
Transcript of the Inquest

Date: 27th June 2022

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Mr Charles Alfred KING	Affirmed	5
Mr Alexander John CONNOR	Sworn	28
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CORONER: Good morning, everyone. I am happy to say that the problem we had with the recording has been overcome, and the recording from, was it Thursday I think, we will be able to recover fully, so that's not going to be a problem.

This morning, Mr SANDERS, I think the others are going to deal with the witnesses this morning, but I think we start with two videolink witnesses, Mr Charles KING followed by Alexander CONNOR, and then we have two witnesses in person, and some witness statements to be read?

MR SANDERS QC: That's correct. And I'm putting questions to Mr KING ...

CORONER: Are you? I see. Okay, fine.

MR SANDERS QC: ... and then Mr FLINN and Ms KUZMENKO ...

CORONER: Okay.

MR SANDERS QC: ... are doing the others.

CORONER: As we have video witnesses, I need to read out the warning that I have read out before. I think in fact only Mr KING is online at the moment. Mr CONNOR, Alexander CONNOR, will be online a bit later, so I shall have to re-read it again. But anyway, I will read it as follows. I hereby give permission for the use of live video to enable participants to access these court proceedings. It is a contempt of court to record, play, dispose of or publish a recording or transcript of the proceedings. That means it is a criminal offence to make or attempt to record or broadcast these proceedings. Thank you.

Right. So then we will start this morning with the evidence of Charles KING. Mr KING, can you hear me?

MR KING: Yes, thank you.

CORONER: Good. Mr KING, I think ... Heather, can we deal with the camera do you think?

MRS NIN: He has got the whole court. Do you want (inaudible)?

CORONER: Yes. Yes, please, if we could go individually. Mr KING, I think now you are looking at me directly. Good morning to you. My name is Richard TRAVERS. I'm the Senior Coroner here in Surrey. In a moment or two I'm going to introduce you to

Mr SANDERS, who will be asking questions of you on my behalf.

Can we start please though? Are you going ...

MRS NIN: Sorry (inaudible).

MR KING: Sorry.

CORONER: Sorry. Okay.

MRS NIN: (inaudible).

CORONER: **Are you going to take the oath or are you going to give the affirmation, Mr KING?**

MR KING: I am not sure. The first one I think, take the oath. I solemnly swear etc.

MRS NIN: He's got the words, sir, and he's got a Bible as well.

CORONER: **Do you have a Bible with you?**

MR KING: Yes.

CORONER: **Thank you. Could you hold the Bible in your right hand? Could you read out the words of the oath please for me? If you could just read them slowly and clearly for me.**

MR CHARLES ALFRED KING (affirmed)

CORONER: **Thank you very much, Mr KING. You have given your name, but can I just ask you to give your full name again for me?**

MR KING: Charles Alfred KING.

CORONER: Thank you very much. Mr KING, I am going to pass you over now to Mr SANDERS, who will be asking questions, as I say, on my behalf.

MR KING: Thank you.

MR SANDERS QC: Good morning, Mr KING. Can you hear me and see me?

MR KING: Yes, thank you.

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you.

CORONER: No. Heather, I think ...

MRS NIN: (inaudible).

CORONER: We will just wait a moment, Mr KING, while the camera moves for you.

MR KING: Okeydokey.

CORONER: There we are.

MR KING: Hello there.

MR SANDERS QC: Good morning.

MR KING: Good morning.

MR SANDERS QC: Mr KING, can I just confirm you are a retired Engineer. Is that correct?

MR KING: Quality Engineer, yes, work in (inaudible).

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you. And you live in Guildford?

MR KING: Yes, I've lived in Guildford for 70 years.

MR SANDERS QC: Very good. Thank you. I just need to start by taking you to the witness statements that you've made.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And they will come up on the screen for you to see. So the first is a statement that's the 15th January 2018, and that's at 8-32. You don't need to do anything. It will just come up on the screen for you to see.

MR KING: Yes, I'm a bit concerned about my ... I'm very new to this video conferencing, but I have the statement before me, so.

MR SANDERS QC: Well, just bear with us, because we need to see it at the same time as you.

MR KING: Oh, sorry.

MR SANDERS QC: There.

MR KING: There we are.

MR SANDERS QC: That has come up. So it is witness statement of ...

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: ... Charles KING. And if we- it had your address there that's been blacked out. And just to go down the page to the end. Do you see, is that your signature there?

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And that's the 15th January 2018.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And then you made another statement, which is at 10-19.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And then go down to the bottom of that, please. And that's your signature there again, and that's the 3rd February this year. Is that correct?

MR KING: Yes, that's correct.

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you. And you've had an opportunity to read those statements?

MR KING: Yes, many times.

MR SANDERS QC: Apologises, Mr KING. Could you repeat that?

MR KING: Many times.

MR SANDERS QC: Many times. Thank you. And can you confirm that the contents are true?

MR KING: They are true ...

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you.

MR KING: ... to my knowledge.

MR SANDERS QC: So you were living in Guildford in 1974. Is that right?

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: At the time of the Guildford Pub Bombings.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And at that time there were a number of military army bases around the town. Is that correct?

MR KING: Well, I knew there were some, yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Were you aware of some pubs in Guildford being known as 'Army Pubs'? Pubs that were popular with soldiers?

MR KING: No.

MR SANDERS QC: You weren't?

MR KING: No, not at all.

MR SANDERS QC: No. And your late son, Robert, who was 20 at the time, he was a Journalist with the Surrey Advertiser?

MR KING: Yes, he was a Sports Reporter.

MR SANDERS QC: A Sports Reporter. And could you just tell us a bit about Robert and where he was living and what he was doing at the time?

MR KING: Well, at the time he was living in the road behind the Guildford Police Station, which is sort of a little bit relevant, but he was living in a flat. We spoke quite a lot. We were sort of in touch. I was interested in his career as a Journalist. Obviously, I used to get told all the things he did. And he was obviously, I think he was a very good reporter, very good Journalist, and later in his life he did very well in actual fact. But (inaudible) ...

MR SANDERS QC: He went onto the national newspapers. Is that correct?

MR KING: Yes. He worked- first of all he worked for the Press Association, and then he worked for The Star, where he had a very good reputation there.

MR SANDERS QC: And was the Surrey Advertiser ...

MR KING: He was very well known, he was very well known in football, both by the footballers and the press.

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you. And was the Surrey Advertiser his first job?

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And he was 20 at the time.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And he sadly died very young. Is that right?

MR KING: 46, yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes. And you say that he'd had emphysema, so a very serious condition.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you. Going back to your first statement, the 2018 statement, could you tell us how you came to make that statement?

MR KING: I'd seen various reports about trying to reopen the Guildford Bombings Inquest, and I just felt that I had something to say. Now, I say that what I thought apparently I can't really say here. I became involved in another way very shortly after the bombing, and well it's difficult because I'm told, or at least I'm told by the terms of the inquest that you are not inquiring into other certain aspects of the bombing.

MR SANDERS QC: That's correct. So you have an interest in the criminal proceedings and the criminal investigation. Is that right?

MR KING: Yes, because basically I witnessed Carole RICHARDSON, and the Guildford Six as they were known at the start, and by pure chance I was walking back to my car from shopping in Guildford ...

CORONER: **Sorry, I'm going to stop you. Mr KING ...**

MR KING: Yes, sorry. I realised ...

CORONER: **... I'm going to stop you for a moment. Because, I mean you are quite right, this inquest is not concerning itself ...**

MR KING: Yes.

CORONER: **... with the details of (inaudible).**

MR KING: But it does colour what I felt. It does give ...

CORONER: **I understand it might do that. Well, what I'd like to do please is concentrate on the evidence you are able to assist with as far as ...**

MR KING: Yes.

CORONER: **... findings are concerned.**

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you, sir. And so the statement that you, the first statement that you produced, did you write that yourself or you- because that was provided by a firm of solicitors called KRW Law?

MR KING: Yes, he helped me to write the statement. I told him the events and I agreed with how he had written, apart from one point, but that is a contentious point, sorry.

MR SANDERS QC: I see. And how did you come to contact the solicitor who spoke to you and wrote the statement out for you?

MR KING: It was Chris STANLEY, the KRW Lawyer. I phoned KRW, I think it is.

MR SANDERS QC: Right.

MR KING: Just to say that I, as far as I was concerned, I had information which was not known at the time.

MR SANDERS QC: All right. And you say in your first statement that your son, Robert, was the first reporter on the scene at the Horse and Groom Pub after the explosion.

MR KING: Yes, exactly.

MR SANDERS QC: And he went up there and immediately afterwards he filed some copy on what had happened that went into the Press Association and that also then went into the Surrey Advertiser?

MR KING: Yes, he did many other things as well at the same time.

MR SANDERS QC: But just focusing on the evening in question.

MR KING: Yes. Well, I'm talking about that. The evening in question he did more than just send it on the wire using a code that was being used at the time because of spoof reports about IRA bombings.

MR SANDERS QC: Well, can you tell me what you remember about what Robert did on the night in question? What happened?

MR KING: I was sitting just watching television quietly on a Saturday evening on my own, as far as I know. The telephone went. The telephone is in the hall, so I went round into the hall, and it was my son. He was extremely agitated and tried to tell me some of, you know, there'd been an explosion or whatever in Guildford, and, you know, he felt that I would know something as I'd been in the blitz. Well, yes, I had been in the blitz. I'd been bombed but not to see anything as horrific as he was describing. The call was reasonably short; only a couple of minutes or so.

I went back, continued watching the television, mulling over what he'd told me, and about ten minutes or so, five, ten minutes, there was it on the BBC 9 o'clock News, exactly what my son had been telling me about. To be honest ...

MR SANDERS QC: In terms of the timing of this ...

MR KING: Well, yes, because Robert he had to, he was in the Surrey Advertiser offices, he ran down North Street, which is, I don't know, maybe

200 yards something, looked at the scene, took it in, as he describes in another part of the statement I've given, ran back to the Surrey Advertiser, put it on the wire, phoned up reporters, because he knew where they were. They were at a party that he was going to when he had finished his report. Phoned a photographer, phoned his Editor, and all this, you know, it just didn't, it wasn't possible he could do all these things in such a short time.

MR SANDERS QC: In order for all those things to have happened ten minutes before the 9 o'clock News, you think that they must have happened earlier?

MR KING: Well, yes. That was always, that was always what I saw or what I believed. I must say even the ... I know I mustn't say ... Sorry. It is difficult because I mustn't say certain things, because ...

MR SANDERS QC: Well, you mustn't comment on who may or may not have planted the bombs.

MR KING: No, but this is about timing.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes.

MR KING: And even during the trial and the appeal, three years later, the timing was still given, was still supposed to be 9.30.

MR SANDERS QC: Well, I think that they ...

MR KING: Sir John May ruled otherwise, but ...

MR SANDERS QC: So you just said 9.30.

MR KING: ... who am I?

MR SANDERS QC: I think, Mr KING, you mean 8.30?

MR KING: Sorry, 8.30. Beg your pardon.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes. And we can see various times when 8.30 is mentioned and various times when 8.50 is mentioned.

MR KING: Yes, sorry. (inaudible).

MR SANDERS QC: Now, I just want to take you to one of the documents that you produce with your second statement. And this is a printout from the BBC website ...

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: ... and it's at 11-32. And that's from the 'On This Day.' It's not a report that was published at the time, but it's a ...

MR KING: No.

MR SANDERS QC: ... bit of the BBC website that tells you what happened on particular days in history. And so we can see on the right hand side that on the 5th October 1968 there was a march in Londonderry that ended in violence, and that was the start of the troubles. And there's a reference there to the first bomb exploded in the Horse and Groom Pub just before 8.30.

MR KING: Yes, that's ...

MR SANDERS QC: And so there's that there. And then there are other documents which refer to the bomb being as 8.50, including the quote Robert ... Can we

just have a look at those, please? So the first is your second exhibit,
which is at 11-33.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: So this is an article from the week of the 14th October 74, the UK Press
Gazette.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And so it's an article about the Surrey Daily Advertiser's coverage of
the bombing.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And we see, if we can just zoom into the top of that. Just bear with us,
Mr KING. We will just try and zoom in a bit because it is quite faint to
read.

MR KING: I've got the original.

MR SANDERS QC: Can you get the first paragraph as big as possible so I can ...? There.
Underneath Guildford Bombs ... No, underneath "Guildford bombs
brought News Team out in minutes."

MRS NIN: (inaudible).

MR SANDERS QC: Yes. So we see there, "The Surrey bomb explosions on October 5th
were only a matter of a few hundred yards from the Surrey Daily
Advertiser offices in Guildford, and within minutes reporters and a
photographer from the paper were on the scene. A team of reporters,

photographers, sub-editors and production staff worked throughout the weekend to produce a special Monday Dawn Edition.” There’s a picture of the front page there. But if we just go down and to the right, but keeping at this magnification. Sorry, just down and just move it to the right a bit. That’s right. Yes.

