

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

ESR

Support person present: No

1. My name is ESR. The surname on my birth certificate is ESR. That was the name I was known by up until I was fostered at the age of six years old. Subsequent to being fostered I was known by the surname ESR during my time in care. My date of birth is 1958. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I have very little information surrounding why I was placed into care or surrounding what my life was like before I went to Quarriers. What I have learnt has come from one visit I had with my biological maternal grandparents when I was fourteen or fifteen and through my brother's subsequent contact with our mother.
3. I don't know what my father's name was. My mother was called I was born in Dulwich in London. I assume that my mother was unmarried when she had me and that Dulwich was where she went from Scotland to have me. After giving birth to me my mother came back to Glasgow. I assume that she stayed with her parents and myself in Glasgow after that. I don't know what my maternal grandparents' names were. My brother was born about fourteen months later on. As far as I am aware I was placed into care at eighteen months. I don't know whether my brother was placed into care at the same time as me. I have memories of being in care with me from the age of about two and a half onwards, however, it could be that he was placed into care earlier than that. I don't really have

much further information about why we were placed in care. I do know through [REDACTED] that our mother later got married, moved to London and went on to have a further four children.

Quarriers, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir

4. I first went to Quarriers when I was about eighteen months old in approximately [REDACTED] 1960. I stayed in cottage 31 until I was about six years old in approximately 1964. I don't particularly have any fond memories of my time in Quarriers. At the time I was there, it was what it was. I didn't know anything different to the life that I had there at that time. It isn't until later on, when I went out into the world, that I realised the things that were different there. I suppose for me there was always the thought that I would get a better life when I was fostered. I knew that there must be more out there from an early age.

Layout of Quarriers Village and cottage 31

5. It was a nice enough place. There were plenty of green spaces. There were plenty of houses in Quarriers. There was a church located right in the middle of the village. There was a hospital type place, a school and a big scout hut. I think there was a play park there.
6. I was placed in cottage number 31 after arriving. That's the only cottage I stayed in during my time at Quarriers the first time. To the left of cottage 31's front door was Miss ^{QEH} [REDACTED] lounge. None of the children were allowed in that room. I don't know where Miss ^{QEH} [REDACTED] bedroom was but it could have been in that area as well. Further along to the left was a dormitory for children below the age of five. Further back in the cottage was a big dining room and a kitchen. The only time we went into the kitchen was when we carried through our dirty plates. I remember that you didn't get to go up to the first floor for anything until you were about five years old. On the first floor were the dormitories for the older children. I think there might have been two dormitories which were used separately for the boys and girls.

Staff

7. Miss ^{QEH} [REDACTED] was the housemother in cottage 31. She was a single lady. I don't remember her having a husband or any children of her own. When I think about what she looked like, she was like the mother figure in the Tom and Jerry cartoons. She used to wear clothes like that character wore and was a larger stronger woman. To me, at the time I was at Quarriers, she was an old lady. Looking back, I think she was older than forty. I do remember a conversation that she was going to retire when I was there so she could have been much older. She lived and stayed in cottage 31. I think she took off either Saturdays or Sundays.
8. There were two or three kitchen staff members who worked in the kitchen. It's possible that one of those staff members just did the cleaning. I don't remember their names. They were all female. They were quite nice to me. I don't remember any other staff working there. I think the kitchen staff covered Miss ^{QEH} [REDACTED] when she had time off.

Other children / siblings

9. It was both boys and girls in cottage 31. The age range was babies right through to children who were about fifteen or sixteen years old. I assume the older children were that age based on what I thought when I small. Everybody does seem older when you are that young. There had to be between fifteen and sixteen children in total in the cottage. I couldn't say how many younger children were in the cottage. Were I to estimate, I think there were only about four or five younger children there. All I remember of the very small children was my brother [REDACTED].
10. I think there were other children who had siblings in the house. I was in the same house as [REDACTED]. Miss ^{QEH} [REDACTED] used to like [REDACTED]. I remember a couple of occasions where she took him into her lounge and sat with him. However, other than that it was my responsibility to look after him. I was told that by Miss ^{QEH} [REDACTED]. I would have to help him to get dressed. I think some of the older children would help me do that.

I don't remember them helping me to get dressed though. I remember taking [REDACTED] to school and tying up his shoelaces in really dark corridors.

Routine at cottage 31

Daily routine

11. I think either Miss ^{QEH} [REDACTED] came up or a bell was used to wake us up. You would then get washed, dressed then go downstairs for breakfast. After breakfast we all walked to school together. The day was either spent at school in lessons or, when we were pre-school age, a room that they had at the school where we were looked after together. After school we came back to the cottage. I would then go to bed earlier than the other children in the evenings because I was a bit younger.
12. On Saturdays during the day we would go out and play. Later on during my time at Quarriers, we had visits from potential foster carers. Sometimes we were taken out by them on Saturdays. On Sundays we would go to church then play in the grounds.

Sleeping arrangements

13. At first I was in a dormitory located on the ground floor of the cottage. I don't really have any memories of that dormitory. All I remember is that it was a little room. Once you were five you were moved upstairs to stay in a room with the older children. That is what happened with me. The dormitory upstairs was larger. It was right down the far end. I remember being in the smaller room downstairs with [REDACTED] and all of a sudden, overnight, I was in this room with much older children. It was quite daunting. I think there were about a dozen children in the room. It was only girls in the room so that makes me think there must have been a separate dormitory for the boys. We slept in single metal beds just like the ones you used to get in hospitals. There must have been somewhere where we kept our things but I can't remember where that was. I can't particularly recollect having a set of drawers or anything like that.

