

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

EJM

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is EJM or EJM. My date of birth is 1954. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

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

2. I stayed in Dumfries with my mother and my father. When I stayed with mum at that time my father was serving three years in prison for stealing lead from roofs. There was no work and he had no money and was stealing to get money to feed us.
3. I was with mum for about six months when she developed Tuberculosis and was taken to hospital. There was no one to look after me and a police officer, Miss Foot, and a social worker, I don't know her name, took me away. They obtained a care and protection order to have me placed into care. While I was in care at Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, my mother passed away in her house in Georgetown.

### **Nazareth House, Kilmarnock**

4. Nazareth House was run by the nuns but on a daily basis I was looked after by one of the older girls in the home, I don't know her last name. I think she was about fourteen when she started looking after me. She was there for me from the day I arrived.

### **Routine at Nazareth House**

5. I don't have many early memories within Nazareth House as I was so young. I do remember there being a lift. When you came out of the lift, the room I stayed in was in front of you. It was a big room with lots of beds. My cot was right beside the door to the room. In the mornings it would be [REDACTED] that would get me up and washed.
6. The first thing I can remember was when I was about two years old and I was in the front gardens near to the big entrance gates. Each day when I was there two ladies would walk by and ask where my mum was. I told them she was in heaven and they would give me a biscuit. If the staff found out I was given the biscuits they would take them from me and hit me with their hands. I don't know the names of the nuns that did this.
7. In the garden there was a statue of the Virgin Mary and it had rocks around the base along with a water feature. I even took my husband [REDACTED] to Nazareth House after we were married and the statue was still there.
8. I have a photograph of when I was young at the home given to me by the social work. I was wearing a frilly dress. I remember I was made to stand on one of the tables. As I was standing there a nun stood in front of me and signalled with her hands that I was to stand still. The nuns sent the photograph to the social work in Dumfries and it was held within my records. They made a copy of the picture and sent it to my father while he was in prison. Later when I got it from the social work I had it updated with the nuns hand in the original taken out of it.

### *Food*

9. I don't remember us getting any food on a regular basis. We got porridge on a good day. If people handed in money for charity some food would be bought. If there was no money then there was no food. Any meals I did get was fed to me while I was at my cot. [REDACTED] would bring the food to me.

10. The only time I was allowed to play was when [REDACTED] had finished doing her chores. If I was not playing with [REDACTED] I would just be left in my cot for most of the day. When [REDACTED] had me out that was when I would see the statue and the ladies with the biscuits.
11. The only time I was dressed properly was if something was happening, like the photograph. The rest of the time I was just in vest and pants. Even if I was dressed properly as soon as it was over I would have the clothes taken away and left in my vest and pants.

#### *Religion*

12. At bed time the nuns would come into the room with their prayer book. We had to say our prayers at night and every morning.
13. Another thing I remember about religion was that I was baptised when I was in Nazareth House. I can't remember if I was going to church when I stayed there.

#### *Visits/inspections*

14. The social work just put us into Nazareth House to rot. They never came to see me while I was there. They never checked to see how I was getting on. Not only was there no visits from social work there were no visits from anyone from my wider family either.

#### *Birthdays/Christmas*

15. Birthdays and Christmas were never celebrated while I was at Nazareth House. There was not even a birthday cake. The first birthday cake I got was when I was twenty one. There were never any toys to play with except when they needed photographs or to show us off to others.

*Medical*

16. When I was about three years old I took tubular meningitis but I am not sure what medical help I was given. What I do know is that for the next two years I have no memories, I have lost those two years completely.

**Abuse at Nazareth House, Kilmarnock**

17. Later in life my husband and I were visiting Nazareth House which had been changed to an old people's home. When we went into the living room I heard my name being called out. As I looked around I saw it was [REDACTED] who was shouting on me. She recognised me even after all the years that passed.
18. [REDACTED] told me that while she was at school the nuns would leave me in my dirty nappies. When I would cry because of this I would be hit by the nuns. I can remember them slapping me in the face because I was upset. I was only about two and a half then. [REDACTED] said to me that she tried to stop the nuns hitting me. She managed to stop some of it but not all of it.
19. There was no affection, care or love while I was at Nazareth House. It felt like I was just a caged animal and I was just a chore for the nuns. I was always scared of the nuns while I was there. It was only their hands that they ever used on me. They didn't need anything else because I was just a baby.

