

Unionists and Nationalists in Ireland 1910 - 1918

Headings	Notes
IRELAND IN THE UNITED KINGDOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Act of Union, which made Ireland part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (UK), was passed in parliament on 28 March 1800, received royal assent on 1st August 1800 and came into effect on 1 January 1801. There was no longer a parliament in Dublin. Decisions for Ireland concerning taxes, trade, education and social welfare were decided in the Westminster parliament in London.
The Act of Union of 1800	
The United Kingdom Parliament at Westminster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The House of Lords <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A seat in the House of Lords was hereditary. It passed from father to son. A lord had his seat for life; therefore, the Lords was not influenced by elections or public opinion. Most members of the House of Lords were wealthy and saw little reason for change. The Conservative Party had a majority in the House of Lords. Sometimes, politicians, judges or others who had served the state were given a lifetime peerage. This seat was not hereditary – their son would not inherit it. The House of Commons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of Parliament (MPs) in the House of Commons were elected by limited suffrage in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The leader of the biggest part in the Commons became Prime Minister of the UK. He appointed his followers as Ministers. Only men over 21 who were the heads of a household could vote. By the 1900s, Irish voters elected 103 MPs to the House of Commons. Ireland had more than its fair share of MPs but British MPs always outnumbered the Irish MPs. That meant that Irish interests always had to take second place to British interests. The House of Commons was dominated by two large political parties: the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party. The Irish MPs joined either the Home Rule Party (also known as the Irish Parliamentary Party or IPP) or, later, the Unionist Party. The two Ministers for Ireland were the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary. They were responsible for the Royal Irish Constabulary (RUC/police), the civil service, the courts, education, transport, etc.
Keywords	Summary

Unionists and Nationalists in Ireland 1910 - 1918

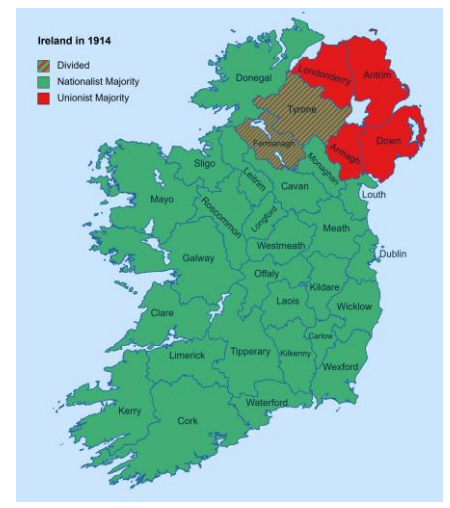
Headings	Notes
WHO WERE THE NATIONALISTS?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 75% of Irish people were nationalists. They wanted Ireland to have a parliament that would decide on Irish laws and taxes. • There were several reasons why a person might be a nationalist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious: Most nationalists were Catholics, who made up 75% of the population. They felt the predominately Protestant UK discriminated against them. They wanted to run their own affairs. • Ethnic: Most nationalists felt Irish, not British. They wanted Ireland to be run by Irish people, not by British people. • Economic/social: Outside east Ulster, the Irish economy had declined since the Act of Union 1800. Through the 19th Century, Ireland experienced famine, poverty, and emigration. Nationalists felt they could do a better job of managing the Irish economy than the British had.
MODERATE/ CONSTITUTIONAL NATIONALISTS (HOME RULERS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most nationalists were moderate or constitutional. • They aimed to persuade the British to give Ireland a parliament with power over local issues like health and transport. But the Westminster parliament would still control international affairs like trade or war. This limited form of independence was called Home Rule. • Constitutional nationalists disliked violence. They hoped to win Home Rule by peaceful and lawful means (i.e. by winning elections and votes in parliament). • In the 1910 general election, constitutional nationalists voted for the Irish Party (also known as the Home Rule Party). It was led by John Redmond and John Dillon. The Home Rulers won 85 of the 103 Irish seats in Westminster.
EXTREME NATIONALISTS (REPUBLICANS/ SEPARATISTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small minority of nationalists wanted to cut all ties between Ireland and Britain and have a completely separate and independent Irish state, perhaps a republic. They were called 'separatists' or 'republicans'. • Separatists believed that Britain would never listen to the moderate requests for Home Rule. Only violence, they thought, would force the British to give Ireland independence. • Some of them belonged to a secret society, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), whose members took an oath to fight for an Irish republic. The IRB was led by an elected Supreme Council. • After 1900, extreme nationalism gained increased support. An important reason for this was the development of cultural nationalism.
Keywords	Summary

Unionists and Nationalists in Ireland 1910 - 1918

Headings	Notes
CULTURAL NATIONALISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All through the 19th Century, the Irish population had become anglicised (like the English). By the 1890s, most Irish people spoke English, read English books and newspapers and played English games. This undermined their claim to be different from the other people of the UK.• Cultural nationalists tried to reverse anglicisation by developing aspects of Irish life where the Irish were different from the English. They set up:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), which aimed to develop distinctively Irish sports and games played according to Irish rules. The IRB used GAA clubs as a cover for recruiting and drilling. The RIC always spied on them.• The Gaelic League, which wanted to reverse the decline of the Irish language. Many of the people who joined it (e.g. Padraig Pearse and Éamon de Valera) were drawn towards republicanism because they believed only an Irish government could protect and revive Irish. In 1915, republicans changed the League's constitution to make it support complete independence.
CULTURAL NATIONALISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Anglo-Irish literary movement tried to develop a distinctively Irish literature in the English language. Poets (e.g. W.B Yeats) and playwrights (e.g. Lady Gregory and J.M. Synge) included Irish myths, place names and folklore in their work. Many of the leading people in the movements were Protestants, which made other nationalists suspicious of them. It had far less impact on Irish nationalists than the Gaelic League and the GAA at the time.
THE REVIVAL OF THE IRB	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Between the 1880s and 1900, the IRB declined. It was revived after 1900 due to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new interest in republicanism after 1898 (the centenary of the 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion) and Wolfe Tone, the first Irish republican.• The impact of cultural revival.• The activities of a number of enthusiastic young men who joined after 1900, e.g Bulmer Hobson, a Belfast Quaker, and Seán MacDiarmada from Leitrim, who used his job as organiser for the Gaelic League to recruit young men into the IRB.• In 1907, Thomas Clarke, who had been in the IRB since the 1880s, returned to Ireland from the US. He joined the younger men in taking control of the IRB Supreme Council.• Fearing spies and leaks, they kept the new IRB small. To compensate for that, they infiltrated other organisations like the GAA and the Gaelic League with the aim of making them support republicanism
Keywords	Summary

