

MASTER TAPE NUMBER: T146549A

WOODS - TAPE NO.1 - 15.5.97

This interview is being tape recorded. The interview is being conducted in an interview room at Lurgan Police Station. My name is Detective Sergeant P10 and I am based with the Regional Crime Squad at Gough. The other officer present in the room is Detective Constable P23 based at Lurgan CID. Today is Thursday, it is the 15th of May 1997 and the time is 2222 hours.

What is your full name please.

WOODS

David William Thomas Woods.

Your date of birth David.

WOODS

The fifth of the first, eighty.

And your current home address.

WOODS

[REDACTED]

Okay. Also present in the interview room with you.

SOLICITOR Richard Monteith, Solicitor, Portadown.

At the conclusion of the interview David I will give you an explanatory notice called a Form PACE 21 which will tell you about the tapes which are currently running in the machine behind me here. What you can do and what your Solicitor can do on your behalf in respect of those tapes. Do you understand.

WOODS Yes.

Okay. What we want to speak to you about David is the murder of Robert Hamill and serious assaults on other persons in the early hours of Sunday the 27th of April 1997. The assaults and murder having occurred in Portadown, the Main Street area. Before I ask you any questions I will caution you and I am going to tell you that you do not have to say anything, but I must caution you that if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court, it may harm your

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defence. If you do say anything it may be given in evidence. First of all David do you understand the caution.

WOODS

Yes.

Right David, first of all what I want to ask you to do for me is to outline your movements on the night in question. Do you understand what I mean by that.

WOODS

Yes.

Where you were, if you could just start with that Saturday night even, just prior you know prior to the actual disturbance which occurred. Could you tell me where you were at or who you were with.

WOODS

In the early hours of Sunday morning.

Well, sorry, starting on the Saturday evening, say from around 8pm right through. Could you tell me who, where you were at and who you were with.

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WOODS I was at the side of the Regal Snooker Club.

Right.

WOODS I was drinking a bottle of cider.

Drinking a bottle of cider. Who were you with David.

WOODS I was on my own.

You were alone.

WOODS Yes.

Okay and tell me did you stay there all night.

WOODS No come nine o'clock I made my way to Herons chip shop to get the bus to the Coach.

Right okay and did you get the bus to the Coach.

WOODS Yes I did.

Who all was on the coach, or sorry who all was on the bus going to the Coach.

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WOODS Just the usual crowd.

Well are they people you know David.

WOODS Yes I know them to see yes.

Do you know their names.

WOODS No.

None of them.

WOODS Yes I know some of them yes.

Well could you tell me who those people were.

WOODS (Inaudible).

Speak up nice and clear for me David please.

WOODS I can't remember.

You can't remember.

WOODS No.

So you went on this bus to the Coach.

WOODS

Yes.

So what happened then.

WOODS

I went into the Coach.

You went into the Coach. How long did you stay in the Coach.

WOODS

Until it was finished.

Right and how did you get back then to Portadown.

WOODS

On the bus.

Right tell me about that. Had you met anybody in the Coach that you knew that maybe travelled back with you, had you joined anybody's company.

WOODS

I was drunk.

You were drunk.

WOODS I was drunk, I was on the dance floor dancing with this, everybody really.

With everybody.

WOODS Yes.

You're a popular guy. When you were coming back on the bus had you any friends with you.

WOODS No I was on a seat on my own with my head down.

Right okay.

WOODS Because I had a lot to drink.

You had a lot to drink and how much had you to drink.

WOODS I had a bottle of cider before I went, two or three ottles of Hooch and quite a number of pints.

Quite a number of pints. Okay so what

happened when you came back to Portadown.

WOODS

I got off the bus outside Z-Cabs.

That's Z-Cabs and what time of the morning would that have been.

WOODS

I can't remember.

You don't remember. What time was it roughly that the bus would come back.

WOODS

About a quarter to two.

A quarter to two, at 1.45am in the morning.

WOODS

Yes.

That would be the Sunday morning.

WOODS

Yes.

Who got off the bus with you.

WOODS

I got off on my own.

You got off alone and what happened.

WOODS I made my way up the town.

Right.

WOODS To go home.

Was there many people on the bus David.

WOODS Yes.

How many roughly.

WOODS A good full bus.

Well was it the size of an Ulsterbus was it.

WOODS It was an Ulsterbus yes.

It was an Ulsterbus so we would be talking around fifty people, forty eight to fifty people.

