

= John de Gray =

John de Gray or de Grey (died 18 October 1214) was a medieval English Bishop of Norwich , and the elected but unconfirmed Archbishop of Canterbury . He was employed in the service of John of England even before John 's coronation as king , for which he was rewarded with a number of ecclesiastical offices , culminating in his pro forma election to Norwich in 1200 . De Gray continued in royal service after his elevation to the episcopate , lending the King money and undertaking diplomatic missions on his behalf . In 1205 King John attempted to further reward de Gray with a translation to the archbishopric of Canterbury , but a disputed election process led to de Gray 's selection being quashed by Pope Innocent III in 1206 .

Innocent consecrated Stephen Langton as archbishop against John 's wishes , triggering a long dispute between the papacy and the King . The pope imposed various sanctions on England and John ; at one point de Gray was one of only two bishops still legitimately holding office in England . In 1209 he became governor of Ireland for John , and spent until 1213 attempting to impose royal government on the Anglo @-@ Norman barons and the native Irish in that country . Recalled to England to help defend against a threatened invasion by the French , de Gray then travelled to Rome to secure a papal pardon after the final settlement of John and Innocent 's dispute over the bishop 's abortive elevation to Canterbury . After securing his pardon de Gray was appointed Bishop of Durham , but he died on his way back to England .

De Gray built a palace in his diocese and several castles in Ireland . Although reviled by one contemporary writer as an " evil counsellor " to the King , modern historians have been more forgiving ; one praised his intelligence and others stated that de Gray was one of the few men King John trusted throughout his life . De Gray 's nephew , Walter de Gray , secured the office of Lord Chancellor with his uncle 's help in 1205 .

= = Early life = =

Some describe de Gray as a native of Norfolk ; he was likely descended from the Norman knight , Anchetil de Greye . De Gray was the uncle of Walter de Gray , later Archbishop of York . The elder de Gray was instrumental in securing the selection of his nephew as Lord Chancellor , as he was a surety for Walter 's payment of a fine of 5000 marks to acquire the position .

By 1196 de Gray was in the service of Prince John (later King John) , and was keeper of John 's seal by 1198 . After John 's accession to the throne of England in 1199 de Gray became Archdeacon of Cleveland in March 1200 , and Archdeacon of Gloucester before April that year . He also served as John 's secretary , and frequently as a deputy for the Lord Chancellor , Hubert Walter . Shortly after John became king , de Gray began travelling between England and the continent on royal business , and for the first two years of John 's reign was active in the royal chancery , sealing royal charters .

De Gray was elected Bishop of Norwich on about 7 September 1200 , although the election was purely pro forma , as acknowledged by a contemporary writer Roger of Howden , who stated that the new bishop " succeeded to the bishopric of Norwich by the gift of King John " . De Gray was consecrated on 24 September . His consecration took place together with that of the new Bishop of Hereford Giles de Braose at Westminster , at the conclusion of a provincial church council held by Archbishop Walter , which de Gray had been attending . Walter performed the ceremony in a chapel of Westminster Abbey .

= = Bishop of Norwich = =

While bishop , de Gray often lent the king money , and on one occasion held the royal regalia as security for the repayment of a loan ; he also served as a royal justice . In 1203 de Gray accompanied Archbishop Hubert Walter and several papal legates on an unsuccessful diplomatic mission to King Philip II of France . Philip had demanded that John 's niece Eleanor of Brittany or his nephew Arthur of Brittany be surrendered to him together with all of John 's lands on the continent ,

none of which John was prepared to concede . Philip invaded Normandy after the bishops returned to England .

In 1203 some of de Gray 's knights were part of the garrison at the castle of Vaudreuil in Normandy , serving under the command of Robert FitzWalter . Although they had provisions and John was moving in support of the troops , in the summer of 1203 the garrison surrendered to Philip , shortly after a siege had begun . When John abandoned Normandy in late 1203 , effectively relinquishing control of the duchy to Philip , de Gray was one of his companions on the journey to the port of Barfleur , and went on to England with the king .

= = Archbishop @-@ elect = =

John 's attempt to impose de Gray 's election as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1205 was the beginning of the king 's long quarrel with Pope Innocent III . After Hubert Walter 's death in July 1205 , the selection of a successor was hindered by doubts about what the proper procedure should be , something that commonly happened with elections to Canterbury . John postponed a decision while delegations from the bishops of England and the monks of the cathedral chapter went to Rome to seek guidance from the pope . The bishops of the province of Canterbury claimed the right to a say in who was elected , as whoever was chosen would be their superior , but according to canon law the monks of the cathedral chapter had the right to elect the new archbishop . The king also had a say in the election , as the archbishop was a major tenant @-@ in @-@ chief and was traditionally one of the principal royal advisors .

While the delegations from the various parties were in Rome , the monks of Canterbury secretly elected one of their own , Reginald , as archbishop , and subsequently sent him to Rome to join the delegation . When John discovered that Reginald had been elected without any royal input he forced the monks to elect de Gray as archbishop . Some stories have Reginald 's election taking place before the despatch of the first delegation to the papal curia . Another source , Gervase of Canterbury , has the king telling the chapter they could choose their own nominee after six months , while the king secretly sent envoys to Rome to secure de Gray 's election . A further story , from Roger of Wendover , states that the monks elected Reginald before Walter was even buried , and that only a few members of the cathedral chapter ? the younger ones ? participated in the election . Wendover wrote in the 1230s and was not a monk of Canterbury , therefore it is unlikely he has recorded a true account .

