

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

**Witness Statement of**

QKS

**Support person present: Yes**

1. My name is QKS My birth name was QKS. My name changed a few times because we always took our foster parents' names.
2. My date of birth is 1959. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going into care**

3. I have an older sister called She is fourteen months older than me. I also have an older sister called who is three years older than me. I didn't know until I was aged 49 because she was adopted by an aunt and the family emigrated to Canada. I never knew my biological mother or father. My sister and I went into care and foster homes together. We were kept together throughout.
4. I went to a few different places and foster families before I went to Ardgare Children's home. As an infant I went to Cardross Park Baby Home in Cardross. <sup>Sec</sup>  
Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
Secondary Institutions - to be published later I think I was three years old when I moved to Cardross Park Children's Home. I stayed there for a while and then my sister and I moved to a foster family in Lossiemouth.
5. The foster family in Lossiemouth was not a good experience. The highlight during my time there was being able to visit my Grandfather every Sunday. It was the only time

that my sister went elsewhere. I used to get dropped off at my Grandpa's. I remember he had a backyard full of rabbits. I loved petting the rabbits and playing with them. He always had a packet of chocolate krispies for me. I used to love going to see him.

6. One Sunday I was getting ready to go to my Grandpa's. I couldn't fasten my shoes because I needed to go to the toilet. I kept telling the foster mum that I needed the toilet. She kept saying that I had to hurry up and fasten my shoes otherwise I would miss the bus. I wet myself and ended up not going to my Grandpa's house.
7. I was left behind in the foster family's house with my foster brother. He was about seventeen at the time. He took me upstairs and made me stand naked. He then took off all of his clothes and stood naked too. I remember looking at his flaccid penis. I didn't know what it was because I'd never seen one before. I said "What's that?" and he asked me if I wanted to play with it. He told me to hit it so I did. The more I hit it the bigger it got. He ended up having a full erection. He asked me if I wanted to see what it did. He then raped me. After he had finished he put me into a bleach bath. I was just a tiny little thing. I was three years old.
8. I didn't tell anyone about what my foster brother did to me. He got away with it because I didn't know what his name was. He told me it was a secret and if I told anyone bad things would happen to me. He said that I would be taken away. I was taken away within a week and I didn't understand why because I hadn't told anyone. I thought I was being punished. I never told [REDACTED] about what had happened. We were then sent to a different foster family in Kent.
9. The foster family in Kent were lovely people. I wish I could have stayed there forever. I have a fond memory of being there de-shelling peas in their pods. I also remember wetting my pants and our foster mum always using newspaper to wrap my pants in. She would take me to the toilet with a newspaper. She would give me my clean pants and put my dirty pants into the newspaper. She used the newspaper so that nobody could tell that I had wet my pants at school. I also started school whilst I was in Kent at a place called St Pauls.

10. I am not sure how long we stayed with that foster family but it was quite a while. They had their own son who lived with us. He began to get jealous of [REDACTED] and I because we were getting all the attention. He didn't want us there anymore.
11. From the foster family in Kent we were then sent to another foster family in Inverness. The Inverness foster parents were farmers. We stayed at their farm for six months.
12. I remember on one occasion having chickenpox and being in bed covered head to toe in spots. There was a bottle from the dairy which had a suction rim on it. I managed to pick the suction ring out of the lid with my fingers. The foster father saw what I had done and he was angry. He thought that I had cut the suction ring out of the bottle with scissors. He hit me with a two pronged leather strap. He dragged me out of my bed and up a ladder to the top of a huge hay stack. He removed the ladder and left me on the top of the haystack overnight.
13. The hay stack was within a barn but it was just like being outside in the elements. There were loads of mice and rats. I remember crying. My sister stole some food from the kitchen and sneaked out to give it to me. In the morning the foster father came to get me. He used the ladder and then put me in a fireman's lift to bring me down. I was about four years old.
14. After the foster family in Inverness I can't remember where we went. At some point I was fostered by the woman that I think of as my foster mum. Her name was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and she lived in Dumbarton. She fostered us for a couple of years. I'm sure she had visited us initially whilst we were at Cardross Park Children's Home and then fostered us some years later.
15. I remember when I was six or seven my foster mum came to visit me at Cardross Park Children's Home. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
[REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

My foster mother then

arrived and she was wearing a fur coat and hat. I thought she was a princess.

