

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Case Study no. 8

Volume 1: Child Migrants' Experiences

Children sent overseas as part of child migration programmes between the late 1800s and the early 1970s

Evidential Hearings: 3 December 2019 to 21 October 2020



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Published March 2023

Produced by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA

| Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

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Contents

Foreword	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Glossary	vii
Preface	ix
Summary	xiv
1. Introduction	1
This volume	3
2. Sisters of Nazareth	5
Applicants - Nazareth House, Aberdeen	5
Applicants - Nazareth House, Carlisle	86
Applicants - Nazareth House, Kilmarnock	106
Applicants - Nazareth House, Lasswade	128
Applicant - Nazareth House, Cardonald	164
3. Fairbridge Society	174
Applicants	174
4. Quarriers	224
Applicants	224
5. Good Shepherd Sisters	239
Applicants	239
6. Barnardo's	264
Applicants	264
7. Church of Scotland: Levenhall Home for Boys	284
Applicants	284
8. Emma Stirling: the Edinburgh and Leith Children's Aid and Refuge Society	291
Applicants	291
9. Glasgow Industrial School for Girls, Maryhill	300
Applicants	300

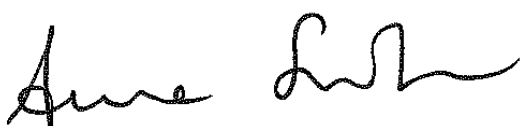
10. Migration sponsored by the Catholic Church or the Church of Scotland	304
Applicants	304
11. Reflections	323
Child migration policy	323
Deprivation of family life	324
Institutional care	326
Impact	328
Apologies	330
Overview	333
12. Other inquiries and redress schemes	334
13. Conclusion	341
Appendix A: Terms of Reference	344
Appendix B: Brief biographies	346
Appendix C: Breakdown of numbers of applicants sent overseas as child migrants	361
Appendix D: LEM3 form analysis	366
Appendix E: Publicity campaign schedule	371
Appendix F: List of receiving institutions, location, and responsible/parent organisation	372
Appendix G: Maps	374

Foreword

During the evidential hearings, I heard of many aspects of the experiences of child migrants that were shocking and distressing. I appreciate how challenging it will have been for all witnesses, near and far, to engage with and provide evidence to the Inquiry. I am very grateful to them for their assistance and co-operation and for their valuable contributions.

In reaching the stage of publication of this report—from detailed analysis to the final document—I have had the benefit of being supported and assisted by some quite exceptional teamwork. I would like to record my gratitude to the Inquiry counsel who led in this case study and the members of Inquiry staff involved at each stage; their diligence and commitment has been remarkable.

Separately, I would encourage anyone who has relevant information in relation to any aspect of our work to get in touch with our witness support team. We want to hear from you.



Lady Smith



Acknowledgements

We could not have achieved this important work without invaluable contributions from so many here in the UK and abroad who gave of their time, skills, and efforts tirelessly. My grateful thanks are extended to all of them, of whom there are too many to mention. They include Professor Stephen Constantine, Professor Gordon Lynch, Professor Marjory Harper, Dr Margaret Humphreys, the Child Migrants Trust, Dr Philippa White, Tuart Place, Oliver Cosgrove, Anna Magnusson, Norman Johnston, the International Association of Child Migrants and their Families, the National Records of Scotland, the National Archives of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the British Columbia Archives, the Library of Birmingham Archives & Collections, and the University of Liverpool Special Collections & Archives.

Glossary

Australian Catholic Immigration

Committee (ACIC): Established in 1948 as the UK branch of the Federal Catholic Immigration Committee (FCIC). The ACIC was recognised by the UK Government as an approved body that could obtain funding under the Empire Settlement legislation to distribute to UK Catholic organisations who selected children for migration to Australia. This was an unusual arrangement; the ACIC was the only non-UK organisation to receive funding under the Empire Settlement Act.

British Home Children: A term used for child and juvenile migrants sent to Canada between 1869 and 1932 under assisted migration schemes.

Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN): CLAN offers support to people who have grown up in institutional care in Australia and New Zealand.

Catholic Child Welfare Council (CCWC): Founded in 1929 it was made up of the administrative officers of diocesan child rescue societies in England and Wales. There does not seem to have been an equivalent body in Scotland.

Catholic Council for British Overseas Settlement (CCBOS): Formed in 1939 by a merger of the Catholic Emigration Society and the Catholic Emigration Association. CCBOS became the primary UK Catholic body liaising with the UK Government on practical issues relating to adult and child migration. There was also a CCBOS for Scotland and Northern Ireland (CCBOS S&NI). It is not clear exactly when this was established, though it was in place by 1947.

Child Migrants Trust (CMT): Organisation established by Dr Margaret Humphreys in 1987 to support former child migrants to discover their family background, reunite with family, and to raise public awareness of the long-term impact of child migration schemes. The CMT also manage the Family Restoration Fund.

Church of Scotland Committee on Social Service (CSCSS): The arm of the Church of Scotland engaged in social and rescue work, offering assistance with personal and domestic problems outwith congregational life. In 2005, this aspect of the work of the church was renamed "CrossReach".

Federal Catholic Immigration Committee (FCIC): A national Australian body created in 1947 to co-ordinate Catholic immigration across the whole of Australia under the authority of the Episcopal Conference of Australian Catholic Bishops.

Family Restoration Fund (FRF): The FRF is intended to enable former child migrants to reunite with their families by providing financial support to travel to meet family, and be involved in any significant family events. It is funded by the UK Department of Health & Social Care, and managed by the Child Migrants Trust.

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA): The independent inquiry for England and Wales was established in 2015 to consider the extent to which State and non-State institutions have failed in their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation. IICSA published its interim report on child migration in 2018.

LEM3 Form: Official form to be completed by sending organisations in conjunction with the parent or guardian of the prospective migrant, authorising the child's migration to Australia.

Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSSPCC): A child protection organisation formally founded in 1889. The Society employed inspectors who investigated allegations of neglect or abuse, and took action in relevant cases. It was granted its royal charter in 1922. In 1995, it changed its name to Children 1st.

Tuart Place: Australian organisation set up in 2012 by Forgotten Australians Coming Together Inc. (FACT). It provides counselling and support services to adults who were in out-of-home care during their childhood.

Preface

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (“SCAI”)

SCAI’s Terms of Reference (“ToR”) require it to “investigate the nature and extent of abuse of children in care in Scotland” during the period from within living memory to 17 December 2014 and to create a national public record and commentary on abuse of children in care in Scotland during that period.

The ToR also require SCAI to consider the extent to which institutions and bodies with legal responsibility for the care of children failed in their duty to protect those children whose care was arranged in Scotland from abuse—regardless of where that abuse occurred—and, in particular, to identify any systemic failures in fulfilling that duty. Therefore, the ToR require me to include the practice of, and systems for, child migration in the Inquiry’s investigations. Accordingly, this report concerns the practice of migrating children from Scotland to locations thousands of miles away, a practice that dates back to the 19th century and continued well into the second half of the 20th century.

The requirement is to investigate sexual, physical, psychological, and emotional abuse and, at my discretion, other types of abuse including unacceptable practices (such as deprivation of contact with siblings) and neglect. There is also a requirement to make findings about the impact of abuse, and recommendations for the effective protection of children in care now and in the future.

A copy of SCAI’s ToR is at [Appendix A](#).

Public hearings

In common with other public inquiries, the work of SCAI includes public hearings. They take place after detailed investigations, research, analysis, and preparation have been completed by SCAI counsel and SCAI staff. That stage can take a long time. The public hearings of SCAI include—importantly—the taking of oral evidence from individuals about their experiences as children in care and the reading of a selection of evidence from some of their written statements. The evidence also includes accounts of the impact of their having been abused as children in care.

The hearings for the child migration case study were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the nature of the case study, some evidence was taken via video-link to enable the Inquiry to hear evidence from applicants resident outside of the UK.

I am aware that children were abused in a substantial number of institutions in Scotland and were the subjects of migration programmes that involved an outcome of abuse. It is not realistic to present every institution and instance of abuse at a public hearing; were SCAI to do so, an Inquiry, which will of necessity be lengthy, would be unduly prolonged. Accordingly, with the assistance of SCAI counsel, I will continue to identify particular institutions and matters that are representative of the issues being explored by SCAI and thus appropriate for presentation at a public hearing in “case studies.”

Section 21 Responses

Under section 21 of the Inquiries Act, 2005, as Chair of this Inquiry, I have the power to require persons to provide evidence to SCAI. Organisations and institutions targeted by SCAI as part of its investigations have been issued with various section 21 notices, including requiring them to respond in writing to questions posed by the SCAI team. Information about institutional responses to the Inquiry can be found in Volume 2 of this report.

Private sessions

An applicant is the term SCAI uses for a person who tells SCAI that he or she was abused in circumstances that fall within the ToR.

Applicants and other witnesses can tell members of the SCAI team about their experiences as children in care and as child/ juvenile migrants, and any other relevant evidence at a “private session”. They are supported throughout this process by SCAI’s witness support team. After the private session, a statement is prepared covering those matters spoken about that are relevant to the ToR. The applicant, or other witness, is asked to check the statement carefully and to sign it if they are satisfied that it accurately records their evidence, but only if and when they feel ready to do so.

Identifying and engaging with Scottish child migrants

From an early stage of the Inquiry, child migration was an announced investigation and case study. Those with any relevant information to offer were asked to come forward to assist the Inquiry.

Engagement with key organisations

In order to ensure that as many former child migrants as possible were aware of the work of SCAI, and to obtain their assistance, the Inquiry engaged with several organisations and individuals who support and advocate for former child migrants.

In Australia, the team began its engagement with the Child Migrants Trust in December 2016. In March 2017 Tuart Place contacted SCAI regarding several individuals they were supporting and engagement with them commenced in October that year. The Inquiry team also had constructive and helpful engagement with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Australia, and the Care Leavers Australasia Network (CLAN).

In Canada, contact was made with Lori Oschefski, founder of the British Home Children Advocacy and Research Association, in March 2018, seeking assistance in relation to British Home Children in Canada. The Inquiry also had discussions with Sandra Joyce, co-founder of the British Home Child Group International, in October 2018.

Contact was also made with the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse for England and Wales (IICSA).

Building on previous engagement with organisations supporting former child migrants, a targeted publicity campaign was undertaken.¹ As a result of these public calls for evidence, the Inquiry was approached directly by former child migrants from Scotland, and their descendants.

1 For further information on the publications used in this campaign see [Appendix E](#).

Statement taking

Statements from former child migrants and their family members were taken at private sessions held in Scotland, Australia, the USA, and Canada.

In Australia, members of the Inquiry's statement taking and witness support teams attended various locations in Tasmania, Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland, and New South Wales during two weeks in September 2018, and two weeks in March 2019. Private sessions were held and statements were taken from a total of 40 former child migrants—23 during the first visit, and 17 during the second.²

Both the Child Migrants Trust and Tuart Place provided invaluable assistance to the Inquiry. They facilitated the Inquiry's contact with applicants, provided additional support to them, and made their premises available for some of the private sessions.

A team from the Inquiry also visited the USA in June 2017 and Canada in May 2019 to hold private sessions with three former child migrants who, through these sessions, provided statements.³

This case study

The scope and purpose of this case study was to consider evidence about:

- The migration of children from Scotland, primarily to Canada and Australia,
- The nature and extent of any relevant abuse,

- The systems, policies, and procedures relevant to child migration, both domestic and international, their application, and their effectiveness,
- The impact on individuals of being migrated as children, and
- Any related matters.

Whilst, for the purposes of this Inquiry, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in this case study, the definition of a child follows the one that applied when the child migration schemes were in place. During the period under consideration a child was defined as someone under the school-leaving age, which was 14 years old from 1883, 15 from 1947, and 16 from 1972. Those over the school-leaving age were classed as juvenile migrants. As the history and practices of child and juvenile migration schemes are intertwined, with the same organisations managing child and juvenile migration schemes, juvenile migration schemes were considered during the hearings and some consideration of these schemes is provided in Volume 2. A detailed history of juvenile migration schemes is provided in the report commissioned by the Inquiry and prepared by Professors Constantine, Harper, and Lynch.⁴

As will be evident from this Volume and Volume 2 (to follow), I am satisfied that the practice of migrating children without their parents, often without the parents' or the child's consent, to distant and unfamiliar places, was itself abusive. Furthermore, many

2 Whilst in Australia, the Inquiry's teams held private sessions and took statements from several other applicants in connection to other case studies.

3 Whilst in Canada, the Inquiry's team held a private session and took a statement from another applicant in connection to another case study.

4 Stephen Constantine, Marjory Harper, and Gordon Lynch, Report to SCAI, *Child Abuse and Scottish Children sent Overseas through Child Migration Schemes*, (January 2022).

children were abused when in the care of institutions in Scotland, and many were also abused, sometimes for the first time, in the institutions and families to which they were sent to in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Republic of Zimbabwe, formerly Southern Rhodesia.

My findings are set out in two volumes. Volume 1 covers, in detail, the histories of former child migrants who provided evidence to SCAI, or whose family members provided evidence. Volume 2 considers the history, policy, and practices of child migration, with a focus on the Scottish context and the responses of organisations involved in child migration schemes.

Where applicants have waived anonymity, I have normally used their real names. Otherwise, in accordance with my General Restriction Order, they are referred to by their chosen pseudonyms.

I have identified a number of persons who abused children, as set out in this Volume and in Volume 2. I understand them to be deceased and have, accordingly, named them.

Evidence

In this volume, I present a comprehensive account of what, on the evidence, I find to have been the experiences of many who were migrated as children. I do this so as to, amongst other things, ensure that their voices are now heard. The fact that a particular piece of evidence is not referred to or discussed does not mean that it has not been accepted or that it has not helped to build the overall picture of the substance of the experiences of many child migrants.

In making these findings, I have applied the standard of proof explained in my decision of 30 January 2018, namely that:

“when determining what facts have been established in the course of this Inquiry, it is appropriate that I do so by reference to the civil standard of proof, namely balance of probabilities. I will not, however, consider myself constrained from making findings about, for example, what may possibly have happened or about the strength of particular evidence, where I consider it would be helpful to do so.”⁵

For the avoidance of doubt, I have not applied the criminal standard of proof in making these findings. The criminal standard of proof is a higher standard of proof, namely proof beyond reasonable doubt.

The period covered in the evidence of former child migrants and their families ranged from 1886⁶ to 1961.⁷ All oral evidence was given on oath or under affirmation. Where evidence relied on is drawn from a written statement produced by the Inquiry, the statement has been signed by the witness after having been reviewed by them and they having confirmed it as a true account.

Leave to appear

Leave to appear was granted to the following in relation to this case study, in whole or in part:

- Barnardo’s
- Quarriers
- Bishops’ Conference of Scotland
- Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales

5 [Standard of Proof – Lady Smith’s Decision](#).

6 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, pp.1-85.

7 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.101-188; [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.1-30.

- The Sisters of Nazareth
- The Christian Brothers
- The Good Shepherd Sisters
- The Church of Scotland Social Care Council (operating as “CrossReach”)
- The Royal Overseas League
- The Aberlour Care Trust (LTA applied for and granted for one day only in respect of Sally-Anne Kelly’s evidence)
- Former Boys and Girls Abused at Quarriers (FBGA)
- In Care Abuse Survivors (INCAS)
- Police Scotland
- The Lord Advocate
- Her Majesty’s Government (UKG)⁸
- Scottish Ministers (SG)

The evidence of any child migrant and other witnesses who might come forward since the evidential hearings will be carefully considered by SCAI as part of a continuing process.

Notice of draft of findings

Organisations received notice of relevant findings in draft form and were afforded a reasonable time to respond. I carefully considered their responses before finalising my findings.

Numbers

The former child migrants who have provided evidence to SCAI in relation to their experiences in Canada or Australia do not represent every person who has made a complaint over the years relating to their experiences as child migrants. It must also be appreciated that many former migrants have described not only what happened to them, but also the treatment they witnessed being afforded to other children. [Appendix C](#) set out an analysis of the numbers of SCAI applicants, when they were migrated, and their destinations overseas.

8 Prior to the evidential hearings starting, leave to appear was granted to Her Majesty’s Government.

Summary

The child migration system was abusive and it resulted in many children being abused. Abuse began at the outset, unacceptable practices being inherent in the systems and procedures applied at the stages of selecting children and making arrangements for their migration. It continued in receiving countries and institutions, where children were exposed to harsh and neglectful conditions, used as slave labour, and were physically, emotionally, and sexually abused by individuals who owed a duty of care to them.

Although decades have passed since the last shipload of child migrants left our shores, and though apologies have been made, families reunited, and public inquiries conducted in other jurisdictions to examine what happened to their children, it is important to listen to and understand what happened to *all* child migrants, including those from Scotland.

I have made detailed findings about the abuse and they can be summarised as follows:

- For many years, children were banished from the UK as child migrants. They have borne the scars during adulthood and those still alive continue to do so.
- Over 100,000 children were migrated over a century, from the 1860s onward. It is not possible to say how many of them originated in Scotland but probably about 8,088 children had been sent from Scotland to Canada by the 1920s and some were sent thereafter. About 369 children were sent to Australia from Scotland over significant periods both pre- and post-Second World War.
- Systemic failures amounted to abuse. They included:
 - Permanent removal from Scotland with little or no regard to the removal of children to the care of strangers in foreign countries, to foreign cultures, foreign climates, and foreign environments;
 - Children not being appropriately prepared for transition to foreign countries, foreign cultures, foreign climates, and foreign environments, all of which were markedly different from Scotland, and of which they had no prior experience;
 - Permanent removal from family left behind in Scotland;
 - Sibling separation;
 - Children's names being changed without their or their family's consent;
 - Young children being included in the migration programme;
 - Children, families, and care providers being misinformed about what was proposed;
 - Consents to migration being invalid;
 - Little or no accurate information being given to children or their parents about their destinations;
 - Flawed pre-migration medical examinations and failures to pass children's medical records to an appropriate repository abroad;

- Failures to pass non-medical records (e.g. birth certificates, details of family members, and children's residence in an institution in the UK), to an appropriate repository abroad;
- Disruption of education;
- Children not being emotionally supported in advance of departure;
- No or inadequate pre-migration checks of institutions to which children were sent;
- No practice of enquiring into whether, on the basis of reliable evidence, it was likely to be better for the individual child to be migrated than to remain.
- System failures at home and abroad exposed child migrants to a real risk of suffering a wide range of abuses in receiving homes and institutions.
- Many child migrants were abused at the institutions in which they were placed, as were other children; some were abused from the moment of arrival.
- Child migrants had no one to turn to.
- The destinations of child migrants and juveniles were thousands of miles from Scotland, often isolated in remote locations; children's sense of displacement was exacerbated in cases where they were depersonalised on arrival by, for example, their already limited possessions being taken away from them; girls' long hair being shaved off; names being changed; and links with family and homeland being severed.
- Some parents who followed their children abroad were not allowed to remove their children from institutional care.
- The interests of parents were regarded as unimportant, as were the consequences of such an attitude for children. At least one father was misled into agreeing to his children's migration on the basis that he would be assisted and allowed to follow them; he was not.
- Conditions were particularly harsh in some receiving institutions—bare, regimented, comfortless, and crowded.
- Children who wet the bed were abused.
- Children were used as slave labour, including for building works and farming.
- Children were required to do heavy chores.
- At their destinations, children were physically abused, they were sexually abused, they were emotionally abused, they were subjected to unacceptable practices, and they were neglected.
- Examples of the physical abuse suffered included brutal beatings on heads and bodies with belts, straps, and other implements, such as reinforced straps and canes, pieces of timber, fists, and feet. Some of it was sadistic.
- Children were sexually abused, including by men in holy orders, some being abused in the most appalling and harmful manner.
- Children were sexually abused by members of a paedophile ring.
- Girls had to assist in caring for the elderly, including elderly men suffering from senile dementia. They had to wash their soiled sheets and they had to prepare dead bodies for burial.
- Children were denigrated, insulted, humiliated, and kept in a state of fear.
- Children were neglected. Their clothing was inadequate. They went barefoot even in winter, when they learnt to walk in fresh cow dung to warm their feet. Some had to sleep on verandas even in cold weather. The food was inadequate. They had no, or limited, access to health care. The education afforded to many of them was lamentable.

- On leaving institutional care, children were ill-prepared for adult life; for many there was little or no follow up or aftercare. They lacked the skills to cope in an outside world where, as former child migrants, they were treated as outcasts and pariahs.
- Abuse caused many former child migrants to suffer long-term psychological damage, and their lack of a proper education left them with a long-term disadvantage in the labour market.
- Whilst some children settled in the country to which they were migrated and established successful adult lives, they remained scarred. Memories of abuse continue to haunt child migrants and childhood severance from their roots in Scotland still hurts.
- Some surviving child migrants have now found and met family members.

1

Introduction

1.1 The migration of children from the UK is now rightly regarded as a shameful chapter in our history. The system itself was abusive and it resulted in many children being abused at their destinations. As adults today, many of those who were migrated are still bearing the scars.

1.2 Early proponents of child migration—such as William Quarrier, Annie MacPherson, and Kingsley Fairbridge—may have been well-intentioned, but ‘good intentions’ do not excuse bad practices.⁹ The practice developed significantly throughout its lifespan, and good intentions were overshadowed by flawed motives, poor practice, and indifferent organisational attitudes. Philanthropists involved in child migration such as William Quarrier, Canon Jupp, and Thomas John Barnardo saw themselves as rescuing destitute and vulnerable children from filthy city streets, and the ethos and mission of the Sisters of Nazareth, who were also involved in child migration, was to provide loving care and safety for children in need. However, the effect of child migration was to destroy many families and that seems to have been lost sight of by most of them. The author and

historian, Professor Lynn Abrams, has gone as far as to say: “evangelical philanthropists used emigration schemes for almost a hundred years as an efficient means to pursue the permanent destruction of thousands of Scottish working-class families.”¹⁰

1.3 Canada received the majority of child migrants, with an estimated 80,000 children dispatched from the UK to Canada by 1920.¹¹ Despite contemporary reports that exposed the failings and abuse in the practice of child migration to Canada, children continued to be migrated there until 1948.¹² SCAI applicants were migrated to Canada by Quarriers, the Fairbridge Society, and Emma Stirling.

1.4 After the Second World War, Australia became the most popular destination for child migration, and between 1912 and 1970 around 7,000 children were migrated to Australia.¹³ This was partly fuelled by the Australian Government’s desire to secure 50,000 ‘orphans’ from the UK and continental Europe, for fear that “[i]f we do not populate Australia we will lose it.”¹⁴ Religious motives also played a significant role, as different religious sects vied to populate the country

9 Constantine *et al.*, paragraph 34.4.

10 Lynn Abrams, *The Orphan Country: Children of Scotland’s Broken Homes from 1845 to the Present Day* (1998), Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, p.156.

11 Roger Kershaw, [TNA Podcast: Child emigration to Canada](#), 9 January 2009.

12 See, for instance, HCPP, Andrew Doyle, *Pauper Children (Canada): a Report to the Right Honourable the President of the Local Government Board, by Andrew Doyle, Esquire, Local Government Inspector, as to the Emigration of Pauper Children to Canada* (February 1875), HC9, at INQ-000000006. This, as well as other contemporaneous evaluations of child migration schemes, are further considered in Volume 2.

13 [Transcript, day 186](#): Professor Stephen Constantine, at TRN-5-000000017, p.40.

14 [Transcript, day 186](#): Professor Stephen Constantine, at TRN-5-000000017, p.55.

with children of their own denomination. SCAI applicants were migrated to Australia by the Sisters of Nazareth, the Fairbridge Society, Quarriers, the Good Shepherd Sisters, Barnardo's, and the Church of Scotland.

1.5 Legislation implicitly authorising child migration had been in place since the 1600s, but 19th-century developments continued and even promoted the practice. The Empire Settlement Act, 1922, was particularly influential, as it provided government funding for migration programmes. While it was not explicitly intended to subsidise child migration, voluntary organisations that were previously reliant on donations to migrate children to the dominions could now rely on the state for financial support.

1.6 Voluntary organisations recruited children through promises that in Australia the sun shone all the time, that there would be horses to ride and animals to play with, and fruit to pick whenever they wanted. Representatives of emigration societies "made it sound like The Promised Land".¹⁵ Children, most of whom had no legal power of consent, nonetheless consented to their migration based on such falsehoods. No system was established for assessing whether migration would benefit the individual child, and in several cases, even when a child was observed to be unsuitable, they were migrated anyway. Valid parental or guardian consent to migration was not always required or obtained, with various individuals signing as a child's guardian with no legal right to do so.¹⁶ No reliable system of reporting back to Britain on the welfare of migrated children was established. Inspectors of

receiving institutions rarely engaged with the children and were often not made aware of the true circumstances of child migrants. Contact between children and families was not promoted, and was sometimes actively curtailed.

1.7 Individual child migrants could be forgiven for thinking that Britain, and the government who had sent them away, no longer had any real interest in them. Indeed, there is little evidence to suggest they were wrong. While some fact-finding occurred—instigated by the UK Government—it was not acted on, despite the worrying deficiencies it uncovered. These deficiencies were apparent from as early as 1874, yet no legislation was implemented to regulate the activities of voluntary societies until 1968—and then, only in Scotland. By then, child migration had largely abated of its own accord.

1.8 For many years, public knowledge of child migration faded along with its decline. But "surviving child migrants did not forget."¹⁷ Thanks to the efforts of organisations like the Child Migrants Trust and Tuart Place in Western Australia, as well as several inquiries, "we know more today than was known at the time about the experiences of child migrants and the legacy for life of what many had endured."¹⁸ It has only been possible to gather this history through the efforts and contributions of former migrants themselves, and without them it could have been lost entirely. This volume contributes to that body of knowledge, by presenting former child migrants' own accounts of their experiences, and their own observations on the practice of child migration.

15 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.005.0242.

16 See [Transcript day 124](#): Professor Kenneth McK Norrie, at TRN.001.001.6566-6569, and Volume 2 of this report.

17 [Transcript, day 186](#): Professor Stephen Constantine, at TRN-5-000000017, p.46; Constantine *et al.*, paragraph 1.4.

18 [Transcript, day 192](#): Professor Stephen Constantine, at TRN-5-000000023, p.153; Constantine *et al.*, paragraph 34.4.

This volume

1.9 Forty-five individuals came forward to tell the Inquiry about their experiences as child migrants, or as relatives of former child migrants: my findings in relation to their evidence are detailed within this volume. These individuals have provided an invaluable contribution to my work, and to Scottish historical records, ensuring that the nature of the child migration schemes and the impact they had upon former child migrants and their families are not forgotten and are properly acknowledged. By doing so, lessons can and ought to be learned. There were also individuals who, having provided statements to previous inquiries and investigations, provided these statements to SCAI or agreed for them to be shared with us. Although these individuals did not apply to give evidence directly to SCAI, their statements were carefully considered during SCAI's investigations.¹⁹

1.10 Many individuals who were migrated as children have been unable, for a multitude of reasons, to voice their experiences. The variety of experiences faced by child migrants is mirrored in the variety of ways that individuals have found of coping with them, and it should be emphasised that, while the accounts herein provide an extraordinary insight into child migration schemes and the experiences of those involved in them, they are by no means exhaustive. Further, in explaining what they witnessed happening to other children as well as what happened to themselves, the evidence of many applicants covered significantly more than their own experiences.

1.11 SCAI also heard from the children and grandchildren of former migrants: as with other forms of child abuse, the impact of child migration was and is not confined to those directly affected, but ripples throughout their families, and across the generations.

1.12 Finally, individuals who came forward to inquiries that preceded this one have not necessarily come forward to SCAI; likewise, we have seen applicants that other inquiries have not. The accounts referred to in this volume represent but a small proportion of child migrants.

1.13 This dedicated volume makes extensive use of applicants' own words, in an effort to create a historical narrative that recognises, hears, and appropriately amplifies the voices of former child migrants—voices that matter and which, for far too long, went unheard.

1.14 To highlight the similarities and differences in applicants' experiences, and to facilitate an understanding of organisational practices and the impact of these on children, applicants' histories have been grouped together according to the institution responsible for their migration overseas. In order to situate the narratives and provide some context about these institutional settings, a brief description of each institution's history is provided. Throughout this Volume, pictures are used to illustrate what the institutions to which children were sent to in Australia and Canada might have looked like at the time, or at a similar time to, when applicants were resident there.

19 Other important sources of the experiences of Scottish migrants are the important contributions made by Lynn Abrams in *The Orphan Country*; Marjory Harper in, for example, "The Juvenile Immigrant: Halfway to Heaven, of Hell on Earth?", *Emigration from Scotland between the wars: opportunity or exile?*, and *Migration and Empire*; and Anna Magnusson in *The Quarriers Story: A History of Quarriers*. The evidence provided to SCAI by Anna Magnusson is considered in Volume 2, see also [Transcript, day 183](#): Anna Snjolaug Magnusson, at TRN-5-000000014.

1.15 The historical accounts presented here are based on evidence provided to SCAI by applicants and family members of child migrants, and the length and depth of these accounts vary depending on how much information was provided to, or recovered by, SCAI. As far as possible, the historical accounts consider some of the applicants' experiences before care, and their experiences of care both in Scotland and their country of destination following migration. Consideration is also given to applicants' experiences of leaving care, and their lives as adults.

1.16 As in other case studies, applicants and their family members offered thoughtful and insightful reflections on their experiences and how to ensure that no child will suffer similar abuse. Some of these have been grouped together according to themes, and are presented in [Chapter 11](#) of this volume. [Chapter 12](#) describes some applicants' experiences of engaging with other inquiries and legal proceedings.

2 Sisters of Nazareth

2.1 In 1851, Victoire Larmenier, a member of the Little Sisters of the Poor, moved to London to establish a foundation for the care of the elderly.²⁰ The first Nazareth House was built in Hammersmith, London, in 1857. In 1861, the Holy See gave approval for the Hammersmith Community to separate from the Little Sisters of the Poor. In 1864 they were recognised as the diocesan religious community of the Sisters of Nazareth.

2.2 The first Nazareth House in Scotland was established in Aberdeen in 1862 to provide care for children and the elderly. Thereafter, Nazareth Houses were established in Kilmarnock (1891); Cardonald, Glasgow (1902); and Lasswade, Edinburgh (1931).

2.3 Records provided by the Sisters of Nazareth to SCAI show that at least 78 children were migrated overseas from Nazareth Houses in Scotland between 1900 and 1954.

2.4 Twenty-one of SCAI's applicants were migrated by the Sisters of Nazareth between 1947 and 1955. The majority were sent to institutions run by the Christian Brothers in Western Australia.

Applicants - Nazareth House, Aberdeen

2.5 The following are the accounts of SCAI applicants who were migrated overseas having been placed at Nazareth House, Aberdeen.

James Albert McGregor (Bert)

Life in the UK and migration

2.6 James Albert McGregor, known as Bert, was born in Aberdeen in November 1941. In March the following year, at the insistence of his grandmother and on the recommendation of Canon Grant, Bert was taken to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, by his uncle.²¹ Bert does not recall much about his time at Nazareth House. He was only about four months old when admitted.²²

2.7 Later, he was told by the boys with whom he was migrated that, prior to his migration, "we were lined up and asked by a Father Stinson 'who wants to go to Australia? If you wanted to go you had to take a step forward. I...saw other boys step forward so I did too. That was my rational consent."²³ He "took one step forward and, from then on, it was out of my hands. But did I consciously make a decision? Oh no, not at that age".²⁴ He knew nothing of Australia. For all Bert knew, "Australia could have been a park across the road".²⁵

20 Sisters of Nazareth, [Parts A and B response to section 21 notice](#), at NAZ.001.001.0040.

21 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 2, at WIT.001.002.3070; [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7165; Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Children's register, at NAZ.001.002.9719.

22 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7166.

23 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 16, at WIT.001.002.3073.

24 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7166.

25 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.5253.

2.8 Bert and at least two other boys from Aberdeen, brothers, were migrated to Australia with “about fifty” other children, including 15 from Scotland.²⁶ They sailed on the SS Ormonde in early October 1947, chaperoned by “some nuns and also Father Stinson”, who had been recruiting for child migrants.²⁷

2.9 Bert arrived in Australia in early November 1947, having just turned six years old.²⁸

Life in Australia

St Joseph’s Orphanage, Subiaco (1947-1949)

2.10 Upon arriving in Australia, Bert was first sent to St Joseph’s Orphanage, Subiaco, run by the Sisters of Mercy, where he stayed for under two years.²⁹ He presumed that he was sent there first “because I was small and silent and skinny.”³⁰ All that Bert remembered about Subiaco was “the swimming pool and the huge big orphanage for the girls up the hill”.³¹ He recalled being taken to “a morning tea at St Joseph’s Orphanage so that they could show others my cute Scottish accent. I decided from that day that I would lose my accent. I didn’t want to attract attention for being cute or different.”³²

Castledare (1949-c.1951)

2.11 In 1949, at eight years old, Bert was sent to Castledare Boys’ Home, run by the Christian Brothers. “There were about five brothers in the community.”³³ There was a female cook and a farm hand. Castledare accommodated about 150 boys aged “from 8 or 9 to 12” years old, most of whom were child migrants, but some of whom were “Australian private placements” or “Aboriginal children.”³⁴

2.12 Castledare itself was set in a “[h]eavenly environment. On the River Canning, playing fields, yards, ovals, gardens. It was physically a paradise.”³⁵ The river “was my life saver... I could swim like a fish... once you got in the swimming, you were in another world.”³⁶ Swimming provided Bert some respite from the “congregate care type dormitories and massive dining room tables. There was nothing personal in the living conditions.”³⁷ Although staff mostly referred to boys by their surnames, all the boys had numbers, because “[i]t was eas[ier] to operate a number than remember a name.”³⁸ Their lives were regulated by this number so that “if you wanted to go to the movie on a Saturday night, you had to line up according to your number and be checked off.”³⁹ The Saturday movie night “was a highlight,” but

26 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7166; [Written statement](#) of James Albert McGregor, paragraph 20, at WIT.001.002.3073.

27 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 20, at WIT.001.002.3073.

28 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7167.

29 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7168.

30 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7168.

31 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7168.

32 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.5253.

33 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7169.

34 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7170.

35 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7170.

36 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7172.

37 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7170.

38 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7170.

39 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 32, at WIT.001.002.3075-3076.

“[Castledare] used to be terribly cold early in the morning. I was bare footed and dressed in only a shirt and shorts.”

as a punishment children had to face away from the screen which the boys found “terrible”.⁴⁰



Castledare facilities, dormitory, 1950. Photograph from the Dease Studios collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.13 At Castledare, “every day was the same. We’d get up, get dressed and make the bed. All the beds had to be made exactly right. Early on I was co-opted to do altar service and so would do the sacristy and serve the early Mass. It used to be terribly cold early in the morning. I was bare footed and dressed in only a shirt and shorts.”⁴¹ Only when “we had to go out and compete in [choral] contests and things like that” were the children given shoes and socks, and more presentable clothing.⁴²

2.14 All the boys had daily chores that they were to complete. One of Bert’s chores was acting as a waiter to the Brothers at mealtimes.⁴³ After the chores, the boys went to school, but Bert “never learned to read” at Castledare, ostensibly because he “looked intelligent”.⁴⁴ As a result of ‘looking intelligent’, “I skipped [class] one and I pulled out of two and was put into three” without having learned to read.⁴⁵

2.15 After school was finished and further tasks completed, the children “were in bed very early, straight after tea. There were speakers in the dormitory and the Brothers would play scary mystery stories and classical music over the speakers”.⁴⁶

2.16 There was some relief from the daily routine at Christmas, when Bert and other boys were billeted to local families. Bert went to the same family throughout his time at Castledare and they were “a life saver”.⁴⁷ At the time of giving evidence he still visited their children and grandchildren.⁴⁸ However, he had to be at Castledare on Christmas Day, where he “got dolled up in a waiter’s suit with a little bow tie and a white shirt and trousers... to serve the brothers when they all turned up for their Christmas gathering party...I missed Christmas Day for 15 years.”⁴⁹ The boys did

40 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7172-7173.

41 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 33, at WIT.001.002.3076.

42 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7171.

43 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7175.

44 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7173.

45 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7173.

46 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 36, at WIT.001.002.3076.

47 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7173-74.

48 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 53, at WIT.001.002.3079.

49 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7174.

have a Christmas party.⁵⁰ He did not know the date of his birthday.⁵¹

2.17 When it came to discipline, in addition to being denied the movie night, boys were physically punished. The straps used by the Brothers were “especially made...by a man [in] South Melbourne” and were “about 14 inches long...about an inch wide, and...about five or six layers of leather, stitched.”⁵²

2.18 Bert was psychologically abused by Brother Murphy. Brother Murphy “was tall, he was lean, he was domineering. He was very ignorant. He was cruel. He was possessive and he was a paedophile.”⁵³ Brother Murphy “had to put you down and dominate you, make you feel as if you were nothing.”⁵⁴ He “undermined your self-esteem if you had any.”⁵⁵ Brother Murphy would “have me brush dandruff off his shoulders”, and forced Bert to undertake demeaning tasks.⁵⁶ Brother Murphy’s possessive nature meant that he would be “extremely upset with you if you even smiled or talked to another Brother.”⁵⁷ Brother Murphy “seemed to pick half a dozen” boys to treat this way.⁵⁸ He began to sexually abuse Bert when he was eight years old.⁵⁹ Although Brother Murphy forced Bert

into his bed, he did not sexually abuse him at Castledare.⁶⁰

“[Brother Murphy] was tall...lean...domineering... very ignorant...cruel. He was possessive and...a paedophile.”

2.19 Bert said he hoped and prayed that the other Brothers at Castledare did not know how Brother Murphy treated these boys “because they didn’t do anything.”⁶¹ There was no one at the institution to whom Bert could turn with his concerns or to report the way in which he was treated by Brother Murphy. This would continue to be the position throughout Bert’s time in the care of the Christian Brothers.

Clontarf (c.1951-c.1956)

2.20 When he was 12 years old, in the early 1950s, Bert was moved to Clontarf Boys’ Town.⁶² Like Castledare, Clontarf was in a “beautiful setting on the Canning river”.⁶³ It was also run by the Christian Brothers, perhaps six or seven, although the number varied.⁶⁴ Bert and his peers were at Clontarf with “the Aboriginal ‘Stolen Generation’ children.”⁶⁵

50 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7174.

51 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7175.

52 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7176.

53 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7177.

54 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7177.

55 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7178.

56 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 68, at WIT.001.002.3081.

57 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7178.

58 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7178.

59 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 69, at WIT.001.002.3081.

60 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7178-79.

61 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7179.

62 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7179.

63 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7180.

64 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7181.

65 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 82, at WIT.001.002.3084.

“If the Brother that was teaching...was in a bad mood, he would pick someone who was hopeless at maths to answer a question. If the boy didn’t know the answer we’d all get the strap.”

2.21 Clontarf ran a “fully functional” farm.⁶⁶ Clontarf was bigger than Castledare, housing up to 250 boys up to 15 years old. Some stayed on as working boys on the farm.

2.22 The routine at Clontarf was “exactly the same” as at Castledare, “except we were bigger and older. We knew the system by then...Again, there was no individuality”.⁶⁷ The food was “very basic”, especially compared to the Brothers’ food.⁶⁸ Bert was once again responsible for waiting upon the Brothers.

2.23 As well as serving the Brothers, Bert cleaned the Brothers’ toilets. The boys had to undertake arduous construction work like building a swimming pool.⁶⁹ Bare feet were the norm at Clontarf, and the boys played sports in their bare feet, “even in the middle of winter.”⁷⁰

2.24 In the school at Clontarf, Bert “skipped grade 4...and went straight into grade 6.”⁷¹ Despite being “considered too bright” for the lower grades (grades four and



Clontarf Boys’ Town, child migrants at work, c.1957/1958. Source: [CMT](#).

66 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7181.

67 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7182.

68 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7182.

69 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7187.

70 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 79, at WIT.001.002.3083.

71 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7179.

five), the Brothers at Clontarf “never had the time to teach me to read, teach a lot of us to read”.⁷² Bert described how “[i]f the Brother that was teaching...was in a bad mood, he would pick someone who was hopeless at maths to answer a question. If the boy didn’t know the answer we’d all get the strap.”⁷³

2.25 An alternative punishment was “being made to stand in the corridor outside the Brothers’ bedrooms. You would be standing there for hours until a Brother would tell you to go to bed.”⁷⁴

2.26 If there was a fight between the boys, a circle would form and Brother Doyle would encourage it.⁷⁵ There was one particular boy that Bert used to fight: “He was a pest. Used to stir me like mad because I got to serve the brothers and he didn’t.”⁷⁶ Bert later found out that this boy was his brother, who, like Bert, had been sent to Clontarf after a period in Castledare following his own migration.

2.27 Had Bert been told that his own brother was with him, perhaps the outcomes could have been marginally better.

2.28 Brother Doyle instilled in the boys’ minds an acceptance that they “had no rights but a Christian funeral.”⁷⁷

“Brother Bruno Doyle would tell us we had no rights but a Christian funeral.”

2.29 Brother Murphy was transferred to Clontarf and matters deteriorated for Bert. Brother Murphy resumed his abuse of Bert “where he’d left off, but by that time he was a fully-fledged paedophile and he would take me to his room, stand at the door until he was ready, and then he’d take you to bed with him...I’d be squeezed up between him and the side wall...you can imagine the rest.”⁷⁸

2.30 Bert found it “difficult to go into the abuse any further without the fear of shocking people.”⁷⁹ This abuse continued for a year. Bert was around 13 to 14 years old.

2.31 Some time after the sexual abuse by Brother Murphy had resumed, Bert had a breakdown: “I just stopped, and physically and mentally I just went dumb and just had enough...I just crashed. I was isolated in the infirmary for about a month. They never got the doctor, they never told me what was wrong, but I just didn’t want to go on living.”⁸⁰ After Bert had recovered, Brother Murphy’s abuse ceased.

2.32 Bert never reported the abuse by Brother Murphy.⁸¹ The Brothers “were laws unto themselves...There was no authority visible or active in their world. They had complete and absolute control over us without anybody seemingly keeping an eye on standards, and you wouldn’t dare report it.”⁸² In hindsight, Bert was of the view that

72 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7183-84.

73 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 107, at WIT.001.002.3088.

74 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 108, at WIT.001.002.3088.

75 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7186.

76 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7186.

77 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 96, at WIT.001.002.3086.

78 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7188.

79 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 112, at WIT.001.002.3088.

80 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7190-91.

81 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7191.

82 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7189-90.

“...there was a...paedophile ring operating...there was a clique of about a dozen Brothers...They all knew each other and all moved from one place to another.”

“there was a...paedophile ring operating... there was a clique of about a dozen Brothers who were known as the ‘Orphanage Brothers’. They all knew each other and all moved from one place to another.”⁸³

Life after care

2.33 At age 15 years old, Bert was sent to Strathfield College for boys “who thought they might like to become Christian Brothers.”⁸⁴ Bert took final vows to become a Christian Brother when he was 27 and became a teacher. Over the course of his career, Bert taught in Fiji for eight years and in Tanzania for two years.

2.34 Bert visited Aberdeen in 1987 and “learned that I did have a family after all.”⁸⁵ Despite finding a large family, and being in touch with his sister and brother in particular, Bert felt “[n]othing”, because “[t]he capacity to love and relate...had completely...been destroyed...I think it was destroyed by the whole experience of growing up and them not being around and my new life as a teacher, I was completely absorbed in it...I had no emotional attachment at all...it’s nice to know who your relations [are]...which was a secret for, what, 40, 50 years...As for human emotions...we were trained to put them aside...And I did. So when I met my

mother, sad to say, I was curious but I had no filial feelings at all. Mind you, I don’t think she had any for me either.”⁸⁶

2.35 Bert “was struggling with the lie of the scheme, that my whole life had been unnecessary because it was founded on a lie.”⁸⁷ The Christian Brothers did not offer Bert any support, despite his being a member of the Order. He and others like him had been told and had accepted that “we were war orphans, which wasn’t true.”⁸⁸ Bert believed that “[p]olitically, we child migrants were the fodder for a future army”, and “it wasn’t only the children that were lied to, they lied to the people of Western Australia as well.”⁸⁹

“As for human emotions... we were trained to put them aside...And I did.”

2.36 Having returned to Australia for several years, the Christian Brothers provided some financial assistance for Bert to return to Scotland, where he bought an apartment in Aberdeen and completed a Master’s degree in Education.⁹⁰ He worked for some time at a day-care centre for those suffering from homelessness, mental illness, and drug and alcohol dependency.⁹¹ While working there,

83 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7190; [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 71, at WIT.001.002.3082.

84 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7193.

85 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 121, at WIT.001.002.3090.

86 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7196.

87 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7197.

88 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7184.

89 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 188, at WIT.001.002.3101, and paragraph 168, at WIT.001.002.3098.

90 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7194.

91 Royal Commission of Australia, Transcript, day WA13: James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.8629.

Bert met a man who had been with him at Castledare and Clontarf, and Bert found out that this man too had been abused in care.⁹²

2.37 Bert's brother had also told Bert that he suffered abuse from the Christian Brothers.⁹³ For Bert, this "painted a picture, which was much bigger than my experiences, and I was shocked."⁹⁴ Bert had previously thought his experiences of abuse in the care of the Christian Brothers were unique.

2.38 Bert returned to Perth, Australia, in about 1992 where he used the research skills he had acquired on his Master's degree to conduct "a mini survey of... 15 cases", all of whom were men who had been at Castledare or Clontarf as boys.⁹⁵ Among the 15 individuals who had been at just the two Christian Brothers institutions, "the amount of abuse was over 50%."⁹⁶ Bert decided that "sexual abuse within institutions run by the Christian Brothers... had to be eradicated".⁹⁷ He put together a report of his findings and sent it "to the superiors in Melbourne."⁹⁸ He said that the response was "[n]othing... It was like dropping it down a well. Absolutely nothing."⁹⁹ The Order told Bert "not to worry about it, they had it under control", but Bert began to worry that "if I stayed silent it would put me on the side of those who cover up crimes and that I would be as guilty as the abusers... I felt that nothing

was going to become of it amongst the Christian Brothers."¹⁰⁰ Bert sent his report to "the Christian Brothers' headquarters in Rome, to the Bishop Pontifical, the Provincial Council, the WA Council, the Government of WA [Western Australia] and to Barry Coldrey, the Christian Brothers' historian".¹⁰¹ He explained that "[t]he only response I got was from Carmen Lawrence, the Premier of WA at the time. She thanked me for my work, but nothing happened. I was floored... These were the highest authorities within the Christian Brothers and they weren't interested. I came to the conclusion that there was no cure from within the organisation."¹⁰²

"I discovered that sexual abuse within institutions run by the Christian Brothers was common and I decided that... it had to be eradicated."

2.39 Bert was still a Christian Brother and, after completing his report, he was sent back to Fiji to teach. Revelations about child abuse were beginning to emerge.¹⁰³ In late 1994, Bert returned to Melbourne having suffered "a massive breakdown."¹⁰⁴ He had become "ashamed of being a Brother and

92 Royal Commission of Australia, Transcript, day WA13: James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.8629.

93 Royal Commission of Australia, Transcript, day WA13: James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.8629.

94 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7198.

95 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7199.

96 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7199.

97 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 140, at WIT.001.002.3093.

98 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7199.

99 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7199.

100 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 145, at WIT.001.002.3094; Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.5266.

101 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 146, at WIT.001.002.3094.

102 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 147, at WIT.001.002.3094.

103 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 122, at WIT.001.002.3090.

104 Royal Commission of Australia, Transcript, day WA13: James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.8636.

“You assumed that the religious orders were the best place for children and it turned out that it might have been the worst.”

was completely depressed. My own abuse by the Order as a child and now as a brother loomed large.”¹⁰⁵ Bert “knew that the highest authorities were aware of the abuse.”¹⁰⁶

“I knew that the highest authorities were aware of the abuse.”

2.40 Once he had returned to Perth, Bert was visited by the Provincial and asked to sign off from the Christian Brothers.¹⁰⁷ Bert refused, believing that they were trying “to get me out of their life”.¹⁰⁸ Instead, he and the Brothers agreed on a ‘separation’.¹⁰⁹

2.41 In around 2000, Bert wrote an autobiographical account of his experiences of forging a life after abuse.¹¹⁰ He submitted his autobiography to the Senate Inquiry into Institutional Care in 2003.¹¹¹ Bert described the apologies provided by the UK and Australian Governments as “wonderful. They’ve finally faced up to the enormity of sending the children away from their country to another country and the enormity of sufficient safeguards, overseers, or whatever. You assumed that the religious orders were the best place for children and it turned out that it might have been the worst.”¹¹²

2.42 Despite the trauma and pain he has faced, Bert was “very conscious of not hurting the brothers or hurting the church... so I just tell the story as simply as I can and as positively as I can. I’m not vindictive.”¹¹³

105 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.5278.

106 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 184, at WIT.001.002.3100.

107 Royal Commission of Australia, Transcript, day WA13: James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.8636.

108 Royal Commission of Australia, Transcript, day WA13: James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.8636.

109 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of James Albert McGregor, at WIT.003.001.5270.

110 Bert McGregor, *With God Behind the Eight Ball*, at WIT.003.001.4430.

111 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7200.

112 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7202.

113 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7202.

“Tony”

Life in the UK and migration

2.43 “Tony” was born in England in 1938. His mother was Irish but, as she was unmarried, “she went to England and I was born there.”¹¹⁴ “Tony” was admitted to Nazareth House, Finchley, and transferred to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, in 1940 when he was two years old.¹¹⁵

2.44 At that time, Nazareth House, Aberdeen, was home to “over 100” boys, which was “too many kids” for the six Sisters who cared for them.¹¹⁶ There was a kindergarten at Nazareth House.

2.45 The meals at Aberdeen “weren’t bad” but “if you didn’t eat breakfast you got no lunch.”¹¹⁷ He witnessed many children being force fed.

2.46 Each dormitory accommodated over 80 children. If a child wet the bed, the Sisters “rubbed your nose in it, then we had to wash our own sheets in the morning.”¹¹⁸

2.47 Children had chores to do in the morning. If these were not done before breakfast “you’d get the strap from Sister Adelpia...with her rosary beads”.¹¹⁹ “Tony” “was about 8 when I started working”, and

the job he was assigned with another boy was to polish the stairways.¹²⁰ It had to be “spotless”; if it was not, “Sister Adelpia, who was a big lady, would give you the strap across your legs with her rosary beads.”¹²¹ On other occasions, if someone “had done something wrong and no one owned up to it”, Sister Adelpia gathered the children in the hall and told them to “put our hands above our heads. If your hands were coming down, you’d be hit with a cane.”¹²² “Tony” remembers that Sister Adelpia “was cruel... When she came in, everyone was terrified.”¹²³

Sister Adelpia “was cruel...When she came in, everyone was terrified.”

2.48 “Tony” had no contact with his mother. He thought that she was dead, although that was not the case.¹²⁴ This meant that “there was nobody to speak to at Nazareth House.”¹²⁵ “Tony” reflected that, “[t]hinking back on it now, what happened to us would have been seen as abuse, especially when we got a strap across the back when we were working.”¹²⁶

114 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0307.

115 Telephone call with Rev. Mother at Nazareth House, Aberdeen, at BEW-000000023, p.30.

116 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0308 and 0315.

117 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0309.

118 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0310.

119 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0309.

120 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0312.

121 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0312-0313.

122 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0314.

123 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0314.

124 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0314.

125 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0314.

126 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0314.

“There were six brothers in Clontarf to look after over 200 boys. There was also four Hungarian nuns.”

2.49 When “Tony” was eight years old, the children were taken into the hall at Nazareth House and “the superior nun asked, ‘Who wants to go to Australia?’ We didn’t even know where that was. We all put our hands up”; everybody wanted “to get out of the place.”¹²⁷ “Tony” remembered “feeling sorry for two twin brothers” who were standing beside him and who also put their hands up, because “one boy and I were picked, but his brother couldn’t go.”¹²⁸ “Tony’s” LEM3 form was signed in December 1946, with the Mother Superior signing as his guardian and Brother P.A. Conlon signing on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council Birmingham.¹²⁹

2.50 A few weeks after “Tony” was asked if he wanted to go to Australia, he was given some clothes, and received some injections from the doctor. “Tony’s” medical examination was signed in August 1947. With “Tony” there were seven boys and two girls from Nazareth House.¹³⁰

2.51 In late September 1947, the party boarded the SS Ormonde. During the journey, his group was kept in the back of ship. Although over the course of the six-week journey “Tony” did not see any children besides those he had boarded with, “when we got to Australia...all the other kids were there...We had a big party and after that

we got on four buses to Clontarf. There were about 400 to 500 children in the shed” where this party was held, all of whom “Tony” believed to have been on the Ormonde.¹³¹

“...the superior nun asked, ‘Who wants to go to Australia?’ We didn’t even know where that was. We all put our hands up”.

Life at Clontarf (1947-c.1954)

2.52 “Tony” arrived in Australia in early November 1947. He was nine years old. He and the other boys were taken to Clontarf Boys’ Town, run by the Christian Brothers.¹³²

2.53 Clontarf “was massive, but you had your mates there. There were six brothers in Clontarf to look after over 200 boys. There was also four Hungarian nuns.”¹³³ When “Tony” arrived, “Brother Crowley was in charge”, but he was replaced by a different Brother quite soon after.¹³⁴ There were five dormitories at Clontarf and “the ‘wetty beds’ were in a different dormitory.”¹³⁵ These dormitories were smaller than those in Aberdeen, each one holding “four rows of beds with 30 to 40 kids.”¹³⁶

127 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0315.

128 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0315.

129 LEM3 form for “Tony”, at BEW-000000023, p.35. The form does not state the name of the mother superior at Nazareth House, Aberdeen, at the time.

130 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0315.

131 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0316.

132 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0317.

133 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0317.

134 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0317.

135 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0317.

136 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0317.



Clontarf Boys' Town, dormitory, 1906. Source: [Find & Connect](#).

2.54 The showers at Clontarf “were open-plan... Sometimes the showers would be freezing and sometimes they were really hot... The brothers controlled the taps.”¹³⁷

2.55 Like at Aberdeen, if a child did not eat the food they were given, they were not given anything else.¹³⁸ He recalled that in the evening “we got two bits of bread with either jam or treacle and a cup of tea. The treacle was used to mix in with the pig feed and we got it too.”¹³⁹ Children were also force fed. “Tony” avoided being force fed by hiding food in his pocket or in a handkerchief.

2.56 After breakfast, the boys “had our charges [jobs] to do... My charge was to sweep the veranda and the hall.”¹⁴⁰ Although the boys had to go to school, it “wasn't good... The school was overcrowded...

There were 70-odd in my class.”¹⁴¹ “Tony” recalled that he “was hopeless at school”, but he felt that the overcrowding and the poor standard of teaching, and the fact that “they picked those that they thought could learn”, was probably the reason behind this.¹⁴² As a result of the poor level of schooling, “Tony” had no incentive to learn and preferred to work on the farm. The teachers would send him there, and he “liked it better. It was peaceful and I would talk to the pigs.”¹⁴³ At the farm, which housed “about 200 pigs, about 30 to 35 cows, and about eight horses”, “Tony” would “milk the cows, feed the pigs and go to market with Brother Angus”.¹⁴⁴ Other jobs at Clontarf included “chip[ping] all the bricks to make them clean... mix[ing] cement and things like that” in order to build a new piggery.¹⁴⁵

“The school was overcrowded... There were 70-odd in my class.”

2.57 After supper boys were expected to study for half an hour and hand in their homework the next morning.¹⁴⁶ “Brother Doyle would ask where it was and clip you on the back of the head if you hadn't done it.”¹⁴⁷ Those boys who struggled with academic work were physically disciplined and offered little support.

137 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0320.

138 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0318.

139 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0319.

140 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0318.

141 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0321.

142 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0321.

143 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0321-0322.

144 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0324 and 0322.

145 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0324.

146 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0322.

147 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0326.

“I felt nervous a lot...most of the boys there were nervous...All you could think of was what [the Brothers] were going to do to you. There was no forgiveness.”

2.58 The boys were not allowed to talk in bed, and while he never got in trouble for doing so, “Tony” “felt nervous a lot. In fact, most of the boys there were nervous. You think that [the Brothers will] forget, but they won’t forget. If you didn’t sleep you were bugged the next day. All you could think of was what they were going to do to you. There was no forgiveness.”¹⁴⁸

2.59 Over the Christmas period the boys went to a place called Angel Farm in Manjimup and another farm in Koolan.¹⁴⁹ There was optional work for the boys, which “Tony” enjoyed.¹⁵⁰ They stayed there for “about four weeks...and we all looked forward to it to get away from” Clontarf.¹⁵¹ In addition, “a married couple from Victoria Park used to come and pick me up the third Sunday of every month. They had two kids. I would spend the day with them, then get dropped off at night...They were very good to me. I went there for years.”¹⁵²

2.60 Clontarf had a local doctor who could be called upon, but this did not always happen. When he was about 10, “Tony” caught his finger in a lawnmower that another boy was using, “and it took a bit of my finger off. I didn’t go to hospital. The nuns gave me

a knife and I had to try and cut the little piece at the top of my finger. I couldn’t cut it off, so they got a pair of tweezers. I was yelling so it didn’t come off. It eventually got better itself. I was given a Band Aid, but I didn’t receive any proper medical attention.”¹⁵³

2.61 Emotional pain was ignored and even punished: “If you cried, you would be sent to the corner until you stopped. You’d have to stay there facing the wall for an hour.”¹⁵⁴ Also, “older boys would push the smaller ones out to take the blame for things and they would get a hiding even though they didn’t do it.”¹⁵⁵ Child welfare officers came only rarely and when they did “[t]hey spoke to the brothers, not the kids, because the kids would tell them a few yarns, but they would never believe it.”¹⁵⁶

2.62 When “Tony” was aged 11 or 12, he was sexually abused at Clontarf. He was raped on a number of occasions by an older boy aged 17 or 18 who had been sent to work at Clontarf. It happened at lunch times and “Tony” was belted by a Brother for not coming to lunch: “He would ask me where I’d been, but I couldn’t tell him. But the older boy would walk straight in and he would get his lunch.”¹⁵⁷

148 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0320.

149 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0321.

150 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0321.

151 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0321.

152 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0321.

153 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0323.

154 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0326.

155 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0326.

156 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0325.

157 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony” at TRN.001.005.0327.

2.63 “Tony” did not tell the Brothers about the abuse. The older boy said he would belt him if he told anyone. The older boy was a “big bloke”, and “[y]ou couldn’t tell the brothers what had happened to you when they asked: why are you bleeding, why are you sore, what are you crying for?”¹⁵⁸

2.64 Years later, “Tony” discovered that another boy had also been abused by the older boy: “He started crying and I started crying. He said, ‘He did it to you, didn’t he?’ This was a long time after I left.”¹⁵⁹ Tony said that, apart from the abuse, he got on quite well at Clontarf but that “the memories of the abuse never go away.”¹⁶⁰

“...the memories of the abuse never go away.”

Life after care

2.65 When “Tony” and other boys at Clontarf reached 16 years old, they became the wards of the welfare officers in Perth until they were 21 years old. They were sent out to work.¹⁶¹ Local farmers would go to the welfare officer, looking for labourers. “It was cheap labour” and “Tony” was given no preparation. “Tony” was sent to a dairy farm and was given the job of milking the cows, which he hated.

He had to get “up at 4 o’clock in the morning” to work, seven days a week.¹⁶² The job was poorly paid and he “slept in the veranda outside the back of the house.”¹⁶³ About a year after being placed at the farm he was released without any explanation.¹⁶⁴ A police officer in Perth took him back to Clontarf where Brother Doyle belted him for leaving a job. The welfare officer organised another job for him, which he enjoyed much more. From there he went on to work on different farms.¹⁶⁵

2.66 In the mid-1960s, “Tony” met his wife, and they married several years later. They had three children together. “Tony” told his wife and children about what happened to him at Clontarf. “Tony’s” own experience impacted upon his treatment of his children: “When you were brought up by the nuns and the brothers you were not treated well so that’s how I brought up my kids. I learned that was the wrong thing to do.”¹⁶⁶

2.67 In the 1990s, “Tony” reported the sexual abuse to the police. The older boy who abused him is deceased.¹⁶⁷ “Tony” was in contact with the CMT, through which he spoke to a counsellor.¹⁶⁸ He also requested their support in tracing his mother and setting up a meeting. He met his mother on one occasion and she did not say much; he did not find out who his father was.¹⁶⁹

158 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0327.

159 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0328.

160 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0326.

161 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0325.

162 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0329.

163 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0329.

164 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0329.

165 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0330.

166 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0332.

167 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0328.

168 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0330.

169 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0331.

“Johno”

Life in the UK

2.68 “Johno” was born in Aberdeen in 1942. He was born while his mother’s husband, who was not his father, was away during the Second World War. His mother was pressured into handing him over to Canon Grant, parish priest at Aberdeen Cathedral.¹⁷⁰ “Johno” entered Nazareth House, Aberdeen, when he was about 10 months old, at the request of Canon Grant, because “Johno’s” grandmother had been brought up there.¹⁷¹ “Johno” remained at Nazareth House until 1950.

2.69 “Johno” recalled that at Nazareth House he “was always very frightened...I still get the heebie-jeebies when I think about the times we were there. A lot of that was because of bullying from the older boys and one or two of the nuns that were probably overly strict in the control area.”¹⁷²

“...I was always very frightened [at Nazareth House]...I still get the heebie-jeebies when I think about the times we were there.”

2.70 He said “we were strapped and what have you if you did something wrong [but] it

was the older boys...that had struck fear into the heart of me.”¹⁷³ He remembered thinking it was “a very dark place, it was cold, we were always frightened of the older boys.”¹⁷⁴

2.71 “Johno” described the punishments meted out by the Sisters as random and excessive, and on “a few occasions...the nuns lost their grips”.¹⁷⁵ The love and emotion that children yearned for simply did not exist, and “it was just a very cold, feelingless place to be.”¹⁷⁶ Only one unnamed nun “showed any sort of attention or care to me...[‘Johno’] felt relaxed in her company...I just felt safe when she was around.”¹⁷⁷ Asked if he had friends, “Johno” responded that “[y]es. I guess you could call them friends. Two or three boys, we stuck together.”¹⁷⁸

2.72 Another particular memory that “Johno” described concerned an occasion when, aged five or six, he was made to run away with some older boys. He was being walked home from school by an older boy when he and two others decided to run away. They took “Johno” with them so that they would not be found out, and later dropped “Johno” off at a police station before continuing their own escape.¹⁷⁹ The older boys were presumably located and returned, because “Johno” was later migrated to Australia with these same boys. “Johno” was eight years old.

170 The Nazareth House Children’s register records “Johno’s” birth in 1942, his handing over to Canon Grant in 1943, and his departure in Mary 1950 on the RMS Otranto. The record of his leaving also notes that his mother is living. See Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.3116.

171 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3117.

172 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.11.

173 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.23.

174 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.12.

175 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.25.

176 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.13.

177 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.13-14.

178 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.19.

179 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.21-22.

“...what really caught my attention was the sun shone every day...They spent a fair bit of time selling this Australia.”

Migration

2.73 “Johnno” had vivid memories of the first time the idea of migration was raised. He and the 50 or so other boys at Nazareth House, Aberdeen, were assembled in the hall in different age groups sitting on the floor. An Australian priest (Father Stinson), two Sisters, another lady, and a politician came in to speak to the boys.¹⁸⁰ They began talking about Australia, which “meant absolutely nothing” to “Johnno” at the time.¹⁸¹ “Johnno” shared this memory: “it all went quiet and I heard then the priest actually say, ‘Give us a show of hands as to how [sic] would like to go to this wonderful place’, and then he elaborated further before the hands went up to say things to the effect that...the sun shone every day. And you’re in Aberdeen and the sun shines every day? Well, that’s got to be something, because in Aberdeen, when the sun shines, you take a photo of it, that’s how rare it is. Anyway, there was the riding [to] the school, there was the picking fruit, all that was said...They spent a fair bit of time selling this Australia...Anyway, the show of hands came around. I can remember looking around and there’s quite a few boys

in that hall and not a hand went up...the next minute I got this tap on the shoulder, or a prod, and it was Sister Columbus, saying, ‘Put your hand up, [“Johnno”].’ I thought, oh, okay, so up went the hand. And I looked around further and then I see the [other boys who had run away with ‘Johnno’] put their hands up over the other side. I thought, gee, this is weird...We were the only four to be selected from that orphanage at that time.”¹⁸²

2.74 “Johnno’s” LEM3 form was signed on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Committee in 1949. The section that is headed ‘Parent’s or guardian’s consent’ was signed by Sister Francis Rita.¹⁸³ Several other signatures appear: Reverend Monsignor David Paterson, administrator at St Mary’s, Aberdeen; Father P.F. Quille, a member of the Social Services Committee for the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh and Secretary to the Catholic Council for British Overseas Settlement for Scotland and Northern Ireland (CCBOS S&NI);¹⁸⁴ and Norah Menaldo, an administrative secretary for CCBOS S&NI.¹⁸⁵

180 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.26.

181 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.26.

182 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.27-.28.

183 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.33. LEM3 form for “Johnno”, at NAA-000000188.

184 It is unclear when CCBOS S&NI was established, but in 1947 an agreement was signed between the Australian Catholic Hierarchy and P.F. Quille for an annual payment to be made to the CCBOS S&NI by the Australian Catholic Hierarchy to cover the administrative costs of arranging the migration of Catholics to Australia—including children. See Constantine *et al.*, Appendix 3, paragraph 5.13.

185 LEM3 form for “Johnno”, at NAA-000000188. See also Constantine *et al.*, paragraphs 5.15-5.16, and Appendix 3, paragraphs 5.19-5.20 for a consideration of the establishment of, and role played by, the CCBOS S&NI in child migration from Scotland and Northern Ireland. Rev. Mgr. David Paterson was instated at St. Mary’s as first senior minister in 1930, promoted to administrator after Meany in December 1937, and made Canon in 1950. See British Newspaper Archives, *Aberdeen Press and Journal*.

2.75 “Johnno” started receiving medical examinations some weeks later. On the day before he was due to leave Nazareth House, “Johnno” asked the nun who had shown him some kindness “[w]here is?’ – I don’t think I could even say Australia”.¹⁸⁶ In response, she said: “‘It’s just down the road’, and she pointed through the gate and around the corner. And I remember thinking innocently, ‘Wow, if the sun shines every day and you’ve got all this fruit, what am I doing here? And if I don’t like it there, I can come back.’ That was the mindset that a kid would have.”¹⁸⁷

2.76 The next day, “Johnno” and the three other boys were put on a train. “Johnno” boarded the RMS Otranto at Tilbury on 4 May 1950.¹⁸⁸ He “bawled [his] eyes out the whole way.”¹⁸⁹ He did not know where they were going, or what was happening to them. “It was just so confusing.”¹⁹⁰

2.77 When “Johnno” finally met his mother decades later in 1983/4, she told him that she had been advised by Nazareth House that he had been adopted by a good English family. She was advised not to seek him out for fear it would destroy any relationship he would have had with the new family.¹⁹¹

Life in Australia

2.78 When “Johnno” and the other child migrants on his ship arrived at Fremantle, they were assembled and “given a number.”¹⁹² This number dictated where the boys were sent according to age: the very youngest group of boys (who were unnumbered) were sent to St Joseph’s in Subiaco; “Johnno’s” group was sent to Castledare; the group above him were sent to Clontarf; those in group three went to Tardun; and the fourth group went to Bindoon. All of these institutions were run by the Christian Brothers, with the exception of St Joseph’s, Subiaco, which was run by the Sisters of Mercy. At that time “Johnno” was aged seven or eight.

2.79 The three older boys who had travelled with “Johnno” from Aberdeen were sent to Bindoon. For “Johnno,” “[i]t was like I’d lost my right arm...because they sort of protected me during the voyage...or kept an eye on me, and then they were taken away and I’m on my own.”¹⁹³ “Johnno” recalls seeing siblings being physically pulled apart, with the Christian Brothers telling them, like “Johnno”, that they must stay in their allocated lines.¹⁹⁴

2.80 “Johnno” boarded the bus with the other boys in his line: “we thought we were going to a fairyland...I’d never been on a bus before. It was quite a novelty, but that came to a shattering halt very shortly.”¹⁹⁵

186 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.30.

187 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.30.

188 Written statement of “Johnno”, paragraph 76, at WIT.001.002.7465.

189 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.37.

190 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.38.

191 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.159.

192 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.41.

193 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.43.

194 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.44.

195 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.45.

“...the level of fear I had on that day has surpassed anything that I would want to experience again.”

Castledare (c.1950-1953)

2.81 “Johno” described his arrival at Castledare Boys’ Home as “one of the worst days of my life...the level of fear that I had on that day has surpassed anything that I would want to experience again.”¹⁹⁶

2.82 On arrival at Castledare, a Brother instructed the boys to form a single file. “Johno” described how some of “us were a bit slow doing it and he then pushed his way up to the back and started belting and kicking us off the bus...we had no idea what a single file was...So we were belted again into a straight line.”¹⁹⁷

2.83 The boys were then told to strip naked: “Suddenly we were standing there naked, something I’d never experienced before, in the laundry with Australian kids laughing or poking at us. The nuns looking over and handing us shirts...It was just so degrading...Suddenly, all our self-worth was gone, just stripped of us, and everything was taken away. We never, ever saw any of our items again. It was like we had been put through a washing machine, you know, and come out the other side a completely different person...everything we held firm – and we didn’t hold that much firm because we were only kids – but what we did have was a little bit of dignity, a little bit of pride, a little bit of self-worth, and it just washed away, just like that, on the order of a Christian Brother.”¹⁹⁸



Facilities at Castledare, laundry, 1950. Photograph from Dease Studios collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

“Suddenly, all our self-worth was gone, just stripped of us, and everything was taken away.”

2.84 The children only had a shirt and pair of shorts to wear. They “had no shoes and no underwear,” leading to chilblains, cuts, and sores on their feet.¹⁹⁹ Within a toilet block with eight or nine cubicles in it, there was no toilet paper.²⁰⁰ Johno described how “if you weren’t in the first, say, 40 or 50, you then cleaned you teeth with soap – and that’s if you had a toothbrush”.²⁰¹ Every Friday children had to comb each other’s hair for nits, and “[i]f you didn’t seem to be scraping hard enough down...[Brother Murphy would] take the comb off you and he’d say,

196 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.46.

197 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.47.

198 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.48.

199 [Written statement of “Johno”](#), paragraph 143, at WIT.001.002.7475.

200 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.62.

201 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.61.

'This is how it's done', and quite often he would make the scalp bleed for the kid he was doing it to and of course you'd get a backhander as well for not doing it as hard as he felt it needed to be done."²⁰²

2.85 Substandard and cruel hygiene practices extended to the kitchen. The food itself "was dreadful...How we didn't come down with some level of poison, I'm mystified."²⁰³

2.86 Regardless of the poor quality of food, "you had to force down your food because whatever you didn't eat was mixed in with your pudding."²⁰⁴ There was an insufficient quantity of food to properly feed young boys and children "were always hungry."²⁰⁵ "Johnno" and others resorted to eating nutgrass from a nearby field to satiate themselves.²⁰⁶ One of "Johnno's" few positive memories relating to food was of the aboriginal cook, Rosie, who would keep some of the Brothers' eggs and bacon aside so that the children who had the task of cleaning the kitchen would benefit. "That was a treat. We got to love Rosie."²⁰⁷ Some boys would have to serve the Brothers "in their silver-service dining room with tablecloths and candelabras [and] had to put white jackets on to take their meals into them while they just sat there."²⁰⁸

2.87 Besides the poor living conditions, "Johnno" faced physical abuse from the Brothers at Castledare. He was strapped daily, often by Brother Murphy who had a long piece of leather with pennies sewn into its end, "and [Brother Murphy is] 6 foot 6 and you're 3 foot nothing with your hand out, and this thing would just come down...After the first hit you really didn't feel it, your hand was that numb."²⁰⁹ "Johnno" described seeing Brother O'Shea publicly beat some boys who had been returned by the police after running away, remembering how "when he hit them, you'd almost see the welts come up on the back of the legs and the backside of these kids."²¹⁰

2.88 Other abusive practices centred around showering and hygiene. After showering, "we had to file past [Brother] Murphy and put our hands up and turn around and he examined us - or supposedly he examined us, but I think it just gave him some pretty bad ideas. If he didn't like you, that's where he caught up with you...if he wanted to punish you, he caught you in the showers or in the classroom, one or the other."²¹¹

202 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.63.

203 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.68.

204 [Written statement of "Johnno"](#), paragraph 137, at WIT.001.002.7474.

205 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.67.

206 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.67. Nutgrass produces a "seedpod, which if you get it at the right time, it's nice and sweet. It's about the size of one of those little round chocolate things, and you could eat a couple of hundred of those without any problem at all."

207 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.69.

208 [Written statement of "Johnno"](#), paragraph 166, at WIT.001.002.7479.

209 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.79.

210 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.80.

211 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johnno", at TRN-5-000000010, pp.58-59.

“...there were a number of kids that were repeatedly taken into [Brother] Murphy’s room at night, abused, and then threatened”.

2.89 When children were punished with freezing cold showers, Brother Murphy “would just stand there and watch and if you dared put your head out [of the shower], that’s what he was looking for, to keep you under there as long as he could, and it was just a very painful and very nasty experience.”²¹²

2.90 Once, “Johnno” saw Brother Murphy holding a “boy by the ankle and he had his head under the water in the foot trough [about one foot deep], belting him with his strap...the boy was naked, yes, but he was just belting the kid and the kid couldn’t scream, his head was under water.”²¹³

“[Brother Murphy] was just belting the kid and the kid couldn’t scream, his head was under water.”

2.91 Children were forced to take freezing cold showers, even in winter, if they had wet the bed, a problem which the Brothers “looked upon as being the work of the devil.”²¹⁴

“Johnno”, who had never had extensive enuresis problems in Scotland, wet the bed chronically in Castledare and received punishment: “when those showers were turned on full pelt...you got brain freeze within seconds and you’re not allowed to take your head out from under the

shower. You could almost pass out from the pain that that alone did, let alone how the rest of your body felt.”²¹⁵

2.92 Brother Doyle put children who wet the bed on the veranda, which was not fully protected from the elements, and was considered by “Johnno” to be a punishment in itself.²¹⁶

2.93 Besides the physical abuse, “Johnno” both experienced and witnessed sexual abuse. “Johnno” understood that “[t]he blonder you were, the bluer your eyes were, the more trouble you were in...there were a number of kids that were repeatedly taken into [Brother] Murphy’s room at night, abused, and then threatened with: don’t dare talk about this to anyone.”²¹⁷ “Johnno” saw the effects of this abuse on his peers; particularly when the boys were showering, “you’d see they’d been interfered with, they’d be bleeding from the backside...but the kid wouldn’t tell you what happened under fear of what was going to happen to him next if he told.”²¹⁸ In class, “Johnno” actively avoided making eye contact with Brother Murphy who, in full view of the classroom, “would just point to someone and that boy would have to come up and stand beside him and run his hands through his greasy, black hair while he just sort of sat there in a daze or in a stupor, call it what you will. It was a sickening thing

212 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.58.

213 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.59.

214 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.55.

215 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.56.

216 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.57.

217 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.77.

218 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.78.

to witness, especially as a kid...And then when you looked down...his hand was down the trousers of the kid, interfering with their private parts. Sometimes he got a bit bored and he had a kid on both sides and his hands down the trousers of both of them."²¹⁹

2.94 On one occasion, "Johno" saw Brother Murphy abusing a young boy with his bedroom door open; "Johno" saw that Brother Murphy "was lying on the bed naked and this young lad was lying on top of him naked."²²⁰

2.95 On another occasion, when "Johno" was leaving the toilet late at night, Brother Murphy sent him to his room. After waiting a while in Brother Murphy's room, Brother Murphy arrived and "just stripped off, got into his pyjamas, turned the light off and went to bed."²²¹ "Johno" was terrified; he "just stood there, I was scared to breathe. I thought, he doesn't know I'm here. He got up the next morning...and he saw me and he said 'Get out of here, get to bed'".²²² It seemed that Brother Murphy had forgotten that he had sent "Johno" to his room, but the terror that "Johno" felt was extreme.

2.96 On a further occasion, "Johno" was tasked, alongside several other boys, with cleaning the stage in the main hall, which was used as a classroom area for grade three students. The other boys had left through the back of the stage while "Johno" was finishing his work on the stairs at the front of the stage. Once he had completed this task, "Johno" went to leave the hall through the front exit. As he was leaving, "I didn't even see initially

Brother Moore over on the right-hand corner of the hall, and I got about halfway down and he just bellowed out, 'What are you doing here?'...As I looked over, he had turned to me as well, and he was fully exposed. Then I looked behind him and there's a friend of mine...kneeling in the upright position. At that time I had no real idea of what was going on. I was just so happy for him to say, in his words, 'Get the hell out of here.' Well, my feet didn't touch the floor".²²³

2.97 At the time, he did not fully comprehend what was happening to his friend, and understandably did not have the wherewithal or ability to challenge Brother Moore. Later, this troubled "Johno": "later on, I learned to regret that. Even if I'd said, 'Brother, what are you doing?' it might have saved my friend. But I was that terrified and relieved to be out of there that...I didn't have the strength to stand up against him".²²⁴

2.98 The day after the incident in the hall, "Johno" and about 20 other boys, most of whom were non-swimmers, were bathing in a shallow section of river near to Castledare, when for the first time, "Johno" witnessed a Christian Brother going into the river. This was Brother Moore, who proceeded to approach "Johno".

2.99 Brother Moore asked "Johno" to put his arms round his neck and said "I'm taking you across to the other side".²²⁵ "Johno" started to cry and said he could not swim. About halfway across, without any warning, Brother Moore broke the grip "Johno" had around his neck: "I had a very tight grip, but

219 Transcript, day 180: "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.82.

220 Transcript, day 180: "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.84.

221 Transcript, day 180: "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.84.

222 Transcript, day 180: "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.85.

223 Transcript, day 180: "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.87.

224 Transcript, day 180: "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.87.

225 Transcript, day 180: "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.88.

“...there were some pretty devastating things done to children at Castledare, particularly through the offices of Murphy.”

he wrestled it off me and almost lifted himself out of the water and shoved me under...Because I couldn't swim, it was my flailing under the water that kept me down there...I was in that great a panic, I didn't have any oxygen...I had stopped struggling and I started hearing these bells and weird noises in my head...I felt my chest was about to explode...I broke the surface and took a gasp, half a gasp of air, before I went down again...I was looking for someone to grab but there was no one there. So I went under again and got back up, but I couldn't lift myself above the nose line. I'd heard then that if you go down a third time, you don't come up. Now I can understand why.”²²⁶

“...[Brother Moore] tried to murder me”.

2.100 Two boys managed to swim out to “Johnno” and helped him ashore. By this time Brother Moore had disappeared. “Johnno” was in no doubt that “he tried to murder me that day because of what I witnessed the day before.”²²⁷ The experience left “Johnno” with PTSD and a fear of water which impacted his later life considerably, especially during his time in the Australian Army.

2.101 “Johnno” did not report the abuse at Castledare: “To report something meant more trouble for you...you were a liar.”²²⁸

2.102 “Johnno” described how the Brothers had boys who were their “pets” and that “it was almost a treat to be a brother’s pet because you got the easier jobs, you got bonuses here and there, but you had to be prepared to put up with what it is they wanted to do with you...And there were some pretty devastating things done to children at Castledare, particularly through the offices of Murphy.”²²⁹

2.103 “Johnno” never had any visitors at Castledare and he believed he had no family.²³⁰ When inspections did take place, the majority of the boys were taken out for the day, sometimes to other local Christian Brothers institutions such as Clontarf. The remaining boys were instructed on how to respond to inspectors to paint a certain picture of Castledare that would encourage an inspector to think that all was well.²³¹ In “Johnno’s” nine years of institutional life, which included several at Castledare, he was never “spoken to by a welfare officer or anyone concerned with the welfare of children.”²³²

226 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.89-90.

227 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.90.

228 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.91.

229 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.76.

230 Written statement of “Johnno”, paragraph 162, at WIT.001.002.7478.

231 The account provided by “Johnno” may help to explain John Moss’s conclusion, following his visit to Castledare in 1952, that boys there appeared happy and well cared for. See TNA, MH102/2041, “Emigration of Children to Australia: Reports by Mr John Moss”, at CMT.001.001.0502.

232 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.76.

2.104 When “Johnno” came to leave Castledare, he and approximately 30 other boys, none of whom knew their real dates of birth, were lined up before Brother Crowley.²³³ Each of them was given a birthday that day.²³⁴ This birthday was not “Johnno’s” real birthday, and it made him a year younger than he actually was. “Johnno”, according to this new birthday, was to turn 11 the following year, making him ripe for transition to Clontarf.²³⁵

Clontarf (1953-1959)

2.105 In late 1953, “Johnno” was transferred to Clontarf Boys’ Town. Clontarf was much larger than Castledare, housing between 250 and 300 boys. Upon transferring, “Johnno’s” name was altered due to spelling errors, and his middle name was dropped.²³⁶ About six months after “Johnno” was transferred to Clontarf, Brother Murphy also moved there.



Aerial photograph of Clontarf Boys’ Town, 1939. Photograph from Stuart Gore Collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.106 The living conditions were, again, inadequate. The food at Clontarf “was worse than Castledare...We were regular raiders of the pig bins. The pigs ate better than us...The buns we were able to steal from the pig bins were fresher than what we were getting.”²³⁷

“The pigs ate better than us.”

2.107 The children were not provided with sunhats or sunscreen, and the quadrangle which served as the main recreational area for the boys was used all year round, and boys were exposed to the elements: “And in the summer when you got your 100 degrees in Australia, and above, we were out there on the concrete. We can’t go on the verandas because that’s where the brothers walk in the shade. But we had to stay out in the heat of the day and it was quite blistering. It wasn’t uncommon to have blistered feet, it wasn’t uncommon to see blistered ears and blistered necks and shoulders.”²³⁸

“...in the summer when you got your 100 degrees...and above...we had to stay out in the heat of the day”.

2.108 Every third Sunday, families were allowed to come in and take one or two boys with them to their homes: “That was the Sunday that we were wearing our suits and our shoes, so it was an image thing that we were all very well cared for and looked after.”²³⁹

233 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.92.

234 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.93.

235 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.93.

236 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.17.

237 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.107-108.

238 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.115.

239 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.119.

“Trust was one of the first thing[s] that went out of the door.”

2.109 Like at Castledare, when an external inspector visited the boys were moved and taken elsewhere for the day.²⁴⁰ Visiting inspectors “looked at the buildings and they looked at the kitchen and they looked at the toilets, but not one child in any of the records show that they were interviewed and spoken to by a welfare officer, either from Scotland, England – or even Australia for that matter.”²⁴¹

“...not one child...[was] interviewed and spoken to by a welfare officer”.

2.110 “Johnno” and others had to send letters to their sending institutions in the UK, but instead of writing their own accounts, they had to sit in the classroom and copy letters from the blackboard and then hand them in. “There was not an ounce of truth in any of them.”²⁴² The letters were collected and checked by a Brother before being sent to their destinations.²⁴³

2.111 As at Castledare, to remain safe at Clontarf boys could not complain and had to be wary of other boys, even if a good friend. “Trust was one of the first thing[s] that went out the door. You couldn’t trust even the kid that you thought you were a good friend of.”²⁴⁴

2.112 Education was substandard at Clontarf. “Johnno” was forced to repeat the eighth grade three times, despite having passed in each year.²⁴⁵ At Clontarf, “you weren’t actually moved up on merit, you were moved up on what they wanted you to do. You were controlled. They controlled who went to the next grades...I just wasn’t one that was destined to go beyond. They decided that. This was the case with a lot of fairly clever kids that were constrained by the requirements of the school or the institution.”²⁴⁶

2.113 “Johnno” and other child migrants were not allowed to fulfil their potential in any way.

2.114 “Johnno” experienced and witnessed emotionally abusive practices at Clontarf. During holidays, “Johnno” and other boys would have to kill the pigs and chickens for feasts at Bindoon or Tardun.²⁴⁷

2.115 One of Brother Doyle’s favourite punishments revolved around movie nights. Brother Doyle’s trick was to be “right in the middle of the hall in his lounge chair with up to a dozen kids sitting in front of him facing away from the screen. He would be eating peanuts and just throwing the shells down at the kids, and he would exaggerate the laugh, if it was a comedy, so the kids would be

240 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.119.

241 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.164-165.

242 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.164. Nazareth House records from June 1950 to August 1951 repeatedly note receiving frequent letters from the boys they had sent to Australia, summarising that “boys appear... to be very happy,” “like their new country very much,” and “are making very good progress”: Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Boys’ disposal book, at NAZ.001.006.3118.

243 [Written statement of “Johnno”](#), paragraph 253, at WIT.001.002.7493.

244 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.118.

245 [Written statement of “Johnno”](#), paragraph 254, at WIT.001.002.7493.

246 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.110.

247 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.121.

tempted to turn round. And if he caught you turning round, you were there for another fortnight. It was just a very sadistic thing to do, I think, for little kids.”²⁴⁸

2.116 Brother Doyle perpetrated much abuse that went beyond this emotional abuse. At Clontarf, the response to bedwetting, for example, was harsh, uncaring, and abusive. In the dorms “we had horsehair mattresses [which] never dried out during the day, so when you put your dry sheet on, it was wet within minutes because the mattress was still wet. But also, the floor underneath was corroding...from the amount of urine that had to pass through the floorboards.”²⁴⁹

2.117 To ‘fix’ the problem of bedwetting, Brother Doyle initiated the use of “a machine that would fit on your...penis. And when you started urinating, it would give you an electric shock and wake you up. The thing was, you needed to have an erection to fit this device on. And that was Brother Doyle’s thing. He would arouse the kids, and there were many that were put through this system. He had his favourites that would fairly regularly be hauled into this; I think there were two machines there. The kids that were required to do that were taken into a separate room, that’s where they slept and where the machine was fitted, so no one else could witness what was going on.”²⁵⁰

2.118 Throughout “Johno’s” time at Clontarf, Brother Doyle physically abused boys. “Johno” witnessed Brother Doyle physically abusing a boy who had lost both legs in a bus accident in 1955. The bus had been carrying Clontarf children and the accident had left one boy dead and four others without one or both legs. The bus had been driven by Brother Doyle.²⁵¹ On this occasion, Brother Doyle “apparently called on him and he either didn’t hear or totally ignored it and Doyle went over and he just lambasted this boy. The kid fell out of the wheelchair and he didn’t even bother to help him back into it, just thrashed him”.²⁵²

Brother Doyle “came up with this idea of an electronic machine...that would fit on your...penis. And when you started urinating, it would give you an electric shock and wake you up.”

2.119 Children were caned excessively by Brother Doyle. “This is a big man, Brother Doyle, 18 stone, 6 foot 6, and when he whacked you felt your arm had been ripped out”.²⁵³

248 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.112.

249 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.105.

250 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.111.

251 Doyle had been driving the bus in 1955 when it crashed, leaving one boy dead, two without any legs, and two with only one leg, as well as causing a multitude of other injuries: Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.127. The Canberra Times reported on the accident in an article dated 16 December 1955: “Boy died, 11 hurt in bus crash,” *Canberra Times*, 16 December 1955, p.1. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/91214092>

252 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.126. See also references to what was experienced by “Harry”, who was in the bus at the time of the accident, at paragraphs 2.323-2.324.

253 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.125.

“...the change around in brothers was just so obvious...when they were caught in one they were simply moved on to the next...there [was] a circuit going on...and it was a very nasty one”.

2.120 While Brother Doyle was a major perpetrator of physical abuse, other Brothers were also physically abusive.²⁵⁴ “Physical abuse was a day-to-day occurrence”.²⁵⁵ Brother Murphy, who had by now been transferred to Clontarf, was also a serial physical abuser. On one occasion after “Johnno” walked past Brother Murphy, Brother Murphy punched him in the kidney: “He knocked me out. I was out cold on the floor and the last thing I heard was him saying to the next kid behind me, ‘Oh, just step over him.’”²⁵⁶

2.121 Brother Higgins took “great delight in getting the side of your face and he would just pinch it and lift you off the ground, and it really hurt, or he’d put his hand on your forehead and pull his finger back and go whack. He used to stun you.”²⁵⁷

2.122 “Johnno” was exposed to abuse as a result of Clontarf’s practice of sending children out with visitors to private homes. “Johnno” and two other boys were allocated to Leo McCarron, an approved benefactor of Clontarf. Leo McCarron sexually abused “Johnno”. Despite knowing that he could not report Leo McCarron to anybody at the institution, “Johnno” threatened to do so. In

response, Leo McCarron threw “Johnno” a pack of chewing gum; “to get a whole packet of chewing gum in the one hit, it was quite a treat. So I didn’t do anything about it.”²⁵⁸ Leo McCarron tried to sexually abuse “Johnno” on another visit and “Johnno” managed to “break away”. “Johnno” described how Leo McCarron would change boys from their usual clothing into baggy bloomer-style shorts, which “gave him access to our private parts.”²⁵⁹

2.123 “Johnno” was also sexually abused by older boys, abuse that involved masturbation.

2.124 Other boys warned “Johnno” to avoid Brother Angus.²⁶⁰

2.125 “Johnno” said that when an abuser was “caught in one [institution] they were simply moved on to the next” and his perception was that there was “a circuit going here and it was a very nasty one”.²⁶¹ “Johnno” believed that Brother Murphy “was probably the most travelled of all of them.”²⁶² In what seemed, given the number of abusive Brothers at Clontarf, to be a particularly telling remark, “Johnno” said: “At the end of the day, that’s what it was, the dregs of the Christian Brothers, that’s where they were sent.”²⁶³

254 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.104.

255 Written statement of “Johnno”, paragraph 288, at WIT.001.002.7499.

256 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.106.

257 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.123.

258 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.130.

259 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.131.

260 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.131.

261 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.135.

262 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.100.

263 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.122.

Life after care

2.126 When “Johno” was 16, the upper age limit for Clontarf, the Brothers sent him to a placement at Waroona Farm. On his way there, he had to sit in the back of a truck with straw, cow dung, grease, and tools.²⁶⁴ As the vehicle was about to leave Clontarf, “Brother Doyle leaned over and said to me, and his words exactly, ‘I guess the next time I see you will be in Fremantle Jail’, and I thought, well, that is a lovely way to say, ‘Take care, son, look after yourself, keep your chin up.’ No, ‘I’ll see you in jail.’ That was 9 years of institutionalised farewell.”²⁶⁵

2.127 Although he was free of Clontarf, his quality of life did not improve. He “had never felt such despair in [his] life.”²⁶⁶ He worked excessively long hours for little remuneration. He had to live in a corrugated iron shed with holes in the floor and no windows, and a door that did not shut. There was no power, and no water. His blanket “was four potato bags sown together.”²⁶⁷ He was allowed to enter the farmer’s house for fifteen minutes per day for his evening meal.²⁶⁸ He spent two and a half years at this farm.

2.128 Eventually, after sending two letters to the welfare office in Perth, a welfare officer visited him. When the officer saw “Johno’s” living quarters and heard about his working conditions, he told “Johno” to resign and helped him to draft a letter of resignation. The next two weeks were “the longest 14 days of my life.”²⁶⁹ On the day he was finally

able to leave, “Johno” ran to Waroona where he caught a train to Perth.

2.129 In Perth, “Johno” was taken in by a family: “And the most wonderful family it was...I’d never known life was so good... their attitude to me was that I was someone. The way they treated me was something that I had never, ever been familiar with. And I thought they must have the wrong person. I really felt that inferior.”²⁷⁰

“I’d never known life was so good...their attitude to me was that I was someone.”

2.130 “Johno” stayed in their “beautiful house” with a private bedroom, polished floors, and real sheets.²⁷¹ Although “Johno” stayed with the family for just six weeks, he has “never forgotten them” and “never will.”²⁷²

2.131 After his time with this family, “Johno” joined the Australian Army, where he stayed for 23 years, retiring as a sergeant major. He received his first birthday present when he turned 21.²⁷³ He served in Vietnam in 1965/66, and returned as a member of their training team in 1970/71.²⁷⁴ On the first of these tours, “Johno” nearly lost his life; he was twice given last rites in hospital in Perth. “Johno” had listed Nazareth House, Aberdeen, as his next of kin, and so they were contacted after his injury; in turn, Nazareth House contacted “Johno’s” mother:

264 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.137.

265 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.138.

266 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.139.

267 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.141.

268 Written statement of “Johno”, paragraph 340, at WIT.001.002.7507.

269 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.143.

270 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.144.

271 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.145.

272 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.145.

273 Written statement of “Johno”, paragraph 381, at WIT.001.002.7513.

274 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.149.

“We were not people, we were a commodity that was made readily available to fill a need in Australia”.

“The postal orderly came to my bedside... and he said ‘I’ve got a cablegram here from your mother’...I thought...he’s got the wrong person, I don’t have one of those...it was a very sincere cablegram...signed off, ‘Your loving mother, [redacted]’. It wasn’t until many, many years later that I realised that was my mother.”²⁷⁵

2.132 For many years, he had just accepted that he did not have any family because that is what he had been told.²⁷⁶

2.133 Two years later, “Johnno” received another letter, signed “your sister.”²⁷⁷ Eventually, in 1983/4, “Johnno” arrived in London and searched archives for births, deaths, and marriages. After three days, he was told to go to Edinburgh where he discovered that he had many relatives. From there, “Johnno” contacted a first cousin who “told me that he can remember me as a baby in that his mum and my mum...lived in the same house and he came down one morning and the nursery was empty – I wasn’t in the nursery, and he went and asked his mum where I was and she told him that the angels had come and taken me away. That’s as much as he knew about me.”²⁷⁸

2.134 His cousin provided his mother’s contact details. When they met “[t]here was a gap...There was no bond.”²⁷⁹ “Johnno” and his mother continued to speak on a monthly basis and wrote to one another frequently, but “Johnno” never saw her again, as the cost of travel from Australia to the UK was too high.²⁸⁰

2.135 During this trip, “Johnno” visited Nazareth House, Aberdeen, and received just one piece of paper, which was a baptismal paper. There were no other records.²⁸¹

2.136 After retiring in 1985, “Johnno” joined the Returned Service League (RSL) where his role was to present cases on behalf of veterans seeking compensation from the army. This is where “Johnno” found his niche; he took more than two thousand cases to the Veteran’s Review Board and was successful in many of them.²⁸²

2.137 In 1991, “Johnno’s” psychiatrist diagnosed him as suffering from PTSD stemming from his years in institutional care.²⁸³ Since retiring, “a lot more of this intrusiveness of my childhood began to fill the vacuum. I was losing my ability to control the anxiety brought on by that, and with the continual refusal of the church and the various

275 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.150-151.

276 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.151.

277 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.155-56.

278 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.157.

279 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.158.

280 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.159.

281 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.9.

282 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.152.

283 Transcript, day 180: “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.168.

agencies about what happened to us, it just strengthened my resolve to get to the bottom of this...There were powers in place, there were people in place that could have stopped it, but they opted not to. We were not people, we were a commodity that was made readily available to fill a need in Australia".²⁸⁴

2.138 "Johno" attended three court hearings in relation to Brother Murphy. He told SCAI that ultimately the case against Brother Murphy was dismissed, with Brother Murphy being considered incapable of standing trial.²⁸⁵

2.139 In 2002, "Johno" received funding from the CMT and used this to travel to the UK to meet his brother.²⁸⁶ By this time his brother had had a stroke and was "in a very debilitated stage", so it was not possible to understand him.²⁸⁷ While "Johno" was able to meet his brother, his chance to communicate fully with him had been lost. The CMT and the UK Government's Family Restoration Fund (FRF) enabled "Johno" to see his brother a few times after that. They have kept in contact, and "Johno" has a good relationship with his nephew and niece.²⁸⁸

Francis Maloney Morrison (Frank)

Life in the UK

2.140 Francis Maloney Morrison, known as Frank, was born in Aberdeen in August 1942.²⁸⁹ His father, who was not married to his mother, died before he was born, and his mother could not afford to keep him and she put him into the care of Nazareth House in Aberdeen.²⁹⁰ Nazareth House's records note that Frank was admitted in June 1943 after Reverend J. McLaughlin was "asked to take the baby, who was then in the Thorngrove Home for Babies."²⁹¹

2.141 Frank's "earliest memory of Nazareth House was going to school" and because he had a bad stutter, he had to go to a special school.²⁹² He "never went to a doctor or dentist. I didn't even have a toothbrush to clean my teeth."²⁹³ As a result of this, he had all his teeth removed when he was 25. Frank "was never taken on any trips or had any holidays".²⁹⁴ Neither birthdays nor Christmas were celebrated.

2.142 There were "young blokes who were employed as lay staff" who looked after the children at night and supervised the children during the day.²⁹⁵ The boys at Aberdeen "slept in a big dormitory" of about 80 beds.²⁹⁶ Showers were taken in a communal bathroom, and were supervised

284 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.169.

285 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.154.

286 Letter from Ian Thwaites to John Kerry (Child Migrants Trust), at BEW-000000027, p.3.

287 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.161.

288 [Transcript, day 180](#): "Johno", at TRN-5-000000010, p.162.

289 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.31.

290 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.31.

291 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3155.

292 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.32.

293 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.33.

294 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.32-33.

295 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.32.

296 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.32.

“They asked who wanted to go to Australia. Everyone put their hands up. We were told you would go to school on a horse and the pavements were lined with silver and gold.”

by the lay staff who “would stand watch and study us. It was shocking.”²⁹⁷

2.143 Frank “had friends at the home. We stuck together and were great mates. We were all abused at Nazareth House.”²⁹⁸ Frank “dreaded going to sleep. The boys who were looking after us would come into the dormitory with little torches. The same ones would come to my bed every night. They would interfere sexually with me. I also had to do things to them that were inappropriate. This happened from when I was about 6 or 7 until I was 10. It happened to all the other boys as well. We would talk about it in the morning. We knew it was wrong, but really didn’t know anything different.”²⁹⁹

“The boys who were looking after us...would come to my bed every night. They would interfere sexually with me.”

2.144 Frank “had no visits from any official people such as the church or social work”, but he did twice receive a visit from his mother, first when he was about eight or nine years old. There was a young girl with his mother. He was told that this was his sister.

This was when he first knew that he had a sister. The second time his mother visited she took him out for the day. That was the last time that he saw her.³⁰⁰

Migration

2.145 The first that Frank heard of the migration scheme was when “the sisters came into the big auditorium at Nazareth House. They asked who wanted to go to Australia. Everyone put their hands up. We were told you would go to school on a horse and the pavements were lined with silver and gold. They told us it was a big country and the weather was beautiful.”³⁰¹ Eight boys from Nazareth House, including Frank, were selected for migration.³⁰² Frank’s LEM3 form was signed by William Nicol on behalf of M. Canning for the Australian Catholic Immigration Committee, and also by his mother, in late December 1951. A note on the reverse of the form adds that Frank was “[a] bright youngster. Appears to understand fully the idea of leaving Scotland for overseas.”³⁰³ To state that a nine year old child could fully understand the consequences of being migrated, particularly when he was not being given accurate information about the place he was being sent, beggars belief.

297 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.32.

298 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.32.

299 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.34.

300 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.33.

301 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.34.

302 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.34.

303 LEM3 form for Frank, at NAA.001.001.0449.

2.146 Prior to migration, Frank “was given a medical and various inoculation jabs”. He left for Australia in May 1952 on the SS Ormonde, with about 80 boys altogether.³⁰⁴ On the ship, Frank was given new shirts, trousers, shoes and a tie.³⁰⁵ Even on the ship, though, Frank and his peers faced continued abuse: “The lay staff who looked after us at Nazareth House also went on the ship with us. The abuse I had suffered continued in the same way on the ship. I never told anyone about this. If we had told the Christian Brothers on the ship we would have been called liars and been given a slap on the face.”³⁰⁶

“The abuse I had suffered continued in the same way on the ship.”

2.147 In early June 1952, the Ormonde arrived at Fremantle. From Fremantle, 12 boys, including Frank, went on to Tasmania. Frank was nine years old.

Life in Australia

St John Bosco Boys’ Town, Hobart (1952-1955)

2.148 In Tasmania, Frank and 11 other boys, including his friends from Nazareth House, were taken to St John Bosco Boys’ School at Hobart, which was run by the Salesians of Don Bosco.³⁰⁷ There were about 300 children in the home, looked after by “eight Salesian

priests...and four lay brothers who assisted. In the main we were treated reasonably well by the brothers. Father Cole was the rector and in overall charge of the home.”³⁰⁸ Although there was a school at St John Bosco’s, “I never learned much at school. My grades suffered a lot”.³⁰⁹

“There were about 300 kids in the home...There were eight Salesian priests in charge and four lay brothers who assisted.”

2.149 Frank’s friends were still with him, and “the six of us from Scotland and three who were already in the home were to stick together through thick and thin.”³¹⁰ Frank was in a dormitory “still with my friends”, but as at Aberdeen he “was still wetting the bed. Father Cole was very intolerant of bed-wetters.”³¹¹ Frank found his reaction very humiliating. He was punished for wetting the bed. Misbehaviour resulted in being strapped on the backside with “a hacksaw blade inside the belt so that it was firmer.”³¹²

2.150 Three years after arriving at St John Bosco’s, Frank and some other boys stole eggs from the coop.³¹³ Eight boys including Frank’s friends from Nazareth House, were sent to St Mary’s Farm School at Tardun, Western Australia.

304 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.34-36.

305 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.35.

306 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.35.

307 The Salesians of Don Bosco is a Roman Catholic Religious Congregation with 89 autonomous provinces. The Australian and British provinces were, and have always been, unconnected. From the available evidence it seems that the Salesians in Scotland and England did not engage in child migration.

308 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.36.

309 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.36.

310 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.36.

311 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.36-37.

312 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.37.

313 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.37.

“My life was condemned to the daily, physical and sexual assaults of the evil Christian Brothers.”

Tardun (1955-1957)

2.151 Frank arrived at Tardun shortly before his 13th birthday in August 1955. In contrast to Tasmania, which was “all green”, “[i]t is hard to imagine a more desolate place than St Mary’s. It was in the middle of nowhere.”³¹⁴ “You were never fed properly”, but Frank had the consolation of sharing a dormitory with his friends.³¹⁵ Tardun was staffed by “24 Christian Brothers” who “had total control over you.”³¹⁶ When he arrived at Tardun, although he did think about the abuse he had suffered at Nazareth House, he believed that that was in the past because “everything had been okay at Tom [sic] Bosco’s.”³¹⁷ However, at Tardun, his “life was condemned to the daily, physical and sexual assaults of the evil Christian Brothers.”³¹⁸

“It is hard to imagine a more desolate place than St Mary’s.”

2.152 Tardun had communal showers, and while the boys showered Brothers would gather and watch the naked boys: “It was degrading. They would comment on the size of your penis.”³¹⁹ In addition to this emotional abuse with its sexual overtones, Frank was physically and sexually abused at Tardun.



Aerial photograph of St Mary's, Tardun, date unknown. Photograph courtesy of Barry Coldrey.

2.153 Due in no small part to the poor schooling at St John Bosco's, “by the time I arrived at Tardun, I could barely read. Brother Jordan was a teacher at the school although I doubt that he was qualified. On the pretext of helping me with my reading, he would take me to the front of the class and tell me to stand next to him at his desk. Brother Jordan had built plywood around his desk so that no one could see under it. He would shamelessly molest me at his desk. He would play with himself while fondling my genitals.”³²⁰

2.154 This treatment meant that other boys thought Frank was Brother Jordan's pet. To dispel this notion, Brother Jordan would punish Frank by giving him the belt. “He would raise the belt above his head and bring it down on my body without mercy” and there was “never any effort made with me in the class. They gave up on me.”³²¹

314 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.36 and 38.

315 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.38.

316 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.38.

317 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.37.

318 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.38.

319 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.38.

320 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.38-39.

321 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.39.

2.155 Frank was also abused by Brother Jordan outside of the classroom, and this abuse began soon after he arrived, on his birthday.³²² Brother Jordan, who “was about 30 or 40 years old” and “very strong and very violent...invited me to his room. He gave me a bag of sweets. He started to cuddle me. This was the beginning of the abuse. He then made me have oral sex with him...This would happen every couple of nights. He also raped me a number of times...Brother Jordan took what he wanted from me whenever he wanted to.”³²³

“Brother Jordan took what he wanted from me whenever he wanted to.”

2.156 Frank “didn’t fight him. There was nothing you could do. I endured the pain and the humiliation and felt that everyone knew.”³²⁴ As well as the sexual and physical abuse, “Brother Jordan messed with my mind too. I think he wanted to control every part of me”.³²⁵ Frank was not even permitted to have a shower before returning to his bed. When Frank was 15 or 16, he was, as usual, called to Brother Jordan’s room. Frank “couldn’t take it anymore. I told him that I was going to report him to the principal. He grabbed me by the throat and threatened to kill me. He said to me that there were three boys buried in the cemetery and if I didn’t want to be the fourth, I would keep my mouth shut. I held his eye

and he let me go. After this, he didn’t come near me again.”³²⁶

2.157 Frank suffered less frequent sexual abuse from Brother Synon, who “was also violent. It was terrifying when he lost his temper. When I was around 13 or 14... he would take me to his room where he would masturbate me...I think he knew I was brother Jordan’s pet. I would just try to imagine that I wasn’t there.”³²⁷

2.158 Frank was also abused by other Christian Brothers when they visited Tardun, where “they renewed their spiritual vows on retreat” from their institutions near Perth.³²⁸ During their visits, the boys would have to give up their beds for them and sleep on the floor.³²⁹ Frank was sexually abused by Brother Angus, Brother Doyle, Brother Duckworth and Brother Papworth, every year from the age of 13.³³⁰ He particularly remembered that Brother Angus would “get off the bus from Perth and peer around, looking for me. When he saw me, he’d laugh and make a hand gesture at me. I knew what was to come that night. Refusal was out of the question, it would only lead to a vicious beating and there was nobody you could tell what these holy men were up to.”³³¹

“Refusal was out of the question, it would only lead to a vicious beating”.

322 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.40.

323 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.40-41.

324 National Redress Scheme, Statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at WIT.003.001.9749, p.3.

325 National Redress Scheme, Statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at WIT.003.001.9749, p.3.

326 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.41.

327 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.41.

328 National Redress Scheme, Statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at WIT.003.001.9749, p.4.

329 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.41.

330 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.41.

331 National Redress Scheme, Statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at WIT.003.001.9749, p.4.

“We would be shown images of wicked sinners burning in hell. All the time these paedophiles were picking us off one by one.”

2.159 Part of the curriculum at Tardun included Catholic teaching, during which Brothers “would warn you about sinning and the consequences of doing so. We would be shown images of wicked sinners burning in hell. All the time these paedophiles were picking us off one by one.”³³²

Life after care

2.160 Frank left Tardun when he was 17.³³³ He was sent to work at a bakery in Geraldton. He did not like the work and only lasted two weeks before he was dismissed.³³⁴ By this time, Frank had “started playing with a local pipe band” and when he went to practice after losing his job, “the guy in charge could see I was upset. I told him it was because I had to go back to Tardun.”³³⁵ He told Frank not to worry, and thereafter arranged for Frank to work at another bakery. Initially Frank was given a five-year apprenticeship there, but the standard of Frank’s work meant that Frank “could start as a third year apprentice.”³³⁶

2.161 One day while Frank was at work, Brother Quirke “came to the bakery. He told me to come to the door. All the boys working at the bakery were looking at him. He asked me why I had stopped going to church then slapped me hard across the face. One of my

workmates, who I was friends with, went over to the brother and warned him off. My boss then came and told the brother to leave.”³³⁷

2.162 Despite finding this experience “very embarrassing”, Frank “felt good because my friends had stood by me.”³³⁸ After this, Frank stopped the payments that he had been making to the Catholic Church.³³⁹

2.163 Not all the Brothers were bad. After he moved to Albany, Frank “used to see some of the brothers from Tardun when they were there for a holiday” and meet them for lunch.³⁴⁰

“I had never been shown any affection while I was in care. I didn’t know what it was.”

2.164 Frank worked at the bakery for 45 years. He met his wife in 1964 when he took her to the cinema: “She held my hand but I didn’t like it. I didn’t know what to do. I had to ask my workmates at the bakery. I had never been shown any affection while I was in care. I didn’t know what it was. I married her six months later.”³⁴¹ He and his wife had three children together. Frank’s mother-in-law “was like the mum that I never had.”³⁴²

332 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.39-40.

333 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.42.

334 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.42.

335 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.42.

336 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.42.

337 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.42.

338 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.42.

339 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.43.

340 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.43.

341 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.43.

342 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.43.

2.165 In 1978, Frank contacted the CMT to inquire about his family in Scotland. This led to some correspondence with his mother, though “[s]he never explained anything about my time in care. It was a bland response”, and eventually his mother stopped writing to him.³⁴³ In the course of that correspondence he sent a photograph of himself. This led to his sister in Scotland finding out about him, having made a determined effort to discover Frank’s telephone number and call him. Although Frank had known that he had a sister, “I was a nobody until the day in 1986 when I received a call from my sister.”³⁴⁴ Frank’s sister told him that he also had a brother who had been brought up by his grandparents. He “didn’t believe her at first. She gave me his phone number to call him. I saved up for three years so that I could visit my extended family in Scotland.”³⁴⁵

“I was a nobody until the day...I received a call from my sister.”

2.166 In 1989, Frank and his wife visited Scotland to meet his family. While they were there, they visited Nazareth House, Aberdeen. He enjoyed his visit there.³⁴⁶ On the same trip, “we were out walking and

passed a cemetery. My sister told me that my mother was there. She said that it was just a plot with no headstone and asked if I wanted to see it. I said no. I didn’t know my mother. Why would I want to see her grave? It could have been anyone.”³⁴⁷

2.167 Frank returned to Scotland in 1992, and he and his brother went away “for a few days to try and reconnect. I asked him why he had been brought up by my grandparents. He wouldn’t talk about it.”³⁴⁸ As with so many child migrants, the forced severance of family ties in childhood caused long-term difficulties.

2.168 In 2012, Frank returned to Tasmania for a school reunion funded by the government. He also went back to Tardun for an old boys’ reunion: “There was a statue and my name was still there where I had carved into the wood.”³⁴⁹ He stayed for a couple of hours but he “couldn’t get away quick enough. There were too many bad memories.”³⁵⁰

2.169 In 2016, Frank’s wife died. As is not uncommon amongst those who were in care as children, he never told his wife about the abuse he had suffered. She “used to say to me that I had no love in me. I used to think: how could I have love after what has happened to me?”³⁵¹

343 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.45.

344 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.46.

345 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.46.

346 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.46.

347 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.46.

348 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.47.

349 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.48.

350 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.48.

351 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.48.

“I never knew if anyone would believe me when I told them what had happened.”

2.170 After Frank's wife passed away, “[w]e were having dinner at my house. There was something on the television about child abuse. My daughter asked me if I had something to tell them. I became very upset and started to cry. After this, I told them the whole story. They wished I had told them before as they would have helped me. It was all very difficult for me. The thing was I never knew if anyone would believe me when I told them what had happened.”³⁵²

2.171 Frank had “tried to commit suicide. My son found me in time.”³⁵³ Frank came to realise that he had a lot to live for with the family that he had. Frank was referred to a psychologist, whom he “told everything. The first five sessions were very hard and I felt bad after the sessions. It has helped me. I’m a lot better now.”³⁵⁴

“I used to think: how could I have love after what has happened to me?”

Christopher David Buchan Booth **Life in the UK**

2.172 Christopher David Buchan Booth was born in Aberdeen in February 1941. He was looked after by an aunt until his grandmother died and his aunt could then no longer afford to keep him. She sent him back to his mother. That was the first time he had ever seen his mother.³⁵⁵ His mother was living with her father “and, because I was a Catholic, my grandfather would not let me in the house, so I was sent to another auntie. And a week later I was in Nazareth House.”³⁵⁶ Christopher entered Nazareth House, Aberdeen, in September 1951, when he was 10 years old.³⁵⁷ His admission records state that his mother “has a younger child who is looked after at the local day nursery.”³⁵⁸

2.173 Christopher provided some insight into the regime at Nazareth House. The children slept in dormitories. There was a big recreation room and a church.³⁵⁹ After being woken up, the Sisters took the children to church, and thereafter into a dining room for breakfast. After breakfast, if it was a weekday, the children attended a local primary school. Christopher was sent there despite having already started secondary school while he was living with his aunt. The children “stayed at school all day and we never got any lunch.”³⁶⁰

352 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.43-44.

353 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.44-45.

354 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.45.

355 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0169-0170.

356 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0169-0170. The Nazareth House children’s register notes that his mother was a non-Catholic: Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2585.

357 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2585.

358 Letter from Father Papworth to Christopher Booth, 30 April 1964, at WIT.003.001.0771.

359 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0171.

360 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 13, at WIT.001.001.3645.

