

Year 7 Medieval England knowledge organiser

Key terms

King's Courts	Law courts which were controlled by the King and his justice.
Church Courts	These were controlled by the church for religious offences and for any crimes committed by the clergy.
Archbishop of Canterbury	The head of the Church in England. He was appointed by the Pope.
Magna Carta	The document that King John was forced to sign by the barons in 1215 that limited some of his power.
Black Death	The disease that affected England from 1348 onwards. It is estimated that it killed 40% of the population.
Bubonic Plague	The more common Plague that was carried in the bloodstream of rats. Fleas bit the rats and become infected. They then hopped onto humans, bit them and passed on the disease.
Pneumonic Plague	This was more deadly. It was caught by breathing in the germs when an infected person coughed or sneezed. They would cough up blood and their lungs rotted inside them.
Freeman	These people paid rent to the lord to farm their land, but they weren't 'owned' by the Lord, and could come and go as they pleased.
Villein	They were Medieval peasants who were 'tied' to the Lord's land. They had to farm their own land and the land of the Lord, and they had to get the Lord's permission to do things like get married or leave the village.
Statute of Labourers	This Statute (law), passed after the Black Death, said labourers could not earn more than 2 pence per day. It was bitterly resented by the peasants.
Poll tax	Introduced by King Richard II to pay for the Hundred Years War. Everyone had to pay 4p every year – later increased.
Peasant's Revolt	A popular revolt in 1381 against the rule of Richard II, his advisors and taxation led by Wat Tyler.



The conflict between King and Church: Henry II vs. Thomas Becket.

1154	King Henry II appointed Thomas Beckett as his Chancellor. His job was to look after the church and the King's law courts. During this time Henry and Thomas became good friends.
1161	Henry asked Thomas to become the new Archbishop of Canterbury. Beckett was asked to make the church courts fairer, as they favoured the churchmen. Beckett refused and made Henry very angry.
1164	Henry announced that he would be in charge of the church court, and Beckett agreed but then changed his mind. Sensing danger, Beckett fled to France.
June 1170	Henry ordered the Archbishop of York to crown the next king. This was usually the job of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Beckett was furious!!
November 1170	Despite making up, Beckett removed Henry's supporters from the church.
December 1170	Henry found out that Beckett had removed his supporters from the church. Henry was furious and shouted: "Will no one rid me of this troublesome priest?!?!?"
29 th December 1170	Four knights heard Henry's shout and went to Canterbury Cathedral. They found Beckett and tried to force him to change his mind. Beckett refused and the four knights stabbed him to death in the church.

The King vs. The Barons



King John (1199-1216)

Brother of the popular King Richard I, who died shortly after his return from the 3rd Crusade.

John was suspicious and had rebelled against both his father and brother. John inherited the cost of his brother's costly wars, but was a cruel and incompetent king.

Causes of the barons' revolt

John spent ten years raising taxes for a war in Normandy with France. The barons did not support this.

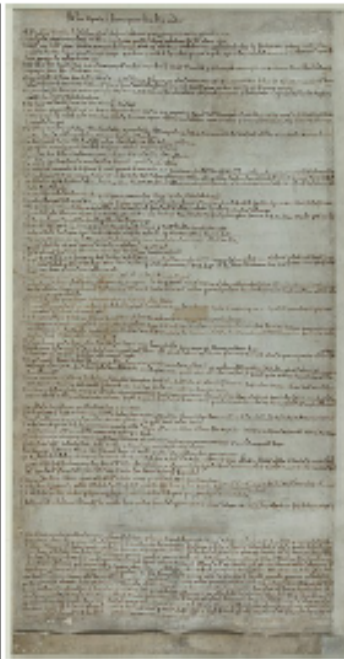
John lost the war and ran up huge debts.

In 1205 the Pope chose Stephen Langton to be the new archbishop of Canterbury. John refused to accept this and so was excommunicated by the Pope.

The Pope supported the French against John. Eventually John was forced to admit Langton as archbishop.

John increased taxes and did not consult the barons on important issues.

John sold justice at court by rewarding nobles who paid him the most.



MAGNA CARTA

The barons were angry with John and no compromise could be agreed. In April/May the barons took up arms against the King, led by Robert FitzWalter. They marched on London, Lincoln and Exeter, which all fell to the barons and the rebellion grew in size.

The barons issued a royal charter of demands which John was forced to accept on the field of Runnymede on 15th June 1215. This became known as the MAGNA CARTA.

Some of the key terms of this were:

- It promised the protection of church rights
- The King could not sell justice.
- Protection from illegal imprisonments
- All people were to be tried by jury.
- new taxation only with the consent of the barons
- The King could not sell justice
- A council of 25 barons would be set up to ensure that the King was respecting the rights and the laws of the charter.

The charter defined that a formal relationship should exist between the monarch and barons. The king was now subject to the law. These were radical ideas.



Consequences

John over-turned the MAGNA CARTA in the Autumn and the battle raged again. John died in 1216 (he died of dysentery, possibly by eating too many mouldy peaches, on his way to fight the barons) and was succeeded by his 9 year old son, King Henry III.

In 1225 Henry III re-issued the MAGNA CARTA to show that he accepted that the King was subject to the law.

It was re-issued in 1265 and 1297 to define the relationship between the monarchs and their subjects.

The MAGNA CARTA showed that the King could not ignore his barons and had to consult. It also made it clear that monarchs could not be a law unto themselves.