

M I L W A U K E E JOURNAL SENTINEL

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Man says McVeigh rented his truck

Movements before bombing documented

Scripps Howard News Service,
Associated Press

Denver — The owner of a Kansas body shop identified Timothy McVeigh Friday as the man who rented the 20-foot Ryder truck that authorities say was used in the Oklahoma City bombing.

Eldon Elliott said McVeigh walked into his body shop in Junction City, Kan., two days before the bombing and paid the balance of the \$280.32 rental fee in cash. He gave his name as Robert Kling and turned down the insurance, saying: "I'm a good driver."

Elliott said he saw McVeigh twice, once when he reserved the truck on April 15, 1995, and also when he picked it up on April 17, 1995. Asked to identify McVeigh in the courtroom, he pointed at the defendant and said, "Right over there. Blue shirt."

McVeigh, wearing a blue shirt

and sitting at the defense table, showed no reaction.

Prosecutors built up to Elliott's testimony by meticulously constructing a time line of McVeigh's movements in the critical days before the bombing, using everything from a McDonald's security camera video to a Chinese take-out order.

Elliott's testimony, later attacked under cross-examination by chief defense lawyer Stephen Jones, puts McVeigh in the bomb truck. And it cements the statements of earlier witnesses tying McVeigh to the "Kling" alias.

Lori Fortier, once McVeigh's close friend, testified last week that she helped McVeigh make a phony driver's license with the "Robert Kling" name.

Authorities traced the bomb-



Nichols

carrying truck to Elliott's through a vehicle identification number on a truck axle found in the bombing debris.

The defense insists that the man who rented the Ryder truck that day was not McVeigh.

Jurors saw McDonald's security pictures of McVeigh holding a fruit pie and checking his watch just before he allegedly walked to Elliott's to pick up the truck.

A courtroom monitor flashed the jerky, stop-action black-and-white pictures of the lanky McVeigh walking through the McDonald's straight at the camera, an image that caused some bombing survivors and relatives to flinch.

Taxi company owner Ann Puett identified records showing that someone took a cab to McDonald's that afternoon from near the Dreamland Motel, where an earlier witness said McVeigh was staying.

Chinese restaurant owner Yuhua Bai testified that a man named Kling phoned her restaurant about 5 p.m. on April 15, 1995, ordering moo goo gai pan — chicken, mushrooms and rice — and an egg roll.

Bai said she was sure of the name she wrote on the order receipt because she always asks customers to spell their last names.

The man named Kling wanted the food delivered to Room 25 at the Dreamland Motel, she said. An earlier witness had testified that McVeigh, using his own name, was staying in that room then.

Bai said restaurant employee Jeff Davis delivered Kling's order to Room 25. Prosecutors may not call Davis as a witness because he has maintained for two years that the man he gave the food to wasn't McVeigh.

Also on Friday, co-defendant Terry Nichols' wife, Marife, testified that her husband got a phone call on Easter Sunday, 1995, three days before the bombing, and then drove away from their house in Herington, Kan.

She didn't see her husband again until the next morning. Marife Nichols testified, under a guarantee from prosecutors that they won't use her words against her husband.

Terry Nichols will be tried later.