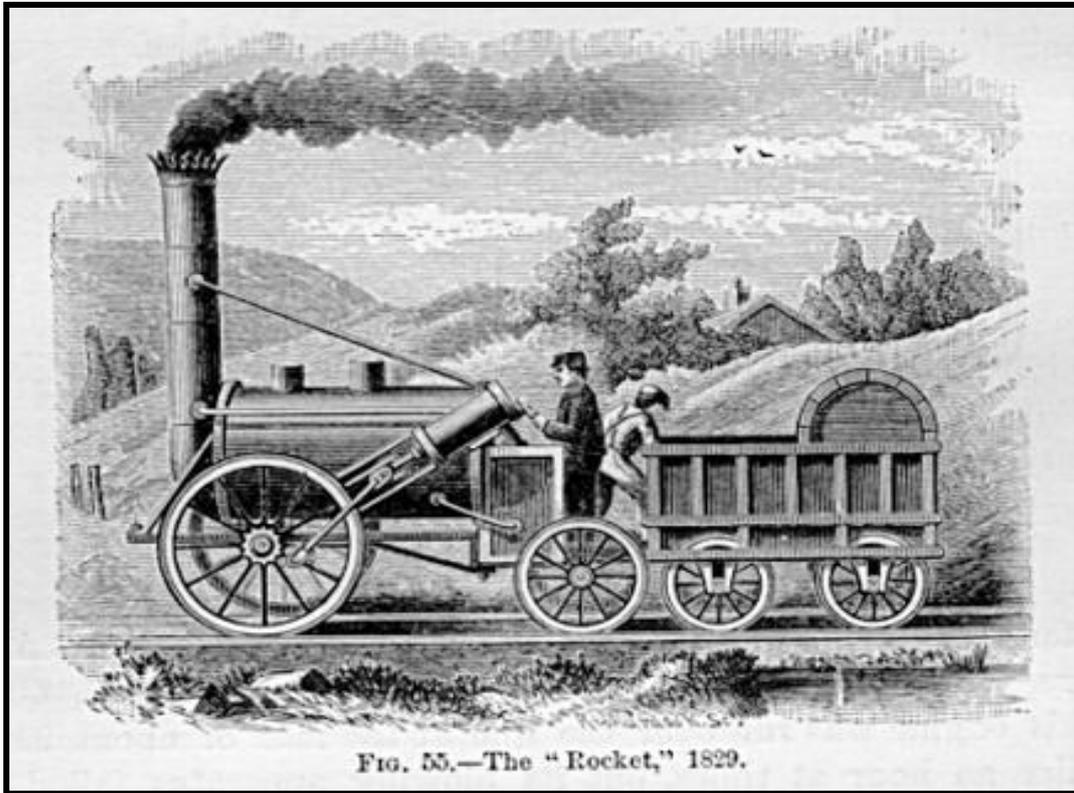


KEYPOINT HOMEWORK HELP/REVISION FILES:HISTORY

SCHOOL



1. HEALTH
2. HOUSING
3. THE COTTON INDUSTRY
4. COAL
5. CANALS
6. RAILWAYS
7. RADICALS
8. 1832 REFORM ACT
9. CHARTISTS
10. 1867 REFORM ACT

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

HEALTH

KP1

BACKGROUND

For most of the nineteenth century the death rate remained at a high level. This was due to the poor state of health of the population, particularly the working class who lived in the cities. Poor diet and bad working and living conditions were the main reasons for ill health. Even minor illnesses could kill people who were undernourished and weak from long hours of work.

Most people could not afford to visit a doctor if they were ill and in many cases this would have done them no good. Medical knowledge was very limited and doctors could offer very little in the way of treatment. Deaths were common among young children and many died before the age of five. Childhood illnesses such as measles and whooping cough were big killers. After 1870 diet, living and working conditions slowly improved and doctors discovered the causes of many diseases. This led to people living longer lives.

