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‘Après la guerre’: John Redmond, The Irish Volunteers, and Armed Constitutionalism, 1913–1915

On 8 August 1914, Captain J. J. Holland of the Limerick company of the Irish Volunteers wrote to the organisation’s inspector-general, Colonel Maurice Moore, concerning John Redmond’s proposal five days earlier that Ireland’s rival nationalist and unionist paramilitary organisations should be entrusted with the task of coastal defence. Redmond had suggested on 3 August that the creation of such a home guard would allow the British Army’s Irish garrison to be re-deployed to meet the threat posed by Germany; in his letter to Moore, Holland welcomed the initiative, observing, ‘I am glad the government are arming us’.<sup>1</sup> At the same time Holland noted that some in the Limerick Volunteers ‘do not like it. They do not wish to defend Ireland as part of the empire’; he subsequently ‘appealed to ... [his comrades] to stick together, and be ... led by John Redmond, who ... was doing a great thing for Ireland, namely, placing the Home Rule Bill on the Statue Book’.<sup>2</sup> Though frustrated by the War Office’s unwillingness to recognise the Volunteers as a home guard, Holland nonetheless remained committed to Redmond’s proposal (serving as the commandment of a training camp in Limerick established to prepare Volunteers for coastal defence). After Redmond called on Irishmen to fight ‘wherever the firing line extends, in defence of right and freedom and religion in this war’ on 20 September, Holland sided with the pro-Redmondite wing of the Volunteers (subsequently renamed the Irish National Volunteers (INV)) when many of the organisation’s original members left over Irish enlistment in the British Army.

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<sup>1</sup> J.J. Holland to Maurice Moore, 8 Aug. 1914, National Library of Ireland, Maurice Moore Papers (hereafter cited as NLI, MP), Ms 10,561/19.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah Cronin, Bureau of Military History, National Archives of Ireland, Witness Statement 1423 (hereafter cited as BMH, NAI, WS).

Indeed, by late 1914, Holland had himself resolved to join up, declaring on his departure that he ‘had thrown in his lot with the Allies, because by so doing he believed he was defending his own country’.<sup>3</sup> Holland was subsequently commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army Service Corps; he was reportedly one of 140 Limerick Volunteers who had enlisted in the British Army by early February 1915.<sup>4</sup>

The decision of home rulers like Holland to join the British Army has customarily been viewed in two ways. Critics of Irish participation in the war have regarded such men as, at best, the dupes of unscrupulous politicians who hoodwinked ‘misguided’ Irishmen into joining the British Army with talk of small nations and Irish freedom, and, at worst, as ‘West Britons’.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, those more sympathetic to the Redmondite ‘project’ have seen the motives of men like Holland as more ‘enlightened’ than those of their fellow countrymen who sided with imperial Germany during the war. From this perspective, men like Holland sought not only to ‘defend the territorial integrity of a small neutral nation, like Belgium’, but by standing ‘shoulder to shoulder in a common endeavour’ with their unionist fellow-countrymen, also strove to achieve ‘unity by consent’ in Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

But, in fact, Holland’s service with the British Army does not fit neatly into either of these two paradigms. This is clearly illustrated by a letter Holland (on active service in France with the British Expeditionary Force from February 1915 onwards) wrote to Moore in

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<sup>3</sup> T.P. Dooley, The Times and World of a Southern Irish Man (1876–1916) Enlisting in the British Army During the First World War (Liverpool, 1995), p. 143; C.M. Kennedy, Genesis of the Rising 1912–1916: A Transformation of Nationalist Opinion (New York, 2010), p. 148; J. J. Holland to Moore, 16 Nov. 1914, NLI, MP, Ms 10,561/19; FJ, 30 Jan. 1915.

<sup>4</sup> Freeman’s Journal, 1 Feb. 1915 (hereafter cited as FJ); Anglo-Celt, 6 Feb. 1915.

<sup>5</sup> T. Denman, Ireland’s Unknown Soldiers (Dublin, 2008), p. 7; A. Jackson, Home Rule: An Irish History, 1800–2000 (Oxford, 2003), p. 145.

<sup>6</sup> Irish Times, 13 Apr. 2012; 30 Apr. 2012.

which he advised him that ‘though 1,000’s of the best [National Volunteers] have answered the call, it is well to keep the remaining ones in a fit and trained condition. They may be required yet.’<sup>7</sup> ‘I hope’, he added, ‘all our efforts out here will [also] count at the reckoning – *apres le guerre*.’<sup>8</sup> As this article demonstrates, neither Holland’s anxiety about a possible post-war ‘reckoning’ with the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) nor his belief in the need to militarily prepare for such an eventuality were anything unusual among home rulers during the first eighteen months of the conflict. Indeed, Moore himself, not to mention John Redmond, was very much preoccupied in this period with the question of how best to prepare in the event of just such an eventuality.

That former Redmondites such as Stephen Gwynn preferred not to highlight the contingent nature of their support for the war after 1918 (emphasising instead that Redmond ‘had no concern with party or partisan arguments’ once the conflict started), helps to explain why few historians have appreciated the full significance of this wartime contingency planning for the pro-war stance adopted by many home rulers.<sup>9</sup> Alvin Jackson has rightly seen in Redmond’s 3 August and 20 September speeches (endorsing coastal defence and enlistment, respectively) the elaboration of a case for building ‘a national army for the new Ireland’ on the ‘commonwealth model’ through the opportunities afforded by the war. But in identifying Redmond’s motives in terms of ‘consolidat[ing] ... the claims of Irish nationality’ and ‘further[ing] the cause of home rule’, he does not consider the intense preoccupation of home rulers in the early months of the conflict with the prospect of some type of post-war military confrontation.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> J.J. Holland, Medal Card, Public Record Office: The National Archive, WO 372/10/1707 (hereafter PRO: TNA).

<sup>8</sup> Holland to Moore, n.d., NLI, MP, Ms 10,561/19.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Gwynn, John Redmond’s Last Years (London, 1919), p. 163.

<sup>10</sup> Hr, p. 168, 170.

Two scholars who have understood something of the importance of this factor in nationalist attitudes towards the war are Robert Kee and Joe Lee. Kee argued in the early 1970s that Redmond's eve-of-war offer of the Volunteers for home defence reflected his ambition for the paramilitary organisation to function as a 'physical guarantee' that after the conflict, home rule would 'be enforced' and that, in the Ulster amending bill that was to be passed before self-government could be implemented, 'nothing unacceptable to Irish national opinion such as the permanent partition of Ireland could be introduced'.<sup>11</sup> While Joe Lee has contended that the small size of the Volunteers' arsenal meant that Redmond's 3 August offer was never intended to be a 'serious' one, he too has argued that the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) chairman came to see that '[p]articipation in the war' – through the formation of the Irish army corps he called for in mid-September 1914 – was his 'only hope of securing a credible paramilitary base, and thus providing himself with some bargaining power *vis-à-vis* both Carson and Asquith' at war's end.<sup>12</sup>

This article contends that Redmond's 3 August offer signified a major shift on his part towards a policy of armed constitutionalism. Before the war, Redmond had reluctantly recognised the Irish Volunteers as the proto-army of the future home rule state of which he was the prime minister-in-waiting, but at that time he had seen the Volunteers as functioning essentially as a political deterrent to counter UVF braggadocio. Fear of further Liberal backsliding in late July/early August 1914 over the Ulster question helped convince him that a credible nationalist paramilitary force was now necessary, while the practical advice and involvement of Maurice Moore suggested how it might be achieved. Through Moore and

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<sup>11</sup> R. Kee, *The Green Flag: The Bold Fenian Men* (Harmondsworth, 1989), 2 vols, ii, pp. 227–8.

<sup>12</sup> J.J. Lee, *Ireland, 1912–1985: Politics and Society* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 22. For a perceptive discussion of Redmondite attitudes towards the war see D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, 'The Rhetoric of Redmondism, 1914–16', *History Ireland*, xi (2003), pp. 44–9.

others, Redmond came to realise that the building of a credible home rule 'army' would be impracticable unless the resources of the War Office were harnessed; indeed, when these were not forthcoming, Redmond eventually concluded that if the military authorities would not recognise the Volunteers then he would use the state's resources to build his defence force through the creation of an Irish corps within the British Army.

Redmond's judgement about the compromises necessary for the Volunteers to become a credible force was by no means accepted by all nationalists (hence the Volunteer split of late 1914). But as this article demonstrates, Redmond was prepared to accept 'joint control' of the Volunteers because his concerns about a possible post-war 'reckoning' were further amplified in the autumn of 1914 by the parallel endeavours of Ulster unionists to acquire military competency through war service with the 36<sup>th</sup> (Ulster) Division.

Far from the Ulster crisis being 'refrigerated' after 4 August then, this article concludes that at an early stage the war was seen by many Redmondites as the continuation of the home rule struggle by other means, with war's end possibly heralding the return of Irish politics to the tense position of summer 1914.<sup>13</sup> The spectre of Ulster exclusion, the prospect of a possible Tory victory at the general election scheduled for 1915, and nationalist anxiety about the enhanced military capacity of the UVF all prompted home rulers to give serious – if naïve – consideration to how they might best prepare for a future post-war confrontation with militant unionism.