Unionists and Nationalists in Ireland 1910 - 1918

Headings	Notes
UNIONISTS OPPOSE HOME RULE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the last actions were illegal, the Conservative leader, Bonar Law, and many in the British ruling class, enthusiastically supported the unionists. Many officers in the British army were also unionists. In March 1914, some of them resigned rather than obey an order to disarm the UVF (the 'Curragh mutiny'). After that it was impossible for Asquith to use the British army against the UVF.
1913-1914: DISCUSSING PARTITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At first Asquith and Redmond believed the unionists were bluffing. They pointed out that only 18 Irish MPs were unionists compared with 85 Home Rulers. But as unionist opposition became clearer and as the UVF gained strength, leading British Liberals David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill insisted that they negotiate with Carson. Secret talks went on through 1913 and 1914 about 'special treatment' for the northeast of Ireland where unionists were in a majority. First Redmond offered them a Belfast parliament under Dublin control. Carson rejected this. He wrote that there was: '<i>A desire to settle on the terms of leaving "Ulster" out</i>'. This pointed to partition. Ireland would be divided (partitioned) into two parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the island would have Home Rule/ Part of Ulster would remain in the UK, under British rule. The question then emerged of how much of Ulster would remain in the United Kingdom? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Ulster has nine counties. They were divided almost equally (49% Catholic and 51% Protestant). Carson did not want all nine counties because a small change in population would mean that the unionists losing control. Four counties – Antrim, Derry, Down and Armagh – had large Protestant majorities Early on, Redmond accepted that he would have to give these up. Three counties – Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan – had large Catholic majorities. Early on in the negotiations, Carson made it clear that he did not want the counties. But two counties – Fermanagh and Tyrone – were more evenly divided, with small Catholic majorities. Each side wanted them.
Keywords	Summary



Unionists and Nationalists in Ireland 1910 - 1918

Headings	Notes
<p>HOW THE WAR AFFECTED REDMOND'S POSITION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• His most active followers were fighting in France.• In 1915, the British parties formed a coalition to fight the war. Asquith offered ministerial jobs to both Redmond and Carson. Carson accepted but Redmond refused. This was popular in Ireland, but it left Redmond on the outside when decisions were made.
Keywords	Summary

Unionists and Nationalists in Ireland 1910 - 1918

Political Crisis in Britain

1. In 1909 the British government was plunged into crisis as a result of the House of Lords rejecting the budget proposed by the Liberals.
2. Two general elections took place in 1910. Both led to a stalemate with the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) holding the balance of power.
3. The Liberal Party, supported by the IPP decided to prevent the House of Lords stopping legislation proposed by the British Government.
4. They passed a law that removed the veto the House of Lords. In future the House of Lords could only hold up legislation for two years.

What was the effect of this change?

1. Every time the British Government attempted to introduce Home Rule for Ireland the House of Lords stopped it.
2. When the British Government introduced a Bill in 1912 that would grant Home Rule to Ireland, the House of Lords could only delay it for two years.

How did Nationalists respond to the establishment of the UVF ?

1. The establishment of the UVF posed a threat to Nationalists and to Home Rule.
2. Despite this many Nationalists welcomed the establishment of the UVF.
3. The Irish Republican Brotherhood argued that it would allow Nationalists to also establish an armed group to fight for Home Rule for the whole island.
4. It became inevitable that Nationalists would have to respond to developments.

What was the reaction in Ireland?

1. The Irish Parliamentary Party were very popular in Ireland. All over the country supporters of Home Rule praised the IPP and it's leader, John Redmond, for achieving Home Rule for Ireland.
2. Among Unionists, however, there was utter dismay that they could be betrayed by a British government.
3. In response Unionists, under the leadership of Edward Carson, established the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) as an armed group, to resist Home Rule.
4. Under pressure from the UVF and the Conservative Party in Britain, the Liberal Government proposed that Ulster would be excluded from Home Rule.

How were the Irish Volunteers established?

1. With the support of the IRB, Eoin Mac Neill, a leading figure in Nationalist circles, called a meeting in Dublin on 25 November 1913 to establish the Irish Volunteers.
2. The IRB had already begun military training and organisations like the GAA and the Gaelic League were actively supporting the initiative.
3. Hundreds attended the meeting in Dublin and meetings followed all over the country.
4. Within weeks thousands had joined the Irish Volunteers and by the middle of 1914 they had over 110,000 members.

Why was Home Rule not introduced in 1914?

1. The First World War started before Home Rule could be introduced and the British Government postponed Home Rule until the war was over.
2. Leader of the IPP, John Redmond, called on all members of the Irish Volunteers to join the British Army, but Eoin MacNeill opposed Redmond.
3. The Irish Volunteers split.
4. Over 100,000 supported Redmond who formed the National Volunteers.
5. About 10,000 rejected the call to fight and remained with MacNeill in the Irish Volunteers.