- Diseases: Tuberculosis - dampness, pollution / Cholera - contaminated water / Typhus – poor hygiene, fleas, lice / Typhoid - contaminated food and water.
- Over-crowding and poor ventilation led to the spread of disease. In Glasgow families in one-roomed houses had a death rate of 32.7. Families in 4 room houses 11.2.
- Water pumps in the streets were often contaminated by sewage seeping in. Studies at the time were able to trace a cholera outbreak in an area of the town to a particular street pump.
- Sewage disposal was often a cesspit, a dung heap or an open street sewer. There were no planning regulations and dangerous, unhealthy trades were often close to houses.
- Food was often adulterated. Most houses had no clean storage areas for food and flies would swarm from the dung-heaps on to unprotected food.
- Bad working conditions in factories and mines, where the air was filled with cotton fluff or coal dust, led to diseases of the chest, lungs and digestive system.
- Before 1870 doctors did not understand the causes of disease. Traditional cures such as bleeding and poultices were used to try to cure cholera.
- The one really effective medical treatment was the spread of vaccination against smallpox. This had been a big killer and deaths from the disease were much reduced after 1800.
- Other medical improvements included Joseph Lister's discovery of antiseptics in 1865. Pasteur and Koch discovered bacteria in the 1880s. This led to an understanding of the causes of disease and how to prevent them
- The abolition of the Window Tax, cheaper soap, and cheap washable cotton clothing all resulted in improved cleanliness and therefore better health.
- Public Health Act 1848 - This gave local authorities the power to set up Health Boards and appoint Medical Officers. This was not compulsory and had little effect.
- Public Health Act 1875 - Councils had to set up Medical Boards with Medical Officers. They were also to pave and light streets, provide sewers and clean water supplies.
- Health improved after 1870 due to better housing, clean water and sanitation, better diet, improved living standards and advances in medical knowledge.

CHANGING BRITAIN 1760-1900

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

HOUSING

KP2

Housing is one of the most important aspects of the lives of individuals and families. In the nineteenth century there was a massive movement of population from the countryside to the towns. This led to the rapid growth of urban areas. There were no building or planning regulations and greedy landowners and builders put up cheap shoddy buildings for profit.

In Scottish towns most working class areas contained tenement buildings of four or more stories. These were separated only by narrow closes and wynds. The streets and the backcourts were usually covered with filth and waste. In the countryside things were little better and many people lived in cold, damp cottages. In England the small back to back terraced house was common and more people lived in two-roomed houses.

- For most people it was important to be close to their place of work as there was no transport. This meant that factories and housing were close to each other.
- Many factories and mines provided houses for their workers. The rent was often high and the accommodation provided was very poor quality.
- People could run any sort of trade or business close to houses. It was not unusual for people to live above a slaughterhouse a pigsty or other some other danger to health.
- Many city tenements were badly built using the cheapest materials. They were damp with poor ventilation and light and often difficult to heat. Rents were high.
- Most tenements had no toilets, water supply or sewers. Water was collected from a standpipe in the street and toilet buckets were emptied into cesspits, dung heaps or open sewers.
- Overcrowding was a problem. Most families had only one small room for everyone to eat, sleep and live in. Most families had between 5 and 12 people...
- Poor housing was an important cause of disease and poor health. Cholera, Typhus, TB and Typhoid spread rapidly through the overcrowded slums.
- There were some improvements in housing 1750-1850. In Scotland planned building such as Edinburgh New Town and model villages such as Inverary were built. Similar schemes were introduced by landowners in England.
- In 1848 the Removal of Nuisances Act allowed councils to compulsory purchase slums. This was not very effective because there were no inspectors or medical officers. A further Act was passed in 1855.
- The 1875 Public Health Act gave town councils the power to provide water supplies and sewers. They were also able to order the demolition of the worst tenement slums.
- In 1918 a Royal Commission found that many of the worst slums had been demolished. 13% of the people still lived in one roomed houses.
- By the 1900 there were still problems of slums and over-crowding, but most houses had water supplies, toilets (often shared) sewers and gas lighting.

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

THE COTTON INDUSTRY

KP3

BACKGROUND

Until the 18th century wool and linen were the main textiles produced in Britain. Cloth was made under the DOMESTIC SYSTEM - people working at home using handloom and simple spinning wheels. This was slow and the quality of the cloth was often not very good. The growth of population and increased foreign trade meant huge profits could be made from cloth manufacturing...

In the 1780s cheap cotton from the USA became available. This was ideal for cloth manufacturers. Cotton cloth was easier to produce than linen or wool and it could be made into cheap, hard-wearing, washable clothes. Manufacturers could sell as much as they could produce and they were determined to increase production by introducing new technology.

