

**“No Idle Sightseers”:
The Ulster Women’s Unionist Council and Ulster Unionism (1911-1920s)**

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Abstract

Title: *“No Idle Sightseers”*: *The Ulster Women’s Unionist Council and Ulster Unionism (1911-1920s)*

This doctoral dissertation examines the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council (UWUC), an overlooked, but historically significant Ulster unionist institution, during the 1910s and 1920s—a time of great conflict. Ulster unionists opposed Home Rule for Ireland. World War 1 erupted in 1914 and was followed by the Anglo-Irish War (1919-1922), the partition of Ireland in 1922, and the Civil War (1922-1923). Within a year of its establishment the UWUC was the largest women’s political organization in Ireland with an estimated membership of between 115,000 and 200,000. Yet neither the male-dominated Ulster unionist institutions of the time, nor the literature related to Ulster unionism and twentieth-century Irish politics and history have paid much attention to its existence and work.

This dissertation seeks to redress this. The framework of analysis employed is original in terms of the concepts it combines with a gender focus. It draws on Rogers Brubaker’s (1996) concepts of “nation” as practical category, institutionalized form (“nationhood”), and contingent event (“nationness”), combining these concepts with William Walters’ (2004) concept of “domopolitics” and with a feminist understanding of the centrality of gender to nation. This analytical framework is used to explore the UWUC’s role in the Ulster unionist movement during the 1910s and the 1920s, with a particular focus on the gendered constitution of Ulster. This study argues that Ulster historically has been constituted through the gendered discourses, norms, symbols, rituals,

traditions, and practices of Ulster unionist institutions, and contingent events, such as the Ulster Crisis, World War 1, the Anglo-Irish War, and the partition of Ireland. This dissertation analyzes primary sources related to the UWUC. It reveals the extent of the work undertaken by members of the UWUC in terms of opposing Home Rule and constituting Ulster. It argues that the scale of the mobilization of the UWUC and the scope of its anti-Home Rule work makes clear that the UWUC was *not* peripheral to Ulster unionism; nor were its members “idle sightseers” in terms of the events of the 1910s and 1920s and the constitution of Ulster.

Dedicated to my family:

My parents, David and Susan McKane
My sister and brother-in-law, Jeanne McKane and Rob Murakami
My sister and brother-in-law, Erin McKane and Anton Swanson
My nieces, Olivia and Ella Murakami
My nephew, Dean Swanson

and to my great-grandmothers, Gertrude Fraser and Margaret McKane, and my great-
great-grandmothers, Barbara Garvie and Mary Jane Crosbie, signatories to the
Declaration in 1912

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Acronyms

AOH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
DMP	Dublin Metropolitan Police
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
INV	Irish National Volunteers
IPP	Irish Parliamentary Party (Nationalist Party)
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
IUPP	Irish Unionist Parliamentary Party
IWFL	Irish Women's Franchise League
IWWU	Irish Women's Workers Union
LAOI	Loyal Association of Orangewomen of Ireland
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
UUC	Ulster Unionist Council
UULA	Ulster Unionist Labour Association
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UDU	Ulster Defence Union
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
UWUC	Ulster Women's Unionist Council
UWUC ECM	Ulster Women's Unionist Council Executive Committee Minutes
UWVA	Ulster Women's Volunteer Association

Chapter 1

Introduction

All I boast is that we have a Protestant parliament and a Protestant state.

(Sir James Craig, Lord Craigavan, first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. *Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates* (Hansard), *House of Commons*, vol 2, cols 1091, 1095, cited in Farrell 1980, 92)

The people cannot decide until somebody decides who are the people.

(Sir Ivor Jennings, cited in Huntington 1991, 15)

INTRODUCTION

One cannot fully comprehend either how Northern Ireland came into being or the approximately three decades of political violence known as “the Troubles” (1968-1998) without understanding the history of unionism in Ulster. Sir James Craig’s famous quote, which opens this chapter, demonstrates the pervading Ulster unionist discourse that constituted Northern Ireland.¹ Fearful of domination by an Irish nationalist Catholic majority in an independent Ireland, Ulster unionists agreed to the establishment of the Province of Northern Ireland as a semi-autonomous region of the UK in 1921 in which Protestants would be a demographic and electoral majority. Northern Ireland comprises six of the nine counties of the historic province of Ulster.²

¹ Sir James Craig was leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, and an MP in the Northern Irish parliament from 1921 until his death in 1940. He was also a member of the Orange Order and Grand Master of County Down Orangemen (Farrell 1980, 339; Foster 1989, 465; Walker 2004, 290-1). The UUP was the dominant unionist political party in Northern Ireland from partition in 1921 until the 2003 election when widespread dissatisfaction with the Good Friday Agreement, or the Belfast Agreement as it is known to many Unionists and Loyalists, meant that many former UUP supporters transferred their support to the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which has been generally more socially conservative than the UUP and was initially very critical of the Agreement (Tonge 2006, 170).

² Darby 1997, 27; Rooney 1995, 40; Roulston 1997, 43. In 1921 the nine counties of Ulster had a population of approximately 900,000 Protestants and an estimated 700,000 Catholics. In the six counties that became the Province of Northern Ireland, however, the Protestant population was roughly 820,000 while the Catholic population numbered around 430,000 (Darby 1997, 27).

As Charles Craig (brother of Sir James Craig) explained at the time: “If we had a nine-county parliament with sixty-four members, the Unionist majority would be about three or four: but in a six-county parliament with fifty-two members the Unionist majority would be about ten”.³ This allowed Ulster unionists and Protestants to attain and retain political and economic power in the province.⁴

Much has been written about Ulster unionism and the Troubles in Northern Ireland. However, there has been little analysis of the gendered nature of Ulster unionism. Much of the literature has focused on the history of Ulster unionism and/or its dominant institutions such as the UUP, the Orange Order, and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).⁵ (Jane McGaughey’s analysis of Ulster masculinities is an exception to this.⁶) Within this literature, as well as reference sources, there is generally more information available related to the male leadership of the UUC than there is related to the female leadership (and membership generally) of the UWUC.

³ Darby 1997, 27.

⁴ Darby 1997, 27; Rooney 1995, 40; Roulston 1997, 43.

⁵ See: Akenson 1991; Aughey 2005, 1999, 1989; Bardon 2007; Bew, Gibbon & Patterson 1996; Boyce & O’Day 2001; Bruce 1986; Buckland 1973; Collins 1994; Edwards 1970; Edwards 2000; English & Walker 1996; Farrell 1980; Fitzpatrick 1998; Gibbon 1975; Graham & Shirlow 2002; Hennessey 1997, 1993; Holland 1999; Jackson 2003, 1994, 1992, 1990, 1989; Loughlin 2007, 1999, 1995; McGarry & O’Leary 1995; McIntosh 1999; McKittrick & McVea 2002; McNeill 1922; Patterson 1980; Powell 2002; Prince 2007; Ruane & Todd 2000; Stubbs 1990; Todd, Rougier, O’Keefe & Bottos 2009; Todd, O’Keefe, Rougier & Bottos 2006; Todd 1987; Tonge 2006; Walker 2004.

⁶ McGaughey 2012.

PURPOSE

This doctoral dissertation contributes to an understanding of Ulster unionism. It analyzes the discursive, symbolic, and practical constitution of Ulster by the institutionalized and gendered Ulster unionist movement between the early 1910s and the 1930s. This was a time of great tension, conflict, and increasing militarization in Ireland. Home Rule, or a return to a Dublin parliament, was supported by many Irish nationalists and opposed by Ulster unionists; World War I broke out; the Anglo-Irish War and Civil War were fought; and Ireland was partitioned. Specifically, this dissertation broadens the existing literature on Ulster unionism by exploring the ways in which gender and gender norms were integral to the constitution of Ulster through an investigation of a little studied organization: the Ulster Women's Unionist Council (UWUC).

Gender norms of the day (and much of the existing literature on Ulster unionism) ascribed a subsidiary role to women and women's organizations. Hence the UWUC was constituted as an auxiliary unionist organization; it was the only unionist organization excluded from the ranks of the Ulster Unionist Council (UUC), an umbrella organization for Ulster unionist associations, until 1918.⁷ The present study argues that the UWUC was *not* in fact an "idle sightseer"⁸—a passive observer from the sidelines or merely a behind-the-scenes supporter—of the Ulster unionist movement and its constitution of

⁷ Urquhart 1996, 36.

⁸ McNeill 1922, 113.

Ulster. In fact, the UWUC was deeply engaged in the Ulster unionist movement and its constitution of Ulster as a distinct and unified polity in the period under study.

This dissertation examines the emergence of Ulster unionism as an institutionalized and gendered nationalist discourse and political movement in these years. It also contributes to the existing literature related to nation and nationalism. Drawing on Rogers Brubaker's concepts of "nation" as "practical category", as "institutionalized form" ("nationhood"), and "contingent event" ("nationness"), it understands the "nation" to be constituted through institutionalized norms and practices of classification and categorization, as well as responses to contingent events.⁹ However, this dissertation expands Brubaker's understanding of nation by combining it with a feminist analysis which takes gender to be central to the discursive, symbolic, and practical constitution of nation, and by combining it with William Walters' notion of "domopolitics." The latter ties notions of home, territory, and security with notions of threats, danger, and insecurity to both home and territory.¹⁰ In this way, Brubaker's concepts of nation combined with a feminist understanding of the centrality of gender to nation and nationalist discourses, and with William Walters' notion of domopolitics, together establish a framework through which to understand Ulster unionism as a discourse and a political movement.¹¹

⁹ Brubaker 1996, 7, 10, 14-8, 20-1.

¹⁰ Walters 2004, 241-2.

¹¹ Brubaker 1996, 7, 10, 14-8, 20-1; Walters 2004, 241-2.

ULSTER UNIONISM: INSTITUTIONALIZED NATIONALIST AND GENDERED DISCOURSE

In this section the framework of analysis and concepts central to this dissertation in terms of understanding the discursive, practical, and symbolic constitution of Ulster as “practical category”, “institutionalized [and gendered] form”, and “contingent event” are briefly discussed (about which more will be said in Chapter 2).

Brubaker’s understanding of nation as practical category allows for an analysis of how Ulster unionist discourse constituted and territorialized Ulster and constituted the Ulster people as a polity with a shared culture, history, kinship, religious identity, and ties to a particular territory (Ulster). His concept of nationhood sheds light on how the institutionalized rules, norms, and traditions of Ulster unionist discourse, symbols, aims, and practices constituted Ulster as distinct from a Gaelic, Catholic, and Irish nationalist constituted Ireland. Further, nationhood is extended in order to understand Ulster also as gendered, with distinct norms of masculinity and femininity. These gender norms, and the gender-segregated institutions—the UUC and the UWUC—through which such gendered norms were constituted and reinforced, established particular roles for men as men and women as women in Ulster. Finally, Brubaker’s notion of nationness reveals how unforeseen events such as the Ulster Crisis (1912-1914), World War I, the Anglo-Irish War, the Civil War, as well as the partition of Ireland were integral to the constitution of Ulster as a polity united and used to mobilize

people through perceived shared and vulnerable aims and experiences and rooted in a particular territory.¹²

Connecting these three concepts with the idea of “nation-work” (a term developed by the author for the purposes of this dissertation), or the discursive, symbolic, and physical work undertaken by people *within* and *through* institutions on behalf of the nation, further reveals how the nation is constituted and institutionalized as gendered, not only through symbolic representations and discourse, but also through particular physical work which instantiates the nation and specifies and defends its membership, boundaries, traditions, and norms.

Additionally, Walters’ concept of domopolitics, which combines notions of home, territory, and security with ideas of threats, insecurity, and danger, as well as with notions of community, trust, and citizenship, is key to this analysis.¹³ It aids in an assessment of Ulster unionist discourses of home and territory (Ulster) and its siege mentality, related to the perceived threat that both Irish nationalist demands for Home Rule and the British government’s potential concession to those demands could and would pose to the security of the Ulster people and “their” territory.

Together, the above concepts form a framework through which the nation-work of the UWUC (its discourses, norms, rituals, and activities) can be understood and through which gender can be incorporated into analyses of nation and nationalism generally. If, according to Ulster unionism, Ulster was a Protestant (as well as British,

¹² Brubaker 1996, 7, 10, 14-8, 20-1.

¹³ Walters 2004, 241-2.

loyal, and patriarchal) sub-state of the UK for a Protestant (as well as British, loyal, and patriarchal) people and was also fundamentally gendered, how did it come to be constituted as such? This study helps to answer this question, focusing on the role of the UWUC as a significant Ulster unionist institution.

Drawing on selected neo-institutionalist literature, the importance of institutions to the work of making the nation is highlighted in this study. However, this literature (including Brubaker and Brubaker and Cooper)¹⁴ generally remains silent on the issue of the centrality of gender to nation and nation-work. Hence, this dissertation builds on Brubaker's insistence that analyses of the nation and nationalism must assess *how* the nation is constituted as a real, concrete, and institutionalized entity, but it also broadens his approach by analyzing how the nation is also constituted as gendered.¹⁵ In this way, the present study expands scholarship related to nation and nationalism, as well as Ulster unionism by addressing how gender and gender norms have been integral to Ulster unionism as a political movement and discourse, as well as its constitution of Ulster through its emphasis on the nation-work of the UWUC.

It should be noted that class has also been integral to Ulster unionism as a political movement and discourse, as others have demonstrated.¹⁶ This dissertation does not address the issue of class in the Ulster unionist movement and its discourse in detail;

¹⁴ See: Brubaker 1996; Brubaker & Cooper 2000.

¹⁵ Brubaker 1996, 16.

¹⁶ See: Gibbon 1975; Patterson 1980; Ruane & Todd 2000.

however, exploring the relationship between gender and class norms within the Ulster unionist movement and its discourses remains an important issue for future research.

Ulster Unionism and Identity Politics

Feminists have broadened the literatures on identity and nation. They have addressed areas around which there was a paucity of analysis and have offered key insights into the intersections of identity and the centrality of gender to the theory, ideology, and practice of nation. This section explores feminist approaches to identity and nation in order to understand the ways in which women's involvement in the Ulster unionist movement has been shaped in part by the dominant and evolving gender norms of femininity in the UK. As feminist scholars have noted, gender, race, ethnic, and class identities are mutually constituted and cannot be analyzed in isolation.¹⁷ Many have asserted that such identities are central to the constitution of nation.¹⁸ These scholars have posited that in the process of constructing collective identities that particular understandings of the primary features, symbols, and values of the community become dominant, while others are excluded or deemed secondary in importance. This has the effect of marginalizing particular groups socially, politically, and economically within a nation-state or nationalist movement, while privileging others. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 demonstrate that Ulster unionism constituted a religious Protestant identity which was

¹⁷ See: Crenshaw 1991; Collins 1990a, 1990b; hooks 1990, 1984; Rich 1980.

¹⁸ See: Ashe 2007; Enloe 1998, 1995; McClintock 1995; Peterson 1998, 1995; Rich 1980; Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989; Yuval-Davis 2004, 2001, 1997.

tioned to a national and cultural British identity and a political identity of loyalty to the key institutions of the UK.

Cleavages of gender, class, and faith denomination complicated this triad of Ulster unionist identity. As stated above, the present study concentrates on the question of gender and Ulster unionist identity. Within the Ulster unionist movement, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 4, authority and leadership were constituted as masculine characteristics personified in the ideal of the *Ulsterman* and the Ulster unionist leader Sir Edward Carson, as well as its symbolic representations of William of Orange. Such norms of masculinity constituted the public spheres of party politics, public administration, and the armed defence of Ulster as masculine domains. A man's role was to govern and ultimately to defend Ulster; masculine characteristics such as physical strength, courage, and risking/giving one's life for one's "King and Country" were held to be the most definitive expressions of patriotism, and they were valorized symbolically through rituals of commemoration and the building of monuments.¹⁹

Conversely, as will be demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6, the qualities of nurturing and caring were constituted as inherently feminine traits.²⁰ The primary role for a woman, according to Ulster unionism, was that of wife and mother, performing specific functions for the unionist cause which included supporting men active in unionist and Protestant struggles, and inculcating children with unionist and Protestant values and norms. While men were constituted as the active, public agents of Ulster

¹⁹ Foy 1996, 53; Jackson 1992, 18, 179-83; Jackson 1989, 15; Loughlin 1999, 110-3; McGaughey 2012, 55, 57, 70; Miller 2007, 99, 115; Walker 2004, 36-7.

²⁰ Wilford 1996b, 52.

unionism and Protestantism, women were often constituted as passive subjects, or as auxiliary agents to be called upon in times of need, but otherwise positioned very much in the private sphere of home and family, and thus sidelined from any formal representation or work in the public sphere.²¹ Such gender norms and gender-segregated spheres gave rise to gender-segregated unionist institutions, such as the UUC and the UWUC.

The influence of Protestant fundamentalism (along with the traditional hostility of Ulster unionism to feminism) further constituted these conservative, patriarchal gender norms.²² Protestant and Ulster unionist organizations also perpetuated a strongly homosocial culture.²³ The Orange Order was founded in 1795 as an exclusively male organization and remained so during the period of this study, while the UUC, an umbrella institution of Ulster unionist organizations, was in reality a male-only organization from its inception in 1905 until 1918, when women finally gained some (but not equal) formal representation on the UUC.²⁴ The UUC (historically the dominant Ulster unionist institution) and the Orange Order were closely connected as

²¹ Farrell 1980, 92.

²² Porter 1998, 47; Wilford 1996b, 44. From 1920 until 1998 only three women were elected as Northern Ireland MPs to Westminster. Women never made up more than roughly six percent of candidates in the Northern Ireland parliament during its existence from 1921 until its prorogation in 1972, while no more than approximately twelve percent of municipal councilors in Northern Ireland were women between the 1920s and the 1990s (Porter 1998, 47; Wilford 1996b, 44-5).

²³ Within the discipline of history the term homosocial refers to all-male or largely-male cultures and/or organizations, such as the culture of chivalry of medieval times, the navy and military, monasteries, sports teams/clubs, fraternities, and single-sex clubs or organizations such as the Orange Order (Lipman-Blumen 1984, 183-4; Sedgwick 1992, 1).

²⁴ Sales 1997b, 66; Urquhart 1996, 36.

the primary organizations through which Protestant and Ulster unionist identities, norms, values, and aims were constituted and expressed, and through which Protestant and Ulster unionist political, economic, and cultural power were exercised during the early 1900s.²⁵

As was previously mentioned, little attention has been paid to the issue of gender in the literature on the period under study here; even less attention has been paid to the nation-work of Protestant, unionist, or Orange women.²⁶ Much of the literature that addresses gender and women in Northern Ireland focuses primarily on women in Catholic and Irish nationalist communities during the Troubles.²⁷ While Rachel Ward's work concentrates on Protestant and unionist women, it is also primarily concerned with the period known as the Troubles.²⁸

Nancy Kinghan's work on the UWUC from 1911 to the 1950s is an important contribution to the history of Ulster unionism, and the UWUC in particular, but it is primarily a descriptive piece about the organization and its early history and work from the perspective of a UWUC-insider rather than an analytical historical study.²⁹ The work of Diane Urquhart comprises the bulk of the scholarly literature that has been published related to the UWUC and is an invaluable contribution as far as the history of

²⁵ Kennaway 2007, 24-5, 28-9; McKay 2005, 136.

²⁶ Here Orange women refers to members of the Loyal Orangewomen's Association of Ireland, the female counterpart of the men-only Orange Order.

²⁷ See: Aretxaga 1997; Fairweather et. al 1984; Fearon 1999; Sales 1997a, 1997 b.

²⁸ Ward 1996.

²⁹ See: Kinghan 1975. Nancy Kinghan was the Organising Secretary of the UWUC from 1938 until 1971 (Urquhart 2001, 224).

that organization specifically and Ulster unionism generally.³⁰ What is missing from the literature pertaining to the UWUC, however, is an analysis of the relationship between gender and nation. This dissertation aims to contribute to filling that gap in the literature through the development and use of a framework of analysis which enables the incorporation of gender into the study of nation and nationalism generally, and of Ulster unionism specifically. In addition, this case study of the UWUC integrates an analysis of that organization and its female unionist members into an examination of Ulster unionism as a political movement and discourse.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH

Research Questions

Very little has been written about the UWUC from a political science perspective. As a result, many questions remain to be answered. In keeping with the analytical framework outlined earlier, the primary research questions which this dissertation seeks to answer are: 1) How was Ulster as practical category, institutionalized form, and contingent event constituted through i) the discourse, norms, practices, symbols, aims, goals, and domopolitics of Ulster unionism in general and of the UWUC in particular, ii) the UWUC's norms, rituals, and traditions, and iii) the activities undertaken by the UWUC in the name of Ulster between the 1910s and the 1930s; and 2) To what extent and in what ways did the UWUC's constitution of Ulster

³⁰ See: Urquhart 2001, 2000, 1996, 1994.

reflect or challenge the ways that Ulster was constituted as practical category, institutionalized form, and contingent event by the UUC? These questions allow exploration of whether the discourse, norms, practices, symbols, aims, goals, and domopolitics of the UWUC was constitutional of or oppositional to that of the UUC, allowing us to gauge the significance of the UWUC to the broader Ulster unionist movement. Addressing these questions can also help us to verify or refute claims that the UWUC was peripheral to Ulster unionism.

To understand the nature of the constitution of Ulster this dissertation also seeks to answer the following questions: 1) To what extent and in what ways did the nation-work of the UWUC normalize or challenge particular understandings of gender, ethnic, and religious cleavages within Ulster?; and 2) How if at all did the UWUC's constitution of Ulster as practical category, institutionalized form, and contingent event shift between the 1910s and the 1930s, revealing changes in norms related to gender in Ulster unionist discourse?

Research Methods

This doctoral dissertation is based on three months of fieldwork in Northern Ireland, during which time I conducted archival research at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and the Linen Hall Library, both in Belfast. PRONI holds the records of the UWUC including the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Council of the UWUC; the financial records of the UWUC; correspondence among the leadership of the UWUC and between the leadership of the

UWUC and the UUC; as well as other primary sources such as newspaper articles pertaining to the UWUC taken from the *Belfast News-Letter* and the *Northern Whig*. The Linen Hall Library has a comprehensive collection on Northern Irish politics and history, including some files related to the UWUC. Diane Urquhart's 2001 published collection of primary source documents related to the UWUC (the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee and Council of the UWUC) has been most valuable in this study.

I have also drawn selectively on other primary sources, such as newspapers (e.g., the *Belfast News-Letter* and the *Northern Whig*), accessed via holdings in the above-mentioned archives, as well as the Newspaper Library of the Belfast Public Library. Newspaper coverage of key events such as the inaugural meeting of the UWUC in 1911, the Ulster Crisis (1912-1914), and Ulster Day in 1912 provide an understanding of the political and social context from which the UWUC emerged and operated between the 1910s and the 1930s. Such sources also illustrate how the UWUC was portrayed by the media at that time. Given that this dissertation seeks to develop an understanding of the UWUC as a province-wide institution, it has not drawn on the records of local branches (such as the minutes of branch meetings and financial records). Further research that expands the understanding of the UWUC through a more extensive understanding of its local branches is necessary, and such records would be an invaluable resource for that research.

Research Challenges

The primary challenge I confronted while doing this research was that although there is a considerable amount of primary source material, some relevant archival material held by PRONI was not available because the staff at PRONI was unable to locate it. In addition, much of the archival material reflects the official face of the UWUC: for example, the minutes of the meetings of its Executive Committee and Council, some of its publications, and the official correspondence among the leadership of the organization and between the leadership of the UWUC and the UUC. These sources did not necessarily lend themselves to constructing a picture of the rank and file of the organization and potential class-based or rural/urban cleavages, which remain important subjects for future research. Furthermore, researching the more recent history (especially from the 1960s to the present-day) is particularly challenging since the records of the UWUC deposited at PRONI during the period of the fieldwork for this dissertation ended in the 1960s and some of the records that date from more recent times remain embargoed for the present. This is why I limited myself to the period of this study.

Terminology

A brief explanation of terminology choices used in this study is warranted since many names and terms are politically charged in Ireland, particularly in Northern Ireland, where the choice of terms can be taken to reveal one's politics.

Unionist/unionist

Unionist (capitalized) is used in reference to those who were formally affiliated with the Conservative/Unionist Party, the UUC (established in 1905), and the UWUC; *unionist* (lowercase) is used in reference to the broader community in Ireland (but in the region that would become Northern Ireland in particular) who wished to maintain the political and economic union between Ireland and Great Britain. Some in Northern Ireland also often use the term *Loyalist* interchangeably with *unionist*, reflecting a particular community's loyalty to the British Crown and/or Northern Ireland's political, economic, and (some argue) cultural ties with the UK.

Irish nationalist

Irish nationalist is used in reference to movements and ideologies spanning the continuum of Irish nationalism from constitutional nationalism, which espoused the use of the existing institutions of the UK (namely its parliament) to achieve political and economic sovereignty for Ireland, to militant republicanism which advocated the use of violence to achieve a politically and economically independent Irish republic.

Ulster

Ulster is a contested moniker. Used by many unionists and Loyalists primarily in reference to the province of Northern Ireland, many Irish nationalists dismiss this use of the name, asserting that Ulster properly refers to one of the four ancient kingdoms of Ireland (which included three counties that were excluded from Northern Ireland at the

time of partition). Many Irish nationalists prefer to use the terms “the six counties” or “the north” in reference to Northern Ireland. Such monikers illustrate the commitment of Irish nationalists to a united Ireland as reflected in the Republic of Ireland’s political and economic claim (enshrined in its constitution of 1937 and only removed as part of the 1998 Good Friday/Belfast Agreement) to those “six counties” as part of a united and sovereign Ireland.³¹

Despite such contestations (and the risk of repetitiveness) the term *Ulster* is employed throughout this study because it has been such an important name and concept in Ulster unionist discourse and ideology for approximately a century. Ulster is a concept that has been imbued with a particular meaning through Ulster unionism as a political movement and ideology. It cannot be understood to be a real, concrete entity outside of how it has been constituted by Ulster unionist discourse, aims, symbols, rituals, traditions, institutions, practices, and actions. Since this study explores how Ulster has been constituted through the Ulster unionist movement, terms associated more with Irish nationalist meanings (e.g., “the north” or “the six counties”) did not seem appropriate choices for this study. Still, those terms will be applied occasionally in reference to the region prior to the partition of Ireland and/or Irish nationalist discourses.

³¹ Kee 2000, 749; McKittrick & McVea 2002, 5, 11, 16, 220; Ruane & Todd 2000, xiv, xv, 53. Although the 1937 constitution of the Republic of Ireland claimed sovereignty over all thirty-two counties of Ireland it recognized that in six counties this claim could not be immediately implemented (Kee 2000, 749).

Derry/Londonderry

Currently, it is politically correct to use the term Derry/Londonderry in reference to the city to reflect both the commonly used Irish nationalist (Derry) and Ulster unionist (Londonderry) names for the city. However, during the period of focus for this study the use of the double name was not common practice. For this reason, and since the focus of this study is Ulster unionism, I have chosen to use the name *Londonderry* to refer to the city.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Here the purpose and key arguments of each chapter are briefly explained and connected to the purpose and key argument of this dissertation. The argument and analysis of the dissertation are organized as follows. Chapter 2 begins with an explication of the key concepts used in this dissertation (nation, nationhood, nationness, nation-work, and domopolitics) and a detailed discussion of the framework of analysis that informs this research. It explores the phenomenon of nationalism and situates this dissertation within the scholarly literature on nation and nationalism, the feminist critiques of that literature, as well as the scholarly literature on Ulster unionism. It is argued in this chapter that gender is central to the constitution of nation and, as such, cannot and should not be treated as marginal or peripheral in analyses of nation and nationalism. It is also argued that Ulster unionism can be understood as a nationalist movement.

Chapter 3 explores the political, economic, and social contexts of nineteenth-century Ireland to outline the circumstances from which Ulster unionism emerged as a political movement. It illustrates that in Ireland, gender, class, ethnic, and religious cleavages were institutionalized in state practices and Irish nationalist discourse, symbols, traditions, aims, and practices. It is argued that because male landed Protestant privilege was institutionalized through a series of laws and historical events, Irish nationalist ideologies and movements were constituted in opposition to those interests and were primarily reflective of male Catholic Irish interests, while unionism (and later Ulster unionism) largely reflected the interests of the male landed Protestant class.

Chapter 4 discusses the rise of Ulster unionism as a distinct institutionalized and gendered political movement during the late 1800s and early 1900s. This chapter addresses the shifting unionist discourse of Ulster and the gendered practices, norms, and discourses of Ulster unionism out of which the UWUC emerged. It also explores the interconnectedness of gender, class, ethnic, religious, and political identities in Ulster unionist discourse, norms, rituals, symbols, aims, and practices, as well as how these multiple and intersecting identities constituted the relationship of male and female Protestants and unionists with Ulster. In this chapter it is argued that the concentration of Protestants and unionists in the northeast of Ireland meant that as the perceived threats to these groups mounted in the early 1900s with proposed Home Rule for Ireland, the unionist movement became increasingly focused on and concentrated in the nine counties of Ulster. Thus Ulster was constituted through Ulster unionists' opposition to Home Rule as culturally, religiously, and politically distinct from the rest

of Ireland, and equally deserving of the right to self-determination.

Chapter 5 explores the ways in which this institutionalized and gendered Ulster was constituted through the UWUC's discourse of Ulster, its norms of membership, aims, rituals, and practices, as well as through its diverse forms of nation-work throughout the 1910s, related to the Ulster Crisis (1912-1914), World War I (1914-1918), and UK and regional elections. Such nation-work included lobbying, organizing demonstrations, and educating the public about the unionist position against Home Rule, administering unionist electoral registers, fundraising, and war work. It is argued that the UWUC was *not* an "idle sightseer", but integral to the Ulster unionist movement and its constitution of Ulster during this decade of crisis, tension, and war.

Chapter 6 examines the decade of the 1920s, as well as a few relevant events of the 1930s, the period immediately following partition during which the new institutions of Ulster (Northern Ireland), as a semi-autonomous region of the UK, were established (such as a parliament, government bureaucracy, and police force). It explores the ways in which the discourse, norms of membership, aims, and practices of the UWUC shifted as a result of Ulster unionists' reluctant acceptance of partition and the emergence of Northern Ireland in 1921, as well as a result of the limited franchise granted to women in the UK in 1918, and which was expanded in 1928. At this time the UWUC focused on supporting the establishment and maintenance of Unionist power within Ulster (Northern Ireland); this meant educating a key new group in the electorate: voting women.

The nation-work of the UWUC during the 1910s, and the partial

enfranchisement of women in the UK in 1918, afforded the leadership of the leadership of the UWUC with justifications for the organization's insistence that the significance of its nation-work receive greater recognition within the broader Ulster unionist movement as Ulster unionists sought to solidify their political and economic dominance in Northern Ireland. During this time the UWUC focused on educating women on political issues of the day (both regional, national, and international) through "at-home" meetings and the two newspapers that it published during the 1920s. These activities not only aimed to educate women, but also constituted Ulster as a distinct entity, while also constituting the dominant norms of femininity in Ulster. I argue in this chapter that the UWUC played a significant role in this process of establishing Ulster (Northern Ireland) as a "Protestant state for a Protestant people" through its work to ensure Ulster unionist political and economic dominance in Northern Ireland.

SUMMARY

As is demonstrated in the following chapter, the literature on nationalism contributes to an understanding of Ulster unionism as a discourse and political movement, yet within this literature scant attention has been paid to gender. The present research contributes to the literature on nation and nationalism through examining the gendered nature of discourses of nation and nationalism generally. Moreover, it contributes to the literature related to Ulster unionism. It provides an understanding of the constitution of Ulster as practical category, gendered and institutionalized form, as

well as moments of nationness through the discourse, norms, rituals, symbols, aims, practices, and domopolitics of Ulster unionism. It demonstrates that contrary to much of the dominant analysis of Ulster unionism, gender has been central to, *not* peripheral to the constitution of Ulster and that the UWUC was integral, *not* marginal to the Ulster unionist movement and its constitution of Ulster between the 1910s and the 1930s.

Chapter 2

Ulster as Gendered “Nation”: Establishing a Framework of Analysis

We cannot understand nations and nationalism simply as an ideology or form of politics but must treat them as cultural phenomena as well. That is to say, nationalism, the ideology and movement, must be closely related to national identity, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism...we cannot begin to understand the power and appeal of nationalism as a political force without grounding our analysis in a wider perspective whose focus is national identity treated as a collective cultural phenomenon.

(Smith 1991, vii)

Appeals and claims made in the name of putative 'nations' ...have been central to politics for one hundred and fifty years...but one does not have to take a category inherent in the practice of nationalism—the realist, reifying conception of nations as real communities and make this category central to the theory of nationalism...One can analyze 'nation-talk' and nationalist politics without positing the existence of 'nations'.

(Brubaker & Cooper 2000, 5)

INTRODUCTION

The present chapter explores nationalism as a phenomenon, establishes the basis for claims regarding nationalism in this study, and situates the constitution of Ulster within the literature on nation and nationalism. It begins with a discussion of the framework of analysis used in and the concepts central to this study—nation; nationhood; nationness; nation-work; domopolitics; and gender. These concepts are related briefly to the case to be further developed in the following chapters: that is, how Ulster unionism constituted Ulster discursively, symbolically, and practically as British, Loyal, Protestant, and gendered in significant ways. Feminist critiques of the literature on nation and nationalism are explored with regards to the connections among nation, gender, family, history, symbols, and citizenship and related to the case of Ulster unionism. The chapter concludes by identifying the ways in which the literature on nation and nationalism

contributes to an understanding of Ulster unionism as discourse and as a political movement.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

Nation, nationhood, nationness

Here the framework of analysis and key concepts used in this study, which were briefly discussed in the previous chapter, are examined in greater depth. The feminist notion that gender and gender norms are integral to discourses and the constitution of nation is central to my framework of analysis as will be discussed below. However, I begin with the idea of nation and processes of nation-building, which have been the subjects of significant debate over the last two centuries. Rogers Brubaker has noted that much of this debate has reified the nation by focusing on the question: *What is a nation?* This may reflect the reality that the nation-state remains the most important institution in international politics, and nationalism is still a dominant political ideology globally, which makes nation and nationalism important contemporary concepts and phenomena worthy of continued analysis.³² However, Brubaker and Cooper have argued that social and political analysts need to assess how the nation is constituted and reified without “*reproducing or reinforcing such reification*”.³³ Therefore, Brubaker has observed that the

³² Anderson 2006, 113; Bacova 1998, 29-30; Breuilly 1985, 65; Brubaker 1996, 7, 10, 14-5, 21; Brubaker & Cooper 2000, 5; Gellner 2008, 3, 5, 132; Hobsbawm 1991, 1, 14, 80-1, 163, 169; Smith 1991, viii, 121, 143-5; Wimmer 2008, 990-1.

³³ Brubaker & Cooper 2000, 5.

more relevant question is: *How* is a nation constituted discursively, symbolically, and in practice?³⁴

For Brubaker, nationalism is not a force to be measured as receding or resurgent, but “a heterogeneous set of ‘nation’-oriented idioms, practices, and possibilities that are continuously available or ‘endemic’ in modern cultural and political life”.³⁵ These idioms, practices, and possibilities fall into three categories: nation, nationhood, and nationness. Drawing on Brubaker’s approach, and employing his categories of analysis, enables us to understand the constitution of Ulster through Ulster unionism without reifying Ulster.

Brubaker has situated his analyses within the neo-institutionalist approaches to nation, which call for a contextualized analysis of the effects of institutions on the constitution of nation. Institutional approaches are generally concerned with how “institutional arrangements” shape, mediate, and channel social choices. Neo-institutionalist approaches tend to diverge from earlier institutional approaches—as well as from the rational-choice approaches of economics and political science—by emphasizing how institutions *constitute* interests and actors rather than how they provide a context that places constraints on “interested action”.³⁶ Such approaches emerged, in part, as a response to primordialist, constructivist, and modernist arguments that cultural, ethnic, or class identities were the foundations of the nation, which many neo-

³⁴ Brubaker 1996, 14-5.

³⁵ Brubaker 1996, 10.

³⁶ Brubaker 1996, 23-4; March & Olsen 1984, 740-1, 743.

institutionalists have asserted ignores the role of the nation-state and state-based institutions.

Neo-institutionalist approaches examine how institutions (e.g., political parties, government bureaucracies, non-governmental organizations, organized religions) constitute strategic choices by making particular boundaries (e.g., ethnicity) more plausible or attractive when determining access to resources.³⁷ In addition, they argue that institutions help to define how resources and power are allocated by using rules, policies, and legislation, as well as rights, privileges, powers, and access to/control of national/state resources (e.g., waged employment, healthcare, education, and other social benefits). Consequently, according to neo-institutionalist approaches, an individual's ties to a community are based on reasoned decisions about which community(ies) will bring the most benefits and advantages; in this way, decisions are based not on kinship, but on the belief that shared interests need to be protected.³⁸ (This will be explored in the following chapters with reference to Ulster and Ulster unionism.)

Brubaker has been critical of primordialist, modernist, and constructivist approaches for their tendency to reify the nation by treating it as a real "substantial enduring collectivity" that is able to act in a unified and "purposeful" manner.³⁹ Moreover, Brubaker has argued that such approaches problematically conflate a "category of practice" with a "category of analysis"; they take an idea central to the

³⁷ Bacova 1998, 33.

³⁸ Bacova 1998, 33.

³⁹ Brubaker 1996, 14-5, 21.

practice of nationalism (i.e., the notion of the nation as a concrete community) and make it central to a *theory* of nationalism.⁴⁰

Primordialist approaches to nation and nationalism tend to reify the nation by focusing on presumed ancient origins and shared kinship and culture, and by assuming that its emergence as a nation-state (or a nationalist movement) was a natural evolution of this pre-existing group. Such approaches tend to consider ethnic identity to be foundational to the nation and rooted in biology and ancient or historical blood/kinship ties. Consequently ethnic identity, and the national identity to which it is believed to be integral, are regarded as natural, fixed, and bestowed through birth based on the “group” into which one is born, rather than identities one can choose or assume through marriage, immigration, or processes of socialization such as through state-based systems of education and values instilled through child-rearing and/or popular culture.⁴¹ In this way primordialist approaches imbue the nation with legitimacy based upon presumed innate shared ethnic and national identities, history, language, culture, and ties to a particular place or territory.⁴²

⁴⁰ Brubaker 1996, 15.

⁴¹ See for example: Bacova 1998, 35-6; Eller & Coughlan 1996, 45; Geertz 1996, 42-3; and van den Berghe 1996, 57 for further discussions related to primordialist approaches to nation and ethnicity.

⁴² Ulster unionist and Irish nationalist discourses of the 1910s and 1920s constituted political (Irish nationalist or Ulster unionist), religious (Catholic or Protestant), class (upper-, middle-, and working-class), and cultural (Gaelic or British; Celtic or Anglo-Saxon) identities. This will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Likewise modernist and constructivist approaches tend to reify the nation by seeing it as emerging from homogenizing historical and social forces.⁴³ Even the argument that the nation was an “ideological smokescreen” and an “illusory or spurious community” (thus making nationalism a “false consciousness”) assumes that the nation is reflective of “concrete communities or collectivities”.⁴⁴ Such approaches to nation contest the naturalness and stasis with which such primordialist discourses imbue the nation, arguing that such understandings of identity as “ineffable, overpowering, and coercive”, based primarily on *a priori* and inevitable attachments, sentiments, and bonds, make identity unanalyzable and occlude the material and ideological bases of identity, as well as its dynamic nature.⁴⁵ Some conceive of the nation and nationalism as a political unit and ideology constituted by an élite “thinking class” (intelligentsia) and/or institutions such as industrial capitalist production, mass media, and state bureaucracies and systems of education of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁴⁶ In contrast, others posit that nation-building processes are not driven exclusively (or primarily) by an educated or political élite, but are a processes in which the masses are central through the use of symbols, myths, traditions, and what Hobsbawm calls “folk culture” (or culture of the masses), which constitute the nation.⁴⁷

⁴³ Brubaker 1996, 15. See for example: Anderson 2006; Bacova 1998; Barth 1996; Benton 1997; Breuilly 1985; Eller & Coughlan 1996; Fearon & Latin 2000; Geertz 1996; Gellner 2008; Hobsbawm 1991; Hutchinson 2001; Smith 1991; and Wimmer 2008.

⁴⁴ Brubaker 1996, 15.

⁴⁵ Eller & Coughlan 1996, 45-7; Fearon & Latin 2000, 848-9.

⁴⁶ See for example Anderson (2006) and Gellner (2008).

⁴⁷ See for example Hobsbawm (1991) and Smith (1991).

However, dominant modernist and constructivist approaches to nation and nationalism have also tended to remain fixed to the primacy of *ethnic* identity over other “interests” (e.g., class, gender, religion) in nation-building processes. The understanding of national identity as *either* homogeneous and constituted through a modern élite-class or modern institutions (*à la* Anderson or Gellner), *or* generated by and through folk culture, symbols, traditions, and ceremonies (*à la* Hobsbawm or Smith) ultimately overrides internal cleavages based on gender, ethnicity, religion, or class, since a shared national identity is constituted as a unifying force which is deemed to be more powerful than such cleavages.⁴⁸ Consequently such approaches often obscure not only internal divisions, but also the ways in which gender, ethnicity, religion, and class are mutually constituted. Different relationships to the nation are generated depending on how these mutually constituted identities intersect, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters.

Brubaker asserts that such reification of the nation is also pivotal to the “phenomenon of nationalism” itself.⁴⁹ Nationalist ideologies reify the nation through the use of symbols, rituals, and particular historical accounts that highlight certain events in the life of the nation and downplay others. In this way, a sense of a commonly held national history, culture, purpose, and heroes is constituted through particular events (such as wars and revolutions), as well as institutions that define who belongs and who is excluded from the nation.⁵⁰ Thus, according to Brubaker, “‘nation’ [is] a category of

⁴⁸ See Anderson 2006; Gellner 2008; Hobsbawm 1991; and Smith 1991.

⁴⁹ Brubaker 1996, 15.

⁵⁰ Brubaker 1996, 14-5.

practice...[and] to understand nationalism, we have to understand the practical uses of the category ‘nation’, the ways it can come to structure perception, to inform thought and experience, [and] to organize discourse and practical action”.⁵¹ He further argues that the nation should be thought of “not as a substance but as institutionalized form [nationhood], not as collectivity but as practical category [nation], not as entity but as contingent event [nationness]”.⁵² (These concepts are explicated below.)

I draw on Brubaker’s concepts of nation, nationhood, and nationness in this study in order to assess how Ulster was constituted through Ulster unionism generally and the UWUC in particular. Nation as practical category relates to a particular “category of social vision and division” which constitutes the nation, as conveyed through nationalist ideology.⁵³ Understanding nation as practical category enables one to grasp how a “people” are constituted as a collective entity experienced as real and united through categories of classification (i.e., Irish/British; Catholic/Protestant; disloyal/loyal) and presumed shared kinship, history, language, culture, religion, and ties to a particular territory.⁵⁴ Evidence of Ulster as practical category is found in the discourse and rhetoric of official documents of the UWUC such as its constitution, the *Declaration*, its petitions to politicians and parliament, as well as in the speeches and personal correspondence of its members (as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6).

⁵¹ Brubaker 1996, 7.

⁵² Brubaker 1996, 7, 18.

⁵³ Brubaker 1996, 21.

⁵⁴ Brubaker 1996, 14-5, 21.

Brubaker additionally posits that practical categories of nation become institutionalized through state-related organizational structures and practices including political organizations, such as the UUC and the UUWC, as well as organized nationalist, labour, and civil rights movements (for example).⁵⁵ Nationhood, or nation as institutionalized form, elaborates fundamental forms of political identity (i.e., national, ethnic, gender, class, and religious) and provides the elementary forms of political understanding and action through institutionalized norms, traditions, rituals, symbols, and practices. In this way, the institutionalized discourse of nation constitutes classifications which are fundamental to “political understanding, rhetoric, interests, identity, and action” and provides the central parameters of political rhetoric and particular political interests.⁵⁶ Therefore, when analyzing nation it is important to understand not only how “the political fiction of the nation” (including its gendered constitution, I argue) shapes perceptions, ideas, and experiences, but also how it informs the discourses and actions of nationalist institutions and movements.⁵⁷

Nationhood affords a comprehension of how Ulster was institutionalized through the rules, norms, rituals, and traditions of the institutions of Ulster unionism. Institutionalized rituals, symbols, and traditions are significant ways through which the nation is embodied and institutionalized. They mark the significant events of a collectivity, provide a sense of unity, signify membership or belonging, and define the

⁵⁵ Brubaker 1996, 18-21.

⁵⁶ Brubaker 1996, 21-2, 24.

⁵⁷ Brubaker 1996, 7, 16; Brubaker & Cooper 2000, 5.

terms of membership through particular norms of participation.⁵⁸ Hence nationhood is a useful concept in analyses of Ulster unionism. The symbols, rituals, and traditions of Ulster unionism constituted Ulster as having a shared history, culture, and experience beginning with the migration of Protestants from Scotland and England to Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries known as the Plantation. This shared understanding of history, culture, and experience tied Ulster unionists and Protestants to each other, to Ulster, and to modern Ulster unionist institutions such as the UUC and the UWUC, mass politics (i.e., political lobbying and demonstrations), modern communications (i.e., mass media and penny postcards), and the literatures of Ulster history and the *Ulsterman*—an ideal-type constituted through Ulster unionist discourse, symbols, and imagery discussed in Chapter 4. However, these institutions, means of communication, and interpretations of history also constituted Ulster as gendered, with a focus on masculine “saviours” or “heroes” of Ulster (such as William of Orange, the Apprentice Boys, and Edward Carson) and a symbolic feminine Ulster.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Smith 1991, 11, 16.

⁵⁹ William of Orange (later William III) was a member of the Protestant royal house of the Netherlands, the House of Orange. He married Princess Mary (a Protestant), the eldest daughter of James II of England (a Catholic). The Westminster parliament was concerned about moves made by James II that curbed Protestant power and privilege (he attempted to reduce parliament’s powers; he altered the charters of municipal corporations—with the exception of Belfast—to provide majorities to Catholics; he granted the majority of judicial, privy council and county sheriff offices to Catholics; and he stripped Protestants of officer positions in the army). In 1688 parliament declared William and Mary to be joint sovereigns of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. James II landed in Ireland in late 1688 and attempted to reclaim his throne. William III followed in the summer of 1689. Several battles ensued. The Siege of Derry (1689) and Battle of the Boyne in 1690—at which William III’s forces defeated those of James II—have gone down in Ulster unionist history as the triumph of Protestant over Catholic and the reassertion of Protestant political and economic power in Ireland (Bardon 2007, 140-3, 150-65; Darby 1997, 21). Founded in 1823 the Apprentice Boys Society is an organization similar to the Orange Order and was named after thirteen Protestant men (apprentices in guilds in Londonderry) who locked the gates of the city from King James II’s forces during the Siege of Derry, thereby protecting the city’s Protestant inhabitants from the danger of attack by James’ forces. The membership of the Apprentice Boys and the Orange Order has frequently

As the analysis in this dissertation will show, the existence of gender-segregated Ulster unionist organizations (i.e., the UUC and the UWUC), and the gender norms foundational to such segregation, were the result of the institutionalization of a gendered Ulster. In the case of the UWUC, its rules of membership, its constitution, the rituals associated with its meetings, as well as the ceremonies associated with the signing of the *Declaration*, united its members and bound them to Ulster, which was itself constituted through the same institutional rituals which bound Ulster to the UK. Additionally, its activities opposing Home Rule during the Ulster Crisis (1912-1914) are illustrative of Ulster as institutionalized form, as will be demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6.

Finally, nationness, that is “[a] contingent, conjuncturally fluctuating, and precarious frame of vision and basis for individual and collective action”,⁶⁰ provides an understanding of how a polity is constituted through perceived but “precarious” common aims and experiences, and mass mobilization related to unforeseen events. As the following chapters will make evident, in the case of Ulster unionism and the UWUC, the Ulster Crisis, World War I (1914-1918), and the partition of Ireland in 1922 can be understood as contingent events through which Ulster and the Ulster people were constituted.

overlapped, indicating the ideological commonalities between the two organizations (Edwards 2000, 113, 193; Farrell 1980, 350). Edward Carson was leader of the Irish Unionist MPs at Westminster from 1910 to 1921 and leader of the anti-Home Rule campaign in Ulster during the Ulster Crisis (“Edward Carson”. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. www.oxforddnb.com. Accessed December 7, 2011: 2, 5).

⁶⁰ Brubaker 1996, 19.

Nation-work

Nation-work encompasses not only discursive and symbolic work, but also physical work that includes actions undertaken by individuals *within* and *through* institutions on behalf of the nation. Nation-work constitutes the nation and institutionalizes it through representative practices that not only instantiate the nation, but also delineate and defend its membership, boundaries, and norms, and recompose the nation in response to changing political, social, and economic circumstances. The UWUC's opposition to Home Rule; its war work during World War I; its work during elections to secure parliamentary seats for Unionists; and its education, lobbying, and fundraising efforts are examples of the nation-work of the UWUC during the 1910s, 1920s, and into the 1930s which will be explored further in Chapters 5 and 6.

Evidence of the nation-work of the UWUC is found in the *Declaration*, the minutes of the meetings of the UWUC, the correspondence between members of the UWUC and between the UWUC and UUC leadership, as well as in the accounts in newspapers of the activities of the UWUC. The UWUC's claims of nation established particular political activities of the UWUC undertaken in the name of Ulster. However, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters, such nation-work was gendered. Dominant norms of femininity and masculinity constituted particular roles and activities for unionist women and others for unionist men in Ulster.

Domopolitics

The concept of domopolitics is also useful in analyzing Ulster unionism and its constitution of Ulster during the 1910s, 1920s, and into the 1930s. According to William Walters, domopolitics (rooted in the Latin word *domo* meaning to tame or domesticate) is “a reconfiguring of relations between citizenship, state, and territory”.⁶¹ It draws on positive images of home, land/territory, and security (such as a sense of community, trust, and citizenship), while simultaneously marshaling fear, unease, and a sense of insecurity by linking such positive images to a sense of a “dangerous...chaotic outside [world]”.⁶² Consequently domopolitics focuses on “conquering”, “taming”, or “subduing” forces that threaten the security of home and/or territory using the binary: “Us versus Them”.⁶³

Walters used the concept of domopolitics to analyze the increasingly securitized world post-September 11, 2001. Generally, nationalist discourses focus on conquering, taming, or subduing threats to the security of the nation as the central task of patriots and citizens of the nation; this includes conquering, taming, or subduing differences *within* the nation in terms of class, religious, race, and ethnic cleavages in the interests of national unity. In the present study Walters’s concept of domopolitics is expanded by incorporating the gender dimension into it. This work of subduing threats to the nation (where the nation is often symbolically portrayed as female) is most frequently constituted as masculine nation-work—particularly in cases of armed conflict or

⁶¹ Walters 2004, 241.

⁶² Walters 2004, 241.

⁶³ Walters 2004, 241-2.

militarized politics—while the spheres of home and family are most often constituted as feminine domains, and hence the work within those spheres as feminine nation-work.

Applied to an analysis of Ulster unionism, domopolitics can assist us in making sense of the discourse and politics of the 1910s and 1920s that connected notions of home with a given territory (Ulster), and the (in)security of Ulster as a defined territory under threat due to the independence claims and demands of Irish nationalists, and the perception that the British government would concede to those demands in order to avoid a potential armed insurrection, which were prevalent in the discourse and politics of the 1910s and 1920s. Furthermore, as this dissertation will show, the discourse of Ulster unionism during the 1910s and 1920s contrasted the safe and trusted community of loyal Ulster unionists and Protestants with the supposedly threatening, dangerous, lawless Irish Catholic nationalists, not only from the south of Ireland, but perhaps most particularly, within Ulster itself.

In this view, given the dominance of Protestants demographically, Ulster was a place where “the people” were democratic, where civil and religious liberties were respected, and where Ireland’s political and economic union with Great Britain produced economic prosperity. In contrast, an independent Ireland dominated by Gaelic (Irish) Catholic nationalists would be chaotic, undemocratic, and *not* respectful of civil and religious liberties as it was assumed that it would be governed by Vatican law. Moreover, such Ulster unionist domopolitics pointed to socio-economic contrasts between Ulster and the rest of Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as evidence that a

government dominated by Irish Catholic nationalists would be incapable of administering the state and economy efficiently.⁶⁴

Constituted in this way Ulster unionism can be understood as an expression of what Brubaker and Cooper call a “thick” identity (i.e., a group identity with little ambiguity), since the siege mentality at its core left little room for ambiguity in terms of Ulster unionist identity (although in reality there was great diversity of Ulster unionist identities and perspectives).⁶⁵ Faced with dangers and threats, the domopolitics of Ulster unionism meant that explicit and distinct boundaries of “Us” versus “Them” were necessary in order to be clear about who was “safe” and who was a supposed threat to the goal of preserving the Union. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, Ulster unionist discourse clearly and unapologetically reified Ulster and “its” people as British, Loyal, and Protestant. It contrasted Ulster’s loyal service and sacrifice during World War I to the disloyalty of Irish nationalists, some of whom were involved in the Easter Rising in 1916 against British rule in Ireland (considered traitorous by many Ulster unionists), while others refused to serve in the UK forces during World War I. Such a constitution of Ulster and Irish nationalists ignored the fact that many Irish nationalists and Catholics fought as part of the British forces during World War I as part of the Irish Volunteers and other divisions within the British armed forces. Furthermore, as the present analysis will

⁶⁴ Gibbon 1975, 132-5; Loughlin 1999, 110, 112-3; McNeill 1922, 2-3; Walker 2004, 25, 33.

⁶⁵ Brubaker & Cooper, 2000. For a discussion of the diversity of Ulster unionist identities and perspectives see: Akenson 1991; Aughey 2005, 1999, 1989; Aughey & Morrow 1996; Bew et al. 1996; Bruce 1986; Buckland 1973; Collins 1994; Edwards 1970; Edwards 2000; English & Walker 1996; Farrell 1980; Gibbon 1975; Hennessey 1997; Jackson 2003, 1994, 1992, 1989; Loughlin 1999, 1995; McGarry & O’Leary 1995; McIntosh 1999; McKittrick & McVea 2002; Ruane & Todd 2000; Sales 1997b; Todd 1987; Tonge 2006, 2002; Urquhart 2001, 2000; Ward 2006, 2000.

detail, the constitution of the UWUC (reflective and constitutive of Ulster unionist discourse) was emphatic that its members adhere to a singular aim, “the maintenance of the Legislative Union” between Great Britain and Ireland, to the exclusion of all other individual interests.⁶⁶

Brubaker has argued that easily identifiable cultural symbols, discourse, rhetoric, and norms of behaviour produce an enhanced emotional attachment to a “thick” identity, particularly when connected to well-established alliances in “day-to-day politics”.⁶⁷ The UWUC’s membership rules and norms, as well as its discourse, constituted such a “thick” identity, and its nation-work, which involved day-to-day politics, produced strong alliances and emotional attachments amongst its members and to Ulster.

What neither Brubaker nor Brubaker and Cooper (or the primordialist, modernist, constructivist, or institutionalist/neo-institutionalist approaches to nation) have addressed, however, is how the nation has been constituted as gendered. Feminist critiques of the literature related to nation and nationalism do offer such an understanding of the centrality of gender to nation *vis-à-vis* the rhetoric of a national family and history, symbols of nation, and citizenship. The gender lens offered by such feminist critiques enables us to examine Ulster unionism and its constitution of Ulster as gendered. Therefore, by combining Brubaker’s concepts of nation, nationhood, and nationness with feminist analyses of the centrality of gender to the constitution of nation, and with Walters’s notion of domopolitics, we are better able to comprehend the gendered

⁶⁶ *Ulster Women’s Unionist Council Papers*. Draft Constitution of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council. January 1911 (D 1098/1/3), reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 215.

⁶⁷ Brubaker 2004, 46-7.

constitution of Ulster. We can also shed light on how power has operated between and among men and women in establishing and embodying Ulster. In this way, we can reach an understanding of the nation-work of the UWUC and how it constituted Ulster during the turbulent 1910s and 1920s.

The present analysis will also make clear that without an understanding of the gender norms of Ulster unionism and the gender-segregated institutions and nation-work which constituted Ulster during the 1910s and 1920s one risks being blind to the patriarchal constitution of Northern Ireland. Without such an understanding the differences in how men and women were constituted through and related to the sub-state of Northern Ireland make little sense. Hence this dissertation expands the understanding of how the rights and benefits of citizenship were differently constituted beyond the oft cited religious, class, and political identities, that is, also through gender. As we shall see below, gender norms of masculinity and femininity have been imbued with characteristics constituted as inherent to males or females, when in fact such gender norms are constituted through discourse, cultural norms and traditions, and institutions.

FEMINIST CRITIQUES OF THE LITERATURE ON NATION AND NATIONALISM

Nation and gender

According to Anthony Smith, gender identity (the social/cultural norms of femininity and masculinity) is “universal and pervasive” and, therefore, fundamental to

“other differences and subordinations”;⁶⁸ however, it is subordinate and secondary to ethnic identities with regards to nation. Since gender cleavages are “geographically separated, divided by class and ethnically fragmented, gender cleavages must ally themselves to other, more cohesive identities [such as ethnic identities] if they are to inspire collective consciousness and action”.⁶⁹ Contrary to Smith, however, many feminist scholars have demonstrated that gender norms and identities (as well as ethnic, race, and class norms and identities) are fundamental, *not* secondary, to the processes of *constituting* the nation.⁷⁰ These scholars have addressed the neglect of gender, and most particularly of women, in the mainstream literature on nation and nationalism.

One of the prominent feminist critiques of the literature on nationalism has been that if women figure at all in such literature, it is often as passive victims of nationalism (i.e., victims of rape, paramilitary violence, and decisions or policies that they had little or no part in making). Many have challenged such analyses and demonstrate that women have been active agents of nationalist discourses and movements.⁷¹ Cynthia Enloe has argued that analyses of nation, nationalism, and the process of nation-building should not assume that all women have been victims, or that all men have been militant; to do so

⁶⁸ Smith 1991, 4.

⁶⁹ Smith 1991, 4.

⁷⁰ See for example: Benton 1997; Charles & Hintjens 1997; Collins 1990a, 1990b; Crenshaw 1991; Day & Thompson 2004; Enloe 1998, 1995, 1989; hooks 1990; McClintock 1995; Pateman 1989, 1988; Peterson 1998, 1995; Racioppi & O’Sullivan-See 2000a, 2000b; Ranchod-Nilsson & Tétrault 2000; Walby 2006, 1992; Yuval-Davis 1998; and Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989.

⁷¹ See for example: Allen 1997; Benton 1997; Dowler 1998; Enloe 1998, 1995, 1989; Lyons 1996; McClintock 1995; Miller et al. 1996; Peterson 1998, 1995; Racioppi & O’Sullivan See 2000a, 2000b; Walby 2006, 1992; Yuval-Davis 1998; and Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989.

“dulls any analytical curiosity [and] ultimately...produces explanations that are naïve in their descriptions of power and camouflage men as ungendered actors”.⁷² Theresa O’Keefe has been similarly critical, noting that some feminist analyses have constituted nationalist movements as oppressive of women and the women who participate in such movements as anti-feminist and contributing to their own oppression by legitimizing nationalism and its patriarchal foundations.⁷³ For its part, the present study also understands gender to be central—rather than peripheral—to processes of nation-building and power relations within such processes. Further, it explores the Ulster unionist constitution of Ulster as gendered and aims to understand the members of the UWUC as political agents in their own right and not simply as puppets of a patriarchal Ulster unionist movement.

Feminist scholars have broadened analyses of identity, nation, and the process of nation-building by explicitly analyzing how gender is central to the constitution of the nation. Collins, Crenshaw, hooks, and Yuval-Davis (to name a few) have noted that gender, race, ethnic, and class identities are mutually constituted and cannot be analyzed in isolation.⁷⁴ Still others have asserted that the construction of such identities is foundational to the constitution of the nation.⁷⁵ For Enloe, nation and nationalism are

⁷² Enloe 1998, 58.

⁷³ O’Keefe 2003, 41.

⁷⁴ Collins 1990b, 222, 224-7, 229-30; Crenshaw 1991, 1242, 1244, 1246, 1249; hooks 1990, 57-64; hooks 1984, 43-66; Yuval-Davis 1998, 116-20.

⁷⁵ See for example: Allen 1997, 58; Benton 1997, 28-9; Day & Thompson 2004, 115, 117; Dowler 1998, 8-10; Enloe 1998, 51-2, 55; Lyons 1996, 115-21; McClintock 1995, 62; Peterson 1998, 44-5; Racioppi & O’Sullivan See 2000a, 21-5; Walby 2006, 81, 84, 118-9; Yuval-Davis 1998, 1-38, 91; and Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989, 7-10.

founded on “gendered politics” and based on men’s experiences and realities.⁷⁶ Enloe notes that socialization related to particular gender norms requires “explicit and artificial construction, sometimes backed by coercion”; hence such gender norms are *not* natural.⁷⁷ Just as the nation is not a natural or real entity, gender norms of masculinity and femininity are constituted through the nation and nation-work as natural and fixed.

A national society is often organized along the seemingly fixed biological or sexual natures of men and women. In this way, gender differences seem “inherent in the blood just as natural as ethnic identities” and nationalist discourses cement gender roles.⁷⁸ Gender norms assign women and men definite and distinct places in the nation, so that the nation is gendered at its very core.⁷⁹ Patriarchy (institutionalized and systemic male power over political, economic, and social life) is central to this relationship between gender and nation.⁸⁰ Embedded in nationalist discourses, patriarchy not only uses assumptions about gender differences, underwriting and consolidating them, but is also the key enforcer of these differences and accompanying inequalities.⁸¹ Consequently such gender norms have implications for how men and women relate to and are constituted through the nation, its history, and characteristics.⁸² Elisabeth Porter has argued that

⁷⁶ Enloe 1998, 1-38, 51, 91.

⁷⁷ Enloe 1998, 51, 55.

⁷⁸ Day & Thompson 2004, 119.

⁷⁹ Day & Thompson 2004, 115.

⁸⁰ Day & Thompson 2004, 117.

⁸¹ Day & Thompson 2004, 115.

⁸² Day & Thompson 2004, 113.

“while women are active participants in ethnic and national struggles—organizing, campaigning, attending to others’ needs, and sometimes participating in armed struggles—men generally act as agents and women as symbols, reinforcing existing gender oppressions”.⁸³

Such scholars have posited that in the process of constituting a collective national identity, particular understandings of the primary features, symbols, norms, and values of the community (i.e., patriarchy, ethnicity, or nation) become dominant, while others (such as class, gender, or sexual orientation) are excluded or deemed secondary in importance, thus marginalizing and denigrating particular people, so as to reify groups while privileging others. By conceiving of national identity as mutually constitutive of gender, ethnic, race, and class identities, one can see how nationalist ideologies and notions of citizenship have often been a stratifying force. Furthermore, this viewpoint illuminates how one’s relationship to a nationalist movement and/or nation is differentiated depending upon how one’s identity is positioned according to norms of gender, ethnicity, race, class, and heteronormativity.⁸⁴

Enloe has observed that the dominant literature of nation and nationalism rests on three assumptions: that men’s ideas and actions are critical in shaping the processes of nationalist consciousness-raising and the politicization of nationalism; that men and women in any community have much the same experiences (a common, yet unspoken

⁸³ Porter 1998, 42.

⁸⁴ Benton 1997, 26, 30; Charles & Hintjens 1997, 3; Collins 1990b, 222, 224-7, 229-30; Crenshaw 1991, 1242, 1244, 1246, 1249; Day & Thompson 2004, 115, 117; Enloe 1998, 52; hooks 1990, 57-64; hooks 1984, 43-66; Porter 1998, 42; Walby 1992, 81, 84, 118-9; Yuval-Davis 1998, 68-92.

assumption); and that the uneven task distribution of gender relations has little impact on sense of belonging or strategies to mobilize collectively.⁸⁵ She has argued that these assumptions are flawed and do not provide an adequate understanding of how nation-building processes and nationalist ideologies operate as relations of power; moreover, a consequence of such assumptions is to bury the demands of women for gender equality in the name of national unity.⁸⁶

Nation and family

One of the predominant ways in which gender and gender norms constitute and are constituted by nation is through the metaphor of family. Whether in terms of a sense of presumed, literal, biological kinship ties and a shared history, or symbolically (as configured by state institutions or nationalist ideologies, historical accounts, myths, symbols, and/or traditions) the metaphor of family is integral to constituting a unified solidary nation. Configuring the nation “as a fictive ‘super family’ [which] can trace its roots to an imputed common ancestry and therefore [conceives of], its members [as] brothers and sisters, or at least cousins, differentiated by family ties from outsiders”⁸⁷ provides a feeling of common bonds or kinship, culture, or history amongst an otherwise heterogeneous population. According to Smith,

⁸⁵ Enloe 1998, 52.

⁸⁶ Enloe 1998, 52.

⁸⁷ Smith 1991, 12.

the metaphor of family is indispensable to nationalism. The nation is depicted as one great family, the members as brothers and sisters of the motherland or fatherland, speaking their mother tongue. In this way the family of the nation overrides and replaces the individual's family but evokes similarly strong loyalties and vivid attachments...the language and symbolism of the nation asserts its priority, and through the state and citizenship, exerts its legal and bureaucratic pressures on the family, using similar kinship metaphors to justify itself.⁸⁸

Given Smith's assertion that the metaphor of family is foundational to the constitution of the nation, it would seem clear that gender is central to both discourses of nation and processes of nation-building.

Gender roles and norms (i.e., husband/wife; father/mother) are central to the institution and constitution of the family. Moreover, it is through the institution of the family that such gender norms are initially instilled through the socialization of children. It should hardly be surprising, then, that such gender norms are extended to metaphors of the national family constituted as a "natural" extension of family and kinship ties. This raises questions regarding the gendered nature of the national family in terms of the gender norms of the nation which constitute gendered responsibilities, rights, obligations, and nation-work. Just as gender norms constitute different roles and responsibilities for men and women within a modern nuclear family, so they establish different roles, responsibilities, and benefits for men and women with respect to the national family. Hence "if the nation is seen as the family writ large, then the mother figure is bound to feature prominently in nationalist imaginings".⁸⁹ (The role of the mother figure will be

⁸⁸ Smith 1991, 79.

⁸⁹ Vincent 1997, 39.

explored later in this chapter.) Furthermore, the nation is frequently referred to as a homeland, and symbolically represented in gendered ways that are tied to ideas of family (for example, Mother Russia, the German Fatherland, the United States' Uncle Sam, the UK's Britannia, or Ireland's Erin, Hibernia, and *Mater Dolorosa*).⁹⁰ In this way, commonly held symbols, customs, language, religion, and history constitute the essential character of the national family.⁹¹

Public versus private

The division of the social world into public and private realms has been central to patriarchal gender norms and the constitution of the gendered national family, as many feminists have observed.⁹² The public domain (party politics, religion, law, and business) is often constituted as a masculine/male space, while the private sphere (family and home) is generally constituted as a feminine/female space, where a woman's primary role is that of wife and mother.⁹³ However, this public/private dichotomy is a historical and social construct—one that has *not* existed across all times, or in all cultures.⁹⁴ Pateman has argued that this binary was integral to the transformation of political systems from

⁹⁰ Charles & Hintjens 1997, 3; Day & Thompson 2004, 123.

⁹¹ Vincent 1997, 39.

⁹² See for example: Elshtain 1981, 4-16, 321-3, 337-40, 342-4; Pateman 1989, 3-4, 118-40; Pateman 1988, 1-8, 10-2, 16, 77-115, 225; Walby 1994, 383-5; Yuval-Davis 1998, 5.

⁹³ Kearns 2004, 445-6; McClintock 1995, 62; West 1997, xix; Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989, 7.

⁹⁴ See for example: Elshtain 1981, 4-16, 321-3, 337-40; 342-4; Pateman 1989, 3-4, 118-40; Pateman 1988, 1-8, 10-2, 16, 77-115, 225; Walby 1994, 383-5; Yuval-Davis 1998, 5.

that of absolute monarchies to systems of modern civil government and civil law as the institutions in which legitimacy and authority rested in a given society.⁹⁵

This dichotomy is critical in shaping nationalist discourses of how men and women could (and should) engage with the nation and helps devalue the roles women have predominantly played in nationalist movements. Since the public realm has often been privileged as a sphere of male power and authority and *the* primary sphere of nation-work, women's nation-work has often been deemed as auxiliary, or even dismissed from analyses altogether. Moreover, women's nation-work in the public realm (beyond that proscribed by a particular nationalist discourse, such as that of "mother of the nation") has frequently been marginalized as inappropriate, radical, or dangerous—a threat to tradition and national unity.⁹⁶

Gender roles in Irish nationalist and Ulster unionist discourses and practices have been predicated on such binary notions of space (public/private; male/female) and how these spaces were appropriately occupied. The analysis that follows suggests that while the UWUC did not overtly challenge such dominant gender norms nor endorse suffragists' demands for women's franchise, its nation-work nevertheless did open up segments of public space where women could work, such as in the education of youth and women and by canvassing for electoral candidates. Moreover, many UWUC members used the dominant gender norm of a woman's caring/nurturing role in the private sphere to justify their work in the public sphere.

