

THESIS
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**THE NORTHERN IRA AND THE EARLY YEARS OF
PARTITION 1920-22**

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy of the
University of Stirling.

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DECEMBER 2003

2003

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ABSTRACT

The years 1920-22 constituted a period of unprecedented conflict and political change in Ireland. It began with the onset of the most brutal phase of the War of Independence and culminated in the effective military defeat of the Republican IRA in the Civil War. Occurring alongside these dramatic changes in the south and west of Ireland was a far more fundamental conflict in the north-east; a period of brutal sectarian violence which marked the early years of partition and the establishment of Northern Ireland. Almost uniquely the IRA in the six counties were involved in every one of these conflicts and yet it can be argued was on the fringes of all of them. The period 1920-22 saw the evolution of the organisation from a peripheral curiosity during the War of independence to an idealistic symbol for those wishing to resolve the fundamental divisions within the Sinn Fein movement which developed in the first six months of 1922. The story of the Northern IRA's collapse in the autumn of that year demonstrated dramatically the true nature of the organisation and how it was their relationship to the various protagonists in these conflicts, rather than their unceasing but fruitless war against partition, that defined its contribution to the Irish revolution.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, and that the work which it embodies has been done by myself and has not been included in another thesis.

SIGNED

DECEMBER 2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My warmest thanks go first of all to my research supervisor Michael Hopkinson without whose help and support this thesis would never have been written. Numerous other individuals have contributed both ideas and material to my research over the past three years and I would particularly like to thank Eamon Phoenix and Jim McDermott for their kind help and hospitality. The staffs of the various archives I have worked in have been unfailingly supportive and accommodating, as have those in the University of Stirling library and in the Faculty of Arts Office. I would also like to thank the staff and research students of the Department of History at Stirling who have given me both encouragement and support over the past three years.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	aide-de-camp
Adj.	Adjutant
AOH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
ASU	Active Service Unit
Bde.	Brigade
BMH	Bureau of Military History
Bn.	Battalion
Brig. Gen.	Brigadier General
C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief
Col.	Colonel
Comdt.	Commandant
C/S	Chief of Staff
Coy.	Company
D/Int.	Director of Intelligence
D/I	District Inspector
D/Org.	Director of Organisation
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
IO	Intelligence Officer
IPP	Irish Parliamentary Party
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
ITGWU	Irish Transport and General Workers Union
NA	National Archives (Dublin)
NLI	National Library of Ireland
O/C	Officer Commanding
PRO	Public Record Office (London)
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
QM	Quartermaster
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
TD	Teachta Dala (Dail Deputy)
UCDAD	University College Dublin Archives Department
UIL	United Irish League
USC	Ulster Special Constabulary

CHRONOLOGY

1920

<i>January</i>	Municipal elections. Nationalists win control of Derry council and a number of other urban authorities.
<i>25 February</i>	(Better) Government of Ireland bill introduced in the Commons with provision for partition of Ireland.
<i>April</i>	IRA launch attacks on tax offices and unoccupied police barracks across the six counties.
<i>June</i>	Rural county elections. Nationalists win control of Tyrone, Fermanagh, South Down and South Armagh
<i>13-25 June</i>	Sectarian violence breaks out in Derry.
<i>17 July</i>	Colonel G. F. Smyth (RIC Divisional Commissioner for Munster) shot dead in Cork.
<i>21 July</i>	'Shipyard expulsions' begin after Smyth's funeral in Banbridge. Catholic workers expelled from shipyards and engineering works. Rioting follows in Belfast, Banbridge and Dromore.
<i>6 August</i>	'Belfast Boycott' inaugurated by Dail in response to shipyard expulsions.
<i>22 August</i>	D.I. Swanzy shot dead in Lisburn. Catholics attacked in Lisburn, many flee to Dundalk.
<i>1 November</i>	Recruitment begins for the Ulster Special Constabulary.
<i>23 November</i>	(Better) Government of Ireland Bill enacted.

