

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

Sir,

Having being employed by the public spirited Gentlemen of this town to co-operate professionally with Messrs Harmer and Pearson, in endeavouring to bring the perpetrators of the late atrocities at Manchester to condign punishment, I think it proper to address you on the subject of the letter lately published by my colleague, Mr Pearson. That part of the press which manifests a disposition to palliate the crimes and to plead for the criminals connected with the \*\*\*\*\* at St.Peter's Field, affects, I perceive, to doubt the accuracy of Mr Pearson's statement. Therefore I feel it a duty which I owe to truth, to justice, and to my country, to declare through your respectable journal, my knowledge of this important transaction.

For some time previous to Mr Pearson's arrival at Manchester, I was actively engaged in collecting facts and arranging evidence, with a view to the prosecution of the real authors and principle actors on that melancholy occasion, which has filled England with horror. Hence I am in possession of such information as authorises me to speak with confidence on this subject; and I have no hesitation in declaring, that Mr Pearson's statement is perfectly well founded. That this Gentleman, indeed, instead of dealing in exaggeration, as appears to be imputed, has rather understated the case, will, I am convinced, be fully demonstrated upon the first trial or investigation that affords opportunity for adducing the evidence that has come to our knowledge, even since the letter alluded to was published. What feelings then can belong to the writers, who being, I must suppose, totally ignorant of the facts, presume to propagate unfounded assertions and over-strained animadversions, which evidently tend, if they are not deliberately designed, to indispose good men to that system of exertion which is indispensably necessary in this case to vindicate the injured laws of humanity and England – to punish the perpetrators and abettors of \*\*\*\*\*. But I will at once tell those writers who seem to sympathise only with \*\*\*\*\* – who would bury the victims of \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\* in oblivion, by proscribing all who dare even to mourn their fate – that if any member of the press who has reprobated, or who may have the virtue to reprobate, the cowardly blood-shedders of Manchester, should be indicted for a libel, and have only the common courage and capacity to detail the facts with which I could furnish him, the presumptuous complainant would be driven from the Court with the universal and unmixed abhorrence of the Jury, the Judge, and the whole people of England. I have only to add, that the task which I have undertaken to perform is in no degree under the influence, or connected with the views of any political party, but suggested by the views of a benevolent body of Gentlemen, who are naturally and laudably anxious to seek redress for the wanton exercise of military violence against an unarmed, unoffending assemblage of men, women and children.

I am Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

Liverpool, 11<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1819.

H.DENISON.

FIRST REPORT OF MESSRS. HARMER, PEARSON AND DENISON TO THE CENTRAL OR METROPOLITAN COMMITTEE FOR THE RELIEF OF THE MANCHESTER SUFFERERS, ON THE OUTRAGES OF THE 16<sup>TH</sup> OF AUGUST.

We, the Undersigned, having been appointed to investigate the transactions which took place at the Meeting held at Manchester on the 16<sup>th</sup> ult. beg leave to report to the Central or Metropolitan Committee, appointed to raise and distribute subscriptions for the relief of the Manchester sufferers, the following facts, as having been incontrovertibly ascertained:—

1. That the whole of the people who came from the country to attend their friends at the Meeting, entered Manchester in a peaceable and orderly manner, and so far from evincing any disposition or intention to commit acts of riot and disorder, the men were unarmed, and were accompanied by their female relatives.
2. That at the time Mr Hunt took the Chair, the area of St.Peter's, where the hustings were erected, and the immediate avenues therein, were crowded with men, women and children, many of whom had been attracted to the spot merely to gratify curiosity, and not to take part in of the proceedings.
3. That the multitude thus assembled conducted themselves with perfect good humour, and there was no tumult, nor even the least noise, except what was made by the applause and acclamations of the people; neither was there the slightest inclination to riot or disturbance, previous to the intrusion of the military.
4. That in about ten minutes after Mr.Hunt had taken the chair, and while the people were peaceably conducting themselves, the Manchester Yeomanry Cavalry entered the ground through one of the principal avenues, at a full gallop, drew up in a line opposite to the house where the Magistrates were assembled, and almost immediately afterwards charged furiously upon the multitude, and pursued their course, cutting and trampling upon the people till they reached the hustings, which they surrounded; and having taken Mr.Hunt and his companions into custody, without resistance or opposition, they renewed the charge in all directions and indiscriminately cut at, and rode over, men, women, and children.
5. That the people appear to have been struck with horror at the unexpected attack, and their panic increased on perceiving other troops enter the ground and intercept the principal avenues for escape.
6. That directly the Yeomanry charged upon the people, they endeavoured to disperse, but notwithstanding they pressed on each other with their utmost force, they were unable to make such progress, owing to their great numbers, and the narrowness of the outlets left unoccupied by the military. Many, in endeavouring to escape, fell, and were trod upon, and fallen over by others, so as to form distinct

heaps; and while they were in these situations, and crying out for mercy, the Yeomanry continued cutting at them with undiminished ferocity.

7. That the slaughter would have been far more extensive than it has, had not an Officer of the 15<sup>th</sup> Hussars interposed at this moment, and arrested the fury of the Yeomanry. This Officer, addressing them, called out, "*For shame, Gentlemen, for shame, the people cannot get away,*" and struck up their swords. We have also great pleasure in reporting the humane interference of a private soldier of Hussars, who stopped the sword of one of the Yeomanry when cutting at a youth, by threatening that if he struck him again, he would cleave him asunder.

8. That the pressure of the people to get away was so great as to force up a post from the ground; and some to avoid their assailants, forced the panel of a street door, and found protection by creeping through the aperture. Others who had secreted themselves in areas and passages were discovered by the Yeomanry, who, pointing their pistols at them, threatened to fire if they did not come out; and when they complied and came within their reach, the Yeomanry cut them down. A great number sought refuge by climbing over the brick wall which incloses the Quakers' chapel and burying ground; and the wounded fugitives, to avoid their pursuers, forced open the chapel doors, and the area of the chapel, the gallery stairs, and the gallery floor, were nearly covered with blood.

That many persons who flew to the Constables for protection. and endeavoured to pass through their ranks, were struck by them and driven back on the Yeomanry; and great numbers, when they had escaped from the ground and considered themselves in safety, found their progress intercepted by other soldiers; and some people were beaten back and wounded with the bayonet, when attempting to pass a street where the infantry were stationed.

Lastly. We beg leave to close this our first Report by remarking, that although we have used out utmost diligence to ascertain whether or not the Riot Act was read, we have not been able to find anyone who heard it read, or who saw or heard anything to indicate or raise a presumption that it had been read; although we are credibly informed, that on the Coroner's Inquest held on the body of DAWSON, a Constable deposed that he saw the Rev. Mr.ETHELSTON, the Magistrate read *something* which he *believed* was the Riot Act; and that Reverend Magistrate sent a messenger to express his readiness, if required, to swear that he had read it.

London, Sept.22, 1819

(signed)

JAS. HARMER

CHAS. PEARSON

HY. DENISON