

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

FCD

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is FCD My date of birth is 1962. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born as FCD. I'm known as FCD I was born in Brechin. My dad came over from Ireland and met my mum. She was a midwife. My mum's dad was a staunch Orangeman and my dad was Irish Catholic.
3. My granddad owned a row of shops in He was quite wealthy. My dad convinced my mum to steal three hundred pounds from him to buy a cottage in Brechin. My granddad disowned her and she was ousted from the family. He wanted nothing more to do with her.
4. My mum was called and my dad was I have sisters called and I also have a brother called My mum had another baby boy called but he died. I think there are eighteen months or less between and me. We're all close in age.
5. My dad went on to have and with another partner. There might be others who are scattered about that I don't know about. I found later in life that none of them are my full siblings. I am an only child to my mother and father.

6. After a while my dad started drinking too much and there were problems in the marriage. He had always had a quarter bottle of rum in his pocket. I can remember sitting in my high chair at the side of the fire place and him being locked out. He was sticking cigarettes through the letterbox. I think he had been paid and drank all of his wages again. My mum let him in and he sat on the sofa. She told him she was going out to a neighbour's for something and called the police from a phone box. They came and he was arrested but I don't know what for. I just remember him being escorted out the door. That kind of thing went on for a while. He used to get me to stand on a chair and open the latch to let him in.
7. I think, by that point, he had met another woman, [REDACTED]. He travelled around a lot because he worked in a 'potato squad' with his friend from the same village in Ireland. [REDACTED] lived in Manchester and my dad had met her in a pub there. I can remember them coming to the front door one day because they had missed their train and were looking for somewhere to stay. My mum actually let them stay in the house so that they could get the train to Manchester the next day.
8. My dad had introduced my mum to cigarettes and alcohol. She had an addictive personality for alcohol and that's when it all went downhill. She was no longer working as a midwife. I used to have a photograph of her in her nurses uniform, back in the early sixties, it was the one with the cuffs and the wee apron.
9. My mum took me down to Perth Harbour one day to meet a man. There was a big row of tenement houses and bedsits down at the harbour. We went to his house which was like a bed-sit. I can remember he had a painting of ballet dancers on his living room wall. I had never seen such a beautiful picture and I used to look at the ballet dancers. He had a telly and I wasn't allowed to turn round on the couch as the bed was behind me. That's where my sister [REDACTED] came from. My dad wasn't with my mum anymore so he couldn't have got her pregnant. I only realised that a couple of years ago. My mum was having sex with this man for money.

10. After my mum became pregnant, she went into an unmarried mother's home to have my sister, [REDACTED] I was taken into care. She had no family to turn to because my dad had talked her into stealing the money off my granddad.

Foster care – Doune

11. I can remember seeing a car coming into the street at [REDACTED] in Perth. I had on a stupid red coat buttoned up and a round box hat with elastic under the chin that my mother had put on me. I knew straight away it was a social worker coming for me so I ran and hid under the bed. I was pulled out and taken away in the back of a car. I can remember taking the hat off. I don't know if I had been taken away before then because I knew the car was for me.
12. I was taken to a woman's house in Doune for the first time. She lived in a cottage. It was very isolated, there were only two cottages. I think I was about three. I can't remember her name but that woman played a huge part in my early years. She was an older woman and she was evil. She was fat and had grey hair. I remember she was very old fashioned, like Nora Baty. Her husband was a wee skinny man with a cap who was very quiet.

Routine at Doune

Mornings and bedtime

13. I slept in the attic. She would get me up in the morning and I would get myself dressed. She would sometimes put my shoes on for me. I only saw her husband at night when he came in from work. He wasn't about and when he was he never spoke. Looking back, he was probably scared of her. I remember it was winter because there was a big roaring coal fire on. I can remember the kitchen was tiny and there was a front room with a coal fire. It was a very old fashioned building.