- The new inventions:

1733- THE FLYING SHUTTLE – weaver could produce cloth 4 times as wide.

1764 - THE SPINNING JENNY - could spin twelve threads at a time.

1769 - THE WATER FRAME - could spin 80 threads at a time.

1779 - THE MULE - could spin 400 threads at a time.

1785 - THE POWER LOOM. - could produce four times as much cloth as a handloom weaver.

- The Water Frame led to the factory system. Factories were often in remote areas for water-power. When steam power took over mills were built close to coalfields.
- In Britain most mills were built in the west to be close to water and coal, there was plenty of labour, the ports of Glasgow and Liverpool for import and export and the climate was damp.
- Working conditions in the mills were usually very bad - mainly women and children / Pay = 15p-35p per week / 14 hour working day / strict rules / beatings and fines.
- Health & Safety was bad - Air thick with dust and fluff / Hot and damp (84 degrees) / Constant noise / Unguarded machines / Open toilet buckets / Accidents were common.
- Children as young as 4 years were employed as piecers and shifters. They had to crawl in and out of moving machinery. Pauper Apprentices were cruelly treated.
- Weavers were paid high wages and had plenty of work after 1780 because factories were producing so much yarn. After 1815 power looms caused unemployment.
- New Lanark under Robert Owen was better than other mills - 12 hour day / good wages / children under the age of 10 went to school / Village cooperative shop / good houses.
- Factory Act - 1833 Act no children under 9 years; children 9-12 years no more than 48 hours per week and school 2 hours per day; no night work for those under 18 years.
- Factory Act - 1844 Act no child under 8 to work, 8-12 years maximum 6 hour day, 13-17 maximum 12 hour day
- Factory Act 1847 young people 12-18 & women were only allowed to work a 10 hour day.

CHANGING BRITAIN 1760-1900

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

COAL

KP4

BACKGROUND

Coal had been mined in Britain since the middle- ages. The first mines were fairly shallow and coal was only mined from seams that were close to the surface. After 1750 there was an enormous increase in demand for coal. This was due to a number of factors:-

Iron smelting / Domestic fuel / Steam engines / Exports / Railways / Gas lighting

The growth of the industry can be seen in the table below

COAL PRODUCTION	1830 = 16 million tons	1910 = 287million tons
EMPLOYMENT IN MINING	1851 = 219,000	1910 = 1,094,000

These increases involved changes in mining technology and working conditions in mines.

- Mining had always been a hard and dangerous occupation. Until 1790 many Scottish colliers were serfs. They and their families were not allowed to leave the mines.
- Until 1842 whole families would work in the coal mines.
Fathers as **Hewers** - cutting coal using a pick and shovel often in very cramped conditions.
Mothers and older daughters as **Bearers** - carrying coal up ladders to the surface in a basket.
Younger sons and daughters were **Putters** - pushing or pulling carts of coal tot the main shaft.
Very young children were **Trappers** - opening and shut ventilation doors when carts had passed.
- As a result of increased demand mines had to become deeper. This increased the dangers from flooding, gas, cave-ins, and getting the coal up to the surface.
- Mines were dark, damp and dangerous. Serious accidents and falls were common. There were no safety checks on ladders or ropes.
- Miners often suffered from long term health problems. Their lungs were affected by the coal dust (black spit). Children who worked long hours in damp, cramped conditions often grew up deformed and would die at a young age
- In the 19th century new technology helped to overcome these problems: - steam pumps and winding engines, Davy lamp, wire ropes, pit props, ventilation fans.
- In 1840 the government set up a Royal Commission to investigate conditions in the mines. This led to the first of a number of new laws which improved working conditions and led to greater safety in the mines.
- In 1842 the Government passed the MINES ACT. Women and children under 10 were forbidden to work underground. This was the first of many laws on mining.
- 1862 — Single mine shafts were declared illegal
- 1860 — boys were not allowed underground until the age of 12
- 1872 - Mine managers had to have a certificate to prove they could do the job.
- By 1900 new mechanical cutters and conveyor belts were being used in British mines. These did increase coal production but often caused new safety problems such as an increase in dust and very dangerous moving parts.