14. I definitely went to bed before some of the other children in the cottage when I moved to the big room upstairs. I think the older children were allowed to play until a certain later time. Nobody put me to bed, read me a story or anything like that. I don't recall having to say prayers. If we did then I probably didn't say them. If there were problems through the night then one of the older girls in the room would help. I don't remember going to get Miss QE or any other staff member being involved in that. I do remember older girls comforting me on occasions.

Washing / bathing

15. I think we had a bath once a week which was pretty standard back then. We had a bath whether we needed it or not. I really don't have much recollection of bath times. I assume we brushed our teeth but I don't remember.

Mealtimes / food

16. A bell was used to call us to the dining room for our meals. The bell was in the cottage. The little ones were fed first. The older ones got their meals afterwards. It was either one big table or two smaller tables pushed together. The kitchen staff would serve the food up. I don't think Miss QE ate with us. It was always porridge for breakfast. I can't remember what we got at other mealtimes. I can't really remember what the food was that we had. Other than the porridge nothing sticks in my mind. I think it was just basic food prepared by the kitchen staff. I don't think at the age I was at Quarriers I gave food an awful lot of thought. I just ate what was put in front of me. I think there was enough to eat. I remember two or three times being given chocolate as a treat. I think the kitchen staff gave that to me.
17. I remember numerous occasions where I was not allowed to leave the table until I finished food that I didn't like. I saw that happening with other children as well. I didn't like porridge when I was in cottage 31. I remember that I was once served porridge and refused to eat it. Miss QE made sure that that same bowl of porridge was served back to me every mealtime for the next three days until I ate it.

I wasn't allowed to have any other food. I would have only been about four years old at that time. Fortunately, the kitchen staff smuggled me some food. They gave me something like sandwiches and told me not to let Miss [REDACTED] know that they had done that. They didn't agree with what Miss [REDACTED] was doing. I eventually took a spoonful of the porridge and it ended there. I had to just learn to put up with eating the porridge in the mornings after that. I can't eat porridge to this day because of that experience.

Chores

18. I don't remember anything like having to do chores. You had to make your bed but I don't remember any cleaning. If you hadn't made your bed you would get into trouble with Miss [REDACTED]. I always made my bed so that didn't happen with me. I think most of the other children were the same.

Clothing / uniform

19. I don't remember having many clothes of my own. I remember there not being much choice and clothes being handed down. I don't remember having my own personal clothes. It was more that I was just given clothes to wear. I remember having a school uniform. I think in the summer we wore gingham dresses but I don't remember what we wore at other times. The shoes they provided are why I have bunions to this day. You were given one pair of shoes and that was it. It didn't matter whether they fitted you or not.

Possessions / pocket money

20. I can't really remember having many possessions. I don't remember having anything like a teddy bear or anything like that of my own. I know that we were allowed to keep the things that potential foster parents gave us when they took us out on weekends. I think I got chocolate, sweets and things like that. I didn't receive any pocket money. I couldn't say whether the older children did either.

School

21. The school was within Quarriers Village itself. I remember going to the school but I don't have any memories of what happened there. I don't remember any of the teachers. I'm assuming there was corporal punishment there. If that happened it didn't happen to me. I possibly wasn't taking stock of school back then. I know that I could read, write and those sort of things when I went into foster care at the age of six.

Leisure time

22. I think we had games and books in the cottage. I can't remember which games we had. We were allowed to watch television one night a week. I think during the week school days were long and I went to bed early so there wasn't much time for me to do anything in the evenings. At weekends we used to play out in the grounds with children from the other houses. We would be out playing and not come back until mealtimes. I remember during the summers there were games between the houses. That was quite fun. I don't remember what sort of games we played. I don't remember going to any clubs or anything like that.

Religious instruction

23. I don't know whether Miss QEH was religious or not. I don't have memories of reading the bible or saying prayers in the cottage or anything like that. We all had to march up to the church on Sundays and on days like Christmas morning to attend services. Each house would come out and have to walk in together by their houses. All the houses had a row set aside. Our house sat in the same place in the church each time. I don't remember having something special to wear to church. Church was church. It didn't make me want to be religious put it that way.

Trips / holidays

24. I don't remember any trips outside of Quarriers. I can't remember trips to the cinema, swimming or anything like that.

Birthdays / Christmas

25. I don't remember my birthdays or whether anything was done. I think it was recognised and people said "happy birthday" but there's nothing comes back to me like them making a fuss of you or anyone else. If I did receive a present I don't remember it.
26. There's only a couple of Christmases that I remember. I remember that we went to church and had things like a Christmas dinner. We received presents but I don't remember any of the presents I got.

Visits / Inspections

27. I didn't receive any visits from social workers. I don't suppose I would have known what one was back then. I do remember some children had parents who would come and visit them at weekends. There would always be people from the outside coming in and taking various children out.
28. I think I was aware from a young age that there was a chance I would be fostered. It was quite a frequent thing for potential foster parents to come into Quarriers and take children out. I remember potential foster parents taking me out at weekends. They'd take you out on Saturdays. I was taken out to Bridge of Weir for an ice cream or something like that. I don't think they ever took me that far away.
29. I remember two or three different people coming over the years. I don't know who co-ordinated all of that in the background. I do remember someone asking me whether I would like to go to "so and so's home", explaining to me how being fostered worked and that that was a possibility for me. I don't know whether that was

explained to [REDACTED] as well. Looking back, that could have been a social worker but that wasn't something I was aware of at the time. I wasn't ultimately fostered until I was six. I think the problem was that I wasn't allowed to be fostered anywhere without [REDACTED] coming too. He was "part of the package." Once they found out [REDACTED] had to be placed with me the potential foster parents would change their minds.

