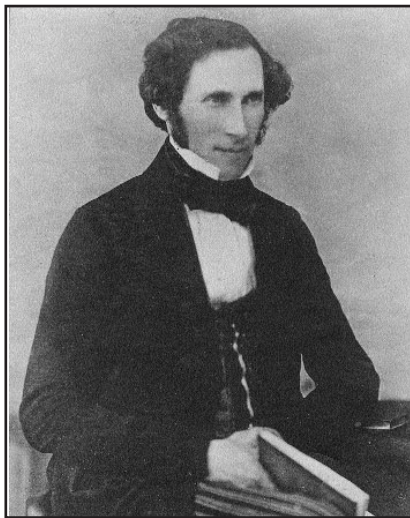


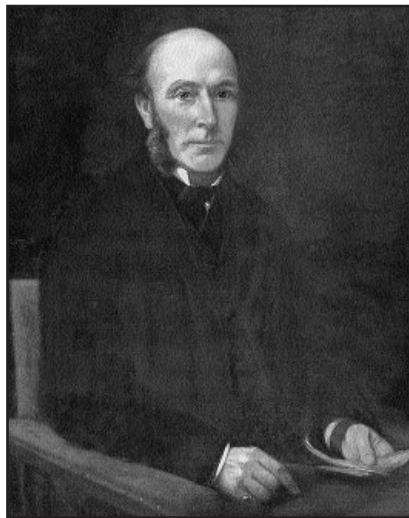
DEBATE I - THE PRESS WAR



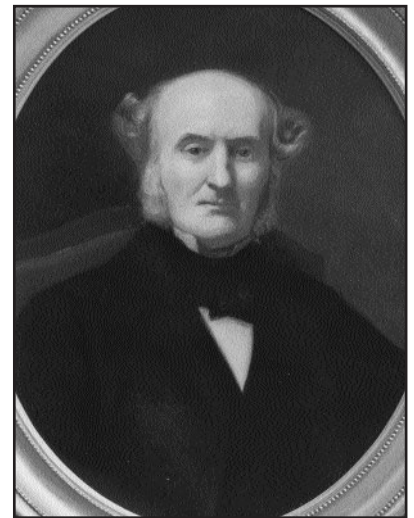
- The British Parliamentary Reform Act, which increased the electorate by 50% and introduced secret ballot, was passed in 1832.
- During the 1830s and 1840s there was a period of political unrest with demands for more democratic government throughout Europe.
- Robert Fargher and, later, James Brown were the main leaders of the Manx Reform Movement for an elected House of Keys. 'Mona's Herald', a radical newspaper, was founded by Robert Fargher in 1833.
- The Isle of Man was a centre for radical printing i.e. political pamphlets and newspapers for circulation in Britain. Unlike Britain, where there was tax payable on printed matter, there was none on the Isle and newspapers could also be sent post free to Britain.
- The Manx Reform Movement had mass public support. Petitions with 3,000 and 5,000 signatures were raised for reform of the self-appointed Keys.
- Economic problems in the Isle of Man were caused by Manx revenue going to the United Kingdom, with the result that funding for insular projects such as harbour improvements could not be easily raised.



Robert Fargher



Mr. Farrant, M.H.K.



George William Dumbell, M.H.K.



After the passing of the U.K. Reform Act in 1832, there was increased interest in electoral reform in the Isle of Man. The House of Keys did not always uphold the public interest rather than their private interests. During the 'Bread Riots' of the early 1820s the Keys supported the stopping of grain imports and the allowing of Manx exports, which suited them as farming landowners, but caused bread shortages and famine on the Island.

In the early 1830s, following the passage of the British Reform Act, Robert Fargher, owner-editor of the 'Mona's Herald' knocked on the door of the House of Keys and demanded admission *'in the name of the people of this Island'*. The Keys were in private debate and ordered the Secretary to close and bolt the door against the intruder.

The rival 'Manx Sun' newspaper had very conservative views, but Fargher's 'letters to the editor' column in the Mona's Herald allowed him and his supporters to

air their opinions about the Keys. In turn there were bitter court actions for libel against Fargher, brought by George William Dumbell, M.H.K., banker, lawyer and sometime Secretary to the House of Keys, leading to Fargher's imprisonment for short periods in Castle Rushen in 1845, 1847 and 1857.

It was the U.K. Parliament which finally decided in 1848, the 'Year of Revolutions', to impose taxes and postage on newspapers and political pamphlets.



- Debate between the Speaker, Mr Farrant M.H.K. and Mr Quayle, M. H. K. on popular elections and the role of the press.
- Vote on the motion that *'this House shall impose taxes on newspapers and newspaper advertising and withdraw the free postage of newspapers to Britain'*.
- Voting results.



Video Loop



Key Points



Background Info



Look out for