

History

Answers and commentaries

A-level (7042)

2B The Wars of the Roses, 1450 — 1499

Marked answers from students for questions from the June 2022 exams. Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the student.

This resource is to be used alongside the A-level History Component 2B The War of the Roses, 1450–1499 June 2022 Question paper and inserts.

Question 1

With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the First Battle of St Albans.

[30 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to present a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. The answer will convey a substantiated judgement. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with an awareness of the historical context to provide a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Shows some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance together with some awareness of the historical context. There may, however, be some imbalance in the degree of breadth and depth of comment offered on all three sources and the analysis may not be fully convincing. The answer will make some attempt to consider the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. It may, for example, provide some comment on the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question but only address one or two of the sources, or focus exclusively on content (or provenance), or it may consider all three sources but fail to address the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**

A-LEVEL HISTORY – 7042/2B – ANSWERS AND COMMENTARIES

L1: The answer will offer some comment on the value of at least one source in relation to the purpose given in the question but the response will be limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalist. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1–6**

Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Student responses

Response A

Source A is somewhat valuable to an historian studying the First Battle of St. Albans as it suggests there was an uncertainty of leadership following the First Battle of St. Albans on the 22nd of May 1455. This is demonstrated in the quote; 'as for what rule we shall have I do not know.' It is true that there would have been a large amount of uncertainty following the First Battle of St. Albans as it was the first time the Yorkists had raised arms against and actually fought the Lancastrians. The Yorkists had captured Henry VI, also something that had never been done before. Before St. Albans, Edmund Beaufort, 5th Duke of Somerset, had been in charge of government in England. Now that 'The Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland and the Lord Clifford were all dead,' Henry lacked several significant nobles to effectively rule England during his captivity. This led to Richard, Duke of York, assuming the position of Protector of England in May 1455 (but officially in November 1455). The fact that John Crane also states 'save only there be made new certain officers' suggests that there was a fear of Henry VI being usurped as king. Although this did not happen at the time, it would have understandable been a concern of Henry VI's subjects as York had a relatively strong claim to the throne through the Mortimer lines. Thus, increasing the validity of Source A's main argument that there was uncertainty following the First Battle of St. Albans. The validity of the source

is also significantly increased as it is from a private letter. Therefore, the source is very unlikely to have any propagandistic elements. For example, ~~against York~~ as a form of anti-Yorkist propaganda by emphasising the deaths of nobles such as 'The Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland and the Lord Clifford'. Also, the source was written only ^{three} days following the battle. Therefore, the events and the idea that Henry VI's subjects held uncertainty about who will be ~~king~~ rule is ~~extreme~~ unlikely to be affected by time. ~~or~~ Thus, increasing the validity of the source ~~for~~ a historian studying the First Battle of St. Albans.

However, the ~~source~~ validity of the source is also slightly decreased by the fact that it was written only three days following the First Battle of St. Albans. The source suggests that Henry VI's subjects were uncertain of who would be king. However, this is inevitable after such a short amount of time following the battle. Therefore, the source does not show a true reflection of the actual impact of ~~St. Albans~~ the First battle of St. Albans. Thus, decreasing the validity of the source.

Overall, the source is extremely valuable as it is unlikely to have been used in a propagandistic way and it is very likely that there would have been significant uncertainty of ~~who~~ who would rule England following the First Battle of St. Albans.

Source B is somewhat valuable in its argument that some people would've viewed the First Battle of St. Albans as a positive situation as it meant that Richard of York could become Protector of England and solve Henry VI ineffective leadership. The source states

that 'some think that the affairs of that kingdom will now take a turn for the better' and 'If that be the case we can put up with his inconvenience.' It is true that many subjects of Henry VI would like to have seen Richard, Duke of York as Protector by 'taking up the government again.' During Jack Cade's rebellion in 1450, the rebels were seen to support Richard of York as oppose to corrupt nobles such as John Talbot and William Crommer and remove other nobles such as the Duke of Somerset from power. Thus, adding validity to the source as it is highly likely that 'some think that the affairs of that kingdom will now take a turn for the better' with Richard of York in charge shown by his support. Furthermore, it is true that York would 'take up government again' as his second protectorate officially started in November 1455 (but effectively in May 1455). The word 'again' is referring to Richard of York's first protectorate in which he took up government during Henry VI's period of madness from 1453 to 1454. Thus, adding validity to the source. Furthermore, the fact that the source was written by an Italian bishop (to an Italian Archbishop) adds a significant amount of validity to the source. As they are Italian, they are unlikely to be involved in the political situation of England at that time. Furthermore, they are no loyalists to the king meaning they are able to suggest that the 'kingdom will now take a turn for the better' since the king has been captured. Therefore, source B may represent the true opinions of individuals in England following

The First Battle of St. Albans, making the source far more valuable to a historian studying the First Battle of St. Albans.