⁹⁵ Pateman 1989, 43; Pateman 1988, 1-8, 10-2, 16.

⁹⁶ Miller et al. 1996, 2.

This dichotomy of male/masculine public space and female/feminine private space has been conveyed and supported by the images used by Catholic and Protestant churches alike, and by Irish nationalist, Ulster unionist, and Orange institutions. Within the Catholic and Irish nationalist communities, the symbol of *Mother Ireland* was central to this dichotomy of male/female and of public/private space, conveying dominant conceptions of Irish womanhood.⁹⁷ Together the discourses of the Catholic Church and Irish nationalist movements constituted the “proper” role for Irish women to play: that of mothers and faithful companions who inspired and supported male nationalists in their efforts to protect/defend Ireland.⁹⁸ The message of the *Mother Ireland* symbolism and discourse was powerful: “Such a potent icon implie[d] that any woman who venture[d] beyond the hallowed, private terrain of home and family was in some way deviant: either because she has been misled by manipulative men; or else suffers from some sort of derangement rendering her mad, bad and dangerous to know”.⁹⁹ Moreover, the primacy of the role of mother implied a heterosexualized identity since “proper” motherhood (according to such discourses) was within the bounds of a monogamous, heterosexual, marital relationship which was sanctioned by the Catholic Church. Motherhood has been similarly dominant in Protestant and Ulster unionist discourses. Although female

⁹⁷ Dowler 1998, 8; Kearns 2004, 443; Lyons 1996, 115-6, 121.

⁹⁸ Dowler 1998, 8; Kearns 2004, 443; Lyons 1996, 115.

⁹⁹ Miller et al. 1996, 2.

imagery/symbols have figured less prominently, some (such as a female Ulster or Britannia) did exist and will be discussed further in Chapter 5.¹⁰⁰

As stated earlier, the public sphere, according to Ulster unionist discourse of the 1910s and 1920s, was a predominantly male space. Men were constituted as the leaders of the Ulster unionist movement. However, the UWUC did emerge as a way for Ulster unionist women to participate in the Ulster unionist cause. Tellingly, this institutionalization of women's involvement in the Ulster unionist movement came during the emergence of the era of mass politics, and in a period when Ulster unionist domopolitics was militarised and particularly concerned about the security of unionists and Protestants. Ulster unionists felt increasingly isolated in the British parliament, and hence more and more reliant on local support than on Westminster MPs (as will be discussed in Chapter 4). Such domopolitics opened up public space to women within Ulster unionism, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, but the role of the UWUC was still seen by many as primarily a supportive one in relation to the male-only UUC of the 1910s.¹⁰¹ The UWUC (including its leadership) considered "their" leader to be Sir Edward Carson (the male leader of the UUC) even though the UWUC had its own president.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Loftus 1990, 46-7, 74.

¹⁰¹ Bardon 2007, 461; Foy 1996, 49; Jackson 1989, 306-7.

¹⁰² There are numerous letters from members of the executive of the UWUC to Sir Edward Carson and references to consultations with him about disagreements within the UWUC related to the war work of the UWUC, the decision to largely abandon its anti-Home Rule nation-work during World War I, potential revisions to the constitution of the UWUC in light of the resolution of Home Rule issue with the partition of Ireland, and the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918. See for example: Letter from Lady Dufferin and Ava to Sir Edward Carson, June 21, 1918 (D 1507/A/28/11); two letters from Lady Dufferin and Ava to Sir Edward Carson, September 25, 1918 (D 1507/A/28/32; D 1507/A/28/33); Memorandum for Submission

Discourse, rhetoric, and symbols are significant to the gendered constitution of the nation. As noted earlier, nationalist ideologies have often deemed a woman's primary role in the nation to be that of biological and social reproduction: the symbolic and literal "mother of the nation".¹⁰³ Women are frequently seen as bearers of the nation's next generation and charged with raising its children and instilling in them cultural norms and values through language, stories, music, food, and proper dress.¹⁰⁴ Thus women are central to the biological and ideological reproduction of the collectivity of the nation and to the transmission of national culture. While this discourse of binary public/private spheres confines women to the private sphere of home and family, it simultaneously confers on women the responsibility of maintaining the national population since "a woman's function was to reproduce the bodies of the 'body politics' represented as masculine".¹⁰⁵

In many nationalist discourses, however, motherhood has not only included the literal role of mother (i.e., giving birth to and raising children), but also a social and spiritual motherhood. As was observed in 1931 in *Gudrun*, the periodical of the KVM (the Catholic Flemish Girls' Movement), a Flemish nationalist women's organization in existence during the late 1800s and early 1900s, "being a woman means being a mother,

from the Ulster Women's Unionist Council to Sir Edward Carson (D 1507/A/6/6); Letter from Lady Dufferin and Ava to Lady Londonderry, September 8, 1914 (D 2846/1/217); Letter from Lady Dufferin and Ava to Lady Londonderry, October 4, 1916 (D 2846/1/262); Proposed Alteration in Constitution (Ulster Women's Unionist Council), November 16, 1916 (D 2846/1/8/60); Letter from Edith Wheeler to Lady Londonderry, June 20, 1918 (D 1507/A/28/9).

¹⁰³ Nash 1994, 237; Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989, 7.

¹⁰⁴ Nash 1994, 237; van Genderachter 2005, 275; Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989, 7, 9-10.

¹⁰⁵ Nash 1994, 237.

physically or mentally, not only mother of one's own child, which we cannot all become or be, but we can all participate in the motherhood of our community, or our people and that way we can leave our mark on the *volksziel* [the soul of the people]".¹⁰⁶ Thus both literal and social motherhood afforded women space in the public realm where they could work without overtly challenging dominant gender norms since it involved caring and nurturing work deemed natural for women. Such a discourse was used by the UWUC to justify its nation-work, as we shall see in Chapter 5. However, the dichotomy of public/private and the central role of motherhood for women within the nation raise questions regarding the varied nature of citizenship including its gendered constitution.

Nation and history

The making of the nation and a national identity through the constitution of the national family requires that the present be established as a continuation or revival of an ancient past. Therefore, rituals, traditions, and historical accounts of a "glorious past" are connected to present struggles in what Hutchinson has called a process of "mythic overlaying" and are integral to nation and national identity.¹⁰⁷ As Michael Billig has observed: "If the world of nations is to be reproduced then nationhood has to be imagined, communicated, believed in, remembered".¹⁰⁸ A national history is created to serve particular interests by providing a sense of a common past, culture, and kinship,

¹⁰⁶ *Gudrun*, 12 (8), July 1931, 249-54, cited in van Ginderachter 2005, 275.

¹⁰⁷ Billig 2012, Chapter 2: 16-21 (e-book); Hutchinson 2001, 82.

¹⁰⁸ Billig 2012, Chapter 2: 7 (e-book).

thereby linking members of a particular group across time and place based on the outcome of shared collective events, experiences, and culture. In this way cleavages within a given community based on class, gender, religious, race, or ethnic identities can be minimized in the interests of national unity.¹⁰⁹ However, national histories can also institutionalize such cleavages by constituting different groups (and individuals as members of such groups) as making sacrifices to greater or lesser degrees in events constituted as national history (or moments of nationness). National histories thus serve to justify differentiated access to the rights and benefits of citizenship which groups and individuals experience based on gender, class, race, ethnic, and religious identities.

Sarah Benton argues that gender and nation are connected through national *myths of origin* and *myths of foundation*. Such myths report the story of usually male acts as foundational to the nation-state and often involve a fraternity overthrowing a paternal power. Distinguishing between *myths of origin* and *myths of foundation*, Benton posits that *myths of origin* tend to be patriarchal and often involve men vanquishing women, while *myths of foundation* tend to be fraternal and are vital to the process of men becoming citizens (e.g., the Siege of Derry and the Battle of the Boyne to be discussed in Chapter 4). Both types of myths are indispensable to the life of the nation and constitute women and men in particular ways.¹¹⁰ They convey a sense of the “proper order of

¹⁰⁹ See for example: Anderson 2006, 37-46, 113-40; Benton 1997, 28-9; Gellner 2008, 54-5; Hobsbawm 1991, 101-30, 191; Smith 1991, 1-98; van den Berghe 1996, 58.

¹¹⁰ Benton 1997, 26, 30.

society” and a gender and sexual order to which members of the nation are expected to adhere.¹¹¹

It is through such myths that the nation is constituted as a “unitary being” from its origins, thus subduing cleavages of class, gender, religion, or ethnicity in such discourses through rendering them as secondary to a common national historical origin. For instance, a woman’s femaleness is often defined as her ability to bear children, and her primary role is to reproduce the nation by bearing and rearing children.¹¹² This essential characteristic of femaleness is possessed by the nation through men, who are the nation’s representatives. This was achieved historically (in part) by designating a wife as the property of her husband. Within these myths (and the nationalist ideologies that constitute them), it is assumed that the primary desire of alien men is to possess and desecrate these “holy vessels” of other men’s honour (i.e., their wives).¹¹³ In this way, myths of nation establish men as the representatives and active agents of the nation, protecting a nation’s women, and position women as passive objects to be protected from danger and desecration.

Wars, revolutions, historical accounts, and religious identity can all play a critical role in forging a national family. As Louise Vincent has noted, “adversity of any kind, but most particularly war, provides a potent fund of myths and memories for future generations. Religion and history are often crucial to the creation of a sense of kinship,

¹¹¹ Benton 1997, 28-9.

¹¹² Allen 1997, 58; Benton 1997, 33; Peterson 1998, 44-5; Yuval-Davis 1998, 22-3; Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989, 7, 9-10.

¹¹³ Benton 1997, 33.

belonging and common identity”.¹¹⁴ Both Dowler and Nash have observed that times of war (and, I will argue in the following chapters, militarised politics also) can constitute conservative gender norms and identities through the assigning of women to the private/domestic realms during times of war. Paradoxically, times of war can also be catalysts of change in terms of gender norms and identities in that they can open up segments of the public domain and spheres of employment to women which were previously deemed male/masculine spheres.¹¹⁵ War and militarised politics came to define the period under investigation in this study and constituted conservative gender norms and identities while also opening public space to women, as we shall see in the following chapters.

Sylvia Walby has noted that analyses of nationalism and nation must pay attention to how women and men may differentially be affected by “the national project” and the “different degrees of enthusiasm” it may engender among men and women (and among particular groups of women and men).¹¹⁶ According to Walby, gender is central to the struggle to define “what constitutes *the* national project”.¹¹⁷ The ways in which history has been used and interpreted are central to processes of defining the national project. However, Walby has observed that the “selective interpretation of the past is a potent method of legitimating present political projects” and that the choice of a particular model

¹¹⁴ Vincent 1997, 39.

¹¹⁵ Dowler 1998, 5, 163; Nash 1994, 237.

¹¹⁶ Walby 1992, 81.

¹¹⁷ Walby 1992, 84.

of gender relations is critical to the nation's gender regime and constitution of the nation.¹¹⁸ As discussed earlier, according to Enloe, this "selective interpretation" of a nation's past primarily privileges men's experiences and realities by focusing on wars, revolutions, and (for the most part) the male leaders or heroes of such events.¹¹⁹

As will be demonstrated in Chapter 4, during the 1910s and 1920s Ulster unionist discourses adopted the practice of "mythic overlaying" to constitute a unified group with a shared past and values. They drew on Orange discourse to position their claims of identity in terms of the unique culture of Ulster, which was based on Ulster's historical and cultural ties to Great Britain (especially Scots Presbyterians), and a domopolitics which glorified and remembered historic (male) Protestant/Loyalist triumphs in Ireland, but which kept the sense of danger to Protestants and Loyalists ever-present.¹²⁰ Ulster unionist "myths of foundation" (or historic moments of nationness), such as the Plantation of Ulster, the Siege of Derry, and the Battle of the Boyne were connected to contemporary instances of Ulster's achievement and sacrifice (again constituted as male achievements and sacrifices), or moments of nationness, such as the Ulster Crisis, the UVF Larne gun-running episode (1914), and the Battle of the Somme (1916).

These historic and contemporary moments of nationness were commemorated with gendered rituals and practices which imbued Ulster unionist claims of identity and territory with a sense of naturalness. For example, the annual marches held between June

¹¹⁸ Walby 2006, 118-9. A gender regime is the dominant gender norms which constitute and institutionalize dynamics of political, economic, and social power between men and women.

¹¹⁹ Enloe 1998, 51.

¹²⁰ Orange here refers to the Orange Order.

and August in which only men could participate until very recently, commemorated these historical triumphs of Protestants over Catholics in Ireland and served to constitute an Ulster identity, culture, history, and values.¹²¹ According to this discourse, the Ulster people shared with the rest of the UK a common British identity that was tied to a Protestant religious identity and loyalty to the British Crown.¹²² What is more, Edward Carson was constituted through such myth-making as the “saviour” of Ulster, a mantle he inherited—according to Ulster unionist and Orange history and myths of foundation—from William III and the Apprentice Boys. This was vital since Carson was from Dublin and not a “native” *Ulsterman*.

Nation and symbols

Symbols have been central to these commemorations and rituals which constitute the nation. Within the nation and nationalist movements symbols can serve to unite people across divides of gender, class, ethnicity, race, and religion. Yet symbols have often been considered to be the creation of élites and leaders of nationalist movements, used to dupe the gullible masses. Such analyses of the use of symbols tend to see them as “imposed upon willing consumers rather than as the outcome of complex processes of contestation”.¹²³ In the case of nationalist discourses “symbols, flags, anthems,

¹²¹ It was not until the mid- to late-1990s that the lodges of the Association of Loyal Orangewomen of Ireland could walk in these marches, but they have to be invited by a men’s lodge of the Orange Order in order to do so (Edwards 2000, 112).

¹²² Turner calls the institutions of monarchy, religion, and parliament “the traditional institutional glue” of the United Kingdom (Turner 2006, 233).

¹²³ Vincent 1997, 31.

monuments, rites, artifacts and costumes provide the state setting without which the nationalist drama would be less believable. This suggests that while nationalist ideologues may claim that ethnicity is primordial and timeless, it is in fact an instrument of the achievement of political goals”.¹²⁴ Hence ethnic and national identities are constituted not only through nationalist discourses, but also symbols of nation.

As mediators between politics and everyday life symbols are integral to politics.¹²⁵ This is certainly true of Ulster (as will be demonstrated in the following chapters) where symbols defined identity, belonging, and territory, and thus were central to unionist rituals, ceremonies, traditions, and commemorations. For example, banners depicting William of Orange, the Siege of Derry, and the Battle of the Boyne, as well as the lambe drum have been integral to Orange and Loyalist marches which commemorate historic moments of nationness such as the Battle of the Boyne and Siege of Derry. The Union flag and the Red Hand (long a symbol of the historic province of Ulster) have also been ubiquitous at these commemorations. Furthermore, they have been used to demarcate particular territory (such as housing estates or areas of cities and towns as unionist, Protestant, and British, and hence “no-go” areas for Irish nationalists and Catholics).

Both Smith and Hutchinson have argued that the nation as an idea and practice is best understood as a combination of modern ideals and institutions and historical, deeply embedded symbols, and concepts.¹²⁶ This dissertation argues in the following chapters

¹²⁴ Vincent 1997, 33.

¹²⁵ Kearns 2004, 445.

¹²⁶ Hutchinson 2001, 74-6; Smith 1991, 71.

that gender is integral to the constitution of such ideals, institutions, ideas, and symbols. The symbolic representation of the nation as a woman has been the dominant female symbol of nationalist discourses, and has been translated into the predominant prescribed role for women: that of mother (as discussed above).¹²⁷

Nation and citizenship

The gendered constitution of nation through the metaphor of a national family and the constitution of a national history and symbols is foundational to the constitution of gender-differentiated experiences of and relationships to the nation through citizenship. The relationship between nation and citizenship has also been a point of significant debate in the literature on nation and nationalism and is central to the relationship between gender and nation. Notions of citizenship have often been connected to religious, ethnic, and gender-based identities that not only define the people (i.e., those who belong to the nation and those who do not), but also norms of belonging (i.e., categories of nation-work, as well as rights, roles, and responsibilities).¹²⁸ Primordialist approaches tend to constitute citizenship rights as connected to kinship ties between people and to a particular territory. According to this logic, citizenship is not something that can be gained through migration, marriage, or processes of socialization (such as state-based education systems, child-rearing, or popular culture), but is only bestowed by birth.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Allen 1997, 58; Benton 1997, 33; Peterson 1998, 44-5; Yuval-Davis 1998, 22-3; Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989, 7-10.

¹²⁸ Pateman 1988, 1; Yuval-Davis 1998, 69, 79.

¹²⁹ Bacova 1998, 39.

If, however, national identity is defined by ideas and institutions (as constructivist, modernist, and neo-institutionalist approaches assert), then citizenship rights, roles, and responsibilities can be detached from primordial ties, but still be connected to a particular nation-state and be earned through marriage, immigration, or learned through processes of socialization. Dominant institutionalist and neo-institutionalist (including Brubaker), primordialist, modernist, and constructivist approaches, however, have largely ignored the ways citizenship has frequently been based on particular norms of gender, class, race, and heteronormativity (e.g., social benefits, suffrage, property, and inheritance rights, tax, employment, and family law, as well as population control policies of the nation).¹³⁰

As discussed above many feminists have identified that such approaches tend to be based on the dichotomy between the private and public spheres. Thus, such analyses are often blind to the ways in which those spheres are connected through the varying degrees of institutionalized rights and obligations of private citizens which tie them to the broader public national community. If, as stated earlier, the male public sphere is privileged over the female private sphere in discourses of nation and nationalism, and citizenship benefits and rights accrue more to the nation-work of the public sphere, most particularly to military service, then one can see that women, since they are often barred from or at least limited in terms of the military service they can perform, are constituted as secondary to, and differently situated from, men in relation to citizenship according to such discourses.

¹³⁰ Yuval-Davis 1998, 79.

It has already been pointed out that war and revolution loom large in histories and myths of nation. War and revolution demand the mass mobilization of men as soldiers, and the settlements after wars primarily recognize men as the citizens and makers of the nation.¹³¹ According to this logic, the nation belongs to those who have made it and protected it, and this was most clearly the role of the military.¹³² Just as the settlements of wars sanctified men as protectors of their own homes and families, men were made citizens through military service. After wars or revolutions, in recognition of such service, particular privileges (suffrage, property rights, access to employment, and the right to hold political office) often accrue to men, while women have commonly been excised from political institutions and nationalist mythologies.¹³³

At the same time, discourses of nation tend to imbue the unity of the national community with such political primacy that any questioning of the gender hierarchy is often deemed divisive.¹³⁴ As Enloe has observed, “the more imminent and coercive the threat posed by an outside power...the more successful men in the community are likely to be in persuading women to keep quiet, to swallow their grievances and analyses. When a nationalist movement becomes militarised, male privilege in the community becomes more entrenched”.¹³⁵ Such “militarised nationalism” puts a premium on communal unity in the name of national survival and often silences those who are critical of patriarchal

¹³¹ Benton 1997, 43; Yuval-Davis 1998, 89.

¹³² Benton 1997, 40, 43; Yuval-Davis 1998, 89.

¹³³ Benton 1997, 38.

¹³⁴ Enloe 1989, 63.

¹³⁵ Enloe 1989, 56.

practices and attitudes.¹³⁶ Moreover, as previously discussed, war and militarised politics or nationalism can serve to constitute conservative gender norms and the binary masculinized public sphere and feminized private domain which assigns women roles in the private realm of home and family.¹³⁷

The Ulster Crisis, Irish nationalist demands for independence, the establishment of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the national Volunteers (armed Ulster unionist and Irish nationalist volunteer forces respectively), the British military presence in Ireland, and World War I, all resulted in the militarization of politics in Ireland. The Ulster unionist domopolitics siege mentality meant that the potential and actual use of force and violence through the UVF was seen as necessary to protect Ulster, its people, and culture from the threat which the demographically larger Catholic, Irish, nationalist population was deemed to pose. This fuelled the militarization of politics in Ireland.¹³⁸ Hence, it should not be surprising that at this same time, when suffragists were organizing and demanding that women in Ireland and Great Britain be granted the vote, Ulster unionists were generally (although not universally) opposed to women's enfranchisement, seeing it as a divisive issue; yet paradoxically, as will be made evident in Chapter 5, it was a time when women increasingly occupied public space in Ireland.

Chapter 5 will discuss the UWUC's support for this view in which the interests of Ulster trumped gender and the interests of the UWUC members *as women*. Moreover, the

¹³⁶ Enloe 1989, 57-8.

¹³⁷ Dowler 1998, 163; Nash 1994, 237.

¹³⁸ Akenson 1991, 184-6; Bardon 2007, 437; Ruane & Todd 2000, 88-9.

Ulster unionist discourse of a British, Unionist, Protestant, and Loyal “Us” differentiated from a Gaelic (Irish), nationalist, Catholic, and disloyal “Other” also served to justify the protection of managerial-level and government jobs for Protestant males, as well as Protestants’ preferential access to council-housing (government-owned and managed housing) once Northern Ireland was partitioned from the rest of Ireland and gained its own parliament in 1922.¹³⁹ Access to council-housing mattered, particularly in the early years of the Northern Irish sub-state, since local voting rights were restricted to ratepayers, even when universal suffrage (regardless of rate-paying status) was introduced in the rest of the UK in 1945.¹⁴⁰

As is evident from the discussion above, this dissertation contributes to the existing literatures related to both nation and nationalism and Ulster unionism. It conceives of the nation as constituted through institutionalized norms and practices of classification and categorization and responses to contingent events. Furthermore, it takes gender to be central to the discursive, symbolic, and practical constitution of nation. In addition, it understands Ulster unionism to be a discourse of nationalism and nation which enables us to comprehend the power of Ulster unionism as a discourse and a movement.

A dominant approach to nation conceives of it as a subjective phenomenon in the manner of Anderson’s “imagined community”, as opposed to an objective reality of

¹³⁹ Farrell 1980, 86; McKittrick & McVea 2002, 5.

¹⁴⁰ Farrell 1980, 85.

common ethnicity, history, territory, religion, or language.¹⁴¹ Such an “imagined community”, Ernest Renan posited in 1887, is “a great solidarity, built on an awareness of the sacrifices we have made in the past and those which we stand ready to make in the future”.¹⁴² Together, according to Renan, the past and present constitute the soul of the nation. “Heroic pasts and great leaders” combined with a continuing desire to live together are foundational to the constitution of nation.¹⁴³ “Past glories in common, a mutual commitment in the present, a record of great achievements and a desire to achieve even more, these are the essential conditions to be a people”.¹⁴⁴ Historically, Ulster unionist discourse did precisely this: it fused historic victories and sacrifices of the Ulster people with a shared contemporary commitment to Ulster’s loyalty to the Protestant/British Crown, Protestant faiths, and the UK state and British empire, as will be discussed further in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Ulster Unionism: Literature

There is an extensive literature concerning Ulster unionist identity and politics, and paramilitary violence and the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Central to this literature has been the question of the basis of Ulster unionism which has been constituted as

¹⁴¹ Anderson 2006, 6; Stevenson 2006, 3-5.

¹⁴² Renan, published in the *Globe and Mail*, October 28, 1995, B3.

¹⁴³ Renan, published in the *Globe and Mail*, October 28, 1995, B3.

¹⁴⁴ Renan, published in the *Globe and Mail*, October 28, 1995, B3.

rooted in class, ethnic, religious, or state-based or national identities.¹⁴⁵ Some, such as Peter Gibbon, have drawn on Marxist analysis, arguing that the rise of Ulster unionism during the late 1800s and early 1900s was élite-driven and reflected the class interests of an emergent industrial capitalist class.¹⁴⁶ This reflected a power shift in Irish unionism, away from the Anglican landed élite (which was dispersed across Ireland) to the industrial capitalist class (which was primarily located in Ulster, especially in and around Belfast). This capitalist class had material interests in maintaining the political and economic ties between Ireland and Great Britain; its livelihood was dependent on trade with Great Britain both in terms of providing resources for its industries (i.e., steel, cotton, and flax) and as a market for the goods produced in Ulster.¹⁴⁷ Gibbon's analysis is an important contribution in terms of an understanding of the distinctiveness of the economic development of the north of Ireland and the basis of some of the economic opposition of Ulster unionism to Home Rule. However, it assumes that such an Ulster unionist discourse and identity was élite-driven and that its basis was primarily economic.

In contrast, Patrick Buckland and Marianne Elliott have noted that religious or cultural identities have been central to Ulster unionist discourses. For Buckland, the migration of settlers from Scotland to Ulster in the sixteenth century, and their particular

¹⁴⁵ See for example: Aughey 2005, 1999, 1989; Aughey & Morrow 1996; Bardon 2007; Bew et al. 1996; Collins 1994; Edwards 1970; Foster 1989; Gibbon 1975; Graham & Shirlow 2002; Hennessey 1997, 1993; Holland 1999; McGarry & O'Leary 1995; McIntosh 1999; Poole & Doherty 1996; Prince 2007; Ruane & Todd 2000; Todd 1987; Tonge 2006; Toolis 1996.

¹⁴⁶ Gibbon 1975.

¹⁴⁷ Gibbon 1975, 143-5.

brand of Presbyterianism and Ulster-Scots culture were foundational to Ulster unionist discourses and the economic development of Ulster as compared to the rest of Ireland throughout the 1800s and early 1900s.¹⁴⁸ Elliott's analysis of Ulster unionism expanded beyond the Presbyterian denomination and has contended that the tenets of liberty of worship and conscience, as well as a sense of superiority *vis-à-vis* Catholicism were common to *all* Protestant denominations and central to Ulster unionist discourse.¹⁴⁹

Still others have addressed the question of whether or not Ulster unionism is a nationalist discourse. David Miller has asserted that since its emergence in the late 1800s and early 1900s Ulster unionism has been based on a “pre-modern contractarian” discourse of “conditional loyalty” to the British Crown and Empire rather than demands of political and economic independence for Ulster. This loyalty hinged on the British parliament's protection of and respect for the British citizenship rights of the Ulster people.¹⁵⁰ Thus, according to Miller, Home Rule was rejected by Ulster unionists at the end of the nineteenth century and the dawn of the twentieth century based on unionists' loyalty to the Protestant British Crown and the political Union of Ireland and Great Britain rather than on any claim of national identification.¹⁵¹ Such assertions of loyalty went beyond claims of nationality. Miller has argued that:

¹⁴⁸ Buckland 1973, xv-xvi.

¹⁴⁹ Elliott 1985, 25-6.

¹⁵⁰ Miller 2007, 5.

¹⁵¹ Miller 2007, 119.

a prime task of statesmanship is to erect state boundaries enclosing a homogeneous people so defined...Loyalty is not such an attribute in Ulster Protestant thinking...Loyalty is a moral principle translated from the realm of personal relationships into politics; it ought to override any pleas of nationality. It carries the connotations of lawfulness, which Protestants understood to be what distinguished them from their Catholic fellow-countrymen.¹⁵²

His analysis has provided an understanding of the complexity and contradictions inherent in Ulster unionism's notion of loyalty. It constituted the people of Ulster as law-abiding and loyal to the Protestant British Crown and parliament, but as also prepared to take up arms against those same institutions if the conditions upon which Ulster's loyalty was given were breached.

Arthur Aughey has similarly posited that Ulster unionism is not a nationalist discourse or movement. According to Aughey, Ulster unionism has rested on claims of citizenship in the British state *not* on claims of Ulster nation or demands of sovereignty for Ulster.¹⁵³ However, it was through Ulster unionist claims of British citizenship, which were based on the constitution of Ulster as British and Protestant, that Ulster was linked to the Protestant British Crown, British parliament, and other British "people" of the UK state. In this way Ulster unionist assertions of British citizenship and Ulster's right to be excluded from a Dublin Home Rule parliament (if that was the will of the majority in Ulster) were legitimated at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Ultimately, however, some of the understandings of nation and nationalism noted above are narrowly limited to discourses that make claims of political and

¹⁵² Miller 2007, 119.

¹⁵³ Aughey 1999, 34; Aughey 1989, 19.

economic sovereignty. They overlook the fact that discourses of nation and nationalism comprise a broad spectrum of ideas, claims, and demands. These range from demands for full political and economic sovereignty to some form of self-determination or autonomy for a sub-state community within the existing framework of a particular state.

James Loughlin has countered the claim that Ulster unionist discourse is *not* nationalist. Loughlin's analysis rests on the notion that Ulster unionist discourse constituted Ulster as "unequivocally loyal" to the UK. Moreover, his assessment of the emergence of the stereotype of the "Ulsterman" as an honest, resolute, and resourceful (Protestant) citizen in contradistinction to the disloyal, feckless, and treacherous nationalist, Catholic, Gaelic (Irish) constituted Ulster unionist identification as connected to place in a manner common to most discourses of nationalism.¹⁵⁴

Ultimately, Loughlin has asserted that "the Ulster problem...has been a problem of national identity set within the framework of the problematic relationship between the British state and the British nation".¹⁵⁵ Jackson has similarly treated Ulster unionism as an ideology that connected place and people in his analyses of Ulster unionism as a response to proposed Home Rule for Ireland and its use of myths, symbols, and modern mass communications and propaganda strategies.¹⁵⁶ By this account, individual and collective perceptions of identity and nation then have been central to the "Ulster problem".

¹⁵⁴ Loughlin 1999, 110-3.

¹⁵⁵ Loughlin 1995, 226.

¹⁵⁶ See Jackson 2012, 2003, 1994, 1992, 1990, 1989.

Claims of nation can be layered, competing, and sometimes even complementary. For instance, claims of nation can be made in terms of dual nationality or membership in a state-less nation within one or more nation-states. Furthermore, as discourses of Ulster after partition suggests, claims of nation can be reluctantly undertaken. In this way a nationalist discourse actually gives rise to a national identity. As Finlayson has observed,

nationalism may be said to produce national identity rather than simply reflect it. Indeed, any nationalist interpellation will contain more than simply a call to recognise ourselves as of a particular nation. It will also ascribe characteristics to that national identity...It may be that we have a long history and heritage that we want to defend at all costs. The nationalist interpellation functions as part of a wider political discourse, which is why we must recognise that it is often at work in movements that are not purely nationalist.¹⁵⁷

In addition, as noted earlier, the continuum of nationalist discourse is broader than claims of political and economic sovereignty for a particular group. According to Balthazar, “a nationalist discourse prioritizes a national affiliation and is concerned with the struggle for better recognition of the nation to which one belongs”.¹⁵⁸ Such an understanding of nationalism also includes demands for autonomy or recognition of the distinctiveness, and the right of self-determination of a particular group within an existing nation-state.

¹⁵⁷ Finlayson 1997, 77-8.

¹⁵⁸ This is translated from the original French: “Voici donc la définition qui me paraît la plus appropriée: Un mouvement qui consiste à accorder une priorité à l'appartenance nationale et à lutter pour une meilleure reconnaissance de la nation à laquelle on appartient” (Balthazar 1986, 19).

The emergence of Ulster unionism has to be seen as part of an emergent and decades-long process of the dismantling of the UK and its empire. Ulster unionist discourse during the 1910s and 1920s was forced to simultaneously assert Ulster's Britishness and opposition to Home Rule for Ireland, and to constitute Ulster in increasingly local, territorialized, and cultural terms *vis-à-vis* its distinctiveness from the rest of Ireland and its right to self-determination. Hence it can be argued that Ulster unionist discourse exhibited key features of a nationalist discourse during the 1910s and 1920s: the constitution of a common identification based on a shared history, language, values, and culture, as well as the struggle for better recognition of the group to which one feels one belongs.

Ulster unionist discourse constituted Ulster as part of a multi-national British state. Ulster was British and connected to the other constituent parts of the British state through the core institutions of that state: the parliament, the Protestant Crown, and the Protestant state church. However, in the period of study, as observed above, there was also an emergent common Ulster identity, history, and solidarity based on the domopolitics of a siege mentality related to perceptions that unionists were a religious and cultural minority under threat in Ireland. As discussed above, Ulster unionist discourse constituted such solidarity in a gendered way through representations of the historic and contemporary sacrifices that Ulster's men had made collectively to protect their rights and liberties.

CONCLUSION

The nation and nationalism have been (and continue to be) significant political and ideological claims around the world. A substantial literature has emerged over the last two-and-a-half centuries contesting the nature (and basis) of the nation and nationalism, as well as the processes of nation-formation. However, as Brubaker has identified, much of this scholarship reifies the nation by focusing on the question: *What* is a nation? He has asserted that the cardinal question to be addressed is not *whether* or not the nation exists, but *how* it is expressed, normalised, and reified discursively, symbolically, institutionally, and practically.

As Calhoun has argued, nations are constituted “largely by the claims themselves, by the way of talking and thinking and acting that relie[s] on these sorts of claims to produce a collective identity, to mobilize people for collective projects, and to evaluate people and practices”.¹⁵⁹ Hence discourse is significant to processes of constituting the nation and nation-work, since it is through discourse (or “the manner in which we talk, or are talked to, about national belonging”) that a national identity is constituted.¹⁶⁰ However, as has been noted above, gender norms and frameworks (not only ethnic or religious frameworks) of the nation are also constituted through discourses of nation.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Calhoun 1997, 5.

¹⁶⁰ Day & Thompson 2004, 99.

¹⁶¹ A gender, race, ethnic, or religious framework is the social and cultural norms and relations which constitute gender, race, ethnic, or religious identities within and between groups which reflect and shape how power operates within and amongst groups or the nation based on those components of identity.

During the 1910s and 1920s Ulster unionist discourse constituted a collective identity and mobilized people against Home Rule and in defence of Ulster's civil and religious liberties, as well as in defence of Britain and the Empire (i.e., the rallying call of "for King and Country" during World War I). It not only categorised people and practices (i.e., Ulster's loyal unionists versus traitorous/disloyal Irish nationalists; British/Protestant versus Gaelic/Catholic; *Ulsterman* versus *Ulsterwoman*), but also categorised particular activities (i.e., the armed defence of Ulster) as masculine/men's nation-work and others (such as administrative, education-related, and caring/nurturing work or mothering) as feminine/women's nation-work.

Combining Brubaker's concepts of nation, nationhood, and nationness with the concepts of nation-work and domopolitics, as well as feminist analyses regarding the centrality of gender to the constitution of nation allows for an analysis of the Ulster unionist discourse of Ulster to be developed in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this dissertation. Such an analysis illustrates the Ulster unionist constitution of Ulster which was foundational to the partition of Ireland in 1922 and the process of building the political entity of Northern Ireland, which more recently has included the three decades long armed conflict in Northern Ireland known as the Troubles.

Prior to exploring Ulster unionism as an institutionalized and gendered political movement, however, it will be helpful to explain the historical and socio-political context which led to its emergence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3

The Evolution of Irish Nationalism and the Constitution of Ireland

Whereas, it is Notoriously known, that the late Rebellions in this Kingdom have been Contrived, Promoted and Carried on by Popish Archbishops, Bishops, Jesuits, and Other Ecclesiastical Persons of the Romish Clergy. And forasmuch as the Peace and Publick [sic] Safety of this Kingdom is in Danger...which said Romish Clergy do, not only endeavour to withdraw his Majesty's Subjects from their Obedience but do daily stir up, and move Sedition, and Rebellion, to the great hazard of the Ruine [sic] and Desolation of this Kingdom...

(*Laws in Ireland for the Suppression of Popery commonly known as the Penal Laws*. Will III c.1 [1697]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Law Library. www.library.law.umn.edu/irishlaw/chronlist2.html. Accessed August 25, 2013)

INTRODUCTION

In order to fully comprehend the emergence of Ulster unionism as a political movement and discourse, it is important to examine the socio-economic context of Ireland prior to the early twentieth-century and the Irish nationalist movements and discourses of Ulster unionism in opposition to which it emerged. This chapter explores the rise and evolution of Irish nationalisms as institutionalized gendered movements during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It assesses the tensions that existed between feminism and nation as institutionalized form (i.e., the suffrage and Irish nationalist movements) during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Finally, it analyses the issue of Home Rule and its aftermath in relation to Irish nationalism.

Although cleavages existed within the Irish nationalist camp and discourses throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, three themes were common and foundational to Irish nationalist domestic politics and constitutions of nation, nationhood, nationness, and nation-work: land, English oppression, and the right of Ireland to independence or some form of self-government. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 4,

Ulster unionism arose in opposition to such domestic politics and constitutions of nation, nationhood, nationness, and nation-work.

Land reform, aimed at reducing the high concentration of land owned by a small number of people, was key to Irish nationalism and the emancipation of the nation given Ireland's largely agricultural economy. The cultural revival of a Gaelic, Catholic Irish nation was likewise critical to the Irish nationalist constitution and institutionalization of Ireland as distinct from England, Wales, and Scotland. This distinctiveness was fundamental to the legitimization of Irish nationalist demands for Irish independence, which culminated in the debates concerning Home Rule for Ireland.

Gender and gender norms were central to Irish nationalist movements for land reform and the revival of a Gaelic Catholic Ireland. Dominant gender norms constituted men's principal nation-work to be the defence of the nation, while women were frequently constituted as having an auxiliary or supportive role as wives and mothers. Although women's nation-work as wives and mothers was vital to reviving, sustaining, and institutionalizing the nation, such nation-work was frequently constituted as part of a marginalized private sphere in contrast to the valorization of the male citizen soldier's defence of Ireland through Irish nationalist discourses. Furthermore, the suffrage movement constituted gender as pivotal to the nation, nationhood, and the aims of Irish independence through the connections it drew between questions of national (Irish) and gender (women's) oppression and emancipation. Yet dominant Irish nationalist discourses marginalized the suffrage movement as a divisive issue, or at best as something to be achieved once political and economic independence for Ireland had been won. This,

combined with dominant gender norms, marginalized women as citizens though the constitution of the Free State (and later the Republic of Ireland), with the rights and privileges of citizenship in terms of labour, criminal, and family law applied unequally to men and women.

THE RISE AND EVOLUTION OF IRISH NATIONALISM

Institutionalized Protestant, landed privilege: the aftermath of the Penal Laws

The quotation that begins this chapter is the opening passage of the Penal Law of 1697, which banished all Catholic priests and ecclesiastics from Ireland. The Penal Laws were integral to the Williamite Settlement of 1703, after William III's defeat of James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.¹⁶² They institutionalized male, landed, Church of Ireland (Anglican) political and economic power in Ireland.

Primarily directed at Catholic male property owners, the Penal Laws barred Catholics from the franchise, from holding public office, from sitting in parliament and on grand juries, and from the legal profession and the military. Not only were the upper clerical ranks of the Catholic Church and regular priests required to leave Ireland, but Catholic mass and education were also outlawed. Male Catholics were excluded from Ireland's only university (other legislation barred all women from university-level

¹⁶² The first Penal Law dated from 1695, and the last one entered the statutes in 1728 (Bardon 2007, 168-9).

education).¹⁶³ Moreover, the *Test Act* of 1704 required that all who held public office, were members of parliament, or served in the military, pledge that they observed the rites of worship of the Church of Ireland, the “established”, or state, church, thereby securing its political power.¹⁶⁴

Perhaps one of the greatest impacts of the Penal Laws was related to land ownership. These laws made it illegal for Catholics to buy land, obtain a mortgage, rent land at a profit, or inherit it according to primogeniture. Consequently the amount of land held by Catholics in Ireland during the 1700s diminished significantly (halved from approximately fourteen percent in 1703 to an estimated seven percent by the mid-1700s), as the size of individual land-holdings.¹⁶⁵ In a socio-economic context where access to land was critical to subsistence, the most significant source of wealth, and central to franchise qualifications, this legislation shunted disproportionate numbers of male Catholics to the economic and political margins.

The Penal Laws also further institutionalized existing patriarchal and religious cleavages in the service of male Protestant landowners. A Protestant woman married to a Catholic man inherited a portion of his estate, but a Protestant heiress lost her inheritance if she married a Catholic.¹⁶⁶ A woman could not inherit property in her own right—only

¹⁶³ The *Royal University Act of Ireland* of 1879 gave women the legal right to attend university, but gender equality in terms of acceptance to universities was not established in law until the *Universities Act* of 1908 (Hill 2003, 28; Owens 2005, 31, 37).

¹⁶⁴ Bardon 2007, 172-3; Darby 1997, 22; Kee 2000, 18-20.

¹⁶⁵ Bardon 2007, 168-9; Darby 1997, 22; Elliott 2001, 166-7; Kee 2000, 18-20.

¹⁶⁶ Bardon 2007, 168-9; Darby 1997, 22; Elliott 2001, 166-7; Kee 2000, 18-20.

through heterosexual marital relations, and only in the context of Protestant legal, social, political, and economic privilege as instituted through this legislation.

Although the Penal Laws were often patchily applied and began to be removed from the statutes in the late 1700s, they had psychological and material effects that lasted into the nineteenth century, long after they were repealed.¹⁶⁷ They institutionalized landed male Protestant political and economic power, enforced Catholic deference, and cast Catholicism—particularly its clergy—as disloyal and, therefore, a threat to the key institutions of the Protestant British state. As a result of the Penal Laws, the political, professional, and economic élite of the late eighteenth century (known as the Protestant Ascendancy) was male, landed, Protestant (predominantly Church of Ireland), and English-speaking in spite of the fact that the population was approximately three-quarters Catholic, one-quarter Protestant, and majority Irish-speaking.¹⁶⁸ Thus Catholicism and the Irish language came to be connected to economic poverty and social and political

¹⁶⁷ Regular priests were formally allowed to return to Ireland as of the 1780s, and Catholic males regained the right to own and inherit property. The one law that remained on the statutes in 1795 prevented Catholic males from sitting in parliament. Limited franchise had been granted to Catholic men through the *Roman Catholic Relief Act* in 1793, but emancipation for all male Catholics was not achieved until 1829. It was not until 1918 that women were granted limited franchise. Women did not receive equal franchise rights with men until 1922 in the Free State and 1928 in the UK when both were granted the franchise at age 21 (Bardon 2007, 169-70; Foster 1989, 604, 606; Kee 2000, 20, 186; Powell 2002, 10-1).

¹⁶⁸ Foster 1989, 170; Kee 2000, 20, 25. The first census in Ireland in 1841 records the population of Ireland as approximately eight million, and indicates that Irish was still the language of the majority (Kee 2000, 171). Demographics based on religious identification remained relatively stable throughout the 1800s in spite of a steep population decline between 1841 and 1911 (the result of the Great Famine and emigration). According to census data from 1871 to 1911 approximately seventy-five percent of the population of Ireland claimed a Catholic identity and around twenty-four percent claimed a Protestant identity, which was split amongst those who claimed affiliation with the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, and Methodist denominations (about one percent claimed “other” as their religious identity). In Ulster, however, Protestant denominations comprised approximately fifty to fifty-six percent of the population; the Catholic population declined slightly from approximately forty-nine percent in 1871 to about forty-four percent in 1911 (Megahey 2001, 160-1).

disenfranchisement. By institutionalizing class, religious, gender, and cultural cleavages, the Penal Laws constituted land, political rights, class, gender, religion, and culture as touchstones for Catholic and Irish nationalist grievances, giving rise to institutionalized Irish nationalist movements in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁶⁹

Irish nationalisms in the nineteenth century: conflicting nations/nationhoods

Inspired by the French Revolution, an Irish nationalist movement, known as the United Irishmen, instigated the United Irishmen Rebellion in 1798 to redress the cleavages institutionalized through the Penal Laws. This popular rising, or moment of nationness, united Catholics and Protestants as well as the landed and working classes in the aim of overthrowing English administration in Ireland and establishing an independent Irish republic. The United Irishmen argued this would only be achieved by ensuring the unity and political emancipation of the majority of the male population of Ireland.¹⁷⁰ Dublin Castle (the seat of British administration in Ireland) recruited the Loyalist forces of the Orange Order and the Yeomanry Corps to quell the uprising.¹⁷¹ Approximately 30,000 people died. Many others were exiled or executed.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Elliott 2001, 167-8; Foster 1989, 207, 211; Walsh 2002, 2.

¹⁷⁰ Curtin 1991, 133-5; Farrell 1980, 13-4; Foster 1989, 274-81; Jackson 2003, 12; Kee 2000, 61, 63, 67, 75; Whelan 1996, 59-61.

¹⁷¹ The Orange Order emerged in 1795 after the Battle of the Diamond (near Loughgall, county Armagh), a conflict between the Catholic *Defenders* and the Protestant *Peep O'Day Boys*. Both were secret oath-bound organizations. The *Defenders* was said to have been established to protect Catholics from attacks by the *Peep O'Day Boys*, who claimed to be enforcing Penal Laws reneged upon by the gentry. However, such attacks appear to have been based on rivalry in Armagh for markets in the linen trade at a time when war in Europe had severely impacted linen and food prices. After their victory at the Battle of the Diamond members of the *Peep O'Day Boys* allegedly met at the home of James Sloan and established the Orange Order named in honour of William of Orange (William III) (Bardon 2007, 224-6; Darby 1997, 23; Elliott

The 1798 rising led to the *Act of Union* of 1801, which united the Kingdoms of Ireland and Great Britain.¹⁷³ The Irish parliament was voted out of existence, and Ireland was administered from Westminster thereafter.¹⁷⁴ Thus, instead of addressing the grievances that had precipitated the uprising, this transfer of political and economic administration compounded the sense of oppression and domination of Ireland by “England’s parliament”. This constituted the issue of political and civil rights as paramount to Ireland’s emancipation from English domination, oppression, and administration in Irish nationalist discourses throughout the nineteenth century.

Robert Emmet led another (failed) United Irishmen rising in Dublin in July of 1803.¹⁷⁵ The repeal of the *Act of Union* (1801) and establishment of an Irish republic were the primary goals, according to the Proclamation of the 1803, which exhorted Ireland “to show the world...that you have a right to claim their recognizance [sic] of you as an independent country” and “solemnly declare[d] that our object is to establish a free and

2001, 224-5; Foster 1989, 272, 275). The oath of the Order made clear its religious identity. Its members pledged “to support the King and his heirs as long as he or they support the Protestant Ascendancy” (Bardon 2007, 226).

¹⁷² Curtin 1991, 133-5; Farrell 1980, 13-4; Foster 1989, 274-81; Jackson 2003, 12; Kee 2000, 61, 63, 67, 75; Whelan 1996, 59-61.

¹⁷³ Boyce & O’Day 2001, 1; Darby 1997, 24. England, Wales, and Scotland (Great Britain) had been constituted as one kingdom administered by one monarch and one parliament under the *Act of Union* (1707). The passage of the *Act of Union* (1801) was controversial since peerages in both the Irish and British parliaments had been sold or granted to those who promised to support the union and ensure the passage of the bill in both parliaments (Foster 1989, 284; Jackson 2012, 184-5; Kee 2000, 156-60; Walsh 2002, 1-2).

¹⁷⁴ Kee 2000, 156-60; Walsh 2002, 1-2.

¹⁷⁵ Kee 2000, 163-9.

independent republic in Ireland”.¹⁷⁶ However, the 1803 Rising was also quickly quashed by Dublin Castle. Emmet was arrested, found guilty of treason, and hanged.¹⁷⁷

Both Theobald Wolfe Tone (a leader of the 1798 Rebellion) and Emmet were constituted by later Irish nationalist discourses as martyrs for the nation. Speaking in 1915 at Wolfe Tone’s grave, Patrick Pearse, a commander of the Irish nationalist forces during the Easter Rising of 1916 (discussed below) declared: “No failure...was ever more complete, more pathetic than Emmet’s. And yet he has left us a prouder memory than the men of Brian victorious at Clontarf...It is the memory of a sacrifice Christ-like in its perfection”.¹⁷⁸ Pearse constituted roughly 1000 years of nationness connecting Clontarf, Brian Boru, Wolfe Tone, Emmet, and the United Irishmen to the contemporary Irish nationalist movement of which he was a part. He cast Emmet as a martyr for the Irish nation and tied his (Pearse’s) Irish nationalist discourse of nation to Catholicism and its predominant symbol of the crucified Christ. Like Christ, Emmet had sacrificed his life for the greater good of the Irish republic; Pearse would do the same in 1916.

¹⁷⁶ Madden 1842-6, 132, cited in Kee 2000, 166.

¹⁷⁷ Kee 2000, 163-9.

¹⁷⁸ Cited in Kee 2000, 169 (original source not provided). Here, Pearse is referring to Brian Boru, King of Dal Cais and King of Munster. He united Munster and southern Ireland when he invaded Ossary in 983 CE, defeated the High King, and subjugated Leinster; he then declared himself High King of Ireland in 1002. His authority over Leinster and claim to the title High King were challenged by the Ua Neill dynasty in Ulster and the Kingdom of Dublin. Brian Boru died in the Battle of Clontarf in April 1014, when he attempted to conquer the Kingdom of Dublin and his opponents in Leinster. The Ua Neill king then reclaimed the title of High King of Ireland (Bardon 2007, 29; *Encyclopedia Britannica*. www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/79152/Brian. Accessed July 4, 2012).

The Catholic Emancipation and Young Ireland Movements

In response to the widespread discontent which persisted after the failure of the United Irishmen risings, the Catholic Emancipation movement emerged in the 1820s, under Daniel O’Connell’s leadership. Religious and political rights were connected and institutionalized through this movement, which was aligned with the Catholic Association, established in 1823, and advocated the repeal of the *Act of Union* (1801) and male Catholic emancipation.¹⁷⁹ The domopolitics of the Emancipation movement constituted Ireland and the Irish as an oppressed Catholic nation and people.¹⁸⁰ This shifted the constitution of the nation and nationhood from the unification of the Irish regardless of religion and class (as conceived by the United Irishmen) to the political emancipation of Catholic Ireland through the extension of the franchise to *all* male Catholics. The emancipation of Ireland was thus constituted by the Emancipation movement as the nation-work of Catholics, particularly Catholic men who were to be the primary beneficiaries of the movement’s expanded nationhood through the expansion of the franchise.

The *Roman Catholic Relief Act* was passed in 1829, removing legal prohibitions against Catholic men voting or holding public office and eliminating the required oath for parliamentary participation.¹⁸¹ However, the financial requirements for holding public office meant that this legislation made little real difference in terms of Catholic (or indeed

¹⁷⁹ Walsh 2002, 1-2; Whelan 1996, 152-3.

¹⁸⁰ Foster 1989, 317; Powell 2002, 53.

¹⁸¹ Up to this time, members of parliament were required to take an oath against the Pope and transubstantiation, which effectively excluded Catholics from being members of parliament (Elliott 2001, 167).

working-class Protestant) representation, either in parliament or public office.¹⁸²

Differences in the constitution of the Irish nation and nationhood were the basis for cleavages between the Emancipation and the Young Ireland movements, which until 1846 had been allied. Young Irelanders considered the re-establishment of the Dublin parliament to be a first step toward Irish independence, but ultimately aimed to forge a Gaelic Irish nation united across religious and class cleavages.¹⁸³ Invoking the United Irishmen risings, the Young Ireland movement advanced a revolutionary path to Ireland's emancipation and advocated the use of physical force in contrast to O'Connell's "moral force" and non-violent route to nationhood.¹⁸⁴

According to the domopolitics of the Young Irelanders, the Norman and Tudor invasions of Ireland, as well as the subsequent imposition of English institutions and culture, had de-Gaelicized Ireland.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, Young Ireland nation-work concentrated on reviving the Gaelic nation since it was this cultural distinctiveness from England that validated Young Irelander claims of independence for Ireland.¹⁸⁶ The decline of Gaelic Ireland was rooted in Ireland's lack of sovereignty; hence it was political sovereignty and

¹⁸² Foster 1989, 300-2, 306-7; Kee 2000, 179, 181-3, 185-6; Walsh 2002, 3. On the same day as the *Roman Catholic Relief Act* was passed by parliament, the *Irish Parliamentary Elections Act* was also passed, which raised the franchise qualification from a forty-shilling to a ten-pound freehold. This was beyond the financial means of many Catholics and Protestants as well (Foster 1989, 606; Kee 2000, 186). Until 1832 women had been prevented from voting by custom rather than law. The 1832 *Reform Act* specifically introduced sex discrimination into electoral qualifications with its use of the words "male persons". This was extended in 1835 to include local and municipal government franchise (Owens 2005, 5).

¹⁸³ Powell 2002, 53.

¹⁸⁴ Innes 1993, 31; Powell 2002, 53.

¹⁸⁵ Innes 1993, 31; Powell 2002, 53.

¹⁸⁶ Innes 1993, 29-30; Kee 2000, 263.

economic independence that would provide Ireland with the legal and economic means to protect and revitalize its Gaelic culture, according to Young Ireland domestic politics.

Production of the newspaper *The Nation* was particularly important nation-work of the Young Ireland movement. First published in October 1842 it functioned as a public space in which the nation was constituted through discourse and interpellation.¹⁸⁷ The goal of *The Nation* was to educate and connect its readership to the broader “people” of Ireland. The masthead of its editorial page made explicit that mission. It read: “To create and foster public opinion in Ireland—to make it racy [sic] of the soil”.¹⁸⁸ Writers for *The Nation* appealed to its readers as citizens. In this way readers of *The Nation* were “induct[ed] into a world of extensive solidarities, concerns, and responsibilities” and, hence, connected as a people.¹⁸⁹

Daniel O’Connell’s Repeal movement of the early 1840s, which aimed to repeal the *Act of Union* (1801), received support within the pages of *The Nation*. It publicized the meetings and public demonstrations organized by members of the Repeal movement as well as the minutes of the meetings and records of the funds raised in support of the movement.¹⁹⁰

Moral regeneration, civil *and* religious liberty, and reason, key themes in *The Nation*, constituted those actively involved in the Young Ireland and Repeal movements

¹⁸⁷ Kearns unpublished, 1-2, 7, 10-5.

¹⁸⁸ *The Nation*, October 15, 1842, 8a, cited in Kearns unpublished, 4.

¹⁸⁹ Kearns no date, 10.

¹⁹⁰ Kearns no date, 6-7, 15-8.

as the opposite of the “irresponsible, superstitious, and violent spectre that haunted the British imagination”.¹⁹¹ The degrading impact of colonialism on Ireland was another important theme. “A country like ours’...is degraded by dependence; the Irish are political children, political slaves: ‘We are slaves, and our country is a province because our Protestant fathers were tyrants, and our Catholic fathers were slaves’”.¹⁹² Foreign rule was identified as the principal cause of Ireland’s woes.¹⁹³

In the mid 1840s, the Young Ireland movement was interrupted by an event which would have a deep social, economic, and political impact on Ireland for decades to come: the Great Famine. The potato had been a staple crop in Ireland since the 1780s, so the blight and subsequent massive failure of the potato crops in the 1840s had profound social and economic repercussions.¹⁹⁴ During the Great Famine (1845-1849), approximately one million people died of starvation or disease and an estimated further one million emigrated to escape widespread poverty.¹⁹⁵ Through death, disease, and migration, the population of Ireland was almost halved in just twenty years.¹⁹⁶ Ireland’s population continued to decline for decades. Between 1841 and 1911, its population plummeted by

¹⁹¹ Kearns no date, 8, 10-4.

¹⁹² *The Nation*, October 22, 1842, 25c, cited in Kearns no date, 10.

¹⁹³ Kearns no date, 11-2.

¹⁹⁴ Bardon 2007, 280; Foster 1989, 219, 319-20; Kee 2000, 172-4.

¹⁹⁵ Walsh 2002, 4. According to the 1841 census, Ireland’s total population was approximately 8.2 million. By 1851, its population had declined to an estimated 6.5 million (Powell 2002, 54). By 1871, the population was estimated to be 5,412,359. It declined further by 1891 to approximately 4,704,750, and by 1901 it had dropped to roughly 4,457,428. By 1911 it had fallen still further to an estimated 4,389,045 (Megahey 2001, 160-1).

¹⁹⁶ Kee 2000, 258.

approximately forty-six percent, making Ireland the only region of Europe to experience a decline in population during this period.¹⁹⁷

As a moment of nationness the Great Famine had a long-lasting effect on Irish nationalist discourses. Throughout the nineteenth century, land was vital to the subsistence of the majority of the population, as Ireland's economy was primarily agricultural. Therefore, the concentration of land in the hands of the landed Church of Ireland elite meant that land and land ownership were contentious issues and central to Irish nationalist discourses throughout the 1800s.¹⁹⁸ The perceived indifference of the British government and the Anglo-Irish landed class to the suffering and social and economic dislocation of much of Ireland's population during the Famine ratcheted up anti-English and anti-landlord sentiments in Ireland, as expressed by the militant Fenian Brotherhood and the Land League.¹⁹⁹

A domopolitics of the oppression of the Irish by the English and Anglo-Irish was central to Fenian and Land League discourses of nation and nationhood, and the basis of these movements' agenda of land reform.²⁰⁰ Drawing on the mythic ancient Gaelic

¹⁹⁷ Bardon 2007, 307; Boyce & O'Day 2004, 10.

¹⁹⁸ Foster 1989, 375; Kee 2000, 172. In 1876 fewer than 800 landlords owned roughly half the land in Ireland; around 302 landlords (roughly one percent of the total) owned approximately thirty-four percent of that. Approximately twenty-three percent of the land in Ireland was held by people who resided outside of Ireland, while an estimated thirty-six percent of landlords lived in Ireland, but not on their estates (Foster 1989, 375).

¹⁹⁹ Innes 1993, 12; Kee 2000, 359. The Fenian Brotherhood of the US and Canada (or the Fenians) was a militant Irish nationalist organization established in the US in 1858 by John O'Mahony and James Stephens. It supported the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a militant, nationalist, secret, pledge-bound organization based in Ireland, which also came to be known as "the Fenians" (or "the brotherhood") through its association with the Fenian Brotherhood (Foster 1989, 390-1; Kee 2000, 310, 315).

²⁰⁰ Kee 2000, 328-34.

warrior Fionn Mac Cumhail and his legion of armed men, the *Fianna*, the Fenian Brotherhood (and through its connection to the Fenians, the Irish Republican Brotherhood [IRB]) constituted Ireland as a Gaelic Catholic nation distinct from, and oppressed by, England and the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. This legitimated Fenian claims of Irish sovereignty and its discourse of retribution aimed at achieving Irish political and economic sovereignty. Casting the English and Anglo-Irish as the “enemies” and oppressors of Ireland and the Irish, the proclamation of the provisional government of the Fenian Republic made clear the Fenians’ domopolitics. It declared: “We have suffered centuries of outrage, enforced poverty and bitter misery. Our rights and liberties have been trampled on by an alien aristocracy [the Anglo-Irish], who treating us as foes, usurped our lands and drew away from our unfortunate country all material riches”.²⁰¹ Consequently, there was “no honourable alternative left” but armed resistance which was a “last resort”.²⁰²

The Fenian armed insurrection in March 1867 was quickly suppressed by the authorities at Dublin Castle who apprehended and jailed many of those involved. Attempts to spring their “brothers” from jail in Manchester and London in November and December of 1867 brought the violence of a militant Irish nationalism (the “Fenian Menace”), which had been previously contained to Ireland, directly to England in a way not experienced before. Although these bungled jail-breaks resulted in numerous deaths and injuries, as moments of nationness they provided Irish nationalists with yet more

²⁰¹ *The Times*. March 8, 1867, cited in Kee 2000, 334.

²⁰² *The Times*. March 8, 1867, cited in Kee 2000, 334.

“martyrs” (known as the Manchester Martyrs): William Allen, Philip Larkin, and Michael O’Brien, who were executed for the murder of a police officer—the first Irish nationalists to be executed since Emmet in 1803.²⁰³

Isaac Butt, a Protestant lawyer from County Donegal, was the legal counsel for the Manchester Martyrs. Although he had been involved in Irish nationalist movements since the 1840s, Butt gained prominence through his work on behalf of the Manchester Martyrs. As the leader of the Amnesty Association, which advocated that the UK government grant Fenian prisoners amnesty, the Irish Tenant League, and the Home Government Association (which he founded in 1870 and became the Home Rule League in 1873), Butt forged alliances between radical and constitutional elements of Irish nationalism. He also connected the issues of land reform, tenant rights, and self-government for Ireland. By 1874 Butt was also leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party (the IPP), an Irish nationalist political party in the Westminster parliament (a position he held until he was overthrown by Charles Stewart Parnell in 1877).²⁰⁴

Butt pioneered a federalist notion of Home Rule as the means by which Ireland could achieve independence without compromising either the unity of the empire or the rights and freedoms of any class or religious group in Ireland. In 1870 he published a pamphlet entitled *Home Government for Ireland*, which advocated the re-establishment of a Dublin parliament to govern the local affairs of Ireland (although Ireland would remain part of the British Empire). This parliament would be representative, according to the

²⁰³ Kee 2000, 327-8, 330, 334-7, 343-4.

²⁰⁴ Foster 1989, 306, 397; Jackson 2003, 24-9; Kee 2000, 359-63; O’Day 2004, 21-4; Spence 2001, 66, 71-5, 81-5.

franchise rights of the day, rather than dominated by a particular class or religious denomination. The Westminster parliament would maintain control over military and imperial affairs.²⁰⁵

Butt's federal notion of Home Rule never took hold. In the early- and mid-1870s, the UK parliament was more concerned with issues related to South Africa and Afghanistan than reform in Ireland. In addition, the more radical factions of the Irish nationalist movement were frustrated by the slow pace of constitutional strategies and agitated for speedier results and complete independence for Ireland from Great Britain. Nevertheless, Butt is important for championing moderate Irish nationalism at a time when it seemed to be out of favour.²⁰⁶ Moreover, the institutions developed under Butt's leadership (such as the IPP) remained influential for decades after, as did Butt's idea of Home Rule for Ireland, the importance he attached to uniting the constitutional and radical elements of Irish nationalism, and his connecting of the questions of the Irish nation and land reform.²⁰⁷

The recession in the UK during the 1870s, poor potato harvests in 1877-78, and the failure of approximately three-quarters of the potato crop due to blight and cold weather in the summer of 1879, meant that famine threatened Ireland again in the late 1870s. Many tenant farmers were unable to pay their rents due to the loss of crops, and

²⁰⁵ Foster 1989, 306, 397; Jackson 2003, 24-9; Kee 2000, 359-63; O'Day 2004, 21-3; Spence 2001, 81-4. Scotland and Wales would also have Home Rule parliaments that would govern local affairs in those regions, which is what made Butt's notion a federal notion of Home Rule and not just an idea applied to Ireland (Foster 1989, 306, 397; Jackson 2003, 24-9; Kee 2000, 359-61; O'Day 2004, 21-3).

²⁰⁶ Kee 2000, 366-7; O'Day 2004, 26.

²⁰⁷ Foster 1989, 398-9; Jackson 2003, 24-33.

this resulted in widespread evictions, particularly in the west of Ireland.²⁰⁸ The National Land League of Ireland (the Land League) emerged from this moment of nationness, and put land reform front and centre in its discourse of nation and nationhood.

Charles Stewart Parnell, leader of the IPP, and John Devoy, leader of the American Fenian movement, forged an informal alliance in 1879. Known as the New Departure, this alliance connected the constitutionalist Irish nationalism of the IPP with the more radical Irish nationalism of the Fenian movement. The New Departure advocated “full legislative autonomy for Ireland” (Home Rule), the compulsory sale of land by landlords to their tenants, and an independent Home Rule party in Westminster. Furthermore, the IPP endorsed the Fenian movement and its promotion of the use of armed strategies to achieve Irish nationalist goals, and the Fenian movement was integrated into the Land League movement of which Parnell was also leader.²⁰⁹

Under Parnell’s leadership from 1879 to 1882, the Land League and the potentially non-sectarian issue of land reform were politicized; as leader of both the Land League and the IPP Parnell tied questions of land reform to issues of Irish political emancipation.²¹⁰ Evidence of this can be gleaned from the slogan of the Land League: “The land of Ireland for the people of Ireland.”²¹¹ Given the extreme concentration of

²⁰⁸ Kane 2000, 245. Evictions were relatively few during years of good harvests, but in 1877 approximately 406 evictions took place, followed by roughly 843 in 1878. An estimated further 1,098 evictions occurred in 1879 when, combined with the cold, wet summer, crop prices fell. There were more evictions between 1879 and 1883 due to widespread crop failures, than in the previous thirty years combined (Bardon 2007, 361-2; Foster 1989, 408).

²⁰⁹ Foster 1989, 402-5; Jackson 2003, 36-7, 39-40; Kee 2000, 368-72.

²¹⁰ Kane 2000, 255; Kee 2000, 376; Walker 2004, 9.

²¹¹ Walsh 2002, 10.

land ownership in Ireland, this was a direct threat to the landlord class.

The domopolitics of the Land League connected land reform and the economic emancipation of tenant and peasant farmers to the political emancipation of the nation.²¹² It understood the existing land system in Ireland to be a tool of British domination. Landlords had misused the land and oppressed those who worked it; hence they were deemed to be threat to Ireland and the “Irish” (the tillers of the land).²¹³ Consequently land reform was constituted as the primary nation-work of the Land League—the means of achieving Ireland’s political and economic independence. The Land League had three demands (the “three ‘f’s”): fair rent, free sale of improvements made to land-holdings (the right of a tenant to be compensated for improvements made by them to a land-holding when a tenancy ended), and fixity of tenure to protect against eviction provided that rent was paid.²¹⁴ These demands were constituted as retribution for past wrongs done to the Irish by the landed Anglo-Irish class and the British government.²¹⁵

Mass meetings and demonstrations organized by the Land League were sites of ritual and meaning construction. Local and national leaders recounted an Irish history of conquest and confiscations, Catholic repression, and the Famine, and constituted the

²¹² Walsh 2002, 10.

²¹³ Kane 2000, 251-2, 255, 257. It should be noted that there were cleavages within the Land League between peasants and farmers who worked small plots of land and tenant farmers or graziers who worked larger land-holdings (Kane 2000, 254).

²¹⁴ Bardon 2007, 369; Boyce & O’Day 2001, 117-9; Janis 2008, 8; Kane 2000, 245; Kee 2000, 378-9.

²¹⁵ Kane 2000, 251. Eviction resistance, demonstrations against evictions, legal action in courts, parliamentary reforms and proposals, the use of intimidation, mass meetings, and boycotts were tools used by the Land League.

aspirations and visions of the Irish “people”.²¹⁶ Tenants were encouraged to boycott any landlord who charged unaffordable rents (and anyone who took over land from which someone had been evicted) by refusing to collect his crops or to pay him rent.²¹⁷ These Land League boycotts incited responses, particularly from the Orange Order, which was concerned about this mass movement that combined demands for land reform with what it perceived to be an agenda to gain rights for Catholics.²¹⁸ Here the domestic politics of the Irish nationalist Land League and the Protestant unionist Orange Order clashed. As previously stated, land reform was vital to the political and economic emancipation of Ireland and its peasant and tenant farmers, according to the Land League; for the Orange Order, however, the Land League’s agenda of land reform posed a danger to Protestant landowners’ political and economic power.

The *Land Act* of 1881 granted the “three ‘fs’” of the Land League. This act divided the Land League and was arguably the beginning of the end for the New Departure. While the act addressed the Land League’s principal demands, it did not apply to those with rent arrears nor to lease-holders. Hence, the Land League continued its protests and tested the new legislation by bringing cases to the Land Courts.²¹⁹ The

²¹⁶ Kane 2000, 250-1.

²¹⁷ Bardon 2007, 366; Walsh 2002, 11. The Land League organized boycotts (named after land agent and farmer, Charles Boycott, from county Mayo, whose tenants refused to gather his harvest in September 1880. Unionist labourers were brought from Cavan and Monaghan to gather his crops at a cost of £10,000; thereafter, “boycott” became a widely used word and strategy within the Land League movement (Bardon 2007, 366; Walsh 2002, 11). *Le Figaro* wrote that “The bright Irish have invented a new word. They are currently saying to *boycott* somebody, meaning to ostracize him” (Marlow 1973, 175, cited in Bardon 2007, 366).

²¹⁸ Bardon 2007, 367-8.

