

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

ABV

Support person present: No

1. My name is ABV. My date of birth is 1940. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My earliest memories are from about 1946, when I was about six years old. I remember we lived at Larkhall. Then we moved to the top of the hill at Larkhall.
3. My dad was and my mum was or . They're both dead now. I have a younger sister, who's about five years younger than me and a younger brother, he's always been known as , who's about ten years younger than me. He was only eight months when my mother disappeared.
4. I never had a very good father; he was a lazy man and we never really had anything at any time. I did wee jobs for local shop owners and that, bits and pieces, like putting stuff into the bins and tidying up their back doors, things like that. I was getting a tenner here and a shilling there. That went on for, I don't know how long, but it was keeping me going. As I say my father was a useless, lazy, lazy man.
5. He used to punch hell out my mother and I think that is why she left. I think he was going to kill her but, as I say, that is how we were surviving and I think the worst part of it was when he didn't have any fags or tobacco for his pipe, you knew everybody

was going to pay for it. I made sure that he always had that, but what he got to me to do, was to start going round the streets picking up the dog ends for his pipe. I was doing that. We were not struggling at any time, we didn't have much but we weren't struggling. We were getting by.

6. Mum used to go to the tatties and help down in the farm, stuff like that you know, but all the money I was earning went to my mum.
7. When we moved to [REDACTED] that is when everything went. We moved next door to my aunt [REDACTED] I don't know how to explain this she was a bitch, right, and I wasn't allowed into her house. This is my father's sister. I wasn't allowed into her house, her garden, nothing like that. Her and my mother were always having words.
8. When I was six or seven, I can remember I was just coming up the road and I'd earned two bob. That was a lot then you know, so I was going to give that to my mother. My mother came out the gate. My father's brother was there, my uncle [REDACTED] I never liked him, but he walked forward to my mother and cracked her with his walking stick and knocked her onto the pavement.
9. I ran up and tried to stop him and I got whacked against the fence and when I looked up my father was standing at the window, looking out. He would have seen what that animal was doing to my mother. [REDACTED] left her unconscious on the pavement and I was trying to get her up to get her into the house.
10. Anyway that ended up in court. I was a witness and I was only about 6 years old then. After that it just got worse. If dad had no fags he would lay in to my mother. It was just constant you know and then all of a sudden my mother walked away. I can remember I was following her, shouting on her, but she never turned back. She just kept going and that was her away. If it had been me I'd have done the same thing.
11. That left me, my brother and sister and my father. I will tell you how lazy the man was right. Just say this was the living room and the toilet was right next to you, in the

next room, he had a bucket in front of the fire with a stick across it and he used that bucket, for the toilet. My mother had to empty it for him.

12. So, my mother left leaving me to look after my brother, sister and my father. Believe it or not we were doing great. I was doing wee bits back and forward, and getting stuff for them to eat and all the rest of it.
13. [REDACTED] was only seven months old and it was a problem getting stuff to feed him with but I was getting that milk stuff and mixing it with water and things like. Then, about a couple of months after my mum left, they came to take us away.
14. I was looking after the family and everything was fine. What I wanted to find out was who it was that reported us. I think it was [REDACTED] that old bitch next door to us, because she had no love for us and it was easy seen.
15. First thing I knew was when this Mr Barr turned up, him and a woman. I don't know who the woman was. I take it Mr Barr was one of the head ones in the social work department because he seemed to have all the say and spun us all this rubbish about how good it was going to be in Smyllum. I suppose that was to get us in but he never fooled me for a minute.
16. Mr Barr told us we were going to a place that was like a holiday camp. I will never forget every word that man said. He told me I would be able to look after [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I would be able to take them walks in the grounds and it was a beautiful place. Absolute nonsense.
17. Anyway, I was in Smyllum about a week before I first encountered old Sister [REDACTED] BAE [REDACTED] BAE

Smyllum Park Orphanage

First day

18. I was ten when I went to Smyllum. On that first day the three of us were taken away in a car by Mr Barr. We went up the back road into Lanark and they dropped me off at Smyllum. I thought I'd be with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but they went somewhere else to start with. Then they were in the other side because [REDACTED] was an infant and [REDACTED] was a girl.
19. I got a welcome from a nun, not Sister [REDACTED] BAE and was asked to go in and that was the start of it. The nun grabbed me by the sleeve and said "You come with me". She took me round to the boys' side, put me in the hall and that was me. It was a big play area for all the boys to play in.
20. Some of the boys came over and talked to me. [REDACTED] was one of them and he told me I wouldn't like it. I couldn't see my brother and sister after that either.
21. I was shown to my bed in my dormitory by [REDACTED] AEV I can't remember her surname. She looked after St. Vincent's, the 'wet the bed' dorm, but she showed me to the Sacred Heart dorm. She told me where to go to get sheets and blankets and all that. That was in a big room with loads of cubby holes.

General

22. When you first went into Smyllum it was a great big round building and you went up the steps into the main hall. Off that main hall there were other rooms and to the left there was the chapel and like a gym hall where we watched films and all that.
23. At the back there was a cobbled square and then you had the refectory where we had dinner. There was the boiler house at the back and a cloakroom and when you come through and up the stairs you were up at the dormitories and the shower rooms. The shower rooms were just off the stairs at the top.

24. In the square there was the building with the chapel corridor in it, you walked through that into the chapel. The billiard hall was along there and then it was the wee fellas at the end.
25. The lassies were over at the other side. I was never in there, it wasn't allowed. I would have got killed if I went in there.
26. As far as I know it was a Sister **EAL** that was the Sister **[REDACTED]**
[REDACTED] The Sisters of Mercy were looking after us, great name. They were of Catholic faith.
27. Sister **BAE** looked after the likes of us. Then you had Sister **AFC** who looked after the infants, the wee fellas as I called them, and that Sister **EAA** she was on the girls' and boys' side. Then you had Sister Patricia who worked in the kitchen. She was alright. She was Irish. The nuns would have been about thirty years old, or so, but I don't know for sure.
28. The nuns all wore big dark blue habits and white butterfly hats. I think they called them cornettes. They had the beads with the cross on it round their waists, that was another weapon.
29. There was other staff, the likes of **BAC** who, as far as I'm led to believe, was brought up in **[REDACTED]** He was the **[REDACTED]** guy. So, why he treated the kids the way he did, I don't know. **[REDACTED]**
[REDACTED]
30. Then you had Miss **AFD** she was in her thirties, and helped Sister **AFC** with the wee fellas. She was just like the nuns. She liked to touch you plenty and she did it to me and many others. She would put her hands around you and most of the boys couldn't go for that. It was privates alright, it wasn't skin to skin or anything, but she just liked to touch you on your privates, but over your clothes.

31. She wouldn't say anything, she just seemed to like that. She wasn't a sister as she wore ordinary clothes. She didn't take you into a private room or anything like that. It could be in front of everybody it didn't matter. It was very embarrassing.
32. She would touch you inappropriately and in public. There was no need for it. To this day I can't stand anybody touching me. [REDACTED] my wife, will tell you she has got friends and they are all kissy/cuddly. I can't do that and I will say to them not to paw at me and to keep their hands off me. I don't hesitate to tell them.
33. There was a lot of boys at Smyllum. I used to think there were hundreds of us, maybe two or three hundred but I really don't know. The girls was about the same.
34. We were supposed to leave to go to St Ninian's when we were twelve but I got there a bit earlier. There were infants up to the age of about fifteen at Smyllum. That is when they were supposed to leave because you were able to work.
35. We wore a blue blazer with a gold braid on it. It had a badge with Smyllum on it. You wore it all the time, Sundays especially. You got dressed up on Sundays when we were going out for walks and things like that. We had short trousers and a shirt, you didn't have a vest it was just a shirt. We wore other older clothes through the week as well. We only got dressed up for special occasions or if somebody was coming to visit.
36. If you needed new clothes you had to show your old ones to [REDACTED] BAE and God help you if they were torn. You had to show them your socks, you couldn't have a hole in them.
37. There was one instance when I got issued with a pair of socks that had a hole in the heel of them. [REDACTED] BAE was busy, but I went to [REDACTED] BAC and showed him the hole in the heel of these socks. He told me he was a bit busy but would sort it the next day.