2.174 Although Nazareth House catered for both boys and girls, they were not allowed to mix.³⁶¹ There were two Sisters in charge of the boys, one of whom was Sister Oswald.³⁶² She “was very cruel. She used to carry a big long cane round with her. If you got in her way, you were likely to feel her wrath.”³⁶³ Christopher did not see anybody other than Sisters working at Nazareth House.³⁶⁴

2.175 At Nazareth House “there was no affection shown to any of the boys”, and physically abusive punishment was common.³⁶⁵ For instance, although Christopher did not wet the bed himself, he once tried to help a little boy who had done so to wash his sheets. When “Sister Oswald came in and caught me helping the boy...she dragged me - from memory - the back of the neck or my hair and pulled me away...basically saying I was very naughty for breaking the rules and helping the boy to wash his sheets. And then I paid the price.”³⁶⁶ The price was a thrashing from a cane, a common punishment. The thrashings lasted “[u]ntil you cried. It depended on how long it took you to cry.”³⁶⁷

2.176 Christopher was “thrashed” for events that ought to have caused celebration. Nobody praised him during his time at Nazareth House.

2.177 Not eating the food led to physical punishment, both by thrashing and by force feeding.³⁶⁸ Christopher thought that “they looked forward to some of the boys or a boy breaking a rule,” and that “they were very happy to see that they could break you.”³⁶⁹

At Nazareth House “there was no affection shown to any of the boys”.

2.178 Christopher did see his mother once while he was in Nazareth House, well before being sent to Australia.³⁷⁰ He was brought into the room where his mother was, but a Sister remained present throughout their meeting “to make sure you didn’t tell her anything that was going on.”³⁷¹ Christopher did not remember seeing his mother being “a happy occasion...because basically I didn’t know who she was.”³⁷² He “never saw a social worker or anybody” else during his time there.³⁷³

Migration

2.179 In 1952, Sister Oswald told Christopher he was to be migrated to Australia. She said, “[y]our family doesn’t want you, your country doesn’t want you, you’re just garbage.’ They were the words that she used. I’ll never forget them.”³⁷⁴ Christopher was

361 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0172.

362 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0174.

363 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0175.

364 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0175.

365 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0178.

366 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0178.

367 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0179-0180.

368 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0191-0192.

369 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0192 and 0188.

370 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0177.

371 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0177.

372 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0194.

373 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0177.

374 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0194-0195.

“...from the day I was put into Nazareth House, that was the day they decided they were going to send me to Australia.”

never asked if he wanted to go to Australia, he “was just told that I was going.”³⁷⁵ Although his aunt—who heard about his planned migration through her children, who were at school with some of the Nazareth House boys—“made a big fuss because she didn’t want me to be sent to Australia”, her concerns were not heeded.³⁷⁶ Instead, “Sister Oswald actually gave me a thrashing because my auntie had gone to the orphanage, complaining about me being sent to Australia...and she had blamed me for telling my auntie” despite the fact that he had no means of communicating with her himself.³⁷⁷ Christopher spent only six months at Nazareth House, and believed that “basically from the day I was put into Nazareth House, that was the day they decided they were going to send me to Australia.”³⁷⁸

2.180 Christopher’s medical examination form was signed in early 1952.³⁷⁹ He “had no idea of what the arrangements were”, but he “didn’t give it any thought because possibly, at that time, I didn’t even know where Australia was. I probably thought any place was going to be better [than] Nazareth House.”³⁸⁰ Before departing, those leaving were given clothes and a case for their belongings.³⁸¹ Christopher kept that case,

and brought it with him on the day when he gave evidence to SCAI. Other boys left Aberdeen with him.³⁸²

2.181 After leaving Aberdeen, another two boys were picked up in Edinburgh, and other boys joined on the way to Tilbury Docks.³⁸³ The group left England on the SS Ormonde in late April 1952.

2.182 Christopher enjoyed the journey. The ship docked at Fremantle in early June 1952.³⁸⁴ There, “some of the boys were disembarked and sent to Bindoon”, but Christopher and some 28 other boys continued on their journey to Tasmania and were then taken to St John Bosco Boys’ Town in Glenorchy.³⁸⁵ Christopher was 11 years old.

Life at St John Bosco Boys’ Town, Hobart (1952-1956)

2.183 St John Bosco Boys’ Town was run by the Salesians of Don Bosco. It was a new establishment with “a fairly substantial brick building...that had been made specially for the Australian boys that were already there” and for incoming British migrants.³⁸⁶ In addition to Christopher’s group of about 29 boys who arrived in June 1952, another

375 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 32, at WIT.001.001.3649.

376 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0195.

377 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0196.

378 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0196.

379 Medical examination form for Chrisotpher Booth, at NAZ.001.003.1661.

380 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0196; [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 32, at WIT.001.001.3649.

381 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0201.

382 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0203.

383 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0209.

384 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0209.

385 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0210.

386 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0211.

group of British boys arrived in September.³⁸⁷ About five priests were in charge. There were some Brothers “studying for the priesthood” and lay Brothers, including the cook, Brother Newport.³⁸⁸ When Christopher first arrived, Father Brennan was in charge, but he left after about six months and was replaced by Father Cole.³⁸⁹



St John Bosco Boys' Town, 1948. Photograph from Dominic College collection. Source: [Find & Connect](#).

2.184 At St John Bosco, “the boys were split into three dormitories...by age group”, and the ages ranged from about five to 15.³⁹⁰ On a normal day, “we got up in the morning, got dressed, we then went down to the chapel, said our prayers...had breakfast.”³⁹¹ The food at St John Bosco “was generally okay and it was all fresh food that we got.”³⁹² The boys had chores to do which they completed on a rotation system, including “the polishing of the floors and tidying up the yard”.³⁹³ The boys had the option of helping to milk the cows.

387 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0211.

388 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0212.

389 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0214.

390 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0213.

391 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0214-0215.

392 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 53, at WIT.001.001.3655.

393 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0221.

394 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0215.

395 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0217.

396 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0233-0234.

397 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0222.

398 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0222.

399 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0217.

2.185 Although after breakfast the boys went into classrooms “there was no formal education, we weren’t in the Tasmanian education system. So basically they only taught us to read, write, and do our maths.”³⁹⁴ The boys “had loads of leisure time”, and were taught Australian rules football, and a love of cricket. They were taught that “Australia comes first...we were very anti-England.”³⁹⁵ Besides sports, they received piano lessons, and “a lady used to come and teach us Highland dancing...She was a lovely lady”.³⁹⁶ The boys received a weekly credit which was recorded in a book, so that “when the tuck shop was opened you could get a bar of chocolate or a sweet, and that was taken off the balance that you had in the book.”³⁹⁷ Boys “probably got some extra chocolates or something like that” on their birthdays, but “there was no Christmas.”³⁹⁸

“...there was no formal education, we weren’t in the Tasmanian education system.”

2.186 During the school holidays, boys from St John Bosco “had someone called a big brother” or “big sister” who “would take you to their home” for the holidays.³⁹⁹

“...at Nazareth House, it was brutality. In Boys’ Town...if you obeyed the rules, no problem.”

2.187 On one holiday, Christopher was taken by a family who “had three boys...I was roughly the same age as their middle son. So I was brought there as a friend to him and him to be a friend to me. And that was brilliant, they were really nice people.”⁴⁰⁰

2.188 Christopher said “there were good times when I was at Boys’ Town. I saw Billy Graham the evangelist preacher, and Patrick O’Hagen, an Irish tenor. He came and put on a concert for us.”⁴⁰¹ They had film nights and hikes fairly often.

2.189 These holidays and activities were a welcome break from the “harsh but not cruel” discipline at St John Bosco.⁴⁰² Boys would be given “six of the best” if they broke a rule, of which there were many.⁴⁰³ Each Brother, however, did have “their choice of weapon.”⁴⁰⁴ Father Cole “used to have a cane...Father Sullivan...liked to have a short length of hose. There was one of the brothers, he liked to have a leather strap which was cut...into strips” in the lower half.⁴⁰⁵ If a Brother caught boys fighting amongst themselves, “they would be taken

down to the gym by the priests or brothers where they would be made to put on boxing gloves and settle it that way.”⁴⁰⁶

“...all [Brothers] had their choice of weapon.”

2.190 On one occasion, “someone was speaking in the dormitory”, which was not allowed.⁴⁰⁷ Christopher “got a huge clap around the ear” even though it was not he who had been speaking.⁴⁰⁸ A clap around the ear was “their favourite thing, if you were in the dormitory...I’ve actually got very bad hearing because of the effects of that.”⁴⁰⁹ The next day, Christopher “was made to clean in-between the tiles in the washroom with a toothbrush and a hard bar of soap. The brother came and if he didn’t think I had done a good enough job he would kick me up the backside.”⁴¹⁰ Despite this, it was not as bad as Nazareth House: “when you look back, at Nazareth House, it was brutality. In Boys’ Town...if you obeyed the rules, no problem.”⁴¹¹

400 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0219.

401 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 57, at WIT.001.001.3656.

402 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0228.

403 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0228.

404 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0223.

405 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0223.

406 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 82, at WIT.001.001.3661.

407 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0228-0229.

408 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0228.

409 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0228.

410 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 92, at WIT.001.001.3664.

411 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0229-30.

2.191 Christopher began to collect stamps while he was at St John Bosco's. When he was 14 years old, "[o]ne of the priests, Father Preitto, told me that I was selfish and never shared or gave anything away and he made me give the stamp collection away".⁴¹² He was told that "my mother didn't want me, which was true at any rate, that the country doesn't want you. That hurt because we were sent away from our country. And they told us we were just garbage, so we got that quite often to a stage where you believed it."⁴¹³ That language echoed what Christopher had already been told at Nazareth House.

"And they told us we were just garbage, so we got that quite often to a stage where you believed it."

2.192 Christopher was physically abused. He described how "sometimes you'd just look at one of the priests or brothers the wrong way, and they gave you a slap with an implement they had."⁴¹⁴

2.193 On a cold day in about 1952, Father Brennan, who was in charge at the time, had told a boy several times to take his coat off, but the boy did not remove his coat. Christopher explained that, during lunch, there was an

"awful crash": Father Brennan "had taken his fist to the boy and rammed it in his face and said, 'I will not tell you a third time'."⁴¹⁵

2.194 Christopher was sexually abused by Father Cole, who was then the priest in charge.⁴¹⁶ This started when he was "not quite 12" years old, after he was sent back to St John Bosco early from his first holiday family.⁴¹⁷ Christopher used to go to Father Cole's office to help sort out the bills, alphabetically.⁴¹⁸ It was while Christopher was assisting with this task that Father Cole "started interfering with me."⁴¹⁹ Christopher explained that Father Cole "ultimately penetrated me."⁴²⁰ Christopher was abused by Father Cole in his office "on average once a month for three years...He didn't always penetrate me but there was always some sort of physical or sexual abuse...It did hurt a hell of a lot and I just had to put up with it."⁴²¹

"...there was always some sort of physical or sexual abuse".

2.195 This abuse by Father Cole continued until around 1955 or 1956, when another priest came to Boys' Town and took over from Father Cole, who went to one of the Order's other houses.⁴²² The priest who replaced

412 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0226.

413 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0235-0236.

414 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0235-0236.

415 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0236-0237.

416 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0230.

417 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0230.

418 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0231.

419 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 86, at WIT.001.001.3662.

420 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 86, at WIT.001.001.3662.

421 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 86, at WIT.001.001.3662-3663.

422 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 86, at WIT.001.001.3662-3663; [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0232.

“If there was something in the letter that the priest didn’t like, it was torn up”.

Father Cole also abused Christopher. He did “the same sort of thing” to Christopher.⁴²³ Christopher did not “know whether [the two priests] spoke about it...but that happened.”⁴²⁴ He said the period during which he was abused by the second priest was “a lot shorter”; that abuse began at the beginning of 1956 and Christopher left Boys’ Town at the end of November 1956.⁴²⁵

2.196 Christopher was sexually abused by another priest on one occasion while he was in the infirmary, recovering after having his tonsils out. This abuser was “one of the priests” who looked after Christopher in the infirmary. Christopher explained that this priest “played around with me...He didn’t have sex with us, just...playing with my penis, et cetera, and also having a go at his own.”⁴²⁶

2.197 Christopher explained that there was a particular toilet block where “you just made sure you were never in that block on your own.”⁴²⁷

2.198 There was nobody to report to: “you couldn’t complain to anybody. If you did complain to one of the other priests or brothers, again, you know, you were in trouble.”⁴²⁸

2.199 Christopher did not tell the family he stayed with during holidays about the abuse “because I was frightened that if I told them I would be stopped from going there.”⁴²⁹

2.200 The boys had to write home once a month.⁴³⁰ They were not allowed to seal the letters and the letters had to be handed to one of the priests to be checked.⁴³¹ Christopher explained that if there was something in the letter that the priest did not like, “it was torn up and you had to write another one.”⁴³² Christopher’s mother answered his letters “but basically, before I even opened the letter, I could tell you exactly what she said. It was basically just weather, what the weather was like.”⁴³³

2.201 At the end of November 1956, aged 16, Christopher left St John Bosco Boys’ Town.

Life after care

2.202 Having left Boys’ Town, Christopher was initially offered a job with the Social Services Department, which would have provided him with accommodation in another part of Boys’ Town, but he failed the eyesight part of the required medical examination and

423 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0232.

424 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0232.

425 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0232.

426 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0233.

427 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0235.

428 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0225.

429 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 102, at WIT.001.001.3667.

430 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0224.

431 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0224.

432 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 78, at WIT.001.001.3661.

433 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0224.

the job offer was withdrawn.⁴³⁴ Instead, he was sent to stay at a boarding house in Hobart.⁴³⁵ Christopher shared a room with three other boys, one of whom got him a job in a tannery.⁴³⁶ Christopher's time at the boarding house "was basically four and a half years of hell" because his landlady "was not a nice lady at all."⁴³⁷ After being paid and paying for his board he was left with very little money. He "couldn't buy clothes, go to the football, cinema...Wherever I went, I had to walk...I didn't get any lunch."⁴³⁸ Whenever his landlady and her partner went out for the day Christopher was locked out until she returned.⁴³⁹

2.203 Christopher and the others accommodated with him complained to the Tasmanian Government's Social Services Department, who sent someone to inspect the placement. The inspector told the landlady when he was coming, and he did not speak to the boys.⁴⁴⁰ Christopher was told that, because he was a ward of the Australian government and Tasmanian government, he had to stay there until he was 21.⁴⁴¹ As soon as he turned 21, he found alternative accommodation.⁴⁴²

2.204 After leaving care, while in employment, Christopher "also went to night school to get extra qualifications."⁴⁴³ He passed all the courses he signed up for with honours and qualified as an accountant. He married his first wife in 1968 when he was 27 years old, and had two children with her.

"After leaving care...when I was working I also went to night school to get extra qualifications."

2.205 In 1979, the company he was working for helped to pay for him to go to Scotland to visit his mother. He stayed with his sister during the visit. Christopher tried to speak to his mother about his migration "but it was like talking to [a] brick wall...There was no sorry or any reason whatsoever...she said no she hadn't signed any papers to send me... that could be an untruth."⁴⁴⁴ Christopher asked who his father was and his mother would not tell him.

2.206 Although Christopher did not know who his father was, he thought that "he must have given me a strong character" because whenever he himself faced adversity he was resilient.⁴⁴⁵

434 [Transcript, day 148](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0227.

435 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0232 and 0237.

436 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0227.

437 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0237.

438 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0237; [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 97, at WIT.001.001.3665.

439 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 98, at WIT.001.001.3666.

440 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0238-0239.

441 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0239.

442 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0245.

443 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 108, at WIT.001.001.3668.

444 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0197.

445 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0246.

“I have great difficulty expressing my emotions... because I didn’t have any family to teach me”.

2.207 Christopher had “never had a family life” and found “great difficulty in expressing my emotions and communicating with the opposite sex because I didn’t have any family to teach me or for me to learn what was socially acceptable.”⁴⁴⁶

2.208 In around 1995, Christopher saw a programme on the television about the “Lost Children of the Empire” and that led to him contacting the Child Migrants Trust.⁴⁴⁷

2.209 After his marriage broke down, Christopher returned to Scotland. He thought “I’ve got family in Aberdeen, so that’s why I come back. I thought I could make a relationship – but I was the skeleton in the cupboard and they weren’t interested in me whatsoever.”⁴⁴⁸ Nevertheless, he remained in Scotland. He remarried in 1997.

“Harry”

Life in the UK

2.210 “Harry” was born in England in May 1945.⁴⁴⁹ He remembered nothing of his life before care.⁴⁵⁰ When he was three or four months old, he was placed with a family friend to be looked after.⁴⁵¹ After living there for around 18 months, he entered Nazareth House, Carlisle, in May 1947.⁴⁵² “Harry” did not know why his mother put him into care; “I think she was frightened.”⁴⁵³ The observation book for Nazareth House, Carlisle, notes that his mother was “a land girl,” and that “Harry” was living “in a non-Catholic home.”⁴⁵⁴ In August 1950, “Harry” was transferred to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, at the recommendation of the Mother Superior at Nazareth House, Carlisle.⁴⁵⁵ He remembered that, at Aberdeen, there was a Sister who “used to belt the hell out of you” with a belt she wore around her waist; it “was about 4 inches wide...and she used to hang a cross off with the rosary bead...She used to take that and undo it and belt you with it.”⁴⁵⁶ “Harry” had no recollection of the other Sisters, so he assumed that “they must have been kind to me.”⁴⁵⁷

446 [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 115, at WIT.001.001.3670.

447 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0246.

448 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0250.

449 HC/CP/12538, Submission to the Select Committee on Health, Evidence of CM282, at HOC.001.001.0395.

450 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0188.

451 Towards Healing, statement of “Harry”, at WIT.003.001.5807.

452 Nazareth House, Carlisle, Boys register, at NAZ.001.006.2687.

453 [Written statement of “Harry”](#), paragraph 2, at WIT.001.002.6578.

454 Nazareth House, Carlisle, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.2687.

455 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0189.

456 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0189-0190.

457 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0190.

Migration

2.211 "Harry" had no memory of being asked if he wanted to go to Australia.⁴⁵⁸ All he remembered was being told by the Sisters that he "was going to Australia to have a new life".⁴⁵⁹ In June 1952, "Harry's" LEM3 form was signed by his mother, and by William Nicol on behalf of the Australian Catholic Immigration Committee.⁴⁶⁰ A month later his medical form was signed by Sister Francis Rita O'Hara (the Mother Superior) as guardian, and A.G.B. Young as physician.⁴⁶¹

2.212 In August 1952, he and five or six other boys from Aberdeen boarded the SS Ormonde bound for Fremantle.⁴⁶² Each boy "had a suitcase...a pair of shoes and we were dressed up like little pommy kids."⁴⁶³ Even though "Harry" and others got seasick, for him, being on the ship "was stunning, it was like a holiday."⁴⁶⁴ "Harry" arrived at Fremantle in September 1952.⁴⁶⁵

Life in Australia

Castledare (1952-1955)

2.213 Once they had landed in Australia, "Harry", who was then aged seven, and other younger boys went to Castledare Boys' Home.⁴⁶⁶ The older children "went to

Clontarf, Bindoon and...Tardun."⁴⁶⁷ "Harry" and 15 to 20 other children travelled the short journey to Castledare on the back of a truck.⁴⁶⁸ On arrival "Harry" "cried my eyes out because the brothers took my clothes off me. They put them in a heap and burned them."⁴⁶⁹ That frightened him. He could not remember having shoes after that incident.

"I cried my eyes out because the brothers took my clothes off me... and burned them."

2.214 Harry recalled that Castledare "was about 400 acres".⁴⁷⁰ There were large dormitories where the children slept, a dining room, a picture hall, and a church. There were "roughly 200" boys there from five to 10 years old, but "no older, because if you got to 10 years old you went to Clontarf."⁴⁷¹ The food at Castledare was "pretty good."⁴⁷² There was "a lot of bread and milk because it was a farm...nothing flash, but just enough to keep us going."⁴⁷³ The Aborigine cook, Rosie, was "plenty of fun."⁴⁷⁴ Birthdays were not celebrated, and "the only visitors we had were

458 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0190.

459 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0191.

460 LEM3 form for "Harry", at NAA-000000186, p.4.

461 LEM3 form for "Harry", at NAA-000000186, p.2.

462 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0191.

463 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0191.

464 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0191.

465 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0192; SS Ormonde, Incoming passenger lists, at NAA.001.001.0216.

466 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0192.

467 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0192.

468 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0192.

469 Written statement of "Harry", paragraph 9, at WIT.001.002.6578.

470 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0193.

471 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0194.

472 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0194.

473 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0194.

474 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0193.

“...we didn’t know what a mum and dad was. We knew the brothers, the big black brothers in habits, that’s all we knew.”

the brothers.⁴⁷⁵ Although “[s]omeone from the big headquarters used to come over every now and then to inspect the place... they didn’t talk to any of the boys.”⁴⁷⁶ The Brothers told them that they were orphans and that they were going to look after them.⁴⁷⁷ There was no family contact; “we didn’t know what a mum and dad was. We knew the brothers, the big black brothers in habits, that’s all we knew.”⁴⁷⁸ The Brothers “were all tough.”⁴⁷⁹



Castledare Boys’ Home, aerial photograph, 4 September 1967. Photograph from Aerial Surveys Australia collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.215 While at Castledare, the boys were given chores: “We had to sweep your dormitory, make your beds, sweep the courtyards, and make sure there were no leaves or dirt around the place. You all had little chores to do and if you didn’t do them, you didn’t get breakfast until they were finished and then you missed out anyways.”⁴⁸⁰

“...they used to flog the hell out of you”.

2.216 Boys were punished for not doing chores, as well as for other misdemeanours. “Harry” used to “knick off down the farm all the time,” but when the Brothers found out that he had missed a class or “didn’t come for tea, they used to flog the hell out of you, literally pick you up and boot you and throw you against the wall, strap you.”⁴⁸¹ In addition to the strap, the Brothers used “a fist and a boot up the bum”.⁴⁸² Besides physical beatings, “if you got into trouble, [the Brothers would say], ‘You’ll never get to Heaven, you blessed turd.’”⁴⁸³ Brother Murphy, “Harry” remembered, was particularly cruel. On the other hand, Brother Wise “was good to us.”⁴⁸⁴

475 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0194-0195.

476 Written statement of “Harry”, paragraph 26, at WIT.001.002.6578.

477 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0198.

478 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0198.

479 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0193.

480 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0194.

481 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0195-0196.

482 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0196.

483 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0196.

484 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0196.

2.217 In 1955, when he turned 10 years old, "Harry" left Castledare for Clontarf.

Clontarf (1955-c.1961)

2.218 Clontarf Boys' Town was bigger than Castledare, housing "about 250 boys".⁴⁸⁵ Each dormitory accommodated about 35 or 40 children and "Harry" remembers having "a lot of fun in those dormitories. We had pillow fights and we used to get belted for that."⁴⁸⁶ On Sunday nights "we used to have a story called The Ghost" which the Brothers played over the speakers when the boys went to bed; "it was scary."⁴⁸⁷ There were communal shower areas which could accommodate 40 boys at a time. A Brother would be in charge of the taps. After a football match, "if their bloody team lost...you would get a cold shower" for losing.⁴⁸⁸

2.219 Dining tables at Clontarf "had 12 boys on, like the 12 apostles. You had a loaf of bread and you had porridge in the morning."⁴⁸⁹ The boys used to fight over the end crusts of bread, which they called "the stunner."⁴⁹⁰ Although the food "was pretty good, there wasn't enough."⁴⁹¹ To assuage their hunger, boys "would raid the bins" filled with "swill from hotels and motels" that arrived in the 'slop run', "and eat apples and old chook and bits and pieces, anything we could eat, quick. It was good tucker, in the

bins."⁴⁹² At tea-time, "after the cups of tea were finished...we used to pinch the tea leaves and we used to grab handfuls and eat them too because we were still hungry."⁴⁹³ Despite being hungry, "Harry" remembered one occasion during his first week at Clontarf when he could not face eating the food. It contained "pig tits, a big fat row of them with fat on them...so I put it in my pocket."⁴⁹⁴ When Brother O'Shea saw the marks from the stew on his shorts, he "gave me a smack...and put it back on the plate and tried to make me eat it and I wouldn't so he cracked the plate over my head."⁴⁹⁵ That was "Harry's" only memory of Brother O'Shea.

"...we would raid the bins and eat apples and old chook and bits and pieces".

2.220 The boys did not know what a birthday was, let alone celebrate it. Children who wet the bed "were treated badly... All the kids that wet the bed stayed on the veranda", which was open-air. They had to sleep there until they stopped wetting the bed; "[i]f they didn't they would get a hiding."⁴⁹⁶ The Brothers at Clontarf "tried electric shock treatment" on some children who wet the bed.⁴⁹⁷

485 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0199.

486 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0202.

487 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0203.

488 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0203.

489 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0200.

490 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0201.

491 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0201.

492 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0201-0202.

493 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0202.

494 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0200

495 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0200.

496 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0205-0206.

497 Written statement of "Harry", paragraph 38, at WIT.001.002.6578.

“...there were broken legs...one of the boys, he was killed and the other kids, you could see their limbs on the road”.

2.221 As at Castledare, there were no visitors; “we might have seen some blokes walking around, but...we didn’t think much of it.”⁴⁹⁸ Although there were no visitors, “we used to have concerts where the brothers used to dress you up like farm animals, like pigs and chooks and bloody cows on the stage, old MacDonald’s Farm, and people used to come from all over Perth to see us.”⁴⁹⁹

2.222 There were many chores to do and if they were not done, “you were brutally belted.”⁵⁰⁰ “You had to sweep the quadrangles” before school, “and if you didn’t do it before school, you missed out on your breakfast.”⁵⁰¹ Boys made beds and cleaned the showers. Besides chores, the boys “built handball courts...swimming pools,” and undertook other hard labour, including shovelling sand into a truck to transport it a short distance “onto the oval” where they would shovel the sand off again.⁵⁰² The ovals had to be built up to protect them from flooding from the Swan River, so “we had to dig drains through the guts of the oval and...put bricks in them so it would drain.”⁵⁰³ The physical work was particularly relentless on Saturdays.

2.223 When he was 10, “Harry” was due to spend the Christmas holidays with a family near Albany. He and about 50 other children were travelling to their respective destinations on a bus, when the bus crashed. “One side of the bus was concertinaed with all the kids crushed in there, there were broken legs...one of the boys, he was killed and the other kids, you could see their limbs on the road, the legs.”⁵⁰⁴

2.224 Those who were not severely injured “were put in gutters on the road and told, ‘Go and have a play you big sook, there’s nothing wrong with you’. We were all upset.”⁵⁰⁵ “We got injured but not badly, not enough to put you in hospital, just cuts and bruises and split heads...But it was only orphan kids, so who gives a bugger.”⁵⁰⁶ Asked if the boys received any support or counselling, “Harry” responded: “You’ve got to be joking. We were told we were big sooks and got a kick up the arse more or less.”⁵⁰⁷ At the time of giving evidence to the Inquiry, “Harry” could “still see the kids...with the blood everywhere, kids squashed, like a piano accordion.”⁵⁰⁸ Brother Doyle was driving the bus when it crashed. It earned him the

498 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0213.

499 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0217.

500 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0203.

501 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0203.

502 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0204.

503 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0204.

504 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0207-0208.

505 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0207.

506 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0208.

507 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0208.

508 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0208.

nickname "Killer Doyle."⁵⁰⁹ "Harry" and the others never got to their Christmas destinations; they returned to Clontarf. This was not the only road accident; "Harry" remembered that, when travelling in the truck, "[s]ometimes kids would fall off the back as we turned a corner. Some would break their legs."⁵¹⁰

2.225 When "Harry" did eventually make it to a family for Christmas, at one point he "got so angry I tipped the table up, lifted everything up, and the bloke grabbed me and gave me a hiding, took me back to the orphanage, and Brother Doyle flogged the hell out of me. And I never went to another place after that."⁵¹¹ "Harry" felt that his behaviour was "because we were so depressed and psychologically damaged."⁵¹²

2.226 "Harry" was emotionally abused by the Brothers. For example, Brother Angus killed "Harry's" pet dog because it was barking. A horse he was fond of, Bomber, was shot, cut up, and fed to the pigs. On another occasion "they got this draught horse, we were riding it Sunday morning, they took it down the playground, Sunday afternoon and shot it and hung it up underneath the tree and they went and fed you bloody horse meat that afternoon for a barbecue. I didn't eat it because I loved those animals."⁵¹³

2.227 Later in his time at Clontarf, "Harry" got a horse that he named Trigger. When it died he cut its tail off and put it in his bed, for about three weeks. When it was found, the Brothers "flogged me and took the tail off me."⁵¹⁴

2.228 Spending so much time with horses turned "Harry" into a skilled horseman. When he was 14, he and five other boys absconded from Clontarf on horseback and travelled "a couple of hundred miles...We had five days of it, no worries, and the police caught us. We didn't take any money, we only took food out of the farmhouses. We lived in the bush in a barn and that's when the cops got us."⁵¹⁵ The police "grabbed us and gave us a hiding" before returning the boys to Clontarf where "we got flogged from Brother Doyle and one of the other brothers...Belted with fists and boots and throwing you against the wall...They were pretty brutal."⁵¹⁶

2.229 At Clontarf "there were a lot of floggings...because there were only about six [Brothers] and they were frustrated men, so they had to rule it like a military camp."⁵¹⁷ The Brothers carried an "A-class V belt, about 3 foot long...down their habit" with which they would hit the boys. Another kind of strap had "a steel ruler [stitched into] the leather."⁵¹⁸ In addition to causing significant bruising the floggings caused psychological harm: "it would make it feel that you weren't wanted, you were just scum."⁵¹⁹

509 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0208.

510 Written statement of "Harry", paragraph 60, at WIT.001.002.6578.

511 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0209.

512 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0216.

513 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0219.

514 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0220.

515 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0209.

516 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0210.

517 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0211.

518 Written statement of "Harry", paragraph 70, at WIT.001.002.6578.

519 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0212.

2.230 The abuse was compounded by the fact that some punishments took place “on the stage in front of everyone...and [the Brothers] would flog [children] in front of the other kids.”⁵²⁰ This system meant that boys had to wait to receive punishment, a cruel wait that filled “Harry” with terror: “Brother Doyle was over 6 foot...He looked like a giant and we were only bloody kids.”⁵²¹ Brother Faulkner would hit “Harry” on the knuckles with a large set of keys that he carried.⁵²²

2.231 Brother Mowen told “Harry”: “you’ll never get to heaven, you’ll only be a road sweeper the rest of your life.”⁵²³ He put “Harry” at the back of the classroom because he struggled academically. On occasions when “Harry” had his head in his desk Brother Mowen “would sneak up and get the lid and slam it on your head,” before hitting him in the temple with his knuckles.⁵²⁴ On another occasion, Brother Mowen threw a wooden duster at a child hitting him on his head and rendering him unconscious.⁵²⁵ Brother Mowen “grabbed the kid and the kid was just hanging from his arm and his legs were swinging, he huddled him up and took him to the surgery, and that’s the last we saw of him.”⁵²⁶

2.232 Brother Murphy was transferred to Clontarf during “Harry’s” time there. Although Brother Murphy “never sexually done anything to” him, he would “sit the kids around him and they had to comb [his hair] and pick his fingernails.”⁵²⁷

2.233 Harry was sexually abused at Clontarf. To the side of “Harry’s” dormitory, which slept about 20 children, a different Brother had a bedroom. “The lights would go off and [the Brother] would come and sit on the side of your bed and talk to you and make a bit of a funny joke and then he would put his hand down next to your leg and gradually pull it up to your willy and then play around and then...grab your hand and pull your hand, and you had to play with his willy.”⁵²⁸

2.234 Brother Marques sexually abused “Harry” for five years on and off: “I had to rub him up and down so that he would come and then you would get stuff on your hand and he’d say, ‘Don’t worry about it, that’s only a bit of liquid’...There were a lot of other things but I’m not going to say because it’s too horrific.”⁵²⁹ “Harry” was also sexually abused by Brother McLaughlin and Brother Angus.

2.235 “Harry” was aware that Brothers Marques, McLaughlin, and Angus sexually abused other boys.⁵³⁰

520 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0217.

521 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0218.

522 Written statement of “Harry”, paragraph 14, at WIT.001.002.6578.

523 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0211.

524 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0211.

525 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0213.

526 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0213.

527 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0216.

528 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0214.

529 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0214.

530 Transcript, day 171: “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0214-0215.

2.236 While he was at Clontarf, "Harry" had some contact with his mother, although for a long period he did not recognise what that really meant. His mother used to send letters to him.⁵³¹ Brother Mowen read the letters to "Harry", and then dictated letters for "Harry" to write back to her.⁵³² "Harry" copied what Brother Mowen wrote, but he did not know what he was writing.⁵³³ When "Harry" was aged 14, his mother sent him a bridle for Trigger. Until then, "Harry" had thought he was an orphan, because, despite writing to his mother and hearing her letters, he "didn't understand anything [he] was writing."⁵³⁴ His mother used to send him money to use at the tuck shop; "Harry" did not understand its value and it was often taken from him if he had been in trouble.⁵³⁵

2.237 When "Harry" was 16 years old, Brother Flanagan told him his mother was on the phone: "She said, 'Hello, Harry, this is your mother', and I said, 'Fuck off', and put down the phone. I'm sorry I said that then, I was only a kid".⁵³⁶

Life after care

2.238 "Harry" left Clontarf when aged 16. He was taken to a farm in Katanning, nearly 300 kilometres away. He received no preparation for leaving care. For "Harry," "[i]t was one of the saddest parts of my life,

never mind the molesting, because I was just pulled away quick. It was my life, all the kids and the farm."⁵³⁷

2.239 "Harry" was sent to a Catholic farming family who "treated me like a dog."⁵³⁸ He lived in a shed and was "treated like a dog on a chain."⁵³⁹ He lived there for about 18 months. One day, the farmer accused "Harry" of not fixing a fence and he "clobbered me and belted the hell out of me, so I belted him back because I'd had too many beltings at the orphanage."⁵⁴⁰ After that incident, "Harry" ran away to a farm run by the farmer's brother, about five kilometres away. This farm was a lot better, and the farmer there "was gentle, he was chalk and cheese from his brother."⁵⁴¹

"I was just pulled away quick. It was my life, all the kids and the farm."

2.240 The only visit that "Harry" received after leaving Clontarf was when two welfare officers from Perth visited the farm "and gave me a bloody hiding...they were just brutal."⁵⁴² The officers had not gone to the farm to check on "Harry's" welfare, but to respond to a report that the farmer had made against him.

531 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0198.

532 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0198.

533 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0198.

534 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0221.

535 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0219-0220.

536 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0221.

537 Written statement of "Harry", paragraph 80, at WIT.001.002.6578.

538 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0222.

539 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0223.

540 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0223.

541 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0222-0223.

542 Transcript, day 171: "Harry", at TRN.001.005.0224.

“I used to write on a piece of paper: I’m going to have a horse farm, I’m going to have a stud, I’m going to have cattle. I got there, 45 years later.”

2.241 After “Harry” left care, he “was fucked in the head for years. I didn’t know who I was. I was a nobody. I didn’t get on with people...I knew I was different because of all that happened...”; “After all that sexual abuse, you don’t know who you are.”⁵⁴³ Some of “Harry’s” peers committed suicide; he felt that if he dwelt on his experiences, he could do the same.⁵⁴⁴ “Harry” saw his peers as his family: “The brothers were supposed to be our leaders, helpers, but in turn you went back to the kids because that’s who were your family.”⁵⁴⁵ “Harry” said he had flashbacks about the abuse he suffered: “lying in bed thinking they’re going to come and get me all the time. I think about the cruelty, I feel like I’m getting belted and bruised but I’m not, it’s all in the imagination.”⁵⁴⁶

2.243 Later in life, “Harry’s” family from England visited him in Australia. They told him about his mother. He never met her but he did have a photograph of her, and described how “she looked beautiful, but I had no feeling there.”⁵⁴⁸ Harry came to Scotland and visited his mother’s grave and “took some photos. It was sad. It was like someone pulled something away from you.”⁵⁴⁹ “Harry” had not recovered any records of his past from Castledare or Clontarf, and only one record from the welfare department listing the items he had when he was migrated.⁵⁵⁰ “Harry” died in December 2022.

“I didn’t know who I was. I was a nobody.”

2.242 The Brothers were “belittling you all the time, they’d put you down like you was scum. Anyway, I used to write on a piece of paper: I’m going to have a horse farm, I’m going to have a stud, I’m going to have cattle. I got there, 45 years later.”⁵⁴⁷

543 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0229 and 0223.

544 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0230.

545 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0230.

546 [Written statement of “Harry”](#), paragraph 92, at WIT.001.002.6578.

547 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0225.

548 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0226.

549 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0227.

550 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0228; [Written statement of “Harry”](#), paragraph 90, at WIT.001.002.6578.

“Michael”

Life in the UK

2.244 “Michael” was born in Aberdeenshire in December 1943. Although he had “no recollection of anything before I was put into Nazareth House”, he later found out that his mother died giving birth to his sister when he was three years old.⁵⁵¹ As a result, his father placed “Michael” in Nazareth House, Aberdeen and his sister was adopted by a cousin.⁵⁵² Growing up, “Michael” thought he was an orphan.⁵⁵³

2.245 “Michael” remembered that at Nazareth House, Aberdeen, he “was always cold” and “always hungry.”⁵⁵⁴ He had no recollection of any leisure time, trips, or holidays. Of “Michael’s” few memories, “none of them are good.”⁵⁵⁵ Several were particularly traumatic.

2.246 Food was limited at Nazareth House, but the children did not dare complain because once, “one of the other kids asked for more. He got a slap across the head...and was told to sit down and eat what he had been given.”⁵⁵⁶ The children were taught by the Sisters, and “if you got something wrong, you got slapped or you would have to put your hand out and get hit with a ruler.”⁵⁵⁷ The Sisters “carried a leather strap hooked to their belts and if they felt

they needed to discipline any boy, they took it out and used it.”⁵⁵⁸

2.247 At night-time, “Michael” “would lie awake shivering and the end result was that I would wet the bed.”⁵⁵⁹ In the morning, the nun who found he had wet his bed would strap him on the back of the legs. When this did not stop the bedwetting, “she started grabbing me by the ear and dragging me along to the bathroom” where “she would stick my head down the toilet and pull the chain.”⁵⁶⁰ The same Sister would sometimes lock him in the toilet overnight and “I would sit on the cold floor in the dark and cry until I fell asleep.”⁵⁶¹ On one occasion he was locked in the toilet for longer than a day and a night: “I remember being cold, hungry and thirsty. I have a vivid memory of pulling the [toilet] chain and drinking the water out of my hands.”⁵⁶²

“...she would stick my head down the toilet and pull the chain.”

2.248 “Michael” did not remember being visited or there being inspections.⁵⁶³ At Nazareth House, “[t]here was nobody available for any emotional support...I can honestly say I never encountered any act of love or compassion from any of the nuns.”⁵⁶⁴

551 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0235.

552 “Michael” was recommended to Nazareth House by Reverend Canon Grant in July 1947. See Nazareth House, Aberdeen, children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2683.

553 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0235.

554 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0237.

555 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0237.

556 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0238.

557 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0238.

558 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0239-0240.

559 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0238.

560 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0240.

561 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0241.

562 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0241.

563 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0239.

564 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0239.

“[The Brother] made it sound like the Promised Land.”

Migration

2.249 One morning, in late 1952, a Brother from Australia “came to speak to the boys and talked about life in the orphanage at Bindoon Boys’ Town, Western Australia.”⁵⁶⁵ The Brother said that the orphanage “was still being built and that the boys there were very happy and got on well together. He said that everywhere there were all kinds of fruit trees that I had never heard of before and that the boys could pick fruit any time.”⁵⁶⁶ “Michael” explained: “I couldn’t imagine what a pear tree, an orange tree or an olive tree were like because I’d never seen one. [The Brother] described how the sun was always shining and it was a beautiful place to live. He said that on the farm there were all kinds of animals to look after...He made it sound like the Promised Land.”⁵⁶⁷

2.250 After the Brother finished giving such a “glowing report”, he asked who wanted to go to Australia, and “Michael’s” hand “shot straight up.”⁵⁶⁸

2.251 “Michael’s” father had died, so “some men from Nazareth House went to see my grandmother with a view to getting me sent to Australia.”⁵⁶⁹ In March 1953, his grandmother signed a statement agreeing to his migration.⁵⁷⁰ “Michael” had no memory of his grandmother being involved. He had

no recollection of her or any relatives being at Nazareth House in connection with his migration.⁵⁷¹

2.252 “Michael’s” LEM3 form does not include his grandmother’s signature. Instead, the Mother Superior of Nazareth House, Margaret O’Hara, signed in the capacity of guardian, and Cyril Stinson signed on behalf of the Australian Catholic Immigration Committee, in April 1953.⁵⁷² “Michael” did not recall having any medical examinations before leaving Nazareth House, but he did remember going to Tilbury Docks and meeting other children who were also being migrated.⁵⁷³ In May 1953, aged nine, “Michael” set sail for Australia on the RMS Otranto with around 30 other boys, including some from Scotland. He remembered that “when we got into nice warm weather for the first time all the boys were running about in their shorts with no shirts on. We were allowed to run freely around the ship and it was fabulous, feeling the sunshine.”⁵⁷⁴ The ship had a swimming pool, and in the course of the trip he learned to swim. “There was all this delicious food that I had never seen before.”⁵⁷⁵ At that time he had a sense of “going somewhere new, the sun was shining, and I was feeling warm for probably the first time in my life. In a sense, it was a new beginning.”⁵⁷⁶

565 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0241.

566 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0242.

567 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0242.

568 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0242.

569 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0242.

570 Written consent of “Michael’s” grandmother, 16 March 1953, at NAZ.001.006.2682.

571 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0243.

572 LEM3 form for “Michael”, at WIT.003.002.0281.

573 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0244.

574 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0244-0245.

575 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0245.

576 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0245.

2.253 “Michael” arrived at Fremantle, Australia, on 4 June 1953.⁵⁷⁷ “Michael” was nine years old.

Life at Bindoon (1953-c.1956)

2.254 At Fremantle, the group was met by a few Christian Brothers. “Michael” and “about 12 other boys, some Scottish”, were told that they were going to Bindoon. They were then driven to the orphanage, which was 60 miles north of Perth.⁵⁷⁸



Bindoon Boys' Town, dormitory, 1952. Photograph from Western Australia Government photographer collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.255 Bindoon was a large isolated farm of 17,000 acres, and was home to about 150 boys ranging in age from seven to 16 years, who had been sent from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Malta.⁵⁷⁹ There were 14 Christian Brothers, a priest, and four Sisters who took care of the kitchen and had some other duties. When “Michael” arrived, Brother

Burns was in charge.⁵⁸⁰ Although there were “a couple of the brothers being kind and soft natured, they were mostly hard cases who would belt you for the smallest infraction.”⁵⁸¹

“...they were mostly hard cases who would belt you for the smallest infraction.”

2.256 The boys “slept in a big, long dormitory” and had no personal possessions.⁵⁸² There were no lockers. “Michael” received a single Christmas present each year from his cousin in Scotland, “usually a Broons comic book...I would hang onto it for dear life.”⁵⁸³ “Michael” and his cousin would write to each other “once a year or so”, but he had no other family contact.⁵⁸⁴ Instead, “Michael’s” support network consisted of “half a dozen boys who were my friends” who looked after each other.⁵⁸⁵

2.257 Life at Bindoon was controlled by a large bell.⁵⁸⁶ When it rang at 6 am boys had to get up quickly “because if you didn’t one of the brothers would come along and kick the mattress from underneath with a big heavy boot...so hard that you were almost kicked out of bed and it hurt.”⁵⁸⁷

2.258 Once boys had fallen asleep at night, “it was not unusual...for a brother to wake me and another three lads up with a kick under our mattress and tell us to go with him.

577 Memo from Assistant Director of Perth Child Welfare Department, 27 July 1961, at WIT.003.002.0280.

578 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0246.

579 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0246.

580 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0246.

581 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0247.

582 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0248.

583 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0255.

584 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0256.

585 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0257.

586 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0248.

587 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0248.

“If we weren’t working on the building we were working on the farm.”

We would do so and get marched out in the gardens where we would find a priest lying as drunk as a skunk under a bush.”⁵⁸⁸ The boys would have to return the priest to his bed.

2.259 As an occasional “treat...one of the brothers would take the truck and go down to the factories in Perth.”⁵⁸⁹ Cereals that were produced at these factories were swept up off the floor and put into a tea chest, which the Brother would bring back to Bindoon for the boys to eat for breakfast; “you’d have to be careful chewing because there were all kinds of things in them”.⁵⁹⁰ The Brothers performed a similar operation with biscuits, collecting those that had been swept off the floor of another factory. This paved the way for a weekly “treat night’...[when] we were allowed to go up to the tea chest, put our hands in and however many broken biscuits we could scoop up in one hand, we would have. We thought these were great days.”⁵⁹¹

2.260 Each boy had “two pairs of khaki shorts and two khaki shirts to wear” which were washed by the boys once a week; “there was no underwear, socks or shoes.”⁵⁹² Boys were barefoot even when they were playing sport outdoors.

2.261 Once a month a movie was shown on a big screen. “Michael” recalled that during a showing of *Calamity Jane* when “one of the star’s boobs flashed on the screen” the boys reacted by cheering, and the Brother in charge “was furious. He started belting boys everywhere and we weren’t allowed another movie for six months.”⁵⁹³ Once a year “a couple of doctors and a couple of nurses from [a] government agency” visited Bindoon to examine the boys, and spent “about 2 minutes with each boy.”⁵⁹⁴

2.262 Education at Bindoon was provided by the Brothers. It consisted mainly of religious instruction, and “[i]f you were asked a question and you got it wrong, you were punished” by being called to the front of the class and strapped on the hand.⁵⁹⁵ Although they received little by way of academic education, boys were taught trades and other practical skills, for which “Michael” was grateful.⁵⁹⁶ After working in the machine shop for a while, “Michael” used his leisure time to build “a bike from bits and pieces and I was sort of like the king of the road.”⁵⁹⁷

2.263 “Michael” explained that “[i]f we weren’t working on the building we were working on the farm.”⁵⁹⁸ The boys had to engage in hard labour to complete the

588 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0253-0254.

589 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0249.

590 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0249-0250.

591 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0250.

592 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0250.

593 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0251.

594 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0254.

595 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0253.

596 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0258.

597 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0251.

598 Transcript, day 171: Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0257.

building of Bindoon. Younger boys would “sweep up the quadrangle and all the verandas”, and boys over 11 or 12 carried out the heavy building and farm work.⁵⁹⁹ This included tasks such as bricklaying and plastering, and often involved “carrying six bricks at a time, walking up planks to the second storey of one of the buildings, dropping them off and going down to get another load...carrying buckets of cement up and all this was done in our bare feet and with no protection.”⁶⁰⁰ Sometimes, “[a]s a reward for all the work we did, we were allowed to swoop up a handful of lollies” which, like the cereals and biscuits, had been swept up off a factory floor.⁶⁰¹ However, “if a job...wasn’t done right, you would get a beating.”⁶⁰² At the dairy, if “Michael” was late bringing the cows in for milking, “the brother in charge would give me the strap.”⁶⁰³ Boys were strapped with a two-foot strap which was usually “used on our hands, but if the brother lost his temper he would just grab you by the hair and belt you on the legs, the backside, the back or anywhere. Sometimes you would have welts for weeks afterwards.”⁶⁰⁴

2.264 The Brothers also punished children with “the quiet room.” They would lock boys in “and leave them. Sometimes you could be in that room in the dark for a couple of days. It happened to me once. When I was put in I was trying to get out, but then after a while my voice wore out and I just sat there and resigned myself to it. I was in for a couple of days and had to do the toilet in the corner.

Sometimes somebody would open the door and throw a piece of bread in for me to eat. I was glad to get out into the daylight when they finally opened the door.”⁶⁰⁵

“Sometimes you could be in that room in the dark for a couple of days.”

2.265 “Michael” “used to think that the nuns at Nazareth House in Aberdeen were cruel, but the brothers were ten times worse.”⁶⁰⁶

2.266 “Michael” explained that at Bindoon “there was a pecking order amongst the boys” and the older boys regularly bullied the younger boys. However, “by the time I got to 11, I was one of the kids that nobody wanted to mess with.”⁶⁰⁷ The Brothers encouraged boys to hurt one another in the course of weekly boxing matches that they organised. They “would call me up and tell the others that they had three minutes to knock the daylight out of me or I would knock it out of them.”⁶⁰⁸

2.267 “Michael” was sexually abused at Bindoon. When he was around 11 years old, he had been finding life at Bindoon difficult. He had been getting into fights and often received strappings. Brother Parker put his hand on “Michael’s” shoulder and asked him how he was getting on: “I told him that I was finding it very hard and I think I started to cry. He told me that he thought we had

599 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0258.

600 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0258.

601 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0259.

602 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0260.

603 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0259.

604 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0260-0261.

605 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0261.

606 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0262.

607 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0259.

608 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0260.

better have a talk and told me a time to go and see him...We talked for quite a while and he gave me some advice...and we left it at that."⁶⁰⁹ Within a week, Brother Parker took "Michael" from his bed during the night, took him to his own bed and "started to molest me. He raped me. It hurt like anything and I wanted him to stop."⁶¹⁰

Brother Parker "raped me. It hurt like anything and I wanted him to stop."

2.268 Such abuse "went on about once a week for over a year."⁶¹¹ Each night "Michael" "would lie awake anticipating him coming to get me until one night when I saw him marching another boy out. I knew then that he was starting on somebody else and he never abused me again."⁶¹² "Michael" also saw different Brothers taking other boys "out of the dormitory during the night and I knew what was happening."⁶¹³ As so often happens to the victims of child abuse, "Michael" experienced conflicting emotions: "I used to hate what [Brother Parker] did to me and yet in some ways I used to look forward to it, not to what he would do, but to the reward... Always the next day he would seek me out and tell me I was his favourite little boy and that I was not to say anything and then he would give me a big handful of lollies, which I used to love."⁶¹⁴

2.269 When "Michael" was 13, during the period when he was being sexually abused by Brother Parker, several "other Christian Brothers came into the home and held an inquiry...they were concerned because a complaint of sexual abuse had come from outside."⁶¹⁵ Brother Parker "pulled me aside and told me what would happen to him if they found out and promised me some more lollies."⁶¹⁶ When "Michael" spoke to the investigators, despite the fact that "[t]hey told me they knew what had been going on...I just told them nobody had done anything to me and I wouldn't answer their questions. I was afraid for Brother Parker", as were the other victims, all of whom had "kept our mouths shut."⁶¹⁷ Although the boys "would never talk directly amongst ourselves about what was happening to each other... if a brother gave a boy a handful of lollies or something, we would tease each other", knowing why that boy was getting them.⁶¹⁸ Despite this, "[t]here was no follow-up [to the investigation] that I was aware of afterwards and Brother Parker remained at Bindoon."⁶¹⁹

2.270 "Michael" experienced physical abuse beyond the 'disciplinary' strappings. On the second occasion that "Michael" arrived late to the dairy, Brother Dick "gave me six of the best with his strap across my hands."⁶²⁰ After he had finished, "I just smiled at him. I knew that would make him mad and it did. He said to me, 'Think you're tough, do you? I'll fix

609 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0262.

610 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0262.

611 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0262.

612 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0263.

613 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0263.

614 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0262-0263.

615 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0267.

616 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0267.

617 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0267.

618 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0268.

619 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0267.

620 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of "Michael", at TRN.001.002.0264.

“He came up to me and cracked me on the head with a piece of timber...so hard that my head split open”.

you.’ He grabbed me and put me head first into the 44-gallon drum of water that was kept in the dairy and pushed the drum over with me in it. The thing I remember most is lying on the floor like a drowned rat and Brother Dick standing over me and laughing his head off.”⁶²¹

2.271 Once, when on piggery duty, “Michael” was so hungry that he started cooking a chicken over a fire. He was caught by Brother Dick who “laid into me with a strap...he was hitting me everywhere and calling me all sorts of names. When it was all over and I had got rid of the bruises I thought, I like chicken, so I did it again, but made sure I didn’t get caught.”⁶²²

2.272 On another occasion on the building site, a Brother accused “Michael” of not working hard enough: “He came up to me and cracked me on the head with a piece of timber...so hard that my head split open and it was so bad that I had to be taken to the hospital in Perth, where I had to stay for a few days. On the way to the hospital, this brother told me not to say anything. He told me that if I was asked, I had to say that it had been one of the other boys who threw a stone at me.”⁶²³

2.273 In another incident, “Michael” was whispering to another boy at breakfast when one of the Brothers belted him on the ear “so hard that he broke my eardrum and

knocked me off my chair. I was screaming in pain but the brother just told me not to be such a cissy and get up. Something happened to me at that moment. Something inside me snapped.”⁶²⁴ “Michael” retaliated, punching and kicking the Brother until he was pulled away by another Brother. Hearing the fighting, the head Brother instructed “Michael” to see him in his office after breakfast. When “Michael” went to the office, the head Brother and another Brother were there with “their long straps in their hands. The head brother told me that I had crossed a line and that they were going to belt me within an inch of my life. I told them that if they touched me I would sneak up to the head brother’s bed one night and cut his throat while he was asleep...I was so angry I [was] shaking with rage”.⁶²⁵

“I was screaming in pain but the brother just told me not to be such a cissy”.

2.274 “Michael” was sent out of the room while the Brothers had a discussion, but “they must have been so afraid of what I might do that they told me they were going to deal with it later. They never touched me after that...I had broken.”⁶²⁶

621 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0264.

622 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0265.

623 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0265.

624 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0266-0267.

625 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0266.

626 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0267.

2.275 Ahead of any inspection visits, “the brothers would make us tidy the place up and we would all have to work extra hard to make it look nice and neat.”⁶²⁷ The Brothers would choose six older boys to “go into a room with the inspectors. They would ask us questions such as whether we were being treated well and suchlike. It was such a waste of time because beforehand we would be told by one of the brothers that if we said anything out of line, they would find out about it and they would belt us. There was always one brother sitting in and we just gave the answers that were expected.”⁶²⁸ “[T]he question is: who could we boys report the abuse to? There was nobody there.”⁶²⁹

“...who could we boys report the abuse to? There was nobody there.”

Life after care

2.276 “Michael” left Bindoon when he turned 16. He was taken to Perth, given a job in an engineering factory and put into a boarding house. He had no contact with the Christian Brothers afterwards.⁶³⁰

2.277 At Bindoon, the boys were not taught so as to equip them for adult life, and “when I left the orphanage, I did so as a very

angry and violent person.”⁶³¹ “Michael’s” experiences at Bindoon “made me do stupid things and I had no respect for my own life and no respect for anyone else’s life...I was so full of anger and rage that I just wanted to hurt people.”⁶³²

“...when I left the orphanage, I did so as a very angry and violent person.”

2.278 “Michael” used his earnings to buy a powerful motorbike that he rode “on the open highway” as fast as he could, taking his hands off the handlebars and closing his eyes because he had a “death wish”; he did not “know how many times I came close to losing it.”⁶³³

2.279 His anger was also directed outwards, and “[o]n Friday and Saturday nights, I would meet up with more boys who had been at the Catholic orphanages...go to the local pub and get drunk...We would look for people in authority” to beat up.⁶³⁴ “We were all the same. We were all lost. We just wanted someone to notice us and we ended up doing crazy things.”⁶³⁵ “Michael” knew that if he did not change his lifestyle, prison would be the likely outcome. Aged 20 he left Perth and gained employment as a windmill mechanic, which he loved.⁶³⁶

627 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0255.

628 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0255-0256.

629 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0268.

630 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0268.

631 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0260.

632 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0269.

633 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0268.

634 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0269.

635 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0269.

636 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0269.

“I tried to get a connection but there was nothing there.”

2.280 In 1965, “Michael” returned to Perth for a holiday where a meeting with the pastor of the Pentecostal church led to his baptism as a Christian. “Michael” described that “God took away the anger, hatred and violence from my life. He also took away the stronghold that alcohol and cigarettes had on me. I haven’t touched a drop of alcohol or a cigarette since.”⁶³⁷

2.281 “Michael” met his wife over 50 years ago and they have had children and grandchildren. He worked as a full-time pastor in a multitude of locations, including Queensland, where he served for 20 years.⁶³⁸

2.282 “Michael’s” wife found his cousin’s address in Scotland and they corresponded. “Michael” met his sister on a trip to the UK. He travelled to Aberdeen where he met some of his family for the first time, “including my three half-brothers and my half-sister.”⁶³⁹ “Michael” and his wife remained in contact with his cousin, and in 1996, on a visit to Scotland, when trying to find his mother’s grave, they were directed to the paupers’ graves: “We found it, although there were no markings, and I realised that my mother was probably the third or fourth person that had been put in that one grave. It is just yet another thing that I have to shut out.”⁶⁴⁰

2.283 “Michael’s” relationship with his sister was affected by migration. More recently, when “Michael” learned that his sister had died, he “didn’t know how to react. I didn’t know whether I should cry or feel sorry. I tried to get a connection but there was nothing there.”⁶⁴¹ That said, “Michael’s” daughter and her husband “went to see my sister’s daughter and her family and they got on like a house on fire. They remain in touch and so there is still a connection.”⁶⁴²

637 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0271.

638 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0273.

639 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0273.

640 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0275.

641 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0276.

642 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0277.

Ian Stuart Donaldson

Life in the UK and migration

2.284 Ian Stuart Donaldson was born in April 1943 in Aberdeen. On 8 July 1943, he was admitted to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, on the recommendation of Reverend G. McCunach of St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral in Aberdeen.⁶⁴³ Ian was "not sure why I was placed in care" and, while there, "never knew anything about my mother or father."⁶⁴⁴ The observation book for Nazareth House recorded only that his "mother was put out of the room she had and had spent the previous night in the waiting room at the station."⁶⁴⁵ Rev. McCunach had thus asked Nazareth House to take her baby into their care. Ian had little recollection of his life at Nazareth House, Aberdeen.

2.285 He did, however, "remember a man and a woman came to see me at Nazareth House and asked if I wanted to go to Australia. I think they were from the government, but I don't know who they were. I said I would go because I didn't think I really had a choice. They never told me anything about Australia. I had never even heard of it before."⁶⁴⁶

"They never told me anything about Australia. I had never even heard of it before."

2.286 Even if he had been informed about where he was going and what it might be like there, he "was clearly unable at this young age to consent to this 'migration'."⁶⁴⁷

2.287 In February 1953, Ian's mother signed the LEM3 form, permitting him to be migrated to Australia.⁶⁴⁸ Ian did not "remember getting any sort of health checks" before leaving, but his medical examination form was signed by Dr A.G. Young of Aberdeen in March 1953, suggesting that he was seen by a doctor.⁶⁴⁹ He left Aberdeen along with two other boys from Nazareth House, one being of a similar age.⁶⁵⁰ In Southampton, they were joined by seven boys and seven girls due to travel with them to Australia.⁶⁵¹ The party left the UK in June 1953 on the RMS Otranto. At that time Ian was aged nine.



Otranto, c.1900/1954. Photograph by Allan C. Green. Source: [State Library Victoria](#).

643 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Children's register, at NAZ.001.006.3096.

644 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0288.

645 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3088.

646 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0289.

647 Letter from Michael Anderson (Counsellor to CBERS) to Manager of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 4 June 2002, at WIT.003.001.5417.

648 LEM3 form for Ian Donaldson, at BEW-000000082, p.52.

649 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0289; Medical examination form for Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5418.

650 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0289.

651 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0289.

2.288 Ian remembered that “[a] man and a woman looked after us on the ship. I don’t know who they were. Every time we got something like fruit or lollies, we would put it in our cabin and the man and woman would...steal it off us.”⁶⁵²

2.289 At the end of June 1953, Ian and the other children arrived at Fremantle. Ian was 10 years old.

Life at Bindoon (1953-1959)

2.290 After arriving at Fremantle and staying the night at Clontarf, Ian and three of the 290 boys were taken to Bindoon on the back of a truck.⁶⁵³ This group included one of Ian’s friends from Aberdeen.

2.291 Ian thought that there were about 300 boys at Bindoon and around 15 Brothers with five or six lay staff. There were also some Sisters. The Brothers “dressed in black robes and looked like Dracula.”⁶⁵⁴ When he arrived, Brother Keaney was in charge and the other Brothers included Brothers Dick, Sullivan, Murphy and Doyle.

2.292 On Ian’s first day at Bindoon, he “had to use the toilet and it was starting to get dark. One of the brothers...was hiding in the dark with the lights dimmed right down. I turned round and saw him dressed up in his black robes and got such a fright that from

that day onwards I never wanted to go to the toilet when it was dark. Instead, I ended up wetting my bed most nights.”⁶⁵⁵

2.293 For wetting the bed, “you would get a flogging with the strap.”⁶⁵⁶ The beds had plastic sheets to protect the mattresses, which meant boys would be sleeping in their own urine. In winter, boys would wake up in cold urine “freezing, shaking with the cold.”⁶⁵⁷

2.294 At mealtimes, the Brothers ate in their own dining room. Brothers had different food and significantly more food than the boys. The boys’ “food was...terrible.”⁶⁵⁸ If a boy did not eat his food he “might have got hit or belted by the monks.”⁶⁵⁹

2.295 At Bindoon “[w]e never wore any shoes, only open-toed sandals and it was cold sometimes. I used to get chilblains a lot of the time.”⁶⁶⁰ Regardless of the season, the boys only wore “a pair of shorts and a shirt.”⁶⁶¹

2.296 Education was almost non-existent for Ian at Bindoon: “In all the years I was in Bindoon I only did about six months’ schooling in total.”⁶⁶² That was not due to a “lack of capacity to learn”, but due to the fact that, instead of being in school, Ian and the other boys were “used as slave labour.”⁶⁶³ There was no respite from the manual labour during holidays or birthdays. Ian did not know when his birthday was.⁶⁶⁴

652 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0290.

653 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0290.

654 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0291.

655 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0291.

656 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0292.

657 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0292.

658 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0293.

659 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0293.

660 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0293.

661 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0293.

662 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0293.

663 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5393; [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0293.

664 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0294.

“My friend had been sitting on top of the bags on the cart when he fell off and one of the wheels ran over this neck.”

2.297 During Ian’s time at Bindoon, “the boys built half the place”.⁶⁶⁵ Ian’s work included lifting bags of cement onto a wheelbarrow and negotiating the scaffolding. Another of his tasks was to clean tiles, which entailed scrubbing them on his hands and knees. Ian also had “to carry large hessian sacks filled with superphosphate, which were so heavy that his legs would give way underneath him.”⁶⁶⁶

2.298 There were no adults directly involved in this work, although normally one of the Brothers would be supervising. But that did not always happen. Once, “[a] few of us boys

were loading bags...on to a cart. There was no brother there to supervise us. The cart had two big wheels and we were the horses. My friend had been sitting on top of the bags on the cart when he fell off and one of the wheels ran over his neck. I told one of the other boys to go and get one of the brothers while I stayed with my friend. When the brother arrived, they took my friend to the infirmary at Bindoon. As far as I know, he was never sent to Royal Perth Hospital; he was kept at the infirmary [at Bindoon]. He was in a coma for three and a half weeks before he died.”⁶⁶⁷



Bindoon Boys’ Town, building work, 1952. Photograph from Western Australia Government photographer collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

665 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0291.

666 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5391.

667 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0298-0299.

2.299 This friend was the boy who had travelled to Australia with Ian from Aberdeen, who Ian considered his closest friend. All Ian had had at Bindoon was “the lad who sailed with me and another boy who was Irish... We had our own little gang and I didn’t associate with any of the other boys.”⁶⁶⁸ Ian did not “know why [his friend] was not taken to hospital” and wondered if “he could have been still alive today”.⁶⁶⁹ His friend’s death “was all hushed up and I don’t even know whether any family he might have had in Scotland were ever notified...None of the brothers ever asked me how I was afterwards. I wasn’t given any support at all.”⁶⁷⁰ His friend was buried in an unmarked grave.⁶⁷¹ Ian suffered “unwarranted ‘survivor guilt’ that he played a role in [his friend’s] death.”⁶⁷²

2.300 On another occasion, when Ian was 11 or 12 years old, he was helping a boy cut firewood on an unprotected circular saw. Ian witnessed the boy lose fingers and part of his hand when he slipped operating the saw. Ian clearly recalled the distressing scene as the boy “screamed and blood poured from his injury.”⁶⁷³ These were not isolated incidents. Ian thought that about five boys had been killed at Bindoon during his time there, four from “accidents while the boys were employed as slave labour.”⁶⁷⁴

2.301 Ian was physically abused at Bindoon. The Brothers “had leather straps hanging from their belts, which were about 16 inches long and an inch thick with strips of lead in them. They used to hit us with those straps and it used to hurt really badly.”⁶⁷⁵ From Ian’s perspective, “[m]ost of the brothers liked hitting kids. Boys were physically abused by the brothers all the time.”⁶⁷⁶ Brother O’Sullivan “used to tell [Ian] to look at something and then whack him in the face as he turned away”; “Brother Moore would beat him and then set his dog on him if he ran away”; and “Brother Dwyer [belted] him with a cane and [threw] wooden dusters at him.”⁶⁷⁷

2.302 Ian described how after boys had washed their feet, Brother Doyle would examine their feet: “Nine out of ten I hadn’t cleaned behind my ankles and before I knew where I was, he had whacked my ankles with his came [sic].”⁶⁷⁸ This cane was wooden with “a steel rod inside.”⁶⁷⁹

2.303 Ian suffered a serious assault at the hands of Brothers Dick and Keaney. Brother Dick had asked him to shut the barn gate after a day’s work at the dairy. Although Ian had done so, Brother Dick accused Ian of not shutting the gate: “He tried to corner me so I picked up a pitchfork and warded him off. I

668 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0295.

669 Documents submitted to Redress Western Australia by Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5407.

670 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0299.

671 Documents submitted to Redress Western Australia by Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5404.

672 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5392.

673 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5390.

674 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0298.

675 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0296.

676 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0296.

677 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5390-5391.

678 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0297.

679 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0297.

“We’d get the strap and get booted and everything.”

dropped the pitchfork and ran away, straight into Brother Keaney. He asked me what was wrong so I told him and he grabbed me by the arm and took me back to the dairy. Brother Dick then appeared and they shut the door and give me the biggest flagging [sic] of my life. They even booted me in the head. I was black and blue for about four weeks afterwards.”⁶⁸⁰

2.304 Boys were beaten if they ran away, which Ian did a few times: “When we went back, we’d get the biggest flogging of our lives. We’d get the strap and get booted and everything.”⁶⁸¹

2.305 The Brothers had older pet boys. These boys would go round beds at night and touch young children sexually “to warm us up for the brothers.”⁶⁸² Ian sometimes hid under a bed to avoid this, but witnessed other boys being targeted. On a couple of occasions, Brothers Dick and Murphy “tried to manhandle me sexually. Most of the time I managed to get away.”⁶⁸³ Ian was ashamed of the sexual abuse inflicted on him.⁶⁸⁴

2.306 At the time, Ian “never reported anything that happened” to him because there was no one to tell.⁶⁸⁵ The Brothers

could not be approached. The welfare department inspected Bindoon from “from time to time”.⁶⁸⁶ However, Ian never spoke to them because the Brothers “would have six or seven boys all dressed up to meet them and we would be put away out of sight. The welfare would see these boys and think we were all getting looked after properly.”⁶⁸⁷

“The welfare would see these boys and think we were all getting looked after properly.”

2.307 Ian had no family or friends beyond Bindoon. He “never heard from...or wrote to” anyone.⁶⁸⁸ Despite this, an annual report on Ian written by Bindoon for the Catholic Child Welfare Council in England maintained that he corresponded with friends or relatives in England and that he visited an Australian family. These assertions were untrue.⁶⁸⁹

2.308 Ian left Bindoon in May 1959, just “seven days after his subsidy closed off on [his] 16th birthday.”⁶⁹⁰ He left with “no preparation for life” afterwards.⁶⁹¹

680 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0297.

681 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0296.

682 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0297.

683 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0298.

684 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0301.

685 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0298.

686 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0294.

687 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0294.

688 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0295.

689 Annual Report of Australian Child Migrant for Catholic Child Welfare Council of England and Wales, 13 October 1956, at BEW-000000082, p.54; [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0302.

690 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5391.

691 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0299.

Life after care

2.309 Ian was sent to stay with and work for “some people at Mount Lawley for about nine months. They were terrible, just like the Christian Brothers...[I had to] spend the day working my guts out. I did all the heavy work and their son did nothing.”⁶⁹² While at this farm, Ian felt very isolated and believed that “there was no one in the world who cared about him...Ian seriously considered killing himself at this point because it seemed like there was no hope.”⁶⁹³ In September 1960, Ian was sent on a train to Perth. After waiting 11 hours in a Perth train station, a lady asked if he was lost and took him to the Catholic welfare agency. Work and accommodation were found for him in Mount Lawley with “a young couple”.⁶⁹⁴ He stayed there for the next two years, and the young couple treated him well.⁶⁹⁵

2.310 After this, Ian worked in a driving job for about 10 years, before securing a job with a contractor on a BP refinery, where he spent the next 20 years.⁶⁹⁶ Finding work was not always easy for Ian, because “[a]ll I used to have was a copy of the extract of my birth certificate and when I went for a job as an [sic] fitter at the BP refinery they wouldn’t accept it. BP asked for a record of my schooling and so I rang Bindoon up and they told me they had no record of me being there.”⁶⁹⁷

2.311 In around 2011, when he was 68 years old, Ian regained his original birth certificate through Dr Philippa White of Tuart Place.⁶⁹⁸ Until then, it had been held by the Australian Welfare Department and then by the Department for Child Protection.

“I rang Bindoon up and they told me they had no record of me being there.”

2.312 In the early 2000s, Ian made enquiries with the Christian Brothers Ex-Residents and Students Service in Subiaco. They worked with the CMT to trace his family.⁶⁹⁹ Eventually, in 2001, he “found out I had a sister in Scotland” with a large family of her own.⁷⁰⁰ That discovery “conjured up some mixed emotions” for his sister and her family.⁷⁰¹ In September 2002, Ian received a letter from his adult niece on behalf of her mother, which told him that “we are all looking forward to meeting the Uncle we didn’t know we had, so if you have any reservations about being accepted into the [family] Clan put them to one side and just get used to having a somewhat larger family than you may have anticipated when you first decided to investigate your roots in Scotland.”⁷⁰²

692 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0299-0300.

693 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5392.

694 Movements and Remarks for Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5425; [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0300.

695 Documents submitted to Redress Western Australia by Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5409. This series of events is confirmed by the Movements and Remarks for Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5425.

696 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0300.

697 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0302.

698 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0302.

699 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0303.

700 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0303.

701 Letter from Ian’s niece to Ian, 17 September 2002, at WIT.003.001.5431.

702 Letter from Ian’s niece to Ian, 17 September 2002, at WIT.003.001.5431-5432.

“The fact that I never got an education and Bindoon said they had no record of me stopped me getting a job...I was pretty upset about that.”

2.313 In April 2003, Ian visited Scotland with the assistance of government funding to meet his sister and her family. They have remained in contact. In 2015 or 2016, Ian visited the UK with the support of the Family Restoration Fund, and met his family again. He and his brother-in-law went back to Nazareth House in Aberdeen and met the Sister in charge. Although his sister and brother-in-law encouraged him to “move back to Scotland”, Ian “love[d] Australia and there’s no way I would ever move back... Australia is all I know.”⁷⁰³

“Australia is all I know.”

2.314 Ian regularly visited Tuart Place where he saw “other people who have been in care as well as the staff there. It makes my day to see everybody...Before that I had nowhere to go.”⁷⁰⁴ He returned to “Bindoon now and again to put flowers on my friend’s grave. I had to get permission to do it and had to get escorted by security because I believe some of the [old Bindoon] boys had been smashing the brothers’ graves.”⁷⁰⁵

2.315 Bindoon and migration affected Ian in a multitude of ways. In material terms, the fact that he never received an education and the absence of records at Bindoon interfered with his employment options. Ian “was pretty upset about that.”⁷⁰⁶ In physical terms, Ian “had bad neck pains” and one of his bones was out of joint. He wondered whether these problems were “a result of getting beaten so much, particularly the beating I got from Brother Keaney and Brother Dick in the dairy.”⁷⁰⁷ He had “a number of scars on his upper arms” which were the result of being beaten with leather straps with strips of lead sewn into them.⁷⁰⁸ In emotional and psychological terms, Ian thought his “head wasn’t screwed on right when I left. I drank a lot and got into a lot of fights” and, without any form of guidance or support, soon got in trouble with the law.⁷⁰⁹ That left him with a criminal record, and encouraged the development of his self-image as being that of an ‘outsider’.⁷¹⁰ He had long suffered from flashbacks to his own abuse and to the accident that killed his friend.⁷¹¹

703 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0306.

704 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0301-0302.

705 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0305.

706 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0304.

707 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0304-0305.

708 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5393.

709 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0299; Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5392.

710 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5392.

711 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of Ian Donaldson, at WIT.003.001.5393.

“Alice”

Life in the UK

2.316 “Alice” was born in November 1944 in Inverness. Her mother already had two children and was going through a divorce.⁷¹² Her father was Canadian. She was never able to trace him. On 5 November 1945, she was admitted to Nazareth House, Aberdeen. The observation book for her admission records that her “Father [is] a Catholic from Newfoundland. Mother a non-Catholic [but] had the child baptised & had given up all claim to her, in consideration of no maintenance being paid”.⁷¹³

Nazareth House, Aberdeen, “was my home, my friends.”

2.317 For “Alice”, Nazareth House, Aberdeen, “was my home, my friends.”⁷¹⁴ She had fond recollections of her time there, particularly of her best friend. The Sisters were like parents to her.⁷¹⁵ “Alice” had no recollection of being disciplined at Nazareth House, Aberdeen, apart from being cuffed around the ear for misbehaving.⁷¹⁶ She and the other girls had a pigeonhole each, and once a month “we were allowed to go down and there would be things left in the pigeonhole” such as lollies, or a doll.⁷¹⁷ “Alice” thought that it was her family that was leaving these gifts for her.⁷¹⁸

Migration

2.318 The first indication “Alice” had that she would be going to Australia was a series of doctors’ appointments. She was told that she was to go on “a long holiday” to Australia.⁷¹⁹ “Alice” was never asked if she wanted to go.⁷²⁰ She was told “only that there were kangaroos and just little things like that – and it never rains”.⁷²¹ The Sisters did not give “Alice” and the three other girls selected with her for migration any information about the migration programme or Australia, including about how long they would be there.⁷²² The children “thought we’d be coming back.”⁷²³

2.319 “Alice” was eight years old when she was selected for migration. The ‘guardian’ section of “Alice’s” LEM3 form was signed by Sister Francis Rita, Mother Superior at Nazareth House, Aberdeen, on 23 November 1953.⁷²⁴ Further records have been recovered relating to “Alice’s” migration, including a letter dated 8 February 1954, in which William Flint, on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council, thanked the Mother General of Nazareth House, Aberdeen, for her letters and the application forms, birth certificates, and baptismal certificates for several girls including “Alice.”

712 Written statement of “Alice”, paragraph 4, at WIT.001.002.7920.

713 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3073.

714 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.53.

715 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.55.

716 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.56.

717 Written statement of “Alice”, paragraph 17, at WIT.001.002.7923.

718 Written statement of “Alice”, paragraph 17, at WIT.001.002.7923.

719 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.57.

720 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.57.

721 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.57.

722 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.58.

723 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.57.

724 LEM3 form for “Alice”, at NAA.001.001.1417.

2.320 William Flint signed “Alice’s” LEM3 form on behalf of the CCWC on 15 February 1954.⁷²⁵ On the reverse of “Alice’s” LEM3 form is a note stating that she was a “very bright little child [who] speaks with very pronounced Scottish accent but good diction. Good writer and of good school standard for age.”⁷²⁶ “Alice’s” official medical examination form was signed on 24 March 1954 by Dr A.G.B. Young as physician, and Margaret O’Hara as guardian.⁷²⁷ On 10 April 1954, another letter from William Flint to the Mother General confirmed that “Alice” had been accepted for migration, “and will be sailing on the 7th May.”⁷²⁸ “Alice’s” mother was not told or consulted.⁷²⁹

2.321 “Alice” and the three other girls were each given a suitcase in Aberdeen with “a few clothes”.⁷³⁰ They collected a further four Scottish girls from Nazareth House, Kilmarnock. A total of eight Scottish girls sailed on the SS Orontes to Australia in May 1954. There were 101 girls on the ship with “Alice”, including the seven other Scottish girls and eight Irish girls.⁷³¹ The other girls were English. There was also a contingent of boys, who departed the ship at Fremantle for the Christian Brothers institutions.

2.322 During the crossing, the girls were chaperoned by three people who were strangers to them. There was a priest on board to supervise the boys; he was called Father Tye. On one occasion, an older girl in “Alice’s” cabin “had been doing some washing and she hung her clothes to dry over a chair next to a heater. There was a small fire and I got the blame for it. I was so upset and crying all the time because of this. The next thing we knew we were all at confession. I told Father Tye that I hadn’t done it, which was hard because I was hysterical...Father Tye believed me and after that he looked after me.”⁷³²

2.323 When the ship docked at Fremantle, only the boys disembarked: “a brother of one of the girls...had to go off the ship and we thought that was really sad.”⁷³³ “Alice” and the other girls continued on to Melbourne where they arrived on 9 June 1954, and were met by “so many nuns.”⁷³⁴ From Melbourne, the girls were taken to Nazareth House, Camberwell.⁷³⁵ They were the first cohort of children at Camberwell. “Alice” was nine years old. In Australia, she never saw her suitcase or its contents again.⁷³⁶

725 LEM3 form for “Alice”, at NAA.001.001.1417.

726 LEM3 form for “Alice”, at NAA.001.001.1418.

727 Medical examination form for “Alice”, at NAA.001.001.1419-20.

728 Letter from William Flint to Mother General of Nazareth House, Aberdeen, 10 April 1954, at NAZ.001.006.2542.

729 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.96-97.

730 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.64.

731 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.67.

732 [Written statement of “Alice”](#), paragraph 30, at WIT.001.002.7926-7927.

733 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.66-67.

734 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.67; [Written statement of “Alice”](#), paragraph 35, at WIT.001.002.7927-7928.

735 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.67.

736 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp. 64-65.

“I had long blue-black hair and I just cried and cried... anyone that had long hair, it had to be cut.”

Life at Nazareth House, Camberwell (1954-1960)

2.324 Nazareth House, Camberwell, was a large building. “Alice” thought it was “a big, big place. A beautiful looking place.”⁷³⁷ Part of the building was dedicated to those training to be Sisters; part was dedicated to elderly women who were being cared for; another part was occupied by elderly men who were being cared for; and there was another area with the children’s dormitories and classrooms. The elderly men were housed on the ground floor and the elderly women on the second floor—the same floor as the children. There were around 50 girls, ranging in age from four to 14 or 15, and organised in dormitories according to their age. There were around 12 Sisters in the house. There was no cleaning staff.⁷³⁸ Each of the dormitories accommodated up to 30 children.⁷³⁹ Three Sisters looked after the children: Sister Teresa Augustine (known as Gussy), Sister Lucilla (known as Louie) and Sister Alphonsus (known as Alphon). The Sisters had “cells” in the dormitories where the girls slept. Each cell had a window that looked out into the dormitory.⁷⁴⁰ The girls who had arrived on the SS Orontes were the only children at Camberwell.



Nazareth House, Camberwell. Photograph from Nazareth House photo collection. Source: [Find & Connect](#).

2.325 When she arrived, “Alice” and any other girl with long hair had their hair cut: “I had long blue-black hair and I just cried and cried.”⁷⁴¹ The girls’ underwear was “made out of butcher’s aprons, butcher material. It was always chafing.”⁷⁴² Every morning the Sisters would wake the girls at 6 am. Mass was at 8 am, followed by breakfast.⁷⁴³ The food, which the girls had to make in large cauldrons for themselves and for the elderly people, “was bland and not very good.”⁷⁴⁴ If a child did not finish her meal, she would be hit.⁷⁴⁵ The Sisters, on the other hand, “had beautiful food” that they ate on “their own upstairs.”⁷⁴⁶

737 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.68.

738 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.22-23.

739 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.70.

740 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.27.

741 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.72.

742 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.84.

743 [Written statement of “Alice”](#), paragraph 42, at WIT.001.002.7929.

744 [Written statement of “Alice”](#), paragraph 45, at at WIT.001.002.7930; [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.72.

745 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.73.

746 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.73.

2.326 At Aberdeen, “Alice” was often sick and regularly vomited.⁷⁴⁷ “Alice” continued to be sick at Camberwell: “I didn’t know what was wrong with me, I just kept getting sick and every time I would vomit, I would go and tell one of the sisters”.⁷⁴⁸ “Alice” thinks that “Sister Augustus...must have got fed up with me being ill and complaining of being in pain because she used to hold the crucifix in front of me, with Jesus on the cross and say, ‘That is agony, not you, there’s nothing wrong with you. Go away and pray’ I never got any medical attention at all when I was there and I was always sick.”⁷⁴⁹ “Alice” later discovered that she had coeliac disease.

“I never got any medical attention at all when I was there”.

2.327 “Alice” also suffered from painful chilblains at Camberwell. She told the Sisters, but they were not interested.⁷⁵⁰

2.328 The Sisters punished children physically for misdemeanours. Sister Augustine used a cricket stump to hit girls on the hands as a punishment, and “[i]f she said six [strokes], you got six.”⁷⁵¹

2.329 Sister Alphonsus used a bamboo cane to punish children; it was known as “the whistling one” because of the way it whistled as it swept through the air.⁷⁵² Sister Alphonsus “would just bang it down on your hand as hard as she could...Honestly, you couldn’t feel your hand. But you did something naughty and we had to pay for it.”⁷⁵³ These punishments were wholly disproportionate.

2.330 The in-house education “was very poor”, but “Alice” “was fortunate enough to go to an outside school” from the age of 14.⁷⁵⁴ Eight girls from Camberwell were sent there as they had performed well in monthly tests.⁷⁵⁵ They had to walk there. “Alice” “went with a little girl” who often made them late. However, in sharp contrast to the Camberwell Sisters, “we never ever got in trouble from the school nuns. They used to call us after school was over into the office and we’d have a cup of tea and scones. They were always very nice to us.”⁷⁵⁶

2.331 At Camberwell, the girls had to work, especially at weekends.⁷⁵⁷ One task was “all the kitchen work, all the dirty pots and your hands with chilblains trying to clean those pots.”⁷⁵⁸ Another task was to scrub four flights of stairs: “If it wasn’t up to their standard... they’d get the bucket, they’d throw it all over again, and you’d have to do the whole lot

747 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.54.

748 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.72.

749 Written statement of “Alice”, paragraph 44, at WIT.001.002.7930.

750 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.54 and p.78.

751 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.74.

752 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.75.

753 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.75.

754 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.76-77.

755 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.77.

756 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.76.

757 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.78.

758 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.78-79.

again.⁷⁵⁹ Sometimes, children would still be scrubbing the stairs as darkness fell.⁷⁶⁰ By the time they reached the bottom, “the old men were round the corner and you could hear them shuffling along...coughing...we were so frightened”.⁷⁶¹ On occasion, when assigned to this task, “Alice” would “hide under the stairs and I’d get into trouble from Gussie. I’d ask, ‘Why do you do this to me?’ and she would get into my face and say, ‘You’ll do what I tell you’ and she’d grab me by the chin so hard...Sister Lucilla was another one who would grab you by the chin so hard she’d nearly choke you.”⁷⁶²

2.332 When “Alice” was aged 11 or 12, she had to help feed the elderly people in the home; she “loved it, [and] wasn’t angry at all about being put over there.”⁷⁶³ She and other girls had to move those who were bedridden and deal with their urine-soaked sheets.⁷⁶⁴

2.333 Aged 12, “Alice” was required to assist a Sister with washing the dead body of an elderly man and “there were bowls of cotton wool that had to be put into every orifice of his...[The Sister] said, ‘Put it in, put it in, get as much in as you can.’” “Alice” was “[p]etrified, absolutely petrified.”⁷⁶⁵

2.334 As “Alice” got older, dealing with dead bodies became more frequent. There

could routinely be as many as three deaths a week, sometimes two in a night, and up to six a week in the winter.⁷⁶⁶ The girls were often left to do the work on their own.⁷⁶⁷

2.335 “Alice” received a visit from Father Tye who had been on the ship with her. On seeing him she “just ran into his arms.”⁷⁶⁸ She did not disclose to Father Tye how she was being treated “[b]ecause two nuns were in the parlour.”⁷⁶⁹ “Alice” did not recall having any other visitors, nor did she remember anybody inspecting the premises.

2.336 When she was aged 13, “Alice” began to take holidays with a family in Castlemaine. They had a daughter who was the same age as her: their house “was beautiful...I didn’t want to go back” to Camberwell.⁷⁷⁰ She was able to keep in touch with the family after leaving Camberwell.

2.337 “Alice” asked if she could write letters to her best friend in Aberdeen. The girls were not allowed to write any letters.⁷⁷¹ If the Sisters saw girls writing letters, “they would get them and just tear them up.”⁷⁷²

2.338 “Alice” and her peers believed they were orphans. They were told: “you’ve got no family at all, this is where you’re going to be staying now.”⁷⁷³

759 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.78.

760 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.79.

761 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.79.

762 Written statement of “Alice”, paragraph 59, at WIT.001.002.7933.

763 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.81.

764 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.81.

765 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.82.

766 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.83.

767 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.83.

768 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.85.

769 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.85-86.

770 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.86.

771 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.81.

772 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.87.

773 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.88.

2.339 A series of half-yearly reports about “Alice” which were sent to the Catholic Child Welfare Council in the UK between December 1956 and January 1960 stated that “Alice” corresponded with friends and family in Scotland.⁷⁷⁴ The reports also stated that “Alice” was of very good health and faced no serious illnesses. These statements were untrue. She was prevented from writing letters. She suffered from recurrent vomiting, and also, at one point, her appendix was removed unnecessarily.⁷⁷⁵

Life after care

2.340 “Alice” left Camberwell with no qualifications in 1960, when she was 16.⁷⁷⁶ She received no preparation for leaving.⁷⁷⁷ Thereafter she had no further contact with the Sisters at Camberwell. No one from the home tried to contact her. There was no aftercare.⁷⁷⁸ “Alice” “was glad to get out of there”, but mentally “it was terrible.”⁷⁷⁹

2.341 At that time “Alice” “lost” about “10 years altogether.”⁷⁸⁰ “Alice’s” depression was the cumulative effect of “everything...my back was in so much pain and trying to cope with that and trying to work, because the nuns would say, ‘There’s nothing wrong with you, nothing wrong with you’, and then just living through the hell in Nazareth House.”⁷⁸¹

2.342 After leaving Camberwell, “Alice” went to stay with her holiday family for about a year before getting a job at a children’s hospital in Melbourne.⁷⁸² She went on to work at a psychiatric hospital in Brighton, Victoria, for about five years before relocating to Sydney.

2.343 “Alice” married and had twins. Despite the fact that “Alice” and her husband were “so happy”, “Alice” “had terrible depression after the children were born. When I looked down at them, all I wanted was my own mother.”⁷⁸³ As a result of her time in care, “Alice” never understood love and affection, “[e]ven with my children, when they were young.”⁷⁸⁴

2.344 Encouraged by her husband, “Alice” began to search for her birth family in earnest at around the time that she had children, having struggled to do so while she was working.⁷⁸⁵ This led to “Alice” making contact with her mother and other family members. “Alice” discovered that her family had not known she had been migrated to Australia.

2.345 In 1986, “Alice” and her children flew to the UK, where she met her mother and the rest of her family, including an older sister and two brothers: “it was a big, beautiful

774 Half-yearly report of Australian Child Migrant, at BEW-000000083, pp.2-5.

775 Half-yearly report of Australian Child Migrant, at BEW-000000083, pp.2-5. In later life she found that this illness was undiagnosed coeliac disease.

776 [Written statement of “Alice”](#), paragraph 52, at WIT.001.002.7931.

777 [Transcript, day 177: “Alice”](#), at TRN-5-000000007, p.91.

778 [Transcript, day 177: “Alice”](#), at TRN-5-000000007, p.91.

779 [Transcript, day 177: “Alice”](#), at TRN-5-000000007, p.97.

780 [Transcript, day 177: “Alice”](#), at TRN-5-000000007, p.97.

781 [Transcript, day 177: “Alice”](#), at TRN-5-000000007, p.98.

782 [Written statement of “Alice”](#), paragraphs 71-72, at WIT.001.002.7936.

783 [Written statement of “Alice”](#), paragraph 79, at WIT.001.002.7937.

784 [Transcript, day 177: “Alice”](#), at TRN-5-000000007, p.99.

785 [Transcript, day 177: “Alice”](#), at TRN-5-000000007, p.94.

thing.”⁷⁸⁶ “Alice” saw her mother on five further occasions before her mother died. She remained in contact with her siblings. “Alice” tried to discuss the fact that she was sent to Australia with her mother, “but she didn’t want to say anything, so I never pressed it.”⁷⁸⁷

2.346 “Alice” was not able to track down any records relating to her migration: “I have tried through Nazareth House but they won’t give you any information. We left there with nothing. No paperwork.”⁷⁸⁸

“I have never managed to track down any paperwork relating to my migration...I have tried through Nazareth House but they won’t give you any information.”

“Michaela”

Life in the UK

2.347 “Michaela” and her twin brother were born in Glasgow in 1946. Their mother was a widow, having lost her husband in combat in the Second World War. In September 1951, when the twins were four years old, they were admitted to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, on the recommendation of Nazareth House, Cardonald (which, at that time, only accepted girls).⁷⁸⁹ They were separated and kept apart throughout their time at Aberdeen.⁷⁹⁰

2.348 “Michaela” remembered wearing glasses but otherwise recalled very little about her time in Nazareth House, Aberdeen. She did, however, remember that “[a] lady used to come there, and she must have walked there, and I would go with her to a home where she would put ringlets in my hair with rags and paint my nails and I had to sit in front of the fireplace until the nails dried. I’d stay with her for a couple of days and then she would take me back to Nazareth House.”⁷⁹¹ This would happen “maybe every few weeks...I thought it may have been my mother.”⁷⁹²

Migration

2.349 About a month before the twins migrated, a lady who was not a Sister (it is not clear whether this is the same lady who took “Michaela” out for weekends) took the twins into a room to speak to them.⁷⁹³ She said:

786 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.95.

787 Transcript, day 177: “Alice”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.96.

788 Written statement of “Alice”, paragraph 88, at WIT.001.002.7939.

789 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.3189. The observation book for the twins incorrectly notes that their father and mother were married.

790 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.59.

791 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, pp.60-61.

792 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.61.

793 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.64.

“You might be going to Australia...it’s a nice place, there’s lots of sun...apples and bananas on the trees; would you like to go?’ And I said yes.”

“You might be going to Australia and it’s a nice place, there’s lots of sun but there’s apples and bananas on the trees; would you like to go?’ And I said yes.”⁷⁹⁴ She thought her twin “went along with what I wanted because at that time it was very cold in Scotland.”⁷⁹⁵

2.350 At around the same time, “Michaela” and her twin had their surnames changed from their mother’s name to their father’s name.⁷⁹⁶

2.351 The LEM3 forms for “Michaela” and her twin were signed in August 1954 by their mother, several months before the twins were asked if they wanted to go to Australia. Their LEM3 forms were signed by William Flint on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council in September 1954.

2.352 The twins left Aberdeen in January 1955 when they were eight years old. During their journey to Tilbury Docks they were joined by two more sets of twins: one pair, a boy and a girl from England, were younger than “Michaela” and her twin; the other pair, also a boy and a girl but from Ireland, were older.⁷⁹⁷ They knew that they were going to Australia, but for all they knew “[i]t could have been round the block.”⁷⁹⁸

2.353 “Michaela” enjoyed the trip. The food was “wonderful”.⁷⁹⁹ “Michaela” did experience one mishap when an encounter with a boy resulted in her glasses being thrown overboard.⁸⁰⁰

“[Australia] could have been round the block.”

Life at St Joseph’s Home, Neerkol (1955-1965)

2.354 When they arrived at Sydney in February 1955, all three sets of twins were sent to St Joseph’s Home in Neerkol, which was run by the Sisters of Mercy. Upon arriving, “[t]he first impression was how hot it was”.⁸⁰¹ At one point, shortly after arriving, “Michaela” “just keeled over in church and passed out”, for which she “got the cane from one of the nuns”.⁸⁰²

2.355 The twins had each been given a suitcase in Aberdeen containing clothes, but at Neerkol “the nuns took the suitcase and took away our clothes, and we just then had to dress like everybody else”.⁸⁰³ The Sisters made the clothes, and “dressed us in underwear that was made from calico” and

794 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.64.

795 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.64.

796 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.62.

797 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, pp.64-65.

798 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.66.

799 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.66.

800 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.74.

801 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.67.

802 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 63, at WIT.001.002.5893.

803 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.71.

dresses that “just had our numbers on”.⁸⁰⁴ The Sisters “would call out number so-and-so and you would go and get your dress.”⁸⁰⁵ Some Sisters referred to children exclusively by their number. “Michaela” remembered “introducing myself to other girls and them telling me that I didn’t have a name anymore, I was just a number.”⁸⁰⁶ As at Aberdeen, boys and girls were separated.

2.356 To “Michaela”, the 3,000-acre orphanage plot “was like the only place in the world.”⁸⁰⁷ It seemed to her “like hundreds” of other children were at the orphanage; these were primarily Australian children, both white and Aboriginal.⁸⁰⁸

2.357 The dormitories had up to 30 or 40 beds and an alcove where one of the Sisters would sleep.⁸⁰⁹ The children were woken up at 6:30 am and children who wet the bed were “belted with the bamboo” by the Sisters.⁸¹⁰ They were hit on the backside either over or under their clothes. “Michaela” wet the bed once and spent the night trying to dry her sheet on the veranda. Her sheet dried, but was discoloured, and she was caned.⁸¹¹ Children who wet the bed had to clean their sheets in boilers before taking them to the laundry.⁸¹²



St Joseph's Home, Neerkol, c.1940/1955.
Photograph from Queensland Government collection.
Source: [Find & Connect](#).

2.358 The children had to have cold baths.⁸¹³ They brushed their teeth with home-made soap, because there was no toothpaste.⁸¹⁴

2.359 The food at St Joseph's was “dreadful.”⁸¹⁵ Children could not leave food on their plate: “You stayed there until you ate it.”⁸¹⁶ “On Sundays...you weren't allowed to sit down until you drank what was in front of you in a cup. One Sunday it was Epsom Salts and the next Sunday it was Sennatin. These were laxative drinks to make the kids go to the toilet.”⁸¹⁷

804 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.71.
805 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.71.
806 [Written statement of “Michaela”](#), paragraph 29, at WIT.001.002.5885.
807 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.68.
808 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.70.
809 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.72.
810 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.77.
811 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.78.
812 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.78.
813 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.80.
814 [Written statement of “Michaela”](#), paragraph 34, at WIT.001.002.5886.
815 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.80.
816 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.79
817 [Written statement of “Michaela”](#), paragraph 36, at WIT.001.002.5887.

2.360 “Michaela” worked in the presbytery when she was aged 14. She took the priest’s meals to him and they were “like a banquet compared to what we got.”⁸¹⁸ The Sisters’ food “was about the same as the priest’s” with “little dishes of butter and jam and toast and little jugs of milk.”⁸¹⁹

2.361 The children’s food was so minimal that they would feign toothaches because when the dentist visited “he would just pull out the teeth”, no questions asked, and “[t]he more teeth you got out, the more food you got, so we just said we had toothaches.”⁸²⁰ After having a tooth, or multiple teeth, removed, “you might get a boiled egg or... you might get jam.”⁸²¹ Most of “Michaela’s” back teeth were removed as a result of these ploys to access more food.⁸²²

2.362 The Sisters indulged in indiscriminate physical abuse with a variety of implements. At mealtimes children were hit by Sister Mercia, who was usually supervising, for slouching. Sister Mercia had “a metal shiny bell, and she’d put her hand in where the donger part was and if you leaned over, she would bang you through the back to straighten you up with the bell.”⁸²³ At other times, Sisters would “slap [children] across the face...They always used the cane...just for a minor thing...if you were caught in a little group...you’d get called in and they would just hit you with the bamboo because you were not allowed to talk.”⁸²⁴ “Michaela”

characterised her behaviour at Neerkol as being “like a timid little mouse because I thought if I step out of line, I’ll get belted with the cane.”⁸²⁵ An atmosphere of fear pervaded Neerkol, and children received no emotional support.⁸²⁶

“...you’d get called in and they would just hit you with the bamboo because you were not allowed to talk.”

2.363 Physical abuse prevailed in the classrooms: “if you...didn’t sit up straight or didn’t do the work enough, they would just come and slap you across the face... there was nothing you could do about it, there was no one there to help.”⁸²⁷ School was particularly challenging for “Michaela” because she had lost her glasses on the journey to Australia. When she arrived at Neerkol, “Michaela” had explained that she needed glasses but her pleas were ignored. As a result, “Michaela” “could not distinguish on the blackboard 8s and 6s and 5s and 3s, so I got most of my schoolwork wrong. And the nun would sit at the front and if you got it wrong, she’d lean over the desk and whack you with the bamboo...When she got sick of us, that we’re not clever...she would make us go to the back of the classroom and by that stage I could hardly see anything.”⁸²⁸

818 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.90.

819 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, pp.90-91.

820 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.87.

821 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.87.

822 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.87.

823 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.80.

824 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.94.

825 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.95.

826 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.94.

827 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.73.

828 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, pp.74-75.

“When my periods first came the nuns told me that I would be bleeding until I was about 50. I was terrified, I thought they meant every day.”

2.364 “Michaela” was eventually provided with glasses at the age of 17, following a rare meeting with the Mother Superior in which “Michaela” was unable to read a letter that her brother had sent to her from boarding school, because of her eyesight.⁸²⁹

2.365 In terms of sex education, all that “Michaela” and her peers received was when “the nun took us up one at a time into the room and she said, ‘I need to talk to you about life.’ She said, ‘You’ve got a pearl and when you lose it, you don’t get it back.’ And I’m waiting to see what she was going to tell us, and that was it.”⁸³⁰

2.366 Similarly, “[w]hen my periods first came the nuns told me that I would be bleeding until I was about 50. I was terrified, I thought they meant every day.”⁸³¹ It is, perhaps, unsurprising that when the girls were about 16, and one of “Michaela’s” peers went into labour in a toilet at the end of the veranda where they were sleeping, “Michaela” and the others did not understand where a baby had appeared from.⁸³² “Michaela” and a friend “had to

clean up the mess and we didn’t know where the mess came from.”⁸³³ Malnourishment, together with the fact that the girls “were always carrying linen around in their arms”, meant that the girl’s pregnancy had not been obvious.⁸³⁴

2.367 As a result of this episode, the Sisters “got the doctor out to examine us girls.”⁸³⁵ As she was lining up, “Michaela” saw other girls leaving the examination room “crying and weeping and I thought...I’m not having that, and I kept going to the back of the line.”⁸³⁶

2.368 When “Michaela’s” education was ended at age 13, she was set to work at Neerkol. For 12 to 18 months she worked at the presbytery for the priest. She would clean the house, clean his shoes, have his clothes laundered, and bring him his meals.⁸³⁷ This was essentially a full-time job.⁸³⁸ When she finished working at the presbytery, she was moved to the “small boys’ dormitory” where she undertook similar housekeeping tasks, both for the boys and for the nun who stayed in the dormitory with them.⁸³⁹ She was not paid for her work.

829 “Michaela” described her brother as “very clever,” and this is why he was allowed to attend boarding school: [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.76.

830 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.89.

831 [Written statement of “Michaela”](#), paragraph 61, at WIT.001.002.5893.

832 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.88.

833 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.88.

834 [Written statement of “Michaela”](#), paragraph 59, at WIT.001.002.5892.

835 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.89.

836 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.89.

837 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.84.

838 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.84.

839 [Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”](#), at TRN-5-000000008, p.85.

2.369 The only respite from work came during the Christmas holidays, when children would be sent to stay with a family for up to six weeks. This was not always a break. One family that “Michaela” stayed with had two daughters close to her in age. When she went there, “the girls would go off to the matinees on a Saturday...and I used to have to scrub the stairs and clean the house while the girls all went and had a nice time...I was just like a little slave.”⁸⁴⁰ Families could request particular children, so “Michaela” had to return there the next year. When they asked for her a third time she refused, preferring to stay with the Sisters over Christmas.

“I was just like a little slave.”

2.370 “Michaela” had “good experiences with another family and they actually asked me what I wanted for Christmas and...I said I wanted a bottle of blue Swan ink, and I got it, and I really thought...this is what Christmas is all about, you get a little bottle of ink.”⁸⁴¹ Upon returning to Neerkol, children were instructed to turn in any gifts they had received, which would be handed out at random on ‘Birthday Day’, a single day each year on which the orphanage celebrated every child’s birthday, en masse.⁸⁴² “Michaela” hid her bottle of blue ink, but she could not use it “because it was

blue and they would know that I’d got it somewhere else and didn’t hand it in.”⁸⁴³ The ink eventually turned to powder.

2.371 “Michaela” had no visitors in the ten years that she was at Neerkol.⁸⁴⁴ Some Australian children were taken out for the day by their families, but “[t]he only other people that came” were two men “from the Lions [Club], one of those type of groups”.⁸⁴⁵ These men would bring ice creams for the children.

2.372 The men “used to take the boys down to [the] creek to teach them swimming”, and some boys were sexually abused there.⁸⁴⁶ The boys taken to the creek included “Michaela’s” twin.⁸⁴⁷ He told her in later life about being sexually abused “at the creek and by one of the priests”.⁸⁴⁸ The abuse had a devastating and long-term effect on him.

2.373 “Michaela” left Neerkol in 1965, when she was 18 years old. When she left, she “decided that no one was ever going to hit me ever again. No one was going to cut my hair and I was going to have a house and a car.”⁸⁴⁹

Life after care

2.374 “Michaela’s” first job after Neerkol was helping a childminder to look after children at her family home. The difference between her provision of childcare and Neerkol was stark: “These children were in a loving home. [“Michaela’s” employer] treated all the kids

840 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.81.

841 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.82.

842 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.83.

843 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.82.

844 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.91.

845 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.91.

846 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, pp.91-92.

847 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.92.

848 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.93.

849 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 113, at WIT.001.002.5904.

the same regardless if they were boarders, day kids or even her own kids. They were all happy kids and they had nice food.”⁸⁵⁰

2.375 The support and encouragement of this one person changed her life. She became a nurse. Later, she qualified as a veterinary nurse and opened a pet shop.⁸⁵¹ “Michaela” remained in contact with the family she stayed with after leaving Neerkol, and her employer’s husband gave her away when she was married.⁸⁵² Despite her success, “Michaela” wondered “what I would have been if I’d stayed [in Scotland] and had an education”.⁸⁵³

2.376 Her brother’s life turned out rather differently. “Michaela” blamed the abuse he suffered at Neerkol for “his life falling apart”.⁸⁵⁴ Despite being clever and winning a scholarship to become a teacher, his life went on a downward spiral.⁸⁵⁵ He was living on the streets, had no employment, and turned to alcohol as a coping mechanism. He was rarely in touch with “Michaela”.

2.377 In efforts to find out more about her background, “Michaela” wrote letters to Nazareth House, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army, and “always got the same reply, that I was illegitimate.”⁸⁵⁶ In 1965, she contacted the Federal Catholic Immigration Committee (FCIC), hoping they could help.⁸⁵⁷

She did not give up. Nazareth House, Aberdeen, sent a record that included some basic information about “Michaela’s” parents.⁸⁵⁸ She did not, however, find her family until she became involved with the CMT in 1988. By that time, her mother had died.

2.378 “Michaela” found out about the CMT when a friend who knew she was looking for her family saw an article in a magazine. With their help, she discovered that she had three half-siblings on her mother’s side, and two on her father’s side. Two of her maternal half-siblings refused to meet her, but she was in contact with her other three half-siblings, and visited one in the UK and one in Israel several times.⁸⁵⁹ “Michaela” benefitted from this family contact. The CMT also helped her twin to visit their half-brother in London.

2.379 For “Michaela”, the education that she missed out on at Neerkol was one of her greatest regrets. As a twin, she also has regrets on behalf of her brother. She believes that the abuse he suffered “preyed on his mind.”⁸⁶⁰ He “was such a clever young man and he had such promise... I think [he] took to drink to push memories out of his mind. Then in the course of his life, things just haven’t worked out for him...He could have been Prime Minister of Australia. Everything just fell apart.”⁸⁶¹

850 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 86, at WIT.001.002.5898.

851 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.101.

852 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 88, at WIT.001.002.5898.

853 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 115, at WIT.001.002.5904.

854 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.103.

855 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 55, at WIT.001.002.5891; Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.102.

856 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.105.

857 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 103, at WIT.001.002.5901.

858 Letter from Sister Mary Gobraith at Nazareth House, Aberdeen, to Canon Harvey, 17 February 1966, at BEW-000000093, pp.11-12.

859 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.107.

860 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraph 100, at WIT.001.002.5901.

861 Written statement of “Michaela”, paragraphs 100-101, at WIT.001.002.5901.

2.380 Because of migration, “Michaela” had to be totally self-reliant: “if I did fall down, there’s no one to pick me up so I had to get on with what I wanted to do”.⁸⁶² While “Michaela” was “very happy with [her] life now”, and had an Australian passport, she still considered herself to be Scottish.⁸⁶³

Applicants - Nazareth House, Carlisle

2.381 The following are the accounts of applicants whose care was arranged in Scotland, and who were migrated overseas after having first been placed at Nazareth House, Carlisle.

“Anne”, on behalf of “Tom”

2.382 “Tom’s” younger half-sister, “Anne”, provided evidence to the Inquiry on his behalf.

Life in the UK

2.383 “Tom” was born in Glasgow in 1942. Two years later, “Tom’s” half-brother was born. His mother struggled to pay the rent, and “she turned to the Catholic Church.”⁸⁶⁴ Aged three, “Tom” was admitted to Nazareth House in Carlisle. His half-brother remained with their mother because Nazareth House “wouldn’t take him” due to a physical disability. “Anne” did not know why “Tom” ended up in Carlisle when his mother still lived in Glasgow, but she “used to go and visit Tom” there.⁸⁶⁵

Migration

2.384 In May 1947, when “Tom” was around five years old, a LEM3 form was completed for his migration to Australia.⁸⁶⁶ The form was signed by Brother P.A. Conlon as a representative of the Catholic Child Welfare Council. There is a signature in the space reserved for parental approval, claiming to be that of “Tom’s” mother, but she told “Anne” that “she didn’t sign anything to say that Tom could migrate.”⁸⁶⁷ “Anne” was able to say that the handwriting on the form was not her mother’s. It was on this supposed authority that “Tom” was migrated to Australia.

862 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.109.

863 Transcript, day 178: “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.111.

864 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.51.

865 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.52.

866 LEM3 form for “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.3550.

867 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.54.

“They told her that [‘Tom’] was away over to Australia to get adopted for a better life”.

2.385 Also in 1947, “Anne’s” parents met and married. Her parents travelled to Carlisle in 1948 to collect “Tom”, and were told that he had gone to Australia.⁸⁶⁸

2.386 “Anne’s” mother tried to find out where in Australia “Tom” had gone. The Sisters of Nazareth refused to tell her. “They told her that he was away over to Australia to get adopted for a better life...They told her if she wanted him back in Scotland, she’d have to pay for his fare back.”⁸⁶⁹ Nonetheless, “my mum kept going back to the Catholic Church” to ask about “Tom”.⁸⁷⁰ After “Anne” was born, her mother wrote a letter to “Tom” to tell him about his new half-sister, and handed it to “the sisters at the Catholic Church. They said they’d make sure that he got the letter. I found out years later that [‘Tom’] got the letter the day he left the orphanage.”⁸⁷¹

2.387 “Tom” told “Anne” that, before leaving for Australia, “the children were told they were going on a journey and that they were going on a big ship...and said he was going on an adventure. They said he’d love it and he’d get ice cream. He told [‘Anne’] he didn’t want to go and that he was wanting his

mum. It was all a mystery to him.”⁸⁷² He also told “Anne” that “all the children going to Australia saw a doctor and had their tonsils taken out.”⁸⁷³ “Tom’s” medical examination form was signed in early November 1947, by a doctor with a Liverpool address.⁸⁷⁴

“...[‘Tom’] didn’t want to go... he was wanting his mum.”

2.388 On 14 November 1947, “Tom” boarded the SS Asturias with many other child migrants. He “was kept below deck for the whole journey.”⁸⁷⁵ During the crossing, “Tom” “remembered being sick quite a lot. The older boys had to look after the younger ones. Some of the older boys bullied [‘Tom’] because he was being sick and crying for his mum.”⁸⁷⁶ The children “got as much food as they wanted on the ship. That was a good memory for him.”⁸⁷⁷

2.389 When the ship arrived at Fremantle and the children disembarked, they “were separated into age groups” and met by Brother Keaney. “Tom” “was then taken to the orphanage.”⁸⁷⁸ “Tom” was five years old.

868 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.52.

869 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, pp.52-53.

870 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.53.

871 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.53.

872 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.54.

873 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.54.

874 Medical examination form for “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.3551.

875 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.55.

876 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.56.

877 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.56.

878 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.56.

Life in Australia

Castledare and Clontarf (1947-1957)

2.390 “Tom” was first taken to Castledare Boys’ Home.⁸⁷⁹ When he reached the age of 11, he was transferred to Clontarf Boys’ Town.⁸⁸⁰



Castledare, building, January 1985. Photograph by Betty Smith. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.391 The routine at the institutions involved waking “at 6 o’clock in the morning” and working before breakfast. “Tom” “used to sleep outside at Clontarf. Even in the wintertime he used to sleep outside on a veranda.”⁸⁸¹ At Castledare, they slept in dormitories.⁸⁸² “Tom” also “spoke about a big washroom where they all went to get washed.”⁸⁸³

2.392 At the institutions, “All [‘Tom’] had to wear was a pair of khaki shorts and a vest. He never had any shoes.”⁸⁸⁴ On a Sunday, when the children went to church, “they had to be very smartly dressed.”⁸⁸⁵ On some occasions,

“visitors would come to both homes to view the children for adoption. The children would be told to go away and get themselves spruced up. But [‘Tom’] was never picked.”⁸⁸⁶ “Tom” “never celebrated a birthday at Castledare and Clontarf”, and Christmas likewise was not a special occasion for the boys.⁸⁸⁷

2.393 “Tom” was emotionally abused. “The Christian Brothers told him his mother was a whore and she was dead and that was why he had been shipped over to Australia.”⁸⁸⁸ They also told “Tom” that he had no living relations.

“Even in the wintertime [‘Tom’] used to sleep outside on a veranda.”

2.394 During a normal week, the boys “were mostly used for work”.⁸⁸⁹ “Tom” “needed glasses...He was a teenager before he actually got glasses...That affected his education. [‘Tom’] couldn’t read or write properly when he left the Christian Brothers.”⁸⁹⁰ In school, “Tom” was physically abused, he “constantly complained [he] couldn’t see but the only response was a flogging with a cane...for getting the work wrong. [He] had constant headaches from eye strain.”⁸⁹¹ The Brothers took “Tom” out

879 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.56.

880 The nature of the evidence makes it difficult to distinguish, at times, which events refer to which institution. This is made clear wherever possible, but in some cases it has not been possible to allocate events to one institution or the other.

881 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.56.

882 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.56.

883 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.57.

884 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.57.

885 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.58.

886 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.58.

887 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.58.

888 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.58.

889 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.57.

890 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.57.

891 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

“...violence was part of daily life, along with the shouting and bullying.”

of school, telling him he “couldn’t learn” and would have “to remain on the farm working as an ‘old boy.’”⁸⁹² “Tom” “felt stigmatised by the label of ‘stupid.’”⁸⁹³

2.395 At Castledare, “Tom” had “to clean the showers, polish wooden floors, clean the church and the dormitories. At Clontarf, the heavy, dangerous work began, when [he] was 11.”⁸⁹⁴ There, the boys “had to clear the pines [sic] trees growing along the front drive; all done by hand, wearing no shoes, chopping with axes, digging out the roots...[They] had to dig out the swimming pool...all done on very poor rations of crap food not fit for the pigs—literally, as they were given better.”⁸⁹⁵ “Tom” “was hired out” at Clontarf; on one placement “he thought he was going out there to be sized up for being adopted but he was sent out there to work. Because he didn’t do what he was meant to do, he got a beating from the owner. He then got another beating when he went back to the orphanage.”⁸⁹⁶

2.396 The food at the institutions “was of the most appalling quality and inadequate ration.”⁸⁹⁷ Breakfast consisted of “porridge that looked like slops...they didn’t get fed again until 6 o’clock at night, when it was slops again. If they didn’t eat the food...they

got a slap about the head.”⁸⁹⁸ In his statement to the Australian Royal Commission, “Tom” explained: “Often there was evidence of vermin, weevils and bugs floating around” in the food.⁸⁹⁹ Once, he “had a plate put in front of me with pig flaps. That means the underbelly of a female pig with the nipples hanging off. Underneath were maggots and a serve of rotten tomatoes on the side. I threw the whole plate over my shoulder in disgust...Doyle was there. He pulled me onto the floor and thrashed me, ordering me to pick it up and eat it but I refused.”⁹⁰⁰

“...I had a plate put in front of me with pig flaps... Underneath were maggots and a serve of rotten tomatoes on the side.”