“The planned 16-page paper was increased to 20 pages and was on the bookstalls by 6.30 am, six hours ahead of normal distribution time.” And just below there there’s the reference to your son and his involvement, and the quote, “Rob KING said just after 8.50 pm there was a vivid blue flash from North Street, coupled with a large explosion which lit up the street 40 yards away.” Do you see that, Mr KING?

MR KING:

Yes. And may I state that on looking at this document, again I suddenly ... Because at the time the timing wasn’t important. But when I did look at this, I realised that maybe, you know, it put doubts into my mind, and that’s the reason for my second statement because of these doubts. But if you can see into the mind of a young reporter like that, what he’d seen was so horrific. That maybe at that time ... Well, I don’t know. Maybe he couldn’t really remember it. I don’t think he looked at his ... I don’t think he would have had time to look at his watch or worry about what the time was at the time, if you understand what I’m saying? I

don't know. It might have just been a typographical error which does occur.

MR SANDERS QC: Well, can we just look at what the Surrey Advertiser said? So if we go to 4-556, and you produce an online printout of this same article. So this is the Surrey Advertiser 40th Anniversary Special about the bombings.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And if we just go down to 4-561. There. Can we get that on there? A full screen, sorry. So that's a picture of Robert there. Is that right, Mr KING?

MR KING: It is. This is the first time I've seen this document.

MR SANDERS QC: Right. Because I think what you provided as your exhibit 3 was an online version of this article, and it's ...

MR KING: No, I've never seen this picture.

MR SANDERS QC: I understand you haven't seen the picture, but the writing I'll show you in a moment, but if we just zoom into the article itself. "Surrey Advertiser Reporter Robert KING was one of the first people on the scene. He was working late in the office at Martyr Road when the first bomb went off at the Horse and Groom." Can you just zoom into the article there?

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: “Just after 8.50 there was a vivid blue flash from North Street, coupled with a large explosion which lit up the street ...”

MR KING: Oh, yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes. So it’s the same quote again, isn’t it, Mr KING?

MR KING: Yes. I can see that, yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And that’s also the version you quoted, just to show you that we are talking about the same thing, was at 11-38.

MR KING: Yes. I can recall having part of that

MR SANDERS QC: Yes.

MR KING: ... statement.

MR SANDERS QC: Is that 11-38?

MRS NIN: (inaudible).

MR SANDERS QC: Sorry. Let me just find the correct ... No, I want exhibit 3 from the statement. Here we go. It’s at 11-34, apologies. So you see there that’s the same article, “Guildford Pub Bombings Reporter Recalls Horrific Scene – Surrey Live.” That’s the Surrey Advertiser from 5th October 2014. That’s the 40th Anniversary.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And it says the same thing. “Just after 8.50 there was a vivid blue flash ...,” etc.

MR KING: I’m afraid every time I read that it puts a chill on me, even now.

MR SANDERS QC: So can we just look at 4-565? We've got the front page of the Surrey Advertiser there. That's from just after the bombing.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Do you see that? And if we ...

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: ... just go down and zoom in. So I'm just going to have to tell you where I want you to ... Just bear with me, Mr KING. I just want to find the right part of the document to show you. So can you see where it says, "Worldwide Net for Killers"? Just a column to the right of that. Can we zoom into there?

MR KING: Yes. Barely, yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes. A bit more. So, "A Daily Advertiser Reporter was one of the first people to arrive. Reporter Rob KING was working late in Advertiser House, less than 100 yards from the Horse and Groom, when the first explosion occurred. He was on the scene within seconds of the blast and gave this account. I was working late in the Advertiser offices when all of a sudden, just after 8.50 pm, there was a vivid blue flash from North Street, coupled with a large explosion which lit up the street 40 yards away."

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: So that's what he said to the Surrey Advertiser at the time.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And you refer in your statement to the fact that quite a number of Surrey Advertiser reporters and photographers attended the scene and were involved in covering the bombing. Is that right?

MR KING: Yes, Robert called them in. Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And so if this had been a mistake, or had been wrong, one would have expected one of those people to have raised that, bearing in mind that they were journalists and given that ...?

MR KING: Well, none of them were (inaudible) ...

MR SANDERS QC: Hold on, Mr KING. Can I finish my question?

MR KING: Sorry.

MR SANDERS QC: Bearing in mind that they are journalists and that it is important that their coverage is accurate ...

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: ... if this had been a mistake one would expect that to have been corrected, wouldn't one?

MR KING: Not necessarily, because none of those reporters were actually at the scene. And at the time I don't believe that the timing was particularly important, but what was happening was important. And I know I mustn't say it, but I must say Robert was later intimidated by the police.

MR SANDERS QC: Well, we are just concentrating on the coverage at the time. I think you've said that what is crucial ...

MR KING: Yes. Sorry, beg your pardon. I will agree, and that is why my second statement came, because set against that there are other timings given.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes. So what seems to be, correct me if I'm wrong, what seems to be important in your mind for the timings is that it was about ten minutes after Robert's call that the 9 o'clock News came on. Is that correct?

MR KING: Yes, yes. Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Okay. Well, I just want to take you to the TV listings for the night, because there was no 9 o'clock News on Saturday 5th October 1974. And I just want to take you to show you first the Radio Times, which is 11-38. So this is the cover for the Radio Times for the week the 5th to the 11th October, and there's the front there. And if we just scroll down to the next page, we've got the listings for the ...

MR KING: Sorry, could you come back to the date?

MR SANDERS QC: Yes, go back to the top.

MR KING: Sorry, my eyesight isn't brilliant. Yes, okeydokey. Thank you.

MR SANDERS QC: And then just there we've got the listing for Saturday, BBC 1 and BBC 2. And if we just zoom in on the evening schedule. There. At 9 o'clock there's an Election Broadcast, because Thursday the 10th October was

the General Election, which is the narrow majority for WILSON against HEATH.

MR KING: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: So you see 9 o'clock Election Broadcast, and then 10 past 9 Kojak, and then 10 o'clock is the News. So if Robert's call was ten minutes before the News, doesn't that mean his call was likely to have been around 9.50?

MR KING: Around 9.50?

MR SANDERS QC: Around 9.50.

MR KING: No, never. Never, sorry.

MR SANDERS QC: So you think he called about ten minutes before the News?

MR KING: Before I saw ... Which I think, I suppose, could have been a News Flash, I don't know, but ... Can I say that I've certainly, yes, I've always been interested in politics particularly, and I don't remember any Election Broadcast or Kojak.

MR SANDERS QC: Well, it was a long time ago, Mr KING. So ...

MR KING: Yes, I do agree.

MR SANDERS QC: ... memories may not be that good. I just want to show you ...

MR KING: My memory is quite good on ... My memory is still very ... There are certain memories in your life that you always remember, and that is just one of them, but ...

MR SANDERS QC: You remember Robert ringing ten minutes before the News?

MR KING: Before the, before it came on the television then. I must be correct. I tried through a source to find out whether the information that you've got there ... The nearest information I could find was from the archives. So that sort of reinforced my belief to some extent, but I ...

MR SANDERS QC: I just want to show you ...

MR KING: ... totally admit I might, I could be wrong. I'm not infallible.

MR SANDERS QC: No, no. You have been ...

MR KING: Sorry.

MR SANDERS QC: ... very fair and open about that, Mr KING. I just want to show you on the right hand side of the page we have the schedule for BBC 2. And just to see that there's no 9 o'clock News there. 9 o'clock again is an Election Broadcast.

MR KING: I never, I wouldn't listen to the radio anyway.

MR SANDERS QC: Sorry, that is BBC 2 the television channel.

MR KING: Yes, yes.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes. And then I just want to show you as well, just for the avoidance of any doubt, that there wasn't any 9 o'clock News on ITV either, and that's at 11-36.

MR KING: Yes, I totally accept what you've shown me. Had I seen this I might have been much more doubtful.

MR SANDERS QC: So there's the front page, you know, to do with the General Election, and then just further down is the schedules for Saturday the 5th October. And if we zoom in on the top of the right hand page, again we see there's the same Election Broadcast at 9 o'clock, then Upstairs Downstairs.

MR KING: Yes. No, I have no doubt what you are showing me is totally correct.

MR SANDERS QC: All right. Thank you, Mr KING. I just want to show you another contemporaneous document, if I may? And this is at 7-809. Can you open it up so we can just zoom in a little bit? Thank you. And just move it down so we see the very top of the page. Go up to the top of the document. Move the document down.

MRS NIN: (inaudible).

MR SANDERS QC: Thank you. So, Mr KING, you haven't seen this before, but this is the Surrey Police Control Room record of the 999 call coming in, and you will see the top left hand corner. The type of call it is circled as 999, 5th October 1974, and time of origin is 20.50. And that has come in from the Surrey Arms Pub, which was just down the road from the Horse and Groom. And so ...

MR KING: Well, yes. That's the time with the message, but how long did it take before that message was sent? And also it talks about a bomb going off, and yet at the time a lot of people thought it was a gas explosion.

So I mean that is ... It is evidence of a phone call that was received, not evidence of the time of the explosion.

MR SANDERS QC: All right, Mr KING. Well ...

MR KING: Sorry, but I mean, you know, fair is fair. I am personally willing to ...

CORONER: **Mr KING, Mr KING, let me interrupt you for a moment. Thank you very much for your evidence. I think Mr SANDERS has concluded his questions. I am just going to ask whether any of the other Barristers have any questions for you. Ms BARTON?**

MS BARTON QC: No, thank you, sir.

CORONER: **Mr PLEETH?**

MR PLEETH: No, thank you, sir.

CORONER: **No. Mr KING, I think the camera is coming back to me, maybe. Mr KING, thank you very much for your evidence.**

MR KING: Can I, Mr Coroner, with the greatest respect ...

CORONER: **Yes.**

MR KING: ... can I say to you, you spoke about young victims. There was a younger victim that you've never mentioned. She was a victim and that was Carole RICHARDSON.

CORONER: **Yes. All right. Thank you, Mr KING. Thank you for your evidence. It has been very helpful. That concludes your evidence**

as far as this inquest is concerned. So thank you very much. Thank you.

MR KING: Thank you.

CORONER: **The next witness, please. I think this is a videolink as well. Alexander CONNOR.**

MRS NIN: He's already online, sir. (Conversation aside).

CORONER: **Mr KING, I think you need to terminate your call. There should be, I suspect, a red telephone image somewhere on your screen.**

MR KING: Yes.

CORONER: **Can you click on that for me, please? Thank you.**

(Witness withdrew)

CORONER: **All right. Mr CONNOR, can you hear me?**

MR CONNOR: (no audible response)

CORONER: **I think you must be on mute. You might be on mute. If the person helping you can assist.**

MR CONNOR: Yes, I can hear you.

CORONER: **Thank you very much. We can hear you nice and clearly. My name is Richard TRAVERS, Mr CONNOR. I'm the Senior Coroner here in Surrey. I'm just going to ask you, do you have the words of an affirmation or an oath in front of you?**

MR CONNOR: Yes.

CORONER: And are you going to read the oath? Do you have a Bible? Or are you going to do the affirmation?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR ALEXANDER JOHN CONNOR (sworn)

CORONER: Thank you very much, Mr CONNOR. That is very helpful. Can I ask you please to give me your full name?

MR CONNOR: Alexander John CONNOR.

CORONER: Thank you. And, Mr CONNOR, is there somebody in the room with you at the moment helping you?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

CORONER: And just let us know who that is, please.

MR CONNOR: One minute.

UK FEMALE: Yes.

CORONER: Hello. You are helping Mr CONNOR, I think, with the videolink, aren't you?

UK FEMALE: Yes. Yes, I am. Yes.

CORONER: Thank you very much. I don't think I need to know your name. I just need to know there is somebody in the room with him. So when he gives his evidence he's giving evidence straight from him, so to speak, and not influenced by you. That's all I need to be assured of.

UK FEMALE: Yes, that's right. Yes.

CORONER: Thank you. (inaudible). Mr CONNOR, I am going to pass you over now to Mr FLINN, who will be asking questions of you on my behalf. Thank you. I think the camera will move in a moment and you will see Mr FLINN. There we are.

MR FLINN: Good morning, Mr CONNOR. I am going to put my hand up so that you can see I'm the one talking. Can you see and hear me okay?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Wonderful. Thank you very much. You've given your full name to the court already. You don't need to give us your full address in detail, but could you just let us know where you are living now, the locality?

MR CONNOR: I live in Blackpool.