That is in and around their carrying capacity.

Would the bus have been full.

WOODS Thirty or forty.

Thirty or forty. Were they mostly men or were they mostly women or was it a sort of balanced mixture.

WOODS I can't really remember as I said I had my head down, I was drunk.

You had your head down. So when you got off the bus, you say you headed up the town.

WOODS Yes.

Did anybody join your company and go up the town with you.

WOODS No.

Nobody at all.

WOODS Nobody at all.

Right and did you stop anywhere for, say for a

meal, a carryout or take-away or anything like that.

WOODS

No.

You didn't.

WOODS

I didn't.

So tell me what happened as you were walking up the town.

WOODS

I was walking up the town, I turned up [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to go home and then into because I live down the [REDACTED]

Yes. That's where Jamieson's Bar is.

WOODS

Yes. I was walking up past Jamieson's Bar and.

On the same side of the street as Jamieson's Bar.

WOODS

Yes.

Okay.

WOODS And I heard people shouting you orange bastard. That was the sound as I came up from the town.

Did this come from behind you or in front of you.

WOODS This was coming from in front of me.
So these people were actually coming down Thomas Street to meet you.

WOODS They were at, outside the Legion Bar, I was outside Jamieson's Bar.

Right and what did you hear them saying.

WOODS Orange bastards, up the IRA.

Right who was saying this or how many people were in this group.

WOODS There was about three fellows and two girls.

And two girls right. Did you know any of the

group concerned, did you know them by name.

WOODS

No.

You didn't. Right were they directing that comment at you.

WOODS

Yes.

And what happened.

WOODS

I stood there.

You stopped.

WOODS

I stopped. I was afraid.

You were afraid. Where you going to have to pass them.

WOODS

Yes.

Right so these people came down the street and said this, or directed this comment towards you.

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WOODS Yes.

Did they know you.

WOODS No.

It is just I am wondering how they knew what religion you were.

WOODS They must have assumed I was from the town.

They assumed. Right okay. So there is two women and three men.

WOODS Yes.

Was it men or boys.

WOODS Fully grown men.

Fully grown men. Big lumps of fellows.

WOODS Yes.

Were they bigger than you.

WOODS

Yes.

They were. Do you remember which one of the men said this or what he looked like David.

WOODS

Yes he had a blue shirt on and a tie.

A blue shirt and a tie on.

WOODS

Yes.

You remember that quite well.

WOODS

Yes.

Right and what age would that fellow have been.

WOODS

Late twenties.

Late twenties. Was he smaller than you or taller than you or what.

WOODS

He was taller and bigger build.

Well how tall would he have been David.

WOODS Nearly six foot, no, five ten, five eleven.

And when you say, was he big build.

WOODS He was a big build yes.

Was he fat or was he muscular. Do you know what I mean by that, was he physically, you know was he an Arnold Swartzeneger or was he just a slob.

WOODS Fat.

Right okay, tell me what happened.

WOODS The other man with him came running at me.

What was he dressed in.

WOODS He had a black coat on.

Do you know what type of coat it was.

WOODS A leather coat.

A leather coat.

WOODS

A leather coat.

What length of a coat was it, was it a bomber jacket type coat or was it a straight cut coat, three quarter length.

WOODS

A straight leather jacket.

Right would it have went to just his waist or below.

WOODS

A box jacket.

A box jacket.

WOODS

That is what you call them.

Is that what you call them.

WOODS

Yes.

And how far down his legs would it have went, was it thigh length, was it knee length or was it waist length, do you know.

WOODS

I can't remember, I was drunk like you know.

Okay had he anything visible or noticeable on under that jacket.

WOODS

Not that I remember no.

Right. How would you describe that fellow.

WOODS

I don't know, he came running at me and hit me.

Right but how would you describe him physically. Was he big like the other guy in the shirt or was he smaller than him or.

WOODS

He was smaller than the guy in the shirt.

Right how much smaller. Like I know you are not tall and I am not overly tall myself. I am five eight and you are a bit smaller than I am. What height would this fellow have been in comparison to the boy in the shirt.

WOODS

As I say I was drunk, I don't really, I didn't

pay much attention to what size he was.

He was just, he wasn't as tall.

WOODS He wasn't as tall no.

He was wearing this black leather jacket.

WOODS Black leather jacket.

Which you call a box jacket.

WOODS Yes.

Can you describe what colour of hair he had.

WOODS No.

You can't. So this boy came running at you.

