

GOSPORT WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL INQUESTS

Monday 20 April 2009

The Law Courts
Winston Churchill Avenue
Portsmouth,
PO1 2DQ

B E F O R E:

Mr Anthony Bradley
Coroner for North Hampshire
Assistant Deputy Coroner for South East Hampshire

In the matter of Mr Leslie Pittock & 9 Ors

(DAY TWENTY-ONE)

MR ALAN JENKINS QC, instructed by **, appeared on behalf of Dr Jane Barton.
MR JAMES TOWNSEND, Counsel, instructed by the Royal College of Nursing, appeared on behalf of a number of nurse witnesses.
MS BRIONY BALLARD, Counsel, instructed by **, appeared on behalf of the acute trust and the PCT.
MR TOM LEIPER, Counsel, instructed by Messrs Blake Laphorn, Solicitors, appeared on behalf of the families of Brian Cunningham, Michael Packman, Elsie Devine and Sheila Gregory.
MR PATRICK SADD, Counsel, (instructed from 23/03/09) appeared on behalf of the Wilson family.

(Transcript of the Official Recording by T A Reed & Co Ltd
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A (In the presence of the jury)

THE CORONER: Good morning and welcome back. I am going to ask you to retire again for the moment. There is the question of room availability and you may find that there will be delays coming in and going out because of alternative uses of this room. Without putting any pressure on you and without requiring you to answer the question, is there any question we might finish today? Are you close enough to a decision to give that indication? It is questionable? [Yes]

B I will ask you to retire and if there is anything further you need, let the usher know.

(The jury bailiff was sworn)

(The jury further retired to consider their verdict)

C THE CORONER: Ladies and gentlemen, you have a clear indication there of a long day.

(The court was adjourned)

(In the presence of the jury)

D THE CORONER: What I will do is I will ask you if you have reached a verdict on each case. I will ask you if that is a unanimous verdict. I will ask you for the cause of death. I will ask you for the answers to the three questions. If there are dissenters I will ask you all to sign the inquisition but if there are dissenters to note by their names that they are dissenting from the verdict. I will give you an inquisition as we go through each one.

E Can we take Mr Pittock first? You have decided on a cause of death?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: We have.

THE CORONER: What is it?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) bronchial pneumonia and (2) severe depression.

F THE CORONER: In response to the questions: (1) Did the administration of any medication contribute more than minimally or negligibly to the death of the deceased?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.

G THE CORONER: I will give you that inquisition which I have signed. If you could each sign that, please. Any dissenters if you could just put after your name "dissenting", please. (Pause)

THE CORONER: Elsie Lavender – can we do a bit of multi-tasking?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes, certainly.

H THE CORONER: Cause of death for Elsie?

- A THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) high cervical cord injury.
THE CORONER: Nothing else?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.
- B THE CORONER: In response to the question the administration of medication contributing more than minimally or negligibly to the death of the deceased?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
THE CORONER: Was the medication given for therapeutic purposes?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
- C THE CORONER: Was it given appropriately for the condition or symptoms?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
THE CORONER: Helena Service: cause of death?
- D THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Congestive cardiac failure.
THE CORONER: Anything else?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.
- E THE CORONER: In response to the question: the administration of medication contribute?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.
THE CORONER: Ruby Lake: cause of death?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) bronchial pneumonia and (2) fractured neck of femur repaired on 5/8/98.
- F THE CORONER: And in response to the questions: the administration of medication?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.
THE CORONER: Arthur Cunningham: cause of death, please?
- G THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) bronchial pneumonia; 1(b) sacral ulcer and (2) Parkinson's disease.
THE CORONER: In response to the questions: the medication contributing to the death?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
- H THE CORONER: Was it given for therapeutic purposes?

- A
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
THE CORONER: Was it appropriate for the condition?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
- B
THE CORONER: Robert Wilson: cause of death, please?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) congestive cardiac failure and (2) alcoholic cirrhosis.
THE CORONER: Given as a (2)?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: As a (2).
- C
THE CORONER: The medication – did it contribute minimally or negligibly to death?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
THE CORONER: Was it given for therapeutic purposes?
- D
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
THE CORONER: Was it appropriate for the condition?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.
THE CORONER: Enid Spurgeon: cause of death, please?
- E
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) infected wound and 1(b) fractured right hip repaired 20/3/99.
THE CORONER: Medication: did it contribute to death?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.
- F
THE CORONER: Geoffrey Packman: cause of death?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) gastrointestinal haemorrhage.
THE CORONER: Anything else?
- G
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.
THE CORONER: On the question of medication, did it contribute?
THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.
- H
THE CORONER: Was it given for therapeutic purposes?

A THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.

THE CORONER: Was it appropriate for the condition and symptoms?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.

THE CORONER: Elise Devine: cause of death?

B THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) chronic renal failure; 1(b) amyloidosis and 1(c) IgA paraproteinaemia.

THE CORONER: In response to the question medication contributing to the death?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.

C THE CORONER: Was it given for therapeutic purposes?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: Yes.

THE CORONER: Was it appropriate for the condition and symptoms?

D THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.

THE CORONER: Finally, Sheila Gregory: cause of death, please?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: 1(a) pulmonary embolus and (2) fractured neck of femur.

THE CORONER: In response to the questions did the medication contribute?

E THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY: No.

THE CORONER: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, can I say that you have my undying admiration. To unscramble all that was quite extraordinary. I am sorry it was presented to you in that way but I could not think of any other way of putting ten together and taking generic evidence and the personal evidence and the expert evidence in one lump, as it were, but you have done a sterling job. Thank you very much indeed. You really have served us very well. I will formally discharge you and I sincerely hope that you never have to do a job like this again. It is the only time I have ever done one like this and it is the only time that I have had to face those issues. I do not think I will do one again either. Thank you for what you have done, I am very grateful.

F
G That completes the proceedings. Unless there is anything anyone wants to say, I will formally conclude. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much indeed. My sympathy to the family members; I am sure it has been very difficult for you to sit through this but I am glad you have and I hope you have achieved something.

(The inquest was concluded)

H