

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF GREAT BRITAIN





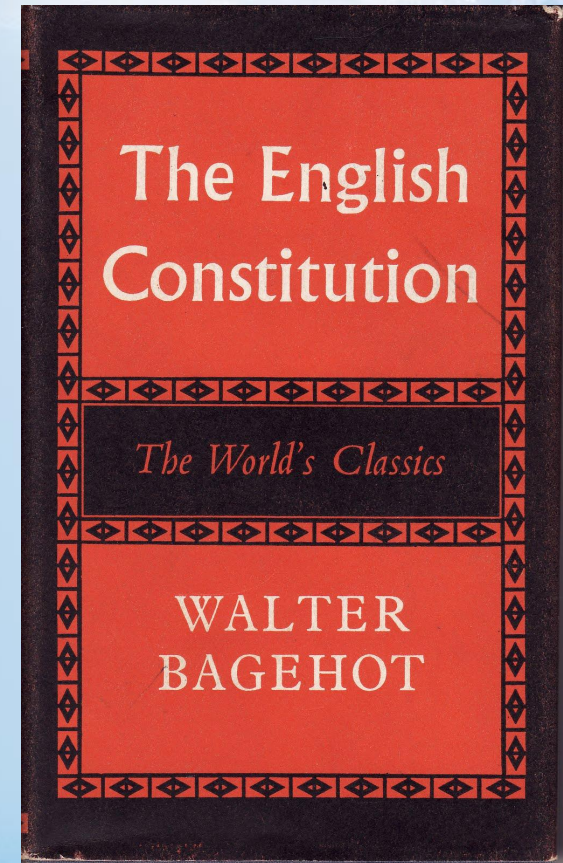
Queen Elizabeth II

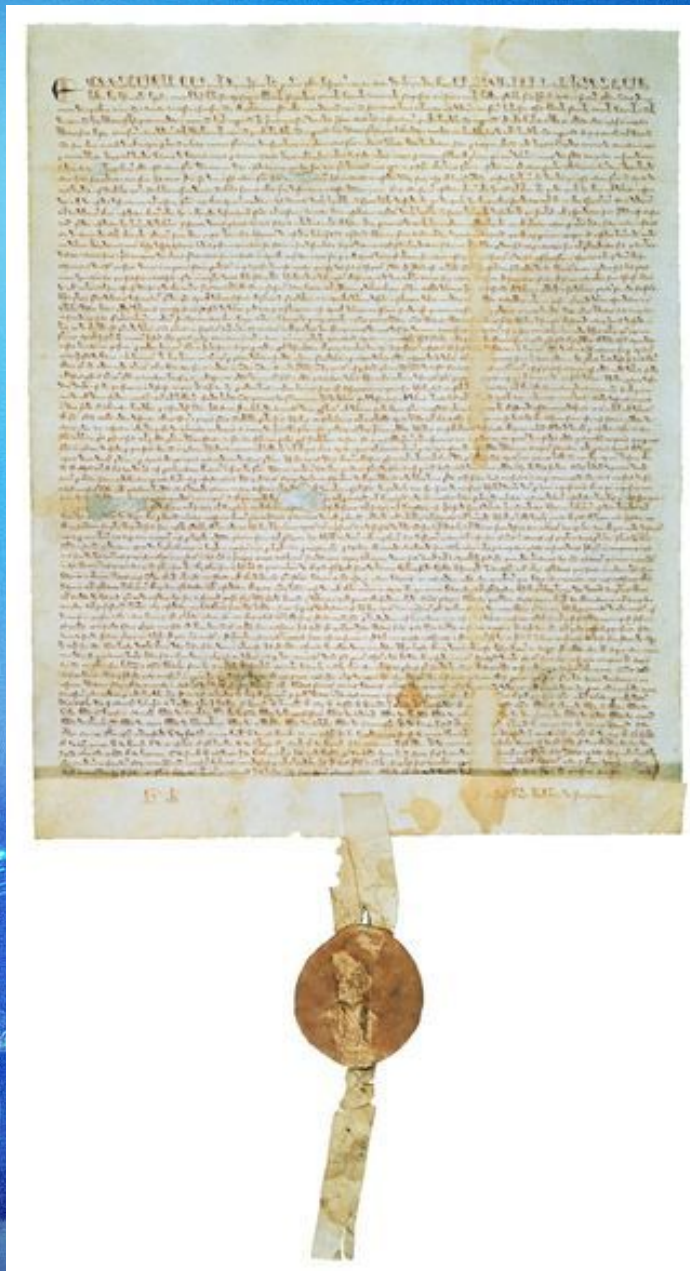
Britain is a constitutional monarchy which means that the monarch, at the moment Queen Elizabeth II, is the Head of State. The hereditary principle upon which the monarchy is founded is strictly observed. The now reigning monarch, Queen Elizabeth II is a descendant of the Saxon King Egbert.