Of course, ultimately, Redmond's lack of influence over the War Office, the Irish divisions, and the Irish people meant that his contingency planning had been rendered all but irrelevant well before the 1916 Easter rising irrevocably transformed Ireland's political landscape. Nonetheless, that the building of a home rule defence force was an early

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<sup>13</sup> F.S.L. Lyons, 'The Revolution in Train', in W. E. Vaughan, ed., A New History of Ireland (6 vols, Oxford, 1996), vi, p. 144.

Redmondite war aim demonstrates that his support for the conflict was more complex than existing accounts have allowed.<sup>14</sup>

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John Redmond did not welcome the emergence in November 1913 of a nationalist paramilitary equivalent to the Ulster Volunteer Force. Notwithstanding the fact that its co-founder, Eoin MacNeill, claimed that the Irish Volunteers had been established to support Redmond's campaign for self-government, Matthew Kelly has observed that the formation of the organisation 'bespoke a critique of the shortcomings of Redmond's strategy and constitutional Nationalism more generally', since the founding manifesto of the Volunteers indicated clearly that it was much more than 'simply the means to enforce home rule'.<sup>15</sup> The Volunteers were founded instead on the conviction that Westminster – including the IPP – had shown itself incapable of resisting unionist opposition to Irish self-government; as a result, the 'normal circumstances' in which the Party customarily had the pre-eminent 'claim to the initiative in matters of policy' no longer held.<sup>16</sup> In this context, those who saw themselves as 'true Nationalists' felt both justified and (more importantly) able to take matters into their own hands. As the *Irish Volunteer* newspaper (the official organ of the new movement) put it in early 1914, 'The time for mere empty talk is past, and on behalf of an armed Irish nation leaders will speak with the consciousness of power that will make their voices of the utmost weight. Behind the ballot box is the rifle, behind the Irish parliamentary

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<sup>14</sup> For example, see D. Ferriter, *A Nation and Not a Rabble: The Irish Revolution, 1913–1923* (London, 2015), p. 143.

<sup>15</sup> M.J. Kelly, 'The Irish Volunteers: A Machiavellian Moment?', in D. G. Boyce and A. O'Day, eds., *The Ulster Crisis, 1885–1921* (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 69.; M.J. Kelly, *The Fenian Ideal and Irish Nationalism, 1882–1916* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 205.

<sup>16</sup> M. Tierney, *Eoin MacNeill: Scholar and Man of Action, 1867–1945*, ed. F. X. Martin (Oxford, 1980), p. 118.

party must be the army.’<sup>17</sup> Evidently, the emergence of the Volunteers was seen by some advanced nationalists as heralding a significant re-ordering of the established political hierarchy in nationalist Ireland, with moral authority and political initiative now resting very clearly with the new ‘army’.

This was important because despite the claims of the movement’s founders that they had been inspired by the example of the UVF and were not hostile to their northern counterpart, in conceiving of the paramilitary Volunteers as a proto-army of a future Irish state, MacNeill presented the new organisation as ‘a permanent and effective force, [to be] trained and armed for the national defence’.<sup>18</sup> In practice, it was accepted by many of the movement’s founders that this might involve ‘fight[ing] a full-scale, traditional campaign against either the British or the Ulster Volunteer Force’.<sup>19</sup> But this had never been part of Redmond’s strategy. Not only did the home rule bill explicitly prohibit the future Irish parliament from establishing a separate ‘military force’, but in the politically volatile context of late 1913 and early 1914, the IPP leadership neither had a desire to see a ‘National defence force’ set up independently of itself, nor any wish to develop a credible paramilitary army as part of its own strategy for securing home rule.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, Redmond and his senior colleague John Dillon feared that such a semi-autonomous force might independently provoke some form of violent confrontation with the UVF in advance of home rule, or, alternatively, demand that self-government be ditched entirely in favour of an Irish republic.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> IP, 8 Jan. 1914 (hereafter cited as IP); Irish Volunteer, 4 Apr. 1914, cited in *Ibid.*, p. 215.

<sup>18</sup> Eoin MacNeill to John Redmond, 29 May 1914, NLI, RP (hereafter cited as RP), Ms 15,204.

<sup>19</sup> B. Novick, ‘Storming Stepside: The Military Education of the Irish Volunteers’, in L. McBride, ed., Reading Irish Histories: Texts, Contexts, and Memory in Modern Ireland (Dublin, 2003), p. 200; IP, 8 Jan. 1938.

<sup>20</sup> Tierney, Eoin MacNeill, p. 136.

<sup>21</sup> J.J. Horgan, Parnell to Pearse: Some Recollections and Reflections (1949, Dublin, 2009), pp. 226 –7; J.

McConnel, The Irish Parliamentary Party and the Third Home Rule Crisis (Dublin, 2003), p. 284.



It was for these reasons that Redmond initially cold-shouldered the Volunteers, only to be ‘surprised’ and alarmed in early 1914 by its progress; he is reported to have stated that ‘he had no intention of forming a new government with so incommensurable an organisation in the field in dispute of his authority.’<sup>22</sup> However, Liberal backsliding on the issue of Ulster’s exclusion from the home rule bill and the refusal of Irish-based British officers to undertake military operations in Ulster (the Curragh ‘mutiny’ of March 1914) ‘vitally altered the position’ (for Redmond) within a few months.<sup>23</sup> Historians have presented Redmond’s subsequent reassessment of the Volunteers as a ‘humiliating political retreat’ motivated by ‘panic’ and ‘weakness’: Redmond – in ‘a last and desperate move’ – scrambled to assert his authority over the movement by ‘smother[ing]’ the existing executive (with its predominance of advanced nationalists) via the nomination of ‘nonentities’ and by trying to ‘vampirize’ the organisation at the grassroots.<sup>24</sup> Having outflanked MacNeill in June 1914, it has been claimed that Redmond thereafter ‘viewed the Volunteers only as a necessary tool to help back up his political position’.<sup>25</sup>

While there is undoubtedly some basis for this view, it should be noted that it was the provisional committee that initiated negotiations with the IPP several days after the Curragh mutiny. The Volunteer leader who first made contact with Redmond was Colonel Maurice Moore, the most experienced military figure then associated with the organisation (he had

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<sup>22</sup> IP, 10 Jan. 1938; D. Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War (New York, 1928), p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> FJ, 9 June 1914.

<sup>24</sup> Kelly, The Fenian Ideal, p. 212; C. Townshend, Easter 1916: The Irish Rebellion (London, 2006), p. 52; A. Jackson, Ireland, 1798–1998: Politics and War (Oxford, 1999), pp. 167, 167–8; Tierney, Eoin MacNeill, p. 141; D. Fitzpatrick, Politics and Irish Life, 1913–21: Provincial Experience of War and Revolution (Cork, 1998), p. 128.

<sup>25</sup> Kennedy, Genesis of the Rising, p. 74; F. McCluskey, Fenians and Ribbonmen: The Development of Republican Politics in East Tyrone, 1898–1918 (Manchester, 2011), p. 144.

retired from the British Army in 1906 after a thirty-year military career).<sup>26</sup> Moore had been concerned for some time about what might happen if ‘Carson ... mobilise[d] his army’, given that Redmond, as Carson’s political opposite number, had yet to openly endorse the Irish Volunteers. In addition, Moore was concerned about the ‘difficulty of arming and training’ the Volunteers on a voluntary basis (he was unimpressed by the military knowledge of the original provisional committee).<sup>27</sup> His solution, as he explained to Redmond when they met on 23 March, was to turn both volunteer organisations into a state-sanctioned force under the 1907 Territorial and Reserve Forces Act. Moore, who had already been lobbying the government over his plans, believed that ‘[i]f the Ulstermen stood out, we would soon be in sufficient strength to prevent any rebellion on their part; we would be more numerous and better equipped’. The difficulty, as Moore saw it, was ‘to find some way to keep clear of War Office control’; he believed that ‘the [1907] Act left an opening for such an arrangement’, claiming that it could be applied to Ireland ‘without reference to Parliament’ and that the resulting territorial battalions could be governed by ‘a Common Council in Dublin’, not the War Office.<sup>28</sup>

Redmond was interested in Moore’s territorial scheme, but the resignation of J. E. B. Seely as secretary of state for war at the end of March 1914 in the aftermath of the Curragh incident was seen by Moore as ending any likelihood of using the 1907 Act as what scholars would now term a ‘force multiplier’ (other senior Volunteers were already getting cold feet

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<sup>26</sup> D. Ó Corráin, ‘“A most public spirited and unselfish man”: The Career and Contribution of Colonel Maurice Moore, 1854–1939’, *Studia Hibernica*, xl (2014), pp. 71–133.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89; *IP*, 8 Jan. 1938; 17 Jan. 1938. Timothy Bowman has considered this question in relation to the UVF. T. Bowman, ‘The Ulster Volunteer Force and the Formation of the 36<sup>th</sup> (Ulster) Division’, *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxii (2001), p. 499;

<sup>28</sup> *IP*, 10 Jan. 1938.

about the idea anyway).<sup>29</sup> In any case, Redmond's main priority at this time was ensuring that the Volunteers did not threaten the Party and home rule, rather than enhancing the organisation's military credibility. Even after the Larne gun-running operation of April gave further urgency to the IPP's negotiations with the Volunteers, the Party was, above all else, driven by the conviction that (as Stephen Gwynn, MP, told MacNeill in May 1914) 'any and every military [force] should be in the power of the constitutional government, and that means, for practical purposes [in Ireland], Redmond and his advisers.'<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, in May/June 1914, the IPP took control of the Volunteers in order to prevent what John Dillon described as an attempted coup by an 'amateur military dictatorship' against Ireland's legitimate government-in-waiting.<sup>31</sup>

In this light, though the IPP's take-over of the Volunteers undoubtedly did represent 'a radicalisation of the Redmondite project', it did not signify the adoption of a policy of armed constitutionalism.<sup>32</sup> After all, Nationalist MPs described the Volunteers in the summer of 1914 as a 'militant force which would be ready for emergencies, not for attack, not for defiance, but for the defence of a constitutional right which had already been granted to them by the British Parliament', while others presented the Volunteers as a contingency against a future Tory government repealing home rule.<sup>33</sup> But in speaking of home rule in the future perfect tense and viewing the possible military role of the Volunteers from the perspective of the future present, many home rulers deliberately evaded not only the current perilous position of the bill but also the question of what the Party would do if some kind of

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<sup>29</sup> Strabane Chronicle, 3 June 1916; IP, 10 Jan. 1938; 14 Jan. 1938; Marnie Hay, Bulmer Hobson and the Nationalist Movement in Twentieth-Century Ireland (Manchester, 2009), pp. 129–30.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Gwynn to Eoin MacNeill, 18 May 1914, cited in Tierney, Eoin MacNeill, p. 133.

