

“United We Stand, Divided We Fall”: The Role of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council During the Third Home Rule Crisis and its Aftermath

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Since the advent of the New Social History in the 1960’s, scholars have focused upon the contributions of female nationalists. Nationalist women were seen to be on the cutting edge of society, the perfect champions of radicalism, feminism, and suffragism. They were young, vibrant, and modern, and, in essence, worthy of attention. Nationalists broke onto the political scene, shattering gender stereotypes as members of suffrage societies and labor associations. In contrast, unionist women tended to join more conventional ancillary associations that supported the status quo, and historians, some of whom possess a strong aversion to auxiliary women, have largely ignored them.¹ Wrongly dismissed as stuffy, old-fashioned, and determined, despite practicality, to hold onto the vestiges of a decaying empire, these loyalists actually represented a powerful and influential force in Anglo-Irish politics. Their participation reflects not only the magnitude of the unionist movement, but reveals a different type of political participation that emphasized inclusion and preservation.

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The largest women’s group in northern Ireland before partition was a loyalist organization called the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council (UWUC). Female loyalists, much like their male counterparts, had first established associations to protest the Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893. However, these groups were disorganized, decentralized, and disconnected.² The intensification of the nationalist threat in the early 1900’s facilitated the formation of the UWUC in January 1911. Building upon the foundation of these earlier societies, loyalist women sought to “bear their share” in the continued struggle against nationalism and assist the male-run Ulster Unionist Council (UUC) in its crusade to preserve the Union.³ At the group’s founding meeting, Council Vice-President Theresa, the Marchioness of Londonderry, exhorted supporters to take up the loyalist cause, declaring:

. . . I earnestly appeal to the Loyalist women all over Ireland to do the same as we are going to do - to begin work at once, to canvass voters, to trace removals, and to endeavor to bring every single voter to the polls during elections, so that every seat in Ulster shall be won for Union . . . we all know well Lord Randolph Churchill's historical words, "Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right". Not only Ulster, but as heretofore the whole Unionist party will continue to fight for the Union, and I feel certain that the women of Ulster will be in no way behind the men in striving for so noble a cause.⁴

The Council's constitution, ratified at its first annual meeting in 1912, echoed Lady Londonderry's sentiments, and provided a framework for the women's activities:

The sole object of the Council shall be to secure the maintenance in its integrity of the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, and for this purpose to resist all proposals, of whatever kind they may be, which have for their object the establishment of any form of an Irish Parliament. It is a fundamental principle of this Council that no other subject than the object above described shall be dealt with by the Council, it being understood that all other questions, in which individual members may be specially interested, shall be subordinated to the single issue of the maintenance of the Legislative Union.⁵

The constitution additionally established membership and administrative guidelines. Members for this new endeavor were to be drafted from existing women's associations. Yet, despite pledges that the organization sought both "the peeress and peasant", the support of wives of Ulster Unionist Peers and Ulster Unionist Members of Parliament was pursued more urgently.⁶ The influence these women possessed in their husband's districts would invariably help the Council to create new branches, spread the unionist message, and raise funds. The UWUC built its own contact network upon the power and connections of these women, who were political and cultural trendsetters in their localities and acquaintances of Britain's elite. As wives of politicians, they represented the values and practices deemed acceptable in their neighborhoods and social circles. They were role models whose examples gave legitimacy and recognition to the Council. Their success seems to confirm Brian Harrison's assertion that "in a strongly

hierarchical society with a small political elite, women could achieve much through personal influence”.⁷

The Council’s governing body was the Executive Committee, and it consisted of a President, a Vice-President, a Chairman, four Vice-Chairmen, three Honorary Secretaries, an Honorary Treasurer, and an Assistant Honorary Treasurer.⁸ A number of mothers and daughters were members of the Executive Committee, and most had husbands or fathers serving in Parliament. The Committee was explicitly responsible for drawing up the Council’s constitution, appointing sub-committees and officers, and expanding its membership through branch associations. It additionally directed council policy, daily operations, and programs and demonstrations. It sought to work in tandem with the men’s organization in promoting the union, proclaiming that the UWUC would “in all its operations, keep in close touch with the UUC”.⁹