16. My foster mother came to see us a few more times and then asked us to stay for the weekend. She asked us what we would like to call her. My sister said she would like to call her "Mum". I said that I would call her "Aunty". I didn't trust "Mummies". She asked me if I wanted to be adopted. I said no. I didn't know what the word adopted meant. I thought it meant that I was being bought. I didn't want to be bought because it meant that I could be sent away again. If only someone had sat me down and explained what being adopted meant I probably would have said yes.
17. My foster mum visited me as often as she could at Cardross Park. It was normally once a month.
18. Miss Pollock was our social worker throughout all of our placements. She was from Strathclyde social work department. She told us that we couldn't be house-trained and were "backwards and mal-adjusted" children. My next memory is of going to Ardgare Children's home in Rhu, Helensburgh. Miss Pollock was responsible for sending us there. I was six years old.

#### **Ardgare Childrens Home, Rhu, Helensburgh**

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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#### Leaving Ardgare Children's Home, Rhu, Helensburgh

43. [REDACTED] and I went back to live with our foster mum in Dumbarton. It was just me, [REDACTED] and our foster mum in the house. My foster Dad hadn't come on the scene yet. I was called QKS [REDACTED] at that time. My foster mum wasn't married by then and her surname was [REDACTED]. We always took our foster parents name. We stayed with our foster mum for one year and went to Knoxland Primary School in Dumbarton. I stayed there until Primary three.
44. One day a teacher came into my classroom. I was making animals out of pipe-cleaners. Our social worker Miss Pollock came to the school and had our suitcases with her. She didn't tell us what was happening or why. She just said that we were moving. She had already been at my foster mum's house. Miss Pollock had turned up at the door and asked my foster mum to pack a suitcase for us. She told my foster mum that we were leaving. My foster mum kept asking "Why? Why are you taking them away?". My foster mum never knew or understood why we were taken

away. Miss Pollock drove us from school to Quarriers Children's Home in Bridge of Weir. She drove a yellow Beetle.

### **Quarriers Children's Home, Bridge of Weir**

#### *First day*

45. It was about 3 pm and I was crying when we arrived. I was seven years old. I was put into cottage thirteen. I remember thinking that number thirteen was unlucky. I was not allowed a visit from my foster mum for one month. I couldn't understand why I couldn't see my foster mum. They said that it was in order to get us settled in. It just meant that I got more upset because I couldn't see her.
46. There were fourteen children in each cottage. My sister [REDACTED] was in the same cottage as me. The cottage was mixed sex but the boys were kept separate from the girls. There were two dorms with seven children in each. The boys dorm was on one side of the cottage and the girls on the other. We each had a single bed and a locker beside the bed.
47. There was an Irish couple called Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] QDW/QDX who were in charge. They were hard people. They had their own room downstairs. The dorms and cloakrooms were upstairs in the cottage. The playroom, dining room, and Living/TV room were all on the ground floor. There was an "aunty" who came in to look after us during the day but she didn't sleep in the cottage. She was good. We always looked forward to her being on duty. There were other staff too but I can't remember their names.
48. I think I stayed at Quarriers for four years from 1968 until 1972.

### **Routine at Quarriers, Bridge of Weir**

49. On my first day I met Mr and Mrs QDW/QDX. They just left me to it. There was a girl called [REDACTED] who was the QDW/QDX favourite. She was about fifteen or sixteen. The QDW/QDX were trying to adopt her. She had her own bedroom and other privileges. Mrs QDX told [REDACTED] to take me to the park whilst she looked after [REDACTED]
50. [REDACTED] attacked me in the park and then took me back to the cottage. Mrs QDX then beat me for "screaming in the street". When Mrs QDX had finished [REDACTED] took me to show me where I slept. [REDACTED] then showed me where my place in the playroom was. We all had our own separate chairs in the playroom. I met all of the other children. My name had gone back to QKS [REDACTED] as I was no longer with my foster mum and QKS [REDACTED] was the name on all of my care records.

