

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 160

Witness Name: HIA 160

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 160

I, HIA 160 will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had three brothers and two sisters. [REDACTED] was born in 1948, [REDACTED] in 1949, DL 141 1951, [REDACTED] in 1952 and HIA 120 in 1954. My father was in the Irish Fusiliers and he was from Motherwell, Scotland. My mother died when I was five. She was pregnant at the time and lost the baby. My father went to pieces and started drinking heavily. He even tried to commit suicide. My mother had a boy to another man before she married my father. He is called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] My maternal grandmother, who lived next door to us when we lived in [REDACTED] brought him up as her own child. My [REDACTED] had thirteen in her own family so she could not have coped with the six of us. My maternal grandmother could not have coped either.

Nazareth Lodge Children's Home, Belfast (12/11/1957 – 15/08/1961)

2. I was placed in Nazareth Lodge, Belfast in 1957 when I was seven years old along with my brother DL 141 who was five. I think my two younger brothers were placed in St Joseph's as they were babies. HIA 120 was two and [REDACTED] was three. I think my sisters were placed in a home in Newry.

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3. When I was older my father told me he visited a couple of times but I cannot remember. I remember my Granny [REDACTED] visiting me a few times.
4. I was in [REDACTED] SR 71 [REDACTED] group and we were called the Marion's.
5. I will always remember my first night in Nazareth Lodge. We were in bed and we had to keep the blankets over our heads. I was told the reason for this is that the nuns would sometimes walk around at night with their veils off so they did not want us to see them. If you looked out from under the blanket they would have slapped you. I cannot recall anyone's name in particular. I could hear my brother crying and no one comforted him.
6. I remember always being hungry. There was not a big selection of food. We always had a lot of chores to do including polishing the corridors every week. We had to get up early every day and go to mass which was in Nazareth Lodge. We then had breakfast and went to school. The school was also in Nazareth Lodge and we were taught by the nuns. I do not feel that I received a good education.
7. At the top of the nun's cell there was an open space. I do not know why I did it but I climbed into it once when I was about eight years old. I do not know what I was looking for. I found an empty roses box with coins in it. I took the coins thinking I could use them to run away. When I was climbing back over in to the room again [REDACTED] SR 71 [REDACTED] was standing at the door. She told me to go down and get my breakfast. [REDACTED] SR 34 [REDACTED] then came in and took me into an empty classroom and hit me with anything she could get her hands on, a belt, a stick. She beat me black and blue and would not stop until she had broken me and made me cry. That night [REDACTED] SR 71 [REDACTED] came and sat on my bed and sort of cuddled me. Since then I have always really liked her. [REDACTED] SR 34 [REDACTED] seemed to want to teach me a lesson from then on. She would pull me up by my ear and she would make me work in the laundry. I had to work in the laundry nearly every day. It was really hard work.

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8. I remember getting my tonsils out when I was about ten years old. I was in the dining room after I got out of the hospital. The other boys were outside playing. **SR 34** thought I should have been out playing with them and hit me even though I was white as a sheet and still recovering.
9. I knew when I was eleven I would be moved to Rubane. I was scared of going as I did not know anything about it. I was taken with a group of boys. I did not see my brother when I went to Rubane and I do not remember any visitors.

De La Salle Boys' Home, Rubane House, Kircubbin (15/08/1961 – 24/07/1965)

10. I was moved to Rubane House in 1961 when I was eleven. I cannot recall the name of the head Brother we simply referred to him as **BR 6**. He was later replaced by **BR 6**. They had boys in charge of other boys. The Brothers would have used unnecessary force. I was tongue tied and used to be bullied by some of the other boys because of it.
11. My bed was not in the main house. I was placed in the house across the yard. **BR 15** was in charge of us. I think there were about twenty two boys in my dormitory. **BR 15** would have hit you for any reason. I remember him making me stand with my hands on a bench while he hit me for losing my toothbrush.
12. After I was in Rubane for about a year **BR 15** started to abuse me. This abuse happened while I was lying in bed at night in the dormitory in the farm house. **BR 15** would creep into the dormitory after the lights were dimmed and came over to my bed. He put his hands under my sheet and masturbated me. After he finished he would have left the dormitory. This happened on a regular basis over a period of about two years. I was really scared. I used to make my bed in such a way that he could not get past the sheet to get his hand down far enough. It was the only way I knew to protect myself.
13. When he was supervising us watching television he would sit in a chair at the back of the room and put his hands up boys' legs including mine. He put his

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hand up my leg and masturbated me. He had a selection of boys he would do this to. He never made us do anything to him. [REDACTED] BR 15 [REDACTED] also masturbated me in the back row of the Majestic Picture House when he took me to see "Jailhouse Rock".