1921

<i>24 May</i>	Ulster Unionists win resounding victory in elections to new Northern Ireland parliament.
<i>7 June</i>	James Craig elected as first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.
<i>22 June</i>	King George V opens Northern Ireland parliament.
<i>11 June</i>	Truce implemented.
<i>July</i>	Attempt to immobilise USC after Truce resisted by the Unionists. British Government relents (USC remobilised September 1921).
<i>16 August</i>	Second Dail convened by Sinn Fein in Dublin.
<i>22 November</i>	Control of policing in Northern Ireland transferred to Unionist government. Sectarian clashes follow in Belfast.
<i>6 December</i>	Anglo-Irish Treaty signed in London.

1922

<i>January</i>	Michael Collins sets up Northern Military 'Ulster Council' under Frank Aiken.
<i>7 January</i>	Treaty narrowly approved by Dail.
<i>14 January</i>	Provisional Government appointed under Collins in tandem with new Dail Ministry under Griffith. 'Monaghan Footballers' arrested in Dromore.
<i>21 January</i>	First Craig-Collins pact agreed.
<i>8 February</i>	Over forty unionists in Tyrone and Fermanagh kidnapped by IRA in retaliation for arrest of 'Monaghan Footballers'.
<i>11 February</i>	Gun battle between IRA and USC at Clones railway station.
<i>13-15 February</i>	'Clones Affray' leads to savage violence in Belfast.
<i>16 February</i>	British government set up Border Commission.

<i>14 March</i>	Sir Henry Wilson appointed as Military Adviser to the Northern Ireland government.
<i>18 March</i>	St. Mary's Hall in Belfast raided by Specials.
<i>24 March</i>	MacMahon murders in Belfast.
<i>26 March</i>	Army Convention establishes anti-Treaty Executive in defiance of Provisional Government Army leadership under Mulcahy.
<i>30 March</i>	Second Craig-Collins Pact agreed.
<i>1 April</i>	Arnon Street murders.
<i>7 April</i>	Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Bill introduced by Northern Ireland government with provision for internment without trial.
<i>14 April</i>	Republican IRA faction under Rory O'Connor establishes HQ in the Four Courts, Dublin.
<i>2 May</i>	2 nd Northern Division begin planned offensive with attacks on barracks in Londonderry and Tyrone (6 RIC and Specials killed over next few days).
<i>18 May</i>	IRA attack on Musgrave Street Barracks in Belfast.
<i>19 May</i>	3 rd Northern Division begin their offensive operations in east Ulster. Planned attacks called off in Armagh and South Down.
<i>20 May</i>	Collins and deValera sign electoral pact to maintain balance of parties in second Dail at forthcoming election.
<i>22 May</i>	Unionist MP William Twaddell shot dead in Belfast. Unionist government introduces internment.
<i>28 May</i>	Fighting begins around Belleek and Pettigo.
<i>1 June</i>	RUC takes over responsibility for policing in Northern Ireland,
<i>3 June</i>	British Army expel IRA from Belleek- Pettigo triangle.
<i>June</i>	Stephen Tallents arrives in Belfast to report for the British Government.
<i>16 June</i>	Pro- Treaty candidates win majority in election for provisional parliament in Southern Ireland.
<i>17 June</i>	IRA attacks on Protestant farms at Altnaveigh.
<i>22 June</i>	Sir Henry Wilson shot dead in London.
<i>28 June</i>	Provisional Government Army attack Republican garrison in the Four Courts initiating the Civil War.
<i>16 July</i>	Provisional Government Army units seize Dundalk.
<i>2 August</i>	GHQ meeting with Northern IRA officers at Portobello Barracks.
<i>14 August</i>	Frank Aiken leads attack to retake Dundalk.
<i>19 August</i>	Provisional Government Cabinet officially adopts a 'peace policy' in regard to 'North -East Ulster'.
<i>22 August</i>	Michael Collins killed in ambush in West Cork.
<i>11 September</i>	Proportional Representation abolished for local elections in Northern Ireland.
<i>November</i>	Ernie O'Malley finally orders Republicans to evacuate Donegal.
<i>7 December</i>	Northern Ireland parliament votes to opt out of the Irish Free State.

