

EW3

MASTER TAPE NUMBER: T131854A

BRIDGETT - TAPE NO.2 - 10.5.97

This interview is being tape recorded. The interview is being conducted in an interview room at Banbridge Police Station. I am Detective Constable Eric Williamson from the Regional Crime Square in Armagh. The other officer present is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Craigavon CID Office. The date is Saturday the 10th of May 1997 and the time from the clock on the wall is 1505 hours.

Also present is.

SOLICITOR [REDACTED], Solicitor, Portadown.

Again what is your full name please.

BRIDGETT Stacey Bridgett.

Stacey at the end of the interview I will give you a notice explaining what will happen to the tapes. Again we have spoken to you

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earlier Stacey but you are here, you were arrested this morning in relation to a serious assault and the subsequent death of Robert Hamill. The assault occurred on Sunday the 27th of April 1997 at about 1.45am in the morning and as a result of the injuries Mr Hamill died on Thursday past, the 8th of May. Again Stacey I have to caution you as follows. 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 defence. If you do say anything it may be given in evidence. Alright do you understand that.

BRIDGETT

Yes.

Stacey we have spoken to you earlier there and we have come back here now and obviously you have had some time over lunch there to think over what we have put to you. Is there anything that you want to say to us or about what we have been speaking to you of.

BRIDGETT

No.

You still deny any involvement in the assault on this man in any shape or form.

BRIDGETT Yes.

We were speaking to you before the end of the last interview in respect of an injury to your foot. You said you were gutting a building in Carleton Street, Portadown.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Who do you work for.

BRIDGETT David Jamieson Roofing.

David Jamieson Roofing and whereabouts in Carleton Street was the building.

BRIDGETT It is in houses that they are renovating.

Whereabouts, I am not sure where Carleton Street is.

BRIDGETT Across from the Orange Hall.

Just across from the Orange Hall.

BRIDGETT Yes.

On the day that you hurt your foot, now I know that you can't really remember the specific day or whatever, who all was working with you at that house on that day.

BRIDGETT I was just working in that house myself.

You were working on it yourself.

BRIDGETT There was guys up on the roof putting a new (inaudible). I was just knocking a wall down.

Right. Was there a foreman for the job.

BRIDGETT Yes but I don't know his name.

You don't know his name. You never mentioned to him that you had hurt your foot, you didn't get it put in any industrial accident book or anything like that there.

BRIDGETT It was no big deal like.

Okay. The other thing I want to put to you during the course of this interview Stacey, there seems to be certainly two police officers, at least two police officers who have said that you were at a location. The first of those would be Constable Silcock and again he would say in his statement that during the fracas 'as a result of the police going to assist the injured men, a large crowd of youths were in the vicinity of these men. They were aggressive both verbally and physically. On several occasions I pushed youths away from the injured men as they appeared to try and kick the men. One of the rowdy youths was pointed out to me by a woman wearing a white top who alleged that this youth had jumped on the head of one of the injured men. This youth was wearing a grey nose. A member of the crowd called this person, calling him Stacey. He responded to his name'. Now you have said in the earlier interview that that wasn't you.

BRIDGETT

Yes.

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You said that you weren't wearing the charcoal top.

BRIDGETT No.

And it has been shown on an earlier interview exactly what you were wearing that night.

BRIDGETT Yes.

I don't know what way that, your top would look under the lights there, under the street lights, I am not going to go into that. Is Stacey a common name around Portadown.

BRIDGETT No.

Apart from an actor [REDACTED], I don't think I have ever come across another fellow called Stacey at all.

BRIDGETT No.

You haven't.

BRIDGETT No.

So a member of the crowd, of this crowd, called to this person calling him Stacey. Now this police officer doesn't appear to know you but he said 'A member of this crowd called to this person calling him Stacey. He responded to his name'. Now I can't say in which way you responded but there is no other Staceys in Portadown that you are aware of.

BRIDGETT

No.

Now at some later stage I can't say whether it would be today or maybe on a future date, would you be willing to go on an identity parade.

BRIDGETT

As long as my Solicitor consents to it.

Now that police officer who saw a person, who had this person pointed out to him and just to see if that would be, that police officer could pick you out, do you understand that.

BRIDGETT

Yes.