30. I have no memories of there being any inspections whilst I was at Quarriers.

Healthcare

31. There was a hospital in Quarriers but I don't remember receiving any healthcare when I was there. I don't remember ever seeing a doctor or a nurse, having vaccinations or attending regular check-ups. I don't remember any incidents or other children requiring medical attention. I don't remember getting any dental treatment.

Running away

32. I do remember children saying that they couldn't wait to get out when they turned sixteen. I didn't try to run away but children from our house, and other houses, would try to do that. You would hear "such and such" has run away and been brought back. I don't remember any names but I do remember us talking amongst ourselves and there being excitement around all of that. I don't know how those children who ran away were brought back. I think there was one girl in our cottage who ran away. I don't remember her name but she wasn't very happy when she returned. I don't know how it was handled but I remember she got into trouble. I don't remember exactly what happened.

Bed-wetting

33. I didn't have a problem with wetting the bed but I think [REDACTED] did. I think he did that quite a few times. I don't know how that was dealt with. I don't remember anyone in the dormitory upstairs wetting their beds.

Abuse in cottage 31

34. The rules were basically that you did as you were told and copied everybody else. Everything was kind of strict. Children didn't want to do anything that they shouldn't. If one child did something wrong then everybody would be punished. I think that was why people behaved. You tended not to do an awful lot wrong because of that.

Miss^{QEH} [REDACTED]

35. A hairbrush was used by Miss^{QEH} [REDACTED] to discipline children. I remember that coming out on a number of occasions. She did use it quite often on older children who she thought had been naughty. The hairbrush wasn't used that often on me specifically. It was more other children. I think that at the age I just tended to do as I was told.
36. I remember one incident just after I had gone upstairs to the older girls' dormitory. I would have been five years old and it would have been in approximately 1963. One of the girls hadn't come back at a time when she was supposed to have come back. I remember being asleep, the lights being turned on, all the girls being woken and made to get out of their beds and Miss^{QEH} [REDACTED] hitting each of us in turn over the hand with the wooden hairbrush. She hit me over the hand more than once. It probably left a mark but I don't remember that specifically.

[REDACTED] (surname unknown) and two other boys from cottage 31

37. The boy's name was [REDACTED] but I don't know what his surname was. He would have been about fourteen or fifteen when I was there. He liked little girls. I would have been about five years old when the abuse started. That would have been in about 1963. When Miss^{QEH} [REDACTED] went out during the day [REDACTED] and two other boys would come and get me and another little girl. I can't remember the other little girl's name but I think she was slightly older than me. I can't remember the names of the other boys but they were his friends and they would have been younger. The boys would then shove us in a cupboard with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] would then do not very nice things to us. He would touch us both sexually. I don't want to go into any further detail than

that. I remember the other two boys opening the wardrobe doors and peeing on us. I remember us shouting and complaining about that. There would have been the kitchen staff in the cottage but I don't remember them supervising.

38. The abuse happened two or three times. All the incidents were similar and happened within the space of two or three weeks. I remember myself and the other girl trying to run away and [REDACTED]'s two friends grabbing us and taking us with them. In the end one of the older girls came in and saw what was happening. She got myself and the other girl and told us not to go near [REDACTED]. She told us that she would look after me. Looking back, my impression was that the older girls knew that [REDACTED] liked to do what he was doing to us and that it wasn't the first time it had happened. I don't know what ultimately happened to [REDACTED]. I don't know whether perhaps he got too old and had to leave. All I know is that one day he wasn't there.

Reporting of abuse whilst at Quarriers

39. I didn't tell any adults about what was happening in terms of abuse when I was at Quarriers. When the abuse happened concerning [REDACTED] and the other two boys we would shout and complain. There was never anyone there to hear because Miss [REDACTED] ^{QEH} wasn't there. The boys also told us not to say anything otherwise we would get into trouble. As a small child I just listened to what they said. I don't know whether the older girl reported what she saw.

Leaving Quarriers and being placed in foster care

40. Over all the potential foster carers who took us out only [REDACTED] ^{EST} and [REDACTED] ^{ESS}, or mum and dad as we would come to know them, were seriously interested. They came to see [REDACTED] and me over a few Saturdays. I think we then went to stay with them on a trial weekend at their house to see if it would work out. I can't remember whether we went to their home and stayed overnight on that weekend but I know we returned back to Quarriers before staying with mum and dad permanently.

I think the trial weekend was a week before they came to collect us at Quarriers to stay with them for good.

Foster care placement with [REDACTED] [REDACTED],
Blantyre, South Lanarkshire

41. I was six years old when I was fostered by mum and dad. That would have been in approximately 1964. I ended up staying with them, with the exception of a four week period in 1974, until [REDACTED] 1975. [REDACTED] and I were the first and only children they fostered. We were fostered by mum and dad because mum couldn't have any more children. Dad had always wanted three children and we were their only option. Looking back, I don't think mum would have been too bothered if she had only had [REDACTED]. Neither [REDACTED] nor I were ever adopted by mum and dad. They never ever wanted to go down that route. I think mum was hedging her bets because she never liked us all that much. I don't know whether they got paid for fostering us. I had no awareness of anything surrounding that as a child nor do I now.

