



**NUI MAYNOOTH**  
Ollscoil na hÉireann M6 Nuad

The Ulster Volunteer Force 1912-4.

by

Gerard Michael Farrell

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MA IN HISTORY  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND  
MAYNOOTH

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Professor R.V.Comerford

Supervisor of Research: Doctor Ian A. Speller

July 2006

**Thesis abstract:**

The aim of this work is to examine the evolution and role of the U.V.F. in Ulster from 1912-4. In the opening chapter the sectarianism that plagued Ulster during the Home Rule crisis is discussed. The work focuses on Castledawson in Londonderry, where an alleged attack by Hibernians against Presbyterian school children sparked riots in Belfast and resulted in Catholics being driven from their jobs. This work shows how the emerging importance of public opinion forced the Unionist leadership to reign in the militant excesses of some Unionists. The chapter discusses the damage inflicted upon the Unionist campaign of opposition to Home Rule by the Belfast riots, with some papers describing Unionists working in the Haarland and Wolff shipyards as terrorists.

In chapter two the formation and structure of the U.V.F. in Belfast, Antrim, and Fermanagh is examined. The chapter discusses the military structure of the U.V.F. and why the organisation was better suited to urban Ulster. In the course of the chapter the link between big business and the U.V.F. is examined, the focus of which is on George Clark of Workman and Clark shipyards. The difference in political views of those on the U.U.C. is studied to show who was in favour of compromise, and who wished to fight. The role of the U.V.F. in halting sectarian attacks in both rural and urban Ulster is discussed, and the levels of recruitment to the organisation in Belfast, Antrim, and Fermanagh.

In the final chapter three major issues that affected Ulster in 1914 are examined. The failure of Asquith to offer a realistic settlement to Carson in the autumn of 1913-4 undermined Carson's authority as leader of the U.U.C. The radical line pursued by some members of government and a significant minority of the Unionist party during the coercion crisis and the Larne gunrunning is examined, to show the effect this had on the political process. Lastly the renewal of sectarian attacks in Ulster as moderate Unionism was marginalised is discussed to show the danger of some form of conflict breaking out if Home Rule was forced on Unionists.

## Table of Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Title page .....   | i   |
| Table of contents .....  | ii  |
| Acknowledgements .....   | iii |
| Abbreviations .....  | iv  |
| Introduction to thesis and literary review .....                                 | 1   |
| Chapter 1: sectarian violence, and Unionist opposition to Home Rule .....        | 12  |
| Chapter 2: U.V.F. formation in Belfast, Antrim and County Fermanagh .....        | 26  |
| Chapter 3: failed negotiations, alleged coercion, and the Larne gunrunning ..... | 41  |
| Conclusion to thesis .....   | 55  |
| Bibliography .....   | 59  |
| Appendix .....   | 63  |

### **Acknowledgements.**

I would like to thank my uncle Mr John Farrell, formerly of the National Library of Ireland, whose helpful advice at the beginning of this project proved invaluable. I also thank Mr John Killen of the Linen Hall Library, Belfast whose kind assistance made my journeys to Belfast extremely worthwhile. He was most generous with his time. I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Ian Speller for reading my work and helping me become more focussed. Finally I would like to thank my parents and family for their continued support and encouragement in my academic pursuits.

**Abbreviations.**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>A.O.H.</b>     | Ancient Order of Hibernians.              |
| <b>C.I.</b>       | County Inspector.                         |
| <b>C.O.</b>       | Colonial Office.                          |
| <b>COL.</b>       | Column.                                   |
| <b>G.O.C.</b>     | General officer commanding.               |
| <b>H.O.C.</b>     | House of Commons.                         |
| <b>I.G.</b>       | Inspector General.                        |
| <b>I.H.S.</b>     | Irish Historical Studies.                 |
| <b>I.V.F.</b>     | Irish Volunteer Force.                    |
| <b>M.P.</b>       | Member of Parliament.                     |
| <b>N.U.I.M.</b>   | National University of Ireland Maynooth.  |
| <b>P.R.O.N.I.</b> | Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. |
| <b>R.I.C.</b>     | Royal Irish Constabulary.                 |
| <b>U.K.</b>       | United Kingdom.                           |
| <b>U.U.C.</b>     | Ulster Unionist Council.                  |
| <b>U.V.F.</b>     | Ulster Volunteer Force.                   |
| <b>W.W.1.</b>     | World War one.                            |

This thesis covers the emergence of the Ulster Volunteer Force (U.V.F.) in the period 1912-4. The thesis examines the reasons for the formation of the U.V.F., the patterns of membership, and how recruitment was carried out in both rural and urban Ulster. The aim of the work is to lay out the problems that dogged the Unionist anti-Home Rule campaign in 1912, leading up to the Ulster Unionist Council's (U.U.C.) decision to form the U.V.F. in January 1913. The question of sectarian rioting that erupted in Belfast in June 1912, and the affect this had on both Ulster business and British public opinion is key to why the U.V.F. was needed, and will be discussed in chapters one and two of this work.

As will be shown in the course of this work, it is now generally accepted that Belfast's business magnates played a leading role in the formation and leadership of the U.V.F. The Inspector General (I.G.) of the Royal Irish Constabulary (R.I.C.) suggests that even those businessmen with little enthusiasm for the U.V.F. would eventually get involved in the struggle due to circumstances forcing their hand.<sup>1</sup> The civil disorder and social unrest that plagued Belfast was a major source of concern in Westminster, as the numerous sessions of Parliament taken up by the question of Belfast rioting clearly indicate.<sup>2</sup> This impacted badly on both the business community's profit, and their ability to portray their community as honest loyal Unionists. Therefore the formal disciplined structure of the U.V.F., often using ex-

---

<sup>1</sup> See 'Arms importation and distribution, crime special', Colonial Office (C.O.) 904/27/631.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, xl, column (col.) 976, (2 July, 1912); *Ibid.*, 1452, (4 July, 1912); *Ibid.*, 1569, (5 July, 1912); *Ibid.*, 2054, (10 July, 1912); *Ibid.*, xli, 1637, (29 July, 1912); *Ibid.*, 1855, (30 July, 1912); *Ibid.*, 2090, (31 July, 1912); *Ibid.*, xlii, 1063, (15 Oct., 1912).

servicemen from the British army to drill the men, helped tame the radicals and in turn garner respect for the Unionist cause.<sup>3</sup>

The thesis will also look at the recruitment methods of the U.V.F., and how pre-existing organisations (Unionist Clubs, and the Loyal Orange Order) drew men into the ranks of the U.V.F. In chapter two of this work the link between religious profession and the levels of U.V.F. membership will be discussed, contrasting the organisation's support in urban and rural Ulster. This work aims to both reinforce the existing literature written on Ulster, but also examine the aggression that characterised the Orange Order, and how their members precipitated sectarian incidents that were subsequently blamed on the Catholic and the wider Nationalist community. The work looks at the difference in attitudes to the U.V.F. in rural and urban Ulster and how this translated in membership levels. The major point of this work is to examine the Unionist community during the Home Rule crisis, and show how the U.V.F. actually played a positive role in improving discipline in the community, unlike the Orange Order. The existing literature available does not focus on the positive affect of the U.V.F. something that this work aims to newly examine.

In examining secondary sources for this work, biographies, specific studies on Ulster, and general histories of Ireland were studied. Those sources most useful to this work are outlined overleaf, particular reference being made to Joseph Lee, Charles Townshend, and A.T.Q.Stewart.

---

<sup>3</sup> See 'Arms importation and distribution, crime special', CO 904/27/629. The I.G. in a secret report on how the Ulster Volunteer Force was developing, highlighted the presence of ex-soldiers in the ranks acting as drill sergeants.

Biographies of the political leaders of both Unionism and Nationalism are important sources of information, and also serve as useful guides to primary information. The Historical Association of Ireland's 'Life and Times' series cover basic texts on both John Redmond, and Sir Edward Carson.<sup>4</sup> While simply overviews of the life and political careers of the two main protagonists in the Home Rule crisis, they are useful material in the preliminary stages of research.

Geoffrey Lewis's recent biography of Carson provides the reader with a more detailed analysis of Carson's life, political career and his time at the head of Unionism in Ireland.<sup>5</sup> The considerable bibliography included by Lewis links the reader to primary information covering Carson and the U.V.F., contained in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (P.R.O.N.I.) and other major repositories.

Charles Townshend's text is one of the most influential to the thesis.<sup>6</sup> Townshend covers the political situation in Ireland, how Unionist tactics evolved over time and gradually shifted the forward momentum of Unionism away from militant sectarianism towards a coherent political campaign.<sup>7</sup>

A.T.Q.Stewart is the leading authority on the subject of Ulster's militant opposition to Home Rule.<sup>8</sup> Stewart covers the political crisis engulfing Ulster and the

---

<sup>4</sup> See Alvin Jackson, *Sir Edward Carson* (Dublin, 1993). See also Paul Bew, *John Redmond* (Dublin, 1996)

<sup>5</sup> Geoffrey Lewis, *Carson* (London, 2005)

<sup>6</sup> Charles Townshend, *Political violence in Ireland* (Oxford, 1983)

<sup>7</sup> Townshend, *Political violence in Ireland*, p.249.

<sup>8</sup> A.T.Q.Stewart, *The Ulster crisis* (London, 1967)



entire United Kingdom (U.K.), as well as the formation and development of the U.V.F. across Ulster. This thesis aims to add to Stewart's work by highlighting the positive influence of the U.V.F. in reducing civil unrest, and how the U.V.F. were to act as quasi-state functionaries serving as Ulster's police and military in the event of Home Rule becoming law.

The main works of reference used in this thesis are, W.E.Vaughan (ed), *A new history of Ireland, vi, Ireland under the Union, 1870-1921*, (Oxford, 1996), Roy Foster's text *Modern Ireland* (London, 1989) and Joseph Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985* (Cambridge,1989). *A new history of Ireland, vi*, covers the political crisis that surrounded the formation of the U.V.F., and the changes that took place in British politics as the European war loomed. *Modern Ireland* deals with the U.V.F. formation, and the type of backing Carson gave it, particularly the donation of £10,000 pounds from his own funds to the organisation.<sup>9</sup> Foster also covers the gradual move towards the first World War (W.W.1.) and the consequences this had for U.V.F. men across Ulster, their fighting with the 36<sup>th</sup> Ulster Division and dying in their thousands on the Somme.

Joseph Lee's text covers Irish history from 1912 up until the 1980s.<sup>10</sup> Lee analyses U.V.F. membership and the reasons for working class Protestants failing to identify with their Catholic colleagues. Lee focuses on the labour trouble in Belfast and the major role of the Orange Order in Ulster life. In chapters one and two, Lee's

---

<sup>9</sup> Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland*, (London, 1989) p.465.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985* (Cambridge, 1989)

work covering the Orange Order is referred to and expanded upon. Lee details the divisions within Ulster Unionism, and why the purging of Catholic labour was allowed to occur. The role of the Orange Order in the growing militancy in Belfast shipyards is not discussed in great detail by Lee, something this work proposes to do. This work will show that Lee's assertion about the influence of the Orange Order on Ulster life is valid, but that rioting and expulsions of Catholics could not have proceeded without some of the wealthiest of the Belfast business community countenancing what occurred. The work of David Miller who wrote in the 1970s about the U.V.F. is a good text to use in contrast with Joseph Lee.<sup>11</sup> Miller argues that there was a unifying opposition to Home Rule amongst Irish Protestants compared with Lee who emphasises the factionalism that existed.<sup>12</sup>

The primary sources available for this work are considerable. There are the R.I.C. files, (I.G.'s monthly reports, County Inspectors' returns (C.I.) and crime special department files), parliamentary papers of Westminster, personal papers, newspapers and the political collection of the Linen Hall Library in Belfast.

The R.I.C. files are an intrinsic part of this study. The British in Ireland series one, available on microfilm in the National University of Ireland Maynooth (N.U.I.M.), covers the Ulster crisis extensively. These files are from the Colonial Office (C.O.) now stored in the Public Record Office in London, and also cover secret societies, political extremists, arms importations and illegal drilling. The most

---

<sup>11</sup> David Miller, *Queen's rebels, Ulster loyalism in historical perspective* (Dublin, 1978)

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid* p.87.

relevant parts of these files are the I.G.'s monthly report, and the C.I.s' returns that reveal the crime rates and political feeling within the thirty-two counties.<sup>13</sup> These files allow us chart the crisis in Ulster and the growth of the U.V.F. as the issue of Home Rule grows larger. The C.I.s' returns detail the numbers of men drilling in Unionist Clubs and Orange Halls, whether or not arms were carried, and if licences for arms were held, plus any outrages that occurred in the locality. The C.O. files also contain a considerable amount of material covering meetings of Belfast businessmen with Sir Edward Carson in 1913-4 and also chart the overall development of the U.V.F. in Ulster.<sup>14</sup>

The Orange Order's role in preparing for armed resistance to Home Rule is also covered in detail by the R.I.C., with material collated together under the category of 'Arms Importation and Distribution 1886-1913'.<sup>15</sup> These files include intercepted letters from the Orange Order leadership, police intelligence reports, and newspaper articles.