<sup>31</sup> McConnel, The Irish Parliamentary Party, p. 288; FJ, 13 June 1914.

<sup>32</sup> Kelly, The Fenian Ideal, p. 214.

<sup>33</sup> FJ, 5 June 1914; McConnel, The Irish Parliamentary Party, p. 290.

paramilitary confrontation occurred in advance of self-government. Moreover, even those nationalists who did acknowledge that the UVF might intimidate the government into conceding Ulster exclusion before the bill's enactment nevertheless presented the Volunteers primarily as a deterrent, while those who argued that 'they were ... training in the event of any contingency ... when they might be called upon to take up arms in defence of their liberty' couched their endorsement of military action in such nebulous terms as to suggest that such sabre-rattling was simply political posturing.<sup>34</sup> This conclusion is also suggested by Redmond's efforts to arm the Volunteers in the summer of 1914.

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That the IPP saw the Volunteers in mid-1914 principally as a deterrent, or, as Roy Foster has termed it, a 'counter-bluff', is suggested by its efforts to arm the movement in June and July.<sup>35</sup> The Party wanted to impress on British politicians that no further compromises on Ulster exclusion would be tolerated (after the humiliating concessions of spring 1914), to underline after the Curragh mutiny the ability of nationalists to defend home rule without the help of a partisan military, to provide a nationalist riposte to the Larne gunrunning, and to boost the morale of beleaguered Ulster Catholics, who were fearful of the communal violence that UVF resistance to home rule might unleash.<sup>36</sup> As Stephen Gwynn observed in early June, 'Some Englishmen were impressed with the desperately determined attitude of Ulster, while they looked upon the policy of the Nationalists as vague and sentimental ... That was the reason why Nationalists should do what Ulster had done.'<sup>37</sup>

At this point, the Party anticipated that if the UVF initiated military action, it would consist of 'isolated attacks on life and property'; as a consequence, little serious thought

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<sup>34</sup> *FJ*, 2 June 1914; 20 July 1914.

<sup>35</sup> R. Foster, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland* (Oxford, 1989), p. 234.

<sup>36</sup> F.X. Martin, *The Howth Gun-running and the Kilcoole Gun-running, 1914* (Dublin, 1964), p. 54.

<sup>37</sup> *FJ*, 2 June 1914.

seems to have been given by the Irish Party to tactical operations against armed unionists.<sup>38</sup> As such, the efforts of the Party to arm the Volunteers were motivated by political rather than military considerations; this is also suggested by the guns the IPP procured. Unlike the organisers of the Larne and Howth gunrunnings who undertook covert missions to Hamburg, John Redmond instructed his brother Willie Redmond, MP, to enter into discussions in mid-June 1914 with a London-based gun merchant, Henry Harris, who in turn secured a supply of weapons from continental arms dealers.<sup>39</sup> Redmond and Harris originally agreed terms for the supply of 3,600 rifles and 50,000 rounds of ammunition. £350 was deposited as a down payment, with delivery in Belgium being contingent on the remaining sum (something in the order of £10,000) being paid.<sup>40</sup>

The fact that in July 1914 the Volunteers had grown to approximately 160,000 men meant that the weapons purchased would have been the equivalent to one rifle for every forty-four volunteers, with fourteen rounds of ammunition per rifle.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the rifle purchased – namely the Italian M1870/87 Vetterli Vitali – was hardly at the cutting edge of military technology, having been described by one historian as belonging to the ‘bargain basement of the international arms market’.<sup>42</sup> That said, while in comparison to the Larne gun

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<sup>38</sup> D. Meleady, John Redmond: The National Leader (Dublin, 2013), p. 272. Some thought was given by Colonel Edmond Cotter to this question. See C. Hannon, ‘The Irish Volunteers and the Concepts of Military Service and Defence, 1913–1924’, (Ph.D Thesis, University College, Dublin, 1989), 58.

<sup>39</sup> Receipt from H. Trulock Harris, 17 June 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,257/2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid; Martin, The Howth Gun-running, p. 53.

<sup>41</sup> C. Reid, ‘The Irish Party and the Volunteers: Politics and the Home Rule Army, 1913–1916’, in C. Nic Dháibhéid and C. Reid, eds, From Parnell to Paisley: Constitutional and Revolutionary Politics in Modern Ireland (Dublin, 2010), 41.

<sup>42</sup> T. Bowman, Carson’s Army: The Ulster Volunteer Force, 1910–22 (Manchester, 2007), p. 144. Also see J.A. Grant, Rulers, Guns, and Money: The Global Arms Trade in the Age of Imperialism (Cambridge, MA, 2007), p. 37.

running of April 1914 (which netted the UVF 25,000 rifles and three million rounds of ammunition), the weaponry secured by Redmond was meagre (even when the additional c.2,800 Italian rifles purchased the following month are factored in), when the IPP originally embarked on the acquisition of weapons for the Volunteers, it probably anticipated that the running of its guns would still have a very considerable political impact on the situation, given the absence otherwise of weapons in nationalist hands.

Originally, Tom Kettle, Willie Redmond, and Richard McGhee, MP, were tasked with organising the transportation of the Italian weapons from Belgium (in what, at the time, was an illegal operation owing to the government's arms proclamation prohibiting guns being brought into Ireland for military purposes being in force).<sup>43</sup> The plan was to land the weapons 'at a small harbour in West Cork' in early August, with Kettle (acting under the assumed name 'Kershaw'), McGhee, and Redmond travelling to Ostende in late July for this purpose. The gun merchant Henry Harris was – having concluded the 'transaction' with John Redmond in London – then to join the group in Belgium, with all of them then travelling to Antwerp together to charter a boat.<sup>44</sup>

Redmond seems to have had no prior knowledge of the landing of 1,500 rifles and 45,000 rounds at Howth on 26 July 1914. Notwithstanding the modesty of the arms and ammunition brought in, the subsequent events at Bachelors Walk helped steal much of the publicity that the Redmondites had anticipated that their own mission would garner. But what ultimately hampered the Party's gunrunning efforts was the deteriorating diplomatic position on the continent. Kettle, McGhee, and Willie Redmond seem to have got as far as Ostende,

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<sup>43</sup> Tom Kettle to Redmond, [before Aug. 10] 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,199/5; Kettle to Redmond, c. Aug. 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,199/5; Willie Redmond to J. J. Horgan, 31 Dec. 1914, NLI, Horgan Papers, Ms 18,269; The Times, 10 July 1889; FJ, 5 Oct. 1914.

<sup>44</sup> Horgan, Parnell to Pearse, p. 259; Tom Kettle (on House of Commons' notepaper) to unknown recipient, n.d., NLI, RP, Ms 15,199/6.

where they secured the weapons located there, but rather than proceeding to Antwerp as planned they were forced to hire a vessel (the L'Avenir) at Ostende. But even this plan had to be abandoned because they were 'not ... permitted to sail' by the Belgian authorities, who, having already moved to prevent the guns in Antwerp from being shipped, then blocked Kettle from transporting the rifles stored at Ostende.<sup>45</sup>

Confronted with Belgian intransigence, Kettle returned to London in early August and consulted John Redmond. Redmond's offer of the Volunteers as a home guard on 3 August led him to believe that the government would assist him. Notwithstanding later nationalist claims about the state placing obstacles in the way of Redmond's wartime policy, in the matter of the Italian rifles at least, His Majesty's ministers were most accommodating. That some form of understanding was in place even before the war broke out is suggested by the fact that the previous month Redmond had told his supporters on the Volunteer executive that in bringing the Italian guns into Ireland 'the government might relax the[ir] precautions so as to convenience us' (probably a reference to rescinding the arms proclamation).<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the fact that Kettle had 'practically to guarantee [the] absence of [British] gunboats' in order to win over the nervous crew of the L'Avenir at Ostende, also suggests that some form of official assistance may have been in place.