Below the Executive Committee were a number of Standing Committees, including a Literature Committee designed to publish and distribute unionist propaganda, and the Provincial Representatives (members of affiliated local women’s unionist associations who were to represent the branches and other affiliated organizations at Executive Committee meetings).¹⁰ The Provincial Representatives were to provide a system of communication between the group’s administrative center and its peripheries. However, these officers became disseminators of executive policy rather than the bearers of regional news and issues, as information flowed out to, not in from, the branches. At its peak, the Council had thousands of members, but an oligarchy of approximately fifty elite and wealthy women dominated its decision-making processes. Dissenting opinions, particularly on political matters, were thus rare.

Initial efforts to spread word of the UWUC’s work and form branch organizations were successful. The Annual Report of 1912 cited between 40,000 and 50,000 members, and, in a January 1913 letter to Lady Dufferin, the Marchioness of Londonderry (now UWUC President) alluded to rosters of four times those figures, citing the fine work of “our splendid Association of 200,000 women”.¹¹ An article printed in an Ulster daily, *The Belfast Newsletter*, nine months later corroborated Londonderry’s figures, quoting UWUC membership at “up to 200,000”.¹² This number may actually be a conservative estimate of the number of women supporting the unionist viewpoint during the crisis years of 1912-1914. Yet, it is also likely that the Council exploited ties with associate and affiliated members for propaganda

purposes, as the average attendance at UWUC meetings and rallies was only about four to six thousand women.¹³

The majority of Council leaders between 1911 and 1922 were upper- and middle-class women, but given the magnitude of the movement and its estimated membership, working-class women must have been involved, particularly among the affiliated branches.¹⁴ The Council's policy on membership dues seems to support this assumption. Dues were set at only two guineas, and collection was never rigorously enforced. Former UWUC officer Nancy Kinghan explains that the Council's traditional "policy of keeping . . . fees as low as possible" bolstered widespread interest in the organization's activities, increased rosters, and actually encouraged those of higher means to volunteer donations and supplies where needed.¹⁵

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To accommodate this network of wives, drawing-room meetings became a common forum for the discussion of policy and objectives during the Council's early years. Drawing-room meetings were an effective and inexpensive way for members and sympathizers to gather both in Ulster and England. The UWUC presided over these meetings, and members, like Mrs. Edith Wheeler, and other influential unionists, such as Ronald McNeill and Captain James Craig, gave speeches.¹⁶ Yet, the UWUC soon began canvassing and speaking at larger venues throughout the British Isles. These ventures became the most effective means of spreading the unionist message, and they quickly grew in number. While only twenty women gave speeches in six constituencies in 1911, ninety women had spoken in ninety-three constituencies where they addressed 230 meetings and over 100,000 electors by 1913.¹⁷

In all of these speeches and meetings, the Ulster Women's Unionist Council deliberately avoided the subject of religion. The women, although ardent Protestants, feared that the emotionalism tied to the religious question would damage the credibility of the wider anti-home rule movement. Deciding to separate their personal religious opinions from the UWUC's public campaign, these loyalists worked to dissociate their organization from the entanglements of sectarian bitterness. The Executive Committee thus declared in January 1911 that the organization would "urge the Ulster case against Home Rule mainly on social and economic grounds, by which the charge of Ulster bigotry will be avoided".¹⁸ Council platforms centered upon the need to protect civil rights and liberties, social privilege, and economic

livelihood, rather than upon the evils of Catholicism and the papacy. In light of this affirmation, many in the Executive Committee remained wary of the participation of Orange lodges. Because of fear over the Orange Order’s “exuberant sectarianism”, such lodges were not officially recognized as UWUC affiliates (with representatives and voting power) until January 1920.¹⁹

