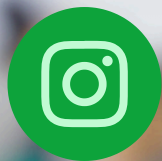


CH. 3 - FROM TRUCE TO TREATY AND
From Truce to Treaty and
CIVIL WAR



Introduction

In this chapter you will learn about:

- The Treaty negotiations (Case Study)
- The Anglo-Irish Treaty
- The Treaty debates
- The Civil War



Useful Terms

Articles of Agreement for Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland: commonly referred to as 'the Treaty'.

Boundary Commission: the commission that was to work out the border between the two newly founded Irish states.

British Commonwealth of Nations: Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand were self-governing countries, linked to Britain by the king, who was head of the Commonwealth.

Document No. 2: this was based on the idea of external association. De Valera produced it in the Dáil, during a private session.

Dominion status: members of the Commonwealth of Nations were dominions. They had their own governments. The king was head of state and the British still claimed the right to interfere in their laws.

Dominion status was achieved first by Canada in 1867, and only defined in 1926. Dominions were almost fully sovereign powers.

Envoys plenipotentiary: can negotiate and sign an agreement without having to refer back to their government.

Republic: a state ruled by elected representatives and with an elected head of state (e.g. a President).

External association: de Valera's compromise between a republic and dominion status. Ireland would be an associate member of the Commonwealth.

Oath of allegiance: Declaration of loyalty to the Crown.

Partition: the division of the island of Ireland into two states.

Sovereignty: independence – a country can make its own laws without interference from other powers.

Saorstát Éireann: title which could be translated as 'republic' or 'Irish Free State'.



@MsDoorley

Useful Terms

Provisional government: a temporary government that holds power until an election can take place.

Dáil Éireann: Government of Ireland set up in 1919 by Sinn Féin MPs.

Cumann na Poblachta: an anti-Treaty party set up by de Valera.

Decommission: to put out of service – make weapons unusable.

National Army: the official army of the Provisional Government and new Irish Free State, also known as the Regulars.

Militant republican: supporter of the Republic, willing to continue to fight until the Republic of Ireland is achieved.

Irregulars: the anti-Treaty IRA.

Public Safety Act: imposed sentence of death for certain offences such as possession of a firearm.

Four Courts: building in Dublin which housed the Supreme Court and the Public Records Office, occupied by the Irregulars in April 1922.

3.1 CASE STUDY: *THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS,* *OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1921*

Negotiations Begin: De Valera and Lloyd George

- Soon after the **War of Independence, or Anglo-Irish War**, ended with the truce of **11 July 1921**, **de Valera** went to London for a series of meetings with the British Prime Minister, **Lloyd George**. De Valera, with the backing of **Dáil Éireann**, demanded an independent thirty-two county republic. The **British Government** was unwilling to grant this. However, Lloyd George did offer a considerable improvement on the 'Home Rule' type of autonomy offered to southern Ireland under the **Government of Ireland Act (1920)**. This was the type of government that had recently been set up in **Northern Ireland**. Instead, the British Government now offered the twenty-six counties of southern Ireland a type of independence known as **dominion status**. This would give southern Ireland the same degree of autonomy as dominions in the **British Commonwealth**, such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In Ireland's case, however, this autonomy would be restricted by provisions that free trade should continue to exist with Great Britain and that the British navy should have unhindered access to Irish ports.

Negotiations Begin: De Valera and Lloyd George

- The **Cabinet of Dáil Éireann** formally rejected these proposals. Although **Lloyd George threatened a renewal of war** if agreement could not be reached, both he and de Valera were anxious for a resumption of negotiations. During August and September 1921, the Irish and British sides were in constant communication in an effort to open up negotiations on a basis that would be acceptable to them both. Whereas the British insisted on Ireland remaining within the Empire, de Valera and Dáil Éireann claimed that Ireland was an independent republic. Lloyd George eventually produced a formula that enabled both sides to enter formal negotiations. He wrote to de Valera, inviting an Irish delegation to come to a conference in London on **11 October 1921**:
- *'...with a view to ascertaining how the association of Ireland with the community of nations known as the British Empire may be reconciled with Irish national aspirations.'*
- De Valera and his Cabinet agreed to this proposal and set about choosing a delegation to attend the conference.

KEY CONCEPT: DOMINION STATUS

This concept is crucial in forming an understanding of the **Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921)**. It refers to the type of government in countries that were members of the **British Commonwealth** such as **Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa**. It was a significant advance on Home Rule for Irish nationalists: under dominion status, the **Free State Government in Southern Ireland** would control economic activity and the **British army** would leave. The **Irish Free State**, in common with other dominions, would be connected to **Great Britain** by joint allegiance to the **King as Head of the British Commonwealth**.

Choosing the Irish Delegation

- When the **Cabinet met to pick a delegation, de Valera** caused a shock by refusing to lead it himself. It had been assumed by most **Sinn Féin TDs** that he would do so. However, he gave two main reasons for refusing to go to London. First, as the President of the declared Irish Republic, he could best influence more extreme republicans if he remained in Ireland. Second, he said that by remaining in Ireland he could ensure that the conference delegates would have to refer matters back to him and could not, therefore, sign anything under pressure from the **British Government**.
- De Valera's momentous decision not to lead the Irish delegation was one of the most controversial in his long political career. Opinion at the time and since has been sharply divided on this point. Whereas his supporters accepted his stated reasons for remaining in Ireland, his critics have strongly condemned him because, in their view:
 - He was the most experienced politician on the Irish side and had already been to London the previous July.
 - He realised that compromise was inevitable and did not want to take responsibility for accepting less than a full Irish republic.

DOCUMENT 1: DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE IRISH DELEGATION

(a) Mr W.T. Cosgrave

- He [de Valera] had an extraordinary experience in negotiations. He also had the advantage of being in touch already. The head of the state in England was Mr. Lloyd George and he expected he [de Valera] would be one of the plenipotentiaries... They were sending over a team and they were keeping their ablest player in reserve The reserve would have to be used sometime and it struck him now was the time they were required...

(b) President de Valera

- He [de Valera] really believed it was vital at this stage that the symbol of the Republic should be kept untouched and that it would not be compromised in any sense by any arrangements which it might be necessary for our plenipotentiaries to make. He was sure the Dáil realised the task they were giving them - to win for them what a mighty army and navy might not be able to win for them. It was not a shirking of duty, but he realised the position and how necessary it was to keep the Head of State and the symbol untouched and that was why he asked to be left out. Dáil Éireann, Private Session, 14 September 1921

QUESTIONS

1. According to W.T. Cosgrave, what advantages did de Valera have as a negotiator?
2. What did Cosgrave mean by the words 'keeping their ablest player in reserve'?
3. How did de Valera regard his own role as 'symbol of the Republic'?
4. In his view, what was a 'shirking of duty'?

