

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

FEN

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is FEN My date of birth is 1958. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going into care**

2. I was born in Guys Hospital in London. I do not know the names of my mother and father. I have three brothers, FWY and who are both older than me and who is younger. I don't see much of as he was adopted after having spent some time in hospital and he now stays in Glasgow. We have seen him recently in our adult life to go to his wedding and his kids christening, but nothing since. I did have another brother but he died when I was really young and I can't remember his name.
3. From conversations with one of my aunts, I was told that my mother had been an alcoholic and that was part of the reason my father left her. My brother FWY was born in Bridge of Weir as that was where a lot of my family came from. When my mum had taken to the drink she moved to London and that was where I was born. Her drinking was also the reason we were put in care. My aunt tried but had her own large family and she was not able to look after us.
4. My brother FWY says he took me one time, when I was about three years old, to see my mother in Glasgow and she asked him who this wee boy was. She didn't even recognised me. He never took me again.

5. It must have been through my aunt or the social work that the first place I was sent to as a young child was Quarriers Village at Bridge of Weir and was there until I was about seven years old. I stayed in Cottage number thirty five but I can't remember much about it except there was no abuse there. I do remember there were lots of cottages and a big house. The people in charge of the cottages were house parents. I also have a memory of another young boy running past me with blood coming from his ear. I asked him what was wrong and he said the barber had cut him.

**Foster care – FWZ-JCT family, Brechin.**

6. I don't remember leaving Quarriers but was taken by social workers to the FWZ-JCT family who stayed in Brechin. I was already attending primary school so I would have been about six or seven. They previously had a son who had died and decided to foster kids. The woman's attitude was that her son had been as good as gold and then we arrived and we were all rough and ready. No matter what we did it was never good enough for her. We stayed there for the next eighteen months or thereabouts. It was me and my two brothers that she looked after.

**Routine at FWZ-JCT family, Brechin.**

*Food*

7. We were never given enough food and were always hungry. One of things she fed us quite regularly at night was dried oatcakes and cheese. She made us eat that without any milk, water or any other liquids. Because it was so dry I was nearly sick each time. She would stand over me as I tried to eat and I was given the belt over the legs for feeling ill as I tried to eat. Even to this day I cannot eat oatcakes.
8. One time I knew there was some trifle in the fridge and I took a spoonful from the bowl. I then realised that I would be getting a beating for taking this small amount so I thought I might as well get the beating for eating all of it. So I did and got my beating.

*Schooling*

9. I remember when I went to the local school, I don't remember the name, that it seemed quite easy as most of the things we were doing I had already completed while I stayed at Quarriers. There wasn't many problems at the school except for the usual children bullying each other.

*Visits/inspections*

10. I am not sure if there were any visits from the social work, but if there was Mrs JCT would never allow me to speak to anyone.

*Birthdays/Christmas*

11. Christmas was never really celebrated, in fact one year I got a present in June instead of the previous Christmas. I can't remember getting anything for my birthday.

**Abuse at FWZ-JCT family, Brechin**

12. If we did anything wrong Mrs JCT would use a leather strap to hit us. It was one of the straps the father used to sharpen razors. We were only wearing shorts and were hit on the bare legs. She was always leaving marks on us from the beating. These beatings were regularly and were mostly for not eating the food. Although it was her that carried out the beatings Mr FWZ was often there and watched her.
13. One of the first times we ran away we were all together. We ran to our pals house and stayed with him. We did not know at that time that our pal's dad was a policeman and we were trapped. We ran away a couple of other times, usually together.
14. I remember things were so bad in the house that she had locked my brother FWY in the bedroom. He was probably about thirteen or fourteen at that time. He jumped from the upstairs bedroom window onto her prized rose bush. He ran away from the house. There was a guy walking passed the house and she was shouting for him

to grab FWY. He brought him back to the house and not long after that the father came home. He was only just out of the hospital after an appendix operation. The father grabbed at FWY and he thought he was going to get another beating so FWY retaliated by punching him right on the wound.

15. One of the times FWY ran away he was caught by the police and when they took him back to the station he told them he was starving. One of the officers gave him a fish supper and that was the first time he had ever had one. Mrs JCT arrived at the station and wanted to take him home but the officers told her they would bring him home when they were ready. They made sure he had time to finish the fish supper.
16. While I stayed at the FWZ-JCT we had to see a psychiatrist. was having a problem wetting the bed and at some point he was caught eating his own poo. They carried out an examination which included checking his back passage. They did the same to me. I don't know if there was anything happening or if they suspected something was happening.

**Urquhart House, Houston, Renfrew.**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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**Redheugh, Kilbirnie, Ayrshire**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

32.

**Leaving care**

33. When I was sixteen I left the home and joined the army. When I told MET [REDACTED] I was joining up she told me I would not make it in the army. I made a point that when I left the army I phoned her up and asked if she remembered me. She said she did and I told her so much for your belief, I completed twelve years' service and four separate tours of Northern Ireland.

**Life after being in care**

34. My brother [REDACTED] joined the army and did quite well there. My other brother FWY [REDACTED] was already in and I also joined up. I wanted to enlist in the Royal Marines but there was an issue with my eyesight and I needed glasses. You could get glasses once you were in the Marines but not when you were joining. I told them my brother was already in the Royal Highland Fusiliers and decided to join them instead. I spent my initial time at Redford Barracks in Edinburgh. Apart from Northern Ireland I also spent time in Canada, Belize, Germany, Norway, San Salvador. While we were in San Salvador, a civil war started and we heard some of the banging.
35. [REDACTED] did a bit of his service in Dungannon and there was very little stress there. I was in Armagh and Crossmaglen, while FWY [REDACTED] was in [REDACTED] stationed in [REDACTED] FWY [REDACTED] and I went through the mill in our areas, but [REDACTED] was in a quieter place. [REDACTED] is the one who went on to suffer from mental problems while FWY [REDACTED] and I managed to cope.
36. Later [REDACTED] mental problems worsened and he was found to have PTSD. He is now suffering from dementia and is in a hostel of some kind in Edinburgh. My ex-wife [REDACTED] went to visit him once and introduced herself as FEN [REDACTED] wife and he became very angry. She thought he was going to get violent and left him and I am not aware of any of the family visiting him again. We are not sure if this was from his experiences as a child or the issues from his time in the army.
37. I got married when I was still in the army and have a son [REDACTED] but I don't have much to do with him. My wife and I divorced a long time ago and I have been with my current partner [REDACTED] for about twenty eight years and I have two step daughters.

**Reporting of abuse**

38. There was never any point in reporting any of the abuse I suffered because I always felt who would believe me and what could be done about it now.



**Impact**

- 39. I never allowed my time in care to affect how I grew up. If anything when I joined the army my time in care probably helped. With all the regimentation in the homes it suited my army career and helped me settle quicker than some others. Some of them had not even seen an iron before but I had been shown how to do a lot of those things when in Urquhart House.

**Records**

- 40. All my life I was told my birthday was [REDACTED] but after we applied for copy of my birth certificate from London I found out it was actually [REDACTED] I had lots of problems having to get all my records changed to the correct date.

**Other Information**

- 41. Unfortunately at this time I have been diagnosed with lung cancer. I have been through chemo and radio therapy and am hoping for a good prognosis after this treatment.
- 42. I think there should be more checks carried out on foster carers. Just because a family has lost a child does not make them ideal for taking care of three children from a different environment.
- 43. 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 statement are true.

Signed..... FEN [REDACTED] .....

Dated..... 13/1/19 .....