²¹⁹ Foster 1989, 413-4; Jackson 2003, 44-5; Kee 2000, 379-80.

imprisonment of Parnell and other male Land Leaguers in October 1881 and the outlawing of the Land League by the Westminster parliament were perceived by many as British callousness in the face of Irish agrarian distress. This raised anti-British sentiments and served increasingly to unify the radical and moderate factions of the Land League against Westminster, which was constituted as the “enemy” of Ireland.²²⁰

By 1892 the alliance of the New Departure had broken down. The Kilmainham Treaty, agreed to by Parnell and the UK government in 1892, brought an end to the Land Wars. In return for their acceptance of the Treaty, Parnell and other Land Leaguers were released from Kilmainham Jail. Parnell, ever the political pragmatist, focused more attention on constitutional means to achieve Home Rule for Ireland and less attention on maintaining the alliance with more radical elements of the Irish nationalist movement.²²¹

Along with the land reforms of the 1880s and 1890s, franchise reforms in these decades significantly reduced the power of the male Protestant Ascendancy by providing greater security of tenure and political agency to tenants and significantly decreasing the local and political power.²²² Franchise reforms in 1884 and 1885 and, crucially, the *Local Government Act* of 1898 roughly tripled the electorate in Ireland by extending the franchise beyond the male propertied class to include male ratepayers (local tax payers),

²²⁰ Janis 2008, 20; Kane 2000, 254-5, 256; Kee 2000, 380.

²²¹ Foster 1989, 404-5; Jackson 2003, 44-5.

²²² Boyce & O’Day 2001, 150; Kee 2000, 407; Walsh 2002, 27. The *Land Act* of 1886 improved the distribution of land to tenant farmers. However, it was the *Land Act* of 1903 which took this process further with roughly 280,000 holdings changing hands (at a cost of £86 million to the Treasury) as a result of the legislation (Walsh 2002, 27).

farmers with small land-holdings, and agricultural labourers.²²³

These reforms were part of an emerging era of mass politics, and also a policy of (in the words of Gerald Balfour, Chief Secretary of Ireland from 1895 to 1900) “killing Home Rule with kindness”.²²⁴ Formal party politics was no longer the exclusive domain of an élite, but a sphere which saw the growth of large political parties and accompanying political machines, one in which an expanded electorate had to be swayed to support particular political parties and policies.²²⁵ The nation and nationhood of Irish nationalism (and of Ulster unionism, as we shall see in Chapter 4) evolved as the expanded male franchise necessitated modified Irish nationalist discourses and practices. An Irish nationalist movement with a focus on a *cultural* nation, which could have mass appeal, came to the fore.

The Gaelic Revival movement of the late 1800s and early 1900s advocated the revival of “Irish Ireland” through the renaissance of Irish (Gaelic) music, language, literature, sport, and history as the means by which the spiritual and cultural Irish nation could be re-established and institutionalized. This was in contrast to the parliamentary path to nationhood advocated by the IPP, which as will be demonstrated below, was increasingly seen as ineffective by the 1890s, given the failure of the two Home Rule bills. Gaelic Revivalism constituted the Irish nation as Catholic and Gaelic, and the Irish people as Catholic and practicing Irish culture (i.e., speaking Irish, playing Gaelic music

²²³ Bardon 2007, 374; Boyce & O’Day 2001, 150; Kee 2000, 407.

²²⁴ Walsh 2002, 27.

²²⁵ Foy 1996, 49.

and sports, reading/writing Gaelic poetry, and telling Gaelic folklore).²²⁶ The Irish language in particular constituted a linguistically distinct nation from the dominant Anglo-Irish nation.²²⁷ However, this discourse of Irishness and the Irish nation minimized or denied any sense of Irishness in unionist discourses, which during this period constituted Ulster as both part of Ireland *and* the UK, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), which promoted Irish sports such as hurling and Gaelic football; the Gaelic League (founded in 1893 and active until 1921), which promoted Gaelic culture (particularly the Irish Gaelic language); *Cumann na nGaedheal* (Fellowship of the Irish); *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* (Daughters of Ireland); and newspapers, such as *Shan Van Vocht* (Poor Old Woman), *United Irishman*, and *Sinn Féin* were all important elements of the constitution and institutionalization of this Gaelic, Catholic Irish nation.²²⁸

Membership in *Cumann na nGaedheal*, established in 1900, was open to “all persons of Irish birth or descent undertaking to obey its rules, carry out its constitution,

²²⁶ Foster 1989, 459.

²²⁷ Harp 1989, 43, 47, 49-50.

²²⁸ Fitzpatrick 2006, 187. *Shan Van Vocht* was published in Belfast between 1896 and 1899 and was edited by Alice Milligan (a Protestant) and Ethna Carbery (a Catholic), whose real name was Anna Johnson (Harp 1989, 42; Luddy 1995, 297; Ward 1995b, 45-6). It ceased publication in 1899 due to waning financial support, the consequence of the editors’ decision not to become involved in the divisive politics of nation and nationhood (Harp 1989, 51; Ward 1995b, 47). The *United Irishman* was a publication of Arthur Griffith and William Rooney begun in 1899. It espoused militant Irish nationalism and was initially critical of the IPP for advancing a constitutional path to Irish independence, and the Gaelic League’s notion of cultural revival (Kee 2000, 442). *Sinn Féin* was also published by Griffith. Established in October 1906 (replacing the *United Irishman*), it marked Griffith’s ideological shift away from a notion of dual nationality for Ireland (Irish/British) to *sinn féin* (“ourselves alone”), or the notion of an Irish nation politically and economically independent of Great Britain and its empire. *Sinn Féin* was banned by the UK parliament in December 1914 (Kee 2000, 453, 533).

and pledge themselves to aid to the best of their ability in restoring Ireland to her former position of sovereign independence”.²²⁹ Perhaps the most influential aspect of its discourse was *sinn féin* (“ourselves alone”): the notion that the revival of the Irish nation would be achieved through the withdrawal of support by the Irish for British institutions—first and foremost the Westminster parliament.

Ireland and the Irish people were also constituted in the pages of the *United Irishman* and *Shan Van Vocht*. Some correspondents to *United Irishman* argued that the “Gael” were the only true Irish, while others maintained that “Irish” *not* “Gael” was primary.²³⁰ One correspondent argued for the deportation of the non-Gaelic population from Ireland, but acknowledged that individuals of the “settler” population could be allowed to remain provided that they were “in touch with the Gael”.²³¹ In spite of such debates and differences many who worked for the *United Irishman* seemed to consider their work not simply as journalistic, but crucially as nation-work. One correspondent declared: “We are nation-makers”.²³² *Shan Van Vocht* also constituted Ireland and the Irish people through its editorials, articles, and poetry. The name of the paper itself reflected its Irish nationalist bent, since the *shan van vocht* (or “the poor old woman”) had

²²⁹ *United Irishman*. October 6, 1900, cited in Foster 1989, 457; Kee 2000, 446. *Cumann na nGaedheal* was established by Arthur Griffith as a way to unite Irish nationalist organizations, and would eventually form the basis of Griffith’s political party: Sinn Féin (Foster 1989, 457; Kee 2000, 446).

²³⁰ Here Gael refers to those who claimed a Gaelic identity rather than a “settler” (i.e., Ulster-Scots or Irish-Anglo) identity. Irish refers to those who espoused Irish independence and identified culturally as Irish through using an Irish name, speaking Irish, playing Irish sports and music, and making themselves familiar with Gaelic myths and folklore.

²³¹ *United Irishman*. March 30, 1901, cited in Kee 2000, 447.

²³² *United Irishman*. February 15, 1902, cited in Kee 2000, 448.

long been a dominant Irish nationalist symbol of Ireland.²³³ Moreover, *Shan Van Vocht* was the first paper to convey the idea of *sinn féin* as a vehicle through which Irish independence could be achieved, when it published Douglas Hyde's poem "Waiting for Help" in both Gaelic and English.²³⁴

Gaelic Revivalism's nation-work of "creat[ing] an Irish nation in Ireland" by re-establishing Gaelic customs and language and developing Irish industry was very influential in Irish nationalist movements of the early twentieth century, particularly the Easter Rising of 1916.²³⁵

GENDERING IRELAND

Gender was integral to the constitution of nation, nationhood, nationness, and to the nation-work of these competing Irish nationalist movements throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Patriarchy was institutionalized through statutes which constituted social relations between "the people" and key institutions in Ireland (such as the monarchy, the aristocracy, the parliament, and the churches). Moreover, organized religion institutionalized patriarchy. The Catholic Church and all Protestant denominations in Ireland were patriarchal institutions. The churches further institutionalized patriarchal relations at the individual level via doctrines of male power

²³³ Harp 1989, 43; Luddy 1995, 297; Ward 1995a, 8-9.

²³⁴ Harp 1989, 47-8.

²³⁵ Kelly 2004, 151.

and authority as well as female chastity, submissiveness, and obedience within the family unit. Such gender norms were constituted through the iconic Catholic image of the Virgin Mary and the marital vow of obedience, which applied only to the bride and was to be found in the form of the solemnization of matrimony of all the churches.²³⁶ Patriarchy was further institutionalized through primogeniture, placing men in positions of power both in their individual families and in key institutions. In this way gender norms were established and institutionalized even at the level of intimate day-to-day relations amongst family members.

Defending and mothering the nation

Irish nationalist discourses since the United Irishmen constituted men's primary nation-work to be the active defence of the nation, and motherhood to be the primary nation-work of women—symbolically and practically. Irish nationalist poetry and symbolism most often constituted men as the active defenders of a symbolically feminine nation (*Erin* or *Hibernia*), who was either in distress and in need of protection or exhorting the men of Ireland to take up arms in her defence.²³⁷ Hence women were often constituted as passive observers, or beneficiaries, of male political agency. Crucially a woman's role was to instill in the next generation of the nation a national culture and

²³⁶ "Order for the Solemnization of Marriage". 1921. *Directory for Public Worship for Use in the Presbyterian Church of England*, 68; "Solemnization of Matrimony". 1923. *Euchologian: A Book of Common Order* (9th Edition), 331-2; "The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony". 1899. *Order of Administration of the Sacraments and Other Services for the Use of the People Called Methodists*, 30-1; "The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony". *The Whole Book of Common Prayer According to the Use of the United Church of England and Ireland*, 432.

²³⁷ Innes 1993, 2, 13, 16, 24.

patriotic ideals and through their child-rearing work as mothers.²³⁸

The discourse of public/private spheres was key to this gendering of nation, nationhood, and nation-work. However, this discourse of separate spheres should be treated as a rhetorical construction rather than a reflection of the lived reality, one through which the virtues of “piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity” constituted the Victorian ideal of “true womanhood”.²³⁹ For example, an unsigned article entitled “The Mission of Women” proposed that female Young Irelanders should follow an ethics of care, acting as intellectual and moral educators of their children and also instilling patriotic values.²⁴⁰ The author argued that men and women should share equally the duties of citizenship, but that those duties should be performed in different spheres of the nation: “The man will act in the public sphere, but the world says that ‘women are not to *meddle* in politics’; and if by this is meant meddling *publicly*, the world is right. This is not a woman’s sphere... a woman’s sphere is her home”.²⁴¹

The ideal of the “citizen mother” or “civic motherhood” in contrast to that of the male “citizen soldier”, prominent in the early 1900s, constituted the nation-work of motherhood not only as a source of power for women, but also key to the nation.²⁴² Reverend Savell-Hicks stated in *The Irish Citizen* in June 1912 that “women’s moral and educational influence in the family was seen to have power ‘to brace nations and make

²³⁸ Anton 1994, 37; Cannavan 1997, 216.

²³⁹ Janis 2008, 16; Kerber 1988, 21.

²⁴⁰ Cannavan 1997, 214.

²⁴¹ *The Nation*. October 19, 1844, cited in Cannavan 1997, 214.

²⁴² Hearne 1997, 31; Meaney 1993, 236.

them great' or 'to weaken them to their fall'".²⁴³ Mary Hayne echoed this sentiment in an article in *The Irish Citizen*.²⁴⁴ She wrote that the "home is a training ground for men who, in future years, will sway the destinies of village, town, and country, and to a great extent they will be, for good or bad, what their mothers make them".²⁴⁵

The Gaelic Revival movement drew on a similar discourse. It published a pamphlet which encouraged women to be Irish "in fact as well as in name" by creating Irish domestic, educational, and social spheres.²⁴⁶ Thus a woman's most important nation-work in terms of constituting a Gaelic Ireland was to raise her children to speak Irish and to have an appreciation of Gaelic music, sports, and folklore. Moreover, in an editorial in *Shan Van Vocht* Alice Milligan wrote:

To them [Irish women] is entrusted the moulding of the minds of the growing generations of the Irish race, and they should exercise their influence, so that old quarrels would pass away with the makers of them, and so that those who are to work for Ireland in the new era should be able to do so untrammled by old feuds and hatreds.²⁴⁷

Clearly Milligan envisioned motherhood to be the fundamental nation-work of women,

²⁴³ Savell-Hicks, Rev. *The Irish Citizen*. June 15, 1912, 30, cited in Hearne 1997, 31.

²⁴⁴ *The Irish Citizen* was the paper of the Irish Women's Franchise League, a feminist Irish nationalist organization. It was published from 1912 until 1920 (when its presses were destroyed by the Black and Tans) by Hannah and Franis Sheehy-Skeffington and Margaret and James Cousins, two husband and wife duos (Luddy 1995, 243, 273).

²⁴⁵ Hayne, Mary. "Women Citizens, Their Duties, and Their Training". *The Irish Citizen*. June 15, 1912, 27, quoted in Hearne 1997, 32.

²⁴⁶ Butler, Mary. "Some Suggestions as to How Irishwomen May Help the Irish Language Movement". *Gaelic League Pamphlet No. 6*, Dublin, 1901, reproduced in Luddy 1995, 299-300.

²⁴⁷ Milligan, Alice. *Shan Van Vocht*. September 1897, reproduced in Ward 1995a, 10.

yet for her the end was different from dominant Irish nationalist discourses since she believed that mothering nation-work was key to the establishment of the nation in which long-standing religious, political, and economic cleavages in Ireland were diminished. Thus such nation-work was recognized as socially and culturally important.

Inghinidhe na hÉireann (Daughters of Ireland)²⁴⁸ similarly constituted the gendered nation-work of women as mothers/nurturers of the nation and the bearers/instillers of Irish culture as significant. However, it took such gender norms and used them to expand a woman's nation-work beyond that of her individual family and household. The caring and nurturing nation-work of motherhood could and should be expanded beyond an individual family unit to the broader nation through philanthropic and cultural/educational nation-work. Hence *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* constituted a social motherhood which broadened "mothering" beyond the care and nurturing of one's own biological children to the care and nurturing and instilling of a nation's culture in its children. *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*'s membership rules required that women pledge loyalty and support to one another, adopt a Gaelic (Irish) name by which they would be known within the organization, and pledge themselves to promoting the Irish language "by every means in her power".²⁴⁹ Moreover, *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* offered free weekly classes

²⁴⁸ *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* was a republican Irish nationalist organization established in 1900. It was part of the Gaelic Revival, and its purpose was to promote the Irish language and culture, but it also advocated feminism, militant Irish nationalism and complete political and economic independence for Ireland (Luddy 1995, 242; Ward 1995b, 47-52).

²⁴⁹ *United Irishman*. October 13, 1900, reproduced in Luddy 1995, 300-1.

for children in Irish language, history, and music.²⁵⁰ It was also involved in the reinstitution of Irish theatre and supported various female actors, who created and produced *tableaux vivants* (living pictures) which reclaimed Irish heroines (such as Queen Maeve) from the margins of Ireland's history.²⁵¹

One of the primary ways that *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* advanced its feminist Irish nationalist discourse was through its paper, *Bean na hÉireann* (Women of Ireland).²⁵² Its editor, Helena Moloney, explained the importance of the paper: "The *United Irishman*, starting as a physical force, separatist journal, had gradually changed its policy to one of reactionary social and dual-kingdom ideas... We wanted a paper to counter-act this. We wanted it to be a women's paper, advocating militancy [and] separatism".²⁵³ Constance Markievicz contributed a regular column to the paper entitled "The Woman with the Garden", in which she advised that "a good nationalist should look upon slugs in the garden much in the same way as she looks upon the English in Ireland".²⁵⁴ Additionally, *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* implemented a school meals program for children in reaction to widespread poverty in Ireland and the lack of a government response to it. This shamed

²⁵⁰ Luddy 1995, 301; Ward 1995a, 19; Ward 1995b, 52. They called upon people such as Maude Gonne and Ella Young, a mystic and poet, who gave classes on Irish history and myths (Ward 1995b, 52).

²⁵¹ Harp 1989, 47; Ward 1995b, 55. A professional theatre company was established as a result of the staging of these *tableaux vivants*, which became the world-renowned Abbey Theatre (Ward 1995b, 57). Queen Maeve of Connemara was constituted as an ancient Irish heroine who inspired her men to defend her territory (Connacht) against an invasion from Ulster.

²⁵² *Bean na hÉireann* was the first paper produced in Ireland that was devoted to women. It began publication in 1908 and supported militant Irish nationalism. Its analysis of national and social issues made it a popular paper which was distributed throughout Ireland (Luddy 1995, 242, 301; Ward 1995a, 24; Ward 1995b, 67).

²⁵³ Fox 1935, 121, quoted in Ward 1995b, 67.

²⁵⁴ Ward 1995b, 69 (original source not provided).

the politicians into extending the *Provision of Meals Act* to Ireland in 1914, which allowed local authorities (through government funding) to provide school meals to children.²⁵⁵

Women's power as consumers was also recognized within Irish nationalist discourses as important nation-work of women. Members of *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* promised to support Irish industry by using "as far as possible Irish made goods in her household and dress".²⁵⁶ Such nation-work illustrated the reality that the idealized binary of the public and private realms were in fact connected through women's nation-work as mothers and consumers. Women constituted the Gaelic nation through philanthropy, their promotion of the Irish language and facets of Gaelic culture at home, and their support of Irish industry, as the primary day-to-day purchasing decision-makers within their individual households.

This dichotomy of public/male nation-work and private/female nation-work was never more evident than in the Land League movement. Many Ladies' Land Leaguers likewise used dominant gender norms to justify their nation-work in order to downplay the challenge they supposedly posed to dominant gender norms.²⁵⁷ They argued that

²⁵⁵ Ward 1995b, 80-2. According to a 1914 government report, the population of Dublin was approximately 304,000; of that an estimated 194,000, or about sixty-three percent, were working-class and lived primarily in tenement houses, with about half of the working-class families of Dublin living in a single room (Kee 2000, 491). As a result of such high levels of poverty Dublin had the highest infant mortality rate in Europe during the early 1900s (Ward 1995b, 80).

²⁵⁶ *United Irishman*. October 13, 1900, reproduced in Luddy 1995, 300-1.

²⁵⁷ In 1880, Anna and Fanny Parnell (Charles Parnell's sisters) and their mother Delia were living in the United States. They established a New York Ladies' Land League to raise funds for famine relief and to support the work of the Land League in October 1880. Anna returned to Ireland in late 1880 to establish the Ladies' Land League there. In January 1881, Fanny published a letter in a Dublin newspaper *Nation*, which

women's nation-work in the Land League movement was an extension of their "feminine" concerns related to the domestic sphere, thus asserting their capabilities of public participation in constituting the nation and its nationhood in the public realm—and the connections between the two spheres.²⁵⁸ By protecting individual families from eviction and providing huts and financial and emotional support to those who had been jailed (and their families) as a result of Land League protests, they were protecting the broader national family in a manner consistent with established gender roles.²⁵⁹ Fanny Parnell asserted: "This Land League business is essentially a woman's business, because it is essentially a work of philanthropy and humanity".²⁶⁰

Opponents of the Ladies' Land League drew on these same gender norms when constituting the Ladies' Land League activities and protests as unfeminine. In March of 1881 the *Belfast News-Letter* (a Protestant, unionist paper) argued that the demonstrations of the Ladies' Land League represented a "distasteful spectacle of women making a harangue from a public platform".²⁶¹ It declared that "sensible people in the North of Ireland dislike to see [sic] a woman out of the place she is gifted to occupy, and at no time is woman further from her natural position than when she appears upon a political

encouraged women in Ireland to support the establishment of this organization (Janis 2008, 9-10, 12; Ward 1995b, 12-3).

²⁵⁸ Janis 2008, 13.

²⁵⁹ Janis 2008, 13; Luddy 1995, 266; TeBrake 1992, 69, 71.

²⁶⁰ Janis 2008, 13.

²⁶¹ *Belfast News-Letter*. March 18, 1881, cited in Ward 1995b, 23.

platform”.²⁶² Archbishop McCabe, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, echoed such sentiments when he declared in March 1881 that:

the daughters of our Catholic people, be they matrons or virgins, are called forth, under flimsy pretext of charity, to take their stand in the noisy streets of life... They are asked to forget the modesty of their sex and the high dignity of their womanhood by leaders who seem reckless of consequences, and who by that recklessness have brought misery on many families... Very Rev. dear fathers, set your face against this dishonouring attempt, and do not tolerate in your societies the women who so far disavows her birthright of modesty as to parade herself before the public gaze in a character so unworthy as a Child of Mary.²⁶³

It seems many in the Catholic and Protestant communities were united in constituting the public sphere as a male sphere.

The opposition to the Ladies’ Land League only deepened when, in anticipation of their probable imprisonment, the male leadership of the Land League decided to pursue a “most dangerous experiment” and charge the Ladies’ Land League with keeping the movement going in the event of the arrest and the male leadership.²⁶⁴ Revealing the gendered power dynamics within the Land League movement, the male leadership of the Land League failed to consult the Ladies’ Land League prior to taking this decision.²⁶⁵

Workers’ rights were also prominent political and economic issues in the early 1900s in Ireland, and these issues were frequently connected to questions of gender and

²⁶² *Belfast News-Letter*. March 18, 1881, cited in Ward 1995b, 23.

²⁶³ *The Freeman’s Journal*. March 12, 1881, cited in Luddy 1995, 263.

²⁶⁴ Janis 2008, 12; Luddy 1995, 264, 266; TeBrake 1992, 63; Ward 1995b, 4, 13.

²⁶⁵ Luddy 1995, 263, 265. Anna Parnell was adamant that she was never consulted about taking over the leadership of the Land League, and that she was made aware of this decision only when it was announced publicly (Ward 1995b, 4, 13).

nation. At the inaugural meeting of the Irish Women Worker's Union (IWUU),²⁶⁶

Constance Markievicz²⁶⁷ declared that:

Without organisation you can do nothing...the purpose of this meeting is to form you into an army of fighters...by [joining this union]...you will be doing a good day's work not only for yourselves, but for Ireland. As you are all well aware women have at present no vote, but a union, such as has now been formed will not alone enable you to obtain better wages, but will also be a great means of helping you to get votes and thus make men of you all (cheers and laughter).²⁶⁸

According to Markievicz, organizing female workers in labour unions was integral to the constitution and institutionalization of the nation, since it was through such organizing that women were transformed into "an army of fighters" in the service of Ireland and would gain the franchise. This process would transform them into men.

At the same gathering, James Larkin, the then President of the IWWU, emphasized the importance of unity amongst female workers and the centrality of women to the nation. He stated:

Women are the basis of a nation's wealth. On them principally depends the efficiency and welfare of the race. Good or bad, the men are what the women made them. If the women are not healthy, the men will degenerate. If the women are ignorant, the men will be beasts. We cannot have healthy

²⁶⁶ The IWWU was established in 1911, with James Larkin (a prominent labour organizer at that time) as President and his sister Delia as secretary. It aimed to organize women workers in Ireland (Luddy 1995, 230).

²⁶⁷ Constance Markievicz (née Constance Gore-Booth) was a feminist and Irish nationalist. She was President of *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* and *Cumann na mBan*, as well as an officer in the Irish Citizen's Army (ICA). During the 1916 Easter Rising she commanded a division of the ICA. She was the first woman elected to Westminster in 1918, but abstained from taking her seat, and was also Minister for Labour in the cabinet of the first *Dáil na hÉireann*. She was married to a Polish count (Kee 2000, 631; Luddy 1995, 230).

²⁶⁸ Doc 60a: *The Irish Worker*. September 2, 1911, reproduced in Luddy 1995, 230.

women while the present conditions remain unchanged. But health is not the only thing. We want good houses. Good clothing and leisure... Women are more determined than the men. I have seen girls in Belfast wrench off a door and paste a bill on it saying, "We are on strike". This was in the middle of January, with snow on the ground, and many of the girls were barefooted.²⁶⁹

According to Larkin, both women's unpaid labour in the home (their caring-work as mothers and wives) and paid labour in the workforce of the nation were vital to the Ireland's physical and economic health, and hence were integral parts of nation-work.

The importance of the work of the IWWU as a voice for female workers, raising matters of importance to women as workers (and members of the nation) for public debate within Irish nationalist discourses of nation, meant that the ranks of the IWWU grew rapidly.²⁷⁰ In August 1917, *The Irish Citizen* observed that: "The Irish Women's Workers Union is increasing its membership by leaps and bounds... Obviously these women are going to prove themselves a force in Irish affairs that no class of politicians can ignore".²⁷¹ Clearly, according to *The Irish Citizen*, the labour organizing of the IWWU was vital nation-work.

²⁶⁹ Doc 60a: *The Irish Worker*. September 2, 1911, reproduced in Luddy 1995, 230.

²⁷⁰ McKillen 1982, 80-1, 83, 87-8, 90. The IWWU undertook several successful strikes: five in 1916 alone, and laundry and printers' strikes in 1917 (McKillen 1982, 81).

²⁷¹ "IWWU". *The Irish Citizen*. August 1917, 371; "A Boom in Trade Unionism". *The Irish Citizen*. August 1917, 371, cited in McKillen 1982, 81.

Irish nationalism and the suffrage movement

The nineteenth century also saw the emergence of institutionalized feminism in the UK—the first-wave women’s movement which advanced the issue of suffrage for women beginning in the 1860s. Although bills to extend the franchise to women were proposed in parliament beginning in the 1860s, between 1886 and 1892 (interestingly, the years between the first two Home Rule bills) the House of Commons did not debate the issue once.²⁷² Thus within the context of an expanding male franchise (discussed earlier) and the nascent women’s movement in the late 1800s, women of all classes in the UK were denied the franchise and the right to sit in parliament or hold public office (key facets of nationhood) until the passage of the *Representation of the People Act* in 1918. The latter granted universal suffrage to males over twenty-one years of age (removing the property ownership requirement), as well as to females over thirty years of age.²⁷³ This act expanded nationhood further, tripling the UK electorate from an estimated 7.7 to roughly 21.3 million and more than doubling that of Ireland from an estimated 698,098 in 1910 to 1,931,588 in 1918.²⁷⁴

Tensions between feminism and nation as institutionalized form (i.e., between the suffrage and Irish nationalist movements) were deep. These tensions were rooted in differently constituted nations, nationhoods, and nationness, and also in the patriarchal gender relations, which were institutionalized through law, every-day practices and relations, and organized religion, as discussed above. Such tensions resulted in a vigorous

²⁷² Owens 2005, 6-20.

²⁷³ Owens 2005, 5.

²⁷⁴ *Irish Independent*. December 5, 1918, cited in Bardon 2007, 461; Kee 2000, 624; Powell 2002, 140.

debate regarding gender relations, and the relationship between gender, nation, nationhood, nationness, and nation-work, which was closely tied to questions of Ireland's political and economic relationship with Great Britain.

The Irish Women's Franchise League (IWFL),²⁷⁵ *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*, *Cumann na mBan* (Irish Women's Council),²⁷⁶ *The Irish Citizen*, and the IWWU all contributed significantly to these debates in the early 1900s, although they constituted the connections between universal suffrage, equal rights for women, and independence for Ireland differently, and held divergent views about the use of armed force to achieve political and economic independence for Ireland.²⁷⁷ Yet these debates also resulted in cleavages in both the Irish nationalist and suffrage camps. An increasing number of female writers for the *Nation* (the paper of the Young Ireland movement) advocated for gender equality and equal rights and responsibilities for both sexes as central to an independent, united Irish nation. Many argued for the right of women to participate in public fora, to vote, to work outside the home, and to take part equally in an armed struggle for Irish independence.²⁷⁸ Many justified such nation-work for women by appealing to the dominant gender norms of the day. They argued that the caring nature of women meant that they should be involved in the public sphere, since women would

²⁷⁵ The IWFL was founded in 1908 by Hannah and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and Margaret and James Cousins (both husband and wife duos). It supported the use of militancy (civil disobedience but *not* violence) to press for the granting of the franchise to women, and published a paper, *The Irish Citizen* (Luddy 1995, 243, 273).

²⁷⁶ *Cumann na mBan* was established in 1914 as the women's wing of the Irish National Volunteers (Benton 1995, 148-9; McKillen 1982, 53; Ward 1995b, 49; Ward 1995c, 88; Ward 1993, 39-40).

²⁷⁷ McKillen 1982, 57-61.

²⁷⁸ Cannavan 1997, 212, 216-7.

bring their caring and nurturing capacities (“feminine” qualities) to nation-work in the public realm, which was deemed important.²⁷⁹

The issue of the enfranchisement of women also alienated many who supported the Irish nationalist cause (and supporters of Ulster unionism, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 5) who believed that suffragists put their concerns as women (enfranchisement) ahead of the political and economic emancipation of Ireland.²⁸⁰ Women’s suffrage nation-work reflected diverse views regarding nation, nationhood, feminism, and militarism.²⁸¹ *The Irish Citizen* connected feminist, nationalist, and pacifist issues and situated them in the key debates in Ireland at the time, advocating for suffrage for women and the non-violent attainment of Irish independence.²⁸² This suffragist discourse asserted that the “struggle against the divisiveness of male politics” unified women in Ireland across political, religious, and class divides (and those between Irish and English suffragists).²⁸³

Many suffragists contended that unless or until women’s interests and concerns were central to the governance of the nation-state and women were full participants in the life of the nation-state, the nation-state could make no claims to the services of women.²⁸⁴ For instance, suffragists such as L.A.M. Priestly (who was also a unionist) argued that

²⁷⁹ Cannavan 1997, 217.

²⁸⁰ Hearne 1997, 31; Kelly 1996, 34; Murphy 1993, 1009, 1010-1, 1013; Walsh 2002, 30; Ward 1995b, 22-3, 84-5.

²⁸¹ Hearne 1992, 1.

²⁸² Hearne 1992, 1.

²⁸³ *The Irish Citizen*. March 28, 1914, 356; May 10, 1913, 402, cited in Hearne 1992, 5.

²⁸⁴ Hearne 1992, 7, 11.

granting the vote to women was “the irreducible minimum of power whereby the self-respecting individual, man or woman, can effectively shape, direct or change political policy, or legislative measures”.²⁸⁵ She asserted that party politics must be put aside as long as the public, formal, political sphere was dominated by men, and encouraged women to develop their own social and political platforms.²⁸⁶ As a pacifist she rejected pledging allegiance to the UK state if that meant supporting the war effort during World War I in any capacity she deemed to be unacceptable.²⁸⁷

Many militant Irish nationalists, on the other hand, tended to argue that political and economic emancipation for Ireland from imperial domination was paramount; freedom for women would follow in due course.²⁸⁸ For them, “there [could] be no free women in an enslaved Nation”.²⁸⁹ Constance Markievicz reflected the reticence of such discourse about women’s suffrage when she exhorted women to: “Fix your mind on the ideal of Ireland free, with her women enjoying the full rights of citizenship in her own nation and no one will be able to sidetrack you to use up energies of the nation in obtaining all sorts of concessions...that for the most part were coming in natural course of evolution”.²⁹⁰ For Markievicz (and others who adhered to this thinking) women’s emancipation would come as a result of independence for Ireland. However, the

²⁸⁵ *The Irish Citizen*. August 23, 1913, 113, cited in Hearne 1992, 7.

²⁸⁶ *The Irish Citizen*. August 23, 1913, 113, cited in Hearne 1992, 4.

²⁸⁷ *The Irish Citizen*. August 23, 1913, 113, cited in Hearne 1992, 7.

²⁸⁸ Hearne 1992, 4; Murphy 1993, 1012-3.

²⁸⁹ Ward 1995b, 96 (original source not provided).

²⁹⁰ Markievicz 1909, 1918, 7-8, cited in McKillen 1982, 58.

cleavages among women—in terms of their constitution of nation and nationhood, their positions on Irish sovereignty and the use of arms to achieve it, as well as their positions on gender equality related to political and labour rights, and how such issues were connected to the struggle for Irish independence—meant that it was difficult to achieve unity on either the issue of women’s suffrage or within Irish nationalism.

Inghinidhe na hÉireann encouraged women’s self-reliance, and counter to the dominant gender norms of passive, submissive femininity, supported the use of physical force and the participation of women as combatants to achieve independence for the Irish nation. It supported suffrage for women, but not in the existing Westminster parliament, and rejected a parliamentary or constitutional resolution to the “Irish Question” because it refused to recognize the legitimacy of the UK parliament as the representative and administrative institution of Ireland.²⁹¹ Increasing the number of women in existing Irish nationalist organizations was integral to the constitution of Ireland, *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* argued, since it would strengthen these organizations and enhance women’s status within the Irish nationalist movement, thereby reducing women’s subordination. In this way, political and economic independence for Ireland would be achieved through the nation-work of the Irish people, *not* through what *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* considered to be an illegitimate parliament, nor indeed solely through men’s nation-work.

²⁹¹ Luddy 1995, 301; Ward 1995a, 28, 30-2; Ward 1995b, 69-73, 85-7.

Militarized politics of the 1910s and 1920s

Irish nationalist discourses such as that of the United Irishmen, Young Ireland, the Fenians, the IRB, and the Easter Rising (discussed below) placed an emphasis on martyrs and the patriotic duty of a male citizen to lay down his life for Ireland.²⁹² The Fenians deemed armed resistance to be men's nation-work. They "manfully deem[ed] it better to die in the struggle for freedom than to continue an existence of utter serfdom...[since] all men are born to equal rights".²⁹³ Approximately half a century later Patrick Pearse echoed such sentiments declaring that "bloodshed is a cleansing and a sanctifying thing and the nation which regards it as the final horror has lost its manhood".²⁹⁴ With the emergence of the UVF, the INV and the National Volunteers, the Ulster Crisis, World War I, the Easter Rising, the Anglo-Irish War, and the Civil War (discussed below), the 1910s and early 1920s was a period of institutionalized, masculinized, and militarized nation, nationhood, nationness, and related nationalist discourses in Ireland. It was a time of the domination of Irish nationalist domopolitics, as Ireland was under threat from both Ulster unionist aggression and British oppression.

The increased militarization of politics in Ireland meant that citizenship took on a martial tone and was constituted as a willingness to take up arms in defence of Ireland. "The hurley stick was the symbol of man's throne, and of his gun in drills".²⁹⁵ As a result,

²⁹² Benton 1995, 155.

²⁹³ *The Times*. March 8, 1867, cited in Kee 2000, 334.

²⁹⁴ "The Coming Revolution". November 1913. *An Claidheamh Solius*, reprinted in Pearse 2012, 84.

²⁹⁵ Benton 1995, 153.

the primary idealized gender norms were the male “citizen soldier” and the female “citizen mother”. In this domestic politics of a nation under threat, the bearing of arms and dying in defence of Ireland (or Ulster, as we shall see in Chapter 4) was constituted as the ultimate act of patriotism (or nation-work) of Irish men. It established gender norms through which men’s nation-work was glorified and honoured, while women’s nation-work tended to be marginalized as supportive or auxiliary to the primary work of defending the nation since women were not deemed to be part of the “brotherhood” of bearers of arms.²⁹⁶ Hence it could be argued that the militarization of politics in Ireland was detrimental to women’s nation-work in that it appeared to solidify gender norms, which honoured men’s nation-work above women’s, since blood sacrifice, men’s nation-work, was accorded primacy as an expression of patriotism, or loyalty to the nation according to such a discourse.²⁹⁷

The dominant notion was that public space was male space and foundational to the increasingly martial nature of politics and discourses of nation in Ireland during the 1890s and early 1900s. Hence women were placed “firmly in the roles of auxiliaries, grievors, and those who kept the home fires burning while the men were on the run”.²⁹⁸ Yet to argue, as many suffragists did and many feminist scholars have, that the nation is a male construct and that those women who prioritized the issue of Irish independence over women’s suffrage were the dupes of men and male-dominated Irish nationalist institutions, is to deny such women independent political agency in processes of

²⁹⁶ Benton 1995, 148, 150, 156-7, 161-2, 169.

²⁹⁷ Benton 1995, 156.

²⁹⁸ Benton 1995, 170.

constituting the nation, as this dissertation shows with respect to Ulster unionism in Chapters 5 and 6.

Extraordinary times called for extraordinary measures, and it could also be argued that within this militarized politic of Irish nationalism women asserted themselves and carved a space for themselves in the public sphere. They participated in the Easter Rising through *Cumann na mBan*. As a result, *Cumann na mBan* and its members became less willing to simply assist the men, and more emphatic about their agency and their demands for recognition of their contributions to the Irish Republic during the 1916 Rising.²⁹⁹ Consequently it emerged “a larger, more active, less subordinate, and more consciously feminist organization”.³⁰⁰

This is evident in the declaration *Cumann na mBan* issued in 1917, which stated that:

Cumann na mBan is proud that its members rallied under the Republican Flag in Easter Week, 1916, and claim that by taking their places in the firing line and in every other way helping the establishment of the Irish Republic, they have regained for the women of Ireland the rights that belonged to them under the old Gaelic civilization where women were free to devote to the service of their country every talent and capacity with which they were endowed; which rights were guaranteed to them in the Republic Proclamation of Easter Week.³⁰¹

The events of Easter Week 1916 and women’s nation-work related to the Rising were

²⁹⁹ Ward 1995b, 161-2; Ward 1993, 40.

³⁰⁰ McKillen 1982, 67.

³⁰¹ National Library of Ireland (Ir 94109). *Cumann na mBan, Explanatory Leaflet* (Dublin, 1917), cited in McKillen 1982, 66.

vital to re-establishing a Gaelic Irish Republic and shifting the dominant gender norms to those deemed characteristic of a Gaelic Ireland (according to this discourse). Gender inequality was cast as a characteristic of an anglicized, colonized Ireland *not* an ancient Gaelic Ireland. This was a shift from the passive stance initially taken by *Cumann na mBan* regarding the enfranchisement of women since here it did not simply accept the vote as a gift granted to its members by male politicians; instead, *Cumann na mBan* claimed that its members had earned the vote for the women of Ireland.³⁰²

The militarization of Irish nationalism at the dawn of the twentieth century meant that, according to Irish nationalist domopolitics, questions of the security and unity of the nation were deemed paramount. Therefore, any issues that might potentially divide the nation (such as suffrage for women or anything deemed to be “non-Gaelic” [i.e., English or British]), were to be avoided in the interests of Irish unity and the revival of a Gaelic Ireland. Consequently, such Irish nationalist discourses could accommodate less and less British and Protestant elements of Ireland. It will be demonstrated below (and in the following chapter), that this increasingly brought Irish nationalist and Ulster unionist discourses into collision around the question of Home Rule.

Through the nation-work of motherhood, cultural revival, consumer decisions, labour, and women’s suffrage women forged spaces for themselves in the public sphere of Irish nationalist movements. The suffrage and Irish nationalist feminists movement thus placed women and questions of gender (in)equality in the public realm of the nation and nationhood, and asserted that women (as well as men) had a place there. Moreover, it

³⁰² McKillen 1982, 67.

gave women a language and discourse through which to think about, frame, and institutionalize their social, economic, and political rights within the Irish nation. However, not everyone accepted this “incursion” of women into the public domain of the nation. There was a notion, perpetuated by their detractors, that female Irish nationalist activists and politicians were bitter, unwomanly “harpies”. Such perceptions and the marginalization of suffragists affected the constitution of gender norms in the Free State post-partition and, therefore, how women and men were constituted through its institutions, which put women firmly back in the private sphere.³⁰³ The decision of the women elected in 1922 to the *Dáil* not to take their seats due to their anti-Treaty stance compounded this marginalization of women, since it meant that women did not have an official voice in the constitution of the Free State’s Ireland.³⁰⁴ Hence patriarchal gender norms persisted within the state, political, religious, and social institutions of the Free State and Ulster, as we shall see in the following chapter.

HOME RULE AND ITS AFTERMATH

Home Rule (some form of self-government) for Ireland was first raised by the IPP in the 1880s. Popular support for the IPP was strong due to Parnell’s role in the Land Wars of the early 1880s. As a result, it won eighty-five of 103 Irish seats, including seventeen of thirty-three Ulster seats, in Westminster in the 1885 general election. This

³⁰³ McKillen 1982, 89, Murphy 1993, 1014.

³⁰⁴ McKillen 1982, 89. Here the Treaty refers to the *Government of Ireland Act* of 1920 which ended the Anglo-Irish War, and which will be discussed later in this chapter.

gave the IPP the necessary clout to push Home Rule as an issue in parliament.³⁰⁵

Home Rule raised questions of nation and nationhood as the masses were organized in institutionalized ways through political parties and nationalist organizations and movements both in support of, and opposition to, it. It illustrated the cleavages between the unionist desire to retain the existing nationhood of the UK and Ireland's place within it, and the Irish nationalist constituted nationhood of self-government for Ireland. Moreover, it brought cleavages within the Irish nationalist camp to a head in terms of differently constituted Irish nations, nationhoods, and nation-work and the means by which they would achieve their aims (i.e., conciliation versus armed resistance).

In April 1886, the Liberal government of Gladstone introduced the *Government of Ireland Bill*—the first Home Rule Bill. It proposed a Dublin-based legislature with jurisdiction over domestic matters such as the police, civil service, and judicial system; the armed forces and foreign and colonial affairs would be the jurisdiction of the Westminster parliament in which Ireland would no longer be represented.³⁰⁶ Westminster would levy financial contributions from the Irish assembly to cover a share of the costs of the national debt, the military and navy, the police, and the Imperial Civil Service. There were widespread objections that this amounted to the taxation of Ireland without representation. Many others were concerned that Protestants would be outnumbered by Catholics in the Dublin parliament. Hence the first Home Rule Bill was defeated in the

³⁰⁵ The IPP really became an “efficient radical machine” through the use of membership dues and the practice of party discipline during the 1885 election (Kee 2000, 376-84).

³⁰⁶ Bardon 2007, 378-9; Boyce & O'Day 2001, 101; Gibbon 1975, 120.

Westminster parliament after two months of debate in June 1886.³⁰⁷

After several years of Conservative Party governance following the defeat of the first Home Rule Bill, the Liberal Party, under Gladstone, was re-elected to government with the support of the IPP in July 1892. It introduced the second Home Rule Bill in February 1893. In an attempt to address concerns raised about the previous Home Rule Bill's constitution, or reconstitution, of nation and nationhood, the second Home Rule Bill proposed that Ireland be represented in Westminster by eighty MPs. Furthermore, the bill proposed that the Dublin parliament be bicameral, with an upper chamber comprised of members elected by voters with high property qualifications (which would be dominated by Protestants, given the class structure of the day), while members of the lower chamber would be elected according to the franchise legislation in place at the time. This structure, it was hoped, would address concerns regarding the potential Catholic domination of the Irish parliament. Nevertheless, this bill failed to address some concerns pertaining to issues of taxation and the question of the exclusion of Ulster from a Dublin-based parliament around which Ulster unionists were agitating, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.³⁰⁸ No other bill of the nineteenth century was the subject of such exhaustive parliamentary debate.³⁰⁹ Clearly the questions of nation and nationhood that

³⁰⁷ Bardon 2007, 379; Boyce & O'Day 2004, 101; Foster 1989, 423; Gibbon 1975, 120; Jackson 2003, 82; Kee 2000, 356; Walker 2004, 6, 9. Under the proposed bill, Ireland would pay the following annually to Westminster: £1.46 million as its share of the national debt, £1.66 million towards the British army and navy, £1 million towards the Dublin Metropolitan Police and the Royal Irish Constabulary, and £110,000 for the Imperial Civil Service (Jackson 2003, 59).

³⁰⁸ Bardon 2007, 411; Foster 1989, 424; Jackson 2003, 82-3; Kee 2000, 414.

³⁰⁹ Bardon 2007, 411; Kee 2000, 420. Unionists and Conservatives spoke against the bill 938 times, for a total of approximately 153 hours over eighty-two days. The governing Liberals and the IPP made 439 speeches in favour of Home Rule over an estimated fifty-seven hours (Bardon 2007, 411; Kee 2000, 420).

Home Rule raised were deemed to be of the utmost significance. However, in the end, the second Home Rule Bill was defeated by the House of Lords (seen by many to represent the interests of unionists and the Anglo-Irish landed class in Ireland) through the use of its veto power.³¹⁰

Gladstone retired from party politics after the defeat of the second Home Rule Bill. A “lameduck” Liberal administration governed until the general election of 1895, which returned to power the Conservatives (who were allied with Unionists in parliament).³¹¹ The *Local Government Act* of 1898 made local governance in Ireland more democratic through the expansion of the franchise for local government elections. The government hoped that this would dampen pro-Home Rule sentiments, since it extended to Ireland the same rights regarding local governance that already applied to England, Wales, and Scotland.³¹² However, the extension of this legislation to Ireland territorialized its politics further. Many unionists felt great unease about this since it gave Irish nationalists and Catholics control of many local councils, with the exception of those in Protestant-dominated areas in the north of Ireland, further entrenching religious and political cleavages.³¹³

After the defeat of the second Home Rule Bill, the IPP was divided between

³¹⁰ Bardon 2007, 411, 412-3; Kee 2000, 414, 421-2; Walker 2004, 14; Walsh 2002, 17-8.

³¹¹ Gibbon 1975, 120; Walker 2004, 14.

³¹² Walker 2004, 15.

³¹³ Bardon 2007, 414; Boyce & O’Day 2004, 9; Foster 1989, 425; Kee 2000, 407; Walker 2004, 15. This legislation replaced grand juries, which were controlled by the propertied (largely Protestant) class, with county councils, which were to be elected on the basis of all-male ratepayer franchise (Bardon 2007, 414; Boyce & O’Day 2004, 9; Foster 1989, 425; Kee 2000, 407).

Parnellites and anti-Parnellites.³¹⁴ This cleavage also reflected the on-going tension within the Irish nationalist camp between competing discourses of retribution and conciliation. Under John Redmond's leadership, the Parnellites were estranged from the Liberal Party; they advocated a more militant Irish nationalist discourse of retribution and complete independence for Ireland, and continued to foster ties with the IRB. The anti-Parnellites maintained connections with the Liberal Party and Catholic hierarchy and, along with constitutional Irish nationalists, advanced a more moderate Irish nationalist discourse of conciliation. This is evident in their hostility to the involvement of the IRB in constitutional politics and their seeking out non-violent, constitutional, conciliatory strategies for achieving Irish sovereignty within the existing political institutions.³¹⁵ Out of this conciliatory/retributive divide within the Irish nationalist camp a new political organization emerged in 1907: the Sinn Féin League, which would later become the political party known as Sinn Féin.³¹⁶

In the December 1910 general election the Conservatives and Liberals each won 273 seats and the IPP won 73 seats.³¹⁷ Consequently, the Liberal Party formed a minority

³¹⁴ Bardon 2007, 407-8. Parnell had refused to accept a decision of the party in 1890, which had ousted him as leader due to a public scandal. Parnell had been having an affair with Katherine O'Shea, the wife of an IPP colleague, and had had three children with her. Although the affair was common knowledge among his inner circle, it only became public knowledge when Katherine's husband named Parnell in their divorce case. Gladstone denounced him, stating he would not work with such an "immoral" character and that if Parnell remained leader of the IPP he would resign as leader of the Liberal Party (Foster 1989, 423-4; Kee 2000, 408-10; Walsh 2002, 18). John Redmond took over leadership of the Parnellite faction of the IPP in 1891 on the death of Parnell, but it was not until 1900 that the party was reunited (Jackson 2003, 75-9, 89; Kee 2000, 413; Walsh 2002, 110).

³¹⁵ Kee 2000, 410-1; Kelly 2004, 146.

³¹⁶ Kelly 2004, 155; Walsh 2002, 31.

³¹⁷ Jackson 2003, 107; Walsh 2002, 28.

government (with Herbert Asquith as Prime Minister) that was dependent on the support of the IPP and was, therefore, seen as pro-Home Rule.³¹⁸ After a bill to remove the House of Lords' veto power was passed in 1911 the Liberal government introduced the third Home Rule Bill in April 1912.³¹⁹ Similar to the second Home Rule Bill, this bill provided for an Irish parliament with powers over domestic issues and also for Irish representation in Westminster; Westminster again would retain control over financial matters, the armed forces, and foreign and colonial relations.³²⁰

The cessation of the veto power of the House of Lords, and the fact that the IPP held the balance of power in the minority government, made the possibility of Home Rule more imminent. This ratcheted up organizing by both Irish nationalists in support of Home Rule and unionists against it. As will be detailed in Chapter 4, due to the concentration of Protestants and unionists in the northeast of Ireland, the opposition to Home Rule had become increasingly Ulster-focused both discursively and institutionally. This made Ulster unionism the most significant unionist force politically and institutionally at the time.

Not surprisingly, response to this bill exposed differences between Irish nationalist and Ulster unionist discourses in terms of how the nation and nationhood were constituted. The IPP's paper, the *Freeman's Journal*, declared that the third Home Rule

³¹⁸ Bardon 2007, 431; Foster 1989, 462; Jackson 2003, 107; Powell 2002, 128; Stubbs 1990, 876; Walker 2004, 27.

³¹⁹ Kee 2000, 463; Walsh 2002, 28. Under the *Parliament Act* of 1911, the House of Lords had the ability to delay legislation for two years, but any legislation passed by the Commons in three successive years that was not passed by the Lords would automatically become law (Walsh 2002, 28).

³²⁰ Jackson 2003, 110.

Bill was “the greatest, boldest and most generous of the three [Home Rule Bills]” and that “Ireland under this Bill, trusted, liberated, armed with all the powers necessary to the full development of her aspirations and her resources will warmly reciprocate so splendid an invitation for final reconciliation between her and the people of England”.³²¹ However, as Chapter 4 explains, Ulster unionists, who were deeply concerned about the potential control of their economic affairs by an Irish nationalist- and Catholic-dominated Dublin parliament, and the fact that there was no provision for the exclusion of Ulster from such a parliament, did not welcome the bill.³²²

The nation and gender as institutionalized form within the Irish nationalist camp clashed over the Home Rule bill. In the context of the expanded nationhood through the increased male franchise, and an institutionalized feminist movement which asserted that this expanded nationhood should grant women the franchise on equal terms with men, the IWFL proposed that the third Home Rule Bill be amended to include suffrage for women. This was dismissed by the IPP. Consequently, the IWFL opposed the bill and organized protests against the IPP. Margaret Cousins’ defence of the IWFL against criticism for its opposition to the bill encapsulated this clash of feminism and Irish nationalist nationhood. She stated: “We were as keen as men on the freedom of Ireland but we saw the men clamoring for amendments which suited their own interests and made no recognition of women as fellow citizens. We women were convinced that anything which improved the status of women would improve not hinder the coming of real national self-

³²¹ *Freeman’s Journal*. April 12, 1912, quoted in Kee 2000, 471.

³²² Bardon 2007, 432-7; Jackson 2003, 109-13; Kee 2000, 468-71; Walker 2004, 30.

government”.³²³ For Cousins the suffrage movement was not, as one newspaper put it, “an amusing sideshow”.³²⁴ The political and economic emancipation of the nation could not and would not be achieved without the emancipation of women.

Due to such differences in the constitution of nation and nationhood Irish nationalist and suffrage camps largely held divergent points of view *vis-à-vis* Home Rule not only from each other, but from Ulster unionist camps, which had increasingly potentially dire consequences. The domestic politics of Ulster unionism and the perceived danger Home Rule posed to Ulster led to the establishment of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) in January 1913. It was a volunteer paramilitary force charged with protecting Ulster from the imposition of Home Rule and armed attacks by Irish nationalists (about which more will be said in Chapter 4).³²⁵ The Irish Volunteers, an armed Irish nationalist volunteer force, was established in November 1913 as a counterbalance. In the words of Stephen Gwynn (an IPP MP at the time), “the political effect of their [the UVF’s] existence was so great that it inevitably called out a counterpart”.³²⁶ Membership in the Irish Volunteers increased rapidly. By May 1914, its numbers were estimated to be over 100,000.³²⁷ The formation of both of these paramilitary forces provided an institutional framework within which the opposing armed nations and nationhoods of the more

³²³ Sheehy-Skeffington 1975, 6, quoted in McKillen 1982, 55.

³²⁴ Cited in Kelly 1996, 34 (original source not cited).

³²⁵ Bardon 2007, 439; Jackson 2012, 311; Walker 2004, 36.

³²⁶ Gwynn 1921, 28, cited in Wheatley 2004, 57.

³²⁷ Kee 2000, 498.

extreme elements of the Ulster unionist and Irish nationalist camps were constituted.³²⁸

In July 1914, the Irish Volunteers attempted to smuggle an estimated 1500 rifles and roughly 45,000 rounds of ammunition from Germany into Ireland at Howth (near Dublin). Unlike the well-publicized successful UVF gun-running three months earlier, to which the British government had turned a blind eye (an Ulster unionist moment of nationness which will be discussed further in Chapter 4), this Irish nationalist moment of nationness had a much different outcome. British forces and the Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP) intercepted the Irish Volunteer forces and attempted to seize the arms. Later that day in Dublin, a violent confrontation between members of the Irish Volunteers and the DMP ensued, in which four people died and an estimated thirty-eight were injured. Since the UVF had not met the same opposition in April of that year, this was constituted through Irish nationalist discourses as another event in the catalogue of ill-treatment of Ireland and the Irish by the English.³²⁹

Ireland now had two armed nationhoods (the Irish Volunteers and the UVF) bitterly opposed to each other's constitution of nation and prepared to fight for their vision. This appeared to be particularly true in Ulster where, according to figures of May 1914, the Irish Volunteers numbered about 41,000 (out of a total of roughly 129,000 members in the whole of Ireland) and UVF and Irish Volunteer forces were seen drilling in neighbouring streets.³³⁰ Therefore, the stakes in terms of violence were higher at the

³²⁸ Kee 2000, 504-5.

³²⁹ Bardon 2007, 447-8; Fitzpatrick 2006, 47-50; Foster 1989, 466-9; Jackson 2003, 135-6; Kee 2000, 510-1; Walsh 2002, 50-2.

³³⁰ Bardon 2007, 447.

time of the third Home Rule Bill in 1914 than with the previous Home Rule Bills. In an effort to defuse the tensions and resolve the “Irish Question” peacefully, King George V called a conference (the Buckingham Palace Conference) in late July 1914 to discuss an exclusion formula for Ulster to be added to the Home Rule Bill. The talks lasted three days, but no agreement was reached. The area to be excluded from Home Rule and the time frame of the exclusion were the main points of contention. The IPP would agree only to a temporary exclusion of the four Ulster counties with the largest Protestant majorities (Antrim, Armagh, Down, and Londonderry), while Ulster Unionists would settle for nothing less than a permanent exclusion of all nine Ulster counties.³³¹

World War I brought a pause to what came to be known as the Ulster Crisis. The third Home Rule Bill was passed in September 1914, but its implementation was immediately suspended for the duration of the war. Both Redmond (leader of the IPP) and Carson (leader of the Ulster Unionists) pledged the support of their parties to the British war effort and committed troops to the British forces.³³² Redmond committed the Irish Volunteers, while the UVF was reconstituted into the 36th (Ulster) Division.³³³ Redmond’s commitment of the Irish Volunteers to active service in the British war effort

³³¹ Bardon 2007, 447; Fitzpatrick 2006, 47; Foster 1989, 470-1; Jackson 2003, 139-40; Kee 2000, 512, 582. The nine counties being: Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, Monaghan, and Tyrone.

³³² Bardon 2007, 461; Boyce 2004, 93-5; Foster 1989, 472. By April 1916, Ulster unionists and Irish nationalists had provided over 150,000 recruits to the British army through the 36th (Ulster) Division and the Irish Volunteers (Powell 2002, 143-4). Of the 40,000 to 50,000 recruits from Ireland who died during World War I approximately half were Catholic (Bardon 2007, 461).

³³³ Jeffry 2000, 13-4; Walker 2004, 38. In a speech at Woodenbridge Redmond pledged that the Irish Volunteers would support the British war effort “wherever needed” (i.e. overseas), not just in the island of Ireland (Foster 1989, 472-3; Jackson 2003, 145-6; Jeffry 2000, 48).

split the Irish Volunteers into two factions: the National Volunteers who supported Redmond and the faction which retained the name Irish Volunteers and was comprised of those who believed that Redmond had betrayed Irish nationalist principles. This latter faction was prepared to defend the island of Ireland during the war, but was opposed to Irish soldiers serving in the war overseas as part of the British forces. It represented the radical, militant IRB-influenced element of the original Irish Volunteers.³³⁴ As the war raged on, the numbers of the National Volunteers plummeted due to demoralization and declining enlistment, while the Irish Volunteers' numbers climbed and its members became associated with Sinn Féin's campaign against recruitment.³³⁵

The 1916 Easter Rising and its aftermath

By 1915 militant elements of the Irish nationalist camp were increasingly agitated by the pace of constitutional paths to Irish independence, the IPP's support of what they considered "England's war", and the possible extension of conscription to Ireland.³³⁶ After months of planning, on Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, approximately 1600 Irish Volunteers, roughly 219 members of the Irish Citizen's Army, and members of *Cumann na mBan*, occupied several buildings and strategic locations in central Dublin.³³⁷ An Irish

³³⁴ Foster 1989, 472-3; Jackson 2003, 145-6; Jeffry 2000, 48.

³³⁵ Foster 1989, 473.

³³⁶ Fitzpatrick 2006, 70-5; Jeffry 2000, 49; Kee 2000, 552; Wheatley 2004, 105-9.

³³⁷ Bardon 2007, 452; Fitzpatrick 2006, 57, 59; Foster 1989, 472-3, 479-80, 481-3; Jackson 2003, 151-2; Kee 2000, 519-21, 554-60, 559-65, 584-6; Walsh 2002, 41, 44-5. Members of *Cumann na mBan* assisted in the preparations for the Rising by taking part in the gun-running operations and preparing first aid kits for the Irish Volunteers. Its members also acted as messengers, cooks, and first aid personnel during the Rising (Benton 1995, 148-9; McKillen 1982, 53; Ward 1995b, 51-3, 55; Ward 1993, 39, 40).

Republic was declared “in the name of God and of the dead generations, from which Ireland received her ancient tradition of nationhood”.³³⁸

The British government considered the Easter Rising to be an act of treason in wartime.³³⁹ Within twenty-four hours, there were approximately 6500 British troops in Dublin; within four days an estimated 12,000 British troops faced the roughly 2000 members of the Irish Volunteer, Irish Citizen’s Army, and *Cumann na mBan* “rebel” forces. Martial law was declared.³⁴⁰ After six days of fighting, which had laid waste to much of central Dublin and caused approximately £3 million worth of damage, the “rebel” forces surrendered unconditionally.³⁴¹ Approximately 3600 people were arrested (of which roughly 1800 were eventually incarcerated in England and Wales); many faced courts martial without a defence. Ninety people were sentenced to death. The fifteen “ring-leaders” were swiftly executed in May 1916 (the remaining death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment).³⁴²

³³⁸ *Proclamation of the Irish Republic* (1916). www.firstworldwar.com/source/irishproclamation1916.htm. Accessed September 16, 2013.

³³⁹ Not only was the Easter Rising an attack on the UK state in wartime, but worse, the parties involved in planning the Rising had purchased arms and ammunition from Germany against whom the UK was at war (Bardon 2007, 452; Fitzpatrick 2006, 57, 59; Foster 1989, 472-3, 479-80, 481-3; Jackson 2003, 151-2; Jeffry 2000, 53-4; Kee 2000, 519-21, 554-60, 559-65, 584-6; Walsh 2002, 41, 44-5).

³⁴⁰ Bardon 2007, 453; Foster 1989, 484; Kee 2000, 566-71; Walsh 2002, 46-52. Martial law was not lifted until November 1916 (Fitzpatrick 2006, 60-1).

³⁴¹ Bardon 2007, 453; Buckland 1973, 105; Fitzpatrick 2006, 60-1; Foster 1989, 485; Jackson 2003, 153; Jeffry 2000, 51; Kee 2000, 549-82; Walker 2004, 39; Walsh 2002, 46-52.

³⁴² Bardon 2007, 453; Buckland 1973, 105; Fitzpatrick 2006, 60-1; Foster 1989, 483-5, 487; Jackson 2003, 153; Kee 2000, 549-82; Walker 2004, 39; Walsh 2002, 46-52. The fifteen “ring-leaders” were: Eammon Ceannt, Tom Clarke, James Connolly, Cornelius Colbert, Edward Daly, Sean Heuston, Thomas Kent, Sean MacDermott, Thomas MacDonagh, John McBride, Michael Mallin, Michael O’Hanrahan, Patrick Pearse, William Pearse, and Joseph Plunkett. These fifteen became known as the “martyrs of 1916” (Kee 2000, 573-9; Walsh 2002, 50-1).

The Rising had not garnered a great deal of popular support and had resulted in a great many civilian casualties. (Approximately 500 people were killed and 2500 injured during the Rising, the majority civilians.) However, the British government's response: the imposition of martial law, mass arrests, and especially the swift execution of the fifteen "ring-leaders", understood as a moment of nationness, turned the tide of popular sentiment in Ireland in favour of the leaders of the Rising (now widely seen as a new generation of Irish "martyrs") and against the British government, whose response was now widely viewed as particularly harsh.³⁴³

In response to the Easter Rising, the UK government initiated talks with the IPP and Unionists in 1916. Lloyd George was the primary negotiator for the British government. It was agreed that the Home Rule Bill would apply to twenty-six counties of Ireland and that the six counties of Ulster would be excluded. Redmond understood that the exclusion was provisional, only in effect for the duration of the war or until a final settlement was reached after the war. An Imperial Conference after the war would "consider the Irish Question" and come to a permanent resolution with regards to the financial aspects of the Home Rule administration and the excluded counties. (However, unbeknownst to Redmond, Carson had secured a commitment from Lloyd George that the exclusion of the six counties would be permanent and guaranteed by the Asquith government.)³⁴⁴

By 1918, popular support for the IPP had declined significantly, while those

³⁴³ Buckland 1973, 105; Fitzpatrick 2006, 60-1; Foster 1989, 483-5, 487; Jackson 2003, 153; Jeffry 2000, 51-4; Kee 2000, 549-82; Walker 2004, 39; Walsh 2002, 46-52.

³⁴⁴ Jackson 2003, 155, 161; Kee 2000, 582-3; Powell 2002, 136, 143.

backing Sinn Féin had increased dramatically. In part, this was due to Redmond's death in 1918 and the less consensual approach of his successor, John Dillon, as well as his greater sympathy for the aims and strategies of Sinn Féin.³⁴⁵ Sinn Féin had been a fringe party in 1914, but post-1916, its more anti-British, less compromising approach (relative to the IPP), and its public identification with those imprisoned in the aftermath of the 1916 Rising, saw the popular support for Sinn Féin grow. Consequently, in the 1918 general election for the Westminster parliament it won seventy-three seats (the IPP was reduced to seven); thirty-four of those members were in jail.³⁴⁶

This shift to Sinn Féin as the dominant Irish nationalist institution not only changed the dominant Irish nationalist discourses of nation and nationhood, but also the dynamic of relations amongst Irish nationalists, Ulster unionists, and the UK government. The newly elected Sinn Féin MPs refused to take their seats at Westminster. Instead, they established a parliament in Dublin (the *Dáil*) and declared themselves to be the elected representatives of a sovereign Irish republic, linking the *Dáil* with the Irish republic that was "proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday 1916 by the Irish Republican Army acting on behalf of the Irish people" (although it most assuredly did not have the support of many in the northeast of Ireland in particular).³⁴⁷ Eamon de Valera, a veteran of the 1916

³⁴⁵ Foster 1989, 488-9; Jackson 2003, 162-72, 183; Kee 2000, 600; Powell 2002, 136; Stubbs 1990, 887; Walker 2004, 38.

³⁴⁶ Bardon 2007, 462; Foster 1989, 490; Jackson 2003, 186; Kee 2000, 629-30; Powell 2002, 145. It should be noted that in twenty-five of a total of 105 constituencies Sinn Féin was returned unopposed (Kee 2000, 626-7).

³⁴⁷ Macardle 1937, 273, quoted Kee 2000, 630-1, 680.

Rising, assumed the Presidency of the *Dáil*, Sinn Féin, and the Irish Volunteers.³⁴⁸

The Anglo-Irish War (1919-1921)

It seemed that the Irish nationalist discourse of retribution had prevailed. With the formation of the *Dáil* and the rise of popular and electoral support for Sinn Féin, the nation-work of the campaign for Irish independence was conducted on two fronts: the establishment and institutionalization of a *de facto* republic, and a military campaign against the British administration in Ireland.³⁴⁹ The *Dáil* established a system of local administration and a four-tier courts system to settle disputes in opposition to those of the British administration. These local governments and judiciaries of “the Republic”, and the popular support they garnered, rendered untenable British political and judicial administration at the local level.³⁵⁰

The British government repudiated the authority of this opposing Irish nationhood. By November 1919, the Gaelic League, Sinn Féin, the Irish Volunteers, *Cumann na mBan*, and the *Dáil* itself (which was designated by the British government as a “dangerous association”) were declared illegal organizations.³⁵¹ In response, Arthur Griffith (the acting President of the *Dáil* in de Valera’s absence) declared that: “The English Government in Ireland has now proclaimed the Irish nation, as it formerly

³⁴⁸ Foster 1989, 489; Kee 2000, 629-31; Powell 2002, 145; Walsh 2002, 63. Cathal Brugha presided over the first meetings of the *Dáil* since de Valera (whose death sentence had been commuted to life in prison) was incarcerated in England (Kee 2000, 630-1, 634).

³⁴⁹ Foster 1989, 494-5; Walsh 2002, 57.

³⁵⁰ Kee 2000, 678-9, 681; Walsh 2002, 60-1.

³⁵¹ Fitzpatrick 2006, 87; Kee 2000, 622, 656, 663.

proclaimed the Catholic Church, an illegal assembly”.³⁵² Hence the second front of the Irish nationalist campaign began which involved armed conflict.

The Irish Volunteers was reconstituted and reorganized into an effective guerilla force—the Irish Republican Army (IRA). A campaign of attacks and counter-attacks ensued between the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and the British military on one side and the IRA on the other. The IRA attacked RIC and British military barracks both to obtain arms and because it deemed them both to be “enemies of the State”.³⁵³ The RIC and military would retaliate with their own campaign of coercion and intimidation in an attempt to apprehend IRA members and supporters. Civilians were often caught in the middle of this violence.³⁵⁴

The numbers of RIC constables declined through both deaths and declining recruitment due to the IRA guerilla campaign. This made it increasingly difficult for the RIC to deal with the IRA. As a result, the British government established the Black and Tans as reinforcements for the RIC.³⁵⁵ Comprised mainly of men demobilized from the British army at the end of World War I, the Black and Tans earned notoriety as a force

³⁵² Kee 2000, 663 (original source not cited).

³⁵³ Beaslai 1926, 274-5, cited in Kee 2000, 635.

³⁵⁴ Foster 1989, 482, 494-5; Kee 2000, 631-3, 637-8, 642, 646-51, 654-9, 661, 669, 674-5, 688; Walsh 2002, 62-4. It should be noted that as far as can be discerned there was a class cleavage between the Volunteers, largely comprised of eldest sons or local notables from strong farming families and shopkeepers, and the IRA, primarily comprised of young men from small towns and the lower middle-classes who were unattached young men of “no property” (Foster 1989, 500). According to the *Freeman's Journal* it is estimated that between January and July of 1921 approximately 707 civilians had been killed and a further 756 injured (*Freeman's Journal*, July 12, 1912, cited in Kee 2000, 699).

³⁵⁵ Kee 2000, 670-1, 681; Walsh 2002, 66-7. The Blacks and Tans earned their name from their uniform, which was a khaki military uniform with a dark green police cap and belt (Walsh 2002, 66-7). The Black and Tans grew to a force of approximately 7000, mostly recruited after November 1920 (Kee 2000, 671).

that unleashed brutality on both civilians and known or suspected IRA members alike. Frequently this took the form of night raids and mass arrests. Practically everyone was under suspicion of either being an IRA member or (at the very least) of aiding and abetting them by providing them with safe-houses and food.³⁵⁶ The often pre-emptive and brutal campaign of the Black and Tans against the IRA, which was constituted through Irish nationalist discourse as yet another example of British oppression of the Irish, can be seen as constituting a moment of Irish nationness since it united many in opposition to the Black and Tans.

The *Restoration of Order in Ireland Act* was passed in August 1920, which allowed the British military and Black and Tans extraordinary powers to arrest and detain known or suspected IRA members. Martial law was re-imposed in much of the south and west of Ireland.³⁵⁷ Across Ireland the RIC, the Black and Tans, and the IRA engaged in tactics of intimidation and shock and awe, often undertaking night-time raids to gain intelligence, apprehend individuals, and terrorize communities into compliance. The most notorious of these was Bloody Sunday, November 21, 1920. Fourteen British intelligence officers were murdered by the IRA. In retaliation the Black and Tans killed approximately twelve people and injured about sixty at a Gaelic football match in Croke Park, Dublin. Two IRA members also died that day in custody, allegedly while trying to

³⁵⁶ Foster 1989, 498; Kee 2000, 671-2, 674-5, 688, 694-5; Walsh 2002, 66-7.

