

# JOHN STAFFORD'S SONG

On the sixteenth day of August, it was held at Peterloo  
A just and lawful meeting we all knew it to be true  
With flags and caps of liberty we did assemble there  
In peace and in good order, the reformers did appear

From Smedley Cottage to the stage was crowded all the way  
The patriots joined hand in hand, the band did sweetly play  
No thoughts of death and murder had occurred to any man  
Until that cruel action on Peter's Fields began

Our champion, Henry Hunt, he climbed the stage and took the stand  
It filled us all with joy, for to see that valiant man  
To see that gallant hero, with courage bold and fair  
He won the heart of every working-man and woman there

The tyrants and the vampires they came to cut us down  
Your flags and caps of liberty we'll scatter all around  
We know you are unarmed, and we will murder all we can  
Women, men and children, and damn your 'Rights of Man'

They formed themselves four deep, and three times over made the charge  
With glittering swords and carbines their foul duty to discharge  
The reformers they stood firm but the horsemen rode them down  
They murdered their own neighbours, trampled them upon the ground

The flags and caps of liberty, these ruffians did destroy,  
But still one valiant female the colours she did fly  
Her babe lay her arms, but still the butchers cut them through  
And left her with her infant bleeding there at Peterloo

Through the crowd right to the hustings those ruffians cut their way  
I've a charge against you Mr Hunt one of that crew did say  
I am ready now says Henry Hunt I'm here at your command  
So they took him to New Bailey Gaol according to their plan

One woman seeking for her son, a trooper there did meet  
She knew him well, for many years they'd lived in the same street  
I know you will not hurt me, Thomas Shelmerdine she said  
But he cut her down that instant and left her lying with the dead

So come all you brave patriots wherever that you be  
You must unite together to gain your liberty  
Don't forget those murderers, with justice them pursue  
And all those cruel tyrants on that day at Peterloo

*Tune: Brian Peters; Words: John Stafford; Arranged: Coe, Peters, Smyth*

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