

Name: William Ellson

Occupation: Farmer

Home: Chatterton

Date: 22nd March 1820

Source: Trial of Henry Hunt, 110

Summary: Describes the use of laurels to distinguish rank. 'Sprigs of laurel were given to four or six, and ten or a dozen had an odd leaf to put in their hats.'

Done by: RH

Wm. Ellson, examined by Mr. *Bamford*. —Was a farmer, residing at Chatterton. He was at Middleton on the morning of the 16th, and described the assembly there to have been perfectly peaceable, and to have heard *Bamford* address the people advising them to conduct themselves in an orderly manner, and to molest no one; and if any one came to take him, or any who might be called leaders, he desired the multitude to suffer them to be taken; for, said he "what we have in view is a Reform, and let us pursue it peaceably." Witness described the distribution of the laurels. Saw nothing but what was peaceable. He went, and three children of his went also, two boys and a girl.

By the *Judge*, —He went as a spectator: his daughter was aged 17, the boys 14 and between 12 and 13: he went on to Manchester and Peter's Field. Some of the party talking tumultuously on the road, they were desired by some of those to whom the laurel had been given not to talk so loud. Was not uneasy though his children were at Manchester; felt no fear till the yeomanry came; would not have suffered his children to go if he had thought there had been any danger.

Cross-examined by Mr. *Scarlett* —Mr. *Bamford* said, "if anybody should take him, or any of those who were called leaders, to let them be taken." Did not know who were called leaders. Was not one of the committee. Sprigs of laurel were given to four or six, and ten or a dozen had an odd leaf to put in their hats. *Bamford* called those out of the square to whom he gave the laurels. Had not heard that *Bamford* was one of the committee. He (*Bamford*) went to London once on reforming business, as witness believed; he (*Bamford*) was noticed for reading newspapers, and so on. Had heard him read *The Manchester Observer* in his own house. Knew *Knight*. Did not recollect in whose company he had seen him. Had attended a Reform Meeting at Middleton some years ago, at which *Bamford* was present

By the *Judge*. — Would not have gone, or suffered his children to go to Manchester, if he had thought that there would have been any riot. Everything on the way to Manchester was very peaceable. Had no motive for going but curiosity.