

Thursday, 21 November 2018

(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH. Good morning. Now Mr MacAulay as promised we have brought a witness today who's evidence is actually relevant to the child migrant programme but it is most convenient to take his evidence now, I think. Is that right?

COLIN MacAULAY. That is the case my Lady and I'm calling Roderick Donaldson Mackay.

LADY SMITH. Good morning.

RODDY MACKAY. Good morning.

LADY SMITH. If you raise your right hand and repeat after me.

RODERICK DONALDSON MACKAY (sworn)

LADY SMITH. Are you comfortable with being called Roddy or would you prefer Mr Mackay, I am happy to use either?

RODDY MACKAY. I would prefer Roddy.

LADY SMITH. If that works for you, it works for me. I can hear that you are probably in a really good position for that microphone which is important and during the course of your evidence if I ask you to move closer to it or further back from it, it is not a criticism it is just that it really matters that we get it right and everybody can hear you.

RODDY MACKAY. I understand.

LADY SMITH. I will now hand over to Mr MacAulay and he will explain what happens next.

COLIN MacAULAY. Good morning Roddy.

RODDY MACKAY. Good morning.

Q. Can I just take from you that you were born on the [REDACTED] 1934.

A. I was.

Q. And if my arithmetic is up to it, you are 84.

A. I am.

Q. In the red folder in front of you, you will find your statement, that is a statement that you have already provided to the Inquiry. I am going to give the reference of the statement for the transcript and that is WIT.001.001.3450. Could I ask you to look at the last page and that is page 3485. Can you confirm that you have signed the statement?

A. That is my signature.

Q. Do you also tell us in the last paragraph that you have no objection to your witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry? Is that correct?

A. That's right.

Q. And you go on to say that I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

A. I do.

Q. As Her Ladyship just mentioned a moment ago Roddy, you are here to give evidence as part of what we call the child migrant case study and in particular that part of that case study that relates to Canada. That is your understanding isn't it?

A. It is.

Q. And that is because you were migrated as a child to Canada?

A. Yes.

Q. I will be looking at your life in Canada but before that I want to explore with you, your life insofar as you can remember it, first of all in Scotland and then at a place called Middlemore where you went before you went to Canada. Do you understand that?

A. I do.

Q. Now so far as your life in Scotland is concerned, and it may be that this has been constructed after the event, [REDACTED] Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. And at a point in time do you remember going into care in Scotland?

A. In Scotland?

Q. Yes.

A. I really don't. It was only through documents that I saw much later in my life when I was searching for my brothers that I saw Fife. I had no recollection.

Q. No recollection. But before we come to that I think it is the case and it is your understanding that your mother and your father separated and it was your father who [REDACTED]

A. Yes.

Q. Can I then try and get some dates, I will do this by reference to documents and I will put a document on the screen for you. If you could look at BCC on the screen 001.001.0326. Now is this one of the documents you, yourself saw when you made some investigations much later on in your life?

A. I don't recall.

Q. This is a document in any event that the Inquiry has recovered in connection with your time at Middlemore. And can you see that it is addressed to the Secretary, Fairbridge Farm Schools and we're given a London address. Do you see that?

A. I see that.

Q. And the date on this document is 22 July 1940, do you see that?

A. That is correct.

- Q. And essentially it is a document that is certifying that you have not been in contact with any infection and it is signed. Do you see that?
- A. There is one part on there I don't understand. I remember the part where it says Roderick MACKAY, Dundee. I don't know where that came from.
- Q. Unfortunately the bit that has been blanked out makes reference to East Newport which is in Fife, where Dundee comes from I am not too sure but leaving that confusion aside it does appear to be a document that is certifying that you have not been in contact with infection.
- A. I was quite firm about telling everybody that I was from Edinburgh.
- Q. It is a mystery I think isn't it Roddy as to how it came to be that your home was in Edinburgh but you were placed in care, according to the records that we have seen, somewhere in Fife and that is your own understanding that it was somewhere in Fife that you were in care. Can we take from this document that it does appear by the 22nd of July 1940 you were in care in Scotland?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And that would tell us I think, therefore that you were aged 6 at this time?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Now the next document I want you to look at and I think you do have some familiarity with this document and that is at WIT.003.001.3047. It'll come up. Now just get your bearings. You will see that this is headed "Commonwealth & Settlement Office, Migration & Settlement Office". Do you see that at the top?
- A. This one I am very familiar with because it has a statement on there that just shook me up.
- Q. And I am going to take you through it Roddy. Is this a document that you recovered yourself from Fairbridge records that were at that time being held in Birmingham?
- A. Right.
- Q. Let's then look at it, can we see first of all your name, MACKAY Roderick, do you see that?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Again part of the address has been blanked out but can we see the word Fifeshire this time?
- A. Yes.
- Q. That is at least part of the reason why you thought you were in care in Fife before you went to Middlemore?
- A. Exactly. I did discuss it with my older brother but he was reluctant to talk about anything in the past, particularly the family break-up.
- Q. If we carry on looking at the document you will see that there are a number of questions, particularly in relation to matters in relation to health. Towards the

bottom we see your age is given, your height and weight and do we see then the date 24 July 1940 towards the end?

A. Yes.

Q. And can we also see the certification just before that is "I certify that I have this day examined the above named and I am of the opinion that he is in good health and of sound constitution and not suffering from any mental or bodily defect which would unfit him from earning his own living as a labourer". Do you see that?

A. That's the one that I find difficult to swallow.

Q. Can you explain why?

A. Well not on a personal level but it was this form that was used for anyone and to make a statement at that age 5, 6, whatever that they are fit for labour. I mean, it was a form but it annoys me.

LADY SMITH: As you say, you were only 6 years old.

A. Yes.

LADY SMITH: And it wasn't just certifying your fitness to be a labourer but your fitness to earn your own living as a labourer. Is that right?

A. Yes. As I say I don't take it personally because this is the form that was used. I saw it with other Fairbridgians. All these documents came later in my life. At school I never saw them and didn't know anything about it, and frankly it was when I was searching for my brothers and so it came later. And the second part of it, the signature of the applicant which must be made was roughly signed by my brother, Rob.

Q. Can I just pause there, unfortunately for us looking at it on the screen that part has been blanked out. I have handed over to you a copy of the form which is not blanked out and as you have just pointed out there is a section dealing with signature and can we see the words "ROB" in that part. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. Moving on from that is there another signature there as well?

A. Yes, Wilhamina MACKAY who was my sister and both of them were just children at the time when I was being made...

Q. And just to be clear, I think at that time your sister might have been about 10 in 1940?

A. Well I was 6, I thought I was 5 when this was going on, but I guess was 6 and so, Minnie was 4 years older. My brother was about 5.

Q. Your sister...

A. Pardon me, he wasn't 5 he would have been about 10 or 11.

Q. Your brother might have been about 10 or 11 and Minnie your sister was about 9, 10. So the point I think you are making is that they are young children and they were being asked to sign this form.

- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know what the purpose.....
- A. Like as parents, almost, and I am on the bottom there signing it too.
- Q. So far as any role played by your father was concerned, do you know whether or not your father played any part of this in connection with the proposed migration, which this is all
- A. I don't. To be honest I assumed that...I knew that...or at the time I didn't know what had happened to my mother. I mean I spent years telling people that she died during the war because I never heard from her and nobody ever told me anything about her. My father was writing letters to me so I knew that he was alive and so I assumed that he could not handle the situation and had turned us over to welfare or whatever...
- Q. The other point I want to take from you with this form you will see the date stamp on it as well and we can see the date there as 24 July 1940?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Now we know from records that you moved from wherever you were in Fife to Middlemore, which was in England.
- A. Yes, Birmingham.
- Q. Birmingham. Do you have any recollection of the journey to Middlemore?
- A. No, I really don't. I just...I've said many times I explained of my memories of Scotland. Barring one vague memory that I had to bring up to my brother one time. I said, I can't remember anything of Edinburgh. I do remember sometime we were on a beach and I was on your back and the next thing I knew we were in the police station. I don't know what happened from there and that is about the only memory I have of Edinburgh. It was almost like my life began at Middlemore Home as far as memory...and that.
- Q. Can we then move on and look at life at Middlemore and again try and get some dates and put it in context. I will put another document on the screen for you and if we could look at BCC.001.001.0347. So here we are looking at what bears to be a letter headed Fairbridge Farm Schools and as you can see it is dealing with what is referred to as case number 4694 which makes reference to you and we can see that your name is there Roderick MACKAY. The number 6 had been put in and scored out and number 7 has been put in. Unfortunately again the next bit has been redacted but the date given, the date of birth is given as the [REDACTED] 1933. Do you see that? That's your understanding?
- A. I see the year.
- Q. You see the year. You can take it from me that the month given is [REDACTED] 1933 which is plainly wrong, that was not your date of birth, but can we see from the last line that you were admitted to Middlemore on the 5th of July 1940.
- A. Yes. That's...I don't recall seeing this particular document. If I did I have forgotten because people ask, "when did you go to Middlemore?" and I was never quite sure. I knew I was there in '40, '41 but that was after the fact. So anyways...

- Q. Again this is a document that has been recovered by the Inquiry and I am just trying to get a context in relation to time. So seeing, for example, that you were in Fife on 24 July 1940 you are admitted to Middlemore on 25 July 1940, a day later, and can we see that at this point in time that towards the bottom of this letter that the plan is that you are to go to Canada and the date given to go to Canada is projected to be 18 October 1941? Do you see that towards the bottom?
- A. Yes I see that.
- LADY SMITH. So that is written just a week after the previous document. Is that right? The previous one was the 24th of July.
- Q. That is correct. The final date here is 31st of July.
- LADY SMITH. And that looks like that is the date of this letter and the previous one came from the Commonwealth of Australia Migration Settlement Office, did it?
- A. Yes. It did.
- LADY SMITH. Yes, and a week later we have got Fairbridge writing saying that they will take you. Quoting that "you are a good type of boy".
- A. Well I don't know about that. I didn't realise that...until just now that a week later I had gone from going to Australia to Canada. You know, I remember as a youth I didn't know...people said, "Did they ask you, did they ask you about going to Canada?" and I said I don't really recall but it would be like asking me would I mind going to Timbuktu. I had no idea, no concept about the geography of the world, period.
- Q. What appears to be the case Roddy is that you had been ear marked for migration?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And do we see from the letter on the screen that your sister went with you to Middlemore.
- A. That is correct. I remember Minnie being with me. I know I must have worried about what happened to Rob...
- Q. It does appear that he did not go with you to Middlemore. Can I ask you to look at this next document. This is BCC.001.001.0327. So this is again headed Fairbridge Farm Schools and it is addressed to a Mr Plenderlith and it is dated 31st July 1940, the same date as the document which we looked at a moment ago. Can you see that this relates to yourself Roddy and it reads, "I confirm that Roderick was examined by Dr Jefferson and Mr Carey on 29 July but was not approved for immediate migration on account of his age. He appeared to be quite satisfactory and he will come forward for re-examination later". Do you see that? Were you aware at that point in time that because of your age you were not being approved for migration?
- A. No I didn't know that.
- Q. Now, you mentioned earlier that you became aware in particular of your father having correspondence with you and were you aware also that he corresponded with Middlemore?

- A. He was...I did pick up some correspondence that he had had back and forwards. They were mostly financial statements or something between my father and Fairbridge.
- Q. If we look at this document it is BCC.001.001.0333. You will see that this is dated the 20th August 1940, it is addressed to Mr R M MACKAY. The address has been blanked out but can we see that it reads, "Thank you for sending postal order for 6 shillings towards the support of your children. Glad to tell you that they are both well and happy". Can you see, therefore, that this is acknowledging the sum of money that your father has sent for your keep?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Could I ask you to look at this letter also. It is BCC.001.001.0328. This is a letter, I think we can take it that it was written by your father to Middlemore, and he begins by saying, "Dear Sir, I take this opportunity of thanking you for the consideration that you have shown to my children, Roderick and Minnie". Do you see that?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Had you seen this letter before today?
- A. I have a feeling I have. When I went to Birmingham I picked up a lot of copies.
- Q. This was when you were an adult?
- A. Yes. I wouldn't have seen this letter because I had no idea of the other two children. That came much later in my life. So no...
- Q. The reference to the other two children was that your father raised the possibility of your younger brothers joining you. Is that the point you are making?
- A. I don't think I could have seen this letter, I am pretty sure I couldn't because I would have known much earlier about William and Alex. I didn't really know anything until my elder brother in 1971 came to visit and asked if William and Alex came to Fairbridge and I looked at him and I said, "Who is Alex and William?" He looked at me like I was a little off and he said, "Your younger brothers" and I said, "You are the only brother I have got". So this letter, I don't recall ever seeing that.
- Q. I will look later how you came to find that you did have other siblings from those that you knew of. The one thing that I want to pick up with you in this letter is that can you see towards the end that your father is uttin forward your date of birth and what he says is "Roderick's birthday is [REDACTED] 1933" and that was not correct.
- A. Right. I celebrated my birthday for years at Fairbridge and they had the correct year date but the month was March.
- Q. Again and we will see this later it was only when you sought to get your birth certificate when you were joining the army that you discovered your true date of birth.
- A. Yes.
- Q. What age were you then?