**Foster Care – [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Dumfries**

20. I don't even remember being taken away from Nazareth House. From there the social work moved me in with [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] Dumfries. The two social workers who took me there were Miss Clydesdale and Miss Wilson. They both worked out of the offices in the County Buildings in Dumfries.

21. [REDACTED]'s husband [REDACTED] had died and left her with their son and daughter in the house. The son, I don't remember his name, was much older, a grown man, and the daughter was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was about eight or nine and I would have been about five when I moved there. I shared the room with [REDACTED]
22. While I was staying there I went to the doctors at Castle Street, Dumfries. Every week he was checking my height and weight. I didn't know why but one of the things [REDACTED] did for me, was to check and make sure I went to the bathroom each day. Sometimes I would pretend to her I did it at school, just to get out of sitting on the toilet for a long time.
23. While I was with [REDACTED] there was so much freedom and time to play. I also bonded with [REDACTED] who was a really good friend. Although we went to different schools, her and I had so much to talk to each other about when we got home. We were always helping each other with homework and brushing each other's hair. At Halloween we would go dunking for apples. I had gone from a jail like atmosphere to a completely new free world.
24. For school I went to St Andrew's Catholic School in Dumfries. Every Monday morning at school we were all asked who had attended church the previous day. Those of us who had not gone to church were asked reasons for us not going. [REDACTED] was Protestant and the school did not like that I was staying with her and I was not being taken to church.
25. I had been staying with [REDACTED] for about two years when I was told that I was being moved. It was like I was being punished all because [REDACTED] could not take me to the Catholic church. She said she was sorry for what was happening and there was nothing she could do to stop it. She told me she would always love me.
26. When I was leaving [REDACTED] gave me the toys that she had given me while I was there. I remember as we were leaving she was at the door and I was waving at her. It was one of the worst days of my life. I had done nothing wrong.

**Foster Care – EJJ ██████████ ██████████ Cresswell**

27. I was taken from ██████████ by a social worker, I don't remember her name. She took me to EJJ ██████████'s house at ██████████ Cresswell.
28. EJJ ██████████ was an older Catholic woman and she made us call her Nana. I learned that she had fostered other kids before I arrived. To begin with the atmosphere in her house was quite good. About two years after I arrived another two girls, ██████████ and ██████████ came to stay with us. ██████████ was four years older than me and ██████████ was three years older. From the moment they arrived EJJ ██████████ changed and so did the atmosphere. It became a total nightmare.
29. I started sleep walking when I was at EJJ ██████████s. I was always trying to get out of the window. I think it was because of being locked in the shed and the memory of not being able to get out. Again I was never taken to a doctor or anyone else who might have been able to help.

*Chores*

30. The house had four bedrooms, living room, kitchen and toilet. EJJ ██████████ would get us up at six o'clock each morning and she would give us the chores we were to do. She had all us kids doing the cleaning throughout the house. One of the chores I had was to clean the stairs. There was a central carpet which I had to sweep with a brush and the white boards either side of the carpet had to be wiped down. ██████████ and ██████████s chore was to get the rolls from the shops for her two grown up son's breakfast. We were in bed for about seven each night which was not much of a hassle as we were up so early and were very tired by then.

*Food*

31. For our breakfast we were given two slices of bread with some jam on it and maybe a glass of milk. She cut the slices of bread into four. For tea we were again served the



same two slices of bread cut into four. There was never anything else. EJJ made tablet and we were to sell it door to door and she gave the money to the church. As we were selling it we would try and steal a little piece out of each bag, just to give us something else to eat.

### *Clothes*

32. I can remember that the only shoes she gave us for school were the black plimsoles, along with our gym slippers, tie and blouse. This was to do us in the winter as well as the summer. She sent us to the local men's barber shop to get a haircut. We had our hair cropped, it was called a "home" haircut.

### *School*

33. We went to school at St Andrew's school at Brook Street in Dumfries. This was a primary and secondary school. At lunch time we were to run home from the school and be there within fifteen minutes. If we were one minute late EJJ would not give us any lunch. If we were given lunch it was a tin of soup with some bread. She kept us back at lunch time until there was only fifteen minutes before we were due back at school. That meant we were to run back to make sure we did not get in trouble at school. Before [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] arrived I was able to go to school with other kids on the bus.

