

CSt: London

on the trail of the 7/7



bombers

The bag opposite was just three feet from the bomb that destroyed a Tube carriage near Edgware Road on 7 July last year. Despite being at the centre of the blast, it - and the man holding it - survived. While the image of his blackened face was seen around the world, behind the police cordon the bag soon became the key to one of the largest forensic investigations in British history

WORDS BY EAMONN O'NEILL

"SUDDENLY EVERYTHING WENT YELLOW," RECALLS PROFESSOR JOHN TULLOCH. **"THE WINDOWS WERE STRETCHING, AND EVEN TIME SEEMINGLY EXPANDED. THEN I FOUND MYSELF IN THE DARK."**

Other than the bomber himself, no one had a clearer perspective on the 7 July terrorist attack on Edgware Road Tube Station than this 63-year-old Australian academic. At 8.50 that morning, he was sitting in the second carriage of Circle Line train 216, just 3ft away from youth worker Mohammad Sidique Khan when he reached into his rucksack and detonated his bomb.

"I knew I was in terrible trouble but I didn't really think anyone else was," Tulloch remembers. "I rolled over and tried to seek help from two young Americans who had been next to me. In a second, I realised they too were in awful trouble." Through blurred vision, the professor could make out Tennessee sisters Katie and Emily Benton, both of whom were in a foetal position. The seats and the side of the carriage were gone. The roof was contorted, the floor was a blackened hole and the interior of the carriage was so devastated that one commuter described it as being "almost melted".



7 July 2005: top, survivor Professor Tulloch is labelled "walking wounded". Above, the Edgware Road train from which he was rescued. Right, Tulloch's bag, pulled from the train, held valuable clues for forensic investigators



PHOTOGRAPH BY DANNY BIRD | ASSOCIATED PRESS | EYEVINE