men “*the Invincibles*” ambushed and killed two British politicians in **the Phoenix Park Murders**. This event damaged the popularity of radical nationalists and increased the desire for peaceful political means.

# The First Home Rule Bill (1886)

In 1882, the Home Rule Party became the **Irish Parliamentary Party**. In 1884, all men who owned or rented property worth £10 or more were granted the right to vote. This increased voters by 300,000 voters.

In the **1885** British general election, the Irish Parliamentary Party won **86 seats**. This meant that Parnell's party held the balance of power in parliament – he could swing sides of a vote to suit himself. Parnell allied with Gladstone and the Liberal Party in January 1886 – making Gladstone Prime Minister once more. As a result the First Home Rule Bill was put forward by Gladstone in April 1886. The terms of the Bill included:

- Irish MPs and Lords would leave Westminster
- Ireland would have an elected parliament in Dublin.
- This parliament could make laws for internal affairs.
- Westminster would keep control of external affairs.
- A viceroy would represent the British monarch in Ireland.

Party	1885	1886
Conservatives	247	317
Liberals	319	191
Irish Parliamentary Party	86	85
Liberal Unionists	N/A	77

The Conservative Party was against the First Home Rule Bill. Many felt that Home Rule would eventually lead to a fully independent Ireland. The Bill was defeated in June 1886 by 341 votes to 311 in the House of Commons. The Liberal Party split as a result and another general election had to take place. The votes were more of the same for the Irish Parliamentary Party while the Conservatives won seats and the Liberals lost.



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# False Accusations



In 1887, **false accusations** of supporting violence and even of involvement in the Phoenix Park Murders were made against Parnell in *The Times* newspapers who published a letter claimed Parnell had written. On investigation, it was proven the letter was a forgery. Parnell was paid compensation and viewed as a hero in the eyes of the British liberals; he received a standing ovation upon his return to the House of Commons. This was the peak of Parnell's career – he would convince Gladstone to put forward another Home Rule Bill once the Liberals regained power.

# The Fall of Parnell



Parnell's long relationship with **Katharine (Katie/ Kitty) O'Shea** was to be his political downfall. Katharine was married to William O'Shea but had separated from him years before meeting Parnell – with whom she then had three children. Katharine's husband did not file for divorce until 1890, due to inheritance money due to his wife. When the relationship became public because O'Shea named Parnell as a co-respondent (blaming Parnell for the divorce).

## **Catholic Ireland disapproved.**

Some Liberal Party members feared their links to Parnell would damage them politically. Many people withdrew their support and demanded that he resign. A vote on Parnell's leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party split it in half. Parnell remained leader of one section, the **Irish National League**. He campaigned despite being very ill from cancer of the stomach. Parnell and Katharine married in 1891 but Parnell died, four months later, from pneumonia, aged only 45.

# The Second Home Rule Bill (1893)

Home Rule was attempted for the second time in **1893** once Gladstone was back in power. Again, it was unsuccessful. However, this time it had passed the House of Commons but was vetoed (blocked) in the House of Lords. Gladstone retired in 1894 and both sides of the Irish Parliamentary Party entered a decline. Home Rule would not be addressed properly again until 1912.



Diagram taken from *Artefact*, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](http://educate.ie))



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# Checkpoint pg. 235 (Artefact, 1st Edition)

1. Explain the terms; parliamentary obstruction and political agitation.
2. How did Parnell gain popularity for the Home Rule Party? Give two examples?
3. Why was the First Home Rule Bill not passed in the House of Commons?
4. Why did Ireland's Parnell popularity fall following the First Home Rule Bill? Describe two factors in this.



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# Checkpoint pg. 235 (Artefact, 1st Edition)

1. Parliamentary obstruction: deliberate interference with the progress of legislation, for example by making very long speeches to delay the passage of laws through parliament. Political agitation: encouraging people to form local groups to demand better treatment, for example by refusing to pay rent or cooperate with local landlords.
2. Parnell tried to solve the 'Land Question' by founding the Land League to gain loans from the British government, lower rents and prevent evictions. This was popular with Irish Catholic farmers. In May 1882 they signed the Kilmainham Treaty, which gave tenants access to land courts and helped tenants who owed money to pay their rents.
3. The Conservative Party was against the First Home Rule Bill. Many felt that Home Rule would eventually lead to Ireland having full independence. The bill was defeated in June 1886, by 341 votes to 311 in the House of Commons.
4. In 1887, false accusations of supporting violence and even of involvement in the Phoenix Park Murders were made against Parnell in The Times newspaper, which published a letter it claimed he had written. Catholic Ireland disapproved of Parnell's relationship with Katharine O'Shea, who in 1890 was in the process of going through a divorce from her husband. Some Liberal Party members feared that their ties to Parnell would damage them politically.



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19.3: *political parties and organisations in ireland in 1910*

# The Irish Parliamentary Party

The **Irish Parliamentary Party** declined in popularity after the Parnellite split but was reunified under **John Redmond** in 1900. It had little power in early 1900s but had steady support as there was no real alternative. Its **constitutional nationalist** aims were unchanged:

- To achieve Home Rule or self-government by having a parliament in Dublin to deal with internal affairs. Westminster could look after external affairs.
- The King/Queen (Monarch) of England would be the King/Queen (Monarch) of Ireland.



# Sinn Féin

**Sinn Féin**, meaning 'we ourselves', is a nationalist political party founded in 1905 by **Arthur Griffith**, a Catholic Dublin-born journalist. He wanted Ireland to win independence and establish its own parliament. It started off as a small party but later grew in size. Arthur Griffith and Sinn Féin wanted:

- A **dual monarchy**; the Monarch of England would be the Monarch of Ireland.
- To **develop Irish industry** by having tariffs put on goods transported across international borders.
- To achieve these by **parliamentary abstention** (Irish MPs would withdraw from the Westminster parliament).
- The **Dublin Parliament** would deal with Ireland's internal affairs.





# The IRB

The **Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB)** had been founded in 1858 and was a secret, radical nationalist organisation. Their members believed in the use of physical and violent force. In 1910, the IRB had been reduced in size and popularity but was slowly beginning to regain support. The IRB wanted:

- Complete independence from Britain
- To make Ireland a republic
- To use physical force to achieve this



# The Unionist Party

Unionists wanted to retain the Act of Union, and their strong link with Britain. **Edward Carson** was the leader of the Unionist Party between 1910 and 1921. He was a Dublin-born Protestant lawyer. The Unionist Party wanted:

- The parliament in Westminster to continue to make laws for Ireland.
- The British government and the Crown to still have representatives in Ireland.



# Checkpoint pg. 204 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. What were the Irish Parliamentary Party's aims in the early 1900s?
2. What were the aims of Sinn Féin?
3. How did Sinn Fein's aims differ from those of the Irish Parliamentary Party?
4. Explain what is meant by parliamentary abstention.
5. What were the political goals of the IRB? Give two examples.
6. What did the Unionist Party want to achieve?