### *Religion*

34. On Sundays EJJ would send us to Caliside graveyard. She made us pray to her dead husband, who we had never met. This was every Sunday. I asked [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] if they knew why we had to do this and they did not know either. While we were there we would try to pick some wild flowers and lay them on the graves of the babies where no one visited.
35. As well as going to the graveyard we still went to church. EJJ dressed us in nice clothes to make sure we looked nice in front of everyone. It was to make it appear to

all that she was looking after us properly. We were at the church every week and at every important day in the church calendar.

### *Chores*

36. We would do some gardening for her as well. It was a big long garden. One time she had me doing some sort of chore on the roof of the shed. I lost my footing and fell through the greenhouse. I pulled the glass out and she battered me stupid for breaking her greenhouse. She just kept slapping me with her hand really hard. I was about ten when this happened. She never even took me to a doctor for the cuts.

### *Visits*

37. Miss Clydesdale, the social worker, would visit at the house. We were well warned by E.J.L. that when Miss Clydesdale asked we were to tell her we were all happy staying there. When Miss Clydesdale did ask I refused to say anything at all. I would not answer her questions. I refused to say yes, knowing it was a lie. When she left I was battered by E.J.L. The social workers could not even pay enough attention that I was not talking and there must have been something wrong. Miss Clydesdale only visited when she felt it was her duty.
38. My mother's parents sent my uncle from Ireland to get me out of the home. They had only found out then, that my mother was dead. They wanted to take me back to Dublin. When my uncle spoke with my grandfather on my mother's side he was told that I had been sent out for adoption. That wasn't true as I was still at E.J.L.'s at that time. I was never considered for adoption and I was still using my own name and could have traced me easily. My uncle went back to Ireland and told my gran what my grandfather had told him. The money she gave him to take me back to Ireland was given to him to allow him to move to the States.
39. My father also told me he had made efforts to get me back but Miss Clydesdale, the social worker, told him that I was settled at E.J.L.'s and at the school. She also told him as he was newly married it would be better for his relationship if they did not take



me home as it may cause strain on the marriage. Although I was told to stay there I was allowed to see him at the weekends. At that time he was living with his new wife's parents at their house. No one ever gave me an update about my dad or that he was trying to get me back.

40. I was about ten when I was allowed to see my dad and his new wife, [REDACTED]. It was on a Saturday and they stayed at Sandside. I was there for a few Saturdays and the first time anything happened was when dad and [REDACTED] had taken me to the shops and bought me a new kilt and white blouse from a shop in Galloway Street. I had them when I went back to [REDACTED] EJL's that night and she took it off me. I never saw them again.
41. When I was at [REDACTED] EJL's, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were allowed to visit their father at Lochside. [REDACTED] EJL did not help us with the transport to see our parents. We had to walk there. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] walked from one side of the town to the other side, about three miles. They walked me first to my dad's house and then had about a mile and a half to walk to their father's. The visit was just for the day and I was back at [REDACTED] EJL's that night.
42. Dad and [REDACTED] also gave me pocket money when I saw them on the Saturday. When [REDACTED] EJL found that out she took it off me each time I returned. Dad started asking me what I was spending the money on and I told him what [REDACTED] EJL was doing when I got back. Instead of giving me money they decided that I would be bought clothes instead. The first time that happened [REDACTED] EJL held out her hand as usual when I got back. When I told her there was no money as I got clothes she battered me. She then stopped me going to see my dad, all because I was coming back with no money.
43. My dad must have reported to the social work that I wasn't allowed to visit him. Somebody must have said something because not long after that the visit's started again. One Saturday he told me something I was to keep as a secret and I could not tell [REDACTED] EJL. He told me he was going to the court to try and get me back. I think I was about thirteen then.

### *Healthcare*

44. Father Conway was the parish priest while we were at St Andrew's school. He and some of the staff at the school had noticed how little I weighed. I was nearly thirteen and only weighed under four stone. There was a nurse at the school who did examinations. We called her the bug hunter because she was always looking for people with nits etc. During school she would take me out of the class for the examinations and was noting my weight each time. They were doing this because they thought I was under nourished. The normal examinations were every three months but she started coming to the school every month. When she arrived I was pulled out of whichever class I was in so she could weigh me.

### *Trips*

45. Miss Wilson, another social worker I had, organised a holiday for us. It was for kids who had never been away anywhere. She hired a minibus and we stayed at a butt and ben. There were separate rooms for the boys and girls. E.J.L. was not happy with this as she had to buy us all new clothes for the trip.
46. While we were there Miss Wilson, who was quite sharp, would wait until we were happy playing and then ask us some questions about our time with E.J.L. I would then tell her what was happening. I told her about praying at the grave yard, the coal cellar and being hit after the greenhouse incident. I never mentioned that we were being hit, either slapped or hit with the ruler, almost every day. I don't know if she took any action with what I reported but it was still years later before I went to live with my dad.

