

- 
- Mccauley



3. Thomas Babington Macaulay, 1800-1859 British Whig politician

Statue, Trinity
College,
Cambridge

How many years passed between the law which gave all adult men the right to vote in the UK, and the law which gave all adult women the same right?

How many years passed between the time when half the adult men in the UK had the right to vote, and the time when half the adult women did ?

1832 « Reform Act »

(ten years, thirty four years)

1838-48 Chartism

1867 « Reform Act »

1884 « Reform Act »

1918 Representation of the
People Act

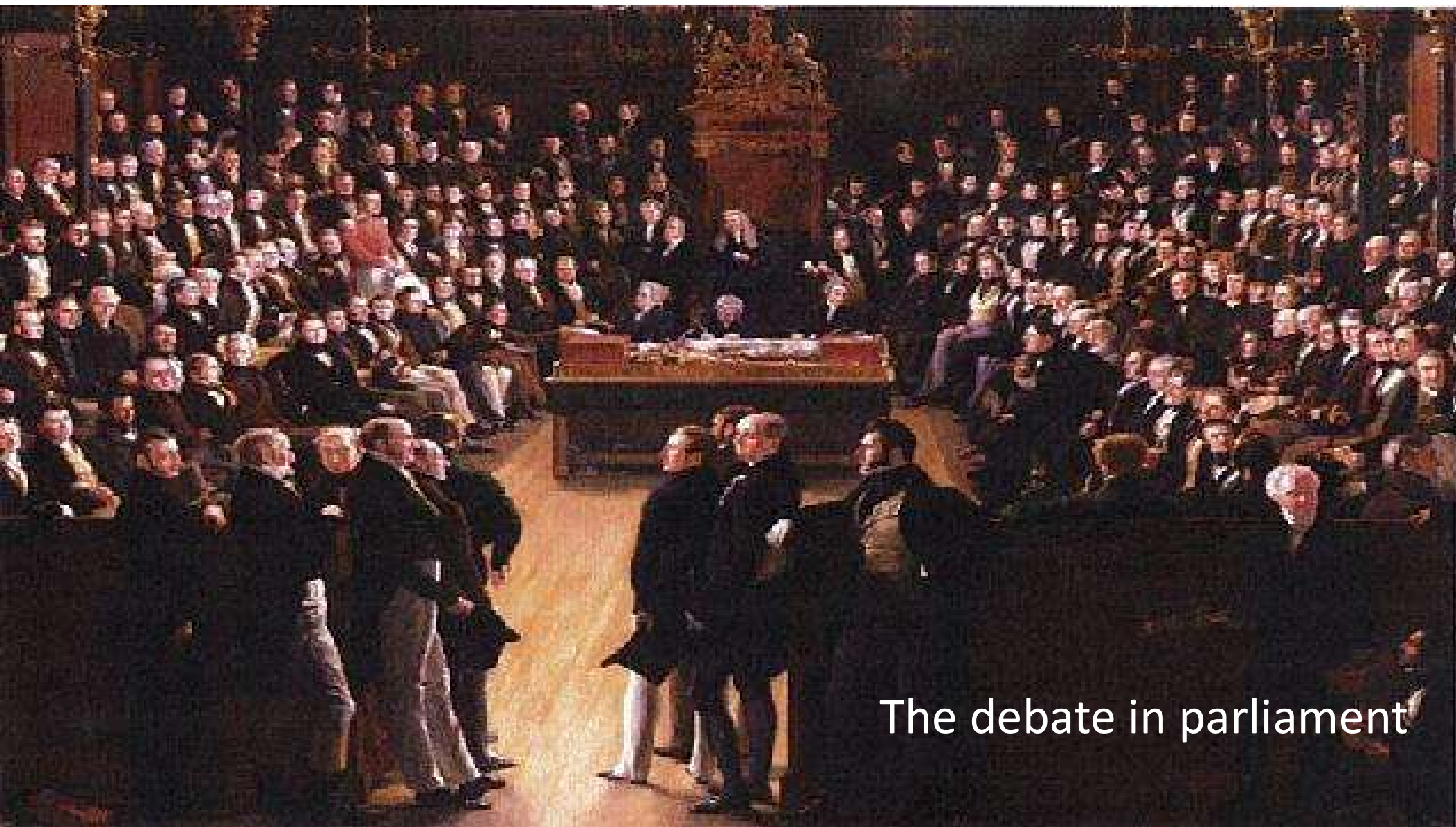
1928 Representation of the
People Act

UK suffrage

Key dates

Reform Act 1932

Whereas it is expedient to take effectual measures for remedying divers abuses that have long prevailed in the House of members to serve in the numerous House of Parliament to deprive many considerable persons of the right of returning members to grant such privilege to large boroughs and to allow to be increased the number of boroughs of



