Electioneering and Propaganda in Ireland, 1917-1920

A dissertation for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

2017

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Trinity College Dublin
Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

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Elaine Callinan
Summary

This thesis will examine Irish political propaganda and electioneering campaigns at a time of extraordinary electoral ferment. During the series of by-elections in 1917 and 1918, the 1918 general election and the 1920 local government elections conflicting political ideologies shaped voter opinions and reinforced entrenched beliefs. This work identified and now attempts to address the neglected area of research into political propaganda between the war years and the foundation of the Free State, and the absence of a collective study of the main parties that contested in the critical elections of this era. The main objectives are: to investigate if the parties that applied a strategic emphasis on propaganda garnered the most votes; to examine how finances were raised to fund a comprehensive campaign; to determine what party utilized broad and novel media methods to communicate and persuade the electorate; and, to explore who devised potent and recurrent themes to enable candidate and party recall at the polling booth.

The thesis examines if propaganda and electioneering were the sole causes of success or failure or if other factors such as voter turnout, new voters, spoiled votes and emigration influenced election results. In November 1918 the Representation of the People Act introduced a greatly increased electorate who had heretofore been ineligible to vote. By strategically targeting new women voters and empowering the youth successful parties effectively staffed their propaganda war and they won the support of those who were previously politically dormant. Some of the other novel characteristics of this election were that it was the first to be held after the Great War and the first occasion on which a general election was carried out on one day throughout the whole of the United Kingdom. Victory fell to the first-past-the-post with no allowances for minority interests. In 1919 the voting system changed to proportional representation with single transferable vote. Minority parties now had a fighting chance for representation. Revolutionary changes in electorate size and choice allowed for interesting outcomes that led to a political transformation in Ireland.
Emphatic contests by Unionists demonstrated determination to secure support in areas of Ulster with a majority Protestant population. By rejuvenating and adapting the sharp anti-home rule message supporters of unionism were again persuaded to advocate for continued endorsement of the Act of Union. To urge a stable sense of identity and enforce emotional investment the use of symbols, banners and ballads formed key components of propaganda for Unionists and nationalists.¹ Labour, on the other hand, was conspicuous by their absence. Trade union membership had increased, and self-confidence in Labour’s socialist manifesto was high, but organisation and certainty was low. Their solution was complete withdrawal from the 1918 electoral contest and their justification for doing so was to facilitate the electorate in making a clear choice and straight fight over the issue of national independence. By 1920 a more organised and determined Labour resurfaced and successfully contested for seats in the local elections.

Contemporary publications, newspapers, private papers and many archival collections will be investigated to provide an analysis of the election propaganda campaigns. These elections, particularly the 1918 general election, were of vital importance in determining the future direction of Irish politics. Before 1914 constitutional nationalism was the dominant political force in the three southern provinces, and Unionists held support in large areas of Ulster. By 1920 the balance of power within nationalism had entirely shifted.

Electoral propaganda was also influenced by internal and external conflicts such as the 1916 Rising, the Great War, the Russian Revolutions, and the War of Independence. How these events influenced the thematic messages of Irish political propaganda will be explored. Executing a convincing and robust communication and propaganda campaign is a skill, and persuasive techniques were already being employed in consumer and Great War military propaganda to reach mass audiences. Objectives of this work include analysing if political parties were influenced by existing contemporary literature on propaganda techniques, if they were implementing acknowledged practices, and if they were creating novel approaches.

In 1918 Unionists, nationalists, separatists and Labour (until their withdrawal) waged a propaganda battle to compete for votes in eighty constituencies. Two years later the local government elections reignited campaigns to secure representation on county councils. Fuelling the ambition for electoral success was a deep-rooted desire to obtain a mandate to control and direct the future political landscape of Ireland. By gaining a thorough understanding of the electoral rationale of political parties in this era through a study of the contrasting political ideals that were embedded in the propaganda themes, we gain greater insight into the divergent public opinions and those of the elites who sought domination.
Table of Contents

Declaration........................................................................................................................................... i
Summary.................................................................................................................................................. ii
Table of Contents ................................................................................................................................... v
Acknowledgements.................................................................................................................................... vii
Table and Figures ...................................................................................................................................... ix
List of Abbreviations .......................................................................................................................... xi
Author’s Note .......................................................................................................................................... xiv

Introduction............................................................................................................................................... 1

1. Thesis structure ................................................................................................................................... 4
2. Sources and Scholarship ..................................................................................................................... 10
3. Electoral Reforms ............................................................................................................................ 17
4. Propaganda ........................................................................................................................................ 26

1. Candidate Selection ............................................................................................................................ 31
1.1: The Irish Party ................................................................................................................................ 35
1.2: Sinn Féin .......................................................................................................................................... 45
1.3: The Unionist Party ............................................................................................................................ 62
1.4: Labour in Southern Ireland ............................................................................................................. 71

2. Funding ............................................................................................................................................. 81
2.1: The Irish Party ................................................................................................................................ 83
2.2: Sinn Féin .......................................................................................................................................... 93
2.3: The Unionist Party ............................................................................................................................ 111
2.4 Labour in Southern Ireland .............................................................................................................. 118

3. Methods of Propaganda: Personalities, Media Selection & Context .................................................. 122
3.1: Electoral Eloquence ......................................................................................................................... 122
3.2: Newspapers ................................................................................................................................... 140
3.3: Advertising ...................................................................................................................................... 153
3.4: Canvassing ..................................................................................................................................... 174
3.5: Symbols and Ballads ....................................................................................................................... 177
3.6: Newsreel & Film ............................................................................................................................. 191

4. Propaganda: Themes and Content ....................................................................................................... 195
4.1: Politics of the Past ............................................................................................................................ 196
4.2: The Great War ................................................................................................................................ 202
4.3: Conscription ................................................................................................................................... 211
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Women Electors – Consider!</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Easter Rising</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>The Bolshevik Revolution</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Abstention from Westminster</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Everyday Issues</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Partition</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>The Results</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>1917 and 1918 By-elections</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1918 General Election</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>The Principal Contests in the three Southern Provinces</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>The Principal Contests in Ulster</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1920 Local Government Elections Results</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Victories and Losses</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6.1</td>
<td>Municipal Elections</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6.2</td>
<td>Rural District Council (RDC) Elections</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Voter Turnout</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Candidates and Voters</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDICES.................................................................................................................. 336

APPENDIX A: 1917-1918 by-election results.............................................................. 336
APPENDIX B: 1918 Results............................................................................................ 339
APPENDIX C: 1920 Municipal Elections....................................................................... 358
APPENDIX D: 1920 Rural Elections............................................................................... 363

Bibliography.................................................................................................................... 365

Primary sources .............................................................................................................. 365

Manuscript Collections.................................................................................................. 365
Newspapers and Periodicals .......................................................................................... 376
Contemporary Publications, Memoires, books, pamphlets and reports .......................... 378

Secondary sources .......................................................................................................... 379
Acknowledgements

It is a great pleasure to be able at last to acknowledge all those who have contributed and helped in the production of this PhD thesis. In order to produce a work of this kind many scholarly and personal debts were accrued and this is the moment where my heartfelt appreciation can be expressed to those who shared generously of their time and knowledge. I am deeply grateful to my supervisor Professor David Fitzpatrick whose profound knowledge of contemporary Irish history and scholarly talent is awe inspiring. He kindly imparts it with impunity and with his inimitable leadership style he encourages one to strive for the best possible work that they can produce. My co-supervisor Dr Anne Dolan was a joy to work with and again her knowledge is limitless. The hours she shared discussing the project and the critique she gladly gave to enhance the narrative contributed enormously, and for that I am truly thankful. It was a pleasure and privilege to work with these great historians and I sincerely hope that I have done them justice.

This PhD study could not have been completed without readers and examiners. I would like to extend a huge thank you to Professor Eunan O’Halpin whose suggestions for research during reviews and examination prompted deeper exploration and whose weekly history seminars (organised with the aid of Dr Dolan) opened avenues to learn of similar or complimentary research projects and heightened scholarly debate. I am also very grateful to Dr Marie Coleman of Queen’s University for her very insightful comments and suggestions. Acknowledgement of the support of fellow colleagues and faculty in the Department of History at Trinity College Dublin has to be extended particularly to Dr Martine Cuypers and Dr Fionnuala Walsh for their kind assistance and practical support.

I am deeply indebted to the librarians and archivists of the many repositories I visited to conduct this research particularly the National Library of Ireland, Trinity College Dublin Library and Manuscripts and Archives, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, University College Dublin Archives, the National Archives of Ireland, the Military Archives in Rathmines, Dublin, and the many county libraries that I visited during the course of my research. All went above and beyond the call of duty to locate material, and responded to my many requests with great patience and efficiency. I also thank the American Irish Historical Society for accommodating my very pleasant visit to their archive, and for giving me a guided tour of their beautiful house in Manhattan, New York.

The personal reasons for this study developed out of a deepening interest in the political and military history of this period which originated in undergraduate and postgraduate Irish history studies. The motivation and encouragement to follow a path in history came from a fellow colleague and good friend in Carlow College, St. Patrick’s. The knowledge and generosity of the late Fr Fintan Morris and his love of history deserves special mention. He was an inspiration, and he is sadly and deeply missed. My other colleagues and employers in Carlow College also deserve
huge thanks. I extend heartfelt gratitude to President Conn O’Maoldomhaigh, Dr Thomas McGrath, Dr Margaret Murphy and all the other lectures for imparting their wisdom and for their continued support and patience.

Motivation also came from my many years of employment in the marketing, advertising and public relations sector and for that I need to thank Wilson Hartnell Public Relations and particularly its chairman Roddy Guiney. The practical and theoretical knowledge gleaned from history studies and from past work experience led to a desire to combine both fields into a specific history study.

To all my personal friends in Ireland, the UK and USA who have given encouragement and gone the extra mile to be of assistance, and oftentimes carried out life’s mundane chores on my behalf, my sincere thanks. I am in the very fortunate position of their being too many to mention by name, but in the coming months I will thank you all individually. My family have been a tremendous help over the past number of years both practically and emotionally. They have suffered through being ignored and forgotten, and they have proved wonderfully resilient and have continued to achieve excellence in everything they do. So, to my husband Caimin and two wonderful children Niamh and Matthew I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I would also like to thank my brother John and his lovely wife Rachel for their kindness and help.

I would like to remember my late parents John and Eileen Callinan because they gave me so much in life, and my Aunt Carmel who collected, delivered and nourished my children in many ways when she was here, enabling me to continue with my studies. Last, but most certainly not least, I thank my late younger sister Cliodhna Callinan. This work could not have happened without her kindness and benevolence in funding all my studies. For that and for much much more I dedicate this thesis to her memory with love.
Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 0.1: Growth in Irish Electorate 1884-1918
Table 0.2: Dublin Electoral Districts pre and post 1918
Table 1.1: Retiring MPs in 1918
Table 2.1: Elected candidates for 1920 Municipal Elections
Table 5.1: Number of Uncontested Seats
Table 5.2: Total valid poll for all contested county and borough constituencies by province
Table 5.3: Direct two-way electoral contests by Sinn Féin in 1918
Table 5.4: Seats won in Ulster
Table 5.5: Belfast Corporation January 1920
Table 5.6: Number of party seats in 1920 Municipal elections
Table 5.7: Percentage vote by party or coalitions
Table 5.8: Absent Voters and Votes returned
Table 5.9: Percentage of women electors in 1918

Figures

Figure 1.1: Leitrim Guardian and NLI, LOP 116: Vote for Dolan and Sinn Féin
Figure 1.2: Weekly Irish Times, 29 April 1916: Sinn Féin Rebellion in Ireland
Figure 3.1: Roscommon Herald, 9 June 1917: Tempting them over the precipice
Figure 3.2: Roscommon Herald, 5 May 1917: When conscription Jack bought a “pig in a poke”
Figure 3.3: Elaine Callinan, Private Collection: The Bishop of Limerick Speaks: How the Irish prisoners are treated.
Figure 3.4: Elaine Callinan Private Collection: Donegall Place, Belfast, Under Home Rule
Figure 3.5: TCD, Samuels Collection, Collection Box: A Chance for South Longford
(Political Dustbin)

Figure 3.6: NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH: *Put him in to get him out*

Figure 3.7: John Redmond presenting the green flag with gold harp to the Irish Volunteers before the split.

Figure 3.8: Elaine Callinan, Private Collection: *Union is Strength* (pin badge)

Figure 3.9: Elaine Callinan, Private Collection: Shamrock pinbadge, *Vote for Cosgrave*

Figure 3.10: TCD, Digital Collections, Samuels Box 4/258: *Which?*

Figure 3.11: Postcard from anti-home rule campaign, dated 27 Sept. 1912: Elaine Callinan, Private Collection.

Figure 4.1: NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP 116/57: *Dalcassians!*

Figure 4.2: TCD, Digital Collections, DPB Papyrus Case 55a, Digital No. PapyrusCase55-009: *Irishmen, Avenge the Lusitania.*

Figure 4.3: NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP116/71: *Ireland at the Crossroads*

Figure 4.4: UCDA, De Valera Papers, P150/550: *Conscription!*

Figure 4.5: NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP116/94: *Will you vote for conscription?*

Figure 4.6: Advert for Colleen Shampoo from Brown’s Soap Works, Donaghmore Heritage Centre, Co. Tyrone.

Figure 4.7: NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP 116/72: *Up Plunkett!*

Figure 4.8: NLI, William O’Brien, LOP 116/100: *Sinn Féin, Violence & Intimidation.*

Figure 5.1: NLI, ILB 400, p. 4 (item 2): *Major Davey’s Record.*

Figure 5.2: BMH, Contemporary Documents 227/7/B/I (i): *Vote for DeValera.*

Figure 5.3: NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH 7/7a: 51.8 x 38.6 cm Sinn Féin 1918 election poster for Robert Childers Barton.
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFIL</td>
<td>All-for-Ireland-League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIHS</td>
<td>American Irish Historical Society</td>
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<td>AOH</td>
<td>Ancient Order of Hibernians</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMH</td>
<td>Bureau of Military History</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCORI</td>
<td>Central Council for the Organisation of Recruiting in Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>DMP</td>
<td>Dublin Metropolitan Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DORA</td>
<td>Defence of the Realm Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRI</td>
<td>Department of Recruiting in Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPD</td>
<td>Excess Profits Duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOIF</td>
<td>Friends of Irish Freedom</td>
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<td>GAA</td>
<td>Gaelic Athletic Association</td>
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<td>GPO</td>
<td>General Post Office</td>
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<td>House of Commons</td>
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<td>Irish Land and Labour Association</td>
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<td>ILP&amp;TUC</td>
<td>Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP</td>
<td>Irish Parliamentary Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRA</td>
<td>Irish Republican Army</td>
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<td>IRB</td>
<td>Irish Republican Brotherhood</td>
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<td>Irish Transport and General Workers Union</td>
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<td>Irish Trade Union Congress</td>
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<td>Irish Unionist Alliance</td>
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<td>IWFL</td>
<td>Irish Women’s Franchise League</td>
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<td>JD</td>
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<td>Local Government Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>PR-STV</td>
<td>Proportional Representation-Single Transferrable Vote</td>
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<td>RIC</td>
<td>Royal Irish Constabulary</td>
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<td>ROIA</td>
<td>Restoration of Order in Ireland Act</td>
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<td>Sinn Féin Standing Committee Minutes</td>
</tr>
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<td>SFSCM</td>
<td>Sinn Féin Standing Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>SIPTU</td>
<td>Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union</td>
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<td>SPI</td>
<td>Socialist Party of Ireland</td>
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<td>STV</td>
<td>Single Transferrable Vote</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCD</td>
<td>Trinity College Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td>TD</td>
<td>Teachta Dála (Member of Parliament)</td>
</tr>
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<td>University College Dublin Archives</td>
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<td>United Irish League</td>
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<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>Ulster Unionist Labour Association</td>
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<td>Ulster Volunteer Force</td>
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<td>Ulster Women’s Unionist Council</td>
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<td>WS</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Author’s Note

A short note on nomenclature is necessary in a work of this kind and I begin with place names because Londonderry was also referred to as Derry. When referring to both city and county I have used Londonderry for convenience, without implying any political preference.

The Irish Parliamentary Party is referred to as the Irish Party and the term nationalism refers to all those who aspired to self-governance in Ireland if a specific party name is not mentioned. Unionists in Ireland belonged to a number of parties or movements such as the Unionist Party, Irish Unionist Alliance, Municipal Reform, Ratepayers and so on.¹ When discussing Unionists I have provided the capital ‘u’ to cover all with general Unionist sympathies. I have also referred to Sinn Féin as ‘separatists’ and this was to distinguish them from their constitutional nationalist rivals. Some have preferred ‘advanced nationalists’, but I see neither as more advanced than the other so have opted for the term ‘separatist’ to describe the desire for a complete separation from the Westminster parliament.

The use of the síneadh fada (acute or long accent) in the Irish language was irregular in this era, particularly in newspaper editorials and often in Sinn Féin’s own propaganda. Because the word ‘Féin’ (self) means nothing without its fada it will always be used in this work even when directly quoting from material that did not use it. The fada will also be retained for the sake of consistency for the slang term Sinn ‘Féiners’ even though there is no such word or translation. Translations are provided in this work, but it is important to note that translations from Irish to English are sometimes approximate because often there is no satisfactory literal translation.

¹ See Alvin Jackson, Ireland 1798-1998, War, Peace and Beyond (UK, 2010), pp. 212-3 for a definition of unionism and its diversity within sections of Irish society.
Introduction

We had Sinn Féin processions, flag-waving, music, songs, cheers, groans, drill-forming … comings and goings of voters, male and female, old and young, on foot or in vehicles, party colours, the yellow, white and green conspicuous. The valley was full of strange sounds for twelve hours, and then quietness and peace when General Election took his departure.¹

Election campaigns, and their consequences, can be turning points in history. The 1918 ‘coupon’ election was the first modern election in the British Isles with its mass media-style propaganda campaigns, systemization of electoral practice, and democratization of the electorate.² This thesis investigates the electioneering and propaganda of all parties and high profile candidates in Ireland from 1917 to 1920 to ascertain the influence on election outcomes. The use of propaganda throughout elections campaigns allowed political parties or movements to gain or hold on to power, oppose entrenched ideas, or advocate for a cause.³

This research has three key objectives: to examine how parties selected candidates to represent and propagate their policies and ideals; to investigate where finances were sought and obtained to fund expensive propaganda campaigns; and to assess how inspiration was drawn from domestic and international commercial propaganda, from the modernisation of propaganda during the Great War, and from other international events of the era that inspired new propaganda techniques. The methods of propaganda used by all parties and movements to disseminate ideas will be explored, alongside the persuasive and contrary themes that were used to convert voters. The work also considers the identifiable symbols, songs, and rhetoric of parties and the political elite to see if they were of benefit in capturing votes.⁴ These questions form the central structure of the thesis chapters, which will be discussed later. An analysis of the themes, iconography, tactics,

¹ _Irish Times_, 19 December 1918: A piece written by a correspondent titled ‘General Election in our Valley: The Invasion of Politics’.
² Certain candidates were offered the support of the Conservative Party prime minister who sent a letter known as the ‘Coalition Coupon’ to endorse their candidacy. For this reason, the election was sometimes known as the ‘coupon’ election: J.M. McEwen, ‘The Coupon Election of 1918 and Unionist Members of Parliament’, _Journal of Modern History_, 34:3 (1962), pp. 294-306.
and defensive strategies of all parties will determine who persuaded the electorate and who failed to impress. An evaluation of other variables such as absent voters, abstaining voters, and electoral reform (to name a few) will also be considered to gauge their effect on voters and results.

A study of electoral propaganda and rivalry between all the major parties in Ireland from 1917 to 1920 has long remained a missing link. This work intends to provide a much deeper understanding of the traditions and tactics of the main political movements in their attempts to seek votes. Running contemporaneously with war and revolution in this era were the political struggles, and they equalled any of the military upheavals that transformed politics in Ireland. Politicians, propagandists and their voluntary supporters instigated forceful campaigns to promote ideologies that aimed to alter or imbed their established principles in the mind-set of ordinary individuals. The goal was victory at the ballot box during the by-elections, general election and local government elections. An examination of the propaganda campaigns reveals the extant divergent political ideologies in Ireland in this era because they were embedded within the dialogue, debates and conflicts that were presented in word, text, image and theme. The pursuit of obtaining votes and winning favour with the electorate was, and is, essentially a marketing or propaganda function. It involved not only devising clever and creative ideas to promote policies, but also adroit strategies to convince and convert.

Unionists and nationalists had hotly contested for seats in past elections, and in the battle against the establishment of a Dublin parliament under home rule Unionists had launched a myriad of propaganda methods to embed their fundamental and unshakable values. Constitutional nationalists had challenged rivals in past electoral contests and those of the 1890s were often adversarial and marred with violence. Pro- and anti-Parnellites contested in heated by-elections in North Kilkenny in December 1890, North Sligo on 2 April 1891 and Carlow on 8 July that same year. In 1892 and 1895 bitter electoral contests were fought between these two opposing factions.

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5 Full results of the by-elections, 1918 general election and 1920 local government elections are included in the appendices to this work.
7 Anti-Parnellites were the victors in all these by-elections. Aside from support for or against Parnell, the divisions between them were views on the role of the Catholic Church in party politics, and after the Parnellites defeat in this election the more clerical and localist segments came to dominate the party at the
and while both laid claim to home rule there were deep divergences of opinion on party policy particularly in regard to the liberal party alliance. While on a par with 1918 in terms of antagonistic electoral rhetoric, they were not fought on political principles but were fraught with acrimonious and personalised clashes that resemble more the contests of the early 1920s between pro- and anti-treatyites.

In 1910 most Irish Party MPs were returned unopposed but again repeated hostile clashes broke out between Irish Party-United Irish League supporters and those of William O’Brien’s All-For-Ireland-League in Cork during the general elections, and against Timothy Healy in Co. Louth. Weightier contests against Unionists had taken place in Dublin and areas of Ulster, and volatile resistance to home rule had necessitated painstaking Irish Party negotiation and intercession tactics. The Irish Party, therefore, was accustomed to political conflict, but Sinn Féin’s and Labour’s entry into the electoral field in 1918 added diverse dimensions and polarized policies. The schism between adherents to home rule and the patently abstentionist policy of Sinn Féin presented new polemics within nationalism. The 1918 election was unique by any measure as now there was a competitive party system instead of the ‘undemocratic and single-issue character’ of past Irish politics. A new pattern of support emerged from voters that persisted in subsequent elections, making this general election the real foundation of contemporary Irish politics. The victors went on to dominate government across the island for the next fifty years, and it is from this election that we can trace the true beginnings of Dáil Éireann, the Northern Ireland parliament, and the development of the modern political landscape north and south.

Sinn Féin had evolved during 1917 to form into a cohesive party, and their arrival challenged the constitutional narrative of nationalist politics. Unionists were galvanised to defend expenses of the more urban, “liberalist secularist” elements: Tom Garvin, ‘Nationalist Elites, Irish Voters and Irish Political Development: A Comparative Perspective’, Economic and Social Review, 8:3 (1977), p. 166


the union and demonstrate their loyalty to the crown, and they systematically organized to secure electoral majorities in their Ulster strongholds. The upward curve of trade union membership inspired confidence within the Labour Party to contest for political representation. A series of thematic studies will be provided in this work to illuminate and assess the core areas of propaganda activity, methods and themes of all these parties.

1. **Thesis structure**

A chronological approach exposes the developments within parties in terms of structure and evolution. By honing in specifically on how each party executed their propaganda campaigns a multifaceted assessment of the electioneering strategies can be provided. Chapters one and two evaluate the organisational structure that was necessary before an electoral propaganda battle could be launched. Chapters three and four focus on the propaganda activities and themes of the political parties; and finally, chapter five provides an analysis of the election results to determine the success or failure of electoral propaganda campaigns. How voters understood party policies, propaganda and electioneering can be interpreted from the votes cast, and dissatisfaction understood from protest votes and those who abstained.

Chapter One, titled Candidate Selection, begins with an exploration into how the different parties selected candidates to contest elections because the procedure for selecting candidates demonstrates whether parties placed strong emphasis on this key role. Candidates were the personification of party ideals and were essential for promoting party policies. A respected candidate also afforded opportunity for obtaining early positive propaganda opportunities in the form of newspaper editorial which could entice or persuade voters to consider them favourably. Because of the Representation of the People Act women now formed a large portion of the electorate so this section will also investigate if political parties fielded women candidates or if difficulties and conflicts emerged. The existing methods of the established nationalist and Unionist parties in choosing candidates to represent political parties will be assessed to explore if systems remained constant or if they altered with the advent of more intense electoral competition from
Sinn Féin and the political threat of labour movements. The nascent Sinn Féin party developed their system of candidate selection during the 1917 and 1918 by-elections, and the evolution of their process saw a move to centralized control and an emulation of the past techniques of the Irish Party under Parnell. Labour, on the other hand, advocated for a system of decentralization and strong trade union involvement. Another important aspect of the selection process was the supporting clubs, associations and organisations of all political parties because they became crucial for electioneering work, so it is important to ascertain whether membership numbers increased or waned.

No propaganda operation can be orchestrated without funds and Chapter Two, titled Funding, explores how electoral propaganda budgets were raised. This chapter examines the methods employed by the main parties to raise funds in Ireland and abroad (particularly in the United States of America), and calculates and assesses the amounts raised and the expenditures incurred by parties and candidates. The ultimate aim is to determine if the party that raised and subsequently spent the most money had greater success than others. The party tactics to raise finances are examined to elucidate on the variances and disparities between parties across all the elections from 1917 to 1920. The efforts made to raise funds for election campaigns provides insight into the importance a party placed on electioneering and propaganda. This chapter (along with Chapters Three and Four) examines the costs of running local, territorial and island-wide political propaganda campaigns.

Chapter Three, titled Methods of Propaganda, explores how parties propagated and distributed information and asks if specific methods of propaganda were favoured over others. Thematic examples are provided for explanation, but the focus is on the types of media used by all parties. Public speeches by party leaders are assessed to examine personality and delivery because speeches set the tone and themes of party policy and ideology and a charismatic leader was essential for audience persuasion. The government elite (in any party) can be differentiated from other actors in the social order in terms of their authority and believability – necessary for the general acceptance of their pledges – and their accountability for the consequences of their discourse. A premise on which this work relies is that the official discourse of party
members/leaders and electoral candidates is an integral element of political relations that enables the ‘constant renewal of hegemonic domination’.\textsuperscript{11}

This chapter will also explore contemporary consumer propaganda practices and assess how parties engaged with an external expert, and if international propaganda trends and professional advertising affected electoral propaganda decisions. Exploring the methods of propaganda allows for insight into the professionalism (or its lack of) in party leadership. To grasp how political ideologies moved from the private into the public domain an examination of the methods demonstrates the channels of communication used to target the electorate.

There was a wealth of newspapers in Ireland – regional, national and special interest group newspapers – and all disseminated political and election news. The manner in which newspapers were used to promote party policies will be explored, such as the paid-for advertisement and reports on political speeches. The influence of the press on the electorate and the media intelligence of parties will be examined. Circulation figures will be analysed, as will the cost of placing advertisements in regional and national newspapers. The influence of censorship on propaganda will be referred to throughout the work, particularly given that the by-elections were held during the Great War and election propaganda was subject to the Defence of the Realm Act, 1914 (DORA).\textsuperscript{12} Political posters, handbills, badges, hoardings and banners, symbols and ballads will feature in this section as will unpaid-for methods of propaganda, such as editorial and the door-to-door canvass. The canvass was an essential component of electioneering and provided the personal arm of the propaganda function. An analysis of the role of Volunteers in canvassing will be conducted to demonstrate the local support available to political parties and movements.

The party themes of political ‘marketing’, or ‘propaganda’ as it was then termed, will be investigated in Chapter Four, titled Propaganda: Themes and Content, to query if creating a concept and strategy to appeal to voters formed an integral function of political parties. Did parties actively promote policies and manifestos, were they manipulative, did they interpret voter interests, and was


\textsuperscript{12} This was replaced by the Restoration of Order in Ireland Act on 13 August 1920, but this later act did not affect the elections from 1917-1920.
there a consistent and coherent theme? The political scientist Dan Nimmo noted that ‘election campaigns are fought not “on the issues”, but on the themes’, the purpose of which is to ‘simplify complex public issues into brief, clear recognisable statements to the advantage of the candidate’. 13

The different interpretations of history, the effect of conscription, the influence of external and internal conflicts such as the Great War, Russian Revolutions and Easter Rising on propaganda, and the high ideologies of home rule, union and republic will be explored to gauge their influence. Awareness of new techniques and themes was gained not only from commercial propaganda but also that used in conflicts and this section investigates if this knowledge was applied to electoral propaganda. The use of the female in commercial, war and subsequently in electoral propaganda is used to provide an actual example. This chapter will also question party intentions to satisfy voters on the everyday issues of, for instance, housing and taxation, and examines how the solutions that were offered complemented the higher ideals of home rule, republic or union.

The content of political propaganda reflects the imaginative propaganda techniques used and our conception of an electorate’s interpretation of candidates and party manipulation strategies. For instance, the Labour Party in Ireland embraced Marxist-style theories to create an alternative programme embodying James Connolly’s belief that Ireland should be ‘the sole mistress of her own destiny, supreme owner of all material things within and upon her soil …’.14 The end of the Great War on 11 November 1918 escalated nationalist sentiment based on the principle of self-determination and an anticipation of its settlement in Versailles in 1919. This led to the regeneration of a more militant-style of nationalism which espoused complete separation from Britain. Chapters three and four will crucially ask if a hypothesis emerges that proves that the party with the greater array of propaganda achieved higher impact. Did parties who placed propaganda to the fore of campaigning encourage persuasion and alter voter opinion to attain a favourable electoral outcome?

Chapter Five, titled The Results, evaluates the results of all the by-elections, general elections and 1920 local government elections individually, and appendices to the work provide the full results. The principle contests across the entire island are examined, and subsequently broken down into the contests in Ulster and the three southern provinces because of the threat of partition. Cornelius O’Leary remarked in his work *Irish Elections, 1918-1977* that ‘the landslide [of Sinn Féin] was not quite so impressive as it appeared on the surface…’. Voter turnout, women’s votes, and absent votes are analysed to ascertain if the Sinn Féin victory was a landslide, if the Irish Party was annihilated (and why), if Unionists held onto their constituencies, particularly in Ulster, and if Labour offered an alternative that was taken up by the electorate in 1920. When voters at the very local and parochial level came to the polls in 1920 did the victors of 1918 triumph again?

Finally, a systematic evaluation of the chapters in the conclusion resolves if propaganda constructively or adversely affected voter behaviour from 1917 to 2020. The thesis argues that propaganda played a significant role in altering voter behaviour. Existing parties faced new challenges to retain voter preference and new parties had to be recognised and understood. The work considers: how the Unionists and the Irish Party promoted their aims and why the latter lost public backing after 1917; how Sinn Féin’s propaganda portrayed its separatist ideals when seeking political recognition; and how the Labour Party competed in this volatile environment.

The 1918 general election was perceived by many as a plebiscite to decide on a favoured form of self-governance for the imminent arrival of independence – Labour proffered this as the main reason for abstaining from the contest. Unionists, nationalists, separatists and Labour (until their withdrawal from the 1918 electoral contest) competed for votes in eighty constituencies to win electoral favour. The local government elections two years later saw political interests, which now included Labour, battle to secure constituencies at the local level. This unique examination into the propaganda campaigns of all political parties in Ireland demonstrates the conflicting

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opinions and ideologies that existed during the years 1917 to 1920 and contributes to and advances on the scholarship on Ireland during the revolutionary period 1912 to 1923.

The work ends after the local government elections of 1920 because these were the last all-island elections before partition. Therefore, the propaganda of these elections provide insight into political attitudes across the four provinces at the local level before the island was divided. Examining the local elections allows for an assessment as to whether the 1918 electoral results remained steady and they inform if results at the local level repeated those of the general election. While the change in the system of voting from First-Past-the-Post to proportional representation makes comparisons difficult, it allows for an investigation into whether minority interests now gained representation.

The rise of Sinn Féin, the foundation of the Free State, and Ireland’s party system are areas of political study that have already attracted much interest among researchers. Historiography of the era has primarily focused on either the nationalist or unionist or labour narrative, but that provides us with only a single dimension. In order to gauge the diverging discourse in Ireland it is essential to analyse the political rivalry of all parties in an all-island context. Voting patterns have also been analysed but without exhaustive discussion on the factors influencing voters. Nationalist pro- and anti-war propaganda during 1914 to 1918, and Irish Free State propaganda


have recently been examined. Military insurgency and counter-insurgency, the violence, terror and actions of rebel and Crown Forces during Ireland’s revolutionary struggles have received extensive coverage and publication, but the equally transformative political upheavals in this period remain neglected. This is the void that this work aims to fill.

2. Sources and Scholarship

To comprehend the propaganda of the past an enormous array of sources and opinion were vital. The primary sources essential to this study existed in a number of archives and repositories and many were within special or private collections. Material on Sinn Féin was easier to come by but sourcing Irish Party and Unionist propaganda required intuitive detective work because they were rarely labelled ‘propaganda’. A comprehensive bibliography is provided with this work, but certain primary sources were indispensable and require special mention. The papers of John Dillon in the Trinity College Dublin Manuscripts and Archives Research Library were crucial to obtaining an understanding of Irish Party motives and plans (or the lack of) particularly for the 1918 general election. The Redmond Papers in the National Library of Ireland proved informative for United Irish League meetings and the early by-elections.

To glean insight into the agenda and strategies of Sinn Féin the papers of Éamon de Valera and Richard Mulcahy in University College Dublin Archives proved hugely beneficial and for detailed reports on the Department of Propaganda Desmond FitzGerald’s papers were vital. Another valuable source for understanding the activities of the movements that reinforced Sinn Féin’s electoral campaigns, such as the Irish Volunteers or Cumann na mBan, was the vast collection of witness statements in the Bureau of Military History that contain over seventeen hundred first-person accounts that describe the military and electoral deeds of these supporters. It


is important to note, as Fearghal McGarry points out, that these statements were made long after the revolutionary actions and individually they are inconclusive, contradictory and fragmentary. Collectively, however, they provide powerful insight into the separatist nationalist perspective to give a ‘valuable, if necessarily subjective, guide to mentalities’.  

Unionist viewpoints and propaganda ephemera was available in the Ulster Unionist Council (UUC) papers and Edward Carson’s papers held in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. The former proved excellent for the minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee of the Unionist Clubs Council and for UUC accounts which revealed to some degree the funds raised and expenses incurred for Unionist propaganda campaigns. Carson’s correspondence with Richard Dawson Bates, secretary of the Ulster Unionist Council, disclosed his thoughts and dealings with Unionist associations and the Ulster Unionists Women’s Council. There was also political ephemera relating to Sinn Féin in this archive and in the Ulster Museum, Belfast.  

The main sources used to ascertain Labour’s electoral positions were the papers of Thomas Johnson in the National Library of Ireland and the reports of the Annual Meetings of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress. The former contained the circulars of the National Executive which provided explanations for Labour’s electoral stance in 1918 and 1920. The very detailed annual reports gave the reasons behind some of Labour’s electoral decisions and plans, alongside containing a host of information on strikes (ongoing or imminent), finances, and trade unionism.  

National and provincial contemporary newspapers and special interest publications were a crucial source for this study to evaluate opinions. All newspapers in this era were notoriously biased and partial to a particularly movement and party. Nonetheless, diligent searching yielded journalistic perspectives on elections, candidates and parties. The speeches of the main party leaders and local candidates were regularly reprinted in full, as were the minutes of local council meetings. Paid-for advertisements were an obvious method of propaganda readily visible in newspapers, and the letters to the editor section provided viewpoints from ordinary voters.

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Collections in the National Library of Ireland, particularly the William O’Brien papers, the personal papers of politicians, and the ephemera collections proved vital for other methods of propaganda such as posters, pamphlets, handbills, ballads and symbols. Sales at auction also yielded valuable ephemera items – some of which have been depicted in this work.

Some key secondary sources are worth mentioning, but they are by no means the only valuable books available on parties, political systems or political leaders, and others are referenced in footnotes throughout this work. Constantly referred to and an indispensable work for the 1918 general election was Brian Walker’s *Parliamentary Election Results* which calculated electorate size and total votes in contested constituencies, with candidates’ names and their party affiliation provided also.²¹ There is value in autobiographies or taking one political viewpoint to give a thorough account of how a specific individual or political movement rose to victory or fell from power and this exists in the current historiography of the era under study.²² Michael Laffan’s *The Resurrection of Ireland, The Sinn Féin Party* is a significant work in the field and provides unique research and analysis on election propaganda from the Sinn Féin perspective, party organisational structure and key political players. Without rejecting Laffan’s findings, this thesis aims to build a more inclusive picture by incorporating the propaganda battles of those who were determined to defeat Sinn Féin.

The suspension of home rule for the duration of a prolonged Great War and the failure to reach a settlement in 1917 have been pointed to by many scholars as the causes for the radicalisation of Irish society and the Irish Party’s ultimate failure.²³ According to Hart it was the

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²³ For instance, Laffan points out that when the Irish Convention talks broke down that nationalists complained bitterly that they had been deceived by the British government and disappointment at their failure was heightened by the impression that, once more, they had been outmanoeuvred by the Unionists, *The Resurrection*, p.252. Finnan states that ‘the failure of the Lloyd George negotiations weakened the Irish Party politically’, p. 210. Kissane, in *Explaining Irish Democracy*, p. 22 and p. 223, argues that ‘the Home
maladroit handing of the Rising, of home rule and of conscription that ‘destroyed the moderate Irish Party’. Works by Paul Bew, F.S.L. Lyons and Joseph Finnan, to name a few, have delved into the politics of constitutional nationalism to assess the political performance of John Redmond. A more recent work by James McConnel provides an intricate analysis of the Irish Party and the third home rule crisis to reveal their adroit negotiating tactics and politicking in Westminster and battles against their domestic critics. This work draws on these sources and intends an examination of Dillon’s leadership during the elections to investigate if he was also partly responsible for the decline of the Irish Party.

A number of interesting studies on unionism provided context for this work. A.T.Q. Stewart’s The Ulster Crisis remains a significant force in the field and Patrick Buckland’s Ulster Unionism, and the Origins of Northern Ireland provides a detailed documentary history of Unionism and the politics of Ulster Unionism. Alan F. Parkinson’s unique research on Unionist propaganda in Friends in High Places explores the propaganda techniques that were implemented from 1912 to 1914 to defeat home rule. As the title suggests the supporters of Unionism comprised the affluent in influential social circles that regularly funded the often ingenious resistance movements and mass meetings in Ulster, and the propaganda campaigns to persuade the public of Great Britain. Parkinson’s work ends where the Great War begins, when home rule was relegated to the backburner for the duration of the war, relieving Unionists of further defiance. This thesis begins with the by-elections in 1917 and continues into 1918 when the general election rekindled hostilities and prompted another Unionist propaganda war against nationalists of all hues. Other valuable works on unionism included Alvin Jackson’s ‘Unionism, and the future of the union’, in Ireland and the new century, Politics and Culture, Graham Walker’s A History of the Ulster

Rule crisis of 1911 and then the First World War greatly radicalised political life, which undermined the hegemony of Ireland’s rather conservative parliamentary elites’ (p. 22).

26 Stewart, The Ulster Crisis; Buckland, Ulster Unionism.
Unionist Party and John F. Harbinson’s analysis of the structures and composition of the Ulster Unionist Party.²⁷

County studies elaborate on the military and political happenings at the local level and David Fitzpatrick’s comprehensive research in Politics and Irish Life hones in on the minutiae of military and political happenings in Co. Clare. His meticulous research uncovers the distribution of radical, partisan and cultural organisations in the villages and parishes to demonstrate that ‘politics was an integral part of social life’.²⁸ Marie Coleman’s methodical research of Co. Longford was another valuable local study because of her thorough examination of nationalist political developments, particularly the investigation into Sinn Féin’s 1917 by-election victory in this county.²⁹

Political scientists have also contributed enormously to the field of study on the foundation of statehood, electoral systems, parties and voters. Mention must be given to John Coakley and Michael Gallagher’s Politics in the Republic of Ireland, Cornelius O’Leary’s Irish Elections, 1918-1977, Basil Chubb’s The Government and Politics of Ireland, Bill Kissane’s Explaining Irish Democracy and James D. O’Donnell’s How Ireland is Governed.³⁰ All identify the influences of Ireland’s geographic location, religious divides, various forms of nationalism, the British influence, and the 1922 Free State constitution. Other political scientists such as Mair and Moss have investigated Irish electoral politics in comparative perspectives, and voting patterns have been explored by Carty, O’Leary, and Gallagher but mainly for elections in the 1920s.³¹

The study of the micro-political of local government elections and its effect on the national political process was crucial for this work because local politics has and continues to play a key

²⁹ Marie Coleman, County Longford and the Irish Revolution 1910-1923 (Kildare, 2003).
³⁰ See footnote 17.
role in Ireland in policy decisions and party formation. To gain insight into the history and essence of government at the local level, and to provide context, structure and an understanding of the function of local councils this work relied on studies by Mary E. Daly (ed), *County and town: 100 years of local government in Ireland*, Virginia Crossman, *Local Government in nineteenth-century Ireland*, Desmond Roche, *Local Government in Ireland*, and the selection of essays in Mark Callanan and Justin F. Keogan’s *Local Government in Ireland, Inside Out*.32

Keiko Inoue, Ian Kenneally, and Maurice Walsh have also picked up the story of journalism and the media in Ireland’s revolutionary years to trace how the confusing events of the era were defined and interpreted in print. Hugh Oram’s account of newspapers in Ireland and Niall Ó Ciosáin’s interdisciplinary approach in *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, provided essential background for analysing the content and outlook of contemporary newspapers.33 Many more historical scholars such as Tom Garvin, Charles Townshend, Anne Dolan, Brian Walker, Ronan Fanning, and Diarmaid Ferriter produced studies that were invaluable to the research for this work.34

Research into propaganda for political elections has been neglected from 1917 to 1920, but a study of the anti-war propaganda of separatist nationalism was carried out by Ben Novick in *Conceiving Revolutions, Irish Nationalist Propaganda during the First World War*. His thematic study examines how Sinn Féin used the war to both undermine the recruitment drive of constitutional nationalists and oppose British rule in Ireland. His assessment of atrocity propaganda and the views of those who were ‘disgusted by the rank slaughter of the battlefields’

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provides valuable insights into the mind-set of nationalists hostile to the Great War. 35 Kevin Hora’s recent and fascinatingly detailed work titled Propaganda and Nation building, Selling the Irish Free State explores the history of propaganda in the Free State to assess how public relations and propaganda were used to construct an identity for this state. It examines the functions and policies of the Department of Finance and the Department of Foreign Affairs (among others) to determine how a Gaelic and Catholic national identity was built and propagated domestically and internationally. 36 One intention of this work is to fill the temporal gap between Novick and Hora by assessing the electoral propaganda war in Ireland instigated by the post-war elections. However, there is still need for further research into electioneering and propaganda for the 1921, 1922 and 1923 elections. This will add to our understanding of how the ordinary voter was persuaded and influenced by political parties and elites that aimed to construct the Free State and Northern Ireland parliaments.

Political communication and political propaganda forms part of an overall marketing and advertising skill, and contemporary and modern works that analysed visual and verbal persuasion, propaganda principles and practices, discourse theory and rhetorical analysis were central. One contemporary example is the work simply titled Propaganda by Edward L. Bernays, an Australian-American pioneer in the field of public relations and propaganda. This was an early effort to define and theorize how skilled practitioners could use crowd psychology and psychoanalysis to control people in desirable ways. 37 Another in Ireland was an article by the National Council of Sinn Féin titled ‘The Advertising Problem’ which offered consumer advice on existing propaganda methods. 38 Modern works such as Political Marketing: Concepts and Theories edited by Paul R. Baines proved useful for definitions and concepts on the marketing of political ideas and opinions; alongside Guy Cook’s The Discourse of Advertising which explores the language of modern advertising to point out that the words of advertisements are not viewed in isolation, but in complex

35 Novick, Conceiving Revolution (p. 55 for quote).
36 Kevin Hora’s TCD PhD thesis titled ‘Official Propaganda in the Irish Free State’ was used in this work as the published book was only released at the time of thesis submission. The book is titled Propaganda and Nation Building, Selling the Irish Free State (see footnote 18).
interaction with image and other texts and the people who experience them. Some examples of propaganda scholarship will be covered in the next section, and further works are mentioned in the text or footnotes.

Political propaganda had to perform a multiplicity of functions such as informing the electorate on party policies and principles, persuading new voters, and reinforcing party dedication and identity among existing supporters. Propaganda aimed to urge the electorate to exercise their franchise and ensure that the party directly appealing for their vote succeeded. The extension of the franchise in the 1918 Representation of the People Act created a vastly increased electorate (see below). This thesis asks if the expanded electorate necessitated loftier propaganda campaigns to inspire and motivate heretofore electorally dormant voices. As mentioned, political rivalries and propaganda campaigns directly affected many more lives than the military campaigns because people were called on to actively participate by casting a vote. In chapters three and four, this work will investigate if, and how, specific sections of this new electorate were deliberately targeted by political parties.

3. Electoral Reforms

The 1918 general election was the apogee of a series of parliamentary reforms dating back to the Reform Bill of 1832 that culminated with the Representation of the People Act of 1918. Another novel characteristic of this election was that it was the first occasion on which a general election was carried out on one day throughout the whole of the three kingdoms, and there was a new arrangement for a number of constituencies. Each of these points will be dealt with individually, followed by an examination of the introduction of the proportional representation voting system in Ireland which was first used in 1919.

The Parliamentary Franchise in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland had undergone three reforms acts: Reform Acts 1832 and 1867 and the Representation of the People Act (or Third Reform Act) 1884. The Redistribution Act of 1885 further extended the suffrage by granting the same voting qualifications that existed in the towns to the countryside. All men paying an annual rent of £10 or holding land valued at £10 now had the vote. This was the Act that was in effect for the 1917-18 by-elections in Ireland and the electoral register was that of the Third Reform Act. In the closing years of the nineteenth century those excluded from politics became eligible to stand for elections and to vote. Propertied women were entitled to be elected as Poor Law Guardians in 1896 and in 1898 the Local Government (Ireland) Act provided a major step towards voting reform. This granted men over the age of twenty-one and women over the age of thirty the right to vote in local elections. Women could also stand for election to urban and rural district councils, but were disqualified from serving on borough and county councils until 1911.

The 1884 and 1898 reform acts gave voting rights to the majority of adult males, substantially increasing the electorate. An example of the impact of the 1898 change is the borough of Limerick city where the electorate increased by 768 per cent from 709 to 5,521 voters. The 1918 extension was much greater. In 1884 the electorate had increased from eight to thirty-one per cent of the population aged twenty and over, and by 1918 it went from twenty-six to seventy-five per cent.

41 Women over thirty years could vote if they were householders or lodgers occupying a portion of a house.
42 In 1898 there were 17 women poor law guardians; in 1899, 85 women were elected as Poor Law Guardians, and by 1900 there were nearly 100. Thirty-one women served as Rural District Councillors and four as Urban District Councillors; see Esther Breitenbach and Pat Thane (eds), Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century, What Difference Did the Vote Make? (London and NY, 2010), p. 80; Mary Cullen, “Women, emancipation, and politics, 1860-1984” in A New History of Ireland, vii, 1921-84, ed. By J.R. Hill (Oxford, 2003), p. 844. Crossman in Local Government in nineteenth-century Ireland has provided a valuable guide to the mechanics, expansion and democratisation of Irish local government. Further study on the reaction to these reforms by women and suffrage movements, particularly in 1898, would add value to the study of women’s history.
43 National Archives of Ireland (NAI), L/FR/FE/2/1-13: Limerick City Electoral Registers post 1898 Local Government Act (1912).
The Fourth Reform Act or Representation of the People Act passed through the House of Commons on 19 June 1917 with an overwhelming majority of 385 for to 55 against. This Act increased the electorate substantially by granting the vote to all men over the age of twenty-one and removing practically all their property requirements. Servicemen who had turned nineteen during service in the Great War could also vote. Voting in general elections was also extended to women over the age of thirty years, but there were still some property restrictions. The age and limited property qualifications for women ensured that they did not become the majority because of the male death toll in the Great War. The effect of these changes was to triple the electorate in Ireland from 700,000 to nearly two million. There were limitations to the 1918 Act because it did not create a complete system of one person, one vote as some had an extra vote or plural vote in their university constituency and home constituency. Even though all adult women did not have the vote, 1918 nonetheless was a defining moment for democracy based on near universal suffrage in Ireland (and Britain). As will be seen in chapters three and four, some political parties now aimed specific propaganda messages directly at women.

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45 House of Commons (HC), Parliamentary Debates (PD), Vol. 94, c. 1751: Division on Representation of the People Act, 19 June 1917. The bill passed through to the House of Lords in December 1917 and passed on 10 January 1918 by 134 votes for to 71 against: House of Lords Debates, Vol. 27, c. 527, 10 January 1918. The Bill received the Royal Assent on 6 February 1918.

46 There was some confusion as to whether they could vote if they had been discharged from service. The 1920 Act would clarify this in the affirmative. Conscientious objectors who had not done war work were debarred from the franchise for five years. See also Eric J. Evans, Parliamentary Reform in Britain, c. 1770-1918 (London & NY, 2013), p. 135.

47 UK Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/PU/1/1918/7&8G5c64: Representation of the People Act 1918. According to the Act: A woman shall be entitled to be registered as a parliamentary elector for a constituency (other than a university constituency) if she … is entitled to be registered as a local government elector in respect of the occupation in that constituency of land or premises (not being a dwelling-house) of a yearly value of not less than five pounds or of a dwelling-house, or is the wife of a husband entitled to be so registered. See also Evans, p. 135.

48 Universal suffrage was granted in Ireland in 1923 when the vote was extended to all women over twenty-one and remaining property qualifications were removed. In the UK the Equal Franchise Act 1928 enfranchised women on the same terms as men: Evans, p. 135.

49 UK Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/PU/1/1918/7&8G5c64: Representation of the People Act 1918.

50 S.M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, ‘Cleavage structures, party systems and voter alignments: an introduction’, in Lipset and Rokkan, Party Systems and Voter Alignments, (New York, 1967), pp. 1-64: in their comparative study of the development of party systems and voter alignments they state that analysis of party systems should begin at the point of political mobilisation, usually the point at which the right to vote was extended to the mass of the population.
The First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) or Single Member Plurality (SMP) voting system was used for all the by-elections of 1917-18 in Ireland and for the 1918 general election. FPTP voting requires electors to place a cross in the box next to their favoured candidate’s name. The candidate with the most votes in the constituency wins.\textsuperscript{52} The advantage of this system is that it is easy to understand, it does not cost much to administer, counting of votes is quick, and a winner declared easily. However, the votes cast for candidates not elected did not count, and MPs could be elected on small proportions of the vote if they simply won the most votes in a fragmented field.\textsuperscript{53} The end result tends to favour large party control with smaller parties finding it harder to win seats.

Provision had been made in the 1914 Government of Ireland (home rule) Act for the election of a number of Irish MPs to Westminster under the system of Proportional Representation-Single Transferable Vote (PR-STV) to safeguard Unionist interests in the three southern provinces and nationalist interests in Ulster. The Act, however, was never implemented. PR-STV was, in fact, tried out for the first time in the Sligo borough election of January 1919. The reason for the by-election was the poor financial condition of Sligo Corporation and to address this the ratepayers formed the Sligo Ratepayers Association (SRA). The well-known local Protestant and Unionist businessman, Arthur Jackson, was elected chairman. A bill was drafted and submitted to the House of Commons to increase the powers of the corporation and introduce the new PR-STV system of election whereby candidates that reached the quota (the number of votes necessary) became

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\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Year & 1884 & 1885 & 1892 & 1895 & 1900 & 1906 & 1910 & 1918 \\
\hline
Value & 225,999 & 737,965 & 740,536 & 732,046 & 757,849 & 686,661 & 683,767 & 1,926,274 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Growth in Irish Electorate 1884-1918\textsuperscript{51}}
\end{table}


\textsuperscript{52} If more than one candidate can be elected, the top two candidates with the most votes get elected. This was the case for Cork city and Dublin University in 1918.

Thomas Scanlon, MP for North Sligo, introduced the bill and the Sligo Corporation Act received the Royal Assent on 30 July 1918.

The SRA received 823 first preference votes in the election gaining eight seats for the party (five Protestants and three Catholics). The remaining seats went to Sinn Féin (7), Labour (5) and independents (4). The *Irish Independent* reported that the system proved ‘quite successful, worked smoothly, and resulted in the election of a municipal council fairly representative of all parties and sections of the people’. The use of proportional representation in Sligo was a pioneering experiment for democracy in Ireland. In an interview with the *Freeman’s Journal* the General Secretary of the Proportional Representation Society remarked that ‘the success of the system in the Sligo election must ultimately lead to the general adoption in Local Government elections’.

The first electoral island-wide use of the new PR-STV system was the local government elections in January and June 1920. The advantages and disadvantages are evident in chapter five which demonstrates the variety of minority and independents elected in 1920, and the tendency for parties with a high number of candidates to win a high number of seats. PR-STV was subsequently written into the 1937 constitution, and it is still in use throughout the Republic of Ireland. Arthur Griffith had advocated for STV in Ireland having become a convert after attending a Dublin meeting organised by the Proportional Representation Society. He was, no doubt, attracted to the process because it marked a clear departure from British practice, but it also allowed for minority interests to be represented.

The 1919 Act made the system of proportional representation universal. At the poll voters now had to place the number ‘1’ in the square opposite the name of their preferred candidate, then ‘2’, ‘3’ and so on in order of preference. If the elector’s first choice obtained more votes than were

\[54\] See footnote 59 on the quota.


\[56\] *Irish Independent*, 6 January 1920. The number who voted in Sligo was 2,251 with only 24 spoiled votes attributable to the new system: *Freeman’s Journal*, 18 January, 1919.

\[57\] *Freeman’s Journal*, 18 January 1919: interview with J.H. Humphreys, General Secretary, Proportional Representation Society.

needed to be elected (the quota) the surplus votes were transferred in proportion to the next choices marked.\textsuperscript{59} The process continued until all surplus votes were transferred.

The \textit{Cork Examiner} in 1920 proclaimed that PR-STV ‘opened up a new era’ in electioneering, relegating any party running a complete ticket to ‘a thing of the past’.\textsuperscript{60} The introduction of proportional representation eliminated the sharp line of demarcation which formerly existed in the first-past-the-post system and it blunted the personal element of voting on the basis of past services. In Cork city constitutional nationalists, Labour, independents, ex-soldiers and the Sinn Féin-Labour coalition all gained representation on the municipal council in 1920. The introduction of proportional representation altered how parties promoted candidates and instigated a series of ‘model’ elections run by the Proportional Representation Society of Ireland to demonstrate the new voting methods.\textsuperscript{61} Courses for instruction were provided for those involved in counting the ballots also. The \textit{Irish Times} remarked that this avoided surprise or dismay ‘by the rows of ballot boxes which confronted them in the schoolrooms when they took their place … ’.\textsuperscript{62} According to the \textit{Cork Examiner}, since 1 October 1919 the PR Society received funds to educate the electorate from a number of sources amounting to the sum of £2,000.\textsuperscript{63}

There were very few spoiled votes in either the urban or rural elections. Examples were Dublin city where there were 32,930 valid votes, and the spoiled votes numbered only 654 (1.99%).\textsuperscript{64} In Londonderry the total poll was 3,885 of which only forty-one votes were spoiled, and

\textsuperscript{59} The quota is the number of votes necessary to secure the election of a candidate. It is calculated by dividing the total number of valid ballot papers (excluding spoiled votes) by one more than the number of seats to be filled, and adding one to the result to disregard any fraction that may arise. A candidate who attains the quota is immediately elected. If no candidate attains the quota then the candidate(s) with the lowest number of votes are eliminated and the votes transferred. Votes are transferred when a candidate receives more than the quota on any count. The surplus ballot papers are transferred to the remaining candidates in proportion to the next available preferences indicated by voters.

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Cork Examiner}, 17 January 1920.

\textsuperscript{61} According to the \textit{Fermanagh Herald} on 24 January 1920: ‘If it were not for the “P.R.” Society and Sinn Féin the electors would have gone to the polls in complete ignorance of the new system’. Advertisements were placed in all the main national and provincial newspapers to advise on the new system. An advertisement in the \textit{Cork Examiner}, 7 January 1920, for example, advised voters on the availability of free pamphlets to explain the new voting system.

\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Irish Times}, 17 January 1920.

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Cork Examiner}, 30 January 1920.

\textsuperscript{64} \textit{Irish Times}, 17 January 1920.
in Tipperary out of a total poll of 1,498 there were only forty-six spoiled votes. Votes were spoiled by placing the word ‘no’ against rejected candidates or by putting the number ‘1’ opposite all favoured candidates, or by spelling out the numbers rather than assigning a number. Voters in some instances placed crosses against candidates and others invalidated their vote by signing their name. Overall, though, the model elections and other methods of propaganda to promote the proportional representation system ensured that most voters were clear on the PR-STV system in 1920. Sinn Féin was particularly active in ensuring their voters were educated and advised that The L.G.B. (Ireland) Order 220 M.1919 was the best guide and could be purchased at Messrs E. Ponsonby Ltd on Grafton Street, Dublin at a price of seven pence ha’penny.

The origins of local government in Ireland dates back to the thirteenth century with the establishment of the county as an administrative unit. Local government in 1920 was largely a product of nineteenth-century statutes of the British parliament. Local government reform was instigated with the passing of the 1898 Local Government (Ireland) Act and the Local Government (Ireland) Act 1919, and both directly affected the 1920 elections. The primary purpose of the former was to put county government on a representative basis so, for instance, the business of grand juries transferred to elected councils. Elections were increased to be held triennially (although the 1917 local elections were cancelled because of the Great War). Administrative counties with county councils were created, and six of the larger cities – Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford and Belfast – were made county boroughs where corporations carried out similar functions to county councils alongside the functions of a borough corporation. In Tipperary two administrative counties were formed, but elsewhere each county was one administrative area. The counties of Ireland were already defined and while their borders were largely a result of accident, they were accepted as local government boundaries without question.

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67 University College Dublin Archives (UCDA), Michael Hayes Papers, P53/248: Affiliation Fee and County Council Elections letter from Padraig O’Caoimh.
and without reference to differences in size, wealth and population.\textsuperscript{69} The administrative county was divided into county districts – rural and urban (although in some only rural districts existed).\textsuperscript{70}

The final novel feature of elections in this era was the regrouping of former wards into electoral areas under the 1885 Redistribution Act and the 1918 Redistribution of Seats (Ireland) Act. Both Acts introduced the concept of equally populated constituencies to align representation across Great Britain and Ireland, and in 1918 the number of seats was increased from 103 to 105 (with the enfranchisement of two additional universities).\textsuperscript{71} Thirty-two electoral districts were altered in Ireland either by an increase in the number of divisions or in the number of MPs to be elected. Dublin provides a good example.\textsuperscript{72}

\textbf{Table 0.2: Dublin Electoral Districts pre and post 1918}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before 1918</th>
<th>County Change</th>
<th>After 1918</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Dublin, North Division (1 MP)</td>
<td>Divided into four single-member divisions</td>
<td>North Dublin Division (1 MP) Pembroke Division (1 MP) Rathmines Division (1 MP) South Dublin (1 MP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Dublin, South Division (1 MP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Green Division (1 MP) Harbour Division (1 MP) St. Patrick’s Division (1 MP) St. Stephen’s Green Division (1 MP)</td>
<td>Representation increased to seven single-member Divisions</td>
<td>College Green Division (1 MP) Harbour Division (1 MP) St Patrick’s Division (1 MP) St Stephen’s Green Division (1 MP) Clontarf Division (1 MP) St. James’s Division (1 MP) St Michan’s Division (1 MP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{69} Chubb, \textit{Government and Politics}, p. 271.
\textsuperscript{70} Rural District Councils took over the responsibilities for housing and rural sanitary functions from the boards of guardians. They also took over roads and public works from the grand juries. Their main area of responsibility was the provision of housing and the acquisition of land for agricultural labourers’ dwellings. County Councils provided housing, roads, bridges, water supply and sanitary services, also inherited from grand juries and boards of guardians.
\textsuperscript{71} There continued to be two two-member constituencies, so the number of constituencies increased from 101 to 103.
\textsuperscript{72} HC, PD, vol. 295, cc. 679-751, 10 March 1885; and Robert Henry Mair (ed), \textit{Debrett’s House of Commons and the Judicial Bench} (London, 1886), pp. 165-244.
The total membership of Dublin Corporation remained at eighty, but the new grouping altered the representation of the county and borough electoral areas which increased from six to eleven divisions.\footnote{In Ireland the urban and rural district councils emerged as a second tier of local government under new county councils and remained until the restructuring in the 1920s, when rural district councils were dissolved by the Local Government Act 1925. Urban district councils operated until the enactment of the Local Government Act 2001 when town councils were created. After independence, centralisation and consolidation took hold, and the powers of central government over local councils were vastly increased and the creation of new town councils virtually ceased.}

Among those politically active at local level were a number of more affluent farmers, small businessmen (shopkeepers), professional (solicitors), publicans and family business people. The working-class in Ireland was largely under-represented across the four provinces. Economic liberty allowed the Catholic middle-class the resources and disposable time to pursue political aspirations.\footnote{Tony Fitzpatrick, ‘social policy and time’, \textit{Time and Society}, 13:2/3 (2014), pp. 197-219, p.214; Valerie Bryson, \textit{Gender and the Politics of Time: Feminist Theory and Contemporary Debates} (Bristol, 2007), pp. 36-40. Grand Juries represented one of the earlier forms of local government and were initially charged with the administration of justice. 23-member juries were composed mainly of landowners, who were appointed by the sheriff, and met twice yearly at the spring and summer assizes. Their functions included the provision of roads, bridges and public buildings and the maintenance of court houses, dispensaries, fever hospitals, county infirmaries and county gaols.} Shopkeepers and publicans also interacted daily with voters and were in a good public position to influence policy and to disseminate information. Local government had (and continues to have) the power to make rates, borrow money, make, amend or revoke by-laws, elect a person to any other local body, supervise elections, and bestow the freedom of the city on worthy persons. The study of the 1920 local elections and their results, therefore, is crucial in understanding how voters at the very local level perceived and reacted to their political environment.

The 1918 general election was deeply influenced in Ireland by the sequence of by-elections in 1917 and 1918, during which all parties developed their themes and techniques which culminated in the general election campaign. The outcome triggered political transformation in the creation of a separatist counter-state administered by Dáil Éireann in 1919. In the 1920 local elections Sinn Féin and Labour won the majority of seats in the local urban and rural councils outside the Unionist north-east and many of these councils pledged allegiance to Dáil Éireann.\footnote{Arthur Mitchell, ‘Alternative Government: “Exit Britannia” – the Formation of the Irish National State, 1918-21’ in Augusteijn, \textit{The Irish Revolution}, p. 76.}
By July 1920 the *Irish Times* reported that ‘an Irish Republic is very nearly in being. To-day the Republican organisation controls three-quarters of the local bodies in Ireland …’, adding that the ‘Sinn Féin flag flies already over the whole province of Munster, and soon will fly over the whole of Leinster and Connaught and over a large part of Ulster’. Propaganda altered the nature of elections and accelerated the development of opposition parties as agents of change. This work intends to address how organized propaganda was propagated by all parties in Ireland to win favour with the voting public. The main objective of propaganda was to affect the election results in a party’s favour, with the fruits being electoral victory. To comprehend the relevance of ‘propaganda’ and its influencing potential we first need a working definition of the word as it is rarely used in modern vocabulary, but it was the defining and accepted word in the era under study.

4. Propaganda

Propaganda has been around since the ancient world engaged in exercises to garner support for wars or to sway religious persuasion. Methods of encouragement or shaping inspiration took form by building impressive public monuments and great temples, creating art, literature and coinage, and deifying leaders. The word ‘propaganda’ is a literal translation from the Latin gerundive as ‘things that must be disseminated’. It was this understanding of the word that led Pope Gregory XV to apply the title *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (the Sacred Congregation for Propagating the Faith) in 1622 to a document, announced in the Bull *Inscrutabili*, to define the Vatican’s intention to recapture Christians in all those parts of the world where Protestantism had been established. This created the basis for modern propaganda techniques as it promulgated a direct aim to control opinions and ultimately the actions of people. It provided a word – propaganda – for the practice of attempting to sway public opinion, even though at this stage it was

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76 *Irish Times*, 16 July 1920.
77 See Oliver Thompson, *Easily Led: A History of Propaganda and Mass Persuasion in History* (UK, 1999) for a description on propaganda techniques that were used in different periods and cultures; P.M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind: War Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Nuclear Age* (Manchester, 1990).
78 Peter Guilday, ‘Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide’, *The Catholic Historical Review*, 6:4 (January, 1921), pp. 478-94. *Propaganda Fide* was launched four years after the commencement of the Thirty Years’ War in Europe (1618-1648) – a territorial war that was fought on religious divides between Catholics and Protestants.
to propagate a religion. The word evolved into an understanding to incorporate a meaning for the techniques employed to alter opinions and spread doctrine. T.H. Qualter in Advertising and Democracy in the Mass Age states that the Propaganda Fide saw the birth of the modern-day use of ‘propaganda’ that gave the term a pejorative inference which continues to dominate the discussion of propaganda because of its largely negative connotation.  

In the eighteenth century propaganda in the American and French Revolutions promoted ideological, constitutional and political thoughts. Political propaganda was inspired by enlightenment writers and pamphleteers who were instrumental in initiating and sustaining this revolution. Thomas Paine’s pamphlet Common Sense is a key example in its demand for colonial America’s independence from Great Britain. The French colours of red, white and blue (particularly the tricolour sash), the Phrygian stocking cap, firework displays, and the burning of effigies of reviled politicians and aristocrats were all propaganda tactics of the French Revolution. This revolution also had its own official propaganda artist, Jacques Louis David, who produced art – particularly for Napoleon – to appeal and persuade the middle classes.

It was during the Great War years that ‘propaganda began to emerge as the principal instrument of control over public opinion’. Harold Lasswell, a leading American political scientist, stated that, ‘there is little exaggeration in saying that the World War led to the discovery of propaganda by both the man in the street and the man in the study …’. All belligerent countries found mass media to be an integral part of the social infrastructure, allowing propaganda activities assume a role of greater significance than ever before. By the end of the war even scholars were surprised by the apparent power that propaganda had exhibited. Nothing in previous historical experience had prepared them for the potent combination of the perfect social, political, and economic conditions and the newly established power of the mass media.

The Great War was, therefore, a propaganda watershed because ordinary people were encouraged to engage with state affairs, and military matters began to impinge on their lives. Governments, in varying degrees, realised that propaganda was essential to assert and maintain control over public attitudes, and ‘public opinion’ emerged from the conflict with an enhanced role in political life.\(^4\) This was the moment when the modern use of propaganda became established, and it coincided with the formation of advertising and propaganda as a commercial business. It was also a time of consumer consumption change, such as the formation of department stores.\(^5\)

However, it was propaganda’s association with falsehood that led to its demise in subsequent years as an acceptable term. The perception was that the messages disseminated during the war years were often misleading. Propaganda became a crucial weapon to promote optimism and confidence during the war and to drive recruitment into the armed forces. Ireland, as part of the British Empire, was no exception to this phenomenon.

While the Great War years are credited with instituting mass media on a grand scale, in Ireland and just prior to the Great War, the strategic propaganda of Unionists during the third home rule crisis from 1912 to 1914 deserves consideration too. Historians such as David Fitzpatrick and Alvin Jackson emphasize the pivotal role of Unionist propaganda with its ‘slickly professional’ and ‘relentlessly modern’ nature.\(^6\) James C. Beckett’s use of phrases like ‘persistent propaganda’ and ‘obvious determination’ emphasises the rigid nature of Unionist beliefs, and their resolve to hold out against and defeat the constitutional nationalist threat.\(^7\) More recently, Parkinson has commented on the ‘keenness, dedication and adaptability displayed by Unionist propagandists, and the clarity of their message’ which he credits to their adoption of ‘a variety of propaganda techniques and tactics’.\(^8\)

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\(^4\) Welch, p. 6.
\(^5\) See chapter three for further information on advertising businesses in Ireland. Department stores were established in Dublin, Ireland in the mid to late 1800s. Arnotts and Clery’s were Ireland’s first department stores in Dublin.
\(^8\) Parkinson, *Friends in High Places*, p. 91.
As will be seen in chapter four, this determination reawakened in 1918 and persisted into 1920. Erstwhile anti-home rule themes took centre stage to wage electoral war against former adversaries in the Irish Party and new threats from separatist Sinn Féin. Complemented by knowledge gleaned from Great War propaganda and recruitment campaigns the recognizable trademarks of Unionism became the iconography of electoral campaigns. Uniformity and consistency in the themes of loyalty and devotion to empire were augmented by references to Ulster’s patriotism – and the evidence proffered was their high enlistment numbers and industrial contribution to the war effort.89 A steadfast refusal to capitulate to the nationalist ‘sham’ of ‘an independent republic or government under the Parliament of the United Kingdom’ was upheld by claims that Ireland under the union guaranteed prosperity and peace.90

Despite extensive relevant scholarship, there is as yet no consensus on the definition of the term propaganda. Jacques Ellul in *Propaganda, The Formation of Men’s Attitudes* focuses on propaganda as a sociological phenomenon, believing that it enabled people to participate in important social events like elections, celebrations, memorials, and so on. He argues that nearly all biased messages in society were propagandistic even when bias was unintentional.91 Leonard W. Doob defines propaganda in a more negative fashion seeing it as ‘the attempt to affect the personalities and to control the behaviour of individuals towards ends considered unscientific or of doubtful value in a society at a particular time’.92 Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell in *Propaganda and Persuasion* contend that ‘propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist.’ They assert that this is central to any definition of propaganda because the benefit of an audience’s response to propaganda – if the response is the desired one – favours the propagandist and not necessarily the recipients of the message (although

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89 A Unionist handbill, titled *The Two Irelands. Facts, Not Fiction!*, issued by the Ulster Unionist Council, stated that ‘75,000 Ulstermen voluntarily enlisted’ and ‘many thousands were prevented from enlisting owing to being on urgent War work’: Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), D1327/20/4/142, U.C. 132.

90 *Irish Times*, 30 December 1918: Carson’s post-election message to the press.


Richard Taylor defines propaganda ‘as the transmission of ideas and values from one person, or groups of persons, to another, with the specific intention of influencing the recipients’ attitudes in such a way that the interests of its authors will be enhanced’. It is these two latter classifications that provide a definition for this work.

No modern theorist uses the term ‘propaganda’ unless it is with disapproval. However, in the early 1900s propaganda was a respectable term, and therefore it will be used throughout this work because the research is primarily framed through the lens of contemporary opinion rather than post-war analysis. It will be understood to encompass all communication activities regardless of whether the information is true or false, honest or deceptive, and regardless of the political affiliation of the communicant and the recipient. The word ‘propaganda’ comprises the attempt to persuade, convince or motivate, and encompasses the communication itself, the process by which the message was transmitted to a receiver, and the themes employed.

Before a political propaganda contest could begin an election had to arise and candidates had to be selected. By-elections ensued usually because of the death or retirement of an incumbent, and general elections had a given timeframe which was usually every four years in the British Isles, with local government elections taking place every three years. The Great War ended on 11 November 1918 and no general election had taken place since 1910 (and there had been a six-year gap in local elections). Lloyd George’s ‘war party’ took advantage of their victory and before the disruptions of demobilisation could be felt, the general election date was set for 14 December and parliament was dissolved on 25 November. This allowed for an intensive three-week propaganda campaign, and the electoral outcome was, by any measure, a transformative moment in Irish history.

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1. 

Candidate Selection

Candidates revealed and promoted party policies and they were the practical medium through which concepts and ideologies were disseminated to voters at the local constituency level. How parties selected candidates shows the importance that was placed on this essential role. This chapter will analyse the prevailing methods of choosing party representatives to explore if practices remained constant or if they evolved over time. Did the entry of new contestants into politics, such as Sinn Féin and Labour, and new voting systems lead to new selection methods or were older techniques emulated? Internal party organizational structures and the systemization of clubs and associations for the candidate selection process will also be investigated.

Certain political parties and movements steered the decision-making process from a centre of operations. Others, such as the Irish Party, retreated from central control to a devolved localized system. The significance of candidate selection as a propaganda and electioneering function is stressed by the political scientist Giovanni Sartori who points out that ‘the way in which political parties select their candidates may be used as an acid test of how democratically they conduct their internal affairs’.  

Independent candidates also contested elections in this era and, in Ulster, Labour associations and Belfast Labour nominated candidates, but with only moderate success. The number of independents and Ulster Labour was low so they will not form part of the analysis as they mainly challenged the larger parties whose competition overshadowed the selection process and propaganda efforts. The main contenders for electoral seats were the nationalist Irish Party and Sinn Féin, the Unionist Party and Labour, and each will be dealt with under their own specific heading.

Candidate selection afforded an opportunity for creating compelling propaganda because the nomination and selection processes were reported on in newspapers. The *Irish Times* on 28

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July 1917, for example, in describing the Sinn Féin conference to appoint their candidate for Kilkenny city named Cosgrave and those who attended the convention. These included, ‘the Sinn Féin members of the Kilkenny Corporation and Poor Law Board, two delegates from the Kilkenny Branch of Cumann na mBan, and six delegates from the Kilkenny Sinn Féin club.’ Candidate selection was also a forum for persuading the Kilkenny electors to vote for Cosgrave. At a later date the same newspaper informed voters that he was ‘a member of the Dublin Corporation and Chairman of its Finance Committee’. His active participation in the Easter Rising was highlighted to demonstrate that he was committed to Sinn Féin ideals, and if further proof was necessary it was pointed out that he had been sentenced to penal servitude for life, and was released some five or six weeks ago.’ Cosgrave was also described as ‘a man of worth and ability … under which the City of the Confederation will recover its lost prosperity and become … the hub of industry, trade and commerce in the south of Ireland.’

Editorial commentary in newspapers often discussed the potential local support of a candidate, proffered opinion and provided a précis of a candidate’s credentials and past accomplishments. The Irish Party candidate Patrick Donnelly received a lengthy biography in the *Freeman’s Journal* for the South Armagh by-election where details of his education and career were supplied.

Election agents of contesting and selected candidates regularly ran classified advertisements. For instance, James Magee, the election agent for Denis Cogan, Irish Party candidate for East Wicklow, announced the selection, provided a biography to list the accomplishments of Cogan’s public career, and detailed the policies being advocated in an *Irish Independent* advertisement. This was one of twelve advertisements that ran on 30 November 1918 promoting Unionist, Irish Party, Sinn Féin and the National University of Ireland candidates. The *Irish Times* on 3 December 1918 published an extensive article on the selection of the Unionist candidate for Rathmines, Maurice Dockrell. They referred to him as ‘an able business man, a

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2 See page 54 for further details on the selection of Cosgrave.
3 *Irish Times*, 8 August 1918.
4 *Freeman’s Journal*, 1 February 1918; *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 July 1918.
5 *Freeman’s Journal*, 1 February 1918.
generous and fair employer, and a hard worker and organizer in many good causes …’. Candidates in uncontested elections sometimes received media coverage. In South Dublin, for example, four Irish Party candidates running for selection to contest a by-election due to take place in July 1917 received a two-by-one-inch account each on their intentions should they be selected. They also announced the successful nominee which was Michael Hearne, solicitor and Chairman of the Freeman’s Journal. By placing advertisements and attaining editorial parties were afforded and received prompt candidate name recognition. Timely nominees received wider media attention because their propaganda campaigns commenced ahead of competitors. Sinn Féin regularly secured weightier press coverage than that of the often tardy Irish Party.

Eight by-elections took place in 1917 and 1918 but neither Labour nor Unionists fielded candidates, therefore all contests were between candidates representing the two disparate nationalist ideologies for a future self-governing Ireland. Seventy-eight seats (eighty including university seats) were contested in the 1918 general election leaving twenty-five uncontested. In all these twenty-five constituencies Sinn Féin fielded a candidate who secured a walk-over, signifying a lack of Irish Party efficacy in a transformed electoral environment. The retention of Ulster constituencies was the primary objective for Unionists, although a small number challenged for seats in Dublin and Cork in 1918, with greater numbers challenging in a wider array of constituencies in 1920. Labour had also entered the electoral fray in 1920 expanding the variety of political interests.

Unionists and the Irish Party faced another issue and that was that they were generally the incumbents in election campaigns from 1917 to 1920. Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina argue that constituency service has given incumbents electoral advantage. This was often by way of harvesting free publicity as a result of their office (provided they conducted their affairs positively),

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6 Irish Times, 3 December 1918.
7 Ibid, 30 June and 7 July 1917. Hearne had no competition so he secured a walk-over.
8 See results in chapter five.
and they also held party identification and candidate familiarity. However, evidence, conducted by Gary King, argues that constituency service actually reduces an incumbent’s advantage. The specific disadvantage that incumbents had to tackle was that they were often measured on past successes rather than party affiliation (this perhaps benefited constitutional nationalist candidates in 1920). A candidate seeking re-election also needed to offer innovative future possibilities and assurances. Therefore, the benefits of incumbency were often overshadowed by a challengers’ contradictory and fresh philosophies, regardless of propaganda spend.

There were no legal provisions for the selection of candidates and this persists to the present day. As Gallagher states, ‘parties or other groups are thus free to select parliamentary candidates in whatever fashion they wish’. The Irish Party and Unionist Party had the candidate selection procedure written into their party constitution, whereas Sinn Féin created a system as the by-elections progressed and the 1918 general election loomed. The national executive of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress (ILP&TUC) drafted aspirational plans for candidate selection. They had planned for but later withdrew from the 1918 election however their candidate selection system is worth exploring.

There were similarities and variances between the parties in the degree of control over the candidate selection process and an individual examination, beginning with the nationalist parties, will highlight how processes were born, how they evolved and where complications arose.

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11 Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh (eds), *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective, The Secret Garden of Politics* (London, Beverly Hills & New Delhi, 1988), p. 119. There was a change in 2012 when the Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Bill 2011 was passed. Parties could now lose half of their central exchequer funding unless the minority sex among their candidates accounts for 30 per cent of the entire national ticket at the next general election. The threshold will then rise to 40 per cent after the new 30 per cent minimum has been in place for seven years: www.oireachtas.ie, Dáil Debates, vol. 773, No. 3, 19 July 2012.

12 Gallagher, ‘The increasing role of the centre’ in Gallagher and Marsh, *Candidate Selection*, p. 119.

13 The Labour Party was established in 1912 by James Connolly as the political wing of the Irish Trade Union Congress.
1.1: The Irish Party

The process of candidate selection under Charles Stewart Parnell’s leadership has been well documented in a number of excellent works such as Conor Cruise O’Brien’s *Parnell and His party 1880-1890*; F.S.L. Lyons’s *The Irish parliamentary party 1890-1910* and more recently James McConnel’s *The Irish Parliamentary Party and the Third Home Rule Crisis*. Suffice to say here that in October 1882 Parnell replaced the semi-revolutionary Land League with the more disciplined and pledge-bound Irish National League that became centralized under his control. By supplanting the weaker system with a more co-ordinated approach to candidate selection it allowed for the creation of an efficient party election machine. Candidates were often chosen privately and prior to a convention with, as T.P. O’Connor stated, ‘everything [being] done subject to the approval or disapproval of Mr. P.’ A ‘façade of popular selection’ at conventions provided credence to the successful candidate. This centralized control facilitated the monopoly of national political sentiment that actively set out to pursue home rule; however, it silenced the local voice at constituency level.

After the fall of Parnell, William O’Brien launched the United Irish League (UIL) in 1898 with its motto ‘The Land for the People’. O’Brien drafted a new constitution for the UIL, replacing Parnell’s system of candidate selection in favour of ‘absolute local control’. Conventions were summoned in each parliamentary division to nominate candidates, and the decision of the majority bound the minority. An Irish Party representative could still attend the local conventions, but now only in the role of observer who could proffer no advice on the selection of candidates except

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14 Cruise O’Brien, *Parnell and His party*, Chapter Four; Lyons, *The Irish Parliamentary Party* and McConnel, Chapter Two.
15 Some areas were more highly organized, for example the honorary secretary of the Carlow Registration Association convinced the priests and lay members to form local committees and appoint a secretary to correspond with him in their parishes: *Freeman’s Journal*, 15 March 1880.
18 *Freeman’s Journal*, 21 June 1900.
19 Ibid. See also Lyons, *The Irish Parliamentary Party*, pp. 150-51 for resolutions that defined the procedure to be followed for the selection of candidates under the auspices of the UIL. *Freeman’s Journal*, 20 September 1900 for details on composition of delegates.
at the invitation of the convention. The party pledge devised by Parnell was retained and a candidate had to sign the pledge before being forwarded to the convention.\textsuperscript{20} The advantage was increased audience numbers at conventions because representatives of public bodies and nationalist organizations could now be present. Prior to this attendance was determined by the party. The drawback was that power lay entirely with the constituency.

This was the system that Redmond inherited in 1900 and there were times when he aspired to a more ‘potent role’ in the selection process.\textsuperscript{21} The fact that candidates ‘were often chosen purely for local and even personal considerations’ caused concern as he wanted to find ‘the man best fitted to do Ireland’s work at Westminster’.\textsuperscript{22} Like Parnell before him, Redmond’s raison d’être was the attainment of home rule for Ireland. By 1915 his confidence in the UIL methods for candidate selection had strengthened, apparent in his statement ‘that the candidates selected shall represent the full, free choice of the nationalist electors of every class and creed in the constituency; … promote harmony; and prevent division’. The system, he maintained, took into consideration the opinion of ‘the greatest number possible of the electors’ to ‘avoid local and personal feuds and cabals … to ensure that the best man shall be selected, men known to the people and worthy of their trust’. This made the Irish Party, in his view, the most democratic and popular in its election and in its personnel.\textsuperscript{23} This speech was made at a UIL meeting in the second year of the Great War, so the impetus may merely have been to rally members. Redmond and Dillon had also voiced concerns about ‘the pernicious influence of localism …’ which they believed ‘had to be checked’.\textsuperscript{24}

UIL disorganization and incompetence was evident in their lack of meetings and its growing detachment from the lives of ordinary people. Prior to 1910 there had been two or three annual meetings, but by 1916 only one had been organized to discuss important issues such as membership and affiliation fees. According to O’Brien and Garvin, the League’s listing in Ireland in 1900 showed 462 branches, representing between 60,000 and 80,000 members in twenty-five

\textsuperscript{20} This pledge stipulated that each MP was required to sit, act and vote with the party at Westminster.
\textsuperscript{21} David W. Miller, *Church, State and Nation in Ireland, 1898-1921* (Pittsburgh, 1973), p. 141.
\textsuperscript{22} Stephen Gwynn, *John Redmond’s Last Years* (London, 1919), p. 39. See also *Irish Independent*, 30 June 1900. For a more detailed discussion on candidate selection in the early 1900s see McConnel, pp. 50-2.
\textsuperscript{23} NLI, MS 708. UIL National Directory, Thirty-third meeting (Fifteenth Annual Meeting), 12 January 1915; see also TCD, JD, Mss 6762: United Irish League: Objects, Constitution and Rules.
\textsuperscript{24} Miller, *Church, State and Nation*, p. 141.
counties, and within two years this had grown to 1,150 branches and 85,355 members.\textsuperscript{25} Membership numbers had not dropped by the time the 1918 general election loomed as there were 110,972 members with 1,025 branches by December 1918. However, when compared against the emergent Sinn Féin – a novice party and growing adversary – rivalry within nationalism was now tense. Sinn Féin’s 1,255 clubs boasted 105,132 members. Even though there was parity of membership Sinn Féin was clearly absorbing nationalists who were discontent with the constitutional approach.\textsuperscript{26} Lack of UIL organization explains why twenty-five seats went uncontested by the Irish Party in 1918. Even with these membership numbers, the 1918 election results reveal that UIL membership numbers did not translate into votes.\textsuperscript{27} With two rival nationalist parties and Unionists primarily contesting for seats only in Ulster, these voters either abstained or converted to Sinn Féin.

The flaws in the Irish Party system came to light during the early by-elections in North Roscommon, South Longford and East Clare. In North Roscommon, the party candidate Thomas Devine, a local county councillor, was nominated one month after the opposition candidates. In South Longford the Irish Party had three candidates in the field vying for voter attention and local selection. The party’s favoured candidate was a local businessman, Patrick McKenna, who was a cattle dealer and according to some ‘had all the cattle dealers and ranchers behind him’.\textsuperscript{28} McKenna waged a war of insults against Sinn Féin, claiming that every time the Sinn Féin policy had been tried in the past it had failed because it was a ‘self-destructive policy … advocated by men who were never known to do a day’s work for Ireland.’\textsuperscript{29} McKenna was not the choice of the Roman Catholic bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, Dr Joseph Hoare. Hoare summoned a meeting of all priests in the diocese during which he proposed the nomination of the barrister

\textsuperscript{27} See chapter five.
\textsuperscript{28} Bureau of Military History (BMH) Witness Statement (WS) 707: Michael Noyk, Legal advisor to A. Griffith and Michael Collins.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Longford Leader}, 21 April 1917.
Joseph M. Flood, much to the fury of the Irish Party. 30 ‘Outrageous’, ‘treacherous’ and ‘scandalous’ was Dillon’s angry observation on the bishop’s actions which he called the ‘most deplorable of affairs’. 31 Flood’s propaganda campaign maintained that the great issue was between the constitutional movement and Sinn Féin, and his strategy was a promise to farmers and labourers to press for cheap loans. To complicate matters further another candidate, Hugh Garrahan, entered the field. Redmond was lobbied by a number of interest groups aiming to influence his decision. He received telegrams from five UIL branches, two divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) as well as the Town Tenants’ League, the Board of Guardians, and Irish National Forrester in Garrahan’s home town of Ballymahon. 32 Garrahan, a local farmer, appealed to this community and warned that a vote for Sinn Féin ‘would take the country back over a century into… disunion and ribbonism…’. 33

The battle amongst Irish Party members for candidature prohibited a single voice argument and clear party message. It was a situation Dillon described as a ‘deplorable tangle’. 34 Redmond reluctantly took on the task of arbitrator and the crisis was finally resolved on 24 April when McKenna was selected. This, however, ran contrary to the League’s constitution for candidate selection. But, as McConnel points out, while Redmond did advocate for certain candidates he ‘did so at the request of senior local nationalists’. 35 The Longford Leader reported that ‘there was much satisfaction on all sides of the town’ with McKenna’s nomination. They also incorrectly predicted that ‘McKenna is the strongest man, and the one most likely to defeat the dangerous enemy [Sinn Féin] now opposed to the national force’. 36

In East Clare internal disputes erupted as local selection contrasted with leadership aspirations. A native lawyer, Patrick Lynch, was nominated by John Moroney, vice-chairman of the Ennis Urban District Council and was seconded by George Frost, a member of Clare County

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30 Hoare’s choice was sanctioned by a majority of the priests – fifteen to two with four abstentions: NLI, John Redmond (JR), MS 15,182/24: Letter from D. Reynolds, Parochial House to J.P. Farrell, 1917.
31 NLI, JR, MS 15,182/24: Dillon to Redmond, 12 April 1917.
32 Ibid, MS 15,263/2: Letters to Redmond of special meetings held by these organizations that passed resolutions call for the support of Garrahan. See also Coleman, County Longford, p. 47.
33 Longford Leader, 28 February 1917.
34 NLI, JR, MS 15,182/24: Dillon to Redmond, 12 April 1917.
35 McConnel, p. 54.
36 Longford Leader, 28 April 1917. See Coleman, County Longford, pp. 46-47.
Dillon was ‘strongly against the party identifying itself with Lynch’s candidature’ because he believed they were being ‘dragged in’ to an election ‘without being consulted on the selection of the candidate’. Sensitivity was high for this by-election. It had come about because of the death of John Redmond’s brother William at the Battle of Messines in the Great War. And, Sinn Féin was fielding Éamon de Valera, their most celebrated candidate because he was the last surviving commandant of the Easter Rising. Dillon was fully cognisant that a propaganda war of maximum strength would be waged against them, and he no doubt wanted a voice in selecting a suitable adversary. Joseph Devlin agreed and correctly argued that the party had ‘not the slightest chance in Clare … we would only be beaten to a frazzle’. Dillon withdrew his objection to Lynch in response to a request for party backing from supporters in Clare and Limerick. The party weakly admitted that Lynch provided the better choice to represent them, but they distanced themselves from the by-election in the hope that public opinion might not identify them with his defeat.

Problems continued into the Kilkenny city by-election in 1918 as confusion once again delayed the nomination of a candidate. A conference due to take place did not occur because the party had vacillated as to whether they should take part in the by-election at all. Eventually a private conference was held and presided over by the Mayor, John Slater, with twenty others present including eight members of the Corporation and a UIL organizer. Attendees only acceded to running John Magennis as their candidate out of fear that an independent candidate might ‘be put

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37 Lynch was nominated at a meeting of nationalists from various portions of the division which included members of Clare County Council, Ennis Urban Council, Ennis Rural District Council, Tulla Rural District Council, Ennis United Labourers Association, Clarecastle Land and Labour Association, officers of the UIL, representatives of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), representatives of the Irish National Foresters, the Ennis O’Connell Club, the Ennis Oddfellow’s Club, and St. Patrick’s Temperance Association: NLI, JR, MS 15,263/2: Letter to Irish Party, 17 June 1917 from Patrick McNamara and P. Howard, Secretaries, East Clare Division Parliamentary Election.

38 NLI, JR, MS, 15,182/24: Dillon to Redmond, 21 June 1917.

39 TCD, JD, Mss 6730: Devlin to Dillon, 13 June 1917.

40 Ibid, Dillon to Redmond, 26 June 1917 and 3 August 1917.
forward in the party interests’. Magennis, a ‘plasterer and slater’, received twenty nomination papers.

Fielding candidates for the 1918 general election proved deeply problematic because of the number of retiring Irish Party MPs. Of the 105 members at the dissolution a total of fifty-one failed to face their old constituents and of these the Irish Party lost the most candidates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>No. of Retiring MPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish Party</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFIL</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Nationalists</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionists</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1.1: Retiring MPs in 1918

Inefficiency and disorder in appointing replacement candidates, particularly because so many retirements came at late notice, left the party in disarray. Three candidates sought election in other constituencies – Richard Hazleton went to Louth, John T. Donovan went to Donegal South and Stephen Gwynn contested Dublin University. Sir Walter Nugent, a former member of the Irish Party, contested in Westmeath as an independent nationalist. In O’Brien’s All-for-Ireland-League (AFIL) seven MPs retired in their stronghold of Cork city and county to make way for Sinn Féin representatives. Irish Party MPs provided an assortment of excuses for retirement, from ill-health to old age, and some fabricated selfless gestures supposedly in an attempt to aid the flailing party. For instance, Thomas Smyth in Co. Leitrim wrote to Dillon stating that because Leitrim could only return one MP under the new Redistribution Act he felt ‘bound in honour to give him [Francis Meehan] preference on account of his fighting the first Sinn Féin election … [because] certainly Mr Meehan will get far more votes in Leitrim than any other outsider who would go on as a party

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41 *Irish Times*, 28 July 1917. The newspaper reported that the Nationalist Party did not ‘officially identify themselves with the parliamentary vacancy in Kilkenny city’. See also *Nenagh Guardian*, 28 July 1917 on Magennis’s selection.
42 *Irish Independent*, 8 August 1917.
43 Ibid, 30 December 1918. Monaghan North, Wicklow East, Dublin South, Carlow, Clare West, Donegal West, Cork West, Louth North, Louth South, Kerry South, Kerry East Kilkenny North, Limerick West, Mayo North, Mayo South, meath South, Newry, Donegal South, Leitrim North, Leitrim South, Galway East, Cork East, Sligo South, Cavan West, Derry City and Tyrone North also did not field candidates who had previously contested as home rulers.
44 *Weekly Irish Times*, 30 November 1918; *Irish Independent*, 30 November 1918.
45 See chapter five.
candidate.' The Irish Party rejected both candidates and ran Gerald Farrell who lost out heavily to Sinn Féin’s James Dolan who gained a majority by 14,615 votes. The Irish Party could not restore internal equilibrium to replace defecting MPs in time to contest twenty-five of the 105 seats for the general election.