MR FLINN: Thank you very much. Now, we are just going to bring a document up on the screen for you. This is in the Caselines references 20-125. Mr CONNOR, hopefully in a moment you'll see a handwritten version of a witness statement coming up on the screen. Can you see that?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Brilliant. Now, this is a handwritten version of a statement that you gave, and you can see at the top there it is dated 7th October 1974. Could you just confirm, just under that date you can see a signature? Is that your signature?

MR CONNOR: Correct.

MR FLINN: Brilliant. And, Heather, if we could just go down to the end of the statement as well. Is that your signature there again, Mr CONNOR?

MR CONNOR: Correct.

MR FLINN: Thank you very much. Now, I am hoping that you received a typed-up version of this statement and that you've had a chance to read it. Is that right?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Brilliant. Thank you. And are you able to say, at the time you gave the statement, was the contents true to the best of your knowledge and belief?

MR CONNOR: True, yes.

MR FLINN: Thank you very much. Now, I'm hoping that you received a typed-up version of this statement and that you've had a chance to read it, is that right?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Brilliant, thank you. And are you able to say, at the time you gave the statement, is the contents true, to the best of your knowledge and belief?

MR CONNOR: True, yes.

MR FLINN: Thank you very much. Now, on the 5th of October 1974 you were 21 years old, is that right?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Now, what I'd like to do is just show you a photograph of yourself, actually. The Caselines reference is 4-191. And it's the bottom left of the page. Mr CONNOR, on the left-hand side of the screen, is that young man you?

MR CONNOR: There's nothing on the screen. Oh yes, right. (inaudible). Yes, that's me.

MR FLINN: Wonderful. I'd just like to start off with a few questions about your experience of the military. You were a private at the time you gave your statement. Could you help the court by letting us know when you enlisted in the army?

MR CONNOR: October 1973, I think, yes.

MR FLINN: October 1973. So you'd been in the army for about a year before the Guildford pub bombings.

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Did you do anything else before you signed up with the army?

MR CONNOR: In what way?

MR FLINN: So you were about 20 years old when you signed up. Did you do anything else after leaving school before you signed up?

MR CONNOR: Yes, when I worked ...

MR FLINN: What did you do?

MR CONNOR: When I went into the army, I was a slaughterman.

MR FLINN: Uh-huh. Oh right, so that's what you were doing before you enlisted.

MR CONNOR: That's right, yeah. So I left that and went into the army.

MR FLINN: Thank you. And when you enlisted with the army, your unit, again, the statement that we just looked at a moment ago, that refers to you as being in Second Platoon, A Company, of 3 Parachute Regiment. Does that sound right?

MR CONNOR: That's correct.

MR FLINN: And you were stationed at Bruneval Barracks in Aldershot, is that also correct?

MR CONNOR: Correct.

MR FLINN: And had you been staying there from the time you enlisted, in around October 1973, up until the date of the bombings on the 5th October 1974?

MR CONNOR: No. I went through recruit company, and went to the battalion, I think it was in the July of '74.

MR FLINN: Right.

MR CONNOR: I was in (inaudible) barracks in the training camp.

MR FLINN: And could you let us know round about the distance between Bruneval Barracks to Guildford Town Centre?

MR CONNOR: We got the train. I can't remember how far it was.

MR FLINN: No, that's alright, but maybe about six or seven miles, would that sound round about accurate?

MR CONNOR: Seven, ten, yeah, something like that, yes.

MR FLINN: Okay, fine. Now, I just have a short number of questions about your initial training. So far as you could remember it, can you just talk us through the training that you went through when you first enlisted with the army? Where it happened and what you did.

MR CONNOR: It was in Browning Barracks. That was the (inaudible). All the physical training, then everything else that goes with it. Then we went through the parachute school in RAF Abingdon. And then from there went up to the battalion.

MR FLINN: Right. And that was at Aldershot.

MR CONNOR: Correct.

MR FLINN: Fine. By the time you got to Aldershot, had you completed your training or were you still undergoing forms of training?

MR CONNOR: How do you mean, Aldershot? That's where we get our training.

MR FLINN: I understand.

MR CONNOR: And that's where the battalion is as well, in Aldershot.

MR FLINN: I understand, okay, thank you. Now, can you recall there being lectures and, sort of, classroom work as part of your training, in addition to military drills and physical exercises?

MR CONNOR: Not really, no.

MR FLINN: No. Can you recall having any training or instruction on security threats that you faced as military personnel? I know it's a long time after the events, but do you have any recollection of anything like that?

MR CONNOR: Well, we had to guard the camp every night. Not every night, it was split up between the whole battalion, because they'd had a bit of an explosion in the officer's mess a few years before that.

MR FLINN: Yes, we'll come on to that in a moment. Just in terms of the training and guarding the camp, what sort of things did you do for that?

MR CONNOR: What, my actual training?

MR FLINN: Yeah, so what were you trained to do in order to guard the camp?

MR CONNOR: Well, we had to do the perimeter each night. All sorts of stuff like that, yes.

MR FLINN: Do you remember receiving any training on the threat posed to you by the IRA?

MR CONNOR: Yes. We wasn't allowed to leave camp to go on leave in uniform.

MR FLINN: Righto. So you can recall there being a restriction on you that you couldn't leave camp in your uniform, and you understood that to be because it made you more identifiable as a military person and therefore threatened, is that right?

MR CONNOR: That is right.

MR FLINN: Can you recall around about when you had that instruction and that understanding given to you? Was that communicated to you before the Guildford pub bombings in October '74?

MR CONNOR: Well before, yes.

MR FLINN: Well before that, fine. Did you have any instructions or training that you can recall about the way the threat from the IRA might manifest? Like bombs, car bombs or throw bombs, or anything of that nature?

MR CONNOR: Yeah.

MR FLINN: And again, were you in receipt of that training before the Guildford pub bombs in October 1974?

MR CONNOR: Correct.

MR FLINN: Do you recall receiving training on other things like checking for explosive devices by looking under cars or anything of that nature?

MR CONNOR: No, not me personally.

MR FLINN: Not you personally, okay. Were you ever given any advice about, for example, avoiding crowded places when out away from camp and not on duty?

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: Were you ever given ...

MR CONNOR: (Inaudible).

MR FLINN: Carry on, please.

MR CONNOR: We wasn't in military uniform, no.

MR FLINN: Okay. Do you recall being given, sort of, general advice or instruction when you were on leave and away from the camp about, sort of, drinking safely and being aware and vigilant?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: And that was part of the instruction that you had as a recruit.

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Do you recall anything about the BIKINI alert system, which is a term the court's heard some evidence about?

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: You have no recollection of that.

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: Do you recall there being posted on entrances or exists to the camp anything about a heightened state of alert or a normal state of alert? Terms that the court's heard include things like 'BIKINI black,' 'BIKINI black special,' or 'BIKINI amber,' do you recall anything of that nature?

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: Do you have any recollection of the term 'Part One orders' and 'Part Two orders'?

MR CONNOR: Roughly, now, yeah. It's a long time about Part One and Part Two orders, yeah.

MR FLINN: Of course, it's a long time ago, but could you help us with what you recall Part One or Part Two orders were?

MR CONNOR: No, I can't remember now.

MR FLINN: That's fine. In terms of time off-duty, do you recall a period at the beginning of your training when you weren't allowed to leave the camp?

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: No. And so what points would you be allowed to leave the camp? Was it weekends?

MR CONNOR: When we finished in the day, we were allowed to go downtown at night.

MR FLINN: Could that be during the week or was it limited to weekends?

MR CONNOR: No, all the time.

MR FLINN: It was any time at the end of the day.

MR CONNOR: Yes, yeah.

MR FLINN: Fine, thank you. When you were on leave, were there any restrictions on where you were allowed to go? Were you, for example, told to avoid any particular places?

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: Before the Guildford pub bombings on the 5th of October 1974, had you been into Guildford before?

MR CONNOR: No, not me personally, but my other two mates out the army, they'd been there before.

MR FLINN: Okay. So the 5th of October was your first visit to Guildford personally.

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: I'd just like, so far as you can, to get a little bit of help from you in what you'd been doing during the day on the 5th of October 1974. Can you remember- any recollection of, during the day, what you were doing?

MR CONNOR: Well, we got the train from Aldershot and got through to Guildford. But in them days the pubs would all shut at three o'clock, so we just, on the (inaudible). I think there was a bit of a fairground. We got a couple of cans, and then we got back up to the Horse and Groom, and we were sitting outside on the bench.

MR FLINN: Righto, thank you. What I'll do is I'll stop you there, Mr CONNOR, because we'll just take it in stages. You've said, "We went into Guildford," and, in refreshing yourself from your statement, you'll recall that you mention a few people. And I actually just wanted to go through them and show you some photos of them, if that's okay.

So in your statement, one of the people you mention, it's spelt Private 'TYMKEW', but I'm wondering if that should be 'TYMKIN', a Roman TYMKIN.

And, Mrs NIN, could we go to Page 4-323 on case lines?

And we can see they're on the right-hand side, there's a photo which has the name 'Roman TYMKIN' on it. Can you see that, Mr CONNOR?

MR CONNOR: That's correct, that's him.

MR FLINN: That's him? Great.

MR CONNOR: Yes, Roman TYMKIN.

MR FLINN: Roman TYMKIN, thank you. Another person you mention is a Private REHILL. We understand his first name's Roland, but he might have been called 'Paddy'. Do you recall a Roland or Paddy REHILL?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Right. Well, we'll take a look at a photo of him. Mrs NIN, Page 4-293.

I think it's at the top of the page, on the right.

MR CONNOR: Yes, I can see it. Yeah, that's him

MR FLINN: That's him. Fantastic.

MR CONNOR: Yeah.

MR FLINN: And then, finally, a Private 'LYNSKEY' we understand to be Paul LYNSKEY. Mrs NIN, Page 4-257.

MR CONNOR: Is that the one on the left?

MR FLINN: Yes, I think if we go up again, on the right. If we just go down again, Mrs NIN, pardon me. On the right on that one, can you see there? Paul LYNSKEY, is that right? Mr CONNOR, can you recognize him?

MR CONNOR: I can't recognize him, no, sorry.

MR FLINN: That's fine. Now, you said you went into town, and who were you with on the train journey into town?

MR CONNOR: Roman TYMKIN, and REHILL. Just the three of us.

MR FLINN: Righto. And you went by train. What time did you arrive in Guildford?

MR CONNOR: I don't know. It was in the afternoon, but the pubs had just shut.

MR FLINN: Righto. Do you recall what you did when you went there? I think you mentioned a fairground.

MR CONNOR: Yes, I think there was one. It was just down the bottom, so we just went down there for a bit, got a couple of cans out of an off-licence, and then made our way back when we knew the pub was opening up. And so we sat outside on the bench, waiting for the doors opening.

MR FLINN: Righto.

MR CONNOR: When they opened, in we went.

MR FLINN: Right. And your statement say that that was at about 6.30 in the evening, does that sound about right?

MR CONNOR: Yeah, that sounds about right, yeah.

MR FLINN: Can I ask, is there a particular reason why you chose to go to the Horse and Groom aside from the fact that it was opening at that time? Was there something about the pub that attracted you to it?

MR CONNOR: Well, I hadn't been there before, but REHILL and TYMKIN had been in there before, and they said it was not a bad pub.

MR FLINN: So they ...

MR CONNOR: So that's why we went in.

MR FLINN: Right. So they said it was quite a good pub. Did they know it to be a pub where army personnel tended to gather?

MR CONNOR: No, I don't think so really. But I know there's loads of army that used ... well, they didn't just use that, they used the Seven Stars or Seven Sisters, what they were called. So we just went round, we thought we'd have a tour around them all.

MR FLINN: Sure. So you hadn't been there before, and so far as you were aware, it was just put to you as being a good place to go.

MR CONNOR: That's right, correct.

MR FLINN: Righto. Mr CONNOR, what I'd now like to do, just to see if we could take you back and perhaps jog some recollections, show you a couple of photos of the exterior of the pub. Mrs NIN, could we go to case lines reference 4-555?

Mr CONNOR, can you see that image on the screen?

MR CONNOR: Yeah, that's the Horse and Groom.

MR FLINN: That's right, and you can see a bus stop in front of it?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: We'll go to another photo. Mrs NIN, 7-1352. So, Mr CONNOR, we can see here a front-on image, and I think the bus stop will be just off the right-hand side of the photo.

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: You mentioned a moment ago that you were sitting on benches. Now, I had a look at these photos last night and I couldn't spot any benches, so they might not be shown in the photo. Could you let us know where the benches that you sat on were?

MR CONNOR: It might have been just a little bit down to the left-hand side, somewhere like that.

MR FLINN: Okay. So you can see to the left of the photo there's a gap. There's, sort of, an overhang roof, and there's a sign there saying 'Friend's Meeting House,' so there was a slight passage there. Do you think it was just to the left of that, perhaps, off the edge of the photo?