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

CANALS

KP5

BACKGROUND

As industry in Britain began to develop after 1750 one of the most serious problems which had to be overcome was the difficulty of transporting raw materials and finished goods from one part of the country to another. The new industries needed coal and iron in large amounts and these were heavy and bulky and existing methods of transport were not up to the job. The road system was in poor condition, often no more than dirt tracks which were impassable in the winter. To move coal and iron needed large numbers of pack horses or wagons and was very slow and expensive. Coastal ships were often used to carry coal. Most of the coal used in London was shipped by sea from Newcastle. The problem was that not all coalfields or industries were near to the sea. Rivers were also used to move coal and iron but again there was a problem because not all parts of the country had rivers suitable for navigation. It was clear that water transport was the easiest way to carry heavy loads and so artificial rivers, or canals were, built. The first canal in Britain was built by the Duke of Bridgewater in 1761 to carry coal from his estates at Worsley to Manchester. This was a huge success and led to the building of canals all over Britain which helped industry to develop quickly.

- Canals were not affected as badly as roads in bad weather conditions. Canals could be quicker than road travel for some journeys. Journey times on canals were more reliable than by road.
- Canal builders had to keep to level ground if they could not avoid hills or valleys they had to build a system of locks, or a viaduct, or a tunnel.
- Coal was the main commodity carried by the canals and most canals were built close to the coal fields. Iron, cotton and other goods were also carried on the canals. Canals also carried manure and lime from cities to farming areas. Farmers could send grain and other produce to market by canal.
- Heavy bulky goods could be carried on canals more quickly and with fewer horses needed. Canals reduced the cost of transporting coal which led to cheaper coal in towns.
- Fragile goods such as pottery and glass could be safely carried by canal. Cheaper fresh food became available in towns due to canals. Canals carried exports to and imports from ports. Passengers were carried on some canals.
- Canals created large numbers of jobs for navvies, barge builders, lock keepers and maintenance workers.
- The work of Navvies was digging out earth and stones to make channels for the canals. They used only basic tools and equipment – picks, spades and wheelbarrows. The work could be dangerous navvies could be seriously injured or even killed. They had to line the canal with clay and then heavy stones.
- Navvies worked in gangs in all weathers. They could earn high wages compared to other labourers. Navvies lived in tents or temporary huts near the canal and would move on as the canal was built. They had a reputation for drunkenness and often caused riots and disorder.
- After the 1840s canals went into decline. The development of railways provided a more efficient form of transport. Railways did not cost as much to build and canals could not go to as many parts of the country as railways. Many canal users switched to using railways which were faster and cheaper.
- Trains could move larger heavier loads than canal barges. Passengers and goods could be carried much more quickly by train than by canal. Canal companies reduced costs to compete with railways and began to lose money. Canals were affected by weather such as drought, flood, frost and freezing over.

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

RAILWAYS

KP6

BACKGROUND

At the start of the 19th century transport in Britain was based on roads, canals and coastal shipping. The best roads were owned by Turnpike Trusts but travellers had to pay tolls. Canals and coastal shipping carried mainly bulky, heavy goods such as coal, iron ore and other products for industry. Canals were expensive to build and could only cover a limited area. If industry was to continue to grow a better system of transport was needed which could provide cheap, fast transport for passengers and goods. Railways could open up all parts of the country and provided great benefits for farmers, industrialists and ordinary people.

- The first railway ran from Stockton to Darlington. This was followed by the Liverpool to Manchester line. Britain was gripped by 'railway mania' in the 1830s and 1840s.
- Irish navvies using picks and shovels built much of the railway system. They were wild, hard drinking men. Deaths and accidents from explosions and falling rocks were common.
- There was some opposition to railways. Landowners and farmers complained the countryside would be spoiled, that sparks would set fields on fire and cow's milk would go sour. Some doctors said that travel at speeds of over 30 miles per hour would damage the health of passengers
- Canals and turnpike trusts lost business because of the railways. Many of these companies were forced out of business.
- Passengers benefited from quick, cheap travel. Railways led to commuter suburbs, holiday resorts, national newspapers, better postal services and standard time in Britain.
- Industry could transport goods and raw materials cheaply and quickly. Railways increased demand for coal, iron and steel and engineering. Thousands of new jobs were created.
- Farmers could send fresh produce to the towns before it started to go off. Fertilisers and coal could be brought to farms. People in towns benefited from improved supplies of fresh food.
- Railway Acts: 1844 Railway Act - 3rd class covered carriages, 1 penny per mile workmen's fares. 1846: Railway Gauge Act- tracks to be 4.85 inches apart /1846 Act on brakes and signals.

