

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

QFC

Support person present: No

1. My name is QFC My date of birth is 1944. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Life before going into care**

2. I was placed in care as a baby. I was born in war time. My understanding is that my father was a serviceman or a plasterer. He was housed at my mother's house for a period of time. I believe my step dad was serving in the war. I was the result of a relationship between my mother and the man she was housing. My father's name was .
3. I didn't have any knowledge of my background when I was growing up. We never asked. We just arrived in the condition we were in and we had no reason to ask.

### **Quarriers, Bridge of Weir**

4. My first memory of Quarriers is being in the baby homes. They were like cottages, but we had nurses to care for us. I remember being three or four years old and I had done something wrong. I was put behind the door and I had to sit there. I also remember being taken out for walks in prams with three or four of us in the same pram. Up until I was five years old, that's all I can really remember.

5. After being in the baby home I was sent to cottage 43. It was called Morton Perry home. It's now used as an old folks' home. Mr and Mrs QBA/Q  
BB were the cottage parents. They had a son called [REDACTED] who was about a year older than me. There were no other staff working in the cottage, apart from about two weeks in the summer when the QBA/QBB went on holiday. Mr Turnbull was the chauffeur at Quarriers. The homes had a Volkswagen bus, which he drove around. Mr and Mrs Turnbull would come and look after us when the QBA/QBB were away, although Mr Turnbull only came in once in a while. Mrs Turnbull never really bothered us so it was like a vacation for the boys. I knew some of the other staff at Quarriers by name, but I never conversed with them or had any dealings with them. We had to exchange pleasantries with them, but nothing further.
  
6. The cottage was built on two levels. After you went up the steps to the cottage, the QBA/QBB living quarters were on the right hand side. The dining room was on the left and straight ahead was the kitchen. At the far end of the kitchen was a door that took you out to the back shed. There was a wooden staircase, which was good to slide down as long as you didn't get caught. The QBA/QB  
R bedroom was the first one you came to upstairs.
  
7. I remember being in awe when I arrived at cottage 43 because there were big boys in there. Mrs QBB told me to follow a boy called [REDACTED] I can remember the other children in cottage 43, but it was rare for us to mix with children from other cottages. We were like a clan. There was no animosity with other cottages, but we just stuck to ourselves. We didn't know much about the other cottages. We were more concerned about looking after ourselves because nobody else was. I stayed in cottage 43 throughout my time at Quarriers. I wanted to get out but there was nobody to ask.
  
8. It was all boys in cottage 43 and everybody was there long term. [REDACTED] was eight days younger than me. [REDACTED] was a year or so older. I remember [REDACTED] who was two years older than me, very well. [REDACTED] was younger than me and he had an older brother called [REDACTED]. I remember [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] went to Australia. He changed his name

after his left. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were older than me. [REDACTED] was older than me and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were younger. They came from Govan. I remember the day they came in when I was about six or seven. They were stripped naked in front of the other children. The scissors came out and their hair was cut off. They were scrubbed down and we were told not to go near them because they were contaminated.

9. The [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] brothers were kept together in our cottage, but I later learned of other siblings who were separated. Girls and boys were in separate cottages and I knew of brothers who were separated. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were separated. [REDACTED] ran away. He was branded as a trouble maker because he had swift feet.
10. There was a church, a school and central hall on the grounds. There was a store, which was a combination of a draper's store and a sweet shop. There was a cobbler's shop, [REDACTED] a plumber's shop and a carpenter's shop. They were ran by outsiders, [REDACTED]. Other workers came from outside to help. There were a couple of football pitches on the grounds, across a bridge from the school. There was a black ash pitch and a red ash pitch. There was a playground and a pond. There were some swings. There was an ambulance on the grounds which we had to tear apart to see how it was made.

## **Routine at Quarriers**

### *Mornings and bedtime*

11. All of the bedrooms were big, with about four single beds on each side of the room and eight boys in each bedroom. They were divided by age groups. There were fireplaces in the bedrooms, but they were seldom lit. I only remember the fireplace in the bedroom being lit once. The heat would rise from the downstairs fire, so we didn't really need the heat.

12. There was one bedtime for all ages. I think it was at 8 o'clock at night. There was no arguing. We had a nightgown which we would change into. Bed was for sleeping. We didn't read or anything. Everything was timed. Lights out would be ten minutes after bed time had been called by Mr and Mrs QBA/Q  
BB It was very regimental.
13. There were no closets or drawers in the bedrooms. I think we just piled our clothes on the floor next to our beds. Our boots would be left downstairs. We didn't have any personal possessions anyway.
14. I don't remember the morning routine much. I think Mr QBA told us to get up. There was no, "Good morning," or, "Did you sleep well?" We woke up early, no later than 7 o'clock.

#### *Mealtimes / Food*

15. At breakfast time we had porridge. On rare occasions, we had cornflakes. That was a treat because we had sugar. One of the older boys would prepare the porridge. There was a big pot on the stove. It would be half filled with water, then we'd throw in the oats and mix it up. There was nothing in the porridge except a little bit of milk. We had to wait until Mr QBA scraped the cream off the top for his porridge.
16. The boys did all the cooking, depending on our age group. Mrs QBB would decide what the meal was and on occasion she would tell us how to prepare it. The younger boys would learn from the older boys. The QBA/QB  
P never ate meals with us. We sat round two long tables with benches alongside them. We came back from school for lunch. We had a jam sandwich. I don't recall much else for lunch. We were given tea to drink.
17. Mr Turnbull would deliver bread to the cottage. Sometimes we had soup for dinner. Sometimes we got another jam sandwich. If we got an apple or an orange, it was a bonus. If we were really lucky, we got tripe. I could not get that down, as hungry as I was. I shudder today, even just thinking of it. If we couldn't eat something, we gave it to somebody else to eat. There were no adults supervising meal times. We either

had to sit there until it was finished or give it to somebody else to help out. We couldn't throw food away. There was no snack before bedtime. There was no such thing as leftovers. Between us, we ate everything. We were given the basics, but we were hungry a lot of the time. There was no such thing as a fat kid.

