

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EKJ

Support person present: No

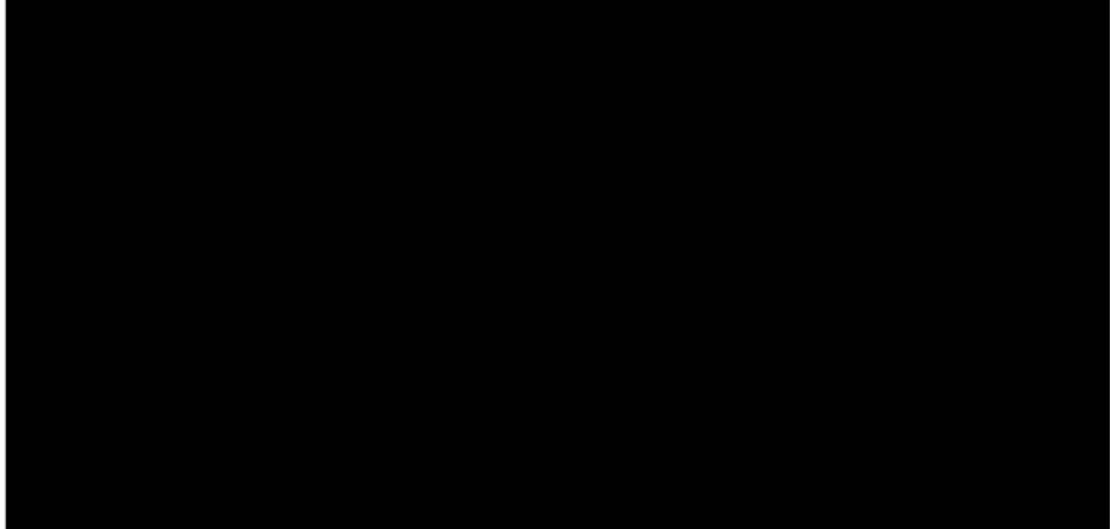
1. My name is EKJ. Until I got married my surname was EKJ. My date of birth is 1946. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. My mother and father were and . I established their details from my birth certificate. It shows that I was born in Clackmannanshire. My mother is recorded as being the widow of . I have a half sister, who is about eighteen months younger than me. She is to a different father. I only found out about her when I was 45 and she found me.

Life before going into care

2. I only have very vague memories before I went into care. I recall when I would have been between two and three being burned on the leg and hiding behind the chair to avoid treatment. I don't recall anything about how I sustained the injury but I still have the scars. I just remember the pain. I believe I lived in the country as I have a vision of a dairy herd and a farmyard. I have no recollection of who actually brought me up or even if this was my mother who lived on the farm.
3. My only other memory is getting washed at a big sink then getting driven away in a big black shiny car. I don't remember where I was taken but it was to Fyvie. A woman there looked after me but I have no idea who she was or if she was a relation of mine. I have been told by social services that when I was living with her I was caught raking through the bins for something to eat and the woman was charged with neglect. I have no recollection of raking the bins or what happened to the woman. I believe that someone had reported it the social services which at the time were called "The Cruelty"

department. I only know about this from overhearing the social workers talking about it when I was around eight.

Clydeville children's home, Buckie

- 4.  Secondary Institutions - to be published later
- 5. 
- 6. 
- 7. 

8.



9. I have no recollection of moving from there apart from being driven there in a big black shiny car along with [REDACTED]. I believe it was a Mr ^{FPS} [REDACTED] from the social services who drove us. He took us to foster parents in [REDACTED]. We didn't have any prior visits to this house or had been introduced to the family.

Foster care with the ^{ERF-SPO} [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Banff

10. The ^{ERF-SPO} [REDACTED] lived at [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. Mrs [REDACTED] was a very nice gentle lady and she lived with her husband and their own little boy called [REDACTED] who would have been around the same age as me. I believe Mr ^{ERF} [REDACTED] could have been a lorry driver or something like that because he was away for several days at a time and was regularly not there overnight.
11. I must have been three when I arrived there because I remember Mrs [REDACTED] telling me when I turned four. Also living in the house were two women who would have been in their twenties. They may have been Mrs [REDACTED]'s younger sisters. One may have been called ^{ERH} [REDACTED] and the other ^{EKI} [REDACTED].
12. The house was in a new council estate, all brand new houses. There was a rear garden which was mostly used to grow vegetables and a small garden at the front. When you went in the front door there was a long hallway. To the right was the sitting room then the kitchen. Upstairs were three bedrooms. I think the ^{ERF-SPO} [REDACTED] bedroom looked

out the front of the house. The room that I shared with ██████ looked onto the back garden. It was a small room with a double bed. That's all I remember about our room. I am not sure if the two other women and ██████ slept in the third room.