Choosing the Irish Delegation

- With the refusal of **de Valera** to join the delegation, **Arthur Griffith**, the Vice-President of **Dáil Éireann**, was chosen to lead it. Two hardline republican members of the Cabinet, **Cathal Brugha** and **Austin Stack**, refused to join the delegation. **Michael Collins** agreed very reluctantly to join the delegation. Although de Valera insisted on this, Collins himself believed that he would have been more useful back in Ireland as a threat if negotiations broke down. Three other delegates were then chosen - **Robert Barton**, **Éamonn Duggan** and **George Gavan Duffy**. As members of the Cabinet, Collins, Griffith and Barton were recognised as chief negotiators, with Gavan Duffy and Duggan termed legal advisers. Finally, **Erskine Childers** was appointed as secretary to the Irish delegation. An Englishman who had become an Irish nationalist, Childers was distrusted by Collins, who regarded him as a type of spy for de Valera.
- The members of the Irish delegation were given written instructions by the Cabinet. Although they were termed 'plenipotentiaries', a word that implied that they had full power, any agreement reached would have to be communicated to the Cabinet in Dublin before they signed it. Their instructions also stated, 'It is understood that the Cabinet in Dublin will be kept regularly informed of the progress of the negotiations.'
- In early October 1921, the Irish delegates travelled to London to prepare for the opening of the talks with the **British Government**.

The British Delegation

- The members of the **British delegation at the Treaty negotiations** were much more experienced than their Irish counterparts. They were led by the **Prime Minister, Lloyd George**, who had been a Cabinet minister since 1906 and leader of the government since 1916. Widely experienced in administration both in peacetime and during **World War I**, he was known as the **Welsh Wizard** because of his cunning and political ability. Also included was the **Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill**, who, like the Prime Minister, had spent many years in government. The delegation's other principal negotiators were two leading members of the **Conservative Party: Lord Birkenhead**, an accomplished lawyer, and **Austen Chamberlain**.
- Birkenhead and Chamberlain were very influential because although Lloyd George was a member of the Liberal Party, the majority of MPs supporting his Coalition Government were Conservatives. As the Conservatives were very close to the Ulster unionists and were strongly in favour of the British Empire, their influence limited Lloyd George's ability to offer significant concessions to the Irish delegation. The difficulty of his position can be seen in a debate in the **House of Commons** during which right-wing Conservatives opposed any negotiations with Sinn Féin. Lloyd George succeeded in defeating the challenge to his decision to negotiate with Sinn Féin when on **31 October 1921** the Commons voted to support him by 439 votes to 43. Nevertheless, the possibility of a Conservative revolt if he conceded too much in the negotiations was constantly on his mind.

DOCUMENT 2: LLOYD GEORGE DEFENDS HIS DECISION TO NEGOTIATE WITH SINN FÉIN

Now I come to the Motion, which divides itself into two parts. The first is an expression of grave apprehension that the government should have entered into negotiations with men who at the same time were engaged in a conspiracy against the authority of the crown.. The second point is that those negotiations ought to have been preceded by the sanction of Parliament to the actual proposals made inside the Conference ... No pact entered into in the course of these negotiations can come into effect without the authority of Parliament. Every detail will have to be submitted to Parliament... If you enter into negotiations, you must have some latitude ... otherwise there is no use in having a conference... There was the Act of Parliament of 1920. That was not a conference ... it was Parliament making a proposal. That did not accomplish its purpose. I was always in favour of a conference, if I could get it... I have repeatedly at this box stated... that the Government were prepared to meet in discussion any representatives of the Irish people who could - I used the phrase - 'deliver the goods', that is, who were in a position to make good a bargain when it was made... The House of Commons must either trust its negotiators or replace them... It is not the first time that Britain has treated with rebels and it is not the first time that Britain has treated with rebels with good effects for the Empire... But I cannot conceal from the House the possibility that I may have to make the grim announcement that it is impossible to settle without danger or without dishonour.

QUESTIONS

1. Why were some Members of Parliament against Lloyd George negotiating with Sinn Féin?
2. Which body would have the final say on every detail of the settlement?
3. In Lloyd George's view, was the Act of 1920 a success?

The Conference Opens

- The conference began its first session on **11 October 1921**, three months to the day since the truce came into operation. From the outset, it was clear that there was a vast gulf between the aims of each side. The **British** were very clear in their objectives. Their priority was the defence of British territory. Recalling the landing of Spanish and French troops in Ireland in centuries past, they feared that an independent Ireland could be used by an enemy to attack Britain in a future war. To avoid this, they were determined to prevent Ireland from becoming an independent republic. In the last analysis, **Lloyd George's Government** would have been prepared to return to war rather than allow Ireland to leave the **British Empire**. The British Government was also anxious to protect the **Ulster unionists** but was willing to put pressure on them if they stood in the way of an overall agreement. In the context of the times, the government believed that the unity of the Empire would be clear only if Irish officeholders had to swear allegiance to the King.
- In contrast to the clear aims of the British delegation, the **Irish delegates** had not worked out an exact strategy that reflected their aspirations. Although committed to an Irish republic and a restoration of Irish unity, they were unclear as to how they should compromise on these aspirations. Recognising the British demand for security guarantees, **de Valera** had developed a proposal known as **external association**, which involved close co-operation with the British Empire. However, the Irish delegates did not have an alternative plan to put forward if, as seemed likely, the British side rejected this. On the question of the **Ulster unionists**, the Irish side was even more vague. Various possibilities were considered, such as a Northern Ireland Parliament under overall Dublin rule, but a clear strategy on dealing with the issue was not worked out.

DOCUMENT 3: THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

OPEN

At the opening session on 11 October, Griffith, the leader of the Irish delegation, remarked that: 'England's policy in the past has been to treat Ireland as a conquered and subject country. If there is a change in the policy of subordinating Ireland to English interests, then there appears to be possibility of peace.' Griffith in a few words had placed Ireland on a negotiating equality. He would acquiesce in the intellectual effort of reconciliation, but only if there went with it on the British side a change of heart. When Griffith remarked that the six conditions that the British Government attached to its offer of dominion status implied British desire to keep Ireland under military control, Lloyd George replied: 'We certainly don't desire that, we seek nothing in the way of military domination of Ireland.' When members of the Irish delegation stated that Britain had broken treaties with Ireland in the past, Lloyd George made the interesting reply: 'You have never made a treaty with the people of this country before. Treaties in the past have been with oligarchies ruling this country.' When the discussion turned to economic matters, the British side appeared particularly willing to compromise. Lloyd George spoke strongly in favour of free trade between both countries, and Lord Birkenhead remarked: 'Nothing is intended to prevent the economic development of Ireland.' The first session of the conference ended with an impression among the delegates. that some of the tension had eased. However, none of the most contentious topics had yet been reached.

QUESTIONS

1. What, according to Arthur Griffith, was 'England's policy in the past'?
2. What did Lord Birkenhead say about the attitude of the British Government to economic development in Ireland?
3. What impression had the delegates formed by the end of the first session of the conference?

