



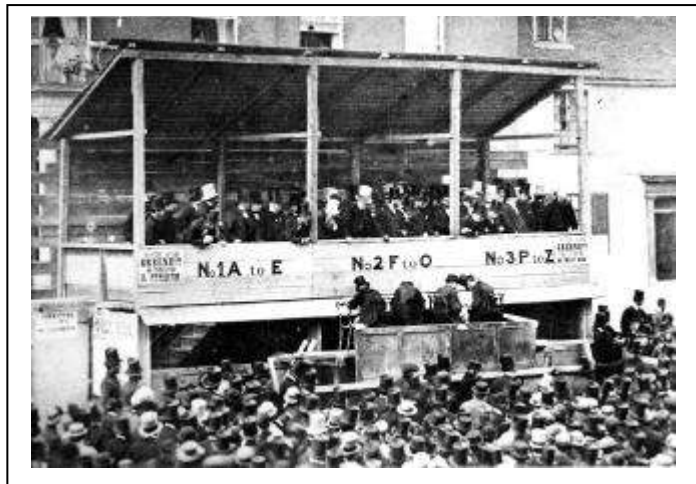
**Hugh Childers, first British MP elected by secret ballot**

In 1834, the Exchequer had two cart-loads of wooden tally sticks (an obsolete accounts system). The Clerk of Works ordered them burnt in two underfloor stoves in the basement of the House of Lords.

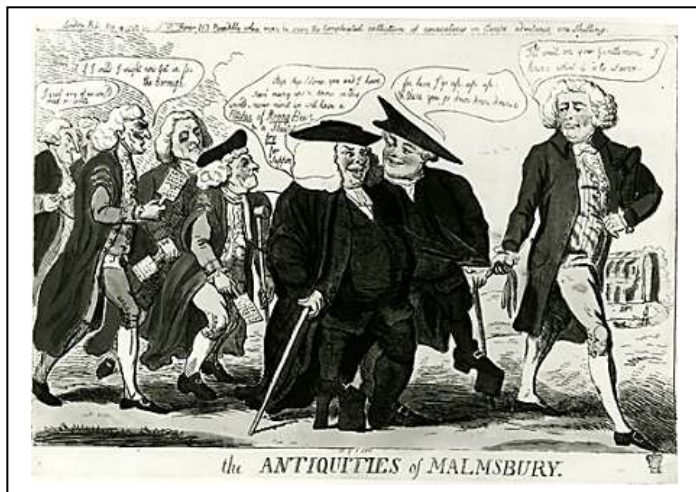
On 16 October, a couple of workmen arrived in the morning to carry out his instructions: they put out the furnaces (they claimed) by 5pm. By 6pm, the House of Lords was on fire; in no time, the flames spread to the rest of the Palace.

Both Houses of Parliament were destroyed along with most of the other buildings on the site: only the Jewel Tower, the Undercroft Chapel, the Cloisters and Chapter House of St Stephen's, and Westminster Hall survived.

There had also been fires in 1263, 1298 and 1512.



**An Election Hustings, Mid-1860's**



**Malmesbury used to return 2 MP's**



**Parliament in 1834**