

John, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Count of Anjou, to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, barons, justiciars, foresters, sheriffs, stewards, servants and all his officials and faithful subjects greeting. Know that we, from reverence for God and for the salvation of our soul and those of all our ancestors and heirs, for the honour of God and the exaltation of Holy Church and the reform of our realm, on the advice of our reverend fathers, Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England and Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Henry, Archbishop of Dublin, William of London, Peter of Winchester, Jocelin of Bath and Glastonbury, Hugh of Lincoln, Walter of Worcester, William of Coventry and Benedict of Rochester, bishops; Master Pandulf, subdeacon and member of the household of the lord pope, brother Aimeric, master of the knighthood of the Temple in England; and the noble men, William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, William, Earl of Salisbury, William, Earl of Warenne, William, Earl of Arundel, Alan of Galloway, Constable of Scotland, Warin fitz Gerold, Peter fitz Herbert, Hubert de Burgh, seneschal of Poitou, Hugh de Neville, Matthew fitz Herbert, Thomas Basset, Alan Basset, Philip d'Aubigné, Robert of Ropsley, John Marshal, John fitz Hugh and others, our faithful subjects:

1. In the first place have granted to God and by this our present charter have confirmed, for us and our heirs in perpetuity, that the English church is to be free, and have its rights undiminished and its liberties unimpaired: and we wish it thus observed, which is evident from the fact that of our own free will before the quarrel between us and our barons began, we granted and confirmed by our charter freedom of elections, which is thought to be of the greatest necessity and importance to the English church, and obtained confirmation of this from the lord pope Innocent III, which we shall observe and wish our heirs to observe in good faith in perpetuity. We have also granted to all the free men of our realm, for ourselves and our heirs for ever, all the liberties written below, to have and hold, them and their heirs from us and our heirs.
2. If any of our earls or barons, or others holding of us in chief by knight service dies, and at his death his heir be of full age and owe relief, he is to have his inheritance through the ancient relief, namely the heir or heirs of an earl £100 for a whole earl's barony, the heir or heirs of a baron £100 for a whole barony, the heir or heirs of a knight 100s. at most for a whole knight's fee; and anyone who owes less shall give less according to the ancient usage of fiefs.
3. If, however, the heir of any such person has been under age and in wardship, when he comes of age he is to have his inheritance without relief and without fine.
4. The guardian of the land of such an heir who is under age is not to take from the land more than the reasonable revenues, and reasonable customary dues and reasonable services, and that without destruction and waste of men or goods. And if we entrust the wardship of the land of such a one to a sheriff, or to any other who is answerable to us for its revenues, and he destroys or wastes the land in his charge, we will take amends of him, and the land is to be entrusted to two lawful and prudent men of that fief who are to be answerable to us for the revenues or to him to whom we have assigned them. And if we give or sell to anyone the wardship of any such land and he causes destruction or waste, he is to lose the wardship and it is to be transferred to two lawful and prudent men of the fief who likewise are to be answerable to us as is aforesaid.

5. Moreover so long as the guardian has the wardship of the land, he [is to](#) maintain the houses, parks, preserves, fishponds, mills and the other things pertaining to [that](#) land from its revenues; and he [is to](#) restore to the heir when he comes of age all his land stocked with ploughs and wainage such as the agricultural season demands and the revenues of the estate can reasonably bear.

6. Heirs [are to](#) be given in marriage without disparagement, yet so that before a marriage is contracted it [is to](#) be made known to the heir's next of kin.

7. After her husband's death, a widow [is to](#) have her marriage portion and her inheritance at once and without any hindrance; nor [is she to](#) pay anything for her dower, her marriage portion, or her inheritance which she and her husband held on the day of her husband's death; and she may stay in her husband's house for forty days after his death, within which period her dower [is to](#) be assigned to her.

8. No widow [is to](#) be compelled to marry so long as she wishes to live without a husband, provided that she gives security that she will not marry without our consent if she holds of us, or without the consent of [her](#) lord of whom she holds, if she holds of another.