De Valera and Pope Benedict XV

- An incident occurred in October 1921 that showed clearly the difference between British and Irish aspirations concerning the relationship between both countries. Soon after the **Treaty negotiations began on 11 October, Pope Benedict XV** sent a message to **King George V of England** to wish the talks a successful outcome. **De Valera**, however, objected because the Pope appeared to regard the King as the supreme authority in Ireland.

DOCUMENT 4: POPE BENEDICT XV TO KING GEORGE V

We rejoice at the resumption of the Anglo-Irish negotiations and pray to the Lord with all our heart that He may bless them and grant to Your Majesty the great joy and imperishable glory of bringing to an end the age- long dissension.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Pope Benedict XV rejoice?
2. What was the main wish of King George V?

DOCUMENT 5: KING GEORGE V TO POPE BENEDICT XV

I have received the message of your Holiness with much pleasure and with all my heart I join in your prayer that the Conference... may achieve a permanent settlement of the troubles in Ireland, and may initiate a new era of peace and happiness for my people.

De Valera decided to express the Irish point of view in a public letter to the Pope (Document 6).

DOCUMENT 6: DE VALERA TO POPE BENEDICT XV

The people of Ireland have read the message sent by your Holiness to the King of Great Britain, and appreciate the kindly interest in their welfare and the paternal regard which suggest it... They are confident that the ambiguities in the reply sent in the name of King George will not mislead you into believing that the troubles are in Ireland, or that the people of Ireland owe allegiance to the British King. The independence of Ireland has been formally proclaimed... The trouble is between England and Ireland and its source is that the rulers of Britain have endeavoured to impose their will on Ireland.

Adapted from Modern Ireland (Fourth Edition) by Gerard Brockie and Raymond Walsh, Gill Education.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did de Valera thank the Pope?
2. What was the main point made by de Valera?
3. How effective is this document as a piece of propaganda, in your opinion?

The **editor of the London Times** objected strongly to de Valera's action, and that paper carried a leading article condemning him on 21 October 1921 (Document 7).

DOCUMENT 7: THE TIMES CRITICISES DE VALERA

Mr De Valera has sent a telegram to the Pope. Towards the Pope himself it is an act of impertinence; and towards the King it is unmannerly to the point of churlishness. What value can attach to Mr De Valera's assurance that 'we long to be at peace and in friendship with the people of Britain', when he deliberately flouts the settled convictions of the British people upon the only terms on which peace and friendship between the British and Irish peoples are possible?

QUESTIONS

1. Why was The Times so critical of de Valera?
2. Contrast Documents 4 and 5 on the one hand, with Documents 6 and 7 on the other. What is the main point of contrast?

Lloyd George and the British Empire

From the start of negotiations, **Lloyd George** was under strong pressure from the **Conservative MPs** - who were keeping him in power - to defend the interests of the **British Empire**. On **31 October 1921**, his government defeated a motion introduced by Conservatives who were opposed to any negotiations with **Sinn Féin**. Despite the opposition of a minority of British MPs, the negotiations continued. Already by **24 October**, seven plenary sessions had been held. Although there was a meeting of minds over issues such as trade and finance, there was no conclusive result on the key issues of the position of Ireland in the Empire and the **Ulster Question**.

DOCUMENT 8: LETTER FROM ARTHUR GRIFFITH TO ÉAMON DE VALERA (IN DUBLIN), LONDON, 24 OCTOBER, 1921

On the Crown they must fight. It was the only link of Empire they possessed. They pressed me to say that I would accept the Crown, provided we came to other agreements. It was evident they wanted something to reassure themselves against the Die-Hards. I told them that I had no authority. If we came to an agreement on all other points, I could recommend some form of association with the Crown ... Questions of elective Head arose. They shied at it. Wholly impossible to them. Told them the only possibility of Ireland considering association of any kind with Crown was in exchange for essential unity - a concession on Ulster. Michael Collins got Chamberlain to admit that the general feeling in England was for a settlement. He countered their arguments on defence etc. all the time. But they always fell back on the impossibility of peace except on acceptance of the Crown. We agreed to proceed on the basis of settling all other points, leaving Crown to last.

Documents on Irish Foreign Policy, Vol. 1, 1919/1922 (Dublin, 1998)

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Arthur Griffith believe that the British would fight to preserve the status of the King in Ireland?
2. Did Griffith agree at that stage to 'accept the Crown'?
3. What decision by the Irish delegates did Griffith convey to de Valera at the end of the letter?

Ireland and the British Commonwealth

- On **26 October**, the format of the negotiations changed, with the introduction of **sub-conferences** between smaller groups of delegates. At one such meeting, **Griffith** assured **Lloyd George** that if the '**essential unity**' of Ireland were guaranteed, he would recommend a free partnership between Ireland and the other dominions in the **British Commonwealth**, with recognition by Ireland of the **King as head** of the proposed association of states.

DOCUMENT 9: LETTER FROM GRIFFITH TO LLOYD GEORGE, 2 NOVEMBER 1921

In our personal conversation on Sunday night you stated that three things were vital - our attitude to the British Commonwealth, the Crown and naval defence. You asked me whether, provided I was satisfied on other points, I would give you personal assurances in relation to these matters.

I assured you in reply that, provided I was so satisfied, I was prepared to recommend a free partnership of Ireland with the other states associated within the British Commonwealth, the formula defining the partnership to be arrived at in later discussion. I was, on the same condition, prepared to recommend that Ireland should consent to a recognition of the Crown as head of the proposed association of free states ...

I stated that this attitude of mine was conditional on the recognition of the essential unity of Ireland. As to the North East of Ireland, while reserving for further discussion the question of area, I would agree to any necessary safeguards and to the maintenance of existing parliamentary powers, and would agree that its industrial life should not be hampered or discriminated against in any way.

With reference to the question of the financial relations between the two nations, I am willing to let the adjustment of this matter rest in the hands of an agreed arbitrator.

QUESTIONS

1. Name the three points in the attitude of the Irish delegation considered 'vital' by Lloyd George.
2. What assurance had Griffith given Lloyd George regarding these issues?
3. Did the issue of 'financial relations between the two nations' create as much difficulty as the Crown and Ulster? Explain your answer.
4. What are the strengths of Documents 8 and 9 as primary sources?

The Idea of a Boundary Commission

- **Lloyd George**, for his part, agreed to attempt to persuade the **Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Sir James Craig**, to allow Northern Ireland to come under the overall control of an all-Ireland Parliament. Lloyd George's secretary, **Tom Jones**, has left a clear account of his part in these events.
- For **Griffith and Collins**, the idea of a **Boundary Commission** had both advantages and disadvantages. They believed that such a Commission would move predominantly nationalist areas such as **Fermanagh, Tyrone, south Armagh** and **Derry city** out of Northern Ireland. They also hoped that the threat of such a Commission would force **Craig** to compromise on the issue of recognising an **all-Ireland Parliament**. However, in two crucial respects, acceptance of the idea weakened their position. By agreeing to a Boundary Commission, they were recognising the permanence of **partition**. They were also making sure that if the talks broke down, it would not be on the question of Ulster.

