



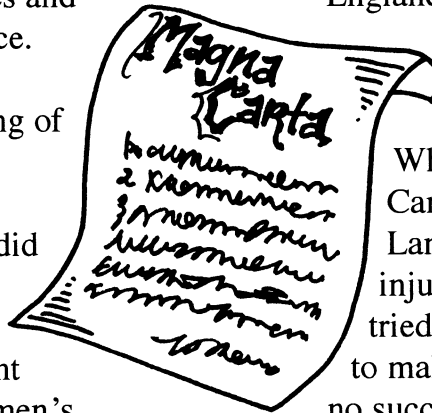
A Magnificent Stand

Story One

Although the birth of our freedoms began earlier, we will start with the signing of the *Magna Carta* on June 15, 1215. This event came about as a result of the unreasonable demands and the progressive usurpation of citizens' rights by the King of England, King John. The signing of the *Magna Carta* was an attempt to bind the king to the rule of natural law, rather than of selfish decrees and the right of inheritance. The king's barons involved in the writing of the *Magna Carta* recognized man had natural rights which did not have their origin with a king or any individual. This event was a monument to men's liberties, a beam of fragile light in an otherwise dark world, and a critical building stone for the freedoms we enjoy today.

On July 9, 1165, Stephen Langston, a key player in this story, was born. He was a bright young man who eventually went to France to study French and Latin. While in France he met a man with whom he became good friends, who later became Pope Innocent. Several decades after

completing school, Stephen's friend was made Pope and the Pope in turn made Stephen Langston a Bishop and offered him the position of Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr. Langston accepted the position but was compelled to wait several years before King John would allow him to come back to England. You see, the Archbishop of Canterbury was the most important Bishop in England since he was an advisor to the king in matters of religion and government.



While serving as Archbishop of Canterbury, it did not take Mr. Langston long to realize the injustices of King John. He tried several times to get the king to make some corrections but had no success. Willing to risk his position and life to correct the injustices placed upon the English people, he called a meeting of the barons and from this group selected a smaller number to attend a private meeting.

At this private meeting, Stephen Langston presented a copy of an earlier proclamation by King Henry, written 100 years earlier, which discussed some of the inherent rights the people should have. From this



proclamation, Mr. Langston built his case, and suggested they unite and call the current king to task and compel him to sign a proclamation granting the people certain rights.

was subject to the law. So the king hired mercenaries from Europe, subsequently called *Satan's Guards*, to assist him in a plan to overthrow the proclamation.

Accordingly, the meeting was held with King John and, due to some current circumstances, the king was forced to sign the Magna Carta. He authorized handwritten copies of the Magna Carta to be prepared on parchment, affixed with his seal and publicly read throughout the realm. This bound not only him but his "heirs, for ever" to grant "to all freemen of our kingdom" the rights and liberties the great charter described. With the Magna Carta, King John placed himself and England's future sovereigns and magistrates within the "rule of law."

Needless to say, the king was quite upset and decided to take action to reverse the signed proclamation.

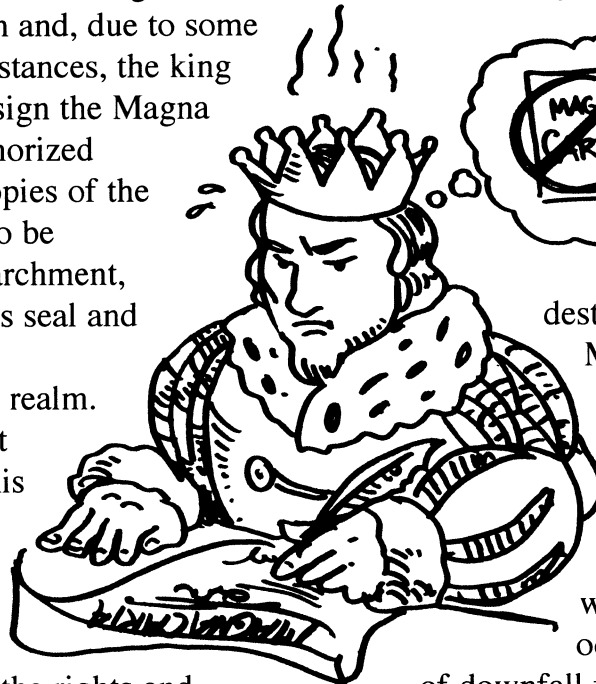
This would not be an easy thing to do. Remember, when a proclamation was signed by the king it became the "rule of law," and he

While waging war against the barons and also King

Louis of France, King John and his mercenaries were in the area

of the king's current destination, Swineshead Monastery. There in the area, they arrived at a place called Sandy Shallows. This was where a stream flowed into The Wash, which is what they called the ocean. This was the area of downfall for King John.

Little understood by the King, was that twice-a-day a meeting of fresh and salt water sometimes would develop an enormous clash and create a dangerous situation. The king, determined to reach the monastery by nightfall, believed they could cross Sandy Shallows safely. Ignoring the advice of his knights, he was the first to urge his horse into the water. The guards and troops then followed him into the stream. At that moment it seemed certain the whole train could cross over before





the tide imposed any serious problem.

Just as all the wagons had entered the river, (wagons containing all the King's gold, silver, and other costly possessions) the in-coming tide crashed with the exiting fresh water

destroy the Magna Carta was ended. Does it not seem more than a coincidence to you that the great turbulence happened precisely as all the king's wealth was at risk? Had he succeeded in his efforts to nullify the Magna Carta, the train of events leading up to the freedoms we enjoy



creating a tremendous turbulence.

The king saw his wagons suddenly engulfed with an incredible force and he watched as his entire treasury was carried away—never to be found. The mercenaries (*Satan's Guards*) realizing the king now had no means to pay them, abandoned their efforts and within six months King John and his campaign to

today and our constitution may not have been. Does God govern in the affairs of men? Yes.

For his efforts in bringing forth the Magna Carta, Stephen Langston, a very religious man and the mastermind behind it, lost his position in the church and the association of his dear friend, Pope Innocent.

A great testament that God governs in the affairs of men.

Suggestions for Discussion

- What is the Magna Carta?
- What connection does it have to our United States Constitution?
- Under what circumstances was the Magna Carta signed?
- After signing the Magna Carta what did the king want to do?
- What event happened to the king and his treasure?
- Was there an event that saved the Magna Carta by Providential help?
- What was the name of the mercenaries hired to help King John?
- What important role did Stephen Langston have in relationship with the Magna Carta?
- Is freedom always free or is there a price to be paid for freedom? Let's talk about it.