13. Initially I spent most of the day with Mrs ██████ in the house because ██████ who was older than me, had started at school. I don't know where everyone else was. Before I was old enough to go to school I played in the house or in the garden. I even wandered to a nearby play park on my own.

Routine with the ██████^{ERF-SPO} in ██████

Morning / bedtime

14. I can't remember what woke us up in the morning or what exactly we did when we got up. We would always be ready in time for school. In the evening ██████ and myself were sent to bed quite early, possibly about eight o'clock.

Food

15. We had porridge for breakfast, soup for lunch and yellow fish on a Friday. I also remember cabbage soup which was horrible. We all ate the same food and we ate together but there weren't enough chairs so myself and ██████ had to stand at the table. ██████ their son, got a chair. There were no real issues with the food and I don't remember ever going hungry.

Washing and bathing

16. I am not sure what the routine was for washing. ██████ and I shared a bath once a week on a Sunday night. I had to wash my hair with a bar of soap. It was a square block of yellow soap. It smelled quite strong and clean. I didn't get shampoo. I am not sure who supervised us when we were in the bath.

Clothing

17. We were given clean school clothes every week. It was a uniform. I had a pinafore, white shirt and a grey sweater. When I got home after school the clothes I was given to wear were just rags. I used to be given [REDACTED] old clothes. Even although I was just young I was embarrassed to be wearing the clothes I was given. I think the clothes were generally kept quite clean.

Schooling

18. Mrs [REDACTED] took me to school for my first day but after that I made my own way there. I went to [REDACTED] Primary which was maybe a twenty minute walk away. School was okay and I was quite interested in learning. Mrs ^{ERG}[REDACTED] was one of the teachers I remember. Everyone at the school would have been aware that I was with foster parents but I wasn't treated any differently because of it. I didn't feel different from the other children. Mrs [REDACTED] used to go over my reading with me at home. She was very proud of my ability to read.

Religion

19. I think the ^{ERF-SPO}[REDACTED] were in the Salvation army so [REDACTED] and I were sent to that on a Sunday afternoon in the village. I quite enjoyed that as it was good fun.

Leisure / recreation / books / toys

20. [REDACTED] and I used to play games in the hallway. It was always very cold there. We weren't generally allowed to go into the sitting room to play. [REDACTED] was allowed in there when he wanted. If ever we did go in we were usually told to leave. There was one time they had a visitor and he realised how cold we were so he took us into the sitting room to warm up. I don't know who this man was.
21. We had things like snakes and ladders to play with. There were no books that we could have read. There was a comic that came into the house weekly and there were

newspapers that I tried to read and understand. There were no toys in the garden so I used to go to the local play park.

Chores / Pocket money / General condition of home

22. We weren't expected to do any chores in the house. There is nothing that sticks out in my mind as to whether the house was particularly clean or if it wasn't.

Birthdays/Christmas

23. Apart from when Mrs [REDACTED] told me I was four, birthdays were never celebrated or recognised. After that I never knew when my birthday was and I didn't even know what a birthday card was. For Christmas lunch we had chicken and I remember I got presents. I got something from the [ERF-SPO] and a present from social services.

Healthcare

24. I can't remember seeing a doctor and the only medical contact I can remember was getting vaccinations at school from the school doctor. I saw the school dentist who used to come in a mobile caravan and did a tour of all the schools.

Trips / holidays

25. I never went on any holidays or day trips with the [ERF-SPO].

Good memories

26. Mrs [REDACTED] was a nice lady and I remember her with great fondness. When she was there it was okay but when she was in hospital, or just out, things were different. I cannot think of any particularly positive memories from when I was living with them, because I think more about the bad times.

Visitors

27. I never saw or heard from any of my own family when I was at the [ERF-SPO].
The [ERF-SPO] never mentioned them.

Supervision oversight / inspection by fostering authority

28. I remember on one occasion going to see Mr [FPS] the social worker. I am not sure exactly when that was and I don't know why I went to see him. Miss Kennedy worked from the Stirling social work office and she visited me when I was with the [ERF-SPO]. She probably visited at least once a year. I didn't know she was coming. She would just appear. Mrs [REDACTED] must have known when she was coming because we were given better clothes to wear before she arrived. Miss Kennedy was taken into the sitting room and Mrs [REDACTED] was always present so I was never alone with Miss Kennedy.