In the wake of Redmond's 3 August speech, the Party was able to call directly upon the assistance of the British Foreign Office. As such, though 'hamstrung by the war', Kettle remained confident that 'the things', as he called them, could still be brought into Ireland. On 3 August, he told Redmond that he had 'applied to have them carried at the expense of the [British] government', though he revealed that he had also been considering a contingency

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<sup>45</sup> Kettle to Redmond, 3 Aug. 1914, RP, NLI, Ms 15,199/6; Telegram marked 'Ostende' from Kettle, n.d., NLI, RP, Ms 15,199/6; Receipt, 22 Aug. 1914, RP, NLI, Ms 15,257/4; Horgan, Parnell to Pearse, p. 259.

<sup>46</sup> Martin, The Howth Gun-running, p. 54.

plan if the Party had to transport the guns itself, with a landing point somewhere off the Waterford coast now being considered (though even then Foreign Office contacts were to be used to secure a ‘suitable boat’ for the journey from Belgium).<sup>47</sup>

These lobbying efforts achieved some success. According to the post-war testimony of the Liberal under-secretary of state for foreign affairs at the time, F. D. Acland, on 8 August, John O’Connor, MP, ‘acting for John Redmond’, asked him to help export ‘some rifles’ to Ireland. Acland, having first secured ‘the express ... approval of Lord Kitchener’s staff at the War Office’, wrote to the British consul-general in Antwerp asking him to assist O’Connor and Henry Harris in arranging ‘for the shipment to Ireland of certain rifles belonging to the Irish National Volunteers’.<sup>48</sup> Precise figures as to how many rifles were ultimately secured do not exist, though later reports put the number at about 3,000.<sup>49</sup>

Under whose colours Redmond’s rifles finally left Belgium remains unclear, but his guns seem to have been eventually landed on or about the weekend of 22/23 August at the English Channel port of Folkestone, before being transported by train to Ireland.<sup>50</sup> As Maurice Moore related in 1938, the final stage was completed ‘by mail boat to Ireland via Holyhead and Dublin’. Whether, as Moore also asserted, the IPP actually had (or required) a ‘Foreign Office permit’, is unclear, though Redmond certainly intimated to the officials of the London & North Western Railway Company that ‘the War Office would bear the expense of conveyance to Dublin’ of the guns.<sup>51</sup> While this proved too much for the War Office (O’Connor reported being ‘laughed out of court’ when he sought to recover these expenses),

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<sup>47</sup> Kettle to Redmond, 3 Aug. 1914, RP, NLI, Ms 15,199/6.

<sup>48</sup> Western Times, 5 June 1922; Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, 27 May 1922.

<sup>49</sup> Fermanagh Times, 27 Aug. 1914.

<sup>50</sup> Burgess to Redmond, 26 Aug. 1914, MLI, RP, Ms 15,257/4; Bill from London and North Western Railway Company, 5 Nov. 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,257/5.

<sup>51</sup> Burgess to Redmond, 31 Aug. 1914, RP, NLI, Ms 15,257/4; 5 Nov. 1914, RP, NLI, Ms 15,257/5.



there seems little doubt that the Liberal government and the War Office were complicit in far more significant ways in the running of Redmond's guns than was realised at the time, or afterwards.<sup>52</sup> Liberal complicity may well have exceeded Conservative involvement in the earlier Larne gunrunning, though Acland's post-war claim that the Belgian government 'had no use for the rifles, as there was no ammunition for them' may help to explain why the government was seemingly so willing to assist in the arming of a private army.

Naturally, the IPP had no desire to publicise this fact, or the extent of the official assistance it had received. Consequently, it sought to '[c]amouflage' its activities, representing the operation as a secretive gun running one, in order to 'set off ... the old Provisional Committee's renown for the Howth landing'.<sup>53</sup> And in this, at least, it proved most successful.<sup>54</sup>

[LINE SPACE]

The covert assistance extended by the British government to the Irish Party in transporting its Italian rifles from Belgium to Ireland in August 1914 was clearly a direct result of John Redmond's coastal defence proposals of 3 August. And yet, when Redmond returned to Ireland and delivered his first public address since making his landmark speech in the House of Commons, his message seemed to be rather at odds with the interpretations angry separatists and 'crusted Tories' had initially placed on what they had taken to be a

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<sup>52</sup> John O'Connor to Burgess, 20 May 1915; 26 May 1915, in private hands.

<sup>53</sup> IP, 4 Feb. 1938.

<sup>54</sup> Separatists were mostly taken in by the party's subterfuge. See M. O'Rahilly, The Secret History of the Irish Volunteers (Dublin, 1915), p. 10; D. Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War (New York, 1928), p. 44; F.

O'Donoghue, Tomás MacCurtain: Soldier and Patriot (Tralee, 1955), p. 39; R. Monteith, Casement's Last Adventure (Chicago, 1932), pp. 29–31.

conciliatory gesture.<sup>55</sup> On 16 August 1914, at Maryborough (now Portlaoise), Co. Laois, Redmond announced for the first time that he had secured ‘several thousand ... rifles’ for the Volunteers; but rather than being for home defence, he stated that the guns would be used to assist the Party’s mission of ‘maintain[ing] the freedom and the rights ... of their nation’. While, Redmond insisted, they were ‘not drilling and arming to attack any body of their fellow-countrymen’, they would, nonetheless, ‘defend themselves if they were attacked’.<sup>56</sup>

Redmond had, of course, long been accused by his critics of ‘speaking with two voices ... on the question of Home Rule’ and it was surely the case that in a period of considerable uncertainty, he may well have wanted to reassure nationalists that the war had not altered his commitment to securing a Dublin parliament.<sup>57</sup> Nonetheless, there are solid grounds for believing that Redmond’s 3 August offer cannot be properly understood without reference to his speech at Maryborough. In short, Redmond’s proposal that the Volunteers become coastal defenders reflected, at least in part, his reassessment of the efficacy of paramilitarism in late July and early August 1914.

Ever since the autumn of 1913, elements within the British cabinet had been advancing exclusion schemes in an effort to placate militant Ulster unionists and their British allies.<sup>58</sup> Redmond had claimed that Asquith’s exclusion proposals of March 1914 were ‘the very extremist limit’ to which he could go; and yet, over the next six months, he was

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<sup>55</sup> R.F. Foster, Vivid Faces: The Revolutionary Generation in Ireland, 1890–1923 (London, 2014), p. 208; M. Brock and E. Brock, Margot Asquith’s Great War Diary, 1914–1916: The View from Downing Street (Oxford, 2014), p. 9.

<sup>56</sup> II, 17 Aug. 1914. The purchasing of these weapons may have been facilitated by Irish-Americans. See II, 8 July 1914.

<sup>57</sup> F.E. Smith, The ‘Two Voices’: Mr F. E. Smith Exposes John Redmond (London, 1911).

<sup>58</sup> McConnel, The Irish Parliamentary Party, pp. 269–96; M. Wheatley, Nationalism and the Irish Party: Provincial Ireland, 1910–1916 (Oxford, 2005), pp. 176–98.

repeatedly pressed to go even further.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, by late July, he had been forced to accept the ‘hateful expedient’ of agreeing to the exclusion of parts of Ulster without any fixed time period after which they would come under Dublin’s authority (hitherto an absolute condition for nationalists).<sup>60</sup> Though the war’s outbreak relieved Redmond of having to make this concession, the future of home rule remained in the balance during the early weeks of the war. In these circumstances, it seems that Redmond’s 3 August speech was at least partly motivated by his concerns about the resumption of the home rule crisis, after what he – like many others in early August – believed would be a relatively brief war. As such, Redmond came to the view that the creation of a credible paramilitary force would not only strengthen his ability to resist further concessions being imposed on nationalist Ireland but also provide a means to counter possible unionist resistance when the home rule act was eventually implemented.<sup>61</sup>

Redmond’s 3 August speech also indicates that he understood that the Volunteers’ military credibility could only be achieved with War Office assistance. In reaching this conclusion, it seems likely that he was influenced by several people, not least Maurice Moore. As far back as February 1914, Moore had proposed that by organising the Volunteers ‘for the defence of the soil of Ireland’ in the event of a German invasion, the force might thereby also prepare itself militarily to ensure that ‘a Unionist Government would [not] be in a position to repeal the Home Rule Bill’.<sup>62</sup> Unlike other senior Volunteers Moore’s military experience meant that he was grasped the limitations of a citizen militia to organise itself militarily. His proposal of spring 1914 to train and equip the Volunteers via the Territorial

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<sup>59</sup> Irish Examiner, 11 Mar. 1914.

<sup>60</sup> Meleady, John Redmond, p. 284.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301; J. Doherty, ‘The Liberals and the Irish Parliamentary Party, 1909–14’ (Ph.D Thesis, University of Southampton, 2014), 310.

<sup>62</sup> Irish Volunteer, 7 Feb. 1914.