DOCUMENT 10: JONES' ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGINS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION

7 November 1921: From 5.00 to about 6.20 Sir James Craig was with the Prime Minister. About 6.30 the Prime Minister sent for me and I had about half an hour with him alone during which time he paced up and down the Cabinet room, more depressed than I had seen him at all since the negotiations began. He said - 'Craig will not budge one inch... This means a break on Thursday'... He then said - 'There is just one other possible way out. I want to find out from Griffith and Collins if they will support me on it; namely that the twenty-six counties should take their own dominion parliament and have a Boundary Commission'.

9 November 1921: I told Griffith that the Prime Minister was prepared to play the Boundary Commission as an absolutely last card, if he could feel sure that Sinn Féin would take it, if Ulster accepted. Griffith replied, 'We would prefer a plebiscite, but in essentials a Boundary Commission is very much the same. It would have to be, not for Tyrone and Fermanagh only, but for the six counties' ... About 5.45 I saw the Prime Minister alone. He was perfectly satisfied with what I reported but pointed out that the Boundary Commission would be for the nine counties.

QUESTIONS

1. Who spent half an hour with the Prime Minister?
2. Why was Lloyd George depressed?
3. What attitude did Arthur Griffith display towards a Boundary Commission?

The Culmination of the Treaty Negotiations

- With the issue of Ulster sidelined, **Lloyd George** and the British delegates concentrated on putting pressure on the Irish negotiators to accept **dominion status**. Refusing to accept external association, the British did, however, grant some minor concessions concerning the role of the King and the **Oath of Allegiance** to him. On **3 December**, the Irish delegates returned to Dublin with a copy of the British proposals. In the **Cabinet discussion** that followed, deep divisions emerged. **De Valera, Cathal Brugha** and **Austin Stack** rejected dominion status and wanted the delegates to return to London and argue for external association once again. Griffith replied that the British had rejected this several times and would do so again. At the end of the meeting, the delegates returned to London, agreeing not to sign any treaty until its terms had been referred back to Dublin. On their arrival in London on **4 December** the Irish delegation once again proposed external association. The British side rejected this, and the talks broke down in disagreement. **Lloyd George** then made contact with Griffith and Collins and persuaded them to return to the talks. However, it was clear that the British were not prepared to make any further significant concessions.

DOCUMENT 11: CHURCHILL'S ACCOUNT OF THE FINAL STATE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

The Prime Minister stated bluntly that we could concede no more and debate no further. They must settle now; they must sign the agreement for a Treaty in the form to which after all these weeks it had attained, or else quit; and further, that both sides would be free to resume whatever warfare they could wage against each other. This was an ultimatum delivered, not through diplomatic channels but face to face, and all present knew and understood that nothing else was possible. Stiff as our personal relations had been, there was by now a mutual respect between the principals and a very deep comprehension of each other's difficulties.

The Irishmen gulped down the ultimatum. Mr. Griffith said, speaking in his soft voice and with his modest manner, 'I will give the answer of the Irish Delegates. at 9 tonight; but, Mr. Prime Minister, I personally will sign this agreement and will recommend it to my countrymen'. 'Do I understand, Mr. Griffith', said Mr. Lloyd George, 'that though everyone else refuses you will nevertheless agree to sign?' 'Yes, that is so Mr. Prime Minister', replied this quiet little man of great heart and of great purpose. Michael Collins rose looking as if he was going to shoot someone, preferably himself. In all my life I have never seen so much passion and suffering in restraint.

QUESTIONS

1. According to Churchill, what statement did Lloyd George make at the start of the meeting with the Irish delegates?
2. What two points did the leader of the Irish delegation, Arthur Griffith, make?
3. How did Churchill describe the appearance of Michael Collins during the meeting?

The Culmination of the Treaty Negotiations

- **Griffith** and **Collins** were under considerable pressure to reach an agreement. Griffith had never been a doctrinaire republican and was willing to accept a settlement that would give Ireland a substantial degree of independence. Collins was keenly aware of how ill-equipped the **IRA** was to resume war against superior British forces. **Lloyd George's secretary, Tom Jones**, recalled the pressure both men were under shortly before the Treaty was signed.

DOCUMENT 12: NOTE FROM JONES TO LLOYD GEORGE, 5 DECEMBER 1921

I saw Arthur Griffith at midnight for an hour alone. He was labouring under a deep sense of the crisis and spoke throughout with the greatest earnestness and unusual emotion. One was bound to feel that to break with him would be infinitely tragic. Briefly his case was:

1. That he and Collins had been completely won over to belief in your desire for peace and recognised that you had gone far in your efforts to secure it.
2. This belief was not shared by their Dublin colleagues and they had failed to bring them all the way, but were convinced they could be brought further. In Dublin there is still much distrust and fear that if the Treaty' is signed they will be 'sold'.
3. They are told that they have surrendered too much ('the King' and 'association') and got nothing to offer the Dáil in return. Cannot you ... get from Craig a conditional recognition, however shadowy, of Irish national unity in return for the acceptance of the Empire by Sinn Féin?...
4. Without something to offer the Dáil on these lines Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins could not carry more than about one-half of them.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the condition of Arthur Griffith as outlined at the start of the document.
2. Explain the meaning of Point 4.
3. Would you agree that this document sympathetic towards Griffith and Collins?

The Culmination of the Treaty Negotiations

- At the meeting on **5 December**, **Lloyd George** presented the Irish delegates with an ultimatum. He stated that he must let the **Northern Ireland Prime Minister, Sir James Craig**, know of their decision immediately. As a last-minute concession, he offered total **fiscal autonomy** - the **Irish Free State** could place protective tariffs on goods entering the country if it wished. This had been a long-term policy of Griffith. Lloyd George also agreed to modify the **Oath of Allegiance** by requiring Irish TDs to swear allegiance to the **Constitution of the Irish Free State** first and then to the **King as head of the British Commonwealth**. Having made his final concessions, Lloyd George insisted that the Irish delegates sign the Treaty there and then, or there would be an 'immediate and terrible war'. He refused to allow them to refer the terms of the agreement back to Dublin. **Griffith** was the first to accept the Treaty, followed by **Collins** and **Éamonn Duggan**. After a few hours of persuasion, **Robert Barton** and **George Gavan Duffy** agreed to sign. At **2.10 a.m. on 6 December** the Irish delegates returned to **10 Downing Street** and signed the agreement known as 'The Articles of Agreement for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland'.

The Anglo-Irish Treaty

- The Treaty contained **eighteen articles** in all and included the provisions shown in Document 13.