A. [REDACTED] 1934.

Q. But what age were you when you discovered your true date of birth?

A. I was 17.

LADY SMITH. I see from that letter that your father refers to money that he was previously paying to the evacuation authorities. I suppose that might fit with you being evacuated out of the city after the outbreak of war to the countryside hence Fife. It is possible that was what happened.

A. I was kind of confused with the whole thing. I didn't have any memory of it. In fact when that first came up, I was supposed to be going to Australia, and then whatever time it was later, I knew I went to Canada not Australia. So I don't know what determined...well I guess this is their saying that I was not fit, health-wise, somewhere along the way.

Q. No, I think it was age that delayed the.....You were at Middlemore for over a year and I will come to look at that period of time in a moment. Can I just put this photograph on the screen. It is at WIT.003.001.3728. Can you tell us what we are looking at here Roddy?

A. That was on a visit back to the UK, I was staying with a family who had actually assisted me, [REDACTED] was at Fairbridge and he had a very bad time and found his way back to England and had knew a father who helped him get through his school and everything else and he became quite successful. Anyways, I was visiting. His wife was a social worker in Birmingham. She's gone now. A lovely lady and she was the first one to tell me when I was searching for my brothers that my records would be in Birmingham archive. I tried for years at the archives of Victoria where many of my school mates found their records. I found a record with 2 pages which told me nothing and so we went to visit Middlemore. It was a beautiful day, I remember that and it was sunny. A far different recollection that I'd carried throughout my life. I was thinking more like the grey disastrous looking sad building, like it would be for the war and the old black and white thing. Anyway, [REDACTED] took a picture of me, and it looks like I need to take a little weight off.

Q. This is a picture of you pointing out Middlemore and I think what you are saying is, it wasn't the image of the building that you had from your.....what was the difference in that?

A. I suppose it was...you know...I can't speak for other people...but when a building stands in your memory as not too a happy place to be in, it will be grey and dismal. We were going through bombings just about every evening. I don't remember being terrified but I do remember it unsettling and getting up in the middle of the night, or whatever, and being single filed by the matron down to the basement and I have a couple of stories to tell on that, if you have time. But anyways, it was not exactly a place of joy for me.

Q. And we must remind ourselves, of course, that this was war time. Can I look a moment or two with you then Roddy at your time in Middlemore because as we will see shortly that you were there until you left in October 1941. So from July 1940 to October 1941, can you just tell us a little bit about your memories and what life was like?

A. It was like my life began...it was so vague about what happened to the family. I didn't know anything about it. I had Minnie which was some comfort to me. It was just like a huge orphanage where you lined up for everything and they inspected your scalp and sometimes put this real stinging whatever

it was on our scalps. Getting the cod liver oil which for children was no treat but if you swallowed it down as you're supposed to you had a little teaspoon of treacle to follow. I remember the gas mask and I remember looking out at night at the barrage balloons. And we'd all be rooting for the German planes to run into one. I remember mornings I was going out into the field looking for shrapnel and bombs if we could find them. Which is about as crazy as you can think. I certainly wouldn't have done that as an adult, but kids are kids. It comes back to me when I see television and children of today, throwing stones at tanks, things like that. You have no concept of the terror that they are in. That is kind of where I was with it.

Q. The regime itself would you describe it, how would you describe the regime and how you were being treated by those in charge?

A. It was very strict and it was the matron that used the belt to keep us in line. There was nowhere to go. I think [REDACTED] an old school mate of mine, the same age and everything who has a remarkable memory, he recalls a time we went out to the country or something from Middlemore for a weekend or something. I think I wrote a bit in the book. For the better part, Middlemore wasn't a pleasant place from my memory.

Q. But you made friendships there...you made friendships at Middlemore?

A. It started with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had a Scottish father and I always believed that [REDACTED] was Scottish. We became pals. I gave some evidence of [REDACTED] was 2 years older and had a far brighter memory of what happened to us in Middlemore. Things like how they handled wetting the bed. It was cruel.

Q. I think you have told us that your sister was with you at Middlemore but she was not migrated ultimately?

A. And I felt the loss of that.

Q. And when you came to be migrated you were separated from her?

A. Yes.

Q. Well can I then look at the migration aspect of your life Roddy. You left Liverpool according to the records, left from Liverpool for Canada according to the records on the 20th of October 1941. Is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Before you left, what information were you given as to where you were going?

A. Well I really...in fairness to everybody...I don't recall and I am sure if I had at that point, as I have said, I wouldn't have known Canada from Timbuktu. Some of the older boys and girls that I talked to said that they were told that they were going to Canada but I had no idea. I think my hardest part of that was the separation from my sister, it was like now I have no family.

Q. Can you remember what sort of preparations there were to get you ready to go to Canada?

A. Oh I remember a little suitcase that had. I think from one of the records I saw every item that was listed from pyjamas to toothpaste which was a little round brick like cake and which was new to us. I don't know if we just brushed our teeth with a brush....

- LADY SMITH. Was it in a tin, Roddy, the solid cake for your teeth was it in a tin?
- A. Yes.
- LADY SMITH. What colour was it?
- A. I have no idea.
- LADY SMITH. Blue, pink, you don't remember?
- A. I don't remember that one. It was just...I think kids just pick up on one thing. There's all kinds of bigger things happening around them, and yet here I can remember this stupid little brick toothpaste.
- LADY SMITH. And you had to wet your toothbrush and rub it on the cake to try and get some paste on?
- A. Probably they didn't have toothpaste in those days...I don't know maybe I should Google it.
- Q. You have this suitcase and a number of items are put in it.
- A. We had an evacuation type thing that you see in the movies, your name and that, who you are.
- Q. You describe that in your statement as a string round your neck like a luggage tag. Did that have your name and where you were going?
- A. Exactly. Yes.
- Q. What about personal papers, was there any personal papers that you can remember that you were to take?
- A. No.
- Q. Can I ask you to look at a photograph for me then Roddy? Can you to look please at WIT.003.001.8112? Now I think you will recognise this photograph. Am I right in that?
- A. That is when I was on the ship at the dock. It is Liverpool. That is on board the SS Bayano which was the ship we went on.
- Q. The caption tells us, "the twelfth party aboard on board the SS Bayano, photo courtesy of Roddy MACKAY".
- A. Yes.
- Q. The source of this photograph, was that one of the Fairbridge magazines?
- A. No it was actually one of the little gremlins that is in this line up, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] came to one of the school reunions and he had a whole stand of photos that I had never seen. We could order copies which...I received my order and that was one of the photos and there were several...3 or 4 others of being on the ship.
- Q. I think I put it the wrong way round, you got the photograph and you provided the Fairbridge magazine with the photograph to be put in one of the publications.

- A. Yes. Right.
- Q. If we look at this photograph can we see the children and if we count from right to left, are you fifth along from right to left?
- A. Yes, the sour...the guy that....well maybe he's just wondering what hell is going on. Sorry.
- Q. This party is described as party 12 and are we told if we look to the left that there were 16 children in the party and the names are given. Do you see that?
- A. Right. Yes.
- Q. And you will recognise no doubt some of these names?
- A. Yes. The one with the white scarf is the one I'm talking about, [REDACTED] We became very good friends.
- Q. You have also mentioned [REDACTED] who is mentioned....
- A. [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] brothers, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] they are gone, and [REDACTED] We became good friends because at one time or another we all...I think at the beginning six of us in that line-up went into one cottage and of course we'll talk about that later.
- Q. Can you see if we look at the numbers and who they are that there were ten boys and six girls in the group?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And just on that were there adults with you to care for you on the trip?
- A. There was. The only one that I can remember was Reverend Buckingham. I know that there were two or three others but I don't recall their names.
- Q. Can we see towards the top left that the information given is that sixteen children arrived at Fairbridge on November 8th, 1941. Do you see that?
- A. Yes.
- Q. So you leave Liverpool on 20 October 1941 and a number of weeks later you are at Fairbridge?
- A. Yes.
- Q. If we look at the bottom half of this document you can see that there is another photograph and again counting from right to left do we see that you are fifth from the front?
- A. Yes. I've got half a smile now.
- Q. We are told here that "The twelfth party aboard the RMS Bayano, photo courtesy of [REDACTED]". We have actually been provided with a photograph of the ship. Do you see that towards the bottom....
- A. Yes.
- Q. I will just read the caption "RMS Bayano was a true banana boat. It was launched in 1917 and scrapped in 1956. it was called the Lucky Bayano as it

made more Atlantic crossings during World War II than any other merchant ship, a total of 52." Do you see that?

A. Yes.

Q. One of these trips was of course the trip that you were on and we have to remind ourselves that you are crossing the Atlantic during wartime.

A. Yes. Which also brought up a factor which when I started to research all of this...I started looking at it and I read a book, the Benares. A ship that was taking children from private homes, it wasn't child migrants like ours and that ship...it was quite a story because it includes the bravery of a couple of young kids that was remarkable but it was sunk and it lost, I can't recall the number, but a major part of those kids that were on that ship. Now I am not thinking that at the time, by any means, this is later when I started thinking and Churchill had a meeting, I think with an organisation called CORB that was behind that one, and they had a meeting and he rejected the concept of sending children across the Atlantic because of the infestation of submarines. And yet even after...ok so here we are just not too many months after that sinking they put us on a ship.

Q. And did you discover afterwards whether or not the convoy that you were travelling in across the Atlantic was attacked?

A. Yes it was. The convey was not only attacked, one ship was sunk and another one so badly damaged that they had to tow it in. It is just the luck of the draw that torpedoes didn't hit the freighter because in those days submarines had...their order was to hit anything. That kind of infuriated me with the fact that they were doing that with children. Just like they couldn't care less. There were safer places to put us, let's put it that way.

Q. I think what you are saying Roddy is that it seems to you that it was an unnecessary risk to ferry you across the Atlantic when there were submarines.

A. Yes and it was common knowledge. The Admiralty certainly knew it. How the Fairbridge organisation...maybe it was because of the child migrant scheme...maybe it was ok to send children. Maybe the CORB organisation that was responsible for sending that first boat that had sunk, maybe it was that...I guess what I am saying is oddly parents who were sending their ship to relatives were probably far more cautious after that happened, whereas with us, I don't know if they were concerned.

Q. As for the trip itself was concerned Roddy, what is your recollection of the trip across the Atlantic?

A. Well I wrote an essay that a teacher brought to one of the reunions. I have a copy of it in the book, I think. I shot down a jerry plane, I shot the driver and then they made me a commander of the British Navy.

Q. So your imagination was running riot?

A. Yes, but we were, once again, I wasn't worried about the submarines. I didn't know about submarines I had no idea...I might have thought much differently but I didn't know. I remember games on the deck and the sailors hanging us over the side and they gave us some Canadian money which we instantly threw away because we didn't know it was worth anything. Once again I didn't have feelings of terror. I know I got sea sick because at that time on the Atlantic would be pretty foul weather. It was more of a bonding with these guys that I had met at Middlemore and now I am on a ship with. So as we say

we became the shipments of the Bayano. You know we have a magazine in which we show each party. When I was President of the Fairbridge Association I had a magazine made up. If you look at most parties they are dressed like they are going to the posh school. It was war years, I guess, but we didn't. We looked like a bunch of urchins. But they were very smartly dressed. Silly I know but...and they were travelling on the Duchess ships and we got a banana freighter for our ship. We should have known that life was going to...

