

Witness Name: Hilary Price
Statement No: WITN3998001
Exhibits: **WITN3998002 - 004**
Dated: 03 February 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF HILARY PRICE

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 30 January 2020.

I, Hilary Price, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Hilary Price. My date of birth is GRO-C 1950. I live in GRO-C North Yorkshire with my husband Stephen, and we have two grown up children, Simon and Jennifer. Stephen and I met while at secondary school in GRO-C and we married in 1973, when I was 22 and a half years old.

2. I retired in 2013 after working for North Yorkshire County Council for over 26 years. My husband Stephen worked in the Army medical corps which meant that we moved around quite a lot, living in [GRO-C] Berlin and Edinburgh for some years.
3. I intend to speak about my father Michael John Maloney, who passed away on 05/12/1974. In particular, I intend to speak about how he came to receive 'jaundice infected blood', the illness he suffered as a result and his untimely death.
4. I can confirm that I have chosen not to have legal representation and that the Inquiry Investigator has explained the anonymity process to me. My family and I are not seeking anonymity.

Section 2. How Affected

5. My father was born on the [GRO-C] 1916 in [GRO-C] Wales. He was the eldest of 6 sons and a daughter. His father had come to Wales from Ireland, and the family were strong Catholics, sending my father and his siblings to a Catholic school.
6. After Dad left school, he went to a seminary in Belgium in order to train to become a Catholic priest. His sister had gone on to become a nun, but sadly she died of Tuberculosis during the war
7. The seminary in Belgium was run by the Society of African Missionaries, and I have in the past contacted them in order to find some records of Dad's time there. However, they have only been able to find some details about Dad's arrival at the seminary, and nothing about his time spent there or when exactly he left. I know he was 18 when he left home.

8. Dad left the seminary after a few years, maybe because World War II was starting. He returned to GRO-C for some time before moving to GRO-C
9. Dad's family in Wales have always held Dad in very high esteem, and a number of babies in the family have even been called Michael after him.
10. Dad trained to become a registered mental health nurse in GRO-C and this is when he met my mum who was doing the same training. They married in around GRO-C 1940, close to the beginning of the Second World War.
11. Dad was working at York City Hospital as a nurse at this time, but he decided to join the RAF. He did not need to do this as his job as a nurse exempted him from being conscripted, but he chose to sign up.
12. Dad was based at RAF Grimsby and was part of the 100 squadron. I have been to the museum that is now there, along with my son who idolises his grandfather and is very interested in our family history. Sadly, my son has no memories of my Dad as he died when my son was just 6 months old.
13. Dad initially trained to become a pilot and I have a logbook of the time he spent flying Tiger Moths as part of his training. However, he failed to pass the relevant tests so he trained to become a navigator instead.
14. In July 1943, dad had been navigating a flight, which had flown to Berlin on a bombing mission. When the plane was returning to England, they flew into an electrical storm that affected the navigation instruments, which rendered them useless.
15. Dad tried to navigate the plane back home manually, but mistakenly navigated the pilot to land at a strip, which was actually in France, near a place called Brest.

16. I've heard that as they were coming into land, the plane's brakes were not working properly and they nearly ran over a group of armed German soldiers that were stood guard at the end of the landing strip, as the pilot could not bring the plane to a stop.
17. The German soldiers captured dad when they landed in France. I have read that he had suffered a leg injury during the landing of the plane, but I'm not sure exactly what happened to him.
18. Dad was taken as a Prisoner of War (POW) to Stalag Luft 6. This was a POW camp in what was East Prussia at the time. He was kept there until the February of 1944 where he was moved to another camp further inland. In July 1944 he was moved to another camp in Toruń, Poland, as part of what is known as 'The Long Walk' and he stayed there until August 1944, when he was repatriated back to England in June 1945.
19. Dad was demobbed in January 1946 and returned home, and my sister was born in the GRO-C of 1946. Dad went back to work at York City Hospital as a State Registered Nurse (SRN) and did very well there, receiving a gold medal and various nursing awards in 1951, presented by the Countess of Feversham.
20. Dad left the City Hospital in 1953 aged 37, and started working as a charge nurse at the Grange Hospital in York, which was formerly the York Union Workhouse.
21. He then worked at Bootham Park Hospital from 1955 to 1963 as head tutor, teaching doctors and nurses. His final job before he died was as a deputy matron at The Retreat, a private hospital in York founded by William Tuke who was a Quaker. Dad was one of the first Roman Catholic members of staff they took on, but he had to follow their rules and their way of doing things.