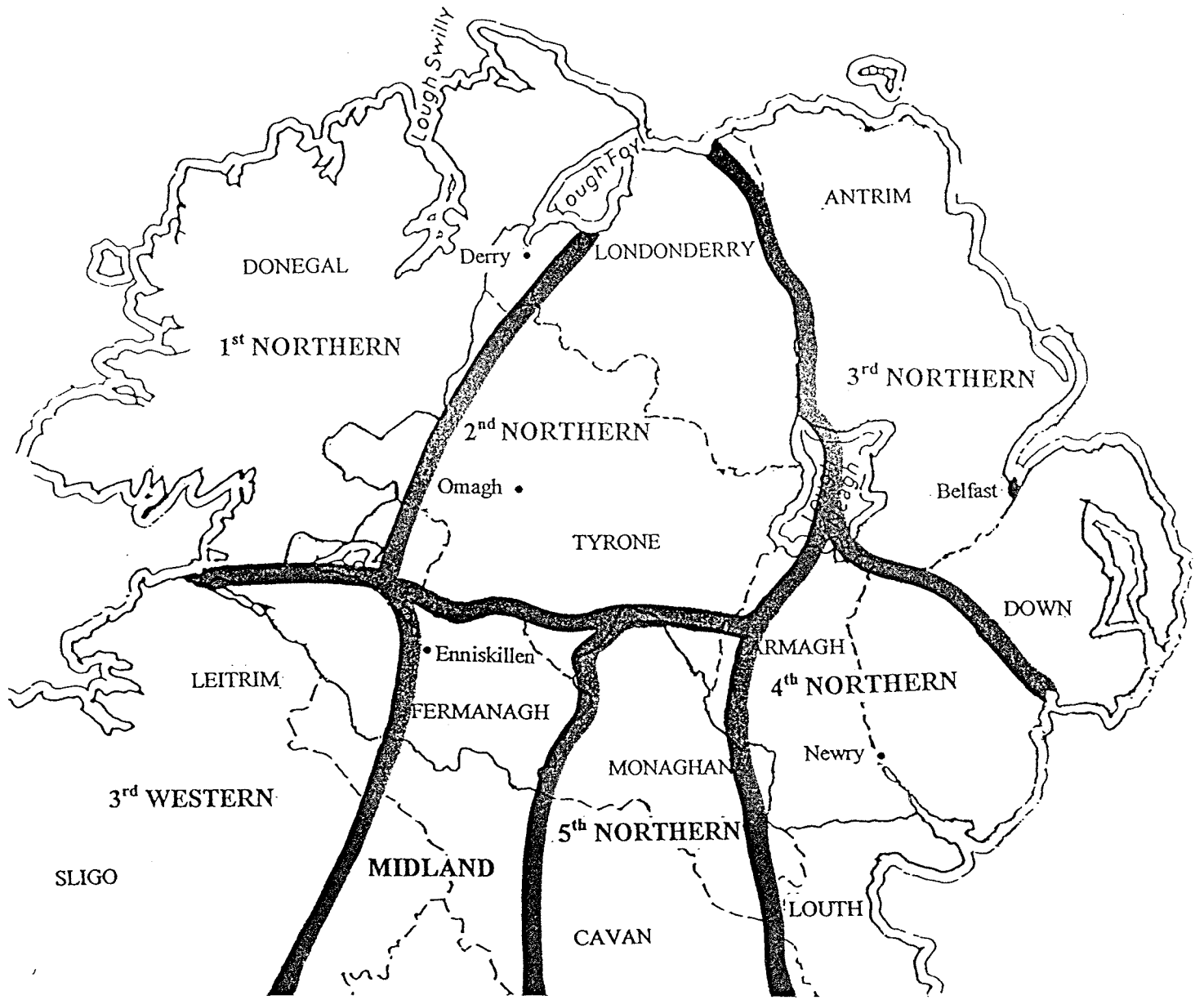
1923

<i>March</i>	Seventeen Republicans killed 'clearing mines' in Kerry.
<i>10 April</i>	Liam Lynch shot dead in the Knockmealdown mountains on the border between Tipperary and Waterford.
<i>27 April</i>	Republican offensive suspended by new Chief of Staff, Frank Aiken.

