

CLANN: IRELAND'S UNMARRIED MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN: GATHERING THE DATA

Statement of Witness 13

Reference Code: CLANN/WIT13

Status: Boarded Out Person

Institution(s)/Agencies: St Patrick's Mother & Baby Home, Navan Road; St Brigid's Orphanage, Eccles Street; Artane Industrial School; Sisters of Charity Magdalene Laundry, Peacock Lane.

Date: 25th May 2016

Records/Papers included: Yes

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WITNESS STATEMENT OF [REDACTED]

1. I, [REDACTED] of [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] WILL SAY:

2. I make this statement for the purpose of providing evidence to the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation established by the Irish Government pursuant to Section 3 of the Commissions of Investigation Act 2004.
3. Attached to this statement is an exhibit marked [REDACTED] which contains various copy documents. References to page numbers in this statement are to pages in [REDACTED]
4. I make this statement as a person who spent time in a Mother and Baby Home and was then boarded out. I have prepared this witness statement with the help of my daughter, [REDACTED]

Circumstances of my birth and early life

5. I was born in Pelletstown (later known as St Patrick's Mother & Baby Home, Navan Rd, Dublin) on [REDACTED] 1937 ([REDACTED] page 2). I have a letter from St Patrick's dated 23 May 2013 ([REDACTED] pages 3 and 4) which records the information about me that was entered in the home's ledger. This information was obtained via a freedom of information request that was made by my daughter on my behalf. The May 2013 letter states that my mother was named [REDACTED] and that I spent the first months of my life in St. Patrick's Mother and Baby Home. Aside from the May 2013 letter I have no records in respect of my time in St Patrick's.
6. The May 2013 letter states that I was looked after by my grandmother, during which time I was baptised a Catholic. I applied to the church where I was baptised for my baptismal certificate but was told there was a fire and my records had been destroyed. However I have since obtained a copy of the entry in the Baptismal Register that records my baptism ([REDACTED] page 5). On [REDACTED] 1938, when I was 15 months old, my grandmother took me to St Brigid's Orphanage, 46 Eccles Street, Dublin ([REDACTED] page 4). I was then boarded out for the duration of my childhood at the addresses listed below. I am unaware of who arranged for me to be fostered but can only assume it was St Brigid's. I do not know if my mother gave informed consent to my being fostered.
7. I was fostered at the following addresses:

Date	Carer	Address
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[REDACTED] 1938- [REDACTED] 1940	Mrs [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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1940 – Mrs [REDACTED]
1944 [REDACTED]

1944 Mrs [REDACTED]
1945 [REDACTED]

Sent to Artane Industrial School, Dublin

8. I have no records of the time I spent in these foster homes. I think the reason for being moved from one foster home to another was because my foster families were unable to pay for my food and upkeep.
9. When I was 8 years old, on [REDACTED] 1945 I was sent to Artane Industrial School in North Dublin which was run by the Christian Brothers [REDACTED] (page 6). At the time I was not aware of the reasons for having been sent there. My daughter contacted the Christian Brothers to access some of the paperwork from my childhood and was sent only a copy of the charge sheet that was issued against me prior to being sent to Artane Industrial School [REDACTED] (page 7). The charge sheet states that I was taken from the streets of Dublin by the NSPCC on [REDACTED] 1945, and then taken to court and found guilty for receiving alms. I was sentenced to 8 years in Artane. When I saw the charge sheet from the Christian Brothers I was truly shocked to see in black & white the reason why I had been incarcerated for 8 long years. I was a young lad. I did not deserve this. I had done nothing wrong.
10. My time in Artane Industrial School was the most gruelling period of my life. The staff at the school performed acts of cruelty on me and the other children on a daily basis. I have never spoken to my family of the abuse I suffered there, and I never will as I do not wish to cause them distress. I suffered regular beatings and other verbal abuse. I cannot bring myself to speak about a lot of the horrendous things that happened to me. I will take these with me to my grave. For the duration of my time in Artane, I was known only by my number, [REDACTED]
11. I left Artane at the age of 16 and went to work as a page boy in the [REDACTED] Hotel in Co [REDACTED]. It states on my charge sheet that the Christian Brothers got me the job. I suffered beatings again in this job at the hands of the hotel staff, and so moved on to a few other jobs before ending up as a farm hand for the [REDACTED] family at [REDACTED]. Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] were the only family that I have ever known until I had my own family. They took me in as a farm hand but actually treated me as one of their own. I stayed there for around 6 years.