During the summer of 1917 the Irish Party had been preoccupied with the Irish Convention in a last ditch attempt to establish a way forward for home rule. Home rule had been placed on the statute book at the outset of the Great War, but with a suspensory bill which adjourned its implementation until the war’s end, and an amending bill to allow for resolutions on Ulster. Irish Party leaders had been absorbed by decisions on convention attendees and by the subsequent intricate debates and proposals by, for instance, Lord Midleton. The convention had caught the imagination of the public, but there was little faith in its success by separatists and Unionists. The Unionist newspaper, the Belfast News Letter welcomed the convention but counselled against any possibility of compromise, stating that ‘those who assume … that courtesy and hospitality involve a change of sincere and life-long convictions are building on a foundation as insubstantial as the stuff dreams are made of’. This did not bode well for convention success. To complicate matters further Lord Decies, the press censor, had prohibited coverage of the proceedings, rendering the Irish Party impotent in promoting their diplomatic contributions. On the plus side, the rift between Ulster and southern Unionists was hidden from public view, as was Ulster Unionist

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46 Anglo-Celt, 23 November 1918.
47 James Dolan contested this seat for Sinn Féin having defected from the Irish Party for the 1908 Leitrim North by-election (see pp 46-47 of this chapter). Griffith and Dolan campaigned vigorously to gain support, obtained £625 to fund the campaign. Dolan was, however, defeated by the Irish Party candidate Francis Edward Meehan who secured 72.8% of the vote: see Ciarán Ó Duibhir, Sinn Féin: the first election, 1908 (Manorhamilton, 1993), p. 53 and Laffan, The Resurrection, p. 29. See also Walker, Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92, pp. 4-9.
48 For instance, in May 1917 O’Connor wrote to Redmond to debate the possible number of attendees at the convention. He bemoaned the fact that Dillon wanted the number up to ninety, and Redmond was adding further to bring the number up to 103: NLI, JR, MS 15,215/2/B: Letter from O’Connor to Redmond, 28 May 1917. The Freeman’s Journal provided an outline of the composition of the convention on 25 July 1917 and a letter from Lloyd George to Horace Plunkett also provides details: NLI, Piaras Béaslaí Papers, MS 33,912(2). See also John Quinn, George William Russell and Horace Curzon Plunkett, The Irish Home Rule Convention (Charlestown, US, 2009); Alvin Jackson, Home Rule, An Irish History 1800-2000 (Oxford, 2003), p. 210; Miller, Church, State and Nation, pp. 371-73; and Dermot Meleady, Redmond the Parnellite (Cork, 2008), pp. 346-47.
50 John Graham Hope de la Poer Beresford, 5th Baron Decies was press censor for Ireland during the war years and he banned the press from reporting, commenting or speculating on the Convention proceedings reminding newspapers that they were still subject to wartime censorship.
obduracy and nationalist bluster. Deadlock had set in by the winter of 1917-18, until enthusiasm for the convention faded entirely leading to its end in April 1918 without resolution.

Meanwhile, Sinn Féin had boycotted the convention entirely allowing them to concentrate on party formation and propaganda preparation for the by-elections and 1918 general election. They had enticed new voters by operating a propaganda war to successfully secure wins in four by-elections throughout 1917. They also established a tightly controlled and methodical system of candidate selection, whereas Irish Party disorganization was manifested in the candidate selection process in many constituencies from the outset of the by-elections, and at the foremost levels of structure. Their decentralized approach failed because of limited guidance to UIL organizations in selecting candidates which resulted in potential contenders publically jostling with each other for supremacy. The regular distancing of the Irish Party elite from candidates out of fear of possible electoral defeat resulted in confused, fragmented and localised propaganda efforts where the only constant was continued support for home rule. A disillusioned Dillon failed to gear up the party machine at the end of the war to provide a centre of operations to oversee a coherent candidate selection process and consistent propaganda themes. Constituencies in Ulster fared better under the guidance of Devlin, but the conflicting Unionist challenge and the threat of partition also aided Irish Party success. Ulster constituencies benefitted from the AOH and under Devlin’s control were ‘well organised’ in Belfast and throughout the province of Ulster. These grassroots organisations operated effectively as canvassers and ‘peace patrols’ as will be seen in chapter three.

Throughout the entire island the UIL and Irish Party went into decline after their 1918 election losses. No annual meetings were held by the UIL from 1919 through to May 1920, although at the local or constituency level there were still weekly meetings and activities. As the local government elections loomed in 1920 approximately 696 branches and 72,525 members remained. In East Cavan the UIL held their quarterly meeting but attendance was not ‘so large as

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51 BMH WS 1698: Liam de Róiste; see also BMH WS 1,765: Sean T. O’Kelly who claimed that the Hibernians also grew rapidly in Dublin city and county.
might be expected’ according to the chairman, James Comey, and he put this down to the ‘very stormy weather’. He counselled the necessity ‘at the present time to have all the branches in the constituency put into good working order’. But, with no overall direction from a central UIL and by now a non-existing Irish Party, nationalist candidates were appointed or suggested at local level.

In Ulster the League was still operating effectively. The Fermanagh UIL held a meeting in Enniskillen in December 1919 where ‘great satisfaction was expressed’ at the announcement that nationalists had an overwhelming majority in the division. Practically every branch in Fermanagh had affiliated and the election agent, J.P. Connery, stated that ‘they should keep their organization active, so that when opportunity came they would come forward with a constructive policy to save the nation’. In the Urban Council elections nationalists topped the poll in Fermanagh in the East Ward (P. Flanagan), North Ward (J.P. Gillin) and South Ward (W.J. Nethercott). The Fermanagh Herald claimed that ‘Nationalists still hold the town’, although the race with Unionists was close in two wards.

Devlin’s sanguine approach for the local elections was to focus on ‘those constituencies where we have a good hold, such as Donegal, Wexford and Louth’. He emphasised that in Donegal John Donovan had been doing well and that he had only been beaten in 1918 by 1,000 votes and that was because ‘he had no vehicles to carry the voters’. He also pointed out that ‘half the voters did not poll’ and because of this a good campaign ‘could be effectively carried out’ going forward. He acknowledged that in Britain ‘nobody is in a mood to discuss the matter [Ireland] rationally, nor do I think there is any possibility of a settlement until things become better or worse’. And, he anticipated a ‘fierce conflict’ between the British government and Sinn Féin’ with the country being ‘in for a very bad time’. There was mounting concern over Sinn Féin’s

54 On the first count in East Ward the Nationalist candidate received 87 votes and the Unionist candidate (A. Cathcart J.P.) received 72 where the quota was 67; in the North Ward J.P. Gillan (N) received 114, an Independent Labour candidate, Bernard Keenan, received 88 where the quota was 61; and in the South Ward, where the quota was 54, the Nationalist candidate, W.J. Nethercott received 61, and the Unionist candidate, S.C. Clarke, solicitor, received 55. There were other parties and candidates contesting in this county, but Nationalists, Unionists and Labour were successful. Sinn Féin attained no seats in the Urban in Fermanagh. The nett result was that eleven Nationalists and Labour candidates were returned, and ten Unionist, giving the Nationalists a majority of one on the Council: Fermanagh Herald, 24 January 1920.
55 TCD, JD, Mss 6730/225: Devlin to Dillon, 22 May 1919. See chapter five, section on ‘voter turnout’.
56 Ibid, 6730/224: Devlin to Dillon, 15 May 1919.
support at local level, although Devlin was less concerned than Dillon, and he believed that Dillon was taking ‘too serious a view of it’.57

Just how seriously the Irish Party leaders took the local elections is questionable because between the municipal and rural elections O’Connor and Devlin spent their time in Great Britain petitioning Irish voters to support Labour candidates in a series of by-elections. Operating from branches of the UIL they called on Irish electors to vote Labour because they ‘are to-day opponents of the Government’. The Irish Party had, since Parnell’s time, allied itself with the Liberal Party, but the Liberals had been overtaken by the Labour Party as the main opposition to the Conservatives in early 1920.58 O’Connor and Devlin continued to believe that Labour would be more sympathetic to the Irish question, and to favouring home rule. There is evidence to support their theory as the South Wales’ Miners’ Association – representing 35,000 members – decided to stop work one day in every month until British troops were withdrawn from Russia and Ireland.59 However, with the June rural elections looming, gambling on Labour or Liberal success in Britain rather than focusing on nationalist ambitions and selecting candidates for the local elections in Ireland was risky.

Within Ireland, nationalist views on Labour contrasted vehemently with O’Connor’s and Devlin’s support of Labour in Britain, because the Labour party became linked with Sinn Féin.60 Misperception among voters on the Irish Party leaders’ support of Labour in the UK by-elections vis-a-vis Sinn Féin and Labour’s local government election agreements in Ireland were heightened. In February 1920 the Dublin Metropolitan Branch of the UIL adopted a resolution stating that:

> those who expect a Labour Party to help Ireland to secure freedom whilst they deliberately refuse to send representatives to Parliament to help Labour … are but furnishing another

57 Ibid, 6730/254: Devlin to Dillon, 5 March 1920.
60 The Inspector General’s police report on Wexford stated that ‘the leaders of the Labour unions in this county are advanced Sinn Féiners and … are also endeavouring to increase the ranks of the Sinn Féin organization in view of the approaching general election’, and in Tuam, Galway it was reported that ‘the union [ITGWU] is being taken by the Sinn Féin organization and may need watching’: NA, 1918 (CO 904, Boxes 159-178), CO 904/164; Seditious Literature, Censorship, Etc., July to October 1918. See also Irish Independent, 15 January 1920: ‘…in many cases that party [Sinn Féin] has a working agreement with Labour’.
illustration of the incapacity of those who have manoeuvred Ireland into the present impasse.\textsuperscript{61}

In the past the Irish Party – since the introduction of the Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898 – had deliberately targeted the county and district councils, and appointed candidates at local UIL meetings. In 1899 these UIL candidates had swept the field, displacing Unionists in many areas, and new councillors began to administer county affairs previously performed by the landlord-dominated grand juries.\textsuperscript{62} By 1920, nationalists had to rely on localism, because their centre had fallen apart after their 1918 electoral defeat. Indicative of the selection process was the \textit{Anglo-Celt’s} report that in Clones, Co. Monaghan, a plebiscite was taken for the selection of seven candidates to represent all sections of Catholics and nationalists in the 1920 urban district elections.\textsuperscript{63} Despite the lacklustre approach by the now disaffected Irish Party leaders, independent nationalists contested seats in many constituencies for the local elections and as will be seen in chapter five managed to gain moderate success.

\section*{1.2: Sinn Féin}

Sinn Féin formed in 1905 as a result of a merger between Arthur Griffith’s Cumann na nGaedheal and the Ulster-based Dungannon Clubs, which in turn merged with the National Council (also founded by Griffith) to begin life as a small monarchical movement similar in ideology to the Irish Party.\textsuperscript{64} Griffith’s conciliatory methods were based on an emulation of the Austro-Hungarian

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Cork Examiner}, 5 February 1920.

\textsuperscript{62} Aside from in Cork where there was a long-standing trade and labour influence. Daniel Desmond Sheehan was a nationalist politician, labour leader and journalist (founding the \textit{Southern Star}, and later, after the civil war, becoming editor of the \textit{Dublin Chronicle}). He served as MP for Mid-Cork from 1901 to 1918. He and O’Brien became disillusioned with the Irish Party. He co-founded and became president of the Irish Land and Labour Association (ILLA) and General Secretary of the Central Executive of the AFIL in 1908. John O’Donovan, ‘Class, Conflict, and the United Irish League in Cork, 1900-1903’, \textit{Saothar}, 37 (2012), Journal of the Irish Labour History Society, pp. 19-29. Reports in the \textit{Cork Examiner}, 9 February 1920 claimed that constitutional nationalism in Cork remained active with the Cork Young Ireland Branch, for instance, holding their fortnightly meeting in February 1920 which ‘was very largely attended.’ They claimed that ‘they had a very active organization’ in Cork ‘which was growing stronger from day to day’

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Anglo-Celt}, 3 January 1920. The \textit{Connacht Tribune}, 3 January 1920, reported that: A meeting for the purpose of selecting Nationalist Candidates will be held in the National Club on to-night (Friday) at 8 p.m.

Compromise of 1867 which he wrote about in his *Resurrection of Hungary*.\textsuperscript{65} He advocated for a form of self-government that mirrored Grattan’s parliament in the eighteenth century, but comprising a more inclusive amalgam of Catholic and Protestant. He had no interest in the clichéd symbols of Irishness, aiming instead to build an ‘ascetic, sober and industrious urban middle-class nation’, maintaining that the Irish should be free to ‘make their own pots and pans’.\textsuperscript{66} Griffith was absorbed by ideas and their expression in an attempt to influence all nationalists in Ireland, however he was not interested in building a political party.\textsuperscript{67} He advocated for economic nationalism (based on the works of the German economic nationalist Georg Friedrich List), dual monarchy, political agitation, and abstention from Westminster. The aim was to win over Irish Party members and Unionists rather than vie against them.

Laffan’s seminal work *The Resurrection of Ireland, The Sinn Féin Party 1916-1923* provides much insight into the formation of Sinn Féin and he maintains that they were ‘the most important of several new political movements which emerged in the first decade of the twentieth century’.\textsuperscript{68} Fitzpatrick described the separatist movement in this period as more of a mood than a party; it reflected the growing public sentiment against home rule which, as yet, had no political party to which it could rally.\textsuperscript{69} The reformist energies of the Irish revival movement, the Gaelic League, the Abbey Theatre and the Gaelic Athletic Association had all encouraged material and cultural development at the local and elite level. Sport, drama, art, music, literature, spirituality, language and a new history opened a rival sphere of influence. The tenets of these movements and ethos of Irish identity were to become embedded in the philosophy of Sinn Féin as it absorbed new followers. Membership increased gradually in the early years to combine this assortment of diverse beliefs and among them were those who aspired to more radical methods for attaining self-government.

\textsuperscript{68} Laffan, *The Resurrection*, pp. 16-25.
\textsuperscript{69} Fitzpatrick, *Politics and Irish Life*, p. 174.
An early political propaganda coup for Sinn Féin was the decamping of the twenty-six-year-old Charles Joseph Dolan, MP for Leitrim and the son of a prosperous Manorhamilton draper, from the Irish Party. He resigned his seat in mid-1907 because he found it a ‘most degrading and humiliating thing to have to send their representatives to the English House of Commons’. Dolan remarked that the results of the 1907 by-election gave hope for the future as it was ‘the first time that the issue of Sinn Féin versus Parliamentarianism was clearly put before an Irish electorate’ and Sinn Féin had secured 1,157 votes ‘recorded in favour of the policy of asserting Ireland’s national rights by abstention from the Parliament of England’.

The Cork Examiner referred to Dolan’s transfer as ‘one of exceeding importance to the national cause’. A private meeting of the UIL with two hundred delegates in attendance had selected Francis Meehan, president of the North Leitrim Executive of the UIL, as the Irish Party candidate. To educate voters on Sinn Féin policy a new eight-page local newspaper, The Leitrim Guardian, was created, printed and published in Manorhamilton every Saturday and sold for one penny. Seán MacDiarmada became editor and also director of the by-election. Dolan delayed resigning his parliamentary seat to buy time to plan the campaign so the by-election did not take place until 21 February 1908. The campaign began in earnest with public speeches and the organization of new branches. £625 was raised to fund the campaign and establish the newspaper. A satirical cartoon on the front page of The Leitrim Guardian on 19 October 1907 (figure 1.1) aimed to persuade those who doubted him that voting for Dolan and Sinn Féin was the right thing to do.

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70 Irish Independent, 23 July 1907 and 24 February 1908.
71 Cork Examiner, 4 July 1907.
72 Irish Independent, 12 February 1908.
73 Ó Duibhir, Sinn Féin; Sinn Féin, 22 February 1908.
that the new and modern Sinn Féin was replacing Irish Party politics of the past. The image depicts
Redmond steering a horse-drawn buggy with the word ‘parliamentarianism’ inscribed on the
buggy-shaft. He stares out over the valley towards a moving automobile that was peopled with
supporters and the words ‘Sinn Féin’ emblazoned on the side. The two modes of transport contrast
the old versus the modern. The tunnelled vision of constitutional politics is portrayed by the
blinkeried horse, and the title ‘A thing of the past’ reinforces the message.74

Sinn Féin, however, could not maintain momentum for the drawn-out campaign and Dolan
lost to Meehan who gained a majority of 1,946 votes. In conceding victory Dolan pointed out that
his 1,157 votes had been recorded for a policy that asserted Ireland’s national rights through
abstention from Westminster and this ‘was surely something to give hope’.75 The protracted by-
election had allowed for the policies and propaganda of Sinn Féin to receive national press
coverage for nearly eight months.

The lengthy gap between the Leitrim by-election and the local government elections of
1912 left little room to reap past propaganda benefits. Only Sinn Féin’s Tom Kelly in Dublin
topped the poll in the municipal contests. Davis highlights that party branches increased at a
modest rate from 1906 (21 branches) to 1909 (128 branches), but Laffan states that ‘this sluggish
advance exaggerates Sinn Féin’s real strength’.76 The movement needed a distinctive and
significant propaganda concept to distinguish them from their Irish Party rivals and provide
impetus for selecting candidates. Militant and restless voices within separatism gained momentum
and emergent radical ideals manifested in the Easter Rising of 1916. For six days the leaders of the
Rising theatrically played out their eschatology of ‘blood sacrifice’ in Dublin city and proclaimed
the Irish republic a sovereign independent state.77

74 Leitrim Guardian, 19 October 1907. The newspaper lasted seven months (July 1907 to February 1908) and
two surviving issues in the National Library of Ireland show that content featured Sinn Féin propaganda, a
series of articles about Hungarian abstention from the Austrian Imperial parliament, Parnell’s political tactics
and Daniel O’Connell’s political speeches, with local news and advertisements featuring heavily also.

75 Irish Independent, 24 February 1908.

76 Richard Davis, Arthur Griffith and non-violent Sinn Féin (Dublin, 1974), pp. 81-2; Laffan, The
Resurrection, p. 30.

77 The Easter Rising began in Dublin on 24 April 1916 and ended the following Saturday with Pearse’s
surrender. The Rising was not confined to Dublin as areas of Wexford and Meath also saw violence. For a
No political party could claim the legacy of the Easter Rising. The Irish Volunteers, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the Irish Citizen Army were all mentioned in the proclamation, but they were not political parties. The British government and Irish newspapers incorrectly blamed Sinn Féin – a charge they happily appropriated – delivering them this propaganda victory.78 Dublin Castle, the Irish Party, Unionists, police and newspapers had become accustomed to referring to Sinn Féin as a term of convenience to describe the numerous separatists’ organizations in existence in Ireland. In the aftermath, Sinn Féin evolved from a monarchist to a separatist party, but it took until the South Longford by-election of 1917 for this ideology to become entrenched.

![Weekly Irish Times, 29 April 1916: Sinn Féin Rebellion in Ireland](image)

**Figure 1.2: Weekly Irish Times, 29 April 1916: Sinn Féin Rebellion in Ireland**

The popular mood had begun to change in the months after the Rising when sixteen leaders were executed and widespread arrests brought internment for approximately 3,500 suspected revolutionaries (many were swiftly released). This caused extensive acrimony towards the British government. Commemorative photographs of the executed leaders were published and disseminated, and ballads were written to celebrate their deeds to create cult hero status. The effect

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78 BMH WS 755 (ii), Sean Prendergast stated ‘what matter if the Volunteers were styled “the Sinn Féin Volunteers”; the intention was good and laudable enough …’.
was to immortalise the leaders of the Rising and provide an enduring permanence to Easter week 1916. As a propaganda exercise the Rising was a consummate success.

The 1916 by-election in West Cork instigated by the death of the incumbent AFIL MP James Gilhooly did not see Sinn Féin field a candidate, but a resilient political voice stirred that was reinforced by opinion from republican prisoners in Reading Gaol. The contest was between three candidates, one from O’Brien’s AFIL; an independent All-For-Ireland candidate, Michael Shipsey; and the tenacious Daniel O’Leary who overrode Redmond’s fear of losing in the constituency and ran as the Irish Party candidate. By loudly rejecting the AFIL in claiming that ‘no Sinn Féiner can vote to send a man to take an oath in Westminster’ Sinn Féin reiterated Griffith’s abstentionist stance. The prisoners vocally denounced Frank Healy mainly because O’Brien was presenting him as a prisoners’ candidate whose election would bring general amnesty, and because he would not fully declare for abstention from Westminster. Many local League members were equally unhappy with Healy’s intrusion. 79

The death of James O’Kelly, the Irish Party MP for North Roscommon, opened the way for a by-election in February 1917. A number of political interests sought candidates to fill the vacancy, and among them was Sinn Féin. Candidate selection was spearheaded by Fr Michael O’Flanagan, a Roman Catholic curate from Crossna, Roscommon, who favoured Count George Noble Plunkett. Plunkett’s past political associations and aspirations made him a curious choice to represent more radical nationalism. He was a sixty-five-year-old papal Count who had received his title from Pope Leo XIII for donating money and property to the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, a Roman Catholic nursing order. He had also served as director of the National Museum of Science and Art in Dublin, and had applied for the post of under-secretary in Dublin Castle. 80 Critics called him a ‘place-hunter’ and a ‘place-holder’, and the local Roscommon newspaper

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79 William Murphy, *Political Imprisonment & the Irish, 1912-1921* (Oxford, 2014), p. 77: Frank Healy had been interred after the Rising until his conditional release from Reading Gaol in mid-July. O’Brien selected Frank Healy as candidate due to his deportation after the Rising, his friendship with Griffith, and his reputation of being a Sinn Féin sympathizer in order to win over the extremist vote: see Laffan, *The Resurrection*, pp. 73-5; Irishman, 25 November 1916. See also Maume, pp. 189-190. The victor was Daniel O’Leary, see Appendix A.

criticised his age calling him ‘a very feeble old man and a delicate man’. The only reason for his selection as a possible Sinn Féin candidate was because three of his sons – Joseph, George and Jack – had been actively involved in the Easter Rising. All three had been sentenced to death, but only Joseph was executed. Plunkett’s familial association with the Rising and his subsequent electoral success initiated a process whereby Sinn Féin aimed to select candidates directly involved or associated with the Rising.

Plunkett had also been discussed as a potential candidate by William O’Brien and Arthur Griffith, and subsequently by William O’Brien and P.T. Keohane because of his association to Easter week. Moreover, he was nominated by the recently formed Irish Nation League (also called the League of Seven Attorneys) created in Ulster to support the anti-partitionist stance. Therefore, Plunkett was not just a Sinn Féin candidate, but an independent candidate with a number of sponsors. Herbert Pim maintained that ‘Count Plunkett is not being run in North Roscommon by the Irish Nation League. He is being supported by Sinn Féin and the Nation League’.

In the aftermath of the by-election Plunkett’s relationship with Sinn Féin became strained. The North Roscommon success and the subsequent South Longford triumph later that year prompted Plunkett, Rory O’Connor and some other younger men to gain control of the movement. They attempted to establish Liberty clubs to replace Sinn Féin clubs, but found little success. Sinn Féin as a political entity had gained national (and international) recognition in the wake of the Rising. The creation of Liberty clubs contemporaneously with the existence of Sinn Féin clubs only resulted in confusing the public mind. Growing concern that this confusion might distil support for the separatist cause prompted Sinn Féin to begin a process of uniting the

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81 Freeman’s Journal, 6 February 1917 and Roscommon Herald, 27 January and 3 February 1917. Post-election local papers were kinder in their reporting of the Count, see Roscommon Journal, 14 April 1917.
82 It was not always possible to select a Rising candidate in rural areas for the 1918 general election, therefore a candidate with separatist credentials was also considered suitable.
83 BMH WS 1,766: William O’Brien, P.T. Keohane was a Manager of Messrs Gills, O’Connell Street. He was described by William O’Brien as a first-rate nationalist and someone who had a large circle of nationalist friends being an early member of the Gaelic League and Celtic Literary Society.
84 Brian Farrell, ‘Labour and the Irish Political Party System, a suggested approach to analysis’, Economic and Social Review, Tara, TCD. The Irish Nation League was established by Bishop MacHugh with the Healyite Omagh solicitors F.J. O’Connor and George Murnaghan: see Maume, p. 188.
85 Irishman, 3 February 1917. Pim was the editor of the Irishman.
86 BMH WS 707: Michael Noyk.
variety of groups and ideologies into one organization. Voter support was encouraged by creating a shared goal, a common cause and collective determination to acquire political success. First, they had to organize themselves as a political party, but it took until the October Convention of 1917 for the party to agree on their aims and form a constitution.

Prior to the convention the party had contested and won three further by-elections in 1917. In South Longford in May Joseph McGuinness, who was serving a prison sentence in Lewes Gaol because of his role in the Rising, was selected to represent Sinn Féin. He was a native of South Longford and considered popular.88 A group comprising Griffith, Plunkett, Kelly, Collins, Rory O’Connor and William O’Brien, among others, met and decided Sinn Féin should contest the seat.89 However, not all within Sinn Féin were amenable to contesting elections, and even McGuinness, according to Dan MacCarthy, had written to Griffith and Collins demanding that his name be withdrawn as a candidate.90 De Valera, also imprisoned at the time, was concerned about defeat, and maintained that if their candidate lost ‘it would mean the ruin of the hopes – not to say the ideals – which prompted our comrades to give the word last Easter’. De Valera insisted that ‘his [McGuinness] defeat would mean our defeat’.91 For de Valera a guarantee of success was essential before an electoral gamble should be taken. Collins and Griffith, however, decided to proceed with McGuinness as a candidate because ‘a man in gaol could not know what the position was like outside.’92 The intervention of Thomas Ashe in support of the decision to field McGuinness bolstered Collins’ confidence in going forward, and mollified the prisoners’ concerns. Ashe argued that those at liberty in Ireland should be allowed discretion.93

The decision of the new movement to select rebel candidates to foster its association with the Rising was cemented in this by-election. The propaganda that accompanied McGuinness capitalized on his prison status by using an imaginative poster campaign using the slogan Put him...

89 NLI, MS 15,705: William O’Brien Diary, 4 April 1917.
90 Ibid; BMH WS 722: Dan MacCarthy.
91 UCDA, de Valera Papers P150: memo Easter Sunday 1917.
92 BMH WS 722: Dan MacCarthy.
His brother Frank McGuinness conducted much of the propaganda campaign and continuously promoted the link with the Rising, pointing out that Joseph McGuinness represented ‘unity in the cause of Ireland for which he had fought in Dublin in Easter Week’.\(^{95}\)

New energy was infused into Sinn Féin with the release of rebel Irish prisoners by Lloyd George in June 1917. Lloyd George hoped for resolution and compromise between disparate Irish ideologies where a political settlement on the Irish question could be found. Cleverly he placed the burden of finding a resolution onto Irish politicians and organizations by establishing the Irish Convention. Meanwhile, the released prisoners arrived into Dublin to a jubilant welcome from the public, signifying the growth of separatist nationalist sentiment. They found a robust and dynamic party that readily accepted them into the fold, and this favoured unification, cohesion and stability. Rejection could easily have split separatist nationalism into two parallel and competitive movements. It also allowed for the last surviving commander of the Easter Rising – Éamon de Valera – to take his place in politics, and the timing was perfect as the death of Major William Redmond paved the way for a by-election in East Clare.

Clare had been a home rule constituency which had not been contested since 1885, and William Redmond had represented East Clare for twenty-five years at Westminster. But, there was no certainty of victory for the Irish Party as the county had become recalcitrant in the post-Rising months. As Fitzpatrick points out in *Politics and Irish Life*, ‘during February 1917 twenty Republican flags were hoisted on trees, schoolhouses and telegraph wires in the county. And three months later all three symbols of disaffection – badges, flags and seditious remarks – were again in fashion’.\(^{96}\) According to Laffan, ‘as far back as 1909 Clare had the third highest number of paid-up members of Griffith’s Sinn Féin party of any county in Ireland.’\(^{97}\)

Sinn Féin members met at the Clare Hotel to get the election machinery going and to select a suitable candidate. The names of three potential candidates were put forward: de Valera, Peadar

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\(^{94}\) See chapters three and four for further details on this campaign.

\(^{95}\) Roscommon Herald, 14 April 1917; Longford Leader, 14 April 1917 stated that ‘McGuinness, it will be remembered, took an active part in the rebellion in Dublin Easter Week last year, having a command in the Four Courts, where he had several British officers in his charge as prisoners of war’.

\(^{96}\) Fitzpatrick, *Politics and Irish Life*, p. 111. Fitzpatrick is discussing the Clare County Inspector reports in the aftermath of 1916 in Co. Clare.

Clancy and Eoin Mac Neill. Initially Clancy, who was a Clare man and had also taken part in the Easter Rising, was favoured. A second meeting in the same hotel a week later with twenty present, including five or six priests, made the decision to hold a convention to select a candidate. Prior to the convention a ‘steady quiet canvass went on for MacNeill by the clergy and their supporters’, and a ‘more forceful and organized canvass for Dev’ was made by others. At the convention, held in the Old Ground Hotel in Ennis, with over two-hundred delegates attending, Clancy and the other candidates withdrew, leaving the way clear for de Valera. There was as yet no real structure for selecting Sinn Féin candidates due to the varying interest groups that held different ideas.

Just over a month after the East Clare by-election a fourth by-election was held in August 1917 in Kilkenny City due to the death of the incumbent Irish Party MP, Pat O’Brien. As previously mentioned, William T. Cosgrave was appointed by Sinn Féin because of his participation in the Rising, his strong service in Dublin Corporation and he had been among those released from prison about two months before the election. On his nomination paper he was described as a ‘grocer of Dublin’ and alongside eleven nomination papers, his supporters included ‘prominent city merchants and farmers’. In a method very similar to Parnell, Cosgrave had been appointed by de Valera as the Sinn Féin candidate at a private meeting held in one of the ante-rooms in City Hall before the convention. After the meeting Cosgrave was presented to the convention delegates in the Council Chamber where E.T. Keane, editor of the Kilkenny People, announced that Cosgrave had been selected as the candidate. He was seconded by businessman W.F. O’Meara, director, St Francis Abbey Smithwicks Brewery. To ensure that Cosgrave’s candidature became the ‘unanimous’ decision of the convention and to ensure there was ‘no opposition’ to the ‘official candidate’ Seán Milroy gave an address to the delegates. He praised Cosgrave for his part in the Rising and spoke of his activities in public life as a member of Dublin Corporation, promoting his ‘general suitability as public representative’.

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98 UCDA, de Valera Papers, P150/548: Letter from Joe Barrett, Barrett Brothers, Kilrush, Clare on 17 April 1917.
99 Cork Examiner, 17 July 1917; BMH WS 1,006: Martin Kealy.
100 BMH, WS 1,032: James Lalor; WS 1,765: Sean T. O’Kelly; and see Irish Independent, 8 August 1917 for nominations in Kilkenny.
Four by-election victories inspired encouragement for the party to officially organize and develop a competent structure. De Valera was unanimously elected president (Griffith decided not to contest) at the October convention where 1,700 delegates attended. Griffith and O’Flanagan were elected vice-presidents. The by-elections stimulated the administrative upscaling and desire for efficiency within Sinn Féin which led to the formation of a constitution.101

Success bred complacency, and perhaps arrogance, and Sinn Féin suffered a reversal of fortune in the next three by-elections. The first in South Armagh in February 1918 saw Sinn Féin select Dr Patrick McCartan. While he had no physical connection with the Rising he nonetheless potently represented separatist ideology and was from Tyrone.102 South Armagh was a strongly nationalist constituency where the incumbent Irish Party MP Charles O’Neill had held his seat since 1909, and the Hibernians were well organized.103 McCartan was selected at a conference held in Whitecross, Co. Armagh, where only two names were submitted – Dr McCartan and Dr McKee of Banbridge – but the latter withdrew (in favour of McCartan).

Waterford city in March 1918 presented a bitter and violent by-election contest between Sinn Féin and the Irish Party. Dr Vincent White was selected at a late night private meeting of the Sinn Féin Waterford Executive. White expressed concern at his own selection stating that ‘it was not his ambition to go forward, but it was the wish of the central and local Executives’.104 He was an interesting selection because he was not a 1916 veteran, nor did he have any familial connection to it.105 Sinn Féin needed a convincing, well-known local candidate because Waterford was an Irish Party stronghold, and William Archer Redmond – John Redmond’s son – was contesting on behalf of the Irish Party. The Freeman’s Journal emphasized that ‘Dr White is a local man, and

102 McCartan was born in Eskerbuoy in Co. Tyrone. He emigrated to the USA as a young man and became a member of Clan na Gael in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He had been due to take part with the Tyrone volunteers but fell victim to Eoin McNeill’s countermanding order. Regardless he was arrested in the aftermath and interned in an open prison in England. After his release he had travelled to the USA to secure publicity and funds for Sinn Féin, but was arrested and interned in New York as the by-election was taking place.
104 Freeman’s Journal, 11 March 1918.
105 BMH, WS 1,764: Vincent White. White had joined the Waterford City Branch of the Liberty League and claimed that membership had grown so much that the organization transferred premises and changed the name to Sinn Féin. He subsequently became a member of the Waterford Sinn Féin Executive
this fact has undoubtedly had considerable influence on his selection’, although they also highlighted that ‘he is only a politician of very recent date, with little experience in public affairs’ – a fact that was common among Sinn Féin candidates in the by-elections and 1918 general election. The *Evening Star* maintained that White’s selection was ‘intended to make a direct appeal to local sentiment, local associations’. Reference to or close links with Easter week would not work in Sinn Féin’s favour in Waterford city and had the potential to be counterproductive. Sinn Féin faced not only a city that was an Irish Party bastion, but one that was still mourning John Redmond who had died exhausted and in his own words ‘a broken hearted man’ on 6 March 1918.

William Archer Redmond had resigned his East Tyrone seat to contest Waterford, activating a by-election in this constituency. East Tyrone proved a disaster for Sinn Féin. The party headquarters believed that contesting this election would be ‘a hopeless proposition and that a defeat during the acute conscription crisis would not be good politics’. Belfast, however, did not agree with the Dublin decision and Seán Milroy requested permission to challenge, assuring that the costs to headquarters would be minimal. In a moment of weakness Sinn Féin agreed, but ultimately it was an imprudent decision as they were defeated by the Irish Party who attained sixty per cent of the vote.

Misfortune turned to triumph in the final by-election of 1918 in East Cavan, again due to the death of an Irish Party MP. Sinn Féin and the Irish Party had been prepared for this by-election as the incumbent MP, Samuel Young, was ninety-six-years-old, seriously ill and his death was expected. Sinn Féin’s candidate was the founder of their movement, Arthur Griffith. He had also been imprisoned after the Rising even though he did not actively participate. Sinn Féin was determined not to repeat the outcome of the previous three by-elections in East Cavan, but they faced a major threat. The Irish Convention, which Sinn Féin had boycotted, was about to present its proposals for implementing home rule, so there was the possibility that support for Sinn Féin could diminish.

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106 *Freeman’s Journal*, 12 March 1918; *Evening Star*, 12 March 1918.
107 BMH WS 353: James McGuill.
Two incidents provided rescue. First, the Coalition Government, under Lloyd George, decided to extend the Military Service Bill, introduced in Britain in 1916, to Ireland. This conscription legislation was connected to a new home rule settlement which had the effect of alienating all nationalists.\textsuperscript{108} With the passing of the Bill by 296 votes to 123, Irish Party MPs walked out of the House of Commons and returned to Ireland to wage an anti-conscription battle. Labour and Sinn Féin became active and vocal in the cause with the former introducing a one-day general strike and the latter rallying the anti-conscription campaign.\textsuperscript{109}

At the height of the anti-conscription crisis a by-election was due to take place in Tullamore, King’s County. To offer a display of nationalist unity against conscription the Irish Party candidate withdrew, allowing Sinn Féin’s McCartan take the seat.\textsuperscript{110} When the by-election in East Cavan opened in June 1918, Dillon, who was now the leader of the Irish Party, expected Sinn Féin to reciprocate in kind so he called for Griffith to stand down in favour of the neutral Mayor of Dublin, Laurence O’Neill. Griffith’s refusal to do so was seen by Dillon as ‘wanton provocation’ and he stated that ‘no other choice could have been calculated to add bitterness to the contest’. The Roman Catholic Church stepped in to support Dillon, but without success, and the Irish Party selected John O’Hanlon.\textsuperscript{111} Public sympathy began to favour Griffith by May 1918 because of his arrest due to ‘the German Plot’. Dillon was now asked to withdraw the Irish Party candidate, but he refused, stating it ‘would be taken as a sign of weakness of the Irish Parliamentary Party were they to withdraw their candidate.’\textsuperscript{112} Griffith won the day, aided by the regurgitation of the Put him in to get him out poster that had been created for Joseph McGuinness in South Longford.

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\textsuperscript{109} Opposition to the Great War in Ireland was mainly to compulsory conscription and not to the war itself or to voluntary enlistment in the British Army: See Fitzpatrick, ‘Militarism in Ireland 1900–1922’, in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery, (eds.) *A Military History of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 386. Also see chapter five regarding Irish Party and conscription.

\textsuperscript{110} The Tullamore, Kings County, by-election was due to take place on 19 April 1918 due to the death of the incumbent Irish Party MP, Edward John Graham.

\textsuperscript{111} Laffan, *The Resurrection*, pp. 147-9.

\textsuperscript{112} *The Times*, 27 May 1918. The Viceroy, Lord French, ordered the arrest of a number of Sinn Féin leaders – including Griffith – citing a conspiracy between Sinn Féin and the German Empire to start another armed insurrection in Ireland. This became known as ‘the German Plot’.

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The by-elections and October convention advanced an ordered system of candidate selection, and this became firmly established for the 1918 general election. By now Sinn Féin candidates were largely nominated by the Comhairlí Ceantair (Area Council or Cumann) and the result was submitted to the Standing Committee for authorization and approval. The Standing Committee, at times, requested further information and only rarely rejected a candidate, mainly to avoid doubling up.113 Obedience, compliance and, in some instances, capitulation to this central authority, ensured that little was left to electoral chance. Long discussions on the suitability of candidates for North Kerry, Derry City, North Monaghan and West Cavan continued into late November.114 Five organizers were appointed for these regions, but had to be funded at constituency/county level.

A new party structure was also outlined by the leaders and it consisted of an intricate system of assemblies and committees, organized hierarchically. At the top was the officer board elected at the Ard Fheis and the Coiste Seasta (standing committee) of ten to fifteen members elected by the Ard Chomhairle (national executive). A new Ard Chomhairle met on 17 December 1917 and elected the Standing Committee, which joined the officer board that had already been chosen at the Ard Fheis. At the lowest level were the Sinn Féin clubs which reported to the constituency executive, who in turn reported to the Standing Committee. The executive, elected at the October Convention, had established eighty-six constituency executives before it disbanded.115 Laffan states that de Valera’s structure was an ‘interlocking system which involved endless meetings, elections and delegations … It was democratic almost to excess.’116 The structural benefit was that regular Standing Committee meetings provided a forum for collecting opinion on

113 For example, Kevin O’Higgins was proposed by Clare West and North Meath for the 1918 general election so the Standing Committee asked Clare West to make another selection. If a selected candidate withdrew the Standing Committee suggested an alternative, as was the case with Seamus Doyle in North Wexford in 1918: NLI, Sinn Féin Standing Committee Minutes (SFSCM), 26 September 1918.  
114 Ibid, 29 August and 6 September 1918.  
115 NLI, MS 11,405/2: Count Plunkett Papers, Report on the national organization of Sinn Féin by Austin Stack and Darrel Figgis, 19 December 1917. See also MS 11,405/3: Report on the organization of Sinn Féin with a list of affiliated clubs, and a list of cumainn in each county and province by Séan Milroy, 19 December 1919; and, Laffan, *The Resurrection*, pp. 170-71 for further details on the organizational structure of Sinn Féin.  
constituency happenings in a timely manner. Sinn Féin, however, was on the road to a horizontal communication set-up with de Valera emulating the leadership style of Parnell.

In an attempt to create consistency, the rules for candidate selection came from the top and were passed down to the constituency. While there were aberrations in that not all candidates had been involved in the Rising, the prerequisite for any candidate was proof of non-compliance with the status quo. By September 1918 candidate selections had been made for twelve constituencies facing contests. Concerns remained on Carlow (subsequently uncontested), West Clare (uncontested), East Donegal, East Mayo, North and South Monaghan, West Kerry (uncontested), East Galway (uncontested), North-West Tyrone, West Cavan (uncontested), Louth County and Mid-Tipperary (uncontested) either because of duplication of candidates or because further information was required on a proposed candidate (as was the case for James Lennon of Borris, Carlow who was serving a gaol sentence in Belfast at the time).117

Cumann na mBan petitioned for female candidates, reminding the Standing Committee that the 1916 proclamation had addressed both Irishmen and Irishwomen.118 The Standing Committee argued that selection resided with the Comhairlí Ceantair and not with themselves, but these appeals indicate that there was no general consensus and opinions differed.119 By 1920 there was a more hardened resolve to forward female candidates for selection. Early and efficient organization paid off as a high number of women became Sinn Féin councillors and poor law guardians.120

Selecting Irish speaking candidates for the Gaeltacht areas of Ireland and creating literature ‘as Gaelige’ (in Irish) proved problematic. There was a dearth of proficient linguists within the party, so a decision was taken to acquire the assistance of the Gaelic League to support the canvass. A newly formed deputation was created which introduced a ‘detailed scheme’ to assist with the Irish language in the election and generally throughout the country.121 Cork West and Galway North became particular concerns. Candidate selection was deferred to inquire on whether

119 SFSCM, 18 September 1918.
121 SFSCM, 16 October 1918.
proposed candidates for these constituencies spoke Irish.\textsuperscript{122} Disquiet about the influence of the Gaelic League in Sinn Féin politics led the party to distance themselves for the 1920 local elections. Sinn Féin was adamant that only their representatives could select candidates, but they assured the Gaelic League that they were ‘always ready to help’ the League to ‘carry through its programme of Irish’.\textsuperscript{123}

Sinn Féin was determined to emulate past Irish Party local election success, so they began preparations in earnest in early 1919. For the January municipal contests Liam O’Broin, Secretary of the Dublin Elections Committee, suggested creating a permanent Registration Office and Advisory Board for the Municipal Elections.\textsuperscript{124} By 16 January 1919 a committee was appointed to draft out a scheme of instructions with regard to local elections and it comprised Alderman Tom Kelly, Jennie Wyse Power, James J. Walsh, C. Collins, Robert Barton and Dr Kathleen Lynn.\textsuperscript{125} Strict directions were distributed to all Cumainn (branches), which had been passed by a resolution of the Ard Comhairle on 20 February 1919, regarding the selection of candidates for local elections and board of guardians. They instructed:

that the selection of candidates for Poor Law Guardians in Urban and Municipal areas and District Councillors in Rural District Electoral areas be left in the first instance to the Sinn Féin Club, or Clubs, in consultation with other organizations pledged to Republican principles in their respective areas, with the reservation that as far as possible candidates selected shall fairly represent the various interests in these areas. …

And for County Councillors:

That the selection of candidates for County Councillors be left to a Convention of those representatives from each Sinn Féin Club in the County Electoral area, together with the selected and approved candidates in the District Electoral areas comprised in the County Electoral area, and presided over by a member of the County Council. … In the event of the County Council failing to approve of the candidate so selected that the reason for so doing be put in writing, and be forwarded to the Standing Committee for final jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{126}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{122} Ibid, 19 August 1918.
\item \textsuperscript{123} Ibid, 20 April 1920.
\item \textsuperscript{124} Ibid, 9 January 1919.
\item \textsuperscript{125} Ibid, 16 January 1919.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Ibid, 20 November 1919.
\end{itemize}
The sheer number of candidates required to successfully capture seats in January and June compelled Sinn Féin to release selection to local clubs. The Standing Committee could not deliberate over each potential candidate in a manner similar to 1918, but they could afford to intervene if difficulties emerged. They also restricted the franchise to those who had joined clubs before 22 January 1919 to avoid the entry of new and unknown candidates. Politically Sinn Féin had to secure the local administration to prove that the 1918 results were not a one-off, and to establish itself as the party in charge at local level.

Many candidates were unfamiliar to voters outside their immediate neighbourhood and untested within the party. Local Sinn Féin Volunteers took up the mantle and ran for council positions because of the dearth of candidates. To ensure adherence to Sinn Féin manifestos and policies a pledge was drafted which had to be signed by those contesting for county boards and offices. In a style that emulated Parnell’s requirement for Irish Party candidates to adhere to home rule policy, Sinn Féin candidates had to pledge their allegiance to the Irish Republic. Furthermore, if Sinn Féin candidates captured control of an urban or rural council then councillors had to pledge their allegiance at a public meeting to the Irish Republic and Dáil Éireann, and this had to be ratified by the County Council. To ensure that only the party faithful became candidates those who did not subscribe to the pledge received no support from Sinn Féin.

Candidates in Tyrone, Fermanagh and other northern counties did not have to adhere to this rule; instead all arrangements were left to local option. This immediately begs the question ‘why?’ Sinn Féin was anxious about repelling or deterring potential voters, particularly those who had previously voted for the Irish Party. They were also apprehensive of robust Unionist reaction if the word ‘republic’ was uttered in the northern counties. An acceptance of the potential reality of partition was acknowledged, although not an acquiescence to its premise. According to the Sinn Féin Honorary Secretary’s report from the Ard Fheis of 27 November 1921, ‘[I]t became clear to

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127 Fitzpatrick, Politics and Irish Life, p. 155.
128 SFSCM, 23 October 1919; BMH WS 353: James McGuill and WS 702: Frank Drohan.
129 SFSCM, 29 October 1919 and 20 November 1919. The words of the pledge were: ‘I ….. recognise the Republic established by the will and vote of the Irish people as the legitimate Government of Ireland.’ See chapter five for further details on councils’ pledge of allegiance to Dáil Éireann.
us in September, 1920, that the British Government was determined to put the Partition Act into operation in order to create a division of the people’.

Foreboding about partition elicited immediate organization in the party in ‘the weaker parts of the country thoroughly’ to ensure that the results of the 1920 elections proved that the ‘the people renewed their Republican Mandate of 1918, and increased its representation’. There was a suggestion at a Sinn Féin Election Sub Committee meeting in November 1919 for the Ceann Comhairle (chairperson/speaker) of the constituencies that were defeated at the general election (such as Rathmines, North Fermanagh) be empowered to nominate a candidate and forward the name for ratification by the Standing Committee. This decision was postponed, but it demonstrates that the party was determined to succeed in 1920 wherever they had lost out in 1918. Agreements were also made with Labour, particularly in Cork, in an attempt to capture the working class vote, and this will be discussed in section 1.4.

1.3: The Unionist Party

The threat of home rule became a reality during the reign of Parnell and because justice for Ireland was affirmed by William E. Gladstone. The defeat of the first home rule bill brought the crisis to an end but triggered a general election which galvanized Unionists into action. Canvassing and registering voters in rural areas for this 1886 election produced a system of local Unionist Associations. These associations began to organize the electorate and continued to select and appoint candidates for all future elections. The election outcome was a Conservative victory, and in Ulster it demonstrated that there was a highly organized and efficient political organization ready to repel attack against the union.

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130 NLI, Piaras Béasláé Papers, MS 33,921(9): Sinn Féin Ard-Fheis, Honorary Secretary’s report, 27 November 1921.
131 SFSCM, 13 November 1919.
133 Harbinson, p. 13.
In early 1891 Belfast Unionists convened a conference to reinforce and stimulate support for the future protection of the union. The principle resolution, moved by Sir William Ewart, set the path for the Unionist stance against home rule, where they announced their ‘resolve to take no part in the election or proceedings of such a [home rule] parliament’. Out of this convention emerged the Ulster Convention League, which became established at every polling district. It provided the permanent electoral machine that became the framework of the Ulster Unionist Council (UUC) – although it did not attain this name until 1905.

The Irish Unionist Alliance (IUA), or Irish Unionist Party, was founded in 1891 from the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union to oppose any plans for home rule within the United Kingdom. The IUA united Unionists, particularly in Ulster where Unionist sentiment and support was strongest. Its primary function was to represent unionism on an all-Ireland basis, and co-ordinate the electoral and lobbying activities. With the introduction of Gladstone’s second home rule bill in 1893 Unionists immediately launched logistical and bellicose activities to protest against any measure that would ‘separate them from their inheritance in the imperial legislature’. Unionist clubs were created and by May 1893 over two-hundred clubs were established throughout the province of Ulster. Laws and a constitution were drafted that determined to defend the legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland, and render assistance to their members and others in carrying out that policy. The duty of clubs was to enrol members over the age of sixteen and unite all in common cause.

With the defeat of the second home rule bill and Liberal Party loss in the general election Unionists clubs went into decline. The ‘devolution crisis’ of 1904-5 sparked another conference.

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134 See special convention issue of the Belfast Weekly Telegraph, 25 June 1892. Also, R. McNeill, Ulster’s Stand for Union (London, 1922), pp. 32-4 and Harbinson, p. 17, for information on the building of a special pavilion to host the convention because there was no building large enough to accommodate the thousands of delegates.
135 Harbinson, p. 18.
136 The Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union had been established to prevent electoral competition between Liberals and Conservatives in the three southern provinces on a common platform of maintenance of the union: Walker, A History of the Ulster Unionist Party, p. 11.
138 Buckland, Ulster Unionism, ii, p. 1.
139 Ibid, p. 16.
140 Laws and Constitution of the Unionist Clubs, 2 May 1893, Clause 1 in Harbinson, p. 21.
which was held in Belfast on 2 December 1904 to ‘form an Ulster union for bringing into line all local unionist associations in the province … to advance and defend the interests of Ulster Unionists in the Unionist Party’.\textsuperscript{141} This led to the formation of the UUC which was largely controlled by a few landowners and professional men, even though they had aspired to encouraging a wide range of opinion and representation. The UUC was highly influenced by Ulster’s Loyal Orange Institution with the first Standing Committee comprising six prominent Orangemen led by the Earl of Erne, Grand Master of Ireland, and four Deputy Grand Masters.\textsuperscript{142}

With a steady increase in prominence over the next few years the UUC became the leading influence of Ulster unionism. Day-to-day activities were managed by a Standing Committee comprised of ten members nominated by the chairman of the Parliamentary Unionist Party and twenty elected by regional delegates. As Lyons states, the formation of the UUC ‘provided Ulster unionism with an instrument whose political importance in succeeding years is difficult to exaggerate’.\textsuperscript{143} According to Jackson, the constituency association within the UUC structure had three functions: supervising and financing the registration of voters, selecting parliamentary candidates, and working for their election.\textsuperscript{144} The formation of the UUC fostered new energy to constituency organization and the council came into its own in the battle against the third home rule bill which was introduced in 1912.\textsuperscript{145}

Leading the establishment of the Ulster Unionist Party in 1905 was Edward Carson and together with Captain James Craig they craftily masterminded a propaganda battle against home rule that led to the formation of a covenant and the creation of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).\textsuperscript{146}

\textsuperscript{141} Irish Times, 3 December 1904.
\textsuperscript{142} Thomas C. Kennedy, ‘War, Patriotism and the Ulster Unionist Council, 1914-1918’, Éire-Ireland, 40:3 (Fall/Winter, 2005), pp. 189-211. For further information on the Orange Order and the UUC see David Fitzpatrick, The Two Irelands, pp. 10-11. See also David Fitzpatrick, Descendancy, Irish Protestant Histories since 1795 (Cambridge, 2014) particularly part 1, pp. 19-78.
\textsuperscript{144} Jackson, The Ulster Party, p. 200.
\textsuperscript{145} See Harbinson, pp. 14-19 for further details on the UUC, including information after the creation of Northern Ireland.
\textsuperscript{146} For an in-depth account of Unionist propaganda campaigns in the resistance to the third home rule bill see Parkinson, Friends in High Places, and Michael Foy, ‘Ulster Unionist Propaganda against Home Rule, 1912-14’, History Ireland, 4:1 (Spring, 1996), pp. 49-53. Craig was the son of a self-made whiskey millionaire who had served in the Boer War and upon returning to Ireland had taken up the Unionist cause. He had
Unionist clubs and the UUC grew steadily and by February 1914, 371 clubs had been formed, with 372 in existence between 1915 and 1919.\(^\text{147}\) The Unionist organizational structure and propaganda skills behind the drive to defeat home rule were easily transferable to election campaigns; although with the advent of the Great War Unionists found they could no longer attack home rule in traditional terms.\(^\text{148}\)

Unionists did not field candidates in any of the by-elections, even though two were held in Ulster in South Armagh and East Tyrone, although they were in predominantly nationalist areas. In South Armagh an unofficial independent Unionist and Temperance Reformer, Thomas Wakefield Richardson, put himself forward, much to the anger and disgust of Unionists in the region. A Unionist Association meeting in Poyznpass on 28 January 1918 refused to support him, with the majority expressing disapproval of his candidature.\(^\text{149}\) Richardson was forced to withdraw due to Unionist pressure and opposition (although he received forty votes because there was insufficient time to remove his name from the ballot papers). This demonstrates the strength and cohesion of the Unionist approach to candidate selection.

For the 1918 general election candidates were nominated by Unionist associations in almost every Ulster constituency, but in the other three provinces there were many areas with no Unionist representatives.\(^\text{150}\) Across Leinster, Munster and Connaught candidate selection and

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\(^{147}\) PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/1/2: Minutes of the Meetings of the Executive Committee of Unionist Clubs Council, 25 February 1914, 26 March 1916 and 30 April 1919; see also NA, Irish Government Police Reports, 1914-1921, CO 904, Boxes 92-122 and 148-156A, September-December 1918, CO 904/107 (there was some overlap in these records of membership of Unionist Clubs and the Orange Order).

\(^{148}\) For instance, Bryan Cooper, a former Unionist MP for Dublin South County, and a prominent member of the IUA, joined Redmond’s National Volunteers and openly encouraged other Unionists to do so: Irish Times, 8 August 1914. On the other hand, George Richardson, General of the Ulster Volunteers, stated in the Daily Chronicle that ‘when the war was over and their [army and navy] ranks were reinforced by some 12,000 men thoroughly well-trained and with vast field experience, they would return to the attack and relegate home rule to the devil’: NLI, JR, MS 15.215/2/1, Daily Chronicle, 26 October 1914. According to Unionist propaganda, 75,000-80,000 Ulstermen voluntarily enlisted to serve in the Great War: see D1327/20/4/142, U.C. 132, The Two Irelands: Facts, Not Fiction! And Ulster’s Claim on Britain, A Proud Record. The 12,000 returning ex-servicemen mentioned by Richardson is, therefore, a rather low number.

\(^{149}\) Armagh Standard, 2 February 1918.

\(^{150}\) Unionists did not contest in the following Ulster constituencies: Armagh South, Belfast (Falls, St Anne’s, Shankill, Victoria – although a Unionist Labour candidate often contested), Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan South. In the three Southern Provinces Unionists only contested in Cork and Dublin.
electoral support was mainly drawn from the Protestant population. Here many Unionists were farmers, small business owners or Church of Ireland clergymen. Unionist associations in these provinces followed a geographic pattern of Protestant population density. Maurice Dockrell (Unionist candidate for Rathmines in Co Dublin) informed the House of Commons in 1919 that outside Ulster there did not exist such a thing as a Unionist – in fact, that Unionists were almost as extinct as the Dodo … they are so few in number. Perhaps some honorary Members will be surprised to hear that I am the sole representative in this House of about 350,000 Unionists.\textsuperscript{151}

The Dublin Unionist Association met in their offices at 10 Leinster Street in late November 1918 to select candidates for a number of constituencies. John Good, a building contractor, was unanimously selected for the Pembroke Division; Simon Maddock, member of the Executive Committee of the Unionist Alliance and Honorary Secretary to the South County Dublin Unionist Association and a Justice of the Peace was selected for the St Patrick’s Division (although he withdrew before the election), and Henry Hanna, a commercial and labour lawyer, was unanimously chosen for the St Stephen’s Green Division.\textsuperscript{152} A meeting of the South Dublin Unionist Association, held in the Shelbourne Hotel on 22 November, approved Dockrell and Sir Thomas Robinson as candidates after their selection by the Executive Council for the Rathmines and South Dublin Divisions respectively. In Dublin all candidates received undisputed support at Unionist association meetings. Unionists in Cork city selected two candidates, Daniel Williams and Thomas Farrington, who were subsequently heavily defeated (see chapter five).

In Ulster, Unionist associations played a pivotal role in candidate selection and in many instances a poll was taken to select one of a number of potential candidates. For instance, the East Antrim Unionist Association at Ballyclare selected Lieutenant-Colonel McClamont who had succeeded his father in the representation of East Antrim in 1913, and the South Antrim Unionist Association selected Captain Charles C. Craig (brother of James). In West Down two names were put forward to the Unionist association – William MacGrath McCaw who was the sitting member

\textsuperscript{151} HC, PD, Series V, vol. 114, c.c. 126-27: Sir Maurice Dockrell, Debate on the Local Government (Ireland) Bill, 24 March 1919. Dockrell’s figures obviously include all Unionists/Protestants in Ireland regardless of voting age.

\textsuperscript{152} Irish Times, 23 and 25 November 1918.
and Daniel Wilson. Wilson was selected by eighty-eight votes to sixty-three over McGrath McCaw and he went on to defeat the Sinn Féin opposition by a huge majority.\footnote{Ibid, 27 and 29 November 1918; Walker, \textit{Parliamentary Election Results}, p. 6.}

Carson and the businessman John Miller Andrews also founded the Ulster Unionist Labour Association (UULA) in order to create a party of loyal workers and dilute class conflicts, and to reduce the threat posed by British Labour, and Sinn Féin.\footnote{Andrews was a landowner, a director of his family linen-bleaching company and of the Belfast Ropeworks: Brian Lalor (ed), \textit{The Encyclopaedia of Ireland} (Dublin, 2003), pp. 23-4.} These intentions were set out by Richard Dawson Bates in a letter to Carson where he stated that the UULA would be used as a means of distracting younger members of the working class from the socialist views of the Independent Labour Party [of Britain].\footnote{PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/1/3/41: Dawson Bates to Carson, [n.d.], 1918.} The UULA put forward three candidates who were elected in 1918 for Belfast seats, and on the basis of a commitment to vote with the Unionist Party on ‘questions affecting the union’.\footnote{Ibid, UUC Papers, D1327/11/4/1: 8 November 1917.} Belfast Labour also put forward four candidates but they lost out to two UULA and two Unionist candidates.\footnote{Belfast Labour was founded in 1892 by a conference of Belfast Independent Labour activists and trade unions and was affiliated to the British Labour Representation Committee in 1900 (to avoid the Irish Labour Party desire to have organising rights throughout Ireland), and remained attached to its successor the UK Labour Party. See Peter Barberis, John McHugh, Mike Tyldesley, \textit{Encyclopaedia of British and Irish Political Organizations: Parties, Groups and Movements of the 20th Century} (London & NY, 2000), p. 694.}

Sinn Féin was perceived as a threat to Unionism, particularly at the local level on urban and rural councils. Carson was aware of their potential to secure a footing as early as May 1917 and discussed the matter with Dawson Bates. In a letter to the British Prime Minister he admitted that if local elections were to take place in 1917 the ‘Sinn Féiners would have a very much increased representation in the County Councils’.\footnote{PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/1/3/41: Dawson Bates to Carson, [n.d.], 1918.} His predictions proved correct in many areas of Ulster during the 1920 rural elections.

Precision in organization and candidate selection did not avert problems. Unionists had struggled to find a candidate for Londonderry in 1918 despite the best efforts of the Londonderry Unionist Association. Lord Armadale, Chairman of the Irish Unionist MPs, took it upon himself to find a candidate and the president of the Unionist association assured Carson that they were devoting all their resources ‘to the duty of having all available Unionists duly qualified’ to see if a
‘candidate can be found’. They found one in Sir Robert Newton Anderson, a hosiery merchant and manufacturer, but he narrowly lost to Sinn Féin’s Eoin MacNeill. When faced again with serious opposition from nationalists in the 1920 municipal elections, seven candidates were nominated. Unionists announced meetings for the selection of candidates for the Rural District Council (RDC) elections, particularly in Ulster where they were determined to secure victory.

Unionists operated a similar system to the Irish Party by selecting candidates through their associations. However, keen supervision to steer attitudes infiltrated into constituencies to ensure that non-union adherents or the hazard of individualism were swiftly eliminated. The removal of Thomas Wakefield Richardson from the South Armagh contest demonstrated the refusal of the Poynzpass Unionist Association to support his candidature. Unlike the Irish Party who had to petition Redmond to cast the final verdict in South Longford, Unionists relied on the direct pressure of peers. The central component for selection to represent unionism was strict adherence to upholding the Act of Union. For instance, Arthur Samuels, the Attorney-General for Ireland, remarked that Maurice Dockrell should be nominated to represent unionism in Rathmines because he ‘would fortify the cause of the Union’.

In the municipal and rural elections in the three southern provinces Unionists faced difficulties nominating candidates because many had transferred allegiance to the Ratepayers Association or Municipal Reform. According to a letter to the editor of the Irish Times from Robert Benson, the Chairman of Rathmines and Rathgar Urban District Council, some candidates were ‘soliciting the support of the ratepayers’ and were not running in ‘the interests of any political party, but merely as business men and women desirous of conducting the affairs of the township on business lines’. The Freeman’s Journal reported that Unionists found difficulties fielding candidates in southern constituencies because they failed to understand the new PR-STV method of voting for the 1920 elections. They also accused the Chamber of Commerce of being unacquainted with the voting system because the ‘reformers’ showed ‘a lack of courage in taking advantage of...

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159 Ibid, D1507/A/26/61: Letter from City of Londonderry Unionist Association to Edward Carson, 20 March 1918.
160 Irish Times, 3 December 1918.
161 Ibid, 7 January 1920.
the new situation’. It is highly unlikely that unfamiliarity with proportional representation was the cause as Unionists began to instruct voters to cast their ballots in alphabetical order (see chapter five). Many had attended the Proportional Representation Society of Ireland ‘model elections’ which had been set up to coach voters on the new system. Furthermore, Dawson Bates in a letter to Carson in January 1920 had reported that Unionists were ‘at the present time engaged in the Municipal Elections’. 

With the introduction of women voters and candidates, due to the 1918 Representation of the People Act, formatting a system for selecting women candidates proved problematic for Unionists. There was even confusion among women themselves. Women’s Unionist associations existed in many constituencies in Ulster, and the president of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council (UWUC) offered two paths forward. The first called for a fusion of men and women in one association and the other for separate associations united at the top in one joint executive. However, the UWUC failed to initiate a definite programme for selecting and appointing women candidates. Instruction was given to every woman above the age of thirty to ensure she was placed on the register. They were also called to carry out ‘vigorous and persistent propaganda work’ prior to the election, and advised that the ‘greatest care should be taken to select as office-bearers and members of the committee only those who are prepared whole-heartedly and enthusiastically to throw themselves into the work of the Association’. There was no specific call to nominate women candidates or to solicit support for potential women candidates, but the move towards inclusivity was evident.

In September 1918 a resolution was passed by the UWUC ‘to provide for the inclusion of representatives elected by the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council, in the same way as the Orange

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162 Freeman’s Journal, 6 and 7 January 1920.
164 PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/33/1: Letter from Bates to Carson, 3 January 1920.
165 The UWUC was established in 1910 and a year later boasted between 115,000 and 200,000 members. The 1912 women’s Declaration in support of the Solemn League and Covenant was signed by 234,046 women, outranking the male equivalent: R. Ward, Women, Unionism and Loyalism in Northern Ireland (Dublin, 2006), p. 115. By 1913 the UWUC had thirty-two associations in every constitution in all nine counties of Ulster, making it the largest women’s political organization at the time in Ireland: Belfast News Letter, September 1913.
166 PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/A/27/3: Address by the president of the UWUC to Council members.
Order and Unionist Clubs’, but this did not require that any of these candidates specifically be women. Lady Dufferin wrote to Carson insisting on the direct representation of women on the UUC, but the UUC’s reply was that the ‘proper way women should get on to the Council is in the ordinary course, similar to the men, and not by nomination from the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council’, which they chauvinistically termed a ‘more or less effete organization’. The UUC expressed hope that women would get ‘their due representation on each of the Parliamentary Associations’ because ‘when they do that any necessity for direct representation will pass away’. Six members of the UWUC met with Carson in June 1918 to voice their grievances and as a result they were granted twelve UWUC representatives in the UUC. No female Unionists were selected as candidates for the 1918 general election, but as will be seen in later chapters, the move to entice the female vote was essential for success.

By 1920 advances had been made and women candidates were nominated. For example, Margaret Kerr Dixon was nominated as the Unionist candidate for the No. 2 West Urban Rathmines Division of Dublin and Mary Weldrick ran as a Municipal Reform candidate in the Mountjoy Ward of Dublin. By 1921 the Unionist Central Office Parliamentary Election Manual still made no mention of selecting women candidates, suggesting only that ‘special meetings for women’ should be arranged and ‘addressed by the candidate and women speakers whenever possible’.

Unionists in the three southern provinces – whether male or female – were never able to attain mass party status because its local branches varied in strength. This was part of the reason why the PR-STV method of voting was introduced in 1920. Unionist support was limited to certain sections of the population, described as being usually ‘Protestant, anglicized, propertied and aristocratic’. It was from this small pool that candidates had to be selected and supported. Lord Midleton stated that a key reason for lack of electoral success among southern Unionists was that

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167 Ibid, D1507/A/28/34: Resolution passed by the UWUC, 11 September 1918.
they were ‘lacking political insight and cohesion’ and ‘restricting themselves to the easy task of attending meetings in Dublin’.\footnote{171}

Unionist associations were given freedom to appoint representatives and intervention came only when difficulties arose. For instance, the president of the City of Londonderry Unionist Association wrote to Carson requesting assistance in finding a suitable candidate as they were ‘unable to find one in our own locality’.\footnote{172} Another appeal was made to Carson in 1919 to solve friction in East Antrim for a by-election because two contestants were forwarded as potential candidates but one refused to abide by the Unionist rules and opted to run as an independent. The division became amplified because one, George Hanna, was an Orangeman and the other, William Moore, was not. Carson could not solve the dilemma and the Unionist vote was split with Hanna getting the majority. Lessons were quickly learned. A reformation of the constituency was subsequently requested to allow for new delegates to be elected and for the enforcement of the rule for unsuccessful candidates to support successful candidates.\footnote{173}

\subsection*{1.4: Labour in Southern Ireland}

Nationalists and Unionists dominated politics across the island, but ideological currents from abroad began influencing the working classes in the late 1800s. Radical trends evolving in Europe as the Great War drew to its end – particularly the 1905 and 1917 Russian revolutions – inspired aspirations for a more coherent voice to improve labour conditions. Enmity towards capitalism and a bias towards equity for the proletariat brought change. While this work does not intend an in-depth analysis of the structure of Labour in Ireland, it is necessary to explore the origin of workers’ organizations to shed some light on why Labour withdrew from the 1918 general election.\footnote{174}

\footnotetext[171]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[172]{PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/A/26/7: Letter to Carson, 20 March 1918.}
\footnotetext[173]{Ibid, D1507/A/29/27: Letter to Carson, 15 April 1919.}
By the early 1900s many unions had become moribund and Dublin city lacked any real industrial organization. Until 1894 Irish trade unionists attended the British Trades Union Congress, but a decision was taken to form the Irish Trade Union Congress (ITUC) to focus on purely Irish labour affairs. James Larkin’s arrival in Belfast in 1907 to organize the dock workers for the National Union of Dock Labourers and James Connolly’s return to Ireland in 1910 initiated a more structured political labour and trade union movement. The focus was on mobilising unskilled workers into large general unions to use collective strength and radical strike action to attain better working conditions and pay.¹⁷⁵

The Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) was established in 1909 and became the centre for the syndicalist-inspired Dublin Lockout in 1913 which radicalised Irish workers. A year before the ITUC at their meeting in Clonmel, Tipperary, established a political arm which was called the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party (ITUC&LP) and its intent was to participate in a Dublin parliament that would follow with the passing of home rule. They first tested their strength in Dublin in 1912 by putting forward eleven candidates in the Corporation elections. Only two were successful, with Unionists taking three seats and the Irish Party twenty-five.¹⁷⁶

The aims of the ITUC&LP were set out at the 1914 Congress when it was agreed that ‘labour unrest can only be ended by the abolition of the capitalist system of wealth production with its inherent injustice and poverty’.¹⁷⁷ Despite this Marxist-style ambition the organization took no part in the 1913 Lockout and as a result suffered heavy defeats in the municipal elections of January 1914.¹⁷⁸ A few months later it was decided to contest a by-election in the Dublin constituency of College Green. This was the first parliamentary seat contested by Labour, but procrastination and indecision led to Thomas Farren, the general secretary of the Transport Workers’ Union, being chosen as a candidate only days before the poll. He was defeated by the

¹⁷⁸ Irish Independent, 16 January 1915.
Irish Party who attained 2,455 votes to Farren’s 1,816. Vacillation and uncertainty became a trait within Labour that extended into the 1920s.

The main difficulty was that political labour remained an appendage of the trade unions and as Laffan points out, this was illustrated by the sequence of words in the movement’s official title. It was not until 1919 that the words ‘Labour Party’ featured before rather than after ‘Trade(s) Union Congress’.\textsuperscript{179} There were also concerns that the formation of an Irish Labour Party would antagonise members of the Ulster trade unions. In 1912, as O’Brien states, the Irish Labour party reflected the full gamut of Irish political opinion. Cleavages continued to exist between nationalist and Unionists, constitutionalists and separatists, artisan and general trade unions and old and new trade unions.\textsuperscript{180} From 1911 to 1915 Labour representation in local government was established on a solid basis in Dublin, but in the rest of Ireland they were active only in the larger towns. According to James Larkin Jr. political activity at the time was seen by the supporters of ‘new unionism’ as primarily another weapon in the industrial struggle.\textsuperscript{181} The formation of a united trade union movement was its primary objective.

The powerful ideological legacy left by Connolly after the Rising may have inspired the substantial increase in trade union membership, which rose from 5,000 to 120,000 between 1916 and 1920. In 1918 the ITGWU’s membership was 43,788 and the \textit{Manchester Guardian} reported on the ‘spread of the Labour organization throughout the length and breadth of Ireland’ which they maintained would be ‘a fact that must be reckoned with in the future’.\textsuperscript{182} Connolly was succeeded as leader by Thomas Johnson in 1917 who led a successful anti-conscription protest strike in 1918. Labour should have been able to emulate Sinn Féin’s anti-conscription success to capitalise on their strike actions during the conscription crisis, and while it gave impetus to the movement the general variation in political interests destabilized the party.\textsuperscript{183} There was also the difficulty of

\textsuperscript{179} Laffan, ‘In the Shadow’, p. 36.
\textsuperscript{181} Interview with James Larkin Jr, 3 February 1966 in Mitchell, \textit{Labour in Irish Politics}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{182} C.D. Greaves, \textit{The Irish Transport and General Workers’ Union: the formative years, 1909-1923} (Dublin, 1982), pp. 207-8; \textit{Manchester Guardian}, 3 September 1918.
\textsuperscript{183} O’Connor, ‘Labour and Politics 1830-1945: Colonisation and Mental Colonisation’ in Fintan Lane and Donal Ó Drisceoil (eds), \textit{Politics and the Irish Working Class, 1830-1945} (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 34.
inconsistency of trade union movements in the smaller towns of Ireland ‘who are at present unorganized either for industrial purposes or political’. Many towns of one thousand to ten thousand inhabitants had no trades’ union branches, where others had two or three societies (such as the Drapers’ Assistants). The National Executive planned to organize unions in these towns and rural districts to create local Trades and Labour Councils, but in 1918 this was yet to be activated.\textsuperscript{184}

In preparation for the 1918 general election P.T. Daly, under the auspices of the National Executive of the ITUC&LP, issued a circular with a list of questions. Trade union councils were asked whether constituencies in their district should be contested, what the financial responsibility would be, and what organizational work needed to be undertaken. The circular then honed in on the prospects for a local Labour representative to ask about the number of candidates required to run the district and how women voters could be organized and associated with the Labour Party.\textsuperscript{185} William O’Brien maintained that Labour was ‘a political party, independent, erect, free … we must bend at all events some of the energies to building up from within of our political machinery …’.\textsuperscript{186} He also called for securing ‘independent, able, strong, efficient and constructive’ Labour representation on ‘all our public elective bodies, both national and local’.\textsuperscript{187} There was, at this point, resolute determination to field candidates, but a lack of coherent order was evident in the acknowledgment that with ‘many places in the country calling out for organization there was absolutely none …’.\textsuperscript{188}

The disparity between the political organization and the trade unions continued with the result that labour was more of a movement in Ireland than an articulate political party. Johnson was still confident that the election could be contested and he released a circular on 20 September 1918 stating that Labour had ‘decided unanimously in favour of entering the field at the coming General Election … to provide an opportunity for the workers to declare their adhesion to the

\textsuperscript{184} NLI, ITUC&LP, Report of the Annual Congress held at City Hall, Waterford, 5\textsuperscript{th}, 6\textsuperscript{th} and 7\textsuperscript{th} August 1918, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{187} NLI, ITUC&LP, Twenty-fourth Report of the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party, p. 17: Chairman’s address.
\textsuperscript{188} Ibid, p. 19.
principles and policy of the Labour Party …’. 189 A directive from the National Executive instructed that trades councils should call a conference of trade unions in each constituency to decide whether Labour candidates should be nominated for the election. Nominated candidates had to be approved by the congress executive and they had to pledge their support of the constitution and pronouncements of the congress. Mitchell states that Labour voted for strict controls over the candidates, however they were also allowed to remain members of their unions if elected, but could not support other parties. 190

The decision was ultimately taken to contest four seats in Dublin – Harbour, College Green, St Patrick’s and St Michan’s – and five names were proposed and included James Larkin (he was in the USA at the time, but his name carried weight), Thomas MacPartlin, Thomas Farren, Louie Bennet (a female candidate) and William O’Brien. 191 With ideological divisions mounting between constitutional and separatist nationalism, adhering to the directive to withhold support from other parties proved problematic. Similarities in policy between Labour and Sinn Féin caused difficulties in constituencies causing many, particularly outside Dublin, not to field candidates. The Kilkenny Trades Council, for instance, disapproved of running a candidate or running Labour as a separate political party ‘being convinced that by doing so they would be doing the movement an immense disservice to itself and the country’. 192 Dublin candidates also had concerns and declared that they stood for a free and democratic workers’ republic, and maintained ‘the right of the Irish people to full, absolute and untrammelled self-determination …’. 193

To address the growing disquiet of labour members a pamphlet was issued, titled Sinn Féin and the Labour Movement. This elaborated on Labour’s national position, stating that ‘Sinn Féin may claim to be the national movement of Ireland … [but] the movement for National Independence cannot possibly hurt the Labour Movement, and the Labour Movement ought not to

189 NLI, Thomas Johnson Papers, MS 17,203: This was written under the auspices of the election subcommittee of the National Executive.
190 Mitchell, Labour in Irish Politics, p. 38.
191 NLI, MS 15,705-10, William O’Brien Diaries.
192 Ibid, William O’Brien papers, MS, 15,705: Diary. See also section on ‘abstention from Westminster’ in Chapter Four.
193 Irish Labour History Society: Voice of Labour, 26 October 1918.
hurt the National Movement’. In the background Labour and Sinn Féin began negotiations on the electoral contest and the possibility of an electoral pact was proposed for some constituencies. At a Sinn Féin Standing Committee meeting in July 1918 the suggestion was made that ‘if Labour put up a good man [for Wood Quay] Sinn Féin would support them’. Harry Boland was assigned as the Sinn Féin intermediary and instructed to arrange a conference with ‘representative Labour men’ in August 1918. Despite many attempts he eventually reported that ‘his efforts to bring about a conference with Labour were fruitless … that Labour intended to contest some fifteen seats and to declare for abstention from the English parliament but not as a principle but as an expedient’. Labour’s election intentions were ‘discussed at length’ by Sinn Féin.

In the end Sinn Féin proceeded with their own ratification of candidates for Clontarf, College Green, Harbour, St Michan’s, St James’s, St Patrick’s and St Stephen’s Green. Conflicting motions were put forward by Sinn Féin throughout the month of November on Labour’s position. George Gavan Duffy proposed that ‘at least 10 seats be given to labour at the present election’ but Seán T. O’Kelly vehemently ruled out any form of co-operation maintaining that all seats were to be contested by Sinn Féin. Despite warnings from Boland that Sinn Féin could not afford to antagonize Labour, an audacious pledge was drafted that all Labour candidates had to adhere to:

I hereby pledge myself to work for the establishment of an Independent Irish Republic and that I will accept nothing less than complete separation from England in settlement of Ireland’s claim: that I will abstain from attending the English parliament: and that if I am ordered by the Labour Congress to attend the English parliament I will place my resignation in the hands of my constituents.

195 SFSCM, 23 July 1918.
196 For further information on Harry Boland’s task of ‘defusing Labour’s challenge’ see Fitzpatrick, Harry Boland’s Irish Revolution (Cork, 2003), pp. 106-08. Fitzpatrick correctly maintains that Boland’s part in the ‘parleys’ between Sinn Féin and Labour ‘was ambiguous’.
197 SFSCM, 19 August, 12 and 30 September 1918.
198 Ibid, 30 September 1918.
199 Ibid, 7 November 1918.
This sparked confusion amongst Labour members and caused consternation amongst some within Sinn Féin. The secretary of the Sinn Féin College Green Ceantar disagreed with the pledge and refused to offer it to the local Labour candidate.²⁰⁰

Signing such a pledge and being subject to Sinn Féin authority was a step too far for Labour. They were keen to have their own policies and principles, espoused by Connolly in 1916, included in the formation of any new state. Editorial comments in newspapers also raised the point that the economic and social concerns of Labour were a luxury that needed to be postponed until the political struggles were overcome.²⁰¹ Furthermore, alarm was raised that trade union members would vote for Sinn Féin over a Labour candidate. A delegate at the special conference stated that ‘he had heard organized bodies of labour down south stating that they would vote Sinn Féin against any man’.²⁰² The fact that Labour could not field a sufficient number of candidates to affect their political programme was evident in Johnson’s admission that the election of five or six or ten or twenty MPs was not the end purpose of Labour.²⁰³

Sinn Féin’s doctrinaire approach and the internal conflicting attitudes towards divergent nationalist approaches to self-government were not the only complications facing Labour. Widespread disorganization also prompted an escape from the stresses of the general election. Labour ultimately capitulated to all the internal and external pressures, but they needed to publicise a viable explanation (or excuse). Johnson called a special conference of the ITUC&LP on 1 November and made a grand and elaborate announcement to enlighten on the reason for Labour’s withdrawal from the electoral contest. He explained that Labour perceived a difference between the election that was originally anticipated and the reality of the one they were facing into. They had intended to nominate candidates for a ‘war election’, but that the current ‘peace election’ (because the Great War had ended) called for a ‘demonstration of unity’ on the question of self-determination to allow voters cast in favour of home rule or republic. The workers of Ireland, Johnston stated, ‘would willingly sacrifice, for a brief period, their aspirations towards political

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 24 October 1918.
²⁰¹ Freeman’s Journal, 18 September 1918; Sligo Champion, 12 October 1918: Sinn Féin notes; and Laffan, ‘In the Shadow’, pp. 36-7.
²⁰³ Ibid, pp. 102-3.
power’. McPartlin, seconder to the motion, maintained that Labour workers would continue to unite ‘for the fight that would come in the future’.204

Labour over-estimated the electoral ability of Sinn Féin and could have secured many of the votes from those who failed to turnout in 1918.205 As Farrell states, ‘they did not recognise in it a political weapon that might be captured by a vigorous labour leadership and shaped into a socialist sword’.206 On the positive side, Labour’s abstention in 1918 allowed for the inclusion of some of their socialist principles in the First Dáil’s democratic programme.207

Labour’s ‘brief period’ of national political absence lasted until the general election of 1922. Prior to that, a political voice awakened at the local level for the municipal and rural elections. As early as October 1918 Daly had asserted that Labour needed to focus on contesting the metropolitan seats in the next local elections. By mid-1919 the ITGWU had matured into a sizeable body which included 959 small farmers and by now the Labour Party was powerless to resist their encroachment. Joining a union had also become a condition for securing employment. Pat Purcell from Queen’s County recalled that a firm of builders, Connolly and Cullen from Kilkenny, were contracted to carry out work on the Munster & Leinster Bank. When he and a colleague ‘went to them looking for work’ they were refused ‘because we weren’t in a union’. This motivated the establishment of an ITGWU branch in their locality.208

Candidates were nominated through the trades councils such as in Galway where the various trades and labour bodies held a meeting to select representatives for the urban council elections. To lure support an article was issued that carried an appeal to voters for ‘a clean administration’. In true socialist style the author stated that the greedy profiteers and landlords have had full control of the steering gear, and have run the Urban Council, of course, to the benefit of their own pockets. As for the working class, they forget all about them until the election comes around.209

204 ITUC&LP, Report of Special Conference, 1 and 2 November 1918, Mansion House, Dublin, p. 103-5.
205 See chapter five.
207 Dáil Éireann Debates, F:1, 21 January 1919.
208 Nationalist and Leinster Times, supplement June 1993: SIPTU Celebrates 75th Anniversary.
209 Connacht Tribune, 10 January 1920: article by Stephen Cremin.
A conference was called in Dublin in October 1919 to ensure strong central control of candidates and election propaganda. Farren stated that this conference would define Labour candidates, pledge them to act as a distinct Labour party, ‘and remain independent of all other parties when elected’. To be eligible to stand, a Labour candidate had to be nominated and financed by a legitimate labour body and/or be bona-fide members of trade unions selected by a recognized Labour conference. The candidate also had to consent to adhere to the decisions of the Trade and Labour Council and to ‘sit, act and vote with other Labour representatives on the Council as a Labour Party in the carrying out of these decisions’. Labour, too, were emulating and implementing past effective Irish Party methods. Their entry into political contests sparked political concern and voter interest. The *Anglo-Celt* reported that the participation of ‘fourteen workers’ had ‘caused much fluttering in the dove cotes of the reactionaries’. Workers were called on to ‘down tools’ at 1 p.m. on election day to cast their votes.210

Labour and Sinn Féin co-operated effectively in 1920 in a number of constituencies. In Cork city, for instance, the parties combined to secure control of the Corporation as the ITGWU had received fourteen nominations and Sinn Féin forty-two. However, not all trade unions were happy with the amalgamation as the Cork District Trades and Labour Council ran thirteen candidates in an attempt to defeat the coalition. In Londonderry constitutional nationalists, Sinn Féin and Labour joined forces to defeat Unionists and they successfully took control of the council. Labour’s eighteen per cent first preference votes in January 1920 (Sinn Féin secured twenty-seven per cent) proved that withdrawal in 1918 had not necessarily resulted in long term difficulties. Labour had fielded and successfully secured enough candidates to become the largest opposition party in Dublin Corporation. In 120 urban districts, Labour candidates were nominated and the results across the country as a whole returned 341 Labour candidates with 116 trade unionists also returned (although nominated by other political organisations).

The pattern in the rural elections of June 1920 was very different as Sinn Féin came in strongly to defeat almost all other contestants, taking 338 of the 393 boards of guardians, rural district councils and county councils. In many instances, outside Ulster, there had been no contest.

210 *Anglo-Celt*, 10 January 1920.
Labour’s weaker performance was either due to a lack of industrial interests outside the major cities which worked against them, or the fact that Sinn Féin was strong in rural areas, or both. The chairman of Sligo District Council maintained that Sinn Féin’s return ‘was a sufficient answer to the British Government to clear out’. Even though Labour had aspired to centrally control the mechanisms for candidate selection, their inefficiency in mobilising support at the local constituency level sometimes resulted in a scarcity of candidates, particularly in 1918 and June 1920.

Candidate selection was vitally important for all parties in their campaigns to secure votes, but it was only one aspect of electioneering. Raising funds, incorporating a variety of propaganda methods and steadfast themes, as will be seen in the coming chapters, also proved necessary for a party’s potential electoral success. Investigating the methods of raising finances to conduct election campaigns is central to determining the importance each party placed on electioneering and propaganda, and this will be investigated in the next chapter.

211 *Irish Times*, 19 June 1920.
2. Funding

Propaganda’s efficacy as a tool to enable a party to achieve hegemonic domination rendered it essential to all parties in Ireland. Raising a propaganda budget to conduct an effective electoral campaign was necessary, and conceiving clever strategies to raise these funds became paramount. Generating handbills, posters, political ephemera, and placing advertisements in newspapers all cost money. Devising successful propaganda also required initiative as not all propaganda was paid for. Raising money for elections also fostered awareness and apprised members or supporters on party policies.

Sinn Féin, Labour and Unionists operated skilled and coherent fundraising campaigns although they differed on method, sources and distribution. Affiliation fees and voluntary donations were collected through the formation of clubs and associations which were tactically controlled by central organisations. The Irish Party, on the other hand, scrambled at home and abroad to plug an ailing balance sheet. Members of all clubs and associations formed part of the propaganda function, as will be seen in later chapters, by distributing leaflets, canvassing for candidates and acting as ‘peace patrols’. Apportioning their financial gains into electoral propaganda campaigns was emphasized by Sinn Féin and Unionists, whereas Labour focussed on reinforcing trade union movements.

In this chapter the tactics to accumulate funds to back candidates and finance elections will be explored. Some of the questions to be examined are: how did parties garner funds in Ireland and how much was raised? Were there disparities between the Irish Party and Sinn Féin, and between nationalist parties and Unionists? And, did the constituency campaigns prove beneficial for the highest spender? The initiatives to raise funds gives insight into the existing supports each party held domestically and in other countries outside Ireland such as the USA.
Candidates and parties incurred personal administration expenses (office rental, postage, travel, accommodation costs and so on) and electoral administrative expenses.\(^1\) For the later, the total administrative charges in each constituency were divided equally among all the candidates, but for all other expenses they were self or party reliant.\(^2\) Under the Representation of the People Act 1918, the maximum permitted administrative expenditure became 5\(d\) per elector in a borough constituency and 7\(d\) in a county. Therefore, if the electorate was 60,000 and there were joint candidates, the maximum total or combined administrative expenses of the two joint candidates for a borough constituency would be £937 10s (£468 15s each).\(^3\) Candidates’ personal expenses did not come within the statutory limit.

In Britain in 1909 a successful challenge in the courts (the Osborne judgement) against financial support from trade unions to Labour MPs led directly to the introduction of an annual payment of £400 for MPs (except Ministers) in 1911.\(^4\) Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, stated that this was ‘not a remuneration, it is not a recompense, it is not even a salary. It is just an allowance, … to enable men to come here … but who cannot be here because their means do not allow it’.\(^5\) Irish Party and Unionist MPs benefited, but for the former the introduction of the payment was controversial and roused condemnation in Sinn Féin propaganda. Laurence Ginnell, for instance, remarked that ‘it was an evil day for Ireland that the £400 was granted to Irish members.’ In turn, Irish Party supporters defended their MPs arguing that:

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\(^1\) If a candidate did not successfully poll (exclusive of spoilt votes) this fee was forfeit. A candidate required one eight (12.5\%) of the votes cast to retain this deposit. Furthermore, the deposit was not returned to a successful candidate unless he took the Oath as a Member of Parliament, so all Sinn Féin candidates in 1918 lost their deposits.

\(^2\) Candidates in uncontested constituencies had substantially lower costs.


\(^5\) HC, PD, Series V, Vol. 29, c. 1383: 10 August 1911: David Lloyd George on the Payment of Members.
They [Sinn Féin] were making a lot of bother too about £400 a year, but did any of them think that £400 a year was the reason why John Redmond was their leader in Parliament? Could he not make £1,000 or £2,000 a year if he devoted himself to his profession and not bother at all about Parliament?6

The £400 was intended to cover both personal income and expenses, but as will be seen later the Irish Party and Unionists had to raise substantial funds to promote candidates yet to be elected and promote party manifestos and policies. Prior to the allowance, party MPs received small stipends from party funds, now this could be redirected to cover electoral expenses and augment financial support for prospective candidates.

By 1920 new parties such as the Municipal Reform Party and Ratepayers Associations also contested the local government elections, but due to their small numbers or divergent views they will only be interwoven into the analysis. Computing a full account of receipts and expenditure for parties is unfeasible due to inconsistent methods of documenting income and expenditure, an arbitrary application of finances to fund propaganda, clustering of expenditures of which propaganda formed only part, and belated applications for expenses accrued. It is highly likely that there were many clandestine donations for all parties as some benefactors may not have wanted to be publicly associated with a particular party for commercial or personal reasons and others may simply not have wanted it known that they had switched allegiance. Therefore, investigating the collection and dispersal of funds confronts the historian with difficulties because of the lack of transparency.

### 2.1: The Irish Party

The organizational changes within the Irish Party, new leaders and the entry into an era of competitive elections altered the approach to fundraising. In the early 1800s, as Conor Cruise O’Brien highlights, ‘candidates were substantial people capable of defraying their own expenses’.7

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6 *Longford Leader*, 21 April 1917: Laurence Ginnell in Newtowncashel and Fr J. Dowdall, P.P. in Legan.
7 O’Brien, *Parnell and His Party*, p. 137.
By the late 1800s candidates had come on board from outside this elite class so the formation of a system to provide election funds became essential.\(^8\)

Initially candidates began to obtain funds through small individual payments from the Land League, such as T.M. Healy who received £290 in 1880.\(^9\) The National League subsequently became a source of revenue, and a total of £1,267 was provided for by-election expenses in 1883. The result was victory for the Irish Party in the six by-elections held in Monaghan, Tipperary, Mallow, Wexford, Waterford and Sligo. The total Irish Party funds from the National League for elections before the 1885 general election was £2,325.\(^10\) However, as this general election approached it became necessary to establish a special parliamentary fund where money was successfully raised through the League and in the USA. By the end of 1885, £17,950 was accumulated, and of that £14,610 was distributed, or as Timothy Harrington stated, the campaign cost ‘about £15,000’.\(^11\)

Under the leadership of Redmond and prior to the Great War the Irish Party created the Home Rule Fund and the amount collected in 1913 provided the party with £20,718. At the thirty-first meeting of the UIL it was claimed that this collection ‘beats all records and is nearly three times the amount subscribed in the very height of the Land League agitation’. In the euphoria of such riches and being blissfully ignorant of Ireland’s impending entry into the Great War, the party announced that there was to be no appeal for funds in 1914 because of ‘the generosity of the Irish people’.\(^12\) Since the formation of the UIL, the Irish Party depended on their revenue, and they in turn relied on the general support of members at constituency level through the provision of

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\(^8\) See Tadhg Moloney, *Limerick Constitutional Nationalism, 1898-1918: Change and Continuity* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 96-108 for information on the Irish Parliamentary Party fund to support MPs at Westminster in the early 1900s.

\(^9\) T.M. Healy, *Letters and Leaders*, pp. 95, 100

\(^10\) NLI, Harrington Papers, MS 16,292: Harrington affidavit. Note: All funds and monies in this chapter have been rounded to the nearest pound value. There were 20 shillings in a pound, and a pound was 240 pence before decimalization.

\(^11\) Ibid, J.F.X. O’Brien papers, MS 13,418-13,477: letters, memoranda, account books, etc., c. 1879-1917, relating to the financial and other affairs of the party including the Parliamentary Cash Book. Expenditure on 40 contests totalled £8,141, averaging about £200 per contest for the 80 contested seats — although a few candidates paid their own expenses, and candidates did not receive the same amounts in each constituency – payments ranged from £25 to £200, and to £475 for East Donegal. For a more detailed breakdown of Irish Party revenue in the late 1800s see Cruise O’Brien, *Parnell and his Party*, pp. 133-39; *Freeman’s Journal*, 17 December 1885.

\(^12\) NLI, UIL, MS 708: Minutes of the National Directory, 7 February 1913: Home Rule Fund.
affiliation fees. In 1912 £2,764 was raised, £2,519 in 1913 and in 1914 branch affiliation fees increased by £50 to £2,570. Between the introduction of the third home rule bill and the UIL meeting of 1914 there had been an overall slight drop in affiliation fees amounting to approximately £193. Nonetheless, the Irish Party could claim at their thirty-second meeting in January 1914 that the UIL ‘was never more widespread, more efficient, or more powerful than it is today’.

By 1916 matters had substantially changed and at the thirty-fourth meeting of the UIL (held in February 1916 – during the war, but before the Easter Rising) the party announced an expansion of affiliated branches since 1915. This increase of 312 branches – Cork (33), Donegal (28), Limerick (25), Louth (17), Kerry and Sligo (15 each), Armagh and Mayo (14 each), Cavan and Tyrone (12 each), Dublin and Derry (11 each), Down (10), Waterford (9), Meath and King’s County (8 each), Queen’s County (7), Carlow, Fermanagh, Galway and Leitrim (6 each) and Wicklow (3) – accrued an extra £1,000 in affiliation fees. Yet, as Paul Bew argues, there was ‘a degree of rustiness’ in the League machinery; ‘throughout 1915 Irish MPs were increasingly frank about the weakness of the UIL structure’.

To remedy this weakness a national organizer was sent to South Longford to revitalize the League in advance of the expected 1917 by-election. However, an assertive propaganda campaign and the resultant success of Joseph McGuinness saw financial contributions moving to Sinn Féin. In 1918 Irish Party election committees were established or reawakened to garner funds to finance the necessary canvassing and campaigning for the general election. In Westmeath, for example, where businessman Patrick J. Weymes was unanimously selected at a UIL convention, an election committee was appointed and £150 was contributed to election funds (including £50 from Weymes himself). The list of donations demonstrated that the breakdown of funds was one payment of £10, nine of £5, nine of £2, seven of £1 and 2 contributed 5s and 3.5s respectively. Aside from monies raised by T.P. O’Connor in the USA, which will be discussed later, this piecemeal style of contribution was the manner in which most of the election monies for the Irish Party was raised.