DOCUMENT 13: THE ANGLO-IRISH TREATY (1921)

- Ireland shall have the same 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.
- 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 in making such appointments...
- The oath to be taken by Members of 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

- What status did Ireland acquire under the Treaty?
- What was the King's representative in the Irish Free State known as?
- Who would have to take an Oath of Allegiance to the King?

The Anglo-Irish Treaty

- Compared with Home Rule, the **dominion status** offered in the **Treaty of 1921** was a major advance. The **British Army** would leave the **Irish Free State** and be replaced by an **Irish Army**. The Free State Government could conduct its own defence and foreign policies. It would have complete control over **taxation** and other financial matters. The **King's representative** in Ireland, the **Governor-General**, would be a figurehead with very little power.
- However, two aspects of the settlement were extremely contentious. First, it failed to reverse effectively the **partition of Ireland** introduced under the **Government of Ireland Act** a year earlier. Second, the inclusion of the **Oath of Allegiance**, which marked the failure to secure an independent republic. The latter was to prove the most contentious issue of all.

Case Study: Review Questions

1. The British Delegation

- Who led the British delegation at the Treaty negotiations?
- Name the British Secretary of State for War who was one of the negotiators.
- Why was the Conservative Party in a strong position in Britain at the time?

2. The Conference Opens

- What was the main aim of the British side in the negotiations?
- Why were British statesmen determined to prevent Ireland becoming an independent republic?
- Who developed a proposal called 'external association'?

3. De Valera and Pope Benedict XV

- What message did Pope Benedict XV send to King George V in October 1921?
- Why did de Valera object to this message?
- How did the editor of the London Times react to de Valera's letter to the Pope?

4. The Boundary Commission

- Which two topics caused the deepest disagreement during the Treaty negotiations?
- What assurance did Arthur Griffith give David Lloyd George 'if the essential unity of Ireland' were guaranteed?
- What advantages did Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins see in the establishment of a boundary commission?

5. The Signing of the Treaty

- While ruling out 'external association', what type of freedom did the British Government offer?
- Why was the Irish Cabinet in Dublin deeply divided at its meeting on 3 December 1921?
- What pressure did Lloyd George place on the Irish delegates to sign the Treaty?

6. The Anglo-Irish Treaty 1921

- What would the King's representative in the Irish Free State be known as?
- Describe the Oath of Allegiance that all members of the Dáil would have to take.
- What powers would the Free State Government have in the areas of defence and foreign policy?
- What role would the British Army play in the Irish Free State?



Case Study: Documents-Based Questions

1. Comprehension

- a. In Document 8, what did Arthur Griffith see as a basic condition of agreeing to 'association of any kind with the Crown'?
- b. According to Document 13, with which other countries would Ireland share a similar status under the Anglo-Irish Treaty?

2. Comparison

- a. Contrast the approach of Arthur Griffith in Document 3 with the approach taken by him in Document 12.
- b. Compare Documents 2 and 12. In both cases, people are compromising. List those who are prepared to compromise and the opponents of compromise in each case.

3. Criticism

- a. From the evidence of Document 2, would you agree that David Lloyd George was a persuasive speaker?
- b. In Document 11, what attitude do you think Winston Churchill displays towards the dilemma facing the Irish delegation? Explain your answer.

4. Contextualisation

- a. What role was played by Arthur Griffith in the Treaty negotiations?
- b. What were the aims of the British delegation during the Treaty negotiations?

The Treaty Split

The immediate public reaction in Ireland to the signing of the **Anglo-Irish Treaty** was one of widespread relief and joy. For many ordinary people, it signalled the guarantee of peace and the removal of the **British Army**, the **Black and Tans** and the **Auxiliaries** from the country. Convinced republicans, however, were dismayed at the failure of the delegates to achieve an independent republic, despite the fact that the **British Government** had no intention of conceding this.

When the **Dáil Cabinet** met, **de Valera** expressed his opposition to the Treaty and his annoyance that the delegates had signed it without referring it back to Dublin for approval. Although he himself, together with **Austin Stack** and **Cathal Brugha**, wished to reject it immediately, they were overruled by the other four Cabinet members - **Arthur Griffith**, **Michael Collins**, **Robert Barton** and **William T. Cosgrave** - who insisted that **Dáil Éireann** must decide. Before the Dáil met, de Valera issued a public statement condemning the Treaty, and Collins got the support of the **IRB leadership** for the Treaty at a secret meeting.

The Treaty Debates

- When the Dáil met to debate the Treaty, positions began to polarise for or against the proposals. De Valera rejected it and instead put forward his own recommendations in what became known as **Document No. 2**, which proposed his idea of external association. However, as Document No. 2 omitted the **Oath of Allegiance** and any reference to the **Governor-General**, it was clear that the British Government would never accept it. When the Dáil failed to support this, de Valera withdrew his proposal. Griffith and Collins made powerful speeches in favour of the Treaty. Collins used the **stepping-stone argument**. In his view, the Treaty did not represent full independence, but 'it gives us freedom, not the ultimate freedom that all nations desire and develop to, but the freedom to achieve it'. **Richard Mulcahy**, the Chief of Staff of the IRA during the War of Independence, argued strongly in favour of the Treaty, pointing out that the IRA could not defeat the British in a renewed war. Other pro-Treaty speakers, such as **Kevin O'Higgins**, pointed to the advantages of dominion status and the huge advance it represented compared with Home Rule.
- The anti-Treaty speakers concentrated on the Oath of Allegiance, which they regarded as a betrayal of the republic and of all those who had died for it from Easter Week 1916 onwards. Significantly, all six women TDs were anti-Treaty republicans: they included Patrick Pearse's mother, **Margaret**; Terence MacSwiney's sister, **Mary**; and **Countess Markievicz**. They argued strongly that the members of the Dáil had no right to abandon their allegiance to the republic.

The Treaty Debates

- Most of the speakers concentrated on the constitutional issue of the conflict between dominion status and the republic. The **Oath of Allegiance** was the most contentious issue in this regard. While few dwelt on the question of partition and the right of **Northern Ireland** to remain in the United Kingdom, **Seán MacEntee**, an anti-Treaty republican and future government minister, argued strongly against the Treaty because of the continuation of partition.
- Opinion among **TDs** in the **Dáil** was more evenly divided than opinion in the country as a whole. When TDs returned home to their constituencies during the Christmas break, they discovered that a clear majority of the people favoured the Treaty. This may have influenced some wavering TDs towards voting for the Treaty. When, after a few weeks of bitter debate, the decisive moment arrived on **7 January 1922**, the Dáil approved the Treaty by **64 votes in favour to 57 votes against**. Although the margin was small, it was decisive. However, as soon as the vote was declared, republicans protested that they would not accept the result.

KEY CONCEPT: ALLEGIANCE

Allegiance involved loyalty to a nation or state. It was closely linked with ***national identity***. In Ireland between 1912 and 1949 it included ***allegiance of unionists to the King***. On the nationalist side, it covered both republicans who wanted complete independence and pledged ***their loyalty or allegiance to the Irish nation***, and others who were willing to ***pledge a certain loyalty to the British monarch in return for advances in self-government like the Irish Free State***.