- Q. Once or twice in passing Roddy you have mentioned the book. I think you have written a book and I will give a plug for you your book because I have a copy here, it is called "Memoirs of a Guttersnipe". I will come to why that is the title but it is the case isn't it that you have in this book set out some of the evidence that you have been providing us with today.
- A. Indeed.
- Q. Now, you tell us in your statement that the trip across the Atlantic took 15 days. Is that correct?
- A. Well I got that information from [REDACTED]
- Q. In paragraph 33 that is what you say. The sea journey took the ship 15 days crossing from Liverpool to Quebec and it was at Quebec that you docked?
- A. For years I thought it was Halifax because that is where most of them came in but [REDACTED] once again, said no it was Quebec.
- Q. Can you pick up the story from there? How did you travel from Quebec to where you were to go which we now know was Vancouver Island in British Columbia?
- A. Yes well we were on a train, Canadian Pacific Railway, and things like during the journey I saw a black man for the first time in my life. They were really nice, they were porters and they were just really nice to us. I remember growing up and all this...I didn't see much of it in Canada but later on seeing all the prejudice and things like that when my early memory was completely opposite of what was happening in the world. So on the train, it was an exciting journey. We got to throw snowballs at each other. We were disappointed because we didn't see any cowboys and Indians riding by and once we arrived...the train was a kind of exciting thing and a fun thing. Once we got to Vancouver we were bussed to British Columbia ferries and put on a ferry to Vancouver Island. Later on in my adult life I worked for a summer on those ferries. We then took the bus from Nanaimo to the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School and I remember looking at the view from the bus. It was beautiful. Green fields, surrounded by green forest and it was so different from Birmingham.
- Q. We saw from earlier photograph that you arrived at Fairbridge on 8 November 1941 so that gives us an idea as to how long it took from the 20 October 1941 until your actual destination which was the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School on Vancouver Island.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can I just digress a little bit because I know that this is something that you have looked at and I'm not wanting to dwell on it too long but can you tell us a little bit about the history of this farm school, how it came into being and the thinking behind this sort of scheme?

- A. Well I can and it was certainly not...this was much later in my life when I was doing the research. I did a lot of reading to see why and what the whole thing was. Kingsley Fairbridge was a young Oxford student who went to South Africa and he made a speech at Oxford pleading for money and part of that speech he called it the vision or the grand vision...
- Q. The vision splendid?
- A. Yes. Well he described that the staff that he would like to see for this. The training for the children would be this and if all that had happened, I'd say that was great. But that's too bad in life someone's vision doesn't quite happen when it comes to institutions.
- Q. I think what he called the vision splendid was the establishments of agricultural colleges, if you call it that, to accommodate children for training, for example, farming. Was that the essence of it?
- A. That is what he professed was the schools but in reality it was all the boys would be farmers and I mean labour farmers and all the girls would be domestics and that is pretty much the way it happened unless you were bright academically then you would carry on at school and they would find help for university and things like that. Most of the boys at 15, even with average intelligence were assigned to the farm and then from there posted up to private farms and the girls were sent as domestics in the welfare homes in Victoria BC. That's the real image of it. Of course...maybe now is the time to make it. Many of my school mates they have an entirely different perspective of Fairbridge and yet those of us like myself, and I wasn't alone, you find yourself wondering, well how could this happen to me? The first reunion I went to I was listening to all these, mostly seniors, saying how wonderful Fairbridge was. I drove home a thousand miles to California thinking maybe I had a bad dream or something. I don't recall Fairbridge like this. So I went back again and it was after the meeting that a group of us sat down, having a beer or a glass of wine and started talking about the other side of Fairbridge which was entirely different, including the girls. I recall distinctly one girl breaking down in tears thinking about what had happened to her and things.
- Q. I will come on to that very shortly Roddy but so far the Fairbridge Farm School on Vancouver Island was concerned, do you know when that school was set up?
- A. 1935 I think.
- Q. And I think by then Kingsley Fairbridge had died but nevertheless his vision, if you want to call it that was being kept on.
- A. You had the other three schools in Australia operating and I think the one in South Africa may have been closed by then.
- Q. Can I get an idea on the layout of the school? I will put a photograph on the screen for you. This is WIT.003.001.8116. Perhaps we could move to the bottom part of the document first. What we have here is what I think is an aerial photograph of Fairbridge. Is that correct?
- A. Yes.
- Q. So, going back up to the top section, to the sketch, on to the map, can we see that the arrangement is sort of like a horse shoe type of arrangement. Is that right?

- A. Yes.
- Q. Can you described what we are looking at here then Roddy?
- A. Well it was like a village with cottages which were duplex and they look more like what I would describe from my army days like smaller barracks and interior was much like army barracks.
- Q. We can move on to another photograph and let's see if this helps and I will come back to this one. This is 8114. Now we've got a number of discreet photographs here. If we move down the photograph can you tell us if any of these buildings would be a cottage?
- A. A cottage, you don't see quite all of it, is the top one, it's a girls cottage obviously and....
- Q. And below that is a caption which says "Edith Atwoods Girls Cottage 1935" so it looks like possibly a two or three storey building. Do you see that?
- A. That would have actually been '35 and would have been one of the first parties out there.
- Q. Does that give us an idea as to the scale of the cottages?
- A. Yes.
- Q. They are fairly sizable buildings.
- A. Be anywhere from 15 or 16 on one side and the same thing on the other side. A cottage mother in charge of each.
- Q. Again I will come to the arrangements in a moment but if we go back then to the previous photograph 8116, you have described the set up as that of a village with a number of different cottages for the children. Was that how it was set up?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Were the boys and girls kept separate?
- A. Definitely...most unfortunately.
- Q. If we look at the bottom photograph can we see that numbers are given to different locations so for example if we look at the key at the bottom we have got number 25 and that is described as "R" cottage.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Layburn seems to have been its proper name. Was that the way it was although the cottages had names a letter was used to identify them?
- A. Yes. I once...well I asked one of the senior boys why it was "S" cottage and he said it's because "little shite's like you are here. You will listen to me". So that was burned in my image, in my memory "S" cottage from that episode.
- Q. And you were in "S" cottage for quite a lot of your time at Fairbridge?
- A. Four or five of us from that ship were in there which, once again it was...other people have said it to me, a mixture of youngsters of 7 and seniors of 15 and 16 is not a very good concept.

- Q. Within your cottage then you had this range of ages of boys?
- A. Yes.
- Q. The 15 and 16 year old boys would they be on the farm as opposed to being at school?
- A. Well they weren't on a farm they were working on the Fairbridge Farm, they weren't signed out.
- Q. I meant the Fairbridge Farm. Because this was a farm apart from the accommodation we've been looking at.
- A. It was a big farm with a lot of stock, cows and a herd of Ayrshire, horses and chickens.
- Q. And looking to the arrangement within the cottage itself, you have given us an idea of the numbers, if you look at boys 15 or 16 boys and you have mentioned the house mother. Would there be a house mother in charge of the cottage?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What other members of staff in the cottage? Would there be other members of staff?
- A. No just the cottage mother.
- Q. Perhaps just look at one or two other photographs just to get an understanding as to the size of the place. If we look at 8115. The top we are looking at is described as the Fairbridge Chapel. So was there a chapel on site?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And if we move down a little bit I think you will see a picture of the inside of the chapel to the left. Is that right?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Towards the bottom of this document can we see what is described as the Fairbridge Farm Day School.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you go to that school?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And just above that do we see a picture as to what the classrooms might have looked like.
- A. I'd like to point out here that the day school staff were paid by British Columbia so they weren't part of Fairbridge.
- Q. Did they come from...were they based at Fairbridge or did they come from outside Fairbridge?

- A. There were three of them, we saw earlier the smaller cottages, stayed in those cottages or they stayed off site like Duncan. They may have lived there...
- Q. Was Duncan the nearest town?
- A. Yes.
- Q. How far away was Duncan?
- A. It was about 5 miles.
- Q. Perhaps just one more photograph, if we go back to page 8114 and moving towards the bottom and we see there a building described as the Fairbridge Farm School hospital.
- A. Yes, when we first arrived, and that happened to every party, you went to the hospital and were given a medical inspection. If everything was ok you were assigned to a cottage. I came across a record book, well I didn't come across it, it was [REDACTED] who just died recently. He lived closed by and he was there when they were tearing the buildings down and he salvaged a record book of the hospital and in there it had entries of the parties and how long the [REDACTED] were in the hospital. [REDACTED] and I both were last out of the hospital. [REDACTED] stayed about a week, I stayed about a month. I have no idea as there was nothing written down as to why, I don't know much about malnutrition, I don't recall a disease but I was in there for a month before I was signed up to a cottage.
- Q. I think you tell us in your statement that one of the things that did happen to you on 1 July was to have your head shaved.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did that also apply to the girls?
- A. Yes I guess we had nits or whatever. Harder on the girls than the boys.
- Q. Can I take you to, we have looked at the set-up and tried and get an understanding as to what it was like but can I take you to when you arrived there on 8th November 1941. How were you welcomed?
- A. Oh we were welcomed very nicely. [REDACTED] CBG [REDACTED] was out there leading all the children. We went through the white gates, one of my schoolmates described them as the pearly gates from hell later on, but at the time it just looked beautiful and the fact that these kids were all cheering gave you some indication that this must be a nice place.
- Q. You mention [REDACTED] CBG [REDACTED] was he the principal or headmaster? [REDACTED] CBG [REDACTED] was he in charge?
- A. Yes he was the Principal. I refer to him in my book because you've got two principals, I called him the headmaster of the school and the principal of the day school. So [REDACTED] CBG [REDACTED] was there. There had been someone else before him for a short period but he had actually gone to school, Oxford, with Kingsley Fairbridge.
- Q. After your spell in the hospital were you then allocated to a cottage?
- A. Yes.

- Q. I think the first cottage you went to was not the "S" cottage but the "R" cottage? Was that correct?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What was your life like in that cottage?
- A. It was quite nice, the same as the hospital. The hospital I thought I was in paradise there so I didn't mind being kept in longer, believe me. But I can't recall the cottage mother, but I was the youngest and she kind of looked over me but that's when I got a taste of the first case of bullies.
- Q. In that cottage?
- A. Yes. It was like "mum's favourite little boy" kind of thing. "Little Scottie boy", stuff like that. You know, I mean, telling the story...I know that people say that well that could happen in any other school. I know it could but should it happen? That is why I told my story.
- Q. Can you say how long you spent in that first cottage? In cottage "R"?
- A. I don't really remember. It was just long enough to get a taste that things weren't all ok with where I was.
- Q. Are you there looking at the bullying side of things rather than....
- A. Wishing that my brother Rob was there to kick them out of the way. And Minnie was gone, I mean I know that I started really feeling not too happy with the situation. But the worst was to come.
- Q. I will put this document up on the screen for you. It is at BCC.001.001.0348. Now this bears to be a document that is headed "Fairbridge Farm Schools" and the London address is given and we read that this is a half yearly progress report dated March 1942 has been received from the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School, Vancouver Island, British Columbia and we can see your name there and it would appear to be the case that half yearly reports were being sent to London from Fairbridge. I don't know if you have seen this document before or not?
- A. Yes I have.
- Q. Now just to pick this up, the date of birth now has been blanked out, the date, the month and the day, but the year is 1924 which is not correct. It makes you 10 years older than what you are. This would bear to be the first half yearly report and you are in cottage "Davidson".
- A. Yes.
- Q. Which I think is cottage "R" and then we have got the cottage mother's report which is the next part of the form, "Roddy is very new in the cottage and very nervous" so that is the description of that early part of your life there. There is a school report, health report and then the principal's remarks at the very bottom "a fine little boy", and although this has been blanked out, [REDACTED] CBG name appears as the principal. So this is in your early period when you were at Fairbridge and it is the case I think that certainly by shortly after that, by the following year in 1943 our cottage mother reports are being signed by someone by the name of [REDACTED] CBB and a Mrs [REDACTED] CBB did become your cottage mother. Is that right?
- A. Yes.