Layout of the house

42. The house was small but it was nice. There were only two bedrooms. I shared a room with [REDACTED]. Mum and dad shared a room with [REDACTED]. Nanna slept in the lounge.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] *and family*

43. [REDACTED] was in his mid-thirties when we first went to stay with him. He worked with the Bank of Scotland. He passed away in 1983. [REDACTED] was also in her mid-thirties when we first went to stay with her. In the beginning she was a stay at home mum. When we went to secondary school she got a job in a hospital as a medical secretary. She passed away in 2015. They were both members of the Salvation Army. They, and us in turn, all attended a Methodist church. Mum was more religious than dad.

44. They came to be known to [REDACTED] and me as mum and dad. That started right from the start. I had to call them that and that was it. I wasn't allowed to call them anything else. As a six year old I just did as I was told to do. I wasn't bothered about that. They never showed any affection or gave us cuddles or anything like that. They didn't say "I love you" or gave us a big hug and a kiss. We never had long meaningful conversations or anything like that. Mum wasn't particularly that way towards [REDACTED] either. It wasn't her way.
45. Nanna, [EST] [REDACTED]'s mother, lived with us. [REDACTED] was mum and dad's daughter. She was five months older than me. We were close in a way.

Siblings - [REDACTED]

46. [REDACTED] was assessed as being autistic, or something like that, shortly after we arrived at mum and dad's. I didn't understand what was wrong with him at the time. I remember mum being upset about that because we weren't the two little perfect children that she had expected. [REDACTED] ended up going to, what they called back then, a special school. He wasn't able to go to a mainstream school. Mum coped with [REDACTED] until he was about thirteen. He was coming into puberty and his behaviour was changing. He was doing things like dressing up in mum's clothes and just being a general teenager. Looking back, I wouldn't say he was being particularly naughty given some of the things I did.
47. Mum decided when [REDACTED] was thirteen or fourteen to place him back into care. He went back to Quarriers. I wasn't privy to very much information about that. We never really knew why he was sent back. It was just a case of "[REDACTED]'s going back." I don't know whether it might have been because of the bedroom situation and they didn't have the room. I remember [REDACTED] being very upset about it all. He was besotted with mum and would have done anything for her. I can't remember whether we were allowed to visit [REDACTED] after he returned to Quarriers. I think getting to Quarriers for [REDACTED] and I was difficult and we didn't have access to a phone.

48. I know that [REDACTED] had a social worker but I don't remember whether it was the same one that I had after he left. I do know that when [REDACTED] turned sixteen he was given either accommodation or housing. I think that was at a time when he was trying to find our mother. He actually went on to do ok in life given the trauma he suffered.

Routine during foster placement with the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Earliest memories

49. When we first arrived they made us very welcome. I didn't feel uncomfortable. I had never lived in a family home environment before mum and dad's but I think that was fine. It was a reasonably happy routine and both [REDACTED] and I were happy to be in a family home rather than a children's home. I did have some sense of being away from Quarriers. It was only as I got older that I started to realise that my personality was never going to be accepted by mum. Through all the time I was fostered I always knew that I would get away one day. There was a lot of stuff that went on but actually, looking back, they gave me a nice time as well.

Sleeping arrangements

50. [REDACTED] and I shared a room. We had two separate single beds with a bedside table in-between, a chest of drawers, wardrobe and posters on the wall. [REDACTED] shared a room with mum and dad. Mum and dad's room was a long room. They put up a curtain to divide it. [REDACTED] stayed in that room until he was placed back into care at the age of either thirteen or fourteen.

Washing / bathing

51. We had a bath once a week whether we needed it or not. I think that when we were six or seven [REDACTED] and I shared a bath but that stopped when we got older. I did have privacy in the bathroom.

Mealtimes / food

52. The whole family ate meals together. Mum wasn't the best cook. I didn't learn any culinary skills from mum put it that way. Nanna was a good cook. She was a much better cook and shared the cooking to a degree. I still struggle to this day with carrots because mum used to burn them. I think in all the food was nice other than that. We never really had a problem with food. It was ok not to like or want something.

Chores / work

53. We weren't particularly given chores to do but we could do things to get extra pocket money. I used to cut the grass or wash the car. That was the same with [REDACTED]. When I was older I got a Saturday job in Woolworths in Hamilton. I continued to do that until I ultimately left mum and dad's to join the navy.

Clothing / uniform

54. We didn't have masses of clothes. When we were younger we would get a new outfit for Easter and things like that. When [REDACTED] and I started secondary school we were both given a clothing allowance. I didn't get the same clothes as [REDACTED] because I didn't dress the same way as her. However, I did get what I needed. I remember that we were only given one pair of knickers for the whole week. We were given our clean underwear after we had our bath. All the clothes were washed appropriately though. I remember that when I made the first team for hockey mum wouldn't buy me a pair of tracksuit bottoms to play in. She gave me an old pair of tracksuit bottoms that she had instead.

Possessions / pocket money

55. I got pocket money. I was given whatever [REDACTED] wanted, in terms of things, all the way through. I was never given what I wanted. I remember [REDACTED] was bought loads

of dolls by mum and dad. They bought them for me too. I didn't want to play with dolls because I didn't like them.