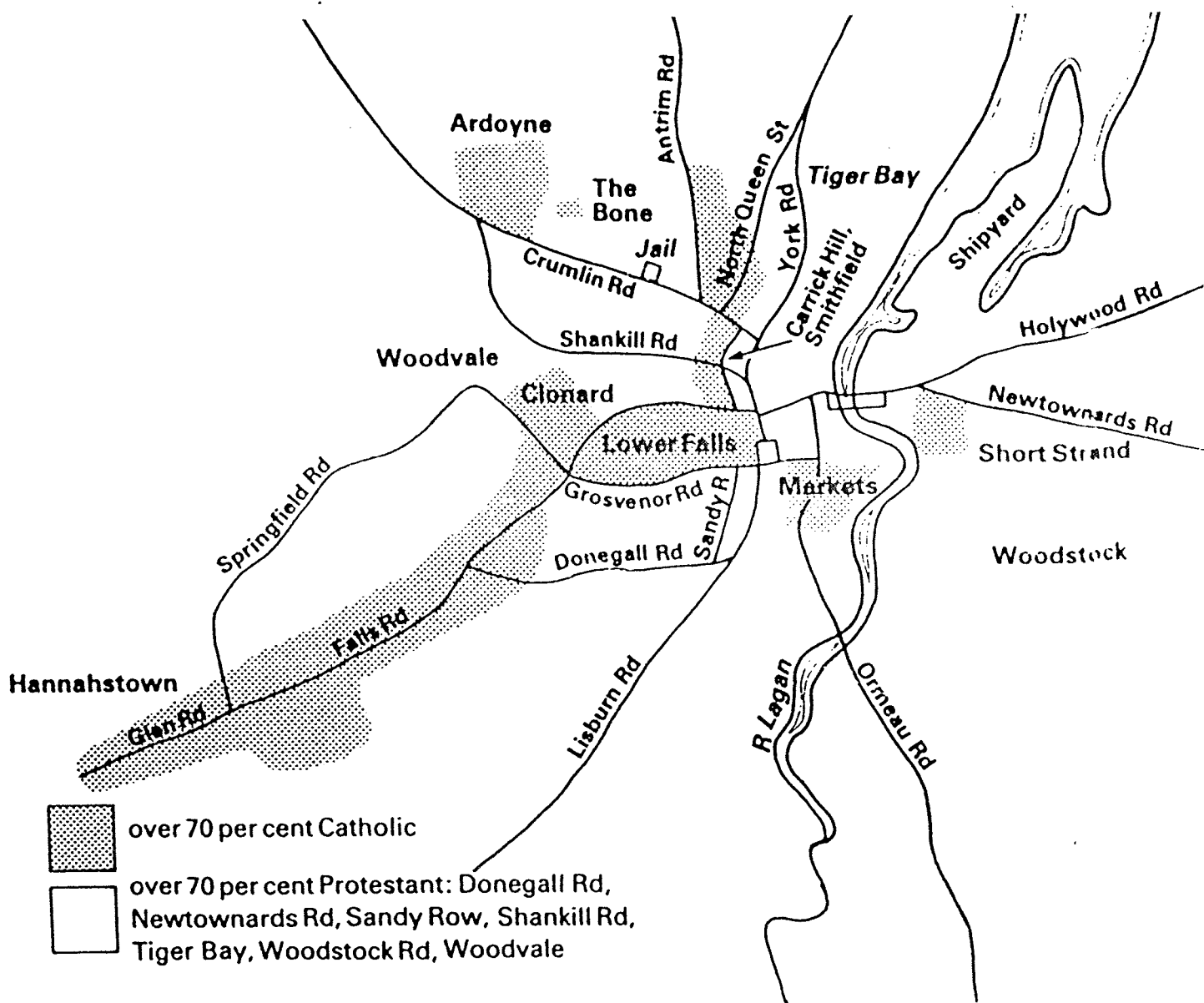
MAPS



Map of Ulster showing majority Catholic areas in Northern Ireland and places mentioned in the text



I.R.A. Divisional areas in Ulster March 1921-August 1922



Map of Belfast showing majority Catholic areas

INTRODUCTION

The Irish War of Independence and its aftermath has long been a fertile period for Irish historical writing. This brutal, although heavily localised conflict which saw the IRA pitted against the security forces of the British government has inspired both popular mythology and weighty academic monographs. From the political manoeuvrings at Westminster to the squalid realities of revolution in the Irish localities the period still retains a strong grip on the historical imagination. Ironically however one of the most important end results of this conflict, the partition of Ireland into two new self-governing administrations, has received only limited attention from historians. Indeed the events of the revolutionary period in the north-east of Ireland have themselves been similarly underplayed despite the fact that by any measure this was a serious, if not defining, aspect of the conflict.

