

Date:

Why was there blood on the Cathedral floor in 1170?

Martyr: Someone who is prepared to die for their beliefs

Archbishop: Leaders of The Church outside of Rome, just beneath The Pope and in charge of the bishops

Bishop: Leaders of the diocese (area) they were in charge of

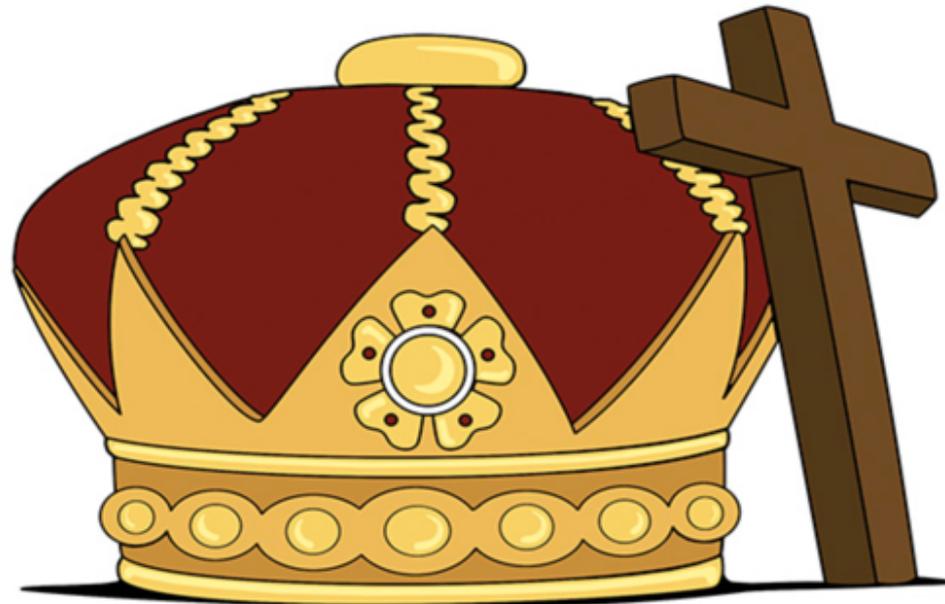
Archbishop of Canterbury: The most powerful religious position in England

Excommunicated: Banned from being part of The Church and its services

Sanctuary: A place, usually holy, where you are protected from violence or arrest

Aim:

To know the story of the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury and how easy it was for The Church to come into conflict with the crown (king)



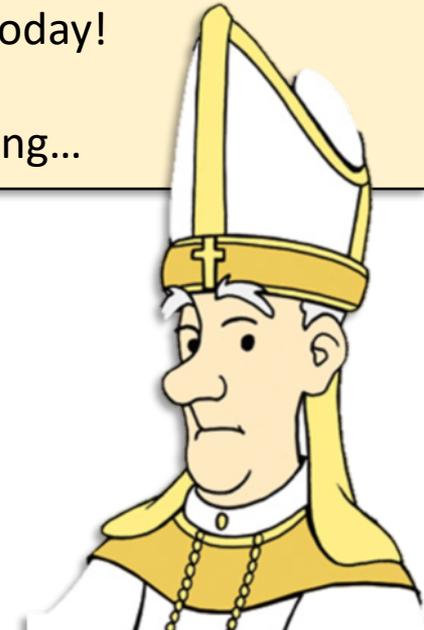
Useful background information:

All local churches had their priests, grouped together by area (diocese) organised and led by a bishop. This high ranking churchman (clergy) would be based in a cathedral. The bishop would be a great landowner, like a baron or noble, he might even raise an army in time of war (remember Bishop Odo, William's half brother, fought at Hastings).

The Church also raised its own taxes called [**tithes**] and were [**10 %**] of people's earnings. This led The Church to become very wealthy and powerful, which will bring it in to direct conflict with the kings over the next 300 years...