- Q. So that is when you were moved from the first cottage you were in to the next one?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can I then move to that cottage where Mrs CBB was in charge as the house mother. I just want to understand first of all the set up within the cottage itself. Now I think you have already told us that possibly 15 or 16 boys. Is that right?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Different ages. You would be one of the youngest?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What about sleeping arrangements, what were the sleeping arrangements? Did you have a dormitory or separate rooms? What was the set up?
- A. Dormitory. Fifteen iron cots. Basically like just in the army
- Q. What were the facilities in the cottage?
- A. Well you had the dormitory upstairs. The kitchen, the dining room...a long table with fifteen boys and the cottage mother at the end. The cottage mother's suite with a bedroom, living room and we definitely did not go in there unless you were invited. She would invite us in sometimes to read bedtime stories but Mrs CBB is the one that turned my life and some of my mates' into a living hell. Her form of punishment was to take us and take the shirt off our back and take a belt, lock us up in the basement and she was more than strict. Well above the strict mark and as I said the chapel became a kind of haven for me because the bullies couldn't hit me and CBB couldn't hit me. But it was a bit of a paradox because I sitting there we were being taught that Jesus loves us and I was praying with all my heart that God would do something about Mrs CBB and the bullies and yet Sunday after Sunday it was the same scene. A week just exactly, from the time you got up we had chores to do and she stood over us like a drill sergeant...worse than a drill sergeant that was in the army. She would punish you while you were going. She'd inspect the corner of each step and if it came up with a little dust, well...that's where the "guttersnipe" came in.
- Q. Is that what she called you
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can you tell us a little about that, what would she say to you?
- A. She'd say, "You filthy little guttersnipe. You are going to clean these steps again".
- Q. Can I just understand the physical punishment, beatings that you got?
- A. Slaps on the head particularly, and I have never been able to prove it, but I've had ruptured eardrums. I got into the army with ruptured eardrums which should never have happened and they got infected and when I checked with an ear doctor how you get ruptured ear drums he said, "Oh you can get it from sharp blows to the side of the head".
- Q. Is that what happened to you?

A. Yes. Whenever she lost her temper you didn't know what you were going to get. I'd be pleading with her like any child would be doing, "Please stop Mum". It wasn't just me...the [REDACTED] brothers, it was all of us, that string of half a dozen of us who were put in that cottage.

Q. You were younger children of course.

A. Yes, you had 7 year olds with, as I say, 14, 15, 16 probably and at that point they are sent out to a farm [inaudible]. There's a huge gap between the 7 year olds and teenage boys.

Q. You mention the use of a belt. Can I just understand how she would use the belt? Where would she target the belt?

A. On your bare back.

Q. Would you require to take your clothing off?

A. Yes.

Q. How regularly did she give mete out this treatment?

A. You would never know, it was often enough. It was burned in your mind forever. I mean, [REDACTED] a friend of mine in that cottage, he was strapped so severely on his hands and when he went to school that day he showed his hands to...the teacher saw what was happening and she said, "Let me see your hands, what happened?". When he told her she took him to the day school principal who looked at the hands and said, "Well very likely he deserved it."

Q. What was the condition of the hands?

A. They were bleeding and that is above and beyond strictness. That is cruelty. Yet her cottage was considered even by [REDACTED] CBG [REDACTED] when they had dignitaries to come and visit, her cottage was always picked out. Why? Because we were so disciplined that we made a good appearance for them and if they asked you a question, "How are you?" you didn't dare say I'm unhappy as hell. I'd say, "I'm fine sir, thank you." But she taught you to...she would tell you, "Now these people are coming and you better behave yourself."

Q. If you were asked how you were then you would say that you were fine.

A. Fine.

Q. Coming to the use of the belt on you and on your bare back, were marks left? Were you bruised?

A. Definitely. Kids being kids we kind of showed them like war scenes..."Look what that bitch did to me", that kind of thing. But they healed.

(ADJOURNED FOR 15 MINUTES)

Q. Before the break Roddy you had been telling us about how you were treated by Mrs [REDACTED] CBB [REDACTED] I want to take you to your statement and just to pick up on one or two points that you make in your statement and this is document WIT.001.001.3460 and you will see that...and it will hopefully come on the screen in front of you, and at paragraph 48 in particular you set out some detail as to what the regime was with Mrs [REDACTED] CBB [REDACTED] So you give the example of

each Sunday morning, for example, what would happen and that you would be inspected. Is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. And if in some way you failed the inspection, would things happen to you?

A. You could be punished right on the spot with a slap on the head or she would say that you'll be gated for the next week. Whatever gated...which my American friends don't seem to understand.

Q. What did it mean there?

A. Confined to either the cottage or the cottage area in most cases. Did you want me to read the..?

Q. I'll take you to it. You give an example of one Sunday that the bullies, as you refer to them, told you to do something and I will come to the bullies shortly, but what happened on this occasion?

A. Well we were lined up because the formal procedure you lined up and she would inspect your hands, your nails and make sure that your tie and socks were pulled up and any infraction of that was a slap on the head or some other punishment later. The common one was so many hours on the wood pile or gated to the cottage. That was the main thing that she passed out.

Q. You give an example there of one of the bullies ordering you to run to Mount Baldy which was a mountain that could be seen from the cottage. You have a clear recollection of that incident?

A. It never left me.

Q. What happened?

A. One of the bullies ordered me to do...when we were lined up they didn't call me a guttersnipe but would call me a vulgar name whatever it was..."You will go and run to Mount Baldy and he said "I told you, get going". So I knew was going to get punished either way so I started on his command and started running and got about 100 yards or so and one of the other senior boys came and brought me back and of course Mrs CBB now witnessed the two of us coming back. I wasn't going to get the other guy in trouble and she said, "What are you doing?" and I said, "I was running away Mum". "Why were you running away?" I said, "I don't know why." "Well for this you will be strapped when we get through church" and that was it and I was punished.

Q. Was this one of the occasions as you tell us in the statement...whip you on the bare back?

A. Yes.

Q. You also mention, as you put it, your butt. Were you also whipped on the backside. Is that right?

A. Mmm hmm. Yeah, it could be...I don't know what it was, her whim or whatever she fancied doing...backside, back, whatever.

Q. What implement was used?

A. It was a leather belt.

- Q. In passing there Roddy you mentioned that when you were speaking to Mrs CBB you called her Mum. Is that right?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Was that what you were told to do?
- A. Exactly.
- Q. Did you have any other descriptions for her when you were not speaking to her directly?
- A. Probably every vulgar expression in the book behind her back.
- Q. One thing you say in that part of your statement is that you can't remember all the reasons why you were hit. Is that right?
- A. It was so common unless you were taking notes or something, I just remember...I made the statement...the safety feeling in the church or when you went to bed. Even when you went to bed you weren't really safe. The bullies could do all kinds of stuff. Force you to do stuff the cottage mother would find out and you got a whipping again. We were not allowed to go to the bathroom thus if you had a problem with bed wetting, which [REDACTED] did, and bed wetting and quite a few of the cottage mothers used to get on to that thinking that the cure was to embarrass the child and punish them by having them...in one case [REDACTED] was put on top of the table with this wet sheet wrapped around his body.
- Q. Is that your friend [REDACTED] you are talking about?
- A. No, that was [REDACTED]. But it was a common thing it was really, in the case of [REDACTED] she would do the same thing, make him sleep in those sheets or sometimes hang them out on the line to embarrass him so that kids would then get on him, [REDACTED] you have wet the bed". [REDACTED]...I gave a written statement that [REDACTED] made...the day Mr CBB left he stopped wetting the bed. You got it both ways, almost daily, either punishments from the cottage mother or heckling or severe bullying or bullies trying to...which they did with [REDACTED] and I...we were on the boxing team and so they would say, "Ok let's see you two little shite heads, you are going to fight." And then we fought and then for some reason or another, and I always thought that it was because [REDACTED] was Scottish and I was Scottish but [REDACTED] told me later, no, his father was Scottish, we just kind of stuck together and years and years later as adults, [REDACTED] and I were up in a campsite in Victoria and [REDACTED] came over. I called him on his number and he came over to visit us and we were talking about it and out the blue he said, "Oh yeah I never understood why you were always picking fights with me". I thought back and I said, [REDACTED] I was ordered to pick a fight with you. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] were constantly doing it." I said, "Of course I didn't get off scot free with that [REDACTED] because your sister [REDACTED] used to come and belt my ear for fighting with you". His big sister [REDACTED]. But that was the kind of...I know I went to bed praying my heart out that things would change but the next day it was just the same.
- Q. If we go back to paragraph 48 which is still on the screen Roddy you tell us towards the end of the paragraph that the treatment and we are looking particularly at Mrs CBB went on for at least four years. Is that right?
- A. Yes.

- Q. Did there come point in time, after about that period of time when she left and you had a new cottage mother?
- A. Yes we were transferred, four of us were transferred over to what I believe was "J" cottage.
- Q. Was that a better environment from the perspective of how you were treated by the house mother?
- A. It was better in two respects. By then I was up in mid years...
- Q. Getting older?
- A. Yes and it was a better mix of age in that cottage. 1947 that art came in and the cottage mother there was not physically as bad as CBB but she kind of took a dislike to myself and three or four other kids. And she had her favourites in the cottage and one of them was a pal of mine, he became a pal of mine, He was on the ship and was academically bright, good at sports. He was like the all Canadian boy so he was ok with her and in fact I think when she died she left part of her estate to But I found m self being not physically but constantly criticised, put down and this is CBF and so that went on as I stayed here and by 1947 the discipline was far more lax. Well I'm jumping actually a few years from Mrs CBF She had been in the Royal Canadian Navy, she had a manish haircut, was a heavy smoker and she had a dog, unfortunately and I love dogs but that poor little do we used to kick the dog because the dog belonged to Mrs CBF I was in that cottage until about 1948 or 49 and there was one episode where two of us were having...am I jumping ahead too far?
- Q. No, finish that off please.
- A. We were in the basement, I guess, rough housing, half boxing, wrestling and somebody swore. I don't think it was either one of us but somebody watching the fight swore and the next thing I knew I was slapped on the back of the head across the ear again and I got swun around thinking it was one of the other lads and [inaudible] and it was Mrs CBF who just went like that and of course for her physical punishment she sent us to the duties master.
- Q. I am going to ask you about the role of the duties minister in a moment. Before I do that can I go back to one other incident, one of a practice that Mrs CBB engaged in and that was this notion of announcing that someone had committed a crime. Can you help me with that, what was that all about?
- A. She would, it was at supper time, it was always supper time that she'd say somebody sitting at the table here has done this and I want the guilty party to...so there was silence and no one was owning up to it and her procedure was to dismiss the older boys like they couldn't possibly and it must be those little guttersnipes and we got to the point that we would try and draw at straws. We didn't physically do that but we would take turns and one particular time it was over a can of sardines that was missing from the pantry. Well it seemed to be it was my turn so I owned up to it. She then said, "What did you do with that can [inaudible] filthy you little guttersnipe". Anyway well I hadn't stolen the can but you go through these things and you know you are not going to get out of it so you are making decisions right on the spot. You are going to get it either way you might as well say something and get it over with. I just wanted to get whipped and get to bed and I said, "Mum I threw it out on the playground". Now it was dark, it was winter and she sent me out to find that can. I'm walking around that field and I had no idea because I hadn't thrown the can, I hadn't stolen the can...I don't know. So she kept me out there in the cold and finally called me in and gave me a

whipping and [inaudible] the next time you steal again. I noticed some of her reports that she would say that I was a little liar and yes I was, she was teaching me to lie. Things like that...you're completely mixed up in life. It took me several years to really get confidence and even in [redacted] CBF [redacted] cottage I joined the boy scouts, was doing well in the boy scouts, they made me scout leader. My confidence was building up... only to come back. One example was after that she had been guide commissioner and of course when I was made scout leader or patrol leader, not scout, she was very sarcastic about it.....

Q. Was this Mrs [redacted] CBB or Mrs [redacted] CBF ?

A. Mrs [redacted] CBF "How they ever made you a patrol leader?" that kind of thing. So one time I had done something wrong, summertime, a beautiful day and she knew I loved to swim. We had a river that ran by we dammed it up. In summer time I fell in love with that river and she knew that and so that would be her time to confine me to the cottage area and plus put you on the piling wood.