### **Abuse at [REDACTED] Dumfries**

47. [REDACTED] suffered from a stammer and if she had a problem with it, E.J.L. would hit her with a wooden ruler. She also used the ruler on me several times. [REDACTED] was sent to [REDACTED] Special School because they said she was slow. She wasn't slow,

she just had a stammer. Unfortunately she has suffered a brain tumour and it affected her memory and she cannot remember anything.

48. There was a coal storage at the house and if I argued with anyone I was locked in there. I would be left in there for hours at a time. It was really dark in there. She had a light in there but the switch was on the outside and she made sure it was turned off.
49. The day my dad told me the news about leaving I knew he said that I was not to tell EJJ but I was so excited with the news that when I got back to the house I couldn't wait to tell [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. When we were sent to bed I told them in the room. It turned out EJJ was listening at the door. She came into the room, dragged me out of the bed and battered me stupid for not telling her. She was slapping me with her hand and was so angry. I tried to tell her it was a secret but she just said there were to be no secrets in her house. She took me down the stairs and demanded to know the date and then sent me back to my room. [REDACTED] said never mind about leaving it would soon be their turn to go home.

#### **Reporting Abuse at [REDACTED] Dumfries**

50. Father Conway told Miss Clydesdale some of things that he thought was happening to us at EJJ's. He tried to get her to get us girls out of the house, but she refused point blank and left us there to keep getting the beatings from EJJ. I found this out when I got married and he was a Monsignor by then.

#### **Leaving foster care – [REDACTED] Dumfries**

51. We went to the Sheriff Court at Dumfries and I was asked directly by the Sheriff, within his chambers, who I preferred to stay with. I told him right away that I wanted to stay with my dad. It was approved right there and then. When I walked out of the room I still wasn't sure what was happening but dad took hold of my hand and took me home to his house.



52. When I moved back in with dad the social work involvement stopped. This also had an effect that I never had any help in adapting to living a normal family life. Likewise, [REDACTED] had no help in adjusting to having me in her house. She could not have her own children and she began to feel I was coming between her and dad. At the same time I felt that she was getting between dad and I getting to know each other again.
53. I was still attending St Andrew's and I did quite well at school. At the end of the first term I was first in the class. When I did the next term I was at the sanatorium and ended up second. Overall for the year I did end being first in the whole school.
54. I did qualify for the Cookery College. I had no grant to go there and had to work to pay for the courses. I worked at Woolworths and would get four pounds and ten shillings wages. Each week [REDACTED] would take four pounds off me and leave me with the ten shillings. She told me my dad said she could do what she wanted to me. I told her she wasn't my mother and she never would be. I was trying to save up for college and she was making that impossible. This went on for weeks.
55. I found out at Woolworths that staff could buy some items beforehand and they would be taken off the wages at the end of the week. I made sure that I spent the four pounds which meant I only had the ten shillings when I went home at the end of the week. She came into the shop and asked for the money. I told her I had spent it. She said she was not having this and dragged her nails right down my throat causing it to bleed. The manageress at Woolworths took me upstairs to the staff room and helped me. They asked me if I wanted to have her charged, but I didn't. This was before my fifteenth birthday.
56. When I got back home she asked me if I wanted to go shopping. I said I did but it was just a pretence to take me to the social work. As soon as we got into the offices she told them they either took me or she was out of the house.
57. The social work sent me to a foster home in Dumfries run by a psychiatrist or he may have been a psychologist. I can't remember his name but I was there to be assessed.

I was taken there that day and my dad didn't even know I was taken away. When I arrived there I found there were other women there who were not fostered but were under the care of the social work. So instead of going to college at fifteen I was back in care.

58. I was interviewed by the psychologist in a room and he told me I was to think of something sad. He then told me to stare at him without blinking. I was to stare, not blink and think of the sad thought at the same time. From this he assessed that I was strong willed and had a mind of my own. He then reported those findings to the social work when they came to visit me. I stayed there for three days for this assessment to be completed.