14. The woman had two daughters, one was called [REDACTED] and I can't remember the other one's name. I had no interaction with them. She had an older daughter too, she was called [REDACTED]. She used to go out to work all day. She was a grown woman.
15. One of my earliest memories there is eating a plate of porridge sitting on the kitchen floor while the three girls sat at the table. The woman gave me most of my meals outside. After I'd eaten my porridge I was put outside on my own. It was snowing. I was left outside all day. She came out at dinner time with a bowl of soup with a big potato in it.
16. I used to go on my knees at an old fashioned stone dyke wall that had two bits of wood across it and have my soup on it. I was kept outside. I was brought inside at tea time and given another bowl of soup. I'd have to get my pyjamas on and go to bed. I wasn't even allowed to use the toilet. I was told to pee in an old fashioned potty.
17. I never had a bath when I was there. I can't even remember what the bathroom looked like. I only ever got a glimpse of it when I was passing to go into the bedroom. I was never in the bathroom.
18. There was an old woman who lived in the cottage next door. She knew what was going on but I don't think she wanted to get involved. She used to take me in and give me a cup of hot orange juice. It was as though she was scared because she would tell me to drink it up quickly.
19. There was a little burn running past the cottages. I pushed one of the daughters in the burn once on our way to school because she was shouting "you've no got a mum!"

Going back home

20. I went back to my mum's house and suddenly [REDACTED] was there. It was a shock. I resented her. I remember thinking I must have been taken away for her to be there. I

wondered what she was doing there when I hadn't been there. I remember one day my mum taking [REDACTED] back to the man at the harbour. She said to him "that's your daughter, I've named her [REDACTED] do you want to hold her?" but he didn't want to hold her. My mum just turned the pram and we walked away.

21. I went back to that woman's house in Doune a few times. I spent the next three years going between my mum's and Doune. I think I stayed with the woman three or four times.
22. Around that time, there were a lot of people coming into the house, mostly for my mum. There were nuns, a priest and social workers visiting us. We used to climb out of the window in the front room when we saw a car drawing up because we thought it was someone coming for us. I always thought that I was going back to Doune. I didn't want to go there but even then none of us told anyone.
23. I remember the priest coming in with boxes of food. The nuns wanted me to make my First Holy Communion, but my mum refused. There was a big row and my mum told them to get out of the house. After that, there were no visits from the nuns or the priests and religion was no longer a part of our lives.
24. I used to have to make myself food when I was at my mum's. She would be in bed out of it on prescription tablets. She had a big bag of semolina powder. I poured it out of the bag into bowls, got the milk and swirled it around. I thought that was how to make it. I would make it for [REDACTED] and me. One morning I put a pot of milk on the stove, I lifted it off and tried to pour into a bowl for [REDACTED]. It spilled all over [REDACTED] knees. My mum sent her to school anyway. It was the start of me looking after [REDACTED] like I was their mum.
25. I can remember my granddad walking into the house once. He was big, he was six foot something. I didn't know who he was at the time but I just saw this smartly dressed, tall man walking down the lobby into the front room. He stood speaking to my mum quietly and he looked down at me. He then took a ten bob note out of his wallet, put it on the mantelpiece and said "there buy your bastards something with

that". My parents were married but my mum had us baptised Catholic. My granddad was the leader of [REDACTED] so our fate was sealed.

26. My mum had a lovely house with nice furniture. I had a doll which sat on the sideboard but I wasn't allowed to play with her. I was allowed to take her down now and again but not play with her. My dad and [REDACTED] left to go back to Manchester. They said that they would pay for the furniture instead of giving my mum maintenance. Apparently my mum had agreed to it. They took the payment book to take over the payments.
27. Every so often a child would appear and I'd be told "that's your sister" or "that's your brother". I can remember being back with my mum when she was pregnant. It could have been on a break from the woman in Doune. One day my mum lay on the floor, she told [REDACTED] and me to play a game. She told us to run and jump on her tummy over and over again. I did about three jumps on and off her tummy. I asked "what about the baby?" and she said "oh the baby will be fine". When it came to the time for the baby to be born, I went to see my mum in hospital. When I got there, my mum was in bed but there was no baby. He had died. As young as I was, I knew that it was me and [REDACTED] jumping on my mum's stomach that had killed the baby. It was never spoken about and he was never mentioned.
28. I remember the doctor used to come all the time because my mum used to abuse prescription drugs and she would get lock-jaw. I remember the doctor said he wouldn't treat her again if she did it again. She was taking drugs every day. I remember her overdosing on drugs about three times.
29. I came home from school one day and the house was empty apart from one leather sofa and the cooker. All of the furniture was gone. My dad and [REDACTED] hadn't paid for the furniture so the bailiffs had come and taken it all. My mum was crying and I didn't know what to do. She was in a right mess and wouldn't stop crying. I went to get the neighbour who stayed next door. She came through and assessed the situation. The doctor came and my mum was taken away. She had had a nervous breakdown and was taken to the Murray Royal Hospital.