Trinity College Dublin provides access to the Hansard collection of parliamentary papers. Parliamentary papers are a useful source of information when examining the Ulster question. The debates often provide a different view on an incident of alleged sectarianism, one that both police and the media may have

---

<sup>13</sup> 'I.G.'s, and C.I.s' monthly reports', CO 904/80-94, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>14</sup> 'Meeting of businessmen with Sir Edward Carson in Belfast, and formation of units of Ulster Volunteers, 1913, crime special', CO 904/27, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>15</sup> 'Arms Importation and Distribution 1886-1913, crime special', CO 904/28, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

overlooked. The comparative attitudes and opinions of Unionists and Nationalists to sectarian incidents that occurred in Ulster, along with the official viewpoint of the Government, allows this work to present a diversity of opinions that might otherwise be lacking.

P.R.O.N.I. contains many deposits of private papers and those of organisations. The main papers used for this study are those of Major F.H.Crawford, and General Sir George Richardson.<sup>16</sup> Richardson as General officer commanding (G.O.C.) of the U.V.F., and Crawford who served as director of ordnance on the U.V.F. headquarters staff<sup>17</sup>, have deposited in P.R.O.N.I. papers that contain general information on the organisation, county reports and documentation relating to the Larne gun-running.

The main newspapers used for this work are the *Irish Times* and the *Freeman's Journal*. The *Irish Times* is available from the 1880s onwards on microfilm in N.U.I.M. The paper, described as 'the unofficial organ of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy for many years'<sup>18</sup>, provides this work with a pro-Unionist viewpoint of the Home Rule crisis and details the emergence of armed volunteers' in Ireland. The *Freeman's Journal* was consulted in hardcopy form in the Russell Library, N.U.I. M., where the full print run is available. The paper highlights the constitutional Home Rule viewpoint, and focuses in considerable detail on the misdemeanours of the Orange Order. In the days following the expulsion of Catholic workers from Workman and Clark, and Harland and Wolff shipyards by their Protestant colleagues,

---

<sup>16</sup> See (P.R.O.N.I., Richardson papers, D/1498). See also (P.R.O.N.I., Crawford papers, D/640)

<sup>17</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis* p.89.

<sup>18</sup> D.J.Hickey & J.E.Doherty, *A new dictionary of Irish history from 1800*, (Dublin, 2005) p.240.

the paper had established a relief fund for victims of the violence.<sup>19</sup> The paper provides a significant contrast with the *Irish Times*, when researching sectarian incidents, and the emergence of the U.V.F.

The other papers I consulted were on microfilm in the National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street. The two principal papers of interest to this work are the pro-Unionist *Belfast Newsletter*, and the *Fermanagh Times*, a more moderate paper in a county where the religions divide along the lines of 34,740 Catholics, 21,121 Episcopalians and 1,265 Presbyterians.<sup>20</sup>

The Linen Hall Library in Belfast contains a collection of political papers, and archival material covering Northern Ireland's turbulent past. Amongst this collection is the scrapbook of Sir Edward Carson, a postcard collection, a collection of pamphlets, and a selection of texts written at the time, the most famous being that of Ronald McNeill, Member of Parliament (M.P.).<sup>21</sup> The scrapbook of Carson contains telegrams he received, documentation relating to Unionist demonstrations and propaganda literature. The main problem with the material available in the scrapbook and the postcard collection is its decaying state, also items have been stolen, depriving future researchers of the opportunity to view the material. The postcard collection also has items missing from it and incomplete numbering due to the process of decay.

---

<sup>19</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 15 July 1912.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas E. Jordan, (ed), *The census of Ireland 1821-1911: general reports and extracts*, iii, (New York, 1998) p.705.

<sup>21</sup> Ronald MacNeill, *Ulster's stand for Union*. (London, 1919)

The biography of Nevil Macready is a highly informative source on Ulster.<sup>22</sup> Macready held the position of director of personal services at the War Office prior to the Home Rule Crisis. The role he held involved the commanding of troops to uphold the rule of law within the United Kingdom. Macready went on to serve as the last British military commander in Ireland during the war of independence. He presents his memoirs and recollections of Ulster as those of an outsider bemused at Ulster politics. Macready does however make many incisive comments about the Curragh incident, the formation of the U.V.F., and inter-community rioting in Ulster. While sometimes overlooking the political allegiances of those he discusses, Macready's text is a source that has relevance to all sections of this work.

I hope to add to the existing body of knowledge by my analysis of the U.V.F. formation. I will examine how the dual forces of military and police within the U.V.F. developed from the Unionist Clubs and the unruly Orange Order. The existing writers on the subject focus on the military strengths and plans of the U.V.F. They largely ignore the plans of the U.U.C. to designate volunteers for policing work, and the retention of rifles by the leadership from the urban proletariat. I do not believe that the positive affect of the U.V.F. on Ulster society has been highlighted enough. The fundamental point of this thesis is to examine why inter-community violence broke out in 1912, what part the U.V.F. played in stemming the violence, and whether or not their doing so was motivated by social conscience or public opinion. The thesis examines how the Orange Order failed in its duties as an organisation by allowing militants dictate the policies of the Order long before the formation of the U.V.F. was

---

<sup>22</sup> Nevil Macready, *Annals of an active life*, i, (London, 1924)

even under consideration. This work will be focusing on counties Antrim and Fermanagh along with the urban centre of Belfast. The reason for comparing the growth of the U.V.F. in these areas is to convey to the reader the differing levels of support for the U.V.F. in Ulster. The existing general surveys of Irish history and special studies of Ulster do not highlight the splits that existed within Unionism that this work examines. Lee focuses on the split within the Orange Order resulting in the formation of an Independent Orange Order under the leadership of T.H.Sloan. This work examines the split between urban and rural Unionists, and the tension that existed between the Orange Order and the moderate political leaders of Unionism. Through the use of the R.I.C. files and other available sources, I aim to show how Unionist mythology of Sir Edward Carson (Unionist party leader) and the U.V.F. are radically different from the truth. I also intend to discuss the crime rate in counties Antrim and Fermanagh, and the urban centre of Belfast, charting the progress of crime and the importation of weaponry from 1912-4. The major authorities on Ulster history do not focus in great depth on the role of the Orange Order in militarising Irish life. This work helps to highlight the Orange Orders militant practices and how it was the U.V.F. command structures that helped to rein in the militancy of those who came before them.

In laying out the sources consulted for this work the chapter content has also been highlighted. The first chapter of this work will cover the violence that erupted in Ulster in June 1912 and the question of why employers generally failed to stop this practice. The chapter will also show the shift towards organised volunteering and Carson's influence in the process of change. The second chapter will look at the

formation of the U.V.F. where its strongest support lay and the reasons for this. The chapter will also examine, using documents available, the question of discipline in Unionism and whether the structure of the U.V.F. was designed to keep control of Unionism as much as achieving its political end. The third and final chapter will examine the U.V.F. in the latter months of 1913 and early 1914, to show how the radicals within the movement began to take over, only for W.W.1. to intervene, when domestic conflict had looked an extremely probable outcome resulting from Ulster's difficulties.



## Chapter One.

*'When Churchill came to Belfast town,  
to tame the Ulster boys-o,  
they met his eloquence with a frown,  
and raised a pretty noise-o...'*<sup>23</sup>

The introduction of the Parliament Act in 1911, and the resultant removal of the House of Lords' power of veto, ended Unionism's traditional safety net against the passage of Home Rule. The visit of Winston Churchill to Belfast in February 1912 and the bitter reception he received marked the formal opening of hostilities between Ulster Unionists and the British Government.<sup>24</sup> In the course of 1912 Ulster politics became increasingly radicalised with the Orange Lodges, Unionist Clubs, and fledgling U.V.F. all drilling men. In the course of this chapter it is proposed to examine the violence that erupted in Belfast in June 1912, the attitude of the major employers to the disruption, and the gradual shift in Unionist policy from anarchic street violence to disciplined drilling of the U.V.F.

County Antrim represented the heartland of Ulster Unionism, where the combined grouping of Protestants, (Episcopalians and Presbyterians) outnumbered Catholics by more than 180,000 in the Census of 1911.<sup>25</sup> Despite such overwhelming

---

<sup>23</sup> Herbert More Pim, *Unconquerable Ulster* (Belfast, 1919) p.15.

<sup>24</sup> See Lewis, *Carson*, pp 88-90.

<sup>25</sup> See Jordan, (ed), *The census of Ireland 1821-1911*, p.705. See also Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985*, p.2.

dominance, the city of Belfast witnessed violent inter-community clashes in 1896, 1893, and 1912 when Home Rule bills were introduced in Westminster.<sup>26</sup>

In 1886 trouble flared in the shipyards of Belfast on the basis of a Protestant worker accusing a Catholic colleague of saying their days were numbered.<sup>27</sup> The attacks were simply a component part of the mass mobilisations of Protestants that had become a characteristic of Ulster life, particularly in Belfast.<sup>28</sup> Such sectarian attacks were perpetrated on pretext, the basis of the attacks was naked sectarianism. In Belfast more than in any other part of Ireland sectarian tension was most extreme, due to close proximity of the communities and the competition for jobs and homes.

In 1912 with the reintroduction of the Home Rule bill, by the Liberal Government in Westminster, violence once again flared in the shipyards of Belfast.<sup>29</sup> Catholic and Protestant Home Rule supporters were driven from the Harland and Wolff shipyards and from Workman and Clark. The pretext for these attacks was an incident in Castledawson, county Londonderry, on 29 June 1912. The allegation was that the Ancient Order of Hibernians (A.O.H.) had attacked a Presbyterian Sunday school returning from a day out in the countryside. The A.O.H. were said to have been

---

<sup>26</sup> See, Foster, *Modern Ireland*, pp 419-21. See also Strauss, *Irish nationalism and British democracy* (New York, 1951) p.251, Lewis, *Carson*, p.16, and Conor Kostick, *Revolution in Ireland* (New York, 1996) pp 8-9.

<sup>27</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p.420.

<sup>28</sup> R.V.Comerford, 'Ireland, 1870-1921', in W.E.Vaughan (ed), *A new history of Ireland*, vi, *Ireland under the Union, 1870-1921*, (Oxford, 1996) p.lv.

<sup>29</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.60.

angered by the children in the procession carrying Union Jacks, and as a result attacked the group and wounded several people.<sup>30</sup>

The attack outraged Unionists across Ireland, and the *Irish Times* described to its readers 'The Attack on Sunday school children'.<sup>31</sup> When the R.I.C. report, parliamentary papers and newspapers are studied, the calculated deception on the Unionists part over the Castledawson incident quickly comes to the fore. The R.I.C. did attribute the incident as starting when 'one of the A.O.H. party seized a small Union Jack'.<sup>32</sup> However the report goes on to highlight how a 'general melee ensued'.<sup>33</sup> In the House of Commons (H.O.C.), chief secretary for Ireland Augustine Birrell stated that the police had to intervene in the disturbance, 'succeeding in inducing the crowds to retire...it would not appear that anyone was hurt'.<sup>34</sup> Joseph Devlin, Nationalist M.P. for west Belfast, alleged that at Castledawson 'a large body of Orangemen...armed themselves with a large quantity of stones, and on meeting the Hibernian procession assailed it with cries of "To hell with the pope" ...'.<sup>35</sup> These accounts should be compared to that of Mr. John Gordon, M.P. for Londonderry south, who alleged that '300 men armed with bludgeons and pikes'<sup>36</sup> attacked the school children. It is clear from the diversity of accounts how the words of the political leaders of all parties in Westminster would have influenced their constituents' perception and reaction to events such as Castledawson. In London *The Times* published an article on 16 July that contradicts the other sources discussed, and

---

<sup>30</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.60.

<sup>31</sup> *Irish Times*, 3 July 1912.

<sup>32</sup> 'C.I.s' monthly confidential report', CO 904/87/291, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, xl, col.977, (2 July, 1912)

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

the work of A.T.Q.Stewart. *The Times* placed the blame for the Castledawson incident firmly with the Orange Order. The article alleged that Catholic homes were vandalised, and windows of a Hibernian hall were smashed. The article also suggested that shots were fired from the train that carried the excursionists into Castledawson. The second account of events that the article published blamed the trouble on youths who attacked Catholic homes and damaged property. Significantly the Orange Lodge master was stated in the article as having suggested that no trouble actually took place.<sup>37</sup> In the summer of 1914 an article in *The Times* described how Sunday school children on an excursion in the Castledawson area, were guarded by U.V.F. men, and the day passed peacefully, a marked contrast with the Orange Order excursion of 1912.<sup>38</sup>

The violence that began in Belfast, following the accounts of Castledawson being published in the press, was seen as the likely backlash against Catholics. The *Irish Times* immediately did its best to limit the damage being done to Unionist moral supremacy. The paper disassociated mainstream Unionists from the violence, attempting to lay blame on over-zealous Unionist youths.<sup>39</sup> There was however no escaping the damaging headlines, and the damning accounts of events in Belfast as relayed to M.P.s by the chief secretary for Ireland Augustine Birrell.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> *The Times*, 16 July 1912.

<sup>38</sup> *The Times*, 29 June 1914.

<sup>39</sup> *Irish Times*, 3 July 1912.

<sup>40</sup> See *Freeman's Journal*, 5 July 1912; *Ibid.*, 10 July 1912. See also *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, xl, col.1451-54, (4 July, 1912).