The debate in parliament

The Right to Vote

- Following the **French Revolution** a number of “**societies**” emerged in **Britain** demanding **political reform**:

Key aims

- **Broaden the franchise**
- **Stop old election practices: “rotten boroughs” and “pocket boroughs”.**
- **secret ballot**



- W. Heath's cartoon *How to Get Made an M.P.* (1830)



- William Hogarth's *Canvassing for Votes* depicts the corruption endemic in election campaigns prior to the Great Reform Act.

➤ ***The Society for Constitutional Information (SCI), revived by John Horne Tooke in 1791:***

John Horne Tooke (1736 –1812)
was an English politician and
philologist



- The ***Society of the Friends of the People (SFP)***, split from the ***SCI*** in 1792

Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey (1764 – 1845)



- ***The London Corresponding Society (LCS)***, founded by **John Frost** a draper and tailor and shoemaker **Thomas Hardy (1792)**.



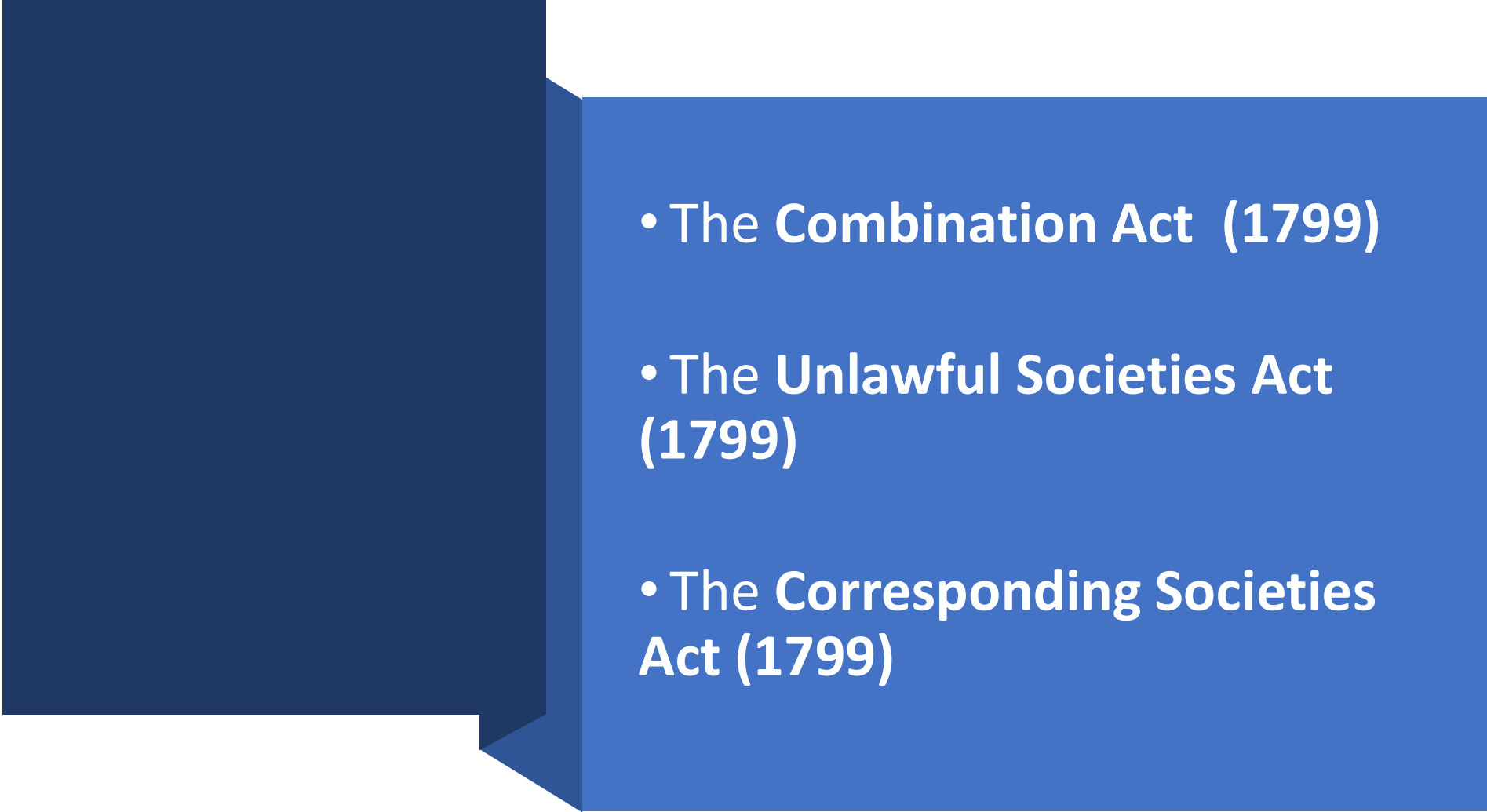
John Frost

To stop further thought of reform,
Pitt issued a **Royal Proclamation**
(1792) outlawing **sedition meetings**
and writings.

Some activists were then arrested
and transported to Australia.



William Pitt the Younger
(1759 –1806)

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- **The Combination Act (1799)**
 - **The Unlawful Societies Act (1799)**
 - **The Corresponding Societies Act (1799)**

- When **Henry Hunt** was invited to speak at a huge meeting at **St Peter's Field in Manchester (1819)** in favour of **Parliamentary reform**, the magistrates, fearing a riot ordered the **local yeomen** to arrest him.
- The crowd resisted and the **yeoman charged**: 11 people were killed and 400 wounded.

1819 the **Peterloo Massacre.**



A painting of the Peterloo Massacre by Richard Carlile

As I lay asleep in Italy
There came a voice from over the Sea,
And with great power it forth led me
To walk in the visions of Poesy.

I met Murder on the way –
He had a mask like Castlereagh
Very smooth he looked, yet grim;
Seven blood-hounds followed him:

All were fat; and well they might
Be in admirable plight,
For one by one, and two by two,
He tossed them human hearts to chew
Which from his wide cloak he drew.

The first lines
of the poem
« the Mask of
Anarchy » ,
written by
Percy Shelley
after the
events of
Peterloo

And that slaughter to the Nation
Shall steam up like inspiration,
Eloquent, oracular;
A volcano heard afar.


And these words shall then become
Like Oppression's thundered doom
Ringing through each heart and brain,
Heard again - again - again

