

0. BRITAIN'S STATUTE NUMBER ONE - Story Preface

1. WHAT IS THE MAGNA CARTA
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The Library of Congress has a copy of the *Magna Carta* in its law library. Although the LoC's copy is not one of the originals which King John signed in 1215, it dates back to the 14th century. The Library's curators describe it as follows: "*Magna Charta cum Statutis Angliae* [Miniature *Magna Carta* with the Statutes of England]. Bound manuscript on vellum, fourteenth century. Law Library, Library of Congress." Click on the image for a better view.

Of the *Magna Carta's* 63 provisions, the most important categories were:

- Independence of the church in England (no wonder Innocent III was upset);
- Freedom from undue tax burdens;
- The fundamental concept of *Habeas Corpus* ("you have the body") by which no one can be imprisoned without due process of law;
- Unencumbered inheritance rights.

The effects of the original *Magna Carta*, in the short term, were minimal since Innocent III declared it null and void soon after Runnymede.

Before long, however, the Charter was confirmed by later English kings. Its eminent place, and effect, in the modern world of law remains unquestioned.

In fact, one of the greatest treasures owned by the U.S. Library of Congress is a 14th century copy of Magna Carta. With its intricate colored pen work and its original pigskin wrapper, this fundamental source of English common law is a priceless holding. Other copies of this wellspring of basic civil rights are equally beautiful.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BRITAIN-S-STATUTE-NUMBER-ONE-Magna-Carta>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/BRITAIN-S-STATUTE-NUMBER-ONE-Magna-Carta>

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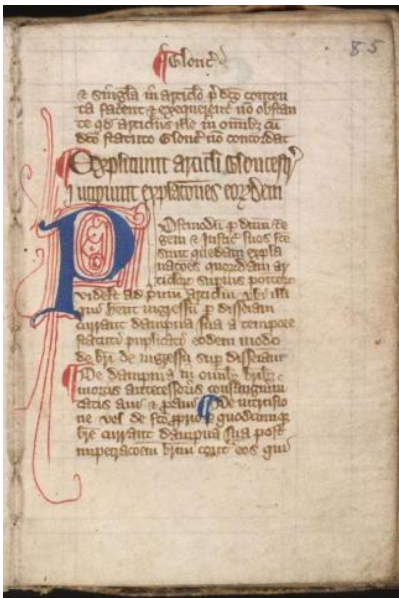


Runnymede

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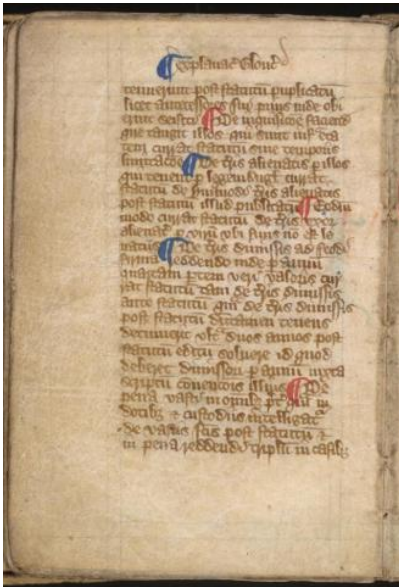
Magna Carta - 14th Century Copy

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

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Magna Carta - 14th Century Copy, P. 2

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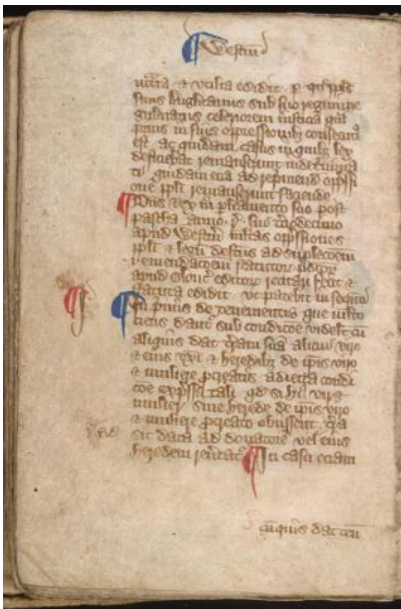
Magna Carta - 14th Century Copy, P. 3

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Magna Carta - 14th Century Copy, P. 4

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Magna Carta - 1297 A.D. Copy

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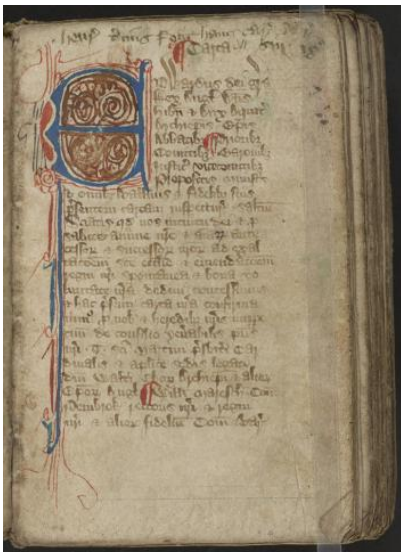
Magna Carta - Beautiful Copy

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

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BRITAIN'S STATUTE NUMBER ONE

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