However, the source loses a significant amount of value in its argument that some people in England were pleased to see York 'take up government' following the First Battle of St. Albans. The source states that 'fresh disturbances broke out in England a few days after my departure' and that the Italian bishop 'learned by letters'. Therefore, the Italian has not got first hand information of the events during and following the First Battle of St. Albans. He would not have been an eye-witness to the events of the battle or the aftermath. Thus, lowering the validity of source B in relation to the First battle of St. Albans as the events may have been manipulated by people before they reached the Italian bishop.

Overall, source B is somewhat valuable as it makes the valuable point that some people would have been willing to accept Richard, Duke of York as Protector of England. However, the fact that the source is based on third party information reduces the validity of it, as the information may not be accurate.

Source C is highly valuable in its argument that following the First Battle of St. Albans, created divisions that then had to be resolved. The source states that 'one reason for ^{the} summoning of parliament is to establish perfect love and peace among the lords'. It is true that divisions were caused by the First Battle of St. Albans known as blood feuds. For example, the children of individuals killed at St. Albans including Henry Percy, Lord of and Edmund

Beaumont ^{Beaufort} continued to work against the Yorkists, seeking revenge for their roles in the deaths of their fathers. For example, many of them such as Henry Beaumont and Henry Stafford went on to join Margaret of Anjou's affinity and work against the Yorkists. ^{adding validity to the source} The source also shifts the blame of the Battle of St. Albans away from the Yorkists by stating that 'our said cousins, and all those accompanying them, should be believed' and that the Yorkists 'should not be impeached, sued, vexed, grieved, harmed or molested in their bodies, lands or goods.' It is true that the Yorkists ~~got no~~ faced no consequence for their actions in the Second battle of St. Albans, mainly because York had taken over the role of Protector and blamed the events of St. Albans on Edmund Beaufort. Thus, adding validity to the source. Furthermore, the fact that source B is from the Parliamentary Roll of July 1455 significantly increases the validity of source B. It is an official document that would show the accurate aftermath of the Battle of St. Albans.

However, the provenance of the source also somewhat reduces the validity of source B in its argument that the Yorkists were not to blame for St. Albans. The Yorkists initiated the battle, which is something the Lancastrians were not expecting as shown by how unprepared they were when the Yorkists attacked. Therefore, they did in fact do something 'to or against the crown' as they raised arms against the crown. As Henry VI was being held prisoner by Richard of York, it is likely that York persuaded him to dismiss his actions in the ~~batle~~ Battle of St. Albans. Thus, ~~the~~ lowering the validity of source C as Henry VI was in charge of the Parliament of Reconciliation.

Overall, source C was highly accurate in its argument that divisions had been caused

denying the first Battle of St. Albans. However, its argument that the Yorkists were not to blame for the Battle of St. Albans is inaccurate, reducing the validity of source C.

This is a Level 5 response

This script shows very good understanding of the content and provenance of the sources and uses the historical context to produce a balanced assessment. The provenance of the sources is understood, and is used successfully to identify purpose, strengths, and possible limitations. For example, from Source A the inference is made that the deaths of Somerset, Northumberland and Clifford, and the capture of Henry VI, gave a great opportunity to the Yorkists. As a private letter, the possibility that this is propagandistic is discounted. Context is also used to judge the value of the content of source C in relation to provenance, the reliability of this 'official document' being balanced by the awareness that Richard now had influence over Henry VI. The strengths and limitations of Source B are also considered and the focus of the answer is consistently maintained.