18. My one good memory of food was when Galbraiths of Glasgow would bring mince pies. They brought them some Fridays as a treat. If we had some money, we would buy sweets.

#### *Washing / bathing*

19. There was one lavatory upstairs and one bathroom for all the boys. There was also a lavatory in the back shed. The QBA/QB  
B had their own bathroom. Bath night was every Saturday, before church on the Sunday. We had one bath between around twenty kids. We all wanted to get in there first, when it was nice and warm and clean. The older kids tended to have their bath first. There was no privacy. There would be two or three boys in the bath.
20. If we could find a brush and toothpaste, we would brush our teeth. There were maybe four toothbrushes, shared between all of us. We didn't know anything different.

#### *Clothing*

21. We wore turtleneck type, grey pullovers. I think they might have been donated. There were some other things, but we didn't pay much attention to clothes. We had nothing to compare them to. In winter time, we had to wear scratchy, wool clothes to keep us warm. It didn't matter how bad they felt.
22. There was a cobbler's shop. Mr QBA would inspect the boots. If any needed repaired, he would tell us to take them down to the cobbler's and bring back the boots that had been left there. We called the boots tackety boots. They had a piece of leather nailed on with tacks. They were great for sliding in the winter time, but they

were painful when the tacks wore through. Every day we lined our boots up and a couple of kids would be designated to polish them. All the boots looked alike, so if the nails were sticking up in mine I'd try to find a different pair in the morning. I wasn't always successful.

23. There was a big basket where laundry went. People came and took the sheets and clothes away to do the laundry. A day or two later, Mr Turnbull would bring them back in a little van. He would leave the laundry outside by the road. Our clothes weren't labelled so we just took whatever we could find that fitted.

### *School*

24. I started at kindergarten when I left the baby home. It was held up in what they called Central Hall. There was an area there for five and six years olds. We started learning to read and write. After we left kindergarten we went to school. School was mixed, boys and girls. We stayed at the one school throughout.
25. I was a fair student. School was nice, I enjoyed it. Maybe it was because it wasn't the cottage. I don't remember getting the belt at school. I think they did use the belt, but it was nothing like the cottage. I enjoyed intermingling with everybody. I enjoyed sports and scholastic competition. Mrs QBR? the teacher, was good. Mr McIntosh was the history teacher. Mr Elder was the music teacher. We called him "Wee Egghead". I can still see him sitting by the organ with his shiny head. We also attended a woodwork class at one end of Central Hall.
26. I remember one play time at school when I was about twelve. There was some ice on the pond, but it wasn't very deep. I managed to get about thirty to forty feet out into the pond and I went down. It was wintertime so it was cold and I got soaked. I went back into school, but I didn't dare tell anybody. I tried to sit by a heater so I could dry up. I wore the same clothes all day long and went back to cottage 43.
27. Mrs QBB directed somebody to light a fire in the dining room, between the QBA/QBB living room and the kitchen. Later on, when nobody was around, I went down and I

took off most of my clothes. They had a guard around the fire. I put my pants on the guard. I fell asleep and they got burned. Mrs QBB made me wear the burnt pants to school the next day. I was really embarrassed.

28. I don't think we got homework. Mr and Mrs QBA/QB certainly didn't encourage us with school work. I would compete with [REDACTED] at school. He was a marvellous writer. I would try and beat him. He was perfect. The marking system was either a G or a VG, good or very good. I got quite a few Gs, but the VGs were sparse.
29. [REDACTED] died of a heart condition at the home. He just disappeared. I remember he got into trouble with a teacher. The teacher was abusive to him. At fourteen years old, I don't think he weighed 35 pounds. The class knew he was frail. He was skin and bone. The class in unison yelled at the teacher and told him to leave [REDACTED] alone. We never heard from [REDACTED] after that. We then somehow became aware that he had died.
30. I graduated at fifteen years old. I didn't get a diploma or any congratulatory statements. I was told there was no more school for me and that I'd learned everything there was to learn. The way it was presented to me was that what I knew was what everybody knew and that I'd gone as far as I could go in the world.

### *Chores*

31. The younger boys learned chores from the next eldest. I learned from [REDACTED] although he wasn't there for very long after I arrived. I think he was only there for about a year. I didn't know he was going to leave. He was just gone one day. There were no farewells or explanations.
32. The younger boys watched what the older boys did. They showed us how to make beds, mend socks and shine everybody's shoes. Everybody graduated through this series of jobs. [REDACTED] learned from me. We had to make [REDACTED]'s bed every day, as well as our own. I don't recall [REDACTED] ever doing any chores.

33. After meal times, the boys would wipe the table, clean the plates and pots, dry them and put them away. I don't recall the <sup>QBA/QB</sup><sub>B</sub> ever doing anything.
34. When I was about twelve or thirteen, [REDACTED] was told to clean above the stove with a bucket. It was a big, cold stove with one or two big ovens in it. There was soup on the stove and he got up on the pot to reach higher. The lid gave out and both his feet were in the soup. He was screaming. I piggy backed [REDACTED] to the Elise hospital. I'm not sure how long he stayed there. I remember coming back and dragging both his socks out of the soup. We still had to eat the soup.