*Mornings and bedtime*

51. Mr and Mrs QDW/QDX would wake us up. The children that had wet the bed had to get up first and wash their sheets before breakfast. We would then go for breakfast. After breakfast we would have chores before school. I had to clean the bathroom.
52. When we finished school I used to play outside or with my toys in the playroom. Friendships were not encouraged. The older you were the longer you got to stay up before bedtime. The youngest girls were aged three and went to bed at 4.30 pm after their supper. I was aged seven and went to bed at 6 pm. [REDACTED] was the oldest. She didn't go to bed until 10 pm. After dinner we played in the playroom until bedtime. I wasn't old enough to watch TV so I wasn't allowed into the TV room with the older children.

*Mealtimes/Food*

53. We ate in the dining room. There were benches and a long kitchen table. There were no chairs. Everybody sat together. The youngest girls were called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were three years old and didn't sit with us. They had their own table and wore bibs in the dining room.

54. All of the meals were bad. The QDW/QDX did the cooking and they would bring the food to us. For breakfast we would have lumpy porridge. After morning lessons we would go back to the cottage for lunch. Lunch was horrible. We would be given meat with gristle in it. Dinner was terrible too.
55. On one of my foster mum's visits she had asked me whether we got supper. I said no and she told me to tell Mrs QDX that "I said you should get supper". I told Mrs QDX what my foster mum had said. Mrs QDX said "Oh did she?". She went and made three fried egg rolls. She made me eat them one after one. I wasn't allowed to leave anything. I never asked her for supper again.

*Washing/bathing*

56. There were two baths and a big sink in the cloakroom. The sink was a really big and old fashioned china one. It was a low-level sink and sunken so it was really deep. If we wet the bed we used the big sink to wash our own sheets. It was so big you could almost fall into it. We would have to put the wet sheets through a ringer and hang them up on a washing line. I remember I was too small to reach the washing line. I had to throw the sheet onto the washing line and hope that it would stay. If the sheet fell on to the floor I had to wash the sheets again. The sheets had to be washed and hung up correctly before I was allowed breakfast.
57. We would have a bath once a week. I think it was every Sunday night before starting school on Monday.

*Clothing/uniform*

58. We never got to wear our own clothes. We were allocated clothes daily. Mr QDW worked in the store and he gave us clothes to wear. The clothes were always different. We had a school uniform that was a grey skirt, a grey cardigan, a grey and blue tie and a grey jacket.



*School*

59. There was a school within Quarriers that I went to. It was terrible. There were perhaps twenty people in my class. It was mixed. I think I repeated Primary three, didn't do Primary 4, repeated Primary five and didn't do Primary six. I think I repeated Primary seven twice at Quarriers. I didn't enjoy school. My sister was clever so she was taken to a different school called Linwood High. She would be picked up in a mini-bus every morning.
60. I never caught up with schooling. I couldn't articulate myself and I just got myself into fights. My sister [REDACTED] could talk her way out of anything but I couldn't. I always used my fisticuffs.

*Trips/Holidays*

61. We went to Girvan for a week each year. The whole cottage went. The Auntie and Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] took us and we stayed in another big house. I enjoyed the Girvan trips because the staff relaxed the rules a bit. We were all given a tin of money that had been put aside for each of us. Every day we would get some of the money from our tins to spend on what we wanted. We generally spent it on sweeties and ice-cream. I remember going on a helter-skelter and getting into trouble for ripping the bum of my trousers.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

62. Christmas was celebrated at Quarriers. Every year we would all go to a department store called Lewis's on Argyle Street in Glasgow to see Santa. I never wanted to sit on Santa's knee. There would be a Christmas party and the home was decorated. We were given presents but we were not allowed to open them until we all got back from church. Parents could hand in presents for their children. Some children didn't have parents and only got one present. The staff did make an effort. The [REDACTED] cooked a Christmas meal.

63. There were no celebrations for your birthday. There were no presents or cake. Your family could hand in a present for you. My foster mum handed in a present for me and the QDW/QDX gave it to me.