MR CONNOR: It might have been. It was somewhere on that hind street where we were sat.

MR FLINN: And it was on the same side of the street as the Horse and Groom Public House, is that right?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Thanks very much, Mr CONNOR. I'd now like to take you to a few images of the interior of the pub. And first of all, we'll look at a birds'-eye view layout. Mrs NIN, could we go to 1-3, please?

So, Mr CONNOR, this is a plan of the pub, and obviously it's not the way you would see it when you're there, but looking at it from above, if you look to the bottom of the image, you can see there's an entrance, and that's the entrance on North Street. And as you go inside, so you move up from that entrance, on the right there's an area which we know as the 'snug', just beyond the fruit machine. And on the left, there's an alcove with an l-shaped bench. Can you see those on the plan?

MR CONNOR: Yes, I can.

MR FLINN: Does that match up with any recollections you have of the interior of the pub?

MR CONNOR: Yes, I can remember it perfectly.

MR FLINN: Oh, brilliant. Alright, well, beyond that on the left we can see there's another alcove where there's a fireplace and a jukebox. And on the right, you can see the bar, which curves around and goes up to the back wall. What I'd now like to do is take you to another photograph. Mrs NIN, 7-1349.

So, Mr CONNOR, what we understand this to be is an image of the bar as you're walking into the pub. And you can see there in front of it two pillars. Can you recall there being two pillars like that in front of the bar?

MR CONNOR: Not the pillars, but that's where the bar was, yes.

MR FLINN: Right, so you recognise the bar, can't recall the pillars.

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Perfect, thank you. Now, if we now go to another image, Mrs NIN, 4-680.

Mr CONNOR, this image on the right-hand side, you can see the bar jutting out, and it's a view tilted slightly to the left, so it's from the other side of the pillars. And you can see there a fireplace on the left-hand side of the screen. And that was in the alcove on the left with the fireplace, can you see that?

MR CONNOR: Yes, I can see it.

MR FLINN: And does that ring any bells, and do you recognise that?

MR CONNOR: Well, it were like three alcoves there, and to the right of the fireplace, in the corner, that's where the jukebox was.

MR FLINN: That's right. We might have a slightly better image of that, we'll just check. So, Mrs NIN, 7-1351.

Ah right, so this is actually looking back towards the bar, and you can see there towards the left of the screen what we understand to be the jukebox.

MR CONNOR: Correct.

MR FLINN: Brilliant. Mrs NIN, could we go back to the plan just for a moment at 1-3?

The reason I'm coming back to this, Mr CONNOR, is because you mentioned a moment ago three alcoves, and I just wanted to clarify that, because if we look at the plan, we can see two alcoves on the left, and then behind that, we've got the ladies' toilets and stairs going up. So is it right that there were two alcoves on the left?

MR CONNOR: Oh definitely two, yes. Definitely two on the left.

MR FLINN: Okay, great.

MR CONNOR: But between the two, the table was right on the corner of the two alcoves. Yes, I can see on side that's where we were sat.

MR FLINN: Right, and what we'll do, Mr CONNOR, is in a moment I'll take you to another diagram which I think will show that quite clearly. I just wanted to ask you, before we do that, in the alcoves, do you have any recollection of the bench seats going around the outside of them?

MR CONNOR: Yes, there were bench seats going round the outside, yes.

MR FLINN: Can you recall the bench seats being open or closed underneath them?

MR CONNOR: I can't remember.

MR FLINN: Does it help if I put the question in this way, can you remember if it was possible to store anything under the bench seats?

MR CONNOR: I don't think so.

MR FLINN: Alright. Now, we'll just take you back to the events once you entered the Horse and Groom Public House. In your statement that you gave you said there were about 20 people in the pub, and also you said a moment ago that you went there at 6.30 because you knew it was going to open around that time. So is it right that when you first went into the pub it wasn't too busy?

MR CONNOR: We were the first three in. We went to the bar, sat at that table, and then a bloke and a girl come in, bought a drink, and stood by the jukebox.

MR FLINN: Right, thank you.

MR CONNOR: (Inaudible) jukebox. And the bloke had a hold-all with him, a bag. And he was at the side of the jukebox ...

MR FLINN: Perfect, thank ...

MR CONNOR: ... and then ...

MR FLINN: Go on.

MR CONNOR: ... the pub started filling up. That's when they ended up, they were, like, 20 or whatever in ...

MR FLINN: Mmm hmm.

MR CONNOR: ... and then a few more come in, it started getting busier, and we was going to have another drink, but we decided to go down to the Seven Sisters. So we give the table to three girls, and I think a couple of lads was with them. Because all the seats were more or less getting taken up, so they thanked us for the seats. If we'd have stayed in there and had another pint it had been us.

MR FLINN: I follow, MR CONNOR. Once again, it's very helpful. Let's just break it down a little bit. Mrs NIN, could we go to 9-1 on case lines?

Right, I think I've given you the wrong reference. If you just give me one moment, I'll get the right reference. Pardon me, it's 9-2.

Mr CONNOR, we understand this to be a plan which you marked up or marked up with assistance showing where you were when you went into the pub.

So it's another plan, and you can see there on the left, there are the two alcoves, and just as you've mentioned to us, there was a table at the end of the partition, which ...

MR CONNOR: Yeah.

MR FLINN: I think there's a circle which has been drawn then and it says 'Table' and it says 'A'. Based on your statement and based on what you've said, that's where we understand you went and sat down, is that correct?

MR CONNOR: That is correct.

MR FLINN: And you've said you were the first three people in. And who are you with at that moment, when you went and sat at the table?

MR CONNOR: Roman TYMKIN and REHILL.

MR FLINN: Right, you were still with those guys. And you said you ...

MR CONNOR: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... mention a lady and a man going and standing in front of the jukebox, is that what we can see marked at D?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: And underneath the partition, towards the bottom left of the screen there's marked F, and you're saying when you said a group of guardsmen were in that area, so I presume that they built up as the night wore on. Can you remember a group of guards, Scots Guards, gathering in that alcove as the night wore on?

MR CONNOR: Well, I can remember quite a few military came in, yes.

MR FLINN: Okay. So over the course of the evening, quite a high proportion of the clientele that came into the pub were military recruits and personnel, is that right?

MR CONNOR: That's right, yes.

MR FLINN: Just for completeness, you can see just by the bottom left corner of the bar, the counter, there's marked E. In your statement you said there was some Teddy Boys at that area, can you recall that now?

MR CONNOR: Roughly, yes. Roughly, yeah.

MR FLINN: Righto. Now, C, over the left-hand side of the page, this is in the second alcove, you said in your statement you recall of a girl of about 18 years wearing blue and white top jumper, with an older couple whom you thought were her parents. Do you have any recollection of that now?
At Position C?

MR CONNOR: I can roughly remember, yes.

MR FLINN: The court's heard some evidence that there was a group of people there celebrating a birthday party, does that jog any recollections for you?

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: Fine. Is it right that you stayed at the table marked as A from the time you entered until about 20.30 in the evening?

MR CONNOR: Yes, that's right. We give the table up to three girls that came in.

MR FLINN: Righto. Is there anything else that stands out in your mind now over those two hours that you were based at Position A?

MR CONNOR: Not really, no.

MR FLINN: Not really. Again, for completeness, Position B in the second alcove, to the left side of your screen, Mr CONNOR, we understand that it was Private LYNSKEY was at that position. Do you recall that?

MR CONNOR: No.

MR FLINN: No recollection now, that's fine. Now, you decided you were going to leave the Horse and Groom and go to, you've referred to 'Seven Sisters,' but I think you mean the Seven Stars Public House, is that right?

MR CONNOR: That's correct, I just got it wrong.

MR FLINN: And you left with Privates REHILL and TYMKIN. You went with them?

MR CONNOR: Yes, just the three of us.

MR FLINN: Just the three of you. And you've said that you gave up your table to three girls who took the table at Position A.

MR CONNOR: That's right. They was with two lads who was at the bar getting drinks.

MR FLINN: I follow. You went to the Seven Stars Public House ... we can take this quicker. You had a couple of drinks there, and then you decided to go to the Three Pigeons Pub, is that right?

MR CONNOR: That's correct.

MR FLINN: Right. Mrs NIN, could we bring up Caselines reference 11-271? Now, this is a map, Mr CONNOR, and just to orient your movements that evening. Heather, I wanted to just, sort of, confirm if we look towards the bottom left of that screen, you should see a yellow label with some red writing, which says 'The Seven Stars Public House.' Can you see

that, towards the bottom left of that map? We might need to zoom in a little bit.

MR CONNOR: I can't see that, no.

MR FLINN: The cursor's moving on it now if that helps.

MR CONNOR: Yes, now I remember, when we walked down from the Horse and Groom down the high street, we turned left, and the Seven Sisters was there.

MR FLINN: Righto. So we can see at the top, you might be able to see, of what you can see on the screen at the moment, North Street. So I take it that you walked down North Street and then turned left into Swan Lane to get to the Seven Stars. But I'm now interested ...

MR CONNOR: Correct.

MR FLINN: ... in your journey back. Did you walk back up North Street in the direction of the Horse and Groom?

MR CONNOR: No, we came down to the corner and went up the other one.

MR FLINN: Okay. Right, so you went up the street at the bottom of the image that we can see there. Heather, you might have to zoom out a little bit if possible.

Right, so that, the road at the bottom of the screen, is that the one that ...

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: ... you walked up to get to the Three Pigeons?

MR CONNOR: That's the one, yes.

MR FLINN: Brilliant.

MR CONNOR: A bit, more or less (inaudible) before it went back round to North Street, yeah, that's where the Three Pigeons was, yes.

MR FLINN: I follow. And if we zoom in, Heather, again, towards the right of the screen ... a bit more, if that's alright, Mrs NIN. You might not be able to see it, but about round about the center of the screen there's a yellow square with the number 40 in it, and we understand that to be the Three Pigeons. Can you see that in the center ...

MR CONNOR: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... of the screen? And is that right? That's where the Three Pigeons was? So you walked up the road and turned left into the Three ...

MR CONNOR: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... Pigeons pub.

MR CONNOR: Yes, that's correct.

MR FLINN: Brilliant. You were still with Privates TYMKIN and REHILL?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: When you went into the Three Pigeons, I understand it was, that you'd been in there a little while when you heard a bang.

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Can you just talk us through that? What do you recall about being in there and hearing a bang?

MR CONNOR: I just said, "Look," I just said to, well, the three of us, well, me and TYMKIN, together, "What were that?" And he said, "It's a bomb." I said, "What do you mean, it's a bomb?" He said, "I've heard too many in Belfast." He said, "It must be round the corner," so we finished our pint, went round the corner, and then we saw the pub in pieces.

MR FLINN: So when you heard the bang, initially you didn't know what it was. You didn't make a connection with it being a bomb blast yourself.

MR CONNOR: No, because I've never heard a bomb blast before.

MR FLINN: And it was Private REHILL who said, "It's a bomb."

MR CONNOR: That's right, yes. Paddy said, "It's a bomb, I've heard too many of them."

MR FLINN: Thank you. Do you recall what time it was?

MR CONNOR: What, when we went back it must have been nine, half nine, something like that, I think.

MR FLINN: Well, maybe we could help a little bit. In your statement you talk about Private REHILL looking at his watch and saying, "It's 20.50 exactly." Does that trigger any recollection for you now?

MR CONNOR: Not really, no, sorry.

CORONER: Sorry, let's go to the statement and show him the statement.

MR FLINN: Of course, yes. Heather, what we'll do is we'll go to the typed version of the statement. So the document reference ...

CORONER: **8-15.**

MR FLINN: ... is S889, and the page reference is 8-15.

CORONER: **I think we need to scroll down a bit.**

MR FLINN: Mrs NIN, could we scroll down a little bit? It should be on the second page of that document.

CORONER: **Keep going. Towards the bottom of that page. Yeah.**

MR FLINN: Mr CONNOR, I'll read it out to you.

CORONER: **Sorry, no, the other way. Slightly ...**

MRS NIN: Sorry.

CORONER: **A little bit more.**

MR FLINN: There we go, that's fine. Now, on the bottom half of the screen, we can see there it says, "When we were in the Three Pigeons, we heard a bang. REHILL who has heard explosions before said, 'That a bomb.' I remember he looked at his watch and said that it was 20.50 hours exactly. Two people then came in and said that there had been an explosion, so we all left the bar and went to the Horse and Groom."

Does that help jogging your recollection now?

MR CONNOR: Yes, that's about right, yes.

MR FLINN: That sounds accurate, okay.

MR CONNOR: Yeah.

MR FLINN: When you left the bar to go to the Horse and Groom, once again, was that still with Privates TYMKIN and REHILL?

MR CONNOR: Yes, it was the three of us.

