

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GIQ [REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is GIQ [REDACTED], although I was born GIQ [REDACTED]. I was known as GIQ [REDACTED] as a child and I added GIQ [REDACTED] later. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1948. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Stirling. My mum was [REDACTED] and dad was [REDACTED]. He was born in Barra but moved to Stirling for work. My brother [REDACTED] was the oldest, he wasn't a [REDACTED]. He was [REDACTED]. He had a different father. I had another older brother called [REDACTED] and older sister called [REDACTED]. Then there was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We were all fairly close in age. Although [REDACTED] is nine years younger than me.
3. My family and I lived on the Raploch estate and life was rough. It was quite a bleak place. My dad lived with us and he worked as a miner. I guess they weren't paid much in those days. The family didn't have a lot of food. My brothers, sisters and I always had to try to source it ourselves by going into Woolworths and stealing biscuits. We would dig turnips up from the nearby fields and literally eat them raw. This was quite common. I can remember borrowing slices of bread from the neighbours. I remember being asked to put my dad's watch in the pawnshop when I was six or seven. At the time it seemed to be once a month. In those days, everybody seemed to have about ten kids and not be able to feed them. It seemed to be quite the norm.

4. I went to the 'Raploch Protestant School', which was next to the Catholic school. That's how it was then. I don't agree with that now. I always did well at school. I was very sporty. The headmaster, Mr McLean, used to say I would play for Rangers or Celtic one day as I enjoyed playing football.
5. One day in [REDACTED] 1957, I came home from school to find my dad lying coughing and spluttering on the bed. I noticed that the local police officer wasn't far away, so I shouted on him. He phoned an ambulance and my dad was taken away to hospital. My mother was in town buying new wallpaper. My dad died that night.
6. Soon after that, at the end of [REDACTED] beginning of [REDACTED], my mum told my brother [REDACTED] and me that we were going into a home. She said it would be "for a wee while". I was nine. By then my older brother, [REDACTED], was getting into trouble with the police and he was in an approved school. [REDACTED] and I were to go to a place called Marr Lodge. It was beside the castle so it wasn't far from home. It didn't worry me because it was still in Stirling. I was nine and [REDACTED] was six.

Marr Lodge, Stirling

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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9. One day in early [REDACTED] 1958 two women from the council arrived at the home. They told us they were taking [REDACTED] and me on a shopping trip to Glasgow. I had never been to Glasgow so it was a first for me. We didn't take anything with us. The women took us around some shops but they didn't buy us clothes or anything. After a while, they

took us on a train. I realised we weren't going back to Stirling. During the journey, one of the women handed me a letter and told me to read it. The letter said we were going to Lochvale House in Dumfries. We didn't know until we were on the train. I felt quite shocked. [REDACTED] was crying. I didn't even know where Dumfries was.

Lochvale House, Dumfries

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Lochvale

66. I left Lochvale when I was about fourteen and a half. Mr Ferguson told me that I would be leaving. I was given three or four days' notice. He told me that my mum had asked me to go back home.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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70. Mr Ross drove me from Dumfries to Dunblane. My mother had moved there. He went via the Co-op and he bought me something like, three school shirts, a school blazer and school trousers. I only had a few months left at school. I had just finished my exams at Lochvale.

Life back at home

71. It was very strange being home. My mum had a big, fat belly and despite my age, I didn't know why. In those days most youngsters didn't know about those things. After a while, the boy was born. A girl named [REDACTED]. My mother was living with a Polish man called [REDACTED]. He worked for a building company. He worked hard. My younger brother, [REDACTED], was living there too. He was about eight or nine. At first we got on alright.
72. It wasn't working out between myself and my mum's partner, [REDACTED]. I don't know if it was because of my age. I didn't smoke or go out drinking. I was quite health conscious but he and my mother were smokers. They lived a different lifestyle. [REDACTED] was keen for me to get a job in light engineering.

73. I asked my mother why she brought me home. She replied that I was her son. I asked her why she hadn't visited me and she said it was far away. I suppose she didn't have much money. There were always plenty of cigarettes though. That's how I see it. I felt a bit resentful because there were bottles of Port around too.
74. About six weeks after I moved back, one day after school, I was watching TV. I flicked the TV channel over to something I wanted to watch. My brother, [REDACTED], came in and flicked it back. I flicked it back again. This went on and on. Then I just felt a ringing sensation in my ears. I realised [REDACTED] had whacked me from the side with the palm of his hand. I didn't see it coming. That was the end of that relationship. I went through to my bedroom. My mother came through apologising. She seemed sincere but I told her I was leaving. My father was a typical West Highland coast man. He enjoyed his malt whisky and could clout us around the ear once too often. My mother used to stand in the way of him to protect us. I can remember that happening often. However, when I came back from Lochvale she wasn't like that anymore.
75. I didn't have any idea where I was going. She gave me a couple of bob. I left with my wee bag and got on the train to Stirling. I didn't even know where I was going. My mother had told me about a priests' house there. One of them was called Father McKinnon. So I went there. Father McKinnon put me up that night. He must have contacted social services because they got me a job on a pig farm in the middle of nowhere outside Falkirk.
76. I worked on the farm. I had to get up at five in the morning to feed the pigs. I stayed in the bothy with an old Irishman who was like the foreman. He slept on one scraggy, old mattress and I slept on the other. I think the council saw me as a potential problem by this point.
77. One day two people from the council came to the farm and told me they were taking me to a hostel in Edinburgh. They told me there would be boys my age between fifteen and eighteen. It was a kind of 'halfway house' for boys who didn't have a home. So I went from a farm in the middle of nowhere to the city of Edinburgh. There was no contact with anyone from my family.

