

Petition of Joseph Coates of Royton

House of Commons, Votes and Proceedings, 15 May 1821

Transcribed by Lauren Jaye Gradwell

(No. 587)

A Petition of *Joseph Coates*, being an inhabitant of the township of *Royton*; in the parish of *Oldham*, in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*, was presented, and read; setting forth, That the Petitioner set out from *Royton*, the place of his residence, on the morning of Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1819, for the purpose of attending a public Meeting, advertised to be held at *Manchester* that day; that he arrived at the place of Meeting in *Manchester* about 12 o'clock at noon; that he remained there until the arrival of Mr. *Hunt* and others (who were expected to take a leading part in the business of the day) and some time after; that Mr. *Hunt* took the Chair at about half past one o'clock; that in about ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour after his appointment as Chairman, the greatest confusion and agitation began to be manifested in the Meeting, owing to the attack which a considerable number of Yeomanry Cavalry and Special Constables were making on the people assembled, the first with their swords, and the latter with their truncheons; that the Petitioner, endeavouring to make his way from such a scene of confusion and blood, had his passage intercepted by the Yeomanry on one hand and by the Special Constables on the other, the latter of whom inflicted on the Petitioner an almost innumerable quantity of most severe blows on the head and different parts of the body, which had the effect of bringing on a most dangerous fever that confined the Petitioner to his bed for twenty-four days, during a great part of which time his life was despaired of; that for upwards of ten weeks the Petitioner was in consequence quite unable to follow his employment; the Petitioner begs leave to state to the House, that he attended this Meeting in the most peaceable disposition, neither intending harm to others nor expecting it from any, and that he reposed himself in that security which he verily hoped the Law would give him; the Petitioner begs also to remark, that in his opinion one of the most excellent maxims of our Constitution is, "that there is no wrong without a remedy," and that as he has suffered in this case a most grievous wrong, for which no remedy has been given he most humbly and earnestly prays, that this remedy may be no longer withheld; and as the first step towards such a measure must, in the opinion of the Petitioner, be a Parliamentary Inquiry into the before-mentioned transactions at *Manchester*, the Petitioner earnestly prays that such Parliamentary investigation may immediately take place; the Petitioner most confidently hopes that this measure may no longer be delayed in the House, seeing that our Courts of Justice refuse to take it up, and that if the House refuse to institute the necessary inquiry, all justice will in this case be lost sight of; the Petitioner also most confidently hopes that the conviction of *H. Hunt*, and others of the defendants at *York*, on one Count of the Indictment preferred against them, will form no barrier against instituting the inquiry, as Mr. Justice *Bayley* repeatedly declared in effect at *York* the Trial of the said Defendants had nothing to do with the guilt or innocence of the *Manchester* Magistrates and Yeomanry; the Petitioner therefore again most humbly prays, That an inquiry into the transactions which took place at *Manchester* on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 1819, may immediately take place in the House.