

Brutal but important lesson



Workingclasshistory auf [Instagram](#):

On this day, 14 June 1381, during the peasants' revolt in England, Wat Tyler's rebel army of some 50,000 to 100,000 people captured London Bridge and the Tower of London. There they killed the chancellor, Archbishop Simon of Sudbury, and the treasurer, Sir Robert Hales.

The rebellion had broken out in May in protest at the imposition of a poll tax on everyone aged fifteen and over, which exacerbated the economic hardship of workers and the poor. People were also enraged by the brutality of tax inspectors, who measured people's pubic hair to determine their age, which was seen as state-sanctioned sexual assault, particularly in the case of girls and women. The rebellion soon developed into a deep and sophisticated social movement

demanding radical changes to feudal society and peaked with the taking of the Tower.

On June 15, Wat Tyler attended a parley with the king Richard II, where he was murdered. Realising his weak position, Richard promised the rebels that he would implement many of their demands, including the abolition of the tax, and even the abolition of forced labor and serfdom, but, while the poll tax was ended, once the rebels had dispersed and returned home, they were no longer a threat, so Richard reneged on all of his other pledges and hanged 1,500 of them. It was a [brutal but important lesson](#) not to trust the promises of the powerful.

Zum Vergleich muss man den oberflächlichen Quatsch im [deutschen Wikipedia](#) lesen – als würde [Aschwin von Cramm](#) über den Tod [Thomas Münzers](#) schreiben.