

# KEY STAGE 3: FROM ULSTER TO NORTHERN IRELAND, 1600–1925 UNIT 3: 1914–1918

#### UNIT DESCRIPTION

The activities in this unit aim to help pupils learn about and evaluate the importance of this crucial historical period in the process leading to partition and the creation of Northern Ireland:

- The Great War
- The Easter Rising 1916
- The General Election 1918

This unit will introduce pupils to how the Great War, the Easter Rising and the General Election of December 1918 affected Ireland. The postponement of the Third Home Rule Act in September 1914, with some form of exclusion of Ulster, had left Ireland's constitutional position in limbo for as long as the war lasted. The Easter Rising of 1916 had serious consequences for both nationalism and unionism, and the war dragged on after it for another two-and-a-half years.

Pupils will discuss and evaluate how the General Election of 1918, which was held in Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom a month after the Armistice of 11 November, altered the balance of power in nationalism and in the House of Commons at Westminster. Next, pupils will explore how the War, the Rising, and the election outcome had a profound effect on Ulster.

#### **UNIT INTENTIONS**

#### Pupils will:

- 1. Discuss the events of 1914–1918 in Ireland, focusing on how they affected the constitutional position of Ireland as it had been left in September 1914.
- 2. Explain how developments during the War transformed nationalism in Ireland and left Ulster unionists even more determined to remain outside the jurisdiction of any government based in Dublin.
- 3. Demonstrate an understanding of the changes which took place during the period 1914-1918 through the use of digital media.

#### **UNIT OUTCOMES**

#### Pupils will:

- Be able to discuss how historical developments 1914–1918 created further divisions in Ulster and in Ireland.
- Employ ICT skills to express an understanding of the topic.

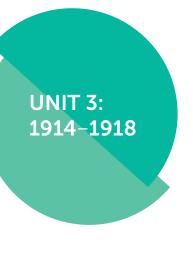
### HANDOUTS AND GUIDES

**SOFTWARE** 

#### **HARDWARE**

- Key Information
- Task Sheet
- Audio Editing software, such as Audacity
- Timeline Software, such as Tiki-Toki
- Whiteboard
- PCs/Laptops









#### **ACTIVITY**

#### Starter

Starter – Play <u>Resource 1: Ireland</u> <u>1912–1916: An Animated History</u> from Home Rule to Easter Rising

This animated video provides pupils with an excellent outline of the key events from 1912 to 1916.

Using the Key Information, teachers will have a choice of activities to engage pupils.

Teachers may choose to split the class into groups and ask pupils to use the discussion points to discuss some aspects of the Key Information. Pupils will then share their discussions with the rest of the class.

Alternatively, teachers may want to use the Questions/Tasks as group discussion questions or to test individual knowledge.

The Alternative Task allows pupils to work in groups to research and discuss the question 'In what ways did the British government damage the IPP, as well as its own policy of Home Rule for Ireland, in the period 1914–1918?'

If possible, allow pupils to research the topic on the internet – see Suggested Additional Resources or search online.

Plenary – discuss with pupils whether the events of the period 1914–1918 might have contributed to the reasons why Ireland was partitioned and Northern Ireland was created in 1921.

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This animated video will introduce pupils in a clear and accessible way to the issues surrounding Home Rule and unionist opposition, the outbreak of war, and the significance of the Easter Rising.

The Key Information is designed to cover the information within the topic and meet the learning objectives.

The discussion questions on the Key Information are designed to meet the learning objectives through interaction and Q & A.

The questions on the Task Sheet are designed to meet the learning objectives through the pupils' understanding and application of the information.

The various activities should allow the pupils to learn while they interact. The activities will also serve to reinforce knowledge and encourage discussion.

The plenary discussion will focus on how developments in the period 1914–1918 are relevant in a study of why the exclusion of six counties of Ulster from Home Rule became more likely by December 1918.



# **Key Information**

### A. The Great War

After Britain declared war on Germany in August 1914, thousands of Irishmen responded to the speeches made by Sir Edward Carson, the leader of Ulster unionism, and John Redmond, the leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, which was the largest nationalist party in Ireland. Their speeches urged their supporters to volunteer to join the British army.

