

Rebel stories from 1381

<p style="text-align: center;">Goditha de Stathum</p> <p>I was a wealthy noblewoman in Derby who was very angry at our neighbour, who was a tenant of John of Gaunt. My sons were involved in killing him and in other violence such as burning down the Priory. I helped to protect them and other rebels from being arrested, and ended up seeking a pardon to protect myself.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Robert de Stathum</p> <p>I was a knight from a wealthy family in Derby who fought in France for the King, serving under the Duke of Gloucester. I helped to lead local rebels in killing people whom we saw as traitors, setting fire to the local priory, and seizing a castle and raising the flag of St George to show our loyalty to the King. I had to seek a pardon after the Revolt.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">John Hende</p> <p>I started out as a draper (seller of cloth) but by the time of the Revolt I was already very wealthy! I used the Revolt to take the opportunity to seize a manor in Essex that I had been wanting for ages. I begged pardon and helped the King to punish other people involved in the Revolt afterwards, as Sheriff.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">John Peper</p> <p>I was a small landowner who later became a soldier and fought in France. I returned and led rebels in the Peasants' Revolt, attacking people and burning the property of traitors. I was initially denied a pardon because of my role in stirring up the Revolt, but after the Bishop of Ely intervened, I was able to get a pardon.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">John Preston</p> <p>I was a wealthy tenant farmer from Hadleigh in Suffolk. After the King had called for calm, I followed his advice and wrote a note demanding the end of serfdom, fair rents and proper justice from the King. I thought that he would listen and help us, but I was arrested and executed.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Robert Hull</p> <p>I was a sailor who had been very loyal to the King and had been given property as a reward. However, in 1381, I led men in attacking the local Abbey, whom we felt were too powerful, and destroying their documents. I was pardoned and continued to serve the King in his navy.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Walter Aleyn</p> <p>I was a tenant of John Reed in Rougham. He was a harsh lord and regularly fined me for brewing and selling ale and bread without following the rules. He really wanted my land, but I kept resisting him. In 1381, I went with lots of local people to attack John Reed's manor and we took all sorts of things. I had to pay a fine afterwards and eventually moved to a different house.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Agnes Aleyn</p> <p>I was a tenant of John Reed in Rougham. John Reed was trying to push us off our land and he had treated my son, Walter, very poorly by fining him all the time. I went with the men and four other women in the village to attack John Reed's manor. I had to pay a fine afterwards and eventually moved to a different house.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">John Spayne</p> <p>I was a skilled craftsman in King's Lynn in Norfolk. I was accused of leading a group of craftsmen around the area, attacking and killing foreigners (mostly Flemings from Belgium) and forcing lords who we felt were bad tenants to give us money. I managed to get a pardon after the local bishop supported my petition that I was innocent.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Geoffrey Lister</p> <p>I was a dyer from Felmingham in Norfolk. I was a leader of rebels in 1381 and called myself 'king of the commons'. I led a group of rebels, including local gentry, in a full-out battle with troops led by the Bishop of Norwich. There was much hand-to-hand combat, but then we were overrun and I was captured and hung, drawn and quartered.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">John Stakepoll</p> <p>I was a man-at-arms, which means that I was a soldier in the army. I fought for the King but when I was told to put down the rebellion, I ran away and joined the rebels. I had musical instruments – a harp and a gittern (like a guitar) – so historians think that I could have played protest songs to rouse the rebels to fight! I was captured during the Revolt and killed.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">John Wrawe</p> <p>I was a chaplain (priest) from Sudbury who led the rebels in Suffolk. I led rebels in beheading important government figures like the Chief Justice, and marched his head on a stake into Bury St Edmunds. The rebels wanted to crown me 'king of Suffolk', but I refused. We attacked the Abbey and lasted until the Bishop of Norwich attacked us, and I was tortured and then hung.</p>