School

56. I went to David Livingstone Memorial Primary School in Blantyre after first arriving at mum and dad's. I was in the same year as [REDACTED]. Starting a new school was a bit daunting to start with but the people were fine. [REDACTED] looked after me. I remember that I wasn't allowed to say I was fostered at school. I would have to say that I was adopted or [REDACTED]'s younger sister. I kept on saying "how could I be [REDACTED]'s younger sister when I am only five months younger than her?"
57. Unfortunately, I ended up going to the same secondary school as [REDACTED] as well. We both passed the exams to get into Hamilton Academy. It was a good school with a good reputation. Mum didn't expect me to pass the exam which allowed me to get in there. [REDACTED] and I were again in the same year. It did feel that we never got away from one another. Fortunately, [REDACTED] was the brainy one so she went into the top class and I went into the class for those who had just scraped through.
58. I tended to spend less time with [REDACTED] when we both went to secondary school. [REDACTED] had her own set of friends and I had mine. She had her activities and I had mine. I was bit less in her shadow at school because of all of that. She tended to be allowed by mum to go out an awful lot more than me to see her school friends. I have to say that it wasn't until I got older that I was all that bothered about that. I had my sports to play and so on.
59. Dad would support us in our education and help us out with things like homework. They attended things like parents nights for [REDACTED] and me. They did participate in those sorts of things. I ultimately achieved two Highers and got five O Levels. I did alright.

Leisure time

60. We had toys, books and things in the house. There was a television that we could watch. We did things like going swimming and going to the cinema. I played with children in the local area. There were children around and things like that. We went to the Brownies and the Guides. I think I was chucked out of the Guides in the end. I played a lot of sport. When I started at Hamilton Academy I got picked to play hockey for the school's first team. Even though I was only eleven or twelve I was playing for that team. I played in goal. Mum and dad didn't come to watch matches. Mum wasn't sporty and didn't encourage me to be that way either.

Religious instruction

61. We went to church and Sunday school every week. We had no choice about that. Even when I was older I still had to go. Nothing was really practised in the house religion wise. We used to say Grace before meals but beyond that there was nothing else.

Trips / holidays

62. We went out on family picnics. We would go on annual summer holidays. We travelled a lot. I remember going down to Devon and Cornwall a lot on family holidays. The car would always break down. The year before I left foster care we went on one of the very first package holidays. We went to Magaluf in Spain. I have very fond memories of those holidays. I thought it was pretty good of them to be able to do stuff like that. It was an advantage for us because a lot of people back then didn't get to experience those sorts of things. I certainly appreciated the travelling that we did and that they took us on holidays.
63. [REDACTED] and I once went on a cruise with the school when we were fifteen. It was on board a ship called SS Uganda. We went to France, Portugal, Spain and St Petersburg.

Birthdays / Christmas

64. My birthday was celebrated but there was never anything particularly big in terms of presents. I remember always wanting a bike and never getting one. I always wanted sporty stuff but never got anything like that. My birthdays were alright but I never received anything fantastic. It was acknowledged. [REDACTED] once had a party but something happened which led to mum saying that nobody was having any parties anymore. Because of that I never did get a party.
65. Christmas was a normal family Christmas with a Christmas dinner. Auntie [REDACTED] and Uncle [REDACTED] would come over in the afternoon. We would go and see dad's siblings on Boxing Day. We all got given presents. [REDACTED] was given things like cars. He never wanted cars though because he more wanted things like Barbie dolls. [REDACTED] and I would always get the same presents. Mum never differentiated between us in that way. It would be something [REDACTED] liked rather than what I liked. Nothing significant comes to mind in terms of presents that I particularly liked. There was nothing I received that I wanted to keep into adult life.

Visits / contact with natural family

66. When we first went to stay with mum and dad a social worker was assigned to [REDACTED] and me. I think that was the first time I was aware of what a social worker was. We had the same social worker for a number of years. I don't remember her name. She used to come and have dinner with the family then take [REDACTED] and I out on our own. She would ask us whether we were alright. We did have an opportunity to speak to her in private. In the beginning she visited about every three months. After a while it wasn't that regular. Towards the end it was either every six months or annually. Looking back, I didn't really find those visits supportive.
67. When [REDACTED] and I were either fourteen or fifteen our maternal grandparents made a request to see us. At that time [REDACTED] was still staying with us at mum and dad's. I think it was through our social worker that we discovered that request. That would have been in either 1971 or 1972. We met with them in Glasgow. They were still

living in Glasgow. That was the first contact I had with anyone in my family. We got a little bit of information about our early lives and how we were placed in care through that meeting. I remember that I didn't really like my maternal grandparents so I chose not to continue seeing them. However, [REDACTED] did continue going every week. I know that happened whilst he was at mum and dad's but I don't know whether that continued after he went to Quarriers for the second time. After meeting with our grandparents [REDACTED] was very keen to find our mother. I can't remember what age he was but he managed to speak with her on the phone. I think he found her through our grandparents and through phonebooks. [REDACTED] told me that when he spoke to her she didn't want to know us at all and told him never to ring her again.

Healthcare

68. I never felt I could speak to mum if I was unwell or having problems. You would just get on with things. There wasn't a lot of nurturing or caring from mum. [REDACTED] got that a bit more than me but it wasn't a lot. It was [REDACTED] who told me what to expect around periods beginning. Mum wouldn't talk about it. All she did was bring me the pads. It was all "get on with it, you'll need these."
69. Generally I wasn't particularly ill. I was registered with the local GP. I broke my leg once. That was dealt with fine. I was registered with the dentist and I went for regular check-ups.