³⁵⁷ Fitzpatrick 2006, 92; Kee 2000, 683, 706; Walsh 2002, 64-6. The *Restoration of Order in Ireland Act* provided broad powers for the arrest and detention of any individual suspected of illegal activity. It was a crime to be associated with any banned organization, which included most political or cultural Irish nationalist organizations. The act provided for imprisonment without trial and trial by court martial, and afforded military tribunals authority over civil ones (Walsh 2002, 70). The proclamation of martial law afforded the army control over the civilian police force and allowed the justice system to operate through courts martial rather than civilian judiciaries (Fitzpatrick 2006, 92).

escape.³⁵⁸

Recognizing that neither victory nor resolution would be swift or easy, the British government opened negotiations, which culminated in the passage of the *Government of Ireland Act* by the British parliament in December 1920.³⁵⁹ The act re-established a Dublin-based parliament in Ireland, but enabled counties within Ireland to opt-out of that parliament in order to appease the concerns of Unionists in Ulster.³⁶⁰ Ulster unionists accepted the *Government of Ireland Act* (1920), an outcome explained in detail in later chapters, and they established a Belfast-based parliament. However, Irish nationalists were divided between those who accepted the Act and those who did not because the nationhood it constituted was not that of a sovereign united Irish Republic, but rather based on Ireland being granted dominion status within the British Empire.³⁶¹

According to the terms of the *Government of Ireland Act* (1920), elections for the Dublin and Belfast parliaments were held in May 1921. Sinn Féin returned 124 candidates unopposed to the Dublin parliament, while four Unionists were elected for Trinity College.³⁶² In the north, elections returned a predominantly Unionist parliament of

³⁵⁸ Fitzpatrick 2006, 87-8; Foster 1989, 498-9; Kee 2000, 656-8, 667-77, 683-8, 693-4; Walsh 2002, 64-6, 70-1.

³⁵⁹ Fitzpatrick 2006, 102-3; Foster 1989, 495, 502; Jackson 2003, 199; Kee 2000, 650, 692-3, 710-3; Walsh 2002, 68, 72-3. Both sides were well armed. Approximately 10,000 Black and Tans and around 2300 auxiliaries who were in Ireland by July 1921 when the Truce was declared confronted an estimated 15,000-member IRA, of which around 3000 were engaged actively in the conflict. However, most of the military activity was confined to Dublin and south and central Munster (Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary); there was intense activity and concentration of troops in those areas (Walsh 2002, 67).

³⁶⁰ Fitzpatrick 2006, 100-1; Foster 1989, 503; Jackson 2003, 198-9; Kee 2000, 714.

³⁶¹ Fitzpatrick 2006, 100-1; Foster 1989, 503; Jackson 2003, 198-9; Kee 2000, 714.

³⁶² Kee 2000, 713. The Sinn Féin members abstained from taking their seats in the Dublin-based parliament.

forty Ulster Unionist members and twelve Irish nationalists, with James Craig (who became leader of the Ulster unionists upon the resignation of Edward Carson in February 1921) as Prime Minister.

On July 11, 1921, a truce was reached between the British and Irish nationalist forces, bringing an end to the Anglo-Irish War.³⁶³ The Anglo-Irish Treaty (the Treaty) agreed between the British government and Sinn Féin established the Irish Free State, which would be governed from Dublin and have dominion status, as well as control over the new entity's finances and armed forces. An opt-out clause for the six counties of Ulster, included in the Treaty meant that it also established a Belfast parliament for the province of Northern Ireland (a process discussed further in Chapter 4).³⁶⁴ Ireland was partitioned. The stage was set for the Irish Civil War, which can be understood as a moment of nationness—the violent encounter between two discourses of nation and nationhood.

The Civil War (1922-1923): clashes of nation and nationhood

The Treaty of 1921 divided Irish nationalists in terms of their vision of nation and the Irish nationhood which the Treaty established. Those who supported the Treaty (led by Michael Collins) considered it to be the best that could be achieved—a stepping stone to an eventual reunited and independent Ireland which gave Ireland “the freedom to

³⁶³ Fitzpatrick 2006, 102-3; Foster 1989, 495; Jackson 2003, 199; Kee 2000, 650, 710-3; Walsh 2002, 72-3.

³⁶⁴ Fitzpatrick 2006, 107-8; Foster 1989, 505, 507; Kee 2000, 720, 726-8; Walsh 2002, 68, 84. The term Irish Free State was a literal translation of *Saorstat*, which was the Irish word the *Dáil* had been using for the Irish Republic for the past two-and-a-half years (Kee 2000, 726).

achieve freedom”.³⁶⁵ The anti-Treaty forces (led by de Valera) considered the Treaty to be a “selling out” of radical Irish nationalist demands and of “the Republic” to which the negotiators (as members of the *Dáil*) had sworn allegiance. The partition of Ireland and the Oath of Allegiance were considered to be a betrayal of the principles for which they had fought.³⁶⁶ De Valera and other anti-Treaty *Dáil* members abstained from attending this first meeting of the new (provisional) *Dáil* of the Free State in January 1922, where the Treaty was passed by sixty-four votes to fifty-seven.³⁶⁷

An IRA meeting held in March 1922, which was dominated by those opposed to the Treaty, rejected the provisional government, administered a new oath to the Republic that severed the link between the new *Dáil* and the Republic, and established an army executive, from which the IRA would now take orders. The IRA was now split between those incorporated into the Free State Army and the anti-Treaty “Irregulars”.³⁶⁸ In April the Irregulars occupied the Four Courts in central Dublin and declared it the headquarters of the executive of the anti-Treaty IRA forces. The pro-Treaty provisional government and army of the Free State faced an armed opposition.³⁶⁹ The fragile peace was shattered

³⁶⁵ Kee 2000, 728.

³⁶⁶ Foster 1989, 506, 511; Kee 2000, 727-8, 733; Walsh 2002, 83-7. In the end a compromise was reached regarding the oath, but it still did not satisfy many. It read: “I do solemnly swear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the Irish Free State as by law established [*not* allegiance to the King]...and that I will be faithful to His Majesty King George V, his heirs and successors by law, in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth [*not* Empire, as was the common contemporary term]” (Macardle 1937, 953-8, cited in Kee 2000, 726).

³⁶⁷ Foster 1989, 508, 511; Kee 2000, 730-1; Walsh 2002, 89-90.

³⁶⁸ Foster 1989, 506, 511; Kee 2000, 727-8, 733; Walsh 2002, 83-7.

³⁶⁹ Foster 1989, 512; Kee 2000, 733-4, 736; Walsh 2002, 92.

in late June 1922 when the Irregulars occupying the Four Courts took hostage J.J. O’Connell (the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Free State Army). In response Michael Collins ordered an attack on the Four Courts. The “truce” between the pro-Treaty Free State forces and anti-Treaty Irregulars was over.³⁷⁰ These competing visions of Irish nation and nationhood—the Free State dominion and independent Republic—were at war. The Civil War had begun.

De Valera established a new political party, *Cumann na Poblachta* (League of the Republic), which was composed largely of anti-Treaty members of the *Dáil*. In perhaps his most infamous expression of anti-Treaty Irish nation and nationhood, de Valera declared that those opposed to the Treaty might need “to wade through Irish blood, through the blood of soldiers of the Irish Government” in order to gain “Irish freedom [the Republic]”.³⁷¹ Liam Lynch echoed this anti-Treaty constitution of Irish nationhood, asserting that the Republic “is a living tangible thing...something for which men gave their lives, for which men were hanged, for which men are in gaol, for which the people suffered and for which men are still prepared to give their lives”.³⁷² Equating Irish nationhood with “the Republic” meant that radical Irish nationalists could not accept the Treaty or the Free State it constituted, as it was *not* “the Republic”.

The civilian population suffered significant hardships through the Civil War, with disruptions to transportation and communications systems and food supplies,

³⁷⁰ Kee 2000, 738-40; Walsh 2002, 97.

³⁷¹ Cited in Walsh 2002, 93 (original source not cited).

³⁷² *Dáil Éireann Official Report, Treaty Debate*, p. 34, cited in Kee 2000, 732.

undermining much of the support the anti-Treaty forces might have had.³⁷³ Emergency Powers, enacted by the provisional government, gave it the authority to deal swiftly and harshly with the Irregulars. The guerilla tactics of ambush and sniper attacks used by the anti-Treaty forces were met by the provisional government's heavy hand of summary execution or imprisonment of those even suspected of such actions.³⁷⁴ Both sides seemed intractable. The Irregulars refused to surrender, and the Free State government refused de Valera's requests to negotiate a truce without such a surrender. Finally in May 1923, de Valera issued an order to the "Soldiers of the Republic" to cease its armed conflict.³⁷⁵ The Civil War was over, but the tensions remained.³⁷⁶ By this time politics in Ireland had been militarized for approximately 10 years, entrenching the gender norms of a masculinized militarized politics and the ideal of the patriot "mother". Many maintained hopes that Ireland would be unified again, while for others, a feeling pervaded that the six-county sub-state of Northern Ireland (already in existence for nearly a year) was inviolable (as will be demonstrated in Chapter 4).³⁷⁷

The national project of the Free State in the aftermath of the Civil War was to

³⁷³ Kee 2000, 734-44; Walsh 2002, 98.

³⁷⁴ In a six month period the Free State government executed by firing squad seventy-seven Irregulars, more than three times the number executed by the British government during the two-and-a-half years of the Anglo-Irish War. In January 1923 alone an estimated thirty-four Irregulars were executed by the Free State forces and a further 13,000 were imprisoned (Foster 1989, 512-3, 743-4; Kee 2000, 742-7; Walsh 2002, 99).

³⁷⁵ Foster 1989, 512; Kee 2000, 744; Walsh 2002, 102.

³⁷⁶ The Irregulars did not surrender or turn over their weapons; instead, they dumped or stashed them for future potential use (Foster 1989, 512; Kee 2000, 744; Walsh 2002, 102).

³⁷⁷ Kee 2000, 734-5, 746-7.

reconstitute the Gaelic Irish nation. To that end it focused on reviving the Irish language through teaching it in state schools (in 1911 approximately seventeen percent of the population spoke Irish) and state-supported *Gaeltachts* (Irish-speaking regions in the south and west of Ireland). The teaching of Irish history in order to “inculcate national pride and self-respect” and the encouragement of all forms of Gaelic cultural activities to “revive the ancient life of Ireland as a Gaelic state, Gaelic in language, and Gaelic and Christian in its ideals” were deemed to be the central nation-work of the Free State government.³⁷⁸ This concentration on a cultural nation meant that motherhood was constituted as a woman’s primary nation-work, since women were not only the literal biological reproducers of the nation, but also the instillers of the nation’s values, language, and culture through their primary child-care and child-rearing work as mothers. This gendered understanding of nation was institutionalized in the 1937 Constitution, which enshrined a woman’s role as mother, and in the marriage bar (beginning in 1935), which prevented married women from working in many sectors of the economy, but particularly in the state sector.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁸ Foster 1989, 518.

³⁷⁹ The 1937 constitution further reaffirmed the doctrine of “separate spheres” for men and women and ensured “that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home” (art. 41.2.20, cited in Fitzpatrick 2006, 235). This justified the exclusion of mothers from paid employment and was the culmination of a process which in 1933 required the resignation of female teachers upon marriage, and which was extended to all sectors of the civil service (excepting that of cleaners) and prevented widowed women from re-entering the paid work force under *The Conditions of Employment Act* of 1935. The marriage bar remained on the statues in the Republic of Ireland until 1973 (Fitzpatrick 2006, 234; Hill 2003, 100, 142-3). A similar marriage bar in Northern Ireland remained on the books until 1975 (Hill 2003, 142-3).

CONCLUSION

Although the Penal Laws had for the most part been stricken from the statutes by the end of the eighteenth century, they left a legacy of institutionalized political, economic, and religious cleavages, which made the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries politically, socially, and economically tumultuous times in Ireland. Poverty was widespread, and land was a critical issue. Domopolitics and the constitution of nation and nationhood were not only contested, debated, and fought over between Irish nationalist and Ulster unionist movements, but also within the Irish nationalist camp, culminating in the Anglo-Irish War, the partition of Ireland, and the Civil War during the early 1920s.

Economic and political power began to shift in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries away from the male landed Anglican élite, which was scattered across Ireland, to a male industrial capitalist class that was largely Presbyterian and based in the northeast of Ireland, especially around Belfast. Electoral reforms and the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869 extended formal political agency, especially at the local level, to male Catholics, Presbyterians, and Methodists, as well as to the urban working-class, tenant farmers, and agricultural labourers. Land reforms had significantly decreased (but did not eliminate entirely) the importance of land as a central issue of the “Irish Question” by the early twentieth century. However, such reforms weakened the economic and political power of the landed class by decreasing the concentration of land under its control and ownership and providing greater security of tenure for and increased ownership of land by farmers.

Although political and economic power began to shift from the Anglican landed gentry to a largely Presbyterian capitalist class, patriarchal power structures remained entrenched. As discussed above, male enfranchisement was broadened to include Catholics, Presbyterians, and Methodists, as well as urban working-class men and male tenant farmers and agricultural labourers, yet the issue of women's suffrage divided many Irish nationalists (and Ulster unionists, as later chapters discuss).

The Irish nationalist camp was similarly split by issues of who (which individuals and groups) constituted the nation; the priority placed on suffrage for women relative to Irish independence; the means through which the envisioned Irish nation and nationhood would be achieved (constitutional or armed force); the form that the institutionalized nation should take (British dominion or independent Republic); and the nation-work required not only to constitute the nation and nationhood, but valorized by that nation.

Home Rule was debated in the Westminster parliament and fought for by Irish nationalists; although the first two Home Rule Bills were defeated in parliament in the late nineteenth century, the fervor of Irish nationalist sentiments did not dim. However, constitutional routes to achieving Irish independence were increasingly deemed to be ineffective. Support for the IPP waned, while backing increased for more militant Irish nationalist discourses, as espoused by the IRB, the Irish Volunteers, the Irish Citizens' Army, *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*, *Cumann na mBan*, and Sinn Féin. This led to the Anglo-Irish War. The cleavages amongst Irish nationalists were brought to a head with the constitution of nation and nationhood through the Treaty of 1921 and the partition of Ireland. This culminated in the Civil War.

As the next chapter discusses, Irish nationalists were met by an increasingly organized, formalized, gendered, and distinctly Ulster-focused unionist discourse and movement in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Initially Ulster unionism constituted Ulster as part of a united Ireland that was part of the British Protestant state of the UK, *not* a sovereign Gaelic Catholic nation. However, this discourse shifted over time. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 4, Ulster unionist discourse increasingly constituted Ulster as a distinct entity and polity that was part of the UK and distinct from an independent Gaelic Catholic Ireland, and equally deserving of the right to self-determination, if not the sort aimed at independence. This is a discussion to which I turn now.

Chapter 4

Constituting Ulster

Ulster 1912 (Rudyard Kipling)

*The dark eleventh hour draws on, and see us sold
to every evil power we fought against of old.
Rebellion, rapine, hate, oppression, wrong, and greed
are loosed to rule over our fate by England's act and deed.*

*The faith in which we stand, the laws we made and guard,
Our honour, lives, and land are given for reward
To murder done by night to treason taught by day.
To folly, sloth, and spite. And we are thrust away.*

*The blood our fathers spilt, our love, our toils, our pains
Are counted on us for guilt and only bind our chains—
Before an Empire's eyes the traitor claims his price.
What need of further lies? We are the sacrifice.*

*We know the war prepared on our ever peaceful home
We know the hells prepared for such as serve not Rome
The Terror, threats, and bread in market, hearth, and field—
We know when all is said, we perish if we yield.*

*Believe, we dare not boast, believe, we dare not fear—
We stand to pay the cost in all that men hold dear.
What answer from the North? One Law, One Land, One Throne.
If England drive us forth we shall not fall alone!*

(first published in *The Morning Post*, April 9, 1912)

INTRODUCTION

If nation is constituted through the discourse, symbols, rituals, norms, rules of membership, and activities of institutions, then the emergence of formalized, gender-segregated Ulster unionist institutions such as the UUC and the UWUC was significant in terms of constituting Ulster and the Ulster people.

The purpose of this chapter is to reveal the gendered practices and discourses of Ulster unionism which have generally been unanalyzed and, therefore, hidden. It examines the emergence and transformation of Ulster as institutionalized and gendered

form through unionist organizations, discourse, and nation-work in order to provide a broader sense of the movement of which the UWUC (as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6) was a part. It explores the emergence of Ulster unionist gendered institutions and discourses beginning in the 1890s, and traces the shift to an increasingly Ulster-centred and militarized entity with the emergence of the UUC in 1905. This chapter also assesses Ulster unionist masculine nation-work related to particular moments of nationness. These include the campaign against the third Home Rule Bill concentrated largely (though not exclusively) in Ulster, World War I, as well as partition and the emergence of the new sub-state of the UK in the north east of Ireland in 1921: Northern Ireland, or Ulster, as it was popularly known within the Ulster unionist movement.

THE RISE OF ULSTER UNIONISM: THE 1880s TO 1912

Unionism in a UK context

Here the rise of unionism as a political movement within the UK is traced prior to an assessment of the development of an institutionalized and distinct Ulster unionist movement which began to take shape in the 1890s. Unionism first emerged in the 1880s as part of the UK-wide rise of mass politics and in opposition to the Home Rule bills proposed in the UK parliament in 1886 and 1893. As discussed in Chapter 3, these bills advocated transferring powers related to policing, the judiciary, and the civil service to a regional government in Ireland, while Westminster would continue to have jurisdiction

over issues of taxation and the armed forces, as well as foreign policy and trade.³⁸⁰

Unionist discourse during this period was pan-British in the sense that unionism in its institutionalized political party form emerged neither as an independent nor a regionally specific political party, but as part of the Conservative Party caucus in Westminster. It focused on the goal of maintaining and reinforcing the political and economic union of the UK by constitutional means and had broad-based support across England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.³⁸¹ In this context, unionism constituted a complex sense of common British institutions, values, and history simultaneous with what were perceived to be distinct regional English, Scots, Welsh, and Irish cultures.

In spite of these institutional ties to the Conservative Party, however, in Ireland unionism spanned ideological (conservative/liberal), class, and faith denomination (Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist) schisms. From the outset unionism in Ireland also had close ties to the Orange Order, which had provided the institutional basis for opposition to the Land League movement (1879-1882) discussed earlier. Many Conservatives and Unionists in Great Britain regarded the ties of unionism in Ireland to the Orange Order as an indication of the sectarian nature of unionism there, which they saw as problematic since it posed the risk of politics inciting violence based on the long-

³⁸⁰ Bardon 2007, 378; Powell 2002, 69, 73. Recall that the intent of the first two Home Rule bills was to make the governance of the UK more efficient and also to address demands of Irish nationalists for greater autonomy. They were also part of a larger process of democratization which included the reform of parliamentary representation in 1884-1885, the extension of representation of local government in 1888-1889 and 1894 in England, Scotland, and Wales, and in Ireland in 1898, as well as increasing pressure to curb the powers of the House of Lords (Powell 2002, 69-70).

³⁸¹ Fitzpatrick 2006, 9.

standing religious divides in Ireland.³⁸² Lord Balfour of Burleigh asserted that he was “anxious not to be connected with...the extreme ‘Orange’ position [of the Irish Unionist Alliance and the UUC]”.³⁸³ Irish Unionists were described as “the gang of noisy Irish Protestants” by Jack Sandars, who was a part of the British Conservative hierarchy and a long-time adviser to Arthur Balfour during his term as UK Prime Minister.³⁸⁴

Initially unionism in Ireland constituted a pan-Irish politics and identity. Organizations such as the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union as well as the Loyal Irish Union emerged in 1885 (in both Dublin and Belfast), with the Ulster Defence Union and the Irish Unionist Alliance established in 1886 and 1891 respectively as a way to institutionalize and organize Unionist activity in Ireland.³⁸⁵ A semi-autonomous Irish Unionist political party known as the Irish Unionist Parliamentary Party (or IUPP) emerged in 1886 as a part of this growing institutionalized unionism in Ireland. The IUPP was also formed in response to parliamentary reforms and constituency redistribution issues initiated by the Conservative government, which many Irish unionists felt had forgotten Ireland. The IUPP’s chief concern was to maintain a united Ireland’s political

³⁸² Jackson 2012, 228-9.

³⁸³ British Library. *Walter Long Papers* (Add. MS 62411, f. 67). Balfour of Burleigh to Long. January 23, 1907, cited in Jackson 1989, 303. Lord Balfour of Burleigh was a prominent Scottish Conservative in the House of Lords and an advocate of free trade (“Lord Balfour of Burleigh”. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. www.oxforddnb.com. Accessed February 22, 2012).

³⁸⁴ British Library. *Arthur Balfour Papers* (Add. MS 49765, fo. 175). Sandars to Balfour. September 20, 1908, cited in Jackson 1989, 305.

³⁸⁵ Jackson 2012, 283, 306-7.

and economic ties to Great Britain.³⁸⁶ Its leadership was drawn from the Anglo-Irish landed gentry,³⁸⁷ which was dispersed throughout Ireland, unlike the future leadership of Ulster unionism,³⁸⁸ which was largely from the commercial class and which was concentrated primarily in the north of Ireland.

Loyalty was constituted as the chief element of unionist identity, and those constituted as “disloyal” were deemed to be a unionist’s primary foes. According to historian Alvin Jackson,

when Unionism emerged in a coherent form [in Ireland] in the 1880s and 1890s it was an essentially Irish political faith, which justified its existence in terms of the condition of the whole of Ireland. Unionism in Ulster was institutionally, merely one fragment of a greater whole. Ideologically Unionism was concerned with all of Ireland, and not merely with the northern province. If there were divisions in Ireland, then these were...the division between “loyal” and “disloyal”, between “loyalty” and “treason”.³⁸⁹

The leader of the caucus of Irish Unionist MPs in Westminster, Edward Saunderson, made this unionist domopolitics of the “Two Irelands” (loyal/disloyal) clear when he wrote in 1884:

³⁸⁶ Jackson 2012, 283; Jackson 1989, 17-8. Edward Saunderson, the founder and leader of the IUPP from 1886 until his death in 1906, was a prominent Orangeman and MP. Many involved in the creation of the IUPP were Orangemen and had been associated with the Orange Order campaign against the Land League movement and the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland (Jackson 2001, 119). The IUPP united those who might otherwise have been divided politically or along faith denomination lines to defeat the first Home Rule Bill of 1886 (Jackson 2012, 283, 306-7). The IUPP split with Unionists from the south of Ireland at the Irish Convention (July 1917-April 1918), when southern unionists accepted a moderate Home Rule proposal as the best of all options (Jackson 2001, 132-3).

³⁸⁷ Such as Edward Saunderson, Lord Arthur Hill, and Thomas Warring (Jackson 1989, 309).

³⁸⁸ Such as James and Charles Craig, as well as William Moore—all Ulster MPs (Ibid.).

³⁸⁹ Jackson 1994, 44.

There are now two classes—Two Irelands—both professing to have the welfare of their country as their dearest wish, but seeking to secure it by entirely different means. The one—Disloyal Ireland—by intimidation, by murder, by threats of revolt and separation, seek [sic] to extort by force from English fear that which England’s reason refuses to concede; the other—Loyal Ireland—strive [sic] for their country’s welfare by every lawful method within the lines of the Constitution of the Empire.³⁹⁰

This constitution of the “Two Irelands” was based on issues of moral virtue, *not* nationality; it was *not* a case of *Ulster* versus *Ireland*, but rather of *loyalty* versus *treason*.³⁹¹ Soon though, an Ulster/Ireland schism would be constituted explicitly within this loyal/disloyal duality, as events would soon make clear.

The Ulster Unionist Convention held in June 1892 was a turning point in terms of a more Ulster-focused unionist discourse and domopolitics, one which tied Ulster to loyalty and disloyalty to the rest of Ireland.³⁹² At this time both unionists and Irish nationalists were organizing around the prospect of another Home Rule bill. Thus a carefully planned and orchestrated show of Ulster unionist determination and unity, the Ulster Unionist Convention, was intended to mobilize unionists of all classes, faith denominations, and political persuasions, thereby demonstrating to detractors in Britain that unionists in Ulster were united and sincere in their refusal to submit to Home Rule. The *Belfast News-Letter* reported: “There was an impression...in England and in Scotland...that Ulster Unionists after protesting against Home Rule would ultimately submit to it if it were forced upon them...this mistaken impression must be driven from

³⁹⁰ Edward Saunderson. *Two Irelands: Loyalty Versus Treason* (London 1884), 3, cited in Miller 2007, 110.

³⁹¹ Jackson 1994, 44; Miller 2007, 110-1.

³⁹² Gibbon 1975, 130-1; Walker 2004, 13.

the minds of the British electorate”.³⁹³

Scale, discipline, and order were the main themes of the convention. The pavilion, specially constructed for the event, “cover[ed] one acre, the glass in the roof being about one third of an acre in extent...the largest which has ever been erected in Great Britain or Ireland for political purposes, being 224 feet in the front and running back for about 150 feet”.³⁹⁴ It represented the scale of achievement that the convention was in terms of planning, organization, and engineering. The sheer number of delegates and spectators further indicated the scale of the event and the fervour of Ulster’s anti-Home Rule sentiments, as well as Ulster’s apparent unity in opposing it and Ulster’s apparently ordered and disciplined nature.

Male delegates (12,000 in all), elected by Unionist associations from all over the province, descended on Belfast. *The Times* reported that “the city...was literally *en fete*. Flags and banners floated from every point of vantage, and the leading thoroughfares were alive with colours. Many thousands of delegates and visitors from England and Scotland arrived on Thursday...Tens of thousands more arrived from all parts of Ulster by the morning trains today”.³⁹⁵ Yet in spite of this mass of people, the delegates were “all orderly, all moving, scant of speech but with an air of quiet resolution, in one direction to the hall”.³⁹⁶ Providing order to the assembly, delegates entered through

³⁹³ *Belfast News-Letter*. June 17, 1892, cited in Bardon 2007, 408.

³⁹⁴ *Northern Whig*. June 18, 1892.

³⁹⁵ *The Times*. June 17, 1892, cited in Bardon 2007, 408-9.

³⁹⁶ *The Times*. June 18, 1892, cited in Bardon 2007, 409.

twenty-four doors and took their assigned seats via eight aisles.³⁹⁷ *The Times* noted that “as far as sight could reach, sat row upon row of sturdy men packed closely together...there was no singing of patriotic songs; these hard-featured *Ulstermen* were come together for business, not for noise”.³⁹⁸ This air of solemnity and order underscored the seriousness of the conviction of unionists in Ulster to maintain the Union.

The spectacle of the convention constituted Ulster as British and as unified and determined in its commitment to remain part of the UK. The liberal Unionist Belfast-based newspaper the *Northern Whig* noted the apparent unity of those assembled, observing that “there were the rugged strength and energy of the North...still Liberal, still Conservative, on this occasion and in this cause they know but one name—that of Unionist”.³⁹⁹ The symbolism, bunting, and mottoes further reflected Ulster’s unity and determination to remain part of the UK, as well as Ulster’s simultaneous British and Irish identity, loyalty to the British Crown, and determination to remain part of the UK. The use of “Erin-go-Bragh” (“Ireland Forever”), which was the English spelling of the Irish saying *Éirinn go brách*, as a motto on the convention pavilion highlighted that at this stage unionism constituted Ulster as Irish (but *not* Gaelic) as well as British.⁴⁰⁰ Above the pavilion’s entrance hung the arms of Ulster and a shield eight feet square on which were the arms of England, Ireland, and Scotland, along with Union flags and the words “God Save the Queen”. Expressions of the solidarity and Britishness of unionists covered the

³⁹⁷ *Belfast News-Letter*. June 18, 1892, cited in Bardon 2007, 409.

³⁹⁸ *The Times*. June 18, 1892, cited in Bardon 2007, 409 (emphasis added).

³⁹⁹ *Northern Whig*. June 18, 1892.

⁴⁰⁰ Walker 2004, 13.

walls of the pavilion. These included: “Defence not Defiance”, “In union is our strength and freedom”, “Keep our noble Kingdom whole”, and “One with Britain heart and soul: One life, one flag, one fleet, one throne”.⁴⁰¹

The Anglican archbishop of Armagh opened the proceedings by asking God to send down “Thy Holy Spirit to guide our deliberations for the advancement of Thy Glory, the safety of the Throne, and the integrity of the Empire”.⁴⁰² Also addressing those assembled, Thomas Sinclair, a prominent Liberal unionist, connected the contemporary concerns of unionists in the north of Ireland to the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which saw the Catholic King James II overthrown by the British parliament and replaced with James’ Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange as co-rulers.

Sinclair declared:

We [unionists] are children of the Revolution of 1688, and cost what it may, we will have nothing to do with a Dublin Parliament (Loud cheers). If it be ever set up, we shall simply ignore its existence (Tremendous cheering). Its acts will be but as waste paper—(cheers)—the police will find our barracks preoccupied with our own constabulary, its judges will sit in empty court houses (cheers)...If Mr. Gladstone, in mad wantonness, can induce Parliament to pass it into law, *Ulstermen* will be idiots and worse than idiots, if they do not utterly repudiate it (Loud applause).⁴⁰³

By tying the contemporary issue of Home Rule to a Protestant history of Ulster such unionist domopolitics constituted the unionist cause as a Protestant cause and Ulster as distinct from the rest of Ireland. Home Rule, it was claimed, posed a threat to Ulster as a

⁴⁰¹ *Northern Whig*. June 18, 1892.

⁴⁰² *Northern Whig*. June 18, 1892.

⁴⁰³ *Belfast News-Letter*. June 18, 1892, cited in Bardon 2007, 410 (emphasis added).

loyal, unionist, and Protestant minority in Ireland.

The convention reflected an increasingly institutionalized “Ulsterization” of unionism in the north of Ireland. It “sharpen[ed] the consciousness of difference on the part of Ulster Protestants and awareness of their ‘front-line’ position in relation to the central question of Ireland’s future direction... arguably it represented the ripening of such a collective identity”.⁴⁰⁴ In this way, the criticism of both Liberals and Irish nationalists that unionism was an ideology created by the landed élite in order to maintain its power and privilege by “dup[ing] Orange workers with sectarian appeals” was answered by unionists in Ulster.⁴⁰⁵

Distinguishing Ulster from the rest of Ireland was one of the principal purposes of the convention. Historian Peter Gibbon has noted that “the efficient majesty of Unionist organisation [in Ulster was] communicated in the event’s physical setting, social organisation and style of leadership”.⁴⁰⁶ As Gibbon has described:

The building’s exterior was decorated with flags, shields and emblems, while inside tapestries depicting famous moments in Protestant history were hung from walls and ceilings. The names of Unionist leaders were painted round the rim of the balcony. The pavilion symbolised operational monumentalism—the capacity of the party to create a monument to the qualities of Ulster and its Protestant inhabitants. Commemorated in this monument were the achievements and potentialities of the imperial experience in general, and its modernising mission in particular. The pavilion also embodied the potential power-to-be-reckoned-with of the Ulster people: immensity, substantiality, safety, attention to the smallest

⁴⁰⁴ Walker 2004, 13.

⁴⁰⁵ Walker 2004, 13.

⁴⁰⁶ Gibbon 1975, 132.

detail, [and] ‘breathtakingly swift execution’.⁴⁰⁷

The pavilion and co-ordination of the convention wove together two primary characteristics of Ulster—tradition and progress—through the symbolism and the mottoes on which it drew.⁴⁰⁸ “Industry, endeavour, boldness, intelligence...tradition and progress [were constituted as the chief characteristics of Ulster]...[and as such they] made a silent comment on the lack of such qualities in the remainder of the Irish population” both in terms of the scale of the convention and the manner of its co-ordination.⁴⁰⁹

The ritual, symbolism, and rhetoric of the convention also constituted Ulster as institutionalized masculine form. Representation at the convention was exclusively male (women could observe the spectacle, but not actively participate in the proceedings). As Gibbon has noted: “To dampen any suggestion of frivolity women were excluded altogether from the proceedings...[and] the floor of the pavilion was sanded in order to make the movement of delegates absolutely silent”.⁴¹⁰ The representation of each constituent class and Protestant denomination, marked by “an emblem, a leader and a speech”, underscored *Ulstermen’s* unity against Home Rule.⁴¹¹ “Each Ulsterman was a concentrated essence of the qualities of the province...the social organisation of the convention symbolised not merely the formal unity and unanimity of the different

⁴⁰⁷ Gibbon 1975, 132.

⁴⁰⁸ Gibbon 1975, 132.

⁴⁰⁹ Gibbon 1975, 132.

⁴¹⁰ Gibbon 1975, 134-5.

⁴¹¹ Gibbon 1975, 135.

sections of the Protestant population but *necessity* binding and compelling that unanimity”.⁴¹² Collectively the delegates not only embodied the main themes of the convention, they constituted Ulster and its chief characteristics—discipline, order, unity, tradition, progress, loyalty, and determination, which became leitmotifs of Ulster and the Ulster unionist discourse.⁴¹³ Thus the convention bound these chief characteristics of Ulster to traits that were deemed to be inherently masculine.

The coordinating party emerged from the convention as more distinctly Ulsterized and assumed some of the central characteristics and tasks of statehood in terms of its pervasiveness and ability to mobilize technical resources.⁴¹⁴ It presented itself as the solution to the political disorder in Ireland.⁴¹⁵ The orderly conduct of a convention of such a scale was deemed to be a result of the civilized and disciplined nature of *Ulstermen*, while the domopolitics siege mentality was “rhetoricised as the elemental fears and drives of the *Ulsterman*”.⁴¹⁶ Much of the leadership of the Ulster unionist movement believed that “the masses’ primordial proclivities to ethnic vengeance and rapine” were dampened and given a constructive outlet through the convention.⁴¹⁷

Divisions amongst Conservatives and Unionists increased after the defeat of the first two Home Rule Bills. Many Unionists in Great Britain were increasingly focused on

⁴¹² Gibbon 1975, 135 (emphasis in original).

⁴¹³ Gibbon 1975, 132-5.

⁴¹⁴ Gibbon 1975, 136.

⁴¹⁵ Gibbon 1975, 135-6.

⁴¹⁶ Gibbon 1975, 135 (emphasis added).

⁴¹⁷ Gibbon 1975, 135-6.

tariff reforms, which it was hoped would transform the Empire into a more organized, self-sufficient economic unit.⁴¹⁸ A great number of Conservatives in Great Britain were tired of what they perceived to be Irish intransigence and militancy, while many unionists in Ireland feared that Conservatives and Unionists in Great Britain would desert them given the declining opposition to Home Rule amongst the British electorate.⁴¹⁹ (Recall that British popular sentiment against Home Rule declined after the Fenian attacks in Manchester and London in 1867, given the perceived threat of more violence by Irish nationalists in Great Britain if Home Rule was not granted.)

As a sense of isolation of Irish Unionist MPs within the Conservative caucus at Westminster grew they began to rely more and more on local resources.⁴²⁰ In 1907 J.B. Lonsdale (Secretary to the IUPP) counselled the Ulster Unionist Convention (UUC) not to depend solely on Unionist MPs, but to use “other means of reaching the electors of England and Scotland”.⁴²¹ As will be demonstrated in the following section, an institutionalized, masculine Ulster emerged out of this increasing focus of unionists in Ireland on local resources.

⁴¹⁸ Jackson 1989, 293-4, 304-6. It was proposed to protect trade within the Empire through a number of preferential duties, while imposing tariffs on imports from outside of the Empire. In the UK many were concerned that such policies would increase the price of imported foods, while in the colonies many argued that such reforms would increase the UK control of their economies (Powell 2002, 122-3).

⁴¹⁹ Jackson 1989, 304-6.

⁴²⁰ Jackson 1989, 306-7.

⁴²¹ Jackson 1989, 309-10.

The Ulster Unionist Council: Ulster as institutionalized and masculine form

Although a distinct and institutionalized Ulster unionism began to emerge with the Ulster Unionist Convention of 1892, it was not until the early 1900s that Ulster unionism materialized as a more fully institutionalized and distinctive political and ideological force.⁴²² Unionism was on the defensive with respect to its British, landed, and masculine identities in the face of the political schism within the Conservative caucus at Westminster, the reforming initiatives of the UK government, as well as the rise of socialism and the women's suffrage movement.⁴²³ The Ulster unionist domopolitics siege mentality constituted the Liberal minority UK government as pro-Home Rule (and, therefore, a threat) due to its dependence on the IPP (a constitutional Irish nationalist political party) for support in parliament.⁴²⁴

Historian Graham Walker has observed that “the more Ulster Protestants felt let down by, or unable to trust, British governments and British opinion, the more an ‘ourselves alone’ and particularist outlook intensified throughout the community and its politics”.⁴²⁵ This increased investment by Ulster politicians in the local politics of Ulster resulted in the establishment of the UUC in 1905 as an umbrella institution of various Ulster-based unionist organizations which linked local activists with a caucus of approximately twenty Irish Unionist MPs in the House of Commons at Westminster, most

⁴²² Jackson 1989, 7.

⁴²³ Powell 2002, 134.

⁴²⁴ Akenson 1991, 186; Jackson 1989, 309.

⁴²⁵ Walker 2004, 48.

of whom primarily represented constituencies in Ulster (except for two members for Trinity College Dublin).⁴²⁶ The UUC was composed of 100 male representatives of Ulster Unionist constituency associations, fifty representatives of the Orange Order, and fifty co-opted (or appointed) members. Twenty members of the thirty-person Standing Committee of the UUC were elected; the remaining ten were appointed by the chair of the IUPP.⁴²⁷

The UUC's membership and authority quickly expanded. By 1911 its membership had increased to 370 men-only organizations, with the inclusion of the Apprentice Boys and representatives of the Unionist Clubs movement. Although the UUC did not explicitly exclude women as representatives within the organization, women were excluded in actuality since the constitution of the UUC required that representatives nominated by districts of the UUC had to be registered as voters. Since women were not granted the franchise universally until 1928, this rule excluded women in practical terms from the UUC at least until some women were granted the vote in 1918 (more of which later).⁴²⁸ By 1918 the membership of the UUC had grown to a total of 432 organizations, with the nominal inclusion of women for the first time through the UWUC and the Ulster

⁴²⁶ Fitzpatrick 2006, 9; Stewart 1967, 32.

⁴²⁷ The Standing Committee represented the manufacturing and commercial class, as well as the conservative and liberal strands of unionism in Ulster. The inclusion of the Orange Order in the UUC signaled the willingness of Ulster unionism to embrace religious sectarianism and militant politics (Bardon 2007, 416, 426, 440; Walker 2004, 22-3). The UUC came to be the governing body of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), which broke from the IUPP when it [the UUP] emerged as the governing party of Northern Ireland upon the establishment of the Belfast parliament in 1921. The UUP was considered to be the voice of the majority of Protestants and unionists in Northern Ireland since it remained the governing party until the Northern Irish parliament was prorogued in 1972 (Farrell 1980, 363).

⁴²⁸ Urquhart 2000, 69.

Unionist Labour Association (UULA).⁴²⁹ Although dominated by Belfast and eastern Ulster, with such a growth in membership the UUC reflected the unionist population of Ulster more accurately than had past unionist institutions. Thus it institutionalized a “comparatively more democratic Unionism—a Unionism more fully, if still inadequately, representative of Ulster loyalism”.⁴³⁰ It also formalized the bonds amongst Ulster unionism, the Orange Order, and more militant unionist and Protestant traditions.⁴³¹

The exclusion of Irish nationalists and Catholics was explicit in the institutions and domopolitics of Ulster unionism. The UUC could be said to be central to the constitution of a “partitionist mentality” amongst unionists in the north of Ireland. “Its growth in power and prestige meant that Unionist politicians were, for the first time effectively accountable to a local authority. Hence the UUC constituted a unionism which not only excluded the south of Ireland, but also England”.⁴³² In addition, it assumed and constituted the trappings of nationhood. “[The UUC] was a prototype of the northern parliament which opened in Belfast in June 1921: it certainly provided members, schooled in partisanship and in the arcana of representative institutions, to the new

⁴²⁹ Bardon 2007, 416, 426, 440; Urquhart 2001, 124; Urquhart 2000, 69-71; Urquhart 1996, 37; Walker 2004, 22-3. At this time, women and the working-class were included for the first time through the UWUC and the Ulster Unionist Labour Association (UULA) respectively. The UULA was established in 1918 to dampen the Labour Party’s hold on Protestant workers in Ulster. It was an organization of working-class unionists and was affiliated with the UUP, which allocated the UULA a small number of seats both in the 1918 UK general election and the parliament of Northern Ireland. However, its significance waned in the mid-1920s once the UUP had attained and secured political power in Ulster (Northern Ireland) (Bardon 2007, 512; Farrell 1980, 363).

⁴³⁰ Jackson 1994, 42.

⁴³¹ Jackson 1994, 43.

⁴³² Jackson 1994, 42-3.

parliament”⁴³³ Ultimately, as a men-only/dominated organization the UUC constituted and institutionalized the *Ulstermen* and tied them to a distinct territory.

As the umbrella institution of every men’s unionist organization in Ulster, the UUC provided an institutionalized and gendered foundation of Ulster’s opposition to Home Rule during the Ulster Crisis, which was a key moment of nationness. Norms of masculinity and femininity constituted particular roles for men and women within the Ulster *domos* (Ulster society). Such norms meant that women were often excluded from direct involvement in the public sphere of the *domos*. As the previous analysis has begun to show, the convention in 1892 contributed to the institutionalization and constitution of existing gender norms of Ulster. Positions of public authority in Ulster were constituted as masculine. Toughness, steadfastness, solemnity, and rationality were deemed to be not only qualities vital to the duties of public administration and defence, but foundational to Ulster, as well as inherently masculine traits.

Women, according to such norms, did *not* hold positions of public authority related to public administration, maintaining law and order, or defending the *domos* by subduing dissident acts and beliefs.⁴³⁴ They played an auxiliary role. The characteristics of nurturing and emotion were constituted as inherently feminine, which constituted women as ideally suited to the primary caring and nurturing work of mothering and childrearing in the private sphere of home and family. The binary of public/private spheres of Ulster unionist domopolitics normalized the exclusion of women from the

⁴³³ Jackson 1994, 42.

⁴³⁴ McGaughey 2012, 153.

public domains of the *domos* since the appropriately feminine role was that of a supportive, passive wife and mother. Women were expected to encourage and support men's work in the public sphere, but *not* to exercise political agency of their own in that realm.⁴³⁵

Such gender norms were also institutionalized through patriarchal churches and state institutions, which preserved the public roles and positions of authority within those institutions for men, as discussed in Chapter 3. These gender norms, central to Ulster as institutionalized form at the 1892 convention, were institutionalized further still with the emergence of the UUC (which even after the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 only granted women nominal representation on the UUC) and the establishment of a separate UWUC in 1911. As a result of the *Representation of the People Act* (1918), which granted the franchise to women 30 years of age and older, it was agreed that the UWUC would have twelve representatives on the UUC. This amounted to approximately three percent of the total representatives on the UUC and was well below the twelve percent proposed by the UWUC.⁴³⁶ Although the UWUC marked a shift in the opening up of some formalized space in the public realm for women, it nonetheless was constituted through unionist discourse as having an auxiliary role within the unionist movement as the following chapters will demonstrate. The male-dominated UUC was constituted as *the* primary and dominant Ulster unionist institution and *Ulstermen* as *the* chief agents of Ulster unionism.

⁴³⁵ Ashe 2007, 768; Ashe 2006, 575-6; Racioppi & O'Sullivan See 2000b, 3-4, 13; Sales 1997b, 144-5.

⁴³⁶ Urquhart 2001, 124; Urquhart 2000, 69-71; Urquhart 1996, 37.

In the 1910s and 1920s poetry and popular fiction (as well as those billed as non-fictional accounts) emerged around the history of Ulster, as well as the trope of the *Ulsterman* and its archetype—the *Belfast Man*.⁴³⁷ The *Ulsterman/Belfast Man* was the embodiment of Ulster. He was tough, independent-minded, rational, honest, determined, pious, business-oriented, and urban; a Protestant man of honour who had the common touch, and a steadfast unionist prepared to defy any government in order to protect Ulster’s connection with Great Britain.⁴³⁸ One chronicler of Ulster and the *Belfast Man*, James Logan, wrote, “Belfast is self-made and so is the average *Belfast man*... There is a tendency in Belfast to place the financially successful man on a pedestal, and contrariwise, to deprecate the idealist and the intellectual”.⁴³⁹ Distinguishing the *Belfast Man* from Irish men (read Catholics and Irish nationalists), Logan continued: “[the *Belfast Man*] may not have kissed the Blarney Stone and may have little charm of utterance of musical speech, but sets high store on duty, personal honour and in keeping his house in order... he is for the most part reserved and a man of action rather than of speech... he is frequently misunderstood, and beneath the brusqueness and apparent austerity there often beats a heart of gold”.⁴⁴⁰ Edward Carson was constituted as the

⁴³⁷ For instance: *The Peril of Home Rule* (Peter Kerr-Smiley, 1911); *Red Hand of Ulster* (George Birmingham, 1912); *The Truth about Ulster* (F. Frankfort Moore, 1914); *Mrs. Martin’s Man* (St. John Ervine, 1914); *The Ulster Scot: His History and Religion* (James Woodburn, 1914); *The Soul of Ulster* (Lord Ernest Hamilton, 1917); *History of Ulster* (Ramsay Colle, 1919-1920); *Ulster’s Stand for Union* (Ronald McNeill, 1922); *Ulster in the X-Rays. A Short Review of the Real Ulster, Its People, Pursuits, Principles, Poetry, Dialect and Humour* (James Logan, 1923); *The Birth of Ulster* (Cyril Falls, 1936) (Jackson 1989, 15; Loughlin 2007, 175; McBride 1996, 7-8).

⁴³⁸ McGaughey 2012, 32; Miller 2007, 99, 115.

⁴³⁹ Logan 1923, 39-41 (emphasis added).

⁴⁴⁰ Logan 1923, 39-41 (emphasis added).

embodiment of this ideal through images of him dressed in a three-piece suit, wearing a bow-tie, and a firm, determined expression (see Appendix C, Figure 1).⁴⁴¹

The ideal of the *Ulsterman/Belfast Man* constituted the appropriate masculine characteristics of dress and behaviour in Ulster. This ideal also constituted urban Ulster, particularly Belfast, as representative of Ulster and its modern yet tradition-bound, progressive, industrialized, urban, and middle-class character. This distinguished Ulster from the largely rural, poor, agriculturally-based, and “backward” Ireland, which was also a prominent trope in Ulster unionist discourse. Ulster unionist discourse was skeptical that a largely rural, agriculturally based, poor, and “backward” people (read: Irish nationalists, Catholics, and those who identified as Gaelic) could be sound administrators of a “modern, industrialized state”.⁴⁴² It claimed that they lacked the necessary skills and organizational capabilities to do so, and that leaving the destiny of Ulster in such hands would inevitably lead to ruin.⁴⁴³ Moreover, it would be a first step towards the disintegration of the Empire and the severing of the political and economic union of the UK.⁴⁴⁴

Internal unity was paramount to achieving the Ulster unionist goal of maintaining the union between Ireland and Great Britain, which was vital to Ulster’s economic success. In 1919 Carson wrote: “It is essential that in the future we should avoid all

⁴⁴¹ Carson was leader of the Irish Unionist MPs at Westminster from 1910 to 1921 and leader of the anti-Home Rule campaign during the Ulster Crisis (“Sir Edward Carson”. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. www.oxforddnb.com. Accessed December 7, 2011, p. 2, 5).

⁴⁴² Akenson 1991, 140, 144, 184-5; Buckland 1973, xxix-xxxi; Foy 1996, 52; Loughlin 2007, 161-2, 175.

⁴⁴³ Akenson 1991, 144, 184-5; Buckland 1973, xxix-xxxi; Foy 1996, 52.

⁴⁴⁴ Powell 2002, 133-4.

friction amongst those who deem the maintenance of the Union as of permanent importance for the prosperity and happiness of the Province”.⁴⁴⁵ In addition, loyalty to the key institutions of the British state: the Protestant faith(s), the (Protestant) British Crown, and parliament (all of which embodied the political and economic union of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland), as well as the British Empire, were central to Ulster unionist discourse and to its constitution of Ulster and its people. Yet Ulster’s loyalty was conditional.⁴⁴⁶ Loyalty was given to the British Crown and parliament, but “any party, government, or even monarch caught tampering with the Union...surrendered all entitlement to loyalty”.⁴⁴⁷ Loyal citizens were obliged to obey all ordinary laws, but Home Rule would not be any ordinary law since it would in effect negate their UK citizenship.⁴⁴⁸ Thus Ulster unionists paradoxically could claim that any “technical” illegality of their actions opposing Home Rule was necessary, since as allegedly “the only law-abiding people in Ireland” such actions would be in defence “against an enemy with no respect for the law, order or decency”.⁴⁴⁹

Ulster unionist discourse was a form of domopolitics in that it constituted Ulster as under threat of siege and needing to be defended “against disloyal Irish and reforming

⁴⁴⁵ Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (hereafter PRONI). *The Ulster Unionist Council (hereafter UUC) Papers 1800-1992* (D 1327/18/19). Letter from Carson to Dawson Bates. April 21, 1919, cited in Walker 2004, 42-3.

⁴⁴⁶ Akenson 1991, 118; Fitzpatrick 2006, 11; Miller 2007, 3, 5.

⁴⁴⁷ Fitzpatrick 2006, 11.

⁴⁴⁸ Akenson 1992, 118; McGaughey 2012, 45; Miller 2007, 98, 101.

⁴⁴⁹ Miller 2007, 101.

governments”.⁴⁵⁰ This siege mentality dated the threat back to the seventeenth-century Plantation of Ireland by Protestant settlers from Scotland and England. It was rooted in a carefully crafted “reading of the past”; a perceived history of Protestants in a continuous cycle of alleged threat, paranoia, and salvation out of which a shared experience of hardship and abandonment was forged, and which rested on an idealized vision of the British Constitution, the empire, and monarchy.⁴⁵¹

The *Northern Whig* advanced this domopolitics. It cast Home Rule as a question of political and religious identity and declared that:

Home Rule is a great religious issue which threatens the destruction of our most precious liberties and the peace of the country... We have to defend the integrity of the Empire against the attacks of men who have never been loyal to the British connection... Home Rule is at bottom a war against Protestantism, an attempt to establish a Roman Catholic ascendancy in this country which would ultimately lead to the overthrow of the British Empire.⁴⁵²

Hence this siege mentality, so fundamental to Ulster unionist domopolitics and the constitution of Northern Ireland, fused religious and political identities and wove the past and present together. It “regarded any softening of Unionist postures or tendency towards accommodation as potentially fatal” because Irish nationalists were conceived of “as a cohesive, purposeful, and cunning ‘bloc’ directed by an all-powerful Church and

⁴⁵⁰ Fitzpatrick 2006, 11.

⁴⁵¹ Akenson 1991, 138-41; Fitzpatrick 2006, 11; McGaughey 2012, 42.

⁴⁵² *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912.

pursuing insatiably the goal of Unionist obliteration”.⁴⁵³ The “hinterland factor” of Ulster unionist discourse, which constantly reminded unionists that they were a minority in Ireland under “perennial threat” from the Irish nationalist majority, reinforced the siege mentality of Ulster unionist domopolitics.⁴⁵⁴

Ulster unionism also framed its opposition to Home Rule as a question of respecting democratic principles and liberties. Ulster was democratic. Its institutions (the UUC, Orange Order, and UWUC) were representative of all classes and Protestant denominations in Ulster, and its people were concerned with protecting civil and religious liberties (so such discourse argued). Carson advanced this view in a letter to the Secretary of the UUC, Richard Dawson Bates, in April 1919.⁴⁵⁵ He stated:

I should like to draw the earnest attention of the whole Province [of Ulster] to the necessity of placing our organisation on a thoroughly democratic basis... Complete unity can only be secured by taking care that all classes and all views are thoroughly represented in our local organisation and that opportunities are taken to keep in touch with the feelings and requirements of the people. The outcome of the war must lead to a great progression of democratic force and ideals and this we must encourage and make effective by a complete understanding of the wants of the people. It is by unity alone that we can expect to maintain our position in the council of the state and enforce our policy of obtaining for Ulster all that is thought essential for the democracies of Great Britain.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ Walker 2004, 55.

⁴⁵⁴ Walker 2004, 55.

⁴⁵⁵ Richard Dawson Bates was Secretary of the UUC from 1905 to 1921, when he became Minister for Home Affairs in the first Northern Irish Government. He organized anti-Home Rule demonstrations and was also active in the UVF, taking a leading part in the Larne gun-running episode of April 1914 discussed later in this chapter (“Richard Dawson Bates”. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. www.oxforddnb.com. Accessed December 7, 2011, p. 1).

⁴⁵⁶ PRONI. *The UUC Papers 1800-1992* (D 1327/18/19). Letter from Carson to Dawson Bates. April 21, 1919, cited in Walker 2004, 42-3.

Democratic principles and institutions were critical to Ulster unionism's success as a movement, according to such Ulster unionist discourse. This was in contrast to Irish nationalists, who were cast as traitors, tyrants, and puppets of the hierarchical and undemocratic Roman Catholic Church.⁴⁵⁷

Ulster unionist discourse asserted that the democratic principle of majority rule should apply to all parts of Ireland. In his chronicle of the Ulster unionist movement, Ronald McNeill (a member of the Standing Committee of the UUC and a Unionist MP), asserted that "Ulster...contended ultimately that her own majority was as well entitled to be heard in regards to her own fate as the majority in Ireland as a whole. To [Irish] Nationalist claims that Ireland was a nation she [Ulster] replied that it was either two nations or none, and that if one of the two had a right to 'self-determination' the other had it equally".⁴⁵⁸ From such rhetoric the eventual reluctant acceptance of partition by Ulster unionists is comprehensible as a means of self-determination and protection from, or taming of, the threats and dangers that Home Rule posed to Ulster. However, it also meant that Ulster unionism had to constitute an "Ulster Protestant ethnic profile" that was distinct from the rest of Ireland "as a means of countering the political dangers perceived to lie in the [Irish] Nationalist project".⁴⁵⁹ That is how Ulster unionism could justify its eventual acceptance of the establishment of a Protestant parliament in Belfast to represent

⁴⁵⁷ Walker 2004, 25, 33.

⁴⁵⁸ McNeill 1922, 15. McNeill's account was one of the earliest of the Ulster unionist movement.

⁴⁵⁹ Walker 2004, 7.

a Protestant people (to paraphrase James Craig's quote which opened this dissertation).⁴⁶⁰ Connecting a Protestant religious identity to a British political and Ulster-Scots ethnic identity achieved this.

Ulster (according to Ulster unionist discourse) had historical and kinship connections with Scotland in particular, as a result of the migration of people from Scotland (and England) to the northeast of Ireland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴⁶¹ According to McNeill's account, "Ulster Protestants could claim descent from the men of the Plantation, through generation after generation of Loyalists who had kept the British flag flying in Ireland in times of stress and danger".⁴⁶² This Ulster-Scots identity was constituted in contrast to the Irish nationalist Gaelic Catholic Irish identity.

McNeill outlined the chief differences between Ulster unionist and Irish nationalist identities. He tied an Ulster unionist identity to rituals such as the singing of *God Save the King*, as well as symbols such as the Union flag, the Red Hand, the lambeg drums, and the British Crown. McNeill explained:

In the mind of the average Ulster Unionist the particular point of contrast between *himself* and the [Irish] Nationalist of which *he* is more forcibly conscious than of any other, and in which all other distinguishing traits are merged, is that *he* is loyal to the British Crown and the British Flag, whereas the other *man* is loyal to neither... The label of "loyalist" is that which the *Ulsterman* cherishes above all others. It means something definite to *him*; its special significance is reinforced by the consciousness of its wearers that they are a minority; it sustains the feeling that the division between parties is something deeper and more fundamental than

⁴⁶⁰ Farrell 1980, 92.

⁴⁶¹ Akenson 1991, 102, 105-11, 120; Bardon 2007, 115-47; Loughlin 2007, 175; Stewart 1967, 26-31.

⁴⁶² McNeill 1922, 8.

anything that in England is called difference of opinion... If the National Anthem has become a “party tune” in Ireland, it is not because the loyalist sings it, but because the disloyalist shuns it; and its avoidance at gatherings both political and social where [Irish] Nationalists predominate, naturally makes those who value loyalty the more punctilious in its use. If there is a profuse display of the Union Jack, it is because it is in Ulster not merely “bunting” for decorative purposes as in England, but the symbol of a cherished faith.⁴⁶³

It was these combined regional, political, and religious identities, the symbols and rituals attached to such identities, as well as the sense of minority status which constituted the *Ulsterman* and Ulster (the territory to which he was tied) as distinct relative to the rest of Ireland and from England.

During the early 1900s, as Ulster unionists felt increasingly that their claims of loyalty to the Union as “Irishmen” were no longer adequate to counter Irish nationalist claims of Irishness, the unionist discourse of Ulster began to shift from an identity constituted as simultaneously Irish *and* British (as at the convention in 1892) to one that was still Loyal and Protestant, but *more distinctively Ulster* and British.⁴⁶⁴ A civic notion of British citizenship was added to “the decidedly ethnic [claim] of an Ulster Protestant distinctiveness with its own right to self-determination...as a means of countering the political dangers” posed by Irish nationalism.⁴⁶⁵ As historian Alvin Jackson has observed:

Throughout the course of the Home Rule era... “Ulster” shifted from being an element of Irishness to being a form of counterweight to Irishness or the antithesis of Irishness. Unionists looked to Britain and the Empire in 1886

⁴⁶³ McNeill 1922, 2-3 (emphasis added).

⁴⁶⁴ Jackson 1989, 15; Walker 2004, 7.

⁴⁶⁵ Walker 2004, 7.

and 1893 professedly as Irish people (or as *Ulstermen* and *Ulsterwomen* who also happened to be Irish people) [but by the time of]...the campaign against the third Home Rule Bill...for Unionists Ulster was not only becoming more important than “Ireland”—Ulster was becoming institutionally and ideologically an alternative both to Ireland and, indeed, to Britain.⁴⁶⁶

The shift in and institutionalization of Ulster identity was constituted through the burgeoning literature on the history and culture of Ulster, discussed above. This literature emphasized Ulster’s historical and cultural connection to Scotland; it valorized the individual, rationality, religious piety, duty, honour, courage, and an entrepreneurial spirit as distinctly Ulster unionist (and chiefly masculine) characteristics. However, as we shall see below, it was also constituted through particular moments of nationness.

ULSTER APART

The Ulster Crisis (1912-1914)

Recall that by the early 1900s Ulster Unionists were increasingly isolated within the Conservative caucus at Westminster. The focus of politicians in much of Great Britain had shifted from the issue of Home Rule (perceived more and more as an “Irish issue”) to concerns such as the proposed tariff reform discussed above. Unionists in Ireland attempted to build and maintain alliances across the UK through missions to England and Scotland in the hope of increasing support for unionism there. Lord Londonderry (a prominent Ulster Unionist politician) explained that “political memories are very short”

⁴⁶⁶ Jackson 1994, 44-5 (emphasis added).

and such missions were necessary “to warn the English people [of] the danger that confronted them. They had been lulled into a sense of false security”.⁴⁶⁷ These missions emphasized to Unionists in Ireland the extent to which they were now dependent on local rather than pan-British resources and support. In the previous Home Rule debates of 1886 and 1893 the bonds between Unionists and Conservatives in Ireland and Great Britain were stronger, but those bonds had been weakened in the intervening decades and the stakes were much higher in terms of the perceived threat of Home Rule between 1906 and 1910.⁴⁶⁸

The growing Ulsterization of unionism coupled with increasing support for the Irish nationalist demand for Home Rule in Ireland, set in place the dynamics out of which the Ulster Crisis arose. Ireland was divided on the question of Home Rule with the most concentrated opposition to it located in the nine counties of Ulster. Ulster’s institutionalized and well-mobilized opposition to Home Rule placed it squarely in the centre of the Home Rule debate. This tended to downplay unionist opposition to Home Rule in the south of Ireland (a small and scattered minority) and Irish nationalist support for Home Rule in Ulster, which was a sizable minority.

As a moment of nationness the Ulster Crisis was central to the constitution of Ulster and the Ulster people—the first modern and popular mobilization of Ulster unionists. The increasing constitution of Ulster as a place apart from the rest of Ireland set the stage for the eventual acceptance by Ulster unionists of partition as a way out of the

⁴⁶⁷ *Belfast News-Letter*. March 21, 1908, cited in Jackson 1989, 302.

⁴⁶⁸ Jackson 1989, 301.

volatile political situation during the early 1900s.⁴⁶⁹ Ulster unionist discourse also constituted male unionists and Protestants as the rightful holders of political and economic power in Ulster. Moreover, unionists in Ulster, who were divided along conservative and liberal ideologies, as well as cleavages of class and faith denomination, were constituted through unionist discourse during this moment of nationness as united against Home Rule. Carson praised “the wage earners of our democracy” as exemplars to those more privileged in terms of the extent to which they were prepared to sacrifice for Ulster.⁴⁷⁰

As was noted above, the Ulster Unionist leadership in the 1910s was drawn from a different social and economic class than the Unionist leadership of previous times. It more accurately reflected the way in which power relations in Northern Ireland would be organized.⁴⁷¹ “The loyalists of 1912, and the imagery which they generated, were more accessible and more relevant to the Unionist rulers of Northern Ireland...[hence] the loyalists of 1912-14 could...be more credibly depicted as the political originators of the state”.⁴⁷² But that authority *and* those “originators” of Northern Ireland were constituted as male.

⁴⁶⁹ Loughlin 2007, 160.

⁴⁷⁰ PRONI. *The UUC Papers 1800-1992* (D 1327/2/14). Letter dated March 10, 1914, cited in Walker 2004, 36.

⁴⁷¹ Jackson 1992, 184.

⁴⁷² Jackson 1992, 184.

Ulster Day 1912 and the Solemn League and Covenant

The highpoint of the Ulster unionist campaign against Home Rule was Ulster Day: September 28, 1912. This was *not* a day of celebration, but one of solemn reflection that included religious services of worship.⁴⁷³ In his address on the morning of Ulster Day Bishop D’Arcy declared: “This is a very great day, a very solemn, a very awful day...it stirs one’s soul to see the men of Ulster fixed, as they are today, by noblest enthusiasm which can move the heart of man”.⁴⁷⁴ The signing of the Solemn League and Covenant (the Covenant) by 218,206 unionist men in Ulster was constituted as the focal point of the day in spite of the fact that more women (234,046) signed the women’s Declaration there (Since women were not permitted to sign the Covenant, the UWUC drafted the women’s Declaration and organized ceremonies at which women could sign that document, more of which later).⁴⁷⁵ Emphasis was placed on the Covenant, which was “exclusively for men”, and its *male* signatories as the *primary* agents in the defeat of Home Rule rather than the total number of signatories that each document secured in Ulster itself.⁴⁷⁶

This “charter of Ulster’s freedom” constituted Ulster, its identity, values, and aims; it signified Ulster’s *men’s* endorsement of Ulster unionism and a Protestant

⁴⁷³ Stewart 1967, 63-8.

⁴⁷⁴ *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912.

⁴⁷⁵ Kinghan 1975, 20; Miller 2007, 97; Stewart 1967, 63-4; Urquhart 2001, xvii; Urquhart 1994, 100; Walsh 2002, 37. It was not until an additional 19,162 men in the rest of Ireland, Scotland, and England (which brought the total number of male signatories to 237,368) signed a similarly worded document that the total number of male signatories out-stripped that of female (McGaughey 2012, 48).

⁴⁷⁶ *Belfast News-Letter*. September 30, 1912, cited in McGaughey 2012, 47; McGaughey 2012, 48; Stewart 1967, 63-5.

religious identity, as well as their loyalty to Ulster, the British state, and the Empire.⁴⁷⁷ The *Northern Whig* described the Covenant as “the simple declaration of a unified [Ulster] Protestant community to the British people ‘We are united in our loyalty to you and the flag’. We are all united in our determination to resist the attempt to put us out of the Union and under Roman Catholic domination”.⁴⁷⁸ It vested authority, agency, and leadership in the “*men of Ulster*” (emphasis added) who pledged to defend by “all means...necessary” their “equal citizenship in the United Kingdom”.⁴⁷⁹ This highlighted the “defender” aspect of Ulster masculinities and the vital masculine nation-work to defend Ulster’s right to remain part of the UK, and could be taken to include the use of arms against the UK parliament—an act of treason.⁴⁸⁰ According to the *Northern Whig*, Ulster Day highlighted that “there are tens of thousands of men who are prepared to surrender personal advantage, personal ambition, and personal ease in order to defend their altars and their hearths”.⁴⁸¹ The Covenant’s claim that Home Rule would be “subversive of our civil and religious freedom” and “destructive of our citizenship” justified any such technically illegal actions.⁴⁸²

The use of the word covenant imbued the men’s document with religious meaning

⁴⁷⁷ *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912; October 1, 1912.

⁴⁷⁸ *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912.

⁴⁷⁹ PRONI. *Copy of signed page of the Solemn League and Covenant* (D 1327/3/4326). September 28, 1912 (emphasis added). See Appendix C, Figure 2 for the complete wording of the Covenant.

⁴⁸⁰ Akenson 1992, 118, 182, 186; McGaughey 2012, 44, 46; Miller 2007, 98.

⁴⁸¹ *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912.

⁴⁸² Akenson 1992, 118, 182, 186; McGaughey 2012, 44, 46; Miller 2007, 98.

and authority since it drew on the biblical sense of a covenant being a pact between God and a person or nation. The Scottish Covenants of 1638 and 1643, those “famous manifestos of militant Protestantism”, served as inspirations for the Covenant.⁴⁸³ As manifestos of Presbyterianism in particular, the fact that they were the inspiration for the 1912 Covenant illustrates the dominance which the Ulster-Scots and Presbyterian identities had attained within the Protestant population of Ulster as a whole.⁴⁸⁴ In addition, the ritual of signing the Covenant was deemed to be a religious act. Its rhetoric was couched in terms of religious vows of commitment which, like marriage vows, bound the Ulster leader (Carson) and the “*men* of Ulster” together—and to God and Ulster—for life.⁴⁸⁵ The Covenant “was a contract between them as *Ulstermen*, and *Ulstermen* were not in the habit of breaking their contracts”, Carson exclaimed (emphasis added).⁴⁸⁶

Reflecting the defensive, militarized, and masculinized Ulster unionist politics of the time, the God invoked in the Covenant was a martial God who would defend their (Ulster’s *men*’s) right to remain British citizens and Ulster’s membership in the British family because of Ulster’s loyalty to God. It drew on historic events as proof of a long held pact between God and the Ulster people. God had seen “their” *fathers* through “stress and trial” and would continue to be on “their” side in their defence of Ulster.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸³ Akenson 1991, 186; McNeill 1922, 108; Stewart 1967, 61.

⁴⁸⁴ Akenson 1991, 186.

⁴⁸⁵ Foy 1996, 50; Jackson 1992, 172, 185; McGaughey 2012, 47, 49.

⁴⁸⁶ Colvin 1934, 143, cited in Miller 2007, 97.

⁴⁸⁷ PRONI. *Copy of signed page of the Solemn League and Covenant* (D 1327/3/4326). September 28, 1912.

This wove together the political (Ulster/British) and religious (Protestant) identities that were so central to Ulster unionist discourse, rituals, and symbols.⁴⁸⁸

The Covenant and the men's signing ceremonies on Ulster Day were afforded prominence in terms of the attention paid to them and the public space which they occupied (see Appendix C, Figures 3, 4, 5, and 6).⁴⁸⁹ News coverage highlighted depictions of unionist men who were prepared "to protect and guard their homes and their land against the forces of 'the other'".⁴⁹⁰ The *Northern Whig* recounted that "we have seen this week the evidence of a great brotherhood" and that "having signed the Covenant they will shrink from no steps that are necessary to give effect to it. The Covenant itself is a means to an end".⁴⁹¹ Belfast City Hall was the most important public building in Ulster. Designed by British architect Sir Brumwell Thomas, and echoing the features of London's St. Paul's Cathedral, it symbolized the British identity of Ulster and Belfast's status as a regional capital.⁴⁹² It was reserved as the focal point of male Covenanters. Carson and prominent male unionists signed the Covenant there.⁴⁹³ The *Northern Whig* reported that "there was gathered around the flag-draped drumhead a body of men who represented a very large part of the capital, talent, the genius and the energy of the city of

⁴⁸⁸ Fitzpatrick 2006, 25; Jackson 1992, 135; McGaughey 2012, 46; McNeill 1922, 108; Miller 2007, 96-7; Walker 2004, 35.