78. The hostel was on Lothian Road. I ended up working for a brewery company delivering kegs of beer and crates of lemonade to pubs. I had to pay the hostel from my wages.

79. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

80. We slept in a railway carriage at Dumfries station. By the second night we were hungry. We saw an ice cream van parked on the Whitesands. We could see the cones and chocolate bars inside. I knew it was wrong but I was hungry so we decided to try to break in to get food. I knew it was wrong but I was hungry. We used a brick but the window didn't smash as it was made of hard plastic. I saw a police van coming across the bridge. We split up and ran away. I ended up in a close several floors up. I was hoping the police wouldn't come that far but they did. I was caught and taken to the cells.

81. I was in front of a court the next day. The magistrate sentenced me to one to three years. I was sent to Kibble Approved School. I went to an approved school from Lochvale in the space of two months. I went being secure to completely insecure.

Kibble School, Paisley, Renfrewshire

82. I was taken that day in a car with a couple of gentleman. Kibble was another walled unit but it was more secure. There were guys in there for very violent offences. It was a potentially dangerous place. I saw other boys being beaten and sexually abused. A lot of the boys were actually young men. They were mostly Glaswegian. I was one of the youngest. The oldest was eighteen.
83. I was lucky because my older brother [REDACTED] knew one of the 'hard men' who ran the place. A guy called [REDACTED] He looked after me until he left. He was my 'saving

grace' and I hadn't met him in my life. After he left, I think being known for my ability to play football in the team saved me from being battered and possibly sexually abused. I can't remember the name of the man in charge.

84. We slept in huge dormitories. There was a minimum of twelve other boys and up to eighteen. There was more than thirty boys in the whole place.
85. There was an Irishman who came around at night telling you you had ten minutes left before the lights were going out. I have more memories of Lochvale than I do of Kibble. I think I have blanked a lot of it out because I was scared and I knew I was in a dangerous situation every day I was there.
86. There was a pig farm and allotments with vegetables. Quite a lot of the other boys worked on the pig farm. There was a basic education system there too. We were taught basic English and maths by a guy with a beard. I can't remember his name.
87. They tried to get us out working. After about two months, I was sent to a place in Johnstone. It was a place that grew tomatoes. I was one of the trusted ones who was allowed out to work. It got me out of there five days a week. I got the bus to Johnstone and came back at night. There were about ten support workers who worked until ten o'clock at night. They let us out and back in. I was paid for the work and took it back to Kibble. It was kept in a cash box until I left.
88. I was allowed to go home to Dunblane once a month. I used to get the bus from Paisley on the Saturday and back on the Sunday. I didn't go every month. I sometimes got the feeling they didn't want me.
89. At the weekend, people just hung around in their wee gangs. We congregated at night time in the gymnasium. Some of the others smoked outside the gymnasium. There wasn't really anything constructive going on there. There were games but people mostly hung around in their gangs. There was a gang culture. I think I've blanked out a lot of the routine.

Abuse at Kibble

90. People were normally abused in the dormitories during the afternoon. One of the boys would stand blocking the dormitory door while three or four of the other ones were doing whatever they wanted to do to someone. It was usually older boys abusing the younger, newer ones. I don't know if the support workers knew it was going on. I was in the dorm twice when it happened to someone. I wasn't able to tell anyone because I would have had serious damage done to me. I would've been abused too if it hadn't been for [REDACTED] and my football skills.
91. There was a PE teacher, I think he was called Mr Livingston, who ignored a lot of what was going on. He saw boys being beaten up and ignored it. He was in his mid-thirties and thought he was one of the guys. I think I was still in shock while I was in there because I had gone from [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published late to going to one of the worst approved schools in Scotland. It was a very frightening place. I wasn't a bad boy so it was outrageous that I was sent there in the first place.

Leaving Kibble

92. The guy who ran Kibble told me that I could do better than staying there. He said I could achieve more because I was different to most of the others in there. He persuaded me to join the army. It was my way out of Kibble. I would have joined anything to get out. I had another eighteen months left in there. I spent fifteen months there. I was sixteen when I left.

Life after being in care

93. I joined the army at sixteen. I went to Catterick in North Yorkshire to do my training. I didn't tell any of my family, I just wanted away. I spent six months there before going to Germany. I flew to Germany just after my seventeenth birthday.

