

OUR MAGNA CARTA
SURETY BARON
ANCESTORS



INTRODUCTION

On June 15, 1215, King John met a powerful gathering of his barons on the field of Runnymede, an ancient meadow traditionally used for councils and negotiation. The King arrived with only a small number of followers, while more than two thousand armed knights and barons were encamped opposite him, demonstrating the overwhelming strength of the opposition.

The barons had taken a solemn oath to force King John to confirm and respect their traditional liberties. If he refused, they were prepared to wage war against him to the death. They regarded their cause as a righteous struggle to recover the rights and customs enjoyed by their ancestors—rights they believed had been violated by what they saw as an oppressive and exploitative ruler. Months earlier, they had already presented their demands to the King for consideration. Before the day ended at Runnymede, John agreed to their initial terms and affixed his seal to a preliminary document known as the “Articles of the Barons.” Over the next four days, further negotiations refined and finalized the agreement. On June 19, the completed charter was formally sealed with the Great Seal of England. Although the final copies were issued on that later date, they were all dated back to June 15, 1215, the day the agreement was first reached at Runnymede.

This document became known as the Great Charter of Liberties, or Magna Carta. It is often called the “Mother of Constitutions” because many of the principles it established influenced the development of constitutional government across the English-speaking world and beyond. It affirmed that the king was not above the law and that even royal authority was subject to established legal limits.

The Magna Carta drew on long-standing customary practices—what would later be called common law—and helped give them written form and authority. Among its enduring principles were protections such as due process of law, judgment by one’s peers, and the idea that taxation should not be imposed without consent. At its core, the charter emphasized liberty: rights were to be held by individuals and their heirs in perpetuity, not granted or withdrawn at the arbitrary will of the ruler. In this sense, the law itself was supreme, and the authority of the king was bound by it.

The eight surety barons referenced in this report, along with King John of England, are presented as ancestral figures. Their lineages are included alongside their profiles to help the reader better understand their historical connections and descendants.



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ANCESTORS

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Seal of King John on original Magna Carta

Magna Carta

Magna Carta—Latin for “Great Charter,” formally *Magna Carta Libertatum* (“Great Charter of Freedoms”)—is an English legal document first issued in 1215. It played a major early role in the long development of constitutional law. The charter arose from conflict between King John, his barons, and Pope Innocent III over the limits of royal authority. It required the king to give up certain powers, follow established legal procedures, and accept that his authority was subject to the law.

Several common misconceptions surround Magna Carta. It was not the first document to limit an English king’s power, and it drew in part on earlier agreements like the Charter of Liberties. In practice, it did not greatly restrict royal power during the Middle Ages, and it was not a single fixed document but a series of revised versions issued over time.

Magna Carta was reissued and updated throughout the medieval period and again under the Tudor and Stuart monarchs. By the early 1800s, most of its clauses had been repealed in England. However, its influence spread widely, especially to the United States, where its principles helped shape the Constitution and Bill of Rights. As a result, Magna Carta remains one of the most important foundations of modern democratic law.

Events leading to the Magna Carta

After the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and continued developments during the 12th century, the English monarchy grew extremely powerful. By 1199, the king of England was among the most powerful rulers in Europe. This strength came from a highly organized central government, built on earlier Anglo-Saxon systems, and from vast landholdings in both England and Normandy.

However, when King John came to the throne in the early 13th century, his rule was marked by a series of military, financial, and political failures. These setbacks weakened his position and angered many of his barons. As tensions grew, the barons eventually rebelled, seeking to limit the king’s authority and protect their traditional rights—events that ultimately led to the creation of Magna Carta.

France

A major source of unrest during King John’s reign came from his actions in France. When he took the throne after the death of his brother Richard, there was no clear rule of succession. Although John was crowned, his nephew Arthur of Brittany also had a strong claim to the Angevin lands. To secure his position, John needed the support of the French king, Philip Augustus, and in return he granted Philip large areas of French territory.

Tensions worsened after John married Isabella of Angoulême, who had previously been promised to Hugh IX of Lusignan, one of John's own vassals. Hugh appealed to Philip, who used the dispute as an excuse to declare John's French lands forfeited. Philip then backed Arthur as the rightful ruler and invaded John's territories in 1202. John's response failed to strengthen his position; instead, Arthur died under suspicious circumstances—widely believed to be at John's hands—costing him support among his French allies.

Following the defeat of John's forces and allies, especially at the Battle of Bouvines, Philip took control of most of John's northern French lands, including Normandy. This loss weakened John both militarily and financially, since these territories had been a major source of income. To recover his losses, John increased taxes in England, further angering the barons.

Note: John's nickname, "Lackland," does not come from these losses. It refers to the fact that, unlike his older brothers, he was not granted significant lands at birth.

The Church

During King John's reign, there was ongoing disagreement over how the Archbishop of Canterbury should be chosen. Traditionally, the king selected a candidate with approval from the monks of Canterbury. However, by the early 13th century, bishops also wanted influence in the decision.

A conflict arose when the monks secretly chose one of their own, excluding John. Angered, John rejected their choice and instead nominated the Bishop of Norwich. Pope Innocent III intervened, declared both candidates invalid, and supported a new choice: Stephen Langton, a respected scholar. John refused to accept Langton and expelled the monks from England.

