

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PBK

Support person present: Yes.

1. My name is PBK My date of birth is 1949. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. My father was called and my mother was called . I had four brothers and three sisters. One of my brothers, died of diphtheria before I was born. Then there was and next was who died from cancer when she was aged fifteen. was next, then me and then who was born in 1950. Then there was , who was born in 1953, and finally who was born in 1955.
3. We were a big family and we were a poor family. We lived in a small prefabricated house in West Pilton in the north end of Edinburgh and life was difficult. At times there were three or four of us sharing a bed. It wasn't a happy childhood insofar as we didn't have a lot and we were impoverished. I attended St David's Primary School.
4. My dad worked in chemist and then in the mill but he was constantly in and out of Edenhall hospital because of his pleurisy so he didn't have much income.
5. My dad was the biggest sticking point to a happy childhood because of his illnesses, which he had contracted during the war, but more so because of his wickedness. He


was possessive of my mother and very controlling. He was extremely violent towards her. I witnessed my father doing terrible things to my mother. It was unforgiveable.

6. When we lived in Pilton we attended St Mary's chapel in Royston and we got support from the church. When my sister [REDACTED] was dying St Vincent de Paul Trust sent her to Lourdes.
7. We were poor and we didn't get the things that other children got. It was hard just to feed ourselves. Money was always tight. We used to go to the National Assistance Board at Gorgie to get money to help feed the family and we got two shillings. We went to the woods to chop down trees and filled up a big Silver Cross pram with logs. I stole coal to put in the fire because we were freezing.
8. I was about six when my mum went into hospital and [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I went to Humbie for the first time so there must have been social care intervention at that time. We all went into care but my older brothers went to Middleton because you could only go to Humbie up to a certain age. I was in Humbie on two or three occasions and I grew to like it. We went whenever my mum was having a baby or when my father was ill.

### **Humbie Home, Haddington**

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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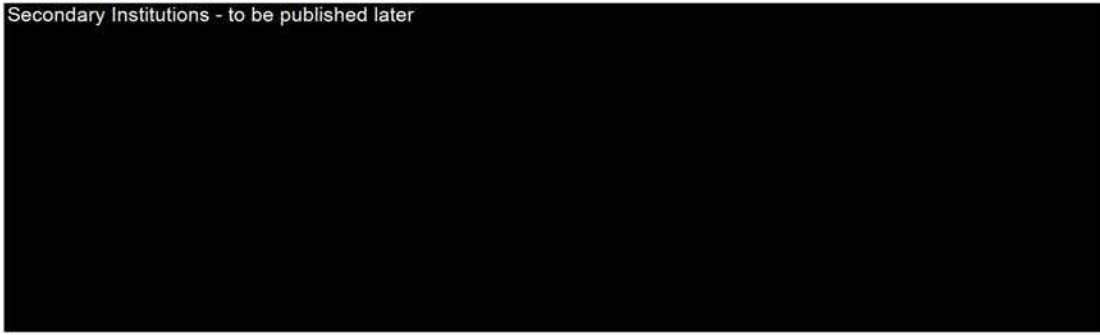
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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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24. I was six or seven when we moved to [REDACTED] We were in the Davidson Mains parish when we lived in Drylaw. My mum got food parcels for my terminally ill sister on a regular basis for a number of months.

25. My brother [REDACTED] went to St Joseph's Approved School. He came home every Saturday night and went back on Sunday. I remember there was never enough money to give him for his tuck when he was going back.

26. I didn't pass my eleven plus so I went to St Anthony's Annex on Hawkhill Road.

27. I was involved in petty crime like stealing apples from about age seven and I had a juvenile police record. I was about eleven when I broke into a car and then I was sent to the remand home. I may have been involved in a shop break in as well. When I appeared in front of the juvenile panel my dad was questioned. I was considered to be a risk so I was remanded in custody to Gilmerton.

### **Gilmerton Remand Home, Edinburgh**

28. Gilmerton was a big stately house. It was surrounded by a wall. It was run by the local authority and you had to go in front of the children's panel before you went there. The boys ranged in age from younger than me up to twelve or thirteen. I think older boys went to Guthrie's which was up the road.

29. When you went in through the front door, the room to the right was a games room where you socialised and it had a billiards table, jigsaws and a radio. You were

allowed turns on the billiards table. They also turned the radio on during the day and you were allowed to read books. We were always supervised.

