

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 240

Witness Name: HIA 240

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 240

I, HIA 240 will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born in [REDACTED] I was from a [REDACTED] family. I had three older sisters called AU 65 AU 64 and HIA 323
2. I am unsure of exactly how I ended up in care. I believe that AU 64 and HIA 323 were placed in care in Nazareth House and my father took AU 65 and I to the home to get them back. The nuns would not let him have the girls back as they said that he was not fit to look after them. He said "well you might as well take these two as well".

Nazareth Lodge / Nazareth House, Belfast (? to 29/08/1947)

3. I am not sure which of the Sisters of Nazareth Institutions I was in in Belfast. I remember being in a babies department to begin with and then I was moved to another building when I was two years old. The nuns I remember were SR 121 SR 121 and SR 181 There is a photograph of me with a group of boys outside Nazareth Lodge taken before we went to Australia.
4. I did not have a good experience in the home in Belfast. I remember a lot of physical punishment by the nuns. I was beaten for trivial things like wetting my

PRIVATE

pants or messing myself. I was slapped with a strap most days by different nuns. I remember the superior nun was the worst. I was called "scabby" and "leopard" by the nuns because of the wounds that I had from being hit. I was told for years that my parents were dead but they were still alive.

5. When I was five I was sent to Australia. I was taken to my sisters and a priest told us that we were going on holiday to England for three weeks. Instead we were sent to Australia on the SS Asturias on 29th August 1947. I remember a big ship and having to wear a badge and follow the leader.
6. Apparently my father signed the permission form for me to go to Australia but like most [REDACTED] he could not read or write so I do not believe that he did.

Australia

7. We landed in Fremantle, Western Australia on 22nd September 1947. Australia was very hot and sticky and my face got covered in mosquito bites. I was sent to Castledare Boys' Home. There were nine brothers and four or five nuns looking after about 200 or 300 children. When I reached the age of ten I was sent to Clontarf. I was one of the first children in Clontarf and we were set to work building the place in the blazing heat. If you sang an Irish song while you were working you were beaten.
8. In 1949 / 1950 when I was about nine or ten years old I was taken in to a dark room and gang raped by five Brothers; [REDACTED] BAU 9 [REDACTED] BAU 10 [REDACTED] BAU 11 [REDACTED] BAU 8 and another brother. There were hands all over me. I was in agony.
9. I used to walk the dog and when I was walking down the lane a woman came over and spoke to me. She asked me what my name was and it turned out that a family of [REDACTED] lived nearby and she took me to their house. I went to their house twice and they asked the Brothers once if I could spend the weekend with them. [REDACTED] BAU 9 said no and punched me in the face and broke my

PRIVATE

nose. He did not want me speaking to people from outside the Institution. He also used to lift my arm and punch me in the armpit.

10. **BAU 10** shot me with a .22 calibre rifle on my left leg. I still have two scars. I was not taken to the hospital. I was treated in the home with kerosene and gel.
11. The Brothers used to regularly throw boys in the Canning River near Castledare Boys Home. We were punished by being held upside down over the river and being strapped on the soles of our feet.
12. We ate figs from a fig tree once and **BAU 11** punished us by making us stand outside in the frost for an hour in just our shorts.
13. I did not go to school in either Institution. I only went to school in Clontarf when there were Welfare visitors.
14. I swept the roadways around the institution. Everyone got hit with a stick in the classroom. You had to drop your pants and **AU 101** used to hit you with a stick.

Life After Care

15. I ran away from Clontarf in 1955 and was never returned. I survived by stealing and I was arrested and sent to Hillston Reformatory, Stoneville until I was eighteen. I served time in Fremantle prison in Australia and was transferred to Claremont Mental Hospital.
16. I came back to England in 1963. I was arrested again and have several convictions. I have spent most of my adult life in and out of secure mental health facilities. I am currently detained in Psychiatric Hospital.
17. I attribute the criminal activity which has lead to my permanent detention to my childhood and the atrocities I was subject to.

PRIVATE

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed **HIA 240** _____

Dated 16/8/2014 _____