

them in putting down riots and keeping the peace. They got me to take the Baton as head of the Gentlemen Special Constables.

About this time a very notorious regiment was stationed at Glasgow. A company of them at Greenock quarrelled with some of the inhabitants, and with their bayonets murdered a number of people. The guilty were hanged for this crime. Another company of them rose on the inhabitants of Perth, which ended in the same fatal manner. They were instantly all brought to head quarters. Very shortly after this, three of them went into a public house on Saltmarket Street, on a market day, where some country lads were, after market, treating their sweethearts. The soldiers became rude to the girls. They were warned to desist, but continued, when one of them was knocked down. They all turned out to the street to fight it out, man to man. The populace formed a ring and saw fair play. The country lads thrashed the soldiers well, when some other soldiers came up and wanted to attack the lads, but the people would not allow such foul play. At this the soldiers ran to their barracks, and the whole regiment turned out with bayonets (they had been prohibited from wearing them except on parade, owing to their former brutal conduct) to attack the people. The alarm was spread in Town that they were marching up the Gallow-gate with drawn bayonets to attack the citizens.

I ran to the police station, and the police turned out with simply their staffs of office. What were a few police with sticks to 700 or 800 men with sharp steel in their hands? The inhabitants came forth to their aid, however, and wherever the soldiers separated from the main body, they were knocked down, disarmed and dragged to the strong room. One of the police, near where I stood, was attacked by three of the soldiers. He put his back to one of the upright large bannons opposite the Lontine, and defended himself most bravely. One of the soldiers stole round him and was ready to stab him from behind, when I darted forward and gave the soldier a blow on the head with a heavy stick, which I for long had carried for self-defence. He dropped down to all appearances dead. The other two left the policeman and fiercely attacked me. I struck one of them on the hand which made the bayonet fly many yards away, and he was instantly secured and dragged off by the heels. Having now only one to look to, I soon laid him low. By this time, the people had armed themselves with sticks, bricks, stones and other things, and were fast overpowering the soldiers. As I stood at the cross one of them quite close to me was struck with a piece of brick; he fell, gave a quiver and lay a corpse. The soldiers, seeing themselves completely overpowered, fled to their barracks. A great many of the people got bayonet wounds, but as far as I recollect, none of them were mortal. Several of the soldiers were killed. I was in a state of great anxiety as to the fate of the one I first knocked down. His skull was fractured and trepanned. It was often reported he was dead, but he did recover. Quite a formal and long legal investigation took place.