The R.I.C. reported that in July 1912 an effective pogrom of Catholic workers had occurred on Queen's Island. The report from Belfast stated that, 'Roman Catholics...were assaulted and intimidated...by their Protestant fellow workers until upwards of 2,000 were forced to quit their employment'.<sup>41</sup> The report highlighted the potential devastation that the continuation of such violence would bring about. It was stated that by the 'end of July only a few Roman Catholics were at work, and the situation was so serious that Messrs Harland and Wolff announced that they would be compelled to close their works'.<sup>42</sup> Such a closure would have left 15,000 Unionists unemployed and the chance of violence breaking out would have increased manifold. Joe Lee attributes the violence in the shipyards to the belief amongst Protestant workers that there was 'little likelihood that class solidarity with poorer Catholic workers would improve their own economic position'.<sup>43</sup> The opinion of the police and the politicians would appear to corroborate Lee's work, with the Liberal Government clearly expressing concerns about such large job losses. The R.I.C. were mainly concerned about the maintenance of law and order.

In Dublin and London the workers were pitched against the state in search of better conditions, while in Belfast workers were pitched against each other. The parliamentary debates surrounding the incident, the evidence of R.I.C. returns, and the crime special files all indicate that some major business magnates of Belfast were at the very least guilty of complacency and at worst collaboration in the perpetration of the violence. The questions being raised by Joseph Devlin during the rioting pointed

---

<sup>41</sup> 'State of the city of Belfast', CO 904/87/375, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985*, p.5.

to the active encouragement of the pogrom by George Clark.<sup>44</sup> Most big businessmen of Belfast were the natural allies of Carson, as without him their rudderless policies would have destroyed Ulster and their wealth. The crime special files reveal through an informant's information, that Carson, at a meeting of the U.U.C.s standing committee in the summer of 1913, warned those businessmen present of the dangers of allowing such violence on their premises<sup>45</sup> due to the counter-productive affect this had on public opinion. As shall be examined in chapter two, it was some of these businessmen who would go on to positions of command in the U.V.F. in 1913 and, like George Clark, assist in the importation of weaponry to the organisation.<sup>46</sup>

The Catholics in Belfast particularly were subject to vicious attacks; the *Freeman's Journal* described to its readers, 'Orange ruffianism in Belfast'<sup>47</sup> and incidents of 'Belfast terrorism'.<sup>48</sup> The need for discipline within the ranks of Unionism clearly arose from the fact that any misdemeanours by the Protestant working class tarnished the whole campaign of opposition to Home Rule. The job of Carson and Craig to stand up in Westminster and defend the position of Ulster Unionists' was difficult, but to portray a riotous mob on Queen's Island as loyal Ulstermen was almost impossible. The chief secretary, in answer to Joe Devlin's questioning about the Belfast disturbances, described to Westminster how 'a great majority of Roman Catholics...are being compelled to stay away from their

---

<sup>44</sup> *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, xl, 1453, (4 July, 1912)

<sup>45</sup> 'Meeting of businessmen with Sir Edward Carson', CO 904/27/298, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* See also Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, pp 96-8, and Macready, *Annals of an active life*, i, p.186. Macready indicates that on the night of his arrival in Belfast, it was indicated by a credible source that some of the Larne rifles were stored in Workman and Clark's yards. See also 'I.G.'s report for month of Apr., 1914', CO 904/93/10, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.) The I.G. describes how the cargo of arms and ammunition landed at Belfast was transferred to Workman and Clark's yards for storage.

<sup>47</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 5 July 1912.

<sup>48</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 10 July 1912.

work...reducing themselves and their families to want, and endangering the whole ship-building industry in Belfast'.<sup>49</sup>

Mr James O'Grady, M.P. for Leeds east, raised the role of the Orange Order in anti-Catholic violence, in Westminster. Mr O'Grady stated 'the fact that the foreman of Workman and Clark's took round books to the benches of the men and asked them whether they were prepared to join Orange Clubs, every man who did not do so was immediately marked down for ill treatment'.<sup>50</sup> The response of Ronald McNeill, 'Is it any more serious an offence to require a workman to join an Orange Lodge than to join a Trade Union'<sup>51</sup>, typified the sectarian prejudices<sup>52</sup> of Unionism given that no Catholic would have been permitted to join an Orange Lodge. Credible evidence exists to support the argument that the Orange Order had by 1910 started to take steps to militarise its members. The Parliament Act of 1911 removed the House of Lord's power of veto. This meant that the Unionist policy of demonstrations and the blocking power of veto could no longer prevent the passage of Home Rule. Colonel R.H. Wallace (secretary to the Grand Lodge) wrote to all lodges in 1910 seeking an approval for an obligatory 'contribution to the Grand Lodge of Ireland of one penny per month by every Orangeman to form a fund...having special regard to the present crisis'.<sup>53</sup> The Orange Order was clearly unwilling to accept the changing demography of Westminster politics. Joe Lee alludes to this attitude stating that the Orange Order included sixty-six per cent of Protestant males<sup>54</sup>, and as such was in a powerful

---

<sup>49</sup> *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, xli, 1637, (29 July, 1912)

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 1859, (30 July, 1912)

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Strauss, *Irish nationalism and British democracy*, p.230.

<sup>53</sup> 'Arms importation and illegal drilling', CO 904/28/334b, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>54</sup> Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985*, p2.

position to 'sustain Protestantism as the symbol of racial superiority'.<sup>55</sup> While Lee's accusation of racism may go too far, there is no denying the dangerous course the Orange Lodges were pursuing by suggesting to its members that parliamentary politics had failed, and reintroducing the gun into the process of political dissent, even on a local level as will be outlined. The sources available in the crime special files indicate that the Orange Order's acquisition of weapons was of major concern to the British Government who saw it as potentially subversive to the state. In a statement by the law officers in 1911, the possession of arms 'for the purpose of intimidating Parliament...or any other such unlawful purpose'<sup>56</sup> was stated clearly to be illegal and those responsible were open to indictment before a magistrate. The only question that the law officers raised was about the quality and quantity of weaponry being imported, suggesting on one hand that '45 rifles might be satisfactorily accounted for'<sup>57</sup>, but 45 rifles purchased by an Orange Lodge who had made clear their intention to resist would constitute strong evidence of sedition. The focus of the statement was on the Orange Order, with police intelligence suggesting that rifles and ammunition had begun to be imported by the Orange Order's Garvagh Lodge in Londonderry.<sup>58</sup> The *Freeman's Journal* reported on 7 December how their Coleraine correspondent had become aware of the importation of arms by local Orange Lodges in the Garvagh district. The media report corroborated by police intelligence already highlighted, describes how arms were brought in from an English company for distribution in the Garvagh District.

---

<sup>55</sup> Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985*, p2.

<sup>56</sup> 'Arms importation and distribution', CO 904/28/35, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> See 'Arms importation and distribution, crime special', CO 904/28/41-4, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)



The R.I.C. files contain press cuttings from the *Irish Times*, *Independent*, and *Whig* newspapers<sup>59</sup>, all of which report the importation of arms to Orange Lodges in Ulster by early 1911. The distribution of a quasi military enlistment form to all Lodges by the Grand Lodge, requested members to provide information as to their length of service in the army, and if presently fit for service.<sup>60</sup> The problem facing the Orange Order was their leadership. The rank and file members were allowed to direct their anger at the Catholics of Ulster, believing that was where the threat lay. The Orange Order's leadership failed to avert the prejudice of its member's from manifesting itself in the form of wholesale violence perpetrated against Catholics.

Lord Templeton had established the Unionist Clubs of Ireland in opposition to the Home Rule bill of 1893.<sup>61</sup> They were maintained across Ulster after 1893 to keep a watchful eye on Unionist representation in Westminster, and ensure the maintenance of the Union.<sup>62</sup> In April 1912, only two days before the Home Rule bill was introduced to Westminster, the Unionist Clubs of Ireland took part in the Balmoral demonstration.<sup>63</sup> In contrast to the violence associated with members of the Orange Order, the Balmoral demonstration was a peaceful expression of Unionist dissatisfaction at once more facing Home Rule. The management of the event indicates that the Unionist Clubs did not want confrontation. Firstly, the gathering took place on Easter Tuesday, a day off work for most in Ulster.<sup>64</sup> When Belfast was in a state of tension, the demonstration gave men something to engage in other than

---

<sup>59</sup> 'Arms importation and distribution, crime special', CO 904/28/45-9, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>60</sup> 'Arms importation and distribution, crime special', CO 904/28/329, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>61</sup> Hickey & Doherty, *A new dictionary of Irish history from 1800*, p.492.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> See Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.54.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

drinking and the inevitable fighting that followed. Secondly, by holding the demonstration in the Agricultural Show Grounds, thousands of men were marched out of the city from early morning until the late evening. This helped to maintain order, and the day passed without a repeat of violence and intimidation according to the R.I.C.<sup>65</sup> Unlike the Orange Order, whose leadership had become dominated by the wealthy elite of Ulster society<sup>66</sup>, the Unionist Clubs were lead by retired British officers, clergymen and landed gentry.<sup>67</sup> Their resistance to Home Rule, while militant, was clearly seen in terms of a campaign requiring religious zeal and discipline.<sup>68</sup>

In Figure 1 a telegram sent to Carson by the Lord Primate Alexander (an active participant in the Unionist campaign) clearly shows the mindset of embattled Unionists ready to face the task ahead. Henry Maxwell writing in 1919 attributed the disciplined nature of U.V.F. membership (many of whom were recruited from the Unionist Clubs and the Orange Order) and the oratory of Carson as having prevented further outbreaks of violence, a point that will be discussed in the next chapter.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> 'State of the city of Belfast', CO 904/86/691, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>66</sup> Hickey & Doherty, *A new dictionary of Irish history from 1800*, p.376.

<sup>67</sup> See complete list of Unionist Clubs in, 'The official programme of the Unionist demonstration 1912', pp 16-9 (Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

<sup>68</sup> See Miller, *Queen's rebels*, pp 87-8.

<sup>69</sup> Henry Maxwell, *Ulster was right* (London, 1919) p.153.

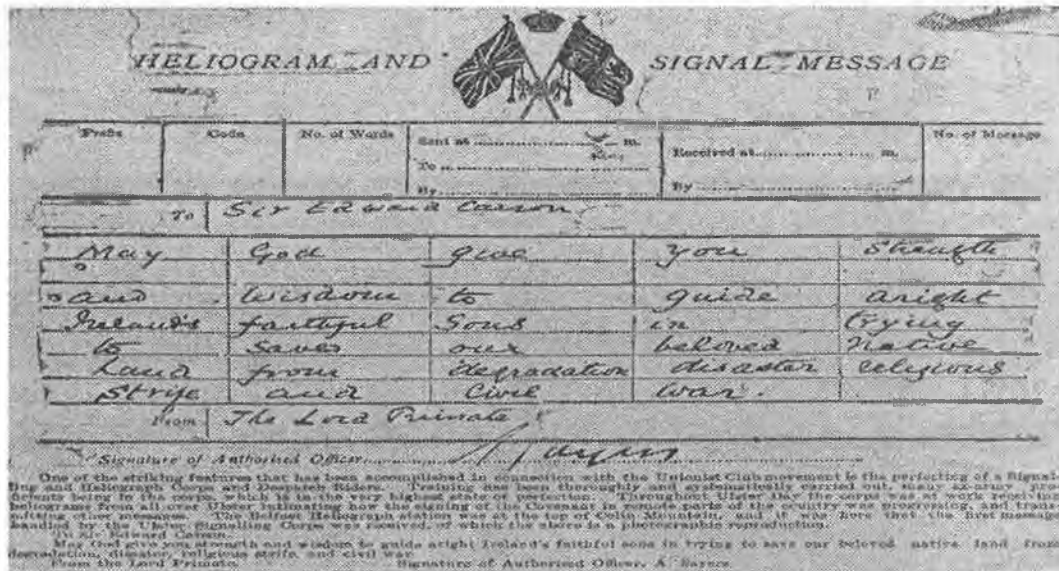


Figure 1: 'Telegram to Sir Edward Carson from the Lord Primate', Carson Scrapbook (Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

In August 1912 economics became the battleground for the bitter sectarianism in Ireland. The A.O.H. launched a boycott of 'certain Belfast Unionist trading firms throughout the south and west of Ireland'<sup>70</sup> in retaliation for Catholics being driven from the shipyards. This move was highly provocative in already tense communities. The Unionist fears of Nationalist economic policies appeared well founded with the R.I.C. stating that the boycott had impacted badly on business, with some letting staff go and a marked reduction in trade.<sup>71</sup> Despite the boycott being removed by November of 1912, it only deepened Unionist mistrust of Nationalists and strengthened Unionist belief that a Dublin government would bring economic ruin to Ulster.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup> 'I.G.'s monthly confidential report', CO 904/88/11, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Strauss, *Irish nationalism and British democracy*, p.231.