30. Down the corridor was the kitchen and the female section, and off another corridor were the ablutions. The boys were in one dormitory and the girls were in another. The dormitory had the capacity for twelve to fourteen but there were about six or seven in it.
31. We had no contact with the girls and we were never outside. The building was locked and even when you went to the shower the door behind you was locked. The whole building was turnkey. Although it was a big house subdivided into two parts, it was close to civilisation and it would have been easy to escape.
32. The deputy head may have been called Mr McDuff or Mr Duffy and his residence was along the corridor on the left. He was a wee, stout man in his sixties with glasses and he was silver haired. He occasionally did a day shift but a lot of the time he did night shift. He would sit at the top of the landing on his chair. He was alright. He was a strict old man but he looked after us and made sure we were safe. He had a vile temper. He never physically harmed you but he had a sharp tongue.
33. The headmaster, who I think was called Mr McKay, was in charge overall but I only saw him now and again. He was the person responsible for punishments and he gave us the belt on our hand. You would get the belt if you were caught smoking, if you started a fight or if you swore. The rule was three strikes and you were out. I only got the belt once because I kept my head down as I wanted to get out.
34. I withdrew because Gilmerton was small and I was so confined. There was no fresh air and it felt like being incarcerated. I wanted to make my time there go as quickly as possible. On hindsight I should have kicked up a fuss to get moved.

## **Routine at Gilmerton Remand Home**

### *First day*

35. They took all our clothes on arrival and we were given shorts, shirt and a tank top to wear. I was also given my first pair of underpants. I think I kept my own shoes. We didn't have any need for a coat because we were constantly locked up.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

36. Mr McKay or one of the other carers got us up in the morning about 7am. Then you had your breakfast. I can't remember where we ate. There was no structure to the day. We were kept in the house until we were sent back to court.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

37. The food was good but sometimes there wasn't enough. We swapped food that we didn't like and they didn't stop us doing that.

### *Washing / bathing*

38. You got a shower every day. The showers started at 4pm and ran through to 5.30pm.

### *School*

39. We didn't have any formal schooling.

*Visits/Review of Detention*

40. A social worker may have come to take a statement from me about the pending court case.

*Healthcare*

41. I think there was a nurse in Gilmerton because when you first went you got a health check.

*Bedwetting*

42. There was a pail in the middle of the dormitory which you could use during the night. In the morning you had a shower if you had wet the bed but you would also get a telling off and be humiliated. You had to gather up your wet sheets and take them to the laundry room to be washed.

**Abuse at Gilmerton Remand Home**

43. There were two old style shower cubicles. Mr PBL was an assistant and his role was to make sure the boys were showered every day when he was on duty. He would try and befriend you to make you think he was your pal who was going to look after you during your stay there. Mr PBL was mid-thirties to forties and was between 5'7 and 5'9. He had a round face and greasy hair which was swept to the side. He wore a brown pin-striped suit.
44. Mr PBL openly abused children of my age and younger in the shower room for a cigarette or a sweetie. He said we mustn't mention it or we would get into trouble and get the belt. He terrified you into keeping your silence. I hated him.
45. He started abusing me within a couple of days of my arrival. He never penetrated me but he made me touch him. The abuse continued the whole time I was there. I



pushed him away and started crying when the abuse went too far but I couldn't defend myself from what he was doing. I had a bit of an attitude and that probably saved me from worse abuse.

46. I never discussed it with any of the other boys, probably for self-preservation, but we all knew it was happening to each other. There was a stigma about being abused and you didn't want the other boys to know you had been tampered with.
47. I assume people weren't vetted in those days because he must have got away with that for years. He made me homophobic for most of my life and I hated gays. I am fortunate I never caused any of them any damage.

### **Leaving Gilmerton Remand Home**

48. I went to a juvenile court. They read out the statements from the social work department to the judge. When my dad was questioned about my behaviour he said that I was out of control so the writing was on the wall for me and I hated him for that.
49. I was only eleven and I was frightened so I was only taking in about thirty percent of what was happening around me. I was never asked my opinion in court. There were several discussions and I can't remember if I was given the sentence at that point or if I was sent back to Gilmerton for reports. I was in Gilmerton twice but I'm not sure if these were back to back.

### **St John's Approved School**

50. St John's Approved School was on the Edinburgh road towards Shettleston. You went down a lane off the Great Western Approach and there was a big house surrounded by a wall. There were three parts to it with a courtyard in the centre. At the end of the wall was the outbuildings. You went through a double green gate into the courtyard and the ablutions, shower room and toilets were on the extreme left.

