

The Articles of Union

A shortened and simplified version
(National Records of Scotland, State Papers, reference SP13/209)

Article 1: Creation of Great Britain and the united flag

- THAT the two kingdoms of Scotland and England, shall upon the first day of May 1707, and forever after, be united into one kingdom by the name of GREAT BRITAIN.
- That the crosses of St Andrew and St George be joined in such manner as Her Majesty shall think fit, and be used in all flags, banners, standards and ensigns both at sea and land.

Article 2: Succession to the throne set upon the heirs of Princess Sophia of Hanover

- THAT the succession to the monarchy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain should pass to Her Most Excellent Princess Sophia of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants.
- That all Papists, and persons marrying Papists, shall be excluded from the Imperial Crown of Great Britain and her Dominions.

Article 3: Creation of one parliament

- THAT the United Kingdom of Great Britain be represented by one and the same parliament to be called the Parliament of Great Britain.

Article 4: Freedom of trade in Britain

- THAT all Subjects of the United Kingdom of Great Britain shall have full freedom of trade and navigation to and from any port or place within the said United Kingdom, her colonies and Dominions.

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Article 5: Registration of British trading vessels

- THAT all ships or vessels belonging to Her Majesty's Scottish subjects at the time of the Union, including those that are foreign-built, shall be regarded as ships of Great Britain.
- That all owners of the ships shall make an oath, by 1 May 1708, that the vessels belong to them and that no foreigner has any share or interest in them and that the oath shall be made before Customs Officers in the nearest port.
- That the Customs Officers shall register the oath and deliver it to the ship's Master to secure her passage and that a duplicate copy be sent to the Customs Office in Edinburgh for registration and to London for entry into a General Register of Trading Ships belonging to Great Britain.

Article 6: Setting the same trade regulations, customs and duties in Britain

- THAT all parts of the United Kingdom shall have the same trade regulations, and be liable to the same customs and duties on imports and exports.

Article 7: Setting the same excise duties in Britain

- That the excise duty settled on liquor in England shall operate throughout the whole United Kingdom after union.

Article 8: Salt tax in Scotland

- That Scotland shall be free of paying duty on Scottish salt for the next 7 years until 1710, after which time Scotland will be liable for the same duty as England.
- THAT after the Union, all foreign salt imported into Scotland shall be charged at the same rate of duty as salt imported into England.
- That after the Union, Scotland will pay the same duty on the use of foreign salt for curing and packing herrings, white fish and salmon for export as in England.

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Article 9: introduction of a Scottish land tax to be paid

- THAT Scotland will pay a new land tax to the British Exchequer in proportion to the sum paid by England.

Article 10: Scotland to be exempt from certain existing English taxes

- THAT Scotland will not be charged with English duties on stamped paper, vellum and parchment.

Article 11: Scotland to be exempt from certain existing English taxes

- THAT Scotland will not be charged with English duties on windows and lights until the year 1710.

Article 12: Scotland to be exempt from certain existing English taxes

- THAT Scotland will not be charged for coal, culm [coal dust] and cinders used within Scotland until the year 1710.

Article 13: Scotland to be exempt from certain existing English taxes

- THAT Scotland will not be charged the English duty on malt set from 24 June 1707.

Article 14: Scotland not to be charged with any extra malt tax while England is at war with Spain

- That any malt made and consumed in Scotland will not be charged during England's present war with Spain.

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Article 15: Scotland to receive financial assistance to pay a percentage of the national debt

- That Scotland shall receive the sum of £398,085 10sh, known as the Equivalent, towards payment of their portion of the English national debt and that full accounts be kept.
- That part of the sum should
 - cover replacing Scottish coinage with English money
 - provide Scottish investors with some compensation for their losses in the Darien colony.
- That the Company of Scotland Trading to Africa and the Indies should be dissolved and stop trading.
- That £2,000 per year for the next 7 years shall be spent towards encouraging and promoting the manufacture of coarse wool in Scotland.
- That £2,000 per year shall be spent towards encouraging and promoting the fishing industry and other manufactures and improvements in Scotland for the good of the United Kingdom.
- That Her Majesty shall appoint Commissioners who shall be accountable to the Parliament of Great Britain for issuing the Equivalent with powers to inspect full accounts.

Article 16: Scottish coinage replaced by English currency

- THAT after the Union, the coin shall be of the same standard and value throughout the United Kingdom as now established in England.
- That a Mint shall be continued in Scotland under the same rules as the Mint in England.

Article 17: Scottish system replaced by English weights and measures

- THAT after the Union, the same weights and measures shall be used throughout the United Kingdom as are now established in England.

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Article 18: Scotland to retain its own laws and legal system

- THAT after the Union, the laws concerning the regulation of trade, customs and excise shall be the same in Scotland as in England.
- But that all other laws in use within the Kingdom of Scotland will remain with the same force as before 1707.

Article 19: Scotland to retain its own Courts in which English Courts have no authority

- THAT the Court of Session [the civil court] remain within Scotland as it is constituted by Scots law.
- That the Court of Justiciary [the criminal court] remain within Scotland as it is constituted by Scots law.
- That the Court of Admiralty and all other courts of law now established in Scotland be continued.
- That no sentences in Scotland be interfered with or stopped by the English courts.
- That a Court of Exchequer be set up in Scotland for deciding questions concerning the revenues of customs and excise with the same power and authority as the Court of Exchequer in England.
- That the Court of Exchequer now in Scotland remains until a new Court be settled by the Parliament of Great Britain in Scotland after the Union.
- That the monarch shall continue a Privy Council in Scotland for preserving public peace and order until the Parliament of Great Britain shall think fit to alter it or establish another effectual method for that end.

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Article 20: The rights of heritable jurisdictions preserved [this article was abolished in 1747]

- THAT the terms of the Union will not alter the rights of those holding heritable posts, offices and authorities granted for life as laid down in the laws of Scotland before 1707.

Article 21: The right of Scottish Royal Burghs preserved [repealed in the 19th century]

- THAT the rights and privileges of the Royal Burghs of Scotland remain intact after the union.

Article 22: Scottish representation in the United Parliament

- THAT at the time of the Union, 16 peers will sit and vote in the House of Lords, and 45 representatives of Scotland will sit and vote in the House of Commons in the Parliament of Great Britain.
- That the members shall assemble and meet in their respective houses of the Parliament of Great Britain at such time and place as shall be so appointed by Her Majesty, and shall be the two houses of the first Parliament of Great Britain.

Article 23: Scottish peers to have the same privileges as the English peers

- THAT the 16 peers of Scotland to sit in the House of Lords in the Parliament of Great Britain, shall have all the privileges which the peers of England now have and shall have after the Union.

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Article 24: Settling the use of State items and official records

- THAT after the Union, there will be one Great Seal for the United Kingdom of Great Britain which shall be different from the Great Seal now used in either Kingdom.
- That after the Union, the Great Seal of Scotland shall be kept and used in all things relating to private rights or grants within that kingdom.
- That the Crown, Sceptre and Sword of State, the records of parliament, and all other records, rolls and registers whatsoever, both public and private, general and particular, will be kept as they are within Scotland, and that they shall so remain in all time coming after the Union.

Article 25: Enforcement of the full authority of the law

- THAT all laws and statutes in either Scotland or England so far as they are contrary to, or inconsistent with the Terms of these Articles, shall from and after the Union cease and become void, and shall be declared as such by the respective Parliaments of each Kingdom.

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