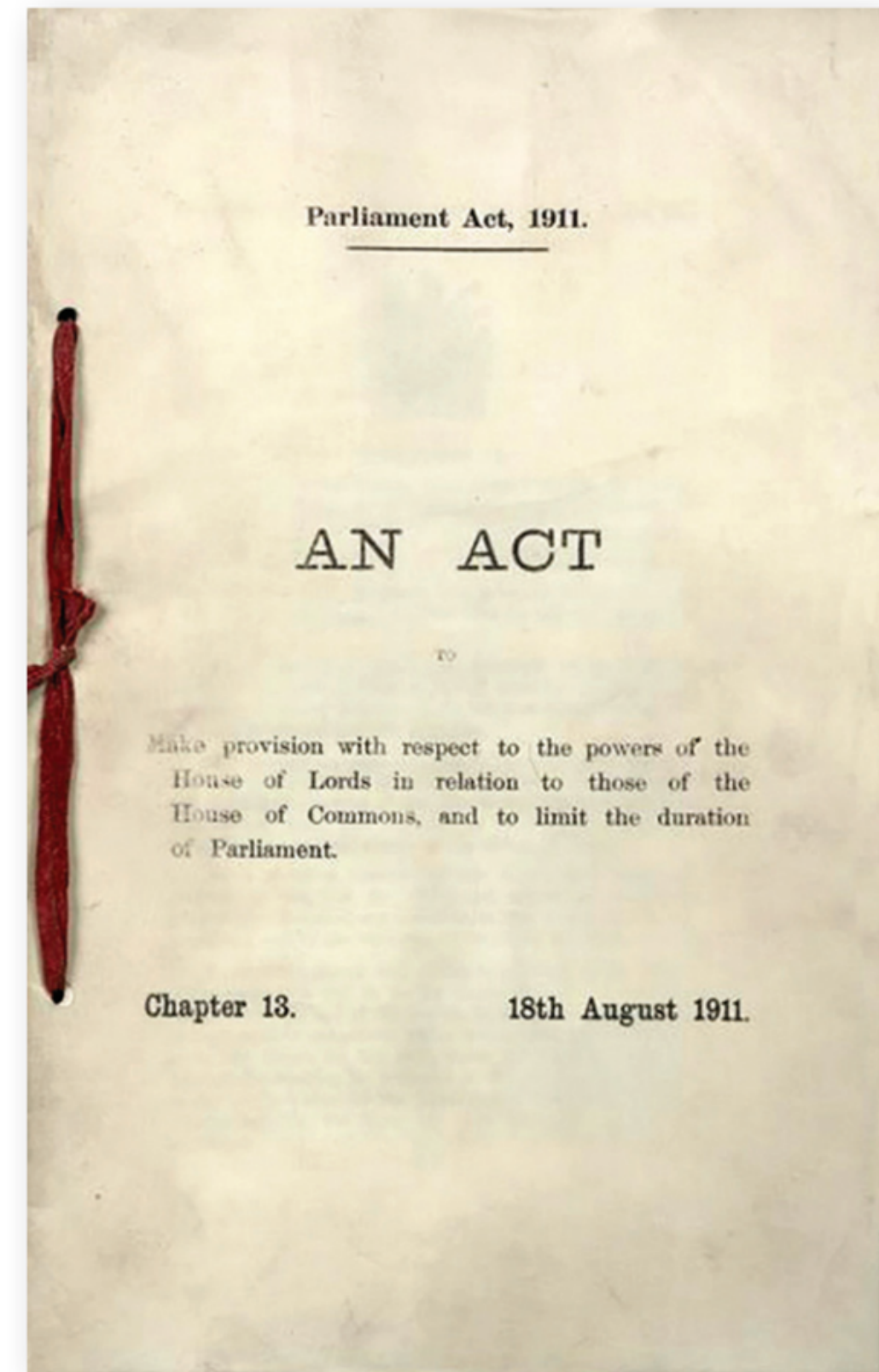
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# 19.33: *the* HOME RULE *crisis*, 1912-1914

# The Parliament Act of 1911

The **Conservative Party** had been in government from 1895 to 1906. They and the Unionists had always supported each other to ensure a majority. While the Conservatives were in power, Home Rule would not be passed. In 1906, the **Liberal Party** was voted back into government and needed no other support for a majority.

However, by 1910, the Liberals needed the help of the Irish Parliamentary Party to stay in government. Up until this year, the House of Lords (Britain's Séanad) could veto (block) any laws or bills passed by the House of Commons (Dáil). In 1911, the Liberals passed a law that changed this: The Parliament Act. This meant that the House of Lords could not fully veto any bill and could only delay laws from passing for two years. This meant that Home Rule was not only just a possibility but an undeniable future.

