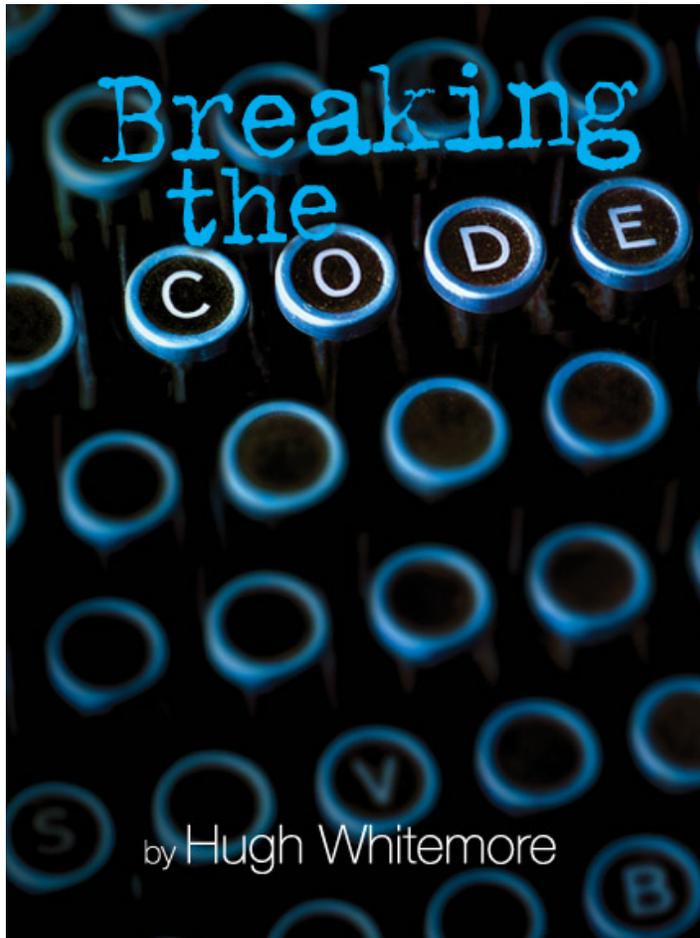


# **Jewel Theatre Audience Guide**

## **Addendum: Mick Ross Biography**



directed by Kirsten Brandt  
by Susan Myer Siltan, Dramaturg  
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## **MICK ROSS**

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According to Andrew Hodges, who wrote the definitive book on Turing in 1983, *Alan Turing: The Enigma*, the names of the actual detectives responsible for Alan Turing's arrest for gross indecency were a Mr. Willis and a Mr. Rimmer. Mr. Wills asks Alan the questions at his apartment that Ross asks him in the play. On the Saturday morning after Alan confessed, Wills was also the detective who arrested Arnold Murray, charged with Alan for the same crime (see biography for Ron Miller, an addendum to this Guide), at the Manchester printshop where he worked, a job Hodges reports, "he immediately lost". Hodges continues, "Mr. Wills ... took him to Wilmslow police station and showed him Alan's statement. Mr. Wills was soon able to write out a statement for Arnold to sign, spelling out 'offences' in copious detail. This in turn Alan agreed on Monday 11 February to be 'materially correct'. The police had solved a crime which attracted up to two years of imprisonment".

Hodges mentions him again: "on 27 February, Alan and Arnold both appeared in the Wilmslow magistrates' court for the committal proceedings. The CID officer, Mr. Wills, described the circumstances of the arrests, and read out the statements in full."

CID stands for Criminal Investigation Department. A CID officer is a police officer who is exclusively involved in the investigation of crime(s) assigned to his/her department. CID officers normally are not expected to wear uniforms; instead they wear civilian clothes.

Hodges writes that the "Documents relating to the case are held at the Chester Record Office. They include the statements made by AMT [Alan Mathison Turing] and Arnold Murray, and the police account of what was said on 7 February 1952. In contrast to the committal proceedings, which are fully documented, the Quarter Sessions trial records are limited to bare statements of the charges and judgments."

Dermot Turing was able to get more information about Wills, Rimmer, the case and the trial for the book he wrote about his Uncle Alan, *Prof: Decoding Alan Turing*. He had the benefit of the passage of time and a kind of climate change in attitudes about Alan Turing and homosexuality. When he was doing the research for his book, which came out in 2015, Hodges had already sold tens of thousands of copies of his book, the government had issued an apology to Turing, the Queen had granted him an official pardon, both the movies *Enigma*

and *The Imitation Game* had been seen by large audiences, and the Alan Turing Year, a year-long program of events around the world honoring Turing's life and achievements, had occurred in 2012. People knew who Alan was, and in this age of information, details about his trial might be more readily released.

Dermot Turing describes in more detail the judiciary events of February 27, 1952:

The facts were set out in the police statement which was read out in the Wilmslow Magistrates' Court on 27 February 1952. Detective Constable Robert Wills said he went to Turing's home with Detective Sergeant Rimmer on February 7. He said to Turing: 'On February 3 you visited Wilmslow Police Station and gave information about two men, who you alleged, had broken into your house. We have made inquiries, and now have some information. Would you please give us his description?' Turing replied: 'He's about 25 years of age, 5 ft. 10 inches, with black hair'. Constable Wills said: 'We have reason to believe your description is false. Why are you lying?'

Turing, it was alleged, replied: 'I tried to mislead you about my informant. I have been an accessory to an offence in this house. I have had an affair with him and I have regarded his conduct as a form of blackmail and have consulted my solicitor about him. His name is Arnold Murray. I picked him up in Oxford Street, Manchester.'

