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Forty barons were weary of King John's efforts to minimize their rights. In 1215, they prevailed upon the King to sign the *Magna Carta* (the "Great Charter") which protected their rights. Among their gains, from the King, was the right of *habeas corpus* (still an important legal right). This image, from the British Library, depicts the *Magna Carta* as it appears in the statutes of Britain. The Library describes it with these words: "This manuscript of statutes, which would have been used by lawyers and administrators, contains the text of the 1215 *Magna Carta*, the 1225 *Magna Carta* issued by Henry III and the *Charter of the Forest*."

In those days, before the Church of England existed, excommunication was a terrible penalty. The mere threat of it often caused people to change course.

The *Magna-Carta* barons remained undaunted. The "Great Charter" is the product of their defiance. (Be sure to use the zoom feature to closely examine this ancient document. [Click here](#) to read an English translation.)

Four original copies of the *Magna Carta* still exist. Two are kept at the British Museum in London; one is located at [Lincoln Cathedral](#) (once the tallest building in the world); and the fourth is at [Salisbury Cathedral](#).

For Great Britain, *Magna Carta* is Statute Number One.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-BARONS-PREVAIL-Magna-Carta>

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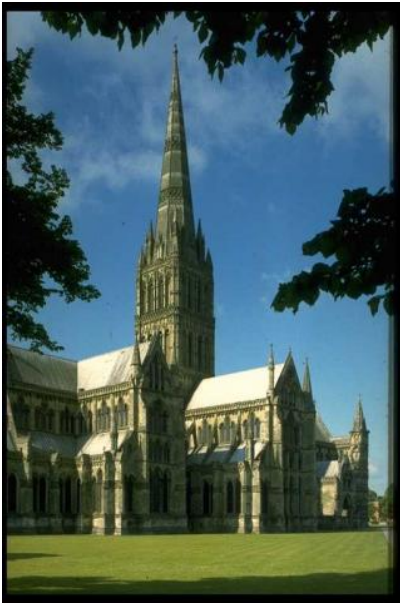


Lincoln Cathedral

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Salisbury Cathedral

Image online, courtesy the [Georgia College](#) website.

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Salisbury Cathedral - Interior

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THE BARONS PREVAIL

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