In response, the pope placed England under an interdict in 1208, which suspended most public religious services, and excommunicated John in 1209. He also supported a possible French invasion of England. Facing growing pressure, John eventually gave in. He accepted Langton as Archbishop, allowed the exiled clergy to return, and, to fully reconcile with the pope, handed over England and Ireland as papal fiefs, agreeing to pay an annual fee.

This settlement angered the barons even more, as it reduced their independence and increased resentment toward the king's rule.

Taxes

Despite King John's weaknesses, England's government continued to function largely because of the strong administrative system established earlier by

King Henry II. This system had even sustained the kingdom during the reign of Richard I. However, maintaining the government and military required large amounts of money, especially as mercenary soldiers had become far more expensive.

The situation worsened after John lost key French territories, particularly Normandy, which had been an important source of income. To try to recover these lands, John needed to raise substantial funds. However, increasing taxes was difficult, since there was a long-standing expectation that taxation would remain relatively stable.

To generate revenue, John introduced and expanded several unpopular measures. He strictly enforced Forest Law—rules governing royal lands that were easy to violate and carried harsh penalties. He also raised *scutage* (a payment made instead of military service) eleven times during his 17-year reign, a sharp increase compared to previous kings. Some of these increases were especially steep.

In addition, John imposed what is often considered England's first income tax, which raised an enormous sum for the time—£60,000. These heavy and frequent financial demands angered the barons and contributed significantly to the growing opposition against his rule.

Rebellion and Civil War

By 1215, opposition to King John had reached a breaking point. A group of rebel barons joined forces and seized London on June 10, gaining a major strategic advantage. With support growing—even among previously neutral nobles—they pressured John into negotiating. On June 15, 1215, at Runnymede, the king agreed to their demands and sealed a document known as the "Articles of the Barons." In return, the barons renewed their loyalty to him a few days later. A formal version of the agreement, later called Magna Carta, was issued on July 15 and copies were distributed across the البلاد to officials like sheriffs and bishops.

One of the most important provisions was Clause 61, the "security clause." It created a council of 25 barons who had the authority to enforce the agreement. If the king failed to comply, they could legally seize his castles and property—a practice known as distraint, never before applied to a monarch. John was also required to swear obedience to this council.

However, John never intended to follow the agreement. Viewing it as forced upon him, especially since Clause 61 severely limited his authority, he soon rejected it after the barons left London. This led to the outbreak of the First Barons' War. Pope Innocent III supported John, declaring the charter invalid and condemning it as an agreement imposed by force. He

released the king from his obligation to obey it, arguing that it undermined both royal authority and the Church's power.

Magna Carta Reissued

King John died during the civil war on October 18, 1216, likely from dysentery. His death changed the course of the conflict. His nine-year-old son, Henry III, became king, and many barons were more willing to support a child ruler than continue rebellion. Henry was quickly crowned, helping bring the war to an end.

To secure support, Henry's regents reissued Magna Carta in his name on November 12, 1216, removing some of its more controversial clauses, including the powerful Clause 61. The charter was issued again in 1217. Later, in 1225, when Henry came of age, he reissued Magna Carta himself in a shorter version containing 37 articles.

Henry III ruled for 56 years, and during that time Magna Carta became firmly established as part of English law and tradition. By the time of his death in 1272, it was much harder for any monarch to reject it, unlike King John had done earlier.

In 1297, Henry's son, Edward I, confirmed Magna Carta for the final time by reissuing it as part of a statute known as *Confirmatio cartarum*. This act formally reconfirming the 1225 version as a lasting part of English law.

Content of Magna Carta

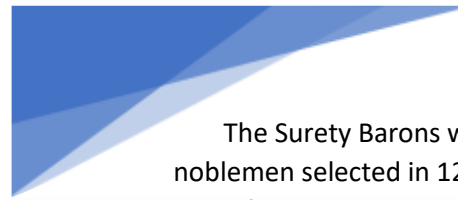
Magna Carta was originally written in Latin. Much of its content was taken almost word for word from the earlier Charter of Liberties issued by Henry I in 1100. That document set limits on the king's power, especially in how he treated church officials and nobles, and granted certain civil liberties to both the Church and the English nobility.

Rights Still in Force Today

Some parts of Magna Carta remain important in law today. Clause 1 guarantees the freedom of the English Church, originally meaning independence from royal control. Clause 13 protects the traditional rights of the city of London. Clause 39 establishes the principle of due process, meaning no one can be punished without lawful judgment.

Although the original 1215 charter was annulled in 1216, later versions—especially the 1297 reissue—preserved some of these rights.

Over time, most clauses were repealed. The process began in 1828, and by 1969 nearly all of Magna Carta had been removed from law, leaving only Clauses 1, 13, 39, and 40 still in force.



The Surety Barons were a group of 25 noblemen selected in 1215 to enforce the terms of Magna Carta and ensure King John complied with its provisions. They acted as guarantors of the agreement, with authority to compel the king to follow the charter—even by force if necessary.

Roger Bigod (c. 1150-1221)

Roger Bigod was the son of Hugh Bigod, 1st Earl of Norfolk. He succeeded to the earldom of Norfolk in 1189. Although his claim had been disputed during the reign of Henry II by his stepmother, his position was confirmed by King Richard I. In the same year, Richard also entrusted him with a diplomatic mission to France, sending him as an ambassador.