Information, tracing my birth parents and reunion with them

12. With the help of my daughter, I searched through various agencies such as the Salvation Army and via various Facebook groups for my mother and any of my siblings, though I

was unaware of whether I had any. The May 2013 letter (pages 3 and 4) states that my mother was told she was being sent to Cork to the Sisters of Charity to prepare to become a Catholic. My daughter helped me to make a freedom of information request on my behalf to the Sisters of Charity.

13. The first piece of information received from the Sisters of Charity was a photocopy of part of a newspaper clipping with the heading "Mother sees Son [redacted]" (page 8). This was dated 1972. It showed a photo of Mum and my brother [redacted] of whose existence up until then I had not known.
14. The newspaper clipping states that the rest of the story is continued on page [redacted]. Sadly this was not enclosed. My daughter [redacted] rang St [redacted] of Aikenhead House, Dublin to ask for the rest of the clipping and the rest of the information held on file on numerous occasions but the same answer was always given, which was that there was nothing else on file. Given that my mother had been held at the laundry for 58 years, I am very surprised that there is not more information. It was very difficult to read the newspaper clipping and to see the photograph of my mother. I had so many emotions. I was pleased to see a photograph but angry at the same time, as we had been separated from each other and I had grown up without a mother.
15. Underneath my mother's photograph in the newspaper clipping was the name [redacted]. It was clear to me then that the nuns in the home took her birth name, [redacted] away. I do not know why they did that or why they had not informed me of this earlier. My daughter and I had been searching for [redacted] and not [redacted] which had made the search more difficult and lengthy. [birth name] [house name]
16. The other piece of information I received from the Sisters of Charity in the May 2013 letter is that my mother [redacted] was sent to Peacock Lane Laundry in Cork by her mother on 28 [redacted] 1938. A sheet with the heading "St. Mary Magdalene's Asylum" gives redacted information about when my mother was taken into hospital due to illness [redacted] (pages 9-12). My mother's death certificate, which I obtained from the General Records Office, states that she died of a heart attack on [redacted] in St Vincent's Home, Cork. This home was attached to the Peacock Lane Laundry.
17. Further to finding out my mother's full name, date of death and place of death I located her grave and have been to visit it (page 13). The first time that I visited my mother's grave was a very emotional event. It was like seeing my mother for the first time. I placed my hand on top of her headstone and said "Hello Mum". I cried for the first time since finding out about her. My mother and the other women who died in the laundry are buried facing the nuns that ran the laundry. I think this is wrong, as it means even in death my mother cannot rest in peace.

18. After making various enquiries in order to trace my brother, my daughter put an advert in the Herald newspaper to ask for help in finding my siblings. Finders International came forward and offered to help. My daughter [REDACTED] received an email from Finders International to say they had found my brother, [REDACTED]
19. When she told me that [REDACTED] had been found I couldn't quite take the news in. I said, "What? You're joking me". "No" she said. She told me on 15 July 2015 that he was still alive and kicking and working in a bar in [REDACTED] I was over the moon at hearing the news. Finally having a brother, someone I can say he's part of Mum. It was the icing on the cake. I still couldn't believe it after 80 years.
20. [REDACTED] was born at the Bethany Home in Dublin on [REDACTED] 1938. He was sent to Avoca Manor, where he stayed until he was 16 years old. He was never adopted. I have since reunited with my brother.
21. [REDACTED] has told me that he met our mother in the Peacock Lane Laundry in [REDACTED] but she did not want to acknowledge him as her son.
22. In December 2014 my daughter also traced some of my first cousins. I have met them on a number of occasions. They were told by their father, also named [REDACTED] that my mother had become a nun.
23. My daughter requested a meeting with the Sisters of Charity in 2014. They granted this request and my daughter met Sister [REDACTED] who was the Sister in Charge. She did not give further details about my background, my mother or any siblings. She did say, however, that St Brigid's Orphanage was simply a "holding place" for children before they were moved on. To be told that I was held in a holding place was a bit of a shock. Surely holding places are for animals not human beings. To my mind, the comment rubbed salt into the wound.

Access to Information

24. I feel that everyone should have the right to have all information held by any organisations about their birth and background disclosed. It is not right that such information should be withheld. The people who make these decisions should consider themselves lucky because they know who they are and where they come from without having to undertake lengthy and emotionally traumatic investigations during which they are provided with incomplete and often inaccurate information.