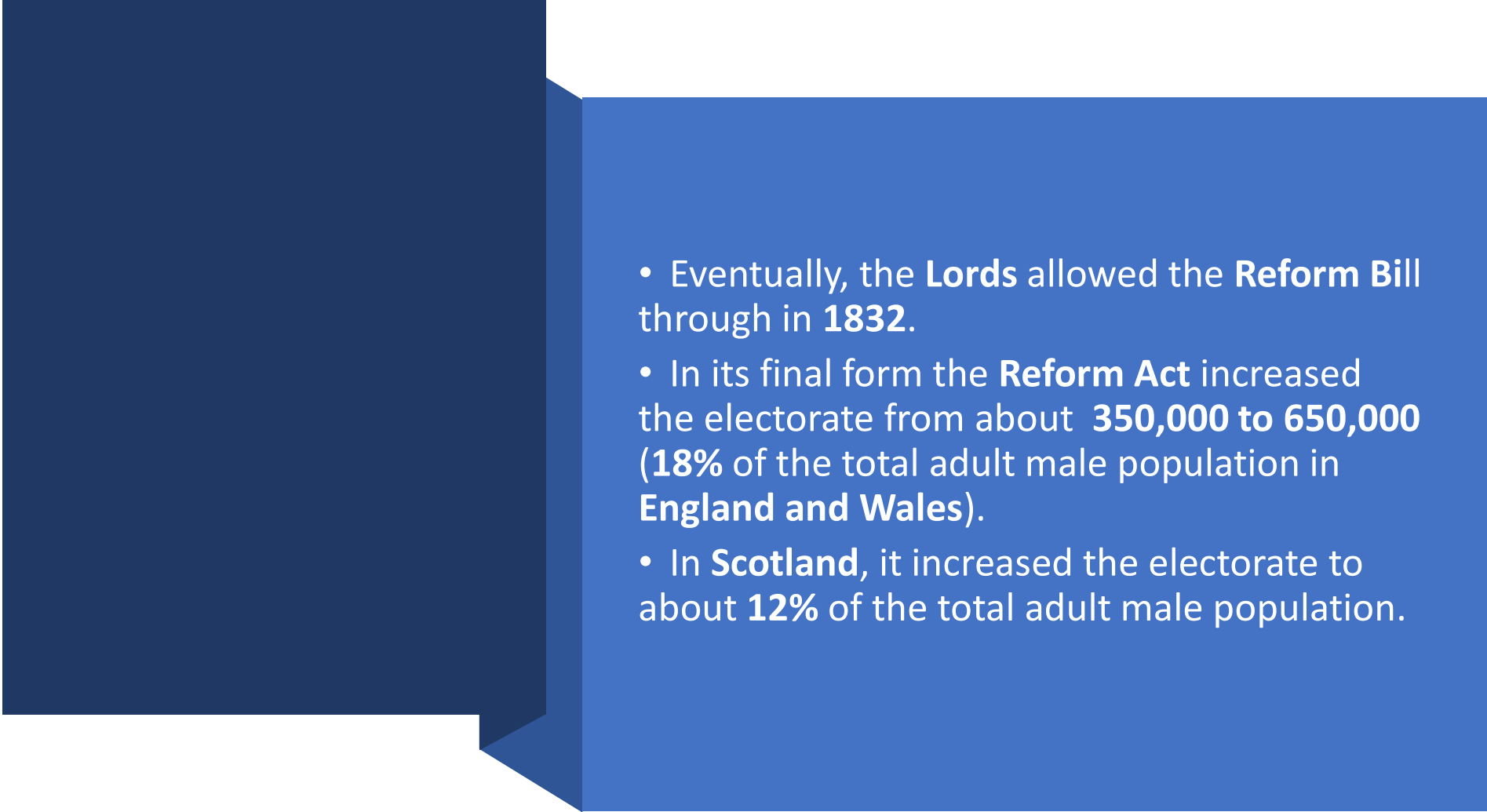
'Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number –
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you –
Ye are many - they are few.'

**The last
lines of
the same
poem**

The First Reform Act

- Agitation for reform led by the **Birmingham Political Union** formed by **Thomas Atwood (1830)**.