Q. You mention the wood pile before, would that involve you having to cut wood?

A. To cut wood and stack it.

Q. With an axe?

A. Right.

Q. How long could you spend on that sort of task?

A. It could be the whole afternoon, it could be a couple of hours, enough that I couldn't go to the swimming.

Q. Now you have mentioned on a number of occasions, Roddy, the bullies. You've mentioned the bullies. Can I just explore that with you for a little while? When in particular you were in Mrs [redacted] CBB cottage, you say in your statement that there were two particular individuals, older boys, who bullied you. Is that right?

A. [redacted] who I'm positive about. I do get a little bit mixed up with...it was either [redacted] or [redacted]

Q. I'm sorry?

A. [redacted] or [redacted], I think I have put [redacted] down. But...

Q. I just want to understand what these individuals were doing you when you were there?

A. They were beating you, physically beating you, forcing you to do things that would get you into trouble and screaming at you and call you...one of the names that always comes up is "little shite head". They made your life miserable. Sitting at the table, banging you so you would do something and then the cottage mother would find you...they structured the table with the senior boys sat at one end and the younger ones close to her so she could use her serving spoon to whack your hand or your elbow or whatever she could reach and it was just a case of making your life miserable. I mean you were constantly being harassed one way or another.

- Q. As far as you are aware was the house mother, Mrs [CBB] aware of this behaviour by the bullies?
- A. Oh she had to be. She had to be. I don't see how she could ever have overlooked it.
- Q. Now you do give an example, this is at paragraph 47, at page 3459 of being held from the roof gutters. Can you help me with that?
- A. At the cottage...the cottage had these gutters like any house would have and from the staircase, the outside of the building, they could reach up. They could reach up, I couldn't at that time, and they would hoist me up and tell me to grab the gutters and they would leave me until it looked like I was almost dropping and at times I wanted to drop, I wanted to fall and break my leg, be in the hospital or whatever. But that was one of their favourite tricks. They would get you to shine their boots and other little chores like that. They both just...the two, particularly [REDACTED] I'm know I'm sure on his name, they left the school and went to Vancouver and hit the streets of Vancouver and were immediately in all kinds of trouble. One of them died in jail and I feel sorry for them now. I haven't been living a life of...even Mrs [CBB]...I was ironing my shirt this morning and I said to myself you know I got to show a little kindness here. She taught me how to iron and things like that which we spent a lot of time at. As a matter of fact when I entered the army I made some pretty good pocket money because Canadian guys didn't know how. Their mums had always pressed the shirts, pants and I would hire [inaudible] fresh pants...the guys' home laundry here.
- LADY SMITH. I think you also learned to darn. Was it she who taught you that?
- A. Yes.
- LADY SMITH. It is a dying art.
- A. Darning socks...put a bulb in there. So, yes, there was some good to come out of this but I think it could have been done in a little better manner.
- Q. I think you identify two particular individuals as bullies. Were these individuals who were together, did it appear to you that they were friends?
- A. Yes they worked like a team. The two of them were pals.
- Q. You do say in your statement at paragraph 59 at 3462 that one of these individuals did try to sexually abuse you.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is that correct. What happened on that occasion?
- A.: Well he dropped his trousers and all I heard was get down on your knees and I was mortified and I just...Another boy came in and on seeing him he immediately pulled his pants up and I was rescued.
- Q. What age were you at that time, can you tell me? What age were you?
- A. I was probably about 8 or 9 and if that boy hadn't come I know I would have been forced to.
- Q. Was that the only time then that that happened to you?
- A. Yes.

- Q. Were you conscious of there being inappropriate sexual behaviour?
- A. Oh there was. One of the duties master put a letter in the...He wrote a book actually and he put in the book where two boys were committing a sexual act and he'd pulled them aside. The duties master, all the duties masters, their major assignment was punishment. They did other things besides that but that was their [inaudible]. This duties...Mr Sanger was his name and he was humane, I mean he felt bad about this. Instead of punishing the boys he said, "Listen I won't punish you this time but you must never do that again. You must never do that again."
- Q. I was going to go on to look at discipline and how discipline was arranged and managed. I understand from what you have been saying that as far as Mrs **CBB** was concerned was quite different and she, as it were, ran her own establishment but were their rules as to who should mete out the punishment to children?
- A. I think the school must have had some... it would have been the cottage mother and if she felt that she couldn't handle it you were sent to the duties master. It could be the duties master plus the headmaster. During my time there was three headmasters. There was **CBG** and then Mr Garnett came from the Canadian navy after the war and the last one to close the school down was Major Plows. Those were the three.
- Q. Where you ever sent to the duties master for punishment?
- A. Oh, yes.
- Q. What did that involve, can I just understand the arrangement?
- A. Well, quite often...some of them would whip you with your pants on or some of them would ask you to drop or they didn't ask, tell you to drop your pants and take a belt to you and of course...There was a duties master before my time. I think I arrived just about the time he, thank God, because he was a sexual deviant and he was caught at it and he was sent to jail. He served a short term and was released and then was re-hired. **[redacted]** [inaudible] had a terrible experience with him. **[redacted]** was probably about 10 years of age and he was sent to **CBH**, Mr **CBH**, and he was told to drop his trousers and he stood in that position, nothing happening, until he finally turned around and **CBH** was standing there masturbating. He ran out of the room and went up to the **[redacted]** had mostly worked in the horse barn and he ran up there crying. One of the, either Mr Reid or Spence...what was the old term for the ones that took care of the horses...teamsters, asked him what was going on and **[redacted]** told him. The teamster, I don't know whether he reported it or not but it seemed according to **[redacted]** nothing was done about it.
- Q. This is a...you have been telling us I think about a duties master who was imprisoned for some sexual offences. Is that correct?
- A. Yes.
- Q. On release he was taken back to Fairbridge. Is that right?
- A. Yes and rehired for the same job. That's like putting the fox in with the chickens.
- Q. And you talk about that...the paragraph is actually on the screen 117 at page 3474.

- A. Yes.
- Q. Can I ask you a little bit about staffing. You deal with this, Roddy, at page 3473 from paragraphs 113 onwards and you make some general comments there about the staffing at Fairbridge and what you say at the beginning that the staff were a mixture of decent people and unfortunately some people who should never have been hired to work with children and I just want to understand...
- A. That is true.
- Q. Can you elaborate on that?
- A. That is why we have different memories. You got two of them in the same room they would say, "No that couldn't have happened." Well it did happen and I believed...I stood up in a banquet one time and said to them. I said, "You have had a good time at Fairbridge. I am happy for you but I just wish that you guys would realise that there was a lot of us did not have that experience." At that time I looked around and I remember..."Look how many of your schoolmates are missing here." [REDACTED] was one that I tried for years to get him to come and [REDACTED] said, "Why do you go?" and I said, [REDACTED], I [REDACTED] put all that crap behind me and I go to see guys like you and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Guys that I grew up with, we were like brothers. We went through all this crap together, that is why I go, the other is gone." It wasn't completely gone or I couldn't write the book that I...
- Q. Can I ask you now a little bit about the routine generally at Fairbridge and one thing that you talk about on page 3464, paragraph 66, is the role of the bell. Can you help me with that? How relevant to your life was the bell?
- A. The bell was the dictator. It rang to tell us to get up. It rang to tell us to go to breakfast. It rang to tell us to go milk the cows. It rang for meals. It rang for church parade. Other than at Christmas I don't remember it ringing for any happy occasion. Of course, I will confess when I was...because you had certain duties, it might be the bell ringer. When it was my turn to do the bell I loved it. I absolutely loved it. It was like they had given me some power.
- Q. So the bell would ring in the morning to would get you out of bed. And breakfast what was the food like at breakfast?
- A. It was always the same. It was a bowl of porridge which sometimes, quite often, had little worms in it. Milk and a piece of bread and jam.
- Q. Would you have your breakfast in the cottage itself?
- A. No, breakfast was in the main hall.
- Q. The other food then, lunch and dinner?
- A. Lunch was also in the main hall. Dinner, what we called supper, was in the cottage.
- Q. I think you tell us at breakfast when you were having your porridge and your bread and jam, the house mother would be at the same table and she would have eggs, bacon, toast and tea?
- A. Exactly.
- Q. Was that a distraction?

- A. On china. I did hand over a report that was written by Canadian Welfare...
- Q. I will come to that report, Roddy, by Isobel Harvey I think, and one of the points that she makes in her report and you make in your statement is the contrast between what you were being given for breakfast and what the house mother had for breakfast.
- A. Yes. I will be honest that part didn't bother me. The part that bothered me was the bullies doing their thing and then the cottage mother punishing you physically or the [inaudible] putting you to work. If you didn't eat all your food...I could not handle parsnips. I would almost throw up. The food at Fairbridge was wholesome but it was cooked in big pots, without seasoning or anything else but should I complain? It was food and you had to eat it or you didn't leave the table. Parsnips I handled. When she wasn't looking, I would line one of my pockets with paper and I would just get the parsnip off and throw it in my pocket. I was never caught at it.
- Q. Washing...you do tell us a little bit about bathing and you say there was a bathtub in the cottage.
- A. Yes.
- Q. But you washed with cold water all the year round. Is that the position?
- A. Pretty much. There was two boys [inaudible] two in a tub and you have got to make sure that you clean behind your ears and all that business.
- Q. Education, what is your recollection of how you were taught at school?
- A. Well there was a mixture of good teachers and some that were...if you weren't a bright kid or a little above average you would get hassled. I loved to read, it is the only salvation for my education. Even when things settled down and we were sent, I'm jumping ahead here, to Duncan life became so much better.
- LADY SMITH. Duncan, that is the school in the local town?
- A. Yes ma'am. There was one teacher there that I will always remember, Mr Sprocky, who [inaudible] I was Scottish and insisted that I get up and read a verse from Robert Burns which opened my heart to Robert Burns for a lifetime. The teacher called me Mr Mackay which was also...anyway there was Mrs **CBB** who was elementary and art. Most of the teachers carried two or three subjects. Mr **CBL** who was a good academic teacher but he also was known, not just by me but several boys, for going above and beyond the normal punishment.
- Q. Was that in Duncan or was that at Fairbridge?
- A. That was at Fairbridge. He was the principal of the day school so he administered all punishment. If we were sent to the office, we stood in line to wait for the strap on the hand.
- Q. You mentioned earlier that one of the upsides, if you like, of being at Fairbridge is that you learned to iron your shirts, trousers and I think you tell us in your statement that you did your own laundry, is that correct?
- A. Yes. The girls did most of the laundry because they were doing domestic...like all the sheets from one cottage was sent to be washed on a certain day.

- Q. I meant the laundry of your clothing, for example. Did you wash your own?
- A. Personal clothing, a lot of that was done by hand on an old scrub board.
- Q. And you have already touched upon the chores that you were required to do and what happened if you didn't do them in a way that Mrs [CBB] would like. But essentially is the picture one where there were no lay staff in the cottages and the chores essentially were done by the children? The chores, the work.
- A. Yes. Interior and the yard, she was in charge of that and one of the things that always stands out in my mind because it happened to me so often was the stairs, the wooden stairs. You had to polish them and that is where she did her inspection. If it didn't come up to her judgement you would re-do those stairs and if it was running into school time she would give you extra duties when you got through school.
- Q. On page 3470 through to page 3471 you provide some information about the leisure time you had at Fairbridge and in particular your role with the school band because there became a point in time as you got older when you got involved with the school band. Is that correct?
- A. Yes. Thank God I did because it led to a life of pipe bands.
- Q. So what was your role in the band?
- A. There was only so many drums. They had already been assigned...all the instruments the bugles, the drums and so on. So I would hang around and finally Mr Ritchie said to me one evening he said, "Roddy I want you to go downstairs to the janitor and see if you can find a drum or a broom handle that he doesn't need." I had no idea what was going to happen after that but essentially he made me the drum major of the band, which was great fun.
- Q. You enjoyed that?
- A. The school carpenter made a mace, a wooden mace. Sports and things like boy scouts, you did everything you could to get involved in that because that meant that you could get away. If we went on the boxing team we went in the school truck, just like an army truck with benches. We would drive to Duncan for scouts, boxing matches and other places and then Victoria was knockout. Going there was like going to New York or something. It was getting away. It was getting away from things to what life could be somewhat normal.
- Q. Christmas was celebrated wasn't it?
- A. Christmas was a good time, even Mrs [CBB] was half-way decent. We got snow so we could go tobogganing. Well not exactly tobogganing, an old garbage can lid going down slopes. The ice pond, there was a pair of blades that you tied on your boots so there was one pair and one kid could be out there skating and fifty others waiting and shouting at him, "C'mon!". We had good times, don't get me wrong, it wasn't all misery. We made friends and one of the most important things to tell my kids, the most important thing in life is friendship. And I got still that school, one is in retirement home unfortunately with dementia, [redacted] is still in the log cabins [inaudible].
- Q. And birthdays, was your birthday celebrated?
- A. I can't remember it. I think we made a little cake or something.
- Q. But it would have been the wrong date?