38. The following morning I had the socks on and [BAE] saw the hole and she just lost it. [BAC] didn't open his mouth. He didn't tell her that I had already went to him with them. Well that was a leathering again for me with the pointer because I had disobeyed her and had got a hole in the heel of my sock. They loved to punish you, who knows why.

Mornings and bedtime (washing and bathing)

39. I think there were only the two dormitories, St. Vincent's and Sacred Heart, they were called. They were big massive buildings. St. Vincent's was the 'wet the bed' dorm. I was moved in there after about six months from Sacred Heart by [BAE] I can't remember why that was.
40. We had a bed with a wee locker at the bottom, that was it. I never had anything to put in it.
41. When we went on holidays, say to Aberfoyle, I was in charge of the 'wet the beds', me and another three or four lads. How can you be in charge when you're on holiday? We went down to a wee burn and washed their sheets for them, how embarrassing is that?
42. In Smyllum we had to go wash the wee kids' soiled bed sheets and their clothes and things like. We did that in the baths in the washroom or they would go down to the shower room and do it. We would wash the wee kids down when they had messed themselves or things like that, we had all that to do.
43. There was a thing there as well, cold showers that was a favourite punishment of [BAE] I can't take a warm shower now, it's always cold showers I take. I can't take a warm or hot shower. I have tried but when I do I go all sweaty and I just don't feel right.

44. [BAE] done that. Every time she accused me of stuff I hadn't done she gave me a cold shower. I can see her, "You done this and you done that", I think she was playing with my nut all the time.
45. We got a shower on a Friday night and it was a wash for the rest of the week. You would change your clothes, socks and sheets on a Friday as well.
46. If you weren't a 'wet the bed' you folded all your clothes and they went to the laundry. If you were a 'wet the bed' you had to wash them all yourself. The laundry must have gone outside as I don't remember a laundry in Smyllum.
47. You were talking about routine, so I was put in the 'wet the bed' dormitory and I shouldn't have been because I didn't wet the bed. [BAE] put me in there. Her favourite habit was coming round the beds in the morning to get you up and the old pointer across the toes.
48. That is how she woke you. She cracked you right across the toes with her pointer and it was painful. You could hear the boys squealing. I got that two mornings, after that, I was up, my bed was made and I was ready to go.
49. She would also throw water out a vase over my sheets and say I'd wet the bed. I never wet the bed, my jammies were always bone dry. She would point at the wet patch and ask what it was. I just stood looking at it. One of the boys told me that she'd poured the water out the vase into my bed. She did that a lot. What was wrong with her, what was wrong with her head?
50. I think it was about 7 am you got up, got washed and went to chapel. Then you went back for breakfast and then you went to your class. That was the routine.
51. We got washed in the wash house at the end of the dormitory, there were wash-basins, baths and all that. You gave yourself a good washing down and back out and dressed.

52. Sometimes you got warm water but not very often. It was first in, first served, but you weren't long because you knew there was other boys waiting.
53. BAE was always there, standing, watching and if something went wrong she would have you kneel down in a corner. Once everyone was away you got up. You were kneeling because she thought you'd done something wrong, and it didn't take much for her to think you were doing something wrong. I think, in her mind, she thought everybody was doing something wrong. That was the type of person she was. AFC wasn't any better.
54. After washing we went and stood by our beds until BAE told you to get dressed. You got dressed and stood by your bed, then she would say to go to chapel.
55. We had breakfast after chapel then we went to school. After lunch we got into the playground for half an hour before going back to school. Once school was finished we got back down into the play area. About 5 pm you got a cup of tea and a sandwich. We called it an 'outsider', an end of loaf with jam on it.

Food

56. For in there, in Smyllum, it was alright. It could have been better but at that time it was alright.
57. We always ate in the refectory. If you didn't like it you didn't eat it, but you didn't let them know. The food went in your pocket and then in the bin when you went out. You couldn't let them know or they'd kill you. The pointer told you that you were not allowed to leave any food, you couldn't leave any or waste any.
58. It was used on me a couple of times. I remember at Christmas time we got stuff like frog's eggs, tapioca. I hated that and I said I wasn't eating it. First thing I got was the pointer stick on the back of my nut. Then it was God this and God that, but I said to BAE I wasn't eating it as I didn't like it.

59. She said "You will eat it boy" and she started to lay in to me. I went to get up and I caught my plate on the table and the food fell on the floor. She wanted me to eat it after everybody was walking about on it. There's no way I was doing that. So I got a hiding for that and I had to clean it up.
60. She was the same with other boys, who didn't get a chance to say they don't like it. She was right there 'bang' and they would eat it and you would see them boaking, why put them through that? If the boys didn't like it they should have been left alone.
61. See when I put something down in front of my kids, I would say to them if they don't like it, don't eat it and just eat what you can and leave it, I've always been like that.

School / Religious Instruction / Work

62. The school was terrible. We had a teacher called Miss IAR and she was just like BAE Nobody could do anything right, everybody was wrong. I finished up just shutting my mouth. She gave you lessons but she didn't care. If you done it you done it, if you didn't you didn't.
63. I think there were six classes and they were mixed. You had lassies and boys all sitting in rows across from each other. That's how I could find out what was happening with and a lassie used to tell me.
64. They were only interested in you learning Latin. I couldn't read or write but I listened to what they were saying and memorised all the Latin. I think they wanted all the boys to become priests, I had that in my head all the time, but there's no way I was becoming one.
65. See when we got PE in that big area, the one I was telling you about, we had exercises. Like reaching to the ceiling, touching your toes and putting your hands out and while you were doing that, BAE was walking around with her pointer stick.

66. She would hit you across the back of the hand, the back of the head and two or three times she got me right between the legs. It was deliberate and for no reason at all. When I went down I would get it on the back. I wasn't the only one. It was sick. I could never understand why they treated us like that.
67. Religion was the thing, that was it. Nothing else mattered. When I came out those two homes I couldn't read or write but ask me anything in Latin and I'd have been able to tell you. Why did they waste our time instead of learning us something proper?
68. You would go into prayer and kneel down, kneel down all the time. I watched a film, 'Song for a Raggie Boy' and it was bang on. Whoever made that film must have been in Smyllum. The thing that surprised me was that when we were standing out in the courtyard it was all cobble stones and the nuns were all standing, but we kids were not allowed to stand, we had to kneel. **BAE** told us to kneel.
69. We went to chapel every morning. Some nights you had the stations of the cross, you had the rosary, benediction, confessions. The best way to say it that you had to kneel, kneel, kneel, all the time.
70. I suffered from weak knees when I was in there and one time Sister **FAM** put me in the isolation ward for a day as my knee was so swollen.
71. **BAE** came from an orphanage in Glasgow, Tollcross for the deaf and dumb and that's when I got my back up right away. She would walk into the hall, with her bent finger up and everybody would go quiet, right. Then she would do this or that and hand sign at us. We weren't deaf and dumb how did we know what she was saying. I let her know that I wasn't deaf and dumb, and I paid for it but I still wasn't deaf and dumb.
72. One of the jobs I did was peeling the potatoes, with the tattie machine. In the winter it was always me, as a punishment. It was wet and cold, you got soaked.