Redmond was determined to prove to the British government that Irish nationalists were loyal to the British Empire in a time of crisis. He believed that a Home Rule Ireland should remain part of the Empire and the United Kingdom.

Carson was a committed unionist and believer in Empire and was keen to prove that, even though Ulster unionists had opposed the Liberal government's Home Rule policy by threatening force, Ulster unionists were completely loyal to the British Crown and Empire.

#### Carson

In response to Carson and other Ulster unionist leaders, 46,000 Protestants from Ulster volunteered. Many members of the Ulster Volunteer Force joined what became the 36th (Ulster) Division and were sent to France in the autumn of 1915 after intensive training in Ulster and England.



36th Ulster Division marching in Belfast

One of their first major tasks was to play a key role in the attempt to break the stalemate on the Western Front at the River Somme in France.



When the time came to advance at 7.30am on 1 July 1916, it soon became clear to the men of the 36th (Ulster) Division that their German opposition had not been as damaged by the heavy shelling of their trenches as they had been led to believe. As the Ulstermen made their way towards the German lines, shells, grenades and machine-gun fire met them head- on. The survivors of this first 'big push' on 1 July remembered the terrible sight of watching comrades getting stuck in barbed wire, leaving them as sitting targets for the German machine gunners, while others were killed by grenade blasts and injured by shrapnel.



The Attack of the Ulster Division - Beadle's painting of The Ulster Division at the Somme

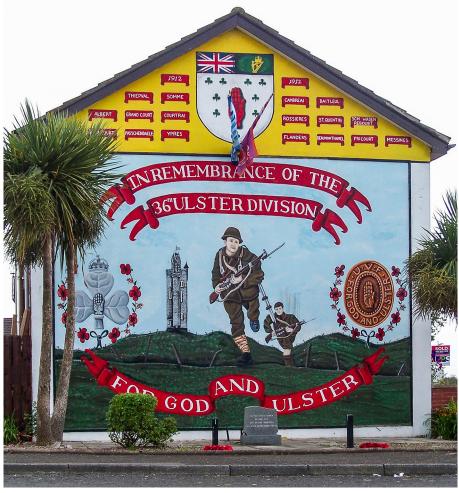
On the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 1 July 1916, at least 2000 men of the 36th (Ulster) Division were killed. Altogether, about 5500 members of the Division were killed, injured or missing (half of its total numbers and almost 10% of total British casualties.) Many more casualties were to follow.



36th Ulster Division Mural



The bravery of the 36th (Ulster) Division was recognised during the war by the awarding of nine Victoria Crosses to its members. Their bravery is also remembered today through memorials, murals and commemorations.



36th Division Somme Mural

Legends about some men of the 36th going out of the trenches, 'over the top' and into the German machine-gun fire, singing Orange songs and wearing their Orange sashes, have been a large part of the unionist identity since 1916.

This sacrifice of the pre-war UVF has been interpreted as proof of the loyalty of Ulster unionists to the British Crown and Empire.

There is no doubt that in the years after the war there was a very strong feeling among unionists in Ulster that the British government owed them a debt. This feeling was shared by a number of leading Conservatives at Westminster – a factor of great importance when Irish policy was being determined in the period 1919–1921.



Somme Orange Banner

'In the years after the partition of Ireland in 1921 stories about the Somme would contribute to a unionist sense of identity in the new state of Northern Ireland.'

Philip Orr, Historian.



#### Redmond

Redmond had taken over the leadership of a nationalist Irish Volunteer Force in July 1914. The force had been set up in November 1913 to demonstrate to the British government that nationalists throughout Ireland were as determined to have Home Rule as the Ulster Volunteers were to stop it. After war was declared, Redmond called for them to join the army, and many thousands did. From Ulster, about 17,000 Catholics joined in the period 1914–1918, with 64,607 joining from Ireland as a whole. Many served in the 16th (Irish) Division. This division was almost a mirror image of the 36th, since it was recruited mainly from the ranks of the Irish Volunteers.



16th Irish Division (above and below)

After the horrific losses in the 36th (Ulster) Division on the first day, the majority of Irishmen who fought during what remained of the Battle of the Somme were members of this 16th (Irish) Division. The 16th was not involved in the first day of the Somme, but its soldiers are remembered for their part in the battles for Guillemont and Ginchy between the third and ninth of September, 1916. The Division played a significant role in capturing the towns but suffered a large number of casualties. Between the first and tenth of September, the division lost 4,090 men and 224 officers.