The Bigod family is closely associated with Framlingham Castle in Suffolk, a powerful medieval fortress. The castle is striking in scale: its outer walls stand about forty-four feet high and eight feet thick, and thirteen towers—each roughly fifty-eight feet tall—still survive, along with a gateway and remnants of outer defenses.

Tradition suggests the site may date back to early Roman or even earlier Anglo-Saxon times. It is sometimes identified as the location of a fortified earthwork said to have sheltered Saint Edmund in 870 when he fled the Danes, though this cannot be confirmed. The Danes later captured the fort, but it was retaken in 921. Afterward, it became a Crown possession and eventually passed to William the Conqueror after 1066.

In 1100, Henry I granted Framlingham Castle to Roger Bigod. It is possible that he was responsible for constructing the first stone buildings on the site. The surviving ruins largely date from the 12th century, though earlier materials may have been reused. The castle appears to have been extensively rebuilt around 1170. It remained in the Bigod family for several generations before later passing to the Mowbray family.

The title Earl of Norfolk has been created multiple times in the English peerage. First established in 1070, it was notably held in the 12th and 13th centuries by the Bigod family. It later passed to the Mowbrays, who were also created Dukes of Norfolk. Through descent, the Bigods were connected to William Marshal and inherited the hereditary office of Earl Marshal, a dignity still associated with the Dukes of Norfolk today. The modern creation of the title dates to 1644 for Thomas Howard, with the title continuing in the Howard family line.

Roger Bigod played an important political role under King Richard I. He participated in negotiations for Richard's release from captivity and, after the king's return, served as justiciar. He was also one of four earls



OUR MAGNA CARTA
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ANCESTORS

LINEAGE *from* ROGER & HUGH BIGOD

29. Roger Bigod
m. Isabella de Warren (Plantagenet)
28. Hugh Bigod
m. Maud Marshall
27. Isabel Bigod
m. John Fitz Geoffrey
26. Maud Fitz John
m. William de Beauchamp
25. Isabella Beauchamp
m. Patrick Chaworth
24. Maud Chaworth
m. Henry of Lancaster (Plantagenet)
23. Maud Plantagenet
m. Henry Percy
22. Henry Percy
m. Margaret de Neville
21. Henry (Hotspur) Percy
m. Elizabeth Mortimer
20. Henry Percy
m. Eleanor de Neville
19. Henry Percy
m. Eleanor Poynings
18. Margaret Percy
m. William Gascoigne
17. Elizabeth Gascoigne
m. George Talboys
16. Ann Talboys
m. Edward Dymoke
15. Frances Dymoke
m. Thomas Windebank
14. Mildred Windebank
m. Robert Reade
13. George Reade
m. Elizabeth Martiau

Continued next page

chosen to carry the silken canopy over the king during ceremonial occasions, a position of high honor, especially given that his father Hugh Bigod had previously borne the royal sceptre in royal processions.

Around Christmas 1181, Roger married Ida de Tosney, who had formerly been a mistress of King Henry II. Together they had several children, including:

- Hugh Bigod
- William Bigod
- Roger Bigod
- John Bigod
- Ralph Bigod
- Margaret Bigod
- Mary Bigod
- Ida Bigod

Roger Bigod was appointed in 1189 by King Richard I as one of the ambassadors to King Philip of France, with the purpose of securing support for the recovery of the Holy Land. In 1191, he held the position of keeper of Hereford Castle.

Between 1195 and 1202, Bigod served as chief judge in the King's Court, reflecting his significant role in royal administration and justice. In 1200 (the precise year sometimes recorded with variation in sources), he was sent by King John as one of the royal messengers to summon William the Lion, King of Scotland, to do homage at the Parliament held in Lincoln.

He later accompanied King John on an expedition to Poitou. However, upon returning to England, Bigod shifted his allegiance and joined the rebel barons. He became one of the leading supporters of the Charter of Liberties, a stance that led to his excommunication by Pope Innocent III.

Roger Bigod died before August 1221. He had married, as his first wife, Isabella, the daughter of Hamelin Plantagenet, who was himself descended from the Earls of Warenne.

LINEAGE *from* ROGER & HUGH BIGOD

Continued

12. Mildred Reade
m. Augustine Warner
11. Elizabeth Warner
m. John Lewis II
10. Robert Lewis
m. Jane Meriwether
9. Nicholas Lewis
m. Mary Walker
8. Jane Meriwether Lewis
m. Hudson Martin
7. Mary Walker Martin
m. Thurston Dickinson
6. Frances Elizabeth Dickinson
m. John Duggins
5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins
m. James Henry Smith
4. Laura Ann Smith
m. Peter Christian Jensen
3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen
m. Wilhelm August Heineman
2. Peter E. Heineman
m. Doris J. Crum
1. Peter Lea Heineman

Hugh Bigod (c. 1182-1225)

Hugh Bigod was the eldest son of Roger Bigod, 2nd Earl of Norfolk, and for a brief period became the 3rd Earl of Norfolk. In 1215, he was among the twenty-five barons appointed as sureties for the Magna Carta during the reign of King John, playing a key role in enforcing its terms.