Going back to Doune

30. [REDACTED] and I were both taken to the lady in Doune. I had a new social worker by then, Irene Mann. My first one, Mrs Crewden, was lovely but she left to care for her own baby. The new social worker, Irene Mann, arranged it all. At first it was just [REDACTED] and me in Doune. It was exactly the same as before.
31. The woman used to put a camp-bed down on the floor for [REDACTED] and me to sleep on. There was a big water tank above us and I used to hear it during the night. In the mornings I would wake up with crusts covering both of my nostrils. I don't know if it was condensation but it was something to do with the water tank.
32. I can remember her making me pee in a potty again and I didn't want to do it so I wet the bed. She came through in the morning and discovered I was wet so she stripped me naked. She smacked me all around the living room. Her two daughters were at the table at the time.
33. The whole time I was there I was given the same food. It was the bowl of soup with the potato in it. Then there was a change of food and we got one boiled egg each instead of the soup. I can remember saying to [REDACTED] "look we've got an egg!"
34. By then my mum had had my other siblings, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They came to Doune too. I can remember we were all sitting on the kitchen floor eating our breakfast and it was snowing outside. I don't remember the social worker coming to visit us. I could have told my mum what was happening there but I didn't. I don't know why. There was still a wee bit of a connection with her but it wasn't as strong as it should have been. It was more or less severed.
35. Another time the women held a birthday party for one of her daughter's and we weren't allowed to the party. I remember someone asking "what about the kids over there?" and the woman said we would have a party later but, of course, we didn't. We were just left outside.

36. It was always so cold. I remember [REDACTED] crying. His hands were blue. I can remember trying to tuck them in his duffle coat pockets and telling him to keep them in there. We were all so obsessed with not being cold. I was frozen all the time because we were outside all the time. It didn't matter about the weather, we were always out. We used to sit in the shed trying to keep warm. [REDACTED] was always crying.
37. My brother [REDACTED] was epileptic and had seizures. At home had had been getting tablets that knocked him out. On one of the occasions we were all back at my mum's, I can remember him falling asleep at the dinner table in my mum's. He used to escape from the house and wake the whole close up singing. He took [REDACTED] out of her pram once, covered her in black boot polish and stuck sugar puffs up her nose. He was jealous of her because she was the youngest.
38. At Doune [REDACTED] wasn't being treated for his epilepsy. He was sleeping on a tiny two-seater sofa in the room with [REDACTED] and me. He would have fits through the night so I would get up, get him up off the floor and put him back on the sofa. I would do my best to lie across the sofa and keep me in at the side so he didn't fall onto the floor. It was all that I could do because he wasn't getting any treatment. The woman never came in the room, I think she was sleeping downstairs. She didn't even know that he was having fits.
39. She was just pure evil, the things that she did to us. I can remember once that my sister [REDACTED] was left sitting in a pram, clipped in, all day. She was crying but the woman just left her for hours. It was cruel. I was in the front room at the time, she picked [REDACTED] up while she was still strapped in the pram and turned her round and smacked right into her bottom and said "there's something to cry about". You wouldn't cross her because she was a big woman.
40. We never got a bath or our teeth brushed. I can't remember any washing or getting clothes.

