

Document based question: the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, 1921

Document A is a memorandum sent by the Irish delegates to the representatives of the British government involved in the Treaty negotiations on 22 November 1921. **Document B** is an extract from the final text of the Anglo-Irish Treaty agreed on 6 December 1921.

Document A

Memorandum by the Irish Representatives 1 London, 22 November 1921 [...]

1. Legislative and Executive authority in Ireland shall be derived exclusively from the Elected Representatives of the Irish People.
2. Ireland agrees to be associated with the British Commonwealth for purposes of common concern and, in respect of those purposes, to recognise the Crown as the symbol and accepted head of the Association.
3. In matters of common concern, which are declared to include Peace and War and Defence, the rights and status of Ireland shall be in no respect less than those enjoyed by any of the component States of the British Commonwealth represented in the League of Nations.

Source: National Archives of Ireland, Dáil Éireann series files, 2/304/1

Document B

Final text of the Articles of Agreement for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland as signed.
London, 6 December 1921

1. Ireland shall have the same constitutional status in the Community of Nations known as the British Empire as the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa with a Parliament having powers to make laws for the peace, order and good government of Ireland and an Executive responsible to that Parliament, and shall be styled and known as the Irish Free State.
2. ...the position of the Irish Free State in relation to the Imperial Parliament and Government and otherwise shall be that of the Dominion of Canada, and the law, practice and constitutional usage governing the relationship of the Crown or the representative of the Crown and of the Imperial Parliament to the Dominion of Canada shall govern their relationship to the Irish Free State.

3. The representative of the Crown in Ireland shall be appointed in like manner as the Governor-General of Canada and in accordance with the practice observed in the making of such appointments.

4. The oath to be taken by Members of the Parliament of the Irish Free State shall be in the following form:- I do solemnly swear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the Irish Free State as by law established and that I will be faithful to H.M. King George V., his heirs and successors by law, in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Questions

1. According to Document A , what is the proposed relationship between Ireland and the Crown (British monarchy)?
2. Based on evidence from Document B, what is the relationship between the Irish Free State and the Crown as outlined by the terms of the Treaty?
3. Which document, A or B, affords Ireland greater independence from British rule? Justify your answer with reference to evidence from both documents.
4. With reference to Document B, which of the terms do you think was the most controversial from an Irish standpoint? Explain your answer.
5. Based on your analysis of both documents and your knowledge of the Treaty negotiations, do you think that the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, 1921 represented a significant concession on the part of the Irish delegation?