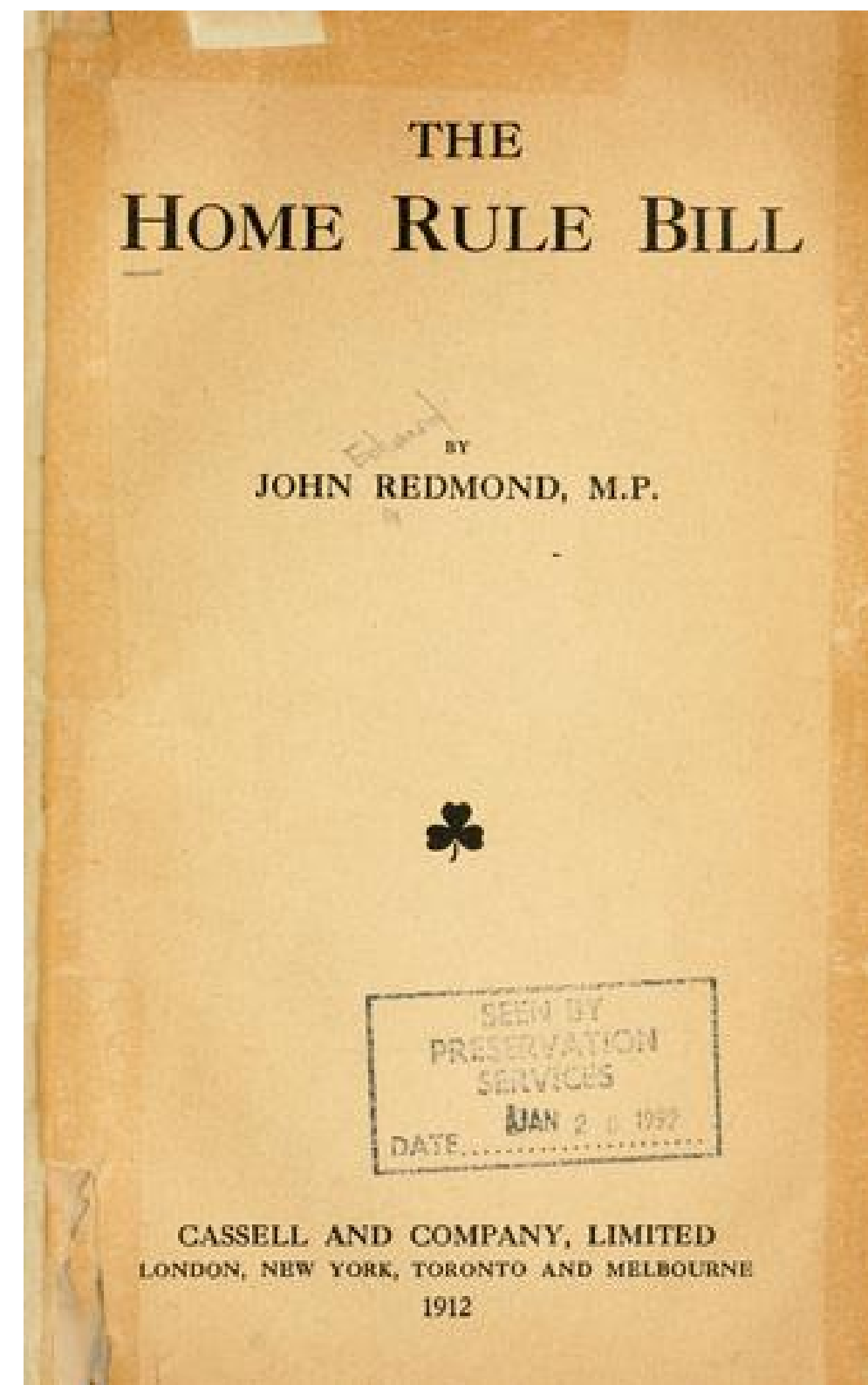


# The Third Home Rule Bill (1912)

The Liberals had tried to pass Home Rule twice before in 1886 and 1893 – both times it had been vetoed by the House of Lords. In 1912, the Liberals were led by Herbert Asquith. He put forward the Third Home Rule Bill to the House of Commons and the House of Lords. It was similar to the other Home Rule Bills:

- Ireland would have its own parliament in Dublin to deal with internal affairs.
- Westminster would continue to deal with imperial matters such as foreign policy and defence.

Due to the Parliament Act, the House of Lords could not veto the Home Rule Bill. This meant that the Home Rule would become law in 1914.



# Unionist Opposition to the Third Home Rule Bill

Unionists believed that if their opposition was strong enough, Home Rule was not be enforced. They decided to:

- Organise **demonstrations** and **protests** against Home Rule
- Made a declaration, **the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant**, that Unionists would “use all means necessary” to protect the Union. 200,000 men signed on the 28th September 1912 (some apparently signed it in their own blood). Roughly 250,000 women signed a similar, separate declaration.
- Founded the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) as a **paramilitary resistance force** (unofficial military organisation of amateur soldiers). Some 100,000 joined the UVF, led by former army officers.
- Bought **arms** and **ammunition** from Germany for the UVF. The **Larne gun-running** took place in 1914, when 35,000 guns and five million rounds of ammunition were smuggled into Ulster.



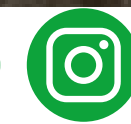
# Nationalist Reactions to Unionist Opposition

**Eoin MacNeill** of the Gaelic League decide that nationalists should do as the Unionists did to ensure Home Rule was established.

- The Irish Volunteer Force (IVF) was officially founded at the Rotunda in Dublin in November 1913. MacNeill was made chief of staff. By 1914, the IVF had almost 100,000 volunteers, including all types of nationalists: members of the Irish Parliamentary Party, the IRB and Sinn Féin.
- Germany also sold arms and ammunition to the IVF. The **Howth gun-running** took place in July 1914, when 900 rifles and 25,000 rounds of ammunition were landed in Howth in north Co. Dublin on a ship called the *Asgard*.



Diagram taken from *Artefact*, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



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# Ireland Heads Towards Civil War

With both groups now armed and Home Rule still causing disagreement in the government, civil war was a real possibility. However, on the 4th August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany, marking the beginning of World War I. Home Rule became law on 18th September but was immediately suspended because of the war. Conflict in Ireland was postponed but not for long.



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# Sir Edward Carson, 1854-1935



Dublin born, Edward Carson was elected a **Unionist MP** for Trinity College in 1892. He became leader of the Irish Unionist Parliamentary Party in 1910 and in June 1911 he led the Ulster Unionists. During the Home Rule Crisis, he spoke against the Third Home Rule Bill in the House of Commons and organised rallies in Ireland. He was the first signatory of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant. By 1914, he supported Irish partition as a solution to Home Rule. Carson remained as Unionist leader until 1921 and retired in October 1929. He died in 1935 and is buried in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.

# Checkpoint pg. 202 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. What change was brought in by the Parliament Act of 1911?
2. When was the Third Home Rule Bill meant to come into effect?
3. What was the UVF?
4. When was the UVF established?
5. List two ways the Unionists tried to convince the British government to stop Home Rule.
6. What was the IVF?
7. When was the IVF established?
8. List two ways the nationalists tried to make sure Home Rule happened.



# Checkpoint pg. 202 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. The House of Lords could not fully veto any bill and could only delay laws from passing for two years.
2. 1914
3. The UVF was the Ulster Volunteer Force, a unionist paramilitary organisation, which was an unofficial military-style organisation of volunteer soldiers.
4. It was established in January 1913.
5. Organised demonstrations and protests against Home Rule; made a declaration called the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant, which stated that Unionists would 'use all means to defend the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland'.
6. The IVF was the Irish Volunteer Force, a nationalist paramilitary organisation.
7. It was established in November 1913.
8. Founded the IVF; bought arms and ammunition from Germany.