#### *Visits*

64. After the initial month when we were not allowed visitors, my foster mum visited us every week. [REDACTED] and I always saw her together. The QDW/QDX banned my foster mum from visiting me at one point because they said that my behaviour always got worse after seeing her. She was banned for three months. It was because I never wanted my foster mum to go.
65. My foster mum got married while [REDACTED] and I were in Quarriers. She took us out for the wedding. She had always said "Once Uncle [REDACTED] and I are married we will take you out of the home". After they were married I started calling [REDACTED] "Daddy". I liked it because I had never had a Daddy. We all took [REDACTED]'s surname which was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] visited us with my foster mum every week after that.

#### *Healthcare*

66. There were no regular check-ups with a doctor or dentist. I didn't see a dentist at all during my time at Quarriers. I only saw a doctor if I took myself to see one.
67. On one occasion I was playing football by myself. I was kicking a ball against the garage door. I fell over and hit my knee bone. It started swelling up. I went and told Mrs QDX. She told me that if I wanted to "make a fuss" then I had to walk up to the hospital by myself. The hospital was called The Elise and was up a hill about a half an hours walk away. I walked to the hospital by myself and the doctors said that I had broken my kneecap. I stayed in the hospital for six weeks with my leg in plaster. It was the best six weeks of my life. I loved it. I was aged nine or ten.
68. On another occasion I was in the hospital with a severe kidney infection. One of the nurses told me that I wasn't to get out of bed. She told me that if I needed the toilet I

had to ask for one of the nurses. No sooner had she said it I was desperate to go to the toilet. I shouted and shouted for a nurse but nobody heard me. I was desperate not to wet the bed so I got out and tip-toed to the toilet. I got back into my bed and the nurse came. She said "What did I tell you about not going to the toilet?". She then punched me in the kidneys. She was a bad nurse. I can't remember her name but she was in her thirties. There were other children on the ward who saw her punch me. I was in hospital for a week.

69. On a different occasion [REDACTED] and I contracted scabies and we were sent home. The QDW/QDX [REDACTED] said that they didn't want the rest of the cottage getting it. I remember Mrs QDX [REDACTED] phoning my foster mum and telling her to come and get us because they wouldn't take responsibility for quarantining the whole cottage. We went home for a week or ten days. My foster mum returned us to Quarriers after the scabies infection had gone.
70. I had worms once too. I don't know how I got them. I didn't receive treatment for it.
71. I also had nits on many occasions. They treated it by using a steel comb.

*Personal possessions*

72. When I was in hospital with a broken knee cap my foster mum sent me two comics in the mail. I felt so special to receive my very own comics. The comics were mine and I didn't need to share them with anyone else. I got the "Beezer" and the "Topper". It felt special that they had come through the mail addressed to me.
73. My foster mum brought in presents for me for my birthday. I used to love cars so she would buy me toy cars. I got to keep them. Everybody had their own things. The Christmas presents you received you got to keep.
74. I remember protecting [REDACTED]'s teddy bear when the other kids were destroying it. It was at Christmas. My foster mum had bought us both teddy's. The other children were ripping [REDACTED]'s teddy to bits and I was hitting them trying to stop them. I was in

tears. The kids ripped the teddy to pieces and I was heartbroken for my sister. It was the only thing she really cared about. I got a beating for that.

*Privacy*

75. I used to get undressed behind a chair. I thought nobody could see. The boys used to laugh at me because they could see everything from the angle where they sat in the playroom.

*Religious Instruction*

76. We would have to go to Church three times on Sunday. There was a church in the grounds. We would go to the morning service and then later we would go to Sunday school at the church in Kilmacolm. In the evening we had to go back to Church for Evensong.

*Running away*

77. I ran away from Quarriers four or five times. I was always picked up on the same day. On one occasion I ran away to Houston ferry. I was in my school uniform and the man on the ferry wouldn't let me on as I didn't have the sixpence fare. On a different occasion I ran away during a storm. I was soaked through to the skin. I was at a quarry. I sat there and cried. This couple picked me up and asked me where I had come from. I said that I was "From the home down there". I told them that I didn't want to go back.

**Abuse at Quarriers, Bridge of Weir**

*Physical abuse*





78. On my first day [REDACTED] was told to take me to the park by Mr and Mrs [QDW/QDX]. When we got to the park [REDACTED] assaulted me. She grabbed me by the hair and pulled me all the way back to the cottage. I lost my shoe. She was dragging me along the ground and I could feel my legs and feet being skelped. I was screaming. I think it was [REDACTED] asserting her authority from the outset. [REDACTED] was pretty instrumental in a lot of the abuse in Quarriers.

