

Petition of William Schofield

House of Commons, *Votes and Proceedings*, 15th May 1821.

Transcribed by Anne Cooper

No 571

A Petition of William Schofield, of Town of Manchester, in the County of Lancaster, was presented, and read; setting forth, That the Petitioner attended the Meeting which was held on the 16th of August 1819, on St Peter's Field; the Petitioner had been on the spot about quarter of an hour (during which time the Meeting was peaceable and orderly) when the Yeomanry Cavalry rode upon the ground and most furiously assailed the people, cutting with their sabres indiscriminately at all who were in their way; the Petitioner immediately attempted to escape, but was overtaken by one on the Yeomanry, who gave him a severe wound on the head with a sabre, and another wound in the fleshy part of his arm; in making his way through the crowd, the Petitioner passed by one man who lay dead upon the ground, and in another part of the plain he came up with thirty of forty people, who lay in a heap one upon another, many of whom were bleeding copiously from wounds and bruises which they had received, and with uplifted hands were beseeching the Yeomanry in prayers and intreaties to spare their lives; in attempting to pass, the Petitioner was forced amongst the heap of wounded by the attacks of the Cavalry, and fell amongst them, and it was with difficulty, and after some considerable time had elapsed, that he was finally enabled to escape with his life; the Petitioner therefore humbly prays, That the House will be graciously pleased to institute and inquiry into the proceedings which took place on the occasion aforementioned, in order that the perpetrators of a carnage so horrible may be brought to justice.