

# Shaping Ireland's Independence

M. C. Rast

# Shaping Ireland's Independence

Nationalist, Unionist, and British Solutions to the  
Irish Question, 1909–1925

palgrave  
macmillan

M. C. Rast  
Independent Scholar  
New York, NY, USA

ISBN 978-3-030-21117-2      ISBN 978-3-030-21118-9 (eBook)  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-21118-9>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use. The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG  
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book began as my doctoral dissertation at Concordia University in Montreal, where the support of the Department of History and the School of Irish Studies could not have been more generous, or the environment more intellectually stimulating. My advisor, Gavin Foster, brought a particularly helpful historiographical and editorial perspective to the project. I would also like to thank the members of my proposal committee, Jane McGaughey, Norman Ingram, and Ted McCormick, as well as final readers Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, Gavin Taylor, Stephen Yeager, and Sean Farrell of Northern Illinois University.

No research project would be possible without the knowledgeable and helpful staff members at libraries and archives, and I thank those at each institution I visited: the National Library of Ireland, National Archives of Ireland, Irish Military Archive, Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Linen Hall Library (Belfast), British Library, the National Archives (Kew), Parliamentary Archives, and New York Public Library. I corresponded with the Bodleian Library (Oxford) and Claydon Estate (Buckinghamshire), and staff members were very gracious in sending copies of documents. I also thank the librarians and interlibrary loan staff at Concordia University, Albany Public Library (New York), New York State Library, Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library, Georgia State University, and Sewanee: The University of the South.

Maps 2 and 3 are reproduced with the kind permission of Sarah Gearty of the Royal Irish Academy and Kieran J. Rankin of Trinity College

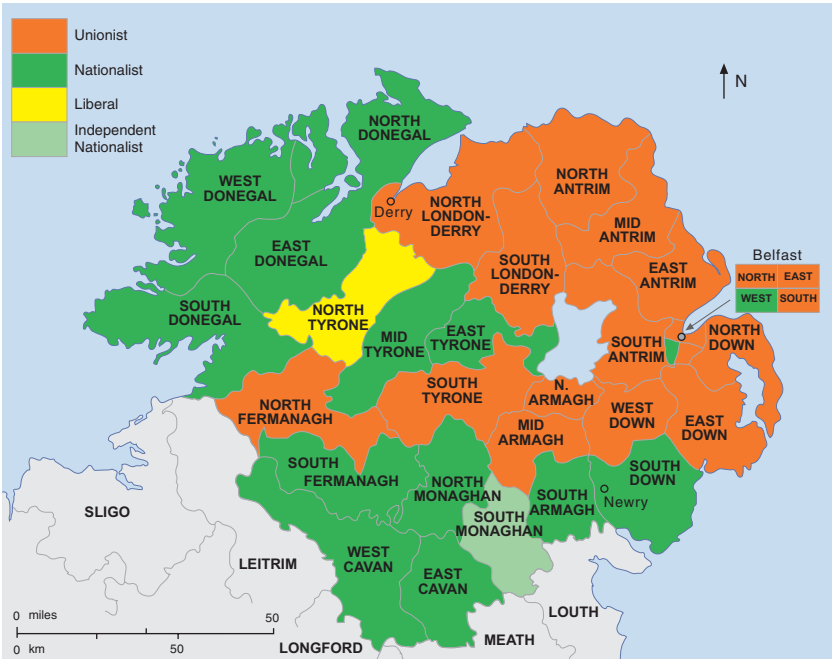
Dublin. Parts of Chap. 4 were published in an article in the *American Journal of Irish Studies*.

This book is a reflection of my intellectual development to this point, and for that, I thank my undergraduate institution, Sewanee: The University of the South, and my advisors there, Arthur Knoll and Charles Perry. I would like to express equal gratitude to my master's institution, Georgia State University, and my advisor, Ian Fletcher.

