

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 333

Witness Name HIA 333

## THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

## WITNESS STATEMENT C HIA 333

HIA 333 will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in County Monaghan. My mother was called [REDACTED]. She was unmarried when I was born and she was about twenty six or twenty seven years old. She lived on the family farm in [REDACTED] in County Fermanagh until she died in 1999. She never married nor had any more children. I do not know anything about my father. I was placed in Nazareth House in Bishop Street by my mother on the recommendation of Father Connelly in [REDACTED] as a baby.

Nazareth House, Bishop Street, Derry (10<sup>th</sup> May 1937 – 19<sup>th</sup> March 1939)

2. I was placed in Nazareth House in Bishop Street when I was two weeks old. I remained there until I was nearly two years old. On the 19<sup>th</sup> March 1939 I entered Nazareth House in Sligo. I do not know why I was moved and I do not remember anything about my time in Bishop Street.

PRIVATE

Nazareth House, Sligo (19 March 1939 – July 1947)

3. I was in Nazareth House in Sligo for ten years. I was recommended by SR 130 SR 130 from Nazareth House in Derry. When I was about six years old a lady came to visit me. She was dressed in dark clothes with a hat with mesh on it. She wasn't a nun. She told me that she was my Aunt and that she would come back and take me away. She did not return. I think it may have been my mother and that she came to see me after her mother had passed away. I had no other visitors.
4. I recall one day I picked lots of gooseberries from around the home which we were not allowed to do. I stuffed them down my shirt and the nuns noticed the bulge. I lifted my shirt and nearly filled an office with the gooseberries that fell out on the floor. I was punished for this by the nuns. We were beaten with straps in Nazareth House by the nuns if we misbehaved. However I do not think the nuns were that bad.
5. We were bathed once a week in Jeyes Fluid. I recall the water was a yellow colour. We wore a slip in the bath for modesty. There were about ten to twelve boys in the bath at one time.
6. I was sent to St Joseph's Home, Termonbacca in Derry around July 1947.

St Joseph's Home, Termonbacca (July 1947 – August 1947)

7. I was in Termonbacca for about six weeks before I was shipped to Australia. One day I was taken on a bus from Nazareth House in Sligo with three other boys. We were not told where we were going. The boys were called HIA 302 HIA 302 and AU 20 I cannot remember the name of the third boy. When we arrived in Termonbacca we were given new clothes. At no time were we told that we were going to Australia. Other than this I do not remember anything about the short time I spent in Termonbacca.

PRIVATE

8. We left Termonbacca by bus and got a ferry during the night to England. I think around twenty seven boys left Termonbacca for Australia. We then got the train to Southampton. I was shipped to Australia on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1947 on the SS Asturias. The food on the ship was good and we ran around having fun. I used to go into the kitchen and the staff used to give me ice cream. We slept in cabins which held about five or six boys in each one. There were a couple of nuns and a couple of civilian women that accompanied us on the journey. One of the nuns was called [REDACTED] and she came from Ireland. She went on to work in Geraldton for many years. I do not recall the names of the others.
9. My migration form is signed by [REDACTED] SR 81 who was the Mother Superior in Termonbacca. I have a certificate of medical examination dated 11<sup>th</sup> July 1947 however I cannot remember having a medical exam.
10. We arrived in Fremantle on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1947. We were taken into a large shed at the Port where there was a reception for the migrant children. There were speeches by the Archbishop, Bishop and Premier of Australia and we were given bags of lollies and oranges.

**Tardun Farm School & Clontarf Boys Town (22/9/1947 – 19/8/1953)**

11. From Fremantle we were taken to Clontarf Boys Town where we had tea. That same evening we were taken on a bus and a train to Tardun Farm School. I think seven boys were taken to Tardun. I was transferred to Clontarf on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1948 then I moved back to Tardun on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1952 when I was fifteen. I stayed for about a year and left when I was sixteen in 19<sup>th</sup> August 1953.
12. We were made to work hard in Tardun. We were out working in all weathers. I was physically abused by [REDACTED] BAU 15. He hated me and belted the living daylight out of me one day because I went to the pictures when I wasn't supposed to.



PRIVATE

13. In Clontarf we had to do physical labour such as scraping the bricks to build the piggery. We were always hungry. The pigs got more food than we did. The pigs got leftovers from shops and restaurants such as bread and cakes while we were starving. Many times I was caught eating from the pig's trough and I was belted by the Brothers. I was physically abused by BAU 6 and Brother BAU 16. I recall BAU 6 beat us when we were naked after a shower. The Brothers picked on the same boys all the time. I was blamed for things I didn't do. The Brother belted me and eventually I admitted the wrongdoing so they would stop hitting me. Instead they belted me again as punishment. My scalp was lacerated for approximately one and a half inches and I was over-worked with inadequate rest, recreation and sleep. I lived in a general climate of fear and apprehension, being stigmatised, cut off from my home country – the land of my birth.
14. When I was sixteen I left Clontarf. My education was limited and my literacy compromised by the inadequate schooling I received at Clontarf and Tardun. The Welfare Department got me a job on a sheep farm. I slept in a small room on the veranda and I only stayed three months. I moved on to work in an orchard but I didn't stay there long either. While I was waiting on the Welfare Department to get me another job I was sent to Castledare to live. BAU 17 was physically abusive to me. He whacked me over the head with a broom and one day he chased me into a paddock and hit me with a plank of wood. A neighbour witnessed this and reported it. The Welfare Department came and took me from Castledare and found me a place in a lodging house. I got into an argument with another boy who was stealing and I hit him. I was taken to a Reform School in [REDACTED] in Perth which was run by the Salvation Army. I was kept there for ten days and then given a job on a sheep farm.
15. When I was twenty one years old I was no longer in the care of the Welfare Department. The Department deducted money from my wages and when I turned twenty one I received money from a Bank Trust Account set up by the Welfare Department.