On 14 September the importation and purchase of arms by the Orange Order and Nationalists almost had deadly consequences. The rioting at a Belfast soccer match between Belfast Celtic and Linfield saw small arms fire being exchanged. The papers reported 'a heavy list of injured, including six cases caused by revolver bullets'.<sup>73</sup> The *Irish Times* article describing the incident wrote of, 'Wild scenes at a football match'<sup>74</sup> and how the 'Military were held in readiness'.<sup>75</sup> The threat of civil war breaking out seemed very real. The return of Carson to Ulster helped to avert this occurrence. The tour of Ulster by Carson was designed to garner enthusiasm for the Unionist cause in the days leading up to Covenant Day on 28 September 1912. The tour once again drew Unionists to mass rallies and ordered parades, which kept them away from trouble. The Solemn League and Covenant represented a confident assertion on the part of Unionists that their place in the United Kingdom would not be taken from them without considerable opposition. The Unionist pledge of opposition to Home Rule clearly delineated their loyalties, highlighting their continued loyalty to the King, but not to his Government. Covenant Day on 28 September 1912 helped to redefine the Unionist campaign of opposition to Home Rule. Patrick Buckland writing about the Covenant states that it 'acted as a safety-valve for popular emotion... and served to convince the world of their solidarity and determination'.<sup>76</sup> The signing of the covenant across Ulster helped refocus Unionists hostility away from Catholics and towards Westminster. It aided Carson's assertion of control over the radicals within Unionism. The most important benefit of Covenant Day for Unionism was that it

---

<sup>73</sup> *Irish Times*, 16 September 1912.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Patrick Buckland, *Ulster Unionism and the origins of Northern Ireland*, (New York, 1972) p.55. See also Figure 1: 'Ratifying the Solemn Covenant under the Union Jack...', *The Graphic*, 28 September 1912, (Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

represented a significant first step in gaining ‘mass support for their policy’<sup>77</sup>, a legitimacy that they lacked in 1912. Strauss attributes this necessity to the advancement of democracy, where public opinion was equally important as the opinion of the politicians.<sup>78</sup> The symbols of loyalty, such as the giant Union Jack in Figure 2, and the words of the oath proclaiming Unionists to be ‘loyal subjects of his gracious Majesty King George V’<sup>79</sup>, were all part of Unionist efforts to regain legitimacy for their campaign of opposition.

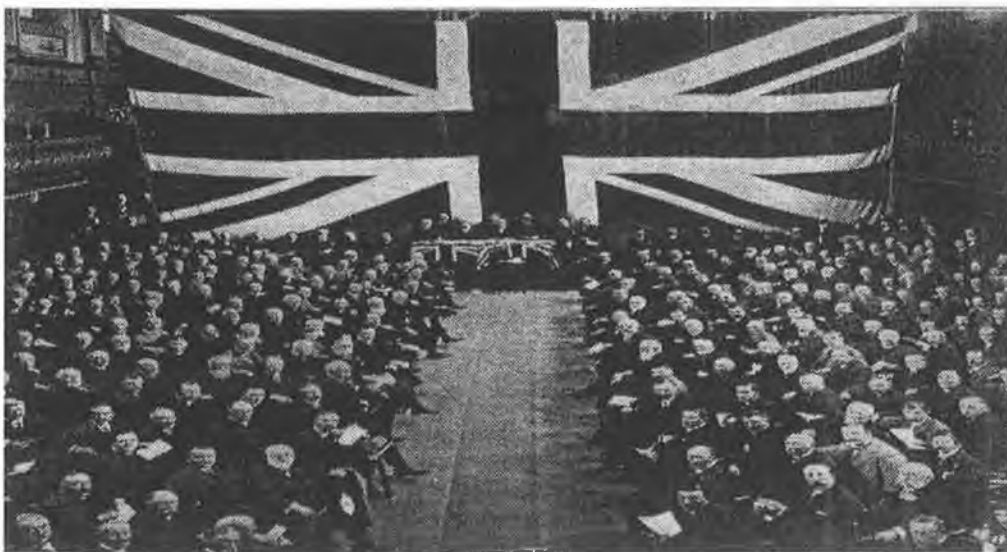


Figure 2: ‘Ratifying the Solemn Covenant under the Union Jack’, *The Graphic*, 28 September 1912  
(Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

The formation of the U.V.F., ratified by the U.U.C. in January 1913 was, after Covenant Day, an easier progression for Unionism. The U.V.F., a structured

<sup>77</sup> Strauss, *Irish nationalism and British democracy*, (New York, 1951) p.233.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> See Edmund Curtis & R.B. McDowell, (eds.), *Irish historical documents*, (London, 1943) p.304.

organisation with a heavy emphasis on discipline<sup>80</sup>, ensured order in Ulster at critical moments in the political process, as will be shown in the next chapter. The Unionist Clubs, and, later in 1913, the Orange Order, acted as recruitment agencies for the U.V.F.

In the next chapter we will examine the leadership of Unionism and the political opinions of the men on whose future Ulster depended. The progress of the U.V.F. in counties Antrim and Fermanagh will be examined to illustrate the contrasting levels of support for the organisation and how this affected membership levels. In Fermanagh the population was finely balanced between Catholics and Protestants, compared with Antrim where Protestants enjoyed overwhelming dominance, which makes such a comparison useful when examining the U.V.F.s development. The question of the U.V.F.s structure as a military organisation, the policing role it would play under a provisional government, and the numbers of weapons the rank and file volunteers held, will all be discussed in chapter two.

---

<sup>80</sup> See Buckland, *Ulster Unionism and the origins of Northern Ireland*, pp 57-67.

## Chapter Two.

*'Carson came to bold Belfast  
and cried "boys get your guns-o  
we'll stand as our fathers did before  
like Ulster's true blue son's-o"...'*<sup>81</sup>

It is proposed to examine chronologically the key issues and events that shaped the U.V.F. formation, and how Unionist tactics evolved in 1913. In the course of this chapter the formation of the U.V.F. will be examined, paying particular attention to the military structure of the organisation. The leadership of the U.V.F. will also be scrutinised to illustrate the different political viewpoints within the U.U.C.

By the end of December 1912 the Unionist Clubs and the Orange Order were engaged in the drilling of men and the shipping of guns into Ulster.<sup>82</sup> The U.U.C. decided to amalgamate the disparate groups into a single centralised body to be known as the U.V.F. The decision was taken at the annual meeting of the U.U.C. on 31 January 1913, a radical step for the U.U.C. to take. The move to form the U.V.F., combined with the council's decision to form a provisional government<sup>83</sup>, (albeit on paper) served as a warning to Westminster that Ulster Unionists would not willingly leave the Union.

---

<sup>81</sup> Pim, *Unconquerable Ulster* p.15.

<sup>82</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis* pp 69-70.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, p.70. See also Ronald McNeill, *Ulster's stand for Union* (London, 1922) p.145.

The day after the U.U.C. meeting, the Unionist biased *Belfast Newsletter* printed a warning to Asquith's Liberal party openly suggesting that, if conflict was to result from the passage of Home Rule, the fault lay with the Government of Britain and not the Unionists who would resist.

*'We warn the Government and their British supporters that in forcing the Bill upon us ...they have incurred the guilt of all the consequences including disorder and bloodshed',*<sup>84</sup>

When analysing such a statement it would be facile to assume Ulster was in an inevitable descent towards armed conflict. Charles Townshend suggests that the U.V.F. served as a control the U.U.C. could exert over Protestants that could prevent indiscriminate violence, channelling Protestants to drill in a disciplined manner.<sup>85</sup> The rioting in Belfast in 1912 had seriously undermined the legitimacy of Unionist opposition to Home Rule. The ability of Carson, Craig (M.P. for east Down), and Bonar Law (Conservative party leader) to fight and possibly stop Home Rule in the H.O.C., relied on Unionists displaying a disciplined resolve, combined with expressions of loyalty to their King. The sources indicate that it was the awareness of Carson and his ally Lord Londonderry of the need for discipline to be maintained, that prevented further violence breaking out.<sup>86</sup> Therefore it would seem Townshend's analysis of the situation is correct as the U.V.F. did initially serve as a positive

---

<sup>84</sup> *Belfast Newsletter*, 1 Feb. 1913.

<sup>85</sup> Townshend, *Political violence in Ireland* p.249.

<sup>86</sup> See Lewis, *Carson*, p.115. See also Charles Townshend, *Easter 1916* (London, 2005) pp 32-5, and 'Report of private meeting of standing committee of U.U.C.', CO 904/27/307, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)



diversion for Unionists. Geoffrey Lewis's work emphasises the difference Carson made to Ulster politics, describing how Carson told Unionists their dispute was with the Liberal administration, not with other Irishmen be they Catholic or any other creed.<sup>87</sup> The Ulster question had become tainted by sectarianism in the most predominantly Unionist areas such as Antrim and Belfast. The challenge for Carson as Unionist leader of a political party and a people, was to enforce upon the Unionist mind the need to end the sectarianism and redirect the hostility towards Westminster. The attitude that Ulster was Protestant territory that must be defended<sup>88</sup> created a siege mentality amongst Protestants. The *Freeman's Journal*, a Nationalist paper with no reason to praise Unionists, also highlighted Carson's public statements on the question of order, reprinted a story from the *Daily Mail* describing how Carson had stated he wished to avoid the public suffering and did not want public disorder.<sup>89</sup>

The crime special department of the R.I.C., who ran an informant inside the U.U.C., provides evidence that Carson's public utterances were similar to those he made in private. In the course of a meeting of Belfast businessmen with Carson, the question of Roman Catholic employees was stated to have been raised by Carson. Carson was said to have asked those owners of large concerns to ensure everything they could was done to make sure Catholics were safe at work<sup>90</sup>, a tacit acknowledgement of Unionist problems. The problem facing Carson was that he had to work with people who considered the only worthwhile purpose of politics to be the

---

<sup>87</sup> Lewis, *Carson*, p.115.

<sup>88</sup> See Miller, *Queen's rebels*, p. 88. Miller describes how both the Orange Order and the urban Protestants, had fostered a territorial attitude that was difficult to get rid of.

<sup>89</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 8 Jan. 1912.

<sup>90</sup> 'Private meeting of businessmen at Unionist headquarters, crime special', CO 904/27/297, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.) See also chapter one p.16. of this work for a more detailed explanation.

maintenance of hegemony of Protestantism. Thomas McKnight, editor of the *Northern Whig*, was quoted as saying that those who settled in Ulster only ever did so on the understanding that they would not be abandoned to the rule of those who viewed them as intruders on their land.<sup>91</sup> Charles Townshend attributes such problems to the considerable gap between the feelings of the Unionist working class and the anxiety of the Unionist leadership, who seemed reluctant to advance beyond tough talk in late 1912-3.<sup>92</sup> Yet some employers, while talking tough, fostered the sectarianism through their comments to the media, and in the case of George Clark, actively participated in the importation of weapons to the U.V.F.<sup>93</sup>

As we have already seen, the R.I.C. ran an informant within the U.U.C. On examination of the informant's reports it is possible to identify a division within the leadership of Unionism between those who favoured compromise and those who wished to fight. While the U.U.C. appeared united, Carson was reported to have remained quiet on the matter of compromise, Lord Londonderry, Sir Jas Henderson, and the Lord Mayor of Belfast all favoured a deal being struck, however Colonel R.H. Wallace and Mr Sclater wished to fight the issue out.<sup>94</sup> The fact that Wallace was grand secretary of the Orange Lodge, and Sclater, chairman of the executive committee of Unionist Clubs<sup>95</sup>, meant that cohesive discipline and the leadership of

---

<sup>91</sup> Miller, *Queen's rebel's*, p.91.

<sup>92</sup> Townshend, *Easter 1916*, p.53.

<sup>93</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.96.

<sup>94</sup> See 'Private meeting of businessmen at Unionist headquarters, crime special', CO 904/27/306, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>95</sup> See Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.75.

Carson would be crucial to maintaining peace in Ulster during the passage of Home Rule.<sup>96</sup>

When the confiscated U.V.F. programme is examined (see Appendix 1) the delicate position of Carson's power is visible. The majority of the U.V.F. volunteers in Belfast were controlled by radicals, and the knowledge of this would have affected Carson's ability to align himself with either those who wanted compromise or those who wished to fight. The meetings of the U.U.C. had shown the British Government the division that existed within Unionism between those who favoured compromise on the question of Home Rule, and those who wished to fight the issue to a conclusion. Colonel R.H. Wallace, grand secretary of the Orange Lodge, Edward Sclater<sup>97</sup>, Chairman of the executive committee of Unionist Clubs, and Doctor William Gibson had been identified as the major figures who were favouring a fight to resolve the question of Home Rule. The presence of Wallace as commander of the north Belfast regiment, Major F.H. Crawford as commander of the south Belfast regiment, and Major R.C. M'Calmount as commander of the east Belfast regiment meant that the majority of Belfast U.V.F. volunteers were under the control of radicals. In the north Belfast regiment Colonel W.E. M'Cammond and George Clark were identifiable radicals. In the south Belfast regiment, the presence of four military battalion commanders could not on its own be taken as proof that they would have split from the U.U.C. However, the presence of such a radical influence as Crawford as regimental commander, meant that in the event of Carson ceding too much to the Nationalists it is likely that Crawford would have carried most of his men with him. In

---

<sup>96</sup> See Maxwell, *Ulster was right*, p.153.

