

**Name:** Joseph Mills

**Occupation:** Publican

**Home:** Manchester

**Date:** 18th March 1820

**Source:** Trial of Henry Hunt, 40-41

**Summary:** Special constable. Saw people attending SPF, in military formation. 'There were, when Mr. Hunt arrived, more than 60,000 people assembled, and it was in his judgment a meeting calculated to inspire terror and alarm into the minds of the inhabitants of Manchester.'

**Done by:** RH

The first witness [of the third day of the trial - HH] was *Joseph Mills*, examined by *Sergeant Hullock*. I keep a public house at Manchester, and know *Joseph Healey*, who came to St. Peter's Field at the head of a very large party of men, on the morning of the 16th of August. They marched in files of about four or five abreast. The number was upwards of 3 or 4000, and *Healey* led them up, in a military way, with a trumpeter, to the hustings or cart, which they surrounded. *Healey* got upon it, and made a little speech, saying that they must stand steady, for their enemies were at hand. They cheered him. I know one *Wilde*, who led up a party of men, and who is not now here to my knowledge. (Witness pointed to *Mr. Johnson* as like *Wilde*, and *Mr. Johnson* addressed the *Judge* and said, "I am no more like him than your Lordship." The defendant *Wilde* was ill, and not in Court at this hour of the morning. He afterwards entered and was identified by the witness, as having led up a party of men through Mosley-street on the 16th of August). *Wilde*, on halting the men, said, "Link your arms, and keep steady," The people immediately obeyed him, quite round the cart. A little after, not thinking they had kept room enough, he ordered them to "fall back", "keep as you are." About one o'clock *Mr. Hunt* arrived, and the people opened a road for him to the hustings. *Mr. Moorhouse* and *Mr. Johnson* were with him. *Mr. Hunt* ascended the hustings, on which, among others, was *Mr. Saxton*, who had been half an hour or more on the hustings before, and who spoke several times to the crowd, and was cheered. There were, when *Mr. Hunt* arrived, more than 60,000 people assembled, and it was in his judgment a meeting calculated to inspire terror and alarm into the minds of the inhabitants of Manchester. All former meetings that I saw were composed of parties, who came in at random, and at their leisure, but these came in several bodies in military array.

Cross-examined by *Mr. Hunt*—I am a publican, since last October twelve months, and was previously one of *Nadin's* runners. I am jolly and well (witness was a fat jovial looking man), and would be glad to see you look so well, *Mr. Hunt*. I was, like many others, a special constable on that day, I am quite sure, *Dr Healey*, came up, heading his party, which formed round the hustings with a trumpeter. He here repeated his direct evidence, and said that *Healey* might have recommended the people to be peaceable, though he did not hear him. None of the men insulted or assaulted me, nor did I see them molest anybody, except shouting. When you came up, they played, "*See the conquering Hero comes*." (laugh) I don't think I heard "*God save the King*" or "*Rule Britannia*" played. *Healey's* men formed at the back of *Wilde's*. The former I think did not link arms, the others did. *Wilde* ordered them to be firm and steady; he had a tradesman's apron on. If he had said anything treasonable or violent, I should, as a special constable, have noticed it. I will not swear that he did not recommend peace or order. *Saxton* was there half an hour before you. You said they must be quiet, if not, to pull 'em down and keep them quiet. I did not hear you tell the people to pull the soldiers down and keep them down. I heard you say nothing so foolish or wicked.

Cross-examined by *Mr. Barrow* and *Mr. Holt*. —Nothing material transpired, except that the witness did not see *Moorhouse* on the hustings, though he did *Saxton*, before *Mr. Hunt* came, *Saxton* was a reporter to a newspaper, but he could not recollect whether he saw him with a pen and Ink. *Dr. Healey*—Did you or did you not tell me, the week before, that if I attended that meeting you would take me into custody?

Q. Did you or did you not say to one of your customers, that when you saw me upon the hustings you marked me down for your bird? I did not; but I was over near where you lived at that time, and was called where you lived at that time, and was called where you were—this was on the 8th of August; he knew me very well, my Lord, as I once took him up to *Lord Sidmouth's* office. He asked me, "you have not another warrant for me, *Mills*?"—No, said I, I

have not. Then, said he, sit down and take something with us. We then talked over our travels together when we were in London.