Even a cursory examination of the period demonstrates that the subject of Ulster's role in the revolution is far more than an historical curiosity. In the two years running roughly from June 1920 to June 1922 what became the province of Northern Ireland was engulfed in brutal and vicious sectarian violence, most of it confined to Belfast. It is estimated that around 550 people lost their lives in this short period due to politically inspired violence. A comparison with the past thirty years of conflict in the North where approximately 3000 people have died, the victims of much more destructive modern weaponry, highlights the intense brutality of this earlier period. It is also

comparable to other parts of Ireland during the revolutionary period itself with Belfast suffering a proportionally higher loss of life than even the most violent counties in Munster.¹

As such this thesis is inspired by what is an obvious historical question. Obvious because with the importance of partition in the current political landscape, and also perhaps in the agendas of present-minded historians, not to mention the huge impact that the past thirty years have had on Irish historical writing itself, it seems natural to ask what role militant republicanism played in opposing Northern Ireland at the time of its creation, a time when it was evidently at its most vulnerable.²

With this obvious connection in mind it may be expected that such a question would have received extensive attention from historians. However, this is not the case. In fact it is arguable that not only the Northern IRA but also the minority Catholic population as a whole have, until relatively recently, been very much the forgotten people of Irish history. While historians such as Eamon Phoenix and Marianne Elliott have done much to address this anomaly the story of the IRA in

¹ G.B. Kenna (Father John Hassan) *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom* (O'Connell, Dublin, 1922) pp.101-112. See also P.Hart *The IRA and its Enemies: Violence and Community in Cork 1916-23* (Oxford, 1998) p.50.

² For an analysis of the effects of the Northern Irish 'Troubles' on Irish historical writing see D.G. Boyce, 'Past and Present: Revisionism and the Northern Ireland Troubles' in D.G. Boyce and A. O'Day (eds.), *The Making of Modern Irish History: Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy* (Routledge, 1996) pp.216-235.

the six counties still requires further attention.³ The pioneering work of Michael Hopkinson and Tim Pat Coogan, whilst providing excellent accounts of the period, form only part of studies whose main focus lies elsewhere. More recently Jim McDermott has made a significant contribution to the study of the IRA in Belfast between 1920-22 although there still exists no dedicated work on the activities of the organisation in the rest of Northern Ireland.⁴ The current trend in Irish historical writing towards local and county studies, typified in the work of Peter Hart, Marie Coleman, Joost Augusteijn and Michael Farry, has yet to have made any impact on the six counties.⁵ With so many of these studies now complete, and many more on the way, this historiographical gap becomes ever more noticeable and the reasons for its existence less and less sustainable. As such this thesis will attempt to demonstrate that not only is the subject of the Northern IRA itself an important and interesting one but also that the reasons for its neglect are similarly enlightening.

Perhaps the most fundamental reason for this neglect has been due to the psychological impact of the past thirty years of political upheaval in Northern Ireland. The sheer length and immediacy of the recent

³ E. Phoenix, *Northern Nationalism: Nationalist Politics, Partition and the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland 1890-1940* (Belfast, 1994); M. Elliott, *The Catholics of Ulster: A History* (London 2000).

⁴ M.A. Hopkinson *Green Against Green: The Irish Civil War* (Dublin, 1988); T.P. Coogan *Michael Collins* (London, 1991); J. McDermott *Northern Divisions: The Old IRA and the Belfast Pogroms 1920-22* (Belfast, 2001).

⁵ See P. Hart, *The IRA and its Enemies*; M. Farry, *The Aftermath of Revolution: Sligo 1921-23* (Dublin, 2000); J. Augusteijn, *From Public Defiance to Guerrilla Warfare* (Dublin, 1996); M. Coleman, *County Longford and the Irish Revolution, 1910-1923* (Dublin, 2002). See also David Fitzpatrick's seminal

conflict has relegated earlier periods of violence in Ulster to the position of mere dress-rehearsals for the main event taking place in the present. They are the unfinished battles of the past now finally reaching their conclusion in the modern era. Such attitudes have meant that the role of the north-east in the Irish revolution is extremely ill defined. Vague or emotive phrases such as the 'Troubles' or the 'Belfast Pogrom' have been employed to describe what is an extremely complex set of historical events with distinct phases of development. This failure to adequately define the period has been reinforced by a distinct possessiveness of the events of the revolutionary period on the part of Southern nationalists, typified by the employment of an identical nomenclature for the various phases of the conflict on both sides of the border. Thus, for example, the Truce period running from July-December 1921 is applied to the six counties despite the fact that more people were killed in Belfast during the last five months of the year than in the first seven.⁶