⁴⁸⁹ McGaughey 2012, 47-8; Stewart 1967, 63-8.

⁴⁹⁰ McGaughey 2012, 42; Stewart 1967, 64.

⁴⁹¹ *Northern Whig*. September 28, 1912.

⁴⁹² Loughlin 2007, 172, 174.

⁴⁹³ Loughlin 2007, 172, 174; McGaughey 2012, 42; Stewart 1967, 62-68.

Belfast...Photographic shutters snapped and cinema handles turned merrily as Sir Edward stepped forward to the drumhead and signed the pledge” (see Appendix C, Figure 7).⁴⁹⁴ Women, on the other hand, went to “various lecture halls and other places” to sign the Declaration.⁴⁹⁵

The theatrics of Ulster Day emphasized the masculine and increasingly martial unionist domopolitics related to Home Rule, while the Covenant defined in writing the maxims of Ulster unionist *masculine* identity. “*Ulstermen* could now point to the language of the Covenant as the key public representation of their movement as a united brotherhood besieged by forces and conspiracies within and without Ulster that needed to be fought against and conquered”.⁴⁹⁶ Echoing myriad nationalist movements’ use of history James Craig was credited with the idea that the ceremony at which Carson signed the Covenant should be filmed and shown to audiences all over Ulster and Great Britain. He was also credited with creating the “political genealogy” which connected Carson and the Ulster unionist movement with William III and the seventeenth-century dissenters of Scotland. It was Craig who apparently secured the banner which had preceded William III into battle in 1690 at the Battle of the Boyne to usher Carson in to the signing ceremony at Belfast City Hall on Ulster Day.⁴⁹⁷ This militarized fraternity would be institutionalized further with the rise of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) as a defensive unionist and

⁴⁹⁴ *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912.

⁴⁹⁵ *Belfast News-Letter*. September 30, 1912, cited in McGaughey 2012, 47.

⁴⁹⁶ McGaughey 2012, 50 (emphasis added).

⁴⁹⁷ Foy 1996, 50; Jackson 1992, 135; Stewart 1967, 63-4; Walker 2004, 28.

Protestant paramilitary force charged with protecting Ulster and *her* people.

The UVF: institutionalized, militarized, masculine Ulster

The introduction of the third Home Rule Bill in Westminster on the heels of the elimination of the Lords' veto power ratcheted up the tensions and perceived threat of Home Rule as far as Ulster unionists were concerned. By September 1912 the UUC had approved plans for a provisional "Government of Ulster". It would assume control of Ulster in the event Home Rule became law and hold "Ulster in trust for the King, pending the Repeal [sic] of Home Rule". In addition to the plan to establish a provisional government in Ulster if Home Rule was imposed, the UUC sanctioned the creation of the UVF in January 1913 and established a sub-committee to administer the financing and preparations of this institutionalized, militant, masculine unionist resistance of Ulster to Home Rule.⁴⁹⁸

The UVF was a hierarchical and centralized organization, a volunteer unionist and Protestant paramilitary force composed primarily of male farmers, factory workers, labourers, and artisans, which was commanded by professional soldiers. This institutionalized, militarized, masculine Ulster was charged with the vital masculine nation-work of defending Ulster from the imposition of Home Rule and attacks by Irish nationalists. The UVF quickly grew to a force of approximately 90,000 to 100,000 oath-bound male unionist recruits from Ulster (roughly one third of the adult male Protestant

⁴⁹⁸ James Craig. *Dictionary of National Biography*, cited in Miller 2007, 98; Stewart 1967, 70, 76; Walker 2004, 3, 36.

population of Ulster).⁴⁹⁹ This made it a significant paramilitary body with which both the British government and Irish nationalists would have to contend. The motto engraved on the badge that each member of the force was given—“For God and Ulster”—further constituted the Ulster of Ulster unionism.⁵⁰⁰ The *Belfast News-Letter* described the UVF as a “great democratic army [preparing for] the grave issues that confronted it with a dauntless spirit and determination characteristic of the race”.⁵⁰¹ This drew on the familiar constitution of determination and democracy as inherent characteristics of Ulster.

Ulster unionists had to sway the opinion of the British government (and public) to counteract the perception of them as violent and anti-Catholic. Hence the UVF leadership was concerned with establishing and maintaining discipline within its ranks.⁵⁰² This fed into Ulster unionist propaganda which constituted Ulster unionists as “sober, respectable, middle class [male] citizens marching in perfectly disciplined processions to and from church”.⁵⁰³ The UVF leadership identified “restraint, self-sacrifice, abstinence from alcohol, the ability to prevent riots, and the ‘physical and social advantages of a marked character’” as the chief qualities expected of its members.⁵⁰⁴ As historian Jane McGaughey has observed, the militarized religious unionist politics united men of the UVF through “shared training, discipline, ideology, and aspirations” and constituted

⁴⁹⁹ Fitzpatrick 2006, 46; Jackson 2012, 311; McGaughey 2012, 46; Stewart 1967, 70-1; Walker 2004, 3, 36.

⁵⁰⁰ Stewart 1967, 87.

⁵⁰¹ *How Ulster Helped the Empire: A Review of the Year 1914*, cited in McGaughey 2012, 58.

⁵⁰² Fitzpatrick 2006, 46; Jackson 1994, 43.

⁵⁰³ Foy 1996, 5.

⁵⁰⁴ *How Ulster Helped the Empire: A Review of the Year 1914*, cited in McGaughey 2012, 55.

northern Protestant masculinities.⁵⁰⁵

Establishing the UVF was a potentially perilous move by the UUC. It risked enabling “paramilitary bosses” to take positions of power and control within Ulster unionist institutions previously occupied by the Ulster gentry.⁵⁰⁶ Yet the UVF also channeled the frustrations of more militant Ulster unionists “within a disciplined and hierarchical environment”.⁵⁰⁷ It is clear from a directive to UVF recruits that they must “restrain the hotheads” that the leadership of the UVF was concerned about the discipline and behaviour of some of its members.⁵⁰⁸ A report from the RIC Commissioner in Belfast in July 1913 confirms that the police shared this concern and questioned whether the command of the UVF would be able to exert control over the rank and file. It noted that it was “impossible to doubt the fanaticism and determination of the rank and file [of the UVF]. Should the Home Rule bill pass, even if they desire to do so, the leaders will not be able to restrain their followers or protect the Catholic population in pursuit of their business”.⁵⁰⁹ Clearly both the leadership of the UVF and the police were aware that in spite of the rhetoric of unity and discipline there were cleavages within the UVF which could not be easily controlled.

The constitution of the UVF as a homogenous force loyal to “King and Country”

⁵⁰⁵ McGaughey 2012, 70.

⁵⁰⁶ Jackson 1994, 43.

⁵⁰⁷ Buckland 1973, 62; Jackson 2012, 313; Walker 2004, 36.

⁵⁰⁸ *Curragh Incident: Reports and Correspondence*, “Action to be Taken in Emergencies”, cited in McGaughey 2012, 56.

⁵⁰⁹ *Various RIC County Inspectors Reports, 1910-22*, “Monthly Confidential Reports for July 1913”, cited in McGaughey 2012, 57.

over-simplified a much more complex reality in terms of the loyalty of individual men.⁵¹⁰ Nonetheless this masculine, militant Ulster—the public displays of Orangemen marching and UVF drills (see Appendix C, Figure 8), as well as the publicized gun-running episode of 1914 discussed below—served the Ulster unionist public relations purposes of tying discipline, organization, and efficiency (themes familiar from the 1892 convention) to increasingly militant discourse, symbolism, and rituals. Such discourse, symbolism, and rituals aimed to mobilize the *male* unionist population of Ulster. They also constituted as normal and important a particular type of masculinity, and were intended to convince the British government and Irish nationalists that Ulster’s preparedness to resist militarily any threats to its population and/or territorial integrity was real and *not* simply empty rhetoric.⁵¹¹ These public exhibitions of Ulster’s masculine, institutionalized, and militarized preparedness and discipline constituted Ulster as unified (or at least the perception of Ulster as unified) in its resistance to Home Rule.

This was important since the minority Liberal government at Westminster was considered to be “too susceptible” to pressure from Irish nationalists given that it was dependent on the support of the IPP (a constitutional Irish nationalist political party) to remain in power.⁵¹² Most crucially Asquith (the British Prime Minister) seemed unconvinced of the strength of the commitment of Ulster unionists’ *vis-à-vis* their

⁵¹⁰ McGaughey 2012, 59.

⁵¹¹ Foy 1996, 53; Jackson 1992, 18, 179-83; McGaughey 2012, 65; Walker 2004, 36-7.

⁵¹² Miller 2007, 102.

opposition to Home Rule.⁵¹³ A military intelligence report of a Home Rule meeting in Dublin in 1912 quoted Asquith as saying: “I am not satisfied Ulster is in earnest”.⁵¹⁴ Ulster unionist propaganda had to persuade the government that Ulster was united and that its threats of armed action were sincere. It not only constituted the institutionalized, militarized Ulster masculinity implied in the Covenant, but also the domopolitics of the threats and dangers which Ulster faced.

This contemporary threat to Ulster (Home Rule) and the response of Ulster’s institutionalized, militarized masculinity were connected discursively and symbolically through unionist accounts of Ulster’s history. Such accounts connected past moments of Protestant and Loyalist nationness in Ireland such as the Siege of Derry and the Battle of the Boyne, as well as Ulster’s past “heroes” such as the Apprentice Boys and William of Orange, to the current moment of nationness (the Ulster Crisis) and its heroes such as Carson (see Appendix C, Figures 1, 9, and 10).⁵¹⁵ In June 1914, Augustine Birrell (the Chief Secretary for Ireland) reported of his tour of Ulster that “unless some agreement...is arrived at, I am certain Sir Edward Carson will be compelled to raise the flag somehow or another in Belfast whenever the unamended Home Rule bill becomes law”; he further noted that the UVF was “well drilled and armed”.⁵¹⁶ Ulster unionist propaganda appeared to have achieved its aim. The juxtaposition of this institutionalized,

⁵¹³ Bardon 2007, 431; Foy 1996, 52; Walker 2004, 27.

⁵¹⁴ Cited in Foy 1996, 52 (original source not cited).

⁵¹⁵ Akenson 1991, 138-9; Loftus 1990, 18, 29, 32, 36, 38.

⁵¹⁶ Cited in Foy 1996, 52 (original source not cited).

armed, “well drilled”, unionist, and Protestant, masculine, militant Ulster and a growing institutionalized, armed, masculine, militant Ireland (e.g. the INV, the Irish Citizens Army, and the IRB, the precursor to the IRA) both within Ulster and in the south of Ireland made the situation increasingly complex and potentially volatile.⁵¹⁷

This institutionalized, militarized, masculine Ulster can also be understood as the reflection of increasing frustration with the seemingly ineffectual constitutional strategies of previous decades, a sense of the imminent danger of Home Rule between 1912 and 1914, and the perceived increased physical threat Protestants and unionists were under from Irish nationalists, particularly the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH).⁵¹⁸ The AOH (an organization roughly the Catholic equivalent of the Orange Order) was portrayed in Ulster unionist domopolitics as the hidden but real power (and, therefore, threat) in terms of the pro-Home Rule movement. Incidents such as an attack (allegedly by members of the AOH) on a Protestant Sunday School group in Castledawson, County Londonderry, in June 1912, in which a party mostly of women and children was attacked and many were injured, made tangible to many this domopolitics whereby Catholics and Irish nationalists posed a real physical threat to unionists and Protestants.⁵¹⁹

As a result of such tensions, and according to Ulster unionist domopolitics, unionists and Protestants were said to be living permanently under threat of violence and

⁵¹⁷ Jackson 2012, 313.

⁵¹⁸ Foy 1996, 51.

⁵¹⁹ Bardon 2007, 423, 436; Buckland 1973, 54; Foy 1996, 51; Maume 1999, 134; McGaughey 2012, 53; Stewart 1967, 59-60; Walker 2004, 31-2.

potential annihilation, particularly if the Ulster Crisis degenerated into civil war.⁵²⁰

Unionist propaganda alleged that Belfast Catholics were conducting raffles for Protestant homes, property, land, businesses, and jobs which would be claimed the day Home Rule became law.⁵²¹ Yet the Castledawson attack enabled Ulster unionists to only temporarily reverse the damaging image of unionists and Protestants as aggressors and depict them as the innocent victims of Irish nationalist and Catholic intolerance. It triggered Protestant anger, and Protestant men tried “to affirm their manliness as the dominant authority in the shipyards, invoking the image of strong men defending the innocent [women and children] even while they intimidated those around them”.⁵²² This sectarian violence resulted in the expulsion of approximately 2000 Catholic and 500 Protestant workers from the Belfast shipyards in July 1912.⁵²³

Aware that the UVF was growing and had plans to raid British army stores of weapons in Ireland, the British government made arrangements to strengthen its depots in the north of Ireland as a defensive measure. In March 1914 Sir Arthur Paget, the British military commander in Ireland (stationed at the British military barracks at the Curragh, County Kildare), was instructed to reinforce troops in order to protect arms depots at Armagh, Carrickfergus, Enniskillen, and Omagh (all in Ulster).⁵²⁴ Paget was concerned

⁵²⁰ Foy 1996, 51.

⁵²¹ Foy 1996, 51.

⁵²² McGaughey 2012, 54.

⁵²³ McGaughey 2012, 53-4; Walker 2004, 31.

⁵²⁴ Bardon 2007, 442, 445; Foster 1989, 469; Jackson 2003, 129; Kee 2000, 487-9; Miller 2007, 104-5; Stewart 1967, 142-75.

that this would incite violence and put officers who had family connections to Ulster in an impossible situation. The British Minister of War agreed that such officers could opt out of the operation; however, those otherwise unwilling to take part would be dismissed from the military.⁵²⁵ Approximately sixty of the officers at the Curragh made clear that they would opt for dismissal from the army rather than take part in the “initiation of active military operations against Ulster”.⁵²⁶ In response to this “mutiny” (the Curragh “Incident”) the British government provided written assurance to these officers that British troops would “not be called upon to enforce the present Home Rule Bill on Ulster”.⁵²⁷

Faced with the revolt of the officers at the Curragh the government backed down. This weakened the hand of the British government and strengthened that of Ulster unionists since it all but virtually eliminated even the threat of any British military offensive against Ulster unionists.⁵²⁸ However, the fact that the British government had also mobilized a battle squadron of the Royal Navy, a reserve force at Aldershot (just outside of Belfast), and the RIC in the north confirmed the belief of many unionists that the British government had been prepared to impose Home Rule on Ulster, by armed

⁵²⁵ Bardon 2007, 442, 445; Foster 1989, 469; Jackson 2003, 129; Kee 2000, 487-9; Miller 2007, 105; Stewart 1967, 142-75.

⁵²⁶ Beckett 1986, 14, cited in Jackson 2003, 130; McGaughey 2012, 65-6; Miller 2007, 105; Stewart 1967, 168-72.

⁵²⁷ Beckett 1986, 218, cited in Jackson 2003, 130.

⁵²⁸ Akenson 1991, 188; Bardon 2007, 445; Foster 1989, 469; Jackson 2003, 132; Kee 2000, 488-90; McGaughey 2012, 66-7; Miller 2007, 105; Stewart 1967, 168-72.

force if necessary. This ratcheted up the unionist domopolitics siege mentality.⁵²⁹

UVF gun-running 1914

Less than a month after the Curragh “Incident” the UVF undertook a well-publicized gun-smuggling effort. In late April 1914 the UVF, under the direction of Major Fred Crawford (a man with a flair for theatrics who was said to have signed the Covenant in his own blood), landed approximately 25,000 rifles and around three million rounds of ammunition from Germany at Larne, Bangor, and Donaghadee.⁵³⁰ This moment of Ulster nationness was reported in both the British and European media and widely celebrated in unionist popular culture through songs, ballads, books, and community history.⁵³¹ Crawford was constituted as Ulster’s *Scarlet Pimpernel*, maintaining the hope that Ulster was capable of self-defence against both British and Irish nationalist attacks.⁵³²

McNeill’s account constituted this episode as the exemplification of Ulster’s strength of conviction, unity, military capability, and efficiency. That it was achieved without bloodshed seemed only to confirm this.⁵³³ Moreover, McNeill tied the events of April 1914 to the Siege of Derry some 225 years earlier. He wrote:

⁵²⁹ Jackson 2003, 130-1; McGaughey 2012, 71; Stewart 1967, 142-75.

⁵³⁰ Buckland 1973, 61; PRONI. *Fred H Crawford Papers* (D 1700/5/17/1/3). Letter from Michael McCarthy to Crawford. July 13, 1914, cited in McGaughey 2012, 68; Jackson 1992, 174; McGaughey 2012, 68; Stewart 1967, 89-92; 196-212; Walker 2004, 37.

⁵³¹ Jackson 1992, 174-5, 178; Stewart 1967, 213-4.

⁵³² McGaughey 2012, 69.

⁵³³ McGaughey 2012, 72.

It was 10:30 that night, the 24th of April 1914, when the *Mountjoy II* steamed alongside that landing-stage at Larne... Fred Crawford, with the able and zealous help of Andrew Agnew, had accomplished the difficult and dangerous task he had undertaken, and a service had been rendered to Ulster not unworthy to run beside the breaking of boom across the Foyle by the first and more renowned *Mountjoy* [in 1689].⁵³⁴

Such discourse and symbolism connected Crawford and this gun-running episode to a long and proud history of the defence of Ulster by Protestants and Loyalists.

Arguably the gun-running was more of a public relations event, and critical to the Ulster unionist propaganda and domopolitics of 1912-1914, than a serious attempt to arm the UVF, since the amount of arms and ammunition smuggled was inadequate to be considered a serious effort to arm a force the size of the UVF.⁵³⁵ Nevertheless logistically, as response to policies of the British government, and in terms of the personal commitment required, “the gunrunning *was* a spectacular tactical success”.⁵³⁶ This “triumph of precise planning” and military preparedness was a “source of masculine pride and honour”.⁵³⁷

Such militarized masculine nation-work “made the Unionist leadership [in parliament] a more formidable adversary in the eyes of the Liberal government... [and] made a negotiated settlement all the more desirable... for *everyone* concerned”.⁵³⁸ It not

⁵³⁴ McNeill 1922, 214. During the Siege of Derry in 1689 the ships of James II blockaded the river Foyle thereby preventing food, arms, and munitions from reaching Derry. A ship named the *Mountjoy* broke the blockade (Bardon 2007, 152-8; Buckland 1973, xix; Farrell 1980, 25).

⁵³⁵ Jackson 1992, 180-2; McGaughey 2012, 71.

⁵³⁶ Jackson 1992, 178 (emphasis in original).

⁵³⁷ McGaughey 2012, 72.

⁵³⁸ Jackson 1992, 181 (emphasis in original).

only demonstrated the strength of Ulster unionist conviction; it mollified the hawks and more radical elements in the Ulster unionist camp and diverted their energy away from politically damaging street confrontations, such as those in which they had been involved in 1886.⁵³⁹ This was crucial in terms of the unionist discourse of Ulster and sustaining its ideal of the *Ulsterman* as law-abiding, trustworthy, honest, determined, disciplined, rational, and independent-minded in contrast to its trope of Irish nationalists and Catholics as lawless, reckless, and puppets of the Catholic Church. Ulster unionist discourse justified the UVF gun-running on the grounds that the aim of Ulster unionists was to uphold the current legal framework which bound Ulster and the rest of Ireland politically and economically to the UK.⁵⁴⁰

The stakes in terms of violence were higher by 1914. In order to defuse the tensions and resolve the “Irish Question” peacefully, King George V called a conference (the Buckingham Palace Conference) in late July 1914. The talks lasted three days, but no agreement was reached in terms of either the boundary of the area to be excluded from Home Rule or the time frame of the exclusion. The IPP would only agree to a temporary exclusion of the four Ulster counties with the largest Protestant majorities (Antrim, Armagh, Down, and Londonderry), while Ulster Unionists would not settle for anything less than a permanent exclusion of all nine Ulster counties.⁵⁴¹

As discussed earlier, such discourse and historical accounts constituted a

⁵³⁹ Jackson 1992, 179-80.

⁵⁴⁰ Buckland 1973, 65-6; McGaughey 2012, 71; Miller 2007, 103.

⁵⁴¹ Kee 2000, 512, 582; McGaughey 2012, 75-7.

domopolitics of Ulster as a place and people under siege throughout history, but united and victorious against any such threats from the Catholic and Irish nationalist majority of Ireland, as well as potential betrayal by the British government. The Ulster people were constituted as a “chosen” people who had a special covenant with God. That covenant and centuries of history bound the Ulster people with place and a particular culture. Historian Donald Akenson has argued that this covenantal culture was central to Ulster-Scots and Presbyterian identities, and which became a hegemonic force amongst all Protestant denominations in Ulster. The basis of this covenantal culture and identity was the constitution of a history connecting the Ulster people through the ages.⁵⁴² The Solemn League and Covenant, as well as the unionist propaganda, rituals, symbolism, and domopolitics of the Ulster Crisis drew on this covenantal culture. Slogans such as “No Surrender” were constituted as reiterations of the cries of the Apprentice Boys during the Siege of Derry. Regalia, sashes, as well as flags constituted Ulster symbolically and were symbols around which Ulster unionists could unite and constitute a common sense of identity, as well as shared aims and interests.⁵⁴³

Between 1912 and 1914 a massive propaganda blitz against Home Rule was coordinated by James Craig. Newspapers, posters, pamphlets, postcards, placards, leaflets, songs, banners, photographs, films, badges, and brooches, as well as lectures, parades, and public demonstrations were used to constitute Ulster and its “people” as

⁵⁴² Akenson 1991, 102, 111, 121.

⁵⁴³ Foy 1996, 50.

collectivities and advance Ulster unionism's opposition to Home Rule.⁵⁴⁴ Ulster unionist domopolitics "recognized an embattled Ulster, identifiable against the uniform anarchy and political eccentricity of the three southern provinces".⁵⁴⁵ Ulster unionist chroniclers of the 1910s and 1920s constituted the Apprentice Boys and William III as historic and mythic militant masculine figures that had protected Ulster's loyal Protestants from harm.

Edward Carson was cast as the inheritor of this mantle of leadership and holder of the "sacred trust" of the Ulster people. He personified the ideal of the *Ulsterman* in terms of dress, deportment, and behaviour, which was important since he was from Dublin and his accent marked him as an outsider (see Appendix C, Figure 1).⁵⁴⁶ Carson was constituted "as an Orange icon... 'the saviour of his tribe'—protecting the least of his people from British betrayal, unifying and mobilising his community in a uniquely thorough manner".⁵⁴⁷ Ulster unionist discourse connected Carson and the events of the Ulster Crisis to the Old Testament Book of Exodus, in which Moses led his people out of slavery. He was portrayed as a "modern-day Moses" or "King Carson" dressed in the ermine and velvet robes of kingship, holding a sceptre and wearing the chain of office (both symbols of sovereign authority and power), and sitting on a throne covered with symbols of Ulster: the Red Hand, the Union flag, as well as the Lambeg drums of the

⁵⁴⁴ Foy 1996, 50; Jackson 1992, 169-72.

⁵⁴⁵ Jackson 1989, 20.

⁵⁴⁶ Walker 2004, 28.

⁵⁴⁷ Jackson 1992, 164.

Orange Order (see Appendix C, Figure 11).⁵⁴⁸

The siege mentality of Ulster unionist domopolitics, expressed in Kipling's poem which opens this chapter, was designed to inspire and mobilize Ulster unionists into a united (but gendered) popular resistance movement and to constitute or reinforce their belief in the righteousness of *their* cause and inspire them in the belief of victory and the steadfastness of *their* leaders.⁵⁴⁹ Lord Clanwilliam stated in July 1914 that "if [civil] war did break out it would probably be a war of extermination. We have the [Irish] nationalists sandwiched between our forces and they have only a few old guns to rely on. They could not possibly have a chance. Our men are well armed and guns and ammunition are constantly being run into Ulster. We have the province [Ulster] in the hollow of our hands".⁵⁵⁰ Such propaganda was intended to not only "impress, overawe and intimidate" Irish nationalists and Catholics into believing that Ulster unionists and Protestants were superior socially, militarily, and politically, but to convince Ulster unionists and Protestants, as minorities in Ireland, of the same.⁵⁵¹

Such propaganda constituted Ulster as a united and loyal polity in opposition to Irish nationalists and Catholics. The "photographs and newsreel images of vast united crowds were not simply an illusion created by Craig, but reflected the reality [that]...by 1914 at the latest, it was undeniable that, whatever class, regional, or doctrinal differences

⁵⁴⁸ Foy 1996, 50; Morris 2005, 107-35.

⁵⁴⁹ Foy 1996, 50-1.

⁵⁵⁰ Foy 1996, 53.

⁵⁵¹ Foy 1996, 53.

divided them, Ulster Protestants in the mass had concluded that what they had in common was infinitely more important”.⁵⁵² Certainly the images of Ulster Day and the masses that turned out to sign the Covenant and the Declaration, or to witness the events of the day contributed to this sense of a mass, unified polity in Ulster (see Appendix C, Figures 5 and 6). Thus, as will be demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6, the UWUC, together with the UUC, served an important purpose in constituting and institutionalizing an Ulster *people* (both men *and* women) as unified against Home Rule and prepared to maintain their political, cultural, and economic ties to Great Britain.

However, this unity was paradoxically built upon the normalization and institutionalization of gendered expectations about the appropriate behaviour of women as women and men as men. Defensive and leadership nation-work was symbolically, discursively, and practically constituted as masculine while caring, nurturing, and education work nation-work was constituted as feminine. The mass media and means of communication of the modern era were employed to great effect to disseminate Ulster unionist propaganda and gender norms.

Film was exploited to publicise Unionist festivals and demonstrations...Motor vehicles and motorcycles were deployed within the U.V.F., drivers advertising their Unionism through brass fender-badges. The resources of the printing industry were exploited to the full. That central medium of communication in Edwardian Ireland, the halfpenny postcard, was used to carry loyalist propaganda, from coy depictions of Unionism in the form of...vulnerable young women through to images of Carson...the Unionist household gods were King-emperor, William III, and—above all—Carson.⁵⁵³

⁵⁵² Foy 1996, 53.

⁵⁵³ Jackson 1992, 136.

The ceremonies and rituals of Ulster Day, the “gewgaws” of Edwardian British politics (badges, sashes, rosettes, and cartoons), as well as membership in the formal institutions of Ulster unionism tied the rank-and-file unionist men and women to unionist leaders in an exceptional, but gendered way.⁵⁵⁴

The defining characteristics of Ulster valorized in Ulster unionist literature and anti-Home Rule propaganda were the appropriately masculine characteristics personified in the ideal of the *Ulsterman/Belfast Man* discussed above and dominant imagery of Protestant Ulster unionist masculinity: “the bowler-hatted Orange men celebrating Protestantism’s triumph at the Battle of the Boyne [or] the archetypal Protestant worker (the skilled male manual worker)”.⁵⁵⁵ Ultimately the Ulster unionist campaign against Home Rule was so successful that by the summer of 1914 “the images and messages of their militancy were virtually inescapable throughout British and Irish society”.⁵⁵⁶ The discourse, symbolism, and literature of Ulster unionism of this period created the foundation for what was to become Northern Ireland by constituting the Ulster people and tying them historically and culturally to a particular territory and shared history, while also constituting the dominant gender, class, and religious norms of Ulster.

Ulster was often depicted as a female figure bearing the symbols of Ulster (the Red Hand, the Union Flag, and in some cases, the Lambeg drum) and rallying her men to her defence (see Appendix C, Figures 12 and 13). In one image a female Ulster pleads with England not to desert her. This image drew parallels in the relationships between

⁵⁵⁴ Jackson 1992, 135-6, 192.

⁵⁵⁵ Sales 1997b, 144.

⁵⁵⁶ Jackson 2012, 313-4.

Ulster and England and that of Ruth and Naomi in the Old Testament, which is the story of a widowed daughter-in-law's (Ruth) loyalty to and love for her mother-in-law (Naomi) (see Appendix C, Figure 14). Yet Ulster's defenders were always male, variously depicted as William III, the Apprentice Boys, Edward Carson, or members of the UVF.

The emergence of the UWUC in 1911 can be understood as part of the increased reliance and focus of Ulster unionists on local Ulster resources and the emerging "mass politics" of the late 1800s and early 1900s, as is discussed in the following chapters.

Unionists in the north of Ireland sought to formalize and institutionalize the involvement of local groups that had not previously been a formal part of the unionist movement, but that supported it (such as women of all classes and working-class men). The gender-segregated institutions of Ulster unionism clearly constituted different roles for women and men within Ulster, yet both were critical in constituting and illustrating to Irish nationalists and the British government that they were a *people*, not only men, unified against Home Rule.

TOWARDS PARTITION: 1914 TO 1922

World War I and the Battle of the Somme

World War I, as already discussed, called "time" on the Ulster Crisis as unionists across Ireland, but especially in Ulster, as well as many Irish nationalists, turned their attention to supporting the British war effort. By April 1916 unionists in Ireland and Irish

nationalists had provided over 150,000 recruits to the British army.⁵⁵⁷ Carson pledged the support of his party to the war effort. He committed Ulster troops to the British forces through the UVF, which was reconstituted as the 36th (Ulster) Division and most poignantly made its mark in 1916 during the Battle of the Somme.⁵⁵⁸

On July 1, 1916, at the start of the Somme offensive, the 36th (Ulster) Division (the main unionist fighting force on the Western Front) successfully stormed the German Front Line. However, the promised support and relief forces did not come, and the Division suffered over 5000 casualties during the first two days of the battle.⁵⁵⁹ Through this moment of nationness a mythology emerged around the 36th (Ulster) Division. Its isolation, self-reliance, and actions during the first days of the battle were constituted as symbolic of the broader situation in which *Ulstermen* found themselves. As Jackson has observed, according to such accounts of the Battle of the Somme:

the *Ulstermen* had done their duty, but in the end had fought and died on their own. Moreover, the (in fact far from complete) overlap between the Ulster Division and the Ulster Volunteer Force meant that the Division's purpose and actions were equated with those of the pre-war Unionist militants. The badges, uniforms, gallantry certificates, and (after the war) commemorative histories all emphasised the "Ulsterness" of the Division, which (however inexactly) was equated with Unionism.⁵⁶⁰

The Somme was added to the unionist catalogue of Ulster's battles and sacrifices

⁵⁵⁷ Powell 2002, 143-4.

⁵⁵⁸ Buckland 1973, 102; Walker 2004, 38.

⁵⁵⁹ Akenson 1991, 202; Fitzpatrick 2006, 61-2; Jackson 2012, 314-5; Jeffry 2000, 15, 55-8, 133; Loughlin 2007, 186; Stewart 1967, 237-42; Walker 2004, 40.

⁵⁶⁰ Jackson 2012, 314-5 (emphasis added).

throughout history. The 36th (Ulster) Division and the Somme constituted Ulster as a place apart, yet united; its men prepared to stand on their own in the face of danger.

Ulster unionist discourse constituted the Somme as Ulster's "blood sacrifice", one that it had made for "King and Country".⁵⁶¹ Such a sacrifice was constituted as *the* central masculine nation-work of the armed defence of Ulster and the Empire. It was a sacrifice that obligated future generations to honour the memory of the 36th (Ulster) Division by refusing to yield Ulster ("No Surrender"! and "Not an inch"!) to any threat to its territorial, political, and/or cultural integrity. According to such unionist discourse:

the struggle against Home Rule appeared as heroic without being bloody...the combination of threatened militancy at Larne, and the actual immolation at the Somme, had served to prepare the way for partition and for a Unionist *heimat*: the Government of Ireland Act [1920], the foundation of Northern Ireland [1922], could credibly be interpreted as a tangible reward for their political investment before and during the Great War...a logical progression between the UVF, their role on the Somme and the later struggles of Unionism.⁵⁶²

It contrasted Ulster's honourable *masculine* sacrifice at the Somme with the treachery of the Irish nationalist Easter Rising only three months earlier in April 1916.⁵⁶³

Ulster unionist discourse asserted that loyalty *not* treachery should be rewarded, and that through the 36th (Ulster) Division Ulster had demonstrated its loyalty and secured its place in the UK family.⁵⁶⁴ Carson exclaimed at an Orange Order parade on July 12,

⁵⁶¹ Akenson 1991, 202; Jeffry 2000, 15, 55-8, 133; McGaughey 2012, 100; Stewart 1967, 242.

⁵⁶² Jackson 1992, 166-7.

⁵⁶³ Walker 2004, 40.

⁵⁶⁴ Akenson 1991, 202; Loughlin 2007, 187; Stewart 1967, 242; Walker 2004, 47.

1919: “For God’s sake stop threatening us! For God’s sake recognise that we are one with you! For God’s sake admit that we have done our share and our duty in the war. Treat us as good citizens”.⁵⁶⁵ In this way the Easter Rising and the Somme fortified Irish nationalist and Ulster unionist cleavages *vis-à-vis* Home Rule and constituted radically distinct “nations” and groups of “martyrs”, though both normalized and valorized militarized masculinity.

1916-1918: negotiations

Recall that in response to the Easter Rising, the Liberal UK government held talks with the IPP and Unionists in 1916. It was agreed that Home Rule would be passed immediately for twenty-six counties (but it would not take effect until the end of the war), while six counties of Ulster would be excluded from this Dublin-based Home Rule parliament.⁵⁶⁶ An Imperial Conference would be held after the war to settle the question of the financial aspects of Home Rule administration and the issue of the time frame for which the six counties would be excluded.⁵⁶⁷ The exclusion of the six counties meant that northern unionists conceded not only their southern unionist allies, but also their unionist allies in three counties of Ulster (Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan) to the Dublin parliament. Many unionists in the south and those three counties felt betrayed and as though they had been sacrificed for the sake of a northern parliament.

⁵⁶⁵ *Belfast News-Letter*. July 14, 1919, cited in Walker 2004, 47.

⁵⁶⁶ Kee 2000, 582; Miller 2007, 123. The six counties to be excluded were: Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone (Buckland 1973, 117).

⁵⁶⁷ Stubbs 1990, 887.

As previously discussed, Redmond understood that the agreed-to exclusion of the six counties from Dublin's jurisdiction under Home Rule was provisional for the duration of the war and until a final settlement was reached. Carson, on the other hand, had secured assurance in writing from Lloyd George that this exclusion was permanent and guaranteed by the Asquith government.⁵⁶⁸ Hence by the time of the Imperial Conference in 1918 there were divergent but equally strident views regarding Home Rule and the time frame of the six counties' exclusion as negotiated and agreed to in 1916.

Joseph Fisher, former editor of the *Northern Whig*, and an Ulster propagandist, stated that:

“Noble-hearted Ulster”, which was told only a couple of years ago that it held the key of the situation and was urged to resist to the last ditch, is now told by the same leaders that...it takes but a narrow and selfish view of the question: and instead of standing fast to save the empire, it must ...surrender to save the party. And the reason assigned in proof of the proposition that what was reasonable in 1916 is unreasonable in 1918...is that we are at a crisis in the war and that Ulster must now embrace Home Rule because the empire is in danger.⁵⁶⁹

By the end of the war in 1918, however, things had changed again. An official at the Central Office noted that “the one thing on which we are all united is that in any Home Rule proposal, the safe-guarding of Ulster is essential”.⁵⁷⁰ Dublin and Belfast would both have Home Rule parliaments. The Ulster unionist constitution of a culturally, religiously,

⁵⁶⁸ Kee 2000, 583; Powell 2002, 136, 143; Stubbs 1990, 887.

⁵⁶⁹ J. R. Fisher. “Ulster and the Irish Angle”. *Nineteenth Century*, lxxxii, Jan-June 1918, p. 1088, cited in Buckland 1973, 111.

⁵⁷⁰ House of Lords Records Office. *Bonar Law Papers* (83/3/11). Younger to Davidson (Private Secretary to Law). May 3, 1918, cited in Stubbs 1990, 891.

and politically distinct Ulster with the right of self-determination had succeeded.

Partition

The negotiated settlement reached in 1918 made partition seem inevitable. Then the Anglo-Irish War (1919-1921) erupted on the heels of World War I. The *Government of Ireland Act* (1920) ended the Anglo-Irish War. However, it was not implemented in the south of Ireland due to a schism amongst Irish nationalists concerning the partition of Ireland and the Oath of Allegiance to the British Crown which the new Irish parliament would be required to pledge according to the terms of the act. This rift led to the Irish Civil War (1922-1923), as discussed in the Chapter 3. The *Government of Ireland Act* (1920) was, however, accepted and implemented by unionists in Ulster. They used the Act's opt-out clause to exempt the six-counties from the Dublin parliament and set about establishing the Belfast parliament, while Irish nationalists were fighting each other and the Boundary Commission set about determining the final boundaries between Northern Ireland (Ulster) and the Irish Free State.

The more credibly Ulster could be constituted as institutionalized form—geographically, politically, and historically—the less likely it would be that the border would be revised by the Boundary Commission to any great degree.⁵⁷¹ James Craig, who succeeded Carson as Ulster Unionist leader in February 1921, considered it important to establish the Belfast parliament while Ireland was in turmoil. That way any further attempts to address the “Irish Question” would have to deal with the reality of a Unionist

⁵⁷¹ Loughlin 2007, 190.

and Protestant controlled government of Northern Ireland. This would make it much more difficult for the British government to renege on its commitment to partition or for Irish nationalists to make claims to the territory under the control of the Belfast parliament.⁵⁷²

Ireland was partitioned and the process of institutionalizing Ulster advanced, although this was not without challenges. As Jackson has observed:

The celebrants of Ulster had won a form of homeland, even if the newly minted “Northern Ireland”...did not do justice to the intensity of their historical and political vision...[yet] “Ulster” came at a cost: over half a million dissatisfied and vulnerable [Irish] Nationalists were trapped within the new Unionist polity, while Ulster Unionism had effectively cast off one third of its provincial identity (three Ulster counties were excluded from “Northern Ireland”), as well as the whole of “southern” Unionism.⁵⁷³

This created the institutional structures and the social and economic conditions for the approximately three decades-long conflict (the “Troubles”) in Northern Ireland at the end of the twentieth century.

The first Northern Ireland parliamentary election took place in the context of the violence, insecurity, and intimidation both of the Civil War and the Boundary Commission, which threatened to alter the boundary between Ulster and the Free State agreed to in the 1920 *Government of Ireland Act*. In spite of this, the voter turn-out was approximately eighty-nine percent. Unionists won forty seats, the constitutionalist Irish nationalist party, the IPP, won six seats, and the remaining six seats went to Sinn Féin (a

⁵⁷² Loughlin 2007, 190; Walker 2004, 47.

⁵⁷³ Jackson 2012, 315.

militant Irish nationalist political party).⁵⁷⁴ Northern Ireland, then, was founded *not* in a context of security, but when Ulster unionists felt in danger and under threat. A siege mentality continued to dominate Ulster unionist domopolitics. “Ulster Unionism...identified preservation with control of its own affairs...[It] prioritized its own security which in practice meant that of the Protestant community whose political project it functioned as to a considerable extent”.⁵⁷⁵ Within this context of continuing insecurity, militarized masculinity prevailed in terms of masculine gender norms, while marriage, motherhood, and the private spheres of home and family predominated *vis-à-vis* feminine gender norms, as we shall see in Chapter 6.

Some have asserted that the eventual acceptance of partition by Ulster unionists was premised on the logic that “devolution would be safe in their hands and partition would give Protestants an unassailable demographic and economic advantage within their own territory”.⁵⁷⁶ This argument appears to affirm the claim that the main priority of Ulster unionists’ was to consolidate Protestant political and economic power rather than to defend civil and religious liberties, since they largely accepted partition against the protestations of abandonment by unionists in the rest of Ireland and the fears of Irish nationalists in Ulster. Moreover, it was *male* Protestant political and economic power which was secured in the new parliament.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁴ Walker 2004, 57.

⁵⁷⁵ Walker 2004, 47.

⁵⁷⁶ Fitzpatrick 2006, 33.

⁵⁷⁷ Fitzpatrick 2006, 33.

As sociologist Rosemary Sales has observed, the unionist Protestant hegemony in Northern Ireland (Ulster) made it difficult for Protestant or unionist women to challenge “the authority of ‘their’ state and political leaders” since to do so was constituted as being “disloyal” to Ulster and the Belfast parliament.⁵⁷⁸ Moreover, the issue of suffrage for women was deemed too divisive to address. As with the experience of Irish nationalist suffragists discussed in Chapter 3, unity amongst unionists against Home Rule and in the interests of Ulster meant that Ulster unionists who were also suffragists were often forced to choose *either* the unionist *or* the suffrage cause (more of which later). Ulster unionism made no room for the question of women’s suffrage on the grounds that it would divide unionists, just as many suffragists considered those not singularly committed to the suffrage movement to be traitors to that cause.⁵⁷⁹ Consequently, issues related to gender in terms of political rights (such as the franchise), access to paid work and equal pay, as well as reproductive rights (such as access to birth control), which affected women in particular, were shunted to the back-burner in terms of establishing this new entity of Northern Ireland born in the midst of insecurity and civil strife, and under real (and perceived) threats by Irish nationalists from within Ulster and without.⁵⁸⁰

Although the Belfast parliament was subordinate to Westminster, partition gave it powers over education, agriculture, local government, law and order, health and social services, the appointment of magistrates and judges, and minor taxation. Northern Ireland

⁵⁷⁸ Sales 1997b, 141.

⁵⁷⁹ Murphy 1993, 1009, 1010-13.

⁵⁸⁰ Sales 1997b, 141; Ward 1995c, 140-4.

would send twelve MPs to Westminster, although it was agreed that Westminster would not discuss any business related to Northern Ireland.⁵⁸¹ Hence the Belfast parliament had effective control and authority over Northern Irish affairs. This was evident in one of the most significant acts of the first Belfast parliament. After the first general election in Northern Ireland in 1921, it abolished the proportional representation electoral system which had been stipulated by the *Government of Ireland Act* (1920) in order to ensure fair parliamentary representation of the religious and political cleavages in Northern Ireland. Proportional representation was replaced with the first-past-the-post electoral system that was in use in the rest of the UK. Although Westminster expressed its displeasure at this move, it did not interfere. This signaled to Unionists that Ulster (and they) would be “left alone”.⁵⁸²

Given that Protestants outnumbered Catholics by a ratio of approximately two to one in Northern Ireland, this change in the electoral system significantly affected the outcome of future elections and ensured Unionist domination of the Belfast parliament. The practice of gerrymandering electoral districts, especially in border areas (and notoriously in Londonderry), further ensured Unionist and Protestant political domination, particularly in municipal politics. Political control, particularly of municipal and rural district councils, was important since, as the role of government increased over time, local councils controlled the access to council-housing, jobs, education, and the

⁵⁸¹ Buckland 1979, 2-4; Walker 2004, 58.

⁵⁸² Buckland 1979, 268-75; Ruane & Todd 2000, 118-20; Urquhart 2001, 124; Walker 2004, 56. The proportional representation system was first abolished in county and municipal elections in Northern Ireland in 1922 and in 1929 for the general election in Ulster (Urquhart 2001, 124).

provision of many social services.⁵⁸³ To recall, since the franchise was tied to being a ratepayer, the creation of house-owners created voters; thus control over housing and who was a ratepayer was vital to attaining and retaining power.⁵⁸⁴

The opening of the Northern Irish parliament in 1921 by King George V was a major occasion of public celebration. When the new parliament building at Stormont, just outside of Belfast, was opened in 1932, it was the embodiment of Carson's wishes that "there must be a dignity about our Parliament...so that no opponents at any time dare come forward and say of that great structure...that it is only a small affair, and we can easily sweep it to one side".⁵⁸⁵ Built in an imposing classical-style with a lavish interior, the parliament building was set on a hill, approached by a long wide avenue, with a large statue of Carson in a defiant pose in front of it.⁵⁸⁶ The building constituted Ulster: strong, dignified, and modern yet traditional. Even the site of the parliament constituted it as Protestant, not just according to Ulster unionist discourse, but also Irish nationalist discourse. One Irish nationalist publication described the Stormont parliament site as "rooted in a dishonorable past" since its ownership had been traced to a Protestant cleric who had been involved in the suppression of the 1798 Rising.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸³ Akenson 1991, 198-200; Buckland 1979, 20-3, 25, 150-75, 179-205, 206-220, 221-46, 247-65, 266-8.

⁵⁸⁴ Akenson 1991, 200.

⁵⁸⁵ *Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates* (Hansard), *House of Commons*, vol. 1, col. 174, cited in Mansergh 1991, 248-9.

⁵⁸⁶ Loughlin 2007, 190; Ruane & Todd 2000, 181; Stewart 1967, 242.

⁵⁸⁷ XQ. *The Truth About Stormont: Full Facts and Figures Showing the Cost of Setting Up and Running the Partition Parliament and Administrative Machine of the Government of Northern Ireland* (Belfast, 1933), 5-6, cited in Loughlin 2007, 192.

The new security force further illustrated the political and social dominance of unionists and Protestants in Northern Ireland. The Ulster Special Constabulary (or the “Specials”), which was established in 1920 to protect Ulster from incursions by the IRA, was largely composed of Protestants. Hence it was regarded by many Irish nationalists and Catholics within Ulster as a Protestant and unionist security force. This sense that law and order in Northern Ireland was intended to protect Protestant and unionist interests was reinforced when the police force of Northern Ireland (the Royal Ulster Constabulary, or RUC) was established in 1922. It was over ninety percent Protestant in composition, thus fuelling the sense that the RUC was a police force geared to the security of Protestants and unionists.⁵⁸⁸ Unionist and Protestant power and domination of the Belfast parliament, local councils, and provincial police force enabled the institutionalization of discriminatory practices related to law and order, access to housing, social services, education, and employment. This gave rise to grievances that eventually found expression in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and led to the “Troubles”.⁵⁸⁹

The institutionalized Ulster unionist discourse, rituals, and symbols throughout the Ulster Crisis, World War I, and period of negotiation for a settlement of the Anglo-Irish War constituted Ulster as a distinct entity politically and culturally and, hence, as

⁵⁸⁸ Akenson 1991, 201; Buckland 1979, 20-3, 179-205; Kaufmann 2009, 298; Kennedy-Pipe 1997, 81; McGaughey 2012, 173; Nelson 1984, 88-9; Ruane & Todd 2000, 140; Tonge 2006, 84; Walker 2004, 56. One third of the positions in the RUC were allocated for Catholics, but this was never achieved, in part because recruitment of Catholics proved difficult due to the widespread perception amongst Catholics that the RUC was a police force for Protestants (Akenson 1991, 201). By 1936 out of a total force of 2,849, only 488 RUC members were Catholic, and a total of nine Catholic officers held the rank of district inspector and higher (Buckland 1979, 21). It is estimated that the percentage of Catholics in the RUC never exceeded twelve percent from its inception in 1922 (Darby 1997, 108).

⁵⁸⁹ Miller 2007, 131; Ruane & Todd 2000, 118-20, 124; Walker 2004, 56.

deserving of the right to self-determination as the rest of Ireland. If maintaining the union of all of Ireland with Great Britain was *not* attainable due to the strength of support for Irish independence, then Ulster unionists and Protestants would concede to a Belfast parliament under their control as a counterweight to the Catholic and Irish nationalist dominated Dublin parliament.⁵⁹⁰

CONCLUSION

Ulster unionism did not come into its own as a distinct, organized, and institutionalized movement until the emergence of the UUC and the UWUC in 1905 and 1911 respectively. This was the period when unionism in Ulster relied increasingly on local Ulster resources, organizations, and support. Ulster was constituted through Ulster unionist discourse during this period as distinct from the rest of Ireland. Propaganda, symbols, rituals, poetry, popular fiction, and accounts of Ulster history of the period constituted the Ulster people (particularly the ideals of the *Ulsterman* and the *Belfast Man*) and imbued them with particular gendered characteristics, as well as a common history and cultural ties to the rest of the UK. Ulster unionism emerged in this period of “mass politics” and covered over, but also simultaneously incorporated class and gender cleavages into a broad movement through class- and gender-specific unionist institutions such as the UULA, the UWUC, and the Orange Order, as well as the male-dominated UUC. These distinct and segregated institutions constituted gender and class cleavages

⁵⁹⁰ Miller 2007, 124; Ruane & Todd 2000, 91.

within Ulster; yet they also constituted and institutionalized common aims and goals of the Ulster *people* that drew attention away from the power inequalities of gender, class, and religion within Ulster unionism.

The emergence of a formalized and institutionalized Ulster through unionist institutions and their discourses, rituals, and symbols laid the ground work for partition in 1920. Jackson has argued that partition was the logical outcome of the Ulster unionist movement and its increasing isolation from both Conservatives in Great Britain and Unionists in the south of Ireland.⁵⁹¹ “Once Unionism had become geographically more specific, once it abandoned its claim to reject Home Rule for all of Ireland, the opportunity emerged to recognise through a political border the emotional and institutional boundary which already divided Ulster Unionists from southern Unionists and from most Irish Nationalists... Unionist principle mattered less and ‘Ulster’ mattered more”.⁵⁹² Thus cleavages of gender, class and Protestant denomination amongst Ulster unionists were to be sidelined in the interests of securing and safeguarding power for Ulster unionists and Protestants in a new Belfast parliament.

In the following chapters, the emergence of the UWUC within this broader Ulster unionist movement is explored and set against the key historical events of this period: the Ulster Crisis, World War I, the partition of Ireland, and the women’s suffrage movement in the UK and Ireland. Since the issue of class cleavages of Ulster unionism has been very ably addressed in other studies the following chapters focus chiefly on the gender norms

⁵⁹¹ Jackson 1994, 45.

⁵⁹² Jackson 1994, 45.

and gendered constitution of Ulster through the UWUC although, as discussed in Chapter 1, future research on the class cleavages as they relate to the UWUC is important.⁵⁹³

⁵⁹³ See: Bew et. al 1996; Gibbon 1975; Jackson 2012, 2003, 1994, 1992, 1989; Patterson 1980; Ruane & Todd 2000; Shirlow & McGovern 1997.

Chapter 5

“Both Peeress and Peasant”

There was no divergence of opinion or of sympathy between the two sexes in Ulster on the question of Union or Home Rule; and the women who everywhere attended the meetings in large numbers were no idle sightseers—though they were certainly hero-worshippers of the Ulster leader—but a genuine political force to be taken into account.

(McNeill 1922, 113)

INTRODUCTION

As was noted earlier, particular institutions such as state bureaucracies, political parties, and political organizations such as the UWUC deploy discourse in order to constitute the nation as practical category, institutionalized form, and through particular moments of nationness. However, such discourse is contested; hence the need for an institution to discipline the nation through its declared norms, rules of membership, goals, rites, rituals, and practices, which serve not only to discipline, but in doing so to constitute the nation.

This chapter examines the gendered and institutionalized constitution of Ulster through the nation-work of the UWUC from the year of its establishment in 1911 to partition in 1920-1921. This chapter explores the Ulster Crisis (1912-1914), World War I, the enfranchisement of women in the UK, and partition as important moments of nationness and significant to the nation-work, aims, goals, and norms of membership of the UWUC. It begins with a discussion of the founding of the UWUC, its norms of membership, rituals, traditions, and its deployment of the unionist discourse of Ulster as practical category. It then examines the Ulster Crisis and the nation-work and discourse of the UWUC related to its opposition to Home Rule. Finally, it explores the UWUC's

nation-work during World War I and in the years leading up to partition, as well as how the UWUC addressed the issue of women's suffrage. For many Ulster unionists partition resolved the thorny question of Home Rule, which meant that the singular purpose of the UWUC no longer existed after partition. This forced the UWUC to reevaluate its purpose, aims, and goals during the 1920s, which shifted to a concentration on the constitution of a "Protestant parliament and Protestant state"⁵⁹⁴ of Ulster (Northern Ireland), a discussion of which will be the focus of Chapter 6.

Meanwhile, in the present chapter, it will be demonstrated that the UWUC and its members were "no idle sightseers" with respect to nation-work and these significant moments of nationness. The UWUC was very involved in constituting Ulster through its deployment of Ulster unionist domopolitics, discourse, and symbols; its norms of membership, practices and rituals, and opposition to Home Rule; as well as its election, fundraising, and war work.

It has already been demonstrated that the period from the 1880s to the 1920s was one of great political and social upheaval and tension for both Ireland and the United Kingdom. Key issues of the time included the three Home Rule Bills including the Ulster Crisis of 1912-1914, World War I, and women's suffrage. Recall that the UK government introduced the third Home Rule Bill in 1912, which precipitated the Ulster Crisis.

During the debates related to Home Rule in the late 1800s and early 1900s many unionists and Protestants in Ulster feared that their religious and civil rights and liberties

⁵⁹⁴ Sir James Craig, Lord Craigavan, first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. *Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates* (Hansard), *House of Commons*, vol 2, cols 1091, 1095, cited in Farrell 1980, 92.

would be lost in a Catholic-dominated Home Rule Dublin-based parliament. Such fears were strengthened when in 1908 Pope Pius X issued the *Ne Temere* decree, which declared any marriage between a Protestant and Catholic null and void if not sanctioned by the Catholic Church and that any children from these marriages must be raised as Catholics.⁵⁹⁵ This provided further validation of Ulster unionist fears, since in response to the decree, there was a well publicized case in 1910 in Belfast (the McCann case) in which a (Catholic) man left his (Protestant) wife and took their children with him using the *Ne Temere* decree as justification for his actions.⁵⁹⁶ This reinforced the Ulster unionist and anti-Home Rule argument (espoused by the UWUC and its members) that the rights and liberties of Protestants and unionists as a political and religious minority in Ireland would be threatened under a Dublin-based and Catholic-dominated Home Rule parliament.⁵⁹⁷ This was central to Ulster unionist domopolitics, which constituted Ulster and the British, Protestant, Loyal “us” in contradistinction to the Irish, Catholic, disloyal, nationalist “other”.

Many unionist and Protestant women, particularly, considered the *Ne Temere* decree and the McCann case to be direct attacks on their primary role (and rights) as mothers. At the inaugural meeting of the UWUC in 1911, Mrs. Allan of Lurgan referred to the case of Mrs. McCann and *Ne Temere* in speaking in support of the establishment of the UWUC and against Home Rule. She stated: “If under existing British laws an act

⁵⁹⁵ Bardon 2007, 406; Boyce & O’Day 2001, 62; Edwards 2000, 301; Jackson 2003, 110-1; Urquhart 2001, 7; Walker 2004, 26.

⁵⁹⁶ Boyce & O’Day 2001, 166-7; Edwards 2000, 301; Jackson 2003, 110-1; Stewart 1967, 43-4; Urquhart 2001, 7.

⁵⁹⁷ Boyce & O’Day 2001, 166-7; Edwards 2000, 301; Jackson 2003, 110-1; Walker 2004, 26.

could be committed such as had taken place recently in Belfast, what hope was there for the sanctity of their homes when Ireland would be under the heel of a foreign priest? Surely there was not a Unionist woman in Ireland but must feel keenly the awful calamity that had befallen the poor woman in Belfast robbed of her two little children”.⁵⁹⁸ Clearly the domopolitics of Ulster unionism constituted the third Home Rule Bill as a serious threat to unionists and Protestants, and it was deemed by many to have a particular impact on unionist and Protestant women. In light of the isolation Unionist MPs from Ulster increasingly felt within Westminster and the intensified threat of Home Rule a more organized unionist structure in Ulster was deemed vital (as discussed in Chapter 4).⁵⁹⁹ As a result, the men-only UUC and the women’s UWUC were established in 1905 and 1911 respectively.⁶⁰⁰

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 temporarily halted, but did not resolve the Ulster Crisis. The war was a moment of nationness, which provided Ulster (according to unionist discourse) the opportunity to demonstrate its loyalty to “King and Country” through the military service of the men of the 36th (Ulster) Division, and the financial and emotional support that women in Ulster provided Ulster’s fighting men and their families largely through the UWUC.

At the same time, simultaneous to World War I an increasingly organized movement in the UK demanded suffrage for women. The passage of the *Representation*

⁵⁹⁸ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 24, 1911; *Northern Whig*. January 24, 1911.

⁵⁹⁹ Fitzpatrick 2006, 13, 19; Jackson 1990, 842; Urquhart 2001, 22; Walsh 2002, 28.

⁶⁰⁰ Fitzpatrick 2006, 9; Urquhart 2001, xii-xiii.

of the People Act in 1918 granted suffrage to women who were over thirty years of age.⁶⁰¹ This imbued the work of the UWUC with greater weight, since it could claim to be the voice of a new group of unionist voters. Moreover, as will be demonstrated below, the partial enfranchisement of women made the Council's nation-work of maintaining the electoral registers increasingly significant since its members and supporters formed a large part of this new group of voters and had to be registered for future elections.⁶⁰² First, though, the emergence of the UWUC and its norms of membership, goals, and rituals are examined.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE UWUC

Ulster as institutionalized and feminine form

To comprehend Ulster unionism's constitution of Ulster as institutionalized and gendered form, as well as the UWUC's practical nation-work and its aims and goals one must first understand how the UWUC constituted Ulster through its norms of membership, rituals, and practices. These were also nation-work in the sense that they constituted Ulster as British, Loyal, and Protestant, as well as gendered in important ways, reproducing the social hierarchies and dichotomies so central to Ulster unionist domopolitics (British/Irish; Protestant/Catholic; Loyal/disloyal; male/female), as discussed earlier.

⁶⁰¹ Owens 2005, 5; Urquhart 2001, xix; Urquhart 1994, 107.

⁶⁰² Urquhart 2001, xix; Urquhart 1994, 107.

Men and women, according to unionist discourse and domopolitics, had distinct roles to play in Ulster; therefore, it should not be surprising that distinct gender-segregated institutions, such as the UUC and the UWUC, emerged. The increasing militarization of Ulster unionism throughout the 1910s and the norms of male privilege and obligation with respect to nation that it intensified (discussed in earlier chapters) was the context in which the UWUC was established. The UWUC afforded women the ability to work together “in a more systematic and coordinated political campaign” for Ulster and unionism.⁶⁰³

Women had earlier been involved in opposing the two Home Rule Bills in the late 1800s.⁶⁰⁴ The *Belfast News-Letter* reported in June 1892 that “it was a happy thought on the part of the Unionist ladies of Belfast to organise a conversazione [sic], to be held at the Ulster Hall on the evening prior to the [Ulster Unionist] Convention” to which “a...distinguished company assembled last night”.⁶⁰⁵ The article described the venue. “Easy chairs were arranged in convenient positions throughout the room. Tea was provided...[and] appropriate mottoes were displayed along the front of the balconies: ‘Keep our noble kingdom whole’... ‘One with England, heart and soul, one life, one flag, one fleet, one throne’, ‘British freedom, British laws, and British citizenship’, and ‘In union is our strength and freedom’”.⁶⁰⁶ A petition opposing the second Home Rule Bill

⁶⁰³ Fitzpatrick 2006, 19; Urquhart 2001, xii.

⁶⁰⁴ Jackson 1990, 842, 852; Urquhart 2001, xi.

⁶⁰⁵ *Belfast News-Letter*. June 7, 1892.

⁶⁰⁶ *Belfast News-Letter*. June 7, 1892.

was signed by 20,000 women and presented to the British parliament in April 1893.⁶⁰⁷ A mass demonstration of unionist women opposing the second Home Rule Bill in Armagh in June 1893 was dubbed the “shrieking sisters” of unionism by local Irish nationalists.⁶⁰⁸ In addition, approximately 1000 women in Strabane, 1700 in Omagh, and 500 in Raphoe demonstrated against the bill, illustrating the extent of women’s unionist activism at the time in Ulster.⁶⁰⁹

To recall, throughout the 1910s and 1920s the UUC constituted the Ulster people (or at least *Ulstermen*) and tied those people to a particular territory (Ulster) in a way which made Unionist politicians in Ulster accountable to a local authority as never before, and constituted a unionism which not only excluded the south of Ireland, but also England.⁶¹⁰ A similar process occurred within the UWUC in the same period. Through its norms and rules of membership the UWUC strove to be representative of every constituency, region, and class, thereby similarly constituting Ulster (or at least *Ulsterwomen*) through its membership. The *Belfast News-Letter* reported that at the inaugural meeting of the UWUC held on January 23, 1911, Edith Mercier Clements (Assistant Honorary Treasurer of the UWUC from 1911 to 1920) exclaimed that both “peeress and the peasant would be represented” within the Council and that its work

⁶⁰⁷ Urquhart 2001, xii.

⁶⁰⁸ Jackson 1990, 852.

⁶⁰⁹ Urquhart 2001, xii.

⁶¹⁰ Jackson 1994, 43.

would include the “education of the working class”.⁶¹¹

During the first month of the UWUC’s existence in 1911, over 4000 women joined the West Belfast Branch (believed to be comprised primarily of working-class women, although this cannot be corroborated as its membership books are not available for review).⁶¹² By the end of 1911 the UWUC had a collective Ulster-wide membership of 40,000 to 50,000.⁶¹³ By 1913, its membership was estimated at between 115,000 and 200,000; and it had thirty-two associations spread over every constituency in all nine counties of Ulster (twenty-one of which were paired with women’s unionist organizations in England), making it the largest women’s political association at the time in Ireland.⁶¹⁴ (By comparison, the membership of *Cumann na mBan*, an Irish nationalist women’s organization, was approximately 4425, while an estimated 3500 women were involved in the suffrage movement in Ireland.)⁶¹⁵

The strength of the UWUC membership numbers and the fact that its membership spanned all nine counties of the historic province of Ulster during this period illustrates

⁶¹¹ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 24, 1911.

⁶¹² Accounts from the period under investigation in this study make clear that west Belfast was a largely working-class area. One of the earliest chroniclers of Ulster unionism, Ronald McNeill, claimed that one west Belfast branch was comprised of approximately eighty percent “mill workers and shop girls”; he further asserted that “no women were so vehement in their support of the Loyalist cause as the factory workers” (McNeill 1922, 37, 113). Lady Spender recorded in her diary that the West Belfast Regiment of the UVF was in “the slummiest part of Belfast” and its men were “of a lower class than the others” [PRONI. *Lillian Spender Diary* (D 1633/2/19), May 6, 1914, cited in McGaughey 2012, 65]. Lillian Spender was married to Wilfrid Spender, one of the key organizers within the UVF, and was part of the Ulster élite (Bowman 2007, 80-1, 165, 192; McGaughey 2012, 32; Stewart 1969, 85-6; Urquhart 2000, 54).

⁶¹³ Urquhart 2001, xi, xiii; Urquhart 1994, 97.

⁶¹⁴ Kinghan 1975, 14; Urquhart 2007, 110; Urquhart 2001, xi, xiii; Urquhart 1996, 32; Urquhart 1994, 97, 101.

⁶¹⁵ Urquhart 1996, 32.

the fact that the discourse of Ulster advanced by the UWUC spoke to a large number of women across Ulster (not only to a particular class or region). Through such membership and its claims to speak for “the women of Ulster” the UWUC constituted Ulster. The structure of the organization also constituted gender and class norms. Its leadership was drawn from the Ulster aristocracy, and the women who held these positions in this period were frequently the “wife of” a prominent member of the UUC.⁶¹⁶ Hence the UWUC has often been cast as a conservative, aristocrat-dominated institution. Historian, David Fitzpatrick, has characterized the UWUC as “more reactionary than its male counterpart”.⁶¹⁷ (The class dimension of Ulster unionism is an area about which much has been written;⁶¹⁸ however, it is an area around which future research could be undertaken, particularly in terms of how class intersected with nation and gender norms. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to provide such an analysis.)

The UWUC’s declared singular goal of maintaining “the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland” (around which all members were united, so the UWUC claimed) meant that in the early 1910s Home Rule was a central and tangible issue around which it quickly galvanized members and organized its nation-work.

⁶¹⁶ For example, the 6th and 7th Marchionesses of Londonderry (Theresa and Edith), the 2nd and 3rd Duchesses of Abercorn, the Dowager Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, Lady Carson, and Lady Craig (later Viscountess of Craigavon) held the position of President and/or Vice-President in the UWUC. Other titled women, such as the Marchioness of Hamilton, the Marchioness of Ely, and the Countesses of Shaftsbury, Leitrim, Kilmorey, Ranfurly, and Erne held leadership positions in the local associations of the Council. Much of the Ulster aristocracy had estates in both Great Britain and Ulster. As a result, they were often absent from their estates in Ulster, spending a great deal of time in Great Britain on their other estates. Hence they not only had the financial means to flee Ulster, but also had another home to go to during times of violence, unlike the less economically privileged in Ulster. Furthermore, they had social networks in the rest of the UK which tied them socially, politically, economically, and culturally to Great Britain.

⁶¹⁷ Fitzpatrick 2006, 36.

⁶¹⁸ See: Gibbon 1975; Patterson 1980; Ruane & Todd 2000.

The UWUC and the discourse of Ulster: British, Loyal, Protestant

The constitution of British, Loyal, and Protestant Ulster identity discursively, symbolically, as well as through norms, rituals, practices, aims, and goals is explored here in relation to the UWUC. The way in which this Ulster identity was connected to norms of femininity in contrast to the norms of masculinity (discussed in Chapter 4) is then reviewed in a discussion of the constitution of a gendered Ulster. When it was first established the UWUC, like the UUC, deployed the predominant unionist discourse of the early 1910s which was increasingly Ulster-focused: that is, nine counties that were part of an Ireland that in turn was part of the United Kingdom since the *Act of Union* 1801. The motion that founded the UWUC, as well the Council's Constitution and the women's Declaration (to be discussed below), spoke of the triad of unionist identity: Ulster was British, but also part of Ireland; Loyal to the Protestant British Crown; and Loyal to the Protestant faiths.⁶¹⁹ (As will be demonstrated later in this chapter and the next, the UWUC's discourse and constitution of Ulster evolved, just as that of the UUC did, as Ulster unionists increasingly accepted partition and a six-county Ulster as the "best" option for Ulster's "people".)

This discourse shaped the UWUC's membership rules, practices, and rituals. Its meetings began with the hymn *O God Our Help in Ages Past* (which reflected a sense that Ulster had a covenant with God) and ended with the singing of *God Save the King* (which constituted Ulster as British and Loyal). In addition, every meeting included the

⁶¹⁹ Fitzpatrick 2006, 24; Stanbridge 2005, 25.

recitation of a pledge to only discuss the issue of the maintenance of Ireland's political and economic ties with Great Britain. The following analysis will show that this discourse of Ulster (and its gender norms) shaped the nation-work that the UWUC undertook in furtherance of its aims and goals with respect to opposing Home Rule, fundraising, education, election, and war work.

Preserving the political and economic union of Great Britain and Ireland was the singular purpose of the UWUC and the basis of unity among Ulster unionists. The establishment of the UWUC was intended to provide a formalized and institutionalized vehicle through which unionist women could dedicate themselves to that singular goal, which was so critical in constituting this Ulster unionist identity. The motion that founded the UWUC made this clear. It stated:

Having arrived at a serious crisis in our Nation's [sic] history, we believe it to be the duty of the women of Ulster to form themselves into an Association [sic] to be named the Ulster Women's Unionist Association, having for its object the maintenance of the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, on the unimpaired integrity of which we believe our civil and religious liberties depend. Realising the supreme importance of united effort, we pledge ourselves [a] to use our personal influence in our own neighbourhood so that in every constituency in Ulster we may have a band of united Unionist workers and, [b] to put forth our best efforts to enlist for our cause the sympathy and help of our sisters in England and Scotland, who stood by us so nobly in previous struggles.⁶²⁰

Ulster, according to such discourse, was politically, culturally, and economically connected to Great Britain—not a distinctly independent Irish state. Lady Theresa Londonderry, the 6th Marchioness of Londonderry (and President of UWUC from 1913 to

⁶²⁰ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 24, 1911.

1919),⁶²¹ echoed this sentiment in a letter to the UWUC in January 1919, in which she declared that the UWUC had been established “to express the feelings of the people of Ulster who have fought with every means in their power to remain associated with England... We banded ourselves together to see how we might best organise ourselves to impress upon our fellow countrymen in England with the fact that Ulster will not consent to the tearing asunder of this country... since the union she [Ireland] has prospered commercially in every way”.⁶²² Central to this singular purpose of the UWUC was the constitution of the triad Ulster identity.