The cause of unionism had assumed a new urgency with the passage of the Parliament Act of 1911, which reduced the veto power of the House of Lords to a mere delaying tactic. More importantly, the Act removed the last political barrier to home rule, as the Lords could no longer interfere with the Commons’ management of the Irish Question. Fearing the introduction of another measure of Irish self-government, loyalists protested throughout early 1912. Yet, such demonstrations failed, as a third Home Rule Bill was introduced to the Commons on 11 April 1912. The bill reflected the Gladstonian Liberal tradition, in the sense that it preserved the sovereignty of Westminster while establishing an Irish Parliament with a nominated senate and elected lower house.²⁰ If enacted, the parliament would possess general powers over regional domestic matters, but issues of Crown, war and peace, the military, foreign trade, defense, treaties, land purchase, national insurance, and old-age pensions would be excluded. The bill also reduced the number of Irish MPs at Westminster to forty-two.

As a show of unionist force against the measure, Ulster unionists decided to stage the grandest, most impressive anti-home rule rally ever; deemed “Ulster Day”, the gathering was planned for 28 September 1912.²¹ The day’s festivities were to include parades, demonstrations, and the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, a written declaration of loyalist commitment to Crown, Empire, and Union. Unionists hoped that such a public affirmation of allegiance would convince the British electorate and the Liberal Government of the region’s sincerity and determination, and thereby persuade them to drop Irish self-government.

Members of the UWUC and its branches were not initially invited to participate in the rally, as such behavior was deemed improper for ladies. However, the Ulster Unionist Council could not ignore the women’s contributions, particularly their collection of over 100,000 signatures for an anti-home rule petition (which was presented to Parliament in May 1912) and their donation of almost £6,000 to the UUC’s appeals and funds.²² The Ulster Unionist Council’s Ulster Day Committee soon reversed its decision and opted to include the women as a show of solidarity, agreeing that a

“Women’s Declaration” should accompany the men’s covenant.²³ The UWUC would create the document and authorize its branches to organize signing centers throughout their constituencies.

Ulster Day was an occasion for celebration, introspection, and demonstration by loyal Orange men and women, who queued up all over Ireland to endorse a sacred pledge for Union.²⁴ Male unionists pronounced their support of the *Solemn League and Covenant*, which, fashioned like a reverent oath, defiantly proclaimed to defend their “cherished position of equal citizenship in the United Kingdom” and to defeat “the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule parliament in Ireland”.²⁵ The Women’s Declaration echoed these sentiments and stated:

We, whose names are underwritten, women of Ulster, and loyal subjects of our gracious King, being firmly persuaded that Home Rule would be disastrous to our Country, desire to associate ourselves with the men of Ulster in their uncompromising opposition to the Home Rule Bill now before our Parliament, whereby it is proposed to drive Ulster out of her cherished place in the Constitution of the United Kingdom, and to place her under the domination and control of a Parliament of Ireland. Praying that from this calamity God will save Ireland, we hereto subscribe our names.²⁶

This document represented the UWUC’s arrival as an official and equal partner in the movement. The men’s council, in recognition of the women’s efforts, offered acceptance and inclusion, and the crisis surrounding the Third Home Rule Bill marked the UWUC’s shining moment. Over 400,000 men and women endorsed the Covenants, and, on 12 September alone, over 80,000 (some 10,000 women) signed the declarations in Belfast, and many in their own blood.²⁷

The UWUC immediately began building upon the momentum generated by Ulster Day, and continued anti-home rule demonstrations, including ones in Antrim and Balmoral (a Belfast suburb), through the first half of 1913.²⁸ These meetings were reported to be “largely attended”, and all passed resolutions against the Home Rule bill.²⁹ In addition to demonstrations, the women also began aiding the newly formed Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), a citizen militia designed to defend the province against home rule and forced inclusion under Dublin rule.³⁰ The UWUC created the Million Pounds Indemnity Fund in September 1913 to compensate members of the

UVF and their dependents for losses, injuries, or disabilities suffered in civil conflict while in the service of Ulster. By January 1914, the fund amounted to over one million pounds, and, on average, the branch organizations of the UWUC had pledged about £1000 each.³¹ Although the Council raised revenue for the UVF, there is no indication that any of it went directly toward the purchase of guns or other weapons. The records only indicate its use in matters of compensation.

