

Discuss the main events of a feud between a monarch and the church

The argument I would like it to discuss is the 'Stephen Langton affair.' The feud is between King John and Pope Innocent III. This argument ranged from 1205- 1214.

Hubert Walter, the archbishop of Canterbury died in 1205 and as was tradition John elected an archbishop as previous monarchs had done. The monks at Canterbury cathedral caught wind of John's ideas and sent their elected archbishop off to Rome. John realised the monks elected man, Reginald, was on his way to the Pope to be invested and sent John Gray there. So we have two elected archbishops thinking they're going to become archbishop and both at the Pope.

By December, nearly a year later, news from the pope was heard. The Pope has rejected both John Gray and Reginald and elected his own man, Stephen Langton, friend to Phillip, King of France and ally to Pope Innocent III. After quite publicly undermining the King, John ordered that Stephen would not be allowed into the country even if he begged.

The Pope ordered an interdict to be placed on England and thought if he did that the peasants would revolt. All marriages, funerals, christenings and others were suspended. John just simply confiscated more Church land. Finally in 1209 the Pope excommunicated John. Unfortunately in John's already rocky position with the barons this made matters worse.

In December 1212 the Pope orders Philip to attack England and that if he won Louis would rule. Under this threat John submits the crown to Innocent. The Pope is pleased with this and lifted the interdict and excommunication. So in 1214 Stephen Langton took up his role as archbishop of Canterbury.

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