Response B

Source A is valuable in regards to the first battle of St Albans in 1455, ~~sp~~ specifically that at the battle the Yorkists defeated the Lancastrians and multiple people had been killed or injured. In the source it says 'the Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland and the Lord Clifford are all dead. As for any other Lords, many of them are hurt' which shows that many important, specifically Lancastrian nobles, were slain at the battle. This battle was the start of the blood feud, as the sons of the deceased nobles were angry at the Yorkists, and wanted to take revenge. The blood feud carried on for years after the battle of St Albans, and only slightly calmed down after the love day event in 1459, which Margaret of Anjou held to bring the Yorkist and Lancastrian nobles together, ~~in the source it also says~~ but this didn't really work, and therefore the Yorkist and Lancastrian nobles never got along after this battle. In the source it also says 'my Lord of York, Constable of England; my Lord of Warwick is made Captain of Calais; my Lord Bouchier is made Treasurer of England' which shows that the Yorkists gained something out of their victory at St Albans, and they took advantage of this victory in their favour. After the first battle of St Albans is when York started his Second Protectorate, but however this was very short-lived as he was only protectorate for one year before Henry VI took back over again. The source is also a private letter written just after the Battle of

St Albans, and because it is a private letter the writer will write freely about what is happening, and won't be worried about offending anyone because the letter is private.

However there are some limitations to the source, as ~~it was~~ the source seems to be partisan to Henry VI, as when it says 'as for our Sovereign Lord the king, thanks be to God, he did not come to great harm' which implies the writer is writing in favour of Henry VI and the Lancastrians, so therefore the source is partisan to Henry VI. The source also makes it seem as though the Yorkists won, they removed many Lancastrian nobles, as well as the King himself, but they didn't, as many of the corrupt nobles around the King were now dead, like Somerset, so York was fine with Henry on the throne, just not with nobles like that around him. Overall, the source is valuable in regards to the Battle of St Albans in 1455, specifically that the Yorkists defeated the Lancastrians and took over.

Source B is ^{not} valuable in regards to the Battle of St Albans in 1455, specifically that Richard of York was to blame for this battle. In the source it says 'he will take up the government again' which is talking about his Second ~~Protector~~ Protectorate in 1455, which happened after the battle for a year, where his Protectorate ended in 1456. The source is also written by an Italian bishop, which means that, because he's not English, he has no loyalty to both the Yorkists or the Lancastrians, and even the king.

So therefore the source will not be partisan to either the Yorkists or Lancastrians.

However, there are some limitations to the source, as it was written by an Italian bishop ~~who~~ who had recently left England before the battle took place, so therefore ~~it is~~ ^{at} ~~be~~ going he will be basing his letter off of what he had witnessed before the battle, as well as ~~second~~ ~~hand~~ ^{Secondary} information that was being spread, so therefore there could be factual errors within the source. In the source it also says 'The Duke of York ~~had~~ has done this, ~~with~~ with his followers' which implies that this was all Richard of York's fault and he is to blame, but Richard of York only acted because of the wrongs done to him prior to this. Before the Battle of St Albans, York, as well as other Yorkist Lords, had been left out at court and no longer had any say in what was happening in court. Richard had also tried to get Henry to remove the corrupt nobles from the King's household, but Henry had ignored him and kept the nobles, which infuriated Richard, as Somerset kept ~~on~~ convincing Henry VI to remove ~~to~~ Richard from his position in court, and Henry listened. Overall the source is not valuable in regards to the Battle of St Albans in 1455, specifically that Richard of York is to blame, as he only acted out as a last resort, due to Henry constantly overlooking him and undermining him.

Source C is valuable in regards to the First Battle of St Albans, specifically that ~~after~~ after the battle. Henry VI wanted to restore

the peace after the battle. In the source it says '... for the more rapid resolution of the business of the Battle of St Albans' which shows Henry VI wanted to resolve the problems that were happening quickly, even though he didn't really do much and just listened to the corrupt people around him telling him what to do. One thing that Henry VI did do after the Battle of St Albans, is that he pardoned many of the Yorkist Lords, like Warwick and York, in 1455 just after the ~~Battle~~ battle occurred, which shows he did want to reform some element of peace within the kingdom. The source is from the Parliamentary Roll of July 1455, so therefore the information within the source will be accurate, ~~but will also be partisan to Henry VI, as he was~~ and was written just after the battle, so therefore the source is well informed and accurate, and the source is an official record, and therefore there can be no lies within the records, making it more valuable.

However, there are some limitations to the source, as it is from the Parliamentary Roll of July 1455, so therefore the source will be partisan to Henry VI, as he was the king at the time, and he was the one to call the parliament, so therefore and Henry VI will try and swing the events that happened to make himself look right, and therefore the source is partisan to Henry VI. Even though Henry VI tried to restore peace within the realm peace was never an option for the Lords because they hated each other, especially the sons of the deceased nobles of Somerset, Northumberland and Clifford, as they wanted to avenge their

father's death, and this started the blood feud. Overall the source is valuable, as it shows that Henry did in fact want ~~peo~~ peace between the Lords, but the corrupted nobles around him got in his ear and would constantly tell him what to do, like he was their puppet.