There is no written constitution in Great Britain because it is not set out in a single document.

Instead it is made up of a combination of laws and practices which are not legally enforceable, but which are regarded as vital to the work of government.

The term "English Constitution" means the leading principles, conventions and laws, many of which have been existing for centuries, though they have undergone modifications and extensions in agreement with the advance of civilization.





Magna Charta, a famous document in English history agreed upon in 1215 by King John and the barons, which set certain limits on royal power and which was later regarded as a law stating basic civil rights



Habeas Corpus Act, a law passed in 1679, which guarantees to a person arrested the right to appear in court of justice so that the jury should decide whether he is guilty or not guilty

Bill of Rights

Congress OF THE United States,
*began and held at the City of New York, on
Wednesday, the fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine.*

The Conventions of a number of the States having, at the time of their adopting the Constitution, expressed a desire, in order to prevent misconstruction or abuse of its powers, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And an extending the ground of public confidence in the Government, will best insure the beneficent ends of its institution:

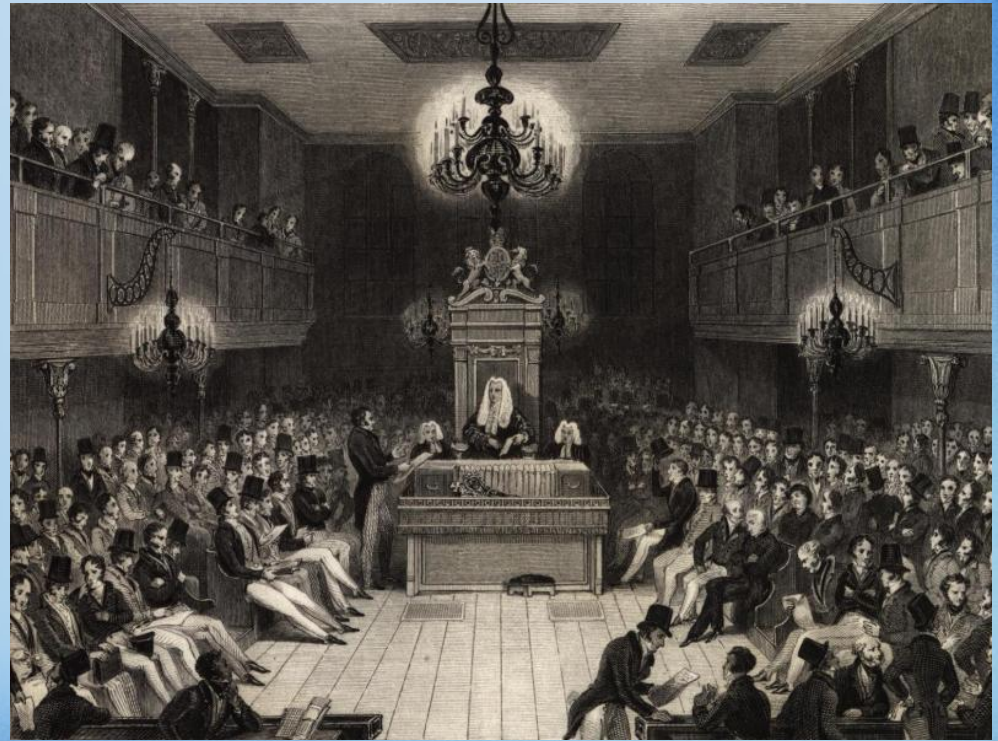
Resolved, by the SENATE and HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA in Congress assembled, That the following Articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as Amendments to the Constitution of the United States: all, or any of which articles, when ratified by three fourths of the said Legislatures, to be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of the said Constitution.