PRIVATE

Life after care

16. I found it very hard to settle in jobs. I found it difficult to adjust to a life outside institutions. After working on farms I worked in a fishing factory for a while and then I became a lobster fisherman which I did for thirty five years. I enjoyed being self employed as I was my own boss and no one was telling me what to do.
17. I was married for seventeen years. We had four children [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We divorced and I remarried. I think my first marriage ended as a consequence of my experiences in residential care. I have been married to [REDACTED] my second wife, for twenty seven years. I find it difficult to show emotion, even with my current wife. I enjoy a good relationship with my children [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] however I haven't seen [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] for a while. My abusive upbringing had a devastating effect on my ability to show love and affection and it is still a problem today and demonstrated by my poor relationship with my sons [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The pain and isolation of my childhood goes on and affects the next generation.
18. As a result of my experiences I do not like going into a room full of people. I have recurrent nightmares of orphanages and I have suffered from depression and at times I feel uncontrollably sad. I always feel excessively guilty when things go wrong, even when it is not my fault. I have low self esteem and difficulty in showing trust. I saw a psychiatrist in 2003 who stated in a report that it is probable that I suffer from chronic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
19. I received \$45,000 AUD from the Australian Redress Scheme.
20. I have been back to Ireland nine times in the last thirteen years. One of the visits was paid for by the Christian Brothers and two visits were paid for by the British Government.

PRIVATE

21. I was born in the Republic of Ireland and I was sent to Australia by the Sisters of Nazareth in Northern Ireland through the British Government Migration Scheme. They did not have the right to send a child from another country thousands of miles away with no hope or opportunity of ever returning home.
22. I was searching for my mother since 1965. I returned to Ireland for the first time in 1997 looking for information. For six of the nine visits I went to Nazareth House in Sligo to ask about my mother. Each time the nuns told me they didn't have any information. Eventually in 2008 a nun in Nazareth House gave me a sheet of paper which said that I was recommended in Derry by Father Connelly in [REDACTED]. The Catholic Church had my mother's address all the time even though I repeatedly asked for all information they had about my family. I gave the sheet of paper to the Child Migrants Trust and they traced my family. They also obtained my birth certificate which I never had as a child. My mother was alive until 1999 and I could have met her had my records been given to me years earlier. We were both deprived of our reunion by their deception. I was my mother's only child.
23. I went to [REDACTED] in 2009 and I was reunited with my family. I met my cousins for the first time. Relatives from England came over as I was having a party for my seventy second birthday. I have a good relationship with my family and I am particularly close to my cousin [REDACTED] who lives in [REDACTED] and my cousin [REDACTED] who lives in England. The last time I was home was for [REDACTED] daughter's wedding in June 2013. Each time I visit I stay for a month.
24. Every time I go home I take many photos which I get put on a disc to music. When I watch it I feel sad and tears come flooding out. I wonder 'what the hell am I doing here?'. I am Irish. My family are thousands of miles away and I could be with them had someone not taken the decision to send me to Australia as a child. Before I was seventy two years old I didn't know who I was. I had no identity. Once I was reunited with my relatives I finally knew who I was.



PRIVATE

25. I am still friendly with boys from the homes. We have BBQs for birthdays and I enjoy their company. We were made to grow up quickly in the institutions in Australia. We were not allowed to be children. We were taken away from our country, our homeland and we had no say in what happened to us. Almost all of us have been scarred by the memories of our treatment in institutions to which we were condemned to serve out our childhood years. We had no one to turn to in our times of need.

**Statement of Truth**

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

HIA 333

Signed

Dated

31-12-13

Department of Immigration  
Australia House, London.

CHILD MIGRATION

Group Nomination No: \_\_\_\_\_  
(This form is to be completed by the Overseas Representative of the  
Sponsoring Organisation)

1. Name in full (in block capitals  
surname first)

HIA 333

2. Full Postal Address (in block capitals)  
\_\_\_\_\_

ST. JOSEPH'S TERMONBACCA, DERRY

3. Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date & Year of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth Monaghan

4. Sex M Weight 1st. 8 lbs. Church Denomination R.C.

5. Furnish name and address of parent, guardian or next of kin  
(if father is living his name must be given)

The Superior, St. Joseph's Home, Termonbacca, Derry

6. Is there any record of mental disease in the child? No

7. Has he or she at any time been subject to fits? No

8. Educational standard IV

Signed P. A. Goulon

Australian

For and on behalf of: Scottish Migration Secretary, Catholic Emigration Office.  
(Name of sponsoring organisation)  
6 India Buildings, Edinburgh

Date: 7.5.47

PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S CONSENT (FATHER IF LIVING)

I SR 81 Superior  
(insert full name, occupation & address)

of St. Joseph's Home, Termonbacca, Derry, Ireland.  
the father  
mother of HIA 333  
guardian

hereby consent to my child/ward proceeding to Australia under the  
Commonwealth Child Migration Scheme.

Dated this 7th day of May, 1947.

Signature SR 81

Witness Rev. M. J. Rooney Qualification Catholic Priest

Address St. Columba's College, Derry

The Witness must be one of the following, viz., a Member or Official  
of any Banking Firm established in the United Kingdom, any Mayor,  
Magistrate, Justice of the Peace, Minister of Religion, Barrister-at-law  
Registered Medical Practitioner, Solicitor or Notary Public.

On completion this form should be forwarded to :

The Chief Migration Officer  
Australia House,  
LONDON, E.C. 4