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13 Ibid, Minutes of thirty-second meeting (fourteenth annual meeting), 29 January 1914.
15 Anglo-Celt, 30 November 1918.
In November 1918 Dillon opened the Irish Party election campaign appealing for funds by announcing that ‘under the new law electoral contests will be less expensive than they have been’. But, an immediate qualification added that since all the seats in Ireland were to be contested ‘the present general election will require a larger sum than has been required [heretofore]...’. Impetus was needed to galvanize support in a short timeframe. Under the auspices of the ‘Irish National Trustees’ a fund was established and Dillon appealed for subscriptions, and acknowledged receipt of £2,951 by November 1918. This amount was followed by a list of 173 further subscribers that contributed from £50 (only 2) to £10 (only 6) to smaller sums of 5s. Twenty-nine had contributed a sum of between £3 and £5, the majority contributed between £1 and £2 5s (96), with the rest coming in smaller values.\textsuperscript{16} Contributors in this instance came mainly from Dublin and areas of Ulster, and a few interestingly referred to themselves as ‘A Friend’ or ‘A Hibernian’ – evidently not all wanted their party affiliation known publicly, perhaps fearing intimidation or loss of business from opposing electors.\textsuperscript{17}

In the same month, Dillon praised the small farmers in Loughglynn, North Roscommon who had donated to the Irish Party cause ‘without any outside appeal or organization’. He hoped to create optimism and encouraged subscribers in other parts of the country ‘to take action spontaneously in support of the Fund’. The nationalists of the townland of Kiltobranks subscribed £15 even though they had ‘no representatives for North Roscommon to look after the interests of the people of this district’ in the hope that their contribution would ‘secure one at the general election’.\textsuperscript{18}

By early December an urgent appeal in the same newspaper requested that all outstanding funds be forwarded, indicating that collecting and releasing funds from constituencies was slow.\textsuperscript{19} For instance, the St Patrick’s Division had gathered £243 by December plus £190 from their first instalment and £55 in the second instalment with further subscriptions still to be taken up just two days prior to polling. Seven days preceding the election Westmeath had raised £131, and

\textsuperscript{16} Freeman’s Journal, 16 November 1918: Letter signed by Patrick O’Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe, John Fitzgibbon, MP for South Mayo and Dillon himself.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, 19 November 1918. Again, contributions came mainly in smaller denominations of 15s, 10s and 3s.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, 9 December 1918.
constitutional nationalists in the village of Augher, South Tyrone had raised £7 and maintained that ‘there is no waning here in the spirit of loyalty and devotion to the great national principles for which we stand’.20 These examples demonstrate that the Irish Party was able to secure funds prior to the general election, but they came in in dribs and drabs, and often too late in the day to mount a constituency-funded and focused poster or pamphlet campaign.

The Irish Party also hoped to raise funds from previously lucrative sources in the USA. By 1900 it had been estimated that 4,862,904 Americans were Irish-born or first generation Irish, but by 1920 there was scarcely a million natives of Ireland, and many of the other millions with Irish parentage were no longer self-consciously Irish.21 Most emigrants from Ireland in the mid-1800s had been young, single, uneducated Catholic unskilled male labourers, but by the early 1900s second and third generation Irish had become more upwardly mobile.22 By 1918 the UIL’s organization in America had collapsed, eliminating a major source of funding.23 Redmond’s defence of the British war effort had negatively affected his popularity among Irish-Americans, particularly within the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Michael Ryan, the leader of the UIL in the USA, and publications like the Irish World had withdrawn their support for the Irish Party. The latter stated in 1915 that for Redmond to ‘fritter away any part of her [Ireland’s] military resources by going to England’s defence would be treason of the blackest kind’.24 The UIL’s decline was so rapid that by 1915, in a complete reversal of fortune, the Irish Party had to finance the American organization.25

20 Ibid, 7 December 1918, and 20 December 1918: letter from John Skeffington, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone to Joseph Devlin.
21 F.M. Carroll, American Opinion and the Irish Question, 1910-1923, A Study in Opinion and Policy (Dublin, 1978), p. 3. These figures were based on the 1900 census, and did not take into account second or third generation Irish-Amercians; see also Fitzpatrick, Harry Boland, p. 137: The 1920 census reported 1,037,234 Americans of Irish birth and 2971,688 with at least one parent of Irish origin: USA Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920 (9 vols, Washington, 1922), ii, pp. 693, 897 in Fitzpatrick.
23 For the collapse of the UIL in the USA see NLI, JR, MS PC 262(1); O’Brien, William O’Brien, pp. 215-16.
24 Irish World, 15 August 1914.
Fear of Sinn Féin’s potential electoral success, and realising that funds needed to be bolstered, the sixty-nine-year-old T.P. O’Connor travelled to the USA in 1917 in the hope of expeditiously revitalising past connections to source money from former advocates. Doubt quickly dawned that they would rally to the party cause. O’Connor aimed to ‘get the necessary funds at private meetings and not to take the risk of any public gatherings’ no doubt in an attempt to avoid public confrontations with or heckling from Sinn Féin supporters. He found and admitted that the party still had some friends ‘stalwart and loyal as ever’ in the county associations and from branches of the Hibernians. Samuel Insull, Chicago’s leading industrialist, was one and he enthusiastically provided money and propaganda, promising $25,000 to O’Connor. The Irish Fellowship Club, at a meeting in December with 150-200 in attendance, also promised $25,000, although there was a lack of confidence that this would be forthcoming.\textsuperscript{26} O’Connor consistently complained that past friends of the Irish Party were now hostile or were largely inarticulate and inactive, while those of Sinn Féin were ‘vocal and had several [news]papers’.\textsuperscript{27} In a letter from Washington he expressed his concerns to Dillon stating that ‘they [the Irish] seem to be just back in 1846; … From the very first hour of my landing I was given proof of the hatred for us as well as for England’. He remarked that the hotel manageress where they were staying had slighted his travelling companion Richard Hazleton (MP for North Louth) by saying that ‘we were not real Irishmen’. Another affront came from the Irish World when they compared O’Connor to Benedict Arnold, casting him in the role of traitor to Ireland.

To add to his difficulties personal funds were also running low by December 1917 and he requested that Redmond ‘put immediately £800 to my credit at the Bank of Scotland’.\textsuperscript{28} While lobbying for party funds O’Connor had to earn his own living and to do this he wrote articles for various newspapers. By early 1918 he could no longer raise personal funds from this source because Sinn Féin activists had been thwarting his efforts in many cities by holding their own


\textsuperscript{27} TCD, JD, Mss 6741/411: T.P. O’Connor to John Dillon, 10 July 1917.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid, Mss 6741/430: O’Connor to Dillon, 28 December 1917.
fundraising campaigns – although how much they gained is unknown. The impact of the conscription crisis in 1918 also affected his ability to raise funds, as did news of the ‘toll of wounded and dead every day’ in the Great War.29

O’Connor was successful in some areas of the USA because of the growing seriousness of the war which made it more difficult for Clan na Gael to openly avow hostile sentiments against England or appeal for support for an Irish rebellion. The Clan had worked closely with German-Americans to defeat the Arbitration Treaty of 1911, but American opinion generally did not support Germany after 1914.30 At the outbreak of the war, most of the USA news originated from English sources which recounted sensational details of German atrocities. Irish Party support of the war should have assisted O’Connor, but he lamented that the ‘money is coming in with dreadful slowness’. O’Connor made assurances that there were promises of a further $5,000, plus subscriptions of $1,000 from several party supporters. He also believed that a considerable number of smaller subscriptions ranging from $100 to $500 were imminent, and was confident that the total raised from Chicago would be $100,000.

By December 1917 he claimed he had accumulated $50,000 and assured those at home that if he reached his expectations the Irish Party would attain £30,000.31 If £30,000 was obtained this should have gone a long way to augmenting the Irish Party election fund. O’Connor continued his USA tour with some level of success (although perhaps not the £30,000), and he vowed to remain – celebrating his seventieth birthday there – until he had exceeded £40-50,000. In January 1918 he dispatched £3,000 and maintained that the total sum sent to date was £13,000. Again, he aspired to raise a further £3-4,000 assuring its arrival within the week, and was confident that £10,000 would

29 Ibid, Mss 6741/501: O’Connor to Dillon, 20 June 1918.
31 TCD, JD, Mss 6741/430: O’Connor to Dillon, 28 December 1917.
be accrued by the end of the month, with a total of $20,000 by June/July 1918. O’Connor commented that his sole source for funds was ‘rich and patriotic Americans’.\(^{32}\)

Meanwhile back in Ireland Dillon was despondent about Irish Party chances in the general election. He pleaded with O’Connor for ‘financial support to fight the seventy or eighty contests Sinn Féiners are forcing upon us’. Yet, in November 1918 he stated that ‘money is coming in very well indeed in Ireland’ although he highlighted that this was ‘ear-marked for the actual expenses of candidates in the different constituencies’.\(^{33}\) His expectation seemed to have been that O’Connor’s fundraising efforts would underwrite the other election expenses, such as propaganda, in order to mount ‘an effective fight’.\(^{34}\) He still held out for a substantial sum from USA benefactors, because ‘with £50,000, or better £100,000, of American money and the moral support of the American-Irish I think this country could be brought back to sanity and the constitutional movement saved’.\(^{35}\)

By 12 December, the Irish National Trustees again earnestly appealed for funds ‘to enable the Irish Party to meet the expenses of the approaching contests’. The total amount received had been £7,715, and this was added to by further donations. Bequests by various county nationalist organizations came in larger denominations such as the first instalment from Queen’s County amounting to £165. Nationalists in Lurgan and District contributed £126, London City Committee £123, Co. Louth Nationalists second instalment was £100, Portadown (Armagh) per Irish News £87, and the rest arrived in smaller sums from UIL organizations or individuals.\(^{36}\)

Motivating supporters across all UIL branches to contribute generously to the election fund was a key propaganda exercise of the Irish Party. The Mid-Armagh Executive of the UIL took up the baton and passed a motion in early December calling on all nationalists of the division ‘at once and generously to subscribe to the fund being raised for the expenses of the General Election’.\(^{37}\) Church gate collections were held in many parishes to garner financial support for the local candidate. In South Meath, for example, it was hoped that nationalists would ‘rise to the occasion

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\(^{32}\) Ibid, Mss 6741/444: O’Connor to Dillon, 29 January 1918.

\(^{33}\) Ibid, Mss 6741/552: Dillon to O’Connor, 22 November 1918.

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

\(^{35}\) Ibid, Mss 6741, Dillon to T.P. O’Connor, 3 June 1917.

\(^{36}\) *Freeman’s Journal*, 12 December 1918

\(^{37}\) Ibid, 4 December 1918.
and provide the sinews of war for the coming struggle’. Where held, these collections proved rewarding, as Thomas Nagle, honorary secretary of the Kilrush UIL Branch in West Clare, said he could not remember ‘a more generous and spontaneous response as we had on Sunday’ where ‘the collection was a record one’. Church gate collections were also useful as a propaganda exercise in alerting voters on candidates and party aims, and in 1918 there was a guaranteed audience for speeches. Funds were also sourced from UIL branches in Great Britain where, for instance, the Irishwomen’s Committee in London provided £29 to raise a total subscription of £51 by early December.

By 11 December 1918 the total received was £8,968. Not all benefactors had desired publication of their names in the national press so some contributions were unpublished, making it difficult to assess the overall Irish Party gain. For instance, Alderman Alfred (Alfie) Byrne, the Irish Party candidate in Dublin’s Harbour Division advertised in the Freeman’s Journal appealing for donations from ‘friends and supporters’ to cover election expenses, and assured prospective contributors that ‘subscriptions will be acknowledged privately and not to the press (unless desired)’. If we accept that O’Connor raised £13,000 and perhaps another £1-2,000 in his final months in the USA, and add this to the £9-10,000 collected by Dillon, the Irish Party entered the General Election with approximately £23,000. This was not an insubstantial sum. However, with eighty seats to be challenged in the 1918 election (twenty-five uncontested by the Irish Party) this gave them only £287 per contested seat to mount a defence. While these numbers are conservative estimates, they also do not take into account any of the monies spent on the by-elections during this time.

Another difficulty that the Irish Party faced was their failing party organ, the Freeman’s Journal, and this consumed party finances. The newspaper had gone into rapid decline since 1912, largely because of competition from the Irish Independent, and because of the destruction of its

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38 Ibid, 28 November 1918.
39 Ibid., 11 December 1918.
40 For details of Irish Party contributions see Freeman’s Journal, 12 December 1918, pp. 5,7.
41 Ibid, 12 December 1918.
premises in Easter Week 1916.\textsuperscript{42} However in June 1917 Dillon confessed to O’Connor that he needed a further £10,000 to carry the \textit{Freeman’s Journal} on through another year.\textsuperscript{43} By the end of 1918 the \textit{Freeman} was making a loss of over £100 a week, and even Dillon had to admit that seventy-five per cent was due to bad management and twenty-five per cent to the changed situation after the election.\textsuperscript{44} The Irish Party simply did not have enough finances to rescue a newspaper and fund an election campaign. Election expenses (detailed later in this and following chapters) highlight that substantial funds were needed by all parties to generate and disseminate challenging and adversarial propaganda.

Disorder in leadership and fiscal liabilities rendered the propaganda efforts of the Irish Party impotent, leaving candidates to fend for themselves. As will be seen later, this resulted in haphazard campaigns and asymmetry of themes, and despondency quickly took root. By 1920 the Party had virtually disappeared as a coherent force (but constitutional nationalists still contested for seats), Sinn Féin had fully awakened, and Labour had taken up its mantle to represent the working classes. The number of elected candidates for the municipal elections in January 1920 was as follows:\textsuperscript{45}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Province & Total members elected & Unionist & Sinn Féin & Labour & Nationalist & Reform & Independents \\
\hline
ULSTER & 623 & 289 & 93 & 109 & 94 & 5 & 33 \\
\hline
LEINSTER & 590 & 57 & 206 & 151 & 69 & 62 & 45 \\
\hline
MUNSTER & 487 & 7 & 207 & 110 & 60 & 37 & 66 \\
\hline
CONNAUGHT & 106 & 2 & 44 & 24 & 15 & 4 & 17 \\
\hline
ALL IRELAND & 1806 & 355 & 550 & 394 & 238 & 108 & 161 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Elected candidates for 1920 Municipal Elections}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{42} See chapter three. See also Brian Farrell, \textit{Communications and Community in Ireland} (Dublin, 1984), pp. 24-26.
\textsuperscript{43} Lyons, \textit{John Dillon}. pp. 419-420.
\textsuperscript{44} TCD, JD, Mss 6730: Dillon to T.P. O’Connor, 20 February and 10 May 1919.
\textsuperscript{45} Results published in \textit{Irish Times}, \textit{Irish Independent} and \textit{Cork Examiner}, 20 January 1920. See Appendix C for full breakdown.
As evidenced from table 2.1, the number of constitutional nationalist candidates had reduced drastically, becoming half that of Sinn Féin and with 117 lesser candidates elected than Unionists, but they had not been completed annihilated. Unfortunately, there is little information regarding fundraising by these candidates as their campaigns seem to be largely self-financed or financed by the local UIL (if they had selected the candidate).

The Cork Ratepayers’ Association, at a meeting of their committee in December 1919, maintained that £100 was required to defray elections expenses. They opened a local election fund and invited subscriptions from ratepayers towards it. This provides some indication of the minimum funding required by candidates intent on securing seats in 1920. The expenses incurred for the local elections were substantially less than that of a general election. Far less literature was needed to sway local votes, evidenced by a remark in the *Irish Times* of 3 January 1920, which stated that ‘up to the present the election has not been marked by any exceptional display of election literature’. Unlike Sinn Féin and the Unionist Party, constitutional nationalists were now leaderless and no longer functioned as a party force, so no central authority managed a fundraising initiative.

### 2.2: Sinn Féin

During the North Roscommon by-election Sinn Féin became aware of the importance of accumulating finances to successfully contest elections, and by May 1917 a fund was created to organize clubs and meet expenses. To challenge a seat in the South Longford by-election – a constituency that had always favoured an Irish Party candidate – Sinn Féin mounted an aggressive fundraising campaign through the pages of *Nationality*. £1,288 was speedily raised from contributions that ranged from small amounts up to £50 from all parts of the country. The expenses accrued during this electoral contest amounted to £491, leaving a surplus of £797 which

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47 £50 was donated by the Working Committee of Limerick Nationalists and the Executive of Sinn Féin in Cork: *Irish Independent, 4 May 1917, Nationality, 5 May 1917, and Factionist, 17 May 1917.*

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was then directed towards the East Clare campaign.\footnote{Laffan, \textit{The Resurrection}, p. 100.} In October 1917 these funds had exceeded £2,000 and by the October convention Sinn Féin affiliation fees had reached £1,010, subscriptions £1,988, and £239 had been gained from the resourceful sale of membership cards and literature. The expenses accrued were £1,034 for organising, £378 for printing, and election expenses at Longford £491, Clare £766, Kilkenny £210, leaving a balance of £1,272.\footnote{\textit{Irish Independent}, 26 October 1917.} An adroit fundraising campaign in these early days of the by-elections positioned Sinn Féin as a serious electoral contender.

Sinn Féin was also the first and only party to establish a dedicated Department of Propaganda at No. 6 Harcourt Street, Dublin, in April 1918 that was staffed with paid workers. Robert Brennan became the first director of publicity earning £5 a week, with £1 5s for a boy assistant, £4 for the chief assistant and £1 10s for a typist. The advantage was the centralization of propaganda efforts and some degree of control over finances until the Standing Committee was established – responsibility for managing finances came under their remit in January 1918.\footnote{SFSCM, 20 May 1919; Laffan, \textit{The Resurrection}, p. 177.}

The aggregate funds were sufficient for the by-elections, but Sinn Féin’s determination for victory in the 1918 general election necessitated collecting larger amounts. The derisory sums available in Ireland inspired the party to seek alternative sources, so in similar fashion to the Irish Party before them Sinn Féin looked outwards – to Britain, Australia and the USA. The Irish in Britain were largely unskilled or semi-skilled workers and it was only with the rise of labour that Irish workers became more organized.\footnote{For a far more detailed account of the Irish in Britain from 1871-21 see David Fitzpatrick, ‘The Irish in Britain 1871-21’ in W.E. Vaughan (ed), \textit{A New History of Ireland, Ireland under the Union 1870-1921} (Oxford 1989), pp.653-702.} However, Sinn Féin had some experience in Britain as Art Ó Briain had created the Irish National Relief Fund in London after the 1916 Rising and later he established the Irish Self-Determination League of Great Britain. The former organization mainly collected funds for the relief of distress in Ireland and the latter was more propagandistic, organising large nationalist demonstrations.\footnote{NLI, Art Ó Briain papers, MS 8436/27, 8422/11 and 8435/20: O’Brien, for example, had organized a demonstration in London’s Trafalgar Square for the release of political prisoners.}
By 1920 targeting Britain became important because the circulation of news from Ireland to a British and international audience was dependent on newspaper correspondents who were resident in London. This proved costly as it required both travel and the issue of pamphlets through these sources to ‘practically every European country as well as the USA, Canada, South America, South Africa, Australia and Japan’. In November 1919 Sinn Féin’s Propaganda Department had received £300 and of this travel to London cost £89, printing of pamphlets for the domestic and international market cost £28, postage £94, and newspapers and photographs £19, giving a total expenditure of £230 with additional costs including rent and office fittings at £46. By June 1920 Desmond FitzGerald was seeking £500 to cover these expenses. Disseminating weekly ‘Acts of Aggression’ committed by the British in Ireland became the barbed message that Sinn Féin wanted foreign journalists to repeat. Voluntary distribution of pamphlets and the Irish Bulletin newspaper through the Self Determination League of Great Britain and through the Sinn Féin organization in Ireland kept costs much reduced. In terms of fundraising Britain did not prove as profitable as Australia and particularly the USA. In February 1918 Australia was added to Sinn Féin’s list as a possible external source for funds when Seán Milroy proposed that the Irish there be petitioned. The difficulty with Australia was that the Irish were widely dispersed geographically and thinly spread on a vast continent. Many Irish had prospered in business and thrived financially, however, they had not retained their Irish cultural traditions and had assimilated quickly into their new country. Archbishop Daniel Mannix led the republican cause after the 1916 Rising, bringing the Irish demand for a republic to the fore in the Australian media. However, the overall response to republican causes was weaker than that afforded to home rule in the past where tours by Redmond and Dillon in 1883 and 1889 had successfully collected substantial funds.

54 Ibid, P80/14(5): Propaganda Department invoice, 10 June 1920.
56 SFSCM, P3269, 21 February 1918.
In 1917-18 the Irish in the USA proved more lucrative, and they were easier to access in terms of travel distance than Australia. As mentioned earlier, T.P. O’Connor’s account of his experiences in the USA demonstrated that Sinn Féin gained larger support than the Irish Party. However, they too fought an uphill battle due to the USA entry into the Great War in April 1917. As a result, Sinn Féin could no longer preach anti-war or pro-German opinions, but O’Connor reported in November 1917 that Sinn Féin was not ‘out of business’.

The Irish population residing in the USA had very diverse beliefs or views of nationalism, and therefore financially backed both radical and constitutional approaches to Irish self-government. There were also many Irish-Americans that hailed from the Scotch-Irish background and they continued to support the union between Britain and Ireland. Walker states that a significant number of Protestants (mainly Presbyterians and Episcopalians) continued to emigrate to America from Ireland throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Australia similarly, according to Fitzpatrick, there was recognition that what used to be viewed as an almost exclusively Irish Catholic community contained a significant Protestant component.

The consequence of the divergent Irish-American diaspora was that finances could only be amassed by Irish political parties from those who supported their point of view. And, even at that, there were conditions imposed for support such as that by The Liberty Digest in February 1918 who claimed that Sinn Féin would continue to receive support from Irish-America if they made their ‘fight for freedom a bloodless one’. However, they added the proviso that if England did not heed

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59 TCD, JD, Mss 6741(430): T.P. O’Connor to John Dillon, 5 November 1917; see also 28 December 1917 for comments on John Devoy and Clan na Gael.
62 Fitzpatrick, Oceans of Consolation: Personal accounts of Irish migration to Australia (New York, 1994).
to reason then ‘a revolt can be considered, and must be considered, after the present world war …
Meanwhile, let them use the ballot wisely’.

Mixed opinion in America on Sinn Féin was evident from a number of newspaper reports. The New York _Gaelic American_ – the newspaper owned and edited by the more radical and contentious John Devoy – complained that Sinn Féin was much maligned; J.P. Mahony, editor of _The Indiana Catholic_ in Indianapolis maintained that Sinn Féin was ‘much misunderstood’, and argued that ‘if the same treatment was accorded Americans by a foreign military oppressor [as Britain was to Ireland] they would revolt in the same way’. Sinn Féin, therefore, was reliant on a small number of organizations that advocated a more Fenian militant-style approach to gaining Irish self-governance such as Clan na Gael. However, by 1915 Clan na Gael was in financial trouble and Devoy maintained in July that ‘the organization is going down instead of up’ and that raising money was now ‘very serious’. A convention was held on 4 March 1916 in the Hotel Astor in New York City, where 2,300 delegates attended. A new Irish-American organization was founded and named the Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF).

The FOIF had a seventeen-man executive committee, of which fifteen were Clan members, and they played a strong role in fundraising in 1916, establishing the Irish Relief Fund Committee. The FOIF had strongly opposed T.P. O’Connor’s visit to the USA, although in 1917 this was not of grave concern. The organization was not numerically strong, mainly because USA war support had led to reduced membership, although they remained active in predominantly Irish cities such as New York and Boston. Many branches of the FOIF had ceased to function during the latter wartime years and in 1917 there were 2,891 paid up members and of these 1,495 were based in New York.

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63 _The Liberty Digest_, 2 February 1918.
64 TCD, JD, Mss 6741(445): newspaper cuttings, _The Indiana Catholic_.
66 John Devoy, _Recollections of an Irish Rebel_ (New York, 1929), p. 450; NLI, Ms 32597: Diarmuid Lynch, ‘History of the FOIF’, p. 28. The relief fund was portrayed as non-political, but rather humanitarian to relieve distress in Ireland.
67 For further information on the FOIF see Doorley, p.48; and Lynch, ‘History of the FOIF’ – this list did not include associate members or other supporters. A mailing list by John D. Moore gives over 6,000 names for 1916-17 so perhaps not all paid up by 1917: American Irish Historical Society (AIHS), Friends Of Irish Freedom (FOIF) papers, John D Moore ‘Membership fees ledger, 1916-17’. 
Disillusionment with the FOIF led to the creation of the Irish Progressive League, and again Devoy was behind this operation.\textsuperscript{68} In the face of this new competition, the FOIF attempted to rejuvenate itself and an Irish race convention was organized for 18-19 May 1918 in the Central Opera House in New York. New officers were elected and Diarmuid Lynch was appointed national secretary on a salary of $3,000 per annum. Tighter discipline was imposed on the organization and the agreed objective was to petition Wilson to allow for Irish representation at the Paris peace conference. The proceeds of the collection taken up at the convention were $819, allowing the organization to meet its expenses, but leaving it little to spare.\textsuperscript{69} As the collection demonstrates, attendance at the convention was much smaller than previous conventions but it did include members of Clan na Gael, the AOH, Irish Progressive League and Irish-American literary societies.\textsuperscript{70} In 1918 membership of the FOIF was still low at approximately 2,000, and this was distributed among 40 branches. A further aim arising from the convention was the advancement of a firm recruitment drive to boost numbers, and membership and funds increased substantially by 1919.\textsuperscript{71} But, in September 1918 the FOIF secretary, Diarmuid Lynch, reported that there was only a paltry $410 available.\textsuperscript{72} Therefore, Sinn Féin had to rely on staging their own meetings and demonstrations to collect for the 1918 election. How much Sinn Féin actually harvested in 1918 is unknown, but the lessons learned and the funds gained were enough to send de Valera to the USA in 1919.

Back in Ireland it became critical for Sinn Féin to manage and centrally coordinate fundraising and fund distribution to local Cumainn for the by-elections. Laurence Ginnell was appointed treasurer by the Standing Committee in January 1918 for the South Armagh by-election, and was empowered to spend £200 at his own discretion and appoint someone locally to manage

\textsuperscript{68} The main organizer of the Irish Progressive League was Peter Golden, a poet and singer who had been active in the FOIF in New York. He had also been an assistant to Devoy in the Gaelic American: Carroll, American Opinion, p. 106. Robert E. Ford, editor of the Irish World, became chairman of the executive committee and John Carroll became vice chairman. Nationalists in Ireland, including Éamon de Valera, backed this new League.

\textsuperscript{69} AIHS, FOIF papers, Box 6, Folder 2: National Executive minutes 1918-1919; Charles Callan Tansill, America and the Fight for Irish Freedom 1866-1922 (New York, 1957), p. 270.

\textsuperscript{70} Doorley, pp. 36 and 78; Lynch, ‘History of the FOIF’.

\textsuperscript{71} In 1919 regular membership was recorded at 6,068 with associate membership estimated at 30,000: Lynch, ‘History of FOIF’.

\textsuperscript{72} Eileen McGough, Diarmuid Lynch, A Forgotten Irish Patriot (Cork, 2013), chapter 6.
funds. Local Cumainn were allowed to retain a small amount for election expenses, but even this tight control failed to prevent over-expenditure. The South Armagh collection provided surplus income for the party but concerns were later raised that ‘the expenditure in some of the departments … was most extravagant’. Cosgrave proposed that all departments were to furnish detailed accounts of proposed expenditure to the Executive Committee at stated short intervals, and ‘no orders [were] to be issued against the funds of the organization which shall not have the approval of the President’. De Valera was president, and the man in charge, and now authorization on spending was his sole preserve. In a similar style to their candidate selection process, Sinn Féin’s financial management structure was beginning to emulate that of the Irish Party when under the reign of Parnell.

Centralized control grew tighter as the distribution of funds for election campaigns became strictly managed. Payment of salaries to those in charge of registration work was agreed on in certain areas, but not in others. Registration work in Dublin was deemed important enough to warrant a salaried employee to be paid £2 per week and £3 if this proved insufficient. Seán Milroy, Director of Elections in East Cavan, received £200 to secure victory there in April 1918, but finances must have come from other sources because the projected expenses for this by-election were estimated at £1,600. By July only £480 had been received in subscriptions and it was agreed that supporters should be further petitioned to improve the situation. East Tyrone received £250 for their battle because a guarantee had been provided for a full treasury refund – but, by July only £11 had been paid back.

Sinn Féin appointed five organizers for the 1918 general election, but the instruction was that their salaries would now be paid by local counties/constituencies while these organizers were engaged there. George Nesbitt became financial director in December 1918 replacing James O’Mara who was now Director of Elections. Jenny Wyse Power became financial director for

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73 SFSCM, 21 February 1918.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid, 10 April 1918.
76 Ibid, 18 April 1918.
77 Ibid, 8 July 1918.
78 Ibid, 6 September 1918.
North East Ulster and was provided with a sum of £2,250 and instructed to make haste to Belfast.

Sinn Féin yearned for victory in Ulster, being determined to defeat partition.\(^79\)

At the outset of the 1918 general election campaign Sinn Féin’s income was declared to be £17,360 and expenditure £9,718.\(^80\) Expenditure on propaganda literature, posters, handbills and so on used up much of this income, as did salaries and travel expenses (cars were still a luxury, and petrol hard to come by in the war years). As the election loomed concerns were raised that debts accrued during the by-elections had not yet been fully paid – and many of them were in connection with the use of cars and car repairs (this was also the case after the 1918 election).\(^81\) Cosgrave moved that all expenses were to be paid at once, no doubt fearing that creditors had better memories than debtors, and that these same cars might be required in the general election.\(^82\)

Funds for the general election were collected by door-to-door canvassers. Hurling and football matches were organized, as were dances, pilgrimages to local shrines, lectures and concerts.\(^83\) Church gate collections for Sinn Féin had commenced in 1914 and the process continued through the by-elections and into the general election. Polling day for the 1918 election was just a few months after the anti-conscription campaign, and it is interesting to query if the anti-conscription fund that was created and collected was used to support Sinn Féin’s election campaign? Sinn Féin cleverly organized a party collection on the same day as the dispersal of

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\(^79\) Although during the election a limited electoral pact between Sinn Féin and constitutional nationalists was arranged to avoid a split in the nationalist vote to defeat Unionist candidates. This determination to defeat partition continued in the 1921 Northern Ireland elections where Sinn Féin and Dáil Éireann spent approximately £2,000 to fund a plan introduced by de Valera at a standing committee meeting of Sinn Féin: SFSCM, 13 April 1921. During the local elections a ‘special effort’ was made to secure a majority in Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh, Monaghan and Tyrone: Ibid, 22 January 1919. Séán Milroy applied for local organizers to manage the local elections and after some wrangling eight sub-organizers were retained for Ulster – two for Tyrone, one for North Fermanagh, two for Co. Down, one for East Donegal, one for South Derry and one for Armagh: Ibid, 14 October 1920.

\(^80\) Ibid, 19 November 1918.

\(^81\) Ibid, 19 August 1918.

\(^82\) Ibid, 19 November 1918.

\(^83\) BMH WS 568: Eilis, (Bean) Uí Chonaill (Ní Riáin), member of Cumann na mBan. She stated that ‘it was customary for two people to … canvass or collect in their own districts’; RIC Inspector General’s Report, January 1918, CO 904/105.
these funds. £17,000 had been accrued, but the return was not furnished until 1919. However, some clubs donated their personal collections to the party (90 per cent of these funds had remained within parishes) such as £400 by Kilfinane in Co. Limerick, where only three demanded their £5 back as they ‘all had sons fit for the front’. Sinn Féin created a handbill to stimulate public donations, simply titled: *Sinn Féin General Election Fund*. This claimed that over a quarter of a million pounds had been collected to fight conscription, but that a ‘much smaller sum’ was needed to enable Sinn Féin make ‘a bid for complete liberty’.

According to the RIC Inspector General Reports, Sinn Féin had collected approximately £42,613 from the provinces up to June 1918, of which £20,540 was sent to headquarters in Dublin; £11,449 was spent locally and £10,623 was in the hands of Sinn Féin clubs across the country. In the month of June alone £2,310 was collected, and 1,117 clubs paid the usual affiliation of £2, with 885 clubs having paid a special levy of £1 each. The general election fund had raised about £6,400 by June - £5,000 was collected in May, £5,595 in April, £4,500 in March and £2,000 by end of February, demonstrating that a sum £500 was being raised monthly (aside from the large leap from February to March).

Despite monies raised, an outstanding debt for the 1918 general election for Sinn Féin amounted to £1,360, and regardless of motions by Cosgrave to finalise bills some were still outstanding six years later. Election expenses incurred by candidates sanctioned in 1918 were still unpaid in 1919 and were then forwarded to the Minister of Finance. These expenses amounted to a total of £712 and included: South Donegal (£92), South Roscommon (£14), West Mayo (£60), South Down (£52), Clontarf (£69), South Dublin (£68), Pembroke (£64), College

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84 NA, CO 904/109: RIC Inspector General’s report, May 1919. Relying on information supplied by the Inspector General is problematic due to inaccuracies, but they do provide a general indication of Sinn Féin finances.

85 BMH WS 1435: Daniel F. O’Shaughnessy.

86 NLI, Irish Large Books (ILB), p. 5: *Sinn Féin General Election Fund*.

87 NA, CO 904/7-23, 27-29 and 157: Anti Government Organizations, 1882-1921, Chief Secretary’s Office No. 20379/S: Sinn Féin Funds. These reports should only be used for an approximation of the funds collected.

88 Ibid, Nos. 19477/S, 18994/S, 18547/S

89 SFSCM, 25 September 1919 and 22 December 1924.

90 Eoin MacNeill was the Minister for Finance from January 1919 to April 1919 when Michael Collins took up the position until August 1922.
Green (£40), St. Patrick’s (£79), Harbour (£85) and Dublin (associated CC) (£89).\textsuperscript{91} Nesbitt reported in November 1918 that there had been a ‘heavy drain on funds’, stating that £5,000 had been spent on the contests in Ulster (although the party was still very much in credit to the sum of £3,900). This led to a proposal by the Standing Committee that every elector who had voted Sinn Féin ought to be asked to contribute one penny to settle the debt (perhaps imitating Daniel O’Connell’s 1824 Catholic Rent).\textsuperscript{92} A motion was passed to the effect that £1 to a penny was to be levied on each individual and that Nesbitt was to take steps to organize the levy, and that election staff be utilised to collect.\textsuperscript{93} This indicates that Sinn Féin had confidence in securing extra Irish fiscal backing and with their USA sources the party was sufficiently able to challenge in 1920. Most of the funding for the 1918 general election had been harvested from homegrown supporters, but the USA also proved lucrative because the party or its leaders returned again and again for financial aid.

In 1919 and 1920 Sinn Féin required substantial finance after their 1918 general election win of 73 seats out of 105. Securing the majority vote had accorded the mandate, as far as they were concerned, to carry out their abstentionist policy, and this was made manifest in the creation of the unicameral Dáil Éireann in January 1919.\textsuperscript{94} Ministers were appointed over various departments, but running these departments and a nation required not only internal support and recognition, but a serious amount of money. By gaining USA recognition for the 1918 electoral victory Sinn Féin also aspired to secure further funds to promote Dáil Éireann and finance electoral contests at local level in 1920.

In June 1919 Dr Patrick McCartan arrived in the USA as ‘envoy of the Irish republic’. He met with in-fighting as well as external anger towards the FOIF’s separatist position from those who considered their sentiments and behaviour unpatriotic. This resulted in media hostility to his

\textsuperscript{91} SFSCM, 6 November 1919.
\textsuperscript{92} The Catholic Rent was a one penny monthly subscription to the Catholic Association used by Daniel O’Connell to raise money for Catholic Emancipation.
\textsuperscript{93} SFSCM, 19 November 1918.
\textsuperscript{94} UCDA, Richard Mulcahy Papers, Ms P7/A/37: Proclamation by President de Valera, 2 May 1921.
and Hanna Sheehy Skeffington’s west coast tours. Sheehy-Skeffington (like O’Connor in 1917) complained that the Irish in America were mainly timid ‘comfortable, elderly gentlemen’ who talked ‘about old times … but the moment I talk of 1918 and what could be done now they close up’.

The decision was also taken to send de Valera to the US, and Harry Boland as ‘envoy’ to Clan na Gael. The predominant ambitions were threefold: to attain support for admitting envoys to the peace conference, to acquire political and public support for Sinn Féin and Dáil Éireann through propaganda and political lobbying, and equally, to garner as much money as possible.

Fitzpatrick’s work *Harry Boland’s Irish Revolution* provides a vivid background and a comprehensive account of Boland’s activities in the USA; and a multiplicity of other works cover de Valera. This work intends only to investigate two aspects of the USA trip. In this chapter an account of the funds raised and returned to Ireland will be examined, although this money was used for a multiplicity of purposes. Chapter four will attempt an impressionistic analysis of USA influence on Sinn Féin domestic propaganda campaigns, particularly the lessons learned from managing and conducting propaganda in New York.

Boland quickly entrenched himself in all aspects of the USA campaign, from supervising propaganda, organizing finance, to lobbying politicians, and procuring arms. De Valera was launched as the President of the Irish republic (although he was only chairman of the Dáil), and he became the front man and orator supreme. Americans understood the role of president and this title solidified him as the democratically elected leader of the (still notional) Irish republic. Boland quickly adapted to the role of auxiliary orator, and as Fitzpatrick states, relished the buzz of roaring

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96 NLI, Peter Golden Papers, Ms 1341: Sheehy-Skeffington to Golden, n.d.


99 In August 1921, de Valera secured Dáil Éireann approval to upgrade his office from chairman (or prime minister) of the cabinet to full president of the Republic.
crowds, receptions from mayors and governors, motorcades, airlifts, banners, banquets, and balls. Initially the campaign concentrated on New York Irish-Americans with nationalist sympathies, with only brief daily excursions to other nearby states. In July 1919 a motion was passed to print and distribute 50,000 or 100,000 copies of the Election Map of Ireland to promote the electoral victory of Sinn Féin. A meeting of the FOIF national executive decided to hand de Valera $10,000 towards the expenses of his American campaign. The FOIF also launched an ‘Irish Victory Fund’ and by February 1919 one million dollars had been raised. Michael Collins immediately laid claim to £5,000; however, the FOIF were reluctant to release money to Ireland as they were keen to finance their own political ends. After some wrangling they agreed to release $10,000.

By October a ‘Grand Tour of America’ was set in motion by Charles N. Wheeler – a man with extensive previous experience in USA presidential tours – and it opened in Philadelphia with a lavish reception at the Bellevue Stratford Hotel at a cost of $7,000 for 613 guests. It continued on into Ohio, Minneapolis, Missouri, Washington State, and Kansas (to name a few), although the bulk of speeches and rallies were held in Chicago, Washington, New York and Boston. A propaganda firm, Thomas R. Shipp & Company, had been retained by Lynch in March 1919 and they also conducted promotional work for the American tour. An agreed contract fee of $2,000 per month was agreed to fund all FOIF campaigns for a period of three months, and this rose to $3,000 by January 1920. J.C. Walsh’s Benjamin Franklin Bureau was also used to disseminate propaganda at a cost of $12,000 to influence professional opinion. By August the advertising committee reported that forty-nine advertisements had been placed in pivotal states and in

100 Fitzpatrick, *Harry Boland*, p. 130.
101 AIHS, FOIF Papers, Meeting of National Executive, 21 July 1919.
102 Ibid, 28 June 1919.
103 This was known in Ireland as it was commented on that the FOIF were ‘engaged in a campaign to raise funds for propaganda purposes for themselves’: Dáil Éireann Debates, F:13, 20 August 1919.
104 AIHS, FOIF Papers, Irish Victory Fund: List of financial donations from USA states; McCartan, *With de Valera in America*, pp. 94-5.
105 NLI, McGarrity Papers, MS17439/1: John A. Ryan to McGarrity, 12 August 1920.
106 AIHS, FOIF papers, Box 4, folder 2: Letter from Thomas R. Shipp, President, Thomas R. Shipp & Company to Diarmuid Lynch, 22 March 1919, and invoice from Shipp for publicity services from 15 May to 30 June, 22 January 1920.
Washington, and that seventy-six advertisements had been placed in connection with de Valera’s tour throughout the country. The costs accrued were ‘in the neighbourhood of $28,600’. De Valera’s USA tour was proving both profitable and costly, but the income accumulated was enough to fund and maintain the programme of meetings and rallies, but only limited amounts were returned to Ireland to fund election campaigns or Dáil Éireann.

Back in Ireland the net sum of the ‘Self Determination Fund’, according to the Minister for Finance, was £12,237. On 4 April 1919 the Dáil voted to issue ‘Republican Bonds to the value of £250,000’, and by 20 August 1919 the secretary for finance moved that an additional sum of $23,750,000 be issued for subscription to the ‘Loan of the Government of the Irish Republic in the United States’. This increased the total amount for the issue to a ridiculously large $25,000,000 by late August and the loan campaign was launched in early September. The bonds were to be redeemable only after the creation of a functioning independent state. Diarmuid Lynch reported that he had requested and received from the American Commission on Irish Independence 70,000 sets of literature pertaining to the ‘bond campaign’ which were released over the following weeks. A further 150,000 pamphlets were produced by May 1920 at a cost of $9,000, but now branches had to pay for them at cost instead of their being sent gratis. Tighter controls were placed on the issue of printed literature, perhaps to encourage branches to just order what they could distribute. Even though elections received only small amounts of the monies raised, the publicity proved enormously valuable in raising international awareness about Sinn Féin’s policies and lessons were learned on how to conduct a large-scale propaganda campaign. Shipp & Company stated that ‘one of the most valuable thing we have achieved is interesting the press in the movement and having them instruct Paris and Dublin correspondents to watch out for news on

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111 AHIS, FOIF, National Executive meeting, 25 November 1919.
112 Ibid, 26 May 1920
113 Called ‘Bond Certificates’ in the USA to avoid transgressing the Blue Sky laws set up to protect investors against securities fraud. The ‘Bond Certificates’ campaign was initially managed in the USA by the Boston financier Edward McSweeney, and subsequently by James O’Mara when he arrived in the USA and substantiated McSweeney’s scheme.
the Irish question’.\textsuperscript{114} Regular requests were also made for ‘pictures of prominent Irishmen in this country and in Ireland. Irish scenes, groups, official bodies, etc.’\textsuperscript{115} This instigated appeals to Ireland for these images and made clear the value of adding image to text in propaganda.

In Ireland, by the end of October reports from certain parts of the country placed the amount of subscriptions promised at £30,700.\textsuperscript{116} Promises were by no means guarantees so Collins decided to run advertisements in the newspapers to promote the bonds appeal further. The \textit{Cork Examiner} printed the advertisements, but other national newspapers were reluctant to do so because Dublin Castle had warned that the act was illegal. Twenty-two other separatist and provincial weekly papers also printed the advertisement.\textsuperscript{117} The result was the proscribing of Dáil Éireann and a raid on Sinn Féin offices in Harcourt Street. However, print advertisements to promote the purchase of bonds indirectly bolstered election campaigns. Creating recognition of the Sinn Féin agenda at local level cannot be underestimated and it no doubt influenced local councils to later pledge allegiance to Dáil Éireann because of instant recognition of the intent and programme.

Collins also looked abroad to raise finances, running advertisements in the European edition of the \textit{Chicago Tribune} at a cost of 8,400 francs and in Catholic weeklies in Britain. The total amount accumulated from Britain and France was £11,719.\textsuperscript{118} In Ireland a total of £370,165 was raised by September 1919, and Collins proudly exclaimed to de Valera in February 1920 that ‘the response has been splendid’.\textsuperscript{119} The Self-Determination Fund, created to help finance Dáil Éireann, had gained £35,703 by the end of 1921. A further £53,343 came from outside Ireland, half

\textsuperscript{114} AIHS, Shipp to Lynch, 19 April 1919.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid, 6 May 1919
\textsuperscript{116} Dáil Éireann Debates, F:14, 27 October 1919: Statement of Acting President – Bond Issue.
\textsuperscript{118} NLI, Art O’Brien Papers, MS 8430: Collins to Alex McCabe 7 January and 10 February 1920; See NLI, Duffy Papers, MS 15439 for Government opposition to loan; and NA, CO 904/112, RIC Inspector General monthly report June 1920.
\textsuperscript{119} Arthur Mitchell maintains that roughly 150,000 bond purchasers represented approximately 15 per cent of the nearly 1 million households in Ireland. The subscribers tended to be concentrated in the south and west of Ireland, with Munster raising a disproportion amount of £165,897, Léinster £85,823, Connaught £54,755 and Ulster much less at £39,074. Sales were weak in old Irish Party strongholds such as Waterford (£636), parts of Dublin (also Unionist) (£20,714) and Wicklow (£4,532).
of which came from the USA ($184,173), and all proceeds went to the general revenues of the Dáil for operating expenses.\footnote{Carroll, \textit{Money for Ireland}, p. 9}

A total of $5,500,000 was subscribed in the USA for Irish bonds, a huge amount by comparison to any previous campaigns by Parnell or any Irish Party representative, and a figure that exceeded even de Valera’s expectations.\footnote{American subscriptions to the Land League in 1880 was £66,000, and £250,000 between November 1879 and October 1882. In December 1883 (in the aftermath of the Kilmainham Treaty) only £2,219 came from the USA and £3,101 in December 1884: Cruise O’Brien, \textit{Parnell and His Party}, pp. 134-35.} Of this, $500,000 was dedicated to the American Presidential campaign in 1920 – although to little avail as de Valera failed to attain USA recognition for the Irish republic, and failed to get representation at the peace conference.\footnote{The House of Representatives had agreed on 4 March 1919, by a vote of 216 to 45, that the peace conference should favourably consider Ireland’s claim to self-determination: US, \textit{Congressional Record}, 65 congress, 3 session, 1919, v. 57, pp. 3174, 5027-57. And, on 6 June the USA senate, by a margin of 60 to 1, resolved that de Valera, Griffith and Plunkett should be allowed to appear before the peace conference: US, \textit{Congressional Record}, 66 congress, 1 session, 1919, v. 58, pt. 1, pp. 728. However, Wilson needed British support for his fourteen-point plan, and particularly for the creation of a League of Nations, and supporting Ireland could threaten these ambitions.} By 1920 Lynch had given Boland $110,000 for the Dáil, although not all of this had been delivered by the start of 1920. By the end of the year approximately $1 million (£200,000) had been slipped into Ireland, and a sum of only $400,000 ended up in the treasury of the Irish Free State.\footnote{Dorothy Macardle, \textit{The Irish Republic} (London, 1937; repr. New York, 1968), pp. 1024-5; O’Doherty, \textit{Assignment America}, p. 66-9. This later caused litigation battles between the Irish Free State and republicans in Irish and American courts, and by 1930 over two and a half million dollars were finally distributed to certificate holders.}

Just how useful were the USA fund collections for the 1920 Irish local elections? The secrecy involved in preventing Crown Forces detecting the arrival into Ireland of funds amassed in the USA makes it problematic to account for their dispersal. There was no specified amount assigned to local government election funds, but Sinn Féin’s determination to secure broad representation on councils hints that they were prepared to invest in propaganda to obtain votes. Given that one of the first departments established by Dáil Éireann was the Local Government Department under Cosgrave, this indicates that the foundation of support at the local level was paramount. Sinn Féin also had to finance the creation of their new counter state and this too required high capital investment, but grants were made to local constituencies to bolster electoral organization and propaganda. For instance, Seán Milroy proposed in July 1919, and Jenny Wyse

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\text{120} Carroll, \textit{Money for Ireland}, p. 9  \\
\text{121} American subscriptions to the Land League in 1880 was £66,000, and £250,000 between November 1879 and October 1882. In December 1883 (in the aftermath of the Kilmainham Treaty) only £2,219 came from the USA and £3,101 in December 1884: Cruise O’Brien, \textit{Parnell and His Party}, pp. 134-35.  \\
\text{122} The House of Representatives had agreed on 4 March 1919, by a vote of 216 to 45, that the peace conference should favourably consider Ireland’s claim to self-determination: US, \textit{Congressional Record}, 65 congress, 3 session, 1919, v. 57, pp. 3174, 5027-57. And, on 6 June the USA senate, by a margin of 60 to 1, resolved that de Valera, Griffith and Plunkett should be allowed to appear before the peace conference: US, \textit{Congressional Record}, 66 congress, 1 session, 1919, v. 58, pt. 1, pp. 728. However, Wilson needed British support for his fourteen-point plan, and particularly for the creation of a League of Nations, and supporting Ireland could threaten these ambitions.  \\
\text{123} Dorothy Macardle, \textit{The Irish Republic} (London, 1937; repr. New York, 1968), pp. 1024-5; O’Doherty, \textit{Assignment America}, p. 66-9. This later caused litigation battles between the Irish Free State and republicans in Irish and American courts, and by 1930 over two and a half million dollars were finally distributed to certificate holders. 
\end{flushleft}
Power seconded, that the Dáil should grant loans to the constituencies to pay for organizers.\(^{124}\) Loans amounting to £400 were agreed for certain constituencies who applied for funds, but in others (for example East Cavan) loans were held over pending reports on performance.

The burden of debt repayment, however, was relegated to local constituencies because many still had outstanding financial liabilities after the general election. The director of propaganda, Robert Brennan, highlighted that it was the responsibility for each Teachta Dála (TD) to clear these debts (although, as stated earlier some of these debts remained outstanding six years later).\(^{125}\) Joseph McGuinness also called for all outstanding election debts to be paid, and a decision was taken to pay off £77 of the East Mayo debt as it was ‘a special case’.\(^{126}\) West Donegal and Rathmines received £32 and £29 respectively to clear their accounts, and South Kildare received £95. Belfast requested £137, but this ‘claim could not be entertained’ as Wyse Power maintained that ‘ample financial assistance was given at the time’.\(^{127}\) In September 1919, as previously stated, constituencies still owed the Standing Committee £1,360 in outstanding election loans, so the Dáil agreed to liquidate these debts.\(^{128}\)

In late December 1919 the Election sub-committee applied for a grant of £300 to cover the cost of printing 750,000 copies of the Sinn Féin programme for the municipal elections. Cosgrave agreed to supply the grant and pay it into the account of the Sinn Féin Executive. Where these funds were derived from is unknown, but managing the distribution of finance was kept under strict control, particularly in regard to election literature expenses. The advantage was a central command to ensure that only agreed literature received the funds necessary for printing, and in turn only approved literature was circulated. Sinn Féin had attained substantial finance by 1920, but interestingly for the rural elections 1,000 copies of the Sinn Féin manifesto were printed and sent to...
all election directors, but every constituency or county council was asked to print sufficient copies locally to cover its own district. It was also considered ‘very inadvisable’ to pay the expenses of candidates during the local elections.\footnote{129} The numerous contenders required to contest seats meant that local cumainn and clubs had to bear most of the burden. General headquarters, the Election and Standing Committees and subsequently Dáil Éireann carried the weight of printing and circulating mainstream propaganda, but candidates and their nominators financed local election expenses and propaganda such as provincial newspaper advertisements and poster campaigns throughout all the elections.

Funding domestic propaganda, the main focus of this work, was only one aspect of the Department of Propaganda; but another important function was securing favourable international propaganda. As will be briefly discussed in chapter three, Sinn Féin created and distributed the \textit{Irish Bulletin}, the official newspaper of Dáil Éireann, daily.\footnote{130} The costs of printing and publishing the newspaper were relatively cheap and the results were positive, despite strenuous suppression attempts by the British administration.\footnote{131}

According to FitzGerald’s report in June 1920 the cost of running the Propaganda Department from November 1919 to May 1920 was £890 and of this £393 was paid in salaries, £235 on the printing of pamphlets and stationery, and £262 ‘has been paid out by me’ which included the printing of pamphlets and handbills amounting to £26.\footnote{132} George Gavan Duffy’s campaign in France during the peace conference was not quite as economical, although the circulation of the \textit{Irish Bulletin} created positive news coverage there also. He estimated that funding representation at the peace conference required 10,000 francs to set up an office and pay a clerk, and that a further 30,000 francs would be needed to pay a high calibre representative. He

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{129} Ibid, 17 December 1919 and 26 February 1920.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{131} UCDA, Desmond FitzGerald papers, P80/14(13), 10 March 1921 and P80/14(21), August 1921. A raid on Propaganda department offices resulted in a forged copy of the \textit{Irish Bulletin} being created by the British forces which demonstrates the effectiveness of this Sinn Féin propaganda tool: UCDA, Desmond FitzGerald P80/14(16): Report from the Department of Publicity, March-May 1921.
\item \textsuperscript{132} Ibid, P80/14(7): Report of Propaganda Department, June 1920.
\end{itemize}
maintained that when these and other costs were taken into account the total sum to present Ireland’s case would be at least £50,000.\textsuperscript{133}

Back in Ireland in 1920 a central office was required to manage both the municipal and rural elections and another outlay was required to rent the backroom of the premises occupied by the Election Committee at a sum equal to half the rent and taxes. Agreement was reached also to pay half the cost of maintenance (coal, light, and so on) and to avail of the services of Dan McCarthy, the election agent, at a payment of £2 per week. £1,000 was applied for in order to cover expected expenses in the Revision Courts, but the agreement reached was that each constituency was to be considered separately and on its own merits. McCarthy had requested this amount for revision work in South Dublin, Rathmines, Pembroke, North and South Wexford, Waterford and certain northern constituencies – all the constituencies that had been problematic for Sinn Féin during the 1918 election. By July 1920 a sum of £340 had been granted for Pembroke, Rathmines, South Dublin, Louth, St Stephen’s Green and College Green.\textsuperscript{134} Salaries also had to be paid and included: Robert Brennan’s salary, now at £6 per week, Dan McCarthy at £6 per week, and Michael Nunan at £2 per week. Salaries for the eight sub-organizers in Ulster at £5 per week - £543 - was passed for payment. The total for salaries by June 1919 was £65 per week for thirteen employees in party headquarters and three provincial organizers.\textsuperscript{135}

As mentioned earlier, funding the administration of Dáil Éireann was also an expense that had to be absorbed, and forming Dáil Éireann was a propaganda exercise in and of itself.\textsuperscript{136} Running costs included ministerial salaries at about £4,100 per annum; the salary of the President was £500 and the seven ministers received £350 each, with the three directors of departments getting the same amount. The payment of ministerial salaries received little or no controversy which was surprising given the endless criticism afforded to Irish Party MPs by Sinn Féin during election campaigns for their receipt of £400 from the Imperial Exchequer. Deputies received no salaries but obtained travel and accommodation expenses and by September 1920 were given up to

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid, Gavan Duffy, P152/115, 13 April 1920; SFSCM, 19 December 1918 and 27 June 1918.b. See chapters three and four on the propaganda of the peace conference.

\textsuperscript{134} SFSCM, 4 May 1920 and 1 June 1920 and 20 July 1920.

\textsuperscript{135} NLI, Robert Barton papers, MS 8786/1; and SFSCM, 5 June 1919, 22 June 1920 and 14 October 1920.

\textsuperscript{136} See chapter four on Dáil Éireann as propaganda.
£250 annually for these expenses. Eight officials (ranging from the Secretary to the Ministry) received £500-£600 per annum with total salaries amounting to about £10,000 annually. The Dáil also voted to award £10,000 yearly for new consular services and another £10,000 for the fisheries programme. Therefore, the new government needed a minimum of at least £25,000 every twelve months. And, this was only for the running of government; when financing the state is added costs add up extensively.\textsuperscript{137}

USA funds were needed to prop up the fledgling state but small amounts were directed into election campaigns to facilitate organization in constituencies that required special attention. Calculating the income and expenditure of Sinn Féin for elections is difficult because much funding was collected and used locally, and record and book-keeping was inconsistent.\textsuperscript{138} Funds amassed from affiliation fees, local fundraising activities, and profits from the sale of propaganda pamphlets and newsletters resulted in a profitable Sinn Féin, certainly after the 1918 general election. The dexterous and resourceful propaganda campaigns initiated by Sinn Féin, which included electioneering, the formation of Dáil Éireann and the drive for representation at the Paris peace conference, were financed chiefly from collections in Ireland and the USA. The distribution of funds to constituencies was managed closely and at times conservatively, yet the importance of propaganda was never underrated by Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin’s ambition to contest practically every seat in 1918 and 1920 necessitated a profitable treasury, whereas the more regional geography of Unionist interests allowed them wage more targeted and economical campaigns.

\textbf{2.3: The Unionist Party}

Propaganda to maintain the union against the threat of home rule had afforded familiarity in financing for political campaigns. Unionist patrons were usually landowners or businessmen and during the third home rule crisis they had risen to the challenge to mount an aggressive propaganda campaign by escalating appeals for funds. Unionists were well represented among UVF

\textsuperscript{137} Dáil Éireann Debates, F:10, 18 June 1919; See also Mitchell, \textit{Revolutionary Government}, pp. 57-58.
\textsuperscript{138} In East Clare, for example, clubs had donated £703 and £523 had been spent locally: \textit{Clare Champion}, 26 July 1919.
commanders who had placed ‘their wealth, their time and their property at the service of the force’. Unionism also had assumed the management of Edward Carson’s Unionist Defence Fund – towards which he had contributed £10,000 of his own personal finances.\(^{139}\) By January 1912 the chairman of the fund committee was able to disclose to Carson that ‘the people connected with the Ulster industries will supply any money you may require in the course of the next two years’.\(^{140}\) The UUC itself was supported by a Belfast bank which allowed them to write a cheque for £16,000 even though they knew ‘full well that there was nothing in the bank account to cover it’.\(^{141}\) Finances obtained from wealthy individuals, business donations and Unionist associations funded the generation and public recognition of Orange lodges, the UVF and the Ulster Covenant (to mention a few), and generated anti-home rule propaganda with its captivating slogans such as ‘Home Rule means Rome Rule’ and ‘Ulster will fight and Ulster will be Right’.\(^{142}\) Ulster was the focus and therefore (unlike other parties) funds were centrally managed and disbursed in a concentrated region.

The anti-home rule income had been expended in the two year battle from 1912 to 1914 by generating propaganda in newspapers and books, and creating postcards, posters, pamphlets, banners, film, badges and a host of ephemeral items.\(^{143}\) These fundraising skills and marketing abilities were rekindled for elections and managed by the UUC Standing Committee. This was the organization which directed the path and policy of unionism until 1920.\(^{144}\) Professional university educated candidates within unionism rallied the political and business elite of Ulster who donated large sums to ensure votes favoured Unionist candidates. Unlike nationalists – militant and moderate – who petitioned for funds piecemeal, Unionists were financed by a small number of wealthy individuals and commercial interests that rallied fellow elites to donate to the cause. Just

\(^{139}\) Stewart, *The Ulster Crisis*, p. 72.
\(^{140}\) PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/1/1912/3: Second Baron Dunleath to Edward Carson, 19 January 1912.
\(^{142}\) Parkinson, *Friends in High Places*, p. 90-91 provides example of a large donation from Samuel McCaughey, a wealthy Ulster exile and sheep-station millionaire in New South Wales who sent £25,000 to Carson’s fund.
\(^{144}\) Harbinson, pp. 40-1.
how much was donated and by whom is unknown, however by investigating UUC minutes, Unionist associations’ correspondence and the personal correspondence between higher ranking politicians some interpretation of Unionist funding is possible.

To supplement larger donations Unionists, like other parties, relied on local clubs to provide revenue and disseminate propaganda. By 1915 there were 369 clubs on the register and 133 clubs had sent in returns of officers for 1915. A further three clubs later joined bringing the total to 372. A UUC meeting of 30 April 1919 stated there was a total of 372 clubs still in existence (although in the interim of 1917 and 1919 four were stated to have been wound up and two were described as virtually non-existent). The laws and constitution of the UUC – adopted at a meeting of the council of clubs in Belfast on 2 May 1893 – stipulated that each club was free to make its own rules regarding subscriptions. However, a club had to subscribe no less than £1 annually to the funds of the Council if its membership was 100 or less, and at a rate of 10s for each 100 or part 100 additional members. These funds were usually used to defray the expenses of the central offices.

The revenue and expenditure for year ended 31 December 1918 for the UUC, calculated by accountants Stewart Blacker Quin and Company in Belfast, stated the total cash in bank amounted to £182, and subscriptions from clubs were to the value of £318 (plus advances for 1919 of £5) giving a net income of £505. There was no definitive figure provided for propaganda, but it was no doubt built into the expenses for printing and stationery which amounted to £65 and post (literature was posted to constituency clubs) at £37. This indicates that the central council absorbed the cost of creating and disseminating universal Unionist propaganda, such as rules or decrees, to local constituencies and candidates during elections. This was conducted by appealing to local business interests and club members. There were funds received from the Unionist Central Office in London who claimed that they had made provision for certain contests in Ireland to the value of £2,143 which was the remainder of a full donation of £4,000. This assistance was provided for the

145 PRONI, UUC Minutes, D1327/1/2: 23 February 1914.
146 Ibid, D1327/1/2: Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Unionist Clubs Council 25 February 1914, 26 March 1915, and 30 April 1919.
147 Ibid, D1327/1/1: UUC Minutes [n.d.].
148 Ibid, D1327/1/4/5/7: UUC receipts and payments for year ended 31 December 1918.
expenses of contests in Dublin and was issued through Arthur Samuels, MP for Dublin University. They disputed having to reimburse the election expenses of Parker Keene in East Wicklow who had been defeated by Sinn Féin’s Seán Etchingham by 3,316 votes.\textsuperscript{149} Like the other parties, local Unionist clubs and associations therefore needed to fundraise to support candidates and distribute specific local propaganda.

Unionists may have garnered sizeable funds, but they instructed candidates and constituencies to be frugal in their expenses. During the 1910 January election campaign 3,783,000 copies of eleven new or revised leaflets and large colour posters were put into circulation in Britain; but by December 1910 posters were dropped as being too expensive, and this no doubt influenced propaganda decisions by 1918.\textsuperscript{150} To defray election costs Unionists were advised to order placards in moderate quantities, and keep leaflets and pamphlets brief to ensure key messages were conveyed to voters to reduce printing costs. Candidates had to exercise ‘great moderation’ in advertising which was to be limited to notices of meetings and the location of committee rooms. They were counselled to canvass directly and personally with the ‘various classes of electors’ because ‘too much importance is attached to the display of bills and placards’. Admitting that placards were useful to attract attention, the effect upon the actual electors, it was maintained, was ‘often out of proportion to the cost’. Targeted campaigning was advised whereby candidates had to ‘carefully’ select leaflets of special interest and send or hand them personally to voters. Furthermore, to attract attendance at open air meetings, it was recommended that candidates ‘use a motor-cyclist the day before’ to put up explanatory notices in advance.\textsuperscript{151} This advice attempted to limit overspending and assured private financers that their cash donations were diligently disbursed.

As previously stated, the number of targeted constituencies was lower for the Unionist Party than for the Irish Party and Labour, and much less than those for Sinn Féin who contested nearly every seat. Unionists were determined to secure election victory mainly in Ulster

\textsuperscript{150} Buckland, \textit{Irish Unionism}, p. 73 on the Unionist British campaign.
constituencies, particularly where Protestants were in the majority. In the southern three provinces, Unionists entered contests only in Cork (two candidates) and the Pembroke, Rathmines, St Patrick’s and St. Stephen’s Green constituencies of Dublin, Dublin South and Dublin University (two candidates).\footnote{Weekly Irish Times, 30 November 1918.} Therefore, finances collected only needed to be expended among twenty-six Ulster constituencies and seven southern constituencies.\footnote{This figure includes Queen’s University in Belfast, but does not include independent or labour Unionists.}

In the 1920 local government elections new contestants had entered the field as Municipal Reform candidates, Ratepayers Association, and a large number of independents. All absorbed previous Unionist Party candidates (and some Irish Party candidates in the case of independents) that had been active at local level or were now eager for the reform of local rates.\footnote{A letter to the editor of the Irish Times, 17 January 1920, pointed out that a number of candidates listed for the municipal elections in Rathmines and Ranelagh, Dublin, had been designated incorrectly as Unionist when they were, in fact, Municipal Reform. In the Pembroke Township, the Ratepayer’s Association nominated four candidates all of whom were already members of the Council: Irish Times, 3 January 1920.} Ratepayer candidates were usually owners of the local small businesses and shops visible on the high streets of towns and villages, and appeals were made to the ‘middle classes’ not to ‘allow themselves be swamped’ by Sinn Féin and Labour.\footnote{Ibid, 3 January 1920.} New Municipal Reform and independent candidates undermined Unionist fundraising efforts (in constituencies where Unionist candidates contested in January 1920) because the key concern among Unionist contestants was also rates. Taking Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) in South Dublin as an example, an appeal was made to the electors to vote for Unionist candidates because they had actively reduced rates while also improving local services.\footnote{Ibid, 13 January 1920.}

To solicit funds and votes Unionists argued that ratepayers fared better under their control of the Urban Council. Approximately forty candidates contested for twenty-one seats in the Kingstown constituency, and Unionist propaganda and funding paid off as wins were gained in the four wards. However, this example only gives an indication of Unionist success where funds and propaganda gained votes. To obtain a breakdown of more specific Unionist fundraising at local
level and to investigate Unionists in the highly contested region of Ulster, County Tyrone will be
the example, as these records were preserved and available.

Unionists contested the four urban Tyrone constituencies in January 1920 and six rural
districts, and a concentrated effort was made to raise funds. The county election and indemnity
fund garnered subscriptions from a number of local businessmen and politicians who contributed in
sums of £100 (10), £50 (4), £25 (7) giving a grand total of £1,375. Unionist associations and clubs
in the county towns held preliminary meetings and also raised funds to the sum of £2,711.157

As the rural district elections were playing out in June 1920 the Government of Ireland Bill
was passing through its final stages in the House of Commons, with the act becoming law on 23
December 1920. This act assured two new jurisdictions with their own parliaments: Northern
Ireland to consist of the six counties of Antrim, Armagh, Down, Londonderry, Fermanagh and
Tyrone with a fifty-two-member lower house and a senate of twenty-six, with the Lord Mayor of
Belfast and Mayor of Londonderry sitting ex officio. ‘Southern Ireland’ (not yet the Free State)
included all remaining twenty-six counties. Amidst widespread communal violence that erupted in
July 1920 where Catholics, Protestants and members of the police and British army were killed
with thousands of Catholics being driven out of their jobs, homes, and businesses, political parties
in these six counties began to prepare in earnest for future elections.158

Unionist concern in 1920 was on the formation of the new Northern Ireland parliament,
particularly in counties with a high Catholic population, like Tyrone. Motivating industrious
fundraising campaigns for an election that eventually took place in May 1921 became paramount.
James Craig viewed the 1921 election as a plebiscite on the single great issue before the voters:
‘Who is for Empire and who is for a Republic?’159 This work cannot delve into great detail on the

157 PRONI, D3110/1: County Tyrone Election Fund: Omagh £480, Dunamana £483, Strabane £100,
Castlederg £200, Dungannon £583, Mountjoy £200, Dunmullan £120, Seskinore £107, Dromore £90,
Edenderry £60, Clanabogan £80, Loughmuck £123, Mullagharn £50, Killyclogher £35.
158 For further information on violence in Northern Ireland see: Jonathan Bardon, A History of Ulster
(Belfast, 1992), p. 494; Brian Follis, A State Under Siege: The Establishment of Northern Ireland, 1920-1925
(Oxford, 1995), pp. 93-4; Dennis Kennedy, The Widening Gulf: Northern Attitudes to the Independent Irish
State, 1919-1949 (Belfast, 1988), p.121; Eamon Phoenix, Northern Nationalism: Nationalist Politics,
Partition and the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland, 1890-1940 (Belfast, 1994), 107-9 and, Thomas
159 Weekly Northern Whig, 14 May 1921.
1921 election, but it is mentioned because differentiating between fundraising carried out in June 1920 for 1921 and for the rural elections proved difficult. For instance, by the end of June 1920, after the rural elections, a handbill was drafted for the purpose of raising £5,000 to meet election expenses in Co. Tyrone. The local secretary R.A. Parke maintained that ‘it is now a case of fighting our corner or disappearing and knuckling down to Sinn Féin forever’. Obviously submitting to a Sinn Féin regime was inconceivable so he called for Unionists to increase the ordinary subscription of £1 ‘which the strong farmer and businessman usually gives’.\textsuperscript{160}

Results of collections across two of the Tyrone towns in 1920 show Omagh providing £438 and Dunamana £250 where the larger farmers and merchants gave £20 and the smaller £10. This provided enough to start proceedings for 1921 as the sum total received was £1,200. This amount had been accumulated only seven days after the rural elections.\textsuperscript{161} The receipts and payments account for the year ended 31 December 1920 show a cumulative income of £2,643, where the balance from two accounts was £1,471, and subscriptions collected were £1,172. There was also the sum of £1,700 explained as a ‘grant from special funds’, giving a total of £4,343.\textsuperscript{162} Payments of salaries, wages, travelling, stationery, literature, printing and advertising (excluding postage) amounted to £225. By the end of 1920 propaganda for 1921 had not yet started, so we can safely assume that the literature, printing and advertising costs were incurred for the local elections.

Despite higher levels of private funding Unionists did not fare as well in the 1920 municipal elections as previously, although they had an overall majority in Ulster. Unionists who formerly numbered fifty-two were now thirty-seven – largely due to the number of seats captured by Labour, and because of proportional representation.

\textsuperscript{160}\textsuperscript{160} PRONI, D3727/E/52/1-10 Armstrong of Deans Hill Papers: A5 handbill to Unionists from R.A. Parke on 29 June 1920.
\textsuperscript{161}\textsuperscript{161} Ibid, D3110/1: Letter to Parke from E.L. Hendman on 19 June 1920.
\textsuperscript{162}\textsuperscript{162} Ibid, D1327/14/5/9, Receipts and Payments Account, Year Ended 31 December 1920. Note the subscriptions include £3 from 1918 arrears, £38 from 1919 arrears, 1920 at £541 and a 1921 advance of £589 (figures are rounded to nearest pound).
2.4 Labour in Southern Ireland

The enormous growth of the ITGWU in rural Ireland, and a host of strikes for better pay particularly among agricultural labourers, during the years 1917 to 1919 should have made Labour a strong force to be reckoned with in the 1918 general election.\(^{163}\) According to ILP&TUC calculations in 1919, 250,000 to 300,000 workers were trade union organized, and about 220,000 were associated through their unions with the ILP&TUC out of 700,000 adult wage earners in Ireland.\(^{164}\) The list of societies affiliated in 1919 to 1920 provides a total membership figure of 256,090.\(^{165}\) In 1912, however, Congress had been divided on the issue of political representation mainly because many trade unions continued to support the Irish Party and they were strongly linked with British trade unions.\(^{166}\) Contesting general elections did not even feature on the agenda of Congress in 1912. The motion moved was not to establish a ‘Labour Party’ \textit{per se}, but to determine that ‘the independent representation of labour upon all public boards be and is hereby included among the objectives of this Congress’.\(^{167}\) This resolution paid off for labour unions in Dublin in the 1912 local elections with contests bringing success for five of the seven candidates.\(^{168}\) However, they fared badly in rural contests with only occasional victories secured in Sligo, Waterford and Drogheda.

As the Great War neared its end in 1918 and the general election loomed Labour’s confidence in electoral success returned and the national executive decided unanimously to enter the contest. Labour had a debit balance in 1918 showing a total income of £1,958. This had been

\(^{163}\) In 1919 there were 66,000 members of the ITGWU: Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting, Drogheda, August 1919; pp. 152-163; David Fitzpatrick stated that the Irish agricultural labourer was a member of a much reduced and deeply discontented class, earning ‘much less than his English counterpart and absurdly less than his relatives employed in foreign cities’: David Fitzpatrick, ‘The Disappearance of the Irish Agricultural Labourer, 1883-1916’, \textit{Irish Economic and Social History}, vii (1980), p. 81. Industrial strikes in 1911 amounted to nine per cent of the total industrial population of Britain and Ireland, with ‘nearly 10 ¼ million working days being lost due to trade disputes: \textit{Irish Independent}, 17 January 1912.

\(^{164}\) Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting, Drogheda, August 1919: Appendix No. 1, Memorandum Respecting Amalgamation, p. 61.

\(^{165}\) Ibid, pp. 152-63: Names of Societies Affiliated, 1919-20 with Number of Members on 1 January 1919. Derry, for example, saw a surge in trade union membership. Membership of the ITUC jumped from under 100,000 in 1916 to 229,000 in 1920: see Donal Nevin (ed), \textit{Trade Union Century} (Dublin 1994), p. 433.

\(^{166}\) Derry is an example of a county where unions were loyal to the ‘amalgamateds’ (as cross-channel unions were called): Emmet O’Connor, \textit{Derry Labour in the age of agitation, 1889-1923, Larkinism and syndicalism, 1907-23} (Dublin, 2016), p. 8.


\(^{168}\) \textit{Irish Independent}, 16 January 1915.
acquired through a balance of £347 carried over from the last congress, from affiliation and
delegates’ fees totalling £708, the sale of Congress Reports at £15, a special appeal fund of £833
(collected to fund strike actions), and the Labour Representation Fund at £55. Up to this point the
party had spent a total of £3 on advertising in the city of Derry, £80 on printing, £9 on an anti-
conscription meeting in Belfast, and £66 on attendance at the Mansion House Conference, so the
total ‘propaganda’ expenditure was £158. 169 There were other expenses not associated with
propaganda such as grants to unions, auditors’ fees and so on, and total expenses amounted to
£512. The net balance of £1,446 (excluding any uncashed cheques, which at the time of accounts
were £154) could have funded a reasonably collective electoral propaganda campaign given that
Labour intended to run only a maximum of two dozen candidates. 170 Yet, the funds raised were far
less than those raised by the Irish Party, and substantially less than that of Sinn Féin and Unionists.
No specific election fund was established by Labour, and their general guideline was that ‘the
expenses of candidates for election to Parliament shall be borne by the organization or
organizations nominating the candidates, with such financial assistance as the Central Fund can
afford’. 171

In a complete volte-face, Labour pulled out of the general election in November 1918
when Johnson, on behalf of the National Executive, proclaimed their unpreparedness for a ‘peace
election’. Did lack of finance play a role in this decision? Labour’s earlier lacklustre
pronouncement that organizations were to bear the burden of financing candidates was practical,
but it was not a rallying call. Nor was there an impassioned appeal to engage in an aggressive
unified battle of the workers, who would contribute into an election victory fund. Vague reference
to an uncertain central fund hardly inspired financial confidence. It also indicated the National
Executive’s timidity to committing themselves to candidates.

Committing themselves to strike funds, on the other hand, generated substantial income,
and this is where Labour had the most power and expertise. The 1919 balance sheets reported that
£1,729 was collected for the Limerick Strike Fund, with the bulk of donations coming from the

169 Ibid. Monies have been rounded up to the nearest £.
170 O’Connor, Derry Labour, see comments by Thomas Johnson, p. 103.
ITGWU and Mansion House Conference who subscribed £1,000 and £500 respectively.\textsuperscript{172} Earlier in 1918, during the anti-conscription campaign, Labour rallied its members to strike action on 23 April 1918, and the twenty-fourth annual conference recommended that all unions were to collect a strike levy of 3\textp{d} a week per member for the purpose of raising funds for the Labour movement in this fight. The total collected for the anti-conscription fund across Ireland was £207,000 and Labour’s collective active campaigning certainly galvanised contributions.\textsuperscript{173} A similar directive to raise money for elections may have had equal success and allowed them more confidence to contest in 1918.

Labour, it seems, were more comfortable in local elections, and in August 1919 plans were afoot for contesting the city, county, rural district and Poor Law Guardians elections due to take place in January and June 1920. The aim was to ‘put forward as many delegates as possible’ because these were bodies ‘upon which Labour should have adequate representation’.\textsuperscript{174} The programme for local government mirrored that of the 1918 general election with the main one being the recovery ‘for the nation complete possession of all the natural physical sources of wealth in this country’.\textsuperscript{175} By the end of June 1919 the balance sheet showed an income of £2,039, garnered from £1,446 carried over from 1918, and delegates and affiliation fees totalling £294. Labour made good profits from the sales of reports at £30, and the sale of pamphlets at £39, and the special appeal and stamp sales brought it £230. When donations and the Limerick Strike Fund (plus interest) is added, Labour had a total income of £3,846. Expenses, including meetings and donations to strike funds, amounted to £2,847 and included printing at £281, postage and sundry at £39, pamphlets at £5 and funding an international delegation at £175.\textsuperscript{176} The surplus was not

\textsuperscript{172} Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the ILP&TUC, pp. 114-17.
\textsuperscript{173} Sean T. O’Kelly stated that the total amount collected for the anti-conscription fund was £250,000. The secretary for finance contradicted that sum, stating that the money received was not more than £18,000; Dáil Éireann debates, F:13, 20 August 1919, cc. 150-51. The return and dispersal of these funds in 1919 resulted in £21,000 going to the Mansion House Conference, £164,000 being returned to subscribers or sent to appointed charities, £17,000 was handed over to Sinn Féin (who wisely held a party collection on the same day), and £5,000 remained in the hands of the trustees: RIC Inspector General’s report, May 1919, CO 904/109.
\textsuperscript{174} Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the ILP&TUC held in Drogheda, 4-7 August 1919, p. 49.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid, p. 65.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
enough to fund contests across all constituencies for all local elections, so again the directive was that those who nominated candidates paid for candidates’ expenses.

Labour did not fail to fundraise – evident in the monies garnered from affiliation fees and other funding initiatives. However, the Labour movement as a whole in Ireland had many fundraising activities in motion as the various elections approached, so targeting election donations from the same unions and members who were already contributing to strike funds was stretching resources too tight, despite substantially increased trade union membership. Labour’s skilled fundraising efforts reinforced trade union movements rather than electoral candidates, but it was lack of organization that sent them off course in 1918. Failure to fundraise for the general election was by no means the only reason for Labour’s withdrawal from the contest, and perhaps it was not even the strongest influencing factor, but it was certainly a contributing cause. The escalation of Sinn Féin support after the Easter Rising, and their 1917 by-election successes particularly, ignited a fundraising mission that was unmatched by any other party.

The finances outlined in this chapter do not account for the total expenditure of the various parties. There were other variables at play such as the methods and means of propaganda that were used by individual parties and the finances attributed to it. A further examination of costs will be conducted during later chapters, particularly in the examination of the methods used for disseminating propaganda in the next chapter.
Political messages can be received and interpreted by different people in different ways, and the method of propaganda often determines the audience that is reached.¹ This chapter examines the type of media used and the reasons behind party or candidate media selection to ask were political parties and candidates influenced by contemporary analysis on propaganda techniques and did they implement this knowledge? Were they already implementing practices that later formed the core of modern skills? Why were specific methods of propaganda favoured over others, and were parties restricted by existing media or did they advance new methods of propaganda? Other issues, such as the context of communication, and who was communicating with whom and why, will also be addressed.

Thematic content and propaganda stimuli are investigated in chapter four, however examples are provided here to demonstrate the effectiveness of methods. Through a study of the various types of propaganda used by individual parties and their candidates a theory emerges. This chapter begins with oratory or speech-making, a selected propaganda method by all parties that could be considered cost-free, although travel and accommodation expenses were accrued; for example to convey speakers to voters Sinn Féin faced a rather large bill of £103 19s 4d to cover petrol and transport in one constituency.²

3.1: Electoral Eloquence

Before delving into speeches as a form of propaganda, it is important to consider personality and delivery. The former contains a key ingredient for a successful propagandist, and often determines audience perceptions of a speaker. The aim of discourse is to persuade and influence political

² SFSCM, 13 February 1919. Petrol was rationed and expensive during the Great War years.
ideology through propaganda, and rhetoric is the relationship between language and persuasion. Discourse is the language or words used and the context of a communication, and takes into account the situation of the propaganda conveyance and the supports, such as images, that alter or add to the communication meaning. Therefore, discourse is both text and context together, and in public or private speeches it lies at the heart of message delivery. It is also essential to ask if delivery and approach in conveying policies and party ambitions helped to alter attitudes during election campaigns. While every speaker and candidate cannot be covered in a work such as this, the main leaders of the political parties that contested the by-elections and general election of 1918 will be examined. They set the tone and themes of party policy and ideology.

There is a relational connection between speakers and audiences and while masterful oratorical skills are advantageous, a successful delivery requires the audience to listen to content and to believe in appearance as well as words. It is audience perception that endorses charismatic authority, and charisma is founded in the creation of a mutual bond between a leader and his or her followers. The larger the crowd the more difficult it was to establish that connection, but mood or tone could be transferred in body language and pitch, and confidence by using a strong stance and projected speech delivery. Therefore, it is important to examine if public personae, characters and image affected electoral propaganda outcomes. In the early days of election campaigning Redmond, Carson and de Valera became the spokespersons or message controllers of their respective parties. Delving into the personality of politicians by examining how they delivered propaganda speeches is important, as is gauging audience responses.

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4 Cook, *The Discourse of Advertising*, p. 4.
Stephen Gwynn described Redmond as ‘hawk faced and thick bodied’ in appearance.6 Punch and other British magazines and newspapers often exaggerated these features of Redmond – and habitually represented the Irish using stereotypical images of unruly peasants, with depictions of ‘Paddy and his pig’. Redmond was sometimes represented within the ‘Paddy’ character holding clay pipe, shillelagh and with pig in tow. One cartoon even displayed Redmond himself as a pig.7 Imagery of this nature was not confined to the British newspapers, as the front page of the Roscommon Herald, for instance, often satirized Redmond or the Irish Party in animal form, as the cartoon examples here show.

Redmond has been, perhaps unfairly, described as a conservative or conciliatory politician. The tone of his later speeches lends to this observation as he maintained that Irishmen, once home rule was possessed, would be content with their Irish parliament and happy within the Empire. But the Irish Party had united under Redmond, he had negotiated a home rule settlement with Britain, and gained both party and majority population support at least up until the mid-war years. However, by the end of 1917 Redmond’s charisma had waned.

6 Gwynn, Redmond’s Last Years, p. 7.
7 For examples see Punch, 12 October 1910; Roy Foster in Paddy & Mr Punch (London, 1993), p. 185 observes that Punch had earlier portrayed Parnell in similar ‘Paddy attire’. For examples of the portrayals of Redmond see Daily Graphic, 29 November 1913; Pall Mall Gazette, 2 February 1914; Westminster Gazette, 16 February 1914; and Reynolds’s Newspaper, 22 February 1914. Further examples can be found in Roy Douglas, Liam Harte, Jim O’Hara, Drawing conclusions: a cartoon history of Anglo-Irish relations, 1798-1998 (Belfast, 1998).
After his death in 1918 he was succeeded by John Dillon. Dillon was once described by T.P. O’Connor as ‘tall, thin, fragile, his physique was that of a man who has periodically to seek flight from death in change of scene and air’. He was, according to Frank Callanan, in many respects temperamentally miscast as a politician. Dillon’s opinions when formed, became entrenched, although his integrity of political belief was unquestionable, particularly that of establishing a highly disciplined nationalist movement; and his predilection was towards the agrarian left. These two beliefs form central messages in Dillon’s election speeches. After obtaining a degree from the College of Surgeons in the Catholic University in Dublin, Dillon entered political life by joining Isaac Butt’s Home Rule League. A heavy involvement in land agitation had enhanced a more inflammatory style oratory, particularly evident in a speech in Kildare on 10 August 1880 when he advocated a general strike against rent.

In contrast to the more appeasing style of Redmond, Dillon’s rhetoric was determined and often provocative, but it contained contradictory messages that led to voter confusion. After the 1916 Easter Rising he urged Redmond to impress upon the government ‘the extreme unwisdom of any wholesale shooting of prisoners’, and vehemently denounced the executions in the Commons on 11 May 1916. Dillon’s protest against the execution of Irishmen was not vocal approval for the actions of those involved in the Rising, but it could have been perceived as endorsement or at least sympathetic support for a more radical approach to Westminster. At age sixty-six he became leader of the party at a time when the destructive rhythm of the Great War reached its height due largely to the German Spring offensive. Sinn Féin had also entered the political fray as a vigorous contender for nationalist seats. Dillon’s forthright counsel to potential voters was that Sinn Féin’s

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8 Dillon was proposed by Joseph Devlin and seconded by Thomas Condon and the motion was carried unanimously: NLI, IPP Minute Books, MS 12,082, 12 March 1918.
pursuit of a republic would lead to bloodshed and defeat, and he characterised their policy of abstentionism as ‘a policy of lunatics’.11

Edward Carson’s angular and austere appearance was, according to William O’Brien ‘as inexpressive as a jagged hatchet’. Yet his sombre and sober countenance assumed near charismatic proportions for Unionists in Ireland.12 He had assertively piloted Unionists through the home rule crisis from 1912 to 1914 and, according to George Peel in The Reign of Edward Carson, ‘the power which he exercised in that quarter was scarcely otherwise than royal and the allegiance according to him might have been envied by kings’.13 Cartoonists in this era satirized the monarchical tendencies asserted by Carson’s political opponents, who sometimes disdainfully referred to him as 'King Carson'.14 Nonetheless, this indomitable personality created an authority that continued to bear down heavily on opponents in election campaigns in 1918, and drew crowds of supporters to public meetings. Carson’s speeches persistently claimed that that the ‘democracy of Ulster is to march on hand in hand with the democracy of Great Britain’. Ulster’s opposition to the home rule bill activated a demand for the separation of Ulster counties from southern Ireland.15 The threat of force in the face of dissent by the British government – should they proceed with home rule – resulted in criticisms of disloyalty. Carson responded to these reproaches by promoting defiance to the existing Westminster government while Unionists kept the province ‘in trust for the Empire and under the king’.16

Éamon de Valera was the new and unknown politician and he had to speedily build reputation and draw public focus to Sinn Féin ideals. His most powerful technique was the use of

11 Lyons, John Dillon, pp. 373, 381, and 439. See also Cruise O’Brien, Parnell and his party; F.S. L. Lyons, The Irish Parliamentary Party; James McConnel, The Irish Parliamentary Party; Frank Callanan, The Parnell Split (Syracuse,1992) and Maurice Manning, James Dillon: A Biography (Dublin, 1999).
15 Four were initially proposed in 1912 by the Cornish Liberal MP, Agar-Robartes; nine were claimed during the 1914 Buckingham Palace Conference, and eventually six counties under the Government of Ireland (home rule) Act 1920 were created to form Northern Ireland.
16 The Times, 15 Sept 1913.
myth, interspersed with allusions to history. He also regularly referred to his personal participation in the Easter Rising, although mainly directing attention to other rebels, who by this stage had become mythologized and etched into the Irish mind-set as martyrs. Mary C. Bromage’s fawning description of de Valera’s return to Ireland after imprisonment in June 1917 observed ‘a new rigidity about his mouth and a different thrust of the chin, though he still looked the teacher and scholar…’. She described him as the embodiment of ‘the legends of 1916’, the man the ‘surging crowds wanted to see, to touch, to sing about.’ At the time of the East Clare by-election Robert Brennan claimed that voters saw de Valera as a ‘leader’; ‘Clare and all Ireland had found a champion worthy of the race. The people of Clare gave this young man, hitherto unknown to them, five thousand votes and only two thousand for his opponent…’.

After the East Clare victory, until his re-arrest and imprisonment in Lincoln Gaol de Valera visited towns and villages to promote Sinn Féin. Padraig Colum stated that his ‘ability to take himself and his position seriously, even solemnly, one reflects, was a potent factor in giving de Valera an ascendancy among the leaders of the Irish movement’. During his tour of the USA in 1919 he presented himself as president of an already established nation. His domination of Sinn Féin was speedy as by October 1917 he became both president of Sinn Féin and the Irish Volunteers. De Valera’s powers of persuasion and emotional nationalism converted the more militant into political adherents to establish an interlude of peace until 1920. He reassured the cautious (including the clergy) to regenerate the development of a Sinn Féin political programme. As Brian Farrell stated, ‘under de Valera’ Sinn Féin ‘presented itself as a cohesive national party, united …, regimented … and monolithic … there was neither dissent nor resignation. The party discipline appeared magical’.

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20 Brian Farrell, ‘De Valera: Unique Dictator or Charismatic Chairman?’ in O’Carroll Murphy, De Valera and His Times, p. 35.
Throughout all elections de Valera’s message was Sinn Féin’s message, even when replaced by other speakers while he was interned. The ideals of republic, unity, Irish language and culture, abstention from Westminster (in similar vein to Arthur Griffith, although outside the domain of empire), and economic self-sufficiency were consistently championed. The teacher had turned statesman physically, but as will be seen later, oratorically there were mixed opinions.

Leading Irish politicians were aware of the power of effective speech-making and the art of rhetoric which had been written about by philosophers dating back to ancient Greece. De Valera, in notes on a speech he intended to deliver in South Armagh in 1918, commented on the ‘founder of Rhet[oric] from Syracuse’, perhaps referring to Plato who spent time in that part of Sicily. He acknowledged rhetoric ‘as an art’, stating that it was a ‘great weapon’. In these same notes he jotted down the names of Socrates and Aristotle, the renowned masters of rhetoric. Therefore, the leader of the young Sinn Féin movement had gained at least some understanding of the power of rhetorical persuasion. It also tells us that politicians prepared, rehearsed and edited notes for public speaking events.

The art of public speaking, which the leaders of Sinn Féin, the Irish Party and Unionism needed to perfect involved discourse, narrative and rhetoric. Rhetoric is defined as language that functions to ‘adjust ideas to people and people to ideas’, and theorists of narrative agree that it includes the ‘what’ is told and the ‘how’ it is told. The ‘what’ of the narrative is called story, and the ‘how’ is discourse. All political speeches contain narrative and this is usually where a speaker sets the scene. Once the historical was divulged the speaker then had to move the audience to a point of action. Producing text or speeches and interpreting same takes place in the arena of social

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22 UCDA, De Valera papers, P150/598: Notes for a speech for South Armagh.

23 Because Labour did not contest the 1918 general election they have been omitted in this section.

interaction, and the processes involved occur in the social context. Fairclough states that discourse involves social conditions that shape the way in which individuals interact and, thereby, their production and interpretation of texts are framed. This was important in election meetings as the conditions were often an impending election, and awareness of the speaker’s intent was evident. The audience knew they were present at a meeting (private or public) to be persuaded or to have their decisions confirmed.

An Irish audience often had to wade through a myriad of sensory material before a speech began as party platforms or indoor gatherings flaunted symbols and iconography of identity such as flags, banners, and shamrocks. An audience at public meetings might have been affected by the threat of violence or heckling (encouraging or obstructive), becoming distracted from content and more concerned with self-preservation. During the general election in the constituency of East Tyrone, Frank Gallagher admitted that during an Irish Party speech after eleven o’clock mass to rally support for Thomas Harbinson, he waited until there was a lull in the speaker’s comments and interrupted with contradictions ‘in a voice that travelled nearly to Dunganon’. This was credited as ‘first class sport’. The atmosphere at crowded meetings also made herd persuasion possible, which proved beneficial if it was biased in the speaker’s favour.

Carson’s speeches reduced complexities to a series of points that culminated with the key issue upon which action was needed. The plight of the Protestant community in Ulster in the face of the home rule threat formed the opening or backdrop, which was regularly followed by the claim that there should be ‘no coercion of Ulster’. Arguments were made in the form of a question, with a one-word answer that inspired an audience to react. For instance, in his address to the annual meeting of the UUC in November 1918 he theatrically unpicked the idea of ‘self-determination’ by asking should there be ‘self determination by the South and West of Ireland of the destinies of Ulster?’ and answering ‘Never!’, to which there was an instantaneous response in ‘cheers’ by the

26 See later section on symbols and ballads.
audience. The proof of loyalty to the United Kingdom by the enlistment of Ulstermen for the Great War was espoused, along with the ‘lofty ideals’ behind war support that inspired ‘a great awakening’ which had invoked a duty in Ulster ‘to see that full advantage is taken of these ideals’. Carson closed this speech, as he did in others, by championing the advantages of the union, claiming that ‘the people of this country were ‘the spoiled children of the United Kingdom’ and that they [Unionists] had made the mistake of not taking their share in government. He did not need to use the words ‘vote Unionist’, it was already there in the closing argument.

Carson habitually used aggressive rhetoric to take his audience to more dramatic places by employing the politics of fear. He, and other Unionists, incessantly maintained that the home rule bill would result in the loss of Ulster prosperity and that home rule would be Rome rule. Modern research on media violence suggests that violent content can lead receivers of that information to overestimate its frequency and in turn misperceive reality. The resulting action may be marginal such as swaying the swing vote; however, a more radical effect within unionism was the forming of the UVF in 1913.

Unionists tirelessly argued that the government was attempting to pass an unconstitutional act and that the response had to be ‘no home rule’. For Carson, unionism represented the values he held in esteem: honour, decency, integrity in public life, justice and the civilizing force of the Empire. He maintained that there were fundamental differences between Protestants and Catholics that were ‘deep rooted, historical questions, traditions, ideas and race too which you

28 Anglo-Celt, 23 November 1918.
31 Unionist opposition to Home Rule, which had manifested itself with Ulster’s Solemn League and Covenant in September 1912, gathered momentum in 1913 with the organization of the 90,000 strong Ulster Volunteer Force, and the drawing up of an elaborate scheme for the establishment of a ‘Provisional Government’ in the north, in the event of Home Rule coming into operation: Eamon Phoenix, Northern Nationalism: Nationalist Politics, Partition and the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland 1890-1940 (Belfast, 1994), p. 7; see also Denis Gwynn, The History of Partition (Dublin, 1950).
cannot get rid of’. These differences were too severe to coalesce under one Irish parliament and for a British government to impose its existence was a ‘nefarious conspiracy’.

Carson’s rhetoric often comprised urgent directness of action, but he was rarely patronizing. Unionists were persuaded into collusion in his planned schemes both against home rule and in attaining votes through his regular use of the first person plural ‘we’ or ‘ourselves’. This provided logic and collective motivation but the disadvantage was that altering perspectives and perceptions were limited. In his speech to the annual UUC meeting in Belfast Carson told his audience that ‘we cannot afford to wait in a great community like this’ for government answers, and stated ‘let us …have the legislation that is suited to us’. There was no need to change opinion amongst the disciples of unionism, but this form of rhetoric to swing borderline votes was weak and entirely impractical for those outside the collective ‘we’. Carson, however, appealed mainly to those who adhered to Unionist beliefs and sense of identity, so by drawing on the collective he attempted to orchestrate feelings of inclusivity and devotedness to a common cause.

