

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EKQ

Support person present: No.

1. My name is ^{EKQ} [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1965. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in the Eastern General in Leith. My mum was called [REDACTED] and she was fifteen when she had me. Her family is from Bathgate. My gran was the only adult in the family who knew of my existence. She was my mum's mum and I don't know her name. My Auntie, my mum's sister, also knew about me but I don't know how she found out. Her name was [REDACTED] but I don't know her second name. My biological sister is [REDACTED] and I discovered her years later. I had two illegitimate sisters as well. I have met them both as an adult.
3. Forceps were used during my birth and I suffered brain damage of some description. I don't know what it was but my paperwork classified me as a "mongol" and as "spastic". They said that I had lots of "mongol and spastic features" and for that reason the doctors said that I shouldn't be put up for adoption. That caused problems when the social work tried to find a family to take me on. I was placed the Church of Scotland Adoption Agency.
4. My mum didn't have anything to do with me from birth. She was offered at least twice to hold me but she refused and she didn't ever hold me in hospital. I was born and then I was taken away from there. The social worker was in contact with my mum but

my gran said that they didn't want anything to do with me. My mum went back to live in Bathgate.

5. I knew of my mum when I was in care and I was told about her when I was about twelve. I knew that I had a sister but that's all that I knew of the family back then. I know from my records that I went straight from the hospital to my first foster family.

The [REDACTED] Family, [REDACTED] Edinburgh

6. I was placed with my first foster family in Edinburgh. I can't remember where in Edinburgh that was. I do remember coming out of the garden gate, looking to my left and seeing a ski slope up on the hill. I know from my records that the foster parents were called Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] and their address was [REDACTED] in Edinburgh.
7. I have nice memories of being in a family even though I was so young. I do remember being in that family and I was taken to the swing park quite often. I fell off the chute and I broke either my arm or my leg, I can't remember which. My big sister, Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]'s adult daughter, carried me home and took me to the hospital, she did everything she could possibly do for me.
8. I remember being bullied and my big sister stepped in and protected me. She was a part of the foster family and it was kids in the neighbourhood that were bullying me but it wasn't anything too vicious.
9. It was a much older family that took me on and my foster sister was much older than me. I know from my records that she was in her thirties and had her own children. Mum was in her late fifties or early sixties and she was in poor health. I don't know exactly what was wrong with her but she passed away while I was still there. My sister wanted to take over my care but she had kids of her own so the social work said no to that. The dad worked away from home so it was a lot for her to take on.

10. My records tell me that the dad worked in the hospital, in the boiler room. They also say that the mum was a larger lady who was kind and loving. They had fostered over one hundred children. I know from my records that the mum passed away on [REDACTED] 1971. She had undergone a mastectomy after which her health deteriorated. My records say that there were other children in the house. There was me and I was supposed to be a "mongol", there was a partially blind boy, a disabled girl and a baby. I know from my records that the social work wanted to take me away and leave Mrs [REDACTED] with the other kids but she fought against that. Church of Scotland wanted to put me in an "institution for retards" in Stonehaven.

11. I know from my records that my big sister, Miss [REDACTED] looked after me on a short term basis until the Church of Scotland found another foster family. I stayed with her until the 19 August 1971.

The ^{EKR-EKS} [REDACTED] Family, [REDACTED] Blackburn

12. I do remember going to another family and that was when my horrible experiences started. I was five years old when I went there. The family were called the ^{EKR-EKS} [REDACTED] and they were from Blackburn. The foster parents and their kids were horrible. My big brother in that family was called [REDACTED] and my little brother was called [REDACTED]. I felt that my identity was being taken away from me because I am ^{EKQ} [REDACTED] and they had both of my names. I was known as ^{EKQ} [REDACTED] and their son was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was three years old and [REDACTED] was six years old. I thought that we were closer in age but I have found their ages in my records. I can't remember the parents' Christian names. As soon as I stepped into the family I felt rubbish.

13. I can't remember being at school prior to that but I started school in Blackburn. I think I was there for a year. I didn't remember the name of the street that the family lived on but I did a Google search recently and I did see the house. I could see the dad walking from the garage to his house but Google had blanked his face out. I have now found out from my records that they lived at [REDACTED] in Blackburn.

