



**STATEMENT OF WITNESS**

**STATEMENT OF COLIN MARTIN HULL**

**DATED THIS**

**DAY OF**

**2008**

I, COLIN MARTIN HULL, declare that this statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that if it is tendered in evidence at the Inquiry I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

1. The Inquiry has disclosed a number of documents to me. Where I make specific reference to a document in my statement I have given the number of the relevant page.
2. I lived in Portadown from 1987 until 2002. At the time of the incident involving Robert Hamill I was living at [REDACTED] For the purposes of this interview and statement I wish to rely upon my statement made to my Solicitor, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 1997 which is now produced and shown to me and contains page number 542-543. She wrote out the statement for me and I signed it at the end. A handwritten copy of that statement is now produced and shown and to me at page 43022-43033.
3. On the evening of 26 April 1997 I left my home to go to McKeever's bar at roughly 20:30. I have marked with an "X" on the Interview map of Portadown town centre the position of McKeever's bar. It is about 100-120 yards from the junction of High Street. It is in a block of its own, near a food shop and taxi depot at the bottom of Woodhouse Street, just before the tunnel going into the Estate on Obin Street.
4. I remember I was wearing a grey jacket with cream jeans and black boots. I have never owned a grey Umbro top.

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5. I went up to McKeever's bar alone and I met other people there. The first person I met was Vincent McNiece and that is who I stayed with. Robert Hamill came into the bar, possibly around 22.00. He was with a few friends and some family members too who I think were cousins. I recognised them and I know their names, E, F, and D. I cannot recall what any of them were wearing that night.
6. I had spoken with D before that night as I had played football with him for one or two seasons in 1994.
7. I did not know Robert Hamill particularly well, but I knew his name and that he lived down [REDACTED] just down the corner from me. I did not speak to Robert Hamill or anyone with him whilst they were in McKeever's and I do not remember seeing them leave
8. I stayed there with Vincent McNiece until 01.30, drinking Harp larger. In total I think I had eight or nine pints. I am not sure what Vincent McNiece was drinking, I think it was Harp although he may have been drinking shorts.
9. The pub was closing at 01.30 and I think we were the last two to leave. Last orders were around 00:15-00:20. When we left the pub there was just me and Vincent outside. I was ok, not drunk, not sober but stable.
10. It was not a busy area at that time in the morning. There is a bridge, known as the tunnel, to take you through up into Obin Street. We were planning on going to Boss Hoggs which was a chippy up the town. It was usual for me to go for chips after going for a drink at McKeever's. I have marked on the Interview map of the town centre where I believe that Boss Hogg's used to be in 1997. It is on the Bridge Street side of High Street. If you come out at the top of Woodhouse Street you cross over the road and turn left past Edward Street where the police station is. I think that Subway is now where Boss Hogg's used to be in 1997.

11. I have been told that Thomas Mallon mentions that he saw me in Woodhouse Street and gave me a warning about going onto the High Street or Market Street. However, I do not recall this, although I do know Thomas Mallon through playing football.
12. In fact we saw nobody at all, which was not unusual, as we walked up Woodhouse Street towards the Royal Oak Pub. I did not see anybody coming out of the pub or hear any noise from the pub. I have marked on the Interview map of Portadown town centre the position of the Royal Oak Pub as being on Woodhouse Street on the left hand side of the street just after the bend.
13. A photograph which was taken more or less at the same time as the incident has been produced and shown to me at page **00226**. The view is looking down Woodhouse Street from High Street. On one corner was the Alliance and Leicester and on the other corner was the Halifax. As I look at the photograph I can see the Royal Oak pub on the right hand side.
14. Another photograph taken at night at page **00251** shows the Land Rover parked at the junction of Woodhouse Street and High Street with the back doors facing the Alliance and Leicester bank on the corner. I thought that the Land Rover was a bit closer to the Halifax but I accept that the photograph is an accurate representation of what I could see of the police Land Rover as I walked up Woodhouse Street.
15. When I reached the Royal Oak Pub I could hear screaming and shouting coming from the town centre and as I looked up the road I could see a police Land Rover. Woodhouse Street was well lit although I cannot recall if there were any lights outside the Royal Oak pub. I could see that the Land Rover was sitting in the lane opposite the Halifax which is on the left hand corner of Woodhouse Street. It was stationary and parked straight.
16. My statement has been produced and shown to me at page **542**. In that statement I say "*As I approached the Royal Oak bar in Woodhouse St I could hear screaming and shouting coming from the centre of town*". This is correct.