22. In the [GRO-C] of 1974, I was newly married and living in [GRO-C] My son had recently been born, and would have been a few months old. One day around this time, mum came over to visit me and told me that Dad was going into York City Hospital to have an operation on his right kidney. We had previously seen Dad bent over in pain and holding his right side, so we realised that the kidney issues were probably why he had been feeling this way.
23. I later learned that Dad had been suffering from carcinoma of the right kidney, and this was why he needed the operation. During this major surgical procedure, it is very likely that he was given blood transfusions, which on reflection was contaminated with hepatitis. I am unsure as to whether his right kidney was removed during this operation, or whether they just attempted to remove the cancer.
24. I remember going to visit Dad in hospital after his operation, not long after this we moved to [GRO-C] so I was unable to go and see Dad after this, as we were so far away. We did not even have a phone in the army house we were living in, and it was difficult to keep in touch with my family.
25. I have a photo of Dad taken in the November of 1974, and he had lost a lot of weight following the surgery he had undergone that summer. As you can see by the picture he did not look that well by then. **Exhibit WITN3998004.**
26. On the 5th of December 1974, the date of my Dad's death, I received a knock on the door from some local police asking me to give my sister a call, as I did not have a phone and she was trying to contact me.
27. I went to a neighbour's house who did have a phone, and called my sister Maureen who told me that my dad was very unwell and we needed to go home to be with him.

28. My sister Maureen was living in Surrey at the time with her husband John Bishop and their young son, and she said they would come and pick us up from [GRO-C] as we did not have a car, and we could travel to [GRO-C] together.

29. During the long drive to Yorkshire, we stopped halfway for a break and my sister told my husband Stephen that Dad had actually already passed away. Stephen was left with the awful job of telling me the news, as I thought we were going to get to [GRO-C] and see Dad alive.

30. I had no real idea how or why dad had died so quickly. After his death, my mother mentioned that the blood he had been given during the operation was infected, and I learned that Dad had gone back into hospital as he had become jaundiced, dying there shortly after.

31. It is only recently when reading about the infected blood scandal and the Inquiry that I was able to understand what caused Dad's sudden death, and the link between the blood transfusion he was given and the jaundice he suffered. Stephen reminded me last night that when he went to see my dad in hospital after the operation he remembers him being quite yellow.

Section 3. Other Infections

32. I am not aware of what infections Dad was infected with as a result of infected blood he was given. As he died in 1974, it would not have been possible to test him for HIV or Hepatitis C. All I know is that he went yellow after his operation.

Section 4. Consent

33. Dad would have provided consent for the operation on his kidney, and this would have covered the possibility of needing to give him a blood transfusion in theatre. As the hospital was unlikely to have known

about the risks of infected blood at this stage, it is highly unlikely he was warned of any risks associated with a transfusion.

Section 5. Impact

34. Finding out that my Dad had died was very difficult to deal with. I had no idea that he had been as unwell as he was, and it was a real shock for me. I felt bad that we had been away in [GRO-C] and had not been able to keep in touch regularly for the last few months of Dad's life.

35. I believe a lot of information surrounding Dad's deteriorating health was kept from me. This may have been because I was young, and they felt that I would not be able to cope with moving away from [GRO-C] with my husband if I knew that Dad was so unwell.

36. Even once I got to [GRO-C] following Dad's death, I was not really involved in anything like funeral arrangements as I was staying with my in-laws which was one the other side of [GRO-C] as there was no room to stay at my family home with my sister and her family staying too.

37. My sister and ex brother-in-law (John Bishop) were very capable people, and seemed to deal with everything following Dad's death, including arranging the funeral and registering Dad's death. I just attended the funeral and likely missed out on a lot of the discussions going on at home about what had happened, and why Dad had died so suddenly.

38. I recently got in touch with my ex brother-in-law John Bishop, who I have not spoken to since he separated from my sister some 30 years ago, to find out more about the situation, and he replied by email (WIT3988003) saying:

'Now that you mention it, I do seem to recall that your mum was of the view that your Dad's death was advanced by reason of jaundice caught in the hospital. I do recall that when your Dad was diagnosed with the

cancer, he phoned to tell me. I think he said that the prognosis was that he would not live for more than a couple of years – but he died within, I think, about 12 weeks.'

39. I had no idea that Dad had been given just a few years to live, and had I known I would have made much more of an effort to visit him and get in touch more regularly after moving away.

40. I had left GRO-C on the day of Dad's death thinking I would see him shortly, and halfway there I found out I would never see him alive again.

41. Although Dad was jaundiced prior to his death, this was not included on his death certificate (See **WITN3998002**), and I am not sure if this is because they did not understand the impact of the jaundice on his health at the time, or whether they had chosen to leave this out. His causes of death are listed as:

1. a) *Bilateral bronchopneumonia*
b) *Carcinomatosis*
c) *Carcinoma Right Kidney*

42. As my mother knew that Dad was suffering from jaundice and other complications as the result of the infected blood he was given during the operation, it is likely that a doctor or nurse treating Dad may have mentioned this to her. If not, I'm unsure as to how she would have concluded on her own that the blood given to him had caused the jaundice.