De Valera regularly attacked the Irish Party for missing their many chances to secure home rule and Unionists for maintaining that they were being coerced into an acceptance of home rule. He argued that these issues could only be addressed and usurped by support at the Paris peace conference. In referring to the ‘heroic’ rebels of the Easter Rising de Valera appealed to the masculine, where young men bravely took to battle for patriotic ends. The inspiration to emulate these actions politically was in the suggestion that if the voters did not elect him ‘on the principle of nationality for which the men fought during Easter Week’, then ‘the men of Clare [in the 1917 East Clare by-election] would be showing that they repudiated the Irish heroes’. The ‘boys’ who died in 1916 could only be vindicated by giving him ‘an overwhelming majority at the poll’.

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34 Carson was referring to Herbert Asquith’s government in this instance. H. Montgomery Hyde, *Carson* (London, 1987), pp 290-91,315; Colvin, p. 85.
35 *Anglo-Celt*, 23 November 1918.
De Valera often became side-tracked in speeches in a manner that was akin to a meandering journey of thoughts on a series of ideals and issues. Darrell Figgis phrased it well when he observed that de Valera’s mind was full of incomplete sentences, ‘he never looked to the end of what he wished to say – or, for that matter, of what he willed to do – but turned to follow a new thought before he, or any one else, had caught the first.’ This mild criticism was enigmatically righted by adding, ‘he did this so imperiously and impatiently, however, that he lent an air of tremendous decision to his own indecision’. Figgis described an occasion where de Valera entered on ‘three successive sentences, leaving each before he came to its verb…’, stating:

I wonder whether he had baulked at those verbs or whether they were ever present to his mind at all. Nor was this a refinement of speech in the search for perfection. At first I had assumed it to be this, but I found, as I watched, that he moved away from his incomplete thoughts to others altogether new, often doubling back upon his traces to expand themes that had already been finished when confronted by themes at which he shied.

Again, his criticism was offset by subsequent praise as the speech in question, according to Figgis, was delivered with the didactic emphasis of a schoolmaster, an engaging and captivating schoolmaster, imperious and impetuous. In later days, I was told that a high dignity in Ireland, who had occasion to be present at important negotiations with him, said that it was as difficult to fix him to a decision as it would be to fix mercury on a plate with a fork. The figure seemed to me most just; but it missed the great air of didactic emphasis, changing quickly to engaging charm, which he vested his mercurial shiftings. Yet this, too, betokened the same defect; for he had nothing of the claim of mind that is of the essence of true decision of character”.

Fitzpatrick remarks that ‘the elements of de Valera’s strategy were expressed plainly enough in his inelegant speeches’. His strategy against Unionists was regularly insolent and unlike the Irish Party, who saw no serious threat from unionism, de Valera perceived unionism as a movement of the Protestant ascendency class. De Valera’s rhetoric advocated Irish unification where the majority rule should be applied and Ulster ‘should not be petted and the interest of the majority sacrificed to her’. His bold resolution to the polarized political views was that if Ulster Unionists failed to recognise the Sinn Féin position – which ‘had behind it justice and right’ – they

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38 UCDA, Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/B/341: newspaper article written by Darrell Figgis on 15 September 1923 titled ‘De Valera’s Oratory’.
39 David Fitzpatrick, ‘De Valera in 1917: The Undoing of the Easter Rising’ in O’Carroll and Murphy, De Valera and His Times, p. 103.
should be condemned to collapse … ‘they would have to go under’. The logic after 1918 was that the Sinn Féin position was ‘supported by nine-tenths of the Irish people’. De Valera elevated the rhetoric of nationalism to an art-form in his speeches and projected the idea of a uniform ideal which was that of a nation aspiring to a ‘republic’. Nonconformity meant expulsion and repudiation, and the court of appeal was to be the Paris peace conference not the Imperial parliament.  

The Irish Party, even under Dillon’s reign, was more appeasing than Sinn Féin. Dillon’s election speech in Straide, Co. Mayo in December 1918 is a good example of how he obliquely championed the constitutional position by emphasizing the menace of physical force to associate Sinn Féin with a policy of failure. He asserted that all of Ireland’s past struggles had resulted in ‘suffering, sorrow and ruin’. To elaborate on the disparity between the nationalist movements he asked the audience to ‘compare the condition of East Mayo today with what it was 33 years ago’. While he did not elucidate on the local gains, he posed a second question ‘What have they [Sinn Féin] ever done?’ This time the audience verbally replied with ‘Nothing’. Dillon had succeeded in engaging his audience by prompting them to participate actively. In this instance it was passive accord, although engaging an audience response was also a form of rabble rousing to excite support and, at times, militant action by all sides in election campaigns.

Dillon, like all home rulers, did not need to build an argument for self-government before an empathetic crowd, but he did need to arouse passions to encourage listeners to see anew that which had become routine. Keeping the home rule argument fresh, four years after it had been placed on the statute book, was a hard task. His method was to fervidly denounce the alternative, asserting that ‘it is in my opinion a sin and a crime to tell the Irish people that they can win an Irish republic … they will bring bloodshed and ruin and disaster upon the people…’. He regularly turned attention to Irish Party successes as he perceived them by asking if the voters wanted to undo ‘the work that we have done for the last 35 years’.  

Dillon’s pugnacious condemnation of violence as

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40 Irish Independent, 20 March 1918 & Irish Times, 6 July 1917.  
41 Freeman’s Journal, 2 December 1918. During the war of independence he espoused similar beliefs. In a letter on 2 January 1920 in the Irish Times Dillon remarked that ‘the policy of the Sinn Féin leaders has been disastrous … and is bound … to lead to even greater disasters.’ He maintained that ‘… to declare war
against constitutionalism supports this, particularly when he played on past fears by referring to a contemporary threat of plantation by Unionists. Here he argued that the Irish Party had saved the people from a British government plan to make provision for the ‘loyal men of Ulster … in Meath and Roscommon’, an action the ‘Sinn Féiners’ had no power to achieve because of their plan to abstain from Westminster. He later reduced Sinn Féin policies to absurdity by using phrases such as ‘their silly language’ and ‘silly actions’.

Dillon’s confrontational style emulated Parnell’s rhetoric against the British government. However, his message was confusing. The Irish Party had nailed their flag to the Liberal Party mast on the home rule issue, so denouncing the actions of the coalition government now opened the debate on the kind of politics he really embraced. Furthermore, as with Redmond, Dillon’s persistent call was ‘let us have home rule’, but very little was said on what was to be done when home rule was enacted. This, and the internecine nationalist quarrels between a future home rule government and a republican government, nourished Unionist propaganda.

Differing political opinions and oftentimes similar styles of oratory had a common goal – to secure votes on election day. Politicians aimed to provide basic facts or at least facts that provided a façade for truth. But, the truth was (and is) often elusive in political speeches, and people’s perception of the truth is often anchored in their own political persuasion. Richard Mulcahy in a 1922 staff notice maintained that Sinn Féin ‘facts must be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth’ and that the ‘other side will … throw doubt on your real truths’. Unionist truth was loyalty to the empire for the benefit of Ireland, particularly Ulster, Irish Party truth was home rule, and Sinn Féin’s was an Irish republic. Deciphering the actual ‘truth’ was the preserve of the voting public, and propagandistic speeches along with other methods were the tools from which the truth was to be untangled. Sinn Féin also suggested that truth was embedded

against the British Empire when Ireland had no means of carrying on that war in a civilised or decent fashion, was foolish in the extreme’.

42 UCDA, Richard Mulcahy papers, P7/A/42: Staff Notice 1922.
within the Irish language rather than in English: ‘Ná bach le haon reacaireacht treason / I dteangain an Bhéarla má bhionn’ (Do not bother with any treason gossip / if it is in the English language).  

Redmond, Dillon, Carson, Craig and de Valera were not the only speakers that advocated for their party policies. During elections local candidates hosted outdoor public meetings where the political theatre of the open-air platform added a sense of drama. Open air meetings afforded an excellent opportunity for a candidate to establish personal contact with electors. Newspaper advertisements and posters and a host of novel methods were used to attract attendance. For instance, Unionists advised their political candidates to take ‘a flare lamp on a dark night [as] a good means of attracting a crowd’.

Large crowd numbers were perceived as a sign of party support or public interest in a candidate. Reports by newspapers of meetings whereby ‘so dense was the crowd’ that the speech had been ‘attended by a large assemblage of electors’ lent subsequent weight to the candidate and the message. Those in attendance at a large public meeting were able to experience the ambiance, but it was difficult to hear the speaker (this was a time before microphones). Messages were often passed back by attendees, but many had to wait for the printed version in the local or national newspapers. Obtaining subsequent editorial in a local newspaper was crucial for political parties and candidates to ensure the dissemination of accurate speech content.

Unionist candidates were encouraged to reflect on meeting times to ensure they were hosted at a suitable time for their audience, advising that, for example, ‘special meetings for women – more particularly in the afternoon – generally have good effect’. Speeches were often held during organized fairs and markets, or in peopled areas of towns, cities, at crossroads or main centres to boost audience numbers. As the *Irish Times* reported on 28 January 1918 during the South Armagh by-election, ‘meetings were held in the vicinity of almost all the churches in order that the congregations might be captured’. Indoor meetings were more intimate affairs and were

43 BMH, Contemporary Documents, 227/7/B1 [R]: De Valera handbill, Ní Fheadar Ca Dédarfadh [sic, Déarfadh] Seán Buidhe (I Do Not Know What John Bull Will Say).
44 *Irish Times*, 7 December 1918: Meeting of Unionist Thomas Robinson in Dalkey, Co. Dublin; *Irish Times*, 15 November 1918: Carson in Belfast.
useful for introducing and making a candidate personally known to existing party supporters. They were also useful for encouraging volunteer canvassers, and providing instruction and education on promoting specific party policies.

At public meetings, especially for unknown candidates, clerical attendance and speech-making offered credence and provided weight and authority. The clergy also provided a pulpit information conduit during church services for disseminating a party policy that reached a large and captive target audience. In North Roscommon the decision to contest the by-election and support Count Plunkett was taken by a number of separatist nationalists under the leadership of Fr Michael O’Flanagan.46 The Roscommon Herald reported that as soon as O’Flanagan began his campaign he was joined by several young curates. He became a strong advocate for Sinn Féin and toured the country during election campaigns addressing monster meetings.47 After the arrest of Arthur Griffith in 1918, O’Flanagan (exempted from arrest because he was a priest) assumed responsibility for campaign management. His bishop intervened in an attempt to suspend and censor his activities, but according to Laurence Nugent this served only to allow him the freedom ‘to continue the campaign’.48 Frank Gallagher described O’Flanagan as possessing a ‘wonderfully resonant voice and a fine appearance’ and maintained that his oratory skills were ‘politically pontifical’. In the East Cavan by-election Gallagher’s incongruous remark was that O’Flanagan’s ‘appalling eloquence moves the great crowd’. He praised O’Flanagan’s address to Arthur Griffith, as if he were there in person (he was at that time in prison) because ‘the thrill of it sent cold shivers of uncontrollable enthusiasm passing up and down my spine like the buckets in a mud boat’.49 In East Clare the Reverend John Scanlon P.P. at a ‘largely attended meeting held immediately after mass’ encouraged all to follow the example of South Longford and elect a Sinn Féin candidate, stating they were worth more than ‘ten thousand speeches in the House of Commons’.50

47 BMH WS 707: Michael Noyk reporting on Fr O’Flanagan addressing a monster meeting in Kilnaleck, Cavan.
49 TCD, Frank Gallagher Papers, Mss 10050/45, 2 June 1918 and Mss 10050/46: 16 June 1918 in East Cavan.
50 Clare Champion, 16 June 1917.
Intervention by the Catholic hierarchy directly or indirectly influenced the outcome of the by-elections. The Bishop of Limerick, Edward Thomas, wrote a scathing letter just before the South Longford by-election in protest against the mistreatment of Irish prisoners (see figure 3.3). By questioning the British government on whether they had ‘any intention’ to give Ireland home rule in ‘any shape or form’ or if it was ‘all humbug?’ he caused grave difficulties for the Irish Party. Redmond was already concerned that support for prisoners and Sinn Féin had become indistinguishable in the public mind. He petitioned Asquith and Duke, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, for a swift amnesty to ‘strengthen the position of the constitutional party’.51

Archbishop of Dublin, William Walsh, also published a letter in the newspapers condemning home rule, with signatures from three (of the four) Catholic Archbishops, eighteen Catholic bishops, three Protestant bishops and several chairmen of the county councils.52 He stated home rule would not ‘contribute in the slightest degree to the pacification of our country’. The letter was reprinted in full in all the national dailies and many provincial newspapers, and the Irish Times referred to the letter as ‘unique’ because it combined Catholics and Protestants in common cause.53 Sinn Féin seized the moment and drafted a handbill claiming that Archbishop Walsh Writes Ireland has been Sold and they called for ‘Votes for Joe McGuinness’.54 The Irish Party immediately attacked the Archbishop across columns of the Freeman’s Journal, but they could not reverse the damage. Some within Sinn Féin believed the letter had secured the very narrow victory in South Longford. Others such as Dan McCarthy claimed the letter was of ‘very little value coming so late’ because he was only able to put the propaganda handbill ‘in the hands of the people on their way to the poll’.55 It did perhaps change the mind of wavering voters.

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51 HC, PD, Vol. 86, cc. 581-594, 18 October 1916; Bodleian Library Oxford, Asquith Papers, Ms 37, f132 and f134, Redmond to Asquith, 14 and 30 November 1916.
52 Dr John Healy, Archbishop of Tuam did not sign the letter due (according to Monsignor Curran) to serious illness: BMH WS 687(i). Dr Healy had advocated strongly for Irish enlistment and the Irish Party had created a poster headlined ‘Archbishop of Tuam’ that maintained the war provided the opportunity to repay a debt for Belgium and his diocese would ‘not fail to do our own duty’: NLI Ephemera collection, EPH C178.
53 For example see Irish Times, 9 May 1917.
54 Elaine Callinan private collection: Bishop of Limerick handbill; NLI, Ephemera collection, EPH C88: Archbishop Walsh Writes Ireland has been Sold.
55 BMH WS 722: Dan McCarthy
The Irish Party had their supporting clerics too who preached publicly and canvassed on their behalf. In South Longford the local curate claimed that voters need not go outside their own parish to find a worthy successor to the incumbent John Phillips (the deceased Irish Party MP).\textsuperscript{56} Canon Charles Quin, the parish priest of Camlough in South Armagh, contrasted the diverse approaches between the two nationalist parties, asserting the insanity of the Sinn Féin movement and the sanity of the Irish Party. He passionately condemned ‘the republican party’ declaring that their triumph would result in ‘Easter week propagated through all Ireland – that awful catastrophe, which meant rebellion, which meant blood, which meant disunion’.\textsuperscript{57}

In East Clare the Reverend Canon Hayes of Feakle admitted that ‘Sinn Féin had captured to the standard the junior clergy’; although he personally condemned Sinn Féin’s policies which he categorized as ‘socialism, bloodshed and anarchy which struck at the root of authority’.\textsuperscript{58} The \textit{Irish Times} also highlighted the defection of younger clergy to Sinn Féin, maintaining that only the older priests were present at the Irish Party convention held in Boyle, Roscommon for the selection of Thomas Devine.\textsuperscript{59} Clearly the nationalist parties believed that the clergy were a powerful force in swaying voter opinion.

There is little evidence of Protestant clerical proselytization towards Unionist ideals during the election campaign speeches. They did nominate Unionist candidates, and therefore imparted an air of authentication. For the Dublin University seats William Morgan Jellett was proposed by the Bishop of Derry and two of his assenting electors were the Dean of Derry and the Reverend John Wilson MacQuaid; and Arthur Warren Samuels (the Attorney General) had the Reverend A.A. Luce as an assenting nominator. In the Dublin constituency of Rathmines, Maurice Dockrell received outspoken support from Samuels, and fellow politicians such as Henry Hanna, along with the female voice of Lady Arnott who appealed to the women of that parliamentary division.\textsuperscript{60} But, no clerical representative of Protestantism was present. Carson was supported on platforms by

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Longford Leader}, 14 April 1917.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Irish Times}, 21 January 1918; see also BMH WS 634: Jack McElhaw of Camlough, Armagh who placed Canon Quinn as the parish priest of Lower Killeavy. The parish of Lower Killeavy is part of the Archdiocese of Armagh and encompasses Camlough.
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Clare Champion}, 7 July 1917.
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Irish Times}, 8 February 1917: selection of Thomas Devine for the North Roscommon by-election 1917.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, 3 December 1918
well-known Unionists such as the Duke of Abercorn, the Marquis of Londonderry and Lieutenant-Colonel Sir James Craig, however there was never a Protestant Reverend mentioned. One can only speculate as to the reason. The main one was the divergent denominations of Protestantism that existed in Ireland, therefore having no clerical representation was better than appearing biased in favour of one.

Carson regularly condemned Catholic clerical interference in electoral politics, particularly that of Cardinal Logue in creating the nationalist pact for Ulster in 1918.61 Ridiculing the Cardinal’s divergent opinion on nationalist politics was his favoured approach, particularly evident in a speech in Lisburn, Co. Antrim when he scorned Cardinal Logue for more or less saying ‘I admit that Sinn Féin is nothing but folly, but in Ulster you must go and vote for Sinn Féin’. Carson attributed lack of prosperity and industrial advancement in southern Ireland to clerical ‘folly’, contrasting it with Ulster progressiveness.62 Earlier that same week in his own constituency of Duncairn in Belfast, Carson claimed that ‘I do not think that we would tolerate that kind of interference on our side’ and he accused Cardinal Logue of ‘compromising with folly’; attaining ‘laughter’ from his audience. He then maintained that the only way that Unionists could counteract possible Sinn Féin advancement was to ‘smother their votes by thousands of ours’, and for that he received applause.

Parliamentary oratory was another forum for Unionist propaganda to persuade support for maintaining the union and advocating rejection of home rule in Britain. During the home rule crisis Unionists lobbied British political opinion relentlessly, however during the election campaigns the focus was Ireland, and Ulster specifically.

Political speeches for the 1918 election campaign honed in on the high ideals relevant to each political party, but many in Ireland were uninterested in ancient rages on the variances between Catholic and Protestant, Orangemen and Hibernians. As the polling date loomed candidates and leaders were compelled to address the more mundane issues of housing, farming, and taxation. These concerns became central to voters during the 1920 urban and rural elections,

61 See chapter five.
62 Irish Times, 14 December 1918: Carson at Lisburn, Co. Antrim in support of the candidature of Captain Charles C. Craig for the South Antrim Division.
and will be investigated in the next chapter. Public speaking to large and small audiences was a central component of electoral and local government campaigns, with the latter usually conducted within the constituency by the selected party candidate(s).

Labour did not contest the by-elections or the 1918 general election, so they have thus far been omitted from this analysis. Connolly was advocated internally as one of the ‘oldest friends in the Labour movement’ whose ‘life and death were the inspiration to which are due the splendid enthusiasm, the strong determination, the manly independence, and … the whole-hearted allegiance of the many thousands of workers.’ Labour leaders claimed to follow the ideals and principles of Connolly, but as Fitzpatrick points out, Labour leaders like Thomas Johnson avoided commitment to his socialism or his nationalism. Labour candidates became more vocal during the 1920 local elections, and in similar fashion to Unionists, Ratepayers and Municipal Reform candidates, much of their commentary was on the everyday issues of taxation and housing.

3.2: Newspapers

Two distinct ways of utilizing newspapers emerged since reports of political news systematically began in the 1760s: the paid for advertisement, and reports of party speeches or meetings. The former will be dealt with under a later specific heading, and the latter will be investigated here. Newspapers were the main forum for disseminating political information and messages during all election campaigns. The importance of newspapers in building awareness and influencing opinion cannot be underestimated in the early 1900s mainly because there was negligible competition from other media. In the 1900s the attention paid to political matters, particularly during elections, was unrivalled by any other news item (with the possible exception of war news in the early days of the Great War).

64 David Fitzpatrick, ‘De Valera in 1917...’, pp. 101-2. Thomas Johnson had been chairman of the Irish Trades Congress.
During this era censorship of seditious newspapers or editorial existed in Ireland and had been enforced under the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) at the start, and for the duration of, the Great War. DORA ‘forbade printing of seditious speeches, articles or other matters which might cause disaffection … or alarm among any of His Majesty’s forces or among the civilian population’. Censorship was extended to press statements and information ‘calculated to assist the enemy or to lead to a breach of the peace, but not to legitimate criticism’. After the war’s end DORA was replaced by the Restoration of Order in Ireland Act (ROIA) because of continuing hostility as the War of Independence played out.

These acts provided propaganda rewards as well as drawbacks for offenders. Press censorship often led to intimidation, and raids resulted in violent attacks, which increased after the 1916 Rising. These raids were a nuisance, but they also became propaganda coups for Sinn Féin who reported them as ‘acts of atrocity’ or ‘acts of aggression’, particularly in the Irish Bulletin for foreign consumption. At the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis on 16 October 1919 in a report by the Propaganda Department a request was made to Sinn Féin Clubs to appoint ‘from amongst its members a press agent who would keep Headquarters informed as to the activities of the Army of Occupation with regards to raids, arrests, acts of aggression, etc.’

Lord Decies was Chief Press Censor for Ireland from 1916 to 1919. Under the system of censorship in Ireland editors had, of their own volition, to submit proofs of their print copy to the censor. What survived inspection was labelled ‘Passed by Censor’ which appeared under the editorial’s headline, and rows of dots replaced text where cuts had been made. The mosquito press

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67 In a report from the Propaganda Department it was stated that Teachtaí (members) should forward ‘statements of all acts of aggression, such as arrests, imprisonments, raids, searches, charges by military and police, etc.’: UCDA, Desmond FitzGerald papers P80/14(30), Report on Propaganda Department, u.d. These raids continued into 1920 when, for example, a house in Herbert Park, Dublin was raided and the following were seized: a booklet on Sinn Féin organizations, a book of Sinn Féin songs; leaflets, Dáil Éireann cards and three copy books containing seditious songs, Cumann na mBan, Killarney and Irish Rebellion. The occupier Richard Humphries, a motor journalist, was arrested and imprisoned: *Dublin Castle Records, NA CO 904/204/195-215, Irish Government, Sinn Féin and Republic suspects, 1899-1921*.

68 UCDA, de Valera Papers, P150/577: Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, 16 October 1919.

69 HC, PD, vol. 106, cc. 1407-9, 4 June 1918: He was described in the House as possessing in marked degree the tact, temperament, and character necessary to discharge the duties of this responsible office. Lord Decies full name and title was John Graham Hope de la Poer Beresford, 5th Baron Decies (5 December 1866 – 31 January 1944): taken from *New York Times* obituary, 2 February 1944: ‘Lord Decies dies in England at 77’.
were particularly adept at getting around the censor often by issuing suppressed material in pamphlet form. In April 1917 the letter by the Bishop of Limerick on the treatment of prisoners (below) was suppressed by the censor, but was later circulated throughout Ireland in typewritten copies.\textsuperscript{70} This method of turning suppressed speeches into pamphlets or handbills was regularly adopted by Sinn Féin. For instance, Fr O’Flanagan’s suppressed speech in North Roscommon was reprinted in the Catholic Bulletin in March 1917, and was turned into a pamphlet and circulated; as was Bishop Walsh’s claim that the Irish Party had sold Ireland by agreeing to partition.\textsuperscript{71} The permanent closure of a newspaper and confiscation of printing material occurred, but this was usually only carried out as a last resort.\textsuperscript{72} These acts had significant negative impact on a number of provincial newspapers – an example being the dismantling of the Kilkenny People by British troops during the Kilkenny by-election of 1918.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{70} Frank Gallagher describes the use of the term ‘mosquito press’ as those newspapers which were, like the mosquito insect, “small, difficult to kill, and with a bite that was remembered” and lists some of them as: Old Ireland, New Ireland, Young Ireland, Honesty, the Republic, The Irish Nation, Irish Opinion, The Irish Volunteer, The Spark, The Voice of Freedom, Nationality, Scissors and Paste, The Watchword of Labour: Frank Gallagher, The Four Glorious Years, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edn. (Dublin, 2005), p. 30; BMH WS 687 (section 1): Monsignor M. Curran PP.

\textsuperscript{71} UCDA, de Valera papers, P150/625: Fr O’Flanagan’s suppressed speech in the Catholic Bulletin, March 1917; see BMH WS 722: Dan McCarthy - he recalled that Dr Walsh’s letter issued to the evening press was turned into a handbill that could be put in ‘the hands of the people on their way to the poll’.


\textsuperscript{73} BMH WS 907: Laurence Nugent.
During the Great War years newspapers were unusually thin, comprising only around eight to twelve pages depending on the news of the day. Paper shortages during the war accounted for this, and subsequent internal conflicts prolonged modest productions. Unlike the modern newspaper that captivates audiences by catchy popular front page headlines and images, in the early twentieth century the front page was dedicated to advertisements. The national dailies broke away from this practice quickly, but many provincial newspapers continued for some time afterwards, although there were exceptions, such as the *Roscommon Herald*.

Another discernible difference to the modern newspaper was the absence of named correspondents, which makes it difficult to ascertain the author of specific articles. Were political parties aware of prominent journalists and newspaper editors, both domestic and foreign? Evidence shows that they were. A detailed list of newspapers and their journalists was compiled by Sinn Féin and included Irish newspapers such as the *Evening Mail, Freeman’s Journal, Irish Times, Belfast Telegraph, Belfast Newsletter*, and British newspapers such as the *Liverpool Courier, Liverpool Post, Sunday Illustrated, Daily Mirror, London Times, Manchester Despatch, Manchester Guardian, Morning Post and Yorkshire Post*; and the US *Chicago Tribune, Chicago Daily News, New York Times, New York World, New York Tribune, and New York Herald*. Major international press associations and their contacts in the USA and Australia were also listed. In Unionist circles, the editor of *The Spectator* corresponded to Carson during the municipal elections to state that he would instruct the editor-in-charge to ‘Back Carson’.

Provincial newspapers carried local or constituency election messages continuously, whereas national newspapers concentrated on general elections. It is impossible to assess with any certainty the real political influence of the provincial press as there were advantages and disadvantages. The political constituency message reached the defined target audience speedily, however a strongly biased newspaper could lead to disaffection by non-party readers. Modern research suggests that newspapers with a known political prejudice were probably only partially

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74 UCDA, de Valera papers, P150/641: Newspapers and journalists.
75 PRONI, Carson Papers (MIC 665) D1507/A/33/37 letter to Carson, 12 February 1920.
successful as they did more to reinforce readers’ existing opinions and failed to convert non-believers.\textsuperscript{76} Richard Mulcahy pointed out in a later staff notice that pamphlets and books had a similar difficulty in that they betrayed their origin, and so were read only by the already convinced. Newspapers, however, inspired ‘talk’, and when details were good and convincing ‘unbelievers’ could be swayed.\textsuperscript{77}

Provincial newspapers in this era were notoriously biased. The \textit{Connacht Tribune} began life as a paper to ‘support the Constitutional Party of the Irish people’ but became more separatist in tone after the Easter Rising. The \textit{Galway Express} had been non-political until 1917 but it changed hands and subsequently became one of the strongest Sinn Féin papers; and the \textit{Longford Leader} owned by J.P. Farrell MP clearly favoured the Irish Party. The provincial press reached target audiences in their thousands, and were typically sold for a price of 1½d.\textsuperscript{78} The \textit{Galway Express} had a circulation of about 2,700 copies weekly by 1920, and the \textit{Cork Examiner} reached 30,000.\textsuperscript{79} While provincial newspapers – every county had at least one – honed in on local happenings, they also frequently reproduced reports and commentary from national newspapers. Provincial newspapers also became feeders of local news to the larger national dailies, thus disseminating county news to a wider audience. The influence of the provincial press in shaping and reflecting local opinion cannot be underestimated and while some stalwart regional newspapers continued to support the Irish Party – such as the \textit{Longford Leader}, \textit{Westmeath Examiner} (owned by John P. Hayden), and \textit{Sligo Champion}, (owned by P.A. McHugh MP) – their electoral losses in 1918 indicates that many others had shifted allegiance to Sinn Féin, similar to the \textit{Galway Express}. McGuinness’s prisoner status in Longford amassed him 6,949 more votes than the Irish Party candidate indicating that readers of the \textit{Longford Leader} were only those Irish Party adherents that

\textsuperscript{77} UCDA, Richard Mulcahy papers, P7/A/42: Notes on the general principles of propaganda [1922].
\textsuperscript{78} This price was introduced during the war years, but remained thereafter.
\textsuperscript{79} NA, CO 904, Boxes 92-122 and 148-156A Irish Government. Police Reports, 1914-1921, January-February 1920 CO 904/111, Inspector General’s Monthly Report for Galway, January 1920; NLI, Frank Gallagher papers, the \textit{Irish Press}, Ms 18361. The \textit{Cork Examiner} initially covered the Munster region and changed its title to the \textit{ Examiner} in 1996 and changed again in 2000 to become \textit{The Irish Examiner}. For further information on nationalist newspapers, their editors and the people who bought and read them see Marie Louise Legg, \textit{Newspapers and Nationalism: The Irish Provincial Press, 1850-1892} (Dublin, 1999); Hugh Oram, \textit{The Newspapers Book}.  

144
supported Farrell. The endemic personal feuding between Longford nationalists, as observed by Marie Coleman, also weakened the Irish party in the county. In Sligo the Irish Party were heavily defeated by Sinn Féin, and no doubt their support was weakened because of the nearly bankrupt Sligo Corporation. Even the Sligo Champion in December 1918 was decrying ‘the insanitary condition of the streets’ and calling for ‘a business Corporation, and this they must be determined to elect’. This led to Corporation elections being held in January 1919, using the new PR-STV method of voting, where the Ratepayers had substantial success winning eight of the twenty-four seats with 823 first preference votes. Sinn Féin came in second with seven seats from 674 first preference votes and Labour third with five seats.

There were three main national dailies in Ireland that also produced weekly editions – the Irish Times, Irish Independent and Freeman’s Journal. The Irish Times was originally the preserve of Unionist opinion and had been formed as a Protestant newspaper. In 1920 the political consensus of the newspaper was that a clear decision had to be made ‘between any tolerable form of government and no government at all’, but that ‘it will be no government at all if the present Home Rule Bill becomes law’. After the death of John Arnott in 1898 the Irish Times had been taken over by a limited company in 1900 after two years in trust, with a share capital of £450,000. The new chairman, Sir John Arnott (second baronet and son of the first John Arnott) commanded the newspaper until his death in 1940. It is difficult to ascertain exact newspaper circulation figures for this period because the Audit Bureau of Circulation was not founded until 1931, and other sources refer to figures from 1930 onwards. However, these later figures provide an indication of the newspaper market in Ireland and a pamphlet titled An Irish Daily Newspaper which was created to raise money for the Irish Press in the late 1920s stated that the Irish Times

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80 Coleman, pp. 17-22. 
81 Sligo Champion, 7 December 1918. 
82 For the results of the 1919 Corporation election see Sligo Champion, 18 January 1919. The Sligo Champion, 18 January 1919 reporting on the old Corporation stated that ‘an exclusively Nationalist Corporation got into authority, and things were allowed to drift from bad to worse until the climax came …’. 
83 Irish Times, 14 July 1920. 
84 Oram, The Newspaper Book, p. 95. 
85 The Audit Bureau of Circulation was founded by the Society of British Advertisers on 14 October 1931 to provide independent data figures on UK national newspapers for media buyers.
had a circulation figure then of 30,000.\textsuperscript{86} Alongside printing the speeches of the main leaders like Carson and Craig, the speeches and advertisements of southern Unionist candidates appeared regularly in the \textit{Irish Times}. This was the forum through which southern Unionists could appeal to supporters for votes throughout all the elections.

In Ulster, Unionists expressed opinion through the pages of \textit{The Belfast News Letter} which advocated the economic, social and cultural benefits of maintaining the link with Britain.\textsuperscript{87} The declared principles of the newspaper were loyalty to the throne, devotion to the religion of the bible, and unswerving attachment to the Protestant constitution of these lands. The price of four pence for thirty-two pages reveals that the target audience was the more prosperous and industrious Unionist businessman. Unionists regularly contributed to and received editorial in the \textit{Dublin Daily Express}, \textit{Morning Mail}, the \textit{Daily Irish Telegraph}, the \textit{Belfast Telegraph} (published in Derry to cover the western counties of Ulster until 1951), \textit{The Irish Post} (which catered for a largely Protestant readership in and around Cavan), \textit{Carlow Sentinel}, \textit{Kilkenny Moderator} and the \textit{Waterford Standard} to name a few. They also issued a publication called \textit{Notes for Ireland} which was launched in 1886 by the Irish Unionist Alliance. Although not a newspaper in the classic sense, its influence in Unionist circles was equal to that of the traditional newspapers that supported the union. It was produced by Irish Unionists from their offices in Grafton Street and while it was circulated in Ireland, its target audience was mainly people living outside Ireland – primarily in Britain – whose support was deemed vital for propagating Unionist policies. \textit{Notes in Ireland} was created to dispute misreporting by nationalists as the Unionist Party Minute book remarked that:

\begin{quote}
   it is to be noted that the authorities quoted for these constantly recurring crimes and disorders are mainly Nationalist newspapers … which on the face of it disproves the frequent Nationalist and Radical assertion that reports of Irish lawlessness are a Unionist ‘Campaign of Calumny’.\textsuperscript{88}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{86} NLI, Frank Gallagher Papers, Ms 18361: \textit{An Irish Daily Newspaper}. By the 1932 the Irish Press was claiming a circulation of 90,936 copies in the fourth quarter, and 111,738 in the first quarter of 1933: \textit{Irish Press}, 28 April 1933.

\textsuperscript{87} \textit{The Belfast News Letter} was founded in 1737 as a bi-weekly radical Presbyterian newspaper and in 1855 it became a daily paper. After the Act of Union 1801 it gradually became more Unionist.

\textsuperscript{88} PRONI, Unionist Party, General Council Minutes Book, D 989 C/3/38: Report for 1907-8. Graham Walker stated that in the period of the third home rule bill publications such as \textit{Notes} ‘lobbied British political opinion relentlessly and effectively’: Graham Walker, \textit{Notes from Ireland} (1888-1938, a brief introduction to the Microfilm edition, Queen’s University Library, Belfast, n.d. Notes from Ireland can be
The *Irish Independent* initially attracted advocates of constitutional nationalism and commercial interests because owner William Martin Murphy led Dublin employers in the 1913 Lockout against trade unions. Murphy and his editor Tim Harrington had set out to keep the *Irish Independent* politically neutral, but when readership increased it began to challenge Irish Party policy (although an anti-republican stance had been taken during the 1916 Rising which Sinn Féin supporters found objectionable). A difference of opinion on home rule finances during the Irish Convention debates in 1917 had outraged Murphy. He criticized Redmond and the Irish Party over the Midleton Plan at length in the columns of his newspaper, causing the party much damage. During the by-elections Dillon complained vehemently that the *Irish Independent* had ‘opened a more villainous campaign against us’ and ‘from the … venom of its attack I gather that Murphy and Co. must be nervous as to our chances of reviving the movement’. By September 1918 after Dan McCarthy’s arrest the *Irish Independent* praised his ‘very important part in recent Irish elections’ and remarked that ‘and to him Sinn Féiners attribute in no small measure their successes so far’. The accusation was made that Dillon would perceive this as ‘part of the Government plan to “assist” Sinn Fein to kill his “constitutional” movement’.

Circulation averaged at around 40,000 per day (before the war), and the *Irish Weekly Independent* sold an average of 50-72,000 copies per week in 1914-15, and 50-60,000 per week in 1915-16. Stephen J. Browne in *The Press in Ireland – A Survey and Guide* states that circulation of the daily edition in 1937 was 143-152,000. Developments in the printing press facilitated sales accessed in the NLI up until 1918, and in Boston College, PRONI and Queens’ University Library all publications up until the paper’s cessation in 1938 are available.

89 There was also a difference of opinion between Murphy and Redmond on home rule finances during the Irish Convention debates. Murphy criticised the Irish Party at length in the columns of his newspapers when Redmond agreed to the partial loss of Irish fiscal autonomy: Gwynn, *Redmond’s Last Years*, pp. 315-16.

90 Ibid, pp. 315-16. John Redmond in his negotiations with Unionists under the Midleton Plan agreed to the partial loss of Irish fiscal autonomy in an attempt to avoid the partition of Ireland.

91 TCD, JD, Mss 6842(522), John Dillon to T.P. O’Connor, n.d. It had been unanimously agreed by the Irish Party in May 1917 that ‘official communication to the Press on behalf of the party should no longer be supplied to the *Irish Independent*’: NLI, Irish Parliamentary Party Minute Books, MS 12,082, 16 May 1917.

92 *Irish Independent*, 20 September 1918.


increases. Rotary presses, mechanised typesetting and a range of printing machines created a variety of printing fonts. These developments also facilitated a substantial reduction in the unit cost of producing a newspaper – and allowed for the production of cheaper handbills, books and posters, creating a vast explosion in the publishing trade. The price of newspapers fell to a penny or even a halfpenny after 1905. Murphy reduced the price of the *Irish Independent* to a halfpenny and this also boosted circulation.\(^{95}\) Better quality printing improved advertising revenue as the *Irish Independent* used five different type-faces (fonts) to enhance presentation.\(^{96}\)

The main opponent was the *Freeman’s Journal* which began life as an Irish Party organ, but despite gallant efforts by Dillon to hold onto the paper it was sold in 1919 and the new owners began to express sympathy towards Sinn Féin.\(^{97}\) The newspaper had been subsidised by the Irish Party since 1912 and continued to be so through 1918 and for a short time afterwards, until financial difficulties eventually caused its sale.\(^{98}\) In an attempt to save the paper and expound constitutional policies Irish Party supporters frustratingly asked ‘why in the name of goodness does not the *Freeman* market a paper at a halfpenny?’ The higher price was leading to heavy trading losses and aiding *Irish Independent* success. A suggestion was made that the Irish Party fund should clear the deficit in order to ‘smash’ the *Independent*, or at the very least ‘the people must have a halfpenny paper with wholesome political news not poisoned arrows directed at Redmond and his followers’.\(^{99}\) Wholesome political news resided, like truth, in the realm of interpretation by the propagandist and recipient.

There was also increasing indignation by 1919 about editorial content. Devlin stated that ‘the *Freeman* has been treating us scandalously’ and that the Sinn Féin candidate in Ardee, Co. Louth had attained ‘half a column for his absurdities, and yet there is only the most casual and

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\(^{96}\) Ibid, p. 35

\(^{97}\) In 1919 ownership changed to the Dublin businessman Martin Fitzgerald and a UK journalist, R. Hamilton Edwards.

\(^{98}\) The paper’s linotype warehouse on Prince’s Street had been destroyed during the 1916 Rising, causing heavy financial losses Linotype was the machine used to create the text for newspapers. Replacing the destroyed machines would require a heavy financial spend.

\(^{99}\) TCD, JD, Mss 6753/357: Letter to W. Doris MP, 9 May 1917.
badly reported insertions of our speeches’.100 Devlin outlined his complaints to Dillon by describing the newspaper management as ‘appalling’ and remarked that he was ‘not satisfied either with the policy or conduct of the paper’. He acknowledged that the Freeman should be free to issue ‘news of every sort’, but argued that the support being given to Sinn Féin gave the ‘impression that the paper was used as a sort of special pleader for the failures of Sinn Féin.’101 In 1919 the new owners – with journalists on staff like Desmond Ryan and Sean Lester who leaned towards republicanism – began to openly express support of Sinn Féin.102 By 1920 the newspaper had drifted entirely towards republicanism, so much so that Desmond FitzGerald stated that Sinn Féin was allowed to use their private wire for the daily transmission of 300 words to foreign correspondents.103

In 1918 most newspapers were unsympathetic towards Sinn Féin policy or ideology. Widespread public support for Sinn Féin after the general election initiated change and aversion gave way to an initial begrudging support – perhaps to maintain or increase circulation figures. The Cork Examiner also altered its editorial to convey similar ideologies to that of Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin had their own specialist newspapers where content sought to inculcate a sense of pride in being Irish. History stories and legend, language and literature featured heavily and they were priced to encourage readership from the lower classes. Arthur Griffith’s Sinn Féin was published weekly. Nationality had a circulation of 4,500 and The Nation distributed about 2,700 copies weekly.104 After the Easter Rising separatist newspapers resurfaced and – with the exception of An t-Oglach – were sold openly in newsagents and news-stands around Ireland. At party headquarters Sinn Féin also drafted ‘Sinn Féin Notes’ (usually created by Brennan or Griffith) which were sent to and published in provincial newspapers across Ireland. This idea was perhaps appropriated from the UIL and Hibernians who had been conducting similar ‘notes’ for many years.

100 Ibid, Mss 6730/217: Tom Hannaly from Joe Devlin, 27 March 1919.
102 By 1920 it had drifted entirely towards republicanism. Desmond FitzGerald reported that Freeman’s Journal agreed to allow use of their private wire in order for the daily transmission of 300 words to foreign agencies and foreign correspondents: UCDA P80/14(7), Desmond FitzGerald Papers, Report on Propaganda Department, June 1920.
103 Ibid.
The Labour Party had established the *Irish Worker and People’s Advocate* as a pro-labour alternative to Murphy’s *Irish Independent*. Labour’s paper was only four pages long and written by one or two people, and was funded from a small list of classified advertisers. In contrast Murphy’s newspaper was twenty-four pages long and was designed and produced by a large team. It was also liberally illustrated using the most modern technology, and garnered huge revenue from its pages of sizeable advertisements.\(^{105}\) *Irish Worker* editorials consistently challenged Murphy by denouncing him as an unfair employer and as James Larkin’s political enemy. The paper also featured literature, poetry and writings by intellectuals like Sean O’Casey.\(^{106}\)

All newspapers regularly printed the speeches of politicians and candidates, lending affirmative opinion and adverse commentary according to their bias. They were also useful for disseminating ideas, critiquing political opponents and giving voice to the ordinary voter in the ‘Letters to the Editor’ section. In a letter to the *Freeman’s Journal* high praise was afforded to Patrick Lynch in East Clare who was hailed as ‘a patriotic, high-minded, and an absolutely honourable man’. Sinn Féin orators and organizers, on the other hand, were disparaged as ‘disruptors of every hue, who are out for the destruction of the constitutional movement’. In its denunciation this letter tells us something about the dedication and enthusiasm of Sinn Féin campaigning as the author states that ‘be-badged motorists and cyclists will be flying, hither and thither, thrusting leaflets and pamphlets into the hands of electors. The electioneering tactics of Sinn Féiners are to rush and hustle’. Irish Party methods were obviously less frenetic because ‘the intelligent electors’ it was maintained, ‘will not allow themselves to be rushed and stampeded by visionaries and crazy boys and girls…’.\(^{107}\) In another lengthy letter to the editor Dillon mentioned the ‘frantic attempts’ by Sinn Féin in the South Armagh by-election and again the ‘poor opinion of the intelligence of their countrymen’ was stressed. Sinn Féin was accused of falsehoods which

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\(^{106}\) This newspaper was suppressed by the authorities in 1915, but reappeared later as the *Worker* and subsequently the *New Ireland Echo*: John Newsinger, *Jim Larkin and the Great Dublin Lockout of 1913* (London, 2013).

\(^{107}\) UCDA, de Valera papers, P150/550: Letter to the Editor of the *Freeman’s Journal* re Lynch’s candidature.
they attempted to make ‘tolerably plausible’, and of error in contemplating an approach to the Paris peace conference as they did not represent ‘united nationalists of Ireland’.\footnote{Ibid, \textit{Freeman’s Journal}, 14 February 1918.}

While the focus of this work is on the domestic propaganda and electioneering of political parties and foreign fundraising, it is worth briefly mentioning that Sinn Féin was the most professional in reaching out to the foreign press. They launched a targeted campaign to stimulate international endorsement for their mandate to establish a republic and secure funds. The ‘spot’ news being supplied by English news agencies, such as the Exchange Telegraph, Central News and the Press Association, who obtained information directly from Dublin Castle was a driving force in the determination to win favour with foreign journalists. This also sparked a number of trips to London. In November 1919 the decision was taken to issue a daily newspaper with special articles on Ireland – the \textit{Irish Bulletin}. The aim of the \textit{Irish Bulletin} was similar to that of the Unionist \textit{Notes from Ireland}, but the main difference was that Sinn Féin’s target audience was all foreign journalists and not just those in Britain. A telegraphic news service was also initiated on 16 June 1920 to ‘correct and amplify the news received through other sources’ and to ‘combat the English Telegraphic News Agencies’.\footnote{UCDA, Desmond FitzGerald Papers, P80/14(6): Report of Propaganda Dept., June 1920.}

By advocating for the right of small nations, as espoused in Great War propaganda, to seek a republic and adding ongoing messages of atrocity in foreign media, Sinn Féin gained prestige and recognition. This was recognised by Sir Hamar Greenwood who, on his arrival in Dublin to take up the position of Commander-in-Chief of Irish operations on 14 April 1920, remarked that officers and troops of the Crown Forces were exasperated by misrepresentation in the press. He acknowledged ‘the total absence of counter propaganda on the part of the Government in reply to the very efficient circulation of systematic falsehoods’ that were being spread by Sinn Féin ‘and their friends in England and America’.\footnote{General Sir Nevil Macready, \textit{Annals of an Active Life} (vol 2, London, 1924), p. 454.} The very use of the word ‘efficient’ demonstrated Sinn Féin’s media propaganda success at home and abroad. Credence was given to Sinn Féin’s efficiency by the attempt to counteract it with a government propaganda machine. Before the appointment of Basil Clarke as head of the Department of Publicity and Public Information in 1920

\footnote{108 Ibid, \textit{Freeman’s Journal}, 14 February 1918.}
\footnote{109 UCDA, Desmond FitzGerald Papers, P80/14(6): Report of Propaganda Dept., June 1920.}
\footnote{110 General Sir Nevil Macready, \textit{Annals of an Active Life} (vol 2, London, 1924), p. 454.}
a Press Section of the army General Staff was created to examine ‘the papers and contradict untrue statements about the troops’; to issue ‘communiqués about actions in which the troops were involved, to report on attacks on military property and results of Courts-Martial on civilians; and to manage ‘all other military matters affecting the press and publicity’. By 1921 Greenwood, in a House of Commons speech, requested £900 to be granted to the Department of Publicity and stated that the appointment of Clarke ‘who was a trained journalist’ was to ‘take charge of the department in Dublin Castle, and to receive every journalist of every country in the world to supply him and the public with official information…’.  

As previously mentioned, low cost printing and the advances in ‘jobbing’ printing influenced the growth of newspapers in Ireland. Educational standards had improved in Ireland since the Education Act of 1831 and the introduction of government financing. The expansion of primary education had stimulated literacy, but this growth was fraught with religious, social and political difficulties. A large number deserted education after the age of eleven, leaving many only barely literate. The lower socio-economic group could read a cheap penny newspaper, but were ill-equipped to read anything of substance. However, news and political propaganda was received by a circuit wider than those who purchased newspapers because readers purveyed information to a larger audience. Rising affluence among the middle classes provided customers for printed material, and these customers were voters. Political news influenced how ordinary people thought and consumed political ideas, and it encouraged the political elite to appeal to people through this medium. 

Newspapers were the principal conveyance for propaganda but they needed to be supplemented by party circulars, pamphlets, handbills, and advertisements. Even though all parties successfully attained unpaid-for propaganda in newspapers, journalistic editing and censorship

111 See Peter Hart (ed), British Intelligence in Ireland, 1920-21 (Cork, 2002).
113 The initial grant was £30,000 which rose to £148,000 by 1848 and £1.1 million by 1900: Donald H. Akenson, The Irish Education Experiment, The National System of Education in the Nineteenth Century (Oxfordshire, 2012), pp. 143-6, 136 and 325.
114 Irish School Weekly, 19 May 1923 which cites figures for 1912 and 1913.
reduced a political candidate’s control over reprinted speeches and editorial. To surmount this and to entice voters it was necessary to purchase advertising column inches in newspapers. Releasing short targeted messages guaranteed that the correct ideals were conveyed.

3.3: Advertising

The term ‘advertising’ covers a broad spectrum of propaganda material that deliberately and specifically aims to promote the policies or manifestos of parties and candidates in the political arena. According to Paul Neystrom advertising aims to ‘attract attention’ in the hope of developing a genuine ‘interest’ which would change to desire and culminate with a ‘decision to purchase’.115 The American Marketing Association defined advertising in 1948 as ‘any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of goods and services by an identified sponsor’, and they added the ‘promotion of ideas’ in 1963.116 This section will examine the paid-for advertisements, posters handbills and pamphlets disseminated for elections to ascertain their effectiveness as a means for reaching potential voters. Before delving into the methods of paid-for propaganda, it is important to investigate influences: was political propaganda emulating existing commercial propaganda, did political parties have previous propaganda experience, and were international events at the time inspiring new propaganda techniques?

Consumerism accelerated from about 1850 with the advent of the department store and its display and mass selling to the more affluent middle-classes who were driven by product acquisition and accumulation.117 These new style retail outlets created a more manipulative

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115 Paul H. Neystrom, Retail Selling and Store Management (London, 1914), pp. 60-61. A definition from the 1950s by the American historian David M. Potter in Advertising Age, 4 October 1954, states that ‘advertising is the dissemination of information concerning an idea, service or product to compel action in accordance with the interest of the advertiser’. In a well-known modern marketing text-book advertising is defined as ‘any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor. … Advertising is used in order to stimulate a response from the target audience’: Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong, John Saunders and Veronica Wong, Principles of Marketing (England, 2002), p. 661.


117 In Ireland, for instance, Arnotts was founded in 1843 at 14 Henry Street by George Cannock and Andrew White, Brown Thomas was founded by Hugh Brown and James Thomas in 1848, and Clerys Department
propaganda approach and the business of advertising was born. In 1840 Volney B. Palmer set up the first advertising agency in Philadelphia that devoted itself to buying large amounts of space in various newspapers to be resold to advertisers. In the nineteenth century N.W. Ayer & Son was founded in New York and it advanced to the planning, creating and executing of advertising campaigns for companies. The USA may have been leaders in the field, but Europe and Ireland quickly caught on. In late nineteenth century France, Charles-Louis Havas extended the services of his news agency, Agence France-Presse, to include advertising brokerage. Thomas J. Barratt, working for the Pears Soap Company in London, became a pioneer of brand marketing through creating an effective advertising campaign for Pears Soap by associating the brand with high culture and quality. This idea of an agency that aimed to manage and develop strategies to promote products also spread to Ireland, despite its scant industrial sector.

As early as 1819 Johnston’s Newspaper and Advertising Office opened at Eden Quay in Dublin; the Wilson Hartnell Agency was founded in 1869 in Dublin; the Kevin J. Kenny agency also existed during this era and by 1910 their clients included Locke’s Whiskey and the Royal Irish Constabulary; and McConnell’s was established in 1916. Charles McConnell in writing his ten-year-old Dublin agency’s first brochure in 1926 provided evidence of the variety of agency services in Ireland. He stated ‘we have a complete organization to carry out commercial research, copywriting, all classes of art-work, designing booklets and catalogues, printing and bill posting,

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Stores was opened in May 1853 by Mc Swiney, Delany and Co. in what was then Sackville Street (now O’Connell Street).


121 Johnston’s Newspaper and Advertising Office quickly had competition from Alexander Johnston and Co., Express Newspaper and General Advertising Office which was stablished by Captain Alexander Johnston at Bachelor’s Walk in Dublin. Other agencies soon followed in Dublin, Belfast Cork and Limerick. J. Strachan and C. Nally, Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland, 1891-1922 (Basingstoke, 2012), pp. 19-25. By the early 1930s there were 31 Irish-owned advertising agencies and two, McConnell’s (founded in 1916) and Janus, had London offices. There were two agencies in Cork city, one in Tralee, County Kerry, one in Drogheda, County Louth and two in Belfast. Kevin J. Kenny had also acted as a commercial manager for publications of Patrick Pearse, Tom Kettle, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington and Frank Gallagher, and he was also an advocate of the Dublin Industrial Development Association. See Hugh Oram, The Advertising Book: The History of Advertising in Ireland (Dublin, 1986), pp. 13, 31 and 52.
writing and distribution from letters and folders, inserting of advertisements in newspapers, retail trade, word preparation, display of advertising and film to production of advertising novelties, etc.\textsuperscript{122}

During the battle against home rule in the years 1912 to 1914 Unionists had devised complex methods of persuasion in an attempt to maintain the union. Alongside winning favourable editorial from Thomas Moles, the leading correspondent of the \textit{Belfast Evening Telegraph} and R.M. Sibbett of the \textit{Belfast News Letter}, an array of propaganda pamphlets, posters, postcards and advertisements supplemented other public propaganda exercises such as mass meetings, Ulster Day and the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant in 1912, and the Larne gun-running of 1914.\textsuperscript{123} Other newspapers and provincial press such as the \textit{Irish Times}, \textit{Northern Whig}, \textit{Irish News}, \textit{Dublin Daily Express}, and \textit{Derry People} carried editorial and publicity to support the Unionist cause. Behind this propaganda machine was Sir James Craig who, as previously stated, had gleaned marketing techniques from the family Dunville Whiskey business. He was the expert who instigated a propaganda campaign that mobilized Ulster Unionists to action. He strengthened existing beliefs in the righteousness of the union by highlighting the potential disastrous consequences of a home rule government, evident in the droll but clever postcard below:

![Figure 3.4: Elaine Callinan Private Collection](image)


\textsuperscript{123} Parkinson, \textit{Friends in High Places}, pp. 91-102; Foy, ‘Ulster Unionist Propaganda…’, pp. 49-53. Thomas Moles also wrote many of the anti-home rule handbills that were published by the Ulster Unionist Council.
Unionists also had to win over British public opinion and strenuous efforts were made to cultivate change. Editorial and images depicting respectable middle-class citizens, and atrocity propaganda that highlighted nationalist aggression aimed to alter prevailing perceptions of Unionists as being violent anti-Catholic bigots. In 1918 and again in 1920 Unionists were more concerned with winning favour at home in order to secure electoral victory. The lessons learned in rallying the anti-home rule cause came into force again to win votes. Along with continued charismatic party leadership by Carson who aroused strong emotions to transform mood, Unionists used paid-for advertisements in Ulster newspapers and in the southern Irish Times, along with pamphlets and posters.

Propaganda existed before the war, but its mass impact was a new phenomenon, and propaganda activities assumed a role of greater significance than ever before. A number of scholarly works have examined the content and impact of British Great War propaganda during the war years, and Ben Novick’s work Conceiving Revolution provides a comprehensive study of Irish nationalist propaganda during the Great War. The intention in this thesis is to investigate if Great War propaganda inspired knowledge for election propaganda; in other words, could the highly successful recruitment campaigns be emulated to engage with and appeal to voters? The variety and sheer volume of Great War propaganda makes it difficult to cover every aspect, so an examination of the main areas where political parties mimicked or modified methods will be provided with some examples.

124 This propaganda ambition by Unionists continued right into ‘The Troubles’ and on into the 1990s: Alan F. Parkinson, Ulster Loyalism and the British Media (Dublin, 1998), pp. 30-31.
127 Chapter four explores the themes and content of Great War propaganda.
One of Britain’s first war actions was to cut Germany’s under-sea communications cables to ensure that Britain held the monopoly on transmitting news from Europe, particularly to USA press agencies.\(^{128}\) This allowed them to influence war reporting around the world, but it also demonstrated the importance of directing the propaganda message. During the War of Independence the Irish Republican Army (IRA) became adept at using the telegraph network to transmit and decipher information, and some of this was used in atrocity propaganda articles.\(^{129}\) Alongside governing the management and dispersal of funds by February 1918, the supervision of propaganda messages was also taken over by the Sinn Féin Standing Committee in May 1919. A decision was taken that ‘in future all pamphlets and circular letters are to be submitted to the Standing Committee before being passed for publication’.\(^{130}\) Sinn Féin cleverly absorbed the method of controlling the message by creating their own election propaganda departments with a paid and dedicated staff. The amount paid in weekly salaries for the election department in 1919 was £10 to three men and the propaganda department accrued a salary expenditure of £11.\(^{131}\)

In the early years of the Great War Britain also established recruiting councils and this system spread to Ireland in 1914 with the creation of the Central Council for the Organization of Recruiting in Ireland (CCORI). This was replaced in 1915 by the Department of Recruiting in Ireland (DRI), and in 1918 by the Irish Recruiting Council (IRC). Heading the DRI was the

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\(^{128}\) Only hours after the expiry of the British ultimatum to Germany the British cable ship *Telconia* cut the direct subterranean cables linking Germany with the United States to gain advantage in the ‘struggle for the sympathy of the American people’: Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind*, p. 177.

\(^{129}\) During the 1916 Easter Rising a Marconi 1.5kw transmitter was used to broadcast news in Morse code that the Rising had commenced. See BMH WS 165, Luke Kennedy & BMH WS 351, Fergus O’Kelly and BMH WS 291, William D. Daly. Both the British authorities and the IRA used the telegraph network to transmit and decipher information. In May 1919 the IRA used coded telegrams to inform volunteers that Sean Hogan was a prisoner on a train so they could organize an ambush at Knocklong Railway station to rescue him. Dublin Castle transmitted instructions to RIC Barracks using cipher telegrams if urgent and confidential posted reports if routine: Richard Abbott, *Police Casualties in Ireland 1919-1922* (Cork, 2000), p. 34.

\(^{130}\) SFSCM, 21 February 1918, 1 May 1919 and 22 May 1919. On 22 May 1919 the report from the Propaganda Department, created by Robert Brennan, stated that Mr Brennan was requested to stop all printing relating to this department, provided no expense was incurred, until all the pamphlets are passed for publication by the sub-committee for propaganda which consists of the following: Fr Michael O’Flanagan, Arthur Griffith and P.J. Little.

\(^{131}\) As mentioned in chapter two, they were the first and only party to establish a specific Department of Propaganda at No. 6 Harcourt Street, Dublin in April 1918. SFSCM, 20 May 1919, salaries in the propaganda department included: £5 for Robert Brennan, £1 5s for a boy assistant, £4 for the chief assistant and £1 10s for the typist.
Viceroy, Lord Wimborne. The aim of the DRI at the commencement of their recruiting campaign in October 1915 was to secure 10,000 recruits in the first month. Initially the results were below par with only 6,058 enlisting, however, by December 7,444 had enlisted – a weekly average of 1,063. Tours of the country had been arranged to petition men to enlist. Wimborne’s tour was carried out at a time when recruitment was plummeting but by January 1916 he was able to report that 75,293 volunteers had joined the 51,046 regulars and reservists serving at the outbreak of the war. The tour and propaganda messages therefore accrued a further 24,247 recruits, and local press advertising was used to encourage attendance. This system of taking the message to the people was replicated by political propagandists when politicians, candidates and Volunteer movements travelled from constituency to constituency to appeal for votes.

Propaganda newsletters were produced and circulated to soldiers in the trenches such as The Wipers Times which provided uplifting news and witty invective on Britain’s war progress. Wellington House also printed its own newspapers with illustrations or photographs for circulation around the world, such as War Pictorial which by December 1916 was running at a circulation of 500,000 copies per issue, in four editions covering eleven languages. Sinn Féin similarly issued their own publications such as Griffith’s weekly Sinn Féin, Nationality and The Nation, all of which were sold at a price of between 1d and 3d. The widely circulated 1915 British publication of the Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages (the ‘Bryce Report’) was an attempt to justify the Great War. The purpose was to give authority to stories of German atrocities in Belgium

133 NLI, JR, MS 15259: Memoranda on Recruiting 1914–18, Recruiting Returns, September to December 1915. See also Novick, Conceiving Revolution, p. 23.
134 Jeffery, Ireland and the Great War, pp. 6–9: Numbers had fallen to just over 25,000 from February 1915 to August 1915.
135 See section on canvassing and volunteers.
136 ‘Wipers’ was the name the soldiers gave to the Belgian town of Ypres. The twelve pages of The Wipers Times were filled with contemptuous anecdotes of trench life and articles that satirized senior command. See Malcolm Brown & Ian Hislop (eds), The Wipers times: The Complete Series of the Famous Wartime Trench Newspaper, (UK, 2006). Original copies held in the Imperial War Museum, London.
137 The War Propaganda Bureau was established at Wellington House by Charles Masterman, a writer and Liberal MP: He recruited writers such as John Buchan, G.K. Chesterson, H.G. Wells and Arthur Conan Doyle and painters Francis Dodd and Paul Nash for the mobilization of intellect in support of the war: Sanders and Taylor, pp. 15–54.
and France by using testimony from refugees and veterans in these countries.\textsuperscript{138} Sinn Féin was resolute in gathering atrocity stories for publication in circulars, in their newspapers, and in the \textit{Irish Bulletin} for an international audience. In 1919 Sinn Féin sanctioned Robert Brennan’s request to distribute pamphlets to soldiers, with one ‘small leaflet for soldiers’ costing ‘about £11 for 10,000’.\textsuperscript{139} There was no detail on the content of this leaflet and no insight into who the recipient soldiers were, but targeting those directly involved in foreign and domestic combat was apparently considered necessary and important.

Another tactic applied by the War Office was the use of iconic figures to reinforce particular points and inspire sentiments such as patriotism. National heroes were used in Ireland to encourage enlistment, such as the text-heavy poster titled \textit{Why Mr. Wm Redmond M.P. joined the army}.\textsuperscript{140} Alongside using real people, those from mythology or folklore were also portrayed in recruitment posters, for instance: Britannia, John Bull and the British bulldog (in Great Britain); the German eagle; the French cockerel or the national emblem of France, Marianne or Liberty – an allegorical personification of liberty and reason; and the female Erin, shamrock and the wolfhound for Ireland. Unionist and separatist political propagandists skilfully adapted these images for electoral propaganda. A poster depicting Sir James Craig announced that ‘character counts in Ulster’s political life’, and asserted that it was ‘absolutely necessary’ to have ‘a Government whose members are perfectly honest … and men whom the lust of Office does not kill, men whom the spoils of office cannot buy’. The ‘strong, wise, calm, unshaken’ character of Craig was espoused by the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, with support from others such as the Most Rev. C.F. D’Arcy and the Grand Master of the Orangemen of Belfast, Sir Joseph Davison.\textsuperscript{141} Using imagery or pictures was more expensive than text, so font size or style was often used to lay emphasis on more salient messages. A good example is the anti-conscription poster in chapter four (figure 4.5) where the leading arguments are emphasised in bold print or capital letters, and the call to action point – Vote for McCartan and kill conscription! – is in a larger and different font.

\textsuperscript{138} Trevor Wilson, \textit{The Myriad Faces of War} (Cambridge, 1986), p. 188; and NA, INF 1/317: \textit{Home Publicity during the 1914-1918 war}.
\textsuperscript{139} SFSCM, 12 June 1919.
\textsuperscript{140} TCD, Digital Collections, World War I Recruiting Collection, EPB Papyrus Case 54b.
\textsuperscript{141} PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/142: \textit{Men you can trust} poster.
While only a few examples have been shown here, it is important to highlight that creating war propaganda had many advantages over political propaganda. The financial support provided by the British government allowed for greater circulation than political propaganda (and anti-recruitment propaganda). War posters were more colourful and were printed on better quality paper as opposed to the later flimsy political sheets. In many cases, authors and publishers did not charge for their work during the Great War (such as H.G. Wells). The propaganda department in Britain also worked with patriotic voluntary groups like The British Empire Union to distribute books and pamphlets and in Ireland the Irish Party had the expansive network of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC). In some instances, to reduce costs, the government tried to sell publications rather than give them away. For example, the Why We are at War pamphlet, published by Oxford University Press (usually known as the Red Book because of its cover) sold over 50,000 copies. Selling propaganda pamphlets garnered only small amounts of income for political parties. After Sinn Féin’s success in the 1918 general election the decision was taken to circulate 500 election maps (bought from an English publication company), with 400 being sold to newsagents at cost price and 100 held for other propaganda purposes. The Labour Party and Trade Union Congress regularly sold their reports and pamphlets. In 1919, for instance, sales of reports amounted to £30 and pamphlets at £4, but printing accounts for that year exceeded sales at £281 and pamphlets at £5.

Unionist wartime propaganda paid dividends politically because the argument to maintain the union remained to the fore. Like Unionists, the Irish Party galvanised wartime recruitment by proclaiming a declaration of loyalty to the empire. The War Office propaganda department secured an advantage because the same recruitment posters and advertisements could be aimed at both. Jérôme ann de Wiel argues that by supporting the war effort the Irish Party had ‘embarked upon a

142 Ben Novick, ‘Postal Censorship in Ireland 1914-1916, Irish Historical Studies, 31:123 (May 1999), pp. 343-56. The advantage of using the RIC was they could tour their areas to dispense recruitment propaganda without fear of censorship.

143 NA, T1/11992: Government spending on propaganda publications, November 1914.

144 SFSCM, 29 May 1919.

145 ILP&TUC Report of Twenty-fifth Annual Conference, August 1919. In 1918 Labour sold £15 worth of Congress reports. Out of their £1,958 income, £3 was spent on advertising in the city of Derry, £80 on printing, £9 on anti-conscription meetings in Belfast, and £66 on attendance at the Mansion House Conference: ITUC& LP, Report of Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting, August 1918.
career of self mutilation’. However, had the war been the anticipated short one, the political manoeuvring which gained Ireland home rule would have been seen as genius on Redmond’s part.

While the Great War (and the Russian Revolutions) found expression in political propaganda, and some techniques and theories were appropriated by political parties, they do not entirely provide information on existing knowledge in Ireland on propaganda methods. It has been generally assumed that all political parties in the early 1900s relied on their own propaganda departments or leaders or even local candidates to create advertising messages. While this was largely the case, particularly for constitutional nationalists, the concept of engaging with an external expert emerged in 1910. A separatist article titled ‘The Advertising Problem’, published in *Leabhar na hÉireann* by the National Council of Sinn Féin, encouraged a study of USA advertising methods and promoted the idea that ‘good advertising pays and bad advertising oftentimes does not’. The advantage of a ‘good advertisement’ the article maintained was that it ‘attracts attention, pleases the reader, and induces a desire to know more of the goods so advertised’. The main theme was that American advertising ‘should be studied for the good that is in it’, and that it should be modified for Irish needs. Good advertising ‘included all recognised forms such as press advertising, catalogues, booklets, circulars, handbills, samples, electric signs, billboard window displays, show cards, novelties, etc.’. The full content of the article covered the means by which all these methods should be used.

This idea of professional advertising was also evident in literary works of the era. For instance the character Leopold Bloom in James Joyce’s *Ulysses* sold advertising space in the *Freeman’s Journal* and other Dublin newspapers. Therefore, knowledge of American

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148 NLI, Ir 94109/i/8: *Leabhar na hÉireann: The Irish Year Book* (1910), Sinn Féin, pp. 309-17. It is unknown who penned the article but conceivable authors are either Tom Grehan, the advertising manager of the *Irish Independent* since 1909 or Kevin J. Kenny.
149 In episode seven, the Aeolus section of *Ulysses*, Bloom is described as being a canvasser for the *Freeman’s Journal*, where he places advertisements for his clients and is paid a commission. While *Ulysses* was not published until 1922 in Paris, it had been serialised in parts in an American journal *The Little Review* from March 1918 to December 1920. See also N. Tomkinson, ‘Bloom’s Job’, *James Joyce Quarterly*, 2:2 (1965), pp. 103-108.
advertising methods existed in Ireland, their benefits were highlighted, and an emphasis was placed on their adoption. During de Valera’s and Boland’s tour of the USA in 1919 the marketing methods being employed by the FOIF, influenced later Sinn Féin propaganda methods. The importance of newspapers and a coherent publicity campaign was heralded in May 1919 in a detailed letter by Thomas Shipp to Daniel Colahan. Shipp’s advertising agency specified that, ‘I will organize for your Committee [FOIF] a publicity campaign which will cover every class of newspaper in the United States’ and ‘the object of the publicity campaign … will be to see that the true facts … are fully and properly presented to the people of the United States through the medium of the public press’. This letter went on to provide intricate details of the campaign which involved: news dispatches, feature articles, pictures with captions, public meetings where ‘advance matter on speeches will be placed in the hands of the press associations’, interviews, and ‘the motion pictures will be employed to further the publicity campaign’. In a later letter from Shipp to Lynch the query as to where ‘some good pictures of prominent Irishmen in this Country and Ireland’ can be sourced was posed.\textsuperscript{150} While some of these methods, particularly newspapers, were already being targeted in Ireland, the importance of using images influenced later propaganda. Motion pictures were a relatively new phenomenon and though not used in election propaganda, the promotion of the Dáil loans used this medium successfully.

In a letter to solicit business the Tucker Agency highlighted the benefits of advertising in order to raise substantial funds. They stated, ‘advertising serves as a foundation for the United States Government’s various Liberty Bond drives. … It made good in the United War Work campaign which raised $150,000,000, in the Knights of Columbus drive for $2,500,000 in New

\textsuperscript{150} Thomas R. Shipp Advertising Agency was retained by the FOIF at a cost of $2,000 per month for a period of six months from 1 March 1919, and the fee covered the execution of the propaganda campaign which covered ‘all the expenses of writing and preparing the publicity matter and of the reproduction of pictures, matrices, plates and other illustrated matter; and distribution’ with only the ‘clipping services’ and ‘extra travel’ accruing extra costs: AIHS, FOIF, Thomas R. Shipp to Daniel Colahan, 3 March 1919 and Shipp to Diarmuid Lynch, 6 May 1919. The Shipp Agency did complain in a later letter that they were not receiving pictures, and more importantly, articles to promote Sinn Féin’s policies from Dr Patrick McCartan and others. Shipp stated that ‘the Irish publicity has been very difficult for three reasons’ - two of which were, he had ‘received little material which could be worked up into acceptable newspaper stories’ and that there was ‘a marked lack of cooperation on the part of those interested in the cause’: Shipp to Lynch, 23 May 1919 and 4 June 1919. Therefore, propaganda in the USA was being handled, as Shipp stated, ‘in a conservative way’.
York City (in 1918),’ as ‘it produced double the amount originally asked for’. This inspired emulating these advertising methods to raise funds for which a minimal amount went to electoral campaigns and a substantial amount to establish Dáil Éireann and the Free State. Handbills and direct marketing also formed a crucial method of disseminating information in the USA. The Molton Distributing Company in Cleveland, Ohio provided a cost estimate that stated the rate for distribution runs was about $3.00 per thousand in the larger cities, and they claimed to be able to place literature ‘in practically twelve million homes in the United States’. These strategic and professional propaganda methods were regularly employed in the USA by the FOIF by hiring a professional agency, using print media with pictures, and moving images. De Valera and Boland may not have been aware of the specific contents of these letters, but they were regularly in contact with the FOIF and no doubt learned about the propaganda strategies. These methods were later absorbed by Sinn Féin in Ireland, so knowledge was gleaned directly in the USA, from articles like ‘The Advertising Problem’, and from progressive domestic commercial propaganda. There was also personal contact with advertising professionals. In August 1917 Frank Gallagher remarked on a collegiate meeting with ‘the manager of Kevin Kenny’s Advertising Agency’. ‘The Advertising Problem’ article had instructed readers to ‘place the matter [advertising] in the hands of a competent agency’, and that ‘Ireland possessed more than one such agency, ready and willing to place its fund of experience at the service of every advertiser’.

Edward L. Bernays in his work Propaganda maintained in 1928 that there was a scientific rationale to propaganda. He argued that ‘a thing may be desired not for its intrinsic worth or

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151 The Tucker Agency letter dated 10 May 1919 was a petition for business and was passed on to Diarmuid Lynch.
152 AIHS, FOIF Papers, The Molton Distribution Company to Diarmuid Lynch, 18 June 1919: letter is in reply to a query by Lynch on practical handling of literature distribution and costs.
153 This letter refers to an open letter published in the newspapers to ‘the Loyal Coalition’ by Edward McSweeney and Daniel T. O’Connell of the FOIF who made the argument that ‘it is un-American to agitate in this country against freedom for any subject race’: AIHS, Letter from Diarmuid Lynch to Edward McSweeney, 4 November 1920. Harry Boland was also very aware of the activities of Edward McSweeney in other matters as in a letter from Lynch to McSweeney on 6 November 1920 regarding raising funds for ‘the devastated Cities and Towns in Ireland’ Lynch commented that Boland had informed him ‘on the telephone that the Republic or representatives of the Republic of Ireland intended to handle that matter’.
154 TCD, Frank Gallagher Papers, 10050/23: Letter from Frank Gallagher to Cecilia Saunders, 4 August 1917: Gallagher’s specific comment was ‘to-day having conquered in a duel with the manager of Kevin Kenny’s Advertising Agency I was returning proudly if rather damply through the broiling O’Connell Street’. He elucidates no further on the encounter.
usefulness, but because he [the consumer] has unconsciously come to see in it a symbol of something else, the desire for which he is ashamed to admit to himself’. The emotional responses that arise from propaganda ‘limit an audience’s choices by creating a binary mentality, which can result in quicker, more enthused responses’. 155 ‘The Advertising Problem’ article mirrors this thinking by directing the advertiser to ‘dress his announcements in accordance with the particular public he desires to reach, and where various classes of people have to be appealed to’. Evidence that this was being applied or considered was, as we saw earlier, in the question as to whether to include or exclude the word ‘republic’ when addressing specific audiences.

These advertising theories, although they relate to consumer advertising, were easily transferred to political advertising. A vote, unlike a product, as D.M. Reid states, is a ‘psychological purchase’. 156 However, there are more similarities than differences in terms of applying propaganda to solicit support (or purchase). Attaining psychological intelligence enabled advertisers gain an understanding of association, recall, perception and emotion to target and connect with customers or voters. 157 In 1895 Harlow Gale began researching advertising practices in an attempt to detect the mental process and relationships in people’s minds to find out how font size, design and colour affected decision-making in product purchase. 158 Walter Dill Scott in the early 1900s focused on the idea of suggestion to influence consumer behaviour and he created the idea of personal association between a customer’s own life and a product. 159 John B. Watson expanded on Ivan Pavlov’s classical conditioning by attempting to predict and control behaviour, particularly outside the laboratory. This led to an understanding of how to control the behaviour of consumers, and how to elicit emotions such as fear, rage and love to activate purchase. 160

155 Bernays, Propaganda, pp. 28 and 100.
159 W.D. Scott, The Theory of Advertising (Boston, 1903) and The Psychology of Advertising.
160 R.E. Fancher, Pioneers of Psychology (2nd edn., New York 1990); D.P. Schultz and S.E. Schultz, A history of modern psychology (9th edn., California, 2008). The relevance of these studies to consumer advertising is evident in the fact that the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency in New York City hired
Taking a brief example from election propaganda in 1918 we see Unionists attempt to elicit an emotional response by issuing a poster titled *The Two Irelands. Facts. Not Fiction* where the impassioned question posed is, ‘will the British Public stand by Ulster, whose sons stood by them, or will they support Sinn Féin Ireland, which stabbed Britain in the back, and has such a ghastly record of disloyalty and crime?’\(^{161}\) War sentiments and grief were still raw and the intent behind this appeal was to stir those feelings and elicit a sense of conscience and tribute towards those who supported or died in the war effort to garner support and loyalty to the unionist cause.

The Irish Party consistently condemned Sinn Féin’s policies as ‘absurd’ and maintained that Sinn Féin had ‘put their money on the wrong horse’ in believing that in the war ‘England would be crushed’ and ‘Germany would triumph’.\(^{162}\) A poster issued by Patrick McKenna during the South Longford by-election in 1917 depicted a political dustbin crammed full of opposition politicians with protruding labels attached. The by-line message ‘Rubbish May Be Shot Here’ prompted constitutional nationalists to act harshly to non-adherents (see figure 3.5).\(^{163}\)

Sinn Féin political leaders, had they read the aforementioned *Leabhar na hÉireann* article, would have learned that ‘as one rarely stops to examine a poster … only a very few words, boldly displayed, should be used’. They should be ‘striking and original in design … bright gaudy colours

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Watson in 1920. Pavlov’s experiments conducted research on how animals learned to respond to a conditioned stimulus.


\(^{162}\) *Freeman’s Journal*, 7 December 1918: report of a speech by Dillon in support of the candidature of J.D. Nugent.

\(^{163}\) TCD, Samuels Collection, Early Printed Books, Collection Box 4 and digitized version is OLS Samuels Box 4, 4SamuelsBox4_288.
should be avoided’ because this provides a better chance ‘of securing intelligent appreciation’.\textsuperscript{164}

While modern theories might disagree with the advice on the use of colour, the notion of instant appeal remained. A Sinn Féin poster that aimed to draw distinct comparisons between Patrick Lynch and Éamon de Valera in the East Clare by-election outlines clear policy differences. Simple imagery of street signage is used – rather than heavy body copy – with only a few lines to draw the distinctions and the means to obtain political goals. De Valera points towards the Paris peace conference as the road to freedom, whereas Lynch who is presented as a crown prosecutor points the way to ‘Famine’, ‘Emigration’ and ‘Jail’ to highlight the constitutional nationalist reliance on the Imperial parliament for freedom. Very little prior knowledge, intellect or even astuteness was needed to interpret this image, and construing the differences between the two nationalist approaches was easy and immediate.\textsuperscript{165}

Franklyn Haiman noted that posters communicate ‘a sense of immediacy and of being surrounded by an event’ that voters (in this instance) ‘are not likely to get elsewhere’.\textsuperscript{166} Posters in 1918 frequently adopted the parlance of personal interaction by using the second person singular or plural and employed familiar colloquial idiom. In addressing audiences directly there was an invitation to become active, and this created a more intimate atmosphere, similar to a two-way conversation. Colbert \textit{et al} maintain that ‘a state of motivation, arousal, or interest’ results in ‘searching, information processing, and decision making’ because the audience has become involved in the communication.\textsuperscript{167} Experimental psychologists who studied the role of moods revealed that ‘events associated with more intense moods become more memorable’.\textsuperscript{168} While these studies came later than advertisements or posters by political parties in the early twentieth century, there was an inherent comprehension of the power of psychological inducement.

\textsuperscript{164} Leabhar na hÉireann, ‘The Advertising Problem’.
\textsuperscript{165} BMH, Contemporary Documents, 227/7/B1[I]: Vote for De Valera poster (1917). See Figure 5.2.
The most successful campaign during this era of elections was the *Put him in to get him out* poster created by Sinn Féin.\(^{169}\) The importance of selecting an Easter Rising rebel as a candidate was affirmed by this very simple poster that spoke volumes.\(^{170}\) The verification or acclaim of the prisoners’ status was evident in the final by-line ‘the man in jail for Ireland’. The underlying message was that no crime had been committed by the candidate, because he was serving a prison sentence for the principles of freedom. The upright tight-lipped stance of the prisoner, arms folded in defiance of his internment, portrayed a proud sureness of the Sinn Féin message. This poster was first used to promote the candidate Joseph McGuiness in the South Longford by-election.

The narrow win by only thirty-seven votes for McGuinness suggests that the poster may not have attained the expected conversion effect. So, why use the poster again, and again? If propaganda opinion of the era is applied, the recommendation was that a poster ‘should be bold in conception and striking in design and execution’. The function was ‘to catch the eye of the passer-by and supply him with a sound suggestion’.\(^{171}\) This poster met the criteria, and the prisoners, as William Murphy states, ‘as survivors of the 1916 Rising … did not make the ultimate ‘blood’ sacrifice. Nonetheless, they became symbols of, and motors of, the profound political change that followed’.\(^{172}\) Convincing large numbers of people that there is only one valid point of view is an important goal of propaganda, as is eliminating all other options, and this poster sets out to make this

\[^{169}\text{Ibid, Ephemera Collection, EPH E31: Put him in to get him out.}\]
\[^{170}\text{See Laffan, ‘The Unification of Sinn Féin in 1917’, p. 359 and Murphy, Political Imprisonment, p. 77-79.}\]
\[^{171}\text{Further proof of the success of this poster campaign is demonstrated by William X. O’Brien, secretary of the Irish Labour Party and a leading figure in the ITGWU, appropriation of the ‘Put him in to get him out’ poster and modifying it to suit his interests. While interned in gaol, he decided to stand in the Stockport by-election in Great Britain in 1920, and the ‘Irish Republican Workers Party’ was listed on the ballot as his affiliation, even though no such party actually existed: NLI, William O’Brien, LOP 116/113. There is no image on this poster and it is more text heavy than the Sinn Féin original, but the lines ‘put him in’ appear at the top and ‘to get him out’ at the base of the poster.}\]
\[^{172}\text{Leabhar na hÉireann, ‘The Advertising Problem’. Contemporary opinion agrees as Henrik Dahl in The Pragmatics of Persuasion (Copenhagen, 1993) states that the first task of the visual element in advertising is designing it to catch the viewer’s eye.}\]
\[^{172}\text{Murphy, Political Imprisonment, p. 79.}\]
claim. The South Longford by-election was really the first Sinn Féin targeted election campaign, so while the result margins were slim, nevertheless a victory was attained. This poster, according to the *Irish Independent*, was ‘displayed at every cross-road and village in the constituency’. The passer-by obviously could not avoid it, interpretation was straightforward and did not require much decoding, and it did not rely on a high level of literacy from a viewer.

The uncomplicated image of a man dressed in prison attire with the large bold headline to ‘put him in to get him out’ holds no meaning without context. There was prior knowledge by viewers that elections were taking place and that rebels had been arrested and gaol. Therefore, the headline does not need to fill in the blanks of ‘put him in’ government ‘to get him out’ of gaol. Continued arrests and interments allowed for re-use and the only change made by Sinn Féin was the name of the candidate on the poster. That this poster was reused many times introduced another major advantage. Unlike the Irish Party and Unionists who also repeatedly advocated for their own causes of home rule or union, their posters did not repeat the same lines and the same image. In effect Sinn Féin had mounted an aggressive repetitive poster campaign and as elections progressed viewers quickly and readily associated the words and prisoner with a Sinn Féin candidate.

The introduction of proportional representation in 1919 altered election posters because candidates now needed to capture first preference votes. Artistic and creative imagery did not disappear, but a dominant feature became the inclusion of candidates’ names, often presented in capital letters. The electorate now voted in numerical preference, numbered from one to the total number of candidates going forward in a constituency, so there was less space to promote policies or include creative imagery. Catchy headlines and memorable slogans became essential to capture voter attention. For instance, during the 1920 municipal elections the Sinn Féin and Labour candidates of the Mountjoy Ward in Dublin enticed voters by asking them to *Strike a blow for Irish Independence*. Candidates’ names were listed in bold capitals, followed by a brief lowercase

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174 *Irish Independent*, 1 May 1917.
description of their occupation and home address. Only four numerical points at the end of the poster presented the key policies and a final by-line requested voters to ‘Vote early and solid for this republican ticket’.175

Some districts carried only simple informative headlines such as that of the North Dock and North City Wards in Dublin that read Municipal Elections, January 1920, 2 Aldermen and 6 Councillors. The candidates’ names loomed large and in bold, and in miniscule almost illegible print their occupations were provided. Two disembodied hands with pointed index finger directed viewers to a bordered box on the right of the poster that set out three principles: Nationality, Trades Unionism and Progress and Efficiency. There was no reference to the political affiliation of any of the candidates, except for those who mentioned their trade union membership.176 An emphasis on personalities rather than issues was a shortcoming of these election posters by comparison to those prior to proportional representation.177

The production of posters incurred significant costs, depending on quantities required, range of colour, and destination journey. An example is the estimate for the printing of a very large poster campaign titled The Statement to the President of the USA printed by Maunsel & Co. Ltd. of Baggot Street for Sinn Féin on 17 July 1918. The cost for 20,000 copies was £70 and for 50,000 copies £169.178 The cost of printing advertisements, posting, and all the clerical work in connection with the rural local elections in the towns of Bawnboy and Swanlinbar, Co. Cavan, comprising fourteen electoral divisions, according to the clerk was a ‘very satisfactory’ £26.179

Posters could not work in isolation as they held minimal details. Supplementing them were handbills, booklets and pamphlets, which were crucial for disseminating comprehensive information on party policies and philosophies. The handbill or booklet provided scope for instruction from the top down to party members, canvassers and supporters. By 1921 the UUC demonstrated their awareness of successful propaganda by publishing a booklet titled The Unionist

175 NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH C75a-e: Strike a Blow for Irish Independence.
176 Ibid.
178 NLI, William O’Brien Papers, MS 15,653(3).
179 Anglo-Celt, 19 June 1920.
Central Office Parliamentary Election Manual. Advice to Unionist candidates and election agents on direct marketing (placards and advertisements) stressed the importance of bringing the ‘name and the claims of the candidate forcibly to the attention of indifferent or ignorant electors’. To sway sympathies and gain electoral favour ‘a striking phrase or alliterative sentence’ was recommended. An emphasis on ‘reaching directly and personally [to] the various classes of electors’ by distributing ‘leaflets of special interest to them’ displayed an understanding of the demographic range of potential Unionist voters.

The costs involved in producing pamphlets/handbills can be seen in the following examples. The Sinn Féin press bureau in September 1918 was granted a sum of £50 for the printing of pamphlets ‘and other work in connection with the general election’. Robert Brennan requested sanction for the publication of some pamphlets in June 1919, stating that the publication of one small leaflet cost about £11 for 10,000 copies. For the 1920 local elections the Election Sub Committee received a grant of £300 to cover the cost of printing one-quarter million Sinn Féin programmes. Unionists also set aside and paid funds for the printing and dissemination of propaganda. A statement of accounts in March 1920 detailed expenses totalling £225 for ‘salaries and wages, travelling expenses, insurance, printing and advertising, &c’ (unfortunately all these expenses were grouped).

Postcards were similar to posters in terms of the constraints on message content, but they used imagery cleverly. In the early twentieth century postcard use surged as many enjoyed sending, receiving and collecting postcards. Thousands purchased and posted regularly, facilitated by improvements in the postal services, and postcard companies boomed – three hundred appeared in Britain. While most postcards were personal and contained landscape or cityscape

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181 SFSCM, 6 September 1918.
182 Ibid, 17 December 1919.
183 PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/14/5/9: Ulster Unionist Council, Receipts and payments Account, Year ended 31 December 1920.
184 Tonie and Valmai Holt, Picture Postcards of the Golden Age (London, 1978). The Post Office permitted the printing of cards by private companies in 1894, and the imperial penny post was introduced in 1898; see also F. Staff, The Picture Postcard and its Origins (London, 1979) and Killen, John Bull’s Famous Circus, pp. 48-75.
images, the Great War heightened postcard use for propaganda purposes. Political parties, governments and businesses issued postcards to promote products, services and ideas. The reverse side usually contained hasty instructions or passed personable information, but some contained seditious or rebellious content; for example, in a postcard titled Against Home Rule Hands Up! created by Unionists during the anti-home rule campaign, the author stated ‘the excitement here is intense and the people are gathering. I was told today to practise rifle shooting…’.

The weakness of this propaganda tool was that postcard messages could only be viewed by consumers visiting newsagents or other points of sale, or by the sender and recipient. Unlike a poster, handbill or press advertisement the direct audience was limited.

Classified advertisements in newspapers were used by all political parties to appeal for votes and each party had their preferred medium. The Irish Party favoured the Freeman’s Journal, Unionists the Irish Times and Sinn Féin used either their own publications or occasionally the Irish Independent. The high price of column inches was prohibitive for minimal budgets, and this affected candidates in the local government elections. The scale of charges for small prepaid advertisements in the Irish Times in 1920 was £1 for twelve words or under with every succeeding word being 3½d. A discount of ten per cent was offered if a series of twelve or more insertions were prepaid. Advertisements not prepaid were charged at a minimum of £3 per insertion and publication of these advertisements was not guaranteed on any particular day, which could be problematic during election campaigns if a series of advertisements needed to run before election day.

Provincial newspapers were usually cheaper. The Anglo-Celt, for example, claimed the ‘largest circulation of any provincial paper in Ireland’ and sold for a price of 2d. Costs for advertisements were rendered according to subject. For legal notices there was a charge of 6d per line, parliamentary notices £1 per line, government advertisements £1 per line; election addresses – parliamentary £1 per line; and local councils received a reduced rate at 6d per line. A commercial advertising sliding scale was also offered on a per-inch (single column), per-insertion where one

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185 Elaine Callinan, Private Collection, Against Home Rule Hands Up!, 27 September 1912. See figure 3.11.
186 Irish Times, 30 December 1920.
insertion cost 3s, three insertions 2s 6d, thirteen insertions 1s 6d and on up to fifty-two insertions at 1s 3d.\textsuperscript{187}

Classified advertisements were regularly used to deliver a short, pertinent and effective message, and many candidates used their local newspaper. In order to reduce costs these advertisements usually contained a very simple message that could be conveyed using the least amount of words and space. For instance, the Unionist candidate John Good purchased a one-inch-by-one column classified advertisement which appealed to voters in Dublin’s Pembroke Division during the 1918 general election stating: ‘Our Empire needs your help. Do your Duty. Support Law and Order, and vote for Good’.\textsuperscript{188} A further two-inches of column length allowed the Plotholders’ candidate in the 1920 municipal elections pose a question and provide a rejoinder for the electors of the Clontarf, Drumcondra and Glasnevin Division: ‘who saved the citizens’ property! The Plotholders’. The candidate, Patrick Ring, then requested all voters to ‘give their next preference to the Plotholders’ Candidate’ when they had ‘exhausted their Party Vote’.\textsuperscript{189}

Most provincial newspapers dedicated the entire front page to classified advertisements. Advertisements also appeared within the interior of these newspapers, and political candidates favoured these pages because the paid-for space appeared more like editorial. Some of the more adroit candidates bought advertising space but used it to issue letters of direct appeal which opened with a personal address such as ‘Ladies and Gentlemen’ or ‘Dear Sir or Madam’. These one-column-by-four-to-six-inch advertisements covered an assortment of political guarantees. James Brady, a Ratepayers’ candidate in the Dublin No. 2 Area sought to sway his potential voters towards civic government by highlighting ‘the general dissatisfaction’ held by ‘citizens about the management of municipal affairs in Dublin’. He claimed that by casting a vote in his favour local government would attain the advantage of his practical civic experience. He catalogued past accomplishments, laying particular emphasis on his financial expertise, and promised that ‘many

\textsuperscript{187} \textit{Anglo-Celt}, 31 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Irish Times}, 14 December 1918.
\textsuperscript{189} Ibid, 15 January 1920.
economics in civic management can be effected’ to secure ‘vastly improved public services’. Others, like Dr Myles Keogh, a Reform candidate from Dublin’s No. 10 Area, used the direct appeal and a curious three inches of his advertisement to exhibit his high social standing by listing his nominees. All but two nominees were medical doctors, presidents or ex-presidents of the Royal College of Surgeons or the Incorporated Law Society and, of course, there was the obligatory clerical representative.

Sinn Féin candidates were often more candid in their approach and, again the 1920 municipal elections provide a good example. In a three-column-by-three-and-a-half-inch advertisement for the Rathmines constituency, Sinn Féin confronted voters by asking ‘who betrayed Rathmines in 1918 and gave RATHMINES to UNIONISM and ORANGE ASCENDANCY’. The electoral results were provided to demonstrate their defeat by 1,405 votes. The tone then lightened to point out that it had not been the Sinn Féin faithful who betrayed Rathmines.

All parties and candidates ran similar style paid-for newspaper advertisements throughout this era, and no one party surpassed the other in mainstream media in terms of quality or quantity. Most contained short text and none carried images, drawings or photographs, even though one of the impressive transformations in newspaper printing was the availability of detailed illustrations – which was liberally used by clothing, fashion, and health businesses. Political parties and candidates’ budgets, however, did not lend themselves to such an expensive outlay. Political advertisements generally were straightforward, simple messages that impressed on readers the need to vote for a specific candidate; and media space was purchased in newspapers or specialist publications close to election day.

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190 See Irish Independent, 30 November 1918 for examples of direct appeal advertisements, and Irish Times, 13 January 1920 for James Brady advertisement.
191 Irish Times, 15 January 1920.
192 Irish Independent, 12 January 1920. While Sinn Féin lost again to the Unionist candidate Maurice Dockrell in 1920, the margin was narrower. Rathmines continued to hold a Unionist majority at the polls up to the late 1920s until a local government re-organization abolished all Dublin borough councils.
193 The FOIF used photography in the USA.
3.4: Canvassing

The door-to-door canvass was an essential component for checking the register of electors, for face-to-face contact by a candidate or a candidate’s representative, and to ensure that a voter could be relied upon to attend the poll.194 Unionists believed that an early effective canvass ‘by means of earnest and intelligent voluntary workers is by far the most powerful aid to success’.195 Lock and Harris argue that many voters vote for the same party as they have in the past because a voter’s views on what parties stand for remain remarkably stable.196 Therefore the personal canvass offered opportunity to suggest a viable alternative to fixed opinions, particularly in the case of Sinn Féin which was fielding many unknown candidates. The Sinn Féin volunteer Michael Healy stated that ‘there was a general canvass of the whole area [Loughrea, Co. Galway] as some of the elderly people had not yet learned the Sinn Féin gospel’.197 Another advantage of the canvass was that some voters might have been unable or unwilling to attend public meetings, so this was another means to reach out.