9. Neither we nor our bailiffs [are to](#) seize any land or rent [for any](#) debt so long as the chattels of the debtor are sufficient to repay the debt; nor [are](#) the sureties of the debtor [to](#) be distrained so long as the [principal](#) debtor himself is capable of paying the debt; and if the principal debtor defaults in the payment of the debt, not [having the](#) wherewithal to pay it, the sureties [are to](#) answer for the debt; and, if they wish, they may have the lands and [rents](#) of the debtor until they have received satisfaction for the debt they paid on his behalf, unless the principal debtor shows that he has discharged his obligations to the sureties.

10. If anyone has borrowed from the Jews any amount, great or small, [and](#) dies before [that](#) debt is paid, [the debt is not to](#) carry interest as long as the heir is under age, of whomsoever he holds; and if that debt fall into our hands, we will take nothing except the principal sum specified in the [bond](#).

11. And if a man dies owing a debt to the Jews, his wife [is to](#) have her dower and pay nothing of that debt; and if he [leaves](#) children under age, their needs [are to](#) be met in a manner in keeping with the holding of the deceased; and the debt [is to](#) be paid out of the residue, saving the service due to the lords. Debts owing to others than Jews [are to](#) be dealt with likewise.

12. No scutage or aid is to be [imposed in](#) our realm except by the common counsel of our realm, unless it is for the ransom of our [body](#), the knighting of our eldest son or the first marriage of our eldest daughter; and for these only a reasonable aid is to be levied. Aids from the city of London are to be treated likewise.

13. And the city of London is to have all its ancient liberties and free customs both by land and water. Furthermore, we will and grant that all other cities, boroughs, towns and ports [are to](#) have all their liberties and free customs.

14. And to obtain the common counsel of the realm for the assessment of an aid (except in the three cases aforesaid) or a scutage, we will have archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls and greater barons summoned individually by our letters, and we shall also have summoned generally through our sheriffs and bailiffs all those who hold of us in chief, for a fixed date,

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with at least forty days' notice, and at a fixed place; and in all letters of summons we will state the reason for the summons. And when the summons has thus been made, the business [is to](#) go forward on the day arranged according to the counsel of those present, even if not all those summoned have come.

15. Henceforth we will not grant anyone that he may take an aid from his free men except to ransom his [body](#), to make his eldest son a knight and to marry his eldest daughter once; and for these purposes only a reasonable aid is to be levied.

16. No man [is to](#) be compelled to perform more service for a knight's fee or for any other free tenement than is due therefrom.

17. Common pleas [are not to](#) follow our court but shall be held in some fixed place.

18. [Recognitions](#) of novel disseisin, mort d'ancestor, and darrein presentment [are not to](#) be held elsewhere than in [their own counties](#), and in this manner: we, or if we [should be](#) out of the realm our chief justiciar, shall send two justices through each county four times a year who, with four knights of each county chosen by the county, [are to](#) hold the said assizes in the county court on the day and in the place of meeting of the county court.

19. And if the said assizes cannot be held on the day of the county court, so many knights and freeholders of those present in the county court on that day shall remain behind as will suffice to make judgements, according to the amount of business to be done.

20. A free man [is not to](#) be amerced for a trivial offence, except in accordance with the [nature](#) of the offence; and for a serious offence he shall be amerced according to [the greatness of the offence](#), saving his livelihood; and a merchant likewise, saving his merchandise; in the same way a villein [is to](#) be amerced saving his wainage; if they fall into our mercy. And none of the aforesaid ameracements [is to](#) be imposed except by the [oath](#) of reputable men of the neighbourhood.

21. Earls and barons [are not to](#) be amerced except by their peers and only in accordance with the [nature](#) of the offence.

22. No clerk [is to](#) be amerced on his lay tenement except in the manner of the others aforesaid and without reference to the size of his ecclesiastical benefice.

23. No vill or man shall be [compelled](#) to build bridges at river banks, except those who ought to do so [of old and](#) by law.

24. No sheriff, constable, coroners or other of our bailiffs may hold pleas of our Crown.

25. All shires, hundreds, wapentakes and ridings [are to](#) be at the ancient farms without any increment, except our demesne manors.

26. If anyone holding a lay fief of us dies and our sheriff or bailiff shows our letters patent of summons for a debt which the deceased owed us, it shall be lawful for the sheriff or our bailiff to attach and list the chattels of the deceased found in lay fee to the value of that debt, by the view of lawful men, [in such a way](#) that nothing is [to be](#) removed until the evident debt is paid to us, and the residue [is to](#) be relinquished to the executors to carry out the will of the

deceased. And if he owes us nothing, all the chattels [are to](#) be accounted as the deceased's saving their reasonable shares to his wife and children.

