

Protest of Archbishop William Warham in Defence of the Church
24 February 1532

In the name of God. Amen. By this public instrument may it be clear and known to all that in the year of the Lord 1531 (according to the reckoning of the Church in England), the fifth indiction, the ninth year of the pontificate of the most reverend father in Christ and Our Lord, the Lord Clement, by divine providence the seventh of that name, on the 24th day of February, in a certain room or chamber in the residence in Lambeth in the diocese of Winchester of the very reverend Father and Lord in Christ, the Lord William, by divine permission Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, legate of the Apostolic See, in the presence of our notaries public, subscribers and witnesses named below, the same most reverend father in Christ in person made and delivered openly and publicly a protest which is more fully contained in a sheet of paper, which, holding it in his hands he then read.

It ran thus:

In the name of God. Amen. We, William by divine permission, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England, legate of the Apostolic See publicly and expressly protest, on behalf of us and the holy Church of Canterbury, that we do not wish or intend, as neither can we do in good conscience, that any statute [passed] in the present Parliament at the Friars Preachers of London on 3 November AD 1529, in the 21st year of the reign of Henry VIII and thence prorogued to Westminster and there continued until now, insofar as any statutes of this kind or any part of them is in derogation of the Roman pontiff or the Apostolic See, or does damage, prejudice or restriction of ecclesiastical power, or subversion, weakening, derogation or diminution of the laws, customs, privileges, prerogatives, preeminences or liberties of our Metropolitan Church of Canterbury aforesaid: far from consenting [to them] one ought to deny, refuse and refute: and deny refuse and refute them do we in this document.

After all this, the same Very Reverend Father sought and asked us public notaries to draw up duly and at once the public instrument or instruments.

All and everything that is written and recited above took place in the year of the Lord, indiction, pontificate, month, day aforesaid; in the presence of the venerable and godly men, the masters John Cox, Doctor of Laws; Roger Harman, Bachelor of Theology; Gerald Bedill, clerk, and William Warham, layman – witnesses to the above specially called and invited.

This instrument was likewise countersigned by the three aforesaid notaries.