

The Manchester Riots medal. "Massacre of Peterloo"

Sold



REF: 8262

Diameter: 2 cm (0.8")

Description

Highly emotive medal in white metal, struck in 1819 to mark the Manchester Riots on 16 August of that year. According to Mr Laurence Brown in volume I, of British Historical Medals 1760-1960, No 989 p.240, about 50 thousand people had gathered at St Peters Fields, outside Manchester to listen to speeches protesting against the economic and working conditions in England. Tension grew among the crowd and the local magistrates ordered the reading of the Riot Act. When it was seen that this had little effect, the Yeomanry were ordered to charge with sabre in hand. As a result, eleven people were killed, two of them women and 400 were injured. The incident was dubbed the massacre of Peterloo as an ironic reference to the Battle of Waterloo. It caused great public anger, which was further aggravated when the government passed six Acts regulating public meetings in order to prevent the occurrence of further incidents. Obverse of medal: Cavalry cutting down men, women and children. In exergue: MANCHESTER/AUGUST 16/1819. Reverse of medal: Above: THE WICKED HAVE DRAWN OUT THE SWORD Below: THEY HAVE CUT DOWN/THE POOR AND NEEDY/AND SUCH AS BE OF/UPRIGHT CONVERSATION/PSALM XXXVII/XIV.

This medal is pierced at the top because many of them were worn. The medal was only struck in white metal so that the poorer members of society could afford to buy it.