

Name: James Schofield

Occupation: Dissenting minister.

Home: Hulme, near Manchester.

Date: 24th March 1820

Source: *Trial of Henry Hunt* 149-151

Summary: Dissenting minister. Preached and published a number of sermons and essays, but not political in nature. Saw no opposition to the cavalry. 'As the cavalry advanced the people held up their hats as a sort of guard against the cutting of the swords.'

Done by: RH

James Schofield, examined by Mr. Hunt—I am a dissenting minister, and live at a place called Hulme, near Manchester. I was at Manchester on the 16th of August last. I came in Manchester to attend professional business. There were many women and children with the parties.

Justice Bayley. – That fact appears to be sufficiently proved.

Mr. Scarlett. —It is not only proved that women and children were present, but even their proportion was spoken to.

Examination continued. —I saw the people going to St. Peters Field. The procession exhibited the utmost regularity, jocularity, and good humour. I saw no person insulted. I was situated between the house where the magistrates were and the hustings. I was in an elevated situation, which commanded the whole meeting. I observed a double row of special constables about ten yards before me. They extended from *Mr. Buxton's* house; and I was near enough to see some of them through the window. I was there when you arrived on the field. After you had arrived, and got on the hustings, a board was exhibited, bearing in large characters the words, "Order order." As far as I could perceive, every disposition was shown by the people to obey that direction. There was no interruption by talking or otherwise. The different divisions had bands, which played the air generally called "Rule Britannia," and the national anthem of "God save the King." When the latter was played the people, for the most part, took off their hats. I felt no alarm, nor did I hear anybody express alarm at the meeting. I was highly gratified to see so numerous an assembly behaving in so peaceable a manner. I saw the military arrive; I perceived no opposition to have been manifested towards them. I saw nothing held up except the hats of the people. As the cavalry advanced the people held up their hats as a sort of guard against the cutting of the swords. The people were fleeing away as fast as they could. There were no brickbats, stones, or sticks hurled against the soldiers. They passed within ten yards of me. The people attempted to disperse immediately; but the crowd was so intense that they could not.

Cross examined by *Mr. Scarlett* —When the cavalry advanced, the people at the extremity of the crowd fled, but those immediately contiguous to the hustings closed in. Some of the constables followed the cavalry; others were mixed with the crowd, and could not get out. I preach at a church called Christ-church. I never saw so large a congregation at one time before. Though my voice is good, I could not have made all the people at the meeting hear me. I could not have made upwards of 20,000 of the people hear me. I think the meeting was a pleasant and friendly one. There were 80,000 present. I was highly gratified at the sight of a meeting so numerous and so peaceable. I did not disapprove of the meeting. — I approved of it", as a people." I could not approve of the meeting, particularly, unless I knew the intentions with which it was called. I saw the placards convening the meeting. I saw several flags. One of them had two bands united, and the word, "Union" written under them. I saw another, inscribed. "No Corn Laws". I also saw a flag, on which were the words, "Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, and Vote by Ballot." I did not consider those banners as pointing out the objects for which the meeting was convened. They only spoke the sentiments of those who carried them—that universal suffrage, annual parliaments, and vote by ballot would be agreeable to them. I should approve of a meeting called for the purpose of inculcating doctrines of this kind, if they were beneficial to the people. I have written for several newspapers, but not particularly for *The Manchester Observer*. I am not a hired writer. I wrote two pieces for the *Manchester Observer*. Those pieces were not of a political nature, farther than the scripture connected them with politics. The scripture does not make use of the words, "Annual Parliaments" and "Universal Suffrage." The scripture may, in many points of view, be connected with politics.

One of the articles I wrote was, I believe, before; the other, since the meeting. I did not sign my name to either of the essays. There was no particular title to either of them. One of the articles probably may be, "A letter to the subscribers of the Manchester declaration." Several letters were written on that subject. My address was to the ministers—to the ministers of the four Evangelists—I mean to the clergymen who had signed the declaration, my support of the police of Manchester. I wrote to disapprove of murder — to express my opinion that a minister ought not to approve of murder. I did not condemn the clergy, I would not condemn any one. I wished to convince. I blamed the clergy. The scriptures were my guide. The declaration was signed by many of the clergy of the Church of England It was not signed by the majority of the dissenting ministers. I am not attached to any sect in particular. I and my flock comfort ourselves to the scriptures, and act according to them. We are denominated Bible Christians. I did not know that *Mr. Carlile* was to be present on the 16th of August. I am not acquainted with that gentleman. I saw two or three of my congregation present at the meeting. They were hot on the hustings.

Re-examined by *Mr. Hunt*—I believe my two letters were written after the fifth of August. One of them went to condemn the conduct of the magistrates who had signed a declaration in favour of the conduct of the police of Manchester on the 16th of August. I cannot speak positively as to the time when I wrote the articles. They were signed with the initial "S." My first-letter contained a disapproval of the prominent part which some of the clergy had taken, in political matters.