The New Pro-Treaty Provisional Government

- After losing the vote on the Treaty, **de Valera** resigned from the office of President and **Arthur Griffith** was elected in his place. Griffith appointed a Cabinet that included **Michael Collins** (Minister for Finance), **George Gavan Duffy** (External Affairs), **Éamonn Duggan** (Home Affairs), **Kevin O'Higgins** (Economic Affairs), **Richard Mulcahy** (Defence) and **W.T. Cosgrave** (Local Government). On **10 January 1922**, de Valera led his anti-Treaty followers out of the Dáil, accusing the new government of undermining the republic.
- In order to take over from the British administration, the pro-Treaty side had to form a **Provisional Government**. As part of the Treaty, the British agreed to hand over power gradually until **6 December 1922**, when the **Irish Free State** would formally come into existence. In the meantime, the British would hand over power to a Provisional Government consisting of TDs who had been elected to the Parliament of southern Ireland in May 1921 under the **Government of Ireland Act**. This Parliament met just once, on **14 January 1922**, and was attended only by pro-Treaty Sinn Féin TDs and the four Unionists elected by **Trinity College**. It elected **Michael Collins** as head of the Provisional Government, and he then appointed a Cabinet.
- On **16 January 1922**, Michael Collins, as head of the Provisional Government, took power from the British administration in **Dublin Castle**. It was a symbolic occasion: after more than seven hundred years, British rule was coming to an end in most of Ireland. However, huge challenges now faced Griffith, Collins and the other pro-Treaty leaders as they sought to form a stable government in a deeply divided society.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was the immediate public reaction to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty?
2. What arguments did Michael Collins make in favour of the Treaty during the treaty debates in the Dáil?
3. What was de Valera's view of the Treaty?
4. What arguments were put forward by those who opposed the Treaty?
5. What was the outcome of the vote on the Treaty in the Dáil?
6. Who became head of the pro-Treaty Provisional Government?

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The immediate public reaction to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921 was deeply divided, with strong emotions on both sides. Many saw it as a step towards independence, while others viewed it as a betrayal of the full republic that had been fought for.
2. Michael Collins argued in favour of the Treaty by stating it provided a "freedom to achieve freedom," seeing it as a stepping stone towards full independence and a way to avoid further bloodshed.
3. Éamon de Valera opposed the Treaty, arguing that it failed to establish a fully independent republic and objected to the oath of allegiance to the British monarch it required.
4. Those opposed to the Treaty argued it did not deliver true independence, critiqued the partition of Ireland, and felt it betrayed the 1916 Easter Rising's ideals.
5. The outcome of the vote on the Treaty in the Dáil was in favour, with 64 votes for and 57 against, leading to its ratification.
6. Michael Collins became the head of the pro-Treaty Provisional Government following the Treaty's ratification.

YouTube Links

- The Anglo-Irish Treaty 1921 from Trinity College Dublin (15 mins)
- <https://youtu.be/wXAoRWZvjDA>
- The Treaty Debates (7 mins) by Patrick Hickey
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdGI9C0XXG0>
- Treaty That Caused Irish Civil War - The Anglo-Irish Treaty 1921
- <https://youtu.be/q4h8XTRj6Oc>

3.2 CIVIL WAR

The Drift Towards Civil War

- The split among **Sinn Féin TDs** over the Treaty was accompanied by a split in the **IRA** throughout the country. In the early months of 1922, as the **British Army** evacuated barracks in different parts of the country, groups of pro-Treaty and anti-Treaty IRA members vied with one another for control in local areas. While a majority of the headquarters staff of the IRA, including the Chief of Staff, **General Richard Mulcahy**, followed **Michael Collins**, some prominent IRA leaders, including **Rory O'Connor**, **Liam Lynch** and **Liam Mellows**, rejected the Treaty. Ordinary Volunteers throughout the country were split on the issue. Many supported the Treaty out of loyalty to Collins.
- Many of the anti-Treaty IRA members distrusted the **Dáil** and were prepared to use force to achieve a republic. In order to preserve unity in the IRA, the Minister for Defence, General Richard Mulcahy, agreed to hold an **Army Convention** in March 1922. However, when it became obvious that a majority of the IRA might be anti-Treaty, he cancelled the convention. In defiance of Mulcahy's order, over 200 anti-Treaty officers met under the leadership of Rory O'Connor and Liam Mellows. They repudiated the authority of the Dáil and prepared to rebel against the pro-Treaty Government.

The Drift Towards Civil War

- On **14 April** the situation deteriorated seriously when Rory O'Connor and a group of anti-Treaty IRA men captured the **Four Courts** in Dublin. In order to avoid immediate civil war, Collins did not take action to remove them. At the time, the government was busy founding a new police force, **An Garda Síochána**, and creating a national army composed of former IRA members who accepted the Treaty.
- **De Valera** also contributed to the growing bitterness and hostility between the government and its anti-Treaty opponents. He declared that 'the majority has no right to do wrong' and made inflammatory speeches in which he stated that Irish people might have to 'wade through rivers of blood'.
- In a further effort to bring about a reconciliation, Collins agreed with de Valera to postpone a general election until June 1922. An earlier verdict by the people on the Treaty, however, might have had the effect of calming political passions.

The Treaty Election, June 1922

- A month before the election **Collins** and **de Valera** agreed to form a 'pact'. They would advise their supporters to vote for both pro- and anti-Treaty candidates, and they would form a coalition government later. Although Collins entered into this pact to avoid a drift towards civil war, his own supporters, including **Griffith** and **O'Higgins**, condemned it as undemocratic. Yet from Collins' point of view, such co-operation would have been useful as part of his policy on **Northern Ireland**. He hoped that if the pro- and anti-Treaty wings of the IRA co-operated in acting against Northern Ireland, the organisation would avoid a damaging split in the south. At the time, he was pursuing a devious policy on the north. Appalled at the widespread attacks on northern Catholics, he sent arms secretly to the IRA in the north. However, at the same time, he was engaging in talks with the northern Prime Minister, **Sir James Craig**, urging him to protect Catholics in Belfast and throughout the state.
- Two days before the general election in June 1922, Collins cancelled the pact with de Valera and advised pro-Treaty voters not to vote for anti-Treaty candidates. Just before the election, the **Constitution of the Irish Free State**, drawn up largely by Collins and Griffith, was published. The result of the general election was a decisive victory for supporters of the Treaty. All parties favoured it, apart from anti-Treaty Sinn Féin. Many of those voting for smaller parties or independents transferred their votes to pro-Treaty Sinn Féin. The results of the general election signified a clear mandate by the people in favour of the Treaty. In democratic circumstances, this would have been decisive. However, in June 1922, Ireland had not known peaceful conditions for the previous eight years. Ten days after the people cast their votes, violence would once again come to the fore in a dramatic manner.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How was there a drift towards civil war in the early months of 1922?
2. What occurred in the Four Courts on 14 April 1922 and what was its significance?
3. What efforts were made by Collins and de Valera to bring about a reconciliation?
4. What election pact was made between them? Did it succeed?
5. Explain the significance of the results of the 1922 general election.



