

Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh  
Summer Examinations 2003

B.A. Examination

History HI 362. Party and Power in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> c. British politics

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Answer *three* questions

Time allowed: *two* hours.

1. Are we at all justified in talking about 'political parties' – in the modern sense – before 1832?
2. "In the short term, the Reform Act strengthened the status quo." (E.J. Evans). Do you agree with this verdict on the Reform Act of 1832?
3. "...substantially, the foundations of the Victorian Conservative and Liberal parties were laid in the decade 1830-1840" (N.Gash). Discuss.

or

Is the verdict on Peel, that he was an outstanding statesman but an indifferent party leader, a fair one?

4. Why did the Chartists fail?
5. In what sense, and for whom, was the 1867 Reform Act a 'leap in the dark'?

or

How important was the pressure of public opinion in the passing of the 1867 Reform Act?

6. "The Second Reform act of 1867 had a decisive effect on the development of party organisation." (P. Adelman). Compare and contrast the organisational initiatives undertaken by the two main parties in the decade after 1867.

7. Assess the significance of religious convictions and allegiances in the political life of Mid-Victorian Britain.
8. Why did the Conservative party become, in the public mind, pre-eminently the party of empire in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century?

or

Assess J. P. Cornford's explanation for 'the transformation of Conservatism' in late - Victorian Britain.

9. "The decline of the Liberal Party is the major feature of Victorian political history between 1886 and the death of the Queen" (P. Adelman). Discuss.

or

Assess the role and significance of Joseph Chamberlain in the party realignment of late Victorian Britain.

10. Discuss the view that the rise of the Labour party – and the decline of the Liberal party - lies in developments within British Trade Unionism in the twenty years before the outbreak of the Great War.

or

Do you agree with Henry Pelling's proposition that it was long term social and economic trends, 'simultaneously uniting Britain geographically and dividing her inhabitants in terms of class,' which ultimately presented the working-class vote to Labour and sealed the fate of the Liberal party?

11. Was it a case of the Conservative/Unionist government losing, rather than the Liberal party winning, the 1906 general election?

or

Was there any convincing evidence on the eve of the Great War that the Liberal party was facing a crisis?

12. Assess the impact of World War 1 on the structure of British party politics.
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# Appendix: The Labour Vote

Elections	Votes	M.P.s elected	Candidates	% share of total vote
1900	63,304	2	15	1.8
1906	329,748	30	51	5.9
1910 (Jan.)	505,657	40	78	7.6
1910 (Dec.)	371,772	42	56	7.1
1918	2,385,472	63	388	22.2
1922	4,241,383	142	411	29.5
1923	4,438,508	191	422	30.5
1924	5,489,077	151	512	33.0
1929	8,389,512	288	571	37.1
1931	6,649,630	52	515	30.6
1935	8,325,491	154	552	37.9
1945	11,995,152	393	604	47.8

# Appendix: The Liberal Vote

Elections	Votes	M.P.s elected	Candidates	Percentage share of total vote
1906	2,757,883	400	539	49.0
1910 (Jan)	2,880,581	275	516	43.2
1910 (Dec)	2,295,888	272	467	43.9
1918				
Coalition Liberal Independent	1,455,640	133	158	13.5
Liberal	1,298,808	28	253	12.1
1922				
(Lloyd George) Liberal (Asquith) Liberal	1,673,240	62	162	11.6
	2,516,287	54	328	17.5
1923	4,311,147	159	452	29.6
1924	2,928,747	40	340	17.6
1929	5,308,510	59	513	23.4
1931				
Liberal National (Simonites) Liberal	809,302	35	41	3.7
(Samuelites) (Lloyd George) Liberal	1,403,102	33	112	6.5
	106,106	4	7	0.5
1935	1,422,116	21	161	6.4
1945	2,248,226	12	306	9.0

# General Election Results

Year	C	L	LU	Irish Nat.	Lab./Lib-Lab
1868	279	379	-	-	-
1874	352	243	-	57	-
1880	238	352	-	62	-
1885	250	334	-	86	-
1886	316	192	78	85	-
1892	268	273	47	81	-
1895	340	177	71	82	-
1900	349	171	68	82	-
1906	132	377	25	83	53

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Hand-out for H1362/Gaeilge: Páirtithe 7 Cumhacht i bpolaiteócht  
na Breataine san 19<sup>ú</sup> 7 sa luath 20<sup>ú</sup> haois.