The Bill of Rights, an act of Parliament passed in 1689, which confirmed certain rights of the people



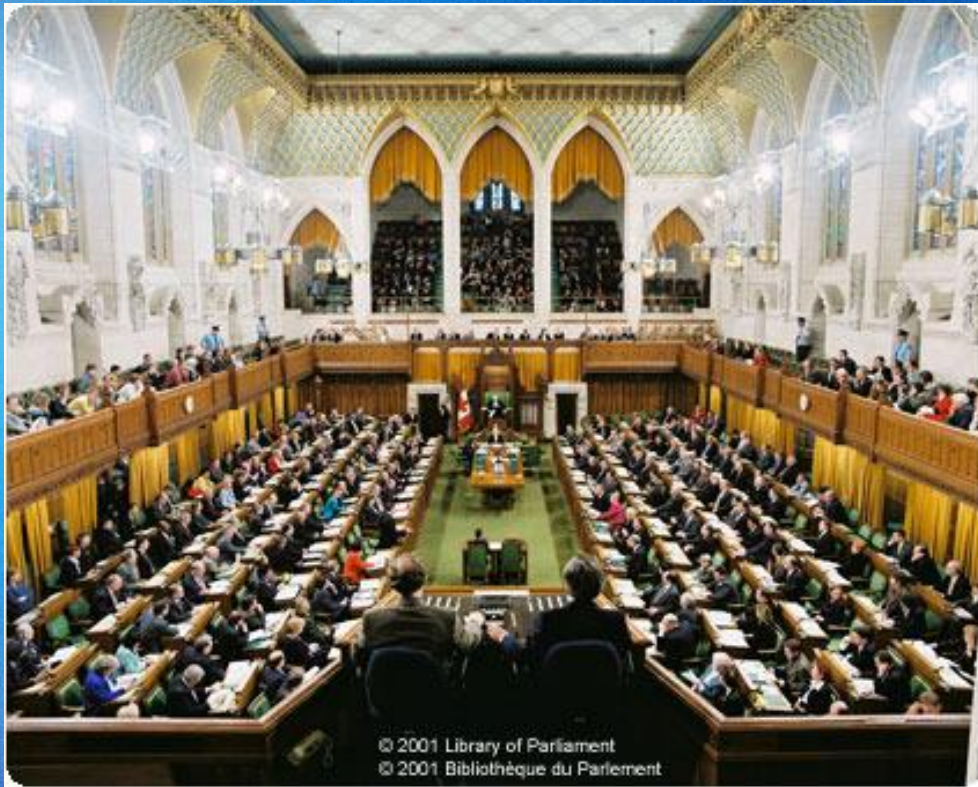
The stability of the British government owes much to the monarchy. Its continuity has been interrupted only once (the republic of 1649-60) in over a thousand years. According to the law the Queen is head of the executive branch of the government, an integral part of the Queen Mother legislature, head of the judiciary, the commander-in-chief of all the armed forces of the Crown and the 'supreme governor' of the established Church of England.

The legislative branch is represented by Parliament, which consists of two chambers, or houses: the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Parliament in Britain has existed since 1265. Having been organized in the reign of King Edward I, it is the oldest parliament in the world.





The House of Lords has more than 1,000 members, although only about 250 take an active part in the work of the House. This House consists of those lords who have been given life peerages which end with the life of their possessors. Members of this Upper House are not elected. They sit there because of their rank. New peers are created by the monarch" on the advice of the Prime Minister.



The members of the House of Commons are elected by a general election. The whole country is divided into constituencies, every one of which chooses one delegate. Big cities are divided into several constituencies each. Members of the House of Commons are elected for five years.



The executive branch is headed by the Prime Minister, who is appointed by the queen. According to tradition, the Prime Minister is the leader of the party that has won the elections and has the majority in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister appoints the ministers to compose the government.





Thanks for attention