Running away

70. Sometimes I would just go out if mum was having a particularly bad day. At the end of the day it was all very well running away but I didn't have anywhere to run away to. I'd not bother coming back until I had to but I always did. They never had to call the police or anything because I always came back. When I came back mum would be ranting and raving and the abuse would start all over again.

Bed-wetting

71. [REDACTED] wet the bed until he was about nine or ten. He had a plastic sheet placed on his bed. I don't really remember how mum and dad dealt with it all. I think mum shouted at him. I don't know whether help was offered to him. They didn't tend to talk too much about those kind of things.

Abuse during foster care placement with the [REDACTED] ^{ESS-EST}

72. As I got older I didn't behave exactly as they wanted me to behave. That was more from mum's perspective than dad's. Looking back over the whole time they fostered me they didn't allow me to have my own personality. They couldn't accept that actually I wasn't exactly the same as [REDACTED]. I was in her shadow all the way through. I was not [REDACTED] and I couldn't have the same traits as her. There was no way I could be like that. Some things come from your living environment but "nature wise" I was never going to be like her. We had completely different personalities.

[REDACTED] ^{EST}

73. I did get a lot of abuse from mum. I think you would describe her now as having emotional problems. She had quite a lot of mood swings. She got particularly bad when she started going through her menopause. She went through that quite early and had a lot of problems. I didn't know what that was at the age of thirteen, fourteen or fifteen. At that time I just felt that it was me that she was picking on. One minute she would be fine and the next she would be flying off the handle. It wasn't just me who got the brunt of it. Dad would sometimes suffer it too.
74. I was the one who did everything wrong. I was always allegedly the naughty one because [REDACTED] couldn't do anything wrong. Sometimes the hairbrush would come out and she would wrap me or [REDACTED] across the knuckles with it if we were seen to have done something wrong. I think when I was primary school age I realised that it was probably in my own interests not to do anything wrong.

75. As I got older mum just felt that she had the right to hit me. She became increasingly more volatile and used to hit [REDACTED] and me quite a lot. She would slap me around the face if I said something she didn't like. She did that to me but never ever to [REDACTED]. I was hit a number of times by mum over the years. I remember her even doing it outside when we were out in Hamilton. She once hit me that hard my nose started bleeding. Anything could prompt her to act that way. It didn't matter what you did. An hour after I was hit it would be as if nothing had happened. I suppose that is the same with anyone who is volatile. My dad and Nanna would be there when mum hit me. I remember a couple of times my dad saying "enough [REDACTED] stop that." I think in the end I just learnt to live with it all.

[REDACTED]
ESS

76. If mum said to dad that I needed to be given the belt then he would give me the belt. I don't remember [REDACTED] ever being given the belt. Being given the belt by dad happened on one occasion when I was a younger child. I took a piece of [REDACTED]'s jewellery and pretended it had been lost. It all got completely out of hand and [REDACTED] went to mum. I was sent to bed and told that I would be dealt with by dad when he returned from work. I was given the belt when he returned. I don't think dad particularly wanted to give me it.

Leaving foster care placement with the [REDACTED] for the first time

77. Around the time I was fifteen I used to skip school quite a lot. On one occasion I went into Glasgow with friends. Unfortunately, Nanna was on the train and saw me. She then told mum that I had been dogging school. When I got back mum asked me whether I had gone to school. I said that I had. I then discovered that Nanna had seen me getting off the same train that she had been on. Mum pretty much immediately called social work and asked them to take me away.

78. There hadn't really been any issues before that day. There had only really been a bit of a clash of personalities. I remember [REDACTED] being shocked about it all which makes me think that it was something out of the blue. There were certainly no warnings that it could happen. I have to say that at the time I was devastated. Social services and my social worker were clearly happy for mum to say that she couldn't handle me and have me placed back to Quarriers. That had already been the case with [REDACTED]. I was taken away that night by a social worker. I don't remember the journey. I don't remember what the social worker said. Looking back it was crazy to take me out of the environment I was in to start all over again.

Quarriers, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir (for the second time)

79. I was fifteen years old when I returned to Quarriers. That would have been in approximately 1973. I stayed there for two or three nights. I didn't stay in one of the cottages when I returned. I either stayed in the sick bay or the hospital that they had in the village. There was a lovely nurse there who looked after me. Everyone seemed to be nice enough people. I wasn't really there long enough to see how it had changed. I was only really in the hospital or sick bay when I was there.
80. I remember they were desperately trying to find me somewhere to go because they couldn't really accommodate me. They eventually found a place near Bellahouston in Glasgow that would take me. I think that place was picked because it was near Bellahouston Academy which was the school they had got me into.

Foster placement near Bellahouston, Glasgow

81. The place I went to after Quarriers was a foster care placement. I can't remember the address. It was near a great big enormous road near Bellahouston Academy. It was only about a ten or fifteen minute walk from there. I went there when I was fifteen in approximately 1973. I was only there for about three or four weeks in total. I remember that the foster parents were very nice people. I don't remember their

names. It was a big huge house. I was placed in a room upstairs with four or five other children. I think all together there was something like nine or ten children all of different ages staying in the house. Amongst those were two of the foster parent's own children.