14. I don't know if it's a good idea or a bad idea but since I have come back to Scotland I have gone round my childhood homes in my car to remind myself of where I was. I have been down that street in Blackburn. It's the street directly opposite the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in Blackburn.
15. The social worker was Dylis Wood. She was English and she was involved in my life later on as well. At that point she was a young female and she didn't have any kids. I believe that she was at the start of her career as a social worker.
16. My brain is telling me that the family managed to cover up a lot of things when the social worker visited and they managed to portray a nice, loving family. I remember on one or two occasions I was given a wash or a bath and new clothes when they knew that the social worker was coming. Normally I was running around the house in a horrible, dirty vest and pants. I was lucky if I was in vest and pants.
17. I have seen my records and there is no evidence of any abuse in them. The social worker says, in the file, that that they showed up at the address and there was no one in the house on numerous occasions. There is a record of two occasions when they showed up and had no response. On the 27 August 1971 there was no one in and they left a calling card. On 30 October 1971 they say that, after several visits, they eventually managed to meet me and Mrs ^{EKR} [REDACTED] at home. On one occasion the social worker investigated with neighbours and spoke to a neighbour called [REDACTED]. She told them that I was left in the house on a regular basis.
18. On another occasion the social worker arranged to come and take me to the zoo but Mrs ^{EKR} [REDACTED] forgot all about it and went to Whitburn to deal with a family matter. She claimed that if she had known what it was for then she would have been in. The social worker's comments indicate that she wasn't sure if that was genuine or not. I can also see from my records that Mrs ^{EKR} [REDACTED] applied for clothing and bedding grants because apparently I wet the bed. She applied in March and in October there is an entry from the social worker saying that she hadn't done anything about it. Mrs ^{EKR} [REDACTED] was struggling because I wet the bed and the social work were not doing enough.

Abuse at The EKR-EKS Family, Blackburn

19. It was back in the seventies and the mother of the family wore massive cut-glass rings. I still have a scar in a personal place thanks to her giving me a bath on one particular night.
20. For me personally that family is the worst family of my entire life. I was treated like a dog at times. I ate my dinner off of the floor, while the rest of the family were at the table. I remember standing in the bedroom naked while mum and dad were having sex. I was locked in the house when the family went away on day trips. I remember being naked in the coal cellar at the back of the kitchen but I don't remember how I got there.
21. I was bullied by the boys and all of my toys were taken off of me. The older son encouraged the younger one to do things to me and I wasn't allowed to do anything back. He got the younger one to hit me, take my toys and take my sweets and I couldn't do anything. At school the older son got his pals to call me names and bully me as well. When we came home once we got into a fight. The big brother told me that if I called him mum "mum" again then he would kill me. I remember there being a large group around me when that was said.
22. I don't know what else to say about it but it was the worst family I have been to. I think they were local to that area and there was an extended family who lived round about. Other family members came into the house. Neighbours were aware of me because I kept running away and they came out to help look for me. The neighbours didn't act on anything but I don't know how much they knew of what was happening. I ran away quite a few times but I can't say exactly how many times. I remember being in fields and bushes. Apparently the police were involved. I was taken back to the family and they made up some excuse about why I had run away. I know that happened once but I don't know if it happened more than that.

23. I remember one day I had run away and then I came back and hid in the garage. I was right at the back of the garage. All I remember was the dad of the family standing on the back step telling everyone else to "leave the wee bastard alone, he'll come back when he's ready". As far as I know no one knew that I was in there. I remember the garage door being opened and then closed again but I was hiding so I don't think they saw me.

24. I don't remember being in the house with the family very often. I remember being in the house when someone chapped at the door. I wasn't allowed to answer the door but I ran upstairs and looked out of the window. There was a social worker sitting in there care doing something and then they drove away. I don't remember anyone else being in the house on that occasion. On another occasion a postman chapped on the door while I was in the house. I was sitting at the bottom of the stairs, close to the front door, crying. Again I think that I was home alone. The postman posted the letters and then ran away.