Recall that the unionist discourse of a British Ulster identity (hence the UWUC’s desire to maintain Ulster’s political and economic ties with Great Britain) was tied to a Protestant religious identity, which, according to such discourse, was best protected by a predominantly Protestant, British parliament, rather than a majority Catholic-dominated independent Irish parliament. This was institutionalized in the 1911 Constitution of the UWUC, which stated that the Council’s objectives were:

to secure the maintenance in its integrity of the Legislative Union [sic]

⁶²¹ Lady Theresa Londonderry, the 6th Marchioness Londonderry, was the daughter of the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury. Her father was a Conservative MP. He took her to both the House of Commons and House of Lords as a child, which instilled in her a life-long interest in politics. Her mother entertained Disraeli and other prominent politicians at the family home. In 1875 Theresa married into one of the most prominent Anglo-Irish families when she wed Charles Vane-Tempest-Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, the son of the 5th Marquess and Marchioness of Londonderry. Charles was Viceroy of Ireland from 1886 to 1889. Theresa counted several Prime Ministers and Cabinet Ministers, as well as Walter Long (Chief Secretary of Ireland), Sir Edward Carson, the Prince and Princess of Wales (later King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra), and the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George V and Queen Mary) as friends. As one of the preeminent political hostesses of her time, and a friend of prominent politicians and society figures, she exerted significant political influence in her own right (Urquhart 2007, 76-9; 83-90).

⁶²² PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 28, 1919, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 192-3.

between Great Britain and Ireland, and for this purpose to resist all proposals, of whatever kind they may be, which have for their object the establishment of any form of an Irish Parliament. It is a fundamental principle of this Council that no other subject other than the above shall be dealt with by the Council, it being understood that all other questions, in which individual members may be specially interested, shall be subordinated to the single issue of the maintenance of the Legislative Union.⁶²³

This discourse understood an Irish parliament to be Catholic because of the demographics of Ireland.

During the UWUC's inaugural meeting, Cecil Craig (future President of the UWUC) echoed this discourse and constitution of an Ulster versus Irish identity. She declared that she "was sure that all those present, while earnestly praying that things might never come to actual conflict, knew that if Nationalists [read Catholics] were in any way given control of the loyal minority dreadful things would come to pass...[and that] their [Irish nationalists'] desire for self-government was based on the wish to have control of Ulster, but Ulster would never submit".⁶²⁴ Miss A. W. Richardson of Moyallon, County Down also equated Nationalist with Catholic. She stated: "There were individual Roman Catholics for whom [she] personally had a warm affection and respect. But for Nationalist [sic] politics and its influence on civic life in Ireland [she] had no respect at

⁶²³ PRONI. *Draft Constitution of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council* (D 1098/1/3). January 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 215.

⁶²⁴ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 24, 1911; *Northern Whig*. January 24, 1911.

all”.⁶²⁵ This integration of political and religious identity in Ulster unionist discourse is further evident in the popular refrain that Home Rule would be “Rome Rule”.⁶²⁶

The singular focus of the UWUC was further institutionalized through its practice of forbidding members to discuss any other issue but Home Rule. This rule highlights the contested and unstable nature of Ulster based on cleavages of class, religious denomination, views on women’s rights, and conservative versus liberal ideologies, as well as the disciplining role that institutions such as the UWUC played in terms of the way in which they constituted Ulster through norms and rituals. The UWUC issued cards to its members on which was written a pledge to only discuss “the maintenance of the Legislative Union”. This pledge was read out in a ritualistic manner at every meeting of the UWUC.⁶²⁷

The UWUC took the institutionalization of its focus on this singular issue even further by writing to other political associations to inform them of this limitation on its members, which the Council apparently considered went beyond UWUC meetings.⁶²⁸ The Executive Committee of the UWUC sent the following response to the request of the Women’s Amalgamated Unionist and Tariff Reform Association (WAUTRA) to have some members of the UWUC come to England to speak on Home Rule:

⁶²⁵ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 24, 1911; *Northern Whig*. January 24, 1911.

⁶²⁶ McGaughey 2012, 35, 39.

⁶²⁷ Urquhart 2001, xv.

⁶²⁸ Urquhart 2001, xv.

As we understand that our members are being asked to speak solely on the question of Home Rule we have much pleasure in accepting the invitation extended to us by your association and shall be glad to work with you on the same lines as in 1893⁶²⁹... We hope that your Committee will be most careful when advertising any of our speakers to make it quite clear that they are concerned solely with the question of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland and with nothing else... as aforesaid under our Constitution we are precluded from touching any other subject.⁶³⁰

It was, according to the UWUC, necessary to discipline Ulster, meaning to constitute and reinscribe its boundaries and to tame threats against it both from within and without, not only by imposing limitations on what its members could and could not discuss, but also by making other organizations aware of such constraints. Asserting a unified polity and thereby minimizing the potential threat of social and economic cleavages within that polity was one way to do this.

The Council's motto—"United we stand divided we fall"—illustrates both the institutionalization of this unity in purpose, and the importance of such unity.⁶³¹ In addition, the rules, norms, rituals, and aims of the UWUC instilled in its members a sense of unity based on a sense of common purpose and a shared national and religious identity of Ulster. They constituted Ulster (even though such discourse asserted that Ulster already existed) in opposition to a Catholic, Gaelic, Irish nationalist Ireland (the "Other"), which afforded Ulster (and unionist institutions such as the UWUC and the UUC) an

⁶²⁹ This refers to the work of fundraising, petitioning, and canvassing undertaken by unionist women in opposition to the second Home Rule Bill in 1893 (Urquhart 2001, 16).

⁶³⁰ PRONI. *UWUC Executive Council Minutes (ECM) 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). April 21, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 16.

⁶³¹ Kinghan 1975, 89.

internal coherence that they did not have in reality. The fact that this unity was expressly stated in the motion that founded the UWUC, as well as its Constitution and motto, was indicative of the primacy of unionist discourse of Ulster as practical category within the UWUC. Moreover, it highlights the UWUC's recognition that on other issues, its members (and supporters of Ulster unionism in general) were potentially divided, as we will see with respect to World War I, the enfranchisement of women, and the partition of Ireland. As such, the UWUC was tangible evidence of a unified Ulster: a people united across class cleavages from "peeress to peasant", but with particular duties, obligations, roles, and spheres for men as men and women as women.⁶³²

Unionist discourse of Ulster and gender

Recall from Chapter 4 that Ulster unionism through both the UUC and the UWUC constituted Ulster according to particular gender norms, as well as through discourse, symbols, practices, and rituals. In this section, the gendered constitution of Ulster through the discourse, rituals, and norms of the UWUC is explored and connected to the unionist constituted Ulster identity. The motion that founded the UWUC drew on metaphors of family (invoking the "sympathy and help of our sisters in England and Scotland"), imbuing the unionist discourse of "our Nation" with a sense of naturalness through a perceived shared kinship amongst "the people" of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England.⁶³³ It also drew on the idea of Ulster being a particular territory ("every

⁶³² Cited in Urquhart 2000, 59.

⁶³³ Kinghan 1975, 10.

constituency in Ulster”) that was simultaneously a part of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

The motion highlighted the connection between the every-day/private spheres and the public/electoral spheres, pledging its members to work in their “neighbourhoods” (the every-day/private spheres) so that every constituency (the public/electoral spheres) in Ulster would have a group of committed people working on behalf of the unionist cause. Women thus had role in the public sphere increasingly, albeit a circumscribed one. Unionist women had a role to play in neighbourhoods and communities. This was distinct from the formal political constituencies which the men-only UUC considered to be its sphere. As the self-declared “medium of...Ulster Unionist opinion” the stated purpose of the UUC was to “bring...into line all Unionist Associations [sic] in the Province of Ulster with a view to consistent and continuous political action”.⁶³⁴ According to such discourse and gender norms women and men in Ulster had distinct nation-work to do within Ulster.

The decision of who to hire as Secretary (the only paid staff of the UWUC) was a key step in the institutionalization of the UWUC within the unionist movement and further illustrated the Ulster unionist gender norms that constituted Ulster. The job posting for this position solicited applications from “gentlemen” with “practical experience of political organization”.⁶³⁵ According to the minutes of the Executive Committee, Mr. Hamill (the successful candidate) “impressed the Committee very favourably. He is 25 years of age, a strict teetotaller, a member of the Presbyterian

⁶³⁴ *Irish Times*. December 3, 1904, cited in Buckland 1973, 20-1; McNeill 1922, 36.

⁶³⁵ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). February 17, 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 8.

Church, and has a brilliant College [sic] record behind him”.⁶³⁶ The UWUC, it seemed, deemed that a male, university-educated, Protestant (and a teetotaler to boot, which reflected the dominant temperance sentiments within many Protestant Churches at the time) was the most appropriate candidate to be Secretary of the Council.

This hiring decision of the UWUC was in line with the dominant Ulster unionist gender norms during this period which constituted positions of public authority (including the management of the day-to-day operations of institutions such as the UWUC), the defence of the nation, and upholding law and order to be masculine nation-work. Motherhood—both literal and symbolic—was constituted through Ulster unionist discourse, symbols, and norms as the most significant feminine nation-work. The discourse of home and family was used by the UWUC to justify its nation-work in terms of its opposition to Home Rule. It asserted that “civic and religious liberties” were a cornerstone of the Ulster Protestant identity, and women, as mothers and promoters of the Union and the Empire within the home, had a responsibility to protect such liberties.⁶³⁷

Despite these gender-segregated spheres of nation-work the involvement of both men and women in the UVF and other Ulster unionist anti-Home Rule work (discussed below) served to underscore the significance and depth of Ulster unionist sentiments against Home Rule since it was tangible and visible evidence of a united polity, according to Ulster unionist discourse. At a meeting of unionists in west Belfast in 1913 Sir Edward Carson declared that “when you find not only your *mankind* but your *womankind* deeply

⁶³⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). Report of sub-committee re Secretary. February 27, 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 9.

⁶³⁷ Jackson 1990, 853.

moved to resistance to the imposition of tyranny...you have...in the union of the two a barrier raised up”.⁶³⁸ Similarly, Lady Theresa Londonderry asserted that the sight of women “campaigning *en masse*” through the UWUC served as a reminder “that the Government were [sic] not up against a political organization, but against a whole people”.⁶³⁹ Thus the work of both the UUC and the UWUC served an important purpose.

Home was central in the Ulster unionist domopolitics advanced by the UWUC. Many unionist women in Ulster saw it as their duty as wives and mothers to protect their homes and families (their primary spheres of activity and influence, according to Ulster unionism) from the dangers of Home Rule. As one local branch of the UWUC put it:

If our homes are not sacred from the priest under the existing laws, what can we expect from a priest-governed Ireland...Let each woman in Ulster do a woman’s part to stem the tide of Home Rule...the Union...meant everything to them—their civil and religious liberty, their homes and children...once the Union was severed there could be no outlook in Ulster but strife and bitterness...Home was a woman’s first consideration...in the event of Home Rule being granted, the sanctity and happiness of home life in Ulster would be permanently destroyed.⁶⁴⁰

Hence Ulster and *Ulsterwomen* were constituted in important ways through discourse, gender norms, symbols, and rhetoric of home and motherhood, as well as calls for women to “do their part” to protect their homes—not only their individual family homes, but also their collective home of Ulster—from the perceived threats of Home Rule. In this way, gender norms were fundamental to Ulster unionist domopolitics and Ulster and

⁶³⁸ Urquhart 1996, 34.

⁶³⁹ *Darlington and Stockton Times*. November 22, 1913, cited in Urquhart 2007, 110.

⁶⁴⁰ PRONI. *Minute Book of the Lurgan Women’s Unionist Association* (D 3790/4). May 13, 1911, cited in Urquhart 2001, xv.

Ulsterwomen were constituted through the UWUC's nation-work against Home Rule, a discussion to which I turn now.

THE UWUC AND THE ULSTER CRISIS (1912–1914)

In the following section the gendered constitution of Ulster through the nation-work of the UWUC and a particular moment of nationness—the Ulster Crisis—is examined. Since the UWUC was established to formalize and institutionalize women's opposition to Home Rule in Ulster it should not be surprising that the UWUC was extremely busy during the Ulster Crisis. Within approximately one year of the establishment of the UWUC the third Home Rule Bill was introduced in the UK parliament, ramping up mobilization in Ulster against Home Rule. The UWUC took on key nation-work in opposition to Home Rule through the administration of the Ulster unionist electoral registers, lobbying, missions, fundraising, education, and ritual and rhetoric, as well as organizing events for women on Ulster Day in 1912.

Drawing on the discourse of the British family and Ulster's place within it, the UWUC objected to Home Rule on religious, economic, imperial, and constitutional grounds. This was reflected in a 1913 resolution of the UWUC which constituted the economic and physical security of Ulster as threatened by Home Rule and Irish nationalists. It invoked the contributions of their fathers (but interestingly, not of their mothers) in securing the religious and civil freedoms of the Ulster *people* in the past. They would honour this proud history through their commitment to uphold the “solemn

pledge to which we unitedly and mutually subscribed our names upon Ulster Day”.⁶⁴¹ The resolution declared that:

Because we are entered [sic] times of great difficulty and stress wherein the prosperity and well-being of our beloved Country [sic] are threatened, we, as representing the Unionist women of Ulster...resolve zealously and constantly to continue in the pursuance of our cause, and against all opposition to promote the same according to our powers. God forbid that we should part with the civil and religious freedom which our *fathers* won and bequeathed to us as a lasting inheritance.⁶⁴²

Home Rule, the UWUC claimed, would be disastrous for Ulster’s (and Ireland’s) industrial and commercial interests, and would harm the integrity of the Empire by opening the flood-gates that would lead to its disintegration. Moreover, the UWUC asserted, it was unconstitutional to impose Home Rule on Ulster against the will of its people.⁶⁴³

At this time, the UWUC’s physical nation-work related to the Ulster Crisis involved maintaining and updating the Ulster unionist electoral registers and canvassing the electorate; political lobbying; missions; fundraising; education; and ritual/rhetoric. In all of this nation-work the UWUC drew on the triad of Ulster identity, as well as on dominant Ulster unionist gender norms of femininity and masculinity.

⁶⁴¹ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 16, 1913, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 186. The “solemn pledge” of the UWUC and its role related to Ulster Day will be discussed later in this chapter.

⁶⁴² PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 16, 1913, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 186.

⁶⁴³ Urquhart 2001, xv.

Electoral registers

Ulster's Loyal and British identity was expressed through the UWUC's nation-work of maintaining and updating the electoral registers. To recall, in 1912 the franchise had only recently been expanded to include male rural workers and tenant farmers, as well as a large number of the urban-based male working-class. While this increased the potential unionist electorate, it also enlarged the potential Irish nationalist electorate. This made the work of the UWUC pertaining to the electoral registers all the more crucial since it was aimed at ensuring that all potential unionist supporters who were eligible to vote in Ulster were able to do so. It was assumed that such work would maximize the number of seats in Westminster won by Unionists, which could be used (in a further expression of Ulster's British and Loyal identity) to vote down any Home Rule bill.

At the founding meeting of the UWUC in January 1911 Edith Mercier Clements described the emergence of the UWUC as "the beginning of real and solid work and a thorough organising of the women of Ulster".⁶⁴⁴ She further stated that it was necessary "to begin work at once...to endeavour to bring every single voter to the polls during elections, so that every seat in Ulster shall be won for the Union...the women of Ulster will be in no way behind the men in striving for so noble a cause".⁶⁴⁵ According to this view, the work of maintaining the electoral registers was vital nation-work; it was one way through which the UWUC could ensure electoral success for Unionists in Ulster and thereby guarantee that Home Rule was defeated.

⁶⁴⁴ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 24, 1911.

⁶⁴⁵ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 24, 1911.

Hariot, the Dowager Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, further reinforced the idea that the administration of the electoral registers was important nation-work. She wrote to Lady Theresa Londonderry in 1916, stating that: “I am sure the registration of voters is most important. There is no doubt the other side [Irish nationalists] are [sic] attending to that”.⁶⁴⁶ She clearly tied this work to the protection of the interests of Ulster and the UK. The women of Ulster (as represented by the UWUC) had a clear part in the nation-work of Ulster unionism and in maintaining the institutional and political ties between Ireland and Great Britain and the Empire. The establishment of the UWUC provided a formal, organized impetus for such work through maintaining the electoral registers.

This nation-work was also considered very important by the UUC since elections in Ireland were frequently won in the revision courts, which ruled on the composition of electoral registers. As such, a great deal depended on the capacity of local associations to gather the necessary information to ensure that its party supporters were registered and its opponents’ supporters’ entitlement to vote was denied as far as possible. Illustrating the importance of this work (and the broad, general equation of voting patterns with religious identification in Ireland), William Wilson (Secretary to the North Tyrone Unionist Constituency) wrote to Richard Dawson Bates (Secretary to the UUC) in November 1910 stating: “I quite agree with you that in Irish Constituencies [sic] the whole fight is at the Revision, not at the Election [sic]. Of course this is different in England, but as everyone

⁶⁴⁶ PRONI. *Theresa, Lady Londonderry Papers* (D 2846/1/262). Letter from the Dowager Lady Dufferin and Ava to Lady Londonderry. October 4, 1916.

knows in this country [Ireland] it is a mere a matter of religion".⁶⁴⁷ Hence the electoral register work of the UWUC was central to the Ulster unionist campaign against Home Rule and its constitution of Protestant, British, and Loyal Ulster. However, the nation-work of the UWUC involved more than just this administrative work. The UWUC also lobbied politicians and the UK parliament to oppose Home Rule.

Lobbying

The lobbying nation-work of the UWUC against Home Rule was rooted in a woman's role as wife and mother. A woman's central role and responsibilities in the private realm of home and family (which were often the impetus for her undertaking nation-work) were used to constitute and justify feminine nation-work in the public realm, such as lobbying. Moreover, this discourse served to constitute gender norms of Ulster defining particular roles for men and women within Ulster.

A resolution from a special meeting of the Executive Committee held on June 16, 1911, to address the Ulster Crisis connected the security of the women of Ulster and their homes to the "Legislative Union" of Ireland and Great Britain. The resolution also invoked Ulster, claiming that Ulster's security was tied to the maintenance of that union. The resolution asserted:

The Ulster Women's Unionist Council protest [sic] in the strongest manner against the passing of any Home Rule Bill for Ireland as they [sic] know that the civil and religious liberty of the women of Ulster and the security of their homes can only be guaranteed under the Legislative Union of

⁶⁴⁷ PRONI. *UUC Papers* (D 1327/23/1A). Letter from William Wilson to Richard Dawson Bates. November 9, 1910, cited in Walker 2004, 25.

Great Britain and Ireland. Therefore they [sic] demand that the question of Home Rule in any shape or form be entirely excluded from the operation of the Parliament Bill; and they [sic] respectfully request the Unionist members of the House of Lords to use every effort to secure this result.⁶⁴⁸

This resolution was passed unanimously and was forwarded to the Marquis of Lansdowne and Marquis of Londonderry (both members of the Ulster aristocracy) and all members of the House of Lords at Westminster.⁶⁴⁹ The strong language in this resolution was impressive given that in 1911 women in Ulster (and the rest of the UK) did not yet have the right to vote, but felt it was their duty to campaign and lobby against Home Rule. The resolution invoked Ulster in terms of its understanding that Ulster was part of the “Legislative Union” of Ireland and Great Britain, and its claim to speak for the women of Ulster in acting to protect their “civil and religious liberties”.

This assertion by the UWUC of its duty was further illustrated in an address the UWUC issued to Sir Edward Carson, as leader of the UUC and Ulster Unionists at Westminster on September 23, 1911, which not only drew on the unionist British identity, but also on the pre-partition connection unionism delineated between Ulster and Ireland. It declared that:

We feel that we are now on the eve of a more critical struggle [against Home Rule] than either of the two preceding ones on behalf of the Union. It is therefore essential that Unionists all over the United Kingdom should close their ranks, and join together in the most strenuous efforts to defeat the destructive policy of the Government... We realise that the civil and religious liberty of the women of Ireland and the security of their homes can only be guaranteed under the Legislative and Administrative Union of

⁶⁴⁸ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). June 16, 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 22.

⁶⁴⁹ Kinghan 1975, 16-7.

Great Britain and Ireland; we are deeply conscious of our responsibilities and are determined to take our full share in the conflict that lies before us.⁶⁵⁰

A woman's role as wife, mother, daughter, sister, and girlfriend (which, according to unionist gender norms was one of support and helpmate) was again central to this resolution and the framing of Ulster femininity and the UWUC's nation-work related to Home Rule. This was echoed in a statement that the UWUC published in the *Belfast News-Letter* in 1912, which asserted: "We [women of Ulster] will stand by our husbands, our brothers and our sons in whatever steps they may be forced to take in defending our liberties against the tyranny of Home Rule".⁶⁵¹

In spite of this dominant gender norm of Ulster femininity, the UWUC did not see its members as apathetic, or as simply supportive wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, and girlfriends. Rather the UWUC considered its members to be a polity with political agency and a duty to Ulster not only to "stand by" and support "our" men, whose obligation it was "to defend our liberties against the tyranny of Home Rule", but also to organize and lobby in their own right against Home Rule.⁶⁵² The lobbying nation-work of the UWUC related to the 1908 Papal *Ne Temere* decree and Home Rule further illustrated this sense of agency. In May 1912 the UWUC prepared a petition against *Ne Temere* and the proposed Home Rule bill. By June 11th of that year, approximately 104,301 women had

⁶⁵⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). September 8, 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 28-9.

⁶⁵¹ *Belfast News-Letter*. January 19, 1912, cited in Urquhart 2001, xi.

⁶⁵² Urquhart 2001, xiv.

signed the petition.⁶⁵³ According to the minutes of the Executive Committee of the UWUC, “the secretary reported...[that the petition] would have to be rolled by machinery to bring it within reasonable bulk as the slips when pasted together measured from 1600 yards or almost one mile in length”.⁶⁵⁴ It was presented to the House of Commons at Westminster by Sir John Lonsdale (MP for mid-Armagh) in June 1912.⁶⁵⁵

At this point Ulster unionist discourse (and symbolism, as we shall see later) constituted Ulster as part of Ireland and all of Ireland as part of the UK, thus constituting Ireland and Great Britain as one nation-state. The petition asserted that the “undersigned women of Ireland” believed that Home Rule would “particularly affect women”. It then outlined the reasons for this belief. First “entrusting legislative functions to a body of which a large permanent majority would be under ecclesiastical control” was of concern since “no legislative safeguards would avail to protect us against [the] dangers...[of] uncontrolled jurisdiction in the provinces of education and the marriage laws” which the Catholic Church claimed, and the Irish Parliamentary Party (the Irish nationalist party in Westminster) supported.⁶⁵⁶ In addition, “the late iniquitous enforcement of the *Ne Temere* decree—a decree which specially affects the women of Ireland”—was, according to the resolution, evidence of “the slavish acquiescence of the Irish Nationalist members of Parliament [and that]...in an Irish Parliament the natural instincts of humanity would be

⁶⁵³ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). May 21, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 57.

⁶⁵⁴ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). May 21, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 57.

⁶⁵⁵ Kinghan 1975, 20; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). May 21, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 57.

⁶⁵⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). April 10, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 52-3. (See Appendix IV for the full text of the petition.)

of no avail as against the dictates of the Roman Church”.⁶⁵⁷ The petition further argued that under Home Rule “the dominating power of ecclesiastics over education in Ireland...would be largely increased and schools and colleges under the control of religious orders would be state favoured institutions under an Irish Parliament”.⁶⁵⁸

Not only did this petition constitute Ireland and Great Britain as one nation, but it constituted Home Rule as injurious to all of Ireland and tied an Irish nationalist identity to a Catholic religious identity. Moreover, it constituted such legislation as having particular impacts on women. Yet the nation-work of the UWUC and its expressions of political agency went beyond petitions and lobbying.

Missions

The missions, or speaking tours across the UK, which UWUC members undertook to deliver the unionist message about Home Rule during the Ulster Crisis, were also nation-work through which the UWUC constituted Ulster as British, Loyal, and Protestant. The missions not only supported the men of Ulster, but also expressed women’s agency within the Ulster unionist cause. The Council trained members in public speaking, educated them about the unionist position on Home Rule, and sent them on speaking missions across Great Britain and Ireland to rally support against Home Rule. The UWUC regarded this as a central element of its nation-work, not only in terms of

⁶⁵⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). April 10, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 52-3. (See Appendix IV for the full text of the petition.).

⁶⁵⁸ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). April 10, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 52-3. (See Appendix IV for the full text of the petition.).

training and educating its members, but as part of its mandate to educate the wider public in Ireland and Great Britain about the importance of maintaining the “Legislative Union”.⁶⁵⁹ This nation-work expanded rapidly from twenty missionaries speaking in six constituencies in 1911 to forty missionaries speaking in sixty constituencies in 1912. The minutes of the Executive Committee of the UWUC for March 19, 1912 record that “Mrs Smith from Banbridge had addressed a meeting of 2000 people in Macclesfield and was speaking at other places during her visit to England”.⁶⁶⁰ By 1913 the UWUC had ninety missionaries speaking in ninety-three constituencies, addressing 230 meetings and an estimated 100,000 voters.⁶⁶¹

The discourse of the UWUC gave this work a religious connotation and thereby contributed to the unionist Ulster triad, which fused political, cultural, and religious identities. Just as religious missionaries were sent on missions with the aim of converting “non-believers” into “believers”, so too, the “missionaries” of the UWUC hoped to convert the UK public to the Ulster unionist position on Home Rule, thereby establishing mass opposition to Home Rule across the UK. In a very short time the UWUC was confident enough in the abilities of its missionaries (and of the unionist message they conveyed) that in 1912 it insisted that its missionaries were “most anxious to address

⁶⁵⁹ Neither the minutes of the Executive Committee nor the minutes of the Council provide details of the groups to which these women spoke. The only information listed is the locations to which these missionaries travelled and the estimated numbers of people to which they spoke.

⁶⁶⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). March 19, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 50.

⁶⁶¹ Kinghan 1975, 14-5.

Radical Audiences [sic] rather than meetings of convinced Unionists”.⁶⁶² Clearly, they were eager to “convert” and not only address audiences of those already supportive of Ulster unionism. Through such nation-work the UWUC asserted its agency. It was not simply going to take a supportive, behind-the-scenes role, but was willing and able to take on work that had its members front and centre and in the public realm as public speakers, political campaigners and lobbyists, administrators of electoral registers, and canvassers during elections.

This mission work was deemed to be so important that the UWUC established a committee, the Active Workers’ Committee, which regularly reported on these missions and the number of places at which (and people to whom) its missionaries had spoken. Often these missions were a response to requests for the UWUC to send speakers to particular organizations and constituencies rather than the UWUC seeking out such opportunities. The volume of such requests received by the UWUC is indicative of the importance which the UWUC attached to such work, and the obvious success it achieved in terms of the skills of its missionaries and the publicity these missions earned. What is more, through such missions the UWUC established networks and supporters across Great Britain and Ireland, and in the process further constituted Ulster as British, Protestant, and Loyal. However, the UWUC was careful to vet such requests and the organizations with which it worked, making clear the parameters under which it would send its missionaries, as is evident in the UWUC’s correspondence with the WAUTRA discussed earlier.

⁶⁶² PRONI. *UWUC Active Workers’ Committee Minutes* (D 2688/1/3). November 15, 1912, cited in Urquhart 2001, xvi.

The leaders of the UWUC showed astute instincts in regards to these missions. Aware of the increased “Ulsterization” of the issue of Home Rule and the wariness of this of many in Great Britain, the Dowager Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava wrote to Lady Theresa Londonderry in October 1916 identifying the need for such missions to relate unionist concerns to those in Great Britain and the Empire and, therefore, not to focus too greatly on Ulster. She counseled that “if we send speakers to England they will not be listened to if they only talk ‘Ulster’—the whole situation has changed and the outlook will be less local and more Imperial [sic] at the next election”.⁶⁶³ This would seem to indicate the increasingly “Ulsterized” nature of the campaign against Home Rule, and a recognition of the need for the UWUC missions to broaden the scope of the case against Home Rule.

The records of the speeches made during these missions are difficult to find as they were often held in private homes or were closed meetings open only to members of particular groups or organizations. Moreover, given the Ulster unionist domopolitics siege mentality which predominated in this period of heightened political tensions, it appears that the UWUC had concerns related to the security of these missions. In November 1912 its Advisory Committee submitted a report that “strongly advised” the Affiliated Associations of the UWUC “to exclude Newspaper Reporters [sic] from the business part of their Annual Meetings [sic], as it is not desirable that the financial position of our Association [sic] should be made public, or the exact places in which our workers

⁶⁶³ PRONI. *Theresa, Lady Londonderry Papers* (D 2846/1/262). Letter from the Dowager Lady Dufferin and Ava to Lady Londonderry. October 4, 1916.

[missionaries] have been”.⁶⁶⁴ This proposal was approved unanimously, indicating that real or perceived threats to these speakers existed (although the nature of these threats is not clarified in the minutes). Nevertheless, the fact that the UWUC had a committee which dealt with the training of speakers and coordination of these missions, as well as the significant amount of reporting of such missions in the minutes of the meetings of both the UWUC’s Executive Committee and the Council, makes it clear that this was deemed important nation-work by the UWUC.

The UWUC clearly established itself as a force through this mission nation-work, since it received requests to send speakers, and it did not have to necessarily seek out such opportunities. Furthermore, the UWUC was approached by some men to embark on missions under the aegis of the UWUC. According to the minutes of the Executive Committee, these requests were first received as early as September 1911, only nine months after the establishment of the UWUC. Clearly these men felt that working under the UWUC would be of benefit to them. It also enabled the UWUC to reach audiences that its female missionaries would be unable to reach, since these male missionaries could speak in men-only clubs, as well as the mixed public gatherings at which female missionaries spoke.

Again, the UWUC asserted its agency with regard to such nation-work. At the September 25, 1911 Executive Committee meeting Edith Mercier Clements suggested that the men requesting to do mission work under the auspices of the UWUC “could be sent under the charge and control of a responsible lady and would be useful in working up

⁶⁶⁴ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 10981/1). November 19, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 65.

meetings and [that they] would have special opportunities of reaching and interesting working men”.⁶⁶⁵ At the same meeting the Executive Committee moved that “these men be employed on special service when necessary, each case to be separately considered by the Executive Committee”;⁶⁶⁶ thus a supposedly auxiliary Ulster unionist organization (the UWUC) asserted “charge and control” over these male missionaries.

Fundraising

Fundraising was an essential part of the UWUC’s nation-work too. Providing financial support to and fundraising on behalf of anti-Home Rule campaigns were ways through which members of the UWUC could express their Britishness and loyalty to Ulster and the UK. Furthermore, none of the lobbying, administrative, missions, or education work related to Home Rule undertaken by the UWUC would have been possible without funds to pay its trainers and those who maintained the electoral registers, the travel and accommodations costs of its missionaries, as well as for the production of its leaflets, slides, and other propaganda materials. The UWUC fundraised to support anti-Home Rule campaigns, Unionist candidates’ election campaigns, as well as their own speakers’ classes and missions.⁶⁶⁷ It raised £5,476 for the Carson Fund, which was launched in 1912 to fund an anti-Home Rule campaign and its propaganda. In 1912 the UWUC also gave £300 to the Ulster Unionist general election fund. By 1914 its

⁶⁶⁵ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). September 25, 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 31.

⁶⁶⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). September 25, 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 31.

⁶⁶⁷ Urquhart 2001, xvi.

contribution to that fund had grown to £1,902.⁶⁶⁸ Additionally, the UWUC raised money to pay its members who worked tirelessly keeping the Unionist electoral registers up to date, as well as those who travelled to London to lobby politicians at Westminster.⁶⁶⁹ All of this fundraising nation-work was deemed to be an expression of a unified Ulster polity and of Ulster's loyalty to the UK.

While this nation-work challenged the dominant gender norm of a woman's role being in the private realm (as a wife and mother), it also reinforced gender norms of women as nurturers and caregivers, since many women involved in the UWUC's nation-work (much of which was in the public sphere) justified their involvement by connecting such work to a woman's role as a wife and mother. Nonetheless, many were motivated to get involved in the UWUC and contribute in ways beyond the traditional roles of wife and mother, and which were of benefit to the Ulster unionist polity rather than simply to their individual families. However, drawing on such gender norms of Ulster femininity allowed the UWUC to do work in the public realm in a way that did not explicitly challenge or transgress such gender norms but did allow for implicit challenges to such norms through a broadening of roles for women in the public sphere. They extended this nurturing role of a woman beyond that of her immediate family to the nation, thereby constituting gender norms of Ulster femininity and feminine nation-work.⁶⁷⁰ Such nation-work brought women into the public realm in a socially acceptable way and illustrated the

⁶⁶⁸ Kinghan 1975, 20.

⁶⁶⁹ Urquhart 2001, 20, 56.

⁶⁷⁰ Luddy 1988, 304.

embeddedness of gender norms within the nation-work of the UWUC and the Ulster unionist movement generally.

Education

Vital to the lobbying and campaigning work related to Home Rule was education work, which from the outset, the UWUC considered important. Such nation-work served to constitute and broaden gender norms of Ulster femininity since education was an important part of a woman's role as mother.⁶⁷¹ This role was extended to the wider Ulster and British family with the UWUC's focus on educating its members and the youth of Ulster, as well as the broader public in the UK primarily regarding unionist values, norms, and goals through missions, as well as the establishment of groups for boys and girls. This education nation-work also included sending 10,000 pro-unionist leaflets and newspapers weekly to Great Britain by 1913.⁶⁷²

The UWUC also held public speaking classes and competitions for its members.⁶⁷³ Lady Edith Londonderry, the 7th Lady Londonderry, highlighted this maternal aspect of politics (according to Ulster unionism). She argued that women should “acquire a wider political outlook in order to train and influence the coming generations...to become sound politicians in the same way as it was in the hands of

⁶⁷¹ Kinghan 1975, 77-8.

⁶⁷² Urquhart 2000, 61; Urquhart 1994, 101.

⁶⁷³ Kinghan 1975, 63.

mothers to bring up their children as useful citizens”.⁶⁷⁴ Hence as both literal and symbolic “mothers” of Ulster, unionist women had a responsibility to educate themselves and Ulster’s younger generation about issues of concern to Ulster and unionists so that they would be “useful citizens”. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 6, this work became all the more important after the franchise was granted to women over thirty years of age in the UK in 1918 and Ireland was partitioned in 1922.

Ritual and rhetoric

The nation-work of the UWUC against Home Rule culminated in the events which were held to mark Ulster Day: September 28, 1912, which further constituted Ulster according to unionist gender norms. Events were held across Ulster to mark Ulster Day in order to rally support for its campaign against Home Rule. As we have seen, the centrepiece of this moment of nationness was the public signing of The Solemn League and Covenant (the Covenant) by men, symbolizing their endorsement of Ulster unionism and a Protestant religious identity, as well as signifying their loyalty to Ulster and the UK. Although not permitted to sign the Covenant, the UWUC drafted the women’s Declaration (the Declaration) and organized similar signing ceremonies on Ulster Day which drew 234,046 women who signed the Declaration.⁶⁷⁵ It would seem that Ulster unionism had the support of many women. The signing ceremonies for women and other events of the day (as discussed in Chapter 4) were not only an expression of Ulster

⁶⁷⁴ PRONI. *Minute Book of North Down Women’s Unionist Association* (D 2688/3/1). December 11, 1925, cited in Urquhart 2000, 77.

⁶⁷⁵ Kinghan 1975, 20; Urquhart 2001, xvii; Urquhart 1994, 100; Walsh 2002, 37.

unionist women's resistance to Home Rule for Ireland, but were also central to the process of institutionally, symbolically, and literally constituting Ulster. The rituals, rhetoric, and symbols of the day built a sense of a unified polity based on a common political, cultural, and religious identity, as well as the perceived shared purpose, aims, and goals of Ulster and its people.

The fact that the Declaration and the Covenant, as well as the signing ceremonies attached to them, were gender-segregated indicated different roles within Ulster for women as women and men as men. While multiple pages in the newspapers were dedicated to reporting on the signing of the Covenant there was scant coverage of the events of the day organized for women. In one brief paragraph the *Northern Whig* declared that it was “gratifying to think that the women of Ulster are standing loyally by ‘their menfolk’ in this crisis, are prepared to go the whole way with them, and to take their share of whatever sacrifice the step may entail”.⁶⁷⁶ As noted earlier, although women signed the Declaration in greater numbers than men signed the Covenant in Ulster, they were not even permitted to sign in the same high profile buildings as the male Covenanters.⁶⁷⁷

The text of the Declaration also constituted such gender norms. It proclaimed:

We, whose names are underwritten, women of Ulster, and loyal subjects of our gracious King, being firmly persuaded that Home Rule would be disastrous to our Country [sic], desire to associate ourselves with the men of Ulster in their uncompromising opposition to the Home Rule Bill now before Parliament, whereby it is proposed to drive Ulster out of *her*

⁶⁷⁶ *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912.

⁶⁷⁷ McGaughey 2012, 47; *Northern Whig*. September 30, 1912.

cherished place in the Constitution of the United Kingdom, and to place *her* under the domination and control of a Parliament of Ireland. Praying that from this calamity God will save Ireland, we here to subscribe our names.⁶⁷⁸ (See Appendix E, Figure 1.)

The language of the Declaration claimed that its signatories spoke for “the women of Ulster”, and invoked God to protect Ulster and its “cherished place in the Constitution of the United Kingdom”, which it tied to Ulster’s loyalty to the British sovereign. The Declaration used the feminine pronoun “her” to refer to Ulster. The men’s Covenant did not gender Ulster in this way. The women who signed the Declaration “associate[d] themselves with the men” (implying a supportive, passive feminine nation-work), while the Covenant invoked action in the masculine nation-work of defending their “equal citizenship in the United Kingdom” using “all means necessary”.⁶⁷⁹ The Declaration did not directly assert citizenship for its female signatories, but it invoked (through prayer) God to save Ireland (including Ulster) from “the calamity” of Home Rule. In contrast, the Covenant expressed confidence that “God will defend the right we hereto subscribe”.⁶⁸⁰ The God invoked in the Covenant was a martial God who would defend men’s right to remain British citizens and Ulster’s membership in the British family because of Ulster’s loyalty to God.

By signing the Covenant and the Declaration, Ulster, through its men and women,

⁶⁷⁸ Kinghan 1975, 21; PRONI. *Copy of signed page of the women’s Declaration* (D 1327/3/4255). September 28, 1912 (emphasis added).

⁶⁷⁹ PRONI. *Copy of signed page of the women’s Declaration* (D 1327/3/4255). September 28, 1912; PRONI. *Copy of signed page of the Solemn League and Covenant* (D 1327/3/4326). September 28, 1912.

⁶⁸⁰ PRONI. *Copy of signed page of the women’s Declaration* (D 1327/3/4255). September 28, 1912; PRONI. *Copy of signed page of the Solemn League and Covenant* (D 1327/3/4326). September 28, 1912.

made a pact with God to remain faithful (loyal to God). God, it would seem, would repay this faith by protecting Ulster from the double danger of becoming a Loyal, Protestant, British minority in an independent, majority disloyal, Catholic, Gaelic Ireland and of being “sold out” by the British government in order to appease Irish nationalists.

Widespread female participation in Ulster Day strengthened unionism as a political movement without threatening masculinity’s dominance in the public sphere. As noted in Chapter 4, the ritual of these ceremonies (and the media coverage of them) privileged *Ulstermen* by affording them prominence and authority as *the* primary agents in the constitution and protection of Ulster.⁶⁸¹

Recall from Chapter 4 that in 1912 and 1913 political tensions in Ireland were high. In Lady Theresa Londonderry’s words, “extraordinary times need[ed] extraordinary measures”.⁶⁸² The emergence of the UVF in 1913 as a male Protestant paramilitary force charged with protecting Ulster broadened the scope of nation-work women could do without explicitly challenging the dominant gender norms of Ulster unionism. Between 1913 and 1914, and under the auspices of the UWUC, approximately 3000 women enlisted in the (auxiliary) Nursing, Driving and Signalling Corps of the UVF as nurses, ambulance and dispatch riders, postal workers, typists, and intelligence workers.⁶⁸³

Although much of this work was fairly traditional feminine clerical and caring work, supportive of the primary defensive nation-work of the men of the UVF, it nonetheless

⁶⁸¹ McGaughey 2012, 48.

⁶⁸² Durham Record Office. *Londonderry Archives* (D/Lo/F 580 (22)). Lady Theresa Londonderry’s resolution to the UWUC. January 18, 1912, cited in Urquhart 2007, 111.

⁶⁸³ Bowman 2007, 60-1; Kinghan 1975, 29-31; Stewart 1967, 86; Urquhart 2000, 64; Urquhart 1996, 35.

signaled women's dedication to Ulster and the solidarity of unionists in Ulster in their opposition to Home Rule. It also expanded the spheres within which women were involved beyond that of clerical, administrative, or caring work to include that of driving, delivering messages, and intelligence.

As a moment of nationness, the Ulster Crisis meant that between 1911 and 1914 the nation-work of the UWUC was focused on opposing Home Rule. The outbreak of World War I in August of 1914 shifted the priority of the UWUC to war work in support of Ulster's troops and "King and Country" (more of which below). Nonetheless, since the issue of Home Rule had only been suspended for the duration of the war, and not conclusively resolved, the UWUC was encouraged to continue its anti-Home Rule work. Richard Dawson Bates wrote to Lady Theresa Londonderry that "notwithstanding the fact they [the UWUC] are doing war work, they should not lose sight of the main object of the association, namely the defeat of Home Rule".⁶⁸⁴ During the war the UWUC did continue its anti-Home Rule, but informally through individual members. It urged its "members...in their private capacity try to reach as many colonial soldiers as possible, and instruct them in the Home Rule question".⁶⁸⁵ Such work blurred the public and private spheres dichotomy of Ulster unionism; women undertook a public objective (defeating the Home Rule bill) in a private capacity.

⁶⁸⁴ PRONI. *Theresa, Lady Londonderry Papers* (D 2846/1/8/65). Letter from Richard Dawson Bates to Lady Londonderry. January 3, 1917.

⁶⁸⁵ PRONI. *UWUC Advisory Committee Minutes* (D 2608/1/7). January 2, 1917, cited in Urquhart 2001, xviii.

WORLD WAR I (1914–1918)

This section analyses the wartime nation-work of the UWUC during World War I in order to understand how Ulster as institutionalized and gendered form through such work and the events of the war was constituted. The outbreak of World War I in 1914 put the issue of Home Rule on the backburner as much of the attention of the UWUC turned to supporting the British war effort. However, it also provided moments of nationness through which Ulster was constituted. Members of the UWUC assembled and distributed care packages, provided financial and emotional support to soldiers of the 36th (Ulster) Division of the British Forces (and their families), and raised money for some war-related initiatives: the Ulster Gift Fund,⁶⁸⁶ the purchase and complete outfitting of an ambulance for the 36th (Ulster) Division (see Appendix E, Figures 2 and 3), and the financing and operation of a hospital in France during the war. The Council also trained its members in nursing and driving ambulances (see Appendix E, Figure 4), recruited for the Voluntary Aid Detachments and Soldiers for the Ulster and Imperial Forces, and initiated a Prisoner of War Fund.⁶⁸⁷ The war work of the UWUC also continued to focus on education. A motion was passed unanimously at the January 1915 Council meeting declaring that “a great deal may be done by our members to help our people in maintaining duty and

⁶⁸⁶ Between 1914 and 1918 the UWUC raised £119,481 for the Ulster Gift Fund, which provided care packages to soldiers of the 36th (Ulster) Division of the UK armed forces [Kinghan 1975, 32-3; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 1914 to March 1918; PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). August 1914 to September 1918, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 100-7, 188-92].

⁶⁸⁷ Kinghan 1975, 32, 36; Urquhart 2001, xviii; Urquhart 1997, 104-5.

discipline in the home and also be [sic] teaching patriotism and love of country”.⁶⁸⁸

Through this war work, the UWUC was able to maintain its staff and local Women’s Associations, which enabled it to resume its anti-Home Rule lobbying and campaigning work when the war ended. Many felt that the sole focus of the UWUC should be supporting the war effort, while others believed that the anti-Home Rule work of the UWUC should not be sidelined during the war.⁶⁸⁹

The UWUC and Ulster’s loyalty

World War I afforded Ulster unionists with opportunities to further demonstrate Ulster’s loyalty to the UK through war work and was a key moment of nationness which became an important part of Ulster unionist folklore, as will be demonstrated in this section. The UWUC’s war work was constituted as nation-work undertaken to demonstrate Ulster’s loyalty to “King and Country”. The *Annual Report* of 1918 stated that “the Council [UWUC] can regard with pride, the achievements of its members in many spheres of patriotic effort. In particular, mention must be made of the Ulster Women’s Gift Fund, and Prisoners of War Fund, which was inaugurated, developed and almost entirely carried on by members of your Council [the UWUC]. The achievements of that Fund will form a lasting monument to Ulster patriotism and Imperial spirit

⁶⁸⁸ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 19, 1915, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 190.

⁶⁸⁹ There are numerous letters about disagreements within the UWUC related to the war work of the UWUC and the decision to largely abandon its anti-Home Rule nation-work during World War I. See for example: PRONI. Letters from Lady Dufferin and Ava to Lady Londonderry. September 8, 1914 (D 2846/1/217) and October 4, 1916 (D 2846/1/262); Letter from Edith Wheeler to Lady Londonderry. June 20, 1918 (D 1507/A/28/9).

[sic]”.⁶⁹⁰ According to the UWUC, this war work illustrated to the British government Ulster’s loyalty to the British nation and Empire.

Ulster’s loyalty was most evident in the 36th (Ulster) Division’s willingness to fight in the war, its sacrifice at the Battle of Somme⁶⁹¹ (discussed in Chapter 4), and the UWUC’s war work. The loyalty of Ulster was contrasted with Irish nationalists’ alleged disloyalty in terms of their refusal to join the British armed forces, as reported in the *Annual Register* of 1914, which stated: “In Ulster, as in England, the flow of recruits outran the provision made for them by the War Office, and by about the middle of October the Protestant districts had furnished some 21,000, of which Belfast alone had contributed 7581, or 305 per 10,000 of the population—the highest proportion of all the towns in the United Kingdom”.⁶⁹² This binary of Loyal Ulster versus disloyal Ireland was central to Ulster unionist domestic politics and was reinforced by the increase in Irish nationalist agitation against the recruitment of the Irish to the British forces. The losses faced by the British armed forces during the war meant that new recruits were vital; and the recruitment work of the UWUC was deemed crucial to this.

Ulster Unionists urged the British government to introduce conscription in Ireland to address this issue and many were critical of its refusal to do so. A resolution put to both

⁶⁹⁰ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). Annual Report. September 11, 1918, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 191.

⁶⁹¹ Recall that during the first two days of the Battle of the Somme, approximately 5500 men of the 36th (Ulster) Division were wounded or killed (Bardon 2007, 455-6).

⁶⁹² *The Annual Register*, 1914, p 259 (quoted in McNeill 1922, 238).

the Advisory and Executive Committees of the UWUC not only invoked a Loyal Ulster, but simultaneously criticized the UK government, stating:

We the members of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council representing a quarter of a million loyal women of Ulster desire to express our deep dissatisfaction at the exclusion of Ireland from the Compulsory Service Act. We protest against the refusal of the Government to join our people with their fellow citizens of Great Britain in a common bond of service to the Empire knowing as we do the readiness of Loyal [sic] Ulster already proved on many occasions to undergo and suffer whatever may be necessary to bring victory to our armies over the forces of tyranny and barbarism.⁶⁹³

This connection of Ulster's loyalty to Britain and unionism/Loyalism was echoed in a letter sent in 1914 on behalf of the UWUC to the Lord Mayor of Belfast from Lady Theresa Londonderry (as President of the UWUC), the Dowager Lady Dufferin and Ava, and Lady Abercorn (the latter two as Vice Presidents of the UWUC). The letter constituted Ulster in gendered ways. It was a man's duty "to rally round the Flag" and defend the nation, while "our duty [as women is] to see [that the] families and dependents [of those men who met their duty] are cared for". This letter drew on gender norms. Men had a duty to defend the nation during a time of war while women had a caring and nurturing role to play in the nation at war; just as women, as mothers, were responsible for the care and nurturing of their individual families, so too they were responsible for the care and nurturing of the collective Ulster family. This letter reinforced such feminine nation-work, remarking that "the Council [the UWUC] and its affiliated Associations and Members [sic] form a unique organization for investigating, registering and dealing with

⁶⁹³ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40*. February 8, 1916 (D 1098/1/2), reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 102-3.

all cases of want or suffering and for dispensing such relief as may be found necessary”.⁶⁹⁴

Ulster was constituted through the UWUC (so this letter claimed) given that the UWUC “cover[ed] the entire province of Ulster”. Moreover, it asserted that “in every great National and Imperial [sic] crisis no part of the community has more clearly demonstrated its loyalty to the Throne and to the Empire than the people of Ulster” with Ulster’s “men...responding to the call of the King and rallying round the Flag”. Finally, it emphasized that the UWUC recognized (and was keen to meet) “the duties attaching to citizenship of the British Empire” (see Appendix F for the full text).⁶⁹⁵ Such masculine defensive nation-work and feminine supportive nation-work was also reflected in a 1913 statement from Lady Theresa Londonderry to the UWUC, which also constituted Ulster as Loyal and British. She stated: “The men of Ulster know well how to defend themselves and we [the women of Ulster] shall support them in all that they may do... We do not ask for privilege or preference, all we desire is to remain where we are—and integral part of the British Isles under the British Government and under no circumstances whatever will we allow ourselves to be driven out”.⁶⁹⁶ Here it was not only gendered nation-work that was constituted, but Ulster as institutionalized and gendered form.

⁶⁹⁴ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). August 18, 1914, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 188-9; PRONI. *Records of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council* (D 1098/3/5). Draft of Letter from Lady Londonderry, Lady Abercorn and Lady Dufferin and Ava to the Lord Mayor of Belfast. August 11, 1914.

⁶⁹⁵ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). August 18, 1914, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 188-9; PRONI. *Records of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council* (D 1098/3/5). Draft of Letter from Lady Londonderry, Lady Abercorn and Lady Dufferin and Ava to the Lord Mayor of Belfast. August 11, 1914.

⁶⁹⁶ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 16, 1913, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 186.

A 1916 call to action issued by Lady Theresa Londonderry and the Duchess of Abercorn to the local branches of the UWUC, which exhorted its members to do their duty for “King and Empire”, echoed this constitution of Ulster as gendered and British. According to this call to action, *Ulstermen* were to defend Ulster and “King and Country” through active military service and representation in parliament, while *Ulsterwomen* were to encourage and recruit men to do their duty. It declared:

It is absolutely necessary that every one of us should do our best to find more men, so as to hasten the end of this terrible war. I am sure, we... will not appeal in vain to our splendid body of workers, when we ask each member, each in her own district, to place herself at the disposal of the recruiting officers, to assist in every possible way. We are confident that the same all-conquering spirit that has always inspired the women of Ulster, particularly when it is a question of the honour of their Province, will again enable them to achieve this object and will crown their efforts with success.⁶⁹⁷

In the same call to action the UWUC asserted that:

The Members of the Council and its Affiliated Associations [sic] have since the outbreak of the war done everything in their power to aid the Empire in the great struggle in which it is engaged and have in particular done their utmost to secure recruits for the Ulster Division and the Imperial Forces generally. The Council realises the serious need for continued and increased efforts to ensure the speedy and successful termination of the War [sic] and will impress upon the individual members of their affiliated associations the urgent necessity for bringing every available man to the colours and the desirability of taking such further steps in their respective districts as may be calculated to obtain this object.⁶⁹⁸

⁶⁹⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). February 8, 1916, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 102.

⁶⁹⁸ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). February 8, 1916, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 102.

Clearly the UWUC (Ulster as institutionalized and feminine form) considered recruitment to be a vital part of its war work and a key role for women, just as Ulster was frequently symbolically and discursively depicted as a woman exhorting *her* men to *her* defence.

Throughout World War I the UWUC undertook its war work as a demonstration of its patriotism to Britain and the Empire. Lady Theresa Londonderry noted the patriotism of members of the UWUC when she observed that: “since the war began our delegates without exception, following the splendid example of our great leader, Sir Edward Carson, have been devoting themselves with unselfish and patriotic energy to valuable war work on behalf of our country”.⁶⁹⁹ It is interesting to note that although the UWUC was considered a separate organization from the UUC, the President of the UWUC, in an act which it could be argued marginalized her own authority as President of that organization, and reproduced the subordination of women in Ulster, referred to the leader of the UUC (Carson) as “our” leader. Conversely, it could be claimed that perhaps Lady Theresa Londonderry felt this was a way to assert that the UWUC belonged to the unionist camp, that though separate from the men-only UUC, by claiming a shared leader with the UUC, the UWUC asserted itself as an integral part of the unionist family.

As the war continued, however, the UWUC became increasingly discontented with how it was treated by the UUC, asserting that neither its nation-work during the war, nor its agency within the Ulster unionist movement was sufficiently recognized by the UUC. So dissatisfied was the UWUC that in June 1918 it sent a letter to the UUC

⁶⁹⁹ PRONI. *Theresa, Lady Londonderry Papers* (D 2846/1/8/64). Draft Letter from Lady Londonderry to Women’s Unionist Associations. Undated.

exclaiming:

During the last four years of war, our opinion on any one political matter has never been asked. We ourselves have been mute under what we consider has been a very insidious and slow disintegration of our power...Our advice has never been asked when the Covenant was broken⁷⁰⁰ ...All the same we have held fast to our Unionist opinions, and our voice has been heard and acted upon although perhaps the 'Ulster Unionist Council' may have thought us an entirely negligible quantity...we have no desire to emphasise any difference between the men and women of Ulster. We should be comrades in defence of a common cause. What is the position of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council? It has none—we are nothing...we have not been treated as comrades...We must have more power for immediate action.⁷⁰¹

Although its nation-work reflected a relatively traditional role for women within the public sphere (fundraising, education work, and administrative work related to the unionist electoral registers), the UWUC was not reticent about asserting its agency and expressing its disagreement with the established male power of the UUC.

This expression of displeasure indicated a confidence in the abilities and in the contributions of the UWUC and its members to the unionist cause. Furthermore, it revealed the continued belief of the UWUC that unity amongst unionists in Ulster was vital to their common goal of maintaining the political and economic union between Ulster and Great Britain. This meant down-playing differences within the unionist community (whether they be cleavages based on gender, class, faith denomination, or political ideology). Potential tensions between Ulster as institutionalized masculine form

⁷⁰⁰ This refers to discussions regarding partition which was seen by many to be a breaking of the Declaration/Covenant which unionist women and men had signed in 1912.

⁷⁰¹ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 2688/1/7). Advisory Committee Minutes. June 4, 1918. cited in Urquhart 1994, 106-7.

(the UUC) and institutionalized feminine form (the UWUC), which related primarily to the issues of suffrage for women and the representation of women on the UUC, were muted by wartime solidarity. The discord between nation and gender as institutionalized form more broadly had been brewing in the Great Britain and Ireland throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, as will be demonstrated below. With the cessation of the war such issues could no longer be put on the backburner for the sake of war-time solidarity.

Women's enfranchisement in the UK (1918)

Here the uneasy relationship between Ulster as institutionalized form (the Ulster unionist movement) and gender as institutionalized form (the suffrage movement) is explored by examining the response of the UWUC to the suffrage movement and the partial granting of the franchise to women in the UK. Simultaneous to both the Ulster Crisis and World War I was a growing movement that demanded the enfranchisement of women in the UK. The suffrage movement succeeded in achieving limited female suffrage in 1918, towards the end of World War I; women over thirty years of age were granted the franchise in 1918 with the passage of the *Representation of the People Act*.⁷⁰² The UWUC's initial opposition to women's enfranchisement constituted Ulster first and foremost as British and Loyal, and hence united around the issue of maintaining political and economic ties between Ireland and Great Britain.

The issue of women's suffrage was deemed by many in the UWUC to be too

⁷⁰² Owens 2005, 5.

divisive an issue and one beyond its mandate of “maintaining the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland”. Lady Theresa Londonderry made this case in a letter to her daughter-in-law Edith (who was pro-suffrage). She wrote that according to the constitution of the UWUC, its members could think:

exactly as [they] like on every other subject except that of Home Rule...I know that there are some suffrage Home Rulers who are doing all they can to split up our magnificent organisation—They know it is impossible to do it on the Home Rule question so they are trying to drag the red herring of the Woman Suffrage across us [sic]...I am sure you will see the point of my letter...we are banded together for one object...it is most inopportune at this moment to bring the question of the suffrage into a large organisation formed for a totally different object.⁷⁰³

This letter not only hints at tensions within the Londonderry family related to the suffrage issue, but also at an on-going schism within the UWUC in terms of the suffrage issue in spite of its public declarations of unity.

In spite of this initial opposition, once the franchise was extended to women the UWUC wasted no time in using it. It framed a woman’s role and responsibilities as a voter not only in relation to her role as wife and mother, but also in relation to her faith and country. The UWUC argued that unionist women should use the vote to constitute and further the interests of Ulster. Addressing a demonstration of unionist women in Belfast in 1921, the 3rd Duchess of Abercorn observed that: “They [*Ulsterwomen*] never clamoured for the vote, but now it had been given to them she was confident they intended to use it to the safety, honour, and welfare of their Church, their country, their

⁷⁰³ Durham Record Office. *Londonderry Archives* (D/Lo/C686 (248)). Letter from Lady Londonderry to Viscountess Castlereagh. September 30, 1913, cited in Urquhart 2007, 111-2.

homes, and their children by helping to put a strong loyal Government in power...no matter what might be the claims of children, home, or business”.⁷⁰⁴ Although it never formally or publicly advocated suffrage for women, clearly when women were given the vote, the UWUC was quick to use it to achieve its goals and aims.

The evolution of the UWUC

The enfranchisement of women meant that the work of maintaining and updating the electoral registers became all the more important nation-wide since a whole new group of voters had to be added to the electoral registers in order to ensure that all possible unionist voters were eligible to vote.⁷⁰⁵ To recall, this was nation-wide work which the UWUC had carried out previously, and the Council continued with it, redoubling its efforts in 1918 in preparation for an election that was anticipated with the cessation of the war. Towards this work, the UWUC raised £5000 to pay for canvassers to ensure that the electoral registers were up to date.⁷⁰⁶ In addition, the UWUC sent a letter to each Honorary Secretary of the local associations affiliated with the UWUC which read:

With a view to helping in securing [sic] the Registration of every possible Unionist Voter in your Constituency [sic], and particularly of safeguarding the interests of women Electors [voters], it is proposed to make a Grant from the Central Funds [sic] for this purpose of paying Inspectors to go round the Constituency [sic] and see that every eligible woman has already been registered, or to assist those who have not yet done so in filling up [sic] their claim forms...[we request that if the Unionist Registration

⁷⁰⁴ *Northern Whig*. May 20, 1921.

⁷⁰⁵ Kinghan 1975, 38; Urquhart 2001, xix; Urquhart 1994, 109.

⁷⁰⁶ Kinghan 1975, 38; Urquhart 2001, xix; Urquhart 1994, 109.

Agent in your Constituency is agreeable] that you...try to secure the services of a number of Canvassers or Inspectors [sic], preferably women, but if suitable women are not available, then men, who are willing to undertake the work.⁷⁰⁷

Furthermore, the UWUC undertook to train its members in their new role and responsibilities as voters by holding workshops on the British proportional representation electoral system (more of which in Chapter 6).

The extension of suffrage to women appears to have strengthened the agency of the UWUC in terms of the unionist movement. Between 1919 and 1921 it demanded clarity from the UUC about its status within the Ulster unionist movement, which it asserted should be equal to that of the Orange Order and Unionist Clubs, both of which had representation on the UUC Executive.⁷⁰⁸ The UWUC became increasingly vocal about the recognition it felt that it deserved within the broader Ulster unionist community. On September 11, 1918, the UWUC passed a resolution that was sent to the UUC which requested that in revising its constituencies the UUC “provide for the inclusion of representatives elected by the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council, in the same way as the Orange Order and Unionist Clubs have representation”.⁷⁰⁹ The UWUC justified this request on the basis that these other unionist bodies were represented on the UUC. Given that some women had been granted the franchise by 1918, the UUC could hardly now

⁷⁰⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 18, 1918, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 104.

⁷⁰⁸ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 25, 1921 and November 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 124, 131; PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). September 11, 1918, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 191.

⁷⁰⁹ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/2). September 11, 1918, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 191.

prevent women from being representatives on the UUC. Thus it did agree “as a temporary measure” that the UWUC would have representation (twelve seats) on the UUC, “and that the whole question of representation of Special bodies [sic] to the Council [the UUC] be reconsidered after the next general election”.⁷¹⁰ However, it was not until 1925 that the UWUC was actually allowed to send delegates to the Standing Committee of the UUC.⁷¹¹

The granting of suffrage to women altered the gendered norms of Ulster subtly, mitigating gender differences partially, although certainly not completely. Women’s suffrage gave the UWUC greater agency within Ulster and the unionist movement, enabling it to make such demands. Nonetheless the real or perceived insecurity of Ulster during the late 1910s and early 1920s *vis-à-vis* the Anglo-Irish War and Civil War, as well as the Boundary Commission meant that safeguarding Ulster’s boundaries and the establishment a “Protestant parliament for a Protestant people” in Ulster (Northern Ireland) were constituted as *the* crucial concerns of that time, according to the UWUC and the Ulster unionist movement in general. Other issues, such as gender equality, would have to be addressed later once the serious security concerns that Ulster was facing were resolved, according to this domopolitics.

Suffrage for women also resulted in the expansion of the UWUC’s education nation-work after 1918. The Dowager Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava made this clear in a letter to Edward Carson in 1918. She informed him that: “We [the UWUC] had [sic]

⁷¹⁰ Cited in Kinghan 1975, 39; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 11, 1918, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 105.

⁷¹¹ Cited in Kinghan 1975, 39; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 11, 1918, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 105.

just decided to reopen our office as it seemed that there would be an anti-Home Rule work to do, and help wanted in the way of educating the Women [sic] voters”.⁷¹² Chapter 6 will demonstrate that as Ulster (Northern Ireland) was established as a self-governing region of the UK during the 1920s this education and electoral register work (which continued into the 1930s) became increasingly significant to the Ulster unionist movement, particularly after the franchise reforms of 1928, as a result of which women came to make up fifty-two percent of the electorate.⁷¹³

CONCLUSION

The establishment of the UWUC in 1911 was a boon for Ulster unionism. Throughout the 1910s the Council contributed to the nation-work of the Ulster unionist movement through its discourse of Ulster; its opposition to Home Rule (through maintaining electoral registers, lobbying, missions, fundraising, education, and ritual/rhetoric); and its demonstrations of Ulster loyalty to “King and Country” through its norms of membership, rituals, practices, and war work. In carrying out such varying nation-work, the UWUC drew on a history of women who had actively supported Ulster unionism. The nation-work of the UWUC constituted Ulster as British, Loyal, and Protestant, as well as the gender norms of Ulster.

⁷¹² PRONI. *The Carson Papers* (D 1507/A/28/11). Letter from the Dowager Lady Dufferin and Ava to Sir Edward Carson. June 21, 1918.

⁷¹³ The franchise was extended to all women on an equal basis with men when women twenty-one years of age and older were granted the franchise with the passage of the *Representation of the People Act* of 1928. With this reform women made up fifty-two percent of the electorate (Hill 2003, 93; Urquhart 2000, 75, 84, 175).

Ulster was constituted discursively and symbolically, as well as through the norms, practices, and rituals of the UWUC. Such discourse, symbols, norms, practices, and rituals constituted gender norms in terms of the roles and responsibilities of men as men and women as women in Ulster. Men's nation-work involved the defence of Ulster through military service and upholding law and order, as well as the formal political representation and leadership of Ulster in parliament and political parties. Women's nation-work was primarily concerned with education, administrative, and philanthropic work. As a wife and mother, an *Ulsterwoman* was expected to instill unionist values in her children, as well as the youth of Ulster generally. She was also expected to encourage and support *Ulstermen* in their nation-work, in terms of canvassing on behalf of unionist candidates, carrying out administrative work such as maintaining the electoral registers, as well as educating the Ulster and British masses and lobbying politicians, recruiting men for military service in defence of Ulster and "King and Country" during the war, and providing financial and moral support to Ulster's soldiers and their families.

The unionist constitution of Ulster was evident in the discourse of UWUC documents such as the motion which founded the organization, as well as its constitution and the Declaration, all of which expressed a sense of a common Ulster people united by a shared culture, religion, and political aims and goals. The rituals of the UWUC, such as the recitation of the pledge to only discuss the issue of Home Rule, and the singing of the hymn *Our God our Hope in Ages Past*, as well as *God Save the King* (which was possibly a practice added in 1920) at its meetings, further constituted the triad of Ulster identity. The activities of the UWUC (campaigning and lobbying against Home Rule, organizing

signing ceremonies for women on Ulster Day, canvassing on behalf of Unionist candidates, and administering the electoral registers, as well as its war work further constituted this British, Loyal Ulster identity which was tied to a religious (Protestant) identity. The assertion that Ulster was composed of a Protestant, Loyal, and British people not only drove this nation-work, but it was through this work that such an Ulster identity was constituted and also gendered with different roles for men and women within Ulster—hence the gender-segregated unionist organizations of the UUC and the UWUC.

Through this nation-work, the unionist discourse of Ulster shifted over time. Ulster, according to unionism, was initially considered to be the nine counties of the historic province that were part of a united Ireland that was politically and economically united with Great Britain. When it became clear to many Ulster unionists that partition would be the best way out of the Irish nationalist/Ulster unionist stalemate, unionism shifted its discourse of Ulster to that of an entity of six counties that retained its political and economic ties to Great Britain, was loyal to the British Crown and Empire, culturally British and Protestant and, therefore, distinct from those who asserted an independent Gaelic, Catholic, Ireland. The partition of Ireland and establishment of Ulster (Northern Ireland) as a self-governing region of the UK put paid to Home Rule as an on-going issue, according to the Ulster unionism. Since Home Rule, the sole reason for the existence of the UWUC, had been resolved with the partition of Ireland, the UWUC now needed to revisit its aims, goals, practices, and norms of membership, as well as its discourse and constitution of Ulster. The next chapter explores how the UWUC reconstituted itself and contributed to the constitution of the “Protestant state” of Ulster (Northern Ireland) during

the 1920s and into the 1930s through its aims, norms of membership, goals, practices, and nation-work.

Chapter 6

“For the Cause of Ulster”

The work [of the UWUC] was beyond all praise...[and] was invaluable...They never wearied or tired. No trouble was too great for them to undertake provided the cause of Ulster be furthered...Their services given so freely and patriotically could not be improved upon.

[PRONI.UWUC ECM 1913-40 (D 1098/1/2). March 2, 1923. Letter from A.W. Hungerford to the UWUC, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 137]⁷¹⁴

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4 the emergence of Ulster unionism as a political movement and ideology was discussed, while Chapter 5 focused on the UWUC after 1911 and its nation-work in constituting Ulster as gendered practical category; institutionalized form through its purpose, norms of membership, rituals, practices, goals, aims, discourse, and symbols; as well as through moments of nationness, such as the Ulster Crisis (1912-1914), Ulster Day (1912), and World War I. The present chapter now explores the unionist re-imagining of Ulster after partition through an examination of the UWUC's reconstitution and its grappling with these questions, as well as the nation-work it undertook throughout the 1920s—and which continued into 1930s.

As the resolution to the clash of nationhoods which the Ulster Crisis, the Anglo-Irish War, and the Civil War represented, two new political entities emerged out of partition in 1922: the Irish Free State (later to become the Republic of Ireland in 1949) and Northern Ireland, or Ulster, as Northern Ireland was [and is] commonly called in

⁷¹⁴ Wilson Hungerford was official (and later Chief) Unionist agent in Northern Ireland. He was a member of the UUC from 1912. He streamlined its finances and administrative structure. He was also Secretary of the Ulster Unionist Labour Association from its inception in 1918 (Bardon 2007, 498; Urquhart 2001, 137).

Ulster unionist discourse.⁷¹⁵ Partition required an altered unionist discourse of Ulster, from that of a nine-county entity within a united Ireland and a part of the United Kingdom, to a six-county entity in which Protestants and unionists dominated economically and politically, and which was politically and economically a part of the UK and separate from the rest of Ireland. Consequently, partition heralded a new era of nation-work for the UWUC. Its institutional norms, structures, rituals, aims, and goals shifted as it adapted to and helped to shape the new post-war and post-partition environment of Ulster.

Coinciding with the altered relationship between Ireland, Ulster, and Great Britain, and this re-imagined Ulster as practical category and institutionalized form, the UWUC had to adapt to its own changes institutionally. Between 1919 and 1923 the UWUC experienced two changes in leadership. Lady Theresa Londonderry, who was President of the UWUC throughout the Ulster Crisis and World War I, resigned her office in January 1919 because she had decided to relocate permanently to England after the death of her husband. The 3rd Duchess of Abercorn succeeded her, but resigned the post in March 1923 when her husband was appointed Governor of Northern Ireland. Lady Cecil Craig (Viscountess of Craigavon), whose husband was elected the first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland in 1922, succeeded the 3rd Duchess of Abercorn and remained President of the UWUC until 1942.⁷¹⁶ The coincidence of the end of World War I, partition, and these changes in leadership meant that the UWUC had to adjust to three

⁷¹⁵ Foster 1989, 566.