Now Constable Cooke says that as he arrived some three or four minutes after the initial call for assistance from the police in the landrover, and he said he saw two males lying on the road who seemed to be unconscious. Both had blood around their faces. Other police arrived at the scene around this time. I approached the crowd along with other police and started to move them back towards West Street. I recognised the following persons at the front of the crowd and he names you, Stacey Bridgett from [REDACTED]. His nose was bleeding. Now you say you don't know Constable Cooke but Constable Cooke happy enough with the agreement of your Solicitor, Constable Cooke could pick you out at an identity parade, would you.

BRIDGETT

Yes.

SOLICITOR

Have these officers been shown photographs of my client, recently or at any time in the past.

I don't believe so. I don't know. I don't believe so.

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SOLICITOR Well I would like to have that verified please, I would like you to research that for me.

BRIDGETT I think the reason he knows me, he was one of the people who took my name. You know when I was at Drumcree. He was with the Portadown ones, so that is how he might know me.

SOLICITOR Yes. There have been recent troubles in the town of Portadown concerning Drumcree and from being a practising Lawyer in Portadown I am well aware that photographs and videos are taken of people attending these protests or whatever and that these photographs and videos are shown to police officers, to large amounts of police officers in an attempt to identify anybody that is doing any wrongdoing, and therefore I am highly suspicious that the integrity of the police officers could have been contaminated by photographs or videos being shown to them.

Okay.

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SOLICITOR Bearing in mind, of course all of this will be edited, should anything ever occur in the future, this young man has a previous conviction, one previous conviction for riotous behaviour at Drumcree and that is the relevant point that I am making.

Right okay. I will certainly take cognizance of that and I will research whether the police officers have seen photographs.

SOLICITOR And therefore when my client consented to taking part in an ID parade, he did qualify it by saying subject to my advising him and approval and therefore my approval and advice has to be measured.

Yes. I was going to go on to say though at the present there is a civilian witness.

SOLICITOR Inaudible.

Who would appear to know Stacey and has come along to say 'These persons were kicking the person on the ground around the head and body, I saw them jump on the person on the ground.

They jumped all over him and kicked him. I saw the persons who were doing this, I can identify them as Dean Forbes, Allister Hanvey, Stacey Bridgett, Muck and Rory Robinson'. Now this is a member of the public who has come forward to identify Stacey. Now they are saying that it was you that, they know it was you and that they identified you as being there. You are saying that they must have been mistaken.

BRIDGETT

Yes.

You were not anywhere near these people on the ground injured. Is that what you are saying.

BRIDGETT

Yes.

If this member of the public was willing to attend an identification parade in order to see if they could pick you out of an identification parade, that is a member of the public as opposed to a police officer.

SOLICITOR

Now hold on a minute. An ID Parade is for the identification of somebody that isn't known.

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There is no point in this person, if they said they know Stacey, going to an ID parade to say that I know him and that is Stacey. I am sorry but I don't see the relevance of that.

Okay it certainly appears to be more recognition than identification.

It is maybe the way it is (inaudible) there in the wording.

SOLICITOR

Exactly. I appreciate that. Right but I mean is this person a paid police informant. I don't know who this person is, I don't know, has this person been given any incentive or encouragement or material consideration for saying so.

It is a member of the public who has come forward to give evidence in respect of a very serious offence.

SOLICITOR

I appreciate that but I don't believe that it is not a paid informant who has previous convictions, offences pending against them that maybe wouldn't be pursued.

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I don't know the background of the maker of the statement at all, sorry, but again the two police officers there and certainly that member of the public, their evidence would certainly tend to be in contradiction of what you are saying Stacey.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Or can you say to us Stacey, now can you tell us or can you provide yourself with anyone that can give you an alibi or can verify your movements on what you did and where you went. So far we have all been suggesting to you, what we are suggesting to you and what we are saying what is happening, but can you, have you anyone that can be spoken to who can say how, where, when or what you did that night.

BRIDGETT

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[REDACTED] should be able to tell you that he told me to get off side and I went. He's a policeman.

But I mean when these other people have said that, for instance the police officers who

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will say that they seen you at the area where the persons are on the ground and that there was blood from an injury to your nose and that the other witness who has named you as being part of the group who physically assaulted the person on the ground. Is there anyone that you can provide who can contradict that there.