Leaving The EKR-EKS Family, Blackburn

25. I don't remember having too much interaction with Dilys Wood in the EKR-EKS home. All I remember is that one day she came unannounced to the house. It was early morning and I should have been at school. Next thing I knew, I was taken away from the house in the afternoon. I was black bagged and taken away from the family that afternoon. Black bagged means that everything was thrown into a black bag. My records say that it didn't happen that way and that Dilys came on the Tuesday and then gave Mrs EKR a few days to get things sorted and I left on the Friday. That is not the way that I remember it. It also says in my records that The EKR-EKS were told to put some photos in with my things for me to take with me. The social worker has written that there were plenty of photo of the other two boys but hardly any of me. Dylis Woods highlighted in my notes that she was concerned that I had not been at school when she visited on the Tuesday.

Wallhouse Children's Home, Torphichen

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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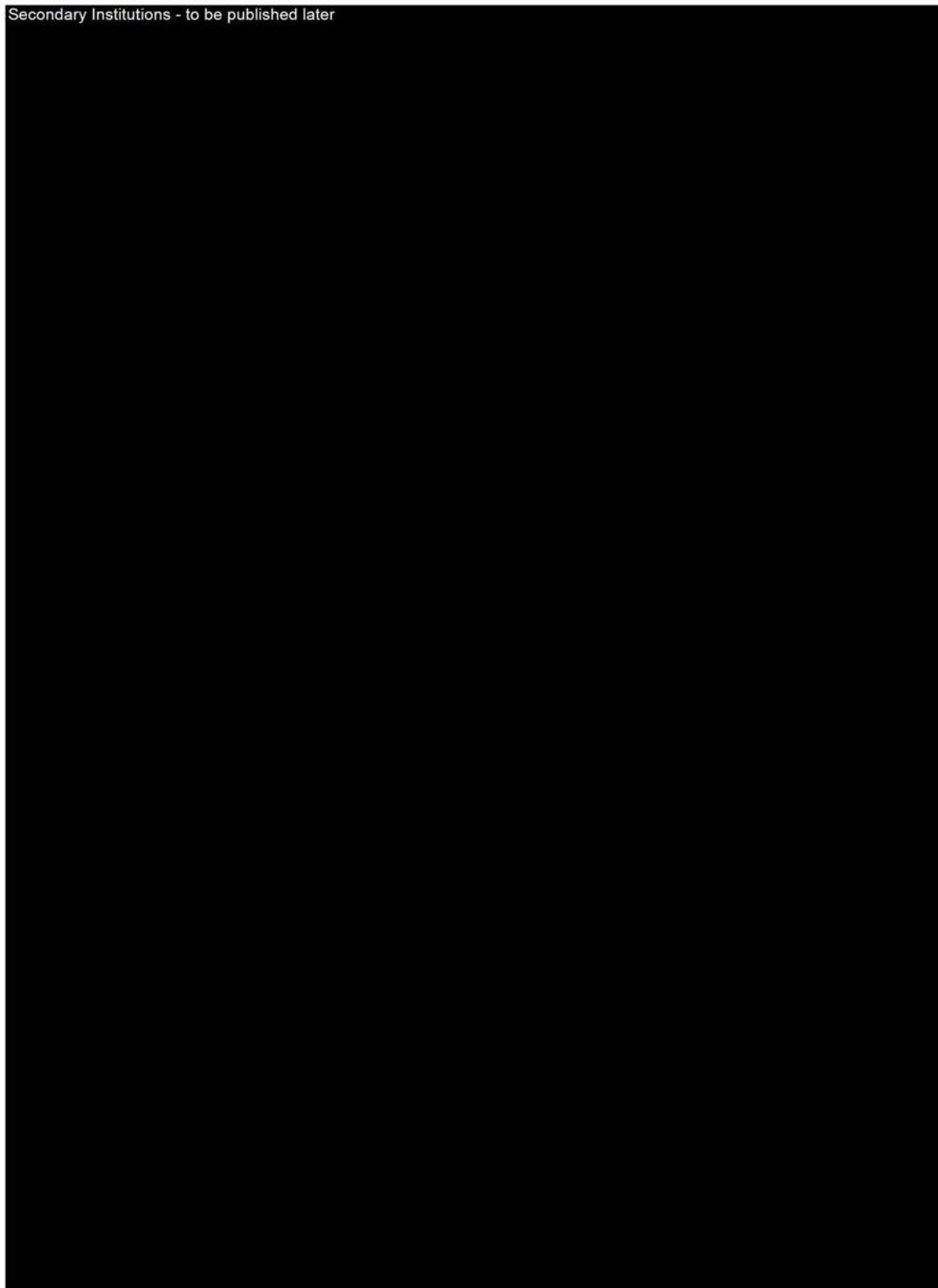
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Leaving Wallhouse Children's Home, Torphichen

91. Social work felt that I had spent too long in that unit so I was transferred to a smaller family unit in Cumbernauld. I had been in Wallhouse for too long and they couldn't find

a foster family for me so Cumbernauld was the only option for them. They were looking at closing institutions like Wallhouse and using smaller family units.