*Leisure time*

35. We went to the swimming baths in Port Glasgow once or twice a year. There were bath tubs on the perimeter of the pool with clean, hot water. In the summertime, the homes had a sports day when the cottages would compete against each other. We ran races and that sort of thing. We played football matches between ourselves. I attended Boys' Brigade, which was internal. Mr Niven took care of that. He was the head plumber. It was good. We went once a week and it got us out of the house after school.
36. We could choose between the boy scouts or the Boys' Brigade. Mr <sup>QFD</sup> [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] of the boy scouts. My good friend, [REDACTED] joined the boy scouts. He wanted me to join the boy scouts too, but I didn't want to. I didn't tell him the reason for that, but I was being abused by Mr <sup>QFD</sup> [REDACTED]
37. At Christmas time, we got donated toys but there weren't many toys around the cottage. They were mostly broken. Once in a while, we got something operable but it was seldom. Mainly, the toys were things that had been discarded. There were bicycles around but usually they were missing a tyre or had flat tyres. On one occasion, I remember a bicycle seat was missing.

38. There weren't a lot of books. We never had library in the homes, not even at school. There were used school books, but nothing else. I got comic books from Auntie [REDACTED]
39. Once a year, we would go to Troon. The bus company in Bridge of Weir, Dolly Garner, sent a couple of single decker buses to the home. Cottage 43 and maybe another couple of cottages would pack into the buses. We went to Troon and spent a day at the seaside. I remember the water was freezing. Mrs [QBB] came on the trips too. We didn't get ice cream or any other treats.
40. When I was nine or ten, I wandered off from the beach and got lost. A couple took me home. They were kind to me. They fed me and put me to bed. Mr Turnbull came to collect me when it was dark. He brought me back to the homes. I got belted for that because the [QBA/Q  
BB] said I ran away. I had nowhere to run to. I just got lost.

*Religious instruction*

41. We went to church three times a week, twice on a Sunday and also on a Wednesday. Mr [QBA] was [REDACTED] church officer. I became his worker. He would tell me to shovel the steps off in the winter time and sweep them in the summer. I had to make sure everything was ready for the congregation. He had me do most of the church work. I also had to ring the bells on Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday evening. There was huge pendulum and when it swung twice, I had to ring the bell. I did it for a minute or two about five minutes before the service started.
42. There were sanatoriums for people with tuberculosis and epileptic people. It was quite scary for children to see people having an epileptic fit or to hear people with TB coughing. Nobody ever explained anything to us. Cottage 43 sat near the back so we seemed to get the brunt of that.
43. We had a church service in the cottage every day in the evening, except on Sundays. I think it was after dinner. Either Mr or Mrs [QBA/Q  
BB] would attend. We had to sing hymns. One of us would be selected to read from the bible. We never knew who

it was going to be. We were seldom called by our first names so they would shout out our second names. It petrified all of us. [REDACTED] had a stutter when he spoke in front of a crowd. He would tremble when he was chosen. He would be ridiculed. The more the [REDACTED] antagonised him, the more paranoid he got. He would be told to stop and see them afterwards. He got belted because of his stutter. We didn't know how to help him or encourage him. I think about him quite a lot and wonder how he is doing.

44. We couldn't do anything on a Sunday. If we picked up anything other than a bible on Sundays, we got the strap. We did go for long walks on a Sunday, up to the Kilmacolm Road or the Bridge of Weir Road. Mrs [REDACTED] came with us. If it was a rainy day, we had to stay in and read the bible. We prayed for nice days on Sundays.

#### *Trips / Holidays*

45. On two occasions, we went to Boys' Brigade camp in Oban. It was good. Anything outside Quarriers was good.
46. When I was twelve or thirteen years old, a guy came in from the outside to deliver something from his lorry. His lorry window was open and he threw a bunch of change at me. I searched for everything and I picked it up. I put it in my pocket and I hid it. It was two half crowns and maybe a shilling or two. I'd never seen so much money in all my life. I kept it for quite a few months because I knew we were going to Crail for Boys' Brigade camp.
47. I decided I would rent a bicycle and run away with any money that was leftover. I went into town and took the bicycle back to the camp, which was stupid. I was asked where I got the bike and where I got the money. I'm not sure what happened after that, but I'm sure I had to take the bicycle back. I never did run away, but I thought about it many times.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

48. On our birthday, we each got a card from Mr Munro, the director of Quarriers. Other than that, there were no celebrations at the cottage. The only reason I knew it was my birthday was because the card arrived. I remember the first time I got one, realising [REDACTED] was my birthday. I was five or six years old. It was just a plain card, but I think it said my age. There were never any birthday cakes.
49. At Christmas time, we were given toys that had been donated. Mr [REDACTED] QBA would distribute the toys while we were asleep. Our names would be above the pile of toys that belonged to us. We would get jigsaws with pieces missing or books with pages missing. When we were younger kids, we'd be really disappointed. One year, I got roller skates but there were no wheels on one of the skates. I don't think there was anything special at Christmas time, although I do remember some cakes. We dressed up and went to the church, then we came back and sang some carols. The [REDACTED] QBA/QBB didn't wish us a Merry Christmas.