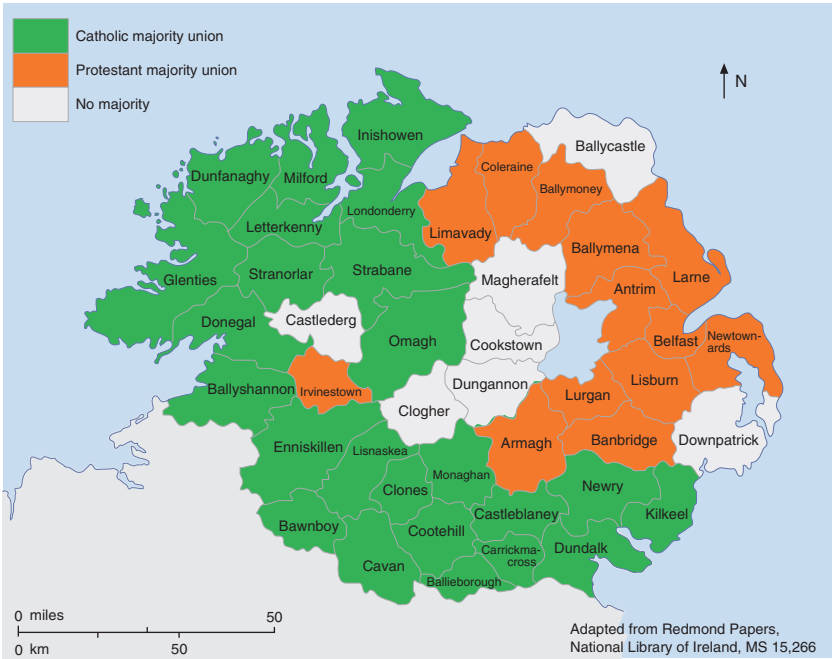
Finally, special thanks to my family and friends, too numerous to name. This endeavor would not have been possible without them.



**Map 1** Ireland, Ulster, and Northern Ireland, by county



**Map 2** December 1910 election results in Ulster. (Courtesy of Sarah Gearty / Kieran J. Rankin)



**Map 3** Religious majorities in Ulster, by poor law union. (Courtesy of Sarah Gearty / Kieran J. Rankin)



# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
	<i>Issues and Arguments</i>	1
	<i>Politics and Democracy in the United Kingdom</i>	5
	<i>Political Identity: Religion, Nation, and the Press</i>	8
	<i>Outline</i>	14
<b>2</b>	<b>“The Hollowest Political Cant”: British Parties, Home Rule, and the Parliament Act, 1909–July 1911</b>	<b>25</b>
	<i>Introduction</i>	25
	<i>Asquith’s Government and Home Rule</i>	28
	<i>Unionists, Civil War, and Home Rule</i>	32
	<i>Liberals, Nationalists, and the Lords</i>	38
	<i>British Attempts at Compromise</i>	42
	<i>Anti-Home Rule, Religion, and Separate Treatment for Ulster</i>	49
	<i>The Parliament Act Passed</i>	54
	<i>Conclusions</i>	56
<b>3</b>	<b>“Prepared to Make Great Sacrifices”: Reactions to Home Rule, July 1911–1914</b>	<b>71</b>
	<i>Introduction</i>	71
	<i>Irish Unionists and Ulster Exclusion</i>	74
	<i>Nationalists and the Third Home Rule Bill</i>	78
	<i>Unionists and Home Rule</i>	87

	<i>The Ulster Covenant and Volunteers</i>	93
	<i>British Public Opinion</i>	100
	<i>Conclusions</i>	106
<b>4</b>	<b>“A Settlement Nobody Wants”: Exclusion Gains Ground, 1913–1914</b>	119
	<i>Introduction</i>	119
	<i>Averting Civil War</i>	122
	<i>Negotiations: Asquith and the Unionists</i>	128
	<i>Negotiations: Asquith and Irish Nationalists</i>	133
	<i>Militarized Politics/Politicized Military</i>	141
	<i>Conference and Anti-climax</i>	146
	<i>Conclusions</i>	151
<b>5</b>	<b>Home Rule During a World War: The Lloyd George Proposals and Irish Convention, 1915–1918</b>	163
	<i>Introduction</i>	163
	<i>Ireland and the First World War</i>	165
	<i>Lloyd George’s Proposals</i>	167
	<i>Party Approval and Cabinet Disapproval</i>	170
	<i>New Government, New Ideas</i>	177
	<i>Irish Parties and the Convention</i>	179
	<i>The Irish Convention</i>	183
	<i>Southern Unionists Split</i>	192
	<i>Conclusions</i>	194
<b>6</b>	<b>“Rickety Parliaments”: Dominion Home Rule and the Government of Ireland Act, 1919–July 1921</b>	205
	<i>Introduction</i>	205
	<i>Ulster Unionists and the Government of Ireland Bill</i>	207
	<i>Dominion Status: Ideas, Organizations, and Limitations</i>	215
	<i>Seeking Peace with Sinn Féin</i>	225
	<i>Conclusions</i>	233

