Medieval History: King John And Magna Carta

King John had one of the biggest roles in Medieval History, he made a lot of conflicting choices that affected the way history turned out. King John had quite a negative influence on his community as he had multiple wars with powerful kings and had a feud with the church which led to ex-communication. He was born in 1167 and passed away in 1216. John is known to be a controversial ruler similar to William I. He is mostly associated with the Magna Carta, as it was created in his time to stop a civil war. John is also known as Richard the Lionheart's successor. John is known as one of the worst kings of all time because his actions often impacted his influence on his people. John had made many achievements throughout his reign as King of England, although not all of his decisions were beneficial they had a massive impact on the community and how it turned out. His decisions almost always brought conflict with it as most of the community didn't agree with his reasoning, an instance of this was when John kidnapped his nephew to make a point to King Philip and ended up killing him in a drunken rage. When the English Nobles found out about this they were not happy with the way John handled it. John played a huge part in shaping today's world, especially with the Manga Carta. The Manga Carta was created to prevent John from being unfair and abusive of his power to his people. The Magna Carta shaped how the world turned out today. King John has been remembered for all of his actions ad they will never be forgotten as he made such an impact.

John had made many achievements throughout his reign as King of England, even though some of them made a very negative impact on England, John still saw them as achievements. A lot of conflicts arose with the community and John though-out his reign. John first became king in 1199 after his older brother Richard died and he was crowned king on the 27th of May. In 1200 John was recognized as successor in all of Richard's French possessions, in return for financial and land-based givebacks to Philip. John became the ruler of the Angevin Empire. Only 7 years after John had been crowned king he lost control over all of Normandy and most holdings in France, by losing so much land he also lost the support of the English nobles. John believed that he could only win them back by regaining control over Normandy. To do this John had to collect a substantial amount of money. The way John collected this money was by rising the taxes, this did not sit well with the people and they were incredibly unhappy with this. John kept on rising the taxes and although he collected all of this money none of it helped him win. John did not win and could not get the land back so this lead the nobles to be even more furious with John. King John kept on doing acts like this and he just continuously lost the support of his people. The last straw for the nobles was John and the Churches feud. King John wanted his archbishop to be appointed, the church wanted an election in which their opinions swayed. The decision took a long time as John tried to maneuverer the bishop's opinion. Pope Innocent III was both intolerant and cleverly invalid and suggested his candidate, Stephen Langton. Although this may have seemed like a compromise King John did not bow down. He rejected Langton and this did not sit well with the Pope. Pope Innocent III refused John's entry into England and imposed an interdict on England which lasted 6 years (1208-1214). During this time John was also excommunicated from the church, this meant that john lost all the support of the Pope. This was seen as a terrible sign from God as people believed that the Pope was chosen by God. Although this affected the people John did not care as he was not afraid of the Pope or God, in fact, he saw it as a chance to rule on his terms. John finally gave in, and Langton was elected archbishop of Canterbury, finishing the ex-communication. However, the

prohibition was not lifted until a year later. Despite the reality that John was no longer excommunicated, monks still believed John was evil and we get proof that he was a terrible man because all of the writing was done by them. We have evidence of this in this source "…he had lost Normandy and, moreover, was eager to lose the kingdom of England or destroy it; he was an insatiable extorter of money, and an invader and destroyer of the possessions of his natural subjects... he had violated the daughters and sisters of his nobles and was wavering and distrustful in his observance of the Christian religion? (After signing the Magna Carta) King John's mental state underwent a great change... He started to gnash his teeth and roll his eyes in fury. Then he would pick up sticks and straws and gnaw them like a lunatic... His uncontrolled gestures gave indications... of the madness that was upon him." As told in this piece of writing John was not seen in a positive light during his time and since the monks were the only people that could write, we only see him from that perspective. John had made many accomplishments throughout his reign as King of England, even though some of them made a very negative impact on England, John still managed to get his name written down in the history books.