29. I remember Mrs [REDACTED] always wanted me to read when Miss Kennedy was there. I think she just wanted to show that I was learning to read and write. I would have been about five at that visit. Miss Kennedy often asked what I wanted for Christmas because I would always get a present from social services. Her visits must have been just before Christmas. There was never any mention of my own family at these visits.

Relationship with foster parents / other children

30. The [ERF-SPO] had their own son, [REDACTED] and it was obvious that he was their child by the way he was treated compared to [REDACTED] and I. [REDACTED] always got what he wanted for Christmas. I think Mrs [REDACTED] encouraged me to call her mum but I don't really think I did because I knew she wasn't my mum. Mr [ERF] first name was [ERF] but I don't actually remember what I called him. I didn't have a relationship with Mr [ERF] because he was hardly ever there. When he was, he was often in the garden doing the vegetables. He was very fond of his little boy and spent time with him, playing. He didn't play with us.

Abuse at the [ERF-SPO] in [REDACTED]

31. The two women who lived with the [ERF-SPO] were scary women. I don't know their names. Both of them often slapped me around. One time they were making bedtime drinks and I must have said something they didn't like. I was sitting on the table at the time and one of the women slapped me so hard with her open hand that I got knocked off the table. They were both horrid to me. If ever I was in their way or near them they would hit me. Sometimes they slapped me across the head but at other times they would punch me to the body.
32. One time I used their shampoo and that was a big issue for them. They gave me a huge beating for that. I was thrown onto the sofa and punched to my body. They were calling me all sorts of names under the sun. They used phrases I didn't understand at the time. They called my mother a whore and that I was just like my mother. I was very confused and it made me very sad.
33. I am not sure when the abuse from these two women started but it continued right up until I left. After the first few times I tried my best just to stay away from them as much as I could. The verbal abuse was a daily occurrence. When the two women in the house beat me they never left me such that I needed any medical attention.
34. There was only one particular incident that happened with Mr [ERF] which I will never forget. I would have been about five or six when it happened. I had been sent to my bed along with [REDACTED]. It was summer time and it was still light outside. Everyone else must have been out somewhere and Mr [ERF] was left in charge of us. I was supposed to be in my bed but I looked out the window and saw Mr [ERF] in the back garden. He saw me.
35. He came into the house and dragged me downstairs and pulled me towards the fireplace. He was swearing at me and telling me how bad I was. He sat beside the coal fire and pulled me onto his knee. All the time he was calling me a little whore and that I wouldn't be living with them much longer. He put a poker in the fire then pulled my pyjama bottoms down. He took the poker out the fire and held it towards my private

area. He said that if I didn't behave he would stick the poker up inside me. I don't remember what happened after that, not even going back to my bed. I think I was in complete shock. He didn't hurt me and mustn't have touched me with the poker as I didn't have any injuries. After that incident I hated living in that house and wished that I was somebody else. I was constantly scared after the poker incident. I am not aware if [REDACTED] was abused in any way when she was living there.

36. At [REDACTED] primary there was one teacher, Mrs [ERG] who was really nasty to me for no reason. One Friday afternoon when I was six or seven, we were getting a story read to us in the class. All of a sudden she came up to me and slapped me with an open hand on my face. I hadn't a clue what I had done wrong and I still don't know why she did it.

Leaving the [ERF-SPO]

37. I would have been about eight when I left the [ERF-SPO] I think it was not long after the poker incident that myself and [REDACTED] got moved again. I think I was becoming more and more a problem for them made worse because Mrs [REDACTED] became quite ill, although I don't know what with. She was in hospital for a while then in bed when she got home. The two older women must have been looking after us. I seem to recall there was a lot of tension in the house at this time.
38. No one sat down with us and told us that we were leaving. Without warning someone just arrived and took [REDACTED] and myself away. I think it was Mr [FPS] from Buckie social services. He came to the house but it was never explained to us what was happening. [REDACTED] was crying and bawling her eyes out when we left. That is why I don't think she was abused in any way when we were there. I was the complete opposite. I was delighted and felt immense relief to be leaving and felt things could only get better. Although I lived with [REDACTED] for quite a long time we were not particularly close. [REDACTED] had learning difficulties and lived in her own wee world. I was sort of in my own wee world too.

