**Name**: John Earnshaw

**Occupation**: Surgeon

**Home**: Oldham

**Date**: April 4th 1822

**Source**: Redford v Birley 130-136

**Summary**: Watched from a house in Windmill Street with Robert Wood, having travelled to Manchester for business and to see meeting. Testifies to lack of provocation or retaliation on part of people, also discusses arrival of speakers, some previous reform meetings, and letters sent at the time of the Lees inquest.

**Done by**: RM

*John Earnshaw, a Quaker: examined by Mr. Blackburne*.

Q. You are a surgeon, and live at Oldham?

A. Near Oldham.

Q. Was you with the last witness, Robert Wood, in a house in Windmill-street, on the 16th. August, 1819?

A. I was.

Q. Did you observe the line of constables?

A. Yes.

Q. How far did it extend from Mr. Buxton's house?

A. Nearly to the hustings.

Q. Did you observe the Cavalry advance towards the hustings?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you observe them all the way up to the hustings?

A. Yes.

Q. Was any resistance, or any opposition offered to them, more than was caused by the density of the crowd?

A. Not the least.

Q. You say that this house is about twenty yards from the hustings?

A. Yes; it appeared to be so.

Q. And you were on the second floor?

A. On the second story.

Q. From that situation had you an opportunity of observing every thing that passed, from the Cavalry going from Mr. Buxton's house to the hustings?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you see either stones, or brickbats, or sticks, or, any thing of the kind, thrown at them during their progress?

A. There was nothing thrown at them.

Q. Were you in a condition, if any thing had been thrown at them, to have observed it?

A. Yes; I was.

Q. Did you observe any thing more than that, after they had proceeded up to the hustings; did you observe what after took place?

A. The hustings were surrounded immediately by the Cavalry.

Q. What more took place after?

A. And the people were immediately dispersed.

Q. Could you see what happened up towards the Quakers’ meeting-house, from the situation in which you were?

A. I did not take particular notice of that part of the meeting.

Q. Neither before or after the Cavalry had got to the hustings?

A. No.

*Cross-examined by Mr. Serjeant Hullock*

Q. Nothing was thrown at them?

A. No; I saw nothing at all.

Q. I understand you to venture to assert that nothing was thrown at them; do you mean to say that, or that you saw nothing?

A. I saw nothing.

Q. Something might have been thrown without your observing it?

A. Nothing very particular.

Q. What do you mean by that?

A. Nothing of any size.

Q. What carried you to Manchester?

A. I was invited by my friend.

Q. To attend the meeting?

A. No; I had some business, for one thing.

Q. Was it to attend the meeting?

A. I did not attend the meeting as a part of the meeting.

Q. One part of the object was to attend this meeting?

A. Yes it was.

Q. Was it the first meeting of the sort you were ever at?

A. No; I have seen another before at Manchester.

Q. By accident?

A. No; I went to Manchester to the meeting.

Q. When was the other?

A. I cannot speak to the time before, but it was some time before.

Q: Who were the orators?

A. I think Henry Hunt Esq. was there.

Q. When was it that you had the first meeting, at which Henry Hunt Esq. was the chairman?

A. I cannot speak to the time; I did not say he was chairman, he spoke.

Q. I thought you had said he was the chairman: was it held in the open air?

A. Yes; in the same place.

Q. How long before the meeting in question?

A. I cannot speak to that.

Q. The January preceding?

A. I cannot speak to the time.

Q. Very cold weather?

A. It was a cold day.

Q. Did you speak yourself?

A. No; I never was on the hustings at all.

Q. Did you speak at the meeting at Oldham?

A. No.

Q. But you are the chairman sometimes?

A. I never was chairman but at one meeting.

Q. When was that meeting?

A. Two or three years ago.

Q. What was it for—"Universal suffrage"?

A. It was to petition Parliament on the subject of reform only.

Q. Did you mean to reform themselves or you?

A. Perhaps we all want it.

Q. Was the petition sent up at the time?

A. Yes, it was; and read.

Q. What an honour that would be to it; did you write it?

A. No; I did not.

Q. You perused, settled, and signed it.

A. I signed it.

Q. You have been in the House of Commons?

A. Yes.

Q. At least, your name was sent in?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you get to the place, from which you saw what was about to take place, before the whole parties had assembled?

A. I think it was near twelve o'clock when I got there.

Q. Had Henry Hunt Esq. got up then?

A. No; he was not there.

Q. You saw him in the carriage?

A. Yes.

Q. Perhaps you know some of his friends along with him?

A. I don't know many.

Q. How many?

A. I think Johnson was there.

Q. Do you know Carlile?

A. I don't know him.

Q. Do you know the lady—the goddess of reason?

A. No; I don't know her.

Q. You saw her?

A. Yes.

Q. Dressed in white?

A. Yes; she was.

Q. Was she on the dickey, or in the carriage?

A. I am not certain.

Q. You forget little matters?

A. It is a long time since.

Q. Were you examined at the Oldham inquest?

A. No; I was not.

Q. You offered yourself?

A. Yes.

Q. Was you the Earnshaw that sent about the letters?

A. No; I did not send any letters.

Q. Who did you employ?

A. I did not employ any one.

Q. You wrote them?

A. I did not write them.

Q. You dictated them?

A. No.

Q. You wrote part of them; who wrote the better part of them?

A. William Nicholson.

Q. And John Earnshaw the other part; it was a joint and several composition, was it?

A. No; not joint.

Q. Each of you wrote your separate parts; your separate portions: which part did you write, the beginning or the end?

A. I think that Nicholson took a copy of what I had wrote: he made some alterations, I fancy.

Q. Did you send them about?

A. No; I had nothing to do with the circulation.

Q. But you was present at the time it was settled to whom they were to be sent?

A. No.

Q. Do you mean they were not sent to the Jury?

A. I had nothing at all to do with it, not the least. I just drew up a statement of the case, not with the intention of sending it to the Jury.

Q. You mean to state, you do not know what was written: I do not ask you what you wrote. Don't you know, of your own knowledge, some of these documents were sent to the Jury?

A. I have heard so since.

Q. Do you know a man of the name of Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. Was he present at any time, when you and Nicholson were composing?

A. No.

Q. Had you any communication with him on the subject?

A. Not the least; I did not know him at the time.

Q. They came in “beautiful order” to the field, we understand. I don't call them mob—the gentlemen: you were highly pleased with it, were not you?

A. No; I was not.

Q. Did not you put your hand out of the window, and shake your handkerchief?

A. No; I did not put any thing out.

Q. You did not greet their arrival?

A. Not in the least.

Q. You heard them shout?

A. Yes.

Q. When a division came on the field, there was a loud shout?

A. I think not always; part of them were there before I got there.

Q. After you got to your place, did not every party, as they came up, shout, and were received by shouting?

A. I think not every part.

Q. You heard the music too?

A. Yes.

Q. Banners flying?

A. Yes.

Q. What were the inscriptions?

A. I did not take particular notice to be able to speak to it now: I did not expect to be called on, else I should have taken notice.

Q. You read them that day?

A. Not many of them.

Q. You have more reason to remember what you did read: did you see “No Corn Laws"?

A. Yes; I think it was.

Q. “Equal Representation or Death"?

A. I cannot say I saw that.

Q. You did see that?

A. I cannot positively say.

Q. You cannot say you did not?

A. They were not all facing me.

Q. I am only asking you respecting those you saw.

A. I cannot speak to the inscriptions of any.

Q. Did you see the black banner?

A. Yes.

Q. That would attract your notice, naturally; probably you would see that as you went to Manchester?

A. I cannot speak to that; I am not certain that I did.

Q. Did you pass any of the parties?

A. Yes; but I did not stop with them.

Q. You were on horseback?

A. Yes; I was about twenty minutes in coming from home to Manchester.

Q. You were afraid of being too late?

A. I did not set off so early as I intended.

*Re-examined by Mr. Blackburne.*

Q. The way you attended this meeting, was up in a house?

A. Yes.

Q. Was that the way you attended the other?

A. No.

*Mr. Serjeant Cross*.—You rode there at the rate of one and twenty miles an hour?

*Witness*.—I have a very good mare.