The Outbreak of Civil War

- The decisive verdict of the electorate strengthened the position of **Collins** in dealing with the threat to the authority of the government posed by the anti-Treaty IRA. Shortly after the election, two events occurred that forced him to act. On **22 June** two IRA members shot **Sir Henry Wilson** dead in London. A leading figure in the British Army, Wilson had been a long-term enemy of Irish nationalism and had recently been acting as an adviser to the Unionist Government in Northern Ireland.
- The **British Government** assumed that the attack had been carried out by the anti-Treaty IRA and threatened to take action against the garrison in the **Four Courts** if Collins failed to do so. On **27 June** the anti-Treaty forces in the Four Courts captured **J.J. O'Connell**, the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Free State Army. At this point, Collins finally acted. He ordered the garrison in the Four Courts to surrender. When it failed to do so, the Free State forces began to bombard the building, using guns provided by the British Army. The bitterness and divisions of the previous six months had finally erupted into open warfare. **Sinn Féin** and the **IRA**, which had been united throughout the War of Independence, were now irrevocably split into two warring factions, fighting a civil war in which members of the same family frequently found themselves on opposing sides.

The Fighting in Dublin and the 'Munster Republic'

- The fighting between the Free State Army and its republican enemies in Dublin was over within a week. On **30 June** the garrison of around two hundred men in the Four Courts was forced to surrender. In the course of the fighting, the building was destroyed, together with the adjoining **Public Records Office**, which housed priceless historical sources dating back hundreds of years.
- Much of the area around **O'Connell Street** was destroyed in fighting and burning that recalled the destruction of Easter Week 1916. Leading republican **Cathal Brugha** died from wounds received when emerging from a hotel; he had chosen to die rather than surrender. At the end of a week's fighting, the republicans were defeated in Dublin, and their struggle was taken up in the country.
- In **Munster**, an area stretching from **Limerick** to **Waterford** was controlled by the republicans and was known as the '**Munster Republic**'. The Free State forces set about capturing the main cities there. In July 1922, they succeeded in taking Limerick, Waterford, and Tralee. On **12 August**, Free State troops, who had travelled by sea from Dublin, succeeded in capturing **Cork city**. At that stage, **de Valera** called for peace but was overruled by **General Liam Lynch**, the commander of the republican forces. These forces now became known as the '**Irregulars**' because they were in rebellion against the Free State, or 'regular', Army.
- With the main towns in government hands, the Civil War continued to be fought in the countryside, with both sides engaging in ambushes and reprisals. After the capture of Cork by his forces, Collins decided to tour the area to inspect army units and to explore the possibilities of peace. However, this tour was dramatically interrupted by news from Dublin of the death of **Arthur Griffith**.

The Deaths of Griffith and Collins

- **Arthur Griffith** died suddenly from a **brain haemorrhage** on **12 August 1922**. Although he was only fifty-one years of age, the stress and strain of the previous months and weeks had undermined his health. **Collins** was chosen to succeed him as **President of the Dáil**.
- After Griffith's funeral, Collins returned to **Munster** on a tour of inspection. His death at the hands of republicans in an ambush at **Béal na Bláth** in west Cork on **22 August** came as a profound shock to the country.
- The funeral of **Michael Collins** on **28 August** was one of the largest seen in Dublin since **Charles Stewart Parnell's**, thirty years previously. Like Parnell, he had been a larger-than-life figure who had a profound impact on the history of the country. After his death, the **Civil War** became even more bitter, as both sides were determined to fight it out to the end.

Key Personality: ARTHUR GRIFFITH (1871-1922)

- **Arthur Griffith** was born in Dublin in 1871. A printer by trade, he emigrated to South Africa in 1896. He returned to Ireland in 1899 and became editor of the weekly newspaper **United Irishman**. Considering Home Rule to be insufficient, he favoured instead the Austro-Hungarian model of 'dual monarchy'. This concept, which he proposed in **The Resurrection of Hungary (1904)**, advocated the withdrawal of Irish MPs from Westminster and the establishment instead of a separate Irish parliament in Dublin.
- With regard to economic policy, Griffith advocated self-sufficiency and the protection of Irish industry behind tariff barriers. He was greatly influenced in these matters by the German economist **Friedrich List**. In order to propagate his political and economic ideas, he established a new organisation called **Sinn Féin** ('We Ourselves'). From its foundation in 1905 until 1918, Sinn Féin enjoyed minimal electoral success and was largely irrelevant.
- Griffith himself supported the formation of the **Irish Volunteers** and opposed recruitment to the British Army at the outset of **World War I**. Although Sinn Féin as an organisation had no involvement in the **Easter Rising of 1916**, the British Government erroneously blamed Sinn Féin for instigating the Rising. Griffith was arrested after the Rising, although he had not been involved.

Key Personality: ARTHUR GRIFFITH (1871-1922)

- Sinn Féin became the focal point for the newly resurgent nationalism that developed after the Rising. The new Sinn Féin was a revolutionary republican organisation that bore little resemblance to Griffith's original movement. Griffith himself was elected to Parliament for Sinn Féin in a by-election in **Cavan** in 1917.
- Following the resounding victory of Sinn Féin in the **1918 general election**, the Sinn Féin MPs followed Griffith's original proposal of abstaining from Westminster and established instead the **First Dáil**.
- In the First Dáil, Griffith became **Vice-President** and **Minister for Home Affairs**. He was responsible for setting up the **Sinn Féin courts**, which took the place of the British courts in many parts of the country. He led the Irish delegation that negotiated the **Treaty settlement** with Britain in 1921. He strongly defended the Treaty in the Dáil and, following the resignation of de Valera, became **President of the Dáil**. He now faced the huge task of establishing and consolidating the new **Irish Free State** in the face of a bitter Civil War. Griffith's health had been failing for some time, and he died on **12 August 1922**.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What solution did Arthur Griffith favour as an alternative to Home Rule?
2. What economic policy did he advocate?
3. What organisation did he found in 1905 and what part did it play in Irish politics up to 1916?
4. How did Sinn Féin in 1918 differ from Griffith's original party?
5. What contribution did Arthur Griffith make to Irish affairs?