I believe that the contents of this statement are true.

Signed

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature.

Date

25th May 2016



Redactions which have been carried out by the Clann Project are flagged at the top of each page or marked with a 'C'. All other redactions were carried out by the original data controllers.

Exhibit

C

Deimhniú Breithe

Arna eisiúint de bhun an Achtá um Chláru Sibhialta 2004



Éire

Birth Certificate

Issued in pursuance of the Civil Registration Act 2004

Ireland

Ainm/Name

Sloinne/Surname

Dáta Breithe/Date of Birth 1937

Gnéas/Sex Male

Ionad Breithe/Place of Birth Pelletstown
Co. Dublin

Máthair / Mother

Athair / Father

Ainm/Name

Sloinne/Surname

Sloinne Breithe/Birth
Surname

Sloinnte Roimhe Seo/
Former Surnames

Sloinne Breithe Mháthair

Tuismitheora / Parents'
Mother's Birth Surname

Sli Bheatha/Occupation

Seoladh/Address

Faisnéiseoir A/Informant A

Ainm/Name

Sloinne/Surname

Cáilíocht/Qualification

Seoladh/Address

Present at Birth
Pelletstown

Sínithe ag/Signed by

Cláráitheoir/Registrar

Cláráíodh i gCeantar an Chláraitheora / Registered in the Registrar's District

Limistéar an Phríomh-Chláraitheora / Superintendent Registrar's District

Contae/County

Dáta an Chlárucháin nó Athchláraithe (má maidir) / Date of Registration or Re-registration (if applicable)

Cláruimhir/Registration Number

Castleknock
Dublin
Co. Dublin

1937

Deimhnítear gur thionscú na sonraí seo ó eilíneáir coimisiúnaí faoi alt 13 den Acht um Chláru Sibhialta 2004/Certified to be compiled from a register maintained under section 13 of the Civil Registration Act 2004

Eisithe ag/Issued by Authorised Officer Dáta/Date 11 August 2015

Is cion tromchúiseach é an deimhniú seo a athrú nó é a úsáid agus é athraithe / To alter this certificate or to use it as altered is a serious offence



St. Brigid's,
Holy Faith Convent,
The Coombe,
Dublin 8.

Phone: [redacted]

Fax: [redacted]

23.05.13

Enclosed brief social history as promised in our
telephone conversation, [redacted] I agree there are so many
gaps — in keeping with the social climate of the time.
But wishes to your good Father & all of you. You will be
most welcome here *With Compliments*
if you come to Animeri. God bless all! [redacted]



Phone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

St. Brigid's,
Holy Faith Convent,
The Coombe,
Dublin 8.

1st ever Piece of information
that dad received
about himself

RECORDS OF ST. BRIGID'S ORPHANAGE, 46 ECCLES ST. DUBLIN 7.

[REDACTED] 1938: (Date of admission to St. Brigid's, aged 15 months.)

[REDACTED] was born in Pelletstown (later St. Patrick's Home, Navan Road) on [REDACTED] 1937. He was baptised in the Church of St. Therese, Donore Avenue on [REDACTED] 1938 (aged 15 months). His mother, [REDACTED] was a Protestant. In 1938 she was staying with the Sisters of Charity in Cork, preparing to become a Catholic. She already had * a little girl aged [REDACTED] years, who was in Bethany House. There is no reference to [REDACTED] age at the time of her son's birth, nor of her occupation, or family background – whether she had brothers and sisters etc. In keeping with the social practice of the period, there is no mention whatever of the father of the child.

[REDACTED] was brought to Eccles St. by his Protestant grandmother, Mrs. [REDACTED] of [REDACTED]. She said that several relatives had become Catholics on marriage and that she herself hoped to die a Catholic.

The case was recommended to St. Brigid's by Sister [REDACTED] Sisters of Charity, [REDACTED]

Nurse: (Fostermother:) Mrs. [REDACTED]

1940: Changed to Mrs. [REDACTED]

1944: Changed to Mrs. [REDACTED]

1945: Sent to Artane.

Sister [REDACTED]
Sister in charge St. Brigid's
May 23rd 2013.

* wasn't a girl. Was actually [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] was in Nona Manor until he was 16 years old.
Dad never knew about [REDACTED] & Vice versa.
We found [REDACTED] in July 15th 2015 arriving in [REDACTED]

Certificate of Registry of Baptism

Page .. [REDACTED] No. [REDACTED] ...