14. From there I was transferred to the farm. [REDACTED] BR 12 [REDACTED] was in charge of the farm. I tried to avoid him because he was a very scary man.
15. I was taken to other farms to work instead of going to school. The Brothers were paid for our work. They would have given us one shilling to spend in the tuck shop in Rubane. [REDACTED] BR 14 [REDACTED] was in charge of the tuck shop and football. He was vicious when we were playing football and used to be known as a dirty old man.
16. The education I received in Rubane was not good. It was not secondary school standard education. It was more like primary school level education. I do not think I was taught anything. I remember [REDACTED] BR 4 [REDACTED] could hit you if you did not know your spellings. I think he got pleasure out of it. He made us all line up and asked each of us in turn to spell a word and then he hit us if we spelled it wrong.
17. One day in [REDACTED] BR 6 [REDACTED] class he called me up to his desk and put his hands down my shorts and touched my private parts. I was older by then and walked away so he did not manage to do anything to me. There were other boys in the classroom but I was standing with my back to them so they couldn't see anything.
18. I started to play hurling and football. It seemed to bring me out of myself and give me the confidence to stand up for myself. My brothers were not interfered with. Perhaps me being interfered with gave them some sort of protection.
19. I cannot remember having a shower the entire time I was in Rubane. I think that things may have happened to me that I have blocked out.

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20. I vaguely remember being in St Patrick's at some point during my time in Rubane but I cannot remember why or for how long.

### Life After Care

21. We were given no preparation for leaving Rubane. I do not remember leaving. I lived on [REDACTED] in Belfast for a while and I had no job. I went to St Augustine's youth club which was for boys who had been in care. It was the closest thing to after care that I got.

22. I could not read or write when I left. My first job was in [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I worked painting the hotel. One time I was called in to be a waiter but that did not last long because I could not write the word "pork". I lived in the Hotel.

23. I moved back to Belfast. I initially lived on [REDACTED] with other ex-residents from Rubane House. I worked in [REDACTED] and then I got a job in the [REDACTED] moved to [REDACTED] and I got a job as a plasterer for a man called [REDACTED] worked with [REDACTED] who was also in Rubane House. I tried to hang myself around this time.

24. I got married in 1975. I have three sons and a daughter and five grandchildren. I have tried to get on with my life. I played sport. I was very good at football and hurling. But after that kind of childhood things never get better. I have been diagnosed with bladder cancer and I am currently receiving treatment.

25. I taught myself how to read and write from papers and books.

26. I would like to see the Orders take responsibility for the abuse we suffered in their care and to apologise for it. I also think they should pay compensation to the children who suffered in their care. I hope that no other children have to suffer in care as we did.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed

**HIA 160**

Dated

10-4-014

COPY

De La Salle Boys' School,

Rubane,

Kircubbin,

NEWTOWARDS,

Co. Down.

20th February, 1962.

Special Class.

Dear Dr. McGilton,

The following are the names and dates of birth of pupils who were ascertained E.S.N. since their arrival at De La Salle:

[Redacted names and dates of birth]

The Following boys were committed to our care by other Local Education Authorities as being ascertained by them:

[Redacted] (Belfast Ed. Auth.)  
[Redacted] (Belfast Ed. Auth.)  
[Redacted] (Derry Ed. Auth.)

The following boys were ascertained in Nazareth Lodge, prior to coming here last August:

[Redacted names]

The following boys are, by our standards, very educationally sub-normal, but have not been officially ascertained:

[Redacted names]  
HIA 160

These are the pupils in the Special Class, but besides these there are seven other ascertained pupils in other classes in the school.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. J. McGilton,  
Down Co. Education Office,  
7, Brunswick Street,  
BELFAST, 2.