2.397 The Brothers were vicious.⁹⁰¹ Boys “could be beaten for anything.”⁹⁰² “Tom” remembered being “flogged, whipped and beaten by Brothers Murphy, Foley, Higgins, Campbell, Angus and Moore, but the most violent and sadistic bastard of them all was brother Bruno Doyle.”⁹⁰³ For “Tom”, “violence was part of daily life, along with the shouting

892 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

893 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

894 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

895 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505-0506.

896 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.57.

897 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0503.

898 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.57.

899 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0506.

900 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0506.

901 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.60.

902 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.60.

903 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0504.

and bullying.⁹⁰⁴ “Tom” explained that “just a word to Doyle” from one of the “pet” boys “could get another kid the flogging of his life. In the quadrangle Doyle would call out [the children’s] names and announce [their] crime.”⁹⁰⁵ Brother Doyle would then get the children onto a stage, where they were made to drop their pants before being flogged with “a thick leather belt.”⁹⁰⁶ “Tom” recalled that: “This happened more times than I can remember.”⁹⁰⁷ Brother Doyle inflicted “[p]ain, shame and fear” on the boys at Clontarf.⁹⁰⁸ When “Tom” visited Clontarf with “Anne” in later life, he “showed [her] a pulley in a room with lockers. It was about 6 feet off the floor. He said the Christian Brothers would lie the boys on the pulley up high. The Christian Brothers would let the pulley go and it would stop just above the floor. That was one of the punishments.”⁹⁰⁹

2.398 “Tom” “had constant workplace injuries: blood blisters, stone bruises, lime burns on [his] feet and legs from mixing cement, standing in it without shoes.”⁹¹⁰ “Tom” also witnessed “a boy falling off a cart. The cart ran over the top of him and he died”.⁹¹¹ “Anne” saw “quite a few graves at the orphanage at Castledare” when she visited.⁹¹²

“I had constant workplace injuries: blood blisters, stone bruises, lime burns on my feet and legs from mixing cement”.

2.399 The boys at Clontarf faced harsh emotional abuse. A “pet dog who lived there...had pups and Doyle made [the children] watch while he drowned the puppies in a bucket, one by one.”⁹¹³ Brother Doyle would kill pets in front of the children “as a warning and a punishment, make us watch while he broke their necks. It made you kind of wither and die inside.”⁹¹⁴

2.400 “Tom” told “Anne” “that he had been raped, often, by a Christian Brother at Castledare.”⁹¹⁵ While “Tom” did not give her any further details, in his statements to Redress Western Australia and to the Australian Royal Commission, he stated that “Brother Murphy sexually assaulted [him] at Castledare over several years.”⁹¹⁶

2.401 Brother Murphy “would come to my bed at night and fondle my genitals. Then one night when I was seven he took me from my bed to his room. In his room he stripped me naked. I remember being very frightened

904 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0504.

905 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

906 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

907 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

908 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

909 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.61.

910 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0506.

911 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.59.

912 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.60.

913 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507.

914 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507. [Walter Kerkhoff](#) recalls this treatment in his own statement.

915 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.60.

916 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0504.

by his emotional intensity and excitement. He made me lay on my stomach and then anally raped me. All the time he had his hand over my mouth to stifle my screaming. It was indescribably painful. When he had finished he told me to go back to my bed. I was bleeding from my backside, could hardly walk. Anybody would have known what happened to me, I could not hide it, hide the blood in my bed and my pants the next day. But nobody said a word. It happened again, many, many times over the next few years. I know he did the same to many other little boys."⁹¹⁷

2.402 "Tom" was sent by the Brothers for a "holiday", where he had to "work in the fields, digging out mallee roots, no shoes or proper clothing, no food or even water out in the bush blocks alone."⁹¹⁸ One night, the farmer did not return at the end of the day to pick "Tom" up from the paddock. "Tom" was "afraid I'd be there alone all night so I started walking up the road. A car stopped and it was a priest."⁹¹⁹ "Tom" told him about what had happened, and he took "Tom" back to the Christian Brothers. As it was the holidays, "most of the boys weren't there. I walked into the dormitory, alone, very upset after such a terrible day. Murphy was waiting for me. He took me to his room and raped me again. This time he didn't bother covering my mouth with his hand because there was no-one to hear me scream."⁹²⁰

2.403 "Tom" was 11 years old when he was transferred to Clontarf in about 1953. Brother

Murphy was transferred to Clontarf around early 1954. One morning, having been raped again by Brother Murphy, "Tom" "ran away from Clontarf. I had no idea where to go, just could not stay without hope of ever feeling safe. When I was dragged back—we were always caught—Doyle got me into the Trophy Room. He belted me, demanding to know why I ran away. Eventually I told him what Murphy had done and he laid into me, screaming I was a liar. He knocked me to the ground and kicked me over and over in the balls. The pain was excruciating and my entire groin swelled up, my penis and scrotum were red raw, swollen and throbbing with pain. I could hardly breathe...I was taken to the infirmary but of course no doctor was allowed to see me. I was watched over by the nuns, but even in a hospital bed Doyle came in and belted me with a strap while I was lying there, calling me a liar; hitting me and demanding I admit it was all a lie. I refused."⁹²¹

"...there was no-one to hear me scream."

2.404 "Tom" was left with "permanent injuries to [his] groin that...ruined [his] life."⁹²²

2.405 "Tom" told "Anne" about one particular occasion when he and several other boys "made their escape during the night."⁹²³ At one point they stopped to ask for food. That person "must have known where they were from because of their clothing

917 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of "Tom", at WIT.003.001.0504.

918 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of "Tom", at WIT.003.001.0504.

919 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of "Tom", at WIT.003.001.0504.

920 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of "Tom", at WIT.003.001.0504.

921 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of "Tom", at WIT.003.001.0505.

922 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of "Tom", at WIT.003.001.0505.

923 [Transcript, day 173: "Anne" \(CQG\)](#), at TRN-5-000000013, p.59.

“...all around me, boys were being picked off and shared between those filthy perverts.”

and told the Christian Brothers. The children were taken back and they got a beating for it.”⁹²⁴ If the police were involved the outcome was the same, because “the Chief of Police in Western Australia was friendly with the Christian Brothers. The police were corrupt and knew what was going on at the Orphanages but they just took the boys back.”⁹²⁵ “Tom” “learned to keep his mouth closed. He never mentioned telling anybody else about it.”⁹²⁶ He nonetheless wondered why the people who were “coming and going all the time” never objected “to children felling trees in full view.”⁹²⁷

“The police...knew what was going on at the Orphanages but they just took the boys back.”

2.406 Although Brother Murphy’s sexual abuse eventually stopped when “Tom” was at Clontarf, “the molestation continued and all around me, boys were being picked off and shared between those filthy perverts.”⁹²⁸ “Tom” recalled the time when Brother Angus attempted to molest him: “I stood up for myself and made him stop...Once we got

to about 14 the Brothers backed off—they were nervous of the violent young men we’d become. I’d like to say I felt relieved by that age that I had control and could protect myself but it’s not really true. I was so screwed up by years of deprivation, violence and rape by then.”⁹²⁹

“Once we got to about 14 the Brothers backed off—they were nervous of the violent young men we’d become.”

Life after care

2.407 In 1957, when he was 15 or 16 years old, “Tom” left Clontarf. He received no “support or help from the Christian Brothers after he left.”⁹³⁰ He was “completely unprepared for the outside world with very limited job prospects.”⁹³¹ He went to work as an apprentice jockey.⁹³² When he left Clontarf, his new boss “couldn’t believe the condition [‘Tom’] was in and probably that was the first time [he] saw decent food.”⁹³³ Until the age of 21, most of “Tom’s” wages were “put in safe keeping,” but he “never got that money.”⁹³⁴

924 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.59.

925 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.59.

926 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.61.

927 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0506.

928 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0504.

929 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0504.

930 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.61.

931 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0505.

932 Transcript, day 173: “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.62.

933 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0506.

934 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507.

2.408 Following an accident, “Tom” was no longer able to ride horses and had to find a new job.⁹³⁵ He was in the army for two years, possibly for National Service. He then worked as a labourer before becoming a truck driver, which he did until he retired and “loved it.”⁹³⁶

2.409 “Tom” later turned to alcohol: “The loneliness, shame and anger left [me] with depression and made it impossible for me to recover any kind of normal life. In 1978, my drinking was so bad I was told I’d be dead in 6 months if I didn’t stop.”⁹³⁷ Although he “was always terrified of getting married, getting close to any person,” in 1980, “Tom” married his wife, and the couple remained together until 2010, when they divorced.⁹³⁸ He was never able to have children, as a result of Brother Doyle’s assault on him.⁹³⁹

2.410 In the late 1980s, “Tom” approached the CMT. He did not know about his and “Anne’s” other sister, or “Anne’s” father’s children until the Child Migrants Trust found them.⁹⁴⁰ “Tom” “was ecstatic. At last he had a family. He felt like he was somebody. He knew where he came from. He knew he had a mum and he had sisters and a brother.”⁹⁴¹ In 1992, CMT brought “Tom” over to the UK to meet his family. “Tom” told “Anne” that “he was desperate and that he wanted to see his

mum. He said he’d been told she was dead and wanted to see her.”⁹⁴²

“At last he had a family...He knew where he came from.”

2.411 “Anne” described that when “Tom” went to give their mother a cuddle she pushed him away. “Anne” told “Tom” she thought their mother “might be scared that [‘Tom’] would think she had sent him to Australia.”⁹⁴³ “Tom” did not blame his mum for what happened to him.

2.412 “Anne” was able to visit “Tom” in Australia in 1994. He took her to Castledare and Clontarf saying: “‘This was my home.’ [‘Anne’] said, ‘This wasn’t home, this was a prison camp.’ He told me that the children built this and the children built that...It was shocking.”⁹⁴⁴ “Tom” “pointed out a picture of [Brother] Keaney. His canvas painting was in the foyer at Castledare...like he was some kind of God.”⁹⁴⁵

2.413 As he got older, “Tom” felt “sadder and more defeated. Some days I wish I hadn’t woken up. It’s like being in prison.”⁹⁴⁶ He suffered from severe post-traumatic stress, sleep deprivation, and he was consumed with anger and anxiety and, despite having a loving family, felt “very much alone.”⁹⁴⁷

935 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.62.

936 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.62.

937 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507.

938 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507; [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, pp.62-63.

939 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507.

940 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.63.

941 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.63.

942 [Transcript, day 173](#) “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.66.

943 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.65.

944 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.67.

945 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.67.

946 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507.

947 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0503.

“Nothing really helps while there is no justice.”

2.414 Over the course of his life, and his involvement in several inquiries into child migration schemes, “Tom” had “seen psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers. I have tried to forget and I have tried to explore it all in detail. Nothing really helps while there is no justice. I’ve lived in a state of perpetual pain and fear for so many years it is impossible to trust anybody or feel OK enough to relax, let alone sleep...it wasn’t just what happened to me, it was the impact of witnessing terrible trauma landing on other kids too.”⁹⁴⁸

2.415 “Tom” never “recovered from the horror of [his] childhood as a state ward in Western Australia.”⁹⁴⁹ He knew he never would.⁹⁵⁰

2.416 “Tom” and “Anne” continued to visit one another over the following years. In 2015, “Tom” died. “Anne” and her son travelled to Australia for the funeral, and they brought “Tom’s” ashes back to Scotland. She missed “Tom”.⁹⁵¹

Frederick Woollorton Smith

Life in the UK

2.417 Frederick Smith was born in March 1938, in Dundee.⁹⁵² He was admitted to Nazareth House, Lancaster, on 3 December 1938; an entry in the Nazareth House, Lancaster, observation book notes that his “parents are Catholics in very poor circumstances.”⁹⁵³ A little over 18 months later, in July 1940, he was transferred to Nazareth House, Carlisle, on the recommendation of the Mother Superior at Lancaster.⁹⁵⁴

2.418 Nazareth House, Carlisle, was near a US air base. During the war, Americans “used to come in on a Sunday and all that and bring in ice creams and...tins of toothpaste, pink toothpaste, for us to clean our teeth because during the war we were using salt to clean our teeth.”⁹⁵⁵ He believed that the Sisters “were pretty good. They used the strap, but that’s all part and parcel of growing up.”⁹⁵⁶ “The food was good” and Frederick did not describe any of his experiences at Nazareth House as abusive.⁹⁵⁷

948 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0503 and WIT.003.001.0506.

949 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0503.

950 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0503.

951 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.68.

952 Whilst Frederick’s birth was registered at Chelmsford Borough, in the County of Essex, England, he was told by his family when they were reunited that he was born in Dundee, Scotland. See [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.14, Frederick Smith’s Certified Copy of an Entry of Birth, at INQ.001.004.0725. Baptism certificate of Frederick Woollorton Smith, at WIT.003.001.8673.

953 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.14; Nazareth House, Lancaster, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3348.

954 Nazareth House, Lancaster, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3349.

955 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.15.

956 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.15.

957 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.15.

“...what I was really happy about is we were going on a boat trip.”

Migration

2.419 The idea of migration was first introduced to Frederick when two Christian Brothers visited Nazareth House, Carlisle.⁹⁵⁸ The Brothers announced that they needed “people, young kids to come out to Australia where we can educate them...and if you pass the medical then you’ll be accepted.”⁹⁵⁹ The Brothers told the children that Australia was “a land of sun and glory and there’s gold and there’s fruit trees everywhere...being 9 or something like that, your eyes open up like saucers and you think, this doesn’t sound like a bad move. Also, what I was really happy about is we were going on a boat trip.”⁹⁶⁰

2.420 The Sisters and other representatives of the Catholic Church made the decision and administered the process.⁹⁶¹ Frederick’s LEM3 form was signed on 17 January 1947 by Sister Mary Fidelis, the Mother Superior of Nazareth House, Carlisle, in the capacity of guardian.⁹⁶² Frederick’s parents were in fact still alive.⁹⁶³ The second signature on the LEM3 form is that of Brother P.A. Conlon, who signed on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council.⁹⁶⁴

2.421 In November 1947, Frederick and other children from across the UK boarded the SS Asturias for Fremantle, Australia. Frederick, then aged nine, was on the ship alongside other boys from across the UK who were all approximately the same age, with the oldest boy being about 11 years old. For him, “it was freedom and the best part about it was there was no punishment, like if you played up, as the nuns called it... most probably because there were other people on board, they wouldn’t hit us.”⁹⁶⁵ On the ship, “the food was brilliant.”⁹⁶⁶ Frederick “had a ball” during the six weeks or so that he spent on the ship.⁹⁶⁷

2.422 The Asturias arrived at Fremantle on 10 December 1947. After getting off the ship, “[t]hey lined us all up on the wharf and they had buses lined up and they took a group photo of all the kids with our cases and little hats on and all that type of stuff. Someone who must have had a bit of authority, done a bit of a talk...Then when that was over, they loaded us on the bus to go to Clontarf Boys’ Home.”⁹⁶⁸

958 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.16.

959 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.16.

960 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.16.

961 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.18.

962 LEM3 form for Frederick Woollorton Smith, at WIT.003.001.8672.

963 Alongside details of his migration, the children’s register notes his “parents [are] living”: Nazareth House, Carlisle, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.3349.

964 LEM3 form for Frederick Woollorton Smith, at WIT.003.001.8672.

965 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.19.

966 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.19.

967 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.19.

968 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.20.

2.423 In this process, “sadly and unfortunately for a lot of the kids, the brothers were split up”, but Frederick could not say whether it was on the basis of age or for some other reason that such separations occurred.⁹⁶⁹

“...sadly and unfortunately for a lot of the kids, the brothers were split up.”

2.424 Although Frederick and a packed bus-load of boys first stopped at Clontarf, he and other migrants were sent on to Bindoon. Bindoon was the first Australian institution in which he lived.

Life in Australia

Bindoon (1947-1949)

2.425 Frederick arrived at Bindoon in December 1947. He was nine years old. As soon as he and the other children arrived, their clothing was taken from them, never to be seen again. They were given “a pair of khaki shorts and a khaki shirt.”⁹⁷⁰

2.426 The buildings at Bindoon had been “built by the boys over the years. There were big bedrooms”, although some children “slept on the veranda.”⁹⁷¹ Frederick slept on the veranda “for most probably six months” before moving into the 30- to 40-bed dormitory.⁹⁷² While “the mess hall was...nice and big to take the whole lot of us,” the food was “absolutely pathetic.”⁹⁷³



Bindoon Boys' Town, building construction, 1952. Photograph from Western Australia Government photographer collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

969 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.21.

970 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.26.

971 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.28.

972 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.31-32.

973 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.28-29.

“Brother Keaney was a very tall...big man...18 stones at least...he’d just knock you over with the horse...if you were a bit slow at work”.

2.427 As soon as the boys started at Bindoon, it was “straight into labour.”⁹⁷⁴ After school had finished for the day “we had to chip bricks...so they could be reused”, and during Frederick’s time there, “we built the staircases and the building with the mortar and bricks and all that.”⁹⁷⁵ Frederick and his peers, who numbered up to 150, were aged eight to nine.⁹⁷⁶

“...we built the staircases and the building with the mortar and bricks and all that.”

2.428 Schooling at Bindoon was provided by the Brothers, but it “was pretty well non-existent.”⁹⁷⁷ During his time at Bindoon, Frederick sat one grade, the only grade he took during his time in the four different institutions.⁹⁷⁸ During his year of education in Bindoon, Frederick “was always nervous” so he was “never able to concentrate.”⁹⁷⁹

2.429 When people Frederick thought were government welfare workers visited Bindoon, “we had to have clean clothes on and shoes on our feet...and they’d just walk around

and the pets...were the only ones who the people who came to visit were allowed to talk to. They weren’t allowed to talk to the general population.”⁹⁸⁰

2.430 The “pets”, who were chosen by the Brothers, “were taught how to speak to these people...And there was always two or three Brothers around to make sure that nothing went wrong.”⁹⁸¹ Boys would rarely be sent to hospital: “they had a fear of sending you off to hospital” because, if the Brothers sent a boy to hospital, “they had to answer to the child welfare department, why and what happened, and everything like that.”⁹⁸² Also, “you learned not to tell your mates anything either because...it would eventually get around to the Brothers and you were in trouble.”⁹⁸³

“...you learned not to tell your mates anything”.

2.431 At Bindoon, Brother Keaney was in charge. “Keaney was a very tall, ex-copper from Queensland...a very, very brutal man.”⁹⁸⁴ Frederick estimated that he weighed “at least 18 stones.”⁹⁸⁵ Brother Keaney would “knock you over with the horse...if you were

974 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.29.

975 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.29-30.

976 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.30.

977 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.31.

978 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.32.

979 [Written statement of Frederick Wooltorton Smith](#), paragraph 41, at WIT.001.002.8128.

980 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.33.

981 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.33.

982 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.61.

983 [Written statement of Frederick Wooltorton Smith](#), paragraph 50, at WIT.001.002.8130.

984 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.27.

985 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.27.

a bit slow at work".⁹⁸⁶ He carried a three- to four-metre-long shillelagh, a knotted stick that he "used all over your back...to move you along."⁹⁸⁷

2.432 The majority of the Brothers in Bindoon regularly used the strap for minor misdemeanours, like being late to class or to work.⁹⁸⁸ Some Brothers used additional forms of physical punishment. Brother Howe, who was "in charge of the stock," used "the whip on you if you were too slow" in agricultural work.⁹⁸⁹ Brother Dawe did not use the strap; instead, he "would turn around and punch you straight in the head."⁹⁹⁰

2.433 Frederick was sexually abused by four of the Brothers at Bindoon. The first was Brother O'Neill. One day, Frederick returned late from a nearby swimming hole. He was limping, with a blood blister on his foot. He was also badly sunburned. Brother O'Neill, seeing him returning, "called me over and said, 'I'll see you tonight in my room'", the supposed purpose for the visit being to tend to his ailments.⁹⁹¹ Frederick accordingly reported to Brother O'Neill's room, and Brother O'Neill treated Frederick's various blisters, taking off Fredrick's pyjamas to do so. After tending to the blisters, Brother O'Neill said to Frederick that he believed he played with himself. Frederick was confused, and denied it. For that, Brother O'Neill "gave

me a beautiful backhander."⁹⁹² Frederick told Brother O'Neill that "the only thing I play with myself was with doogs, the marbles, I played doogs on my own. [Brother O'Neill] said, 'Don't be a smart one', and I got another backhander."⁹⁹³ Brother O'Neill then raped him.

2.434 Shortly after Frederick was raped by Brother O' Neill, he was raped by Brother Angus, who also accused Frederick of "play[ing] with [him]self."⁹⁹⁴ Frederick thought that "the only conclusion you can come to is that O'Neill lagged on me to Angus."⁹⁹⁵

2.435 The sexual abuse by Brother Angus "would happen everywhere...we'd be sucker-bashing and he'd drive up in the Fargo Ute and...say, 'Right, Smith, I want you to open the gates for me because we're going to drive the sheep through there.' So I'd get in the Ute with him, go and open the gate. I'd only open one gate and next thing he's all over me and my dacks are down and I'm getting raped on the back of the Fargo Ute."⁹⁹⁶

2.436 Brother Wise was the next Brother to sexually abuse Frederick. Initially, Frederick trusted Brother Wise, who had never belted him. Frederick told Brother Wise that he had been abused by Brother Angus. However, Brother Wise "asked me to explain and he done the same bloody thing."⁹⁹⁷

986 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.27.

987 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.27.

988 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.34.

989 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.34.

990 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.34.

991 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.40.

992 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.40.

993 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.40. Frederick includes more detail about the abuse by Brother O'Neil and others in his autobiographical account. See Frederick Woollorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996), at WIT.003.001.8686.

994 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.39.

995 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.38-39.

996 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.40-41. The term "ute" was used by the applicant to refer to a utility vehicle.

997 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.41.

“...[the Brothers] were doing exactly to me what they were saying you’re going to...Hell for.”

2.437 Brother Dawe also sexually abused Frederick at Bindoon.⁹⁹⁸ Frederick did not detail this abuse in his evidence, but he described it in his autobiographical account.⁹⁹⁹ As with the abuse by Brother O’Neill, the abuse by Brother Dawe was instigated with the promise of a remedy for a blister that Frederick had developed. Brother Dawe raped Frederick when he was nine years old.

2.438 As a result of the sexual abuse, Frederick “used to have nightmares...and also wet my bed, and through wetting my bed, I got really belted in the morning and had to stand out with the wet sheet over my head so the other boys could look and say, ‘He’s a wet-the-bedder’.”¹⁰⁰⁰

2.439 The abuse at Bindoon left Frederick utterly confused: “I knew something was wrong, but I only knew that because they used to say if you sin, you’re going to go to Purgatory and if you commit a bigger sin, like sex, you’re going to go to Hell. But they were doing it and it was total confusion...they were doing exactly to me what they were saying you’re going to Purgatory or...Hell for.”¹⁰⁰¹

2.440 One morning, Frederick was called into the office, and told “you’re on the truck with Brother Dawe and going to Castledare.”¹⁰⁰² Frederick left Bindoon on 28 May 1949, and his time at Castledare began.

Castledare (1949-1950)

2.441 Castledare Boys’ Home was the home “for us little blokes who couldn’t do the physical heavy work at Bindoon or Clontarf”; the children did not have to build at Castledare as they had at Bindoon, but they did not receive much by way of education either.¹⁰⁰³ Frederick “stayed in the one grade all the time”, the same grade he had been in at Bindoon.¹⁰⁰⁴ Although the food was “a big improvement”, some of Frederick’s other experiences at Castledare were not.¹⁰⁰⁵ Children who wet the bed in particular were very harshly treated. Brothers not only belted them but forced them to put their wet sheets over their heads and stand in the quadrangle, and encouraged other children to mock them.¹⁰⁰⁶ As at Bindoon, whenever government representatives visited “a few of the boys were picked out and they just talked to them and...they never bothered about the other boys.”¹⁰⁰⁷

998 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.37.

999 Frederick Woollorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996) at WIT.003.001.8686.

1000 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.37.

1001 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.38.

1002 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.36.

1003 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.43.

1004 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.52.

1005 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.45.

1006 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.46.

1007 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.45.

2.442 Frederick was, again, sexually abused at Castledare. This abuse began “about 5 weeks after being in Castledare. Brother Murphy was the first one to attack me in Castledare and then Campbell joined into the affair.”¹⁰⁰⁸ Frederick explained that Brother Campbell “could make me wet myself just if he looked at me.”¹⁰⁰⁹ Brother Campbell was a mechanic and a lay Brother. Frederick nicknamed him “Hose Brother” because of the piece of hose he carried in his robes. Brother Campbell “used to wrap the hose around my private parts and also he’d hit my private parts with them...he’d stick it up my backside and then he used to make me go and lie in the corner and I’d be bawling my bloody eyes out and I’d lose everything, which was worse to me than what he was doing to me, because I messed myself and peed myself, and that really affected me big time. It overpowered the use of the hose and the sexual abuse.”¹⁰¹⁰

2.443 Brother Campbell’s abuse of Frederick, which continued throughout his time at Castledare, was appalling. Frederick explained it “stuffed my head up real bad,” to the point that he attempted suicide.¹⁰¹¹

2.444 Frederick explained that “Brother Campbell took away from me my private hideaway; my own personal world. That was, I could not roll into a ball ever again, and pull my blanket and cry myself to sleep. The ‘Hose Brother’ got into my head. I could not, and was never again able to pull my blanket over my head in bed; I was too scared.”¹⁰¹²

“Brother Campbell took away from me my private hideaway; my own personal world.”

2.445 Frederick’s written account details the sexual abuse inflicted on him by Brother Murphy at Bindoon. It began with Brother Murphy accusing him of playing with himself.¹⁰¹³

Clontarf (1950-1952)

2.446 Frederick was transferred from Castledare to Clontarf once he was 12 years old.¹⁰¹⁴ Frederick was at Clontarf with 150 to 200 other boys, aged between 12 and 14, including some Australian children.¹⁰¹⁵ During his period at Clontarf, Brother Crowley was replaced as head of the institution by Brother O’Shea. As at all the Christian Brothers institutions, the accommodation was spartan. The boys had, for instance, nowhere to put their single set of clothes other than on the floor.¹⁰¹⁶

2.447 By the time he got to Clontarf, Frederick “had voices in my head and everything like that, I was talking to them and they were talking to me, and it never entered my head that brothers were doing others. I thought I was a one-cutter, you know, a loner. That was the way I thought all the way through the orphanage system.”¹⁰¹⁷

1008 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.48.

1009 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.49.

1010 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.50.

1011 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.69-70.

1012 Frederick Woollorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996), at WIT.003.001.8692.

1013 Frederick Woollorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996), at WIT.003.001.8692.

1014 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.52.

1015 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.52.

1016 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.53.

1017 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.55.

2.448 Frederick believed that he was alone in being abused, and he did not discuss it with the friends he made there, in no small part because “every one of the brothers who attacked me said the same thing, ‘You open your mouth, you’ll pay.’”¹⁰¹⁸

“...every one of the brothers who attacked me said the same thing, ‘you open your mouth, you’ll pay.’”

2.449 While the “pets at Clontarf were sent on to Aquinas College for further education,” Brother Crowley called Frederick, aged 12, to his office “after a couple of months and said, ‘The brothers can’t teach you...and that’s it, your education’s finished, mate.’”¹⁰¹⁹ From then on, Frederick worked full-time on the farm, “milking the cows, feeding the chooks, feeding the pigs, looking after the horses.”¹⁰²⁰

2.450 The violence at Clontarf was “absolutely horrendous”; if a Brother accused a boy of “playing up”, and the boy denied it, “you’d get a ripper to the bloody face, you’d get a double banger because your head would hit the wall and you’d slide down the wall and you’d see stars and everything—or the boot would go right into your private parts.”¹⁰²¹ Violence was also inflicted publicly: when a boy was strapped, other “boys had to count, ‘One brother, two brother’, so if you’re getting 12 on the bum the boys were standing on the tables in the mess hall and counting out the strokes for the brother.”¹⁰²²

2.451 Frederick described an incident after a boy had run away from Clontarf. Brother Doherty pulled the boy into the quadrangle, and “[the Brothers] really got stuck into him, boots, fists, and everything...When they finished, he wasn’t moving. He just wasn’t moving. He was on the deck and that was it...the brothers turned around and then addressed the lot of us and said, ‘This is what happens when you run away, because it involves the police, it involves the child welfare.’...It all had to be kept...in-house.”¹⁰²³

2.452 On one occasion, when Frederick was working in the kitchen, Brother O’Shea appeared and accused another boy, who was working alongside Frederick, of leaving dishes greasy: “O’Shea just picked him up and threw him straight into the trough. He come out screaming so we had to grab hold of him and he was all pink, all his skin was really, really pink and swollen up. And O’Shea just said, ‘Take him straight across the road’, because across the road the nuns had the [infirmary], if you could call it that, and we took him across there and that was the end of it. That was beyond punishment...that was an act of an animal.”¹⁰²⁴

2.453 On another occasion, while travelling in a truck, a boy spotted a kangaroo and called out to Brother O’Shea, who “turned around and just hit them on the head with a fully loaded gun.”¹⁰²⁵ On another day, while the boys were in church, Brother O’Shea shot four of the boys’ pet horses. He then forced the boys to “put the chain around their legs, take them down to the piggery, chop them

1018 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.56.

1019 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.73.

1020 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.57.

1021 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.58.

1022 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.59.

1023 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.66-67.

1024 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.60.

1025 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.62.

“...[Brother Higgins] used to roam [the dormitories] at night-time and pick his prey.”

up and put them in the boilers to feed the pigs...That upset a lot of boys. That really hit them hard.”¹⁰²⁶ Brother O’Shea also shot all of the boys’ pet dogs and the children protested, marching up and down outside and calling him a killer.¹⁰²⁷

2.454 At Clontarf, Frederick was sexually abused. Brother Doyle, who Frederick estimated was six feet tall and 16 stone, called Frederick to his room, where he “had to give him a blow job. I still got six or eight on the bum, because I had to take my clothes off, and then I had to put my head under his black dress and give him a bloody blow job. So just entirely different punishment.”¹⁰²⁸

2.455 Some time after Frederick had arrived, Brother Angus, who had already abused Frederick at Bindoon, arrived at Clontarf. It “was rumoured...that he was shipped because of his...interfering with kiddies.”¹⁰²⁹ Brother Angus continued to abuse children at Clontarf, including Frederick. Brother Angus sexually abused him in the piggery or the chicken yard.¹⁰³⁰

2.456 Brother Thyer “inflicted pain with his fingers on [Frederick’s] private parts, my testicles and all that, he’d twist them and I’d be crying away there and he’d call me a sook and I’d be dancing on my bloody toes.”¹⁰³¹

2.457 Frederick was sexually abused by Brother Higgins. Brother Higgins was nicknamed “Sneaking Jesus” because “he used to roam [the dormitories] at night-time and pick his prey.”¹⁰³² He would “take you into the tuck shop because he was the only bloke who had a key to it” and “interfere” with the boy.¹⁰³³ “Then he’d give you a couple of lollies or a bar of chocolate and tell you: keep your mouth bloody shut.”¹⁰³⁴

2.458 The bandmaster, Joey Jackson, who was not a Brother, sexually abused Frederick at Clontarf: “He’d invite you back to his room and...he’d have an apple or an orange in his pants and he’d ask you to put your hand in there and get it out...He used to dress you... in a girl’s dress and put powder on you and this bloody lipstick and all that type of stuff. Then he would put his hand under the dress and you had to lift the dress up and he’d be playing with you. He was a very vile man.”¹⁰³⁵

Joey Jackson “used to dress you...in a girl’s dress and put powder on you and this bloody lipstick and all that type of stuff.”

1026 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.61-62.

1027 [Transcript day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.63.

1028 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.64-65.

1029 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.66.

1030 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.67.

1031 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.70.

1032 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.71.

1033 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.71.

1034 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.71.

1035 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.72-73.

2.459 Frederick was abused by Joey Jackson roughly eight times. When Frederick left the band, that abuse stopped.¹⁰³⁶ Throughout his time in Clontarf, Frederick “was used as a girl, three times a week on average.”¹⁰³⁷ This included anal penetration and forced oral sex by Brothers Doyle, Angus, Campbell, and Wise.

2.460 Frederick explained that sexual abuse was always kept secret.¹⁰³⁸

2.461 After the protest following Brother O’Shea’s shooting of the pet dogs, “eight of us were shipped 300 miles north-east of Perth on to Tardun”; Frederick’s time at Clontarf was over.¹⁰³⁹

Tardun (1952-1956)

2.462 Frederick arrived at St Mary’s, Tardun in 1952, aged 13 or 14. At Tardun, as at Clontarf, Frederick received no education. Instead, he and other boys “worked full-time out in the paddocks.”¹⁰⁴⁰ Tardun then consisted of 73,000 acres.¹⁰⁴¹ Alongside about 80 other boys aged 14 and over, Frederick worked eight-hour days. The only requirement other than farm work was to attend church before and after work.¹⁰⁴² Although the food “was a bit better” than at Clontarf, “the work was a lot harder.”¹⁰⁴³

2.463 Brother Geoghegan was considered to be in charge at Tardun, and it was to him

that boys would be reported if a Brother thought that they were not working hard enough. When this happened to Frederick, “I had to take my clothes off and lie across [Brother Geoghegan’s] bench...and he used to give me 12 across the bum [with a bamboo cane]. Not fast either, just nice and slow and methodical.”¹⁰⁴⁴ The pain from this punishment would last for a couple of days. The worst of the physical abuse Frederick received at Tardun was perpetrated by Brothers Brown and Howe.¹⁰⁴⁵

2.464 Frederick was sexually abused at Tardun by a number of Brothers, including Brothers Howe, Thomas, and Shannahan.

2.465 In September 1952, Frederick developed rheumatic fever.¹⁰⁴⁶ Over the following months his condition worsened. Gradually Frederick’s limbs swelled up so much that he struggled to complete basic tasks. During this period, Frederick was still punished by Brother Geoghegan.

2.466 Eventually, his condition deteriorated to an extent that he was not able to talk and “[t]he only things that was moving was my eyes.”¹⁰⁴⁷ One morning, when Brother Shanahan came to wake the boys, Frederick’s throat was so swollen that he was unable to speak. Brother Shanahan “grabs my hair and drags me out of bed; I fall to the concrete

1036 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.73.

1037 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.65.

1038 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.69.

1039 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.74.

1040 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.24.

1041 [Written statement of Frederick Woollorton Smith](#), paragraph 98, at WIT.001.002.8137. See also [Western Australia Now and Then](#), “Tardun.” Retrieved 7 December 2021.

1042 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.76-77.

1043 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.77.

1044 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.77-78.

1045 [Written statement of Frederick Woollorton Smith](#), paragraph 108, at WIT.001.002.8139.

1046 Frederick Woollorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996), at WIT.003.001.8698. In his hearing, Frederick placed himself at 15 years old, though the specific date provided in his autobiography would suggest he was 14 at the time.

1047 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.80.

“I told [Dr Lynch] exactly what went on and he said he’d look into it, but like everything else, it was covered up.”

floor.”¹⁰⁴⁸ Frederick was put in the back of a Ute truck and driven 25 miles to Motherwell hospital. As instructed by Brother Shanahan, Frederick told his doctor, Dr Lynch, that he had fallen down the stairs while sleepwalking.¹⁰⁴⁹ Dr Lynch recognised that this explanation was a lie, and told Frederick that he was “very sick”.¹⁰⁵⁰ Frederick remained there for 61 days.

2.467 During his stay in hospital, Frederick “was given some parcels, Christmas presents, by the staff”, which he refused to open; he “was asking them what they wanted from me. ‘Nothing Fred’; I didn’t understand why.”¹⁰⁵¹ On another occasion, a nurse caught him masturbating. He wasn’t embarrassed because “[i]t wasn’t wrong because the brothers were doing it to me.”¹⁰⁵² He told the nurse as much, who in turn told Dr Lynch. When Dr Lynch enquired, Frederick told him “exactly what went on [in Tardun] and he said he’d look into it, but like everything else, it was covered up. No further action was proceeded with.”¹⁰⁵³ Nonetheless, it would appear that Dr Lynch did speak to the Brothers, because when Frederick returned to Tardun after his time in hospital, “it all stopped, even the beltings stopped.”¹⁰⁵⁴

2.468 Frederick left Tardun when he was 16, “which was the first time I knew how old I was.”¹⁰⁵⁵ Before leaving, Frederick was called to Brother Geoghegan’s office: “He said, ‘Well, Smith, you have turned 16 and now you’ve got to leave the orphanage. I’ve tried everything to turn you into a decent person. One day they’re going to make a rope and they’re going to bloody hang you, I’m telling you. Get out of here.’”¹⁰⁵⁶

2.469 Although Frederick was the victim of sustained emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, he was keen to highlight some positive aspects of his time at Tardun. In particular, he “made really good mates in Tardun. Still know half a dozen today.”¹⁰⁵⁷

Life after care

2.470 After leaving Tardun, Frederick was sent to Pithara to work on a farm with a “really good couple” for a couple of years.¹⁰⁵⁸ After more farm placements, Frederick secured an apprenticeship in painting with a public works department.¹⁰⁵⁹ However, the Christian Brothers having failed so woefully in their educational responsibilities, he struggled with “the theory side...and I failed miserably...and that happened all the way through my life.”¹⁰⁶⁰

1048 Frederick Woollorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996), at WIT.003.001.8698.

1049 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.80.

1050 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.80.

1051 Frederick Woollorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996), at WIT.003.001.8698.

1052 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.81.

1053 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.82.

1054 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.82.

1055 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.83.

1056 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.83.

1057 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.86.

1058 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.87.

1059 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.87.

1060 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.88.

“...the truth is the truth and it needed to be put on paper for people to understand.”

2.471 Frederick also spent time in the Australian Army, from February 1958 to June 1964, a role that he enjoyed and wanted to continue to pursue.¹⁰⁶¹ However, again, although he “could do the practical side of it...[he] couldn’t do the paperwork.”¹⁰⁶² When Frederick spoke to the Inquiry, he was pursuing a course in bar management, but though he passed the practical side of the course “with flying colours”, he failed the theory side—and, consequently the whole course—because he “just couldn’t put it on paper.”¹⁰⁶³

2.472 In 1964, Frederick told an army acquaintance about his childhood experiences.¹⁰⁶⁴ The friend told him that he ought to record his experiences.¹⁰⁶⁵ In 1969, Frederick started to write, and with his friend’s help produced and condensed his account.¹⁰⁶⁶ The result was Frederick’s *Nine Years Under the Christian Brothers*, where he described his experiences in extensive detail. It makes for harrowing reading. The process helped Frederick recover from his suicidal thoughts: “I got over that and now I have no drama and I wanted the story to come out, it needed to come out, especially for me, to

make me feel good, because the truth is the truth and it needed to be put on paper for people to understand.”¹⁰⁶⁷ Frederick’s account is included in Terence McLernon’s *The Fifth Estate*.¹⁰⁶⁸

2.473 Frederick blamed his treatment in care for being arrested after leaving. He said that “every time I got arrested was always... for...a vagrant charge...So you’d do a couple of weeks in the slammer and all that. [The Detective Sergeant] said, ‘What’s wrong with you? All you orphan kids that I come across, you’re all bloody mental cases.’ I said, ‘Mate, I’ll just tell you one orphanage I was in and I’ll tell you what it was all about’, and I told him about Clontarf. He said, ‘I’ll go and see my superior’, and he was told to drop the whole bloody matter. He came back to me, I will give him that, and after that he never arrested me again.”¹⁰⁶⁹

2.474 Frederick married, an achievement that he regarded as “the greatest thing I ever bloody did.”¹⁰⁷⁰ His experiences in Catholic institutions meant that he never felt willing to have children, in case they entered care and suffered the same abuse that he himself had suffered.¹⁰⁷¹

1061 Frederick was in the 28th Infantry Battalion and the Cameron Highlanders. See [Written statement of Frederick Woollorton Smith](#), paragraph 122, at WIT.001.002.8141.

1062 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.88.

1063 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.88.

1064 [Written statement of Frederick Woollorton Smith](#), paragraph 129, at WIT.001.002.8142.

1065 [Written statement of Frederick Woollorton Smith](#), paragraph 130, at WIT.001.002.8142; [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.90.

1066 [Written statement of Frederick Woollorton Smith](#), paragraph 131, at WIT.001.002.8142; [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.90.

1067 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.99.

1068 Terence McLernon, *The Fifth Estate* (2007), Perth: BlckDogBarking Books, at WIT.003.001.8214.

1069 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.91.

1070 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.89.

1071 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.96.

2.475 Throughout his childhood Frederick was told that he was a war orphan and that his parents and family had been killed in the war.¹⁰⁷² After investigating, Frederick learned that his mother and father were deceased, but that he “had all these uncles and cousins and everything in Dundee.”¹⁰⁷³ A newspaper in England heard about Frederick’s story, and flew him to Scotland to meet his relatives. Meeting his relatives for the first time at age 75 or 76 “was bloody horrendous...I could not associate with them, they’re crying and bawling and hugging me, and I just couldn’t cop it...I didn’t want anything to do with them, but now I’ve got all these rellies...they’re all good.”¹⁰⁷⁴

“I could not associate with [relatives], they’re crying and bawling and hugging me...I just couldn’t cop it...but now I’ve got all these rellies...they’re all good.”

2.476 Frederick visited Scotland a second time, and later received support from the CMT, who helped him to return to the United Kingdom again in 2019.¹⁰⁷⁵ Frederick has developed positive relationships with his family.

Applicants - Nazareth House, Kilmarnock

2.477 The following are the accounts of SCAI applicants who were migrated overseas having been placed at Nazareth House, Kilmarnock.

“Anne”

Life in the UK

2.478 “Anne” was born in Ardrossan in 1944, and contracted polio when she was two and a half years old. As a result, she was in hospital for over three years. Due to the long-term effects of polio, “Anne” had to wear callipers. Meningitis also seems to have featured in her childhood medical history pre-migration. She had a younger brother, and three half-siblings from her mother’s previous marriage. In 1953, “Anne’s” mother died. When “Anne” “was lifted up to kiss her goodbye” in her coffin, she saw that “she had my rosary beads wrapped around her hand. This memory has stayed with me all my life.”¹⁰⁷⁶

2.479 After their mother’s death, “Anne’s” older half-sister “did her best to mother us but she was only fourteen.”¹⁰⁷⁷ “Anne’s” father was “working as a garbageman” at the time and, as “Anne” later discovered, “our local church, the St Vincent de Paul Society, decided dad wasn’t looking after us properly. As a result, us kids would have [to go] into Catholic care.”¹⁰⁷⁸ About two months

1072 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.25.

1073 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.93.

1074 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.95.

1075 [Written statement of Frederick Wooltorton Smith](#), paragraph 150, at WIT.001.002.8145; [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.94.

1076 [Written statement of “Anne” \(LTI\)](#), paragraph 11, at WIT.001.002.3279.

1077 [Written statement of “Anne” \(LTI\)](#), paragraph 13, at WIT.001.002.3280.

1078 [Written statement of “Anne” \(LTI\)](#), paragraph 13, at WIT.001.002.3280; [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.32.

after “Anne’s” mother died, “a big black car pulled up” to “Anne’s” house and “a man and woman got out of the car. They asked our names and they then grabbed two of my brothers and me. My older sister ran off. We didn’t know who these people were. All they said was we were going for a ride. We were all crying, screaming and very scared.”¹⁰⁷⁹

2.480 “Anne’s” next memory was arriving at Nazareth House, Kilmarnock.¹⁰⁸⁰ One of the Sisters took a hold of her hand and spoke with the woman. “Anne” “was screaming and trying to get back to my brothers.”¹⁰⁸¹ “Anne” did not see her siblings again until 1982. “Anne” was taken to a dormitory where, exhausted “from screaming and crying”, she “fell asleep on top of the bed.”¹⁰⁸² She was “very frightened”, but “[n]o one had come to see me to make sure that I was okay.”¹⁰⁸³

2.481 “Anne” shared the dormitory with about 25 other girls of varying ages.¹⁰⁸⁴ In the morning, “an older girl told me to get out of bed. She gave me some different clothes... [but] didn’t know how to put my callipers on, so just left them off.”¹⁰⁸⁵ Nazareth House did not have “a bath area,” and children walked to the bathhouse in Kilmarnock once a week.¹⁰⁸⁶

2.482 During her time in Nazareth House, “Anne” attended Sailor Street School and had her callipers on when she went there.¹⁰⁸⁷ The children went to Mass every day, and two or three times a day during Lent.¹⁰⁸⁸

2.483 “Anne” remembered that her “knees were really sore from polishing the floors, but you couldn’t get up. If you moved or lifted your head, you would get a jab in the small of your back [from] the nuns.”¹⁰⁸⁹

2.484 At Christmas, “Anne’s” father and aunt visited her, and gave her a doll, “but [she] never saw it again after they left.”¹⁰⁹⁰ Unbeknown to the Sisters, her father also visited at other times. He would see her “at the gates. He would always tell [her] to be quiet in case the Sisters heard him.”¹⁰⁹¹

Migration

2.485 One day, Sister Domitilla took Anne to her office, and “showed me a picture of a ship on a calendar and asked if I would like to go for a ride on it. I said I would. What 8-year-old girl wouldn’t want to do this?”¹⁰⁹² In November 1953, a LEM3 form was signed by “Anne’s” father, approving her migration to Australia.¹⁰⁹³ William Flint signed on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council on the same day, and the final section was signed,

1079 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.31-32.

1080 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.32.

1081 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.32-33.

1082 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.33.

1083 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), TRN-5-000000003, p.33.

1084 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.33.

1085 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.33.

1086 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.34.

1087 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.34.

1088 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.34.

1089 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.34.

1090 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.34.

1091 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.34.

1092 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.34-35.

1093 LEM3 form for “Anne” (LTI), at WIT.003.001.2720.

“When he left, I remember my father kissing me and holding me tight...I just stood there watching him with tears running down my cheeks.”

also by William Flint, in February 1954. A note on the reverse of the form described “Anne” as an “average type of child... Consider suitable. Medical arranged.”¹⁰⁹⁴ In February 1954, a separate “application for transfer” form was completed for “Anne”. That form included a space in which to record “Any physical deformities”, and was left blank.¹⁰⁹⁵ The same form noted that “Anne” had never had any serious illnesses or accidents. Her polio and its residual effects were not recorded. There was no mention of her need for callipers.

2.486 In March 1954, an older girl took “Anne” to the doctor for the arranged medical.¹⁰⁹⁶ “Anne” did not have her callipers with her when she went for her appointment. The resulting medical report recorded no serious accident or illness, and described “Anne’s” physique as “good”, adding a remark that she was a “[h]ealthy and lively little girl.”¹⁰⁹⁷ In later years the doctor noted that no adult accompanied “Anne” to her appointment, and so “the history of meningitis and poliomyelitis was not disclosed to [him].”¹⁰⁹⁸ He stated that “had I learned about it at the time I doubt very much if I would have considered her application at all.”¹⁰⁹⁹ In the

event, “Anne’s” LEM3 form was approved and stamped by the Department of Immigration twice: in March 1954, the day before her medical exam; and again in April 1954.

2.487 “Anne’s” next memory was of her and three others from Kilmarnock “going on a ‘holiday.’” The night before she left, her father came to see her which was “very traumatic”: “He also said that I was going on a holiday and he would see me when I got back... When he left, I remember my father kissing me and holding me tight...I just stood there watching him with tears running down my cheeks. Sister Mary Magdalene took me back to the playroom and I never saw my father... again.”¹¹⁰⁰

2.488 During this visit, “Anne’s” father asked where her callipers were and “I told them they were on the chair next to my bed. I never saw the callipers again.”¹¹⁰¹

2.489 The next day, “Anne” and the other Kilmarnock girls were put on a train to London with “another four girls from Nazareth House, Aberdeen”, and the two Sisters who chaperoned them.¹¹⁰² In London, they spent one night at Nazareth House, Hammersmith, before being taken

1094 LEM3 form for “Anne” (LTI), at WIT.003.001.2721.

1095 Federal Catholic Immigration Committee, Application for transfer to Australia for “Anne” (LTI), at BEW-000000087, p.25.

1096 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.35.

1097 Medical examination form for “Anne” (LTI), at WIT.003.001.2722.

1098 Letter from Dr George Barr to Dr J. Bryan Mathieson (Chief Medical Officer, Australia House), 5 September 1955, at WIT.003.001.2735.

1099 Letter from Dr George Barr to Dr J. Bryan Mathieson (Chief Medical Officer, Australia House), 5 September 1955, at WIT.003.001.2735.

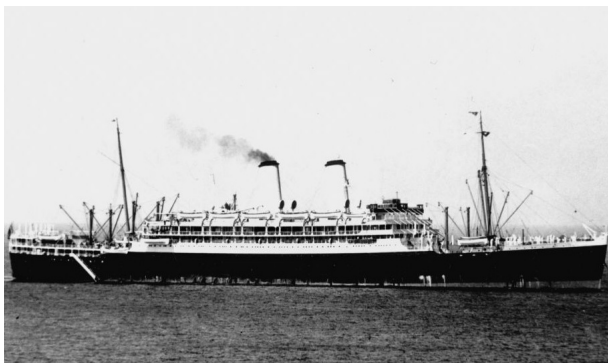
1100 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.35-36.

1101 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.35.

1102 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.36.

“If you had any personal belongings in your case, too bad, you never saw them again.”

to Southampton to board the SS Orontes. “Anne” boarded the Orontes in early May 1954, when she was 10 years old. There were 24 children on the ship, including “a few young boys who were accompanied by a priest, Father Tye.”¹¹⁰³



Orontes, date unknown. Source: State [Library of Queensland](#).

2.490 When the ship arrived in Perth in June 1954, the boys and Father Tye left the ship.¹¹⁰⁴ “Anne” had a “bad fall on the ship” around this time, for which she had to go to the ship’s hospital and needed seven stitches on her chin.¹¹⁰⁵ She and the remaining children “eventually arrived at Victoria dock at Melbourne where [they] were met by the press...[They] were lined up on the deck and had [their] photograph taken.”¹¹⁰⁶ There were two Sisters from Nazareth House,

Camberwell, waiting to take them there.¹¹⁰⁷ “Anne” “still thought this was some form of extended holiday.”¹¹⁰⁸

Life at Nazareth House, Camberwell (1954-1961)

2.491 As the girls’ bus reached Camberwell, they “all had [their] faces pressed against the windows to see what it was like...It was the biggest building I had ever seen. There were three floors and five separate wings.”¹¹⁰⁹ In addition to the main building, “there was tennis courts...lawns with palm trees and a little grotto...a farm, a laundry, a huge dressing shed and a vacant allotment”, which later became a swimming pool.¹¹¹⁰

2.492 On their arrival, Sisters came out to meet them.¹¹¹¹ “Anne” and the others “were marched across the hall through a glass door”, where they were told to leave their cases, coats and hats.¹¹¹² “If you had any personal belongings in your case, too bad, you never saw them again. Life at Nazareth House in Camberwell had started.”¹¹¹³

2.493 After arriving, the girls’ “hair was cut very short by an older girl.”¹¹¹⁴ All of the new arrivals “were issued with the same clothing. This comprised a green apron, a

1103 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.36.
1104 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.37.
1105 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.37.
1106 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.37.
1107 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.37.
1108 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.37.
1109 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.37.
1110 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.38.
1111 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.38.
1112 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.38.
1113 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.38-39.
1114 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.39.

dress, knickers that were made of denim and looked like shorts, a vest, a flannel nightdress, socks and a pair of lace-up shoes.”¹¹¹⁵ The girls got clean clothes once a week, even if their clothes became dirty before then.¹¹¹⁶

2.494 There were three Sisters at Camberwell responsible for looking after the girls: “Sister Augustine, who we called ‘Gussie’”; “Sister Lucilla, who we knew as ‘Lucifer’”; and “Sister Alphonsus, known as ‘Alphon’.”¹¹¹⁷ Sister Alphonsus “was our favourite. You knew where you stood with her.”¹¹¹⁸

2.495 Every day started at 6 am. When one of the Sisters “banged on the dormitory door you had to be on your knees by your bed for the morning prayer. I would then get dressed, make my bed and do my ablutions. After this I would get in line to go for Mass at 7...Breakfast was at 8. You were given a slice of bread, a sausage, some dripping and a cup of tea. On a Friday there was porridge and a boiled egg.”¹¹¹⁹

2.496 After breakfast, “there were chores to do...The younger girls would tie rags to their feet to polish the floors. One of the older girls would then use the polishing machine on the floor.”¹¹²⁰ Girls of 12 to 14 would be given “heavier chores”, such as “helping in the laundry or parlour. They would also have to help out with the old people.”¹¹²¹ The girls did all of the cleaning at Camberwell, some

of which “was very dangerous, like when we had to clean the outside of the windows upstairs.”¹¹²²

2.497 Once morning chores were complete, the girls went to school.¹¹²³ After school the girls were given a cup of milk which “had been left out all day...The milk was sour like yogurt. You had to drink it. I would hold my nose to help me swallow it. You were given the milk in horrible plastic cups that hadn’t been washed properly. Sister Lucilla would make sure I had two mugs of milk as she knew I couldn’t drink it in any shape or form.”¹¹²⁴

2.498 “Anne” explained that often “your studies suffered. There was so much to do [in the home] you never had time to do your homework. This meant that when you went to school you would get into trouble.”¹¹²⁵ Despite this, “Anne” passed the Commonwealth public service exam, which meant she would be able to work for the government: “I didn’t find out I had passed the exam until Mother Alphonsus found it in a rubbish bin within Sister Augustine’s room. I wouldn’t have known otherwise.”¹¹²⁶

2.499 The girls “were allowed one bath a week”, but “[e]very night you had to have a strip-down wash. You had to keep your towel wrapped round you tightly. If the towel slipped, you’d be clipped around the ear or whacked with the cane, which again was

1115 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.39.

1116 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.39.

1117 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.39-40.

1118 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.40.

1119 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.41.

1120 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.41.

1121 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.41.

1122 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.41.

1123 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.44.

1124 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.41.

1125 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.44.

1126 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.44.

“I cried buckets of tears and told God that I hated him. There was no other place or person that I could go to for comfort.”

actually a cricket stump.¹¹²⁷ Girls who wet the bed “were made to stand with the sheet over your head during breakfast. You had to wash and dry the sheet to be put back on your bed that night...come [rain], hail or shine, even if the sheet wasn’t dry.”¹¹²⁸

2.500 Most of Sunday was “spent at church services. We would also go to church every afternoon at 4 for the rosary.”¹¹²⁹ “Anne” was in the choir, “which practised twice a week” under the leadership of Sister Alphonsus.¹¹³⁰ “Anne” remembered “a music classroom that was one of my favourite places. I remember being there once when I was really unhappy. I cried buckets of tears and told God that I hated him. There was no other place or person that I could go to for comfort.”¹¹³¹

2.501 Christmas day, Easter and birthdays were never celebrated in Camberwell, but holiday periods did provide some respite for “Anne”.¹¹³² At Christmas, local Catholic families “were urged to open their homes and take one [of] us poor orphans for the holidays.”¹¹³³ Whenever “Anne” went back to Nazareth House, any clothes and toys which had been given to her would be removed. This made the mother of the holiday family “very angry.”¹¹³⁴ “Anne” saw one of these

gifts, a “lovely doll” the family had given her for her 11th birthday, on display in Nazareth House, Camberwell, when she left.¹¹³⁵ Despite the good relationship she had forged with this family, “they were stopped from taking me on holidays...because they didn’t go to Mass on Sunday.”¹¹³⁶

2.502 “Anne” went to visit a new family. The mother in that family was “instrumental in getting me accepted for St Benedict’s College”, where “Anne” continued her education.¹¹³⁷ The mother “wanted to adopt” her, but “Anne” was unwilling because she “had family back in Scotland. Sister Augustine was furious and said that I was an ungrateful hussy.”¹¹³⁸

“Sister Augustine was furious and said that I was an ungrateful hussy.”

2.503 “Anne” remembered one occasion when the children at Camberwell were told that there were two women coming “from child welfare” and the children were to be “on our best behaviour when they came”, but during the visit “they never came near

1127 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.43.

1128 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.44.

1129 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.92.

1130 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.92.

1131 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.92.

1132 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.94-95.

1133 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.92-93.

1134 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.93.

1135 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.93.

1136 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.94.

1137 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.94.

1138 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.94.

us.”¹¹³⁹ The playroom at Nazareth House “was wonderful to look at for a visitor. It had a dollhouse and lots...of toys...It was more like a showroom.”¹¹⁴⁰

2.504 Nazareth House, Camberwell, submitted half-yearly reports on child migrants to the Catholic Child Welfare Council in the UK. These were very brief, often including only one-word answers relating to “Anne’s” progress.¹¹⁴¹

2.505 “Anne’s” undisclosed polio led to a series of hospitalisations, as well as much concern from the immigration authorities. For the first five months that “Anne” spent at Camberwell, she did not wear her callipers—which had been left in Scotland. Despite “Anne” telling the Sisters about her medical history, “[a]ll they would say was that I was lying. It was obvious I had a problem. One leg was an inch and a half shorter than the other.”¹¹⁴² After one Sister noticed that “Anne” was falling over a lot and often had scabs on her knees, she was referred to the Royal Children’s Hospital in Melbourne. “Anne” “remember[ed] the day I went to hospital so clearly. I went in the convent van with Sister Marianus, Sister Anton and [the cook]. When my name was called, I went into the examination room” where there was the doctor “and about six student doctors.”¹¹⁴³ “Anne” was asked to undress, “which was very embarrassing for me. I had to bend

over and lift my legs, turn my head, and then walk back and forward. I couldn’t wait to get out of there. It was bad enough having all these men there, but the nuns were also present.”¹¹⁴⁴ When “Anne” and the Sisters returned to Nazareth House, “Sister Marianus called me over. She then struck me so hard across the face that I fell over and my nose started to bleed. Sister Marianus said, ‘That’s for parading so immodestly in front of those men.’ For a 9-year-old, it was very difficult to fathom what she meant.”¹¹⁴⁵

“Sister Marianus called me over. She then struck me so hard across the face that I fell over and my nose started to bleed.”

2.506 The specialist who had examined “Anne” “formed the impression that this child had poliomyelitis when younger.”¹¹⁴⁶ He observed that her “left leg is 1 [inch] shorter than the right, with considerable weakness”, and approved a splint for “Anne” in November 1954.¹¹⁴⁷ The same specialist noted that a subsequent “letter from her father stated that she had had infantile paralysis...was 3 years in hospital and had spent one year in a respirator.”¹¹⁴⁸ All of this fitted with a diagnosis of poliomyelitis.

1139 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.95.

1140 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.95.

1141 Half-yearly reports for “Anne” (LTI), June 1956 to January 1961, at BEW-000000087, pp.8-15.

1142 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.45.

1143 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.45.

1144 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.45.

1145 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.45-46.

1146 Letter from C.H. Schneider (Senior House Surgeon at Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne) to J.V. Nelson (Secretary, Children’s Welfare Department), 16 May 1955, at WIT.003.001.2720.

1147 Letter from C.H. Schneider (Senior House Surgeon at Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne) to J.V. Nelson (Secretary, Children’s Welfare Department), 16 May 1955, at WIT.003.001.2720.

1148 Letter from C.H. Schneider (Senior House Surgeon at Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne) to J.V. Nelson (Secretary, Children’s Welfare Department), 16 May 1955, at WIT.003.001.2720.

“Sister Lucilla would cane you with all of the effort she could. Her face would be red and there was spittle coming out of her mouth.”

2.507 Although “Anne” had used callipers in Scotland, Nazareth House, Kilmarnock “denied any knowledge of my callipers.”¹¹⁴⁹ The Mother Superior at Kilmarnock wrote to Canon Flint stating that “Anne” had initially been admitted to Kilmarnock “without any medical certificate”, and that she had contacted “Anne’s” childhood doctor in Ardrossan, who said that she had not had polio.¹¹⁵⁰

2.508 “Anne’s” case sparked much correspondence between officials in Australia and the UK.¹¹⁵¹

2.509 The Chief Medical Officer in London contacted Dr Barr, who had conducted “Anne’s” pre-migration examination. Dr Barr stated that “it seems to me appalling that I failed to notice her condition”, and “I cannot find excuse for myself.”¹¹⁵²

2.510 Despite all of “Anne’s” health problems, her half-yearly reports often included either only a single line on “Anne’s” health problems, or described her health as “good” with no reference at all to her pain, her suffering, or to the various bouts of surgery she required.¹¹⁵³

2.511 “Anne” was physically abused in other ways at Camberwell. Most commonly, punishment was by the cane, and Sister Lucilla “delighted in using the cane... Sister Lucilla would cane you with all of the effort she could. Her face would be red and there was spittle coming out of her mouth.”¹¹⁵⁴ On other occasions, “Sister Augustine would cane us. In saying that, it was an effort. She would sooner give us a punishment like polishing the floors at 2 in the morning than use the cane.”¹¹⁵⁵ Nonetheless, Sister Augustine once “broke a bone in my hand after she gave me the cane...I couldn’t move three fingers and had to go and see Sister Mary. She asked me what had happened. When I told her, she contradicted me and said that I had fell over. When I said that I hadn’t, she said, ‘Yes, you did’, so a lesson was learnt.”¹¹⁵⁶ “Anne” still could not straighten her hand at the time of giving evidence to the Inquiry. As a result of incidents like this and others, “you learned to keep your mouth shut and take your punishment.”¹¹⁵⁷

“...you learned to keep your mouth shut and take your punishment.”

1149 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.46.

1150 Letter from Sister Aloysius Magdalene to Canon Flint, 24 October 1954, at BEW-000000087, p.21.

1151 For additional correspondence relating to “Anne’s” (LTI) medical condition, see BEW-000000087, pp.16-22.

1152 Letter from Dr George Barr to Dr J.B. Mathieson (Chief Medical Officer, Australia House), 5 September 1955, at WIT.003.001.2735.

1153 Half-yearly reports for “Anne”, June 1956 to January 1961, at BEW-000000087, pp.8-15.

1154 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.99.

1155 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.95.

1156 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.98-99.

1157 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.100.

2.512 In addition to her regular chores, “Anne” “was rostered every Tuesday to help out in the kitchen”, where she would have to peel “a big sackful” of potatoes for that day’s meal.¹¹⁵⁸ On one occasion, she finished peeling the potatoes early, so the cook, Paddy, “gave me another sack and said ‘Do these too.’ I was furious and I said no. Paddy went to grab me and so I threw a spud at him. After this, all hell broke loose. He said he would box my ears. When Paddy eventually caught me, he locked me in a room. Sister Anton came in and said she was going to cane me. She tried to hit me with a cricket stump. I grabbed it and threw it out of the window. I was then marched to Sister Lucilla, who then caned me.”¹¹⁵⁹

2.513 The nature of life in the convent meant that “Anne’s” “kitchen escapade was soon known about”, so that “as well as the nun involved, everyone else would have their say on the matter and frown at me. You would also be punished by the other nuns when they saw you. The other children were all patting me on the back for doing it.”¹¹⁶⁰

2.514 On another occasion, several girls had been given permission by Sister Alphonsus to grow their hair, if they kept it tidy. However, when “Anne” told Sister Lucilla this, as she was about to get her hair cut, Sister Lucilla “hit me on the shoulder with a cricket stump. She just ignored what I’d said and told the hairdresser to cut it extra short... Sister Lucilla held me down in the chair and my hair was cut like a boy’s.”¹¹⁶¹

“When I came to I was on the floor, locked in the room. It was pitch dark and I was terrified.”

2.515 As well as forcing “Anne” to have her hair cut short, “that night after tea when I was doing my prayers, Sister Lucilla told me to be quiet and gave me a whack with her stick. I started to scream. The harder she hit me, the louder I screamed. In the end she grabbed me by the hair and the arm and I was dragged down two flights of stairs to the closed storeroom...I had my callipers on and I was frightened that I was going to fall down the stairs. Sister Lucilla then continued to whack me wherever it landed. She didn’t care. I must have passed out. When I came to I was on the floor, locked in the room. It was pitch dark and I was terrified. Sister Lucilla came back later and told me to get to bed.”¹¹⁶²

2.516 The Sisters did not educate the girls about puberty, so that, when “the girl in the next bed to me” found her “nightgown and bedsheets were covered in blood” one morning, she “was shaking” with fear.¹¹⁶³ The girl “was dragged by her hair to the bathroom”, but when “Anne” asked her what had happened “she said she couldn’t talk about it.”¹¹⁶⁴ This meant that when “Anne’s” periods started, she “was terrified and thought I was going to die.”¹¹⁶⁵ Sister Alphonsus gave her “a belt and a pad”, but they “were only allowed one pad at a time.

1158 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.42.

1159 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.42.

1160 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.42-43.

1161 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.99.

1162 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.99-100.

1163 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.96-97.

1164 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.97.

1165 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.97.

[They] still only had one pair of pants and were not allowed to wash these.”¹¹⁶⁶

“I hated it at the orphanage and I wanted to come home.”

2.517 The girls had no one to tell about the treatment they faced at Nazareth House, Camberwell. When they first arrived, “Anne” and the others had been told that they could write to their families. “Anne” wrote to her father about a month after she arrived, telling him that “I hated it at the orphanage and I wanted to come home. Sister Alphonsus saw the letter and ripped it up in front of me. She said I wasn’t allowed to write things like that.”¹¹⁶⁷ Also, letters sent to “Anne” and to other children “would be vetted by the nuns. I was sent a birthday card by my auntie, but I only found out about it when I discovered part of it in a bin when I was cleaning a classroom.”¹¹⁶⁸ Nonetheless, “Anne” “still thought of [her] family back in Scotland”.¹¹⁶⁹

Life after care

2.518 In approximately 1961, when “Anne” reached 15 years old, she left Nazareth House. The Sisters arranged for her to go to stay with one of her holiday families.¹¹⁷⁰ The mother there found “Anne” a job at the bank, and “made me leave my pay envelope on the table every week. I would be given my

bus fares to go to work but nothing else.”¹¹⁷¹ She moved to another family who were “very kind” to her, and she stayed with them until she met her husband.¹¹⁷² After she married, “Anne” returned to Camberwell with her husband to see Sister Alphonsus, with whom “Anne” had kept in touch.¹¹⁷³ Sister Marianus, “who was now in charge, was horrible to us. After this I never went back again.”¹¹⁷⁴

“I would be given my bus fares to go to work but nothing else.”

2.519 In the early 1960s, “Anne” tried to raise awareness about what had happened to her and the other girls at Nazareth House. She found that “most of the girls were too scared of the Catholic Church to try and do anything.”¹¹⁷⁵

2.520 “Anne” reconnected with her family, and through them she “learned that in 1958 my father had tried to get me back but was told that I was a ward of the State of Victoria. My uncle who was in the navy had visited Melbourne in 1959. He had wanted to see me but was told that I was no longer a member of their family”, and was turned away by the Sisters.¹¹⁷⁶ When “Anne” spoke to her aunt, she “asked why I hadn’t written to thank her for the gifts she sent me...I had never received them.”¹¹⁷⁷

1166 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.97.

1167 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.95-96.

1168 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.96.

1169 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.98.

1170 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.100.

1171 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.101.

1172 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.101.

1173 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.101.

1174 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.101.

1175 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.101-102.

1176 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.102.

1177 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.102.

“We were like garbage...I felt like we were rubbish being sent out, like the convicts.”

2.521 In 1982, “Anne” visited Scotland to meet her family. As she was leaving, “my brother came running down the garden path. He gave me another cuddle. It was almost like he knew he wouldn’t see me again. He died a year later.”¹¹⁷⁸

2.522 Migration had a significant impact on “Anne”. From age 22, she suffered depression and had to take medication for many years. She had low self-esteem and lacked self-confidence. She deeply missed her siblings. “Anne” could not comprehend “how they managed to send me to Australia when I was infirm.”¹¹⁷⁹

2.523 “Anne” reflected that at Camberwell, it was as if “you had lost your personality.”¹¹⁸⁰ “Anne” described that, instead of being “brought up...We were like garbage being pushed up. I felt like we were rubbish being sent out, like the convicts.”¹¹⁸¹ Her time in care was “traumatic, frightening, apprehensive and painful.”¹¹⁸² In conversations with other girls from Nazareth House, Camberwell, she found that “the memories we had were of the punishments, the fear and all the work we used to do. There was also a lot of resentment, anger and hostility.”¹¹⁸³ She “could not recall even one” happy childhood memory from her time in the institutions.¹¹⁸⁴

2.524 Despite all of this, “Anne” regarded herself “as one of the lucky ones. I would hope that by recounting what happened to me, it will ensure it doesn’t happen to other children.”¹¹⁸⁵

“There was also a lot of resentment, anger and hostility.”

1178 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.103.

1179 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.102.

1180 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.100.

1181 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.104.

1182 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.104.

1183 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.105.

1184 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.104.

1185 Transcript, day 172: “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.105.

“Trish”

Life in the UK

2.525 “Trish” was born in 1943, one of three sisters from Dumfries. She and her younger sister initially went to an orphanage in Dumfries as young children, but were moved to Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, when “Trish” was aged two and a half. She described her years at Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, as “horrible.”¹¹⁸⁶ The Sisters at Kilmarnock struck children for little reason, with rulers or straps they wore round their waists.¹¹⁸⁷

2.526 When “Trish” was seven or eight years old, she was sexually abused by a Sister who came into the dormitory during the night. The Sister pulled “Trish’s” blankets down and touched her inappropriately.

“There was no sympathy.”

2.527 After that, “Trish” started to wet the bed, something she continued to struggle with until her early teenage years. If a Sister at Kilmarnock discovered a child had wet the bed, “you’d have to stand in a corner for a long time with [the sheets] on your head” and were told they were “dirty girls.”¹¹⁸⁸ “There was no sympathy.”¹¹⁸⁹ The Sisters encouraged other children to mock the children who wet the bed.

Migration

2.528 When “Trish” was aged nine or 10, she and her sister were called into the Mother Superior’s office: “She asked if we’d like to go for a long holiday on a big ship. We were kids...[and said]...oh yes, that’d be great.”¹¹⁹⁰ “Trish” did not know where they would be going: “They just said, plenty of fruit and plenty to eat and drink, sunshine, and a nice holiday...I’d never heard of Australia...[the first time I heard of Australia was] when we landed in Australia.”¹¹⁹¹

2.529 The consent form for “Trish’s” migration was signed in February 1954 by Sister Aloysius Magdalene, the Mother Superior of Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, as “Trish’s” guardian, with William Flint signing on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council.¹¹⁹² “Trish” was not sure whether their mother had been told they were leaving for Australia. At this time, “Trish” had not seen her mother since she had left home as a young child to go to the orphanage in Dumfries.

2.530 “Trish” and her sister travelled to Nazareth House, Hammersmith, where they spent some time before sailing on the SS Orontes on 7 May 1954, and arriving in Fremantle on 3 June 1954.¹¹⁹³ “Trish” was aged 10 when she arrived in Australia.

1186 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.4.

1187 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.8-9.

1188 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.11.

1189 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.12.

1190 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.13.

1191 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.13.

1192 LEM3 form for “Trish” (LST), at BEW-000000089, p.12.

1193 SS Orontes, Incoming passenger list to Fremantle, at NAA.001.001.0271.

“...about four or five of us would share the [bath] water before it was changed.”

2.531 “Trish” had fond memories of the journey itself: “It was enjoyable. There was no one controlling us...They just let us do whatever we wanted to do...they were giving us fruit and biscuits. It was really enjoyable. But of course it had to come to an end...We didn’t know what was ahead of us...We still didn’t know we were coming to Australia.”¹¹⁹⁴

“We still didn’t know we were coming to Australia.”

2.532 She did remember that there was a girl on the ship without her callipers: this was “Anne”, whose account is included above.¹¹⁹⁵ “Trish” was on the ship with a mixture of English, Scottish, and Irish children; “Trish” believed that there were six girls from Scotland.

2.533 On arrival at Fremantle, the Scottish girls were taken to Nazareth House, Camberwell, in Melbourne. That was the first time “Trish” had heard of Camberwell.

Life at Nazareth House, Camberwell (1954-c.1958)

2.534 “Trish” described Camberwell in similar terms to “Alice”. She described the Sisters as being “just vicious.”¹¹⁹⁶

2.535 Each day, after having been woken up at “about six o’clock, we got dressed and went right to mass” for “about forty five minutes and we were kneeling down all that time.”¹¹⁹⁷ After church they had breakfast, which was “‘gluggy’ porridge and a piece of toast.”¹¹⁹⁸ Then there was school and chores before supper. The meals at Camberwell were “terrible but we had to eat them...If you didn’t eat your dinner you were sent to bed” as early as 5:30 pm.¹¹⁹⁹ Once each week they would have a bath, and “about four or five of us would share the water before it was changed.”¹²⁰⁰ Some respite from the daily routine came at Christmas time, when “we went for two weeks to different places with different families...Some of the people you stayed with were good but some treated us like slaves.”¹²⁰¹ If they were given any presents, “the nuns would take them from us when we got back to Nazareth House.”¹²⁰²

2.536 Although the girls were taught by the Sisters, “Trish” did not think they were teachers: “they were just put there because they were nuns and they needed someone to look after the children, because [they] also worked in the evenings when we were going to bed and all that sort of stuff.”¹²⁰³ When she was in the classroom, Sister Augustine “mainly [used] the ruler on its edge” to hit

1194 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.17.

1195 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.15.

1196 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.26.

1197 Written statement of “Trish” (LST), paragraph 31, at WIT.001.002.4758.

1198 Written statement of “Trish” (LST), paragraph 34, at WIT.001.002.4759.

1199 Written statement of “Trish” (LST), paragraph 36, at WIT.001.002.4759.

1200 Written statement of “Trish” (LST), paragraph 37, at WIT.001.002.4759.

1201 Written statement of “Trish” (LST), paragraph 40, at WIT.001.002.4760.

1202 Written statement of “Trish” (LST), paragraph 40, at WIT.001.002.4760.

1203 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.24-25.

“They were those windows that you pulled up and one girl had to sit on the ledge and push her bottom out...and she’s hanging there, cleaning the window...It’s a wonder no one fell.”

children “on the hand.”¹²⁰⁴ “Trish” was often put to work “during the day when I was supposed to be at school.”¹²⁰⁵ Later, a few of the girls went to college and “Trish” was one of them but she found it hard as she had not been to primary school and could not keep up with the work.¹²⁰⁶

2.537 The ruler was not the only implement used by Sister Augustine; she was also “good with the strap...But she was a brute...With the way she treated you, belted you” with the “thick belts” that they wore “round the uniform or their habit.”¹²⁰⁷ In the dormitories, Sister Augustine would “punch you. If you were talking when you were supposed to be going to sleep and she was on duty.”¹²⁰⁸ Children were punished regularly, even being taken out of bed during the night to scrub floors.¹²⁰⁹

Sister Augustine “was a brute...[w]ith the way she treated you, belted you”.

2.538 The children did all the cleaning at Camberwell, and they were each given jobs. “Trish’s” job was the laundry where, for two years, from the age of 10, she used “a great

big washing machine” and an industrial drier.¹²¹⁰ This was hard work. Another job she had was cleaning the windows on all five floors of the building, inside and outside: “They were those windows that you pulled up and one girl had to sit on the ledge and push her bottom out, and then you pulled the windowsill down and she’s hanging there, cleaning the window. And someone else is supposed to be holding her legs, but it didn’t work that way. It’s a wonder no one fell”.¹²¹¹

2.539 “Trish” had to help with the elderly women at Camberwell. She was aged 12 or 13 when she started this work. One night, when “Trish” was 13 or 14, she was sent to an elderly woman who had died and instructed to take the old woman’s clothes off and wash her. “Trish” “just thought, I’ll just wash her hands and face or something. I’d never touched a dead body before. [Sister Lucilla] said, ‘No, strip her off, take her nightie off and you’ve got to wash her.’ Lucilla stood there beside the bed, just watching me wash this lady, and she said, ‘And you’ve got to turn her over and wash her back, right down.’ I did it and she said, ‘No, you’ve got to do it properly, you’ve got to wash her bottom, front and back, and then dry her.’

1204 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.25.

1205 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.26.

1206 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.32.

1207 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.24.

1208 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.25.

1209 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.26.

1210 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.29-30.

1211 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.30.

She gave me cotton wool and said, 'You stick that in her bottom and in her vagina and up her nose and her eyes, you do all that, and then you dress her.' And all this time Lucilla was standing there watching me do it, not helping me at all."¹²¹² This experience "stayed with ['Trish'] all [her] life."¹²¹³

2.540 "Trish" did not tell anyone at the time how she was being treated at Camberwell "because you'd get in trouble anyway. You don't tell them, you just have to do what they tell you to do...It's like they stick together, you know? You don't do it."¹²¹⁴

"You don't tell them, you just have to do what they tell you to do."

2.541 "Trish" did not see any visitors or inspectors during her time at Nazareth House, Camberwell.¹²¹⁵ Her sister was in a different group and a different class, and she had little contact with her. "We didn't sort of get to know each other until we left Camberwell."¹²¹⁶ The girls had no one to report anything to: "They would say we were lying. We have never reported it to the police."¹²¹⁷

Life after care

2.542 "Trish" left Camberwell when she was aged 15 with "no preparation for life" outside the institution.¹²¹⁸ She had hoped to become a nurse but was told she was too young.¹²¹⁹ "Trish" moved into kindergarten work and, for a while, she worked in the kindergarten at Nazareth House, Camberwell.¹²²⁰ After "a couple of years", she left.¹²²¹ She married, had a family, and returned to work in later life, working with dementia patients for 15 years.¹²²² "Trish" never told her in-laws or her friends where she grew up, as she was "embarrassed...That had a big effect on me. I have two sons and they always say to me that it wasn't my fault and I shouldn't take the blame. But I tell them it's hard."¹²²³

2.543 "Trish" kept in touch with friends from Nazareth House, Camberwell. "Trish" and her sister have regular contact. "Trish" saw her mother once, when she returned to Scotland in her 20s. Her sister did not see their mother again.¹²²⁴ "Trish" discovered later in life that they had "four brothers and two sisters, all in Dumfries."¹²²⁵

2.544 "Trish" had not sought to recover records, and did not think she wanted to see them. It was something she preferred to "try and get out of my head."¹²²⁶

1212 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.35-36.

1213 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.36.

1214 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.37.

1215 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.37.

1216 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.28.

1217 [Written statement of "Trish" \(LST\)](#), paragraph 63, at WIT.001.002.4764.

1218 [Written statement of "Trish" \(LST\)](#), paragraph 64, at WIT.001.002.4764.

1219 [Written statement of "Trish" \(LST\)](#), paragraph 65, at WIT.001.002.4764.

1220 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.38-39.

1221 [Written statement of "Trish" \(LST\)](#), paragraph 70, at WIT.001.002.4765.

1222 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.39.

1223 [Written statement of "Trish" \(LST\)](#), paragraph 81, at WIT.001.002.4767.

1224 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.44.

1225 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.40.

1226 [Transcript, day 177](#): "Trish" (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.39.

“I suffered a hard, harsh childhood under the control of the Sisters of Nazareth. They never gave me any information about my family or identity and made me feel ashamed about my family”.

2.545 “Trish” continued to have flashbacks in adult life and saw “a counsellor for years to help her.”¹²²⁷ She prepared the statement that she provided to the Inquiry with the assistance of the CMT.¹²²⁸

2.546 “Trish” felt that her migration as a child made “a big difference” to her life in that “you worry about the least little thing: are you doing this right, are you doing it wrong? It is just little things, but they’re annoying things.”¹²²⁹ She felt that Nazareth House, Camberwell “[m]ade me a nervous person. I think I want to please everyone, I think that’s what it is. I feel if we didn’t please them at Camberwell, you’d get whacked.”¹²³⁰ She found it took her a while to get to know people, and that she wanted “just to be on their good side.”¹²³¹ “Trish’s” education suffered as a result of her migration and her time in care.¹²³²

2.547 “Trish” explained that she “suffered a hard, harsh childhood under the control of the Sisters of Nazareth. They never gave me any information about my family or identity and made me feel ashamed about my family origins, calling me names and saying to us that we were nothing, our mothers didn’t want us. They were cruel to children

who already had nothing. I always missed Scotland, felt there was something wrong with me, for me to be sent so far away like that. Scotland still feels like home to me, although relationships with family are not as strong as they might have been if I had been able to grow up in my own country.”¹²³³

2.548 When she was in Australia, “Trish” thought of Scotland and missed it, but when she was in Scotland she missed Melbourne: “That’s the hard bit, you know, you’re in between.”¹²³⁴ She reflected that “I’m caught in the middle...I couldn’t live in Scotland permanently...I like to come visiting but I always like to go back to Australia. I think that’s what a lot of the girls [who were migrated] think: there’s something missing.”¹²³⁵

1227 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.40.

1228 Statement of Historical Institutional Abuse of “Trish” (LST), at WIT.00.001.2672.

1229 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.45.

1230 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.45.

1231 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.45-46.

1232 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), .at TRN-5-000000007, p.45.

1233 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.46-47; see also Statement of Historical Institutional Abuse of “Trish” (LST), at WIT.003.001.2672.

1234 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.46.

1235 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.47.

“Mary”

Life in the UK

2.549 “Mary” was born in Dumfries in late 1944, and “went into care when [she] was a baby.”¹²³⁶ She and her sister were admitted to Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, in April 1946.¹²³⁷ “Mary” remained there for eight years, but had “no memory of Kilmarnock.”¹²³⁸

Migration

2.550 In 1954, “Mary” and her sister were migrated to Australia. “Mary’s” LEM3 form was signed by Sister Aloysius Magdalene, the Mother Superior at Kilmarnock, as “Mary’s” guardian, in late November 1953. William Flint signed on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council in February 1954. The form includes a handwritten note commenting that “Mary” was a “[b]right little girl. Good appearance, well spoken. Consider suitable. Medical arranged.”¹²³⁹ Her medical examination form was, in due course, signed in March 1954 by Dr Brown at Kilmarnock, who raised no medical concerns.¹²⁴⁰

2.551 “Mary” had no memory of the journey from Kilmarnock to Australia. Records show that she and her sister boarded the SS Orontes at Southampton in May 1954, when “Mary” was nine years old. “Mary” did “remember getting off the ship and there being buses waiting to take us to Nazareth House, Camberwell.”¹²⁴¹ After the children

from the ship were split up, “we were shown to a bus. Luckily, I stayed with my sister.”¹²⁴²

Life at Nazareth House, Camberwell (1954-c.1959)

2.552 “Mary” and her sister were taken to Nazareth House, Camberwell, which also housed elderly men and women. “Mary” could not remember her first day at Camberwell, but did remember “the minute I walked into the place. It was hell...It was like a jail.”¹²⁴³

Nazareth House, Camberwell “was hell... It was like a jail.”

2.553 The staff at Camberwell included the “Mother Superior who was in charge of the nuns”, and the Sisters who looked after children, including “Sister Teresa Alphonsus, Sister Lucilla and Sister Augustine.” “Mary” described how the children “used to call Sister Lucilla ‘the devil’...She was the worst of them all.”¹²⁴⁴

2.554 The girls at Camberwell slept in dormitories divided into age groups. As a result, “Mary” and her sister were in different dormitories, and “didn’t have much to do with” each other.¹²⁴⁵ The Sisters would “wake us up at 7 o’clock for church.”¹²⁴⁶ Breakfast was “porridge with lumps in it. I haven’t eaten it since. If you didn’t eat it, you got a belting or it was thrown over you or rubbed into your

1236 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.141.

1237 Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.3255-3256.

1238 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.142.

1239 LEM3 form for “Mary”, at NAA.001.001.1438.

1240 Medical examination form for “Mary”, at NAA.001.001.1439.

1241 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.143.

1242 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.143.

1243 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.144.

1244 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.144.

1245 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.145.

1246 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.145.

“...the food was horrible. It wasn’t edible...If I didn’t eat it, you were belted black and blue or punished in some other way”.

hair” by Sister Augustine or Sister Lucilla.¹²⁴⁷ “Mary” remembered that “the food was horrible. It wasn’t edible...If I didn’t eat it, you were belted black and blue or punished in some other way, like being made to scrub floors in the dining room. They made such a big deal of it. There could be a dozen of us not eating it...We were all punished.”¹²⁴⁸

“I did not receive the education every child in 1950s Australia was entitled to.”

2.555 After breakfast, the girls went to “so-called school.”¹²⁴⁹ The first few years of schooling were taken by the Sisters, “but I don’t think they were even teachers. We got adding up and English, but they didn’t teach us history or geography. I hadn’t heard of algebra or geometry...you didn’t learn much.”¹²⁵⁰ As the girls got older, “they had to send us somewhere else to be educated.”¹²⁵¹ “Mary” was sent to Melbourne Tech for a term to learn typing and shorthand. She considered her “very inadequate education” to be “another form of abuse...I did not

receive the education every child in 1950s Australia was entitled to.”¹²⁵²

2.556 Once school was finished for the day, children had to do manual work, “scrubbing and polishing floors. The cleaning took up hours of our day.”¹²⁵³ After cleaning, “Mary” “would have to go to the kitchen and peel the potatoes for the old people.”¹²⁵⁴ Her sister, as one of the older girls, “was up with the elderly folk most of the time.”¹²⁵⁵ “Mary’s” sister “was forced to lay out dead bodies...clean bed pans and face the indignity of being groped by old people who were beyond reason or inhibitions through dementia and various age-related illnesses.”¹²⁵⁶ Other girls, of about nine or 10 years old, were given the task of “washing the outside of the windows on the second or third floor, held by their legs—not by adults but by other children.”¹²⁵⁷ There were no cleaners at Nazareth House, “we did it all. We were slaves.”¹²⁵⁸

“We were slaves.”

2.557 Children who wet the bed were punished by being forced to “go out to the veranda and stand with the sheets over their heads. It was horrible.”¹²⁵⁹

1247 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.145.

1248 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.146.

1249 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.145.

1250 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.146.

1251 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.146.

1252 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2688.

1253 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.147.

1254 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.147.

1255 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.147.

1256 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2687.

1257 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2687.

1258 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.147.

1259 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.148.

2.558 The girls showered once or twice a week in a communal area, where the younger girls would undress and the older girls would have to help them get washed. "There were always nuns there watching us get washed. I just thought they were perverts."¹²⁶⁰ "Mary" explained that it was "a hell of a time" when a girl got her period. The Sisters would "throw the sanitary towel at you and call you filthy and disgusting...You couldn't get a bra either. They would tell me that I didn't need one. You didn't have any modesty there. Personal hygiene was non-existent."¹²⁶¹

"Personal hygiene was non-existent."

2.559 "Mary" "didn't have any visits from anyone personally. None of the girls had any visitors throughout the year."¹²⁶²

2.560 All the girls knew was that "we were there. We got three meals a day, a whack every now and again, and told how rotten we were for being orphans."¹²⁶³ "Mary" said that she "wouldn't know anything about my birthday", and "Christmas was rubbish...I can't even remember seeing a Christmas tree, but they would have had one in the front entrance for visitors. We weren't allowed in there. I can't remember getting any presents from the nuns other

than a smack on the mouth."¹²⁶⁴ The girls "didn't have anything of our own, not even a toilet bag."¹²⁶⁵ "Mary" had no recollection of "getting any healthcare."¹²⁶⁶

2.561 The holiday periods provided a change of scenery for the girls when they "would be sent to stay with a family in the neighbourhood."¹²⁶⁷ "Mary" was sent to a family with eight children and "I was their little slave...They had a huge house...I had to clean up after them at mealtimes and wash the floors."¹²⁶⁸ While she had largely positive experiences of the family, "Mary" did add that she "was being used as well, so it suited them to take [her]."¹²⁶⁹ Unlike the Sisters at Camberwell, this family were good to her and "didn't throw insults" at her.¹²⁷⁰

2.562 At Nazareth House, "Mary" experienced frequent verbal and physical abuse. The Sisters at Camberwell "thrived on humiliating us, trying to break our spirits and make us defer to their power and authority. Sometimes the nuns would walk past and jeer at us, or belt our legs and bodies, calling us names."¹²⁷¹ According to the Sisters, they were "ungrateful bitches, horrible and nasty. They would say, 'No wonder your mothers didn't want you.'...They never had a kind word" for the children.¹²⁷² Any curiosity "about our identity or families was used as a weapon against us. Nobody wants you.

1260 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.148.

1261 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, pp.148-149.

1262 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.151.

1263 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.151.

1264 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, pp.150-151.

1265 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.151.

1266 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.150.

1267 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.149.

1268 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.150.

1269 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.150.

1270 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.155.

1271 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of "Mary", at WIT.003.001.2689.

1272 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Mary", at TRN-5-000000009, p.154.

“We were made to feel like we were nothing and that they were doing us a favour.”

You are nothing. You are nobody.”¹²⁷³ All of this “was degrading and at the time we couldn’t do anything about it...We couldn’t tell anybody. We were made to feel like we were nothing and that they were doing us a favour.”¹²⁷⁴

2.563 “Mary” told SCAI that “[b]eatings... happened at least three or four times a week” for various infractions. The Sisters had “no patience. They were violent bullies. Gussy and Lucilla were the nastiest.”¹²⁷⁵ This indiscriminate physical abuse had a lasting impact on “Mary”. Sister Alphonsus, however, “was never horrible to me and she was nice to a lot of the girls. At night she used to sneak the biscuit tin in for the girls and we would share them. She did whack you sometimes if you had done something wrong, but she wasn’t a nasty person.”¹²⁷⁶

2.564 The Sisters hit the children with “either the belt or the stick. They used to wear a long white robe with a bit over the front. They had their hands under [there] all the time, so you knew when they brought them out they were going to hit you...You saw it coming. They brought [a belt] out from underneath and hit you wherever it landed.”¹²⁷⁷ These “beatings got worse over time.”¹²⁷⁸

2.565 In addition to the routine physical brutality, “Mary” experienced a particularly traumatic abusive incident. When she and the other girls who attended Melbourne Tech were returning to Nazareth House one day, they had met some boys from another college and talked to them. This was reported to the Sisters. On their return to Camberwell, the girls were taken into a room one by one and searched. “Mary” explained that “I was given an internal examination by Dr Croty to check my virginity. There was a priest and a nun there...They thought I’d had sex with one of the boys...It was the most embarrassing thing that ever happened to me, being searched in front of a priest, a nun and a doctor. I have never recovered from that assault. I hadn’t done anything wrong. I was belted for about a week afterwards. I was taken out of the school and for a while I had nothing to do except cleaning.”¹²⁷⁹

2.566 The examination she was subjected to “involved a vaginal examination.” “Mary” felt that she was “sexually assaulted by the doctor aided by the Sisters of Nazareth and the local priest.”¹²⁸⁰ After this incident, she “was taken out of school and lost my one chance for an education.”¹²⁸¹ She “was labelled a ‘slut’ and ha[d] lived with this terrible injustice all my life.”¹²⁸²

1273 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2689.

1274 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.154.

1275 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.151.

1276 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.153.

1277 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.152.

1278 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.152.

1279 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.153-154.

1280 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2688.

1281 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2688.

1282 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2688.

2.567 Throughout “Mary’s” time at Camberwell, there was nobody to speak to about the abuse. Even though priests who went to Camberwell “knew what was going on...They didn’t say or do anything to stop it.”¹²⁸³ The government failed to “interfere. Nobody from the welfare department came to visit us or ask us how we were. Nobody worried about whether we were being treated well, nobody bothered to ask.”¹²⁸⁴ Although half-yearly reports were sent to the Catholic Child Welfare Council throughout “Mary’s” time at Camberwell, these consist almost exclusively of single-word entries.¹²⁸⁵

“Nobody from the welfare department came to visit us or ask us how we were.”

Life after care

2.568 “Mary” was 15 years old when “the nuns told me I was leaving...We had nothing and I was glad to be out of there.”¹²⁸⁶ She went to stay with her holiday family, accommodation which was arranged by the Sisters. “Mary” was glad to be away from Camberwell, but she “was like a house cleaner” at the family’s home.¹²⁸⁷ She “was quite happy to do the work because I wasn’t being verbally or physically abused and I was out of the jailhouse.”¹²⁸⁸

“Mary” stayed with this family for about a year, and “had some happy times.”¹²⁸⁹

2.569 Aged 15 or 16, “Mary” and a friend got a flat together.¹²⁹⁰ “Mary” turned to alcohol: “Drinking was the only thing that kept me sane.”¹²⁹¹ After some time she and her friend moved to a boarding house “because it was cheaper because we just used to drink our wages.”¹²⁹²

2.570 “Mary” later met and married her husband and they got their own house when their son was born. When “Mary’s” mother-in-law found out she had grown up in an orphanage “[s]he was beside herself because her son had married someone from an orphanage.”¹²⁹³

“She was beside herself because her son had married someone from an orphanage.”

2.571 “Mary” did not remain married for long and brought her three children up by herself.¹²⁹⁴ She continued working until she became ill with alcohol poisoning. She stopped drinking in her mid-50s: “The kids forgave me for my drinking. They know all about me and have been so supportive.”¹²⁹⁵

1283 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.151.

1284 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.155.

1285 Half-yearly reports for “Mary”, June 1956 to January 1961, at BEW-000000090, pp.2-10.

1286 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.155.

1287 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.155.

1288 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.156.

1289 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.156.

1290 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.156.

1291 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.156.

1292 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.157.

1293 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.157.

1294 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.157.

1295 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.157-158.

“...all my life I thought I was an orphan.”

2.572 After “Mary” had started her own family, her sister received a phone call “out of the blue” telling her about their family in Scotland, namely four brothers and two sisters. For Mary “[i]t was a shock because all my life I thought I was an orphan.”¹²⁹⁶ Her sister was able to travel to Scotland to meet their mother. “Mary” could not afford to do so, so she “never met her.”¹²⁹⁷

2.573 “Mary” was later able to visit Scotland for her nephew’s funeral, which “was a sad occasion, but I wanted to meet the family.”¹²⁹⁸ “Mary” has been visited in Australia by a couple of her brothers. It had, though, been difficult because “the rest of the family [were] upset that we [had] delved into history...They didn’t even know who we were and I doubt if my mother ever spoke to them about us.”¹²⁹⁹

2.574 “Mary’s” migration and time in care had a profound effect on her. She lived her life “with anger and sadness in equal measures.”¹³⁰⁰ She remained unable to “eat properly now” because of having been “forced to eat muck and it put me off food because of the way it was thrown over you or rubbed in your hair.”¹³⁰¹ She became ill due to not eating.

2.575 “Mary” and the other girls at Camberwell were “brought up believing we were orphans...We were only kids and they made us feel like rotten scoundrels.”¹³⁰² She “was ashamed that [she] didn’t have parents”, and was so embarrassed listing Nazareth House when filling out forms that she “would tell lies and say that I was in a boarding school because my parents died in a car accident.”¹³⁰³

“We were only kids and they made us feel like rotten scoundrels.”

2.576 “Mary” did not “trust people...I can get angry very quickly. To me, it’s just getting back at the world for how I was treated when I was young.”¹³⁰⁴ “Mary” described that “[w]hen the truth came out” about the treatment former child migrants faced in institutions in Australia, “I couldn’t believe that the nuns got away with it for so long. I wondered how we survived.”¹³⁰⁵ “Mary” believed that the governments of Scotland and Australia held the greatest responsibility for her suffering and loss because they implemented the policy of child migration, “leaving us to the misery of the cruel Sisters of Nazareth.”¹³⁰⁶

1296 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.158.

1297 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.159.

1298 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.159.

1299 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.159.

1300 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2689.

1301 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.146.

1302 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.155.

1303 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.161.

1304 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.160-161.

1305 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.161.

1306 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2689.

2.577 “Mary” had never seen her records nor had she reported anything to the police: “I was too embarrassed for years and years. I wouldn’t even talk about it.”¹³⁰⁷

“I was too embarrassed for years and years. I wouldn’t even talk about it.”

2.578 “Mary” had never had counselling, and said that the only support she had received was from the CMT.¹³⁰⁸

Applicants - Nazareth House, Lasswade

2.579 The following are the accounts of SCAI applicants who were migrated overseas having been placed at Nazareth House, Lasswade.

Walter Kerkhof **Life in the UK**

2.580 Walter Kerkhof was born in Falkirk in January 1942. When he was 55, he discovered that his “real date of birth” was two days later than he had always believed, because “the authorities altered it.”¹³⁰⁹ Walter knew that his father was a priest, but he did not know anything about where he lived before he entered Nazareth House.¹³¹⁰ Records indicate that he was admitted to Nazareth House, Lasswade, on the recommendation of “Miss Gallacher” at the “Catholic Inquiry” in May 1943, when he was a year and four months old.¹³¹¹

2.581 Walter could not remember anything about Nazareth House, apart from the day when “a man came to the Orphanage...[and] asked me if I wanted to go on a boat”, to which he said yes.¹³¹² He did not remember “the journey to Australia.”¹³¹³ According to his Nazareth House records, he was discharged from there in October 1947. The passenger list including his name records that he boarded the SS Ormonde, and arrived at Fremantle on 7 November 1947.¹³¹⁴ He was five years old.

1307 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.158.

1308 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.158.

1309 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.106.

1310 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.107.

1311 Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2783.

1312 Written submission of Walter Kerkhof, at WIT.003.001.5097, p.1.

1313 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.107.

1314 Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2783; SS Ormonde, Incoming passenger list for Fremantle, at NAA.001.001.0135.

“I had to kneel on the pitch for three-quarters of an hour...I was so frozen that I couldn’t even stand up...I was 7 at the time.”

Life in Australia

St Joseph’s Orphanage, Subiaco
(1947-c.1948)

2.582 Walter was too young to be admitted to Castledare, so he was initially sent to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco, run by the Sisters of Mercy.



St Joseph’s Orphanage, front entrance, 3 December 1953. Photograph from the [State Library of Western Australia](#)’s collection of online images. Source: [Find & Connect](#).

2.583 Walter had few memories of his time at Subiaco, but he did remember being shocked at the change in temperature. When he left Scotland “it was minus 10 degrees”, but in Fremantle it was 30 degrees, and he “was red raw with sunburn.”¹³¹⁵

Castledare (c.1948-1951)

2.584 When Walter was about six years old, he went to Castledare Boys’ Home, run by the Christian Brothers.

2.585 The boys at Castledare “didn’t have shoes...we only wore shoes when we went to church.”¹³¹⁶ Walter’s memories from his youth were limited, but he did “have little clear patches of memory that are usually connected to the major things.”¹³¹⁷

“...we only wore shoes when we went to church.”

2.586 Walter was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at Castledare.

2.587 Sometimes, the abuse came in the form of extreme discipline. For talking in chapel, Walter was “marched down to the cricket pitch. The lawn was pure white and you could hear the ground crackling...I had to kneel on the pitch for three-quarters of an hour with no shoes, shorts, a little shirt and a thin jumper. I was so frozen that I couldn’t even stand up when he blew the whistle. I was 7 at the time.”¹³¹⁸ On another occasion when Walter was caught talking to another boy, he “was socked in the side of the head by [Brother Doyle] and [Doyle] hit my friend’s head off my head.”¹³¹⁹

1315 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.107.

1316 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.113.

1317 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.108.

1318 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.111.

1319 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.111.

2.588 At another time, Walter was “called to Brother Doyle’s office. I can still hear the grandfather clock tick-tocking some nights. He asked me why I had done something. I didn’t know what he was talking about. He gave me six of the best. He hit me with the strap all over my body.”¹³²⁰ Walter continued to say he knew nothing about the supposed offence, so Brother Doyle “gave me 20 more. I realised if I said the same thing again I would get another six so I said that I did it. I still didn’t know what I was admitting I had done. He told me to name the other kids who were there. I said, ‘You’ve got me there.’ He asked why I said I did it when I didn’t and I said, ‘Because you would have kept belting me until I said I did.’”¹³²¹

2.589 Brother Doyle only then told Walter that he thought he had seen him running away having done something to another boy.¹³²² Brother Doyle “flogged boys who would get scared and just name anybody to stop the belting...The brothers were brutal with their beltings”, which consisted of “beatings on the body with a cane or the strap.”¹³²³

2.590 Brother Higgins abused Walter after catching Walter climbing a loquat tree to collect the fruit: “He let me go for a week until he grabbed me one day and said, ‘Thought you’d get away with it, Mr Kerkhof?’ I got cold showers each day after that.

Every shower represented a loquat. It was freezing. It was so cold that I would walk out and bang into other kids. My brain wouldn’t function.”¹³²⁴ At Castledare, “[e]verything was about fear and massively wicked.”¹³²⁵

“Everything was about fear and massively wicked.”

2.591 One night Walter was woken from his sleep and he “could hear the window above me open slowly...I felt a pressure on the edge of the bed and Brother Campbell was sitting there. I was shaking like a leaf. He said, ‘I will come like a thief in the night.’ My heart didn’t stop thumping until 2 in the morning. The next thing I heard [was] Brother Campbell going crazy throwing kids about the room for being out of bed.”¹³²⁶

2.592 Although Walter had limited memories of his time at Castledare, he recalled that “Brother Murphy was there. I could never forget him.”¹³²⁷ Brother Murphy sexually abused Walter. He “called me one day to nit his head with my fingers. While I was doing that, his hands were up my trouser leg.”¹³²⁸

2.593 The Brothers “didn’t tell us anything about sex” and so the children “got warped ideas about it.”¹³²⁹

1320 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.112.

1321 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.112.

1322 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.112.

1323 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.112.

1324 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.113.

1325 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.113.

1326 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.113.

1327 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.109.

1328 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.111.

1329 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.110.

2.594 Walter was attacked by other boys at Castledare. Soon after arriving, Walter saw two kittens in Castledare's boiler room. Having "never seen cats or dogs" before, he "killed them", thinking that "they were beasties. I told everybody what I had done, that I had saved them from the beasties."¹³³⁰ In response, "fifty or so boys took me down to the 'ghost tree' and found me guilty. They told me to climb up on the fence post. Somebody found an old holster from the dairy made out of jute...They told me to say sorry to God and jump from the fence post. I did what I was told. I saw stars and my neck was aching."¹³³¹ The holster "broke but still caused me great sharp pain in the neck."¹³³² As a result, Walter walked with a crooked neck for several days until "Brother Murphy came up to me and told me to stop slouching my neck. He lifted me up off the ground and I saw stars again", although Walter's neck was no longer crooked.¹³³³

The Brothers "didn't tell us anything about sex. Kids got warped ideas about it."

Clontarf (c.1951-1957)

2.595 Walter left Castledare when he was eight or nine years old, and was transferred to Clontarf Boys' Town.¹³³⁴



Clontarf Boys' Town, January 1984. Picture by Betty Smith. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.596 Not long after Walter moved, Brothers Doyle and Murphy were also transferred to Clontarf, where "[t]here were virtually four men looking after 200 kids."¹³³⁵

"There were virtually four men looking after 200 kids."

2.597 The daily routine was similar to that at Castledare. In the morning "[t]he brother just...shouted, 'Out of bed'. We would jump out of bed and kneel by the side of our bed saying prayers. We did our jobs and then had breakfast."¹³³⁶ One of Walter's tasks "was to rake the poplar leaves barefoot. My toes would be cracked and my feet would bleed."¹³³⁷ After morning tasks, the boys would be given breakfast which was usually

1330 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.109.

1331 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.109.

1332 Written submission of Walter Kerkhof, at WIT.003.001.5097, p.2.

1333 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.109; Written submission of Walter Kerkhof, at WIT.003.001.5097, p.2.

1334 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.114,

1335 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.129.

1336 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.114.

1337 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.115.

“We made the pool. It was 1 metre shy of an Olympic sized pool...We mixed up the cement with our feet and with sticks. We had no tools.”

porridge, but “[t]he milk was always just a little bit off. The brothers got cream but [the children] never got it”, despite Clontarf having “30-odd milking cows”.¹³³⁸ At 9 am the boys would start school. Their lunch “was an apple or broken biscuit from local shopkeepers.”¹³³⁹ Walter “used to see the rats come out of the storeroom with full biscuits in their mouths. I never accepted a biscuit.”¹³⁴⁰ After school had finished, “we played around down at the oval or the creek...I was always fishing.”¹³⁴¹

2.598 Boys “worked for an hour after school” on various tasks: they got “manure from the piggery or the dairy” for the gardens; they “built handball courts”; “put a foot of dirt in the oval and used sugar bags to raise it”; “started growing vegetables”; and “had to sew up 180 bags of wheat”, which required 12 stitches to each bag.¹³⁴² In addition, while Walter was at Clontarf “[w]e made the pool. It was 1 metre shy of an Olympic sized pool...We mixed up the cement with our feet and with sticks. We

had no tools...You were supposed to just work and say nothing. We were in our bare feet. Sometimes they gave us boots”, but this could make it even harder because of the weight and heat of the boots.¹³⁴³ Walter would “get a burnt nose every day because [he] didn’t wear a hat.”¹³⁴⁴

2.599 After school and jobs was the evening meal, which consisted of “basic” food with steamed vegetables.¹³⁴⁵ Walter recalled being made to eat “dirty swede” by Brother Doyle.¹³⁴⁶ One of Walter’s ways of dealing with the poor food was to “sneak into the cool room” where he stayed “all night” and “ate cream and lumps of butter like you’d eat cake.”¹³⁴⁷

2.600 After the boys had eaten dinner, “we played around doing active sports” before going to church.¹³⁴⁸ In the evenings “we used to listen to a creepy thing called The Shadow. Nobody would dare talk when it was on.”¹³⁴⁹ They went to bed at about 9 pm.¹³⁵⁰ Each of the dormitories accommodated about 40

1338 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.115.

1339 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.115.

1340 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.116.

1341 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.115.

1342 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.122.

1343 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.121.

1344 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.122.

1345 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.116.

1346 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.116.

1347 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.115-116.

1348 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.116.

1349 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.114.

1350 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

children, except “the wetty-bed dorm” where there were about 20.¹³⁵¹ As punishment for wetting the bed, boys were beaten and made to have freezing cold showers. They “were made to feel like a criminal for wetting the bed.”¹³⁵² In addition, “Doyle came up with the idea of electric shock treatment for them too. When the kid woke up and piddled, he got an electric shock. They had to wait until Doyle got out of bed to stop it. The kids were raving lunatics. They were demented because of the shocks after that happened a few time[s].”¹³⁵³ Walter wet the bed only once during his time at Clontarf, but avoided harsh punishment because the boy who usually slept in the next bed to him was in the infirmary, and he was able to swap the sheets.¹³⁵⁴

2.601 To counter head lice, “the brothers used to line [the children] up and pour kerosene on [their] heads”.¹³⁵⁵ If boys had dirty teeth or a bit of food in their teeth, they were punished with a “backhand” or by missing out on watching films.¹³⁵⁶ Clontarf sent boys including Walter to Perth Dental Hospital where “there was a government initiative to train dentists. They couldn’t get enough volunteers so they started to use orphans. Orphans didn’t ask questions. They drilled all my back teeth. After my fourth or fifth visit I asked why they were drilling my teeth

because I didn’t have any cavities. They didn’t take X-rays or anything. They told me I had soft centres. It was just an excuse to use me as a guinea pig...I lost all but one tooth.”¹³⁵⁷

2.602 At Christmas time the boys went to family homes. Walter went with a friend to a family in Subiaco.¹³⁵⁸ If these families gave the boys presents, the Brothers would take them from the children, who “didn’t see them again.”¹³⁵⁹ Birthdays were not celebrated.¹³⁶⁰

“Boys lost arms and legs. One boy was killed...Brother Doyle just told us to pray.”

2.603 Boys were taken to Bindoon on St Joseph’s Day in March. Some 50 children travelled there on the back of “an open-sided truck in rain, hail or shine.”¹³⁶¹ One particular trip stands out in Walter’s mind: “We were going on a trip to Bendotty’s farm when we were in a bus accident. Boys lost arms and legs. One boy was killed. That boy’s own brother didn’t even know they were brothers. Another boy had a leg cut off. Another boy’s wrist was flopping and he was asking other kids if they needed any help. Another kid had his nose ripped off. Brother Doyle just told us to pray.”¹³⁶²

1351 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.114 and 117.

1352 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

1353 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

1354 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

1355 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

1356 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.120.

1357 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.120-121.

1358 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.123.

1359 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.123-124.

1360 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.124.

1361 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.118-119.

1362 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.119.

“I used to suffer more because I liked animals...I was used to my animals being killed.”

2.604 When a group of boys did reach Bendotty’s farm, “we were just cheap labour...It was supposed to be our holiday. I found it repugnant.”¹³⁶³

2.605 Walter faced multiple forms of abuse at Clontarf. He had several pet animals that were killed, including a puppy he had (mistakenly) been told he could take from a local farmer; rabbits that boys used to hide in their desks; and the parrots that Walter looked after.¹³⁶⁴ Walter felt that he “used to suffer more because [he] liked animals. [He] cared for them and understood them.”¹³⁶⁵ He became used to his “animals being killed”.¹³⁶⁶

2.606 At Clontarf, Walter described the discipline as “over the top. Some of the incidents were abuse.”¹³⁶⁷ Brother Doyle, who had already beaten Walter for something he did not do, “kicked [him] in the groin” once.¹³⁶⁸ The “sadistic” Brother Higgins “had a halfpenny sown into the end of the strap by the bookmaker...He would hit you right on the tips of your fingers or on your wrist”.¹³⁶⁹ On one occasion Walter stood on a nail in his bare feet, but did not feel it due to the

cold, and failed to notice the pool of blood on the floor.¹³⁷⁰ He was beaten by Brother Higgins “for making a mess on the floor and not telling the brothers.”¹³⁷¹ Brother Higgins would let Walter know that he was going to be punished, but then make Walter “wait with a psychological anguish for a week waiting to find out what he was going to do to me.”¹³⁷²

“I had to wait with a psychological anguish for a week to find out what he was going to do to me.”

2.607 Walter estimated that he was strapped on a daily basis. Attempts of self-defence were met with a lash on the head, causing “unbearable” pain.¹³⁷³ He said that Brothers Murphy, Doyle, and Foley were the main ones who belted the children.¹³⁷⁴ On Wednesdays the children were required to gather in the hall for “speech day”.¹³⁷⁵ Brother Doyle would instruct “bad kids” to stand at the wall, and then “say what you had done wrong and then give you six of the best.”¹³⁷⁶

1363 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.119.

1364 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.123; p.119; and p.122.

1365 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.122.

1366 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.123. “Anne” (CQG) above recalled “Tom” telling her about Walter’s pets being killed.

1367 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.124.

1368 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.125.

1369 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.125.

1370 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.125.

1371 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.125.

1372 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.127-128.

1373 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.128.

1374 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.128.

1375 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.129.

1376 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.129.

As with the emotional abuse inherent in the delayed punishment from Brother Higgins, Brother Doyle forced boys to wait for their punishment while witnessing their peers being beaten.

2.608 The abuse by Brother Murphy featured most prominently in Walter's memory. Brother Murphy was "straight out brutal."¹³⁷⁷ Walter "used to have to go through Brother Murphy's hair with a fine nitcomb in the classroom. It was bearable until he grabbed my [penis] or made me grab his...My mates were there, but they couldn't see it happening behind the desk. I was in second year at the time."¹³⁷⁸ This "went on for a while", whenever Brother Murphy "got the urge until I pulled away one day."¹³⁷⁹ When Walter did this, Brother Murphy "grabbed me and said, 'Not good enough am I, Kerkhof? We'll remember this', with his horrible breath. He didn't say what he was going to do to me."¹³⁸⁰ Even though the Brothers "had a phobia about sexual stuff" and would punish children for any show of sexuality, "they were doing it themselves."¹³⁸¹

2.609 A few days after this incident, Walter "was sent down to the big boys' end of the showers" because he was reaching puberty.¹³⁸² Brother Murphy, who supervised showers, knew this because he "used to look at all the boys' [penises]. There were 27 showering at any one time. He would

turn the tap for a minute and move on to the next one. He would come back and look at you when you had soaped up."¹³⁸³ One evening, when Walter, aged 11 or 12, "was in the shower cubicle alone" and the other boys were already at dinner, Brother Murphy "pulled my towel off and was looking down at my...private parts, so I covered myself. He said, 'who told you to move?' and went in with his knee in my groin so I doubled over. The next thing, I was upside down and he knocked me out...When I came to, I was lying on the ground. I coughed and saw a big lump of thick red jelly next to me. I felt my tongue and there were two holes in it. I had bitten my tongue on both sides. I was out of it for 20 minutes. He just left me lying there naked. Eventually, I went to tea and one of the brothers said, 'Playing with the pigeons again, nature boy?' and I said, 'yes, sir.' There was no way I could tell the brother what had been done because I would have been flogged for lying...I got six of the best in front of everybody and missed the movies for five weeks."¹³⁸⁴ After this incident, when Walter "tried to remember anything or concentrated on something, [he] would get a headache."¹³⁸⁵

2.610 Walter was physically abused when he could not remember a spelling in class, and he "stayed in the same class at school for two years" because he was unable to progress after Brother Murphy's assault.¹³⁸⁶

1377 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.125.

1378 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

1379 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

1380 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.125.

1381 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.117.

1382 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.125.

1383 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.126.

1384 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.126-127.

1385 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.127.

1386 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.127.

“...people at the top level were in denial. The whole nation was in denial about the abuse. They were all complicit”.