82. The foster parents were very nice to me and realised that it was emotional for me. I remember that the foster mother took me into her lounge and spoke to me. She said she was there if I needed her and that I could go to her with anything at all. Everything was ok in that regard.
83. I was placed into Bellahouston Academy during the time I was there. I just had to get on with it. I remember being further ahead in the subjects I was taught there. We had already covered half the topics at Hamilton Academy that they were only starting to cover. In the end I was only at the school for the three or four weeks.
84. There was communication between myself and my social worker. She continued to see me whilst I was in the house. I remember mum calling up the place and speaking to me. Mum, dad and [REDACTED] then came to visit me about three weeks into my stay. During that visit mum and dad said that if I changed my ways I could come back. My social worker then met with me and told me that mum and dad would let me come back if I promised not to do anything wrong.
85. I think there was the option to stay where I was rather than going back to mum and dad's. However, I knew I would be on my own by the age of sixteen so that wasn't really an option for me. My options were really either to apologise profusely and say I wouldn't do what I had been doing again or to remain in another unknown foster care environment. I ultimately decided to hedge my bets. I decided that I wasn't going to stay in a new foster care placement until I was sixteen. I knew that was my best option. I needed to sit my O Levels and Highers so it made sense for me to apologise and go back to stay with mum and dad.

Final year in foster care placement with the [REDACTED] / leaving care

86. After returning to mum and dad's I was given a list of rules that I had to abide by. Mum had compiled it. I wasn't allowed to go out for three months, they wanted to know where I went at weekends, I had to go to school but not see friends afterwards, and mum had to vet my friends and various other things. I was allowed to continue doing my Saturday job but I was pretty much not allowed to do anything else. To be given a list of rules when you are fifteen didn't make me feel like I was returning back to a family home. Signing those rules was the only way I would be allowed back into the house and the family.
87. [REDACTED] was fine after I came back. She was really good. I suppose I just forgot about it all and got back into normality. The physical abuse continued with mum though. She would hit me if there were any incidents or she thought I said or did something wrong. That carried on right up until I eventually left at the age of seventeen. I don't think my social worker was around after I returned to mum and dad's because I was sixteen by then. I don't think I saw her again after leaving the place in Bellahouston.
88. I went back to Hamilton Academy and sat my O Levels and Highers. The plan for [REDACTED] was to go to university. However, mum's intention for me was to then go to Bell College. University just wasn't an option for me. She said that she was a secretary so that was good enough for me. I did typing at school, and was good at it, however I didn't want to become a secretary.
89. There was a sixth form at Hamilton Academy but that was generally for people who were going on to university. Before I reached the age of sixteen I had already been to visit the navy recruitment offices in Glasgow. I think someone had also come into the school and given careers advice. I had already made my mind up that I was going to join up. I think mum and dad were very happy when I told them that I had made the decision to join the navy.
90. Mum and dad didn't really prepare me at all for leaving but they were supportive of my decision. There was no party or anything for me leaving. There was no support

for me moving on. I remember I was given a list of things I needed to buy in preparation for joining up. Mum told me that I would have to pay for those things out of the wages I was earning from my Saturday job. She wouldn't buy me a thing. I was saving my money up so I could buy all the stuff I needed.

Reporting of abuse during foster care placement

91. I never reported what was happening at mum and dad's to anyone whilst I was there. I didn't tell my social worker about what was happening.

Life after leaving care

92. I joined the navy when I was seventeen and one month. That was in [REDACTED] 1975. I used to come back to visit mum and dad on leave because I had nowhere else to go. I remember I would have to make my own way to their home. [REDACTED] would get driven to and from her university in Newcastle. I received no financial support after I left. Mum would charge me rent to stay with them for the two week periods when I returned on leave. [REDACTED] wouldn't have to pay a penny. There were little things like that made me still feel different.
93. Mum's behaviour didn't change after I left. She still continued to hit me. I remember when I was twenty one I came back for [REDACTED]'s wedding. After the wedding, [REDACTED]'s friends and I wanted to go into Hamilton to continue the day. I asked mum whether I could go and she slapped me around the face in front of everybody. She then told me that I couldn't go and that I was coming back with her. That was a shock to me and everybody else in the room. I just walked out of the room. I remember that my dad got me into his car and said to me something like "it's your mum who has got the problem not you." I think that was the last time she ever hit me.
94. I ended up spending nine years in the navy. I started up in Rosyth but went on to stay in Yeovilton, Gosport, Gibraltar, London, and Belgium. I played lots of sport

when I was in the navy. I played squash for the navy. Funnily enough I ended up in a role as a secretary. I chose to do that because it allowed me to play lots of sport.

95. I married my husband, [REDACTED] in 1983. I was still in the navy at that point. I ultimately left the navy in 1984 because in those days you had to leave if you wanted to start a family and that's what I wanted to do. I went on to have three children. I've had various jobs since leaving the navy. I tried to do civvy work but it didn't work for me so I ran various businesses instead. We all moved up to Scotland for a short time. I ran a café and a carpet cleaning business. It wasn't working for me up in Scotland so we moved back down to England. We then started a wheelie bin cleaning business. We did that for twenty five years. That business meant I could be around the kids at the same time as working.
96. I'm in the process of being divorced from my husband. It has taken ten years to get the divorce but we've got around to it in the end. It's not really a difficult thing because we had already decided twelve or thirteen years ago that enough was enough. We stayed together until the kids were old enough. We still keep in contact. We're not best friends but we can talk to one another.

Contact with the [REDACTED] / [REDACTED] in later adult life

97. Dad had a massive stroke and died two weeks before my wedding in 1983. He was fine with me after I left to join the navy. He was a nice enough guy. I would try to get up to look after mum when she was older. I'd have to do that because [REDACTED] was a teacher and couldn't get the time to go up there. I would take time out and help out. Mum passed away about six years ago.
98. I kept in touch with [REDACTED] a long time after he was sent back to Quarriers. We then lost contact with him in adult life before [REDACTED] and I found him again. Sadly we then lost touch with him again and I don't know where he is now. We have just been unable to find him.