MR FLINN: What did you see when you got to the Horse and Groom?

MR CONNOR: We see the pub in pieces.

MR FLINN: Were there any fire engines or police cars there already, or had they not arrived at that point?

MR CONNOR: I think there was a couple there. I think there was a couple of police cars before the fire brigade come and what have you.

MR FLINN: In your statement you said you offered assistance but were told it wasn't needed. Can I just ask, can you remember who you offered assistance to?

MR CONNOR: Either it was the fire brigade or the police, but they said, "No, we'll sort it all out, you don't need to." Bang (?). So, okay, they wouldn't let us assist them.

MR FLINN: How long did you stay at the scene before you went off somewhere else?

MR CONNOR: I can't exactly say. We were there for a bit.

MR FLINN: Are we talking more than ten minutes?

MR CONNOR: I think they more or less moved us on. So it would be no less than ten minutes.

MR FLINN: No less than ten minutes, okay. You've mentioned that you saw the pub in pieces, is there anything else that stands out in your mind about what you saw of the aftermath?

MR CONNOR: Yeah, when they were bringing the bodies out.

MR FLINN: Right, so you saw people being brought out. Were the bodies, that you say you saw, on stretchers?

MR CONNOR: Yeah, they were on stretchers, covered over with, like, whatever, tarpaulin over the top of them.

MR FLINN: Right. Were you aware at that moment that they were in fact dead?

MR CONNOR: Yes.

MR FLINN: Do you recall ...

MR CONNOR: I remember one of the stretchers, as they were coming out, a girl's arm flopped over the stretcher and just fell out.

MR FLINN: I understand.

MR CONNOR: Then I knew they were dead.

MR FLINN: When you left the scene, you went to another pub, is that right?

MR CONNOR: Yes, so we went down the road to another pub before we went back to Aldershot.

MR FLINN: And that was because the police went to that pub and cleared it out, is that right?

MR CONNOR: That's right, yeah.

MR FLINN: There is some evidence that the court might hear in a moment from another witness that says that was the King's Arms pub, does that ring true for you?

MR CONNOR: I can't remember the name of the other pub, no.

MR FLINN: That's fine. Mr CONNOR, you've been very helpful and clear. I don't have any further questions for you, but some others in the court might have, so I'll hand you back over. Thank you very much.

MR CONNOR: Okay, thank you.

MS BARTON QC: No thank you, sir.

CORONER: **Mr CONNOR, there are no further questions. I am very grateful to you for the evidence you've given, it's been very helpful. That now concludes the evidence you're going to give to this inquest, so once again, many thanks, and we're going to cut the line, but thank you very much.**

MR CONNOR: Could I just ask you one question?

CORONER: **You can ask.**

MR CONNOR: On the list of guards, all the people that had been at, you know, to court ...

CORONER: Yes.

MR CONNOR: ... my two mates, TYMKIN and REHILL, they're not on the list.

CORONER: Yes, I think Mr REHILL is. In fact, actually I think I'm going to hear, I think Mr REHILL might be here in the room.

UNKNOWN: Yes.

CORONER: So, I'm going to see, so don't worry, we've got the evidence. And Mr REHILL is here with me. He's about to give live evidence. So thank you very much. Thank you.

MR CONNOR: Okay, thank you.

CORONER: Cheerio.

MR CONNOR: Bye.

CORONER: Bye. Right. In fact, Mr REHILL, we're going to have a short break. So we'll be on break for about a quarter of an hour or so, and when we come back I'll call you in to give evidence live. Thank you very much. Thank you.

UNKNOWN: Court, please rise.

CORONER: Thank you. Our next witness please, Mr REHILL.

MR REHILL (sworn):

CORONER: Thank you very much, do sit down please. Would you give me your full name, please?

MR REHILL: Rowland John REHILL.

CORONER: Thank you. Mr REHILL, can I ask you just to, in fact you can pull that microphone just slightly towards you if you would be so kind. That is lovely, thank you.

MR REHILL: Sure.

CORONER: I am going to pass you over to Mr FLINN who sits closest to you who is going to ask you a few questions on my behalf. Please keep your voice up nice and loudly so we can hear you clearly.

MR REHILL: Okay.

CORONER: And do not rush ahead too quickly because people will be taking notes of what you are saying. Thank you.

MR FLINN: Mr REHILL, good morning.

MR REHILL: Morning.

MR FLINN: You've given your name to the court. You don't need to tell us exactly where you live, but roundabouts where are you living now?

MR REHILL: I live in Essex.

MR FLINN: And are you still working or are you retired?

MR REHILL: No, I'm retired.

MR FLINN: What I would like to do first is take you to the handwritten versions of the statements you gave back in 1974, and there were two of them. Mrs NIN, could we go to case lines reference 20-1? So you should see on

the screen in front of you a handwritten statement. It is dated the 7th of October 1974. Underneath that date, is that your signature?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is.

MR FLINN: Mrs NIN, if we go to the end of that document. Just up slightly there, is that your signature there again?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is.

MR FLINN: Mrs NIN, we will now go to the other statement 20-5.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Once again, we can see there a date 21st of October 1974. Once again, is that your signature?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is.

MR FLINN: And same process end of the document. Once again, I think it is just above about where the cursor is. Is that your signature there as well?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is.

MR FLINN: Are you able to confirm that the contents of the statement are true?

MR REHILL: To the best of my knowledge, yes.

MR FLINN: Thank you very much. On the 5th of October 1974 I have you as being 20 years old, does that sound right?

MR REHILL: That's correct.

MR FLINN: We'll just show you a photo of yourself at that age, you might have already seen it in court, but we'll just bring it up again, 4-293. And there at the top right of the page.

MR REHILL: Yeah, that's correct.

MR FLINN: That's you?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: We'll start off with a few brief questions about your military career. In the second statement you gave, we don't need to turn to it, it says that in December 1973 you joined the parachute regiment.

MR REHILL: That's correct.

MR FLINN: What did you do before that?

MR REHILL: I tried to join the army in Northern Ireland, but unfortunately on three separate occasions they blew the recruitment office up...

MR FLINN: So that didn't happen?

MR REHILL: So that didn't happen, so I then moved to live with my uncle in Hull. And (inaudible) I was there until I actually signed up.

MR FLINN: Right. So you have had some experience living in Northern Ireland.

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: It might help just to short circuit it, there's a nice summary that you provided in one of your statements. Document S88A and case lines reference 8-8. Mr REHILL, and actually if I could ask you to just read

that paragraph which starts off with, 'I was born in Toronto.' If you could read it aloud that would be helpful.

MR REHILL: Okay. 'I was born in Toronto, Canada. I left with my parents at the age of around about four and a half months. We then went to live in Belfast Northern Ireland. My last address in Belfast was 1, Thirlmere Gardens, Belfast 15. We left there in June 1966, from there we moved to the USA. My mother and father are still in the USA, but I left to return to Northern Ireland on the 28th of May 1973. I stayed there for four months living with my mother's brother in Cedar Park. And October of that year I went to stay with my father's brother Alexander REHILL in Dawnay Road, Bilton near Hull until December 1973 when I joined the Parachute Regiment. When I go out to Belfast on leave and this time, I stayed with my grandmother Mrs Agnus BOWLIES WALKER in Cedar Avenue in Belfast. The last time I was there on leave it was in July 1974 for two weeks. I am Protestant by religion.' It is then signed by me.

MR FLINN: It has your name after that. Is that an accurate summary of your life history up until enlisting?

MR REHILL: A short version of it, yeah.

MR FLINN: A short version, yes. You moved around a lot?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Yeah. Now, your unit in the military your statement says Eighth Platoon C Company third parachute regiment. Is that right?

MR REHILL: That's correct, yeah.

MR FLINN: And like we heard from Mr CONNOR that was stationed at Bruneval Barracks in Aldershot.

MR REHILL: It was, yeah.

MR FLINN: And that's where you lived at the time of the Guildford pub bombings?

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: We'll just briefly go through the training that you had after you enlisted. Could you tell us a little bit about your basic training, how long did it last?

MR REHILL: Approximately six months.

MR FLINN: And you had drills and physical exercises during that training?

MR REHILL: Yes, we did, yeah.

MR FLINN: Did you have any classroom work or lectures that you can recall?

MR REHILL: Yes, quite a bit actually.

MR FLINN: Did those lectures cover the threat that was posed to military personnel by the IRA?

MR REHILL: They did near the end of the training, yes.

MR FLINN: Right, near the end of the training was it, did that training occur after recruits had been allowed to go out on leave into the town? It wasn't ...

MR REHILL: That was roundabout when we got our first leave because we were there quite, you know, for quite some time before that, yeah.

MR FLINN: Right. So were you permitted on occasions to go out into towns like Guildford on leave before you'd had that training on the threat posed by the IRA?

MR REHILL: No.

MR FLINN: No. In terms of the content of that training could you give us a brief summary of the sorts of things that it covered in respect of the IRA threat?

MR REHILL: Basically just, you know, be aware, be on the lookout for any sort of unusual incidences, people being following you or whatever. And also make sure that there's cert packages or anything else that's lying around that, you know, just make sure and make sure other people are aware of the same thing at the same time.

MR FLINN: And you were made aware that as a military person you could be a particular target?

MR REHILL: Yeah, I pretty well knew that.

MR FLINN: Yeah, so and certainly ...

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... based on where you lived you were well aware of that?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Yeah. But it also formed part of the training?

MR REHILL: It did, yeah.

MR FLINN: Just in terms of practical things, can you recall things about looking under cars, checking mail or anything like that? You've talked about general awareness, do you recover those sorts of things?

MR REHILL: That was usually covered when we were on, doing guard duties because that was their normal entries into the camp, all the guards were all checked coming in and out of the camp.

MR FLINN: Now, you might have heard Mr CONNOR's evidence about not leaving the camp wearing uniform, can you recall that?

MR REHILL: Yeah, that was normal, yeah. Nobody ...

MR FLINN: Sorry ...

MR REHILL: Nobody wore uniform outside of in our normal working hours.

MR FLINN: No. And did you understand that, like Mr CONNOR, to be because it could identify you more easily to someone like the IRA?

MR REHILL: Absolutely, yeah.

MR FLINN: But would you agree that even if you weren't in uniform based on your haircuts and different accents congregating together with young men you might have been identifiable anyway?

MR REHILL: We were very identifiable, yeah.

MR FLINN: Right. I asked Mr CONNOR some questions about the BIKINI alert system, do you have any recollection of that alert system?

MR REHILL: Yes, there was being quite prominent, we were using it in depot before we went up to the battalion and also when we got to the battalion it was still there.

MR FLINN: Righto. Could I just ask you to keep your voice up a little bit?

MR REHILL: Yes, sure (inaudible).

MR FLINN: Thank you very much. So could you talk us through so far as your understanding of the terms BIKINI black, BIKINI black special, do you recall those terms?

MR REHILL: Most of the time we were on amber, and it used to go to black which obviously is one level up. And then BIKINI black special we never actually got to. But, yeah, another time (?).

MR FLINN: So in your recollection amber was a default or a normal status, but then as it got more severe it went to black and maybe up to black special?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: There has been some evidence that it was actually the other way round, so it would be black being normal, black special a step above and then up to amber and in extreme cases red. Do you think you might have that the wrong way around?

MR REHILL: Possibly, it's been a long time.

MR FLINN: It has been a long ...

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... time, so no worries about that. Part One and Part Two orders, do you have any recollections of them?

MR REHILL: Yes, but don't ask me to explain them because it's been a long time.

MR FLINN: The court heard some evidence about Part One orders containing guidance or information about security, does that ring any bells for you?

MR REHILL: Yeah, Part One was like a general synopsis of what was going on and what was to happen in the next month or so. And then Part Two orders were like promotions and whatnot.

MR FLINN: Okay, so part two more administrative?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Were you required to read the Part One and Part Two orders?

MR REHILL: Yes, we were, yeah.

MR FLINN: And where were they made available to you if you can remember?

MR REHILL: They were posted in the company office and sometimes they were posted in the block, Pelican (?) block as well.

MR FLINN: And just stepping back for a moment, again about the BIKINI alert system, can you recall how you were made aware of what the BIKINI alert level was on any particular day?

MR REHILL: That was usually on a chalkboard outside the guardroom and also it would be the entrance to the camp as well.

MR FLINN: Can you recall if there was a time in your training when you sort of had to stay on the camp for a period of weeks or a period of time at the early part of your training and you weren't allowed to leave the camp?

MR REHILL: Yeah, the initial four or five weeks we were confined to camp basically.

MR FLINN: Right. When you were allowed to leave the camp were there any restrictions on where you could go or what you were allowed to do?

MR REHILL: Not at that point, no.

MR FLINN: Were you given any advice or guidance about places to avoid?