2.611 Walter “ran away frequently, especially in [his] last year.”¹³⁸⁷ He “asked Brother Dopiazza why God made some kids suffer more than others. He told me, matter of factly, ‘God gives it to those who can handle it, so be off with yourself.’ I felt like telling him to tell God to give it to somebody else because I had had enough.”¹³⁸⁸

2.612 Walter “[n]ever told a brother or outside authority about the abuse...You wouldn’t dare report anything to the police. It was pointless. There was a lot of Catholics in the police and government.”¹³⁸⁹ Similarly, “the Welfare Department came once and everybody was on their tippy-toes. The visits were all orchestrated”, and the abuse went unchallenged.¹³⁹⁰ Walter believed that “people at the top level were in denial. The whole nation was in denial about the abuse. They were all complicit in it.”¹³⁹¹

2.613 One day, Brother Doyle told Walter that he “wasn’t doing very well at school”, that he was leaving, and sent him to get the bus away from Clontarf.¹³⁹² He was just under 15 years of age.

Life after care

2.614 After leaving Clontarf in 1957, Walter got a job at a farm where he worked for six months.¹³⁹³ The Christian Brothers then got another job for him at a different farm, where Walter slept in a tin shed that was “stinking hot in the summer and freezing in the winter.”¹³⁹⁴

2.615 From there, Walter went to stay with a family who respected him. He lived with them for four years.¹³⁹⁵ He left before he turned 21 and went to work on the railways.¹³⁹⁶ Walter married and had two children.¹³⁹⁷ He and his wife separated after 14 years.¹³⁹⁸

2.616 Walter attempted to trace his mother without any success. In about 1985, Walter’s “guts was torn out” after he received a letter telling him his mother had died in 1983.¹³⁹⁹ He had never met her.¹⁴⁰⁰ Walter travelled to Scotland in 1990 and 1999 and met some of his family and was able to keep in touch with one of them.¹⁴⁰¹

1387 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.124.

1388 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.124.

1389 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.129.

1390 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.124.

1391 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.129.

1392 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.130.

1393 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.130.

1394 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.130.

1395 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.130-131.

1396 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.131.

1397 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.131.

1398 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.131.

1399 Written submission of Walter Kerkhof, at WIT.003.001.5097, p.2.

1400 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.132.

1401 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.132.

“I cannot recall any nun ever with a smile on her face which would obviously be assuring for any small children experiencing uncertainty”.

2.617 Walter “[n]ever had counselling. I sometimes think it’s worse to dwell on things. You have to get yourself together and pick out the best parts of life.”¹⁴⁰² However, “when I meet up with my friends who were in there too, we talk about it all.”¹⁴⁰³

“...it’s worse to dwell on things. You have to get yourself together and pick out the best parts of life.”

2.618 Walter did not have records from his time in care.¹⁴⁰⁴ At the age of 65, Walter “found out [he] had no nationality”, even though “we were British subjects.”¹⁴⁰⁵ He obtained a British passport and received a state pension.¹⁴⁰⁶

“James”

2.619 “James” was unable to provide the Inquiry with a witness statement, and the evidence he submitted was a compilation of submissions to other inquiries and redress schemes.

Life in the UK

2.620 “James” was born in Yorkshire in 1941. His mother died in 1943 and he was placed in Nazareth House, Lasswade, in January 1946, aged four.¹⁴⁰⁷ His younger sister was sent to Nazareth House, Cardonald, in March 1946, aged three.¹⁴⁰⁸

2.621 “James” found Lasswade “a miserable place”, without “any merriment”.¹⁴⁰⁹ The “hardships there...were chiefly psychological...I cannot recall any nun ever with a smile on her face, which would obviously be assuring for any small children experiencing uncertainty...and who were perpetually insecure about everything”.¹⁴¹⁰ He was not physically abused by the nuns, although he vaguely recalled others being physically punished.¹⁴¹¹

1402 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.132.

1403 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.132.

1404 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.132.

1405 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.132.

1406 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.132-133.

1407 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2840; Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2774.

1408 Nazareth House, Glasgow, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2710.

1409 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.210.

1410 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.210.

1411 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.211.

2.622 In October 1947, aged six, “James” “left the UK on SS [Ormonde], arriving in Fremantle, Western Australia”, in November 1947.¹⁴¹² His sister later followed: she was migrated from Nazareth House, Glasgow, on the RMS Mooltan in April 1949, at the age of six.¹⁴¹³

Life in Australia

Castledare (1947-1951)

2.623 “James” was sent to Castledare Boys’ Home in November 1947, a fact which he “learned only recently.”¹⁴¹⁴ Throughout his time there he did not know his age or the date of his birthday.¹⁴¹⁵

2.624 “James” was physically abused at Castledare. On one occasion, a Brother picked “James” up “in front of the entire classroom” and “repeatedly rained blows upon my legs and buttocks and caused that portion of my body to swell and take on a lucid red and blue that extended to just above my ankles.”¹⁴¹⁶ “James” developed welts behind his knees following this assault and, by the end of the following day, these “welts had begun to weep and that night, for fear that I would dirty the sheets as my legs and calves were sticking to them, I passed the night sitting on the bedside.”¹⁴¹⁷ “James” was about eight years old at the time.

“...he repeatedly rained blows upon my legs and buttocks and caused that portion of my body to swell”.

2.625 “James” described how Brother Campbell would “use the strap at the smallest infringement of the rules.”¹⁴¹⁸ While “the word ‘strap’ connotes flexibility”, the strap used by the Christian Brothers was different.¹⁴¹⁹ It was about 18 inches long, and “consisted of two blocks of stitched rigid leather...divided by a strip of 4 inches of leather to enable it to fold and comfortably fit in their habit pockets.”¹⁴²⁰ Brother Campbell strapped “James” with this implement “on numerous occasions”.¹⁴²¹ This process involved “James” having to “extend [his] right hand, palm upwards, aimed at the pit of [Brother Campbell’s] stomach, and then he would proceed to give [‘James’] six of the best.”¹⁴²² This was repeated on the left hand. Boys could identify Brother Campbell’s victims because they would walk with their arms crossed over their chest, and hands tucked into their armpits; from this, the other boys would know that “Campbell was in a

1412 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2840.

1413 There is no further information on the lead-up to “James” (FBF) migration due to the nature of the evidence he submitted. “James” was migrated on the same ship as several other SCAI applicants, including “Rose”. “James’s” sister was on the same ship as “Rose’s” sister, “Trish” (MZW), migrated in 1949. “Trish” notes that “James’s” sister went to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco with her. See Exhibit RK8, Written statement of Rosemary Keenan, at BEW-000000009, p.2 and p.5.

1414 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.211.

1415 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.212.

1416 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, pp.211-212.

1417 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.212.

1418 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.212.

1419 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.212.

1420 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.212.

1421 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.213.

1422 Transcript, day 182: Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.213.

bad mood.”¹⁴²³ “James” described that, in winter in particular, “this treatment was extremely painful and added more misery to our scantily clad, shoeless existence.”¹⁴²⁴

2.626 Brother Murphy physically abused “James”. On two occasions, “James” and other boys “were told to strip and get into one of the baths of warm water.”¹⁴²⁵ Kerosene was then poured into the bath. According to Brother Murphy, this was to get rid of lice and nits. “James” was born “cross-eyed”, with one eye particularly badly affected. When the kerosene “entered that particular eye, the pain was excruciating. I was not the only one to scream.”¹⁴²⁶ “James” said that this incident left him feeling as if he was “a little animal being treated as a nonentity.”¹⁴²⁷ Despite his eye problems, an “educational guidance report dated 25 July 1949” signed by Brother Campbell noted that there was “[n]o apparent defect” with “James’s” sight.¹⁴²⁸

“I felt like I was a little animal being treated as a nonentity.”

2.627 Brother Murphy sexually abused “James”. In August 1948, Brother Murphy’s attitude towards him “softened”. While in Brother Murphy’s classroom alone, “[h]e sat me on his knee. I was suffering sheer, raw fear. I wasn’t hearing what he was saying...I do not wish to go into details. It will have to suffice that I, at 7 years old, was sexually assaulted...I cried uncontrollably. He had no compassion. Sometime before being allowed to leave my mind was frozen. I do recall that his buttons were still agape.”¹⁴²⁹

“He sat me on his knee...I, at 7 years old, was sexually assaulted...I cried uncontrollably.”

2.628 Some time after this incident “James” “was ushered to a plywood room.”¹⁴³⁰ He was “once again...filled with terror.”¹⁴³¹ Though “James” did not specify who was in the room with him, he explained that he “was made to kneel in front of [the person] with my head resting upon his knees. He told me that I was no longer to be an altar boy. He was lightly stroking the top of my head. I turned to jelly. I was petrified to leave. In today’s jargon I was stressed out.”¹⁴³²

1423 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.213.

1424 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.213.

1425 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, pp.213-214.

1426 JG2: Typed statement of “James”, 2018, at WIT.003.002.2842; [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.214.

1427 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.221.

1428 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.214.

1429 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.219.

1430 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.220.

1431 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.220.

1432 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.220.

“...it was child slave labour.”

Bindoon (1951-1952)

2.629 In 1951, when “James” was nine years old, he was transferred from Castledare to Bindoon Boys’ Town.¹⁴³³ He had particular memories of the treatment he received there from Brother Keaney, who was in charge of Bindoon, Brother Dawe, and Brother Wexted.¹⁴³⁴

2.630 The daily routine at Bindoon was physically demanding, and caused injury to the boys. Before school began at 9 am, “James” and the others had to work at the

existing building sites, and engage in in physically demanding tasks such as carrying scaffolding poles, bricks and rocks. They had to use wheelbarrows to carry sand for making concrete or picking up debris.¹⁴³⁵ In this labour, “our size was of no consequence... [and] age did not appear to have been even considered.”¹⁴³⁶ “James”, who “was very small”, “was literally petrified by Brother Keaney.”¹⁴³⁷ This labour “continued after school”.¹⁴³⁸ “James” viewed his treatment to have been “child slave labour.”¹⁴³⁹



Bindoon Boys’ Town, building work, 1952. Photograph from Western Australia Government photographer. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

1433 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.214.

1434 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.214.

1435 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, pp.214-215.

1436 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.214.

1437 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.214.

1438 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.215.

1439 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.215.

2.631 As a result of the labour, “James” developed cement burns “to my still-shoeless feet, chilblains between my toes” and suffered from “constant splinters in my hands”, as well as often stepping on the seeds of the Doublegee plant, which had “three sharp thorns”, making it “impossible to walk without first extracting them.”¹⁴⁴⁰

2.632 Boys were also abused directly by Brother Keaney. One day in 1951, “James” and “four or five others” were wrongly told by a new Brother that the smaller children “were not required” for labouring work.¹⁴⁴¹ As the boys were returning from the nearby paddock, Brother Keaney “lined [them] up with a walking stick and drove down at [their] outstretched hands.”¹⁴⁴² This led to “severe lacerations” on their forearms and wrists.¹⁴⁴³

2.633 “James” was terrified of Brother Dawe, whose “physical attacks were well-known. He used his open hand [on] me on various occasions. I was sent sprawling.”¹⁴⁴⁴ Brother Dawe also engaged in emotional abuse. He would “taunt me over my dislocated eye” by crossing “his own eyes on nearly all occasions” when “James” passed him.¹⁴⁴⁵ He taunted “James” “openly, only once” in relation to a movie that the children were about to watch.¹⁴⁴⁶ This taunt was met with “universal laughter” from the other

boys.¹⁴⁴⁷ As a result, “James” “was forced to suffer inwardly” until the incident had faded from the boys’ memories.¹⁴⁴⁸

2.634 Brother Wexted frightened “James” “in a different way.”¹⁴⁴⁹ He did not make physical contact with “James” but he would make “bold remarks” about sinister things like how much “James” would weigh if he “were divided into four parts.”¹⁴⁵⁰

Clontarf (1952-1953)

2.635 “James’s” sister, who had been sent to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco, had since been adopted. In about 1952 “there was an attempt” by the same family to adopt “James” at his birth father’s request, but “it failed.”¹⁴⁵¹

2.636 Following that failed adoption attempt, in April 1952, “James” was transferred to Clontarf Boys’ Town.¹⁴⁵² At Clontarf, “James” did not recall experiencing the same level of physical hardship as at the other institutions, but he did remember “the abysmal lack of self-esteem and the failure of the brothers to encourage us.”¹⁴⁵³

“...the abysmal lack of self-esteem and the failure of the brothers to encourage us.”

1440 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.215.

1441 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.215.

1442 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.215.

1443 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.215.

1444 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.216.

1445 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.216.

1446 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.216.

1447 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.216.

1448 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.216.

1449 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.216.

1450 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.216.

1451 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.217.

1452 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2840; [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.217.

1453 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.217.

Brother Quilligan “lectured me on the weakness of the flesh...I was ordered to lay on my back and Quilligan laid on top of me...I was intimidated”.

2.637 There was an occasion when, after walking back from a church service at Clontarf, “a number of us were selected in the ablution block to answer for [a] lack of any evident piety at the service.”¹⁴⁵⁴ The group was “administered the strap six times on each hand in an already icy room. For a child to be dealt with in this manner was nothing short of an abomination, the reason for it smacking of hypocrisy.”¹⁴⁵⁵

2.638 “James” was sexually abused at Clontarf by a teacher, Mr Jackson. He was instructed to remain behind one day to sharpen the classroom pencils. “James” recalled that Mr Jackson “was sitting on his chair with his pants down. They were around his ankles. His erection was evident. He made me put a hand on it. As with Murphy, his own hands were up my shorts. He told me to masturbate him. For some reason, I didn’t experience the terror that nearly made me comatose with Murphy, just a feeling of being helpless and a sense of hopelessness. I was told that I would be the dux of the class. I was sobbing quite loudly through this. I was warned not to gasbag about it.”¹⁴⁵⁶

2.639 “James” spent about a year at Clontarf. Following another failed attempt at

adoption by the same family as before, he was returned to Bindoon and “[w]hat was left of my youth was stolen from me there.”¹⁴⁵⁷

Bindoon (1953-1957)

2.640 “James” returned to Bindoon in 1953, when he was around 12 years old. Shortly after “James”’ return, Brother Keaney was replaced by Brother Quilligan.

2.641 “James” was sexually abused by Brother Quilligan when he was 14 or 15 years old. He questioned “James” about a young contractor who had been hired to build a dam at Bindoon and had been larking about, including by dropping his shorts: “Quilligan had heard that I had on occasion objected to this behaviour. Quilligan was speaking as though I was part guilty. Using words that at the time I had never heard of, he lectured me on the weakness of the flesh...I was ordered to lay on my back and Quilligan laid on top of me...I was intimidated to the degree that I waited still until he had finished.”¹⁴⁵⁸

2.642 Although “James” had felt “psychologically stronger” after having undergone eye surgery, that feeling faltered after he was sexually abused by Brother Quilligan.¹⁴⁵⁹

1454 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.213.

1455 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.213.

1456 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, pp.221-222.

1457 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.217.

1458 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.223.

1459 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.223. In total, “James” “underwent three operations on my eyes” while at Bindoon, which “left me with permanent double vision”: JG2: Typed statement of “James”, 2018, at WIT.003.002.2842.

Life after care

2.643 “James” left Bindoon for the second and final time in October 1957, when he was 16 years old. He had received very little education and was barely able to read and write.¹⁴⁶⁰ He spent the “first 10 years after leaving Bindoon working on various farms.”¹⁴⁶¹ He did not want to carry on with farm work but had little choice as he needed the income.¹⁴⁶² “James” later did obtain a truck drivers’ licence “and was then able to get [alternative] work.”¹⁴⁶³

2.644 In the mid-1970s, “James” felt “a real need to get out of Australia.”¹⁴⁶⁴ He travelled to Africa and spent about three months travelling across the continent before going to England. He returned to Australia, and worked as a labourer and subsequently trained as a seismic navigator.¹⁴⁶⁵ Having travelled to the Philippines during that employment he decided to return there in 1984, where he met his wife, with whom he had one son.¹⁴⁶⁶

2.645 “James” lost contact with his sister in 1952 after the second failed adoption attempt. He made contact with her again in 1991, “after losing her for 40 years”, when he “received a letter enquiring if [he] was her brother.”¹⁴⁶⁷ He subsequently visited her. She died in 1996.

2.646 In 1998, “James” returned to England “to see if [he] would be able to handle returning to the Western world and a Western lifestyle.”¹⁴⁶⁸ He later returned to the Philippines to secure his wife a visa to live in England, and they moved there to live in April 1999.¹⁴⁶⁹

2.647 “James” wrote to SCAI acknowledging that, although he had indicated that he would attend a private session, he found that: “I just cannot do it. I apologise. But I have related the story so many times now...it gets more painful to mentally delve into it all again as time passes.”¹⁴⁷⁰ That is far from being an unusual response and is, in all the circumstances, entirely understandable.

“I have related the story so many times now... it gets more painful to mentally delve into it all again as time passes.”

1460 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2840.

1461 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1462 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1463 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1464 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1465 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1466 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1467 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.218; JG2: Typed statement of “James”, 2018, at WIT.003.002.2840.

1468 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1469 JG2: Typed statement of “James” (FBF), 2018, at WIT.003.002.2841.

1470 Email from “James” (FBF) to SCAI, 5 July 2019, at WIT.003.002.2834.

“My sister was asked if she wanted to go [to Australia]...She thought she was going down to the shop for an ice cream.”

“John”

Life in the UK

2.648 “John” was born in 1936, possibly in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.¹⁴⁷¹ He had three sisters and a half-sister. He had no recollection of living as a family.¹⁴⁷² He believed his mother “was a bit of an alcoholic. She didn’t really want us.”¹⁴⁷³ He was “in five or six” care placements, although the only one he remembered was Nazareth House, Lasswade, where his mother took him in June 1946, when he was 10 years old.¹⁴⁷⁴ While he was there, he did not know that he had sisters.¹⁴⁷⁵

2.649 At Lasswade, “John” slept in a dormitory with about 10 to 20 boys.¹⁴⁷⁶ “John” walked to his school in Dalkeith with other children from Lasswade. A number of them regularly played truant.¹⁴⁷⁷ They would return to Nazareth House at about 3 pm, where they “would play soccer...We played a lot of games inside the home. We didn’t have to do any chores.”¹⁴⁷⁸ “John” had no visitors during his time at Nazareth House.¹⁴⁷⁹

2.650 “John” described the Sister in charge, Sister Anne, as “a very cruel person.”¹⁴⁸⁰ She made children kneel to be belted across their wrists for minor matters. Sister Gertrude, on the other hand, “was nice.”¹⁴⁸¹

“We played a lot of games inside the home. We didn’t have to do any chores.”

Migration

2.651 “John” had no recollection of being asked if he wanted to go to Australia or of “sitting any tests.”¹⁴⁸² He was only told he was going and “didn’t have a clue where Australia was.”¹⁴⁸³ In later life, his sister told him that she “was asked if she wanted to go [to Australia]... She thought she was going down to the shop for an ice cream.”¹⁴⁸⁴ “John’s” mother “signed the papers for [him] to go”, and he and a few other children from Lasswade went to Middleton camp where “there were hundreds

1471 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.135.

1472 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.135. See “[Rose](#)”, who is “John’s” sister, and “[Trish](#)” (MZW), who is “John’s” half-sister.

1473 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.135.

1474 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.135; Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.3300.

1475 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.138.

1476 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.136.

1477 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.136-137.

1478 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.137.

1479 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.138.

1480 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.138.

1481 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.136.

1482 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.138. The Inquiry has not been provided with any documentation for “John’s” migration, such as a LEM3 form or medical examination form.

1483 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.138.

1484 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.138.

of kids".¹⁴⁸⁵ "John" stayed there for one or two weeks. There were other boys there that he knew. They were all a bit older than "John" except for one boy who was around the same age.¹⁴⁸⁶ They were not provided with any information about where they were going.¹⁴⁸⁷ They embarked on the SS Ormonde in October 1947.¹⁴⁸⁸

2.652 During the crossing "there were two Christian Brothers looking after the whole lot of us...We were allowed to run wild."¹⁴⁸⁹ At some point during the crossing, "John" found out that two of his sisters were on the ship.¹⁴⁹⁰ After docking at Fremantle in early November 1947, "John" waited to get on the same bus as his sisters but discovered he was unable to do so when he "was told they were going on a different bus."¹⁴⁹¹

2.653 "John's" sisters were taken to St Joseph's Orphanage at Subiaco, "John" was taken to Bindoon.¹⁴⁹² He was aged 11 at the time.

Life at Bindoon (1947-1952)

2.654 The bus taking "John" to Bindoon stopped at the top of a hill above the town. From that vantage point they could see that "the place was only half built. There wasn't much to see, it was all bush and country. You

couldn't run away. It was in the middle of nowhere."¹⁴⁹³

2.655 On arrival, the clothes the children had were taken from them and, instead, they "were given some old clothes...That's the last [he] saw of shoes for four years."¹⁴⁹⁴ "John" was allocated to a dormitory where the children "were sort of jammed in."¹⁴⁹⁵ "John's" group was "the second or third" to arrive at Bindoon, so once his group arrived "there were 30 or 40 kids there and then they kept coming in. About 12 months later there were about 70 there."¹⁴⁹⁶

"You couldn't run away. It was in the middle of nowhere."

2.656 The routine involved "getting up, going to Mass every morning, breakfast and school or working."¹⁴⁹⁷ The boys were woken by "a Christian Brother [who] walked down the row of beds ringing a bell."¹⁴⁹⁸ Those who wet the bed were belted and had the wet sheets "put on their heads."¹⁴⁹⁹ Breakfast was "a couple of pieces of bread dipped in dripping. It was too bad if you didn't like it, you'd go hungry".¹⁵⁰⁰ They "were always hungry."¹⁵⁰¹

1485 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.139.

1486 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.139.

1487 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.139.

1488 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.139.

1489 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.139.

1490 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.140. See "Rose's" account.

1491 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.140-141.

1492 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.141.

1493 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.141.

1494 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.142.

1495 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.141.

1496 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.141.

1497 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.142.

1498 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.142.

1499 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.142.

1500 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.142.

1501 Transcript, day 172: Read-in statement of "John" (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.142.

“We worked until dusk each and every day in the fields, on the quarry and the farm, but mostly working on the building site”.

2.657 The boys had toothbrushes and toothpaste. A dentist came to check their teeth.¹⁵⁰² They had nightly showers in the communal shower. They wore the same clothes all week.¹⁵⁰³ A group of Sisters “looked after the laundry” and “did the cooking”.¹⁵⁰⁴ One of these Sisters had some medical experience, so if someone “had a cut or something, she would bandage you up.”¹⁵⁰⁵ There was no doctor at Bindoon. For more serious medical issues boys would be sent to the Royal Perth Hospital, where “John” once “spent about a week...getting [his] tonsils out.”¹⁵⁰⁶

2.658 Boys would only receive “about an hour of schooling a week” because when the truck appeared with building supplies, they would be summoned to work on the building site.¹⁵⁰⁷ “John” “could read and write when [he] left there, but only just.”¹⁵⁰⁸ Boys’ education was curtailed because of their involvement in construction work.¹⁵⁰⁹

2.659 The boys “were treated like slave labour under the harshest conditions. We

worked until dusk each and every day in the fields, on the quarry and the farm, but mostly working on the building site”.¹⁵¹⁰ “John” provided a description of what that work involved. Boys “had to go to the quarry and dig out rocks using a pick. The bigger boys dug them out and we would pick them up and load them on to the truck. The rocks were as heavy as you could lift.”¹⁵¹¹ Brother Dawe, who was “terrible”, supervised this work.¹⁵¹² The boys had to mix cement, and because “there wasn’t a cement mixer, you mixed it with a shovel.”¹⁵¹³ Boys had to bag up the cement, and there were no trolleys, only wheelbarrows.¹⁵¹⁴ “There were a few broken fingernails and blisters”, but it was “useless complaining”, so nobody did.¹⁵¹⁵ The boys also had to work barefoot and without hats.¹⁵¹⁶ “John” remembered his “nose getting sunburnt a lot.”¹⁵¹⁷ Shortly before he left Bindoon “they got some old ex-army hats...but they were too big for us” so nobody wore them.¹⁵¹⁸

1502 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.144.

1503 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.142-143.

1504 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.143.

1505 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.144.

1506 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.144.

1507 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.143.

1508 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.143.

1509 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.148.

1510 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.148.

1511 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.144.

1512 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.145.

1513 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.144.

1514 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.145.

1515 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.145.

1516 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.144.

1517 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.145.

1518 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.145.

“I soon learnt to walk behind the cows and step into the hot dung as it came straight from the cow to stop my feet from freezing.”

2.660 When boys reached 14 years old, they were taken out of school to work full-time. “John” “mainly worked in the dairy”.¹⁵¹⁹ In the morning, when everybody went to breakfast, he “went out and brought the cows in for milking” and feeding.¹⁵²⁰ “John” would only get breakfast after the cows were in. After that he “cleaned out the dairy and put the cows back in the paddock.”¹⁵²¹ His duties also included feeding the pigs and bringing the cows back in for the afternoon milking, which was done by other boys. Sometimes

he would separate the milk and make butter. In the afternoon he would work in the orchard, water the young plants, and complete a variety of other tasks.¹⁵²² After work, “John” would shower, and if he was “quick enough [he] would get down for tea. If not, [he] would go hungry.”¹⁵²³ For the majority of “John’s” time at Bindoon, working outside meant “during the winter [his] feet would freeze” while bringing the cows in; he “soon learnt to walk behind the cows and step into the hot dung as it came straight



Bindoon Boys’ Town, boy feeding pigs, 31 March 1966. Photograph by Illustrations Ltd. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

1519 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.144.

1520 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.145.

1521 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.146.

1522 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.146.

1523 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.146.

from the cow to stop my feet from freezing.”¹⁵²⁴ It was not until about six months before he left, roughly 18 months after starting work on the dairy, that he “got a pair of rubber boots” from Brother Parkes.¹⁵²⁵ “John’s” description of what he was being made to do at such a young age is one of serious exploitation.

2.661 Birthdays went uncelebrated at Bindoon, and although “some people would make donations” to the Home at Christmas, “John” had no recollection of receiving a present or “a different meal on Christmas day.”¹⁵²⁶

2.662 When “John” was 15 or 16 years old, he discovered that his sisters were in St Joseph’s Orphanage in Subiaco.¹⁵²⁷ His half-sister was also there, having been migrated later. “John” was able to visit them there on one occasion.¹⁵²⁸

2.663 “John’s” mother also migrated to Australia and remarried when she was there. His mother tried to get the siblings together, but “[i]t was too late by then...We were separated so long that there were no feelings whatsoever.”¹⁵²⁹

2.664 “John” was physically abused at Bindoon. He and others “just got belted for

the sake of it half the time.”¹⁵³⁰ “Most of the brothers used sadistic methods” to punish children.¹⁵³¹ “The worst was Brother Keaney. This man took great pleasure in flogging us with his heavy walking stick, which he had with him at all times.”¹⁵³²

“Most of the brothers used sadistic methods to control and punish us.”

2.665 On one occasion, not long after arriving at Bindoon, “John” was feeling unwell and could not eat his breakfast of bread and dripping and passed it to the boy beside him: “Immediately I felt this awful bang. I was hit from behind. I got up, turned around, and bang, I was knocked down again. I was then given a good kicking...I can’t remember the rest, but the boys told me I was picked up by the ears by Brother Keaney, my face shoved into the greasy bread and told to stay there until I ate the lot.”¹⁵³³ At that time, “John” had tonsillitis.¹⁵³⁴

2.666 The nature of the abusive regime that “John” and other boys were exposed to was such that “[n]umerous stories could be told of such things, but it would take more than a book to write it all.”¹⁵³⁵

1524 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.150.

1525 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.145.

1526 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.146.

1527 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.147.

1528 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.147.

1529 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.147.

1530 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.147.

1531 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.148.

1532 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.148.

1533 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.148-149.

1534 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.149.

1535 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.149.

“I got used to the lumps, bumps and bruises, but the sexual abuse I will take to the grave with me.”

2.667 “John” shared with SCAI the psychological scarring he suffered when his best friend was killed in a road traffic accident: “I will never forgive them for what they did to my very best friend, who was like a brother to me. Early in 1950...there were police everywhere...At mass next morning, we were told that my best friend was in an accident and he was dead. They said a truck ran over him. We were told to go for mass out the side door and we had to file past my best friend, who was lying [on] a table with just a towel across his middle. I didn’t recognise him at first because of the mess he was in. I remember his last words to me: [‘John’], when I make some money, I will come back and take you away from this slave camp.”¹⁵³⁶

2.668 “John” “prayed for [his] best friend’s soul” and was then “told to go and have breakfast.”¹⁵³⁷ The experience caused some boys to be physically sick. “Some even fainted. I was shocked, it took a few days before it hit me.”¹⁵³⁸ When it did hit him, “John” “tried to run away but only got as far as the main road.”¹⁵³⁹ He was neither comforted nor supported in relation to the loss of his friend. He was flogged for attempting to run away, but “[t]he flogging I got did not worry me as I was still in shock. I still have nightmares about having to look at my best friend’s mangled body. At that time I was only 13 years old.”¹⁵⁴⁰

2.669 “John” was sexually abused at Bindoon. He said that “the first two years at Bindoon were bad enough with mental and physical abuse. I got used to the lumps, bumps and bruises, but the sexual abuse I will take to the grave with me.”¹⁵⁴¹

2.670 One Sunday, “John” was sent to the priest, Father Eugene, to talk about being an altar boy. “When I got there he asked me about the impure thoughts I was having as I had been to confession that morning. The next thing I know, my pants are down to my ankles. I’m not going into the gory detail as this is hard enough to put to paper, but my first sexual experience was with a paedophile priest. This went on until I turned 14.”¹⁵⁴²

“I still have nightmares about having to look at my best friend’s mangled body...I was only 13 years old.”

2.671 During the period he was being abused by Father Eugene, “John” was outside with Brother Parkes one day. Brother Parkes “was telling me, when I get a block of land from Bindoon he would help me get started. He was saying I’ll get married, have children and have a good life. That was when I lost it and started to cry and sob. He came over to me. He thought I had been bitten

1536 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.149.

1537 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.149.

1538 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.149.

1539 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.149-150.

1540 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.150.

1541 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.150.

1542 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.150.

by a snake. He put his arm around me and I started to punch him, but he wrestled me to the ground and shook me and asked me what the matter was. I told him what Eugene had been doing to me.”¹⁵⁴³

Brother Parkes “asked me what the matter was. I told him what Eugene had been doing to me.”

2.672 Several days later, Brother Parkes told “John” “to try and forget” what had happened and to promise not to disclose the abuse. He said that it would “never happen again”.¹⁵⁴⁴ The abuse stopped, presumably as a result of Brother Parkes’ intervention. If so, this could be an example of some action being taken in response to a disclosure of abuse, but it is not known if it stopped other children being harmed, and was an inadequate response to such a significant institutional failing. “John” never reported the abuse further: “Who could you complain to? Brother Keaney’s brother was a senior police officer in Perth. I think he was the police commissioner. Nobody complained.”¹⁵⁴⁵

2.673 When “John” was 16 years old, he was told he was leaving Bindoon in 10 minutes’ time: “The child endowment they got paid

for us stopped when you were 16, so you were no good to them.”¹⁵⁴⁶ Brother Wise, the secretary of Bindoon, gave him £20 when he was leaving: “I think it was for all the work I had done...one day you were there, the next you were leaving.”¹⁵⁴⁷ “John” had “just enough time to run to the dairy to say goodbye to Brother Parkes.”¹⁵⁴⁸

Life after care

2.674 “John” left Bindoon Boys’ Town aged 16, “uneducated, illiterate, with very few social skills. I felt I was a social misfit.”¹⁵⁴⁹ He was still a ward of state and would remain so until he was 21. “John” was taken to the Child Welfare Department, and provided with new clothes and shoes, and the next day sent to work on a sheep farm at Newdegate.¹⁵⁵⁰ The family who ran the farm “only used me. They wanted a holiday and left me to run the place. They were away for about six weeks.”¹⁵⁵¹

“I felt I was a social misfit.”

2.675 The next farm that “John” was sent to “was even worse. They also left me for weeks. When they returned, they said I would get a bonus if I helped with the harvest.”¹⁵⁵² “John” did so, but “when I asked for the bonus, [the farm owner] laughed at me, told me to get off the property. So I did, packed up and went.”¹⁵⁵³

1543 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.151.

1544 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.151.

1545 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.151-152.

1546 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “John” (MEF), at WIT.003.002.0725; [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.152.

1547 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.152.

1548 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “John” (MEF), at WIT.003.002.0725.

1549 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “John” (MEF), at WIT.003.002.0727.

1550 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “John” (MEF), at WIT.003.002.0725.

1551 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.152.

1552 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, pp.152-153.

1553 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “John” (MEF), at WIT.003.002.0726.

“[We] went back to Bindoon to find out about the blocks of land we were supposed to get...we were just laughed at. They said you boys still believe in fairy stories.”

2.676 “John’s” third placement was at a dairy where he stayed for two years from age 17 to 19. That proved to be a good experience.¹⁵⁵⁴ Each of “John’s” placements had been secured for him by the Christian Brothers.¹⁵⁵⁵

2.677 After two years at the dairy he went to Perth, where he met up with some of the old boys, who went with him back to Bindoon “to find out about the blocks of land we were supposed to get. Well we were just laughed at. They said you boys still believe in fairy stories. Then we were told to get off the place as soon as possible by Brother Tuppin.”¹⁵⁵⁶ Years later, “John” learned that they had each been left “a piece of land...and the money to start us off on that land” by Mrs Catherine Musk; they never got either.¹⁵⁵⁷

2.678 When “John” was 24 he married and, at the time he provided his evidence to SCAL, he and his wife had been together for nearly 60 years. They had two sons. He began working as a sheep shearer once he had married, and retired when he was about 60 years old.¹⁵⁵⁸ At the time of giving his statement, “John” had “not even told [his] wife” about the sexual abuse at Bindoon.¹⁵⁵⁹

2.679 “John” was able to create a relationship with his sisters after they left St Joseph’s. His sisters visited him on the Gold Coast.¹⁵⁶⁰

2.680 “John” obtained Australian citizenship. “John” knew that the CMT would have helped him to get counselling but he felt it was too late for it to do him any good.¹⁵⁶¹ Likewise, “John” has never attempted to get his records because he did not feel that they would help him.¹⁵⁶²

2.681 “John” “definitely” saw himself “as Scottish but I’m proud to be Australian too.”¹⁵⁶³ Many of “John’s” acquaintances in Australia were Scottish; “[y]ou’ve got to keep hold of something.”¹⁵⁶⁴

1554 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.153.

1555 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.153.

1556 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “John” (MEF), at WIT.003.002.0726-0727,

1557 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “John” (MEF), at WIT.003.002.0727.

1558 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.154.

1559 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.151.

1560 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.155.

1561 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.156.

1562 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.156.

1563 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.156.

1564 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.156.

“Stuart”

Life in the UK

2.682 “Stuart” was born in Edinburgh in 1939. His father died of cancer at the age of 37, when “Stuart” was aged seven or eight.¹⁵⁶⁵ “Stuart” started staying out late and although he was not getting into trouble his mother worried about him. She spoke to the parish priest, who told his mother to put him into Nazareth House.¹⁵⁶⁶ “Stuart” was admitted to Nazareth House, Lasswade, in January 1948, when he was nine years old, with his younger brother.¹⁵⁶⁷ His brother ran away from Nazareth House. They brought him back, but he ran away again, after which they “wouldn’t have him back.”¹⁵⁶⁸ This is confirmed in the records kept by the Sisters of Nazareth.¹⁵⁶⁹

2.683 “Stuart” remembered “being very lonely” in Nazareth House: “As a kid, you wonder why you’re there. You want your mum and dad...I remember sitting at the window looking at the gates hoping someone was coming to get me. It was terrible.”¹⁵⁷⁰ “Stuart” could not recall “the welfare” visiting him.¹⁵⁷¹

2.684 “Stuart” slept in “a big dormitory [with] 15 to 20 kids in it of different ages.”¹⁵⁷² The children went to school in Dalkeith.¹⁵⁷³ He remembered that “there were these tin baths that they used to wash your hair. The stuff they used smelled like sheep dip. It was this milky white stuff. They would dip your head in it. It was called something like Jeyes.”¹⁵⁷⁴

2.685 At Nazareth House, “[i]f you did the least little thing, got up to mischief or just out of spite, they’d pull you out of bed and you had to polish a corridor...you had to keep your feet up while you did it or you’d get a whack.”¹⁵⁷⁵ “If you said something wrong, you got whacked with a cane.”¹⁵⁷⁶ Likewise, “if you looked sideways at anyone, you got a whack on the ear from the nuns.”¹⁵⁷⁷ “Stuart” “just remember[ed] cruelty and praying a lot in Nazareth House.”¹⁵⁷⁸

**“I just remember cruelty
and praying a lot in
Nazareth House.”**

1565 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.180.

1566 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.180.

1567 Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.002.9723.

1568 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.181.

1569 Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.002.9723.

1570 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.182.

1571 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.184.

1572 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.182.

1573 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, pp.182-183.

1574 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.183.

1575 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.185.

1576 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.183.

1577 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.185.

1578 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.185.

“The immigration people showed us a film and talked to us...They painted a picture of riding horses to school, oranges and big ocean liners.”

2.686 On one occasion, “Stuart” was “whacked with a cane pretty badly across the arm.”¹⁵⁷⁹ He showed his mother what had happened and “[s]he wasn’t happy at all. She knew a man in Edinburgh who worked for a newspaper...He must have contacted the Bishop of Edinburgh. The next thing I knew I was with my mum and the friends of mum with the bishop, who wasn’t happy at all. It was all hushed up. When I got back to Nazareth House...the nuns were like honey and treacle. It was exactly the same in Australia when we got off the ship with the Christian Brothers. You never met anyone as nice. Then it changed from black to white.”¹⁵⁸⁰

Migration

2.687 In 1950, “Stuart”, then aged 11, was migrated to Australia. He described how potential migrants were induced to volunteer: “immigration people showed us a film and talked to us and asked us who would like to go. It conjured [up all] kinds of dreams. They painted a picture of riding horses to school, oranges and big ocean liners.”¹⁵⁸¹ The boys who were being migrated had to undergo a number of tests including medical examinations.¹⁵⁸² “Stuart”

“pestered [his] mum to sign a consent form. She told [him] years later that it was the worst thing she had ever done.”¹⁵⁸³

2.688 “Stuart’s” group was made up of about 30 children including four from Nazareth House, Lasswade, as well as some from Aberdeen and Glasgow.¹⁵⁸⁴

2.689 “Stuart” thought the ship “was fantastic”, despite the fact that he “nearly drowned...at the pool.”¹⁵⁸⁵ He was “grabbed” by “a guy sitting next to the pool...[he] never went near it again.”¹⁵⁸⁶

2.690 After a month at sea, the ship arrived at Fremantle, where they were met by Christian Brothers and taken to Castledare where they had a picnic. Children were then “graded” by age, weight and height and put on trucks to Bindoon. “It was dark when we got there. When we woke up, we were in hell.”¹⁵⁸⁷

“It was dark when we got there. When we woke up, we were in hell.”

1579 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.184.

1580 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, pp.184-185.

1581 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.185.

1582 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, pp.185-186.

1583 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.186. “Stuart’s” LEM3 form and medical examination form have not been recovered by SCAI.

1584 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.186.

1585 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.186.

1586 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.186.

1587 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.187.

Life at Bindoon (1950-1955)

2.691 Bindoon Boys' Town "was 50 or 60 miles in the middle of nowhere. You woke up in the morning and thought, where the hell am I?"¹⁵⁸⁸ "I couldn't believe where I was. You're in a strange place with a lot of kids around you that you didn't know. They started poking fun at you because of your accent."¹⁵⁸⁹ Bindoon was "100 times worse than Nazareth House."¹⁵⁹⁰

"Bindoon was 100 times worse than Nazareth House."

2.692 Upon arrival, children's clothes and possessions were taken from them and they were given "khaki shorts and a khaki short-sleeved shirt."¹⁵⁹¹ They were not provided with socks and shoes. Brother Keaney was in charge of Bindoon when "Stuart" arrived. At that time, "there were over 100 kids there", accommodated in dormitories of 15 to 20 boys of similar ages.¹⁵⁹² "Stuart's" dormitory was overseen by Brother O'Neill. Children who wet the bed "had to sleep on the veranda. They were freezing in the morning... Then they got freezing cold showers. The showers were under the dormitory I was in and you could hear them screaming."¹⁵⁹³

2.693 Usually, in the showers "Brother Robinson, a younger brother, would...turn the water off when you were soaped up. He then used a brush you would use to clean the toilet and stick it up your backside and round your back. It had very hard bristles. You learned to try and duck if he came along. It happened to all of us."¹⁵⁹⁴ The same Brother "had a strap about an inch thick. If you were running late, he'd whack you on the back of the legs...He took great delight in doing it."¹⁵⁹⁵

2.694 The children quickly had to learn how to comply.¹⁵⁹⁶ In the morning, the Brothers "would just wake the whole dormitory up... We went to church first after a wash. If you were late for church, they'd give you a whack."¹⁵⁹⁷ Breakfast was "porridge and a bit of bread. It was terrible but you had to eat it. It was all you had."¹⁵⁹⁸ "Stuart" made the point that, although "Bindoon was a self-sufficient farm, 17,000 acres...we were absolutely starved. We had bread and milk saps for dinner. The highlight of the week was two sausages for lunch on a Sunday. We thought we were in heaven."¹⁵⁹⁹ Meanwhile, "the brothers ate well. Chops and eggs for breakfast and toast. It was unbelievable...I saw this when I had the job of cleaning the dining room one time."¹⁶⁰⁰ On one occasion,

1588 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.187.

1589 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.187.

1590 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.187.

1591 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.190.

1592 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.188.

1593 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, pp.197-198.

1594 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.189.

1595 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.190.

1596 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.188.

1597 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.188.

1598 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, pp.188-189.

1599 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.189.

1600 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.189.

“We worked all day, barefooted most of the time.”

“Stuart” stole half a dozen scones from the Sisters’ dining room. Someone saw and reported him. The Brothers delayed his punishment, waiting until he went to bed. They got “Stuart” up and gave him “three of the best on each hand.”¹⁶⁰¹



Bindoon Boys’ Town, dormitory, 31 March 1966.
Photograph by Illustrations Ltd. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.695 Schooling at Bindoon was provided by the Brothers, and it “was terrible.” “Stuart” realised that if he had not learned to read and write in Scotland he would “be illiterate today.”¹⁶⁰²

2.696 Boys were allocated jobs to complete before and after school each day. Before school, “Stuart’s” “job was sweeping. It was a very dusty place, so we were always sweeping the concrete.”¹⁶⁰³ After school, he would have to clean.¹⁶⁰⁴ One teacher, Brother Wexted, “was nuts. He would walk up and

down the aisle and give you a clip around the ear for no reason.”¹⁶⁰⁵ When boys turned 13, “they’d take you out of school to work... We had to put cement in the mixer by hand using a shovel. We were like working ants. We worked all day, barefooted most of the time. They gave us army boots sometimes but no socks, so we got blisters. We seemed to be working all the time.”¹⁶⁰⁶

2.697 At Bindoon “[t]here was no healthcare. The nuns had a dispensary... If you had anything seriously wrong with you, they took you to Perth. I had a really bad toothache once and they took me there. Brother Dawe took me in the truck. The dentist said he couldn’t see anything wrong with it. I told him he would have to take it out or they would bash me for wasting their time.”¹⁶⁰⁷

2.698 “Stuart” described how persuading the Brothers to take you to the dentist or hospital was “like getting out of jail. You had to keep telling them before they would let you go. One kid had a boil on his gut. They sucked it out with a bottle. I was there and I couldn’t believe it.”¹⁶⁰⁸

2.699 From the age of 14, boys “used to go to a place on the coast” for a few weeks.¹⁶⁰⁹ That was an enjoyable experience. The boys also “used to get a trip to the Royal Show. Different benefactors used to come up there and give us a party.”¹⁶¹⁰ “Stuart” was wary of

1601 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.189.

1602 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.190.

1603 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.188.

1604 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.189.

1605 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.190.

1606 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.191.

1607 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, pp.196-197.

1608 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.197.

1609 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.192.

1610 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.192.

them because “from talking to a couple of guys” he thought that they were “paedophiles”.¹⁶¹¹

2.700 At Bindoon, “Christmas and birthdays weren’t celebrated.”¹⁶¹² However, “Stuart” was fortunate enough to be taken on holiday with a family in 1952: “They were fantastic people. I went there for a couple of weeks at Christmas and it was great. It was like heaven being treated like a normal person. It was hard to swallow having to go back to Bindoon.”¹⁶¹³ “Stuart” received a present from his mother in Scotland during this holiday because his mother knew that he was going to be there at that time.¹⁶¹⁴

2.701 “Stuart’s” mother migrated to Australia in 1952 with his brother. “Stuart’s” brother stayed at Bindoon because their mother “had nowhere to go” at the time.¹⁶¹⁵ Once their mother had settled, she “visited when she could”, and managed to take “Stuart” and his brother out on holiday periods in “Stuart’s” last couple of years at Bindoon.¹⁶¹⁶

2.702 When visitors came to Bindoon, “Stuart” was asked to show them around. He thought the Brothers “must have seen something in me”, possibly because he “kept [his] nose clean.”¹⁶¹⁷ A senator in the parliament who “Stuart” had shown round Bindoon sent him a book called

“Golden Year”. He did not receive it from the Brothers until he asked for it when leaving Bindoon.¹⁶¹⁸ On other occasions, people being shown around gave the children money. If children “withheld the money and got caught, the brothers gave you a right bashing. They took the money from you... One kid got caught out and the brothers gave him a savage beating...in front [of] everyone. They used their fists to beat him”, no doubt to encourage other children not to repeat his error.¹⁶¹⁹

2.703 A couple of the Brothers were, according to “Stuart”, “reasonably all right, but the others more than made up for it. Brother Dawe was a shocker.”¹⁶²⁰ Brother Dawe drove a truck. “He was Mr Nice Guy in the truck. He spoke to you like you should be spoken to, but in the home he turned into a monster...He was brutal in the home.”¹⁶²¹

2.704 Catholic firms in Perth used to donate items to Bindoon, “like broken biscuits or bread that they couldn’t sell, and [Brother Dawe] would pick this up.”¹⁶²² He asked the boys who wanted to go with him and “[e]veryone would put their hands up to escape from Alcatraz”.¹⁶²³ To get picked, “you had to show you could lift heavy weights” as being on the truck entailed “manual work.”¹⁶²⁴

1611 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.192.

1612 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.196.

1613 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.193.

1614 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.193.

1615 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.196.

1616 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.196.

1617 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.194.

1618 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.194.

1619 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.194.

1620 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.190.

1621 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.195.

1622 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.196.

1623 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.195.

1624 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, pp.195-196.

2.705 One day, "Stuart" did not get his allocation of food and went to the servery to ask for it.¹⁶²⁵ For this, Brother Dawe "gave me a punch or a fist to the side of the head...I saw stars. He said if I wanted anything I had to ask him, I wasn't to go to the kitchen and ask. I was about 14 or 15 when this happened."¹⁶²⁶

2.706 Other Brothers also meted out physical punishments. When the roof at Bindoon was being tiled, an outside company was enlisted to do the work, with the boys helping. The workers asked "Stuart" about Bindoon "and I told them about the brothers".¹⁶²⁷ The workers went back to Perth and reported to someone who called the home "and told them some little Scottish guy was complaining about the treatment and that the brothers were all bastards, pigs and all that."¹⁶²⁸ "Stuart" was asked to see Brother Keaney in his office. He hit "Stuart" with a belt "all over, mainly on the backside but he lashed out."¹⁶²⁹ "Stuart" told his mother about this beating "but she couldn't do anything."¹⁶³⁰ Brother Keaney told "Stuart" that "they were stopping my mail and all my privileges until my character improved".¹⁶³¹

"Stuart" regularly received letters from one of the people he had shown around Bindoon, which came with "10 bob."¹⁶³² "Stuart" eventually received "a backlog of mail but no money".¹⁶³³ Even before this incident the Brothers read all the mail before it was given to the boys.¹⁶³⁴

"As a punishment...they were stopping my mail and all my privileges until my character improved."

2.707 Other punishments included being denied privileges: "If you lost a towel or an item of clothing, you would miss the pictures", but the Brothers would be sure to place the boy in a next-door room where he could hear but not see the film "to teach you a lesson."¹⁶³⁵ The boys were denied movies for two years when nobody admitted to stealing a golden watch that belonged to Brother Keaney.¹⁶³⁶ The punishment only ended when "the garden was dug up at the front a couple of years later and the watch turned up."¹⁶³⁷

1625 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.198.

1626 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.198.

1627 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.198.

1628 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.198.

1629 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.199.

1630 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.199.

1631 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.198.

1632 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.199.

1633 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.199.

1634 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.198.

1635 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.200.

1636 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.200.

1637 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of "Stuart", at TRN-5-000000013, p.201.

“You got belted [by older boys] but then, as you got older and someone gave you lip, you belted them.”

2.708 There was also physical abuse between the boys: “You got belted [by older boys] but then, as you got older and someone gave you lip, you belted them.”¹⁶³⁸ Brother Keaney’s successor, Brother Quilligan, once saw “Stuart” doing this to another boy, so “he grabbed me and shook me so hard I thought my head was going to fall off. It was worse than getting a belting.”¹⁶³⁹

2.709 Although “Stuart” did see his brother, who was two years younger, he “didn’t hang around with the younger kids. It was the law of the jungle.”¹⁶⁴⁰

“It was the law of the jungle.”

2.710 There were few people to whom abuse could be reported. When “Stuart” mentioned it to his mother, she could do nothing to change it. When he told the roofers how he was treated at Bindoon, he was beaten for having done so. Also, Brother Keaney “had influential friends in politics” having previously been in the police force, making oversight all the more complicated.¹⁶⁴¹

Life after care

2.711 “Stuart” left Bindoon at the age of 16 with no “preparation for life after Bindoon.”¹⁶⁴² He considered himself lucky that he had been out with different families which provided some insight into life beyond Bindoon.

2.712 “Stuart” went into an apprenticeship.¹⁶⁴³ When he found himself unable to pay the rent, it became apparent “that [he] was getting shortchanged with my wages.”¹⁶⁴⁴ The woman he boarded with told him “to see the union guy” to address the underpayment.¹⁶⁴⁵ This created difficulties at work for “Stuart”. He was later transferred to another farm, but “went from the frying pan into the fire because the employer I went to knew what I’d done to the others.”¹⁶⁴⁶ “Stuart” was “under the child welfare in Western Australia until I was 21”, so “welfare were checking up to see if I was behaving.”¹⁶⁴⁷

2.713 In 1960, “Stuart” relocated to Darwin for a while before returning to Perth, where he later met his wife. They moved to Melbourne and had been married for over 52 years at the time he provided his evidence to the Inquiry.¹⁶⁴⁸ “Stuart” told his

1638 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.201.

1639 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.201.

1640 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.201.

1641 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.193.

1642 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.202.

1643 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.202.

1644 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.203.

1645 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.203.

1646 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.203.

1647 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.203.

1648 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.203.

wife about his experiences in care, but did not tell his children.¹⁶⁴⁹ He never “reported it to the police.”¹⁶⁵⁰

2.714 In 1995, “Stuart” returned to Scotland with his wife for the first time since he had been migrated. He said it “was the best trip as it had been so long”.¹⁶⁵¹ He had a number of further trips “but the first time was the best.”¹⁶⁵² He visited Bindoon with his wife in about 2007, though the site had, by then, fallen into disrepair.¹⁶⁵³ In 2011 “Stuart” visited Nazareth House, Lasswade.¹⁶⁵⁴

2.715 “Stuart” had “never seen [his] records”.¹⁶⁵⁵ He received “an old age pension” in Australia, but still had his British passport and was “proud of being Scottish.”¹⁶⁵⁶

2.716 “Stuart” engaged with the CMT, and believed that “Margaret Humphreys should be knighted and given \$1 billion for what she’s done. She’s still there. She isn’t one of those that comes in and leaves. She’s still going.”¹⁶⁵⁷

“John”

Life in the UK

2.717 “John” was born in England in 1940, but had no memories of his childhood.¹⁶⁵⁸ In October 1941, he was admitted to Nazareth House, Carlisle, on the recommendation of the Mother Superior in Glasgow.¹⁶⁵⁹ “John’s” Nazareth House records from 1941, state that “his mother is dead” and that his “[g]randmother has paid 30/2 monthly for him.”¹⁶⁶⁰ “John” explained that, after his mother’s death, one of his aunts “was going to look after [him], but she had just had a baby that died. The Catholic priest told her that it would be better if [‘John’] went into a home for a little while and then go back to [his] aunt, that never happened.”¹⁶⁶¹ In August 1950, when he was 10 years old, “John” and at least six other children were transferred from Nazareth House, Carlisle, to Lasswade.¹⁶⁶²

2.718 “John” had no recollection of “either of these convents”.¹⁶⁶³ In later life, “John” was told that his “uncle went looking for [him] at the convent after the war, when [‘John’] would have been 5 or 6 years old” but was told that “John” had “already gone to Australia, although that wouldn’t have been the case.”¹⁶⁶⁴

1649 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.202.

1650 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.202.

1651 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.206.

1652 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.206.

1653 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.204.

1654 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.182.

1655 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.206.

1656 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.205.

1657 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.206.

1658 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.113.

1659 Nazareth House, Carlisle, Observation book, at NAZ.001.007.8944.

1660 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.114; Nazareth House, Carlisle, Observation book, at NAZ.001.007.8944.

1661 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.114.

1662 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.114; Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.007.8946.

1663 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.114.

1664 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, pp.114-115.

“...a chap came to the convent one day and asked who wanted to go [to Australia]...I was probably the first to put my hand up...I’d never heard of Australia before.”

Migration

2.719 “John” was migrated to Australia several years after his uncle was told that he had already gone. At Nazareth House, Lasswade, “a chap came to the convent one day and asked who wanted to go [to Australia]...We were all in one room as he spoke to us and I think I was probably the first to put my hand up. I don’t know why I was the first, I’d never heard of Australia before. I don’t remember getting anything like a health check or what then happened, but the next thing I know I was on the boat and going to Australia.”¹⁶⁶⁵

2.720 “John” left Lasswade in late April 1952, when he was 11 years old.¹⁶⁶⁶ When “John” boarded the SS Ormonde at Tilbury there were 39 boys like him being migrated “but there was nobody there to say goodbye to us.”¹⁶⁶⁷ “John” was not aware at the time whether there were any other children from Scotland other than a boy who had been in the same institution as him. Another applicant, [Christopher Booth](#), was migrated on the same ship as “John”.¹⁶⁶⁸

2.721 “John” and the others boarded the SS Ormonde at the end of April 1952.¹⁶⁶⁹



SS Ormonde, date unknown. Source: [General Photographic Agency](#).

2.722 When the ship arrived at Fremantle in late May, several boys disembarked, but “John” and some others were to continue to Tasmania. “John” did not “have a clue at that time that Tasmania was part of Australia.”¹⁶⁷⁰ “John” and another boy from Scotland were “quarantined for a few days” at Melbourne, likely because “they were worried that we might be carrying foot-and-mouth disease” before continuing their journey to Burnie in Tasmania.¹⁶⁷¹ From there, they “got the train to Glenorchy,” a journey which took “about 6 or 7 hours”.¹⁶⁷² “John” and the other boy were on their own during the journey “with very little to eat”.¹⁶⁷³

1665 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.115.

1666 Nazareth House, Edinburgh, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.007.8946.

1667 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.116.

1668 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.116.

1669 SS Ormonde, Incoming passenger list, at NAA.001.001.1189, p.1215.

1670 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.116.

1671 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.117.

1672 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.118.

1673 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.118.

“...we were given a pair of shorts and a T-shirt and thrown a pair of shoes. We were told to put those shoes on whether they fitted us or not.”

Life at St John Bosco Boys' Town, Hobart (1952-1956)

2.723 St John Bosco Boys' Town, which was run by the Salesian Brothers, “was very basic.”¹⁶⁷⁴ “John’s” group were the first boarders at Boys' Town, and ranged from about nine years old to about 12: “John” was “apparently...the oldest one” there.¹⁶⁷⁵ All of the staff at St John Bosco’s were “brothers and priests.”¹⁶⁷⁶ When “John” arrived, Father Brennan was in charge and he was later replaced by Father Cole.¹⁶⁷⁷ “John” remembers Brother Sullivan and Father Anthony being at the institution.

2.724 Upon arrival, “all the clothes we had been given in Melbourne were taken off us and we were given a pair of shorts and a T-shirt and thrown a pair of shoes.”¹⁶⁷⁸ The shoes that “John” got “were always far too small.”¹⁶⁷⁹

2.725 Each day, the boys “would get up at 6 o’clock in the morning and have a wash, go to church, come back and have breakfast. After breakfast, we’d go to school. Then at lunch we’d have something to eat and a bit of a play in the playground before going back into class. Sometimes after class in the

afternoon we would go back into church. There was quite a bit of religious instruction. After that, we’d have dinner before going out into the playground again. After that, we would have a shower every night and then, around 7.30 or 8 o’clock, we went to bed.”¹⁶⁸⁰

2.726 On occasions, a Brother would go into the boys’ dormitories at night and ask whoever was asleep to put their hand up. If a child put his hand up the Brother would “come around and belt you. You learned pretty quick to only raise your hand once.”¹⁶⁸¹ As for bedwetting, “the brothers used to deal with it by rubbing the boys’ noses in it.”¹⁶⁸²

2.727 In general “the food was pretty poor, sometimes it was very poor, but we didn’t know any better...We got whatever was the cheapest thing they could buy”.¹⁶⁸³ Boys would go hungry if they disliked or could not eat what they were given.

2.728 Although there was a school within St John Bosco’s, “John” did not believe that the priests and the Brothers were teachers. “John” “wasn’t allowed to go to the school.”¹⁶⁸⁴ Instead, he “spent too much time on the farm and in the orchard...and when I

1674 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.117.

1675 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.117.

1676 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.117.

1677 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.117.

1678 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.118.

1679 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.119.

1680 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.118.

1681 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.119.

1682 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.122.

1683 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.119.

1684 Transcript, day 178: Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.120.

left school, I couldn't even spell my own name."¹⁶⁸⁵ "John" spent much of his time working on the farm but "never got paid for it".¹⁶⁸⁶

"...when I left school, I couldn't even spell my own name."

2.729 At St John Bosco's, there were "no birthday celebrations and very little was done at Christmas".¹⁶⁸⁷ From his second year onwards "they used to billet us out to different families in the community for the holidays."¹⁶⁸⁸ "John" went to stay with a family who he got on well with.¹⁶⁸⁹ After the wife in that family died, the Brothers tried to send "John" out to another family but he refused. He explained: "I had lost my mother and father and now I was just getting to know somebody and I had lost them too. I was determined I wasn't going to another family no matter what anybody said".¹⁶⁹⁰ From then on, "John" remained at St John Bosco's over Christmas, "working on the farm", sometimes being the "only boy there with two or three of the priests."¹⁶⁹¹

2.730 "John" was not aware of any inspectors or official persons coming to Boys' Town while he was there.¹⁶⁹²

2.731 The Brothers "were very strict and punishments were by the strap, which was leather, or the cane."¹⁶⁹³ "John" was hit twice: "Once I deserved it and another time I consider I didn't. That particular time I got blamed for something I didn't do and Father Sullivan came from behind and whacked me hard."¹⁶⁹⁴

2.732 "John" was physically abused by Brother Anthony, who "John" described as "a real brute of a man."¹⁶⁹⁵

2.733 "John" witnessed other children being physically abused. A few weeks after he arrived at Boys' Town, Father Brennan asked a French boy to take off his coat.¹⁶⁹⁶ When the boy did not take off his coat, "Father Brennan beat this lad so badly with his open hand, all over his body, that I was sure he was going to kill him."¹⁶⁹⁷

"Father Brennan beat this lad so badly with his open hand...that I was sure he was going to kill him."

1685 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.120.

1686 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, pp.120 and 122.

1687 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.120.

1688 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.120.

1689 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.121.

1690 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.121.

1691 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.121.

1692 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.121.

1693 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.122.

1694 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.122.

1695 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.123.

1696 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.123.

1697 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of "John" (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.123.

“We’d never been outside the school and they never taught us about life.”

2.734 A number of boys needed medical treatment “as a result of their being beaten by the brothers, but nothing ever, ever happened to change the way the brothers behaved.”¹⁶⁹⁸ “John” was not sexually abused “because I wasn’t backwards at coming forwards, but some of the other boys told me that they were.”¹⁶⁹⁹

2.735 As for reporting the abuse, “[t]here was nobody to go to and, even if we had, they would just deny it.”¹⁷⁰⁰ “John” had no family with whom he could communicate.¹⁷⁰¹

Life after care

2.736 When boys left St John Bosco’s, they “didn’t have a clue what to do. We’d never been outside the school and they never taught us about life. Once we left, that was it and we had to fend for ourselves.”¹⁷⁰² “John” left at the age of 16. He worked on a farm and was lonely. He tried to return to Boys’ Town but they refused to have him back. He was “put under the social service and they looked after me until I was 21.”¹⁷⁰³

2.737 Through social services “John” was placed in a family home, which he found “very poor”.¹⁷⁰⁴ “John” worked as a butcher

and his pay “had to go to the social service”, who paid his board and gave him a weekly allowance.¹⁷⁰⁵ When “John’s” state wardship finished at the age of 21 he “never got the money that would have been left over”.¹⁷⁰⁶

2.738 When “John” was 29, he married his wife. At the time “John” provided evidence to the Inquiry, they had been married for 50 years and had one son.¹⁷⁰⁷

2.739 In the mid-1990s, “John” received a phone call from the CMT which he bluntly rebuffed.¹⁷⁰⁸ Shortly thereafter, “John” received a letter from his uncle, introducing himself, and telling “John” a few things about his family back in the UK. He then thought that “the CMT had contacted me because my uncle had been trying to trace me.”¹⁷⁰⁹ In due course, “John” and his wife visited the UK, where he met his uncle and other members of his family and learned more about his background.¹⁷¹⁰

2.740 “John” “never had any support or counselling for my experiences as a child in care or as a child migrant”, and never attempted to obtain his records from when he was in care or to do with his migration.¹⁷¹¹

1698 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.2.

1699 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.1.

1700 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.2.

1701 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.121.

1702 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, pp.4-5.

1703 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.2.

1704 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.2.

1705 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.3.

1706 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.3.

1707 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.4.

1708 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.6.

1709 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.6.

1710 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.6.

1711 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.5.

2.741 The impact of “John’s” time in care, both in the UK and after migration, was long-lasting. After leaving St John Bosco’s he “tried to forget everything that had happened to me as a child. I felt that I’d had to start my life over when I came to Australia, so I pushed it out of my memory.”¹⁷¹²

Physically, he had suffered “tremendously badly from chilblains” and had two toes “taken off because [they] had been twisted and pushed under one another” from years of wearing ill-fitting shoes.¹⁷¹³ His education having been so neglected by the Brothers at St John Bosco’s, he was barely literate when he left. However, having sought the help of a tutor, he was able to improve his literacy.

2.742 For “John” “coming to Australia was probably the best thing that happened” to him, and he enjoyed his life in Tasmania.¹⁷¹⁴

“John” counted himself and the others who continued on to Tasmania “very lucky because some of the boys that stayed...in Western Australia were treated something shocking.”¹⁷¹⁵

Applicant - Nazareth House, Cardonald

2.743 The following is the account of the SCAI applicant who was migrated overseas having been placed at Nazareth House, Cardonald.

Yvonne Radzevicius

Life in the UK

2.744 Yvonne O’Donnell, now Yvonne Radzevicius, was born in Glasgow in October 1942.¹⁷¹⁶ Her mother “was an alcoholic” and her father “was nowhere in sight”.¹⁷¹⁷ She was placed in Nazareth House, Cardonald, in July 1943 on the recommendation of the Reverend Father Keane at Whiteinch, Glasgow, where Yvonne had been baptised. She was nine months old. Throughout her time at Cardonald, Yvonne was called “Marie”.¹⁷¹⁸

2.745 The Mother Superior of Cardonald at that time was Mother Mary Loreto McGregor. Sister Hildegarde “was in charge of the children.”¹⁷¹⁹ Sister Hildegarde was “very strict...you couldn’t think for yourself, you couldn’t speak for yourself, you couldn’t do anything. You were under the nuns’ thumb.”¹⁷²⁰

2.746 Yvonne provided some insight into the Cardonald regime. Children “only changed clothes once a week and everybody had work to do cleaning and polishing the floors”.¹⁷²¹ The food was not “particularly

1712 [Transcript, day 178](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000008, p.113.

1713 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.5.

1714 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.10.

1715 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.7.

1716 Birth certificate for Yvonne Lawrie O’Donnell, at BEW-000000080, p.6.

1717 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 4, at WIT.001.002.2475; Nazareth House, Cardonald, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.2730.

1718 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0049.

1719 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0065.

1720 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0065.

1721 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 11, at WIT.001.002.2477.

“...the Catholic Church picked those whose parents didn’t come and visit them, so they wouldn’t notice it.”

nasty, but if you didn’t like something the nuns kept putting it back in front of you every meal afterwards until you ate it.”¹⁷²² The girls at Cardonald were occasionally visited by “a Catholic association”, but Yvonne had no other visitors.¹⁷²³

2.747 When she was eight or nine, “a big pot of porridge accidentally fell” on Yvonne, leaving her with a scar on her neck.¹⁷²⁴ On another occasion, she went with a group of children to Belvidere Hospital where they “had [their] heads shaved and...ended up with purple dots on the top, both sides, and the back.”¹⁷²⁵ Yvonne “never found out what it was for”, though she was sure it was not connected to her migration.¹⁷²⁶

2.748 Yvonne was told by the Mother Superior, “that [her] parents were dead and that [she] had no brothers and sisters.”¹⁷²⁷ In fact, while Yvonne was at Cardonald, her mother “was working at St Paul’s [Catholic Church in] Whiteinch, the next suburb on from Cardonald.”¹⁷²⁸ This is the same church in which Yvonne was baptised. Her mother was “living about four streets away from the church,

which wasn’t very far from Cardonald and the nuns were telling me she was dead.”¹⁷²⁹

Migration

2.749 When Yvonne was about 10 years old, she and two other girls, aged five and six, were told that they were going to Australia. Yvonne “had never heard of Australia.”¹⁷³⁰ She believed that “the Catholic Church picked those whose parents didn’t come and visit them, so they wouldn’t notice it.”¹⁷³¹

2.750 Yvonne’s godmother “came looking for [Yvonne] because she wanted to stop the nuns sending [her] to Australia.”¹⁷³² She asked for Yvonne O’Donnell but the Sisters denied having a child of that name. Her godmother was not allowed to see Yvonne and “she was told to go away.”¹⁷³³ Yvonne believed that her godmother wanted to adopt her. Yvonne believed that the Sisters “never spoke” to her mother about her migration, and that tallies with the migration forms.¹⁷³⁴ Yvonne’s LEM3 form was signed in November 1952 by “Sr M Loreto (McGregor)”, the Mother Superior of Cardonald. She signed both in the section for ‘sponsoring organisation’,

1722 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 13, at WIT.001.002.2477.

1723 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0052.

1724 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 25, at WIT.001.002.2479; [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0063.

1725 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0051-0052.

1726 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0051-0052.

1727 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0048-0049.

1728 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0105.

1729 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0105-0106.

1730 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0058.

1731 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0058.

1732 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0053.

1733 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0053.

1734 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 42, at WIT.001.002.2482.

though no sponsoring organisation is listed, and as Yvonne's guardian.¹⁷³⁵ Cyril Stinson signed Yvonne's form both as witness and on behalf of the Australian Catholic Immigration Committee.¹⁷³⁶ A handwritten note on the form, dated December 1952, described Yvonne as a "[b]right type of girl, appears to be average plus for her age. Courteous and well behaved. Neatly dressed and clean looking."¹⁷³⁷ The day after that note was made, a medical examination form for Yvonne was signed by Sister Hildegarde, noting that Yvonne had had an 'accident' in the last 12 months, providing no further details, but attesting that Yvonne was "not suffering from any mental or bodily defect which would cause inability to earn a living as a school"; presumably, this was intended to read as 'school teacher'.¹⁷³⁸ Yvonne had been earmarked for a certain trajectory in which she had no say.

2.751 In preparation for migration, Yvonne was given a suitcase containing "two dresses, some singlets and some panties and some socks."¹⁷³⁹ The case was engraved with the initials "Y.L. O'Donnell". At that time Yvonne did not recognise that name but was told: "that's your name from now on."¹⁷⁴⁰ Until she migrated, she "had never heard the name Yvonne."¹⁷⁴¹ Her LEM3 form shows Yvonne's name as: "O'Donnell Yvonne Mary Lawrie".¹⁷⁴²

2.752 With her new name and suitcase, Yvonne travelled by train from Glasgow to London with the other two girls, where they stayed overnight at Nazareth House, Hammersmith.¹⁷⁴³ Arriving at Southampton was "the first time I knew we were going on a ship."¹⁷⁴⁴

2.753 The ship left Southampton on 28 January 1953, when Yvonne was 10 years old. A chaperone designated to look after Yvonne and her group had little involvement with them.¹⁷⁴⁵ Yvonne explained that during the voyage "you did as you were told and that was it. We were too frightened to do anything else. I mean, I'd never seen a ship before, let alone been on one."¹⁷⁴⁶ Yvonne went to mass on the first Sunday she spent on the ship, but the service "was different and I realised afterwards that it was Church of England. I was horrified. I thought the ship was going to sink and we would get found out for going to the wrong church."¹⁷⁴⁷

"I thought the ship was going to sink and we would get found out for going to the wrong church."

1735 LEM3 form for Yvonne, at NAA.001.001.0331.

1736 LEM3 form for Yvonne, at NAA.001.001.0331.

1737 LEM3 form for Yvonne, at NAA.001.001.0331.

1738 Medical examination form for Yvonne, at NAA.001.001.0333.

1739 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0066.

1740 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0058.

1741 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0053.

1742 LEM3 form for Yvonne, at NAA.001.001.0331.

1743 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0058.

1744 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0058.

1745 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0060.

1746 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0070.

1747 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 55, at WIT.001.002.2484.

“...when we went to bed...weren’t allowed to lie on our left side because that was the side of the devil”.

2.754 The ship docked at Fremantle in late February 1953. The girls from the ship stayed overnight at St Joseph’s Orphanage, Subiaco. The next day, they travelled by bus the 300 miles to Nazareth House, Geraldton, with two Sisters: Sister Veronica and Sister John Bosco.¹⁷⁴⁸ During the long journey they “never stopped for a meal or a drink, nothing.”¹⁷⁴⁹

2.755 After Yvonne had been migrated, her godmother and mother “were told that [she] had been adopted by a good Catholic-Irish family.”¹⁷⁵⁰ Her godmother persisted in her inquiries “and she found out that [Yvonne] was sent to Australia. The nuns in Cardonald told her [Yvonne] was sent to Queensland. Queensland and Western Australia are quite a distance apart.”¹⁷⁵¹

Life at Nazareth House, Geraldton (1953-1959)

2.756 Yvonne and the group of about 20 girls arrived at Geraldton on 24 February 1953. On arrival, “they took everything off” her, including a Fair Isle cardigan she had from Cardonald and the clothes from her suitcase. She “never saw them again.”¹⁷⁵²

2.757 Nazareth House, Geraldton, “seemed like the middle of nowhere.”¹⁷⁵³ It had originally been “built for child migrants”.¹⁷⁵⁴

However, when the war broke out children could not be sent there and Geraldton was used to accommodate the elderly. When Yvonne was there, there were “about 70 children”, from babies to girls “who had left school but were working at Nazareth House.”¹⁷⁵⁵ There were only two Sisters to care for these babies, children, and girls, and no lay staff, “[o]nly the girls that were brought up in Nazareth House. [They] did the work once [they had] finished school”, including helping to “look after the elderly people.”¹⁷⁵⁶



Nazareth House, Geraldton, 1954. Photograph by Claire Mercer. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

2.758 On her first night at Geraldton, Yvonne went to bed crying: “It was dark and raining...I didn’t know where I was or who any of the girls were, other than the ones I’d

1748 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0072.

1749 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0071.

1750 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0059.

1751 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0059.

1752 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0067.

1753 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0076.

1754 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0074.

1755 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0078.

1756 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0079 and 0078.

been with on the ship.”¹⁷⁵⁷ The children were accommodated in dormitories of about 40 beds.¹⁷⁵⁸ When they “went to bed [children] had to lie on [their] right side.”¹⁷⁵⁹ They were not allowed to lie on their left side “because that was the side of the devil”, and they were not allowed to lie on their back “because [they] would have impure thoughts.”¹⁷⁶⁰ Children also had to keep their hands crossed over their chests.¹⁷⁶¹ If a Sister saw a child not sleeping in the prescribed position during her nightly rounds, she “would bang [the children] on their toes. Some of the nuns had a torch and would use that, but it depended what they had with them”.¹⁷⁶² After leaving Nazareth House, Yvonne slept on her left side, “to spite the nuns”.¹⁷⁶³

2.759 Children who wet the bed were made to “have a cold bath and hang their sheets out so everybody could see that they had wet the bed”.¹⁷⁶⁴ Later the Sisters began to “put some contraption on the stomachs of the girls that wet their bed. It was supposed to warn them that they needed to go to the toilet, but it used to go off and frighten the living daylights out of them so they would wet the bed anyway.”¹⁷⁶⁵

2.760 Children had a bath once a week “and if you didn’t get in front of the queue, you ended up bathing in dirty water and... trying to dry yourself with a wet towel.”¹⁷⁶⁶ There was no privacy. The children’s clothes—a dress, a singlet, and one pair of underwear—“were changed once a week”.¹⁷⁶⁷

“...if you didn’t get in front of the queue, you ended up bathing in dirty water”.

2.761 Most of the children at Geraldton were taught by Sister Veronica and Sister John Bosco even though they “weren’t teachers”.¹⁷⁶⁸ Yvonne, however, was sent to Stella Maris College, having performed highly in the IQ test.¹⁷⁶⁹ At Stella Maris, she performed well.¹⁷⁷⁰

2.762 For “the first few years”, Yvonne had to walk four miles each way to get to and from college.¹⁷⁷¹ At college, she was “called ‘the Nazzie House bastard’. That’s what they thought I was...they all thought we were illegitimate.”¹⁷⁷²

1757 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 72, at WIT.001.002.2487.

1758 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0079.

1759 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0080.

1760 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0080.

1761 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0080.

1762 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 77, at WIT.001.002.2488.

1763 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0080.

1764 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0080.

1765 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 80, at WIT.001.002.2488.

1766 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0081.

1767 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0082.

1768 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0082.

1769 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0082.

1770 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0083.

1771 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0077.

1772 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0085.

2.763 When Yvonne passed her junior certificate, she was awarded a bursary for teacher training.¹⁷⁷³ Yvonne had never wanted to go into teaching because she “wanted to go into children’s nursing.”¹⁷⁷⁴ When she decided not to become a teacher after passing her leaving exams, the Sisters said she had “to work to pay off what [they] paid out for the teacher training bursary.”¹⁷⁷⁵ Yvonne did not know whether in fact the Sisters had to pay anything at all for the bursary. After she completed her education two years earlier than usual, at the age of 14, she was sent “to work in the kitchen.”¹⁷⁷⁶

2.764 The Sisters at Geraldton did not celebrate the children’s birthdays. Yvonne recalled that “[e]verybody sang ‘Happy birthday’, but that was it”.¹⁷⁷⁷ At Christmas, the Sisters put up a tree but children rarely got presents.

2.765 Yvonne was emotionally abused at Geraldton. Sister John Bosco upset her by giving a disparaging account of the way in which Yvonne was placed at Nazareth House, Cardonald, telling her that she was left outside the gate “in wet nappies.”¹⁷⁷⁸

2.766 When children asked the Sisters about their parents, they did not answer

and the children took that to mean that they were illegitimate: “Some of us were, some of us weren’t, but that’s what we were all led to believe.”¹⁷⁷⁹ Sister Da Ricci made bras for the girls at Geraldton, and “if they were worn out in any way, she’d hold them up and show everybody. She was horrible.”¹⁷⁸⁰ Sister Da Ricci “would mainly show people up, making a fool of the girls that had wet their bed for example.”¹⁷⁸¹ Yvonne described the Sisters as “wicked”.¹⁷⁸² There was no emotional support or care “whatsoever,” and there was “nobody whatsoever” for children to speak to about any problems.¹⁷⁸³

“...if you didn’t do exactly as they said, you got punished.”

2.767 Children were physically abused. Yvonne was struck on the back of her hand with a ruler “quite often...All the girls got this.”¹⁷⁸⁴ Another punishment, which was meted out for talking back or not obeying an order immediately, was to get the children out of their beds and send them to “sit in the bathroom for as long as they wanted you to and they were all cold tiles...It could be a couple of hours”.¹⁷⁸⁵ If the Sisters “said jump... you said, ‘How high?’ And if you didn’t do exactly what they said, you got punished.”¹⁷⁸⁶

1773 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0084.

1774 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0084.

1775 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0084.

1776 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0084.

1777 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0087.

1778 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0090.

1779 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0056.

1780 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 84, at WIT.001.002.2489.

1781 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 121, at WIT.001.002.2495.

1782 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 67, at WIT.001.002.2486.

1783 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0090.

1784 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0091.

1785 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0092.

1786 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0092.

“They would both run their hands up my skirt or grab me. Most of the time I was working in the kitchen I spent trying to get away from these dirty old men.”

2.768 Girls were punished for running away: when two girls “were brought back by the police, frightened to death...they were belted by the nuns and told the police wouldn’t believe anything they might have said.”¹⁷⁸⁷

“...a couple of girls ran away and were brought back by the police... they were belted by the nuns and told the police wouldn’t believe anything they might have said.”

2.769 When Yvonne was about 12 years old, her head was pushed through a window by Sister da Ricci. Yvonne “didn’t believe the nuns could do that, but they did.”¹⁷⁸⁸ Yvonne was left with cuts on her head. The Sisters’ response was: “take the glass out, comb your hair and just put up with it. I had to hold a bit of gauze on there to stop the bleeding.”¹⁷⁸⁹ Yvonne received no other medical treatment.

2.770 On another occasion Yvonne was burned by a steam press while she was pressing some of the men’s trousers. Despite having told the Sister in charge that “[t]here

was a screw loose” on the press, she was told to carry on, and the press fell on her hand.¹⁷⁹⁰ Yvonne still had to finish the laundry. She sustained lifelong scars from the burns.

2.771 Yvonne was sexually abused at Geraldton by two men who worked there.¹⁷⁹¹ Both men would “run their hands up [her] skirt or grab [her].”¹⁷⁹² Whilst working in the kitchen, she spent much time “trying to get away from these dirty old men.”¹⁷⁹³ Once she caught one of them “masturbating, although at the time [she] didn’t realise what he was doing.”¹⁷⁹⁴ One of the men told Yvonne: “the nuns are not going to believe you, they pay us to work and you are working for nothing, so they’re not going to believe you.”¹⁷⁹⁵ Yvonne believed what the men told her: “You were too scared not to [believe that]. You were scared of these men and you were scared of the nuns. And if you didn’t have anyone to help you, what else do you do as a child?”¹⁷⁹⁶ This abuse went on intermittently throughout the three years she worked in the kitchen.¹⁷⁹⁷ Yvonne believed that what happened to her also happened to others at Geraldton, but “being children, you sort of keep—the other kids will think I’m making it up or they won’t believe you, so you didn’t really tell each other secrets.”¹⁷⁹⁸

1787 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 127, at WIT.001.002.2496.

1788 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0091.

1789 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0091.

1790 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 94, at WIT.001.002.2491.

1791 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0093.

1792 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 119, at WIT.001.002.2495.

1793 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 119, at WIT.001.002.2495.

1794 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 119, at WIT.001.002.2495.

1795 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0095.

1796 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0095.

1797 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0095.

1798 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0094.

2.772 A social worker from the Catholic Welfare Department, Miss Sanderson, visited Geraldton but “[w]hen [the social worker] came, we had to be polite, we had to be well mannered and we had to have our hair combed. We never got to speak to her.”¹⁷⁹⁹

2.773 Yvonne left school at age 14 and, between then and leaving Geraldton at age 17, her daily routine was: “Called at 5.30 in the morning. Down to the kitchen. Preparing all the meals, all the breakfasts, until the morning bell went for Mass, straight up to the church to Mass. Serve all the breakfasts out and then you could have your breakfast. Then back in the kitchen, made sure all the lunches were served for the old people...the nuns, the children, 12 o’clock, they were all served. Then we had to clean up and we got an...hour and a half’s break in the afternoon, then we went back and had to do the evening meal. After 7.30, 7.45, depending on what part of the kitchen you were working on, if you were working on the stoves, you had to look after the fires, the Aga fires. We had to fill them up with coke and look after the fires. We had to make sure everything was cleaned down and then, upstairs, and 8.30, lights out. And that was it for the day. And that was every day.”¹⁸⁰⁰

2.774 Yvonne and three other girls “cooked...for over 200 every day”.¹⁸⁰¹ They received no payment.

2.775 When she left Nazareth House, Geraldton, at the age of 17, the Sisters gave her “a case with a few things in it and that was it. End of an era. Never to be welcomed back.”¹⁸⁰² She was given no preparation for leaving.¹⁸⁰³

“End of an era. Never to be welcomed back.”

Life after care

2.776 Yvonne was accepted to train as a paediatric nurse. After her training, Yvonne worked as a nurse in various settings for 20 years. In 1966, she married, and went on to have two daughters.

2.777 In 1975, Yvonne received a letter from her godmother telling her that her “parents were both still alive...and that [she] had five brothers and sisters.”¹⁸⁰⁴ Yvonne’s immediate reaction “was running around, waving this letter about, saying, ‘I’m not a bastard, I’m not a bastard’...I was just so excited to get this letter. It was the first time I’d ever got anything from anyone.”¹⁸⁰⁵ At that time Yvonne was 32 or 33 years old. In 1979 she decided to visit the UK to “see if I could find my family.”¹⁸⁰⁶ Two days before she was due to leave, she received a letter from her sister which included her telephone number, “so I rang her and that’s...the first contact I had with my family.”¹⁸⁰⁷

1799 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0089.

1800 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0086.

1801 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0087.

1802 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0097.

1803 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0096.

1804 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0055.

1805 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0100.

1806 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0100.

1807 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0100-0101.

“...the records were there...If I had got records when I was 17...I would have had all that time to meet family and have time to bond with family”.

2.778 In 1979 Yvonne returned to live in the UK with her two daughters. She spent some years working in a hospital in Nottingham, trying “to fit into a very fragmented family”.¹⁸⁰⁸ In 1981, Yvonne finally met her mother. It had taken some time to find her.¹⁸⁰⁹ Yvonne was with her eldest daughter when she met her mother. Her mother recognised them as family. The next time Yvonne saw her mother was when she was required to identify her following her death.¹⁸¹⁰ Yvonne had a breakdown following her mother’s death.

2.779 Although Yvonne eventually found her siblings, there was “no bond.”¹⁸¹¹ Yvonne felt that, in hiding the truth about her family from her, the Sisters emotionally abused her. Had they given her the information they had about her family when she left Geraldton, she “would have had all that time to meet family and have time to bond with family”.¹⁸¹²

2.780 After living in the UK for around two decades, Yvonne returned to Australia, not because it was ‘home’, but because she was “running away from what [she] didn’t have when [she] met the family.”¹⁸¹³

2.781 Like many former child migrants, Yvonne did not know where she belonged: “where do I belong? I don’t know to this day where I belong, except as part of a group of child migrants. I didn’t belong at Stella Maris, I didn’t belong at Nazareth House. But as soon as the child migrant issue was brought up, you belong to a group of child migrants, and that’s the only group who can understand”.¹⁸¹⁴

“...where do I belong? I don’t know to this day... except as part of a group of child migrants.”

2.782 Meeting three members of the inquiry team who travelled to Australia to speak with former child migrants was the first time Yvonne felt she had “been treated as a person and not as a number in a group.”¹⁸¹⁵

1808 HC/CP/12534 Submission to Select Committee on Health, Evidence of CM122, at HOC.001.001.0190; [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0101.

1809 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0103.

1810 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0104.

1811 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0106.

1812 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0112. In 1997, Yvonne was sent a letter from Nazareth House, London, stating that the only record for Yvonne they held was her register of entry into Cardonald. The records that Nazareth House submitted to SCAI comprised several further entries for Yvonne, including one recording her mother’s address during Yvonne’s years at Cardonald. See letter from Nazareth House, London, to Yvonne Radzevicius, 2 May 1997, at BEW-000000070, p.34; and Nazareth House, Glasgow, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.2729

1813 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0106.

1814 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0109-1010.

1815 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0110.

“...nobody’s taught you how to love. And that was brought up in my upbringing of my two daughters.”

2.783 One of the most difficult outcomes of migration for Yvonne was the effect it had on her own children. She had no doubt that the breakdown of her relationship with her daughters was “a direct consequence of what happened to [her].”¹⁸¹⁶ Yvonne explained that: “Because of my childhood, nobody’s taught you how to love. And that was brought out in my upbringing of my two daughters. It was discipline, discipline, discipline, like I got at the convent...I loved my daughters, but I was never able to show them.”¹⁸¹⁷ She reflected that: “I did to my daughters what had been done to me. I took them away from where they had been born, from where they were going to school and away from their father and from all their mates.”¹⁸¹⁸

2.784 Yvonne felt the impact of migration and institutional care “goes on, generation after generation after generation...That to me is worse than any other form of abuse. The emotional abuse you’re left with”.¹⁸¹⁹

1816 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 141, at WIT.001.002.2503.

1817 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0109.

1818 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 131, at WIT.001.002.2497.

1819 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0109.

3

Fairbridge Society

3.1 The Fairbridge Society was established by Kingsley Fairbridge in 1909 as the Child Emigration Society.¹⁸²⁰ Having moved from South Africa to England as a Rhodes scholar, he told a group of fellow enthusiasts at the Oxford University Colonial Club about his vision for emigrating destitute children. He proposed to focus on children aged eight to 10 years old, migrating them “before they have acquired the vices of ‘professional pauperism’ and before their physique has become lowered by adverse [environmental] conditions.”¹⁸²¹

3.2 Fairbridge’s sole purpose was to facilitate the migration of children: it did not run residential homes in the UK. It was, essentially, a broker, sending out children from other agencies—mostly voluntary societies—including Middlemore Emigration Homes, Birmingham, which was itself a type of broker. Once children had been selected for migration they were usually sent to Middlemore Homes or to the Society’s emigration home in Knockholt, Kent, for a short period of time before being sent overseas.

3.3 Between 1935 and 1948, Fairbridge sent 329 children—232 boys and 97 girls—to its Farm School in British Columbia, Canada.¹⁸²² At least 25 of these 329 children

were Scottish. Most children migrated by Fairbridge were, however, sent to its farm schools in Australia, with 997 sent in the period 1947-1965 alone. It is estimated that approximately 80 Scottish children were migrated to Australia by Fairbridge throughout the duration of its child migration programmes.

Applicants

3.4 Six SCAI applicants were migrated by Fairbridge. Three of them were migrated to Canada via Middlemore Homes, two in 1941 and one in 1945. Three were migrated to Australia, in 1955, 1958, and 1959. Their histories are detailed below.

“Scott”

Life in the UK

3.5 “Scott” was born in Glasgow in February 1935. His father died before he was born. His grandmother looked after him for the first three years of his life “until I got too much for her and she gave me away to the Fairbridge Society.”¹⁸²³ “Scott” had “no memory” of his mother or grandmother.¹⁸²⁴ On his Fairbridge admission form, his grandmother explained that “[t]his is an illegitimate child of my daughter, who has since married. Her husband is unaware of the child’s existence. I have had the care of him

1820 Constantine *et al.*, paragraphs 4.3 and 5.2; and Appendix 3, paragraph 4.7; and IICSA, Child Migration: [2.2 The Fairbridge Society](#) | IICSA Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

1821 Patrick A. Dunae, “Waifs: The Fairbridge Society in British Columbia, 1935-1951”, *Histoire Sociale*, XXI (42) (November 1988), pp.225-250.

1822 Constantine *et al.*, paragraph 10.8.

1823 *Written statement of “Scott”*, paragraph 3, at WIT-1-000000011.

1824 *Written statement of “Scott”*, paragraph 3, at WIT-1-000000011.

since he was born...I am now 65 years of age and I worry as to what might happen to the child if anything should happen to me."¹⁸²⁵

3.6 "Scott's" admission form was signed by his grandmother on 7 July 1938. Shortly thereafter, a letter from Gordon Green, Secretary of the Fairbridge Society, to Robert Plenderleith, the Principal of Middlemore Children's Home, reported that "[t]he General Secretary of the Edinburgh Council of Social Service [Anne Ashley] has asked if a little boy, ['Scott'], could be admitted to Middlemore with a view to emigration to a Fairbridge Farm School when he is older".¹⁸²⁶

3.7 Another application form was completed and signed by "Scott's" mother on 12 November 1938.¹⁸²⁷ Soon afterwards, a letter was sent by Anne Ashley to Gordon Green, noting that she had "had the form signed in duplicate as the first one was signed by the grandmother and I was sure that you would want the mother's signature, in spite of the fact that she seems to take no interest in the child".¹⁸²⁸ Middlemore Homes were, at that time, in the process of setting up a babies' home, which was expected to be ready in March 1939. "Scott" stayed with his grandmother until it was completed, when he was admitted to Middlemore.

3.8 "Scott" was moved frequently once he arrived at Middlemore. Over the course of three and a half years, he was resident in five different homes or placements, all organised

by the Fairbridge Society. In September 1939, the children from the babies' home at Middlemore were evacuated to Wilderhope Manor in Shropshire. In July 1940, "Scott" was billeted with a couple in Brookhampton, Shropshire. In August 1941, "Scott" was at Middlemore temporarily on account of having broken his arm. By April 1943, "Scott" and others had been transferred to the Fairbridge Society's Hostel in Bennington.¹⁸²⁹ Throughout this time, he "was always alone, I found it difficult to make friends. I felt like the Lone Ranger. I later found out that my family were looking for me and I feel like every time they looked for me, I was moved."¹⁸³⁰

"I later found out that my family were looking for me and I feel like every time they looked for me, I was moved."

3.9 "Scott's" whereabouts were not always shared promptly with his grandmother, who continued to ask after him frequently. At one point, to locate "Scott" she wrote to the couple in Shropshire—with whom she believed "Scott" was still staying—who told her to write to the secretary in Birmingham, who in turn told her to write to Middlemore.¹⁸³¹ She did this in order to ensure she could send "Scott" a Christmas present. Ultimately, she was told that "Scott" had been moved to Benington in

1825 Fairbridge admission form for "Scott", at WIT.003.002.1801.

1826 Letter from Gordon Green to Robert Plenderleith, 12 July 1938, at WIT.003.002.1921.

1827 Fairbridge admission form for "Scott", at WIT.003.002.1799.

1828 Letter from Anne Ashley to Gordon Green, 18 November 1938, at WIT.003.002.1917.

1829 Letter from Gordon Green to Anne Ashley, 6 September 1939, at WIT.003.002.1907; Letter from Robert Plenderleith to Gordon Green, 26 July 1940, at WIT.003.002.1906; Letter from Gordon Green to Anne Ashley, 11 August 1941, at WIT.003.002.1902; Letter from Charles Hambro to Anne Ashley, 3 April 1932, at WIT.003.002.1900.

1830 *Written statement of "Scott"*, paragraph 4, at WIT-1-000000011.

1831 Letter from "Scott's" Grandmother to Middlemore Homes, 11 November 1943, at WIT.003.002.1893.

“I felt like I was a prisoner on the run. We were given information that none of our relatives were allowed to contact us and we weren’t allowed to contact them.”

Hertfordshire but was in hospital.¹⁸³² For “Scott”, it “felt like I was a prisoner on the run. We were given information that none of our relatives were allowed to contact us and we weren’t allowed to contact them.”¹⁸³³ Despite his grandmother’s efforts to locate and contact him, “Scott” “never had any contact” with her after he was taken in by Fairbridge.¹⁸³⁴

3.10 “Scott’s” schoolteacher at Benington treated him harshly. “Scott” was targeted for being left handed and if he used that hand to write he would be smacked with a ruler.¹⁸³⁵ The meals “were good”, but “Scott” hated the barley soup. Nonetheless, he “was told to eat it or I would go without.”¹⁸³⁶ On one occasion, after being ordered to bed at 6:30 pm, the children “all ran away” and were only located “a couple of days later.”¹⁸³⁷ They were well treated on their return.

3.11 “Scott” described how, at Christmas, American and Canadian forces stationed in the area would “throw a party in the hall” for the children and children were given chocolate bars: “We thought we were

millionaires getting a chocolate bar as chocolate was really hard to get...We were all screaming and yelling as we had never seen Santa before.”¹⁸³⁸

3.12 At Benington, “Scott” had little memory of any visitors “[u]nless some big shot came, they would be taken into the office and then shown around. That drove me nuts. Why bring someone in to see the kids and then not let them see them?”¹⁸³⁹ “Scott” had no contact with his family before he went to Canada.¹⁸⁴⁰ He was under the sole care of the Society with no one to whom to report any concerns.

Migration

3.13 “Scott” broke his arm when he was billeted with the couple in Brookhampton.¹⁸⁴¹ While in hospital for that injury, Gordon Green reported that “Scott” had been examined by the Chief Medical Officer and Civil Examiners from Canada House and found “to be suitable for emigration to Canada when we are able to send a party without undue risk.”¹⁸⁴²

1832 Letter from General Secretary to “Scott’s” Grandmother, 17 November 1943, at WIT.003.002.1895.

1833 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.4.

1834 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.10.

1835 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 10, at WIT-1-000000011.

1836 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 12, at WIT-1-000000011.

1837 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 15, at WIT-1-000000011.

1838 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 20, at WIT-1-000000011.

1839 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 22, at WIT-1-000000011.

1840 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 26, at WIT-1-000000011.

1841 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.6.

1842 Letter from Gordon Green to Anne Ashley, 11 August 1941, at WIT.003.002.1902.

3.14 “Scott” remembered receiving injections prior to being migrated.¹⁸⁴³ Another boy who was “supposed to go to Canada” failed his medical examination. That meant that “Scott” was added to list of those destined for Canada.¹⁸⁴⁴ Prior to this, “Scott” was due to be sent to Australia. He “didn’t have a clue” about Canada or Australia. He was “never asked if I wanted to go to Canada.”¹⁸⁴⁵ “Scott” was told: “‘You are going to Canada,’ and that’s it, ‘You were supposed to go to Australia, but this other guy failed his medical.’”¹⁸⁴⁶ One day, “we were just loaded up on a bus...and off we went.”¹⁸⁴⁷

3.15 “Scott” left for Canada on the SS Bayano on 12 July 1945.¹⁸⁴⁸ Fairbridge sent two groups of children close together, one group of boys and one of girls. The boys sailed on the SS Bayano and the girls on the SS Oria. Siblings were permitted to travel together on the Oria instead of being split up by gender.¹⁸⁴⁹ All the boys that “Scott” travelled with had been with him in the UK at Fairbridge institutions. “Scott” was 10 years old at the time. Some of the boys with him were a little younger and some a little older.¹⁸⁵⁰

3.16 During the journey, “the kids just seemed to want to stick by themselves. I don’t remember making any friends on the boat.”¹⁸⁵¹

3.17 On arrival in Montreal, the children were put on a train to Vancouver, which “took us about four days to a week”.¹⁸⁵² From Vancouver, they were taken to the Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School on Vancouver Island.

Life at Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School, Canada (1945-1953)

3.18 When the children arrived at Fairbridge, they were assigned to their respective cottages “and introduced to their cottage mothers.”¹⁸⁵³



Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School, British Columbia, Canada, May 2019. Photograph by SCAI.

1843 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.8.

1844 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.15.

1845 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 24, at WIT-1-000000011.

1846 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.17.

1847 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.17.

1848 Fairbridge, Information on “Scott”, at WIT.003.002.1809.

1849 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.17.

1850 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.18.

1851 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 29, at WIT-1-000000011.

1852 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.19.

1853 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.19-20.

“...one of the kids said to the police that if Mrs Armstrong wasn’t so mean then we wouldn’t have run away. They said we should be notifying someone. The kid said that we would be ignored.”

3.19 “Scott’s” cottage was run by Mrs Armstrong. In “Scott’s” opinion, “she shouldn’t have been a cottage mother.”¹⁸⁵⁴ Mrs Armstrong “got it in her head that if she was going to pick on somebody, she’d better find somebody who’s not going to argue back, and it seems to me I was number one on the hit list.”¹⁸⁵⁵ Mrs Armstrong’s primary punishment “was just a mental thing. It just seemed that if I loused up anywhere, I worked, whether I liked it or not. It made it hard.”¹⁸⁵⁶ One common punishment was being instructed to pile wood. Children were punished for a number of reasons, such as failing to make up their beds to a required standard, though “sometimes you didn’t know what you had done”.¹⁸⁵⁷ Although “Scott” always made his bed, “either Mrs Armstrong or some other kid would mess it up. I told her there was no need to do that.”¹⁸⁵⁸ She failed to protect “Scott” when he was bullied by other children. “Scott” “didn’t retaliate as I would’ve ended up in the corner. That was another of Mrs Armstrong’s punishments.”¹⁸⁵⁹

**Mrs Armstrong
“shouldn’t have been
a cottage mother.”**

3.20 On one occasion, several of the boys at the cottage “had had enough of Mrs Armstrong. We built a lean-to den in the bush area...She came looking for us...[and] we were hauled back to the cottage. When we went back to the house, the police were at the house and one of the kids said to the police that if Mrs Armstrong wasn’t so mean then we wouldn’t have run away. They said we should be notifying someone. The kid said that we would be ignored.”¹⁸⁶⁰

3.21 “Scott” did not “think you could open your mouth to tell anyone how you felt as they wouldn’t have believed you or they would have ignored you.”¹⁸⁶¹ “Scott” never had visitors, so there were no opportunities for him to report his experiences to outsiders.¹⁸⁶²

3.22 From the outset, Mrs Armstrong’s brief half-yearly reports on “Scott” described him as “spoiled and inclined to show off,” despite the fact that “there is nothing to suggest that any behaviour or personality problems presented themselves before [he] went to Canada.”¹⁸⁶³ Anne Ashley at Edinburgh Council of Social Services concluded that “his first Cottage Mother summed him up rather adversely very quickly indeed since her first report to this effect was

1854 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.21.

1855 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.22.

1856 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.22.

1857 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 60, at WIT-1-000000011.

1858 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 64, at WIT-1-000000011.

1859 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 68, at WIT-1-000000011.

1860 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 66, at WIT-1-000000011.

1861 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 67, at WIT-1-000000011.

1862 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.27.

1863 Letter from Anne Ashley to Harry Logan, 28 September 1948, at WIT.003.002.1817.

dated September, 1945, when he cannot have been in her care for more than about two months.”¹⁸⁶⁴ Harry Logan, the Principal of Fairbridge in Canada, agreed that “[p]art of the trouble is no doubt due...to his Cottage Mother’s lack of sympathy...So many of our problems with child care can be traced to this source, while the attempt is often made to find cause elsewhere.”¹⁸⁶⁵ E.M. Carbery, Fairbridge UK’s psychiatric social worker, reported in 1949 that “a change of cottage mother seems to have caused real improvement in [‘Scott’s’] behaviour lately”.¹⁸⁶⁶ “Scott” wondered why, given that cottage mothers were so evidently able to influence a child’s behaviour, “[t]hey didn’t do a thing about it” when a cottage mother was poor.¹⁸⁶⁷

“Part of the trouble is no doubt due...to his Cottage Mother’s lack of sympathy”.

3.23 Before she left for Canada, E.M. Carbery had been in contact with “Scott’s” grandmother in England, and her report notes that “Scott” “was very glad to have news of his granny.”¹⁸⁶⁸ This does not entirely tally with the half-yearly reports’ assertions that “Scott” “is an avid correspondent”, not only with his grandmother but with pen pals and one female correspondent, whose identity no one at Fairbridge seemed sure of.¹⁸⁶⁹ It does, however, tally with “Scott’s”

own experiences: the first Christmas he was at Fairbridge in Canada, he received a Christmas present of a wristwatch from his grandmother, although “it had already been opened. I remember that because somebody mentioned something that they had to open the mail before the kids got it.”¹⁸⁷⁰ After about a week, “Scott’s” watch “took a hike”, being stolen by another boy in the cottage or taken by the cottage mother. Moreover, despite the fact that his grandmother and others were sending letters, “Scott” “never saw them.”¹⁸⁷¹ Had he received the letters from his grandmother, he “would have definitely written to her.”¹⁸⁷² Indeed, “Scott” himself “was told at the time that relatives were not allowed to contact me when we came over to Canada...I was told they were not allowed to write us letters.”¹⁸⁷³ Not knowing about his family exacerbated the emotional abuse he received from his cottage mother and others in his cottage.¹⁸⁷⁴

“I was told they were not allowed to write us letters.”

3.24 While bedwetting “was a no-no,” “Scott” believed that it happened “because of nerves of just being picked on and bullied.”¹⁸⁷⁵ Whilst he himself “got over it”, bedwetters “had to do [their] own laundry and you ended up getting punished” with further chores.¹⁸⁷⁶

1864 Letter from Anne Ashley to Harry Logan, 28 September 1948, at WIT.003.002.1817.

1865 Letter from Harry Logan to Anne Ashley, 5 October 1948, at WIT.003.002.1858.

1866 Report made by Miss Carbery during her visit to Fairbridge Canada, September-December, 1949, at WIT.003.002.1826.

1867 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.30.

1868 Report made by Miss Carbery during her visit to Fairbridge Canada, September-December, 1949, at WIT.003.002.1826.

1869 Half-yearly report on “Scott”, September 1949, at WIT.003.002.1824.

1870 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.26.

1871 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.26.

1872 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 59, at WIT-1-000000011.

1873 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 72, at WIT-1-000000011.

1874 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.22.

1875 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.23.

1876 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.23-24.

“He talks of suicide and thinks everyone is against him.”

3.25 One positive for “Scott” was that he “had a good teacher” at the school at Duncan.¹⁸⁷⁷ However, he was “picked on at school, not by so much the Fairbridge kids, but kids from Duncan”.¹⁸⁷⁸ As had been the case at Benington, “if you wrote left-handed, you got a slap on the wrist” and children were made to write right-handed.¹⁸⁷⁹

“...if you wrote left-handed, you got a slap on the wrist”.

3.26 “Scott’s” experiences at the Prince of Wales Farm School meant that he “didn’t think I was wanted, anywhere.”¹⁸⁸⁰ One report of March 1949 noted that “Scott” “often has morbid thoughts. He talks of suicide and thinks everyone is against him.”¹⁸⁸¹ The same report observed that “he seems most unsuited to group living.”¹⁸⁸² By this point, “Scott” had had an appointment with the Child Guidance Clinic, under whose advice he was put on medication to try to improve his behaviour.¹⁸⁸³

3.27 In June 1950, “Scott” “proceeded to outside placement.”¹⁸⁸⁴ This placement was at a dairy farm run by a family. For “Scott”, that placement was “the happiest three years

of my life.”¹⁸⁸⁵ The couple he stayed with “were as close to parents...that I ever had,” and he called them mum and dad.¹⁸⁸⁶

Life after care

3.28 “Scott” left the dairy farm shortly after his 18th birthday. Throughout his time at the dairy farm there was no aftercare from Fairbridge.

3.29 After working in several jobs around Canada, “Scott” “got a job with [the Department of National Defence] and was there for 21 and a half years.”¹⁸⁸⁷

3.30 “Scott” only discovered that he had a family after his son began to research his history, about a year before “Scott” contacted SCAI. “Scott” “just couldn’t believe it” when his son “started to find out things” about their family.¹⁸⁸⁸ “Scott” discovered that he had two sisters who lived in Australia and two brothers.¹⁸⁸⁹ This discovery “really threw me off balance. All my life I thought I was on my own.”¹⁸⁹⁰

3.31 In a powerful description given during his oral evidence to the Inquiry, “Scott” explained that finding out he had

1877 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.24.

1878 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.27.

1879 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.25; Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 10, at WIT-1-000000011.

1880 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.31.

1881 Half-yearly report on “Scott”, March 1949, at WIT.003.002.1822.

1882 Half-yearly report on “Scott”, March 1949, at WIT.003.002.1822.

1883 Half-yearly report on “Scott”, March 1949, at WIT.003.002.1822.

1884 Principal’s report on “Scott”, June 1950, at WIT.003.002.1828.

1885 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.39.

1886 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.31.

1887 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.34.

1888 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 91, at WIT-1-000000011.

1889 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 91, at WIT-1-000000011.

1890 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 91, at WIT-1-000000011.

“...now I’m finding out I do live, I do exist, I do have family.”

a family was “the best thing that ever happened, now I’m finding out I do live, I do exist, I do have family.”¹⁸⁹¹ He explained that “when you’re not used to having family, it’s like saying...you’ve been broke all your life, and all of a sudden you buy one lousy lottery ticket and it’s a \$50 million lottery ticket and you haven’t seen that much money. So what do you do with it? Do you give it away? Do you spend it? It’s like having a family, believing I’m the only one, and all of a sudden, wham, the lights come on.”¹⁸⁹²

3.32 “Scott”, by then aged 85 years, was due to meet some of his family in the UK during the week following his having given evidence to the Inquiry.¹⁸⁹³

3.33 In the early 1990s, 42 years after arriving in Canada, “Scott” “got this paperwork from England that said we had to become Canadian citizens. It may have had something to do with my pension, but I can’t remember. When we were kids, we were told that we would automatically become Canadian citizens...Why did it take over 40 years to be told we had to apply to be a Canadian [citizen]?”¹⁸⁹⁴

3.34 Below, I refer to the evidence given to the Inquiry by “Scott’s” son, “Brian”.

“Brian”

His father’s migration and its effects on “Brian”

3.35 “Brian” was born in Canada in 1977. He knew very little about his father’s experiences until 2018, when he began to investigate “Scott’s” history.¹⁸⁹⁵ Before then, “Brian” only knew that his father had “come from Glasgow and had been sent to Canada from England. I knew he’d gone to Fairbridge Farm School but that was it. I really didn’t know anything.”¹⁸⁹⁶

3.36 When “Brian” was growing up, “Scott” “didn’t know how to be a dad. My life growing up as a kid sucked. There’s no other term I can use.”¹⁸⁹⁷ “Scott” “was an alcoholic” when “Brian” was young, and to “Brian” it seemed that “he didn’t care about me.”¹⁸⁹⁸ Although he and his father “did car stuff together...he was never a dad in other senses.”¹⁸⁹⁹ He said that “Scott” was “awful” to “Brian” and his mum, but “[as] I got bigger and stronger, I put a stop to the behaviour towards me and my mother.”¹⁹⁰⁰

“My life growing up as a kid sucked.”

1891 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.36.

1892 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.37.

1893 Transcript, day 174: “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.37.

1894 Written statement of “Scott”, paragraph 96, at WIT-1-000000011.

1895 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.56.

1896 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.44.

1897 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.57.

1898 Written statement of “Brian”, paragraph 44, at WIT-1-000000013.

1899 Written statement of “Brian”, paragraph 44, at WIT-1-000000013.

1900 Written statement of “Brian”, paragraph 45, at WIT-1-000000013.

3.37 “Brian” realised that this had an impact on him when he became a father himself: “I’ve got two kids at home I love with all my heart and soul, but it’s been damn hard trying to learn how to be a dad because I never had one. He was there physically, he wasn’t there emotionally...So I’m snapping and barking at my son because it’s all I’ve ever known and now I’m having to learn through the grace of my wife and trying to learn how not to be that dad.”¹⁹⁰¹

“...it’s been damn hard trying to learn how to be a dad because I never had one. He was there physically, he wasn’t there emotionally...”

3.38 One day, “Brian” saw that a friend “had posted an article about British Child Migrants.”¹⁹⁰² Knowing that his father had “come from England or something like that,” “Brian” read the article and saw “a picture of my dad and I knew it was my dad the second I saw it”, despite never having seen the photograph before.¹⁹⁰³ “Brian” began “asking questions and messaging more people until I got all the answers I wanted – or at least most of them anyway.”¹⁹⁰⁴

3.39 Soon, he had found out that his father “had brothers and sisters and we had cousins and aunts and uncles...it was crazy.”¹⁹⁰⁵

“Brian” wanted to be absolutely certain that the information he had received was correct before speaking to his father.

3.40 “Brian” then went to his father’s house and told him: “I got some crazy information for you, and then I just spilled it to him.”¹⁹⁰⁶ “Brian” “had pages and pages and pages of documents, pictures”.¹⁹⁰⁷ “Brian” told his father who his parents were, who his grandparents were, and who his siblings were. While “Brian” was at his father’s house “his sister from Australia phoned me...I just said, ‘hi’, and, ‘How’s it going? I’m your nephew and here’s your brother.’ I handed my dad the phone.”¹⁹⁰⁸ Two of “Scott’s” sisters “live close by to each other” in Australia, and so on this phone call “Scott” was able to speak to them both.¹⁹⁰⁹ On the same day “Brian’s” other aunt, who lived in the United States, phoned via video call: “My dad recognised her as the woman he had met in Detroit. He even remembered Uncle Joe’s car. When she saw him on the phone, she called him ‘wee Jackie.’ It was the same name she had used back in 1954 when she saw him in Detroit...This was the name they had used for him when he was a boy living with Granny”.¹⁹¹⁰

1901 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.69.

1902 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.46.

1903 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.46.

1904 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.46.

1905 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.54.

1906 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.55.

1907 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.56.

1908 Transcript, day 174: “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.56.

1909 Written statement of “Brian”, paragraph 30, at WIT-1-000000013.

1910 Written statement of “Brian”, paragraph 32, at WIT-1-000000013. See “Scott” for the encounter in Detroit.

“...I told him I was sorry. I was sorry that people felt it necessary to treat him that way as a child.”

3.41 In 1954, when “Scott” was 19 years old, this sister and her husband sent him tickets to Detroit to visit them. “Brian” explained that the couple “had put [‘Scott’] up in a hotel in Windsor...When they went back to the hotel the next morning, he was gone. She had no idea where he went and had no way of contacting him. He had no idea that it was his sister. When I told my dad who she was he got upset. I started to tell him about all the family he had. I was giving him all this information and he was getting upset. He had always thought that he had been an only child and had been abandoned.”¹⁹¹¹

“He had always thought that he had been an only child and had been abandoned.”

3.42 When “Scott” was “three years old, he completely disappeared one day from his family...No-one ever knew what happened to [him]. It impacted on everyone’s life.”¹⁹¹² After finding him again, “Scott’s” sister said that “she had lost him once, she was not going to lose him again”.¹⁹¹³

3.43 For “Brian”, there were “42 years of having no idea who the family is on my dad’s side. 82 years of my dad having no idea who his family is.”¹⁹¹⁴ “Brian’s” grandmother died in the early 1990s when “Brian” “would have been 8 years old.”¹⁹¹⁵ To know that he had a grandmother, aunts, uncles, and cousins then “would have been pretty awesome... instead of having to wait another 30 years to even be able to begin my research.”¹⁹¹⁶ As it was, “in that 60-year span” between “Scott’s” migration and “Brian’s” research beginning, “nobody in any of these government offices thought: maybe we should release this information...maybe these kids would want to look out and search for their families.”¹⁹¹⁷ Had the process of recognition and reparation “started earlier, [‘Scott’] might have been able to find and meet his mother and his family.”¹⁹¹⁸ Instead, “Brian’s” grandmother “died never knowing where [‘Scott’] ended up in life.”¹⁹¹⁹

3.44 It troubled “Brian” that his great-grandmother clearly loved “Scott” but that his father never knew that when she was alive: “his mum might not have given any care for him, but his grandma sure did.”¹⁹²⁰ Having learnt about his father’s background as a child migrant, “Brian” no longer held his father responsible for the way he behaved

1911 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 29, at WIT-1-000000013.

1912 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 82, at WIT-1-000000013.

1913 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 33, at WIT-1-000000013.

1914 [Transcript, day 174: “Brian”](#), at TRN-5-000000004, p.62.

1915 [Transcript, day 174: “Brian”](#), at TRN-5-000000004, p.66.

1916 [Transcript, day 174: “Brian”](#), at TRN-5-000000004, p.67.

1917 [Transcript, day 174: “Brian”](#), at TRN-5-000000004, p.66.

1918 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 74, at WIT-1-000000013.

1919 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 21, at WIT-1-000000013.

1920 [Transcript, day 174: “Brian”](#), at TRN-5-000000004, p.70

towards him when he was growing up.¹⁹²¹ “Brian’s” knowledge of his father’s migration enabled him to come to terms with his own childhood. He understood that his father had sought “to mask the pain of a bad childhood. I gave him a big hug one day after we had gone through some information and I told him I was sorry. I was sorry that people felt it necessary to treat him that way as a child.”¹⁹²²

Hugh Taylor

Life in the UK

3.45 Hugh Taylor provided evidence to the inquiry in the form of a copy of a letter he had written to the CMT on 14 February 2017.

3.46 Hugh was born in Gateshead in March 1933. His parents had moved to Gateshead from Glasgow in the 1920s, in search of work.