Organizations and movements that supported a specific political philosophy supplied visible assistance to parties in election campaigns.198 The Irish Party acquired advocacy from the Ancient Order of Hibernians (who were largely members of the party), the Unionists from the Orange Order, and Sinn Féin from the Irish Volunteers. Parties canvassed in all areas, but there were instances where it was known that the majority support was for an opponent so resources were put to use elsewhere. For instance, in Ulster Sinn Féin canvassed in many constituencies, but

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194 According to Sean T. O’Kelly, ‘Voters’ lists were of course very much out of date. During the war nothing had been done to bring these lists into proper order, but every voter on every list … in every constituency, certainly in every constituency in Munster, Leinster and Connaught, was canvassed’: BMH WS 1,765.

195 PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/148: Unionist Central Office Parliamentary Election Manual, p. 67. The Irish Unionist Alliance in southern Ireland applied for canvassers in the several divisions where they ran candidates and urged that ‘no time be lost in offering and undertaking this valuable voluntary service’. They appealed to the ‘large number of women electors’ whose assistance ‘can help in canvassing and on the polling day’; Irish Times, 6 December 1918.


197 BMH WS 1064: Michael Healy.

198 For examples of canvassing on behalf of Sinn Féin see: BMH WS 1,101, Martin Cassidy, Kilkenny; WS 479, Commandant Michael Murphy, Dublin, Member ‘B’; WS 1,006, Martin Kealy, Clifden, Co. Kilkenny.
there were a good many, according to Seán T. O’Kelly, ‘where the Unionists were in the vast majority where such a canvass was not feasible’.  

Women’s movements were affiliated to volunteer organizations and, congruently, to political parties and they also assisted in election campaigns. They were often ancillary forces to the main organizations; for example, a distinct female organization reinforced the Orange Order, known as the Association of Loyal Orangewomen of Ireland, and Cumann na mBan buttressed the Irish Volunteers. These women proved crucial in mobilizing the female vote which resulted in victory for Unionists and Sinn Féin in the 1918 general election. Vigorous canvassing formed a core duty for young women (and men) as ‘young girls were mobilised and worked on the register and on the canvass of the voters enthusiastically’. Unionist women were also encouraged to canvass for their candidates and were reminded that it was the ‘duty of every working woman at the present time to speak out her views with no uncertain voice’. The chairman of the Victoria Parliamentary Association, David E. Lowry, reminded women in the Victoria constituency that they ‘ought to be inspired to help in the cause.’

Women from the Ballyclare branch of the East Antrim Women’s Unionist Association resolved to give their best assistance and support to Colonel McCalmont.

Volunteers and party supporting organizations – such as Sinn Féin clubs, Unionist clubs and associations, and the UIL and AOH for the Irish Party – were very effective canvassers and proved efficient for the most part in this duty, honing skills as the by-elections progressed. According to one Sinn Féin Volunteer in South Armagh, they conducted ‘practically all the electioneering work: canvassing voters, marking the register, providing transport, getting voters out

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199 Ibid, WS 1,765: Seán T. O’Kelly
200 Garvin, The Evolution, pp. 107-110; Diane Urquhart, Women in Ulster Politics, 1890-1940 (Kildare, 2000); Rachel Ward, Women Unionism and Loyalism in Northern Ireland, From ’Tea Makers’ to Political Actors (Kildare, 2006); and Cal McCarthy, Cumann na mBan and the Irish Revolution (Cork, 2007); and Ward, Unmanageable Revolutionaries, (1988 edn.), chapter 4.
201 See chapter five on results.
202 BMH WS, 492: John McCoy.
203 Belfast News Letter, 10 December 1918: Meeting for the Unionist candidate for the Ormeau Division W.J. Stewart; and public meeting of Unionist electors held in Strandtown Unionist Club.
204 Ibid, 11 December 1918.
to the polling booths and taking charge at the polling booths’. Lobbying voters during by-elections made practised campaigners by the time the general election came around, particularly in the Sinn Féin camp. The Irish Party were less successful as many in the AOH had defected to the Irish Volunteer movement, mainly during the conscription crisis. Unfortunately for Unionists and constitutional nationalists, men (and women) who might previously have campaigned on their behalf in the 1918 election were either still at the frontline or making their way home. Many would not return in time to cast their votes on 14 December 1918.

Volunteers also acted as protectors for canvassers. Séamus Hennessy in East Clare described volunteer duties during the campaign for de Valera stating that they escorted canvassers, protected and guarded supporters during rallies and election meetings, and visibly attended polling stations. In Waterford City de Valera was attacked when he went out to canvass alone, despite advice to the contrary, and Volunteers hastily had to rescue him. Hibernians and Ulster Volunteers equally acted as guardians for their leaders, candidates and canvassers.

Canvassing proved very effective only if comprehensive knowledge of party policies and candidate ambitions were clearly articulated. Canvassing was also free because most of the work was conducted by Volunteers (although they were often supplied with literature which did accrue costs). Strong local canvassing by one party often encouraged an opponent to step up their activities, and where a vacuum existed there was a desire to fill it. William J. Kelly claimed that ‘a lot of contacts were made by those men [canvassers] with local Republicans all over the constituency and the various Republican organizations such as the Volunteers, Sinn Féin and the Cumann na mBan were got going’. Nationalists in Omagh declared that they held the council in

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205 BMH, WS 658: John Grant.
206 Over the course of the war 210,000 volunteers had enlisted: David Fitzpatrick, ‘Militarism in Ireland’, p. 388.
207 BMH Military Service Pension 34/1 Ref 17178, Séamus Hennessy. Martin O’Regan recalled that the Loughrea Battalion of the Irish Volunteers protected members of the Sinn Féin Club, speakers, canvassers and voters: WS 1,202.
208 See WS 755 (ii), Sean Prendergast, Irish Volunteers; WS 1764, Dr. Vincent White, Waterford and WS 1,104, Thomas Brennan, Tramore, Co. Waterford.
209 Kevin O’Sheil recalled that the Irish Party official candidate in North Co. Louth Dick Hazleton had received powerful support from the AOH and UIL, both of which organizations were highly organized in that constituency: WS 1,770.
210 WS 893: William J. Kelly Jnr.
1920 despite ‘all the forces of well-organized Unionism and Orangeism’ being ‘arrayed against the Nationalists’. They triumphantly claimed that the Unionist voters ‘were canvassed and recanvassed, and specially instructed … but despite all these efforts the Nationalists have again obtained control of the Urban Council.\(^{211}\) Canvassing assisted in altering electoral perspectives, but it required awareness creating supports in the form of other propaganda methods. As a stand-alone means of convincing voters to switch party allegiance it was insufficient.

Canvassing by volunteers and public oratory by candidates was bolstered by party symbols and balladeering. Over time voters came to recognise and associate colours or songs with particular political movements.

### 3.5: Symbols and Ballads

Nationalist iconography during election campaigns included harps, shamrocks, round towers, wolfhounds, sunbursts, Celtic crosses, green and tricolour flags (depending on the particular brand of nationalism). Unionism exploited some of these images also, such as the harp, alongside the Union flag and images of King William III. Ewan Morris in his work *Our Own Devices, National Symbols and Political Conflict in Twentieth Century Ireland* outlines the controversy about national symbols and provides a detailed explanation of a selection of official symbols.\(^{212}\) This work intends to investigate how and where these symbols were used to encourage voter support and whether their use transformed opinion. The focus will be on the abundant use of symbols and ballads in the by-elections and 1918 general election, because their use was minimal during the local government elections of 1920. The personal canvass and handbills were more favoured due to the parochial nature of local elections. Symbols and ballads worked well for constituency by-elections and general elections, and ballads generally did not hold content about local election candidates. While they were a cost-free propaganda exercise, their creation and erection was time consuming and required manpower.

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\(^{211}\) *Fermanagh Herald*, 24 January 1920.

\(^{212}\) Morris, *Our Own Devices*, for a comprehensive history of Ireland’s national symbols and emblems.
At the outset it is essential to note that the main symbols used during election campaigns were flags and banners. Flags were the most potent symbol and were used extensively as bunting that lined the streets, decorated crossroads and the platforms of public speeches. The Irish Party flag comprised a gold harp centred on a field of green, and they claimed that the ‘old green flag’ represented the flag of Ireland. The selection of the colour green represented Ireland and the harp her official symbol. During the election campaigns of 1917 and 1918 this flag appeared on motor cars that brought speakers and canvassers to voters and also decorated polling booths, particularly in constituencies where the Irish Party was strongest, such as Waterford City. In South Longford the *Longford Leader* reported that McKenna and his supporters were actually ‘wearing their green colours’.

The importance of the flag can be seen in an Irish Party handbill which posed the confrontational question ‘What is Wrong with the Green Flag?’ Content associated the green flag with Irish national tradition, order and sturdy progress towards home rule whereas the tricolour was married to revolution, anarchy and repudiation of the national tradition. The real question voters had to consider was why it was necessary to ‘invent an absurd new-fangled flag for Ireland?’ Voters did not have to rely on their own wit as the answer was provided in the condemnation of Sinn Féin, ‘a fake flag is the right flag for a fake policy’. Sinn Féin’s tricolour was consistently referred to as the ‘rainbow’ flag and Irish Party followers were regularly reminded to, as Thomas Campbell (Nationalist candidate for South Monaghan) stated, ‘stand by the old green flag under which their fathers fought’. He criticised the ‘yellow streak in their [Sinn Féin] flag’ and

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213 Henry VIII introduced the use of the harp as an Irish emblem in c. 1534 and it appeared on coinage. Subsequently the harp became widely visible on maps, charters and son on in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Owen Roe O’Neill raised a flag showing a gold harp on a green field during the 1641 rebellion. See G.A. Hayes McCoy, *A History of Irish Flags from Earliest Times* (Dublin, 1979), pp. 22-3 and 43-7.

214 *Longford Leader*, 12 May 1917.
highlighted that there was ‘no white feathers on their flag – their flag was a flag of no surrender, and it was green all the time, and green all the way’.  

Unionist identity and convictions were embodied in the Union flag (or Union Jack flag) evident in many references to this flag in election speeches. During Maurice Dockrell’s nomination to represent Unionists in Rathmines, Dublin, one of his supporters reminded the audience that ‘the Union Jack was the flag for which Sir Maurice Dockrell sent three sons to fight [in the Great War], and it was for that flag that Mr Samuels sacrificed his only son’.  

Union Jack bunting bedecked streets to welcome Unionist leaders such as that for Carson in Belfast in November 1918 where ‘from every window along the route flags and streamers floated. The shipyard workers were supplied with a liberal quantity of Union Jacks…’. Union colours were represented on pin badges (as shown in figure 3.8). The reverse side marked this as a series of ‘no surrender’ badges that could be obtained from ‘all newsagents or direct, post free’ from the printers. Ronald MacNeill maintained in *Ulster Stands for Union* that ‘if there is a profuse display of the Union Jack, it is because it is in Ulster not merely ‘bunting’ for decorative purposes as in England, but the symbol of a cherished faith’. So intense was the fidelity to this flag that in Belfast the Protestant domination of an

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215 BMH WS 707: Michael Noyk. He also states that one of the names attributed to Sinn Féin by the Irish Party was ‘The Rainbow Chasers’; *Anglo-Celt*, 7 December 1918: Thomas Campbell speech at Ballybay, South Monaghan. The yellow streak refers to the orange, or gold as it oftentimes called, and the white feather was a traditional symbol of cowardice and was used during the Great War to shame men who were not soldiers.

216 The Union Jack design was created at the time of the Union of Ireland and Britain in 1801 by adding the cross of St Patrick, representing Ireland, to the crosses of Saints George and Andrew, representing England and Scotland: Hayes McCoy, pp. 36-41.

217 *Irish Times*, 3 December 1918.

218 Ibid, 15 November 1918.

219 Elaine Callinan, private collection, No Surrender Badge by Wm. Strain & Sons Ltd, Belfast, ‘Union is Strength’. Wording on reverse also states that ‘special wording supplied for Unionist demonstrations at moderate prices’.

industry was often celebrated with an unfurling of the Union Jack.\textsuperscript{221}

Sinn Féin first raised the tricolour over their GPO headquarters in Dublin City during Easter week and raised another which bore the words ‘Irish Republic’ in gold lettering atop a green backdrop. At the anniversary of the Rising a year later displaying the tricolour flag of green, white and orange became a gesture of defiance among separatist nationalists. During the by-elections it became a symbol of Sinn Féin aspirations. \textit{Nationality} reported that the tricolour was ‘the flag of the Young Irelanders, adopted 70 years ago by them avowedly as a symbol of the union of Ireland against enforced union with England’.\textsuperscript{222} In this way the history of the tricolour summoned a link with past battles for Irish freedom.\textsuperscript{223}

Sinn Féin’s practice of decorating the streets with tricolour bunting began during the South Longford by-election campaign where ‘glittering and dancing in the brilliant sunlight were hundreds of tricolours, the Sinn Féin flag, waving from end to end of the procession’. This procession was filled with marching men ‘stretching from Market Square almost to the Eattery at the opposite end of the town’. Parades were often led by young Sinn Féin supporters such as, in this instance, ‘two charming, well dressed girls, carrying Republican flags’.\textsuperscript{224} During the campaign it was reported that the Sinn Féin colours could be seen everywhere with ‘thousands’ of people carrying the ‘well-known colours of the green, gold and white’. During de Valera’s East Clare by-election campaign a supporter on a train to Clare stated that there were ‘so many republic flags displayed in the procession from Ennis station to the Old Ground Hotel that it appeared … as if the road was one great blaze with the failing sunshine on the orange of the banners’.\textsuperscript{225} The tricolour quickly became associated with the party and candidates. The \textit{Roscommon Herald} reported that

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\textsuperscript{222} \textit{Nationality}, 26 May 1917.  \\
\textsuperscript{223} On 15 April 1848 Thomas Meagher presented a silk tricolour to the citizens of Ireland stating ’the white in the centre signifies a lasting truce between the “orange” and the “green”’. The tricolour, however, had been used by the Women’s Freedom League who displayed the colours horizontally in the order green, orange and white with the words ‘votes for women’ inserted. This suffragette tricolour was highly visible across the British Isles during this era. Countess Markievicz claimed that the Rising brought together the three great movements of nationalism, socialism and feminism. The tricolour was adopted as the flag of the Irish Free State in 1922. It was formally confirmed as the National Flag in the 1937 Constitution in Article 7: ‘the national flag is the tricolour of green, white and orange’.  \\
\textsuperscript{224} \textit{Roscommon Herald}, 5 May 1917.  \\
\textsuperscript{225} BMH WS 908: Laurence Nugent.
\end{flushright}
‘many voters when asked their opinion on the election merely nodded to the flag in an approving manner’.  

Ballads sang of the profundity of tricolours decorating the streets and towns of Ireland, and claimed that the flag of Sinn Féin had replaced that of the Union Jack. Ballads such as the *Dying Rebel* (sung to the air of the *Merry Ploughboys*) and *The Boys from County Cork* linked the tricolour with bravery and the rebels of 1916. In the former, the line ‘He fought for Ireland and Ireland only/ The harp, the shamrock, green, white and gold’ gives equal weight to universal symbols of Irishness such as the harp and shamrock with the tricolour. In the latter ballad the Easter week rebels were credited with giving ‘history to the Orange, White and Green’ as they were the boys ‘who died in Dublin town in Nineteen and Sixteen’. 

The gravity and depth of passion regarding flags and colours and their association with political parties was borne out in repeated sneers and insults against the other in an attempt to stress disparity. De Valera claimed that he stood for that tricolour (and pointed to the flag on display) and not for the Union Jack, maintaining that Patrick Lynch ‘was fighting under the Union Jack’. The *Clare Champion* drew distincton between the nationalist parties by referring to their flags, stating that ‘the Sinn Féiners carry the triColour, while the supporters of the Nationalist candidate carry green flags, French colours and the Union Jack’. Supporters of Sinn Féin sometimes accused the Irish Party and Unionists for colluding to create advantage, evident in the South Armagh by-election. John Cosgrave claimed he saw the ‘unusual spectacle of Hibernians and Orangemen travelling together in the same public conveyance with the green Hibernian flag and the Orange Union Jack flying side by side’. This he termed as an ‘unholy alliance between Orange and Green’ because the Hibernian slogan of ‘Up Donnelly’ was echoed by the Orange cry of ‘To hell with the Pope’. 

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226 *Roscommon Herald*, 14 April 1917.  
228 *Clare Champion*, 30 June 1917.  
Symbols can function to signify dissent, to establish legitimacy for a particular cause, or to protest against the legitimacy of a nation’s ideology or actions.\textsuperscript{230} However, just how effective were these demonstration of colours by the various political movements to win votes? Social scientists have long argued that symbols of a nation increase people’s sense of psychological identification with their nation, or even identification with an imagined nation.\textsuperscript{231} According to the Irish Times during the South Armagh by-election ‘the Sinn Féin colours were in evidence at most of the crossroads and villages in the districts, and the signs and tokens of the Nationalist Party were not to be seen to anything like the same extent.’\textsuperscript{232} The Irish Party won this by-election by 5,095 votes over the Sinn Féin candidate so this should indicate that the profuse display by Sinn Féin returned no reward. However, in Longford Town the Sinn Féin colours, according to the Roscommon Herald were seen everywhere through the district. Never in Longford has there been such a display of flags ... There were thousands of people present, and most of them carried the well-known colours of the green, gold and white. Every vehicle sported a flag, and some of them, especially motor cars, had several floating to the breeze’.\textsuperscript{233} And, in East Clare it was reported that ‘demonstrative crowds … with Republican colours and Irish flags, gathered …’\textsuperscript{234} De Valera had a landslide victory in East Clare with 2,975 votes over the Irish Party candidate. Similar examples can be taken from the 1918 general election where flags and colours decorated all contested constituencies. Particularly evident were Sinn Féin colours and in Ulster Unionist colours adorned constituencies that promoted Unionist candidates. Baumeister and Leary argued that people are ‘empowered by the use of symbols to feel a strong sense of unity

\textsuperscript{230} R. Firth, Symbols: Public and Private (NY, 1973); see also David A. Butz, ‘National Symbols as Agents of Psychological and Social Change, Political Philosophy, 30:5 (October, 2009), pp. 779-804.
\textsuperscript{231} S. Feshbach and N. Sakano, ‘The structure and correlates of attitudes toward one’s nation in samples of United States and Japanese college students: A comparative study’ in D. Bar-Tal & E. Staub (eds), Patriotism in the lives of individuals and nations (Chicago, 1997), pp. 91-107.
\textsuperscript{232} Irish Times, 28 January 1918.
\textsuperscript{233} Roscommon Herald, 5 May 1917.
\textsuperscript{234} Clare Champion, 12 May 1917

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and belongingness, particularly in the wake of a threat. The flag, as a strong symbol of identity, visually characterised disparities between parties and reinforced a political stance. They generated a strong sense of presence and showcased a party’s enthusiasm to win votes. They also had an intimidatory impact which may have discouraged an opponent’s voters from presenting at the polls. Flags and colours helped build recognition of a candidate, but once the candidate and their policies became known often old partisanships took over.

Another strong symbol during election campaigns was the shamrock, and nationalists of all hues used the shamrock as a symbol of Irish identity. Sinn Féin favoured shamrock-shaped button badges with printed messages and candidate images which were worn by canvassers and party supporters. What is striking about the images in figures 3.9 and 3.10 is the slogan ‘A felon of our land!’ This demonstrates that Sinn Féin interconnected badges, banners and posters—all with similar or related messages. The poster Which? (figure 3.10) depicts an imagined court scene (or perhaps mimicks an Easter Rising court martial) where de Valera stands resplendent in his Irish Volunteer uniform. Crown Prosector Patrick Lynch, the Irish Party candidate, points to him as a felon and the British judge, enveloped in the Union Jack, writes out the sentence. This poster and badge link together and relate to other propaganda that refers to Lynch’s profession; and it connects with the the *Put him in to get him out* poster because all suggest imprisonment for Irish rebels.

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236 The shamrock had been used by Catholics and Protestants because of its Christian folklore. It was, according to legend, used by St. Patrick to explain the mystery of the Trinity because this three leaf clover plant was analogous to the Triune God with three separate and distinct persons: Alban Butler, *Butler’s Lives of the Saints*, Vol. 1, ed by Herbert J. Thurston (1956), p. 615; E. Charles Nelson, *Shamrock: botany and history of an Irish Myth* (Kilkenny, 1991), pp. 115-20. By the twentieth century Liberal Protestants continued to wear and use the shamrock, particularly on St Patrick’s Day, but conservative Protestants began to regard it as a nationalist party symbol rather than a national symbol.

Sunbursts were also used by separatist nationalists, but rarely in the foreground of election iconography. They were referred to in songs and ballads, for instance The O’Rahilly’s *Thou Art Not Conquered Yet, Dear Land* had the lines ‘Thy sun has never set;/ Twill blaze again in golden glow/ Though art not conquered yet!’.

Unionist propaganda on the other hand identified with Britishness and Protestantism, although not always to the exclusion of their sense of Irishness. The image of King William crossing the Boyne river astride a white horse became popular on posters and banners (and in the modern era in murals on the gable end of houses in Protestant areas of Northern Ireland). Unionists

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238 Sunbursts, while not unique to Ireland, came into use in Irish nationalist iconography during the nineteenth century. The sunburst was used on Na Fianna Éireann flags and banners. The inspiration came from the mythology of the Fianna, a small group of independent warriors in Irish and Scottish mythology. See W. Smith, *Flags through the Ages and Across the World* (Maidenhead, 1975), pp. 314-5 on sun symbolism on flags. On 16 August 1909, the Irish National Boy Scouts changed their name to Na Fianna Éireann, with Bulmer Hobson as president, Countess Markievicz as vice-president and Padraig Ó Riain as secretary.

239 Joe Good, *Inside the GPO, A Firsthand Account* (Dublin, 2015), p. 81-96: It was claimed The O’Rahilly sang this in the GPO during Easter week against the background of advancing flames and gunfire.

also used the Red Hand of Ulster which had its roots as a Gaelic Irish symbol. During the South Armagh by-election the symbol of the Red Hand emblazoned on a large flag being carried by Unionists during a speaking rally infuriated de Valera. He pointed to the flag (as it arrived, led by a Unionist pipers band) and proclaimed, ‘there’s the flag of Ulster’. Carson was then accused of being ‘the man who would sell Ulster if it was convenient’; and Unionists generally were denounced as being ‘a rock in the road’ that ‘must be stormed’. ‘They must’, stated de Valera, ‘if necessary blast it out of their path’. Symbols, therefore, had the power to evince strong emotive reactions.

The clever location or shrewd placement of symbols and flags carried an electoral message to wider audiences. Automobiles and other transport vehicles were creatively used by all during election campaigns, being adorned with flags and party colours. According to the *Roscommon Herald* on 14 April 1917 a Sinn Féin motor car with mounted tricolour ‘drew many a cheer along the way’. Dillon commented that Sinn Féin ‘[m]otor cars passed through the streets with new flags fluttering over them’; and one enthusiastic volunteer claimed he sang *The Soldier’s Song* from the top of an outside car. Sinn Féin devised the imaginative idea to re-register cars in order to evade arrest and recognition by authorities as there were restrictions on the use of cars on polling day without a permit. The Irish Volunteers changed the registration on their cars to ‘I.R. 1916’.

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241 Organisations such as the Irish Citizen Army, the ITGWU, and Ulster GAA clubs all used (and continue to use) the Red Hand. The Red Hand first appeared on the seal of the O’Neills, the kings of Tir Eoghain, and its use became widespread by Unionists during opposition to the third Home Rule Bill in 1912. See Belinda Loftus, *Mirrors, Orange and Green* (Cornell, 1994), p. 38; Alvin Jackson, ‘Irish Unionist Imagery’ in E. Patton (ed), *Returning to Ourselves* (Belfast, 1995), pp. 354-6. ‘The red hand is present on a number of Ulster county crests, i.e. Antrim, Cavan, Londonderry, Monaghan and Tyrone, and it is used by many other official and unofficial organizations throughout Ireland. It remains one of the few cross-community symbols and crosses the sectarian political divide.

242 *Ulster Gazette*, 2 February 1918.

243 *Longford Leader*, 12 May 1917; BMH WS 397: Thomas Pugh.
‘I.R. 1916’ afforded recognition to Sinn Féin supporters and the electorate because Volunteers collected and delivered speakers and voters; and the registration differentiated their vehicles from those of the opposition. They were, of course, held up by the RIC, and when questioned, the drivers ‘referred the Constabulary to the Sinn Féin headquarters’. In a further act of defiance to British law, drivers’ licences were issued by the Sinn Féin organization and were signed ‘E. de Valera’. 244

Drilling, marching and parading by all nationalist volunteer forces functioned as another unpaid-for propaganda exercise. The general laxness of suppressing public military marching in late 1918 allowed Sinn Féin’s Irish Volunteers the freedom to act as guards or ‘peace patrols’ at public meetings, election rooms and at polling booths. Irish Party supporters quickly learned to counter Sinn Féin with Sinn Féin tactics and imported their own ‘peace patrols’, usually members of the AOH. There is little evidence of the UVF offering similar support to Ulster Unionists, however there was a call for a general mobilization of Unionist supporters. Unionist workers answered the call and ‘volunteered their services’ to help voters get to the polls. In the Duncairn district of Belfast the Unionist workers ‘turned up their machinery to the highest pitch’ and ‘toiled unceasingly … to the close of the poll’. 245

Outside polling booths and amongst audiences at campaign speeches, rival detachments of Volunteers – often carrying hurleys – readied for defence or combat. A sense of audacious presence and crowd enlargement were positive outcomes, but the negative impact was the occasional spill-over into violence or conflict. The latter often occasioned press reports about these hostile or aggressive actions, and depending on either the outcome or public perception there could be propaganda benefits or losses. 246

244 Weekly Irish Times, 9 February 1918; For information on car registrations and licences see: BMH WS 353: James McGuill, WS 907: Laurence Nugent, and WS 633: Michael Joseph Ryan (when he was carrying out election work in Co. Clare).
245 Belfast News Letter, 16 December 1918. A similar call was made to Unionists in the City and County of Dublin to do ‘all in their power for the success of candidates at the coming election’. A ‘unity of purpose and vigour’ was the motivational message: Irish Times, 6 December 1918.
246 Sinn Féin, for example, suffered negative publicity in the Freeman’s Journal on 2 December 1918 in a report about an attack on the road to the Sinn Féin headquarters on Divis Street where ‘100 Sinn Féiners attacked a number of girls with bludgeons’. The editorial expressed ‘much indignation … at the terrorist methods of the Sinn Féiners’.
The AOH ‘safeguarded’ voters in the Catholic districts of Ulster and they were particularly active in South Armagh – one of their strongholds. The AOH was also active in Dillon’s home town of Ballaghadereen, and dynamic in Waterford City, outmanoeuvring Sinn Féin. Waterford and Mayo witnessed a high level of violence during the election campaigns. Bottles and stones were hurled by both sides. Ex-servicemen and Waterford’s Ballybricken Pig Buyers assembled in large groups to advance on the Sinn Féin meetings and election rooms. In turn, volunteers charged at the Pig Buyers using heavy walking sticks or ‘good stout ash plants’ sending them to flight. In Waterford, the Sinn Féin candidate, Dr Vincent White, was hit and wounded by a large brick. In Mayo, during Dillon’s campaign, the RIC had to intervene when Irish Volunteers and Irish Party supporters clashed. Weapons were discharged, but no one was injured. Other campaign meetings around Ballaghadereen saw many ‘clashes with the Redmondites’. The attitude of Hibernians to violence was similar to that of the Sinn Féin volunteers in the belief that the realization of legitimate political goals through the use of force was necessary. As Jackson states, ‘[i]t was perhaps not desirable or practicable, but violence was not out of the question.’ Hibernians launched an attack on Countess Markievicz at Lislea throwing a huge paving stone that ‘only missed her by inches’, and frustrated at their failure they subsequently ‘pelted her with sods and mud’. De Valera also came under attack in the South Armagh by-election where a ‘Hibernian attempted to drive a pike’ through him.

Clashes were not always violent. Some were conducted in good-humoured, affable competition such as the ballad sing-off during the South Armagh by-election. Two large bonfires had been lit on opposite ends of a street, about sixty yards apart, by Irish Party and Sinn Féin supporters. Sinn Féin’s Clare volunteers began singing republican songs and Irish Party supporters counteracted with ballads such as A Nation Once Again, Deep in the Canadian Woods and God

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247 In Ballymacnab, Co. Armagh there was a ‘small pocket of Catholic houses situated in a predominantly Unionist area’: BMH WS 605: John Cosgrove.
248 Ibid, WS 972: Tomas O’Cleirigh (Thomas Cleary); WS 1,006: Martin Kealy.
249 Ibid, WS 1,017: Garda Patrick Cassidy.
251 BMH WS 755 (ii): Sean Prendergast.
252 Ibid; WS 1764, Dr Vincent White; and WS 1,104, Thomas Brennan.
Save Ireland. According to the volunteer, John McCoy, ‘if a really good effort was produced from either party it was applauded by both parties’.253

Unionists had their favoured ballads and their themes often referred to the 1641 rebellion (in the ballad Portadown for example), the Glorious Revolution, or earlier battles between popular secret societies of the nineteenth century. For instance, Dolly’s Brae was a ballad about Orangemen and Ribbonmen on Dolly’s Bray, Co. Down in 1849. Ballads on Protestantism were also popular such as A Fine True Hearted Protestant, which was sung to their air of A Fine Old English Gentleman.254

Sinn Féin’s foremost anthem during the election campaigns was The Soldier’s Song and it was regularly used in tandem with Volunteer and Cumann na mBan marches and sang in both English and Irish.255 Unionists rendered the British national anthem God Save the King. These party anthems provided insight into the ‘deepest political aspirations, experiences, goals and values’ of political movements.256 The British national anthem promoted profound Unionist beliefs in song such as the appeal for the king to be ‘happy and glorious/ Long to rein over us’, and to ‘defend our laws’. Loyalty to the anthem and to the Union Jack was, according to Morris, useful when it came to distinguishing Unionists from nationalists.257 The substance of the distinctive characteristics, particularly between Sinn Féin and Unionists, was in the lyrics as they held the ingredients of the principles of those who performed them.

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253 Ibid, WS 492: John McCoy.
254 NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH C287: Songs for Protestants (Dublin, c. 1850).
255 The lyrics of this ballad had been written in English in 1907 by Peadar Kearney and the music was composed by both Kearney and Patrick Heeney. Ewan Morris, ‘God Save the King’ Versus ‘The Soldier’s Song’: The 1929 Trinity College National Anthem Dispute and the Politics of the Irish Free State’, Irish Historical Studies, 31:121 (May 1998), pp. 72-90. See also Ruth Sherry, ‘The Story of the National Anthem’, History Ireland, 4:1 (Spring 1996), pp. 39-43. The Soldier’s Song was adopted as the national anthem of the Free State in 1926. Prior to this Thomas Moore’s Let Erin Remember was often played on formal occasions abroad and God Save Ireland and A Nation Once Again were also used. In 1934, the Department of Finance acquired the copyright of The Soldier’s Song for the sum of £1,200 (Appropriate Act 1934), but copyright law changed in 1959 and the government had to reacquire copyright in 1965 for £2,500: Dáil Éireann Debates, vol. 609, no. 63, 8 November 2005. The version which became commonly known, Amhrán na bhFiann, was written (perhaps as early as 1917) by Liam Ó Rinn, who later became the Chief Translator to the Oireachtas. This translation was first published in the Free State army magazine An tÓglach on 3 November 1923.
257 Morris, Our Own Devices, p. 118.
During the election campaigns ballads or poems were created to extol the virtues of candidates or condemn those of an opponent. In North Roscommon the ballad *Hurrah! Hurrah! For Plunkett* was performed to the air of *The Boys of Wexford*, where electors were told ‘for Éire’s right in freedom’s fight/ Your manhood strong with Plunkett throng/ To win her liberty’. In the East Cavan campaign a Sinn Féin election agent, Joseph Stanley, entertained the crowd at a public meeting by singing a newly composed ballad, titled *Britannia to East Cavan*. The repetition throughout of the line ‘Says the Grand Old Dame Britannia’ (which appears three times in each verse and twelve times in total) allowed the crowd to swiftly absorb both lyric and tune to join in. The content of this ballad ridiculed the hold Britain had on the Irish Party by, for instance, satirising the £400 annual salary received by Irish Party MPs – ‘Four hundred quid on a fishing hook’; and mocking the fact that home rule lies dormant on the statute book. The ballad *The Lawyer and the Vote*, sung to the air of *The Peeler and the Goat*, ridiculed Lynch in East Clare. The original ballad was inspired by the relaxation of the penal laws. The folklore behind it was that a Peeler (policeman) took a goat into ‘custody’ for creating an obstruction on a road in Bansha, Co. Tipperary. The goat assumed the persona of a loiterer or prostitute (by the use of the word ‘Stholler’), and an argument ensued between the two over money and alcohol. The goat symbolized the persecuted Catholics in the lines ‘No penal law did I transgress’ who, because of British coercion, suffered. The last verse reduced the acts of the policeman to absurdity to reflect the similarities between British ‘quacks’ and the Irish Party ‘hacks’. ‘Let scheming place-men build their nests’ referred to Irish Party corruption and jobbery and this is contrasted with the good character of de Valera who was hailed as the ‘man for Éire O’.

Ballads could rouse a crowd at public meetings but they were also outward expressions of cultural or national identity. The symbols and ballads or anthems of all parties in the elections

258 NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP 116(76).
259 TCD, Digital Collections, 679 (5/111: *Britannia to East Cavan*. The original Great War anti-recruitment ballad *Says the Grand Old Dame Britannia* was created by Sean O’Casey. See also BMH WS 755 (ii): Sean Prendergast. Further electoral ballads include ‘*Up Kilkenny*, *The Shan Van Vocht*, *The Lawyer and the Vote* – which ridicules the Irish Party candidate Patrick Lynch, and *De Valera for East Clare*: NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP 116(37), (38), (40) and (41).
260 NLI, William O’Brien papers, LOP 116(40).
during 1917 and 1918 functioned as agents of psychological, social and political persuasion.

During electioneering in Co. Longford John Dillon maintained that:

…last night in the streets of Longford, I saw a sight which appeared to be a symbol of the struggle in which we are engaged. Motor cars passed through the streets with new flags fluttering over them which are unknown in the history of Ireland’s struggle. But we fight under the old flag (loud cheers) under which our fathers fought and which has been handed down to us through generations of sacrifice and of blood, and, under that flag, I appeal to the people of Longford … if they do, victory will light upon our banners (loud and prolonged cheers).\textsuperscript{261}

Their persuasion influence can only be assessed by their incessant use, evident even in commercial and modern propaganda such as the international promotion of Ireland on St Patrick’s Day by the use of the colour green, the presentation of shamrock to the President of the USA, the presence of the harp on the pint of Guinness, and the display of tricolours and Union Jacks in Northern Ireland. Their effectiveness in electoral campaigns in the era under study is difficult to ascertain because symbols and ballads were not used in isolation. Weighting in their favour, however, was their persistent and prevalent use by all parties. Signifying their power was the visible anger by authorities towards Sinn Féin public displays of colours, evident in Co. Clare when the police were ‘kept busy hauling down Republican flags’.\textsuperscript{262} The destruction of a band by the RIC in Kishkeam, Co. Cork was, according to Sean Moylan, ‘one of those incidents that tended to accentuate the dislike for British authority in the district’.\textsuperscript{263} The presentation of symbols as gifts to honour leaders demonstrates their profound meaning. In Co. Clare ‘young ladies’ representing the local Cumann na mBan branch sang The Soldier’s Song as they presented Sinn Féin colours and a banner bearing ‘the candidate’s motto “Justice for Ireland”’ to de Valera after he completed his tour of the constituency.\textsuperscript{264} Flags and banners, badges, belts, and ballads were extolled as the weapons wherewith the nation’s freedom might be bought. The desire for music and pageantry filled townlands with colour and led to a demand by nearly every political candidate to have a pipers’ band.

\textsuperscript{261} Longford Leader, 12 May 1917.
\textsuperscript{262} Clare Champion, 5 May 1917.
\textsuperscript{263} BMH WS 838: Sean Moylan.
\textsuperscript{264} Clare Champion, 7 July 1917.
3.6: Newsreel & Film

Public speeches, newspaper editorial, advertisements, posters and handbills, symbols and ballads outwardly propagated concepts and reinforced impressions. Newsreel also existed in this era, but coverage honed in on Great War stories, and to a lesser extent the Easter Rising. Generally the newsreel covered five to eight silent stories, ran for five to ten minutes, and contained intertitles to explain what was going on. Live music helped create atmosphere and the focus was on light news, parades, fashion, celebrities and royalty – until the outset of the Great War. Film and cinema had been used in Ulster by James Craig as early as 1912 to promote the signing of the Ulster League and Covenant. John Hill stated that James Craig had recognised the propaganda value of film newsreels, arranging for recordings ‘under the fierce glare of electric light and to the click of a dozen cinematograph machines’.

The main difficulty for election campaigning, of course, was that films were silent until 1927. Newsreel provided audiences with a visual image of contemporary reality, but there was only very limited coverage of the by-election and general election campaigns. So, while film was not a medium used to purposely promote specific candidates, it did promote the pageantry of elections in displays of bunting, and showed enthusiastic voters diligently trooping to the ballot box. Film had been important for the Irish Party and Unionists in terms of support for the war effort and to supplement recruitment, but it was not sought out as a specific method of propaganda by any party to promote political aims. General Film Supply, founded in 1910 by Norman Whitten and

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265 News film originated with Charles Pathé, founder of the French Pathé company, and in June 1910 Pathé’s Animated Gazette became the first British newsreel. It began with a weekly showing that contained a selection of one minute long reality items. These newsreels were compiled from footage shot by two British-based cameramen and supplemented by material from Pathé’s international organization: The Gaumont Film company quickly followed and by the end of 1910 was also creating newsreels for British audiences. Warwick Bioscope Chronicle was also created in 1910. Pathé, however, led the way and expanded to offer news coverage to several European countries and American audiences. Topical Budget also appeared in 1911 and this company would become War Office Topical Budget during the years of the Great War. See: Richard Abel, The Ciné Goes to Town: French Cinema, 1896-1914 (California,1994); and Luke McKernan, Topical Budget: The Great British News Film (British Film Institute, 1992), p. 6.

266 Ciara Chambers, Ireland in the Newsreels (Dublin and Portland, Oregon, 2012), pp. 56-57.


268 Pathé, Film 234.49: Footage also displayed voting in Cork in Michael Collins’ constituency: Pathé, Film 270.31.

269 For a general sense of newsreel footage in this era, which also showcases some election material, see Mise Éire and Saoirse films produced by Gael Linn, directed by George Morrison. Newsreel footage is also
Gorden Lewis, produced commercial films, newsreel and recruitment films in Ireland. 270 With the rise of Sinn Féin and separatist sentiment this company honed in on the market and established the first Irish newsreel service called ‘Irish Events’. Now news covered, for instance, the 1917 Sinn Féin Ard Fheis and the release of prisoners in June 1917. 271

Screenings of films with footage adverse to nationalist views (such as recruitment films) were disrupted during the early war years, and this continued into the era of the early Free State. 272 This illustrates the persuasive power of film and newsreel, and inspired Michael Collins as Minister for Finance in 1919 to invest in a propaganda film to raise support for Dáil bonds to finance the creation of the new counter-state. Produced by John Mac Donagh (Thomas MacDonagh’s brother) – at a cost of £600 – the film featured Collins and Diarmuid O’Hegarty at a table (which was the block on which Robert Emmet was beheaded) signing bond certificates for well-known nationalists such as Kathleen Clarke, Margaret Pearse and Arthur Griffith. 273 When conflict with Britain started in Ireland in 1919 and ended with the 1921 Anglo Irish Treaty, cinematic images and intertitles provided a propaganda forum for inspiring support and this was utilised by all sides.

available in the Irish Film Institute, Dublin. Only two films covered the Rising – one newsreel by Topical Budget which promoted its ‘exclusive’ pictures and another called Aftermath of the Easter Rising and both are stored in the Imperial War Museum.

270 Denis J. Condon, Early Irish Cinema, 1895-1921 (Dublin, 2008), pp. 189-91
272 For instance, armed raiders stole seven of the eight reels of the film ‘The Somme’ released in 1925 in the Masterpiece Cinema, Dublin: Irish Times, 17 November 1925. The cameraman, Geoffrey Malins, stated that one of the main aims of wartime films and newsreels was aiding the recruitment drive; however, the extreme battle scenes that portrayed ‘death in all its grim nakedness’ had to be counteracted at the film’s conclusion by happier scenes to restore a viewer’s ‘sense of cheerfulness and joy’: Geoffrey Malins, How I Filmed the War (London, 1993), pp. 160-63. See also Catriona Pennell, ‘Presenting the War in Ireland’ in Troy R.E. Paddock (ed), World War 1 and Propaganda (Boston, 2014), p. 60. With the North and South Irish at the Front – a compilation film released in 1918 and shown on cinemotor – showed footage taken between 1915 and 1917. The film contains scenes of the 36th Ulster Division and the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and the aim of this thirty-two minute long film was not to encourage enlistment but to provide ‘evidence for the fact that the British Army on the Wester Front contained a number of organized formations made up exclusively of Irishmen’: Roger Smither, ed., Imperial War Museum Film Catalogue: Volume 1, the First World War Archive (Trowbridge, 1993), p. 77; see also, Nicholas Reeves, The Power of Film Propaganda: Myth or Reality? (London, 1999), p. 29.
273 Irish Film Institute Archive, The Dáil Bonds film 1919. This film was lost until 1965 until it was discovered in St. Enda’s Rathfarnham, Dublin.
Film and newsreel were used scantily between 1917 and 1920, but their power as a propaganda medium was realised in the 1920s. The power of audio propaganda resulted in the formation of the radio station 2RN in 1927, albeit amidst much controversy over content and funding. Patrick Hogan, Minister for Agriculture, argued in the Dáil in 1924 that if the control of radio passed to private institutions they would be more interested in profits than in ‘cultivating our national distinctiveness’. In presenting the final report of the committee of broadcasting to the Dáil, Padraig Ó Maille endorsed the ‘incalculable value’ of radio, emphasising the ‘propagation of knowledge’ with ‘lessons on the institutions of government and civics generally’ which ‘might be widely disseminated in an attractive fashion’. Hogan maintained that ‘cultivation of the Irish language, Irish music, Irish literature and Irish culture’ necessitated state control of broadcasting.

A hypothesis emerges that proves that the greater the array of propaganda, the higher the impact. Parties who placed propaganda to the fore of campaigning encouraged persuasion and altered voter opinion to attain a favourable electoral outcome. In South Longford, the *Roscommon Herald* reported that Sinn Féin ‘posters and leaflets are scattered in every corner’. The expanse and cacophony of election literature generally in South Armagh was expressed by the *Irish Times* which reported that:

Judging by the amount of election literature distributed in all parts of the constituency there is no shortage of paper in South Armagh. Leaflets, intended for distribution to stimulate the ardour of voters, were scattered broadcast, and the unfortunate voter had to pass through a regular barrage of fire from the literature guns as he went to his polling booth.

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274 Radio content in Ireland was discussed as early as 1924 when a parliamentary committee was set up to consider how best to proceed. Education and entertainment were considered important, but the idea of nation building took precedence: Dáil Éireann, Vol 6, No. 33, 28 March 1924: Wireless Broadcasting Report, Final Report of Special Committee.

275 Ibid, c. 2865, 3 April 1924.

276 Ibid, cc. 2610-11, 28 March 1924.

277 *Roscommon Herald*, 5 May 1917

278 *Irish Times*, 2 February 1918: piece was writing on polling day in South Armagh by-election.
However, it is problematic to argue in favour of any particular method of propaganda or even a selection of methods, without first investigating the content and themes of propaganda for elections. Chapter Four throws more light on how voters were persuaded to cast in favour of a particular party or candidate.
4.

**Propaganda: Themes and Content**

Identifying the central themes of political propaganda allows for a thorough investigation into how content may have influenced voters. Lasswell regarded ‘content’ as a set of ‘messages’ aimed at ‘recipients’ rather than as ‘texts’ to be interpreted by ‘readers’. The underlying theory was that media generally produced powerful, direct, and uniform effects on people. This remained the prevailing perception and propaganda approach throughout the early twentieth century.\(^1\) The effectiveness of a theme can be measured on uniqueness or prevalence, its application and relevance within the society in which voters lived, and the aspirations for an altered future. Throughout the election campaigns of 1917 and 1918 future reforms based on physical, moral and ethical standards were offered which aimed to transform Ireland or preserve the status quo.

Dominant political actors introduced diametrically opposed opinions on common themes (for instance the Great War) to uphold, condemn or highlight discordant stances. To attain credence politicians endorsed the militant actions within supporting movements or condemned the perceived atrocity acts of an opponent. Fundamental lofty ideals were espoused to unveil or fortify political ideologies that led to the development of new dimensions to secure those aims. Sinn Féin, for example, backed abstention from Westminster and pursued sanction from an international forum for the recognition of Ireland’s right to independence.

The contentious and incessant political wranglings that played out in election propaganda enlighten on the themes used to convert voters. Content tells us how the electorate interpreted political messages to cast a vote in favour of a political party or candidate. It also informs on

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\(^1\) Lasswell, *Propaganda Techniques*. The theory that media influences public opinion remains a widely held concept in the modern era also, particularly with the advent of social media. In electoral terms, the election of Barack Obama in 2008 was described by Greengard as ‘the first internet president’: S. Greengard, ‘The First Internet President’, *Communications of the ACM*, 52:2 (2009), pp. 16-18. See also Farrel Corcoran ‘Political Communication: an overview’ and Martin Molony, ‘Social Media and political communication’, in Mark O’Brien and Donnacha Ó Beacháin (eds), *Political Communication in the Republic of Ireland* (Liverpool, 2014), pp. 18-20 and 201-216.
voters’ interests – was the choice between a home rule government, rule from Westminster or a republic central to those casting their vote or were everyday farming, taxation and pensions concerns greater? Did content alter as election dates loomed? And, were there variances in message content for the general election as against local government elections? This chapter intends to investigate electoral propaganda across all parties in a thematic manner to query why political parties and candidates believed these matters were central to winning votes from 1917 to 1920.

4.1: Politics of the Past

The power struggle to secure ideological dominance presented divergent interpretations of history and contrary claims on past political leaders. Association with a perceived glorious bygone era or creating continuity with admired political predecessors was used by political leaders to provide unanimity and confidence in contemporary tactics. History, according to Reicher and Hopkins, was mobilized as a symbolic resource to define a group in a way that is consistent with the political agenda of its elites. According to Liu and Hilton, ‘a central part of a group’s representation of its history is thus its charter’. They also contend that the great advantage of history for politicians is ‘that most of the participants in it are dead, and while immortal as symbols, can speak only through the tongues of present day interpreters’.²

The high ideals were the fundamental motif of a political party, and were transmitted to create and persuade acquiescence to a common wisdom in order to attain hegemonic domination. Stuart Hall defined ideology as ‘the mental frameworks – the languages, the concepts, categories, imagery of thought, and the systems of representation – which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make some sense of, figure out and render intelligible the way society works’, and, in the case of 1918 how it ought to work.³ Redmond and other Irish Party candidates regularly

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provided an account of the history of home rule prior to promoting other electoral policies, and drew on past known political figures to reinforce Irish Party integrity.

During heated by-election and general election speeches both nationalist parties laid claim to Parnell, Davitt and O’Connell, Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmet, and all parties maintained allegiance to or refutation of the 1798 rebellion and Grattan’s parliament depending on their political standpoint. For instance, Redmond in Waterford maintained that with the advent of home rule ‘they now had an opportunity Parnell or O’Connell never had – that no one had since the days of Grattan’. Devlin similarly supported this belief when he stated in South Longford that ‘we stand for the same principles and stand by the same leaders since everyone knows what our principles are. They were declared by Parnell and Davitt … Those principles were: The land of the Irish for the people of Ireland, and Ireland for the Irish’. The central tenet of this approach was to appeal to different political leanings: the Catholic Church and moderates could be kept on board, land issues dominated the concerns of the small farmers of rural Ireland, the middle classes of the towns and cities could also be comforted in the knowledge that they would be the masters of their own island. ‘Ireland for the Irish’ suggested a self-governing nation that could in the future manage its own taxation and employment affairs. Most importantly, by linking with the idea of Parnell’s Old Brigade, a combination of separatist aspirations with a constitutional strategy could be upheld.

Dillon’s election speech in the village of Straide, Co. Mayo in December 1918 (mentioned in chapter three) opened with the simple statement that ‘this parish of Straide is an historic parish’. An immediate connection was made with Michael Davitt – the agrarian agitator and founder of the Land League – who hailed from the town. An automatic kinship between Davitt’s conviction of ‘the land for the people’ and agrarian reform with the Irish Party’s constitutional efforts was drawn to focus attention on the land acts attained under Irish Party governance. No specifics on the historic personality or land acts were mentioned, but that was unnecessary. The audience made the instant connection and cheered the speaker on.

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4 *Waterford News*, 22 March 1918.
5 *Longford Leader*, 12 May 1918.
To demonstrate the current programme of inclusivity within the Unionist agenda and to dispute against Irish Party claims for a reconstitution of Grattan’s parliament, Carson and Craig maintained that Grattan’s Parliament was a ‘so-called Irish Parliament [that] was a gathering of representatives of the aristocracy and the Anglican ascendancy’ where ‘the Irish people were not represented at all’. They argued that this parliament passed thirty-two coercion acts which ultimately led to the 1798 rebellion, and what saved Ireland was the Act of Union. Unionists, in Aristotelian fashion, presented a number of arguments or proofs to defend the union, one being the ‘argument of history’. Here they claimed that Ireland had never been a whole and undivided nation not even during the Druidic or the Christian periods. They asserted that Ireland ‘has had many kings and rulers at one time’ and that it was only under British rule that ‘Ireland ever approached unity’.

Sinn Féin, in similar tone to the Irish Party, laid historic claims to past icons of Irish politics. De Valera in Ennis, Co. Clare said ‘if there was any party who were the logical followers of Parnell it was the Sinn Féin party. …Parnell acted out to kill the grip of landlordism as a preliminary to greater changes which were to be accomplished’. Count Plunkett acknowledged that the Irish Party were the plausible descendants of Parnellism, because they had been ‘brought together by one of the best patriots of Ireland, Charles Stewart Parnell’. However, the Irish Party did not live up to the principles taught by Parnell, and ‘it was time they were thrust out of public life’ (cheers). Their abandonment of Parnell’s policy had ‘inevitably led … to the policy of surrender, jobbery, corruption and paralysis’. The correct interpretation of Parnell, he argued, was Sinn Féin policy because:

Parnell had said in 1881 that ‘it is no use relying on the Government, it is no use relying on the Irish members, it is no use relying on the House of Commons. You must rely on your own determination, and if you are determined, I tell you have the game in your own hands’.

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7 Ibid, U.C. 121, America and Ireland, What American Protestants say.
8 Clare Champion, 30 June 1917.
9 Roscommon Herald, 12 May 1917.
10 Ibid, 6 January 1917: Laurence Ginnell speech.
De Valera declared that Parnell had spoken ‘about these things to prepare them for a campaign of misrepresentation, which he expected was about to be started by the Irish party’. 11

The Irish Party vehemently opposed such claims; for instance Thomas O’Donoghue, MP for South Meath in 1918 criticised Sinn Féin’s abstentionist policies by arguing that Parnell had said, ‘I will never so long as there is breath in my body abandon the weapon that attendance at Parliament places in my hands’. And, he further advocated that Michael Davitt regarded abstention from Parliament as ‘a suicidal political programme’. 12

Sinn Féin’s Dr Vincent White in Waterford maintained, quoting from the 1916 proclamation, that Sinn Féin had been ‘sanctified by the blood of successive generations of Irish martyrs’ and the movement existed ‘to carry [Ireland] to triumphant realisations’. 13 Sinn Féin also associated themselves with a more golden age in the nation’s history by appealing to ancient Irish clans or tribes, evident in de Valera’s handbill titled Dalcassians. This encompassed a great deal of content, requiring an audience to pause, read and ruminate. The headline holds no meaning unless the reader had prior knowledge that the ‘Dalcassians’ were a tenth century Gaelic tribe known as the Dál gCais. The most famous leader Brian Ború became legendary after defeating the Viking Norse at the Battle of

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11 *Clare Champion*, 7 July 1917.
12 *Irish Times*, 14 December 1918.
Clontarf in 1014. The story goes that the country ‘by degrees’ supported Brian and ‘won their votes’ and ultimately he forced his brother to ‘throw off the yoke and adopt the Cause of Independence’. That de Valera was a notional link to a mythical hero and a tangible warrior of 1916 demonstrates his highly gendered propaganda themes that hint at his vision for a future independent Ireland. The generous wording disparages the Irish Party candidate Patrick Lynch. In the final paragraph de Valera’s devotion to and proficiency in the Irish language and his dedication to Irish literature reinforces the analogy with the past. All is linked back to the main point through the by-line that de Valera is the ‘hero to represent you’.

Sinn Féin, as Laffan points out, ‘concerned themselves with abstractions rather than with material questions’. If the 1918 Sinn Féin election manifesto is examined only blithe reference to the development of ‘Ireland’s social, political and industrial life, for the welfare of the whole people of Ireland’, was made in point three of a four point plan. The rest of the document was based on nationalist theoretical principles that were all subject to using ‘any and every means available to render impotent the power of England to hold Ireland in subjection…’

Labour attempted to combine both Easter Rising and labour working class concerns. In his address to members at the annual 1918 meeting William O’Brien passionately stated that Connolly ‘had laid down his life ‘for the working class in all countries (not just Ireland) … to spur them to resistance to the powers of imperialism and capitalism.’ The ideals and principles of Connolly were the inspiration for Labour in Ireland; his were ‘the plans and methods upon which we [labour] organize … and our place in the forefront of the fighting army of Labour and in the battle for

14 Roger Chatterton Newman, Brian Boru King of Ireland (Dublin, 1997); John Francis Byrne, Irish Kings and High Kings, (2nd edn., Dublin, 2001); Donnchadh Ó Corráin, Ireland before the Normans (Dublin, 1972).
15 NLI, LOP 116(52), William O’Brien Papers: A Bit of Dalcassian History; LOP 116/57: Dalcassians!
17 The Manifesto of Sinn Féin as prepared for circulation for the General Election of December, 1918 by the Sinn Féin standing committee in Dorothy Macardle, The Irish Republic: a documented chronicle of the Anglo-Irish Conflict and the partitioning of Ireland, with a detailed account of the period 1915-1923 (London, 1937), pp. 919-920.
freedom and justice in this and all other lands’. O’Brien maintained that Connolly had ‘fought the good fight’ and that he fell in ‘the battle for the right against the wrong’.  

Despite the association with 1916 through Connolly and pledges to ‘carry on’ and ‘battle on’ until the ‘Workers’ Republic for which you [Connolly] worked and fought and died’ were realised, Labour withdrew from the contest in 1918. They had veered towards republicanism before the 1916 Rising, but as Laffan states, Labour was restrained by a number of fears such as ‘alienating not only the northern Unionist workers, but also the Catholic majority of the population.’ Labour’s supporters were trade union workers, so their concerns were economic rather than political. There was also the problem of the Great War as many who had enlisted hailed from working class backgrounds. This difficulty was highlighted in Labour’s support and commemoration of those who died in both the Great War and the Easter Rising.

Labour also protested ‘strongly’ against the Government who refused ‘to recognise the large demands on Irish Trades Unions’ after Easter 1916 because of lack of compensation which had been given to ‘capitalists for losses arising out of the same crisis’. This appealed to the working class rather than separatist ideology, but it was no less of a complaint than that which might have been made by industrial Unionists. Sinn Féin, on the other hand, laid claim to the Easter Rising, petitioned for prisoner political status, and endorsed rebel prisoners as candidates (see later heading, Easter Rising). The 1920 local government elections energized Labour candidates and past doubts on Sinn Féin’s rebel agenda were erased largely because of their 1918 election win. In some constituencies pacts were created and candidates ran under the banner of ‘Sinn Féin and Labour’ and secured favourable electoral outcomes, as will be seen in chapter five. However, in 1918 Labour’s working class agenda was suffocated by the abstracts of a constitutional versus republican status for Ireland versus devotion to the Act of Union (especially among Ulster Unionists).

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18 Report of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting of the ITUC&LP, August 1918: Wm. O’Brien, Chairman’s Address, pp. 8-10.
19 Ibid.
21 The resolution was proposed by L.J. Duffy of Cork, and seconded by W.J. Murphy, and supported by T. Farren, M.P. O’Flanagan and W. Murphy and was declared carried: Report of the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting of the ITUC&LP, August 1917, p. 54.
Politics of the past were used in electoral propaganda to afford authenticity, lend credence to arguments, or proffer examples of failure in order to suggest that new methods were more viable. All parties relied on historic arguments and allied with historic figures to make these points. Political oratory was the main forum for engendering these associations. Speeches were made in front of crowds, and crowd reaction could be instantly measured. Therefore, if historical content was ineffective or drew weak reaction, it would have been swiftly abandoned. Sensational and dramatic effect and memory recall was evident in that all parties continued with this style of content and plied it to both internal members and to public audiences.

4.2: The Great War

The content of Great War propaganda has been intricately researched by other scholars and therefore requires no great interpretation in this work.\textsuperscript{22} However, the influence of Great War propaganda on electoral propaganda was immense and therefore analysis is essential. The by-elections played out in the final years of the Great War, and the war’s end instigated the general election. One of the main themes was Ireland’s relationship within the British Empire. Propaganda by the Irish Party and the Unionist Party during the Great War to encourage enlistment constantly appealed on the grounds of loyalty to the Empire. Redmond had made imperial arguments for home rule for many years and he sustained this view throughout the war years. On the eve of Britain’s entry into the war Redmond’s rhetoric of empire fashioned the idea of a consolidation of volunteer forces in Ireland to protect the coastline from foreign invasion. He advocated that the outcome would ‘be good not merely for the Empire, but good for the future welfare and integrity of the Irish nation’.\textsuperscript{23} Like Parnell, he believed that Irish nationhood was

\textsuperscript{22} For a more in-depth analysis of Great War Propaganda see, for example, Taylor, \textit{Munitions of the Mind}, pp.176-197; Lasswell, \textit{Propaganda Techniques}; Welch, \textit{Propaganda and Total War}. For a concentration on Irish Great War posters see Mark Tierney, Paul Bowen and David Fitzpatrick, ‘Recruiting Posters’ in \textit{Ireland and the First World War}, ed by David Fitzpatrick (Trinity History Workshop, Dublin, 1986), pp. 47-8; and Ben Novick, \textit{Conceiving Revolutions}.

compatible with the link with Britain.\textsuperscript{24} The prolongation of the war resulted in the continued suspension of home rule. News of war casualties and high death tolls, the fallout from the Easter Rising, and the failure of the Irish convention ultimately negated any attempt to promote a good relationship between Ireland and Empire.

Imperial rhetoric was entrenched in Unionist propaganda during the war and continued throughout the general election campaign. Arguments insisted that the British Empire embodied civilization and therefore ‘in all future legislation the democracy of Ulster is to march on hand in hand with the democracy of Great Britain’. During the 1918 general election Unionist voters were reminded that ‘they took up arms to retain their citizenship in a United Kingdom and an Empire which had proved itself in the war the greatest asset of civilization and freedom that the world had ever seen’, and that when war broke out ‘their duty was to march their men into the camp of the empire…’.\textsuperscript{25} In rousing war-like passions for electoral purposes Carson urged voters to remember that ‘wherever we met our enemies we could beat them’. The moral justification for winning at the polls was to remember the ‘work and sacrifice’ of the ‘brave men’ and ‘those at home who mourned because they would never again look upon the faces of the brave men who had done so much for us’.\textsuperscript{26} To reinforce Ulster’s rightful position within the Empire comparisons were made between Ulster contributions to the war effort and southern provinces by assertions that out of a population of 386,947 in Belfast over 46,000 volunteers enlisted in ‘the fighting forces of the Crown during the war’. The ‘proud record’ of the ’80,000 Ulstermen’ who enlisted demonstrated allegiance to the empire and voters were urged to ‘keep Ulster in the Empire by Voting Unionist’.\textsuperscript{27}

The rhetoric of empire was merged with that of war sacrifice and upheld by southern Unionists also in the general election campaign. Maurice Dockrell stated that votes must be cast in his favour because he was the candidate ‘who represented the people who shed their blood for the Empire, the people who, during the war, had fought for all they were worth’.\textsuperscript{28} In Dublin’s

\textsuperscript{25} Anglo-Celt, 23 November 1918.
\textsuperscript{26} Irish Times, 15 November 1918: Carson in Belfast.
\textsuperscript{27} PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/142: Ulster’s Claim on Britain, A Proud Record.
\textsuperscript{28} Irish Times, 23 November 1918: Speech of Maurice Dockrell, Unionist candidate for Rathmines, Dublin.
Pembroke Division John Good reasoned that ‘peace’ could only be attained in this post-war election by ensuring that the ‘commerce of our Empire’ which had ‘been sacrificed in order to win the war’ had to be ‘restored and remodelled’ so that ‘our Empire may be able to hold its own in competition in the various markets of the world’. This speech was permeated with references to Empire because, according to Good, it was the only model to rebuild Ireland’s industry as ‘these important matters would require a large sum of money’. ²⁹

This appeal to imperial union was tempered by southern Unionists during the local government elections. The results of the 1918 general election had resulted in a Sinn Féin majority, and the few Unionist candidates in the south became more concerned with holding seats on urban and rural councils. The Irish Times commented that ‘great changes have taken place in our social and political life’ and they highlighted three particular issues: the disappearance of the ‘Nationalist Party’ and rise of Sinn Féin; the awakening of Labour ‘to a sense of its political power and responsibilities’; and the introduction of proportional representation.³⁰ Issues like housing and taxation became the focal arguments. Nationalists (Sinn Féin and constitutional) also honed in on these issues as did other smaller parties such as Municipal Reform. There were restricted objectives in the local government elections, but smaller budgets and a limited target audience also prescribed a more parochial tone and approach. The war and empire slipped into the shade, but anti-home rule sentiment remained to the fore and the Unionist William Jellett referred to it as ‘worse than a farce’. ³¹

Sinn Féin anti-recruitment and anti-war rhetoric blamed Redmond for supporting the war and vehemently argued against any future for Ireland within the Empire. Separatist propagandists, as Ben Novick points out, widely circulated the fact that service in the British army meant death. Specialist publications produced a catalogue of articles and imagery that depicted the horrors unique to the war.³² Irish Party association with the British Liberal Party was derided by the

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³¹ Ibid, 22 May 1920: Meeting of City of Dublin and Pembroke Unionist Association. Jellett was MP for Dublin University from 28 July 1919-1922. He was defeated in the constituency at the 1918 general election.
assertion that ‘they [Sinn Féin] did not rely on the gratitude of England’. Cosgrave in the Kilkenny by-election remarked that ‘the constitutional party was every day supported by their votes and their presence [in] the English Government in the English Parliament’. With the advent of the political voice of Sinn Féin, Wheatley observed that ‘Redmond’s moderate, conservative vision … of Home Rule peacefully and constitutionally achieved within the British Empire, simply could not be realised’. This became consistently upheld in Sinn Féin’s propaganda.

Election propaganda began to emulate war propaganda by providing arguments on rights and wrongs to create a sense of justice or injustice for or against a political entity. While Sinn Féin busily accused the Irish Party of misleading the youth of Ireland into war enlistment, the Irish Party (and Unionist) counter accusations were that Sinn Féin were ‘friends of Germany’. During the South Longford by-election they were charged with receiving £5,000 for their election campaigns from Germany, along with slurs of obtaining ‘German gold’. The Longford Leader scathingly remarked that they were ‘entitled to ask who is paying the large sums they [Sinn Féin elections] will cost’. The aim was to connect Sinn Féin with a widely perceived undesirable other (Germany) to dissuade voters. Substance for this form of propaganda was aided by comments like those of Griffith who claimed ‘I am not pro-German. But Germany is the enemy of England and England is my enemy. You may draw your own conclusions’. De Valera asserted that ‘England and Ireland are in a state of war. While we are in a state of war, England’s enemies must be Ireland’s friends’. De Valera made similar pro-German statements during the East Clare by-election when he stated that if Germany offered help to Ireland he would tell them ‘it is to your advantage as well as to our interest, and certainly we’ll combine’. Yet, he denied Irish Party accusations that Sinn Féin were ‘the friends of Germany’, and argued that the Irish Party had

33 Kilkenny People, 30 November 1917.
34 Wheatley, Nationalism and the Irish Party, p. 266.
35 Sinn Féin rarely condemned the recruits once Irish volunteers in the British army began to suffer causalities. The worst that was said of them, according to Novick, was that they ‘were misguided fools who had been tricked into volunteering…’. Novich, Conceiving Revolution, p. 58.
36 Roscommon Herald, 5 May 1917.
37 Longford Leader, 28 April 1917.
38 TCD, JD, Ms 6741/446: The Liberty Digest, 2 February 1918: Griffith quote and de Valera statement in an article titled ‘Where Irish Americans Stand in the War’.
39 Clare Champion, 30 June 1917.
‘thrown themselves over to the English to be completely devoured’.\textsuperscript{40} Blame by association sustained ethical denunciations for all parties.

Negative campaigning had been a strong feature of wartime propaganda across all belligerent nations, and usually expressed criticism of an opponent’s wartime actions. For instance, the sinking of the \textit{Lusitania} in 1915 and the Zimmermann Telegram in 1917 were widely used as propaganda in Britain and Ireland during the Great War (and, as the poster by-line demonstrates, were tailored to suit audiences).\textsuperscript{41} Sinn Féin counter-argued that the sinking of the \textit{Lusitania} had been ‘worked out as a means of getting recruits’. A leaflet seized during a raid of the Sinn Féin headquarters in Dublin scorned the ‘self-righteous Englishmen’ who ‘held up their hands in horror’ and yet ‘it is against neutrality to run a wagon of gravel from Holland into Belgium’.\textsuperscript{42} Criticism at, and the culpability of, the British for causing Irish deaths was the message.

Atrocity stories were as, Philip M. Taylor notes, a ‘time-honoured technique of war propagandists’. By depicting Germany as a bloated ‘Prussian Ogre’ or ‘Beastly Hun’ it brought

\begin{figure}[h]
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\caption{TCD, Digital Collections, EPB Papyrus Case 55a, Digital No. PapyrusCase55-009}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Irish Times}, 29 January 1917.
\textsuperscript{41} TCD, Digital Collections, Poster was printed in Dublin by John Shuley & Co and issued by CCORI in 1915. For more on the propaganda around the sinking of the \textit{Lusitania} see Ben Novick, \textit{Conceiving Revolution}, pp. 74-75. The Zimmermann Telegram was issued from the German Foreign Office and it proposed a military alliance between Germany and Mexico if the US entered the war. If Mexico sided with Germany they would be granted Texas, Arizona and New Mexico. The telegram was intercepted and decoded by British intelligence.
\textsuperscript{42} NLI, Ms 10494: Documents Seized in raid on Sinn Féin HQ, March 1918: \textit{Irishmen: Remember! Be On Your Guard!} A similar incident was the sinking of the \textit{Leinster}, a Dublin mail boat, in October 1918 which caused the deaths of over 600 Irish men, women and children in St. George’s Channel. Propaganda containing bold print (rather than images) called on \textit{Irishmen} to \textit{Remember the \textit{Leinster} – And Avenge Your OWN DEAD} : TCD, Early Printed Books, EPB Papyrus Case 55c (Digital No. PapyrusCase 55_076).
home to civilians and potential recruits alike the terrifying consequences of defeat. Germany was portrayed as the instigators for letting loose the dogs of war upon peace loving nations, so moral condemnation was stacked against them. Sinn Féin emulated this to cast Britain as offender and place her in the role of the enemy that had to be demonised. They used Irish Party pro-war discourse and substituted ‘Germany’ for ‘Britain’ to fortify this opinion. In a poster for the Tipperary East candidate Pierce McCann, ‘Irishmen!’ were asked if they were going to elect a representative that ‘murdered Padraig Pearse…’, ‘that kidnapped hundreds of your brothers …’, that ‘batoned and bayonetted 10,000 men and women of your own flesh and blood’ and ‘which has reviled your race in the four corners of the world’. In another titled Whose is the policy of bloodshed constitutional nationalists were depicted as an aged man wielding a Union Jack flag, standing atop a bag filled with the £400 annual ministerial salary. The man holds an unfurled scroll that stated, ‘millions of Irishmen in the army on the advice of Redmond [or sometimes Dillon is mentioned] slaughtered in British blunders at Gallipoli, Verdun, Mons, Cambrai, Mesopotamia, the high seas, etc., And Home Rule still on the statute book!’ The alternative offered was Irish freedom and the opposing image depicted a tall strong Irish Volunteer soldier holding a sign stating ‘only 72 Irish men killed fighting (without pay) for the freedom of a small nation whose deaths have made Ireland a worldwide question’. Underlined at the bottom was a list that stated ‘No Partition, No Conscription, Conserving food supplies’.

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44 NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP 116/83: Irishmen!
45 TCD, Samuels Collection Box 4 (Digital No. SamuelsBox4_291): Policy of Bloodshed.
Allied countries portrayed the German Kaiser as a devil in spiked helmet, and depicted German soldiers as murderers and rapists (particularly of nurses and nuns). Sinn Féin did not go quite so far in their criticism of Irish Party members. However, in a poster for the East Clare by-election Patrick Lynch was portrayed as a pixie/elf-like creature with pointed ears. In Victorian literature elves or pixies usually appeared in illustrations as tiny men with pointed ears. Their origin dates back earlier, but in the late 1800s people would have understood them as a mischievous or malicious diminutive woodland humanoid. They were sinister characters and were often described as ill-clothed or naked. Lynch in the Sinn Féin poster (figure 4.3) sits naked atop a tree branch in a woodland setting, and hooked to a sign overhead is his lawyer’s wig. He holds a candle enclosed in a glass case with the words ‘sham convention’ in reference to the Irish Convention proposed by Lloyd George. To the right of Lynch is the image of the maiden Erin, but she is shackled by ‘taxation’ and ‘foreign rule’. Within the beams of a sunburst radiating out from a central disk is the word ‘freedom’. In terms of imagery the sunburst was a symbol of revolutionary ideology, and was often depicted either emerging from behind a cloud or from just below the horizon. Freedom was portrayed as being almost achievable, and in visual propaganda the accompanying words provided

Figure 4.3: NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP116/71

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46 Andrew Lang’s *Fairytale the Princess Nobody* (1884) which was based on an existing series of illustrations by Richard Doyle in *Fairyland* (1869). One illustration shows an elf astride a tree branch teasing a small bird. See Anne E. Duggan, Donald Haase (eds) and Helen Callow, *Folktales and Fairy Tales, Traditions and Texts from Around the World* (2nd ed., Connecticut, 2016), p. 1082.
the clues as to its attainment. In this poster voting for de Valera and his ideals of appealing to the Paris peace conference was the way to bring Ireland along the ‘road to freedom’. 

Atrocity stories attracted attention, and Unionists were equally aware of their impact in creating alarm. The purpose was to stimulate voters into a desired action – to vote Unionist. To dismiss promises made by the Irish Party on home rule, and particularly on Sinn Féin’s republican aspirations a text laden poster titled *Sinn Fein “Guarantees” “Safeguards” for Ulster* in fact repudiated any beliefs in ‘guarantees’ or ‘safeguards’. By repeating past Irish Party condemnation that ‘the whole policy and practice of Sinn Féin …is madness in its wildest and most violent form’ readers were forewarned of the potential dangers of a Sinn Féin led government in Ulster. The ‘madness of Easter week, 1916’ and the ‘imbecile folly of May 1918’ were emphasized, and a list of acts of atrocity and violent language perpetuated by Sinn Féin swayed voters to turn from the ‘orgy of violence and outrage from North Longford to East Tyrone’. Former statements made by de Valera were presented to stress that Irish Loyalists were ‘arrayed’ against Sinn Féin and would ‘never yield’. Three mentioned were de Valera’s comments in Killaloe (Clare) on 5 July 1917 that maintained ‘Ulster must be coerced if she stands in the way’; and at Cootehill (Cavan) on 2 September 1917 when he stated ‘If you (Ulster) continue to be Britian’s garrison we will … kick you out’, and at Bessbrook (Armagh) on 27 January 1918 where he declared that Unionists were ‘a rock on the road’ and they ‘must, if necessary, blast it out of their path’. A Unionist handbill drew comparisons between ‘Ulster’s Record’ and ‘Sinn Féin’s Record’ to appeal for British support against a party that ‘stabbed Britain in the back, and has such a ghastly record of disloyalty and crime’.

Atrocity stories focused on the cruelties of carnage, slaughter, and mistreatment. Like Great War atrocity propaganda, carnage and slaughter featured heavily in electoral propaganda and

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47 Aidan Beatty maintains that the image depicts de Valera ‘in drag’ … ‘reimagined as a woman from the Irish past who showed the way to a glorious future’: *Masculinity and Power in Irish Nationalism, 1884-1938* (London, 2016), pp. 24-5. This is to exaggerate on the image and Sinn Féin’s interpretation of de Valera, and the notion would have been an anathema and ran contrary to the ideals of the time. The portrayal of Ireland as a shackled and oppressed maiden seeking freedom was, however, a common theme in iconography and drama.


49 Ibid, U.C. 132: *The Two Irelands, Facts, not Fiction!*
was waged through the use of words like ‘bloodshed’. Unionists condemned Sinn Féin violence in a poster that was reprinted from the *Belfast Telegraph*, which placed a black hand over the southern provinces, leaving Ulster ‘immune from the horrible deeds of the sister provinces’. The title *Where Hand of Murder Rules* was bolstered by the naming of DMP and RIC who had been killed.50 Sinn Féin denounced Irish Party jobbery and corruption – evident even in ballads such as *De Valera for East Clare* that lamented, ‘We’re tired of jobbery and talk/ By men who’re highly paid;/ Such dastards now the plank must walk,/ And find some other trade’.51

Mistreatment of Irish rebels was also widely condemned in Sinn Féin propaganda. Redmond was accused of being an ‘arch-traitor’ who would not help Roger Casement’s solicitor by signing a reprieve. He was also charged with cheering upon hearing of the executions of Pearse, MacDonagh and Clarke, and being disingenuous during comments in the House of Commons when he appealed for ‘the Government not to show undue harshness or severity to the great masses of those who are implicated [in the Rising], on whose shoulders lies a guilt far different from that which lies upon the INSTIGATORS and PROMOTERS of this outbreak’. The claim was that Redmond signified his approval for the execution of the leaders of the Rising, and that some harshness, but not ‘undue’ harshness could be levied upon others involved. Voters were petitioned not to elect ‘the approver and inciter of the execution of Joseph Plunkett. 52

Were atrocity stories effective? There was an assumption that ‘black propaganda’ or ‘hate propaganda’ was nearly all deliberate lies devised by political parties to foster support and endorse ideologies (or by journalists or the state in the case of Great War propaganda).53 Good atrocity propaganda, however, held either a modicum of truth or was based on truth and designed to motivate a fighting spirit, to instil a sense of fear of defeat, and to halt cruel or brutal acts by encouraging the selection of an alternative.54 In this Sinn Féin excelled. They began circulating

51 NLI, William O’Brien, LOP 116/41: Ballad was sung to the air of *Paddies Evermore*.
52 *Ibid*, LOP 116/47: Poster titled *Who was the Hangman?* which provides an extract from a letter written by Mrs Agnes Newman (Roger Casement’s sister): LOP 116/80: *John Redmond and the Executions*.
54 Jowett & O’Donnell, p. 225. Atrocity tales in the Great War propaganda that called on Irishmen to ‘save Catholic Belgium’ contained truthful details of German acts of aggression.
atrocity stories or ‘Acts of Aggression’ during the by-elections and continued to publish throughout the election campaigns. In June 1920 pamphlets were disseminated to journalists at home and abroad to ‘influence public opinion’. Large quantities were distributed through the Sinn Féin organization in Ireland, and ‘large quantities’ were sent to ‘our friends in America’ and to Sean T. O’Kelly and George Gavan Duffy in Paris. Atrocity stories, however, were merely one element of a much broader narrative of war propaganda. Another was the effect on Ireland by the threat of conscription.

4.3: Conscription

Even though Ireland was exempt, rumours of conscription being extended to Ireland began when the Military Service Act was passed in Britain in 1916. The *Roscommon Herald* remarked in early 1917 that ‘young men who feared conscription were abroad night and day in noisy gangs’. O’Connor wrote to Dillon in early 1917 stating his unease, and referred to a report by Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who had stated that recruiting in Ireland had ‘gone down to 80 a week’. O’Connor strenuously pointed out the ‘impossibility of enforcing conscription on Ireland’. Robertson retorted that the present temper in England ‘with so many of them sending their sons to the war and losing them, these perils [of conscription] might be faced …’. Alarmed by the possibility that conscription might be extended to Ireland, Irish Party supporters and candidates began to emphasize voluntary enlistment and condemned any form of a draft throughout the by-elections. For instance, in a speech in Boyle Councillor Doherty (a potential Irish Party

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57 This imposed conscription on all British single men between 18 and 41 (a second Act passed in May 1916 extended conscription to married men), but exempted those medically unfit, clergymen, teachers and certain classes of industrial worker. Parliamentary Debates throughout the months of late 1915 and 1916 carry the details.
58 *Roscommon Herald*, 10 February 1917.
59 TCD, JD, 6741/369, T.P. O’Connor to John Dillon, 23 January 1917.
candidate for North Roscommon) stated ‘his denunciations of conscription’ which were loudly cheered.\textsuperscript{60}

Vocal and enigmatic condemnation of conscription during the North Roscommon by-election was made by Count Plunkett and the independent candidate Jasper Tully. Tully accused Redmond of supporting conscription because of his statement that the Irish Party ‘would vote for Conscription in Ireland if it was proved necessary’. Redmond had made this remark in the House of Commons in December 1915, but had added the caveat that he was ‘not convinced that the compulsion of any class of people in this country is necessary to the ending of the war’.\textsuperscript{61}

Regardless of Redmond’s qualifications his statement was used in election literature to promote Sinn Féin’s Joseph McGuinness: ‘Redmond pledged himself to the English Government to enforce Conscription in Ireland if the English Government “proved” to him it was necessary. Will you vote for Redmond’s candidate or for Joseph McGuinness – the man in Jail for Ireland?’ Also in Longford, Frank McGuinness charged the Irish Party with sacrificing ‘the youth of Ireland in the war by advocating conscription in Ireland’.\textsuperscript{62}

In defending the Irish Party’s stance on conscription Joseph Flood, a potential candidate, claimed that ‘conscription was never intended to be introduced or applied to Ireland and if it was it

\textsuperscript{60} Roscommon Herald, 6 January 1917.
\textsuperscript{61} HC, PD, vol. 77, cc. 223-224, 21 December 1915: John Redmond.
\textsuperscript{62} Roscommon Herald, 14 April 1917.
would be resisted by the Irish Party’. He strongly advocated that the ‘Irish Party would never tolerate it’. Richard Hazleton MP also stated that ‘it was a lie that Mr Redmond ever dreamt of allowing conscription to be introduced in Ireland’. An excerpt from a speech by Dillon was reproduced in an election poster for Patrick Lynch during the East Clare by-election to emphasize that conscription would not be tolerated in Ireland.

Battle lines were drawn to attract voter recognition for being the party that prevented conscription. The Irish Party claimed it was their ‘strenuous opposition’ that ‘STOPPED Conscription in Ireland’. Sinn Féin argued that it had been the actions of Easter week. This point was emphatically opposed by Lynch who maintained it was ‘untrue to say the rebellion had prevented Conscription’. Laurence Ginnell contended that it was the ‘volunteers who prevented Conscription … and it was the events of Easter Week which made it impossible for the English to ever hope to enforce conscription in Ireland now’.

In a highly spirited rebuttal of Sinn Féin’s claim, James Farrell declared:

The fire-eating rebels tells us only for Easter Week they’d all be conscripted … and if you are mad enough to swallow this harum scarum indigestible mess of pottage called Sinn Féin you’re bound soon after to have a very sick stomach and jolly well serve you right.

The War Office had hinted at the possibility of conscription in a letter to Carson in April 1917 when they referred to ‘the excellent accounts of the Irishmen at the front’ and voiced disappointment that ‘it is a thousand pities we cannot get more of them, especially as we are so short’. ‘Irishmen’ and not just ‘Ulstermen’ were mentioned and the point on ‘how necessary it is to do everything possible that will help us to get Irishmen for the army’ alludes to the possibility of a draft. Sinn Féin election posters accused England and the War Office of imposing conscription because they had ‘been badly beaten in France’:

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63 Longford Leader, 21 April 1917.
64 Ibid, 5 May 1917.
65 Clare Champion, 30 June 1917.
66 Longford Leader, 5 May 1917. James Patrick Farrell was an Irish Party MP from 1895 to 1918.
The Irish Party’s attempted hardline stance on conscription became utterly undermined when Lloyd George extended the Military Service Bill in 1918 and introduced conscription for Ireland. This he did to facilitate the raising of a further 555,000 men for the war effort, of which 150,000 were expected to come from Ireland. Damage limitation was sought by the Irish Party through withdrawing in protest from parliament and colluding with Sinn Féin, the Roman Catholic bishops and priests, trade unions, and some Protestant groups to oppose conscription. Their extreme outrage was largely due to the fact that the implementation of home rule had been linked

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68 On 21 March 1918 Germany launched their Spring Offensive at the Battle of St. Quentin. In early 1918 Germany broke through the allied lines in several sectors of the Western Front, putting a large drain on forces. The Allies lost around 255,000 men of which 177,739 were British dead, wounded or missing; 90,882 were in the Fifth army and 78,860 in the Third Army which suffered 15,000 deaths. The greatest losses were to the 36th (Ulster) Division with 7,310 casualties, the 16th (Irish) Division with 7,149 casualties and the 66th (2nd East Lancashire) Division with 7,023 casualties: C.B. Davies, J.E. Edmonds, and R.G.B. Maxwell-Hyslop, Military Operations France and Belgium, 1918: The German March Offensive and its Preliminaries, History of the Great War Based on Official Documents by Direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence I, Imperial War Museum & Battery Press (1995 edition), pp. 490-1; J.E. Edmonds, Military Operations France and Belgium, 1918 March-April: Continuation of the German Offensives, History of the Great War Based on Official Documents by Direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence II (London, 1937 and 1995), pp. 482-483, 487-490. Churchill puts the total British casualties from the German Spring Offensive at 418,374: Winston Churchill, The World Crisis 1911-1918, (New York, 2005), pp. 763-791 and 823-845.
with the ‘dual policy’ of enacting the Military Service Bill. Dillon, keenly aware of the potential injury to the Irish Party if conscription was extended, stated to O’Connor that ‘if conscription comes on in October or November, there will be no room for the Constitutional Movement in this country’. With the combination of Redmond’s death in March 1918 and the failure of the Irish Convention a month later voter confidence plummeted. Conscription now placed the Irish Party, who had been in the vanguard of wartime recruitment and the war effort, in condemnation of government policy. Yet, recruitment posters and advertisements with Irish Party candidates’ names still bedecked towns, villages, railway stations, shopfront windows and newspapers. As Fitzpatrick stated, recruits rushed to enlist, but not to the army, rather into Sinn Féin and the Irish Volunteers.

Sinn Féin propaganda in the Tullamore, Offaly by-election exploited the conscription crisis to convert voters to Sinn Fein. Furthermore, their candidate Patrick McCartan ran unopposed because, according to Dan McCarthy:

> A number of us visited the constituency to work up enthusiasm and we made the question of conscription one of the chief issues in our election speeches. We spoke rather strongly on the matter and advised the people at large that for every conscript that would be taken three policemen should be shot; that it was better to die at home than fight for a country that had kept us in subjection. In this way we worked up great enthusiasm. The people flocked to our side and the result was that our opponents failed to put up a candidate.

The effective influence of the ubiquitous and persistent Sinn Féin ‘devlish’ anti-conscription propaganda was emphasised by Dillon who remarked to T.P. O’Connor in September 1918:

> With conscription in force and a general election in November – I do not think we could win ten seats. I am sending you a bundle of cuttings to give you an idea of the kind of propaganda that is going on throughout the country. ….

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70 TCD, JD, 6742/516: John Dillon to T.P. O’Connor, 22 August 1918.
72 Fitzpatrick, *Politics and Irish Life*, p. 127. Once the threat of conscription passed many of these Volunteers ceased to be members.
73 BMH WS 722: Dan McCarthy.
We have no adequate machinery to meet and deal with this devilish propaganda. I am doing my best to construct some machinery but it is very uphill work.\textsuperscript{74} Irish Party MPs emulated abstentionism by walking out of the Commons in protest at conscription, placing themselves on a parallel path to separatism. Voter uncertainty and confusion increased. In conceding to de Valera’s leadership in the crisis Dillon forfeited command and turned public attention towards Sinn Féin.

Sinn Féin won the anti-conscription propaganda battle in their strident claims that they alone stood between ‘you and the death of your sons and brothers in France’. A vote for Sinn Féin, they claimed, would ‘kill conscription!’\textsuperscript{75} Irish Party MPs were accused of being ‘recruiting sergeants’ for the British army, an accusation that lingered in the war’s aftermath.\textsuperscript{76} As McConnel points out, it became incorporated as one of the dominant narratives of the Irish revolution after 1922.\textsuperscript{77} The arrival of Irish Party candidates at election meetings whose last appearance was on recruiting platforms was compared against Sinn Féin enthusiasts who had been only recently released from British internment camps. Public support for the Irish Party eroded.

In complete contrast to nationalist media, unconditional support for conscription was upheld by Unionist publications and leaders. The \textit{Irish Times} stated that ‘the whole Unionist population of Ireland will accept conscription’. Protestant Archbishops felt that ‘Ireland’s sons’ had been ‘omitted from the call’ when conscription had been applied to England and Scotland, and that this ‘would have been readily obeyed two years ago’. They called for prayer ‘with special urgency that God will bless our arms and save our country in this grave hour of national danger’.\textsuperscript{78} Carson maintained that conscription shared the burden evenly, and that it was the only way to make every man take his fair share in the elementary duties and privileges of British citizenship. He professed of being ‘ashamed’ about the much reduced Irish divisions that needed replacements.

\textsuperscript{74} TCD, JD, 6742/536: Letter from Dillon to O’Connor, 25 September 1918. The date of the election had not yet been set so the reference to ‘November’ was in anticipation of a date.
\textsuperscript{75} See Figure 4.5: \textit{Will you vote for conscription}.
\textsuperscript{77} McConnel, p. 297.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Irish Times}, 18 April 1918: letter from Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin (letter was signed John B. Armagh and John Dublin and dated 17 April 1918).
because of those who had been slaughtered by the enemies of Britain.\textsuperscript{79} In a general election speech he referred to his efforts to include Ireland in conscription in 1916, but that Ulster was ‘besmirched because they had allowed themselves to be dragged at the heels of the Nationalist Party in the South and West’.\textsuperscript{80} The \textit{Church of Ireland Gazette} and the \textit{Ulster Guardian} believed conscription should not be a religious issue ‘as between Protestants and Roman Catholics’, but rather it was an issue of political standing as to whether people are nationalist or Unionist.\textsuperscript{81}

Unionist election propaganda regularly referred to Ireland’s contribution to the war effort, particularly Ulster’s contribution. An election poster highlighted that the Ulster Unionist Party had urged the Government ‘to apply the Military Service Act impartially to all parts of Ireland’, and claimed that ‘the Protestant Churches in Ulster; the Corporation of Belfast; the Ulster County, Rural, and District Councils; the Loyal Orange Institution; and the other various Unionist Parliamentary bodies’ had passed resolutions ‘calling upon the Government to apply the Military Service Act to the whole of Ireland’. Constitutional nationalists were accused of blocking the way, while in contrast the Belfast workers’ war record was ‘unique in several respects with the ‘shipbuilding yards’ holding ‘three world’s records made during the war’.\textsuperscript{82} A handbill listed Ulster’s contributions to the war effort; for instance, Ulster had gained eight Victoria crosses, it had forty-two battalions of infantry as against thirty seven battalions for the rest of Ireland, Ulster had contributed over £1,000,000 to war charities, and supplied ninety-five per cent of all aeroplane cloth.\textsuperscript{83}

During the 1920 local government elections a small number of Unionist candidates also ran as ex-soldiers, and their key issues were the provision of housing and employment. Their concerns diminished under the weight of aspirations for an impending change in the governance of Ireland and party principles. Promises were made that their bravery would be remembered, such as that made by Major Bryan Cooper who proclaimed that Ireland would ‘not easily forget [their] deeds’;

\textsuperscript{80} Anglo-Celt, 23 November 1918.
\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Church of Ireland Gazette}, 26 April 1918 and \textit{Ulster Guardian}, 29 April 1917.
\textsuperscript{82} PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/142, U.C. 107: \textit{Ulster and Great Britain}.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid, U.C. 132: \textit{The Two Irelands, Facts not Fiction!}
but, ultimately they became lost in the complexities of domestic war and partition. In reality only Unionists gave recognition to the practical concerns and interests of ex-soldiers in election pledges. The opinions and influence of ex-servicemen should have reverberated louder in post-war politics because more Irishmen fought in the Great War than in 1916, the War of Independence and the Civil War combined. In southern Ireland, on the eve of the creation of the Free State and the cessation of British mediation in Irish affairs, historical representation and memory discriminated in favour of revolutionary expression. The armistice in November 1918 ended the threat of conscription, but the after-effects continued into the general election, and through to the local elections, albeit with reduced import and mention.

4.4: Women Electors – Consider!

The Great War had been influenced by consumer propaganda and had enriched it for mass appeal. Ideas for persuading and tools for nurturing visualization were heightened, and political parties appropriated this intelligence and applied it to inspire voters to conceive of alternatives. To demonstrate this, the use of the female across commercial, war, and electoral propaganda will be used in this section. Before the electoral politics of the early 1900s the use of the female resounded in images of Ireland as Hibernia or Britain as the female Britannia. While John Bull, the stout, middle-aged, country dwelling, jolly character, attired in a Union Jack waist-coat, was the national personification of the United Kingdom, Britannia flourished in the Victorian era. She was usually represented with a trident in her hand, a lion at her feet and a Union Jack shield.

Correspondingly Ireland, as far back as the eighteenth-century, was described by Gaelic poets and writers as a woman. Mother Ireland, the Poor Old Woman/the Shan Van Vocht [sean bhan bocht], Cathleen Ní Houlihan, Dark Rosaleen and Erin featured heavily in literature, poetry

84 Bryan Cooper, The 10th (Irish) Division in Gallipoli (Dublin, 1993), p. 139.
and propaganda into the twentieth century. Erin personified Ireland in two contrasting modes – a tragic and troubled Erin who awaited a saviour to free her from British oppression or a belligerent and forceful Erin with spear or sword or flag in hand.

Commercial interests applied the Irish peasant female to encourage the purchase of hygiene or luxury products among the working classes and the ‘colleen’ or Irish peasant girl became an icon to create brand personality. The message was that using soap or shampoo would lead to ‘a purified working class cleansed of polluting labour’. Robert Brown, proprietor of McClinton’s Soap Company at Donaghmore, Co. Tyrone expanded his company by taking this a step further in creating the brand ‘Colleen Soap’. He not only applied the image of the Irish colleen but also constructed a model Irish village called Ballymaclinton which was populated by 200 hired ‘colleens’ to humanize the brand. Consumer purchase of Colleen Soap expanded hugely due to a widespread print advertising campaign which also expressed Brown’s opposition to home rule.

Great War propaganda in Ireland portrayed Ireland as female to encourage enlistment across the political

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86 For more detail on the personification of Ireland see Morris, Our Own Devices, pp. 22-26; Richard Kearney, Transitions: Narratives in Modern Irish Culture (Manchester, 1988); Stephen Regan, Irish Writing, An Anthology of Irish Literature in English 1789-1939 (Oxford, 2008).


88 A. McClintock, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (New York, 1994), p. 211.

divides. In the poster *Will You Answer the Call*, Ireland as a female was in the foreground with long auburn hair and arm resting upon a harp.\textsuperscript{90} The clothing of the white dress and blue mantle was similar to that of Mary (the Mother of God), and the crown represented either Mary’s role in the kingdom of heaven or Ireland’s position within the Empire. Through the strings of the harp a bugle-playing gallant Irish soldier was visible and the music notes at the top translated the opening bars of *The Last Post*; and the background image within the harp included a large artillery machine gun which had just gone off. To the side was a small village beside a lake with a group of houses and church spire, depicting the threat to Belgium and perhaps to that of any Irish village if the Germans were not defeated. Mother Erin pointed upward to employ what Pauline Codd calls the ‘pull’ factors, such as patriotism or compassion for ‘poor little Belgium’.\textsuperscript{91}

Women persuaded men to enlist. Mothers, wives, and daughters endorsed the departure of men to defend their honour. In a poster titled *Have you any women folk worth defending* an image simply depicted the head and shoulders of an appealing peasant Irish girl, with dark wavy hair draped in a green shawl. If this type of allure failed another titled *Will You Go or Must I* showed a peasant Irish woman wielding a rifle and needling her husband or male relative to war as she pointed towards a smouldering Belgium.\textsuperscript{92} War propaganda instigated disquiet and apprehension through the application of pressure by asserting that women and children were under threat and needed defence. Women themselves were called upon to care for the troops at the front, to work at home to enable men leave for war, and work in munitions factories so their men would have ammunition.