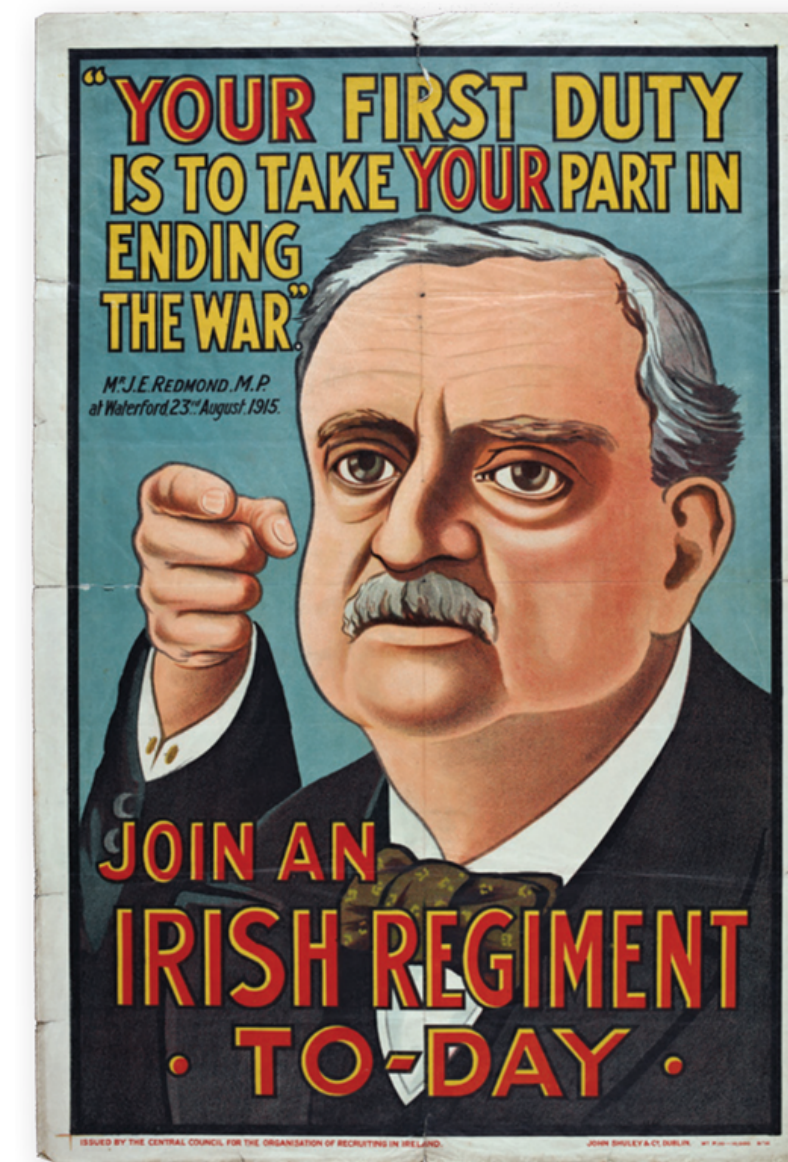


# 19.1: *Ireland* AND *World War I*

# The split in the Irish Volunteer Force

Carson and the Unionists supported the British war effort, believing it would maintain the Union between the two islands. Thousands of Ulster Unionists joined the British army to show their loyalty.

With the nationalists and the IVF, things were not so clear-cut. John Redmond of the Irish Parliamentary Party made a speech in Woodenbridge, Co. Wicklow, urging IVF members to join the British Army. He hoped that this would benefit Ireland when it came to Home Rule negotiations after the war. The Irish Volunteer Force split over the issue of whether or not to support the British war effort. At the time, many people thought the war would be short and that Home Rule would soon be in place. However, the war was to last for four eventful years – both on the war front and in Ireland.



The Irish Volunteer Force Split

National Volunteers	Irish Volunteers
175,000 agreed with Redmond and felt that supporting Britain would benefit Home Rule.	11,000 disagreed and were led by Eoin MacNeill. They wanted to stay and make sure Home Rule happened.

Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



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# The Irish soldiers of World War I

About **250,000 Irishmen** fought on Britain's side in World War I. Between **30,000** and **50,000** died. **Nationalists** and **Unionists** fought on the same side but for different reasons. Many fought in WWI for their political beliefs but also because times were hard at home. The war was a good opportunity to earn money to send home to their families. Many, as young as 15 and 16, joined the war because they seen it as a opportunity to "become a man".

**Nationalists** joined the **16th (Irish) Division** which contained regiments such as the Irish Guards, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the Royal Munster Fusiliers. **Unionist** joined the **36th (Ulster) Division**. The Irish soldiers fought in the **Battle of the Somme** in **France**, **Passchendaele** in **Belgium**, and **Gallipoli** in **Turkey**.



# Checkpoint pg. 208 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. Why did (a) Unionist and (b) nationalist leaders encourage their supporters to fight in World War I?
2. Why did the IVF split?
3. What groups did it split into and what was the difference between them?
4. How many Irishmen fought in World War I?
5. Why did so many enlist to fight?



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# Green Fields of France - The High Kings

Well how do you do, young Willie McBride  
 Do you mind if I sit here down by your graveside?  
 And rest for a while 'neath the warm summer sun  
 I've been walking all day and I'm nearly done  
 I see by your gravestone, you were only nineteen  
 When you joined the great fallen in 1916.  
 I hope you died well and I hope you died clean  
 Or young Willie McBride, was it slow and  
 obscene?

Did they beat the drum slowly, did they play the  
 fife lowly?  
 Did they sound the death march as they lowered  
 you down?  
 And did the band play the Last Post and Chorus?  
 Did the pipes play 'The Flowers of the Forest'?

Did you leave 'ere a wife or a sweetheart behind?  
 In some faithful heart is your memory enshrined?  
 Although you died back in 1916  
 In that faithful heart are you forever nineteen?  
 Or are you a stranger without even a name  
 Enclosed in forever, behind a glass frame?  
 In an old photograph, torn, battered and stained  
 And faded to yellow in a brown leather frame

Did they beat the drum slowly, did they play the  
 fife lowly?  
 Did they sound the death march as they lowered  
 you down?  
 Did the band play the Last Post and Chorus?  
 And did the pipes play 'The Flowers of the Forest'?

The sun, now it shines on the green fields of  
 France  
 There's a warm summer breeze; it makes the red  
 poppies dance  
 And look how the sun shines from under the  
 clouds  
 There's no gas, no barbed wire, there's no gun  
 firing now  
 But here in this graveyard, it's still no man's land  
 The countless white crosses stand mute in the  
 sand  
 To man's blind indifference to his fellow man  
 To a whole generation that were butchered and  
 damned

Did they beat the drum slowly, did they play the  
 fife lowly?  
 Did they sound the death march as they lowered  
 you down?  
 And did the band play the Last Post and Chorus?  
 Did the pipes play 'The Flowers of the Forest'?

Ah, young Willie McBride, I can't help wonder why:  
 Do those that lie here know, why did they die?  
 And did they believe when they answered the call  
 Did they really believe that this war would end  
 wars?  
 Well, the sorrow, the suffering, the glory, the pain  
 The killing and dying were all done in vain  
 For young Willie McBride, it all happened again  
 And again and again and again and again

Did they beat the drum slowly, did they play the  
 fife lowly?  
 Did they sound the death march as they lowered  
 you down?  
 And did the band play the Last Post and Chorus?  
 Did the pipes play 'The Flowers of the Forest'?

Did they beat the drum slowly, did they play the  
 fife lowly?  
 Did they sound the death march as they lowered  
 you down?  
 Did the band play the Last Post and Chorus?  
 And did the pipes play 'The Flowers of the Forest'?