73. You got all different chores like making sure your dormitory was clean, beds were made and the chapel corridor was cleaned and polished.
74. They would throw coffee leaves down on the chapel corridor and we would sweep them up, that kept the dust down. Once you got rid of all that, you polished it all and once the polish dried you shined it. Once you had done it with the blocker you got a big cloth and you got down on your hands and knees and you polished everything until it was all shining. The blocker was a big square bit of wood with a handle. It was heavy and you used it to polish the floor.
75. You ought to have seen the floors, they were beautiful. The toilets was another - we had to clean them out and all that. Anything that was done was done by the boys in there.
76. The chores were mostly done at night, you had to keep everything clean. Sister **BAE** told you what to do, but all the boys had a shot of everything. You would probably get a job for a week and if you were being punished you would maybe get a second week. That's how it worked.

Holidays / Leisure

77. We didn't get to West Linton because I got punished and I didn't get to go. I can't remember what I had done but it must have been serious to stop me going. I can't think of ever doing anything.
78. We had a big recreation area where all the boys would play. That was the only place you were allowed or down the park, but most of the time you were stuck in that big area. We would go out there to play football. There was no mixing, we weren't even allowed to talk to the girls. I couldn't even talk to my sister.
79. There was no television. I've seen photographs that Frank Docherty showed me with kids sitting playing with toys, so they must have given them the toys for the photos,

as we never had anything like that when we were in Smyllum. Frank was in after me but we never seen a toy.

80. Well, the wee infants had wee toys that folk would hand in. There was one instance when I went over to see our [REDACTED]. I wasn't supposed to, but as I walked in I seen [REDACTED] AFC smack him off the wall. She slapped him over the head when he was playing with a wee wooden scooter thing. The wean fell and I ran over to comfort him and she came down with the scooter right on my back.
81. [REDACTED] had only just started to walk then. I think he was only about ten months or something. You should have seen how they treated they wee infants. It wasn't real, there was something seriously wrong there.
82. I do remember watching a film, Pinocchio, it was in the fifties, in a wee picture house called the Rio, in Lanark. We all got to go, that's the reason I got to go because everybody was going - otherwise [REDACTED] BAE wouldn't have let me go. She never let me go to anything.
- Birthdays and Christmas / Personal Possessions*
83. There was one time my mum sent me in a birthday cake, the one and only time she done that. Sister [REDACTED] BAE told me this woman, as she put it, had sent me a birthday cake. That was my ma she was talking about right, so that afternoon she brought in the cake. She had me standing there at the front and she cut it into bits.
84. I asked for a bit for my brother and sister and she never let on and started dishing it all out to everybody. I said I want a bit for my brother and sister. She said "I will attend to you in a minute". Well she attended to me with her cane stick. I didn't care if I got a bit or not but I wanted a bit for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. So they never got a bit and I got a beating for speaking back. That was something you weren't allowed to do.
85. In Smyllum, you never knew what Christmas was. There was no celebration - you just got midnight mass and all that. There was nothing special about it.

86. Believe it or not, my first Christmas present ever was from my wife. I was seventeen years of age and working in the pit. I was getting ribbed because I didn't shave and she bought me a shaving kit. I didn't know what to say or nothing. Nobody had ever gave me anything.
87. I think you got an apple and an orange, that was it.
88. There were no books or comics, nothing. That's what people don't understand, there was absolutely nothing. Plenty of hammerings and abuse but nothing else.

Visits/Inspections/Siblings

89. I remember a great aunt and uncle came to visit once at Christmas, I don't remember their names. I've never seen them since. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were with me, on a very rare occasion. They gave me a wee wooden aeroplane and I gave it to [REDACTED] to play with. They grabbed it off him and said it was for me and put it on a table.
90. It fell off the table and I put my foot on it and said I didn't want it. It was ideal for my wee brother to play with. The uncle said he didn't want the visit to go on any longer and on the way out they reported it to Sister [REDACTED] BAE [REDACTED]. I got another hammering for that.
91. My mum came to see me twice, my father came to see me once and my grandmother came to see me once with my two sisters, [REDACTED]. I have two older sisters who my gran brought up. My mum had them to another man before she met my father. It's complicated. [REDACTED] all her life and was in a wheelchair.
92. They never let any of my family in to see me. I would have to take [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and go sit outside. They never even let my granny in. I know it was because [REDACTED] BAE [REDACTED] didn't like me, so I got to expect things like that. The feeling was mutual. I hated her and I let her know that endless times.

93. I told my mum, dad and gran all about what was going on. My mum had words with [BAE] and it nearly came to blows. After that episode with my grandfather I never opened my mouth to nobody after that. That finished me when he wouldn't believe me.
94. My dad didn't really have much of a reaction, there was nothing he could have done anyway.
95. The second time my mum came she took me away, out of Smyllum for the day, to see my granny as she was ill. I remember my granddad was working in the garden. I was giving him a hand and I had my shirt off to wash. He saw all the marks on me and he was quite angry.
96. I told him straight what happened and that it was Sister [BAE] with her pointer stick and he went for me, he was going to hit me. I was a liar so what chance for me, that was my granddad. I told my ma I didn't want to go back there again. I couldn't believe my own grandfather wouldn't believe me.
97. My mum just walked away with me. Then she took me back quite late at night. I got a right good leathering for that as well.
98. I once asked [BAE] if I could take my brother and sister down to see my mother and she looked right through me with those wee beads that she had for eyes. She was standing staring at me and I thought she hadn't heard me. So I raised my voice a wee bit and asked again. She exploded and lost it altogether. She said my mother was a woman of the night and was living in sin.
99. She laid in to me on that occasion. I can't remember the words she used but I kept saying no and she just kept laying on me.
100. When you were in Smyllum you didn't have a family anymore. Your family life was finished but I couldn't see that as I had to keep going to see our [REDACTED]. I wanted to

make sure he was alright. I just went myself. I didn't get permission, they wouldn't give you permission to go see them.

101. I could only see [REDACTED] limping in her playground and I knew, I could feel what she was going through.

Healthcare

102. You saw Sister [REDACTED] FAM for everything. If you needed a doctor you'd had it. There were no doctors or dentists or nothing in Smyllum.
103. I remember one of the boys took no well. I knew him but I can't remember his name, and one morning Sister Patricia asked if I would take some breakfast up to him before I went to school. I took this wee tray up to the isolation ward and when I opened the door and walked in, I went over to him and he was lying on his side with foam in his mouth. I tried to move him and I spoke to him but the boy looked as if he was dead.
104. I didn't know that, at the time, so I went down and told Sister [REDACTED] FAM and she told me to go to school and that she would attend to it. So I went to school and after school I came back down by the isolation ward and I saw it was empty and he was away. When I asked they said he was away and he had gone. That was it, there was nothing else they would tell you.
105. I take it he was dead, I couldn't swear on it but there was no movement from him or nothing. He was about my age, eleven or twelve

Discipline at Smyllum Park Orphanage

106. [REDACTED] BAE would say "What are you doing boy" to some of the boys. They could be standing playing with an elastic band or something and they would wet themselves just talking to her. They did that out of fear. See that, it really got to me, it really did.

But I could not get our [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] out my mind and I was worried about them all the time.