Act also reflected this conclusion. Finally, in August 1914, when Redmond made his offer of coastal defence, Moore clearly apprehended that ‘the Volunteers were not then in a position to undertake the defence of anything’ on their own.<sup>63</sup> As one of Moore’s aides put it the same month, ‘[Moore] wants to have [no] more to do with the War Office than can be helped but [he] ... can’t see any way out of it’.<sup>64</sup>

Through Moore, and other such as Sir Horace Plunkett, Redmond clearly ‘grasp[ed] the essential conditions of efficiency for citizen armies of this kind’ (i.e. the necessity of War Office support).<sup>65</sup> In the light of the Party’s ongoing efforts to secure small numbers of old Italian rifles from the European arms market (now in any case closed), the prospect of acquiring some of the considerable number of surplus ‘old pattern’ British Army rifles which the Irish chief secretary, Augustine Birrell, advised Redmond were held in ‘military stores in Ireland’, was undoubtedly attractive.<sup>66</sup> Likewise, the provision of professional soldiers to train the Volunteers would more than offset the loss of the many reservist drill instructors who had returned to the colours at the war’s outbreak (something which an alarmed Moore had warned Redmond about in early August).<sup>67</sup>

But to organise the Volunteers into a ‘full-equipped National Guard of Ireland’, Redmond needed the co-operation not of Birrell, nor even of Asquith, but of Kitchener and the War Office.<sup>68</sup> Kitchener’s position has tended to be characterised in terms of an

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<sup>63</sup> IP, 9 Feb. 1938.

<sup>64</sup> Diarmuid Coffey to Cesca Chenevix Trench, 22 Aug. 1914, NLI, Diarmid Coffey Papers (hereafter cited as CP), Ms 46,305/3.

<sup>65</sup> Sir Horace Plunkett to Redmond, 8 Aug. 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,221.

<sup>66</sup> Redmond to H. H. Asquith, 8 Aug. 1914, cited in Denis Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond (London, 1932), p. 367.

<sup>67</sup> Maurice Moore to Redmond, 4 Aug. 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,205/7.

<sup>68</sup> Weekly Freeman’s Journal, 22 Aug. 1914.

uncompromising unwillingness to consider the Volunteers as a home guard. In fact, just as with the government's involvement with Redmond's rifles, the War Office's position regarding home defence was rather more complex than is often appreciated. That this was not evident to Redmond when he met Kitchener on 7 August to 'consult [him] ... with reference to the Nationalist Volunteers' probably reflects the fact that the Liberal chief whip, Percy Illingworth, had written to the new secretary of state for war in advance claiming that once home rule had been passed, Redmond 'will undertake that you will get 100,000 or 200,000 or more recruits from Ireland'.<sup>69</sup> Whether Redmond had stated matters quite so baldly to Illingworth is unclear, but even if he had, that he would not have wanted Kitchener to know this before negotiations had commenced, is suggested by the tone of their meeting. As Redmond told Asquith afterwards, '[Kitchener's] idea, apparently, is simply to appeal for recruits in Ireland, and to take no step with regard to the Volunteers as a defence force – at any rate for the present'.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, Kitchener told Redmond, 'Get me five thousand and I will say thank you ... Get me ten thousand and I will take off my hat to you.'<sup>71</sup>

In fact, while Kitchener certainly felt that the Volunteers would be a 'superfluous encumbrance' in terms of coastal defence, he also believed that an Irish paramilitary body 'outside the State's control' might well pose 'a danger'.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, he genuinely seems to have feared that arming the Volunteers might re-ignite pre-war political tensions, since he was convinced that recognising and training nationalist paramilitaries would exacerbate the shaky

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<sup>69</sup> Percy Illingworth to Herbert Kitchener, 7 Aug. 1914, TNA: PRO, Herbert Kitchener Papers (hereafter cited as KP), 30/57/60.

<sup>70</sup> Redmond to Asquith, 8 Aug. 1914, cited in J. P. Finnan, John Redmond and Irish Unity, 1912–1918 (Syracuse, NY, 2004), p. 91.

<sup>71</sup> Redmond to H. H. Asquith, 8 Aug. 1914, cited in Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, p. 366.

<sup>72</sup> Gwynn, John Redmond's Last Years, p. 139.

wartime truce in Ireland; that it might, indeed, ‘lead directly to civil war’ with the UVF.<sup>73</sup> In these circumstances, the War Office’s preferred solution (as a memorandum dating probably from August 1914 in the Kitchener papers makes clear) seems to have been to place both Volunteer organisations ‘under the direct control of the Army Council’ as a means of preparing them for ‘Home Defence’. Starting from the position that the usefulness of the Irish Volunteers at the time was ‘nil’, the memorandum proposed the formation of ‘County Volunteer Corps’, commanded by ‘local gentry’, with the subaltern officers coming from the Catholic population. Crucially, ‘[a]ll equipment, rifles, &c, should be the property of the War Department.’ Through such arrangements, the War Office believed that not only could civil order in Ireland be secured but also that recruiting for the regular army might thereby also be advanced, as once nationalist Volunteers ‘got a taste of soldiering and were imbued with a military spirit, [they] would drift into Line Regiments’.<sup>74</sup>

Such a level of War Office control would not have met Redmond’s needs, but other discussions in these weeks promised a more satisfactory basis for agreement. On 5 August, the ‘Dublin Military Authorities’ – via Sir Horace Plunkett – approached Maurice Moore to explore the practicalities of putting Redmond’s proposal into effect (Kitchener only being appointed secretary of state the following day). Moore met Sir Arthur Paget, the British Army’s general officer commanding in Ireland and the man at the centre of the earlier Curragh mutiny, on 7 August to discuss a set of proposals developed by Paget’s staff, apparently with the tacit approval of the government.<sup>75</sup> He proposed that 60,000 Volunteers would serve under the direction of the British Army’s commander in chief in Ireland for a period of twelve weeks. Paget’s scheme recognised the political sensitivities surrounding the

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<sup>73</sup> T.P. O’Connor to Redmond, 15 Feb. 1915, NLI, RP, Ms 15,215/2/A.

<sup>74</sup> Memorandum on Irish Volunteers, n.d., TNA: PRO, KP, PRO 30/57/60.

<sup>75</sup> Horace Plunkett’s Diary, 6 & 7 Aug. 1914, NLI, Horace Plunkett Papers, Ms 42,222; IP, 7 Feb. 1938.

Volunteers co-operating with the British Army, as it proposed that ‘Officers and NC Officers on [the] retired list would act as instructors’, with existing Volunteer officers ‘assist[ing] as far as possible in the work of training’ (the latter would also have the opportunity to attend ‘[s]pecial training schools’). At the end of this period, the men would be ‘allowed to retain their arms and personal equipment at a reasonable cost’ (with the government also selling the Volunteers some weapons directly).<sup>76</sup>

Paget’s scheme obviously met many of the political and military requirements of Moore’s earlier territorial plans far better than the War Office’s proposals. After all, just as Moore had earlier seen the Territorial Act as a means of countering a possible UVF mobilisation, so now did he see Paget’s proposals as an opportunity to ‘arm ... and train ... our forces, so that when the time comes again ... we shall be ... in a position to enforce respect for our [political] demands’.<sup>77</sup> But while Redmond, Dillon, and Joe Devlin ‘were in favour’ of Paget’s scheme when it was shared with them, Eoin MacNeill came to feel that Moore’s endorsement of it demonstrated his tendency to lose sight of nationalist priorities when considering ‘the purely military aspect of a matter’.<sup>78</sup> He and others on the Volunteer executive could not accept the level of British control entailed in Paget’s scheme and their amended counter-proposals were seemingly designed to ensure rejection by the War Office, since the ‘British were [now] expected to fund, feed and arm a Volunteer force with no guarantee as to its use, excepting the professed friendly intentions of its leadership’.<sup>79</sup>

At what point Kitchener was apprised of Paget’s negotiations is unclear, but as he stated to the cabinet on 12 and 14 August, he ‘thought recognition [of the Volunteers] should

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<sup>76</sup> B. Hobson, *A Short History of the Irish Volunteers, 1913–16* (Dublin, 1918), pp. 186–9.

<sup>77</sup> *IP*, 7 Feb. 1938.

<sup>78</sup> Hannon, ‘The Irish Volunteers’, 88.

<sup>79</sup> *IP*, 7 Feb.; 8 Feb. 1938; 9 Feb. 1938; Hannon, ‘The Irish Volunteers’, 90.

be the vehicle by which arrangement should be reached', i.e. 'the postponement of the Home Rule Bill'.<sup>80</sup> Asquith rejected this recommendation, but it reinforces the sense that Kitchener never had any real intention of establishing the Volunteers as a home guard unless foreign military service was acceded to. Redmond himself only realised this fact at the end of August after Lieutenant-General Bryan Mahon had been sent to Ireland to inspect the Volunteers.<sup>81</sup> Birrell had led Redmond to believe that Mahon's tour might yet facilitate the Volunteers becoming a home guard; Redmond told MacNeill on 25 August that Mahon might be able to persuade Kitchener to allow the Volunteers to become a 'Defence force' under 'some sort of joint control' while at the same time 'obtain[ing] ... a considerable number of arms for the general body of Volunteers, from the Government' (i.e. along the lines of the Paget scheme), thereby 'arming and drilling not only a Defence Force, but a large number outside that'.<sup>82</sup> But Mahon's mission was primarily to assess the Volunteers' willingness to enlist in the British Army, and any deal on home defence hinged on foreign service. Redmond's refusal in advance of the passage of home rule to endorse enlistment meant that, as Mahon's made clear to him, the War Office would never support the creation of an Irish home defence force.<sup>83</sup> When he returned to London, Mahon 'reported to Kitchener that he had failed in his mission.'<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> E. David, ed., Inside Asquith's Cabinet: From the Diaries of Charles Hobhouse (London, 1977), p. 166, 181.