41. I went to ██████ Primary School. It was a tiny country school with one classroom. The woman's youngest daughters were going to school too. We weren't given breakfast. She gave me an apple and told me it was for my dinner. I took the apple out one day and the teacher asked if it was all that I had. I told her it was so she gave me her sandwiches. When she asked the woman about it, she lied and told her that she had told me to come home for my dinner. She was just a bad woman. A lot of it was the mental cruelty.
42. My mum came to visit us once. I thought I was going home. The woman asked us if we would like to feed the chickens and of course, we were never allowed to feed them so we all wanted to do it. ██████ and I went off like a pair of idiots to feed the chickens. When we came back, my mum had gone. I can remember running up the hill screaming after her but she had left. I was fissing mad that she had just disappeared again. They had lied. They had planned together it to distract us so that my mum could leave. My mum lying to me was the worst part. I felt betrayed by her.

Leaving Doune

43. I knew something was going on because we got a bath. The next day Irene Mann appeared in the car. I was never told what was happening, I just went. I was just so happy to get away from there. I think I was six or seven.
44. ██████ was taken to Quarriers. When ██████ went to Quarriers they sorted his drugs out. I went to visit him there once but he didn't want to speak to me, or my mum. He had probably forgotten us. I think that was a couple of years later. He just hung onto the carer. I saw him once or twice in fourteen years. I actually forgot that I had a brother for years.

Hillyland Children's Home, Perth

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63. I had stayed at another home of a woman called [REDACTED] at one point. She lived in Craigie in Perth. She was lovely, like a granny. She had a son with long hair. She looked after eight or nine other children. I think we stayed with her twice but I can't remember how long we stayed. I don't have any bad memories there. I was here, there and everywhere.

64. [REDACTED] and I got in the car at Doune. We drove somewhere and I remember Irene Mann saying "there are your sisters". I looked and saw [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] outside on the swings. I had met them before but time had lapsed and I had forgotten about them. We had all been separated. I wasn't even told we were going to meet them. I remember the journey on the way to Carolina House because [REDACTED] car door opened as the car was moving. She nearly fell out because she didn't have her seatbelt on.

Carolina House, Dundee

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Colonsay House, Perth

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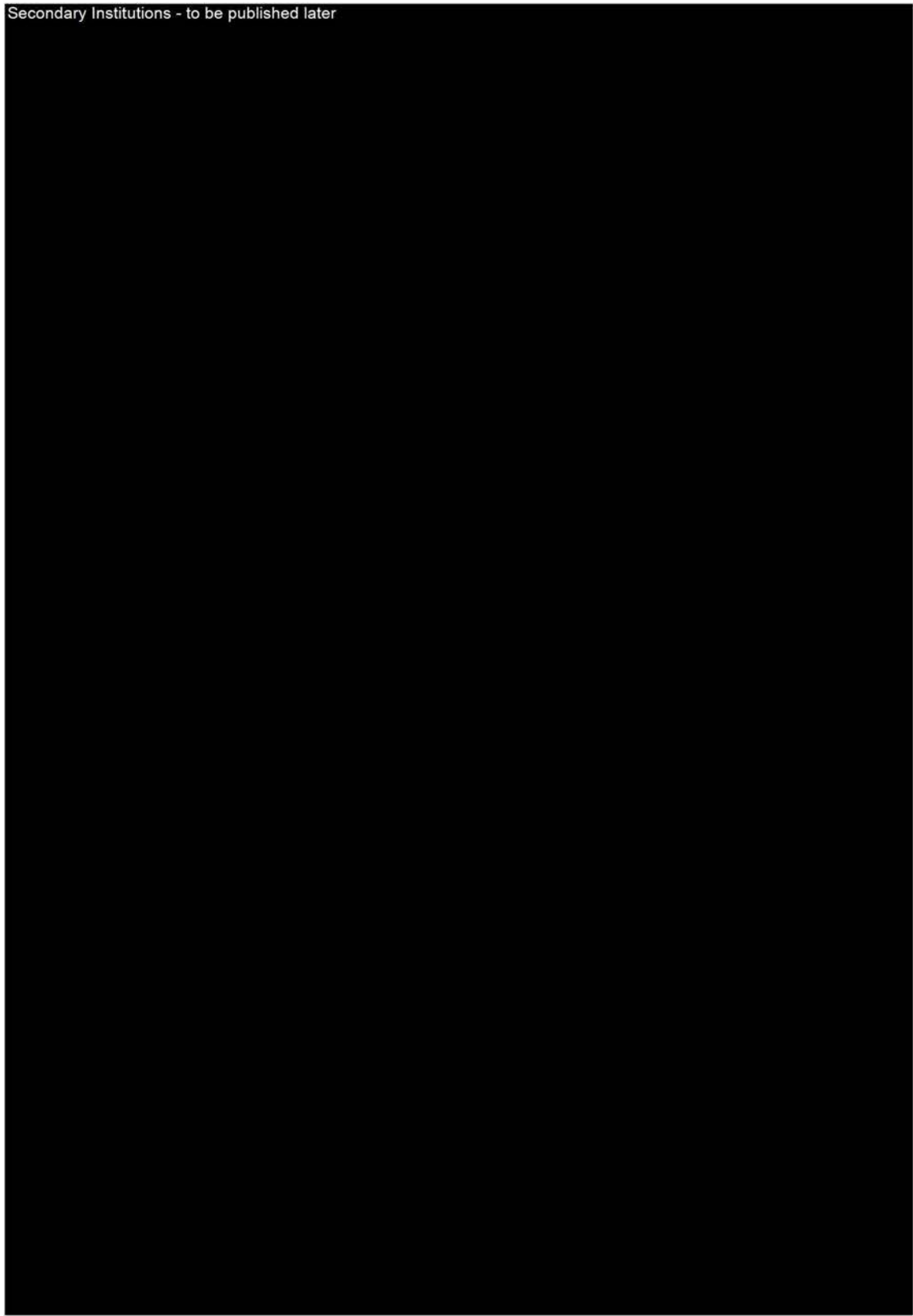


