

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

STATEMENT OF THOMAS GERARD MALLON

DATED THIS

DAY OF

2008

I, THOMAS GERARD MALLON, 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 was born and bred in Portadown and still live there. On the night of 26 April 1997, I was at St Patrick's Hall. I was accompanied there by [REDACTED] and another friend who I now cannot remember. There was a regular Saturday night dance on, which I went to quite often. St Patrick's Hall is no longer there but it used to be at the end of Thomas Street. I have marked it as "St. Pats" on the map at [page 73910].
3. I arrived at St Patrick's Hall between 22.00 and 22.30. I met with other friends there. I have been asked if I knew Robert Hamill. I did not know him personally and I didn't recognise him that night, I wouldn't have picked him out as being there.
4. I knew D, E and F. I played football with D and have known him for about 15-20 years. I consider him to be a good friend and who is always pleasant and in good spirits. I have known E his wife even longer than I have known D. I cannot remember if I saw D, E, and F at St Patrick's Hall that night but it is highly likely that I did. If I had seen them then I definitely would have spoken to them.

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5. I had about 5 or 6 pints to drink that night. I can't remember if I was drunk.
6. I left the Hall at about 01.00 to walk home on my home. Things were winding down by that time. I did not leave with anyone. I would normally have got a taxi home but there were a lot of people in the hallway waiting to use the telephone to call for taxis. There is no cab rank outside the hall and you need to phone for taxis. The feeling was that it was going to be a long wait for taxis. As it was a pleasant night I decided to walk.
7. I walked down the right hand side of Thomas Street, heading across the centre of town into Woodhouse Street. I cannot recall seeing anyone else in Thomas Street. When I reached the end of Thomas Street where it meets Market Street I noticed some young people milling around. There was quite a lot of noise; singing and some kind of chanting but I do not know what they were singing.
8. I saw a police Land Rover parked in the lay-by on the corner of West Street/High Street and Woodhouse Street, which I have marked "LR1" on the map of Portadown town centre p.[73910]. Because of the Land Rover being there I decided to continue on into Woodhouse Street.
9. As I was crossing Market Street the Land Rover began to move off. I waved to the police because I wanted to tell them that there would be people coming down Thomas Street from St Patrick's Hall, other people who couldn't get taxis.
10. I was worried that there would be trouble if they bumped into the people in the town centre who I guessed were Protestants because they were in the town centre. I knew it was highly unlikely they were Catholics, who tended to stay away from the town centre as Catholics had been assaulted in the town centre previously.
11. I don't want to imply that there was a big protestant group milling about, but there were lots of little clusters of young people dotted around the town centre and this area. I am not sure where they are coming from, but there appeared to

be quite a number of them and they'd come from somewhere. I don't know where they'd come from though.

12. The town centre was a known hotspot for sectarian incidents and I hoped that by warning the police that a crowd was coming from St Patrick's Hall they could avoid potential trouble.
13. The Land Rover stopped quite close to the end of Market Street and just above the entrance to Woodhouse Street. I have marked its position "LR2" on the map. I approached the driver's door and I think a woman police officer opened a door. There was nobody standing at the Land Rover but there were some young people in the general area of the vehicle.
14. I think I made them aware that I was concerned that they should stay in the area because there were people coming from St Patrick's Hall. I think the officer asked me to explain and I told them about the taxi situation and that people would therefore be walking down Thomas Street. It was a brief conversation no more than about 30 seconds.
15. I did not speak to any of the other officers in the Land Rover. There were definitely two in the front of the Land Rover and there was certainly at least one in the back, but I couldn't see into the back of the Land Rover from there. I didn't recognise any of the officers in the Land Rover.
16. I walked on towards Woodhouse Street and was in the mouth of the street when I was approached by a group of four or five youths. I have marked "TM" on the map p[73910] at the point where I was approached. The youths were crossing the road from High Street and were walking in the direction of West Street.
17. One of the youths spoke to me and asked me did I want a glass of wine. I replied that I didn't want any wine and I didn't want any hassle. They asked me "Where are you going?" and I said "I'm going home and I don't want any hassle." One of them was carrying a bottle of wine and asked me if I wanted a

drink of his wine. That was it really. There wasn't a big conversation. I held my hands up and declined the drink.

18. He was holding the bottle naturally, not in such a way that looked like he would use it in a threatening way. He was of average height, average build and had fairish hair. I don't think he had any facial hair. He was obviously drunk but was not aggressive.
19. The youths were not threatening and did not try to obstruct my path but I was in amongst them when I was talking to the one man. I just wanted to get home. I couldn't tell if they were Catholic or Protestants; they were strangers to me so I don't know.
20. I walked down Woodhouse Street and at one point looked back. I saw a policeman get out of the Land Rover and speak to the lads I referred to above. I am almost certain the policeman got out of the back of the Land Rover. He was quite tall with an average build and short hair. I could not hear what he said. I just kept walking.
21. I did not see anybody in Thomas Street at that stage but I did not have a clear view as the Land Rover was parked across the top of Woodhouse Street.
22. When I got towards the end of Woodhouse Street I saw two men, one of whom I recognised as Colin Hull. I have marked "CH" on the map on p.[73910] at the point where I met Colin Hull. I have known Colin for a few years through football. I cannot recall what he was wearing but can describe him as quite stocky with thick hair that I would call dirty fair in colour. By dirty fair I mean dark with fairer bits in it. He has a fair complexion. I can't recall if he had any facial hair at that time. He looked like he had had a few drinks but I would not say he was very drunk. He didn't have anything in his hand.
23. He asked me what was happening because he must have heard noise from the town centre. I had a brief chat with Colin and told him not to go anywhere near the town centre but to go back home instead. I told him that the police were on

the corner and that there were lots of people in the town. He did not say or do anything as such in reply, he just spoke to me. It was a passing conversation. I continued to walk down the road and I was keen to get home. I did not speak to the other man with him and I cannot recall what he looked like. All I can say is that he was just average looking. I didn't know him other than to see him around sometimes.

24. I did not meet anyone else after that. I got home at about 01.25. I tried to telephone St Patrick's Hall to warn them that there were a lot of people in town and that the town centre should be avoided. Unfortunately I could not get through on the telephone.

25. I was not in town at the time of the fighting. I have been told that Reserve Constable P40 made a statement [Page 9686 – 9687] that I had warned them of the approach of people from Thomas Street at about 01.43 and at the time of the fight ran over to him and said "What the fuck are you going to do?" That definitely was not me. I was definitely at home by 01.25. I would be happy to come forward had I witnessed the attack, I would be more than happy, it is not the case.

26. I was interviewed by the police on 29 April 1997 the questionnaire showing the results of that interview is at page 8117 – 8118 and on 12 May 1997, the questionnaire is at pages 8149 – 8150. A statement [pages 503 – 505] was taken from me. The contents of these documents are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

SIGNED:

THOMAS GERARD MALLON

DATED: