

**Name:** John Ellis

**Occupation:** Bookseller and Special Constable

**Home:** Manchester

**Date:** 18th March 1820

**Source:** Trial of Henry Hunt, 49

**Summary:** Present at SPF. Saw many flags, people marching. Testifies that Ashworth died by being 'crushed on the chest'. Knocked down during the tumult.

**Done by:** RH

*John Ellis* examined by *Mr. Littledale*—I am a bookseller in Manchester. I was a special constable on the 16th of August. I went to Peter's field and saw the different parties come up with flags. On a can of liberty was "*Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage, Vote by Ballot, and Success to the Female Reformers of Stockport.*" On a flag underneath, "*No Corn Laws*", on a black flag; "*No Boroughmongering*"— "*Unite and be Free*" — "*Equal Representation or Death*"; "*This is the Saddleworth, Lees, and Moseley Union*;" on the reverse, "*No Corn Laws*" "*Taxation without representation is unjust and tyrannical*" On another flag, "*Labour is the source of wealth; Royton Female Union.*" On a flag-with a pike on the end, "*Annual Parliaments.*" In the centre were the rose, thistle, and shamrock; under that, "*Election by Ballot*," on the reverse was a figure of Britannia, "*The Rights of Man*," "*No Corn Laws*," "*No Combination Acts*," "*Oldham Union.*" On a red flag with green borders, "*Let us die like men and not be sold like slaves*"; reverse, "*Liberty is the birthright of man.*" This flag was, I believe, inscribed "*Middleton.*" The next was a cap of liberty and flag. The inscription on the cap: "*Hunt and Liberty*;" on the flag, "*Major Cartwright's Bill.*" In the centre was an emblem of *Justice*, with scales and sword under it. "*Election by Ballot*," reverse, "*Annual Parliaments.*" On a blue flag, "*Unity and Strength*": reverse, "*Liberty and Fraternity.*" Green flag, "*Parliaments Annual*," reverse, "*Suffrage Universal.*" White flag, "*Universal Suffrage*," "*Annual Parliaments*" and "*Election by Ballot.*" I saw several other flags, but did not take down their inscriptions. The hustings were removed about six yards while I was on the ground. I think the meeting was calculated to produce a most appalling effect.

Cross-examined by *Mr. Hunt*— The parties marched in regular order into the field; I can't tell whether that was the best way of keeping the peace. I noticed the dispersion. I was occupied attending to *Ashworth*, a constable, who was injured by the crowd; he was crushed on the chest; he died afterwards. Any one swearing that he died of cuts, would swear falsely, as I conceive. When I copied the flags, I did so fairly. I cannot conceive that I made any omission respecting the black flag. There was one with "*No Corn Laws.*" I do not know whether the pike I saw was of *wood* or of *steel*: it was in the form of a pike The caps of liberty 'did not in themselves alarm me. (Here *Mr. Hunt* handed to witness a Nottinghamshire militia button, with a cap of liberty upon it).

*Mr. Hunt*—Look at that button, is that a cap of liberty on it? Witness. —I believe so.

*Mr. Hunt*—There is a sword to protect this cap of liberty: were they his words to protect those at the meeting?

Witness. No. I saw sticks in the hands of the people; they did not take them. I was, however, knocked down in the hurry of dispersing the crowd. I was not knocked down by a brother constable, nor by a horse, by a person whom I did not know, who struck me a violent blow.