

**OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS
ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY GCE**

F983

HISTORY B

Using Historical Evidence – British History

MONDAY 8 JUNE 2009: Morning

DURATION: 1 hour 30 minutes

SUITABLE FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED CANDIDATES

Candidates answer on the Answer Booklet

OCR SUPPLIED MATERIALS:

8 page Answer Booklet

OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED:

None

READ INSTRUCTIONS OVERLEAF

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- **Write your name clearly in capital letters, your Centre Number and Candidate Number in the spaces provided on the Answer Booklet.**
- **Use black ink. Pencil may be used for graphs and diagrams only.**
- **Read each question carefully and make sure that you know what you have to do before starting your answer.**

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- **The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.**
- **This question paper contains questions on the following Option:**
 - **The Impact and Consequences of the Black Death in England up to the 1450s (pages 3–8)**
- **Answer both sub-questions from the Option.**
- **You should write in continuous prose and are reminded of the need for clear and accurate writing, including structure of argument, grammar, punctuation and spelling.**
- **The time permitted allows for reading the Sources in the Option you have studied.**
- **In answering these questions, you are expected to use your knowledge of the topic to help you understand and interpret the Sources, as well as to inform your answers.**
- **The total number of marks for this paper is 50.**

1 THE IMPACT AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE BLACK DEATH IN ENGLAND UP TO THE 1450s

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE BLACK DEATH

Read the interpretation and Sources 1–7.

***Interpretation:* The Black Death caused economic disaster in England.**

(a) Explain how far sources 1–7 support this interpretation. You may, if you wish, amend the interpretation or suggest a different interpretation. If you wish to do this you must use the sources to support the changes you make.

Remember not to simply take the sources at face value. Use your own knowledge of the period to interpret and evaluate them. [35]

(b) Explain how these sources are both useful and raise problems and issues for a historian using them. [15]

SOURCE 1: A government document explaining why state officials were expected to conduct business as usual despite the impact of the Black Death.

Aymer fitz Waryn says that on the day after Trinity Sunday he was lying sick at Marland and was unable to do his duty. And he says that Richard de Greencombe, who was under sheriff and responsible for receiving the taxes of the county of Devon, along with his other ministers and officials (viz Richard de Upcote, clerk, John Furlang, clerk, Richard Wolfe and Robert Taynestor) who had been keeping of the records which he needed to make up his account, had died suddenly at Marland before the date of the pestilence that was then raging in the county.

From an exchequer roll of 1349 recording a fine of £20 on Aymer fitz Waryn.

SOURCE 2: A record of unpaid rents and the extent of un-worked land.

The bailiff John de Woodhull reported the following income from land. Fifty-one pounds had been received from various tenants belonging to the lord in Rudheath, which lands are held from the lord for a term of years. The rent is due at St Martin [11th November] and the Nativity of St. John the Baptist [24th June] in equal shares. And for the rent of 215 acres of arable land in Overmarsh, which used to be leased out for 2 shillings an acre, the lord has received nothing this year because the land has lain fallow because it has not proved possible to find tenants because of the pestilence last year. Moreover, those tenants who held part of the land last year relinquished it completely by Michaelmas [29th September] at the beginning of this accounting year.

From a manorial account for Drakelow, a royal manor in Cheshire, written between 1349 and 1350.

SOURCE 3: An account of the impact of the Black Death.

In 1349, that is in the 23rd year of the reign of King Edward III, a great mortality of men advanced across the globe, beginning in the southern and northern zones. Its destruction was so great that scarcely half of mankind was left alive. Towns once packed with people were emptied of their inhabitants, and the plague spread so thickly that the living were hardly able to bury the dead. In some religious houses no more than two survived out of twenty. It was calculated by several people that barely a tenth of mankind remained alive. A disease of animals followed on the heels of this pestilence. Rents dwindled and land was left untilled for lack of tenants. And so much wretchedness followed these ills that afterwards the world would never return to its former state. Meanwhile, as the plague raged in England, Pope Clement granted – because of the epidemic – full remission of penance to all those throughout the kingdom who died truly contrite and after making confession.

From Thomas Walsingham's chronicle written between 1390 and the early years of the 15th century.

SOURCE 4: An account describing the effect of the plague on patterns of employment.

Such a shortage of workers ensued that the humble turned their noses up at employment and could scarcely be persuaded to serve the eminent unless for triple wages. Instead, because of the doles handed out at funerals, those who once had to work now began to have time for idleness, thieving and other outrages, and thus the poor and servile have been enriched and the rich impoverished. As a result, churchmen, knights and other worthies have been forced to thresh their corn, plough the land and perform every other unskilled task if they are to make their own bread.

From his modest household the Bishop of Rochester lost four priests, five squires, ten household servants, seven young clerks and six pages, leaving no one in any office who should have served him.

From a history of England written just after the Black Death.

SOURCE 5: A description of the effects of the plague on animals in the fields.

In the same year there was great disease of sheep throughout the realm, so much so that in one place more than 5000 sheep died in a single pasture, and their bodies were so rotten that no animal or bird would touch them. And because of the fear of death everything fetched a low price. For there were very few people who cared for riches or, indeed for anything else. And sheep and cattle roamed unchecked through the fields and through the standing corn and there was no one to chase them and round them up. For lack of attention animals died in unaccountable numbers in the fields and in bye-ways and hedges throughout the whole country; for there was so great a shortage of servants and labourers that there was no one who knew what needed to be done.

From the chronicle of Henry of Knighton, canon of Leicester Abbey, writing in about 1382.

SOURCE 6: A poet describes the condition of the peasants.

The poorest folk are our neighbours, if we look about us – the prisoners in dungeons and the poor in their hovels, overburdened with children and overcharged by landlords. For whatever they save by spinning they spend on rent, or on milk and oatmeal to make gruel to fill the bellies of their children who clamour for food. And they themselves are often famished with hunger and wretched with the miseries of winter – cold sleepless nights, when they get up to rock the cradle cramped in a corner. The miseries of these women who dwell in hovels are too pitiful to read or describe in verse.

From William Langland's 'The Vision of Piers Plowman', a narrative poem written some time between 1372 and 1389.

SOURCE 7: A recent account of the consequences of the Black Death.

Those who had survived the epidemic had to struggle with appalling problems. Most families lost at least one member. Others came near to being wiped out.

Having dealt with the immediate effects of the plague, people returned to their usual tasks. Some activities were temporarily halted. Lead mining in Derbyshire stopped in 1349. These interruptions lasted for some years, but work was eventually resumed. All of the potters at Manley Castle in Worcestershire were reported to have died in 1349, but the industry flourished again later in the century. Cornish tin mining suffered a setback, but in 1386 production had climbed back to pre-plague levels.

From ‘Making a Living in the Middle Ages’, published in 2002.



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