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Leaving Colonsay House

172. Irene Mann came to visit me at my mum's and sat on the sofa. It was one of those sofas that goes into a bed. One side was soaking wet, it was filthy. The house was filthy. There was no food or hot water. There was no heating or toilet paper. We used to squares of newspaper for toilet paper. There was no bedding. There was no washing machine. There was nothing in it apart from cans lying everywhere. It was disgusting. Irene said I would be fine and left.
173. It had one bedroom which my mum shared with a man called [REDACTED]. There was no bedroom for me so I had to sleep on the filthy couch or sit in the chair.
174. I used to have to fill a twin tub washing machine and plug it in to heat it up. I would wheel it through and empty it into the bath so that I could have a bath. I had to hand wash my clothes but there was no soap powder or soap. I couldn't even wash my hair. I had nothing.

Life after care

175. After four months, I took [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I was taken to Perth Royal Infirmary and had to have my stomach pumped. I saw a psychiatrist the next day. I don't know what came out of that. I was in hospital for a couple of days and then I was put back to my mum's. I was just left to it.

176. My mum used to throw me out when she was drunk. I would be out all night with nowhere to go. Sometimes I would sit on the stairs in the close all night. If I was lucky she would let me back in to get my school uniform but most of the time she wouldn't let me in. I had nowhere to go. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
- Secondary Institutions - to be published later
177. I met a girl called ██████ in the estate. He introduced me to her older brother, ██████ when I was fourteen. I had my school uniform on when I met him. It was 1976. He was 21. ██████ said one night that he was going to take us to a club. I had never been to a club in my life. We went to the club and he bought me a drink. He bought me a half pint of cider because ██████ picked that so I just had the same.
178. ██████ parents ended up taking me in stay with them. I saw more and more of ██████ He was around a lot. I had sex with him when I was fourteen. He had a house so it was somewhere else to go. He did a lot of cooking so there was hot food for me.
179. I turned fifteen and I was still with him. He then joined the parachute regiment. He asked me if I would go down to live with him in Aldershot when I turned sixteen. He wanted to get married. I said no.
180. I met ██████ when I was eighteen. ██████ had moved away by then. ██████ was one of the nicest people you could ever meet. I married him. We bought a flat together.
181. My mum was found dead in bed on Christmas Day with all of her heart tablets lying around her. I think she had been so drunk that she couldn't get her tablet into her mouth. ██████ and ██████ were lying with her at the time. I was nineteen.
182. I didn't give ██████ or ██████ a second thought until after the funeral when Irene Mann told me that I was their legal guardian. She told me that they could live with me

instead of going back into care. She didn't tell me about the consequences of taking them in.