⁷¹⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). March 2, 1923; PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 28, 1919; March 2, 1923, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 137, 192-4, 201.

significant events simultaneously.

As a result of this shift in Ulster unionist discourse, as well as the event of partition and the end of the perceived threat of Home Rule, the UWUC reconsidered its future as an organization and its organizational structure. Home Rule, the constitutional *raison d'être* of the UWUC, had been settled with partition. Moreover, as was discussed in Chapter 5, the granting of the franchise to women in 1918 (even if only partial) raised the issue of whether gender-segregated political institutions were still relevant.

Consequently the UWUC was forced to grapple with the question of whether or not it had a reason to continue to exist: Should the local women's unionist associations merge with the men's? Should the UWUC support women unionist candidates in the elections for the new parliament in Belfast? What was the role of unionist women in Ulster (Northern Ireland), this new partially self-governing region of the UK? These were key questions which the UWUC grappled with during the late 1910s and early 1920s.

In January 1921 the President of the UWUC, Lady Abercorn broached these issues with the Executive Committee. She stated that "a serious crisis had been reached in the affairs of the Council, and a decision must come to either take up and carry on definite work or to dissolve [sic]. [She further] emphasised the necessity for securing proper representation on the men's Unionist Associations [sic] throughout the country and urged representatives of local Associations to take this matter up strongly [sic]"⁷¹⁷ Thus the question of the UWUC's purpose and future was raised for debate within the Council, at least at the level of its executive.

⁷¹⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 25, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123.

Lady Abercorn reiterated the question of the UWUC's future in October of that same year in a letter to the Executive Committee. Lady Abercorn put forth the problems facing the UWUC. She also raised some of the options to be considered. She noted that since under the existing constitution the UWUC was "much handicapped", given that the organization's *raison d'être* was now a moot point as Ireland had been partitioned, "it has occurred to some of our members that it might be for the best to consider seriously the winding up of the present Association [sic]".⁷¹⁸ Lady Abercorn stated that she would "deeply regret the breaking up of our Council, Executive, and Branches, where we have a fine, solid body of loyal women working".⁷¹⁹ She suggested keeping "the Association as at present constituted [sic] owing to the altered conditions of politics since the War [partition]" and advised that a sub-committee be created to explore what kind of work the UWUC could do for "the Cause" under the present condition".⁷²⁰ If the committee decided that the UWUC should fold she asked that it consider ways to keep the local branches functioning within a structure that "would bring town and country Branches more together, and be more workable and useful than we seem to be at the present".⁷²¹ This sub-committee was asked to submit its draft recommendations to each local branch of the UWUC "to get their views" prior to submitting its final report to the Executive

⁷¹⁸ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 4, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 129.

⁷¹⁹ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 4, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123.

⁷²⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 4, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123.

⁷²¹ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 4, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123.

Committee.⁷²²

The UWUC was grappling with questions of its future and possible restructuring in order to remain relevant within the changed context of Ulster. Clearly many in the UWUC felt that in the immediate post-partition context of the Civil War and the Boundary Commission, which meant continuing insecurity for Ulster both territorially and institutionally, there was a need for the organization to change in order to remain “useful” to the Ulster unionist movement. Some institutional changes would be necessary if it was to continue to function and adapt in the new post-partition Ulster. These were obviously not easy issues to address since almost ten months after such issues were initially raised within the Council in January 1921 they were still being discussed.

The sub-committee tabled its report at the November 1921 meeting of the Executive Committee. It proposed that the UWUC should not fold, but that its structure, norms of membership, purpose, aims, and goals should be altered. The sub-committee recommended that “it is desirable in the interests of efficient working and for the promotion of the Unionist Cause [sic], that separate Women’s Unionist Associations be continued in all Constituencies [sic], but that a scheme of close affiliation with the Men’s or Parliamentary Associations [sic] be adopted for the purpose of election work”.⁷²³ It also recommended that the UUC meet with the UWUC “to decide the best means of affiliation” and that “as the importance of the Imperial Union [sic] was never greater than at present, the name ‘Unionist’ be retained by the Council and all its Affiliated

⁷²² PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 4, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123.

⁷²³ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). November 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 130.

Associations [sic]”.⁷²⁴ The sub-committee further suggested that “as a measure of economy, Mr Hamill [the Organising Secretary of the UWUC] be asked to carry out the work of the council at his own office”.⁷²⁵ In addition, it advised that the UWUC continue to hold its meetings at the Old Town Hall, but that “except where special business makes more frequent meetings necessary” the Executive Committee meet quarterly rather than monthly.⁷²⁶

Recall from Chapters 4 and 5 that this was a period of great insecurity for Ulster unionists and Protestants. They were institutionalizing their political and economic power through the new Belfast parliament within the context of civil war and a review of the border between Ulster and the Irish Free State by the Boundary Commission as per the conditions of the *Government of Ireland Act* (1920) and the *Anglo-Irish Treaty* (1921). Consequently, it was through such debates and the siege mentality of Ulster unionist domopolitics that Ulster as a practical category and institutionalized form was reconstituted as a “Protestant parliament and a Protestant state” for a Protestant people.⁷²⁷ The nation-work of the UWUC was important in the process of constituting this new Ulster through the UWUC’s norms, values, and rituals, which were reflected in the

⁷²⁴ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). November 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 130.

⁷²⁵ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). November 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 130. Although it is not clear from the minutes of the UWUC what additional role Mr. Hamill had for which he had his own office, it is clear from the minutes that the decision to offer him the position of Organising Secretary was made in part because he had an office of his own with access to a telephone and a room in which the Executive Committee of the UWUC could meet (PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* [D 1098/1/1]. Report of sub-committee re: Secretary. February 27, 1911, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 9).

⁷²⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). November 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 130.

⁷²⁷ Parliament of Northern Ireland. *Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates: Official Report* (Hansard) *House of Commons*, vol. 16, cols. 1091, 1095, cited in Farrell 1980, 92.

UWUC's election, education, philanthropic, and fundraising nation-work.

POST-PARTITION: INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND CONSOLIDATION

Ulster redefined

Here the role of the UWUC in the process of redefining Ulster as practical category, as well as institutionalized and gendered form after partition is explored and then later in the chapter connected to the nation-work of the UWUC. The partition of Ireland had been agreed to by Ulster unionists and Irish nationalists in 1916 as a (temporary for some) solution to the "Irish Question", as the struggle between the Irish nationalist and Ulster unionist claims with respect to Ireland was known. The minutes of the meetings of both the Executive and Council of the UWUC, correspondence amongst members of the UWUC and between the UWUC and the UUC, as well as media coverage of events of this period illustrate the new understanding of Ulster and its significance post-partition. Such sources also illuminate the role which the UWUC felt that it could/should play in the institutionalization of this new Ulster.

The partition issue was of major concern to the UWUC. Some members of the Executive of the UWUC, as well as rank and file members, were not initially supportive of the proposed partition of Ireland. According to the minutes of the meetings of the Council, the majority felt that partition abrogated the women's Declaration that the UWUC's members and supporters had signed in 1912 and which, as discussed in the previous chapter, involved a pledge to a united Ulster polity (understood to include all

nine counties) in opposition to Home Rule for Ireland.⁷²⁸ Many considered support for partition to be a betrayal of their unionist “brothers and sisters” in Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan. They had been working with them for at least a decade in the UWUC, and members from those counties would be excluded from Ulster if Ireland was partitioned as proposed.

The discussion within the UWUC about the potential partition of Ulster had been on-going for several years prior to partition becoming a reality in 1922. Lady Dufferin and Ava wrote to Lady Theresa Londonderry in July 1916 that:

Our women are naturally much upset by the turn things have taken, and are longing to be up and doing. Of course we all feel heartbroken over the proposed partition of Ulster and are still hoping some better solution of our difficulties may come out of the melting pot...in reply [to Mrs Wheeler]⁷²⁹ I have said that “No scheme can come forward except through the Council—that we must not act prematurely in any way and that we do not yet know what is going to happen”. I feel strongly with our women in all this, but I thought it well to add, that of one thing I was quite sure “we must do nothing to weaken Sir E. Carson’s⁷³⁰ position. He is the only strong leader we have and any expression of opinion that weakened his authority would be bad for Ulster [sic]”.

The whole state of Ireland is terrible, and hopeless because the government

⁷²⁸ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). March 9, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 197; Urquhart 2000, 66-8.

⁷²⁹ Edith Wheeler was an Honorary Secretary of the UWUC between 1911 and 1912 (Kinghan 1975, 92). She continued to be an influential member of the UWUC who organized talks, classes for speakers and canvassers, and participated in UWUC missions to England and Scotland [PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098 /1/2). April 21, 1911; December 12, 1912; March 19, 1912; April 1, 1913; June 17, 1913; December 18, 1913; September 3, 1919; October 7, 1919; November 4, 1919; January 6, 1920; February 3, 1920; March 30, 1920; January 25, 1921; March 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 3, 16, 39, 50, 70-5, 80, 92, 111-5, 124-5].

⁷³⁰ Sir Edward Carson.

will not allow strong measures to be taken. After the “rebellion”⁷³¹ they had a splendid chance of showing a mailed fist and they lost it.⁷³²

Here, and in subsequent discussions about partition, the new understanding of a six-county Ulster began to emerge. Clearly unionists, including the UWUC, were not in reality a united polity, as the above letter indicates, even though Lady Dufferin and Ava, and the dominant discourse of Ulster unionism constituted Ulster as a unified polity. Such unity was cast as vital to Ulster’s continued existence given the perceived danger which Irish nationalists both within and without Ulster posed to Ulster’s continued existence as British, Protestant, and loyal. As such, partition, and the establishment a Belfast-based parliament for six-counties in which Unionists and Protestants would dominate given the demographics of those six counties, was constituted through unionist domopolitics as the only way in which Ulster could be protected territorially and politically.

Just two weeks later in July 1916, Edith Mercier Clements⁷³³ confirmed these sentiments about partition in a letter to Lady Theresa Londonderry describing her recent trip to Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan. She reported that many members of the UWUC in those counties were:

at present...too sad to even want to attend our committees and we must show them that they are more to us now than ever before because of their

⁷³¹ This refers to the 1916 Easter Rising of Irish nationalists against the British administration in Ireland, which was discussed in Chapter 3.

⁷³² PRONI. *Theresa, Lady Londonderry Papers* (D 2846/1/8/38). Letter from the Dowager Lady Dufferin and Ava to Lady Londonderry. July 6, 1916.

⁷³³ Edith Mercier Clements was Assistant Honorary Treasurer of the UWUC from 1911 until her death in 1920 (Kinghan 1975, 92; Urquhart 2001, 3).

inestimable and incomparable self-sacrifice... You can hardly form any idea of how many women are irreconcilable and never would have consented to anything which meant the breaking of the Covenant [sic].⁷³⁴

Edith Wheeler echoed this sense of a bond between unionist women in a letter to Theresa Londonderry, which discussed the issue of a scheme to assist in the emigration of women from Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan to “the six counties”. She declared that: “We all feel that unless we do something like this we will be unable to look old friends and fellow Covenanters⁷³⁵ straightly in the face [sic]”.⁷³⁶ Clearly many women in the UWUC felt deep ties with each other through the years of working together and also through the act of having signed the women’s Declaration in 1912.

In response to such concerns, also raised by Mrs M. Sinclair (Honorary Secretary of North Tyrone Women’s Unionist Association), Hugh de Fellenberg Montgomery⁷³⁷ asserted that partition did not undermine either the Declaration or the Solemn League and Covenant. He argued that:

If I enter into a solemn covenant to give you a certain house...and that house...is swallowed up by an earthquake I obviously have to reconsider my position...our duty [is] to oppose Home Rule in any way we can, and, if we cannot prevent its being introduced in some part of Ireland, to

⁷³⁴ PRONI. *Theresa, Lady Londonderry Papers* (D 2846/1/8/43). Letter from Edith Mercier Clements to Lady Londonderry. July 19, 1916.

⁷³⁵ This refers to those who signed the women’s Declaration and the men’s Solemn League and Covenant in 1912 as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

⁷³⁶ PRONI. *Theresa, Lady Londonderry Papers* (D 2846/1/8/39). Letter from Edith Wheeler to Lady Londonderry. July 8, 1916.

⁷³⁷ Montgomery was Deputy Lieutenant, Justice of the Peace, and High Sheriff of County Tyrone, and Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for County Fermanagh, as well as a member of the Northern Irish Senate from 1922 (Urquhart 2001, 135).

prevent its being introduced in as large a part of Ireland as we can...the six counties is the most we can absolutely secure.⁷³⁸

Limiting Ulster to the six counties (Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone) would give unionists a larger electoral majority and, therefore, increased security in terms of their political and economic dominance in a Belfast parliament. Acceptance of this shift was vital to Ulster unionism's constitution of post-partition Ulster.⁷³⁹

In the end, in spite of the schism over the proposal for a six-county parliament based in Belfast, it seemed that the majority of the UWUC agreed with this point of view. It did not oppose the *Government of Ireland Act* (1920) through which a six-county Ulster (or Northern Ireland) was established as an essentially self-governing region of the UK.⁷⁴⁰ Nonetheless, at this stage there was still a prospect that the Boundary Commission could alter the border between Ulster and the Irish Free State, which was embroiled in a civil war until mid-1923. Ultimately, the UWUC's support of partition cost it members as many in the local branches of Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan resigned from the organization in protest.⁷⁴¹ According to the minutes of Executive Committee meetings of March and June 1920, Mrs Shaw-Hamilton, Mrs Talbot, Lady Mabel Annesley, Lady

⁷³⁸ PRONI. *Papers of Hugh de Fellenberg Montgomery* (D 627/429/66). Letter from Hugh de Fellenberg Montgomery to Mrs M. W. Sinclair. September 20, 1916, cited in Urquhart 2000, 68.

⁷³⁹ Buckland 1973, 106-7; Darby 1997, 27.

⁷⁴⁰ Urquhart 2000, 68.

⁷⁴¹ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). March 30, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 115-6.

Rode, and Lady Bangor resigned their membership in the UWUC.⁷⁴²

Institutionalization of the re-imagined Ulster

Recall from Chapter 4 that the Belfast parliament and its bureaucracy, including its police and security forces (the B-Specials), were constituted as unionist and Protestant. The ethos of the new Ulster (Northern Ireland) was based on a particular Ulster unionist and Protestant ideology, which illustrated the close ties between Ulster unionism and the Orange Order, as well as among Ulster unionist political, cultural, and religious identities, as discussed in the previous two chapters. This ethos was also based in the domopolitics of the perceived danger out of which Ulster (Northern Ireland) was born and from which it needed to be protected: the Civil War and an Irish nationalist majority in the south, as well as a sizable Irish nationalist minority in Ulster, which opposed partition and advocated a unified, independent Ireland predominantly constituted as Catholic and Gaelic.

In 1934 the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Sir James Craig, put forth this ethos in the parliament of Northern Ireland, declaring that: “I am an Orangeman first and a politician and a member of this parliament afterwards...All I boast is that we have a Protestant parliament and a Protestant state”.⁷⁴³ Craig was contrasting the Ulster parliament and sub-state of the UK with the southern Irish parliament and state. Earlier in

⁷⁴² PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). March 30, 1920; June 1, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 115-8; PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). March 9, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 197; Urquhart 2000, 66-8.

⁷⁴³ Parliament of Northern Ireland. *Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates: Official Report* (Hansard) *House of Commons*, vol. 16, cols. 1091, 1095, cited in Farrell 1980, 92.

his speech he had observed that “in the South they boasted of a Catholic state. They still boast of Southern Ireland being a Catholic state”.⁷⁴⁴ Arguably Craig’s speech smacked of religious jingoism and political defensiveness; however, recall that only three years later de Valera’s government established a new constitution which outlawed divorce as well as birth control, and enshrined the special relationship between the Catholic Church and the Free State.

The shift in the unionist discourse of Ulster from a nine-county to a six-county Protestant- and unionist-dominated entity post-partition was further institutionalized within the UWUC through changes in its constitution in 1929. The UWUC would now focus on “promoting” and “assisting” the aims and goals of the UUC and the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) in the parliament of Northern Ireland, as well as the consolidation of the empire. Meanwhile, having agreed to partition, the UUP and the UUC now focused on consolidating and maintaining unionist and Protestant political and economic power in Northern Ireland. In the context of insecurity produced by the Civil War (1922-1923) and on-going work of the Boundary Commission between 1924 and 1925, this meant establishing the institutions of Ulster (the new parliament, bureaucracy, and police force) and protecting the existing boundaries of Ulster as stipulated in the *Government of Ireland Act* (1920) and *Anglo-Irish Treaty* (1921).

Echoing this shift in the making of Ulster as practical category and institutionalized form, the new constitution of the UWUC stipulated that its membership was now drawn from six counties, not nine. In addition, since the Home Rule issue was

⁷⁴⁴ Wilson 1989, 73, cited in Jackson 2003, 229.

now settled:

the sole objects of the Council shall be: to keep alive the feeling of the Union with Great Britain, and to promote and assist all such measures as may be considered desirable by the Ulster Unionist Council and the Unionist Party of the Parliament of Northern Ireland for the consolidation of the Empire, and the good government and improvement of Northern Ireland, and all classes and conditions of people within its borders.⁷⁴⁵

The UWUC also constituted itself as active in and central to the establishment and consolidation of this new Ulster. Furthermore, it continued to constitute “the women of Ulster” as a representative institution of this new Ulster (the six counties and both rural and urban Ulster).

Paragraph Three of the revised constitution outlined the UWUC’s main activities in furtherance of its objectives. These included work it had been doing over the past decades, such as maintaining electoral registers, canvassing and speaking at elections, and supporting public meetings and reforms proposed by the UUP in the Northern Irish parliament through the distribution of leaflets and other information. It also included work aimed at “trying to raise the standard of education, morality and industry of all kinds” and all classes, as well as supporting unionist propaganda work in Great Britain, America, and “the colonies”.⁷⁴⁶ The material and physical nation-work of the UWUC continued to be geared to education, but with the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918, this work expanded beyond educating *Ulsterwomen* about unionist aims and goals

⁷⁴⁵ PRONI. *Draft Constitution of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council* (D 1098/1/3). January 1929, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 219.

⁷⁴⁶ PRONI. *Draft Constitution of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council* (D 1098/1/3). January 1929, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 219.

to include educating them about their roles and responsibilities as new voters. This meant that “At Homes”, as well as classes for its members on public-speaking, voting, and current events were important nation-work to which the UWUC dedicated its focus and energy (more of which later).

With the loss of members from Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan, attention was also turned to building up the organization and to the retention of its membership, as well as to establishing stronger relations between rural areas and Ulster. Beginning in the mid-1920s the UWUC began an “experiment” of holding two of its four annual Executive Committee meetings outside of Belfast. This was meant to facilitate increased connections between “town and country” members, and to enable those who perhaps could not travel to Belfast to have a chance to attend some of the Council’s meetings.⁷⁴⁷ (It is interesting to note, however, that its meetings were generally held on weekdays during business hours, which would make it unlikely that many working-class members of the UWUC would be able to attend these meetings regularly.)

This was crucial to the establishment and maintenance of “Ulster-wide” connections between local branches of the UWUC, and so was critical to the processes of the UWUC constituting its members as sharing an identity as *Ulsterwomen*. While this “town and country” divide had existed prior to partition, recall that during the Ulster Crisis and World War I unionists mobilized around the common causes of opposition to Home Rule and the war effort. It was after partition, when unionists and Protestants in Ulster were concerned with establishing and consolidating their institutional, political,

⁷⁴⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 22, 1923, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 140.

and economic power in Northern Ireland that such cleavages (particularly those between Belfast, as the politically and economically dominant centre of Northern Ireland, and the rest of Northern Ireland) became even more critical to address so that unionists and Protestants across Northern Ireland were unified in supporting and working towards the consolidation of unionist and Protestant political and economic power. Moreover, it was vital to these efforts in the new border counties and communities since the border between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland was under review. They were the areas of Northern Ireland which experienced much violence and were most under threat of armed attack by Irish nationalists, particularly during the Civil War. In this way, the branches of the UWUC in the border areas were critical to the institutionalization of the unionist territoriality and ideology of post-partition Ulster (Northern Ireland).

While the UWUC claimed to be a non-sectarian organization, according to its constitution Ulster was a part of the British nation-state. While it certainly strove to be inclusive of all Protestants denominations, the ties of Ulster unionists to the Orange Order and its pledges of loyalty to a Protestant British state and Crown made the UWUC very unlikely to be an institution which many Catholics would join. Moreover, the lack of separation of church and state in the UK meant that the state was constituted through a particular religious identity and a particular religious identity was tied to the state, whereas other religious identities were constituted as institutionally outside of the state. Although the constitution of Ulster as Protestant, British, and loyal had always been a part of the understanding of Ulster in UWUC discourse, symbols, norms, aims, practices, and rituals, in post-partition Ulster this understanding took on extra significance as a

boundary marker of those who were constituted as institutionally part of Ulster (Northern Ireland) and those who were not. Ulster was constituted through unionist discourse, symbols, aims, norms, practices, and rituals as a Protestant, loyal bulwark against the Catholic, Gaelic domination of the southern parliament. As the only part of Ireland that remained a part of the UK after partition, this became ever more important to the Protestants' and unionists' continued existence in Ireland.

As such, religious identity was an increasingly significant unifying resource. Ulster unionists' loyalty to the British Crown and Protestant identity, as noted in Chapter 5, was institutionalized in 1913 when the UWUC established the practice of opening each Council and Executive Committee meeting with the hymn, *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*. This reflected the practice within unionist discourse and symbols of Ulster to draw on history and evoked a sense of a covenantal relationship between the people of Ulster (read Protestant, loyal, and British) and God. Further fusing these religious and national/cultural identities was the practice of opening meetings with the recitation of a prayer, written by the Lord Primate of Ulster (the head of the Church of Ireland in Ulster) at the request of the UWUC, and used for the first time at its Executive Committee meeting in December 1920.⁷⁴⁸ The prayer remembered to God "all those in authority" including "His Most Gracious Majesty the King, His Excellency the Governor of

⁷⁴⁸ The suggestion of opening Council and Executive Committee meetings with a prayer was raised at the November 2, 1920 Executive Committee meeting by Mrs McMordie. The Executive Committee requested that the President of the UWUC write the Lord Primate to ask that he "write a short form of Prayer [sic] suitable for the occasion [PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). November 2, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 121]. It is unclear from the minutes of both the Council and its Executive Committee as to why it was decided to commission a prayer at this particular time, but arguably it could be seen as part of the process of institutionalizing the unionist identity in the new province of Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland, the Prime Minister, the Government and Members of Parliament of the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister, the Government and Members of the Parliament of Northern Ireland, and all who serve under them”.⁷⁴⁹ It also asked God to “watch over our Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Police, and give to them the right spirit in doing their duty” and concluded by asking that “all people [be] grant[ed] the gifts of patience, self control and unfailing faith in Thee”.⁷⁵⁰

The text of this prayer and the fact that it was written by the head of the Church of Ireland in Northern Ireland, constituted Northern Ireland and the UWUC as Protestant. Since many Irish nationalists (particularly members and supporters of Sinn Féin⁷⁵¹) neither recognized the authority of the British sovereign nor the Belfast parliament, it was unlikely many Irish nationalists would be prepared to recite such a prayer. This belies the UWUC’s assertions that it was a non-sectarian organization.

Added to these meeting rituals during the 1920s was the singing of *God Save the King* at the end of each meeting or, if the practice was not new, at least the minutes now recorded the practice. Such rituals fused British political and cultural and Protestant religious identities in Ulster unionist discourse, which made it difficult (if not impossible) for members of the UWUC to separate the two and for the organization to be non-sectarian in reality. Protestants and unionists (according to unionist discourse) were assumed to share a British political and cultural identity. They were presumed to be loyal

⁷⁴⁹ Cited in Kinghan 1975, 95.

⁷⁵⁰ Cited in Kinghan 1975, 95. See Appendix VII for the full text of the prayer.

⁷⁵¹ Recall from Chapter 4 that Sinn Féin members elected to the Belfast parliament refused to take their seats in that parliament (Farrell 1980, 37, 66-7).

to the British Crown and state, while Catholics were assumed to share an Irish national identity and were, therefore, constituted as disloyal to the British Crown and state which was officially Protestant given the institutional ties between sovereign, church, and state in the UK.

This was evident in the minutes for the meeting of the Executive Committee in April 1934, during which there was a discussion of the Catholic Truth Society's application to use the Ulster Hall (a prominent concert hall in Belfast) during the first week in July.⁷⁵² The Catholic Truth Society, founded in 1899, celebrated the peasant Irish culture of the Gaelic Revival movement and tied it to Catholicism.⁷⁵³ Its request to use the Ulster Hall during the first week of July was contentious since this was just one week prior to "the Glorious Twelfth" holiday, which was the height of the "marching season" for the Orange Order. Recall that "the Glorious Twelfth" commemorated the triumph of Protestant King William III over Catholic King James II in Ireland at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. Members of the Orange Order or Ulster unionists may have wanted the Ulster Hall for events connected to that holiday. As a result of this discussion, the Secretary of the UWUC was asked to write to the Lord Mayor of Belfast and members of the City Council to "protest on behalf of the Council [the UWUC] against the building being let to any body of persons [sic] whose loyalty to the King and the Government of Northern Ireland was in doubt, and at the same time to explain that the protest was made not on any religious ground but only in the interests of the Loyalists [sic] of the

⁷⁵² PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). April 19, 1934, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 170-1.

⁷⁵³ Elliott 2001, 451.

Province”.⁷⁵⁴ The fusion of these political, cultural, and religious identities within the unionist discourse, norms, symbols, aims, and practices of the UWUC meant one could not separate one from the other.

Consolidation of British/Loyal/Protestant identity

In September 1919 (prior to partition), in a move that further fused British political and cultural identities with Protestant religious identities, Miss F. H. Whitaker proposed to the Executive Committee of the UWUC that it grant the Association of Loyal Orangewomen of Ireland (ALOI)⁷⁵⁵ representation on both the Executive Committee and the Council. It was recommended at the March 2, 1920 meeting of the Executive Committee that a sub-committee be established to meet with representatives of the ALOI to discuss this proposal.⁷⁵⁶

The constitution of the UWUC was changed to allow for the inclusion of the ALOI within the UWUC in February 1921. Each District Lodge of the ALOI was allowed three representatives on the Council, and its representation on the Executive Committee

⁷⁵⁴ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). April 19, 1934, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 170-1.

⁷⁵⁵ Established in County Cavan in 1887, the Association of Loyal Orangewomen of Ireland was inactive for a number of years after initially flourishing. It was re-established in December 1911, and by 1919 twenty-five women’s lodges existed (including ten in Belfast) with a total membership of over 1000. The ALOI shared with its male counterpart “a pervasive sense of religious identification and ritual” (Urquhart 2000, 59-60). However, gender norms also pervaded the Orange Order and the ALOI. At the “Glorious Twelfth” celebrations in July 1912 the Orange Grand Master of Londonderry, R. W. Kerr, paid tribute to the growth of the ALOI since December 1911, asserting that: “What it [the ALOI] meant to Protestantism no one could estimate, because they all knew that the hand that rocked the cradle ruled the world. So they said to their Orange sisters: ‘Go on and God be with you in your splendid work for the truth and home and freedom’” (*Belfast Evening Telegraph*. July 12, 1912, cited in Urquhart 2000, 60).

⁷⁵⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). September 3, 1919; March 2, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 111, 115.

was “to be nominated by the Grand Lodge of the Association out of, and in the proportion of two for every three of the representatives of the Association on the Council”.⁷⁵⁷ The institutionalization of representation of the ALOI on both the Council and Executive of the UWUC not only highlighted the overlap between the two organizations in terms of personnel and politics in both the men’s and women’s Unionist and Orange organizations,⁷⁵⁸ but further entwined and cemented the British, loyal, and Protestant identities of Ulster.

In an effort to further solidify Ulster’s British identity (and thereby its place within the UK), two new initiatives became practice in 1925. First, members of the UK Conservative Party were invited to speak at both Council and Executive Committee meetings in order to inform the UWUC of issues of the day that were deemed to be of importance to Ulster. Second, representatives of the UWUC were invited to attend the conference of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations (an umbrella organization of all Conservative and Unionist organizations across the UK) in London.⁷⁵⁹ Both of these initiatives furthered the development of formal ties between the UWUC and organizations across the rest of the UK. This was also achieved through the local Unionist Women’s Associations linking with constituencies in Great Britain to carry out

⁷⁵⁷ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/2). February 5, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 198-9.

⁷⁵⁸ Kinghan 1975, 41; Urquhart 1994, 112.

⁷⁵⁹ Kinghan 1975, 50. PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). May 29, 1925; July 7, 1925; April 20, 1926, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 144-7.

propaganda work.⁷⁶⁰

Another change, which could be seen as an indication of the UWUC's proximity to Unionist power, was the fact that the Executive and Council meetings of the UWUC were now held at the UUC Headquarters in Belfast—first at the Old City Hall and then the Glengall Street offices. Prior to 1918, the Council minutes record that its meetings were held in the Minor Hall of the Young Men's Christian Association, while the minutes of the Executive Committee record that its meetings took place in the parlour of the YMCA Hall during the first two months of 1911. After Mr. Hamill was hired as Organising Secretary of the UWUC its Executive Committee meetings were held at his office in Belfast until February 1912, when Executive Committee meetings were held in the Lecture Hall of the YWCA in Donegall Square in Belfast, and in various rooms in Belfast's Old Town Hall. As mentioned above, in 1924 the quarterly meetings of the Executive Committee alternated between Belfast and regional centres around Northern Ireland in order to reach those who might not be able to travel to Belfast.⁷⁶¹

POST-PARTITION: NATION-WORK

Here the nation-work of the UWUC after partition is examined in terms of its role in constituting Ulster as institutionalized and gendered form. It begins with a discussion

⁷⁶⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 7, 1919, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 112.

⁷⁶¹ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1) and *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 1911-January 1930, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 3-155; PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). April 10, 1912; January 16, 1913; April 1, 1913; May 20, 1913; January 18, 1914; August 18, 1914; September 28, 1914; and January 15, 1915, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 185-90.

of the election nation-work of the UWUC before investigating its education-related nation-work. With the institutionalization of post-partition Ulster in the norms of membership, aims, practices, and rituals of the UWUC, the nation-work of the UWUC similarly constituted the new post-partition Ulster. This was reflected and constituted through the UWUC's education, campaigning, and canvassing nation-work during elections in Ulster and the UK. Such election work and the education of UWUC members and others in Ulster about Ulster unionist norms, aims, goals, and policies was important nation-work in this period. It served to secure, maintain, and legitimize unionist and Protestant political and economic power within Ulster and the UK and helped to underpin the sectarian state of Northern Ireland.

However, as before partition, such nation-work was gendered. The spheres of party politics, governance, and maintaining law and order were still deemed to be masculine domains, while the spheres of home and family were still constituted as feminine realms; a woman's role was still that of wife and mother. Nevertheless, recall from Chapter 5 that the UWUC had already blazed a path for women in the party political sphere as canvassers, effective mobilizers of unionists during elections and the Ulster Crisis, as well as administrators of unionist electoral registers. Reflecting on the extension of a partial franchise to women in 1918 at the Council meeting in February 1921, the new leader of the UUC, Sir James Craig,⁷⁶² "spoke of the work of the women and urged them to use their vote, to stand united and so secure a good majority [of Unionists] to make the

⁷⁶² He succeeded to the leadership of the UUC on the resignation of Sir Edward Carson in February 1921 (Jackson 2003, 368).

new parliament a success”.⁷⁶³ At this same meeting The 3rd Duchess of Abercorn) read a resolution which she had presented the previous day to the UWUC (and which was passed unanimously), which stated “that in the view of the approaching Elections [sic] for the Northern Parliament [sic] and the necessity for organised and energetic efforts to secure a Unionist majority, the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council is prepared to undertake Election work [sic] with the Ulster Unionist Council”.⁷⁶⁴ Although distinct gender nation-work remained, according to Ulster unionist discourse, the cooperation and unity amongst men and women in carrying out their nation-work related to elections was considered critical.

Election work

After partition, the election nation-work of the UWUC also continued to focus on maintaining electoral registers and making sure that all eligible unionist voters were on the electoral register and were, therefore, able to vote. This was crucial work in terms of maximizing the electoral success of Unionists and establishing and maintaining unionist and Protestant political and economic power in Ulster. As noted earlier, it became all the more significant when women over thirty years of age were granted the franchise in the UK in 1918.⁷⁶⁵ The Executive Committee minutes of June 21, 1921 reported: “The

⁷⁶³ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). February 5, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 198.

⁷⁶⁴ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). February 5, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 198.

⁷⁶⁵ Kinghan 1975, 42, 4; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). March 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2011, 125.

president spoke on the subject of [electoral] Registration [sic], and the importance of having every eligible person to put [sic] on the Register”.⁷⁶⁶ A decade later, when women and men were granted the franchise on equal terms (age 21) in 1928, making women fifty-two percent of the electorate, this work became even more crucial.⁷⁶⁷ Given that partition effectively granted self-government to Ulster, it was vital that unionists and Protestants emerged as the dominant power in the new parliament in order to shape Ulster according to Unionist norms, aims, goals, and values.

The first general election for the Belfast parliament in 1921 was a resounding success for Unionists. All forty Unionist candidates were elected to the House of Commons in that parliament (along with six Sinn Féin and six Irish Nationalist candidates who abstained from taking their seats).⁷⁶⁸ The minutes of the Executive Committee of the UWUC recorded that “a hearty congratulations of the U.W.U.C. sent to Sir James Craig and to Mrs Chichester and Mrs McMordie, “on their election as members of the Northern parliament”;⁷⁶⁹ thanks was also proffered to all UWUC members who had helped “to make the election a splendid success”.⁷⁷⁰ This was only the second election in which women could vote and stand for election, the first being the UK general election in 1918.

⁷⁶⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 21, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 127.

⁷⁶⁷ Hill 2003, 93; Urquhart 2000, 75, 84, 175.

⁷⁶⁸ Farrell 1980, 37, 66-7.

⁷⁶⁹ Neither Mrs Chichester nor Mrs McMordie (the first women elected to the Northern Irish parliament) was supported officially as candidates by the UWUC [PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 24, 1921; March 1, 1921; April 5, 1921; May 3, 1921; June 21, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123-7; Urquhart 2000, 73].

⁷⁷⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 21, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 127.

Between 1923 and 1924, the Labour government in power at Westminster was not particularly sympathetic to the Unionists in power in the Belfast parliament. The Boundary Commission established under the *Anglo-Irish Treaty* of 1921 was delayed due to the Civil War. With the cessation of fighting in 1923, the Labour government reinitiated the work of the Commission. Partition was considered by many Irish nationalists and many in the British government as a temporary measure. The Boundary Commission, the 1924 UK general election, and the 1925 general election for the Northern Irish parliament, therefore, were seen as critical events to the future of Ulster. It was especially important to ensure Unionist electoral success in order to influence the Commission and the UK government.⁷⁷¹

No speakers from Ulster were sent to England during the 1924 election, since it was determined by the UUC that it was critical to concentrate on Ulster constituencies (particularly North Belfast, West Belfast, Fermanagh, and Tyrone, all areas with sizeable support for Irish nationalist political parties) in order to secure the electoral success of Unionist candidates and, therefore, political power in Ulster. Towards this goal the UWUC held a “very large and influential meeting [sic] [with] representatives of all parts of Tyrone and Fermanagh”.⁷⁷² In the end, the Conservative Party won the 1924 UK general election. All thirteen seats for Ulster in Westminster were won by Unionists who were allied with the Conservative caucus in Westminster.⁷⁷³ The 1925 general election in

⁷⁷¹ Kinghan 1975, 48.

⁷⁷² Kinghan 1975, 49; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 16, 1924, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 143.

⁷⁷³ Kinghan 1975, 49.

Northern Ireland returned a Unionist majority to the Northern Irish parliament, although with a smaller majority than in 1921 (thirty-two seats compared to forty seats, with the IPP winning ten seats, Independent Unionists four, Labour three, and Sinn Féin two seats).⁷⁷⁴ These elections took place in the context of lingering insecurity after the civil war and as a result of the pending Boundary Commission report, which posed potential threats to the territorial and ideological integrity of Northern Ireland (Ulster), according to the Ulster unionist domopolitics siege mentality.

The UWUC's *Annual Report* for 1925 reflected a sense that the nation-work of Ulster unionism generally, and the UWUC in particular, was on-going and integral to electoral politics, especially at this time when the question of the border was in limbo.

The report stated that:

The year 1925 has been an eventful one in the history of our Province. The action of the Labour Government at Westminster, when in power in 1924, in setting up a Boundary Commission despite the protests of Northern Ireland seem likely to plunge our country into fresh horrors of civil strife; and almost to the end of the year we were filled with anxiety by the uncertainty of the outcome. At last, when it seemed almost certain that an adverse decision would be promulgated by the Commissioners [sic] an amicable agreement was reached between the three Governments [sic] concerned,⁷⁷⁵ confirming the Boundary [sic] exactly as defined by the Act of 1920,⁷⁷⁶ thus freeing Ulster from the dark shadow overhanging [sic] her for so long, and justifying the policy of the Government—"Not an inch"... the result of the General Election [sic] held in the month of April showed that there is no weakening in our allegiance to the Empire and no breach in our united front. The various affiliated Associations [of the UWUC] and their members played no small part in the success of the

⁷⁷⁴ Farrell 1980, 77.

⁷⁷⁵ The governments of Northern Ireland, the Irish Free State, and the UK.

⁷⁷⁶ *Government of Ireland Act* (1920).

Election [sic].⁷⁷⁷

The domopolitics siege mentality clearly remained central to Ulster unionism. This made it particularly important to educate members of the UWUC about the electoral systems of the UK and Ulster so that they knew how to use their votes to further Unionist and Protestant aims and interests. Campaigning and canvassing on behalf of the unionist cause, and ensuring the electoral registers were up-to-date were also all vital nation-work in constituting Ulster as practical category and institutionalized and gendered form.

Speakers and canvassing

Given the great uncertainty regarding the territorial integrity of Ulster during the early 1920s, speaking and canvassing for the maintenance of the 1920 border (and hence the territorial integrity of Ulster) was also critical nation-work. Sir James Craig planned a unionist propaganda campaign across the UK in which 300 unionists from Ulster (fifty of whom were from the UWUC) travelled throughout England and Scotland speaking and distributing Ulster unionist propaganda in attempt to establish UK-wide support for the demand of Ulster unionists that the Westminster government maintain the boundaries as agreed in the 1920 *Government of Ireland Act*.⁷⁷⁸

Wilson Hungerford provided an account of the UWUC's contribution to this campaign in a letter to the UWUC. He described the work of the UWUC members as:

⁷⁷⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 19, 1926, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 146.

⁷⁷⁸ Kinghan 1975, 45; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). April 4, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 133.

beyond all praise. In fact we could not have done without them. In London, where I remained all the time, their work was invaluable, and I have received similar reports from all the centres. They never wearied or tired. No trouble was too great for them to undertake provided the cause of Ulster could be furthered and the concise[,] lucid, and forcible way in which they presented that case frequently turned opponents into friends. . . . Their services given so freely and patriotically could not be improved upon.⁷⁷⁹

Women's nation-work was acceptable if it was largely supportive and did not challenge men's primacy in the sphere of party politics in Ulster. They could be part of election and propaganda campaigns—even praised and deemed to be exceedingly capable and vital to such work; yet questions were raised about a woman's ability to win an election and/or carry out the duties and obligations of elected office. As will be discussed later, the UWUC asked women to defer their individual aims and desires to stand for election for the good of the collective interests of Ulster. Leadership and statecraft remained male domains, ones which women apparently very ably supported, but ought not to challenge overtly.

The “concise, lucid, and forcible” presentation by these women of the Unionist case was, in part, thanks to the training provided by the UWUC through the weekly speakers' classes it held beginning in 1919, and which it expanded after the 1922 election.⁷⁸⁰ Between November 1923 and March 1924 the UWUC held nine speakers' classes, which were attended by a total of 299 people who were encouraged to speak on various issues of the day from tariff reform, free trade, the Education Act, child welfare,

⁷⁷⁹ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). March 2, 1923, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 137.

⁷⁸⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). September 3, 1919; January 6, 1920; February 3, 1920; March 2, 1920; March 30, 1920; November 2, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 111, 114-5, 121.

and Socialism to “our beloved province of Ulster”.⁷⁸¹

Although the UWUC did not formally endorse women candidates or actively encourage its members to stand for election in either Northern Irish or UK general elections, it did discuss and advocate a role for unionist women within the Ulster government bureaucracy. At the Executive Committee meeting in June 1921, “Mrs MacGregor Greer spoke on the importance of women being given appointments in the different departments of the Northern Parliament”.⁷⁸² This led the Executive Committee to send “a short letter” to Sir James Craig in September of that year in order to raise “the importance of the services women can and are anxious to render to their country, especially in such matters as Education, Care of Children, Local Government, Agriculture and Labour [sic]”.⁷⁸³ The UWUC asked that the desire of the members of the UWUC “to be included in the above named Departments be seriously considered, either as Advisory Committees, or Women [sic] to consult with Ministers and Officials, or as Women Officials [sic]”.⁷⁸⁴

The UWUC was being proactive in advocating for a role for its members in the new government institutions. Its members had clearly moved beyond merely “associating themselves” with the men of Ulster to seeking an active role in the administration of Ulster. Nonetheless, its identification of a role for women, particularly in the areas of

⁷⁸¹ Kinghan 1975, 47; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). Report of Speakers Class. April 1, 1924, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 141-2.

⁷⁸² PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 21, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 127.

⁷⁸³ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). September 20, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 128.

⁷⁸⁴ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). September 20, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 128.

education, child welfare, and local government, meant that women's role as supportive partner, care-giver, and nurturer remained primary in terms of the gender norms of Ulster femininity. Women could forge advisory or consultative roles for themselves in the Belfast parliament, but *not* as primary decision-makers in their own right.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee in October 1921 a letter from the 3rd Duchess of Abercorn was read, which echoed these sentiments. She stated:

I am deeply impressed with the necessity of the inclusion of suitable *Ulsterwomen* in the newly formed [Government] Depts. [sic] In England they have been found invaluable in Education, Health and Agriculture Depts., [sic] and of the people of the 6 counties, I do trust women will be able to assist in their great work...I shall be only too pleased to help in any way that is approved of.⁷⁸⁵

She was clearly eager to carve out a role for the UWUC in the post-partition government of Northern Ireland and was not shy about making clear the wishes of the UWUC to be actively involved in the new government in some capacity. However, for her this role was one of "assistance". She advocated "the inclusion of suitable *Ulsterwomen*" in the Belfast parliamentary institutions. The question of who decided the criteria of suitability is an interesting one, and not one which she addressed directly in this letter, however.

Electoral system

When women over thirty years of age were granted the franchise in the UK in 1918, the UWUC considered that a vital piece of its election-related nation-work was to

⁷⁸⁵ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 4, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 129 (emphasis added).

educate its members about the electoral system and their obligations as voters to help them understand how to use their vote to the benefit of Ulster and the Unionist cause. A sub-committee report on the re-organization of the Council which was adopted in 1924 stated that “if women are to learn to use the vote and fulfil the responsibilities placed upon them, they must be educated in Political Thought [sic]”.⁷⁸⁶ There was no doubt that this was nation-work since, according to the *Annual Report* of 1930, the goal of such classes was “that every woman elector should be given an opportunity of studying Unionist aims and ideals [so] that the Unionist women of Ulster realise their political responsibilities and their power as citizens”.⁷⁸⁷ To this end, the UWUC held bi-weekly classes on how the proportional representation electoral system worked.⁷⁸⁸

The proportional representation electoral system was intended to address the concerns of the minority Irish nationalist population that it would be subsumed by the Unionist and Protestant majority in Northern Ireland. It institutionalized a method of voting that would ensure representation in the parliament proportional to a party’s results in a given election, thereby reflecting the array of political perspectives in Northern Ireland. It was used in the Northern Irish local election of 1921, as well as in the 1921 and 1925 general elections of Northern Ireland. However, in 1921 there was widespread concern regarding the electoral success of the Labour Party (a socialist-leaning political party in the UK) since its candidates had won control of Lurgan, been elected for the first

⁷⁸⁶ Kinghan 1975, 48; Urquhart 2001, xix.

⁷⁸⁷ PRONI. *UWUC Annual Report 1930* (D 2688/1/9), cited in Urquhart 1994, 111.

⁷⁸⁸ Kinghan 1975, 43; Urquhart 2001, xix.

time in Lisburn and Bangor, and had greatly reduced the Unionist majority in Belfast. This electoral success, and an apprehension about the spread of socialism, ramped up a movement against the proportional representation electoral system. It was abolished for use in both the local election in Northern Ireland in 1922 and general election in 1929 in favour of the first-past-the-post system in use in the rest of the UK. This assured the security of Unionist and Protestant political dominance in Ulster because of the way in which electoral districts were drawn and re-drawn in order to maximize the Unionist vote.⁷⁸⁹

Women as electoral candidates

As we have seen, during this period of institutionally constituting Ulster and establishing and maintaining unionist and Protestant political and economic power in Ulster, the UWUC put “the safety of the Unionist cause” ahead of questions of gender equality. The UWUC did not cede to pressure from the Women’s Advisory Council⁷⁹⁰ to promote female candidates in the Northern Ireland elections. Recall that it did not actively promote any women parliamentary candidates in the 1920s or the 1930s in elections for either the Westminster or Northern Irish Parliaments, as it deemed that women did not have the experience to be effective holders of high public office, nor to address the challenging issues of the day, such as partition, the Boundary Commission, and the

⁷⁸⁹ Bardon 2007, 468, 480, 499-501, 510-1; Urquhart 2001, 124.

⁷⁹⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). March 1, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 125. This is the only reference I have found related to either the work or the aims of the Women’s Advisory Council. Urquhart similarly notes that she has not found any other reference to that organization, its aims, or work (Urquhart 2000, 73).

establishment of the first Northern Irish Parliament.⁷⁹¹ The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting in January 1921 reported that the President [of the UWUC]:

expressed that the time was not ripe for this [women candidates], and the essential thing in the first Parliament [of Northern Ireland] was to preserve the safety of the Unionist cause, that much organisation and construction work would be necessary for which perhaps women had not the necessary experience, and except in the case of outstanding qualifications, men candidates were preferable.⁷⁹²

The minutes of that meeting do not record any objections or significant dissent from this point of view, which would seem to indicate that it was not an especially controversial stance within the Executive Committee at least.

Sir Edward Carson, as leader of the UUC, concurred with these sentiments.

During the 1921 general election in Northern Ireland, in a statement published in the *Northern Whig*, he counselled women, “to choose the *man* who they thought would best represent their views”.⁷⁹³ Sir James Craig echoed this point of view in the same newspaper on the same day. He implored that “before any [unionist] woman put herself forward for Parliament she should fully consider the matter. Patience... should be the watchword of the moment”.⁷⁹⁴ Both Carson and Craig were asking women to put aside any personal ambitions to stand for parliament for the time-being (to be “patient”), and to let men hold the reins of power during the tempestuous process of establishing the new

⁷⁹¹ Urquhart 2000, 73.

⁷⁹² PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 25, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123.

⁷⁹³ *Northern Whig*. February 7, 1921 (emphasis added).

⁷⁹⁴ *Northern Whig*. February 7, 1921.

institutions of Ulster.

Maintaining a united front (or at least the perception of one) was crucial. Both the UUC and the UWUC argued that Ulster would be best served at this sensitive time if its governance and administration were in the hands of *men* who were deemed to have the masculine qualities of rationality, determination, piety, loyalty, steadfastness, authority, and leadership that were considered to be essential for politics, particularly in such a challenging context. Consequently, the UWUC asked women Unionists to consider seriously any decision to stand as candidates in elections. It called on women to put any potential individual interest and desire to stand for election aside for the sake of the collective interests of Ulster and Unionist and Protestant electoral success. No women Unionist candidates were publicly supported by the UWUC in these early Northern Irish parliamentary elections in spite of the fact that some of its members did stand for election. The result was that few women were members of parliament. Thus it was not only Protestant and unionist power and privilege, but male power and privilege that were institutionalized within the Belfast parliament. From 1921 until the prorogation of the Northern Irish parliament in March 1972, women never made up more than an estimated six percent of candidates,⁷⁹⁵ and there were only nine women elected to the parliament during those five decades.

It appears that local elections were viewed differently by the UWUC, as it supported women candidates in city and county council elections beginning in March

⁷⁹⁵ Porter 1998, 47; Wilford 1996b, 44-5.

1919, and in poor law elections from 1920.⁷⁹⁶ The Poor Laws were the first area of public administration open to women with the passage of the *Poor Law Guardians Act* in 1896; they were an integral part of the municipal governance in Ireland. The office of Poor Law Guardian involved the management of work houses, fever hospitals, an infirmary and dispensary system which provided medical care for the sick poor, as well as a boarding system for orphans and deserted children. Many argued that the gender norms of femininity and roles of women as carers and nurturers as well as wives and mothers made them uniquely suited to such work.⁷⁹⁷

In 1920 seven women were Unionist candidates in the Poor Law Guardian elections. A sub-committee was created by the UWUC to interview these women in order to determine if the women candidates and the UWUC's goals and aims were in synch and, therefore, that the UWUC could publicly endorse and financially support them. As a result of that committee's work, the UWUC agreed to pay the election expenses of three of them, while the other four felt they could cover such expenses without such support.⁷⁹⁸ The women candidates are not named in the minutes of the meetings of the UWUC. However, given the responsibilities of the Poor Law Guardians, as described above, it clearly did not challenge dominant Ulster unionist norms of femininity. Hence, it was deemed to be suitable work for women, but also perhaps as training for elected office at higher levels.

⁷⁹⁶ Luddy 1995, 290-5; Urquhart 2000, 118-9.

⁷⁹⁷ Luddy 1995, 290-5; Urquhart 2000, 118-9.

⁷⁹⁸ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). March 30, 1920; April 23, 1920; June 1, 1920, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 115-7; Urquhart 2000, 73.

Consumer nation-work

Women's consumer nation-work in Ulster was also important to the UWUC in terms of constituting Ulster as practical category and gendered and institutionalized form, as is discussed below. During the 1910s and 1920s, Ulster was part of a new mass consumer culture of the UK. Historians Victoria de Grazia, Ellen Furlough, and Erika Rappaport have observed that mass consumer culture has constructed gender roles and power relations.⁷⁹⁹ The underlying assumption of this consumer culture was that "the consumer" was female.⁸⁰⁰ By the late 1920s, after two successful general elections for the UUP in both Northern Ireland and the UK, and with the question of the border between Ulster and the Free State settled, the UWUC could now turn its attention to maintaining Ulster's British identity, as well as its place in the UK and the Empire through means other than defensive actions and beyond the realm of party politics. It did so by concentrating on women's particular power and role in Ulster as consumers who supported the economies of Ulster, the UK, and the Empire through their consumer behaviour and choices. In this way, they drew the attention of Ulster unionist women to the need to express, and the importance of, their British patriotism through their consumption patterns.

The UWUC established a campaign to encourage its members to buy "Home and Dominion Goods" in 1926 and 1927.⁸⁰¹ They saw this as a demonstration of Ulster's

⁷⁹⁹ de Grazia et. al, 1996, 7; Rappaport 2000, 13.

⁸⁰⁰ Hilton 2002, 107.

⁸⁰¹ Dominion here refers to goods from the dominions and colonies of the British empire.

loyalty and commitment to the Empire. According to the minutes of an Executive Committee meeting in October 1926, “Lady Craig [the then President of the UWUC] said that...now that our domestic troubles are happily at an end, the Council might with advantage turn its attention to further the purchase of Dominion products. She had spoken to the Lord Mayor of Belfast about holding an Empire shopping week and hoped that something of this kind would be done”.⁸⁰² At the suggestion of Lady Craig the Lord Mayor of Belfast sponsored a “Special Empire Shopping Week” in January 1927.⁸⁰³

This focus of the UWUC highlighted women’s nation-work as consumers in terms of keeping the nation’s economy going, but also the politics of consumption and making choices about how to apply one’s purchasing power. The *Annual Report* of the UWUC for 1926 stated that “the advantages of closer co-operation between different parts of the Empire has been prominently before your Committee during the year, and efforts have been made to interest Unionist women in the subject and to induce them to purchase Empire products on preference to foreign importations whenever possible [sic]”.⁸⁰⁴ To this end, the gendered nature of consumer nation-work became an increasing focal point of the UWUC’s nation-work. This is illustrative of Rappaport’s point that consumer practices, such as shopping, shape identities by disrupting and re-constituting social categories and their perceived relationship to public and private spaces.⁸⁰⁵

⁸⁰² PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 19, 1926, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 147.

⁸⁰³ Kinghan 1975, 51; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). April 20, 1926; October 19, 1926; January 21, 1927; April 5, 1927, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 146-9.

⁸⁰⁴ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 21, 1927, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 148.

⁸⁰⁵ Rappaport 2000, 13, 19.

This consumer nation-work continued into the 1930s. In May 1930 Jeannette Martin (Organising Secretary of the UWUC at that time) wrote to Richard Dawson Bates (Northern Ireland's Minister of Home Affairs) on behalf of the UWUC informing him of the UWUC's internal debates about a tiered purchasing strategy. Such a strategy placed an emphasis first on the purchasing goods made in Ulster, second those goods produced in other parts of the UK, and third those produced in other parts of the empire—and over and above good produced outside of the UK and the British empire. On behalf of the UWUC she requested the advice of the UUC and Ulster government on this issue, stating that:

At the Executive Meeting of our Council it was suggested that the Ulster Women's Unionist Council should take some definite steps to further the buying of Ulster Goods [sic]. As I had previously been warned that too definite a stand on this matter might be prejudicial to Ulster interests over the water, I recommended taking no immediate action and referring the question to you for your advice.

Would it be wiser to circularise our Branches [sic] asking women Unionists to ask first for Ulster, and then Empire goods in their own domestic shopping? Or would it be better to form an Empire Purchasing League within our Associations [sic], members of which would pledge themselves to give preference to Ulster goods first, and secondly to Empire goods.⁸⁰⁶

Consumer nation-work was one way through which the UWUC expressed its British identity and Ulster's loyalty to the UK and the Empire. Such nation-work reinforced and constituted feminine nation-work. Women, as wives and mothers were the people

⁸⁰⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). May 20, 1930. Letter from Jeannette Martin to Richard Dawson Bates. May 9, 1930, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 156.

primarily responsible for decisions regarding consumption within individual families related to the food their families ate, the clothes their families wore, the toys their children played with, the furnishings within their households, and the products used to clean their households. Consumer choices gained significance in the public realm since these private decisions were constituted as having wide public and political importance in terms of alleviating unemployment and supporting local, regional, or national economies. In the words of Rappaport, “wives shopped”.⁸⁰⁷ Yet, such nation-work also had significant class implications (an in-depth investigation of which is beyond the scope of this dissertation) in terms of which women had the time and money to be consumers and the kinds and quality of goods one’s household consumed.

Philanthropy and fundraising

Philanthropy and fundraising were also significant elements of the nation-work of the UWUC after partition. This nation-work was crucial in the process of re-constituting Ulster and also provided outlets for the expression of unionist British, Protestant, and Loyalist identities. Such nation-work was constituted as women’s nation-work; it was based on the qualities of caring and nurturing deemed to be feminine characteristics by the dominant Ulster unionist gender norms. Fundraising and philanthropic nation-work were vehicles through which the values, aims, and goals of the UWUC were expressed *vis-à-vis* its support of the UUC and the UUP in their efforts to consolidate unionist and Protestant political and economic power in Ulster. This instilled a sense of unity and

⁸⁰⁷ Rappaport 2000, 49.

solidarity in terms of members of the UWUC working on behalf of and representing the interests of Ulster. For example, during the Civil War (1922–1923) the UWUC raised £962.13.5⁸⁰⁸ for the Loyalist Relief Fund (a fund established to provide support to families of victims of sectarian violence) and provided practical and moral support to refugees who came to Belfast fleeing violence in the south and west of Ireland.⁸⁰⁹

Both the fundraising work in support of the Loyalist Relief Fund, as well as the provision of moral and practical material support to Loyalist refugees from other parts of Ireland, helped to constitute Ulster by providing both those undertaking such work and the recipients of such aid with a sense that they comprised a community of Loyalists, Unionists, and Protestants, which was united by the common values, goals, and beliefs and under attack by Irish nationalists. Additionally, since they were the primary ones undertaking such work, it constituted *Ulsterwomen* as the principal care-givers and nurturers in Ulster.

The UWUC was also integral to the establishment and operations of the Ulster Women's Volunteer Association (UWVA) in 1922. The main purpose of the UWVA was to coordinate the work of women in support of the new Ulster government during times of crisis, such as the Civil War. It enlisted and trained women as telephonists, telegraphists, nurses, cooks, and police officers. Its members were also trained to staff

⁸⁰⁸ This is an amount in the former monetary system of the UK which included pounds, shillings, and pence. Under this system: 12 pence = 1 shilling, 20 shillings = 1 pound, and 21 shillings = 1 guinea.

⁸⁰⁹ Kinghan 1975, 44. The minutes of the Executive Committee for April 4, 1922 reported that “£962.13.5 had been received from the different Associations [of the UWUC] for the Loyalist Relief Fund” [PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). April 4, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 133].

government offices, the St. John Ambulance Association, and the Red Cross.⁸¹⁰ The primary purpose of the UWVA was to proffer assistance to the Ulster government during times of crisis,⁸¹¹ “arising either of a serious military nature due to Sinn Féin or an internal nature due to strikes on a large scale...[during which it would] provide ‘the essentials of life to the community’...that is...food, water, fuel and light”.⁸¹² This further instilled a sense of solidarity within an Ulster unionist and Protestant community of UWVA members. This was not only a time of great concern about security and law and order in Ulster due to the Civil War, but also a period of sectarian violence, labour unrest which it was feared could evolve into full-scale strikes, and the increasing political strength of socialism not only in the UK, but globally. With the establishment of the UWVA the government was capitalizing on the organizational capacity of the UWUC. A special meeting of the Executive Committee of the UWUC was held in June 1922 to:

consider and if approved of, to support a scheme for the organisation of an Ulster Women’s Volunteer Association to give assistance to the Northern Government [sic] in case of emergency. That this organisation would be mainly concerned with the selection, registration and allotment of suitable women personnel for the different work for which the various Government Departments concerned may ask [for] [sic] its services. That all women employed in the Special Constabulary would serve in a Women’s Branch of the Royal Ulster Special Constabulary of which [Edith, the 7th Lady Londonderry] had been appointed Hon. [sic] Commandant, and that this Department would bear full responsibility for the supervision and proper control of its members. That all members would receive rates of pay according to scales laid down by the Government; that it was intended to

⁸¹⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 20, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart, 2001, 134.

⁸¹¹ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 20, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart, 2001, 134.

⁸¹² PRONI. *Notes on the Ulster Women’s Volunteer Association* (FIN 18/2/56). July 20, 1922, cited in Urquhart 2000, 83.

enrol as many members from Ulster as possible...after discussion [the proposal] was...passed unanimously...that we [the UWUC] heartily approve of the proposed scheme and promise to support it by every means in our power.⁸¹³

The Executive Committee agreed to appoint a sub-committee, which would assist in the establishment of the UWVA. This sub-committee drew up a plan for registering “all loyal women in Ulster who would be prepared to help the Government in a case of crisis”, as well as “a Scheme [sic] for the working of the Ulster Women’s [Volunteer] Association” which were submitted to the Northern Ireland Minister for Home Affairs for approval.⁸¹⁴ Such work was primarily caring/nurturing work and, therefore, constituted as feminine nation-work.

This sub-committee, however, made clear in its report to the UWUC Executive Committee that the UWUC and the UWVA were distinct organizations and should be seen as such. The report emphasized that:

The Ulster Women’s [Volunteer] Association is a non-political organisation under Government auspices, and if the need for its services arises, it will immediately pass under Government control, therefore, it must be kept separate and distinct from any political association, and the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council has no control or responsibility, but has been asked to help and advise in furthering the Scheme as one which is considered to be for the good government and prosperity of Ulster...No part of the fund of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council has been used for the work of the Ulster Women’s [Volunteer] Association. The expenses [of the UWVA]...are met by a grant from the Ministry of Home Affairs.⁸¹⁵

⁸¹³ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 20, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 134.

⁸¹⁴ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 21, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 134-5.

⁸¹⁵ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). June 21, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 135.

In spite of such claims by the UWUC of separation between the two organizations, the government was clearly using the UWUC and its capacity to mobilize its members built through its years of nation-work to constitute Ulster post-partition and consolidate male unionist political and economic power.

At the next UWUC Executive Committee meeting, Lady Edith Londonderry (who was then both Vice-President of the UWUC and Honorary Commandant of the UWVA) noted that “it had been pointed out to her that a Government service [the Ulster Women’s Volunteer Association] should not be carried out in the offices of a political Association [sic] and that other offices outside would be provided for her Committee [sic]”.⁸¹⁶ Yet she was also “most anxious that the U.W.U. Council [sic] should keep in close touch with her work and should really have the credit of it”.⁸¹⁷ Clearly the UWUC was keen to keep the workings of the two organizations separate given that one (the UWVA) was envisioned to be a “government service”, while the other (the UWUC) it considered to be a “political organisation”. However, since by this time Ulster unionists so dominated the Northern Irish government, it was in fact *not* possible to separate unionist political interests from those of the government of Northern Ireland. Furthermore, since there was significant overlap in personnel (including leadership) and values and aims between the UWUC and the UWVA, it was also next to impossible to separate the interests and work of these organizations, even if they did operate out of separate offices.

As discussed earlier gender norms were central to the establishment of gender

⁸¹⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). July 4, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 135-6.

⁸¹⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). July 4, 1922, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 135-6.

segregated unionist institutions in Ulster, such as the UWUC, the UWVA, the UUC, and the UVF, as well as the nation-work undertaken on behalf of these institutions. Such gender norms were also central to the new Ulster sub-state which was dominated by militarized masculinities of Ulster unionism. Due to real or perceived threats to its territory, the establishment of the RUC (and its part-time force, the B-Specials) meant that by the summer of 1922 there were 50,000 regular and part-time police in Northern Ireland, one for every six families in the region, or one for every two Catholic families.⁸¹⁸ These militarized masculinities (which also included the existence of paramilitaries) and philanthropic/caring femininities were a contrast in Ulster gender norms and nation-work, yet were mutually constitutive.

Education

Education about Ulster unionist aims, goals, and values, the electoral systems of the UK and Ulster, and public speaking were integral to much of the election work, lobbying, and propaganda nation-work undertaken by the UWUC after partition. Moreover, much of the education nation-work of the UWUC reflected the traditional domains of women, including through a focus on issues of safety in the home, food safety, as well as the education of children and youth. A woman's role within the domestic realm as a wife and mother continued to frame the UWUC's nation-work throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s. At a meeting of the UWUC in May 1921

⁸¹⁸ Bardon 2007, 490.

Captain Herbert Dixon⁸¹⁹ asserted that: “To the *women* security meant even more than it did to *men*. If they had secure and happy homes in which to rear their children they would bring up a race of *men* who would rally to the aid of their country in its hour of danger...it was the *men* who won the war but it was the *women* who would win the peace”.⁸²⁰ In this way (as Yuval-Davis and Anthias have argued), a woman’s primary role within the nation (in this case Ulster) was to instil the proper (i.e., Ulster unionist) values in her children.⁸²¹ This meant, as Cynthia Enloe has observed, raising sons to be men who were prepared to defend the nation (in the case of this study, Ulster) whatever the cost, and raising daughters to be women who were prepared to do what they could to enable and encourage their men to defend the nation’s interests and territory.⁸²²

That women have a “thorough” understanding of unionist values, aims, and goals was of utmost importance to the UWUC executive. It established committees to undertake this education nation-work. Many felt that education about the issues of the day and their duties as citizens and voters best situated unionist women to carry out their roles as mothers of Ulster. Furthermore, the education of its members maximized the effectiveness of the UWUC in terms of lobbying, canvassing, fundraising, and supporting Ulster and its people philanthropically. The education of the children and youth of Ulster

⁸¹⁹ Captain Herbert Dixon was a Justice of the Peace and High Sheriff for county Kildare, an MP in the Westminster parliament from 1918-1939, and an MP in the Northern Irish parliament for East Belfast from 1921-1929. He was Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance for Northern Ireland in 1921 and Minister of Agriculture for Northern Ireland from 1941-43, as well as Chief Whip of the Northern Ireland Government (*Burke’s Genealogical and Heraldic History*, 876-7; *Thom’s Irish Who’s Who*, 62).

⁸²⁰ *Northern Whig*. May 20, 1921 (emphasis added).

⁸²¹ Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989, 7, 9.

⁸²² Enloe 1998, 54-5.

was of significance to the UWUC, as a key way to shape the future of Ulster. Although the decision regarding institutionalizing such nation-work was one for the Executive Committee, as the ultimate governing body of the UWUC, this work also required the approval of the majority of the Council, and the support and participation of its rank-and-file.

Speaking classes, youth clubs, weekend and day schools

The education work of the UWUC provided opportunities for women and youth to develop skills in public speaking through the classes and competitions that the UWUC held during the 1920s and into the 1930s. Through its work with the Junior Unionist Committee and Pioneer Clubs for young girls, the UWUC encouraged “the youth of Ulster” to get involved in unionism and the party political system. This would train them to be future leaders of unionism.⁸²³ All of this work reflected women’s roles as educators, rearers of children and youth, as well as transmitters of culture across the generations, as stated earlier.⁸²⁴ To this end, the Council minutes for July 28, 1931 reported that:

the Marchioness of Londonderry’s [proposal] to assist in the financial support of the Girls’ Unionist Pioneer Clubs in Northern Ireland [was] accepted. The management to be vested in a special Committee [sic] affiliated to the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council...At least 15 minutes to be devoted to some kind of Unionist propaganda at each ordinary meeting of a Club [sic] [and]...that representatives from the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council...be on the Committee of the Girls’ Unionist Pioneer Clubs, and that two representatives of the Girls’ Pioneer Clubs be

⁸²³ Urquhart 2001, xxii; Urquhart 2000, 77; Urquhart 1994, 112.

⁸²⁴ Kinghan 1975, 73; Urquhart 2001, xxii.

appointed to the Ulster Unionist Council each year.⁸²⁵

The minutes for the Council meeting in October 1923 further noted that “debating societies” would be established in larger regional towns. This would give “practice in speaking and arguing political questions, and would thereby in time provide a supply of new speakers” and “a strong body of loyal women with a real interest in and a sound knowledge of the political questions of the day”.⁸²⁶ Such work reproduced the UWUC by drawing younger women and girls into the organization and training the next generation of public speakers, lobbyists, canvassers, and educators, and in this way constituted the future of the organization and of Ulster. Yet such classes also had another practical purpose since, according to the *Annual Report* of 1930, the UWUC sent speakers to address over 160 meetings in that year.⁸²⁷

To be successful such “scheme[s] of rejuvenation” needed to be “socially as well as politically interesting”.⁸²⁸ It was suggested that they could involved concerts, lectures on “one of the Colonies, the Empire, or any Educative [sic] subject” and “in small places even a monthly Sewing Party [sic]...or competitions...in Needlework, Knitting or Baking [sic]” and “little debates arranged [and an] interchange of visits from speakers between the strongly Unionist parts of the country and the Borders[sic] [which]...should in time

⁸²⁵ PRONI. *UWUC Council Meeting Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). July 28, 1931, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 161.

⁸²⁶ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 22, 1923, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 140.

⁸²⁷ PRONI. *Annual Report 1930* (D 2688/1/9).

⁸²⁸ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 22, 1923, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 139-40.

lead to closer touch with all parts of the Province, a better appreciation of each other's difficulties and a firmer bond in the Common Cause [sic]".⁸²⁹ Such work had multiple purposes: to educate, to entertain, and to build and sustain the institutional bonds of the UWUC and within "the Province", which would further the solidarity felt amongst unionist and Protestants related to their "common cause".

Providing financial support to these clubs, ensuring ties between the UWUC and the Girls' Clubs in terms of representation of these clubs on the UWUC (and vice versa), as well as mandating a minimum of Girls' Club time to be devoted to unionist propaganda, ensured that the UWUC had a role in shaping the future of Ulster. Moreover, the Council organized weekend and day "schools" to educate its members and youth about issues relevant to Ulster unionism, as well as the key issues of the day. Since the rank-and-file was the intended target of its weekend "schools" and educational nation-work, without that group's buy-in, such nation-work would be ineffective and unsuccessful. Extending this educational role further, prominent members of the Conservative Party were invited to speak at Executive Committee and Council meetings in order to inform its members on key issues of the day of relevance to Ulster.⁸³⁰

Newspapers

The UWUC, however, was also interested in a more far-reaching educational focus than its classes could achieve. It established and published two newspapers during

⁸²⁹ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 22, 1923, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 139-40.

