

Magna Carta

Means “Big Letter (Great Charter)”

Brought to **King John** to sign (he was a doofus—did a lot of things to get the nobles mad: tried to dethrone brother (King Richard the Lion-Hearted), abused power, taxed heavily, allowed corrupt judges, allowed corrupt officials, dishonest, unjust, greedy, took away nobles’ power, dissed the church, etc.)

By Barons and Archbishop of Canterbury (his nobles and a representative of the Church)

In June, **1215**

Contained **63** ways that the king’s power would be limited or that things would be done differently

- No more raising taxes without consulting nobles
- No selling royal positions to the highest bidder
- No demanding outrageous fees from the losers in court
- No imprisoning people without a trial
- No taking property from people without a trial
- Must recognize the barons’ rights
- Protection of the law
- Trial by jury

**Written document - no “forgetting”
what was agreed to**

Forever limited the power of kings

Forced King John to recognize that the nobles had rights and King John couldn’t just do whatever he wanted.

Began gradual loss of power for the monarch, gradual increase of power for the governed

Initially, just helpful to the barons; much later, extended to all citizens

Two big ideas came from the Magna Carta:

People had rights

The power of government should be limited

Contains ideas that are used in the US Constitution today (mostly in the Bill of Rights):

No taxation without representation (in Constitution, but not in Bill of Rights)

Equal protection under the law; due process of law

Right to a trial by jury

Right to a speedy trial

Right to a public trial

No cruel and unusual punishment

All came from the MAGNA CARTA!!!