*Visits / Inspections*

50. From the age of seven or eight, we had friends' day. Once a month, somebody would come and visit us from the city and take us out for the afternoon. They might buy us a comic book or some sweets. I was visited by Mrs [REDACTED] and Aunty [REDACTED]. I don't know how we were selected for that. Mrs [REDACTED] was from Johnstone. She was very elderly and frail. She used to visit, sometimes with her two granddaughters. She came to be my friend when I was seven or eight years old and then she stopped coming. She was very nice. She came all that way just to see me. We would talk and play and I enjoyed the sweets. It was such a relief to have somebody to hold hands with.
51. On one occasion, I did something naughty on friends' day. I don't know what it was. I got the strap and was sent to bed. I could see the bus coming at the top of the hill. Mrs [REDACTED] came to the cottage and said she was there to see [REDACTED] QFC. The [REDACTED] QBA/QB<sub>B</sub> told her I was sick and that I couldn't see anybody that day. I felt like screaming. I think that was the last trip she ever made to visit me. It made me hate the [REDACTED] QBA/QB<sub>B</sub> more.

52. Aunty [REDACTED] was my friend after Mrs [REDACTED]. She came to see [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as well. [REDACTED] was the oldest. He went to Australia. We were never told where he had gone. His bed was just empty one day. I don't know what the arrangement was, but I know he wrote to Aunty [REDACTED] after that. I think a relative may have provided for him. Aunty [REDACTED] was very sweet. She always brought us comics and sweets. She would give us a shilling or two so we could go to the store and buy some sweets ourselves. She had a laughter that was infectious.
53. Aunty [REDACTED] would take [REDACTED] and me up to her house in [REDACTED] for two weeks in the summer. Aunty [REDACTED] had a daughter, [REDACTED] who was in the [REDACTED] police and a son, [REDACTED] who was about twelve years older than me. I saw [REDACTED] and his wife the last time I was in Scotland. Being at Aunty [REDACTED]'s was the sweetest time of my life. They had a television, a living room and we had pancakes for breakfast. Aunty [REDACTED] would give us two shillings on a Saturday morning and [REDACTED] and I would run to see the matinee in [REDACTED]. Being in [REDACTED] was heaven.
54. Social workers and external visits from the local authority were non-existent. There were no inspections to my knowledge. We never knew who to ask, who to tell. We had no relationship with any staff, other than Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] QBA/Q. The only external visitors I had were Mrs [REDACTED] and Aunty [REDACTED]. I never told them about the abuse at Quarriers. I was just so happy to see them. I didn't want to relive anything with them. It was a different world.
55. Through the years at the homes, there were people who came to visit us in church on a Sunday. We'd be told to line up for the people to walk or drive through, just to look at us. It felt awful, like we were animals.

### *Healthcare*

56. I still have a scar on my chin from slipping and falling in the bath tub when I was eleven or twelve years old. I broke my teeth and a part of my tooth went through my lip. I went to the Elise Hospital where Doctor Davidson stitched me up. The [REDACTED]

was called [redacted] QAJ [redacted] I was given a two tooth dental thing to put on my teeth. I think I had them in for about six months. They took us to the baths at Port Glasgow. I went swimming and forgot to take them out. They're probably still in the pool somewhere. They were never replaced.

57. That was the only health care I can remember. We didn't go for regular check-ups or anything like that. If we had a real toothache, we would go up and get our tooth pulled. We shared toothbrushes. Most of us didn't brush at all. There was never any emphasis on doing things right.

*Running away*

58. Every once in a while, somebody ran away. There were three boys in our cottage who ran away fairly often. [redacted] was one of them. I often thought about running away, but I never did. I dreamed of knowing somebody, an aunt or an uncle, and I would have somehow ran away. I had nobody to go to.

*Relationship with the [redacted] QBA/QBB [redacted]*

59. Mr and Mrs [redacted] QBA/QB [redacted] never conversed with us. It never happened. We spoke when we were spoken to. There were no Happy Birthdays or Merry Christmases. Everything was an order. Nobody ever sat in their laps. They never asked anybody how school had been that day or whether we had passed our exams. There was never any discussion about what we would do when we left. There was never any affection at all. Mrs [redacted] QBB [redacted] often told me that my next home would be Barlinnie Prison. I learned that Barlinnie was for criminals and I wondered what I had done wrong.
60. [redacted] went to a school outside Quarriers. I think he went to Paisley Grammar School. He never mixed with us. He had his own bedroom. He didn't do any chores. We were a different breed. He never played with us and any interaction was minimal. At first I didn't think too much about it. [redacted] would be sitting in there, watching television. We were outside, playing with the battered toys, wondering what the

television was like and why we couldn't do that. All these discrepancies went through our minds.

### Abuse at Quarriers

Mr QBA

61. At one of the Quarriers dinner dances I attended as an adult, I met [REDACTED]. He now lives in Australia. When I told him I grew up in cottage 43, he said he could still hear the screams from that cottage. There were very few days that passed without an altercation and somebody getting the wrath of the QBA/QBB.
62. Fortunately, I didn't wet the bed regularly. I think I did a couple of times when I was little. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] wet the bed. I weep for [REDACTED] today. Poor [REDACTED] was a nice kid, but he had a physical problem. I don't know if his muscles were developing properly. He was beaten mercilessly by Mr QBA. He would stand and wet his pants because he was getting beaten. QBA/QBB would pack his sheets in his school bag and make him take them to school. When he got home from school, he had to try and wash his sheets. He then had to put them on his bed, whether they were dry or not. It was almost a daily occurrence. We tried to encourage him to go to the bathroom.
63. They tried to cure [REDACTED] once. They put a rubber sheet on his bed. When it got wet, bells went off. He just had to lie back down again because there was nobody to change his bed. He went through a lot. I think they tried to make us hate him. They ridiculed him.
64. Mrs QBB seldom used the strap, not like Mr QBA. She would refer boys to Mr QBA. He was the administrator of punishments. It didn't take much for us to get the belt. He mostly strapped us on our hands, but it could be anywhere. We'd have belt marks up our arms. The belt was thick. We'd hold out our hands and he would whack us. You could see the tongue marks coming up on both arms. I was belted

numerous times. It was probably two, there, four times a month. It happened to all of us or the smallest of infractions. We would huddle together each day, wondering who was next and hoping it wouldn't be our turn. It was fearsome.