51. The western elevation had classrooms on the lower level and dormitories on the upper level. The Brothers' accommodation was above the south wing on the facing elevation. All the wings were connected. The eastern elevation had a dining hall, a laundry room, a tailors and the outside farm worker's room where all your equipment was kept. Back through the gates at the top of the yard you had the joiners, the cobblers, and then you had the playing fields. Round the side of the eastern elevation was where they cultivated turnips and other vegetables.
52. Two of the groups shared the same dormitory. A south west wing and a north west wing had two corridors where the dormitories were and each group would have their own side of the dormitory. De La Salle was on one side and St Patrick's were on the other. When you went upstairs to the dormitory there was a landing and a toilet.
53. The whole system was run by the Irish Catholic Order. Four Brothers ran the school and they had several female members of staff to assist who lived in and who did things like the laundry and cooked. The majority of these women were Irish. They very rarely had anything to do with the boys. You only saw them when you were collecting the laundry.
54. There were four halls. Each of the four Brothers was in charge of their own hall. St Patrick's was run by Brother **MDC**. I was in De La Salle where Brother **HOZ** was in charge. The Brothers called you by your surname. There were about sixty or seventy boys in De La Salle and a similar number in the other groups. The school could hold 180 to 200. The staffing levels were low considering the number of boys in the home.
55. I was one of the youngest boys, they usually started at age twelve and went up to age sixteen. Some of the older boys had been in List D schools and other approved schools all their lives so they were institutionalised and that was all they knew. That was their home and these boys committed crimes because they didn't know anything else. I tried to keep a low profile but they would threaten you for cigarettes or toothpaste and they would steal from you.

56. The Brothers sold you tobacco, you got a flint and you had a bit of lead to strike it on. You had a tinderbox. The tuck shop was on a Saturday morning before the weekend release left by 12pm. I was underage but I was still allowed to spend my wages on tobacco.

### **Routine at St John's**

#### *First day*

57. I think a probation officer took me in the car to St John's. On the day we arrived we went in through the Shettleston approach to the front of the building and we were greeted by the governor, Brother Celeste. He was the headmaster and in overall charge. Brother Celeste didn't teach, he dealt with the administration and the overall running of the approved school. He took the paperwork, had a word with the person who brought you and then somebody would take you to your class dormitory in your hall. You were then shown the dormitory and told what you had to do, for example to line up in a certain place when you heard the bell. It was explained to you how the system worked and what part you were to play in it. Normally this was done by the Brother in charge or it could be one of the carers.
58. The intakes were normally during the day between 10am and 12pm. You were taken to the intake room where all your clothes and belongings were removed from you. You were then given your uniform in a wire basket and you were given a number for that particular set of clothes. I was number [REDACTED]. You put your civvies into the wire basket and they were taken away and put into a box. They were returned to you when you left the approved school. You were then showered, had a medical and were then taken to a workshop to join your group.
59. It was up to you to integrate. You were lucky if you knew somebody and I knew a boy called [REDACTED] so I thought I was going to be fortunate but a lot of the boys kept their heads down and didn't want to have any contact with you. They wanted to get out as quickly as possible as well.

*Mornings and bedtime*

60. There were at least twenty in the dormitory which had bunk beds. I think a bell rang in the morning to wake us up. The wire basket hung on the end of your bed. In the morning you got dressed and put your pyjamas in the basket. I think a clean set of pyjamas were left on your bed every week and you threw your old ones into the laundry basket.
61. At night you would line up in your house group in front of the cook house building. Supper was at 8pm. You would get a bun before you went to bed but you didn't get anything to drink after 6pm. At bedtime your pyjamas would be in the bottom of the basket and you took your clothes off, put them into the basket and hung it over the end of your bed again.
62. The civilian staff stayed until 10pm when the night watchman came in. He was in his late fifties or early sixties. He sat on a chair on the landing between the two halls. You couldn't walk past him without him seeing you. There was a pail in the middle of the dormitory which you could pee in at night. There was also a toilet on the landing which you could use.

*Mealtimes / Food*

63. Most mornings you got porridge and bread and jam but some mornings you would get a scrambled or boiled egg. I was once threatened by one of the other boys for my boiled egg.
64. There were cooks but the only time we came into contact with them was when we went for our meals. The dining hall was all laid out so you never had to do anything. One person at your table would go with the trolley to collect the food. I think this was a trustee who was a boy who was ready for release or who was institutionalised.

*Washing / bathing*

65. The ablutions were done in halls. I think we went for a walk around the courtyard before ablutions. You were allowed to have a smoke in the courtyard, even at my age, if you smoked. Then we went into ablutions and got washed and brushed our teeth. Afterwards we lined up and went into the dining hall.
66. We didn't shower in the morning. We showered every day last thing at night but I wet the bed, as did other boys, so I had to have a shower every morning as well. The PE teacher was a Polish man and he supervised the showering. He was fanatical about cleanliness. Mr McKay the woodwork teacher also supervised but it would mostly be one of the Brothers because it was early in the morning. You never knew who was going to be on duty.