43. Mum was only around 56 or 57 years old when Dad died. She continued to live in our family home which was a detached 3-bedroom house in GRO-C for a number of years, before buying a 2-bedroom flat

and moving to Surrey, in order to live closer to my sister and help out with her 5 children.

44. Although Mum had worked as a matron in an old people's home when we were younger, after Dad died her life was very mundane and she was just at home most of the time, following the same routine every single day. She did not even really maintain the relationships she had with her friends either, and spent much of her time alone. She was still quite young when Dad died, but she seemed to live like a much older person.

45. Sadly, Dad was not able to enjoy retirement after working so hard his whole life. However, as a result of my Dad's pension and other savings, Mum never had any financial concerns following Dad's death. He may have also had a life insurance policy that she benefited from, but I'm not sure about this.

46. Mum never really discussed the emotional and mental impact of Dad's death on her life, and I did not know much about what their relationship was like. They did have arguments sometimes and mum walked out on a few occasions. I later learned from my sister that she used to just go and sit in the garden shed to cool down when she walked out following an argument, but as a child I would be very upset that mum had left.

47. As a couple Mum and Dad seemed fine, but I don't think it was the easiest marriage, and she did not talk about how his death had affected her. Looking back and reflecting on his life now he must have been affected by the way he was treated when he was captured. We will never know the mental impact that that would have had on him. Understandably he may have not been the easiest of people to live with.

48. The only time I really remember Mum talking about Dad was when she and my nephew came to visit our family when we were living in Berlin. We took them to a viewing platform to see the Berlin Wall, which was

still up at the time. She said to my nephew that some of the bullet holes and the damage to the tenement buildings in the wall could have been made by his Grandad from his [GRO-C] We left the viewing platform very quickly after that, in case someone had heard her!

49. It is also difficult to know how my sister Maureen was impacted by Dad's death, as I saw her very rarely after we moved away from [GRO-C] I later learned from my mum that the visits we made to see her down in Surrey were always planned for when her husband John would be away, as he didn't like us being there and saw us as the 'poor relatives'.

50. John had come from money and was educated at a public school; he was a solicitor, whereas Maureen and I had grown up in a 2-bedroom house in [GRO-C] [GRO-D]
[GRO-D]

51. Maureen sadly died in 2005 as a result of ovarian cancer. If she had been alive she may have been able to give me more information about Dad's death.

52. I have always wanted to know more about what happened to Dad and why he died so suddenly, and this has played on my mind ever since Dad passed away. After reading about the infected blood scandal, it appears very likely that this was the cause of Dad's jaundice, and why his health deteriorated so quickly after the operation and transfusion.

53. I have looked into getting copies of Dad's medical records from York City Hospital, but having looked at the application form, I was under the impression that only the executor of Dad's estate or his legal representative could apply for them.

54. I asked my ex brother-in-law John about applying for Dad's records as I thought he might have been the executor of Dad's will, but he said he is not, so I felt stuck with regards to making an application for these records. Having spoken to the Investigator today, I am going to try and

apply for these records by letting the Hospital know I am his daughter, and I will see what happens.

55. I know it is unlikely the hospital will hold such old medical records due to destruction policies, but I want to try my best to find something that could explain what happened to Dad, and also try and find out what the doctors and nurses actually thought he was suffering from. As it is looking so far back, it will be difficult to prove anything, but I want to try and find out as much as I can for my own sake, and get rid of that niggling question about what happened to him.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

56. The cause of Dad's jaundice was not identified at the time of his death, but it was thought to be as a result of infected blood. There were no diagnostic tests or treatments available at the time of his death in 1974, so I do not believe he could have been treated for this.

57. I do not know if Dad was offered any counselling or psychological support to help cope with his poor health, and his short life expectancy.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

58. My family and I were not aware of any funds providing financial assistance to those affected and infected by contaminated blood. As Dad died so early on, he could not have been tested for HIV or Hepatitis C, so I am unsure as to whether we would have been able to make a claim for financial assistance. I am not looking for any financial benefit over dad's death, I just want to try and find out the truth.

Section 8. Other Issues

59. I want the Inquiry to acknowledge what happened to those who received infected blood, and the suffering they and their families have gone through.

60. I only want an apology for what happened to my Dad, and for those responsible to be held accountable. I am giving this statement so my Dad's amazing life is recognised, and it is known that it was cut short as a result of infected blood.

Schedule of Exhibits

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| WITN3998002 | Death certificate of Michael John Maloney. |
| WITN3998003 | Email from John Bishop to Hilary Price, discussing her father's advanced death due to Jaundice. |
| WITN3998004 | Photographs before Operation summer 1974. Second Photograph Post operation November 1974. |

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 3-2-2021