

Petition of William Barnes of Manchester.

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

Transcribed by Helen Eden

A petition of William Barnes of Manchester, was presented and read; setting forth, that the petitioner attended the meeting held in Manchester on the 16th August 1819, the petitioner saw no disturbance at the meeting until the Yeomanry Cavalry made a furious attack upon the meeting; on the approach of the Yeomanry the petitioner made his escape, and spent the remainder of the day in attending to his business; about nine o'clock in the evening of the same day, as the petitioner was walking peaceably through the streets, he was attacked by a number of the Yeomanry Cavalry, who cut the petitioner in several parts of his body with their sabres; he endeavoured to escape from his assailants, when they pursued him, threatening with the most horrid oaths and imprecations the life of the petitioner; the petitioner finding himself closely pursued, rushed into the bar of the Star Inn in Deansgate, and asked the protection of a peace officer; several gentlemen, who were in the bar, asked the cause of the petitioner's alarm, and why he was pursued by the Yeomanry; on an explanation taking place, the said gentlemen remonstrated with the Yeomanry, when the petitioner offered to surrender himself to justice well-knowing that he had committed no offense; hereupon he was taken by the Yeomanry to the Police Office, and although he offered no resistance, but went quietly along, these conservators of the public peace, while taking him to the aforesaid office, again attacked the petitioner, and inflicted 3 more sabre wounds upon his body; from the Police Office the petitioner was sent handcuffed to the New Bailey prison, where he was confined for a week and then liberated, no charge being proved against him; the petitioner humbly prays that the House will be pleased to institute such inquiry into the transactions which took place relative to the aforesaid meeting as justice requires.