*Clothing / uniform*

67. Each boy in De La Salle wore a coloured uniform to distinguish them from boys in the other halls. Mine was blue and white jerseys and tank tops. Everybody wore blue and white striped shirts and we had moleskin trousers. If I made a suit in the tailors it would be given to me when I left or during my time there so when it was put aside at night, it would have my number put on it.

*School*

68. The day was very highly structured. They did a head count every time you moved from one class to the other. We got our education in the morning. Most of the formal education was done by the Brothers and a lot of it was religion orientated although we were taught the core subjects. Brother **MDC** Brother **LAA** and Brother **HOZ** all taught different subjects. Brother **LAA** taught maths and English, Brother **MDC** taught history and Brother **HOZ** taught English. He was an educated man.
69. We had workshops in the evenings during the week so that we could learn skills. There were tailors, joiners, cobblers, painters and decorators and there was a farm.

They were all civilians and they were all professionals. You got a disciplined kindness from some of the staff. They tried to make you man up but also respected your age.

70. The guy who did the joinery work was a big tall man and he may have been called McKay. He was the perfect example of someone who would try to cheer you up and make light of the situation you were in and help you progress to where you wanted to be. I could have talked to him but not about the abuse because I didn't know what would happen.
71. I completed most of the crafts during the period I was in there. They moved you about to see where you were best suited. I was in the tailors, the cobblers and I spent a limited amount of time in woodwork which surprises me because I love woodwork. They tried to teach you a semi-skilled or a skilled job so that you were in a better position when you went out into civilian life.
72. You got your pocket money for working. The wages were peanuts, a shilling a week if you were lucky. The pocket money varied according to how you were progressing with your work. You made shoes for yourself and a suit to wear on a Sunday or for going to the cinema. Everything you made was all for you or for somebody else in the tailor's shop. There were made to measure orders throughout the school. I didn't get my first suit until after four weeks after I had started there as it took this length of time for the boys to make it.
73. I worked in the laundry room in St John's for three or four weeks and there were four women there. They were definitely spinsters and they were probably failed nuns. It wasn't a nice place to work because there was an uncomfortable feeling. It was almost like they were sizing you up.
74. If you didn't have a leisure class in the evenings during the week you would be in the library or in an education class. I think this was so that they could keep control. You could go to the woodwork shop during the week.

75. I worked in the gardening section when I first went to St John's. The gardener was a big, tall Irishman and he had three missing fingers. He might have been called Mr Gardiner. He was down to earth and you could have a laugh with him although he was strict and sometimes instead of telling you off he would give you a small push.
76. During my first winter there I was picking turnips in one of the big fields at the back of the school. There were about eight of us and the gardener asked if any of us had ever worked with pigs and if we would like to help out on a Saturday on a pig farm. I offered right away because I knew I couldn't stay at St John's at the weekends with what was happening.
77. I started three weeks later. I was taken down to the farm which was about half an hour away and I cleaned out the pens. The work was hard but the farmer asked me if I would work there every Saturday morning and I started about four or five weeks later. I went every Saturday and a couple of times during the week from 7am to 9am and was then brought back to school. One of the staff took me there in the minibus. I didn't get paid. It was considered to be a privilege.

#### *Trips / Holidays*

78. The majority of the boys in St John's were from the west coast and if they didn't have any discipline points they would get away for the weekend. A good percentage of them went home at the weekends and there was about one hundred to one hundred and fifty left in the school. I never managed to get a weekend home.

#### *Leisure Time*

79. When I first went to St John's I played football, there was a gravel football pitch, and went swimming on a Saturday morning because they had their own pool. Each of the four houses took it in turns to use the pool. A staff member supervised the swimming and the football. You could do things in the woodcraft shops during the weekend. Occasionally they put up a projector screen and showed a film but there wasn't a

television. We used to make jacks with bits of lead and sit in the courtyard and play with other boys at the weekends.

80. I used to go hillwalking with several other boys and Brother<sup>HOZ</sup> on a Sunday in the Cairngorms so I was not considered to be a flight risk by that time. We went in the minibus. I got my kit ready on a Saturday afternoon and collected it and put in on on Sunday morning. That was a saving grace for me because it got me away from the people I wanted to get away from.
81. The boys did the cleaning so that kept you busy at the weekends as well. You would have your breakfast about 7.30am and be finished for about 8.30am or 9am. If you weren't doing a leisure activity like swimming or football, you had to do chores, even if you had football because that was usually in the afternoon.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

82. Birthdays weren't celebrated. I didn't go home for my first Christmas because I was only at St John's for a couple of months by that time but we had a Christmas dinner and Christmas crackers in the cookhouse. We were given a bar of chocolate and the tuck shop was opened so you could buy tuck if you had money. It was more like a military establishment than a family Christmas gathering. I went home the following Christmas.