27. If any free man dies intestate, his chattels are to be distributed by his nearest relations and friends, under the supervision of the Church, saving to everyone the debts which the deceased owed him.

28. No constable or any other of our bailiffs [is to](#) take [anyone's](#) corn or other chattels unless he pays cash for them at once or can delay payment with the agreement of the seller.

29. No constable is to compel any knight to give money for castle guard, if he [is](#) willing to perform that guard in his own person or by another reliable man if for some good reason he is unable to do it himself; and if we take or [send](#) him on military service, he shall be excused the guard in proportion to the [length of time during which he was on military service for us](#).

30. No sheriff or bailiff of ours or anyone else is to take horses or carts of any free man for carting without [the agreement of that free man](#).

31. Neither we nor our bailiffs shall take other men's timber for castles or other work of ours, without the agreement of the [person whose timber it is](#).

32. We [shall](#) not hold [for more than a year and a day](#) the lands of [those who have been convicted of felony, and then](#) the lands [are to](#) be returned to the lords of the fiefs.

33. [All fish-weirs henceforth are to](#) be completely removed [from the Thames and from the Medway, and throughout England, except on the sea coast](#).

34. The writ called *praecipe* [is](#) not, in future, [to](#) be issued to anyone in respect of any holding whereby a free man [can](#) lose his court.

35. Let there be one measure of wine throughout our kingdom and one measure of ale and one measure of corn, namely the London quarter, and one width of cloth whether dyed, russet or halberjet, namely two ells within the selvedges. Let it be the same with weights as with measures.

36. Henceforth nothing [is to](#) be [paid](#) or taken for the writ of inquisition of life or limb, but it [is to](#) be [granted without charge](#) and not refused.

37. If anyone holds of us by fee-farm, by socage or by burgage, and holds land of someone else by knight service, we will not, by virtue of that fee-farm, socage or burgage, have wardship of his heir or of land of his that belongs to the fief of another; nor will we have custody of that fee-farm or socage or burgage unless such fee-farm owes knight service. We will not have custody of [anyone's](#) heir or land [which he](#) holds of another by knight service, by virtue of any [small](#) sergeanty which he holds of us by the service of rendering to us knives or arrows or the like.

38. [No](#) bailiff [is henceforth to](#) put anyone on trial by his own unsupported allegation, without bringing credible witnesses to the charge.

39. No free man [is to](#) be taken or imprisoned or disseised or outlawed or exiled or in any way ruined, nor will we go or send against him, except by the lawful judgement of his peers or by the law of the land.

40. To no one will we sell, to no one will we deny or delay right or justice.

41. All merchants are to be safe and secure in leaving [England](#) and entering England, and in staying and travelling in England, both by land and by water, to buy and sell free from all [maletotes](#) by the ancient and rightful customs, except, in time of [war](#), such as come from an enemy country. And if such are found in our land at the outbreak of war they shall be detained without damage to their [bodies](#) or goods, until we or our chief justiciar know how the merchants of our land are treated in the enemy country; and if ours are safe there, the others shall be safe in our land.

42. Henceforth anyone, saving his allegiance due to us, may leave our realm and return safe and secure by land and water, save for a short period in time of war on account of the general interest of the realm and excepting those imprisoned and outlawed according to the law of the [realm](#), and natives of an enemy country, and merchants, who shall be treated as aforesaid.

43. If anyone dies who holds of some escheat such as the honours of Wallingford, Nottingham, Boulogne or Lancaster, or of other escheats which are in our hands and are baronies, his heir [is not to](#) give any relief or do any service to us other than what he would have done to the baron if that barony had been in a baron's hands; and we shall hold it in the same manner as the baron held it.

44. [Men](#) who live outside the forest [are not henceforth to](#) come before our justices of the forest upon a general summons, unless they are impleaded or are sureties for any person or persons who are attached for forest offences.

45. We will not make justices, constables, sheriffs or bailiffs, [except of such men](#) who know the law of the [realm](#) and mean to observe it well.

