

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EEY [REDACTED]

Support person present: No.

1. My name is EEY [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in [REDACTED] just up from Ibrox, more or less Govan. My parent's names were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The name used to be spelt [REDACTED] but my grandad changed it by deed poll because it was related to Catholics or something. We were brought up as Protestants. I can't remember if my father worked.
3. I was one of eight children, I had four brothers and three sisters. The oldest was [REDACTED] who would have been seventy-one or seventy-two. He has passed away now. Then there's EEZ [REDACTED] who is seventy, [REDACTED] at sixty-eight and ESE [REDACTED], who is sixty-seven. I've come up to see him in hospital. I am sixty-six. Then my three younger sisters, [REDACTED] who has passed away, she would have been sixty-three, [REDACTED] who is eleven months younger and [REDACTED] who is coming up for sixty.
4. I don't remember primary school before being boarded out. I don't really remember anything about home before leaving when I was five or six. My first memory is being taken away. We were all huddled behind curtains, not wanting to go. I can't remember, but EEZ [REDACTED] told me that Mr Meldrum, a social worker from the corporation, took us all away.

5. They took us all away because of neglect from both parents. The main one was my mother. She was imprisoned for six months for neglect. My father was also in prison for something. I don't know if it was for neglect or something else. Some of my aunties were there when we were taken away and the social worker asked if they could help out but they said no.
6. I know we were taken away and separated into little children's homes until everything was organised, but I don't remember going to any home. I know my sisters went to St Anne's. I can only surmise that was a girl's place. My first memories are going to Tiree, which is an island up in the north of Scotland. I think it's the Inner Hebrides. You get the ferry from Oban.

The ^{EMY-EVI} foster care, Tiree

7. I don't remember the whole trip to Tiree, but I remember the plane ride, as I'd never been in a plane. It was from Glasgow to Tiree. We all went together, except ^{EEZ} who came about three weeks later. He told me this, he said he had epilepsy and had to be treated. I was never told where we were going, I was too young.
8. The family were split up right away. ^{EEZ} and ^{ESE} and myself went to one house and the other three, ^{EMY-EVI} went to another family over on the other side of the island. I didn't see them again until we returned to Glasgow four years later. I remember being in the house with the foster parents and them being really nice. Their names were ^{EMY-EVI}. As far as I know they are both deceased now. She tickled me, trying to make me feel comfortable, and told me how I would like it there. That sticks in my head. It's the only recollection I have of getting there.
9. The place is still up and running but I don't know what as. All I know is that it's ^{EEZ} I don't know the name of the place. I know the name of the primary school I went to was ^{EEZ} It was just the one big classroom. ^{EEZ} told me

- there was a primary and secondary school at his side of the island, so I imagine there were two primaries and one big secondary. I think we lived in [REDACTED]
10. I can't remember how old [REDACTED] EMY-EVI [REDACTED] were, maybe thirty-five to forty years old. They had one daughter of their own called [REDACTED] I met her again when I was twenty-one and I think she was about ten years older than me.
 11. The only other person I remember being there when we arrived was Mr Meldrum. I can't remember if he stayed long. It was a big working farm. The house was big with six or seven bedrooms. [REDACTED] and I shared a room, I would imagine the girls shared one too. There were cattle on the farm and fields with corn, hay, potatoes and all that kind of stuff. I was six or seven years old at this time. [REDACTED] was three years older and the girls were younger than me.
 12. It was ok at the beginning, everything seemed to be fine, but after that I don't remember anything happening apart from working on the farm. There was no playing. If you did it was just running about like idiots, playing 'tig' or something like that, because there was nothing. No toys, swings, anything like that.
 13. There were another two children fostered by [REDACTED] EMY-EVI [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] It might have been [REDACTED] but I've always known her as [REDACTED] I can't remember if they were there before us or if they came after us. We got on ok with them. I don't think they were treated any differently from us. They were similar ages to us. I've had no contact with them since then.
 14. [REDACTED] EMY-EVI [REDACTED]'s didn't foster any other family while we were there, but I think they were regular foster carers. I would say they fostered because it benefited them with farm labour. Don't get me wrong, it was less work than an adult would have done, but the government would have given them a lot of money for doing it and they would have got a lot of work done for them. I don't know if their daughter [REDACTED] was treated any differently, she probably wasn't smacked like we were and things like that. They told us to call them mum and dad. To do that in school was easier because if you called them Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] EMY-EVI [REDACTED], then kids are going to question it, "So that's not your mum and dad?" You would alienate yourself.