New technology – improved speed, safety and comfort

- Improved steam locomotives allowed trains to travel faster – up to 100mph by 1900.
- Iron rails were replaced by steel rails which could tolerate higher speeds and heavier loads.
- New signalling systems made railways safer.
- Improved design and streamlining of locomotives improved speeds.
- More efficient and bigger boilers increased the power of locomotives.
- Some sections of line had four tracks and junctions to allow train to pass.
- Carriages were given heating/sleeping cars/restaurant cars/lavatories.
- New materials and designs for railway bridges: brick/iron/concrete - Forth Bridge
- Safety was improved by continuous braking systems which stopped the wheels on all carriages.
- All trains had a dead man's handle which stopped the train if the driver let it go.
- New steam mechanical diggers and drills made railway construction more efficient.

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

RADICAL UNREST

KP7

BACKGROUND

A "RADICAL" was someone who supported the reform of Parliament so that all men over the age of 21 had the right to vote. They campaigned for change. At the end of the wars against France in 1815 many people were thrown out of their jobs, wages were low and the price of bread was very high because of the Corn Laws. Many ordinary people listened to the Radicals and hoped that reform would improve their lives. Others joined in demonstrations as an excuse to drink, have a good time or maybe join in any exciting trouble that might happen. Landowners and many middle class people were very frightened that violence could lead to revolution. Some agreed that reform was necessary but they preferred to back the Tory government's refusal to change at all in case reform led to revolution. The Tory government of Lord Liverpool believed that the radicals were secretly plotting a revolution right across the country. They employed spies to report back to London and sometimes agent provocateurs to provoke trouble, so that radicals could be caught and punished.

Radicals held meetings, published newspapers and pamphlets and formed clubs and societies to gain support for reform of Parliament. In most cases radicals were peaceful.

MAIN EVENTS

1816 Spa Fields Riots, – a government spy reported that a meeting to be addressed by Henry Hunt was a cover for a plot to overthrow the government. The army was sent in to disperse the crowd and arrest the leaders. There was rioting and looting before order was restored.

1817 The Blanketeers – unemployed weavers from Lancashire planned to march on London – the magistrates of Manchester used cavalry to disperse the marchers by force.

1819 Peterloo Massacre – a peaceful crowd of 50,000 gathered at St Petersfields in Manchester to hear Henry Hunt speak. The magistrates ordered Hunt's arrest and the Yeomanry charged through the crowd with swords drawn. Eleven people were killed and over 400 injured including women and children.

1820 Cato St Conspiracy - group of radicals led by Arthur Thistlewood planned to kill members of the government. A government spy informed on them and they were arrested and the leaders were hanged.

1820 The Battle of Bonnymuir – a group of about twenty unemployed weavers planned to march from Glasgow to the Carron Ironworks to seize weapons. They were stopped by cavalry near Bonnybridge and arrested. The leaders were transported or hanged.

GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST THE RADICALS

Habeas Corpus was suspended and radicals could be arrested and put in prison without a trial.

A new law (Seditious libel) made it a crime to criticize government ministers.

Stamp Act – tax on newspapers was introduced to stop radicals publishing newspapers.

Military drilling was made illegal.

Magistrates could search houses for weapons without a court order.

Bail could be denied to suspected radicals.

Meetings of more than 50 people were banned.

Seditious libel – it became a crime to criticize members of the government.

The government arrested radical leaders such as Cobbett, Hunt, and Thomas Muir in Scotland.

Judges passed heavy sentences on radicals - many imprisoned or transported or hanged.

Government spies and agent provocateurs joined Radical groups to stir up trouble. (1)

Government prepared to use force - army and local militia used to break up Radical meetings.

After 1822 the economy began to improve and as unemployment fell, interest in the radical cause declined.