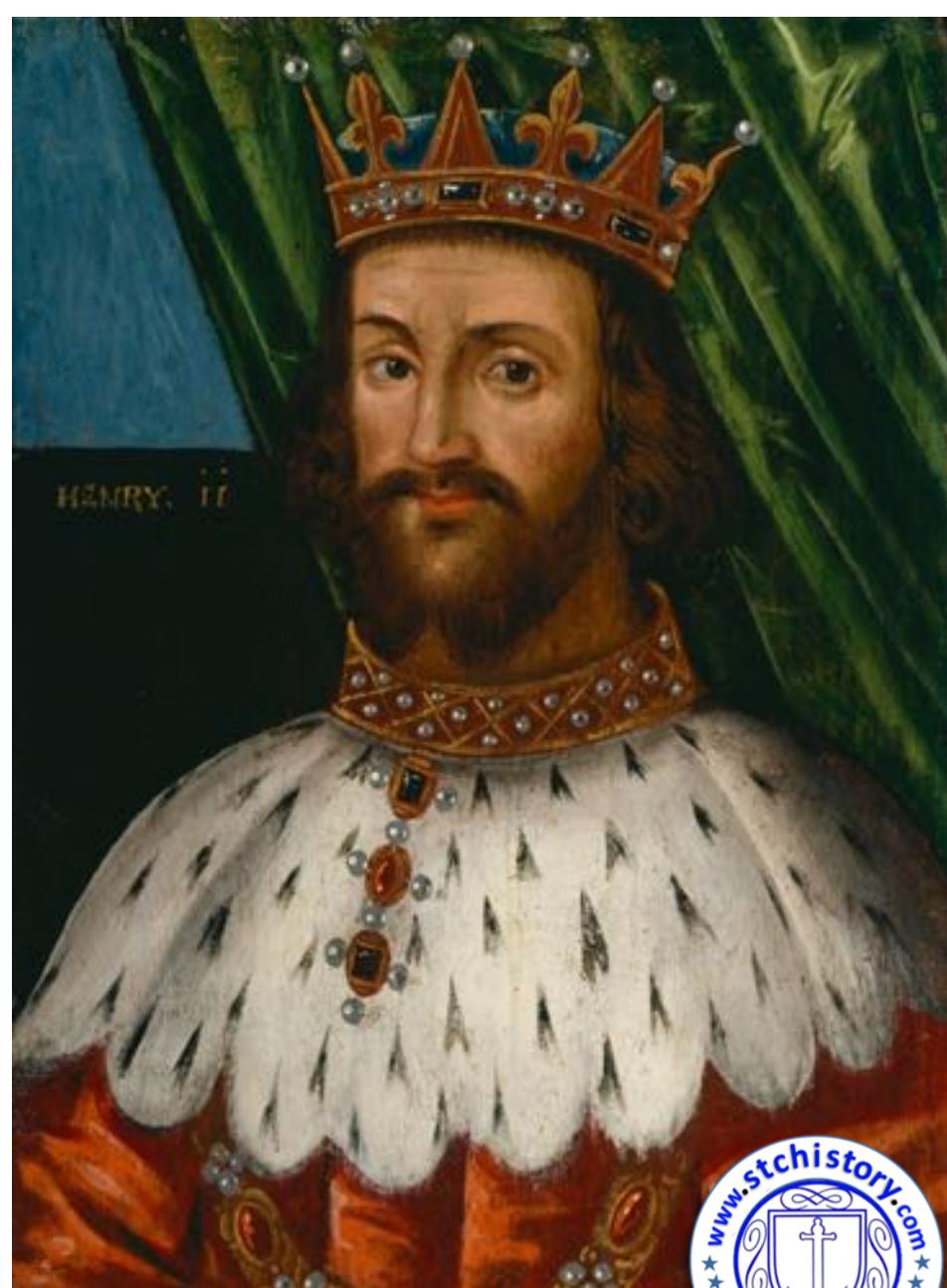
Organising and leading the bishops were the archbishops. In England there were two: The Archbishop of Canterbury, who was the leader of the Church in England, and the Archbishop of York. These two men were very powerful, often working for the king. One of the main jobs of the Archbishop of Canterbury was to crown the new monarchs, even today!

Once in a while an archbishop could prove to be a real problem for the king...



Who was King Henry II?