#### *Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention*

83. Because I came from Edinburgh I wasn't allowed out at the weekends so I was limited to visits from my family. It wasn't easy for my mother either financially or logistically to get to me from Edinburgh. You weren't allowed visits for three months until you had settled in. My mother visited once or twice and these took place in a visiting room. You were allowed to get sweets and I was allowed to get tobacco but only a certain amount.



*Healthcare*

84. There was a nurse there and we had regular health checks, probably monthly, and any signs of ill health were treated right away. I can't remember ever getting dental treatment or even having a dental examination.

*Running away*

85. Boys used to go home at the weekends and not come back. When they came back they were disciplined and their time at St John's would be extended. If you were well behaved you could get out on licence in a year and a half. I was told I would be in St John's for between one and three years so I knew if I ran away that my time there would be extended. If you were habitually trying to abscond you would have time added on to your sentence.
86. I was under constant watch for the first couple of months and after about ten months I was allowed out on my own on a Saturday and I worked on the pig farm. They knew I wasn't going to run away after that because I was getting near to the end of my time there.

*Bed Wetting*

87. One of the Brothers would be on night shift so they would come around during the night, checking that the watchman was okay. When I first went I was terrified to tell anybody that I wet the bed. I wet the bed one night when Brother LAA was on duty. He sat on the bottom of my bed and asked me if I had wet it. He then touched me inappropriately. At that time you were allowed to get up if he was still on duty and go for a shower and you would get your bedclothes changed. I was terrified when I was in the shower because of what he had done and I was worried he might return and do it again.
88. Because we slept in bunk beds the boy in the other bunk could smell when I had wet the bed and would call me names. I was afraid to go to sleep in case I wet the bed

and I had to face the repercussions of that. We were called 'piss the beds' and pushed away by the other inmates because we were smelly. I had no medical help with bed wetting. I was given a rubber sheet and I was humiliated loads of times. I had to get up during the night, go down to the shower block, have a shower and change my bed so everybody knew that I wet the bed.

89. The morning was the most embarrassing time of the lot because when you got up in the morning you stood by your bedside and I couldn't put my pyjamas in the rack as they were wet. So I had to stand there naked and the night watchman would shout 'PBK have you wet the bed this morning?' and I would have to say yes.

### *Discipline*

90. For a punishment you could lose privileges like weekend leave, and leisure time like the cinema or going to the pig farm. You could lose pocket money as well so you couldn't go to the tuck shop and buy toothpaste or other things. You were allowed to buy a quarter of an ounce of tobacco a week. These were important to us because we had nothing.
91. A common name for getting the belt was the 'pants'. This happened to me in St John's. 'Pants' was the most severe punishment. A tawse was used and it would hit your legs as well as your backside. You would be left with welts on your bottom and your legs. The 'pants' was the belt on your bum with your trousers on but sometimes they made you wear wet swimming trunks. They sent you to the swimming pool to get your swimming trunks wet and then they would leather your backside. Apparently this was much sorer.
92. When I got the 'pants' it was over my short trousers and that was for fighting. It wasn't even me who started the fight. I was struck six times. This was done by Brother Celeste who was the headmaster. Brother HOZ was the SNR and he would belt too. Occasionally Brother MDC would do it. You would be pulled up on a discipline report and you would end up going to the headmaster's office and they would tell you that you were going to be punished. They told you how many strokes

of the belt you would get. It was normally six but sometimes it was only two or three. You were leant over a desk when they belted you.

### **Abuse at St John's**

93. On a Saturday and Sunday a large percentage of the boys were on release. A number of the staff were away as well so a lot of the perpetration took place then. You were at more risk at the weekends. My biggest problem was during the week and at night. Summer nights were alright but winter nights were difficult because it was dark. I spent most of my time trying to avoid being in the school because I was terrified of what might happen to me and I volunteered to get away when I could.
94. It didn't happen to me until I was at the school about three months. It was at swimming lessons on a Saturday morning. It started with Brother LAA handing me my towel when I got out of the shower and he patted my bum. This continued for some time. He would also put an arm around me when I was coming out of the cubicle. I saw him masturbating under his robes while he was watching the boys in the shower area. He knew that I knew because he smiled at me. He was Irish. I think Brother LAA was late thirties or early forties.
95. Every time Brother LAA was supervising the showers something would happen but I think he got the message after a couple of months that it wasn't going to be easy with me. It continued to happen until I got the job in the pig farm and then I was away from him most of the time. I was very quick to learn to try and avoid certain places and certain people, for my own safety and also because you got a bit of stick from the other boys if you were seen with these people.
96. In St John's it wasn't just your carers you had to watch, it was the inmates as well. I never understood until I became a mature adult why they had guys like that in those places. Most of them weren't homosexual but they probably had it done to them. In fact it got worse in St John's because you were older and you were in the company of older kids. There was also bullying if you had a disability.