A. March or something. Another story there was [REDACTED] was one of my pals too and we were assigned to the kitchen. Two would be assigned to the kitchen to make the evening meal, with orders or recipes laid out for what you had to do and I had no argument there. That was also of value to me later but [REDACTED] CBB would stand there and she would...and so [REDACTED]...it was a little hard sometimes for him to get the message right. So he knew if he didn't put the right portions in he would get a ladle over his head or something. So he decided, I'll read off and see if I make a mistake, she won't hit me. But he made a big mistake because he called it half a cup instead of a full cup and bang, it was stuff like that that really was...the refined women that Kingsley Fairbridge was talking about was not there. Can I interject something here or maybe you're going to get to it?

LADY SMITH. What is it?

A. There was a teacher who is still alive and she was a beautiful young woman and she had been hired as a day school teacher. All of the boys loved her, all the boys. Someone nicknamed her Mimi. Mimi is still alive today and my wife and I go and visit her. She is mentally alert. I don't talk too much to her about mine because she has a completely different...she is very loyal to the school, the concept, particularly [REDACTED] CBG because she went to university with his daughter and [REDACTED] CBG hired Mimi.

Q. What you are saying is that her perspective is quite different from yours?

A. You know these people [inaudible]...I'd veer off the subject. But she did open up one time and say, "You know there really was three different Fairbridges. The first part was good. They had the money and the kids were happy here." A lot of them came from terrible situations to start with which is never really taken into account, what had the kid been through before they arrived at Fairbridge, bombings, loss of family and a whole bunch of things. But there was this time before the war when they had the money and the staff were better selected. And then you have the war years where the money went and the quality of the staff went so that is why [REDACTED] CBG I imagine, was in a state where he would end up hiring just about anybody that came through the door. And then after the war it was closing down so things had gone altogether different. I mean I'm happy with it as the bullies are long gone and Mrs [REDACTED] CBB is long gone. It was a far looser arrangement.

Q. But you were there, I think you tell us in your statement Roddy, until you were 17 years of age?

A. Yes.

Q. And it was closing down, Fairbridge was closing down at that time in about 1950-51?

A. Yes and kids were being fostered out as much as Major Plows...they were either going to stay with the farming or in some cases if they doing above average in school...which I wasn't. At high school I was a bit of a rebel at that time doing things that I shouldn't but I think.....

LADY SMITH. You were a teenaged boy.

A. And having raised one I understand.

Q. It was of course a farm school and I think at a particular age you would be introduced to farm work?

- A. That was still going on but it wasn't as it had been. Up to probably 1947 or so when Major Plows took over and it was closing, you could see the farm and the equipment was being sold off.
- Q. When you came to leave school at the age of 15, did you leave school at the age of 15?
- A. No I worked on the farm.
- Q. By school I mean education.
- A. Well I was still in Duncan House School. Fairbridge School had been closed so the few remaining, it was down to probably forty kids or less.
- Q. When you were at Duncan High School did you also work on a farm?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can I just take you to when you came to leave Fairbridge and you mention at paragraph 127 that working on the farm was designed to prepare you for a life after Fairbridge in farming?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And as you have already mentioned, so far as the girls were concerned they were being taught to go and work as domestic maids?
- A. Right. That was never advertised as such but that is the way it was and I believe there was one school...one of the Fairbridges was different because it was more scholastic in Australia but the main one was much the same as ours and we never heard a bad word about that school, like nobody ever heard a bad word about our Fairbridge. Australia was first to get it out. All of a sudden reports were coming out about Fairbridge and that gratefully was coming from Margaret Humphreys and the Child Migrants Trust investigations which opened up the same kind of things happening there as happened in our school.
- Q. If I take you to the point where you become to be leaving Fairbridge, it is closing down and you are leaving, I think the position is that you decide to join the army?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And that was at the age of 17?
- A. Yes
- Q. Up until you left Fairbridge did you work on the farm?
- A. Pretty much. The last year that I left the herd had already been sold so a lot of work on that farm...but I worked weekends for a farmer on one of the farms that was close and I made a few dollars that was enough to get me to a dance hall to dance.
- Q. Would that be in Duncan you would go to?
- A. No it was Cobble Hill.
- Q. Is that further afield? Is that further away?

- A. About the same distance.
- Q. You mentioned earlier the Isobel Harvey report and can I put that on the screen for you now Roddy. It is WIT.003.001.6186. Is this a document that you managed to recover and made available to the Inquiry?
- A. I believe...what I can't read...the print is almost unreadable...
- Q. I think it says "Report on study made of Fairbridge Farm School during the month of August 1944" and we are told there by Isobel Harvey, Superintendent of Child Welfare. Is that your handwriting?
- A. Yes.
- Q. So this is a document that you recovered and you handed over to the Inquiry?
- A. That was when I was really looking for any information. It wasn't just Fairbridge, I was looking for information on the whole child migrant scheme. Reading books, particularly one, The Little Immigrants. If anybody could read that book and tell me that it wasn't a badly flawed operation. This one I know came to me because I got contact with David Hill and Ian, I can't remember his last name...I got into a conversation with him through the internet. So he said, "You know while we were putting the book together with David Hill we came across the reports about your Fairbridge."
- Q. The importance of this report is that it is relatively contemporaneous to your time at Fairbridge and it seemed to have been completed after an inspection in 1944.
- A. Right and they were very critical of Fairbridge. They were the ones that said that children eating off tin plates in front of the staff eating off china, it reminded them of something out of a Charles Dickens orphanage or words to that effect and I think it went into detail about the deviant duties master, the way the children looked, scruffy and dirty. Not Mrs **CBB** cottage...
- Q. I think one of the points that Miss Harvey makes is that she contrasts I think Mrs **CBB** cottage to other cottages in the report?
- A. Yes and they gave her a higher rating.
- Q. Can I look at one or two points?
- LADY SMITH. Just before we go further into the report Roddy I see that there is a manuscript note on the front of it which I think says "By Isobel Harvey Superintendent of Child Welfare BC or Federal". BC presumably is British Columbia?
- A. Yes
- LADY SMITH. Was that your handwriting or did it come to you in that form?
- A. Yes that is my handwriting. Not very nice but...
- LADY SMITH. Did you ever work out whether she was employed by British Columbia or whether this was federal responsibility?
- A. British Columbia, BC. I think that was factored into the closing because when that report went to the higher ups, it was kind of like if you don't change this...this is not going to happen in Canada.

- Q. We will see from other sources when we look at the case study that this may have been a three day inspection that followed upon an earlier inspection but I needn't trouble you with that but what I want to do is look at some of the comments made by Ms Harvey in her report to see how they chime with your own experience as were. If we, for example, look at page 6187 towards the bottom of the page her comment is that "the cottages are planned on an out-moded plan which allows the cottage mother little opportunity to foster any feeling of home". Do you have any feeling of home when you were in your cottages?
- A. Never. I found more feeling a home when I joined the army and was sleeping in barracks.
- Q. If we turn over the page to 6188, there is a reference there to a little girl that she spoke to because she says "one little girl interviewed said with tears that her mother had sent her because she was assured that this was a grand place and some detail is given about that. Most of the children seemed to feel cheated and the allegiance is still to their own families back in England, poor though they may be". So that is the experience of some children.
- A. I would find that very valid. Absolutely.
- Q. And there is some discussion in the next paragraph about poor clothing and then about the food. The food was being badly prepared and I think you have touched upon the food yourself.
- A. The cook also was a molester.
- Q. Then at the last paragraph she says "one would judge that good food was purchased but it has a dreadful sameness day after day especially the children's food. For breakfast they get porridge, a cup of milk, bread and butter or jam or syrup. The cottage mothers sit at the same table and eat bacon and eggs and toast". That seems to fit in with your own experience?
- A. That's true.
- Q. If we turn on to the next page 6189 the second paragraph begins, "one thing that strikes a Canadian is that the children all eat off metal dishes and drink from a metal mug while the cottage mothers and staff members have china". Was that the position?
- A. Exactly. The staff, the cottage mother was sitting at the head of the table and then the centre would be some of the day school teachers, other staff members like the minister. We said a prayer before every meal which I can recite to this day. You don't care to hear it?
- LADY SMITH. Do tell us Roddy.
- Q. I think it is short and sweet isn't it ...Can I take you on to the next page 61....
- A. For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful for Christ's sake, Amen. I'll tell you later the other version.
- Q. As I said, short and sweet. Moving on then to page 6190 there is section dealing with discipline and the second sentence there "the children are harried over every mistake that most mothers would wisely overlook. Corporal punishment is said to be very rare but according to the children that statement is untrue" and that again fits in with your own experience that you were physically punished on a regular basis. Is that right?

- A. That is true.
- Q. If we turn perhaps to page 6192, just to pick up something that I think you have touched upon. It is the second last paragraph "the Duties Master", this has been redacted "the Duties Master Mr [REDACTED] has a name for fooling with the girls and was seen twice walking down the path with a teenage girl hanging on to either arm" and she goes on to say "the principal has warned him more than once about this in the hearing of staff members, however, this and other stories of fooling might not have been considered seriously had not one fifteen year old girl stated in her interview that she did not go to his house anymore because she got scared and she describes how she had been...he had put his arms around her and kissed her and she did not know what he wanted and didn't go back". So again there is an indication there of inappropriate behaviour between this particular individual and....
- A. Even Mimi told me that this was going on. She did sometimes just get away from glorification of the Fairbridge concept and I never challenged her with it. She was a lady in her late 90's, it just wasn't.....these documents actually [inaudible] helped me when we got some of these documents... you have got one here in front of me right now, I never saw that one.
- Q. Can I take you to the next page 6194, this is the last page that I want to look at in this report. In the second last paragraph what he says is "one concrete evidence of lack of administration is the absence of true records of children at Fairbridge. When a child is received a piece of paper with his name, birth date, name of father and mother and employment and his religion starts the file. Generally after that there is some correspondence" but she goes on to say "there is no true record kept of the child's development". Was that the position with yourself Roddy? Was any record of your development while you were at Fairbridge?
- A. Well none other than that....
- Q. Half yearly report.
- A. Yes. I do want to touch on this record business if I may.
- Q. Certainly.
- A. One of the things that I have bitter feelings, I don't know whether [inaudible]...the physical stuff I put that aside a long time ago but the fact that they had these records, personal records, nobody told us. I was in my late 60's before I was able to obtain records that could have assisted me in re-connecting with my brothers, the rest of my family. I mean when people ask me do you get any closure now that you have met your family. I say no, I can't say I do get closure here. I am not being sour grapes but I am looking at the years that we missed just over some stupid records that nobody would tell us where they were. Nobody would give us any assistance including the gentleman who was a politician in Scotland who I met personally and asked him if he could help me. He'd been down there. He had been in California and I had put on a dinner for him in the Scottish Society and I went prepared, just a page and a half of what information I had and thinking this is a leading politician in Scotland.
- Q. What year was this?
- A. It had to have been in the 90's.