WOODS Yes.

And you were standing at Jamiesons.

WOODS Yes.

And was he on the same side of the street as you or had he crossed the street.

WOODS No they were coming along the same side of the street as me.

Okay what happened.

WOODS He came running and hit me on the face and run out into the middle of the town.

He hit you on the face.

WOODS He hit me on the face and run past me into the middle of the town.

Did he use his fist.

WOODS Yes.

Or did he headbutt you or anything like that.

WOODS He just used his fist and run on past me.

Did he say anything to you when he was hitting you. Did he make any comments to you David.

WOODS

No.

Right and he ran on into the middle of the town.

WOODS

Yes.

Now could you still see him after he ran past you.

WOODS

I was dazed like you know.

You were dazed. Right you had just got a slap on the mouth, is that right.

WOODS

That's right.

Okay and he ran on into the middle of the town.

WOODS

Yes.

What did you do.

WOODS

I just froze and stood against the wall and

the rest run past me.

And the rest of them run past you.

WOODS Into the town.

That would be the two women you described.

WOODS Two women.

And the other two men.

WOODS The other two men yes.

One of them being the one with the shirt.

WOODS Yes.

What was the other fellow dressed like.

WOODS I can't remember at all.

You can't remember at all.

WOODS No.

Right, did they do anything on you when they passed you.

WOODS

No.

What did you, what happened then.

WOODS

My sister lives about Jamieson's.

That's Carol Anne.

WOODS

Yes.

Yes.

WOODS

Her and her boyfriend came down, they had heard it all from the living room and they had come down to see if I was alright. And they seen then that there was a fight going on in the middle, in the town so she pulled me into the flat.

Right, so this fight would have been visible from Jamiesons, you know you could see it from Jamiesons.

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WOODS Yes you could yes.

It was going on basically just at that junction there, wasn't it.

WOODS That is right yes.

Okay, so you were standing outside and your sister came down for you.

WOODS Yes.

How long did it take your sister to come down for you David.

WOODS A minute.

A minute or so. I am laid to believe from my enquiries that this fight was over very quickly, you know that the fight didn't last. You know the initial fight concerning the three people, one who was the deceased Robert Hamill and the crowd didn't last very long, would that be a fair comment.

WOODS I don't know I never seen really much, I was

drunk, I was pulled into the flat.

You were pulled into the flat but you were outside there for a minute.

WOODS

Yes.

You see I am led to believe the initial assault wasn't very prolonged, if you know what I mean, a minute and a minute is a long time when somebody is beating on you. Do you understand what I am saying.

WOODS

Yes.

I am led to believe that that assault may not have lasted much more than a minute but what slowed the thing down was the police trying to get the crowd back up the street. Do you understand what I am saying.

WOODS

Yes.

The crowd would have still been there. Would that be a fair comment. They were there for quite a while.

WOODS I was pulled into the flat, I don't know.

Right before you were pulled into the flat,
what did you see David.

WOODS There was a fight going on in the middle of
the town.

Right who was fighting.

WOODS I haven't a clue.

Was it any of the people that you have
described for me. Was it any of the people
that hit you.

WOODS It was the man who hit me I think.

You think it was the man who hit you.

WOODS Yes. He went running into the town past me.

What.

WOODS And started fighting in the middle of the

town.

Right, who was he fighting with David.

WOODS I don't know.

You don't know.

WOODS I don't know.

Are you being honest with me when you say that.

WOODS Yes.

Tell me this, when this fellow hit you did you defend yourself in any way.

WOODS No. As I said I was dazed I just stood there. You stood there.

WOODS Yes.

But then this fellow hits you and runs on past you.

WOODS Yes.

And out into a crowd of people.

WOODS Yes.

How many people were coming.

WOODS I don't know.

Would you say about forty, did they all come up the town together.

WOODS I don't know.

Well you said there was a crowd there.

WOODS I wasn't with the crowd, I got off the bus on my own.

I know but when you were standing outside Jamiesons, you said there was a crowd and you were obviously outside there and saw there was a fight going on.

WOODS Yes.

How many people were involved in the fighting.

WOODS I don't know.

Was it two, was it four, was it more than that.

WOODS It was just a crowd of about eight to ten.

Eight to ten people. And obviously those ten people being made up of the three people that ran past you, the three male people, male persons that ran past you.

WOODS Yes.

That was part of the ten.

WOODS Yes.

So there would have been five, possibly more, slightly more persons attacking them.