Did you meet anyone, when you say you returned to speak to the police to make the complaint about the injury and you were told 'Get off side', from that moment you have distanced yourself from it from what you have told us. Is there anyone who you met either en route home or spoke to along the way.

BRIDGETT

There was plenty of people who seen me but I wouldn't know them.

Right but there is no-one that you can get a name for. Did you walk the whole way home.

BRIDGETT

Yes.

And who lives with you at the house, at your home.

BRIDGETT Me and my mum and my brother.

Right. Were any of those people up when you arrived home.

BRIDGETT They were in bed.

Pardon.

BRIDGETT They were in bed but my mum probably knows, she knows what time I come in. She stays awake until I come in.

Well was your nose still troubling you then, did you have blood still or were you bleeding.

BRIDGETT It had stopped bleeding then. It was still like.

You didn't discuss the events of what happened down the street with anyone when you arrived home.

BRIDGETT My Mum.

So was she up at that time.

BRIDGETT No it was the next morning that I said to her.

So you had gone home and just went to bed.
Can you remember anyone you might have seen or
did you wave to anyone on the way home.

BRIDGETT No I didn't. (Inaudible).

You got off the bus Stacey at the bottom of
the town and at that stage you were with Dean
Forbes, isn't that correct.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Do you go to the Coach often on a Saturday
night.

BRIDGETT Now and again.

Do you get that bus or do you get a taxi over.

BRIDGETT The bus.

The bus and you would come home most nights by

the bus, would you.

BRIDGETT Yes. Sometimes I get a taxi.

Would it be the same people generally travelling on the bus.

BRIDGETT No there is always different people. There is a whole lot of people who get taxis in from the country and don't get the bus.

Is that bus the specific bus for the Coach people or is it a service bus. Do you know the way they have extra buses which take people back and forward from a disco, is that.

BRIDGETT It goes to the Coach and people get off it and go to the Belmont.

So it is like a young persons' bus, taking them back from the disco.

It is not an Ulsterbus, it is a Liness, (inaudible) Liness' bus or something like that.

BRIDGETT It is an Ulsterbus.

It is an Ulsterbus alright, is it.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Now whenever you all got off the bus was there anybody that you recognised or that you knew got off the bus with you.

BRIDGETT I just got off with Dean.

I know you got off with Dean, but was there anybody that got off the bus at the same time that you know.

BRIDGETT Not that I know.

Not that you know. Not even to see.

BRIDGETT I might know them to see.

When was your next contact with Dean.

BRIDGETT It wasn't that night, not even the day after.
It would have been later on that week.

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Was there any discussion between you and him about the events of that night, did you discuss how you got home or what happened.

BRIDGETT No we didn't mention it.

Were you aware of what happened to him or where he went after you lost sight of him, you lost sight of him when the person was speaking to the police officer who was the driver of the landrover, isn't that right.

BRIDGETT Yes.

That is your last recollection of Dean with you.

BRIDGETT Yes.

He wasn't with you whenever you got the smack on the nose.

BRIDGETT I went round the back of the landrover and then I got the smack on the nose.

But Dean wasn't walking beside you.

BRIDGETT No.

Did this smack come out of the blue in an instant or was it.

BRIDGETT He just turned and bang.

Had you any chance to defend yourself of see who, what or where they came from.

BRIDGETT It was from a short stocky man who hit me.

Where did the person go to after that.

BRIDGETT He went to get into (inaudible) but I run.

Oh you ran.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Was there any comment or discussion between you, was there anything said.

BRIDGETT Get him, it was something like that there he

says.

Get him!

BRIDGETT Something along those lines.

Was there someone else with him then.

BRIDGETT Not that I remember.

But you never even looked round to see had he
laid into Dean.

BRIDGETT No. I didn't care.

You legged it then.

BRIDGETT Oh yes.

And over in the direction of Dorothy Perkins.
Then you stood about there and then moved back
down to talk to P40 .

BRIDGETT Yes.

And at no time did you physically assault any

person, at no time did you hit any person even
in self defence.

BRIDGETT As I told you before no.

And you weren't in the crowd then that was
taunting those people that were injured on the
ground.

BRIDGETT No.

Could you see anybody injured on the ground.

BRIDGETT No.

Women around a couple of boys lying on the
ground or police officers around them, police
officers trying to push the crowd back from
the injured.