MR REHILL: Not at that stage, no.

MR FLINN: Right. You said, 'not at that stage', did there come a point where you were given guidance of that nature?

MR REHILL: After the bombings basically it was a lot more.

MR FLINN: A lot more prescribing?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: And in terms of what they said after the bombing, can you recall what the guidance was about where to avoid?

MR REHILL: They specified different pubs that we shouldn't go in, you know, because they knew they were certain military pubs and there was a lot of military personnel there so try to avoid them. If there was a lot of people there then avoid them, move off to somewhere else.

MR FLINN: Okay. Turning then to the 5th of October 1974 had you been into Guildford before that date?

MR REHILL: Yes, I had, yeah.

MR FLINN: How many times can you recall roughly?

MR REHILL: I don't know how many, ten or 12.

MR FLINN: So you were quite familiar ...

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... with the town?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Turning to the day itself, the statement that you gave said you went into Guildford at about 13.00 hours, so one o'clock in the afternoon. Can you recall what you did that morning on the 5th of October?

MR REHILL: No.

MR FLINN: No. What would you normally do on a Saturday morning?

MR REHILL: Usually dropped off my washing in the launderette and then picked it up after that. And then ...

MR FLINN: A bit of free time?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: The statement mentions going into Guildford with a Private JOHNSON, does that ring a bell for you now?

MR REHILL: Yes, it does, yeah.

MR FLINN: Yeah, what was his first name?

MR REHILL: We used to call him Jonno.

MR FLINN: And it's certainly not a memory to yourself.

MR REHILL: No.

MR FLINN: So no problem. You travelled by train?

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: Again, your statement talks about walking around Guildford and buying some gear, I don't need to ask you any questions about that. But what we'll do is we'll just like we did with Mr CONNOR briefly take you through the photos of those just to confirm your recollection, maybe jog some memories. We don't have a photo of Private JOHNSON I believe. We do have Mr CONNOR, you saw him on screen, but let's look at the photo again of him as a young man. This is in case lines

reference 4-191. Bottom left of that screen on the left side is Mr
CONNOR.

MR REHILL: Yes, that's correct.

MR FLINN: Next case line reference 4-323. And this should be on this page, Mr
Roman TYMKIN. Here we go, the right-hand side.

MR REHILL: Yeah, TYMKEW.

MR FLINN: TYMKEW is it?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Okay, thank you. And then finally, you mentioned a Private
LYNSKEY, we'll just look at him briefly, 4-257. Do you recognize Mr
LYNSKEY?

MR REHILL: Just about.

MR FLINN: Just about, a vague recollection.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Your statement says that you went to have something to eat in Guildford
and then went to the Seven Stars Public House at about 5.35 in the
evening, does that sound right?

MR REHILL: Yes, correct.

MR FLINN: Am I right that you went to the Seven Stars Pub alone?

MR REHILL: Yes, because me and JOHNSON had gone shopping and the other two
had gone to the fairground.

MR FLINN: Right.

MR REHILL: That's why we got split up. And then I went down to the ... He went back to camp.

MR FLINN: Mmm hmm.

MR REHILL: And I went down to the Seven Stars.

MR FLINN: And then you left at about 6.30 to go to the Horse and Groom Public House. We don't need to turn to it, your second statement said that you had seen Private LYNSKEY in the Seven Stars and he told you that Alexander CONNOR and Roman TYMKEW were at the Horse and Groom Public House. Is that what prompted you to go there?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is, yeah.

MR FLINN: Just setting aside the fact that they were there, what was it about the Seven Stars and the Horse and Groom that prompted you to go to them?

MR REHILL: Usually full of WRAC.

MR FLINN: Right. And we've heard some evidence that they were popular with both young men and the young ladies who were recruits to the military. So you went there to see if you might meet a nice WRAC girl?

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: Yeah. We'll look at the public street now and this is 4-555 is the reference. We can see there the pub with the bus stop in front of it. I don't need to ask you any questions about that. We'll turn to the layout

of the pub 1-3. You might have seen me taking Mr CONNOR through this. We can see the two alcoves on the left, what we've heard there's a snug on the right, the bar directly in front of you slightly to the right as you walk in. Towards the back ladies' toilets and the stairs. Does that trigger any recollections for you as to the layout of the Horse and Groom?

MR REHILL: Yeah, that's pretty much how I see it, yeah.

MR FLINN: Alright. Did you see the photos that were on screen that I went through with Mr CONNOR with the photos of the jukebox and ...

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: ... fireplace?

MR REHILL: Yeah, we did, yeah.

MR FLINN: And did they look accurate to you in terms of aligning ...

MR REHILL: Yes, they did.

MR FLINN: ... with your recollection?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Fine, I won't take you through again in that case. Do you recall the bench seats around the alcoves on the left-hand side?

MR REHILL: Yes, yeah.

MR FLINN: Do you recall if they were open or closed?

MR REHILL: I was thinking about it, no, I can't, no,

MR FLINN: That's fine. In terms of going into the Horse and Groom, you went there from the Seven Stars Pub, is it the case that you met with Mr CONNOR and Mr TYMKEW outside the pub and went in with them?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is, yeah.

MR FLINN: And Mr CONNOR said that you were literally the first three in the pub, is that in accordance with your recollection as well?

MR REHILL: Yeah, yes, it is.

MR FLINN: Right. And so that being the case the pub got much busier as the time went on when you were there?

MR REHILL: Yeah, it got very busy.

MR FLINN: The court has heard some evidence about it being a popular military pub and we've heard some evidence about it being two thirds or three quarters military personnel in the pub generally. Would that be about right from your recollection?

MR REHILL: Yes normally.

MR FLINN: As well as some regulars?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Mrs NIN could we go to case lines reference 9-3? Mr REHILL, I understand that this is a floorplan which you marked up and we can see there the partition between the two alcoves. You've, like Mr CONNOR did, marked a table there at A.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: And you've also marked three positions around it identifying where you
Mr TYMKEW and Mr CONNOR were sitting, does that sound right?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is, yeah.

MR FLINN: Okay. And for completeness, your statement says you were specifically
at position B, I don't know if you can remember that?

MR REHILL: Yeah, it was, yeah.

MR FLINN: Right, you do remember that. Your statement also says that Private
LYNSKEY came in and sat at position E. We won't go into any more
detail about that. But is it right that you stayed at the table at A broadly
from the time you entered until the time you left ...

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: ... the pub?

MR REHILL: Yes, it is.

MR FLINN: And that was at about 20.30 hours, so 8.30?

MR REHILL: Maybe a little bit before that.

MR FLINN: Just a little before that.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Okay. In your statement you don't mention seeing anything odd or
suspicious over the course of your time in the pub, is that right?

MR REHILL: Um ...

MR FLINN: I'll put it another way. Do you now have a recollection of seeing anything odd or suspicious?

MR REHILL: I actually identified persons that were in the pub which looked suspicious at the time.

MR FLINN: Right. And you described them in your statement, is that right?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Right. But aside from that thinking about that after the event, at the time when you were in the pub you were just having an evening with your friends?

MR REHILL: Basically yes.

MR FLINN: Right.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: And that was the whole time at that table with Mr CONNOR and Mr TYMKIN?

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Your statement say that you went to the Seven Stars Public House, but only stayed for five minutes and decided to go back to the Horse and Groom. But on route you changed your mind and went to the Three Pigeons instead.

MR REHILL: That's correct.

MR FLINN: I won't take you to the map that we've seen because you would have seen that on screen with ...

MR REHILL: Yeah, that's ...

MR FLINN: ... Mr CONNOR.

MR REHILL: ... the, yeah, the same route.

MR FLINN: Same route. You walked up the high street, turned left ...

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... into the Three Pigeons. And all three of you went into that pub together as well?

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: When you got there you bought a drink?

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: And then we've heard evidence of really about hearing a bang, can you recall how long you'd been in the Three Pigeons when you heard the bang roughly?

MR REHILL: Not very long because we'd only drank sort of half a pint, you know, because we'd only just got the one pint in.

MR FLINN: Thank you. Talk us through essentially the hearing of the bomb and what you did.

MR REHILL: I mean as soon as the bomb went off, I turned around and said, 'That's a bomb,' heard enough of them. And just automatically checked my watch because I do.

MR FLINN: Yeah. Can I ask what was it about the bang or the noise which immediately made you make that connection as opposed to something like a gas explosion or something like that?

MR REHILL: We just had the whole series of them last time I was in Northern Ireland, and they were virtually going off every 15 minutes.

MR FLINN: Yes.

MR REHILL: And that's why I ended up doing the watch thing because I used to time them to see how far there was between each one.

MR FLINN: Right. We've seen on the map that we looked at with Mr CONNOR that the Three Pigeons was quite close to the Horse and Groom but not immediately next door. From where you were in the pub was it particularly loud or was it more in the distance?

MR REHILL: We were right at the back end of the pub, and it was actually upstairs it was almost at the back wall that was facing the Horse and Groom.

MR FLINN: Okay. So was it ...?

MR REHILL: We got quite a vibration off it as well.

MR FLINN: Okay.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: We've heard some evidence that we went through with Mr CONNOR about you looking at your watch, can you recall that now?

MR REHILL: Yes, I did.

MR FLINN: And what time was it when you looked at your watch?

MR REHILL: 20.50.

MR FLINN: Do you have a clear recollection of that?

MR REHILL: Yes.

MR FLINN: Okay. Your statement said a few seconds later someone came running in and confirmed your suspicion that there'd ...

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... been a bomb at the Horse and Groom. Do you recall anything else about what they said at that point?

MR REHILL: No, not really just ...

CORONER: **Can I just ask you, was your watch reasonably accurate at the time do you think?**

MR REHILL: Yes.

CORONER: **Yes.**

MR FLINN: You then left the pub and went down to the Horse and Groom.

MR REHILL: Yeah, basically just finished the pints off and went straight round the corner.

MR FLINN: What did you see there?

MR REHILL: Devastation, there was one ambulance and there was no police and the fire brigade were just turning up at that point.

MR FLINN: You said a moment ago that you finished your pint before walking down there, how long do you think it took you to get to the pub, to the Horse and Groom after having heard the bang?

MR REHILL: Less than a minute.

MR FLINN: So very quickly finished ...

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: ... your pint and then walked straight there.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: Less than a minute, but already an ambulance there in your recollection?

MR REHILL: Yeah, it was, well it was just turning up, there was blue lights flashing at the time.

MR FLINN: Blue lights, certainly.

MR REHILL: Yeah.

MR FLINN: You don't think that was a police car?

MR REHILL: No, it definitely wasn't the police.

MR FLINN: Okay. Mr CONNOR said that you offered assistance, can you recall doing that?

MR REHILL: We were actually about right on the edge of the building and there was some people stumbling out. And I remember looking into the actual, the hole which was at the table we were actually sitting at, and I thought to myself, 'That was a lucky one.'

MR FLINN: When you say looked into the pub, was this from the street or down the side alley to the left of the pub?

MR REHILL: No, it was from the street.

MR FLINN: It was from North Street?

MR REHILL: From the front of the building.

MR FLINN: Right. So do you think you looked in through a door or a window?

MR REHILL: No, there wasn't much left of the windows and doors, it was all pretty well smashed.

MR FLINN: Right. So you looked at them and saw, you said you saw a hole or you looked through a hole?

MR REHILL: No, I looked, I saw a hole.

MR FLINN: You saw a hole.

MR REHILL: Directly below the table we had been sitting at.

MR FLINN: I understand. Your offer of assistance wasn't (inaudible)?

MR REHILL: Well, the police arrived then and then they started ushering everybody away.

MR FLINN: So you were moved on. Before I ask about what you did next briefly, you heard Mr CONNOR's evidence about seeing bodies being brought out, do you recall that?

MR REHILL: Yes, yes, I do, yeah.

MR FLINN: Do you recall how many, what you understood, to be bodies being brought out?

MR REHILL: I didn't really count them at this stage, no.

MR FLINN: Right. Did you know that they were dead because someone had told you? Or did you believe them to be dead based on you seeing them being seen carried out on stretchers?

MR REHILL: Just the way they looked, yeah, it was ...

MR FLINN: I understand. Your statement says that afterwards you went to the Kings Arms and that pub was being cleared out by the police. You walked around a bit and then went back to camp, is that accurate?

MR REHILL: More or less, we just more or less finished off in there and went straight back to the station again.

MR FLINN: Were you aware of the second blast at the Seven Stars?

MR REHILL: We had actually walked down to the end of the alleyway, and everybody was running out of there and with us just reaching it that bomb went off as well.

MR FLINN: So you were actually a witness to that blast as well?

MR REHILL: Well, we didn't ... yeah.

MR FLINN: From a distance?

MR REHILL: In the fact, yeah, from a distance at the end of the lane.