The UWUC also formed a new branch, the Ambulance and Nursing Corps, in 1913 to augment the Ulster Volunteer Force’s operations. Its participants were to serve as ambulance drivers, dispatch riders, nurses, and signalers in the event of civil war between nationalists and unionists.³² Members of the Ambulance and Nursing Corps also gathered equipment and held first-aid classes throughout the province. “Working parties” were arranged “to make supply stores” for the UVF.³³ These supply stores stocked necessary medical supplies, including bandages, bed jackets, pajamas, surgical gowns, shirts, and sheets.³⁴ The first-aid classes were established to train unionist women to care for those husbands, brothers, or sons who become injured while in the service of Ulster, and taught all basics of first aid and wound care. Between October 1913 and May 1914, over 4,000 women were instructed in First Aid and Home Nursing Training.³⁵ The Council also considered the formation of subsidized hospitals between January 1912 and March 1914, but issues of cost and the availability of suitable buildings hindered any real progress.

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By the summer of 1914, the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council encountered two new threats to political stability and civic security — total continental war and the suffrage movement. While the Third Home Rule Bill, which included all Irish provinces, had already passed on 25 May, its enactment as the Government of Ireland Act was suspended due to the outbreak of World War I in August 1914.³⁶ Most nationalists accepted the measure’s suspension, recognizing that a return to peace would bring its inception, and, like most unionists, turned their attentions to the war effort. The UWUC suspended its campaign against home rule in January 1915 to aid Britain in its struggle against Germany, and resolved in its annual report to “help our people in maintaining duty and discipline in the home and also by teaching patriotism and love of country.”³⁷

To fulfill this pledge, the organization’s war-time activities assumed

three main forms. The members collected clothing and food, visited families of servicemen, and offered comfort, usually money, "where they could".³⁸ For example, the Council formed the Ulster Women's Gift Fund in the fall of 1916 to "look after the welfare and comfort" of those Ulstermen serving in the Ulster Regiments, on the different ships of His Majesty's Fleet, and as prisoners of war.³⁹ The Fund specifically distributed parcels filled with cigarettes, tobacco, woolen articles, socks, shirts, handkerchiefs, razors, pipes, sweets, writing pads, soap, tea, and sugar.⁴⁰ The endowment not only benefited over 20,000 soldiers, but kept the spirit of the unionist campaign alive in a trying time. By the end of 1915, the Fund stood at £120,000, and was second only to the British Red Cross Society in terms of funds raised.⁴¹

Yet, unlike the UWUC, Irish suffragists continued their normal activities during the war. The nationalist Irish Women's Franchise League (IWFL) directed the franchise movement in Ireland, and, since 1911, it had been trying to persuade the women of Ulster to join the campaign.⁴² The League opened a branch office in Belfast in September 1914 with the hopes of "keeping the suffrage flag flying in Ulster".⁴³ During the next several months, this "Ulster Centre" carried out a paper-selling campaign, which included editions of the IWFL's *Irish Citizen* and various propaganda leaflets, canvassed for new members, and set up a library that housed suffragist material.⁴⁴ Lack of popular support and financial problems hindered the group's activities, and the Ulster Centre closed by 1915.⁴⁵ The IWFL's experiment among the unionist masses had failed, and, given the UWUC's dominance, it was perhaps doomed from the outset.