94. I was based in Germany for twenty years. I joined the [REDACTED]. I knew that they had trucks and I would be able to get a licence. I didn't have parental guidance. I played football for the army for my first four or five years.
95. There was lots of travel. By the time I was 21, I had been to Paris, Rome and Copenhagen. I used to travel around Europe at the weekends because we had free travel on the trains. I didn't have much contact with my family during this time. I got married at 25. My son was born in West Berlin. He had to be registered at the British Consulate. My wife and I had two more children, two girls. I went from trouper to warrant officer which was as far as you could go. I enjoyed it.
96. I left the army in March 1988. I went to North Yorkshire and bought a house. I got a job driving trucks to support the mortgage. I worked as a truck driver for a short time. I used to go to the Job Centre looking for work as a heavy goods driving instructor and I ended up getting a job doing that. While I was there, I met an ex-army man who told me about a job in the [REDACTED]. I then got a job with the [REDACTED]. I spent twelve years with the [REDACTED] in Northumberland.
97. After I left the army, I began looking for my mother in the Stirling area. I went to the Raploch. I found [REDACTED] in a house with needles around him so I left. I found my mother through the Salvation Army. They told me she was dead. I found out that she had died horribly. [REDACTED] had survived so I tracked him down in a care home. I took him to stay with me for the weekend. I don't know why I wanted to contact my mother. I suppose it's the whole 'son/mother' link. Some people may question if she was really a mother to me.
98. After my time in Northumberland, I went to live in Aberdeen because my younger brother [REDACTED] lived there with his wife. I became a support worker with [REDACTED] working with young people with learning disabilities. After nine months there I was in charge. I was there for three years.
99. I moved to Stirling because I'd met someone. I got a job with [REDACTED] as a team leader working with people with severe learning disabilities. I worked there for three

years. After that, I got a job with [REDACTED] based in Troon. I'm now a self-employed carer. I've been self-employed for the last eight years.

Impact

100. I had a hidden secret. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] I told my children that I had been in a children's home but I didn't go into any detail. I certainly didn't want to tell them about Kibble or the circumstances of me being sent there. I felt ashamed about it. I didn't want to tell anyone. I've kept it hidden all these years. I desperately wanted to tell someone. I didn't even tell my wife. I didn't think she was the right person because I didn't want her to see me as a boy who went to an approved school. I think it held me back mentally.
101. I think Kibble destroyed me in many ways, even my dream of being a footballer, because it was a very scary place. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] It was real threat. I haven't had any counselling.
102. I didn't have a sense of security as a child. I could sell my home tomorrow, I could just move. It doesn't bother me because it's not a home to me, it's just a house. I think that is due to my childhood.
103. [REDACTED] Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I think about Kibble too. I shouldn't have been sent there. I think it was wrong to do that to a youngster in my situation. I think it was a miscarriage of justice.
104. My brother [REDACTED] ended up in a children's home. I used to meet up with him when I was in the army. He was married and lived in Dalkeith. I got on well with him. My brother [REDACTED] died due to drugs. I'm still in contact with my brother [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] passed a number of years ago. My sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], both ended up in a nunnery in Edinburgh for years. I keep in touch with my older sister [REDACTED] too. My sister [REDACTED] is a bit of a loner. She lives in Surrey and doesn't keep in touch with the [REDACTED].

105. The whole family was scattered around. The relationships I have with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are strong but only because I have built them as an adult. We've been closer in the last ten years than in the last fifty. I think if we had been placed closer together I would have seen more of them as children. If we had been closer together we may have got in contact earlier. I didn't see or speak to them for years.

106. I think my education was also affected by my time in care. I was clever enough to go to university. I did well in terms of progressing in the army but I don't think it makes up for it. I found the army easy [REDACTED: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]. Some parts of it were second nature to me. I was quite strict with my own children too. I think I might have been a bit 'over the top'.

Reporting of Abuse

107. I didn't tell anyone about what was going on in Kibble because of the potential threat to my life. [REDACTED: Secondary Institutions - to be published later] There could have been repercussions. I just kept quiet.

108. I reported the abuse to Troon Police about five or six years ago. [REDACTED: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]
[REDACTED: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]
[REDACTED: Secondary Institutions - to be published later] I wasn't asked my time in Kibble. I phoned the police some time later, I'm sure they told me that there wasn't much they could do because it was historical.

Records

109. I didn't try to get my records.

Lessons to be Learned

110. I hope there will be a lot of positives which come from the Inquiry. I think, from the information I have read about it, that it will be thorough. We can't change the abuse but I hope that there aren't as many abusers Secondary Institutions around now.
111. I think if there had been checks, unannounced visits by inspectors and I had been listened to, things would have been different. I think unannounced visits and more supervision would act as deterrents in stopping abusers.
112. In my opinion, children who say they have been hurt or abused don't tend to make it up so they should be listened to. I think the authorities and the police have to listen more. It's about listening more and believing them. I wasn't listened to when I was apprehended by the police. I think the attitude was wrong.

Other information

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

GIQ [Redacted]

Signed.....

01 November 2020

Dated.....