- Henry was born in France 1133. His mother Matilda was the daughter of Henry I of England. Matilda had been named as heir to the English throne but her cousin Stephen had taken over the job.
- In 1153, Henry II crossed to England to win back the throne. He succeeded Stephen in **1154**.
- King Henry then made his close friend Thomas Becket his Chancellor.





Henry II and Thomas Becket were very good friends, so much so Henry made him his chancellor and his right hand man (effectively number 2 in the country after the king). This arrangement worked well and then the Archbishop of Canterbury died.

Henry thought this was his chance to seize power from The Church and he made Thomas Becket his new Archbishop of Canterbury in 1162, thinking he would be loyal to him. Henry was angry with The Church for its abuses of power, he felt it was corrupt, and that in The Church courts, priests were getting away with things they shouldn't be, so he saw this as a chance to make his courts the courts of the land.

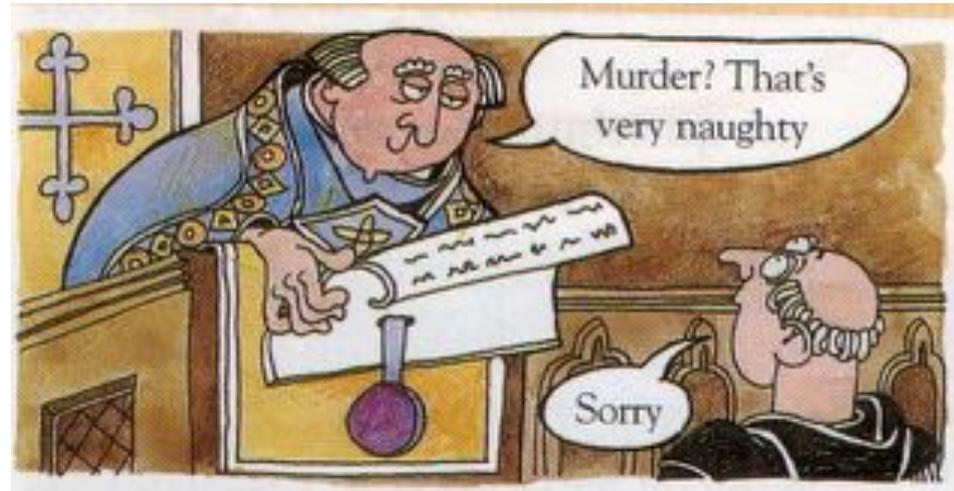




It wasn't long before the conflict began. Henry had misjudged Becket, who threw himself into the role of protector of The Church, in effect being much more loyal to The Pope, and seeing himself as above even the king.

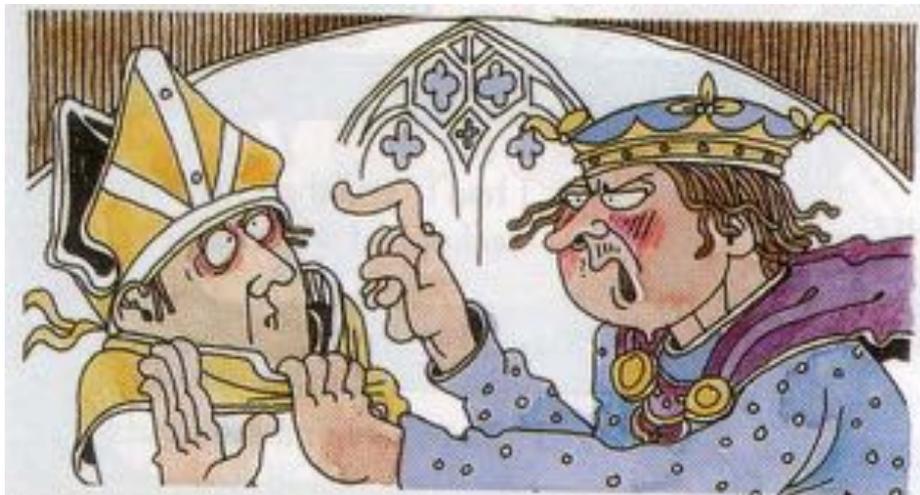
The main arguments were about what should be done with these criminals and churchmen (clergy) committing crimes, being let off in the corrupt Church courts.

As well as this, the fines went to the Church not the king.