BAPTISM Solemnized in the Church of IRELAND in the Parish of ZION In the County of .. DUBLIN ... in the Year .. 1935 ..

When Baptized	When Born	Child's Christian Name	Parents' Names		Abode	Quality, Trade, or Profession	By whom the Ceremony was performed
			Christian	Surname			
[REDACTED] 1935	[REDACTED] 1935	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	BETHANY HURK ORVELL ROAD DUBLIN		[REDACTED]

I HEREBY CERTIFY the above Extract to be a true Copy of an entry in the Baptismal Register of the Parish of ZION and Diocese of ... DUBLIN ...

Extracted this FIRST day of JULY In the Year .. 2013 ..

By me, [REDACTED]

Dad's records from Arkare.

Report by School Number and Pupil Number

SCHOOL	13
NUMBER	
FILE	N
SURNAME	
FIRSTNAMES	
SEX	M
DOB	1937
COURT	Metropolitan CC
COURTDATE	1945
JUDGE	
GROUND	Receiving alms
REFERRED BY	
ADMISSION	1945
DISCHARGE	1953
MOTHER	
FATHER	
POSTDISCHA	Retained. On 1953 to (page boy)
COMMENTS	Mother's whereabouts unknown. Boarded out by Eccles Street Orphanage to Mrs
BIRTHPLACE	
GENREGNO	

This was the 1st & only piece of information sent from the Sisters of Charity about Dad's mum.

Mother sees
son-after
years

R.I.P.

They said that's all they had after 58 years.

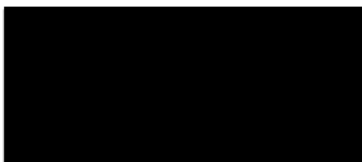


Religious Sisters of Charity

Mary Aikenhead House

01 July, 2013

Strictly Private and Confidential
Strictly Addressee Only



Re: [redacted] records

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your letter dated 10th June 2013.

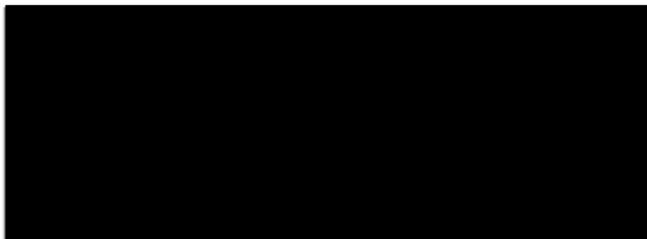
We are enclosing as requested the following records for [redacted]

Two copy pages in anonymised/redacted form, taken from the Cork Register together with a copy of a paper cutting relating to a visit by [redacted] to his mother. [redacted]

In order to protect the confidentiality of other people whose names are listed on these pages we are sending you these records in anonymised/redacted form.

We trust the above information will be helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,



BOOK OF MATERNITY HOMES

Copyright 1914
The Public Health Supply House,
Chicago, Ill.

Division of Maternity Homes

Particulars of Maternity Homes

11/1

Registers07/04/14

156585

21

REGISTRATION OF MATERNITY HOMES, 1914

(Name of Home (if any) and Address of Home or Hospital)

RECORDS AND PARTICULARS

Particulars of Home to be filled in by the Home								Medical Attendant (if any) at Patient while in Home		
No.	Name	Address	Age	Color	Condition of Health	Period of Pregnancy (Last Year or 2 Years)	Name of Physician (if any)	Occupation of Patient's Husband	Name	Address
C	C	C				5.2				

Registers07/04/14

156585

BOOK OF MATERNITY HOMES

Copyright 1914
The Public Health Supply House,
Chicago, Ill.