65. I vividly recall [REDACTED]'s brother, [REDACTED] being outside in the back yard on one occasion. I think he might have tried to run away. The yard had a high hedge with a tennis net in the middle. Mr QBA was running towards him with the belt. [REDACTED] was back pedalling and the belt was going everywhere. I can still see it and I can still hear the screams. If it wasn't [REDACTED] it was somebody else. We got it on the arms, the legs, anywhere.
66. There was no buckle on the belt. It was a chunk of leather with two prongs at the end. I don't recall anybody asking about the marks on our arms, although we wore pullovers. Nobody ever commented. [REDACTED] was belted because of his stutter. We couldn't help him. We couldn't offer to read for him or we would get belted instead.
67. On one occasion, I remember it being dark. I was walking down the hall way and I had my hand on Mr QBA's penis. I was told to go back up to bed. I think I was about seven or eight years old. I don't know how it all came about but I distinctly remember that. I don't know if things like that were happening to other boys. They probably were, but we kept things to ourselves. I thought it was just part of growing up.

QAS

68. A very bad thing happened to me when I was twelve or thirteen. At Christmas time, a group from a church in Paisley came to visit us at the cottage. They would play the accordion and entertain us. We would sing songs. One of the people in this group was called QAS I would guess he was in his early twenties. He became fixated on me. [REDACTED] He seemed like a strange fellow. He returned to Quarriers by himself in the summer time. He told Mrs QBB he wanted to take me to Arran overnight to stay in a hotel. He came to get me a couple of days later.

69. When we got to the Isle of Arran, QAS was trying to be friendly, too friendly. He was always hovering. It was as if I was wearing him on my back. I felt that something wasn't right. I felt very uncomfortable. When we got to the hotel, there were two beds in the room. I forget what he did, but I do know I woke up and QAS was in my bed with nothing on. I don't know exactly what happened, but I was very uncomfortable. I really don't know what happened, but I'm sure something did. I just wanted to get it out of my head.
70. The next day, I wanted to get back to the homes. Cottage 43 was the best of two evils at that time. It wasn't that I wanted to go back, but I wanted to be anywhere but there. I remember racing around Arran on a bicycle just to get away from him. I never saw QAS again. I didn't tell anybody what had happened. There was nobody to tell. There was no communication with QBA/QBB just orders to do things.

Mr QFD

71. There was a painter at Quarriers called Mr QFD. He was thirty or forty years old. [REDACTED] He had some sort of fixation with me. When I was thirteen or fourteen, he requested my presence at his paint shop. He said he was going to make a painter out of me. He took me to a fence and gave me a can of black paint and a brush. I think the chemicals in the paint made me sick.
72. Eventually, Mr QFD came and I was heaving. He took me to his shop. I distinctly remember sitting in his lap. He was fumbling around with some colour charts. He asked me to help him arrange some paint colours. The next thing I knew, I turned around and his pants had fallen down. He had something in his hands and he asked me to help him pull his pants back up. He asked me to fasten them. I fastened them.
73. It progressed from there. He asked me to reach into his pockets and asked what I could feel. I was thirteen or fourteen when that started. He would touch me as well. He would tell me to come and give him a wee hug and then put his hand down my

pants. It was so confusing. I worked for him for a couple of years and the abuse carried on throughout that time. There was no getting away from things like that because there was nobody to talk to. At Christmas time, he would dress up as Santa and come into the church. I wouldn't take part. I would just sit there, forlorn, thinking nobody else knew. I remember wondering who would be next. It was a very dark period in my life.

### Leaving Quarriers

74. I left school when I was fifteen. I worked at [QFD] for the summer and he continued with his escapades. When [redacted] came, it was almost as if today was the day and I was out.
75. There was no preparation for leaving. Nothing was offered. University or college weren't even mentioned to us. I didn't even know what university or college was. I was fifteen. Even today, I'm astounded by that. They sent us out at fifteen years old and abandoned us. It's criminal. They told me I had all the education I needed and I was sent out into the world that same day. Nobody asked me to let them know where I was or how I was getting on. I didn't even have Quarriers number. I didn't know how to use a phone. There was nothing. It was just, "You're gone. You're all done."
76. [QBA/QBB] didn't wish me well. I was given a small suitcase with a change of clothes and £15. As far as I was concerned, I was educated to the highest degree and there was nothing else to learn. I thought I could go out into the world and talk to anybody because they didn't know anything I didn't know. We never conversed with anybody outside of ourselves anyway, so we just assumed we were smart but we weren't.
77. When I left, I felt jubilation. I was out in the world. The reality didn't sink in until I left. Auntie [redacted] didn't even know I was leaving. I assumed I would have to break contact with her. I thought she'd have to go and visit somebody else and I'd never seen her again. I felt really abandoned. I knew the times tables. I knew a bit of

history. That was about it. Each boy went through the same thing, but we never knew because the cottages didn't interact. We were never told if somebody was leaving. It was as if we just evaporated. There was no connection, no follow up. Nothing.

