**Name**: Robert Keymer

**Occupation**: Lieutenant Colonel in Local Militia

**Home**: Newton, near Failsworth

**Date**: April 6th, 1822

**Source**: Redford v Birley, 308-314

**Summary**: Says drilling on 15th August exactly like that of a militia regiment and that many of the drillers were present on St Peter’s Field on 16th August. Also saw a pistol fired from a window that day and a cavalry man knocked off his horse.

**Done by**: RM

*Robert Keymer sworn. Examined by Mr. Serjeant Cross.*

Q. You reside on the Failsworth side of Manchester?

A. I reside in Newton.

Q. Near Failsworth?

A. Yes.

Q. And you are a Lieutenant Colonel of the local Militia?

A. I am.

Q. Had you observed any training, prior to the 16th. August, in the neighbourhood?

A. I had.

Q. About what time of day?

A. About nine o'clock at night; from eight to nine.

Q. Did that happen once, or frequently?

A. I only saw them once.

Q. How long before the 16th?

A. About three weeks.

Q. How many persons did you see?

A. About a hundred.

Q. Was there any difference in their mode of drilling, and that of your regiment?

A. None.

Q. Did you hear the same words of command?

A. I did.

Q. The same movements?

A. I did.

Q. Any bugle or other instrument?

A. I have heard the bugle of an evening frequently, and words of command, several evenings; I could go out and hear words of command from three or four different parties.

Q. Were these people generally peaceable or otherwise, prior to the 16th. August?

A. The neighbourhood was very much disturbed—the people were very insulting.

Q. Did you hear these words after dark—words of command, and the bugle?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever go to the White Moss?

A. Yes; I did.

Q. On what day?

A. On the 15th. August.

Q. The day before the meeting?

A. Yes.

Q. What time did you get there, Col. Keymer?

A. A little after three in the morning. When I got there, Murray had just received his beating, and gone off.

Q. You was not so unfortunate?

A. No; they threatened me a little.

Q. Being conversant with military movements, you would be able to compute the numbers you found there?

A. 2,000. I counted them in line, after seeing them march and drill about.

Q. Did you see them moving about in squads?

A. I did.

Q. Was any person commanding each squad?

A. There was a person commanding every squad.

Q. Did they drill, in any respect, different from your own regiment?

A. The same; indeed I saw many who had been in my regiment drilling.

Q. What number had belonged to your regiment?

A. I think there were as many as 150, who had been under my command.

Q. Did any of them speak to you?

A. They did, several.

Q. In what way did they address you?

A. In different divisions; they marched by and shouted, "Colonel, we can march yet, we shall be able to teach you bye and bye."

Q. Did they say any thing about the meeting on the following morning?

A. Several of them told me 20,000 were to meet Hunt next morning.

Q. The next morning, did you see any of the body of the people in motion?

A. I did.

Q. Going towards the town?

A. I did.

Q. Among them, did you recognise any of those you had seen at White Moss?

A. Several.

Q. Who had been under your command?

A. Several.

Q. Do you recollect to what divisions they were attached?

A. To the Oldham and Failsworth.

Q. Did they move as well along the road as at White Moss?

A. They did.

Q. Did you see their banners?

A. I did see their banners.

Q. Was that the party who carried the black flag?

A. Yes; they had the black flag among that party.

Q. I believe you afterwards proceeded to the meeting?

A. I did; I had been at the meeting before I saw that party.

Q. Did you get near the hustings?

A. I did.

Q. Did you find any of those men you recognised at White Moss, upon the ground in St. Peter's Field?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Any considerable number?