107. I found out [REDACTED] BAE didn't like swearing and I did that constantly so I brought a lot of that on myself. She would hit me with her pointer anywhere at all for that. It was something terrible. She would get me to put my tongue out and put a solid block of carboic soap in my mouth. It used to catch on your teeth, but it never stopped me, I kept doing it.
108. I did run away and I took some sore hidings for that. I roamed the Clyde all my young life. The police, Sergeant Whitelaw, I would tell him he was taking me back to a hammering but it made no difference. They didn't believe me either. I don't blame them, who would think people like that would carry on like that?
109. I ran away two or three times. I would just take off. I was heading for Larkhall, I knew where I was going and what I was doing but I'd remember [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I'd start worrying about them and I'd go back. That's when the police would drive up.
110. I'd always get a hammering when I run away, but I was used to it by then. I told [REDACTED] BAE that I'd never greet for her again, and I didn't.

Abuse at Smyllum Park Orphanage

111. It was after about a week. I had no word from them so I went to Sister [REDACTED] BAE, I said to her I wanted to see my sister and she told me I couldn't. I asked why not and she hit me with her pointer stick. I got it just for asking her why not.
112. Then all of a sudden we weren't a family and this woman wasn't my mother. By this time I am 10 years old and this is me just into Smyllum. I was used to the streets and everything, used to my freedom. After that, when I asked when I could see my brother and that was another leathering. She loved that pointer.

113. It was a long stick for pointing at the blackboard. About three, three and a half foot in length. It was heavy at one end and thin at the other and it was always the heavy end she gave you, you know what I mean.
114. She would just hit you anywhere at all, it didn't matter. I'll never forget the first time she hit me. I thought she was never going to stop and I hadn't done a thing. It was when I questioned not being able to see my sister and brother, all I said was why not, that was all.
115. That was in the hall where everybody played, I can't remember what happened. I think we were going for our dinner and I went to see Sister [BAE]. I think she was supposed to be going to prayer. I went to see her and that is what happened, so I found out that I wasn't going to get to see them.
116. I went over myself to see them, went to see our [] and I kept doing that regular until [BAE] caught me. It's hard to explain the beatings you know, she never knew when to stop and she was in a frenzy. There was something no right with the woman. She wasn't the only one, and we'll come to that.
117. Anyway, my young brother didn't like fish, see if you gave him anything with fish he was sick. It was a while after that Sister [AFC] sent for me because my brother wouldn't eat his fish. We had fish every Friday, what for I don't know but it was every Friday. I didn't eat in there, it was never cooked right.
118. I said [] didn't like fish and this went on for I don't know how long. Sister [AFC] always sending for me and I would go over. What really started to get to me was that she carried a wee ladle with her. It was a cast iron ladle, and she would smack it on the top of his head and say "Eat your fish". I could see my brother with her standing over him. I knew what she was doing.
119. There was another incident that happened with [], it was coming near the end of my stay in Smyllum. I was sent for again and went over. [] was sitting at a table,

by this time he was about 2 maybe 2½. Sister AFC was stabbing at him with a spoon with fish on it. His wee lip was burst, I could see it.

120. I said he doesn't like that, she said "He will eat it" and I said he wouldn't eat he doesn't like it, you will make him sick. She kept stabbing at him and saying "He will eat it, he will eat it" and I just lost it. This was after months and months of watching them doing this with my wee brother so I went for her and I knocked her to the floor. One of the novices I think ran for BAE, and she came over with her pointer and they told her what happened.
121. BAE hit me three crackers and the fourth time she brought the stick down, I put my hand up caught it. Well it came away in my hand and that was all I needed. I didn't know when to stop, I went mental. I could have killed that woman, the hate I had for that bitch. Anyhow that's when BAC got involved. He told me to get to the billiard hall and I knew I was in for it. That's where you went when you were really going to get it.
122. I went into the billiard hall and I was standing there waiting and in they came. The first thing BAC did was walk forward and hit me a punch in the stomach and I went down. I remember swinging around on the floor and he kicked me on the ankle and my ankle hit off the billiard table. I thought I'd broken my ankle.
123. Then he kicked my forehead and I saw wee stars. I thought he had knocked me out. Then BAE was there with that pointer stick as well and he was kicking me and whacking me. She burst my mouth and everything and after it was all done I just lay on the floor for I don't know how long. I lay there for quite a while then I got up and went back into the play area.
124. I think BAC was there just to punish you. I think that was his sole purpose. A slap on the lug, a kick in the guts or a punch in the mouth. He just didn't care, he could have broken your bones but nobody cared because they had nobody to answer to.

125. Then I ended up in the 'wet the bed' dormitory that's what it was and I had to go there, that was my punishment. They never knew when to stop. They loved it, they enjoyed it, that was their life, frustrated old hags. I didn't know that then but I know it now.
126. I had to go to their dormitory and the smell wasn't real. I was there to help them wash their sheets.
127. The next time Mr Barr came to see us I went to see him. I wanted [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in with me but that was not allowed. The thing was, you weren't a family anymore in there They did not have families in there, you were a loaner and that didn't work for me. That was my family and I looked after them.
128. I remember a wee lassie, [REDACTED], used to talk to me quietly about what was happening with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and she told me she'd seen them hurt [REDACTED] and he was in the isolation ward. That's where you go when you are not well. Well, this was after the incident with [REDACTED] BAE and [REDACTED] BAC and all the rest of it so I knew it was to get at me.
129. Well it did get to me, so as soon as the school was finished I went straight to the isolation ward and I could hear him greeting from outside. I went to the door and I couldn't get in, I went around about the building but couldn't get in, so I went round the back, broke the toilet window and I went in through the toilet.
130. Well, I couldn't believe it. He was sitting on a thing like a saddle and his pelvis had been broken. He was only about two and a half. He was all bandaged up and sitting in there all alone. I don't know if he even went to hospital or if any doctors saw him or if it was just Sister [REDACTED] FAM that saw him.
131. I found out he'd been lifted and thrown on to an iron framed bed which smashed his pelvis. I tried to lift him but I couldn't. That killed me, I was his brother and I should have been looking after him but I didn't, they wouldn't let me.

132. It was breaking his heart. There was a jug, and I filled it with water and I gave him that. The wean drunk it all, he hadn't had a drink or nothing, what kind of people were they.
133. Sister **FAM** did come in when I was there and she went right into one because I had broken the window. That's another one I shouldn't have broken the window. I should have went for her but I didn't have an hour to wait. I could hear my wee brother greeting.
134. They maybe have records about how bad I was but there'll be none about what caused that injury to my wee brother. This is where they are all falling down. I looked after my brother and sister before we went in there and once I went in there that was taken away. They just would not let me see them.
135. When **[REDACTED]** came home I tried to get it out of him what happened to him, but he will not talk about anything. To start with he was too young to be seeing all that. He says he can remember sitting with a big nappy on and somebody cuddling him. That was me when he was sitting on that saddle in that isolation ward.
136. Now my mother moved in with an old guy across the road from **[REDACTED]** down in Lanark. She worked as his housekeeper so that meant when I went down for the sisters' milk I could talk to her and I did a couple of times.
137. Once, we were all walking down to Lanark and we passed my mother standing at her door. I couldn't ignore her so I went to run across the road. Well, I nearly lost an arm. **BAE** grabbed me by the arm and dragged me back. She kept saying "That is not your mother, that's not your mother". See the crap she used to put into my nut, I was the 'devil's disciple', I was this, I was that.
138. I am left-handed, and **BAE** said "We will knock that out of you boy, you will learn to write with your right hand, the devil's disciple writes with their left hand". What a load of rubbish. She just leathered me every time I wrote with my left hand.