21

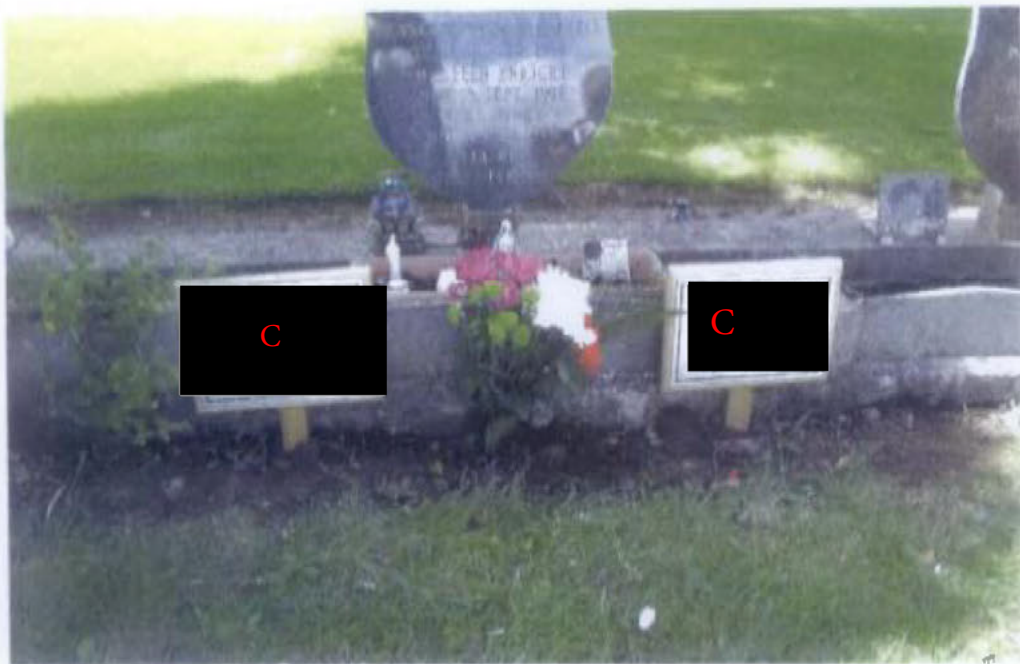
Particulars of Maternity Homes

C 11/1 C

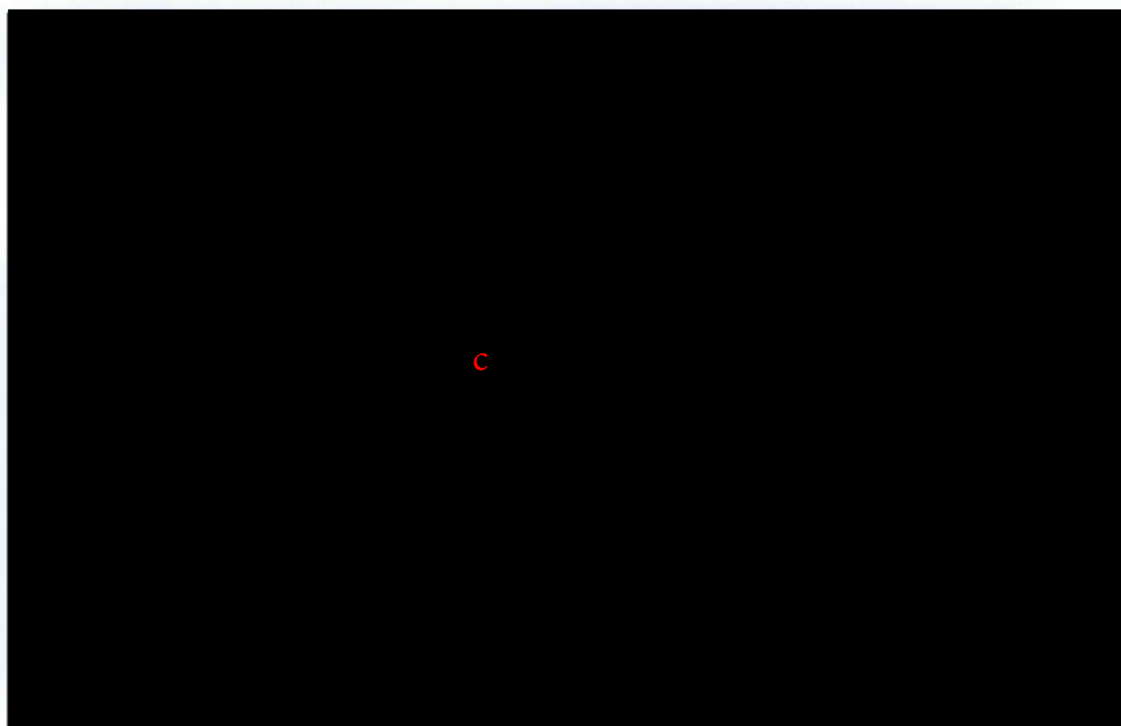
11/1

ST. MARY MAGDALEN'S ASYLUM

[illegible]



Old
1st Visit
to mums
grave



Pages 14-15 deleted by Clann Project to protect
confidentiality of the witness

Dear [REDACTED]

This may have come as a shock to you but I believe that you and my father are brothers. I have information that relates to your mum that states on my dads birth cert and yours that [REDACTED] is both your maternal mother known as [REDACTED] in the laundries. I know the address in Dublin where your mum came from is this is on my dads paperwork and were given some information from the orphanage where my dad was states he had an older brother.