He inherited his father's estates, including Framlingham Castle, in 1221. Hugh died relatively young in 1225, in his early forties.

In late 1206 or early 1207, Hugh married Maud Marshal (d. 1248), daughter of Sir William Marshal, 1st Earl of Pembroke. Their marriage linked the Bigod family to one of the most powerful noble houses of the period. Together they had several children:

- Roger Bigod, who became 4th Earl of Norfolk (b. c. 1209)
- Hugh Bigod, who later served as Justiciar of England
- Isabella Bigod
- Ralph Bigod
- Simon Bigod, who died before 1242 (recorded in *Ancestral Roots of Certain American Colonists Who Came to America Before 1700* by Frederick Lewis Weis, Line 232-29)

Shortly after Hugh Bigod's death, Maud Marshal remarried, taking as her second husband William de Warenne, 6th Earl of Surrey.

Richard de Clare (1162-1218)

Richard de Clare, 4th Earl of Hertford, was the son of Roger de Clare, 3rd Earl of Hertford, and Maud de St. Hilary. Often called the Earl of Clare, he inherited a share (moiety) of the Giffard estates through his ancestor Rohese.

He attended the coronations of King Richard I at Westminster on September 3, 1189, and King John on May 27, 1199, and was also present when King William of Scotland paid homage at Lincoln.



Hertford Castle, associated with the de Clare family, exists in two historical forms: a 10th-century ruin and a later 17th-century structure. The older remains include a surviving wall and part of a Norman tower, while the rest of the site consists of a Jacobean brick addition that has since been fully modernized.

Around 1172, Richard married Amice Fitz William, Countess of Gloucester (c. 1160-1220), the second daughter of William Fitz Robert, 2nd Earl of Gloucester, and Hawise de Beaumont. Despite previously swearing peace with King John at Northampton, Richard later joined the barons in opposition to the king, leading to the seizure of his castle at Tonbridge. He played a major role in the negotiations that produced the Magna Carta and was one of the twenty-five barons appointed to enforce it. On November 9, 1215, he served as a commissioner for the barons in peace negotiations with the king.

That same year, his lands in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex were granted to Robert de Betun. Both Richard and his son were among the barons excommunicated by the Pope in 1215. Earlier, sometime before 1198, Richard and his wife Amice had been ordered by the Pope to separate due to consanguinity. Although they complied for a time, they were later reconciled with papal approval.



OUR MAGNA CARTA
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ANCESTORS

LINEAGE *from* RICHARD & GILBERT de CLARE

29. Richard de Clare
m. Amice FitzRobert
28. Gilbert de Clare
m. Isabella Marshall
27. Richard de Clare
m. Maude de Lacie
26. Gilbert de Clare
m. Joan of Acre
25. Elizabeth de Clare
m. John de Burgh
24. William de Burgh
m. Maud Plantagenet
23. Elizabeth de Burgh
m. Lionel Plantagenet
22. Philippa Plantagenet
m. Edmund Mortimer
21. Elizabeth Mortimer
m. Henry Percy
20. Henry Percy
m. Eleanor de Neville
19. Henry Percy
m. Eleanor Poynings
18. Margaret Percy
m. William Gascoigne
17. Elizabeth Gascoigne
m. George Talboys
16. Ann Talboys
m. Edward Dymoke
15. Frances Dymoke
m. Thomas Windebank
14. Mildred Windebank
m. Robert Reade
13. George Reade
m. Elizabeth Martiau

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Gilbert de Clare (1180-1230)

Gilbert de Clare, 5th Earl of Hertford, was the son of Richard de Clare, 4th Earl of Hertford. He inherited extensive holdings from multiple family lines: the Clare estates from his father; the Gloucester estates and the honor of St. Hilary from his mother, Amice Fitz Robert; and a share (moiety) of the Giffard estates through his ancestor Rohese. In June 1202, he was placed in charge of the lands of Harfleur and Montrevillers.



Gilbert built a castle at Caerdigan in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Through marriage, this property later passed to William Marshal, who went on to control some of the strongest castles in the region. The castle's keep has since been converted into a modern house, and scholars believe the original structure may have been made of wood.

In 1215, Gilbert and his father were among the barons appointed as sureties of the Magna Carta. During the First Barons' War, he supported Louis, the French dauphin, and fought under the baronial cause at Lincoln. In 1217, he was captured by William Marshal; he later married Marshal's daughter, Isabella. In 1223, he joined his brother-in-law, the Earl Marshal, on a campaign into Wales. Two years later, in 1225, he attended the confirmation of the Magna Carta by King Henry III.

In 1228, Gilbert led a campaign against the Welsh, during which he captured Morgan Gam, who was released the following year. He later took part in an expedition to Brittany but died on his return journey at Penrose in that duchy. His body was transported back to England via Plymouth and Cranbourne and was buried at Tewkesbury. His widow, Isabel, later married Richard Plantagenet, Earl of Cornwall and King of the Romans.

John Fitz Robert (1190-1240)

John Fitz Robert married Ada de Baliol and, through her, became lord of Barnard Castle, which had originally been founded by her ancestor, Barnard de Baliol. Today, the castle survives only as a partial ruin, but its remaining walls still rise high above a steep cliff descending to the River Tees. It overlooks the town and can be approached through a gate in the yard of the King's Head Inn.