#### **Foster care – St Euphrasia's – Bishopton**

59. When the social worker arrived at the psychologist's I was asked if I still wanted to go to college. When I said I did she told me she had a placement, but it was in Glasgow. When I arrived in Glasgow I found out I was actually staying at St Euphrasia's in Bishopton. Right up until I went through the door the social work kept telling it was a college I was going to. I don't remember the social workers name but she took me there in a car.
60. As I went through the door I saw the place was run by nuns. I realised then that this was no college and knew that something was wrong with being there. The social worker asked me to wait outside the office while she spoke to the nuns. As the social worker left she said to me that she hoped my stay there would be a happy one. I knew right away she had tricked me.
61. I spoke with one of the nuns and I was calling her sister. She told me she was the SNR [REDACTED] there and I was to call her LLW [REDACTED] and she was really nice. She then explained to me what the rules were that I had to learn while I stayed there.



62. I think there were about forty other girls there at that time. We were separated into our different houses and there was a nun for each one. I think my house name was Euphrasia House. There were about four houses in total. The person in charge of my house was Miss <sup>FSH</sup> [REDACTED]. The dormitory I was placed in had all the beds separated by a curtain.
63. I found that everything was done by routines and each started with a bell being rung. As soon as the bell went in the morning to waken you, you had to get out of bed and onto your knees ready for prayers. This was usually about six in the morning. We then made our beds and afterwards used the buffers to clean the floors. One of us cleaned the toilet. All this was to be completed before we headed down for breakfast.
64. In the dining hall we sat at long tables along with the others from our houses. There was a nun who sat at the table to supervise us while we ate. The bell would ring again and we were fed our breakfast. The food in general was quite good while I stayed there. You were not allowed to talk during meals or when you were completing your chores.
65. As we finished the bell would again ring and we went to complete our other allocated chores. My job was in the laundry and I really enjoyed it as I got to wash the tops from the players at Celtic Football Club. I thought that was brilliant.
66. At the home you were given different braids to wear depending on how well you behaved and how well you followed the rules. You started with nothing and then the first was a green braid, then a red one and the next one was red with a blue medal on it. If you were extremely good you were told you were a child of Mary. This was the highest praise you could get.
67. I stayed at St Euphrasia's for about two years in total. I knuckled down and was given the red braid and took up some work in the sewing room. I stitched the chain stitching for the priests vestments. I also stitched the stripes for Sergeant's uniforms. I had a lot of spare time and would walk around the playground area. I tried to stay out of trouble but one afternoon I did get in a fight with one of the big girls. I gave as good as I got

but there was no trouble with the staff. FSH was the person who ran the sewing group. She stayed in the convent but was not a nun, although we had to call her Sister

FSH

68. When I got my green braid I was asked by LLW if I was still interested in going to college. I told her I was and she let me know I could go to college on a touch typing and shorthand course and she would see what she could do for me to get enrolled. It turned out the college was actually a school within the grounds with different classes in the corridor. You had to earn your place on the courses. I started the typing and short hand. The course was taught by a teacher who was brought in.
69. The music teacher was sister Alphonsis. She was in a wheel chair and I sometimes pushed her around the grounds. I also did music courses at night and learned to play different instruments including the treble recorder, violin and the piano. I passed the touch typing but they would not pass my short hand as the teachers couldn't understand my strokes. I passed my music O-Levels with Honours. I was really proud of myself, after all that happened to me.

#### *Visits*

70. Some people got to go home at the weekends but I was never allowed. I asked why I wasn't allowed home but never really got an answer. When the other girls came back from their weekend at home they were all happy and some were wearing makeup. I had no contact with the social work or my family while I was there.

#### *Religion*

71. When I was going into the church I was talking to some of the girls in my group. I was aware some of the girls at the home were not Catholic. There were also some girls who would be sat at a different section of the church. I later learned that those girls were part a group of borstal girls, who sat on the left side of the church. One of the older girls told me I was in a group of kids that were deemed uncontrollable and we were in the centre and the nuns seated on the right. This I found out had been decided

from the assessment [REDACTED] had passed to the social work department. This came as a real shock to me. There was also a group of unmarried mothers, but I am not sure if they were sat up the stairs somewhere, as I never saw them.

### *Healthcare*

72. The nuns gave us a brown tablet to take each night. I never knew what they were for and did not take mine [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I was so low at the way I was being treated I wanted to die.

73. When the girls came back that night from their home visits I warned them I might not see them in the morning. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] They said I was right I would not see them, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I was lucky in the morning I escaped with just [REDACTED] The nuns did not do anything to help. They knew what was happening to me but they just left me lying on the floor for the full day.

