

HO42 198 f. 673. Information of Mary Slater, Great Lever Hall.

Transcribed by Tom Crolla.

The Information of Mrs Mary Slater of Great Lever Hall, widow, taken upon oath before me one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the County of Lancaster this seventh day of November 1819.

Who saith that on the morning of the sixteenth of August last was walking to Bolton about 10 o'clock and saw many crowds of people with thick sticks and bundles going towards Manchester. She spoke to a Young Man, well dressed, who was in advance of the others as follows – "Young Man you had better go back to your works." He replied brandishing his stick "I am going to my work today" meaning at Manchester. On informant's returning from Bolton to her own house about one hour afterwards, overtook thousands of other people going to Manchester all carrying thick sticks and bundles. Informant addressed a young man who was separated from the main body of the people, saying "Where are you going?" He answered "I am going to Manchester there is to be a meeting there to petition the Prince Regent for a reform in parliament". Informant advised him to return that such mobs would not be allowed to speak, when he said "We are determined to speak we know there are several thousand soldiers in Manchester but they but they durst not come near us they would hurt us." Informant then said "You will get your head cut off," he replied "I will go I am not afraid" and he went on.

The last time that Hunt returned from Bolton on his way to Manchester, he had a numerous concourse of people with him. Informant saw in the afternoon of the same day large crowds of people returning from Manchester who had been there to accompany Mr Hunt and heard one of the people say privately to the residence of Mr Watkins the magistrate "damn him I should like to shoot him". On the morning of the 17th of August Informant saw groups of women pass her house going towards Manchester and heard some of them say "We sent our sweethearts to the meeting at Manchester yesterday and we are going to look for them damn it now the revolution is begun and we will never work again" and some of the men addressing themselves to Informant said to her "it will not be long before all such as you are pulled down." Informant was alarmed and got home as soon as she could. Informant further swears that on the afternoon (about five o'clock) of the 17th of August last large crowds of persons were returning from the meeting at Manchester who were met by some men that had not been there they said to those who were returning "why did you not stone the soldiers as they did in France when they came near you." The others answered "that is what we would have done if they had not cleared the ground (meaning the area of St Peters) but there was not so much as a pebble to be found."

Mary Slater
Sworn before me
Jas Watkins