Reporting of abuse at the [ERF-SPO]

39. Mrs [REDACTED] was present sometimes when the two women were beating me up. She was just too soft to stand up for me or do anything about it. She was aware what these women were doing to me. She never discussed it with me when we were on our own. I never told anyone about the poker incident with Mr [ERF]. I was too frightened. I also didn't want to get the blame for something happening to their son [REDACTED] if he was removed from them. I also realised it was only my word against Mr [ERF].

Foster care with family in [REDACTED] Banff

40. [REDACTED] and I were driven straight from the [ERF-SPO] along the coast to [REDACTED] which is next to [REDACTED] and arrived at another house. This address was [REDACTED] Banff and it was a semi-detached house. We went in and were introduced to the woman who we were told that we were going to be living with. I can't remember what I called her, in fact I can't even remember what she looks like. I was at this address between eighteen months and two years. I think the foster father could have been a fisherman on the boats because we rarely saw him. I can't remember his name either. They had their own daughter who was around the same age as myself. Her name was something like [REDACTED].
41. Downstairs was a sitting room and a kitchen. I can't remember where the bathroom was. Upstairs were three bedrooms. [REDACTED] and I shared a double bed in a room in this house.

Routine with foster family in [REDACTED]

Morning / bedtime

42. I don't remember much about the routine of getting ready in the morning but we obviously got up in time to go to school. I can't remember when we got up at the weekends. We were told when it was time for bed so we would go upstairs and get ourselves ready.

Food

43. At meal times I can't remember if we all sat together because I don't ever recall a family meal. I don't remember what the food was like at this house but there were no issues with it, and I didn't go hungry. I had my lunch at school.

Washing and bathing

44. I can't remember what the routine was in relation to washing and bathing.

Clothing

45. The only thing I can remember about the clothing is that we didn't have very many clothes. I ended up wearing a boys' leather jacket because I had found it so the foster mum just said that I was to wear it.

Schooling

46. I moved to [REDACTED] primary school. [REDACTED] went there too. I don't recall much about the school. It was a very mundane place. I spoke differently from the other children at school and my accent was different. I was a bit embarrassed by this and I was mocked sometimes because of it but it didn't really bother me. Any homework I got I used to do on a Sunday afternoon. I didn't get any help from the foster parents with my homework.

Clubs / organisation

47. [REDACTED] and I were sent to Sunday school.

Leisure / recreation / books / toys

48. There were very few toys or games to play with. I only remember Ludo and snakes and ladders. I also had my own doll. Whenever we could, the foster mum made us go out of the house and play. She didn't want us hanging about the house so I spent most of my time out of the house. She cleaned and cleaned the house when we were out. I wandered down on my own to the beach and spent a lot of my time there and I had a great time. I usually just went back to the house when I was feeling hungry.

Chores

49. After meals, [REDACTED] and I had to wash our own dishes and tidy up the kitchen. [REDACTED] and I were given other chores to do, things like dusting, sweeping the floor and stripping the sheets off the beds. The house in general was very clean. I don't remember [REDACTED] ever doing any chores.

Birthdays/Christmas

50. Birthdays were never recognised or celebrated. I was aware of other children at school having birthday parties and I got invited to a girl's party. It was a lovely experience and I was quite jealous. I never had a party of my own. At Christmas I had a stocking hung up and as usual I got a present from social services. I remember I got a sewing box for the Christmas I was with this family.

Healthcare

51. At some point there was a flu epidemic going around and the doctor was called to see [REDACTED]. The doctor came to the house and when the doctor saw me he felt my forehead and said that I had a temperature and should be in my bed. I was quite ill

that time, I had a fever and I started sleep walking. The window was open one night and I apparently was climbing out the window when I was pulled back in. This was in the upstairs bedroom. I don't remember seeing a doctor at any other time.

Trips / holidays

52. The only trip I remember was a Sunday school trip where we visited the next village to [REDACTED] I never went on any holidays with the foster family in [REDACTED]

Visitors

53. I still didn't have any contact with my own family. I never had any conversations with these foster parents about my own parents. At some point the subject must have been brought up and they told me that I didn't have a mother and a father. I was quite bewildered and confused by this. Miss Kennedy, the social worker, may have visited me but I can't remember.