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# Working with Sources

1. How old was Willie McBride when he died, and what significance might his age have in the context of World War I?
2. The song frequently mentions the ceremonies and traditions (e.g., drum beats, fife playing, Last Post, and The Flowers of the Forest). What role do these traditions play in memorializing the fallen, and how do they contrast with the brutal realities of war described elsewhere in the lyrics?
3. How does the songwriter depict the passage of time, especially when discussing Willie McBride's memory and the physical state of his photograph?
4. Describe the imagery used to portray the present-day setting of the "green fields of France". How does this contrast with the historical setting of World War I as implied in the song?
5. What significance do the "countless white crosses" have in the song, and what comment is the songwriter making about "man's blind indifference to his fellow man"?
6. Based on the lyrics, how does the songwriter feel about the broader implications of war, and the repeated nature of conflict?
7. "To a whole generation that were butchered and damned" – What message or sentiment is being conveyed with this line?
8. The singer contemplates why soldiers like Willie McBride went to war. What reasons does he consider, and what conclusions does he draw about the overall purpose and outcome of the war?



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# Working with Sources (Answers)

1. Willie McBride was only 19 years old when he died. His young age is significant as it underscores the tragedy of young lives lost in World War I. Many young men, some even younger than Willie, enlisted or were conscripted into the war, often with little understanding of the true horrors they would face.
2. The ceremonies and traditions mentioned serve as respectful and sombre tributes to soldiers who have passed away. They offer a dignified remembrance to the fallen, celebrating their service and sacrifice. However, these rituals starkly contrast with the brutal realities of war described in the song, highlighting the difference between the sanitized or honourable depiction of war and its gruesome realities.
3. The songwriter alludes to the passage of time by referencing Willie's age at death and contrasting it with the current state of his grave and memory. The old photograph, described as "torn, battered and stained and faded to yellow," serves as a poignant representation of how time has passed, yet Willie remains forever young in memory.
4. The present-day imagery paints a serene and peaceful landscape with "a warm summer breeze," "red poppies dancing," and the sun shining "from under the clouds." This contrasts sharply with the implied historical setting of World War I, where there would have been gas attacks, barbed wires, and continuous gunfire. The beauty of the present setting serves as a stark juxtaposition to the devastation of the war era.



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# Working with Sources (Answers)

5. The "countless white crosses" symbolize the vast number of soldiers who lost their lives in the war. They serve as a haunting reminder of the human cost of conflict. The reference to "man's blind indifference to his fellow man" suggests the senseless nature of war, where life is often disregarded, and the sheer scale of loss can become numbing or abstract.
6. The songwriter expresses a profound sense of sorrow and futility about war. He questions the reasons soldiers are called to war, especially considering the painful consequences. The repeated lines "it all happened again and again and again and again" convey a sense of despair at humanity's inability to learn from past conflicts, suggesting that the tragedies of wars like World War I continue to repeat themselves.
7. This line conveys a sentiment of tragedy and condemnation. The term "butchered" implies that the generation was led to slaughter, emphasizing the senseless loss of life. "Damned" suggests a betrayal or condemnation of this generation by the forces that sent them to war, hinting at the idea that they were sacrificed for causes that may not have been just or worthy.
8. The singer wonders if soldiers like Willie McBride went to war out of a sense of duty, for love, or perhaps due to societal pressures. He questions whether they believed that their participation would end all wars. By the end, the conclusion drawn is somber, suggesting that the sacrifices, sorrows, sufferings, and even the glories of the war were all in vain since similar conflicts continued to arise in subsequent generations.



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# Green Fields of France - The High Kings

Written in **1976** by **Eric Bogle**, a **Scottish-Australian** songwriter. The song, also known as "**No Man's Land**" or "**Willie McBride**", is a **lament** about the **loss** and **futility of war**. It tells the **story** of a **visitor** who comes across a **grave** in a **WWI cemetery** in **France**. The **grave** belongs to a **young soldier** named **Willie McBride**, who **died** in **1916** at the **age of 19**. Bogle's **decision** to choose an **Irish name**, "Willie McBride", was **deliberate**. During the **time** of the **song's composition**, the **Troubles** – a **violent** and **complex political conflict** in **Northern Ireland** – was at its **height**. **Anti-Irish sentiment** was **pervasive** in parts of the **UK**, and Bogle wanted to **remind listeners** of the **sacrifices** the **Irish** had made during **WWI**, in an **attempt** to **foster understanding** and **compassion** amidst the **contemporary conflict**.

Through its **poignant lyrics**, the **song contemplates** the **reasons Willie** might have gone to war, imagining perhaps he **loved a sweetheart**, or was it **purely for king and country**. It **ponders** the **stark contrast** between the **jubilant send-off young soldiers** received and the **tragic reality of their deaths**. The **chorus**, which talks about the "**green fields of France**", **alludes** to the **tragic irony** that the **once bloody battlefields of WWI**, where **countless young men died**, have now **returned to peaceful fields**.

The **song** has been **covered** by **numerous artists** and has become an **anthem for peace** and a **poignant reminder** of the **costs of war**. It has **particular resonance** for the **Irish**, many of whom **fought in WWI under British command** and **faced complex issues of identity and loyalty**, especially during the **aftermath of the Easter Rising**. While **not exclusively about the Irish experience in WWI**, the **song does resonate** with the **story of many Irish soldiers**. Their **participation in the war** was for a long time a **controversial** and often **overlooked part of Irish history**, as **Ireland itself** was undergoing **significant political change** and the **struggle for independence** during the **same period**.