The castle was likely founded between 1112 and 1132. Its keep, known as Baliol's Tower, stands about fifty feet tall and later served as a backdrop for Sir Walter Scott's

LINEAGE *from*

RICHARD & GILBERT de CLARE

Continued

12. Mildred Reade
m. Augustine Warner
11. Elizabeth Warner
m. John Lewis II
10. Robert Lewis
m. Jane Meriwether
9. Nicholas Lewis
m. Mary Walker
8. Jane Meriwether Lewis
m. Hudson Martin
7. Mary Walker Martin
m. Thurston Dickinson
6. Frances Elizabeth Dickinson
m. John Duggins
5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins
m. James Henry Smith
4. Laura Ann Smith
m. Peter Christian Jensen
3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen
m. Wilhelm August Heineman
2. Peter E. Heineman
m. Doris J. Crum
1. Peter Lea Heineman

Rokeby. The surrounding grounds cover roughly six acres.

Fitz Robert also held Warkworth Castle in Northumberland, a well-preserved fortress dating back at least to the 12th century. Located near the mouth of the River Coquet, it is approached by a double-arched bridge and is bordered by water on three sides. Much of the structure remains intact, including the walls, gateway, Great Hall, the 13th-century Lion Tower, and the 14th-century keep. Additions may have been made by Robert Fitz Richard during the reign of Henry II. The castle later passed to the Percy family under Edward III and is now held by the Dukes of Northumberland.

At the time of the barons' meeting at St. Edmundsbury, John Fitz Robert remained loyal to King John and served, alongside John Marshal, as joint governor of Norwich and Oxford castles. He later joined the baronial rebellion and became so prominent in the uprising that the king seized his lands. However, under the next reign, he returned to royal allegiance, and his castles and extensive estates were restored to him.

7 He was subsequently appointed High Sheriff of

Northumberland and governor of Newcastle upon Tyne.

John Fitz Robert died in 1240, the same year as his father. The chronicler Matthew Paris described him as "a man of noble birth, and one of the chief barons of the northern provinces of England."



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LINEAGE *from* JOHN FITZ ROBERT

- | | |
|--|---|
| 28. John Fitz Robert
m. Ada Baliol | 12. Mildred Reade
m. Augustine Warner |
| 27. Roger Fitz John
m. Isabel | 11. Elizabeth Warner
m. John Lewis II |
| 26. Robert Fitz Roger
m. Margaret Zouche | 10. Robert Lewis
m. Jane Meriwether |
| 25. Euphemia Fitz Roger
m. Ralph de Neville | 9. Nicholas Lewis
m. Mary Walker |
| 24. Ralph de Neville
m. Alice Audley | 8. Jane Meriwether Lewis
m. Hudson Martin |
| 23. John de Neville
m. Maud de Percy | 7. Mary Walker Martin
m. Thurston Dickinson |
| 21. Ralph de Neville
m. Margaret Stafford | 6. Frances Elizabeth Dickinson
m. John Duggins |
| 20. Joan de Neville
m. Unknown | 5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins
m. James Henry Smith |
| 19. Joan de Neville
m. William Gascoigne | 4. Laura Ann Smith
m. Peter Christian Jensen |
| 18. William Gascoigne
m. Margaret Percy | 3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen
m. Wilhelm August Heineman |
| 17. Elizabeth Gascoigne
m. George Talboys | 2. Peter E. Heineman
m. Doris J. Crum |
| 16. Ann Talboys
m. Edward Dymoke | 1. Peter Lea Heineman |
| 15. Frances Dymoke
m. Thomas Windebank | |
| 14. Mildred Windebank
m. Robert Reade | |
| 13. George Reade
m. Elizabeth Martiau | |

John De Lacie (1192-1240)

John de Lacie was the seventh Baron of Halton Castle and hereditary constable of Chester. The Lacie family held several key strongholds along the Welsh border, including Beeston, Chester, and Halton castles. Beeston Castle is now largely in ruins, and its keep is difficult to identify, though it may have been the large wall tower east of the gatehouse. The site occupies a high position, protected on three sides by sheer drops and on the fourth by a steep slope, making it naturally defensible. The castle had two baileys: an inner bailey on the summit and an outer one on sloping ground below. The inner bailey was fortified on its most accessible side by a gatehouse, two wall towers, and a ditch measuring about thirty-five feet wide and thirty feet deep, cut across the promontory. Notably, this artificial ravine was created roughly 250 years before the use of blasting techniques. Beeston Castle was founded in the 13th century by Ranulf de Blondville, Earl of Chester.



Chester was the last city in England to surrender to William the Conqueror, doing so in 1070. Afterward, William appointed his nephew, Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, to oversee the border region. Chester Castle, originally built by the first Norman Earl of Chester, has since been largely replaced by modern structures, including courts, a prison, and barracks. The only surviving Norman feature is "Julius Caesar's Tower," a square tower by the river that was later used as a powder magazine. Its appearance has been significantly altered by later rebuilding in red stone, making its Norman origins less obvious. Aside from this and another round tower with nearby buildings in the upper ward, the castle was dismantled in the late 18th century. From Julius Caesar's Tower, one can see the ruins of Beeston Castle, which was itself dismantled in 1646. Nothing remains of Halton Castle.