*Sinn Féin* appealed to women within their own movement, and skilfully seized upon the new franchise qualifications; and in a pamphlet titled *An appeal to the women of Ireland* many of the Great War themes that exemplified the role of women became those of Irish freedom in election campaigns. Ireland, it was claimed, had been personified as female because ‘in woman the ancient

\textsuperscript{90} TCD, Digital Collections, Digital No: PapyrusCase 55_011:

\textsuperscript{91} Pauline Codd, ‘Recruiting and Responses to the War in Wexford’, in Fitzpatrick (ed), *Ireland and the First World War*, pp. 25-6. The ‘pull’ factors she conceives as weaker incentives to enlist than the ‘push’ factors like poverty and insecurity.

\textsuperscript{92} TCD, Early Printed Books, Digital Collection, EPB Papyrus Case 55c (Digital No. 55_094): *Will you go or must I*; and EPB Papyrus Case 55c (Digital No. 55_096): *Have you any women folk worth defending.*
Gael saw the great glory of his race’. A chronicle of the ‘valiant champions of the dispossessed race’ such as Patrick Sarsfield, Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, John Mitchel, Charles Stewart Parnell and Padraig Pearse, ‘the grateful voices of the dead’, now cried out to the women of Ireland to ‘stand by their tortured sister Rosaleen’. It was pointed out that women could ‘save Ireland’ if they voted in similar fashion to ‘Mrs Pearse’ in order that the ‘ancient ideal’ could be realised. This objective of using history and Gaelic culture was to entice women to ‘vote with Sinn Féin’. If the lure of the ancient did not satisfy, then the politics of fear was applied as ‘the physical safety of the race depends upon our immediate freedom’. The promise of a dynamic future in politics in the line the ‘womenfolk of the Gael shall have a high place in the Councils of a freed Gaelic nation’ was the final attempt to attract women to the Sinn Féin side.93

However, where women candidates ran for election much of the campaigning was conducted for women by women with the males propping up male candidates. Sheehy-Skeffington described Markievicz’s constituency as ‘the worst managed constituency in Dublin’, and the activist Meg Connery remarked that ‘the one woman they have thrown as a sop to the women of the country has her interest neglected’. Carney also complained that ‘the organization in Belfast could have been better – much better’.94 Laffan points out that there appeared to have been a disconnect between the Sinn Féin leaders and the rank and file on the role of women members with the latter being ‘more conservative in this respect’.95

Unionists also emulated Great War themes and like Sinn Féin created propaganda directly aimed at women. Carson’s obdurate stance on the issue of women’s suffrage had influenced Craig as he was not prepared to challenge the main goal of Unionists – the defeat of Home Rule. However, by 1912 with at least 100,000 members in the UWUC the female voice stirred, particularly during the home rule crisis.96 Unionists were prodded from within to take steps in every constituency to ‘provide for close co-operation of men and women in the Unionist

93 NLI, Sinn Féin, IR 94109: An appeal to the women of Ireland.
96 During the home rule crisis 228,991 Ulster Unionist women signed the Declaration associating themselves with the men of Ulster ‘in their uncompromising opposition to home rule’. Another 5,055 women had signed elsewhere: Stewart, The Ulster Crisis, p. 66.
organizations’. Sobering encouragement went out to women themselves ‘to endeavour to interest other women … to see that their votes are registered in the constituency in which they live’. Failure to cast a vote was warned against because ‘a very great responsibility will soon be placed upon us in the exercising of our vote’. To increase anxiety and alarm a handbill cautioned Unionist women to be wary of Irish Party and Sinn Féin candidates who were posing as Unionists, because they ‘are prepared to promise anything to catch our vote, and to support many schemes that are quite impracticable of fulfilment’.

Urquhart maintains that a communication network had been formed among Unionist women during war-time fundraising initiatives and that this had important political implications in strengthening Unionist solidarity. Kinghan points out that female Orange Lodges became a useful networking arena, particularly when they were given representation on the UWUC in 1920. Meetings to petition Unionist women collectively were enabled by the formation of these organizations, and it was advised that when addressing female Unionists meetings that ‘they should be addressed by the candidate and women speakers whenever possible’.

Unionists, like Sinn Féin, encouraged women to become active politically as canvassers, lobbyists, and supervisors of electoral registers. Propaganda was specifically targeted at women, outlining their role and responsibilities not only as wives and mothers, but also in relation to church, home, country and empire. Henry Hanna and Maurice Dockrell placed small advertisements in the *Irish Independent* that addressed ‘Ladies and Gentlemen’.

Labour became attentive not only to the voting potential of women but also to the assistance that could be given by ‘the great hosts of the new voters who have come upon the new register’. They acknowledged that ‘our sisters’ became enfranchised ‘only as the result of many generations of great efforts, as noble sacrifices, as gallant battles as any in the history of these

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97 PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/A/27/3: Letter from President of the Ulster Women’s Unionists Council to members of the council, 1918.
99 Ibid.
people’. Linking with past Irish freedom crusades, O’Brien endeavoured to elevate the revolutionary struggle to attain the enfranchisement for women with that of the 1916 Rising. O’Brien also called for room to be made for women voters ‘in our political as well as in our industrial work, and in the new constitution of the Congress and Party’. The militant strategies of some of the suffrage movements that ‘had compelled the extension to our women comrades the right to vote’ mirrored that of the ‘fighting elements’ of Labour, and it was claimed that ‘the lesson’ would ‘not be lost’.103 P.T. Daly in a letter to the Trades Councils was more practical as he wanted to know how ‘women voters can be organised and associated with our work as a Labour Party’?104

No attempt was made to overturn the unyielding opposition to women’s suffrage by Redmond and the Irish Party in propaganda for the 1918 general election. As will be seen in chapter five the turnout of women voters altered the election outcome, and became a significant reason for the defeat of the Irish Party. However, Joseph Devlin attempted to make amends by addressing both the ‘Ladies and Gentlemen’ of the Falls Division of Belfast, and by emphasising his record of reform, particularly in the old age pension which was created to support Irishmen and Irishwomen ‘in frugal comfort in their own homes’. He also appealed for equality of pay, advocated for the distribution of wealth ‘amongst the masses of its citizens, and the only real wealth of any city or country is in the health, happiness, contentment, and well-being of its working class’. Outstanding issues such as housing, he argued, could be settled ‘for themselves quickly and satisfactorily’ if Irishmen and Irishwomen had home rule.105

Such was the industry of the female separatist supporter in 1918 that one nationalist agent complained that he had got nothing to eat all day, while his wife and daughter had been busily carrying food to Sinn Féin agents.106 In 1920 the Freeman’s Journal claimed that in Londonderry ‘40 per cent’ of the municipal voters were women ‘who are even more enthusiastic in the fight than

103 By 1908 Hanna Sheehy Skeffington and Margaret Cousins in the IWFL had lost patience with the moderate tactics of the older suffrage organizations. They were influenced by the militancy of the British Women’s Social and Political Union, and were determined to impose their ideology of ‘Suffrage First, before all else’.
104 Report of Twenty-Fourth ITUC&LP Annual Conference, August 1918.
105 Freeman’s Journal, 30 November 1918.
106 Irish Times, 23 December 1918.
are the men’. By targeting propaganda at women voters Unionists and Sinn Féin gained advantage on polling day. The female vote contributed to their success (and Labour in 1920) and led to Irish Party losses in the general and local elections.

4.5: Easter Rising

Did Sinn Féin make the Rising a pillar of their propaganda? Was it the violence and aggression behind the motives of those who rebelled? Was it the messages and aspirations within the rhetoric of the Rising, such as appealing to the Paris peace conference, that gave it electoral legacy? Did tributes to those who participated in the Rising that bestowed martyr status provide a cult from which voters could be recruited? Hart’s research has shown that many men and women initially joined the Volunteers because of post-Rising propaganda, but can this be said of Sinn Féin and electoral propaganda? How did older parties react to this new party that had a recent history of aggression and militant action which was aimed at the old established order?

Sinn Féin first had to unify and form itself into a coherent structure, and, as previously discussed, it was the success of the first contested by-election of 1917 that inspired a strategy. In-built into the rhetoric of this election was the vivid connection between Count Plunkett and the Easter Rising. O’Flanagan consistently promoted the link between Plunkett, his sons and the Easter Rising through phrases such as ‘Count Plunkett’s son had been shot as one of the leaders of the rebellion …’. Plunkett’s election literature drew analogy between the Rising and the by-election, particularly in a poster titled The West’s Awake. The title echoed that of a Thomas Davis ballad, so viewers were reminded of the rebellious days of the Young Ireland movement, and an antique font-style and ochre-toned background reinforced connections with the past. Phrases such as ‘strike a blow for our small nationality’ and ‘will North Roscommon loosen their bonds or get us

107 Freeman’s Journal, 15 January 1920.
109 Hart, The IRA at War, p. 207.
110 Cars carrying Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith also travelled to Roscommon to campaign on behalf of the Count. Irish Times, 9 February 1917.
gaolers over Irishmen’ served as a reminder that Irishmen remained in British prisons because they had struck out for freedom. The collective and global appeal that ‘the eyes of Ireland’ and ‘the eyes of your sons and daughters beyond the seas’ were ‘on you’ stirred emotion. By voting for Plunkett, the North Roscommon electorate could now act on behalf of their sons and daughters, bereft of a voice through exile.\footnote{NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH E239: The West’s Awake.} While Sinn Féin received no mention in any of Plunkett’s election literature, the testimonial that he was the ‘father of the young patriot who gave is life’ formed a bond with the uprising for which Sinn Féin had received blame.\footnote{Ibid, William O’Brien, MS LOP 116/74&78: Ireland Over All and Why you should support Count Plunkett.}

The obscurity of a defined political vision for a future Ireland was evident in the disparate ideas within the neophyte Sinn Féin. The aspiration for an Irish republic was visible only to those who were the agents of freedom, evident in Pearse’s poem \textit{The Fool} that contemplated on a point from which all outlines of the republic would become visible: ‘O wise men, riddle me this: what if the dream come true?’ Townshend maintains that Pearse’s poetry indicates that he ‘actively’ sought ‘a sacrificial death’.\footnote{Townshend, \textit{Easter 1916}, p. 114.} This notion of sacrifice for an ideal that could only be understood as an abstract has attained much debate amongst humanities scholars. The arguments around the blood sacrifice theory of the Rising has and continues to be well-rehearsed by other historians and academics. The purpose here is to investigate if those who survived the Rising leaned on the actions of those who died in 1916; and if leaders emerged to convert the theoretical into an attainable reality.

An \textit{Irish Times} correspondent claimed that Plunkett won North Roscommon because of his anti-conscription stand ‘plus the appeal to the people’s sentiments in connection with the rebellion of Easter Week’. The report reasoned that 3,023 of these men recorded their votes ‘for the candidate who was recommended to them because he was the father of one of the leaders executed in Easter week’.\footnote{Irish Times, 8 February 1917 (earlier figures from a number of newspapers put the figure for Plunkett at 3022). Plunkett defeated the Irish Party candidate by 1,314 votes, and the independent Jasper Tully gained only 687 votes.} Arthur Griffith wrote in \textit{Nationality} that same week stating that ‘today it is Count Plunkett, yesterday it was John MacNeill, The O’Rahilly, Roger Casement and a score of
other Irishmen’, further binding Plunkett’s victory to those who served and died in the 1916 rebellion. Plunkett himself maintained that the reason for his by-election success was because ‘his son died a martyr for Ireland’.  

Plunkett’s success in the election demonstrated what could be achieved, and this led to reorganization within Sinn Féin and a drive to contest many of the future by-elections of 1917-18. Plunkett’s abstentionist policy upheld the more moderate ideals of Griffith’s Sinn Féin, but new and more radical characters began to broaden separatist ideologies which included an appeal to the Paris peace conference to attain recognition of an Irish republic. Ginnell scorned further deliberations with the Imperial parliament because the country had ‘no faith’ in obtaining their approval and such an appeal would ‘deprive Ireland of any right to be heard in the international peace conference’. Herbert Pim persuaded voters that Sinn Féin proposed to send representatives, ‘not to a foreign Parliament, where they break treaties, but to a Peace Conference of the Nations of this earth, where they make treaties (cheers) … and he hoped to live to see the Flag of Ireland unfurled there (cheers)’. Count Plunkett’s literature called on voters to cast in his favour to guarantee a ‘seat for Ireland at the peace conference’. By sending Irish representatives to the peace conference Éire could fill the vacant chair amidst the leaders of major countries (as depicted in figure 4.7) who are attired in recognisable costume, and seated at the peace conference table.

115 Roscommon Herald, 10 February 1917.
117 Roscommon Herald, 13 January 1917 and 28 April 1917; NLI, William O’Brien Papers, LOP 116/74 & 72.
The release of internees in December 1916 further facilitated the promotion of rebel as candidate. In South Longford McGuinness had been sentenced to death and was serving a sentence of penal servitude, and *The Times* heralded him as the ‘rebel candidate’. Frank McGuinness regularly promoted the link with the Rising by stating, for example, that Joseph McGuinness represented ‘unity in the cause of Ireland for which he had fought in Dublin in Easter week’. As we saw in chapter three, this campaign introduced the successful *Put him in to get him out* poster campaign.

This release of internees also introduced new leaders and voices into Irish politics; for instance, Michael Collins was appointed secretary of the National Defence Fund and Sean Hayes who had fought in the GPO during the Rising returned to Cork and was appointed editor of the *Southern Star* after the paper was purchased by Sinn Féin. The prisoner candidate that became most successful in this era was de Valera who had been nominated for East Clare while still in prison, but released by a general amnesty in June 1917 before the by-

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118 See chapter one.
119 *The Times*, 10 April 1917.
120 *Roscommon Herald*, 14 April 1917. *Longford Leader*, 14 April 1917, stated that ‘Mr McGuinness, it will be remembered, took an active part in the rebellion in Dublin Easter Week last year, having a command in the Four Courts, where he had several British officers in his charge as prisoners of war.
121 *Freeman’s Journal*, 30 December 1918.
election took place. Robert Brennan claimed that his reputation immediately soared on his military prowess (during the Rising). Townshend accepts that de Valera’s battalion in Boland’s Mill during the Rising did not encounter ‘much of a fight’, but maintains that his inexperience was similar to that of all the Volunteer leaders who were indecisive as they ‘tried to grasp the real nature of the battle they had so often fought in their imaginations’. Regardless of battle prowess, the choice of de Valera as Sinn Féin candidate, according to Frank Gallagher, was dictated by one thing only, ‘the brother of the leader of the old movement was dead. … De Valera had a status nobody else had – he was the last surviving commandant of the Rising’. Enormous celebrations and enthusiastic torch-light processions had welcomed the returning prisoners to Ireland, bolstering their prestige and demonstrating a change of mind-set among many. This creation of a ‘patriotic cult’ as Hart called it was ‘more influential than revolutionary ideas or texts’.

Two days after his selection de Valera began campaigning and he immediately sought to sway opinion from ‘blood sacrifice’ in the pursuit of independence to success at the ballot box, stating ‘every vote you give now is as good as the crack of a rifle in proclaiming your desire for freedom’. Just a few months earlier he had stated privately in a letter to Simon Donnelly that ‘nobody should think however that contesting elections is the policy which the men here would advocate if they had a say in the matter’. Clearly de Valera was unsure at this early stage whether contesting elections was the best course of action, although he had admitted that prisoners were not always familiar on ‘the exact position at home’. He also had to appease the more militant advocates of republicanism and sway them towards politics.

126 Hart, *The IRA at War*, p. 207.
127 Clare Champion, 14 July 1917.
128 UCDA, de Valera Papers, P150/529: De Valera to Simon Donnelly, 23 April 1917. Simon Donnelly was Vice-Commandant of the Dublin Brigade, 3rd Battalion from 1917 to 1921: BMH WS 481.
With Eoin MacNeill at his side in order not to alienate ‘the all-important support of the clergy’ de Valera opened his speech in Tulla, Co. Clare in Irish stating, ‘Nil de chead agam-sa tosnu ar an obair bhreannuighthe seo i dteanga na namhad’ (I have no permission to begin this holy work in the language of the enemy). According to Fanning, de Valera’s papers contain no documents earlier than 1908 that indicate he had taken the slightest interest in the Irish language. However, after completing Irish language courses and joining the Gaelic League he became a proficient enthusiast. Speaking ‘as Gaeilge’ and promoting the language provided another association with Pearse and Irish-Ireland. Having opened in Irish he turned to English to ally the political with the revolutionaries of 1916 by stating that ‘he had only to ask those brave boys in Dublin to face danger, and they did not fail … one hundred and twenty boys stood out against 40,000 British soldiers … with courage in their hearts knowing they were fighting for Ireland …’. This synthesis of peaceful (appeal to the peace conference) and truculent (Easter week) rhetoric in de Valera’s speeches continued throughout the by-election campaign, and the result was a landslide victory. To encourage voter support, Ginnell in speeches at Ogonnelloe and Killaloe, Co. Clare had stated that ‘Eamonn de Valera represented Ireland; Mr Lynch represented England. Ed de Valera fought under the flag of Easter Week of which the present election contest was a continuation…’

Cosgrave, another living embodiment of Easter week, rarely referred to his rebellious actions during election speeches. Instead he concentrated on the bread and butter issues of taxation and inflation. His past ‘strong service’ in Dublin Corporation turned attention to the more

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130 Ronan Fanning, Éamon de Valera, A Will to Power (Harvard, 2016), chapter two. The positive impact of this dedication to a rejuvenation of the Irish language was resolutions taken during the 1920 local elections. For instance, the Ballyconnell, Co. Wicklow Coiste Ceantair passed a unanimous resolution that ‘in future all cheques, memos and minutes be signed in Irish, and we further request that the cheque books used by said bodies be printed in Irish, and in the matter of printing advertisements that preference be given to such papers as support the language movement’: Anglo-Celt, 19 June 1920. Ultimately, however, de Valera’s language revival failed, perhaps, as J.J. Lee argued, because ‘First, the teachers knew little Irish. Second, the people knew even less’: in Ireland, 1912-1986 (Cambridge, 1989), p. 133.
131 Clare Champion, 30 June 1917.
132 Ibid.
133 Kilkenny People, 20 October 1917 and 17 November 1917.

229
mundane issues that affected the lives of ordinary Irish people.\textsuperscript{134} His victory in Kilkenny brought Sinn Féin’s total to four and a new confidence emerged, as did a more conciliatory and political approach. After the by-election Cosgrave declared in Dublin that ‘they [Sinn Féin] had no quarrel with the English people, but with the British Government’, and he condemned the Irish Party’s policy of pauperism and emigration.\textsuperscript{135} By creating political concepts, if not yet policy, Cosgrave positioned Sinn Féin as a political entity. Sinn Féin’s objective to attain voter support was to create a shared goal, a common cause and collective determination.

First, however, policy decisions had to be agreed and the process began at the Mansion House conference in Dublin in April 1917 where the agenda included discussion and resolution on Ireland’s claim to representation at the peace conference, taxation, labour and the national organization of Ireland, to name a few.\textsuperscript{136} As mentioned, the organizational structure of Sinn Féin was firmed up at the later Ard Fheis in October 1917 when the party agreed on aims and formed a constitution.\textsuperscript{137} To avoid a split in the party between the monarchist and republican wings de Valera replaced Griffith as president and a compromise motion was passed. The ultimate goal of attaining a republic was stated, and once that status was achieved the people of Ireland could by referendum freely choose their own form of government.\textsuperscript{138}

The by-elections of 1918 were not successful for Sinn Féin, although this had little to do with structure and more to do with geography and lack of organization in Ulster particularly. In South Armagh, according to a report in the Armagh Standard, ‘the constituency has not been organized by the Sinn Feiners … but the AOH are a virile force’.\textsuperscript{139} The Irish Times reported that ‘the South Armagh election campaign bids fair to be exciting and hard fought’. While no Easter Rising veterans ran as candidates in the South Armagh constituency Sinn Féin held numerous meetings and the Volunteer ‘organization invaded the constituency from Dundalk, Armagh and

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{134}]\textit{Cork Examiner}, 17 July 1917.
\item[\textsuperscript{135}]\textit{Irish Times}, 13 August 1917.
\item[\textsuperscript{136}]NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH D95a-e: Leaflet with agenda detailing 11 points and list of participants at the Irish Assembly, Mansion House, Dublin, 19 April, 1917.
\item[\textsuperscript{137}]See chapter one.
\item[\textsuperscript{139}]\textit{Armagh Standard}, 26 January 1918.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
The Sinn Féin candidate, Patrick McCartan, had been arrested and interned after the Rising in an open prison in England, and this provided credence for his candidature.

Dr Thomas Dillon, the brother-in-law of Joseph Plunkett, was called in to buoy up the Rising connection, but there was little mention of the Rising in this constituency. This opened the way for the Irish Party to condemn Dr Russell McNabb (a McCartan speaker) by questioning ‘where [McNabb] was during Easter Week’. They followed immediately with their own satirical reply that ‘when the rebellion broke out Dr McNabb sought shelter in the Four Courts Hotel, and had to be pitched out by the “boots”’ (laughter).

Easter week became the exemplar for Sinn Féin candidates and their supporters to award legitimacy to the bloodshed of the Rising, but they walked a tight rope of praising it and ennobling its rebels while seeking an electoral mandate to pursue political ends and international recognition of their claim for a republic. De Valera gradually transformed the Rising rebels from belligerents into political martyrs. While interned in Lincoln Gaol in 1918 he drafted a letter for the Sinn Féin Mansion House meeting, which was subsequently reported on in many newspapers, where he praised the ‘glorious dead’ and contended that ‘it is not a slave’s status that Irish heroes have fought and died for’ but rather ‘the securing for their beloved country her rightful place in the family of nations.’ The salient points within De Valera’s letter were espoused by Sinn Féin speakers during 1918; and the underlying message was not a resort to violence but to negotiation and representation at the peace conference.

The regeneration of Sinn Féin as a respectable political entity, while still retaining its connection to the heroic martyrs of Easter week, was masterfully choreographed. Fine-tuning this message throughout 1918 by sharpening the abstentionist policy and wedding it to an appeal for Ireland at the Paris peace conference (whether attainable or not) captured many voters. There were still hardliners within republicanism who were determined to remain vigilant and alert to continued

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140 Irish Times, 21 January 1918.
141 Armagh Standard, 26 January 1918.
142 Ferriter, Judging Dev, p. 13.
143 Killarney Echo and South Kerry Chronicle and Strabane Chronicle, 16 November 1918: report of a Sinn Féin meeting in the Mansion House Dublin where a letter by de Valera was read out and a resolution passed that ‘the Irish people shall have full, untrammelled self determination…’. This letter was reported on in many provincial newspapers.
revolt, but the electoral success in 1918 placed the balance in political favour, albeit only for a short period of time.\textsuperscript{144}

The examples in this section have been taken from the by-election campaigns to demonstrate, to some extent, Sinn Féin’s growing countrywide loyalty to the Rising. Similar examples can be collected from speeches and demonstrations during the general election, but there runs the risk of tedious repetition. Much of the analytic rhetoric of the Rising involved struggling with the problem of interpretation and the transformation of that interpretation into election propaganda (both from a Sinn Féin perspective, and in explaining that perspective). However, the conclusion can be definitively drawn that the Easter Rising rebels who died in 1916 were held up as the intrepid instigators of the Sinn Féin resolve to attain a republic. The survivors, many of them now candidates, were now not only the guardians of the physical fight for freedom but the political expression of 1916 and all historic battles in the pursuit of that freedom from British rule. It cannot be overstated that the connection with the Rising was a mainstay of Sinn Féin electoral propaganda throughout 1917 and 1918.

The same cannot be said of the 1920 local elections. The rebels of 1916 and the Rising itself received occasional mention, but the issues that affected townlands and rural areas became paramount and parochial issues came to the fore, such as housing, pensions and farming. Dáil Éireann had been formed in the intervening years and the elected delegates perceived themselves as representatives of the Irish people. Convening the First Dáil was their commitment to the election promise of abstention from Westminster. As will be seen in the next chapter, pledging allegiance to the Dáil became required from those councils where Sinn Féin was in the majority. Nevertheless, in 1920 constitutional nationalists, Labour representatives and Unionists still challenged for seats.

What is unusual about 1920 electoral propaganda was the utter absence of any mention to
or condemnation of the on-going War of Independence by any party, or even a correlation between
it and the Easter Rising by Sinn Féin. Random reports of the occasional spill-over into violence
attained some attention, but this violence did not involve clashes between nationalists and British
military. Two incidents saw conflict between Sinn Féiners and demobilized soldiers. In Cork City
‘a serious collision’ took place between ‘a party of Sinn Feiners and ex-soldiers’ where stabbing
injuries occurred. The Lord Mayor of Cork was attacked by six men when he left a public meeting
held in support of candidates representing the Discharged and Demobilised Soldiers’ and Sailors’
Federation. During the meeting he had said that ‘the promises made by the Sinn Féin Party at the
last General Election had all been broken, and …that they could not be trusted to administer the
affairs of the municipality’. However, there is not enough evidence to support an argument that
demobilized soldiers (or their supporters) were deliberate targets or were perceived as extant
British military. Blame fell on the excitement of youths, such as that in Londonderry where there
were a few mild scenes when a group of youths greeted soldiers with shouts of ‘up the rebels’.
Windows were smashed in areas of the city and this was attributed again to the ‘large groups of
youths’ who ‘paraded the streets singing the Soldier’s Song’. The Irish Independent reported,
however, that for the rest of polling day voting ‘was conducted peaceably and with good
humour’. The Cork Examiner proclaimed that ‘all the candidates seemed to be on the best of
terms, and the friendliest feeling prevailed’.

146 Ibid, 21 January 1920. See chapter five for further commentary on voter lethargy during the 1920 local
government elections.
147 Irish Independent, 16 January 1920.
During all the by-elections and general election campaigns the Irish Party continuously vilified Sinn Féin’s Easter Rising rhetoric. Voters were asked if they favoured a party of ‘physical violence’ over a constitutional settlement. Monsignor O’Farrell in Longford argued that Sinn Féin’s policy was ‘fantastic and absurd’ and that it only ‘ended in a cul-de-sac – a blind alley, a new political museum of skeletons and specimens of past ages.’ Aggressive attack was the Irish Party strategy – a tactic that imitated consumer advertising. Broadside posters with large black type that claimed clerical endorsement condemned Easter week, such as that here which refers to Sinn Féin as the ‘physical farce’ party or the party of ‘violence & intimidation’. The ‘tar and chalk’ comment may have been an indictment by the Irish Party against Sinn Féin supporters for lighting tar barrels to celebrate the release of prisoners or election victories; and, chalk marks may have referred to the marking of enemy targets, although this was not reported on until 1921. Poor election results prove that Irish Party condemnation of the Easter Rising did

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149 Hugh Garrahan, a potential Irish Party candidate in South Longford, asked voters at a meeting in Ardagh if they were going to ‘support a party whose only policy was what would lead to violence and destruction’ and asserted that the policy of Sinn Féin was ‘physical violence’: *Longford Leader*, 28 April 1917.

150 *Longford Leader*, 5 May 1917.

151 Kotler et al., *Principles of Marketing*, p. 97.

152 For example, *Irish Independent*, 19 June 1917, *Strabane Chronicle*, 23 June 1917 or *Kerry News*, 22 June 1917 which reported that after the release of prisoners ‘hundreds of the inhabitants … singing rebel songs …’ lit several ‘tar barrels and bonfires’.

153 For instance, Constables Kelly and Hetherington were killed at Ballisodare when they were followed on the train from the midlands. When the train reached Sligo it was noticed that the carriage in which they travelled bore a peculiar chalk mark: *Irish Independent*, 23 April 1921.
not serve them well. This is not to suggest that those who voted for Sinn Féin condoned a return to violence. As will be seen in chapter five, the motives behind casting a vote had many strands.

Ulster Unionists, according to Buckland, viewed the Rising with a modicum of complacency. Others wrought humour from the nationalist attempt to physically overthrow the British. Adam Duffin, the old liberal Unionist, likened the Rising to a ‘comic opera founded on the Wolf [sic] Tone fiasco a hundred years ago’ and acerbically hoped that the rebels had captured Birrell, the Chief Secretary. Many saw the Rising as an act of predictable treachery and proof that nationalists were disloyal at heart, regardless of their war-time enlistment numbers. A Unionist handbill demanded to know whether loyalists should trust to ‘the “common sense” of those guilty of the madness of Easter Week 1916’. A letter to the editor of the Irish Times from T.S. Lindsay, Malahide, Co. Dublin who claimed to be a true Irishman ‘proud of Ireland, loving Ireland, intensely anxious to promote her prosperity in every way’ stated that the military had not ‘yielded to the superior strength of the attackers’ of the union. The author, who claimed not to be ‘the mouthpiece of any party or organization’ and who wished only to express the views he believed were ‘shared by very many’, asserted that the Rising proved that a Dublin parliament would mean ‘absolute ruin to our unfortunate country’. Carson cried ‘shame be upon them’ as ‘in the darkest days of our history the contribution of the South and West of Ireland to the Empire was a rebellion in which they shot our soldiers’.

Positive or defiant electoral propaganda on the Easter Rising has to be set within the context of the wider European conflicts. These conflicts demonstrated that it was possible to reconstitute society radically.

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156 Irish Times, 18 March 1918.
157 Ibid, 15 November 1918.
4.6: The Bolshevik Revolution

The force of the Great War, as discussed earlier, and the 1917 Russian revolutions weighted on public opinion, having received wide press coverage. For instance, 10,000 people attended a rally in Dublin and passed a resolution to ‘hail with delighted the advent of the Russian Bolshevik revolution’. A Sinn Féin commentator, Aodh de Blacam, remarked that ‘nowhere was the Bolshevik revolution more sympathetically saluted’ than in Ireland. During the battle for seats in East Mayo the President of the South Mayo Sinn Féin Executive proclaimed that ‘the death knell of tyranny had rung in Russia and Germany. Every country was planning for liberty …’

According to Hobsbawm and Ranger, the new powers in Russia had created ‘a set of practices … which [sought] to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implied continuity with the past.’ Bonnell stated that the critical issue facing the Bolsheviks in 1917 was not merely the seizure of power but the seizure of meaning. As previously discussed, continuity with the past and the seizure of meaning had been interpreted differently by Irish political movements. All nationalists had laid claim to Parnell and Davitt, Unionists to the 1801 Act, and Labour to Connolly, and used myth, language, or past service to apply meaning to contemporary campaigns. Republican ambitions were born because of the Easter Rising, which could now be realised, they upheld, if Ireland voted Sinn Féin.

While there was symmetry between separatist nationalist propaganda and that of Bolshevik Russia, it was too early for imitation on either side. The perceived success of the Russian revolution of October 1917 was held up as example by some parties and disparaged by others.

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160 *Kilkenny People*, 23 November 1918: P. O’Donnellain, President South Mayo Sinn Féin Executive.
Labour acclaimed the Russian revolution and created ideological ties with their own practical policies for the working classes through trade union movements. James Connolly’s Easter week actions were restored and propagated and, in 1917, conjoined with the Russian proletarian revolutions. Connolly had ‘laid down his life for the Irish working class’, but his actions had not been in vain, it was claimed, because of the ‘influence it exercised among those great men and women who have given us the great Russian revolution’. Russia was identified as the ‘one bright spot’ at a time when belligerent nations were engaged in ‘awful carnage’. A resolution was passed in 1917 that stated the ‘Congress of Irish Workers hails the Russian Revolution. With gratitude and admiration it congratulates the Russian people upon a Revolution which has overthrown a tyranny …’. Europe’s war raged because of capitalism rather than democracy, and Ireland’s hostility to the subjugation of the working classes to the war had been laid during ‘the great Bolshevik meeting in the Mansion House’.

William O’Brien ended his speech at the twenty-fourth annual meeting by praising the ‘Workers’ Republic’, the building of which was ‘the sacred trust and legacy handed down to us by the great saints and martyrs and soldiers of Labour’. Greatest of them all was Connolly ‘who sanctified it with his life’s blood …

And by their graves we swear this year of story,
To battle side by side,
Til Freedom crowns with immemorial glory,
The cause for which they died’.

Given that Labour did not contest the 1918 election, did this internal speechifying on the values of Bolshevik Russia influence voter opinion? It could be argued that it did. The twenty-fourth annual meeting provides a good example for analysis because it was held in 1918 on the eve of election campaigns. There were around two hundred delegates in attendance, representing forty-five trades unions. Therefore, the admiration and commendation of the Russian revolutions was disseminated subsequently to a far wider trade union audience. As will be seen in chapter five

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163 Report of Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting of the ITUC&LP.
164 Report of Twenty-third Annual Meeting of ITUC&LP, held in Derry in August 1917. The reference to the ‘one bright spot’ was in inverted commas, so perhaps it was in imitation of Edward Grey’s comments in the House of Commons about Ireland at the outset of the war.
165 This was in reference to the anti-conscription meeting held in the Mansion House Dublin on 18 April 1918.
166 Report of Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting of the ITUC&LP.
many trade union and Labour members voted Sinn Féin in 1918, because of a lack of alternatives (although many abstained). Parties with strong communist leanings, such as the Socialist Party of Ireland and the Communist Party of Ireland, had not yet been formed or had minute membership, did not contest, and therefore did not sway or attract voters in 1918. Throughout 1918 there was a demand for higher wages, and strikes increased. Emmet O’Connor highlights the town of Charleville as an example where five local general strikes occurred between 1918 and 1923, and Dungarvan had eleven. The counter-politics of the era, according to O’Connor, stood for the rejection of capitalism, and the celebration of solidarity, spontaneity, and direct action.

Confusion and contradiction are the best words to describe the Irish Party’s interpretation of the Russian October revolution. In Louth the Irish Party candidate, Richard Hazleton, stated that ‘Sinn Féin in Ireland was Bolshevism’. In the North American Review of 16 December 1918 Dillon, in comments on the aftermath of the February revolution, stated that:

There is going on before us now one of the most interesting, one of the most fateful experiments that have ever taken place in the history of the human race, and that is in Russia. Russia had a Government, perhaps worse than our own; it was corrupt, it was oppressive, and, in fact, it was in every way the antithesis of liberty. The Russian people have overthrown that Government and have proclaimed a Republic.

While this seems to suggest support for the Russian revolution, in this same article Dillon went on to say that, ‘God forbid Ireland ever experience what Russia is undergoing’ because ‘the country is a seething mass of anarchy from one end to the other …’. In a letter to the Freeman on 20 February 1918 he accused Sinn Féin of taking Ireland down the same path; that in Russia there was

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167 Russia’s Bolshevik revolution heavily influenced Roddy Connolly, son of James Connolly, who joined the Socialist Party of Ireland as he and Seán McLoughlin were frustrated by the absence of a socialist input into the independence struggle. At a meeting on 28 October 1922 the Socialist Party of Ireland (SPI) adopted a new constitution, committing it to struggle by political, economic and military means for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The SPI was renamed the Communist Party of Ireland. For further information on these parties and communism in Ireland see: Mike Milotte, *Communism in modern Ireland: the pursuit of the workers’ republic since 1916* (Dublin, 1984); Henry Patterson, *The Politics of Illusion: republicanism and socialism in modern Ireland* (London 1989); Emmet O’Connor, ‘Communists, Russia and the IRA, 1920-23’, *The Historical Journal*, 46:1 (Mar., 2003), pp. 115-131; Thomas Darragh [Roddy Connolly], ‘Revolutionary Ireland and communism’, *Communist International*, June-July 1920; and, Stephen White, ‘Ireland, Russia, communism, post-communism’, *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 8 (1997), pp. 155-61.


169 Anglo-Celt, 30 November 1918. Nicholas Whittle in discussion Irish party opinion in 1916 stated that the convinced Redmondite who believed firmly that Redmond was the saviour of Ireland and we, of Sinn Féin, were closely allied to the Bolsheviks in Russia: BMH WS 1105.
the ‘full illustration of the form of liberty which these [Sinn Féin] leaders desire to introduce into Ireland’.

Carson also interpreted the ‘great changes’ brought about ‘notably in Russia’ as the advent of global change that demonstrated ‘people must have freedom and liberty’. It was, he claimed, through the union that ‘they had that freedom and liberty which they could exercise at the polls’. Interpretation of the Bolshevik revolution, therefore, had a variety of understandings in Ireland. The UULA, formed by Carson, was comprised of trade unionists and Ulster Unionists to embrace the working classes of Ulster and to counteract the threat of Sinn Féin and Belfast Labour. In 1918 the Belfast Linen Mills were held up as ‘one of the industrial marvels’ of both the war and the ‘internal confusion’ in Russia. Tribute was paid to the Belfast linen captains for anticipating ‘the stoppage of flax from Russia’ and ‘organising a flax growing scheme in Ireland’ which ‘ensured a steady supply’. A guarantee fund of £200,000 was created and five of the leading Irish banks advanced money to finance a flax growing scheme. Nonetheless, the general Unionist consensus on the Russian revolutions was that the Soviets post-revolution presented themselves as ‘arbitrary and irresponsible, not democratic and representative’. Carson’s address to the UULA in July 1918 made no mention of Russia’s revolutions, instead the focus was on the union which ‘comes first in all our hearts, because it involves everything else’. Home rule, he claimed, cannot ‘get rid of us [Ulster]’ and he encouraged Belfast trade unions to organize for representation in Westminster because he had ‘never heard one word’ from the British Labour Party on the ‘view of the workers of Belfast’. The voice of Unionism in southern Ireland in the columns of the Irish Times expressed concern that the ‘anarchy of Bolshevism’ had invaded Ireland ‘sapping the national conservatism’. Unionists charged that Sinn Féin raids for arms were ‘proof of a …moral teaching of the Red Guards’, and the seizure of land had drawn ‘inspiration directly from the later stages of the Russian Revolution’ which

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170 Irish Times, 11 December 1918.
171 Weekly Irish Times, 7 December 1918: Flax seed was purchased in large quantities because of this investment from Canada, and 20,000 acres of land was rented in all parts of Ireland from £20 to £4 per acre. This bolstered flax farming because the farmer ‘saw the linen merchants of Belfast undertaking flax cultivation to the extent of 20,000 acres’.
172 Irish Times, 18 December 1918.
173 Ibid, 5 July 1918.
represented the extreme form of communism. It was claimed that Bolshevism had even gone so far as to undermine the authority of the Roman Catholic Church where the priest was ‘visibly losing his power’. Russian anarchy was responsible for the ‘menaces in our homes, our businesses, and all our intellectual and spiritual concerns’.174

Sinn Féin’s Cosgrave compared the situation in Ireland to that of Russia because the Irish party continuously supported the ‘English government in the English Parliament, while Ireland existed as at present under a military oligarchy which was only paralleled by Russia before the Czar [sic] left the throne’.175 Towards the end of the general election campaign Countess Markievicz claimed that ‘the liberty won by the Bolsheviks in Russia is the kind of liberty the Irish people are determined to fight for’.176 The Irish Party seized upon this statement and demanded a comment from de Valera as to whether he believed this to be his future vision for Ireland. De Valera remained silent.

The ideologies of bolshevism travelled fast and influenced Sinn Féin who hoped to capture support from Russia. In May 1917 the Supreme Council of the IRB appointed Patrick McCartan as its envoy to Russia because they believed that ‘the representatives of the workmen, soldiers and sailors had referred to Ireland in a friendly resolution; and we believed they would soon be in power’.177 When it became evident that supporting Soviet Russia would not help Ireland gain independence and when President Woodrow Wilson began to talk of peace based on self-determination, they quickly changed policy. McCartan was re-routed to the USA instead as Wilson’s approach seemed more promising and it fit with a potential appeal to the peace conference.178

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174 Ibid, 27 February 1918.
175 *Kilkenny People*, 3 November 1917.
176 *Frontier Sentinel*, Newry, 26 January 1918.
4.7: Abstention from Westminster

Abstention from Westminster and appealing to the peace conference was the means by which Easter week ideals and Sinn Féin policy could gain recognition and strengthen. Both ideas had been born with Count Plunkett in the North Roscommon 1917 by-election. His abstentionist policy was criticised by the *Longford Leader* (which had a strong Irish Party bias) when they reported that he ‘did not tell the people that he would not attend parliament if elected, TILL AFTER HE WAS ELECTED’. McGuinness in South Longford received less criticism because he told the electorate in advance what he means to do. ... the electors of South Longford have now to decide whether they will elect a man who will do nothing for them in parliament or whether they will elect one of the three Nationalists before them who promise their constant attendance’.  

The Irish Party continuously ridiculed Sinn Féin’s plan of abstention stating it would damage industry and employment opportunities. Emmet Dalton in a letter to the *Clare Champion* retaliated by stating:

> the Redmondites are claiming that their policy of attendance at Westminster is constitutional, and that the Sinn Fein policy of abstention is unconstitutional. …By what right and by virtue of what Act does the Irish Parliamentary Party go to Westminster? By virtue of that Act which was passed by perjury, bribery and fraud – the Act of Union.

Separatist electoral propaganda changed the rhetoric of nationalism. Instead of terms such as ‘sovereignty’ and ‘independence’, the term ‘republic was increasingly used in many areas of southern Ireland (Waterford being an exception because of its strong Irish Party support). Concerns over abstention from Westminster and Sinn Féin’s declaration of a republic were widespread amongst Unionists for ideological and pragmatic reasons. Major Robert Lyon Moore, a Unionist from East Donegal, stated that ‘complete separation from Great Britain’ constituted ‘a constant menace to the peace, happiness and prosperity of Ireland’. Daniel Wilson, Unionist candidate for West Down, remarked that ‘Ulster claims to remain an integral part of the United

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179 *Longford Leader*, 21 April 1917.
180 *Clare Champion*, 7 July 1917.
181 *Derry Journal*, 11 December 1918.
Kingdom, and refuses to become part of a Sinn Féin pro-German republic’.182 Others were concerned that Ireland would become a republic ‘without any protection from the British Navy’.183 At a meeting with Professor Eoin MacNeill, the Sinn Féin candidate for Derry City, questions were put to him by discharged and demobilised soldiers who were anxious that a republic would threaten ‘pensions, employment, housing, income tax’ and so on.184 While MacNeill repudiated these concerns, they perhaps explain why Sinn Féin themselves were also uneasy about references to a ‘republic’, and why the Irish Party was more successful in Ulster among nationalist voters as they were advocating for the retention of a nationalist political voice at Westminster.

Uncertainty about the use of ‘republic’ was expressed as early as the South Longford by-election campaign. Laurence Nugent from Co Kildare (who had travelled to Longford for the Sinn Féin campaign) stated that they had ‘received instructions to the effect that the Republic was not to be mentioned’ from ‘Mick Collins and Eamon Fleming’. He went on to say that ‘here in Longford were men who had fought in Easter Week ordering men who had also fought in Easter Week not to mention the Republic’. The reason given was that ‘Longford was a difficult district. It was an old garrison town’.

This continued into the East Clare by-election when Nugent again commented that during public meetings held following ‘all masses in the constituencies’ they were ‘cautioned to avoid mention of the Republic’.185 Dan McCarthy also remarked that the ‘speeches in Clare are a little strong for the country farmer. I think they should be toned down somewhat’. In an undated letter sent to de Valera during this by-election, the suggestion was made that the word ‘republic’ be removed until after the election as the farmers were not yet prepared for the Irish republic idea.186 Randal Marlin in Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion maintains that, ‘if you subordinate

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182 Belfast News Letter, 4 December 1918.
183 Strabane Chronicle, 7 December 1918.
184 Belfast News Letter, 14 December 1918.
185 BMH WS 907: Laurence Nugent. Eamonn Fleming was a Volunteer activist and became involved in the collection for the Dáil Éireann loan in 1919.
186 UCDA, de Valera papers, P150/552: Note to Dan McCarthy, 5 July 1917 and P150/549: Letter to de Valera, signed R.M.N., undated and handwritten, and sent to the Old Ground Hotel in Ennis where he was staying during the East Clare by-election.
truth … you affect the credibility of what you say’, so if the party or candidate does not correctly or truthfully spell out policies and intentions, then people are misinformed. Whether suggesting the omission of the word ‘republic’ was misinforming or whether it was simply moulding a message to fit an audience is questionable. Language is a highly ambiguous transaction, or as Eagleton states, ‘language does not simply constitute reality, but has a specific function in seeking to explain, legitimate and conceal it.’ De Valera did not want to subordinate his truth and he ignored the suggestion to omit using the word ‘republic’. In Newmarket-on-Fergus in Co Clare he declared for ‘a free and independent republic’, whereby ‘the audience were electrified’. In Scarriff he again claimed that his policy was ‘for a free and independent Irish Republic’. According to Michael Noyk, legal adviser to Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith, ‘de Valera made it as clear as daylight that he and the party stood for a republic and this was the slogan right through his Clare election’. De Valera, according to Robert Brennan, stated that he had been cautioned by ‘some of the young fellows’ to ‘go slow’, but the ‘old men’ had advised him to ‘nail your colours to the mast’. He chose to listen and heed ‘the old men’ as ‘no one need ever tell me to go slow’ and his resounding win in this constituency proved his accurate interpretation of the audience. The Irish Party candidate for South Armagh, Patrick Donnelly, poured scorn on Sinn Féin aspirations for a republic because they failed to explain ‘how it was to be accomplished.’ If the Irish Party pursued the same tactics’ he argued, they could ‘promise them Timbuctoo, but could they get it for them!’

Labour had declared in favour of self-determination and abstention from Westminster at the end of September 1918 because of ‘the proved futility of Irish members attending British parliament during the war’. Unlike Sinn Féin however, there was an exit clause which stated that abstention was not binding for Labour and could be overturned by a special congress of

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189 BMH WS 907: Laurence Nugent.
delegates. These parallels between Labour and Sinn Féin caused concern. Boland warned the Standing Committee that if enough trade union candidates intervened in the campaign they could deprive Sinn Féin of up to twenty seats.

Convinced they had received a mandate from the Irish electorate in 1918 and assured of continued support from the Irish people, Dáil Éireann was created by Sinn Féin in Dublin in 1919. This unicameral legislature was established because of their abstentionist policy and it made manifest their electoral promises of 1918, but again no mention was made of establishing a republic. On 21 January in the Round Room of the Mansion House twenty-seven new members met for the first time to act as the government of a notional Irish republic. Amidst mounting violence in areas of Ireland as antipathy against the British Government increased, the Irish Independent reported that the new assembly was ‘conducted with order and dignity’. An internationalist and lofty air prevailed as a Declaration of Independence for Ireland as a nation, and an Address to the Free Nations of the World were read out and ‘adopted with enthusiasm’. The intended audience was France and the peace conference, and an awareness of the importance of securing international recognition was affirmed. Present also to record the momentous event were foreign journalists. Piarais Béaslaí later recalled that the public gallery of the Mansion House was ‘packed with spectators’ and many of them were foreign pressmen. The salute to Irish-Ireland was that all other proceedings were conducted in the Irish language, with no speeches in English.

Continuity with the available and familiar British model of Westminster was simply accepted by Dáil Éireann. MPs became TDs, and the Democratic Programme gave a nod to socialism (because of Labour’s election abstention) through addressing ownership of property, the right to education, social welfare services and equality. Most of the twenty-seven present were not

193 NLI, Thomas Johnson Papers, MS 17,249: National Executive circular.
194 SFSCM, 19 September 1918 and 7 October 1918.
195 Twenty-nine names were recorded as present, but the attendance of Harry Boland and Michael Collins was called in order to conceal their plans to spring Éamon de Valera from Lincoln Gaol. Many of those elected to this First Dáil were interned following the German Plot arrests.
196 Irish Independent, 22 January 1919; Gallagher, Political Parties, p. 3.
197 Irish Independent, 22 January 1919.
199 Ibid, 22 January 1919.
of a socialist disposition and one of them later doubted ‘whether a majority of the members would have voted for it, without amendment, had there been any immediate prospect of putting it into force’.201

Political progress was slow for Sinn Féin and had to be conducted against caustic Unionist reaction, evident in *Irish Times* editorials. In similar style to residual Irish Party supporters, the protests were that those elected in 1918 represented only ‘three-fourths of the Irish people’ and when Ireland quickly became convinced of the ‘folly’ of their election ‘the sooner her sanity will return’.202 While the Irish Party had been defeated in 1918 the impending home rule bill was now due to come into effect because the war had ended; and the problem of Ulster had yet to be resolved.

Establishing Dáil Éireann was a propaganda success as newspapers country-wide reported on the first day’s proceedings. Brian Farrell’s work *The Founding of Dáil Éireann* gives a comprehensive account and critique of the First Dáil, so this work will focus briefly on the propaganda behind the funding of this counter-government. Most of the finances raised from Dáil bonds, created and issued by Michael Collins, now the Minister for Finance, funded the creation of Dáil Éireann departments rather than elections. Research into the monies raised has been covered in chapter two and in works such as Carroll’s *Money for Ireland* which details how the Dáil financed its activities and how funds were used; and Mitchell’s *Revolutionary Government in Ireland* also explains Dáil finances, how the loan was raised and how Dublin Castle attempted to suppress it. There are many works and biographies on Michael Collins but one worth mentioning is Hart’s work *Mick, the real Michael Collins* which highlights the frustration faced by Collins in trying to motivate constituencies to promote the bond drive.203

Influenced by the success of the Great War bonds and the US Liberty bonds, and the aggressive advertising campaigns behind both to popularise these bonds, Collins set about doing

similar in Ireland. Bonds were issued in sums of £1, £5, £10, £20, £50 and £100, and accrued five per cent interest per annum. Trustees were appointed, and purchasers paid fifty per cent on application and the remainder in two equal instalments. All bonds were redeemable within twenty years of the international recognition of the Irish republic. Printed copies of a prospectus and an application form were issued to the media, and Sinn Féin clubs began collecting subscriptions. Cult heroes pervaded press advertisements to persuade. For instance, ‘Pearse gave all. Won’t you give a little? Buy Dáil Éireann bonds today’; and by using the symbolic table to denote Robert Emmet’s martyrdom in Michael Collins’ Dáil bonds film (discussed in the previous chapter).

Many of these prospectus and loan literature were swiftly seized by the police and some provincial newspapers were suppressed for publishing information on the Dáil loan. Some of those suppressed included *Nationality, Fainne an Lea* (the Dawn of Day, organ of the Sinn Féin boy scouts), the *Voice of Labour, The Republic, The Leader, New Ireland, The Irish World* and a number of provincial newspapers with Sinn Féin sympathies such as the *Cork Examiner.* Alternative methods of reaching the target audience had to be sought and the handbill proved effective. These handbills called on the patriotic nature of Sinn Féin supporters. A ‘grave reflection’ was cast on those who voted for independence but who were not prepared to give ‘proof of their faith’ by lodging into the coffers of the Irish republic.

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204 According to T.P. O’Connor the second Liberty Loan in the USA raised half a billion dollars by October 1917: TCD, JD, Mss 6730/183: Letter from T.P. O’Connor in Chicago to Joseph Devlin, 11th November 1917.


206 BMH WS 1413, Tadhg Kennedy; NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH F243: Dáil Éireann loan (printed in Irish and English).

207 NLI, IR 300 P47: Advertisements for Dáil Éireann Loan.


209 NLI, IR 300 p. 47: Collins informed local committees that he was compelled ‘to adopt some other means of advertising’ because of the actions ‘of the English newspapers in preventing newspapers from advertising…’. He also stated that 5,000 handbills could be supplied, ‘but it would be better if you could have them printed locally’.

210 NLI, Piarais Béaslaí papers, MS 33,912/14: Handbill; NLI, ILB 300, p. 2: Issue of £250,000 5% registered certificates, August 1919. To motivate purchase Collins wrote to Sinn Féin constituencies and detailed those that had furnished monies in bold typeface. For instance, the Constituency of West Limerick had sent £12,500 and East Limerick were ‘hopeful of doing even better than this’. The ‘remote and mountainous’ mid-Cork, ‘with no town of any considerable size’ had forwarded £5,000; and on the list went, with the total sum netting £36,000.
Novel and cost-free propaganda techniques pervaded towns and cities to encourage donations. According to county inspectors, loan slogans were painted on walls, were stencilled on footpaths and on lampposts and letterboxes, handbills were distributed after masses, and door-to-door canvasses were conducted.\(^{211}\) Sourcing free propaganda opportunities was not unusual, and many forms were also used during elections. An irate solicitor from Dublin wrote to the *Irish Times* in January 1920 appealing for political parties to ‘abstain from disfiguring the walls and wood-work in the city with … paint’. He pointed out that in past elections the Dublin walls were ‘painted and posters affixed without regard to public or private rights’.\(^{212}\) The paid-for and unpaid-for loan propaganda methods indirectly strengthened election campaigning by augmenting voter support through party recognition. While loan collection was slow, the sheer mass of the propaganda campaign and the application of ingenious propaganda methods ensured wide viewership.\(^{213}\)

Candidates in 1920 imitated these novel and effective methods of propaganda which worked in their favour. To credit just the loan propaganda with the power to edify on imaginative propaganda techniques is to ignore some of the inventive methods used during the early by-elections. In North Roscommon in 1917 a blanket of snow and drifts up to ten feet deep resulted in the election being dubbed ‘the White Election’. Plunkett’s campaign cleverly exploited the poor weather conditions by printing slogans of ‘Up Plunkett’ into the snow, using it as an advertising medium.\(^{214}\) The *Roscommon Herald* of 17 March 1917 reported that O’Flanagan had found lines from an unknown poet printed into the snow satirising Plunkett’s opponents ‘who put rather well the thought that was uppermost in the hearts of the people’

Don’t vote for Tully  
Or you will sully,  
The name and fame of the men who died,  
But true men  
Like you men

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\(^{211}\) *Irish Times*, 8 November 1919; NA, Dublin Castle papers CO 904/110: RIC Reports September-December 1919, CO 904/111 January-February 1919; NAI, DE 1/1: Cabinet Minutes, 19 September 1919: Minutes of Dáil Éireann Ministry and Cabinet, 26 April to 19 September 1919.

\(^{212}\) *Irish Times*, 6 January 1920: Letter to the editor from a ‘solicitor’.

\(^{213}\) The amount collected was £380,000 which, according to Michael Hopkinson, ‘was an impressive amount considering the absence of the wealthy in Sinn Féin ranks: Hopkinson, *The Irish War of Independence*, p. 43.

\(^{214}\) *Irish Independent*, 29 January 1917.
Will honour them with pride.

Tully’s mixture
Is not a fixture,
It’s just like margarine.
Count Plunkett’s pure,
And it’s secure,
Don’t mind poor Tom Devine.

The ideals of home rule, union, republic and the themes used to promote them were not enough to convince voters on election day. The more mundane everyday issues and a party’s or candidate’s handling of them also had an impact on voters.

4.8: Everyday Issues

Political parties and candidates realised that it was tactically wiser to alter propaganda approaches to address the everyday issues in the drive to win seats. And, they had to fit it within their overall loftier ambitions. The question is, did all parties equally sharpen the content of their messages to include a future vision for managing the routine affairs of a state? And, what was their solution for satisfying voters on the safety and security of the ordinary within the remit of home rule, republic or union? The efficacy of promoting the mundanities of life in electoral propaganda has held little interest. The distinguishing precepts of political parties fuelled the initial thrust of political campaigning, but a disquiet obviously stirred within voters’ minds on the future of old age pensions, farming, access to education and more equitable taxation.

Governance from a local perspective in 1920 became necessary for candidates to secure approval on local issues. Life’s mundanities became the backbone of electoral propaganda content. As the polling date loomed in 1918 old age pensions, housing, farming and general taxation took prominence, and in 1920 the cost of rates and local public services, such as parks and amenities, came to the fore. To ascertain the importance of these issues to the electorate, this section will investigate how parties and candidates approached propagandizing these topics.

The 1908 Old Age Pension Act had not been framed with Ireland in mind but was rather the outcome of a long political debate in Britain to alleviate the miseries of old age amongst the
industrial workers of England. It did, however, relieve thousands from the indignities of poor relief in Ireland. Nationalist politicians had not sought pensions for the aged, and nor were they consulted beforehand on its implications for Ireland, but they claimed credit during the by-elections and general election campaign. The Irish Party also attempted to inculcate a sense of fiscal fear by asking who would protect the government pensions. For instance, Chas Laverty, solicitor and Irish Party supporter in South Monaghan, emphasised that the British Exchequer would, if they were not monitored in Parliament, cut down the old age pension because there would be ‘no one to speak a word for this county unless the Carsonite gang’. In the Falls Division of Belfast, Devlin reminded voters that ‘under the Old Age Pension Acts up to the present £20,000,000 [had] been paid to Irish men and Irish women … whereas formerly they had no refuge in their old age’. He maintained that it was he who had ‘laboured unceasingly and successfully’ to have this pension increased from 5s to 7s 6d per week, and that he would continue to campaign until the pension was increased ‘to 10s a week in view of the increased cost of living’. To unsettle voters further, Irish Party candidates alleged that the pensions could cease if Ireland cut off ties with the British Exchequer. O’Flanagan, during the East Cavan campaign, angrily condemned the Irish Party for attempting to create a state of anxiety.

Creating confidence in Sinn Féin’s abstentionist ideals was crucial in alleviating voter uneasiness about an Irish government managing its own fiscal affairs and protecting pensions. Sinn Féin’s immediate reaction was to incessantly voice indignant outrage against the Irish Party for trying to quell the possibility of increasing pensions for Ireland’s aged. In South Longford it was pointed out that Redmond had stated that pensioners should be allowed to receive no more than half-a-crown a week. Ginnell argued that the old age pension ‘should no more be reduced than

215 John Borgovino, ‘Throwing Discretion to the Wind: The 1918 General Election in Cork City’ in From Parnell to Paisley, Constitutional and Revolutionary Politics in Modern Ireland, ed by Caoimhe NicDháibhéid and Colin Reid (Dublin & Portland, Or, 2010), p. 88.
216 Anglo-Celt, 7 December 1918.
217 Freeman’s Journal, 30 November 1918.
218 Maume, p. 193.
219 Claimants whose income did not exceed £21 were entitled to five shillings a week (a half crown = 2s and 6d, so 5 shillings = a crown). The entitlement decreased on a sliding scale by a shilling per £21 2s 6d of extra income until the upper annual income limit of £31 10s was reached.
Redmond’s salary of £400 a year to £300’. 220 To protect pensions Sinn Féin repeated their plan to appeal to the Paris peace conference to guarantee Ireland’s independence and management of tax affairs. By condemning exorbitant nationalist and Unionist spend in towns and cities they endeavoured to reveal that pension affordability was attainable under republican administration.

MacNeill announced that Derry contributed ‘over and above’ what it was compelled to pay to the British Empire. He calculated that £700,000 was contributed annually and most of the cost went to ‘maintaining a British army of occupation’. Ireland was paying ‘about thirty-five million pounds’ because of the ‘exorbitant cost of Irish administration’, and therefore taxation and payments made Ireland ‘one of the most profitable of the so-called possessions of the British Empire’. Separating the exchequers could allow Ireland fund welfare payments and sever ‘the trade monopoly which made the Irish people deal with her [Britain] for everything they wanted and everything they had to sell’. 221 A Sinn Féin supporter in West Cavan argued that England could not be trusted because ‘Irish farmers could get £5 more per head for their cattle than the English were paying’. 222

Unionists upheld the idea that with continued control by the British Exchequer no change would be effected in state payments. Craig acknowledged and pledged reforms in housing for Ulster, but in all else he allied to British concerns because Ireland ‘was likely to go on as an integral part of the United Kingdom for many years to come’. 223 In contradiction, the Irish Party – since the outset of the Third Home Rule Bill – maintained that ‘the introduction of old age pensions had made it impossible for Ireland to pay her own way has not real evidence to support it’. Augustine Birrell, Chief Secretary during the home rule negotiations, had pointed out that Irishmen

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220 The Pension Act (1909) provided for a non-contributory old age pension for persons over the age of 70 with a number of conditions. The level of benefit was set low to encourage workers to make their own provisions for retirement. In order to be eligible a person had to earn less than £31 10s per annum and they had to pass a ‘character test’ – only those with ‘good’ character could receive a pension. You also had to be a UK resident for at least twenty years and you had to have worked your whole life to be eligible. Excluded entirely were those in receipt of poor relief, ‘lunatics’ in asylums, persons sentenced to prison for ten years after their release, persons convicted of drunkenness (at the discretion of the court), and any person who was guilty of ‘habitual failure to work’ according to one’s ability: John Macnicol, The Politics of Retirement in Britain, 1908–1948 (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 157–8.

221 Fermanagh Herald, 16 December 1919.

222 Anglo-Celt, 7 December 1918: at a public meeting to support Paul Galligan’s candidature for West Cavan.

223 Irish Times, 29 November 1918.
received over £1 million more in benefits, mainly for old age pensions and land purchase, than they paid in taxes. Unionists repeatedly promoted this argument.

Voter interest on the future of pension payments should have received more attention than they in fact did; given that one third of government expenditure in Ireland was on old age pensions.224 In 1918 the Irish voter, and in turn the political candidates, mentioned but did not dwell on the financial intricacies of the old age pensions to any great degree. Whether this was because it was a difficult concept that required sophisticated fiscal knowledge, or whether it was the additional arguments made by Sinn Féin on Ireland’s possible nett taxation gain under independence is difficult to determine. There were also other more pressing concerns now that the Great War had ended. The financial farming boom brought about because of war food and agricultural supplies had ended, and returning soldiers required housing and employment.

The interruption in house building, particularly in Ulster, during the war had created serious shortages. The *Irish Times* reported that there were no vacant houses in Belfast, and that at least 2,000 new homes needed to be built immediately.225 Fiery exchanges followed between Unionists and nationalists in Ulster on housing. In the early months of canvassing for the 1918 general election Captain Charles Craig at a meeting of the South Antrim Unionist Association emphasised the necessity for ‘a thorough-going housing reform’.226 For Unionists, the needs of demobilised soldiers and industrial workers took priority, and as Carson declared, they were not going to wait until the Prime Minister sorted out the problems of nationalist Ireland for a housing reform for Ulster.227 Devlin in the Falls division of Belfast claimed he had always considered it his

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224 NLI, JR, MS 15,252/2: John Redmond on Home Rule Bill finances. Estimates for OAP spend were £2.60 million. Under home rule the imperial government was to continue to control and pay for the ‘reserved services’ including old age pensions, national insurance, land purchase and collection of taxes. If the Irish government chose to take over any of the ‘reserved services’ then the block grant, generally termed the ‘transferred sum’ would be increased accordingly. The transferred sum would include a surplus of £500,000 per annum for the first three years, to provide a working margin for the Irish government. This surplus would be reduced gradually over six years, until it reached £200,000 at which point it would remain fixed: Patricia Jalland, ‘Irish Home Rule Finance: A Neglected Dimension of the Irish Question, 1910-1914’ in O’Day, *Reactions to Irish Nationalism*, p. 304. See also McConnell, p. 237.


226 *Irish Times*, 29 November 1918.

227 *Freeman’s Journal*, 16 November 1918: Carson stated that ‘We are not going to wait until he [Prime Minister] comes to terms with the Nationalists to have that [housing] reform for Ulster’.
‘special duty to champion the cause of the working classes of this great city’, particularly in relation to securing ‘better housing of the workers’. He announced that if re-elected he would continue to support housing reform and other measures at Westminster.\(^{228}\)

Housing concerns unsettled southern politicians also and instigated debate and passion into the 1920 local elections. A letter to the *Limerick Leader* condemned ‘the wretched housing of the working classes, and the “scourge of profiteering”’. High rates were killing the building trade and paralysing the investor. The solution proffered was to ‘be our own landlords by purchasing our own houses’ to have ‘a direct interest in keeping down the rates’.\(^ {229}\) P.C. Cowan’s *Report on Dublin Housing* estimated that there was a need for improved housing for at least 41 per cent of Dublin city’s population (135,700 persons or 29,500 families), ergo 16,500 new houses were needed with a ‘re-model’ of 13,000 tenements.\(^ {230}\) The Irish Convention Committee on housing calculated that the existing shortage of houses for Irish County Boroughs was 28,950, with a shortage in Dublin being 16,500 and Belfast at 7,500. For all Irish urban areas, the Committee stated that a total of 67,500 houses were needed at a cost of £400 per house, amounting to £27,000,000 in total.\(^ {231}\)

Devlin disagreed with the Belfast figures, believing them ‘not very creditable’; however he preferred to get the building work done rather than engage in controversy.\(^ {232}\) 400,000 houses at £400 per house were required in these two countries, he calculated, and this would cost the

\(^{228}\) Ibid, 30 November 1918.
\(^{229}\) *Limerick Leader*, 16 January 1920.
\(^{231}\) However, it was expected that fifty per cent of the loan charges for building were to be borne by the central Government, and that the work was to be conducted by local authorities.
\(^{232}\) *Freeman’s Journal*, 30 November 1918.
exchequer £160,000,000; and the provision of adequate housing would reduce the spread of tuberculosis. Labour candidates in 1920 pushed for launching a housing scheme without delay, and the application of a £2 10s minimum wage. In the South Dublin Parliamentary Division, the Unionist Thomas Robinson, highlighted that ‘there were other questions of great importance’ and those were the ‘housing of the working classes and of the poor’. Maurice Dockrell, Unionist candidate for Rathmines, promised to ensure the ‘betterment of the working classes’.

Ireland differed from Britain in that there had been no physical destruction of property or infrastructure due to war (aside from the 1916 Rising), therefore progress on forming a plan of reconstruction was slow. Poor housing was not just a city problem, yet little remedy was offered or debated by rural candidates across all parties during the 1918 elections. A correspondent from the Irish Times on 19 December 1918 provided vivid editorial on the deprived conditions in a ‘valley away from the lure of city, town and village’ on general election day. He recalled cycling ‘through three villages within a radius of nine miles’, and described how his heart ‘grew heavy’ when he observed ‘the streets of wretched dwellings, which were neither rain-proof nor wind-proof nor smoke-proof, nor smell-proof from the dung hills and stagnant cesspools.’ There was ‘not one word appear[ing] in the [election] addresses about this crying evil of habitation, fit only for swine, and not for human beings…’.

Whether Unionist or nationalist, labour or independent the solution propagated was to amend taxation, particularly taxation on farming because Ireland relied heavily on agricultural industry with three-fourths of the population living by farming. Most Irish farmers now owned their own land with some eleven million acres having been purchased as a result of the Land Acts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Irish Party claimed it was they who had ‘enabled the farmers to purchase their own holdings, secured decent cottages for the labourers to live in…’ Dillon at a meeting in Adavoyle in South Armagh stated that:

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233 Ibid; See NAI, 1911 Census, B1 Form.
234 *Kilkenny People*, 10 January 1920.
235 *Irish Times*, 23 November 1918.
236 Ibid, 19 December 1918. The author does not name the villages or county in which he is travelling.
237 *Dundalk Democrat*, 26 January 1918.
the Irish farmers were to-day the owners of their own land, and if they were to-day beginning to prosper, as compared with the position they occupied thirty years ago, who had they to thank? Not the baby politicians of to-day, but the men who had helped to take the yoke off their necks.\textsuperscript{238}

Sinn Féin retaliated by criticising the Irish Party for levying high taxes on farmers. ‘Farmers! Your turn now’ was the mantra. Candidates alleged that the only reason higher taxes had not been imposed on farmers in Ireland was because the exchequer could not afford to employ new collection staff. War taxation was the real future threat because ‘very little of the colossal expenditure of this war has been recovered in taxation’ and that it was only a matter of time before ‘crushing taxation’ would be implemented.\textsuperscript{239} In 1914 income tax was imposed at relatively low rates, and large parts of the working population were exempted, particularly within the waged working classes.\textsuperscript{240} By 1915 it became evident that the amounts of revenue being raised from taxation were not sufficient to fund a large-scale war. Therefore, initiatives were sought to rapidly increase revenue, and the result was the Munitions Levy and the Excess Profits Duty (EPD).\textsuperscript{241}

The latter was introduced specifically to tackle war profiteering in an attempt to distribute the burden of taxation equitably between different classes of taxpayer.

Sinn Féin promised Irish farmers they would only pay four pounds ‘at the most’ in taxation rather than the ten pounds an Irish farmer was now paying. Again, the Paris peace conference was to provide the answer because Sinn Féin was to ‘have behind them England’s claim that the “small nations” of the world should be free’. A claim before the ‘Powers of Europe’ could allow for a

\textsuperscript{238} \textit{Irish Times}, 28 January 1918.
\textsuperscript{239} Britain in 1918 still had to finance the Allies to the sum of £405,000,000: HC, PD, vol 105, cc869-873, 23 April 1918: Herbert Samuels. The Income Tax Act 1918 was introduced to affray some of these costs. This act defined different types of income in schedules to the act, and specified different rules for allowable deductions in each schedule: Victor Thuronyi, \textit{Comparative Tax Law} (The Hague, London and NY, 2003), pp. 26-27. In Ireland, income tax for 1918-1919 was charged at a rate of 6 shillings, but there were reliefs. The taxation details are intricate and difficult to engage in in a work of this nature. Further details are available from \textit{Irish Statute Book, Finance Act 1918}, 6 & 7 Geo. 5. c. 24. 16 & 17 Vict. c. 34; 32 & 33 Vict. c. 67 (Office of the Attorney General), http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1918/act/15. In regards to reliefs, any individual who claimed and proved that the total income from all sources did not exceed £2,500 shall receive relief from income tax – 2 shillings and 3 pence if the total income does not exceed five hundred pounds.
constitution to be drafted that would provide relief from a ‘ruinous burden of taxation’. They warned that after the war this burden of taxation on Ireland would increase to £27,000,000, and on top of that Ireland’s contribution to the Empire would not be less than £14,500,000, and the cost of government £12,500,000. They calculated that the tax per head of the population would be £6 7s, whereas an Irish Republic could reduce these taxes because the projected cost of government would not be more than £10,000,000 or £13,000,000 – even if a further small amount was imposed for internal development, encouragement of industries, farming operations, and subsiding export trade. This would bring the total to £3 per head of the population.

Pre-independence public policies for Sinn Féin had been developed mainly by Griffith who upheld a system of economic self-sufficiency to reduce dependence on trade with Britain. His 1905 economic argument against British rule, detailed in a pamphlet, decried current over-taxation and projected how Ireland’s tax revenue could be reduced under Sinn Féin management. It began by comparing Ireland’s taxation figures with a number of other small nations, among them Denmark and Greece. Denmark with a population of 2,464,770 and a revenue of £4,250,000 paid £1 13s tax per head; Greece with a population of 2,133,806 and a revenue of £3,000,000 paid £1 3s 6d per head; Ireland, on the other hand, with a population of 4,376,600 and a revenue of 9,490,500 paid £2 3s 3d per head. Resolution, therefore, lay in complete withdrawal from Westminster and the creation of an Irish Council which would use taxpayers’ money to reform education through a National Education Fund, support industry and create co-operative banks. It was pointed out that the Irish Party were ill-equipped to wage the battle against over-taxation because they collected a salary of £400 per year from the British Exchequer. Those in receipt of government pay could not fight a land tax as ‘they must think of their own pockets first’.

No mention was made at this stage of future salaries for Sinn Féin ministers.

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243 TCD, Samuels Collection, Box 3 (Digital No. SamuelsBox3-040): Hard Facts.
244 Peter Brown, TCD, Personal Collection: Pamphlet Sinn Féin in Tabloid Form.
245 UCDA, P150/550, Eamon de Valera Papers: Threatening A Land Tax. Sinn Féin regularly made reference to the £400 a year salary of the Irish Party MPs. Arthur Griffith accused them of betraying Davitt and Parnell and following a policy of Sadlier and Keogh. Lord Aberdeen had appointed William Keogh as Solicitor General for Ireland and John Sadlier became Junior Lord of the Treasury. The media controversy that followed Sadlier and Keogh’s ‘defection’ intensified a split within the Irish Party: R. V. Comerford,
Sinn Féin’s Cosgrave, as mentioned earlier, waged his propaganda war in Kilkenny on the issue of taxation. Now and again he alluded to the fact that Sinn Féin stood in the election in similar style to Owen Roe O’Neill and the old Irish during the days of the Confederation of Kilkenny. He quickly moved on from these historic references to hone in on Ireland’s over-taxation, declining population and increases in lunacy and pauperism. Blame was squarely laid on weak Irish Party policies which had led to ‘this degradation’ and lack of industry in a city where previously a blanket industry had employed 4,000 hands when the population was 25,000. By voting Sinn Féin ‘a soul’ would ‘come back to Ireland’.  

Magennis counter-campaigned to highlight that Cosgrave was an outsider and a Dublin Corporation man by releasing a poster titled *Kilkenny for a Kilkennyman*. Kilkenny City proved that it was not all high idealism that secured victory for Sinn Féin. This small city with a population of 10,514, a register of electors of 1,676, cast their votes for Cosgrave giving him a majority of 380.

Unionists unreservedly slammed charges of over-taxation, and any notion that a separate legislature was the solution. According to a 1918 handbill they claimed that Ireland under the Union had been permitted to have a separate Exchequer until 1817 and during this time the national debt rose from £28,000,000 to £147,000,000. An end to this insolvency only arrived when the exchequers were united and Great Britain accepted responsibility for that vast sum. They argued that the theory of over-taxation in Ireland had only been invented to justify financial proposals for the home rule bill, starting with Gladstone’s Bill in 1886.

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246 See chapter two. Dáil deputies were not paid a salary but they did receive travel and accommodation expenses. Other initial expenditure included securing several properties around Dublin for Dáil business. The RIC Inspector General’s report for February 1919 stated that the financial situation was causing considerable anxiety for Dáil Éireann as the scale of the finance needed to establish a functioning counter-state became clear: NA, Dublin Castle Papers, CO 904/108.

247 *Irish Independent*, 20 July 1917.

248 *Thom’s Directory* 1915. The *Irish Times* puts this figure at approximately 1,701 names, but stated that the effective strength of the constituency would not exceed 1,300 for this by-election. The *Irish Independent* reported that the total poll was 1,164 and it as estimated that the qualified voters numbered between 1,300 and 1,400: *Irish Times*, 8 August 1917 and *Irish Independent*, 13 August 1917.

249 PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/142, U.C. 111: *Has Ireland been Robbed by England?*
Ulster, it was pointed out, had invested in the linen trade which amounted to over £20,000,000 and it now had the largest linen manufacturing concern in the world. Ulster also had the largest firm of linen thread, twine and netting manufacturers, the largest rope and cable works, the largest shipbuilding firm and the largest single tobacco works in the world. Ulster had the largest single flax spinning industry in the world and the largest linen export trade. Unionists, therefore, summoned the electorate to ‘stand by Ulster’ and not support Sinn Féin.\textsuperscript{250}

Other Unionists highlighted that the great problem facing industry was reconstructing and reorganising trade because of the war.\textsuperscript{251} The priority was the development of Irish industries, reform of primary education and the extension of technical and university education.\textsuperscript{252} The completion of land purchase through the Land Acts was a paramount concern to sustain prices to ensure a proper return to farmers. Unionists warned that if Ireland separated from the British Empire and obtained a republic then there would be ‘no markets for cattle and produce’. In Cork City Daniel Williams argued that a vote for Sinn Féin would disfranchise Cork’s important commercial and industrial centre, so the ‘strong protecting arm of Great Britain’ was necessary.\textsuperscript{253}

So, who did the electorate believe? The results indicate at a cursory glance that Sinn Féin persuaded voters in the three southern provinces and in parts of Catholic Ulster, and Unionists held the support of their adherents in Ulster and areas of Dublin. Yet, as will be seen in chapter five, some of Sinn Féin’s wins (Louth and South Wexford being examples) were very narrow. This indicates a bewildered nationalist electorate, and some of that confusion was based on the political hypotheses and wranglings over the management of everyday issues.\textsuperscript{254} In the majority of cases the Irish Party failed to impress with their unaltered home rule arguments. Illusory computations which seemed grounded in fact through comparisons with other small independent nations convinced many voters to cast in favour of Sinn Féin.

\textsuperscript{250} Ibid, U.C. 132: \textit{The Two Irelands, Facts not Fiction!}
\textsuperscript{251} \textit{Irish Times}, 29 November 1918.
\textsuperscript{252} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{253} Ibid, 10 December 1918.
\textsuperscript{254} Walker, \textit{Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92}, pp. 4-9.
In 1912 the formation of a home rule parliament in Dublin seemed almost tangible, but by 1918 all had changed. Unionists with their belief that the Union was ‘the constitutional form best designed to protect Irish Protestants from subjugation to a Catholic minority’ refused to accept a Dublin parliament. Unionism, particularly in Ulster, swelled into aggressive repudiation of any form of home rule. To counteract the threat from the UVF, the Irish Volunteer force was formed in the southern provinces in 1913. The subsequent volunteer split, the Easter Rising, and the breakdown of home rule negotiations in 1916 and 1917 sparked a drive for complete independence among separatists which became politicised in 1917. Laffan correctly points out that ‘the by-elections alone did not cause the emergence of the new Sinn Féin party’, but they were pivotal in creating the political compulsion that transformed the opinion of many. Nationalism assumed a dual approach to independence, with the Irish Party facing progressive decline in numbers heading into the general election.

In 1914 Ireland had stood on the brink of civil war with two volunteer forces armed for conflict – one to defend home rule and the other to resist it. The unfolding Great War in Europe eclipsed the internal domestic tensions, but the idea of partition remained and was made manifest in an amending bill when home rule was enacted and subsequently frozen for the war’s duration. The amending bill implied that Redmond’s ambitions for county option/temporary exclusion was open to further change. In the House of Lords in June 1914 county option became a bloc exclusion of six counties and the time limit was removed.

This perhaps is to begin in the middle of the story, but partition is a topic that has amassed much scholarly work and interpretation. The suggestion to exclude four counties from the home

256 Stewart, The Ulster Crisis, p. 106. Unionist opposition to Home Rule, which had manifested itself with Ulster’s Solemn League and Covenant in September 1912, gathered momentum in 1913 with the organization of the 90,000 strong Ulster Volunteer Force, and the drawing up of an elaborate scheme for the establishment of a ‘Provisional Government’ in the north, in the event of home rule coming into operation: Phoenix, Northern Nationalism, p. 7. At the inaugural meeting of the Irish Volunteers in Dublin 4,000 enlisted. Later Redmond and Devlin persuaded the provisional committee to accept twenty-five nominees from the Irish Party to secure administrative control of the Irish Volunteers (which subsequently became the ‘National’ Volunteers). On the foot of this, membership rose from 50,000 in late May to 100,000 in mid-June, and 150,000 a month later: Freeman’s Journal, 10 June 1914; Fitzpatrick, The Two Irelands, p. 49.
rule agreement began with the Agar-Robartes motion in the Commons on 11 June 1912, paving the way for further debate that continued up to and beyond the creation of the Free State.\textsuperscript{258} This section does not intend an analysis of exclusion or partition, but will briefly examine how political parties represented their views in political propaganda. Elections did not instigate or alter standpoints on partition, so similar messages were regularly repeated.

A few caveats at the outset on the position of Unionists generally and southern Unionists particularly are important. Unionist propaganda created the impression that Ulster was firmly Protestant and Unionist. As Buckland states, this was not the case as only the county borough of Belfast and the counties Antrim, Armagh, Down and Londonderry (including the city) had Protestant majorities.\textsuperscript{259} Furthermore, Unionism was not a homogenous entity across the island because the position and concerns of southern Unionists differed. As O’Connor remarked in a letter to Dillon in 1916, there was a ‘strong protest of the Southern Unionists against any form of partition’ which made the solution of temporary exclusion ‘more difficult than ever’.\textsuperscript{260}

Letters to the editor of the *Irish Times* in 1918 divulge the variances in southern Unionist opinion. For instance, one criticised the ‘entire policy’ of a speech delivered by Carson to the UUC in 1918 because it was ‘limited to Ulster’ with ‘no thought of the southern Unionists’. Trepidation was voiced on whether ‘Ulster, on the question of home rule, has definitely adopted the policy of “ourselves alone”’ or whether in the future … Ulster Unionists will stand shoulder to shoulder with their Unionist brethren in the South’.\textsuperscript{261} A week or so later another letter disputed that Carson had ‘abandoned us’. The difficulty within southern Unionism was that they ‘were scattered and unable to affect any real stand or return any member to represent them in parliament’. Carson’s maxim, it was argued, was to ‘concentrate on Ulster, knowing that practical work for the Union’ would be

\textsuperscript{258} HC, PD, vol. 39, c. 771-774. His amendment was defeated on 14 June by 69 votes, with the House dividing 251 for and 320 against: Stewart, *The Ulster Crisis*, 58-9; O’Day, *Irish Home Rule*, p. 251. On 1 January 1913 Carson proposed an amendment to exclude the province of Ulster from the Home Rule Bill, stating that Unionists were opposed to the whole Bill ‘root and branch’ and that they ‘would not compromise upon this matter if we could’: HC, PD, vol. 46, c. 377-79. On 2 October 1913 Churchill, in a speech in Dundee, hinted at Government capitulation when he stated that the claim of North-East Ulster for special consideration ‘should not be brushed aside without full consideration by any Government’: *Irish Times*, 18 October 1913.

\textsuperscript{259} Buckland, *Ulster Unionism*, p. 93.

\textsuperscript{260} TCD, JD, Ms 6741/355; T.P. O’Connor to John Dillon, 31 October 1916.

\textsuperscript{261} Letter to editor of *Irish Times* from J.H. Nunn, Dublin, 16 November 1918.
achieved and therefore ‘Home Rule Ireland would never accept a division of the island’. Carson was likened to a bridge player holding an immensely strong hand, whereas southern Unionists held weak and scattered cards. With the Sinn Féin opponent on one side and nationalists on the other, a strong hand was necessary to gain a ‘grand slam’ to culminate in ‘closer connection with Great Britain and her Colonies’. \(^\text{262}\)

Population counts and tax contribution comparisons between Ulster and the other three provinces were published to highlight that Ulster paid more and that Ulster was thirty-five per cent more valuable than Munster and Connaught combined. Ulster Unionists, mainly through the voice of Carson, regarded partition as permanent because of the commercial, industrial and social position of Belfast and Ulster, compared with the rest of Ireland. \(^\text{263}\) He regularly maintained that ‘we in Ulster will never give up our freedom and our liberty for any man’. This point was restated by southern Unionists who proclaimed (often in their *Irish Independent* advertisements) that the ‘true interests of this country are best served by a steadfast maintenance for the whole of Ireland of the Legislative Union’. Henry Hanna voiced opposition to partition which ‘would be disastrous to the interests of Southern Unionists’. Dockrell bound Ireland’s interests with those of Great Britain and would ‘oppose any measure involving the partition of Ireland’. \(^\text{264}\)

Ulster Unionist apprehension that the electoral outcome could reject partition was evident when four days before polling Carson routed Ulster Unionists from a ‘No Home Rule’ negative policy towards an offensive policy to demand ‘that they receive exactly the same treatment in every respect as was given to their brothers and sisters in England and Scotland’. \(^\text{265}\) As the municipal elections played out in January 1920 rank and file Unionists were satisfied to wait for action and direction from Carson. They were now prepared to accept a parliament for the six counties in

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\(^{262}\) *Irish Times*, 29 November 1918: letter was signed ‘A Woman Voter’.

\(^{263}\) PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/142, U.C. 120: *Ulster and Ireland*.

\(^{264}\) *Irish Independent*, 30 November 1918: Two column-by-five-inch Advertisements by Henry Hanna and Maurice Dockrell.

\(^{265}\) *Irish Times*, 11 December 1918: Carson addressing a meeting of women electors at the Duncarin Divison, Belfast.
preference to the more dangerous nine counties because the loss of seats through local friction could have given the home rule party a majority.\textsuperscript{266}

Unnerved and flustered by Unionist intransigence Irish Party leaders believed it ‘fatal’ if the government proposed or Ireland assented to ‘any policy of partition’. O’Connor in a letter to Devlin remarked that Dillon was ‘more pessimistic’ and saw ‘no end to our present conditions but the destruction of the party and the constitutional movement’. County option had been favoured by the Irish Party in the hopes of retaining Fermanagh and Tyrone and a hope (‘great hope’) of holding ‘some if not all of the other counties’.\textsuperscript{267} A disconcerted O’Connor wrote to Redmond in 1917 oscillating on his translation of Carson’s opinion. First Carson ‘blocks the way’ to a home rule settlement and then Carson was ‘anxious for settlement’ but worried over ‘losing all hold over his followers in Ulster’. O’Connor feared that home rule might amount to only ‘separate treatment’ by Britain rather that the ability ‘to establish a unitary parliament’ for all Ireland.\textsuperscript{268} By May 1917 O’Connor had given up hope and claimed that ‘all my efforts for county option had been futile’. Blame was cast on the state of Irish feeling and the Bishop’s manifesto.\textsuperscript{269}

Conventional constitutional nationalists were not so forlorn in 1918 and without hesitation declared their opposition to the partition of Ireland. Denis J. Cogan, nationalist candidate for East Wicklow, affirmed that the answer for nationalists was ‘an Irish Parliament with full powers of legislation in all Irish affairs, subject to the religious safeguards contained in the 1914 Act, and giving generous additional representation to our Unionist fellow-countrymen’. Patrick Shorthall of Clontarf claimed similar stating he was ‘convinced’ that the principle of self-determination should apply and he favoured an ‘undivided Ireland by constitutional means’.\textsuperscript{270} Special arrangements for Unionist Ulster for these two candidates had not broadened beyond what was on offer in 1914 – an

\textsuperscript{266} PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/A/32/1: Letter to Edward Carson, 3 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{267} NLI, Redmond Papers, MS 15,215/2/B: T.P. O’Connor to Joe Devlin, 16 February 1917.
\textsuperscript{268} Ibid: T.P. O’Connor to Redmond, 29 March 1917.
\textsuperscript{269} Ibid: T.P. O’Connor to Redmond, 10 May 1917. The bishop’s manifesto was in reference to Walsh’s letter (signed by three Protestant and sixteen Catholics including Cardinal Logue and Archbishop Walsh) released in May 1917 during the South Longford by-election which was alleged anti-partitionist.
\textsuperscript{270} Irish Independent, 30 November 1918: Two-column-by-five-inch advertisement by Patrick Shorthall, Clontarf; and two-column-by-seven-inch advertisement by D.J. Coogan, East Wicklow.
offer that remained unacceptable to Unionists who perceived themselves as British with, as Fitzpatrick points out, ‘all the spiritual and material privileges that this conferred’.  

‘No Partition’ and ‘a united Ireland’ were the two constants in Sinn Féin propaganda. In Sligo, Sinn Féin condemned the Irish Party record of consent to ‘the dissection of Ireland’. Condemning partition and endorsing a republic were the verbal or printed propaganda messages. Yet, the by-elections of 1918 brought two losses for Sinn Féin in Ulster constituencies (South Armagh and East Tyrone), demonstrating political impotency in this province. Only three seats were won by Sinn Féin in the 1918 general election in the area of Ulster that went on to become Northern Ireland. The Ulster total was twenty-three seats for Unionists out of thirty-eight, with Sinn Féin getting ten and the Irish Party five. Ulster Unionists were perceived as the enemy by Sinn Féin, as pawns of English conservatism, necessary only to maintain Britain’s powerbase in Ireland. Only a few in Sinn Féin, such as Erskine Childers, grasped the obligation of providing Unionists with a place of power in an independent Ireland.

Labour similarly disparaged the ‘claim of a minority government to pass [the] … partition of Ireland’. O’Brian asserted that organized labour in Ireland ‘was absolutely agreed that there should be no such thing as partition. The trades unions of the north were determined they would not be separated from the trades unions of the south’ (applause). Internally to members at annual congress meetings, leaders reinforced the Labour position on partition by stating that ‘Irish Trade Unionists would not have partition’.

Initially all sides had held the opinion that Ireland must remain undivided, but as the expected short world war dragged on constitutional nationalists inclined towards a temporary compromise. Sinn Féin believed abstention from Westminster was the ‘only logical and long-called-for protest against the Union’. The Irish Party utterly rejected Sinn Féin policy and attempted to mollify both Unionists and nationalists in Ulster by insisting on a policy of consent.

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272 TCD, JD, Mss 6742: speech by Rev. P.J. O’Grady addressing a Sinn Féin meeting in Sligo in 1918.
275 ITUC&LP, Twenty-third Annual Report.
By 1920, despite wars, uprisings, and conventions, the Irish Party had no fresh solutions to the Ulster problem.

Having attained fifty-three per cent of the seats in Ulster in the 1918 general election and with the triumph of the coalition government in Britain, Unionists were in a stronger position to demand their six counties. Nationalists were no longer able to proclaim Ulster’s homogeneity; Britain was utterly dependent on the votes of the Conservative and Unionist Party; and Sinn Féin retreated from Westminster allowing Unionist domination in the House of Commons. Partition was now patently unavoidable – but what form would it take? By 1919 an Irish Committee was appointed by the British government, headed by the Conservative MP Walter Long, which recommended two home rule parliaments with a supervisory Council of Ireland to direct all sides eventually towards reunion of the whole island. In February 1920 Lloyd George ultimately reversed the committee recommendations and appeased Unionists by granting their six county Northern Ireland which was ratified by the Government of Ireland Bill.276

Did propaganda on partition sway voters to align with a particular political approach? Sinn Féin’s message was melded with demands for a united Ireland and abstention from Westminster. This unyielding approach was similar (but contrary to) the Unionist partition demand and gave little leeway for compromise. The Irish Party protested against partition, but began to concede that temporary exclusion from home rule might be necessary. Nationalists on both sides berated the other, with the result that the fight against partition was waged among nationalists rather than through projecting a unified approach against Unionist and British interests. John Cosgrove, a volunteer from South Armagh, remarked that after the South Armagh election the feelings between Sinn Fein and the Hibernian organization became more antagonistic; ‘the intense hatred by Hibernians to everything republican did a lot of harm from 1918 up to the truce and it paved the way for the later partitioning of the country’.277

Voter interest in the topic can be somewhat deduced by the vehemence of the approach to partition by political candidates. Voters could also observe political and military attitudes and

277 BMH WS 605: John Cosgrove.
tactics in Ulster, but much of the actions – or lack of action – in the six counties of Ulster during the War of Independence came after the major elections of this era. That Sinn Féin and the IRA militant wing failed to make a priority of Ulster and failed to protect Catholic minority interests has been a common accusation. Yet, Sinn Féin was successful in some of the constituencies with Catholic majorities so other influences no doubt affected electoral outcomes. The coalition government had caved because of pressure from James Craig by September 1920, particularly in regard to supplementing reserve forces and establishing the Specials. Voter confidence in the Irish Party’s placatory approach swayed to favour Sinn Féin’s doggedness on partition and other issues. For many Catholics in Ulster the Irish Party had wavered which demonstrated incompetence in the face of the Unionist challenge, but the fear of outright partition convinced many to stand by Devlin in 1918.

Open criticism against Unionists by clerical supporters of Sinn Féin such as that by Archbishop Walsh who described Irish Unionists as the ‘common enemy’, and Cardinal Logue who stated the election of an abstaining Sinn Féiner was preferable to that of a Unionist may have alarmed Ulster Catholics. Temporary solutions suggested by Irish Party candidates at least bought time, and may have protected Devlin’s seat. It was the passionate counsel of the Unionist leaders before and during (and after) the general election on the partitioning of Ulster from a southern home rule parliament that ensured victory in their stronghold constituencies in 1918. As will be seen in the next chapter, the local government election results caused alarm for northern Unionists who believed that the PR-STV system weighted against their attaining majorities on county and rural district councils. This led Unionists in Northern Ireland to abolish the PR-STV system in 1929 in favour of the previous first-past-the-post system.

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278 In 1921 a sum of £5,000 was advanced by the Minister for Finance for Partition Elections in the North of Ireland so while attention may have deviated to the south in military matters, politically Sinn Féin vested time and money into winning elections in Ulster: NLI, Piarais Beaslaí Papers, MS 33,912/9 Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, November 1921, Report of the Secretary.


280 Irish Times, 3 December 1918

281 Devlin defeated de Valera in the Falls division by strong margin of 5,243 votes.
5.

The Results

This chapter investigates the results of all elections to determine which parties influenced voters to cast in their favour and who failed to impress. Voter turnout will also be analysed to assess the effects of emigration and absent voters because of the Great War. Other factors that influenced electoral results such as intimidation and aggression, the Spanish flu, spoiled votes, candidate age and occupation, and the impact of the youth vote and women’s votes in 1918 and 1920 will be examined. The conclusion of this thesis will analyse if party propaganda campaigns directly influenced the electorate, but prior to reaching that point it is important to know how parties performed.

Gallagher correctly points out that there are no official records of the results of pre-1948 general elections in Ireland.¹ Those provided in this work come from a number of sources, the main one being Brian Walker’s *Parliamentary Election Results*. As stated in the introduction, this proved invaluable for the 1918 general election for results, candidates’ names, party affiliation, number of votes obtained, and electorate size. Provincial and national newspapers were also extensively used for the by-elections and the 1920 local government elections, and to add some further relevant details for 1918 particularly contemporary opinion and commentary.