The context of the recent 'Troubles' in the north-east has also meant that any historical subject which involves a link between the IRA and Northern Ireland will almost inevitably be an extremely sensitive one. This has been demonstrated markedly by the lack of substantial historical sources for the period. Archival material, such as that now

study of County Clare, *Politics and Irish Life 1913-1921: Provincial Experience of War and Revolution* (Dublin, 1977).

⁶ Between 1 January and 11 July 1921 52 people were killed in Belfast compared to 71 between 11 July and 6 December. See Kenna *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom* pp.103-6. For an interesting

released today, was simply not available to earlier historians. There was almost a paranoid fear, especially in Northern Ireland, that new historical revelations would do little but stoke the fires of sectarian conflict and either offend or reinforce one of the two competing ideologies. The absence of available archives meant that those who did research the subject tended to have something of an axe to grind. This approach is typified in the work of republicans such as Michael Farrell and rather defensive unionists, most notably Bryan Follis.⁷

The absence of archives however is only part of the story. There has also been a general unwillingness to investigate the Northern aspects of the conflict because they reflect badly on present-day mythologies. For unionists any scrutiny of the period will inevitably focus on their rather woeful security record and the violent oppression of the Catholic minority by elements within their own police forces, principally the notorious 'B' Specials. Unionists during this period are more readily identified as the besiegers of the Catholic minority rather than the besieged of their own historical tradition.⁸

discussion of the limitations of current definitions of the revolutionary period see P. Hart, 'Definition: Defining the Irish Revolution' in J. Augusteijn (ed.), *The Irish Revolution, 1913-1923* (Dublin, 1996).

⁷ See for example M. Farrell, *Arming the Protestants: The Formation of the Ulster Special Constabulary and the Royal Ulster Constabulary 1920-27* (London, 1983); B. Follis, *A State Under Siege: the establishment of Northern Ireland 1920-25* (Oxford, 1995).

⁸ In total 557 people were killed between July 1920 and July 1922 in Northern Ireland. 455 of these deaths occurred in Belfast (267 Catholics, 185 Protestants and three of unknown religion). However, as Catholics made up only one quarter of the population of the city the per-capita death rates were much higher. See Kenna *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom*; J. Bardon *A History of Ulster* (Blackstaff, 1992) p.494

Similarly Southern nationalists have little interest in highlighting the Northern aspects of the independence struggle mainly because it demonstrates their total failure to avert partition, typified graphically by their role in the shambolic Boundary Commission of 1925. It also shows up the extent to which the South was prepared to purchase its own independence at the expense of Irish unity.⁹ In this sense, as with the North, historical anomalies have been jettisoned in order to provide both states with an unambiguous justification for their existence. For unionists the events of 1920-22 do little but highlight the Northern government's rather shaky hegemony over its territory and its use of brutal methods to maintain it, whilst in the South it shows up the limitations of nationalist rhetoric in the Irish context. They have preferred to concentrate on the victory they achieved over the British in the War of Independence rather than the squalid failure of armed insurrection in the North. It is notable for example that in the recent film of the life of Michael Collins his personal crusade against partition of the first six months of 1922 is not even mentioned, let alone dramatised.

Irish republicans themselves have also got distinct reasons for ignoring the role of their forebears in attempting to undermine partition. The most unpalatable fact they face is that the Northern IRA was almost totally destroyed in the period 1920-22, failing to make

⁹ The most impressive studies exploring southern nationalist attitudes to the North are C. O'Halloran, *Partition and the Limits of Irish Nationalism: an ideology under stress* (Dublin, 1987) and J. Bowman,

any inroads into partition and essentially ceasing to exist until the 1960s, so great was their defeat. Irish republican tradition is not noted for celebrating defeats unless, like the Easter Rising, they are 'glorious' ones and there was nothing glorious about this period, it was bitter, brutal and sectarian. The vast majority of those killed, both Protestant and Catholic, are innocent civilians, an extremely high proportion of them women and children. The manner of their deaths is also truly horrific and the IRA's role is a largely ambiguous and counterproductive one.