Aberlour Family Unit, Cumbernauld

92. The unit in Cumbernauld was a purpose built family children's home. I was about eight or nine when I went there. I can't remember who took me to Cumbernauld. There were seven kids and two members of staff. It was set up as a family home and it was run by Aberlour Trust. It was a breath of fresh air for me. It was fantastic. The main matron of the place was Jean White and we called her Auntie Jean. She was a lovely, sweet lady. For me looking back now, I would have loved for her to have been my mother. She was so caring, loving and thoughtful. I loved her to bits. Up to that point, she was the only adult who had accepted me for me. She showed an interest in me and she was always there for me.
93. Auntie Jean and Auntie Morag were usually there and there was a part time member of staff who came in to cover if they were on days off or holidays. My Auntie Jean had a room upstairs, above the house so it was her house as well. Even on her days off she would spend time there but up in her room. She was a widow and didn't have her own children. Both of them were there overnight. Morag lived onsite as well. I don't remember her second name.
94. The oldest boy in there at that point was sixteen and his name was [REDACTED]. There was a family of three called the [REDACTED] and they included [REDACTED] who was fifteen, [REDACTED] who was a year younger than me and [REDACTED] who was my age. He was the one who caused most of the trouble in Cumbernauld. There were a couple of younger kids called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who were brother and sister and a baby came in later.
95. It was a normal house with a sitting room, a colour television and lovely furniture. There were typical seventies style seats, a coffee table, a nice fireplace and a lovely bookcase with four or five rows of books. There were all sorts of book in it. There were

Enid Blyton books, dictionaries and encyclopaedias. There was a small piano in there as well. It was a lovely, family sitting room.

Routine at Aberlour Family Unit, Cumbernauld

First day

96. On my first day at Cumbernauld I was taken to the GP to get a full examination, I was taken to the dentist and then to the optician. I was then brought to the co-op and bought brand new clothes. I was given a brand new school uniform then Auntie Jean brought me to "One Piece" and we had a meal there.

Mornings and bedtime

1. In Cumbernauld there was a routine of all getting up at the same time. My Auntie Jean made sure that we got up but she didn't push us all to get up at the same time.

Mealtimes/Food

2. In the dining room there were two tables but we all sat around one big table. My Auntie Jean sat at the top of the table with the other member of staff which was generally my Auntie Morag. All the kids were sat round the table. We all took time setting the table and we all took time clearing the table when the meal was finished. We all said Grace at the start of the dinner and then we were all encouraged to talk openly round the table.
3. The food was fantastic. We were given a variety of breakfast foods throughout the week. We had cereal and fresh fruit and I allowed to drink tea or juice. There was always something for lunch and two courses for dinner. It was totally different. My Auntie Jean was strict in that she didn't let you be choosy. She gave you a meal and she encouraged you to eat it. There was never a meal put down to me that I wouldn't eat so I never had a problem.

Leisure time

4. After dinner we were told to get our homework done or you wouldn't be allowed to watch television.
5. We had friends in the neighbourhood. I wasn't that close to them but I would definitely say that I had friends there. I could go into their houses and they were more than happy to come into my house. It was a kids' home but it was our house and we weren't allowed to call it a kids' home. We were allowed to treat it as a home. Kids could play in our garden and we could play in their gardens. I did become friends with a set of twins who were about my age and their big brother. We had friends at the bottom of the road and, as long as we told my Auntie where we were going, she was more than happy to let us go. Our house was bigger than everyone else's but apart from the size of the house, you couldn't tell it was a kids' home. You would be in trouble if you didn't tell a member of staff where you were going so they knew where you were.