46. All barons who have founded abbeys of which they have charters of the kings of England, or ancient tenure, [are to](#) have custody thereof during vacancies, as they ought to have.

47. All forests which have been afforested in our time [are to](#) be disafforested at once; and river banks which we have enclosed in our time [are to](#) be treated similarly.

48. All evil customs of forests and warrens, foresters and warreners, sheriffs and their servants, river banks and their wardens are to be investigated at once in every county by twelve sworn knights of the same county who are to be chosen by worthy men of [that](#) county, and within forty days of the inquiry they are to be [totally](#) abolished by them beyond recall, provided that we, or our justiciar if we are not in England, first know of it.

49. We will restore at once all hostages and charters delivered to us by Englishmen as [security](#) for peace or faithful service.

50. We will dismiss completely from their offices the relations of Gerard d'Athée that henceforth they shall have no office in England, Engelard de Cigogné, Peter and Guy and

Andrew de Chauceaux, Guy de Cigogné, Geoffrey de Martigny [and](#) his brothers, Philip Mark [and](#) his brothers and [Geoffrey](#) his nephew, and all their following.

51. [And](#) immediately after concluding peace, we will remove from the kingdom all [foreigners](#): knights, crossbowmen, sergeants and mercenary soldiers who have come with horses and arms to the hurt of the realm.

52. If anyone has been disseised or deprived by us without lawful judgement of his peers of lands, castles, liberties or his rights we will restore them to him at once; and if disagreement arises [over](#) this, then let it be settled by the judgement of the [twenty-five](#) barons referred to below in the security clause. But for all those things of which anyone was disseised or deprived without lawful judgement of his peers by King Henry our father, or by King Richard our brother, which we hold in our hand or which are held by others under our warranty, we shall have respite for the usual term [of those bearing the sign of the cross](#); excepting those cases in which a plea was begun or inquest made on our order before we took [our](#) cross; when, however, we return from our pilgrimage, or if perhaps we do not undertake it, we will at once do full justice in these matters.

53. We shall have the same respite, and in the same manner, in doing justice on disafforesting or retaining those forests which Henry our father or Richard our brother afforested, and concerning custody of lands which are of the fee of another, the which wardships we have had hitherto by virtue of a fee held of us by knight's service, and concerning abbeys founded on fees other than our own, in which the lord of the fee claims to have a right. And as soon as we return, or if we do not undertake our pilgrimage, we will at once do full justice to complainants in these matters.

54. No one shall be taken or imprisoned upon the appeal of a woman for the death of anyone except her husband.

55. All fines which [have been](#) made with us unjustly and contrary to the law of the land, and all amercedments imposed unjustly and contrary to the law of the land, [are to](#) be completely remitted or else they [are to](#) be settled by the judgement of the [twenty-five](#) barons mentioned below in the security clause, or by the judgement of the majority of the same, along with the aforesaid Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, if he can be present, and others whom he [has](#) wished to summon with him for this purpose. And if he cannot be present the business [is](#) nevertheless [to](#) proceed without him, provided that if any one or more of the aforesaid [twenty-five](#) barons are in such a suit they [are to](#) stand down in this particular judgement, and be replaced by others chosen and sworn in by the rest of the same [twenty-five](#), for this case only.

56. If we have disseised or deprived Welshmen of lands, liberties or other things without lawful judgement of their peers, in England or in Wales, they are to be [restored](#) to them at once; and if a dispute arises over this it shall be settled in the March by judgement of their peers; for tenements in England according to the law of England, for tenements in Wales according to the law of Wales, for tenements in the March according to the law of the March. The Welsh are to do the same to us and ours.

57. For all those things, however, of which any Welshman has been disseised or deprived without lawful judgement of his peers by King Henry our father, or King Richard our brother, which we have in our possession or which others hold under our legal warranty, we shall

have respite for the usual term [of those bearing the sign of the cross](#); excepting those cases in which a plea was begun or inquest made on our order before we took [our](#) cross. However, when we return, or if perhaps we do not go on our pilgrimage, we will at once give them full justice in accordance with the laws of the Welsh and the aforesaid regions.

58. We will restore at once the son of Llywelyn and all the hostages from Wales and the charters delivered to us as security for peace.