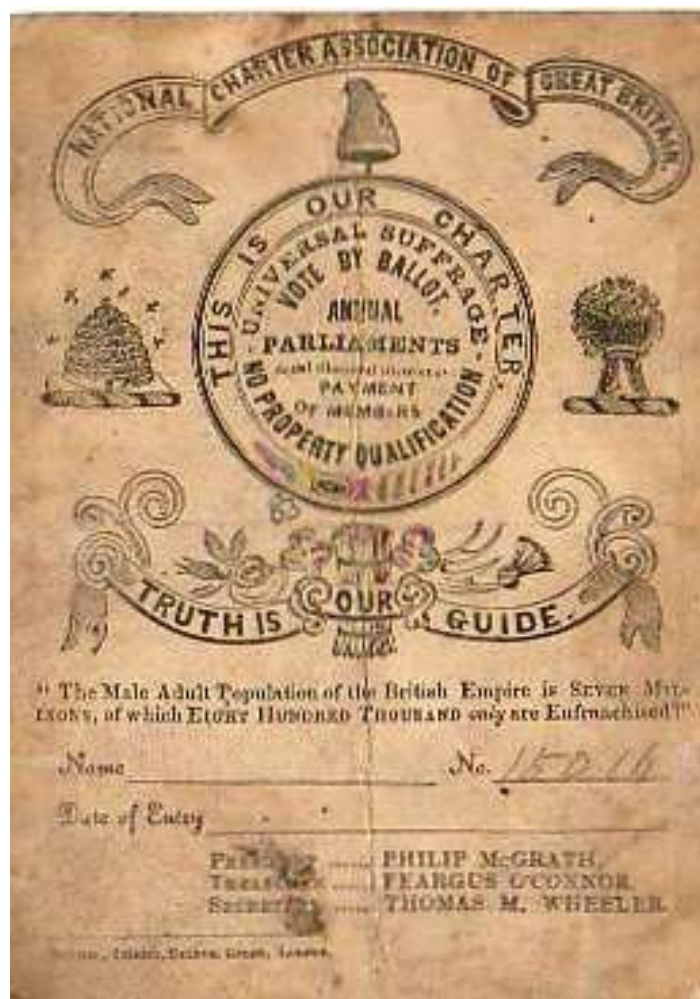
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- **twice rejected** by the **Lords** ;
 - **Lord Grey** even resigned to force the Bill through.
 - **rioting took place in towns all over Britain** to keep up the pressure on Parliament.

