

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

CGO [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is CGO [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1941 and I am presently seventy-eight years of age. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My mum was [REDACTED] and my dad was [REDACTED]. Mum died in [REDACTED] 1949 when she was 32 years old. I had two brothers, [REDACTED] or [REDACTED], who was eleven months older than me and CHC [REDACTED] who was two years younger. All have since passed away. [REDACTED] died in [REDACTED] 2000 when he was fifty-nine years old and CHC [REDACTED] died in [REDACTED] 2016 when he was seventy-three years old.
3. I was born in Peebles because Mum had been evacuated there from Govan due to the bombing of the Clyde at the time. We returned to Govan soon after because I had an operation when I was six weeks old. I learned from my auntie when I visited Scotland in 1992 that I had a pyloric stenosis, which was very serious and I had to have a blood transfusion.
4. We lived at [REDACTED] Govan in what was known as a single-ender, which consisted of one room and a coal locker in an old tenement building. There was my mum, dad and us three boys all in the one room and it was pretty hard going. It was straight after the war and nobody had any money.

5. We were on the second floor and shared a toilet with two other families. There were no showers and baths were usually once a week. Otherwise we washed our faces and hands in the sink with hot water from the kettle.
6. They were tough times and growing up wasn't easy. Looking back I wonder how Mum managed, living on coupons with food being in such short supply just after the war.
7. We all went to [REDACTED] school and I can still remember walking to the school in snow up to our knees. It was always good when you got to school because we got a hot breakfast and a hot drink there.
8. Mum had seven sisters and three brothers and quite a few of our aunties lived nearby and in the same block. All of them supported each other.
9. Dad worked at the shipyards alongside my uncles and I remember they used to knock-off early on a Friday and spend a lot of their money in the pub. I felt for my mum and for my aunties too because they were the ones that kept things going.
10. Even as a little kid I can remember Mum and Dad and my aunties were often fighting. It just seemed to be part of normal life growing up in Glasgow at that time.
11. Eventually we got a house at Pollok, which was an upstairs and downstairs. I remember moving there and actually travelling in the back of the furniture truck with what furniture we had. There was great excitement.
12. Mum had become very sick by then and spent a lot of time in and out of hospital. In [REDACTED] 1949 she died when she was just thirty-two years old. Mum never got to live in the house in Pollock and I don't remember us living there.
13. After Mum died we all went to stay with different aunties. [REDACTED] went to one auntie, I went to another and [REDACTED] CHC went to another. I don't remember a lot about that, but as I understand it now we lived with them for a short time.

14. In recent years I have learned from some of my cousins that there was a lot of friction between Dad and my aunties because of us. He wanted to be with his boys, but he wasn't getting any relationship with us.
15. I believe there was a big advertising campaign at the time about sending children overseas and Dad took us away from our aunties. I don't know a lot about that time, but we were living somewhere else that I think was connected to the Presbyterian Church. I have no recollection of where that was at all.
16. Dad was really close to us and it must have been a very traumatic experience for him having just lost his wife. He wouldn't have done anything that would have been detrimental to our wellbeing, but before we knew it, [REDACTED] CHC and I were all on a train to Southampton.

Migration

Selection/information

17. I'm not sure whether Dad told us that we were being sent to Australia on the child migration scheme. I don't really remember, but I don't think he would have held that from us. I think we all had an idea we were going, but I don't recall any of the lead up to it and I don't remember having any health checks or seeing a doctor before we left.

Migration papers

18. I have never seen my migration papers, although I have since obtained some letters stating my brothers and I were all sent over as child migrants.

Leaving Scotland

19. I'm not sure whether Dad travelled on the train to Southampton with us, but I do remember it was a big thing going on the train. We had never really been on public

transport before. I think we took the train from Glasgow to Edinburgh and then from Edinburgh down to Southampton. I'm not really sure now.

20. I remember we all had a little brown cardboard case each that had some clothes in it, but I don't remember where those clothes came from. I don't know whether we had any identification papers with us.
21. We met a minister called the Reverend Andrew Boag and his wife in Southampton. I think my Dad must have had talks with him beforehand and he must have set up all the arrangements. We were just young boys and hadn't been involved in any of the meetings before.
22. When we arrived at Southampton we met up with twenty-seven other boys from Ireland, Scotland and England. I remember us all being lined up ready to board the ship.
23. Years later I obtained a photograph that was taken on the ship. It shows Reverend Boag and his wife along with two assistants that they had, as well as all of us boys.