### *Visits*

74. About nine months after I arrived at the home, Father Duffy, later a Monsignor from my own parish at [REDACTED], came to visit me. I knew him for years, he even put me through my confirmation as a young child. He was not aware that I had been placed in care and had been there. When he came to the home he took me out of the home for the day and drove me down to Largs. While we were there he bought me some make-up.
75. He was asking why I was in the home. I told him it was because [REDACTED] my stepmother, had told the authorities that she did not want me. I told him there was a lot of resentment between [REDACTED] and I. She did not want me as she felt I was coming between her and my father. I felt she and my dad could have done more to get me out of the

home. They were both in employment and could have gone to the courts to have me released. Father Duffy told me he understood what I was saying.

### *Running away*

76. I had a friend at the home, [REDACTED] and we were in the bungalow at St Euphrasia's run by Miss FSH [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had a problem with bed wetting and Miss FSH [REDACTED] started calling her names in front of us. I tried to tell Miss FSH [REDACTED] to leave [REDACTED] alone. [REDACTED] was breaking her heart at the time and we decided after breakfast we were leaving the home. We got out of the house, walked down the lane leading to the banks of the Clyde, then onto the motorway. We were hitch hiking and got picked up by the police as we were walking on the busy road. I told the officers we had ran out of money for bus fares and we were walking home. It was fine to start with and they were driving towards our parent's house and then a message came across their radio about two missing children from the home. We were taken right back to the home.

### **Abuse at St Euphrasia's, Bishopton**

77. When the police took us back to the home we were told to wait outside the office, while the staff talked to the officers. When they left, [REDACTED] and I were taken next door into the room used as the clinic. We were taken in one at a time, I was taken in first. When I got into the room the two members of staff, EJK [REDACTED] and FSH [REDACTED], got me onto the table and held me down and they removed our underwear. A man was brought into the room and we were told he was a doctor. I did not know him, I had never seen him before and never saw him afterwards. The two women held my legs open and the man put his hands inside me supposedly to check that we were still virgins. I was screaming while he did this. When he was finished they sent me outside the room and [REDACTED] was sent in. The same thing happened to her.
78. When it was all over the staff were not finished we were made to wear what they called penance dresses. They were made of material similar to sack cloth. The staff then

tried to force us to clean the long tiled corridors. I told them I was not doing this, I had done nothing wrong.

79. For refusing to do the chore I was taken up the stairs and into the bathrooms. At the far end of the bathroom there was a separate room. I was shoved in there and told to sit on the wooden chair in the room. When I sat on the chair I could see there was a wooden cross on the wall right in front of me. In the dark that cross was illuminated. I was made to sit in that room for the rest of the night and they locked the door. I had to stare all night at that cross.
80. In the morning a girl was sent to the room with some breakfast for me. I told her that I was not going to eat the breakfast. FSH came up a short time later and told me that when the girls were finished bathing I was to clean all the baths. I told FSH I was not cleaning their dirt out of the baths. She again locked me in the room. Some girls kept coming up with meals for me but I refused to eat anything that was offered. I was locked in that room for four days.
81. One of the staff came in and told me that if I did not eat any of the food they would come in and force me to eat some. I told them that if they tried that I would make myself sick. She told me that if I was sick she would make me eat that off the floor. I told her she could try but she would never succeed. I told them I wanted them to get into trouble for what they were doing to me and would do as much as I could to see that happened.
82. While I was having all the problems in that locked room I am not aware of what happened to my friend I never saw her again.
83. At the end of the four days and all the arguing, I was told that my penance was at an end. A few days later my dad came up to the home to have a conversation with the staff about me staying in the home. He spoke with LLW After talking with the staff he returned home. It was decided between them that I would be found a job organised through St Euphrasia's.



84. The job was at a shop in Paisley, but I was still to live within the convent. The shop sold fancy goods and was within a large Mall. I was working each day and stayed in a separate flat within the convent. While I stayed in that room I never saw and was not allowed to see any of the other people within the convent. The staff told me this was to educate me into life outside the convent when I would be going home. Any money I got from working at the shop was taken off me by the staff. They handed me fares to travel to the shop and some for my food while I was at work.
85. After several months I asked when I was getting home. The staff told me that as far as they were concerned I was not going home. One Friday I got my wages and decided I was not going back to the convent right away. I was going to go out and enjoy myself. I met up with some of the girls from work and spent my money. I did not even have enough to get me back to the convent.
86. I went to the local church and went into the confessional and told the priest what I had done. He then asked if I wanted to speak about this outside the confessional box. I was naïve and said yes. This allowed him to tell anyone what I had done, where he could not if I stayed in the confessional box. He immediately got in touch with the police, who took me back to the home.