3.47 Hugh was the youngest of six siblings. He had three sisters and two brothers. His father died in about 1935, and later that year his mother developed stomach cancer.¹⁹²³ As a result, just before Hugh’s third birthday, he and all of his siblings except for his eldest brother were sent to Middlemore Homes, “a bleak place.”¹⁹²⁴ His mother had signed documents transferring the care of her children to the Fairbridge Society but insisted that her children be kept together, “and Mr Green reassured her that that would be done.”¹⁹²⁵ Mr Green was the Secretary of the Fairbridge Farm Schools and it was he who had told Hugh’s mother about the Fairbridge child migration scheme. By October 1936, Hugh’s siblings had left for Canada. Despite his mother’s stated wish for the siblings to be kept together, Hugh remained at Middlemore “with no family for the next 5 years, survival mode in overdrive.”¹⁹²⁶

1921 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.64.

1922 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 45, at WIT-1-000000013.

1923 Letter from the Director of Middlemore to Mr Lardner, 24 August 1954, at PRT.001.003.0145.

1924 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.60.

1925 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.60.

1926 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.60.

“I hardly slept a wink for those 2 weeks as I awaited my punishment.”

3.48 At Middlemore, the nurses “never hesitated to hit you on the side of the head”; on one occasion, Hugh was found jumping on his bed and “was directed to a room downstairs where three other nurses were sitting. I was told to remove my clothing and lie across three pairs of legs. The nurses then took turns spanking me over a long period of time, after which I was left alone in the room” with the lights off and the door closed.¹⁹²⁷ There was “no compassion shown” at Middlemore, and there was “no attempt at any sort of education.”¹⁹²⁸

“I was told to remove my clothing and lie across three pairs of legs. The nurses then took turns spanking me”.

3.49 Hugh remained at Middlemore until 1940, when he and some other children were sent to Wilderhope Manor in Shropshire.¹⁹²⁹ He found the site to be beautiful but the treatment, as with Middlemore, was “Dickensian.”¹⁹³⁰ In December 1940, he and two other boys “discovered a passageway along the top of the manor in which Christmas presents were stored. We had fun with the toys and left. It wasn’t long before we were found out. We had

to wait two weeks before Mr Plenderleith [superintendent of Middlemore] came from Middlemore to give us each a caning. I hardly slept a wink for those 2 weeks as I awaited my punishment.”¹⁹³¹ Instilling fear and anxiety in children by delaying corporal punishment—a practice which was prevalent in other institutions, including boarding schools—is abusive.

3.50 In Spring 1941, Hugh and some of his peers moved back to Middlemore before being migrated to Canada.

Migration

3.51 Although Hugh was not migrated until the autumn of 1941, a medical examination form for Hugh—headed ‘Commonwealth of Australia Medical Examination’—was signed in February 1936, perhaps at the same time as the forms for his siblings were completed.¹⁹³² He was not medically examined for migration purposes again, so more than five years elapsed between Hugh’s official medical examination and his migration. In July 1940, a letter from Gordon Green, Fairbridge’s General Secretary based in London, to Robert Plenderleith, stated that “as soon as this operation [a tonsillectomy] has been performed, after Hugh’s head is clear, this lad may go to Canada.”¹⁹³³ Hugh’s operation was,

1927 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.61.

1928 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.61.

1929 Letter from Robert Plenderleith to Gordon Green, 24 October 1940, at PRT.001.003.0167.

1930 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.61.

1931 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.61-62.

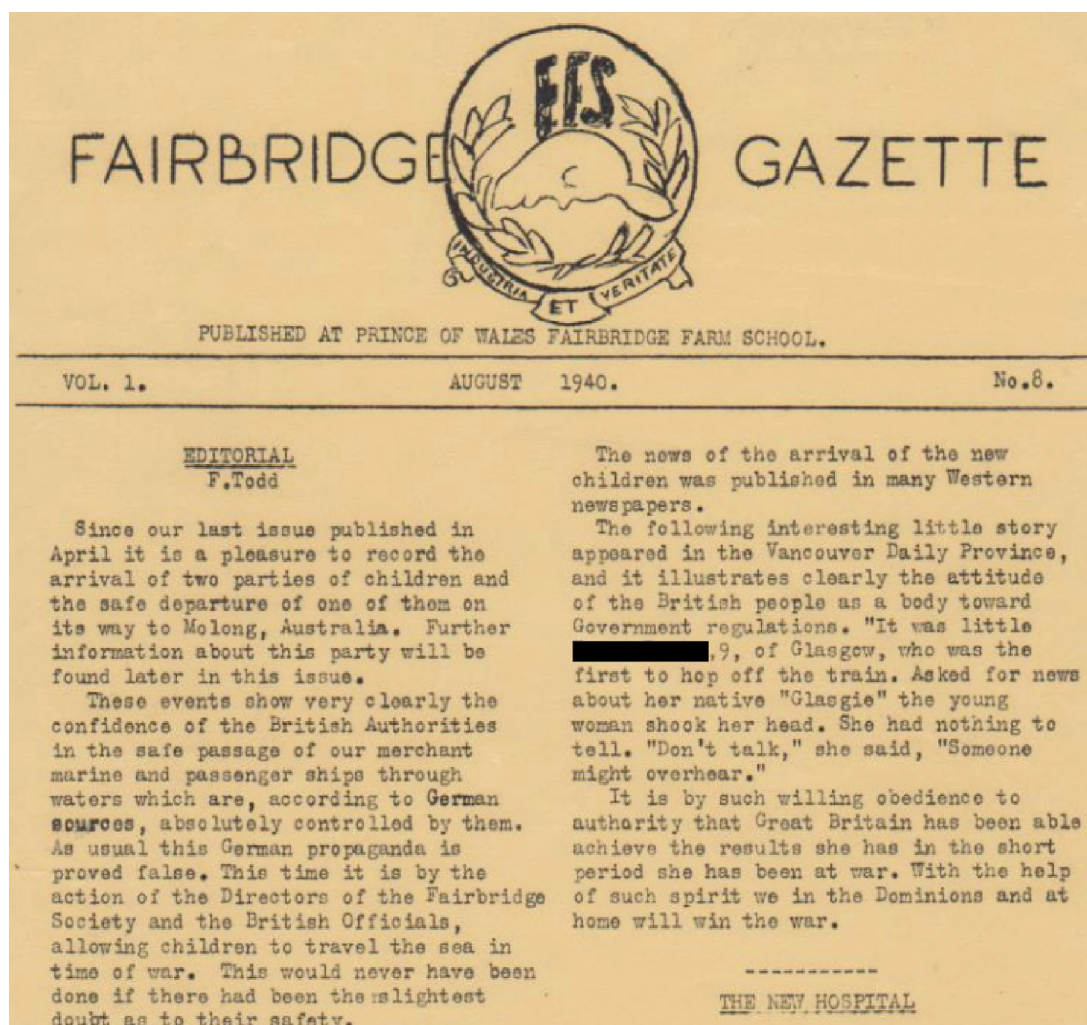
1932 Medical examination form for Hugh Taylor, at PRT.001.003.0190.

1933 Letter from the Secretary of Fairbridge Farm Schools to Robert Plenderleith, 31 July 1940, at PRT.001.003.0170.

however, repeatedly delayed. In September 1940, the Secretary again wrote to Robert Plenderleith, telling him that “[w]e [Fairbridge] are very anxious for him to go to Canada soon, especially as only last week, Miss Hall had a letter from [Hugh’s eldest sister] asking when Hughie was coming and saying how eagerly she was looking forward to his arrival.”¹⁹³⁴ In a letter dated October 1941 to Harry Logan (Principal of Prince of Wales Farm School), sent while Hugh was on the

ship for Canada, Gordon Green stated that “I doubt if Hugh remembers very much of his sisters as he was only three when they left for Canada.”¹⁹³⁵

3.52 Hugh and 15 others from Middlemore Homes sailed to Canada on the SS Bayano, leaving England on 19 October 1941.¹⁹³⁶ The Bayano travelled in convoy, and during the crossing “at least one ship in our group was torpedoed”. This was the last shipment of children until after the Second World War.¹⁹³⁷



Fairbridge Gazette, no.8, August 1940. Source: Fairbridge Canada.

1934 Letter from the Secretary of Fairbridge Farm Schools to Robert Plenderleith, 31 July 1940, at PRT.001.003.0165.

1935 Letter from the Secretary of Fairbridge Farm Schools to Harry Logan, 27 October 1941, at PRT.001.003.0164.

1936 [Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), who also provided evidence to SCAI that is included here, was one of those who was migrated alongside Hugh Taylor.

1937 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.62.

“...I believe my hearing loss is related to these brutal attacks”.

Life at Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School, Canada (1941-1952)

3.53 On 8 November 1941, the children arrived at the Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School. Hugh was aged eight on his arrival. He was the only boy of the group to be assigned to Mrs O'Neill's cottage, where his brother had been accommodated “before he died of a brain tumour in late October 1937.”¹⁹³⁸ Hugh had previously been told that his brother had “died of the cold in Canada. This raised my anxiety as I was being sent to the very same place. It was years before I knew the real reason for his death.”¹⁹³⁹ Mrs O'Neill was “the only [caring cottage mother] in all three places I was housed from the age of three years.”¹⁹⁴⁰



Fairbridge Farm School, houses, left to right: 1. Girls' cottage *Douglas/Pennant*, built in 1937; 2. Girls' cottage *Edith Attwood*, built in 1935; 3. Girls' cottage *Silver Jubilee*, built in 1935; 4. Kenilworth dining hall, built in 1936; 5. Boys' cottage; c.1940. Source: [Cowichan Valley Museum & Archives](#).

3.54 Hugh did not, however, experience kindness from other staff members at Fairbridge. He found that “if there was a child to strap” when the school Principal, Jock Gillat, was around, “it was usually me.”¹⁹⁴¹ Once, Hugh “started to nod off” from the warmth in Gillat's classroom.¹⁹⁴² He awoke to Jock Gillat “viciously hitting me directly on my ear, and it was very painful. As an adult, I believe my hearing loss is related to these brutal attacks, which also happened at Middlemore and Wilderhope.”¹⁹⁴³

3.55 Hugh was later moved to Davidson cottage, overseen by Mrs Grieve. She “was the cruellest, meanest person I ever met... and seemed especially to enjoy strapping boys' bums.”¹⁹⁴⁴ Hugh attributed a duodenal ulcer he developed at Fairbridge to the “poor nutrition and unrelenting stress, particularly while in Mrs Grieve's cottage.”¹⁹⁴⁵ Mrs Grieve was “the tyrant of all the cottage mothers.”¹⁹⁴⁶ Her cottage was “the model used to show visitors: polished floors, neat bed covers, all done by the boys who would be severely punished if all was not perfect.”¹⁹⁴⁷ On one occasion when Hugh was ironing, he “put a crease in the yoke of one shirt.”¹⁹⁴⁸ In response, Mrs Grieve “screamed and threw one of the hot irons at me, hitting me in the side of the face.”¹⁹⁴⁹ At this point,

1938 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.62.

1939 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, pp.62-63.

1940 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.62.

1941 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.63.

1942 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.63.

1943 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, pp.63-64.

1944 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.64.

1945 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.64.

1946 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.64.

1947 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.64.

1948 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.64.

1949 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.64.

Hugh was old enough to threaten retaliation, and “Mrs Grieve fled, fearing I would do as she had done to me.”¹⁹⁵⁰

3.56 Hugh wet the bed while he was in Mrs Grieve’s cottage; there, “any boy who wet the bed was forced to take the sheets to the laundry area, naked, no matter the time or temperature (unheated in winter), wash and hang them to dry.”¹⁹⁵¹ Hugh continued to wet the bed throughout his time in Mrs Grieve’s cottage but “the day [she] left Fairbridge was the end of that problem for me.”¹⁹⁵²

3.57 One day, while Hugh was sipping milk in the dining hall, “a small drop fell on the table.”¹⁹⁵³ Mrs Grieve told him that he would have to do “an hour on the wood pile on Saturday”, which would mean missing out on swimming.¹⁹⁵⁴ When Hugh questioned this, he was told that he would be doing another hour on the wood pile. He “began to say ‘Thank you’ after each hour of punishment was pronounced.”¹⁹⁵⁵ In response to this, he was sent to the duties manager, Mr Ritchie. On arrival, Mr Ritchie began to strap Hugh “until blood started to flow from my left hand” and “[t]o this day I have scar tissue and sensitivity in that hand.”¹⁹⁵⁶ Hugh managed to take hold of the strap, threw it out of the window, and ran to school. His teacher, Mrs Gray, was “horrified” at seeing his hands and took Hugh to see Jock Gillat.¹⁹⁵⁷ She explained the

circumstances and suggested that Jock Gillat should telephone the police. Jock Gillat’s response was to say that there was “no need for that, he...probably deserved it. He then closed his door.”¹⁹⁵⁸

3.58 Hugh observed that Harry Logan, the Principal of Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School, “immersed himself in his Latin books” and that Mrs Grieve, Jock Gillat, and Mr Ritchie “were allowed to do as they wished to children under their care.”¹⁹⁵⁹

3.59 Mr Rodgers, who had left shortly after Hugh’s arrival, had been convicted of child sexual abuse while at Fairbridge and had served time in Ocala Prison. Hugh noted that, “[f]ully aware of this, Colonel Logan nevertheless rehired Rodgers.”¹⁹⁶⁰ The cottage mother, Mrs O’Neill, quit her job in protest. In Hugh’s view there was “little or no supervision of those hired, who in many instances seemed to have no knowledge about children, especially those traumatised by home situations”.¹⁹⁶¹

3.60 Many children were not informed of their family backgrounds and did not know they had siblings elsewhere. Many did not know their own birth dates.¹⁹⁶² Some children had their names changed by staff if there was another child at the Farm School with the same name; this was done “with no

1950 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.64.

1951 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.65.

1952 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.65.

1953 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.65.

1954 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.65.

1955 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.65.

1956 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.66.

1957 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.66.

1958 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.66.

1959 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.66.

1960 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.67.

1961 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, pp.66-67.

1962 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.67.

“...there was cruelty perpetrated by sadistic adults against defenceless children with no advocates.”

consideration of what that can do to one’s sense of identity.”¹⁹⁶³ Hugh considered that “there was cruelty perpetrated by sadistic adults against defenceless children with no advocates.”¹⁹⁶⁴

3.61 After his siblings had left Fairbridge, half-yearly reports about Hugh noted that he “misses his sisters and feels lost without them.”¹⁹⁶⁵ He maintained contact with two of his sisters after they left. By 1949, Hugh was also in touch with his half-brother in England. During the Christmas holidays in 1950 he was able to visit one of his sisters at the home of her employer.¹⁹⁶⁶

“...the doctor felt that Hugh should have psychiatric treatment”.

3.62 One report noted that, in light of recurrent stomach issues, “the doctor felt that Hugh should have psychiatric treatment but agreed that such was hard to get and very expensive.”¹⁹⁶⁷

Life after care

3.63 In 1952, when Fairbridge was preparing to close down, Hugh was fostered out to a family and became an ‘old Fairbridgean.’¹⁹⁶⁸ He graduated from the local high school in June 1952; he lacked credits in mathematics and French and so was unable to go to university to train as a veterinary surgeon as he had hoped.¹⁹⁶⁹ After working for some time at various lodges and on ships in Canada, Hugh joined the Air Force in 1954. This was partly so that he could “meet the brother I did not know I had.”¹⁹⁷⁰ Hugh explained that his older brother and his wife later told him that they had contacted the Fairbridge Society while Hugh was still in England, “but the society told my brother and his wife I was in Canada. Had the society been truthful, I would have had a loving home with my brother and his wife.”¹⁹⁷¹

“Had the society been truthful, I would have had a loving home with my brother and his wife.”

1963 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.67.

1964 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.65.

1965 Half-yearly report for Hugh Taylor, March 1947, at PRT.001.010.5822.

1966 Report made by Miss Carberry during her visit to Fairbridge, Canada, September–December, 1949, at PRT.001.010.5831; Principal’s report for December 1950, at PRT.001.010.5835.

1967 Half-yearly report for Hugh Taylor, April 1952, at PRT.001.010.5838.

1968 Half-yearly report for Hugh Taylor, April 1952, at PRT.001.010.5838.

1969 Half-yearly report for Hugh Taylor, January 1953, at PRT.001.010.5841; Report made by Miss Carberry during her visit to Fairbridge, Canada, September–December, 1949, at PRT.001.010.5831.

1970 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.67.

1971 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, pp.67-68.

3.64 An aftercare report for Hugh dated 1955 stated that Hugh “keeps in close touch with [two of] his sisters, [he] cannot understand why [his eldest sister] has cut herself off from the rest of the family.”¹⁹⁷² Hugh later came to believe that his older sister “dealt with the trauma by deciding to tell people, including her husband, that she was an only child with no siblings. It was well over 40 years [after leaving Fairbridge] before I ever had contact with her.”¹⁹⁷³ Hugh was able to keep in contact with some of his siblings, but his family relationships were fractured as a result of migration.

3.65 Hugh reflected that, while some former Fairbridgeans “refuse to allow our truths, as we experienced them, to be validated, even brought forward in discussion...Those of us who lived this darker version have the right to speak our truths, to be given the same respect as those who have different truths, and to have our truths acknowledged and validated.”¹⁹⁷⁴

Roderick Donaldson Mackay

Life in the UK

3.66 Roderick Mackay, known as Roddy, was born in February 1934. Roddy’s parents divorced in about 1939. His father had custody of Roddy and his four siblings.

3.67 “Barring one vague memory” Roddy could not “remember anything of Edinburgh,” where he and his family lived before he was taken into care.¹⁹⁷⁵ That memory was of he and his brother being “on a beach and I was on [his brother’s] back and the next thing I knew we were in the police station.”¹⁹⁷⁶ Roddy and his brother—who would have been about 11 years old at the time—had been trying to run away; Roddy believed his brother “feels he should have kept the family together...I do not feel any child his age should have had to take on that responsibility.”¹⁹⁷⁷ Although Roddy was one of five siblings, he believed that he only had two siblings until 1971, when he was around 37 years old. Nobody had told him about his other siblings when he was a child.

3.68 At the outbreak of war in 1939, Roddy’s father was called to join his regiment, and he had his children sent “to another town in case of air raids.”¹⁹⁷⁸ From later records it appears that this town was in Fifeshire. Roddy and his sister were then sent to Middlemore Homes on 25 July 1940. Roddy explained that “it was almost like my life began at Middlemore Home”.¹⁹⁷⁹

1972 Aftercare report for Hugh Taylor, January 1955, at PRT.001.010.5842.

1973 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.68.

1974 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.69.

1975 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0005.

1976 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0005.

1977 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 3, at WIT.001.001.3450.

1978 Letter from Robert Mackay to Roddy Mackay, 21 October 1948, at PRT.001.002.4068.

1979 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0005.

3.69 Roddy did not know when his two younger brothers went into care, nor did he know what happened to his mother: “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.”¹⁹⁸⁰ Roddy knew his father was alive and “assumed that he could not handle the situation and had turned us over to welfare.”¹⁹⁸¹ His father “was so vague about what happened to the family”, but Roddy “had [his sister] which was some comfort”.¹⁹⁸²

3.70 Middlemore was “a huge orphanage.”¹⁹⁸³ Roddy recalled having his scalp treated with a “real stinging” ointment, and getting cod liver oil and a teaspoon of treacle.¹⁹⁸⁴ The regime was “very strict” and the matron “used the belt to keep us in line... Middlemore wasn’t a pleasant place”.¹⁹⁸⁵

3.71 Roddy was at Middlemore during the war and experienced regular bombings.¹⁹⁸⁶ In the mornings, the children went “out into the field looking for shrapnel and bombs.”¹⁹⁸⁷ Roddy did not remember being “terrified” but it was unsettling.¹⁹⁸⁸

Migration

3.72 Roddy and 15 other children from Middlemore were migrated to Canada in October 1941. His migration had been planned the previous year on admission

to Middlemore. Roddy’s father had signed a form handing him over to Fairbridge Farm Schools “for emigration to Canada or Australia” and promising “to use no influence with a view to removing [him]”.¹⁹⁸⁹

3.73 The day before Roddy and his sister were transferred to Middlemore, he underwent a medical examination.¹⁹⁹⁰ The form stated that Roddy was physically healthy, with good hearing and eyesight, and was bright. The examining doctor added a note that Roddy was a “good type of boy.”¹⁹⁹¹ The form was signed by children: his 11-year-old brother, and his nine year-old sister.¹⁹⁹²

3.74 Although Roddy had been medically examined, he “was not approved for immediate migration on account of his age.”¹⁹⁹³ It appears that Roddy was earmarked for migration, to either Australia or Canada, on his arrival at Middlemore.

3.75 Roddy was sent to Canada on 18 October 1941, just five days after Fairbridge had sent Roddy’s father a letter which stated

*“we have an opportunity to send a few children to Canada for admission to the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School and we propose to include Roderick in the party...I shall send you word as soon as we have cabled news from Canada of the safe arrival of the party.”*¹⁹⁹⁴

1980 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0005.

1981 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0005.

1982 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0008.

1983 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0008.

1984 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0009.

1985 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0009.

1986 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0008.

1987 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0009.

1988 Transcript, day 92: Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0008.

1989 Fairbridge Farm Schools admission form, at PRT.001.002.4108.

1990 Medical examination form for Roderick Mackay, at WIT.003.001.3047.

1991 Medical examination form for Roderick Mackay, at WIT.003.001.3047.

1992 Medical examination form for Roderick Mackay, at WIT.003.001.3047.

1993 Letter from Fairbridge Society to Robert Plenderleith, 31 July 1940, at WIT.003.001.4101.

1994 Letter from Fairbridge Society to Robert Mackay, 13 October 1941, at PRT.001.002.4099.

“It was beautiful. Green fields, surrounded by green forest and it was so different from Birmingham.”

3.76 Roddy had no recollection of being asked if he wanted to migrate. Even if he had been asked, “it would be like asking me would I mind going to Timbuktu. I had no idea, no concept about the geography of the world”.¹⁹⁹⁵

“...it would be like asking me would I mind going to Timbuktu. I had no idea, no concept about the geography of the world”.

3.77 Roddy’s older sister—who was at Middlemore with him—was not migrated, possibly because she wet the bed.¹⁹⁹⁶ She was instead returned to their father in April 1942.¹⁹⁹⁷ For Roddy, the “hardest part of [being migrated] was the separation from my sister, it was like now I have no family.”¹⁹⁹⁸ Roddy’s father later told Roddy that she was not approved because she was ‘unsuitable’.¹⁹⁹⁹

3.78 Roddy and the other children boarded the SS Bayano at Liverpool on 20 October 1941. Roddy confirms [Hugh Taylor’s](#) account that during the crossing, the convoy

in which they were travelling was torpedoed: “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.”²⁰⁰⁰ Despite the fact that one boat carrying child migrants had already been sunk during its crossing, child migrants were still being sent across the Atlantic, “just like they couldn’t care less.”²⁰⁰¹

3.79 For Roddy, “the voyage was fun. It was an adventure.”²⁰⁰² Roddy remembered “games on 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.”²⁰⁰³ The trip “was more of a bonding with these guys that I had met at Middlemore”.²⁰⁰⁴ After landing at Quebec following the 15-day crossing, the children travelled by train to Vancouver, and from there to the Prince of Wales Farm School on Vancouver Island. Roddy remembered “looking at the view from the bus. It was beautiful. Green fields, surrounded by green forest and it was so different from Birmingham.”²⁰⁰⁵ When they finally arrived, the other children who lived there “were all cheering [which] gave you some indication

1995 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0006.

1996 Letters from Gordon Green to Robert Plenderleith, 24 and 31 July 1940, at BCC.001.001.0238 and BCC.001.001.0243; 17 November 1941, at BCC.001.001.0279; 18 March 1942, at BCC.001.001.0293; Letter to Gordon Green, 20 November 1941, at BCC.001.001.0277; Letter from Robert Mackay, 15 March 1942, at BCC.001.001.0292.

1997 Letter from Gordon Green to Robert Plenderleith, undated, at BCC.001.001.0300.

1998 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0009.

1999 Medical examination form for Roderick Mackay, at WIT.003.001.3047; Letter from Fairbridge Society to Robert Plenderleith, 31 July 1940, at BCC.001.001.0300.

2000 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0012.

2001 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0012.

2002 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 31, at WIT.001.001.3456.

2003 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0012.

2004 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0012.

2005 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0013.

that this must be a nice place.”²⁰⁰⁶ Roddy was seven years old upon arrival.

“It is just luck of the draw that torpedoes didn’t hit the freighter.”

Life at Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School, Canada (1941-1951)

3.80 When the children first arrived at the Farm School they “went to hospital and were given a medical inspection. If everything was ok you were assigned to a cottage.”²⁰⁰⁷ Roddy was in hospital for a month before being assigned to a cottage, though “there was nothing written down as to why.”²⁰⁰⁸ Roddy suspected that he had been malnourished. Children had their heads shaved on arrival, which upset many of the girls.²⁰⁰⁹

3.81 At Fairbridge, “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.”²⁰¹⁰ When Roddy was allowed to ring the bell, he “absolutely loved it. It was like they had given me some power.”²⁰¹¹

3.82 Breakfast was served in the main hall and was always “a bowl of porridge which sometimes, quite often, had little worms in it.”²⁰¹² Senior boys “would use their spoons to flick the maggots at the younger boys.”²⁰¹³ The children were given a piece of bread and jam and some milk at breakfast. While they were eating their maggot-ridden porridge out of tin bowls, “the house mother would be at the same table and she would have eggs, bacon, toast and tea” off china crockery.²⁰¹⁴ Lunch was served in the main hall, and dinner was in the cottages. The food at Fairbridge had to be eaten before leaving the table.²⁰¹⁵ Roddy hated parsnips; he lined his pockets with tissue and hid parsnips there so he could avoid eating them. He was never caught.²⁰¹⁶ The boys had cold baths and showers all year round, with two boys to a tub at bath-time.²⁰¹⁷

“...a bowl of porridge which sometimes, quite often, had little worms in it.”

3.83 Roddy recalled that “Christmas was a good time...We got snow so we could go tobogganing [on] an old garbage can lid going down slopes.”²⁰¹⁸ At Christmas, the children were given a tangerine or an orange, as well as three or four other items

2006 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0017.

2007 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0017.

2008 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0017.

2009 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0017.

2010 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0027.

2011 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0027.

2012 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2013 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 69, at WIT.001.001.3464.

2014 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0027.

2015 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2016 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2017 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2018 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0029.

“...we could go tobogganing [on] an old garbage can lid going down slopes.”

in a sock that they each hung at the end of their bed. There was also “a special meal at Christmas.”²⁰¹⁹ Roddy’s cohort were also assigned ‘godfathers,’ and “the children would go away for a week at Christmas to see their godfathers.”²⁰²⁰ Birthdays were less of an event than Christmas; “they made a little cake for you” but “I don’t recall ever getting a present on my birthday.”²⁰²¹

3.84 The children went to a day school which operated under the authority of the British Columbian government.²⁰²² Some teachers were good, but “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.”²⁰²³ In 1949, Fairbridge was preparing to close down, and Roddy and the remaining children there were transferred to the local school at Duncan. Roddy recalled one particular teacher there who “insisted that [he] get up and read a verse from Robert Burns” because he was Scottish.²⁰²⁴ This experience “opened my heart to Robert Burns for a lifetime.”²⁰²⁵



Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School, day school, 1937.
Source: [Cowichan Valley Museum & Archives](#).

3.85 Some teachers within Fairbridge—and Jock Gillat in particular—were “known... for going above and beyond the normal punishment.”²⁰²⁶ On one occasion, one of Roddy’s classmates, [Hugh Taylor](#), arrived at school with his hands bleeding from being strapped by his cottage mother.²⁰²⁷ As Hugh also explained in his evidence to the Inquiry, when the teacher took him to see Jock Gillat, he looked at the boy’s hands “and said, ‘Well very likely he deserved it.’”²⁰²⁸

...he looked at the boy’s hands “and said, ‘Well very likely he deserved it.’”

2019 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 106, at WIT.001.001.3471.

2020 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 54, at WIT.001.001.3461.

2021 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 108, at WIT.001.001.3472.

2022 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 37, at WIT.001.001.3457.

2023 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2024 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2025 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2026 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0028.

2027 [Hugh Taylor](#) provided evidence to SCAI, and his account is included above.

2028 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0020.

“...she’d say, ‘You filthy little guttersnipe. You are going to clean these steps again.’”

3.86 The cottage mother in Roddy’s first cottage “was very gentle and kind” and doted on him.²⁰²⁹ This led to him being called a “mummy’s pet” by the older children.²⁰³⁰ Roddy wished that his older brother “was there to kick [the bullies] out of the way.”²⁰³¹ He was upset that “[his sister] was gone.”²⁰³²

3.87 By 1943, Roddy was in ‘S’ cottage (Strathcona) which housed youngsters aged seven alongside seniors of 15 and 16, “not a very good concept.”²⁰³³ Several other children from Middlemore were in this cottage. The cottage mother there, Mrs Grieve, “turned my life and some of my mates’ into a living hell.”²⁰³⁴ Mrs Grieve ran her cottage like a barracks.²⁰³⁵ She issued regular punishments. She belted children “on [their] bare back”, and locked children in the basement.²⁰³⁶ She slapped children on their heads.²⁰³⁷ Roddy developed hearing problems at Fairbridge. He had ruptured eardrums later in life and believed them to be attributable to the blows on the head he had received from Mrs Grieve.²⁰³⁸ When Mrs Grieve 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.’”²⁰³⁹ Other children received the same treatment. Her punishment “was burned in your mind forever”.²⁰⁴⁰ Some punishments followed Mrs Grieve’s weekly inspection, during which children would line up to have their hands, nails, and clothing inspected. If they did not come up to her standard, “that was a slap on the head or some other punishment later.”²⁰⁴¹ Knowing Roddy loved swimming in the river in the summer, Mrs Grieve gave him chores that kept him in and around the cottage at that time of year, so he could not go swimming.²⁰⁴² If a chore was not completed to her satisfaction, “she’d say, ‘You filthy little guttersnipe. You are going to clean these steps again.’”²⁰⁴³

“I’d be pleading with her like any child would be doing, ‘Please stop mum.’”

3.88 If Mrs Grieve felt that a misdemeanour had been committed by a child during the day, she would raise the issue at dinner time and ask the guilty party to confess. When

2029 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 42, at WIT.001.001.3458.

2030 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 42, at WIT.001.001.3458.

2031 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0018.

2032 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0018.

2033 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0015.

2034 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0019.

2035 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0019.

2036 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0019-0020.

2037 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0019.

2038 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0019.

2039 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0020.

2040 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0020.

2041 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0024.

2042 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0022.

2043 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0019.

silence ensued, she dismissed the older boys as innocent, and turned her attention to the younger boys. Roddy recalled that “[i]t got to the point that we would [metaphorically] try and draw at straws [and] take turns” to confess.²⁰⁴⁴ On one occasion when it was Roddy’s ‘turn’, he was accused of stealing a tin of sardines. When asked what he had done with the empty can, he told Mrs Grieve that he had thrown it out on the playground, even though he had not actually taken it. It was a dark night in the winter and “she sent me out to find that can...She kept me out there in the cold and finally called me in and gave me a whipping.”²⁰⁴⁵ Some of her reports about Roddy “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.”²⁰⁴⁶

3.89 Children were not allowed to go to the bathroom at night-time in Mrs Grieve’s cottage so some of them inevitably wet the bed. One boy “was put on top of the table with this wet sheet wrapped around his body.”²⁰⁴⁷ Roddy remembered, as [Hugh Taylor](#) stated in his evidence, that although Hugh had wet the bed as long as Mrs Grieve was in charge of his cottage, he stopped wetting the bed the day she left.²⁰⁴⁸

3.90 Roddy’s only respite from Mrs Grieve and the bullies was the chapel, which “became a kind of haven for me...But it was a bit of a paradox because...we were being taught that Jesus loves us and I was praying with all my heart that God would do something about Mrs Grieves [sic] and the bullies and yet Sunday after Sunday it was the same”.²⁰⁴⁹ Roddy’s experiences “didn’t match what religion talked about. I would wonder what kind of God I was praying to.”²⁰⁵⁰

“I would wonder what kind of God I was praying to.”

3.91 Eventually, Roddy and three others were transferred to ‘J’ cottage, which was run by Mrs Broadhurst. This was a better experience, partly because Roddy was older.²⁰⁵¹ Although Mrs Broadhurst “was not physically as bad as Grieves [sic]...I found myself being not physically but constantly criticised, put down”.²⁰⁵² For instance, Roddy joined the Scouts, and was promoted to scout leader, and his “confidence was building up,” but it took a blow when Mrs Broadhurst “was very sarcastic about it.”²⁰⁵³ Roddy was also the drum major of the band, and was on the boxing team; “you did everything you could to get involved in [extra-curricular activities] because that meant you could get away.”²⁰⁵⁴

2044 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0023.

2045 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0023-0024.

2046 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0024.

2047 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0022.

2048 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0022.

2049 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0019.

2050 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 111, at WIT.001.001.3472.

2051 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0023.

2052 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0023.

2053 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0024.

2054 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0029; [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 100, at WIT.001.001.3470.

3.92 Roddy was bullied by the other boys at Fairbridge: “you got it both ways, almost daily, either punishments from the cottage mother or heckling or severe bullying.”²⁰⁵⁵ As Roddy was on the boxing team, the bullies would often make him and his friend fight each other.²⁰⁵⁶ At the dinner table the bullies “would be banging you so you would do something and then the cottage mother would...use her serving spoon to whack your hand or elbow...it was just a case of making your life miserable.”²⁰⁵⁷ Once, while lining up for their weekly inspection at Mrs Grieve’s cottage, a bully told Roddy to run to Mount Baldy, a nearby mountain. Roddy “knew I was going to get punished either way so I started on his command and started running” before being brought back by another boy and, inevitably, punished by Mrs Grieve.²⁰⁵⁸ One of the bullies’ favourite tricks was to “hoist me up and tell me to grab the [roof] 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”.²⁰⁵⁹ The hospital appeared a better option to Roddy than being in the cottage and he “did everything I could to get into the hospital. I would stand under draining gutters hoping I’d get pneumonia.”²⁰⁶⁰ However, when Roddy

“stepped on a rusty nail” he “didn’t report it to the house mother because I would have been in big trouble.”²⁰⁶¹ After passing out in church from the ensuing infection, he was sent to hospital: “It was great being in hospital.”²⁰⁶²

“...it was just a case of making your life miserable.”

3.93 Another boy, who was one of the bullies, tried to sexually abuse Roddy. When Roddy was eight or nine years old, the boy went into a room with Roddy. The boy dropped his trousers and “all I heard was get down on your knees and I was mortified.”²⁰⁶³ Another boy came into the room and, on seeing this other boy, “he immediately pulled his pants up and I was rescued.”²⁰⁶⁴ Other boys reportedly had similar experiences, not only from peers but from staff. Mr Rodgers, the duties masters mentioned by [Hugh Taylor](#), left shortly before Roddy arrived: he “was a sexual deviant and he was caught at it and he was sent to jail.”²⁰⁶⁵ He served a short term, was released and then was re-hired in his old job at Fairbridge. One of Roddy’s close friends “had a terrible experience with him.”²⁰⁶⁶

2055 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0022.

2056 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0022.

2057 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0024.

2058 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0021.

2059 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0025.

2060 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 95, at WIT.001.001.3469.

2061 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 96, at WIT.001.001.3470.

2062 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 96, at WIT.001.001.3470.

2063 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0025.

2064 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0025.

2065 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0026.

2066 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0027.

“...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.’”

3.94 Roddy explained that abuse was not reported. Indeed, Mrs Grieve’s cottage was often chosen as the representative cottage to be visited by dignitaries who came to Fairbridge “[b]ecause 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.’”²⁰⁶⁷

3.95 Roddy did not believe that Mrs Grieve “could ever have overlooked” the bullying that occurred in her cottage.²⁰⁶⁸ Even when Isobel Harvey’s 1944 report described many elements of Fairbridge as “something out of a Charles Dickens orphanage...they gave [Mrs Grieve] a higher rating.”²⁰⁶⁹

3.96 Roddy did not remember any inspectors visiting Fairbridge.²⁰⁷⁰

3.97 Roddy corresponded with his father, and Fairbridge sent reports to his father. Later reports were redacted before they were sent home.²⁰⁷¹ Roddy’s father would “say that he was disappointed with my

reports.”²⁰⁷² Roddy received one letter from his brother and sister, but never heard from his mother.²⁰⁷³

3.98 Roddy joined the cadets during his time at Fairbridge, and aged 17 decided to join the army. In 1950-51, Fairbridge was closing down, and other children were fostered out or sent into farm work. Roddy had found his niche in leadership, and was already in the reserve of the Canadian Scottish Regiment.²⁰⁷⁴ He “wanted to get out of Fairbridge as soon as possible.”²⁰⁷⁵ The recruitment officer advised him to join the medical corps: “He was the first person to tell me that I was intelligent.”²⁰⁷⁶ Roddy left Fairbridge in 1951. He joined the army, and there he “found more feeling of home” than in the cottages.²⁰⁷⁷

3.99 In the 1960s, Roddy visited Vancouver Island with his wife. They visited Roddy’s final cottage mother, Mrs Bullcock. She had been kind to Roddy. She said “that the severe punishments we received weren’t right. She said that she had eventually reported it but

2067 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0020.

2068 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0025.

2069 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0031. Harvey stated that some practices at Fairbridge were “reminiscent of an orphanage of the last century”: Prince’s Trust, ‘Report on study made of Fairbridge Farm School during the month of August 1944’, by Isobel Harvey, at PRT.001.001.2722. For further discussion of the Harvey Report see Volume 2 and Constantine *et al.*, Chapter 24.

2070 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 123, at WIT.001.001.3475.

2071 Half-yearly reports for Roderick Mackay, March and September 1948, at PRT.001.008.0237-0238.

2072 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 126, at WIT.001.001.3476.

2073 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 126, at WIT.001.001.3476.

2074 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0036.

2075 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 131, at WIT.001.001.3477.

2076 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0036. The Principal’s Report of 8 May 1952 notes that Roddy enlisted in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps in September 1951: at PRT.001.008.0220.

2077 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0033.

had stopped making reports as no one was doing anything about it.”²⁰⁷⁸

“...she had eventually reported it but had stopped making reports as no one was doing anything about it.”

Life after care

3.100 After leaving Fairbridge, “[t]here was no follow-up...to find out how we were getting on.”²⁰⁷⁹ Those who left before Roddy “also had to send half of their pay cheque to Fairbridge and they never saw the money again.”²⁰⁸⁰

3.101 Roddy’s time in the medical corps “is the part of my life that I have always kind of treasured.”²⁰⁸¹ Despite hoping he would be sent to Europe so that he could have “hopped over to Scotland and find what was there of my family,” he was sent to Korea.²⁰⁸² There, “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.”²⁰⁸³ While serving there, “a traumatic incident happened to me and I broke down afterward. I was suicidal. I was transferred out of Korea and was under psychiatric care. The doctor went over things with me and I told him only a little bit about Fairbridge. I recovered and went back to active duty.”²⁰⁸⁴

3.102 While on leave from Korea, Roddy was able to return to Scotland. When he wrote to his father telling him he was going to be in Scotland and wanted to meet him, his father “wrote and said well this is a bad time to come.”²⁰⁸⁵ Roddy went anyway. At first, Roddy’s father “was pretty cool.”²⁰⁸⁶ Roddy met his father’s wife, whom he had married while Roddy was in Middlemore in the early 1940s. While Roddy found her to be “a lovely woman, very kind,” he felt his father did not want to engage with the children from his first marriage.²⁰⁸⁷ Later he discovered that his father’s wife had not known that he had five children from a previous marriage.²⁰⁸⁸

3.103 This triggered a darker period of Roddy’s life. He left the army around 1954. He spent time in Scotland living with his father and then with his aunt. He went back to Vancouver in about 1955.²⁰⁸⁹ He lost contact with his father and aunt. He experienced “rough years” and depression: “This was to do with things that were happening in my life at the time and also my past childhood. I felt very lonely and couldn’t find work. It was just too much. Also, when I found my father, it didn’t feel that he was a true father. I had feelings of worthlessness. I was lucky. I had two friends who helped me not go over the edge.”²⁰⁹⁰

2078 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 58, at WIT.001.001.3462.

2079 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 128, at WIT.001.001.3476.

2080 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 128, at WIT.001.001.3476.

2081 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0036.

2082 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0036-0037.

2083 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0037.

2084 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 141, at WIT.001.001.3479.

2085 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0038.

2086 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0038.

2087 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0038.

2088 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 4, at WIT.001.001.3451.

2089 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0040.

2090 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 142, at WIT.001.001.3479-3480.

“I had feelings of worthlessness. I was lucky. I had two friends who helped me not go over the edge.”

3.104 Roddy’s doctor believed that this difficult period was a result of his experiences at Fairbridge.²⁰⁹¹

3.105 In 1964, Roddy and his wife had a daughter.²⁰⁹² Roddy tried to contact his father via the Fairbridge Society, having lost touch with him after returning to Canada, but it is unclear whether Roddy’s message reached him.²⁰⁹³ Roddy remarried in the mid-1980s, and described his wife as “the biggest healer that I’ve ever come across.”²⁰⁹⁴

3.106 In the early 1970s Roddy saw on the news that a man was going from Florida—where Roddy was working at the time—to Edinburgh on an agricultural grant. Although Roddy did not know the man, he asked him to help find his aunt. The search was successful. Roddy’s aunt and uncle were found and, in turn, Roddy’s brother Rob, who had been looking for Roddy in Scotland. Roddy met his brother in 1971. When they met, Rob asked Roddy if Alex and William had migrated with him. Roddy asked “Who is Alex and William?” and Rob responded: “Your younger brothers.”²⁰⁹⁵ Roddy did not know until 1971, when he was 37 years old, that he had two younger brothers. He spent the next 30 years looking for them and finally, with the support of the CMT, all

the siblings reunited in 2001.²⁰⁹⁶ During his search, he had requested help from Lady Dodds-Parker of the Fairbridge Society, the Royal Navy, and Alex Salmond, then First Minister of Scotland. He received no help from anyone until approaching the CMT.²⁰⁹⁷ Had the Fairbridge Society “told me of the existence of the records, I could have traced my family...much earlier.”²⁰⁹⁸ Instead, “the family relationship that we could have had was taken from us...You can’t replace that. Nobody can.”²⁰⁹⁹

3.107 Roddy went on to act as a spokesperson for the CMT for child migrants who had been sent to Canada. He observed that “[t]here were 120,000 children sent over to Canada compared to 30,000 children sent to Australia. We feel left behind and completely out of the picture.”²¹⁰⁰ Besides working with the CMT, Roddy wrote a memoir, appeared on podcasts, and featured in news articles, in his effort to ensure the extent of child migration to Canada was recognised. Roddy died in January 2021.

“...the family relationship that we could have had was taken from us...You can’t replace that. Nobody can.”

2091 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0037.

2092 Letter from Roderick Mackay to Fairbridge Society, 28 January 1965, at PRT.001.002.4043.

2093 Letter from the Director of the Fairbridge Society to Robert Mackay, 26 March 1965, at PRT.001.002.4028.

2094 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0038.

2095 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0007.

2096 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0041.

2097 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0035.

2098 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 132, at WIT.001.001.3477.

2099 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0035.

2100 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 152, at WIT.001.001.3481.

“I’d never heard of Australia before and had no idea what [that] involved.”

“Gregs”

Life in the UK

3.108 “Gregs” was born in 1944, the youngest of two brothers. His father “had been in the army” and “Gregs” had no recollection of ever meeting him.²¹⁰¹ His mother worked “all the time because in those days there was no support for a woman on her own with two children,” and so “my brother virtually brought me up.”²¹⁰²

3.109 By 1951, “Gregs” mother had started a new relationship and his father started divorce proceedings. In October 1952, the Angus branch of the Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSSPCC) received a “complaint alleging neglect” of “Gregs”.²¹⁰³ “Gregs” had begun “to soil himself habitually” by this time, a condition attributed to his mother’s full-time job, her preoccupation with a new baby, and “adverse home circumstances.”²¹⁰⁴ The RSSPCC arranged for “Gregs” to receive treatment at the Dundee Child Guidance Clinic but had “difficulty in getting the mother’s full co-operation”.²¹⁰⁵

Migration

3.110 The RSSPCC made enquiries with the Fairbridge Society about the possibility of “Gregs” being migrated “to Australia or Canada”.²¹⁰⁶ By May 1955, the local RSSPCC inspector had reported “that the mother gave her consent willingly and the boy is keen to go.”²¹⁰⁷ “Gregs” LEM3 form was signed by John Petrie of the RSSPCC on 25 April 1955. It recorded that “Gregs” was “living with his mother and stepfather but is being neglected. Stepfather unreliable type and mother feckless.”²¹⁰⁸ His mother’s typed ‘signature’ also appears on this document and, on 29 April 1955, she hand-signed the Fairbridge Society consent form.²¹⁰⁹ Several letters of July 1955 relating to whether the father’s consent would also be required concluded that, with regard to custody, “the onus would lie on the father who would have to prove to the satisfaction of the Court that [migration] was not in the child’s best interests”.²¹¹⁰

“...the mother gave her consent willingly and the boy is keen to go.”

2101 [Written statement of “Gregs”](#), paragraph 2, at WIT.001.002.4784.

2102 [Written statement of “Gregs”](#), paragraph 5, at WIT.001.002.4785.

2103 RSSPCC Report on “Gregs”, at PRT.001.002.0712.

2104 RSSPCC Report on “Gregs”, at PRT.001.002.0712.

2105 RSSPCC Report on “Gregs”, at PRT.001.002.0712.

2106 Letter from C.A. Cumming Forsyth to W.R. Vaughan, 21 March 1955, at PRT.001.002.0704.

2107 Letter from C.A. Cumming Forsyth to W.R. Vaughan, 3 May 1955, at PRT.001.002.0690.

2108 LEM3 form for “Gregs”, at PRT.001.002.0707.

2109 LEM3 form for “Gregs”, at PRT.001.002.0707; Fairbridge Society Parent’s Consent Form, 29 April 1955, at PRT.001.002.0713.

2110 Letter from C.A. Cumming Forsyth to W.R. Vaughan, 7 July 1955, at PRT.001.002.0691.

3.111 “Gregs” could “remember my mother asking me if I wanted to go to Australia. I’d never heard of Australia before and had no idea what [that] involved. I have since found out from my mum’s sisters...that they had offered to look after me instead of me going, but that never happened.”²¹¹¹ He did not recall having any health checks before leaving Scotland, but his records include a medical examination dated June 1955, suggesting that this did happen.²¹¹²

3.112 In September 1955, “Gregs” was sent to Fairbridge’s pre-migration institution at Knockhalt, Kent.²¹¹³ Knockhalt was “a large stately home”, and “Gregs” spent four weeks there, “although I always thought it was longer than that.”²¹¹⁴ During his time there, he and the other children were provided with inappropriate clothing for their migration: “They dressed us in heavyweight clothes more suitable for an English climate.”²¹¹⁵

3.113 “Gregs” and 12 to 14 other children from Knockhalt sailed from Tilbury Docks on the RMS Otranto in early October 1955.²¹¹⁶ “Gregs” thought that he “was the only Scot.”²¹¹⁷ During the journey, various excursions were arranged when the ship docked at ports en route.

3.114 “Gregs” arrived at Fremantle on 31 October, 1955. He was aged 11.²¹¹⁸

Life at Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra (1955-1961)

3.115 When the ship arrived at Fremantle, the children were sent to Fairbridge at Pinjarra or Molong. “Gregs” went to Pinjarra.²¹¹⁹ The vice-principal of Pinjarra, Tom Brayne, collected those bound for Pinjarra and accompanied the party the 100 miles to the Farm School.²¹²⁰

3.116 Pinjarra comprised about 3,500 acres of land on which “a village had been built that included a primary school, a church and a number of other buildings, which included the cottages where all the kids stayed.”²¹²¹ The farm “was well-established.”²¹²² There were “between 250 and 350 children” there and cottages “had, on average, about 12 kids in each of them. Each cottage had a small garden around it. The kids in each cottage were single sex and ranged in ages from about 3 years old up to 16.”²¹²³

3.117 When “Gregs” arrived, the Principal was Alex Ball. Malcolm Allan took over later. Other staff included “two old ladies who worked in the office, staff in the dining room, teachers, some of whom lived on site, farm staff, the priest and a number of cottage mothers.”²¹²⁴ Teachers were supplied

2111 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.106.

2112 Medical examination form for “Gregs”, at PRT.001.002.0705.

2113 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.107. See also Letter from L. Coulson to W.R. Vaughan, 8 September 1955, at PRT.001.002.0676.

2114 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.107.

2115 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.107.

2116 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.108.

2117 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.109.

2118 [Written statement of “Gregs”](#), paragraph 8, at WIT.001.002.4784.

2119 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.110.

2120 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.110.

2121 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.111.

2122 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.111.

2123 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.112.

2124 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.111.

“Life as a child at Fairbridge was impersonal”.

by the education department of Western Australia. The other staff were employed by Fairbridge.²¹²⁵ The cottage mothers “had absolutely no training or qualifications.”²¹²⁶

Cottage mothers “had absolutely no training or qualifications.”

3.118 “Gregs” spent the first few days in the hospital at Fairbridge because his nose was bleeding from a fight on the ship.²¹²⁷ Eventually, he was allocated to Lawley Cottage, which was run by Mrs Schokoff who “was a battle-axe.”²¹²⁸ A widow, Mrs Schokoff lived in her own quarters in the cottage with her son, who “never mixed with any of us.”²¹²⁹ At first, Mrs Schokoff “insisted I call her ‘mum’ as the other kids did. Having just recently left my mother in Scotland, I refused and so I got off to a bad start. I was punished for it. Eventually it was decided that we should call the cottage mothers ‘auntie’.”²¹³⁰

3.119 “Gregs” explained that “[l]ife as a child at Fairbridge was impersonal”.²¹³¹ Regardless of age, you had to make your bed as soon

as you got up early in the morning.²¹³² “Everybody then went to a cold shower”, during which all 12 children in the cottage “would be in together while the cottage mother watched, making sure everyone had a shower.”²¹³³ “Gregs” did not recall ever having a toothbrush or cleaning his teeth.²¹³⁴

3.120 After showering and dressing, the children had various tasks to do, depending on age. After breakfast the children went to school. After school, there were extra duties to do.²¹³⁵ Tasks included having to chop wood, make breakfast, and clean the bath and the showers.²¹³⁶ Later in the day, “some kids would have to wash and dry all the [dinner] dishes. We also had to maintain the garden, which included mowing the lawn and weeding.”²¹³⁷ Before bed, the boys had a bath, for which “we had to bucket hot water in from outside to fill the bath and then everybody had to bathe in the same water,” with the youngest children bathing first.²¹³⁸

“...everybody had to bathe in the same water”.

2125 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.112.

2126 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.112.

2127 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.114.

2128 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.113.

2129 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.113.

2130 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.114. “Watto”, who was also at Fairbridge, also drew attention to the problematic practice of calling cottage mothers ‘auntie’, as they were not relatives and were instead paid to care for the children.

2131 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.113-114.

2132 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.115.

2133 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.115.

2134 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.115.

2135 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.115.

2136 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.123.

2137 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.123.

2138 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.115.



Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, child migrant tilling with rotary hoe, 1954. Photograph from Western Australia Government photographer collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

3.121 The children ate breakfast in the cottage every day. They had their evening meal there on a Saturday and all meals on a Sunday. The rest of the meals were taken in the "main dining room in a separate building."²¹³⁹ Meals were "very strict and regimented. We sat at bench seats with our feet underneath and we weren't allowed to talk at the table...If you didn't eat your food it would be sitting waiting for you at the next meal."²¹⁴⁰ After "being given the job of killing the chickens", "Gregs" "wouldn't eat chicken for years because...when you had that job you ended up crawling with fleas and so I couldn't touch it."²¹⁴¹

3.122 Although in the UK "Gregs" was given clothes to take to Australia, "we never saw them again" after arriving at Pinjarra.²¹⁴² Instead, "we were given two T-shirts and two pairs of black shorts every Christmas that had to do us the whole year. We never got underpants until we were older. We also had Sunday clothes, which in winter was a pair of corduroy trousers and a collared shirt, although again no shoes. When we were old enough to go to high school we had a uniform to wear and that was the only time we were given shoes."²¹⁴³

2139 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.115.

2140 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.116.

2141 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.125.

2142 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.116.

2143 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.117.

3.123 Other than at high school, “all year round we never wore shoes...I had to learn to walk on the gravel tracks in my bare feet. When the weather was starting to warm up and the ground was hot, all I could do was hobble from shade to shade. You could always tell the new kids because they would be doing the same and because they would also be covered in mosquito bites.”²¹⁴⁴

“...all year round we never wore shoes”.

3.124 It was common for new arrivals to suffer “bruising to their feet from walking barefoot.”²¹⁴⁵ Although they were given a uniform when they went to high school, “most of the kids [there] didn’t wear a uniform, only the Fairbridge kids did. As a result, we stood out and that encouraged an us-and-them situation.”²¹⁴⁶ The Fairbridge children generally stuck together against this: “if someone picked on one Fairbridge kid, they picked on the lot.”²¹⁴⁷

3.125 “Gregs” went to that school for the last three years of his education, between 1958 and 1960.²¹⁴⁸ While at the primary school “much of what we were taught...was on Australian history”, the high school was initially opened to train children “to work on the land.”²¹⁴⁹ By the time “Gregs” joined, it

had opened “a commercial branch, to train children for other occupations”, and this was the route “Gregs” took, although he still did some farm work during school holidays.²¹⁵⁰

3.126 “Gregs” had always wanted to become a schoolteacher, a fact that his teachers in Scotland and even the RSSPCC knew. However, “[w]hen I came to Fairbridge, my education finished after the third year of high school when I was 16.”²¹⁵¹ This was not because “Gregs” was not academically capable. Rather, it was a matter of “Gregs” not being offered the opportunity to proceed to further education because, as the Principal of Pinjarra explained, “although we had three boys pass their Junior Certificate in seven subjects there is only one boy who would justify the expense of taking on to his Leaving Certificate.”²¹⁵² “Gregs” believed that “it probably looked like I wasn’t really trying and therefore I was not chosen to go on.”²¹⁵³ He added that “[t]o finance only one child to go beyond high school was just wrong,” and it would be difficult to disagree with him. For “Gregs”, that decision had a lifelong impact.²¹⁵⁴

“To finance only one child to go beyond high school was just wrong”.

2144 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.116-117. “Watto” described being bitten by mosquitoes so severely that the bites got infected and required extensive medical attention.

2145 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.122.

2146 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.118.

2147 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.118.

2148 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.118.

2149 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.118.

2150 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.118.

2151 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.119.

2152 Letter from H.R.M Allan to W.R. Vaughan, 1 February 1961, at PRT.001.002.0633.

2153 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.119-120.

2154 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.120.

“I was always torn between whether to please the cottage mother or the eldest boys; whichever one you upset would give you a hiding.”

3.127 In free time, children were mostly outside. At weekends sport was organised and “[w]e often played against some of the other institutions like Clontarf and Bindoon and some of the local teams... Despite the fact that most of the hockey field was gravel...[w]e played in our bare feet.”²¹⁵⁵ Children were sometimes taken to the cinema and swimming.²¹⁵⁶ Events like going to the cinema were paid for out of the children’s pocket money: this small amount of money was split between the movies, church donation, and the bank, leaving five pence to “be spent in the store on sweets.”²¹⁵⁷ Every child at Pinjarra had to attend the same church regardless of their background. “The priest at Fairbridge was called Peter Hodge and he was very popular with the kids.”²¹⁵⁸ “Gregs” explained that there came a time, however, when “Hodge was given 24 hours to leave. I don’t know the reason why, although I have since heard stories that he had been sexually abusing both boys and girls...I never had a problem with him at all.”²¹⁵⁹

3.128 There were not many trips out, because the whole school shared one bus. During school holidays, “the older boys went to stay with families outside Fairbridge

for a week.”²¹⁶⁰ At Christmas every year, the children “used to go down to Mandurah.”²¹⁶¹ One year, “some of the elder kids led me down the path of breaking into cars and stealing money while we were at Mandurah... If I hadn’t done it, I knew I would have got a beating.”²¹⁶² This is because “the older boys controlled the younger ones and one of the biggest problems was deciding who to make happy. I was always torn between whether to please the cottage mother or the eldest boys; whichever one you upset would give you a hiding.”²¹⁶³

3.129 As predicted, “Gregs” got a beating regardless after he was caught stealing at Mandurah: “the principal, Malcolm Allan, gave me a public thrashing in the dining room in front of the whole farm. I was made to bend over a table and hit across the backside with a cane.”²¹⁶⁴ Such a beating “probably happened to me about three times.”²¹⁶⁵

3.130 “Gregs” was abused by his cottage mother. Mrs Schokoff used “a length of garden hosepipe” to hit children “wherever she could reach. I was hit with it on the legs, the backside, the head, it didn’t matter where. Quite often she would have hold of

2155 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.120-121.

2156 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.121.

2157 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.124.

2158 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.123.

2159 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.123 and p.131.

2160 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.122.

2161 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.121.

2162 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.121-122.

2163 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.128.

2164 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.130.

2165 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.130.

my hair as I was struggling to get away from her hitting me.”²¹⁶⁶ Such beltings occurred regularly.²¹⁶⁷ “Gregs” suffered “welts and bruises” from these beatings.²¹⁶⁸

3.131 On one occasion, “Gregs” ran away following an argument with Mrs Schokoff. He saw her heading towards him with the hosepipe to beat him, and he “took off.”²¹⁶⁹ To “Gregs” great surprise, he was not punished on his return, although “sometimes the punishment for running away was a public thrashing from the principal.”²¹⁷⁰

3.132 Mrs Schokoff emotionally abused “Gregs”. She made comments “such as my mother didn’t want me and that was why I was there.”²¹⁷¹ He heard her telling children “that their parents were dead only for them to find out later in life that they were in fact still alive.”²¹⁷²

“[Mrs Schokoff] made comments such as my mother didn’t want me and that was why I was there.”

3.133 Boys who wet the bed received “a slap around the head or something similar” from Mrs Schokoff and were humiliated

by having “to strip our beds in front of everybody, drag our mattresses out onto the veranda to dry, and then wash our sheets.”²¹⁷³

3.134 “Gregs” was abused by an older boy in his cottage. This boy “was an aggressive and violent bully and a persistent sexual abuser [who] abused both myself and a couple of the other kids...over a period of at least a year.”²¹⁷⁴ When “Gregs” was asleep, he would sometimes grind his teeth and the other boy would “come up and punch me in the face”.²¹⁷⁵

3.135 This boy sexually abused “Gregs”. This abuse happened when “Gregs” was around 13 years old. “Gregs” described how it was “excruciating and afterwards I would lay there, sobbing.”²¹⁷⁶ He said that “[o]ther boys must have known what was going on but it was never spoken of.”²¹⁷⁷

3.136 The older boy did “other perverted things as well, stooping even to bestiality” which he would force “Gregs” to witness.²¹⁷⁸ He often abused “Gregs” “after dark or straight after dinner, during bath time.”²¹⁷⁹ The older boy forced “Gregs” to “gratify him orally”.²¹⁸⁰ “Gregs” witnessed the boy also forcing other boys to perform oral sex on him. “Gregs” and the other boys “were all frozen in fear; he was a big boy and very

2166 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.129.

2167 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.129.

2168 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.131.

2169 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.128.

2170 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.128.

2171 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.130.

2172 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.130.

2173 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.128.

2174 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.131.

2175 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.131.

2176 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Gregs”, at WIT.003.001.2670; [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.131.

2177 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Gregs”, at WIT.003.001.2670.

2178 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Gregs”, at WIT.003.001.2670.

2179 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.133.

2180 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Gregs”, at WIT.003.001.2670.

“...Fairbridge was like a prison where all correspondence is vetted when it comes in or before it goes out.”

violent.”²¹⁸¹ “Gregs” would very rarely speak with the other boys about what this older boy was doing to him and them because “if he found out that I’d said anything to anybody, I would be in for it.”²¹⁸² “Gregs” found the abuse by this older boy “painful, degrading”, and destructive of his childhood.²¹⁸³

“...if he found out that I’d said anything to anybody, I would be in for it.”

3.137 Around 1959, “Gregs” went to the nursing sister “with some visible signs of having been beaten by the older boy.”²¹⁸⁴ The housemaster came to see him and asked what had happened and “I think that was the only time any of the staff had asked me about anything”, despite the fact that Mrs Schokoff “must have been aware of at least some of the abuse the older boy...subjected me to.”²¹⁸⁵ When he told the housemaster about what was happening, the older boy was transferred out of the cottage. To “Gregs” knowledge “nothing more was ever done about it. I was certainly not offered any help or counselling.”²¹⁸⁶

3.138 “Gregs” was not aware of there ever being any inspections at Fairbridge. He recalled some visitors, but the children were “virtually hidden from them and had no interaction with them.”²¹⁸⁷

3.139 Every Saturday children had to sit down and write a letter to their families. “Gregs” described that the letters were “obviously vetted because I wrote about some of the things that had happened to me in those letters to my mother [but] there’s no reference to that in any of the paperwork I received [as an adult]. It’s almost like Fairbridge was like a prison where all correspondence is vetted when it comes in or before it goes out.”²¹⁸⁸

3.140 Pinjarra sent half-yearly reports back to the Fairbridge Society in the UK, who in turn passed the reports to the RSSPCC office, which had originally nominated “Gregs” for migration. Some reports “indicate that I was going off the rails. Looking back as an adult, I wonder how nobody picked this up and delved into it. There were things that happened during that time that would have been obvious to a blind man and yet nobody stopped to question what was going on.”²¹⁸⁹

“There were things that happened...that would have been obvious to a blind man and yet nobody stopped to question what was going on.”

2181 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Gregs”, at WIT.003.001.2670.

2182 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.134.

2183 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Gregs”, at WIT.003.001.2670.

2184 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.131.

2185 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.131-132.

2186 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.132.

2187 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.127 and p.126.

2188 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.140.

2189 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.139.

3.141 "Gregs" explained that "there was no emotional care or support whatsoever", from inside the home or from outside.²¹⁹⁰

Life after care

3.142 "Gregs" left Fairbridge in 1961, when he was 16 years old. He was only told that he would not be proceeding to further education "about a week before" he left. Until then he had "always had the dream of being a schoolteacher. When I was told that they had got me a job with a company in Perth, I was just wiped out."²¹⁹¹ Fairbridge arranged for "Gregs" to stay with a family he did not know in Bayswater, from where he commuted to Perth for work with little support or guidance. "Gregs" had "no recollection of anyone from Fairbridge asking me how I was doing."²¹⁹²

3.143 For "Gregs", "it was a pretty horrific time and unfortunately I didn't like the city and I couldn't settle down."²¹⁹³ After about two years working as a clerk in Perth, he moved to a farm where he stayed until he was 21. Until that age, he "had to send half of the money I earned back to Fairbridge."²¹⁹⁴ This money was intended for a Trust Fund in "Gregs'" name held by Fairbridge. In addition to his wages, the money in that account should have included the small wages he earned doing holiday and weekend jobs at Pinjarra before he left; the pocket money that he banked each week; and money sent

to him by benefactors or 'godparents,' of which he had two. At age 21, "Gregs" was given a sum of just over £56. When "Gregs" calculated "how much money [should have been in the account], the sums don't add up...I would think I should have been given a lot more."²¹⁹⁵

3.144 After four or five years at the farm, "Gregs" moved back to the city where he worked in various jobs. He met his wife and they had two sons who he brought up himself after his wife "disappeared".²¹⁹⁶

3.145 In the early 1980s, "Gregs'" older brother phoned him "out of the blue" to let him know that their mother had passed away.²¹⁹⁷ "Gregs" visited Scotland in the mid-1990s and he and his brother "got on like a house on fire."²¹⁹⁸ He also met his half-brothers and his step-father, who had retained some of his letters that his mother had kept.²¹⁹⁹

3.146 "Gregs" remarried in 1996. He has "never discussed anything [of Fairbridge] with my wife or with my two sons."²²⁰⁰

3.147 "Gregs" visited the UK a second time in 1996 with his wife on a trip that was funded by the Australian Government through the CMT. The CMT traced some cousins on his father's side in Dundee, and "Gregs" and his wife visited these relatives. Before this, "Gregs" knew nothing about his father.²²⁰¹

2190 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.127.

2191 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.133.

2192 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.133.

2193 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.134.

2194 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.134.

2195 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.126.

2196 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.134.

2197 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.141.

2198 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.141.

2199 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.141.

2200 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, pp.137-138.

2201 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Gregs", at TRN-5-000000012, p.141.

“...I grew up without a great deal of confidence in myself”.

3.148 “Gregs” played a prominent role in the Old Fairbridgeans’ Association, a group which “as much as anything...support[s] each other.”²²⁰² It became his objective “to get the boys I’d been with to come in as well.”²²⁰³ The group eventually grew to over 100 Old Fairbridgeans who attended various events with their partners and children. “Gregs” explained that the group’s “relationship with Fairbridge itself is very tenuous. They tolerate us and that’s about it. They seem to forget that we are the history of the place and that without us Fairbridge at Pinjarra wouldn’t exist.”²²⁰⁴

3.149 At Fairbridge, “Gregs” and the other children “received virtually no education in social skills...Even today I feel awkward hugging other people.”²²⁰⁵ His education “was such that I grew up without a great deal of confidence in myself”, and his experiences at Fairbridge “in some ways made me not go for the goals I perhaps should have.”²²⁰⁶ “Gregs” attributed the failures at Fairbridge in part to the state government, who tolerated “poor standards of care, cruel and abusive child care practices, and a total failure to provide any measure of individual attention to vulnerable children who had nobody else to turn to.”²²⁰⁷

“Kath”

Life in the UK and migration

3.150 “Kath” was born in Edinburgh in June 1945, the youngest of six siblings in her family.²²⁰⁸ Her mother was a Protestant and her father a Catholic.²²⁰⁹ In 1955, her father died and her mother arranged for him to be cremated. That led to her being “ostracised by my dad’s Catholic family...the Catholic church position was that you couldn’t get cremated if you were a Catholic”.²²¹⁰ By this time, two of “Kath’s” sisters and her older brother “were married and were living away from home,” leaving “Kath’s” mother to look after the three remaining children in straitened financial circumstances.²²¹¹

3.151 “Kath” did not know how her mother made contact with the Fairbridge Society but she did recall that “when she did, the deal was, ‘Come out to Australia, the sun shines, it’s warm, good education, you’ll be looked after.’ They were looking for widows, widowers and orphans. They were also taking underprivileged children from the UK”.²²¹² Her “mum got some pamphlet... about how lovely and hot Australia is, and a scheme or the society would look after the children. And when the parent came out to Australia, as mum did, I would be taken out of the environment as soon as possible.”²²¹³

2202 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.136.

2203 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.136.

2204 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.136.

2205 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.146.

2206 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.146.

2207 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Gregs”, at WIT.003.001.2673.

2208 LEM3 form for “Kath”, at NAA.001.001.1634.

2209 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 3, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2210 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 7, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2211 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 2, at WIT.001.002.4152; [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.52.

2212 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 7, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2213 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.53.

“...the information that Fairbridge were telling people turned out to be lies from beginning to end.”

3.152 “Kath’s” mother intended to migrate with her daughter, sending “Kath” first and following shortly afterwards. She “was really taken by all the Fairbridge Society propaganda about the education and the opportunities”, and “thought maybe I’d get a better life” overseas.²²¹⁴ “Kath” and her mother were “accepted to go to Australia.”²²¹⁵

“Mum was really taken by all the Fairbridge Society propaganda about the education and the opportunities.”

3.153 The Fairbridge Director’s opinion was that “it would be better for [‘Kath’], who is 12, and getting on so well at school with a particular interest in Music, to complete her schooling in this country”, but her case was nonetheless “put before the Committee”, and “Kath’s” LEM3 form was signed on 8 August 1958.²²¹⁶ The first that “Kath” knew about the plans to migrate was when she “had to go to the hospital and get my tonsils out and I had to get all my hair cut...I asked [my mum] why and she said: well, you’re going to a farm in Australia and they’re going to look after

us.”²²¹⁷ Her mother told her “that I’d be living with other children on a farm, and I thought that sounded terrific because I loved my animals. But we didn’t see many animals.”²²¹⁸ “Kath” thought she was “going to show up at Pinjarra and someone was going to look after me...It was sold like a holiday camp.”²²¹⁹ She believed that as soon as her mother “came over, say within a month, I would be reconciled with her.”²²²⁰ However, “the information that Fairbridge were telling people turned out to be lies from beginning to end.”²²²¹

3.154 In February 1958, when she was 12 years old, “Kath” travelled to the Fairbridge Reception Centre in Kent.²²²² In March 1958, “Kath” and 11 other children boarded the SS Iberia and set sail for Fremantle. On the ship, “Kath” “had a ball...it was very enjoyable and we had a married couple from Sydney who were our chaperones.”²²²³ The group who travelled with “Kath” ranged in age from about four years old up to their mid-teens, and included both boys and girls.²²²⁴ However, “[n]othing had been explained to us prior to leaving Scotland or in Kent or even on the trip across about what to expect when we arrived in Australia.”²²²⁵

2214 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 12, at WIT.001.002.4152; [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.52.

2215 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 12, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2216 Letter from W.R. Vaughan to L. Coulson, 17 June 1957, at PRT.001.002.2375; LEM3 form for “Kath”, at PRT.001.002.2390.

2217 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.53.

2218 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.54.

2219 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 20, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2220 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.54.

2221 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 12, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2222 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.54.

2223 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.55.

2224 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.56.

2225 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 19, at WIT.001.002.4152.

Life at Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra (1958)

3.155 When the ship docked at Fremantle at the end of April 1958, “Kath” and the youngest girl went to Pinjarra while “the rest were going to Molong in New South Wales.”²²²⁶ They were met at Fremantle by the Principal of Pinjarra.²²²⁷

3.156 Pinjarra “was a big huge place. The cottages were either single storey or double storey. Boys were in theirs and girls were in their ones, and it was...pretty uncomfortable in the heat. There was no fly screens or anything and we all got bitten to blazes.”²²²⁸ The boys worked the farm, while “the girls did the home duties.”²²²⁹ Boys and girls were not allowed to socialise except during sports, and even siblings who lived in next-door cottages were not allowed to speak to each other. If the cottage mother found a girl “talking to any boys, we got into trouble.”²²³⁰



Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, July 1990. Photograph by Betty Smith. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

3.157 “Kath” was assigned to Wolfe Cottage. Upstairs was the girls’ dormitory, which “was very open, there was no privacy whatsoever up there. I just found it quite embarrassing and humiliating.”²²³¹ “Kath” was the youngest in her cottage.²²³²

3.158 On the day she arrived, “Mr Allan took me into the cottage and he says, [“Kath”], this is your cottage mother’... She says, ‘You’ll call me auntie,’ [and] I says, ‘You’re no’ my auntie, I’ve got aunties and uncles in Scotland’, and that was it. To put it bluntly, I think I was dead meat for saying that...She was cruel to me, mentally.”²²³³ This set the tone for the remainder of “Kath’s” time at Pinjarra.

“She was cruel to me, mentally.”

3.159 On arrival, “Kath” had a little brown suitcase and, in common with so many of the child migrants, she never saw it or its contents again after that day. She recalled that “[t]he only thing that I got to keep were my glasses but even they were a source of bullying.”²²³⁴ Instead of their own clothes, “Kath” and the other children were given shorts and a t-shirt. Shoes were only worn “to the church on a Sunday or...to the high school in Pinjarra.”²²³⁵ The only other time shoes were worn “was when we were going out on a day trip”.²²³⁶ As a result, “Kath” “used

2226 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.57.

2227 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.57.

2228 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.58.

2229 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.58.

2230 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.59.

2231 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.60.

2232 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.60.

2233 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.61.

2234 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 44, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2235 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.62.

2236 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.62.

“I had no option because I was alone.”

to get a lot of cut feet and blisters [and] if I said anything” her cottage mother would say: ““Oh, you stupid girl, just get on with it.””²²³⁷ “Kath” was fair skinned and had red hair. She suffered severe mosquito bites, and “had lumps and bumps and bleeding and everything”, but was never given any treatment by anyone at Pinjarra.²²³⁸ Nor were the children given anything to protect them from the sun.²²³⁹ Given her complexion, “Kath” was inevitably sunburnt, but “just had to suffer it. I had no option because I was alone.”²²⁴⁰

3.160 “Kath’s” cottage mother, Mrs Fry, was cruel to “Kath”. Mrs Fry “seemed to get me on my own quite a lot and she would chastise me. She’d say, ‘You are a stupid, stupid girl. Why don’t you speak English? No one can understand you and you will never get on in the world because of how you talk.’ But most of all, everything I did was stupid and...I used to walk on eggshells because I was scared to talk.”²²⁴¹

“...I used to walk on eggshells because I was scared to talk.”

3.161 “Kath” “was wondering why I couldn’t speak English, I didn’t understand why she kept saying these things to me. I questioned myself because I knew that my mother had understood what I was saying.”²²⁴² Mrs Fry “wasn’t a compassionate person or had any empathy towards me...within a week or a fortnight, I was just...scared to talk. I was scared to go anywhere. I just sort of withdrew within myself.”²²⁴³

3.162 In addition to calling “Kath” “stupid,” Mrs Fry called her names such as “four eyes,” “red hair”, and “freckles”.²²⁴⁴ She “never had a kind word with me.”²²⁴⁵ The abuse “was always verbal” and Mrs Fry “hardly spoke my name”.²²⁴⁶

3.163 “Kath” had little recourse to support. She only encountered other cottage mothers “in passing...and even then, I hardly talked to anybody, because I was just too scared to open my mouth because I didn’t speak English.”²²⁴⁷

3.164 The girls in Wolfe Cottage had to collect the groceries: “I had to go walking down in my bare feet...to pick up all the provisions that Mrs Fry had ordered and then you had to take them all back to the house.”²²⁴⁸ Once rations had been

2237 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.70.

2238 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.71.

2239 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.72.

2240 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.72.

2241 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.63-64.

2242 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 24, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2243 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.65.

2244 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.64.

2245 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.65.

2246 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.82.

2247 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.66.

2248 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 25, at WIT.001.002.4152.

collected the girls had to make the food last. Sometimes that did not happen, so “quite a few times I had dripping on bread and you ate it because you were hungry.”²²⁴⁹ Otherwise, breakfast “was always porridge... like cement. And of course, I never ate it, but she would force me to eat it. She would sit there until I ate it and then, if I was sick, I’d get called, ‘You stupid, stupid girl, why be sick when you’re eating porridge? You eat that in Scotland’”.²²⁵⁰

“She would sit there until I ate it and then, if I was sick, I’d get called, ‘You stupid, stupid girl...’”

3.165 “Kath” believed Mrs Fry was the cause of her sickness, which she attributed to severe anxiety. She suffered pains in her stomach and when she tried to eat something, “I just ran to the toilet and vomited because – I think it was just nerves, I was just...I didn’t know what was happening to me, but she wouldn’t take me to the nurse to help me.”²²⁵¹ “Kath” suffered sustained emotional abuse from Mrs Fry.

3.166 Initially “Kath” went to the primary school at Pinjarra, and subsequently to the local high school, “which was about 20 minutes away”.²²⁵² At the high school, the

children from Fairbridge “had to wear the uniform,” and that led to some of them being bullied: “we got a lot of abuse, bullying... we were like...a red cloth to a bull.”²²⁵³ Fairbridge children were also bullied because of their lunches. The Fairbridge bus “would bring the lunches in a crate... But sometimes the local kids would steal just to think they were funny. So that meant you had nothing to eat at lunchtime and I was too scared to speak up.”²²⁵⁴

3.167 Fairbridge children “were classed as a weirdo or a homey” by the local children at the school.²²⁵⁵ “Kath” said that she “wasn’t a great student and I put that down to circumstances I found myself in at the home. In general, the girls at Fairbridge were being groomed for a life in services or domesticity. The boys were being groomed to work on farms or provide cheap labour.”²²⁵⁶

3.168 After school, the children had to do chores in and around the cottage.²²⁵⁷ Chores consisted of “sweeping all the floors and mopping them, doing all the laundry and hanging it on the line, anything, really, like tidying up the garden.”²²⁵⁸ One of “Kath’s” duties was to polish “a huge veranda” that surrounded the cottage.²²⁵⁹ To do this, “Kath” “had to...mix up the polish with kerosene. You had no mask, no rubber gloves and it was a messy task.”²²⁶⁰ Then she would “get the cloth

2249 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.67.

2250 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.66-67.

2251 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.82.

2252 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.68.

2253 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.68.

2254 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.68.

2255 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 31, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2256 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 34, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2257 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 32, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2258 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.69.

2259 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.69.

2260 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 38, at WIT.001.002.4152.

“If I couldn’t get the fire started due to the wood being damp I would get very anxious and frightened of what the house mother would say.”

and put that on the veranda wood...and polish it within an inch of your life or – the cottage mother did this to me – she said, ‘That’s not good enough, you’ll start again,’ and I had to do all that before I had tea.”²²⁶¹

3.169 On other occasions, “Kath” was responsible for “lighting the fire before everyone else got up in the morning...If I couldn’t get the fire started due to the wood being damp I would get very anxious and frightened of what the house mother would say”.²²⁶² These were heavy chores for a girl of her size.²²⁶³ The only respite from cottage life was during sports, in which “Kath” participated “to get a bit of breathing space.”²²⁶⁴

3.170 “Kath” had nobody to speak to about the way in which she and other children were treated at Pinjarra. Although children were allowed to send aerograms to the UK, “everything was censored.”²²⁶⁵ In one of these aerograms—which “Kath” wrote while her mother was still in the UK—she “begged my mum to get me out: doesn’t she want me any more, it’s horrible here...I don’t like this woman, she’s always telling me off for things and I’m scared to talk...And of course, nothing would leave the cottage without being seen...Well, I was on the coals again. She says, ‘You do not do this, you do not do that...I’m going to get another air mail

and you will write what I say.’ Well, I had no option and she’s saying to me, ‘You will write the following: Dear mum, having a lovely time, the children here are just wonderful, the farm’s great’, sort of promoting the farm, although it was the dead opposite.”²²⁶⁶

3.171 Instances such as this left “Kath” feeling that she “had no liberty and no freedom. I was a nothing. Inside I was cursing my mum, cursing everybody because I couldn’t get the truth out. I had now become such an introvert that I hardly talked.”²²⁶⁷ “Kath” “was heartbroken because I thought mum had left me forever.”²²⁶⁸

“..everything was censored.”

3.172 In July 1958, “Kath’s” mother arrived in Australia. Despite being told that she would be able to take “Kath” out of Pinjarra, “in their infinite wisdom, they sent my mother a way up north in [Western Australia]...many thousands of kilometres” away, so that “she had to take all these...trains and buses to get to me.”²²⁶⁹ To visit “Kath”, she “had to go through all the rigmarole. You had to write to the cottage mother, then the cottage mother would tell Mr Allan, the principal, and then mum had to write to Mr Allan and then she agreed to come see me.”²²⁷⁰ “Kath”

2261 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.69.

2262 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 38, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2263 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.69.

2264 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 29, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2265 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.74.

2266 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.74-75.

2267 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 41, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2268 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.75.

2269 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.75-76.

2270 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.75.

believed that the distance between her and her mother and the drawn-out process of arranging visits “was on their agenda. The less she saw of me, maybe the better it was.”²²⁷¹ This flew in the face of Fairbridge’s supposed policy of guaranteeing “employment and accommodation for the mother within visiting reach of the children.”²²⁷² An internal Fairbridge letter stated that the society “give the mothers to understand that the children will be 60 miles away at any rate”, a far cry from the distance involved in “Kath’s” case.²²⁷³

3.173 When “Kath’s” mother was finally allowed to visit, she “brought me a parcel with some sweets...a lovely parcel.”²²⁷⁴ After her mother left, “Kath” was again in trouble with the cottage mother because “[n]o way has your mother got a right to give you anything for your birthday because lots of children here don’t have parents.”²²⁷⁵ “Kath’s” mother was chastised in a letter from the principal, for giving “Kath” presents.²²⁷⁶ “Kath’s” mother “was absolutely heartbroken”.²²⁷⁷

“No way has your mother got a right to give you anything for your birthday because lots of children here don’t have parents.”

3.174 When “Kath’s” mother saw “Kath”, she was shocked at Kath’s condition, “because I was covered in mozzies and I was scared to even talk to mum. I said, ‘Don’t you love me any more, mum, don’t you want me?’ She was really upset.”²²⁷⁸ In September 1958, her mother arranged for “Kath” to spend a week with her while she was working as “a housekeeper for the doctor.”²²⁷⁹ During that week, “Kath” told her mother what life was like at Pinjarra. Her mother “was just really taken aback and I thought, I don’t think she believes me, she might think I’m making it up. But she saw the scars on my body, the mozzie bites I was scratching, and she thought I had the measles or chickenpox. She took me to the doctor and he helped me, and mum got me lotion and that...She was devastated about what was happening.”²²⁸⁰

3.175 “Kath’s” mother “was told, ‘You won’t get [“Kath”] out of our care until she’s 21. She is a ward of the State of Western Australia.”²²⁸¹ “Kath” explained that her “mum went ballistic and that’s when she started doing the writing to government departments to get me out.”²²⁸² She “wrote to everybody she could to fight to get me back”.²²⁸³ “Kath’s” mother succeeded in December 1958, almost six months after she had arrived in Australia.

2271 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.77.

2272 Letter from W.R. Vaughan to “Kath’s” mother, 5 April 1957, at PRT.001.002.2384.

2273 Letter from W.R. Vaughan to W.E. Apsinall, 11 December 1957, at PRT.001.002.2343.

2274 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.73.

2275 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.73.

2276 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.73.

2277 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.74.

2278 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.76.

2279 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.77.

2280 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.78.

2281 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.78.

2282 Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.78.

2283 Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 50, at WIT.001.002.4152.

“...everything I did was stupid, and of course mum had a hell of a time trying to get me out of that way.”

3.176 The director of the Fairbridge Society in London wrote to the principal, apologising “that [‘Kath’s’ mother] has been such a nuisance but I like to think that none of the others has caused such trouble.”²²⁸⁴

3.177 The director agreed that “Kath” could be “restored to her mother”.²²⁸⁵ In his letter, he wrote that he has “no doubt, however, that she will miss the life at Fairbridge and all her friends there.”²²⁸⁶ “Kath” observed that the principal would have been “getting all the news from the cottage mother [who would] be telling him, oh, they’re fine, they’re lovely...there’s nothing wrong”, and passing this information back to London.²²⁸⁷

Life after care

3.178 “Kath” described how after finally being released to her mother, “I was free, it was just so nice to talk how I did to mum and vice versa. I went to...High School...made friends, did a lot of sports, was in Guiding...I just had a ball, because even though mum was working three jobs...she was only just down the road at a shop where I could go and visit her.”²²⁸⁸

3.179 The effects of Fairbridge persisted: at Pinjarra, “everything I did was stupid, and of course mum had a hell of a time trying to get me out of that way, that I wasn’t stupid.”²²⁸⁹

3.180 In 1960, “Kath’s” mother decided to return to Edinburgh. By then, “Kath” “didn’t want to go home because I’d started to enjoy the freedom and the fresh air of Western Australia away from Fairbridge.”²²⁹⁰ “Kath” and her mother left for England in June 1960 on the SS Orontes.

3.181 Back in Edinburgh, “Kath” met her husband. She wanted to return to Australia, and she and her husband departed once more for Australia on the SS Orcades in April 1965. “Kath” “became an Australian citizen” in 1987, and considered herself “an Aussie with a Scottish accent”.²²⁹¹

3.182 In Pinjarra, “Kath” had little protection against the sun and suffered terrible sunburn which may have contributed to her having developed various forms of skin cancer in adulthood.²²⁹²

2284 Letter from W.R. Vaughan to H.R.M. Allan, 28 November 1958, at PRT.001.002.2267.

2285 Letter from W.R. Vaughan to H.R.M. Allan, 28 November 1958, at PRT.001.002.2267.

2286 *Written statement of “Kath”*, paragraph 51, at WIT.001.002.4152; Letter from W.R. Vaughan to H.R.M. Allan, 28 November 1958, at PRT.001.002.2267.

2287 *Transcript, day 172*: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.79. The June 1958 half-yearly report for “Kath” written by her cottage mother states that she is “enthusiastic and happy about all aspects of Fairbridge life,” and praises her disposition and character. See Half-yearly report for “Kath”, June 1958, at PRT.001.006.0325.

2288 *Transcript, day 172*: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.83.

2289 *Transcript, day 172*: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.82.

2290 *Written statement of “Kath”*, paragraph 53, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2291 *Written statement of “Kath”*, paragraphs 66 and 75, at WIT.001.002.4152.

2292 *Transcript, day 172*: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.71-72.

3.183 “Kath” attended a reunion for Old Fairbridgeans where, talking to the group’s secretary, she discovered that ex-residents of Pinjarra could access their records at the State Archive for Western Australia.²²⁹³ She accessed her own records in October 1996, but “without having had that discussion... at the reunion I wouldn’t have known about how to get my records and they would have ended up locked away for fifty years.”²²⁹⁴

3.184 “Kath” became involved with the CMT, who assisted in her returning to Scotland in 2013.²²⁹⁵

3.185 “Kath” continued to have vivid flashbacks. What she suffered “was just cruel. It was mental cruelty.”²²⁹⁶ “Kath” explained, however, that “[n]ot all the cottage mothers were bad...we just happened to get the horrible one.”²²⁹⁷

“It was mental cruelty.”

“Watto”

Life in the UK

3.186 “Watto” was born in 1948. Her family lived in Edinburgh. Her father died when she was aged eight and her mother, although a hard worker, struggled on her own.²²⁹⁸ “Watto” had a younger brother.

Migration

3.187 When “Watto” was 10, her mother decided the family would emigrate: “she actually wanted to go to Canada, but because she was a widow, the Canadian Government were worried that she’d be a burden on their social security, so she put in for Australia and got it.”²²⁹⁹ “Watto” and her brother left first: “That was the only way she could get out to Australia. We came first and then she came after us, about a month later.”²³⁰⁰

3.188 “Watto” had memories of a man coming to their house in Edinburgh and showing the family photos of the Fairbridge Farm. Her mother asked “Watto” if she wanted to go to Australia: “I didn’t want to go. I said to mum that she could go to Australia with [my brother] and I would stay with gran and mum just told me that wasn’t happening. It was all of us or none of us.”²³⁰¹

“I didn’t want to go.”

3.189 “Watto” remembered having a medical examination prior to migration. She and her brother sailed to Australia on the SS Orontes on 15 September 1959 as part of a

2293 *Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 63, at WIT.001.002.4152.*

2294 *Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 65, at WIT.001.002.4152.*

2295 *Written statement of “Kath”, paragraph 62, at WIT.001.002.4152.*

2296 *Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.89.*

2297 *Transcript, day 172: “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.90.*

2298 *Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-000000008, pp.1-4.*

2299 *Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.8.*

2300 *Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.8.*

2301 *Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.10.*

group of 19 children. “Watto” and her brother were, she thought, the only two Scottish children on the ship; there was one Danish boy and the rest were from England. She and her peers “[d]idn’t have any idea [where Australia was]. But we had to stand on our heads the day that we were leaving. We had to do a handstand on our bed with our feet up against the wall because we were going down under. So we all had to do a handstand on the bed so we knew which way was up.”²³⁰²

3.190 “Watto’s” mother had bought “brand spanking new suitcases” for them that she could not afford, but “she didn’t want anyone to think we were poor.”²³⁰³

3.191 “Watto” had some “fantastic memories” of the journey on the ship and the places they sailed to and ports they stopped at en route to Australia. The children were provided with “very good food” on the journey.²³⁰⁴

Life at Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra (1959-1963)

3.192 On arrival in Australia, “Watto”—who was 11 at the time—and her brother were collected by Mr Allan, the principal of Fairbridge who was “very good to us.”²³⁰⁵ They travelled to Fairbridge in Pinjarra: “The actual village was 80 acres. It had 15 or 16 cottages. The girls had the two-storey cottages, the boys had single-storey cottages.”²³⁰⁶ There were some other Scottish children there. Contrary to “Watto’s”

expectation that she would be returned to her mother’s care shortly after arriving in Australia, she spent four years at Fairbridge, from the ages of 11 to 15.

3.193 When “Watto” arrived, she was placed in Wolfe Cottage with about 14 other girls aged four to 15 years old. It was run by cottage mother Mrs Ticehurst. “Watto” “couldn’t stand her. She was a cruel cow.”²³⁰⁷ Mrs Ticehurst slapped “Watto” on the face on one occasion, and “Watto” witnessed her break a coat hanger “on the back of one of the girl’s legs, left great welts on the legs, but nothing was done.”²³⁰⁸ “Watto” and another girl decided to run away one night. They were picked up by a local policeman and returned to Fairbridge, to the surprise of the cottage mother who had not realised that they had run away.²³⁰⁹ “Watto” overheard the policeman tell Mrs Ticehurst that “the kids have had a big enough fright with me picking them up and bringing them back, so I wouldn’t punish them anymore, they have had punishment enough for being back to Fairbridge.”²³¹⁰ Although Mrs Ticehurst told the policeman that he was “quite right”, the moment he was gone she called “Watto” down into the kitchen “and bent me over and whacked me with the strap until the lights went out - and she used the buckle end... [on my] bare bum with a strap.”²³¹¹ Two days later the matron also strapped “Watto” and the other girl “to show the other kids they couldn’t run away.”²³¹²

2302 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.14.

2303 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.15.

2304 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.17-19.

2305 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.19.

2306 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.20.

2307 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.22-23.

2308 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.23.

2309 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.24.

2310 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.25.

2311 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.25.

2312 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.26-27.



Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, 1952. Photograph from the Western Australia Government photographer collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

3.194 The children were all required to carry out heavy manual work in the cottages. The work included cleaning out the lounge and fire, cleaning the dormitories—including stripping and making up 12 beds—cleaning windows, cleaning the cottage mother’s and her daughter’s rooms, and kitchen duties which involved preparing breakfast for everyone. There was no staff in the cottage other than the cottage mother, who supervised but did not engage in the manual work herself.²³¹³ All the cleaning was done by the children, “[a]nd if you didn’t do it right, you’d have to do it again.”²³¹⁴ The food at Fairbridge was quite good.²³¹⁵

3.195 Reflecting on life in the cottage, “Watto” said “[w]e were a job to the women rather than them looking after us. It was their job. Some of the cottage mothers were

really good; other ones, they should never have been anywhere near kids. They had no understanding of kids...you had 4-year-olds to 15-year-olds, all different...families, and they had to look after us so you can understand why it was regimented. It wasn’t fun but it was regimented.”²³¹⁶

“Some of the cottage mothers were really good; other ones, they should never have been anywhere near kids.”

3.196 Besides facing Mrs Ticehurst’s cruelty, “Watto” was bullied by other girls for about 12 months, until “I actually thumped one because I had had enough.”²³¹⁷ “Watto” was

2313 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.28.

2314 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.30.

2315 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.32.

2316 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.37.

2317 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.22.

“...we had to stay there for four years until I left because the welfare department in Western Australia wouldn't let us go back to mum and gran.”

then moved to another cottage. Thankfully, the mother at the new cottage—Shakespeare Cottage—“was gorgeous...Different nature. She was just kinder.”²³¹⁸

3.197 “Watto” and her brother were separated at Fairbridge, as boys and girls lived apart. She was only allowed to see her bother when they were going to the dining hall: “You weren't allowed to go to the boys' cottages. What for, I don't know. It was horrible.”²³¹⁹ Girls were “not allowed to walk on the gravel roads because the boys' dormitories faced outwards on the gravel road...it was archaic...We couldn't swim at the same time as the boys. We were sitting in church, we had the first eight pews for the girls and then the boys sat behind us and on the other side. You couldn't sit together as a family...It was really pathetic.”²³²⁰

3.198 On her first day at Fairbridge, “Watto” walked out of her cottage to go down to her brother's cottage, and Commander Buckie (who she described as being the person in charge of discipline) stopped her and asked where she was going.²³²¹ When she said that she was going to see her brother, “[h]e said, ‘You can't go to the boys' cottages...you'll see your brother when you go down to the dining room and you might be able to play with him at 5 o'clock at night on the way home back to the cottage.’”²³²² “Watto” replied that

“that's fine, because...we'll be leaving here [soon] anyway,’ and he just looked at me and said, ‘I wouldn't count on it.’ And he was right: we had to stay there for four years until I left because the welfare department in Western Australia wouldn't let us go back to mum and gran.”²³²³

3.199 “Watto” recalled that Commander Buckie was “more in charge of the boys than the girls”, and had a soft spot for the girls: “We got away with a lot more...he'd say to the boys, ‘Pick the cane’, and then the boys had to pick the cane and he'd give them a couple of slaps on the backside with it...if they got a bit cheeky he'd give them another one for good measure, but that was it. That was his way of disciplining. After talking, if talking didn't work, then the cane was the next thing. He never ever used the cane on a girl, ever. He wouldn't. He refused.”²³²⁴

3.200 Shortly after arriving in Australia, “Watto” was badly bitten by mosquitos: “I had my legs in bandages for six months, from the tip of my toes up to my knees. My legs were poisoned and I got told I'd be lucky if I didn't lose them. I had to have six penicillin needles, one every day for six days...I've still got the scars, the pockmarks on my legs, where my legs were bad, really bad. They're still lumpy.”²³²⁵

2318 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.35.

2319 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.27.

2320 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.51-54.

2321 [Written statement of “Watto”](#), paragraph 47, at WIT.001.002.3924; “Gregs” identified Buckie as a housemaster.

2322 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.41.

2323 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.41.

2324 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.41-42.

2325 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.35-36.

3.201 The girls walked to school barefoot: “We weren’t allowed to wear shoes. The boys could walk on the gravel, but the girls had to walk on the bitumen”, which was hot in the summer time, “and that was rain, hail or shine.”²³²⁶ However, if visitors came “to see the kids, they always made sure that we had our uniform on, that we had our socks and shoes on. They didn’t want to see kids running about barefoot. That would never do.”²³²⁷ Fairbridge would know in advance if any visitors were coming and “they’d get us into the uniform and stuff.”²³²⁸ “Watto” recalled one visitor called Mr McAlpine, who “said that: ‘When you look at the kids at Fairbridge, they are unwanted and unloved.’ I thought, how true.”²³²⁹ In terms of education, “Watto” “cut my nose off to spite my face. I didn’t want to be at Fairbridge at all so I just dug my heels in and didn’t want to learn. Stupid.”²³³⁰

“...When you look at the kids at Fairbridge, they are unwanted and unloved.’ I thought, how true.”

3.202 “Watto’s” mother arrived in Australia in November 1959, later than “Watto” had expected. When she arrived, she had not seen her children for three months and said she would not be going anywhere until she saw them. However, she did not get a job at

Fairbridge as a cottage mother, as “Watto” had understood she would: “Basically when she came out here they were going to get her a job and she assumed that the job would be where we were. What they didn’t tell her was if you have a girl and a boy, you couldn’t be a cottage mother. You had to have either one child, two girls or two boys, you couldn’t have mixed.”²³³¹

3.203 Instead, “Watto’s” mother worked in a maternity hospital and then in a hospital for soldiers. Once “Watto’s” mother had a house and a job, “Watto” and her brother were able to go and stay with her at weekends once a month and during holidays. By this time, “Watto’s” grandmother had also come out to Australia and was living with their mother. The children were not allowed to go and live with their mother “because the reason they gave was that gran was too old, and gran would have been 70.”²³³² Her mother was at work, so her grandmother was seen as the person who would be there to care for the children and was considered too old to do so, “[s]o we had to stay put until I left at 15.”²³³³ “Watto” had a clear recollection that her brother left Fairbridge at the same time as she did, against Fairbridge’s wishes, although their records state that he left at a different time.²³³⁴ After she left Fairbridge, “Watto” had no further contact with Fairbridge or the Western Australia Welfare Department.²³³⁵

2326 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.31.

2327 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.36.

2328 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.36.

2329 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.36-37.

2330 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.31-32.

2331 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.38-39.

2332 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.39.

2333 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.40.

2334 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.40.

2335 Transcript, day 178: “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.43.

“...I just wanted to be away from there, and anything to do with Fairbridge or Pinjarra”.

3.204 “Watto” “hated” her time in Fairbridge and just wanted to be at home with her mother and brother: “I just wanted to be away from there, and anything to do with Fairbridge or Pinjarra, I didn’t want anything to do with”.²³³⁶ She felt strongly that children should not have to call people in the role of cottage mother or similar ‘aunties.’ Instead, “[c]hildren should call these people by their own name...They’re not aunties at all. They’re people paid to look after you, so why would you want to have to call them auntie? What’s wrong with calling them [their name]?”²³³⁷

3.205 When she gave evidence to the Inquiry in early 2020, “Watto” had not been back to Scotland since her migration in 1959. She was planning a trip for later that year. She thought about Scotland and “quite often” carried out Google searches for places she knew as a child.²³³⁸

2336 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.51.

2337 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.51.

2338 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, pp.48-49.

4 Quarriers

4.1 William Quarrier (1829-1903) was a successful businessman and philanthropist who was concerned about the welfare of children.²³³⁹ After establishing a children's night shelter in Glasgow, he put his energies into raising sufficient funds to build the Orphan Homes of Scotland, in Bridge of Weir. It became the largest child rescue organisation in Scotland.²³⁴⁰ By 1903, the village accommodated over 1,500 children in individual cottages run by house parents.²³⁴¹ With changes in childcare practices and expectations, the numbers of children housed at Quarriers decreased and, by 1980, Quarriers accommodated only 300 children.

4.2 It is estimated that over 7,000 children were migrated to Canada by Quarriers between 1872 and 1933.²³⁴² Quarriers' reception and distribution centre, Fairknowe Home in Brockville, Ontario, opened in 1888 and closed in 1934. Quarriers also migrated 43 children to Australia between 1939 and 1963.²³⁴³ Quarriers provided information to SCAI about 573 children sent overseas between 1870 and 1960.

Applicants

4.3 Four SCAI applicants were migrated by Quarriers between 1913 and 1961. Their histories are detailed below.

"Kathy", on behalf of her grandmother Life in the UK and migration

4.4 "Kathy" provided evidence to SCAI on behalf of her grandmother.²³⁴⁴ "Kathy's" grandmother and her siblings were moved into Quarriers in 1909.²³⁴⁵ Shortly after turning 12, "Kathy's" grandmother was migrated to Canada with two of her sisters, including her twin. They were passengers on the SS Grampian, which sailed from Glasgow on 24 May 1913 and arrived in Montreal, Quebec, on 2 June 1913.²³⁴⁶

Life in Canada

4.5 The girls were placed at Fairknowe, Brockville, for a couple of weeks, before being moved to other placements. The sisters were separated. By the age of 18, "Kathy's" grandmother was in Spencerville, where she lived and worked as a maid for a family who was good to her. She lived there

2339 Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, [Case Study no.3: The provision of residential care for children in Scotland by Quarriers, Aberlour Child Care Trust, and Barnardo's between 1921 and 1991](#), (January 2020), pp.3-6.

2340 Constantine *et al.*, Appendix 1, paragraph 16.1.

2341 Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, [Case Study no.3: The provision of residential care for children in Scotland by Quarriers, Aberlour Child Care Trust, and Barnardo's between 1921 and 1991](#), (January 2020), pp.3-6.

2342 Constantine *et al.*, Appendix 1, paragraph 16.2.

2343 Constantine *et al.*, paragraphs 17.33-17.36.

2344 [Written statement of "Kathy"](#), at WIT.001.002.8252; [Transcript, day 174: "Kathy"](#), at TRN-5-000000004, pp.106-131.

2345 [Written statement of "Kathy"](#), paragraph 12, at WIT.001.002.8254.

2346 Passenger manifest for RMS Grampian, at WIT.003.002.2866, and BCA.001.001.1093

until she got married.²³⁴⁷ Her twin sister was in a placement where she was mistreated and, as a result, suffered from anxiety and developed a stutter.

4.6 In evidence to SCAI, “Kathy” described her grandmother as a “very quiet and unassuming lady” who was “very hands-on” and “very loving” with her grandchildren.²³⁴⁸

“Kathy” finding out about the past

4.7 “Kathy” was 13 years old when her grandmother died and has found out more about her life from relatives and from her own research. The experience of finding out

about her grandmother, including her early life, being put into Quarriers, and being migrated to Canada, “overwhelmed” “Kathy”: “I couldn’t believe it. And then for [my grandmother and her sisters] to not be able to freely speak about [their experience], it tore me apart.”²³⁴⁹ “Kathy” spoke to her aunt to find out more, but her aunt was initially “very hostile; didn’t understand why I needed to pull skeletons out of the closet and dirty up the family; and she was extremely upset.”²³⁵⁰ Latterly “Kathy’s” aunt understood a little more “but she still wouldn’t give up anything.”²³⁵¹



Outside Fairknowe, Brockville. Photograph from Quarriers Historic Photo Album. Source: [The Golden Bridge: Child Migration from Scotland to Canada 1869-1939](#).

2347 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Kathy”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.116-118; Letter from Quarriers to “Kathy”, 21 September 2005; Extract from History Book held by Quarriers, at WIT.003.002.2869; Documents from public archives Canada, at WIT.003.002.2864-2866, WIT.003.002.2859, and WIT.003.002.2860-2861; Quarriers, *Narrative of Facts*, at INQ.001.004.2501, pp.22-23.

2348 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Kathy” at TRN-5-000000004, p.122.

2349 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Kathy” at TRN-5-000000004, pp.125-126.

2350 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Kathy” at TRN-5-000000004, p.121.

2351 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Kathy” at TRN-5-000000004, pp.120-121.

“Gray”

Life in the UK and migration

4.8 “Gray” was born in the Scottish Borders in 1949.²³⁵² “Gray” was in Quarriers between 1950 and 1960.²³⁵³ He lived in cottage 27 with Nurse Charles for a year before being moved to another cottage where the house parents were “brutal” to him. He was frequently belted by the house father for wetting the bed, “a proper whipping in front of the other children.”²³⁵⁴ He was very unhappy there: “It was the punishment and mental anguish. I felt despair knowing that I was going to receive a belting.”²³⁵⁵ He ran away back to Nurse Charles a few times and eventually moved back into her cottage. He described Nurse Charles as “fair but tough” and said that, despite being a “disciplinarian”, she treated him “as a human being.”²³⁵⁶

“Nurse Charles called me in and said, ‘...would you like to go to Australia?’...I said, ‘Yes, where is it?’”

4.9 In early 1960 “Gray” was migrated to Australia, aged about 11.²³⁵⁷ He clearly recalled the lead-up to his migration: “I still remember it as if it happened a week ago. Nurse Charles called me in and said, ‘...

would you like to go to Australia?’...I said, ‘Yes, where is it?’ She elaborated on it and told me the reasons for it. She felt it would be a better place with more opportunity in her eyes. She wasn’t aware of what institutional life was like in Australia. She had obviously been asked if any of her boys would like to go to Australia, so she selected me.”²³⁵⁸

4.10 A report from a psychologist a year later deemed “Gray” a suitable child for migration.²³⁵⁹ He recalled being measured for new clothes and doing school projects about Australia: “We did one about fruit because everyone talked about the beautiful fruit where we were going.”²³⁶⁰ He recalled sitting an IQ test but did not remember signing any paperwork. He learnt from a letter he received years later that his mother had signed documents relating to his migration. It appears that his mother consented to his migration in around 1959.²³⁶¹ Nurse Charles took him to Edinburgh leading up to his departure from Quarriers, and “Gray” “suppose[ed] it was a motherly instinct that she had” shown towards him.²³⁶²

4.11 In January 1960, “Gray” travelled from Southampton aboard the *Fairsky* bound for Australia. “Gray” was sexually abused by an older boy on the ship. The abuse was encouraged by other older boys: “I didn’t tell anyone about what happened for fear of retribution. I was always on the lookout for

2352 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.74-107.

2353 Quarriers’ admission form, at QAR.001.008.6167-6172.

2354 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.79.

2355 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.80.

2356 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.80.

2357 Quarriers discharge record, at QAR.001.008.6191.

2358 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.81.

2359 Psychologist’s report, at QAR.001.008.6175.

2360 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.82.

2361 Letter from Gray’s mother, at QAR.001.008.6176.

2362 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.81.

danger.”²³⁶³ “Gray” said that, apart from the assault, the journey was “like a holiday. I had food, morning noon and night, any time I wanted it. I spent most of my time around the pool or playing games, thinking it was wonderful.”²³⁶⁴

“I didn’t tell anyone about what happened for fear of retribution. I was always on the lookout for danger.”

Life at Dhurringile (1960-1964)

4.12 The ship arrived in Melbourne on 4 February 1960.²³⁶⁵ “Gray” and a group of another 10 boys (including the boy who had abused him on the ship) were driven to Dhurringile.²³⁶⁶ “Gray” was the youngest of the group. “Gray” remembered “driving up

the driveway to the castle, as I called it, open mouthed...The house was four storeys high with a turret...It was beautiful. Initially we were in awe of the place.”²³⁶⁷ Dhurringile was a 120-acre farm with pigs and chickens, over 100 milk cows, and an orchard. The home had previously been a prisoner-of-war camp and had closed in 1958 but re-opened for the intake of which “Gray” was part.

4.13 “Gray” attended school and worked on the farm in the morning and at night. There was little time for studies.²³⁶⁸ He went on holiday to a local family who was good to him. “Gray” had no contact with his own family back in Scotland but was asked to write to the family he had spent holiday time with while in Quarriers. He had no visitors and could not recall speaking to anyone from the welfare department.²³⁶⁹



Dhurringile, 2008. Source: [Victorian Heritage Database](#).

2363 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.84.

2364 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.84.

2365 Passenger list, at NAA.001.001.0031; [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.84-85.

2366 For a map of receiving institutions, see [Appendix G](#).

2367 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.86.

2368 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.88.

2369 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.92.

“It was generally good but it was just the discipline and the bullying that went on...I had to be careful because some of the boys would prey on me.”

4.14 Describing life at Dhurringile, “Gray” offered this view: “It was generally good but it was just the discipline and the bullying that went on...I had to be careful because some of the boys would prey on me. I still had my screwdriver for protection. I usually kept it hidden in my sock.”²³⁷⁰ He described a practice that went on called “nuggetting” whereby “older boys would hold you down, pull down your pyjamas, and cover your private parts in black shoe polish...they found it funny.”²³⁷¹

4.15 One of the superintendents was an ex-detective “who played the part and treated the boys like young criminals. He was the biggest problem we had there...He would get [the boys] in the boxing ring and make us fight with each other...He would say, ‘Hit him, hit him.’...He created this mental anguish in us. He got great delight in seeing some of the boys being hurt.”²³⁷²

4.16 The superintendent also hit the boys: “He would give you a whack with his hand, or it could have been a punch, even if you didn’t deserve it. He was a big, strong man in his mid to late 30s...He was violent.”²³⁷³ The same superintendent put “Gray” into

the ‘dungeon’ “once or twice. You couldn’t climb up out of it so you couldn’t get out. It was a psychological thing. He tried to break you, particularly if you showed strength.”²³⁷⁴ “Gray” ran away a couple of times, “especially after a beating. I would usually go back myself and think, ‘I’ll suffer it again.’”²³⁷⁵

“[The superintendent] tried to break you, particularly if you showed strength.”

4.17 “Gray” did not report the abuse to anyone: “I never knew what the consequences of reporting could be and I didn’t feel confident in the system. I just hope it never happens to anyone again.”²³⁷⁶

4.18 SCAI recovered reports sent to Quarriers from Dhurringile, all of which are complimentary of “Gray”. He was described, for example, as an “excellent boy in many respects. Presents no problems whatsoever. We are very proud of him.”²³⁷⁷ Despite the favourable reports sent to Quarriers, he was told he was “going to a delinquent home for unruly children” when he was discharged from Dhurringile in 1964, at nearly 15 years

2370 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.93 and p.88.

2371 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.95.

2372 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.94.

2373 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.94.

2374 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.95.

2375 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.93.

2376 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.101.

2377 Report to Quarriers, June 1962, at QAR.001.008.6174; Report to Quarriers, March 1963, at QAR.001.009.0135; Report to Quarriers, January 1964, at QAR.001.008.6173.

old.²³⁷⁸ “Gray” rebuffed that pessimistic proposal and managed to resort to his holiday family. Ultimately, they fostered him and he came to regard them as his own family.²³⁷⁹

4.19 Later in life, the CMT investigated “Gray’s” family in Scotland on his mother’s side.²³⁸⁰ In 2003, “Gray” was provided with a photograph of his mother for the first time. He learned that his mother had passed away a month before he had received the photograph. The CMT traced “Gray’s” mother’s twin sister. “Gray” met her and her son (“Gray’s” cousin). She told “Gray” that he had a sister. After further investigations “Gray” learned about his father’s side of the family and discovered he had a number of cousins, some of whom lived in Edinburgh. At the time of providing evidence to SCAI, “Gray” had not been able to find his sister.

Hugh McGowan

Life in the UK

4.20 Hugh was born in 1948 to a single mother. His grandparents would only allow his mother to live with them if she did so without Hugh. She was “not prepared to return on this condition”, so Hugh and his mother “lived in a Salvation Army hostel in Glasgow.”²³⁸¹ When Hugh was just under two years old, the Salvation Army “wrote a letter to Quarriers’s...asking them to take me in”, as he could not “be kept in the Salvation Army Home” beyond that age.²³⁸² Quarriers accepted Hugh, and he was a resident in Quarriers Homes for 11 years from 1950, just before his second birthday, until 1961, when he was aged 13.²³⁸³

4.21 At Quarriers, Hugh “was placed in the babies’ home for two years”, before being moved to different cottages from when he was four years old.²³⁸⁴ Hugh remembered “scrubbing the kitchen floor” in his first cottage, but noted that there “was no mistreatment” there.²³⁸⁵ That changed when Hugh was moved to Nurse Charles’ cottage; although she was “well liked” as a nurse, “as a cottage mother she became a tyrant”, forcing her wards to call her “mummy”.²³⁸⁶ The cottage mother “would tell you off for doing things wrong, but if you did it correctly you would not be praised.”²³⁸⁷ She punished children for wetting the bed.

2378 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.96; Report to Quarriers, February 1965, at QAR.001.009.0120.

2379 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.100-101.

2380 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.102-103.

2381 Letter from Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children to Superintendent at The Orphan Homes of Scotland, Bridge of Weir, 29 May 1950, at WIT.003.001.3606.

2382 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 3, at WIT.001.001.7515; Letter from Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children to Superintendent at The Orphan Homes of Scotland, Bridge of Weir, 29 May 1950, at WIT.003.001.3606.

2383 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.101-188; and [Transcript, day 106](#): Read-in statement of Hugh McGowan, at TRN.001.004.5052-5075.

2384 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 7, at WIT.001.001.7516.

2385 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 10, at WIT.001.001.7517.

2386 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 11, at WIT.001.001.7517.

2387 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 18, at WIT.001.001.7519.

“[An older boy] came into my bed one night and made me masturbate him until he ejaculated.”

4.22 The boys wore shorts all year round. Hugh remembers younger children “crying because it was so cold but we were still required to remain outside” during school playtime.²³⁸⁸ Children “only wore shoes on Sunday.”²³⁸⁹

4.23 Discipline in the school at Quarriers “was very strong”, and Hugh was given “a fierce beating with the strap” after talking to another pupil.²³⁹⁰ The teacher who meted out this punishment “was a sadist.”²³⁹¹ When Hugh’s cottage mother saw the welts caused by this beating, she “hit me for being naughty in school.”²³⁹² On another occasion, a teacher “hit both her hands on my ears at the same time”, causing Hugh severe and ongoing earache.²³⁹³ At bedtime, Hugh “would be crying from the pain” but his cottage mother “would tell me to stop as I would wake up the other boys.”²³⁹⁴ Hugh never received medical attention for this problem.

4.24 When Hugh was hospitalised to correct a squint, he overheard his cottage mother telling another cottage mother “that

she had made sure that I wasn’t spoiled” during the stay in hospital.²³⁹⁵ When Hugh was hospitalised again after breaking his femur, he noticed that other children there were “visited by their mum and dad every day. Some of the other kids noticed I didn’t have many visitors and gave me toys and one of them gave me a stamp collection.”²³⁹⁶ Hugh’s education suffered as a result of his hospitalisations, and he “had no opportunity to catch up.”²³⁹⁷

4.25 While Hugh was in this cottage, an older boy, who was one of Nurse Charles’ “favourite boys”, “came into my bed one night and made me masturbate him until he ejaculated.”²³⁹⁸ This happened “about a dozen times” before Hugh began to refuse.²³⁹⁹ The older boy told Hugh “not to tell anyone.”²⁴⁰⁰ On one occasion, one of the windows in the cottage was broken while the cottage mother was out, and when she returned “the older boy said it was me.”²⁴⁰¹ Hugh denied it, but the cottage mother “belted me for breaking the window and also gave me another belting for saying that I hadn’t done it...After the punishment, the

2388 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 28, at WIT.001.001.7521.

2389 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 29, at WIT.001.001.7521.

2390 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraphs 35-36, at WIT.001.001.7522-7523.

2391 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 36, at WIT.001.001.7523.

2392 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 36, at WIT.001.001.7523.

