

**Name:** Joseph Prestwich

**Occupation:** Weaver

**Home:** Droylsden

**Date:** April 4th 1822

**Source:** Redford v Birley p60-68

**Summary:** Testifies to seeing Redford cut by a soldier who he identifies as Oliver. Was also slightly wounded himself in crush by hustings, and saw and old man and a woman cut.

**Done by:** RM

*Joseph Prestwich sworn: examined by Mr. Blackburne.*

Q. You are a weaver, I believe, and live at Droylsden near Fairfield?

A. Yes.

Q. How far is that from Manchester?

A. About five miles and a half.

Q. Do you know Alexander Oliver?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Do you know Thomas Redford, too?

A. Yes.

Q. How long have you known them?

A. I suppose I have known Redford, might be about fifteen years; and Oliver I have known about ten.

Q. Do you know whether he was one of the Manchester yeomanry cavalry?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you see him on the field on the 16th. August 1819?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And Oliver?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you see Redford there too?

A. Yes.

Q. Whereabouts was it from the hustings that you saw Redford first?

A. I saw him where he was cut, near by the Quakers' meetinghouse, amongst some timber.

Q. Was that over Peter-street, from the hustings?

A. Yes.

Q. On the other side?

A. Yes.

Q. You say you saw Redford cut?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you see his face before he was cut?

A. No; I did not: when he received the blow he turned round so sharply on me—knowing Oliver before: he was amongst the timber.

Q. You had seen Oliver before that?

A. I had seen him about twenty yards from the hustings, at first when I saw him.

Q. Who was it that you saw cut Redford?

A. Oliver.

Q. You say Redford was near the Quakers' meeting-house?

A. Yes.

Q. Where was he struck?

A. He was struck upon the shoulder: I was expecting it would take one side of his head, when I see the sword move.

Q. When you saw him strike, what did you do?

A. I was busy making my escape as well as I could, expecting that would be the case with me.

Q. Were there any other of the yeomanry cavalry on the ground at this time?

A. Yes, there were several others cutting in the same manner.

Q. You perhaps were not acquainted with any others, were you?

A. Yes, I knew Samuel Harrison.

Q. What time of day was it when you went to the meeting, what time did you get there?

A. It was between eleven and twelve, might be near twelve.

Q. Did any body go with you?

A. There was about six or seven.

Q. From your village, your neighbourhood?

A. I was set down to breakfast when they came and invited me:

Q. In what part of the field did you first take up your position?

A. The first place I offered to go to, was near the gentlemen's houses, and there constables were fixed: I wanted to go through them, and they objected; so I took down betwixt the multitude, and took the other side of the hustings, and found myself between the hustings and Windmill-street, near the end, towards Mr. Buxton's house.

Q. Did you see the cavalry come up afterwards to that place?

A. Yes sir, I staid there and saw them when they first appeared in sight: when they appeared in sight, they came up in a short canter, to my recollection.

Q. That was before they came in front of Mr. Buxton's house?

A. Yes.

Q. After they came in front of Mr. Buxton's house, did you see them then set off towards the hustings?

A. Yes sir, I did; I saw them waive their swords before they set off.

*Mr. Justice Holroyd.*—What was the first you observed?

A. To my recollection, there was one singled him out in front of them.

Q. What was he, do you recollect?

A. I do not recollect what he was; but he came a few paces, and the others followed him down the line of the constables.

Q. At what speed were they coming?

A. They were coming a canter, as usual, before they halted.

Q. By this time, in what manner had the meeting of the people conducted themselves?

A. Very decently: I would not have gone, if I had any suspicions.

Q. I only ask how they did conduct themselves in fact?

A. They conducted themselves very peaceably and quietly.

Q. Did you see the cavalry then come up to the hustings?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you see any sticks, any stones, or brickbats, thrown at them?

A. No, sir, I did not.

Q. Were you taking notice of them at the time?

A. Yes, I was.

Q. When they came up to the hustings; what did you see done?

A. I was between Windmill-street and the hustings; and they came close by me, and they made several blows at the people as they were going by me.