Constable Wills read out a statement alleged to have been made by Turing in which he said he had committed an offence at his home with Murray. In an alleged statement Murray said he met Turing in Oxford Street and 'knew what he was by the way he talked'.

Presumably, Dermot Turing was permitted to copy the documents relating to the case at the Chester Record Office. The only record available online is a two-page spread from the trial ledger, which is shown on the next page. As you can see, it has columns reading left to right for the counsel, prisoners, particulars of offence, plea, verdict and sentence, but there is no information about the arresting officers, etc.

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BEFORE :- His Honour Judge J. Fraser Harrison. 31st March, 1962.

COUNSEL	PRISONERS	PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE	PLEA	VERDICT	SENTENCE OR ORDER
Mr. S. Llewellyn Pros. Mr. R. David. Dfg.	Christopher Howard Newton.	On the 29th day of January, 1962 at Sale broke and entered the shop of Tom Roberts and stole 3 boxes of cigars, 1 box of cheroots, 12 boxes of Whiffs, 6 cigarette lighters, 50 packets of flints, 3 pipes, 2 cigarette cases, 24, 516 cigarettes, 17 boxes of chocolate, 34 bars of chocolate together of the value of £205.17.1½d and £1.5.0. in money the property of the said Tom Roberts in the said shop.	Guilty	-	Sentence postponed for Twelve Months.
Mr. R. David. Dfg. Mr. Lind Smith Dfg. Turing. Mr. E. Hooson. Dfg. Murray.	Alan Mathison Turing.	1. On the 17th day of December, 1961, at Wilsalw, being a male person, committed an act of gross indecency with Arnold Murray, a male person. 2. On the 17th day of December, 1961, at Wilsalw being a male person was party to the commission of an act of gross indecency with Arnold Murray, a male person. 3. On the 12th day of January, 1962 at Wilsalw, being a male person committed an act of gross indecency with Arnold Murray, a male person. 4. On the 12th day of January, 1962, at Wilsalw, being a male person, was party to the commission of an act of gross indecency with Arnold Murray, a male person. 5. On the 2nd day of February 1962 at Wilsalw, being a male person committed an act of gross indecency with Arnold Murray, a male person. 6. On the 2nd day of February, 1962, at Wilsalw, being a male person was party to the commission of an act of gross indecency with Arnold Murray, a male person. 7. On the 17th day of December, 1961 at Wilsalw being a male person, committed an act of gross indecency with Alan Mathison Turing, a male person. 8. On the 17th day of December, 1961, at Wilsalw, being a male person, was party to the commission of an act of gross indecency with Alan Mathison Turing, a male person. 9. On the 12th day of January, 1962 at Wilsalw, being a male person, committed an act of gross indecency with Alan Mathison Turing, a male person. 10. On the 12th day of January, 1962 at Wilsalw, being a male person, was party to the commission of an act of gross indecency with Alan Mathison Turing, a male person. 11. On the 2nd day of February, 1962, at Wilsalw, being a male person, committed an act of gross indecency with Alan Mathison Turing, a male person. 12. On the 2nd day of February, 1962, at Wilsalw, being a male person, was party to the commission of an act of gross indecency with Alan Mathison Turing, a male person.	Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty Guilty	- - - - - - - - - - -	Turing:- Placed on Probation for a period of Twelve Months. To submit for treatment by a duly qualified medical practitioner at Manchester Royal Infirmary. Murray:- Bound over to be of good behaviour for Twelve Months. When passing sentence, the Court took into consideration at the request of the prisoner, one outstanding offense, which he admitted, as per the list attached to the indictment.
	Arnold Murray.		Guilty	-	

In the Author's Note towards the end of his book, *Alan Turing: The Enigma*, Hodges has written, "I should like to thank these and other contributors to my picture of Alan Turing for all that they have done," and includes in his list the names "T. Rimmer" and "R. Wills". It is conceivable that either or both men were alive in 1983 when he published the book. Dermot was able to identify Detective Constable Wills as Robert—he is likely the R. Wills in Andrew Hodges' list.

There are some passages in Hodges' book about Alan that sound very much like he interviewed the detectives, but they are not annotated. The officers seem to be impressed by Alan's honesty, candor and geniality, traits that also endeared him to his friends. See if you agree that these might be their own words to Hodges:

'A very honourable man', the detectives thought him as they cautioned him in the usual way, and they were the more impressed when he volunteered a statement of five handwritten pages. Relieved of the usual necessity to translate human life into police language, they were most appreciative of what was 'a lovely statement', written in 'a flowing style, almost like prose', although 'beyond them in some of its phraseology'. They were particularly struck by his absence of shame. 'He was a real convert.... he really believed he was doing the right thing.'

There was a Mr. Ross in Alan's life: he was A. H. Trelawny Ross (1884-1967), Alan's form-master in his sixth form at Sherborne School. Whitmore was known for his sense of humor, so using his name may have been an inside joke. In Act I, Scene 2 of the play, Alan tells his mother about a form-master at Sherborne School who doesn't treat mathematics as a serious subject, saying that their classroom "stinks of mathematics," and telling his students that "the Germans lost the Great War because they thought that science was more important than religion". The teacher in question was none other than Trelawny Ross, who did indeed have little respect for math and science. Ross was the housemaster of the Lyon House for over 30 years at Sherborne; Christopher Morcom was a resident of his house. He was, as described by Andrew Hodges in *Alan Turing: The Enigma*, "a stern foe of 'slackness'". He was not a fan of Alan's, constantly chiding him for his sloppiness and poor penmanship.



A. H. Trelawny Ross

## **RESOURCES**

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*Please see separate resources document provided as an addendum to this Guide.*