

Sussex to wit The Voluntary Examination and  
Information of Charles Longhurst late of the  
Parish of Beachill in the County of Sussex Taken  
on oath this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of February 1828 Before  
me Frederick North one of his Majesty's Justices of  
the peace for the said County -

Who saith that on the Evening of the ~~4~~ Thursday Evening  
in the beginning of the Month of January last on the first  
Thursday in the Month, about the hour of six or between six  
and seven, Thomas Waters of Hastings Bricklayer and James  
Bennett of Beachill, Bricklayer, came to his House at Hollers  
Hill in Beachill, and wished Deponent to get them a few  
hands to be employed to carry smuggled <sup>goods</sup> and to be at the  
Corner of a Lane against Stephen Hubberfields by 11 o'clock that  
night. That there were in this Deponents house besides himself  
and the said Thomas Waters and James Bennett this Deponents  
Father and ~~mother~~ wife but they did not hear the conversation  
<sup>that he</sup> promised to get them the Men about 10 or 12, he believes but  
he is not sure. That this Deponent went out and engaged  
Thomas Miller of Beachill Laborer, the person now in custody  
Henry Miller of Barnhorn in Beachill, Laborer. John Spray  
of Barnhorn, Laborer. James Prazier of Beachill Laborer,  
William Shoemith of Sidley Green, in Beachill, Laborer -  
Thomas Smith of Sidley Green, in Beachill, Laborer, John

Waters coming up with the people That he saw the Cart  
of the said Thomas Underdown filled with Tubs and  
the said Thomas Underdown and another person with  
him got into the Cart and drove off very fast towards  
Sidley Green - That this Deponent then went on towards  
Sidley Green with the said Thomas Waters and as they  
were walking they heard firing behind them - That this  
Deponent <sup>and Thomas Waters</sup> went to the house of one Thomas Shoemith near  
Cott's hill in the said Parish of Bechill - That while they  
were going over the top of Sidley Green they heard firing  
near Mr. Cramp's house - That two of the Carts which Deponent  
had seen standing in the Road came after ~~them~~ him and  
driving very fast towards Ninfield but he did not see the Cart  
of the said James Foord there That from the house of the  
~~house~~ of the said Thomas Shoemith this Deponent the next  
morning went home - That the next Evening, Friday, about 7  
o'clock this Deponent was in company with the said Thomas  
Underdown George Whiteman and Thomas Waters at the Bell  
Public house in Bechill and they said they believed they  
was a seaman of the Blockade killed - and laughed at ~~his~~ <sup>Deponent</sup> because  
he went back - On the Sunday morning following he heard the  
said John Fryman say that he got a slight wound on the  
the thigh or hip in the 28 acres on the night that the man  
of the Coast Blockade was killed That Thomas Waters paid  
this Deponent on the Sunday Evening following he believes in the  
Tradesman's Room at the <sup>Public House</sup> Bell in the presence of the said  
Thomas Underdown <sup>and also 13 shillings</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>the</sup> work done for him the said Thomas Waters  
Thomas Underdown 10 shillings for getting the people - That  
the said Thomas Waters gave the said James Bennett £12  
to pay the men who carried the Tubs - That on the Monday  
Evening following he this Deponent saw the said James  
Bennett near the said John Fryman John Shoemith -