'I saw Irishmen of the north and south forget their age-long differences and fight side by side, giving their lives freely for the common cause.'

Marshal Ferdinand Foch, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in the war, speaking in 1928.



As the war dragged on for more years than most people expected, the number of volunteers from Ireland diminished in 1917 and 1918; but much had happened on the island to change the political climate by the end of the war in November 1918.



### B. The Easter Rising 1916

In Unit 2, the section on nationalism in the 19th century covered revolutionary nationalists, particularly the Fenian Brotherhood, otherwise known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). After the Rising of 1867, the IRB had faded in significance, but it was reorganised in the early years of the new century. As it became clear throughout 1913 and 1914 that war between the British Empire and Germany was likely, the IRB saw the chance to plan a Rising based on Wolfe Tone's slogan from the 1790s, when Britain was at war with France:

#### 'England's danger is Ireland's opportunity.'

In September 1914, when Redmond ordered his Irish Volunteers to join the British army, they split into two groups. The IRB controlled the smaller group that refused Redmond's orders. The IRB and these Volunteers were part of the Easter Rising of 1916, which was condemned by Redmond. The executions of the seven leaders (Pearse, Connolly, Plunkett, Clarke, Ceannt, McDermott and McDonagh), and eight others, had a massive impact on public opinion in Ireland.



Remembering 1916

Within two and a half years, Redmond's IPP had lost most of their support.

A large majority of nationalists had supported the IPP for decades and this had remained the case up to 1916, even after two years of war and increasing Irish casualties. However, Redmond's difficulties during the Home Rule crisis 1910–1914 had damaged him in the eyes of some nationalists, particularly his acceptance of some form of Ulster exclusion in March 1914.

The executed leaders of the Rising became heroes in the eyes of most Irish people very quickly.







1916 Mural

The British government had made the mistake of calling the Rising the 'Sinn Féin Rising', even though Griffith's party had no part in organising it, and at that stage were not even in favour of an Irish Republic. Yet the party benefitted from this mistake as sympathy for the rebels grew, and Sinn Féin became very popular. They became a separatist party, believing that Ireland should have a government completely separate from Great Britain: in other words, an Irish Republic.

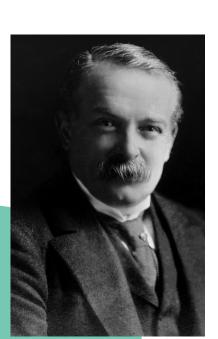
Ulster unionists, as well as many British people, saw the Easter Rising very differently – they viewed it as a betrayal of the Empire in a time of war. Their determination to stay apart from a Home Rule Ireland was strengthened:

'Both nationalists and unionists became separatist in their own way. The Easter Rising reinforced that separatism among Ulster unionists, and it also reinforced their militancy.'

Professor Graham Walker, Queen's University Belfast







David Hovd George

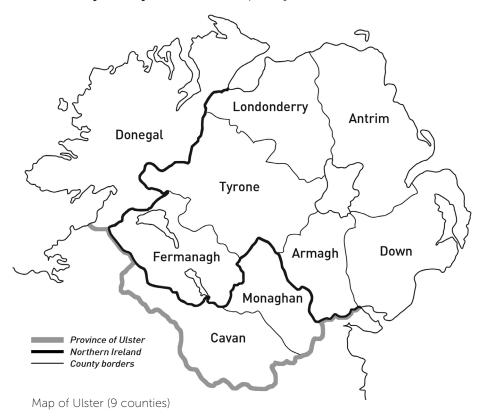
### C. The General Election of 1918

# 1. The Lloyd George talks 1916: a further step towards exclusion of Ulster

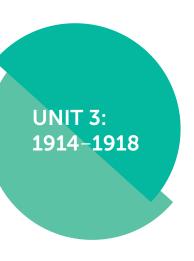
In the weeks after the Easter Rising and the executions of its leaders, the British government realised that its policy of Home Rule for Ireland was in trouble. To stop support growing for an Irish Republic, it would need to show that the two-year delay in Home Rule was nearly over. For this reason, the leading Liberal David Lloyd George held a series of talks with Redmond and Carson from May to July 1916, to try to solve the problems which had caused deadlock in 1914.