Doctrinal factors, most notably the Northern IRA's perceived pro-Treaty stance in the Irish Civil War, have also militated against the group's acceptance into the republican pantheon. As such it is the tiny and insignificant anti-Treaty element of the period which has gone on to secure the mantle of being the true Irish republicans. This has meant that Northern IRA veterans of the period have reacted with a mixture of embarrassment and secrecy to their role in the conflict. Unlike Southern IRA figures such as Tom Barry, Dan Breen or Ernie O'Malley who became popular celebrities due to their exploits in the War of Independence, writing best-selling books and appearing on television documentaries, virtually none of the key leaders of the Northern IRA are familiar to a general readership.

DeValera and the Ulster Question, 1917-73 (Oxford, 1982). For the complex workings of the Boundary Commission see G. Hand, *Report of the Irish Boundary Commission* (Shannon, 1969).

Perhaps the most potent example of this historical amnesia is the almost non-existence of republican songs about the Northern IRA and the lack of virtually any monuments to IRA actions in the six counties from the revolutionary period unlike in the South where songs, monuments and commemorations abound. A typical example of these forgotten fights is the 'Clones Affray' of February 1922 where in extremely dramatic circumstances a party of 'A' Specials fought a gun battle with the IRA leaving five dead and well over twenty wounded. At the time its impact was enormous leading to the suspension of British troop withdrawals from the South and nearly forty deaths in Belfast during the following three days. Today however the incident, like so many others in the North during the revolutionary period, is almost completely forgotten receiving only scant attention in even the most specialised of texts.¹⁰ The question to be asked is if such an event had occurred in Cork or Kerry would it have been so easily ignored? This lack of reference in Irish republican tradition to the Northern IRA, especially in an organisation so obsessed with its past, is perhaps the greatest testament to how these events have been quietly forgotten.

The end result of these various practical and ideological barriers has led to what the historian and political scientist Paul Bew has called 'partitionist history'. Bew argues convincingly that historians have concentrated overly on the internal development of either Southern nationalism or Ulster Unionism. Whilst knowledge of the two

¹⁰ This incident is examined in detail in chapter five.

traditions in Ireland has become increasingly sophisticated this has been achieved at the expense of all-Ireland perspectives. Obviously the victims of such a rigid north-south division will be anomalous groups such as the Northern Catholic minority who do not fit neatly into either state. This however is the very reason why the story of the Northern IRA is such an important one as it focuses on the fault-lines between the two ideologies and their respective foundation-myths showing up something of their inherent character and ideological limitations.¹¹

The structure of this thesis reflects very much the lack of reference to Northern republicanism in Irish historical writing. A narrative rather than thematic approach has been favoured principally because the story of the Northern IRA is a very complex one and a thematic approach it was felt would hinder rather than help an understanding of the flow of historical events in Ireland between 1920-22. As well as untangling the elements of this often confusing story the study will concentrate on those attitudes, activities and perspectives which the IRA in the six counties possessed which makes them deserving of the prefix 'Northern'. What is key to understanding this group of men, and one of the main themes which emerges from their history, is how they both come to define themselves and be defined by others as a distinct grouping apart from their compatriots south of the border. Indeed it is

¹¹ See P. Bew, *Ideology and the Irish question: Ulster Unionism and Irish nationalism 1912-1916* (Oxford, 1994); one potent example of this 'partitionist history' can be found in Dermot Keogh's

only through an analysis of the Northern IRA's relationship with its erstwhile Southern allies that the true nature of the organisation can be understood. As such the principal aim of this thesis is not only to examine the part played by the Northern IRA in attempting to undermine the Northern Irish state in its formative years, but also its wider role and contribution to the Irish revolution.

Twentieth-Century Ireland: Nation and State (Dublin, 1994) where the North is deliberately left out of the study.

