

Petition of the Harvey sisters of Pendleton, near Manchester

House of Commons, Votes and Proceedings, 15 May 1821

Transcribed by Lauren Jaye Gradwell

(No.615)

A Petition of *Elizabeth Harvey*, aged 24, *Ellen Harvey*, aged 18, and *Isabella Harvey*, aged 14, of the Township of *Pendleton*, near *Manchester*, was presented, and read; setting forth, That the Petitioners are three sisters, who, unconscious of wrong; visited the Meeting held on *St. Peter's Plain*, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, 1819, where every appearance of peace and good order was demonstrated by the assembled multitude, and continued so till a body of Cavalry galloped into the field, and halted for a few moments opposite the house where the Magistrates were said to have assembled; the woeful cry of dismay which instantly assailed the Petitioners' ears soon convinced the Petitioners that the Cavalry had charged with their drawn sabres upon the multitude; the piercing shrieks and deep moanings of the people were indescribable; the Petitioners were carried off their feet many yards, they had not a moment to choose; on the approach of the infuriated Cavalry, one of the Petitioners, *Elizabeth*, the eldest sister, was thrown down, and trampled on by the horses, the flesh trod off her neck and face, and her shoulder, knees, and ancles, were also much injured, and here it was the Petitioners were compelled to part from each other; another of the Petitioners, *Ellen Harvey*, was struck a violent blow on the stomach by a Yeoman's sabre, which cut through her stays and a piece of whalebone two inches and a quarter wide and a quarter of an inch thick, thus narrowly escaping with her life; the third and youngest of the Petitioners was also rode over by the Yeomanry Cavalry and trampled upon; when rising she received a sabre blow from one of them over her arm, which disabled her for many weeks, and the Petitioner believes that many innocent and unoffending people were maimed and murdered at this meeting; the Petitioners therefore humbly pray, That a solemn investigation may be instituted respecting the transactions of the fatal 16<sup>th</sup> August.