Most women in Ulster tended to be loyalists, and the majority belonged to the UWUC rather than franchise clubs. The Council's firm commitment to Union, and Union alone, prevented many women, despite interests to the contrary, from formally joining the suffrage campaign.⁴⁶ Ulster women believed that suffrage without Union had no meaning because freedom would cease to exist in a society governed by the region's most vile enemies. Union had to come first, and only through solidarity of thought and action would it be preserved. Interestingly enough, when votes for women became law in early 1918, the Council's Executive Committee did not view the passage of suffrage as inherently important to women.⁴⁷ They did consider it inherently important to unionism, however. Suffrage provided the perfect opportunity to expand the loyalist voter support base. The third home-rule crisis had emphasized the importance of constituent support, and, with a wider voter base, unionism would be strengthened. The expansion of the franchise introduced a new population of voters to the unionist campaign, and the UWUC

fully intended to exploit this potential source of support. The Marchioness of Londonderry asserted that this new legion of voters would be instructed “always” to use the privilege “for the preservation of our rights as an integral part of England”.⁴⁸ The female franchise, however, did little to change the UWUC’s daily activities, objectives, or outlook. Its focus remained survival, and, when World War I ended in November 1918, peace meant a return to their usual round of speeches, rallies, and fund-raising.

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Yet, with the conflict’s end, peace did not come to Ireland. Some nationalists now demanded full-fledged independence, and, by 1919, these tensions erupted into civil war. This conflict facilitated the partitioning of Ireland by December 1920. Six of Ulster’s counties remained in the Union, while the three remaining counties of Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan, along with the provinces of Connacht, Leinster, and Munster, were to be governed under a separate southern parliament.⁴⁹ The division of Ireland was a pragmatic solution, a compromise that attempted to maintain peace by giving Irish nationalists and British loyalists a portion of their demands. In 1920, 820,000 Protestants and 430,000 Catholics lived in the six counties which eventually made up “Northern Ireland”.⁵⁰

The Ulster Women’s Unionist Council reexamined its objectives following partition, and shifted its focus to the protection of these six counties:

The future holds much uncertainty for the loyal population of the Six Counties . . . our watchword is still “UNION”, the struggle against the enemies of the Empire and of Ulster is not at an end, it is merely transferred to a new field. Ulster stands alone as never before, and every Loyal Ulsterwoman must give of her best; must realise her responsibilities, and by working and voting must help to hold fast that Civil and Religious liberty which has been handed down to us as a sacred trust.⁵¹

In reality, this suggestion was a capitulation since it signaled the defeat of their efforts to maintain the status quo. Partition was disagreeable, but loyalists resigned themselves to it in order to keep most of Ulster’s population with the United Kingdom. That fact consoled many. The Anglo-Irish Treaty formalized partition in December 1921. It ended one hundred

and twenty years of British rule in all but six counties of Ireland and created the Irish Free State in the south.⁵² The UWUC reacted to the news of the treaty with typical aplomb, pledging to “support to the utmost of our ability such further measures as may be necessary to maintain our position against the designs of our enemies”.⁵³ To do this, the women had resolved to fight onward for the preservation of the six counties, declaring that “under God’s guidance Right may yet prevail over Might. Let our Motto still be ‘United we stand, divided we fall’”.⁵⁴

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After 1922, the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council continued to be an important player on the Anglo-Irish political stage, but its campaigns expectedly turned toward the maintenance of partition and the preservation of “Northern Ireland”.⁵⁵ Fund-raising, canvassing, and speaking engagements continued to dominate the Council’s routine. However, the 1930’s marked a turning point in the history of the UWUC, as new faces with fresh ideas assumed leadership. These women attempted to modernize the UWUC by incorporating more socially and politically relevant ideas into the group’s objectives, and, as a result, they began a gradual transformation of the Council from a political auxiliary at its inception to a women’s issues society by the early 1970’s.