King John is known for many different things, but he is mainly known for his role in the Magna Carta. The Magna Carta was established in 1215 and was originally written in Latin. The Magna Carta is important because it established the principle that everybody, including the King, had to submit to the law. It is seen as one of the most influential legal documents in History. It was created as an act of rebellion against King John by a collection of barons, the reason behind the rebellion was because John collected taxes that were unfairly high and abused his power over the church and his people. John often lost wars and was losing money quickly, his authority was completely undermined. John had charged and collected a tax from the barons to pay for his campaign in Normandy. After his defeat at Bovines in 1214, he asked the barons for more money for another campaign. The barons did not have enough money to pay this nor did they want to so they gathered a group of people and started to plan a rebellion. In January 1215, John encountered the rebel nobles, but the king postponed the response to their requests as he tried to obtain assistance. He got support from the Pope by promising to go on a Crusade, but in May when he ordered the confiscation of the properties of the rebels, the rebels took control of London and invited Philip II to England. The emperor encountered Runnymede's insurgents in June and published the Magna Carta signing to his terms, after being forced. By signing the document, King John agreed to do his duty as King of England, supporting/judging as correct the law and running a fair government and in return, the barons would surrender. Magna Carta contained 63 promises about what the king could and couldn't do. It also set up a Council of 25 barons to make sure John kept his promises. Some of the laws included, A £100 limit on the tax barons had to pay to inherit their lands, the royal forests were to be reduced in size, foreign knights had to be deported, no one could be arrested on the accusation of a woman. The Magna Carta was a direct attack on John's royal authority, and as soon as he could, Joh asked the Pope for permission to ignore the Magna Carta, on the grounds that he had been forced to sign it. John wasn't the only one who wanted to disregard the Magna Carta though, the barons also didn't agree with what they said they would do. This ended up in a civil war. King John died in October of the same year leaving the country in a state of civil war. His son Henry III, was forced to reissue the Magna Carta three times while he was king. However, the power of the king had been permanently damaged, and no king of England was ever again unrestricted or 'absolute'. Within half a century, England had a parliament to represent the wishes of the barons to the king. Although King John did not follow the agreement, the ideas put forward in the Magna Carta became lasting principles of freedom to the English. Three of the clauses are still in force as English law including the freedom of the English Church, the 'very old freedoms' of the City of London, and the right to due process. However, the power of the king had been

permanently damaged, and no king of England was ever again unrestricted or 'absolute'. Within half a century, England had a parliament to represent the wishes of the barons to the king.

King John is best known for singing Magna Carta, although he almost instantly attempted to annul it. His reign was characterized by a series of ineffective military operations, a continuous fight against the Church, and the baronial rebellion which led to the Magna Carta. John is known to be the worst king of all time. No kings after John’s reign were named John because of his bad reputation. Usually, a king/heir would be named after a past king because of their achievements, but there were no heirs named John. This is known to be a bad thing. John’s title is quite conflicting, as there are so many new points of view on King John. It has been said before though that creating the Magna Carta was one of the best things he could have done for his country. John placed multiple laws and taxes on England, and most people remember how injustice and unfair they were so they are learning from John’s mistakes. John’s fight with the church put a lot of negative views and thoughts on his back as people loved the church so much. This fight placed a lot of tension between the church and the people. Kings were known to be very supportive of the church and the pope and if you weren’t you would go to hell because God chose the pope and you were “disobeying” him. This created a very negative outlook on King John and how he was viewed. John also was negatively looked upon as he was money hungry. His only motives were money and power. He thought that. He thought that the richer he got all of his problems would go away. This made him very unpopular with his barons as the taxes got quite high. John also took bribes from people and stole money from the church and his people. John is rarely seen as a good king, one of the areas where he is seen as a good king and person are in the towns of Lynn, Norfolk. He is remembered as the kind King who granted them the freedom to rule themselves, and that King John spent some of his last days there in these towns feasting.

King John had one of the biggest roles in Medieval History, he made a lot of conflicting choices that affected the way history turned out. His decisions and choices will always be second-guessed but he made some decisions that would benefit his country and his people for centuries. King John is best known for singing Magna Carta, although he almost instantly attempted to annul it. His reign was characterized by a series of ineffective military operations, a continuous fight against the Church, and the baronial rebellion which led to the Magna Carta. King John played a big role in the outcome of England and Medieval times.