BRIDGETT I heard women screaming.

You heard women screaming.

BRIDGETT Yes they were just screaming.

Do you know what they shouted.

BRIDGETT No.

Was there any shouting in the crowd that you did hear, that, you are standing there, that you can recognise as hearing.

BRIDGETT Yes.

And what was it.

BRIDGETT Just orange bastard this, fenian bastard that, come on, all the fighting talk.

Were you doing any of that.

BRIDGETT No.

Were you doing any of the cat-calling.

BRIDGETT No.

You had nothing to do with it.

BRIDGETT No as I told you before.

Do you, whenever the police officer said that they came along and they tried to usher people back up West Street away from the injured people, would you have been in among the crowd of people at that stage or had you already left.

BRIDGETT I had left. I went on up to St Marks Church and waited on Dean but he didn't appear.

So you weren't with any number of people, at any time you weren't one of the crowd.

BRIDGETT I walked up and the police were just, everybody was just, the police and people were just talking and they were just walking, people were walking up in front of the police and I came in contact with one girl who wiped my nose.

You don't know who that girl was do you.

BRIDGETT No she was a small girl with blond hair.

A girl.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Did you not say earlier on you thought it was
a male.

BRIDGETT I never said earlier.

You did.

BRIDGETT No I didn't.

Or maybe who helped you out.

SOLICITOR Somebody stopped to wipe his nose.

Right sorry.

SOLICITOR Somebody did stop to wipe his nose, there is a
difference.

Somebody did stop to help you then.

BRIDGETT Yes.

A female.

BRIDGETT On up the street yes. Because it was right in front of a policeman. When I was walking a policeman was just walking behind me. I was just walking up to get home and a young girl came over and wiped my nose.

Do you know her no.

BRIDGETT No but I see her about, a small girl with blond hair.

But obviously she must have known you now.

BRIDGETT She is a skinny girl.

Was there any conversation between you and her no.

BRIDGETT No just are you alright, I says yes.

The other people that are named here by this witness as Dean Forbes, well you obviously know Dean, you had been walking up the street with him.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Allister Hanvey, do you know Allister.

BRIDGETT I went to school with him.

Did you see Allister on the street that night.

BRIDGETT No.

Was Allister at the Coach that night.

BRIDGETT Not that I know off, I didn't see him.

He, was he on the bus coming back from
Banbridge.

BRIDGETT I didn't see him.

Do you know Muck.

BRIDGETT I have never heard of Muck in my life.

Do you know Rory Robinson.

BRIDGETT I have heard of Rory.

You have heard of him.

BRIDGETT I have seen him about like.

You know him to see.

BRIDGETT Yes.

Did you see him on the street that night.

BRIDGETT No I think he was at the Coach.

You think he was at the Coach.

BRIDGETT Yes but I didn't see him in the Coach.

Do you know if he came home on the bus that
you came home on.

BRIDGETT More than likely, because if you get the bus
there, you would more than likely get the bus
home.

Did he get the bus there, you said you seen
him at the Coach.

BRIDGETT Well that is how he normally gets over there.

So you are not sure if he got the bus back or not.

BRIDGETT No but more than likely he would have got the bus back. It is a return bus, if you get it there, you get it back.

You went up to Boss Hoggs having got off the bus and Dean went in there to get something to eat. During the time that you were standing about, did you see Rory.

BRIDGETT No.

Standing about Boss Hoggs you didn't look in and see if there was anybody else that you knew there to have a bit of crack with there.

BRIDGETT I was just waiting on Dean, I was tired.

Okay and you are still adamant that you know nothing about, you weren't involved in the incident at all.

BRIDGETT I told you no, there is nothing else.

Anything from you [REDACTED].

SOLICITOR No thank you.

Right Stacey we are going to terminate the interview here in a few minutes. Now is there anything that you want to add or say in any way about this.

BRIDGETT Just that I had nothing to do with the beating of that man. How many times are you going to ask if I had anything to do with it.

Okay.

Right you have already had a PACE Form 21. It is just a notice explaining what happens to the tapes.

SOLICITOR Would you put the reference number on it would you.

The tape reference number.

SOLICITOR Yes please.

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Okay.

SOLICITOR Lovely thank you.

Okay it is now 1529 by the clock on the wall
and I am about to turn the machine off.

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