2393 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 38, at WIT.001.001.7523.

2394 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 46, at WIT.001.001.7524.

2395 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 59, at WIT.001.001.7527.

2396 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 60, at WIT.001.001.7527.

2397 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 60, at WIT.001.001.7527.

2398 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 14, at WIT.001.001.7518.

2399 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 14, at WIT.001.001.7518.

2400 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 14, at WIT.001.001.7518.

2401 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 14, at WIT.001.001.7518.

boy said, 'That's what will happen to you if you tell.'²⁴⁰²

4.26 Throughout Hugh's time at Quarriers, "[t]here was no emotional support" and "no one to talk to or confide in."²⁴⁰³

"There was no emotional support at Quarriers and there was no one to talk to or confide in".

Migration

4.27 Hugh became aware of the possibility of migration in 1959 when another boy in his cottage was selected to be migrated to Australia. The cottage mother, Nurse Charles, suggested to Hugh that he also might wish to go to Australia. Hugh "was chosen" for migration in 1961.²⁴⁰⁴ He was happy enough to go; "[a]nything to get out of Quarriers."²⁴⁰⁵ The only preparation Hugh received for migrating was when "a man took us into the vestry at the church and gave us our first 'father and son' talk. The man said... we mustn't touch or play with our penis as it would make us sick, deaf or blind."²⁴⁰⁶

4.28 Quarriers wrote to Hugh's mother asking for her to consent to his migration.²⁴⁰⁷ It appears the letter was not delivered to her,

something Hugh discovered 40 years later: "I was sent to the Orphan Homes of Scotland. I was allowed to believe that I was an orphan. I didn't know that I had a mother and I didn't know that letter had been sent. Again, I didn't know that she never got it, because I think if she did get it, she would have said no."²⁴⁰⁸

4.29 Hugh understood that his mother had moved to England and changed her address. He did not believe that "there was any effort made by Quarriers to try and find her."²⁴⁰⁹

4.30 A letter from the Salvation Army to Quarriers before the possibility of migration was raised suggests that Hugh's mother did not consent to his being adopted. Hugh believed she would therefore not have consented to his going to Australia either.²⁴¹⁰ That letter noted that, although his mother's parents were willing to take her back into their home, they were not willing to take Hugh, and consequently she could not return.²⁴¹¹ Hugh concluded that this "tells me that my mother cared about me...There's no question that my mother wanted...to be with me as long as she could."²⁴¹² The consent form for Hugh's migration was signed by Hector Cameron Munro, Quarriers' Superintendent, on 6 April 1961, purportedly as guardian.²⁴¹³

2402 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 14, at WIT.001.001.7518.

2403 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 65, at WIT.001.001.7528.

2404 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.111.

2405 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.111.

2406 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 40, at WIT.001.001.7523.

2407 Letter from Quarriers to Miss McGowan, 11 January 1961, at WIT.003.001.3605.

2408 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.113.

2409 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.115.

2410 Letter from the Salvation Army to Mr Hector Munro, secretary of the Orphan Homes of Scotland, 20 May 1950, at WIT.003.001.3603.

2411 Letter from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to the superintendent of the orphan homes of Scotland, 29 May 1950, at WIT.003.001.3606.

2412 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.109.

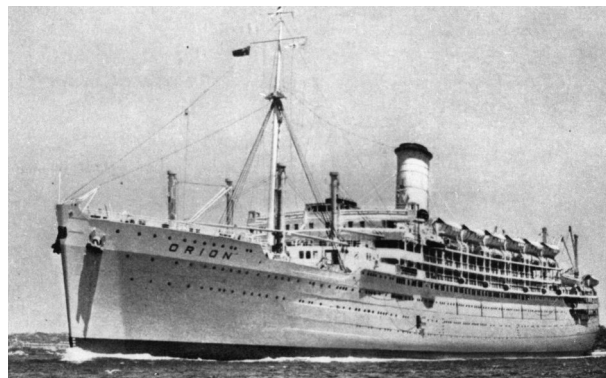
2413 LEM3 form for Hugh McGowan, at WIT.003.001.3638.

“[Quarriers] had said to us that this is a good opportunity and they convinced us that it was going to be a good opportunity, and I think they believed it.”

4.31 Although Hugh had initially been willing to go to Australia, he had a change of heart: “I got a case of severely cold feet about it...I wondered sometimes whether in fact I wasn’t an orphan and that there was someone—maybe a mother or a father—that maybe I’d be able to find...I was very frightened of the prospect of being sent to Australia.”²⁴¹⁴

4.32 He told his new housemaster that he did not want to go, but “he just replied, ‘Too bad, you’re going’, and that was it.”²⁴¹⁵ After that, Hugh realised that he “was going to Australia and there was nothing that I could do about it. I could have run away from Quarriers, but...the consequences of that were too great...[Quarriers] had said to us that this is a good opportunity and they convinced us that it was going to be a good opportunity, and I think they believed it.”²⁴¹⁶

4.33 On 11 September 1961, Hugh left Quarriers along with four other boys, including “Jok” whose account follows. The following day they sailed on the RMS Orion bound for Australia. For Hugh, “the voyage was fantastic. It was the first time that I really felt free.”²⁴¹⁷ He arrived on 15 October 1961, aged 13.



RMS Orion, date unknown. Source: [State Library of Queensland](#).

Life at Dhurringile (1961-1964)

4.34 Hugh was taken to Dhurringile. He did not know what to expect, but “I certainly didn’t think that I would be housed in a 68-room mansion.”²⁴¹⁸ During the Second World War, Dhurringile had been used to house German prisoners of war before being purchased by the Presbyterian Church to accommodate child migrants.²⁴¹⁹ During Hugh’s time there, Dhurringile housed between 14 and 17 boys—all from Scotland.²⁴²⁰

4.35 Hugh travelled 18 miles by bus each day to a technical college for his education, where the master of the form took a dislike to the boys from Dhurringile.²⁴²¹ As a result, Hugh left school aged 14 or 15 to work full

2414 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.115.

2415 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.120.

2416 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.120-121.

2417 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 89, at WIT.001.001.7533.

2418 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.126.

2419 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.128.

2420 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.128.

2421 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.141.

“It was constantly being bullied...I went to [Colin Tutchell] and complained about it and he told me, ‘Don’t be silly, be a man’.”

time on the farm: “My chore [on the farm] at the time was milking the cows in the morning and milking the cows at night and I was good at it. So because my schooling wasn’t going well, because I didn’t have the support that one would expect to get, [the farm manager and the superintendent] asked me whether I wanted to go on the farm, and I said yes. But really I didn’t...have a choice.”²⁴²² He considers that his education was “very badly” affected while he was at Dhurringile.²⁴²³

4.36 Hugh provided some insight into life within the home at Dhurringile, and how the staff treated the boys. The boys did the cleaning in the house and physical punishment was meted out.²⁴²⁴ The shower cubicles were open, and there was little privacy. Dick Read, the superintendent, “sometimes seemed to delight in supervising the showers. He seemed to encourage the boys into activities that a boy would normally want to do in private. Sometimes the boys would get an erection and he thought it was hilarious...Next time they did it, he’d belt them because they were filthy, dirty, grubby. That was the way he was.”²⁴²⁵

4.37 Colin Tutchell was the next superintendent of Dhurringile. His attitude was “not to take any emotional stuff from the boys, not to be sympathetic, not to

be caring. He regarded it that the most important thing for us was to be a man.”²⁴²⁶ Hugh was being bullied by other boys, and Tutchell did not take this seriously, or offer any support. In a report dated June 1962, which Hugh thinks was a report for the Presbyterian social services and for the Victorian State Government social services, Colin Tutchell wrote that “Hugh is showing steady improvement. He is well-mannered, neat and tidy and is a very willing boy around the house. At first he was not very popular with some of the boys, but appears to be adjusting better now.”²⁴²⁷ Hugh was being bullied by other boys and “[t]hat’s why I wasn’t liked by the other boys and I was reacting to their bullying. [Colin Tutchell] accepted...that I was being bullied, and I was the one that had to grow up and be a man.”²⁴²⁸

4.38 A further report dated January 1964, written a few months before Hugh left Dhurringile, “epitomised what that man [Colin Tutchell] was like.”²⁴²⁹ In that report, Colin Tutchell wrote that “Hugh has shown good improvement during the past 12 months and has learnt to shoulder the teasing and provocation from other lads.”²⁴³⁰ Hugh explained that the “teasing and provocation” referred to was Hugh being

2422 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.142.

2423 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.143.

2424 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.136-139.

2425 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.135.

2426 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.145.

2427 Report on Hugh McGowan, June 1962, at WIT.003.001.3657.

2428 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.146.

2429 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.146.

2430 Report on Hugh McGowan, January 1964, at WIT.001.001.3658; [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.153.

bullied by other boys: "It was constantly being bullied...There were threats. There was pushing around. There were insults...I went to [Colin Tutchell] and complained about it and he told me, 'Don't be silly, be a man'."²⁴³¹ After going to Tutchell, "[t]here was another boy who was younger than me and smaller than me and [the bullies] turned on him, and he was the subject of their bullying. So I was left alone, which [Colin Tutchell] has now interpreted as I've learnt to shoulder the teasing and provocation."²⁴³²

4.39 Around September 1964, during the period that Dhurringile was closing down, Peter Hannan, a previous superintendent from before Hugh's time, returned. Over a few days, he spoke to Hugh about sex, having found Hugh, then aged 16, reading a "raunchy" book: "he made me feel that he was guiding me in regard to what it was going to be like in the future if I got married and stuff like that."²⁴³³ He came back over several nights and the discussions about sex increased. One night Hugh woke up to find that Peter Hannan was in bed with him and he tried to rape Hugh. Hugh "was fortunately strong enough not to allow it...I managed to get out of bed and I told him I was going to report him and he whacked me...in the head. He told me to get dressed...I was scared, I was really frightened. He got dressed, he dragged me down to the van that we had, and he drove off."²⁴³⁴

4.40 Peter Hannan told Hugh that he was taking him to a youth detention centre

in Turana. He said he would not take him if Hugh did not tell anyone what had happened. Hugh promised to "keep [his] mouth shut" and did not tell anyone for "over 40 years."²⁴³⁵

4.41 Hugh had no recollection of inspections at Dhurringile, "[n]one whatsoever, I don't recall seeing anyone from anywhere come to me and say, 'How are you?'"²⁴³⁶

4.42 Hugh left Dhurringile in September 1964, when it closed down.²⁴³⁷ Hugh considered that he received no emotional support there and did not learn any life skills: "We didn't get a bit of tenderness or care, any caring or loving, which was just not available. That was not on the agenda."²⁴³⁸ Hugh was 16 years old.

"We didn't get a bit of tenderness or care...That was not on the agenda."

4.43 Hugh was then moved to Kilmany Park, a training farm in Victoria about 300km south-east of Dhurringile, also run by the Presbyterian Church. Five boys from Dhurringile moved there at that time. Hugh explained that "[b]ecause I'd already been taken out of school, it was decided I would be put on the farm and stay on the farm... We'd get up at 5 o'clock in the morning to go and milk the cows and we'd be back at 5 o'clock at night."²⁴³⁹

2431 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.153-154.

2432 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.153.

2433 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.161.

2434 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.161-162.

2435 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.162.

2436 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.158.

2437 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.159.

2438 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.135.

2439 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.164-165.

“...I didn’t know how to relate to people. I unwittingly brushed them off and they didn’t want to know me.”

4.44 One day Hugh slept in for five minutes and Eric Frith, the superintendent, “came into the room, stripped the blankets off me, saw that my hands were around my groin, and he gave me such a belting [with his hands] because [he thought] I was masturbating. I hadn’t been, and if I had, I don’t care, but he belted me because he claimed I was masturbating.”²⁴⁴⁰

4.45 On another occasion Eric Frith took Hugh and four other boys into his office and “belted the crap out of us with his hand” for having been caught smoking.²⁴⁴¹ Although there were incidents such as these that Hugh thought were “not fair,” he considered Kilmany to be “fairer” than Dhurringile and Quarriers.²⁴⁴² Hugh left Kilmany aged 17 and went to Melbourne.

Life after care

4.46 There was no aftercare having left Kilmany, “[a]bsolutely none.”²⁴⁴³

4.47 Hugh went on to have a successful career, although he “struggled.”²⁴⁴⁴ He said that he “was terribly lonely because I didn’t know how to relate to people. I unwittingly brushed them off and they didn’t want to know me.”²⁴⁴⁵ His relationship with his wife was lifesaving, as “[h]ad it not been

for [her], I would have been dead years ago...I would have joined [the] three others who committed suicide” and had been at Quarriers, Dhurringile, and Kilmany Park.²⁴⁴⁶ Hugh said: “It was all too much for them.”²⁴⁴⁷

4.48 In 2000, Hugh contacted the CMT who were able to track down his mother’s address and advise him that she had died around twenty years earlier. He was told his mother had nine siblings, news which “just floored [him].”²⁴⁴⁸ Six of her siblings had already died. Hugh also learnt that his mother had married and that he had a half-sister. He met her in 2005.²⁴⁴⁹

4.49 Hugh has campaigned on behalf of child migrants. He firmly believes “that the situation that child migrants found themselves in was controlled by the British and Australian Governments, the British Government by agreeing to sending us to Australia...the massive majority of [us] came without a passport or a birth certificate. I know I’m one of them that didn’t [have a passport]. We didn’t have personal documents. We came on someone else’s passport.”²⁴⁵⁰

“...the massive majority of [us] came without a passport or a birth certificate.”

2440 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.168.

2441 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.169.

2442 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.169-170.

2443 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.175.

2444 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.176.

2445 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.176-177.

2446 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.180.

2447 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.180.

2448 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.181.

2449 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.182.

2450 Transcript, day 176: Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.183.

“Jok”

Life in the UK and migration

4.50 “Jok” was born in Kirkcaldy in 1947. He was placed in Quarriers when aged eight months old, and remained until he was 13.²⁴⁵¹

4.51 “Jok” was sexually abused at Quarriers by a young man (a previous resident of Quarriers). Miss Christian, “Jok’s” housemother, allowed this abuser to stay in the cottage from time to time. “Jok” told her what had happened but she just dismissed it: “She just kept walking. I got the usual, a wave of the hand...left me standing there and that was the end of the conversation.”²⁴⁵² This was a lasting memory for “Jok”.²⁴⁵³

4.52 During the years he was in Quarriers, “Jok’s” mother visited him once a month. He was not aware of any other family.

4.53 “Jok” knew that a number of boys from Quarriers had gone to Australia. When he heard that more boys were to be sent he asked his mother if he could go. He was keen to go “because of what the other boys had said.”²⁴⁵⁴ “Jok’s” mother wrote a letter to Quarriers consenting to his migration to Australia: “she said in her letter that she thought Scotland wasn’t going to be productive in my life as far as working and there was a better chance because Australia was a new country, a new opening, and there was a better chance of me getting a better life out here in Australia.”²⁴⁵⁵

4.54 “Jok” did not recall any information being provided to him from Quarriers about life in Australia, other than that other boys had gone there and were looked after in a home run by the Presbyterian Church.²⁴⁵⁶

“...she said in her letter that...there was a better chance of me getting a better life out here in Australia.”

4.55 Prior to migration, “Jok” underwent a medical examination which he eventually passed. He failed the first time because his blood pressure was too high. He was tested again and passed. He was told the cause of his previous high blood pressure would have been his excitement about going to Australia. He recalled being provided with a trunk of clothes by Quarriers ahead of leaving.²⁴⁵⁷

4.56 He and four other boys of a similar age, including [Hugh McGowan](#), set off from Quarriers in September 1961. They sailed on the RMS Orion, arriving in Australia in October 1961. “Jok” was 13 years old. Mr Reid, the housemaster at Dhurringile (referred to by some witnesses as the superintendent) collected “Jok” and the other boys and drove them to their new home, where they arrived five days later. “Jok” did not know if he knew about Dhurringile prior to his migration. He did not “even think I could pronounce it.”²⁴⁵⁸

2451 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.4 and 8-9; Quarriers admission form, at QAR.001.001.2073.

2452 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.6.

2453 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.5.

2454 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.7-8.

2455 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.8; Letter from “Jok’s” mother to Mr Munro (Quarriers), 14 January 1961, at QAR.001.008.6462

2456 [Written statement of “Jok”](#), paragraph 38, at WIT.001.002.1879.

2457 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.9.

2458 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.12.

Life at Dhurringile (1961-1964)

4.57 “Jok” described Dhurringile as “a nice place.”²⁴⁵⁹ On arrival, he recognised other boys from Quarriers. There were around 16 children there in total.²⁴⁶⁰

4.58 “Jok” described Mr Reid as “strict, but we just took it in our stride.”²⁴⁶¹ The food in Dhurringile was “edible, because we grew our own fruit and vegetables and we had animals and the farmer would kill what we needed to kill, whether it was sheep or cattle or whatever.”²⁴⁶² All the boys worked on the farm on “a rotating roster” of tasks.²⁴⁶³

4.59 “Jok” had told his mother that he would “try and write every week” following his arrival in Australia but that became once a month.²⁴⁶⁴ He does not remember receiving a reply. He does not know if his mother ever received his letters. Nonetheless, the lack of replies “put in [his] mind that [he] really wasn’t wanted.”²⁴⁶⁵

4.60 “Jok” had no visitors and did not recall seeing any social workers or anyone from a welfare department.²⁴⁶⁶ He “never” had any contact with anyone from Quarriers: “Not one call. Not one jot of anything.”²⁴⁶⁷

4.61 “Jok” was allocated a family that he stayed with during some holiday periods,

including Christmas time. This proved to be a very happy experience for “Jok” and, at the time of giving evidence, he was still in touch with them.²⁴⁶⁸

4.62 For “Jok”, life at Dhurringile was “tough, because you sort of had to...rough it. If you couldn’t get something done in one way, the boys were...inclined to say, well, if we can’t do it this way, we’ll do it that way. We ended up knowing how to fix fences... And you learned how to pick the fruit... You learned how to milk cows, you learned how to look after pigs...you learned how to separate the milk, because we got money for the big drums of cream...So we learned how to survive off the land...it wasn’t easy because when it gets hot...you’re working in 40, 44-degree temperatures, and you’ve got a big bush hat on and you’re in the shade of trees and you’re still working... That’s the way it was done. I think that’s what made me tough because you had to work to survive.”²⁴⁶⁹

“...we learned how to survive...it wasn’t easy”.

4.63 Overall, Dhurringile was “for sure” a positive experience for “Jok”.²⁴⁷⁰

2459 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.14.

2460 A party of 11 boys had been sent from Quarrier’s Village to Dhurringile in 1960, in addition to “Jok’s” party. See Volume 2 and Constantine *et al.*, paragraphs 17.36-17.42, and 31.1.

2461 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.13.

2462 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.19.

2463 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.19.

2464 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.21.

2465 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.22.

2466 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.23.

2467 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.24.

2468 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.21.

2469 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.24-25.

2470 Transcript, day 173: “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.25.

“...I found all that out when I went back to Quarriers in 2005. But they knew about it, but I was never told, even after I left.”

Life after care

4.64 In 1964, when he was 16 years old, “Jok” left Dhurringile and joined the Australian Navy. He had no communication from anyone from Dhurringile after he left: “That was me, I was on my own.”²⁴⁷¹ One thing that remained in his life was the connection he had established with the family with whom he used to spend holiday periods.²⁴⁷²

4.65 “Jok” considered that the “biggest mistake by Quarriers” was not communicating with him about his extended family: “I think that this is something they could have done...They had a history of me that I didn’t know anything about.”²⁴⁷³ When “Jok” visited Quarriers in 2005, he found they had information about him and his family: “[Quarriers] gave me my papers, admission papers and everything, the papers from my mother being interviewed by the directors of the home to say that they had investigated her lifestyle, she was a poor lady being looked after by her [family] because she couldn’t afford to live in her own house, couldn’t afford to look after her son...and I found all that out when I went back to Quarriers in 2005. But they knew about it, but I was never told, even after I left.”²⁴⁷⁴

4.66 “Jok” felt “time in care has made me tougher. I wouldn’t want other kids to go through what I had to.”²⁴⁷⁵ “Jok” still saw himself as Scottish, and explained how he loved coming back to visit Scotland.²⁴⁷⁶

“I wouldn’t want other kids to go through what I had to.”

2471 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.26.

2472 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.26.

2473 [Written statement of “Jok”](#), paragraph 77, at WIT.001.002.1885; [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.27.

2474 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.27-28.

2475 [Written statement of “Jok”](#), paragraph 76, at WIT.001.002.1885.

2476 [Transcript, day 173](#): “Jok”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.29.

5

Good Shepherd Sisters

5.1 The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd was founded by St Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, and approved by Pope Gregory XVI in 1835. It was established to provide residential care for women and, later on, for children facing difficulties. The Good Shepherd Sisters ran several institutions in Scotland from the 1930s to the early 1980s, including Woodfield Children's Home (also known as the Good Shepherd Home of Colinton), The Good Shepherd Centre, Bishopton, and St Euphrasia's.

5.2 Evidence provided by the Good Shepherd Sisters to the Inquiry indicates that 15 girls, aged six to 13, were migrated from the Good Shepherd Home in Colinton between 1947 and 1949.²⁴⁷⁷ However, two of the 15 children left with their mother.²⁴⁷⁸

Applicants

5.3 Four SCAI applicants were migrated from the Good Shepherd Home in Colinton; two in 1947 and two in 1949. Their histories are detailed below.

"Maryanne"

Life in the UK

5.4 "Maryanne" was born in August 1933. Her mother "left" when she was three years old. Her paternal grandmother looked after the family for a period, but "it got too much for her" and her father looked after them on his own for a while.²⁴⁷⁹ He was sometimes violent to "Maryanne".²⁴⁸⁰ In around 1941, "Maryanne's" sister broke her arm while they were playing, and had to be taken to hospital. "Maryanne" thought that "the hospital staff must have noticed we weren't very well cared for" and alerted the Social Welfare Department.²⁴⁸¹ "Maryanne" and both her siblings were then put into care.

5.5 "Maryanne" and her sister were admitted to Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, in February 1941.²⁴⁸² There, "Maryanne" "was very scared all the time."²⁴⁸³ The regime at Kilmarnock was very strict. "Maryanne" and others wet the bed, and then they would be forced "to stand with a sheet over their heads in front of everybody and we wouldn't get any breakfast. It was very embarrassing. They used to make us take our knickers off at night and one of the older girls would smell them. I was always in trouble and would be made to stand in the corner with my pants on my head."²⁴⁸⁴

2477 Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Parts C and D response to section 21 notice, Woodfield Children's Home, Colinton, 1945-1970, at GSH.001.001.0411-0412.

2478 [Transcript, day 194](#): Sister Rosemary Kean, at TRN-5-000000025, pp.6-7.

2479 [Written statement of "Maryanne"](#), paragraph 4, at WIT.001.002.2912.

2480 [Written statement of "Maryanne"](#), paragraph 4, at WIT.001.002.2913.

2481 [Written statement of "Maryanne"](#), paragraph 5, at WIT.001.002.2913.

2482 Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, Children's register, at NAZ.001.001.8020, p.201.

2483 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6275.

2484 [Written statement of "Maryanne"](#), paragraphs 26-27, at WIT.001.002.2916.

5.6 The older girls at Nazareth House “did all the disciplining, knocking us around with a cane across the legs. That was their job.”²⁴⁸⁵ The girls had to do chores, including scrubbing and polishing the floors. When officials came to inspect the home, “we would all be made to dress up for them. We would only speak to them with a nun supervising.”²⁴⁸⁶ “Maryanne” “never spoke to anybody about anything. I don’t think I would have known who to speak [to] anyway, even if I’d wanted to.”²⁴⁸⁷

5.7 The regime was harsh and very strict. On one occasion, “Maryanne” made the mistake of speaking during a period of silence, “and got into big trouble...they bruised all my arms, they hit me with a stick, and my sister was very upset and she wrote to my dad and told him, and he came up to the convent and took us out of there.”²⁴⁸⁸ “Maryanne” noted that: “Even though he had been doing the same he was very angry. I don’t think he ever reported it to anybody, I certainly never did.”²⁴⁸⁹ “Maryanne” left Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, in December 1943.

5.8 Following some family discord, “Maryanne” and her brother were sent away from the family home once more, “Maryanne” to Woodfield, and her brother to Spean Bridge. “Maryanne” entered Woodfield in March 1946.²⁴⁹⁰

5.9 For “Maryanne”, Woodfield “wasn’t as strict as Nazareth House had been.”²⁴⁹¹ There were still chores to do at Woodfield, “but I never got knocked around.”²⁴⁹² During the holidays, “Maryanne” returned to her father’s home.²⁴⁹³

Migration

5.10 “Maryanne” attended St Thomas Aquinas school in Edinburgh while she stayed at Woodfield.²⁴⁹⁴ One day at school, “a gentleman came in...and a lady, and they said, ‘Who would like to go to Australia?’ I didn’t know where Australia was, but I thought it must be better than what I’ve had so far, so I put my hand up.”²⁴⁹⁵ Another girl in the class also put her hand up, “and she came over with me.”²⁴⁹⁶

“I didn’t know where Australia was, but I thought it must be better than what I’ve had so far, so I put my hand up.”

5.11 After “Maryanne” said she would like to migrate, her father gave his consent to her migration and the paperwork was signed. She believed he “thought I was going to Perth in Scotland, not in Australia.”²⁴⁹⁷ There are two migration forms for “Maryanne”; one was signed in February 1947, with

2485 Written statement of “Maryanne”, paragraph 29, at WIT.001.002.2917.

2486 Written statement of “Maryanne”, paragraph 22, at WIT.001.002.2916.

2487 Written statement of “Maryanne”, paragraph 24, at WIT.001.002.2916.

2488 Transcript, day 114: “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6275.

2489 Written statement of “Maryanne”, paragraph 32, at WIT.001.002.2917.

2490 Good Shepherd, Admission records for “Maryanne”, at GSH.001.001.0484.

2491 Written statement of “Maryanne”, paragraph 36, at WIT.001.002.2918.

2492 Written statement of “Maryanne”, paragraph 51, at WIT.001.002.2920.

2493 *How a Letter Changed a Life*, Biography of “Maryanne”, at WIT.003.001.5647.

2494 Transcript, day 114: “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6278.

2495 Transcript, day 114: “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6279.

2496 Transcript, day 114: “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6279.

2497 Written statement of “Maryanne”, paragraph 56, at WIT.001.002.2921.

her father's name appearing both as father and "on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Council for Scotland, Victoria St. Edinburgh."²⁴⁹⁸ This seems to have been an error as, at the end of August that year, another copy of the form was signed, this time with Father P. F. Quille signing on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Committee, and her father's name again appearing in the parental consent section.²⁴⁹⁹ "Maryanne's" medical examination form was signed shortly before the final LEM3 form was signed.²⁵⁰⁰

"Dad thought I was going to Perth in Scotland, not in Australia."

5.12 Before "Maryanne" left Scotland, her teacher "organised a big party and I got all these lovely gifts, which I never, ever saw again when I got to Australia".²⁵⁰¹ She and five other girls from Woodfield set sail on the SS Ormonde on 10 October 1947. There were many other children on the ship from institutions across England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. For "Maryanne", the trip "was great fun...it was freedom at last."²⁵⁰²

5.13 When they set sail, "Maryanne" and several other girls believed that, when they arrived in Australia, they would be adopted into families.²⁵⁰³

5.14 When the ship arrived at Fremantle, the children all went to St Joseph's Orphanage at Subiaco, which was run by the Sisters of Mercy. "Maryanne" and the others with her "were very disappointed to know that I was going to an orphanage. That really upset me, all of us, because we didn't think it was going to be like that."²⁵⁰⁴ "Maryanne" was aged 14 when she arrived.

"...we were told it was going to be a much better life...we were very disappointed to know I was going to an orphanage. That really upset me."

Life at St Joseph's Orphanage, Subiaco (1947-c.1949)

5.15 There were "at least 80" children at St Joseph's, including Australian children.²⁵⁰⁵ Many of them were orphans.²⁵⁰⁶ St Joseph's was run by the Sisters of Mercy.

5.16 St Joseph's "wasn't very nice when we first got there".²⁵⁰⁷ Promised renovations had not been completed and there was "only one big bath in a room with sand on the floor."²⁵⁰⁸ Once the work had been completed, "there were more baths so we could all have a bath

2498 LEM3 form for "Maryanne", 16 February 1947, at NAA.001.001.0930.

2499 LEM3 form for "Maryanne", 26 August 1947, at NAA.001.001.0931.

2500 Medical examination form for "Maryanne", at NAA.001.001.0932.

2501 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6283-6284.

2502 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6287.

2503 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6282.

2504 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6282.

2505 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6290.

2506 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6290.

2507 [Transcript, day 114](#): "Maryanne", at TRN.001.004.6284.

2508 [Written statement of "Maryanne"](#), paragraph 79, at WIT.001.002.2924.

“When the people came round...they’d have these beautiful dolls on our beds, and when the people had gone, they were all taken off again.”

before bed every night if we wanted.”²⁵⁰⁹ On arrival, “they put us in these other clothes and we weren’t allowed to wear shoes.”²⁵¹⁰ “Maryanne” wrote to her father at one point to tell him about having no shoes, and “he sent me a pair of fur-lined boots” which were not given to “Maryanne” until she left the home four years later, by which time “they were far too small.”²⁵¹¹ The only time the children wore

shoes was “when we had visitors coming round, where they gave us shoes and socks to wear to make it look good.”²⁵¹² Likewise, although there were routinely no toys or books, “[w]hen the people came round to have a look at the place, they’d have these beautiful dolls on our beds, and when the people had gone, they were all taken off again.”²⁵¹³ At Christmas, “they would wake us



St Joseph’s Girls’ Orphanage, dormitory, c.1920s/1960s. Photograph from the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea Archives and Heritage Centre collection. Source: [Find & Connect](#).

2509 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 80, at WIT.001.002.2924.

2510 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6284, p.20.

2511 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6284, p.14.

2512 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6284, p.14.

2513 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6294.

“I got knocked around really bad by Sister Theresa”.

up for Midnight Mass. When we got back, there would be all these presents on our beds, which was lovely, but we never saw them again, they were all collected.”²⁵¹⁴ There were no birthday presents, but children did “go and see the old people and get bread and jam, which we really looked forward to.”²⁵¹⁵ When she gave her statement to the Inquiry, “Maryanne” thought “[i]t sounds awful now.”²⁵¹⁶

5.17 When she arrived at St Joseph’s, “Maryanne” “was hoping to go back to school.”²⁵¹⁷ Instead, “Maryanne” was made to work in the kitchen.²⁵¹⁸ While “Maryanne” and her peers would get “bread and dripping... We cooked roast dinners for [the nuns and priests] and good meals”.²⁵¹⁹

5.18 The Sisters taught “Maryanne” to sew, and the girls were also taught cake decorating which she enjoyed, but “we didn’t have any sex education whatsoever, nothing.”²⁵²⁰ When girls started having periods, they would “pinch some sheets and tear them up and use them and have to wash them. Then you put them on the line and someone would steal them. It was terrible.”²⁵²¹ Throughout her time at St Joseph’s, “Maryanne” received no emotional support.

5.19 Children who wet the bed at St Joseph’s had to stand “with their sheets on their heads, which surprised me, because I didn’t think it would go on there as well. But I was lucky, I was over it by then.”²⁵²² Nonetheless, girls “were physically punished all the time.”²⁵²³ On one occasion, “Maryanne” “had to take a jug of tea down to the men in the workshop and someone closed the door and [the Sisters] couldn’t find me...I got into trouble, I got knocked around really bad by Sister Theresa, who was the head nun”, who accused “Maryanne” of being a “hussy”.²⁵²⁴ Sister Theresa “slapped me across the face, back and forth, which was pretty horrible.”²⁵²⁵ “Another girl who was at St Joseph’s with “Maryanne” “has since told [her] that she saw [“Maryanne”] getting slapped across the face [by Mother Theresa] one time when [“Maryanne”] nearly fell on the floor. She said it was very upsetting.”²⁵²⁶

5.20 There was much cruelty at St Joseph’s. One Sister “had a stick and if you got out of line or you talked, she’d poke you in the arm with this, so they were quite cruel.”²⁵²⁷ There was also “Sister Jerome, who was very cruel. No one liked her very much.

2514 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6296.

2515 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6297.

2516 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 19, at WIT.001.002.2915.

2517 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6291.

2518 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6292.

2519 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6293.

2520 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6298-6299.

2521 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6299.

2522 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6293.

2523 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 99, at WIT.001.002.2927.

2524 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6294; *How a Letter Changed a Life*, Biography of “Maryanne”, at WIT.003.001.5652.

2525 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6294.

2526 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 100, at WIT.001.002.2927.

2527 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6294.

She was in the dormitory.²⁵²⁸ “Maryanne” once saw a girl, who could not speak properly due to a defective palate, being knocked down the stairs by Sister Jerome.²⁵²⁹ On one occasion, “Maryanne” was beaten by Sister Peter for a mistake she made while working in the nursery.²⁵³⁰ The only positive care experience for “Maryanne” was that Sister Ursula “was really good to me”, and once comforted her after she had had a beating from Mother Theresa.²⁵³¹

“...they were quite cruel.”

5.21 The abusive practices at St Joseph’s went unchallenged. Although visitors came to the home, they did not speak to the children. The practice of dressing children differently and putting toys on the children’s beds persisted and the girls “had to work for weeks to get the place spruced up for them” when inspectors came.²⁵³² “Maryanne” “made friends with some of the other girls, but there was nobody I could turn to if I had any worries or concerns.”²⁵³³

Life after care

5.22 When “Maryanne” was 16 or 17 years old, the Sisters “got me a job in a belt factory, which I hated because I wanted to

do something better than that because I was a good sewer.”²⁵³⁴ At first, she continued to lodge at St Joseph’s while she was working. The girls who were lodging there had to “give the nuns our [pay] envelopes and they gave us so much for our fares and things like that. That was all.”²⁵³⁵ When she eventually moved out in 1952, there was no discharge procedure, and she was given no advice.²⁵³⁶

5.23 “Maryanne” worked at the belt factory for about a year, before moving to a job “as a telephonist in the public works in East Perth.”²⁵³⁷ It was there that she met her husband, who she married in 1956. The couple went on to have four children. She renewed her relationship with her brother after he made a surprise visit to her in Fremantle.²⁵³⁸ They were close as children.²⁵³⁹ She found out that, after he was placed at Spean Bridge and she had been sent to Woodfield, he “went into the army. He was over in India and he was very upset when he came home and I wasn’t there.”²⁵⁴⁰ He visited Australia just before “Maryanne’s” wedding and stayed for almost a year with her and her fiancé, before having to return to work on the merchant ship where he was serving.²⁵⁴¹ “Maryanne’s” father, however, did not even acknowledge her wedding and that left her feeling “bitterly disappointed.”²⁵⁴²

2528 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6297.

2529 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 103, at WIT.001.002.2928.

2530 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Maryanne”, at WIT.003.001.5218.

2531 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6297 and 6299.

2532 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 96, at WIT.001.002.2926.

2533 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 98, at WIT.001.002.2927.

2534 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6300.

2535 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6301.

2536 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6301.

2537 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 109, at WIT.001.002.2929.

2538 *How a Letter Changed a Life*, Biography of “Maryanne”, at WIT.003.001.5658.

2539 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6304.

2540 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6303.

2541 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6303.

2542 *How a Letter Changed a Life*, Biography of “Maryanne”, at WIT.003.001.5659.

5.24 In 1976, “Maryanne” visited Scotland with her son.²⁵⁴³ That was the first time that “Maryanne” had seen her mother and father since she was 14 years old. When they met, “[t]here was nothing there...I didn’t have any feelings at all for either of them...No bond, nothing.”²⁵⁴⁴ She was able to develop a relationship with her sister, but when “Maryanne” provided evidence to the Inquiry she was “no longer in touch with any of [her] family.”²⁵⁴⁵

“There was nothing there... No bond, nothing.”

5.25 After her husband’s death, a close friend wrote “Maryanne’s” biography based on her own long-hand notes.²⁵⁴⁶ “Maryanne” felt it was important that her story was told and that writing it down had encouraged others to do the same.

“Rose”

Life in the UK

5.26 “Rose” was born in 1938, and was one of nine siblings, although she believed, until 1997, that she was one of five. She was admitted to Woodfield with her older sister in December 1945. Her younger sister was admitted at a later date, although “at the time I didn’t even know my younger sister was my sister.”²⁵⁴⁷ Woodfield only housed girls.²⁵⁴⁸ Although the Sisters at Woodfield “were pretty strict”, “Rose” did not “remember getting whacked there.”²⁵⁴⁹

Migration

5.27 When “Rose” was about eight years old, “[w]e were all asked as a group who wanted to go to Australia. I think we nearly all put our hand up. I thought I was going somewhere for a holiday.”²⁵⁵⁰ Once “Rose” had “consented”, her mother signed the LEM3 form for her migration in February 1947; she “virtually gave me away.”²⁵⁵¹ Father P. F. Quille signed the form, both as the representative of the sponsoring organisation—the Catholic Child Welfare Council—and as witness to her mother’s signature.²⁵⁵² “Rose” did not “remember

2543 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6302.

2544 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6302.

2545 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 122, at WIT.001.002.2931.

2546 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6286; *How a Letter Changed a Life*, Biography of “Maryanne”, at WIT.003.001.5629.

2547 Good Shepherd, Admission records for “Rose”, at GSH.001.001.0493, p.9; [Transcript, day 174](#): “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.133. “Rose’s” brother and younger sister provided evidence to SCAL: see “John” (MEF) “Trish” (MZW), below.

2548 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.133.

2549 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.134.

2550 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.134.

2551 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.134.

2552 LEM3 form for “Rose”, at TUA.001.001.0006.

“They taught us how to work and they taught us how to pray, but that was about it.”

getting any examination or health tests” but knew that her migration form recorded her general medical condition.²⁵⁵³

5.28 “Rose” and her sister did not see their mother before leaving. They boarded the SS Ormonde in October 1947, with five other girls and a group of boys.²⁵⁵⁴ On the ship, the girls “mixed together with the boys from Scotland and one of the boys told me there was a boy with my surname. That’s when I met my brother for the first time.”²⁵⁵⁵

5.29 The ship docked at Fremantle in early November 1947. “Rose’s” brother “was put back on the truck...I was calling after him not to go”, but he was taken to Bindoon and she did not see him again until years later.²⁵⁵⁶

Life at St Joseph’s Orphanage, Subiaco (1947-c.1956)

5.30 “Rose” and her older sister were taken to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco. It was run by the Sisters of Mercy “but they had no mercy.”²⁵⁵⁷ There was also “a foundling home that had boys and girls in it up to the age of 5. Once the boys were 5 they went to Castledare.”²⁵⁵⁸

5.31 “Rose’s” experience of life at St Joseph’s was very similar to that described by “Maryanne”.

5.32 When they arrived, “Rose” and the others “were given lunch...and there were

beautiful tablecloths on the table...it was lovely.”²⁵⁵⁹ The welcoming lunch was a one-off, and “from then on we just got on with our lives, answering the bells and commands. They taught us how to work and they taught us how to pray, but that was about it.”²⁵⁶⁰



St Joseph’s Orphanage, Subiaco, orphanage dining room, c.1901/1950. Photograph from the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea Archives and Heritage Centre collection. Source: [Find & Connect](#).

5.33 At St Joseph’s, “Rose” and the other girls would wake up “at 6 o’clock in the morning and immediately [be] on our knees praying. Then we would get dressed, do our chores, and then go to church. After that, we had breakfast and...do whatever other work needed to be done. Then we had school. After school we had some leisure time before the evening meal, and then we had night church and then there was homework... After homework we went to bed, but before we got into bed we had to go the toilet in a row of buckets...While we were doing that a

2553 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.135.

2554 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.135.

2555 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.135. See “John’s” (MEF) account.

2556 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.136-137.

2557 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.137.

2558 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.137.

2559 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.138.

2560 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.138.

couple of the senior girls would be standing there. There was no privacy. The doors were locked at night and we'd say our prayers at the side of our beds before we got in."²⁵⁶¹

"There was no privacy."

5.34 The girls at St Joseph's slept in dormitories of 75 to 80 girls, and the girls who wet the bed slept on the balcony.²⁵⁶² The dormitories were overseen by Sister Matilde, and once in bed, "we couldn't move. Sister Matilde walked about and up and down the dormitory and if we moved she would hit us with her strap."²⁵⁶³

5.35 The meals at St Joseph's "were terrible" and "Rose" was "belted for not eating them."²⁵⁶⁴ Breakfast, which was usually porridge made from semolina or sago, came with "a cup of tea, but it was what the nuns had left over and it had been brewing for a couple of days."²⁵⁶⁵ If a girl did not eat the food, "you had to sit until everybody else had finished and then you'd get hit by one of the nuns."²⁵⁶⁶ "Rose" would sometimes take a paper bag with her in which to hide her food.²⁵⁶⁷

5.36 There was a weekly shower, and the rest of the time the girls would use basins to "wash our hands and face and then the nun would turn the light off so we could wash the

rest in private. There were no toothbrushes. I didn't clean my teeth until I went out to work at the age of 16."²⁵⁶⁸ The girls got one pair of clean underwear each week, and "never had shoes unless we were going out to a funeral or to the church."²⁵⁶⁹ There were "no toys or games", and the only respite from the daily routine was two trips a year, one at Christmas and one on St Patrick's day.²⁵⁷⁰ On St Patrick's day "we would go to one of the big ovals in Perth, where the bishop would say Mass to all the Catholic schools."²⁵⁷¹ At Christmas "we would all go into the city to watch movies", and on these occasions "we'd get a bit of Christmas cake and a bucket of ice cream."²⁵⁷² On Christmas Eve, the girls "would have Midnight Mass, which was lovely. When we got back to our dormitories, they'd give us a cup of cocoa and a biscuit and there would be a wrapped gift on the end of every bed. We were allowed to open them and see what was inside and then we had to put them back. When we woke up in the morning, all the gifts were gone."²⁵⁷³

5.37 The girls were educated at the orphanage, and "Rose" considered herself "lucky" because, instead of having her education curtailed at "sixth standard", as was usual, she "went up to seventh standard. I was 14 when I finished schooling."²⁵⁷⁴

2561 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.139.

2562 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.146.

2563 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, pp.139-140.

2564 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.140.

2565 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.140.

2566 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.140.

2567 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.140.

2568 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.141.

2569 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.141.

2570 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.141.

2571 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.141.

2572 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.143.

2573 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, pp.143-144.

2574 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of "Rose", at TRN-5-000000004, p.142.

“The nuns told us that our periods were us getting punished by God.”

5.38 Shortly after arriving, “Rose” and the others “were told by the nuns that we had no family, no mother and no father. We just had to live with that belief.”²⁵⁷⁵ Despite this, “one of the first things we had to do while we were at school was to write letters to our families. I don’t know what happened to them. I don’t think they ever went anywhere.”²⁵⁷⁶

“...we were told by the nuns that we had no family”.

5.39 The Sisters did not teach the girls about puberty. When the girls started their periods, “[t]he nuns told us that our periods were us getting punished by God. We were never given any of the proper stuff...All we had was a piece of elastic, two pins and some material that we had to wash ourselves by hand.”²⁵⁷⁷

5.40 Chores that had to be done by the girls included waxing and polishing floors on their hands and knees, and working in the laundry or kitchen. “Rose” “was mainly polishing floors.”²⁵⁷⁸ Sometimes she had to “pick the olives”; if the girls filled a four gallon tin with olives they were given a sixpence.²⁵⁷⁹

5.41 When “Rose” was aged 14, about five years after she was migrated, her mother migrated to Australia on a government-

assisted scheme. “Rose’s” mother “would come up now and again to see us but then she met this man and that was it...I never saw my mum after that.”²⁵⁸⁰ Although “Rose” had been given the choice to go and live with her mother at that time, she “didn’t want to go...I didn’t know her.”²⁵⁸¹ By this time, “Rose’s” older sister had left St Joseph’s, but “she would come back and visit every couple of weeks.”²⁵⁸² After “Rose” had been at St Joseph’s “for a while”, she was told that her “sister was coming out as well. I didn’t understand because I thought she was meaning my older sister. It was then that I found out I had a younger sister. My younger sister was supposed to be going to South Australia, but when my older sister learned that she insisted that our younger sister come to St Joseph’s instead. The Reverend Mother then arranged for that to happen.”²⁵⁸³ However, with “Rose” being five years older than her younger sister, they “didn’t have much contact.”²⁵⁸⁴

5.42 Once a year “someone from the health department came to St Joseph’s” but did not speak to the girls.²⁵⁸⁵ This lack of proper and effective oversight meant that the “very harsh and cruel” treatment meted out by nuns went unchallenged, even though “[w]e all suffered mental and physical abuse.”²⁵⁸⁶

2575 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.138.

2576 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.142.

2577 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.142.

2578 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.143.

2579 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.143.

2580 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.144.

2581 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.145.

2582 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.144.

2583 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.145.

2584 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.145.

2585 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.145.

2586 Transcript, day 174: Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.146.

“I never got any of the pay back when I eventually left at 18.”

5.43 The way the Sisters spoke to the girls was emotionally abusive, and was sometimes accompanied by physical abuse. They told the girls that “we had come from the slums and that we should be grateful we were in a better place now.”²⁵⁸⁷ “Rose” gave a statement to the Western Australia Redress Scheme, in which she stated that “when she was about ten years old Sister Theresa Joseph said to her ‘I would leave your corpse at my feet’. When [‘Rose’] asked Sister Theresa Joseph what a corpse was, the nun slapped her hard across the face.”²⁵⁸⁸

5.44 The physical abuse sometimes involved the use of implements: “Every nun carried a leather strap rolled up in their pocket”, which was used to hit children, sometimes “on the bottom of our feet.”²⁵⁸⁹ “Rose” acknowledged that “we were children and we would do naughty things, but I don’t think the punishment was ever appropriate.”²⁵⁹⁰

5.45 During her last two years at St Joseph’s, “Rose” worked for the Land and Service Department of the government. She had to give her wages “to the nun in charge and she would give me the money for the bus...I never got any of the pay back when I eventually left at 18.”²⁵⁹¹

Life after care

5.46 “Rose” was given “no preparation for leaving” St Joseph’s.²⁵⁹² There was no aftercare. She went to stay with her older sister, “but it didn’t work out.”²⁵⁹³ Eventually she secured a room in Subiaco, where she stayed until she got married.²⁵⁹⁴ In all this time, “[n]obody from St Joseph’s ever checked to see if I was okay or gave me any support at all.”²⁵⁹⁵

5.47 “Rose” married when she was 20 years old. She and her husband “had three beautiful kids”, but “the marriage was abusive.”²⁵⁹⁶ “Rose” “had gone from the orphanage into marriage only to be treated the same way. I was so used to getting whacked around in the orphanage, I didn’t know any different when I left.”²⁵⁹⁷ “Rose” recognised that her decision to marry was “influenced by her acute vulnerability and lack of social support at that time.”²⁵⁹⁸

5.48 In 1983, “Rose” left her husband and had different jobs, until she retired aged 76.²⁵⁹⁹

2587 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.146.

2588 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Rose”, at WIT.003.001.5212.

2589 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.146.

2590 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.146.

2591 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.147.

2592 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.147.

2593 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.147.

2594 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.148.

2595 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.148.

2596 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.148. “Rose” details the abuse she experienced in her marriage in her statement to the Western Australia Redress Scheme.

2597 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.153.

2598 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Rose”, at WIT.003.001.5213.

2599 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.148.

5.49 In the late 1990s, “Rose” took part in two television shows, “speaking about my experiences as a child migrant.”²⁶⁰⁰ In 1997, she “went back to the UK with other former child migrants...paid for by the Sisters of Mercy.”²⁶⁰¹ “Rose” noted that “there was only one other Scottish migrant on the trip.”²⁶⁰² When “Rose” arrived in the UK, she was met by her older sister. After spending some time in the UK with the other former child migrants, she spent time with her sister and her husband “and it was lovely. She died two years later.”²⁶⁰³

5.50 “Rose” tried to trace another of her younger sisters who had not been migrated, without success.²⁶⁰⁴ Having been separated from her siblings as a child, “Rose” found it difficult to form a relationship with them “because we were all separated. My younger sister [who was migrated] and I now have a good relationship but it took a long time.”²⁶⁰⁵

5.51 “Rose” tried to retrieve her records from the Sisters of Mercy and St Joseph’s, but “their response every time is that there was a fire and the records don’t exist

anymore.”²⁶⁰⁶ The records that did exist had “lots of mistakes”, such as misspellings of her surname and an incorrect birth date for her younger sister.²⁶⁰⁷

5.52 As a result of her time in care, “Rose” “felt like a ‘nobody’ all her life.”²⁶⁰⁸ She had a sleep disorder for many years, was “very afraid of the dark”, had periods of depression and anxiety, and had “intrusive memories and flashbacks to traumatic events.”²⁶⁰⁹ In addition, “the abusive treatment at St Joseph’s ‘took me from my church and damaged my faith.’”²⁶¹⁰ She “never had any support or counselling regarding my time in care. If I have ever had any problems, I have just asked Dr White from Tuart Place. She’s very helpful and supportive. I think I’m too old for anything else.”²⁶¹¹ “Rose” always found it upsetting to be asked about her parents, and so had difficulty if asked “to fill in any official documents, like for the doctor” if they included questions about her parents; “I just say I’m an orphan.”²⁶¹²

2600 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.149-150.

2601 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.150.

2602 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.150. “Anne” was also on this trip.

2603 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.151.

2604 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.152. Documentation of “Rose” and her sister’s search for their younger sister who was adopted in the UK can be found at BEW-000000014.

2605 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.151.

2606 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.151.

2607 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.151.

2608 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Rose”, at WIT.003.001.5214.

2609 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Rose”, at WIT.003.001.5214; [Transcript, day 174](#): “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.153.

2610 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Rose”, at WIT.003.001.5214.

2611 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.150.

2612 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.154.

“Our biggest problem as child migrants is that we had no identity.”

5.53 For “Rose”, the “biggest problem as child migrants is that we had no identity.”²⁶¹³ “Rose” did not receive her birth certificate until she got married, and she found it “so hard having no identification document when I was a teenager.”²⁶¹⁴ She felt that her childhood had been “lost. That’s the sad part about it.”²⁶¹⁵

“Trish”

Life in the UK

5.54 “Trish” was born in Edinburgh in May 1943, the youngest of five siblings. She had only “vague memories” of childhood before care.²⁶¹⁶

5.55 The records of the Good Shepherd Sisters for Woodfield Children’s Home, Colinton, state that “Trish” and three of her siblings were admitted in 1947, after they returned from having been evacuated to Inverness towards the end of the war.²⁶¹⁷ Her eldest sister “was 15 and she said she didn’t want to go to the orphanage, so she went down to England to get a job instead.”²⁶¹⁸

Migration

5.56 “Trish” was only five years old when she was migrated to Australia. She had no memory of being spoken to about going to Australia, or of any health checks.²⁶¹⁹ Her mother signed the form consenting to her migration in January 1949. Alongside her mother’s signature is that of Father P. F. Quille, who signed both as representative of the Catholic Child Welfare Committee, and as witness to her mother’s signature.²⁶²⁰

2613 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.151.

2614 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.152.

2615 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.154.

2616 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.101.

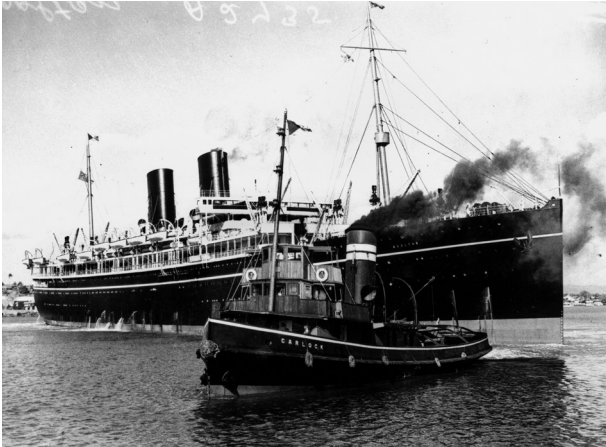
2617 Good Shepherd, Colinton, Admission records for “Trish”, at GSH.001.001.0493, p.10. “Trish” (MZW) believes that she entered Colinton when she “was about 3”; the Good Shepherd records indicate that she would have been four years old when she entered their care.

2618 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.102. Good Shepherd records indicate that “Trish’s” sisters entered their care about 22 months before “Trish” (MZW), and it is not clear why all three were not admitted at the same time. One of “Trish’s” sisters, “Rose”, and “Trish’s” half-brother, “John” (MEF), also provided evidence to the Inquiry. “Trish” does not believe that the dates on her admission document are accurate. [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (MZW) at TRN-5-000000007, p.102.

2619 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.103.

2620 LEM3 form for “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0021.

5.57 “Trish” left Woodfield and boarded the RMS Mooltan at Tilbury in April 1949. Although three of her siblings had been migrated to Australia in October 1947, she did not know that at the time. She knew, from a photograph, that she had a case with her, but did not know what it contained.



Mooltan, being tugged into the port, 1936. Source: [State Library of Queensland](#).

5.58 In May 1949, the Mooltan arrived at Fremantle. “Trish” had originally been due to continue on to Adelaide in South Australia, but her oldest sister, who was already at St Joseph’s, Subiaco, with another sister, “made a big fuss” when she found out that “Trish” was due to be sent to Adelaide.²⁶²¹ A letter from the Secretary of the Catholic Migration Committee of South Australia to the Director of Migration in late May 1949 confirms that, after a request from Father Stinson, “Trish” was to be taken off the ship at Fremantle instead of Adelaide.

5.59 “Trish” disembarked the Mooltan at Fremantle, but was immediately quarantined there because “[a]nother girl who was travelling with her family going to Sydney had grade 1 smallpox and they thought I might have had it too.”²⁶²² The two girls and several other individuals were “all put in a single big room at Woodman Point”, where they stayed for 17 days—one of which was “Trish’s” sixth birthday.²⁶²³ She did not “remember leaving Woodman Point or who I might have been picked up by.”²⁶²⁴ All she knew was “when I left I went to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco, where my sisters were.”²⁶²⁵

“Another girl...had grade 1 smallpox and they thought I might have had it too...I went into quarantine with her and a few others.”

Life at St Joseph’s Orphanage, Subiaco (1949-c.1960)

5.60 St Joseph’s, run by the Sisters of Mercy, was home to “a couple of hundred children”, including “some young boys in a foundling home” and “some elderly people who stayed upstairs.”²⁶²⁶ Mother Theresa was the Mother Superior. The other staff were also Sisters. Some of the older girls worked in the kitchen.²⁶²⁷

5.61 The life experienced by “Trish” at St Joseph’s was very similar to that described by “Maryanne” and “Rose”.

2621 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.104.

2622 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.105.

2623 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.105.

2624 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.106.

2625 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.106.

2626 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.107.

2627 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.106.

“We never went to school on a Monday because the clothing from all the nuns...used to come to the orphanage and we’d have to launder it.”

5.62 Children slept in dormitories. “Trish” was put in a dormitory with older girls.²⁶²⁸ Girls who wet the bed were “put out to the balcony.”²⁶²⁹ “Trish” remembered being woken by a bell at 6 am, and having to dress for church and make their beds before kneeling at their beds to pray. After cleaning their teeth with soap and going to church, they ate breakfast in silence.²⁶³⁰ There were chores until school; which included sweeping, waxing, and polishing the floors on hands and knees; cleaning the bathrooms; helping in the kitchen; and working in the laundry.²⁶³¹

5.63 The girls “all had a bath every night.”²⁶³² If a girl got nits or scratched her head in front of a nun, the Sisters would “put olive oil...on your hair, and then cover your head with the top part of their stockings” which they would tie in a knot, “and you had to walk around like that for a couple of days to get rid of the nits...That happened to me and it was terrible.”²⁶³³

5.64 The food at St Joseph’s “changed every day but it was the same each day of the week.”²⁶³⁴ “Trish” remembered being given

cabbage with slugs in it, and “tea that tasted terrible because it had been the nuns’ tea from the day before.”²⁶³⁵

“...we would get tea that tasted terrible because it had been the nuns’ tea from the day before.”

5.65 The children at St Joseph’s never wore shoes except to church “or when somebody important came from the child welfare department.”²⁶³⁶ For church, they “had to wear a special dress”, but would change back into “horrible uniform” afterwards.²⁶³⁷ Clothes were washed once a week in the large laundry at St Joseph’s, so they “never went to school on a Monday because the clothing from all the nuns in the surrounding area used to come to the orphanage and we’d have to launder it”, as well as washing the bedding.²⁶³⁸

5.66 Education was provided at St Joseph’s by the Sisters, some of whom “were all right, but some were cruel.”²⁶³⁹

2628 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.107.

2629 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.108.

2630 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.108.

2631 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.113.

2632 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.108.

2633 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.108.

2634 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.109.

2635 [Written statement of “Trish” \(MZW\)](#), paragraph 42, at WIT.001.002.7702.

2636 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.110.

2637 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.110.

2638 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.113.

2639 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.110-111.

Although “Trish’s” pre-migration medical examination form described her as “bright”, she struggled at school in Australia.²⁶⁴⁰

5.67 “Trish” was taught to type, but “[w]e were never taught any life skills or anything to equip us for adult life for when we left the orphanage.”²⁶⁴¹ The Sisters did not advise the girls about puberty or menstruation, so “it was a shock when my periods started and I didn’t know who I could ask [or] turn to.”²⁶⁴²

“We were never taught any like skills or anything to equip us for adult life for when we left the orphanage.”

5.68 There were no celebrations for birthdays and little to mark Christmas: “One year we got clothes for Christmas, but they were gone when we came back from church.”²⁶⁴³ Another Christmas everyone was given a toothbrush and tin of toothpaste.²⁶⁴⁴

5.69 Even though “Trish” had two sisters at St Joseph’s for at least some of her time there, “we were lucky if we saw each other once a week.”²⁶⁴⁵ After her sisters left St Joseph’s, she wrote to them, and also to

her mother, who had moved to Australia in 1953.²⁶⁴⁶ Her mother visited “Trish” “a couple of times”, as did her brother.²⁶⁴⁷ “Trish” “didn’t know what to say to him...I had never had any communication with him.”²⁶⁴⁸

5.70 “Trish” was sometimes allowed to visit her sisters after they had left, and was able to go to one sister’s wedding.²⁶⁴⁹ Soon after arriving in Australia, “Trish’s” mother began a new relationship, and on one Sunday each month “Trish” “would go and see my mum.”²⁶⁵⁰ Although these visits should have provided a safe and nurturing environment for “Trish”, she was subjected to sexual abuse by her mother’s partner from the age of 11 or 12.²⁶⁵¹ Her mother’s partner would “make excuses to get her on her own, feigning a ‘fatherly’ interest in her”, before sexually abusing her.²⁶⁵² “Trish” believes that her mother “was unaware of what was happening” because of her drinking problem.²⁶⁵³ “Trish” “felt frightened, hated what was happening, and hated being anywhere near [him]”, but she was unable to disclose the abuse. If she “told the nuns they would have blamed her, and might have stopped her visiting her mother.”²⁶⁵⁴ Her abuser had said “not to tell anybody or he would leave my mum.”²⁶⁵⁵ “Trish” put her mother’s interests before her own, and there

2640 Medical examination form for “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0025.

2641 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.111.

2642 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.115.

2643 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.114.

2644 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.114.

2645 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.115.

2646 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.115.

2647 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.114.

2648 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.114.

2649 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.115.

2650 [Written statement of “Trish” \(MZW\)](#), paragraph 68, at WIT.001.002.7706.

2651 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0032.

2652 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0032-0033.

2653 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0033.

2654 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0033.

2655 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.118.

“If any visitors came from the child welfare department the nuns made us change out of our day clothes and into our special dresses so we looked nice”.

was no one to assure her that she did not need to do so.

5.71 Although the Sisters “weren’t all cruel, they were all cold and uncaring”, leaving “Trish” with nobody to speak to about the abuse by her mother’s partner.²⁶⁵⁶ “Trish” particularly recalled that Mother Theresa, Sister Leonard, and Sister Teresa Joseph were cruel. “Trish” remembered that “it was always our hands they hit, nowhere else, although they did pull our ears sometimes.”²⁶⁵⁷

“Although the nuns weren’t all cruel, they were all cold and uncaring.”

5.72 “Trish” could not recall ever seeing a dentist.²⁶⁵⁸ The lack of appropriate medical attention had a life-long impact on her. Her leg had been severely burnt when she was very young.²⁶⁵⁹ As a consequence, her leg “used to break out in sores every year. I was supposed to have had a skin graft when I came out to Australia but I never did get

one. The nuns did try and treat it and they would wash and clean it, but all they did was make the burn bigger and it never healed. I remember one year it wasn’t healing and a doctor was called out to the orphanage...I went to the Royal Perth Hospital but they said they couldn’t operate on my leg because the skin was so thin. All the sores that I had been getting had been damaging the leg even more.”²⁶⁶⁰

5.73 “Trish” “finally received medical attention...at the age of 14, after enduring eight years of painful and traumatic ‘first-aid’ treatment from the nuns.”²⁶⁶¹

5.74 The abuse and neglect at St Joseph’s continued unchecked because inspectors “never spoke to any of us children without the nuns being there.”²⁶⁶² “Trish” “could never have told the police or anybody else about either the physical or the sexual abuse I suffered. I was too scared.”²⁶⁶³ Furthermore, “[i]f any visitors came from the child welfare department the nuns made us change out of our day clothes and into our special dresses so we looked nice and neat and tidy.”²⁶⁶⁴

2656 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.116.

2657 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.117.

2658 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.112.

2659 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p. 101.

2660 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.111-112.

2661 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0033. “Trish’s” Migrant Child Certificate notes that in August 1957 “Trish” (MZW) was at the Royal Perth Hospital for treatment: Migrant Child Certificate for “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0060.

2662 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.114.

2663 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.118.

2664 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.114.

5.75 When “Trish” was aged 17, “the nuns got me a job working in a bakery...in South Perth”; Subiaco was in the North of Perth, so to get to work she had to catch two buses.²⁶⁶⁵ She did this “for about a year before they found me somewhere to live that was closer to the bakery.”²⁶⁶⁶ During that year, she “had to hand over all my wages to the nuns... every morning I had to wait for one of the nuns to walk along the veranda and give me money to catch the bus.”²⁶⁶⁷

Life after care

5.76 “Trish” moved out of St Joseph’s a year or so after starting at the bakery, and continued to work there “for a couple of years” before moving to a different job.²⁶⁶⁸ After she left St Joseph’s, she “never heard from the nuns or the child welfare department again”, despite the fact that she was a ward of the state until the age of 21.²⁶⁶⁹ There is no documentation in relation to “Trish” for the period between 1960 and May 1964, when her state wardship officially ended.²⁶⁷⁰

**“...after I left the orphanage
I never heard from the
nuns or the child welfare
deparment again.”**

5.77 After the bakery, “Trish” had an office job until she got married in 1965, aged 22.²⁶⁷¹ She had two daughters with her husband, but her marriage “was marked by emotional and verbal abuse.”²⁶⁷² “Trish” said that she remained married to her husband “for the children’s sake, and divorced him once they had grown up.”²⁶⁷³

5.78 Over the years, “Trish” reconnected with some of her family. In the 1980s, “Trish” discovered through the CMT that she had another sister in the UK (her eldest sister). “Trish” had two trips to the UK, financed by the Family Restoration Fund through the CMT.²⁶⁷⁴ “Trish” and her sisters tried to find their younger sister who had been adopted, but were unable to do so.²⁶⁷⁵

2665 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.118. “Trish’s” (MZW) commencement of work, as well as her salary, is noted in the ‘Movements and Remarks’ document, at TUA.001.001.0061.

2666 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.118.

2667 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.118.

2668 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.118.

2669 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.119.

2670 Movements and Remarks for “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0061.

2671 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.118.

2672 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0035.

2673 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0035.

2674 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.121.

2675 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.121.

“I was told I that I would be going to Australia...I never thought that I would be going and not coming back.”

“Helen”

Life in the UK

5.79 “Helen” was born in 1938 in Glasgow, where she lived with her mother, father, and older sister.²⁶⁷⁶ “Helen’s” mother became ill after her younger brother was born and was admitted to the Stoneyetts Mental Hospital in January 1944.²⁶⁷⁷ Her mother’s illness, and her father having gone “away to the war”, were the reasons she and her sister were put into care.²⁶⁷⁸

5.80 In July 1946, “Helen’s” sister was sent to Woodfield, and “Helen” “fretted and cried until eventually I was allowed to go there as well.”²⁶⁷⁹ She was admitted to Woodfield in October 1946.²⁶⁸⁰

5.81 When “Helen” arrived, her “sister came running along the passageway to meet me. After this we were never split up again.”²⁶⁸¹ “Helen” “was very happy...there weren’t any issues and no abuse.”²⁶⁸² The Sisters “were lovely...very gentle with the children...It felt very secure.”²⁶⁸³ Despite their age difference, “Helen” and her sister were placed in the same small dormitory.²⁶⁸⁴

5.82 “Helen’s” father visited “a couple of times. I have a memory of going out with him and being on his shoulders. At that time my father was still in the army. He would wear his uniform when he came to the convent. My mother never visited” as she was still in hospital.²⁶⁸⁵

Migration

5.83 One day, “someone came to the orphanage and did a presentation to us all about Australia...At the end of the presentation we were asked who wanted to go to Australia. I put my hand up.”²⁶⁸⁶ After this, “Helen” “forgot about it until a year later when I was told that I would be going to Australia. I was told I would be going to a foster family...I never thought that I would be going and not coming back. I assumed that I was going there for something like a holiday.”²⁶⁸⁷ Before migrating, “Helen” and her sister had “no contact with our parents.”²⁶⁸⁸ There are two different LEM3 forms for “Helen” signed on the same date in October 1947, one of them hand-signed and one with a typed signature. Neither of

2676 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.123. For many years, “Helen” believed her birth date to be a different date and month in a different year, as that date appears on several forms pertaining to “Helen”, but she stated that documents she obtained in later life record a different birth date, so that is the date followed here.

2677 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.123; Letter from R. Brough (Children’s Officer, Glasgow) to Canon Flood (Catholic Child Welfare Committee), 8 October 1958, at BEW-000000056, p.5.

2678 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.123.

2679 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.123.

2680 Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Response to section 21 notice, at GSH.001.001.0478.

2681 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.123-124.

2682 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.124.

2683 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.124.

2684 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.124.

2685 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.125.

2686 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.125-126.

2687 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.126.

2688 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.126.

these forms includes a signature in the space reserved for the sponsoring organisation. As for signature by a parent or guardian, “Helen” had seen a letter about her migration written by Father Rattigan “signed by him and my father...I don’t think my father would have signed this. I have looked at the letter and it seems that the writing by Father Rattigan is the same as my father’s signature.”²⁶⁸⁹ Furthermore, the birth date differs between the two forms: the printed birth date on the hand-signed form has been altered by hand, and the typed form shows the alternative date.²⁶⁹⁰

5.84 “Helen’s” migration went ahead. She “was given a medical” before leaving Woodfield, and her examination form was signed in August 1947, prior to completion of consent forms.²⁶⁹¹

5.85 “Helen” “was given a suitcase and clothes before leaving for Australia. I remember we were pretty excited about going. There were seven of us from Colinton that were travelling together...me, my sister and five other girls.”²⁶⁹²

5.86 In December 1948, they boarded the SS Ormonde at Tilbury Docks. During the crossing she “got the measles and was very ill.”²⁶⁹³ “Helen” was nine years old when she left the UK, and she had her 10th birthday during the crossing.²⁶⁹⁴

5.87 The Ormonde arrived at Fremantle in January 1949, then sailed on to Adelaide.²⁶⁹⁵

Life at St Vincent de Paul Orphanage, Goodwood (1949-c.1956)

5.88 On arrival in Australia, “Helen” and her sister were taken to St Vincent de Paul orphanage, also run by the Sisters of Mercy, at Goodwood, a suburb of Adelaide.²⁶⁹⁶ The Sisters of Mercy wore mainly black, in stark contrast to the Sisters at Woodfield, who wore cream habits.²⁶⁹⁷ The girls had been transported from the depths of a winter in Scotland to the height of the Australian summer, and “Helen” found these differences very difficult to deal with.²⁶⁹⁸ Whilst it might be thought that saving the children from the rigours of a Scottish winter ought to be seen as a positive, the contrast in temperatures clearly came as a shock and I heard no evidence that any effort was made to prepare the children for its likely impact on them.



St Vincent de Paul Orphanage, main building, 12 April 1948. Photograph by Lyle Fowler. Source: [State Library of Victoria](#).

2689 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.139. The Inquiry has not seen this document, but the fact that “Helen” was migrated under a LEM3 form with no sponsoring organisation, with an incorrect date of birth—on at least one of the two forms—and possibly no parental signature was a significant breach of protocol.

2690 LEM3 form for “Helen” (Hand-signed), at NAA.001.001.1487; LEM3 form for “Helen” (Typed), at BEW-000000056, p.12. The LEM3 form for “Helen’s” sister, which is typed rather than hand-written or hand-signed, does include a sponsoring organisation signature from P.F. Quille for the Catholic Child Welfare Council: LEM3 form for “Helen’s” sister, at BEW-000000055, p.8.

2691 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.126.

2692 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.126-127.

2693 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.127.

2694 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.126.

2695 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.127.

2696 [Written statement of “Helen”](#), paragraph 31, at WIT.001.002.4837.

2697 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.128.

2698 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.128.

“When we arrived at St Vincent de Paul’s Orphanage, it seemed so bleak. It was not a welcoming place.”

5.89 Although the weather “was very hot, the atmosphere in the convent was very cold.”²⁶⁹⁹ St Vincent’s, “was not a welcoming place.”²⁷⁰⁰ Initially, “Helen” “was thinking, why are we here? I was expecting my new foster parents to be there to meet me.”²⁷⁰¹ When she realised that she would actually be staying at the convent, she “was devastated...I cried for about a week.”²⁷⁰²

5.90 St Vincent’s was home to “about 90 girls”, who were “a mixture of migrants and girls from Australia”; this sometimes led to “trouble between the groups.”²⁷⁰³ Each girl was “given a number” which is “what you

were called by. The number related to everything. It was stitched on to your clothes. It was all very regimented, much like being in a prison.”²⁷⁰⁴

“We were given a number...This was what you were called by.”

5.91 “Helen” slept “in a huge dormitory with a whole lot of other girls”, unlike at Woodfield, where the dormitories were small.²⁷⁰⁵



St Vincent de Paul Orphanage, one of the dormitories, date unknown. Photograph courtesy of [MacKillop Family Services](#). Source: [Find & Connect](#).

2699 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.128-129.

2700 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.128.

2701 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.128.

2702 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.128.

2703 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.129.

2704 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.129.

2705 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.129.

5.92 At 7 am, Sister Margaret Mary “would come in reciting the Bible to wake us up. The first thing was to kneel at the side of the bed and do your prayers. After this, you got washed and dressed” and made the bed.²⁷⁰⁶ In the bathrooms, “[t]here was no toothpaste and you had to use soap. I would just use water. It seemed so primitive and horrible.”²⁷⁰⁷ When they were getting ready, “Helen’s” sister “used to wet my hair and then put it up to curl it with a brush. One morning Sister Margaret Mary came in when she was doing this. She grabbed the brush from my sister and went to hit me and her. My sister grabbed the brush from her and said, ‘Don’t you dare hit my sister.’ Sister Margaret Mary backed off and didn’t try this again.”²⁷⁰⁸

5.93 Before meals, the girls lined up and “were given Epsom salts...for your bowel movements...The punishment for not eating your meals was usually to go and stand somewhere.”²⁷⁰⁹

5.94 Girls were punished for bedwetting. One of “Helen’s” Australian friends wet her bed regularly, and so “[t]he nuns would make her stand in the bathroom, which had a marble floor. She was made to put the sheet over her head when she was doing this. It was freezing in the bathroom. The mattress was taken off the bed to dry and my friend was then made to sleep on the bed springs... It was very cruel.”²⁷¹⁰ Despite the fact that this

girl regularly wet the bed, “[n]obody tried to find out what was wrong with my friend. She ended up having to go to hospital and had her spleen removed. She nearly died.”²⁷¹¹

5.95 Education was delivered by the Sisters at St Vincent’s “even though they weren’t qualified. I used to help some of the younger girls who had problems with their reading.”²⁷¹² “Helen” did enjoy drama, art, and singing classes, which “gave me a love of music in later life.”²⁷¹³

“The nuns would teach you even though they weren’t qualified.”

5.96 At Woodfield, school had afforded the girls a chance to leave the environment of the institution, and girls had been able to do extracurricular activities, but St Vincent’s “was a total institution.”²⁷¹⁴ However, one nun, Sister Claire, “was better than the others.”²⁷¹⁵ She had joined St Vincent’s “after we arrived. She was actually very good with the girls. She would try and get us toothbrushes and places for our personal possessions.”²⁷¹⁶ She also showed the girls “how to make toffee and other sorts of homely things” and “started to coach the basketball team.”²⁷¹⁷ “Helen” thought Sister Claire “got a bit of flak from the other nuns for trying to help us”, though she was still “a bit of a disciplinarian.

2706 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.130.

2707 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.131.

2708 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.130.

2709 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.130.

2710 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.130-131.

2711 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.131.

2712 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.132.

2713 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.132.

2714 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.132.

2715 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.131.

2716 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.131.

2717 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.131.

“At some point there were visitors at the convent from either England and Scotland...We never got the opportunity to speak to them.”

On the odd occasion I had a hiding from her...if I'd done something wrong. Despite this, she was fair with all the girls.”²⁷¹⁸ Sister Claire later taught “Helen” “shorthand, bookkeeping and typing skills”, which helped “Helen” after she left St Vincent’s.²⁷¹⁹

5.97 Sister Claire was an exception, though, and life at St Vincent’s was harsh. For instance, “the nuns were paid for tying strings together for the butchers. They didn’t do the work it was us who had to do this.”²⁷²⁰ This task was also used as punishment, and “[i]f you did something wrong they might make you do a hundred bundles of string...in addition to what you would normally do.”²⁷²¹ In later life, “Helen” developed arthritis in her hands, which she attributes to that work.

“They didn’t do the work it was us who had to do this.”

5.98 At Christmas, “we would go to stay with Catholic families...it was a good experience for me.”²⁷²² These trips also proved important for “Helen’s” sister, whom the nuns “tried to groom...into being a nun” by telling her that “she would get an education if she became a nun.”²⁷²³ Her sister did not want to become a nun. The family

that “Helen” and her sister stayed with at Christmas “went to the convent and told them that they had to let my sister leave as she didn’t want to be a nun. She said if they didn’t, she would make the archbishop aware. My sister was lucky that she had the [family] looking out for her. I was glad she was able to get away from the convent when she did.”²⁷²⁴

5.99 In due course, “Helen’s” sister did leave St Vincent’s, and went to stay with the family while she worked elsewhere. She stayed with them “until she was married”, and she visited “Helen” in the convent regularly.²⁷²⁵

5.100 “Helen” remembered that at one point the convent received visitors “from either England or Scotland. They were there to check how the kids were getting on. We never got the opportunity to speak to them. The nuns would have knew [sic] in advance they were coming. This meant that everything would be fine for the visit.”²⁷²⁶

5.101 That was not the reality of life at St Vincent’s, where in fact children suffered not only physical abuse but also emotional abuse. “Helen” was “told by one of the nuns that my mum and dad were dead. I just

2718 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.131.

2719 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.132.

2720 [Written statement of “Helen”](#), paragraph 62, at WIT.001.002.4837.

2721 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.133.

2722 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.133.

2723 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.132.

2724 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.134.

2725 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.134.

2726 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.134.

believed this. I thought it must be right as that's why we had been in an orphanage. I just felt that everyone had deserted us."²⁷²⁷ "Helen's" parents were both alive at the time.

5.102 There was physical abuse by "the head nun, Mother Michael", who "was pretty brutal. If you did something wrong you would be sent to her and she would give you the strap. I saw some of the older migrant girls being punished. They had run away. When they were brought back to the orphanage, the nun in charge gathered everyone together. She made an example of the girls. She hit them with the strap on the back and the buttocks. It was horrible."²⁷²⁸

5.103 "Helen" was only able to leave the convent because of Sister Claire's support. A lawyer used to visit to give the Sisters fruit, and he "told Sister Claire he was looking for a junior. Sister Claire said that she had just the person for this. I went to his office for an interview. I was successful and started as the lawyer's receptionist."²⁷²⁹ Having secured employment, "Helen" "was able to leave the orphanage."²⁷³⁰ Had Sister Claire not offered "Helen" the chance to gain secretarial skills, and acted as an advocate for her in securing a job, "Helen's" route out of St Vincent's could have been very different.

Life after care

5.104 Although she had secured a job, "there was no preparation" for leaving St Vincent's. "Helen" "left with virtually what I was standing in."²⁷³¹ Fortunately, "at the lawyer's office, the wages were good. I was given a pay rise every year. I was treated as an equal."²⁷³² "Helen" remained "in touch with Sister Claire right through to when my daughter was born...she was the one who put me on the road to my first job."²⁷³³

"When I left the orphanage...I left with virtually what I was standing in."

5.105 "Helen" eventually settled in Perth, where she met her daughter's father.²⁷³⁴ They became engaged, but "split up before my daughter was born...My daughter is the best thing that ever happened to me."²⁷³⁵

5.106 In the late 1950s, "Helen" and her sister decided to try to find out more about their family in Scotland.²⁷³⁶ In their letter to the Migration Office in August 1958, they just wanted to know whether their parents "were killed during the war, or whether they [were] still alive."²⁷³⁷ "Helen's" sister was later "sent a letter by a lawyer [which] informed her that

2727 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.134.

2728 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.135.

2729 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.135.

2730 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.135.

2731 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.135.

2732 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.135.

2733 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.135.

2734 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, pp.135-136.

2735 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of "Helen", at TRN-5-000000007, p.136.

2736 Correspondence between various offices pertaining to this search are included in "Helen's" Caritas Social Action file, at BEW-000000056, pp.3-11.

2737 Letter from "Helen" to Migration Office, 21 August 1958, at BEW-000000056, p.11.

“If we had received proper support and information from the Catholic Church or Federal Government, then we might have been able to reunite properly with our mother.”

her father had been looking for us. He wouldn't have done this if he knew we were in Australia. She found out that our mother was still alive but was in hospital. Our father had tried to get her out of hospital but he wasn't allowed to. This was a shock to me that our father was still alive. My sister tried to find out more information but couldn't get any until years later.”²⁷³⁸

5.107 They eventually located their mother in a hospital in Glasgow.²⁷³⁹ In due course, “Helen” and her sister “travelled to Scotland to see our mother in hospital. It was actually an institution with locked doors. It was very traumatic, as mother kept repeating ‘Where have they taken the children?’ She didn't recognise or remember us. I thought she looked a lot like my sister. I wanted to have a conversation with my mother, I wanted to tell her how much I loved her. Somehow I just couldn't do it. My heart went out to her. She must have suffered with no one there for her. I just wanted to hold her.”²⁷⁴⁰

5.108 Their mother died in the 1980s, aged 79. “Helen” believed that “[i]f we had received proper support and information from the Catholic Church or Federal Government, then we might have been able to reunite properly with our mother.”²⁷⁴¹

5.109 “Helen's” sister remembered their younger brother, and told “Helen” about him. She “remembered him being taken away in a shawl to foster parents when we were very young.”²⁷⁴² In 1989 “Helen” eventually met her brother and his wife.²⁷⁴³

5.110 “Helen” became involved with the CMT, after her sister met Margaret Humphreys.²⁷⁴⁴ It was then that she “started to become aware of other child migrants who had come to Australia. I think that what Margaret Humphreys has done for child migrants is just amazing.”²⁷⁴⁵ “Helen” had seen “a lot of benefits...from going to the Child Migrants Trust by speaking to them. I felt that someone was listening to me. They understood what I had been through.”²⁷⁴⁶

“My time in care left me without faith.”

5.111 Despite the trauma of migration, “Helen” felt she had had “a certain amount of stability because of my background. I don't let life pull me down. I am much stronger for it. I am fiercely independent. My time in care left me without faith. I make up my own mind about things now.”²⁷⁴⁷

2738 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.137.

2739 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.137.

2740 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.138.

2741 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.138.

2742 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.137.

2743 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.137.

2744 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.136.

2745 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.136.

2746 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.136.

2747 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.141.

6.1 Barnardo's was founded by Thomas John Barnardo in 1867, the year in which he opened a 'ragged school' in London providing children with a free education. Thomas Barnardo "believed that every child deserved the best possible start in life, whatever their background."²⁷⁴⁸

6.2 The first home for boys was opened in 1870 in Stepney, London, to provide children with accommodation and training. A home for girls was opened at Barkingside, Essex, in 1879. By 1900, this home had grown to include 65 cottages, a school, a hospital, and a church. It could accommodate up to 1,500 girls. By the time of Thomas Barnardo's death in 1905, the charity had 96 homes that cared for more than 8,500 children.

6.3 Barnardo's established homes in Scotland during the Second World War. The Barnardo's institutions in Scotland included: Blackford Brae in Edinburgh; Arbigland in Kirkbean, Dumfriesshire; Glasclune in North Berwick; Tyneholm in East Lothian; Balcary in Hawick; Craigerne in Peebles; and Thorntoun School near Kilmarnock.

6.4 Thomas Barnardo was an enthusiastic supporter of child migration. Over 30,000 children were migrated to Canada by Barnardo's between 1866 and 1939.²⁷⁴⁹

Barnardo's also migrated more than 2,700 children to Australia over the duration of its child migration programme. Barnardo's estimate that a total of 46 children migrated to Australia in the post-Second World War period were Scottish, or spent time in one of its Scottish homes before being migrated.²⁷⁵⁰ In addition, Barnardo's was able to identify one Scottish child who was migrated to Canada from an English home, and it is likely that there were more.

Applicants

6.5 Three SCAI applicants were migrated by Barnardo's, one in 1953 and two in 1956. Their histories are detailed below.

"Gavin"

Life in the UK

6.6 "Gavin" was born in Gilmerton, Edinburgh, in November 1943. When his mother met his father, who was 20 years older than her, he "was married with seven children."²⁷⁵¹ She had two children with him; "Gavin", and his older sister. When "Gavin" was born, his mother's parents "kicked her out of the house," and his mother had to find a job.²⁷⁵² The job she secured was a live-in job and she could only take one child with her.²⁷⁵³ She took "Gavin's" sister, and handed "Gavin" over to the care of Barnardo's.

2748 Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, [Case Study no.3: The provision of residential care for children in Scotland by Quarriers, Aberlour Child Care Trust, and Barnardo's between 1921 and 1991](#) (January 2020), p. 9.

2749 IICSA, Child Migration, [2.1 Barnardo's | IICSA Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse 2019](#).

2750 Letter from Clyde & Co to SCAI, 20 December 2019, at BAR-000000021, p.2.

2751 [Transcript, day 172: "Gavin"](#), at TRN-5-000000003, p.4.

2752 [Transcript, day 172: "Gavin"](#), at TRN-5-000000003, p.4.

2753 [Transcript, day 172: "Gavin"](#), at TRN-5-000000003, p.4.

“It was remarkable that in normal circumstances I was treated as a child yet I was asked an adult question about a country which I knew nothing about.”

6.7 In early February 1945, “Gavin” was admitted to Arbigland and subsequently to six different institutions by the time he was seven years old.²⁷⁵⁴ Of the homes in the UK, “Gavin” remembered only Tyneholm, which was run by Mr Smoothy.²⁷⁵⁵

6.8 “Gavin” recalled that in Tyneholm House, children got up at “around 7:00am”, made their beds and brushed their teeth, then went to breakfast.²⁷⁵⁶ The food was “okay. However if you didn’t eat your meals you would be caned.”²⁷⁵⁷ “Gavin” “used to sneak down to the pantry during the night and I would steal a loaf of bread to eat”; while the food was “okay”, it seems that there was not enough of it.²⁷⁵⁸ Boys who wet the bed were caned and had to strip and clean their own beds. Caning was a common punishment; “Gavin” once “got into trouble at school for going into the girls’ area. I was given the cane on the hand by the headmaster and the teacher at school...I was caned again on the backside by Mr Smoothy when I got back to the home. That was eighteen times in total I was caned on that day.”²⁷⁵⁹

6.9 Mr Smoothy was “a bully...I just didn’t like him. I didn’t like the way he treated his family.”²⁷⁶⁰ “Gavin” “felt that Mr Smoothy was a constant threat to me...He seemed to enjoy meting out punishments.”²⁷⁶¹ “Gavin” had been warned by a good friend at Tyneholm that Mr Smoothy had made a sexual advance on him. When Mr Smoothy made an advance on “Gavin”, he “was prepared...and I just kicked him and...got the cane again.”²⁷⁶²

Migration

6.10 Shortly after Mr Smoothy attempted to sexually abuse “Gavin”, Mr Smoothy asked him “if I wanted to go to Australia. I said yes as it meant getting away from Mr Smoothy.”²⁷⁶³ “Gavin” described that he had “had this vision of riding horses to school and seeing kangaroos jumping up and down the street. It just seemed like an exciting trip...Getting away from him, that was the main thing.”²⁷⁶⁴ On reflection, “Gavin” found it “remarkable that in normal circumstances I was treated as a child yet I was asked an adult question about a country which I knew nothing about...I had no comprehension about how far away Australia was. I feel that I was being enticed to go.”²⁷⁶⁵

2754 Arbigland admission note, 9 February 1945, at BAR.001.006.1123; Note of “Gavin’s” placements, at BAR.001.006.1069.

2755 This man is referred to in “Gavin’s” witness statement and in the hearing’s transcript as “Mr Smoothie”. However, Barnardo’s staff records indicate that the correct spelling of the superintendent’s surname is “Smoothy” and that is the spelling that is used in this volume, including in direct quotations. See Barnardo’s, staff files, at BAR.001.004.0304.

2756 *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraph 9, at WIT.001.002.2312,

2757 *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraph 10, at WIT.001.002.2312,

2758 *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraph 11, at WIT.001.002.2313.

2759 *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraph 15, at WIT.001.002.2313.

2760 *Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”*, at TRN-5-000000003, p.5; *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraph 8, at WIT.001.002.2312.

2761 *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraphs 23-24, at WIT.001.002.2314-2315.

2762 *Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”*, at TRN-5-000000003, p.6.

2763 *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraph 21, at WIT.001.002.2314.

2764 *Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”*, at TRN-5-000000003, p.7.

2765 *Written statement of “Gavin”*, paragraph 27, at WIT.001.002.2315.

6.11 “Gavin” had hoped that the friend who had warned him about Mr Smoothy would also be migrating to Australia, but “he was black so he couldn’t come anyway”, thanks to the White Australia policy in operation at the time.²⁷⁶⁶ Another friend was not allowed to migrate “because he wet the bed.”²⁷⁶⁷ This led “Gavin”, who also wet the bed, to think that, “if [he] couldn’t come, how come I was able to come? So I think Mr Smoothy wanted to get me out of there.”²⁷⁶⁸

6.12 Behind the scenes, the Scottish Representative (presumably of Barnardo’s, although unnamed) sent a letter to Mr Welbank, the Chief Executive Officer of Barnardo’s Homes, noting that

“at present I think there is only one boy... [‘Gavin’]...who is both suitable and a likely candidate for Australia...He has no relatives whatever, nor anyone who keeps in touch with him...There are three other lads in this Home who would like to go to Australia but I think there is very little chance in each case of getting permission from the next-of-kin and I am not sure that it is worth pursuing the matter.”²⁷⁶⁹

6.13 Despite the letter’s assertion that “Gavin” had no relatives, a later letter noted that “we must have [‘Gavin’s’ mother’s] consent in writing, whether by way of a letter, or on the attached form.”²⁷⁷⁰ Finding “Gavin’s” mother proved more difficult than

anticipated, but she was located through her sister. “Gavin’s” mother had remarried, and her sister did not know whether she had “ever told her husband about [‘Gavin’] and rather thinks she has not done so.”²⁷⁷¹ As a result, Barnardo’s asked the sister to secure the signature of “Gavin’s” mother to facilitate his migration. In due course, “Gavin’s” mother wrote to Mr Welbank. She stated that she had

“given the matter serious thought hence delay in replying [Mr Welbank had written to her on 8 July 1953], but as I am unable to offer him a better future I am quite sure it will be for his good just as all decisions that have been made in the past have been I am sure in his best interests ever since he came under your care.”²⁷⁷²

6.14 She did, however, add that “I should be glad to hear from him or of his progress in Australia if that is possible.”²⁷⁷³ The letter was accompanied by a signed consent form.²⁷⁷⁴

6.15 “Gavin” remembered having a medical examination before leaving Tyneholm in late October 1953, aged nine.

6.16 On 11 November 1953, “Gavin” and 20 other children left Southampton on the SS New Australia. “Gavin” “was the only Scot there.”²⁷⁷⁵ “Gavin” “loved the trip; I’d do it again if I could...It was just the fact of being on the ocean, I used to sneak out of my cabin

2766 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.9.

2767 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.9.

2768 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.7.

2769 Letter from Scottish Representative (Unnamed) to Mr Welbank, 11 May 1953, at BAR.001.006.1079.

2770 Letter from Mr Welbank to Miss Garland, 14 July 1953, at BAR.001.006.1081.

2771 Letter from Scottish Representative to Mr Welbank, 29 July 1953, at BAR.001.006.1085.

2772 Letter from “Gavin’s” mother to Mr Welbank, 27 July 1953, at BAR.001.006.1177.

2773 Letter from “Gavin’s” mother to Mr Welbank, 27 July 1953, at BAR.001.006.1178.

2774 Consent letter for “Gavin’s” migration, 27 July 1953, at BAR.001.006.1179.

2775 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.11.

“...I was genuinely disappointed because there were no kangaroos running about...as I had been promised.”

in the middle of the night to go and just look at the ocean. It was beautiful, I just loved it.”²⁷⁷⁶ “Gavin” had his 10th birthday during the crossing.

6.17 The ship arrived in Sydney on 13 December 1953, where “we were met by... auntie and uncle, as we used to call them – and they put us on a bus to take me to the home at Normanhurst” about 30 kilometres from Sydney.²⁷⁷⁷ “Gavin” “was genuinely disappointed because there were no kangaroos running about the streets as I had been promised.”²⁷⁷⁸

Life in Australia

Greenwood, Normanhurst (1953-c.1954)

6.18 Greenwood was run by the Australian branch of Barnardo’s. It consisted of three different houses, with a lot of land: “[i]t was a good place for kids, that’s for sure.”²⁷⁷⁹ There were about 60 boys and girls, all child migrants, between the ages of around eight and 15.²⁷⁸⁰ There were eight to 10 staff in charge of the three different houses and children were assigned to the houses by age.²⁷⁸¹ Children slept in dormitories,

and attended outside schools.²⁷⁸² “Gavin” attended primary school at Normanhurst Public School for just over a year.²⁷⁸³ Thereafter, he and two other boys were sent to Carlingford, which was a rural school.²⁷⁸⁴



Greenwood, date unknown. Photograph from the Remmers collection. Source: [NARDY: old boys and girls reunion club](#).

6.19 Overall, “Gavin” concluded that “considering...the amount of kids that were there, I think [discipline] was pretty good” at Greenwood.²⁷⁸⁵ “Gavin” considered that “the food was good” too.²⁷⁸⁶ In around 1954, “Gavin” was sent to Mowbray Park Farm School in Picton as “punishment”.²⁷⁸⁷ “Gavin” was not sad to leave Greenwood, “because I hadn’t been there long enough and Picton sounded like a big adventure anyway.”²⁷⁸⁸

2776 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.11.

2777 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.12.

2778 [Written statement of “Gavin”](#), paragraph 39, at WIT.001.002.2317.

2779 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.13.

2780 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.13-14.

2781 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.14.

2782 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.14.

2783 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.15.

2784 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.15.

2785 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.17.

2786 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.17.

2787 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.17.

2788 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.17.

Mowbray Park, Picton (c.1954-c.1960)

6.20 Mowbray Park at Picton, also a Barnardo's institution, was around 60 miles south-west of Greenwood.²⁷⁸⁹ Like Greenwood, Picton housed about 60 boys, though starting from the slightly older age of about 11. Sleeping arrangements were very similar to Greenwood with large dormitories.²⁷⁹⁰

6.21 At Picton, all "the Barnardo's boys would go to the movies on a Saturday afternoon" and if a boy had misbehaved they would not be allowed to go.²⁷⁹¹ Another

punishment for misbehaving was that you had to milk the cows on the farm at four in the morning.

"All the Barnardo's boys would go to the movies on a Saturday afternoon."

6.22 On occasion, "Gavin" went to stay with families during the school holidays. One of the people he stayed with was a woman he called Auntie who was "a really nice person."²⁷⁹²



Mowbray Park, Picton, boys working in the garden, 1948. Source: [National Archives of Australia](#).

2789 [Transcript, day 172](#): "Gavin", at TRN-5-000000003, p.18.

2790 [Transcript, day 172](#): "Gavin", at TRN-5-000000003, p.19.

2791 [Written statement of "Gavin"](#), paragraph 55, at WIT.001.002.2320.

2792 [Written statement of "Gavin"](#), paragraph 61, at WIT.001.002.2321.

“We had some bad moments, but otherwise it was good...it was a lot different to Scotland”.

6.23 “Gavin” went to Picton High School where he was happy enough and “didn’t worry about school too much.”²⁷⁹³ One of the teachers at “Gavin’s” school and his wife wanted to adopt “Gavin” as they could not have children of their own. He went to stay with the couple for a short time, but it was “[n]o good...the guy used to go to church...and preach and everything, and then come home and belt his wife...I finished up jumping on him one day when he did it. That’s when he hit me and I just hitchhiked back to the home.”²⁷⁹⁴

6.24 Reflecting on his time in Barnardo’s care in Australia “Gavin” felt that it “was good, most of it. We had some bad moments, but otherwise it was good...I think it was a lot different to Scotland anyway, that’s for sure.”²⁷⁹⁵

Life after care

6.25 In about 1960, when “Gavin” was 16, he left Picton.²⁷⁹⁶ He moved into a boarding house in a suburb of Sydney, where he and another boy from Barnardo’s worked making ear and sheep markers for cows and sheep.²⁷⁹⁷ Thereafter, “Gavin” had a number of different jobs.²⁷⁹⁸ Barnardo’s kept in touch

after “Gavin” left its care. Barnardo’s hosted founder’s days which “Gavin” attended: “they always sort of kept an eye on what you were doing.”²⁷⁹⁹ “Gavin” explained that it was “pretty rare” for a representative of Barnardo’s to visit an ex-resident; “it did happen, but there was a lot of kids out there that had left Barnardo’s and I don’t think they had the staff to be able to do that much.”²⁸⁰⁰

“...they always sort of kept an eye on what you were doing.”

6.26 During his time in care, “Gavin” thought that he “was an orphan”.²⁸⁰¹ He started to make enquiries when he was about 18 years old, to “find out who I was.”²⁸⁰² He contacted Barnardo’s and recovered his records. In due course, “Gavin” found out who his mother was, and that he had a sister.²⁸⁰³ “Gavin” wrote to his mother and eventually she answered: “she told me not to write and that was it.”²⁸⁰⁴ He later found out that she was married and “had three boys by her husband, who wasn’t my father. I just surmised in my mind that maybe he didn’t know about me”.²⁸⁰⁵

2793 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.19.

2794 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.20.

2795 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.20.

2796 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.21.

2797 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.21.

2798 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.21.

2799 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.22.

2800 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.22.

2801 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.23.

2802 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.23.

2803 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.24.

2804 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.24.

2805 Transcript, day 172: “Gavin”, at TRN-5-00000003, p.25.

6.27 Barnardo's own records suggest that "Gavin's" interest in his family began while he was still in their care. In February 1957, Mr Tucker (Assistant General Superintendent of Dr Barnardo's in London) wrote to Miss Garland, noting that "[w]hen I saw this lad in Australia on my recent visit, he was asking for information regarding his parentage."²⁸⁰⁶ He went on to ask Miss Garland to make contact with "Gavin's" aunt to

*"ask if she could ascertain from the mother if there is any possibility of her writing to ['Gavin']; as things are there is very little we can tell the boy, but it does seem a pity to hope that he dismisses her from his mind while there is any chance of the mother making herself known to him."*²⁸⁰⁷

6.28 Four years later, in 1961, the Chief Executive Officer recorded that "Gavin" had made enquiries about his family, but surmised that "I think Gavin belongs to a large company of young people who just have to accept the fact that their parents are missing, and try to get along and make something of his own life irrespective of this."²⁸⁰⁸

6.29 In the late 1970s, the brother of "Gavin's" partner visited Scotland and "Gavin" managed to make contact with his uncle.²⁸⁰⁹

6.30 "Gavin" made contact with his sister. "Gavin's" sister then entered a competition, where she had to say in 25 words or less why she wanted to visit her relatives in Australia "and she won it. And that's how we first met."²⁸¹⁰ A journalist interviewed them, and wrote a story with the headline 'Orphan finds love in search for the past.'²⁸¹¹ When "Gavin" married his second wife, the TV show *This Is Your Life* picked up the couple's story, and attended the wedding to film the show. This was the first time that "Gavin" met his uncle, who had travelled to Australia with "Gavin's" sister for the wedding.²⁸¹²

6.31 In 2005, "Gavin" returned to Scotland with his wife on a trip funded by the Australian Convention of Social Services.²⁸¹³ When "Gavin" arrived in Scotland, he found out where his mother was buried: "I went to this quiet cemetery and found her headstone. I kissed the plaque and said goodbye."²⁸¹⁴ That was "the only time that I had anything to do with her".²⁸¹⁵

"When I arrived in Scotland I found out where my mother was buried...I kissed the plaque and said goodbye."

2806 Letter from Mr Tucker to Miss Garland, 6 February 1957, at BAR.001.006.1093.

2807 Letter from Mr Tucker to Miss Garland, 6 February 1957, at BAR.001.006.1093.

2808 Letter from Chief Executive officer to P. L. Hartley, 8 September 1961, at BAR.001.006.1096.

2809 [Transcript, day 172](#): "Gavin", at TRN-5-000000003, pp.25-26

2810 [Transcript, day 172](#): "Gavin", at TRN-5-000000003, p.26.

2811 [Transcript, day 172](#): "Gavin", at TRN-5-000000003, p.26.

2812 [Written statement of "Gavin"](#), paragraph 74, at WIT.001.002.2323.

2813 [Written statement of "Gavin"](#), paragraph 78, at WIT.001.002.2323.

2814 [Written statement of "Gavin"](#), paragraph 79, at WIT.001.002.2324.

2815 [Transcript, day 172](#): "Gavin", at TRN-5-000000003, p.26.

“Amy”

Life in the UK

6.32 “Amy” was born in 1943, the youngest of three siblings. Her father died in about 1944, leaving their mother “stranded”.²⁸¹⁶ Ultimately “Amy’s” mother and brother went to live with her grandparents in Wolverhampton. “Amy” and an older sister were admitted to Barnardo’s Homes.²⁸¹⁷

6.33 “Amy” was admitted to Barnardo’s Home, Glasgow, in early February 1944. In March 1944 she was transferred to Comlongon Castle near Dumfries.²⁸¹⁸ Comlongon Castle catered for children below school age, so “[f]or the first five or six years, my sister and I were both in Comlongon Castle but not together. I didn’t know my sister then.”²⁸¹⁹ “Amy” had “good memories” of Comlongon Castle.²⁸²⁰ In around April 1949, “Amy” was told she was going to move to Glasclune, North Berwick: “I protested bitterly that I didn’t want to go and cried. I had become secure where I was.”²⁸²¹ To encourage her, the staff said she would meet her sister, but “[t]hat didn’t have a big impact on me. I didn’t understand anything about sisters and brothers.”²⁸²² “Amy” was transferred to Glasclune in April 1949.

6.34 At that time, Glasclune was home to between 70 and 80 boys and girls. “Amy” thought the building was “lovely.”²⁸²³ When she arrived, the superintendent of the home was Miss Martin. Mr and Mrs Horn then took over. Their two children “mingled in with us quite a lot, they were part of the crowd. They weren’t special or treated differently.”²⁸²⁴ “Amy” met her older sister at Glasclune but they did not get on very well.²⁸²⁵

6.35 “Amy” had memories of “some lovely times”.²⁸²⁶ Christmas was “exciting” and each child was given a gift, and on birthdays “you always had a cake and everyone sang Happy Birthday. You got a gift.”²⁸²⁷ She and her sister went on holidays with a couple who were “really nice.”²⁸²⁸

“There were some lovely times”.

6.36 Nevertheless, “Amy’s” memories of abuse “all begin in Glasclune.”²⁸²⁹ Children at Glasclune were force-fed if they refused to eat their meals. They were not given shoes that fitted them. Bedwetting was not tolerated, and on one occasion “Amy” was punished by having her knickers tied around her face and being forced to sit in the middle

2816 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.103.

2817 Barnardo’s, Glasgow Branch, admission form for “Amy”, at BAR.001.001.8235.

2818 Medical examination form for “Amy”, at BAR.001.005.1064. “Amy’s” file notes January as her admission month, but given the dates of the correspondence and the fact that her sister’s file lists the same date in February for admission to Glasgow, February is likely to be the correct date. See BAR.001.005.1057 for “Amy’s” sisters’ admission dates.

2819 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.103.

2820 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.104.

2821 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.106.

2822 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.106.

2823 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.107.

2824 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.108.

2825 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.107. The next section relates to “Amy’s” sister, “Margaret”.

2826 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.112.

2827 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.113.

2828 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.112.

2829 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.108-109.

“I didn’t realise just how far away Australia was.”

of the dormitory for several hours.²⁸³⁰ On another occasion, a favourite possession which she had been given by Barnardo’s for her birthday was taken from her and never returned, as a punishment.²⁸³¹

6.37 Miss Martin “enjoyed seeing me fearful,” and once whipped “Amy” while she was isolated in the dormitory, recovering from mumps and having broken her ankle.²⁸³²

6.38 Mr Horn physically punished children for not doing chores correctly, “usually by being hit with the ruler...It hurt, I was crying.”²⁸³³ He “hit me on a regular basis. There was always something wrong.”²⁸³⁴ Once, Mr Horn “hauled [‘Amy’] into the bathroom...I was made to strip and bend over a bath. Mr Horne [sic] hit me with the back of a brush on my bottom. There were just two of us in the bathroom. I was 9 or 10 years old.”²⁸³⁵ Mr Horn sexually abused children. He “was always caressing the teenage girls who were developing breasts, myself included.”²⁸³⁶ “Amy” and the other girls were “too frightened to say anything and who do you say it to?”²⁸³⁷

6.39 While they were on holiday from Barnardo’s, “Amy” and her sister were sexually abused: “It was many years later that it came out between my sister and I that we’d

both experienced it.”²⁸³⁸ “Amy” thought that, even if she had reported the abuse, nobody “would have believed me.”²⁸³⁹

Migration

6.40 When “Amy” was 12 years old, Mrs Horn asked her if she would like to go to Australia: “I said, yes, I’d love to. I had no idea where Australia was. I didn’t realise just how far away Australia was. I just thought of the thrill of it all. I was on my own when I was asked.”²⁸⁴⁰ Her sister was not so keen: “My sister didn’t want to go. She was 15 years old. In my records it says that I seemed thrilled that my sister didn’t want to come. She ended up with me, so at some point she must have changed her mind.”²⁸⁴¹

6.41 A letter to Mr Tucker, the Deputy General Superintendent of Barnardo’s, stated that when the issue of migration was first put to “Amy”, who

“had asked many times to be considered for Australia...there seemed no possibility of [‘Amy’s’ sister] going too because of her age. It was not until you mentioned that [she] might be considered that the idea was put to her. It was quite her own idea that she should train and work hard until she was nineteen or twenty and then try to join [‘Amy’] as an adult emigrant.”²⁸⁴²

2830 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.115.

2831 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.115.

2832 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.117.

2833 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.115.

2834 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.117.

2835 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.117.

2836 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.118.

2837 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.118.

2838 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.119.

2839 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.119.

2840 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.119.

2841 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.119.

2842 Letter from Unknown (possibly Mr Horn) to Mr Tucker, 14 November 1955, at BAR.001.005.1135.

“I found out I had a mother a week before we left...to come to Australia. Suddenly I had a mother and a brother. I was 12 years old.”

6.42 It seems that both sisters may have elected to migrate but “Amy” did not know where Australia was. Barnardo’s reported that the sisters “were quite willing to be separated” when it appeared that the elder sister was not eligible for the scheme.²⁸⁴³ The sibling bond nonetheless appears to have potentially encouraged “Amy’s” sister to choose to migrate when it became clear that it was a possibility.

6.43 Both girls passed the preliminary medical exams required for migration, subject to satisfactory IQ scores being attained.²⁸⁴⁴ The girls’ mother signed the consent form after Barnardo’s had spent several months trying to contact her.²⁸⁴⁵ Barnardo’s received completed LEM3 forms for the girls from Glasclune on the same day.²⁸⁴⁶

6.44 “Amy” and her sister “were taken by train to Barkingside in Essex, England.”²⁸⁴⁷ It was not until she got to Barkingside that she knew that she “would be going on a boat for 6 weeks” to reach Australia.²⁸⁴⁸ “At Barkingside there was a group of around 30 children from age 10 to 16 years. My sister and I were the only ones from Glasclune.”²⁸⁴⁹

6.45 “Amy” said she “found out I had a mother a week before we left the shores of England to come to Australia. Suddenly I had a mother and a brother. I was 12 years old. That was traumatic for me. That was when my sister found out too. She was 15 years old.”²⁸⁵⁰

6.46 The girls’ mother had chosen not to visit them at Glasclune before they left but she did write a short letter enclosing a photograph of herself and the girls’ brother. “Amy” described how when she opened the letter she “was bewildered. There was a photo of my mum. There was a photo of my brother in choir robes...The letter and photo changed my whole way of thinking. The happiness I was looking forward to in going to Australia changed because I had this knowledge. It was awful. No one spoke to me about the information. I didn’t get any counselling.”²⁸⁵¹

6.47 On 20 March 1956, “Amy” and her sister boarded the SS Orontes with 30 children of various ages and set sail for Australia.²⁸⁵² “Amy” was seasick every day: “It was miserable. It wasn’t such a pleasure cruise after all.”²⁸⁵³

2843 Letter from Unknown to Mr Tucker, 14 November 1955, at BAR.001.005.1135.

2844 Letter from Unknown to Mr Horn, 24 November 1955, at BAR.001.005.1134.

2845 Letter from Assistant General Superintendent to “Amy’s” grandfather, 12 December 1955, at BAR.001.005.1130; Letter from Unknown (possibly Mr Tucker) to Mr. Lewis (Enquiry Officer), 9 January 1956, at BAR.001.005.1121; Consent letter for “Amy”, 12 January 1956, at BAR.001.005.1118.

2846 Letter from Unknown (possibly Mr Tucker) to Mr. Horn, 13 January 1956, at BAR.001.005.1115.

2847 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.120.

2848 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.120.

2849 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.120.

2850 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.121.

2851 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.121-122.

2852 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.122.

2853 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.122.

6.48 The party reached Sydney in late April 1956. "Amy" and her sister "were separated straightaway...I didn't see her for a long time."²⁸⁵⁴ "Amy" was sent to Barnardo's Home at Burwood.

"When we arrived at Sydney, my sister and I were separated straightaway."

Life at Barnardo's Home, Burwood (1956-c.1958)

6.49 The home at Burwood, which was about an hour's drive from Sydney harbour, was a "big, beautiful place".²⁸⁵⁵ It housed eight to 10 girls aged 18 or over as well as "Amy", aged 12, and another girl who was aged 13.²⁸⁵⁶ "Amy" lived there until she was 15. It helped that it was run by Miss Bickmore, who had come from England in "Amy's" group: "I got to know Miss Bickmore on the boat journey. Miss Bickmore was a comfort to me."²⁸⁵⁷



Barnardo's Home, Burwood, c.1938/1958. Photograph from the Remmers collection. Source: [NARDY: old boys and girls reunion club](#).

2854 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Amy", at TRN-5-000000009, p.124.

2855 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Amy", at TRN-5-000000009, p.125.

2856 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Amy", at TRN-5-000000009, p.125.

2857 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Amy", at TRN-5-000000009, p.124.

“I didn’t like Burwood. I wasn’t happy there”.

6.50 Describing her overall experience at Burwood, “Amy” said she was “unsettled...I didn’t like Burwood. I wasn’t happy there in the end.”²⁸⁵⁸ “Amy” found the first summer in Australia to be “horrendous. It was a bit of a shock. I had never known so much sunshine. All I remembered was rain and snow in Scotland.”²⁸⁵⁹

6.51 The routine “was the usual... Institution stuff. You got up in the morning and made your bed. Everything was always under inspection too. Bedtime was later, but we were still tightly watched.”²⁸⁶⁰ The food was good and daily baths were on offer.²⁸⁶¹ There were lots of chores to do: “A lot of my young life consisted of cleaning. In Burwood we swept, mopped and cleaned the bathrooms.”²⁸⁶² The girls “had no choice” about the clothes they wore, which were given to them by Barnardo’s: “You wore them whether you liked them or not.”²⁸⁶³ Christmas “was not so exciting and happy” as it had been at Glasclune.²⁸⁶⁴ Likewise, “my birthday wasn’t celebrated quite the same...I wasn’t given any presents.”²⁸⁶⁵ When “Amy” was 15, she “went to Hornsby High School in Sydney. I didn’t mind school. I managed all right. I didn’t leave with any qualifications.”²⁸⁶⁶

6.52 On two or three occasions, the gardener at Burwood “would expose himself” to “Amy” and the girl who was a year older than her: “The other girl and I thought that was wrong.”²⁸⁶⁷

“A lot of my young life consisted of cleaning.”

6.53 “Amy” considered one of the hardest parts about being in Australia was that she “was supposed to not be concerned about finding out I had a mother and a brother, not to be curious or enquire about it.”²⁸⁶⁸ Having found out about her mother and brother just before her departure for Australia, “Amy” did not even “have time to write to my mother before we left”.²⁸⁶⁹ On arrival at Burwood she “was a prolific letter writer...I found writing helpful because of the way I was feeling about finding out I had a mother and brother.”²⁸⁷⁰ “Amy” later found out that “Barnardo’s were having to ask my mother to write more often and keep in contact... The impression I got was that my mother was being forced to write to me and she didn’t want to.”²⁸⁷¹ When “Amy” attempted to find

2858 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.126 and 125.

2859 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.125.

2860 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.125.

2861 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.125.

2862 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.127.

2863 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.126.

2864 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.126.

2865 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.126.

2866 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.126.

2867 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.128.

2868 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.122.

2869 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.127.

2870 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.128.

2871 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.128.

out more about her, “Barnardo’s weren’t forthcoming. They weren’t helpful to me at all. Barnardo’s fobbed me off.”²⁸⁷²

6.54 In around 1958, “Amy” was transferred from Burwood to Greenwood at Normanhurst.²⁸⁷³ She stayed there only “for a short while until I went out into the working world. I started work when I was 14 going on 15.”²⁸⁷⁴

“Barnardo’s weren’t forthcoming. They weren’t helpful”.

Life after care

6.55 After leaving care, Barnardo’s helped “Amy” find places to live and work.²⁸⁷⁵ Barnardo’s aftercare reports generally offered yearly updates about “Amy” and about her sister. In October 1958, “Amy” was boarding in “a family home where everyone has strong musical interest”.²⁸⁷⁶

6.56 By January 1959, “Amy” was in a different household, where a man was “a bit touchy-feely”, and commented on “Amy’s” underwear.²⁸⁷⁷ On one occasion, he was “too close” to “Amy” and “he said to me to be a good girl. [He] was caressing me, I felt it was wrong. I didn’t like the comment about my panties or the caressing.”²⁸⁷⁸

6.57 She left that home at some point between January 1959 and March 1960, and multiple reports in 1960 expressed “grave cause for concern” or serious concern about “Amy”.²⁸⁷⁹ The report from April 1960 stated that “Amy’s”

“behaviour and mode of life have caused considerable concern during the past few months...[She] has to leave the Business Girls’ Hostel in Mosman where she has been living for the past six weeks as she was considered by the Manageress to be a bad influence on the other girls.”²⁸⁸⁰

6.58 After another short placement, “Amy” was sent to see a doctor as Barnardo’s were “seriously concerned about her mental health.”²⁸⁸¹ After two further placements it was noted that “[w]e feel that [‘Amy’] is beyond our control and exposed to moral danger and have reported this to the Child Welfare Department.”²⁸⁸² The available information suggests that no action was taken by either Barnardo’s or by the child welfare department, despite the fact that “Amy” was the responsibility of those organisations until she was 21 years old. “Amy” felt that she “could so easily have gone off the rails when I was a teenager at 16 and 17 years old. No one was looking after me in the right way.”²⁸⁸³

2872 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.128.

2873 Barnardo’s at Burwood closed in 1957: [findandconnect](#), “Dr Barnardo’s Girls’ Home, Burwood (1938-1957).” Retrieved 9 March 2022.

2874 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.129.

2875 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.130.

2876 Aftercare report for “Amy”, October 1958, at BAR.001.006.0388.

2877 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.129.

2878 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.129.

