

Memories of punishment in the institution

(Extracts from *No Going Back – Forgotten Voices from Prudhoe Hospital*; reproduced with kind permission)

“I was on Grade 5 then I went right down to Grade 1 and I lost my temper with the nurse. I thumped his lug in 1995. I had to go to my room for 10 minutes. Then I got a needle off the doctor. You couldn’t go anywhere unless you were on grade 5 and then you could go anywhere you liked, we used to go out to Prudhoe shops. I got my money from the nurse, he ran it.”

“When I worked myself I got the needle sometimes. I didn’t put ink on the carpet it wasn’t me – I didn’t have a pen. I didn’t have any pen in my room.”

“If I worked myself I would have to go to my room and stay there. I wet the doctor’s trousers off his suit, he put me in the corner and told me off. I just knocked the table, it was an accident, that wasn’t good – it was bad.”

“I used to get injections and sleeping tablets and all sorts, I got injections for my temper, because I hate people hitting people who can’t do anything for themselves.”

“Before your birthday they would take a bit of blood from your finger and they used to examine you. They would listen to your chest and that and take blood. They sent me to another hospital, I can’t remember where it was, but it was a children’s hospital the ill people went. People who got knocked over and that. I can remember getting carried into this hospital and I had nobody to come and see me. I was crying because everybody could see me. My mother didn’t come and see me; I didn’t get presents off her or anything.”

“I moved to Seguin when I was 14, Seguin was a new ward, and it will be pulled down now. We used to get moved around a lot. They put me back on Ash Villa and that’s when I started to get good hidings because I saw other people getting belted.”

“M was a bad tempered old lady. She was pulling my plaits and her glass eye fell out on my lap. I screamed a lot – they gave me an injection to calm me down. I used to kick at them when they tried to give me an injection. I was scared and didn’t want to be a zombie. It’s like being asleep but you are awake.”

“Well they’ve got a punishment room which I went in. They put the shutters down and you wear one of these strong gowns – you know so you couldn’t tear it and all they’ve got is a mattress. Well I used to shred it to ribbons didn’t I?”

Keilty, T. and Woodley, K. (2013) *No Going Back – Forgotten Voices from Prudhoe Hospital*, The Centre for Welfare Reform, pp. 68-69.