

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 294

Witness Name: HIA 294

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 294

I, Maria Dougan, Assistant Solicitor to the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry confirm that I have read the transcript of evidence HIA 294 gave to the Acknowledgement Forum. HIA 294 sadly passed away on before he met the Inquiry legal team. It was his wish to proceed to the Statutory Inquiry. The Chairman has directed that HIA 294 remarks to the Acknowledgment Forum about his time in Millisle Borstal should be produced in the form of a witness statement so his evidence can be included for that module. I confirm that HIA 294 remarks about Millisle Borstal from his Acknowledgemnt Forum transcript are as follows:-

Millisle Borstal

HIA 294 I felt low in myself because of what was happening, I didn't think it was, I didn't think much of myself, still to this day sometimes you know I get depressed and all that there. So I ended up in Millisle Borstal for, they just sent me there for discipline, so I went there.

AF member: How old do you think you would have been?

HIA 294 I'd have been about seventeen.

AF member: Seventeen.

HIA 294 So I went there for this discipline and as soon as I went through the door I got beat in there, kicked in the shins and there used to be the old brogues they all wore in them days.

AF member: Yes.

PRIVATE

HIA 294 They weren't in uniforms, they wore suits you know, I was in the closed, this is in the closed bit, you didn't get down into the open bit until you were good enough or they thought you were good enough. I never got charged for anything but there was folk that did get charged and they were down there before me.

AF member: Okay.

HIA 294 The sentence to Borstal would have been six to two years, six months to two years.

AF member: Okay.

HIA 294 And I think it took me six months getting down to that closed place for what reason I don't know, now my class officer was called a man called **ML 7**

AF member: **ML 7**

HIA 294 Yeah but you see the woman couldn't find any record of. She got one of them **ML 14** he was just this big, have you ever seen the film Kes.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 He would remind you of the PE teacher.

AF member: Oh okay.

HIA 294 That type of man, thumping you, I was kneeling down like just putting my gutty on or something or taking it off and I got this big mighty blow in the lung which I don't know if it's cancerous or it's just a lesion you know what I mean.

AF member: They can't tell at the minute.

HIA 294 But I reckon he done that with that blow cos I couldn't breathe nothing and me pride wouldn't make me cry or not in front of the other fellows you know and this man **ML 7** came into my cell one night before he went off home, he came into my cell and went by the way cos me older brother **ML 15** was in there.

AF member: Okay.

HIA 294 This was early in '72 or something, he says have you a brother called **ML 15**, here's me yes he's me brother, he got the door, the cell door and slammed it so hard that the crack, the plaster round the frame, metal frame round the door, the plaster broke that's how hard he slammed it, didn't say anything about him, just says is that your brother

PRIVATE

and slammed that door in my face. I sat down and didn't know what to think, what's going on you know and I never found out.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 Now even into a prison sentence three days into it I was at home, I was so institutionalised and still am but I don't get into trouble now you know I've stopped that.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 So through the 70's I ended up in trouble, I went down the wrong road cos I didn't care about anything, I didn't have respect, didn't care about nothing. I never got myself mixed up in the Paramilitaries, I was there to get at the Authorities.

AF member: Okay.

HIA 294 That was my game, anything where there was trouble against the Police, anything authority I wasn't against them. It wasn't my fault, it was the way them ones in them Homes made us feel.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 So these like foster parents called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] moved to Bangor so I went to Bangor when I got out of Borstal after thirteen months. When I was getting out of Borstal there was an ex-Policeman who was a Prison Officer then, he leaned down into the car and went to the, we called them me Auntie and me Uncle.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 He leaned down into the car and he says see that fella there he should never have been in here, I felt like patting him.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 His name would have been **ML 16** That would have been 1980 so back out in the middle of Bangor and the place me Auntie and Uncle bought, there was Police all on the street, I couldn't stick it, I had to get out. I went down and started living in bedsit land round Bangor.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 Every time I got a jail sentence it was like going home yeah, the characters I met you know.

AF member: Yes.

PRIVATE

HIA 294 So then that's when I heard about, something about Lissue hospital being closed.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 Because of some scandal.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 That made me think even more and here's me to meself I wonder was I or wasn't I.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 So it's always stuck in my mind you know, meantime I watched me brothers, I watched me brothers and sisters deteriorating, I had to watch them and try to protect them as much as I could you know. I had to stand embarrassed and listen to fellas talking about me two sisters, it's hard to take.

AF member: Yes.

HIA 294 You know so I ended up drinking a lot, I wasn't an alcoholic, I was never an alcoholic but I went into [REDACTED] so I did and it would have been about [REDACTED] When I walked through the door I noticed a very calm peaceful feeling, they were good people you know and before you get in there you went on an interview and I says it's not really the alcohol I'm here for its drugs which I got put on in Millisle Borstal LSD, I was on anything and I took it yeah and here's me I have a temper, I don't confine it and I'll not even remember what I've said to you.

Statement of Truth

I confirm that this is a true account of **HIA 294** remarks about Millisle Borstal which he made to the Acknowledgement Forum.

Signed 

Maria Dougan

Assistant Solicitor to the Inquiry

HIA 294

PRIVATE

4

PRIVATE

Dated 4th Januy 2016