<sup>81</sup> D. Howie and J. Howie, 'Irish Recruiting and the Home Rule Crisis of August–September 1914', in M. Dockrill and D. French, Strategy and Intelligence: British Policy during the First World War (London, 1996), pp. 17–18; Redmond to John Dillon, 13 Aug. 1914, Trinity College Dublin Archive, John Dillon Papers, Ms 6748/525.

<sup>82</sup> Redmond to MacNeill, 25 Aug. 1914, cited in Tierney, Eoin MacNeill, p. 149.

<sup>83</sup> Howie and Howie, 'Irish Recruiting and the Home Rule Crisis', p. 18.

<sup>84</sup> F.X. Martin, ed., The Irish Volunteers, 1913–1915: Recollections & Documents (1963, Dublin, 2013), p. 158.



While unwilling to endorse enlistment before home rule had been secured, Redmond (like Moore) was clearly willing to accept War Office control over some, if not all, of the Volunteers as the price for creating a militarily competent force. T. P. Gill, a former Parnellite MP, agreed. In an effort to overcome Kitchener's 'contempt and mistrust' of the Volunteers, Gill revived Moore's earlier scheme to regularise the organisation under the 1907 Territorial Act.<sup>85</sup> In Gill's proposals, this territorial force would be complemented by an 'Irish army Corps' for foreign service and together they would constitute 'an Irish Army'.<sup>86</sup> Having consulted Redmond, Gill placed his scheme before Winston Churchill at the Admiralty in early September, but to no avail.<sup>87</sup>

The arrival of Redmond's Italian rifles at this juncture not only underlined how weak the Volunteers were without state support, but may also have confirmed the War Office's fears about Redmond's ulterior motives vis-à-vis coastal defence. After all, approximately half the guns were immediately sent northwards and distributed among what the nationalist press tellingly described as 'first line troops' in early September.<sup>88</sup> But while the IPP's northern press organ the Irish News editorialised that Belfast's Irish Volunteers were now equipped with the 'weapons of a modern army', with the result that 'they are able to stand up now, rifle in hand, as equals with their friends of the Ulster Volunteers', the reality fell

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<sup>85</sup> Memorandum on Irish Volunteer Force (Territorial), n.d., NLI, T.P. Gill Papers (hereafter GP), Ms 13,486/9; Moore to T. P. Gill, 3 Sept. 1914, NLI, GP, Ms 13,486/11; Gill to Francis Hopwood, 9 Sept. 1914, NLI, GP, Ms 13,486/12.

<sup>86</sup> Memorandum on a Military Scheme, n.d., NLI, GP, Ms 13,486/12.

<sup>87</sup> Gill to Redmond, 12 Sept. 1914, NLI, GP, Ms 13,486/11; Gill to Hopwood, 9 Sept. 1914, NLI, GP, Ms 13,486/12.

<sup>88</sup> Burgess to Redmond, 31 Aug. 1914, RP, NLI, Ms 15,257/4; 5 Nov. 1914, RP, NLI, Ms 15,257/5; II, 3 Sept. 1914; Inspector General's report, Sept. 1914, PRO: TNA, CO 904/94; FJ, 3 Sept. 1914.

someway short of this.<sup>89</sup> Although Redmondites publicly dismissed separatist sneers that the Vetterlis were ‘antiques’ whose proper place was in a museum ‘near the bow-and-arrow and the flintlock musket’ (claiming instead that they were ‘thoroughly efficient and good weapon[s]’ that could be compared favourably to ‘the leading ones in [terms of] modern design’), Moore’s more measured judgement of them was that they were ‘heavy and cumbrous’ and too few in number.<sup>90</sup> In any case, nothing had changed since July 1914, when the Party’s initial efforts to send what guns it already held northwards had elicited from Moore the criticism that ‘[w]e are not and will not be in a position to resist an attack in the North and it [the sending of guns to Ulster] will be just handing the arms over to the Ulster men’.<sup>91</sup>

The refusal of the War Office to help turn the Volunteers into a credible paramilitary force meant that Redmond’s post-war contingency plans seemed to have reached a dead end by early September 1914. At Volunteer headquarters, Diarmid Coffey could not ‘see any way of making the Irish Volunteers any good unless we get help from the War Office and if the Irish Volunteers fail how can we insist on good terms in the amending bill?’ His colleague, Colonel Edmond Cotter (like Moore, a former professional soldier) was reportedly ‘very depressed’ because ‘when the war is over there will be a whole Ulster Division trained and we shan’t be trained or even organised.’<sup>92</sup> Cotter may well have conveyed this view to Joe Devlin when they met on 3 September to discuss the urgent need for a ‘coup d’etat’ against the founders of the Volunteers.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Irish News, 3 Sept. 1914.

<sup>90</sup> Eire-Ireland, 23 Nov. 1914. Also see Tyrone Constitution, 18 Sept. 1914; Mid-Ulster Mail, 26 Sept. 1914; Eire-Ireland, 26 Nov. 1914; IP, 4 Feb 1938.

<sup>91</sup> Moore to Edmond Cotter, 17 July 1914, NLI, MP, Ms 10,561/6.

<sup>92</sup> Coffey Diary, 10 Sept. 1914; 14 Sept. 1914, NLI, CP, Ms 46,308/3.

<sup>93</sup> Coffey Diary, 4 Sept. 1914, NLI, CP, Ms 46,308/3.

It is perhaps a measure of how desperate Redmond was by this time that he sanctioned a second gunrunning operation to import tens of thousands of weapons into Ireland from America. One of the Belgian gunrunners, Richard McGhee, was dispatched to the US in early September 1914 for this purpose. As he told one meeting of Irish-American sympathisers, any guns acquired could be used against invading Germans, though the implication of his statement that they could be used to ‘defend the country and freedom against attack from any direction’ would not have been lost on his audience.<sup>94</sup> But as one Irish-American source told Redmond later the same month, ‘there are no rifles of any kind to be had at present at any price’ in North America.<sup>95</sup>

The collapse of Redmond’s home defence plans in early September occurred at the same time as the outline of the eventual settlement of the home rule question came into focus (the enactment, suspension, and future amendment of the bill that was announced mid-month). But as Birrell warned Redmond on 8 September, it remained unclear ‘how far their [i.e. the unionists] fury would carry them ... When the war is over, Ulster will once again be found ready to exclude Home Rule by force from her boundaries’.<sup>96</sup> That this consideration was having some effect on Redmond is suggested by his response to Birrell on 9 September, in which he now asked only that the Volunteers be supplied with ‘a few instructors’ and ‘a few thousand rifles’ which the British Army would not need ‘because they are too old’, since these would ‘be quite suitable for making a beginning’ in terms of home defence.<sup>97</sup>

Arguably, the modesty of Redmond’s ambitions reflected the fact that he was in the process of coming to terms with the reality of a home rule ‘army’ without guns, officers,

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<sup>94</sup> Boston Daily Globe, 15 Sept. 1914; 18 Sept. 1914; 26 Sept. 1914.

<sup>95</sup> Patrick Egan to Redmond, 29 Sept. 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,236/5.

<sup>96</sup> Augustine Birrell to Redmond, 8 Sept. 1914, cited in Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, p. 379.

<sup>97</sup> Redmond to Birrell, 9 Sept. 1914, NLI, RP, Ms 15,169/4.

experienced NCOs, and soldiers (either because the most enthusiastic Volunteers were already enlisting or because there were signs that those who remained were increasingly alarmed by rumours that they might be dragooned en masse into the British Army).<sup>98</sup> As a result, Redmond reached the conclusion in early-to-mid September that the Volunteers could not make a significant contribution to the creation of a credible paramilitary force before war's end and the resumption of nationalist-unionist tensions that might follow.

It is these considerations that seem to have helped to determine Redmond's next step. When he declared on 17 September in favour of Irish enlistment in the British Army (in the certain knowledge that home rule was to be passed the following day), though he still paid lip service to the Volunteers being turned into a home guard, his claim that 'by the time the war ends Ireland will possess an army of which she may be proud' now rested on the success of the Irish 'brigade', or Irish army corps, which was the centrepiece of his statement.<sup>99</sup> And as he stated during his famous pro-war speech at Woodenbridge, Co. Wicklow, a few days later, 'it would be a disgrace for ever to our country and a reproach to her manhood ... if young Ireland confined their efforts to remaining at home to defend the shores of Ireland from an unlikely invasion'.

That the failure of Redmond's efforts to use the war to turn the Volunteers into a home rule defence force was an important reason behind his decision to endorse Irish enlistment in the British Army is set out clearly in a letter he wrote on 17 September 1914 – three days before Woodenbridge – to Michael J. Ryan, national president of the United Irish League of America.

I have made a claim that Irish recruits should be put into an Irish unit and should form

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<sup>98</sup> Wheatley, Nationalism and the Irish Party, pp. 213–18; Moore to Joe Devlin, 20 Sept. 1914, NLI, MP, Ms 10,561/8.

<sup>99</sup> II, 17 Sept. 1914.

an Irish brigade with Irish officers, and my hope and belief is that when the War is over we will then ourselves have a large Irish Army, consisting of those who have joined the Expeditionary Force and of those who have defended the country in the ranks of the Volunteers in Ireland.