I believe you visited your mum in 1972 and was in a local paper, I have been sent this from the Sisters of Charity and will enclose a copy for you.

My father is still alive and would dearly love to meet you or get in touch as he has never seen his mum or even knew he had an older brother until a few weeks ago.

My address details are above or you can contact me on [REDACTED] or my mobile [REDACTED]

I do hope to hear from as it would be lovely to be reunited with family at long last.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

Copy of letter I Sent to the Client
Identity Services in Dublin for
them to forward to wife [REDACTED]
last known address they had on file
for him. He made contact in 2009.

Dad's brother born Register

1935

429

Superintendent Registrar's District <u>Dublin</u>				Registrar's District <u>Rathmines h. 2</u>						
BIRTHS Registered in the District of <u>Rathmines h. 2</u>				in the Union of <u>Dublin</u>						
				in the County of <u>Dublin</u>						
No.	Date and Place of Birth.	Name (if any).	Sex.	Name and Surname and Dwelling place of Father.	Name and Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Baptismal Name if added after 28th Date.
(1).	(2).	(3).	(4).	(5).	(6).	(7).	(8).	(9).	(10).	(11).
372	19 35 Bethany Home Rathgar	[Redacted]	m	—	[Redacted]	—	M. L. Pilgrim Present at birth Bethany Home Rathgar	Twenty first 19 35	W. F. Harper Registrar	

1935

Bethany Home

mother

of

Dublin

Page deleted by Clann Project to protect confidentiality of witness

Grandma's Death Register of death

Peacock Lane Laundry Cork



Basanna a Cláríodh i gCeantar } i gCeantar an Chláraitheora-Maoirseachta } i gContae }

Deaths Registered in the District of } in the Superintendent Registrar's District of } in the County of }

Uimh. No.	Dáta agus áitead Éilí Date and Place of Death	Ainm agus Sloinne Name and Surname	Giúis Sex	Stáid Condition	Áis an lé breithe is déanaí Age last Birthday	Clóm, Giúis, nó St. Bheatha Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Cúis Bhíth Dhráistialle agus fad an tinnis Certified Cause of Death and Duration of Illness	Síniú, Cláríodh agus áitead Cóimhe An Fíorúcháir Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant	An áite a Cláríodh Who Registered	Síniú an Cláríodha Signature of Registrar
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
187	[Redacted] St Vincent's Convent St Mary's Rd. Cork	[Redacted]	Female	Single	[Redacted] yrs	Retired Laundry Worker	Myocardial Infarction - ves. Certified	Sister Joan O'Sullivan Occupier St Vincent's Convent St Mary's Road Cork	[Redacted]	[Redacted] Cláríodh Registrar

D.O.B [Redacted]
Died [Redacted] - Myocardial Infarction
Retired Laundry Worker - St Vincent's Convent, St Mary's Rd
Cork.

Worked in [Redacted] Hospital Dublin before
went into Magdalene Laundry (Peacock Lane) Cork

Dad was then taken to [Redacted] St. Diptara
Grandmother

[Redacted] 1938
[Redacted] 1938 by his

①

1914

Dad's mum back Register

Superintendent Registrar's District South Dublin Registrar's District W.B.M. Kelly

BIRTHS Registered in the District of W.B.M. Kelly in the Union of South Dublin
in the County of City of Dublin

No. (1.)	Date and Place of Birth. (2.)	Name (if any). (3.)	Sex. (4.)	Name and Surname and Dwelling-place of Father. (5.)	Name and Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother. (6.)	Rank or Profession of Father. (7.)	Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant. (8.)	When Registered. (9.)	Signature of Registrar. (10.)	Signature Name of Informant after Registration of Birth and Date. (11.)
326	1914 County Hospital	[redacted]	F	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	6 M 707 Lahone County Hospital	1914	[redacted]	[redacted]

Page 20

Dad's grandmother

[redacted] [redacted]

Dad's grandfather

[redacted]

[redacted]

1913

[redacted]

born 1888 Dad's Uncle
born 1890 - Dad's grandmother
born 1864 great great Dad's Uncle