

## MY STORY – SO MUCH TO TELL



My story begins on 6 September 1932 when I was born to an unmarried 19 year old. My mother had no support from her family, so when I was born at Crown Street Womens' Hospital, I stayed there till I was one month old. I was then taken to Myee Children's Home at Arncliffe and made a State Ward.

I remained at Myee till I was 18 months old and was then fostered by the ~~Newman~~ family of Campsie. Neighbours have told me that my mum used to come and visit me on week-ends and I would cry when she was leaving so Mrs ~~Newman~~ told the Welfare Department that these visits would have to stop as they were upsetting me. The Welfare Department should have known of the bond that I had with my mother, that I was fretting for her, and wanted her to stay with me.

As I was growing up, I never felt part of this family but I was always led to believe that I was their own flesh and blood. It was not until both my parents had died that the true story emerged and I finally realised why I never felt close to my mum and why I was treated the way I was. I had grown to hate my mum because of the way I had been treated and I always felt I was unwanted.

When growing up, my mum never showed me any love. She would say things like 'if Miriam was here, she'd be good', 'she would do as she was told'. Apparently she had had a stillborn daughter and I was to replace this child – little did I know at the time.

I regarded myself as being an unpaid slave as from an early age, I had to do all the housework while my friends were out playing. I felt like a robot and if the tasks I was set were not done properly (or just for any reason like talking when I wasn't spoken to or looking sideways) my punishment would be the jug cord or feather duster around my legs and backside. If I tried to escape this abuse, I would get more and harder.

My friend's father used to mend shoes and one day she got sent over to deliver the shoes to our house. Mrs Newman was flogging me when Mary came in and she was so scared that she ran home with the shoes. She said to her mother 'come quick you have to help Fay' but her mother's reply was 'no, we can't interfere in other people's lives'. Mr Troy, another neighbour, repeatedly heard the abuse and talked about wanting to dob her in to the Welfare but this was never done.

I grew up a frightened, confused little girl with no self-esteem or self-worth. My schooling suffered because of the abuse. I have been told by the neighbours that when I was six or seven years of age, I took my little school bag with a pair of socks and panties in it and went to the Troys who lived across the road and asked if I could live with them.

When I was young I couldn't figure out why I felt hatred towards Mrs Newman. I thought about this as I got older but I could not help feeling this way. I was never really a naughty child as I was too frightened of her.

I was never allowed to be a child and play. I remember going outside one day and dancing. I was feeling so happy when Mrs Newman came out and said "Stop that silly nonsense". I was made to go inside. This made me feel like I had been doing something really bad.

When I achieved something at school, I would be excited and run home to tell Mrs Newman only to be greeted with 'change your clothes, clean your shoes and wash your socks and undies. She was never interested in what I did.

I do remember trying to get back on Mrs Newman. When she used to send me with the billy to get the milk, I would drink some of it on the way home and add water out of the tap at the side of the house. I felt smart that I was able to get my own back in a small way.

Mr Newman was a good man but Mrs Newman ruled the roost. She was the boss and he used to keep out of her way. He used to get me out of the house to save me – this is all he could do. I would sit down the back with him. I loved this time and no one would ever take his place.

In 1974, after both my parents had died, I was told that I was not actually a Newman and on investigation, I found that the Newmans had fostered me.

At the age of 17 the Newmans adopted me. There was no provision for me in their will, everything went to their son. I was to find out that my real mother died in 1963 at 49 years of age, so now I also carry the grief of never knowing her. I took myself off and sat by her grave and wondered if I looked like her. Finally, I was able to track down a half brother and sister and was able to see that I was very much like my mum in photos.

If I had known that the Newmans wanted to adopt me at 17 and that I was not their real child, I would have objected because of the life I was forced to lead. I don't know why this woman fostered children as she was so mean and nasty to me. She punished me all the time and put me down and the emotional, psychological and physical abuse I suffered, will stay with me forever. Where was the Child Welfare? Why didn't they do checks?

Life has been very unfair to me as I had three sons and two have died. One grandson has also died.

I will go to my grave hating this woman who was paid 10 shillings a week and got a servant.

It is too painful to go back in my mind because I learned early in life to block things out so I was not hurt more. I still get very emotional to-day, so a lot of my story stays buried. This is how I have survived.

Ruby Fay Glase

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. F. Glase". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.