Q. Did they come near you?

A. Yes.

Q. Did any thing happen to you personally?

A. Yes; I got a little cut there, and on my knee; I just knocked my hand out of the way, and the point of the sword struck down my finger.

Q. When they got up to the hustings, what did they do?

A. They began to clear the hustings; some of the people jumped off, and some they struck at.

Q. Some people jumped off?

A. Yes.

Q. After they had got to the hustings, what then became of them?

A. They began to clear the way. One part of them, when I began to make my way, surrounded the hustings, and the other were making their way among the people.

Q. Which way?

A. All ways; some towards Deansgate; some towards St. Peter's Church.

*Mr. Blackburne.*—St. Peter's Church is on the right side of your plan, my Lord; Deansgate is on the other side.

Q. You mean the people that went away?

A. Yes, and the Cavalry after them.

Q. Which way did you go?

A. I offered to go down into Deansgate.

*Mr. Justice Holroyd*—You mean, attempted?

A. Yes.

Q. What prevented you?

A. The cavalry was cutting so by the Quakers' meeting-house that I made the best of my way towards the opening that was between the meeting-house and a new building where the timber lay.

Q. You turned back?

A. I attempted to go down Deansgate, but I could not get down, so I made my way there.

Q. Where?

A. I do not know the street; it was where the timber lay.

Q. Do you know Mount-street?

A. I am not acquainted with that part of the ground.

Q. Which way did you go?

A. I went up a street till I got to a bit of a bye street.

*Mr. Justice Holroyd.*—How did the cavalry cutting away by the Quakers' meeting-house, prevent you getting into Deansgate?

A. I saw them there, and I durst not go.

*Mr. Justice Holroyd.*—The Quakers' meeting-house is a different way.

A. No, not to Deansgate.

*Mr. Justice Holroyd.*—It is in the plan: the Quakers' meeting-house is at the other side of the hustings.

Q. You were on Windmill-street side?

A. Yes.

Q. You attempted to make your way towards Deansgate?

A. Yes.

Q. Where were you when you attempted to make your way towards Deansgate?

A. From the Windmill-street.

Q. Do you know Peter-street, the wide street between the place where the hustings were, and the Quakers' meeting-house?

*Witness.*—Is that it that goes from St. Peter's Church down to Deansgate?

*Mr. Blackburne.*—Yes.

*Witness.*—That is the way I was walking across.

Q. Where was it you saw the cavalry that prevented you?

A. I spied them on the left, and I took straight to my right towards the new building.

Q. How far from the Quakers' school is this new building?

A. It must be it: the timber lies within the new building and the Quakers' meeting-house.

Q. Then you made your way towards there?

A. I made my way up there.

Q. Was it about there, where you saw Oliver cut Redford?

A. It was among the timber.

Q. How did you get away?

A. I went up there till I got to a gentleman's back place, where there were, some trees planted: the cavalry was hemming me in on both sides, and I took over the wall, rails and all.

Q. There were some rails, as well as: a wall?

A. There was a wall built, and pieces of stone lying, and I jumped on the edge of the stone, and threw my legs over the rails.

*Mr. Justice Holroyd.*—By the Quakers' meeting-house, the cavalry were cutting?

A. Yes.

Q. Was there any cavalry in any other part of the field besides that?

A. Yes, there were different roads.

Q. Now, how long was it from the time. you lost your first situation, to the time of your getting over the wall?

A. It might be between five and ten minutes.

*Cross-examined by Mr..Serjeant Hullock.*

Q. You have not told us yet what carried you to this meeting?

A: I went merely for curiosity.

Q. Did you always go from curiosity to these meetings?

A. I never frequented meetings; but I was advised by some of my neighbours to go and see it, as it would be a grand sight.