Routine at ^{EMY-EVI} Tiree

Mornings & bedtime

15. I wouldn't be up at the time farmers got up. On Monday to Friday I'd be up about 7:00 am. I'd get washed, dressed and have breakfast. They fed you well, that is one thing they did do. We walked to school. It was about two miles away. ^{EM} and I walked together. My sisters weren't there at first, they were too young. We had lunch at school.
16. We would finish school about 3:00 – 3:30 pm. When we got home we changed. In the winter we didn't do anything when we got home really. In the summer months we would help out on the farm, in the fields or cleaning out the byre. We went back into the house for our main meal, which was always good. Mrs ^{EVI} was always very strict at putting us to bed. I can't remember the time, about 8:00 – 9:00 pm.
17. At the weekends we were up early, not really early, and worked on the farm. We never went to church. They weren't religious.

Food

18. The food was always good. The only thing I didn't like was sugar in my porridge. I hate it. If you didn't like something you ate it anyway, but there was chicken, fish and eggs, so everything we had I didn't have a problem eating.

Washing & bathing

19. The washing facilities were bad, you didn't have much. There was no shower and we shared a bath. ^{EM} and I shared. We would have a bath two or three times a week. I can't remember if they made us brush our teeth. There was electricity on Tiree, but we had no running hot water, you had to boil it. I don't remember anything electric in

the house. Everything was done on a stove, like a range. They shouldn't have put kids there as it wasn't suitable.

Schooling

20. School was just normal. The education was just basic, normal stuff. If we had homework, like reading and spelling, that sort of thing, Mrs **EVI** would help us. It was one big class ranging in ages from five to eleven. There was about twenty-three in the class. When I came back from Tiree I was still in primary school.
21. There was only one bad incident. There's a game called 'Penny to the wall'. We didn't have money so we threw little stones to the wall. Another kid told a teacher that I hit a teacher's car. I didn't, we were nowhere near the car, but the school told **EMY-EVI**'s and I got leathered with a belt from Mr **EMY**.
22. My sisters eventually came to the school as they got older. I think there were other foster children there. I don't remember being treated differently at school. I think the teachers name was Mrs Cameron, but I'm not sure.

Clothing

23. I don't remember taking any clothes with me. I would imagine the corporation supplied us with clothes, but I don't know. I would think when children are fostered out they would get supplies for them first. I don't remember **EMY-EVI**'s taking us out and buying clothes. I don't remember wearing a school uniform, just normal clothes. I have a school photo and everyone is wearing normal clothes.

Leisure time

24. We didn't have toys, books, magazines or comics. We didn't get pocket money. I can't recall getting sweets. There was no shops near us anyway. There's a couple of shops on the island, but everything is shipped from the mainland. They didn't have a TV. They may have had a radio, but I can't recall sitting listening to it.

Trips/Holidays

25. On school holidays we would help on the farm. That was our daily chores. I never went on a trip or holiday. I stayed on Tiree for about four years until we left.

Visits/inspections

26. I don't remember being visited. I have seen in [EEZ]'s records that Mr Meldrum came, but I can't remember. I assume he did. My mum and dad didn't visit. I never saw my other siblings. They were staying in a different house on the other side of the island. I think we more or less forgot about them.

Birthdays/Christmas

27. I don't remember birthdays being celebrated at all. I can't remember getting a toy at Christmas, they didn't celebrate it. Easter was just another day. I don't remember going to church at all.

Chores/work

28. A chore to me is being given a task and finishing it. It wasn't like that at the [EMY-EVI]'s. You went out in the field and worked. It might not have been as intense as an adult, but you did things in the field, gathering up corn, picking potatoes, cleaning out the byre, things like that. Corn is like miniature bamboo. It's hard. You would tie it with the strands of the corn and I would cut my hands a lot. I would cut the corn and clean the byre for the cows. We would sit in the back of the trailers going from field to field. That was something you enjoyed. You didn't realise you were being taken advantage of, you're that young you don't know. I don't remember the early years with my mum and dad. I don't remember being neglected, or them being taken away. [REDACTED] done the same work as me but I don't remember the girls in the fields.
29. It was a way of life, you just got on with it. If you made a mistake it would all depend on what it was. If you didn't clean something right, you would have to do it again. In

the summer you would be out for four to five hours. In the four years I was there it was all work. I can't remember playing, there was nothing to play with. If you wanted a toy you had to make it. I don't remember us having a ball. The nearest house was miles away, so there were no friends to play with. My friends were my family. You went to school, came home and stayed there. That is all we did.