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- Eventually, the **Lords** allowed the **Reform Bill** through in **1832**.
 - In its final form the **Reform Act** increased the electorate from about **350,000 to 650,000** (**18%** of the total adult male population in **England and Wales**).
 - In **Scotland**, it increased the electorate to about **12%** of the total adult male population.

Chartism in the late 1830s

A six-point Charter :

- 1. Vote for all men over 21**
- 2. Secret ballot**
- 3. Electoral districts of equal size**
- 4. No property qualification to become an MP**
- 5. Payment for MPs**
- 6. Annual elections for Parliament**



The 1839 petition: more than **1.2 million signatures: Parliament** refused to consider it.

Feargus Edward O'Connor
(1794 –1855) was an Irish
Chartist leader



➤ Many debates

**‘physical force’ chartists and
‘moral force’ Chartists.**



A PHYSICAL FORCE CHARTIST ARMING FOR THE FIGHT.

Punch Magazine Cartoon: A Physical Force Chartist Arming for the Fight. Artist: John Leech. Published 26 August 1848.

- **A second petition 1842 - over three million signatures (many of them suspect).**
- triggered **Britain's first General Strike**, also known as the **Plug Plot Riots**.



Plug Plot Riots in Preston (August, 1842)

➤ Through the 1840s, chartists tried different tactics to move their cause forward and intense debates took place in their newspapers.

temperance chartism
education chartism
the Land Plan

➤ The last major attempt to influence the government took place in **1848** with a meeting at **Kennington Common** to be followed by a **procession to Westminster to present another petition.**



The Great Chartist Meeting on Kennington Common, April 10, 1848, photograph taken by William Kilburn.



A crowd of Reform League supporters pulls down the railings round Hyde Park, London, after the gates were closed to prevent the group from holding a meeting, 23rd July 1866.

The **Second Reform Act** passed in **1867** enfranchised a total of **2 million men**: but it still represented only **13%** of the total adult population.