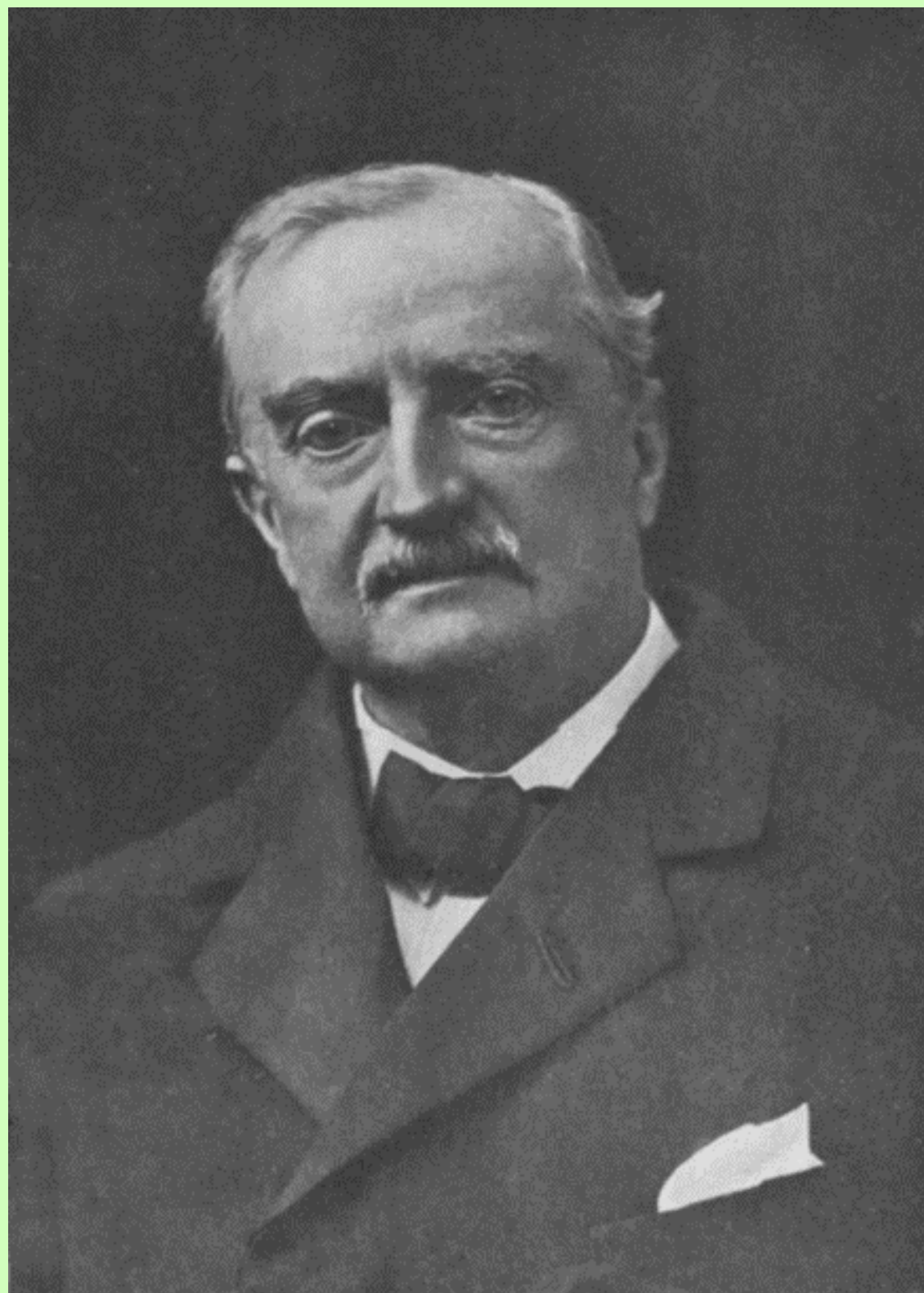


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1914: *John* **REDMOND**, 1856 – 1918



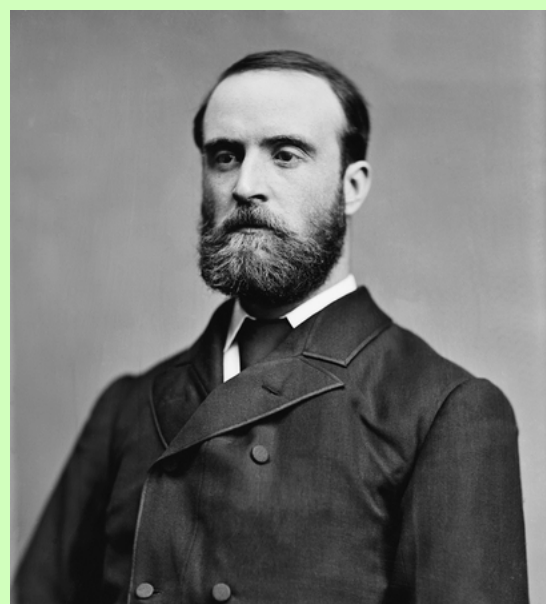
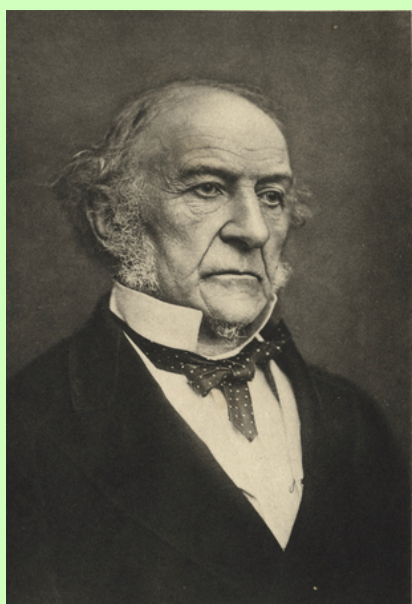
# Early Life and The Home Rule Cause



John Redmond was born in Dublin in 1856. His father, William Archer Redmond, was one of Ireland's first Home Rule MPs. He grew up in Co. Wexford and attended Clongowes Wood College boarding school from the age of 12. In 1881, Redmond was first elected to the House of Commons as MP for New Ross, Wexford.

Between 1882 and 1884, Redmond undertook a number of fundraising missions to the US and Australia for the cause of Home Rule for Ireland. In 1887, he was called to the Irish bar at the King's Inn having earlier studied law in Trinity College. He returned to the USA in 1904, but was uncomfortable with the extremism that was being spoken about there in relation to achieving Home Rule.