Relationship with foster parents / other children

54. I didn't have a relationship with [REDACTED] There was no interaction between the foster father and me. All his attention was devoted to [REDACTED] I never felt part of this family. I was never shown any love and attention It may sound petty but an example of this was that her pyjamas were ironed whereas ours weren't. She used to go to her bed about an hour after us and I often heard her laughing and giggling when she came upstairs.

Abuse at foster family in [REDACTED]

55. Apart from there being no love and affection and me not feeling part of the family there was only one incident which could probably be considered to have been abuse. This time I must have done something that was deemed to be naughty so the foster mother took my sewing box off me. This was the sewing box I got for Christmas. She then put

it in the oven, which was switched on. The plastic box burned and melted and everything inside was ruined. I was quite upset and shocked by this. There was no physical or verbal abuse there.

Leaving [REDACTED]

56. I am not sure why we were moved from [REDACTED]. My feeling is that the foster mother couldn't cope with us and she had taken on more than she could handle. I suspect that she wanted a companion for her only daughter. I also had the feeling by then that I was actually bringing in money for her. I had not been told that I was leaving and again it was Mr ^{FPS} [REDACTED] the social services man, who came and took me and [REDACTED] away in his car. I don't think [REDACTED] was upset this time. I think we were two little, bewildered, confused girls by this time.

Reporting of abuse at foster family in [REDACTED]

57. I never told anyone about anything that went on in [REDACTED]

Foster care with the ^{ERA-ERB} [REDACTED] in Macduff

58. We left [REDACTED] and Mr ^{FPS} [REDACTED] drove us to Macduff. I would have been nine or possibly ten by that time. The address we went to first was in [REDACTED], Macduff and the foster parents were Mr and Mrs ^{ERA-ERB} [REDACTED]. In all the time that we stayed with the ^{ERA-ERB} [REDACTED] they moved house twice. The other two addresses were in [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED], both of which were in Macduff.
59. We were in the house in [REDACTED] for one year. It was a little cottage and was a hovel. There wasn't a proper kitchen and what was there was behind a curtain. It had two rooms downstairs. The sink was in the sitting room but there wasn't a shower or a bath. [REDACTED] and I shared a bed which was in the eaves of the house and we had

to climb up a step ladder to get up there. It wasn't cold in the house apart from when you had to use the outside toilet. The house wasn't kept particularly clean and was an absolute hovel. Looking back we shouldn't have been allowed to stay there. There was no electricity, with gas lamps and the toilet was outside. It should have been condemned. I think because we were living with them it enabled them to get a new house.

60. We moved to [REDACTED] where we lived between one and two years. It was a post-war prefabricated house. [REDACTED] and I still shared bed. At the age of thirteen we moved to the house at [REDACTED] and stayed there for the rest of my time with the ERA-ERB [REDACTED]. This was a newly built house. There were three bedrooms upstairs. The sleeping arrangements were the same as the previous houses. I shared a bed with [REDACTED] in one room. Mr and Mrs ERA-ERB [REDACTED] were in another room. The third room had lodgers who had started to stay when we were in [REDACTED]. When I was about fourteen [REDACTED] moved out and I moved in to Mrs ERB [REDACTED] bedroom and shared the bed with her. I stayed with them in this house for the next four years until I was seventeen. The daily routine followed from house to house.
61. We just called the foster parents Mr and Mrs ERA-ERB [REDACTED]. She would have been about fifty. Mr ERA [REDACTED] was about seventy, and was retired. Mrs ERB [REDACTED] was lazy and often very angry. There was never any encouragement or love and affection from either of them.
62. The lodgers who came to stay were always men. They may have been homeless or just unemployed. They certainly weren't professionals. These men had a free reign in the house and were able to go anywhere they wanted. They sat with us at mealtimes.

Routine with foster parents, the ERA-ERB [REDACTED], at Macduff

Morning / bedtime

63. [REDACTED] and I used to get ourselves up in the morning and got ourselves ready for school. It was the same at night.

Food

64. Mrs ^{ERB} wasn't a particularly good cook, but the food was okay. I didn't go hungry. There were no issues with the food. Mrs ^{ERB} was lazy and I often used to get up for school and make my own breakfast. I also had to make Mr and Mrs ^{ERA-ERB}'s breakfast and take it to them in their bed. I got lunch at school. Mrs ^{ERB} made the supper which was quite heavy and greasy but I have to say I never went hungry.