Trips and holidays

6. We went on holidays every year. Most of the time we went to Rothesay, occasionally we went to Blackpool.
7. Dylis Wood came back into my life while I was in Cumbernauld. I had nothing to do with it but it was agreed among the powers that be that I should have someone in my life that was a responsible person. Dylis stepped up and fulfilled that position. She also brought her husband, Christopher, on board so that I had a family to go to. That was a wonderful period of time for me. She would take me home to her own house and I spent nights there. Looking back on it now they were my adopted family. We would go to the zoo and go to museums. Chris was into trains and he had a massive trainset set up in his loft in Edinburgh. We spent hours up there playing with the trainsets. Dylis fell pregnant and had two kids. I'm led to believe that I am her son's godfather. He must be in his late thirties or early forties now but I don't have contact with him

anymore. Auntie Jean did all the parents nights, doctors' appointments and things like that. Dylis and Chris stepped in to give me a sense of a family unit.

Schooling

8. I had to change schools but my Auntie Jean made it as easy as possible. We went to school and I was introduced to the head teacher and shown around the school. I wasn't allowed to start school that day so I was brought back home and then my Auntie Jean got me to read her a story. I couldn't read it but that showed me that my Auntie Jean was taking an interest in me.
9. When I did eventually go to school, the school did everything in their power to make sure that I fitted in well. [REDACTED] went to a special school called Glencryan School. He had learning difficulties of some description so he was placed in there. [REDACTED] went to the same primary as me but she was a year below me.
10. I was held back in school at that point because my education was poor but my Auntie Jean encouraged me to do a lot of homework. I was never good at reading and writing. I thought it was because of my childhood and having moved schools but eventually it came out that I was dyslexic. However, at this point I was classified as stupid and there are reports saying that I was too slow to cope with normal schooling so I joined [REDACTED] in Glencryan and spent a few terms there to catch up. It did help me to a certain extent but I never really caught up.
11. My Auntie Jean made sure that I did my homework every night. She helped me with reading and when I wasn't given homework to do then somehow she would manage to find homework for me.

Visitors

12. My Auntie Jean's family, who we called Uncle Robert and Auntie Margaret, would come and visit us. It was a nice family atmosphere. Robert and the boys, me [REDACTED]

and [REDACTED] would go and play with our action men out in the garden. It was like a normal family.

13. Paula Hudder became my social worker then she left to get married and then she came back as Paula Bell. She eventually started Home-Start within West Lothian and became one of the top managers in social care in West Lothian. When she first took me on, she was a young social worker. Paula and I were close. She had a baby blue Beetle car and she would take me on day trips here, there and everywhere. One place she liked taking me to was Stirling University. There was a big loch with swans and she would bring bread so I could feed the swans. She would take me to Linlithgow Palace as well.
14. When she said she was going to come, she was there for me. If she wasn't going to be there then she either told me herself or she made sure that my Auntie Jean told me that she wasn't coming and why she wasn't coming.
15. She started to make a book with me about my life. Paula would fill me in with information that I had forgotten and we started making this book. Anything I could think of I could ask Paula and if she didn't have the answers then she would go and find out. It was at that point that I realised that I did have a mum and I did have a sister. She told me that I wasn't allowed to see my mum or my sister and that my sister knew nothing of me at that point. My mum didn't want anything to do with me. Paula didn't explain to me why and I didn't ask too many questions. I just accepted that.
16. Making the book lasted for a good year with bits and bobs. Paula encouraged me to add to it when I was on my own and then she would sit down with me and look through it when she visited. It was a massive book and there were different coloured pages in it. I put in everything from the time I was born including my weight at birth, where I was born and what time I was born at. Everything that we could think of was in that book. There was even a picture of my mum in the book. It was the only picture that I had of my mum. When I was first given the picture of her, I slept with it under my pillow.

17. Paula moved on and I can't remember whether she had gone to get married or whether she had gone to university. I can't remember too much about her replacement. It was another female, much older but I can't remember much of her. I met Paula recently for a coffee so we are still in contact.

Personal possessions

18. I had my own wardrobe in Cumbernauld so my book was in my wardrobe and every night I would go into my wardrobe, take the picture of my mum out and tuck it under my pillow. In the morning I would put her photo back into the book. But then [REDACTED] had one of his funny turns and my book disappeared. It wasn't him who did it apparently but my book disappeared and that was the only photo of my mum. My Auntie Jean stripped the whole house from top to bottom and she knew that there was only one other person who could have done anything about it but [REDACTED] denied it.
19. We were given pocket money every week.