The start of the modern Troubles in 1969 and Westminster’s imposition of Direct Rule in 1972 brought attentions back to Ulster, but the UWUC never recaptured its past strength. The Council gradually became less political, as it took on campaigns of social importance, with its most recent platforms championing equal pay opportunities, nursery care, and women’s health issues, such as breast cancer.⁵⁶ By the group’s own admission, many of its members were senior citizens who rarely participated in hard-core party politics and whose ability to “stay on top of the issues” was waning.⁵⁷ The UWUC had little success in courting younger, more socially connected women to join. The Council attributed this to the political split between unionists during the 1970’s, apathy and loss of interest in the issues, and, most importantly, fear of Irish Republican Army retaliation. Unionists became prime targets of brutality and boycotts since the resurgence of violence in 1969, and many were not prepared to risk their careers, businesses, and families because of open and public association. The majority of people in Northern Ireland continued to vote unionist, but most refused to canvass for their candidates. The UWUC openly described themselves as “marked people”.⁵⁸

The UWUC currently remains an affiliated body of the Ulster Unionist Council, and it continues to attract middle- and upper-class women whose husbands are active in the UUC and Ulster Unionist Party.⁵⁹ However, the organization only has about 150 to 200 members, far below previous membership.⁶⁰ Despite the changes in attitudes, political players, and policy, the fundamental questions that gripped the UWUC at its inception still plague the current organization — could the Union, whatever its form, be saved, and how could they as women help expedite that end?

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Love for union, support of family, and respect for tradition characterized the history of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council between 1911 and 1922. Its members were primarily older, wealthier women who took tremendous pride in their heritage and connection to the past, and, through a variety of media, attempted to spread their message to the masses. The single aim of preserving the union dominated their thinking and actions. Every effort was put towards that end. Their greatest triumph was the Women’s Declaration, while their greatest failure was partition. In a region plagued by violence and shifting political loyalties, these women managed to turn Ireland’s division into a positive good for the province’s Protestants. Although labeled “auxiliary” by contemporaries and scholars, their assistance was complete, welcomed, and unrivaled by any other group. They remained a source of constant support, and were relatively unaffected by outside distractions, not even by the hot topic of women’s suffrage. While the UWUC appreciated that the franchise would fatten loyalist voting rosters, women’s suffrage remained incidental to its crusade. The UWUC, unlike many other contemporary women’s organizations, never endorsed the female franchise in the pre-partition era.

The Council’s members neither desired nor needed suffrage to break into the public sphere. As wives of MPs, most already enjoyed a level of influence and power in political and social arenas. Some had been involved in early unionist campaigns to protest the First and Second Home Rule Bills, but most formally joined loyalist associations after the loss of the Lords’ veto power in 1911. The UWUC, in fact, emerged in direct response to this crisis. The life these female unionists cherished was under threat, and, to preserve it, they did all they could, including canvassing, distributing literature, and demonstrating. Behind their motto “United We Stand, Divided We Fall”, the members of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council were joined by their common belief in the sanctity of the political union between Ireland

and Great Britain, and, in the years prior to partition, they fought solely for that cause, allowing no other interests to impede this goal. An anonymous contributor to the *Irish Citizen* “who thinks that the [daily] is just a little too hard on the Women of the North who want to ‘stand by’ their men-folk” aptly summarized the Council’s historical legacy, stating that

suffragists claim that political women should first remember that they are women; the Ulsterwomen show that their interests as human beings are stronger than those of sex. We may not agree with their tactics, but let us not forget that they are a fine practical argument against Anti-feminists.⁶¹

NOTES

1. Asserting that “Ulster women have been living in the shadows of historical obscurity for too long”, Janice Holmes and Diane Urquhart call for a wider analysis of Irish women. Holmes was among the first to study northern cultural affairs, while Urquhart examines women in politics. Diane Urquhart and Janice Holmes, eds. “Introduction”, *Coming Into the Light: the Work, Politics, and Religion of Women in Ulster, 1840-1940* (1994), viii.

