

**Name:** William Nicholson

**Occupation:** Paper-printer

**Home:** Lees

**Date:** 23<sup>nd</sup> March 1820

**Source:** *Trial of Henry Hunt* 129

**Summary:** Saw the procession from Lees to Manchester. Saw sticks thrown at cavalry after they had surrounded the procession. 'Saw *Dr. Healey* and *Mr. Wilde* on the hustings; he heard them exhort the people to be peaceable, and to do their utmost to maintain good order'.

**Done by:** RH

*William Nicholson*, examined by *Mr. Hunt*—lived at Lees. Was a paper-printer. Saw the Lees procession in front of the Exchange, in Manchester; did not walk in it. Understood the black flag had originally been white. Saw nothing extraordinary till he went into a public-house—there he found the shutters were closed. A person in the company with him called for a quart of beer; a young woman said, they had been told by the magistrates to draw no porter that day; they, however got two quarts. He then saw a procession pass; he saw a waggon break through the procession without molestation; and he saw several gentlemen do the same. Saw some sticks: of these, only a part might be called common walking-stick; the rest were switch sticks. The procession was headed by females— some thirty or forty there might be, who were rather poorly attired. They walked four a-breast. Saw people walking along, taking hardly any notice of the procession. Heard no one express alarm. Went to St. Peter's Field. Saw no disposition to oppose the cavalry. Saw one of the yeomanry passing before the Exchange that morning; no one insulted him. Saw *Dr. Healey* and *Mr. Wilde* on the hustings; he heard them exhort the people to be peaceable, and to do their utmost to maintain good order. Witness and his father have considerable property at Lees. Saw in the course of the day some sticks thrown at the cavalry; this was after they had surrounded the [hustings] and had proceeded some forty yards on the other side,

Cross-examined by *Sergeant Hullock*.

*Hullock*. – He and his father were printers and booksellers, and had a cotton-mill. Did not sell *Cobbett* and the pamphlets called trash. Never sold *Mr. Hunt's* speeches; did not know whether they were trash. —(The rustic manner of this witness, and some expression which accidentally escaped him, caused much laughter in Court).