<b>7</b>	<b>“Terrible Finality”: Treaty, Constitution, and Boundary Commission, 1921–1925</b>	<b>245</b>
	<i>Introduction</i>	245
	<i>External Association and the July 20 Proposals</i>	247
	<i>Treaty Negotiations: Establishing Positions</i>	252
	<i>Treaty Negotiations: British Unionists and Northern Ireland</i>	255
	<i>Planning for Failure</i>	261
	<i>Finalizing the Treaty</i>	264
	<i>Constitution and Boundary Commission</i>	269
	<i>Conclusions</i>	277
<b>8</b>	<b>Postscript and Conclusions: Consequences of the Settlement</b>	<b>291</b>
	<i>Irish Free State</i>	291
	<i>Northern Ireland</i>	293
	<i>Britain and the Empire</i>	295
	<i>Conclusions</i>	298
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>305</b>
	<b>Index</b>	<b>329</b>

## ABBREVIATIONS

AFIL	All-for-Ireland League
AOH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
<i>BET</i>	<i>Belfast Evening Telegraph</i>
BL	British Library
BMH WS	Bureau of Military History Witness Statement
<i>BNL</i>	<i>Belfast News-Letter</i>
<i>BWN</i>	<i>Belfast Weekly News</i>
<i>CE</i>	<i>Cork Examiner</i>
DÉ	Dáil Éireann
<i>DED</i>	<i>Daily Express</i> (Dublin)
<i>DEL</i>	<i>Daily Express</i> (London)
<i>DH</i>	<i>Daily Herald</i>
<i>DJ</i>	<i>Derry Journal</i>
<i>DN</i>	<i>Daily News</i>
<i>FJ</i>	<i>Freeman's Journal</i>
<i>FR</i>	<i>Fortnightly Review</i>
HC	House of Commons
HL	House of Lords
<i>II</i>	<i>Irish Independent</i>
IMA	Irish Military Archive
<i>IN</i>	<i>Irish News</i>
IPP	Irish Parliamentary Party
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
<i>IT</i>	<i>Irish Times</i>
IUA	Irish Unionist Alliance
<i>MP</i>	<i>Morning Post</i>

NAI	National Archives of Ireland
NLI	National Library of Ireland
NR	<i>National Review</i>
NW	<i>Northern Whig</i>
NYPL	New York Public Library
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary
RT	<i>Round Table</i>
SR	<i>Saturday Review</i>
TCDA	Trinity College Dublin Archive
TT	<i>The Times</i>
UCDA	University College Dublin Archive
UH	<i>Ulster Herald</i>
UIL	United Irish League
UKNA	United Kingdom National Archive
UKPA	United Kingdom Parliamentary Archives
UUC	Ulster Unionist Council
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
WIT	<i>Weekly Irish Times</i>
YP	<i>Yorkshire Post</i>

Speeches are noted by the speaker and location.

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Religious populations in Ulster, 1911 census	38
Table 3.1	Local Irish press reactions to the Third Home Rule Bill, April 1912	84
Table 3.2	United Kingdom by-elections by party, 1911	103
Table 3.3	United Kingdom by-elections by party, 1912	104
Table 3.4	United Kingdom by-elections by party, 1913	105
Table 3.5	United Kingdom by-elections by party, 1914	105
Table 5.1	Contested Irish by-elections by party, 1917–April 1918 (end of Irish Convention)	191