Key Personality: MICHAEL COLLINS (1890-1922)

- **Michael Collins** was born near **Clonakilty, Co. Cork**, in 1890. At the age of fifteen, he went to work in the **British Post Office** and lived in London until 1916. During his years in London, he became involved in Irish cultural organisations, including the **GAA** and the **Gaelic League**. He joined the **IRB** and fought in the **GPO** during the **Easter Rising of 1916**. He was arrested after the Rising and was interned for a period in **Frongoch Camp** in Wales.
- On his release from Frongoch in 1917, Collins quickly became a key figure in the revitalised independence movement. In the **1918 general election**, he was elected Sinn Féin MP to the **Westminster Parliament** in the South Cork constituency but instead took his seat in the **First Dáil**, which met on **21 January 1919**. On the same day, the first shots of the **War of Independence** were fired.
- During the War of Independence, Collins revealed his abilities as a strategist and organiser. As **Minister for Finance** in the government established by the First Dáil, he helped raise money to pay for the activities of the Dáil. As head of intelligence during the War of Independence, he orchestrated the activities of the **IRA**. He used his own select group, known as the '**Squad**', to infiltrate the British intelligence network in Ireland and assassinate many of its key operatives.

Key Personality: MICHAEL COLLINS (1890-1922)

- Following the declaration of a truce in July 1921 and the subsequent breakdown of talks between **Lloyd George** and **de Valera**, full negotiations between the British and Irish delegations commenced in October. Despite his protestations, Collins was chosen by de Valera to be a member of the Irish delegation appointed to negotiate a **Treaty** settlement.
- Collins believed that the negotiated Treaty, which granted **dominion status** to Ireland, was the best that could be achieved in the circumstances. He vehemently defended the Treaty in the Dáil and argued that it was a stepping stone to greater independence in the future. Although the Treaty was accepted by a small majority in the Dáil, the divisions within the country, the Dáil, and the IRA formed the prelude to the outbreak of **civil war**.
- During the Civil War, Collins became **Commander-in-Chief** of the forces of the newly created **Irish Free State**. It was a bloody and bitter conflict, culminating in his own death at the hands of anti-Treaty forces in an ambush at **Béal na Bláth, Co. Cork**, on **22 August 1922**.
- Collins was a leader of exceptional ability and energy. As an outstanding organiser and strategist, he played a pivotal role during the War of Independence and the Civil War. In accepting, defending, and implementing the Treaty settlement, Collins proved to be a realist who had made the successful transition from revolutionary to politician.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What part did Michael Collins play in revitalising the independence movement after 1916?
2. What role did he play in the War of Independence?
3. How did he view the Anglo-Irish Treaty?
4. What role did he play during the Civil War?
5. What contribution did Michael Collins make to Irish affairs?

The Civil War Continues

- After the deaths of **Griffith** and **Collins**, **William T. Cosgrave** was elected President. He immediately united the **Dáil Government** and the **Provisional Government**. His choice of the dynamic **Kevin O'Higgins** for the key post of **Minister for Home Affairs** was of immense significance. In this position, O'Higgins was responsible for justice and law and order. As such, he was determined to crush all challenges to the authority of the Free State Government.
- Although the **Irregular forces** continued to fight the Civil War, their position weakened considerably. During the War of Independence, public support for the guerrilla fighters ensured that they had many 'safe houses' to hide in, but most people now supported the Free State Government. In October 1922, the **Catholic bishops** met at Maynooth and issued a very strong statement in support of Cosgrave's Government. They condemned the Irregulars for 'waging a war of wanton destruction, of murder and assassination against the people and the people's government. People refusing to abandon their rebellion would be **excommunicated**.
- The Free State Government introduced strict emergency legislation, with **military courts** and the **death penalty** for those found with illegal weapons. On **24 November 1922**, **Erskine Childers** was shot by firing squad for this offence. He claimed that the pistol had been given to him by Collins before the split over the Treaty.

The Civil War Continues

- On **8 December 1922**, the Free State Government acted in a ruthless manner to suppress the challenge of the Irregulars. In response to the shooting dead of the pro-Treaty Cork TD **Seán Hales**, four Irregular prisoners were executed without trial. These were four leading republicans from different parts of Ireland - **Rory O'Connor, Liam Mellows, Joseph McKelvey** and **Dick Barrett**. Rory O'Connor had been the best man at the wedding of Kevin O'Higgins, who now voted for his execution. The government's action was criticised on moral grounds by the Catholic **Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Edward Byrne**, among others. He conveyed his dismay privately to Cosgrave. However, Cosgrave and his colleagues argued that their first duty was to defend the state. In all, **seventy-seven republican prisoners** were executed during the Civil War.

The Civil War Continues

- By April 1923 around **13,000 republican prisoners** were imprisoned. Any protests, such as hunger strikes, were ignored by the Free State Government. As the fighting continued, some appalling atrocities were committed by both sides, especially in Co. Kerry. On **10 April 1923, General Liam Lynch** was killed in action in the Knockmealdown Mountains. He was succeeded as Chief of Staff of the Irregular forces by **Frank Aiken**, who almost immediately ordered a ceasefire. On **24 May, de Valera**, who had been overshadowed by the military leaders during the Civil War, issued a statement to his followers calling on them to lay down their arms:
 - *Soldiers of the Republic, Legion of the Rearguard: the Republic can no longer be defended successfully by your arms. Further sacrifice of life would now be in vain... Military victory must be allowed to rest for the moment with those who have destroyed the Republic.*
- According to republicans, they never finally surrendered but only hid their arms. For the Free State side, however, the Civil War ended in a victory and gave supporters of the Treaty the opportunity to reconstruct and develop the newly independent state.

The Impact of the Civil War

- The Civil War had profound consequences for the development of Ireland in the decades ahead.
 - It created deep **bitterness** and **resentment**, which lasted for many years.
 - It resulted in the deaths of talented men on both sides, including **Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins, Harry Boland, Rory O'Connor, and Cathal Brugha**.
 - It resulted in significant **destruction of property** and damage to the state's **infrastructure**, such as the transport system.
 - It greatly **strengthened the position of unionists** in Northern Ireland as their nationalist opponents fought one another.
 - The Civil War was a distraction from serious **social problems** such as poverty, bad housing, unemployment, and emigration.
 - The two main political parties to emerge in the Irish Free State, **Fianna Fáil** and **Fine Gael**, can trace their origin back to the split in Sinn Féin between pro- and anti-Treaty factions.
 - Unlike in other European countries, where politics was divided along **right- and left-wing lines**, in Ireland Civil War divisions predominated.
- By the time the Civil War came to an end in the spring of 1923, Ireland had experienced conflict of one kind or another for nearly nine years. The challenges facing any government of a newly independent state are formidable. The Civil War ensured that the Free State Government would have to overcome additional serious obstacles in order to establish law and order and justify Ireland's claim to rule itself in the years ahead.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What event marked the beginning of the Civil War?
2. How did the republicans fare in Dublin during the Civil War?
3. What was the Munster Republic?
4. Name the two pro-Treaty leaders who died in August 1922.
5. How did the Civil War end?
6. State two consequences of the Civil War for the development of Ireland.

YouTube Links

- Frongoch University of Revolution (45 mins)
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9l0l2zp35_A&t=1239s
- Frongoch from a Welsh perspective (3 mins)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsgP6EHVr08>
- Laffan very good here