139. There was one particular time she came in and she sat down in front of me when I am trying and trying with my right hand but I just couldn't get the hang of it. I lifted the pencil with the left hand and I kept my hand off the page. She was sitting there watching with her wee beady eyes going right through me. "I told you to use your right hand" she said. I told her my hand was sore. Well she lifted the pencil and sunk it right in to my leg, boom, like that. I started to bleed and you know the lead out that pencil is still in there now, it's still not right yet.
140. The blood was running out it. She told me to go see Sister **FAM**, so I went to see her and she put a plaster on. I told Sister **FAM** there was a bit of lead in there, but that didn't matter.
141. I also had to go to the hen run and get the eggs in the morning things like that.
142. This particular time **BAE** told me to go and get the tatties ready and I went away and got them. These bags of tatties weigh some so I used to drag them over and put all the tatties in the machine. Anyhow this morning when I went round the door was missing off the machine. I started hunting for the door and I couldn't find it.
143. Of course Sister **BAE** came round, "Why haven't you started yet?". Then she spotted the door was missing, "Where is the door off the machine?" I said I didn't know and that I was looking for it. She thought I wanted out of washing the potatoes and that I was lying but I couldn't find the door. Well she set about me with that pointer again and got me a cracker right between the legs.
144. I went down like a log. I was lying there in agony and she was still laying on me. Then she stood back, I think she was out of breath. I put my hand on a wee funnel on the machine to get up and she came down with the pointer, right across my fingers. I thought she had broken my hand, the pain. It turned out she had dislocated my finger I found that out afterwards. What annoyed her most was that I wouldn't greet for her. I stopped doing that a long time before that.

145. I got up holding my hand and she looked at my hand. I was dazed as well and she said to go see Sister [FAM]. I went to see Sister [FAM] but she was at prayer, they were always in at prayer. I stood and waited for her for about ¾ of an hour, in agony. It was so painful. I told her Sister [BAE] told me to come up and see her and I showed her my hand. She just put my hand on the table and pushed down flattening out my hand. That was my hand fixed. I nearly passed out with the pain. She must have seen my fingers were all out of joint you know. It gets me angry, see when I think back.
146. There were so many times [BAE] hit me, she just loved the pointer, you know what I mean. She also had a hair brush. She used to bend your hand out and lay it on the palm of your hand.
147. She would also send me to [BAC]. He had one of those long boot-brushes He would hold your wrist and lay it across your hand. This was him punishing you for Sister [BAE]. She would send you to him to get punished.
148. She would hit you then send you to [BAC] for more, oh yes. His favourite was to hold up your head and you had to lift your head up until he slapped you on the neck. He was a man and had a good smack at you.
149. [BAE] and that [BAC] drew blood out of me sometimes. I will carry those scars until I die, they are all on my hands. When I came home I had to go to the doctors as there was always pain in my hand. I had to go to Law Hospital and have it examined. I had a chipped bone which is why my hand would swell up for no reason.
150. That was a few years after we were married. We got married in 1964 but that plagued me all the time.
151. They have buried that [BAC] right at the front of all those weans up in that cemetery in Lanark. That man shouldn't be there. I don't know where he should be but he shouldn't be there. The abuse that man dished out wasn't real That was his favourite the boot brush, - he loved that.

152. Sister [BAE] burst my mouth with the pointer and everything. As I say when she came at you with that pointer she didn't care where she got you, she just got you and that was it. My shoulders were all black and blue.
153. That was after about eight or nine months at Smyllum. When Mr Barr came up out the blue, I didn't know he was coming. It was the only time he came to see us. It must have been to check up on how we were getting on.
154. I went in and he asked me what happened to my face. I showed him what happened to my body and everything and told him [BAE] was lading in to me with a pointer. I didn't hide anything, I told him everything like an idiot and it all came back. I never seen him again after that, he went to [BAE] and then disappeared.
155. I also asked Mr Barr if I could see my brother and sister but he said no. He's the pig that put us in there and explained how good it was going to be.
156. I got a right good leathering for that. You couldn't win.
157. Sister [BAE] told him that I was always fighting and always falling down. We were all like brothers in there, all the guys, you never got any fighting. It's the same even yet, if you meet them outside, because you know what they've been through.
158. The beauty of it was that I told Sister [EAL] about my beating as well and she went to Sister [BAE] and told her. Sister [EAL] was the [EAL]. Now if you can't trust her who can you trust? I also went to her and I told her my brother and sister were getting it and she went to [BAE] and told her that.
159. Sister [EAA] she had a thing for kicking the lassies' ankles. My sister [] was always limping. I only seen [EAA] doing it once but the wee lassie that kept me up-to-date with what was happening with my brother and sister, she kept telling me I'd see a lot of the lassies limping.

160. I think the lassie I saw getting kicked by [EAA] was [REDACTED] somebody. I am sure it was [REDACTED] somebody. You see you never got to talk to the girls. If you wanted to talk to the girls you wouldn't have survived. That was a no no, everything was the devil and the devil was in you.
161. I seen a lot of kids getting hit. It was heart breaking to watch. When [BAE] went into that frenzy, something went missing in her. You could see it in her face, she was slavering at the mouth, she even slavered on me a couple of times. She wasn't a nice person at all, there was something mentally wrong with the woman.
162. The three of them, [BAE], [AFC] and [EAA] they all had the same action.
163. The only decent one was Sister Patrica but if things went wrong you could not ask her for back-up. She once sent me to do a job on the other side of the steam house, to clean up the wee alley way where a lot of vegetable stuff was lying.
164. I got a brush and shovel, went over and cleaned it all up. There were two boys who were supposed to be cleaning the steam room, having a right carry on. They packed up and went out the back door and I packed up and went to tell Sister Patricia I had finished. I walked out and who was standing there, Sister [BAE] She'd heard the boys making a noise but thought it was me.
165. I told her I'd been doing a job for Sister Patricia but she never opened her mouth to defend me and I got a leathering for that. [BAE] didn't care where she hurt you. She was like that with all the boys. She was a ruthless woman.
166. There was an incident, when I went to see our [REDACTED] because I heard she got a leathering and I was on my way down to see her. She was limping and I never got a chance to talk to her because [BAE] came right out the blue and got me. "You aren't allowed to visit your brother or your sister." I was the devil's disciple and she harped on at me about that all the time.

167. [BAE] once sent for me to go to the office, with about six boys. She had bought swimming trunks for going for a shower and they were huge, way too big. They got us in and, of course, the first one she picked was me. The lassies that were going to be nuns, they were fifteen or sixteen, about half a dozen of them came in, and they were to give an opinion on the swimming trunks. I remember we [REDACTED] was standing next to me to and I said the trunks were too big and that we were going to be embarrassed. We thought we better put them on, as we know what [BAE] is like so I put them on.
168. I had a handful of trunks to stop them falling down, they weren't even on right and I'm embarrassed as it is. [BAE] then brings the lassies in, and I turned my back as I was embarrassed but [BAE] took that pointer right across the hand holding my trunks. Of course they fell to the floor. I lifted my pants and I shot out the door, grabbed my clothes and away. I paid for that.
169. This other one is different, there is something not right here. It was when I was about twelve. [BAE] sent for me once and I went in to her office. I had to go in and I had to go and stand beside her and I am standing beside her and she starts to play with me. That was the last thing I expected of somebody like that.
170. She said "Does anybody ever do this to you, have they ever done this to you since you have been here?" and I said "No they haven't". I was angry I was really angry but she kept doing it and doing it and then she started to squeeze my testicles and I was down on my knees on the floor in agony. After she was finished she said that if anybody ever did that to me she wanted to know. She was so sick, you're standing there and there's not a thing you can do about it.
171. I was fully dressed but it was short trousers you wore. She was touching me on the skin, you know. It wasn't just me that she did it with, there were other boys as well. It was talked about in a roundabout way. You couldn't say anybody's name in there, you couldn't tell anybody about anything in case it got back to them and then you really paid.