#### **Leaving St Euphrasia's, Bishopton**

87. When I was back at the convent I was asked by LLW what I had been up to. I had already told the priest and could not lie to her, so told her I had spent my wages having a bit of fun. I told her my reason for doing it was I felt like a prisoner in that room. She told me I could not be trusted anymore to be allowed out on my own. She must have got in touch with my dad, because he turned up at the convent and I was taken home again.
88. We travelled by train and when we were in Central Station he kept trying to lose me in the crowds. I kept hanging on to his coat tails so he could not abandon me.

### Life after being in care

89. When I was back living with my dad I got a job as a waitress in the [REDACTED] Hotel. I was also allocated a room in the hotel to stay. It was good to be away from dad and [REDACTED] and to make my own choices. Because it was shift work it was very tiring. I spent my time working, eating and sleeping at the hotel. I did get a fair bit of freedom when I had my days off.
90. On one of the days off I went to see my mother's father. I was wanting to know why he had abandoned my mother as she lay dying in her bed and allowed me to be taken into care. I also wanted to know why he told my uncle that I had been sent for adoption, when he knew I was still in the home. When I spoke to him he could not give me an explanation.
91. I later moved out of the [REDACTED] Hotel and got a job in another shop, [REDACTED]. I also got myself a small flat. I was there for about a year and would have been about eighteen.
92. I then got a job in [REDACTED] pet shop. It was about that time I met my first husband. His name was [REDACTED] and he was a fireman. I thought this was the answer to my dreams as I wanted to be married and have my own family. I was nineteen when we got married.
93. The dream did not last and we were living in a static caravan, in [REDACTED] Dumfries at that time. I was pregnant at that time and there was an incident where he hit me. In [REDACTED] 1974 I gave birth to my first child, [REDACTED]
94. In [REDACTED] 1976 I was pregnant with my second child and the violence had started again. I was a few months into the pregnancy at that time, when [REDACTED] battered me and my son [REDACTED]. The assault was so bad we both ended up in hospital and he was

charged by the police with attempted murder. While I was in the hospital he visited me there and threatened that he was going to put my son into a home. He knew how much I had gone through and this was never something I was going to allow to happen.

95. I signed myself out of the hospital and walked to a lawyer's office, Alistair Hogg. He took one look at me and he said he knew what I was there for. I explained that [REDACTED] was trying to put my boy into a home and he was now blaming me for the injuries to my boy.
96. After being at the lawyer's I was back at the hospital to see [REDACTED]. At that time he was being seen by doctors, one a psychiatrist. When I saw [REDACTED] he came up and was cuddling into me. When [REDACTED] arrived he was still dressed in his fire brigade uniform, the same as he had worn when he beat us up. [REDACTED] began screaming and crying in front of the doctors. In their opinion it was obvious who had injured my son.
97. Not long after that [REDACTED] went to a party and on his way home he had an accident from which he was seriously injured. A couple of months later in [REDACTED] 1976, [REDACTED] was born. As a result of his injuries [REDACTED] died in [REDACTED] 1976. I went on to bring the kids up on my own.
98. I had all the paperwork relating to the case against [REDACTED]. I intended to have that when my children were old enough to understand and I could tell them the truth as to what he was like. I saw my father not long after the funeral and he did not recognise me because I was still covered in bruises. I spoke with him and we sort of made up. I gave him the paperwork to keep safe for me.
99. Later in life my daughter was calling me a liar when we were discussing her dad. Her grandad was upset with her and he spoke with her and told her that one thing she needed to know was that I did not lie. She was then shown the paperwork showing what [REDACTED] was being charged with and the injuries we sustained. He told her that would be the one and only time she would see this, but she needed to understand what her father was like.

100. My current husband [REDACTED] was a crush from my time at school. We started seeing each other well after the death of [REDACTED]. We eventually married when I was thirty five. I have three children with [REDACTED] my sons [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and daughter [REDACTED]. We have been together ever since. Later in our marriage we made a trip back to Nazareth House as he wanted to see the places I had described to him.