Q. You was told there would be such a meeting as was never seen before in any part of the county?

A. No

Q. How many people did they tell you would be there?

A. They did not mention any number.

Q. Who did you go with?

A. I went with about six or seven of my neighbours.

Q. Was-there any division, or any party, went from your place?

A. No.

Q. Your friends went merely from curiosity?  
A. Yes.  
Q. You are a weaver?  
A. Yes.  
Q. You had known Redford a long time, you say?  
A., Yes, about eighteen years.  
Q. Was you perfectly acquainted with him?  
A. I was apprentice to a brother-in-law of his, and went twice a week to the place where he lived.  
Q. Where does he live?  
A. At Audenshaw, near Ashton.  
Q. Did he live there at the time of this meeting?  
A. No.  
Q. How long before this meeting was it that you saw Redford?  
A. I had not seen him, not for two or three years.  
Q. Have you seen him since the meeting?  
A. Yes.  
Q. You saw him the day when he marched on the ground with his colours?  
A. No; I did not see any march.  
Q. When you saw him attacked by the Yeomanry, or the Manchester Cavalry, or some person or another, had he then his colours, or had he left them?  
A. I did not take notice; I was too busy making my way on; I cannot recollect whether he had them with him when he was cut.  
Q. You saw him with the colours before: I believe they were green colours?  
A. No; I did not see him at all before.  
Q. You mean to swear you never saw him with the colours on that day?  
A. I will.  
Q. How was he dressed?  
A. I did not take particular notice.  
Q. Perhaps he was another man?  
A. He had a yellow waistcoat on.  
Q. You were examined at Oldham?  
A. Yes, Sir: no, I was not; at the Star Inn.  
Q. You were examined on the subject at Manchester, at the Star Inn?  
A. Yes.  
Q. There you said you saw a yeoman cut an old man, did not you?  
A. Samuel Harrison.  
Q; You saw him cut an old man, and a woman on the breast; you did not say any thing about this, then?  
A. Yes; I did.  
Q. How was the man dressed, the soldier dressed?  
A. He was dressed in light blue, and white facings.  
Q. I was speaking of the person who cut your friend Redford?  
A. I did not take particular notice of the dress.  
Q. Then you' cannot tell us any more than that he was dressed in a light blue jacket, with white facings?  
A. Yes; that is all. I know his features.  
Q. What sort of a horse did he ride?  
A. I did not take notice; I did not notice his horse.  
Q. Was he upon a horse?  
A. Yes.  
Q. Was it black or grey?  
K. I did not notice it; it was not a grey.  
Q. It might be a black one?  
A. I did not notice it.  
Q. Were they all dressed alike—the Yeomanry?  
A. I did not notice them.  
Q. You knew Oliver some time you say?  
A. I have known him by his coming into our neighbourhood. He has a relation, James Booth, the carpenter; and he comes to the public-house where I was; and he often went to their house, when he went to town: that was in Shudehill.  
Q. That was the first time you saw that person on horseback?

A. No; it was not.  
Q. Where did you see him before?  
A. About twenty yards from the hustings, the first I saw of him.  
Q. Whereabouts was it that this cut was inflicted?  
A. Towards the Quakers' meeting-house.  
Q. What business had you there; do you mean to say, you could not have got into Peter-street, without going to the Quakers' meeting house?  
A. I was making the clearest way, as I thought; but we were hemmed in on all sides. I thought of going down Deansgate; it was the road that I knew.  
Q. You were beside the hustings, you said, originally?  
A. Yes; when I first came on the ground.  
Q. I ask you, if you were anxious to get into Deans-street, if your course would not have been up Peter-street; by Windmill-street, or up Lad Lane, you might have gone?  
A. I will tell you. I was forced agen a building, where there is no window; and there I made my way to have attempted to go down Deansgate, and then I made on to the timber.  
Q. Therefore you went directly the contrary way?  
A. Yes, right across.  
Q. By way of attaining your object, you took the longest way about?  
A. There was not so many, as I thought there, and so I made my way there.  
Q. I want to know why you did not make your way where there was no person or horse to prevent you?  
A. I could not find that way.  
Q. Do, you mean to swear you tried Peter-street, and found obstructions there?  
A. I run across Peter-street.  
Q. You did not try to make your way out at Peter-street?  
A. I was, hemmed in of all sides, and I looked for the way I could go the clearest.  
Q. Did you try to get up Peter-street?  
A. No, I did not.  
Q. The only reason was, because you might have gone that way.  
A. You did not see what I saw or else -----