59. We will treat Alexander, King of the Scots, concerning the return of his sisters and hostages and his liberties and rights in the same manner in which we will act towards our other barons of England, unless it ought to be otherwise because of the charters which we have from William his father, formerly King of the Scots; and this shall be determined by the judgement of his peers in our court.

60. [Moreover, all](#) these aforesaid customs and liberties which we have granted to be held in our realm as far as it pertains to us towards our men, all men of our realm, both clerk and lay, [are to observe](#), as far as it pertains to them, towards their own men.

61. Since, moreover, we have granted all the aforesaid things for God, for the reform of our realm and the better settling of the quarrel which has arisen between us and our barons, wishing these things to be enjoyed fully and undisturbed in perpetuity, we [make](#) and grant them the following security: namely, that the barons [are to](#) choose any twenty-five barons of the realm they wish, who with all their might [must](#) observe, maintain and cause to be observed the peace and liberties which we have granted [to them](#) and confirmed by this our present charter; so that if we or our justiciar or our bailiffs or any of our servants offend against anyone in any way, or transgress any of the articles of peace or security, and the offence is indicated to four [barons](#) of the aforesaid twenty-five barons, those four barons shall come to us or [to](#) our justiciar, if we are out of the kingdom, and bring [the transgression](#) to our notice and ask that we have [the transgression](#) redressed without delay. And if we, or our justiciar should we be out of the kingdom, do not redress the [transgression](#) within forty days from the time when it was brought to the notice of us or our justiciar, should we be out of the kingdom, the aforesaid four barons shall refer [that](#) case to the rest of the twenty-five barons and those twenty-five barons with the commune of all the land shall distrain and distress us in every way they can, namely by seizing castles, lands and possessions, and in such other ways as they can, saving our person and those of our queen and of our children, until, in their judgement, [it has been redressed](#); and when it has been redressed they are to obey us as they did before. And anyone in the land who wishes may take an oath to obey the orders of the said twenty-five barons in the execution of all the aforesaid matters, and to join with them in distressing us to the best of his ability, and we publicly and freely permit anyone who wishes to take the oath, and we will never forbid anyone to take it. Moreover we shall compel and order all those in the land who of themselves and of their own free will are unwilling to take an oath to the twenty-five barons to distrain and distress us with them, to take the oath as aforesaid. And if any of the twenty-five barons dies or leaves the [land](#) or is otherwise prevented from discharging these aforesaid duties, the rest of the aforesaid [twenty-five](#) barons [are](#) on their own decision [to](#) choose another in his place, who shall take the oath in the same way as the [rest](#). [Moreover, in](#) all matters the execution of which is committed to those twenty-five barons, if it should happen that the twenty-five are present and disagree among themselves on anything, or if any of them who [have](#) been summoned will not or cannot come, whatever the majority of those present shall provide or order is to be taken as fixed and settled as if [all](#) twenty-five had agreed to it; and the aforesaid twenty-five are to swear that

they will faithfully observe all the aforesaid and will do all they can to secure its observance. And we will procure nothing from anyone, either personally or through another, by which any of these concessions and liberties be revoked or diminished; and if any such thing is procured, it [is to](#) be null and void, and we will never use it either ourselves or through another.

62. And we have completely remitted and pardoned to all any ill will, grudge and rancour that have arisen between us and our [men](#), clerk and lay, from the time of the quarrel. Moreover we have fully forgiven and completely condoned to all, clerk and lay, as far as pertains to us, all offences occasioned by the said quarrel from Easter in the sixteenth year of our reign to the conclusion of peace. And moreover we have caused letters patent of the Lord Stephen, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Henry, Archbishop of Dublin, the aforesaid bishops and Master Pandulf to be made for them on this security and the aforesaid concessions.

63. Wherefore we wish and firmly command that the English church shall be free, and the men in our realm [are to](#) have and hold all the aforesaid liberties, rights and concessions well and peacefully, freely and quietly, fully and completely, for them and their heirs of us and our heirs in all things and places for ever, as is aforesaid. Moreover an oath has been sworn, both on our part and on the part of the barons, that all these things aforesaid shall be observed in good faith and without evil intent. Witness the above-mentioned and many others. Given under our hand in the meadow which is called Runnymede between Windsor and Staines on the fifteenth day of June in the seventeenth year of our reign.