<sup>97</sup> See *The Times*, 2 July, 1914. Edward Sclater is quoted by the paper as saying he would accept no compromise on the pledge within the covenant.

the east Belfast regiment, the regimental commander Major R.C. M'Calmount and Doctor William Gibson battalion commander would have been unlikely to accept compromise on the question of Home Rule. The prospect of a breakaway U.V.F. forming would have left Carson unable to achieve his political objective, the preservation of the Union. The British Government who was aware of the machinations of the U.U.C. and the divide that existed, could not have failed to understand the delicate position Carson was in. On one hand the Unionists portrayed him as an almost regal figure with songs and poetry written about him, as the Linen Hall Library collection confirms. On the other hand, if Carson gave too much ground to the Nationalists, a radical U.V.F. splinter group who were willing to fight the issue out could well have emerged over whom Carson could have exercised little influence. This predicament Carson found himself in would in turn have affected the process of negotiation between the British Government and the Nationalists. The British would have preferred to extract more concessions from Redmond than allow the Unionist leadership pass from Carson to more radical men.

As it was, the U.U.C. faced significant dissent within their ranks due to the initial reluctance of the leaders to purchase arms.<sup>98</sup> The R.I.C. reported that although the majority of those present at the meetings of the U.U.C. were against the importation of weapons, and in favour of some sort of compromise, there remained a significant militant minority.<sup>99</sup> The problem for Carson as already discussed was that the militant minority held key positions of power in the U.V.F. command structure.

---

<sup>98</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, pp 117-21.

<sup>99</sup> 'I.G.'s report for month of May, 1913', CO 904/90/11, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

The Unionist Clubs and the Orange Order were acting as recruiting agents for the U.V.F. across Ulster, and presented the U.U.C. with the opportunity to recruit a vast amount of Protestant males into its ranks, but equally presented the organisation with problems from its very inception. The positions of Sclater and Wallace within their respective organisations guaranteed a zealous drive to recruit men to the ranks of the U.V.F. In Antrim the organisation had by 1913 sixty-seven clubs and 28,851 members.<sup>100</sup> In Belfast there were twenty-six Unionist Clubs, with eleven clubs accounting for 12,000 members.<sup>101</sup> Despite the U.V.F.s enrolment form asking members to sign a declaration for the preservation of the peace<sup>102</sup>, it is doubtful whether Sclater would have helped the rise of the U.V.F. if he knew, as Buckland suggests, that the movement was to be used to control the radicalism of the Unionists who had rioted in July 1912.<sup>103</sup> The crime special department's files chart the central role the Unionist Clubs played in recruiting men to the U.V.F. The main area where the Unionist Clubs had their early success was Belfast, then Antrim, and gradually the counties of Armagh, Down, Tyrone, Londonderry and Fermanagh. The population balance between Catholics and Protestants was an influencing factor in sectarianism - west of the river Bann, the population balance between Catholic and Protestant became much closer and sectarianism lessened.<sup>104</sup> The Unionist Clubs and the tighter discipline of the U.V.F. appear to have been needed in Belfast to prevent repeat rioting and damage to business. The factors that caused a slow uptake of U.V.F.

---

<sup>100</sup> Brendan Mac Giolla Choille (ed.), *Intelligence notes* (Dublin, 1966) p.20.

<sup>101</sup> 'Synopsis of C.I.'s reports for June, 1913', CO 904/27/206, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>102</sup> See 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/360, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>103</sup> Buckland, *Ulster Unionism and the origins of Northern Ireland*, p.75.

<sup>104</sup> See religious demography of Ulster, Jordan, (ed.), *The census of Ireland 1821-1911* p.704. See also *The Times*, Mar. 18 1914. *The Times* in an article describing the democratic status of the Volunteers, published a map showing the concentration of U.V.F. battalions in Belfast, Antrim, and Down, decreasing in numbers towards the west of Ulster.

membership in both Antrim and Fermanagh (the inclement winter weather and the pressures of farm work) did not affect the urban working class Unionist. The county of Fermanagh's crime rate barely rises to five indictable offences per month in 1913.<sup>105</sup> In comparison the combined indictable offences for county Antrim and Belfast peaks at forty-two in January 1913<sup>106</sup>, but steadily falls to eighteen indictable offences by December 1913, an indication of the improvement in discipline amongst the majority Unionist communities in urban areas.<sup>107</sup>

The emerging military structure of the U.V.F. was designed to keep the urban mass peaceful. In rural Fermanagh the mixed communities worked and interacted on a daily basis uninterrupted by the sectarian tensions effecting Belfast.<sup>108</sup> The Enniskillen Horse started by William Copeland Trimble could only muster a couple of hundred men at any given drill<sup>109</sup> since its inception at the start of Carson's pre-Covenant tour of Ulster in September 1912. Similarly, the U.V.F. regulars in Fermanagh mustered 2159 men, with access to only eighty-seven rifles<sup>110</sup>, the roll book showing poor attendance and a reluctance to enrol for the Special service section amongst what were essentially Sunday soldiers.<sup>111</sup> The difficulty facing the recruiters of the U.V.F. in Fermanagh, was that unlike in Belfast, the U.V.F. was viewed with

---

<sup>105</sup> See 'C.I.'s monthly confidential report', CO 904/89-90, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>106</sup> 'Precis of C.I.'s reports for month of Jan., 1913', CO 904/89/3-4, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>107</sup> 'Synopsis of C.I.'s report for month of Dec., 1913', CO 904/90/612, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>108</sup> See Eileen M. Murphy & William Nolan, (eds.), *Fermanagh history and society*, (Dublin, 2004) pp 323-31. See also 'C.I.'s report for month of Feb., 1913', CO 904/89/261, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.), Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.128, and *Fermanagh Times*, 3 Apr. 1913, this edition of the paper had a considerable amount of space dedicated to alerting the people to the wrong being done behind their backs. The language being used in the articles indicates the apathy that Home Rule appears to have been met with in Fermanagh.

<sup>109</sup> See 'Enniskillen Horse', CO 904/27/2-96, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.), this section of the R.I.C. files covers the development of the Enniskillen Horse in considerable detail outlining the meetings of the squads, the correspondence between the War Office and Dublin, and the requests for amalgamation into the Territorial army by William Copeland Trimble.

<sup>110</sup> 'Precis of C.I.'s reports for Nov., 1913', CO 904/90/409, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>111</sup> See 'adjutants Roll book Fermanagh U.V.F', (P.R.O.N.I., D/1267)

suspicion, the landed gentry having reservations about encouraging militancy in the working class.<sup>112</sup>

In Belfast the military structure of the U.V.F. suited the compact neighbourhoods of Unionists. The emphasis was on localism, the smallest unit within the U.V.F. being the squad. This was to consist of twelve men including one squad leader. The movement being interdependent would then have two streets' squads join together to form a section. The section consisted of twenty-two men, two squad leaders and a section leader. When four streets' squads joined together a half company was formed. The half company consisted of forty-eight men, two section leaders and a half company commander. The formation of eight streets' squads into a company, included one commander, two sub-commanders, four sub-leaders, and ninety-six volunteers.<sup>113</sup> The largest units were then the battalions and the regiments, one regiment for each parliamentary constituency.

The U.V.F. being a Volunteer army was not able to enforce conventional military discipline on the men. The most serious form of discipline that could be used against a volunteer was to expel him from the force, and make him return his rifle or truncheon and his uniform, which excluded him from the group that the other men of military age belonged to in his street or townland.<sup>114</sup> In Belfast the R.I.C. also

---

<sup>112</sup> Murphy & Nolan, (eds), *Fermanagh history and society*, pp 325-6.

<sup>113</sup> 'Development of the U.V.F.', CO 904/27/396-403, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>114</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, pp 125-6.

observed that ex-British soldiers were training the best-attended Unionist Clubs<sup>115</sup> which, combined with the presence of General Sir George Richardson as G.O.C. of the new force, ensured that tight discipline would be maintained over Ulster's Sunday soldiers. It would be the extreme militarists in 1914 that would assume control of Unionism's forward movement through the Larne gun-smuggling operation, not Richardson who knew the limits of part-time soldiers. In the next chapter the question of the U.V.F. leadership will be re-examined to show how extremism was winning out over semi-constitutionalism.

In 1913, the U.V.F. was kept on a tight rein and its leadership did their best to maintain control of the organisation through limiting arms in the hands of the ordinary volunteers, being careful to build a legitimate place for the U.U.C.'s private army. Buckland describes how volunteers were warned not to engage in street disturbances, only to get involved if the police requested their assistance. In relation to weaponry, while the numbers of guns held by the rank and file was low, strict instructions were in place that guns would only be issued as a very last resort.<sup>116</sup> The organisation also forbade the carrying of revolvers in the U.V.F., the leadership understandably anxious to avoid a repetition of the September 1912 football match when small arms fire was exchanged with Nationalists<sup>117</sup>, and the rioting in Londonderry in August 1913.<sup>118</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> 'I.G.'s monthly report', CO 904/27/498, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.). See also 'Development of the U.V.F. in county Antrim, crime special', CO 904/27/341, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>116</sup> 'Printed circular memorandum containing directions as to the protection of arms and ammunition', (P.R.O.N.I., U.U.C. papers, D/1238), quoted in Buckland, *Ulster Unionism and the origins of Northern Ireland*, pp 62-63.

<sup>117</sup> See footnote 72, 73, and 74 for a description of the violence that took place on 14 Sept. 1912.

<sup>118</sup> 'Synopsis of C.I.s' report', CO 904/90/648, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)



The evidence available to us corroborates the idea that in 1913 constitutionalists controlled the U.V.F., and not the extremists who favoured a fight. As late as December 1913 the I.G.'s report concluded that the rank and file volunteers had not been armed, with predominantly the 'better class having purchased their own weapon'.<sup>119</sup> The U.V.F. in Antrim only possessed two hundred weapons for a force of 10,000 men, excluding privately held weapons, this equates to one gun for every fifty men.<sup>120</sup> The I.G. reported that disappointment existed amongst volunteers who had to drill with dummy weapons. The report stated that in Portadown the U.V.F. volunteers had refused to drill anymore due to the U.U.C.s failure to purchase arms in any quantity.<sup>121</sup>

The purpose of the U.V.F. in 1913 was self-defence, mutual defence of loyalists, and to keep the peace.<sup>122</sup> The formation of the Ulster Provisional Government in 1913 brought clarity as to the plans of the Unionist leadership for the U.V.F. The U.U.C. planned to assume both policing and military control of Ulster. The Government consisted of a 76 member central authority, Carson as Chair, and committees (departments) for the U.V.F., law, education, customs and excise and post office.<sup>123</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, CO 904/90/613, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.). See Townshend, *Political violence in Ireland*, p.252. Townshend describes the disappointment felt amongst the U.V.F. whose leaders talked of a fight, but did not provide the arms to back up their claims. See also 'letter from Colonel Spender, Cabin Hill, Knock, to Ronald McNeill', (P.R.O.N.I., Mic/103) The letter describes how the arms supply was a 'reserved service in the hands of certain businessmen.

<sup>120</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.116.

<sup>121</sup> 'I.G.'s monthly report', CO 904/89/199, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.). See also 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/335, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.), and Stewart, *The Ulster crisis* p.71.

<sup>122</sup> 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/400-5, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>123</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 4 May 1935.

The R.I.C. had, since early 1913, been aware of the dual function of the U.V.F. for military and policing duties.<sup>124</sup> This dual mandate of military and police work also helps to account for the low number of service rifles in circulation. In Fermanagh the Enniskillen Horse was armed with lances and rifles that were decades out of date, the Martini-Henri rifle having been made during the 1870s. The evidence available suggests that outside of the militant core of Belfast resistance, the U.V.F. faced significant recruitment problems as a result of the small number of weapons in their possession. In Antrim, despite having heard a call by the Unionist Clubs for a significant increase in membership<sup>125</sup>, the initial response to the U.V.F. was poor. In Ballymena by 26 January 1912, the police reported that only two out of two hundred enrolment forms had been signed, both by the drill instructors of the club.<sup>126</sup> The inclemency of the weather and the necessary farm work meant, that in Antrim and in Fermanagh, fluctuating drill attendance was a common problem for the U.V.F.

In September 1913 the U.V.F., under the authority of the Provisional Government, was expected to assume the responsibilities of the R.I.C. in the event of Home Rule passing into law.<sup>127</sup> The Unionist leadership clearly recognised the constraints they worked under with the U.V.F., which had many eager but inexperienced men. The decision to split the U.V.F. into those who would be fighting and those who would be policing is something that few contemporary authors highlight.<sup>128</sup> The major significance of the U.V.F. for Ulster was that in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence from a Dublin parliament, the U.V.F. would be

---

<sup>124</sup> See 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/356, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>125</sup> Peter Harbinson, *Ulster Unionism and the origins of Northern Ireland*, (Belfast, 1973) p.25.

<sup>126</sup> 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/337, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>127</sup> 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/373, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>128</sup> See 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/364, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

expected to provide both military and policing service to the Unionist community.<sup>129</sup> The police identified that Colonels Wallace, Sharmon-Crawford, and Major T.V.P.McCammon would be in charge of the military force. The organisation represented self-reliance within Unionism that manifested itself in a coherent campaign of opposition to Home Rule. The major difference between the Irish Volunteers in the south and the Ulster Volunteers in the north was that the U.V.F. had workable plans in place to back their propaganda claims.