PART I

THE WAR COMES NORTH

CHAPTER ONE

FINDING THE FIGHT

The rebirth of Irish republicanism in the first decade of the 20th century had a distinct Ulster heritage. The resurrection of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and establishment of the Dungannon clubs was in large part due to the energetic activities of the Belfast-based republican trio of Bulmer Hobson, Sean McDermott and Denis McCullough. On the surface at least it appeared that Ulster was the new home for an equally new breed of radical republicans. However such radicalism was largely illusory; as the historian Austen Morgan has written, the republican movement in the north-east consisted of little more than ‘...big individuals in small organisations who leave for Dublin.’¹ Indeed after the split in the Volunteer movement of 1914 only a mere 200 men in Belfast remained loyal to the IRB controlled Irish Volunteers.²

The role played by these men in the Easter Rising of 1916 was little short of farcical. McCullough brought a motley band of 132 Volunteers and Cumann na mBan girls by train from Belfast to Dungannon with vague orders from Patrick Pearse to move into Connaught and link up with Liam Mellows to defend the line of the river Shannon. After arriving in Tyrone, a combination of opposition from the handful of local Volunteers, who refused to countenance leaving their own area, and a realisation of the sheer impracticality of

¹ A. Morgan, *Labour and Partition: The Belfast Working Class and the Belfast Labour Movement, 1868-1920* (London, 1991) p. 198.

² *Ibid.*, p.204.

Pearse's orders led McCullough to call off the entire operation and return to Belfast without a shot being fired.³

In the patriotic aftermath of the Easter Rising McCullough's pragmatic decision appeared to many young radicals as treachery. Sean Cusack, later to be an IRA officer in Belfast, recalled a conversation he had with McCullough after the aborted insurrection: 'He told me that he had been asked by his leaders to do something which was beyond the reasonable expectations of his small force...These reasons prompted him to discourage action in Belfast after they returned from Co. Tyrone on Easter Sunday. I told Mr McCullough that we all felt that he had to some extent let us down.'⁴ Similarly Roger McCorley, a future leader of the Belfast Brigade and barely fifteen years old in 1916, angrily stated: 'I feel that a few determined men could have taken action which would have compelled most, if not all, of the British Garrison to remain in Belfast. It was from this that my detestation of faint-heartedness in war originated.'⁵ It would be the uncompromising attitude of young men like McCorley rather than the cautious approach of McCullough which would later come to dominate the outlook of the IRA in Belfast.

³ For a full description of the events in Ulster in 1916 by some of its key participants see the statements of Sean Cusack (Bureau of Military History (BMH), National Archives (NA), WS 9); Frank Booth (BMH, NA, WS 229); John Garvey (BMH, NA, WS 178). See also Morgan *Labour and Partition* pp.205-6; J.McDermott *Northern Divisions*: p.13.

⁴ Sean Cusack statement (BMH, NA, WS 402).

⁵ Roger McCorley statement (BMH, NA, WS 389).

The post-Rising arrests demonstrated markedly the weakness of advanced nationalism in the north of Ireland with only 83 of the estimated 1600 men detained coming from the nine counties of Ulster.⁶ As such reorganisation of the Irish Volunteers in Belfast during 1917 was on an extremely small scale. David McGuinness, later to emerge as a key IRA Intelligence officer in the Belfast Brigade, described the disorganised confusion which surrounded these early efforts to re-establish the movement: 'The first move to effect a reorganisation was the notification by word of mouth for Volunteers to attend a meeting at premises opposite the Forester's Hall at Mill Street. This meeting was most informal, no proper chairman, each man had apparently something to say and said it.'⁷

Four Volunteer companies, each consisting of at most forty men and based in the Catholic Falls Road area of the city, were existing in Belfast by early 1918. Each one was built around a hard-core of radical members of prominent Gaelic sporting associations and pipe bands in the city such as the O'Neill Crowley, Michael Davitt, John Mitchell and Sean McDermott GAA clubs. Added to these were the remnants of the old Fianna companies whose members would later graduate to the leadership of the Belfast IRA in the early 1920s. Under the guise of sporting and cultural gatherings basic military training was undertaken. This involved little more than drilling in the hills

⁶ Morgan, *Labour and Partition* p.206. For details of the internees from Ulster see S. O'Mahoney, *Frongoch: University of Revolution* (Dublin, 1987) pp.170-1.

⁷ David McGuinness unpublished memoir quoted in McDermott, *Northern Divisions* p.13.