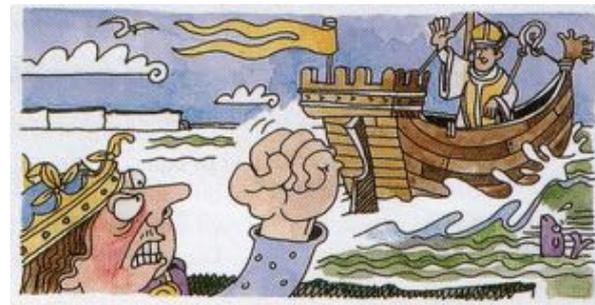


Summarise the relationship between Henry II and Thomas Becket into 3 bullet points (try to include the roles Becket was given and how their relationship was up and down)

What was the Constitution of Clarendon and why was it a turning point 1164?



The two men, although friends, were both very stubborn, neither would 'give in'. In 1164, Henry tried to force Becket to agree to a set of rules called the constitution of Clarendon. The main rules were that no one could be excommunicated without the king's approval; no churchman (clergy) could leave the country without the king's permission; wherever trials took place, it would be the king's court that gave the sentence. Becket refused to accept these rules and Henry attempted to put him on trial. Becket escaped to France, neither willing to give in for 5 years.



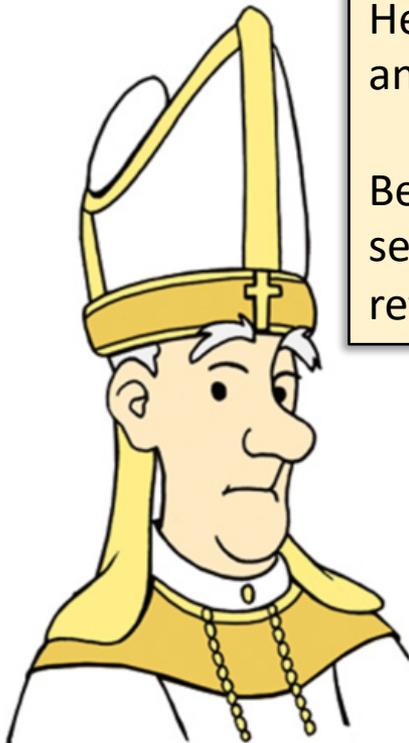
List the 3 main rules that Henry tried to force Becket to agree to.

Prince Henry was impatient for power so King Henry decided to make his son King of England, but still under his control until he died. To do this a coronation was needed, placing the crown on the new king's head. This was the job of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who of course was Thomas Becket and in exile in France.



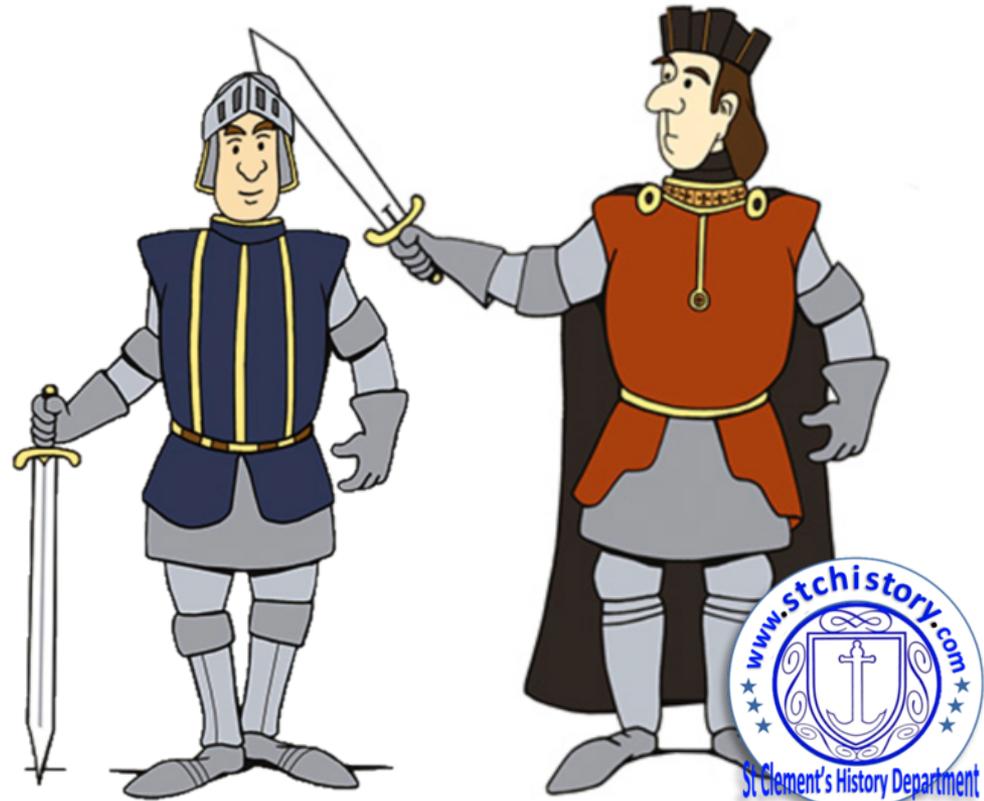
Henry turned to the Archbishop of York to perform the ceremony. This angered not only Becket but The Pope as well.