17. I could hear the noise coming from the centre of town. I recognised one particular person's voice. It was Colin Prunty. I would have known Colin Prunty at that time for about six years. I knew him through football. We had a wee team that we used to have in summer and he was part of it. I'd seen him a few times in the bars watching football matches. The tone of Colin's voice was fearful, as he was shouting for help from the police. He was shouting "Get out and help us." He may have been shouting other things but I knew that there was something seriously wrong and there was nothing I could do.
18. I could also hear two girls screaming for help. I knew they were screaming at the police to help them because of the Land Rover that was there at the scene.
19. From my position I could see a mob at the top of Woodhouse Street. I could see at least 30 people running around the Land Rover. I could not see anything else until I got to the top of Woodhouse Street. The street lighting in the High Street and Market Street is a lot better than the Street lighting in Woodhouse Street.
20. I do not recall saying anything to Vincent McNiece, but we both just wanted to see if we could help. We started to run towards the top of Woodhouse Street. I have been shown photograph **00227**, a daytime photograph that is looking from the Royal Oak direction up towards High Street. I can confirm that this is the view I would have had as I was walking up the street, looking directly across the street towards the Number 7 bakery.
21. As I was getting closer I saw Colin Prunty banging the back of the doors on the Land Rover. He is taller than me by a couple of inches, so he's about 5 foot 10 and stocky build. His hair was short and a ginger or a light brown colour. He did not wear glasses. I do not recall what he was wearing on that evening.
22. As I got to the top of Woodhouse Street I saw two people lying on the ground being beaten. There was a body on top of each of them, trying to protect them. The people in the mob were kicking and kicking.

23. I did not have to run past the police Land Rover as I was on the Alliance and Leicester side. I ran straight into the High Street. When I got to the top there were maybe 5 or 6 people going around the Land Rover. At this stage I could not see Colin Prunty. I know he was certainly still there but I could not see exactly where he was. It was pretty crazy. I did not see bottles or anything like that.
24. There were at least thirty people in the mob. They were going nuts, shouting and roaring "Fenian bastards." They were obviously shouting at me Dermot [Vincent] McNeiece, Colin Prunty the two girls, Robert and D. In terms of the number of Nationalists at the scene that I could recall, it was these four men and the two girls.
25. The two injured men were lying on the ground. The Interview map of Portadown town centre has been produced and shown to me and I have marked the position of the first man with the initials "GG". He was lying at the top of Thomas Street on the corner with Market Street. A photograph showing the main street at an angle looking towards Eastwoods on the corner of Thomas Street and Market Street and No.7 Bakery on the corner of Thomas Street and High Street has been produced and shown to me at page **00222**. Looking at the photograph I would say that D was on the road near the No.7 Bakery. Robert Hamill was lying on the ground nearby, at the junction of Thomas Street and Market Street outside Eastwoods. I have marked his position on the Interview map of Portadown town centre with the initials "RH".
26. D was lying on his back on the main street. The whole of his body was more or less was on the main road although I am not sure if his feet were facing the shops. I think he was unconscious.
27. As I was trying just to make my way past the Land Rover this one individual came from behind and hit me in the side of my head. He didn't knock me over at that stage - it was just like a whack at the side of the head. It was possibly a half miss. It is impossible to describe what he looked like as it happened in a

flash. He would have come from the left hand side. I just continued on over to where the two injured men lay.

28. I just briefly checked to see if **D** was okay because Robert was over 20 yards away from him. I knelt down to check if he was breathing and I felt his pulse. I know basic first aid. I cannot recall seeing any cuts or bruises on his face and I don't recall seeing any glass or anything around his body. I think Dermot [Vincent] McNeice was with him there.
29. One of the girls who was initially with **D** had left where he was and was banging the back of the Land Rover which was about 10 yards from his body. I don't know if she was Robert Hamill's girlfriend or sister or cousin. She was screaming for the police to get out. She was about 5 foot six five seven, although she could have been shorter. I think she had short dark hair. I cannot recall what she was wearing. She was asking the lads to call for help because they were not sure if the police had called for an ambulance or even if they had a mobile phone. The doors were not open and I screamed "Open the doors," although I did not physically go to the Land Rover.
30. Another girl remained with **D**. She was possibly **D**'s partner or his girlfriend at the time but I don't know her name. She was a slim young girl and I think she had short dark hair. I can't recall what she was wearing. I didn't know her overly well to stand and talk to her. She was asking **D** over and over again if he was ok. She was crying her eyes out.
31. When I was near where **D** was positioned, I was attacked again. A crowd of maybe six or seven jumped on me and knocked me to the ground and I was repeatedly kicked and punched, although I did not bleed. They were calling me a "Fenian bastard". I rolled into a ball and tried to cover my head to protect myself the best I could while the attack was lasting but I did manage to break free. I am not able to describe any of the attackers and I did not recognise any of them. I was not wearing glasses then. I do not know where Vincent McNiece was at that stage.