Redmond went on to reiterate that ‘the only way in which we can make sure of arming and drilling properly a sufficient force to make it sure that at the end of the War we will have a real Irish Army is through the War Office and the British Army.’<sup>100</sup>

Redmond’s rationale for endorsing enlistment was in many respects the logical extension of Moore’s own reasoning vis-à-vis the Volunteers since at least spring 1914. Unlike many founding members of the Volunteers who broke with Redmond over his endorsement of enlistment, Moore had already overcome his reservations about War Office control by accepting, in principle, the Paget scheme in August 1914. But though he remained loyal to Redmond when the Volunteers split, he was unconvinced that the War Office had any more ‘intention to raise a ... national army in Ireland’ through Redmond’s Irish corps than it had when Redmond had first proposed that the Volunteers become a home guard.<sup>101</sup> Moore’s alternative policy was, however, simply to continue to pursue his territorial scheme (interviewing the Anglo-Irish general Lord Roberts to this end in mid-September); when this proved unsuccessful he too sought to arm the Volunteers privately (this time with captured German Mausers).<sup>102</sup> This not only proved a wild goose chase in itself but it also disregarded his own earlier conclusion that private armies ultimately required state-sponsorship to achieve military credibility. Indeed, Moore later returned once again to his territorial scheme

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<sup>100</sup> Redmond to Michael J. Ryan, 17 Sept. 1914, cited in Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, p. 417.

<sup>101</sup> Hannon, ‘The Irish Volunteers’, p. 115.

<sup>102</sup> Coffey Diary, 16 Sept. 1914; 19 Sept. 1914, NLI, CP, Ms 46,308/3.

when Mausers could not be secured.<sup>103</sup>

Redmond's belief that only the direct entry of nationalists into the British Army could now help build his defence force was strengthened by growing nationalist anxieties in the autumn of 1914 about the 36<sup>th</sup> (Ulster) Division. As he explained to Ryan in his letter of 17 September, the wartime service of the Ulster unionists in the British Army would likely considerably strengthen the UVF: 'You will easily understand what the position will be if, at the end of the War, Carson has even 10,000 or 12,000 thoroughly trained men who have seen war and we have nothing on our side except a lot of half-armed and half-disciplined Volunteers who have never seen any service.'<sup>104</sup>

This anxiety reflected the parallel wartime contingency planning of Ulster unionists themselves, since as Timothy Bowman has noted, Edward Carson was undoubtedly 'keen to preserve the UVF as a viable force, conscious that the Home Rule issue ... would be revisited when the war ended.'<sup>105</sup> In fact, the Ulster unionist decision of August 1914 to sanction UVF enlistment in the British Army (provided they served with a distinctive Ulster unit) was very much presented at the time as strengthening loyalism in advance of the resumption of post-war Irish hostilities. Carson told UVF members in early September 1914 that 'when you come back, you who go to the Front to serve your king and country, you will come back just as determined as you will find us at home'.<sup>106</sup> Privately, he urged on the commander of the

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<sup>103</sup> For the history of Moore's efforts to secure Mausers, see J. Fitzgerald Kenny to Moore, 24 Aug. 1914, NLI, MP, Ms 10,561/11; *National Volunteer*, 7 Nov. 1914; Moore to Devlin, 17 Dec. 1914, NLI, MP, Ms 10,561/8; Moore to 'Lord Mayor' (Lorcan Sherlock?), 25 Dec. 1914, University College Dublin Archive, Michael O'Rahilly Papers, P102/353; *National Volunteer*, 9 Jan. 1915; W. Melville to Moore, 20 Jan. 1915, NLI, MP, Ms 10,561/23; 'Memorandum on the Defence of Ireland, Sept. 1917, NLI, MP, Ms 49,803.

<sup>104</sup> Gwynn, *The Life of John Redmond*, p. 417.

<sup>105</sup> Bowman, *Carson's Army*, p. 166.

<sup>106</sup> Gwynn, *The Life of John Redmond*, p. 379.

UVF, Lieutenant-General Sir George Richardson, ‘the absolute urgency of keeping our Ulster Volunteers, so far as organisation is concerned, as perfect as possible’, because ‘the home rule bill has been placed on the statue books and will come into operation the moment the war is over [so] we must be in such a position as in a very brief time, to render ourselves effective against all attempts to force the bill upon us.’<sup>107</sup> For his part, Richardson, in a speech that alarmed many nationalists, declared: ‘When the war was over, and their 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.’<sup>108</sup>

Redmond’s concern about unionist plans to use the 36<sup>th</sup> (Ulster) Division as a training school for the UVF resonated with many nationalists and became a key element of the pro-war position in the eighteen months leading up to the Easter rising. Home rule newspapers, Nationalist MPs, and senior IPP politicians all sought to alert their supporters to the risks posed to self-government if they did not enlist and thereby prepare for a possible post-war confrontation.<sup>109</sup> As J. P. Hayden (a member of Redmond’s inner circle and one of only two MPs he had consulted before announcing his home defence policy on 3 August) told a meeting of Volunteers in October 1914, ‘when the war is over then Sir Edward Carson will be in possession of trained, drilled and equipped soldiers ready to menace the freedom which

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<sup>107</sup> Edward Carson to George Richardson, 19 May 1915, cited in D. Ferriter, A Nation and not a Rabble, p. 136.

<sup>108</sup> FJ, 26 Oct. 1914. Also see Meleady, John Redmond, p. 319.

<sup>109</sup> For example, see the employment of this analysis in Connacht Tribune, 19 Sept. 1914; 24 July 1915; Donegal News, 26 Sep. 1914; 24 Oct. 1914; 18 Sep. 1915; Fermanagh Herald, 7 Nov. 1914; 24 July 1915; FJ, 24 Aug. 1914; 25 Jan. 1915; 8 Mar. 1915; 27 May 1915; 4 Aug. 1915; II, 5 Oct. 1914; 26 Oct. 1914; Longford Leader, 14 Aug. 1915; 11 Sep. 1915; Nenagh Guardian, 14 Nov. 1914; Skibbereen Eagle, 23 Jan. 1915; 20 Mar. 1915; 10 Apr. 1915; Southern Star 10 Oct. 1914; 21 Nov. 1914; 3 Apr. 1915; Ulster Herald, 26 Sep. 1914; 10 Oct. 1914; 31 Oct. 1914; 24 July 1915; 21 Aug. 1915; Westmeath Examiner, 14 Aug. 1915.

we have gained for you'.<sup>110</sup> In private, T. P. O'Connor (the other MP Redmond had consulted on 3 August) pointed out to C. P. Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian, that Catholics were enlisting in large numbers in Belfast because Joe Devlin was telling them that the 'Covenanters' who had volunteered would return as trained soldiers and if nationalists were to 'hold their own', they 'must get trained too'.<sup>111</sup>

But it was John Dillon who in almost every major public speech he delivered in 1914 and 1915 emphasised that 'Sir Edward Carson was getting 15,000 or 20,000 of his men equipped, armed and turned into regular soldiers without expense to himself', 'a fact', he contended, 'which deserved the careful consideration of all men in Ireland'.<sup>112</sup> Dillon was convinced that 'when the war is over ... that section of the Irish nation that has done best on the battlefields of France will be the strongest in the struggle which may then be thrust upon us.' As such, the return of the '50,000 National Volunteers who have gone to the war' would, he claimed in 1915, mean that 'trained and gallant soldiers, many of them with high records of gallantry and skill ... will take their places again in the ranks'. As a result, in the 'final struggle' after the war, the Volunteers – 'stiffened' by these veterans – would be a 'deciding element'.<sup>113</sup>

[LINE SPACE]

The Easter rising illustrates the extent to which Redmond's efforts to build a home rule 'army' lay in disarray by the spring of 1916. A year earlier, on 4 April 1915, some 25,000 Irish National Volunteers had reportedly assembled in the Phoenix Park before parading through central Dublin. Amidst the enthusiastic press coverage for this carefully stage-managed display, at least one newspaper claimed that the principal object of the whole event

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<sup>110</sup> Roscommon Messenger, 17 Oct. 1914.

<sup>111</sup> T. Wilson, ed., The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott, 1911–1928 (Ithica, NY, 1970), p. 114.

<sup>112</sup> II, 5 Oct. 1914.

<sup>113</sup> FJ, 8 Mar. 1915; Skibbereen Eagle, 10 Apr. 1915; FJ, 4 Aug. 1915.



was really ‘to impress the Government with the strength of the Volunteer[s]’, in order to persuade the War Office to reconsider its opposition to the INV undertaking coastal defence duties.<sup>114</sup> Though Redmond drew attention to the fact that the parade would have been even larger but for the thousands of Volunteers who had already joined the colours, it seems that in light of modest recruiting figures (in the six months to February 1915 less than ten per cent of the INV had enlisted), the refusal of the War Office to sanction an Irish army unit, and the precipitous decline of the Volunteers in provincial Ireland, he returned once more to the question of home defence in the desperate hope of saving his plans for a post-war home rule military force.<sup>115</sup>

Given that Redmond’s renewed efforts in spring 1915 to persuade Kitchener of the merits of the Volunteers as a home guard were once again rebuffed, the prospects of pro-war nationalist plans being realised thereafter were slim to none.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, in the twelve months following the Phoenix Park review, provincial INV activity lapsed into ‘total insignificance’, while less than ten thousand more National Volunteers enlisted.<sup>117</sup> As a result, when the much-anticipated challenge to home rule finally came, the INV were in no position to respond to it. Of course, it came not after the war had been won, but – unexpectedly – while it was still being waged. And rather than the Ulster Volunteer Force,

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<sup>114</sup> II, 5 Apr. 1915.