Discipline

20. If you did something wrong then you were punished for it. I remember me and [REDACTED] went to the shopping centre on a Saturday afternoon and we stole a couple of packets of biscuits. Why we were stealing biscuits I don't know because we were getting biscuits and cakes until they came out of our ears. We thought it was fun stealing them from the supermarket. We buried the empty packets under our mattresses unaware that my Auntie Jean would come and turn the mattresses over when she was making up the beds so she discovered the wrappers. When we arrived home from school she didn't say where we were going and she took us back to the shop. We were in the manager's office and we had to apologise to him for doing it. The police became involved and we weren't charged with it but it gave us a fright. That did me a world of good because I have never been involved with the police since then. I just loved that place.

21. There were minor issues with one or two of the kids there but there is no way that you could run a home, with all these kids coming in and out, without any trouble. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was a trouble maker and he bullied a few of us but it was nothing out of the ordinary and Auntie Jean tried to control it to an extent. In general it was a brilliant place.

Leaving Aberlour Family Unit, Cumbernauld

22. Cumbernauld, in theory, was supposed to be a stepping stone from a massive institute to a foster family. Ideally you were only meant to be in there for a short time scale and I extended that time scale by a good few years. I was at Cumbernauld for seven years, until I was fourteen. I bought my first album when I was leaving Cumbernauld and it was Abba's Greatest Hits.
23. My Auntie Jean tried to adopt me officially but she was told that she couldn't do it. She did find herself a flat, away from the house, which was her own place. She had the intention of adopting me and moving into the flat with me but her boss in Aberlour put a stop to it and from that point onwards they were looking at moving me out of Cumbernauld. It was a massive step and at that point I didn't want to leave. I was perfectly happy where I was, I knew everyone around me and I loved my Auntie Jean. I felt like I had blossomed while I was there and I had become myself again. I was loving and I would do anything for anybody. I just became the real me. It was a fantastic place and for me personally that would be the ideal place for kids to be in today.

The [REDACTED] Family, Livingston

24. I was moved on to another family, the [REDACTED] in Livingston. I moved there in March 1980. My Auntie Jean was, in my eyes, at that time, my mum so I did not want to leave but then I was shown what I could have had with the [REDACTED] and that was good.

25. It was a lovely family set up there. I had a big sister, a sister about my age and a little brother. [REDACTED] was the oldest sister and she was about sixteen, [REDACTED] was about my age and [REDACTED] who was much younger. I don't remember the names of the parents, they were mum and dad. Dad was some sort of engineer and mum was a stay at home mum. It was a lovely family. I felt relieved that I had been moved into a family set up and that there was a lot more personal closeness.
26. Even though I said that Cumbernauld was like a normal house, the [REDACTED] was a house, end of story. There were all the mod-cons in the house. I was even promised a Raleigh racing bike for my Christmas so I was more than happy to go. Maybe that was them bribing me but it worked.
27. The [REDACTED] were a typical family so you got up when you got up. You knew you had to be at school but mum left you to get up and made sure you left in time to get to school. In my eyes that's how a family should have been.
28. In Cumbernauld I was held back at school, I went to the special school and occasionally I would go to the High school for the odd lesson. I moved to Livingston and went to a proper High School without any questions. I went to Deans High School. I was held back a year but I still managed to get there. I wouldn't say that I caught up with my work and I was classified as slow in my paperwork.
29. Everything was going lovely and I was in the process of being adopted. Dad had been given a job in South Africa and the only way that I could move with the family was if I was adopted. We were all happy with the idea, or so I was led to believe. We had signed all the papers and I was given the honour of posting the paperwork but then I was called in and I was accused of stealing money from mum's purse which I knew nothing of. Apparently the money had been found in my belongings when mum did a search and that blew up the adoption. From that point I didn't feel safe in the house so I called a halt to the adoption and I was moved at my own request.
30. I discovered later, after I had moved on, that it was [REDACTED] the sister who was my age, who had taken the money and put it into my belongings. I found this out from

██████████. ██████████ had been getting jealous of me being there. I didn't see what ██████████ had done as nasty, I saw it as her protecting her position in the family. I was stepping into that position and she wasn't comfortable so she was doing what she was doing to get rid of me. She won. That was how I felt at the time. I think my upbringing was such that I didn't believe that I belonged to a family, families weren't for me and I deserved to be in care.