32. I was ten yards from the Land Rover, although it could have been 15 yards or 20 yards with the width of the road. I could not see the Land Rover when I was being attacked as I was not facing it.
33. When I broke free I ran almost to the top of Woodhouse Street and I was more or less outside of the Alliance and Leicester. I was there for about 20, 30 or 40 seconds getting myself together. I was about 5 or 6 yards from the Land Rover at this point. I did not go over to the Land Rover as I never thought that the police would help me.
34. At this stage I could see somebody at the Land Rover. I cannot recall who it was but the police were constantly asked for help. There was also a girl screaming at this stage. I don't know if it was the same girl I had seen earlier. I still could not see into the Land Rover. I recall seeing Colin Prunty on the street.
35. The fighting seemed to stop shortly afterwards and a line across the road was formed which is when I made my way over to Robert. One of the girls remained with D.
36. I do not recall anyone else being attacked. I do not recall if Vincent shouted out. I think that he was pulled out of the crowd, once it had formed a line across the road. He wasn't pulled out by the police.
37. After I left the Alliance and Leicester, I stayed with Robert until the ambulance arrived. I know that it says in my statement that after I got away from the crowd I went back to D first and then I went to Robert Hamill but I recall just going to Robert at this stage.
38. When I went over to him he was by himself. I knelt down to see how he was. I was close to him on his left hand side, about 18 inches away, with my knee down. I cannot recall whether the floor was wet or damp or if there was any glass around Robert. I was very close to Eastwood's Clothing Store, I had my back to it. Robert was lying on his back and I think that his mouth may have been open slightly. I don't recall seeing blood on his face or any bruising

although I can't really remember. He was slightly turned away from me a wee bit. He was at the church side and I was at the Number 7 Bakery side.

39. The crowd was about seven or eight yards away from me and I was facing the crowd, looking over Robert's body.
40. When I was kneeling in this position I could see the back and side of the Land Rover clearly. I did not see any police officers outside the Land Rover. The crowd did not obscure my view of the Land Rover although I was not constantly looking at it as I was more concerned about Robert. **D** was at the side of me and there was a girl with **D**. The crowd which had formed a line were just shouting abuse like "Fenian Bastards". I did not recognise anybody from that crowd that were lined up in front of me and I cannot describe any of those people in that line.
41. I did not move his head or his body nor check his pulse as I could hear him breathing. He was making what sounded like a snoring sound. I cannot recall if he had a jacket covering him or if there was anything underneath his head. I talked to him to see he was ok but I knew that he was in serious trouble by the way that he was breathing.
42. While I was with him I think Vincent McNiece came over. The two girls who I'd seen in the pub with him earlier might also have come over. They did not say anything to me; as I said I don't know them particularly well. They came over and checked to see if he was ok.
43. One person from the crowd did actually make another attempt to run and attack Robert. He was stocky build and I think he may have been a bit taller than me but I am not 100% sure, possibly 5ft 8 inches. I am not sure if he had long hair or short hair or if he had a beard or moustache. I can't recall what he was wearing and I don't know if he was wearing scarves or anything like that. He made a run from the crowd and attempted to jump on Robert. I could tell from the way he was running and the way that his body moved that he was going to jump. His body shape changed to jump because he was leaning back. He could

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possibly have been intending to kick Robert, but it looked to me as if it was another jump. I was on my hands and knees and I saw him coming.

