

r This document is a bridge between the Constitutional protection of one's access to the common law, and the Magna Carta. The modern value of the following is that it links the Magna Carta to the Common Law. The U.S. Constitution guarantees one's access to the Common Law, i.e. the Magna Carta. (See the next to last line of the first paragraph.)

CONFIRMATIO CARTARUM [26]

October 10, 1297

EDWARD, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Guian[27], to all those that these present letters shall hear or see, greeting. Know ye that we, to the honour of God and of Holy Church, and to the profit of our realm, have granted for us and our heirs, that the Charter of liberties, and the Charter of the forest[28], which were made by common assent of all the realm, in the time of King HENRY our father, shall be kept in every point without breach. (2) And we will that the same charters shall be sent under our seal, as well to our justices of the forest, as to others, and to all sheriffs of shires, and to all our other officers, and to all our cities throughout the realm, together with our writs, in the which it shall be contained, **that they cause the foresaid charters to be published, and to declare to the people that we have confirmed them in all points; (3) and that our justices, sheriffs, mayors, and other ministers, which under us have the laws of our land to guide, shall allow the said charters pleaded before them in judgement in all their points, that is to wit, the Great Charter as the common law[*] and the Charter of the forest, for the wealth of our realm.**

2. AND we will, That if any judgement be given from henceforth contrary to the points of the charters aforesaid by the justices, or by any other our ministers that hold plea before them against the points of the charters, it shall be undone, and holden for nought.

3. AND we will, That **the same charters shall be sent, under our seal, to cathedral churches throughout our realm, there to remain, and shall be read before the people two times by the year.**

4. AND that all archbishops and bishops shall pronounce the sentence of excommunication against all those that by word, deed, or counsel do contrary to the foresaid charters, or that in any point break or undo them. (2) and that the said curses be twice a year denounced and published by the prelates aforesaid. (3) And if the said prelates, or any of them, be remiss in the denunciation of the said sentences, the archbishops of Canterbury and York for the time being shall compel and distrein them to the execution of their duties in form aforesaid.

5. AND for so much as divers people of our realm are in fear that the aids and tasks[29] which they have given to us beforetime towards our wars and other business, of their own grant and good will (howsoever they were made) might turn to a bondage to them and their heirs, because they might be at another time found in the rolls, and likewise for the prises taken throughout the realm by our ministers: (2) We have granted for us and our heirs, that we shall not draw such aids, tasks, nor prises into a custom, for any thing that hath been done heretofore, be it by roll or any other precedent that may be founden.

6. Moreover we have granted for us and our heirs, as well to archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, and other folk of holy church, as also to earls, barons, and to all the communalty of the land, that for no business from henceforth we shall take such manner of aids, tasks, nor prises, but by the common assent of the realm, and

for the common profit thereof, saving the ancient aids, and prises due and accustomed.

7. AND for so much as the more part of the communalty of the realm find themselves sore grieved with the maletent of woolls, that is to wit, a toll of forty shillings for every sack of wool, and have made petition to us to release the same; We at their requests have yearly released it, and have for granted us and our heirs, that we shall not take such things without their common assent and good will, saving to us and our heirs the custom of woolls, skins, and leather, granted before by the communalty aforesaid. In witness of which things we have caused these our letters to be made patents. Witness EDWARD our son at London the tenth day of October, the five and twentieth year of our reign.

NOTES

[26] 25 Edw. i, c. i. Danby Pickering (ed.), Statutes at Large (Cambridge, 1726-1807), I, 273-75.

[27] Aquitaine, the territory in southwestern France.

[28] The Charter of the Forest was issued in 1217, early in the reign of Henry III, as a supplement to Magna Carta. It was confirmed by him in 1225. Some of the provisions omitted in the reissues of Magna Carta which relate to forest matters appeared in the Charter of the Forest.

[29] "Aids," "tasks," and "prises" were forms of taxation.

The above is quoted from "Sources of Our Liberties" Edited by Richard L. Perry, American Bar Foundation; distributed by Associated College Presses, 32 Washington Place, New York 3, New York.

[*] This reaffirms that the Magna Carta may be pleaded as the Common Law before a court.

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