Leaving The ██████████ Family, Livingston

- 31. I don't remember the name of my social worker at that point but her first name might have been Elaine. I approached my social worker when I wanted to be moved. I felt there were too many conflicts between ██████████ and myself to make it work properly. I wouldn't say there was anything over the top but there were niggling things here and there and, at fifteen years old, I wasn't prepared to go through that. I stayed with the ██████████ for about a year two months, until I was fifteen. I was hoping to go back to Cumbernauld or a unit like Cumbernauld.

Firhill Children's Home, Edinburgh

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Firhill Children's Home, Edinburgh

35. I wasn't in Firhill for that long and then I was moved to Uphall Children's Home. I think I was only placed there for a few months because it was the only place that was available when I wanted out of the [REDACTED]

36. I was black bagged again. I was aware that I was moving but I wasn't given any boxes to move my things. I was just given a black bag to pack up my things. I didn't have a lot of things but I had more than I'd previously had and everything was just being put in black bags. As far as I was concerned that was part of being in care and at that point I didn't see anything wrong with being black bagged.

Uphall Children's Home, West Lothian

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Life after being in care

56. I don't remember when I moved out of the flat but I remember that I had had enough and I decided to go and live with the [REDACTED] the family of my best friend from school. My friend's name was [REDACTED] We had been friends from the first time I was at Deans High School. He was the only person at that point who I could say was a true friend. The family discussed it with me and they were happy with that so I settled down for a while. We moved from Livingston to South Lanarkshire and that's where I met my first wife.

57. I married at the age of eighteen and had my first child when I was nineteen. I married young and I had children young. Unfortunately I lost my first child and that snowballed into me returning to my old self. I was withdrawn and quiet. I reverted back to my childhood. By the time I walked out of the marriage, I had been married for twenty years.
58. In that twenty years, the first ten years were good. We had [REDACTED] in 1986 and [REDACTED] in 1990. We were a nice family but looking back on it now I wouldn't say that I was close to my first wife. We were together and we had two lovely kids and that was about it.
59. I managed to get myself a new job on a farm and I was a foreman. We moved to the house that came with the job. [REDACTED] stepped off the bus after school one afternoon and she was knocked down and killed. From that point onwards my life collapsed. My first wife dealt with it her way and I dealt with it my way. We split up slowly but painfully over the next ten years.
60. I married again and my wife has three kids and six grandkids.
61. I work in social care now. I've been through the system myself and I would have liked to have been a social worker so that I could have helped other kids but I didn't have the brains or the opportunities to do that. Social care is the next best thing. I will never be a social worker but this is as close to that as I will get. I think my past, how I was treated and how social work treated me helped me become who I am today. The system is not perfect so we have to work around that and make the system work for the individual people.
62. I started off working in Asda when I was living in Edinburgh and then I was asked to look after an elderly gentleman who was suffering from Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. I took that on while I was still working at Asda. One day, out of the blue, the guy said that there was a full time job as a care worker going nearby. He suggested that I would be good at it but at first I thought that it wasn't for me and I didn't fancy it. I told him that but I was getting fed up at Asda so I went to see about it and the rest is history. I

started with the company eighteen years ago doing one small service. I asked to be transferred to the service that I'm doing now. I was offered a promotion that I didn't want because it would be too much paperwork but they had faith in me. I love this job. I've done various jobs but this is the best job I have ever had because I can help people in their lives.

63. Out of my entire working life, I have only had two years unemployment. My job is the most important thing in my life apart from my wife.