97. We used to go to the cinema in Shettleston, the Odeon. They marched you down the road on a Saturday. There was a matinee so some boys would go in the morning and some would go in the afternoon. A lot of things happened in the cinema. Boys were abused by other boys. I could hear it and they would talk about it when we were walking back to the home. Fortunately for me, I never got propositioned in the cinema but I know one of the other boys called █████ used to get the life of hell and this happened to another couple of boys as well.
98. I was up against it in both the tailors and the cobblers. The tailor that taught us was about seventy. He taught us in a small room and there were about ten boys in it learning various skills. The boy who tried to abuse me was called █████. He was two or three years older than me. He pulled his penis out and wanted me to touch him and masturbate him. He would cover himself with material. I think █████ tried to do this twice. I don't know whether he knew about the Brother and that is why he tried to abuse me but he certainly tried to make me do things. The tailor sat elevated on a big chair so I don't know how he didn't see what was happening.
99. There was a big Irish boy called █████ and he was a bit of a protector. He stopped █████ on a few occasions. █████ was in the cobbler's class as well so I tried to avoid him there too. I made one pair of shoes and got out of there. That took me five weeks. I think █████ knew that if he continued that I was going to tell but I was reluctant to do that because you were creating a stigma for yourself right away so you tried to avoid the situation. He didn't try to anything to me anywhere else and he was in a different house to me.
100. █████ was one of Brother LAA's protégées. He was an inmate who preyed on inmates and he was preyed on by Brother LAA. █████ was another inmate who was preyed on by Brother LAA. I think █████ was around the same age as me. I felt sorry for that guy because he got preyed on quite a lot. Everybody knew that █████ was being abused by Brother LAA who was a little snake. The English class was near the swimming pool and the toilets were nearby. █████ was always kept back after the English class by Brother LAA and he would come back about

three quarters of an hour later. Everybody else was lined up and marched up to your hall. I suspect that the other Brothers knew what Brother LAA was doing.

101. [REDACTED] would get pushed when he was in the queue for supper and called a wee poof. The boys would say "Brother LAA is on tonight so you will get two buns." and things like that. It was every man for himself in these places. Even though the other boys knew it wasn't your fault that you were getting abused they still saw you as Brother LAA's wee bum boy so you tried to avoid the stigma as well.
102. You didn't know who was your friend and who was your enemy and that was within your own group. You dare not get yourself the reputation for being a grass or you would have a life of total misery. If I got into a fight I couldn't grass the person I was in a fight with or if I got a beating because I would get more than my share of beatings after that.
103. Two sleeping blocks were off one corridor so the night watchman sat at the entrance to each house and he knew nobody could come in or go out. Somebody came into the dorms at night. I don't know who it was but I could hear them moving about. I took ages to get to sleep because I was so terrified about wetting my bed. You could hear boys saying 'No, don't.' The night watchman would have seen someone come in who it was so I can only imagine it was someone within the dorm doing it to someone else within the dorm. You had to watch out for the other boys doing things to you as well.

#### **Reporting of abuse at St John's Approved School**

104. When my mother visited I told her what [REDACTED] Brother LAA had done to me and she obviously told my dad. He said I was trying to cause trouble. I was initially reluctant to tell my mum what was going on after my experience with my dad but I did. It was never an easy thing for me to do because I knew my dad would give her a life of misery.

### **Leaving St John's Approved School**

105. Prior to leaving St John's you would be given tasks to do, which were unsupervised, in an attempt to prepare you for life after you left. I left St John's when I was fourteen. You were told a month before you were getting released. I don't think I went back to school after I left. My family were still living in the Drylaw area in Edinburgh.
106. My sole intention was never to get in trouble again after I left but I did. I only got into trouble once when I got into somebody's car and slept in it after I had been drinking heavily and the man came out in the morning and thought I was stealing it.

### **Life after being in care**

107. I left home when I was fifteen because my dad threw a penny at me and it hit me on the ear. I was afraid that I was going to be violent towards him so I tried to get into the army but they refused me because I wet the bed and because I had a criminal record so I went on the trawlers. I was told to apply to the army again when I was seventeen so I went to sea for two and a half years. I think the farming job at St John's prepared me for later life but trawling was no life for somebody my age so I joined the army a couple of years later. The reason I joined the army was because of the incident with my father. I needed to get out of the house and I had nowhere to go.
108. I was conscious when I joined the army that I was institutionalised because I had been in homes for most of my life. I thought I was going to be safe in the army but it was like every other institution and there were perpetrators everywhere.
109. Something happened in the army when I was in Belfast. I was on rest and recreation and I was stationed in the Milltown Cemetery bus station [REDACTED]. A common tactic by the British army was to befriend locals and you were allowed to have tea or coffee with them or you were limited to two pints. When I was coming back from this

I was put into transport to another company's barracks. This took place somewhere on [REDACTED]. I was consequently tied to a chair and I was forced to drink salt water to the point where I was choking. They had my arms tied with tie wraps behind the chair and they water boarded me. There was a lance corporal and a sergeant involved and I told them that if I ever saw them again I would kill them.