Lincoln was one of the most important cities in England at the time of the Norman Conquest, ranking fourth in the realm. William the Conqueror chose it as the site of a major castle, and according to the Domesday Book, 166 houses were demolished to make space for its construction. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that William began building the castle in 1068 on the site of a former Roman fort. Because the terrain was relatively flat, a large defensive bank was constructed around it. The castle features two mottes, the larger crowned by a polygonal shell keep, possibly built by the widow of Ralph de Gernon. King Stephen captured the castle in 1140, and in 1216 it was held by the barons who supported Magna Carta.



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LINEAGE *from* JOHN de LACIE

28. John de Lacie
Margaret Quincey
27. Maude de Lacie
m. Richard de Clare
26. Thomas de Clare
m. Juliane Fitz Maurice
25. Maude de Clare
m. Robert de Clifford
24. Idonea de Clifford
m. Henry de Percy
23. Maude de Percy
m. John de Neville
22. Ralph de Neville
m. Margaret Stafford
21. Ralph de Neville
m. Mary de Ferrars
20. Joan de Neville
m. Unknown
19. Joan de Neville
m. William Gascoigne
18. William Gascoigne
m. Margaret Percy
17. Elizabeth Gascoigne
m. George Talboys
16. Ann Talboys
m. Edward Dymoke
15. Frances Dymoke
m. Thomas Windebank
14. Mildred Windebank
m. Robert Reade
13. George Reade
m. Elizabeth Martiau

Continued next page

John de Lacie was among the earliest barons to take up arms in support of Magna Carta and was appointed to help enforce its provisions in the counties of York and Nottingham. For his role, he was excommunicated by the Pope. After the accession of King Henry III, he joined a group of nobles on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he distinguished himself during the Siege of Damietta.

In 1232, de Lacie was created Earl of Lincoln, and in 1240 he was appointed governor of Chester and Beeston castles. He died on July 22, 1240, after a long illness, and was buried at the Cistercian Abbey of Stanlaw in Cheshire. The chronicler Matthew Paris noted his death, recording that he "went the way of all flesh" on St. Mary Magdalene's Day that year.

His first wife was Alice, daughter of Gilbert d'Aquila, but they had no children. She died in 1215. He later married Margaret, the only daughter and heir of Robert de Quincy, a fellow crusader who died in the Holy Land and was the eldest son of Saer de Quincy, one of the Magna Carta sureties. John and Margaret had three children. Their daughter, Lady Margaret, survived him and later married Walter Marshal, Earl of Pembroke.

LINEAGE *from* JOHN de LACIE

Continued

12. Mildred Reade
m. Augustine Warner
11. Elizabeth Warner
m. John Lewis II
10. Robert Lewis
m. Jane Meriwether
9. Nicholas Lewis
m. Mary Walker
8. Jane Meriwether Lewis
m. Hudson Martin
7. Mary Walker Martin
m. Thurston Dickinson
6. Frances Elizabeth Dickinson
m. John Duggins
5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins
m. James Henry Smith
4. Laura Ann Smith
m. Peter Christian Jensen
3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen
m. Wilhelm August Heineman
2. Peter E. Heineman
m. Doris J. Crum
1. Peter Lea Heineman

William Malet (1175-1215)

William Malet was still a minor in 1194, when he is first mentioned in connection with an expedition to Normandy. His principal estate was at Curry Malet. From 1210 to 1214, he served as sheriff of Somerset and Dorset.



Malet later joined the barons in opposition to King John and became one of the Magna Carta sureties. As a result, his lands in four counties were confiscated and granted to his son-in-law Hugh de Vivonia, to Thomas Basset, and to his father-in-law. In 1216, he was excommunicated by the Pope. He was also fined 2,000 marks, though this amount was not paid until after his death; at that time, 1,000 marks were remitted in recognition of military service he had previously provided to King John in Poitou.

There were several contemporaries bearing the Malet name—at least five relatives—who held lands in England or Jersey during this period.

William Malet died around 1215. He had married Mabel, also known as Alice or Aliva, the daughter of Thomas Basset of Headington. Today, nothing remains of his estate at Curry Malet.