He was particularly keen to achieve a settlement in Ireland because he knew that the Somme Offensive on the Western Front was due to start in a few weeks.

The principle of exclusion of at least part of Ulster from Home Rule was still the basis for discussion. In separate talks with each leader, Lloyd George persuaded Redmond to accept the exclusion from Home Rule of six of the nine Ulster counties (Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone) on a temporary basis.



Redmond had only accepted the principle of excluding **four** Ulster counties temporarily in March 1914.



Lloyd George persuaded Carson to accept this six-county exclusion on the understanding that it would be permanent: the only way that Carson and James Craig could accept it.

This piece of trickery showed Lloyd George's desperation to get some form of settlement to stop the progress of more extreme nationalists like Sinn Féin. When a southern unionist leader revealed that Redmond and Carson had come away from their talks with the British politician with completely different conclusions, the talks collapsed. Nothing had been achieved, except even deeper distrust of British politicians by Irish unionist and nationalist leaders.

Before the collapse of the talks, Carson and Craig had managed to persuade Ulster unionists from the three other Ulster counties of **Cavan**, **Monaghan and Donegal** that, even though they were seemingly being abandoned by their six-county colleagues, it was only for the purposes of negotiation. The minority of unionists in each of these three counties were relieved when the talks broke down and the deal was off. But the same problem was to arise again for them in 1920, without such a satisfactory outcome.

Redmond and his party were severely damaged by what he seemed to have agreed to with Lloyd George in 1916. His agreement to a temporary four-county exclusion in 1914 had been bad enough for Ulster nationalists, but at least Catholics were in a minority in the four counties of Antrim, Armagh, Down and Londonderry. Catholics/Nationalists were a majority in both Tyrone and Fermanagh, yet it seemed that Redmond was now abandoning them also to further British rule. There was great anger among many northern nationalists, including leading figures in the Catholic Church, who were normally fully behind Redmond and Joseph Devlin.

Redmond, deeply angry also, told the House of Commons in July 1916 that:

'The consequences in Ireland of these talks will only be to shatter any faith in constitutional methods and to increase the mounting sympathy with the recent rising'.

It seemed that, yet again, the IPP leadership had been outmanoeuvred by the unionists and the British. The Irish Convention of 1917–1918 was another attempt by the British to revive their Home Rule policy in Ireland by asking Irish political leaders to sort matters out for themselves, but it failed. Redmond died in March 1918, but later that year his successor, John Dillon, said that the 1916 talks:

"... struck us a deadly blow and since then the party has been going downhill at an ever-faster pace".





#### 2 The General Election results

This 'deadly blow' was shown in the results in Ireland of the General Election of December 1918. The IPP, who had won about 80 seats in 1910, went down to only six, including four in Ulster; and even these four seats were due to a pact with Sinn Féin, organised by leading Catholic clerics. It seemed as if constitutional nationalism had been almost destroyed. The Irish News in Belfast, a long-time supporter of the IPP, reported sadly that:

'... the Irish Parliamentary Party founded by Parnell has practically disappeared'.

Sinn Féin had not stood in the 1910 elections but had won some byelections in 1917 and 1918. They won 73 seats in the Westminster House of Commons in the General Election but they rejected Britain's right to rule in Ireland and refused to attend; this policy of abstention remains to this day. **Éamon de Valera** had succeeded Arthur Griffith as leader in October 1917 and the party had become republican at that time, so it was very clear that most Irish nationalist people wanted a change from the IPP's policies and tactics. Unionists won 22 seats in Ulster.



Éamon de Valera



# **Perspectives**

The war gave a boost to a more extreme form of

Dr Russell Rees

Enthusiasm and trust in Redmond is dead as far as the mass of the people is concerned.

IPP deputy leader John Dillon

The failure to win even a limited form of Home Rule before the war discredited the IPP and led to its eclipse by a new generation of nationalists.

Professor Patrick Buckland

The Easter Rising created some of the conditions for the death of the IPP and the failure of the Lloyd George talks was a defining moment in this process.

Professor Alvin Jackson

By the end of 1918, Sinn Féin seemed to have almost universal support.

Professor David Fitzpatrick

The 1918 general election result completely transformed the face of Irish politics.