183. I took [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in to live with [REDACTED] and me. I didn't even think about the money aspect of caring for them. I ended up getting into mortgage arrears. I was only starting to earn about bills and running a house. I didn't know how to budget. After about six months, I lost the flat and my marriage broke down.
184. I got a council flat in an estate in Perth and I took [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in with me. I was working in the lab at the Co-op creamery six days a week. I would give them the money to pay the rent but unbeknown to me they were spending it. I got a rent arrears letter. They had been out spending the money in the disco.
185. I bought a turkey two weeks before Christmas because I didn't know it would go off. I had to do the weekly shopping carefully. I'd come home and they'd eaten it during the day when I had been out working. We sat with one Frey Bento's steak pie between the three of us for Christmas dinner. It was a mess.
186. I was left to deal with it on my own. I phoned Irene Mann once to tell her that I was struggling financially and I didn't have any money to buy [REDACTED] a school uniform. She came to the house with one skirt. It was the last time I saw her.
187. I got an electricity bill for four hundred pounds and it was the final straw. I told them to leave. By that time they had left school, [REDACTED] was pregnant and [REDACTED] wasn't even getting out of bed to go and sign on at the job centre. We all fell out. They still blame me for putting them out. After I lost everything, Irene Mann told me that I could have fostered them and got a foster grant to help with their keep. I couldn't believe it.
188. I met my dad after all those years and he begged me for money. He kept in touch with me every couple of years.
189. [REDACTED] kept coming back into my life. I would have known better had I been a bit older or told more when I left care. He would ask me to come round when he came

home on leave and send [REDACTED] to get me. It just became a life habit. I would never have been with him if I had been taken somewhere safe when I was put out of Colonsay House.

190. [REDACTED] left his wife and came back from England. He moved in with me when I lived [REDACTED] in Perth. After a couple of years I had my son, [REDACTED]. His dad wanted him to be called [REDACTED]. He was born in 1988.

191. [REDACTED] started drinking more and his behaviour was getting worse. I was too scared to get away from him. He was very abusive and violent towards me. If I had had the proper help when I came out of the care system I wouldn't have become involved with him. I wouldn't have been going around with a 21 year old drinking cider and staying at his house.

192. I moved to another house in Perth and got a job working full-time in a home caring for amputees. After that I applied to the council to work with the elderly. I worked night-shift so that I could put my son [REDACTED] into the council nursery and sleep during the day. I worked there for around three years. The situation with my son's father was getting worse.

193. I started getting headaches. I had a brain haemorrhage when I was 32. [REDACTED] was five. I collapsed on the floor one morning when I was getting ready to go to work. It was like someone pouring a warm cup of tea over the inside of my head. It was so painful. I woke in hospital in Dundee with my head shaved and staples in my head. Helen Scott visited me. It was the last time I saw her. She's dead now.

194. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

195. [REDACTED] father was still around. He was seeing other women by then. My son was having fits and asthma attacks because he was so scared of his father. I decided

one day to leave. I packed all my things and left Perth with my son. He was eight. We came to [REDACTED] and I've stayed there since.

Reporting of abuse

196. I blame the social work department and Irene Mann for most of what could have been avoided. I couldn't speak to Irene Mann. She spent most of her working day trying to get me in trouble for something. I wasn't taught that I could tell anyone so it never crossed my mind. If something happened, you just dealt with it. I never saw her senior. I didn't know she had one. There was nobody that I could talk to and my mum was drunk most of the time. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

[REDACTED] Secondary

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197. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later
198. My mental health has suffered too. I think, mostly, it's the mental abuse and having to always watch your back. There are places in my mind that I won't go to because I know if I go I there I might not come out. I refuse to dip into it. I just don't go there.
199. I have difficulty connecting with people. When I had my son, there was nothing there. They held him up, I looked at him and felt nothing. There was no love or bond at all. The health visitor told me that I was very adult for admitting that because it doesn't happen for everyone. When he was baby I didn't know what to do with him and I found it very difficult at first. Once I started to get a bit of a reaction back from him I started to bond with him. Now we're very close.

