Home Rule and Unionism

1. Parnell and Home Rule
   a. Parnell manages to unite radical Fenians, peasants, and conservative Catholic clergy
      i. 1880s American Clan na Gael (Fenians) re-institute violent campaign
      ii. 1881, Land League outlawed by Gladstone; Parnell happy with that,
      iii. 1884/5, Parnell’s Home Rule Party gets 85 MPs
      iv. Gladstone’s Home Rule Bill of 1886, however, a two-edged sword
   b. Fall of Parnell
      i. attack on Parnell in The Times, victory
      ii. 1889, Capt. William O’Shea, erstwhile friend and Home Rule MP, sues for divorce
      iii. 1891 by-elections: Parnellites against new Home Rulers
      iv. 1893, 2nd bill passed in commons, defeated in Lords

2. The Situation circa 1900
   a. Gladstone Liberals: Rebuilding
      i. Fight for the Succession
      ii. 1899 Boer War nadir
         (1) Lloyd George outspoke against
         (2) Revived from 1900-1902
   b. Irish National Party
      i. Decline in 1890s with Parnell’s fall
      ii. Rebirth with Redmond circa 1898
   c. Unionists
      i. In Ulster, a separate Irishness?
         (1) Orange Societies expand dramatically in 1880s
      ii. In Britain
         (1) Constructive Unionism
         (2) 1890s and British racialism
         (3) British imperialist/protectionist vision circa 1900
   d. Cultural and Political Nationalists
      i. Irish-Ireland
         (1) Yeats and cultural nationalism
         (2) Gaelic League and Gaelic Athletic Association
         (3) Problem for Home Rulers seeking a united Ireland is that Irish Nationalism increasingly a Catholic nationalism
      ii. Sinn Fein
         (1) Arthur Griffith and Sinn Fein, 1898, est. 1905 as an organization
         (2) Relations with radical republicans and trade unions
         (3) Not politically successful before 1914

3. Home Rule and Britain, early 20th century
   a. 1906 Liberal landslide (majority of over 200) means don’t need Irish Home Rulers
      i. sop of devolution (1907) a Council of elected and appointed representatives offered
         (1) Redmond and the H.R. convention reject it.
      ii. massive Liberal welfare initiatives in Britain and Ireland
      iii. Conservatives seek anything to stop Liberals
         (1) turn to encouraging Unionist violence
         (2) and use of Lords
   b. 1910 elections, Liberal majority of 2 then even
      i. depend on Labour Party and Home Rule Party for majority
      ii. concessions to Labour and Home Rulers means Home Rule
      iii. Parliament Act of 1911, new voters, but House of Lords absolute veto now curtailed
         (1) (monetary vs. non-monetary matters)
4. **Home Rule and Prospect of Civil War**
   a. **1912, Home Rule: what would it mean?**
      i. elected lower house, appointed upper; nationalist and unionist Irish MPs remain at Westminster; retain the RIC for six years, no religious legislation
      ii. Sir Edward Carson and Irish Unionists reject,
         1. 470,000+ sign “solemn league and covenant” to defeat Home Rule “all means...necessary”
         2. Carson heads Ulster Unionist Council
         3. supported by the *Times* and Conservatives
   b. **Redmond and acceptance of six year vote for 4 northern counties on Home Rule**
      i. understood that Home Rule would mean division
         1. but 4 better than 6, better than 9
      ii. Sinn Fein would later claim that division was a sellout
         1. but perhaps all that could be achieved
         2. [Neither Home Rulers nor Nationalists really have a solution to Ulster question]
   c. **Organizing to fight**
      i. Ulster Volunteers (created Jan. 1913)
         1. early 1914, Volunteers bring in 20,000 rifles and ammunition from Germany despite 1913 ban
         2. Some 90,000 members
      ii. IRB creates Irish Volunteers, Nov. 1913
         1. by May 1914 100,000 members; by September 180,000
         2. Irish National Volunteers attempt to bring in some 1500 rifles and ammunition
      iii. On eve of WWI, British Government realizes an Irish Civil War could envelop all of the B.E.F.

5. **Home Rule and WWI**
   a. **Aug. 1914, Redmond commits Irish Volunteers to join with Ulster Volunteers**
      i. moment of unity in Westminster
      ii. but no unity from common war experience
         1. (Ulster allowed distinctive insignia/badges, not Home Rule Irish)
   b. **Blood sacrifice: from initial enthusiasm to disenchantment to large-scale resistance to conscription**
      i. Aug. 1915: 132,454 Irish in British Army (77,511 Catholics, 52,943 Protestants)
         1. by April 1916: 150,183
      ii. sad state of hundreds of thousands of Irishmen who had volunteered to serve in British Army, only to return in 1918 to a changed Ireland: never recognized as returning war heroes
         1. as one Home Ruler noted of is service: after Easter 1916, while the rebels would “go down in history as heroes and martyrs, I will go down—if I go down at all—as a bloody British officer.”
         2. just now being studied
   c. **pro-Germanism of Roger Casement and others**
      i. revolutionaries will look for German aid
         1. “Ireland’s opportunity is England’s adversity.”
         2. anti-conscription feeling grows as war goes on
   d. **Home Rule passes Commons and receives royal assent 14 Sept. 1914**
      i. Immediately followed by suspension