<sup>115</sup> In February 1915, 12,595 Volunteers had enlisted from a peak Volunteer population of 191,539 in mid-September 1914. B. Mac Giolla Choille, ed., Intelligence Notes, 1913–1916: Preserved in the State Paper Office (Dublin, 1966), p. 175; P. Callan, ‘Recruiting for the British Army in Ireland during the First World War’, The Irish Sword, xvii (1987), 53; Wheatley, Nationalism and the Irish Party, p. 235.

<sup>116</sup> O’Connor to Redmond, 15 Feb. 1915, NLI, RP, Ms 15,215/2/A; Redmond to Birrell, 19 Apr. 1915, NLI, RP, Ms 15,169/4; Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, pp. 414–5.

<sup>117</sup> Callan, ‘Recruiting for the British Army in Ireland during the First World War’, 53; Wheatley, Nationalism and the Irish Party, p. 235.

the challenge came from the INV's erstwhile comrades, the MacNeillite Irish Volunteers. At Redmond's behest, INV units co-operated with the authorities during and after the 1916 Easter rising but the weakness of the organisation limited its operational usefulness. In counties Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Louth, Waterford, and Wexford, a small number of Redmondite Volunteers were sworn in as special constables (though their role was largely restricted to guarding public buildings), while offers of help were received – though not taken up – from the INV in counties Cork, Kerry, Mayo, Tipperary, and Waterford.

The weakness of the National Volunteers by April 1916 was further underlined by the fact that along with Mausers, Martini-Henrys, and Lee-Enfields, the British authorities confiscated a number of Italian-made Vetterli rifles from the captured insurgents.<sup>118</sup> This might seem odd, given that these same rebels had earlier rubbished Redmond's rifles, but this would be to forget the extent to which the masculinised discourse of the advanced section of the original movement fetishised guns, even, it turned out, old Italian ones.<sup>119</sup> Rifles were in such short supply that the minority MacNeillite Volunteers sought to wrest control of the Italian guns from the INV almost as soon as the paramilitary movement split in September 1914 (thereby lending credibility to Redmond's misgivings about arming southern Volunteers).<sup>120</sup>

But while the presence of these Italian rifles in the arsenal of the Irish republic further underscores the ultimate failure of Redmond's efforts to build a home rule defence force in advance of home rule, that they existed at all speaks to the fact that the IPP's attitude towards paramilitarism during these years was far more complex than historians have acknowledged.

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<sup>118</sup> F. McGarry, *The Rising: Easter 1916* (Oxford, 2010), p. 176; 'Topical Budget', 17 May 1916, NTB 247-1, Imperial War Museum Film Archive.

<sup>119</sup> Kelly, *The Fenian Ideal*, pp. 219–20.

<sup>120</sup> NAI, BMH, WS, 16, Riobárd Langford; 147, Bernard McAllister; 158, Seamus Kenny; 161, Donal O'Hannigan; 224, John Shields; 225, Michael McDonnell; *Fermanagh Times*, 26 Nov. 1914.

As with advanced nationalists and militant unionists, home rulers were not untouched by the militarist turn Irish politics took in the years between 1912 and 1914. The IPP may have been forced against its better judgement to develop an ad hoc doctrine of armed constitutionalism, but it nonetheless sought to adapt to the new realities of Irish politics because it recognised the shortcomings of its existing parliamentary tactics. As Dillon pointed out in 1915, ‘we learned the lesson last year – even the oldest of us Irish politicians, that sometimes ... eloquence and speechmaking, organisation and peaceable demonstrations, are not the last word in an argument’.<sup>121</sup>

Of course, in repositioning itself in this way, the IPP did not concede that its overall strategy had been found wanting. After all, the Volunteers were never regarded by the Party as the embodiment of the state itself (as some advanced nationalists saw the organisation and as many in the later IRA regarded themselves). Instead, the creation of this force was presented as the first institution to be created by the Irish state to be, reflecting Ireland’s ‘new legal status’ following home rule’s enactment and suspension (though the force was also privately recognised as potentially vital to the actual achievement of the state).<sup>122</sup> To this end, as this article has shown, Redmond tried initially to persuade the War office to train and equip his embryonic army by offering the Volunteers for coastal defence. The War’s Office’s refusal to sanction service on these terms eventually prompted him to authorise a further scheme to acquire weapons privately. The failure of this mission, alongside the rapid loss of momentum among provincial Volunteer units (now denuded of their military advisers), led Redmond to re-think his methods, though not his overall aims. In the end, military competition with the UVF proved decisive in convincing Redmond of the necessity of nationalist enlistment in the British Army, as only through foreign service could home rulers

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<sup>121</sup> Southern Star, 10 Apr. 1915.

<sup>122</sup> Kelly, The Fenian Ideal, p. 212; Gwynn, John Redmond’s Last Years, p. 182.

acquire training and combat experience to meet the possibility of unionist opposition at war's end.

And yet, for all Redmond's concern about the possibility of what Churchill called a 'bloody peace', neither Redmond nor his senior colleagues appear to have ever seriously considered the military options that would be available to their private army once it existed. This may well have reflected Redmond and other senior nationalists 'lamentable ignorance of military matters', as well as the dearth of experienced military advisers.<sup>123</sup> But it surely also reflects – as with other aspects of policy towards Ulster – nationalist unwillingness to engage in a serious, systematic, and sustained way with the challenges posed by the north of Ireland vis-à-vis home rule.

All that being said, the rallying of more experienced military men to the pre-war UVF, as well as its acquisition of many more weapons, did not mean that loyalist tactical planning was very much more sophisticated, while its larger arsenal certainly did not prevent the UVF's wartime decline.<sup>124</sup> Nor, as one authority has noted, did the determination of elements within the minority MacNeillite Volunteers to organise an insurrection after 1914 mean that they developed a plan that was necessarily 'intelligible, or militarily speaking intelligent'.<sup>125</sup> By comparison, Redmond's efforts to use War Office logistical support and training as a 'force multiplier' to transform the Volunteers into a home rule army were, I would argue, a reasonable plan of action in the circumstances. Likewise, his subsequent decision to try to build an army within an army was also credible, since the acquisition of military expertise by minority groups in the forces of stronger powers was a tactic also

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<sup>123</sup> Irish Examiner, 26 Sept. 1914.

<sup>124</sup> Bowman, Carson's Army, pp. 92, 94, 100, 105, 167.

<sup>125</sup> F.X. Martin, 'The 1916 Rising – A Coup D'état or a "Bloody Protest"?', Studia Hibernica, viii (1968), p. 110; Townshend, Easter 1916, p. 111.

adopted by others in this period (Roger Casement, for example, sought to create an Irish ‘brigade’ within the German army during the same war).<sup>126</sup> That this aspect of Redmond’s plan was sound in principle is suggested by the fact that the war did ultimately produce a generation of Irish soldiers with combat experience; though when these volunteers returned to Ireland after 1918, it was the ranks of the new National Army, not Redmond’s home rule defence force, that they swelled when the Irish Free State had to fight its own internal enemies after 1922.<sup>127</sup>

As such, Redmond’s real problem was less his limitations as an armchair general, than the fact that – pending the implementation of self-government – he was also an armchair prime minister. The achievement of his plans rested entirely on the willingness of a hostile War Office to co-operate and the preparedness of the amateur citizen soldiers of the Volunteers to recognise his (moral) authority. The former helped thwart Redmond’s plans for the Volunteers (whether as a home guard or as an Irish army unit), while not enough of the latter agreed that in fighting the kaiser at the front they would be helping to defeat ‘King Carson’ at home after the war. In these circumstances, Redmond’s efforts to adopt a policy of armed constitutionalism unravelled faster than the contingencies he sought to prepare for materialised. Nonetheless, that he attempted to build an ‘army’ at all suggests that perceptions of Redmond as ‘too much a romantic commonwealth man, too much a genuine

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<sup>126</sup> R. Dorries, Prelude to the Easter Rising: Sir Roger Casement in Imperial Germany (London, 2000), pp. 52–3; A. Mitchell, Casement (London, 2004), p. 105. For other examples, see K. Elst, The Saffron Swastika: The Notion of ‘Hindu Fascism’ (2 vols, New Delhi, 2001), i, p. 471; Y. Oron, The Banality of Indifference: Zionism and the Armenian Genocide (Piscataway, NJ, 2009), p. 66; D. Sharfman, Palestine in the Second World War: Strategic Plans and Political Dilemmas (Eastbourne, 2014), p. 55.

<sup>127</sup> P. Cottrell, The Irish Civil War, 1922–23 (Oxford, 2008), p. 23. Also see P. Taylor, Heroes or Traitors?: Experiences of Southern Irish Soldiers Returning from the Great War, 1919–1939 (Liverpool, 2015).

Westminster parliamentarian' unable to 'grasp the function of force' need to be rethought.<sup>128</sup>

Instead, Redmond and his supporters endeavoured to adapt to developments in extra-parliamentary politics in these years, believing as they did that regardless of how much '[t]he whole map of Europe ... changed' as a result of the world war then raging, 'the dreary steeple of Fermanagh and Tyrone' would still have to be fought over at war's end.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Lee, Ireland, 1912–1985, p. 17.

<sup>129</sup> For a recent discussion of this theme see R. Fanning, Fatal Path: British Government and Irish Revolution, 1910–1922 (London, 2013).