

THE MEETING AT PETERLOO

(SATTB)



Arranged by

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The Meeting at Peterloo

The “Peterloo Massacre” is an important historical event which is often not known about. On August 16th 1819 a mass meeting was arranged in a huge open area around what's now St Peters Square, Manchester: about 60,000 peaceful pro-democracy and anti-poverty protesters gathered to hear Henry Hunt, the main leader and well-known radical orator who advocated annual parliaments, universal suffrage, and the ballot. The crowd was gathered in St. Peter's Fields when trouble arose between it and the Lancashire militia who were present on the plea of preserving order.

Contingents with bands and banners, and including many women, marched to the meeting ground in perfect order but with a discipline more terrifying to the authorities than any disorder could have been. As Hunt was beginning to speak, a troop of Huzzars and the Manchester Yeomanry were launched at the closely packed crowd, hacking and trampling the unarmed people.

An estimated 18 people, including a woman and a child, died from saber cuts and trampling. Over 700 men, women and children received extremely serious injuries. All in the name of liberty and freedom from poverty: a pre-planned assault against defenceless men, women and children.

Why else would 600 Hussars, several hundred infantrymen, an artillery unit with two six-pounder guns, 400 men of the Cheshire cavalry and 400 special constables be waiting to attack a peaceful demonstration against tyranny?

THE MEETING AT PETERLOO

*Come lend an ear of pity while I my tale do tell.
It happened at Manchester a place you know right well.
For to redress our wants and woes reformers took their ways,
A lawful meeting being called upon a certain day.*

*The sixteenth day of August eighteen hundred and nineteen
There many thousand people on every road were seen
From Stockport, Oldham, Ashton and from other places too,
It was the largest meeting that reformers ever knew.*

*Brave Hunt he was appointed that day to take the chair.
At one-o'clock he did arrive, our shouts did rend the air.
Some females fair in white and green close by the hustings stood
And little did we all expect to see such scenes of blood.*

*Scarcely had Hunt begun to speak: Be firm, he said, my friends.
But little still did we expect what was to be the end
For around us all so hard and cruel regardless of our woes
Our enemies surrounded us on the plains of Peterloo.*

*The soldiers came unto the ground and thousands tumbled down
And many armless females lay bleeding on the ground.
No time for flight was gave to us, still every road we fled.
There were such heaps were trampled down, some wounded and some dead.*

*Brave Hunt was then arrested and several others too.
They marched us to the New Bailey, believe me it is true
And numbers there was wounded and many there was slain
Which makes the friends of those dear souls so loudly to complain.*

*Oh God above look down on those for Thou art just and true
And those that can no mercy show thy vengeance is their due.
Now quit this hateful mournful scene, look forward with this hope
That every murderer in this land may swing upon a rope.*

*But soon reform shall spread around for sand with the tide won't stay.
May all the filth that's in the land right soon be washed away.
And may sweet harmony from hence in this our land be found
May we with plenty all be blessed in all the country round.*

THE MEETING AT PETERLOO^(*)

Giuseppe Di Bianco

Lentamente, con libertà **In tempo;**
Moderatamente mosso (♩=56)

Soprano *ppp* Come lend, come lend

Alto *ppp* Come lend, come lend ear

Tenore solo *mp* Come lend an ear or

Tenore *ppp* Come lend Come lend or

Basso *ppp* Come lend, come lend an

5

S while do pen ed *mp* at

A I tale tell *mp* It happen - ed at

Tsolo pi - ty, while I my tale do tell It hap - pen - ed at

T ty it *mp* It hap - pen - ed at

B pi my hap - - - pen - ed at

^{*)} based on a old english tune

10

f Man - che - ster

mf For to re - dress our -

you know right well For to re - dress our

a place you know right well *mp* wants

a place you know right well *mp* to for dress For

a place you know right well re our

15

p

mp A law - ful

p A law -

p A law - ful meet - ing

wants and woes re - form - ers took their ways,

wants and woes re - form - ers took their ways,

to re - dress our wants they took their ways

wants re - form - ers took their ways

Più animato (♩ - 120 ca.)

p Ma - ny

p Ma - ny thou - sand

p Ma - ny thou - sand peo - ple

p Ma - ny thou - sand peo - ple were seen

meet - ing up - on a cer - tain day.

ful meet - ing up - on a cer - tain day.

be - ing called up - on a cer - tain day.

concitato

S
thou - sand peo - ple Stock - port, Old - ham, and from

A
peo - ple ma - ny thou - - - sand peo - ple from Stock - port, Old - ham,

T
ma - ny thou - sand peo - ple from Stock - port, Old - ham,

T II
Ma - ny thou - sand peo - ple from Stock - port, Old - ham, and from

B
ma - ny thou - sand peo - ple From Stock - port, Old - ham, and from o - ther

S
o - - - ther pla - ces *ppp* from

A
and from o - ther pla - ces *ppp* ma - ny thou - - - sand

T
Ash - ton *mf* The

T II
o - ther pla - ces *ppp* ma - ny thou - sand, ma - ny thou - - - sand

B
pla - ces ma - ny thou - sand peo - ple, ma - ny thou - sand peo - ple,

(in rilievo il canto)