- Q. You do tell us about it in your statement and it is now on the screen at paragraph 137 where you had this meeting with Alex Salmond who was the First Minister. Is that right?
- A. Yes.
- Q. That would give us some indication as to when that might have been.
- LADY SMITH. I think in the statement it may have been that it was before he became First Minister. It would depend when in the 1990's it was. He did go on to become First Minister but that wasn't until 1998, if I remember rightly, so it would be a little bit before then?
- A. Yes I think it was. He was going around collecting support from the different American Scottish groups.
- Q. I take it from what you are saying in your statement, that you prepared this document, you handed it over to him and you asked him if....
- A. Because I knew he didn't have time, he was flying out the next morning and I would be back in San Francisco. I said really would appreciate it you could help me. Is there is some group over there or something could assist me? I am searching for two younger brothers. A part of that search was before computers were personalised and it was difficult. I was writing to the Royal Navy and I couldn't get anywhere with them. Fairbridge gave me no assistance. Lady Dodds Parker was included in that. So I asked him...I said, "I know you are busy right now but when you get back to the office could you possibly give me some assistance with this on where to go?"
- Q. And what did he say to that?
- A. He said, "Fine, I'll do that Roddy." and he gave me a friendly hug around the shoulder.
- Q. And did you hear from him?
- A. No, nothing. So I ran into this so often and that is the part that annoys me even worse than the beatings because the family relationship that we could have had was taken from us. My family over here didn't know them. They got to know them by me personally going over and making my own trips and that, only part it but it was 1999 before I found Billy and Sandy.
- Q. They are your younger brothers?
- A. Sandy is gone now. Billy is in South Africa so it is just, you know, you can't replace that. Nobody can.
- LADY SMITH. Roddy I am going to stop now for the lunch break and we can sit again at two o'clock if you are ready then. How much longer do you think we are going to need Roddy to give evidence?
- Q. Well I am now coming to that chapter of life after Fairbridge, so perhaps by three o'clock.
- LADY SMITH. By three o'clock...If you don't feel ready at two let me know.
- A. We're coming to the interesting part.
- LADY SMITH. I think you need your lunch before that. Very well I'll rise now.

(ADJOURNED FOR LUNCH)

- LADY SMITH. Roddy are you ready to take us to the interesting part you were promising us before we rose for lunch?
- A. Yes ma'am.
- LADY SMITH. Thank you. Mr MacAulay.
- Q. Thank you my Lady. Good afternoon Roddy, I want to go to look at life after Fairbridge and I think you already mentioned that you didn't go into farming work, that type of life, after Fairbridge you went into the army?
- A. Yes, Major Plows was headmaster of the school at the time and it was down to about probably fifteen of us and so I had not done by lessons in high school and so he was stuck between putting me on a farm or trying to place me with a family. Because of my experience in cadets and reserves where despite Mrs [REDACTED] CBF so called harassment [inaudible] that I'd never amount to be anything, I kind of found my niche in leadership and so on and so on. I felt the army...I was in the Canadian Scottish Regiment and I wanted from reserve to go into the active. Anyway it was just about that time Canada dissolved the Scottish regiments and they all became the Black Watch of Canada so it was kind of a bit of a hassle. Then the recruitment officer said, "I'm checking your records and I see that you have taken the St John Ambulance and you have taken this cadet course medical corps and you did quite well. I think that you would be well advised to join the medical corps." He was the first person to tell me that I was intelligent.
- Q. That is what you did, you joined the medical corps?
- A. Yes that is what I did.
- Q. I think you have already touched upon in relation to your ironing skills, you found the discipline of the army not to be difficult following upon Fairbridge.
- A. No the uniform and all the, I hate to use the word chicken...army slang...
- LADY SMITH. Don't feel you have to hold back. I promise you it is hard to shock me.
- A. What we termed as chicken shit. Following of orders, marching, I was good at that. I had done drill Instructor and so I felt fine with it. I joined the medics and me really...that is part of my life that I have always kind of treasured. There was a few bumps along the way which is in the book but I was keen to learn that.
- Q. You served in Korea? You went to Korea?
- A. Yes I didn't ask for that one. I had hoped to have gone to...the army at the time had European Force, the Home Force and the Far East. I had joined the Home Force and thinking being a regular and hoping that I could bring my education up to be an officer. So I joined there and got into the medical corps and enjoyed what I was learning there and became a surgical tech. So it was a case of going from not wanting to learn in advance but learning in advance...completely different.
- Q. When you went to Korea that was during the Korean War?
- A. Yes. I didn't really want that. I started explaining those three divisions. I had wanted to go to Europe which would have been Berlin and that way I could have gone and hopped over to Scotland and find what was there of my

family. Well that didn't work out and I had been working in the surgical part and I was called up. The Commanding Officer informed me that I was scheduled to go to Korea.

- Q. And you went to Korea as a surgical tech which meant that you would assisting the doctors and surgeons who were dealing with....
- A. We did things that you wouldn't find yourself in a civilian hospital doing. It was kind of like crash training but I was still in my teens.
- Q. But you were dealing with wounded men?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did there come a point in time when you were in Korea that you had what might be called a breakdown?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And did that then lead to a rather darker part in your life?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did that part in life continue after you left the army?
- A. Yes it did actually.
- Q. When did you leave the army?
- A. I left because of my hearing loss and also some of my keenness about being in the army was diminished. Stationed in headquarters where instead of doing training that I had been I was now a desk clerk and signed papers and so on. The thing came up with my ears and that precluded my decision of whether I stayed on or left so I had to leave.
- Q. What year was that?
- A. That was 1954.
- Q. You tell us in your statement that after the army you returned to Canada and you mentioned this dark period of your life after you had your breakdown. I think you got married but your marriage broke up. Is that correct?
- A. Well that came a little later. I first of all came back to Scotland....
- Q. I will come to the Scottish part in a moment but in any event you came through this period of your life?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You tell us about aspects of that in paragraphs 143 through to 147 in your statement. You did receive some counselling. Is that right?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you attribute this period in your life to your experiences at Fairbridge?
- A. Well the doctor I was seeing at the time did. He said your childhood...I'm amazed you haven't been ill before this. Well I said I had a breakdown in the army.

- Q. If we look at page 3481 of your statement at paragraph 147. Involved in your...well what you say in your statement and I will just read that in fact, "I think as the years roll by I have made my peace with the demons". Is that your position? And your wife Betty who is with you today and you have been married to her for 35 years.
- A. Right. She has been the biggest healer that I've ever come across.
- Q. She has played an important part?
- A. Absolutely.
- Q. I do want to ask you about then something that you have already touched upon and it has been very important to you and that is your contact with your family. When did you first come back to Scotland to seek out family?
- A. First came back...I was still in the army and I had leave from my year in Korea and I also had money in the bank. So I came back. As far as I was concerned then my father, who I hadn't met up until this point, was ok. I didn't...I did kind of get a feeling when he wrote and said well this is a bad time to come. How can you tell me it's a bad time to come? I have been without a family for far too long. So I told him a big white lie and said I had already bought my tickets, I'm on my way. He was ok at first. He was pretty cool.
- Q. You met him in Edinburgh?
- A. Yes. I forget the address at the time. I met my [REDACTED]
- Q. These are the [REDACTED] to his second marriage?
- A. Yes and his wife was a lovely woman, very kind and...I don't know it was just like he'd never left the army and she waited on him hand and foot. So we parted after that one feeling a little that something was there that wasn't bringing the relationship [inaudible].
- Q. I think the way you put it was that, "it didn't work out with my father so I returned to Canada. My father had re-married and didn't want to engage with the children of his first marriage". Was that your impression?
- A. Yes.
- Q. But you wanted to engage with your [REDACTED]
- A. Yes I was ok with it. I remember one time he warned me about going to London looking for my brother Rob. He said, "You stay away from him" and I didn't pursue it any further why he was saying that and I didn't give him a negative or a positive.
- Q. I think you tell us in your statement, Roddy, that you did in fact make contact with your brother Rob.
- A. I did not make contact with my brother until he came to the States so that came quite a bit later than that initial visit.
- LADY SMITH. I think according to your statement that must have been about 15 or 16 years later?

- A. Yes it was. I'm probably jumping ahead of my story. So that first trip I took a quick trip down to London because I was dating a nurse who came over and was working at Hammersmith Hospital and back then nobody had a phone, a call box outside with fifty people waiting and so we arranged to meet at.....what's the big...?
- LADY SMITH. In London? Piccadilly Circus? A lot of people meet there.
- A. Nelsons...
- LADY SMITH. Trafalgar Square. Very close to Piccadilly Circus.
- A. Trafalgar Square. So I took a train down there and the girlfriend never showed up. I was dodging pigeons and so I got on the train heartbroken and went back up to Edinburgh. I found out later that she had been pulled into a different shift and couldn't do it and there was no way of contacting. Cell phones weren't around. So anyways I just moved on from there.
- Q. So you didn't on that visit meet up with.....
- A. My father, now this is the first of what I had felt was there and it came open when he got quite angry about it because he thought that I had gone down to London see my brother and he told me that was...When I told him that I had went down to see this girl who had already visited the family anyway. She got to Edinburgh before I did and I gave her the address and she went around and visited the family. Anyway it became an issue which I mean first of all how could I possibly find any of my relatives in London? It would have been like looking for a needle in a haystack. But it brought...it set a little disharmony there that stayed until my next trip and then the next trip is one...he lived out at the Inch, I think it was. I was only there about a week and we had a...I had met a girl at the Palais and brought her home and he raised an issue with that. I just brought her home for tea. I didn't bring her for anything else. He said "dance hall sluts" or something. Later on I found out he had met my mother at a dance hall. They were quite good dancers. At that point I told him, look I'm sorry but apparently we can't get along so I will move out and I did. I moved over to Aunt Kate.
- Q. She lived nearby?
- A. No she lived out at Saughton Mains Loan and she took me in again. It got quite funny with Aunt Kate, "Oh here you are again" kind of thing. They became family to me, they really did. They were so kind and to this day. Matter of fact I'm staying right now with one of Aunt Kate's gran or it is great gran...Anyway that is where I'm staying now. The [REDACTED] family. That was my father's sister.
- Q. How long did you stay with her then on that visit?
- A. I am running two visits into together here because one was when I was in the army and I didn't go to her on that one. But when I came back I was out of the army. I came back...Sorry I'm speaking like an Italian here...I hope there are no Italians in the family.
- LADY SMITH. I thought you were complimenting them.
- A. I was. It was when I had received my discharge from the army and I decided that I was going to go back to Scotland and stay. I went straight to Aunt Kate and that worked out for about six months or something. Then I realised that I wasn't going get the kind of work I wanted. I was doing labouring. I was doing anything I could to make enough to pay Aunt Kate the rent and put enough

money to go back if that was going to happen, which did happen. So I went back to Vancouver.

Q. What year are we into now then, Roddy, when you went back?

A. It was about 1955 or 56, somewhere in there. Actually at least here there was work. I got to Vancouver there was no work and it kind of went that way. The medical corps training I had, there was no kind of position in a civilian hospital for that. There was an orderly or what we call a bed pan job and I did that in desperation. Unfortunately ended up working on a ward of geriatrics. Very elderly people and it was hard in my state...depressions and that. I just couldn't do it.

Q. You did do different jobs I think?

A. I did every job I could imagine.

Q. If I take you on to when you met your brother, if I take you on to that point in time and I think in your statement you say that was in 1971?

A. By then I had moved down to the States to Florida. For the Scousers, Liverpool guys.

Q. How did it come about that you got in contact with your brother when you were in the States, how did that happen?

A. I was managing this recreation centre and I was counting out the cash registers. I had the TV going, morning news, and I saw that this gentleman was coming to Edinburgh on an agriculture grant or something. So I didn't know him from Adam but I got his number and I called him and I said, "I have got a strange request to ask of you, if you don't mind". I explained a little bit of my background and I said, "I have got family over there that I have lost track of and I'd like to find my Aunt Kate. Now I have an address here and in Scotland unlike the States or the UK, frankly, they don't move around that much and when they do neighbours will tend to know where they have moved. It's not like out there in the States, you move and nobody knows where you went". So he followed it up and found my Aunt Kate and Uncle [REDACTED] and...

Q. She got in touch with your brother did she your Aunt Kate?

A. No. My brother had been coming up to Scotland when he had heard that I had come over there. He came up to Scotland several times looking to see if I had come back and now finally we made the connection and he called me over there and we agreed to meet. I would pick him up at the airport, San Francisco, and that is when the thing came up with the two younger brothers.

Q. And that's when he told you...you knew about your sister, of course, that you had a sister and you now learned about your two younger brothers?

A. Yes.

Q. I think that meeting you had with your brother was in 1971, is that correct according to what you said in your statement?

A. Yes.

Q. If we move on a little bit, Roddy, as you tell us in your statement, did you have what I think you describe is a full family reunion later on in 2001?