Becket and Henry were forced to meet to sort out their differences and it seemed in December 1170, they had managed it, Becket was allowed to return to England. Henry stayed in France to deal with his lands there.





Upon returning, Becket wasted no time in excommunicating all bishops that had been involved in Prince Henry's coronation. The bishops and Roger of York made their way to France to complain directly to Henry and in a rage Henry cried out '***will no one rid me of this troublesome priest?***' ...





Four knights heard this and believed it was their chance to impress the king. They sailed to England, led by Reginald Fitzurse, and later joined by the de Broc family who hated Becket.

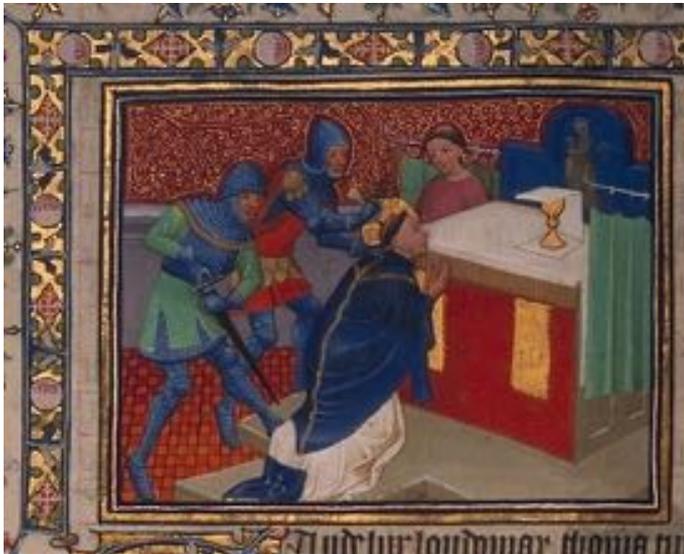
29th December 1170

The knights arrived at Becket's palace next to Canterbury cathedral and marched in to arrest him. Henry realised what was happening and sent a messenger to stop them, but it was too late...