*Mr and Mrs* [QDW/QDX]

79. On my first day when [REDACTED] dragged me back to the cottage I got my first beating from Mrs [QDX]. She said it was because I had been "screaming in the street". Mrs [QDX] took me upstairs to the dormitory. [REDACTED] wasn't there. Mrs [QDX] took my clothes off. She used a leather belt with a buckle on my backside and my legs. She then "whip-cracked" me with wet towels against my legs.
80. On a different occasion I lost my shoe and my coat in the burn that ran through the grounds. I was on my way to the swimming pool. I got a beating from Mrs [QDX] for that. She also used a wet towel and wrapped it around my neck. She squeezed the towel until I passed out. Mr [QDW] then threw water over me to wake me up.
81. The [QDW/QDX] always beat me and abused me upstairs in the dormitory out of sight. The beatings and abuse happened weekly. Mr [QDW] would also beat me with the belt.

*Mr* [QKW]

82. The swimming instructor was called Mr [QKW]. He made the children climb up some scaffolding that was constructed beside the swimming pool. It was quite high. There was no diving board. The scaffolding was made of metal. We all had wet feet so it was pretty slippery. When we got to the top he would just push us off the scaffolding.

*Sexual abuse*

██████████

83. ██████████ would force me and a boy to have a bath together. I think his name was ██████████ She ran the bath and told us to get into it. ██████████ and I were both so embarrassed. We didn't know where to look. Obviously the first thing you do at that age is to look at the genitalia of the opposite sex. I saw his penis and thought "Oh, he is a boy".

84. I was terrified because the last time I saw a penis it hurt me. I thought ██████████ was priming this boy to "have a go" with me but nothing more than sitting in the bath together happened. It was more embarrassing than anything else. It happened most weeks up until we were pubescent. At that stage our legs were so long that they couldn't help but touch each other's genitals. His feet were on my vagina. ██████████ would get aroused. He was only human and at that age our hormones were everywhere.

██████████ – a peer in cottage 13

85. I regularly got sexually assaulted by one of the other boys. He was in the same cottage as me. His name was ██████████ He was ten and I was seven. He would take every opportunity in the cottage to put his hands down my pants. It happened on a daily basis.

86. ██████████ would also assault me in the swimming pool. It was a 25 metre pool. He would always trap me in the shallow end. He would put his hands inside my swimming costume and play with my genitals. I told him to stop it repeatedly but he just said "Why?". I said I didn't like it. He said that if I ever told anyone he would say that I asked him to do it.

87. The abuse in the swimming pool happened every week for four or five years. It lasted for my entire time at Quarriers. I learnt to swim in order to get away from him. I was too scared to tell anyone. I thought the beatings would get even worse if ██████████

told everyone that I asked him to touch me. The swimming Instructor Mr <sup>QKW</sup> must have seen it. He just watched from the diving scaffolding.

*Forced feeding*

88. On one occasion I remember Mrs <sup>QDX</sup> had made a stew. She put it down in front of me. I could see gristle in it. I couldn't eat it. Mrs <sup>QDX</sup> noticed and asked me why I wasn't eating it. I told her that I couldn't. Eventually I did eat it but I vomited it back up. Mrs <sup>QDX</sup> made me eat my vomit. She pushed it into my mouth. I was gagging and kept vomiting it back up. She said that it would be put in front of me for every meal until I ate it. She put it down in front of me for two days. I eventually threw it on the floor. That bought me another beating from Mrs <sup>QDX</sup>

*Witnessing other children being abused*

89. I witnessed a lot of abuse and assaults against other children. I remember going to Church one day. I saw a group of four boys standing totally naked outside. It was freezing cold. It was when winters were real winters. I remember thinking "oh those poor boys, who could do that to them? They must be absolutely terrified".

*Dark room*

90. Whenever I ran away I would be punished when I returned. I would be put into a dark room for two or three days. Every single time.