Healthcare

30. I don't recall seeing a doctor. I would get a plaster from Mrs ^{EVI} when I cut my hands on the corn. I don't remember seeing a dentist in Tiree.

Bedwetting

31. When I first went there I wet the bed regularly because it was traumatic. I would have to strip the bed and they would put me in a cold bath. If it was a school day there wasn't time to put me in the bath so I just washed and dressed and went to school. The others were ok about it. In school they may have smelled me. Half the time they would put little kilts on me. I don't know if they were kilts or skirts. It was more in the early days because it was traumatic. It was freezing cold, so you didn't want to get out of bed to go to the toilet. ■■■ was always close to me then. We were all close there, we knew we were brothers and sisters. We would always look out for each other. There were no cliques though, we got on with ■■■■■

Abuse at ^{EMY-EVI} ■■■■, Tiree

32. If you were naughty and done something wrong, Mr ^{EMY} ■■■■ leathered you with a belt. That time that the school reported me to them I had to go upstairs, take my pants down and got absolutely battered with the belt. I remember getting smacked more without the belt. Mrs ^{EVI} ■■■■ left him to deal with the discipline, but she was strict. They never showed any affection after the first day. The belt or being smacked was the discipline.

33. We were treated like workers, we had nothing. I have no happy memories of being there. It was the normal routine every day. I had nothing else to compare it with as I had no memory of anything else. I didn't know any better.

Leaving foster care

34. I don't remember getting any notice of leaving there. We were all put together, all of us and taken back to Glasgow. When we were taken to Tiree we thought that was our life. I don't know why we were put back home either, because what we went back to was a disgrace. I remember being on the plane home and our other siblings were on it, but we were kept separate until they got everything organised at the other end. When we got to our house in Glasgow it was like, "Who are you?" And we had another little sister, [REDACTED] that we knew nothing about.
35. As I said, on the way home we were kept separate from our other siblings. [REDACTED] ESE [REDACTED] tried to give us a sweetie but was told not to and they kept us apart on the plane. I don't remember any conversation with the others. We flew to Glasgow. I don't know if we were put to a home to integrate us again. I remember when we got home, it was chaos. We didn't know the others at all.
36. We stayed in [REDACTED] just off [REDACTED] above the [REDACTED] Bar. It was a two apartment house. There was a bedroom and a kitchen with a recess. Mum and dad slept in the recess, on a bed and we were all crammed in the bedroom. Why did we get put back into a house like that? Ten in that house, eight of us in a bedroom, covered in blankets and coats. That has always been my problem, why did they put us back to that? We were glad to be together, but the conditions were horrendous. We were between four to seventeen years of age, in one bedroom. The biggest thing in my head was wondering why that had that been allowed to happen. There was at least a toilet in the house, a lot of houses in the closes had outside toilets.
37. Life was horrible. We had nothing. My mum wasn't much better to us than when we left with neglect, and my dad died three months after we returned. We had been

given clothes from the corporation, shoes, jackets, stuff like that, but my mum sold most of it for her own benefit, and we ended up with scraps. My mum was more for herself than for us. She couldn't handle us all. She would rather have a big plate of mince and potatoes for her and give us a bag of chips to share. That's the kind of person she was.

38. I cannot get over why we were put back to the two apartment. It was horrible. It was brilliant that we were altogether, but apart from that it was horrible. I think the two older brothers went to live with aunties that were local after a little while, making things a little bit easier. I think we all bonded pretty quickly, because we knew we were brothers and sisters. I can't remember any other social work involvement after we got home.

Life after being in care

39. I went to Dalmarnock Primary School, then we moved back to [REDACTED] which was a bigger house. We ended up getting kicked out of there, because my mum just couldn't handle the expenses. I then went to Lorne Street Primary School and Lambhill Secondary, which is in Kinning Park. I was everywhere. This was what my mum was like, she wouldn't pay bills and we ended up going here, there and everywhere. We were also in [REDACTED] near the [REDACTED]
40. My dad died three months after we got home. The story I was told was that he was poaching with my grandad and he died while he was hiding from the warden. I remember we were all crying in the close. We thought he had been put back to prison but were told he was dead. My mum and dad were forty-two when he died. Their birthdays were actually one day after the other, the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] So the eight of us were alone with my mum. A normal person would think more of the kids than herself. Not my mum, she was the other way around.
41. I finished school when I was fifteen. Between the ages of fifteen and twenty I was in approved school, borstal and I had a recall from borstal and done three months in Barlinnie. I was never violent, it was for stealing things to survive. There was a big

scrapyard at the viaduct in Bridgeton. I went up and stole scrap and took it back to them the next day. You would get half a crown, which was a lot of money now. **Seconda**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