The alliance of Carson with Lord Londonderry and the Lord Mayor of Belfast was crucial to the continued success of the Unionist forward movement. Lord Londonderry could exert huge political influence over his fellow Unionists, and the Lord Mayor of Belfast was in a position of influence within the tinderbox of the Home Rule crisis. The Lord Mayor, as part of his efforts to maintain order in Belfast, formed the Young Citizen Volunteers who were an unarmed citizen army of the city's youth and drilled at the home of Lord Pirie in Ormistown (see Figure 3).



Figure 3: 'Young Citizen Volunteers marching at Ormistown 1913...', un-catalogued, (Linen Hall Library, Belfast.)

---

<sup>129</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis* p.80.

The efforts of the Unionist leadership gradually began to rein in the non-conformist Orange elements that had insisted on maintaining a sectarian campaign. The most noteworthy function of the U.V.F. was in January 1913 to discipline members of their own community. It was a clear attempt to clean up Unionism's image in the U.K.<sup>130</sup> The police reported how on 17 January the U.V.F took up duty to maintain order in Lisburn on the occasion of the third reading of the Home Rule bill. The British Government had everything to gain by Belfast's congested working-class districts rioting and the sacking of Nationalist areas.<sup>131</sup> The Government only needed one severe outbreak of sectarian violence to justify coercion of the U.V.F., and the arrest of its leaders. The British political system was at a stage of evolution at which the support of the public was vital to the cause of Ulster Unionism.<sup>132</sup> The emergence of a British league for the support of Ulster in March 1913 was cast-iron proof of the need and use of public opinion.<sup>133</sup>

In the next chapter the resurgence of the physical force elements of the U.V.F. will be discussed. The attempted settlement of the Ulster crisis in early 1914 will be examined to show how the failure of these talks gave Asquith the excuse he needed to attempt the coercion of Ulster. The gun-running at Larne on the night of 24-5 April will be studied to show how the massive importation of weaponry was

---

<sup>130</sup> See 'Development of the U.V.F.', CO 904/27/375-8, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.). See also D.G.Boyce, 'British conservative opinion, the Ulster question, and the partition of Ireland, 1912-1921', in *Irish Historical Studies (I.H.S.)*, xvii (1971), pp 89-112. This article describes how the Unionists enjoyed the support of key conservative figures, Lord Milner, Lord Roberts, and A.V.Dicey. This support could not have been maintained had Unionist discipline broken.

<sup>131</sup> See Lewis, *Carson*, p.65, and Buckland, *Ulster Unionism and the origins of Northern Ireland*, p.65.

<sup>132</sup> Strauss, *Irish nationalism and British democracy*, p.233. See also *Belfast Newsletter*, 4 May 1935. The paper published a jubilee supplement that detailed the Ulster crisis over the passage of Home Rule. The article describes how it was the intention of the Government and the army that loyalists would be goaded into attacking police, and that would be the signal for the coercion of Ulster to begin.

made possible by the seeming failure of semi-constitutionalism under Carson's leadership. The Larne incident, the Curragh mutiny, and the commencement of W.W.1. , reduced the likelihood of conflict in Ulster. W.W.1. cemented Ulster Unionisms place within the empire, thus proving their loyalty with the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. A.T.Q.Stewarts biography of Carson sums up this process describing how Carson reversed the old Fenian motto, telling Unionists that England's difficulty would not be used as Ulsters opportunity.<sup>134</sup>

---

<sup>134</sup> Stewart, *Carson* p.95.

### Chapter Three.

*'Every day that came was an enemy,  
that tightened the belt and paled the cheek,  
and men took turns on the great church tower,  
for some relief to seek...'*<sup>135</sup>

In this chapter it is proposed to examine the allegation by Unionists that the British attempted the coercion of Ulster in March 1914.<sup>136</sup> The Larne gun-running in April 1914 and the actions of both the Liberal Government and the Unionists in the months leading up until W.W.1. will also be discussed. The continued evolution of the U.V.F. in the course of 1914, and the difficulties of maintaining order in the Unionist communities as Home Rule looked increasingly likely, will also be outlined in the period 1913-4.

Asquith's failure to reach a negotiated settlement in the autumn of 1913, pushed Carson into pursuing a more radicalised agenda for Ulster in the course of 1914.<sup>137</sup> Despite the belief of King George V, that a negotiated deal made sense, the tactic Asquith pursued was to do nothing.<sup>138</sup> By ultimately offering Carson only a temporary reprieve from dreaded Home Rule (in the form of a six-year period of grace), Asquith pushed Carson into acquiescing to the radicals within the ranks of

---

<sup>135</sup> Pim, *Unconquerable Ulster* p.20.

<sup>136</sup> See *Belfast Telegraph*, 4 May 1935, the paper discusses the Ulster crisis, and the alleged attempted coercion of Ulster. See also 'Synopsis of C.I.s' reports for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/408, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.), and 'I.G.'s monthly confidential report for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/414-6, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>137</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, pp 141-2.

<sup>138</sup> Jackson, *Home Rule 1800-2000*, p.124.

Unionism. Some within Unionism felt the longer Asquith delayed the more likely the lower classes of Belfast society would riot, giving him an excuse for coercing Ulster.<sup>139</sup>

The situation in Belfast, Antrim and Fermanagh was increasingly tense due to the continued uncertainty over the Home Rule question. The C.I. reported how, in Belfast, Roman Catholic women were driven from their employment for the first time since July 1912, and the imminent formation of a Special service section for the U.V.F. of which 3,000 men would be drawn from Belfast.<sup>140</sup> The Special service section was to be a force drawn mainly from those with military experience who could be mobilised at short notice in the event of Home Rule being signed into law.

Carson upon his return to Belfast from the London talks had no positive news to report to the U.U.C., and was left with little option but to follow the plans of the radicals within the U.V.F. movement and acquiesce to the idea of massive arms importations. Fred Crawford, a zealous Unionist, would be given charge of the biggest importation of arms in the course of the Home Rule crisis.

In Belfast the political uncertainty was creating a situation that Carson would find increasingly difficult to control. The expulsion of workers that occurred in the

---

<sup>139</sup> See Lewis, *Carson* p.147. See also 'Constance Williams to Carson 14 Jan. 1914', (P.R.O.N.I., Carson papers, D1507/A/5/3), quoted in Jackson, *Home Rule 1800-2000* p.131.

<sup>140</sup> See 'Synopsis of C.I.s' reports for month of Jan., 1914', CO 904/92/2, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

Brookvale mill, combined with an industrial slump and increasing crime rate, meant Belfast was in a position akin to that of June and July 1912.

Unlike the situation in 1912, the U.V.F. was now a well armed and disciplined military force to contend with. The organisation by 1914 was increasingly organised across Ulster with spot mobilisations of volunteers testing the abilities of the R.I.C. to maintain order in Ulster.<sup>141</sup> The R.I.C. believed the U.V.F. to have access to 17,000 arms, which included service rifles, side arms and sporting guns.<sup>142</sup>

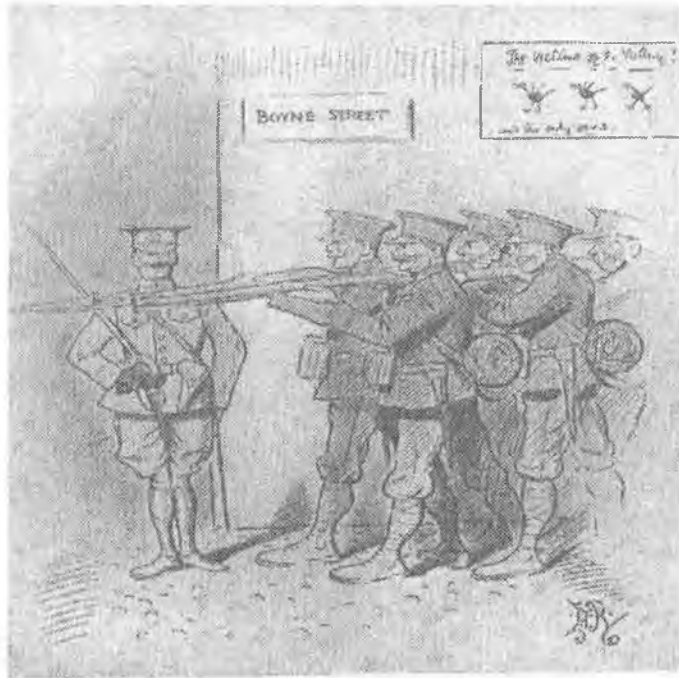
The delaying tactics of Asquith forced Carson into a corner and allowed radicals (Winston Churchill and Lloyd George) within Asquith's party to pursue a more provocative policy by moving troops into Ulster to guard arms dumps. The problem for Asquith was that by the time the plans for Ulster were initiated, the actions of the army officers at the Curragh had undermined his administration. The embarrassment for the British was that initially the whole affair arose from the incompetence of Seely, secretary of state for war, and Sir Arthur Paget in the Curragh. The satirical swipe being aimed at the Liberal Government in Figure 4, shows a British army officer telling his men to aim their guns high or he would break their necks, an acknowledgement that as far as the media was concerned the army had no intention of firing on Ulstermen.

---

<sup>141</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of Jan., 1914', CO 904/92/9-10, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.) The I.G. describes how the tendency of the U.V.F. to conduct spot mobilisations and sham fights was testing the resources of the police in an already tense environment.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.





**REBELLION IN FAVOUR OF KING AND COUNTRY**  
 BRITISH OFFICER (to "Ulster of the Valley"):  
 "Men! our orders are to put down this rising in Ulster at all costs.  
 It is 'ball-cartridge' this time, remember! In the name of everything  
 patriotic, I still expect you, as the word of command, to fire  
 (with me) and fire high, not low like that, or I'll break your necks!!!"

Figure 4: The beauties of Home Rule by E.T. Read (Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

The initial aim of the British had been to reinforce the arms depots of Armagh, Omagh, Carrickfergus and Enniskillen. The unoccupied military base at Newry and the barracks at Dundalk were also to be re-enforced.<sup>143</sup> The predicament that Asquith faced was that the large movement of troops into Ulster would be seen by the U.V.F. as a provocation and thus justifying civil war. However, if Asquith allowed the U.V.F. raid Government stores his position would have been untenable. The fact was that the Government appears to have been well aware of the U.V.F.s number one scheme<sup>144</sup>, but was understandably unable to reveal details to Westminster. The carefully devised

<sup>143</sup> See Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.143.

<sup>144</sup> See Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, pp 126-29.

number one scheme for the U.V.F. to seize stocks of weaponry and assume military control of Ulster, was ready to be enacted within a matter of hours should it be required. The scheme also outlined plans to paralyse the rail network and ensure the civilian population did not riot.

The debates that occurred during the crisis revealed the political mindset of the Liberal Government and their opponents. Walter McGuinness' (M.P. for Bury St. Edmunds) speech to the commons on 25 March shows how, even as the confusing events unfolded, some members of the House could see the fallacies of the Liberal's actions. McGuinness stated that 'the army are citizens...you [the Government] must allow them to use their rights as citizens to stand out if their conscience will not allow them from military service'.<sup>145</sup> The underlying fact was that the Home Rule issue split Britain, and the army was equally divided. McGuinness rightly asserts that the Liberals had missed their chance to coerce Ulster, long before thousands of rifles had found their way into the hands of an illegal army.

The failure of the Government to act decisively during March emboldened the U.V.F. and its leadership. On the night of 19 March, with the rumour circulating that coercion was imminent, the U.V.F. mobilised its members to guard the Unionist leadership, an eventuality long planned for.<sup>146</sup> According to the I.G.'s report, the U.V.F. used every available means, including the cinema to mobilise its men.<sup>147</sup> By

---

<sup>145</sup> *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, lx, 481, (25 Mar., 1914)

<sup>146</sup> 'I.G.'s report for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/414-6, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.) See also Stewart *The Ulster crisis* p.126.

<sup>147</sup> 'I.G.'s report for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/414-6.

midnight on the night of 19 March 1,000 men had mobilised to guard Craig's residence at Craigavon, Colonel Chichester's Ormistown park residence, and Mr Coate's Clonallen residence.<sup>148</sup> The U.V.F., in a move similar to that of the Irish Republican Army in the war of independence, mobilised flying columns of Special service troops, doing so in order to guard the leadership. They also ensured that there would be no breakdown of order among the civilian population by assigning volunteers to police work.<sup>149</sup> Carson's main concern throughout the course of the Ulster crisis appears to have been the maintenance of order in the U.V.F. ranks. The Inspector's report describes how it was the discipline of the leaders that prevented outbreaks of sectarianism. Carson was stated to have issued a manifesto calling on the U.V.F. to do nothing to provoke their political opponents. Crucially the bulk of the 25,000 weapons held by the U.V.F. were in the hands of the leadership, and not the rank and file.<sup>150</sup> The I.G. describes in his report for March 1914 how volunteers had been assigned to policing duties and truncheons had been issued. Macready attributes more of a threat to the Crown forces from the Irish Volunteer Force (I.V.F.) as he considered them to be completely undisciplined compared to the U.V.F. who were under some measure of control by their officers.<sup>151</sup> The Special service section of the U.V.F. was a properly armed, disciplined and uniformed force (see Figure 5), was also paid when on active service, a level of professionalism that the I.V.F. would not develop for another five years.<sup>152</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup> 'I.G.'s report for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/414-6. See also Jackson, *Home Rule 1800-2000*, p.129, Lewis, *Carson* p.139, and Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, pp 146-47.

