

Summary:	The Black Death had begun to stir discontent amongst the peasants, this combined with changing attitudes to religion and the unpopular Poll Tax led to peasants revolting and marching to London. Although the revolt failed and the immediate impact was negligible, in the longer term it hastened the decline of serfdom.
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Reasons for peasant discontent		
Summary		
The effects of the Black Death had transformed 14 th century society and left the peasants feeling emboldened and determined that the government should not end their new found freedom. Peasant discontent was also caused by changing attitudes towards religion; the reignition of the 100 Years and the introduction of the, extremely unpopular, Poll Tax.		

Key knowledge		
1.	The Church	The peasants had to work for free on church land which led to their own land being unfarmed. The view was that pre-plague conditions for peasants should be restored. This made the Church extremely unpopular with peasants.
2.	John Ball	Some members of the Church also began to challenge the ideas and believed in ideas of equality. John Ball was the most prominent priest who preached about equality. In 1366 he was removed from his post in Colchester, and travelled around the country delivering sermons that challenged the authority of the church. He was imprisoned a number of times. He was very popular with peasants.
3.	French Wars	the next decade saw England lose many of the gains made in the early stages. Both the Black Prince, and Edward III died, so Richard II became king, he was only 10 years old. The military defeats in the 100 and they were running out of money to fight.
4.	Poll Tax	Introduced to raise money to fund the wars. The first very unpopular. A second Poll Tax was introduced in 1379, and a third in 1380. Many people refused to pay and hid from the tax collectors.
5.	Tax collectors	In 1381 the government sent out collectors to investigate and identify those who refused to pay. This made an already tense situation worse.

Wat Tyler and the events of May – June 1381		
Summary		
The arrival of tax collectors in Essex led to a series of revolts which culminated with the peasants arriving in London on 12 th June 1381.		

Key knowledge		
6.	The villages of Fobbing, Corringham and Stanford.	On May 31 st 1381 Thomas Bampton arrived in Essex to investigate the shortfall of taxes in the villages of Fobbing, Corringham and Standord. When the villagers of Fobbing refused to pay the taxes Bampton riots broke out leading to Bampton fleeing and 3 of his derks being killed.
7.	Spread of revolts	Following events in Fobbing revolts spread across Essex, with peasants planning to march to London to confront the king. Peasants from Norfolk and Suffolk joined, and the actions of notorious tax collector, John Legge, prompted revolts in Kent.

8.	Rochester Castle	On 6 th June peasants from Essex and Kent forced the surrender of Rochester Castle, freeing prisoners.
9.	Wat Tyler	On 7 th June the revolting peasants reached Maidstone, Tyler the peasants marched to Canterbury where they
10.	12 th June	Thousands of peasants had arrived at Mile End, and thousands were in Blackheath, both in London. The king and his advisers had taken refuge in the Tower of London.
11.	13 th June	The peasants crossed London Bridge and attacked Marshalsea prison and destroyed the Savoy Palace. Many Flemish immigrants were murdered.
12.	14 th June	Richard II met the peasants at Mile End and agreed to their demands. However on the same day a different mob of peasants gained access to the Tower of London and murdered the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Lord Chancellor, Simon Sudbury.
13.	15 th June	Richard II met the peasants again, and Wat Tyler spoke to him in a rude manner, making demands in excess of what had been agreed the previous day. Tyler was killed in an argument. With no leader, and general confusion, the peasants surrendered and the revolt ended.

The significance of The Peasants' Revolt		
Summary		
The Peasants' Revolt did not change much in the day to day life of the peasants (bar the abandonment of Poll Tax), but in the longer term contributed to the decline of Serfdom. It had a significant impact on the 100 Years' War.		

Key knowledge		
14.	Richard's broken promises	Richard stated that he did not approve of the rebels, and significant figures were arrested and executed, including revolt. Peasants were ordered to return to work as before, and very little changed, although the government did reflect on the causes and the role of corrupt royal officials.
15.	Poll Tax	Poll Tax was abolished.
16.	Control of wages	Villeins and workmen were worse off as Lords once again sought to control wages.
17.	Decline of Serfdom	more aware of their value and hastened the decline of serfdom. In the longer term the position of peasants did improve.
18.	Effects on the 100	Had a significant impact. The lack of poll tax meant efforts were made to reduce the military involvement. In 1389 a truce was signed at Leulinghen. Most people in England saw the war with France as unwinnable.
19.	Richard II	his authority enhanced, he faced further problems in the 1380s and 1390s and was deposed by Henry Bolingbroke in 1399. Richard died in captivity in 1400.
20.	Success in France	English control.

Key words	
Serfdom	Peasants who were bound to their Lords and had very little freedom.