How voters interpreted and understood party policies, propaganda and electioneering methods in 1918 can be interpreted. Of course, this cannot account for the protest vote. For instance, in nationalist circles those who were dissatisfied with the Irish Party had only two alternatives – Unionist or Sinn Féin. An existing ingrained political stance (or intolerance) was often the predicator of that vote, and lack of choice meant abstention or spoiled votes. As discussed in chapter one, working class voters in the three southern provinces were limited because of Labour’s absence during the by-elections and withdrawal in 1918. They either abstained or cast in favour of Sinn Féin, perceiving them as more compassionate to labour issues particularly

because the Irish Party had been conspicuous by their silence in the Dublin labour dispute of 1913. In labour circles the Irish Party were perceived as a party of ‘the middle classes, the agriculturalists, the house jobbers, slum landlords, and drink sellers’.²

The results can enlighten on voter attitudes towards party propaganda communiqués because voting – or abstaining – was the practical demonstration of beliefs and aspirations. Knowledge was gleaned during the by-elections by nationalists (as no Unionists participated), particularly separatists, which no doubt led to victory for those who developed strong propaganda that persuaded or manipulated voters; and understood voter wants in 1920. Irish Party trepidation because of the threat of Sinn Féin deepened and this affected their ability to contest in many constituencies in 1918 and it led to losses in many other constituencies. The scale of Irish Party losses in 1918 will be investigated to ascertain if they were annihilated, leaving them unable to contest in 1920. Did constitutional nationalists have any success in 1920 or were those elections landslide victories for Sinn Féin? And, where were Unionist successes and failures across the entire island in these elections? An examination of Labour’s participation in 1920 will inform on the electorate’s views towards a burgeoning working class party.

5.1: 1917 and 1918 By-elections

Earlier chapters of this work revealed the regeneration of Sinn Féin during the by-elections and the growing impotence of the Irish Party, particularly during the home rule negotiations of 1916 and the Irish Convention of 1917. This section considers the extent to which Sinn Féin won voters at the by-elections to the impairment of the Irish Party. Was there a pre-general election indication that the Irish Party was now under a severe threat by a less conciliatory and more aggressive form of nationalism? A full table of by-elections results can be seen in Appendix A.

The outcome of the by-elections was heavily influenced by wartime occurrences such as conscription and British cabinet decisions. All occurred post-Easter Rising, including the West

Cork by-election held in November 1916 and mentioned in chapter one. O’Leary’s victory by 116 votes did not reflect Irish Party strength in the constituency, but rather the League’s growing disarray. O’Leary’s win was less than the combined votes of the two League candidates, and the seat fell uncontested to Sinn Féin nearly two years later in the general election.3

On Christmas Eve 1916 internees involved or connected with the Easter Rising were released and among the 130 arriving at Westland Row on the early morning train from Kingstown, having come across by the ‘mail packet from Holyhead’, were Griffith and Collins.4 Their arrival enhanced political momentum, and the North Roscommon by-election in February 1917 galvanised them to action. The victorious candidate, Count Plunkett, was vociferously supported by Sinn Féin’s Fr O’Flanagan and Laurence Ginnell, and an entourage of cars carrying Collins and Griffith, who led the canvass. His clear majority over the Irish Party candidate, Thomas Devine, who was a well-regarded county councillor, revealed there was a threat now facing the Irish Party which jeopardized their political predominance and wartime recruitment drive.

Three years before the North Roscommon by-election most county councils across Ireland had voiced unconditional support for Redmond and the Irish Party when Volunteers were pledged to defend the coastlines of Ireland at the outbreak of the war.5 After Redmond broadened this to ‘wherever the firing lines extends’, the mood began to subtly alter.6 A split developed in the Irish Volunteer movement, but the majority remained on the side of Redmond.7

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3 The two AFIL candidates were Frank J. Healy who attained 1,750 votes and Dr Michael Shipsey who attained 370, with O’Leary reaching 1,806 votes.
4 Irish Times, 26 December 1916: ‘most, if not all of the young men who were arrested early last summer for having some connection, more or less, with the disastrous rebellion … have been released from the internment camps in which they were detained in England and Wales’.
5 See for example, Nationalist and Leinster Times, 8 August 1914; Drogheda Independent, 8 August 1914; Clare Champion, 8 August 1914. Cork Examiner, 4 & 5 August 1914; Limerick Leader, 5 August 1914; Irish Times, 8 August 1914; Leitrim Gazettet/Advertiser, 6 August 1914; Kilkenny Moderator, 15 & 20 August 1914.
6 The Maryborough, Queen’s County and Woodenbridge speeches in August and September 1914 are good examples of Redmond’s encouragement to Volunteers to extend service beyond Ireland. See Weekly Irish Times, 22 August 1914. Full text of Redmond’s speech in Maryborough; Martin, The Irish Volunteers, p. 148: Redmond’s speech to Volunteers at Woodenbridge, Co. Wicklow on 20 September 1914.
7 Westmeath Independent and Sligo Champion, 26 September 1914; Wheatley, Nationalism and the Irish Party, pp. 208-212. Prior to the split the numbers enrolled in the Volunteer movement totalled approximately 188,000, of this 13,000 adhered to the original Provisional Committee. Lee, Ireland, p. 22: There are variations in these figures cited by different authorities on the subject, however the overall ratios are similar. See Nationalist and Leinster Times, 10 October 1914 and Connacht Tribune on 17 October 1914 for commentary after Woodenbridge speech.
Party candidate in North Roscommon demonstrated, as Fanning pointed out, mounting disillusion with the horrors of war, and a growing uncertainty over home rule. This sustained anti-war and anti-recruitment rhetoric, adding energy to Plunkett’s campaign. Disaffected or disillusioned Irish Party supporters turned to Plunkett who offered what seemed like a viable alternative to Irish Party supplications to the Imperial parliament. The real vote catcher, however, was Plunkett’s ability to garner empathy from people for his sons’ connection with the Easter Rising, particularly for his executed son Joseph. As the Irish Times put it, ‘Mr Redmond’s formidable election machine was powerless against impassioned appeals like this’.

Unionists did not field a candidate in North Roscommon (or in any of the by-elections), but they denigrated the election result in the pages of their newspapers. The Belfast News Letter in February 1917 maintained that North Roscommon was ‘glorying in its treason’, and the ‘rebel poll of North Roscommon’ demonstrated ‘what lies at the bottom of home rule’. The results of North Roscommon sharpened Unionist demands for retention of the union and heightened their condemnation of home rule and any form of Irish republic. Blame was also cast on censorship of the press which had hushed reports of ‘seditious doings’ by nationalist organisations ‘on the ground that they would injure Imperial interests’.

Irish Party gloom was evident in words written by Redmond after North Roscommon where he remarked on ‘the remarkable and unexpected results of the election’. His ‘fatalistic despair’, as Lyons termed it, was evident and only the protests of senior colleagues prevented publication of this memorandum. Genuine trepidation over the Irish Party’s future and an awakening to the mounting threat of Sinn Féin was expressed, but there was still an element of denial. The Irish Party leader believed that people would not repudiate home rule in favour of ‘the alternative principle … which Ireland’s enemies to-day assert’.

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9 See chapter four, section 4.4.
10 Irish Times, 8 February 1917.
11 Belfast Evening Telegraph, February 1917.
13 TCD, JD, Mss 6749/649: Letter from Redmond to Dillon with an enclosed statement for the press, 21 February 1917.
One contested by-election was insufficient evidence that the Irish Party was facing defeat by separatist-style nationalism – particularly given that Plunkett was not specifically a Sinn Féin candidate. What it demonstrated was that Plunkett’s methods of propaganda and his novel themes had attracted voter attention. Redmond’s sense of unease and foreboding was evident but his words tried to convince that ‘no natural heartburning and disappointment at [home rule] delays, and no resentment, however passionate, at recent happenings will drive her [Ireland] into a fatal and insane course’.

South Longford’s bitterly fought contest between the interned McGuinness and the Irish Party’s McKenna culminated in an expectant ‘huge crowd’ that gathered outside the Courthouse. According to the Longford Leader, ‘300 Sinn Féiners and about 500 supporters of McKenna wearing their green colours’ anxiously awaited the results. An initial pronouncement gave a twelve vote victory to McKenna. But, it was promptly discovered that fifty votes had gone uncounted and when these were added victory fell by a majority of only a mere thirty-seven votes to McGuinness. Determination had narrowly won the day for Sinn Féin in a constituency that had heretofore been ardent in its Irish Party advocacy. Frank Gallagher acknowledged that Longford was ‘strong it its support of the Parliamentary Party’; Piaras Béaslaí believed ‘the supporters of the Parliamentary Party were very strong in Longford’; and Arthur Griffith saw South Longford as a ‘hotbed of the Irish Party’. Redmond had been attacked for suspending home rule and agreeing to partition in an attempt by Sinn Féin to nourish the idea that partition was avoidable. They won over the younger clergy and some parish priests who spoke out openly in their favour regardless of the politics of their bishops. Sinn Féin’s majority was slim, but for a new party with novel policies contesting against the established regime they proved that their often wily and

14 Ibid.
15 Longford Leader, 12 May 1917.
16 There are many versions of the vote counting in South Longford including accusations of purposeful miscounting or changing the vote bundles. Laurence Nugent, BMH WS 907, stated that ‘some smart AOH electioneering agent had changed a bundle of fifty votes cast in favour of Joe McGuiness on to the votes for the IPP candidate. This was soon discovered. What joy!’ Dan McCarthy, BMH WS 722, claimed it was an innocent error. See BMH WS 707: Michael Noyk and BMH WS 1766 William O’Brien for further examples.
resourceful propaganda paid off. Astute opinion and wit was well displayed in a Sinn Féin ballad published in the *Roscommon Herald* on 4 April 1917:

So how the party would barefacedly sell you  
Cut Ulster up on a con-acre plot  
Hear their loud cheers when they heard in the Commons  
That Pearse and his men were court-martialled and shot.  
Men of South Longford show  
That bounders now must go!  
Party supporters no victory will gain.  
Still be on Erin’s side  
Think of the men who died.  
Vote for McGuiness and the call of Sinn Féin.

Constituency disorganisation and lack of intelligence on the political ambitions of Sinn Féin lost the Irish Party this by-election. McKenna’s crude insults, evident in the ‘political dustbin’ poster (see Figure 3.5), inadvertently gave credence to his opponent. While he had led in the polling districts of Newtownforbes, Longford and Kenagh, with an even vote in the townland of Caltrabeg (where out of 301 votes he attained 150), he was outvoted in Ballymahon and Carrikboy, and held a ‘hopeless minority’ in Lanesborough.\(^\text{18}\)

In East Clare the Irish Party could have forecast a heated contest against de Valera, but not their annihilation in a constituency where John Redmond’s brother William had been MP since 1892.\(^\text{19}\) All was not calm within Sinn Féin either as prior to de Valera’s release from Pentonville Prison in June 1917 Brugha and Griffith ‘had been at daggers drawn … so much so that Brugha had threatened that if Griffith stumped the country for Sinn Féin, he would get the Volunteers to stop him’. Robert Brennan claimed that in the immediacy of de Valera’s release he ‘was working night and day to get Brugha and Griffith in step’.\(^\text{20}\) Concerns over de Valera’s moderate political approach were voiced by some within the Irish Volunteers who disapprovingly perceived him as similar to the constitutionalists. De Valera’s skill during the East Clare campaign lay in pulling

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\(^{18}\) *Longford Leader*, 12 May 1917.  
\(^{19}\) William Redmond had previously fought two contests in East Clare. In 1892 he defeated a local sitting member, J.R. Cox by a majority of 446. However, an election petition in a constituency where Cox was strong proved that in one polling booth the presiding officer failed to stamp the votes and this knocked them out. In 1895 P.A. McHugh ran as a William O’Brien candidate. Redmond polled 3,315 and McHugh, 3,257 – Redmond’s majority was only 58 in a constituency that had 9,130 electors. There were no further contests in this constituency until 1917: *Roscommon Herald*, 25 June 1917.  
\(^{20}\) BMH WS 779, (Section ii): Robert Brennan.
these dissonant elements together to present a united front (albeit only a temporary one that crumbled under the weight of the Anglo Irish Treaty in 1921).

Many nationalist voters were overwhelmingly swept up by the promises of abstention and a speculative appeal to the peace conference. De Valera defeated Lynch by 5,010 votes to the Irish Party’s 2,035, and his triumph heralded a new leader. The defeat set the Irish Party in a tailspin. Lynch wrote to Redmond on behalf of six Irish Party MPs pleading for ‘a review of our own policy and methods’, suggesting a constitutional policy in pursuit of self-government on the model of South Africa or Australia.\(^{21}\) Dillon was utterly disheartened and proclaimed accurately that ‘at this moment they [Sinn Féin] could sweep the greater part of the three southern provinces’.\(^{22}\)

Kilkenny city had proved that it was not all high idealism that secured victory for Sinn Féin as the focus in this constituency had been on the everyday matters of taxation and industry. This was a small city with a population of 10,514 and a register of electors of 1,676.\(^{23}\) Inclement weather conditions where torrents of rain fell for four hours on the evening of polling sent candidates’ agents out to rescue voters from doorways, windows and the outer areas of the town to the polling booths to cast their vote.\(^{24}\) The end result was a win for Cosgrave by 380 votes against Magennis.

Two by-elections were held in Ulster constituencies in Catholic dominated areas. The first was in South Armagh which was considered ‘so irretrievably nationalist as to make intricate local organisation superfluous’, but Walker suggests that this judgement was unduly pessimistic.\(^{25}\) A

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\(^{21}\) NLI, JR, MS 5742/MS 15,202: Lynch to Redmond, 9 May and 31 July 1917. Lynch was advocating for Dominion Home Rule.

\(^{22}\) TCD, JD, Mss 6840: Dillon to Hooper, 14 July 1917.

\(^{23}\) Thom’s Directory 1915. The Irish Times puts this figure at approximately 1,701 names, but stated that the effective strength of the constituency would not exceed 1,300 for this by-election. The Irish Independent reported that the total poll was 1,164 and it as estimated that the qualified voters numbered between 1,300 and 1,400: Irish Times, 8 August 1917 and Irish Independent, 13 August 1917.

\(^{24}\) Freeman’s Journal, 11 August 1917.

\(^{25}\) Alvin Jackson, ‘Unionist Politics and Protestant Society in Edwardian Ireland, The Historical Journal, 33: 4 (December 1990), pp. 839-866. The total population of Armagh was 119,659, of which 53,461 were Roman Catholic, with the remainder being Protestants of various denominations. South Armagh was the third of the divisions of County Armagh created through the Redistribution Act 1884-5: NAI, 1911 Census online; Walker, ‘Parliamentary Representation in Ulster, 1868-86’, unpublished PhD thesis, TCD, 1976, pp. 390-1. The electoral register for South Armagh was 6,347 and the constituency was largely composed of small farmers. It was divided into six polling districts: Ballybot, Forkhill, Crossmaglen, Cladymiltown, Newtownhamilton and Poyntzpass.
variation of nationalist, Unionist and independent candidates had held the seat over the years. An independent nationalist J. Campbell won the seat in 1900; in 1905 William McKillop, a Unionist, was returned unopposed for the constituency and held the seat until his death in 1909, when the Irish Party’s Charles O’Neill defeated the Unionist candidate Richard Best to be elected. O’Neill was re-elected unopposed in January 1910 and defeated the independent nationalist, S.H. Moynagh in December 1910 by a clear majority.\(^\text{26}\) If the history of the constituency was anything to go by, the field was open for robust competition. According to the *Ulster Gazette*, the 1918 by-election ‘created … intense interest … and the rivalry between the Irish Party and Sinn Féin supporters’ was ‘extraordinarily keen’.\(^\text{27}\)

South Armagh was Sinn Féin’s first election contest in Ulster. Their propaganda campaign fell mainly to Countess Markievicz because Patrick McCartan was in an American gaol. Volunteers were ushered in from Armagh city and neighbouring counties and a Sinn Féin committee arrived to run the election.\(^\text{28}\) Lack of local knowledge soon became evident and the selection of Dundalk as party headquarters was quickly dispensed with in favour of Newry.\(^\text{29}\) Visiting Volunteers distributed leaflets and posters across South Armagh, and marched to different areas to protect Sinn Féin meetings. Their efforts were in vain as the seat went to the Irish Party’s Patrick Donnelly by a strong margin with 976 votes more than McCartan. South Armagh witnessed a number of bitter disturbances between the Hibernians and Volunteers, and often fisticuffs were considered by some as more effective than arguments.\(^\text{30}\) For instance, in the Square in Crossmaglen ‘a series of fights took place’ because rival meetings were being held at the same time.\(^\text{31}\)

The East Tyrone constituency had been created by the Redistribution Act in 1885 and usually returned nationalist members, as did mid-Tyrone. North and South Tyrone were traditionally Unionist, although the former was captured by a Liberal with nationalist support in

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\(^{26}\) *Ulster Gazette and Armagh Standard*, 19 January 1918.  
\(^{27}\) Ibid.  
\(^{28}\) BMH WS 658: John Grant.  
\(^{29}\) Ibid, WS 549: Robert Kelly.  
\(^{30}\) Ibid, WS 658: John Grant.  
\(^{31}\) Ibid, WS 534: James Short. Volunteers had arrived into the constituency armed with hurleys to act as escort to Countess Markievicz: WS 822: William James Stapleton.
1885. East Tyrone was predominately Catholic although it held a substantial Protestant and Unionist minority. Unionists did not field a candidate for this by-election and many Sinn Féin Volunteers argued that this was due to an ‘unofficial truce between them and the nationalists whilst the Convention was in existence’, and that their votes favoured the Irish Party. Contradicting this, the *Cork Examiner* reported that ‘Unionists of that constituency [East Tyrone] refrained as a body from voting for the nationalist … although it is shrewdly suspected that in isolated cases any Unionist votes recorded were given for Sinn Féin on the principle of “Divide et impera” [divide and rule]’.

Again, Sinn Féin’s prominent Dublin leaders and the Irish Volunteers and IRB conducted election work. Both South Armagh and East Tyrone were Irish Party victories, although Sinn Féin claimed that the energetic canvass had resulted in the establishment of networks with Volunteer, Sinn Féin and Cumann na mBan clubs being created. Yet, Sinn Féin suffered heavy defeats in the 1918 general election in South Armagh and East Tyrone, although nationalist pacts make comparisons problematic.

Waterford city provided another Irish Party victory in contested by-elections. The final result was an anticipated victory for the Irish Party, but as the *Irish Times* correctly highlighted it was due to the ‘attachment of the people to the Redmond family’ which ‘seems to outweigh all political considerations’, and even the fact that the Sinn Féin candidate was a local man. The Redmond family had never lived in Waterford city, and John Redmond was an irregular visitor, but

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32 Count Plunkett had contested the mid-Tyrone election in 1885 as a Parnellite and won only a paltry 123 votes. Matthew Kenny, Circuit Court judge for Cork was the anti-Parnellite, and Dr Edward Thompson, an Omagh doctor was the Unionist candidate. Kenny was returned at the head of the poll with 3,667 votes and Thompson gained 2,698.
33 See for example BMH WS 1770: Kevin O’Sheil.
34 *Cork Examiner*, 5 April 1918.
35 BMH WS 893: William J. Kelly.
36 Ibid.
37 In South Armagh the Sinn Féin candidate received only 79 votes against the Irish Party’s Patrick Donnelly who attained 4,345. East Tyrone became part of the new North East Tyrone constituency after the dissolution of parliament in 1918. In North East Tyrone the Sinn Féin candidate was heavily defeated (56 votes) by the winning Irish Party candidate (11,605 votes) and the runner up Unionist candidate (6,681 votes): Walker, *Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92*, pp. 4-9.
38 *Irish Times*, 23 March 1918.
when he arrived he was usually ‘received with enthusiasm’. Captain Redmond won the city against the local doctor, Vincent White, by a comfortable 478 votes. In later years, and throughout the upheavals of internal war and conflict Redmond continued to retain his seat, running as an independent, and coming in second to the republican candidate Caitlín Brugha in the 1922 general election. White ran as a Cumann na nGaedheal candidate and took the third seat in this four seater constituency with 2,382 votes less than Redmond.  

In 1918 East Cavan was the final contested by-election and before the battle began nationalists wrangled over format. Indignant debate ensued as to whether a contest or plebiscite should take place because of the imminent threat of conscription (the Military Service Bill having being passed two days before the death of Samuel Young, the Irish Party MP). Sinn Féin suggested that an informal ballot could be held after Sunday mass and that the result of this would dictate the winner. As Laffan points out, this was a meaningless concession. Sinn Féin had previously attained the seat in Tullamore in an uncontested by-election because the Irish Party candidate stepped down. Dillon expected Sinn Féin to return the favour and saw their refusal to do so as indicative of the lack of a united ‘spirit’ being exhibited ‘by the leaders of Sinn Féin’ in ‘making this indecent attempt to capture the seat …’(see chapter one). The subsequent ‘German Plot’ arrests and the internment of Griffith facilitated a re-run of the Put him in to get him out poster campaign and gave the Sinn Féin campaign platform to O’Flanagan. He took Griffith to victory with a massive 1,201 margin.

By-elections as predictors of general election results are by no means reliable indicators. There are limitations to interpreting the results of the by-elections in terms of analysing all active

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39 Ibid, for example, see 7 October 1916.
40 Ibid, 29 December 1918; In 1927 Redmond ran as a National League candidate and again later that year in a second election to the sixth Dáil he won but only by a very narrow margin (189 votes) against the Fianna Fáil candidate. He contested his final election as a Cumann na nGaedheal candidate in 1932 to win by a substantial majority over Fianna Fáil. After his death his wife Bridget Mary Redmond was elected and re-elected until her death in 1952. This attests to the fact that Waterford city remained a Redmondite constituency throughout all these years with Fianna Fáil only laying claim in 1954 for the next two general elections: Walker, Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92, pp.4-204; Mary Clancy, ‘Women in the Free State Parliament, 1923-37’ in Yvonne Galligan, Ellis Ward and Rick Wilford, Contesting Politics, Women in Ireland, North and South (Colorado, 1999), p. 207.
41 Nationality, 11 May 1918.
42 See Anglo-Celt, 4 May 1918: Dillon’s speech in East Cavan at the opening of the nationalist campaign. Sinn Féin speeches also reported on in this edition.
political parties in Ireland – not all areas of the country voted in the eight contested by-elections in 1917 and 1918, and all contested elections were held in nationalist areas. By-elections are powerful at constituency level and they can forecast the fate of a government in that area in an impending general election. However, generally speaking they may simply reflect the fact that all or most of the by-elections have occurred in areas where support for a particular party is weak or strong, such as in the Waterford city by-election. Some parties may not run candidates, thus diminishing their by-election totals.\(^4^3\)

There were no contested by-elections in any counties on the eastern seaboard, although one might have taken place in South County Dublin in June 1917 following the death of Alderman William Cotton MP. The Irish Party candidate Michael Hearne obtained the majority UIL votes and with the good fortune of having no competitor he was declared elected on 6 July.\(^4^4\) While by-elections really only give an indication of voter mood in specific constituencies, the geographic locations of the 1917 and 1918 by-elections hinted at political transformation in many areas of Ireland.

### 5.2: 1918 General Election

The general election was held on 14 December 1918, and a fortnight elapsed between polling and the declaration of results on 28 December. This section intends to explore the results of the election to discuss the numerical returns for candidates and parties. Voter turnout, and absent voters will also be investigated to analyse outcomes, along with an appraisal of who voted. This was the last all-island general election so it is important to investigate the results in that context. However, the future partitioning of the island makes it worthwhile to break down the results into Ulster versus the three southern provinces also. The number of contests renders it impossible to cover each individually so a broad analysis will be provided. The aim is to explore just how successful Sinn Féin was in the southern provinces and whether Unionists held Ulster. Did Unionists

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\(^{44}\) *Weekly Irish Times*, 30 June 1917; *Irish Times*, 7 July 1917.
convince voters in the counties they hoped to hold after partition, and were they successful in any other areas of Ireland? In terms of the Irish Party the question is just how badly were they defeated in the southern provinces? The full results of the 1918 general election have been included in Appendix B, with candidate occupations and ages where obtainable.

The overall outcome in 1918 was a political upheaval in Leinster, Munster and Connaught that was reminiscent of the Parnell split of the late 1800s. Parnell’s downfall however did not convulse the various sections of Irish nationalism to anything like the degree that occasioned the rout of Irish Party MPs across many constituencies by Sinn Féin candidates. Before the dissolution, Ireland returned sixty-eight MPs from the Irish Party, eighteen Unionists, seven AFIL, seven Sinn Féin, two Liberals and one independent nationalist to Westminster. The political contests in 1918 resulted in seventy-three seats for Sinn Féin, twenty-five for Unionists, one independent Unionist, and six Irish Party MPs (seven if T.P. O’Connor’s Liverpool seat is taken into account).45

Driven and aggravated by a ruthless Sinn Féin electioneering and propaganda campaign the Irish Party was outwitted and overcome in most constituencies in Ireland. Exploring the form of electoral contests throws some light on why parties or candidates needed to cleverly propagandize in many constituencies, although there were twenty-five uncontested seats which meant advantage fell to Sinn Féin, particularly in Munster. The distribution of these by province was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>No. of Uncontested Seats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Munster</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connaught</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leinster</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Ulster</td>
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</table>

Table 5.1: Number of Uncontested Seats

The large number of uncontested seats makes it challenging to gauge voter rationale. Carlow perhaps illustrates the reason why twenty-five constituencies failed to put forward an Irish Party candidate, or any other candidate, in the 1918 general election, leaving the seats free for Sinn Féin. The Carlow Nationalist Election Committee at a meeting in December 1918 proposed and

45 See Appendix B for full results.
unanimously passed a resolution stating it was ‘inadvisable to continue the electoral contest’. Reporting on the reasons for this decision the *Freeman’s Journal* remarked that ‘there was no mistaking the conviction under which the young men and the workers of Carlow were going to vote. They believed in the reality of the Republican policy, and they were going to vote straight for the republic’.46 This was a constituency that had previously held strong Redmond supporters, even at the outset of the Great War and after the Easter Rising.47 Effective Sinn Féin electoral propaganda had not only convinced Carlow, it had swayed many voters in these twenty-five constituencies, and had ousted potential challengers from the field. Dillon blamed ‘stupid blunders on the part of our men’ for two of these, and the ‘hopeless lack of organisation in the country’ and ‘sheer cowardice’, which was an obvious reference to the retiring MPs.48

The total electorate in contested constituencies in 1918 was 1,462,895.49 The total valid poll for the eighty (including universities) county and borough constituencies across the provinces was:50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Leinster</th>
<th>Ulster</th>
<th>Munster</th>
<th>C’naught</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinn Féin</td>
<td>193,346</td>
<td>110,014</td>
<td>87,609</td>
<td>104,409</td>
<td>495,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Party</td>
<td>90,992</td>
<td>70,899</td>
<td>34,877</td>
<td>30,627</td>
<td>227,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. Nat.</td>
<td>5,581</td>
<td>2,602</td>
<td>8,738</td>
<td>9,531</td>
<td>26,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionist</td>
<td>22,455</td>
<td>234,376</td>
<td>4,773</td>
<td>261,604</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. Unionist</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>8,738</td>
<td>9,531</td>
<td>12,164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>659</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab. Rep. Committee</td>
<td>12,164</td>
<td>12,164</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>30,304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. Labour</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>659</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Unionist</td>
<td>30,304</td>
<td>30,304</td>
<td>30,304</td>
<td>30,304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>313,137</strong></td>
<td><strong>470,192</strong></td>
<td><strong>127,259</strong></td>
<td><strong>135,036</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,045,539</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Total valid poll for all contested county and borough constituencies by province

46 *Freeman’s Journal* 5 December 1918.
47 *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, 15 & 22 August 1914: ‘hearty approval’ was given to Redmond’s ‘statesmanlike speech in the House of Commons’ on 3 August 1914 when he pledged Volunteer support to ‘guard the shores of Ireland’. When Asquith announced that the Home Rule Bill was to be placed on the Statute Book but suspended for the duration of the war the *Nationalist and Leinster Times* reported that ‘this final constitutional victory is due – and due alone – to the continued advocacy of the Irish Parliamentary Party both in the House of Commons and out of it …’: 19 September 1914. After the Easter Rising, this newspaper warned readers ‘about the futility of a policy which a section – a small section – of intellectual fanatics was trying to impose on Ireland’: 6 May 1916.
48 TCD, JD, Mss 6742/567: Dillon to O’Connor, 6 December 1918.
50 Results calculated from Walker, *Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92*, pp. 4-9; the total number of electors on the register for the county and boroughs including uncontested seats and excluding universities was 1,921,601: *Irish Independent*, 30 December 1918.
In fifty-two constituencies there were direct two-way contests by Sinn Féin against another party or independent candidate, as follows:\textsuperscript{51}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Sinn Féin V Irish Party</th>
<th>Sinn Féin V Unionists</th>
<th>Sinn Féin V Independents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Munster</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connaught</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leinster</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulster</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Direct two-way electoral contests by Sinn Féin in 1918

There were twenty-one triangular contests in the general election: seven in Leinster and fourteen in Ulster where the battle was usually between Sinn Féin, Irish Party and Unionist candidates. These contests provided sixty-nine candidates in total. A triangular contest in four of the three Dublin constituencies saw Unionists contend against nationalists, and in St Patrick’s the three-prong attack was between an Irish Party candidate, an independent and Sinn Féin’s Countess Markievicz – the latter of whom won, becoming the first female MP in the British Isles.\textsuperscript{52} In all the other Dublin constituencies the battle was fought out by Irish Party and Sinn Féin candidates, except for College Green where a Sinn Féin candidate contested against a Town Tenants League candidate.\textsuperscript{53}

In total there were 103 constituencies, with 105 seats.\textsuperscript{54} Eight Sinn Féin candidates stood for more than one seat with de Valera nominated for four seats including East Clare (unopposed), East Mayo, Falls Belfast and South Down. De Valera was obviously regarded as their strongest candidate who could defeat Dillon in his home constituency of East Mayo, Devlin in the Belfast Falls constituency and generally make Sinn Féin gains in Ulster. Five Sinn Féin candidates were

\textsuperscript{51} These account for 104 candidates. The National University is included in Leinster and Queen’s University, Belfast, in Ulster. Two of the eight Ulster seats which were allocated evenly between Sinn Féin and the Irish Party are also included (N.W. Tyrone where the contest was between Sinn Féin and a Unionist and S. Armagh where a Unionist was not nominated): see Irish Independent, 30 December 1918.

\textsuperscript{52} Markievicz was imprisoned in London’s Holloway gaol at the time of the election. She did not take her seat in the Commons but did become Minister for Labour in the First Dáil, making her the second female cabinet minister in Europe: Margaret Ward, Unmanageable Revolutionaries: Women and Irish Nationalism (London, 1983).

\textsuperscript{53} The candidate Joseph Briscoe was a nationalist.

\textsuperscript{54} The composition of the House of Commons had undergone changes since the 1910 general elections. Constitutional nationalists (Irish Party) could count on 84 members in 1910, but this reduced to 72 in 1918, just before the general election. There were seven independent nationalists and seven Sinn Féin representatives. The new House of Commons – leaving aside Sinn Féin’s proposed abstention – would comprise 707 members in total.
elected to two constituencies, so subsequently had to select the one they intended to represent. Therefore, Sinn Féin had sixty-eight elected candidates with seventy-three seats.

5.3: The Principal Contests in the three Southern Provinces

Sinn Féin’s victory was comprehensive in Dublin and in Dublin South Gavan Duffy won by a margin of 779 votes over the Unionist candidate, Thomas Robinson, and by 1,314 over the Irish Party’s Thomas Clarke. In all other constituencies Sinn Féin’s margin was in excess of 2,000 votes, with, for example, Constance Markievicz in the St Patrick’s Division attaining 4,083 more votes than her nearest rival, the nationalist William Field.\(^55\) In Dublin county Sinn Féin made a clean sweep, except for Rathmines where the southern Unionist, Maurice Dockrell, recaptured the constituency by beating the combined vote of Sinn Féin and the Irish Party by fifty-four.

Ulster’s results (as will be seen later) weighted strongly in Unionist favour in the counties that later formed Northern Ireland. While this was not the sole cause for the later partitioning of the island, these results created a decisive powerbase that allowed the followers of Carson to ‘leave Ulster immune from the horrible deeds of the sister provinces’.\(^56\) In Dublin Unionists also contested in the Pembroke and South Dublin Divisions, but the results were surprising victories for Sinn Féin in both constituencies. John Good was defeated by Desmond FitzGerald in Pembroke by a strong 1,976 majority, with the Irish Party candidate Charles O’Neill attaining only 2,629 votes out of a total poll of 12,881.\(^57\) Dublin South and Pembroke had previously been held by Unionists.\(^58\)

Across many constituencies in the rest of the three southern provinces Sinn Féin secured immense victories. In Cork city, Galway Connemara, Leitrim, Limerick East, Longford, Mayo

\(^{55}\) Except for the Rathmines constituency where the Unionist Maurice Dockrell won.

\(^{56}\) PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/142: Where Hand of Murder Rules: The assassinations of DMP and RIC in this poster cover the period January 1919 to July 1920.

\(^{57}\) Prior to the 1918 general election Pembroke formed part of the central part of the South Dublin constituency which extended into a small area of North Dublin.

\(^{58}\) Dublin South wins had alternated between Unionist and Irish Party candidates. In January 1910 the Unionist Bryan Cooper had narrowly defeated the Irish Party’s William Cotton, but an about-turn in December 1910 gave the victory to Cooper. In 1906 the Unionist Walter Long won the constituency, and in 1900 the Irish Party candidate John Joseph Mooney defeated the Irish Unionist candidate Horace Plunkett (by 1912 Plunkett had become a convinced home ruler).
North and West, Queen’s County, Roscommon South, Sligo North and South, Tipperary South, Westmeath and Wicklow West they had strong majorities. The Irish Party prevailed in Waterford city, but they lost Waterford county to Sinn Féin’s Cathal Brugha by an overwhelming majority. However, there were some very tight contests between Sinn Féin and the Irish Party. In Louth John O’Kelly only marginally defeated the Irish Party’s Richard Hazleton by 255 votes; and in Wexford South Sinn Féin’s James Ryan narrowly won over Peter Ffrench. Wicklow East could have been another tight contest had the Irish Party not split their vote with two candidates in the field. Their combination total was 5,066 which still gave the Sinn Féin candidate Seán Etchingham a majority of 850. He polled 3,316 more votes than the nearest Irish Party rival.

A heated contest took place in East Mayo – the home constituency of Dillon – between the constitutional leader and the president of Sinn Féin, Éamon de Valera. The Press Association referred to this as ‘probably the stiffest contest in Ireland’. Dillon blamed ‘organised intimidation’ which resulted in ‘the terror of the people’ for Irish Party losses. He described ‘young bands of roughs going around the roads at night shouting that they will burn down any house that votes Dillon’ and there were threats ‘to destroy cattle’. 59 Sinn Féin had organised ‘hundreds of helpers’ into the constituency who ‘paraded the streets of the towns and the roads leading to them, armed with heavy blackthorn sticks’. 60 Disorderly scenes erupted in many townlands, particularly Dillon’s home town of Ballaghadereen, but Irish Party supporters were equally to blame. When Sinn Féin arrived into the town, led by a marching band, they were met by a ‘ fusillade of stones and bottles … poured into them from both sides of the road’ with ‘Sinn Féiners replying with revolver shots’. 61 Dillon’s defeat was catastrophic with de Valera attaining a majority of 4,400 votes – a two to one decision. Daunted and perhaps frustrated by violence and intimidation from both sides of the nationalist divide 8,146 potential voters abstained from the poll.

59 TCD, JD, Mss 6742/567: Dillon to O’Connor, 6 December 1918.
60 Irish Times, 23 December 1918.
61 Ibid, 16 December 1918.
Cork city and county were previous strongholds of the AFIL who withdrew to make way for Sinn Féin, even though in the December 1910 elections they had won eight seats. O’Brien’s final address to the electors of Cork encouraged the AFIL to support ‘the spirit of Sinn Féin, as distinct from its abstract programme’ and he advocated for the ‘full and sympathetic trial for enforcing the Irish nation’s right of self-determination’. In the face of past losses against the AFIL and O’Brien’s endorsement of Sinn Féin, the Irish Party made no attempt to secure the seven county divisions of Cork, giving victory to Sinn Féin. In Cork city two seats polled over 20,500 votes each for Sinn Féin, crushing the Irish Party candidates who mustered a mere 7,500 votes between them. A similar situation occurred in Kerry where the four seats went uncontested to Sinn Féin. Serious violent disturbances erupted in Cork during the campaign. At the Shandon polling station ex-soldiers collided with Sinn Féin Volunteers and a ‘fierce’ exchange of stones and bottles ensued. A Volunteer ‘peace patrol’ charged and disbursed the rival crowds, but ‘many were injured … others were knocked down and kicked …’ Two Unionist canvassers, Major J.H. Phillips and Andrew Williams (brother of the Unionist candidate Daniel Williams) encountered stone throwing and verbal abuse as they motored through the Cork suburb of Blackpool, but ‘miraculously’ they escaped injury. A second Unionist candidate, Thomas Farrington, also contested in Cork city, but lost out to both constitutional and separatist nationalists. The combined votes of the two Unionist candidates did not even come near the lowest nationalist vote.

Waterford was fought with extraordinary ferocity and reciprocal nationalist insults. Captain Redmond vehemently advocated that the Irish Party stood for a united Ireland, and did not

63 Quote in Michael MacDonagh, The Life of William O’Brien, the Irish Nationalist (London, 1928), p. 234. O’Brien did not ‘subscribe to a programme of armed resistance … or even of permanent withdrawal from Westminster’.
64 The AFIL had previously held seven seats in Cork but they retired from the field for the 1918 election. O’Brien stated that he did not seek re-election in order to leave the women and men of Cork ‘freed from all considerations of personal character to deal with the authors of Ireland’s ruin if they should have the effrontery to present themselves for election’: Irish Times, 23 November 1918. Echoes of the AFIL continued in Irish politics as Jack Lynch who served as Taoiseach from 1966 to 1973 was no doubt influenced by his father’s political support of the AFIL through his union, which was probably the Amalgamated Tailors’ Union. Dermot Keogh, Jack Lynch: A Biography (Dublin, 2008), pp. 4-8.
65 Irish Times, 23 December 1918.
66 Ibid.
tell the Ulster people they would ‘give them six weeks or six months to make up their minds or kick them into the sea’. Sinn Fein’s programme, according to Redmond, was a sham and a policy of negation. It was the programme of the old Clan-na-Gael and secret societies. Sinn Féin responded with complaints that they were the victims of intimidation, especially in Ballybricken, in an attempt to neutralize Irish Party affronts. Violence erupted in many areas, particularly in Ballybricken and on Thomas Street at the Volunteer Hall where Hibernians attacked and Volunteers retaliated. The arrival of the police with fixed bayonets quelled the attacks but the result was that six soldiers home on leave and five Volunteers ended up in the infirmary. There were other minor incidents such as window smashing. Overall only a few constituencies witnessed this level of violence. The rest were like East Wicklow which, according to the _Irish Times_, ‘was fought in a spirit of friendly rivalry, and no incident occurred throughout the day that would mar the harmonious relations’.

An expectation of re-organisation increased optimism within the Irish Party rank and file for a return in 1918 ‘by a minority of votes’. However, the hoped for votes did not emerge and Dillon’s despondency indefinitely postponed party rejuvenation. The general election total for the Irish Party was less than half that of Sinn Féin but they had attained nearly two hundred thousand votes; and in the municipal elections had retained representation on the larger corporations. Structured leadership with an articulate and consistent strategy could have drawn future support from absent voters and those who abstained. A comparison could be made with the modern election of 2011 where Fianna Fáil suffered the worst defeat in the history of the Irish state. After six or seven years of propagandizing and strident cabinet opposition, public opinion oscillated back towards Fianna Fáil. By 2017 they had climbed to a twenty-nine per cent approval rating as against Fine Gael’s twenty-eight per cent and Sinn Féin’s twenty-one per cent (with Labour at four per cent.

68 _Irish Independent_, 20 March 1918.
69 _Irish Times_, 30 December 1918.
70 Ibid, 23 December 1918.
71 Ibid, 17 December 1918.
72 Ibid, 25 November 1918.
73 See Gwynn’s account of the Irish Convention which discusses southern Unionist opinion: Gwynn, _John Redmond’s Last Years_, pp. 191-193.
and independents at eighteen per cent).\textsuperscript{74} The Irish Party’s defeat in 1918 was severe but it need not have been fatal, particularly with the introduction of the proportional representation system of voting. Dillon also blamed Lloyd George who ‘by his atrocious treatment and his persistent villainous policy in Ireland since 1916’ left no scope for a ‘definite programme’ for a ‘satisfactory solution to the Irish question’. This was his ‘terrible responsibility and crime’.\textsuperscript{75}

5.4: The Principal Contests in Ulster

Nationalists in Ulster eventually arrived at a pact through the intervention of Cardinal Michael Logue and the Roman Catholic bishops in a determined effort to defeat Unionists.\textsuperscript{76} The temperament of Dillon and MacNeill at the original meeting to discuss Ulster was fractious because each stubbornly refused to capitulate to the other. Dillon described the ‘three hours tête-à-tête with MacNeill’ as ‘an absolutely sickening experience’.\textsuperscript{77} While the principle of agreement over the eight seats considered in danger to Unionism was accepted, no agreement on the allocation could be arrived at. Dillon came under pressure from Devlin that the proposal on Ulster ‘ought to be accepted’ in order to secure the representation of ‘practically all the men of our loyal supporters ... who at present represent northern constituencies.’ He pointed out that if the proposal was rejected ‘Harbinson’s and Donnelly’s seats will be lost, and that North West Tyrone will either go to the Sinn Féiners or the Tories’; stating that there were no guarantees that the Irish Party would win any seat, except his own; and ‘the proposal will strengthen us’.\textsuperscript{78} Despite further protests from Devlin

\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Irish Times} opinion poll, 2 March 1917. Fianna Fáil’s results have and continue to fluctuate. In February 2018 the \textit{Sunday Independent} opinion poll reported that Fine Gael had increase support by six points to hold thirty-six per cent of the country. Fianna Fáil had dropped one point and was at twenty-eight per cent of the country: \textit{Sunday Independent}, 18 February 2018.

\textsuperscript{75} TCD, JD, Mss 6744/816: Letter from Dillon to O’Connor, 20 February 1921.

\textsuperscript{76} A conference between Sinn Féin and Irish Party leaders was held to devise a means of avoiding eight Ulster seats falling to Unionists, and it was agreed to ask Cardinal Logue to allocate the seats. Four went to each side.

\textsuperscript{77} TCD, JD, Mss 6742/561: Dillon to O’Connor, 3 December 1918.

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid, 6730/201: Devlin to Dillon, 28 November 1918.
about clerical interference, the decision on seat allocation was eventually made by Cardinal Logue.⁷⁹

Across the nine Ulster counties candidates battled for thirty-eight seats, with fifteen nationalists and twenty-three Unionists winning their contests. Four Irish Party seats were secured in South Down, East Donegal, North East Tyrone and South Armagh – the party had succeeded in holding East Tyrone and South Armagh twice during 1918 contests. This attests to the fact that Irish Party candidates in Ulster were more organised and, unlike their southern brethren, were accustomed to fighting battles against those with opposing political viewpoints.

Sinn Féin fielded a candidate in every contested election of Ulster except Down North. In the counties that later formed Northern Ireland they lost out hugely to Unionists who gained 66 per cent of the total, Nationalists 30.7 per cent and Labour and others 3.3 per cent. Sinn Féin secured only three seats in the six counties and this was chiefly because of the nationalist pact. Unionists won Antrim (Sinn Féin only obtained 8,643 out of a total valid poll of 57,451, while Unionists secured 48,808 votes), Armagh (except for Armagh South where the nationalist candidate won and in Armagh-Mid where the Sinn Féin gains were higher), Belfast, Down (although with a tighter contest in Down East), Fermanagh North (but they lost Fermanagh South), Londonderry (except for the city where MacNeill took a tight victory), and Tyrone South (with Sinn Féin securing Tyrone North West and the nationalist candidate Tyrone North East) – all three political interests captured a constituency in Tyrone, each securing high returns (the Irish Party won the North East, Sinn Féin the North West, and Unionists the South).⁸⁰ Sinn Féin captured ten seats with the Irish Party taking four and Unionists twenty-two.

The pact did not hold up in two Down constituencies, and in East Down the three-way contest gave victory to the Unionist candidate David Reid. The combined votes of Sinn Féin and the Irish Party totalled 8,238 which could have defeated Reid by a margin of over two thousand. Down South was similar, but this time it was a four-way contest and the nationalist candidate,

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⁷⁹ Ibid, 6742/561: Dillon to O’Connor, 3 December 1918: Mac Neill argued for ‘a cut and dried’ programme that had been arranged at the Sinn Féin Dungannon Convention. Dillon refused this because it would not allow Tim Healy to get in for Derry, giving the seat instead to MacNeill.

⁸⁰ Walker, Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92, pp. 4-9.
Jeremiah McVeigh, prevailed by a margin of 3,183 to his nearest rival, the Unionist, John Weir Johnston. De Valera had contested for Sinn Féin but only attained thirty-three votes.

Unionists had hoped to win thirty seats in total, but did not do as well as expected. Twenty-six seats were secured which exceeded previous parliamentary representation by eight.\(^81\) In the nine Ulster counties the seats won were (including uncontested and university):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Seats won</th>
<th>Percentage Win</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unionist (including Labour Unionist and Independent)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Party</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinn Féin</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5.4: Seats won in Ulster*

The total electorate for contested constituencies in Ulster (nine counties) was 658,484,\(^82\) and the total votes cast in contested constituencies were 470,192. Percentage turnout in Ulster (including Queen’s University) was 71.4 per cent. Unlike large areas of other provinces voter turnout in Ulster was high. The ‘beautiful weather’ according to the *Irish Times* ‘favoured the polling day in Belfast and the north of Ireland generally’.\(^83\)

The Unionist vote across the nine counties was 234,376 out of the 470,192 which gave them nearly fifty per cent of the province. They captured Antrim (excluding Belfast) with 84.9 per cent of the votes, winning all four seats. In Armagh-Mid and North they heavily defeated the Sinn Féin candidates to secure 59 per cent. In Down-Mid (Craig’s constituency), North, West (nationalist pact) and East, Unionists received 73.9 per cent of the votes (65.6 per cent if South Down is included). Fermanagh North was a difficult contest, but the Unionist, Edward Archdale, defeated Sinn Féin’s Kevin O’Shiel by 532 votes. The reverse occurred in Fermanagh South with Sinn Féin’s majority of 2,149 giving them a comfortable win over the Unionist and nationalist

\(^{81}\) This number includes Labour Unionists and Universities.

\(^{82}\) There was no contest in either of the two Cavan constituencies.

\(^{83}\) In a modern study on the effects of weather on voter turnout in the United States it was concluded that ‘voters seem to be rather sensitive to what is presumably a minor increase in participation costs – the weather’: Brad T. Gomez, Thomas G. Hansford and George A. Krause, ‘The Republicans should pray for rain: Weather, Turnout and Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections’, *The Journal of Politics*, 69:3 (August 2007), pp. 649-663.
candidates. Londonderry South saw a three way contest between Unionists and nationalists where ‘Unionist workers left nothing undone’.

The Unionist candidate overpowered their Sinn Féin rival in Londonderry North to attain a 72.7 per cent majority. A heated contest in Londonderry city gave Eoin MacNeill a slim majority over Sir Robert Anderson, the Unionist candidate, and both wiped out Major William Davey who attained a meagre 120 votes.

Cavan was captured entirely by Sinn Féin as there was no contest. In Monaghan constitutional nationalists gained 27.4 per cent of the vote, and in Fermanagh South they attained only 0.5 per cent (Sinn Féin attained 47.8 percent), and in Donegal nationalists (constitutional and separatist) captured all the seats – three constituencies selected the Sinn Féin candidates and in one, Donegal East, the nationalist Edward Kelly secured the majority.

The determination to hold Ulster invigorated an abrasive Unionist propaganda campaign. Carson’s Duncairn Division contest showcases Unionist determination. This was a three-way battle between Carson, Major Davey, a liberal home ruler, and Dr Russel McNabb of Sinn Féin. Carson mounted a continuous, challenging and bellicose election campaign. He and Lady Carson toured the constituency on polling day, and Unionists ferried voters and supporters using ‘numerous motor cars and perfect organisation’. Davey was unable to compete against Carson’s ability to fund the use of motor vehicles so he issued literature to instruct electors not to ‘wait for motor cars! Major Davey had to foot it in France. Follow his example and walk to the

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84 Irish Times, 16 December 1918.
85 There were no Unionist candidates in Armagh South, Belfast Falls, Donegal North, South, West and Monaghan South.
86 Irish Times, 23 December 1918.
poll’. Using similar war-like analogies to those of Unionists in an attempt to appeal in a constituency that supported the war effort he ‘plastered’ the district ‘with bills and the request to “Go over the top behind the Major”’. He also promoted his educational achievements and his military accomplishments evident in the election poster in figure 5.1.\textsuperscript{87} Defeating the leader of unionism, regardless of nationalist propaganda, was unachievable. But, while Davey lost out heavily to Carson who received 11,637 votes, his 2,449 votes were better than McNabb’s paltry 271. This indicates that Davey’s strong publicity campaign may have allowed him to defeat the Sinn Féin candidate. It is difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion in this strong Unionist constituency, because those who did not want unionism (perhaps because of the threat of partition) had no labour alternative and Davey may have secured votes because Sinn Féin was considered utterly unacceptable.

There were occasional divisions within Unionist ranks. In five constituencies Belfast Labour Unionists competed against official Unionists, but given that Unionism defeated the nationalist opponent there was minimal distress.\textsuperscript{88} In Down North however, the Reverend Dr John Irwin, an ex-moderator of the General Assembly, indignantly stated that the independent Unionist ‘formed a rallying point for all those who would not support the official Unionist’. He compared them to southern Unionists who were ‘strong Unionists mentally’, but when it came to the vote they were ‘bumbling over one another to cast their vote for home rule’.\textsuperscript{89}

Ulster brought moderate success for the Irish Party with Devlin topping the poll in the Belfast Falls Division. Aside from the high ideals of home rule, he was keen to reach out to his working class constituents to advocate for a ‘living wage’, pay equality for women and the greater

\textsuperscript{87} Ibid, 16 December 1918: NLI, ILB 400, p. 4 (item 2): Election poster for Londonderry City.
\textsuperscript{88} In the St Anne’s, Shankill and Victoria wards Labour Unionists polled strongly, defeating their official Unionist opponents and wiping out Sinn Féin (although Sinn Féin did marginally better in the St. Anne’s Division). The Labour Representative Committee ran candidates in Pottinger, Shankill and Victoria but they were heavily defeated in all constituencies.
distribution of wealth.\footnote{For example, in an election address to the voters of the Falls division of Belfast, Devlin stated that ‘Women ought to be paid an equal wage with men’: \textit{Freeman’s Journal}, 30 November 1918.} He acknowledged the improvements gained by the trade unions and the Factory Acts but called for reduced working hours (eight hours for ‘any man or woman’), better working conditions and adequate employment for ‘all who are able and willing to work’.\footnote{\textit{Freeman’s Journal}, 30 November 1918; \textit{Irish Times}, 2 and 14 December 1918.} His only opponent was de Valera who had secured the East Clare constituency without contest. Sinn Féin and Irish Party supporters engaged in ‘wild scenes’ where clashes resulted in thirteen, including three members of the RIC, being removed to hospitals. Meetings scheduled to take place at the Springfield Road were disbanded because of violence where Devlin had to ‘dodge missiles of various kinds thrown by members of the crowd’.\footnote{\textit{Irish Times}, 2 December 1918.} Despite the violence, heckling and interruptions (or perhaps because of it) Devlin routed de Valera by a majority of 5,393 votes.

In Ulster nationalists had to compete against Unionists even in constituencies where the pact held up. The Irish Party was more successful in Ulster than the southern provinces, but Sinn Féin still secured more overall votes with its total for Ulster being 110,014. It had contested seats in parts of Ulster where the Irish Party had never ventured, and only the Unionist stronghold of North Down (and Trinity College in Dublin) was to be left unchallenged. The party ran thirty-four candidates who were in gaol, six who were evading arrest, and four who were in the USA.\footnote{\textit{Irish Independent}, 21 Nov 1918.} The Irish Party attained only 73,834 across the nine counties, but their wins in Belfast exceeded those of Sinn Féin by 2,032.\footnote{Sinn Féin received 8,905 votes and the Irish Party 10,937 in Belfast. This also includes the independent nationalist in Tyrone South.}

### 5.5: 1920 Local Government Elections Results

The municipal elections took place in January 1920, and the Rural District Council (RDC) elections in June, amidst escalating violence and labour agitation in some areas of Ireland. There were also elections to local boards, such as the board of guardians, in 1920 but the emphasis in this section will mainly be on the urban and rural elections. The national issue remained to the
forefront of electoral propaganda, but there was growing ire amongst agricultural labourers over
low wages and post-war inflation, and town businesses over increased rates. Volunteers were
attacking British government property and carrying out raids for arms and funds. In early April,
many abandoned RIC barracks were burned to the ground to prevent them being used again and
income tax offices were also attacked.95

Strikes organised by workers to oppose the British presence in Ireland began in Limerick in
April 1919 to protest against Limerick being declared a ‘Special Military Area’ under DORA. By
now special permits issued by the RIC were necessary to enter the city. In May 1920 Dublin
dockers refused to handle any British military material, and they were soon joined by the ITGWU
who banned railway drivers from carrying British forces. The situation was brought under control
by the threat to withhold grants from railway companies, which meant railway workers would not
get paid.96

This suggests that the local government elections should have been acrimonious and
hostile, yet this backdrop of unease was never mentioned in electoral propaganda or electoral
newspaper reports. Commentary across all newspapers stated that the municipal and rural elections
were ‘fought with good feeling’. Rivalry between candidates was keen in contested constituencies,
but there were only very few instances of violence with minor skirmishes.97 Corporation contests
excited the most interest, but most observations in newspapers remarked that there was an
‘atmosphere of apathy’ among the voting public. Concerns were raised that ‘lamentable apathy
was found among those who should have had the greatest interest in municipal affairs’.98 Local
elections are less exciting than national elections (but not less important at local level) and turnout

95 Hopkinson, The Irish War of Independence, pp. 25-30. See also BMH WS 1440: IRA member Daniel
Byrne describes a raid on the income tax office in Carlow by six members of their company. They filled
documents into corn sacks, brought them out to the country and ‘burned the lot’.
96 Strikes in Limerick in 1919 received widespread coverage in the national newspapers, for examples see
Freeman’s Journal, 23 April 1919 and Irish Independent 23 April 1919. The ILP&TUC 1919 Report of the
Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting, August 1919 and Report of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting August 1920
also details a number of other strikes and labour unrests that were taking place and imminent. See also, Liam
74.
97 Irish Times, 19 January 1920; Freeman’s Journal, 13 January 1920: who described the Cork election as
having ‘so far the utmost good humour and good temper’. The Freeman’s Journal reported that the elections
were carried out ‘in good spirit’ in Cork, Waterford and Limerick.
98 Irish Times, 3 January 1920.

289
tends to be lower, but given that no elections had taken place for six years because of the war
interest should have been livelier. The Connacht Tribune classified the electoral mood as ‘utter
apathy’ in the Galway and Connemara areas. In three of their five districts there were no contests,
and many of the existing councillors withdrew.\textsuperscript{99}

The sources used in this work to provide and calculate the results of the 1920 elections
were provincial and national newspapers where candidate names and details were cross checked in
a number of papers and in Thom’s Directory 1920.\textsuperscript{100} Newspapers often did not provide a full list
of results for constituencies outside Dublin, and provincial newspapers regularly did not go into
full details on townland results, so there are gaps (see Appendix C for urban results and Appendix
D for rural results).\textsuperscript{101} No newspaper reprinted in their entirety the official version of results
supplied by the returning officer, but some did go into great detail by listing transfers received by
candidates. While every attempt was made to ensure accuracy in calculating votes cast, it would be
rather conceited to assume there is no error either on the part of the author or from figures obtained
in newspapers. Where possible the results have been verified by amassing data from a number of
newspapers and sources, but some results proved unattainable.

The goal is to investigate the outcomes of these elections to ascertain if Sinn Féin’s 1918
election victory was an anomaly or if their policies had become imbedded at the local level by
1920, particularly with the introduction of proportional representation. It is unfeasible to examine
every contest, so the focus will be on the larger corporation and council constituencies where more
enthusiastic campaigns resulted in interesting results. These provided data and returns from the
large cities and towns and therefore affords a broader indication of voter behaviour. 1,840 vacant
seats were contested by over 2,300 in the municipal elections, and of these 1,300 were Sinn Féin or
Labour and 1,000 were constitutional nationalists, Unionists or independents. Constitutional
nationalists did not run under the banner of the Irish Party – or at least newspaper reports on results

\textsuperscript{99} Connacht Tribune, 14 February 1920.
\textsuperscript{100} Thom’s Directory produced a supplement on the 1920 municipal elections which provided information on
winning candidates and their constituencies, but not their political affiliation: TCD Berkeley Library.
\textsuperscript{101} Urban results calculated by PR Society of Ireland and Local Government Board Ireland, Annual Report
for the year ended 31 March 1920.
referred to them only as ‘nationalists’ – even though pleas were made to Dillon to reorganise the party.

Rank and file nationalists were not prepared to go down without a fight in January 1920, although despair had set in at leadership level. The Blackrock Urban District Council passed a resolution at their bi-monthly meeting which deplored the ‘present condition of the country’ and requested Dillon and Devlin to ‘take steps to re-organise the nationalist forces in Ireland’. Dillon’s reply to this request noticeably demonstrates his pessimism. He believed no remedy was possible due to the determination of Sinn Féin and the ‘military Government’ to ‘make any constitutional movement in Ireland impossible’. Accusations that Sinn Féin policy was spurring the people towards ‘violence and folly and crime’ in pursuit of a policy to enact ‘military rule’ influenced his belief that there was little point in attempting ‘to re-organise Ireland on constitutional lines’. The solution proffered was postponement and deliberation. Until ‘some general evidence’ that the Irish people were ‘growing dissatisfied with their present leaders’ he admitted to not having ‘the slightest desire to resume active political life unless I can clearly see my way to do some good’. He advised nationalists to ‘get together, organise and discuss the situation’ with those who voted Sinn Féin at the last election and with those who stayed away from the polls. This, he maintained, was the only way that in the future ‘there may be some machinery in existence’ to ‘lay a programme of action before the people.’

Nationalists in Fermanagh were instructed to keep their UIL organisations active so that ‘when the opportunity came’ they could ‘come forward with a constructive policy to save the nation’. The election organiser J.P. Connery stated that ‘any man possessed of common sense ideas’ would see that Sinn Féin could not ‘now or in the near future’ be ‘able to carry out their promises … so long as she [England] had gun or a ship [they] would never consent to “cut the painter” with Ireland’ because ‘Ireland supplied her with food, with genius and military leaders’. The expectation and hope was that by the time the next general election rolled around Sinn Féin promises would have failed and the ‘common sense of their country’ would assert itself and

102 Irish Times, 2 January 1920: Blackrock Urban Council resolution and reply by John Dillon.
103 Freeman’s Journal, 22 December 1919: J.P. Connery, election organiser, at a meeting of the Fermanagh UIL.
constitutional nationalism would prevail again. A stalemate end to the War of Independence led to the Anglo Irish Treaty which caused the pact election of 1922, the split in separatism and the general election of 1923. Constitutional nationalism in the form of the Irish Party faded from politics, although at local level in 1920 there were still some success stories.

The use of the PR-STV method of voting fulfilled Government intentions to return minority interests, particularly in Ulster where Londonderry city and Counties Tyrone and Fermanagh returned nationalist-controlled councils; and Belfast Corporation also included for the first time several minority groups. But, in the southern provinces after the local elections Sinn Féin controlled most of the borough and urban councils in the South and West, including the city of Cork. It also had a majority of one or two over any possible combination of other parties in Dublin city. Constitutional nationalists held their own in the municipal elections, indicating that life was still left in the party amongst the rank and file, but they lost out in the rural elections. Dillon’s reply to the Blackrock Urban Council (mentioned earlier) suggests it was at leadership level that despondency had set in. Only a small number of Unionists outside the North-East of Ulster survived the elections – sixty-six in the three southern provinces; but it is important to note that Ratepayers, Municipal Reform and independents comprised Unionists.

Nationalists rarely topped the poll, except in Dundalk where they headed in each of the four wards, but they won fourteen seats in Dublin Corporation and had a number of successes in the Dublin townships and coast elections. The nationalist John Harkin in the Victoria division of Belfast became the youngest senior alderman at only twenty-one years of age. And, as will be discussed later, nationalists held onto a number of other Belfast seats.

In terms of campaigning Sinn Féin and Labour were ‘extremely active’ and the Irish Times warned readers that ‘none of us wants to see our municipal affairs directed by a Sinn Féin-Labour

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104 Ibid.
107 Irish Times, 24 January 1920.
108 Freeman’s Journal, 19 January 1920. The second alderman was the Unionist James Duff and the rest of the constituency comprised two Unionists, one labour, one Unionist Labour and one Sinn Féin candidate.
Sinn Féin and Irish Transport and General Workers had fused in some constituencies to gain the republican and working-class votes, such as in Cork where the former obtained forty-two nominations and the latter fourteen. The Cork District Trades and Labour Council ran thirteen candidates to frustrate the attempt of the Sinn Féin-Transport coalition. The widening of the franchise and the redistribution of seats in 1884 had destroyed the smaller boroughs with their tiny electorates, and the 1898 Act terminated Unionist control in Cork. The existing constituencies were replaced by seven county divisions each with an average electorate of 6,500. Cork city retained its two seats but the number of voters increased from 5,000 to 16,000, and with only 1,500 Protestants in the city they were utterly overwhelmed (as evidenced in 1918). Yet, Protestants still played a pivotal role in Cork’s economy and local representation was important, and despite their low numbers Unionists could still exert influence. While no Unionists directly won in January 1920, three ex-soldiers (one each in three divisions of the seven) and two commercial candidates were successful across the seven divisions of Cork.

5.6: Victories and Losses

5.6.1: Municipal Elections

Sinn Féin captured 557 seats (30.2 per cent), Unionists won 368 seats (19.9 per cent), Labour 399 (21.6 per cent) and nationalists 238 (12.9 per cent) with the rest going to Ratepayers, Municipal Reform and independents (15.3 per cent). The total number of councillors elected was 1,845. Labour made great strides in the municipal elections and next to Sinn Féin gained control of the largest share of municipal government in Ireland. There was a strong Labour vote in Wexford

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109 Irish Times, 3 January 1920.
110 In the late 1800s Unionists were a powerful group holding over one-third of the Council seats, but by 1920 they had faded entirely from local politics in Cork. See also Ian d’Alton, ‘Cork Unionism: Its Role in Parliamentary and Local Elections, 1885–1914’, Studia Hibernica, 15 (1975), pp. 143-161; Cork Constitution, 18 January 1899.
111 The three commercial candidates were R.H. Beamish, Sir John Harley Scott and J.T. Mulligan: Irish Times, 24 January 1920.
112 See Appendix C.
town where fifteen candidates contested for twenty-four seats and secured ten.\textsuperscript{113} Across the country 650 Labour candidates were nominated and successful candidates were cautioned to ‘prove your fitness to govern’ in a country which ‘has been turned into an armed camp’.\textsuperscript{114}

Sinn Féin gains were made in Ulster, but (similar to 1918) a Sinn Féin-nationalist pact in many areas makes it difficult to assess overall strength.\textsuperscript{115} Throughout their election campaign they suffered from raids, resulting in the seizure of literature on a number of occasions. One such raid in Dublin South saw the loss of ‘a number of copies of pamphlets’ titled \textit{The January Elections}, \textit{The Economic Grip} and the \textit{Sinn Féin Manifesto}. Over 360 copies of the three documents were found and confiscated, and given that the raid was conducted on the eve of polling, Sinn Féin claimed that the purpose was to ‘prevent voters giving free expression to their opinion’.\textsuperscript{116} Griffith ranted against the injustices committed against Sinn Féin during the municipal elections, asserting that they had to face this election with its political organisation suppressed by the English government, its election literature interdicted, its transit arrangements deliberately obstructed by the Motor Permits Order, its secretary, Alderman Kelly, being seized and imprisoned without charge, and its press stifled.\textsuperscript{117}

Despite this Sinn Féin secured predominance on municipal councils in Ulster outside the five counties of Armagh, Antrim, Down, Fermanagh and Londonderry. They were particularly dominant on the urban councils in Leinster and Munster.\textsuperscript{118} Three-fourths of Dublin Corporation councillors were Sinn Féin’ and, according to Griffith, they polled ‘almost man for man in Rathmines, the English garrison’s one stronghold outside Belfast’. He pointed out that Sinn Féin had ‘forced its way’ into Belfast Corporation and in the south, east and west, and most of the north ‘it has planted its standard’.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Irish Times}, 20 January 1920
\textsuperscript{114} ILP&TUC, Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of Congress held in Cork, August 1920 gives the figure of 364 returned Labour candidates plus 116 Trade Unionists who had been nominated by other political organisations. The anomaly in the figures is due to newspaper interpretation of Labour candidates.
\textsuperscript{115} For example, in the Strabane, Cookstown, Dungannon Rural Councils the Sinn Féin-nationalist combination won, the latter two for the first time. Omagh RDC was also retained by nationalists.
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Freeman’s Journal}, 24 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Donegal News}, 24 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
In Ulster approximately 142,000 votes were recorded and more than half of them were Unionist, with the Labour vote at 25,000 and Nationalists 20,000. Concerns were raised in the Commons that under proportional representation Unionists across the island were at a disadvantage. Aneurin Williams, a Liberal and treasurer of the Proportional Representation Society in Great Britain, remarked that in the case of Kerry which could return eight members, there were 155,000 Catholics against 4,000 non-Catholics leaving the minority with only one-fortieth. Therefore, even with proportional representation it would be difficult to attain Unionist representation.

Londonderry city was one of the keenest contests where nationalists bid for twenty-two seats and Unionists for twenty-one. To gain a majority of two on the Council all Unionist candidates had to be successful. Unionists issued two private circulars to their supporters warning that failure at the polls would result in ‘the election of a Roman Catholic Mayor and a Sinn Féin Corporation’. Unionists were also warned that

the future prosperity of the town and community depends upon the result … all hope of obtaining equality for the Unionists in the new Corporation, and the power of deciding the question of mayoralty depends upon every voter voting in alphabetical order and for all the Unionist candidates. To leave any one Unionist out would be fatal.121

These passionate pleas inspired, but they also bolstered nationalists who rallied supporters to ‘relieve the Derry Corporation from the domination of the Unionists’.122

Londonderry city had 3,844 valid votes and the total Unionist first preference vote was 2,035 with nationalists at 1,809. Of the valid votes it was estimated that forty per cent were women. Accusations of personation and gerrymandering of electoral borders abounded and the South East ward became the subject of a high court action. Unionists had taken a number of their voters out of the West Ward and transferred them to the South East, and nationalists were transferred from the South East to the West. Nationalists challenged these decisions in the Revision Sessions over an eleven week period, but to little avail, and it spurred determination to

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121 Freeman’s Journal, 15 January 1920.
122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
hone propaganda efforts on the south east of the city to defeat Unionists. Unionists directed their electors not only to vote Unionist, but ‘to vote in alphabetical order as the names appeared on the ballot paper’ because of the PR-STV method of voting.

In Londonderry, the end result was a bitterly disappointing nineteen seats for Unionists, with constitutional nationalists gaining eleven seats, and Sinn Féin ten seats. Nationalists held a majority for the first time in history of Londonderry Corporation, having a total of twenty-one seats. This placed Unionists in a minority of two against the nationalists. Scenes of ‘great nationalist jubilation’ took place, with ‘bonfires blazing in the streets’. The *Freeman’s Journal* reported that ‘for the first time since the Siege [of Derry] a Catholic and Nationalist has been returned as the Chief Magistrate of the Maiden City’. Bradley of Sinn Féin in his address to the inaugural meeting of the Corporation spoke in ‘Gaelic’, and it was the first time that the Irish language had been used in the Guildhall at a municipal gathering.

Londonderry, however, did not hold its nationalist advantage when the Government of Ireland Act was introduced and after the border was eventually drawn to establish Northern Ireland. The abolition of proportional representation for the Northern Ireland elections in 1929 and the altering of electoral boundaries returned Unionists to local authority power. Craig had threatened this change in the Commons in June 1920 when he stated that ‘when that Parliament [under Government of Ireland Act] is elected and when these three years have elapsed that parliament will put an end to this system of proportional representation and will go back to the system which exists here at present’. Disputes over electoral gerrymandering and voting rights

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124 See pp. 307 for more details on personation.
127 Ibid. Galway Rural Council at its first meeting conducted its business ‘as far as possible in Irish’ and most of the proceedings of the meeting, which lasted six hours, were conducted in the Gaelic language: *Irish Times*, 26 June, 1920.
129 HC, PD, vol 130, cc. 1164-1217, c. 1193, 15 June 1920: Provisions as to Parliaments of southern and northern Ireland.
continued, leading to the formation of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association in the 1960s.\textsuperscript{130}

Limavady was another devastating loss for Unionists in Ulster as the constituency had been previously in their control. The contest returned three nationalists, four Unionist, one Labour and one Comrade of the Great War (Comrades). In Portstewart, another previous Unionist stronghold, the Unionist vote held, but one nationalist was elected in the West Ward and two Comrades in the East Ward out of a total of twelve seats. In Lisburn, where Unionists held nearly all the seats, surprise came in the success of the Sinn Féin candidate W.F. Shaw. The \textit{Fermanagh Herald} reported that ‘the return of a Sinn Féiner at the head of the poll in one ward is an extraordinary result in so loyal a town’.\textsuperscript{131}

In Belfast, Unionist or Labour Unionist consistently remained dominant. Independent nationalist Labour had posed a threat to Sinn Féin so (in similar fashion to Cork) they combined with Labour to ‘plant the flag of progress and toleration’.\textsuperscript{132} Official Unionists had nominated fifty-five candidates for sixty seats, but only thirty-five were elected (plus two independents). Belfast’s new Corporation comprised thirty-seven Unionists (including three independents and five Labour Unionists), thirteen Labour, five Nationalist and five Sinn Féin. Turnout was 65.7 per cent and the political groups in the new Corporation became:\textsuperscript{133}

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Division & Register & Valid Votes & Spoiled Votes & Unionist & Labour & Nationalist & Sinn Féin \\
\hline
Cromac & 17,014 & 10,635 & 209 & 5 & 1 & 1 & - \\
Duncairn & 15,259 & 9,945 & 248 & 5 & 1 & 1 & - \\
Falls & 13,193 & 9,811 & 764 & 1 & 1 & 2 & 1 \\
Ormeau & 13,264 & 8,328 & 160 & 4 & 2 & - & - \\
Pottinger & 13,474 & 8,379 & 267 & 4 & 1 & - & 1 \\
Shankill & 17,629 & 12,057 & 289 & - & 2 & - & 1 \\
St Anne’s & 14,275 & 9,356 & 342 & 4 & 2 & - & - \\
Victoria & 15,917 & 9,275 & 300 & 4 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\
Woodvale & 15,523 & 11,245 & 212 & 5 & 2 & - & - \\
\hline
Total & 135,548 & 89,013 & 2,791 & 37 (61.6\%) & 13 (21.6) & 5 (8.3\%) & 5 (8.3\%) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Belfast Corporation January 1920}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{130} Walker, \textit{A History of the Ulster Unionist Party}, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Fermanagh Herald}, 24 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Freeman’s Journal}, 19 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{133} See also \textit{Belfast News Letter}, 19 January 1920 for a comprehensive account of results.
\textsuperscript{134} See section 5.7 on Voter Turnout for discussion on reasons for spoiled votes.
Unionists lost fifteen seats previously held and nationalists lost three, whereas Labour gained thirteen seats and Sinn Féin five. The retention of five Irish Party seats indicates the enduring strength of Devlinites and this can be attributed to a number of factors. Devlin’s long-standing relationship with the AOH had heightened the electorates’ perception of him as protector and defender of Catholic interests. Insecurity amongst Catholics particularly because Ulster Unionist propaganda regularly demanded their supporters to ‘Keep Ulster in the Empire by voting Unionist’ heightened anxiety about partition. The more radical policies of Sinn Féin were taking some hold, but the conciliatory approach still appealed to many. Labour’s social policies were associated with benevolent societies and the skilled craft trade union workers, and their gains reflected its cross-class support in Belfast city.

In Dublin the outgoing Corporation had been comprised of Irish Party members, with a sprinkling of Sinn Féin and Labour. After January 1920 Dublin Corporation was divided between Sinn Féin, Labour, Municipal Reform, Independents and Independent nationalists with one solitary Unionist. Sinn Féin gained forty-two of the eighty seats to become the largest party in the Corporation with a majority against all other parties put together. Dublin also elected a woman as alderman, Kathleen Clarke (Belfast was the only other area where a woman, Julia McMordie (Unionist), was elected alderman). Women fared best in the Dublin townships where twelve were returned with Rathmines electing six, or nearly one-third of the whole council of twenty-one members. Eight women represented Sinn Féin, one nationalist, two Unionist and one Ratepayer. In the Dublin townships Sinn Féin candidates fared badly and Reform candidates did well in the more affluent areas of Dalkey, Kingstown, Blackrock, and Howth.

A majority of Cork’s voters selected the Sinn Féin and Transport Workers’ combination giving them twenty-four seats on the new Corporation, and the runners-up were the nationalists.

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135 PRONI, UUC Papers, D1327/20/4/142: Election poster titled Ulster’s Claim on Britain, A Proud Record.
137 Cork Examiner, 19 January 1920.
138 Irish Independent, 19 January 1920. In all there were thirty female candidates in Dublin and the townships with fourteen being elected. In the provinces women were successful in Cork (1), Limerick (1), Coleraine (1), Carlow (3), Macroom (1) and Castlebay (2).
with fourteen, and an assortment of twelve others for a total of fifty seats. The new composition was Sinn Féin and Transport 24 seats, Nationalists 14, commercial 2, independents 3, Labour 4 and Demobilized Sailors and Soldiers 3 seats.\textsuperscript{139}

Limerick had a big turnout for the municipal elections with the \textit{Limerick Leader} reporting that the Corporation elections ‘were fought out in a quiet, good humoured spirit, and nothing of an untoward nature, happily, occurred’.\textsuperscript{140} Limerick borough was divided into five divisions (instead of the previous eight) and seventy-eight candidates vied for the forty seats. Of these, forty were Sinn Féin, nine Labour, twenty-nine independents (of whom some were nationalists) and ratepayers’ candidates.\textsuperscript{141} The result gave twenty-six seats to Sinn Féin, five to Labour, four to independents, and five to ratepayer candidates. Voter concerns in Limerick were ‘abnormal rates, the wretched housing of the working classes, and the “scourge of profiteering”’ — which hints at some of the other difficulties that caused strikes. The \textit{Limerick Leader} called on voters to select a candidate who proposed ‘bringing about much desired change’ regardless whether they were ‘Protestants or Catholics, Sinn Féiners, nationalists or Unionists’. Another ‘scourge’ was ‘excessive drinking, bad picture houses, and the cursed system we Irishmen have of supporting everyone and anyone except our own’.\textsuperscript{142} This indicates that members of the old nationalist council were out of favour and unlikely to be re-elected.

In the municipal elections in Galway city nine nationalist outgoing members were returned for ten seats alongside two outgoing independents, three new Labour and ten Sinn Féin candidates; however, in the RDC elections all the Sinn Féin candidates were returned (except in Clifden where an independent headed the poll). The return of nationalist candidates was measured on their past performance as the majority were incumbents.\textsuperscript{143} For example, Magennis in Kilkenny had topped the poll in January 1920. He had lost out to Cosgrave in the by-election of 1917, but along with de Loughry of Sinn Féin and another nationalist, Edward Healy, he became alderman of the city in

\textsuperscript{139} \textit{Irish Times}, 24 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Limerick Leader}, 19 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid, 7 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid, 16 January 1920: The article was written by J.J. Hobbens of the W&IF Training School in Limerick.
\textsuperscript{143} See chapter one, pp. 33-4.
1920. The *Kilkenny People* believed that voters had cast in favour of constitutional nationalism because they saw them as ‘a sort of breakwater against the rising tide of expenditure that threatens to plunge the city hopelessly into debt’. In some Ulster constituencies nationalists won seats in Londonderry city, Omagh, Belfast, Downpatrick in Co Down, Strabane Urban District Council and Lisburn – which was described as ‘a hotbed of Orangeism’ by the *Strabane Chronicle*, and returned one Sinn Féin, two nationalists, three Labour and an independent, although eight Unionists gave them a majority. The number of seats attained by the parties in Ulster were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Number of Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unionists</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinn Féin</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6: Number of party seats in 1920 Municipal elections

Omagh was indicative of the propaganda activities of parties in Ulster. Thirty-nine candidates had contested for twenty-one seats and nominations came in from nationalist, Trade and Labour Council, Unionists and the local Comrades branch. Public meetings were held in support of Labour and nationalist candidates and, as previously mentioned in chapter three, this afforded an inexpensive and excellent opportunity for personal contact with electors. A smaller number of meetings were held in support of the Comrades who concluded their meetings with the singing of ‘God Save the King’, demonstrating their political beliefs and aspirations. Polling was brisk, and sizable numbers turned out with ‘a large queue waiting at the Townhall to get recording of their votes’. Nationalists were active at the polling booths, particularly in the St Patrick’s Hall Division, where ‘a willing band of capable workers’ instructed ‘the voter on how to mark the ballot papers’. Proportional representation had obviously resulted in interference or persuasion in the form of education at the polling booth (although the extent is unknown).

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144 *Kilkenny People*, 24 January 1920.
145 Ibid.
147 See chapter three, Section 3.5: Symbols and Ballads.
149 Ibid.
5.6.2: Rural District Council (RDC) Elections

In June 1920 Sinn Féin took control of 338 of the 393 RDCs and board of guardians (including those in Ulster). Four of the six future Northern Ireland counties retained large Unionist majorities, but both Tyrone and Fermanagh were won by non-Unionists. In the Falls division (contrary to the 1918 election results) two-thirds of Devlin’s Irish Party were swept out – perhaps because of Sinn Féin’s 1918 electoral success. Mayo County Council became exclusively Sinn Féin as did every district council in the county. Roscommon elected a complete Sinn Féin council, Tipperary North Riding was composed of Sinn Féin representatives with all independents being defeated; in Meath Sinn Féin won twelve out of the thirteen seats, and in Louth Sinn Féin won in almost every division. In Wexford there were contests in five areas, and out of twenty-seven candidates twenty-four seats went to Sinn Féin and Labour. In Dublin North out of a register of 3,642, 1,986 polled and two Labour and three Sinn Féin were returned. Kingstown saw two Unionist candidates returned – Lady Dockrell who received 1,383 votes from a total poll of 7,935 (15,519 on the register) and the official Unionist, Patrick Merrin, who received 602 votes and was elected after the fifteenth count.

Ratepayers fared well in some districts also, for instance in Donegal six Ratepayers were returned in the municipal elections, and in Ballina’s Ardnaree Ward two of the four seats went to Ratepayer candidates with the other two going to Labour in the RDC elections. In the South Ward only one Sinn Féin candidate was elected with one independent, one Labour, one Ratepayer and one Comrade. Similar results occurred in the North Ward with the Sinn Féin candidate gaining the sixth seat. Municipal Reform candidates, on the other hand, were disappointed as they

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151 Freeman’s Journal, 9 June 1920. He had been elected in the municipal elections in January 1920 with 249 first preferences from a valid poll of 1,064: Irish Times, 19 January 1920.
152 Ratepayers also did well in the Sligo elections of 1919 (see introduction).
managed to secure only a few seats in the local elections and most were in Dublin or areas of Munster.\textsuperscript{153}

In most instances outside Ulster Sinn Féin and the Sinn Féin-Labour coalition gained seats without contest. For instance, in Carlow thirteen Sinn Féin candidates and seven Labour candidates were returned unopposed, and similarly Clare had no contests with five Sinn Féin TDs selected.\textsuperscript{154} Whether this was because Sinn Féin was strong in rural areas or whether other parties decided not to enter the contests because of the expense, dearth of candidates or simply lack of interest is unknown. Analysis of the RDC elections shows strong Sinn Féin gains, and Sinn Féin and Republican-Labour in Munster, Leinster and Connaught also had substantial gains. In areas of Ulster, separatists and nationalists again formed coalitions or pacts. The all island results were:\textsuperscript{155}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party(s)</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinn Féin</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinn Féin and Labour</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinn Féin and Nationalist (Ulster)</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionists</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7: Percentage vote by party or coalitions

Sinn Féin took exclusive control of the councils in Tipperary North and South, Cork, Waterford, Limerick, Kerry, Clare, Cavan, Longford, Wexford, Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo and Leitrim. And took control with Labour in Carlow and King’s County (with two Labour). The percentage gain in other counties was: Donegal 75, Derry 21, Armagh 21.7, Down, 20, Tyrone 30.8, Fermanagh 30, Monaghan 80, Dublin 63.1, Meath 95.2, Kildare 71.4, Queen’s County 81.8, Louth 64.3, Westmeath 65.2, Wicklow 68.4 and Kilkenny 84.2.\textsuperscript{156}

Sinn Féin’s success in 1920 allowed them to progressively usurp authority from the Imperial Parliament by refusing to recognise the control of the Local Government Board (LGB) and encouraging councils to make declarations of allegiance to Dáil Éireann.\textsuperscript{157} Most did, but some held out until agreed past and profitable deals were realised. In Dundalk, for example, the council

\textsuperscript{153} Freeman’s Journal, 19 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{154} The new representatives were Padraig Brennan, Sean Liddy, Éamon de Valera and Brian O’Higgins: BMH WS 683: Hugh Hehir.
\textsuperscript{155} See Appendix D (total seats 699).
\textsuperscript{156} Ulster Herald, 19 June 1920; see also Irish Bulletin, June 1920. See Appendix D for full results.
\textsuperscript{157} See Kilkenny People, 19 June 1920 for an example.
chose not to pledge allegiance until the sale of Dundalk Demesne had been finalised because they needed the LGB to put up the money to purchase Lord Roden’s interest in the property.\footnote{BMH WS 353: James McGuill.}

Once allegiance was pledged, copies of minutes and routine returns had to be sent to the Local Government Department of Dáil Éireann rather than to Dublin Castle. A resolution in June 1920 introduced Irish as the official language of the councils, but in a rather limited manner as few actually were proficient. All minutes and other documents were to be signed by the Chairman in Irish and all Pay Orders of Councils had to be printed in the Irish language after 1 August 1920.\footnote{First Report of the Department of Local Government and Public Health 1922-25 (Dublin, 1927); NLI, MS 49,595/5: Department of Local Government papers 1920-21: Circulars from Cosgrave informing that Dáil Éireann have issued a decree that all relations between the Irish public bodies and the “English Local Government Board” and the Custom House are to be severed.}

Local allegiance transferred in many counties outside the north-east region of Ulster from the LGB in the Custom House to the Local Government Department under William Cosgrave, although they did so at differing times. Some were concerned that rates would be ‘forthwith squandered’, and Unionists were angry over the destruction of their property and homes.\footnote{Laffan, The Resurrection, pp. 323-32: Kinsale, Co. Cork did not recognize the new authority until as late as October 1921; Callanan and Keogan, Local Government, p. 30. See also F.S.L. Lyons, ‘The War of Independence, 1919-21’ in A New History of Ireland, p. 243.}

By the end of 1920, however, Sinn Féin had established its constituent assembly and was in control of most urban and rural councils. By obtaining the adherence of councils, establishing the use of the Irish language (even minimally), and seizing the administration they had waged a symbolic battle in an unclear political environment. The British administration quickly notified local councils that no loans or grants would be made to any local authority unless accounts were submitted, routine audits allowed, and the rules set out by the LGB followed. Entrenched belief in Dáil Éireann roused angry protests from some councillors such as those in Kilkenny who acerbically asked ‘are we going to sell ourselves for a few pounds?’ According to the minutes of the council an order was given for the LGB letter to be destroyed. This was done, but when a second letter arrived two months later the council sent in their returns – financing the local area evidently took precedence.\footnote{Kilkenny People, 7 August 1920.} However, this was more a matter of form than recognition or approval, and many councils humoured the authority that best served their needs. However, some
municipalities faced bankruptcy because of the lack of funds from the LGB, particularly Dublin Corporation.\footnote{Many property owners were reluctant to pay rates to these councils, diminishing funds further. Cosgrave, assisted by Kevin O’Higgins, instructed local bodies to carefully conceal their finances and use hidden bank accounts to avoid seizure of their funds.}

Dealings with Dáil Éireann resembled and followed the practices of the LGB. According to the clerk of Kilkenny RCD, Dáil Éireann was ‘strictly adhering’ to the LGB regulations’ and they added that ‘in fact they are a little more strict that the LGB’.\footnote{Kilkenny People, 7 August 1920.} The dual administration did not last as councils moved progressively under the authority of Dáil Éireann, and eventually in November 1920 an order was issued to sever relations with the LGB.

Sinn Féin’s 86 per cent success rate in the rural district councils does not necessarily indicate orthodoxy of voter belief. It was the result of a number of factors. They put forward candidates where other parties did not, and voters who turned up at the polls in contested constituencies were already Sinn Féin adherents or had been persuaded by their propaganda. Variances of opinion in larger urban centres resulted in a wider party spread in the councils. Sinn Féin’s organisation, discipline and Volunteer contributions at the rural level facilitated voters accessing the polling booths and receiving propaganda messages.

Their success in Ulster in January did not raise widespread concern among Unionists. Dawson Bates commented to Carson that ‘at first glance the Elections, so far as regards Belfast, look worse than they really are’. He pointed out that Sinn Féin topped the poll in the St Anne’s Division yet they were ‘a negligible quality in that Division’. He apportioned blame to proportional representation, but also to the ‘general apathy on the part of the public … which is frequently the case in municipal matters’. He also remarked that many in the old corporation ‘were rather unpopular which did not improve matters’, and he advised that going forward Unionists needed to ‘work as one party in the Corporation.’\footnote{PRONI, Carson Papers, D1507/A/33/20: Dawson Bates to Carson, 23 January 1920.} In an earlier letter he remarks that ‘the bulk of the rank and file would be quite prepared to accept a parliament for the six counties in preference to nine counties’, and anticipation of this outcome may have resulted in voter apathy for local
elections. A new parliament for areas of Ulster would, and did, allow for new laws on local government elections.\textsuperscript{165}

In 1919 Major Bryan Cooper, acting Press Censor for Ireland, attributed Sinn Féin’s increasing success to the fact that the Government had ‘turned a blind eye to the doings of Dáil Éireann’ and was unable to ‘bring the murderers to justice’. Fault lay with the ‘already overburdened police force’.\textsuperscript{166} For Sinn Féin, gaining success at the local level received equal attention to general election aspirations. The Election Committee was empowered to ensure that each Comhairle Ceantair or Cumann sent forward as many official Sinn Féin candidates as were considered likely to be successful. A temporary transfer of available staff into the Elections Department to oversee the local elections provided experience and personnel.\textsuperscript{167} And a clear and resolute programme was adopted for the municipal elections which aimed:

- to secure the expenditure of the rates raised in Ireland inside Ireland,
- to secure efficiency and purity of administration,
- to establish the principle of free and open competition for public appointments,
- and, to carry into effect the democratic programme approved by the elected representatives of Ireland.\textsuperscript{168}

The content may not have been all that electrifying, but it set out to address the issue of rates which was a focal concern for town businesses and local industry, and it set out to remedy the widespread perception of corruption and jobbery in local councils that had lain under the control of Unionists and constitutional nationalists in the past. Labour’s mandate for the local elections had absorbed the ideals of the democratic programme. Sinn Féin’s reference to this allowed for both the assimilation of similar ideals in the promotion of working class values which facilitated alliances, and the targeting of the Labour or trade union vote.

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid, 33/1: 3 January 1920.
\textsuperscript{166} Kilkenny People, 29 December 1919.
\textsuperscript{167} SFSCM, 4 December 1919.
\textsuperscript{168} Ibid, 26 November 1919.
5.7: Voter Turnout

The total electorate for the county and boroughs of Ireland in 1918 was 1,921,601, but of significance was the low turnout in many constituencies. The Great War, erroneous registers, deceased voters and emigration may have caused some of the absenteeism in 1918, but can it account for figures running into the thousands? In Galway Connemara, for instance, the Sinn Féin candidate attained 11,754 votes and the Irish Party 3,482 where the total electorate was 24,956. Therefore, 9,720 voters did not go to the poll. In Leitrim, where Dolan defeated the Irish Party candidate by massive 14,615 votes, 9,272 eligible electors abstained from voting. As previously mentioned, in Dillon’s constituency the total electorate was 21,635, yet 8,146 stayed away from the ballot box. The intimate reasons for voter disaffection will remain forever unknown, but a palpable spurning of both nationalist parties or a dislike of the candidates was evident. A desired (but unavailable) alternative such as Labour may have captured these votes. The withdrawal of Irish Labour and independent parties from the contests left a clear issue between Sinn Féin separatism and Irish Party constitutionalism in numerous areas, but in the minds of many this choice was too limited or entirely deficient to meet their hopes and wants.

Great War casualties and absent voters affected election results, particularly for the Irish Party and Unionists. Over the course of the war 210,000 Volunteers had enlisted, and of those it is estimated that between 30,000 and 35,000 Irishmen died in the course of the campaigns. Men, and women, who might previously have campaigned on behalf of or voted for Unionism or constitutional nationalism in the 1918 election were either still at the frontline, making their way

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169 Note: all 1918 general election results and calculations therefrom were obtained in Walker, Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92, pp. 4-9; Irish Independent, 30 December 1918 – excluding the university seats.

170 The registers had errors despite attempts to update them. For instance, during the municipal elections in 1920 a young boy, aged five years, named Joseph Hunt was listed on the register in the Dublin No. 10 area and a girl aged nine or ten recorded her vote in Drumcondra, Dublin. Both, it was believed, cast their votes for Sinn Féin: Irish Independent, 16 January 1920.

171 See Fitzpatrick, ‘Militarism in Ireland, 1900-1922’ in Bartlett and Jeffery, A Military History of Ireland, p. 388 who states that Ireland’s aggregate male contribution to wartime forces was about 210,000 which includes the 58,000 Irish-born servicemen who were mobilized in August 1914, not all of whom had joined the services in Ireland itself. These figures do not include women who served as wartime nurses. See War Office, Statistics of the military effort of the British Empire during the Great War, p. 192; and Fionnuala Walsh, ‘The Impact of the Great War on women in Ireland 1914 to 1919’, TCD unpublished PhD thesis, pp. 182-183. ‘Estimated that between 30,000 and 35,000 Irishmen died’ in Philip Orr, ‘200,000 volunteer Soldiers’ in John Horne (ed), Our War: Ireland and the Great War (Dublin, 2008), pp. 63, 76. The number of Irish deaths in the British army recorded by the registrar general was 27,405.
home, or were killed or missing in action. Many would not return in time to cast their votes on 14 December 1918. The Northern Whig estimated that the number of absent voters was in the region of ‘something like 22,000’.\(^{172}\)

The new Representation of the People Act allowed for servicemen over nineteen to vote and to vote absently if in France or Belgium; all others could appoint proxies,\(^{173}\) but there were problems with these votes. As the Irish Times reported, in Dublin’s St James’s Division, 84 papers from absent electors were disallowed because they were unstamped. In the Pembroke Division only 495 absentee votes were polled out of a total of 2,337; in the Rathmines division only 539 absent electors out of 1,500 sent in papers; and, in Cork only 1,553 absent votes were recorded out of a potential 5,665. The selection of constituencies in table 5.8 gives some indication of the impact:\(^{174}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Registered Absent Voters</th>
<th>Votes Returned</th>
<th>Percentage Returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rathmines (Dublin)</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Wexford</td>
<td>752</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>5,665</td>
<td>1,553</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s County</td>
<td>1,193</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Kildare</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pembroke (Dublin)</td>
<td>2,337</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Wexford</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,102</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,490 (-9,612)</strong></td>
<td><strong>26.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While it is unlikely that, say, John Good in Pembroke would have attained all the registered absent votes; speculatively if the 1,842 votes (figure minus those that were returned) had been added he could have defeated Desmond FitzGerald; and Peter Ffrench would certainly have defeated James Ryan of Sinn Féin in South Wexford. Yet, in the other constituencies mentioned Sinn Féin’s results were too strong to affect change even if absent votes were added. The sample given here was all that was available, and perhaps in other constituencies absent voter numbers were higher. There is

\(^{172}\) Northern Whig, 14 December 1918.

\(^{173}\) HC, PD, Vol. 110, cc. 1780-3, 4 November 1918: The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Hayes Fisher).

\(^{174}\) Figures calculated from Irish Times, 30 November 1918 and Cork Examiner, 30 December 1918.
a wide variation in the registered absent voters and the votes returned in table 5.8, particularly between Rathmines in Dublin and South Wexford in comparison to North Wexford. Comprehending the reason for this is difficult because the whereabouts of these voters is unknown. They may have been too distant to have received their voting papers in a timely manner for the three week election lead in, they may have been missing-in-action, or the registers may have been incorrect. Their absence no doubt affected overall results as Sir Thomas Robinson, the Unionist candidate for South County Dublin, lamented that it was ‘most disagreeable that the Act passed for the purpose of enabling absent voters to record their votes should have so failed its aim’. He further asserted that ‘many thousands’ were ‘deprived of the opportunity of voting at this election’. 175 A Sinn Féin supporter writing to the *Irish Times* on 15 January 1920 upheld this claim, remarking that there was ‘ample proof’ that the voting papers reached ‘but a small percentage of the men at sea and the men in the trenches’ in 1918. However, contrary to the opinion that these men would vote Unionist or Irish Party he ardently maintained that in the municipal elections of 1920 ‘the men who were deprived of their votes in 1918 will vote, and in Rathmines the majority will vote Sinn Féin’.