44. I told him to back off, the man, (being Robert) was in serious trouble, and he said, "You're a fucking Fenian bastard. This is our town. You shouldn't be here." That's when I told him to fuck off and leave him alone. I said there was no call for this. I grabbed hold of his two arms moved him and then just pushed him back into the crowd.
45. There was continual shouting but there was no more fighting. I don't recall seeing if Colin Prunty was still there. I recall that Vince was still there because he went to the hospital.
46. The ambulance arrived and came up the High Street and I think it parked on the same side of the road as the Land Rover. It would have been facing towards Bridge Street.
47. At that point I saw officers getting out of the Land Rover and the back doors were definitely swung open. I think five or six officers got out but I can't be sure of the number. I didn't see the passenger door open. I could see the back and the driver's side and I think the driver's door opened, although I am not 100% sure. That was the first time I had seen the police officers get out of the van. They got out and made their way towards the mob, which as I have said, had formed a line across the road. The police officers went towards them with their arms outstretched. I do not recall seeing their batons. I think I saw one female police officer although I am not sure.
48. They were just keeping the mob at bay whilst the injured people were being put in the ambulance. The police were then between Robert Hamill and myself and the crowd. I did not see any other police cars arrive.
49. I cannot recall how many ambulance crew there were. There might have been four or five, I'm not sure. I can't remember what they said. I said, "They've

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danced all over him; danced over his head". I helped two ambulance men put Robert on a stretcher into the ambulance.

50. I cannot recall if there were one or two ambulances or who was taken in each ambulance. Vincent McNiece, D and Robert Hamill went to hospital by ambulance. I think that Dermot went in the ambulance with D because he knew D. I am not clear if D came round from being unconscious before the ambulance arrived or if he came round in the ambulance. I think two girls were in an ambulance but to be honest I am not sure which two girls these were. The ambulance was at the scene for maybe about ten minutes.
51. An ambulance man asked me to come along to the hospital although there were no injuries to my head which would have caused me to become unconscious. I am not sure if I got into the ambulance with D or with Robert. I may have even got a taxi, although I'm not sure where I would have got a taxi from.
52. It only took a few minutes to get to Craigavon hospital and D and Robert Hamill were taken straight to theatre whilst I was taken to the A& E department. I do not recall any of the doctors or nurses asking me what happened but a nurse asked me if I was okay. I just waited then with Vincent McNiece and the girls from the scene.
53. Robert Hamill's sisters arrived not long after we had arrived at the hospital and spoke to the girls about Robert's condition and asked them what had happened. They did not speak to me as I did not really know them. Apart from that there was not a lot of talking as we were all in shock and our conversation was along the lines that we couldn't believe what had happened and why didn't the police get out to help?"
54. I stayed at the hospital until about 06.30 or 07:00. I was examined by a doctor before I left and he said that I was 'okay'. I do not recall seeing or speaking to any police officers at the hospital.

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55. We knew it was serious when Diane, Robert's sister went to see how he was and she came back telling us that Robert was in a bad way she was crying.
56. She was asking the girls what had happened. As far as I recall no one identified any particular individual as being at the scene. I think that they would probably have spoken together but I would have been away and not listened. I didn't hear the conversation. As I say, I don't know Robert's sisters particularly well. I am not sure if Vincent was involved in the conversation or not. I can't particularly remember.
57. Towards the end of the night I recall that the doctor only examined me for a few minutes. He looked at my eyes, checked my back and ribs and all in all he said I was ok. He didn't write to my doctor in Lurgan. I left after that. The sisters stayed with Robert.
58. I didn't go back into the room. It was more or less no point in staying there with them as it might have done more harm. I left about 18:30 or 19:00 and got a taxi home with Vincent McNiece. I am not sure if Vincent was examined.
59. I do not remember any police officers coming into the hospital, although it is possible that they may have been there.
60. I recall that the police visited me on a Friday evening after the incident although I am not sure of the date. When the police called at my house on the Friday I was going to work. I worked nights from 20:00 to 04.00. They must have come round between 18.00 and 19.00.
61. They did not actually come into my home that evening. Instead one or two of them came to the door and took me into the back of the police car where they asked me a series of questions regarding the incident. They wrote down some of the answers but it wasn't signed by me or them.
62. There has been produced and shown to me Action Record Print at page **3449** which records a notebook entry of Detective Constable Keys in respect of an

interview at my home on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1997. They note that my description as being 5'7" With short brown hair, short, spiked on top and light growth of a beard. It is impossible to recall if nine years ago I had a beard, although it's possible I had not shaved. The description also reads that I am of medium build, although I am a bit stockier now. In terms of the clothes I was wearing, they were described as being a dark brown check shirt, a dark blue zip up jacket, jeans and black boots. However, I do not think that I would have been wearing black boots to work neither would I have been wearing cream jeans and a blue zipped jacket. It could be a reference to the clothes that I said that I was wearing on the night of the 26 April 1997.