This is a Level 3 response

This script shows an understanding of some of the content of each of the sources and is able to make reference to some historical context. The answer is dependent on the source content more than context, and uses the formula 'the source says' followed by extended quotations. The limitations of the content are explored by taking issue with specific claims made in the sources. For example, in Source B the implication that it was all Richard's fault. The judgement is not convincing due to the lack of strong historical context. The provenance of the sources is addressed, but the comments on provenance, 'it is a private letter', it is 'from a parliamentary roll', are not developed in context. For example, the significance of the letter writer being able to 'write freely' is not explored. There is a partial development of the significance of the parliamentary record.

Question 4

'By the end of 1484, Richard III was in an extremely weak position as king.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Student responses

Response A

It is true that by the end of 1484, Richard III was in an extremely weak position as king. His unpopularity caused by his unjust actions during his usurpation of the throne left Richard III in an incredibly weak position from the start of his reign (the 26th of June 1483) and continued to diminish his support for the following. There were a few moments of strength in Richard III's reign up until the end of 1484, but overall, he was in an extremely weak position by this point.

It was inevitable that Richard III would lack support, putting him in an extremely weak position, when he usurped the throne without right. Actions such as the execution of Hastings on the 13th of June 1483 and Earl Rivers on the 25th of June 1483 caused anger within the nobility that previously supported Edward IV. His then alleged involvement in the disappearance of the Princes in the Tower (Richard of York and Edward V) added to his unpopularity. They were last sighted in late July 1483 and individuals such as John Cheney made attempts to rescue them. Thus, showing how Richard III's subjects would much rather see Edward IV's children on the throne than Richard, putting him in a weak position. Richard III's actions during his reign added to his lack of support, causing his position to deteriorate further by 1484. For example, in ~~January~~ the parliament of January 1484, Richard III ~~disinherited~~ pronounced Edward IV's children as illegitimate in Titius Regius on the pretext that Edward IV had a precontracted marriage to Eleanor Butler meaning his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville was illegitimate and as were their children. In early 1484, Richard also began installing what is known as 'Northern plantations' He placed trusted northern nobles in positions of power in the south. Although this also arguably strengthened

his position by giving him loyal subjects in a lawless part of the country, it also led to resentment and a lack of support ~~for him~~ from southern gentry. The fact that Richard had such little support considerably weakened his position when Henry Tudor's power began to increase. In summer 1483, Margaret Beaufort (Henry Tudor's ^{mother}) and Elizabeth Woodville (widow of Edward IV) schemed, using Lewis Caryon as a messenger, to put Henry Tudor and Elizabeth of York on the throne. Henry Tudor publically announced that he would marry Elizabeth of York in December 1483. This left Richard III in an extremely weak position as people who were angry at Richard III's actions now had an alternative claimant to support. Henry Tudor also received support from foreign powers such as Charles VIII of France who gave him sanctuary when he fled Brittany. This proved to put Richard III in an extremely weak position as ~~strong~~ Charles VIII provided Henry with a small fleet and mercenary troops for his invasion in 1485 which eventually led to the death of Richard III. ~~For~~ Moreover, Richard III's succession crisis left him ~~me~~ in an incredibly weak position and also led to increased support for Henry Tudor. Richard's only child, Edward of Middleham, die in April 1484. As his wife, Anne Neville, had only produced one child in twelve years, it was unlikely that another would be produced. Thus, people were reluctant to support a king who succession was not clear or stable. Meaning people turned to support Henry Tudor as oppose to Richard III, significantly weakening his position by the end of 1484.

Although ~~overall~~ Richard III's position by the end of 1484 was overall extremely weak, it is important to consider some strengths of his reign. A significant strength for Richard was his victory in defeating

Buckingham's rebellion in the Autumn of 1483. This revealed Richard III's enemies such as Margaret Beaufort and, Henry Tudor and Henry Stafford (Duke of Buckingham). He was then able to execute Buckingham in October 1483 and attack 104 other participants of Buckingham's rebellion in January 1484. However, Buckingham's rebellion was also a weakness for Richard III as enemies such as Henry Tudor, John Cheney, Salisbury and Thomas Grey went into exile to Brittany in November 1483 meaning they were out of Richard's reach. Moreover, another strength of Richard III's position by 1483 is that he had no Yorkist rival to the throne. Edward of Warwick was pronounced as illegitimate in Titus Livius due to his father, Clarence, being attacked in 1478. The Princes of the Tower had disappeared in July 1483. ~~And~~ ~~Edward IV's~~ However, ~~due~~ Richard III was still in more of a weak position as he had to deal with the alternative claimant of Henry Tudor.