<sup>149</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/415, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>150</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of Feb., 1914', CO 904/92/220, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>151</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/415, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.). See also Macready, *Annals of an Active life*, i, p. 191, and Stewart *The Ulster crisis*, p.112 and p.127.

<sup>152</sup> Buckland, *Ulster Unionism and the origins of Northern Ireland*, p.63. See also Stewart *The Ulster crisis*, p.124.

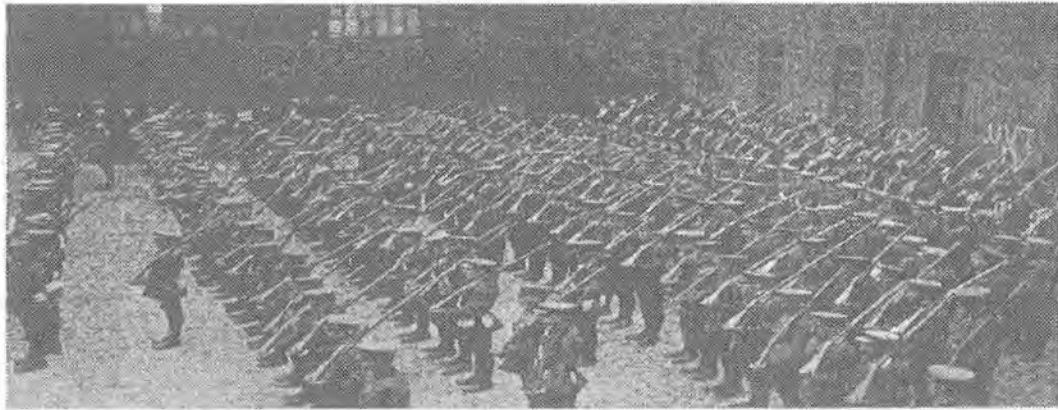


Figure 5: U.V.F. volunteers drilling, U.V.F. Christmas book 1915 (Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

The problem now facing the Liberal Government was that Churchill had thrown down the gauntlet to Unionists in his speech at Bradford, declaring that it was time to put Ulster's claims to the test.<sup>153</sup> The Government's failure to deal decisively with either the Unionists, or the mutinous behaviour of Sir Hubert Gough (Brigadier-General in the Curragh) left Asquith the humiliating task of backing down, not just from the threats of the U.V.F., but from dissension within his own ranks. The only physical damage inflicted upon U.V.F. property during the March crisis was the burning of a U.V.F. hospital (a mansion belonging to Hugh McCalmount), destroyed as a direct result of Carson's refusal to back the suffragette movement's claims for the vote.<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>153</sup> *Belfast Newsletter*, 4 May 1935.

<sup>154</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of Mar., 1914', CO 904/92/416, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

The importation of 24,600 rifles and 3,000,000 rounds of ammunition on the night of the 24-5 April<sup>155</sup> was a clear example of the ability of the U.V.F. to circumvent the Government's authority, and not be made answerable to the law in any way. The importation of guns meant that between fifty to sixty percent of the U.V.F. could be issued with a weapon.

In Westminster, in the days after the Larne landings, the Liberal administration was forced to defend its very credibility to govern. On 27 April, the Prime Minister, upon being questioned as to what he proposed to do, could only really promise that they would 'vindicate the authority of the law, and protect officers and servants of the King, and His Majesty's subjects, in the exercise of their duties'.<sup>156</sup> The truth was that for Asquith to fulfil such a pledge he would have to coerce Ulster and conduct extensive military operations in order to seize illegal weaponry from the U.V.F., something that we have seen was beyond his ability.

The I.G., reporting on the importation of weapons in April 1914, described how the development of the U.V.F. was buoyed up by the success of the operation.<sup>157</sup> The police describe the arrival of the steam ship *Mountjoy* at Larne, (purchased in Glasgow, also known as *Clydevalley*<sup>158</sup>) and how the U.V.F. ensured no R.I.C. interference was possible. The U.V.F. planners used the Government's predicament to their advantage, rather than placing armed guards at the entrance to the ports they

---

<sup>155</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis* p.246.

<sup>156</sup> *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, lxi, 1347-8, (27 Apr., 1914)

<sup>157</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of Apr., 1914', CO 904/93/9, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>158</sup> Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.194.

placed large numbers of unarmed civilians.<sup>159</sup> The R.I.C. could neither arrest such numbers nor fire on them, and this prevented them from carrying out inspections of the cargoes landed, allowing the U.V.F. to proceed unimpeded. The subsequent landings at Belfast, Donaghadee, and Bangor, were equally undisturbed. The arrival of weapons at Donaghadee was supervised by U.V.F. commander Lord Dunleath, who informed the police they were not to interfere. The I.G.'s report is understandably limited in certain areas due to the restrictions under which they were operating. The report does contain detail on the ships, U.V.F. commanders, and regiments mobilised and involved, that corroborates the work of Stewart, but also provides the reader with a greater understanding of the logistics of landing arms and munitions.<sup>160</sup> The cordons of volunteers across the road at Donaghadee meant that the police, customs and coastguard were in no position to inspect the ships. The report also alludes to the collusion of big business in Belfast with the U.V.F. The R.I.C. suggested that the arms and ammunition landed at Belfast were transferred to the shipyards of Workman and Clark. George Clark, a partner in the business, commanded the third battalion north Belfast regiment of the U.V.F. The report highlights how the rifles landed were of an old pattern, often Martini Henri or Martini Enfield. The confusion over numbers of weapons could be accounted for by the U.V.F. policy of importing rifle barrel and stock separately. The knowledge that the rifle shipments coming into Ulster were outdated rifles would have helped Asquith significantly in his decision making over Ulster.<sup>161</sup> This corresponds with Charles

---

<sup>159</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of Apr., 1914', CO 904/93/9, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>160</sup> See Ibid. See also Stewart, *The Ulster crisis*, p.211.

<sup>161</sup> 'I.G.'s report for month of Apr., 1914', CO 904/93/10, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

Townshend who considers the rifles smuggled into Ulster to have been of old stock, and in many cases unserviceable.<sup>162</sup>

The gun-running proved to the British public that the U.V.F. was a strong organisation with an efficient command structure, with the necessary auxiliary services to back up their regular volunteers and Special service section troops. Sir Joseph Walton M.P. for York West Riding, in a speech to the H.O.C. on 29 April, summed up the reasons for the U.V.F. being able to operate with impunity. He stated to the House that the actions of the Tory leadership in meddling with the allegiance of the army, had ensured as the *Morning Post* reported, that the army had killed the Home Rule bill.<sup>163</sup> The affect of this on the Liberal party in Britain was devastating. They were forced to get up daily and explain why the state could not prevent the illegal importation of arms by an illegal army. The Nationalist community in Belfast was in a vulnerable position with only 1800 volunteers to protect them from more than 24,509 U.V.F.<sup>164</sup> The only option open to the Liberals was to extract more concessions from Redmond, who clearly had the weaker hand as this work had shown. Ferriter suggests that the British, by failing to deal with the Unionists, could not deal in a heavy-handed manner with the Irish. That may be so, but it is clear Carson came off best with a position in government and the suspension of Home Rule until after the war, by which time the Liberals might have been out of office.<sup>165</sup> The army had clearly shown that they would not move to impose Home Rule on loyal Ulstermen. This had given Unionists a carte blanche in their actions to import arms

---

<sup>162</sup> Charles Townshend, *Easter 1916* (Dublin, 2005) p.51.

<sup>163</sup> *Hansard 5 (Commons)*, lxi, 1639, (28 Apr., 1914)

<sup>164</sup> 'Synopsis of C.I.s' reports for month of May, 1914', CO 904/93/222, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>165</sup> See Diarmaid Ferriter, *Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London, 2004) p.128.

and munitions, compared with the I.V.F. who were challenged by troops and police when they landed weapons at Howth in July 1914. The major difference in the approach to the respective Volunteer armies stemmed from the fact that the U.V.F. commanded support at every level of British society, including the wealthy and influential. By comparison the I.V.F. were seen as seditious radicals who needed to be challenged, having openly imported guns into Dublin, unlike the U.V.F. who rapidly distributed their weapons throughout Ulster.

The changing face of Irish politics in the two years since Home Rule was introduced to the H.O.C., meant that by July 1914 at the Buckingham palace conference<sup>166</sup>, the Unionists had behind them a disciplined armed force to back their vehement opposition to Home Rule. Redmond by contrast had the I.V.F. whom he had reluctantly endorsed only after a power struggle with their executive. The U.V.F. did contain radical Unionists such as Fred Crawford, but ultimately was governed by shrewd military and political minds. Few Nationalists of southern Ireland possessed knowledge of military tactics, but spoiled for a fight far more than the U.V.F. The leadership of Carson had, up until December 1913, ensured that the U.V.F. remained largely a localised force dedicated to the maintenance of peace in Unionist communities. The blundering behaviour of Asquith lost Carson some of his political leverage within the Unionist party. The Unionist allegation, that the British were attempting to precipitate civil war disastrously undermined the British administration. This left the way open for the Unionists to pull off their greatest coup, namely the Larne gun-running.

---

<sup>166</sup> See Foster *Modern Ireland*, pp 470-471. See also J.L.McCracken, 'Northern Ireland, 1931-1966' in T.W.Moody and F.X.Martin (eds), *The course of Irish history* (Dublin, 1994), p.304, and Ferriter, *The transformation of Ireland 1900-2000*, p.128.



By May and June 1914 the unresolved political situation looked increasingly likely to draw Ulster into war. The C.I.s' reports for May and June show the U.V.F. on war footing.<sup>167</sup> The report from Antrim describes how linen traders were clearing their stocks to American companies at cost price in order to avoid losing everything in the event of war. The trade with London was also in trouble due to London firms refusing to work on credit terms with Belfast companies.<sup>168</sup> The description of the political situation in Belfast gives an accurate picture of the U.V.F. by 1914. The commissioner for Belfast, describes how the U.V.F. 'organisation is now fairly complete...signalling corps, ambulances (see Figure 6), nurses, cooks, transport and commissariat contingents...'<sup>169</sup>, the U.V.F. were at the zenith of their power.

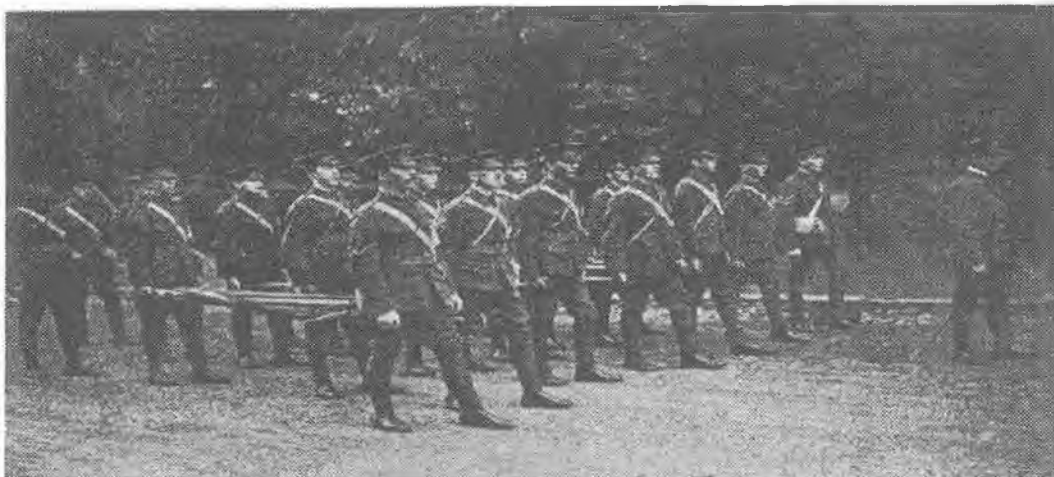


Figure 6: U.V.F. stretcher-bearers...,U.V.F. Christmas book 1915 (Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

<sup>167</sup> See 'Synopsis of C.I.s' reports for month of May, 1914', CO 904/93/222-5, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

While the I.G. acknowledges that the U.V.F. commanders offered their cooperation with the police in the maintenance of order, the seriousness of the situation is equally underlined by his report. The I.G. highlights how it had been noted that since joining the U.V.F. the tougher elements had shown a marked improvement in discipline, something that was not attributed to the Orange Order.<sup>170</sup> The report on the arming of both Volunteer factions accurately sums up the problems facing the R.I.C., the army, and the British Government in the maintenance of the peace in Ireland. The I.G. describes how,

*'The training and drilling of men to the use of arms of a great part of the male population is a new departure...obedience to the law has never been a prominent characteristic of these people...if the people become armed and drilled, effective police control will vanish...'*<sup>171</sup>

The prospect of inter-community armed conflict, or U.V.F. men fighting the crown forces may have become inevitable were it not for the war. The suspension of the Home Rule bill until after the war allowed all parties to halt the campaign that had dominated Ulster life for many years. By August 1914 the I.G. reports a marked drop in tension in Ulster due to the outbreak of war. While more weapons were landed for the U.V.F., they were legal imports due to the arms proclamation being repealed. The report highlights how the U.V.F. and I.V.F. drills decreased with drill instructors

---

<sup>170</sup> See 'I.G.'s report for month of May, 1914', CO 904/93/232-3, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>171</sup> Ibid, CO 904/93/235, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

mobilised and returning to their regiments in England.<sup>172</sup> Ulster had a war to fight, with both Unionist and Nationalist joining up in the spirit of patriotism. This allowed for old hostilities to be put aside temporarily in the quest to defeat the Germans, the men of Ulster, Nationalist and Unionist alike, went en masse to the recruiting stations.