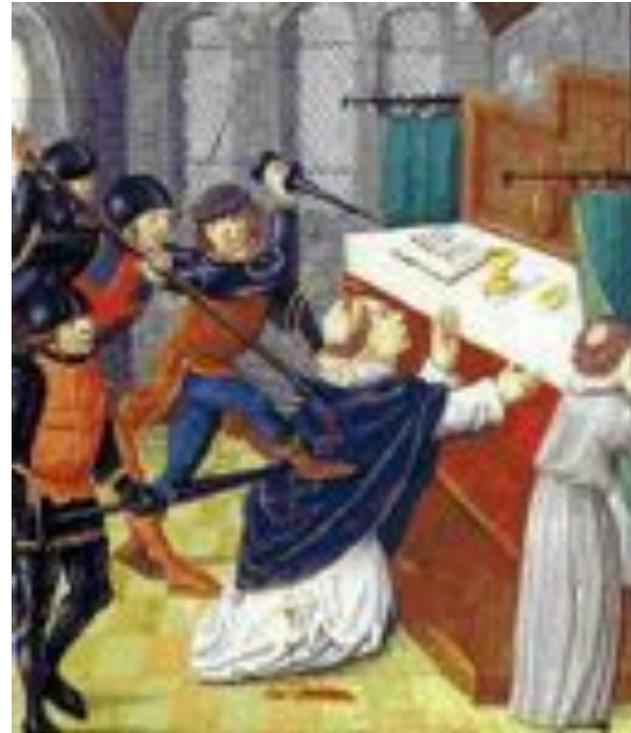


Canterbury
Cathedral, the
scene of the
brutal murder



What happened inside Canterbury Cathedral on 29th December 1170?

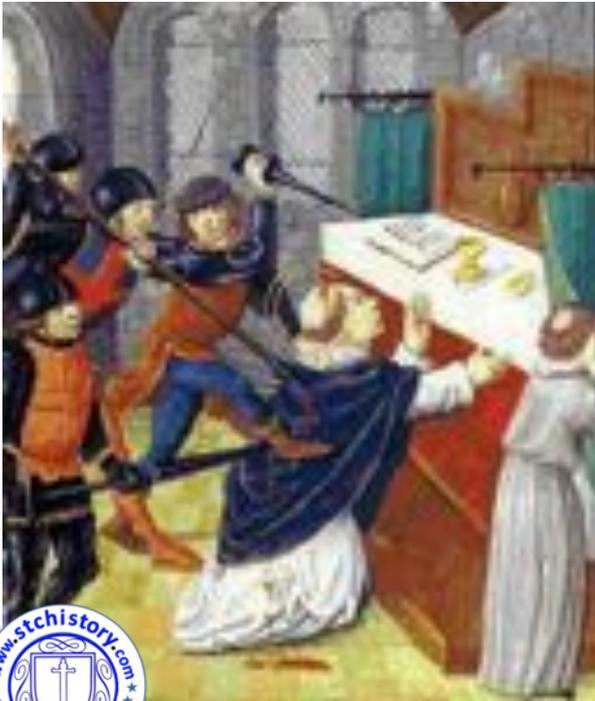
Are these images possible?



Do they share a common message?

One of the knights raised his sword and wounded Becket in the head. That same blow almost cut off my arm as I held the archbishop. Then Becket received a second blow, but still managed to. At the third blow he fell. He said, “**For the name of Jesus I am prepared to die**”. Then the third knight struck Becket so hard that his sword broke. The top was cut off the archbishop’s head so that blood stained the cathedral floor. Another man put his foot on Becket’s neck and scattered his brains all over the floor. He called out, “**Let us away, knights. He will trouble us no more**”.

Edward Grim, a monk who was an eyewitness to the murder in 1170



Does this source support any of the images?



Did Becket deserve to die?

Watch this clip very carefully and make some notes in two columns, YES and NO...

We'll have a discussion after it...



Interpretations clip

“For the name of Jesus
and the protection of
The Church, I am ready
to embrace death”

St. Thomas Becket

Was Thomas Becket responsible for his own death?

Possible layout: Intro -

General statement: (some background to the question and your judgement clearly)

Topic statement: (list what he did that maybe contributed to his death – how did he upset Henry)

Argument statement: (what other reasons were there for his death – how did Henry upset Becket)

Possible layout: Paragraph -

ATQ (answer the question) sentence:

Reasons why Becket responsible

Possible layout: Paragraph -

ATQ (answer the question) sentence:

Reasons why other factors led to his death – Did Henry mean it literally? Knights took it upon themselves

Possible layout: Conclusion-

All things considered, it is clear that... this is because...



Put the key events of this story into chronological order...

1164 – King Henry II and Thomas Becket argue and Becket flees to France.

1154 – Thomas Becket becomes Chancellor of England

1170 June – Becket and Henry II meet in France and become friends, Henry stays in France

1170 December – Becket returns to England to cheering crowds. He excommunicates his opponents in the church.

1162 – Thomas Becket appointed Archbishop of Canterbury

29th December 1170 – King Henry is furious at Becket for his actions. 4 Knights ride to England and Murder Thomas Becket

1154 – Henry becomes King Henry II of England

1164 – Constitution of Clarendon