# The Irish National League



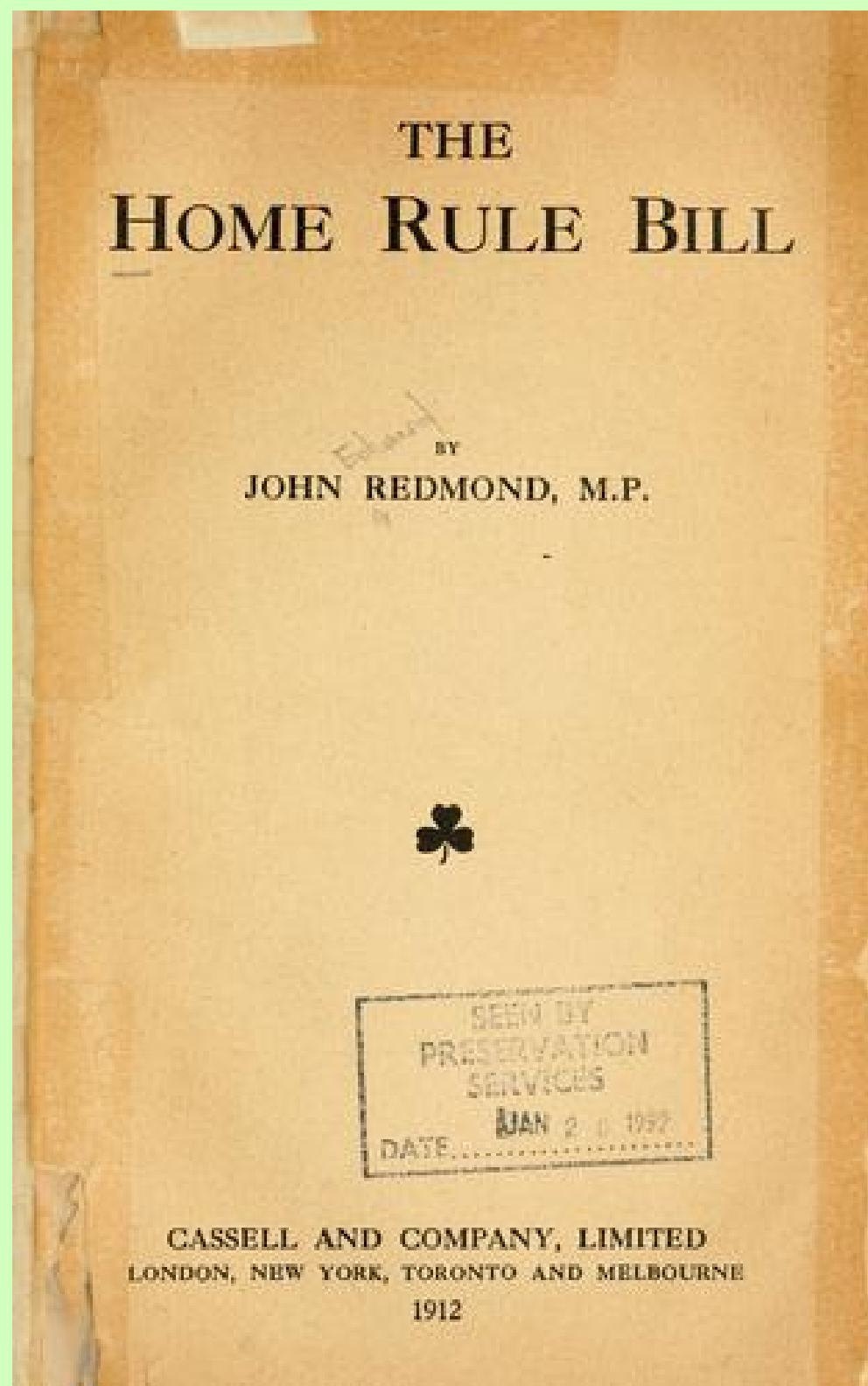
The Irish Parliamentary Party split over Parnell's leadership in 1890. Following Parnell's death in 1891, Redmond took over leadership of the **Irish National League**, the 'Parnellites', a nine-member group. Redmond was elected MP for Waterford City which he represented until his death. Gladstone introduced the Second Home Rule Bill (1893) but defeated by the House of Lords.

In 1899, the Conservative Party developed the policy of 'killing Home Rule with kindness'. Redmond cooperated with the Conservatives which led to the development of the Irish Department of Agriculture and the introduction of the Local Government Act (1898).

The Irish Parliamentary Party was reunified in 1900, with Redmond elected as leader.



# The Third Home Rule Bill



The general election of 1910 left the IPP with the balance of power at Westminster, marking a high point in Redmond's political career. He sided with the Liberal Party.

The Parliament Act (1911) diluted the power of the House of Lords to veto (block) new laws passed by the House of Commons; the House of Lords could not veto a law once it had been passed three times in the House of Commons. The Third Home Rule Bill (1912) was introduced by the Liberal Prime Minister Herbert Asquith and was passed by the House of Commons; this meant that Home Rule would be achieved by 1914.

# World War I



World War I broke out in 1914 which caused Home Rule to be postponed for the duration of the conflict. Redmond urged members of the Irish Volunteer Force (IVF) to join the war effort as he

felt that this would benefit Ireland when it came to Home Rule negotiations after the war. Redmond's request led to a split in the Irish Volunteers. A large majority of 175,000 followed Redmond, forming the National Volunteers who enlisted in Irish regiments such as the 16th (Irish) Division while a minority of around 11,000 members remained as the original Irish Volunteers led by Eoin MacNeill.

# 1916 Onwards

The Easter Rising (1916) resulted in a move away from Irish parliamentary politics and a return to physical force traditions with John Redmond's popularity declining. Redmond's younger brother, Major Willie Redmond, was killed in action at the Battle of Messines in Belgium in June 1917. Redmond in 1918 died of heart failure in London after an operation. His son, William, won his seat in the by-election, who served until 1932 as a TD while Redmond was succeeded as leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party by John Dillon. Redmond had truly devoted his life to achieving Home Rule for Ireland. To honour Redmond and his commitment to non-violence, former John Bruton kept his portrait on the wall while he was in office.



Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



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# Checkpoint pg. 210 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. Explain how the Home Rule Bill belongs to the parliamentary tradition.
2. How did John Redmond help to support the Home Rule cause between 1882 and 1886?
3. Why was 1910 a high point in Redmond's political career?
4. What was the impact of the outbreak of World War I on Home Rule?
5. What impact did the Easter Rising have on Irish parliamentary politics?
6. What is your understanding of Redmond's reflection on his career in 1917?



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# Checkpoint pg. 210 (Artefact, 2nd Edition)

1. The Home Rule Bill involved the use of peaceful political means to achieve political change.
2. Redmond undertook a number of missions to the USA and Australia to fundraise for Home Rule.
3. In 1910, the Irish Parliamentary Party held the balance of power at Westminster.
4. The enactment of Home Rule was postponed for the duration of the conflict.
5. The Easter Rising of 1916 resulted in a move away from Irish parliamentary politics.
6. Students own understanding of Redmond's reflection.