OUR MAGNA CARTA
SURETY BARON
ANCESTORS

LINEAGE *from* WILLIAM MALET

- | | |
|---|---|
| 28. William Malet
m. Mabel (Alice) Basset | 12. Mildred Reade
m. Augustine Warner |
| 27. Hawise Malet
m. Robert de Muscegros | 11. Elizabeth Warner
m. John Lewis II |
| 26. John de Muscegros
m. Cecily of Bicknor | 10. Robert Lewis
m. Jane Meriwether |
| 25. Robert de Muscegros
m. Agnes Ferrers | 9. Nicholas Lewis
m. Mary Walker |
| 24. Hawise de Muscegros
m. John de Ferrers | 8. Jane Meriwether Lewis
m. Hudson Martin |
| 23. Robert de Ferrers
m. Elizabeth Boteler | 7. Mary Walker Martin
m. Thurston Dickinson |
| 22. Robert de Ferrers
m. Joan de Beaufort | 6. Frances Elizabeth Dickinson
m. John Duggins |
| 21. Mary de Ferrers
m. Ralph de Neville | 5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins
m. James Henry Smith |
| 20. John de Neville
m. Unknown | 4. Laura Ann Smith
m. Peter Christian Jensen |
| 19. Joan de Neville
m. William Gascoigne | 3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen
m. Wilhelm August Heineman |
| 18. William Gascoigne
m. Margaret Percy | 2. Peter E. Heineman
m. Doris J. Crum |
| 17. Elizabeth Gascoigne
m. George Talboys | 1. Peter Lea Heineman |
| 16. Ann Talboys
m. Edward Dymoke | |
| 15. Frances Dymoke
m. Thomas Windebank | |
| 14. Mildred Windebank
m. Robert Reade | |
| 13. George Reade
m. Elizabeth Martiau | |

Geoffrey de Saye (c. 1155-1230)

Geoffrey de Saye took up arms with the other barons against King John, and as a result, his extensive lands across ten counties were confiscated and granted to Peter de Crohim. Six of these counties are known—Northampton, Cambridge, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Lincoln—though the remaining four cannot be identified with certainty, nor is it clear which specific castles in these regions belonged to Geoffrey.



During the siege of Rochester Castle, William d'Aubigny and his fellow barons had been assured that other rebel leaders would come to their aid if the king attacked. In practice, such a relief effort would have been difficult. If royal forces controlled the bridge over the River Medway, a direct march from London along the Dover Road would have been blocked, forcing any relief army to take a longer route through Maidstone. On October 26, a baronial force advanced as far as Dover but, upon hearing that King John was approaching, quickly retreated to London, leaving the garrison at Rochester to fend for itself. This attempted advance may have been more symbolic than a serious effort.

A further attempt to resolve the situation came through negotiation. On November 9, King John issued letters of safe conduct for Richard de Clare, Robert Fitz Walter, Geoffrey de Saye, and the Mayor of London to meet with royal representatives, including Peter de Roches, Hubert de Burgh, and the earls of Arundel and Warenne. It is unclear whether this meeting ever took place, and if it did, it produced no results. It is possible that the barons were willing to surrender Rochester Castle in exchange for safe passage for the garrison, but no agreement was reached. Despite the lack of outcome, this episode provides the only known association between Geoffrey de Saye and a specific castle—Rochester.

After the civil war ended and the French dauphin was expelled, Geoffrey returned to royal allegiance under King Henry III and recovered his confiscated lands. He died on October 24, 1230, leaving a son and heir, William, by his wife Alice, daughter of William de Cheney.



OUR MAGNA CARTA
SURETY BARON
ANCESTORS

LINEAGE *from* GEOFFREY de SAYE

- | | |
|---|---|
| 28. Geoffrey de Saye
m. Alice Periers | 12. Mildred Reade
m. Augustine Warner |
| 27. William de Saye
m. Sibyl Marshall | 11. Elizabeth Warner
m. John Lewis II |
| 26. William de Saye
m. Mary | 10. Robert Lewis
m. Jane Meriwether |
| 25. Lady de Saye
m. John de Sudley | 9. Nicholas Lewis
m. Mary Walker |
| 24. John de Sudley
m. Joan le Boterer | 8. Jane Meriwether Lewis
m. Hudson Martin |
| 23. Elizabeth Boteler
m. Robert de Ferrers | 7. Mary Walker Martin
m. Thurston Dickinson |
| 22. Robert de Ferrers
m. Joan de Beaufort | 6. Frances Elizabeth Dickinson
m. John Duggins |
| 21. Mary de Ferrers
m. Ralph de Neville | 5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins
m. James Henry Smith |
| 20. John de Neville
m. Unknown | 4. Laura Ann Smith
m. Peter Christian Jensen |
| 19. Joan de Neville
m. William Gascoigne | 3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen
m. Wilhelm August Heineman |
| 18. William Gascoigne
m. Margaret Percy | 2. Peter E. Heineman
m. Doris J. Crum |
| 17. Elizabeth Gascoigne
m. George Talboys | 1. Peter Lea Heineman |
| 16. Ann Talboys
m. Edward Dymoke | |
| 15. Frances Dymoke
m. Thomas Windebank | |
| 14. Mildred Windebank
m. Robert Reade | |
| 13. George Reade
m. Elizabeth Martiau | |

King John of England (1167-1216)

King John of England, often called "Lackland," was born on December 24, 1167, at Beaumont Palace in Oxford. He died on October 19, 1216, at Newark Castle in Nottinghamshire, aged 48, and was buried in Worcester Cathedral. He was the youngest son of King Henry II of England and Eleanor of Aquitaine, and a member of the Plantagenet dynasty. His nickname "Lackland" reflected the fact that, unlike his older brothers, he was not originally granted significant territories by his father.



John married twice. His first marriage, on August 29, 1189, at Marlborough, was to Isabella of Gloucester (often styled Countess of Gloucester). His second marriage took place on August 24, 1200, in Bordeaux, to Isabella of Angoulême, born in 1188, daughter of Count Aymer of Angoulême and Alice de Courtenay. After John's death, Isabella remarried Hugh X de Lusignan (also known as Hugh X de la Marche) in 1219. She died on May 31, 1246, and was buried at Fontevraud Abbey.