A. Yes; I saw a good many.

Q. About what time was it you got near the hustings?

A. I got near the hustings a little after twelve o'clock.

Q. Could you observe in what manner the people stood, who were nearest the hustings?

A. They appeared to be very close together, and their arms locked.

Q. Have the goodness just to describe in what manner?

A. Their hands were put through one another's arms.

Q. One, or two, or many?

A. Many.

Q. How far did they extend?

A. They appeared to be nine or ten deep.

Q. Could you find it possible to pass through them?

A. No; I could not get through them.

Q. Were they between you and the hustings?

A. They were.

Q. I believe there was some word given from the hustings?

A. That they were to stand fast, and not suffer themselves to be broken.

Q. Did you judge the public peace to be in perfect safety, at that time?

A. I did not.

Q. How did it appear to you?

A. I considered the town to be in very great danger.

Q. Did you do anything, in consequence of feeling that impression?

A. As soon as I saw the Cavalry, I immediately left the ground, and I advised the people to do the same, for I was sure something would happen.

Q. Before you went away, did you see any thing thrown?

A. No.

Q. Do I understand you right that you did not act or give any advice to any body else till the Cavalry arrived?

A. I might have given advice to the women and children.

Q. Then was it before the Cavalry came that you apprehended mischief?

A. Long before.

Q. Did you afterwards see any of the Cavalry?

A. I left the ground for a few minutes, and I returned when the Light Horse came up out of Quay-street. In coming up Peter-street there was a great crowd rushing out, and I saw one of the Yeomanry knocked off his horse with a brickbat.

Q. Where was you then?

A. In Quay-street.

Q. Whereabouts is that?

A. Near St. Peter's-street.

Q. I wish to confine you to the field where the matter happened; where was it you saw the brick thrown?

A. The side of the new Jerusalem Church, in Peter-street, just by the field.

Q. By where?

A. The new Jerusalem Chapel.

Q. You say you saw it strike one of the Yeomanry?

A. Yes.

Q. Was he sitting on his horse?

A. Yes.

Q. What became of him?

A. He fell to the ground.

Q. Did you see any thing of any fire arms?

A. I saw a pistol fired out of an upper room by the Jerusalem Church.

Q. You saw a pistol fired near the same spot?

A. Yes.

Q. After the ground was cleared, did you see any sticks or stones laying about?

A. A great many sticks, and a good many stones.

*Cross-examined by Mr. Blackburne*.

Q. You say there was some training going on near the place where you live, and that you saw them one night to the amount of one hundred?

A. I did.

Q. This was at eight at night?

A. It was.

Q. Where did you see them?

A. In one Robert Berry's field.

Q. How far from the road?

A. It may be three quarters of a mile there is a road that goes to Ashton, which is nearer.

Q. I understand that you, in walking out at night, heard the words "march" and "halt"?

A. I did.

Q. Was you walking in the public path?

A. I had been at this meeting, and had called on a gentleman for my daughter, and in, coming home, I heard these words of command. I was on a foot rood, leading to the Newton Road, and all other roads about there.

Q. I understand you to say that you came on the ground a little before twelve?

A. I had been on before.

Q. And then was the time you saw them lock?

A. It was a quarter before one, when I saw them so strongly locked.

Q. Did you see them open again?

A. No, I did not.

Q. As far as fell under your observation, they continued so?

A. They continued so, on the side where I saw them.

Q. You say you saw a pistol fired out of a window?

A. I did.

Q. Did you see the pistol?

A. I saw the flash.

Q. And heard the report?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you see the effect?

A. No.

Q. You did not see any mischief that it did?

A. I did not.

Q. You say you was coming back from Quay-street towards Peter-street, did you meet with a number of people running?

A. I did.

Q. Did any Cavalry follow?

A. There was this Cavalry man I saw knocked off his horse.

Q. Cavalry?

A. Yeomanry.

Q. At what speed were the people going, who were going down the street?

A. Running very fast.

Q. At what speed were the Yeomanry going, who were following them?

A. Just turning the corner of the Church at a short trot.

Q. What Church?

A. The new Jerusalem.

Q. Turning the corner of the Chapel?

A. There is a narrow street when you get past the Chapel yard.

Q. Then they were turning out of Peter-street?

A. Yes.

Q. Were some of the people flying up that way?

A. Up that way.

Q. He was riding after them?

A. He was riding that way.

Q. Was his sword drawn?

A. Yes.

Q. That was the place where you saw him struck with the brickbat?

A. Yes.

Q. As he was riding?

A. Yes.