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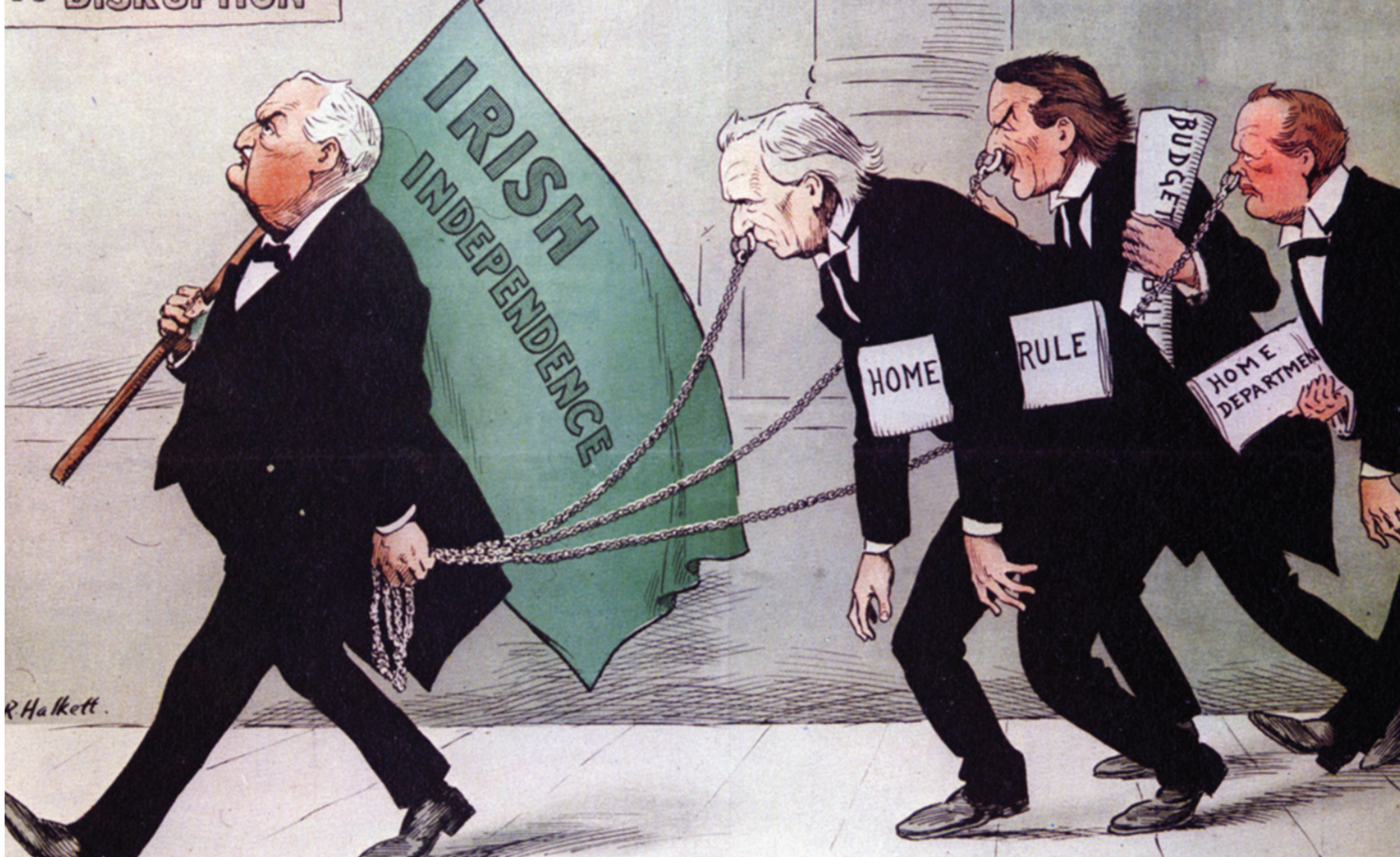
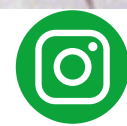


Diagram taken from Artefact, 2nd Edition by [Eimear Jenkinson](#) and [Gregg O'Neill](#) ([educate.ie](#))



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# 19.5: SUMMARY

# In this chapter, we have learned that...

- Irish nationalists at this time fell into two camps: constitutional nationalist (seeking change through peaceful politics) and radical nationalists (prepared to use violence for political change).
- Charles Stewart Parnell campaigned for tenants' rights and Home Rule and his part was immensely popular in the 1880s. However, the First Home Rule Bill (1886) failed during Parnell's time and the Second Home Rule Bill (1893) failed soon afterwards.
- In 1910, the important political groups in Ireland were the Irish Parliamentary Party, Sinn Féin, the IRB and the Unionist Party.
- The Parliament Act of 1911 meant that the House of Lords could only delay (not veto) laws. This Act made Home Rule possible.
- The Third Home Rule Bill was presented to the British government in 1912 and would be put into action in 1914.
- Unionists responded to the Third Home Rule Bill by: Holding demonstrations, Founding the UVF, Creating the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant and Sourcing arms and ammunition
- Nationalists reacted to this by founding the IVF and likewise buying arms and ammunition.
- Unionists supported Britain in World War I (1914-1918). Nationalists had mixed opinions, causing the IVF to split into the National Volunteers and the Irish Volunteers.
- About 250,000 Irishmen fought on Britain's side in World War I, and 30,000-50,000 died. Some Irish regiments were the Irish Guards, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the Royal Munster Fusiliers.



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## Reflecting on... The Rise of Nationalism and Unionism in Ireland

The years 1884-1914 saw significant change in Ireland. Politically, the divisions that had existed on the island since the Plantations became sharper as the competing ideas of Home Rule and Unionism emerged. The formation of the armed UVF and IVF threatened to cause wide-scale violence between the communities.

The hardening of lines between the two communities would eventually see the island split in two and shape the twentieth century in Ireland.

# Exam Style Question Answers

(a) Primary aural source.

(b) Limitation: It may contain bias; Benefit: Speeches can tell us a lot about the issues of the time.

(c) 'Go on drilling and make yourself efficient for the work, and then account for yourselves as men, not only in Ireland itself, but wherever the firing line extends in defence of right, of freedom and religion in this war (WWI).'

(d) The volunteer's duty is, at all costs, to defend the shores of Ireland from foreign invasion.

At the time, the nationalists were trying to achieve Home Rule from Britain, and Redmond was asking the volunteers to fight on the side of Britain.

(f) Leader from the parliamentary tradition: John Redmond; Three contributions: in 1891 he was elected MP for Waterford City, which he represented until his death; in 1899 Redmond's cooperation with the Conservatives led to the development of the Irish Department of Agriculture (1899) and the introduction of the Local Government Act (1898), which effectively ended landlords' control of local government in Ireland; in 1900 the Irish Parliamentary Party was reunited under Redmond and he became its chairman (leader).

(g) Key event: the passing of the Third Home Rule Bill of 1912 due to the Parliament Act of 1911 (it was to become law in 1914); Any two Impacts: led to the foundation of the Ulster Volunteer Force and the signing of the declaration called the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant, which stated that Unionists would 'use all means to defend the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland'; led to the foundation of the Irish Volunteer Force and resulted in the Howth Gun Running.



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# SEC Examination Questions

2023 SEC Q8

# Project

## Guidelines:

1. **Length:** The depth of your project should reflect about 2-3 weeks of work.
2. **Sources:** Use at least three different sources for your research. These can be books, scholarly articles, or reputable online resources.
3. **Citations:** All information and images that are not your own should be properly cited.
4. **Mediums:** You may choose to present your project in one of the following ways:
  - **Poster:** Your poster should be informative and visually engaging.
  - **Minecraft or Lego Model:** If choosing this option, please also include a brief report explaining your model.
  - **Painting/Drawing:** Your artwork should be accompanied by a description.
  - **Recycled Materials:** Create your model using recycled materials and provide an explanation of your creative process.

## Assessment:

Your projects will be assessed based on:

1. Research and Content
2. Creativity and Presentation
3. Understanding of Context
4. Adherence to Guidelines



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# Project

## *Historical Sites*

Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin, Republic of Ireland  
Soloheadbeg Ambush Site, County Tipperary  
Balmoral Showgrounds, Belfast, Northern Ireland  
Irish Parliamentary Party Offices, Dublin  
Edward Carson's Statue, Belfast, Northern Ireland

## *Historical Figures*

Isaac Butt  
Charles Stewart Parnell  
John Redmond  
John Dillon  
William O'Brien  
Anna Parnell  
Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington  
Isabella Tod  
Anna Haslam  
Edward Carson  
John Redmond  
James Craig  
Eoin MacNeill



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