



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

# A Level History A

Y316/01 Britain and Ireland 1791–1921

**Wednesday 6 June 2018 – Afternoon**

**Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes**



**You must have:**

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet  
(OCR12 sent with general stationery)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and any **two** questions in Section B.
- Write your answers in the Answer Booklet. The question number(s) must be clearly shown.
- Do **not** write in the barcodes.

## INFORMATION

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

## SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of why there was opposition to the creation of the Union in 1800. [30]

**Passage A**

The arguments of the opponents of Union were emotional, and were based primarily on a vague feeling of Irish nationality. They insisted that Ireland was a separate society with its own distinctive institutions and interests, and should therefore possess its own independent parliament, even though it bore allegiance to the British Crown. The record of that parliament, based on the constitution of 1782, had clearly justified its existence [the 1782 Constitution meant that the Irish House of Commons could pass its own laws without agreement from the British government]. Ireland was now a more prosperous and cultivated society, the arts flourished, and Dublin was a major European city. 'God and nature', affirmed one anti-unionist MP, 'never intended Ireland to be a province, and by God she never shall'.

It was, argued opponents of the Union, the Ascendency which had helped Ireland make so much progress in the eighteenth century, and it was the Ascendency which had crushed the rebellion of 1798. 'How was the rebellion put down?' asked another like-minded MP; 'By the zeal and loyalty of the gentlemen of Ireland rallying around the laws, the constitution and the independence of their country'. Destroy that independence, and Ireland would once again be under the heel of Great Britain and decline into a provincial backwater. As Sir John Foster, the Attorney-General, one of the major parliamentary opponents of union argued, 'I admit this kingdom is dependent on the Crown of Great Britain but it is dependent only on the Crown whereas if we adopt the proposed Union we shall be brought back to the miserable state in which we were governed by the laws of another parliament sitting in another land, ruled by their will, not by our own.'

Adapted from P. Adelman, *Great Britain and the Irish Question 1800–1922*, published in 1996.

**Passage B**

Those who opposed the Union could not aspire to unanimity, and frequently contradicted one another. The leading opposition politicians, Henry Grattan and George Ponsonby, were opposed to Union on the grounds that the 1782 settlement was a 'final adjustment'. They maintained that, in any case, the Irish Parliament could not terminate itself as it was beyond its authority to do so.

The most effective opposition to Union came from a quarter not usually associated with Grattan or Ponsonby: John Foster, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. He swiftly announced his hostility to the measure and until it was passed he remained its most formidable opponent. It is not too much to say that, but for Foster's determined opposition, the Unionist case would have been unanswerable. Foster's influence stemmed from his office: as Speaker he held a pivotal position in the Irish Commons; then, from his reputation as a financial and economics expert; and finally from his Protestant Ascendency credentials. Foster denounced Union as he believed that the Irish Parliament could work very well but only if ill-informed British ministers would stop interfering in its business. Foster also felt that the economic terms offered to Ireland were unfavourable – a free trade area was not at all suitable for Ireland's industries and the financial burden it was expected to bear was too heavy. But especially, Foster opposed Union on the grounds that it would ultimately mean the end of the Protestant Ascendency.

Adapted from T. Bartlett, *Ireland: A History*, published in 2010.

**SECTION B**

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2\*** 'Parnell was by far the most successful leader of constitutional nationalism in the period from 1798 to 1921.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3\*** To what extent were the Whig and Liberal parties successful in helping bring stability to the Union from 1800 to 1921? **[25]**
- 4\*** 'Agrarian under-development was the major economic influence on the development of Irish Nationalism from 1791 to 1921.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

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