Professor F.S.L. Lyons

# Questions

1. Explain why both John Redmond and Sir Edward Carson told their supporters to join the British army in 1914. 2.
Explain why the 36th
(Ulster) Division suffered
so many casualties on
the first day of the
Battle of the
Somme.

Explain how the exclusion offer Redmond agreed to in 1916 was different from the one he had accepted in March 1914.

Explain why the Irish Volunteers were set up in November 1913.

## **Extension Activity**

Imagine you are an IPP voter and supporter living in Tyrone or Fermanagh in December 1918. Write a letter to the Irish News, the pro-IPP nationalist newspaper in Ulster, explaining why you will be voting for Sinn Féin and not the IPP in the upcoming General Election.



Get into pairs, and use the evidence in the Key Information as well as your own research to write two letters:

- One person will write a letter to the Belfast Telegraph, a unionist newspaper at the time. The letter will be from a Protestant former UVF soldier in the 36th (Ulster) Division who has survived the Somme. He is writing in September 1916 to explain his feelings about the Easter Rising when he heard about it on returning to Ulster after the battle.
- The other person should write a letter to the Irish News, a nationalist newspaper, by a Catholic Irish Volunteer. He has fought in the 16th (Irish) Division at the Somme and is outlining his feelings about the Easter Rising.

You will each read your letter to the class, and they will then decide which is the most realistic.









#### **Alternative Task**

• Get into groups. Using the evidence in this unit, your own research, and the information found on the Perspectives page, try to answer this question:

'In what ways did the British government damage the IPP, as well as its own policy of Home Rule for Ireland, in the period 1914-1918?'

Write your answers on the Task Sheet, which should be printed.

- In your groups, decide how to gather the evidence to answer these questions:
  - Decide which British actions and policies damaged the IPP, and decide which British actions and policies damaged the policy of Home Rule. Are the two lists identical?
  - Which political party and which people took advantage of British mistakes?
- Once your group has done the research, you must all agree on an answer. One pupil from each group can then share the conclusions you have reached together with the class.
- Next, each group should try to consider whether the events of the period 1914–1918 might have contributed to the reasons why Ireland was partitioned and Northern Ireland was created in 1921.

The following additional resources may be useful for this research task.

### **Suggested Additional Resources**

Resource 1: <u>Ireland 1912-1916</u>: An Animated <u>History from Home Rule to Easter Rising</u>

**Resource 2:** BBC Newsnight clip on <u>The Easter</u> <u>Rising Centenary</u>

**Resource 3:** Success Then Tragedy: The 36th Ulster Division at the Somme with Dan Snow

Resource 4: <u>Ulster, the Somme and Northern</u> <u>Ireland's 'Creation Myth'</u>, by Dr Timothy Bowman

Resource 5: Carson's Army: The Story of the 36th (Ulster) Division, by Philip Orr

Resource 6: <u>Countess Markiewicz Sinn Féin:</u> the only woman returned in the 1918 General <u>Election</u> (silent Pathé News footage)

Resource 7: Account of William McFadzean,
Belfast man who won the Victoria Cross

Resource 8: <u>BBC NI Year '21 podcast episode</u> 6: The Priest Hunter, on Joseph Devlin

Also, see the CCEA website <u>Understanding</u> <u>1916</u> for much more information on the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme.

# Digital Task 1 Audio Editing Task



#### TASK DESCRIPTION

Pretend that the year is 1966, the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

- In this task, you will work in pairs to script, record and edit a radio interview with a Catholic man from Belfast in his 70s named Michael. One of you will imagine you are Michael, while the other will be the reporter asking him questions.
- Michael's story:
  - Michael joined the 16th (Irish) Division in the British army in October 1914.
  - He did so because John Redmond's speeches had given him the message that if thousands of Irish men joined the army, then the British government could not deny Home Rule for the whole island of Ireland, with **no** exclusion of Ulster.
  - Michael has fought at the Somme and many other battles. He survived the war, unlike most of his friends who had volunteered.
- Research the topic together by looking at news reports, videos, eyewitness accounts, and so on. Your script will detail Michael's feelings **now** about his decision to volunteer. Does he feel that it was all worthwhile?
- Write and record the script based on the information you have researched for a radio interview between a reporter and Michael. Your recording will be at least **one minute** long.

