

Definitions of Key Terms

Chartism was a movement for democratic and political rights in the Great Britain. It flourished between 1838 and 1852. Its main body of support came from workers directly experiencing the impact of the industrial revolution. During its lifetime it organized three national petitions to Parliament in 1839, 1842 and 1848. The largest of these petitions (1842) contained over 3 million signatures - which is six signatures for every voter!

Knowledge Chartism was a branch of the movement which emphasized the need to raise the educational level of the working class in order that they might use their vote responsibly. Accordingly, it encouraged Chartists to read (and produce) newspapers and form educational groups in order to develop their political understanding.

Temperance Chartism encouraged individual Chartists to demonstrate their moral fitness to be admitted to the franchise by abstaining from alcoholic beverages.