110. The only thing I can think is that they were practising their tactics on me and who better to do it on than one of your own because it is not going to come to light. I asked to be tried by a court martial on a charge and seven times in a week I was up on company orders, they read out the charge and on the eighth day I was fined fifty pence.
111. I was old enough to realise that the army could never be seen to be wrong. What annoyed me more than anything was that I asked to be tried by court martial and they refused because they knew it was a fictitious charge. They denied me my right to be tried by court martial because they knew I would have won. The fifty pence fine was a token gesture.
112. After the incident above, I couldn't handle the army any more so I left when I was 23. I thought about instructing a solicitor, Beltrami, but I knew I would be taking on the establishment and I wouldn't win.
113. After I left the army I met my first wife. I worked for Sunblest but I lost my job and I couldn't get a job locally so we moved to London for three or four years. My wife couldn't stand being away from her family so we separated. I moved back to Scotland and I met my current wife [REDACTED] shortly after that. We have been married for 47 years and we have four children and six grandchildren. I worked as a product development manager with one company and I worked at the airport for years as an engineer. I then worked for a window company. I was a maintenance man at [REDACTED] when I was semi-retired and I retired from there.

## Impact

114. My dad was a huge obstacle and I hated him all my life for that. His mentality was that I was trying to make trouble for the Brother and the Catholic Church and I was the bad boy making false statements. What made it worse for me was my dad and how he treated my abuse with the contempt that he did. The only reason I can come to terms with that now is because of what he was and I didn't realise that until I saw my mother getting the beatings and the accusations and I was old enough to understand. He was as evil as the people who were trying to do what they were trying to do to me. That's why he wouldn't help me when I asked him to help me.
115. I once saw my father sexually abusing a fourteen year old girl who was the girlfriend of one of my brother's friends. My father was a hypocrite. He was a sex abuser but he refused to believe that similar things had happened to me. I think he was scared that he would be found out if we reported what had happened to me.
116. After my dad died about thirty years ago, we found out that when my daughter [REDACTED] and her cousin had stayed with him on a couple of occasions, he had let them watch pornographic movies and he had touched [REDACTED] inappropriately.
117. Through my whole life people have tried to abuse me in various ways. Because of what happened and because of how my father treated me when I tried to get help from him I have put up barriers which I couldn't take down. I saw counsellors in the past but I felt I was going over the same things again and again and it was upsetting me so I stopped. It was exhausting.
118. I have buried my memories for a long time. I purposely didn't want to think about them. I kept things under wraps for so long and then I had a mental breakdown at the end of 2018. A mental health nurse was doing an assessment with me and she told me it was never too late to speak to somebody about the abuse I had suffered. She said I had buried it and it was causing my mental health situation. The nurse said I couldn't get help unless I let them help me.



119. It is the hardest thing to let somebody know that you have been abused. Certain things which I wouldn't have seen as abuse came to my mind afterwards, like the repercussions of wetting the bed which I now know were abuse. I suffered sexual and physical abuse and I didn't even think about mental abuse and then it all fell into place.
120. I didn't think I had mental health issues but I clearly did. My family didn't know what had gone on in my life but I did and I started feeling sorry for myself. When I had an argument with [REDACTED] I would drive to end of the bypass and scream and shout and bang on the steering wheel. I was angry about everything, the whole establishment, everything in my life and how people walked all over me. All because I stole apples when I was eight years old. Every time I get into a situation I can't handle I lost my temper.
121. For sixty years I have felt that I have not had the justice I deserved and I will never forget the names of the sexual perverts.
122. I have a good relationship with my wife because of my past. I was institutionalised and had to do what I was told so I am not confrontational. We have four children who have all excelled. I probably over disciplined my children in some situations. I have overprotected my children and I have been really strict. I could have been more lenient and that is one of the things I hate about myself because I was no better than my father but I am not like him. There was no way my children were going to suffer like I did.
123. I get really angry with my children for not listening to me. This affects my relationships as I argue with my children about a lot of things.
124. I keep friends at a distance. I don't trust anybody. I get really angry now. I question everybody and ask, why me?
125. I wouldn't 'piss' on a member of the Catholic Church if they were on fire but I know they are not all like that. That is the sad part. The establishment has got such a

rotten twist in it now that it is difficult for anybody within the establishment to clear themselves.