**Reporting of abuse at Quarriers, Bridge of Weir**

91. I did not tell anyone about the abuse at Quarriers during my time there or in the immediate aftermath. Two years ago I spoke to the police about the abuse. Mrs <sup>QDX</sup> had died the year previously. The police said that because Mrs <sup>QDX</sup> had died they couldn't do anything about it. Miss Pollock is also dead so I feel like there is no point in further reporting.

92. I told my foster mum about what had happened before she died. She started crying and asked why I hadn't told her before. I said that I didn't think she would have believed me.

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

93. My foster mum eventually decided that "enough was enough". It was 1972 and we had been at Quarriers for four or five years. She gave the [QDW/QDX] one week's notice and that was it. I had to put a chit in to the store to get my stuff out. We just left. They let us go. We didn't know that my foster Mum could do that. When she found out that she could just come and get us she did. My foster Dad was there too. I remember we had to get the Houston ferry home.

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

94. [REDACTED] and I went back to my foster mum and dad's house in Dumbarton. It was the first time that I was at home with a dad. I loved him. I was a Daddy's person. [REDACTED] was a mummy's person.
95. When I was fifteen my foster parents divorced and I gave my foster mum a really hard time about it. I went through a difficult patch. I told her that she had thrown out the only daddy I had ever known. She stayed silent and never answered me. A while later I asked my foster mum why she had thrown my foster dad out of the house. She said that he wasn't what she thought he was. I never saw my foster dad again after that. Even though I was never formally adopted by my foster dad I kept his name after the divorce.
96. After Quarriers I went to Knoxland Primary and then to Dumbarton Academy. At Knoxland Primary I was always put in the "dunces chair". We always had a test on Friday and we moved seats on Monday according to how well we had done on the

- test. I remember moving seat one place away from the dunces chair and thinking I had done really well.
97. At Dumbarton Academy I did better than I thought. I got a Certificate of Excellence. I assumed everyone would still think I was a dunce. I left school when I was sixteen.
98. After school I had a terrible experience and ended up becoming an inpatient at Argyle and Bute Psychiatric Hospital. I was [REDACTED] I had had an argument with my foster mum. She slapped me on the face. I slapped her back and ran away. I picked up a lift on the boulevard by two men in a white Ford van. They were nice to me and bought me a fish supper. They asked me "Where do you want to go?" and I said "Wherever you want to take me". It was the wrong answer. They put me in the back of the van and raped me. Both of them had a go. They sodomised me too.
99. The men threw me out of the van. [REDACTED] and cut my arms. It was my first episode of self-harming. I found a parking warden and asked her to take me to the police station. I went to the police station and asked to speak to a police woman. They said it may take some time because all of the police women were on the beat. While I was waiting I went to the toilet at the police station. I was embarrassed because I blocked it up. I couldn't help it. My insides just came out of me.
100. The police asked me how I had got there and told me that I needed to go to the hospital. My arms were bleeding from the self-harming. I said that I didn't want to go to the hospital. They asked about who had brought me there and I told them that two men had given me a lift in their van. The police asked if the men had done anything to me and I denied it. I said "No, no, I just want to go home".
101. A friend of my foster mum's called Mr [REDACTED] came to collect me from the police station. I remember not wanting to be in a car with a man. I got out of the car very fast when we got to my house. I never told my foster mum or anyone about what had happened. About three months later I thought that I was pregnant from the rape. I

started to get all of these thoughts about it being the devil's child. I didn't want the baby. That is when I took [REDACTED]. I ended up going to Argyle and Bute Psychiatric Hospital.

102. Secondary Institutions - to be published later  
[REDACTED]

103. [REDACTED]

104. [REDACTED]

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

105.

106. After my release from Carstairs I spent seventeen years intermittently at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital as an in-patient and out-patient. I lived in Granton for some time and then I moved to [REDACTED] I kept in touch with my foster mum throughout. I went to see her every weekend when I was out of hospital. I moved to the West of Scotland when I was 44 because my foster mum's health was deteriorating. I have lived in the West now for fifteen years. I initially lived in Dumbarton and moved to my current address in [REDACTED] six years ago. I love it there.

107. My foster Mum died in 2007. Her physical health had deteriorated. I had to sort out the funeral and other arrangements. I had not kept in touch with [REDACTED] over the years but I saw her at the funeral. We were never close.

108. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I met my step brother [REDACTED] and he said that he could help me to find my other sister [REDACTED]. We managed to find her and I got in contact. I have visited her three times in Canada. I call her [REDACTED]. Her children call me Auntie QKS. I love it. [REDACTED] and I got matching tattoos of the Canadian and Scottish flags on our arms. I haven't seen her since 2011 because of my health difficulties but we are still in touch. Sadly I doubt I will be able to go back to see her.



109. As I had never been formally adopted by my foster dad I felt I needed to change my name by deed poll to formalise things. I changed my name to QKS [REDACTED] by deed poll in 1986.

*Current circumstances*

110. I am wheelchair bound and have to take a number of prescribed medications for my physical health. I take two boxes of pills a day for a heart murmur, arthritis, stroke, epilepsy, cerebellar ataxia and osteoporosis. I also have significant mental health support and medication.

**Impact**

*Relationships*

111. My time in care has had a terrible effect on me. Up until last year I had never been in a relationship. I never got married. I never had children. I would have loved to have had children. I never had sex. After I was raped in 1975 I wanted to be a prostitute. I thought "Fuck this, if people want to have me sexually I may as well get paid for it" but I don't like people touching my body. I suppose I'm frigid. Last year I met my soul mate. He was gentle and told me that I needed to trust him. We just started with cuddles and took things slowly. Sadly he died last Hogmanay.

*Mental health*

112. I have been diagnosed with schizo-affective disorder. It is slightly different to the schizophrenia diagnosis I received when I was in Argyle and Bute psychiatric hospital and Carstairs. I receive injections to keep the schizo-affective disorder under control. I also have depression and receive medication for it. I also see my CPN every two weeks. I see my support worker [REDACTED] from In Care Survivors once a fortnight or once a month. I have been seeing her for the last eight years.



113. I self-harmed from the date that I was raped aged sixteen. I have significant scars. I received medication and support and stopped self-harming five years ago.
114. After the "dark room" even now I can't sleep in the dark.

#### *Education*

115. I failed all of my O-levels due to my disrupted schooling. I always wanted to become a gym teacher but I couldn't without any qualifications.

#### **Records**

116. Miss Pollock was our social worker and should have kept our records. I remember an occasion when we had left Quarriers my foster mum took us on holiday to Banff. She said "Let's go to Lossiemouth". I got out of the car screaming and started banging my head against the pavement. My foster mum didn't understand what I was doing. Eventually she said "Ok we won't go to Lossiemouth". When we got home she called Miss Pollock at the social work department and asked what had happened in Lossiemouth. Miss Pollock said "Nothing happened". She said that there were no records from back then. My foster mum questioned why there were no records. Miss Pollock just said that there weren't any.
117. I know that Miss Pollock got demoted for the way that she had handled [REDACTED] and I. The way she used to move us around and treated us. She went from being a senior social worker to a junior one.
118. I contacted Quarriers directly and asked for my records. I only got four pages from them. There was a woman called Josie Bell who was the archivist of Quarriers. [REDACTED] she contacted my support worker [REDACTED] and said that the Quarriers records did not match my recollection. She said that their records stated that I had been in Quarriers for only eighteen months not five years.

**Lessons to be Learned**

- 119. Children should not be moved continually. They should have access to an independent advocate or counsellor to talk to if any abuse is taking place. If any abuse is reported, the abuser should be removed immediately from the premises. The child should not be moved. The perpetrator should be moved.
  
- 120. I think every member of staff should be vetted if they are to be employed working with children. That should include people working in the foster care setting. The social work training should include awareness of child abuse, assault or sexual assault on a child. They should be trained to recognise the signs and symptoms. They should question why a child is misbehaving rather than just deeming the child a "bad kid". I think it would be helpful to have input from survivors of abuse. They could use their experiences to help social workers recognise the signs of trauma and recognise the impact on adulthood.
  
- 121. I would like to see something enshrined in law to ensure that perpetrators of abuse receive a jail sentence. I feel that there should be a mandatory jail sentence for abusers. Then at least they will get their comeuppance.
  
- 122. I think if a child comes forward to report abuse, they should be believed there and then. It should not take twenty years for them to be believed.

**Other information**

- 123. 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 30/8/18 .....