200. I can't keep relationships or friendships at all. I've never kept a relationship. I don't think I ever will. I can't cope with rejection. It's something that troubles me to this day. I like to be on my own, I don't like anyone around me in the house. I can't trust anyone. I find people think less of you when they find out that you were brought up in care so I only tell people if it's necessary.
201. When I meet someone I'm waiting for them to let me down. My son told me once that I was totally void of emotion and affection. He wasn't being nasty but it really hurt me. I'll often accuse people in my life of things they haven't done and I'll be convinced about it. I can make friends but if they do anything I can walk away easily even over something stupid.
202. My sisters have tried to make contact with me but I don't want to speak to them. It's been thirty years since I've seen any of them. There's no connection for me to want to go back to them. I didn't see my brother for years. I finally got his address through my employment at the old people's home. They were able to access social work records. I tried to contact him but he didn't answer the phone. After I had an aneurysm we meet up.
203. My time in care will never leave me. Most of it was all mental abuse. It was wondering what was going to happen next and having to watch your back. I think my education was affected too. I didn't get any qualifications. I was in lots of schools but I learned nothing. It wasn't that I was stupid it was just that I didn't have support. I didn't realise the importance of education at the time. I wish I could go back and get my head in the books. I definitely would have gone on to study Forensic Pathology. I went back to education when I was in my forties. I studied to be an embalmer at the British Institute of Embalmers and passed all the exams. I worked for an embalmer for three years.
204. I hoard things now. I buy lots of shoes and clothes. I have about forty or fifty eighteen pairs of shoes. I have shoe racks with rows and rows of shoes on them. I think it's because I always had second hand clothes and I never had anything when I was younger. I literally only really had the clothes on my back.

205. I give people everything. I buy something brand new and then I give it away. I even do it with food too. I don't know why I do that. I'm always cleaning and lose sleep thinking about what I need to do in the house. It is a result of doing chores and cleaning when I was in care. My house has to be in a certain order.
206. I've had one counselling session recently. I'm not sure if I found it helpful. I am still very angry about certain things that happened.
207. If I see people being awkward or doing something wrong, I will interfere. It doesn't matter who it is. I try not to but I can't stop myself. I am good with my mouth. It can be dangerous at times. To me it's the anger from being in care. I'm angry at everything and I think it's because of what went on. I think it all stems from not being able to let that anger out.
208. If I had had help and support when I left Colonsay House I wouldn't have ended up in that estate. I have heard of other people who came out who were given flats and training. It would have made a big difference.
209. The social work failed me a lot in terms of my health and my removal from care. I should never have been put back to live with my mum. If I had been prepared for life after care I wouldn't have got involved with [REDACTED] and I would have made other choices. That situation wouldn't have happened if I hadn't been put back there or had been given support and guidance.

Reporting of Abuse

210.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



211.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

212.

Records

213. I have thought about getting my records but the last time I asked I was told by Irene Mann that my records had been burned on the roof of Colonsay House. I wanted to find out about my past and information about my medical history.
214. I have a solicitor in Edinburgh and I've spoken to him about raising a claim against the council. I have signed a form for him to obtain my medical and social work records. I'm still pursuing action against them. The social work failed me and it has had a big impact on me.

Lessons to be learned

215. I want justice for myself and for other people in care. I don't want what happened to me to anyone else. They didn't give me any advice or support for life or a career. I didn't know what university or college was. I knew nothing. I missed out on so much because of people by-passing me and not even talking to me. I hope that doesn't happen to others. I hope the truth comes out and it prevents history being repeated.

216. Children shouldn't be scared to ask or speak. If you don't agree with something then speak up. There was no choice. If I had been allowed a voice I would have said.

217. 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.

FCD


Signed.....

Dated..... 23/10/218.....