

# The People's Charter

- Written mainly by William Lovett of the London Working Men's Association in 1838 set out 6 points the Chartists believed were necessary to reform the electoral system and thus alleviate the suffering of the working classes.
  - Universal Suffrage
  - No property qualification
  - Annual Parliaments
  - Equal Representation
  - Payment of members
  - Vote by secret ballot



# William Lovett (1800-1877)

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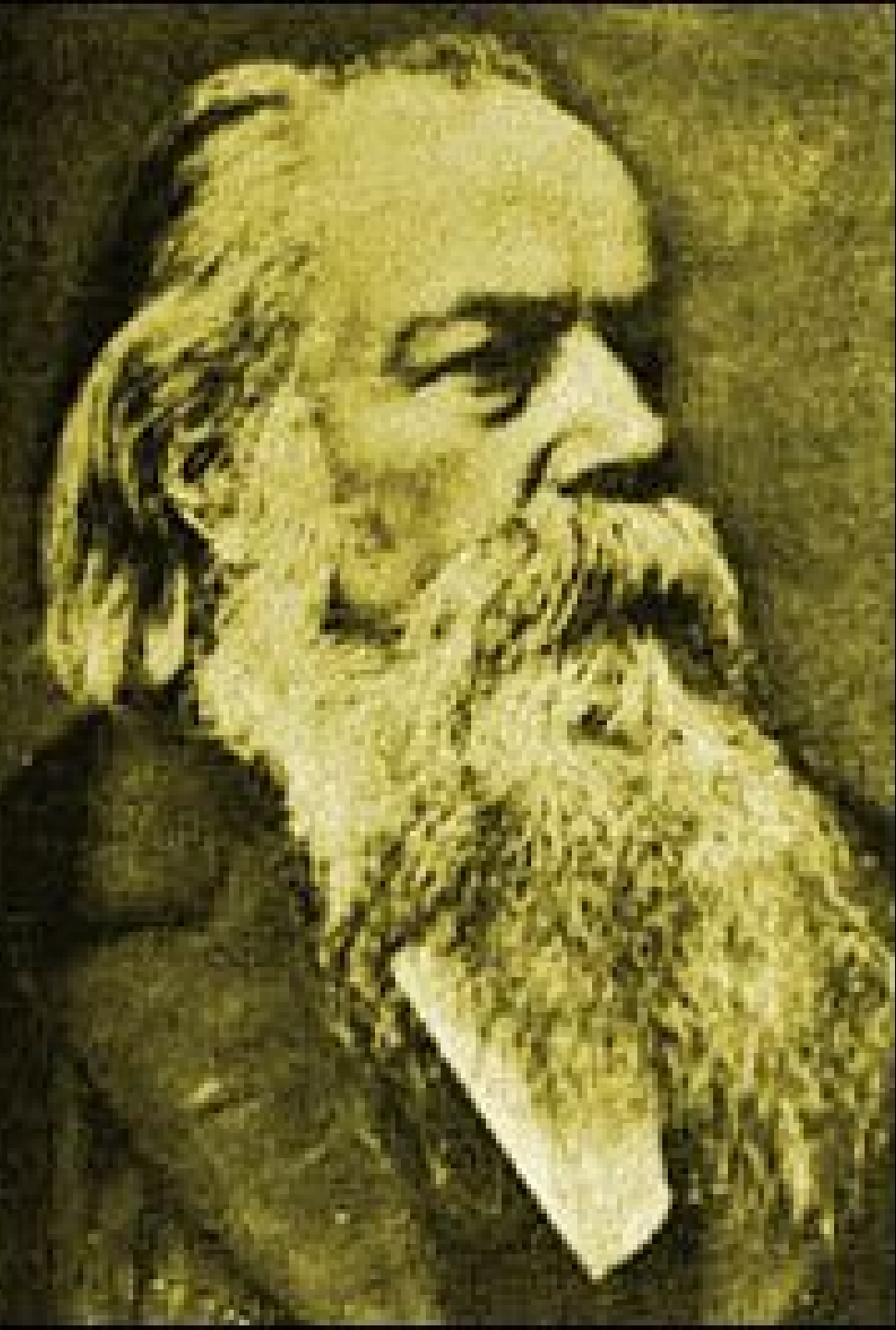
- Drafted the People's Charter
- Established the Anti-Militia Association – brought him to national prominence.
- In June 1836 formed London Working Men's Association and chosen as Leader of the group now known as the Chartists.
- In 1839 arrested – while in Warwick Goal for a year wrote the book 'Chartism, a New Organisation of the People'.
- In 1842 retired from politics and devoted the rest of his life to the development of working class education.
- Died in August 1877 in extreme poverty.



# Feargus O'Connor (1796-1855)

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- In 1832 elected MP for County Cork
- Editor of the Northern Star, established in 1836, very successful selling over 48,000 copied a week by spring of 1839.
- Critical of Chartist leaders – advocated Physical Force
- Imprisoned for 18 months for publishing seditious libels
- In 1845 launched Chartist Land Plan – by 1847 70,000 people had paid £100k into a fund to buy land. But by 1850 the company was bankrupt.
- Committed to a mental asylum for assaulting MPs
- Died 30 August 1855 – aged 59.
- 40,000 people witnessed the funeral procession.



# Henry Vincent 1813-1878

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- Popular Chartist leader, brilliant and gifted public orator.
- Worked as a printer.
- Government sought to deny him the opportunity to speak out.
- May 1839, he was arrested and sentenced to one year in goal for making inflammatory remarks.
- After release, re-arrested almost immediately for using 'seditious language'.
- Published The National Vindicator and went back on the road with the Chartist message and later anti-slavery.
- Stood as an MP five times but never successful.
- Died December 1878



# John Frost (1784-1877)

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- Leader of the Newport Uprising, November 1839
- Prosperous businessman in Newport, elected in 1835 as one of Newport's 18 new councillors. Appointed a magistrate and elected mayor in 1836.
- A leader of the Physical Force Chartists.
- Frost called for protest in Newport against the imprisonment of Henry Vincent. Marched on Westgate Hotel but soldiers opened fire and over 20 men killed and 50 wounded.
- Frost arrested and charged with high treason. Last men to be sentenced to hung, drawn and quartered but changed to transportation to Tasmania.
- In 1854 pardoned and went to USA but returned to England in 1856 where he retired to Stapleton and wrote articles.

# Other key Chartists

- **John Collins** – unsung hero who travelled the country and got support for the Chartist movement. Brought together major groups for the first appearance of the Charter at Glasgow Green in Scotland. 150k crowd cheered its contents.
- **Thomas Cooper** – imprisoned where he wrote 'Purgatory of Suicides' which runs to 955 stanzas.
- **George Julian Harney** – Chartist leader in and out of jail, feuded with fellow Chartists who expelled him from the Party.

# Key Chartist & Organisations

- **Henry Hetherington** – joint founder of the London Working Man's Association in 1836. A printer, he published the Poor Man's Guardian, selling 22k copies a week in 1833. He was a Moral Force Chartist and very critical of Feargus O'Connor.
- Organisations
- **The National Union of the Working Classes** – formed in 1831 by Richard Carlile, Henry Hetherington, James Watson, John Cleave and William Benbow.
- **The London Working Men's Association** – formed 1836 by William Lovett, Henry Hetherington, John Cleave and Francis Place. Drafted the People's Charter.