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

THE 1832 REFORM ACT

KP8

BACKGROUND

In the eighteenth century landowners controlled Parliament. The right to vote or become an MP was only given to those who owned property. They argued that only those who owned land were responsible enough to govern the country. By the 1780s the growth of industry led many people to challenge the idea that landowners should have so much power. Ideas of democracy from America and France began to influence the thinking of people in Britain. The middle class who depended on the new industries for their wealth thought that they should have a share in running the country. They claimed industry's needs were being ignored. The working class wanted the vote so that they could improve their lives and elect a government that would pass laws to improve living and working conditions. Demand for reform of parliament had been resisted by the Tory governments which had been in power in Britain for forty years. However, in the general election of 1830, the Whigs (Liberals) led by Lord John Russell came to power and they were in favour of the reform of Parliament.

In 1832 the Parliamentary system was corrupt, undemocratic and designed to give power to landowners.

- **THE FRANCHISE** was restricted only 1 man in 12 had the vote. There were two types of Parliamentary Constituency – Counties and Burghs each sent two MPs to Parliament

In the Counties Forty shilling Freeholders could vote (anyone who owned or rented land worth £2 per year)

In the Burghs there were many different qualifications. Some examples were:-

Potwalloper Burghs – anyone who had a hearth to boil a pot could vote.

Councillor Burghs – only town councillors could vote.

Scot and Lot Burghs – only people who paid local taxes could vote.

Freeman Burghs – only those who were freemen of the Burgh could vote.

- **THE METHOD OF ELECTION** involved voters calling out the name of the person they were voting for. This led to bribery and intimidation of voters by landowners.
- **THE DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS** was very unfair. Small villages, some with only six voters had 2 MPs (Rotten and Pocket burghs). Big towns like Manchester (population 60,000) had no MPs. Scotland and Ireland had too few MPs.

In 1831 the Whigs introduced a Bill to reform parliament. The House of Commons voted in favour but the House of Lords which was dominated by the Tories rejected it. There were riots and demonstrations all over the country. Lord John Russell persuaded the King to create enough new Whig peers to pass the Bill. The Lords backed down and in 1832 the Great Reform Act became law.

The Representation of the People Act 1832:

- 56 burghs in England and Wales lost 2 MPs
- 31 burghs were reduced to only one MP
- 67 new constituencies were created so that large industrial towns like Manchester had 1 MP.
- The right to vote in the counties there was unchanged (40 shilling freeholders)
- In the boroughs all the old qualifications were abolished and the vote was given to male householders who paid a yearly rental of £10 or more.
- There was still no secret ballot which meant bribery and corruption continued
- Property qualifications for voters and MPs remained.
- Country areas which were controlled by landowners still had too many MPs

For many the Act did not go far enough. The property qualifications meant that the middle class got the vote but the working class was still excluded.

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

THE CHARTISTS

KP9

The Chartists were the first organised working class political movement with a clear programme. The 1832 Reform Act disappointed many people because it did not do enough to make Britain more democratic. The working class wanted the right to vote and the 1832 Reform Act excluded them. Property qualifications for voters and MPs remained. People wanted Parliamentary seats to be fairly distributed and many seats were still controlled by landowners. They wanted a secret ballot to end the corruption caused by open voting. Working class wanted improvements to working and living conditions and it soon became clear that parliament was no better than before. In 1834 a new Poor Law was passed which introduced the hated workhouse system. This was an attack on the working class, and helped the Chartist movement to gain massive support all over Britain.

- The People's Charter was drawn up by **William Lovett** in May 1838 as a draft parliamentary bill. It contained six points:
 1. Universal male suffrage – *votes for all men over 21 years of age.*
 2. A secret ballot – *voting in private to end bribery and corruption.*
 3. Abolition of property qualifications for MPs – *to allow working class men to become MPs.*
 4. Payment of MPs – *to allow working class MPs to support themselves and their families.*
 5. Equal electoral districts – *all parts of the country to be equally and fairly represented.*
 6. Annual elections – *so that MPs did what voters wanted or quickly lose their seats.*
- The Chartists presented their petition to Parliament three times – In 1839, 1842 and 1848. On each occasion it was rejected by Parliament.
- In the face of this rejection the Chartist leadership was split. William Lovett believed that only 'moral force' (peaceful persuasion) would win through. Fergus O'Connor believed 'physical force' (violent uprising) would be necessary. This split weakened the movement and made it possible for the government to portray the chartists as dangerous revolutionaries.
- The Chartist moral force campaigns involved publishing newspapers, posters, petitions and holding public meetings. All over the country there were chartist churches and Sunday schools.
- In 1842 factory workers in the North of England organised a strike in support of the People's Charter known as the Plug Plot. Striking workers removed the plugs from steam engine boilers to bring stop production – around 1500 strikers were arrested and sentenced to between 7 and 21 years transportation.
- The physical force Chartists were more talk than action and there was very little chartist violence. The only serious incident was at Newport in Wales where 22 Chartists were killed after they tried to set free some chartist leaders who had been arrested.
- The Chartist movement came to an end in 1848 when the final petition was rejected and government troops broke up a large Chartist demonstration at Kennington Common.