MR FLINN: I understand. Mr REHILL, you've been very helpful, thank you very much. I don't have any further questions for you for the moment, but I'll hand you back to the coroner who will go around the room.

MR REHILL: Okay.

MR FLINN: Thank you.

CORONER: **Thank you, Mr REHILL. Ms BARTON?**

MS BARTON QC: No thank you, sir.

CORONER: **Mr REHILL. Thank you very much, Mr REHILL, that does conclude your evidence. It has been very helpful to have that picture and the timings, so I am grateful to you. But that concludes your evidence, so you are free to stay or to go as you choose, thank you.**

MR REHILL: Okay, thank you very much.

CORONER: **Thank you. Our next witness is Helen WOOD.**

MRS HELEN WOOD (sworn):

CORONER: **Thank you very much, do sit down please.**

MRS WOOD: Thank you.

CORONER: **Would you give me your full name please?**

MRS WOOD: Helen WOOD.

CORONER: Thank you. I am going to pass you over in a moment to Ms **KUZMENKO** who is going to ask you some questions on my behalf. But your voice is nice and loud, can you try to keep it up so it maintains that volume? Do not rush ahead too quickly please, Mrs **WOOD**, because we have to take a note of the things you are saying.

MRS WOOD: Okay.

CORONER: But I will ask Ms **KUZMENKO** now if you are ready to ask you some questions, thank you.

MS KUZMENKO: Thank you. Good afternoon, Mrs **WOOD**.

MRS WOOD: Afternoon.

MS KUZMENKO: Now, without confirming your full address, can you just tell us what town you're from?

MS WOOD: Pontypridd.

MS KUZMENKO: And at the time of the bombings am I right that you weren't yet married?

MRS WOOD: Single, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: And what was your maiden name?

MRS WOOD: ATKINS.

MS KUZMENKO: Now, at the time of the bombings you made two statements to the police, and you received typed of copies of those, didn't you?

MRS WOOD: Yes.

MS KUZMENKO: And so I'm just going to show you the original versions so we can verify your signature. Mrs NIN, can you turn up 20-9, please? So this statement is dated the 9th of October 74, so that is four days after the bombings. At the top there is a signature sort of midway to the right.

MRS WOOD: Yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Is that your signature?

MRS WOOD: Yes, that's right.

MS KUZMENKO: And, Mrs NIN, if you could scroll to the bottom of the statement, please.

And is that your signature also?

MRS WOOD: Yes, that's right.

MS KUZMENKO: Thank you. And, Mrs NIN, could you take us to 20-11? The second statement dated 16th of October, again there's a signature there, is that yours?

MRS WOOD: Yes, that's right, yes.

MS KUZMENKO: Thank you. And to the bottom, and that signature?

MRS WOOD: Yes.

MS KUZMENKO: Thank you. Now, have you had a chance to reread the typed versions of those statements?

MRS WOOD: Yes, I have.

MS KUZMENKO: And can you confirm that the contents of those statements are true?

MRS WOOD: Yes.

MS KUZMENKO: That's brilliant, okay. So I'm just going to take you now back to 1974 to the time you started at the WRAC. So I understand you joined it would have been around the 16th of September, does that sound about right?

MRS WOOD: That's right, that's correct.

MS KUZMENKO: And how old would you have been?

MRS WOOD: 18.

MS KUZMENKO: 18. Now, Mrs NIN, can you bring up 4-89? Hopefully we'll see a photo of you from the time. So scroll down second row on the left, is that you?

MRS WOOD: That's me, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Thank you. And so you were 18, did you have any jobs before you enlisted?

MRS WOOD: Yes, I worked in a soap factory and a soft pop factory ...

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm.

MRS WOOD: ... for about four years.

MS KUZMENKO: Four years, okay. And so when you joined aged 18 you would have had basic training.

MRS WOOD: Yes.

MS KUZMENKO: And did you finish that training?

MRS WOOD: Yes, we did six weeks.

MS KUZMENKO: Six weeks. And did you do any further training after that?

MRS WOOD: No, I came out.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And throughout your six weeks were you always based at the Queen Elizabeth barracks?

MRS WOOD: Yes, that's correct.

MS KUZMENKO: And so you lived there essentially?

MRS WOOD: Yes, yes.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And trying to imagine what it looks like, was there any sort of fences around the perimeter or anything like that?

MRS WOOD: Yes, I think so, yes, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: And on entry to the camp was there something like a guard house or ...

MRS WOOD: Yes.

MS KUZMENKO: ... offices? Okay.

MRS WOOD: Yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Now, I'm just going to tease out some more details about your basic training. And again, we appreciate it's been 48 years so you might not recall the details. If there's anything you don't remember, just tell us. So in terms of the six weeks can you just give us an outline of the sort of things that you would have been trained on?

MRS WOOD: We did a lot of marching, we did a lot of, oh, just the basic training, you know.

MS KUZMENKO: Do you remember anything like classroom lectures or anything like that?

MRS WOOD: I think we did a few lectures.

MS KUZMENKO: Do you remember what those lectures would have been on?

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. Did you have an understanding of the provisional IRA before you started at the WRAC?

MRS WOOD: No, no.

MS KUZMENKO: And did you on entry receive any training on the group on the provisional IRA?

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: Did you in your six weeks have any sense of being a target as a military personnel of ...

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: the provisional IRA? Did you have any training on things like checking for parcels or post or anything like that?

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: Is it fair to say that if you had any such training that at the time of the bombing you would have recalled training from earlier?

MRS WOOD: I think I would have, yes.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. Was there a period that you were confined to the camp before you were able to go out to town for example?

MRS WOOD: Yeah, we had to do three weeks. So the first weekend I was allowed out was the 5th of October.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. Were there any restrictions on the particular day on which you could go out?

MRS WOOD: Just the weekends.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And was there any restrictions on the time, for instance the time you were allowed to leave from or come back?

MRS WOOD: I think there was a certain time we had to be back.

MS KUZMENKO: Curfew of some sort?

MRS WOOD: About 11.30 if I recall.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And were you ever told that there were places you couldn't go to?

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: So wherever you wanted to go as long as you were back you were able to go out?

MRS WOOD: I think so, yes, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And so I take it there wasn't any restrictions on for instance how much you drank or anything like that?

MRS WOOD: No, you just had to be 18 to go into the public house.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. Were you able to leave in your uniform?

MRS WOOD: No, no.

MS KUZMENKO: Why not, do you remember? There was a rational or you were just told you weren't allowed to.

MRS WOOD: Just told you weren't allowed to.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. Now, we've heard a lot about the sort of recognisability of personnel, do you think you would have been noticeably military even without your uniform going out?

MRS WOOD: I don't think they would have recognised us, no.

MS KUZMENKO: Following the six weeks did you have any exams or anything that you had to do?

MRS WOOD: At the end of the six weeks.

MS KUZMENKO: And what was the exam on?

MRS WOOD: I was going to go in and do driving so they did maps and road things and ...

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And in terms of providers of your training do you remember for instance who your company commander would have been?

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: No, so nothing like your lieutenants or ...?

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: Serjeants or Corporals.

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. So just turning now to things like advice, so we've sort of slightly touched upon it but, and you would have heard about it, would you have recalled the BIKINI alert system?

MRS WOOD: No, nothing.

MS KUZMENKO: What about Part One and Part Two orders is that a term you're familiar with?

MRS WOOD: No, no.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And standing orders?

MRS WOOD: No, I can't recall.

MS KUZMENKO: Where you would have stayed would there have been any sort of notice boards or anything like that, that had notices that you needed to be reading?

MRS WOOD: I can't remember.

MS KUZMENKO: That's okay. So a more general point, do you recall there being a culture of awareness of security or anything like that?

MRS WOOD: Oh, there was always security around, yes. You know you were aware.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm.

MRS WOOD: Yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. So moving on then to the day of the bombing itself, so I understand earlier in the day you went shopping?

MRS WOOD: Yes.

MS KUZMENKO: Right. And that was with Private Susan PEARSON and Private Carol TOWNSEND?

MRS WOOD: Yes.

MS KUZMENKO: Is that right? And that was your first time in Guildford?

MRS WOOD: First time in Guildford, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: And from there after shopping, you actually came back ...

MRS WOOD: That's right, yes.

MS KUZMENKO: ... to the camp?

MRS WOOD: Yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: And you would have stayed there until around eight o'clock, is that right?

MRS WOOD: Eight o'clock, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: And you would have gone back to town with again Private PEARSON but also Private Jane RILEY and Private Barbara MASON?

MRS WOOD: That's right four of us.

MS KUZMENKO: How long would it have taken? So you went by taxi, how long would that have taken?

MRS WOOD: About ten minutes, quarter of an hour.

MS KUZMENKO: So not far, okay. And you went to the Three Pigeons Public House, does that sound right?

MRS WOOD: The first one, yeah, first pub.

MS KUZMENKO: Why did you go there?

MRS WOOD: I don't know, I'd never been to Guildford I wouldn't know, so I just went along with the girls.

MS KUZMENKO: So did they know the pubs around or were they the same as you?

MRS WOOD: They must have to go there.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And you stayed for about half an hour, is that about right?

MRS WOOD: That's correct.

MS KUZMENKO: And what was the sort of clientele like? Was it civilians or military there, do you remember?

MRS WOOD: In the first pub?

MS KUZMENKO: Mm, the Three Pigeons.

MRS WOOD: Don't know, can't remember.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. How busy was it?

MRS WOOD: I think it was quiet that's why we moved on.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm, okay. And so that's you say around 8.45 you went to the Horse and Groom?

MRS WOOD: That's correct, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Again, was there any particular reason you chose it?

MRS WOOD: I think the girls said it's more lively up there.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm. And so you arrived you say around 8.50 roughly?

MRS WOOD: We got there around 8.45.

MS KUZMENKO: Right, okay. And when you entered the pub where did you go from there?

MRS WOOD: We walked into the pub, and we stood by the bar.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. I'm just going to bring up some plans just to sort of help you with the layout. Mrs NIN, can you bring up 3-12 please? So this is the first of the plans that we have for you.

MRS WOOD: Yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Does this look like a plan that you marked up with some various crosses? So we see at the bottom is the entry which is marked the only door.

MRS WOOD: Right.

MS KUZMENKO: And then there's a pillar in the middle of the room so where there's a square. And at the top we can see the bar and the counter where I think there's some Xs and I think you've marked out where you were.

MRS WOOD: Yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Can we just take a look at the second plan as well which is at 3-14, Mrs NIN? So this is a sort of more standardized plan drawn up by someone else. And again, we see the sort of four crosses for four of you and there's about in the middle of the room next to the pillar.

MRS WOOD: Yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: So in this one we have the bar and the counter reaching as far as the pillar. But can you just help us because they're both very similar places, but do you remember how close you were to the pillar?

MRS WOOD: I don't, I just remember we were standing at the bar. The four of us was at the bar, there was two in the front and two behind us and then there was the pillars.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. Okay, now were you the one ordering drinks, is that right?

MRS WOOD: Yes, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Sorry, how busy was this pub?

MRS WOOD: It was very busy.

MS KUZMENKO: So more lively than the first?

MRS WOOD: Oh, very busy. We were lucky, I don't think we would have been able to sit down it was that busy.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm. And was it quick to get your drinks ordered?

MRS WOOD: They were just serving us as we, you know, as we walked in, we must have stood there about three or four minutes and then we got served.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And can you recall looking around again was it military or civilian?

MRS WOOD: Oh, there was a lot, yeah, military.

MS KUZMENKO: How do you know that they were military?

MRS WOOD: I think some of the men had like a uniform, I don't know if they had a uniform or ...

MS KUZMENKO: Okay.

MRS WOOD: But, you know, you could see that they were something, you know, like that.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And so it wasn't very long then until, so it was just as you got the drinks I think that you say the explosion took place. So I'm going to try and sort of break it down slightly, so in terms of what you can recall about the explosion what did it sound like?

MRS WOOD: We stood by the bar and then we ordered the drinks and then I hadn't paid for them, I still had the money in my hand. And there was a big flash ... orange and then everything went dark.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm, okay. And what did you feel? So you were holding the money at the time was there something you felt at the time?

MRS WOOD: I was holding the money I just felt, I don't know what I felt, but in the back of my mind I thought, 'Oh my God, you know, is it going to go off again?' I just thought there was going to be another explosion. And then my friend pushed me, there must have been a chair she pushed me on it. And then all of a sudden we could hear someone shouting, 'Everyone out.'

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm, okay. And in terms of besides your friend I think it was Jane pushing down, did you feel sort of any vibrations or anything like that from the explosion do you think?

MRS WOOD: I don't think so.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay.

MRS WOOD: I was frightened, I was just frightened at the time.

MS KUZMENKO: Of course. And so when you heard, 'Quick run to the door,' were you able to get up and manoeuvre okay?

