

Witness Name: Alan Murray

Statement No: WITN3589001

Exhibits: WITN3589002

Dated: 24/1/22 .

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

---

### WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GEORGE ALAN MURRAY

---

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 22 July 2019.

I, George Alan Murray, will say as follows: -

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is George Alan Murray and I'm 80 years old. My date of birth is the GRO-C GRO- 1941. I am retired now but I was in the Fire Service for 30 years, and I owned a business for 23 years.
2. I intend to speak about my father, Thomas Murray, who I believe was infected with HIV through a blood transfusion.

3. I am not legally represented, and I am happy for the Inquiry team investigators to assist me with my statement and I am happy for the story to be in the public domain.

## **Section 2. How Infected**

4. My Dad was born on GRO-C 1900. He was a councillor in Edinburgh, a hotelier, a politician, a trade union organiser... anything you like! He had a very full life.
5. He was very active. He was a healthy man all his life and travelled extensively.
6. When he was in his early eighties, a cyclist knocked him down when he was crossing the road in Edinburgh. He was shaken up by the incident and a chemist took him in. once he had regained his composure he got on with it. He did not receive any medical treatment at the time.
7. My father was living on his own then. But everyone in that community knew each other and look out for each other.
8. After the accident, he had a large black bruise on his hip and leg. We all get bruises but this bruise didn't disappear. It stayed there. I think it caused him pain but my father wasn't one to complain.
9. After a while, his GP in Horne Terrace in Edinburgh looked into it and found out it was to do with his platelet levels. I can't recall the time frames but some time later dad was admitted to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary for a blood transfusion.
10. The bruising on his leg was not given a particular diagnosis. He had no other treatment that I am aware of other than the transfusion.
11. He came out of hospital for a short spell, but he deteriorated and went back in again. After the second admission he did not come back out.

12. He was in hospital for a few months before he died. He had travelled to China in the past and had another trip planned but was not able to go. I remember he wrote that years Burns speech for his local club from his hospital bed.
13. He gradually deteriorated over that period. He was mentally with it right until the end but he was in bed all the time. He had no strength, no energy but he had medical students visiting him so his case must have been of some interest.
14. You take the blood for granted. The first I knew about the seriousness of it was when I asked the consultant whose name I don't recall for the prognosis, and whether my father was coming out. In those days you're more pragmatic than you are nowadays. He said he wasn't coming out.
15. He died on 9 February 1983. The same surgeon said he died as a result of the blood transfusion being contaminated. His death certificate shows Leukemia and Bronchopneumonia as the cause of death. **(See Exhibit WITN3589002)**
16. I was in The Royal Infirmary at the same time for a minor operation. I remember talking to the doctor and mentioning my father was in for a transfusion and he just laughed. You take these things for granted as visitor at the bedside but it's different as a patient.
17. There wasn't a conversation with doctors about why he passed away so quickly. In those days you simply accepted the explanation you were given. He was in the General Ward. They didn't say anything out of the ordinary about blood tests he had underwent whilst in the hospital. I don't remember my father complaining about ever being unwell so it is difficult to say if he was affected by anything other than the bruising prior to him going into hospital
18. It is my recollection and that of our family members that he was given a contaminated blood transfusion, and he died from HIV/AIDS. He did not mention

anything about this infection to me but he may have told one of his sisters which is why the family ended up having this belief.

19. He never mentioned that they told him there was a risk from the transfusion and it is not something that the doctors discussed with me. There was never any suggestion that I or other family members be tested.

20. My father never gave blood. He didn't have any other transfusions, nor tattoos. He didn't have any medical treatment abroad. He never took drugs. He was an intellectual. If as I believe he had contracted HIV it could only have been as a result of that transfusion to treat the bruising.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

21. I am not aware of any other infections.

### **Section 4. Consent**

22. I don't think my father was in a position to consent to the blood transfusion, things were different back then. I don't believe that he would have known that his blood was being tested in relation to HIV.

### **Section 5. Impact**

23. I was 56 when my dad died. The impact on me was that I lost my father, my friend. I was on my night shift when someone called me and told me he had passed away.

24. It was expected to a degree as the surgeon had told me he wasn't coming out. Consultants didn't say much in those days and they didn't make a big deal out of these things. It was a shock when I was given the prognosis but what can you

do? I couldn't let my father see that it had affected me. He needed to stay strong to fight on as best he could.

25. We weren't even really aware of AIDS in the early 80s, but I think I suspected it. After he passed away we just didn't talk about it. There was a lot of stigma attached to the infection at that time and the Government poster campaigns were getting underway. There wasn't much discussion after the funeral with the family just going their separate ways. I do know there were no issues in having his body released from the hospital.
26. I think he was such a realist that he wouldn't want anyone to be upset. At the time it was a shock. Although you know it's going to happen... but it's still always a shock when it does.
27. It didn't affect me financially. We have never made any claim in respect of my father's death and this is not about money.
28. I have a feeling in the back of my mind that I approached a firm about medical records. I'm not sure, but I think they said they don't have them now. If there was anything on the records, it wouldn't be a surprise for them to get rid of them.
29. There was full front-page obituary in the Scotsman newspaper. It was by a journalist from Edinburgh who was well known. It was a fitting tribute to my dad. It didn't mention AIDS or the cause of death.
30. There are books written that pay tribute to his exploits. He appears on the cover of one which is attached below for information. He fought in Spain during the civil war with his brother and sister who was a nurse in the field hospitals. He survived that experience and went on to travel widely. For the life he led and for a man of his stature it was such a poor way to go.

### **Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support**

31. As far as I am aware he was never given any treatment of any type but simply looked after in the ward. I don't think they actually knew much about it.

### **Section 8. Other Issues**

32. It was an unfortunate episode in the history of the NHS. It happened to so many people and if what is said is true then it could so easily have been avoided.

33. My father's experience didn't dent our faith in the NHS. I've been waiting for a knee operation for the last two years – that has!

34. If they ever did something about the people who died... I'd like my father's name to be recognized along with the others. Otherwise, it's just happened without any record and that is not right at all. If there was to be any financial compensation paid out, I would be happy to accept it with a view to passing it on to a charity.

### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

24/1/22.

Scotland and the Spanish Civil War

# HOMAGE TO CALEDONIA

DANIEL GRAY

Foreword by Tony Benn