2879 Aftercare report for “Amy”, July 1960, at BAR.001.006.0373.

2880 Aftercare report for “Amy”, April 1960, at BAR.001.006.0378.

2881 Aftercare report for “Amy”, May 1960, at BAR.001.006.0377.

2882 Aftercare report for “Amy”, July 1960, at BAR.001.006.0373.

2883 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.137.

“Getting my records was devastating. It was the cold way Barnardo’s made their reports on you, like you were nothing, just a number”.

6.59 By April 1961, nine months later, “Amy” and her sister were boarding in the same house and in April 1961 it was reported that “[“Amy”] seems to have plenty of friends in Neutral Bay and enjoys a happy social life. She has been in her board for over a year now which, for [her] is a very good record indeed.”²⁸⁸⁴

6.60 “Amy” met her husband, who had been a juvenile migrant, when they were both living in Sydney.²⁸⁸⁵ In about 1963, aged 19, “Amy” wrote to Barnardo’s seeking permission to get married as, being under 21, she was still in the care of Barnardo’s.²⁸⁸⁶ Permission was granted, though the Barnardo’s Social Worker noted she had “little hope of this marriage being a success, as [‘Amy’] is so selfish and narcissistic, and will never be able to cope with the demands of marriage.”²⁸⁸⁷ “Amy” was married to her husband for 44 years, and they had three children together.²⁸⁸⁸ Shortly after the marriage, while “Amy” was pregnant, she returned to the UK ahead of her husband and stayed for 14 months with his parents in Walthamstow.²⁸⁸⁹ She persuaded

her husband that they should return to Australia.²⁸⁹⁰

6.61 “Amy” had continued to write to her mother. In 1971 or 1972 she received a letter from her mother “to ask me to stop writing or she would get her solicitors on to me... My mother had decided to cut me out of her life...[She] was hiding [my sister] and I from her family.”²⁸⁹¹ “Amy” continued to contact her mother, and “eventually talked to my mother on and off on the phone.”²⁸⁹² “Amy” knew that her mother had another daughter, but her mother would not tell her anything about her brother.

6.62 In the 1990s, “Amy” received her records from Barnardo’s, but the records had been “vetted...first and blacked things out... Getting my records was devastating. It was the cold way Barnardo’s made their reports on you, like you were nothing, just a number...I don’t think Barnardo’s were telling me everything.”²⁸⁹³

6.63 In 1998, “Amy” and her husband visited the UK in the hope of finding “Amy’s” brother.²⁸⁹⁴ Before leaving Australia, they

2884 Aftercare report for “Amy”, April 1961, at BAR.001.006.0371.

2885 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.130.

2886 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.130.

2887 Letter from Mrs R. Tankard to Miss Garland, 29 January 1963, at BAR.001.005.1078.

2888 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.130.

2889 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.131.

2890 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.131.

2891 [Written statement of “Amy”](#), paragraph 129, at WIT.001.002.6372.

2892 [Written statement of “Amy”](#), paragraph 130, at WIT.001.002.6372.

2893 [Written statement of “Amy”](#), paragraph 126, at WIT.001.002.6372. An internal Barnardo’s letter from 1994 noted that “Amy” and her sister visited the aftercare office to request their records: Letter from Lyndall Eeg (After Care Co-ordinate) to Betty Poulter (Senior Records Research Officer), 11 April 1994, at BAR.001.005.1093.

2894 [Written statement of “Amy”](#), paragraph 133, at WIT.001.002.6372.

placed an advertisement in a Glasgow newspaper. “Amy’s” brother read the advert. He did not know he had two sisters. In due course “Amy’s” brother phoned “Amy”: “We cried for half an hour. [He] was overwhelmed. He was happy.”²⁸⁹⁵

6.64 “Amy” met her mother and brother for the first time during that visit.²⁸⁹⁶ Although their first meeting was a little strained “my mother and I really got to know each other in the end...It was quite a journey those last 20 years of her life. We got each other’s sense of humour. My mother was very affectionate in her ways with me.”²⁸⁹⁷ “Amy” made nine trips to the United Kingdom. Her mother died in 2016, aged 98.²⁸⁹⁸ Three of the trips were made with the assistance of the CMT.²⁸⁹⁹

6.65 “Amy” “never blamed my mother for putting us in a home...What must it have been like for her to be left stranded with a wee baby, a 3-year-old daughter and a little boy? She did what she thought was best.”²⁹⁰⁰

“I have never blamed my mother...She did what she thought was best.”

6.66 “Amy” kept in close contact with her brother. “Amy’s” relationship with her sister in Australia “blossomed when we both started having children in our early 20s... Now it’s wonderful. I love all her family.”²⁹⁰¹ She summed up her family circumstances: “I have a loving family. The house I’m living in now I’ve been in for 35 years. As an adult, I’ve had a very happy life. I feel blessed. I met the right man.”²⁹⁰²

6.67 “Amy” was “very proud to say I’m Scottish; that will never go away.”²⁹⁰³

6.68 “Amy” received counselling through the CMT: “The trust has been absolutely wonderful.”²⁹⁰⁴

2895 [Written statement of “Amy”](#), paragraph 136, at WIT.001.002.6372.

2896 [Written statement of “Amy”](#), paragraph 137, at WIT.001.002.6372.

2897 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.134-135.

2898 [Written statement of “Amy”](#), paragraph 137, at WIT.001.002.6372.

2899 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.134.

2900 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.135.

2901 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.136.

2902 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.131.

2903 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.140.

2904 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.138.

“Margaret”

Life in the UK

6.69 “Margaret” was born in 1940. Barnardo’s records indicate that her father was working at Rolls Royce in Hillington at the time of his death in 1944, and had significant financial problems. As he and “Margaret’s” mother were not married, she became destitute after his death, and this led to “Margaret” and her younger sister “Amy” being taken into the care of Barnardo’s when she was three years old. Their brother remained in their mother’s care with her mother’s parents in Wolverhampton. “Margaret” “found out when I was an adult that my mother was supposed to come and take me out of Barnardo’s once she had sorted things out. However, she never did.”²⁹⁰⁵

6.70 “Margaret” was placed in Barnardo’s, Glasclune. Glasclune “was very strict but I didn’t mind. I thought this was okay.”²⁹⁰⁶ When she arrived, she “slept in a big dormitory” with girls of her own age, and “[a]s you got older, you went to a different floor. It was smaller bedrooms there that slept one or two people.”²⁹⁰⁷ “Margaret” remembered being “fed quite well. You were given a cooked breakfast.”²⁹⁰⁸ However, some of the food made her “sick and faint” and when she was in Australia she was “diagnosed as having coeliac disease. This was never diagnosed at the home.”²⁹⁰⁹

6.71 “Margaret” went to a primary school in North Berwick before moving on to North Berwick High School.²⁹¹⁰

“At that time I never knew I had a family”.

6.72 One day, after “Margaret” had been at Glasclune for about three years, “I was told my sister was coming to stay with me. At that time I didn’t even know what a sister was. I’m not sure what age I was when she came in. I put sweets on her pillow for her coming.”²⁹¹¹ Barnardo’s records show that “Margaret” was eight years old when her sister arrived. “Margaret” and her sister went to stay on a farm with “a lovely woman” and her husband “once or twice a year,” and “the home would take us on trips.”²⁹¹² At Christmas “we had a Christmas dinner and were given little presents.”²⁹¹³ “Margaret’s” birthday was not celebrated at the home and “[t]here was never any affection, no cuddles or anything.”²⁹¹⁴ Other children would receive family visitors, but “[t]here were never any visits from any of my family members while I was in the home...At that time I never knew I had a family that could visit me.”²⁹¹⁵

2905 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.189. “Amy’s” account precedes this one.

2906 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.190.

2907 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.190.

2908 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.191.

2909 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.191.

2910 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.191.

2911 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.190.

2912 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.192.

2913 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.192.

2914 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.192.

2915 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.193.

“I really didn’t want to go to Australia, but I had to. I didn’t think I had anyone else apart from my sister. I thought my mother was dead.”

6.73 Sex education was woefully inadequate. “Margaret” attended the Sea Rangers and, one evening, a boy walked her back to the home where he kissed her: “As we got to the gates as [sic] Glasclune he gave me a kiss. Mr Horne [sic] went past in his car at the same time this happened. He told me later that I could get pregnant if I kissed a boy. After this, if any boy tried to kiss me I would freak out. That was my sex education. No one explained to me what it was like growing up as a girl and the changes that happen to you.”²⁹¹⁶

“No one explained to me what it was like growing up...the changes that happen to you.”

6.74 On one of the visits to the farm with her sister, when “Margaret” was about 12 years old, she was sexually abused. “Margaret” “never told anyone about this. I wouldn’t have known who to speak to about it even if I did want to say.”²⁹¹⁷ This abuse was also referred to by her sister, “Amy”, above.

Migration

6.75 When “Margaret” was 15 years old, she was migrated to Australia. She only found out that she was going the day before she left.²⁹¹⁸

6.76 “Margaret” had no memory of undergoing a medical before leaving Glasclune, but her Barnardo’s file contains a completed medical examination form signed on 7 November 1955.²⁹¹⁹

6.77 “Margaret” explained that she “was happy where I was. I didn’t really want to go.”²⁹²⁰ Her mother signed a consent form for “Margaret” and her sister on 12 January 1956.²⁹²¹

6.78 They set sail for Australia on the SS Orontes towards the end of March 1956. To “Margaret”, it “felt like we were going on an adventure”, but “[l]ooking back now, I really didn’t want to go to Australia, but I had to. I didn’t think I had anyone else apart from my sister. I thought my mother was dead.”²⁹²²

2916 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, pp.191-192.

2917 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.194. “Amy” states that “many years later” this experience “came out between my sister and I”: [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.119.

2918 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.194.

2919 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.195; Barnardo’s medical examination form, 7 November 1955, at BAR.001.005.1031.

2920 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.195.

2921 Consent letter for “Amy”, at BAR.001.005.1008. See “Amy’s” account for attaining their mother’s signature.

2922 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.195.

6.79 The crossing “lasted about six weeks in total”.²⁹²³ They arrived in Sydney in late April 1956.²⁹²⁴ “Margaret” was 15 years old. There, they were taken to Dr Barnardo’s Girls’ Home at Burwood. “Margaret” “still had no idea what was happening.”²⁹²⁵

Life in Australia

6.80 “Margaret” stayed at Burwood for “two or three days” before she went to work for a family.²⁹²⁶ “Margaret’s” sister stayed at the home and “I wouldn’t see her for a long time after I left.”²⁹²⁷

6.81 Although her sister remembered finding out about their mother shortly before leaving England, “Margaret” could only say that “[w]hen I arrived in Australia, Barnardo’s gave me my mother’s address so that I could write to her. It was quite a novelty having this and for me now to have a mother for the first time in my life.”²⁹²⁸ An unsigned letter to Mr Price, the manager of Barnardo’s in Australia, dated May 1957, suggests that her mother did not frequently respond.²⁹²⁹

6.82 “Margaret’s” first job in Australia was with a family in Edgecliff.²⁹³⁰ She “kept in touch with Barnardo’s in Sydney” and “[a]t that time I looked on Barnardo’s as my life and family.”²⁹³¹ She “was lonely...as I didn’t have anyone to talk to, so I joined a church

group.”²⁹³² Once, when “Margaret” and another girl were on their way to church, they met some boys who invited them to go on a boat. The motor on the boat broke down and “Margaret” was late home. When the family she was living with found out where she had been “I was told that they were disgusted with me. They asked a doctor to come and examine me. It was an awful experience.”²⁹³³

“It was lonely...as I didn’t have anyone to talk to”.

6.83 “Margaret” remained with that family “for about two years.”²⁹³⁴ Aged 16 or 17 she then went to work as a cook at Barnardo’s, Greenwood, a job she was not trained for and did not remain in long.²⁹³⁵ “Margaret” understood she was still under the care of Barnardo’s at this time.

6.84 After leaving Greenwood, “Margaret” was visited periodically by a Barnardo’s social worker, Mrs Tankard. Generally, “Margaret” remembered Mrs Tankard as “a nasty woman. She would always comment on my weight. She would also say that I was jealous of my sister because I wouldn’t visit her. Before this, no one from Barnardo’s had ever come to visit me in person.”²⁹³⁶ Indeed, aftercare reports written by the social worker frequently

2923 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.196.

2924 SS Orontes, Incoming Passenger list, at NAA.001.001.0472.

2925 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.196.

2926 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.196.

2927 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.197.

2928 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.200.

2929 Letter from Unknown to Mr Price, 9 May 1957, at BAR.001.005.0990.

2930 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.197.

2931 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.197.

2932 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.198.

2933 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.197.

2934 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.198.

2935 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.198.

2936 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, pp.198-199.

“She held my face in her hands and said my name...her other daughter was there and she didn’t know about me.”

included comments to the effect that “Margaret” was “very much overweight” and “flabby-looking”, or that she “is jealous of [her sister] and very critical of her.”²⁹³⁷

6.85 “Margaret” worked in several roles, including as an assistant nurse at a children’s hospital, and in stores, including a chemist’s where she worked for 10 years.²⁹³⁸ By April 1961, she was living in Neutral Bay, Sydney, with her sister.²⁹³⁹ It was around this time that she met her future husband.²⁹⁴⁰

6.86 “Margaret” had “kept in touch with my mother up until I was married” but “any time that I asked her about why I had been put in care there was no response.”²⁹⁴¹ Eventually, “Margaret” stopped writing to her. Later in life, “Margaret” asked the Salvation Army to help her trace her family, but to no avail. After finding out about the CMT through the Barnardo’s newsletter, she “spoke with Margaret Humphreys from the CMT and asked if she could help me: she was able to trace my mother.”²⁹⁴² “Margaret” and her husband subsequently visited her mother in Wolverhampton.²⁹⁴³ She arrived unannounced

at her mother’s house. As soon as her mother saw “Margaret” she recognised her. “She held my face in her hands and said my name. She then said that her other daughter was there and she didn’t know about me.”²⁹⁴⁴

6.87 When “Margaret” returned to Australia, she wrote to her half-sister and told her who she was. Her half-sister told “Margaret” about her brother but her mother would not provide his contact details.²⁹⁴⁵ “Margaret” subsequently traced and visited her brother in Scotland and was able to develop “a good relationship” with her mother.²⁹⁴⁶ Two of her trips were paid for by the CMT.²⁹⁴⁷

6.88 About 20 years ago, Barnardo’s gave “Margaret” a copy of her records.²⁹⁴⁸ She continued to consider herself to be Scottish, but did not “regret ending up in Australia. I would say it was the best thing that ever happened to me. I have had a good life and been married for 52 years.”²⁹⁴⁹ She had both a British and an Australian passport, and “[t]here were no problems obtaining either of these.”²⁹⁵⁰

2937 Aftercare report for “Margaret”, undated, at BAR.001.005.1043; Aftercare report for “Margaret”, 13 September 1960, at BAR.001.005.1044.

2938 Aftercare report for “Margaret”, 29 June (No year given, but probably 1960), at BAR.001.005.1045.

2939 Aftercare report for “Margaret”, April 1961, at BAR.001.005.1039.

2940 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.199.

2941 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.200.

2942 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.199.

2943 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.200.

2944 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.201.

2945 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.201.

2946 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.202.

2947 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.199.

2948 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.203.

2949 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.202.

2950 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.202.

“The lack of choice I had when I was in care...was a bit degrading.”

6.89 For “Margaret”, “Barnardo’s was always a very positive experience.”²⁹⁵¹ She felt that her “time in care was good for me. It was disciplined and strict, but I don’t think that this was a bad thing.”²⁹⁵² Nonetheless, it “was difficult for me when I saw other kids with their parents.”²⁹⁵³ “Margaret” did, however, have this concern: “When we were sent to Australia there wasn’t any choice, we just had to go. I look on us as a stolen generation. The lack of choice I had when I was in care has stayed with me. I think it was a bit degrading.”²⁹⁵⁴

2951 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.202.

2952 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.203.

2953 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.203.

2954 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-00000006, p.202.

7

Church of Scotland: Levenhall Home for Boys

7.1 Levenhall Home for Boys, Musselburgh, was one of a number of establishments run by the Church of Scotland providing residential care for children.²⁹⁵⁵ It opened in 1938, and closed in 1958, with residents being transferred to Malta Home, Edinburgh.

7.2 It is estimated that the Church of Scotland Committee on Social Service funded the migration of 98 children to Australia between 1947 and 1963.²⁹⁵⁶ Not all of these children were from the Church of Scotland's own homes—some were recruited by the Royal Over-Seas League from elsewhere in the UK, and some were supplied by Quarriers.

Applicants

7.3 Two SCAI applicants who had been placed at Levenhall Home for Boys were migrated to Australia by the Church of Scotland Committee on Social Service.

"Darby"

Life in the UK

7.4 "Darby" was born in 1937. His earliest memory of childhood was living in the Falkirk area of Scotland with his parents and three older sisters.²⁹⁵⁷ When he was four years old, his mother was knocked down by a bus and died.²⁹⁵⁸ After this, his father took care of him and his sisters, one of whom would help when their father was at work.²⁹⁵⁹ When "Darby" was seven years old, his father died during surgery.²⁹⁶⁰ After their father's death, the children's uncle looked after the children. "Darby" said that "I don't even know if he was our real uncle."²⁹⁶¹

7.5 About a year later, "Darby" and his sisters were taken into care. Subsequently, two of his sisters went to live with an aunt but he and another sister were "put into a children's home in Bathgate."²⁹⁶² "Darby" had to move schools, and "was sad about this because I had liked the school I had previously been at."²⁹⁶³ In 1948, he and his sister were moved to Weedingshall Children's Home in Polmont, a home managed by Stirling County Council.²⁹⁶⁴

2955 CrossReach, Parts A and B response to section 21 notice, Ballinkinrain, at COS.001.001.0001-0006.

2956 Constantine *et al.*, paragraphs 10.24-10.25.

2957 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.73.

2958 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.73.

2959 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.73.

2960 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.74.

2961 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.74.

2962 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.74.

2963 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.74.

2964 Letter from John Robertson to Rev. Lewis Cameron, 16 March 1950, at COS.001.001.0919.

“I was asked...if I wanted to go to Australia...I thought that it was to go on holiday. It never occurred to me that I wouldn’t be coming back.”

7.6 “Darby” described Weedingshall as “very regimental...you could get a whack on the back if you didn’t sit up straight at mealtimes.”²⁹⁶⁵ In March 1950, “Darby” was moved again, this time to Levenhall Home for Boys, Musselburgh, a home run by the Church of Scotland. As Levenhall was a boys’ home, “Darby” was separated from his sister. He later found out that his aunt wanted to take care of him and his sister but she was not allowed to do so “because she already had too many children.”²⁹⁶⁶ At Levenhall, “[i]f you didn’t behave, then you would be clipped around the ear by the staff.”²⁹⁶⁷ “Darby” “had no contact with the social work or my family.”²⁹⁶⁸

“If you didn’t behave, then you would be clipped around the ear by the staff.”

Migration

7.7 “Darby” remembered being “asked by one of the staff at Levenhall if I wanted to go to Australia. There was no presentation or anything like that. I thought that it was to

go on holiday. It never occurred to me that I wouldn’t be coming back.”²⁹⁶⁹ Levenhall had migration in mind before asking him about it; letters from late May 1950 disclose that Levenhall had received visits from a representative of the Child Migration Department for the Commonwealth of Australia, recruiting for boys to migrate. The superintendent had “mentioned one or two of the boys whose parents were dead,” including “Darby”.²⁹⁷⁰ The Church of Scotland Committee on Social Service acknowledged that the relevant welfare services may feel that “Darby” should not be migrated without his sister.²⁹⁷¹ There was consequently some suggestion that “Darby’s” sister might be migrated with him.²⁹⁷² The outcome of these discussions is not divulged in extant correspondence, but in September 1950, the Secretary of State apparently consented to “Darby’s” emigration to Australia under Section 17 of the Children Act, 1948.²⁹⁷³ The concerns about “Darby” being migrated without his sister seem to have come to nothing, and he was sent to Australia without her in November that year.

2965 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.75.

2966 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.75.

2967 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.75.

2968 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.76.

2969 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.76.

2970 Letter from Miss M.K. Cumming to John Robertson, 26 May 1950, at COS.001.001.0921.

2971 Letter from Miss M.K. Cumming to John Robertson, 26 May 1950, at COS.001.001.0921

2972 Letter from Miss M.K. Cumming to John Robertson, 26 May 1950, at COS.001.001.0921; Letter from Miss M.K. Cumming to John Robertson, 30 May 1950, at COS.001.001.0924.

2973 Application for Relief, County Council of the County of Stirling, at STC.001.001.1331.

7.8 “Darby” and one other boy from Levenhall were migrated to Australia at the same time.²⁹⁷⁴ “Darby” did not remember having any pre-migration medical examinations. When they boarded the train at Glasgow, bound for Liverpool, “there were other kids on the train from different homes.”²⁹⁷⁵ All these boys departed from Liverpool in early November 1950 on the MV Cheshire, bound ultimately for Melbourne.



MV Cheshire, 1927. Source: [Sydney Heritage Fleet Museum](#).

7.9 “Darby” “was well looked after...There were activities on the ship and I remember that there were games for us to play with.”²⁹⁷⁶ “Darby” was vaccinated against smallpox during the crossing.²⁹⁷⁷ The children “were able to get off the ship when it arrived at Colombo in Ceylon...It was the worst experience of my life. There were children there who had leprosy and parts of their arms were missing. It was very frightening as a child to see these shocking things.”²⁹⁷⁸

7.10 It was mid-December when “Darby” and his peers arrived in Melbourne, and “it was extremely hot...There were 29 of us put on to a bus with no air conditioning. We were taken on a journey of 120 miles. We were told that we were going to a place called Dhurringile, but that was all I knew.”²⁹⁷⁹ “Darby” was aged 13 on his arrival.

“We were told that we were going to a place called Dhurringile, but that was all I knew.”

Life at Dhurringile (1950-c.1953)

7.11 Dhurringile Rural Training Farm was run by the Presbyterian Church. It housed migrant boys from eight to 14 years old and was situated in Tatura, Victoria. It was “in the middle of nowhere and it was all boys...We were the first children to arrive there.”²⁹⁸⁰ The children “had to make our own beds and we also had to polish the floors.”²⁹⁸¹ The boys also “had to wash the dishes after our meals.”²⁹⁸² “Darby” found that “[i]t was very difficult to sleep at night because of the terrible heat. We also had to put up with every type of insect.”²⁹⁸³

2974 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.76.

2975 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.76.

2976 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.77.

2977 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.77.

2978 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.77.

2979 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.78.

2980 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.78.

2981 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.78.

2982 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.79.

2983 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.79.

“There was a bit of freedom for the boys, but most of the time it was like living in a prison.”

7.12 When he arrived, the school “Darby” was to attend was closed so he “was missing out on a lot of the schoolwork” he had been doing at Levenhall.²⁹⁸⁴ This school was about 42 miles and an hour’s bus ride away: “The bus was old and there was no air conditioning.”²⁹⁸⁵ “Darby” got on “all right” at school.²⁹⁸⁶

7.13 On Sundays, the boys “had to go to church” and “were taken as a group on the back of a truck...about 6 miles away from the farm.”²⁹⁸⁷

7.14 “Darby” described how “[t]here was a bit of freedom for the boys” but that “most of the time it was like living in a prison.”²⁹⁸⁸ There was a “set daily routine” and all the boys worked on the farm where their “chores included such things as feeding the pigs and milking the cows.”²⁹⁸⁹ When “Darby” reached “around 15 or 16,” he got his first “proper job” away from the farm.²⁹⁹⁰ It was at a local knitting mill and “[o]nce I started working and being paid I had to start paying for my board on the farm.”²⁹⁹¹

Life after care

7.15 When “Darby” decided to leave Dhurringile “[t]here was no preparation for life beyond, you just left. I had not been taught any life skills for managing money or paying bills.”²⁹⁹² He worked different labouring jobs that provided him with basic accommodation, sometimes working “for 14 hours, each day, often in extreme heat, for about £2 a week.”²⁹⁹³

7.16 “Darby” was alone and “started to wish someone would come and take me home to Scotland.”²⁹⁹⁴ He worked on farms until he was about 25 years old. Later, his sister found him through the Salvation Army.²⁹⁹⁵ He wrote to her a few times.²⁹⁹⁶ He was informed by a lawyer that his father had left him £17 in his will, and eventually he received a cheque.

“I was on my own a lot of time...I started to wish someone would...take me home to Scotland.”

2984 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.79.

2985 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.79.

2986 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.79.

2987 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.79.

2988 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.80.

2989 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.79-80.

2990 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.80.

2991 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.80.

2992 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.80.

2993 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.80-81.

2994 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.81.

2995 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.81.

2996 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.81.

7.17 When “Darby” saw an advertisement for the CMT, he applied for financial assistance to travel to Scotland in the late 1980s to see his sister: “It was very emotional seeing my sister and her daughter. I also visited my other sisters but one of them didn’t recognise me.”²⁹⁹⁷

7.18 “Darby” still felt “half Australian and half Scottish.”²⁹⁹⁸ “Darby” had mixed feelings about his migration: “In one way I didn’t like coming to Australia. Life on the farms was very hard...In another way, Australia has been good for me up to now.”²⁹⁹⁹ Nonetheless, he did not “think that the authorities had the right to send me to Australia.”³⁰⁰⁰

“In one way, I didn’t like coming to Australia. Life on the farm was very hard... In another way, Australia has been good for me”.

“James”

Life in the UK

7.19 “James” was born in 1940, and he lived in Dumfries with his parents, three brothers, and sister. He did not “really remember family life before going into care.”³⁰⁰¹ His mother died when he was an infant, and his father was an alcoholic, so he could “only imagine that he didn’t have the means or the wherewithal to look after us. I think that probably the local authority stepped in and we were put into care.”³⁰⁰²

7.20 “James” and his brothers were admitted to Levenhall. Their sister was sent to a different orphanage. “James” was three years old at this time; his brothers were about four, five, and eight years old.³⁰⁰³ “James” was emotionally and physically abused at Levenhall: “The beatings started almost from when you arrived and happened every day” and he was “constantly abused mentally. Every day you were called names and left in no doubt about your birthright.”³⁰⁰⁴

“You would be constantly abused mentally. Every day you were called names”.

2997 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.81-82.

2998 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.82.

2999 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, pp.82-83.

3000 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.83.

3001 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.61.

3002 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, pp.61-62.

3003 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.62.

3004 [Written statement of “James” \(MEB\)](#), paragraph 54, at WIT.001.002.1496.

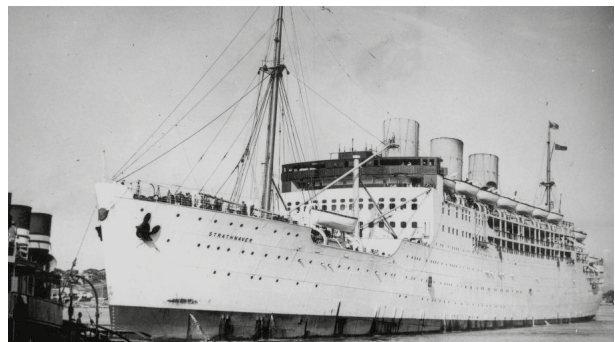
7.21 Boys at Levenhall had to leave at age 15. "James" did not know what he was going to do next: "There was no guidance and no one had the answers to what would happen to me."³⁰⁰⁵

Migration

7.22 In 1952, one of "James'" brothers was migrated to Australia under the child migration scheme.³⁰⁰⁶ "James" did not "recall anything about the time he left other than saying goodbye to him. It was a very sad time as that left me in the home on my own. I had no contact with him after he went to Australia."³⁰⁰⁷ For "James", the possibility of migration had first been raised when he was "around 13 years old...although I didn't leave until I was 15. [Mr Angus] asked me if I wanted to join my brother in Australia and I said yes."³⁰⁰⁸ "James" "had no knowledge of Australia or where I was going. I was aware I had to go there, work hard and keep my head down."³⁰⁰⁹ "James" did not remember being asked to sign any forms about going to Australia, but believed that his father "did sign a consent form".³⁰¹⁰

7.23 "James" received "no preparation for leaving. The day before I left I was told that I was going on a bus in the morning. That night I stayed with my grandmother and grandfather. My father came to see me. All I remember was him singing 'Bye-bye Blackbird.'"³⁰¹¹ The next day, "James" was

given £10 and put on a bus to Edinburgh. He "then travelled on a train alone to London and went to the YMCA. I have no idea how I managed to get there. At the YMCA there were 12 of us altogether waiting to travel to Australia...all Scottish."³⁰¹² In the morning, "a minister of the church came and took us all to Tilbury" where the group boarded the SS Strathnaver and sailed for Australia.³⁰¹³ "James" was 15 years old.



SS Strathnaver, date unknown. Source: [State Library of Queensland](#).

7.24 "James" had some happy memories of the journey.³⁰¹⁴ At Perth, the group was "taken on a trip by train to a national park for a visit," before re-boarding the ship and travelling through to Melbourne.³⁰¹⁵

Life in Australia

7.25 In Melbourne, "James" was met by Superintendent Hannan who drove him to Dhurringile Rural Training Farm in Tatura, Victoria.³⁰¹⁶ "James" was the only one from his group to go with Mr Hannan.

3005 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.63.

3006 Letter from Unknown to Mr D. Angus (Superintendent of Levenhall Home for Boys), 17 October 1952, at COS.001.001.0867.

3007 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.63.

3008 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.63.

3009 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.63.

3010 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.63.

3011 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.64.

3012 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.64.

3013 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.64.

3014 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.65.

3015 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.65.

3016 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "James" (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.65.

“...as a child migrant we take comfort in what we have and what we got.”

7.26 “James” said that Dhurringile “was very good. You were very well fed. There were proper meals. The staff were all good.”³⁰¹⁷ However, he was only there for about a week, because he was “too old for the scheme” by the time he migrated; he was only permitted to migrate because his brother was already in Australia.³⁰¹⁸ Instead of staying at Dhurringile, “James” “moved to the Katandra area, where I had to work on farms for the next 2 years.”³⁰¹⁹

7.27 The Church of Scotland Committee on Social Service had requested that Social Services in Melbourne secure “James” employment “as near as possible” to his brother.³⁰²⁰ This request was met by Mr Hannan.³⁰²¹ Although “James’s” brother in Australia did not know where “James” was, “James” knew where his brother was and managed to make contact with him. As for another of his brothers, he tried to talk to him on the telephone but found it very difficult: “when I was in Australia, I had difficulty speaking with my brother. I would ring him up but I couldn’t speak and hung up. This went on for years until I was 60 years old.”³⁰²² “James” attributed this difficulty to his time at Levenhall.

Life after care

7.28 “James” worked long hours on the farms. He worked on five farms and “was well treated at them all even though I wasn’t keen [on] farming.”³⁰²³ In later life he learned that “there were people who had responsibility for me whilst I was working on the farms”, but he did not know that at the time.³⁰²⁴ After a couple of years, “James” started to work on the roads before joining the Australian Navy when he was 19.³⁰²⁵

“I was treated well at them all even though I wasn’t keen [on] farming.”

7.29 In 2002, “James” and all his brothers reunited in Melbourne to celebrate his daughter’s 21st birthday.³⁰²⁶

7.30 “James” was able to access funding from the Family Restoration Fund.³⁰²⁷

7.31 Although he had voted in Australia since he was 18 years old, “James” did not become an Australian citizen until he was in his 50s.³⁰²⁸ For “James”, “as a child migrant we take comfort in what we have and what we got.”³⁰²⁹

3017 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.65.

3018 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.65.

3019 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.65.

3020 Letter from Miss Mary K. Cumming to Mr Harrison, 25 February 1955, at WIT.003.001.3563.

3021 Letter from Mr Peter G. Hannan to Mr H. L. Hooper, 23 March 1955, at WIT.003.001.3561.

3022 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.66.

3023 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.66.

3024 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.66.

3025 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.66.

3026 “Brothers in arms after two countries and half a century”, *Shepparton News*, 29 March 2002, at WIT.003.001.4626.

3027 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.68.

3028 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, p.68.

3029 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, pp.67-68.

8

Emma Stirling: the Edinburgh and Leith Children’s Aid and Refuge Society

8.1 In 1877, Emma Stirling, a British child welfare activist, moved to Edinburgh where she established and subsidised the Stockbridge Day Nursery and Infant Home for working mothers and motherless children. Her initiative was renamed the “Edinburgh and Leith Children’s Aid and Refuge Society” in 1884, and a board of directors was appointed. Her direct involvement then diminished and her Scottish homes were left under the Society’s control.

8.2 By 1886, the Society was caring for 300 children at seven institutions, including a training farm.³⁰³⁰

8.3 In early 1886, Emma Stirling became aware that the Canadian Government was prepared to give liberal grants to child savers, as they were called, to take children to Canada to work as farm labourers and domestic servants.³⁰³¹ Emma Stirling bought Hillfoot Farm in Nova Scotia, believing that “it would...be worse than useless to send boys and girls across the sea, without a home within reach of them, with their own people there to look after their interests, and to hear constantly how they are getting on.”³⁰³² Hillfoot Farm, which was situated about 100 miles from Halifax, comprised many acres and woodland and orchards and farmlands

in a very attractive part of Nova Scotia.³⁰³³ The farm was run with the free labour provided by the children Emma Stirling took out there from Scotland.³⁰³⁴

Applicants

8.4 Patricia Delaney Dishon gave evidence on behalf of her great grandfather’s children—James, Annie, and Robina Delaney—who were migrated by Emma Stirling in 1886 and 1887.

Patricia Delaney Dishon

8.5 Patricia spent many years assiduously researching her family’s history. Thanks to her, a book recounting the family history was published in 2012 and the Delaney family’s experiences were able to be told in evidence before me.³⁰³⁵ It was striking that the impact on Patricia and her family of the harm occasioned to the Delaneys by Emma Stirling’s child migration activities still resounds profoundly more than a century later.

8.6 Patricia drew attention to the fact that the story she had uncovered did not just relate to the Delaneys: “there were all those other children. There were 300 at least from Edinburgh that [Emma Stirling] took and it has been estimated that over

3030 Constantine *et al.*, paragraph 16.26.

3031 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.18.

3032 Emma M. Stirling, *Our Children in Old Scotland and Nova Scotia* (1892) London: John Haddon & Co., Part 2, Chapter 9.

3033 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.18.

3034 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.20.

3035 Patricia Delaney Dishon, *The Delaneys of Edinburgh: Based on a True Story* (2012), Surbiton: Grosvenor House Publishing.

100,000 children went to Canada under this migrant scheme."³⁰³⁶ There are many other child migrants whose "stories have not been told and therefore these are lost."³⁰³⁷ Patricia presented her family's account "to represent not just the Delaney children but all the lost children".³⁰³⁸

"...there are other children whose stories have not been told and therefore these are lost."

The Delaney Children: Summary

8.7 The story of how Emma Stirling migrated the three Delaney children, James, Annie and Robina, is one of deceit and selfish endeavour. The children's father, Arthur Delaney, was forced by circumstances to place his children in Emma Stirling's care after the death of his wife. His intention was always one of recovering the children once circumstances allowed. When that time came after he remarried, he was unable to locate his children. Their whereabouts were deliberately concealed from him. When he could not find the children he commenced legal proceedings with a view to locating them. By that time in 1886, two of the children, Robina and James, had been migrated to Canada by Emma Stirling. Their sister Annie Delaney was migrated in 1887. The Court of Session decided that the children had been abducted by Emma Stirling. The children were not recovered.

Arthur Delaney was awarded damages which he used to go to Canada to search, in vain, for his children. Arthur died in 1907, aged 47, without seeing his children again.

Background to the children being in care

8.8 Arthur Delaney was a glass cutter based in the Old Town of Edinburgh, where he lived with his wife, Mary Moffat. In about 1877, the couple's first child, James, was born. Annie was born in 1878, and Robina followed in 1880. In 1882, George was born, but died only five hours later. Mary died of septicaemia one week later, leaving Arthur Delaney with three children under the age of five to care for.³⁰³⁹

8.9 Arthur "looked after the children by himself for six months with the help of neighbours."³⁰⁴⁰ In November 1882, Arthur was made redundant, "at a time when there was already high unemployment in Scotland."³⁰⁴¹ Arthur could no longer take care of his children. At that time, there was "a missionary movement in the Old Town where...evangelic Christians went round the Old Town seeking to help people. When one of these missionary ladies saw the situation that Arthur was in...she suggested that he place his three children in the care of Emma Maitland Stirling, who had homes in Edinburgh, and that is what Arthur did."³⁰⁴²

8.10 Arthur placed his children in care in 1882. They were five, four, and two years old. Emma Stirling's Homes "were small homes," and the home at Mackenzie Place

3036 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.38.

3037 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.83.

3038 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.83.

3039 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.7.

3040 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.8.

3041 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.8.

3042 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.9.

to which the children were initially admitted “was only for young children and girls...The boy, James, therefore had to be separated from his two young sisters and he was put in the home that Emma Stirling had in Beaton Terrace in Granton”.³⁰⁴³

8.11 Arthur contributed to the cost of his children’s board “so far as I could [but] when I was not working I discontinued paying.”³⁰⁴⁴ Arthur visited them “mostly every Saturday... for a length of time after their admission.”³⁰⁴⁵ Arthur’s mother also used to visit his children. He explained in court papers that he did not always see them when he arrived at the homes, and “sometimes I only saw one and sometimes two”.³⁰⁴⁶

“...his son...had been actually taken away to Nova Scotia without his knowledge.”

8.12 In July 1886, Arthur remarried.³⁰⁴⁷ At that time, Arthur believed “that the children were in homes in the country” and that was why he had not seen them.³⁰⁴⁸ Having remarried, “he intended taking the children to live with him because he now had a home and a wife to go to.”³⁰⁴⁹ In the summer of 1886, Arthur went to visit his

children but “did not find them in the home. I was told they had been sent to Moffat... for six weeks of the summer.”³⁰⁵⁰ When he visited again a fortnight later, he was told “they would probably be back in another week.”³⁰⁵¹ He was told that the children were in various places, including Moffat, Burntisland, and Granton. This continued until “he heard from a girl who worked beside his sister that his son...had been actually taken away to Nova Scotia without his knowledge.”³⁰⁵² The following morning, Arthur went to Mackenzie Place and spoke to John MacDonald, the secretary of the Edinburgh and Leith Children’s Aid and Refuge Society, who “denied at first knowing anything about them.”³⁰⁵³ Arthur returned the next day, and was told “that Robina had been sent away three months before, and that James and Annie were still in this country; but he declined to tell me where.”³⁰⁵⁴ Arthur commenced legal action shortly afterwards with a view to locating his children and having them returned to him.

“...he intended taking the children to live with him because he now had a home and a wife to go to.”

3043 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.10.

3044 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9871.

3045 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9871

3046 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Ann Delaney (Arthur’s mother), at WIT.003.001.9873.

3047 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.24.

3048 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.24.

3049 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.25.

3050 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9871.

3051 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9872.

3052 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.25.

3053 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9868.

3054 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9872.

“They were really child trafficked...and they were slaves.”

Migration

8.13 In early 1886, Emma Stirling bought Hillfoot Farm in Nova Scotia with a view to migrating children there.³⁰⁵⁵ Robina Delaney was in the first party of about 25 children Emma Stirling migrated to Canada, and she sailed to Halifax on the Caspian in May 1886, when she was six years old. Emma Stirling accompanied the party on the journey. James was migrated in August 1886 on the Carthaginian, with a group of 36 children. He was approximately nine years old. At this point, Annie “was still in the boarded-out home...in Moffat.”³⁰⁵⁶ By the time Arthur brought his case against Emma Stirling and her former society, two of his children were already in Canada, without his consent or prior knowledge.



Emma Stirling's Home, Hillfoot Farm, 1888.
Source: [British Home Children in Canada](#).

8.14 In Canada, Emma Stirling would move children on “as soon as she could” to farms, in accordance with the agreement

with the Canadian Government.³⁰⁵⁷ Any child over the age of eight or nine was sent out to work, “almost as soon as they arrived”.³⁰⁵⁸ Patricia Delaney described how these children “were really child trafficked, as we would call it today, and they were slaves.”³⁰⁵⁹ Furthermore, the sheer size of Canada posed logistical difficulties in monitoring children or assessing the suitability of placements. While “Emma says she asked for references from the people that the children were being placed with...she didn't go herself, she didn't send any staff to see where the children were being placed. They were totally at the mercy of whoever they were placed with.”³⁰⁶⁰

“They were totally at the mercy of whoever they were placed with.”

8.15 Although Hillfoot was intended to be a place to which child migrants could return should they encounter difficulties, “only James was placed in a farm near to Hillfoot.”³⁰⁶¹ When Annie too was migrated to Canada in 1887, one of the girls “was placed in the Quebec area, and one was placed in New Brunswick...over 500 miles away from Hillfoot.”³⁰⁶² They had no recourse to support from Emma Stirling or her farm: no visits were made to them, and they had no way to return to Hillfoot. Distance was

3055 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.20.

3056 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.24 and p.29.

3057 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.20.

3058 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.20.

3059 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, pp.20-21.

3060 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.80.

3061 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.18.

3062 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.18.

not the only problem: in 1890, when he was about 12 years old, James Delaney was living with the DeWolfe family near Middleton. He repeatedly ran away. As Patricia observed, “[i]f he was suffering some kind of abuse, which sounds like if he kept running away at that age into the wilderness of Canada, why did he not go back to Hillfoot, which was supposed to be this home from home for him?”³⁰⁶³ The reality was that Emma Stirling’s scheme left its children at the mercy of their placements with little preparation, oversight, or aftercare.

Attempts to find the children

8.16 Upon discovering that two of his children had been migrated to Canada, Arthur Delaney’s lawyer raised a court action against Emma Stirling and the Edinburgh and Leith Children’s Aid and Refuge Society. By this point, Emma Stirling had relinquished her role and the Society was in the hands of the directors, who “constantly say that they have no objections to Arthur getting his children back.”³⁰⁶⁴ In October 1886, the directors telegraphed Emma Stirling in Canada and “persuaded her to bring the two children back.”³⁰⁶⁵ In November, she duly brought the two children with her back to the UK. John Macdonald from the Society “went to Liverpool to meet Miss

Stirling, and accompanied her and the two children...to Edinburgh. The last I saw of them was at the Caledonian Station, where I saw them into a cab with Miss Stirling.”³⁰⁶⁶ In the evidence he gave in Arthur’s litigation in 1889, Mr Macdonald stated that he did not know where the third child, Annie, was, though contradictorily he also stated that he “declined to deliver up Annie Delaney to the petitioner because I could not deliver her without Miss Stirling’s consent.”³⁰⁶⁷ Shortly after returning, Emma Stirling collected Annie from the home where she had been boarded out and took her away. The directors told Arthur and his lawyer that the children were back in the UK.³⁰⁶⁸ When Arthur “went to the homes the next morning”, he was referred to Mr Macdonald, who first “denied knowing anything about it”, but later told Arthur that he was instructed “to give you no information about them.”³⁰⁶⁹ Arthur only found out that Emma Stirling herself was back in Scotland when he “saw her carriage in High Street...I asked her if she was to give me up my children, and she said ‘No.’ I then went to the Police Office.”³⁰⁷⁰

“I asked [Emma Stirling] if she was to give me up my children, and she said ‘No.’”

3063 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.58.

3064 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.31.

3065 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.40; Respondent’s Proof, 1 February 1889, John Macdonald, at WIT.003.001.9854.

3066 Respondent’s Proof, 1 February 1889, John Macdonald, at WIT.003.001.9854.

3067 Respondent’s Proof, 1 February 1889, John Macdonald, at WIT.003.001.9857.

3068 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.32.

3069 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9869; Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Thomas Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9874.

3070 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9870. The detective, John Macpherson’s, evidence corroborates this: Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, John Macpherson, at WIT.003.001.9870.

“...the court in Nova Scotia become involved and... Emma Stirling was required to find the children or tell the court where the children were.”

8.17 Up until this point, a charity in his local community had been funding Arthur’s legal expenses but they could not afford to carry on doing so and the lawyer could not continue the case.³⁰⁷¹ However, Arthur “never authorised any one to intimate to the respondents in this case that I had abandoned my case for my children.”³⁰⁷²

8.18 In March 1887, Emma Stirling took all three children back to Canada with her, along with “56 other children from Edinburgh,” claiming that Arthur had not tried to get them back while they were in the UK.³⁰⁷³ When she removed the children to Canada once more she “change[d] their name.”³⁰⁷⁴

8.19 In 1889, Arthur was able to continue the case, having signed on to the Poor Roll, a very early system of legal aid.³⁰⁷⁵ His litigation was revived and the Court of Session essentially decided that the children had been abducted by Emma Stirling, and “had told the directors that they had responsibility to find the children and so...Mr McDonald, was despatched to Hillfoot Farm, to Nova Scotia, and when he got there Emma refused to see him.”³⁰⁷⁶ On his sixth visit, “she told

him that...they had been placed long ago in excellent homes in Canada and she could not return them to the old country.”³⁰⁷⁷ Mr Macdonald then “presented the petition for the return of the children to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia in Halifax”.³⁰⁷⁸

8.20 When the Nova Scotia court eventually became involved, “Emma Stirling was required to find the children or tell the court where the children were.”³⁰⁷⁹ Again, she refused and was charged with contempt of court. The Nova Scotia court declared that she had “acted illegally and she should return the children”; in August 1890 they ordered her “to employ a law agent to go and search for the children at her own expense.”³⁰⁸⁰ Thus, she hired a Mr Cogswell, and told him where “the children were last located at”.³⁰⁸¹ Mr Cogswell went “to look for the children all over these places in Nova Scotia, in Quebec, and in New Brunswick”, but to no avail.³⁰⁸²

8.21 The case returned to the Court of Session in Edinburgh which ruled that “the directors were still liable and that they should arrange to have a detective sent to look for

3071 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.30.

3072 Petitioner’s Proof, 8 February 1889, Arthur Delaney, at WIT.003.001.9870.

3073 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.33.

3074 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.32.

3075 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.63.

3076 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.48.

3077 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.49.

3078 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.49.

3079 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, pp.49-50.

3080 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.50.

3081 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.50.

3082 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.50.

“...the several changes effected in their respective residences...were made with the deliberate intention of avoiding location in case of enquiry.”

the children” at their expense.³⁰⁸³ They employed the Canadian lawman Mr Mellish. In August 1891, Mr Mellish “went to Little Shemogue...in New Brunswick and found that Robina Delaney had been living there...under the name of Bessie Whitehead until April, when she was taken away by a man who came for her in company with her brother.”³⁰⁸⁴

8.22 The same man who took Robina had found Annie living with a couple whom Annie was initially unwilling to leave. Nonetheless, she too was taken by him after he claimed to be her uncle.³⁰⁸⁵ This man also collected their brother, James. In his September 1891 report, Mr Mellish concluded that “the several changes effected in their respective residences of late were made with the deliberate intention of avoiding location in case of enquiry.”³⁰⁸⁶ Neither investigator had found the children.

8.23 After the failed searches, Arthur Delaney was awarded £100 in damages, equivalent to approximately £13,000 today. Delaney used this money to pay for his legal case and to travel to Canada to search for his children.³⁰⁸⁷ He sailed on the Nova Scotian in May 1892, but he never found them. He returned to Scotland empty-handed. He died in 1907 at the age of 47; “it is stated in

the court that he had ruined his own health seeking his children.”³⁰⁸⁸

“...he had ruined his own health seeking his children.”

Children’s lives after migration

8.24 The man who took the children out of their placements before Mr Mellish’s visit was James Sutherland. Mr Sutherland, who was a Scot, placed all three children in Cayuga Home in New York State, “a home for orphan children”, in 1890.³⁰⁸⁹ When they were admitted to Cayuga, James was 13, Annie was 12, and Robina was 10. All three children were admitted under the surname ‘Whitehead.’³⁰⁹⁰

8.25 After being admitted to Cayuga and working several seasonal harvests, James, aged 15, “was indentured to one farm” that kept him and paid him for his labour.³⁰⁹¹ When Patricia Delaney was researching his life, she found his great-grandson was also seeking information about him. He said that “James Delaney had told his family that he had been kidnapped from Scotland by a lady who lost interest in him and his sister and put them into Cayuga Home.”³⁰⁹² Patricia

3083 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.52.

3084 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.54.

3085 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.56.

3086 Report by Detective Officer of Search for Children in Petition Arthur Delaney for Custody, Mr Mellish, at WIT.003.001.9887.

3087 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, pp.62-63.

3088 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.63.

3089 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.67.

3090 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.67.

3091 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.68.

3092 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.72.

saw photos of James “with his large family of children and grandchildren. He looks a contented man in spite of the trauma of his life.”³⁰⁹³ He named one of his children after one of his sisters, and another after his father, which brought Patricia “some consolation because I thought he obviously remembered his father fondly when he used his name”.³⁰⁹⁴ James died in 1958, at the age of 81.

8.26 Shortly after arriving at Cayuga, Robina was placed with a couple in New York State who had recently lost “their young daughter...it looks as if Robina was well cared for by the [couple] and that she was actually brought up more as a daughter.”³⁰⁹⁵ In his will, the husband of this couple instructed his wife to take care of Robina until she was 18 years old, when she was to be given “\$100 in cash and \$100 worth of clothes to set her up”, provided she remained “obedient to his wife before that time.”³⁰⁹⁶ When the husband died, Robina was “sent to a very exclusive boarding school in New York State...she attended parties...and she also sang at the local opera house. So she looked like she had a very successful life with the family.”³⁰⁹⁷ Robina was about 38 years old when her ‘step-mother’ passed away. She attended her ‘step-mother’s’ funeral and then “we have no further information about what happened to Robina”.³⁰⁹⁸

8.27 Annie, on the other hand, remained in Cayuga “for quite a few months before she also was placed out as a domestic servant with a family. She remained with that family for three years and then...the family had returned her to the home to say they did not wish the care of an invalid; it was discovered that Annie was suffering from tuberculosis. By this time Annie was 17 and she was too old to be in the home, but Cayuga...took her on and allowed her to do light tasks, and in the documents we’ve discovered that Annie said that she had come home to Cayuga to die...that broke my heart that she thought that home was Cayuga Home instead of with her father, who wanted her to be with him. She died of tuberculosis aged 17 and she’s buried in the home, in the graveyard set aside for the home children.”³⁰⁹⁹ Annie’s grave is “in the name of Annie Whitehead, so Emma Stirling even robbed her of her name on her gravestone.”³¹⁰⁰

“...Emma Stirling even robbed her of her name on her gravestone.”

Patricia’s journey

8.28 Patricia highlighted that “there were many, many children who suffered abuse and great harm,” a fact demonstrated by the Doyle report, for instance.³¹⁰¹ She pointed in

3093 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.73.

3094 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, pp.73-74.

3095 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.70.

3096 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, pp.70-71.

3097 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.71.

3098 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.71.

3099 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.69.

3100 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.69.

3101 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.82. For further consideration of Andrew Doyle’s report see Volume 2 of this report, and Constantine *et al.*, paragraphs 7.1-7.2.

Emma Stirling “was more than a little naïve to think you could send young girls into the wilderness with farmers and not check up on them.”

particular to the story of a girl also migrated by Emma Stirling who was raped in her placement, and was forced to have an abortion by her rapist. The abortion nearly killed her. Emma Stirling herself heard of this abuse, and went to see the girl; she “could not believe that anyone would have treated a young girl in that way, so I think perhaps she was more than a little naïve to think you could send young girls into the wilderness with farmers and not check up on them.”³¹⁰² Emma Stirling “raised proceedings against the farmer and the doctor,” but the case was thrown out by the jury, which was “packed... with people sympathetic to the farmer and the doctor.”³¹⁰³ Following this case, there was a fire at Hillfoot Farm, believed to have been set for getting “in the bad books” with the locals.³¹⁰⁴ After the fire, Emma Stirling quickly “disposed of” the approximately 23 children remaining at the farm and went to live with the Quakers in Philadelphia.³¹⁰⁵ Thereafter, she became engaged with animal welfare causes, and then “the cause of poor sponge fishermen.”³¹⁰⁶ Emma Stirling simply moved from one ‘good cause’ to another and, as Patricia stated, gave “no indication that she is aware of the enormity of what she’s done.”³¹⁰⁷

8.29 As well as abuse, “the Home Children suffered lives of great stigma, they were not welcome in Canada... So a lot of these children, as they grew up, kept it secret that they had been home children” out of a sense of shame.³¹⁰⁸

“...the Home Children suffered lives of great stigma, they were not welcome in Canada.”

3102 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.75.

3103 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.76.

3104 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.76.

3105 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.77.

3106 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.78.

3107 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.42.

3108 [Transcript, day 175](#): Patricia Delaney Dishon, at TRN-5-00000005, p.82.



Glasgow Industrial School for Girls, Maryhill

9.1 The Glasgow Industrial School for Girls was established by the Glasgow Industrial Schools Society in 1847, at 71 North Frederick Street, Glasgow.³¹⁰⁹ In 1881, the school moved to new premises in Lochburn, Maryhill, which provided accommodation for 200 girls aged nine to 14.³¹¹⁰ It became an Approved School following the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act, 1933, and was renamed the Gilshochill School. The school closed in 1951.³¹¹¹

9.2 There are no records relating to the number of children sent for migration from Maryhill Industrial School, but an inspection in 1896 reported that “an average of twelve girls had been migrated to Canada annually” from the school.³¹¹²

Applicants

9.3 Judy Neville’s grandmother was migrated to Canada in 1891 having been placed at Maryhill Industrial School.

Judy Neville on behalf of Mary Scott Pearson

9.4 Judy Neville provided evidence to SCAI in relation to her grandmother, Mary Scott Pearson. Mary was born in Glasgow in November 1877.³¹¹³ Two years later, her sister Maggie was born.³¹¹⁴ Less than a week after Maggie’s birth, in October 1879, their father died. Their mother remarried but died in 1887 or thereabouts, leaving her new husband to care for the children.³¹¹⁵ He remarried, and Mary was sent to the Industrial School at Maryfield in about 1886.³¹¹⁶ Maggie remained in the family home at that time.

9.5 In September 1891, Mary was migrated from Glasgow to Canada on the SS Hibernian, as part of a group of 21 girls sent by Quarriers.³¹¹⁷ Although Mary had been at Maryhill Industrial School, the others had been at Quarrier’s Village, Bridge of Weir.³¹¹⁸ Mary was almost 14 years old. The girls landed at Halifax and although described in passenger lists as a “party of domestics to Saint John”, Mary was sent to Quarriers’

3109 Peter Higginbotham, ‘Glasgow Industrial Schools for Girls, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland’, Children’s Homes. Retrieved 6 September 2022.

3110 Peter Higginbotham, ‘Glasgow Industrial Schools for Girls, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland’, Children’s Homes. Retrieved 6 September 2022.

3111 Peter Higginbotham, ‘Glasgow Industrial Schools for Girls, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland’, Children’s Homes. Retrieved 6 September 2022.

3112 Peter Higginbotham, ‘Glasgow Industrial Schools for Girls, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland’, Children’s Homes. Retrieved 6 September 2022.

3113 British Home Children Archives: Mary Scott Pearson, at INQ-000000068.

3114 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.96.

3115 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.97.

3116 [Written statement of Judy Neville](#), paragraph 17, at WIT-1-000000053.

3117 Library and Archives Canada, “Mary Pearson”, at INQ-000000072.

3118 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.99.

“I’m thrilled to think that somebody took the time to reach out, just to say, ‘You’re not alone in the great big world.’”

Fairknowe distribution home in Brockville, Ontario.³¹¹⁹ No records have been found to indicate how long Mary spent at Fairknowe; although records were initially kept in triplicate, they were destroyed when the distribution centre at Fairknowe closed.³¹²⁰

9.6 By 1895, Mary was employed in Prescott, Ontario.³¹²¹ While she was there, several years after her migration, “she received a small, plain Christmas card” from the matron at Maryhill Industrial School.³¹²² Judy thought this showed that “there was some compassion there and that not all children were abused or neglected.”³¹²³ Over a century later, she was “thrilled to think that somebody took the time to reach out, just to say, ‘You’re not alone in the great big world.’”³¹²⁴

9.7 In 1901, Mary left Prescott and moved to Summerstown, Ontario, where she worked with “a renowned cheese-making family” at the Chafee Family Farm.³¹²⁵ As far as is known, she remained there “until she finished her indenture contract at the age of eighteen. After that she would have been

on her own.”³¹²⁶ There is an indication that Mary was sexually abused: “One of [Judy’s] cousins did tell me that Mary had confided in her mother and told her something about having been raped”, but it is not known where or when that occurred.³¹²⁷

9.8 After her indenture finished, she was employed as a housekeeper at St John Presbyterian Manse in Cornwall.³¹²⁸ There, a neighbour who “knew Mary was a young lady working at the Presbyterian manse in the community” introduced her to the widower Curtis Brownell.³¹²⁹ In March 1906, she married Curtis, becoming step-mother to his two children. The couple later had two children of their own. Their eldest son, Earl Kenneth, was born in 1907, and was Judy’s father. Curtis died in 1931, and Mary died in 1945.

9.9 Maggie, Mary’s sister, was eventually sent to Canada by Quarriers in 1894. Like her sister, she was placed at Fairknowe before being sent out to her placement in Eastern Ontario, near her sister, although “we don’t know if they had contact while either of the

3119 Library and Archives Canada, “Mary Pearson”, at INQ-000000072, p.3; [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.104.

3120 [Written statement of Judy Neville](#), paragraph 32, at WIT-1-000000053.

3121 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.106; Library and Archives Canada, “[Home Children \(Part VI\) - Mary Scott Pearson, ancestor of former Ontario Member of Provincial parliament Jim Brownell](#)”, *Library and Archives Canada Blog*, 6 June 2013. Retrieved 13 September 2022.

3122 “Mary Scott Pearson”, [RootsChat.com Reference Library](#), at INQ-000000064, p.2.

3123 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.101.

3124 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, pp.101-102.

3125 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.106.

3126 [Written statement of Judy Neville](#), paragraph 37, at WIT-1-000000053.

3127 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, pp.106-107.

3128 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.107.

3129 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.107.

girls were indentured.³¹³⁰ However, they did communicate as adults.³¹³¹ After marrying and moving to the prairies in Western Canada, Maggie and her husband returned to Eastern Ontario. She “died young” and “is buried in a local cemetery with her name on the tombstone.”³¹³²

9.10 Judy Neville was heavily engaged in advocating for British Home Children. Judy was born in 1960. Her father died when she was 13 years old, and so she “never had a chance to ask him anything about his mother.”³¹³³ Her brother, Jim Pearson, a Canadian politician, had started to make inquiries about their grandmother. The discovery that “a lot of Scottish children had been sent to Canada to work” was shocking news to Jim and to Judy.³¹³⁴ They knew nothing about the child migration schemes at that time. In 2008, as part of his research, Jim “travelled to Scotland and visited Quarrier’s Village” to increase his knowledge of child migration.³¹³⁵ In 2011, he brought a “private members’ bill, ‘British Home Child Day, September 28’ in Ontario”, which was passed unanimously.³¹³⁶

“...a lot of Scottish children had been sent to Canada to work.”

9.11 In due course, Judy organised an event that was held at a living history museum that exhibited primary sources and materials from the lives and histories of British Home Children. Since then, many more such days have been held and a memorial tree planted to commemorate these child migrants.³¹³⁷ In Scotland, Quarriers planted a maple tree in memory of the children who were migrated to Canada.³¹³⁸ Judy stated that Quarriers “have always reached out and helped” and “have been as open and forthright as...any of the people I’ve been involved with”.³¹³⁹

“Quarriers have always reached out and helped.”

9.12 The first British Home Child Day was observed only in Ontario, but since then, thanks to the efforts of Judy and her local MP, Canada has established a National British Home Child Day, and the history of child migration there has been recognised and discussed.³¹⁴⁰

9.13 For Judy, the history of British Home Children needed “to be taught, we have to learn it. This is part of our British and Canadian history”.³¹⁴¹ Some of the children who were migrated to Canada “were from loving families”, but because of their experiences as child migrants, “many of

3130 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.109.

3131 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.109.

3132 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.109.

3133 [Written statement of Judy Neville](#), paragraph 13, at WIT-1-000000053.

3134 [Written statement of Judy Neville](#), paragraph 6, at WIT-1-000000053.

3135 [Written statement of Judy Neville](#), paragraph 6, at WIT-1-000000053.

3136 [Written statement of Judy Neville](#), paragraph 46, at WIT-1-000000053.

3137 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, pp.111-112.

3138 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.137.

3139 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.137.

3140 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.115 and p.113.

3141 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.132.

“Whether those children that came to Canada were abused or treated well, they deserve to be heard.”

these children...made up a story they could live with.”³¹⁴² Many of them did so to save their own children and descendants from the burden of their own history.

9.14 Now, “these children deserve nothing less than having somebody recognise the fact that they were contributing people to our society...Whether those children that came to Canada were abused or treated well, they deserve to be heard.”³¹⁴³

3142 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.133 and p.142.

3143 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.133 and p.143.

10

Migration sponsored by the Catholic Church or the Church of Scotland

Applicants

10.1 Two applicants were migrated overseas from their family home under the auspices of the Catholic Church or the Church of Scotland.

“Jack”

Life in the UK and process of migration

10.2 “Jack” was born in Milton, Glasgow, in June 1937, the eldest of three siblings. His mother left the family home when he was about four, and moved back to her mother’s home in another area of Glasgow. He and his older brother visited her sometimes “against my father’s wishes.”³¹⁴⁴ Their father looked after the children well, and the children lived with their father for the next eight years.³¹⁴⁵

10.3 “Jack’s” father was a Catholic. When “Jack” was about 10 years old, his father “was told by the Hierarchy of the Catholic Church at the government officers [sic] in Edinburgh [that] you’d do a good job, going to Australia for a better life, send the children first, you can follow later.”³¹⁴⁶ “Jack” understood his father was told this by a Catholic bishop and an emigration officer who “worked hand in hand.”³¹⁴⁷ In due course, “Jack’s” father told the children that they were “going to

Australia” and that “we’ll send youse over first and I’ll follow later”.³¹⁴⁸ “Jack” did not want to go as he thought he would lose contact with the rest of his family, but he and his siblings had “no say at all”.³¹⁴⁹

“He was told by the... Catholic Church...You’d do a good job, going to Australia...send the children first, you can follow later.”

10.4 Their mother had little involvement in the process, although she did sign the papers at his father’s insistence. On 5 September 1949, his father signed the LEM3 form approving “Jack’s” migration.³¹⁵⁰ Norah Menaldo, administrative secretary for CCBOS S&NI, signed the form on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Committee (CCWC), indicating the CCWC held some administrative responsibility for “Jack’s” migration. “Jack’s” father signed his medical examination form on 14 March 1950.³¹⁵¹

10.5 In March 1950, about two months before her brothers left Scotland, “Jack’s” sister was migrated, sailing for Sydney on the SS Asturias.³¹⁵² Like many others, “she

3144 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.4.

3145 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.4.

3146 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.5.

3147 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.5.

3148 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.5.

3149 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.7-8.

3150 LEM3 form for “Jack”, at WIT.003.001.9281.

3151 Medical examination form for “Jack”, at WIT.003.001.9283. A further medical examination form for “Jack”, unsigned and undated, listing only a tonsil operation from 1948, is extant: see WIT.003.001.9285.

3152 SS Asturias, Incoming passenger list for Sydney, at WIT.003.001.9276.

“Some of the brothers were separated... some...were told they weren’t related.”

thought she was going on holiday.”³¹⁵³ She was sent to St John’s Convent in Albury, which was run by the Sisters of Mercy and provided accommodation for girls aged five to 16 years.³¹⁵⁴ “Jack” and his brother did not see her again for many years.

“My sister...thought she was going on holiday.”

10.6 In May 1950, “Jack” and his brother began their journey to Australia. They went by train to London with a group of about 20 children, including “about half a dozen” from Scotland.³¹⁵⁵ Some of these children were as young as five or six years old.

10.7 The group boarded the RMS Otranto at Tilbury Docks in London; during the voyage, they were taken care of by couples who “were given free passage in exchange for looking after the children on the way to Australia.”³¹⁵⁶ The couple looking after “Jack” and his group appear to have discharged their responsibilities well.

10.8 The Otranto arrived at Fremantle on 30 May 1950. “Jack” was 12 years old. When

the children disembarked, they were met “by two Christian Brothers...Brother Dawe and Brother O’Neill.”³¹⁵⁷ They had not been told where they were going or who would be taking care of them. From Fremantle, “Jack” and the other boys were taken to Castledare on the back of a truck, where they left the younger children.³¹⁵⁸ “Jack”, his brother, and the other 20 or so boys were taken to Bindoon.³¹⁵⁹ Although “Jack” and his brother remained together, some siblings were separated.³¹⁶⁰ Some siblings “were told they weren’t related”.³¹⁶¹ “Jack” did not know where his sister was located.³¹⁶²

Life at Bindoon (1950-1957)

10.9 When “Jack” and the others arrived at Bindoon, their suitcases and clothes were taken from them and they were provided with “two pairs of shorts and two shirts, no shoes or socks.”³¹⁶³ On the rare occasion that a boy did receive shoes, “[i]t might be two left boots or two right boots, and they never had any laces.”³¹⁶⁴ Their own clothes “were all sent down to Perth to the St Vincent de Paul shops.”³¹⁶⁵ Poignantly, “Jack” noticed that one of his jackets, a new “blue checked lumber

3153 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 8, at WIT.001.002.4886.

3154 Find & Connect, “[New South Wales - Organisations: St John’s Orphanage, Thurgoona \(1882-1978\)](#)”. Retrieved 13 September 2022. St John’s Orphanage, Thurgoona was established in 1882 by the Albury Foundation of the Sisters of Mercy. It was also known as St John’s Orphanage, Albury.

3155 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.9.

3156 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.9-10.

3157 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.11.

3158 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.11.

3159 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.11.

3160 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.11.

3161 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.11-12.

3162 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.12.

3163 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.12-13.

3164 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 17, at WIT.001.002.4888

3165 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.16.

jacket" that his father had bought him before leaving Scotland, "was ripped in half and [a Sister] was polishing the floor with it."³¹⁶⁶ The clothes they were given "were marked with a number" and that is how boys were most commonly referred to.³¹⁶⁷ The Brothers "took everything from us", from names to personal possessions.³¹⁶⁸

10.10 After being given their new clothes and numbers, the children were allocated to their respective dormitories and each boy had "an old Kapok mattress...one sheet, a couple of blankets...and pillow."³¹⁶⁹ "Jack" "was always cold at night."³¹⁷⁰ The dormitories were separated by age so "Jack" and his brother were put in different dormitories. This separation continued throughout their time at Bindoon; "they didn't let you...mix with your own, with your flesh and blood, like brothers...You'd very seldom catch up with each other."³¹⁷¹ "Jack" believed that was because the Christian Brothers feared what would happen "if one starts telling stories about this [abuse], and they get together".³¹⁷²

**"...they didn't let you...
mix with your own,
with your flesh and
blood, like brothers."**

10.11 When "Jack" arrived at Bindoon, Brother Keaney was in charge of the 17,000-acre property, as well as the 12 Brothers and 40 boys who were there. Among the Brothers at Bindoon was Brother Conlon who, as "Jack" correctly pointed out, "was in his 80s... He was the main character who used to go to Ireland and tee up the children to come to Australia."³¹⁷³ There were also "four nuns, a priest, and three Aboriginal girls who came from New Norcia."³¹⁷⁴ The girls looked after the convent and "worked seven days a week. They were allowed to go for a walk on a Sunday afternoon. They didn't get any time off. They were only thirteen or fourteen."³¹⁷⁵

"Worse than a prison camp."

10.12 For "Jack", it was "[w]orse than a prison camp"; the Brothers "[t]reated us worse than animals."³¹⁷⁶ The boys got up early to go to chapel, before having their breakfast, doing their ablutions, and then proceeding to school or work. "Jack" recalled how "[t]he pigs ate better food" than the boys at Bindoon.³¹⁷⁷ The tea that the boys were given was usually purple because "[t]hey used to get the bottom of the nun's stocking, a black stocking, put tea leaves in it, and boil it up in the urn."³¹⁷⁸ For breakfast the boys were given either "two pieces of bread and dripping or a plate of porridge which

3166 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.17.

3167 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.16.

3168 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.17.

3169 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.17.

3170 Written statement of "Jack", paragraph 19, at WIT.001.002.4889.

3171 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.46.

3172 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.47.

3173 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.18.

3174 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.15.

3175 Written statement of "Jack", paragraph 16, at WIT.001.002.4888.

3176 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, pp.13 and 25.

3177 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.21.

3178 Transcript, day 176: "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.21.

“Sometimes there were maggots in the sheep flaps or weevils in the porridge.”

was so gluggy you could stand up a stick in it.”³¹⁷⁹ All the while, “Keaney would sit in the dining room with the boys...He had chops, bacon, eggs and stuff”.³¹⁸⁰ One of Brother Keaney’s “favourite tricks” was to “walk away leaving a chop on his plate and watch us fight over it.”³¹⁸¹ The boys’ dinner consisted of “boiled sheep flaps. It was also putrid. I couldn’t eat it so I hid it in my handkerchief. Keaney was walking around telling us to eat up because the good Sisters had spent all day cooking it. We told him to taste so he did. He blamed the kid in the kitchen...He pulled him through the servery hatch and belted him. It wasn’t him, it was the nuns.”³¹⁸²

10.13 At night time the children were given “bread and milk or watery soup.”³¹⁸³ The food was the same each day, and was literally “rotten, the meat had gone off. Sometimes there were maggots in the sheep flaps or weevils in the porridge.”³¹⁸⁴ One way in which “Jack” learned to counter his inevitable hunger was to steal the “much nicer” food from plates prepared for the Brothers who were late to dinner.³¹⁸⁵ The boys would assuage their hunger by going to the vineyard well after lights out and picking grapes off the vines.³¹⁸⁶ Once, hearing that

there was due to be a party for one of the Brothers, “Jack” and half a dozen other boys “went into the brothers’ dining room...and we took everything off the tables, down behind the dam, and had a good feed. When they came in at 8 o’clock there was nothing for them.”³¹⁸⁷

10.14 If a boy refused to eat his food “[y]ou got a good smack across the side of the face.”³¹⁸⁸ One day, Brother Dawe “punched me in the nose...and it bled into the porridge and he forced me to eat the porridge.”³¹⁸⁹

10.15 After breakfast the boys went to school or, more likely, to work. “Jack” and the others “got very little education because in the classroom Keaney would walk in and want volunteers to go to the building and all the hands would go up and he just pointed to whoever, ‘Go and change your clothes, you don’t need school, forget school, go and work.”³¹⁹⁰

10.16 Brother Moore and Brother Robertson, who were in charge of education, were not trained teachers. Like many others at Bindoon, “Jack” “was deprived of an

3179 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 24, at WIT.001.002.4890.

3180 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.22.

3181 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.88.

3182 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 24, at WIT.001.002.4890. Sheep flaps are the low quality end of a sheep’s rib, containing the gristly ends of the ribs.

3183 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 26, at WIT.001.002.4890.

3184 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 26 at WIT.001.002.4890.

3185 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 28, at WIT.001.002.4891.

3186 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.23.

3187 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.23.

3188 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.22.

3189 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.22.

3190 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.19.

education.”³¹⁹¹ Instead, he worked. This work included “[p]ulling barrels of concrete up the ramp to put the buildings up”, a project which was “Keaney’s idea of building a monument to himself, more or less.”³¹⁹² Boys would carry bricks to the roof, tile the roof, put up scaffolding, and “fight fires too”, all dangerous tasks, and highly unsuitable for boys as young as 10 years old.³¹⁹³ The work

was “[v]ery hard...especially in bare feet.”³¹⁹⁴ They received “[n]o wages, no money”.³¹⁹⁵ In addition to working on the buildings, “Jack” looked after the pigs, feeding them, rearing them, and preparing them for market. The Brothers told “Jack”: “‘When they get big enough, we’ll give you so much money.’ I’m still waiting.”³¹⁹⁶



Bindoon Boys' Town, construction of administration building, 1952. Photograph from the Western Australia Government photographer collection. Source: [State Library of Western Australia](#).

3191 [Written statement of "Jack"](#), paragraph 43, at WIT.001.002.4894.

3192 [Transcript, day 176](#): "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.19.

3193 [Written statement of "Jack"](#), paragraph 52, at WIT.001.002.4896.

3194 [Transcript, day 176](#): "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.20.

3195 [Transcript, day 176](#): "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.20.

3196 [Transcript, day 176](#): "Jack", at TRN-5-000000006, p.33.

Brother Keaney “hit me all over with a strap... The strap had hack saw blades sewn into it.”

10.17 Being a good worker resulted in neither monetary compensation nor better treatment. While some boys were allowed to visit local families for holidays, the boys who were regarded as good workers were denied that privilege because Brother Keaney’s approach was that “[w]e need you here, we need the work done....I was working on the piggery, on the building site, seven days a week.”³¹⁹⁷ Brother Keaney “even had us working at night sometimes.”³¹⁹⁸ The only exception to this incessant routine was one Christmas when “Jack” and his brother spent the holidays with a man who had been to Bindoon to recover after a mental breakdown: “We went down there for two weeks...and we had a lovely time.”³¹⁹⁹ “Jack’s” father once wrote a letter to Bindoon correctly pointing out that children were being used as “just a form of cheap labour.”³²⁰⁰

10.18 “Jack” and many others were physically abused at Bindoon. He told SCAI that “[e]very day there was always somebody being flogged” by a Brother.³²⁰¹ Brother Dawe, who was in charge of the laundry, “would whack you if you mislaid any items of clothing. You got belted badly and he would take away the few privileges we had.”³²⁰² Boys who wet

the bed were put on the veranda to sleep with only one blanket, even though it was cold. Brother Moore intentionally humiliated children who wet the bed, and encouraged other boys to do the same.³²⁰³ Witnessing this treatment “upset [‘Jack’] very much.”³²⁰⁴

“Every day there was always somebody being flogged”.

10.19 Brother Dawe and Brother Keaney “were a good pair together...Sadistic and cruel. Punch you in the side of the head, hit you with wire, sticks, pieces of baton.”³²⁰⁵ Brother O’Neill kept a strap up his sleeve, and “he’d call you over, take a good whack and be off with it”; Brother Dick kicked boys with his hobnail boots; Brother Robertson would set a dog on the boys, which once “bit [‘Jack’] around the leg.”³²⁰⁶ Every Sunday, Brother Keaney “had a list. If your name was on that list, they called you up” and would beat boys with a strap on the bare backside.³²⁰⁷ On other occasions, Brother Keaney “would get you to pick his weapon. If a kid came back with a thin bit of branch, he would tell them it wasn’t thick enough and told them to get a bigger one. I thought he was a mad man. One day, he hit me all over

3197 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.35.

3198 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 52, at WIT.001.002.4896.

3199 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.36.

3200 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.40.

3201 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.55.

3202 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 34, at WIT.001.002.4892.

3203 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.25.

3204 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.26.

3205 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.55.

3206 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.56-57.

3207 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.44.

with a strap in his office. The strap had hack saw blades sewn into it. I managed to get under the settee. He was kicking me out from underneath it. I was cut all over my body.”³²⁰⁸

10.20 Brother Keaney “ruled by fear”, and even the other Brothers were afraid of him.³²⁰⁹ He called the boys “sons of whores” and told them “[y]ou were sent here because your mothers didn’t want you...You won’t amount to nothing, you’ll end up in prison.”³²¹⁰

10.21 If a boy ran away, he was “flogged” upon his return. “Jack’s” brother once ran away with another boy. When they returned after three or four days, “Brother O’Neill, Brother Dawe, Brother Moore...held them down and gave them a flogging and I had to stand there and watch it, couldn’t do a thing about it.”³²¹¹ Brother Dawe once hit “Jack” with a piece of thick wire which he doubled over, drawing blood. Although children sustained injuries that required medical attention, no such attention was available.³²¹² Children were forced to work even if injured because according to Keaney “[t]he only time you need to stop is when you’ve got the work done.”³²¹³

10.22 “Jack” described how boys were sexually abused at Bindoon, often in the shower area. Bindoon had “open cubicles... six on either side.”³²¹⁴ While boys were

showering at the usual time of 5 pm, Brother Moore would “get in the shower with you, start soaping you up and would wash you... rubbing his hands all over you...More or less molesting you in the shower.”³²¹⁵ He would do this “to many boys...every chance he got. There was nothing to stop them. Nothing at all.”³²¹⁶ This happened to “Jack” weekly. Brother Robertson also used to abuse “Jack”; as the boys left the showers, Brother Robertson would “call you over...to examine you.”³²¹⁷ He would “make you bend over and poke a stick up your backside and say, ‘You haven’t cleaned it.’”³²¹⁸

10.23 Brother Keaney sexually abused boys. He “used to have a bath and have the young boys go in with him, scrubbing his back and everything, washing him in the bath.”³²¹⁹ Brother Keaney had favourite boys for this task. Some of the young boys had to sleep in his bed, ostensibly to warm the sheets for him.³²²⁰ These boys told “Jack” that Brother Keaney “made them masturbate him.”³²²¹

10.24 Brother Keaney was not the only perpetrator of such abuse. As the evidence to SCAI has disclosed, sexual abuse was rife at Bindoon. “Jack” described how most Brothers were “[t]aking a young boy... into bed with them.”³²²² Brother O’Neill’s

3208 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 67, at WIT.001.002.4900.

3209 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.39.

3210 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.26.

3211 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.47.

3212 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.34.

3213 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.34.

3214 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.27-28.

3215 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.28-29.

3216 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.29.

3217 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.30.

3218 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.30.

3219 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.29.

3220 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.31.

3221 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.32.

3222 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.32.

practice was to approach different beds and remove “younger boys”, who “he’d take back to his room.”³²²³ On the first occasion this happened to “Jack”, Brother O’Neill “tried to make me – put his penis in my mouth... He had nothing on underneath the habit...I only had pyjamas on, no underpants...I started getting upset and he hit me and took me back to my bed.”³²²⁴ Brother O’Neill continued to take “Jack” from his bed, and on some occasions “he tried to penetrate me... [but] I pushed him off.”³²²⁵ Even after this stopped, Brother O’Neill “still used to come to the bed and abuse me when the lights went out.”³²²⁶ Other boys told “Jack” that they were abused by Brother O’Neill.³²²⁷

10.25 The practice of removing boys from their beds was prevalent among a number of Brothers. In addition to Brother O’Neill, Brothers Dick, Moore, Angus, and Quilligan all took boys to their bedrooms.³²²⁸ On occasion, one Brother would remove a boy from the dormitory to a Brother’s room, “and the others would be in the room waiting.”³²²⁹ Brother Dick had a reputation of having “done the same with the younger boys at

Castledare.”³²³⁰ Brother Quilligan was often seen “walking about the yard with his hand on a young boy’s shoulder, like a pet.”³²³¹ The boys would know who was being abused because “the young boys would come with black stockings as a reward...as a gift from the brothers...for services rendered.”³²³² “You weren’t safe anywhere.”³²³³ “Jack” “felt safer at the piggery than...in the dormitories.”³²³⁴

“You weren’t safe anywhere.”

10.26 “Jack” and other boys were sexually abused by the priest, Father Gimenez, who would “give you holy pictures and sweets and stuff.”³²³⁵ He befriended “Jack” “not to be friendly, just so he could molest and abuse you.”³²³⁶ The first time Father Gimenez abused “Jack”, he told him that he was teaching “Jack” “about what sex is all about”, and then “[s]tarted molesting me.”³²³⁷ He touched “Jack’s” genitals and undressed him, and forced “Jack” to reciprocate.³²³⁸ Father Gimenez then “tried to make me put him in my mouth.”³²³⁹ This happened “four or five times. Until I eventually said, ‘No, this is wrong.’”³²⁴⁰

3223 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.57.

3224 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.58-59.

3225 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.59.

3226 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.59.

3227 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.60.

3228 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.61.

3229 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.62.

3230 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.66.

3231 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.68.

3232 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.69.

3233 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.61.

3234 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.61.

3235 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.74.

3236 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.75.

3237 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.75.

3238 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.75-76.

3239 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.76.

3240 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.76.

“The priest was an abuser, [the Brothers] were abusers, and they all used to discuss who they’d been with, who they had abused.”

10.27 In the garden, Father Gimenez would “bring you lollies and stuff and play around with you when he put them in your pocket... He’d bribe you.”³²⁴¹ Each child would “think you’re the only one that it happened to but you weren’t. They picked you out. You think they’re befriending you. They would get you on your own. The priest used to give you altar wine to drink. That was when I acquired a taste for wine.”³²⁴²

10.28 “Jack” believed that Father Gimenez would “inform the different [Brothers] who was available to be abused...they all used to discuss who they’d been with, who they had abused.”³²⁴³ The abuse was common knowledge, even to Brother Conlon.³²⁴⁴ Even though some “good [Brothers]...knew what was going on, if they opened up and spoke up they got transferred somewhere else” for speaking out.³²⁴⁵

10.29 Brother Keaney ensured that the abuse went on unaddressed; he “had that much power and very, very forceful, and he told the inspectors, ‘Don’t come when I’m not here, come when I’m here so I can see what you’re up to.’ He said, ‘...give us plenty of warning that you’re coming so we can get everything all set out to look good!’”³²⁴⁶

Furthermore, “Commissioner John Doyle, the police commissioner...[was] Keaney’s outsider.”³²⁴⁷ This relationship helped to protect Brother Keaney and the other Brothers from being exposed. Likewise, professionals who visited Bindoon would usually be found drinking with Brother Keaney when they were there. Dr Riley, the medical practitioner, “didn’t come to do any checks...or look after anybody, he just came to have a drink with Keaney”; it was “all about boozing.”³²⁴⁸ The dentist, Dr O’Keefe, “was a drunk. And Margaret Sanderson from the Catholic Welfare, another one, another drunk.”³²⁴⁹ The professionals “were all Keaney’s mates. He had them eating out of his hand. None of these professional people ever did anything to protect the children, or blew the whistle on the abuse.”³²⁵⁰ Government officials “only came every six months. They didn’t come often enough... The whole system was corrupt.”³²⁵¹

“None of these professional people ever did anything to protect the children, or blew the whistle on the abuse.”

3241 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.76.

3242 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 72, at WIT.001.002.4901.

3243 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.78.

3244 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.71.

3245 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.71

3246 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.41.

3247 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.42.

3248 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 45, at WIT.001.002.4894; [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.37.

3249 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.37.

3250 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 46, at WIT.001.002.4894.

3251 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraphs 57-58, at WIT.001.002.4897.

10.30 Even when a boy did manage to tell an outsider about the abuse, “no one done nothing about it [saying] ‘The good brothers wouldn’t do that, stop making up stories, you’re telling lies.’”³²⁵² Visitors who were told “were in shock, they couldn’t believe it...They might have mentioned it to some of the brothers, and if they did, woe betide the boys. They’d go back to the boys and they’d cop it.”³²⁵³ Brother Keaney “made it his business to find out” if a boy had reported anything to a visitor.³²⁵⁴ Boys were unable to report any abuse by writing to someone as letters were censored.³²⁵⁵ Boys “had to copy the words off the board” into letters to parents. Letters written to the children were not always passed on. There came a point at which “Jack” stopped receiving letters from his father and “thought he had stopped writing to me but he hadn’t.”³²⁵⁶ Instead, the regime at Bindoon prevented contact between parent and child, including between “Jack” and a father who had spent the years since his children migrated to Australia trying to get his own migration approved.

“I stopped getting my father’s letters. I thought he had stopped writing to me but he hadn’t.”

10.31 The impact of “Jack” of being at Bindoon was apparent certainly by 1956, when C.E. Jones, psychologist, wrote a report after having examined him. He reported that “Jack”

“tries ‘too hard’ to succeed and tends to block emotionally...He is best characterized by his rigid and constricted emotional (personality) structure...This state of affairs results from his deep feeling of insecurity, ego impoverishment, and despair over his lack of strong familial ties and familial contact.”³²⁵⁷

10.32 The report went on to state that “Jack” had “a strong tendency toward acquiescence...toward authority, probably mostly because he seeks protective security (and was formerly coached by a harsh father).”³²⁵⁸ While the tendencies identified may well have been present, the psychologist misidentified their cause as being “Jack’s” natural father: when he read the report, “Jack” “thought the only harsh father I knew was Keaney, not my father.”³²⁵⁹ Similarly, though the psychologist noted that “the parental interest is probably not much”, it is clear that both “Jack” and his father continuously attempted to remain in contact.³²⁶⁰ These attempts were stymied by multiple obstructions, including the Catholic authorities who refused to nominate “Jack’s” father for migration in good time, and the Brothers at Bindoon who so vehemently

3252 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.68.

3253 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.43.

3254 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.43.

3255 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.53.

3256 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 63, at WIT.001.002.4899.

3257 C.E. Jones’ Psychological report on “Jack”, 12 April 1956, at POA.001.001.0050.

3258 C.E. Jones’ Psychological report on “Jack”, 12 April 1956, at POA.001.001.0050.

3259 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.81.

3260 C.E. Jones’ Psychological report on “Jack”, 12 April 1956, at POA.001.001.0050.

“...he never forgave the Catholic Church for stealing his children. Neither will I.”

checked and blocked communication.³²⁶¹ In the closing passages of the report, C.E. Jones added that “Jack” “has suffered misunderstanding and loneliness from the influence of living in a foreign and different culture, and the emotional bombardment of group social life.”³²⁶² The psychologist would not, of course, have known about the abuse “Jack” suffered and did not, accordingly, report on its effect on him.

“Jack’s” father’s experience

10.33 When “Jack” and his siblings were in Australia, their father endeavoured to join them. He had been assured that he would be able to join his children in Australia, but his efforts to do so were in vain:

“Three days after the boys’ departure I received word from Australia House that I failed to fulfil medical requirements and was therefore a reject. On enquiring which medical deficiency I had acquired I was told that it was not the policy of Australia House to disclose ‘diagnostic findings’. For six years I have had but one idea, to join my children in Australia, and finally last year Australia House asked me to get a specialist’s report at my own expense. This I did, and received a favourable letter from Australia House saying that from a medical

aspect my application could continue but as I was now over 45 I would have to find my own nomination. As my children are yet too young to do this I wrote to many organisations, thinking they would help, but those who did reply were sorry, but couldn’t help. My children for the last six years have been asking when I am coming over and are under the impression that I have abandoned them, as did their mother when she left me with them to rear in 1941.”³²⁶³

10.34 It “broke [‘Jack’s’ father’s] heart to think he couldn’t come here to join us and he died a lonely man.”³²⁶⁴ “Jack” explained that “the last thing [his father] wanted to do was” to send his children away without him, “because he was sent away as a child himself from Ireland when his mother passed away and the father married again”.³²⁶⁵ The promises made to “Jack’s” father by the Catholic Immigration Committee in Edinburgh had been false promises that denied a family reconciliation: “We felt completely abandoned by our father. It was only when I visited him thirty years later that he revealed to me the broken promise, made by the relevant authorities that he would be employed as a bootmaker in Bindoon Boys’ Town...he never forgave the Catholic Church for stealing his children. Neither will I.”³²⁶⁶

3261 C.E. Jones’ Psychological report on “Jack”, 12 April 1956, at POA.001.001.0050.

3262 C.E. Jones’ Psychological report on “Jack”, 12 April 1956, at POA.001.001.0050.

3263 Letter from “Jack’s” father to Unknown, 8 June 1956, at WIT.003.001.9302. Emphasis in original. Canon Flood at the CCWC asked Monsignor Crennon at the FCIC in April 1956 “to give special help in this case. I will be grateful if you could find some means of giving this man a nomination.” No such nomination was forthcoming. See Letter from Canon Flood, CCWC to Monsignor Crennen, FCIC, 26 April 1956, at POA.001.001.0048.

3264 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.82.

3265 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.52.

3266 Letter from “Jack” to the Secretary of Community Affairs, 11 December 2000, at POA.001.001.0046.

Life after care

10.35 Although “a lot of kids left at sixteen... the good workers were held back.”³²⁶⁷ “Jack” was nearly 21 by the time he was allowed to leave Bindoon.³²⁶⁸ When he was finally released, Brother Dawe told “Jack”: “‘You’re leaving here, get in the truck.’ That was all the notice I got. I had a little suitcase with two pairs of trousers...and no money, nothing. I was taken to Perth, dropped off at the corner of King and Wellington Street, with the commonwealth employment, the dole office. ‘Get yourself a job’, and that was it. I ended up on a dairy farm at Keysbrook.”³²⁶⁹

10.36 Two welfare officers who worked at the department where “Jack’s” money was banked “controlled all the money and they gambled it away.”³²⁷⁰ Although the Catholic Welfare Officer recorded that “Jack” had “over £200 in a Savings Bank account at Bindoon”, in addition to “the money being banked for him” by the Child Welfare Department in Perth, he did not receive anything.³²⁷¹

“...the two welfare officers, they controlled all the money and they gambled it away.”

10.37 “Jack” began working at the dairy farm in Keysbrook with no money and no support network in place. There, he “had to

get up at half past three in the morning to milk the four hundred cows. I slept in a hut with a dirt floor. It had potato bags hanging for a wardrobe and potato bags on the bed for blankets. I told him [his employer] that I wanted to leave but he threatened to send me back to Bindoon.”³²⁷²

10.38 “Jack” left this farm after about six months. Then, following a chance encounter on a train, “Jack” gained employment as a farm manager in Bunbury. His new employer “was a wonderful person.”³²⁷³ For the first time since leaving the UK, “Jack” was the recipient of kindness. Thereafter, “Jack” joined the army and worked as a cook. He worked in hotels as a cook and travelled round Australia in a number of jobs.³²⁷⁴

10.39 Eventually, “Jack” was able to establish contact with his brother and his sister.³²⁷⁵ In 1983, “Jack” returned to Scotland for the first time, and met his father. His father expected “Jack” to be angry with him and tell him off. “Jack” said “[h]e’s been through enough as it is. He’s been through enough. I said, no, don’t worry about it, it’s okay.”³²⁷⁶

10.40 During the same visit, “Jack” met his mother who apologised to Jack and asked for forgiveness. “Jack’s” response was “[l]et it go, that’s it, finished, let it go.”³²⁷⁷ “Jack” recognised that his parents were not responsible for his experiences, and that the

3267 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 79 at WIT.001.002.4902.

3268 Movement and Remarks for “Jack”, at WIT.003.001.9297.

3269 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.21.

3270 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.20; A later letter to “Jack” confirms that “the Clerk in charge of accounts, Leonard Joseph Townsend was convicted of stealing funds from children’s accounts”: see Letter to “Jack”, undated, at WIT.003.001.9292.

3271 Letter from Margaret Sanderson to the Assistant Director of the Child Welfare Department, 10 January 1956, at WIT.003.001.9275.

3272 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 83, at WIT.001.002.4903.

3273 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.91.

3274 Bishop’s Conference of England & Wales, Report by Joan Kerry, 15 March 2003, at BEW-000000049, p.28.

3275 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.91.

3276 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.92.

3277 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.93.

Bindoon “ruined my life. Who knows what I could have been if I’d been looked after properly, had a decent education?”

authorities “tricked my father into sending us away over here...and wouldn’t let him follow us.”³²⁷⁸

“...they tricked my father into sending us away...and wouldn’t let him follow us.”

10.41 “Jack” returned to the UK in the mid-1990s to attend his mother’s funeral, and returned again in 2013 to visit his father’s grave.³²⁷⁹

10.42 “Jack” did not “get too close to people”, physically or emotionally.³²⁸⁰

10.43 Later in life, “Jack” met several other boys who had been in Christian Brothers institutions. One of them told “Jack” that “Brother O’Neill actually chained him to the water pump [and] sexually abused him... He kept it to himself for years.”³²⁸¹ “Jack” reflected that the culture of silence meant that “some of the boys thought they were the only ones it happened to until the other ones opened up and started talking about it.”³²⁸² On another occasion, “Jack” happened to meet a man who disclosed to him that he had been at a Christian Brothers institution near Fremantle where he was abused by a

music teacher. He described that this man “opened up to me. Two or three weeks later I went back to the same hotel and I said to the chap behind the bar, where’s so-and-so, I haven’t seen him around, and he had committed suicide.”³²⁸³

10.44 “Jack” considered himself “very mixed up and...very bitter. I’m very angry about how my father was treated. I’m angry at the British Government and the Church who let it happen. He was tricked by both parties. We were used as cheap labour.”³²⁸⁴ “Jack” was “surprised [he was] still alive. I used to drink a lot to blank everything out. I don’t drink anymore...I get flashbacks all the time.”³²⁸⁵ Bindoon “ruined [Jack’s] life. Who knows what I could have been if I’d been looked after properly, had a decent education?...I could have been prime minister of this country.”³²⁸⁶ He could “talk about it like it was yesterday. What’s happened to me, you never forget, and to the other boys... you don’t forget cruelty, you don’t forget kindness.”³²⁸⁷ “Jack” acknowledged that “[h]ad [Bindoon] been run according to everything that is right that started off with the Christian Brothers, that would have been wonderful.”³²⁸⁸

3278 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.97.

3279 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.93-94.

3280 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.98.

3281 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.67.

3282 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.67.

3283 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.74.

3284 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraph 102, at WIT.001.002.4906.

3285 Written statement of “Jack”, paragraphs 104-105, at WIT.001.002.4907.

3286 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.98.

3287 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.99.

3288 Transcript, day 176: “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.99.

“Robert”

Life in the UK and migration

10.45 “Robert” was born in 1941 in Peebles, where his mother had been sent during the Clydebank blitz. He was the middle child of three brothers. The family returned to Glasgow where they lived “all in the one room and it was pretty hard going.”³²⁸⁹

10.46 In 1949, “Robert’s” mother died.³²⁹⁰ After her death, “Robert’s” father took him and his siblings to stay with their aunts, each child staying with a different aunt.³²⁹¹ After experiencing family friction, “Robert’s” father took him and his siblings to live “somewhere else that I think was connected to the Presbyterian church.”³²⁹² During this period, “there was a big advertising campaign... about sending children overseas.”³²⁹³ “Robert’s” father “was very close to” “Robert” and his siblings, and taking the decision to migrate his children “must have been a very traumatic experience for him having just lost his wife. He wouldn’t have done anything that would be detrimental to our well-being, but before we knew it my brothers and I were all on a train to Southampton.”³²⁹⁴ Although he did not remember his father telling him what was happening, “Robert” did not “think [his dad] would have held it from us.”³²⁹⁵ “Robert” did not “recall any of the lead-up

to [migration] and I don’t remember having any health checks or seeing a doctor before we left.”³²⁹⁶ “Robert” had “never seen [his] migration papers”, and they have not been recovered.³²⁹⁷

10.47 “Robert”, his brothers, and the 27 other boys in their party from Ireland, Scotland, and England boarded the MV Cheshire bound for Fremantle, accompanied by Reverend Andrew Boag and his wife.³²⁹⁸ “Robert” had never met Reverend Boag before but “I think my dad must have had talks with him [Boag] beforehand and he must have set up all the arrangements.”³²⁹⁹

10.48 The journey was “a big adventure.”³³⁰⁰ To “Robert”, the meals were good. He recalled that at one stage on the ship, “[t]hey set up a boxing tournament and all of [the] boys were weighed and went into the ring... the rest of the passengers and captain and crew were watching us as we got in the ring and belted one another about.”³³⁰¹

“They set up a boxing tournament...we got in the ring and belted one another about.”

3289 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.70.

3290 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.71.

3291 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.71-72.

3292 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.72.

3293 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.72.

3294 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.72.

3295 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.72.

3296 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.72.

3297 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.73.

3298 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.73. Reverend Boag was a Presbyterian minister from Australia who came to Scotland in 1950 to recruit child migrants. Reverend Boag was assisted by the Church of Scotland Committee on Social Service (CSCSS). See Volume 2 for further details of Reverend Boag’s recruitment drive in Scotland, and the role of the CSCSS in supporting the recruitment of children in Scotland for migration to Australia.

3299 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.73.

3300 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.74.

3301 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.74.

“I remember always wearing shoes that were too small for me”.

10.49 The ship arrived at Fremantle in December 1950.³³⁰² From there, the boys “were loaded on to the back of a truck” with “wooden plank seats bolted to the floor and that’s where we all sat on the 100-mile journey to Dhurringile. We thought we were never going to get there.”³³⁰³

10.50 Eventually, the party of about 30 boys reached their new home: Dhurringile Rural Training Farm. “Robert” was aged nine.

Life at Dhurringile (1950-1958)

10.51 Dhurringile “had 160 acres of land with crops and dairy cows. The house itself was a huge building, like a palace. It was really beautiful”.³³⁰⁴ It was “run by the governing body of the Presbyterian church with six or seven staff.”³³⁰⁵

10.52 “Robert” and his peers, who ranged from five to 15 years old, were the first group of boys to arrive.³³⁰⁶ Over the years, they were joined by more child migrants.

10.53 The boys slept in six-person dormitories. “Robert’s” brothers were in different dormitories to him because of their age difference.³³⁰⁷ The boys would be “taken to the church in Tatura in the truck.”³³⁰⁸ “We

were all at risk in the back of that truck and sometimes we would get tossed about on the rough roads. We were probably lucky to survive.”³³⁰⁹

10.54 The meals were “pretty good” at Dhurringile with the exception of the breakfast, porridge, which “Robert” disliked.³³¹⁰

10.55 Their clothes usually “came from church stores and donations...I remember always wearing shoes that were too small for me and now my toes are all misshapen.”³³¹¹

10.56 The jobs the boys were allocated included “cleaning the whole building and polishing the floors...preparing all the vegetables for about 40 people including staff”, and working on the dairy or feeding the pigs.³³¹² Another task was to clean out the silage pit, which “was probably about 7 feet by 3 and there would be layers of greasy stuff in it, which we would have to drain, put in a wheelbarrow, and dump in a hole we had dug before.”³³¹³ The boys also “planted an orchard” and “cleaned up the old tennis courts...so that the staff mainly could use them.”³³¹⁴ They were not paid for any of the work they did.

3302 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.75.

3303 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.76.

3304 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.76.

3305 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.76-77.

3306 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.77.

3307 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.78.

3308 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.84.

3309 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.82.

3310 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.79.

3311 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.79.

3312 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.84.

3313 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.85.

3314 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.85.

“The education was really good... We all went on to high school”.

10.57 After the morning jobs, the boys caught a bus to the local state school about five miles away. Most Dhurringile boys had difficulty adjusting to the school because “we were pretty rough...It took a while for us to fit in and the principal Mr Milvain actually gave the other kids a couple of days off so we could be given an introduction into how things were done. He took us through how they did things and we actually ended up being very good friends with the other kids.”³³¹⁵

10.58 “Robert” described the education as “really good” and “[w]e all went on to high school”.³³¹⁶

10.59 During the Christmas holidays the boys “were billeted out to different families” who would be recruited through radio adverts put out by Dhurringile.³³¹⁷ This was a “wonderful experience” for “Robert” and the family he stayed with “became like family to me.”³³¹⁸

10.60 On a visit to this family in 1955, “Robert” fell from a horse and fractured two lumbar vertebrae.³³¹⁹ He spent 11 months in hospital and “did a whole year’s schooling while I was in there.”³³²⁰

10.61 “Robert” said that “[b]ed-wetting was dealt with very poorly.”³³²¹ All the boys that wet their beds were put into one room. His younger brother was one of them. These children had to take their sheets to the laundry to soak in the morning. They were subjected to “this little electronic thing that they’d put on the boys’ penises so when the dampness came they got a shock and woke up. It didn’t really work...it was pretty cruel.”³³²²

“Bed-wetting was dealt with very poorly...They got this... electronic thing that they’d put on the boys’ penises... it was pretty cruel.”

10.62 “Robert” regarded the disciplinary regime as excessive and “never thought the punishment matched the offence.”³³²³ There was physical abuse.³³²⁴

10.63 “Robert” saw his older brother being physically abused. His brother and another boy, both aged about 12 years old were late returning to the home. “Robert” remembered that “we were all lined up to witness a thrashing. I think it was to warn us that if we didn’t do what we were supposed to, that is what we would get. They were both belted...

3315 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.81.

3316 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.81.

3317 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.82 and p.85.

3318 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.82.

3319 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.82.

3320 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.83.

3321 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.78.

3322 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.78-79.

3323 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.88.

3324 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, pp.88-89.

My brother's back was bleeding and that is something I will never forget. What sort of a man would do that sort of thing? A couple of the elder boys who were about 16 at the time intervened. They pulled the strap off the superintendent and pushed him away."³³²⁵

10.64 "Robert" explained that "most of the boys who wet the bed were actually sexually abused. I think they took advantage of boys that were a bit more timid and my younger brother was one of them."³³²⁶ "Robert" was aware of nine boys who were sexually abused at this time.

10.65 "Robert's" brother told him in later life that "they went to the Presbyterian minister in Tatura, the Reverend Collard" and that "the minister found it hard to believe, but said he would look into it."³³²⁷ It was never looked into. As a result, the boys grew up thinking that nobody would believe them. This abuse had a life-long impact on "Robert's" younger brother and on "Robert" himself, who was deeply pained by the lack of recognition and knowledge on his brother's behalf. Even "Robert" "had no idea anything like that happened" until he read a newspaper interview with a boy who had been abused.³³²⁸

"...most of the boys who wet the bed were actually sexually abused."

10.66 "Robert" had no memory of formal visitors or inspectors visiting Dhurringile.³³²⁹

10.67 "Robert's" father moved to Australia "[a]bout a year and a half after we arrived".³³³⁰ Once every three weeks or so "[h]e would travel the 100 miles from Melbourne on the bus...we would have about 3 hours with him...He was the only visitor we had."³³³¹

"He would travel the 100 miles from Melbourne on the bus...we would have about 3 hours with him...He was the only visitor we had."

10.68 Although "Robert's" father had always intended to follow his sons to Victoria, correspondence between the Office of the UK High Commissioner in Canberra and the Department of Immigration noted that "the present procedure ensuring that child migrants are not later followed to Australia by their parents without special approval was not...strictly enforced" in this case.³³³² Similarly, further correspondence highlights significant ambiguity surrounding the State's financial responsibility for child migrants in voluntary institutions.³³³³ It appears that even the High Commissioner and the Department of Immigration may not have been clear as to where responsibilities ultimately lay.

3325 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Robert", at TRN-5-000000012, pp.90-91.

3326 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Robert", at TRN-5-000000012, p.89.

3327 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Robert", at TRN-5-000000012, p.91.

3328 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Robert", at TRN-5-000000012, p.89.

3329 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Robert", at TRN-5-000000012, p.87.

3330 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Robert", at TRN-5-000000012, p.86.

3331 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of "Robert", at TRN-5-000000012, p.87.

3332 Letter from A.L. Nutt to the Department of Immigration, 15 July 1952, at WIT.003.002.1072.

3333 Notes for file, 29 July 1952, at WIT.003.002.1069; Letter from A.L. Nutt to the Department of Immigration, 29 August 1952, at WIT.003.002.1059.

10.69 In his final period at Dhurringile, “Robert” was working locally as an electrical apprentice. The man he worked for went bankrupt and although he arranged another job for “Robert”, “Robert” had “had enough.”³³³⁴ “Robert” left his apprentice role, and “the home sent me to work on a farm near Wangaratta.”³³³⁵ By that time he was 17, and he left Dhurringile.

Life after care

10.70 “Robert” worked hard on the farm and enjoyed it.³³³⁶ His younger brother needed some help and ultimately “Robert” left the farm and went to Shepparton with his brother. After some years of working and “drinking and smoking a lot”, “Robert” joined the Presbyterian Church: “I got quite involved in the church and became a Sunday School teacher and ran a youth group as well. I took the youngsters on camps and that’s where I met my wife.”³³³⁷

10.71 After a few years, “Robert” joined the ambulance service where he served for 34 years.³³³⁸ He and his wife have been married for over 50 years and have had two children.³³³⁹ At the time of giving evidence to SCAI “Robert” had visited Scotland four times since leaving Dhurringile.³³⁴⁰

10.72 “Robert” tried “very hard, with some success, to manage my emotional stress and that has not always been easy, growing up on your own with no family support.

Through my married years at times my wife and daughters were very understanding and were a great support, but it was not easy for them either.”³³⁴¹

“I tried very hard...to manage my emotional stress...my wife and daughters were very understanding...but it was not easy for them either.”

10.73 “Robert” acknowledged that, while it was painful to talk about his experiences, he had “probably adjusted better to life after being migrated than a lot of people did.”³³⁴² His younger brother was not so fortunate; he “had problems drinking heavily...because of all of his abuse of alcohol over the years, his major organs were starting to deteriorate and he was not very well.”³³⁴³ He died in 2016.

10.74 “Robert” was particularly thankful to the CMT: “It was only after the constant pressure applied by Margaret Humphreys of the Child Migrants Trust that [governments] did start to acknowledge what happened.”³³⁴⁴ “Robert” questioned whether, had Dr Humphreys and the CMT not spotlighted the problem, “[g]overnments [would] really have done anything.”³³⁴⁵ For “Robert”, “[t]he British

3334 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.92.

3335 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.92.

3336 [Written statement of “Robert”](#), paragraph 104, at WIT.001.002.6916.

3337 [Written statement of “Robert”](#), paragraphs 109-111, at WIT.001.002.6917.

3338 [Written statement of “Robert”](#), paragraph 114, at WIT.001.002.6917.

3339 [Written statement of “Robert”](#), paragraph 113, at WIT.001.002.6917.

3340 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.99.

3341 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.103.

3342 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.102.

3343 [Written statement of “Robert”](#), paragraph 122, at WIT.001.002.6919.

3344 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.102.

3345 Letter from “Robert” to Lady Smith, 18 March 2017, at WIT.003.001.4387.

“To my mind, child migration was a betrayal by the British Government. It was terrible and it was unforgivable.”

Government’s lack of recognition of the fundamentally flawed nature of the historic child migration programmes...was a betrayal to many thousands of British children...It was terrible and it was unforgivable.”³³⁴⁶

10.75 “Robert” supposed that he had “always blamed my dad for us coming out to Australia. I found out later from archives that he was not allowed to live in the same state... It was such a shock when I read that and I felt really upset.”³³⁴⁷

3346 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.104.

3347 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.101.

11 Reflections

11.1 As with other case studies, many thoughtful and insightful reflections were offered by applicants, many of whom had been deeply affected by having been migrated as children. The impact of migration on their lives and on the lives of their families was, for many, marked and profound. Whilst, very fairly, some applicants spoke about what, for them, were positive aspects of having been migrated, it was clear that, overall, the migration programmes caused widespread and lifelong damage, suffering, and harm to many children.

Child migration policy

11.2 Many applicants considered child migration policy to have been deeply flawed throughout its history. Former child migrants were deceived as to what would happen to them overseas and now consider that they were used as commodities, their welfare having been sacrificed to promote economic interests and empire-building. In his evidence, Hugh McGowan wanted “to try and set the record straight in respect to what was called child migration, which was really child deportation. I’d also like to pay my respects to the...children that went from Quarriers, I would like to pay my respects to those who took their own lives and others who have passed away for other reasons.”³³⁴⁸

11.3 “Stuart” observed that people told him that “it was a different era but

no era was good to abuse children, none whatsoever.”³³⁴⁹ He would “keep telling people: be very careful who you have minding your kids. You can never be sure. I hope it never happens again”.³³⁵⁰

“...it was a different era but no era was good to abuse children”.

11.4 In relation to the practice of child migration, “Watto” said that “[c]hildren shouldn’t be told lies about where they’re going to...children should be told exactly what’s happening and where they’re going... You turn round and say to a kid, ‘Do you want to go for a boat ride?’ If you were told that, you’d think you were on a river. You turned round and you’d go on a great big...ship and you’d travel 12,000 miles where you don’t know anybody, you’ve got no idea where you’re going, you’ve got to rely on strangers that you don’t know. I mean, it’s cruel. It really is cruel. Those kids had nobody at all. The kids that had parents were marginally better than the ones who didn’t. The ones who didn’t had to rely on the cottage mothers bringing them up”.³³⁵¹ Children were indeed lied to. They were not given information they should have been given. They were misled about critical, life-changing matters. It is entirely understandable how and why “Watto” felt this was cruel.

3348 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.102.

3349 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.188.

3350 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.208.

3351 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-000000008, pp.54-55.

“...countries need to view the child migration scheme as a large injustice they facilitated. They...need to hear about the individual traumas children suffered as a result”.

11.5 “Johno” provided this insight: “Children should never, ever be sent away from their country...I’m Scottish, even though I don’t speak it...I could never come back here to live...there’s too much of me in the other country. My children are there, their children are there. I’ve spent 70 years of my life there and only seven here. But yet the 7 years here has a much greater impact than any decade or two decades over there insofar as my psyche is concerned.”³³⁵²

11.6 As a result of migration, “Johno”—like so many child migrants—had lost his national and personal identity never to be able to regain them.³³⁵³ His account emphasised the importance of roots, and his experiences clearly demonstrate the multiple devastating effects of forced migration. “Johno’s” evidence provokes the poignant realisation that, for many child migrants, uprooting them became a permanent arrangement from which there was no possible return.

11.7 “John” had sometimes been asked if he would ever return to the UK, but his response was to question why he would, “when they threw me out of the country in the first place.”³³⁵⁴ He described how “[s]ome of the kids that were sent over as child migrants were told that they had no family whatsoever. It was only in later life that those kids found out their mothers and fathers

were still alive and that they hadn’t been told their children were being shipped off to Australia. I was told by the priests and the brothers when I first came to Tasmania that I had nobody.”³³⁵⁵ In that reflection, “John”, like “Watto”, captures the inherent dishonesty that was a defining characteristic of the operation of child migration policy.

“I was told...when I first came to Tasmania that I had nobody.”

11.8 “Helen” felt that she “was robbed of my heritage and nationality”, and her family was robbed of her and her sister. She believed that “countries need to view the child migration scheme as a large injustice they facilitated. They really need to think of the enormity of it and how it impacted on every one of us. The countries involved need to hear about the individual traumas that children suffered as a result of the scheme. It is not enough to say it was because of the times and use that as an excuse.”³³⁵⁶

Deprivation of family life

11.9 The importance of family life was a common theme. The trauma inherent in the permanent removal of a child from family, friends, and the culture of their homeland cannot be overstated.

3352 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.172-173.

3353 Transcript, day 180: “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.172-174.

3354 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “John”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.8.

3355 Transcript, day 179: Read-in statement of “John”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.8-9.

3356 Transcript, day 177: Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.142.

“...being alone was every bit as damaging as the sexual abuse I suffered”.

11.10 While Bert McGregor did not think that his life, had he stayed in Scotland with his family, “would have been a bed of roses”, he was clear that “not to have the chance of belonging to a family and to relationships, whether good or bad, is a great sin and should never happen again.”³³⁵⁷ Bert observed that “[c]hildren who have been separated from their parents are emotionally numb. They have to be taught the emotions that they should feel. There is no cure for the migrants. How do you mend a broken child?”³³⁵⁸ Through his own efforts and tenacity, Bert “absorbed my experiences, the pain and everything else, myself. It has become part of who I am and I accept who I am, both the good and the bad.”³³⁵⁹

11.11 Although Frank Morrison considered that his time at Nazareth House in Aberdeen was not bad, “it did lead me to being sent to Australia. The Sisters of Nazareth stripped me of my identity and family by doing this. Losing the chance to know my mother, having no family identity and being alone was every bit as damaging as the sexual abuse I suffered at the hands of the Christian Brothers.”³³⁶⁰

11.12 The reflections offered by Walter Kerkhof likewise focused on the damage caused by divorcing a child from their birth culture and family. He explained how he could “never recapture [his] Scottish culture.

It was taken away from [him]”, as was his family: “I just wanted my mother or a sister. I never had any female bonding. I don’t like thinking about it. It’s just when someone pulls a scab off, it all comes flooding back.”³³⁶¹

11.13 One of the most difficult experiences for “Amy” was finding out that she had a mother and brother only a few days before she was migrated to Australia: “I felt devastated. I was lonely. I felt empty. I felt cheated and deceived. Barnardo’s shouldn’t have done what they did to me. There was no support about how I felt at all.”³³⁶² Her mother and brother were “always in the back of my mind...It still makes me cry to this day.”³³⁶³

11.14 “Helen’s” feelings about the past were marked with sadness not only for herself, but also for her family. She explained that her migration “wasn’t just very traumatic for me and my sister, it was traumatic for our mother and father. I was happy in Scotland but my family were taken away from me. They robbed myself and my sister of our childhood and our heritage. I have never had any ill-feeling towards my mother and father. I don’t believe they were party to the decision for us to go to Australia. They must have suffered. Being a mother myself, I can only imagine what it must have done to my mother and father.”³³⁶⁴

3357 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7203.

3358 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 189, at WIT.001.002.3101.

3359 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 179, at WIT.001.002.3099.

3360 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.49.

3361 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.133.

3362 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.133.

3363 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.134.

3364 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, p.140.

11.15 “Robert” surmised that, while many boys at Dhurringile were indeed orphans, “some of those from Scotland did have family and it was only later on that they found that out. Some of their mothers had put them into a home in Scotland because they couldn’t afford to keep them. Some of them later went to the home to get their children, only to be told that their child had been adopted out. I am aware now that some of these children were boys from Scotland who had been migrated to Australia. I think it was a betrayal of the British Government to do that to children and their families.”³³⁶⁵

11.16 These reflections demonstrate just some of the often irreversible impacts that the policy of child migration had on families, both the members who were migrated and those who were left behind.