MRS WOOD: Well, we turned and then there was no door as such, it wasn't a doorway it was just, everyone was just moving towards the door entrance. But I remember two fellas and they were quite big fellas standing either side and they were just dragging us through.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm, okay. And so would you remember who the fellas were? Were the ...

MRS WOOD: Oh, I don't know.

MS KUZMENKO: ... people, emergency response?

MRS WOOD: I just thought they were, you know, soldiers at the time, you know.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And in terms of the aftermath what did you hear sort of within the pub? Did you hear people?

MRS WOOD: Oh, they was loud just talking and singing and the music it was just merry everywhere.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And based on where you heard the bang did you get a sense of where that came from?

MRS WOOD: Behind.

MS KUZMENKO: Behind you, okay. And do you recall looking back in terms of inside, so did you see for instance a hole in the floor or anything like that?

MRS WOOD: I didn't see nothing, no.

MS KUZMENKO: How dark was it? When you say it was dark was it continually dark until after that?

MRS WOOD: It was dark, but it was a lot of dust, there was a lot of dust coming down. And you felt like choking and you just wanted to get out.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And when you got outside you tried to find your friends, I think?

MRS WOOD: I think one of the girls came behind me. And I think another girl then we couldn't find.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm. I think that's Susan.

MRS WOOD: I think so.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And from there what was your sort of instinct when you were outside?

MRS WOOD: Oh, just relieved to be out there, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Mmm hmm. And so you decided to go back to camp?

MRS WOOD: Well, we heard someone shouting, 'Everyone back to barracks.' So I think the three of us then made our way back.

MS KUZMENKO: Do you recall who might have said that?

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: But you remember hearing it, okay. And when you got back to barracks you reported to say that you were back?

MRS WOOD: Yeah, we had to, we had to report back (inaudible).

MS KUZMENKO: Was that just at the guard house or to anyone in particular?

MRS WOOD: I think we had to be signed in to make sure we were there.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. And in terms of injuries did you have anything ...

MRS WOOD: No.

MS KUZMENKO: ... that you came away with? Okay. Did you learn that the bombing was a provisional IRA bomb or anything like that?

MRS WOOD: When we got back there was a lot of talk, yeah.

MS KUZMENKO: Sort of amongst your colleagues?

MRS WOOD: Yeah, that's right.

MS KUZMENKO: Okay. Thank you, I don't have any further questions for you, but others may do, so just wait there.

MRS WOOD: Thank you.

CORONER: **Thank you.**

MS BARTON QC: No thank you sir.

CORONER: **Mr PLEETH?**

MR PLEETH: No thank you sir.

CORONER: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mrs Wood, that concludes your evidence. It is very helpful to have an eyewitness account. And so you are now free to stay or to go as you choose, but thank you very much.

MRS WOOD: Thank you very much.

CORONER: Thank you, cheerio. I think that leaves three statements to be read. Mr FLINN, are you reading it?

MR FLINN: I am sir.

CORONER: Okay.

MR FLINN: Thank you very much. The first statement I will read is from a Mr William Frank DENTON. URN S1000 Caselines page reference 2-636. 'I retired from normal employment at the age of 65 and for the past five years have been employed on a casual basis at the AA office in Guildford. I have been a regular customer of the Horse and Groom Public House for the past five or six years, usually drinking there on a Saturday afternoon and evening. When using the Horse and Groom Public House I usually buy my drink at the bar then walk across to where there is a shelf along the wall. I used to put my drink on the shelf and stand there normally facing towards to the front door of the public house. I do not drink with anyone as I enjoy drinking on my own although I know most of the regulars by sight. For the past year or so

my drinking habits at the Horse and Groom have been regulated by the bus service in the town. That is to say on a Saturday evening I catch the 7.30pm bus from Bellfields and get off at the end of Woodbridge Road at about 7.45pm. Then I go and have a drink at the Spread Eagle Public House in Chertsey Street. I usually stop there for a couple of drinks and leave at about 8.10pm and walk to the Horse and Groom Public House where I arrive at about 8.20pm. This routine which I have outlined above hasn't varied for months and was in fact what I did on Saturday the 5th of October 1974. On the evening of Saturday the 5th of October 1974, I arrived at the Horse and Groom at about 8.20pm. I walked into the public house by way of the front door, walked up to the bar and ordered a pint of Mild. I then took my beer and walked directly across from the bar to where there was a shelf against the wall. I placed my beer on the shelf and stood there facing towards the front door. The bar when I walked in was packed solid, but I did not have to wait long to get served because I saw little Maureen serving behind the bar and as I am a regular customer she knows what I like to drink. Whilst I was standing near the shelf a man who uses the pub pretty often came up to me and we had a casual chat for a while. I have met this man on several occasions in the pub and I think his name is Percy. He is about 42 years old, five foot eight, thick set with dark hair. He was wearing a blue suit

and was wearing a darkish overcoat on top. We were still talking together at the time of the explosion. The only other person I took notice of that evening was a man aged about 35 years, five foot ten to 11 inches with blonde hair and moustache who was wearing a light-coloured raincoat. He came past me and went up to the bar to get a drink, then he came back again with his drink and stood on his own about three feet away from me. I noticed him because he was smoking a really huge cigar and looked as if he had just come out of a nightclub. I do not remember if this man was there at the time of the explosion because after first seeing him, I continued talking to Percy. When I was talking to Percy I had occasion to look at my watch which showed 8.40pm. I then walked across to the bar and bought another pint intending to spend about ten minutes to drink it and then walk to the bus station where I usually catch the 9.15pm bus to Bellfields. This too was a habit which I have not changed for many months, however on this occasion I bought my drink, took it back to the shelf where Percy was standing and continued talking to Percy. About five minutes later there was a terrific explosion, everything went dark and all you could hear was screaming and shouting. I stood where I was for about two minutes recovering my senses, then I looked round, I could not see anything because of all the dust created by the explosion. After a few

minutes I saw some lights in front of me, so I made my way towards them. To get to the lights I had to step over debris. When nearing the street I could see that the front door of the public house was lying flat on the pavement. I managed to get out of the public house where I could see a member of the special constabulary standing nearby holding a torch. At this time there was a lot of shouting and screaming and a great deal of confusion. On leaving the Horse and Groom Public House I walked down North Street, crossed over and went into the White Lion Public House where I bought myself a drink and also informed the landlady of what had happened at the Horse and Groom. I then finished my drink and walked down to the bus station where I caught the 9.15pm bus to Bellfields and I went straight home. At the time of the explosion in the Horse and Groom Public House I was wearing brown corduroy twill trousers, dark brown polo neck sweater, medium brown coloured coat with fur collar and dark brown suede shoes. I own a motorcar which is a Hillman Husky 1962 model, colour blue, index number WPK665.' And sir that's signed and dated the 8th of October 1974.

CORONER: **Thank you very much.**

MR FLINN: The next statement I will read is from a Mr John Joseph HOWARD a builder's labourer. URN S1619 Caselines page reference 8-21. 'I am a married man legally separated from my wife and I live in lodgings at

the above address. Although I am Irish, I have lived in England since 1933 and in the Guildford area for five years. On Saturday the 5th of October 1974 I left home at about 7.45pm and walked to the Horse and Groom Pub in North Street Guildford arriving there about 8pm. When I arrived the pub was fairly crowded, I bought myself a drink and went and sat near the lavatory door with my friend Joe HALPIN and his wife Kath. I sat drinking and talking to Joe and his wife until about 8.45pm when I excused myself and went into the gent's toilet. I was in the toilet for about two minutes and was just leaving when there was a terrific explosion. The door blew into the lavatory, and I staggered a bit. The landlord then came into the lavatory and told me to get out quick. I went out the front door and as I walked through I saw there was dust and bricks everywhere, there were people lying about and screaming. I got outside and walked down to the Little White Lion and had a drink to pull myself together. I remained there until the landlord cleared the pub at about 9.45pm and then went home. The people I know who were in the Horse and Groom last night was an Irish fellow called Ned who was drinking with Mick BARLOW. I don't know where either of them live. Then there was Scotch Joe, I believe he was injured and taken to hospital. These three were standing at the corner of the bar near the flap. I remember seeing Ned after the explosion, not the other two. Joe

HALPIN, I don't know where he lives, but he uses the Wooden Bridge Hotel as his local. The pub was packed, but I didn't know anyone else, neither did I see anything suspicious. I was sitting to the right of the front door talking and was not taking any notice of who was coming in and out. I noticed nothing out of ordinary at either pub.' Sir, and that's signed and dated the 6th of October 1974.

CORONER: **Thank you.**

MR FLINN: The final statement for reading today is from a Mr Sidney George PAVEY who was a driver. The URN is S1742, and the case line page reference is 8-24. He states, 'On Saturday the 5th of October 1974 I was driving a one-man Greenline coach on the route 715. The route is between Guildford and Hartford. The bus I was driving should have left the starting point in Commercial Road Guildford at 8.33pm, but due to shortage of vehicles I didn't leave until about 8.50pm. I got into North Street about 8.53pm and I stopped at the compulsory stop there. I had about four passengers on from Commercial Road. There was a lady in her 60s who got off in Camden Town High Street. There was a man and a woman both aged between 25 to 30, these two had two suitcases. The girl had short dark hair and I believe the man had a three-quarter length leather jacket in a dark colour. These two got off at Shepherd's Bush Green. At North Street I picked up a man and a

woman who travelled to Queen Mary's Hospital Roehampton. The next passengers were two young girls aged about 15 to 17, one had light hair and one dark hair both shoulder length. The girl with fair hair had a light-coloured topcoat with lamb's wool lining. The dark-haired girl had a dark coat on. There was a man in his late 40s with reddy gingery hair and a weather-beaten face. This man had been drinking pretty heavily as he reeked of beer. This man got off at Wisley Gardens. This man had an accent, but I couldn't place it. At this stage I heard the bang and one of the girls said, 'Christ a bomb.' I looked up the road in front and saw the smoke across the road outside the Horse and Groom Pub. When it cleared I could see people staggering about and lying outside the pub. At this time after the bomb had gone off a young man came to the bus and got on, he was speechless and kept saying, 'I've just come out of there.' He appeared very shocked. I would say this lad as early 20s, clean shaven, dark black hair cut short, wearing dark navy or black overcoat, about five foot eight to five foot nine. He got off at Send Marsh just before Ripley. The two young girls got off my bus at Ripley Post Office and walked towards Cobham along the road. After the young man got on the bus I moved off. I did not see any cars parked in North Street. When I was first parked at the stop in North Street there was a turning on the left between the stop and the Horse and Groom

and before the explosion two cars turned out of this turning, travelled across my front, and passed me down North Street. One car was a white Corsair the one with the pointed front near the headlamps. I saw a wing mirror on the driver's side. I could not see into the car from my position in the cab. The car was on full headlights and appeared to swing out of the turning quite fast. This car was followed immediately by another car. I thought they were similar models, and the second car was a grey green colour. This car followed the first car down North Street, again on full headlights.' And, sir, he says he would be willing to attend court if required. The statement is signed and dated the 9th of October 1974.

CORONER: **Thank you very much.**

MR FLINN: And concludes the read statements for today.

CORONER: **Thank you. So Mr SANDERS, I think that concludes the evidence for today, is that right?**

MR SANDERS QC: That's correct, sir, yes.

CORONER: **Thank you. And so tomorrow we have one, two, three, four live witnesses, I think, four witnesses attending court. And two statements to be read, is that right?**

MR SANDERS QC: So we have Andrew SAUNDERS the fireman is being brought forward and is attending tomorrow, I believe.

CORONER: Yes.

MR SANDERS QC: And then query whether Alexander FINDLAY will also be able to ...

CORONER: Oh, yes, alright, yes.

MR SANDERS QC: ... give evidence via video link. So on the schedule it's two live witnesses and one video link. But there's now one live witness and possibly one more video link.

CORONER: Alright. I have got is it Marion PRESCOTT ...

MR SANDERS QC: Correct.

CORONER: ... maiden name MONTGOMERY.

MR SANDERS QC: Correct.

CORONER: Caroline MACRAE.

MR SANDERS QC: Yes.

CORONER: What about Cristopher SHAW?

MR SANDERS QC: Yes.

CORONER: And then Andrew SAUNDERS as you say out of slightly more interposed. I do not know what the position is in relation to Mr FINDLAY, but no doubt we will find out.

MR PLEETH: Ms MACRAE, sir, is scheduled to give evidence remotely as well.

CORONER: Oh, is she? Oh, that is where I was getting it wrong. And so she is remote, sorry that was my fault. Good. Thank you very much. So that concludes the evidence for today. We will sit again please at ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

CLERK: Court please rise.

CORONER: Thank you.

(The court adjourned)