

Peterloo massacre in manchester in 1819 essay sample



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Carlisle was actually at the scene of the Massacre making the source more reliable, but he is on the speaker's side making the source less reliable. He uses emotive language to suggest that the Yeomanry had a 'thirst for blood.' Implying that the Yeomanry attacked without good reason and shows that he is biased in his view of the Peterloo Massacre.

Source 2 implies that the Yeomanry 'galloped' onto the field and he says that the meeting was like a 'gala day'. The source says there were women and children at St. Peters Field because the men will have taken the women and children for a family day out and they would have no intention of rioting. Historical evidence for this is that there was a dead child and 100 women injured as a result of the massacre. The last source disagrees with Smith, because the writer Hulton suggests that only 50 000 people attended the event, which is a lot less attendee's. This is because smaller numbers are less extreme, and as a result can make out that there was less support for the cause. The source is primary, but it is not clear how long after the event it was written; therefore this would probably make the evidence less reliable as the writer may have a less vivid outlook on the event and some details could be incorrect, that Hunt did not make his speech.

The next source is an artist's impression of the Peterloo Massacre by Cruikshank, who did not attend the meeting. The artist is clearly on the speaker's side as he has shown the Yeomanry looking very violent and waving their swords in the air as if ready to strike and the crowd are defenceless. The artist has done the painting based on the evidence of people who did attend the event.

The next source is from the Manchester Observer, produced five days following the event. Wroe is on the speaker's side as he uses emotive language against the Yeomanry to exaggerate their actions and cause the readers to be taken in so that the papers are sold. This source could be fairly unreliable due to this. Examples of this are when he says that the attendees were, 'victims of these monsters' and he refers to the Yeomanry as 'hair-brained assassins.'

Hulton was a magistrate who would be on the government's side, because he would not want reform. This source provides a totally different outlook on the event compared to the other sources. Hulton says that the Yeomanry horses 'trotted' onto the field and were showered with bricks and stones. However this may not be true as in the first source Carlisle says that the horses were 'galloping' and that 'every stone was gathered from the ground'. This source supports E. P. Thompson who states that it was a 'pre-meditated attack by the Yeomanry'. This in a sense shows how different people's views were of the event, but there is more evidence suggesting that the Yeomanry made the event worse. It is clear that the evidence in source 5 suggests that activists exciting discontent caused the Peterloo Massacre.

In conclusion even though all of the sources are not completely reliable on a whole they still seem to suggest that activists exciting discontent didn't cause the Peterloo Massacre. The government may have overreacted as they had fears of revolution and after the events in France there had also been other protests. However all of these had concluded peacefully; therefore the outcome could be expected to have been peaceful. The fact that the

speakers were found guilty suggests that the government were trying to
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cover up their responsibility. If the speakers hadn't been found guilty then the Yeomanry would have been guilty of murder.