To conclude, overall Richard III was in an extremely weak position by 1483 as shown by his lack of support and the increasing strengthened position of his opposition, Henry Tudor. Very few strengths were shown throughout Richard III's reign by 1483-1484, the main one being his victory over Buckingham's rebellion. However, the weaknesses of his reign by 1484 significantly outweigh the strengths.

This is a Level 5 response

The script shows good focus in the opening paragraph, and it offers a balanced argument. An analytical approach is maintained throughout with good focus on the issue, the position of Richard as king, and on the time period of 1483-84. There is use of well-selected and precise knowledge in support of the argument. There is balance, with an awareness and explanation of some of the weaknesses of Richard's position as a counter-argument, although the main argument is more strongly developed. The answer overall has good range and the judgement is supported and convincing.

Response B

By the end of 1484, Richard III was in an extremely weak position as king, as, in his short time on the throne, he faced many problems throughout the years, such as ~~the~~ ~~repett~~ a lack of support throughout England, but majorly in the south.

By the end of ~~to~~ 1484, Richard III was in an extremely weak position as king, as there were many problems he faced. After he had ~~usuff~~ usurped the throne in 1483, and supposedly killing Edward IV's two sons, Edward and Richard, not many people were too fond of him, and they wanted to remove him off the throne and put Edward V on the throne, but after they found ~~out~~ out he was dead, they turned to Henry Tudor, who was in Burgundy at the time, to become the next king, which ~~start~~ started the rise of Tudor against Richard III. Richard also had to deal with Buckingham's rebellion in 1483, and Buckingham was Richard III's most trusted noble, so this meant Richard had lost his supposedly most loyal ~~subt~~ noble, which dented Richard's support greatly. Richard III didn't have ~~at~~ a large amount of support anyway, due to the way he usurped the throne, but he also struggled with the southern gentry, as they were key followers of Edward IV, and they wanted his son on the throne. To counteract this lack of support, Richard decided to start the northern plantation, where, in 1484, he had placed trusted northern and midland nobles into the south, and he removed the southern gentry, which made them dislike Richard III even more. ~~Richard also had to deal with people~~

~~like Lambert~~ In 1484, Richard had also experienced the loss of his only legitimate son, so he no longer had an heir to the throne, and to make it worse his wife died a year later in 1485, which meant that after the death of his son there was no chance he would have another son with Anne before she passed, which shows just how much of a weak position Richard III was in by the end of 1484.

However, even though Richard III's position was weak by the end of 1484, it would be wrong to not look at things that strengthened his position, such as, after Buckingham's rebellion in 1483, Richard III was able to see who he could actually trust in the nobility and who he couldn't trust, which would have slightly ~~streng~~ strengthened his position. Even though there was little of it, Richard still had support from nobles, as well as ordinary people, so this would have also strengthened his position slightly. Richard was also able to put a stop to the rebellion in 1483, which just shows how strong of a position he was actually in by the end of 1484. Also, even though Henry Tudor was starting to rise against Richard III, Henry was still in exile in Burgundy, so he ~~could~~ could not do much to Richard while he was in exile, so he was not really a threat to Richard at the time.

To conclude, Richard III was in an extremely weak position as king by the end of ~~1483~~ 1484, as he had faced many problems, including losing his only heir to the throne, as well as

receiving a lack of support from the gentry, specifically the southern gentry, and also the Edward IV's council, who actually worked against Richard III, which shows just how weak his position is by the end of 1484.

This is a Level 3 response

The script shows an understanding of the issue, and the question is addressed with some balance, albeit stronger in the argument than the counter-argument. The opening paragraph is one-sided and there is a degree of repetition in the opening statements which suggest uncertainty. Some relevant knowledge is deployed, showing an awareness of the issues such as the princes, Henry Tudor, Buckingham's Rebellion and the nobles, but the lack of depth and precision of knowledge means that the significance of the factors is rarely analysed or explored. There are a number of general statements, particularly in the counter-argument, and the concluding judgement is one-sided.

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