



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Wednesday 24 May 2023 – Morning

A Level History A

Y316/01 Britain and Ireland 1791–1921

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes



You must have:

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer the question in Section A and **any two** questions in Section B.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document has **4** pages.

ADVICE

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

SECTION A

Read the **two** passages and answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the progress in negotiations for Home Rule by 1914. [30]

Passage A

The idea of partition had been discussed in Liberal circles since 1911. It was brought to the Cabinet as a possible solution, but the Cabinet decided against proceeding with the idea of any such compromise. This is because neither Asquith nor any of his leading ministers felt it necessary or politically wise at this stage to make concessions. This was perhaps a golden opportunity for the leadership of the Liberal party to accept a compromise as a means of resolving the issue, but they failed to take the opportunity.

The discussion about the possibility of a separate solution for Ulster that could include a compromise became public in 1913. The Irish Party leadership made clear their opposition to some form of a compromise. Redmond declared 'Irish Nationalists can never be assenting parties to the mutilation of the Irish nation.' Whatever Redmond's statements, by this point the initiative had passed to those in government who favoured some form of partition. A conference was organised to resolve the issues, but the record of the conference clearly highlights the extent of the disagreement. The Nationalists indicated that it would be quite impossible for them, under any circumstances, to agree to any Ulster Unionist demands. The fact that no deal was made and nothing finalised reflects the deep disagreement and the entrenched position taken by either side. No agreement was possible in 1914. The constitutional debate had also, to a certain extent, been overtaken by extra parliamentary action.

Adapted from: M. Collier, Britain and Ireland 1867–1922, published in 2008.

Passage B

While attention had been focused on the fate of the Home Rule Bill at Westminster, events had been moving in Ireland itself. Ulster supporters in Ireland pledged themselves to resist a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland should one ever be set up. The creation of para-military groups with totally opposed objectives meant that the long-feared risk of civil war began to emerge as a real possibility. The Home Rule Bill was heading for its final passage. By 1914 the Government and the Unionists had agreed to some form of compromise. However, there was no agreement as to what these amendments should be.

Encouraged by King George V, the politicians convened a constitutional conference in 1914. The conference was intended to reach decisions. But the crisis of the First World War overtook the Irish Question at a crucial point. All sides in the constitutional conference realised that some kind of compromise was inevitable. The Unionist leaders, in particular, were far more moderate in private than they were prepared to be in public. If the parties had been forced to continue the negotiations, a constitutional settlement would almost certainly have been reached. In the event, the war enabled all sides to agree to shelve the issue in a way which virtually guaranteed the renewal of the crisis at some later date. This was just about the worst outcome, short of actual civil war, which could possibly have happened for the Ulster Crisis.

Adapted from: M. Byrne, 'Ireland from the Union to Partition, 1800–1921', in Years of Expansion: British History 1815–1914, published in 2002.

SECTION B

Answer any **two** questions.

- 2*** 'The Roman Catholic Church was consistently opposed to the Union from 1791 to 1921.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3*** 'Partition in 1921 did more to reduce tensions over the Union than any other reforms in the period from 1791 to 1921.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 4*** 'The Famine (1845–1849) had a greater impact on Irish Nationalism than any other economic factor in the years 1791 to 1921.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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