Institutional care

11.17 The failure of institutional care for children was identified by many applicants. In the case of children cared for in institutions overseas, the impact of poor institutional care was often exacerbated by the loss of family and culture outlined above.

11.18 Reflecting on his experiences, “Gray” explained that “[t]here is something about growing up in an institution where you can’t get too close to anyone. You’re brought up in a manner not to be close. I think people always think you are stand-offish. You don’t get too close to anyone in case you are disappointed. I needed a lot of sandpaper to smooth me out because I was scarred... In my view, it’s an abuse that those children

don’t know who they are or why they’re out here [in Australia]. They should have been told that they [had] a family in the UK but they were being sent there for a reason. They shouldn’t have been told that they didn’t have a family.”³³⁶⁶

11.19 Bert McGregor, who was resident in the Christian Brothers institutions in Western Australia, reflected that “although [the Brothers] fed you and clothed you and half educated you, they couldn’t give you any emotional development at all.”³³⁶⁷ As a result, “coming out of that, you find it very difficult to relate with emotion to anyone. You just can’t, you’re so stripped bare of that side. It was almost as if it was wrong to be loved.”³³⁶⁸ Bert firmly believed that in systems like institutional care, “[t]he child cannot speak for themselves therefore there must be someone working for that child, speaking for them and protecting them. We had no protection and all hell broke loose.”³³⁶⁹ Children should be able to talk openly and freely to such an advocate at any time, and the advocate “should not be answerable to the authorities or to the institution, they should only be answerable to the children.”³³⁷⁰

11.20 “Brian”, whose father “Scott” was migrated to Canada, accepted that people like Kingsley Fairbridge “meant to try to better the lives of these kids, but they went about it in the worst possible way they could have.”³³⁷¹ “Brian” had found that documents concerning his father “don’t refer to [‘Scott’] as a person, he’s a commodity...They didn’t care about his welfare, they didn’t how it was

3365 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.101.

3366 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Gray”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.104-105.

3367 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7205.

3368 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7205-06.

3369 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 183, at WIT.001.002.3100.

3370 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 181, at WIT.001.002.3100.

3371 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.63.

“Any institutional setting will always attract predators if it gives them access to children from a position of power and authority.”

affecting him mentally being passed around from this person to that person...There was never the love and support and care that a child needs.”³³⁷²

“...they don’t refer to [‘Scott’] as a person, he’s a commodity...They didn’t care about his welfare”.

11.21 “Darby” reflected that, in the UK and in Australia alike, “none of the homes I was in showed me any love or care in the way mum would have. When you were moving from home to home, no one ever explained to me what was happening. It was like cattle being moved from one place to another.”³³⁷³

11.22 “Tom” observed that “[a]ny institutional setting will always attract predators if it gives them access to children from a position of power and authority.”³³⁷⁴

11.23 “Michaela” felt that the Sisters of Mercy at Neerkol “were really rotten to us and they should have had a bit more empathy for the fact that none of the children there, including us, had parents...a lot of them were just angry, angry people.”³³⁷⁵

11.24 “Trish” felt that it was important for children to be treated better than she was as a child; that they “aren’t treated like slaves, that they have better food, schooling and just better treatment overall.”³³⁷⁶ “Trish” added, “[o]n behalf of all the other children that go through it, someone has to speak out. I just hope that it comes out that it has been worthwhile for us to speak out.”³³⁷⁷

11.25 Although Hugh McGowan accepted that there are times when institutionalisation is an appropriate way to look after children, he was clear that it is wrong “if [institutionalisation] was ever to be like what it was when we were children...children who were not in a family situation...were vulnerable. To put us in the situation that we were in only added remarkably to that vulnerability.”³³⁷⁸ He added that “I hope we suffered so that in future these organisations understand what not to do.”³³⁷⁹

11.26 Many of these reflections apply to institutional care in any setting but the risks of abuse, which were inherent in the systems that operated abroad, were not recognised by those responsible for child migration.

3372 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Brian”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.59.

3373 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Darby”, at TRN-5-000000002, p.83.

3374 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0501-0502. “Tom” died in 2015; his sister “Anne”, provided evidence to SCAI on his behalf. See [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Anne”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.51.

3375 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.109.

3376 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.47.

3377 [Transcript, day 177](#): “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, p.47.

3378 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.185.

3379 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.186.

Impact

11.27 It is hardly surprising that the lives of many children who were migrated were and continue to be affected.

Education

11.28 “James” felt that his “entire existence” had been “an effort of fighting my fears and inhibitions stemming from our treatment in the Catholic institutions” to which he was migrated.³³⁸⁰ He added that “the harsh and twisted treatment that was our lot, the almost maniacal building over the needs of education had an effect on me that has lasted. They instilled the thought that you had to be tough in this world...In addition to my lack of education affecting my ability to obtain employment in which I would have earned better money, I also experienced difficulties due to a sense of inferiority and a lack of trust.”³³⁸¹

“I also experienced difficulties due to a sense of inferiority and a lack of trust.”

11.29 The negative impact of the lack of a proper education referred to by “James” was a common theme.

11.30 “John” did not “really think about Bindoon too much. It was rough, but it was what it was. It definitely impacted on my education. It affected me getting a job at

first...When I was 17 or 18 I tried to join the army but didn’t even have the education to do that.”³³⁸²

“...I tried to join the army but didn’t even have the education to do that.”

11.31 Likewise, for “Trish”, the poor education and “terrifying classroom” environment at St Joseph’s, Subiaco “led to a lifelong disadvantage”.³³⁸³

11.32 Of all of the harsh treatment that “Maryanne” experienced, she was most unhappy about the loss of education, which was “a source of frustration and sadness for her throughout her adult life.”³³⁸⁴ The option to carry on with her schooling would, she felt, have “absolutely” had a good impact on her life.³³⁸⁵

11.33 Frederick Smith suffered a catalogue of sustained sexual abuse at the hands of the Christian Brothers, yet he did survive and said “I’ve enjoyed my life.”³³⁸⁶ Nevertheless, he wondered what his life would otherwise have been like: “I’ve always thought that I’m better than what I believe I am and I could have also made a real good living earning good money...I could have been anything, a doctor or a nurse. I could have been anything. But I’ll never know...I’ll die not knowing that”.³³⁸⁷

3380 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in evidence of “James” (FBF), at TRN-5-000000013, p.218.

3381 JG2: Typed statement of “James”, 2018, at WIT.003.002.2842.

3382 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.157.

3383 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0036.

3384 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Maryanne”, at WIT.003.001.5219.

3385 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6291.

3386 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.96.

3387 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.98.

“...the abilities of most other kids that went through those places were curtailed.”

11.34 Similarly, “Stuart” felt that he “could have been anything if I’d had a better education. I’m probably lucky to be a tradesman.”³³⁸⁸

11.35 “Scott” too reflected that, had he had “a good education and a good family then who knows where I would have ended up.”³³⁸⁹

11.36 That sense of what might have been was also captured by “Johnno”, who felt that, had it not been for his migration, he “could have been the Prime Minister of England, you don’t know. I do believe that my abilities were stymied. I believe the abilities of most other kids that went through those places were curtailed.”³³⁹⁰

Mental health

11.37 “Tom” reflected that his “entire life [was] profoundly disadvantaged by the abuse and deprivation I endured...I was kept helpless and vulnerable” through a denial of education “along with starvation, slave labour, bashings, bullying and constant fear”.³³⁹¹ These factors, and the vulnerability they engendered, “allowed [the Christian Brothers] to continue the sexual assaults

for many years.”³³⁹² “Tom” “carried so much shame of what they did to [him], especially Murphy and Doyle.”³³⁹³

11.38 The impact of migration was long-lasting for Frank Morrison: “In my head I know that what happened to me was not my fault, but I cannot get rid of the overwhelming feeling of shame.”³³⁹⁴ That shame led him to keep his experiences, “the demons from my childhood”, to himself for 65 years.³³⁹⁵

11.39 “Tony’s” time in care had an “effect on my mental health...When you are on your own, you think about it”, so “Tony” spent a lot of energy keeping himself occupied.³³⁹⁶ All “Tony” hoped was that what happened to him is not still happening, because “I went through it and it stuck with me.”³³⁹⁷

11.40 “Trish’s” experiences of abuse in childhood “affected her marriage, and her capacity to have intimate relationships... the abuse damaged her trust in people”.³³⁹⁸ “Trish” never felt able to disclose the abuse she experienced as a child—which she described as a ‘shameful secret’—to anyone other than Dr White at Tuart Place, including

3388 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.204.

3389 [Written statement of “Scott”](#), paragraph 103, at WIT-1-000000011, p.21.

3390 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johnno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.166.

3391 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0502. “Tom” died in 2015; his sister “Anne”, provided evidence to SCAI on his behalf. See [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Anne”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.51.

3392 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0502.

3393 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0507.

3394 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.48.

3395 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.48.

3396 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0332.

3397 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Tony”, at TRN.001.005.0326.

3398 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0036.

to her husband and sisters; “Trish” said that “[s]ometimes you really need to talk and I think some kind of counselling would be good.”³³⁹⁹

11.41 When “Michael” and his wife first “set up home together, I had no idea how to live in a house like that. I didn’t know how to behave...I was institutionalised” and struggled for “probably the first 10 years of being married”.³⁴⁰⁰ “Michael” knew that “there was a lot of stuff inside me that needed undoing, so I did that. However, there are still things that bother me.”³⁴⁰¹

Records and finance

11.42 Roddy Mackay had put “the physical stuff” aside “a long time ago”.³⁴⁰² What could not, to his mind, be justified was “the fact that they had these records” and that he was in his late 60s “before I was able to obtain records that could have assisted me in re-connecting with my brothers, the rest of my family.”³⁴⁰³ He felt that the “least institutions can do is turn over records to people to allow them to be reunited with their families”; his feelings about the fundamental importance of records were common amongst many of the applicants.³⁴⁰⁴

“...the least institutions can do is turn over records to people to allow them to be reunited with their families.”

11.43 “Mary” also believed that “we are entitled to proper levels of financial redress for all that we suffered and all that was taken from us. I was a ward of the State of Victoria which failed to monitor the conditions we suffered.”³⁴⁰⁵

Resilience

11.44 In spite of the markedly negative impact suffered by many former child migrants, many have shown and continue to show a great deal of resilience.

11.45 For “Amy”, “[t]here was a lot that wasn’t okay for so long. Too many people got away with too much. Everyone goes through trials and tribulations and they experience things that aren’t good, some worse than others. I’ve picked myself up and tried to be strong. I’ve accomplished a lot that I’m happy and proud of, my family, my sister and her family.”³⁴⁰⁶

“I’ve accomplished a lot that I’m happy and proud of”.

Apologies

11.46 Applicants’ responses to the government apologies that have been tendered varied. Some reacted positively, others were lukewarm in their reaction and some were quite disappointed.

3399 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0035; [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.119.

3400 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0282.

3401 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0282.

3402 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0034.

3403 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0034.

3404 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 161, at WIT.001.001.3484.

3405 Child Migrants Trust, Statement of Historic Institutional Abuse of “Mary”, at WIT.003.001.2689.

3406 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Amy”, at TRN-5-000000009, pp.136-137.

“...it was a wonderful effort by the then Prime Minister... in that he was able to succinctly describe the nation’s sadness...and took full responsibility for it happening.”

11.47 “Johno’s” response to Gordon Brown’s apology for the practice of child migration was positive: “I think it was a wonderful effort by the then Prime Minister of England in that he was able to succinctly describe the nation’s sadness at what they allowed to happen and took full responsibility for it happening.”³⁴⁰⁷ This did not excuse the child migration system though, nor did it excuse the governments’ lack of response to their ‘guilty knowledge’. “Johno” added that “the British Government knew we were being abused, so much so that several of the institutions were blackballed by the organisations concerned, but the British Government still continued sending us.”³⁴⁰⁸ However, he felt that Gordon Brown’s apology was an important moment.

11.48 In 2010, Roddy Mackay returned to the United Kingdom to hear Gordon Brown’s apology for child migration. His brother and sister also attended, and “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.”³⁴⁰⁹ Roddy found Gordon Brown’s apology “to be very sincere. I don’t think it was a political forced issue.”³⁴¹⁰ Nonetheless, “there was no follow up.”³⁴¹¹

While in London, Roddy was invited to the Canadian consulate: “The Canadian High Commissioner had tea with us but it seemed to be a token gesture. He said that he had never heard of child migration.”³⁴¹² The Canadian government seemed not to even acknowledge their role in migration; Roddy wanted “recognition from the Canadian and provincial governments for all child migrants so that something like this never happens again.”³⁴¹³ Roddy continued to call for an apology from the Canadian government.³⁴¹⁴

11.49 “Michaela” was selected by the CMT to travel to the UK for Gordon Brown’s apology in 2010. She felt he was “a genuine man”, and that when he spoke with “Michaela” and other former migrants “he’d had the Prime Minister halo removed and he was more interested in us at that time.”³⁴¹⁵ She did not comment on the apology itself, but her interaction with Gordon Brown was evidently positive.

11.50 “Helen” too was asked by the CMT to go and hear Gordon Brown’s apology. She travelled to the UK with a group of other former child migrants, and found it to be “a very sincere and moving apology. There was a depth to what he was saying.”³⁴¹⁶

3407 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, pp.163-164.

3408 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.165.

3409 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0041.

3410 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0042.

3411 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0043.

3412 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 154, at WIT.001.001.3482.

3413 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 147, at WIT.001.001.3481.

3414 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraphs 156-157, at WIT.001.001.3483; “Former British child migrants seek apology from Canadian Government”, CBC Radio, March 15 2017, at WIT.003.001.6177; Transcript at WIT.003.001.6182.

3415 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Michaela”, at TRN-5-000000008, p.108.

3416 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.136-137.

11.51 Christopher Booth saw Gordon Brown's 2010 apology for the child migration schemes, but did not welcome it "because I reckon it was very easy to turn round and say you're sorry. Anybody can say they're sorry. You've got to back it up with action to – like this Inquiry is trying to do – improve the lives of the children that are going to come after us so that it doesn't happen to them."³⁴¹⁷ For Christopher, "[f]or 60 years the British Government has done nothing for us. In actual fact, I don't call it the British Government, I call it the English government...I've got a great hatred for the British Government."³⁴¹⁸

“Anybody can say they’re sorry. You’ve got to back it up with action”.

11.52 Similarly, “Tom” said to his sister “Anne” of Gordon Brown’s apology that “[t]hat pommy Prime Minister was a bit bloody late with his apology.”³⁴¹⁹ He felt the same about Kevin Rudd’s apology. “Tom” said that half the child migrants were already dead or they’d been murdered. I think he meant that a lot of the children had been neglected, beaten and malnourished and hadn’t survived.³⁴²⁰

11.53 “Michael” recalled the statement and apology that Kevin Rudd, then Australian Prime Minister, in 2009, but asked: “what good did it do? What did it change? I wasn’t aware of the British apology regarding child migration, but if you ask anybody who was abused and who received an apology,

they will ask: what difference does it make? Saying sorry is not enough; you have to change what has happened by bringing some healing.”³⁴²¹

“...if you ask anybody who was abused and who received an apology, they will ask: what difference does it make?”

11.54 Hugh McGowan, who was present when Kevin Rudd made an apology, was unimpressed: “We child migrants felt as if we were just an addendum to that because it was always ‘the forgotten Australians and child migrants’. We thought that it was more appropriate if the child migrants were separated and apologised [to] there because it was the Australian Government that instigated the migration scheme after the Second World War...and asked for ‘the good white stock’...and we were part of that.”³⁴²²

11.55 In 2018, “Kath” was selected, by ballot, to attend the national apology for child migration by the then Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison. She “was in awe. There was sadness for a lot of the people who never made it or who committed suicide. I spoke to quite a lot of people. They just couldn’t put on enough for us. They paid for everything and it doesn’t make up for what’s happened, but to me, they put in a lot of thought to make us really welcome...It was just absolutely beautiful.”³⁴²³

3417 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0240.

3418 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0241.

3419 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Anne”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.71. For a copy of Gordon Brown’s apology see Volume 2.

3420 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Anne”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.72.

3421 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at TRN.001.002.0279-0280.

3422 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan at TRN-5-000000006, pp.182-183.

3423 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Kath”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.87.

11.56 At the time “Gregs” gave evidence, there had “never been an apology from Fairbridge, despite them knowing before I even arrived that things were happening.”³⁴²⁴

11.57 Regarding the government apologies given in Australia and in the UK in general, Yvonne Radzevicius remarked: “Everybody kept saying, ‘Sorry, sorry, sorry’, and ‘Go away now we’ve said sorry’...nobody was doing anything or they weren’t setting up any counselling for us.”³⁴²⁵ Yvonne considered that apologies without ensuing action are ineffective and it was all too late: “Any responses now to the whole child migrant scheme are not going to make any difference.”³⁴²⁶

“Everybody kept saying, ‘Sorry, sorry, sorry’, and ‘Go away now we’ve said sorry’... nobody was doing anything”.

11.58 For “Rose”, although she had been told that “what happened back then should never have happened...that doesn’t take it away or make it any better.”³⁴²⁷ “Rose” felt that “someone must be held responsible. There is no need for children to be migrated as we were.”³⁴²⁸

11.59 Bert McGregor described the apologies provided by the UK and Australian Governments as “wonderful...they’ve finally faced up to the enormity of sending the children away from their country to another country and the enormity of sufficient safeguards, overseers, or whatever. You assumed that the religious orders were the best place for children and it turned out that it might have been the worst.”³⁴²⁹

Overview

11.60 There are some clear themes that can be distilled from these reflections. Child migration was dominated by deceit and evasion. Child migrants were dreadfully abused, exploited, and traumatised. Lives were destroyed. Child migrants were abandoned and betrayed by governments at home and abroad. The findings I set out in this volume need to be recognised as a legacy that must endure and live on in Scotland’s history as an indelible stain.

3424 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.143.

3425 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0110-0111.

3426 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 174, at WIT.001.002.2505.

3427 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Rose”, at WIT.003.001.5215.

3428 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.154.

3429 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7202.

12

Other inquiries and redress schemes

12.1 Many applicants spoke about having participated in other inquiries and redress schemes. As “Johno” highlighted, inquiries and redress schemes cannot change the past. Whilst engaging with inquiries and redress schemes may seem challenging, doing so can help to offer resolution, and support survivors to find effective coping mechanisms and progress beyond their trauma.

12.2 Bert McGregor, who conducted his own research and campaigned for recognition from the Christian Brothers, submitted his autobiography to the Senate Inquiry into Institutional Care in 2003.³⁴³⁰ In 2005, he participated in the ‘Towards Healing’ programme, set up by the Catholic Church in Australia. He found it “traumatic. For the first time I told [two Christian Brothers] my story and I found that the hardest thing. I don’t think a sit-down session for half a day with two men who are in power today and out of power tomorrow can heal. There was no outcome, nothing followed. My story to them was just another story.”³⁴³¹ He noted that the Christian Brothers “were impotent in their ability to face up to the problem. They still cannot, face-to-face, say sorry.”³⁴³²

“There was no outcome, nothing followed. My story to them was just another story...the Christian Brothers...were impotent in their ability to face up to the problem.”

12.3 Bert submitted his story to the Oral History Project in 2010, after he “had lost a bit of confidence in the truth ever coming out and I wanted an independent source that had my story.”³⁴³³ When Bert gave evidence to SCAI his brother had recently completed a form on Bert’s behalf for the National Redress Scheme.³⁴³⁴

12.4 One of Frank Morrison’s friends “took the Christian Brothers to court in Tasmania. I was contacted by the court and asked to be a witness. I think that the two brothers on trial were sent to prison.”³⁴³⁵ The CMT informed him about the Australian National Redress Scheme and, with their support, Frank made an application to the scheme in 2018.³⁴³⁶

3430 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7200.

3431 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraphs 153-154, at WIT.001.002.3095.

3432 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 156, at WIT.001.002.3096.

3433 [Transcript, day 123](#): James Albert McGregor, at TRN.001.004.7200-7201.

3434 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 162, at WIT.001.002.3096.

3435 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.44.

3436 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at TRN-5-000000002, p.44; National Redress Scheme, Statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at WIT.003.001.9749.

“I received...[financial] redress...but it wasn’t anything for what I’ve been through. It wouldn’t even cover my horses’ feed for a year.”

12.5 In around 2010, Christopher Booth got in touch with the Tasmanian Inquiry.³⁴³⁷ This was the first time that he disclosed the abuse he had suffered.³⁴³⁸ Christopher also made a submission to the Australian Commission, a decision that took him years “to pluck up the courage” to take.³⁴³⁹ He said that the Commission “were apologetic for what happened. Then they thanked me for being brave enough to tell them what happened. But that’s where it is at the moment.”³⁴⁴⁰ In that statement, Christopher “left out quite a bit...I didn’t tell them that the abuse was constant because I was ashamed of it.”³⁴⁴¹

“I didn’t tell them that the abuse was constant because I was ashamed of it.”

12.6 “Harry” never reported the abuse he suffered to the police: “They wouldn’t take any bloody notice of you. Being an orphan, they couldn’t care”.³⁴⁴² In 1998, he engaged with the UK’s Select Committee on Health in their inquiry into child migration.³⁴⁴³ In 2007, he participated in the ‘Towards Healing’ project.³⁴⁴⁴ Through that, he met with the Christian Brothers; he was not bitter towards the Brothers in general, and regarded his experiences as the fault of a few bad men. He participated in the Western Australia Redress Scheme and in 2010 received an amount of money in redress, “but it wasn’t anything for what I’ve been through. It wouldn’t even cover my horses’ feed for a year.”³⁴⁴⁵ In 2014, “Harry” submitted a statement to the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.³⁴⁴⁶

3437 It is unclear which inquiry this may be, but it is likely to be the *Listen to children: review of abuse from adults in state care as children*, an Ombudsman inquiry set up by the Tasmanian Government in July 2003. The inquiry’s initial report was published in 2004, and its final report in 2006. Shortly after the inquiry was set up the Tasmanian Premier announced that *ex gratia* payments would be made to those who met the criteria, and an independent assessor of the claims was appointed. Since the conclusion of the Inquiry in 2006 there have been two further rounds of *ex gratia* payments, and it is likely that Christopher Booth contacted the Ombudsman during the first one of these.

3438 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0240.

3439 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0241; [Written statement of Christopher Booth](#), paragraph 105, at WIT.001.001.3667.

3440 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0242-0243.

3441 [Transcript, day 48](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0244.

3442 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0225.

3443 HC/CP/12538, Submission to Select Committee on Health, Evidence of CM282, at HOC.001.001.0395; House of Commons Health Committee, [Welfare of Former British Child Migrants](#), HC 755-II, and Minutes of Evidence and Appendices HC 755-II, 1997-98, at LIT.001.001.2840.

3444 Professional Standards Resources Group, Confidential statement of “Harry”, 1 October 2007, at WIT.003.001.5807; Towards Healing, Additional statement of “Harry”, at WIT.003.001.5806; Professional Standards Resource Group, Record of meeting on 24 September 2007, at WIT.003.001.5812.

3445 [Written statement of “Harry”](#), paragraph 91, at WIT.001.002.6578.

3446 Australian Royal Commission, Statement of “Harry”, at WIT.003.001.5820.

12.7 Dr Philippa White at Tuart Place helped Ian Donaldson to compile a statement for the Redress Western Australia Scheme.³⁴⁴⁷ When Ian participated in the Western Australia Redress scheme, initially he “never mentioned the sexual abuse...because I was too ashamed”, and only eventually did so on the advice of his lawyer.³⁴⁴⁸

12.8 “Tom” participated in a number of inquiries, schemes, and as a witness in a criminal trial before his death in 2015.³⁴⁴⁹ He described how “Brother Murphy was finally brought before the court in the mid-1990s, only to have the charges dismissed because the judge decided he was too old and sick to answer for his crimes. He died free of conviction. Yet at seven years of age I wasn’t too young to be raped and abused.”³⁴⁵⁰ In his submission to the Redress Western Australia Scheme in 2008, “Tom” spoke about “court room horrors during the class action against the Christian Brothers in 1995, the failed 1996 WA Inquiry into child migration, the 1998 UK Inquiry, the 2001 Senate inquiry, and now this”, referring to the 2008 Redress scheme.³⁴⁵¹

12.9 “Tom” submitted the same statement to the Australian Royal Commission in 2014, with a covering letter explaining that “[i]t is very difficult not to feel cynical about the likelihood of any action by the Royal Commission that will help me feel better

when I wake up every day...all I see is apathy and indifference from the authorities when it comes to holding the Christian Brothers to account. The fact that most of the perpetrators have now died – but they were still alive when I gave my evidence to the police in 1994 – does not remove the need for justice.”³⁴⁵²

“The fact that most of the perpetrators have now died...does not remove the need for justice.”

12.10 In the 1990s, over three decades after leaving Tardun, Frederick Smith “got in touch with the sexual abuse department” in the local police.³⁴⁵³ They investigated Brother Brown, who had physically abused Frederick at Tardun and found that Brother Brown—and possibly other staff—“were under the age of 21” and therefore “couldn’t be charged because they were minors in those days.”³⁴⁵⁴

12.11 Later, Frederick was contacted by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), who informed him that “they were going to charge Brother Lawrence Murphy and I was going up to court.”³⁴⁵⁵ Frederick was invited to testify against Brother Murphy. The case was ultimately dismissed because Brother Murphy was found to be unfit to stand trial.³⁴⁵⁶

3447 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0301.

3448 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0301.

3449 “Anne” (CQG) provided evidence to the Inquiry in May 2019 on behalf of her older half-brother, “Tom”. See [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Anne”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.51.

3450 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0501.

3451 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0503.

3452 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0501.

3453 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.91.

3454 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.91.

3455 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.92.

3456 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Woollorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.92.

“I had to meet some social workers and one of them told me that I had to try and see the Brothers side of it before I could be healed. They offered all sorts of excuses for the Brothers”.

12.12 In 1997, Frederick’s account was given to the UK Select Committee on Health, though Frederick himself did not participate in the investigation.³⁴⁵⁷

12.13 When Frederick participated in the ‘Towards Healing’ programme, one social worker “told me that I had to try and see the Brothers side of it before I could be healed. They offered all sorts of excuses for the Brothers”.³⁴⁵⁸ The scheme offered Frederick psychiatric support and he was told again that he had to forgive the Brothers, “but there’s no way in the world I’m going to do that.”³⁴⁵⁹

12.14 Walter Kerkhof submitted evidence to the UK Select Committee on Health in 1998.³⁴⁶⁰ He received a redress payment from the Christian Brothers but “you cannot put a price” on experiences as a child in their supposed care.³⁴⁶¹

12.15 “James” had been involved in several litigations against the Christian Brothers. In 1996, he received some compensation. He received further compensation in 2015.³⁴⁶² In

2008 he “lodged an application with Redress WA” for compensation, and received a payment under the scheme in 2010.³⁴⁶³

12.16 “Stuart” was involved in litigation against the Christian Brothers in the early 1990s, and received some compensation.³⁴⁶⁴ “Stuart” “got redress from Western Australia in 2007. It wasn’t what it was meant to be, but at least it was something.”³⁴⁶⁵ In 2016, he was involved with another case against the Christian Brothers, through which he received compensation from the Catholic Church. During this process, whilst he was in the lawyers’ office, a spokesperson for the Christian Brothers “was [down] the hall and the lawyer asked me if I wanted to meet him...he came in and asked me a couple of questions. I asked him why they thought we were all liars and why did they treat children like they did. I told him they were men of God, they were meant to look after us”.³⁴⁶⁶ “Stuart” had not “touched any of the money. It is for me and my wife when we die. At least we will be buried correctly. I saw my brother buried and it made me cry.”³⁴⁶⁷

3457 [Written statement of Frederick Wooltorton Smith](#), paragraph 139, at WIT.001.002.8143.

3458 [Written statement of Frederick Wooltorton Smith](#), paragraph 137, at WIT.001.002.8143.

3459 [Written statement of Frederick Wooltorton Smith](#), paragraph 138, at WIT.001.002.8143.

3460 HC/CP/12538, Submission to Select Committee on Health, Evidence of CM278, at HOC.001.001.0392.

3461 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.120.

3462 Affidavit of “James” (FBF), at WIT.003.002.2838. “James” (FBF) provided a number of documents to SCAI detailing his experiences at Christian Brothers’ institutions in Australia, including this affidavit sworn on 25 March 2019. Whilst “James” (FBF) had wanted to engage with SCAI, he later wrote that he felt unable to do so as he had told his account many times before and “it gets more painful to mentally delve into it all again as time passes.” Email from “James” (FBF) to SCAI, 5 July 2019, at WIT.003.002.2834.

3463 Affidavit of “James” (FBF), at WIT.003.002.2838.

3464 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.205.

3465 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.205.

3466 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, pp.204-205.

3467 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.205.

12.17 “John” received compensation from the Tasmanian Government and a payment from the UK Government.³⁴⁶⁸

12.18 Yvonne Radzevicius had participated in several schemes and inquiries. She engaged with the ‘Towards Healing’ programme set up by the Catholic Church. She “met two nuns...and they kept saying, ‘We’re sorry, we’re sorry, we’re sorry, we’ll give you some money, but we haven’t got very deep pockets’...Sorry for what happened in the convent is all they said: ‘This shouldn’t have happened’...and you had to sign [a letter], saying that you wouldn’t come back to them for anything else.”³⁴⁶⁹

12.19 Yvonne submitted a statement to the Western Australia Redress Scheme, “but I was never interviewed...Nobody ever spoke to me about it”.³⁴⁷⁰ Yvonne applied to the National Redress Scheme and submitted a statement to the UK’s Select Committee on Health in the late 1990s.³⁴⁷¹ She has been able to access the Family Restoration Fund.³⁴⁷² Yvonne found the support of Tuart Place, where she was “part of a group again”, helpful.³⁴⁷³

12.20 “Gregs” participated in the Western Australia Redress Scheme, but to him, it “was the biggest insult. The scheme should have been about someone genuinely recognising things happened...I consider the apology offered by the Western Australian State Premier Colin Barnett was a purely political gesture.”³⁴⁷⁴

12.21 At the time of giving evidence to this Inquiry, “Gregs” had not yet decided whether to participate in the National Redress Scheme, which he believed “lacks genuine intentions...It keeps getting postponed, decisions are not made, and in the meantime people who suffered are dying...I’m unsure whether I want to go through it all again and get the knife turned once more.”³⁴⁷⁵

“I’m unsure whether I want to go through it all again and get the knife turned once more.”

12.22 “Maryanne” approached Tuart Place, who supported her in preparing the statement she submitted to the Western Australia Redress Scheme. She obtained a redress payment which “was very handy, I bought myself a new car and gave some money to the kids.”³⁴⁷⁶ She “would speak to Dr Philippa White” at Tuart Place, but had “never had any support or counselling in relation to my time in care.”³⁴⁷⁷ Two of the trips that “Maryanne” made to the UK “were paid for me”, one by the UK Government and another “by both the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Nazareth.”³⁴⁷⁸ She did not expect to visit Scotland again.

12.23 In 2008, “Rose” submitted a statement to the Redress Western Australia Scheme. This statement was compiled on

3468 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.7.

3469 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0106-0107.

3470 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 136, at WIT.001.002.2498.

3471 HC/CP/12534, Submission to Select Committee on Health, Evidence of CM122, at HOC.001.001.0190.

3472 [Written statement of Yvonne Radzevicius](#), paragraph 137, at WIT.001.002.2497.

3473 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0110.

3474 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.142.

3475 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.143.

3476 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 113, at WIT.001.002.2929.

3477 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 116, at WIT.001.002.2930.

3478 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 124, at WIT.001.002.2931.

her behalf by Dr Philippa White at Tuart Place and “Rose” received some financial compensation from the Scheme.³⁴⁷⁹ A statement written by “Rose” was submitted to the Select Committee on Health of the UK Government in the late 1990s.³⁴⁸⁰ Also, although she does not remember doing so, “Rose” appears to have given evidence to the Community Affairs Reference Committee in Australia in around 2001 (whose work culminated in the *Lost Innocents* report).³⁴⁸¹

12.24 In 1998, “Trish” submitted a statement to the UK’s Select Committee on Health, which was investigating the welfare of former British child migrants, stating that “[a]s it was not my decision to migrate to Australia I feel I am entitled to some form of compensation to help me put together the missing pieces of my family and life”.³⁴⁸² “Trish” had two trips to the UK funded through the Family Restoration Fund, but she paid for her first trip (in 1997) herself, and had not received any other compensation from the UK Government.³⁴⁸³ “Trish” engaged with the Redress Western Australia Scheme in 2008 with the support of Dr Philippa White of Tuart Place and received compensation, but had “not been involved in any other inquiries”.³⁴⁸⁴ Apart from disclosing her experiences to Dr Philippa White, who prepared “Trish’s”

statement for the Western Australia Redress Scheme, “Trish” had “never reported or spoken about what happened to me...Other than speaking to her, I have never had any other counselling or support.”³⁴⁸⁵ “Trish” had “never received an apology from the Sisters of Mercy or any other person regarding my migration to Australia as a child or the abuse that I suffered.”³⁴⁸⁶ She did not “know what response there should be to all the child migrants”, but hoped that giving evidence to this Inquiry would help “make sure that children in care today are safer.”³⁴⁸⁷

12.25 “Jack” had spoken to several other inquiries and taken his case to the police. In the late 1980s or the 1990s, he spoke to the police about his time at Bindoon. However, “[t]he detective who was taking my statement was taken off the case...and they just closed it up.”³⁴⁸⁸ “Jack” engaged with the Australian Royal Commission, and spoke with Justice Peter McClellan, the chair of the commission.³⁴⁸⁹ In 2008, “Jack” received a letter from the Christian Brothers apologising for “the way you were treated whilst under the care of the Christian Brothers at Bindoon between 1950 and 1957.”³⁴⁹⁰ In “Jack’s” opinion, it was “not worth the paper it’s written on”; “[t]hey tried to blame the government officials in Edinburgh instead

3479 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.149.

3480 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.149. “Rose’s” handwritten statement can be found at HC/CP/12534, Submission to Select Committee on Health, Evidence of CM135, at HOC.001.001.0192.

3481 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.149.

3482 HC/CP/12534, Submission to Select Committee on Health, Evidence of CM119, HOC.001.001.0189.

3483 The UK payment scheme for former British child migrants was announced in December 2018, and applications for payment opened in March 2019, so it is possible that, when she initially provided evidence to SCAI, “Trish” (MZW) did not know about this scheme or had not yet applied.

3484 Western Australia Redress Scheme, Statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TUA.001.001.0032; [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.121.

3485 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.119.

3486 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.121.

3487 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.122.

3488 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.89.

3489 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 96, at WIT.001.002.4905; [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.94.

3490 Letter from Peter Negus to “Jack”, 22 February 2008, at WIT.003.001.9298.

of taking responsibility.”³⁴⁹¹ “Jack” engaged with the Western Australia Redress Scheme, and received financial redress in 2011.³⁴⁹² At the time he provided evidence to this inquiry, “Jack” was “in the process of taking civil action against the Commonwealth Government.”³⁴⁹³ For “Jack”, inquiries and schemes had “left it a bit late because most of the perpetrators are dead. They can’t be punished.”³⁴⁹⁴

12.26 “Robert” and his brothers engaged with several schemes and inquiries including the Australian Royal Commission. “Robert’s” younger brother died three years before the Commission reported: “He had never had any real quality of life or happiness and he had gone to the grave with no recognition of his suffering.”³⁴⁹⁵ “Robert” felt that the redress scheme was “long overdue” and he explained that, because his brothers passed away before redress was in place, “[t]hey passed on feeling that nobody really cared.”³⁴⁹⁶

12.27 When “John” applied to the Western Australia Redress Scheme, with the support of Tuart Place, “[t]here was initially an age limit on compensation, but they’ve done away with this. It has been settled now.”³⁴⁹⁷

3491 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.95; [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 96, at WIT.001.002.4905.

3492 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 101, at WIT.001.002.4906.

3493 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 100, at WIT.001.002.4906.

3494 [Written statement of “Jack”](#), paragraph 106, at WIT.001.002.4907.

3495 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.96.

3496 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Robert”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.103.

3497 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.156.

13 Conclusion

13.1 Each child migrant had individual experiences. No two individuals' experiences were exactly the same, whether before, during, or after their migration. Nonetheless, several themes from these narratives resonate throughout.

13.2 All children were migrated through a scheme that did not regard them as individuals and took no account of their individual needs and vulnerabilities.

13.3 Some children had been abused in care in the UK and were migrated already bearing the scars of that abuse. Many were abused in their receiving institutions. The abuse varied in its nature, extent, and width. Some of it was quite horrific, particularly in some of the receiving institutions. All of it matters and the fact of it underlines the tragedy and trauma visited upon these children. It cannot be captured in a homogenous sweeping statement.

13.4 The process of migration was abusive: removing a child from family, friends, community, and homeland severed attachments and relationships which may otherwise have flourished. Doing so, and doing it in the way that it was done over the period examined in this case study, constituted emotional abuse of the children and of those left behind in the UK.

13.5 Children were stripped of their identities in a variety of ways. Many children were told that they were orphans, and were thereby denied the sense of family connection they had before migration. Letters to and from family were either

heavily controlled or entirely prohibited. Some children were separated from their siblings when they arrived in the receiving country, fracturing relationships that could have sustained identities and protected individuals. Children had their clothing and personal possessions removed when they arrived, denying them any semblance of individuality or material signs of affection they had received before migration. Family gifts were often not passed on to children, leaving them to feel isolated and abandoned by family who, in fact, still cared for them. Some children's hair was shaved off, and some were dressed the same regardless of gender or age. In some institutions, children were either given new names with which they had no prior affiliation, or were addressed by a number. Child migrants frequently lost their national identity. While many of the child migrants from Scotland continued to feel Scottish, the majority of applicants remained in their receiving country, some by choice and some because the barriers to acquiring British nationality have been insurmountable. This left many of them feeling they were neither fully Scottish, nor fully Australian or Canadian.

13.6 The process of obtaining the consent of the children and their families prior to migration was a key feature of many accounts. The practice of asking children if they wished to go to Australia or Canada, often with little and/or inaccurate and misleading information, was fundamentally flawed. Many applicants highlighted that they did not even know where they were going; they may have known the word, 'Australia,'

for instance, but they did not know what or where it was, or what it would mean for them. Some children expected to travel a short distance for a short holiday before returning to their sending institution. Children were frequently told that Australia would be an idyllic land of plenty, with an abundance of fruit and sunshine every day. To an eight-year-old from an institution in Scotland, such a vision was bound to be appealing; asking children to decide whether to migrate based on these false representations was shameful. Furthermore, children were sometimes coerced by staff at their institutions into volunteering for migration.³⁴⁹⁸ This was often so as to assist with recruiting 'good stock' for Canada and Australia.

13.7 On arrival at their receiving countries and institutions, child migrants were often put to excessively laborious, and sometimes dangerous, tasks. Many child migrants received minimal or no education, and instead were used as manual labourers at their receiving institutions, or boarded out as soon as possible to local farmers to work on the land. This was all heavy work. Children built farm buildings; they built accommodation; they built "ovals"; they farmed the institution's land; and they dug drainage trenches in hard dirt courtyards. Children who were too young to undertake such work efficiently, were put to different but no less arduous and inappropriate tasks. Many institutions had no janitorial staff, leaving the children to undertake extensive cleaning and maintenance work of a type that went well beyond involving children in reasonable and age appropriate chores.

13.8 Children were frequently deprived of quality education. Many SCAL applicants were left feeling they could have achieved more had it not been for being migrated. In particular, those who received inadequate education after migration are very aware of its significance. The successes that some achieved despite their lack of education must, to an extent, help but they also indicate the likelihood that those individuals had untapped potential.

13.9 Many of the staff at receiving institutions were not suitably qualified or trained. In particular, many were not trained in childcare or education, let alone in how to approach and care for the needs of children migrated from the other side of the world. In Fairbridge Prince of Wales, Canada, a convicted sexual abuser was rehired into the school at which he had first committed abuse, and he continued to abuse children in his care. Christian Brothers who were suspected of abuse were regularly moved from one institution to another, where they continued to abuse children with impunity. Many 'employers' were inadequately vetted and as a result unprotected children were at their mercy. Families that took children in during holidays were not vetted. When a child was sent for a holiday to a family, some had good experiences and some were put to work.

13.10 The system also lacked a robust inspection regime. Many applicants recalled meeting no inspectors at all during their time in care post migration. Even where inspections happened, they were ineffective at detecting abuse; a show was put on for these visitors that did not reflect reality.³⁴⁹⁹

3498 "Johnno", for instance, was told to put his hand up by Sister Columbus. See above.

3499 For further discussion on the inadequacy of inspection regimes see Volume 2.

13.11 The response to the experiences of former child migrants has, for many, been inadequate. While many tried to obtain their records from the relevant institutions, few were able to do so easily. Birth certificates, migration documents, and medical records were withheld by institutions in the UK and in destination countries; for some, it was as though their entire history before migration was erased. When the CMT was formed in 1987, it was the first cohesive body that former migrants could approach for support to find their records and families, to clarify their citizenship status, and to request help reuniting with their families overseas.

13.12 In the 1990s the first public inquiries were held into child migration in the UK and in Australia. In 2009 Kevin Rudd apologised on behalf of the Australian Government. In the same year, the charity Tuart Place was formally founded to support former child migrants and other individuals who had experienced out-of-home care in Australia. In 2010, Gordon Brown offered an apology on behalf of the UK Government, and introduced the time-limited Family Restoration Fund to enable former child migrants to reunite with their families overseas. In 2018, as a response to IICSA's report on child migration, the UK announced a redress fund for all former child migrants. Also in 2018, the National Redress Scheme was launched in Australia, and provided financial redress to all survivors of sexual abuse in care in Australia. While some former child migrants have been able to apply for this scheme, those who were not sexually abused, but faced extensive, harmful, and undeniable physical and emotional abuse as a consequence of migration, are ineligible. These apologies and redress payments happened because of the pressure brought to bear by individuals and charities who were determined that governments should acknowledge their role in child migration

and recognise its life-long effects. It is through the strength and will of people such as the applicants to this Inquiry that child migrants have been granted some recognition and reparation. Canada has still not offered an official apology, and several of SCAI's applicants understandably felt that the Canadian Government does not acknowledge or accept the very significant role it played in the migration of over 100,000 children to its shores.

13.13 Experiences of child migration will inevitably include many aspects that are not detailed here, and have not been heard in the course of our hearings. However, I would suggest that if proper regard is had to the accounts included above, they will be an invaluable resource and they should certainly ensure that the history of the migration of children from Scotland is acknowledged and recorded. Doubtless many more individuals had experiences of this kind which have not been told. It is vitally important that child migration, and the direct and long-lasting effects it had and continues to have on those affected, is acknowledged; that its survivors are heard. Such abuse must never be tolerated again.

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

Introduction

A.1 The overall aim and purpose of this Inquiry is to raise public awareness of the abuse of children in care, particularly during the period covered by the Inquiry. It will provide an opportunity for public acknowledgement of the suffering of those children and a forum for validation of their experience and testimony.

A.2 The Inquiry will do this by fulfilling its Terms of Reference which are set out below.

1. To investigate the nature and extent of abuse of children whilst in care in Scotland, during the relevant time frame.
2. To consider the extent to which institutions and bodies with legal responsibility for the care of children failed in their duty to protect children in care in Scotland (or children whose care was arranged in Scotland) from abuse, regardless of where that abuse occurred, and in particular to identify any systemic failures in fulfilling that duty.
3. To create a national public record and commentary on abuse of children in care in Scotland during the relevant time frame.
4. To examine how abuse affected and still affects these victims in the long term, and how in turn it affects their families.
5. The Inquiry is to cover that period which is within living memory of any person who suffered such abuse, up until such date as the Chair may determine, and in any event not beyond 17 December 2014.
6. To consider the extent to which failures by state or non-state institutions (including the courts) to protect children in care in Scotland from abuse have been addressed by changes to practice, policy or legislation, up until such date as the Chair may determine.
7. To consider whether further changes in practice, policy or legislation are necessary in order to protect children in care in Scotland from such abuse in future.
8. To report to the Scottish Ministers on the above matters, and to make recommendations, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Definitions

A.3 'Child' means a person under the age of 18.

A.4 For the purpose of this Inquiry, "Children in Care" includes children in institutional residential care such as children's homes (including residential care provided by faith based groups); secure care units including List D schools; Borstals; Young Offenders' Institutions; places provided for Boarded Out children in the Highlands and Islands; state, private and independent Boarding Schools, including state funded school hostels; healthcare establishments providing long term care; and any similar establishments intended to provide children with long term residential care. The term also includes children in foster care.

A.5 The term does not include: children living with their natural families; children living with members of their natural families, children living with adoptive families, children using sports and leisure clubs or attending faith based organisations on a day to day basis; hospitals and similar treatment centres attended on a short term basis; nursery and day-care; short term respite care for vulnerable children; schools, whether public or private, which did not have boarding facilities; police cells and similar holding centres which were intended to provide care temporarily or for the short term; or 16 and 17 year old children in the armed forces and accommodated by the relevant service.

A.6 "Abuse" for the purpose of this Inquiry is to be taken to mean primarily physical abuse and sexual abuse, with associated psychological and emotional abuse. The Inquiry will be entitled to consider other forms of abuse at its discretion, including medical experimentation, spiritual abuse, unacceptable practices (such as deprivation of contact with siblings) and neglect, but these matters do not require to be examined individually or in isolation.

Appendix B: Brief biographies

The brief biographies in this appendix are abridge accounts of the experiences of the individuals whose evidence has been considered in this Volume. Readers accessing this Volume electronically can click on an individual's name to be directed to that individual's full account. The biographies appear here in alphabetical order for ease of reference.

"Alice"

B.1 "Alice" provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020. She was born in Inverness in November 1944 and was admitted to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, in November 1945. In May 1954, when she was nine years old, "Alice" was migrated to Australia on the SS Orontes. There, "Alice" spent six years at Nazareth House, Camberwell, where she was physically and emotionally abused and neglected. After leaving care, "Alice" had a career in nursing, and went on to marry and have two children. She traced her birth mother and returned to the UK where she had a "tremendous family reunion".³⁵⁰⁰ "Alice" has suffered physical and mental health problems as a result of her experience as a child migrant. "Alice" felt that "there should be no more lies" from the UK and Australian governments: "We need to know the truth. [Migration] was so cruel, they failed us."³⁵⁰¹

"Amy"

B.2 "Amy" provided evidence to the Inquiry in May 2019. She was born in 1943, and was admitted to the Barnardo's Home in Glasgow with her older sister when she

was about a year old. Their older brother remained in their mother's care. "Amy" was transferred from Glasgow to Comlongon in March 1944, and then to Glasclune—where her sister was already staying—in April 1949. "Amy" was sexually abused in Barnardo's, and the sisters were both sexually abused during holidays. Both sisters were migrated to Australia aboard the SS Orontes in March 1956. The week before they migrated, they learned that their mother was alive and that they had a brother; this was "one of the cruellest blows that ever happened to me."³⁵⁰² In Australia, "Amy" was sent to Barnardo's in Burwood, Sydney where she was subjected to indecent exposure. She moved to Normanhurst briefly before leaving to work when she was about 14 or 15. In later life, her relationship with her sister flourished, and she formed a good relationship with her brother. Being migrated was "traumatic...for lots of reasons. I cried in bed. I was homesick for Scotland and I was thinking about my mother and my brother. It still makes me cry to this day. It was cruel what Barnardo's did."³⁵⁰³ "Amy" did not "wish to gain anything from talking about my experiences, I just want it to be useful for the future."³⁵⁰⁴

3500 [Written statement of "Alice"](#), paragraph 86, at WIT.001.002.7939.

3501 [Written statement of "Alice"](#), paragraph 97, at WIT.001.002.7941.

3502 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Amy", at TRN-5-000000009, p.133.

3503 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Amy", at TRN-5-000000009, p.134.

3504 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of "Amy", at TRN-5-000000009, p.137.

“Anne”, on behalf of “Tom”

B.3 “Anne” provided evidence to the Inquiry in May 2019 on behalf of her older half-brother, “Tom”, a former child migrant who died in 2015. “Tom” was born in Glasgow in 1942, and was admitted to Nazareth House, Carlisle, in September 1945. He was migrated to Australia on the SS Asturias in November 1947 when “Tom” was about five years old, where he was placed in Castledare then Clontarf. There, he was physically, emotionally, and sexually abused. In a statement to the Australian Royal Commission, he said that his “entire life has been profoundly disadvantaged by the abuse and deprivation [he] endured.”³⁵⁰⁵ After finding his family in about 1990 with the support of the CMT, “Tom” met his mother and his half-sisters, including “Anne”. They visited each other several times.³⁵⁰⁶

“Anne”

B.4 “Anne” provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2018. She was born in Ardrossan in 1944, and after her mother’s death in 1953 was admitted to Nazareth House, Kilmarnock. As a young child, she contracted polio, spent three years in hospital and required to wear callipers to support her legs thereafter. In May 1954, aged 10, she was migrated to Australia on the SS Orontes. The medical form completed in relation to her migration made no mention of her having suffered polio or of her need to wear callipers. In Australia, she was sent to Nazareth House, Camberwell, where she was physically abused. “Anne” developed depression at the age of 22, and remained on medication for this for nearly 50 years.

She reflected that “we weren’t brought up at the convent. We were like garbage being pushed up...The Catholic Church has a lot to answer for.”³⁵⁰⁷

“Brian”

B.5 “Brian”, “Scott’s” son, gave evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020. He was born in 1977. He grew up knowing nothing more of his father’s history than that he had come to Canada from the UK. “Brian” began to research his father’s history after reading an article about child migration schemes to Canada. Learning about this history had had a deep impact on “Brian”: “My father’s experiences are not just something that affected him, it has affected the whole entire family. It has affected me and how I raise my own two children.”³⁵⁰⁸ He wanted his “[d]ad to know that although he was given up, and that he spent time in these homes, he does have a family and that he was loved and care for.”³⁵⁰⁹

Christopher David Buchan Booth

B.6 Christopher Booth provided evidence to the Inquiry in April 2018. He was born in Aberdeen in February 1941, and for the first decade of his life was cared for by his aunt. In September 1951, he was placed in Nazareth House, Aberdeen, where he was physically and emotionally abused. In April 1952 Christopher was migrated to Australia on the SS Ormonde. He continued his journey to Tasmania where he was sent to St John Bosco Boys’ Town, Glenorchy. He was sexually and emotionally abused there. When he was 16, he was sent to a boarding house in Hobart where he remained under

3505 Royal Commission of Australia, Statement of “Tom”, at WIT.003.001.0501.

3506 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of “Anne” (CQG), at TRN-5-000000013, p.68.

3507 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “Anne” (LTI), at TRN-5-000000003, p.104.

3508 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 81, at WIT-1-000000013, p.19.

3509 [Written statement of “Brian”](#), paragraph 42, at WIT-1-000000013, p.10.

the care of the state until he was 21. Despite having been given no formal education in St John Bosco, after leaving the state's care Christopher attended night school where he gained qualifications and became an accountant. Although he acknowledged that he had "good times" among the bad, and had retained his Catholic faith, he said "[w]hen I was sent to Australia...I was robbed of a family, I was robbed of a country, I was robbed of an education...They robbed me of my identity, of really who I was."³⁵¹⁰

"Darby"

B.7 "Darby" provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2019. He was born in 1937, and spent his early years in the Falkirk area with his parents and siblings. He entered care when he was seven, following his parents' death. About a year later, "Darby" and one of his sisters were placed in a children's home in Bathgate. In 1948, they were transferred together to Weedingshall Children's Home, Polmont. In 1950, "Darby" was moved on his own to Levenhall Boys' Home, Musselburgh, and shortly after, in November 1950, he was migrated to Australia on the MV Cheshire when he was 13 years old. He was sent to Dhurringile Rural Training Farm, where "most of the time it was like living in a prison."³⁵¹¹ "Darby" was never shown affection or care by any of the institutions in which he lived, instead he was moved "like cattle...from one place to another."³⁵¹²

Francis Maloney Morrison (Frank)

B.8 Francis Morrison, known as Frank, provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2019. He was born in August 1942, and was admitted to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, less than a year later, in June 1943.³⁵¹³ He was sexually abused there by lay staff. In May 1952, aged nine, Frank and seven other boys from Nazareth House were migrated to Australia on the SS Ormonde, and arrived at Fremantle in June 1952. From there, they were sent to St John Bosco Boys' School in Tasmania, where the corporal punishment amounted to abuse. In August 1955, Frank and the other boys from Aberdeen were transferred to St Mary's School at Tardun, run by the Christian Brothers. Frank was sexually and emotionally abused there by Brothers from Tardun and other institutions. Frank left Tardun when he was 17. He later married and began a family. He never told his wife "what had happened to me when I was in care" because "I never knew if anyone would believe me".³⁵¹⁴ Frank still has nightmares, and had tried to commit suicide. Speaking to a psychologist helped Frank, but even though "[i]n my head I know that what happened to me was not my fault...I cannot get rid of the overwhelming feeling of shame" that his migration and ensuing abuse caused.³⁵¹⁵

Frederick Wooltorton Smith

B.9 Frederick Smith provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2020. He was born in Dundee in March 1938 and entered Nazareth House, Lancaster, in December the same year, before being transferred to Nazareth

3510 [Transcript, day 148](#): Christopher Booth, at TRN.001.003.0254.

3511 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.80.

3512 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of "Darby", at TRN-5-000000002, p.83.

3513 Nazareth House, Aberdeen, Children's register and Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3154 and 3155. The hearing transcript records 1947 as Frank's year of entry to Nazareth House, but both archives record June 1943 as his admission date.

3514 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at WIT-5-000000002, pp.43-44.

3515 [Transcript, day 173](#): Read-in statement of Francis Maloney Morrison, at WIT-5-000000002, p.48.

House, Carlisle, in 1940.³⁵¹⁶ Aged nine, Frederick was migrated to Australia on the SS Asturias in November 1947. Frederick spent time in all four Christian Brothers institutions in Western Australia: Bindoon (1947-1949); Castledare (1949-1950); Clontarf (1950-1952); and Tardun (1952-1956). He was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused in each institution by several Christian Brothers. After leaving care, Frederick served in the Australian Army, though his lack of education meant he could never progress as he desired. After leaving the army, Frederick “wanted the story to come out...because the truth is the truth and it needed to be put on paper for people to understand.”³⁵¹⁷ He wrote an account of his time under the Christian Brothers.³⁵¹⁸ His participation in SCAI gave him faith “that I’ve been heard and I’ve been allowed to have my say. Because I’ve never had that before.”³⁵¹⁹

“Gavin”

B.10 “Gavin” provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2019. He was born in Edinburgh in November 1943, and entered care at Barnardo’s, Arbigland, Dumfriesshire in February 1945. He was transferred to two further Barnardo’s Homes—Redholm and Ravelrig—before moving to Tyneholm in June 1950, aged six. On one occasion, the superintendent of Tyneholm attempted to sexually abuse “Gavin”. Shortly afterwards, “Gavin” was asked if he wanted to go to Australia and he said yes. In November 1953,

“Gavin” sailed to Australia on the SS New Australia, where he was sent to Barnardo’s Home at Greenwood, Normanhurst. He was 10 years old. He stayed there for a little over a year before being transferred to Mowbray Park, Picton. After leaving care, “Gavin” tried to contact his mother, but her only response was to tell him not to write to her. “Gavin” later met his sister and his uncle, and saw some former friends from Tyneholm. For “Gavin”, the care in Australia “was good, most of it.”³⁵²⁰ Nonetheless, there was “an emptiness that I can’t fill. The worst part is that I never got the chance to meet my mum.”³⁵²¹

“Gray”

B.11 “Gray” provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2018.³⁵²² “Gray” was born in Hawick in August 1949, and entered Quarriers Homes in August 1950. He remained there until January 1960 when, at the age of nine, he was sent to Dhurringile Training Farm, Western Australia aboard the Fairsky bound. There, “Gray” was physically and emotionally abused. He remained at Dhurringile until July 1964, when he was ultimately adopted by the family he had been visiting during the holidays. With them “the world was [his] oyster”, in stark contrast to what he experienced at Dhurringile.³⁵²³ Nonetheless, “Gray” still had flashbacks of his time in Dhurringile, and he wanted to try to ensure that what happened to him never happened to anyone else.³⁵²⁴

3516 While his birth certificate states that he was born in Chelmsford, and he was baptised in Maidenhead, his sisters later told him that he was born in Dundee, which is the account he accepted. See [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.14; Nazareth House, Lancaster, Children’s register, at NAZ.001.006.3347.

3517 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.99.

3518 Frederick Wooltorton Smith, *Nine years under the Christian Brothers: The Fifteen Evil Ones* (1996) at WIT.003.001.8683.

3519 [Transcript, day 179](#): Frederick Wooltorton Smith, at TRN-5-000000009, p.100.

3520 [Transcript, day 172](#): “Gavin”, at TRN-5-000000003, p.20.

3521 [Written statement of “Gavin”](#), paragraph 82, at WIT.001.002.2325.

3522 [Written statement of “Gray”](#), paragraph 120, at WIT.001.002.7713.

3523 [Written statement of “Gray”](#), paragraph 94, at WIT.001.002.7731.

3524 [Written statement of “Gray”](#), paragraph 112, at WIT.001.002.7734.

“Gregs”

B.12 “Gregs” provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2019. He was born in 1944 in Arbroath. In 1952, following a complaint of maternal neglect, arrangements were made for “Gregs” to be migrated to Australia by the Fairbridge Society. He departed to Australia in October 1955 on the RMS Otranto, where he was sent to Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra aged 11. “Gregs” remained at Pinjarra until he was 16. He was emotionally, physically, and sexually abused by staff and by another boy in his cottage. “Gregs” had always dreamed of becoming a school teacher but, despite passing the junior examinations, the Fairbridge Society denied him the opportunity to continue to further education. “Gregs” had never told his wife and children of his abuse at Fairbridge because of the feelings of shame and the trauma it caused him. While “Gregs” considered himself Australian, he nonetheless felt “that I don’t have a true peg to hang my jacket on.”³⁵²⁵

“Harry”

B.13 “Harry” provided evidence to the Inquiry in May 2019. “Harry” was born in England in May 1945.³⁵²⁶ He entered Nazareth House, Carlisle, aged two years old, and was later sent to Nazareth House, Aberdeen. In 1952, he was migrated to Australia on the SS Ormonde when he was seven years old. He spent the next nine years in institutions run by the Christian Brothers, at Castledare from 1952 to 1955, and at Clontarf from 1955 to 1961. “Harry” was physically, sexually, and psychologically abused during his time in the care of the

Christian Brothers in Australia. For many years after leaving care, “Harry” “didn’t know who [he] was”.³⁵²⁷ He still had flashbacks: “It’s with me all the time.”³⁵²⁸ “Harry” died in December 2022.

“Helen”

B.14 “Helen” provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2019. She was born in 1938 in Glasgow, though for many years believed her birth date to have been a different date in 1939. She was admitted to the Good Shepherd Sisters’ Home at Colinton in October 1946, where her sister had been since July that year. In around 1947, she agreed to go to Australia, thinking it would be a holiday. She and her sister boarded the SS Ormonde in December 1948, and set sail for Australia. There, they were sent to St Vincent de Paul Orphanage at Goodwood in South Australia, run by the Sisters of Mercy. She was 10 years old on arrival. They had believed that they were going to be fostered, but instead found themselves in a prison-like institution where they were addressed by numbers instead of names. “Helen” was physically and emotionally abused. “Helen” and her sister attempted to find their parents after they had left the institution. They met their mother in the UK in the 1960s, but were unable to reconnect with her properly as she suffered from severe mental health problems. “Helen” felt that governments must “understand that any monetary measures will not undo the heartache and sadness that was our lot” and that, to begin to acknowledge their role in this suffering, “the countries involved need to hear about the individual traumas that children suffered as a result of the scheme.”³⁵²⁹

3525 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “Gregs”, at TRN-5-000000012, p.144.

3526 Submission to the Select Committee on Health, HC/CP/12538, Evidence of CM282, at HOC.001.001.0395.

3527 [Transcript, day 171](#): “Harry”, at TRN.001.005.0229.

3528 [Written statement of “Harry”](#), paragraph 79, at WIT.001.002.6578.

3529 [Transcript, day 177](#): Read-in statement of “Helen”, at TRN-5-000000007, pp.141-142.

Hugh McGowan

B.15 Hugh McGowan provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020.³⁵³⁰ Hugh was born in Glasgow in July 1948, and was placed in Quarriers in June 1950. He remained there until September 1961, when he was migrated to Western Australia aboard the RMS Orion. Hugh was aged 13. He was in Dhurringile Training Farm for three years, before being transferred to Kilmany Park in September 1964. Hugh was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused throughout his time in care in Australia. When he left care, Hugh lacked skills, and considered himself “a man without love.”³⁵³¹ Though he went on to have a successful career, he struggled. He “was terribly lonely” and used alcohol as a coping mechanism.³⁵³² Hugh believed that, had it not been for his wife and family, he “would have been dead years ago.”³⁵³³ Hugh had campaigned in Australia to raise awareness about child migrants. Hugh did not “see [himself] as a former child migrant; I am a child deportee. The Government owes us.”³⁵³⁴

Hugh Taylor

B.16 Hugh Taylor provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2017. Hugh was born in March 1933 in Gateshead. Hugh and his five siblings were placed in Middlemore Homes, Birmingham, in 1936. In October 1936, three of Hugh’s siblings were migrated to Canada. His brother died there of a brain tumour in 1937. Hugh stayed at Middlemore and Wilderhope Manor until he and 15 other Middlemore children were migrated to Canada on 19 October 1941

on the SS Bayano. He arrived at Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School in November 1941 aged eight, where he was physically and emotionally abused. He stayed at Fairbridge until 1952. In 1954 he joined the Canadian Air Force. After leaving Fairbridge he discovered that he had another older brother in the UK. During his time in care, Hugh experienced “little, if any, compassion, kindness or encouragement. At best it was indifference, at worst physical and emotional abuse.”³⁵³⁵ While some old Fairbridgeans “refuse to allow our truths...those of us who lived this darker version have the right to speak our truths...and to have our truths acknowledged and validated.”³⁵³⁶

Ian Stuart Donaldson

B.17 Ian Donaldson provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2018. He was born in April 1943 in Aberdeen, and was placed in Nazareth House, Aberdeen, when he was three months old. When he was aged 10, in June 1953, he was sent to Bindoon Boys’ Town, Western Australia aboard the RMS Otranto. At Bindoon, he was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused. When Ian left Bindoon, aged 16, he had no preparation for life outside the institution and received no guidance or support from the state or the Christian Brothers. Ian had worked all his life, but his opportunities were limited due to the lack of education at Bindoon. Ian had flashbacks to his time at Bindoon and felt that “those brothers were real criminals who should never have been allowed to do what they did.”³⁵³⁷

3530 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.101-188.

3531 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 161, at WIT.001.001.7547.

3532 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.176.

3533 [Transcript, day 176](#): Hugh McGowan, at TRN-5-000000006, p.180.

3534 [Written statement of Hugh McGowan](#), paragraph 190, at WIT.001.001.7554.

3535 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.68.

3536 [Transcript, day 183](#): Read-in statement of Hugh Taylor, at TRN-5-000000014, p.69.

3537 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of Ian Donaldson, at TRN.001.005.0291.

“Jack”

B.18 “Jack” provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020. He was born in Glasgow in 1937. In 1949, “Jack’s” father was approached by the Hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Edinburgh who advised him to migrate to Australia, sending the children ahead of him to expedite the process. “Jack’s” sister was sent to Sydney in March 1950, and “Jack” and his brother followed in May 1950 on the RMS Otranto. “Jack” was aged 12. “Jack” and his brother did not see their sister for many years. “Jack” and his brother were sent to Bindoon Boys’ Town, where “Jack” remained for seven years. He was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused there. “Jack’s” father was never permitted to join his children in Australia as he had been promised he would. “Jack” was angry at the UK Government and the Catholic Church, both for his experiences and the way they treated his father. Bindoon “ruined [Jack’s] life” and it was in “Jack’s” mind “all the time”.³⁵³⁸

James Albert McGregor (Bert)

B.19 James Albert McGregor, known as Bert, provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2019. He was born in Aberdeen in November 1941, and was placed in Nazareth House, Aberdeen, when he was four months old. He was migrated to Australia in October 1947 aboard the SS Ormonde, and arrived at Fremantle just a few days after his sixth birthday. There, he spent the next 10 years at three different institutions: St Joseph’s, Subiaco; Castledare; and Clontarf. Bert was

physically, sexually, and psychologically abused at Castledare and Clontarf. Bert went on to become a Christian Brother himself and found a love of teaching. He later discovered the widespread nature of the abuse that occurred at the Christian Brothers institutions and, having interviewed 15 individuals who had been at the institutions he himself had attended, wrote a report on his findings. This report was repeatedly ignored by those to whom he submitted it. While Bert expressed a clear wish not to hurt the church, he felt that the Christian Brothers “were impotent in their ability to face up to the problem.”³⁵³⁹

“James”

B.20 James provided evidence to the Inquiry in July 2019.³⁵⁴⁰ He was born in Yorkshire in 1941, and was admitted to Nazareth House, Lasswade, in early 1946. He was migrated to Australia in October 1947 on the SS Ormonde, at the age of six. He spent 10 years at various Christian Brothers institutions: Castledare, Clontarf, and Bindoon. He was physically, emotionally, and sexually abused. He left these institutions unable to read and write properly, and suffered throughout his life from “a sense of inferiority and a lack of trust” as a result of his experiences there.³⁵⁴¹ He wrote to the Inquiry apologising for being unable to attend a private session: “I just cannot do it...I have related the story so many times now...it gets more painful to mentally delve into it all again as time passes.”³⁵⁴²

3538 [Transcript, day 176](#): “Jack”, at TRN-5-000000006, pp.98-99.

3539 [Written statement of James Albert McGregor](#), paragraph 156, at WIT.001.002.3095-3096.

3540 “James” did not submit a specific witness statement to SCAI, but provided the Inquiry with statements and evidence he has submitted to other formal inquiries and investigations.

3541 JG2: Typed statement of “James”, 2018, at WIT.003.002.2842.

3542 Email from “James” to SCAI, 5 July 2019, at WIT.003.002.2834.

“James”

B.21 “James” provided evidence to the Inquiry in September 2018. He was born in 1940, and lived in Dumfries with his parents and siblings. His mother died when he was very young. Soon after, “James” and his siblings were put into care. “James” and his brothers were placed at Levenhall Home for Boys, Musselburgh, while their sister went to a different institution. “James” was physically and emotionally abused at Levenhall. In 1952, his one brother still at Levenhall was migrated to Australia. “James”, aged 15, followed three years later on the SS Strathnaver, in August 1955. He was sent to Dhurringile Rural Farm School for only a week, before being sent out to work on local farms for the next two years. “James” did not reconnect with his siblings until he was 60 years old. For “James”, “as a child migrant we take comfort in what we have and what we got.”³⁵⁴³

“John”

B.22 “John” provided evidence to the Inquiry in January 2020. He was born in London in 1940, and was admitted to Nazareth House, Carlisle, when he was one year old. In 1950, he was transferred to Nazareth House, Lasswade. “John” was migrated to Australia on the SS Ormonde in May 1952. On arrival, aged 11, he was sent to St John Bosco Boys’ Town in Tasmania, where he suffered some physical abuse. He left when he was 16 or 17 years old, with no preparation for life outside the institution and unable to spell his own name. In the mid-1990s, he discovered that he had family

in Scotland.³⁵⁴⁴ In retrospect, “John” felt that going to Australia “was probably the best thing that happened to me”.³⁵⁴⁵ “John” considered himself “lucky” to have been sent to St John Bosco’s instead of a mainland institution where children “were treated something shocking.”³⁵⁴⁶ He believes that “[g]overnments must tell the truth about what happened and admit to the lies that were told.”³⁵⁴⁷

“John”

B.23 “John” provided evidence to the Inquiry in May 2019. He was born in 1936, and was placed in five or six institutions before being admitted to Nazareth House, Lasswade, in 1946. In October 1947, he and several other children from Lasswade boarded the SS Ormonde and were migrated to Australia. During the crossing, “John” discovered that he had three sisters, two of whom he met on the ship. “John” later found out that he had a half-sister, who was also migrated to Australia several years after her siblings. “John” and his sisters were separated once they arrived at Fremantle in November, and “John” was taken to Bindoon Boys’ Town. He was aged 11. There, he was physically, emotionally, and sexually abused. He left barely being able to read and write, and was placed on multiple farms where he was used as cheap labour. He married in 1960, but never told his wife about the extent of the abuse he faced at Bindoon. “John” stated that: “I have no vendetta against the Catholic Church. It was not the church that did this to me. All these brothers and the priests will be dead now, so I hope God has mercy on their souls.”³⁵⁴⁸

3543 [Transcript, day 181](#): Read-in statement of “James” (MEB), at TRN-5-000000010, pp.67-68.

3544 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.6.

3545 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.10.

3546 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.7.

3547 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “John” (FBC), at TRN-5-000000009, p.9.

3548 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of “John” (MEF), at TRN-5-000000003, p.151.

“Johno”

B.24 “Johno” provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2020. He was born in Aberdeen in November 1942, and entered care in Nazareth House, Aberdeen, in September 1943. In May 1950, when he was seven years old, he was migrated to Australia aboard the RMS Otranto. There, he was sent to the Christian Brothers institutions at Castledare, from 1950 to 1953, and Clontarf, from 1953 to 1959, before being placed on farms in Australia until he was 21. “Johno” was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused throughout his time in care. One Brother at Castledare attempted to murder “Johno.” “Johno” went on to serve in the Australian Army. Later in life he became an advocate for former child migrants. “Johno” considered himself to have been deported. Migration cost him his personal and national identity, and “Johno” felt that “children should never, ever be sent away from their country.”³⁵⁴⁹

“Jok”

B.25 “Jok” provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2019. “Jok” was born in Kirkcaldy, in December 1947, and entered Quarriers when he was eight months old.³⁵⁵⁰ “Jok” was sexually abused at Quarriers. In September 1961, “Jok” and four other boys from Quarriers were sent to Dhurringile Rural Training Farm, Western Australia on the RMS Orion. He was 13 years old. “Jok” left Dhurringile in 1964, and joined the Australian Navy, where he served for 12 years. For “Jok”, Dhurringile was a positive experience overall. “Jok” knew nothing of his family history until 2004. For “Jok”

“[t]he biggest mistake by Quarriers was not communicating to me about my extended family.”³⁵⁵¹

Judy Neville, on behalf of Mary Scott Pearson

B.26 Judy Neville provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020. Her grandmother, Mary Scott Pearson, was born in Glasgow in November 1877 and was placed in Maryhill Industrial School after her parents died. In 1891, aged 13, she was migrated to Canada by Quarriers aboard the SS Hibernian. She briefly went to Quarriers’ Fairknowe receiving home in Brockville before being indentured to various families in Eastern Ontario. After her indentures, she married and brought up two step-children and two children of her own. Judy Neville is the tenth child of Mary’s eldest son. Since 2011, Judy has advocated for British Home Children to ensure that their stories are heard on a national level. Judy realised that “we can’t take away the hurt and the harm that any of these children endured, but we can make sure that we recognise each and every one of the children.”³⁵⁵²

“Kath”

B.27 “Kath” provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2019. She was born in Edinburgh in June 1945.³⁵⁵³ Believing that opportunities for her family would be better overseas, “Kath’s” mother applied to migrate to Australia through the Fairbridge Society. “Kath” was migrated in March 1958 aboard the SS Iberia, and was sent to Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, aged 12. She expected her mother to follow her and take her out

3549 [Transcript, day 180](#): “Johno”, at TRN-5-000000010, p.173.

3550 Quarriers, Admission form for “Jok”, at QAR.001.001.2073.

3551 [Written statement of “Jok”](#), paragraph 77, at WIT.001.002.1885.

3552 [Transcript, day 175](#): Judy Neville, at TRN-5-000000005, p.138.

3553 LEM3 form for “Kath”, at NAA.001.001.1634.

of the farm school almost immediately but “Kath” remained at Pinjarra until December, even though her mother had arrived in Australia in July. “Kath” was verbally and emotionally abused there, and suffered the effects of anxiety caused by this treatment. “Kath” believed that Fairbridge intentionally frustrated her mother’s efforts to remove her from Pinjarra and it was only due to her mother’s tenacity that she was eventually released. “Kath” “just want[ed] people to believe me and understand what I went through. I spent a lot of my life believing that I was stupid because I was told that so often.”³⁵⁵⁴

“Kathy”, on behalf of her grandmother

B.28 “Kathy” provided evidence to the Inquiry on in February 2020 about her grandmother’s experiences as a child migrant.³⁵⁵⁵ “Kathy’s” grandmother was born in 1901, and was sent to Quarriers with her two sisters, one of them her twin, when she was eight years old. In May 1913, she boarded the RMS Grampian and travelled to Canada, landing in early June when she was 12 years old. She continued her journey to Fairknowe, Brockville, where she stayed for a couple of weeks before transferring to her placement. She was separated from her siblings. By the age of 18, “Kathy’s” grandmother was in Spencerville where she lived and worked as a maid for a family who were good to her. She lived there until she got married. “Kathy” was 13 years old when her grandmother died, and found out more about her life from relatives, who were initially reluctant to share.

“Margaret”

B.29 “Margaret” provided evidence to the Inquiry in June 2019. She was born in 1940, and was the older sister of “Amy”, whose account is detailed above. “Margaret” was taken into care in 1944 after her father died, leaving her mother destitute. She spent a little over two years at Barnardo’s Home at Comlongon Castle, before being transferred to Glasclune in 1946, where her sister later joined her. “Margaret” was sexually abused at Glasclune and at the holiday home she visited with her sister. In March 1956, though “Margaret” was over the age usually considered for migration, she and her sister were migrated to Australia on the SS Orontes. “Margaret” was immediately sent out to work. She was 15 years old. “Margaret” later traced her family with the help of the CMT, and went on to meet her mother, half-sister, and brother. For “Margaret”, “Barnardo’s was always a very positive experience for me. It was my family that I was disappointed in.”³⁵⁵⁶ Nonetheless, “[w]hen we were sent to Australia there wasn’t any choice, we just had to go. I look on us as a stolen generation.”³⁵⁵⁷

“Mary”

B.30 “Mary” provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2019. She was born in Dumfries in 1944, and was admitted to Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, with her older sister in April 1946. “Mary” remembered nothing of Kilmarnock. In May 1954, she and her sister were migrated to Australia on the SS Orontes, where they were both sent to Nazareth House, Camberwell. “Mary” was aged nine when migrated. Due to their age difference, the two did not have much

3554 [Written statement of “Kath”](#), paragraph 77, at WIT.001.002.4152.

3555 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Kathy”, at TRN-5-000000004, pp.106-131.

3556 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.202.

3557 [Transcript, day 176](#): Read-in statement of “Margaret”, at TRN-5-000000006, p.202.

contact during their time there. “Mary” was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused there, and never recovered from being sexually assaulted.³⁵⁵⁸ After leaving care, she became addicted to alcohol, eventually becoming “very ill with alcohol poisoning.”³⁵⁵⁹ “Mary” “wondered how we survived.”³⁵⁶⁰

“Maryanne”

B.31 “Maryanne” provided evidence to the Inquiry in January 2019. She was born in 1933, and her mother left the family home when she was three years old. Her father physically abused her and her two siblings. In 1941, she and her sister were sent to Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, while their brother was sent elsewhere. “Maryanne” was physically and emotionally abused there. She and her brother returned to their father’s care in 1943, but following a misdemeanour both were sent away again. “Maryanne” was sent to the Home of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Colinton, Edinburgh (“Woodfield”), where she remained for about a year. In 1947, aged 14, she was migrated to Australia on the SS Ormonde. There, she was admitted to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco, run by the Sisters of Mercy. Again, she was physically and emotionally abused, before she finally left in 1951. At St Joseph’s, “Maryanne” was denied an education, and this has always troubled her. Despite being promised a better life in Australia, “it wasn’t much better, really.”³⁵⁶¹ “Maryanne” felt that “it’s all too late for a lot of the child migrants. What can be done now?”³⁵⁶²

“Michael”

B.32 “Michael” provided evidence to the Inquiry in August 2019. He was born in Aberdeenshire in December 1943. His mother died when he was three years old, and so his father put him into the care of Nazareth House, Aberdeen, where “Michael” was physically and emotionally abused. In May 1953, “Michael”, aged nine, was sent to Bindoon Boys’ Town in Western aboard the RMS Otranto Australia where he was physically, sexually, and emotionally abused. He left soon after he turned 16, with no preparation for life outside of institutions. Several years later, he experienced a religious conversion, through which “every bit of hatred and animosity that I had to all those people who did things to me was dealt with.”³⁵⁶³ He spent the remainder of his working life in the ministry. “Michael” had been married to his wife for over half a century and, though he found it hard to adapt to married life, he had a loving family. “Michael” experienced panic attacks and nightmares due to the abuse. He felt that “those who are hurting the most should be found and a means for them getting help should be established.”³⁵⁶⁴

“Michaela”

B.33 “Michaela” provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2020. She and her twin brother were born in Glasgow in September 1946. They were admitted to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, in September 1951, and were both migrated to Australia in January 1955 aged eight. In Australia, they were sent to St Joseph’s Home, Neerkol. “Michaela”

3558 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.153.

3559 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.157.

3560 [Transcript, day 179](#): Read-in statement of “Mary”, at TRN-5-000000009, p.161.

3561 [Transcript, day 114](#): “Maryanne”, at TRN.001.004.6305.

3562 [Written statement of “Maryanne”](#), paragraph 134, at WIT.001.002.2932.

3563 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at WIT.001.002.0271.

3564 [Transcript, day 171](#): Read-in statement of “Michael”, at WIT.001.002.0287.

stayed there for 10 years. The siblings were kept separate throughout their time in care. "Michaela" was left with very little education, but nonetheless carved out a successful career in nursing and in business. She felt that if she had been educated she "could have been anything."³⁵⁶⁵ She wanted the public to realise that children from all parts of the UK were migrated, and for former child migrants to be heard "before it's too late."³⁵⁶⁶

Patricia Delaney Dishon

B.34 Patricia Delaney Dishon provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020. Patricia is the great-granddaughter of Arthur Delaney, whose three children were migrated to Canada without his prior knowledge or consent. Arthur Delaney placed his children in Emma Stirling's Homes in Edinburgh in 1882. Two of the children were migrated in 1886. James was approximately nine years old and Robina was six years old at the time of migration. When Arthur discovered this, he began legal proceedings to get his children back. Although Emma Stirling returned for the winter of 1886-87 with the two children she had already migrated, she refused to disclose their location, collected Arthur's third child from the home where she was boarded out, and took all three children back to Canada under new names. The third child, Annie, was nine years old. Arthur raised multiple legal actions to have his children returned to him. No investigators were able to find the children. In 1892, he himself visited Canada to search for them, to no avail. Arthur died in 1907 without ever seeing his children again. It is thanks to Patricia Delaney Dishon's extensive research that the account of Arthur and his children can be told here.

3565 [Transcript, day 178](#): "Michaela", at TRN-5-000000008, p.111.

3566 [Transcript, day 178](#): "Michaela", at TRN-5-000000008, p.111.

"Robert"

B.35 "Robert" provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2020. "Robert" was born in 1941 in Peebles. In 1949, his mother died, leaving his father to care for the three boys. After living for some time at various relatives' houses, all three boys were migrated to Australia by the Presbyterian Church aboard the MV Cheshire in November 1950. They were sent to Dhurringile Rural Training Farm. "Robert" was aged nine. There the three brothers were physically, emotionally, and in one instance sexually abused. After leaving Dhurringile, "Robert" moved around different jobs before settling to a career in the ambulance service. His younger brother struggled with alcoholism and was never able to maintain a stable job. Both of "Robert's" brothers died before their experiences as child migrants were acknowledged by national governments.

Roderick Donaldson Mackay

B.36 Roderick Mackay, known as Roddy, provided evidence to the Inquiry in November 2018. He was born in February 1934, in Edinburgh, and entered care in 1938. In October 1941 he and 15 other children were migrated from Middlemore Homes in Birmingham to Canada on the SS Bayano. He was separated from his siblings. Aged seven, he was sent to Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School where he was physically and emotionally abused. Roddy joined the Canadian Army Medical Corps when he was 17, but left following a mental breakdown and physical problems, both stemming from his time at Fairbridge. Roddy maintained contact with his father on and off throughout his life. He met his older brother again in 1971. When he met his brother, he learned that he had two younger brothers. All five siblings

were reunited in 2001. Roddy hoped that governments “will care enough to ensure that people and children never have to go through an experience like this again.”³⁵⁶⁷ Roddy faced many hurdles in finding his own records, but had there been open and invested support from organisations, he felt he “could have traced my family...much earlier.”³⁵⁶⁸ Roddy died in January 2021.

“Rose”

B.37 “Rose” provided evidence to the Inquiry in December 2018. She was born in 1938, and she and her older sister were placed in the Good Shepherd Sisters’ Home at Colinton when “Rose” was very young. A younger sister was also admitted at a later date. When she was nine years old, she agreed to migrate, believing she was going on holiday. She, her older sister, and her brother—who she had never met before—were migrated to Australia on the SS Ormonde in October 1947. She and her sister were sent to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco, run by the Sisters of Mercy. She did not see her brother until she left St Joseph’s. “Rose” was physically and emotionally abused during her time in St Joseph’s. After leaving, she married, but it was an abusive marriage and “Rose” eventually ended the relationship. “Rose” felt that “someone must be held responsible” for the migration schemes. “Rose’s” childhood was, she said, “lost. That’s the sad part about it.”³⁵⁶⁹

“Scott”

B.38 “Scott” provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020. “Scott” was born in Glasgow in February 1935 and spent his

earliest years living with his grandparents. In June 1939 he was admitted to Middlemore Babies’ Home. “Scott” was moved to Fairbridge, Bennington, when it opened in April 1943, before being migrated to Canada on the SS Bayano in July 1945 aged 10. He was sent to Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School, where he was emotionally abused by his cottage mother and other boys in his cottage. Letters from his grandmother were withheld from him throughout his time there. It was only in recent times that “Scott” had discovered he had a family in Scotland. Not only was “Scott” himself deeply affected by his experiences as a child migrant, but he wondered “what did [his family] go through? Nothing was done to help them.”³⁵⁷⁰ He felt that the Canadian Government should apologise for their role in child migration.

“Stuart”

B.39 “Stuart” provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2019. He was born in Edinburgh in 1939. He was admitted to Nazareth House, Lasswade, in 1948, at the age of nine, where he was physically abused. In 1950, he was migrated to Australia on the RMS Otranto. There, he was sent to Bindoon Boys’ Town where he was physically and emotionally abused. “Stuart’s” education was curtailed when he was 13 years old; he was then used as an unpaid labourer at Bindoon. “Stuart” found it “hard to put into words” the impact Bindoon had on him; he had continued to suffer psychologically, including by suffering flashbacks and nightmares.³⁵⁷¹ “Stuart” explained that: “People tell me it was a different era but no era was good to abuse children, none whatsoever.”³⁵⁷²

3567 [Transcript, day 92](#): Roderick Donaldson Mackay, at TRN.001.005.0044.

3568 [Written statement of Roderick Donaldson Mackay](#), paragraph 132, at WIT.001.001.3477.

3569 [Transcript, day 174](#): Read-in statement of “Rose”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.154.

3570 [Transcript, day 174](#): “Scott”, at TRN-5-000000004, p.40.

3571 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.207.

3572 [Transcript, day 182](#): Read-in statement of “Stuart”, at TRN-5-000000013, p.188.

“Tony”

B.40 “Tony” provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2019. He was born in England in 1938, and entered care at Nazareth House, Finchley, before being transferred to Nazareth House, Aberdeen, in June 1940. There he was physically and emotionally abused. In October 1947, “Tony” was migrated to Clontarf Boys’ Town aboard the SS Ormonde. He was nine years old. At Clontarf, “Tony” was physically abused by staff and sexually abused by another boy. “Tony” was discharged from the institution aged 16. After being discharged “Tony” continued to work in the area and held several posts at Clontarf and Castledare. “Tony” later traced his family with the help of the CMT but, despite visiting family members in England, he was unable to form a connection.

“Trish”

B.41 “Trish” provided evidence to the Inquiry in February 2020. She was born in Dumfries in 1943, and was sent to an orphanage in Dumfries with her younger sister, before being transferred to Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, where “Trish” was abused. They remained there until 1954 when “Trish”, aged 10, and her sister were migrated to Australia on the SS Orontes.³⁵⁷³ There, she was sent to Nazareth House, Camberwell, where she was physically and mentally abused. “Trish” left Nazareth House when she was 16, and went on to have a career in care, including a spell working at the kindergarten at Nazareth House, Camberwell. “Trish” had flashbacks to her time in care. She “always missed Scotland,” but she felt she could never live here; she

felt “caught in the middle”, and that being migrated had fractured her relationships with her family.³⁵⁷⁴

“Trish”

B.42 “Trish” provided evidence to the Inquiry in August 2019. She was born in Edinburgh in 1943, and was placed in the Good Shepherd Sisters’ Home at Colinton when she was three or four years old. Two of her sisters were already there, but she did not remember seeing them. In 1949, aged five years old, she was migrated to Australia on the RMS Mooltan. Upon arrival she was quarantined for 17 days with suspected smallpox which, fortunately, she did not have. She was then sent to St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco, where two of her sisters had been sent several years earlier. She rarely saw them. She was physically and emotionally abused at the institution, and was sexually abused by her mother’s partner after she migrated to Australia in 1953. “Trish” had never received support to cope with her time in care or her abuse, and felt that “[s]ometimes you really need to talk and I think some kind of counselling would be good.”³⁵⁷⁵ While she did not “know what response there should be to all the child migrants” she hoped “that giving evidence to the inquiry helps make sure that children in care today are safer.”³⁵⁷⁶

“Watto”

B.43 “Watto” provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2020. She was born in 1948 in Edinburgh. Her father died when she was eight years old and a few years later her mother decided to migrate. The “only way she could get out to Australia” was to

3573 Nazareth House, Kilmarnock, Observation book, at NAZ.001.006.3257.

3574 Transcript, day 177: “Trish” (LST), at TRN-5-000000007, pp.46-47.

3575 Transcript, day 177: Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.119.

3576 Transcript, day 177: Read-in statement of “Trish” (MZW), at TRN-5-000000007, p.122.

send “Watto” and her brother first.³⁵⁷⁷ They were migrated by the Fairbridge Society in September 1959 on the SS *Orontes*, and sent to Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra. “Watto” was 11 years old. At Pinjarra, “Watto” and her brother were rarely able to see each other. “Watto” was emotionally and physically abused at Fairbridge, and the farm school changed her brother completely. Although her mother and grandmother later followed the children to Australia—with a longer delay than expected—“Watto” and her brother were not allowed to leave Fairbridge to live with them for another four years. “Watto” “couldn’t stand the place,” and felt that Fairbridge had a psychological impact on her.³⁵⁷⁸ She had never been back to Scotland.

Walter Kerkhof

B.44 Walter Kerkhof provided evidence to the Inquiry in March 2019. He was born in Falkirk in 1942, and placed in Nazareth House, Lasswade, when he was just over a year old. He was migrated to Australia aged five in October 1947 on the SS *Ormonde* and placed in St Joseph’s Orphanage at Subiaco until he was old enough to be placed in Castledare, then Clontarf. In both these Christian Brothers institutions he was physically, sexually and emotionally abused. Walter believed that “the biggest problem is when children tell you something” and are not believed, and that when a child makes an allegation, it should “[b]e looked into objectively.”³⁵⁷⁹ Walter travelled to Scotland and made contact with some of his family, but felt he could “never recapture [his] Scottish culture. It was taken away from [him]”.³⁵⁸⁰

Yvonne Lawrie Radzevicius

B.45 Yvonne Radzevicius provided evidence to the Inquiry in January 2019. She was born in 1942, and was placed in Nazareth House, Cardonald, when she was nine months old. In January 1953, aged 10, Yvonne was migrated to Australia on the SS *New Australia*. She was placed in Nazareth House, Geraldton, where she was emotionally, physically, and sexually abused. She left there when she was 17 years old, trained as a paediatric nurse and continued to work as a nurse for 20 years. She married and had two daughters. Having discovered her mother was still alive, Yvonne moved back to the UK where she lived for about 20 years, from 1979. She then returned to live in Australia. Relationships with her daughters broke down and she had no doubt that that was attributable to her experiences as a child migrant. She felt that the effect of migration “goes on, generation after generation after generation.”³⁵⁸¹

3577 [Transcript, day 178](#): “Watto”, at TRN-5-00000008, p.9.

3578 [Written Statement of “Watto”](#), paragraph 127, at WIT.001.002.3924.

3579 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, pp.133-134.

3580 [Transcript, day 172](#): Read-in statement of Walter Kerkhof, at TRN-5-000000003, p.133.

3581 [Transcript, day 116](#): Yvonne Radzevicius, at TRN.001.005.0109.

Appendix C: Breakdown of numbers of applicants sent overseas as child migrants

C.1 The analysis below is drawn from the accounts of child migrants and their relatives considered in this volume.³⁵⁸² The tables below provide an overview of some key information relating to the child’s migration.

Country of destination

C.2 Most former child migrants who provided evidence to SCAI, or whose relatives provided evidence to SCAI, were sent to Australia.

Table 1: Country of destination

Country	Number of applicants
Australia	38
Canada	8
Total	46

Numbers of children sent by each institution

C.3 Of the 46 former child migrants who provided evidence to SCAI, or whose relatives provided evidence to SCAI, most (21) were sent to Australia by the Sisters of Nazareth. Of the 21 children migrated from Nazareth Homes, in Scotland or England, 10 had been resident at the Sisters of Nazareth Home in Aberdeen, five in Lasswade, three in Kilmarnock, two in Carlisle, and one in Cardonald.

³⁵⁸² The evidence of “Brian”, “Scott’s” son, has not been included in the tables below, as “Scott’s” evidence included the relevant data used, and “Brian” gave evidence on how he assisted his father in finding out more about his past. The evidence of Patricia Delaney Dishon comprises three child migrants to Canada.

Table 2: Sending institution or sponsoring organisation

Sending institution/sponsoring organisation	Number of children
Sisters of Nazareth	21
Fairbridge	6
Good Shepherd Sisters	4
Quarriers	4
Barnardo's	3
Edinburgh and Leith Children's Aid and Refuge Society	3
Levenhall Home for Boys	2
Glasgow Industrial School for Girls, Maryhill	1
Catholic Church	1
Church of Scotland	1
Total	46

Age at the time of migration

C.4 Most former child migrants who provided evidence to SCAI, or whose relatives provided evidence to SCAI, were 9 years of age or older when they were migrated.

Table 3: Age at time of migration

Age at migration	Number of children
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	2
9	11
10	5
11	8
12	4
13	4
14	1
15	2
Total	46

Year of migration

C.5 SCAI heard evidence from former child migrants and their relatives in relation to children who were migrated between 1886 (the two Delaney children, Robina and James) and 1961 (Hugh McGowan and "Jok"). Most of these children were migrated in the post-Second World War period to Australia.

Table 4: Year of Migration

Year of migration	Number of children
1886	2
1887	1
1891	1
1913	1
1941	2
1945	1
1947	9
1948	1
1949	1
1950	5
1952	4
1953	4
1954	4
1955	3
1956	2
1958	1
1959	1
1960	1
1961	2
Total	46

Institutions at destination

Australia

C.6 Thirty-eight former child migrants were migrated to Australia. In Australia they were sent to, at least initially, the following institutions:

Table 5: Receiving institutions in Australia

Receiving institution in Australia	Number of children
Barnado's - Normanhurst	1
Barnardo's - Burwood	2
Christian Brothers - Bindoon Boys' Town	6
Christian Brothers - Castledare Boys' Home	4
Christian Brothers - Clontarf Boys' Town	1
Presbyterian Church - Dhurringile Rural Training Farm	6
Fairbridge - Farm School, Pinjarra	3
Sisters of Nazareth - Nazareth House, Camberwell	4
Sisters of Nazareth - Nazareth House, Geraldton	1
Salesian Brothers - St John Bosco Boys' Town, Hobart	3
Sisters of Mercy - St Vincent de Paul Orphanage, Goodwood	1
Sisters of Mercy - St Joseph's Home, Neerkol	1
Sisters of Mercy - St Joseph's Orphanage, Subiaco	5
Total	38

C.7 Of the 38 children migrated to Australia, nine were transferred to one or more institutions. All but one of these children were under the care of a Catholic institution, which separated children into different institutions according to age, and gender.

Table 6: Children with multiple placements in Australia

Name	First institution	Second	Third	Fourth
James Albert McGregor	St Joseph's Orphanage, Subiaco	Castledare Boys' Home	Clontarf Boys' Town	
"Johno"	Castledare Boys' Home	Clontarf Boys' Town		
Francis Maloney Morrison	St John Bosco Boys' Town	St Mary's Agricultural School, Tardun		
"Harry"	Castledare Boys' Home	Clontarf Boys' Town		
"Tom"	Castledare Boys' Home	Clontarf Boys' Town		
Frederick Wooltorton Smith	Bindoon Boys' Town	Castledare Boys' Home	Clontarf Boys' Town	St Mary's Agricultural School, Tardun
Walter Kerkhof	St Joseph's Orphanage, Subiaco	Castledare Boys' Home	Clontarf Boys' Town	
"James"	Castledare Boys' Home	Bindoon Boys' Town	Clontarf Boys' Town	
"Gavin"	Greenwood, Normanhust	Mowbray Park, Picton		

Canada

C.8 Eight former child migrants were migrated to Canada—all were sent before 1945.

Table 7: Receiving institutions in Canada

Receiving institution in Canada	Number of children
Fairknowe, Brockville (Quarriers' receiving home and distribution centre)	2
Hillfoot Farm, Nova Scotia (Emma Stirling's receiving home and distribution centre)	3
Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School	3
Total	8

Appendix D: LEM3 form analysis

D.1 LEM3 forms were used by the Australian Commonwealth Department of Immigration post-Second World War to record and process an application for a child migrant's entry into Australia. LEM3 forms required four signatures to authorise the migration of a child: Sections A and C both required a signature on behalf of the sponsoring organisation; Section B required a parent's or legal guardian's signature, specifying that it should be signed by "Father if living", as well as that of a witness, who should be "a Member or Official of any Banking Firm established in the United Kingdom, any Mayor, Magistrate, Justice of the Peace, Minister of Religious, Barrister-at-Law, Registered Medical Practitioner, Solicitor or Notary Public." Several LEM3 forms were made available to SCAI by sending organisations, such as the Sisters of Nazareth and Barnardo's. Other LEM3 forms were recovered after extensive searches of the NAA digitised archive.

D.2 While care has been taken to compile the information presented below, it may be incomplete or inaccurate due to the nature and paucity of surviving records recovered.

SCAI Applicants

Proportion of applicants with LEM3 forms

D.3 Of 46 SCAI applicants, 38 were sent to Australia between 1947 and 1961, and LEM3 forms should have been completed for them. LEM3 forms were recovered for 29 of SCAI's applicants, 14 females and 15 males. These applicants were migrated to Australia aged between five and 15 years.

Table 10: Number of boys and girls migrated by age

Age	Number of girls	Number of boys
5	2	1
6		4
7	1	
8	2	2
9	3	3
10	3	2
12	2	2
14	1	
15	1	

D.4 The date when these LEM3 forms were signed ranged from December 1946, for a child being migrated from Nazareth House, Aberdeen, to March 1961, for a child being migrated from Quarriers.

Table 11: Year LEM3 form signed and child's age

Age	1946	1947	1949	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1959	1961
5		2	1									
6		2	1		1							
7							1					
8	1	3										
9				1		5						
10		1			1	1		1			1	
11												
12			1						1	1		1
13												
14		1										
15									1			
Total	1	9	3	1	2	6	1	1	2	1	1	1

D.5 Of the 29 applicants in respect of whom LEM3 forms were recovered, 18 were sent to Australia from one of five Sisters of Nazareth institutions, including two Scottish children migrated from Nazareth House, Carlisle.

Table 12: Sending institution

Sending Institution	Number
Sisters of Nazareth institutions	18
Good Shepherd Home, Colinton	4
Fairbridge	3
Barnardo's	2
Quarriers	1
Catholic Child Welfare Council (from family home) ³⁵⁸³	1
Total	29

³⁵⁸³ "Jack's" father was advised by representatives of the Catholic Child Welfare Council to send his three children to Australia, and to follow them there later. See "Jack's" history above.

LEM3 forms sections A and C: sponsoring organisation

D.6 Sections A and C of LEM3 forms required a signature on behalf of the sponsoring organisation.

Table 13: Sponsoring Organisations

Signatory 1	Sponsoring Organisation	Sending organisation	Year
Cyril Stinson	Australian Catholic Immigration Committee (ACIC)	Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1953
		Nazareth House, Cardonald	1952
	Federal Catholic Immigration Committee of Australia (FCIC)	Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1953
Hector C. Munro	Quarriers	Quarriers	1961
Joseph J. Durnin	Catholic Child Welfare Committee (CCWC)	Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1947
Norah M. Menaldo	Catholic Child Welfare Committee (CCWC)	Family	1949
		Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1949
P.A. Conlon	Catholic Child Welfare Council Birmingham (CCWC)	Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1946
		Nazareth House, Carlisle	1947 (x2)
P.F. Quille	Catholic Child Welfare Committee (CCWC)	Good Shepherd, Edinburgh	1947, and 1949 (x2)
		Nazareth House, Lasswade	1947
Sister Ann	Catholic Child Welfare Council Birmingham (CCWC)	Nazareth House, Lasswade	1947 (x2)
W. Vaughan	Fairbridge Society	Fairbridge	1955, 1957, and 1959
William Flint	ACIC	Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1952
	Catholic Child Welfare Council (CCWC)	Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1954 (x2)
		Nazareth House, Kilmarnock	1953 (x3)
William Nicol for M. Canning	ACIC	Nazareth House, Aberdeen	1951
Blank	Not stated	Good Shepherd, Edinburgh	1947
Blank	Barnardo's	Barnardo's	1956

D.7 The above table illustrates that there was considerable overlap between the Catholic sponsoring organisations. For example, Cyril Stinson signed two forms on behalf of the Australian Catholic Immigration Committee (ACIC)—in November 1952 and May 1953—and one on behalf of the Federal Catholic Immigration Committee of Australia (FCIC), in April 1953. ACIC and FCIC were branches of the same organisation. From 1948, the Australian Catholic Immigration Committee (ACIC), was recognised by the UK Government as the Catholic organisation sending child migrants to Australia. Unusually, funding was made available to the ACIC.

D.8 William Flint signed as a representative of both the Australian Catholic Immigration Committee (ACIC) and the Catholic Child Welfare Council (CCWC). William Flint was a member of the Catholic Council for British Overseas Settlement (CCBOS). There was some overlap between CCBOS and CCWC.³⁵⁸⁴

D.9 P.A. Conlon, a Christian Brother from Australia who came to the UK in 1946 to recruit child migrants, signed forms as a representative of the Catholic Child Welfare Council, Birmingham, in 1946 and 1947.³⁵⁸⁵

D.10 P.F. Quille, a member of the Social Services Committee for the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh and Secretary to the Catholic Council for British Overseas Settlement for Scotland and Northern Ireland (CCBOS S&NI), signed forms ostensibly on behalf of the Catholic Child Welfare Committee, and the Child Welfare Immigration Committee.³⁵⁸⁶ In two instances, Quille additionally signed as the witness in Section B. These forms were signed in 1947 and 1949.

D.11 Norah Menaldo, who was appointed in 1947 as administrator to the CCBOS S&NI, signed two forms in 1949 ostensibly as a representative of the Catholic Child Welfare Committee.

D.12 It is likely that 'Catholic Child Welfare Committee' and 'Catholic Child Welfare Council' were used interchangeably. Given that the CCWC's remit only extended to England and Wales, it is unclear what responsibility they would have had for children migrated from Scotland.³⁵⁸⁷

LEM3 forms section B: parents' or guardians' consent

D.13 As mentioned above, section B of LEM3 forms required a parent's or legal guardian's signature, specifying that it should be signed by "Father if living". Only five of the 29 LEM3 forms recovered for SCAI's applicants were signed by the child's father. Over a third of forms were signed by representatives from the institutions where children were residing.

3584 Constantine *et al.*, Appendix 3, paragraph 5.10.

3585 P.A. Conlon had been in the UK previously, in 1938, to recruit children for migration to Australia.

3586 It is unclear when CCBOS S&NI was established, but in 1947 an agreement was signed between the Australian Catholic Hierarchy and P.F. Quille for an annual payment to be made to the CCBOS S&NI by the Australian Catholic Hierarchy to cover the administrative costs of arranging the migration of Catholics to Australia—including children. See Constantine *et al.*, Appendix 3, paragraph 5.13.

3587 Constantine *et al.*, Appendix 3, paragraph 5.20.

Table 14: Guardian’s Consent

Form signed by	Number of forms
Father	5
Mother ³⁵⁸⁸	13
Mother Superior	10
Superintendent	1
Total	29

D.14 The practice of having a representative from an institution signing LEM3 forms as the child’s guardian was irregular, as parental responsibility was not transferred to organisations when parents placed their children there to be cared for.³⁵⁸⁹ Nor were these individuals “guardians” as defined in the Children Act 1948, section 59(1). Both these points are considered in greater detail in Volume 2.

Witnesses

D.15 Section B of the LEM3 form required the signature of a witness to the parent or guardian’s consent. The witness should be “a Member or Official of any Banking Firm established in the United Kingdom, any Mayor, Magistrate, Justice of the Peace, Minister of Religious, Barrister-at-Law, Registered Medical Practitioner, Solicitor or Notary Public”. In relation to the 29 LEM3 forms recovered for SCAI’s applicants the witnesses who signed 15 of the forms were religious figures. In three instances this signature was provided by the representative of the sponsoring organisation, thus calling into question the independence of the witness. Medical practitioners signed as witnesses on seven instances. The other witnesses were a police sergeant, two justices of peace, a teacher, and a headmaster.

3588 In the case of one child migrated by Barnardo’s in 1956, the mother did not sign the LEM3 form but signed a separate form giving her consent for her children to be migrated.

3589 See [Transcript day 124](#): Professor Kenneth McK Norrie, at TRN.001.001.6566-6569.

Appendix E: Publicity campaign schedule

The section below shows the publicity campaign carried out by the Inquiry in 2017 and 2018.

	Publication/Broadcast	Date
Australia and New Zealand	Child Migrants Trust newsletter	February and August 2017
	CLAN (Care Leavers Australasia Network) newsletter (Clanicle)	May and July 2017
	Tuart Times	February 2018 and February 2019
	TVNZ, New Zealand's national broadcaster	January 2018
	Radio New Zealand	January 2018
	Canada	YouTube video appeal by the Inquiry's Chair, encouraging any surviving British Home Children or their descendants to come forward to the Inquiry.

Appendix F: List of receiving institutions, location, and responsible/parent organisation

The tables below show receiving institutions in Canada and Australia, their locations, and the organisations responsible for the oversight of these institutions.

Table 8: Canada

Institution	Location	Organisation responsible for oversight of the institution
Fairbridge Prince of Wales Farm School	Duncan, Vancouver Island	Fairbridge Society, London
Fairknowe Receiving Home	Brockville, Ontario	Quarriers Homes, Bridge of Weir
Hillfoot Farm	Aylesford, Nova Scotia	Emma Stirling Homes, Edinburgh
Fairview Receiving Home	Halifax, Nova Scotia	Middlemore Homes, Birmingham

Table 9: Australia

Institutions in Australia	Location	Organisation responsible for oversight of the institution
Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra	Pinjarra, Western Australia	Fairbridge Society, London
Fairbridge Farm School, Molong	Molong, New South Wales	New South Wales Council/Committee/Society
The Lady Northcote Farm School	Bacchus March, Victoria	Northcote Trustees/Committee/Society
Barnardo's Mowbray Park Farm School	Picton, New South Wales	Barnardo's, London
Dr Barnardo's Girls' Home, Burwood	Burwood, Victoria	Barnardo's, London
Greenwood, Normanhurst	Normanhurst, New South Wales	Barnardo's, London
Nazareth House, Geraldton	Geraldton, Western Australia	Sisters of Nazareth
Nazareth House, Camberwell	Camberwell, Victoria	Sisters of Nazareth
Castledare Boy's Home	Queen's Park, Western Australia	Christian Brothers
Clontarf Boys' Town	Manning, Western Australia	Christian Brothers
Bindoon Boys' Town	Chittering Valley, Western Australia	Christian Brothers
Tardun Farm School or St Mary's Agricultural School	Tardun, Western Australia	Christian Brothers
Dhurringile Rural Training Farm	Tatura, Victoria	Presbyterian Church, Australia
St Joseph's Orphanage	Subiaco, Western Australia	Sisters of Mercy
St Joseph's Home	Neerkol, Queensland	Sisters of Mercy
St John Bosco Boys' Town	Glenorchy, Tasmania	Salesians of Don Bosco

Appendix G: Maps

World Map

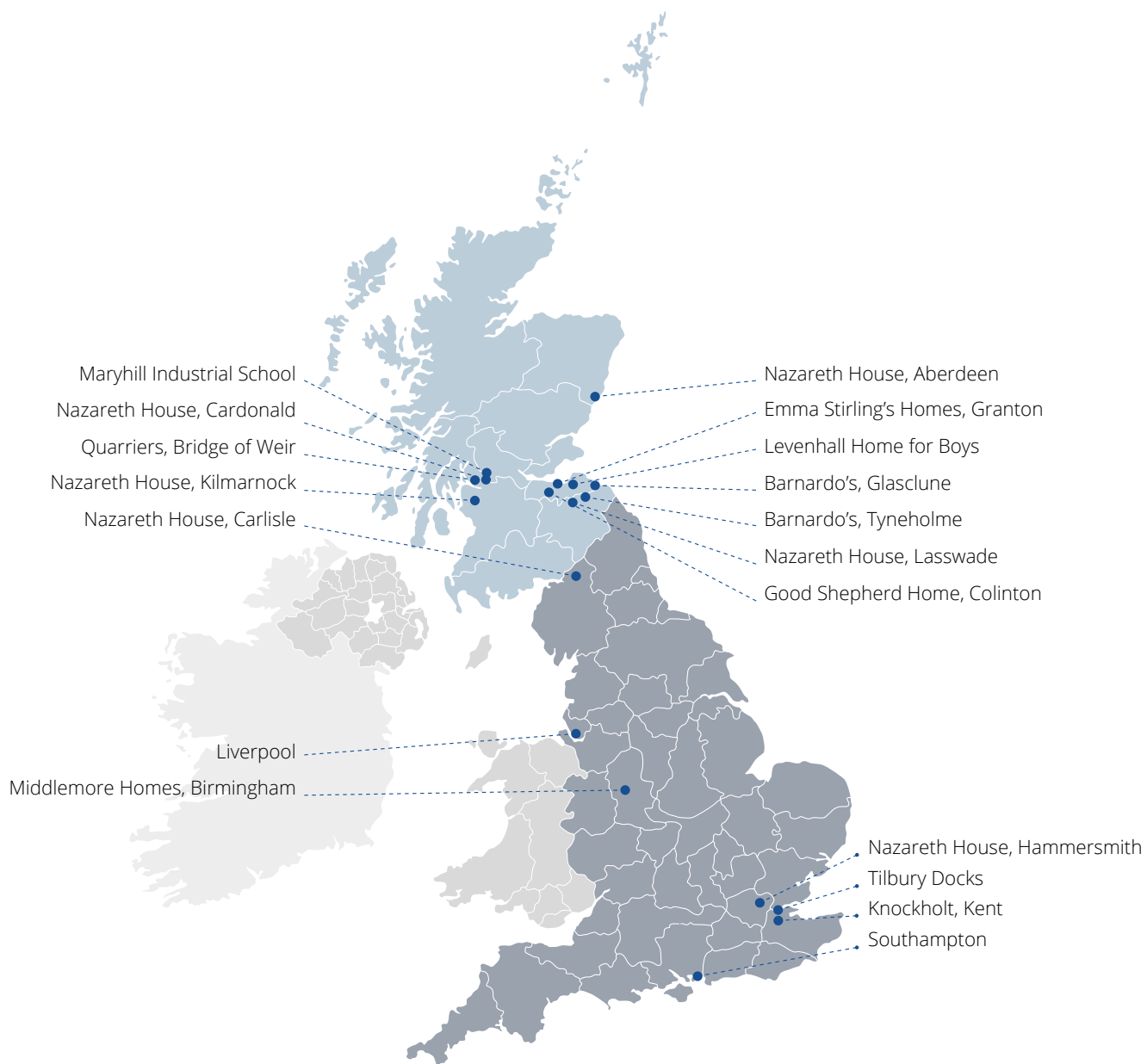
The map below provides an average number of days it took the child migrants whose accounts are included in this Volume to arrive at their country of destination.



Sailing times given are based on the average time SCAI applicants spent at sea.

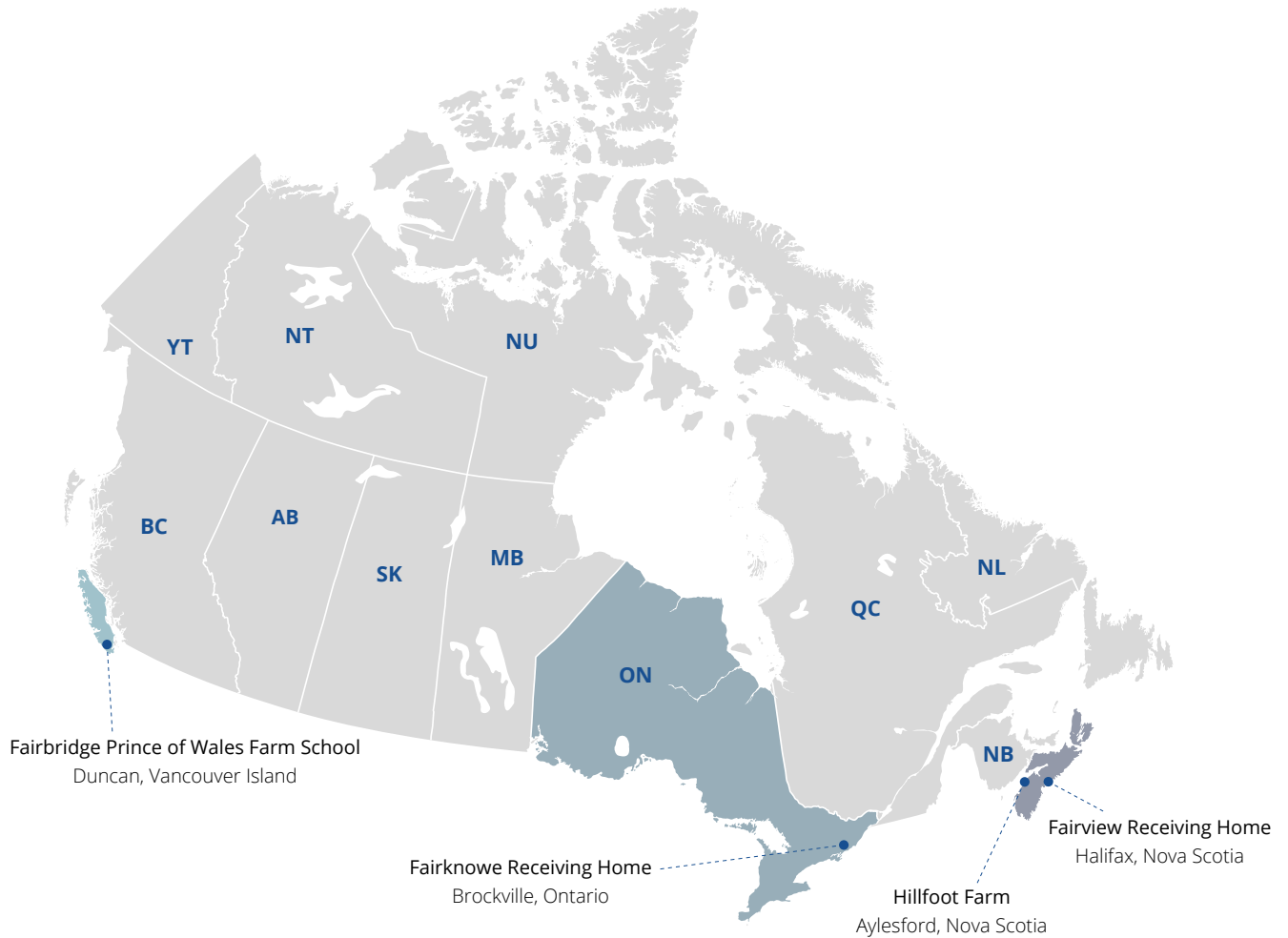
Sending institutions and ports of departure in Scotland and England

The map below shows the locations of institutions in Scotland and England where child migrants whose accounts are included in this Volume were residing prior to migration, and the ports of departure.



Receiving Institutions in Canada

The map below shows the locations of receiving institutions and distribution homes in Canada mentioned in this Volume.



Receiving Institutions in Australia

The map below shows the locations of receiving institutions in Australia.