Again in 1920 there was a significant number of uncontested seats and voter turnout was low, for instance in Galway’s South Ward out of a register of 941 only 542 polled. 176 Of these sixteen were spoiled votes, so only five-ninths of the electorate in this ward went to the polls, and almost half were women voters. 177 The vigorous and at times rancorous 1918 general election campaign may have generated electoral fatigue. The mundanity of battling over everyday issues resulted in bland and featureless propaganda campaigns. And, the overall uncertainty of Ireland’s future governance may also have caused voters to believe it not worth their while casting votes until final decisions were made. This is mere speculation because whether urban or rural no

175 *Irish Times*, 29 and 30 November 1918.
176 In the Dublin County contests it was estimated that only half the electorate went to the polls: *Freeman’s Journal*, 8 June 1920.
reasons were provided for this apathetic voter sentiment. The *Freeman’s Journal* reported that by evening there was a little more life at the various centres.\textsuperscript{178}

An absence of long-term emigration opportunities due to the war also affected voter numbers. According to the registrar general’s report, between 1851 and the outbreak of the Great War, annual emigration overseas never fell below 23,300 and was rarely less than 35,000. In the ten years 1904 to 1913, the average number of migrants was 31,872. If we take the year 1911 as an example, the total number of native Irish emigrants was 30,573 which was equivalent to 7.0 per 1,000 of the population of Ireland. By 1914 the total number of emigrants leaving Ireland decreased to 20,314 – 4.6 per 1,000 of the population – a decrease of 10,653 since 1913 [and 10,259 by 1911 figures]. In the year 1916, only 7,302 Irish natives emigrated, which represented a rate of 1.7 per 1,000 of the estimated population.\textsuperscript{179} By 1918 the figures had dropped hugely, with the total number of Irish native emigrants being only 980 (442 males and 538 females) representing 0.2 per 1,000 of the estimated population.\textsuperscript{180} Many of these voters may have enlisted for war service, but those who did not may have been persuaded by or supported the anti-war rhetoric in Sinn Féin propaganda.

Voter turnout was also affected by the influenza pandemic in 1918-19 which killed at least 20,057 people and infected an estimated 800,000 people on the island. According to Ida Milne, the pandemic occurred in three waves in Ireland, a mild wave in the early summer of 1918, and two much more severe waves in the autumn of 1918 and spring of 1919. Milne’s research into the medical reports of the Adelaide Hospital in 1918, reveal that ‘the peak months for hospital

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid, 8 June 1920.
\textsuperscript{179} HC, PD, CD 6131, 1912-13, CV, p. 595; HC 1913, CD 6727, LV, p. 933; HC 1914, CD 7313, LXIX, p. 1001; HC 1914-16, CD 7883, LXXX, p. 319; HC 1916, CD 8230, XXXII, p. 915; HC 1917-18,CD 8520, XXXXVII, p. 269; HC 1918, CD 9013, XXV, p.17. See also Vaughan and Fitzpatrick, *Irish Historical Statistics*. These figures do not include men and women recruited through labour exchanges for work in Great Britain, as they do not count as emigrants because they were not permanently leaving. For migrant war workers, check: NAI CSO RP/1918/33366, Chief Secretary Office Papers: 34,207 people left Ireland to find work in Britain through the labour exchanges in 1917 and 1918 (although the total number of war work migrants is probably higher as it does not include those who went independently of the labour exchanges). The destination of migrants out of Ireland in the years 1911 to 1916 was mainly the United States. In 1916 4,207 went to the United States and 2,446 went to Great Britain, with the remainder going to Canada, South Africa and Australia.
\textsuperscript{180} The destination had changed. The majority were now opting for England, Wales and Scotland as opposed to North America or elsewhere.
admissions were June, and October, November and December. In many households, entire families were incapacitated by the disease’.  

Spoiled votes, either through ignorance or purposefulness, were also uncounted across the elections. Some ballot sheets had ‘God Save the King’ written across them, indicating that they were Unionist in a constituency with no representative candidate, and others wrote ‘unionist’ or ‘nationalist’ according to their bias. Some errors saw voters put crosses against two and even three candidates, and one individual placed a huge cross that covered all three names in the constituency, while another put a zero against the names of rejected candidates.

Finally, and as mentioned earlier, many may have stayed away from the polls in hostile constituencies where volunteer aggression created a state of fear. Nearly three thousand failed to vote in Waterford city in 1918 which was ridden with violence. In Wexford, despite William Redmond’s determined efforts to instruct Irish Party supporters to ‘allow freedom of speech to our political opponents’, disorder prevailed. During a speech by Fr O’Flanagan ‘a fracas’ quickly assumed the dimensions of a riot and a ‘battle royal[e]’ took place. Of the 46,190 on the register of electors in Wexford, 12,199 did not vote. Atrocity propaganda and aggressive propaganda added fuel to heightened political emotions which spilled over into violence in some constituencies. As evidenced in chapter four both nationalist sides engaged in verbal abuse and printed insults.

5.8: Candidates and Voters

New voters were particularly targeted by Unionists and Sinn Féin. Another oft made and truthful claim was that Sinn Féin’s success was the result of the youth vote. As Garvin phrased it, ‘the young were released from any restraint [after the conscription crisis] and rushed into Sinn Féin’.

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182 Irish Times, 30 December 1918.
183 Ibid, 29 November 1918.
184 Garvin, The Evolution, p. 130. He credits conscription and church support for separatism as the reasons.
Newspapers claimed that ‘Sinn Féin has a powerful hold on the youth of the country’.  Hart explains that Sinn Féin was a coalition of interests and ‘this omnibus “Sinn Féin” flew a republican flag’ that was also ‘a voice for youth and women’.  Youths had been called on to join Sinn Féin clubs in order to receive military instruction, with Eoin MacNeill stating that ‘every man should join a Sinn Féin Club and be a soldier and be prepared to act as a soldier’.  As seen in chapters one and two, Sinn Féin had ardently established clubs at the constituency level in many counties and this had enhanced electioneering, enriched fund-raising efforts and generated votes.

Accusations of personation and falsifying the register of electors was widespread during the elections in this era and all parties engaged in the practice. In 1918 Patrick Cassidy of Mayo maintained that the Irish Party was beaten in Dillon’s constituency of Ballaghaderreen because of the ‘great volume of personation and by falsifying the register of voters and so forth. Dead and absent voters "recorded" their votes’. Eugene Kilkenny of Leitrim remarked that ‘in an all-out effort to win the election and finally oust the Redmond Party … personation was resorted to on a large basis. I myself voted at least fifty times’. In 1920 Sinn Féin in Co. Tyrone accused Unionists of personation, stating that ‘the booths were not long open on the day of the poll when it became known that a large number of prominent Unionists had voted twice, and also that numerous attempts at personation had been made, a good many of which were successful’. However, Sinn Féin’s overall support of fifty-seven per cent (from the sixty-nine per cent of the electorate who cast a vote in contested constituencies) in 1918 was a considerable victory margin that offset any advantage secured through internal personation, and it overshadowed competitive personation by the Irish Party or Unionists. All parties were equally culpable of personation so they effectively cancelled each other out.

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185 Irish Times 7 and 8 May 1917; Westmeath Nationalist and Midland Reporter, 26 April 1917.
186 Hart, The IRA at War, p. 17
188 BMH WS 1017: Garda Patrick Cassidy, who also stated that ‘Volunteers from Co. Clare had come up to Ballaghaderreen for this election, and they all voted for some one who was on the register but was either dead or absent from the country. Even then, we only won by a small majority; WS 1146: Eugene Kilkenny. There are many other accounts of personation within Sinn Féin, for example see: WS 1366: Patrick Lennon (Westmeath), WS 1436, Walter Brown (Fingal).
189 Ulster Herald, 12 June 1920.
The claim is also regularly made that Ireland in 1918 had new characters in its political elite that were younger men in their late twenties or thirties – a generation younger than Irish Party leaders. While this is true when compared against Dillon and O’Connor, it is not true of all Irish Party candidates. Devlin was forty-seven years old at the time, only a year older than Griffith. Sinn Féin had also selected the sixty-seven-year-old Count Plunkett in 1918 for North Roscommon. An examination of the contested elections shows that most Irish Party and Sinn Féin candidates were of similar age, with the exception of thirteen. Within this thirteen the candidates of both nationalist parties were similarly older in Fermanagh South, Kildare North, Mayo West and Westmeath. Unionist candidates were inclined to be older, ranging in age from thirty-five to sixty-seven, with the majority being in their late forties to early fifties. Where Sinn Féin benefited in terms of youth was in their Volunteer members. Taking Hart’s figures, the majority of Volunteers were in the age group 20 to 29 years making them useful canvassers and ‘peace patrollers’ and, if male, eligible voters. Therefore, the youthfulness of the candidates was not as crucial as the youth of those necessary to conduct the propaganda war and cast a vote. Even Dillon conceded that Sinn Féin’s by-election victories in Roscommon, Longford and Clare were because of ‘the frantic activity of the young Irish, who seem to be possessed by poisonous hatred of the party’.

As Hugh Hehir, a Volunteer member of the Dublin Brigade, pointed out ‘in those days the franchise was very restricted, none of the young people having the vote and … polling booths were few and far between’. However, the Irish Volunteer movement (and Cumann na mBan) attracted the young, and imagery in Sinn Féin propaganda regularly portrayed de Valera in military uniform emphasising manliness and youth, as shown in figures 3.10 and 5.2. Candidates were linked with the Easter Rising and the hardened ability to overcome British oppression, even while interned. And, the Irish Party were ridiculed as being old, stale and repetitive. Tom Nairn drew

190 See Appendix B: Election results and candidate profiles.
191 Hart, The IRA at War, p. 121: Between 1917 and 1918 the majority of volunteers were in this age category. See also Townshend, The Republic, p. 43.
192 TCD, JD, 674/1416: Dillon to O’Connor, n.d.
193 BMH WS 683: Hugh Hehir.
194 See also Beatty, Masculinity and Power, pp. 21-57.
attention to the Janus-faced approach of Sinn Féin – a party that harked to the past and looked towards a new future.\textsuperscript{195} Using minimal text and strong imagery a soldierly de Valera in the poster (figure 5.2) suggested that the coherent path to freedom and prosperity lies with Sinn Féin’s plan to appeal to the peace conference. The Irish Party road promised only high taxation, conscription and famine. De Valera presaged a self-determined future Ireland with an internationalist flair.

‘A large number of clergy voted during the day’ and Roman Catholic clergymen voted in large numbers in Dublin City in 1918, according to the \textit{Irish Times}. The Most Reverend Dr Bernard, Archbishop of Dublin voted in the Kevin Street polling station at midday and the Most Reverend Dr Walsh, Roman Catholic Archbishop voted at Drumcondra and Finglas, and it was reported that he ‘voted in each case for the Sinn Féin candidate’.\textsuperscript{196} If the vociferous propagandistic support of separatism by the Catholic clerics is to be believed and if devout members of the electorate followed, the majority of the clergy voiced favour for Sinn Féin. The \textit{Irish Times} claimed that the Roman Catholic bishops had ‘strengthened the hands of Sinn Féin and weakened the hands of the Nationalist party …’ and they were ‘using Sinn Féin as a means of killing home rule …’\textsuperscript{197}

Unionist anger at Catholic Church interference was also evident in reports in the \textit{Irish Times} and other newspapers, particularly in Ulster. For instance, when ‘the first dignitary of the

\textsuperscript{195} Tom Nairn, \textit{Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited} (London, 1997).
\textsuperscript{196} \textit{Irish Times}, 23 December 1918. The provision in the 1918 Act that no elector could have more than two votes reduced the overall number of plural votes, but they still remained the privilege of a number of a few: Mordechai Feingold, \textit{History of Universities}, Volume XXIII/1 (Oxford, 2008), p. 121.
\textsuperscript{197} \textit{Irish Times} 5 December 1918.
Roman Catholic Church’ threatened to recommend voters to select ‘the Sinn Féin candidates in the eight divisions of Ulster’ if the pact failed, Unionists claimed that it was an attempt to stymie temporary partition.198 Archbishop Walsh’s description of Irish Unionists as the ‘common enemy’ and Logue’s preference for the election of a Sinn Féin candidate to that of a Unionist sparked frustration at any ‘chance of Irish unity’ which now ‘recedes into the world of dreams’.199 When enclosing a subscription of £25 to the Sinn Féin election fund Dr Michael Fogarty, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Killaloe, condemned the Irish Party’s policy of ‘massaging’ English ministers. He irately maintained that abstention was ‘not only a logical and long-called for protest against the pillage of our national rights in the infamous Union’ but that ‘no other course is open to us if we have a particle of self-respect’.200 He indignantly accused Unionists of working ‘its shameless will on Ireland’ and saw little point in sending members to the Commons to be:

spat upon as paupers, to come back to us with empty hands, or with a few crumbs from the English kitchen garnished with rhetoric, but, as always, with the leprosy of Anglicisation visibly developed on their person for the ruin of our national spirit.201

So powerful was the influence of clerical rhetoric that Dillon credited the success of East Cavan to the priests who ‘went the length of working minds’ through ‘spiritive intimidation’.202 Many in the Roman Catholic Church, from the local curate up to the bishop, had gradually switched to the separatist ideology of abstention and encouraged parishioners to follow suit.203

198 Ibid, - the author of this piece claimed that the partition proposals of 1916 ‘would have provided at least a temporary settlement’.
199 Ibid, 5 December 1918.
200 Ibid, 30 November 1918.
201 Ibid.
202 TCD, JD, Mss 6742/499: Dillon to O’Connor, 22 June 1918.
203 See Coleman, County Longford, pp.54-55 which discusses how church had influenced the South Longford by-election.
Candidates in all parties hailed from a mixed bag of middle-class occupations, including university lecturers, teachers, civil servants and journalists. In 1918 Sinn Féin had eight doctors, five solicitors, eight barristers and one King’s Counsel running as candidates. After the election Unionists comprised three doctors, six King’s Counsel, seven barristers and seven military officers as Members. Among Sinn Féin there were three doctors, two solicitors, and a barrister. And, of the six Irish Party MPs elected there were three barristers and two solicitors with Devlin being the only layman. Therefore, with such similarities of occupations across the political divides, it is safe to conclude that a candidate’s means of earning a livelihood had little bearing on election success.

Women, on the other hand, strongly influenced electoral outcomes. Comprehensive studies on the history of the nationalist and Unionist suffrage campaign in Ireland have already been carried out by many authors on the topic, so it is unnecessary to repeat research already available. This work intends to investigate if and how women voted in 1918 and 1920, and to ask if the parties that petitioned for women’s votes were more successful than those who did not. Chapter four demonstrated that Sinn Féin and Unionist propaganda resolutely pursued women voters or addressed both sexes. Sinn Féin had the advantage of having as its founder Arthur Griffith and even though he was concerned that women’s suffrage might distract from attaining independence he backed the cause. Sinn Féin (unlike the Irish Party) had no long-term past history on suffrage which could be pitched against them during election campaigns. Contrary to the Irish Party they had encouraged women’s organisations such as Cumann na mBan, albeit as an auxiliary to the Volunteers.

204 Irish Independent, 30 December 1918.
205 For studies on Unionist women see Diane Urquhart, The Ladies of Londonderry, The Minutes of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council and Executive Committee 1911-40 (Dublin, 2001), Women in Ulster Politics, and ‘The Female of the Species is More Deadlier than the Male?’ The Ulster Women’s Unionist Council”, Janice Holmes & Diane Urquhart (eds), Coming into the Light: The Work Politics and Religion of Women in Ulster 1840-1940 (Belfast, 1994). For Nationalist women see Senia Pašeta, Irish Nationalist Women, 1900-1918 (Cambridge, 2013); Cullen Owens, Smashing Times; Margaret Ward, In Their Own Voice (Dublin, 1995) and Unmanageable Revolutionaries.
Back in 1912 Redmond had told a delegation from the Irish Women’s Franchise League (IWFL) that he would not support the extension of the franchise to women either before or after home rule. This proved an error of judgement and because of past policies the Irish Party failed to draw women voters in 1918. They did attract vocal support from ‘separation women’ – so called because they were paid ‘separation money’ while their husbands (or other male family members) served in the war – during election campaigns. But, despite their bellicose campaign tactics on behalf of the Irish Party many of the separation women did not have the vote in 1918 because of the property qualifications imposed on women voters. According to Borgonovo, their turnout in Cork was only twenty-seven per cent.\(^\text{206}\) Therefore, they were of little use to bolster Irish Party votes.\(^\text{207}\)

Unlike Unionists and Sinn Féin the Irish Party had neglected to create targeted propaganda to capture the female vote, aside from Devlin who made specific mention of issues that affected women in this era (see chapter four, 4.3: Women Electors – consider!). Whether Devlin’s policies appealed or whether women voters were swayed because of his inclusivity is hard to tell, but he was one of six Irish Party MPs in Ireland to hold his seat in 1918.

Irish Party propaganda and policy during the home rule era and particularly in the general election campaign left some women feeling deserted and betrayed. The leadership had grossly underestimated the power of the female vote, evident in the numbers that turned out on polling day (see below). Labour made all the right gestures and their inclusivity plans were comprehensive, however, as discussed in chapter one, they failed to materialise in external propaganda as they had not organised efficiently to contest the general election.

In a letter to the editor of the Irish Independent in November 1918 the chairman [sic] and honorary secretary of the IWFL pointed out that ‘the number of women voters on the register is very large; in Belfast alone there are 85,000, in one of the Tipperary divisions women are half the total electorate’.\(^\text{208}\) The Freeman’s Journal highlighted that ‘the women’s vote is a new factor in

\(^{206}\) John Borgonovo, Dynamics of War and Revolution, (Cork, 2013), p. 228.
\(^{207}\) For more information on separation women see Jeffery, Ireland and the Great War, pp. 44-46; and Walsh, ‘The impact of the Great War on women in Ireland’, pp. 90-109.
\(^{208}\) Irish Independent, 18 November 1918.
the election campaign, and as it roughly represents from forty to fifty per cent of the electorate, it will exercise an enormous influence on the result of the elections’. According to the *Freeman’s Journal*, in the city of Dublin, out of a total electorate of 124,426, there were 49,351 women parliamentary voters, representing roughly about two-fifths (or 39.7 per cent) of the electors. In the county of Dublin, out of a total electorate of 75,524, there were 30,609 women voters, comprising 40.5 per cent of the electorate. 209

Figures from the *Freeman’s Journal* of 26 November 1918 (see table 5.9) show the total number of electors and women electors in various city and county constituencies and this gives some indication of the strength of their voting power:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Total Electors</th>
<th>Women Electors</th>
<th>Percentage of Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cavan East</td>
<td>15,148</td>
<td>6,956</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rathmines</td>
<td>19,002</td>
<td>8,233</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork City</td>
<td>43,017</td>
<td>17,701</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pembroke</td>
<td>17,951</td>
<td>7,358</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin South</td>
<td>18,144</td>
<td>7,371</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin, St. Patrick’s</td>
<td>18,785</td>
<td>7,595</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast Cromac</td>
<td>21,975</td>
<td>8,834</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast Falls</td>
<td>15,859</td>
<td>6,359</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin, College Green</td>
<td>21,345</td>
<td>8,433</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast Ormeau</td>
<td>16,408</td>
<td>6,471</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin, St James’s</td>
<td>13,134</td>
<td>5,156</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down South</td>
<td>18,708</td>
<td>7,310</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin, St Michan’s</td>
<td>17,588</td>
<td>6,742</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo East</td>
<td>21,635</td>
<td>8,237</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin North</td>
<td>20,427</td>
<td>7,627</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone North East</td>
<td>22,963</td>
<td>8,162</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipperary South</td>
<td>14,716</td>
<td>5,119</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexford South</td>
<td>23,168</td>
<td>8,011</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipperary Mid</td>
<td>17,458</td>
<td>5,925</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo North</td>
<td>20,212</td>
<td>6,744</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexford North</td>
<td>23,022</td>
<td>7,331</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Tipperary County, the women voters were nearly 35 per cent, and in Co. Cavan about 33¼ per cent of the entire electorate. 211 While the sample provided here is small given that there were eighty contested constituencies, it is unlikely there were great variances for the rest of the country.

209 *Freeman’s Journal*, 26 November 1918.
210 These were the only constituencies mentioned in the *Freeman’s Journal*, 26 November 1918.
211 Ibid.
In general women averaged at 38.5 per cent of the total electorate (based on the figures above).\textsuperscript{212} There is a wide variation between rural and urban constituencies in the number of female registered electors (although Cavan East is an anomaly). Women had moved to the cities in search of employment mainly as domestic servants and factory workers.\textsuperscript{213} The number of women electors in Rathmines and Cork city greatly exceeds that of Wexford North and Mayo North even though the total number of electors is contradictory. The influence on electoral outcomes supports the argument that the parties that appealed directly to women in propaganda campaigns secured their votes. In Rathmines the Unionist candidate Maurice Dockrell won and in Wexford North and Mayo North Sinn Féin secured wide majorities (there was no contest in Cavan East). The novelty of being able to cast a vote and participate at the political level sparked enthusiasm amongst women. As discussed in chapter four, propaganda to encourage women to exercise their franchise, particularly by Unionists and Sinn Féin, resulted in high turnout and votes cast for these parties. Evidence of the high turnout by women was in the newspaper reports that consistently commented on their predominance at the polls; for instance, the \textit{Irish Times} stated that ‘from all quarters … women voted in large numbers, and early in the day’, and in Belfast women also voted ‘in larger numbers than was generally anticipated’.\textsuperscript{214} This did not bode well for the Irish Party, particularly when the IWFL at their meeting accused ‘Mr Dillon’s Party’ of being ‘from the beginning hostile to their League’. They reminded that Dillon had previously stated ‘he hoped they [women] would never get the vote as it would mean the “disturbing of Western civilization”’.\textsuperscript{215}

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid, 26 November 1918: They estimated that the women’s vote would be ‘from forty to fifty per cent of the electorate’ and that it ‘will exercise an enormous influence on the result of the elections’.

\textsuperscript{213} HC, PD, Cmd. 721, 1919: The 1919 emigration statistics show that most women over thirty years were ‘housekeepers’ and ‘servants’.

\textsuperscript{214} \textit{Irish Times}, 21 December 1918.

\textsuperscript{215} Ibid; \textit{Irish Independent}, 4 December and 11 November 1918. Similar comments were made in a letter to the editor of the \textit{Irish Independent} on 11 November 1918 by K. Connery, chairman [sic] and C. Cahalan, honorary secretary of the IWFL and the question was asked ‘how far these parties are prepared to back up their support by action, namely, by adopting women as their candidates. Sinn Féin also came under criticism for selecting only one female candidate (they ultimately fielded two in the 1918 general election): \textit{Irish Independent}, 18 November 1918.
Women were not successful in fielding candidates and despite Cumann na mBan urging Sinn Féin to select women candidates only two ran in urban constituencies.\textsuperscript{216} As previously mentioned, Constance Markievicz was elected in Dublin’s St Patrick’s Division, gaining sixty-six per cent of the vote. The other candidate, Winifred Carney, contested in the highly Unionist constituency of Belfast’s Victoria and received only 539 votes (four per cent) – although, as stated, Sinn Féin did not do well in any of the northern counties that went on to become Northern Ireland. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington had declined nomination to run for Sinn Féin. Labour had also nominated Helena Moloney, but she too refused to run, even before the decision was taken not to contest the election.\textsuperscript{217} Greater numbers of women contested elections in 1920, but in Ulster only three women were elected outside Belfast. In Dublin City five women were returned (one of them for two seats) and in the townships they fared better where twelve were returned. Eight of the twelve women elected represented Sinn Féin, two were Unionist, and one nationalist and one ratepayer.\textsuperscript{218} Kathleen Clarke maintained that while she had been considered for Dublin North City and Limerick City she was ultimately disregarded in favour of male candidates.\textsuperscript{219} Anna Haslam believed that women were ‘withheld by the heavy expense involved’ in contesting elections.\textsuperscript{220}

Sixty-nine per cent of the electorate cast a vote in contested constituencies in 1918 and of this only forty-seven per cent of the votes favoured Sinn Féin.\textsuperscript{221} The Irish Party managed to win one-fifth of the total vote and polled well in some areas, particularly Ulster. However, this leaves a majority of the electors in the southern provinces endorsing the Sinn Féin programme. In 1920

\textsuperscript{216} SFSCM, 12 September 1918: Cumann na mBan wrote to the Standing Committee to express hope that some women would be selected for parliamentary seats and pointed out that the Republican proclamation made it essential that women stand. The Standing Committee pointed out that the selection of candidates resided with the Comhairl Ceantair and not with the Standing Committee, but they agreed to draw up a list of suitable women candidates.

\textsuperscript{217} Laffan, \textit{The Resurrection}, p. 154.

\textsuperscript{218} \textit{Irish Independent}, 19 January 1920.


\textsuperscript{220} She did appeal for funds to be sent to the Municipal Reform Committee which were to be earmarked for election expenses of women candidates: \textit{Irish Times}, 23 December 1919.

\textsuperscript{221} See also O’Leary, p. 8. For examples see: Garvin, \textit{The Evolution}, p. 130; Kissane, \textit{Explaining Irish Democracy}, p. 10.
trade and Ulster’s prosperity had been the mainstay of Unionist propaganda for the municipal elections. Sinn Féin had contested on the promise to defy English mismanagement and to rid local government of corruption and patronage. They mounted an unwavering and assertive campaign to secure these seats in order to facilitate control at the local level to enact the policies of Dáil Éireann.

The formation of Dáil Éireann in 1919 created a dual government system across the island, and the Government of Ireland Act was passing through the House of Commons. Official Sinn Féin candidates had been pledge-bound to support the Irish republic and the new Dáil (see above section 5.6.2). This had raised widespread concern amongst Unionists who perceived Sinn Féin as incapable of managing local affairs. A letter to the Irish Times from a ‘Citizen’ remarked that if Sinn Féin were elected ‘the business-like management of municipal affairs would come to a standstill with consequent chaos’.

Sinn Féin’s alliance with Labour led to victory, which made the 1920 local government elections pivotal in embedding Sinn Féin authority during the interim and politically transformative years from 1917 to the formation of the Free State.

As mentioned earlier, Sinn Féin captured 30.2 per cent of the all-island seats in January 1920, with Unionists attaining 19.9 per cent, Labour 21.6 per cent, nationalists 12.9 per cent and the rest going to Ratepayers, Municipal Reform and independents at 15.3 per cent. The municipal elections, therefore, demonstrated a diversity of electoral opinion which was enabled by the introduction of proportional representation. Sinn Féin’s determination to secure representation at the local level was evident by their creation of an election sub-committee for the municipal elections, the development of a programme for their candidates, and focusing on constituencies defeated in 1918. Indistrious campaigning by candidates who secured advertising in local and national newspapers encouraged voters (see chapter three, section 3.3: Advertising). For instance, an advertisement in the Irish Times on 13 January 1920 aimed at voters in the Dublin No. 2 Area, titled ‘The Voters’ Guide’, appealed for electors ‘hail, rain, or snow, go to the Polling Booth for

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222 Irish Times, 15 January 1920.
223 SFSCM, 13 September 1918.
your own ward … carefully read the instructions … and then place the figure 1 opposite the name of J. Hubbard Clark’.

The *Freeman's Journal* claimed Sinn Féin’s success was because ‘they put before the electors a straight issue’ which was an outright demand ‘for an independent Irish republic, completely separated from Great Britain’. There were no abstract messages, rather a mere declaration of a national right for self-determination that was presented as immediately obtainable and practicable. The conclusion of this thesis will analyse if there is truth to this statement, and if the political propaganda strategies of all parties directly influenced the electorate from 1917 to 1920.
Conclusion

Did propaganda constructively or adversely affect voter behaviour from 1917 to 1920? The concentrated campaign of Ulster Unionists and the pervasive Sinn Féin propaganda and electioneering tactics brought victory. Influenced by the often wilful and sometimes witty print propaganda, widespread unpaid for editorial in newspapers, and a plethora of electoral ephemera, many nationalist voters converted to separatism and steadfast loyalists were convinced to remain devoted to the union.

According to O’Leary, the 1917 and 1918 by-elections were unusual because they occurred at a time when revolutionary nationalism was replacing constitutional nationalism.¹ In effect, the content of an all-encompassing propaganda campaign and the methods used to propagate Sinn Féin ideals during these by-elections changed many voters’ perspectives from conciliatory politics towards more radical tactics and attitudes to gain self-government. Momentum for change developed as this party revitalised to challenge the previously dominant Irish Party. This new threat within nationalism intensified a mounting pessimism in the Irish Party elite that continued into their general election campaign.

Laffan remarked that the 1918 results caused an upheaval in Irish politics comparable to that of the Parnellite landslide in 1885.² Irish politics transformed in and after 1918, turning from competitive personality driven contests and bitter democratic affairs into hardened battles between discernibly opposing ideals on the future governance of Ireland.³ The sharp and crafty propaganda campaigns of 1917 and 1918 introduced not only entrenched political ideals but earnest combat

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¹ O’Leary, Irish Elections, p. 7.
³ With the introduction of PR-STV in the Free State, the snap general election of 1923 also saw hardened ideological contests with Cosgrave’s Cumann na nGaedheal attempting to defeat Sinn Féin using propaganda that suggested a vote for Sinn Féin would plunge the country back into civil war. With PR-STV, however, promoting personalities was key to obtaining votes (see chapter three, section 3.3). Most parties made gains in this election because of the PR-STV method of voting, but it was also because the total number of seats in the Dáil was increased by 25 from 128 to 153. Cumann na nGaedheal formed a minority government and anti-Treatyites abstained from taking their seats. See Walker, Parliamentary Election Results, 1923.
between two clearly opposing paradigms of nationalism, and between nationalism and deep-rooted Unionist beliefs. Sinn Féin deposed the Irish Party in the 1918 general election in the three southern provinces of Ireland because it had converted the majority into believing in its abstentionist policy and assurance of an appeal to the post-war peace conference. For a party with abstention and separatism as their central themes and posters that proclaimed ‘Sinn Féin will have no English supremacy’ the irony was that Sinn Féin made the most effective use of British elections to promote their aims.\textsuperscript{4}

Unionists had maintained their opposition to the third Home Rule Bill and in 1918 the same messages were reassigned to electoral campaigns that became reinvigorated and energized by Great War rhetoric. Sinn Féin and Ulster Unionists funded and managed numerous propaganda methods to persuade voters, convincing the electorate to support their brand of politics. By inducing followers to empower elite decision-making or acquiesce to peer pressure both political entities presented systems that were credible to supporters. Unlike the tightly controlled system of Parnell’s Irish Party that heavily influenced the choice of parliamentary candidates and propaganda, Redmond’s and Dillon’s decentralized approach failed them in many constituencies in 1917 and 1918. The only system available for candidate selection and electioneering was local organizations, but disorganized and unsupportive leadership left UIL branches with limited guidance.

Within Sinn Féin the disparate energies fused in 1917 to give voice to separatist ideologies and as the by-elections played out Sinn Féin became a political party. In the following months this nascent party became the ‘inheritors of the spirit of the leaders of Easter week … with the proclamation as their political guide’, or the medium through which the message was interpreted practically.\textsuperscript{5} By receiving the blame from newspapers and the government for initiating the Easter Rising Sinn Féin gained recognition as a minor movement. The leaders set out to create a

\textsuperscript{4} PRONI, MIC14111: Sinn Féin election poster titled \textit{Who Owns Ireland?} See chapter four.

\textsuperscript{5} BMH, WS 492: John McCoy.
political order where the Rising formed the backdrop for change, and the way forward was the formation of a new state that removed its ruins.⁶

Participation in the Rising provided a rationale for political perpetuation and it became a key factor in the Sinn Féin candidate selection process for the by-elections and, where possible, for the 1918 general election.⁷ Realization of the Rising’s electoral appeal had been learned after the success of Count Plunkett in North Roscommon in February 1917 and going forward Rising co-conspirators were appointed as candidates under the guise of local selection. Rebels were transformed into politicians, but managing and in control at all levels was the Standing Committee and ultimately de Valera. Separatists had started out disorganized and leaderless – and this had not changed after the Rising as several groups still operated which were often mutually antagonistic – but the appointment of de Valera as president and the subsequent structural organization of the party meant centralized control fostered a disciplined approach to candidate selection, and subsequently to electioneering and propaganda methods. Sinn Féin formed into a professional and robust organization with roots at the local level, turning it into a strong political movement.⁸ Their shameless centralized control facilitated authority over the selection of specific candidates for each constituency (i.e. whether they were male or female, Irish or English speaking); and, in an era of change it is bizarre they got away with it. However, the appointment of a Standing Committee and the localized cumainn allowed for the claim that it was embodying the will of the people, so they could justify the process. While incumbents usually have a greater chance of getting elected, there was momentum for change in Ireland in 1918, and electors were persuaded to embrace new and inexperienced candidates.

Labour in the southern provinces had to employ more flexibility to allow an array of trade unions voice opinion and submit candidates, and in 1918 the end result was withdrawal from the contest. Working class apathy coupled with middle-class and clerical condemnation of socialism

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⁷ As stated in chapter one, it was not always possible to select a Rising candidate in rural areas, therefore a candidate with separatist credentials was also considered suitable. For instance, Arthur Griffith was not involved in the Rising but was selected as a candidate for East Cavan in the by-election and general election.
⁸ For more information on the reunification of Sinn Féin see Laffan, ‘The Unification of Sinn Féin in 1917’, pp. 353-79.
continued to favour the election of small employers, publicans, and shopkeepers to the detriment of Labour and its allies. The Labour Party’s brand of politics was dimmed by the light of Sinn Féin’s success, and lack of electoral participation in 1918 eliminated their participation in the formation of the First Dáil. While elements of their policies were embodied in the Democratic Programme it was, as Laffan points out, mostly a ‘thank you’ gesture by Sinn Féin.\textsuperscript{9} The \textit{Irish Times} reported that the programme’s ‘astonishing vagueness allowed it to be associated with any one of a hundred brands of modern Socialism, or with them all’.\textsuperscript{10} Unskilled and factory workers made political progress in 1920 but they were nominated in insufficient quantities to effect dramatic change. Ulster labour, on the other hand, was more organized, and official Labour Unionist and the Belfast Labour Party (which was predominantly Unionist) gained thirteen of the sixty Belfast seats in January 1920.\textsuperscript{11}

In 1918 the devolution of control to local organizations worked for Unionists, but with a focus on Ulster the control over decisions was more straightforward and monitoring candidate selection procedures was easier. There is no doubt that the adroit supervision of candidate selection from a centralized system brought success for both Unionists and Sinn Féin, whereas abdication to local control by the Irish Party and Labour yielded limited outcomes.

The fundraising methods of Unionists, Irish Party, Sinn Féin and Labour differed considerably. Unionists generated substantial finance from home-grown benefactors by targeting allies in Ulster’s industrial sector. Funding was also sensibly generated through their associations and clubs, and prudently dispersed by offering tactically wise advice to avoid overspending. They had learned from past anti-home rule propaganda campaigns to target finances towards functional propaganda methods, even in the generation of those funds.

Sinn Féin and the Irish Party also collected from their own clubs and leagues, and from Irish contributors in general (and Labour from trade unions), but for the Irish Party the donations arrived piecemeal and in low amounts. With only a very limited industrial sector in the southern provinces to pursue, both nationalist parties were compelled to influence more affluent Irish

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{9} Laffan, ‘In the Shadow’, p. 38.} \footnotesize{\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Irish Times}, 22 January 1919.} \footnotesize{\textsuperscript{11} See chapter five, table 5.5.}
supporters abroad, mainly in the USA. The Irish Party’s connections in America had fallen by the way-side, forcing O’Connor to travel far and wide for success. He faced the difficulties of British Great War propaganda and a floundering political message. The rehashing of a hackneyed home rule narrative versus the fresh, focused and more radical Sinn Féin programme turned his tour into a hardened battle for favour and funds.\textsuperscript{12} The amounts raised by O’Connor were not insubstantial, but they had to be divided out among eighty constituencies and support a failing newspaper. Sinn Féin’s financial gains in 1918 were substantial enough to send de Valera and Boland back in 1919 to raise funds for their counter state.\textsuperscript{13}

Irish Party privation reduced its control over propaganda spend and diminished its electoral influence. Dillon, like Redmond before him, viewed propaganda as a poor relation to statecraft and he had lost touch with provincial organizations. The unwieldy treatment of propaganda funding and the decline of the Party’s localized structures were strong reasons for electoral defeat in 1918. Sinn Féin, on the other hand, dedicated vigour to fundraising campaigns and utilized its Volunteer supporters to the maximum (particularly during the by-elections). The development of a rational and considerably controlled fiscal agenda and the internal regulation over dispersal of funds played a pivotal role in securing election success.

While no particular method of propaganda guaranteed success over the other, most political parties and candidates in this era favoured public speeches at open air meetings. Along with the canvass, this afforded personal contact with electors, and even audience members too distant from the speaker could become captivated by the atmosphere. In speeches and in print Sinn Féin and Unionists excelled in propaganda that complemented and that used consistency in

\textsuperscript{12} See chapter two; Doherty, ‘The Irish Party Hack’, pp. 345-347.

\textsuperscript{13} Success in the 1917-18 and 1919-20 fundraising campaigns influenced the decision to return again in 1928 when De Valera and Frank Gallagher travelled to raise money to create a Fianna Fáil newspaper, the \textit{Irish Press}. De Valera aspired for ‘1000 people … to invest at least $500 in the enterprise’: NLI, McGarrity Papers, MS 17,441: Letter from De Valera to a fundraiser, 29 September 1929. See also UCDA, Fianna Fáil Records, P176/27-33 on the American fundraising campaign for the creation of the \textit{Irish Press}; Catherine Curran, ‘Fianna Fáil and the Origins of the \textit{Irish Press}’, \textit{Irish Communications Review}, 6 (1996), p. 10. NLI, McGarrity Papers, MS 17,441: Letter from McGarrity to De Valera, 10 January 1928 stating that De Valera ‘must get men of means to subscribe for large blocks of stock …’. It turned out to be more difficult than anticipated because the 1929 Wall Street Crash and subsequent Great Depression frustrated their attempts to net the aimed for $500,000; De Valera wrote to McGarrity on 29 September 1929 stating that they had received only $135,000. The reduction of the initial $500 minimum investment to $50 was reported on by \textit{The San Francisco Leader}, 12 May 1928 and 14 August 1928. McGarrity wrote to de Valera stating that business was bad in the USA: NLI, MS 17441, 25 September 1928.
message, slogan, theme and image, such as ‘Vote for de Valera, a felon of our land’ and ‘keep Ulster in the Empire by Voting Unionist’. Those who supplemented speeches with newspaper editorial and advertisements (to reach wider audiences, and those distanced from speakers at open air meetings), canvassing, and clever displays of symbols and colour created presence. Novel approaches to propaganda, such as the re-registering of cars to ‘I.R. 1916’ by Sinn Féin, furthered electoral success, as did using vehicles decorated with party colours. For instance, Edward and Lady Carson had toured their constituency on polling day in a vehicle decorated with Union Jacks and bunting.

The creation of unique identities by Sinn Féin and Unionists, propagated through the use of symbols, iconography and ballads, reinforced a constant stream of propaganda messages. Ulster Unionists generated public awareness with their Union flags and banners of red, white and blue. In similar style, but with contrary messages and symbols, tricolour banners and flags abundantly decorated towns and villages to promote Sinn Féin during election campaigns. Scant use of Irish Party symbols in many constituencies reduced visual presence, so reinforcing the home rule argument with imagery was neglected.

The emulation of American and European marketing methods in Ireland in the early 1900s and the growth of advertising agencies was proof of an increasing realisation that the tools of commercial and political marketing were essential to success. As discussed in chapter three, the 1910 ‘Advertising Problem’ article astutely remarked that ‘no new industry can hope to be even moderately successful without enlisting to its aid at least a moderate degree of business-making publicity’. This advice is equally applicable to political parties, and the prodigious, and often radical and zealous, propaganda efforts of Unionists and Sinn Féin paid dividends at the ballot box. The temperate approach of the Irish Party combined with a haphazard candidate selection process,

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14 *Irish Independent*, 1 May 1917. During the East Clare by-election Volunteers recalled the interesting way in which Sinn Féin was supplied with petrol. Because of U Boat warfare, cargo ships of the allies were being constantly sunk and a number of large containers filled with petrol came in from the sea and were taken away by local farmers. These farmers ‘liberally met our requirements’: BMH WS 722: Dan McCarthy.
15 *Irish Times*, 23 December 1918.
16 *The Advertising Problem*, p. 309.
enervated fundraising, and pedestrian leitmotifs doomed it to subordination in a post-war world where the skills of mass marketing and public relations had accustomed the public to new ideas.

Sinn Féin’s formation of a funded and staffed department of propaganda ensured a coherent and targeted campaign. This department also raised and managed finances, and flooded the voting market with strong messages and unique identity symbols. After their 1917 South Longford success, election machinery was honed, core policy was tweaked (such as abstention which moved from Griffith’s idea of monarchical supervision to complete separation from Westminster), and aggressive attack replaced conventional diplomatic oratory. Sinn Féin’s narrow win in South Longford had been gained by the launch of the *Put him in to get him out* poster campaign. From this, a party brand was unveiled and with constant repetition there was instant association with Sinn Féin when the voter saw the prisoner image and the invitation to vote for a particular candidate.

Unionist skills lay in adapting and regenerating their sharp anti-home rule message to persuade political adherence to their philosophy, and they held fast to a time-honoured fidelity to the union. Ideological disparities between separatists and Unionists were propagated across electoral propaganda efforts, highlighting the divergent views on the governance of Ireland. Unionist propagandistic strength was homogeneity of message and an array of propaganda techniques conveyed their doctrine. Unionist voters adhered to the call for collective balloting which brought victory in Ulster and in a pocket of Dublin in 1918. In 1920 propaganda messages were supplemented by proposals to manage the everyday issues that were particular to local government. Unionists won control of many urban councils in Ulster, but competition from Sinn Féin and the PR-STV voting system reduced their domination, particularly in the rural elections. The strength of unionism during the election campaigns and its continuing endurance in Ulster was (and remains) its branding and sense of identity that enabled instant recognition in posters, handbills and all political ephemera, in the words of leaders, candidates and canvassers, which facilitated recall at the polling booth.

As Ulster Unionists inched closer to partition, southern adherents grew frustrated and anxious, and began to vacillate between embracing and impairing home rule negotiations, evident
in their letters to newspaper editors. Carson privately complained that southern Unionists had not been ‘prepared to run any risks … it is very difficult to ascertain what the South and West want us to do as they only talk in generalities’. The gradual popularization and localization of the movement in the northern counties pulled apart a tentative all-Ireland Unionism, and ultimately left southern Unionists stranded in a nationalist dominated Free State.

If electoral success for Unionists and Sinn Féin can be measured by the extensive and structured propaganda campaigns that teemed with supposed factual details to underpin values, wit to entertain, and repetitiveness to prompt recall, why did the Irish Party fail to pursue similar tactics? Did the leaders and candidates neglect to grasp its import? Could they not resurrect Parnell’s imperious approach, rejuvenate and battle forth in 1918?

The prolongation of the war, the failure of the 1916 home rule talks and the Irish Convention all contributed to the downfall of the Irish Party. However, in 1918 the party laboured under stale rhetoric that harked back to land acts, home rule crusades, and Great War mobilization which only rehashed well-worn policies in the hopes of retaining favour. The only novelty was spirited vilification of Sinn Féin ideals, but in turning attention to the past the Irish Party opened the way for critical opposition propaganda. This came in verbal assaults for collecting the £400 salary, and for corruption and jobbery (particularly at local level). Harsh condemnation of Irish Party candidates by Sinn Féin flooded constituencies in print and ballads, such as in East Clare where voters were asked ‘are you giving Patrick Lynch a vote? He’s fat with English pay./For he sat at home in comfort while Valera was away’.

The *Irish Times* attributed Irish Party failure to ‘two great mistakes’: ‘it [the Irish Party] agreed to the partition of Ireland as an alleged settlement of the Irish question’, and ‘after the rebellion, it made itself a boxer of wood and a drawer of water to the people who gloried, and still glory, in the rebellion’. Fanning maintains, it was the prolongation of the Great War that turned home rule into ‘a cosmetic exercise that sowed the seeds for the downfall of the constitutional

18 Ibid., *Ireland*, p. 227.
19 NLI, Ephemera Collection, EPH A323: *Ballad of East Clare*; see also *Which* poster, figure 3.10.
20 *Irish Times*, 7 February 1917.
nationalists…’. 21 Redmond had, as Finnan points out, seen the war as ‘an extraordinary chance to break the impasse between nationalists and unionists in Ireland’, and had the war ended quickly home rule would not have remained suspended for years. 22 However, by 1917 the wavering of Irish Party leaders on the Great War made it difficult for voters to interpret irresolute attitudes. War was a tangible and visual reality during the by-elections, and as whole nations engaged in combat this began to stimulate an interest in state affairs in the minds of ordinary people. The war triggered concerns over who should govern and the best political structure that fit interests.

The extension of conscription to Ireland in March 1918 fuelled public anxiety and it dealt the Irish Party a severe blow. Sinn Féin, on the other hand, gained a valuable anti-conscription propaganda platform. Enforcing conscription on Ireland was always going to be difficult, particularly during the latter war years when high death tolls had weakened war support. Given that all major nationalist parties (and Labour and the Roman Catholic Church) had actively campaigned against conscription, voters were now challenged to distinguish the difference between the two forms of nationalism. The conscription crisis increased membership of Sinn Féin clubs (albeit briefly) and led to growing public support. This combined with the German plot arrests that facilitated the reappearance of the Put him in to get him out campaign weakened the Irish Party considerably.

Disorganization and lack of an efficient political machine also undermined Dillon’s leadership. While the Irish Party still retained roots in provincial Ireland, it lacked the necessary supports and cohesion to contest against a fresh ambitious rival. Depleting numbers in the AOH, who operated in a similar fashion to Sinn Féin’s Irish Volunteers during elections, reduced Irish Party presence in many constituencies and contributed to their electoral defeat. A high degree of disaffection by Irish Party MPs and by voters who were now jaded with imperialism converted many towards the idea of abstention from Westminster. Growing disgust at ‘the humbug, muddling and treachery’ of the party led many, according to the Irish Independent, to express their ‘wrath’ in the polling booths to wipe ‘the discreditable and corrupt Party practically out of

21 Fanning, Fatal Path, p. 355.
22 Finnan, p. 230.
existence’. With their usual anti-Irish Party venom this newspaper maintained that Dillon ‘thoroughly deserves the fate which has overtaken him’ because ‘Ireland’s interests were scandalously sacrificed’.

Heavily influenced by Wilsonian commentary on self-determination Sinn Féin sought an appeal to the post-war peace conference to forge a domestic alternative to Westminster and create international recognition. Propaganda methods and themes, and wily electioneering tactics, had accustomed the electorate to their abstentionist policies and peace conference aspirations, so by the time voters went to the polls in 1918 Sinn Féin had established widespread voter awareness and many now championed their cause. The *Irish Independent* phrased it well when they remarked that ‘if we do not know what Sinn Féin means to do there is no excuse for us, for we have been told plainly enough, in hundreds of speeches and in dozens of newspapers in Ireland for the last 18 months’.

The same could be said of Ulster Unionists and their electoral propaganda. By establishing the notional counter-state in 1919 and acquiring pledges of allegiance at the local council level in 1920 a foundation was established that allowed Sinn Féin shrewdly seize control.

Yet, Sinn Féin and their Volunteers were unable to defeat the constitutional nationalists in the Redmondite stronghold of Waterford; and in South Armagh the Irish Party overwhelmed the Sinn Féin candidate. In the three constituencies of Donegal East, Down South, and Tyrone North-East the Irish Party candidates defeated both the Unionist and Sinn Féin candidates (although the nationalist pact has to be taken into consideration). In the Belfast Falls constituency Devlin received 53.9 per cent of the vote, indicating that voters who were nervous about partition gave their allegiance to the home rule ideals rather than the more revolutionary and radical aspirations of Sinn Féin.

Nationalists still fielded a large number of candidates in the 1920 municipal elections who continued to advocate a constitutional approach, and they attained 12.9 per cent of the vote (22.1 per cent if independent candidates are included as many were nationalists) under the proportional

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23 *Irish Independent*, 30 December 1918.
24 Ibid: reprinted statement from an article in the *Daily Chronicle*. 
representation system of voting.\textsuperscript{25} However, in the rural elections the following June, Sinn Féin’s 74.7 per cent victory was a landslide in comparison to the nationalist 5.6 per cent and Labour’s 4.6 per cent (6.3 per cent if Sinn Féin and Labour coalitions are included).\textsuperscript{26} The tone and mood of Ireland had altered by 1920. The creation of Dáil Éireann introduced radical change in the mindset of separatists, partition lurked in the background, skirmishes had broken out in many areas of Ireland as a prelude of the war to come, the Irish Party centre had collapsed, and Labour had entered the field as the voice of trade unions and the working-class. Aside from Ulster where Unionists remained in the majority, Sinn Féin and Labour polled well above the Irish Party in the three southern provinces.\textsuperscript{27}

The electorate in December 1918 cast in favour of Sinn Féin in Ireland’s three southern provinces and enabled the claim that the results of the ‘national plebiscite held under British law and British supervision’ indicated the ‘will of the Irish people’ as to the ‘government under which they live’.\textsuperscript{28} But, if Ulster’s results are added then the claim of a homogeneous desire for self-determination does not hold up. Unionists in Ulster followed instructions to vote solidly for their own candidates to maintain the union and establish a policy of material prosperity in 1918 and 1920. Furthermore, if the total votes for Irish Party candidates, the low turnout and the absent votes are calculated, and the method of the first-past-the-post voting system are taken into consideration Sinn Féin’s ‘landslide’ victory is questionable. The proportion of votes attained in 1918 in an all-Ireland context gave Sinn Féin only 46.9 per cent of the total vote, Unionists 28.5 per cent and the Irish Party 21.7 per cent (of course this does not take into account the uncontested seats).

\textsuperscript{25} See Appendix C: Sinn Féin received 30.2 per cent of the vote in January 1920.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid: Nationalists fielded 588 candidates in the Municipal Elections, mainly in Leinster and Ulster; and Sinn Féin fielded 717, mainly in Leinster and Munster. Unionists fielded 428 candidates, of whom 321 were in Ulster and 92 in Leinster. Labour fielded 395, the lowest number of candidates, and concentrated on Leinster, Munster and Ulster (with only 24 in Connaught).
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} UCDA, de Valera Papers, P150/627: Booklet by de Valera titled The Foundation of the Republic of Ireland; P150/687: Speech or article titled ‘The Irish people exercised the right of self-determination, and declared for an independent republic. The Basis of Ireland’s right’. On the issue of self-determination for Ireland, De Valera claimed that ‘the people of Ireland in a general and regular parliament election [was] in effect a national plebiscite’.
The dominance of national and constitutional issues had inhibited the development of Labour in 1918. Labour’s retreat was a relief to Sinn Féin who could now avoid the battle for working class votes. It was ill-fated for home rulers who had hoped to split the vote and retain some seats. Labour movements were more interested in trade union militancy rather than politics, and even by 1920 they had yet to unite coherently under the banner of their political party – as evidenced in Cork where a rival union contested against the Sinn Féin/Labour coalition in 1918 and in their coalition with Sinn Féin in 1920 in a number of constituencies. Labour’s political future was precarious and this has been well documented in works by Emmet O’Connor, Michael Laffan and Niamh Purséil.29

The final and most revolutionary factor for the success of Sinn Féin and Unionists, (and Labour in 1920) was the powerful influence of new voters, particularly women voters, because of the Representation of the People Act. Whether it was the novelty factor of attaining the vote or a genuine interest in political affairs, women in 1918 and 1920 took their new electoral roles and franchise powers seriously.30 They cast in favour of Unionist candidates in Ulster and Sinn Féin in the three southern provinces, and marginalized the Irish Party who had disregarded their past demands for suffrage. The Irish Independent declared that ‘a novel feature of the elections was the interest displayed by women in municipal affairs’, and reported that in Dublin ‘the majority of those who voted … were women’.31

There was no real attempt by any party to develop a new feminist politics around women’s issues. Women’s reaction to this merits further attention, as does an analysis of women’s attitudes and responses to the 1898 Local Government Act which granted suffrage at the local level. The politicising effects of war service on women and the anti-conscription campaign also merit more in-depth analysis. Sinn Féin, Unionists and Labour (and the women within them, although small in number) defined women as active participants within electoral propaganda and in the political


30 A considerable amount has been written about the pre-war suffrage movements, however less attention has been paid to post-suffrage women’s politics.

31 Irish Independent, 6 January 1920.
process. The exclusion of women under thirty from the franchise reinforced the ideal of women voters principally as wives and mothers, but that did not eliminate them as canvassers and voters. They were of equal importance as the young men in securing votes, evidenced in the personal classified advertisements in the print media where appeals for votes were made to ‘Ladies and Gentlemen’ and ‘Irish men and women’ by separatists and unionists, and Devlin in Belfast. The Labour Party was in the difficult position of trying to merge the dominance of the masculine in its trade union movements with that of working women, but they, too, attempted to encourage active participation by women in electioneering. Strategic targeting of women voters and the empowerment of the youth, as mentioned in chapter four, enabled Sinn Féin, Unionists and Labour to successfully staff their propaganda war. The industry of the female separatist supporter brought victory to Sinn Féin in 1918 and again in 1920.

Sinn Féin’s electoral gains were the result of successfully incorporating and tailoring new propaganda techniques. However, as Charles Townshend points out ‘whether they [voters] really knew what the party [Sinn Féin] stood for is another issue’. The Sinn Féin voter was not sanctioning the future physical war against Britain which began in 1919 nor were they approving its continuation in the local elections of 1920. Nationalist voters endorsed an innovative and fresh approach for freedom from Westminster, even if there was some vagueness on its future form or interpretation of ‘republic’.

Political transformation in Ireland was influenced by the election campaigns which inculcated the policies and beliefs of Sinn Féin and Unionists (and labour movements in 1920) into the minds of the people by propagandizing ideas. The votes cast by Unionists and separatists in 1918 provide evidence that strident propaganda campaigns altered public opinion, and the 1920 local government elections embedded a deepening resolve to remain steadfast to those beliefs. However, as previously stated in chapter five, intimidation and violence, absent voters, a much reduced number of emigrants, and the weakness of a credible alternative political programme resulted in high voter disaffection in 1918 and 1920.

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32 See chapter three.
34 See chapter three, section 3.3, p. 153
Sinn Féin, and Unionists to a lesser degree, succeeded in convincing adherents to empower elite decision-making or to acquiesce to peer pressure, and both political entities presented systems that were credible to supporters. The dichotomy on which separatism and unionism was based was evident in the themes that were rooted in their propaganda. They were the pillars upon which the impetus for change was formed. The leaders of that change were the political elite, but it was the vigorous electioneering activities and votes of the youth and particularly the votes of women that instigated a political upheaval in Ireland. Although opinions collided in a civil war from 1922 to 1923 and partition divided the island in 1920, the elections of 1917 to 1920 established Irish party systems and policymakers who influenced the political landscape for decades. The propaganda techniques and practices developed by revolutionary electioneers continued to influence the propaganda and marketing techniques of all major parties after partition.
### APPENDIX A: 1917-1918 by-election results

#### Results of 1917-1918 by-elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By-Election</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Age in 1918</th>
<th>Occ.</th>
<th>Registered Electors</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Majority</th>
<th>% Votes</th>
<th>% Win</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Cork</td>
<td>November 1916</td>
<td><strong>Irish Party</strong></td>
<td>Daniel O’Leary</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Farmer/Vintner</td>
<td>3,926 [Vote turnout]</td>
<td>1,806</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>46.0</td>
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<td>AFIL</td>
<td>Frank J. Healy</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Roscommon</td>
<td>February 1917</td>
<td><strong>Irish Party</strong></td>
<td>Thomas J. Devine</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>8,449</td>
<td>1,708</td>
<td>627</td>
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<td>3,022</td>
<td>687</td>
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<td>Jasper Tully</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Newspaper Proprietor</td>
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<td>South Longford</td>
<td>May 1917</td>
<td><strong>Irish Party</strong></td>
<td>Patrick McKenna</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>3,763</td>
<td>1,461</td>
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<td>Sinn Féin</td>
<td>Joseph McGuinness</td>
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<td>Draper Apprentice</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
<td>9,117</td>
<td>2,035</td>
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<td>South Armagh</td>
<td>February 1918</td>
<td><strong>Irish Party</strong></td>
<td>Patrick Donnelly</td>
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<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>6,400</td>
<td>2,321</td>
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<td>Sinn Féin</td>
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<td>Doctor</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>0.63</td>
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<td>Independent Unionist</td>
<td>Thomas Richardson</td>
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<td>Candidate</td>
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<td>Registered Electors</td>
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<td>Majority</td>
<td>% Votes</td>
<td>% Win</td>
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<td>South County Dublin</td>
<td>July 1917</td>
<td>Irish Party</td>
<td>Michael Hearn</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
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<td>Offaly</td>
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<td>Sinn Féin</td>
<td>Dr Patrick McCartan</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Journalist/Doctor</td>
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Results of 1917-1918 by-elections – uncontested
## Results of 1918-20 by-elections

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<th>By-Election</th>
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<th>Party</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Age in 1918</th>
<th>Occ.</th>
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<td>Londonderry North</td>
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<td>Lawyer</td>
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<td>Antrim East</td>
<td>May 1919</td>
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<td>Barrister</td>
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<td>Unionist</td>
<td>Charles McFerran Legg</td>
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<td>British Army</td>
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<td>7,549</td>
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<td>Merchant</td>
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## Results of 1918-20 by-elections – uncontested

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<th>Majority</th>
<th>% Votes</th>
<th>% Win</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dublin University</td>
<td>July 1919</td>
<td>Unionist</td>
<td>William Morgan Jellett</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Queen’s Counsel</td>
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# APPENDIX B: 1918 Results

## Elected Unopposed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Political Affiliation</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Electorate Votes Received</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Lennon</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Carlow</td>
<td>16,133</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arthur Griffith</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Cavan East</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Christian Brothers</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Galligan</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Cavan West</td>
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<td>St. Patrick’s, Cavan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eamon de Valera</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Clare East</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Bruree National School, Co. Limerick; CBS, Charleville, Co. Cork; Blackrock College; Royal University of Ireland</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian O’Higgins</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Clare West</td>
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<td>Publishing Business</td>
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<td>Terence MacSwiney</td>
<td>SF</td>
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<td>Christian Brothers, Cork City</td>
<td>Playwright/Author</td>
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<td>David R. Kent</td>
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<td>Cork East</td>
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<td>SF</td>
<td>Cork North</td>
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<td>Diarmuid Lynch</td>
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<td>Knocknamana National School</td>
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<td>John (Sean) Hayes</td>
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<td>Galway East</td>
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<td>Military School, Wellington Barracks, Cork</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
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<td>Name</td>
<td>Party</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
<td>Occupation, Additional Notes</td>
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<td>William T. Cosgrave</td>
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<td>Christian Brothers, Malahide Road, Marino, Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrick McCartan</td>
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<td>Kings County</td>
<td>Editor/Doctor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piarras Beasláí</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Kerry East</td>
<td>St. Xavier's Jesuit College, Merseyside</td>
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<td>Veterinary Surgeon</td>
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<td>Christian Brothers, Tralee Clerk (&amp; Gaelic Footballer)</td>
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<td>Finian (Fionán) Lynch</td>
<td>SF</td>
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<td>Rockwell College; Blackrock College Teacher [Qualifies as barrister in the 1930s]</td>
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<td>Cornelius Collins</td>
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<td>Newspaper Proprietor</td>
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<td>Count George Noble Plunkett</td>
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<td>UCD Publisher/Biographer</td>
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### Elected Opposed

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<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tr>
<td>Robert O’Neill</td>
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<td>Antrim Mid</td>
<td>18,032</td>
<td>10,711</td>
<td>59.40</td>
<td>Eton College &amp; New College, Oxford.</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
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<td>Joseph Connolly</td>
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<td>2,791</td>
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<td>Engineer apprentice &amp; furniture trade.</td>
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<td>Lt-Col Robert Chaine McCalmont</td>
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<td>Antrim East</td>
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<td>15,206</td>
<td>61.31</td>
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<td>Daniel Dumigan</td>
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<td>19,110</td>
<td>9,621</td>
<td>50.34</td>
<td>Eton College &amp; Trinity Hall, Cambridge</td>
<td>Major British Army/Chairman of Northern Whig newspaper</td>
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<td>Capt. Charles Craig</td>
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<td>23,235</td>
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<td>TCD</td>
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<td>James Rolston Lonsdale</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>Armagh Mid</td>
<td>17,339</td>
<td>8,431</td>
<td>48.62</td>
<td>Royal School, Armagh &amp; TCD</td>
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<td>11,637</td>
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<td>Law</td>
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<td>271</td>
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<td>Winifred Carney</td>
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<td>2.77</td>
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<td>19,802</td>
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<td>20,801</td>
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<td>Maurice Talbot Crosbie</td>
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<td>Richard L. O’Sullivan</td>
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<td>Teacher &amp; Barrister</td>
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There is an anomaly here for which there remains at this time no solution. The total votes attained (which is correct) exceeds the electorate by 15,705. In the December 1918 general elections the Cork city electorate increased from 12,000 to 50,000: Micheál Martin’s work *Freedom to Choose: Cork and Party Politics in Ireland 1918-1932* (Cork, 2009) which investigates the politics of Cork city in the decade after independence claims that the Cork City electorate increased from 12,000 to 50,000 with the passing of the Franchise Act.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Education/Notes</th>
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<td>IP</td>
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<td>and St Patrick’s College, Drumcondra</td>
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<tr>
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<td>SF</td>
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<td>29.95</td>
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<td>SF</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>0.29</td>
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345
<table>
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<td>Éamon de Valera</td>
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<td>17,997</td>
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<td>1,725</td>
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<td>SF</td>
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<td>707</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>Company director Dunville Whisky &amp; landowner</td>
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<tr>
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<td>SF</td>
<td>Dublin (Clontarf)</td>
<td>14,588</td>
<td>5,974</td>
<td>Mount Sion CBS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Patrick Shortall</td>
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<td>SF</td>
<td>Dublin (College Green)</td>
<td>21,414</td>
<td>9,662</td>
<td>Librarian and manager of An Claidheamh Soluis.</td>
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<td>Name</td>
<td>Ind. N.</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Rate</td>
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<td>Joseph Briscow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip Shanahan</td>
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<td>John P. Good</td>
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<td>3,752</td>
<td>19.97</td>
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</table>

Proprietor Public House
Grocer’s assistant and a bicycle mechanic & Proprietor Public House
St Bonaventures, London
Journalist
Company director, businessman. Solicitor.
Clongowes Wood college, UCD.
Bráithre Criostáí ag Bráithre Mhuire
Accountant Family business
Slade School of Art, London.
Harcourt Street School, Dublin and Catholic University.
United Arts Club & various organisations.
Butcher.
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<tr>
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<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Occupation/Education</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrick Brady</td>
<td>IP</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Hanna</td>
<td>U</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Barrister and Judge.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Occupation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capt. Stephen Gwynn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edward Mervyn Archdale</td>
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<td>Cattle Trader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pádraic O’Maille</td>
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<td>Galway Connemara</td>
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<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>Journalist &amp; Sportsman.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bryan Cusack</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Galway South</td>
<td>18,507</td>
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<td>Teacher &amp; Barrister.</td>
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<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Constituency</th>
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<td>Leitrim</td>
<td>30,079</td>
<td>17,711</td>
<td>Business (London)</td>
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<td>Limerick East</td>
<td>21,095</td>
<td>12,750</td>
<td>Historian and medical doctor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Lundon</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof. Eoin MacNeill</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Londonderry City</td>
<td>16,736</td>
<td>7,335</td>
<td>St Malachy’s College, Belfast &amp; Queen’s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sir Robert Newton Anderson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7,020</td>
<td>41.94</td>
<td>Educated privately, and at Foyle College.</td>
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350
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<tr>
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<th>Party</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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<th>%</th>
<th>School/College</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<td>Barrister &amp; Journalist</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hugh Alfred Anderson</td>
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<td>Londonderry North</td>
<td>21,306</td>
<td><strong>10,530</strong></td>
<td>St Columb’s College, Derry, Clongowes Wood &amp; UCD</td>
<td>[resigned seat after 3 days]</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrick J. McGilligan</td>
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<td>3,951</td>
<td>18.54</td>
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<td>Denis Stanislaus Henry</td>
<td>U</td>
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<td>21,199</td>
<td><strong>8,942</strong></td>
<td>Marist College, Dundalk, Mount St Mary’s College, Chesterfield &amp; Queen’s.</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof. Arthur William Conway</td>
<td>IP</td>
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<td>3,981</td>
<td>18.78</td>
<td>St Peter’s College, Wexford, UCD &amp; Corpus Christi College, Oxford.</td>
<td>Professor Mathematical Physics, lecturer at St, Patrick’s, Maynooth.</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louis Joseph Walsh</td>
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<td>St Columb’s College &amp; UCD</td>
<td>Solicitor &amp; Playwright.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph McGuinness</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Longford</td>
<td>20,449</td>
<td><strong>11,122</strong></td>
<td>Clonmoore national school, apprentice draper</td>
<td>Drapery shops, Dublin</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Patrick Farrell</td>
<td>IP</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,173</td>
<td>20.41</td>
<td></td>
<td>Owner and editor of Longford Leader</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Joseph O’Kelly</td>
<td>SF</td>
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<td>Catholic University School, Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, &amp; Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin.</td>
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<td>8.30</td>
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<td>Emigrated to Lancashire – clerk, Midland Railway Company; Registrar of Births and Deaths; Journalist.</td>
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<td>Joseph McBride</td>
<td>SF</td>
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<td>10,195</td>
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<td>Clerk</td>
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<td>Seán Francis MacEntee</td>
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<td>16,164</td>
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<td>Thomas Joseph Campbell</td>
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<td>4,413</td>
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<td>Editor <em>Irish News</em>. Legal, King’s Counsel in 1918.</td>
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<td>Prof. Eoin MacNeill</td>
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<td>NUI</td>
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<td>SF</td>
<td>Queen’s Co</td>
<td>26,063</td>
<td>51.61</td>
<td>Clongowes Wood College, Knockbeg College, St Mary’s</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Trained for Priesthood. Called to the bar in 1923.</td>
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<td>Sir William Whitla</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Queen’s</td>
<td>2,039</td>
<td><strong>1,487</strong></td>
<td>Model School, Monaghan, Apprentice with Wheeler and Wheeler, pharmaceutical firm; Queen’s College.</td>
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<td>John Blake Dolan</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Roscommon South</td>
<td>22,093</td>
<td><strong>10,685</strong></td>
<td>Tailor and cutter at tailoring department of Todd, Burns &amp; Co., Mary Street, Dublin.</td>
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<td>Harry Boland</td>
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<td>18,448</td>
<td><strong>9,030</strong></td>
<td>Staff of Congested Districts Board, Secretary to Sligo County Committee of Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Patrick Hayden</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4,233</td>
<td>19.16</td>
<td>Founder of <em>Westmeath Examiner</em></td>
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<td>Alexander McCabe</td>
<td>SF</td>
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<td>18,013</td>
<td><strong>9,113</strong></td>
<td>Journalist, Glasgow Observer; Solicitor.</td>
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<td>Founder The Nationalist, South Tipperary</td>
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<td>59.42</td>
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<td>Party</td>
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<td>Age</td>
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|                      |       | Officer in British Army | 37    |
|                      |       | Barrister | 68    |

**Abbreviations:**

**Sources:**
The electorate figures and votes polled are taken from Walker, *Parliamentary Election Results, 1918-92*, pp. 4-9; Biographical Details were sourced in regional and national newspapers, a selection of which includes: *Weekly Irish Times* 14 December, 1918; *Irish Independent*, 30 December 1918; *Cork Examiner*, 30 December 1918.

Also:
NAI, Census Online 1901 & 1911.
Bureau of Military History Witness Statements
APPENDIX C: 1920 Municipal Elections

PARTICULARS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS 1920

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Particulars in regard to:</th>
<th>County Boroughs</th>
<th>Non-County Boroughs</th>
<th>Urban Districts</th>
<th>Town Commissioners</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>13,367</td>
<td>154,632</td>
<td>13,583</td>
<td>474,992</td>
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<td>Number of Members to be elected</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1,148</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>1,735</td>
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<td>Number of Candidates: Nominations -</td>
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<td>153</td>
<td>2,258</td>
<td>338</td>
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<td>Withdrawals -</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>287</td>
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<td>Remaining -</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>2,023</td>
<td>315</td>
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<td>9,687</td>
<td>109,420</td>
<td>9,744</td>
<td>322,244</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>749</td>
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<td>(b)</td>
<td>2,357</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3,994</td>
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<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>197</td>
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<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>2,344</td>
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<td>Writing or mark by which voter could be identified: Unmarked or void for uncertainty:</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>571</td>
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<td>Total number of invalid ballot papers</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>715</td>
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<td>Total number of ballot papers (valid and invalid):</td>
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<td>281</td>
<td>3,424</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>9,259</td>
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<td>Percentage of electors who</td>
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<td>112,844</td>
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<td>331,503</td>
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<td>67.65</td>
<td>74.59</td>
<td>72.98</td>
<td>75.12</td>
<td>69.79</td>
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Sources: Local Government Board Ireland, Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 1920; Irish Times, 20 January 1920 (PR Society of Ireland Abstract of Results); Irish Independent, January 1920; Irish Examiner, January 1920; and Freeman’s Journal, January 1920 and Freeman’s Journal, 18 January 1919 (Sligo). * Cork City: Sinn Féin and Labour coalition; ** Sligo election was held under the Sligo Corporation Act of 1918. *** 8 Ratepayers.
Electoral Registers for Municipal Elections 1920

(Compiled by the Emergency P.R. Press bureau, Dublin)

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**PROVINCES**

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1 Printed in a number of newspapers, see *Irish Independent*, 15 January 1920 for example.
**APPENDIX D: 1920 Rural Elections**

**Rural District Council Election Results June 1920**

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1 Most of these results are taken from the *Freeman’s Journal*, 12 June 1920, however they have been crossed checked against the *Irish Times* and regional newspapers where results were published.
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<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>79</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total All Provinces</strong></td>
<td><strong>522</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
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</table>
Bibliography

Primary sources

Manuscript Collections

The principal primary sources used in this work were the private collections of the party leaders and those who directed or managed propaganda election campaigns. Insight into planning and rational was obtained from the correspondence of John Dillon, T.P. O’Connor, Éamon de Valera, and Edward Carson among others. These collections are stored in a number of archives and they are listed below. Posters, handbills and political ephemera in general were also accessed from a number of repositories, and in some instances were purchased at auction or access was kindly given by the current holder. Sinn Féin collections were vast and easily sourced in ephemera and political collections. PRONI holds a decent collection of Unionist political ephemera, but locating the posters and handbills used by the Irish Party was more difficult because they have either been destroyed or lost. The decision to catalogue the primary sources by archive, rather than by topic, was to facilitate convenience for future researchers to source material with greater ease. Some secondary sources were of greater value to this work than others, and some are of more academic import than others. The conventional system of grouping them all together and arranging by alphabetical order was used because it is a system that is now familiar to academics and history scholars.

IRELAND

National Library of Ireland (NLI)

John Redmond papers

An excellent source for correspondence, particularly on the by-elections and on UIL activities, and for T.P. O’Connor and John Dillon’s views on the by-elections held in 1917.

MS 12,083: Irish Party Minute Books.
MS 15,182: Correspondence with John Dillon from 1899-1918.
MS 15,202: Correspondence with Colonel Arthur Lynch 1917.
MS 15,215: Correspondence with T.P. O’Connor 1900-1918.
Ms 15,252: John Redmond on Home Rule Bill finances.
MS 15,259: Memoranda on Recruiting 1914-18. Also includes statistical tables on recruiting 1914-1918.
MS 15,263: Correspondence in connection with South Longford and East Clare by-elections.
MS PC 262(1): Information on the collapse of the UIL in the US.

Sinn Féin Standing Committee Minutes

The Standing Committee minutes are held on microfilm in the NLI, Call Number n.3651, p.3269 and for this work the years 1917 through to 1921 were researched extensively to discern how and why decisions were made, particularly in relation to candidate selection, election planning, party spend on propaganda, staffing decision and correspondence to and from regional cumainn.

UIL National Directory

MS 708: Minutes of the National Directory: particularly useful for the Home Rule fund and meetings in 1914 regarding organisational structure and candidate selection.
Ms 12,082: Irish Parliamentary Party Minute Books.
**Count Plunkett Papers**

MS 11,405/2: Report on the national organisation of Sinn Féin by Austin Stack and Darrel Figgis, 19 December 1917.

MS 11,405/3: Report on the organisation of Sinn Féin with a list of affiliated clubs, and a list of cumainn in each county and province by Seán Milroy, 19 December 1919.

**Frank Gallagher papers**

Ms 18361: a rather thin collection holding details on the formation of the *Irish Press* newspaper and Frank Gallagher’s role as editor, but useful for circulation figures and commercial propaganda to promote the *Irish Press* in the late 1920s early 1930s.

**Piaras Béaslaí papers**

MS 33,912: This collection is more useful for the years 1921-1923 for research into the War of Independence, Dáil Éireann and civil war and the years of the Free State. They were beneficial for this work for the Irish Convention, Sinn Féin Ard Fheis reports, and propaganda ephemera for the Dáil Loan.

**William O’Brien papers**

MS 15,705: William O’Brien Diary provides ninety-six pages of information on publications, the North Dock Ward, and Dublin Trades Council.

LOP 116: An excellent collection of political ephemera for many of the Sinn Féin candidate and elections, including posters, handbills, and ballads.

Ms 8506/12: Notebook.

MS 15,653/3: Newspaper cuttings that includes speeches of William O’Brien.

MS 15,653(3): Newspaper cutting regarding Count Plunkett and the Mansion House Conference. Statement for a meeting of the Mansion House conference concerning monies received and disbursed, 1919. Files also included costs of poster printing poster by Maunsel & Co. Ltd.

**Sinn Féin**

IR 94109: *An appeal to the women of Ireland* poster/handbill.

Ms 21,523: Typescript report of Sinn Féin annual convention at the Mansion House, Dublin, 25-26 October 1917.

IR 300 P47: Advertisements for Dáil Éireann Loan.

**Thomas Johnson papers**


MS 17,203: Electoral and political material, particularly regarding Belfast 1906-1919. Includes circulars of National Executive, 20 September 1918.

MS 17,249: Material regarding the 1918 general election and National Executive circular.
Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress Annual Reports

The reports listed below proved invaluable for knowledge on Labour’s internal workings and dealings with trade unions and trade strikes. Valuable for this work in terms of the plans made to contest in 1918 and subsequent withdrawal; and were particularly useful for the municipal and rural elections:

- Report of Twenty-third Annual Meeting of IL&TUC, held in Derry in August 1917.
- Report of Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting held at City Hall, Waterford, August 1918 and of the Special Congress held at the Mansion House, Dublin, November 1918.
- Report of Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting, held in Drogheda 1919.
- Report of Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting, held in City Hall, Cork, August 1920.
- Report of Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting, held in Mansion House, Dublin 1921.

Harrington papers

MS 16,292: Harrington affidavit.

J.F.X. O’Brien papers

MS 13,418-13,477: Letters, memoranda, account books, etc., c. 1879-1917, relating to the financial and other affairs of the Labour Party including the Parliamentary Cash Book.

Art Ó Briain papers

MS 8430: Details of Ó’Briain’s work for Irish political prisoners (1916-21) and as the Dáil’s envoy in London (1919-1921).

McGarrity papers

This collection was used in conjunction with the AIHS, FOIF collection in New York, particularly for correspondence between McGarrity and Devoy, de Valera.
MS 94109: Devoy correspondence.
MS17439/1: Schedules, finances, and itinerary of de Valera’s US tour in 1919-20.
MS 17,441: Details on funding of US tours 1919-1971 – used in this work for the 1919 US fundraising and awareness creation tour.

Peter Golden papers

Ms 1341: Correspondence with Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington.

Charles Gavin Duffy papers

MS 15439: For details on the government’s opposition to the Dáil loan.
Robert Barton papers

MS 8786/1: Details on salaries and payments.

Michael Hayes papers

MS 708: UIL National Directory, Thirty-third meeting (Fifteenth Annual Meeting).

Ad hoc Collections/Sources

Ir 94109/i/8 *Leabhar na hÉireann: The Irish Year Book* (1910): (available in NLI main reading room).

MS 32597: Diarmuid Lynch, ‘History of the FOIF’

MS 12,082: *Irish Parliamentary Party Minute Books* – scant details were recorded, but useful for some insights into party rational, structure and finance.

Irish Large Books

(ILB 300): Sinn Féin pamphlet titled *Sinn Féin General Election Fund* which appealed for money to contest the 1918 general election.

Ephemera collection

EPH C178: Poster *Archbishop of Tuam.*

EPH C88: Handbill: *Archbishop Walsh Writes Ireland has been Sold.*

EPH E31: Poster: *Put him in to get him out*

EPH C75a-e: Poster: *Strike a Blow for Irish Independence.*

EPH C287: Booklet: *Songs for Protestants* (Dublin, c. 1850).

EPH E239: Poster: *The West’s Awake.*

EPH D95a-e: Leaflet with agenda detailing 11 points and list of participants at the Irish Assembly, Mansion House, Dublin, 19 April, 1917.

EPH F243: Dáil Éireann loan (printed in Irish and English).

EPH A323: *Ballad of East Clare.*

General

Ms 10494: Documents Seized in raid on Sinn Féin HQ, March 1918: *Irishmen: Remember! Be On Your Guard!*


NLI, ILB 400, p. 4 (item 2): Election poster for Londonderry City.

MS 49,595/5: Department of Local Government papers 1920-21
Trinity College Dublin Manuscripts and Archives Research Library

John Dillon papers

This very detailed collection was invaluable for unravelling the rationale (or lack of) for Irish Party propaganda and plans for contesting elections. The sources mentioned in this work portray only a small amount of the research undertaken in this collection because the papers of John Dillon provide extensive coverage of the happenings in Ireland from the era of Parnell, through to Irish Party thoughts and actions in 1916, valuable and intricate communication between O’Connor and Dillon on partition, and deliberations on attendees for the 1917 Irish Convention in Mss 6741. Dillon’s views and judgements continue into 1921-22 in Mss 6582 which is Dillon’s diary. For this work, the correspondence between the Irish Party elites on the by-elections and 1918 general election proved particularly useful.

Mss 6730/183-254: Correspondence between Joseph Devlin and John Dillon.
Mss 6741/369-552: Correspondence between T.P. O’Connor and John Dillon – particularly good for communication between Dillon and O’Connor on the US fundraising trip in 1917, including comments on John Devoy and Clan nan Gael. Good selection of US newspaper cuttings, i.e. The Indiana Catholic and The Liberty Digest.
Mss 6742/499-567: Correspondence between T.P. O’Connor and John Dillon during November and December 1918.
Mss 6744/816-884: Correspondence between T.P. O’Connor and John Dillon in 1921 and 1922 which contained reflective material on 1918 and opinion and commentary on military and political happenings in Ireland.
Mss 6749: John Dillon’s correspondence with John Redmond.
Mss 6753/357: Dillon’s correspondence with other Members of Parliament. General Correspondence on Longford and Sligo election (1918).
Mss 6840: General correspondence.

Frank Gallagher papers

Mss 10050/23-46: Frank Gallagher’s correspondence to Cecilia Saunders, 1918.

Digital Collections:

World War I Recruiting Collection – an extensive digital collection (also available in original format in TCD Early Printed Books Library) of Great War recruitment posters:
EPB Papyrus Case 54b: The Duty of Irishmen
EPB Papyrus Case 55a: An Appeal by John Redmond MP.
EPB Papyrus Case 54b-11: Wm Redmond and the war
EPB Papyrus Case 54b-08: Joseph Devlin and the Irish Brigade.
EPB Papyrus Case 55a, Digital No. PapyrusCase55: Irishmen! Avenge the Lusitania.
EPB Papyrus Case 55c (Digital No. PapyrusCase 55_076): ‘Irishmen’ to ‘Remember the ‘Leinster’ – And Avenge Your OWN DEAD’.
Digital No: PapyrusCase 55_011: Will you answer the call.
EPB Papyrus Case 55c (Digital No. 55_094): Will you go or must I.
EPB Papyrus Case 55c (Digital No. 55_096): Have you any women folk worth defending.
EPB Papyrus Case 55d (Digital No. 55_109): Is your home worth fighting for.

Samuels Collection, Early Printed Books

Collection Box 4 (SamuelsBox4_288): A Chance for South Longford (Political Dustbin)
679 (5/111): Britannia to East Cavan (ballad)
Samuels Box 4/258: A Felon of Our Land.
EPB OLS Box 4 (Digital No SamuelsBox4_258): Which?
Box 4 (Digital No. SamuelsBox4_291): Policy of Bloodshed.
Box 3 (Digital No. SamuelsBox3-040): Hard Facts.

University College Dublin Archives

De Valera papers

P150/548-687: Includes letters to and from de Valera to local directors of elections, notes for speeches, details of Sinn Féin Ard Fheis October 1917 and 1919 (reports from department of propaganda), information on newspapers and journalists, political posters, handbills and booklets and correspondence from local cumainn.

Desmond Fitzgerald papers

P80/14 (5-31): Detailed Reports of Propaganda Department 1920-1922; and information on raids, speeches, foreign correspondents, propaganda funding and expenses, the Irish Bulletin, and internal departmental communications.

Richard Mulcahy papers

P7/A37-70 and P7/B/14-341: The Richard Mulcahy collection includes vast details on the formation of the Free State, and the early Free State elections. Letters, speeches and notes provide insight into Sinn Féin views on the general principles of propaganda, newspaper articles, staff notices (along with detailed information on military activities).

Michael Hayes Papers


Ernie O’Malley papers

P17b/153: Draft biography of Seán Connolly by Ernie O’Malley; P.S. O’Hegarty, The Victory of Sinn Féin (Dublin, 1925).
Gavan Duffy papers

P152/115: Re costs involved in setting up the Paris office during peace conference.

Records of the Fianna Fáil Party

P176/27-33 On the American fundraising campaign for the creation of the Irish Press

National Archives of Ireland

1901 and 1911 censuses of Ireland, available at http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie
CSO RP/1918/33366, Chief Secretary Office Papers.
NAI, DE 1/1: Cabinet Minutes, 19 September 1919: Minutes of Dáil Éireann Ministry and Cabinet, 26 April to 19 September 1919.

The National Archives of Ireland also holds a significant number of electoral registers.

County Archives

(Located either in the County Council offices or the local history department of county libraries).
Local county councils and library archives hold county electoral registers e.g. Limerick City:
L/FR/FE/2/1-13: Electoral Registers post 1898 Local Government Act (1912). For an example of rural district council collections see Cork City and County Archives which holds records for Cork RDC’s in their Local Government and Health Archives, Rural District Councils, for instance, Youghal Rural District Council: IE CCCA/RDC163, Dates 1899-1925.
Dublin City Archives contains records of the civic government of Dublin from 1171 to the late 20th century. These records include City Council and committee minutes, account books, correspondence, reports, court records, charity petitions, title deeds, maps and plans and drawings.

Military Archives

Bureau of Military History, Witness Statements
(available online at www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie)

The witness statements were made long after military or political revolutionary activities and individually they are inconclusive, contradictory and fragmentary, but collectively they offer a vivid insight into events in this era, including all the election campaigns. However, they provide only the separatist nationalist perspective and contain hearsay; and the problems associated with memory and recall need to be considered. Their great advantage is the valuable, albeit biased, guide to attitudes and personalities. Many witness statements were read for this study, but the ones quoted or footnoted in this work were:
Bureau of Military History Contemporary Documents

227/7/B/I (i): Vote for DeValera.

Irish Labour History Society

*Voice of Labour*, 26 October 1918.

Irish Film Archives

Pathé, Film 234.49
Pathé, Film 270.31.
* Mise Éire and Saoirse films
  The Dáil Bonds film 1919

Dáil Éireann Debates

(available on oireachtas.ie/Dáil Debates)

F:1, 21 January 1919: First Dáil.
F:13, 20 August, Ministerial Motions, Finance.
F:13, 20 August 1919, Secretary for Finance
F:10, 18 June 1919: Anti-conscription Fund.
Vol. 609, No. 63, 8 November 2005: Department of Finance
Private Collections

Ephemera collections are often held privately, but come up for auction (or borrowing).


*Peter Brown collection, TCD* (kindly shared, and included):
Pamphlet *Sinn Féin in Tabloid Form*; Handbill titled *A Message to the electors of East Clare from the people of Limerick.*

NORTHERN IRELAND

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

The vital collections for Unionist perspectives that were used in this work were the Ulster Unionist Council records and Carson Papers, but other works were consulted, although not quoted, to establish Unionist perspectives, and included: D3727/E/52/1-10 for printed matter regrading Lord Carson and Craigavon. The papers of Sir Robert Lynn MP in North Antrim in D3480/59, Roy Bradford D4211, Adam Duffy, a Belfast Liberal Unionist MIC 127 and J.J. McCarroll, and Alderman Frank E. McCarroll for the Foyle Division of Londonderry, T2712; papers of Rev. J.B. Armour (interesting commentary from a home rule enthusiast on the election campaigns), D1792; Papers of the Irish Anti-Partition League D3257; and Correspondence of Joe Devlin (although he had left strict instructions with his sister that his papers were to be destroyed), T2257, T2424 & T2307; papers of R.H. Coulter, member of the Ulster Unionist Council, D1207 and papers of the East Down Unionist Association, D1255.

*Ulster Unionist Council Records*

A wide-ranging collection that provided sources on:


D1327/14/5/7-9: UUC receipts and payments 1918-1920.

D1327/20/4/142, U.C.114-155: Posters and Handbills (election ephemera)

*Carson Papers*

D1507/1/3/3-41: Correspondence between Richard Dawson Bates and Carson, 1918-1920.


D1507/A/26/7-61: Correspondence from City of Londonderry Unionist Association to Edward Carson, 1918.

D1507/A/27/3: Correspondence relating to the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council, 1918.

D1507/A/28/34: Resolution passed by the UWUC, 11 September 1918.
D1507/A/32/1: Edward Carson correspondence, January 1920.
D1507/A/33/20-37: Correspondence with Richard Dawson Bates.
D1507/1/1912/3: Correspondence from Second Baron Dunleath to Edward Carson, January 1912.

Armstrong Papers
D3727/E/52/1-10: Correspondence and political ephemera circulars to unionists from R.A. Parke, June 1920.

Papers relating to Tyrone and Fermanagh Political Elections
D3110/1: County Tyrone Election Fund
D3110/1: Letters to R.A. Parke from E.L. Hendman, June 1920.
MiC 604/1, Diary of Robert Brown.

General
MIC 127/17: A Duffin to D. Duffin, 25 April 1916.
MIC14111: Sinn Féin election posters and ephemera.

GREAT BRITAIN

National Archives, Kew, London
T102/16: NWAC Minutes and Reports 1917-1918.
T1/11992: Government spending on propaganda publications.
INF 1/317: Home Publicity during the 1914-1918 war.
(Dublin Castle Records accessed on TCD/library/collections/databases)
CO 904, Boxes 92-122 and 148-156A, 1918-1920, Dublin Castle Records, ‘The British in Ireland’, Irish Government Police Reports, 1914-1921, [there was some overlap in these records of membership of Unionist Clubs and the Orange Order. Relying on information supplied by the Inspector General is problematic due to inaccuracies, but they provide a general indication of Sinn Féin finances and club/association membership numbers.]
CO 904, Boxes 159-178, CO 904/164; Seditious Literature, Censorship, Etc., July to October 1918.
CO 904/7-23, 27-29 and 157; and 19477/S, 18994/S, 18547/S: Anti Government Organisations, 1882-1921, Chief Secretary’s Office No. 20379/S: Sinn Féin Funds. These reports should only be used for an approximation of the funds collected.
UK Parliamentary Archives
HL/PO/PU/1/1918/7&8G5c64: Representation of the People Act 1918.

Imperial War Museum

Aftermath of the Easter Rising (film newsreel by Topical Budget)

Bodleian Library Oxford

Asquith Papers, Ms 37, f132 and f134: Redmond to Asquith, 14 and 30 November 1916.

House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates
(available at www/tcd.ie/library/collections/databases – House of Commons Parliamentary Papers)

Vol. 29, c. 1383: 10 August 1911: David Lloyd George on the Payment of Members.
Vol 105, cc869-873, 23 April 1918: Herbert Samuels.
Vol 130, cc. 1164-1217, c. 1193, 15 June 1920: Provisions as to Parliaments of southern and northern Ireland.
Vol. 110, cc. 1780-3, 4 November 1918: The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Hayes Fisher).
Vol. 82, cc. 940, 945, 948, 11 May 1916: John Dillon.
Vol. 86, cc. 581-594, 18 October 1916.
Vol. 77, cc. 223-224, 21 December 1915: John Redmond.
CD 6131, 1912-13, CV, p. 595; HC 1913, CD 6727, LV, p. 933; HC 1914, CD 7313, LXIX, p. 1001; HC 1914-16, CD 7883, LXXX, p. 319; HC 1916, CD 8230, XXXII, p. 915; HC 1917-18, CD 8520, XXXVII, p. 269; HC 1918, CD 9013, XXV: Emigration figures for Ireland.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

US Library of Congress
(available at www.loc.gov)


American Irish Historical Society, New York.
An impressive collection of documents and papers on the Friends of Irish Freedom and correspondence between politicians in Ireland and the USA are held in this archive. The collection also includes wide-ranging details on fund-raising campaigns for de Valera’s tour and the Victory
Fund on a state-by-state basis, and correspondence to and from advertising and public relations companies. The only difficulty with this collection is that it is broadly catalogued so content requires careful perusal.

*Friends Of Irish Freedom papers*
John D Moore ‘Membership fees ledger, 1916-17
Box 6, Folder 2: National Executive minutes 1918-1919
Meetings of National Executive, 1919-1920.
Irish Victory Fund: List of financial donations from US states.
Box 4, folder 2: Letters and invoices from Thomas R. Shipp & Company to Diarmuid Lynch, 1919-1920.
Thomas R. Shipp to Daniel Colahan, 3 March 1919 and Shipp to Diarmuid Lynch, 6 May 1919.

**Newspapers and Periodicals**

The national daily/weekly newspapers were excellent sources for establishing funds raised for the Irish Party, election results, and electoral commentary and opinion for all parties. The regional newspapers were informative for local election results in 1920 and commentary and opinion on local political candidates. To assign some order to the collections consulted for this work the national newspapers are listed first, followed by regional newspapers, special interest publications and, finally, foreign publications.

National Dailies/Weeklies

*Irish Times*
*Irish Independent*
*Freeman’s Journal*

Regional Newspapers

*Anglo-Celt*
*Armagh Standard*
*Belfast Evening Telegraph*
*Belfast Newsletter*
*Belfast Weekly Telegraph*
*Clare Champion*
*Connacht Tribune*
*Cork Constitution*
*Cork Examiner*
*Daily Dublin Chronicle*
*Daily Graphic*
*Donegal News*
*Drogheda Independent*
*Dundalk Democrat*
*Evening Star*
*Fermanagh Herald*
*Frontier Sentinel*
*Kerry News*
*Kilkenny Moderator*
*Kilkenny People*
*Killarney Echo*
Leitrim Gazette/Advertiser
Limerick Leader
Longford Leader
Midland Reporter
Nationalist and Leinster Times
Nenagh Guardian
New Ireland Echo
Northern Whig
Reynolds's Newspaper
Roscommon Herald
Roscommon Journal
Saturday Record
Sligo Champion
South Kerry Chronicle
Southern Star
Strabane Chronicle
The Leitrim Guardian
Ulster Gazette
Ulster Guardian
Ulster Herald
Waterford News
Westmeath Independent
Westmeath Nationalist

Special Interest

Sinn Féin
Church of Ireland Gazette
Irish School Weekly
Nationality
Factionist
Irishman
Workers Republic
Advertising Age

Foreign (including Britain)

The Times
Manchester Guardian
Pall Mall Gazette
Westminster Gazette
Punch
London Gazette
New York Times
The Liberty Digest
Irish World
Contemporary Publications, Memoires, books, pamphlets and reports

Thom’s Directory 1915, 1920 and 1921.
*Notes from Ireland* - Microfilm edition, Queen’s University Library, Belfast, n.d. Notes from Ireland can be accessed in the NLI up until 1918, and in Boston College, PRONI and Queens’ University Library all publications up until the paper’s cessation in 1938 are available.
First Report of the Department of Local Government and Public Health 1922-25 (Dublin, 1927)
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Secondary sources


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--- *Allegiance* (Dublin, 1950).

Bromage, Mary C., *De Valera, the rebel gunman who became President of Ireland* (Great Britain, 1967 ed).

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Duggan, Anne E., Donald Haase (eds) and Helen Callow, Folktales and Fairy Tales, Traditions and Texts from Around the World (2nd ed., Connecticut, 2016).


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--- Oceans of Consolation: Personal accounts of Irish migration to Australia (New York, 1994).

--- Politics and Irish Life,1913-1921, Provincial Experience of War and Revolution (Cork, 1998).


--- *Paddy & Mr Punch* (London, 1993).


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