Washing and bathing

65. We must have been given privacy to wash even when the sink was in the living room in ^{ERB}.

Clothing

66. We didn't have many clothes as they didn't have a lot of money. We were taken to a store because Mrs ^{ERB} was given money by social services to get us clothes. This was my clothing allowance and I was allowed to spend it on clothes that I wanted, within reason. There was a list of things I was allowed to buy, but there was a degree of choice. I had a school uniform but it wasn't particularly strict. We had brown shoes for Sunday and black shoes for through the week. We got this allowance twice a year.

Schooling

67. I changed school again and went to Macduff primary then Macduff high school. They were both in in the same building. School was quite challenging because I was getting bullied and nasty things were getting said to me. I remember sitting the eleven plus exams and I did exceptionally well. I was told by Miss Kennedy that I had the ability to go to Banff academy but because of who I was I wasn't allowed to go. It was because of my social circumstances, because I didn't have my own parents that I didn't get to go to Banff Academy. I felt a bit annoyed by this but Miss Kennedy was not very approachable so I didn't bother complaining to her. I left school when I was fifteen and got a job at a solicitors office in Banff.

68. I got homework at school and I had to do it all on my own. I never got any help or support at home. The school were good at giving praise and as long as I had tried to do my best there were no issues. I got bullied by the other children sometimes and I think I became quote introverted.

Religion

69. I went with Mrs ^{ERB} to the local church but sometimes I went on my own. I got on well with the minister. He was a Church of Scotland minister.

Leisure/recreation

70. There wasn't much in the house for us to play with. There were a couple of board games but not much else.

Chores / Pocket money / General condition of home

71. Because we were getting older, Mrs ^{ERB} used to send me out to her friends' houses on a Saturday so that I could clean their houses. I had to go with Mrs ^{ERB} to the church and she made me help her clean the church. From the age of eleven I was out working. I was also sent to her friend's house which was a bed and breakfast business and I had to clean all the dishes. There was a lot of floor scrubbing using a scrubbing brush, moving furniture and sweeping. I never saw any money for doing this. At home I often cooked for ^{ERB}, myself and for Mr and Mrs ^{ERA-ERB}.
72. When I got home from school Mrs ^{ERB} would be up and would cook supper. I would have to clean all the dishes. Every Friday after school ^{ERB} and I would take all the chairs out the kitchen and clean the kitchen floor. On Saturday morning we would be sent to the shops to get some shopping. After that we would come back and clean the other rooms.
73. I got some pocket money but I know this came from the social services.

Birthdays/Christmas

74. Birthdays were not celebrated at all. At Christmas we still got a present from the social services and we got some other presents like chocolates and other bits and pieces.

Healthcare

75. I didn't get any help or information from Mrs **ERB** when I was starting to mature. I had to go to the chemist myself and buy my own sanitary products.

Trips / holidays

76. I didn't go on any trips or holidays with the **ERA-ERB**

Visitors

77. I still didn't have any contact with any of my family. Miss Kennedy visited me twice in all the time that I was with the **ERA-ERB** I don't think she visited at all when we were in the first house.

Abuse at foster care with the **ERA-ERB**

78. The first lodger that I remember was called **ERE** and he was living with us in the house in the He slept in a bed-settee in the living room. A few times, I can't remember how often, but he came into my room after he had been out drinking. I would have been in my bed for quite a while. He came in on his own and he offered me money for me to touch him. He wanted me to touch his private parts. I said 'No' several times because he tried to persuade me but he gave up and left. I would have been twelve or thirteen and he must have been between fifty and sixty.
79. Another lodger who came later to the **ERA-ERB** was called **ERD** To be honest he was a bit of a weirdo and may have had mental health issues. I kept out of his way

because he would wander around the house and his zip was often down. He may have been exposing himself but I never looked and I never actually saw his private parts. It was horrible when he was in the house and I was afraid to go to sleep. I felt quite vulnerable and afraid with these men in the house.