126. I have always had nightmares about the Sandyman. This is about a man standing at the bottom of my bed with a black cloak and a black sombrero hat. I am frozen with fear. That happens to me quite a lot. The Sandyman has never left.
127. I attended a wellbeing clinic for eight or nine weeks but they couldn't help me. They put me in touch with two other institutions but they never came back to me. This was about six months before Covid.
128. My education was very poor because I was moved around different establishments when I was at school but I excelled in the army. I got my education in the army.
129. Going by what I have done in my life and what I have achieved by pure drive, if I had a more academic background I would probably have been a lot better off. Even now my spelling is atrocious. When I was working at the airport I could only go to a certain level because of my lack of education.
130. When I was young I had a normal relationship with my siblings but in later life we didn't speak for months on end. I didn't see my brothers and sisters through my adolescent life so this impacted on our relationship. You were not part of the group when you come back. It felt like I had been excommunicated and I had to justify my place in the family again.
131. It was only when my brothers and sisters started dying that I realised what I was losing. My brother [REDACTED] used to beat me up when we were young but I probably have more love and affection for him now than I ever did because I know what he went through. He has never spoken to me about his experiences in care and I haven't told him about speaking to the Inquiry. I know he has had a harder life than I have. He has had three failed marriages and he has lost two of his children to drugs and a lot of his problems stem back to my father.

132. Each time I have been institutionalised whether it be in care, on the trawler or in the army there has been abuse of some kind. People are picked on because they are different but you have to be who you are. I still can't talk about certain things which I will probably take to my grave and I know I am not alone. What I tell ill the Inquiry will not help mend the broken parts of society. Perpetrators have always been able to wheedle themselves into society and ply their trade but that is what human beings are.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

133. I have never spoken to the police about the abuse I suffered whilst in care.

### **Records**

134. I went to Police Scotland to get records from the time I was on remand from an approved school and I managed to obtain the dates I was remanded and the dates I was incarcerated. This was because I couldn't get any information from the councils.
135. Nobody even knows of Gilmerton Remand Home although the police records clearly show that I was in a remand home. Maybe it changed names but the annoying thing is that it was either under Midlothian or Edinburgh Council and they split up in the seventies into various councils, as a result of which the records were dispersed. I get the impression the records were lost on purpose.
136. I went to Edinburgh Council and they did an extensive search. They took the name and date of birth of every member of my family but they didn't come up with anything.
137. It is possible that East Lothian Council may have records relating to the time I was in Humble. I spoke to Glasgow Council regarding St John's and the woman there said

that with all the publicity regarding abuse in the Catholic Church, a lot of the records had been destroyed.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

138. Nowadays there is Disclosure Scotland now but there was nothing like that in those days so institutions were wide open to abuse. My biggest issue is that those in authority must have known what was happening. In the sixties and seventies society was rotten and they didn't want to know. Society needs to be honest with itself. You get people in positions of power who hide facts or they manipulate them to suit.
139. Children need to be listened to. When I asked for help my own father kicked me into touch. I wouldn't have been in care if my father hadn't wanted me there. He had to sign me into care. If I couldn't trust him who could I trust? Children have to be punished for their crimes but you need to look at the severity of the crime.
140. There have to be people that children can talk to. What does society do with a child that is difficult to manage? They have to get to the root of the problem but they rarely do. Maybe my problem when I was growing up was that I wanted things that I couldn't have. Children growing up in poverty is a recipe for trouble. You start off stealing apples and it is a progression after that. The more you do it and the more you get away with it, the more criminalised it becomes.
141. My wife and I have had the advantage of seeing our grandsons grow up in America and right from the word go in kindergarten they are taught to be reliant on their friends, they are taught to speak freely and they are taught that they are part of a team. There were two boys that didn't get on and the parents arranged a play date so that they could spend time together and it built up a relationship. The bond between them all is amazing. They have a close relationship with their teachers. All this is lacking here. I think the biggest problem is lack of respect. Here they lock people up to get rid of the problem.

142. You can't stop poverty. There are always going to be differences in society. If you can get rid of poverty you will get rid of some of the other problems. I don't think this will ever happen but we could make it better. I got the short straw but not everybody did. I had to pay the penance I was put in these places for but I shouldn't have been abused. The establishments were rotten to the core. The Inquiry has to let the public know how bad it was and probably still is in a lot of cases. Children and society are more educated nowadays and less tolerant of abuses but his won't help me. My problems are too deep rooted. My bogeyman will only go away when I die.

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

Signed..........

Dated..... 28 January 2021 .....