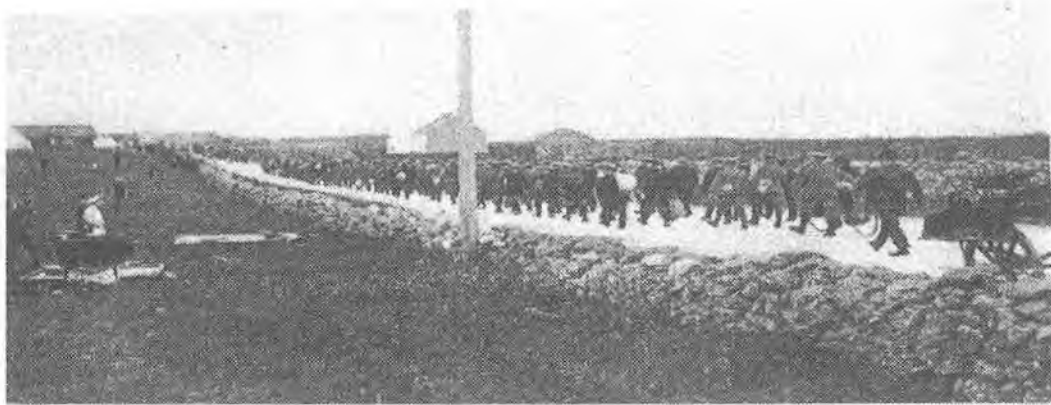


Figure 7: U.V.F. volunteers going to enlist in the British army, U.V.F. Christmas book 1915 (Linen Hall Library, Belfast)

---

<sup>172</sup> See 'I.G.'s report of month of Aug., 1914', CO 904/94/213-5, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

## Conclusion.

The stated aim of the U.V.F. upon its inception was the mutual defence of loyalists and to keep the peace.<sup>173</sup> The organisation at its peak in March 1914 had 84,450 members across the nine counties of Ulster.<sup>174</sup> This work has shown how in 1913 under the political leadership of Carson, Unionism generally moved away from street violence, instead engaging the fledgling U.V.F., in frequent drills, parades and weapons practice. The thesis has illustrated how sectarian conflicts like the frequent riots in Belfast during 1912, and the reckless discharging of firearms in the course of Orange excursions no longer dominated the British and Irish media. This work has shown how it was only in 1914 when the passing of Home Rule seemed imminent, that radicalism re-emerged within Unionism, hijacking the positive influence the U.V.F. had brought to loyalist communities.

The purpose of this thesis was to show the positive affect of the U.V.F. in Ulster. This work has shown how the U.V.F. substantially reduced loyalist violence in Belfast, by enrolling tough working class loyalists in their ranks, retaining weapons in the hands of trusted leaders, and frequently reminding the Unionist community their quarrel was not with Catholics. The Castledawson incident was highlighted to show how a U.V.F. escort allowed Presbyterian school children return to the Castledawson area without any repeat of the violence of 1912. The discipline of the U.V.F. compared favourably with the pre-existing situation when the Orange Order had been clearly implicated in the violence at Castledawson in 1912.

---

<sup>173</sup> 'Development of the U.V.F., crime special', CO 904/27/400-5, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>174</sup> Brendan Mac Giolla Choille (ed.), *Intelligence notes* (Dublin, 1966) p.37.

This work has shown how the U.V.F. from its inception was, to a certain extent an extension of Unionist party policy. However, it was the ordinary volunteers who first instilled order in their communities, and later earned a reputation for Ulstermen as loyal soldiers serving their country in W.W.1.

This work has shown that the Orange Order and the Unionist Clubs did serve as effective recruiting agents for the U.V.F., corroborating current academic opinion. The thesis has shown that the membership and support for the various units of the U.V.F. differed substantially between urban and rural Ulster. The work has shown how different factors influenced drill attendance in rural and urban areas, with seasonal farm work or inclement winter weather keeping rural loyalists from drilling regularly.

The thesis has highlighted the importance of public opinion, to both Unionists and Nationalists, a battle Unionism won. The initial sectarian incidents that this work highlighted illustrated to the reader the shift in attitudes that were required within Unionism in order to reach an acceptable resolution to the Home Rule crisis. The work has highlighted how the indictable offences dropped month on month with the formation of the U.V.F., and how in the media, reports of sectarian violence were replaced by reports of disciplined U.V.F. men marching in the ranks. In January 1913 the R.I.C. reported thirty-eight indictable offences in Belfast<sup>175</sup>, by June 1913 twenty-

---

<sup>175</sup> 'Precis of County Inspectors' reports for month of Jan., 1913', CO 904/89/3, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

three indictable offences<sup>176</sup>, and by December 1913 just fifteen indictable offences.<sup>177</sup>

This work has highlighted the role of the U.V.F. in stemming loyalist violence in Belfast.

This work has shown that contrary to Timothy Bowman's opinion that the U.V.F. were strongest in the areas they were least needed<sup>178</sup>, the U.V.F.'s large membership in the working class communities of Belfast reined in militant loyalists. The outlying units of the U.V.F. such as the Enniskillen Horse in Fermanagh could have been sent to Belfast in the event of serious loyalist violence without adverse consequences to public order in Fermanagh. This work has shown how in Fermanagh the indictable offence rate was negligible with minimal incidents of violence being perpetrated by either community. The highest reported number of indictable offences in Fermanagh was four in March 1913<sup>179</sup>, five in July 1913<sup>180</sup>, and four in October 1913.<sup>181</sup>

While this work has examined loyalist violence and the sectarian attacks that occurred in Belfast, it is clear that the violence directed against Unionists within Nationalist communities has not been studied in any great depth. It is my hope that

---

<sup>176</sup> 'Synopsis of County Inspectors' reports for month of June, 1913', CO 904/90/206, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>177</sup> 'Synopsis of County Inspectors' reports for month of Dec., 1913', CO 904/91/612, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>178</sup> Timothy Bowman, 'The Ulster Volunteer Force 1913-4' in *History Ireland*, x, no 1 (2002), pp 43-7.

<sup>179</sup> 'Synopsis of County Inspectors' reports for month of Mar., 1913', CO 904/89/375, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>180</sup> 'Synopsis of County Inspectors' reports for month of July, 1913', CO 904/90/392, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

<sup>181</sup> 'Synopsis of County Inspectors' reports for month of Oct., 1913', CO 904/91/195, (Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)

this work would encourage such a study and examine what influence the I.V.F. brought to bear on Nationalists in Ulster.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

**PRIMARY SOURCES: MANUSCRIPTS**

**P.R.O.N.I.**, 66 Balmoral Avenue, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Carson Papers.

Crawford Papers.

Hall Papers.

Richardson Papers.

**LINEN HALL LIBRARY**, Donegall Square, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Carson Scrapbook.

Pamphlet collection.

Postcard collection.

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND**, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Colonial Office Papers, (Microfilm).

**THE LIBRARY OF TRINITY COLLEGE**, College Green, Dublin.

H.O.C. Debates 1912-1914.

Practical Hints for elementary training of the Ulster Volunteer Force, 1913. (T.C.D.,

Early printed books, ols1-2-43).



**NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF IRELAND, BISHOP STREET, DUBLIN 1:**

Witness Statement 223, Robert Haskins Belfast

**PRIMARY SOURCES:** Published contemporary works.

Johnston, Joseph, *Civil war in Ulster* (Dublin, 1913)

Johnstone, Rev. Thos.M., *Ulstermen: Their Fight for Fortune, Faith, and Freedom.*  
(Belfast, 1914)

Macready, Nevil, *Annals of an active life*, i (London, 1924)

Maxwell, Henry, *Ulster was right* (London, 1919)

Moore, Herbert Pim, *Unconquerable Ulster* (Belfast, 1919)

*The Great War 1914-8* (Belfast, 1919)

**NEWSPAPERS:**

*Belfast Newsletter* 1912-4.

*Fermanagh Times* 1912-4.

*Freeman's Journal* 1912-4.

*Impartial Reporter* 1912-4.

*Irish Times* 1912-4.

*The Graphic* 1912.

*The Times* 1912-4.

- Jordan, Thomas E., (ed), *The census of Ireland 1821-1911: general reports and extracts*, iii, (New York, 1998)
- Kostick, Conor, *Revolution in Ireland* (New York, 1996)
- Lee, J.J., *Ireland 1912-1985* (Cambridge, 1989)
- Lewis, Geoffrey, *Carson* (London, 2005)
- Mac Giolla Choille, Brendan, (ed.) *Intelligence notes* (Dublin, 1966)
- McCracken, J.L., 'Northern Ireland, 1921-1966' in T.W.Moody and F.X.Martin (eds), *The course of Irish history* (Dublin, 1994), pp 313-341.
- Miller, David W, *Queens rebels Ulster loyalism in historical perspective* (Dublin, 1978)
- Townshend, Charles, *Political violence in Ireland* (Oxford, 1983)
- Townshend, Charles, *Easter 1916: the Irish Rebellion* (London, 2005)
- Stewart, A.T.Q., *Edward Carson* (Dublin, 1981)
- Stewart, A.T.Q., *The Ulster crisis* (London, 1967)
- Strauss, Erich, *Irish nationalism and British democracy* (New York, 1951)

**WEBSITES:**

<http://www.irishsoldiers.com>

<http://www.nli.ie>

<http://www.promi.gov.uk>

## Appendix 1:

### **ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE**

(BELFAST DIVISION).

*Inspection by Sir Edward Carson, K.C. M.P. and the General Officer Commanding U.V.F. on Saturday, 27 September, 1913, at the Agricultural Show Grounds, Balmoral, Belfast*

#### STAFF-

|                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| General Offr. Commanding Lt. | General Sir George Richardson, K.C.B. |
| Chief Staff Officer          | Col. G. Hackett-Pain C.B.             |
| Officer I/o Administration   | Lt.-Col. T.V.P. McCammon.             |
| Asst. Qr.-Matr. General      | Capt. W.B. Spender.                   |
| Military Secretary           | Capt. F.Hall                          |

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>North Belfast Regiment (Red)</b> | Colonel R.H. Wallace, C.B.<br>(Commanding) |
| No. 1 Battalion                     | Colonel W.E.C. Mc. Cammond                 |
| No. 2 Battalion                     | Mr. S.O. Slacke                            |
| No. 3 Battalion                     | Mr. George Clark junior                    |
| No. 4 Battalion                     | Mr. B.W.D. Montgomery                      |

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>West Belfast Regiment (Orange)</b> | Capt. The Hon. A.C.S. Chichester<br>(Commanding) |
|---------------------------------------|--|

|                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| No. 1 Battalion | Mr. Stewart Blacker Quin |
| No. 2 Battalion | Mr. John Graham          |

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>South Belfast Regiment (Yellow)</b> | Major F.H. Crawford<br>(Commanding) |
|--|-------------------------------------|

|                 |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| No. 1 Battalion | Major W.A. Lenox-Conyngham |
| No. 2 Battalion | Capt. Holt Waring          |
| No. 3 Battalion | Capt. Frann Dixon          |
| No. 4 Battalion | Capt. H.H.B. Cunningham    |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>East Belfast Regiment</b> | Major R.C. McCalmount M.P.<br>(Commanding) |
|------------------------------|--|

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| No. 1 Battalion | Mr. Arthur Gregg   |
| No. 2 Battalion | Mr. H.V. Coates    |
| No. 3 Battalion | Dr. Wm Gibson      |
| No. 4 Battalion | Mr. C.W. Henderson |

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>Signalling and Despatch Riders Corps (Belfast section)</b> | Mr. A. Sayers<br>(Commanding) |
|---|-------------------------------|

|  |
|--|
| Mr. J Windrim, Commanding Signallers.      |
| Mr. J Thompson, Commanding Despatch Riders |

The Division will be ready for the Inspecting Officer at 5 p.m.  
On the arrival of the Inspecting Officer the Division will come to "attention."  
The Division will advance in Review Order, "The British Grenadiers".  
The Division will give three cheers for the Union, taking the time from the G.O.C.  
The Union Jack will be broken out.  
"Rule Britannia" "God save the King"  
Sir Edward Carson will address the troops.  
The Division will return and stand at ease.  
The Division will March Past in Column of Fours from the Right.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Rescue Tent and Sirocco Bands (Conductor Mr. Fred May.)</b> |
| "Heart of Oak" "God Bless the Prince of Wales."                |
| "Our Glorious Empire Day." "The Hero of Trafalgar."            |
| "The Old Brigade." "Let me like a Soldier fall."               |
| "Red, White, and Blue." "Bay of Biscay."                       |
| "Let the Hills Resound." "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep."   |

Appendix 1: 'U.V.F. programme, 27<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1913, crime special', CO 904/27/409,

(Microfilm, N.U.I.M.)