⁸³⁰ Kinghan 1975, 41, 43, 78.

the 1920s: *The Ulsterwoman: A Monthly Journal for Union and Progress* (published from July 1919 to August 1920) and *Northern Ireland, Home, Politics, A Journal for Women* (published from October 1925 to June 1927).⁸³¹ As many scholars have observed, this was a period in which the production of and market for journals and magazines specifically for women was burgeoning within the UK.⁸³² While some have argued that such magazines and journals were sites of a hegemonic domestic ideology or regime of sexual oppression of women, others have challenged this assertion from a diversity of perspectives.⁸³³ This study shares Beetham's understanding that norms of femininity and women's magazines and journals are mutually constitutive, that such magazines not only reflected dominant norms femininity, but also constituted such norms.⁸³⁴

In the first edition of *The Ulsterwoman* (July 12, 1919) the 3rd Duchess of Abercorn, in her capacity as President of the UWUC, introduced this new paper. She noted the role and responsibilities of women as new voters and observed that this newspaper could serve to educate these new voters about a myriad of topics from current affairs, to civic rights and responsibilities, to Unionist values, aims and discourse, and, of course, "women's issues", such as cooking, home management, as well as mending and

⁸³¹ Urquhart 2001, xxi; Urquhart 1994, 113.

⁸³² See: Adburgham 1972; Barret-Ducroq 1991; Beetham & Boardman 2001; Beetham 1998; Beetham 1996; Bland 1995; Gay 1984; Phegley 2004; Shires 1992; Smart 1992; White 1970.

⁸³³ Adburgham (1972) and White (1970) have both viewed women's journals and magazines of the late 1800s and early 1900s as sites of sexual oppression and the middle-class ideals of the housewife and domesticity. Barret-Ducroq (1991), Beetham & Boardman (2001), Beetham (1998), Beetham (1996), Bland (1995), Foucault (1981), Gay (1984), Phegley (2004), Shires (1992), and Smart (1992) have challenged this point of view from a variety of perspectives.

⁸³⁴ Beetham 1996, 1-2.

sewing skills. She wrote that:

The power of voting at Parliamentary and Local Government Elections being now ours [sic], it is considered essential that means should be taken to bring before the *Ulsterwoman* the chief questions of the day...in a form that will not make too great a demand on busy women's time. It is hoped that the publishing of this newspaper will assist us to know what is going on in the world of politics affecting ourselves and the Empire, and so enable us to make the best use of our power of voting.

Ulsterwomen have always interested themselves in politics. We can do more now, and we must...be able to give a reason for our convictions, and an answer to those who would try to refute them...every woman who has our cause at heart, who is anxious for improvement in the lives of the workers in town or country, in the housing question...in education...and in countless reconstruction schemes...will take advantage of the opportunity this Journal [sic] will afford...to show we are as competent to take our share in the difficult problems of Peace [sic], as women in the last four terrible years of war.⁸³⁵

In this view, nation-making was not only about bettering the lives of both urban and rural workers, but about responding to current events. However, it was made clear that women should not spend too much time focusing on current events; to do so risked neglecting their other roles and obligations.

The banner of the first edition of *The Ulsterwoman* carried a quote from Rudyard Kipling's poem *Ulster 1912*, which opened Chapter 4 of this dissertation: "What answer from the North? One law—one land —one throne!",⁸³⁶ thus conveying the Ulster triad of British, loyal, and Protestant identities.

⁸³⁵ PRONI. *Envelope Containing Miscellaneous Documents* (D 2688/1/10). *The Ulsterwoman*. July 12, 1919 (emphasis added).

⁸³⁶ PRONI. *Envelope Containing Miscellaneous Documents* (D 2688/1/10). *The Ulsterwoman*. July 12, 1919.

Propaganda

The two newspapers of the UWUC, discussed above, were one element of the UWUC's propaganda nation-work after partition. In addition, the UWUC produced and distributed leaflets via its local Women's Unionist Associations and sent speakers around Great Britain and Ireland to impart the unionist position on pressing issues of the day, as they had before partition.

In 1921 some members objected to the continued propaganda work of the UWUC outside of Ireland on the grounds that they felt that the Council needed to focus its attention on "prepar[ing] voters for the coming Elections [sic] to the Ulster Parliament". Since this objection was raised a vote was held; thirty one voted to continue the propaganda work outside of Ireland and three voted against.⁸³⁷ Such work, it seems, was deemed by many within the UWUC to be too important to give up. It seems it continued for a number of years. According to the Annual Report of 1930, in that year the UWUC sent 7000 propaganda leaflets across Ulster and Great Britain.⁸³⁸

Belying its claim of non-sectarianism, in 1932 when the threats to Ulster's territorial boundaries were over, Unionists could turn their attention to consolidating and maintaining political and economic power in Ulster (as opposed to securing power in it), which it retained until prorogation of the Northern Irish parliament in 1972. Towards this aim of maintaining and consolidating its institutionalized power in Northern Ireland, the UWUC produced and distributed 10,000 leaflets on the actual eviction of Protestants

⁸³⁷ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 4, 1921, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 123.

⁸³⁸ PRONI. *Annual Report 1930* (D 2688/1/9).

from Catholic areas of Belfast. The Council also discussed “whether any steps could be taken to prevent the penetration of Roman Catholics in certain parts of the Province, and if anything could be done to prevent Disloyalists [sic] buying property over the heads of Protestants [sic]”.⁸³⁹ In response, Cecil Craig (the Viscountess Craigavon), the then President of the UWUC, suggested that “in their individual capacity the members...do whatever lay in their power to check this failing”.⁸⁴⁰ This again indicated the connection amongst and institutionalization of political, cultural, and religious identities within Ulster unionist discourse and the Ulster sub-state.

“At Homes”

Still another element of the education nation-work of the UWUC in this period was the “At Homes”, which began in the late 1920s. These were events held at members’ homes (usually a luncheon) to which speakers were invited to address UWUC members on myriad political and social subjects.⁸⁴¹ For example, in October 1927, Miss Gregg prepared a lecture for an “At Home” entitled “China and its Relation to the British Empire”.⁸⁴² These “At Homes” proved very popular, particularly with the Belfast

⁸³⁹ PRONI. *UWUC Council Meeting Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 26, 1932, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 207-8.

⁸⁴⁰ PRONI. *UWUC Council Meeting Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). January 26, 1932, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 207-8.

⁸⁴¹ Kinghan 1975, 51.

⁸⁴² PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 11, 1927, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 149-50.

branches of the UWUC, and were later converted to working parties for the Ulster Gift Fund during World War II.⁸⁴³

In spite of the settlement of the partition border with the Boundary Commission's report in 1925, during the late 1920s (and into the 1930s) there was still a sense that Ulster was under threat from within and without. This threat was institutionalized through the 1937 constitution of *Éire* which laid claim to the "six counties".⁸⁴⁴ Ensuring that unionists and Protestants maintained political and economic power in Ulster remained critical nation-work according to Ulster unionist domopolitics. The minutes of the UWUC Executive Committee recorded in January 1927 that:

It is earnestly that our hope of a prolonged period of peace and mutual good feeling throughout Ulster will be amply fulfilled, but that no false sense of security will tend in any way to induce the relaxation of those efforts necessary to maintain our splendid organisation at the highest state of perfection. All should bear in mind that if a time of crisis should again arise the loyal women of Ulster must be well prepared, and with this end in view should see that the necessary machinery is kept in smooth working order, so as to be able to repeat the magnificent help they rendered in past hours of anxious trial.⁸⁴⁵

Since Ulster and its people remained under threat, retaining political and economic control of Ulster was crucial to Ulster unionists and Protestants in order that their interests

⁸⁴³ Kinghan 1975, 52, 65; PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). October 17, 1933, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 169.

⁸⁴⁴ De Valera's government had been against partition and "the Northern government" from the beginning. Consequently, the second paragraph of the 1937 Constitution of Ireland asserted that "the national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and the territorial seas" (cited in Fitzpatrick 2006, 142). De Valera was the political head of the anti-Treaty forces during the Civil War (1922-1923). He was *Taioseach* (head of the southern Irish government) from 1932 to 1948, again from 1951 to 1954, and from 1957 to 1959. He was President of the Republic of Ireland from 1959 to 1973 (Farrell 1980, 340).

⁸⁴⁵ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1913-40* (D 1098/1/2). January 21, 1927, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 149.

and territory were protected.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s the UWUC was central to the process of reconstituting Ulster after partition, the establishment of unionist and Protestant economic and political power in the new largely self-governing region of the UK, popularly known as Ulster to many unionists, and the maintenance of that power. The waning of Home Rule as an issue, the partition of Ireland, the establishment of Northern Ireland (Ulster), the enfranchisement of women, the increasing but slow acceptance of women in the public realm, and the interests of the empire all contributed to the UWUC affirming the need for its continued existence. However, in keeping with the shifting nature of Ulster as an institutionalized form, the goals and objectives of the UWUC (as enshrined in its 1929 constitution) were reframed in order that it remain relevant within the changing context of Ulster and unionism throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s.

The UWUC continued to be a vital part of the unionist cause through its nation-work including the institutionalization of post-partition Ulster through the discourse, norms, aims, practices, and rituals of the UWUC. As before partition, its members showed that they were *not* “idle sightseers...but a genuine political force”⁸⁴⁶ within the Ulster unionist movement and its constitution of Ulster as practical category and institutionalized and gendered form, which involved the essential task of reproducing

⁸⁴⁶ McNeill 1922, 113.

Ulster as a “Protestant (as well as unionist and gendered) parliament and a Protestant (as well as unionist and gendered) state” for a Protestant (as well as unionist and gendered) people in the new post-partition Northern Ireland. Although feminine nation-work was still deemed to be primarily related to a woman’s role as wife and mother slowly and subtly the UWUC was shifting this role of help-mate to one of more autonomous political agency for women. This is evident in the increasingly assertive ways in which the UWUC sought to maintain and expand its role to include not only the every-day nation-work of women as consumers, educators, and nurturers of the nation but also advisory/consulting roles within particular sectors of the Ulster government.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

The early decades of the twentieth century were turbulent in Ireland and Great Britain. It was a period in which the territorial-political form of both the UK and Ireland were altered significantly. Ireland was partitioned in 1922. The Irish Free State was established as the first step in those twenty-six counties achieving political and economic independence from the UK, and Northern Ireland emerged as a largely self-governing region of the UK. Simultaneous with this emergent institutional rupture, both Great Britain and Ireland were embroiled in World War I and the trauma and widespread social change that it wrought, while there were on-going struggles that culminated in expanded citizenship rights and norms as women of all classes and working-class men were granted the franchise in a series reforms between the 1880s and the 1930s.

The research in the present study draws on primary sources such as the minutes of both the Executive Committee and the Council of the UWUC, correspondence amongst members of the UWUC and between the UWUC and the UUC, as well as key newspapers of the period and region: the *Belfast News-Letter* and the *Northern Whig*. Consequently, it is based on official records and accounts of the leadership of the UWUC. This study focuses primarily on gender, nation, and ethnicity, but acknowledges their intersecting especially with religion nature of national, ethnic, class, and gender identities. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to provide an in-depth analysis of these latter intersections, it is nevertheless an important subject for future research related to Ulster unionism generally and the UWUC in particular.

Future research that explores in greater depth the records of the local branches of the UWUC and local and regional newspaper coverage of the organization, as well as the

records of the UUC, would perhaps provide a greater understanding of the UWUC, most particularly of its rank and file membership, as well as the gender and class norms of Ulster unionism. Furthermore, research investigating the nature of the UWUC's activities from the 1930s on, including the decades of the Troubles (1968 to 1998), is important in terms of a broader understanding of Ulster unionism. One challenge of such research at this time, however, is that the records of the UWUC from the late 1960s to the present are currently largely unavailable either because they are still embargoed or have not been deposited into the UWUC archives at PRONI. However, such research could yield interesting insights into the shifting notions of Ulster as well as its gender and class norms, in addition to the practical cognitive and social political categories of *Ulsterman* and *Ulsterwoman*, Northern Irish, British, and Irish as constituted institutionally through the ongoing discourse, membership rules, norms, rituals, and practical work of the UWUC.

This dissertation is situated in and contributes to the significant scholarly literatures related to analyses of and approaches to nation and nationalism, as well as Ulster unionism. Much of the debate within these literatures hinges on the question of what a nation is. (This is certainly true in terms of the debate in the literature on whether or not Ulster unionism is a form of nationalism, which has tended to concentrate on whether or not the discourse of Ulster unionism conceives of Ulster according to particular criteria of nation or nationalist ideology.) However, Brubaker has observed that the more vital question which analyses of nation and nationalism need to address is how nation is constituted as a practical category (i.e., the cognitive categories through which

groups comprehend the world and socio-political categories, such as those used by states for statistical purposes) through the discourse and rhetoric of both scholarly literatures and social and political movements; how nation is constituted through moments of nationness, or unanticipated events; and how nation is constituted through its institutionalization in particular rules and norms of membership, rituals, practices, aims, symbols, and traditions of institutions and organizations (what Brubaker calls nationhood).⁸⁴⁷ Nation-work is integral to such processes of nation-making. It is the discursive, symbolic, and practical work which constitutes the categories and institutionalized practices, which together make the social collectivity of nation seem real, for without whose processes of instantiation nation cannot be experienced as internally coherent and clearly delineated from other collectivities.

Discourses of nation and nationalism were integral politically, economically, and socially to both Ireland and Great Britain during the early twentieth century. Irish nationalists advanced a vision of a politically and economically independent, united, Catholic, Gaelic Ireland. Against this discourse institutionalized Ulster unionism imagined Ulster as politically, culturally, and economically distinct from the Ireland constituted through institutionalized Irish nationalism, and as a part of a British, Protestant state. As was demonstrated in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, the Ulster Crisis, World War I, partition, and the enfranchisement of women were moments of nationness critical to such a constitution of Ulster. These moments provided the context within which the Ulster unionist imagining of Ulster could be institutionalized and gendered through the

⁸⁴⁷ Brubaker 1996, 7, 10, 14-8, 20-1.

UWUC and the UUC, as well as through the post-partition establishment of a unionist- and Protestant-dominated parliament of Northern Ireland. In this regard the UWUC's and the UUC's constitution of Ulster through discourse, norms, rituals, traditions, symbols, and the nation-work of their members appeared largely to paper over ethnic, class, and religious cleavages in terms of the gender norms and gendered nation-work which the memberships of these organizations undertook in the name of Ulster, though more research is needed to determine the extent of such cleavages with regards to the UWUC in particular.

To understand these developments and their gendered dimensions, the present study offers both conceptual and empirical contributions. First, it has used an analytical framework that combines the present author's concept of gendered nation-work with Brubaker's understanding of nation and the concepts of nation, nationhood, nationness, and Walters' notion of domopolitics. It has argued that gender and nation-work were intertwined and central *not* peripheral to the constitutive process of nation in the context of the fracturing of the political and economic relationship between Ireland and the UK, the partition of Ireland, the constitution and institutionalization of the Irish Free State *and* Northern Ireland, as well as the cognitive and socio-political categories of Ulster unionism. Such a framework of analysis enables one to examine how Ulster was constituted and gendered through Ulster unionist discourse, norms, aims, practices, rituals, and symbols, as well as how these changed over time, in response to wider events. As such, the study has sought to understand how moments of nationness—contingent events such as the Ulster Crisis, World War I, the partition of Ireland, and the

enfranchisement of women—constituted and institutionalized Ulster through the UWUC’s nation-work, including its rituals, practices, symbols, norms of membership, aims, and discourse, as well as its response to such moments of crisis and rupture.

There is myriad scholarly literature on Ulster unionism, its history, ideology, and class cleavages. However, there has been little analysis of gender and Ulster unionism, and in particular little analysis of the UWUC and its role related to the Ulster unionist movement of the early twentieth century. As such, in addition to the conceptual contribution outlined earlier, the present study makes an empirical contribution by investigating the UWUC and its role in constituting Ulster through Ulster unionist discourse in gendered, national, cultural, and religious terms between the 1910s and the 1930s.

The UWUC was established in January 1911 as a women’s auxiliary of the UUC, which initially served as an umbrella organization for all the men’s unionist clubs and organizations in Ulster. Within a year the UWUC had a membership of between 40,000 and 50,000. By 1913 its membership had expanded to between 115,000 and 200,000 women making it the largest women’s political organization in Ireland at that time.⁸⁴⁸ The scale of the UWUC’s membership during this period, and the reach it had through its local associations in every constituency in Ulster, illustrates that the unionist discourse, norms, aims, goals, and practices advanced by the UWUC spoke to a large number of

⁸⁴⁸ Kinghan 1975, 14; Urquhart 2001, xi, xiii; Urquhart 1996, 32; Urquhart 1994, 97. Protestant denominations comprised approximately fifty-six percent of the population of Ulster in 1911 which, according to the census of that year, was estimated to be 1.6 million (Bardon 2007, 396-7; Megahey 2001, 160-1). Hence, the membership of the UWUC comprised a significant proportion of the adult female population of Ulster.

women across Ulster (not only to a particular class or region of the province) to the extent that they were moved to join the organization. Through its membership the UWUC constituted Ulster, claiming to speak for “the women of Ulster”.

The nation-work of the UWUC went beyond speaking for “the women of Ulster”, however. The present study argues that the UWUC and its members were *not* “idle sightseers”, or peripheral to, but actively engaged in constituting Ulster more widely, through its rules of membership, norms, rituals, traditions, and the rhetoric of its official documents. Particularly important in this regard were the motion that established the UWUC, its constitution, the women’s Declaration which its members and supporters signed on Ulster Day in 1912, the pledge that its members took at every meeting during the Ulster Crisis to only discuss the issue of Home Rule, and the petitions against Home Rule submitted by the UWUC to Ulster politicians and the Westminster parliament.

As discussed above, the UWUC’s discourse, norms, rituals, traditions, and the activities which its members undertook in the name of Ulster reflected a similarly constituted Ulster to that of the UUC in terms of ethnic and religious cleavages. However, although careful not to challenge overtly the dominant Ulster unionist gender norms, the UWUC did assert political agency for its members in spite of the dominant constitution within Ulster unionist discourse of feminine nation-work as being supportive—primarily within the private sphere of family as a wife and mother in contradistinction to a public and often militarized masculine nation-work. The UWUC used such gender norms of femininity gradually to expand roles for women into the public sphere during the 1910s, 1920s, and into the 1930s. It justified its active role in speaking out and mobilizing people

against Home Rule, in war work, as well as in establishing and consolidating the institutionalized and gendered political and economic power of male unionists and Protestants in Northern Ireland through its election- and education-related nation-work. The UWUC considered all of this work to be an extension of a woman's role as wife and mother. Yet it also advocated that women have more extensive, active, and public roles in Ulster in support of the Unionist-dominated Belfast parliament, particularly once women were granted the franchise.

The discourse, symbols, norms, rituals, traditions, and activities of the UWUC, and Ulster unionism generally, constituted a nested Ulster identity which evolved between the 1910s and the 1930s. Initially, Ulster was constituted simultaneously as part of Ireland and the UK nation-state. Ulster was British according to this discourse. It was tied through shared norms and values to the core institutions of the UK: the Protestant British Crown, the parliament, and a Protestant faith. Furthermore, this discourse constituted a common Ulster identity, history, and solidarity based on the domopolitics associated with the siege mentality that came to characterize Ulster's Protestants and unionists, according to those who understood themselves to be a threatened religious, political, and cultural minority within Ireland and saw themselves as making historic and contemporary sacrifices collectively to protect their rights and liberties as a minority. However, Ulster itself is also usefully understood in terms of nationness in that the discourse and practices that constituted Ulster shifted in response to contingent events. After partition, the assertion of Ulster unionists that Ulster, now defined territorially as the six counties agreed to in the 1921 Treaty between the British government, Irish

nationalists, and Ulster unionists, had a right to self-determination justified their acceptance of partition and of a parliament for Ulster (Northern Ireland) as a way through which unionists and Protestants could control Ulster's affairs and protect their interests.

The UWUC was very important to the process of establishing Ulster post-partition as a "Protestant state for a Protestant people" through its discourse, norms, aims, rituals, practices, and nation-work. This was an Ulster that was gendered, with specific masculine and feminine norms and nation-work. The UWUC also constituted Ulster through its practical nation-work in ways that reflected Ulster's shifting nested identity in response to changing events. As was discussed in Chapter 5, it was through such work that the leadership of the UWUC saw the organization as doing its part to protect Ulster from the perceived dangers of Home Rule during the Ulster Crisis through missions, the distribution of anti-Home Rule propaganda, as well as education, fundraising, and lobbying work. In addition, the UWUC's leaders saw the organization as demonstrating Ulster's loyalty to "King and country" during World War I through the war work of its members, which included nursing, recruiting, fundraising, distributing care packages to British troops, and administering a hospital in France. Finally, after partition, the leaders of the UWUC considered the election work undertaken by the UWUC to be very important to ensuring that Protestant and unionist liberties and interests were protected and institutionalized through the establishment of a Protestant- and unionist-dominated parliament in Ulster (Northern Ireland).

With partition, however, the UWUC had to revisit its purpose, aims, goals, practices, and norms of membership, as discussed Chapter 6. What is more, the electoral

reforms of 1918 and 1928, which granted women the franchise, made the electoral- and education-related nation-work of the UWUC all the more significant, since women came to make up fifty-two percent of the electorate.⁸⁴⁹ Thus, the UWUC was a significant organization in terms of the history and politics of both Ulster unionism and Ireland in these crucial decades.

This study also demonstrates that the nation-work of the UWUC spanned the public and private spheres and that the latter was centrally important to expanding roles for women within the Ulster unionist movement and Northern Ireland, as well as to shifting gender norms of Ulster unionism. Moreover, this nation-work was not only connected to contestations about Ulster and Ireland, but was also connected to an evolving and expanded understanding of citizenship, including the struggle over women's equal citizenship including in the public realm. It makes clear that women as much as men were integral to the efforts and work of imagining Ulster and, after partition, of re-imagining and institutionalizing a newly imagined Ulster as the province of Northern Ireland.

⁸⁴⁹ Hill 2003, 93; Urquhart 2000, 75, 84, 175.

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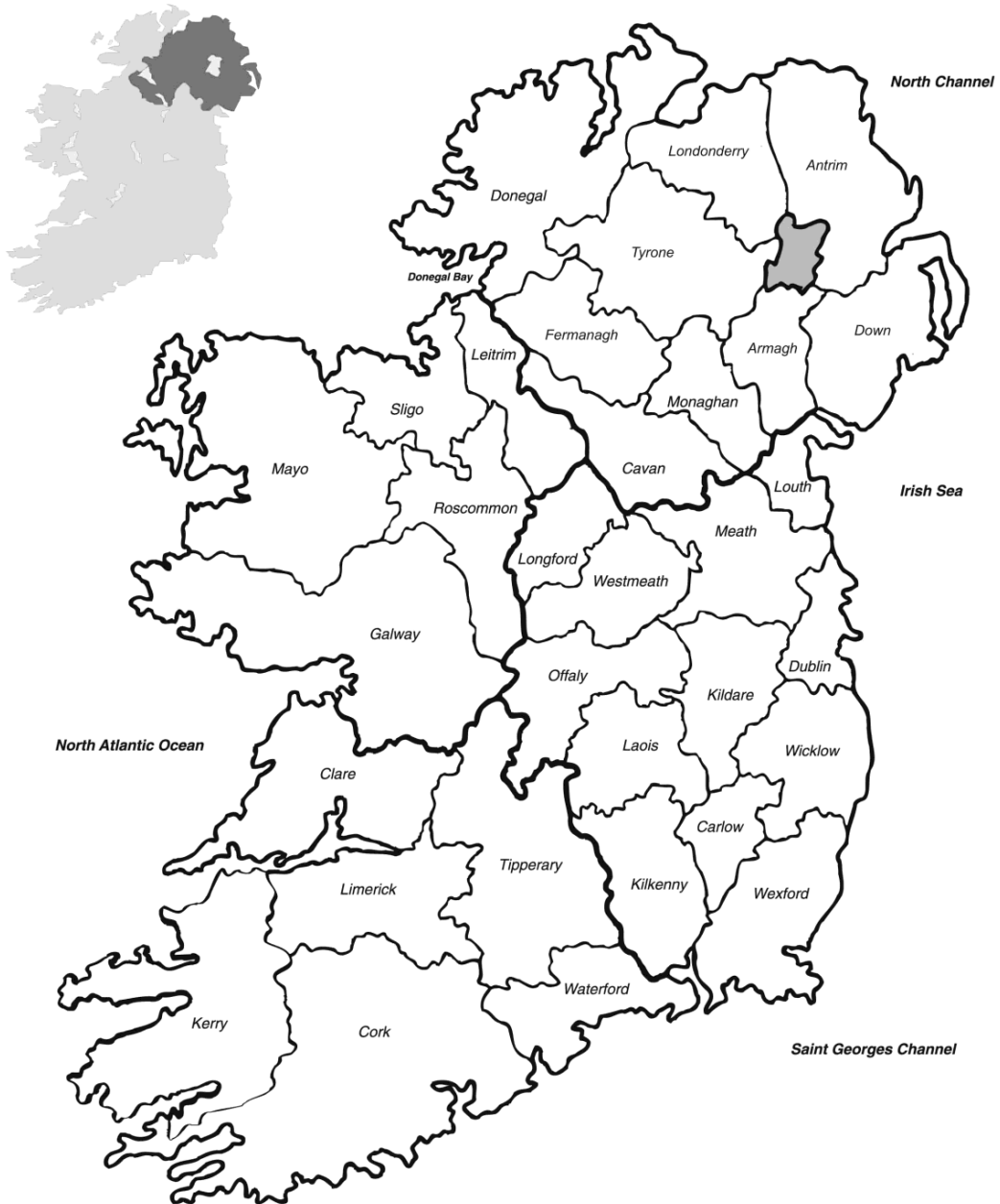
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Appendix A

County Map of Ireland



Appendix B

Historical Time Line

1795		The Orange Order is established
1800	21 May	Introduction of the Bill for Union in the Dublin Parliament
	1 August	Act of Union receives royal assent
	2 August	Last meeting of the Irish parliament
1801	1 January	Act of Union effective unifying Great Britain and Ireland
1803		United Irishmen Rebellion
1823	12 May	Apprentice Boys Society established Catholic Association established by Daniel O’Connell
1829	13 April	Roman Catholic Relief Act passed Irish Parliamentary Elections Act passed
1834	22 April	Daniel O’Connell introduces parliamentary debate on repeal of the Act of Union (1801)
1838	31 July	Irish Poor Law enacted
1840	15 April	National Association founded by O’Connell
	13 July	National Association re-launched as the Loyal National Repeal Association to repeal the Act of Union (1801)
1845	9 September	Potato blight first reported in Ireland
1845-1849		The Great Famine
1846	28 July	Repeal Movement splits over the use of physical force
1847	15 May	Death of Daniel O’Connell
1852	July	General election (UK)

1857	March/April	General election (UK)
1858	17 March	Irish Republican Brotherhood founded (Dublin)
1859	April	The Fenian Brotherhood founded in the USA
	May	General election (UK)
1867	5 March	Fenian Rising
	20 June	<i>Clan na Gael</i> founded (New York)
	23 November	Execution of the Manchester Martyrs
	13 December	Fenian bombing at Clerkenwell (London)
1868	November	General election (UK)
1869	26 July	Passage of the Irish Church Act: disestablishment of the Church of Ireland
1870	19 May	Home Rule Movement formed by Isaac Butt
1873	November	Home Rule League formed (Dublin)
1874	February	General election (UK): 60 Home Rulers returned
	3 March	Home Rule parliamentary party created
1875	22 April	Charles Stewart Parnell enters House of Commons (MP for Meath)
1876	20 August	IRB Supreme Council withdraws support from Home Rule Movement
	29 December	Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language established
1879	20 April	Launch of the land agitation in Irishtown, County Mayo
	5 May	Death of Isaac Butt, founder of the Home Rule Movement
	16 August	National Land League of Mayo formed

	21 October	Irish National Land League formed
1880	March/April	General election (UK)
	17 May	Parnell elected Chair of the Irish Parliamentary Party
	19 September	Parnell launches the boycott campaign against those defying the Land League
1880-1885		William Gladstone (Liberal, UK Prime Minister)
1881	31 January	Ladies' Land League launched in Ireland
	22 August	Land Act legalizes the "three 'F's'" of Land League
	13 October	Parnell arrested
	18 October	"No Rent" Manifesto issued by Land League Movement
	20 October	Land League outlawed
1882	2 May	Parnell released after Kilmainham "treaty" with Gladstone
	17 October	Irish National League formed
1884	1 November	Gaelic Athletic Association founded
1885	14 August	Ashbourne Act: land purchase extended
	November/ December	General election (UK) (Liberal victory) Gladstone (Liberal, UK Prime Minister)
1886	8 April	Introduction of 1 st Home Rule Bill in Westminster
	8 June	Defeat of Gladstone's Home Rule Bill Gladstone resigns
	July	General election (UK) (Conservative victory)
1886-1892		Marquis of Salisbury (Conservative, UK Prime Minister of "caretaker government" after Home Rule defeat)

1887	7 March	Arthur Balfour appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland
1889	24 December	O'Shea divorce petition lodged citing Parnell
1890	15-17 November	O'Shea divorce hearing
	24 November	Gladstone reports that Liberal support for Home Rule threatened by Parnell's continued leadership of the IPP
	25 November	Parnell re-elected as chairman of the IPP
	28 November	Parnell denounces Liberal alliance with the IPP
	1-6 December	Debate within IPP: majority oppose Parnell
1891	3 February	Final breakdown of attempted agreement within the IPP
	6 October	Death of Parnell
1892	17 June	Ulster Unionist Convention (Belfast)
	July	General election (UK) (Liberal victory)
1892-1894		William Gladstone (Liberal, UK Prime Minister)
1893	13 February	Introduction of 2 nd Home Rule Bill in Westminster
	31 July	Formation of the Gaelic League
	9 September	2 nd Home Rule Bill defeated by Lords Gladstone resigns
1894-1895		Earl of Rosebury (Conservative, UK Prime Minister of "caretaker" government)
1895	July	General election (UK) (Conservative victory) Marquis of Salisbury (Conservative, UK Prime Minister)
1896	14 August	Gerald Balfour's Land Act passed
1898	12 August	Local Government Act passed

1899	4 March	<i>United Irishman</i> launched by Arthur Griffith
1900	30 January	Reunification of the IPP
	6 February	John Redmond elected leader of the IPP
	September/ October	General election (UK) (Conservative victory) Arthur Balfour (Conservative, UK Prime Minister)
	30 September	<i>Cumann na nGaedheal</i> founded by Arthur Griffith
	9 November	George Wyndham appointed Chief Secretary of Ireland
1902		Ancient Order of Hibernians revived in Ireland
1903	14 August	Land Act passed: comprehensive scheme of land purchase launched
1904		Clerical ban on Ancient Order of Hibernians (as a secret society) lifted
	2 December	Ulster Unionist conference calls for the creation of an Ulster Unionist Council
1905	3 March	Ulster Unionist Council established (Belfast)
	6 March	Resignation of George Wyndham
	8 March	Dungannon Clubs founded (Belfast)
	26 November	Griffith proposes the sinn féin policy to the National Council
1906	January	General election (UK) (Liberal victory)
	21 October	Death of Colonel Edward Saunderson, Unionist leader
1906-1908		Henry Campbell-Bannerman (Liberal, UK Prime Minister)
1907	29 January	Augustine Birrell appointed Chief Secretary of Ireland

	21 April	Sinn Féin League formed from <i>Cumann na nGaedheal</i> and Dungannon Clubs
	2 August	Pius X issues <i>Ne Temere</i> decree on mixed marriages
	5 September	Sinn Féin formed from merger of the National Council with the Sinn Féin League
1908	21 February	North Leitrim by-election: first parliamentary election for Sinn Féin
	3 April	Henry Campbell-Bannerman resigns as Prime Minister and leader Liberal Party due to ill health; Herbert Asquith succeeds him as Liberal Party leader and UK Prime Minister
	22 April	Henry Campbell-Bannerman dies
	1 August	<i>Irish Universities Act</i> passed: formation of the National University of Ireland and Queen's University, Belfast
	11 November	Irish Women's Franchise League established
	29 December	Proposal for Irish Transport Workers' Union
1908-1916		Herbert Asquith (Liberal, UK Prime Minister)
1909	4 January	James Larkin founds the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU)
	30 November	Liberal government's "People's Budget" vetoed by House of Lords: beginning of constitutional crisis
	3 December	Passage of the Birrell <i>Land Act</i>
1910	January	General election (UK) (Liberal minority government with Asquith as Prime Minister)
	21 February	Edward Carson elected as leader of Irish Unionist Parliamentary Party
	June- November	Constitutional conference fails (London)
	December	General election (UK) (Liberals retain power)

1911	23 January	The Ulster Women's Unionist Council established (Belfast)
	18 August	veto power of House of Lords removed by Parliament Act of 1911
	21 August	Irish Women's Suffrage Federation formed
	23 September	Ulster Unionist demonstration at Craigavon (Belfast)
	13 November	Balfour succeeded by Andrew Bonar Law as leader of Conservative Party
	December	The Association of Loyal Orangewomen of Ireland re-established
1912	9 April	Bonar Law pledges unconditional support for Ulster Unionist resistance to Home Rule (Belfast)
	11 April	3 rd Home Rule Bill introduced in Westminster
	28 June	Irish Labour Party formed
	29 June	Castledown attacks by AOH members
	2 July	retaliatory expulsion of and attacks on Catholic workers from Belfast shipyards
	14 September	Riot at soccer match in Belfast between Linfield Football Club (a team supported predominantly by Protestants) and the Celtics (a team predominantly supported by Catholics): approximately 60 injured
	28 September	Ulster Day: <i>Ulster Solemn League and Covenant</i> and <i>Declaration</i> signed by unionists
1912-1914	Ulster Crisis	
1913	1 January	Carson's exclusion amendment to the Home Rule Bill submitted to parliament
	31 January	Ulster Volunteer Force established
	26 August	ITGWU strike begins (Dublin)

	24 September	Provisional Government of Ulster launched by the UUC (Belfast)
	19 November	Formation of the Irish Citizen Army
	25 November	Formation of the Irish Volunteers under Eoin MacNeill
1914	20 March	Curragh Incident
	2 April	<i>Cumann na mBan</i> founded (Dublin)
	24-25 April	Larne gun-running
	23 June	Government of Ireland (Amendment) Bill proposes exclusion through county option in Ulster
	21-24 July	Buckingham Palace Conference fails to reach agreement on exclusion of Ulster from Home Rule
	26 July	Howth gun-running: 4 killed in Dublin in confrontation between army and protesters
	3-4 August	World War I begins Redmond pledges support of Irish Volunteers for defence of Ireland
	15 September	Home Rule suspensory measure passed
	18 September	Home Rule enacted and suspended
	20 September	Redmond commits Irish Volunteers to serving outside of Ireland
	24 September	Split within Irish Volunteers between supporters and opponents of Redmond's position
1915	25 May	Coalition government formed under Asquith
	May	Military Committee of the IRB Supreme Council formed
1916	19-22 January	Military Council of the IRB agree on a rising no later than Easter

3 April	Plans published for Irish Volunteer “manoeuvres” on 23 April (Easter Sunday)
20-21 April	German arms shipment intercepted by the Royal Navy: the <i>Aud</i> captured and scuttled
21 April	Roger Casement arrives in Ireland from Germany and is arrested
22 April	Eoin MacNeill countermands the order for manoeuvres
23 April	MacNeill’s countermanding order published Military Council of the IRB agrees to proceed with plans for rising
24 April	Easter Rising Initial military operations of rebels: key buildings (including the General Post Office) seized and reinforced and Irish Republic declared
25 April	Martial law proclaimed for Dublin
29 April	Unconditional surrender of the insurgents Martial law proclaimed for all of Ireland
3-12 May	Leaders of the Rising executed
May-July	Lloyd George attempts to negotiate a deal between the IPP and Ulster Unionists on the basis of exclusion
12 June	Ulster Unionist Council agrees to immediate implementation of Home Rule if six Ulster counties temporarily excluded
1 July	Opening of the Somme offensive
3 August	Casement hanged at Pentonville jail (London)
4 November	Martial law in Ireland terminated
7 December	Lloyd George replaces Asquith as UK Prime Minister
22-23 December	The first of those interned after the Rising are returned to Ireland

1917	February-May	series of by-election victories for Sinn Féin
	16 May	Proposal for an Irish Convention
	10 July	Clare East by-election: Eamon de Valera (Sinn Féin) Victorious
	25 July	First meeting of Irish Convention (meets until 4 April 1918)
	25-26 October	Sinn Féin <i>ard-fheis</i> : de Valera elected President of the Party
	27 October	de Valera elected President of the Irish Volunteers
1918	6 February	<i>Representation of the People and Redistribution of Seats Act</i> extends suffrage all UK men over 21 years of age and to all UK women over 30 years of age
	6 March	John Redmond dies
	18 April	Military Services Act raises possibility of conscription in Ireland: Mansion House conference of nationalists (Dublin)
	21 April	Anti-conscription pledge signed by nationalists
	17-18 May	Arrest of Sinn Féin leadership
	11 November	World War I ends
	December	General election (UK): IPP (Nationalist Party) wins 6 seats; Sinn Féin wins 73 seats; Unionists win 26 seats at Westminster
January 1919 to July 1920		Anglo-Irish War or War of Independence
1919	21 January	Sinn Féin MPs refuse to take seats in Westminster 1 st meeting of <i>Dáil Éireann</i> (Assembly of Ireland) declared by Sinn Féin Soloheadbeg ambush, County Tipperary: 2 RIC officers shot Opening of Anglo-Irish War or War of Independence

	3 February	de Valera escapes from Lincoln jail
	1 April	de Valera elected President of the <i>Dáil</i>
	3 June	<i>Local Government (Ireland) Act</i>
	4 July	Sinn Féin, IRA, <i>Cumann na mBan</i> , the Gaelic League and the Irish Volunteers declared illegal by Westminster
	12 September	<i>Dáil Éireann</i> declared illegal by Westminster
	19 December	Phoenix Park ambush on Viceroy of Ireland (Dublin) unsuccessful
1920	15 January	Local elections: Sinn Féin wins control of 172 out of 206 borough and urban councils
	25 February	Government of Ireland Bill introduced in Westminster proposing the partition of Ireland with parliaments in Dublin and Belfast
	20 March	UUC accepts the Government of Ireland Bill (Belfast)
	4 April	Destruction by IRA of almost 300 unoccupied RIC barracks
	23 May	Railway workers strike begins
	19 June	Disturbances in Derry leading to 18 deaths
	21-24 July	Expulsion of Catholic workers from shipyards and engineering works (Belfast) Fatal riots in Belfast
	27 July	Formation of Auxiliary division of ex-officers to assist RIC
	6 August	Boycott of Belfast firms begun by the <i>Dáil</i>
	9 August	<i>Restoration of Order in Ireland Act</i> becomes law: Crown forces had powers to arrest and detain any individual suspected of illegal activities; Membership in banned organizations (see above) now criminalized; Imprisonment without trial legalized; Trial by courts martial, military courts given precedence over civil courts

	21 November	“Bloody Sunday” IRA assassinates 14 British intelligence agents in Dublin; Black and Tans retaliate by opening fire on crowd at Gaelic football match at Croke Park (Dublin) killing 12 and wounding 60
	28 November	16 Auxiliaries killed by West Cork flying column at Kilmichael
	10 December	Martial law imposed in counties Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Tipperary; extended to 4 adjacent counties on 4 January 1921
	23 December	<i>Government of Ireland Act</i> becomes law: devolved administration launched in Belfast
1921	21 January	Start of government policy of reprisals
	4 February	Sir James Craig succeeds Carson as Ulster Unionist leader
	13 May	Nominations for parliaments: all Sinn Féin candidates for Dublin parliament returned unopposed
	24 May	Unionists win 40 of 52 seats in the Belfast parliament
	25 May	Dublin Customs House sacked by IRA
	7 June	Sir James Craig elected 1 st Prime Minister of Northern Ireland
	22 June	Opening of Northern Ireland parliament by George V
	9-15 July	Belfast riots: over 20 people died
	9 July	Truce declared between IRA and British army
	16 August	2 nd <i>Dáil</i> meets
	26 August	de Valera elected President of Irish Republic by the <i>Dáil</i>
	11 October	Anglo-Irish conference opens in London
	22 November	Control of police in Northern Ireland transferred to the Belfast parliament

	6 December	Anglo-Irish Treaty signed
	14 December	Debate on the Treaty terms begins in the <i>Dáil</i> (ends 7 January, 1922)
1922	7 January	<i>Dáil Éireann</i> approves Treaty by a vote of 64 to 57
	9 January	de Valera resigns as President of the <i>Dáil</i> ; Arthur Griffith elected in his place
	14 January	Provisional Government appointed under Michael Collins jointly with new <i>Dáil</i> Ministry under Arthur Griffith
	16 January	Hand-over of power: the end of the Castle administration in Dublin
	12-15 February	Belfast attacks: 27 deaths attributed to IRA followed by 4 months of sectarian riots, sniping and shooting
	21 February	<i>Garda Síochána</i> (police force of the Free State) inaugurated
	26-27 March	Anti-Treaty IRA repudiates the authority of the <i>Dáil</i> and establishes the Irregular forces
	30 March	Ineffectual Collins and Craig pact signed to end Belfast Boycott and protect northern Catholics
	7 April	<i>Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act</i> passed by Belfast parliament (renewed annually and made permanent in 1933); allowed for internment and other emergency measures
	14 April	Anti-Treaty (Irregular) forces seize the Four Courts (Dublin)
	20 May	Pre-election pact between Collins and de Valera to maintain balance of parties in the 2 nd <i>Dáil</i> in the forthcoming election
	31 May	Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) established as police force of Northern Ireland to replace the RIC
	16 June	General election (Irish Free State): Pro-Treaty candidates secure the majority of seats

	22 June	Sir Henry Wilson (military adviser to the Belfast government) killed by the IRA in London
	28 June	The Provisional Government moves to dislodge the Irregular forces from the Four Courts Irish Civil War begins
June 1922 to May 1923		Irish Civil War
	12 August	Death of Arthur Griffith
	22 August	Michael Collins killed in an ambush at Beal na mBlath, Cork
	9 September	3 rd <i>Dáil</i> (Provisional Government) meets: William Cosgrave elected President
	11 September	Abolition of proportional representation for local elections in Northern Ireland
	28 September	<i>Dáil</i> approves the creation of military courts to try civilians
	10 October	Catholic bishops issue a joint pastoral excommunicating active members of the Irregular forces
	25 October	Constitution of the Free State approved Rival Republican Government constituted under de Valera with the support of the IRA
	6 December	Irish Free State formally established: Cosgrave appointed President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State
	7 December	Belfast parliament votes to opt out of the Free State parliament (implementing cabinet decision of 13 March)
15 November 1922 to 24 May 1923		Execution of 77 members of the Irregular forces
1923	31 March	Customs control inaugurated between the Free State and the UK
	27 April	de Valera orders the suspension of the Irregulars' campaign; arms dumped in May

	24 May	de Valera instructs republicans to abandon armed resistance following the suspension of the Irregular offensive on April 27 Civil War ends
	20 July	Eoin MacNeill appointed by the Free State as delegate to the Boundary Commission
	8 August	<i>Garda Siochana</i> given statutory force
	15 August	de Valera arrested in Ennis, County Clare (interned until 16 July 1924)
	27 August	General election (Free State) (<i>Cumann na nGaedheal</i> victory)
	10 September	The Irish Free State enters the League of Nations
	6 December	General election (UK)
1924	6-19 March	Army “mutiny” following the announcement of the reorganization and reduction of the national army on 18 February
	10 March	Eoin O’Duffy (chief commissioner of the Garda since September 1922) takes temporary command of the defence forces until February 1925
	12 April	Free State judiciary reconstituted by Courts of Justice Act
	10 May	The Belfast parliament declines to appoint delegate to Boundary Commission
	29 October	General election (UK)
	6 November	Boundary Commission convened in London; northern delegate appointed by Westminster parliament
	8 November	Amnesty granted for Civil War offenders in the Free State
	24 December	Release of the last internees in Northern Ireland

1925	11 February	Effective prohibition of divorce legislation in the Irish Free State
	3 April	General election (Northern Ireland): Unionists returned with reduced majority; Devlin and Nationalist colleague take seats on 28 April
	7 November	Proposals of the Irish Boundary Commission leaked to the media
	15 November	IRA convention repudiates the authority of de Valera's Republican government
	20 November	MacNeill resigned from the Boundary Commission after proposals leaked
	3 December	Tripartite Agreement to maintain the existing border between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland announced
	10 December	Disbandment of the "A" Division (Special Forces) by Craig
1926	4 February	"C" Division (Special Forces) recruitment ended in Northern Ireland
	11 March	de Valera resigns as President of Sinn Féin
	18 April	Census of the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland records the population as: 2,971,992 (IFS) and 1,256,561 (NI)
	16 May	Fianna Fáil founded by de Valera (Dublin)
	14 November	2 Gardai (police officers) killed in attacks on police barracks by the IRA
1927	9 June	General election (Irish Free State): <i>Cumann na nGaedheal</i> retained power as minority government; Fianna Fáil takes seats on 11 August
	10 July	O'Higgins (Minister for Justice for the Free State) assassinated by the IRA

	11 August	<i>Public Safety Act</i> passed in the Free State providing for special courts with military members and suppression of associations
	15 September	General election (Free State): <i>Cumann na nGaedheal</i> victory
1928	26 December	A further <i>Public Safety Act</i> passed in the Free State which repeals the legislation of August 1927
1929	16 April	Proportional Representation abolished for House of Commons (Northern Ireland)
	22 May	General election (Northern Ireland): Unionist victory
1932	4-13 October	Strikes and riots over lack of unemployment relief (Belfast)
	16 November	New parliament building opened at Stormont, Belfast

sources: Bardon 2007, 436; Fitzpatrick 1998, 264-277; Foster 1989, 599-619; Jackson 2003, 361-378; Walsh 2002 ,viii-xiii.

Appendix C

Constituting Ulster (Chapter 4) Images

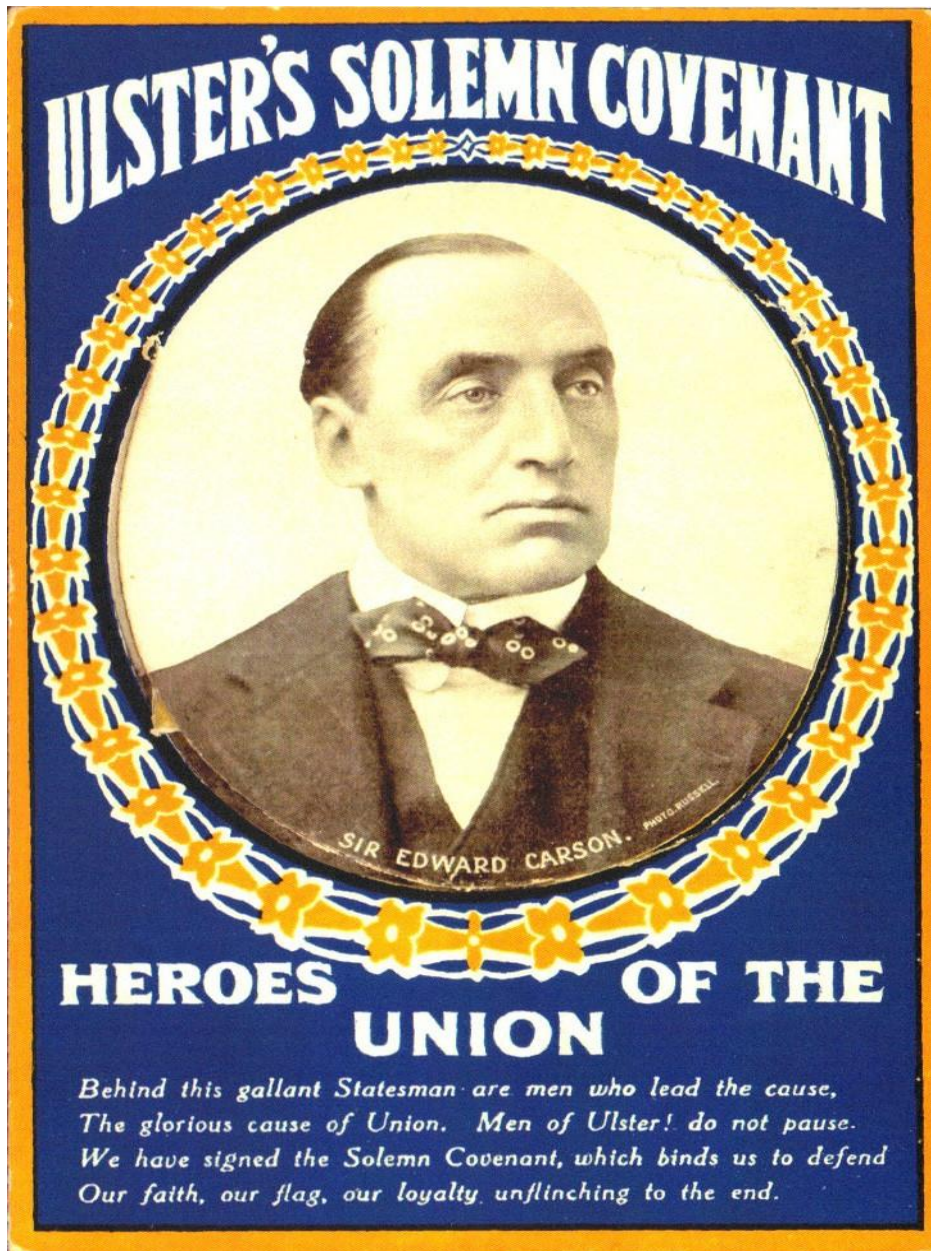


Figure 1. Only men are heroes. The defence of Ulster is masculine nation-work. Sir Edward Carson is constituted as the contemporary “savior” of Ulster unionists and Protestants and exemplifies the ideal of the *Ulsterman* in both dress and demeanour.

(Ulster Unionist image of Sir Edward Carson from the period of the Ulster Crisis. Belfast Telegraph.)

(MEN)

SHEET No 1

PARLIAMENTARY DIVISION, _____

DISTRICT, _____

PLACE OF SIGNING, _____

Covenant:—

BEING CONVINCED in our consciences that Home Rule would be disastrous to the material well-being of Ulster as well as of the whole of Ireland, subversive of our civil and religious freedom, destructive of our citizenship, and perilous to the unity of the Empire, we, whose names are underwritten, men of Ulster, loyal subjects of His Gracious Majesty King George V., humbly relying on the God whom our fathers in days of stress and trial confidently trusted, do hereby pledge ourselves in solemn Covenant, throughout this our time of threatened calamity, to stand by one another in defending, for ourselves and our children, our cherished position of equal citizenship in the United Kingdom, and in using all means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland. And in the event of such a Parliament being forced upon us, we further solemnly and mutually pledge ourselves to refuse to recognise its authority. In sure confidence that God will defend the right, we hereto subscribe our names.
And further, we individually declare that we have not already signed this Covenant.

NAME.	ADDRESS.
<i>Robert Wilgar</i>	<i>30 Dargle St, Belfast</i>
<i>Alexander Fraser</i>	<i>137 North Queen St</i>
<i>John Gainger</i>	<i>36 Rabbitt Street</i>
<i>Andrew Jewelland</i>	<i>51 Durcain Gardens</i>
<i>J. Sidney Johnson</i>	<i>15 Stanley Villas, Clifton Park W.</i>
<i>Bernard O'Neil</i>	<i>26 Eglinton St</i>
<i>Ampt Herald</i>	<i>7 Annanvale Terrace</i>
<i>John G. McCready</i>	<i>43 Alva St. Clifton Park</i>
<i>Wm Neil</i>	<i>42 Mt Colyer Avenue</i>
<i>Thos W Foster</i>	<i>15 Glenrussa Street</i>
<i>D 1327 / 3 / 4326</i>	

Figure 2. Full text and signed page of the Solemn League and Covenant.

PRONI (D 1327/3/4326). Copy of signed page of the Solemn League and Covenant. September 28, 1912. www.proni.gov.uk/UlsterCovenant/image.aspx?image=M0043260001. Accessed September 28, 2012.



Figure 3. Masculine Ulster: A meeting to ratify the Covenant: an entirely male affair. (Belfast Telegraph)



Figure 4. The gendered ceremony and ritual of Ulster Day. Men parade into Belfast City Hall to sign the Covenant while women observe the spectacle. (Belfast Telegraph)



Figure 5. A united Ulster polity: Crowds of men and women (but note the predominance of masculine Ulster) in Ulster Hall the day before Ulster Day demonstrating Ulster's opposition to Home Rule. (Belfast Telegraph)

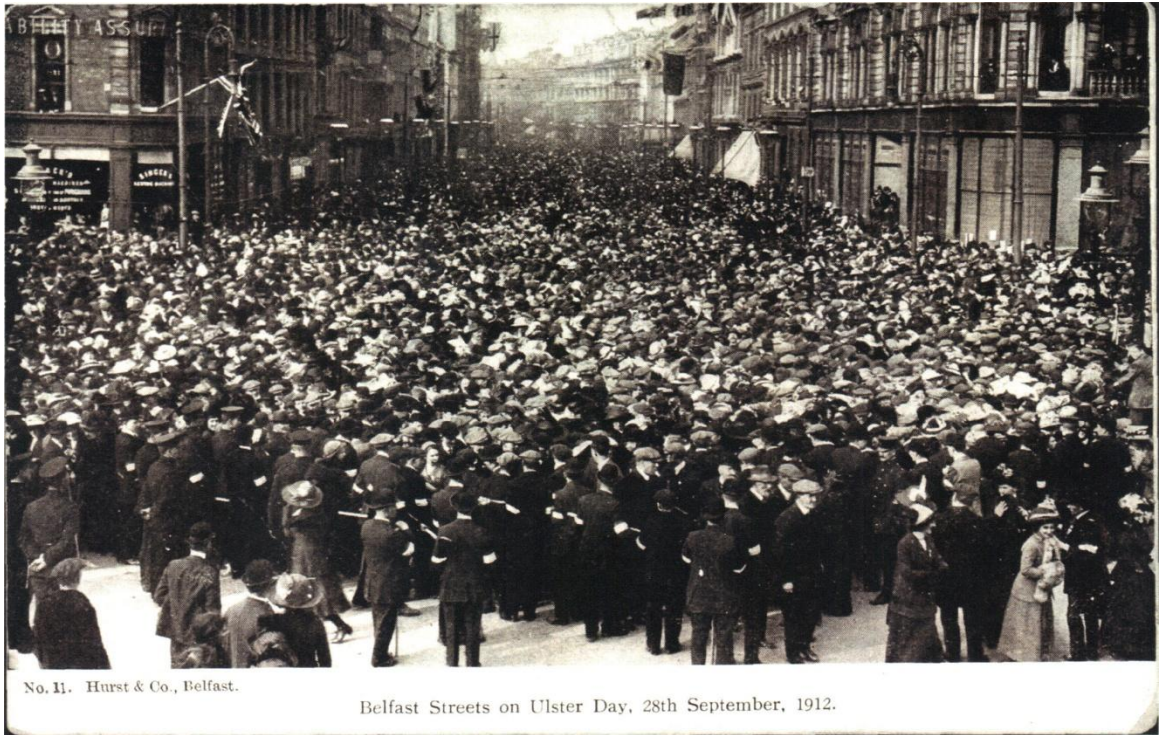


Figure 6. A united Ulster polity: Crowds of men and women in central Belfast on Ulster Day demonstrating Ulster's opposition to Home Rule. (Belfast Telegraph)



Figure 7. Solemn, determined, and united *Ulstermen*: Sir Edward Carson signing the Covenant under the central dome of Belfast City Hall and witnessed by the male political and commercial élite of Ulster. The standard that allegedly accompanied William of Orange into battle at the Boyne in 1690 is behind him. (Belfast Telegraph)



4)

Belfast Volunteers at Balmoral, 27th September, 1913.

Publishers—Hurst & Co., Fine Art Warehouse, Belfast.

Figure 8. Institutionalized, militarized, masculine Ulster ready to protect and defend Ulster: The Ulster Volunteer Force on parade in Belfast, 1913. (Belfast Telegraph)



Figure 9. The Apprentice Boys rally to protect and defend Londonderry during the Siege of Derry in 1689. This half-penny postcard tied the Ulster Crisis to a history of Ulster and a Protestant militarized masculinity.

(Ulster unionist half-penny postcard from the period of the Ulster Crisis. Belfast Telegraph.)



Figure 10. William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne (July 1, 1690): An early “hero” and “defender” of Protestants and Loyalists in Ireland during another time of danger and threat.

(Ulster unionist half-penny postcard from the period of the Ulster Crisis. Belfast Telegraph.)



Figure 11. Sir Edward Carson: “King Carson”—President of Ulster’s Provisional Government. This was clearly not intended to be a republican government. Carson is surrounded by the trappings of monarchy: ermine robes, a sceptre and chain of office with the Red Hand of Ulster; he is seated on a throne on which the distinctive symbols of Ulster and Protestantism: the Red Hand, the Union Flag, and the Lambeg drums are represented.

(Ulster unionist half-penny postcard from the period of the Ulster Crisis. Belfast Telegraph.)



Figure 12. A feminized Ulster pledging a daughter’s love and loyalty to England. This is in contrast to the images of the masculine defence of Ulster and England by Loyalist forces.

(Ulster Unionist half-penny postcard image from the period of the Ulster Crisis. Belfast Telegraph.)

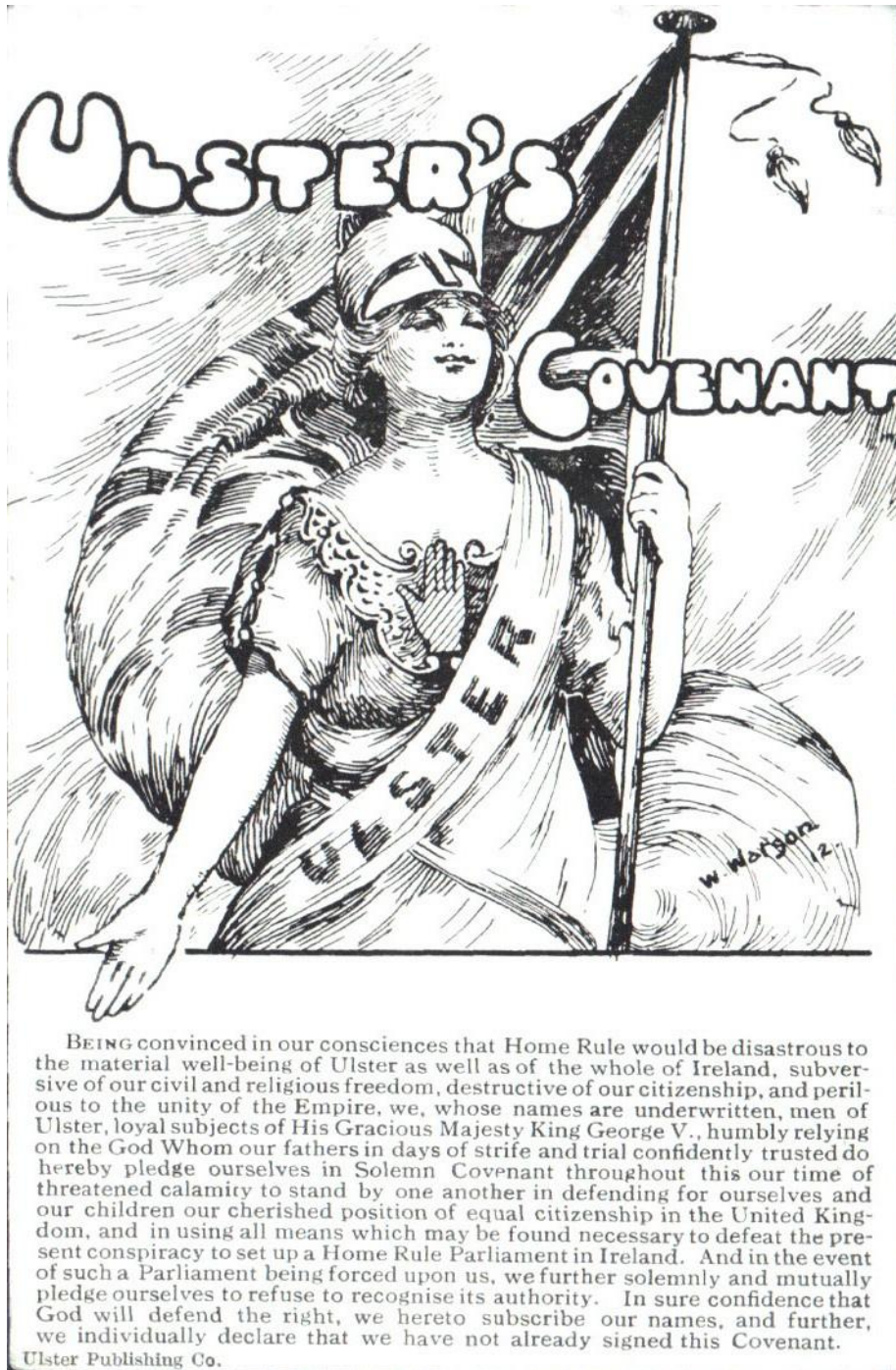


Figure 13. The text of the Covenant which constituted a masculine Ulster below a feminine symbolic Ulster bearing the Red Hand and the Union flag representing Ulster's Britishness and ties to the UK.

(Ulster Unionist half-penny postcard image from the period of the Ulster Crisis. Belfast Telegraph.)



Figure 14. A feminine Ulster (wearing robes decorated with the Red Hand of Ulster and the crown) demonstrates her loyalty and love to England (bearing robes with the English rose)—as Ruth was loyal to Naomi (a reference to verse from the book of Ruth in the Old Testament)—by pleading with England not to desert her and cast her off to a Home Rule parliament. Scotland (bearing tartan robes and holding the Act of Union) looks on.

(Ulster Unionist half-penny postcard image from the period of the Ulster Crisis. Belfast Telegraph.)

Appendix D

Text of UWUC resolution submitted to the House of Commons, June 1912

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in parliament assembled.

The humble petition of the undersigned women of Ireland showeth [sic].

That we are convinced that any legislation which would impair the existing Union of Great Britain and Ireland or result in the establishment of an Irish legislative body and an (independent) Irish executive responsible to it would be injurious to the common interests of our countrywomen, and we respectfully desire to call the attention of your Honourable House to certain of the grounds against such legislation which particularly affect women.

a) Serious dangers would arise to our social and domestic liberties from entrusting legislative functions to a body of which a large permanent majority would be under ecclesiastical control.

b) No legislative safeguards would avail to protect us against such dangers, as the Roman Catholic Church refuses to recognise the binding effect on any agreements which curtail her prerogatives and claims an uncontrolled jurisdiction in the provinces of education and the marriage laws, a claim which has been recognised in practice by the Irish Parliamentary Party.

c) The late iniquitous enforcement of the *Ne Temere* decree—a decree which specially affects the women of Ireland—and the slavish acquiescence of the Irish Nationalist members of Parliament in its operation, demonstrate that in an Irish Parliament the natural instincts of humanity would be of no avail as against the dictates of the Roman Church.

d) The dominating power of ecclesiastics over education in Ireland, which is already excessive, would be largely increased and schools and colleges under the control of religious orders would be state favoured institutions under an Irish Parliament.

e) There would be no prospect of beneficent [sic] legislation to ameliorate the conditions of life of unprotected women engaged in industrial work in many conventional institutions, as the Irish Nationalist members of Parliament steadfastly oppose such legislation.

f) No valid reason has been advanced for depriving Irish women of the rights or privilege which they now enjoy

We therefore pray the Honourable Commons of the United Kingdom of Great

Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled to reject any legislative proposals to disintegrate the United Kingdom and expose us to the disastrous consequences of such discrimination.

And so your Petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray [sic]...⁸⁵⁰

⁸⁵⁰ PRONI. *UWUC ECM 1911-13* (D 1098/1/1). April 10, 1912, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 52-3.

Appendix E

Both Peeress and Peasant (Chapter 5) Images

(WOMEN)

SHEET No 4

PARLIAMENTARY DIVISION, North Belfast

DISTRICT, _____

PLACE OF SIGNING, Clifton St. Drury Hall

Declaration:—

We, whose names are underwritten, women of Ulster, and loyal subjects of our gracious King, being firmly persuaded that Home Rule would be disastrous to our Country, desire to associate ourselves with the men of Ulster in their uncompromising opposition to the Home Rule Bill now before Parliament, whereby it is proposed to drive Ulster out of her cherished place in the constitution of the United Kingdom, and to place her under the domination and control of a Parliament in Ireland.

Praying that from this calamity God will save Ireland, we hereto subscribe our names.

NAME.	ADDRESS.
<u>Mary Simpson</u>	<u>110 Silvio Street.</u>
<u>Annie Ferguson</u>	<u>36 Wimbledon street</u>
<u>Lilli McShane</u>	<u>28 Twickenham st</u>
<u>Adelaide Smith</u>	<u>22 Twickenham st</u>
<u>Janet Lawie</u>	<u>74 Denmark St.</u>
<u>Bertrude Fraser</u>	<u>74 Denmark St.</u>
<u>Margaret Kirkpatrick</u>	<u>60 Israel St.</u>
<u>Janie McCready</u>	<u>43 Alcoa St.</u>
<u>Louisa Black</u>	<u>21 Landscape Ave</u>
<u>Olive Agnew</u>	<u>211 Hollywood Rd.</u>
	<u>D 1327/3/4255</u>

Figure 1. PRONI (D 1327/3/4255). Full text and signed page of the women's Declaration signed on Ulster Day: September 28, 1912. www.proni.gov.uk/UlsterCovenant/image.aspx?image=W0042550004. Accessed September 28, 2012.



Figure 2. The presentation of an ambulance by members of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council to Col. F.H. Crawford and Sir Robert Liddell (PRONI. *Records of the UWUC*. D 1098/2/7).



Figure 3. The presentation of an ambulance by members of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council to Col. F.H. Crawford and Sir Robert Liddell (PRONI. *Records of the UWUC*. D 1098/2/7).



Figure 4. Ulster women parading as part of the UVF ambulance, driving, and signaling corps (Belfast Telegraph).

Appendix F

Text of draft of letter to the Lord Mayor of Belfast from Lady Londonderry, Lady Abercorn, and Lady Dufferin and Ava

In every great National and Imperial crisis no part of the community has more clearly demonstrated its loyalty to the Throne and to the Empire than the people of Ulster. Today our men are responding to the call of the King and rallying round the Flag; and we feel it is our duty to see that their families and dependents are cared for and that any want and suffering which may result shall be minimised as much as possible.

We are very glad and proud to assure your Lordship and your Committee, and also, if they desire it, The Soldiers and Sailors Families Association of the whole-hearted co-operation of our great organisation. It covers, as you are aware, the entire province of Ulster and through it any individual case can be reached without delay.

...Associated with us are the members of the Ulster Volunteer Nursing Corps all of whom are prepared to take up whatever duty they may be assigned or called upon to perform. We have also at our disposal numerous well equipped Dressing Stations throughout Ulster.

We will assist in the distribution where required of supplies of clothing, food and other necessaries of life. If any further means suggest itself to your Lordship in which our organisation can be of use we shall be happy to co-operate.

We realise at this crisis not merely the privileges but also the duties attaching to citizenship of the British Empire [sic].⁸⁵¹

⁸⁵¹ PRONI. *UWUC Council Minutes 1912-40* (D 1098/1/3). August 18, 1914, reproduced in Urquhart 2001, 188-9; PRONI. *Records of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council* (D 1098/3/5). Copy of Draft of Letter from Lady Londonderry, Lady Abercorn, and Lady Dufferin and Ava to the Lord Mayor of Belfast. August 11, 1914.

Appendix G

Text of the prayer used at opening of meetings of the Council and Executive Committee of the UWUC

O God, guide us we pray Thee, and enable us to see, with clear vision, the way which Thou would have us take.

Direct, we beseech Thee, all those in authority, and especially we pray for His Most Gracious Majesty the King, His Excellency the Governor of Northern Ireland, the Prime Minister, the Government and Members of Parliament of the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister, the Government and Members of Parliament of Northern Ireland, and all those who serve under them.

Watch over our Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Police, and give to them the right spirit in doing their duty.

To all people grant the gifts of patience, self-control and unfailing faith in Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.⁸⁵²

⁸⁵² Kinghan 1975, 95.