### **Impact**

101. I think my time in care made me a stronger person and this gave me the confidence to be able to foster children. I like to treat people honestly and straightforward. If people have an issue with me I prefer that they are up front and not say things behind my back, where you could be labelled wrongly, as [REDACTED] did with me. If someone upsets me I like to deal with that right away and not let things fester. My kids can come to me with anything, no matter what the problem they may have. They will always be treated with understanding and love.
102. My daughter [REDACTED] came to me when she was quite young and I knew there was something wrong. She opened up to me and said that she was pregnant and scared. I told her she had nothing to worry about as there were much worse things than expecting a child. She has been supported throughout her life and we would help her out when she needs it.
103. I give my children as much as I can. [REDACTED]'s garage went on fire and I gave him the money for it to be rebuilt. My son [REDACTED] is a jockey and I have paid for three different race horses and spent most of my life savings on those horses. [REDACTED] has not been left out and been given many holidays.
104. I have sought and received counselling from my time in care. Both [REDACTED] and I still see Mike Morton, a psychologist. One of the foster children we looked after was also seeing him. From his own background the boy, aged about nine, was needing some help and that was why he was seeing Mike Morton. When our time with that boy came to an end, Mike told [REDACTED] and I that the boy had made more progress in getting better

during that year than at any time previously. That made me so proud that I was able to help someone in care and make sure they were treated with love and affection. I have also looked after two girls, sisters, who were about ten and eight.

105. When I was young I was sent to a sanatorium because of the my health and the tuberculosis. In later life when I suffered my strokes, I was being looked after by Mr Hays at the hospital. During the MRI examinations it was found that I had many scars on my brain. Mr Hays asked about my childhood illnesses and I told him about having tuberculosis. He was able to confirm the scarring was from then. He also explained that my fear of needles is likely to have stemmed from that period as the cure discovered in 1954 was administered by being injected with large needles. I would have been one of the first patients to have received this new cure. It also made sense as I could not recall why as an adult I had a fear of needles. He confirmed most of the health issues I have now can be traced back to my childhood and the lack of food provided.

#### **Lessons to be learned**

106. One of the problems you have with the social work and fostering is that you are not provided with any background information about the children they place in your care. They expect you to look after them with absolutely no knowledge. The boy I looked after for the year I only learned later that he had previously been in trouble for presenting a knife at previous carers. Information like that is vital as you can tailor the care. You give love and affection unconditionally but you could cater for the knife issue if you are aware of it.
107. Authorities must pay much more attention to the children in care and make better checks on the people looking after the children. Children need rules and guidance but that should not involve the punishments like being locked up in a room for days on end. Their life in care should not be regimented by the use of a bell to start and end whatever activity they are involved in.



108. If the children are prescribed any medication it should be fully explained what this is for [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
109. Make sure that all the staff involved in the care of the children are introduced and identified by their role. This would stop any random person coming in and pretending to be a doctor and carrying out intimate examinations of children.
110. If children are helping in homes to make items that are being sold, then share some of the money that is being made and not use them as child labour. The children might want to help, and not be forced, so give them something back. It will encourage them more in their future.
111. When children are in care and the carers are being paid then make sure that the money is used to feed and clothe the children properly. When you are feeding the children make sure it is the same food you are having and not starving them and forcing them to steal because they are hungry.

### **Hopes for Inquiry**

112. My reasons for coming to the Inquiry are to help stop what happened to me, happening to new kids in care.
113. I would like everything that happened to me in the different organisations to be addressed by the Inquiry. This should include the issues of being used for child labour, not being fed, being assaulted, locked in a room and all the mental abuse inflicted by them. There should be lessons learned from the people who did care, like Mrs [REDACTED] and for that to be used as an example how children should be treated in care. Not to allow religious differences to be a determining factor in where children are looked after.

114. Most of the children who were placed in care, were not there because they had done anything wrong. Most of them were there because of family problems out with their control. They should be loved and fed and looked after by the authorities in charge of them.
115. As a result of me never being fed properly when I was in care, I have always made sure that my kids are well fed and the plates are full. I have also made sure that my kids have choices in their lives, as to what clothes they wear and if they are wanting to be involved with religion. They must have the freedom to choose what they want to do.

### **Records**

116. About forty years ago I was able to go to the social work offices and read some of my records. This was around the time I was asking questions about my mother. That was when they gave me the photograph which I have updated and hung on my wall.

### **Other Information**

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.....EJM.....

Dated.....03 December 2020.....