2. Nancy Kinghan, *United We Stood: The Official History of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council, 1911-1974* (1975), 3.3. Lady Theresa Londonderry, *My Visit to Antrim in Connection with the Anti-HomeRule Campaign*, Public Record Office, Northern Ireland (hereafter cited as PRONI), D.2846/1/2/7, 20 September 1913.4. The Marchioness of Londonderry also served as chair of the meeting. The Ulster Women’s Unionist Council, *The Fight Against Home Rule*, PRONI, D.2846/1/2/3, 23 January 1911, ff. 2-4.5. *Constitution of the Ulster Women’s Unionist Council*, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 1911.6. *Ibid.*, and UWUC, *The Fight*, PRONI, D.2846/1/2/3, 23 January 1911, ff. 6.7. Brian Harrison, *Separate Spheres: The Opposition to Women’s Suffrage in Britain* (1978), 81-82.

8. UWUC, *The Fight*, PRONI, D.2846/1/2/3, 23 January 1911, ff. 10.

9. *UWUC Executive Committee Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/2/3, 13 September 1912.

10. *Ibid.*, PRONI, D.1098/1/2, 20 January 1914.

11. For these membership statistics, see *The UWUC Annual Report of 1912*, D.1098/2/1, January 1912, and Lady Londonderry to Lady Dufferin, PRONI, D. 1098/1/3, 13 January 1913.

12. *The Belfast Newsletter*, 22 September 1913, 7. This figure is impressive given the fact that the total population of Ulster Protestants in 1911 was approximately 695,000. *The Census of 1911*, PRONI, MIC354.

13. *Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/1/2, 1912.

14. For example, the original list of Provincial Representatives shows a range of titles, with only one member lacking rank. The Representatives were: Lady Hervey Bruce, the Countess of Dartrey, the Dowager Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, the Marchioness of Ely, the Countess of Erne, Lady Ewart, the Marchioness of Hamilton, Lady Heygate, the

Countess of Kilmorey, the Countess of Leitrim, the Countess of Ranfurly, the Lady Rossmore, Mrs. Saunderson, the Countess of Shaftesbury, the Dowager Lady Smiley, and Lady Stronge. *Constitution*, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 1911.

15. One guinea was equivalent to one pound and one shilling. The fee for affiliate associations, which was set at three guineas, was also quite low. Kinghan, *United We Stood*, 74.

16. Miscellaneous UWUC meeting invitations, PRONI, D. 1098/2/4, 1912-1914.

17. Cited by Kinghan, *United We Stood*, 14.

18. *Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/1/1, 30 January 1911.

19. Patrick Buckland, *Irish Unionism, 1885-1923: A Documentary History* (Belfast: 1973), 99, and *Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 20 January 1920.

20. For a complete discussion of the bill's provisions, see D. George Boyce, *Ireland, 1828-1923: From Ascendancy to Democracy* (1992), 79-80.

21. A. T. Q. Stewart, *The Ulster Crisis: Resistance to Home Rule, 1912-1914* (1993), 62.

22. Kinghan, *United We Stood*, 20.

23. Robert Dawson Bates to Edith M. Wheeler, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 13 September 1912.

24. Jonathan Bardon, *A History of Ulster* (1992), 437.

25. UUC, *The Solemn League and Covenant*, PRONI, D.1496/3, 28 September 1912.

26. *The Women's Declaration in My Visit to Antrim*, PRONI, D.2846/1/2/7, 20 September 1913.

27. *Ibid.*, and Peter Singleton-Gates and Maurice Girodias, eds., *The Black Diaries: An Account of Roger Casement's Life and Times With a Collection of his Diaries and Public Writings* (1959), 326.

28. *Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 30 September 1912.

29. *My Visit to Antrim*, PRONI, D.2846/1/2/7, 20 September 1913.

30. Bardon, *Ulster*, 439-441.

31. Cited by Kinghan, *United We Stood*, 27.

32. *Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/1/2, 18 November 1913.

33. *Ibid.*, 16 December 1913.