WHY CHARTISM FAILED

Chartist support varied according to economic circumstances – high in bad times/ low in good times. The government refused to talk to the Chartists and rejected their petitions. Many of the signatures on Chartist petitions were false and led to them being ridiculed. The movement was weakened because of divisions between moral force and physical force chartists. Many workers were apathetic and ignored chartist activities. The Chartist leader Fergus O'Connor was incompetent and most of his schemes failed. The 'plug plot' failed to attract support and made the chartists look foolish. The Chartist land bank collapsed due to fraud and poor management. The Chartists had difficulty raising money and there was a lot of fraud.

HOMEWORK HELPSHEET / REVISION FILE

THE 1867 REFORM ACT

KP10

BACKGROUND

In the 1860s the Reform of Parliament once again became an important political issue. The political system was still based on the Great Reform Act of 1832. This had given the vote to the middle classes but the working class still had no real say in choosing governments. In the years between 1832 and the 1860s much had changed. A new class of educated, well paid skilled workers had developed as the economy expanded. They were represented by strong and responsible trade unions. This had the effect of undermining the idea that the working class were an uneducated rabble who were not fit to be given the vote. When the American Civil War ended in 1865 the freeing of the slaves revived interest in democracy. In other parts of the British Empire - Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa all men over 21 had been given the vote and this had not led to bad government or a threat to life and property. It seemed unacceptable that in the dominions where British workers emigrated they were given the right to vote – but not in Britain. Many people still supported the ideas of the chartists and Trade Unions were a growing force and they supported votes for the working class. The middle class National Reform Union was formed in 1864 and campaigned for votes for all men over 21. The working class Reform League also founded in 1864 campaigned for reform of Parliament. Many Liberal MPs and even some Tories supported votes for working class people.

- In 1866 William Gladstone the Liberal Prime Minister introduced a Bill to reform Parliament and extend the right to vote. Some Liberal MPs did not support this and together with the Tories they voted the Bill down. Gladstone resigned and an election was held.
- The Tories were returned to government and to everyone's surprise their leader, Benjamin Disraeli introduced a new Bill to extend the right to vote which went even further than Gladstone's proposals. Disraeli believed that the new voters would be grateful and vote Tory.

THE 1867 REFORM ACT

The Franchise

Voting rights still depended on property qualifications.

Before 1867 – Counties 40 shilling freeholders / Burghs £10 leaseholders.

After 1867 – Counties 40 shilling freeholders + Owners or leaseholders of land of yearly value of £5.

Burghs - all adult male householders + lodgers paying £10 per year rent.

Number of voters increased from 1.4 million to 2.4 million.

The skilled working class in the burghs were given the vote.

Many agricultural labourers and miners who lived in their employer's accommodation were excluded from voting.

Distribution of seats

Before 1867 - There were still many pocket burghs; large towns still did not have enough MPs.

After 1867 - 52 seats were redistributed from small towns to the growing industrial towns or counties.

Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester saw their representation increase from 2 MP's to 3 MP's.

In 1868, Scotland was given 7 new MP's as some new constituencies were created.

Counties whose population had increased were given 6 MPs instead of 4 MPs.

Voting procedure

Before 1867 - voting was done publicly by a show of hands – this led to bribery and intimidation of voters.

After 1867 - voting was unchanged and bribery and intimidation of voters remained a problem. (1)

The property qualification for MPs remained the same.

The 1867 Reform Act paved the way for further changes such as the Secret Ballot (1872);

The Corrupt & Illegal Practices Act (1883); Equal Constituencies (1885).