78. Nobody ever asked me what I'd like to do. Now, I wonder why the military services didn't come to the homes to recruit kids who had nowhere to go. I was told to go to a farm [REDACTED] by Mr [REDACTED] QFX [REDACTED]. He was fairly new at Quarriers. When I got to the farm, I was shown my bed. It was an empty stall in the byre with the cows. They put straw down for me. I had a blanket, but that was it. There was a door into the house from the byre. They would open it and give me my food. Sometimes they'd leave it there and by the time I got it, it was cold.
79. I worked from dawn till dusk, day in day out. I got a wage. It wasn't much, but to me it was an enormous amount. I stayed in the byre. I was there over winter. I would lie there at night, thinking this was what I'd left the homes for. I thought I should go back to the homes because at least there I had friends. I had nobody on the farm.
80. I worked at that farm for three or four months, until after Christmas. I wanted to go back to the orphan homes at Christmas time to wish everybody a Happy Christmas. I got a bus and walked from Bridge of Weir to the homes. I wanted to impress the boys and show them that I was surviving. I got to cottage 43. Mrs [REDACTED] QBB [REDACTED] said, "You don't belong here, [REDACTED] QFC [REDACTED]. You're supposed to be out there getting a job or working." I told her that I was working but I had the weekend off. She told me that I couldn't stay there. It was as if I had cost them enough already. I had to go back to Bridge of Weir and get a bus to [REDACTED]. I never went back to the homes after that.
81. When I was between farms, I went to the navy recruitment office in Glasgow. I remembered a song we learned growing up, "I've joined the navy to see the world. What did I see, I saw the sea." I decided I wanted to see the world. There was nothing in Scotland for me. I had no family. There was nothing to stop me and I had nowhere to go anyway. At least I'd be on a ship and have somewhere to put my

head down. I was asked my age at the recruiter's office. I was fifteen. They told me I was too wee and I was disappointed.

### Life after being in care

82. After I left Quarriers, I was in Johnstone and I thought I'd look up Mrs [REDACTED] I was about sixteen years old. That same day, I knocked on the door and one of her granddaughters opened the door. She asked if I'd like to see Mrs [REDACTED] She told me she was in the bedroom and said I should just go in. She didn't tell me that she had died the day before. She was lying in a coffin in the bedroom. She had died the day before. I was terrified. I'd never seen a dead body before.
83. The next month, when I had a day off, I went to see Auntie [REDACTED] I told her I had a straw bed in the barn and she got me out of there. I stayed with her for a week or two. [REDACTED] came and spoke to Auntie [REDACTED] and agreed to take me. I'm not sure how the meeting came about, but I went to work for him and his brother [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] I stayed with their parents on the adjacent farm. They had a [REDACTED] farm [REDACTED]. They needed [REDACTED] boys my age. I got to know the other boys. I would go to their houses in [REDACTED] and meet their parents. Even today, I'm still part of their family. The [REDACTED] family were kind to me. I have very good memories of [REDACTED]
84. I didn't forget Quarriers, but I didn't go back there. The kids my age had left and the QBA/QBB weren't concerned about me. I became friendly with the [REDACTED] boys. They were milk boys. I would visit them regularly. On many a night, I would start to fall asleep on their couch. Mrs [REDACTED] wouldn't let me go anywhere. She'd tell me I could sleep upstairs with [REDACTED] one of the brothers, and ask me to give her a wee hug before I went upstairs. I'd never had that before and it was a wonderful feeling.
85. I was in [REDACTED] for three or four years. The [REDACTED] had an elder son in Canada. He came back for a visit with his wife. He suggested I go to Canada with them. They offered to sponsor me. I saved up money to get my teeth fixed and to get a passport.

I left Scotland when I was 21. It didn't faze me at all because I was leaving everything behind. I missed [REDACTED] but it was an opportunity for me to start a new life where nobody knew I was an orphan. Mrs [REDACTED] drove me to Prestwick Airport and I was going with her son, so I still felt like part of the [REDACTED] family.

86. I went to [REDACTED] initially. I met some Scottish people at a party the first night I was there. One of the people I was talking to asked me to be in his office on the Monday morning and by Monday night, I was working at a steel plant called [REDACTED]. I started off as a crane operator. We were making pylons to carry wires, [REDACTED]. Just before Christmas, the union decided to go on strike. I'd only been there a couple of months. I didn't want to strike so I left that job. I started delivering mail in [REDACTED] a few days later. After the post office, I got a job as a cab driver. As well as driving my taxi, [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

87. I liked Canada, but it was bitterly cold. I'd never experienced cold like that in my life. By spring time, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were having a baby and moving house. [REDACTED] had moved to Canada with me. He had moved to Vancouver so I decided to go there. I had a girlfriend in [REDACTED]. She wanted to get serious, but I couldn't settle down so I just got up and left. She was a lovely girl and she knew I was an orphan, but I needed to keep moving at that time so I didn't have to answer questions about my past. I stayed there for a while, working in an iron works. I think I was restless. I moved north to [REDACTED] British Columbia. I worked in a paper mill as a [REDACTED]

88. I went back to Scotland after that because [REDACTED] was getting married. I went back a few times for visits, but never to Quarriers. When I returned to Canada, I lived in [REDACTED] for a while before moving up to the [REDACTED] for a couple of years. I worked for the [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