John became King of England and Lord of Ireland in 1199, following the death of his brother, King Richard I. Although the rightful heir was Arthur, Duke of Brittany—son of John's elder brother Geoffrey—John secured the throne and fought to maintain his claim against both Arthur and King Philip II of France, who supported Arthur. John captured Arthur, who later died under suspicious circumstances, widely believed to have been on John's orders. In the ensuing conflicts with France, John lost much of his continental inheritance, including Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Poitou.

John's reign was marked by conflict and controversy. His harsh rule and disregard for established rights brought him into serious disputes with both the Church and the English barons. In 1206, he rejected the pope's preferred candidate for Archbishop of Canterbury, prompting Pope Innocent III to place England under



OUR MAGNA CARTA
SURETY BARON
ANCESTORS

LINEAGE *from* KING JOHN OF ENGLAND

- | | |
|--|---|
| 28. King John of England
m. Isabella of Angouleme | 12. Mildred Reade
m. Augustine Warner |
| 27. King Henry III
m. Eleanor of Provence | 11. Elizabeth Warner
m. John Lewis II |
| 26. King Edward I
m. Eleanor of Castile | 10. Robert Lewis
m. Jane Meriwether |
| 25. King Edward II
m. Isabel of France | 9. Nicholas Lewis
m. Mary Walker |
| 24. King Edward III
m. Phillipa of Hainault | 8. Jane Meriwether Lewis
m. Hudson Martin |
| 23. Duke Lionel Plantagenet
m. Elizabeth de Burgh | 7. Mary Walker Martin
m. Thurston Dickinson |
| 22. Philippa Plantagenet
m. Edmund Mortimer | 6. Frances Elizabeth Dickinson
m. John Duggins |
| 21. Elizabeth Mortimer
m. Henry Percy | 5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins
m. James Henry Smith |
| 20. Henry Percy
m. Eleanor de Neville | 4. Laura Ann Smith
m. Peter Christian Jensen |
| 19. Henry Percy
m. Eleanor Poynings | 3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen
m. Wilhelm August Heineman |
| 18. Margaret Percy
m. William Gascoigne | 2. Peter E. Heineman
m. Doris J. Crum |
| 17. Elizabeth Gascoigne
m. George Talboys | 1. Peter Lea Heineman |
| 16. Ann Talboys
m. Edward Dymoke | |
| 15. Frances Dymoke
m. Thomas Windebank | |
| 14. Mildred Windebank
m. Robert Reade | |
| 13. George Reade
m. Elizabeth Martiau | |

interdict in 1208. John retaliated by seizing Church property, leading the pope to depose him and encourage King Philip II of France to invade England. Facing widespread opposition at home, John submitted to the papacy in 1213, agreeing to hold his kingdom as a papal fief.

Despite this, hostilities continued. Philip's attempted invasion failed after his fleet was defeated off the coast of Flanders. John then launched a campaign in France but suffered a decisive defeat at the Battle of Bouvines in 1214. This setback emboldened the English barons, who had long resented his rule. In 1215, they

demanded a charter guaranteeing their rights. After initially refusing, John was forced to concede, and on June 15, 1215, at Runnymede, he sealed the Magna Carta.

John soon sought to overturn the agreement, securing papal annulment of the charter and raising an army of foreign mercenaries, which led to the First Barons' War. However, he died in 1216 before the conflict was resolved. He was succeeded by his young son, who became King Henry III.



National Society Magna Charta Dames and Barons

The National Society Magna Charta Dames and Barons was instituted at the Capitol of the United States in 1909 and is composed of people, who are descendants of one or more of the Barons of England who in or before the year 1215 rendered actual service toward securing, and who, after many defeats, finally did secure the articles of constitutional liberty, properly called Magna Charta, from their sovereign, John King of England.

The Society is a 501(c)(3) organization with male and female membership from all over the world. With Divisions in 31 States and with 24 Chapters or Colonies, they provide information and education concerning Magna Charta at meetings during the year.

Membership is by invitation only. Enrollment provides life membership for a Primary Member and qualified successor.

The Magna Carta Barons



*William d'Albini
Belvoir*



*Hugh Bigod
Framlingham*



*Roger Bigod
Framlingham*



*Henry de Bohun
Trowbridge*



*Gilbert de Clare
Clare*



*Richard de Clare
Clare*



*John FitzRobert
Warkworth*



*Robert FitzWalter
Little Dunmow*



*William de Forz
Skipton*



*William Hardel
Mayor of London*



*William de Huntingfield
Huntingfield*



*John de Lacy
Pontefract*



*William de Lanvalet
Walkern*



*William Malet
Curry Mallet*



*Geoffrey de Mandeville
Pleshey*



*William Marshal
Long Crendon*



*Roger de Montbegon
Hornby*



*William de Mowbray
Thirsk*



*Richard de Montfichet
Stansted Mountfichet*



*Richard de Percy
Topcliffe*



*Saer de Quincey
Leicester*



*Robert de Ros
Helmsley*



*Geoffrey de Say
West Greenwich*



*Robert de Vere
Castle Hedingham*



*Eustace de Vesel
Alnwick*