42. I got a job with a security firm for seven or eight months on building sites and all sorts. I then got a job in [REDACTED] Hospital and met my wife and my life just changed completely. I was twenty-one. We have been together for over forty years. We're not married but she uses my name and actually changed her name to mine by deed poll.
43. I have worked with [REDACTED] tools in Manchester for twenty-six to twenty-seven years. I am a warehouse worker. I could have got promotion, but I saw other guys doing it and going off with stress and anxiety, so I chose to do the job I'm doing. I can come in, do my work and go home. There's no pressure.
44. I have four kids, my oldest son is forty-two, and my other son is thirty-eight. My daughters are thirty-five and thirty-one. I have seven grandchildren and five ready-made ones. I have lived in Manchester for twenty-seven years. I moved to Manchester as I was in [REDACTED] Paisley and my sons were mixing with the wrong crowd. They were teenagers then, school age, and there was a lot of drugs going about. My wife's mum and dad had split up and they had different partners. Her mother lived down in Manchester, where we are now, and she asked us to move down, saying I'd get a job no problem. We got a council house down there and it was the best move I've made. My kids don't touch drugs whatsoever, I've bought my council house now as well. It's all great.

Reporting of abuse at [REDACTED] s, Tیره

45. I have never reported what happened to me. You just thought it was life. It doesn't go through your head.

Impact

46. It was an adventure going to Tiree because I was a little kid, but we went back to live in squalor. It should never have happened. We got new sand shoes when other kids got proper shoes to go to school. When everyone went on school trips, I never went because we had no money.
47. To me it has made me a better person. I give my kids as much as I can, I don't want them to live like that. They've had everything I could give them. In Tiree you got fed, had more room, etc, but being with all your family balanced that. As a family we are so, so close. When you're younger kids, you fight all the time. My brothers would leather me, as my dad wasn't there. When we lost our dad that must have been a major point in our lives. As we got older, we would look out for each other all the time.
48. I left the house at fifteen and got a flat. I had flats right up until I worked in the hospital. I then met my wife and eventually we got a house together. My kids are my life, and now my grandkids. The youngest one is my little angel. She was three months premature and we thought we were going to lose her. My daughter was fantastic with her and revived her a number of times when her heart stopped. My wife and I had Covid last year. My wife was in hospital and I couldn't stop coughing. My daughter stayed with me for four days and done everything for me. I Face timed my wife. It was horrendous, but everything turned out brilliantly.
49. I think because we went through so much turmoil when we were younger, we are very close now. We've never had any big fall outs. You are always welcome at the others houses.
50. I think we possibly needed counselling at the time, but we didn't know that. I just got on with life. You put it to the back of your mind. I've had no nightmares or flashbacks, I've shut it out and locked it away. It's something I don't want to remember.

Records

51. My brother **EEZ** said he had been in touch with a David Sinclair and they got some records, mainly school reports, from an archive in a little cottage thing in Tiree. The foster population of Tiree is like a clique. They look after each other, trying to get rid of stuff, so that there's no evidence, that kind of thing. I don't think David Sinclair is a lawyer, his email address is **[REDACTED]** I don't know what position he has.
52. I haven't applied for my records. I think everything has been destroyed. I have been in touch with Future Pathways. I would love to know why they sent us back to Glasgow. I would like to know all the little things. How good I was, how bad I was, the education.

Lessons to be learned

53. I think when kids are put into care everything should be in place for them, and make sure they are going into a loving environment, not a farm in isolation. To me that's not a foster home. You shouldn't be fostered in to something with no friends, no Christmas, no toys, no pocket money. The government should make sure that kids aren't put back to what we were put back to. It was ridiculous. I'll never get over that.

Hopes for the Inquiry

54. I hope the Inquiry makes sure that what happened to us doesn't happen to anyone else. Make sure they go to the right places, a loving family. It shouldn't happen to anyone.

Other information

55. 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.

EEY


Signed.....

Dated..... 17-2-22