34. Vere Galway to Lady Theresa Londonderry, PRONI, D.2846/1/11/17, 22 March 1914.

35. *Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/1/2, 10 July 1914.

36. George Dangerfield, *The Damnable Question: A Study in Anglo-Irish Relations* (1976), 128.

37. UWUC, *Annual Report of 1915*, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 19 January 1915.

38. Ibid.

39. *The Ulster Women's Gift Fund*, PRONI, D.2846/1/9/8, October 1916.

40. Efforts to aid the UVF had inadvertently prepared the Council for the war, as its stockpile of supplies and funds were immediately distributed to the Ulster Regiments or placed in the Gift Fund. Ibid.

41. *Minutes*, PRONI, D.1098/2/1/2, 1915.

42. Support for suffragism was relatively small compared to unionism. Before 1914, only a few hundred non-militant suffragists inhabited Ulster, and, according to the IWFL, the "total body of organised woman suffragists" in Ireland during this period was 3,000. This number was comparable to English franchise supporters, but clearly much less than UWUC rosters. "Organised Suffragism in Ireland", *The Irish Citizen*, 25 May 1912, 7.

43. "Irish Women's Franchise League, Ulster Centre", *Irish Citizen*, 12 September 1914, 134.

44. Ibid., 19 September 1914, 142

45. Ibid., 11 December 1915, 195.

46. *Constitution*, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 1911.

47. Martin Pugh attributes the coming of the female franchise to the fact that men, after experiencing the benefits of women's participation in the public sphere, specifically through their ancillary political work and wartime activities, were now more receptive to the ideas and opinions of women. Pugh's argument explains why Ulster politicians eventually accepted the vote, as the UWUC, not the Irish Women's Franchise League, had the greater impact in the region. Martin Pugh, "The Impact of Women's Enfranchisement in Britain", in *Suffrage and Beyond: International Feminist Perspectives*, Caroline Daley and Melanie Nolan, eds. (1994), 321.

48. Speech of Lady Londonderry, *UWUC Annual Report of 1919*, PRONI, D.1098/1/3, 28 January 1919, ff. 8.

49. Nicholas Mansergh, "The Influence of the Past", in *The Constitution of Northern Ireland: Problems and Prospects*, David Watt, ed. (1981), 12-13.

50. John Darby, "The Historical Background", in *Northern Ireland: The Background to the Conflict*. John Darby, ed. (1983), 20.

51. *UWUC Annual Report of 1920*, PRONI, D.2688/1/9.

52. For a complete discussion of the Treaty, see J. C. Beckett, *Modern Ireland* (1966), 453.

53. *Minutes*, PRONI, D. 1098/1/2, 6 December 1921

54. *UWUC Annual Report of 1921*, PRONI, D.1098/1/2, 3 January 1922.

55. *Constitution*, PRONI, D.1098/1/2, 1921.

56. Kinghan, *United We Stood*, 68.57. UWUC Executive Committee, interview by author, Ulster Unionist Party Headquarters, 3 Glengall Street, Belfast, 10 September 1996.

58. Ibid.

59. On 18 April 1998, the UWUC backed a UUC Resolution on the Stormont (Good Friday) Agreement which stated that the Ulster Unionist Council “endorses the actions of the Party leadership . . . and pledges support for [Mr. Trimble] in his continuing determination to resolve those areas where concerns still exists among our people”. Reported by Joanne Murphy, Systems Officer of the Ulster Unionist Party, interview by the author, 20 December 1998.

60. Total membership of the Ulster Unionist Council in 1995 was 852, 18.2% of whom were women belonging to its UWUC affiliate. Rick Wilford and Yvonne Galligan, “Gender and Party Politics in Northern Ireland”, in *Contesting Politics: Women in Ireland, North and South*, Yvonne Galligan, Eilis Ward, and Rick Wilford, eds. (1999), 171.

61. “In Praise of Ulster Women”, *Irish Citizen*, 7 February 1914, 301.