



# The Hundred Parishes

## An introductory article about MAGNA CARTA

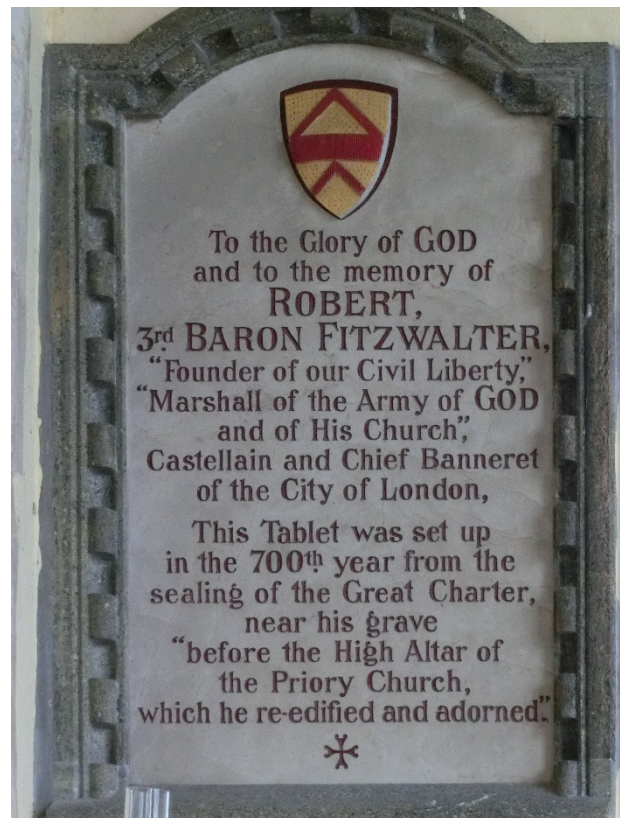
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The Magna Carta was sealed by King John in 1215. That document is widely recognized as a key step in the development of democracy in this country and across the English-speaking world.

The Magna Carta resulted from a revolt by many of King John's barons. Under clause 61 of the document, a committee of 25 barons was appointed to ensure that the king complied with the terms of the agreement.

Three of those barons had their principal manors in what is now the Hundred Parishes. They were Robert Fitzwalter of Little Dunmow, Geoffrey de Mandeville of Pleshey and Robert de Montfichet of Stansted Mountfichet. Each of these parishes was just part of the area overseen by their baron, but each has marked the event or the baron in some way.

Little Dunmow's parish church displays a tablet, installed on the 700th anniversary of Magna Carta in 1915 in recognition of Robert Fitzwalter and the Great Charter. The church has tombs for some of his descendants. One is thought to be of his daughter, Matilda, who is reputed to have been poisoned by King John's men after she refused his advances.



Little Dunmow's village sign, erected 100 years later in 2015, also has reference to the Magna Carta.





The ladies of Little Dunmow created a Magna Carta tapestry in time for the 2015 celebrations.

It is shown on the left.

Pleshey celebrated the 800th anniversary with festivities at its ancient castle which is not normally open to the public.



For eighteen months before the celebration, a group of Pleshey ladies worked on a large patchwork quilted embroidery which has been framed and now hangs in the parish church.

In the centre, is Pleshey's baron, Geoffrey de Mandeville, flying his coat of arms and Essex flag.





In Stansted Mountfitchet, another dedicated group embroidered three large panels, showing images of many of the village's historic buildings and events.



The centrepiece of Stansted's tapestry includes the burning of Mountfitchet Castle, when King John later wreaked revenge upon his rebellious barons.



Stansted Mountfitchet has a village sign at each end of the village. Like Little Dunmow's sign it incorporates a reference to Magna Carta. A new primary school opened in Stansted in 2016 and is named Magna Carta Primary Academy.

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Any comments or suggestions for improvement may be submitted by using the Feedback form on the website. The website has many short articles on various aspects of The Hundred Parishes, as well as introductions to individual parishes and to a number of local celebrities, and an extensive What's On section. More than a hundred walk route descriptions can be freely downloaded, with each of the hundred parishes featuring in at least one walk.