#### **PLAN**

Teacher: Give the pupils search terms to source appropriate information such as appropriate images, videos, and news articles online. Ask them to consider the reliability and objectivity of the information that they have found.

- In pairs, source information online and use it to help you to write your scripts.
- Identify and select the material you wish to use and save it appropriately in a dedicated folder with a meaningful filename. This may be images, or quotes that have helped you to write your script.
- Keep an account of the sites you have visited in a saved document.

#### DO

Teacher: Encourage pupils to consider the feelings of the interviewee involved. Ask them to consider how valid their information in the broadcast is. Remind pupils that, although they can experiment with the effects of Audacity, they should also consider whether these effects are necessary or appropriate. Also, remind pupils to save their work in a dedicated folder with an appropriate filename.

- Use the record function on the audio editing software (such as Audacity) to record your script and use the various editing tools to edit your recording (for example, Selection tool, Time Shift tool, Trim, or Silence). When you have edited the recording, complete the audio file by exporting it in a file format (WAV/MP3).
- Save your work in a dedicated folder with an appropriate filename.

#### **REVIEW**

Teacher: Give pupils the opportunity to view each other's work and discuss the choices they have made. You can do this by playing back the best work, or pupils may circulate the room listening to the work of others. Taking other pupils' feedback into account, ask them to justify their choices and decisions, including any difficulties they encountered when creating their audio file. Pupils may complete this in the form of a saved document.

• Review each other's work. Discuss the choices you have made, and why.

# Digital Task 2 Timeline Task



#### TASK DESCRIPTION

- Use Tiki-Toki web-based digital timeline software (or similar) to design a timeline showing the pivotal events of the period 1914–1918 in Ireland.
- Your timeline should have at least **eight** entries and a background image. Each entry should have a date, and a short summary of the event.

#### **PLAN**

Teacher: Give the pupils search terms to source appropriate information from the internet. Ask them to consider the reliability and objectivity of the information that they have found.

- Identify and select which text to use and save it appropriately in a dedicated folder with a meaningful filename.
- Keep an account of the sites you have visited in a saved document.
- Use the images and information you have sourced to create your digital timeline.

#### DO

Teacher: Remind pupils to save their timelines as they progress.

- Log into your Tiki-Toki accounts. Begin to create your timeline.
- Using the information you have sourced, insert at least eight entries into your timeline.

#### **REVIEW**

Teacher: Give pupils the opportunity to view each other's work. You can do this by displaying the best work on the whiteboard, or students may circulate the room. Taking other pupils' feedback into account, ask them to justify their choices and decisions, including any difficulties they encountered when creating their timeline. Pupils may complete this in the form of a saved document.

• Review each other's work. Discuss the choices you have made, and why.



# Task Sheet

'In what ways did the British government damage the IPP, as well as its own policy of Home Rule for Ireland, in the period 1914–1918?'
Which British actions and policies damaged the IPP?
Which british actions and policies damaged the IFF:
Which British actions and policies damaged the policy of Home Rule? Are these two lists identical?
Which political party took advantage of British mistakes? How did it do this?
Did the events of the period 1914–1918 contribute to the reasons why Ireland was partitioned and Northern Ireland was created in 1921? If so, why?



# Copyright

Page 1:

British troops manhandling a field gun, World War 1

Credit: Photos.com/Getty Images Plus

Page 3:

36th Ulster Division marching in Belfast

Credit: Crown Copyright

Page 4:

Beadle's painting of The Ulster Division at the Somme

Credit: This painting is reproduced by the kind permission of

Belfast City Council. The original can be viewed at City Hall, Belfast

36th Ulster Division Mural

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36th Division Somme Mural

Credit: Stephan Barnes/Northern Ireland News/Alamy Stock Photo

Somme Orange Banner

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Both Images: 16th Irish Division Credit: Crown Copyright

Page 7:

Remembering 1916: Easter Rising Leaders Credit: Radharc Images/Alamy Stock Photo

Page 8: 1916 Mural

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Map of Ulster (9 counties) Credit: CCEA Copyright

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Éamon de Valera Credit: Public Domain

Westminster House of Commons

Credit: eddygaleotti/istock/Getty Images Plus

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