Waters - all went down to the sea but this Deponent and  
the before named Edward Cossum, Samuel Hubberfield  
and James Bennett all remained behind in the 20  
acres - That the 20 acres adjoins the field called the 40  
acres - That this Deponent then went up into the Pleasure  
house, <sup>alone</sup> and it being a very clear moonlight night he  
saw a Lug sail Boat come in towards the shore, <sup>at Lord's house</sup> and  
stand close in, and in about 2 minutes after he heard  
a firing which came from near the Point at the forty acres.  
That from the time this Deponent left the Company until  
the firing took place was about 20 minutes or it might  
be half an hour. That this Deponent then went into  
Bexhill Street and spoke to James Bennett a few minutes  
and continued there till the first party of people came  
up about 4 or 5 people carrying half anker casks. That  
this Deponent walked with the said persons as far as  
the place where 4 Carts were standing just past his  
this Deponent's house, <sup>in the Road leading from Bexhill to Sidley Green.</sup> - That the Tubs or Casks which the  
men were carrying were put into the Carts. That the  
Cart belonging to Thomas Underdown was one of them.  
That this Deponent continued there while several other  
persons came up with Tubs and amongst them the before  
named John Spray who carried 2 Tubs. That he also  
observed the before named Thomas Underdown and Thomas

Beachill Laborer, Edward Shoemuth of Beachill Laborer,  
Edward Cossum of Beachill, Laborer, Samuel Hubberfield  
of Beachill Laborer, William Bennett of Beachill Laborer the  
person now in custody - James Foord of Kenfield in the County  
of Sussex Laborer was there but <sup>of this Deponent</sup> he did not engage him - That  
this Deponent, and the other persons named, met at the hour  
of 11 the same Evening, at the corner of the Lane against Stephen  
Hubberfield's house near Sidley Green, and this Deponent also met  
there fifty persons and upwards - but he cannot be certain how  
many - That there were about 24 or 25 with Bats - long Bats  
that he saw no Guns or Fire arms of any kind amongst them  
That amongst those who carried Bats he saw George Whiteman  
of Rye Laborer, and Spencer Whiteman, who lives either at  
Rye or Guestling, who had each a Bat and stood with the  
other Bat Men ~~who stood~~ <sup>apart</sup> by themselves - That this Deponent  
spoke to the said George Whiteman, and he also saw Thomas  
Underdown of Rye formerly a Mariner - and also Thomas  
Waters of Hastings, the person before named - and also James  
Bennett the person before named neither of which three last  
mentioned persons had Bats - That the said Thomas Underdown  
acted as Master of the Men <sup>employed</sup> to carry Tubs, and an argument  
arose about going forward between the said Thomas Underdown  
and the said George Whiteman, and the said Thomas Underdown  
said "he was Master and intended so to be" That the said  
George Whiteman appeared to be the freeman of the Bat  
Men and look kept them in order and the said Thomas

Robert Carey of Beachill aforesaid Laborer. and William

Hubberfield of Beachill aforesaid Laborer - all of whom

this Deponent engaged except Stephen Hubberfield, William Mills  
and James Birt

And that all the said persons went with the said

Company and the Bat Men down to the Field called

the 20 acres near the Sea for the purpose of assisting

and carrying away the Smuggled goods which were to be

landed that night And this Deponent further saith that

the said Robert Hubberfield, John Wilson, <sup>and</sup> James Birt

~~James Bean - Robert Carey and William Hubberfield~~

all went forward with the said company and the

armed men from the said Field called the 20

acres towards the Sea Shore, but this Deponent verily

believes that the said Stephen Hubberfield, William Mills

James Bean, Robert Carey and William Hubberfield

all left the said Company before they got down

to the sea coast =

Chas Longhurst

Sworn by the above named  
Charles Longhurst at Hastings  
aforesaid the 4<sup>th</sup> day of February  
1828.

Red<sup>d</sup> Verto

Chas Longhurst says he first saw Levi Brett on the  
night of the Darbourne affair when he came back  
from the Coast with the Subs. Saw him beside one  
of the Carts I think Menhams, he had a Bat in his  
hand - then was Henry Ford and another Stephen  
Ford I believe had bats - there were more than those  
armed with Bats. The Bat was standing in his hands  
it was a long Bat Saw him again at different times  
in the course of the night. Saw him at Metcham Down  
Saw him again coming up Standard hill, he was  
walking beside the Carts - I don't know where he went  
to afterwards - he resides at -  
and is a day labourer - I understood he was ~~at~~  
that night - He was not at Beechill -