

Deposition of James Jaques of Manchester, 13 April 1820

Transcribed by Peter Castree

James Jaques of Manchester, Calico Printer, says that on the sixteenth of August last he was present at the Meeting of the People in Saint Peter's Field. That about eleven o'clock all business seemed to cease. Informant directed his Warehouse to be closed. The Meeting bore a most tremendous appearance. The number assembled was in Informant's estimation about Eighty thousand.

The house, in which Informant was, belonged to a Relation, who was from home, and his Wife sent for him to protect it. It was at this House that the Magistrates assembled for the purpose of watching the progress of the Meeting. Informant was in the same Room with the Magistrates during great part of the Day. That from the numbers assembled, and the manner of their assembling, Informant felt considerable alarm for the safety of his own property.

From the Window being upstairs, out of which Informant looked, he could distinctly see the People, and what they had with them. Informant observed a great proportion to have thick sticks. Informant also could see that the people round the Hustings were linked together.

Informant recollects about one o'clock **Mr Silvester**, one of the Magistrates, taking up the Card on which the Riot Act was printed, for the purpose of reading it. Informant saw him go into the Crowd with it in his hand, and he (**Mr Silvester**) shortly afterwards returned covered with dirt as if he had been down. **Mr Silvester** said he had been pressed down.

Informant was in the room when a number of Gentlemen deposed to the state of alarm in which they were, and of the danger in which the Town was thrown by the Meeting. Recollects perfectly **Mr Shuttleworth** being in the Room and stating that he agreed with the Depositions, and thought the Meeting should be dispersed.

Informant was present when the Warrant for the apprehension of **Hunt** was given to **Mr Andrew** and **Mr Nadin** to execute, and heard them say they could not execute it, that it was dangerous to undertake it.

Informant saw the Manchester Yeomanry go towards the Hustings with the Constables to apprehend **Hunt**. Was in the Room with the Magistrates when he heard someone call out they are attacking the Yeomanry. Informant ran to the Window at the time **Mr Hulton** did, and it appeared to him that the Yeomanry were attacked. That was the impression made on his Mind at the moment as he saw stones and Brickbats flying, and the People seeming to close in upon the Military and Constables. At this period **Colonel L'Estrange** rode up, and Informant heard **Mr Hulton** exclaim "Don't you see the Yeomanry are beat. Disperse the Mob". That the Yeomanry appeared to be overpowered Informant at the moment had no doubt.

Informant before the Meeting commenced had walked over the Ground and noticed that there was scarcely a Stone or Brickbat to be seen or anything that could be used offensively or defensively. After the Meeting was dispersed he walked over the Ground and there he saw great numbers of sticks lying, many of them very large and too cumbersome for walking sticks, some appeared like Hedge Stakes, and a very great quantity of stones and brickbats lay scattered up and down the Ground. The Sticks appeared as many as would fill the body of a Cart.

That since return of Informant from York, Mr Shuttleworth has called upon him to know if he was the one who asserted he was in Mr Buxton's House, and if he meant to persist in it. Informant said he was, and that now he was more confirmed in his hearing his voice. Shuttleworth said "I think you might have allowed me the privilege of a doubt." Informant said "Why should I speak of doubts if I have none. I am certain that you Mr Shuttleworth are the Man."

James Jaques

Sworn before me
This 13th day of April 1820
J Norris