172. Like what I did with Mr Barr and Sister **EAL** I should never have done that but I didn't know at that time. I thought those people were there to look after us. I was told I was in there to get educated and looked after. I got neither. When I came home I couldn't even read or write, embarrassing.
173. A couple of months after that I was in St Ninian's.
174. **[REDACTED]** was just a child like me. We were in the same class, she used to put her hand over her mouth when she was talking to me so that the teachers couldn't see, you know. You weren't allowed to talk to each other or nothing. It was a scary place. I wish I hadn't been so stupid. I brought quite a bit of it on myself I did.
175. Well I think **BAE** was trying to dominate me. I took it for a long while, but the constant beatings get to you and when you see your young brother, eyes full of tears, looking up at you for help, what do you do? That is when I lost it. I had been watching that for months but I couldn't take any more of it.
176. I still have scars from the likes of **BAC** with the boot brush. You can see them, it was alright if he hurt you with the flat of the brush, but it was painful when he turned it on its side. That's when it split the skin. He didn't mean to, it was just the speed that he was doing it at.
177. Then they would send you over to Sister **FAM** and she would bandage it up. Three or four days later and you were alright again. Mind, when **BAE** stabbed me with the pencil, that took ages to heal up.

Reporting of abuse at Smyllum Park Orphanage

178. Everybody knew about it. I spoke about it and a lot more than me spoke about it, yet nobody knew. Barr knew and he was one of the ones who was putting kids in there.

Leaving Smyllum Park Orphanage

179. I got no warning up to the time I was going. When I was told, the first thing I said to Sister **BAE** was what about my brother and sister but she told me it was none of my concern.
180. That was it, these strangers came in a motor and just took me away. They told me I was going to St. Ninian's, but I didn't have a clue what that was or where it was.

St Ninian's School, Falklands, Fife

First day

181. I was about twelve and I can remember it like it was yesterday. I got out the taxi and walked up the stairs into this big main hall. There was a figurehead on a stand over in the corner. It was a guy called Tyndall Bruce, who built the home.
182. I was taken round the place by Brother **LHC** shown my dormitory and taken for a cup of tea. He couldn't have been any nicer. He was he was blethering away and telling me about the area.
183. He was telling me if I wanted to go out I could. He asked if I liked fishing, which I did, and he told there was a river full of trout. I was introduced to the classroom, where the dining room was and taken all round about. Then he told me I could go out and play. I went on my first run to this burn and I remember standing looking over the brigg and thinking what a good place it was.
184. Then I got introduced to the teachers, Brother Fitten, Brother **MOA** Brother **MIC** and Brother **MBW**. That was the five brothers.

185. Then there was Mr Fannon, Mr MCH and Mr BHB that was the three teachers, and then you had Matron Carroll. I don't know why there was a woman because it was an all-boys school. Her and Mr Fannon got married and they moved away.
186. Some of the boys had been in Smyllum and had moved to St. Ninian's because of their age. So I knew [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

General

187. Brother LHC was the [REDACTED] of the Christian brothers, it was a Catholic order.
188. There were a lot of boys there, maybe 200 or 300 and about 14 dormitories. The ages ranged from 12 to 15.
189. The school and chapel were both in the home, everything was in that home.

Mornings and bedtime (washing and bathing)

190. The morning routine was just the same as Smyllum, Catholic, so chapel and breakfast. After breakfast it was your work, whatever you had to do. Tidy your dormitory and all that, then it was school.
191. We got up ourselves at the crack of dawn. I was always up early, nobody needed to wake me in there.
192. At bedtime you got your tea and all that and then you went to bed, that was it. In bed by 9 o'clock and lights out as soon as you went to bed. Sometimes I would go out and wander about the woods and things like that, nobody ever knew that.
193. You got your shower on a Friday.

Food

194. At mealtimes, you had to stand in queues and then once you were served you went into the refectory and had you dinner.
195. The food wasn't too bad at St. Ninian's, as I say, I spent most my time eating outside. I would tell Brother **LHC** what I was doing, so I didn't get punished for not going to meals. He came up to see me twice, in the woods. He sat one day with me and had a couple of tatties with me. He was alright, he got me a line to fish the burn.
196. I can't remember anybody getting punished for not eating.

School / Religious Instruction / Work

197. My first class was English with **MCH** a big fat ignorant man. When he walked into the class everyone was talking to one another and the first words out his mouth were "Calm down you little bastards". That was our teacher and I was quite stunned at that.
198. He used to get you to write on the blackboard and he got me out a lot because he knew I couldn't write and then he would make an arse of me, so I had enough.
199. By this time I was fifteen, so, most of the time I just didn't go to school, I spent it in the woods. I wouldn't go to **MCH** class. I didn't like school, I had no reason to like school. They weren't learning us anything and any excuse at all you got a hiding.
200. They wanted me to go to the music class but I wasn't into music so I would go to Brother **MBW** science class because it got you out into the woods. That was the only classes I went to.
201. I didn't get punished for not going to school. The brothers would try and talk me into going but I told them again and again that I wasn't learning anything so there was no point in going.

202. I was cleaning the chapel corridor all the time. Now and again you maybe needed to give somebody a wee hand if they had a big job, but that was seldom. My job was the chapel corridor.
203. We got a tanner or sixpence every Friday for pocket money.
204. I also used to go and work for the local farmers. I got one or two other boys in with me and you would get half a crown or five bob here and there.
205. There was plenty of religious instruction, it was nearly all religion. That is what I couldn't understand. They were hammering all this Latin in to you and it was no good to anybody.
206. We went to chapel every morning, weekends as well. We said prayers all the time. You had benediction and you were in the chapel at 9am. You had stations of the cross, I hated them. There was 24 of them, and about a thousand prayers to say for each one. You were kneeling all the time and your knees were in agony. There was ten sets of the rosary again on your knees. I just wasn't interested.

Holidays / Leisure

207. There were no tellies or radios, nothing like that. They did have plenty of books but I wasn't interested in books. I couldn't read. I liked going through the woods and the wilderness.
208. I was right into keep fit. I would go running, do weight-lifting and go up and down East and West Lomond, all over the place, I loved it. We played football, jumping, javelin, all those sports. I liked that.
209. They had a sports day. You got to play regular and make up football teams, maybe play an outside team. Things like that.
210. Mr **BHB** took all that, he was the PE teacher and he was alright.

211. I lived outside during the day, at the parks, I loved that. I seemed to get all the ducks hanging on to me and we started a wee survival course thing out in the woods, to see what we could live off.
212. We grew fruit, then tatties and turnips and carrots. We used to get fires going and cooking food, that was right my alley, it was really good. The first time we did that, was with [REDACTED]
213. We caught about half a dozen trout, put sticks through them and cooked them all across the fire. It got us out the home, there was nobody to worry you, you needn't worry about a belt or pointer or nothing.
214. You were allowed out in the evening but you had to be back for dinner and bedtime.

Birthdays and Christmas / Personal Possessions

215. We got nothing at birthdays or Christmas, except an apple and an orange. No Christmas trees or decorations, it was never recognised in there.
216. I didn't have any personal possessions.

Visits/Inspections/Siblings

217. My ma came to visit me once at St. Ninian's, that was the only visit I got. I spoke with her on my own and we took a wee walk around and about but I never said anything else to her.
218. I was finished with all that, I wasn't talking to nobody else again. I'd had enough.
219. There was no visits from anyone else and no contact with the social work or anyone else at St. Ninian's.

220. I did once ask to see my brother and sister. It was Brother **MBW** I asked and he said I couldn't and that was it. I didn't have much longer to go, so I thought I would just wait until I got home.