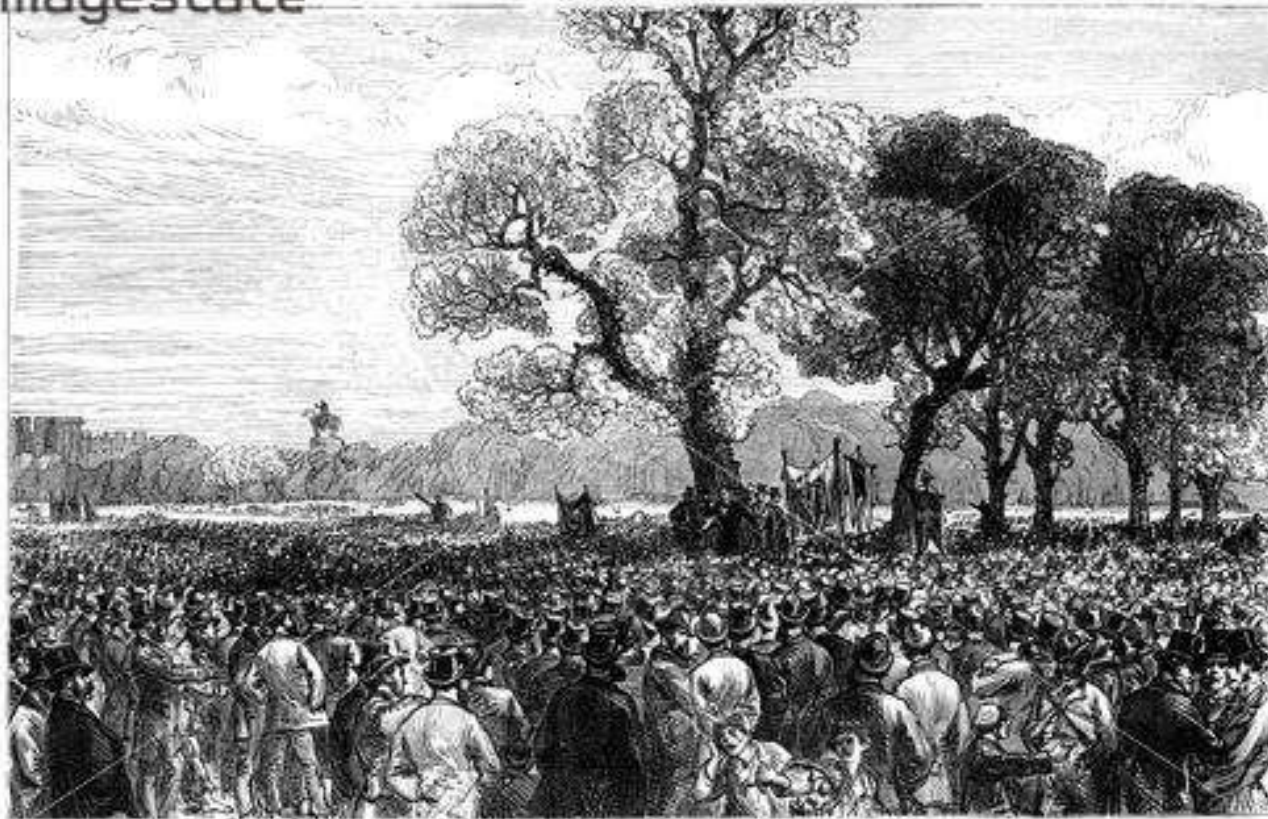
➤ **1872, Ballot Act**

➤ **1872 Parks Regulation Act**



Voters take advantage of the full secret ballot in the British general elections of 17th April 1880, with rich and poor on an equal footing. The caption reads: '£30, 000 a year and 30 shillings a week are equal this time'.

imagestate



Great demonstration at the Reformers Tree in Hyde Park, London, mid 19th century. Illustration from "The Life & Times of Queen Victoria", by Robert Wilson, Vol III.

➤ In **1884**, the **Third Reform Act** gave the vote to **almost 2/3 of the men**.



Why were working-class activists disappointed by the 1832 Reform Act ?

The 1832 Reform Act was initially viewed with optimism by working-class activists, who believed that they would benefit from the extension of the franchise and the redistribution of parliamentary seats. However, the Act ultimately fell short of these expectations.

The franchise was extended only to the most affluent members of the working classes, with the property requirement of 40 shillings effectively maintaining the existing exclusion of the majority of the working class. Furthermore, the redistribution of parliamentary seats only applied to counties, and not to the boroughs, which meant that only a small number of people in a few select areas were granted the franchise.

The Act also failed to address some of the key grievances of the working classes, such as the Corn Laws and the Poor Law. This disappointment led to the Chartist movement, which campaigned for further reform, including the extension of the franchise to all adult males. Although the Chartists ultimately failed to achieve their goals, the 1832 Reform Act provided the groundwork for further reform in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

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Q : What was the role of Lady Gaga in the 1832 Reform Act ?

Lady Gaga had no role in the 1832 Reform Act [1], which abolished tiny districts, gave representation to cities, gave the vote to small landowners, tenant farmers, shopkeepers, householders who paid a yearly rental of £10 or more, and some lodgers. It also introduced the first explicit statutory bar to women voting by defining a voter as a male person. This meant that only qualifying men were able to vote, and it extended the electorate from about 400,000 to 650,000, making about one in five adult males eligible to vote [2]. The 1832 Reform Act is viewed as one of the most important pieces of legislation in British political history as it was the first step towards a more representative democracy. However, it is important to note that no women were given the right to vote under this Act [3], which seems outrageous to us today.

[1] Reform Act 1832 - Wikiwand [2] The Representation of the People Act February 1918 A ... [3] Blog: The Secret World of London Clubs Part 1

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