WOODS Yes,

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07514

Right and did you know any of these persons that were fighting.

WOODS No as I said I was drunk I couldn't really see.

Right.

WOODS I only got a glimpse of it.

You only got a glimpse of it.

WOODS Yes.

Did you see what happened to the fellow who had hit you.

WOODS No.

Where was he at the last time you saw him, before you were pulled into this flat.

WOODS I only got a glimpse, I can't remember, I was drunk.

Right.

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WOODS

I got hit.

Right I accept that you had drink taken. I don't know how much you had taken obviously I wasn't with you but I have to accept what you are saying to me. But where did you last see him before you were pulled into the flat, do you remember.

WOODS

Running past me.

So he ran past you and you were immediately pulled into the flat.

WOODS

He hit me and run on, though not immediately.

So he hit you.

WOODS

He waited a minute.

Ran on and then the row started in the middle of the street.

WOODS

Yes.

So it all happened just like that, didn't it.

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WOODS Exactly yes.

Split seconds.

WOODS (Inaudible).

Once he ran past you the row started.

WOODS Very quickly.

So was he the one who instigated the row or was it the other people who had seen you being struck who knew you.

WOODS I don't know, I only caught a glimpse of it.

Okay and in that glimpse were was the last place you seen this man who struck you.

WOODS He struck me and run past me, that was the last I seen of him. He just.

Yes but when he ran out into the middle of the street, you said you seen him running out into the middle of the street, right.

WOODS

Yes.

So you obviously seen him when he was in the middle of the street and people were attacking him. You said there was ten people, some of the three that ran past you and the other people that were attacking him.

WOODS

Yes.

You obviously seen that.

WOODS

I didn't see nobody attacking anybody I just, everything was so quick, there was just people.

It was a free for all. Is that right.

WOODS

Yes.

Would that be a fair way to describe it.

WOODS

Yes.

But could you see the individual who struck

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you in the middle of this melee so to speak.

WOODS

I couldn't make anyone out.

You couldn't make anyone out.

WOODS

No.

Is that because.

WOODS

I was drunk. I had just got hit and I only got a glimpse because I was pulled into the flat

Right okay. So this obviously this disturbance went on for some time then, out in the street.

WOODS

I don't know.

By the time the police arrived and ambulances and all that carry on, how long did you stay in the flat for.

WOODS

I don't know.

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Did you stay there overnight I'm asking you,
you know.

WOODS No I didn't stay overnight.

Right.

WOODS Because I was home in my bed in the morning.

Right.

WOODS I must have left. I don't know how long I
stayed I had lost track of time.

You say you don't know how long you stayed.

WOODS No.

Or was it how long we stayed.

WOODS I stayed.

You stayed. But you left the flat sometime
later in the morning.

WOODS Yes.

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And walked home.

WOODS

Yes.

Right. Did you go to any one else's house before you walked home.

WOODS

Not that I remember no.

Not that you remember and you weren't in the company of anyone.

WOODS

No.

Who was at the Coach.

WOODS

When.

On that night, you know the people who came home on the bus with you. You are telling me you weren't in anyone else's company.

WOODS

No I was on my own.

Are you sure about that.

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WOODS Yes I fell, I had my head down.

In the bus yes.

WOODS On the bus.

When you were coming up the street.

WOODS I was on my own.

Do you know a fellow called Allen. Andrew
Allen.

WOODS No.

Would he be called 'Fonse'.

WOODS Yes.

You know 'Fonse'.

WOODS Yes.

Do you know a lad called Rory Robinson.

WOODS I know him to see.

Right and he would know you.

WOODS I don't know.

Sorry.

WOODS I don't really know.

You don't know him.

WOODS I am not really close to him like.

Right okay. I am going to run through a few names here just to see who you do know if that is alright David.

WOODS Yes.

Do you know Mark Hobson.

WOODS I know him to see.

You know him to see. How about Allister Hanvey.

WOODS No.

Stacey Bridgett.

WOODS I know him to see too, cause he goes to the
Coach with us yes.

Dean Forbes.

WOODS Yes I know the boys that get the Coach bus. I
know him to see then yes.

Wayne Lunt. Do you know Wayne.

WOODS No.

If you are such a good dancer, would you know
any of these girls if I put their names past.
Kelly Lavery.

WOODS No.

Heidi Rainey.

WOODS Oh yes.

Do you know Heidi.

WOODS I went to school with Heidi yes.