89. I could go anywhere. There was nothing stopping me. I was a free man. A friend in the [REDACTED] suggested going to upstate New York, where he knew some people. I met a girl in [REDACTED]. Eventually, we got married. I was 25 or 26. I applied for permanent residency in the US. I have dual citizenship, but I'm still a British citizen and I have a British passport. I didn't want to lose my British identity.
90. My [REDACTED] asked me to help him fell trees and haul them to [REDACTED] so I did that for a couple of years. My first wife, [REDACTED] passed away in 1993 or 1994. She is the mother of my oldest son, who is now in his mid-forties. My oldest granddaughter is graduating from high school [REDACTED]. I married my second wife in 1993 or 1994. I had three more sons.
91. I'd always been curious about my family [REDACTED] prodded me a few times, but I didn't do anything about it until the computer came along. In the 1990s, I got access to the world wide web and I tried to trace my family. I subsequently tried to reach my father in [REDACTED] East Lothian. I got one reply from a young man with the surname [REDACTED] saying he'd experienced the same thing and wishing me good luck. That was it. That was as far as I got and that was the end of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I'd still like to find out something more about him.
92. I wrote to Quarriers. I told them I didn't have any information about myself. They gave me a modified birth certificate which said I was born in [REDACTED]. Doctor Davidson replied to my letter and said that my mother had lived [REDACTED]. He said that I might have brothers and sisters and that my father was a lodger. He advised me to let matters lie or words to that effect.
93. In around 2004, I wrote some letters to people in [REDACTED] who had the same surname as me. A month or so later, I got a phone call at 4 o'clock on a Sunday morning. It was my brother, [REDACTED]. We talked for a bit and he gave me some information about my family in Scotland. I discovered I had four half siblings altogether. I got in contact with my older sister's daughter through Facebook. She lived in [REDACTED] England. She gave me a lot of information about the family over time. We wrote to each other feverishly and then she sent me money for a ticket home.

94. I went over to Scotland to meet my family in 2005. I got off the train at [REDACTED] There was a swarm of about thirty people walking towards me on the platform. They told me they were my family. I hadn't been sure what to expect. I knew somebody would be there to meet me but I wasn't expecting so many people. It felt good, but I was still quite apprehensive. I didn't know what to say or do. After that visit, I carried writing and sending cards to some of my siblings. I think I then moved and we lost touch a bit.
95. I returned to Scotland in 2010 for Time to be Heard. I met up with [REDACTED] We took the bus to the homes and wandered around. We chatted about things. I also attended four dinner dances, which were held for former residents at Quarriers and their families. It hasn't been held for a few years now. There was never any discussion about abuse at the dinner dances. We all skirted around that because it was meant to be a happy get together. Comments would be made, but nothing was discussed in any detail.
96. On that same trip, I went up to [REDACTED] I wanted to stay in my mother's bedroom for a night. I stayed overnight and my niece slept on the couch. She gave me a key for the house and told me I could go back any time. I still have the key.
97. The last time I went to Scotland was in 2013. I took one of my sons, [REDACTED] and his friend. We rented a car and visited [REDACTED] I'd lost contact with my family by then and I didn't want to stir things up, so I didn't intend to visit my family. I stopped and saw my sister. I don't think she was overly excited to see us. I didn't detect any great enthusiasm from any of my siblings, except for [REDACTED] I also visited Quarriers on that occasion. We walked around and I showed my son my cottage.
98. I am separated from my second wife just now, but I still pay her rent. She suffers from [REDACTED] and has some physical health problems. Dealing with her and our children has been very difficult. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Essentially, I brought our three sons up. I took them to school, appointments and later on jobs. I cooked for them. I did

whatever work I could. I'm adept at most things because I've had to be. I didn't have a full time job because I didn't have time to do that and look after the kids. I got jobs where I could and worked for myself. Everything was word of mouth. I just got another job the other day and have a house to paint before the end of the summer. I live with two of my sons. I have a good relationship with all of my sons.

## Impact

99. I didn't feel comfortable as a young man in Scotland. I wanted to get away. I was bottling everything up. It felt like we were jeered at and scorned because we had been in the homes. In America and Canada, nobody asked questions about my background. If I stayed somewhere long enough, people would ask questions that made me uncomfortable so I kept on moving. If I didn't have my three sons, I would have carried on moving.
100. Before I left for Canada when I was [REDACTED] I had all of my teeth pulled. My mouth was a mess. Everything had rotted. I had never had dental treatment at Quarriers and our diets didn't promote healthy teeth. We shared four tooth brushes amongst twenty or so boys. I went to the dentist and all my teeth had to come out. I've had dentures all of my adult life.
101. Many years after leaving Quarriers, I moved to New York State. I was advised that I was a tuberculosis carrier. There was a TB sanatorium at the homes. Cottage 43 was the last cottage to be seated in the church. The people who walked down from the sanatorium sat two rows behind us. You could hear them coughing. I believe that's why I carried TB. About twenty years ago, I had to go through a treatment programme in Rochester. I had to take a tablet every three or four weeks until I'd completed the series.
102. I think about my childhood quite a lot. It was a living hell, to grow up without affection and without conversation. I knew a lot of people back at Quarriers who I don't know anymore. I remember their names, their faces, their sizes and most of their ages. I

would dearly love to know them now. I often get flashbacks. It's not constant, but it's periodic. I think the homes had an impact on my mental health. Not many people went through what I went through, only people who grew up in Quarriers or other institutions. There was nothing to look to or admire in **QBA/QBB** I couldn't learn anything from them. When I look back, I feel sad. It was so regimental. We had to sit for hours with our arms folded. I've recently sought support from my doctor. He was aghast when I gave him a brief overview of my childhood. He said he'd speak to a colleague and try and arrange something. I've never received any treatment or counselling before.