63. I was not at St Patrick's Hall that night. I was at Johnny McKeever's Pub on Woodhouse Street. I did not see Robert Hamill, **D** and two women walking along Thomas Street as I did not walk along that road that night. DC Keys recorded in his notebook that I had told him that "*I walked across the main Street towards Thomas Street and saw about 20 people spaced out in small groups, of which – the small groups, the first of which were near Ronnie's. [I] was called "a fenian bastard". [I] walked on down to Woodhouse Street.*". As I have said, I was in Woodhouse Street at McKeever's Pub and I accept that I heard shouting and saw people jumping on Robert Hamill's head. I tried to help and was kicked and punched to the ground. I got up and could hear the people shouting "You Fenian bastards".
64. DC Keys had gone on to record that I had told him that I had spoken to an officer at the scene and said "*Are you not going to stop it or do anything about it?*" I did not see any police officers when Robert Hamill was attacked neither do I recall the officers speaking to me or coming to look at Robert or **D**.
65. The officers did not give me their names. They returned a few days later but I am not sure of the date. They left and they called maybe a week later wanting an official statement in the police station. At this point I got confused and said that I wanted to speak to my solicitor.

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66. When I was asked to make a statement I said that I would get a solicitor. They never stopped torturing me for a statement. I wanted to get a solicitor to make my statement, because I did not trust the police. The reason why I did not trust the police was because of being a Catholic in Northern Ireland and thirty years of the Troubles. What happened on the night of Robert's death enhances that even more.
67. [REDACTED] was my solicitor. When I was at his office I saw a police officer, in plain clothes at the solicitors about 40 seconds before me. When I saw him coming down and I said to myself "I've got a sneaking feeling that's the police". I recall the next day when I went to tell the girl in the office I was there for my appointment [REDACTED] came down and said "Colin, I have a policeman who is accusing you of assaulting one of their officers on the Robert Hamill incident". I guess that this was one of the officers I had seen on Friday.
68. He said he was taking the officer's case and he told me to go and see [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I did not make an appointment to see her I went to see her straight away at her office on the same street, towards the top of William Street, on the left hand side which is practically next to the police station. I sat upstairs in her office for about half an hour and made a statement on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 1997.
69. My father told me that the police had called again looking to see me to make a statement. I was living at home with my mum and dad then. He had told them that I was going to make a statement with my solicitor and the police man said "who is your solicitor and my father said [REDACTED] and the policeman replied "Oh .... Fucking [REDACTED]
70. I did not go back again to [REDACTED]'s office. I was not asked about assaulting a police officer at any stage. I did not receive a letter from the police asking me to make a statement and I did not hear from [REDACTED] that the police wanted me to make a statement. If the police had wanted to interview me again, I accept that I would have wanted [REDACTED] present at all times.

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71. The only time that I was contacted was when I was asked to speak on UTV, Ulster Television. They were making a programme about what had happened. In Robert's house were myself and Colin Prunty. It was not long after Robert had passed away. The programme was made in the house and it was a night during the week. They just asked me "What do you think of what's done?"
72. I did watch the programme but it was not possible to tell that it was me I was given a different name and my face was covered. The interview was more or less about what I could see on the evening. I think that it was before the trial, although I am not exactly sure.
73. I know that Colin Prunty was also interviewed. We did our interviews independently. He went to [REDACTED] as well but on a different day from me. I don't know how he ended up instructing [REDACTED] I can't recall if I saw him before of after I made a statement. I did not discuss the events of that night.
74. Vincent McNiece also made a statement at [REDACTED]'s office. He also went on a different day from me.
75. The interview took place at the Hamill family home which is only about 150 yards away from where I lived. I wasn't asked by UTV but by the family. I think Robert was buried three days after he died. I didn't speak to the Hamill family in that time. I did not have any contact with the family after the interview. I was pretty hard to get in contact with because I had a new address. From 2002 until now I have not had any contact with the Hamill family.
76. I was aware that Colin gave evidence at the trial. I heard bits and pieces about it in the news but I never really knew 100% what was going on. I have been asked about Colin Prunty's evidence that he gave at trial that he saw someone going into the back of a Land Rover about the time the ambulance was there. I do recall someone but I could not describe that individual at all as he was at the back of the door.

**SIGNED:** *Colin Martin Hull*  
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**COLIN MARTIN HULL**

**DATED:** *19-11-08*  
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