Okay. Pauline Newell.

WOODS I know her to see from the Coach yes.

Okay. Vickie Clayton.

WOODS I know her from the Coach yes.

Tracey McAlpine.

WOODS No.

Well now you may, she may also be known as Tracey, let me remember, Tracey Newell.

WOODS No.

Okay. What about a Tracey Clarke. Would you know Tracey Clarke.

WOODS Have you a description.

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No. Just a name.

WOODS

No.

You don't okay. I am asking you if you know these people, if I name some of those lads to you there, was any of those people in your company on Saturday night, now in particular Rory Robinson and Andrew Allen. Were they in your company on Saturday night/Sunday morning.

WOODS

No I was on my own.

You were on your own. So basically your version, or sorry what you are telling me David is, you left, went to the Coach.

WOODS

Yes.

You came home from the Coach.

WOODS

Yes.

You had quite a lot to drink.

WOODS

Yes.

You were on a bus with other persons.

WOODS

Yes

You got out at Z-Cabs.

WOODS

Yes.

You walked up the town, you turn into Thomas Street.

WOODS

Yes.

You met two ladies and three men.

WOODS

Right.

One of the men called you.

WOODS

An orange bastard.

An orange bastard.

WOODS

And shouted 'Up the IRA'.

Right and an associate of his wearing a leather jacket then came down the street and struck you on the face.

WOODS

That's correct, yes.

Ran on out into the street.

WOODS

Yes.

Closely followed by his friends.

WOODS

Yes.

And they were attacked by a crowd.

WOODS

I don't know if they were attacked or not, I was just.

Or sorry, there was crowd, there was ten people fighting.

WOODS

There was a crowd yes.

And there was always, was there anything being

shouted between this crowd. You know what I mean sectarian remarks.

WOODS I can't remember.

You can't remember, right. Did you see a police landrover on your travels, when you were walking home.

WOODS I can't remember.

Well they are big and grey. (Laughter). You know it is just if you notice one, sometimes they stick in your mind.

WOODS Yes there was one at the top of Woodhouse Street.

Right okay. Were the words 'fenian bastards' used.

WOODS I can't remember, I didn't hear any, no.

Right. The reason I ask you is we have obviously spoke to people and we have been told that the words 'fenian bastards' were

used. Now I am putting myself in your shoes and like you have been about the town and there has been a lot of obviously strife in the town and you have just been struck on the face by someone who would be, it would be conceivable that they were coming from a Catholic establishment or from the direction of a Catholic Club. Would that be your, if you met someone coming from the part of the town at night, would you believe that they were Catholic people.

WOODS

No.

Well if someone called you an 'orange bastard' and struck you in the face, would you retaliate and assume that they were a Catholic person and maybe use the words 'fenian bastards' yourself.

WOODS

If he was on his own yes.

If he was on his own, but

WOODS

But he had his friends with him and I wasn't.

You weren't going to take on the world, sure
you weren't David.

WOODS That's right.

Okay right. Did you hear any of the crowd
chant 'die you fenian bastards, die you fenian
bastards'.

WOODS No I was in the flat.

Or words to that effect.

WOODS I missed that, I only got a glimpse of the
hustle in the middle of the town as I was in
the flat.

Has your sister been spoken to by the police.

WOODS I don't know.

Obviously Mr Monteith it is my intention not
to pursue this interview further until I can
check out this young lad's version of events.

SOLICITOR Okay.

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The time by my watch, as the interview room clock is not working, is.

WOODS

It is about ten forty six or so anyway.

I can be a bit faster than that, I have 1045. We will not argue with you. The situation being I intend to terminate the interview and then we have to set about and check out what you have told us here. Do you understand.

WOODS

Yes.

That would entail calling with your sister Carol Anne.

WOODS

Yes.

Is that her husband she is living there with or is it her friend.

WOODS

No it is her boyfriend.

That's okay. Before I terminate the interview I am going to serve this Form on you that I

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talked about at the start. That is a Form
PACE 21. Now that is the notice that I told
you will tell you about the tapes and what you
could do and what a Solicitor could do on your
behalf. Do you understand.

WOODS

Yes.

Well now I am serving that on you, the time
being 2244 hours. Would you sign just here
David to say that I served the Form on you at
that time.

WOODS

Yes.

Just along there. Now is there anything that
you want to ask me before I finish the
interview David.

WOODS

No.

There's not. Okay, the time being 2245 hours
I will turn off these tapes.

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