Healthcare

221. I didn't see a doctor but I went to the village dentist once. I got a filling and it came out that night. I didn't go back, I got my teeth sorted when I come home.
222. If you had cuts or bruises then you would go the matron. I don't know what happened if it was more serious, but there was a Royal Infirmary in St. Andrews, if anything was really serious.

Discipline at St Ninian's School

223. There was no discipline code or anything like that, Brother **LHC** just said you can go where you want as long as you are back for your dinner and bedtime and don't get into trouble. That was the rules.
224. Brother **MBW** would say you were going to the dungeon as a punishment sometimes. It wasn't actually a dungeon he called it but it was something like that. It was a room down in the basement with no lights on. You could see light coming in so it was a grey dark. Some lads didn't like it but I would love to go down there. It was quiet and you were out of it all. Away from the beatings for the night.

Abuse at St Ninian's School

225. There was an awful lot of incidents that happened. I can't just remember them all, it was constant hammerings all the time.

226. Mr MCH and Brother MBW were the two worst. Brother MOA gave you the belt as well but he wasn't as bad as the other two.
227. Mr MCH had a special strap. He called it the "Lochgelly Special". It was a long belt with two tongues and was as stiff as a board.
228. My first encounter with him was when I was supposed to do something. I forget what it was, but it wasn't important. A few days later he asked if I'd done it and I said I'd do it that afternoon but that wasn't good enough.
229. He gave me four belts across my hands and wrists but I accepted that as I hadn't done what he told me.
230. A wee while after that [REDACTED] and I had a bit of a tiff and we were both to get the strap. They had us sitting on chairs, [REDACTED] pulled his hands away and ended up on the floor. I was consoling [REDACTED], then it was my turn. I put my hands out but Mr MCH told me to hold them over the wooden bannister. He got me right up my forearm that time, and I just kept looking at him.
231. [REDACTED] and me had a couple of fall outs but we ended up the best of friends. He was a very fat lad, I think it was something to do with his glands. Anyway, I loved going up West Lomond for walks and one Saturday morning Mr MCH told me to take [REDACTED] with me. I knew he wasn't fit for that and after about an hour he was greeting. I was ahead and went back to see what was wrong. His legs were all bleeding as they were rubbing together, and the skin was all rubbed off.
232. I took off my shirt, tore it in half and put it round his legs to stop them rubbing. When we got back we saw Brother MBW and he sent [REDACTED] to the matron. He asked where my shirt was then asked if I'd torn it and I told him I had done it to protect [REDACTED] legs.

233. Well out came the coin strap. It's like one of those black jacks and has a farthing, a shilling and a halfpenny in the handle. That's the bit you got. It was the first time I'd experienced it. It's used in that film I told you about, "Song for a Raggie Boy".
234. I lost count how many times he hit on my back. I went back to my dormitory and, I think it was wee [REDACTED] came in and put a wet face towel on my back. I nearly hit the ceiling. He gave me some leeching.
235. That was for destroying their property but I didn't have anything else to put on him. I fell foul of Brother [REDACTED] after that. I knew he didn't like me. Brother [REDACTED] must have been about forty.
236. There was another incident that happened after that when I'd had a fall out with another boy and Brother [REDACTED] took me up to his office. He came out with a golf club and hit me with it on my side. It wasn't the head that hit me, it was half on the handle and it snapped. See the bit he had left in his hand, he just laid into me with that. I don't know if his name was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] MBW [REDACTED] but it was Brother [REDACTED] and he took the [REDACTED] class.
237. The worst incident that happened to me was when I was out with [REDACTED] up the woods and we got back a wee bit late. It was a Friday night, shower night, so I went up to my dormitory to get my stuff and when I came back down [REDACTED] was about finished his shower.
238. I went in and had my shower then the light went out. Sometimes it did that. Maybe a fuse or something so I thought it was [REDACTED]. I was drying myself and it was still dark and I shouted on [REDACTED] to put the light on, but there was no sound.
239. It was pitch black so I came out the shower and the next thing a hand was over my mouth and I couldn't breathe. I started to panic, I was no idiot, I knew what was happening and I started battling. I kept going and going but everything went dark, so I must have passed out.

240. I woke up on the floor, frozen, and I don't know how long I lay there. I was stunned and numb. I wasn't sore or hurting anywhere, I don't know what they'd done. I went up to my dormitory and just sat on my bed thinking and thinking who that could have been. I'm thinking it was Brother **MBW** or maybe Brother **MOA** but I didn't know.
241. I swore from then on that they would never get me like that again. They never did. That was a couple of months before I left, so I was fifteen.
242. There were boys that used to play football or tig, or go up to the water for trout, that all of a sudden were just sitting in a corner. They wouldn't move or anything, they'd changed altogether. I realised what was happening because what happened to me with the hand over the mouth, that must have happened to them and they were letting it get to them.
243. I asked them what was wrong, but nobody would open their mouths, the boys were feared and you couldn't blame them either. You would need to experience that kind of life to know what I'm talking about. It was beating after beating and you were saying to yourself "What have I done wrong, why am I getting this?"
244. Some of the boys died at Bellevue, that **██████████** - he died with failure of the heart, that's what they said.

Leaving St Ninian's School

245. One day Brother **LHC** came down and said to me "You'll be pleased to know that you're going home". I said that was the best news I'd had in all my life. I was fifteen.
246. They put me in a taxi to Kirkcaldy then I got a train to Glasgow. My mum and her man, **██████████** were waiting on me at the station. The first thing I did was ask my ma for a fag as I'd given mine away to the boys in the home, as I was going home.

Reporting of abuse at St Ninian's School

247. All you got was a leathering when you did say anything so I basically shut up and I think most boys were the same. There was no point as people thought they were such holy people and they wouldn't do anything like that.

Reporting to police/criminal proceedings

248. The police wouldn't believe me. Have you ever had a run in with the police?. We tried telling the police but it was a waste of time, they're not interested.

Life after being in care

249. Mr Barr had told my mother that I had to go and live with my granny as long as she was with that [REDACTED] I was supposed to live with her for a whole year but after the incident with my grandfather I wasn't too keen on the idea. I knew he would have a go at me. I was there about six months before going to stay with my mother.

250. I'm not sure why Mr Barr didn't want us staying in the same house as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] wasn't a nice person anyway, all he did was drink and make friends through spending his money on drink. I eventually fell out with him. I said to my mother we had to get the weans home. She was staying with him which was stopping that so it felt like she must have thought more of him than her weans.

251. I got a job in [REDACTED] the local mill. I was working in the loft in the mill, the grain came through and I was bagging it, getting it ready for the motors coming to take it away. I liked that.

252. I can't remember who said it to me but, I was told I could get my brother and sister home if I had my own house, but where was I going to get a house?

253. Well I found out that if I got a job in the pit, I could get a house through the pit, so I did that, I worked in the pit. As soon as I got that job, I went to see the union man, John Dickson, and told him I had a brother and sister lying in a home and I wanted to get them home so I needed my own house.
254. He took some details and said to leave it with him. About two or three weeks after that they gave me [REDACTED] and I got [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] home. I was sixteen, the youngest guy ever to have a house in the pit.
255. That was the last time I saw Mr Barr. I had to go see him to arrange to get [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] back home. I went to a clinic building in [REDACTED] the building is still there. He was still a social worker. I did a lot of enquiring then I found out what I had to do and what I wasn't to do. Mr Barr's name kept cropping up, so I went to see him.
256. My first words to him were "Do you not remember me?", he was a bit older, he said he didn't, but I didn't think he would. I told him our [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] names and he remembered then. I didn't say anything else I just wanted them home.
257. I mind when [REDACTED] came home - he was covered in bruises, I think he was about seven. My mother took him next door to show [REDACTED] Nobody believed that people were like that.
258. [REDACTED] had black and blue marks just like all the rest of the kids in there. If someone had bothered to look it up they would have seen what was happening in there.
259. [REDACTED] will not tell you a thing, he'll say nothing, he's locked it away. He had a terrible experience in there and so did my sister. She doesn't say much either.
260. When [REDACTED] came out of Smyllum we had to get him to school. My mother took him along to the local primary and it was a nun who was the head teacher. Well that panicked [REDACTED] and he ran away. It too me four of five days to persuade him to go to that school, just because there was a nun there.

