

**Name:** Jonathan Hobson

**Occupation:** Merchant

**Home:** Liverpool

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> March 1820

**Source:** *Trial of Henry Hunt* 152-3

**Summary:** Corroborates previous witnesses re: the peaceable nature of the crowd, that they offered no resistance to the military, and that *Hunt* did not incite any resistance in his speech. 'Saw nothing done to intimidate or oppose the cavalry; there was a shout, but he considered it to be a shout of welcome'.

**Done by:** RH

*Jonathan Hobson* examined by *Mr. Hunt*—Resided at Liverpool; has a house and the third of a warehouse in Manchester. Is a merchant by profession. Was in a house behind the hustings on the 16th of August. Went merely out of curiosity to see the proceedings of the meeting, and certainly should not have gone if he could not have got into a house out of the way of the crowd. Saw the different divisions come to the ground. This witness corroborated the statements of former witnesses on the subject of the peaceable conduct of the meeting. He heard *Mr. Hunt* exhort the meeting to be peaceable and quiet, and defeat the wishes of their enemies. Did not understand the words "put them down and keep them down," to be applied to the military, but to any persons who might seek to create a disturbance. No soldiers were in sight at the time; saw nothing done to intimidate or oppose the cavalry; there was a shout, but he considered it to be a shout of welcome; it was similar to that given when *Mr. Hunt* came on the ground. Heard no particular tune, but "*See the Conquering Hero comes.*" Did not hear *Mr. Hunt* use any words like these: "Never mind them (the soldiers); they are only a few and we are a host against them." The crowd collected about the hustings were not different from those assembling about other hustings; they had nothing like the appearance of disciplined soldiers. Many women were mixed with the crowd, apparently dressed in their best clothes. Saw nothing there or elsewhere in Manchester that created in his mind any feeling of alarm for the safety of the town; saw nothing to excite fears in any rational mind.

Cross-examined by *Mr. Scarlett*—Was at a house immediately behind the left-hand corner of the hustings, the farther one from *Buxton's* house. What came from the people in the direction of *Buxton's* house, unless very loud, witness might not be able to hear. The crowd was very thick round the hustings, but not quite so thick round *Buxton's* house, though still thick. Saw some of the people round the hustings lock their arms after being addressed by a person from the hustings. This seemed to extend all along in front of the hustings, in one row only that he could see, and he believed this continued till *Mr. Hunt* came. A great crowd came with him. Those round the hustings opened to let *Mr. Hunt* pass through.

Here from the lateness of the hour the Court was about to adjourn when *Mr. Pearson* stated that the evidence for the defence was nearly closed; They proposed to call but seven witnesses more, and two to character. The examinations, as far as depended on them, would not be long ones.

*Mr. Hunt* said, they could not answer for the length to which they might extend, and had therefore better say nothing about it.

*Mr. Pearson* did not think the examination of the remaining witnesses would occupy more than three hours. He thought it probable that they might be finished in that time.

The *Judge* then said, if the examination of witnesses should close within the time mentioned, it was probable that, in the course of to-morrow, he should have to address a few observations to the Jury, to direct their attention to the points which would be left for their particular consideration.