Impact

64. I'm not sure if everything that I remember is one hundred percent true. I'm not sure if it's the whole truth and nothing but the truth or if it's my mind playing scenarios out. I would like to think that I was one hundred percent certain. What I've been told by my counsellor is that there must be some element of truth to what is in my mind.
65. Apart from My Auntie Jean, Paula and Dylis, I have had no one to guide me through life. I have never had a male adult teach me how to shave, how to tinker with cars, or what a man and son do together. I've never had a mother teaching me love. I believe that has had an impact on me finding the right person and finding love. Today I cannot fault my wife, I found her and she is the rock of my life. She has been marvellous for me but it took me a lifetime to find her. I can one hundred percent say my wife is the one who is there for me. There have been difficult times but she is always there for me and I am always there for her.
66. I don't have any real friends apart from two and they have come late in my life. I don't have any childhood friends. I know that not everyone has childhood friends but I've never had that opportunity. I find it difficult to make friends and it hurts me at times that I can't make that bond with people. I have a male friend but the only thing that's bonding us together is that he is a gay guy and we bond together over gay issues and political issues. We were never in a relationship. The female friend that I have was my wife's friend initially and she became my friend. She is in a lesbian relationship and

again we were able to bond over gay issues. Apart from that I don't have any real friends. I've made friends in the past and said that I would keep in touch with them but I never do. I'm used to making friends, moving on and losing contact.

67. As part of my job I was asked to move an elderly gentleman to a care home one day. He didn't have any suitcases and I was told by my manager to put his things in a black bag. I told my manager that I wouldn't do that and explained why. My manager knows all about my past and she was crying when I told her about this happening to me as a child. I would have made it clear that I wouldn't put people's things in a black bag.
68. Work will always be first. If they ask me to jump then I will ask how high. I will do anything for our grandchildren. I don't know how to react around the ten year old and I don't want to cross any barrier. My other grandchild is a diamond but he can be a handful for his mother so I try to be there for him. I do my best for him and I think I'm doing ok. The other grandkids adore me as granddad.
69. I think about my time in care quite a bit. I don't want to do it but every so often it comes to the forefront. That's mostly at home but occasionally at work as well.
70. I've had counselling in the past because I was confused about my sexuality. I touched on my childhood but nothing major. I'm having counselling now and it has helped tremendously.

Reporting of Abuse

71. I never reported anything. I've talked about it with my wife but not the whole story. I tried to talk to my first wife but she didn't want to know about it. I opened up to the elderly guy that I looked after but that backfired on me because he knew how to push my buttons. He encouraged me to drink alcohol and then I remember him abusing me. He is dead now but he was a retired senior social worker in his younger days and had been [REDACTED] social work. His behaviour made me concerned about how he

behaved when he was in that position. I have heard stories about his private life from friends that I do not want to repeat.

Records

72. I have my first set of records somewhere in my house, although I don't know where. I feel there were periods that didn't touch on my childhood. There were no great details about the EKR-EKS or why I was taken out of there. There were no details of any of the abuse that I had claimed had happened to me.
73. I received a second set of records, my full files, in 2020 and while there are more papers in those folders but a lot of information that has been blanked out. It is hard to see that there are missing sections. There are sections blanked out of my second set of records that I can read in my first set of records. I think there must have been a change in data protection laws after I received the first set. There is still no record of any abuse and I personally think that the abuse would have been hard to miss.
74. In my records I was classified as a "mongol" at birth. My biggest issue was that they used that word when describing me. I am a pretty intelligent guy with all my faculties and when I was younger I was exactly the same. I wonder why they used that particular term to describe me? They also use the term "spastic" to describe me and say that I need to go to a "spastic unit."

Lessons to be Learned

75. Every kid is an individual and they might not be old enough to decide what is good for them but they are old enough to know what they are going through and they need someone to talk to. They need someone to trust and open up to which I was never given. I did have my Auntie Jean and while I was there we discussed things. Apart from her, Paula Bell and Dylis Wood I had no one in my life and I had no one that I could always turn to because they came and went. Someone who has their parents

from birth to death can turn to them all of the time but kids in care don't have that. I didn't have someone behind me to tell me when I was doing something wrong and to guide me. I'd like to think there will be someone for kids to turn to throughout their lives. I know that is a big ask but something like that would be beneficial to the system.

- 76. The other thing I have issues with is that there are no photographs of me throughout my childhood. I have two photos of me and that does hurt me. One is from Halloween at Wallhouse and the other is taken with the [REDACTED] I was only given the second one recently, with my records.
- 77. I would like to think that no kid in the future has to go through what I went through in the system.

Other information

- 78. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed.....EKG [REDACTED].....

Dated.....27 April 2021.....