261. I remember they'd been home about two years when there was an incident in the pit. I got my arm smashed in three places and I had to go to hospital. When I came out the hospital [REDACTED] was greeting as he thought they would have to go back into Smyllum. I told him he would never go back in Smyllum and not to worry.
262. I worked in the pit then we went to Leicester, me and [REDACTED] and we were married down there in 1964. By the time we came back the pit was shut.
263. Then I went into joinery and that was it. I was in jobs in England and this is where it fell down. I spent six weeks learning the machines on the floor in this place, it was a dawdle and I moved on to a section with twelve machines. Then the manager explained to me that he wanted to send me to London on a five year course for management.
264. I had to say no, I couldn't read or write, how embarrassing is that. That was an opportunity of a lifetime for me and I couldn't take it. I could have been a charge hand but that was too much writing, so I was away. I can read and write alright now, I more or less taught myself.
265. We're now 53 years married and we have [REDACTED] children and loads of grandkids. I made my mind up that I was going to be a joiner. I retired about 2000, I had arthritis in my hands and couldn't use them. My last job was with [REDACTED] that was conservatories and anything fancy.

Impact

266. Coming through these places it kills something in you. I've got kids and I have never gave them a cuddle. With my own children, I couldn't say 'I love you', things like that. I can't allow touching.
267. In our early years, [REDACTED] will tell you, she felt unloved and I was uncaring. I didn't feel the way I should have felt towards [REDACTED]

268. I know myself that it was her that got me through this really because I was in prison and I was staying there. I was getting into trouble fighting and thieving and I went off the rails, I lost it altogether.
269. It started with the police hassling me for nothing and it just snowballed from there. I had all different things but it came to about eight years or something that I did. Funny thing was that when I ended up in Barlinnie it was like being back in Smyllum, most of the Smyllum boys were back in there.
270. It was getting rid of hate with the violence and dishonesty, and I've not got rid of it yet, it's still with me, I'll die with that.
271. I have no feeling for authority at all. They never shown me any decency anyway. Anything they have to say to you, is talking to you like you're scum.
272. There was a lot more I could have done for my weans than I done. I used to take them fishing and shooting and I made sure they got out and that they didn't want for anything but there was something that wasn't there. I don't know how to explain it and I'm not very good at talking but something wasn't there.
273. I couldn't express love to them. I went down to the school one day when my wee granddaughter was on stage. She came running down off the stage, right over and flung her arms around me. I'm standing there, looking around, I didn't know what to do. It was [REDACTED] that said to me it was my wee granddaughter, but I still didn't know what to do.
274. Way back our [REDACTED] was into football and I used to take all the weans from our street up the bing to play football. They would all pile into my van, the kids and a teacher. The kids loved it and after the game I would take them to the shops and get them ginger and sweeties. But I've never been able to cuddle them or anything like that.
275. I've done my best, but I know it wasn't good enough, I could have been a lot better.

276. My arthritis is in both hands, and that was from the hammering with that brush, I know it was. I used to come away from that [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] with my hands in agony and I couldn't shut my fists. People have no idea what it was like, I wish I had a film or something to show you what they were doing.
277. My right hand was where [REDACTED] BAE [REDACTED] got me, rapping me with that pointer, right across my fingers and bending them back and everything. See when the frost comes my fingers go like sausages and swell up.
278. Then I found out that all the kids were buried in that cemetery up there. Frank Docherty was telling me and I went away up. You should see the graves that they nuns have got, big fancy headstones and everything, and all those kids are buried up there with not one headstone to represent them. How sad is that and they have no records of them.
279. Smyllum and St. Ninian's keep coming back to me all the time. The look on my wee brothers face sitting there getting his face smashed with a ladle and wanting me to help. Me standing there not doing anything up to the last minute. Then I did something but that's when they took me away so I made a mistake. He doesn't talk about Smyllum.
280. I never stop thinking about my time in care, that will be with me forever. You need to have been there to go through that and everybody like me will be the same. I don't care who they are, they will be the same.
281. Faith, is a load of rubbish man. They hammer on about God so where was he? How can he sit back and let that happen to all those weans? All the weans buried up there, do you think God would sit back and let that happen?

Treatment/support

282. I'm supposed to be starting counselling and I've had one session. I've one more to set up. It's through INCAS but I don't see how it will help.
283. I don't go to the doctors or anything like that. I don't take tablets either.

Records

284. I had quite a while to wait before getting any records but I got them. There is no record of what went on in the home. It's just records of when I went in and came out and when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went in and out. That is really it.
285. Nothing about my broken leg or fingers or my burst face, there's nothing. They should have wrote down the truth about fear of life.
286. It does say that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were admitted to Beechfield Home on [REDACTED] 1951. That explains why they weren't in Smyllum when I went in and wanted to see them. No one told me a damn thing about that.

Lessons to be learned

287. Don't let kids go in, just don't let them go in. Do away with those people, as many as you can.
288. I don't care what they are, that is something you will never stop because you have always got those kinds of people, in every walk of life, it will go on forever. You always hear about it, about them interfering with wee boys. These people need done away with.
289. My hopes for the Inquiry are that they shut them all down and do away with them all. If there is anybody going to be looking after the weans there should be someone supervising them at all times because there was nobody supervising us. They

wouldn't want it and they took advantage of it. Shut the care establishments down completely.

290. I am sounding quite bitter now but it's true. No matter where you go you have always got these people. It makes me feel very, very, angry because they are still there and it's still going on.

291. It has helped speaking to you today, but I will never get rid of this anger, that is with me, forever. I am involved in it and I have lived with it up until now. I've not much longer to go and that will be with me until I die. It's the same with everybody that came through that, it was brutal, the worst part and there was no need for it.

Other information

292. I tried to see the nuns and Sister [BAE] long after I'd left Smyllum. I took [REDACTED] with me. It was in the late sixties and I went to see them. I don't know what their reaction would have been if they had been there but I wanted to know why they treated us like that. I asked for the three of them, [BAE] [AFC] and [EAA] but none of them were there.

293. To be honest, I'd have ripped the face off any one of the three of them, that is how bad they got to me. That would have been some satisfaction and I would have done time for that.

294. I went back to St. Ninian's as well, last year, with [REDACTED] again. Although I had also been back with a couple of mates to see Brother [MBW] but he wasn't there. I would have leathered him at that time. It was a couple of years after I left when I was working in the pits.

295. When I went back with [REDACTED] I knew they would all have been dead and gone so I took her up, just to show her where I'd been brought up.

296. It brought back some memories, a lot of memories. I wanted to have a look around but they wouldn't let me in. I showed her the woods where I ran about it was great up there. [REDACTED] took some photos and she says I looked like I was a young thing again, running about mad, like a rabbit. Like I told you, once you were in those woods you were away out of it all, that was the best times.

297. I try to think of the good things but the bad times keep coming back. See when I went up to the main door, I was waiting on Brother [REDACTED MBW] coming out with that belt in his hand. I'm an adult and shouldn't think like that but that's what goes through your nut.

298. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed. [REDACTED] ABV

Dated... 2-11-017