80. Mrs ^{ERB} started beating me up when I was eight or nine. One time I remember it was because I was putting my shoes on without undoing the laces. She hit me several times on the body with the shoe. She did it on my bare bottom and on my back. She had huge hands and big fists. Another time, when we were living in [REDACTED] Macduff, she punched me and my head went through a window. I didn't get injured badly and only had fairly minor lacerations to my scalp. I didn't need medical attention. Mrs ^{ERB} got a fright when that happened. The beatings from her were quite regular but became less and less as I got older. By the time we moved to [REDACTED] the beatings had almost stopped.
81. Another thing Mrs ^{ERB} did to me, when we lived in [REDACTED] was lock me in the outside coal shed. It was big enough that I could stand up but there was no heating or lighting so it was cold and very dark. Sometimes she would lock me in there for hours. I must have been impertinent or said something to upset her for her to put me in there.
82. Mr ^{ERA} was a disgusting old man. He sat at fire side and regularly exposed his private parts to me and made lots of sexual comments full of innuendo to me. He made these comments and exposed himself to me in front of other people. He was clothed but his bits were out and clearly visible. He wasn't aroused and wasn't sexually active in what he was doing. One of the comments he made about me was "She is ready for the knife". I didn't really know what it meant at that time but I know now that he was meaning I was ready to lose my virginity. His behaviour was horrible and he acted like this even when Mrs ^{ERB} was there. He never laid a finger on me in any way.

Leaving foster care

83. There were two lodgers sleeping in the other room. One night one of the men attacked the other and I heard the commotion. I went next door to get our neighbours to call the police. When I went back the lodger was covered in blood and the ceiling was splattered with blood. The police came and his attacker was charged with grievous bodily harm and ended up in prison.
84. After this incident I decided I had to leave. I was seventeen. I packed my suitcase and walked out. I had found a lady who had a bedsit and was looking for someone so I took it. When I was in the digs I contacted Mrs Kennedy and told her that I had moved out from the ERA-ERB. She just said that was it then and she would leave me on my own. I never had any dealings with her after that.
85. Mrs ERB never prepared me for independent living and I didn't get any help from social services either to support me.

Reporting of abuse at the ERA-ERB in Macduff

86. I didn't tell anyone about the time the lodger came into my room. I didn't see the point in trying to tell anyone.

Life after being in care

87. I worked in the solicitor's office from the age of fifteen when I was still with the ERA-ERB. At the age of seventeen I decided I wanted to do nursing so I obtained a degree in nursing and worked in Aberdeen. It was hard work but very rewarding.
88. In the 1980s I studied psychology and obtained a degree. I then returned to nursing. I subsequently went to University and taught behavioural sciences.

Reporting of abuse in foster care

89. After I contacted the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, the police were in touch with me and I told them about the incident with the poker and Mr ^{ERF} [REDACTED]. They later got back to me and told me that Mr ^{ERF} [REDACTED] had since died so no further enquiry would be made.

Impact

90. I will never forget the incident with Mr ^{ERF} [REDACTED] when he threatened me with the poker. I was really upset when it happened and I still think about it now.
91. It was only when my grandchildren came along that it brought it all home to me that the way I was treated as a child was all wrong. My own children received a loving, nurturing upbringing and are all happy. I still have flashbacks to my time in care when my grandchildren are about.
92. I think I got married because I wanted a house of my own and to bring up a proper family the way it should be. It turned out the man I married was an abuser and I couldn't get out of it. It only stopped when he left me for another woman.
93. I think I have tried to turn round all the negative impact from my time in care and use it in a positive manner. My strategy is to put it all behind me and to the back of my mind. I have not spoken to anyone about what I went through because I don't want to burden them, and I don't want any sympathy. This is the first time I have disclosed any of this information to this extent.
94. Because of all the moves, the fact I was never really happy at school and wasn't put forward to go to Banff Academy despite the fact I was good enough, my education suffered. I had to remedy my lack of education myself by the extra education I took on. I have achieved what I wanted to achieve because I set out to be successful and to turn the negative into a positive.

Records

- 95. I have never tried to get any of my records and not sure that I want to either. I managed to locate my birth certificate and that is how I found out what my mother's and supposed father's names. I didn't pursue this any further to locate any other relative.

Lessons to be learned

- 96. I hope that the police, social work, education and all the other agencies involved, take on board the findings of the Inquiry and things change so that other children don't go through what I did.
- 97. I hope by coming forward to the Inquiry no other child is subjected to what I was. Foster care must be more closely monitored and children must be encouraged to speak out if they are unhappy with anything. Fostering needs to be turned on its head but it is difficult when fostering by its very nature and it is all behind closed doors. Where possible children should be adopted to make the children feel wanted and to be safe.

Other information

- 98. 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..... 

Dated..... 12. 02. 20