De Gray was postulated , or nominated , to Canterbury on 11 December 1205 , which presented Innocent with two candidates for the office . In an effort to reach a compromise , the pope quashed both nominations on about 30 March 1206 ; Innocent 's reason for invalidating de Gray 's candidacy was that any election was invalid if an earlier one was still under appeal to the papacy . The monks then elected Stephen Langton , with Innocent 's approval . John did not accept Langton 's candidacy however , and Innocent 's consecration of Langton in 1207 led to an eight @-@ year struggle between John and the pope over the rights of the king to secure the election of his choice as archbishop . John refused to allow Langton to enter England and exiled the Canterbury monks . Innocent placed an interdict on England in 1207 , which John countered by confiscating the income and estates of any clergy who enforced it . Innocent went on to excommunicate John in 1209 , in a dispute that led to the exile of many of the English clergy and John 's imposition of heavy financial demands on the church in England ; by 1209 de Gray and Peter des Roches , the Bishop of Winchester , were the only English bishops not in exile or dead . But it was not until 1213 , when Innocent began to support John 's deposition , that the king became concerned and reached a settlement with the papacy .

= = In Ireland = =

By 1209 de Gray was in Ireland serving as the king 's governor , an office sometimes referred to as justiciar for Ireland . One possible reason for his appointment was to save him from being accused of ignoring the interdict on England . As a bishop , it was de Gray 's ecclesiastical duty to enforce

the interdict , but by going to Ireland , which was not under interdict , he could continue to serve the king without provoking the papacy . De Gray 's chief policy in Ireland was to extend English rule , to which end he was involved in battles on the River Shannon and in Fermanagh . He also replaced the Irish coinage with English , and attempted unsuccessfully to make English laws applicable in Ireland . De Gray 's term of office in Ireland coincided with a time of change in Irish governmental practices .

During John 's persecution of William de Braose in 1209 , William Marshal gave de Braose shelter on his Irish lands . De Gray demanded that Marshal surrender de Braose to him as a traitor , but Marshal refused , claiming that since he held some lands from de Braose , it would be an act of treason to surrender his lord to an outside authority . Marshal 's refusal does not seem to have embittered de Gray however , as three years later the bishop was praising him in a letter to John .

John led an expedition to Ireland in 1210 in an effort to bring the Anglo -@-@ Norman barons under control . He opened talks with the native Irish kings , and some accounts state that his negotiations were so successful that the native Irish submitted to him . In contrast , the historian Seán Duffy has argued that the native Irish nobility were just as resistant to John as the Anglo -@-@ Norman barons . After John 's return to England he ordered de Gray to build three new castles in Connacht , one of them at Athlone . Associated with the castle building were two military invasions of Connacht by the royal government ? one from Meath and Leinster and the other from Munster . De Gray left Ireland in 1211 to lead a military campaign against the Welsh , leaving his deputy Richard de Tuit in charge of the country .

De Gray also faced resistance from the northern Irish . In 1212 he led a campaign against Áed Méith , in the promotion of which he constructed castles at Cáer Uisce , Belleek , and Clones , bases for raids against the Ua Néill territory in the north . A naval campaign was also launched , but to no avail . De Gray suffered a defeat at the hands of Cormac O 'Melaghlin in 1212 at Fircal , Offaly , and left Ireland the following year . He continued to hold the office of governor for a time , but by July 1213 he had been replaced by Henry de Loundres , the Archbishop of Dublin . One of de Gray 's final acts as justiciar was to take a force of Irish knights to England to help repel a threatened invasion by the French king Philip II .

= = Episcopal affairs and later career = =

As bishop , de Gray settled a long @-@ running dispute between the monks of his cathedral chapter and his predecessors as bishop . He also allowed the monks of his cathedral chapter the right to appoint and replace the clergy of the dependent churches of the cathedral . De Gray received a 1203 missive from Innocent III decrying the marriages of some secular clergy , in contravention of canon law . In more secular matters , he granted the town of Bishop 's Lynn (now King 's Lynn) the right to hold a weekly market and two fairs per year . He also built a palace at Gaywood .

De Gray 's ability to raise money made him useful to John . In 1213 de Gray mustered 500 knights during a period when Philip II was threatening to invade England , bringing this force over from Ireland along with mounted men @-@ at @-@ arms to support the king in England . In May 1213 , John and Innocent finally resolved the dispute over Langton 's election to Canterbury , and part of the settlement was that John gave Ireland and England to Innocent and received them back from the pope , making John a papal vassal . The settlement was sealed with a treaty , to which de Gray was one of the witnesses . After John settled with the papacy , de Gray was not included in the general pardon , and had to go to Rome to be pardoned . While in that city the bishop was named as one of the guarantors of a new financial arrangement between the king and the pope dealing with feudal payments from England , which lowered the lump sum that had to be paid before Innocent would lift the interdict . After Innocent pardoned de Gray , the pope recommended his election as Bishop of Durham in 1213 ; but de Gray died during his journey back to England on 18 October 1214 , at Saint @-@ Jean @-@ d 'Angély in Poitou . He was buried in Norwich Cathedral , but his tomb has not survived .

As well as encouraging his nephew 's career , de Gray took into his household two of Hubert Walter

's household clerks : David , and Robert of Rudeby . Another clerk employed by de Gray , Robert de Bingham , was in the bishop 's household during the papal interdict on England ; he went on to become a tutor in theology at Oxford , and Bishop of Salisbury in 1228 .

De Gray remained close to John for most of the bishop 's life , and one of the King 's chief fundraisers . Sidney Painter , a historian and biographer of John , said of de Gray that he was " probably the only man whom John trusted absolutely and without reservation for the whole period of their association " . The medievalist Ralph Turner called de Gray " one of John 's greatest favourites " , and another of John 's biographers , W. L. Warren , described de Gray as " one of the best brains of the royal administration " . Matthew Paris , a medieval writer , called him an " evil counsellor " , and blamed many of the difficulties of John 's later reign on de Gray 's failed election to Canterbury .