99. I initially kept contact with [REDACTED] over the years. She has never had any children and was a good auntie to my children when they were younger. As time went on my children and I have lost touch with [REDACTED]. I don't have any contact with her now. There were issues surrounding mum's will when she passed away and we haven't spoken since. I wasn't bothered about getting anything but was more upset that mum didn't acknowledge my children. [REDACTED] wasn't happy about me saying that and we haven't spoken to one another since. My children and I look on it all as being more [REDACTED]'s loss because we all still have one another.

Impact

100. Whatever life you have growing up, whether that be good or bad, impacts on you when you are an adult. Looking back, I don't think I had a nice childhood. When I joined up to the navy I discovered that people had had completely different lives to me growing up. I discovered that some people had actually had nice childhoods. That was never something that I regarded myself as having.
101. I don't have flashbacks or nightmares about it. The only time I think or talk about my childhood is when I have a drink. That prompts me. I only really talk about it if I am asked. It isn't the sort of subject that I ever bring up off my own back. I don't dwell on the past. I think as you get older your past becomes less important. What's more important is what you are going to do ahead. That's the kind of way that I look on things.
102. I think there was an impact on the way I had relationships with people. I didn't know how to be that close to people. I think I got over that but in my early twenties that was a thing. What I knew for certain when I had children was that I was going to be a much better mother than mum. I have been far more affectionate to my children than mum ever was to me. My children have had a better life than I had. We have had our ups and downs but generally I think they have all had a good upbringing. Unlike me, they all went to university and went on to do whatever they wanted to do. I still have a good relationship with them all to this day.

103. I did pretty well at school in my exams. I would have liked to have gone on to university, in particular art school. I liked being creative but that was never encouraged. That was never an option for me. I got to be creative in other ways in later life though. My children always had the best fancy dress costumes. In a way all of my children have gone on to do the things I would have liked to do in terms of education and creativity.

Treatment and support

104. I've never sought any support, or things like counselling, because of my experiences in care.

Reporting of abuse after leaving care

105. I've never reported what happened during my time in care to anyone. The Inquiry is the first official organisation I've spoken to. [REDACTED] my soon to be ex-husband, told me about the Inquiry. He is still up in Scotland and was reading about it. I didn't think the Inquiry would be interested in what I had to say but I clicked on the link that he sent to me anyway. It all started from there.
106. My children all know about the experiences I had growing up. They could see that mum wasn't a good grandmother to them and that she wasn't the nicest of people. That was clear to them as they were growing up. She was a dreadful grandmother. I think I told them about my childhood as a result of all of that. I didn't tell them when they were really young but I certainly did tell them when they were teenagers. They all know the ins and outs of it and know that I have spoken to the Inquiry.

Records

107. I've never received any records from Quarriers or anywhere else. Looking back, I have received very little information surrounding going into care or what was happening in the background during my time in care. I am not interested in recovering my records. I view what happened as having happened. I'm too old to be bothered about it all now.

Lessons to be learned

108. Young children should never experience the kinds of things that I was subjected to during my upbringing. Unfortunately those sorts of things happen. I don't know what the fostering system is like any more. I don't even know whether children's homes still exist. Not everyone is in a children's home or being fostered for the same reasons. I'm assuming that in today's world the problems aren't as large, or as great, as they were when I was a child growing up in care.
109. It's only when I was an adult that I realised how different my childhood was to other people. It was only then that I realised that some children had nice lives. There are little things too that you realise weren't normal. It's a silly thing but it was only when I was in the navy that I realised it wasn't normal to have only one pair of knickers for the whole week. It was then that I discovered from others that you had to change your knickers every day. I find it strange that I always remember that memory.
110. My argument was always that they wouldn't have sent █████ away if she was found to be difficult so why should it have been different for us? They had nowhere to send her so why use the threat to me if I did something wrong? I did ask mum what she would do if █████ did something wrong but it was seen that █████ never did anything wrong. Looking back on both █████ and I being placed back into care by mum, I think mum should have accepted the responsibility of looking after us because she had taken us on as her foster children. She shouldn't have been able to just send her foster children back to Quarriers when things got a little bit tough. Teenagers tend to be a bit naughty and do things that parents don't really like. They then grow

up through that and become adults. For me, if you take on a parental responsibility then you just have to work through that period.

- 111. There should be a thorough vetting of people who work with children. However, even with the most thorough vetting in the world you only have what the person has given you to go on. In all honesty, mum should never have been allowed to foster children. I don't suppose they did vetting in those days. They shouldn't have allowed mum and dad to foster a boy and girl with the boy sleeping in the foster carers' bedroom. That just didn't make sense. It didn't give [REDACTED] the privacy and respect that he should have received. Why that was viewed as acceptable even back then I just don't know.

Hopes for the Inquiry

- 112. I don't really know what I hope will come out of me speaking to the Inquiry. I don't know whether people already know about the abuse that went on in the days when I was growing up in care. You are always going to get vulnerable children no matter what the circumstances are. However, those vulnerable children need to be placed with loving caring people. If I can be of help to someone else and create a better system for children in care in the future then I would be happy. That really is what it is all about isn't it?
- 113. 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.

ESR [REDACTED]

Signed.....
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19 July 2021

Dated.....