- A. Yes.
- Q. Can you tell us about that, how did that come about?
- A. This is when I located the two younger brothers and so through the Child Migrants Trust, they had this family restoration, so they...either they got in touch with me or I got in touch, I can't recall but anyway there it was it was laid out that I could...wait a minute...When was the apology, that was after?
- Q. That's the Gordon Brown apology? 2010, I think.
- A. Gordon Brown...2010. They had this fund it was already...at the time it was handled through Canada. Any Canadians would apply to Ottawa and the lady up there, most graciously, because they were looking at your income and I said, "What have I to be dirt poor in order to get this?" I'll never forget her; she said, "I have heard your story", not that story, and she said, "You are going to go." Just like that. So my wife and I packed our bags and went to Scotland. Rob didn't show up so we visited Aunt Kate first and then we went down to London and I met my brother and my sister Minnie. It was the only time in my life that I saw ever my sister normal, happy and I danced with her. She was sick shortly after that and I never saw her again.
- Q. In any event there was that quite brief period of time then when you were reunited with Rob, your sister and your other two younger brothers?
- A. Not the two younger brothers yet. They came next.
- Q. They came next. But was there a time when you were altogether as a family?
- A. That was...you are going to have to help me...2001.
- Q. 2001. What you say in your statement, although you hadn't spent a lot of time with them particularly with your sister for reasons you have given, you do say at paragraph 140 and you put it quote, "I really feel for those who have never met their family".
- A. Absolutely. If you look at that picture of Canada, which is probably not the business we are in right now, 120,000 children sent to Canada and many of them never saw their parents again. It was true even with 329 kids because I wasn't the only one on that boat there was...Many of them didn't want to go back.
- Q. The 329 number is the number of children who were migrated to Fairbridge in Vancouver Island?
- A. Right. [REDACTED] who you have heard me mention, [REDACTED] was a shipmate of mine, he was one of those little [REDACTED] was a very private, isolated kind of guy. He went straight from Fairbridge to work in the logging camps. The kind of guy if I got lost in the forest I'd like to be with him because he knew it inside out. He built a log cabin, a home of his own. At one of the reunions I was sitting there talking to [REDACTED] and I said, [REDACTED] you've read the story about my brothers and I, you've never talked about family, do you remember?" He said, "Well I had an Aunt Kate and all I have from my mother" and I said, "You know the Child Migrants Trust helped me find and they did it quite quickly. I had gone through years on my own trying to locate them, why don't you give that"...He said, "Oh, no, no, no." He was not terrified but close to it at the thought of someone else coming into his life, period. I finally convinced him after about three visits. I said, "Let me just talk to them. If you don't want them to come, they won't give any particulars. You won't be forced you to do

anything.” So there was a young lady by the first name of Lindsey Hughes of the Child Migrants Trust and I talked to her. I said, “Lindsey you have got to be careful with [REDACTED] because he is very closed and introverted.” She did a great job because he finally relented. They came over and they didn’t stay in his log cabin which [REDACTED] was kind of worried about. It was clean and everything else like that. They were so kind to him, they thought that he was living in poverty almost. He wasn’t living in poverty, he’s got more money than several people I know. The brother-in-law bought him a big TV set which [REDACTED] didn’t know how to explain to them, look I don’t need. Well it went from there to then [REDACTED] finally making up his mind he’d go over there and since then he has built a family. As a matter of fact right now he is trying to reconsider whether he should go back here because he has nobody there.

Q. So this is a story that has rather a happy ending to it?

A. Yes. It was quite by accident and I feel quite proud that I stuck with it to open that door for him because he was just not going to and the other end they are extremely happy. One of the sisters has done research on the boat, the Bayano, sent me about 42 pages of where the Bayano had gone. Oh, it was tremendous.

Q. Well you’ve mentioned reunion on more than one occasion in your evidence, Roddy, and I think this is another little chapter in your life because you began to be involved with the Fairbridge Society if that is what you want to call it, is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about that part of your life?

A. Well, it is basically an association of students who went to Fairbridge. It had nothing to do with the old country Fairbridge Association which I think is still running today...I’m not sure. As I said before, I explained to many people that I didn’t go back to relive the memories of what happened to us as children. I went back to be with the ones I grew up and, for lack of a better phrase, we really had become more like brothers to each other than my own flesh and blood.

Q. You became a spokesman, did you, I think you say this in your statement for children who had been abused at Fairbridge?

A. Yes, the Child Migrant Trust, Margaret Humphreys...the first thing I said to her when I met her at the Gordon Brown apology was, “If only we had had someone like you as an advocate.” I don’t know, I really wished we had and she explained to me that she had attempted, she had been over there. But the Canadian Government of the day, or whatever, had just stone walled and her hopes...Betty was with me and we drove down to...it was quite a distance, about a 7 hour drive. I think she was thinking it was like a mile down the road but we went. So I was encouraged with the fact of some hope that we would finally have a voice with the Canadian Government over not just Fairbridge but the 120,000. She had asked me to be kind of like the representative and because she didn’t want everybody calling the office and asking this, that and the other. So I said, that’s fine I am President of the Association but I have to take that hat off and just work on my individual. I am the one that has the grievance because there are others of my schoolmates who see it in a different light so I’m president of both factions and I took it that way and she understood it that way. I did get Margaret and her Executive Officer from Australia both to come to a reunion...what was that about 10 years ago or 12?

- Q. In Canada?
- A. Yeah. They came over. They interviewed...I told the group, I said, "Anybody that would like to meet with Margaret and convey your personal story [inaudible]". So she did, she interviewed several. Then we had the follow up meeting in Burbank which really had me enthusiastic because I thought they would have come over all the way to Burbank. Well they were going to come out that year and then they didn't.
- Q. Were you hoping at this time to get an apology from the Canadian Government, was that the objective?
- A. Basically yes. That would be the beginning of it.
- Q. You knew of course that Gordon Brown had made an apology on behalf of the United Kingdom?
- A. Yes, because I shook his hand when he did it. I knew that the Australian Government had made an apology. I knew that New Zealand had. Canada who took in the largest. Australia was about 20,000 to 30,000 and Canada had 120,000 over about close to 100 years. This Child Migrant Scheme went back to something like 1830.
- Q. Can I take you to a document, Roddy, it will come on the screen WIT.003.001.8117. I imagine that you would recognise this particular document, I think it is taken from the Fairbridge Gazette, is that right?
- A. Right. Too bad you can't see my kilt.
- Q. As we look to the right hand side picture, is that a picture of you speaking to Gordon Brown?
- A. Yes. He lost the election shortly afterwards.
- Q. Well that wasn't your fault.
- LADY SMITH. I don't think you need to feel responsible for that, Roddy.
- A. I told him I said, "Prime Minister I think you could use about a couple of hundred of these kilties up in those back benches." That was what he was laughing about it. He had a good sense of humour.
- Q. Was this then at the time of the apology that you met Mr Brown?
- A. Yes. I found it to be very sincere. I don't think it was a political, forced issue. I think he genuinely looked at it and the speech he gave that our home country had let us down but the children...there was no follow up which was the case. I don't care if it was Australia South Africa or Canada. I've stated that I am angrier about that, even than the bullying and the mistreatment, and that part will never reach forgiveness on my part.
- Q. As narrated in the article, can we see if we go back to the screen that in 2009, November 16th the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Rodd, he gave a formal apology and in 2009 we note here that the Canadian Immigration Minister, Jason Kenny, stated that there is no need for Canada to apologise for abuse. That was the Canadian approach?
- A. Yeah. I mean, it is completely irresponsible that a government could make a statement like that. It received that many children to their shores. Now, true, back in 1830 you could have found where there was no welfare but as the

years went by they were into years where they had. We have seen the reports from the Canadian welfare and which brings up another kind of fine point. It seems like the BC Government because they condoned it, the Premier of the day was Bennett, I believe, and nowhere else in Canada. Canada had actually closed it down. It was stated at some point much earlier than Fairbridge that "no more home children". Yet Canada or the Fairbridge Association was able with the Government of British Columbia to open and run that school.

Q. And that school was to take in 329 child migrants over the piece?

A. Exactly.

Q. Now can I take you to that part of your statement, Roddy, where you set out some final comments. This is on page 3484 at paragraph 163, can we look at that first of all. Here you are putting forward some I suppose advice looking to your own experience. Can you take us through what messages you are trying to give us?

A. Well, I hope that the evidence that I have given to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry allows governments to understand child migration. I hope that they will care enough to ensure that people and children never have to go through an experience like this again. Governments must and should protect their children. I think the Child Migrants Trust is right that it is still happening today in the world...that's the neglect of children. I turn on the TV and mainly watch the BBC News [inaudible] and US and of course anyone with a television you turn on the news and what you are exposed to almost nightly is starving children, the slavery of children. It is incomprehensible for me. Today we are in a world that is every bit as bad if not worse but surely countries like the UK, United States and Canada would not allow that to happen to their children. I'm not quite sure about the present leader of the...you know the country I am speaking of...cares about children from just exactly what he has done recently.

Q. You say there at the bottom of the paragraph that vulnerable children need protection and if parents can't do that then someone else needs to.

A. Yes I do.

Q. And putting them in a big institution is not the way to do it. You say that from your own experiences?

A. I think that there has been too many failures from not just my personal life in an institution but, I don't know, it just seems that I've seen so many things happen that are wrong particularly Catholic schools and institutions of that kind where children have no chance of happiness or a decent life. I don't disagree with the view that Kingsley Fairbridge had. He was an idealistic young man. I think he intended that Fairbridge children should be cared for but in reality with some cottage mothers and several staff members never fitted with Kingsley Fairbridge's aims.

Q. I should have asked you this earlier but when you were at Fairbridge, for example in Mrs [REDACTED] cottage, you would address her as "mum"?

A. Yes.

Q. How would she address you?

A. Well, when she wasn't calling me a guttersnipe, it would be "Macka ". I find myself saying ok...somewhere in life you have to...and think Mrs [REDACTED] had

lost a husband in World War I. Now does that excuse her from becoming what she was? I have no idea, but maybe I should throw a little compassion that way on that. But I don't see that losing a husband would turn into bashing children.

- LADY SMITH. It could be said, Roddy, that having experienced loss of somebody close to her, she should have had empathy towards children who had lost families leaving them behind in their home country.
- A. Absolutely.
- LADY SMITH. I don't think have to beat yourself up for not making allowances.
- A. You won't think of me terrible if I said amongst us we used to say, "Yeah bet her husband jumped out of the trenches. He was the first man up". Oh...terrible...
- Q. Roddy I have already advertised your book but what I want to do next, finally, in your evidence is to put the prologue of the book on the screen. I am not putting the whole book on the screen and that is at WIT.003.001.7932. Can you recognise this as the prologue to the book?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can you read that please out for the Inquiry?
- A. I'd been waiting for this moment for nearly 70 years. At long last someone in power, prestige and authority was acknowledging and apologising for the terrible wrong done to thousands upon thousands of innocent children over the decades. On a late February morning in 2010, I joined dozens of other former victims of misguided government programs in a reception at the British House of Commons. When Prime Minister Gordon Brown came forward to shake my hand and the cameras flashed, all that I could think of was the appropriate caption for the photograph: "The Guttersnipe meets the Prime Minister", and I could not help but marvel at the long, bumpy journey that had taken to take me back out of the depths and up to the heights, and to reflect back on how it all began.
- Q. Thank you Roddy. That journey has taken you also to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. Thank you for coming and giving your evidence and no other questions have been submitted to be asked.
- LADY SMITH. Thank you. Let me check whether there are any outstanding applications for questions. Roddy those are all the questions we have for you and it just remains for me to give you my profound thanks for the extent to which you have engaged with the Inquiry. You, as you say, are possibly the last surviving Scottish boy who was migrated to Canada. It's been of such assistance to hear from you about the journey you have explained. I know you have come a long way, not just in your life, but physically to get here for this week to give your evidence. It is precious to us and I am very grateful for it and I am now able to let you go. Thank you.
- A. I would like to thank you and all the staff. They have been marvellous, wonderful. My wife and I have enjoyed the hospitality and I just feel almost like I'm going to part ways with a family here. Thank you
- LADY SMITH. Thank you very much. I'll now rise.

(THE INQUIRY ADJOURNED)