103. I think my half siblings know that what happened to me was wrong. I hope they do. I thought there might have been a little bit more concern for me when I was growing up. It irks me. My brother, **QBA/QBB** did tell me that he looked for me in Glasgow, after I'd left the homes. He said he couldn't find me because I had left for Canada. He rubbed my head and told me that he had missed me. When I visited them, nobody came right out and said they knew, they thought about me, they wanted to see me, they hunted for me, they should have inquired or sent a card. It wasn't there.
104. I really don't know how to make a relationship. I never learned. I left a lot of relationships because I didn't want to explain myself. If people asked where my family was, it would balloon for me and I just didn't want to deal with it. I don't have any family history for people to relate to. I've lied a lot about it. I've told people I had a brother and sister in Scotland who didn't want to come to America. I still find it hard to form friendships. Only Tom Shaw and the Inquiry know anything about me.
105. I think my experiences growing up affected me as a father. The boys would never go through what I went through. I've scalded them, but I've never been abusive to them. I explained things to them and I was kind to them. I wanted them to know they could do whatever they wanted. I told them they didn't have to do what I did. I used hammers, nails and screwdrivers because that was what I had to do. I told them they didn't have to follow in my footsteps, although they would help me out with jobs.

106. I had one father figure growing up, [REDACTED] QBA [REDACTED] I didn't like that. I can't picture him smiling or talking to us. I learned a lot from Mrs [REDACTED] and Auntie [REDACTED] about decency. I also took a lot from the [REDACTED] into my family life. I gave my boys a lot of physical affection. I have pictures of them all over me. We wrestled, we played football, we played games together. We're close. My kids don't know what happened to me growing up.
107. The impact of Quarriers on my education was worse than grim. It's nice to know the basics. I could rattle off the twelve times table, but where did that get me in life? I needed further education, but I couldn't get it because I had to work, I had to survive and I didn't know where to go. I had no direction. Communication with the [REDACTED] QBA/QBB [REDACTED] was non-existent. Nobody suggested anything to me and there was nobody I could call on to ask for guidance.
108. Quarriers did nothing for me, other than give me a bed and feed me, and I can't see anything going forward either. They didn't offer me anything and there's nothing they can offer me now. I still have to battle my own way through. That's what I've done and that's what I'll continue to do. One day, I'm going to die. I'd like to be buried in Scotland because that's where my roots are. I don't have a home in New York. I was born in Scotland, I should die in Scotland. I don't have a family grave site, so where would I go? I started to think that the best I could do was write to the state of New York and donate all of my parts, so that's what I did.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

109. There was a chat room for people that had been in Quarriers, which I came across through the Former Girls and Boys Association. In around 2010, there was mention in the chat room of an article in the Herald newspaper about abuse. I inferred from the whole thing that nobody believed any of the children who had been in the homes. I was quite angry because they were accusing us of lying.

110. I wrote to the head of Quarriers to the effect that there was abuse at the homes and I could witness that and these people were not lying. I also indicated that I had been abused. The head of Quarriers wrote back and suggested that I make a complaint to the Greenock police, which I did. I think I wrote a letter. I don't recall a telephone conversation with the Greenock police. They noted [REDACTED] QFD [REDACTED] in particular, but advised me that there was nothing they could do at that time. I can't remember how they informed me of that, but I think it was by email. I don't think I'd gone into detail, but it was the first time I'd spoken about the abuse. It wasn't pleasant. I felt like it was a waste of paper.
111. I became aware of Time to be Heard through the FGBA. I'm not too sure about the precise details. I was in a room with Tom Shaw and a lady. I did find that beneficial in a sense. I felt that the Shaw report was fair. I had given my piece and it was the truth. There were a lot of other people involved and it felt like I was supporting them. Why would I take time off work to go there and lie? It had taken years. We should get some kind of satisfaction out of it because it's the truth.


## Records

112. I wrote to Quarriers in the mid-1990s, requesting some information about my family background. Doctor Davidson replied with some information and I was sent a modified birth certificate, which indicated that I'd been born in [REDACTED]
113. Around 2010, I wrote to Quarriers about the abuse. I also asked them to send me my records. They sent me my medical records, which were thin. The terminology was so archaic, they were incomprehensible. I had been to the Elise hospital on the grounds once or twice. Once I went for the measles. Another time, I had chilblains. We wore wellies without socks in the winter. When I was about ten, my toes were frozen and I couldn't walk. I didn't get any school records or any other records about my care. They also sent me a small picture of me at the age of five or six. It was so sparse and there were no dates or anything.

114. That picture is the only picture I have from my childhood, other than a picture I was given at a dinner dance. At one of the Quarriers dinner dances, a guy came up to me and gave me a photograph of me at Quarriers. I had won a prize at sports day and I'm standing at the presentation table.

### **Hopes for the Inquiry**

115. Today, there are adoptions or foster care. I hope nobody will have the experience that I had. I would never want anybody to be in that position again. Back then, it would have helped if my mother had come to me and explained. I'm sure she wondered about me, but to be abandoned like that was a big sting. We were all just one and the same.
116. I hope that what happened when I was in Quarriers will never be replicated. If it is replicated, I think that the system will be vastly improved. I feel the pain of people that have experienced abuse in care. I know they're going through the same pain that I am. They're all my age now. They've all lived through it and somehow managed.
117. 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...  QFC .....

Dated..... *July 3-2018* .....