

PIONEERS IN ECONOMICS 20

GEORGE SCROPE

(1797-1862)

THOMAS ANTHONY

(1783-1834)

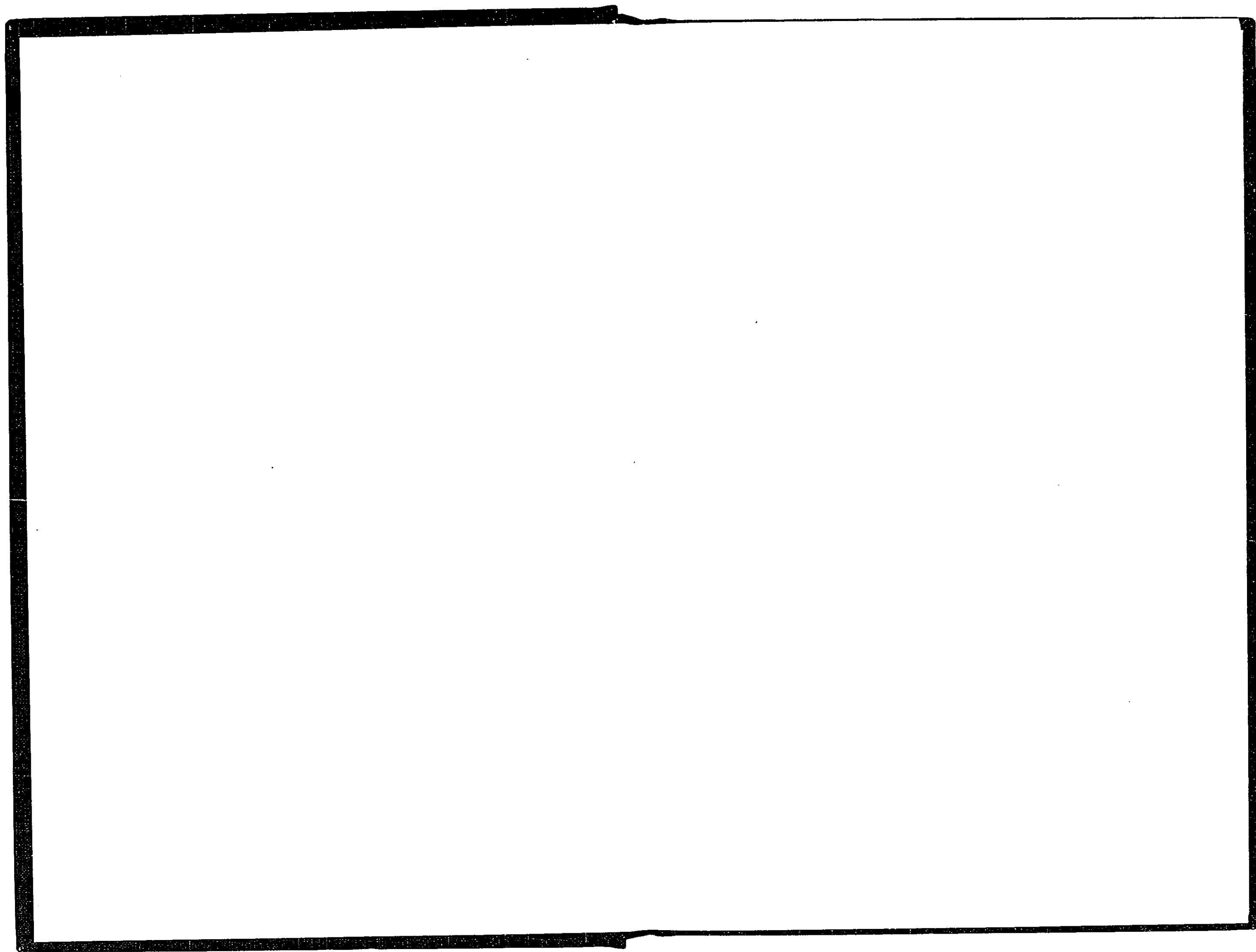
EDWIN CHADWICK

(1802-1899)

JOHN CAIRNES

(1823-1875)

Mark Blaug



George Scrope (1797-1876)
Thomas Attwood (1783-1856)
Edwin Chadwick (1800-1890)
John Cairnes (1823-1875)

Pioneers in Economics

Series Editor: Mark Blaug

Professor Emeritus, University of London
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(1797–1876)**

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(1783–1856)**

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(1823–1875)**

Edited by

Mark Blaug

*Professor Emeritus,
University of London*

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Introduction

George Poulett Scrope was a well-known Vulcanist, a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Member of Parliament for over 30 years, and a prolific anti-Ricardian Tory economist of the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Although a Tory, his Toryism was highly eccentric because he also opposed the Malthusian theory of population, favoured free trade and the repeal of the Corn Laws, and agitated in favour of Parliamentary reform.

Scrope was educated at Harrow and both Pembroke and St John's College, Oxford. After gaining his degree in 1821, he married an heiress, changed his name to that of his wife and established himself as a country gentleman in the County of Wiltshire. After a series of articles on economic questions for the *Quarterly Review* he published his *Principles of Political Economy* in 1833.

The first half of the nineteenth century saw a veritable flood of pamphlets on the great question of monetary and banking reform, reflecting the protracted parliamentary debates that finally led to the famous Banking Act of 1844. Despite all the disagreements between the numerous participants in the discussion, they were all united on the desirability of a metallic standard, differing only about whether it should be based on gold, on silver, or on both — all, that is, with the exception of the brothers Thomas and Matthias Attwood, spokesmen for the Birmingham-based iron and brass industry, who urged a return to the inconvertible paper standard that had ruled in the days of the Napoleonic wars. It was Thomas in particular whose numerous economic pamphlets made him the leading monetary crank of the day; his call for a paper standard was invariably attended by ridicule and obloquy.

Thomas Attwood was born the son of a banker and himself became a banker. From an early age he was active in the civic life of the City of Birmingham and as founder of the Birmingham Political Union for the Protection of Public Rights, Attwood played an active role in the agitation for Parliamentary Reform that led up to the Reform Bill of 1832. Subsequently, he was presenter of the mammoth Chartist petition to Parliament in 1839 but even the Chartists rejected his monetary doctrines.

Edwin Chadwick, social reformer and public administrator, was born in Lancashire, educated as a lawyer and worked as Bentham's secretary for a crucial two-year period in the 1820s. As the foundations of the British welfare state were laid in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Chadwick was employed in a variety of administrative positions ranging from poor law reform to public health measures. He was responsible in part or in whole for many of the 'Blue Books' of the period, being most closely identified with the *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population* (1842), a work that laid the foundation for urban sewerage in Britain and, incidentally, the regulations governing water pipes to this day. Chadwick was a utilitarian in politics and a Ricardian in economics but with a view of the problem of externalities that went beyond anything dreamed of by Ricardo.

What McCulloch was to Ricardo, John Elliot Cairnes was to John Stuart Mill, a faithful disciple who nevertheless did not always see eye to eye with his master. In *Some Leading Principles of Political Economy Newly Expounded* (1874), he defended the Ricardian system