

**An Ideal Unionist: The Political Career of Theresa,
Marchioness of Londonderry, 1911-1919**

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Abstract

The most prominent unionist woman in the early twentieth century was Theresa, Marchioness of Londonderry. During the Third Home Rule Crisis and its aftermath, Lady Londonderry worked tirelessly against Irish self-government. She had been a celebrated political hostess since her husband's tenure as Irish Viceroy in the late nineteenth century. Now, in this perilous time for unionism, she employed her family and political connections to spread Ulster's message to England. She also helped to facilitate the formation of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council (UWUC), an anti-home rule organization, in 1911. She served as UWUC president from 1912 to 1919, directing loyalist women through Ulster Day, the Government of Ireland Bill, and the difficult years of World War I. Driven by her commitment to unionism above all else, Lady Londonderry demanded like dedication from her colleagues, and called for the subordination of outside interests, including the female franchise. She believed that adherence to this ideal was essential to the movement's success.

Key Words: *Theresa, Marchioness of Londonderry, Ulster Unionism, The Ulster Women's Unionist Council (UWUC)*