Journey on MV Cheshire

24. We spent just over six weeks on the boat and to us it was a big adventure. Our cabins were right down in the bottom and I remember the crossing was pretty rough. We were all sick. The crew were West Indian and they were pretty good. They used to put us up onto their shoulders and take us onto the deck for some fresh air. After a couple of days we got our sea legs and it wasn't so bad.
25. Reverend Boag was in charge of us, but I don't remember seeing much of him. He tried to make us go to school while we were on the ship, but that was pretty difficult. We weren't easy boys to handle. We were pretty rough, but that's how we were brought up.
26. There were some good things that happened on the ship as well. They set up a boxing tournament and all of the boys were weighed and went in the ring. I don't

know if it was a fund raiser or what, but the rest of the passengers and the captain and crew were watching as we got in the ring and belted one another about.

27. I remember sitting on a deckchair next to the pool as we crossed the equator. Someone was dressed up as King Neptune and we got tipped in the pool, even though we couldn't swim. Someone was there to pull us out though.
28. The meals were pretty good as well. We had different stuff to the rest of the passengers, but there were always a couple of special things on the menu. It wasn't like a modern day cruise liner, I think the Cheshire was originally a medical ship, but it was alright. It wasn't very flash, but as boys we thought it was impressive and we thought it was huge.

Arrival in Australia

29. The ship arrived in Fremantle first and we got off and stayed there for a day or two before we travelled on to Melbourne, where we arrived on the [REDACTED] 1950.
30. I have been shown by the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry a copy of the ship's manifest which shows my name and the names of my brothers. We are listed as part of a Presbyterian boys party and going to Dhurringile.
31. I also have a photograph that was taken when we arrived in Australia. I have passed a copy of it to the Inquiry. It shows the captain of the ship, the Reverend Andrew Boag and his wife, the couple who helped look after us and a lady called Mrs Muirhead. She was from Glasgow and had her son [REDACTED] with her. She also came to the boys' home with us and she ended up being employed there.
32. I can still name most of the boys in the photo because we grew up as a family. There are boys from around Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, as well as others from Ireland and England. As well as my brothers and I, the boys from Scotland were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and the three [REDACTED] brothers, who were [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

33. When we arrived in Melbourne I remember the heat was tremendous and there was a group of people from the church to meet us there. Before long we were loaded onto the back of a truck that was specially built with an aluminium frame covered by canvas. There were wooden plank seats bolted to the floor and that's what we all sat on for the hundred mile journey up to Dhurringile. We thought we were never going to get there.

Life in care – Australia

Dhurringile Rural Training Farm

General

34. Dhurringile was set in the country, about eight kilometres from Tatura, Victoria. It had a hundred and sixty acres of land with crops and dairy cows. The house itself was a huge building, like a palace. It was really beautiful and had about seventy-two rooms, a lovely set of stairs inside and beautiful stained glass windows. It had been a prison previously and the prisoners were locked up in cells in the dungeon.
35. The home was run by the governing body of the Presbyterian Church with six or seven staff. The person in charge was the Superintendent and over the years there were several. The first one was Superintendent **MOY** and then another man whose name I can't recall. Then there was **AIP** and then a man called **AIO**.
36. Among the staff there was a man whose name was **MOX**, two nursing sisters named Sister George and Sister Golding, a lady in the laundry and there was Matron Harrison. In the kitchen was a cook and her assistant and a Mr Fleming was the farm manager.
37. It was all boys at Dhurringile, ranging in age from about five years old to around fourteen or fifteen. **[REDACTED]** There were thirty of us and then more kept coming in over the years. I think the highest number

of boys there would have been was about forty-five. Normally the staff called each boy by their first name.

Routine at Dhurringile

First day

38. I don't remember much about our first day at Dhurringile, except that there were committee members from the church to meet us. One was a Bill Ponting, who also used to do a bit of maintenance work. It was just a couple of weeks before Christmas and there was a big welcome organised for us with a tree set up and gifts for us all. It was amazing, they did a good thing there.

Mornings and Bedtime

39. We all slept in five or six dormitories that each had six old wire-framed hospital beds in them. All the dormitories had boys of different ages in them. My brothers were in different dorms to me.
40. We were always up by six o'clock in the morning and everybody had to make their bed. After that we all had to wash in the communal shower that had about eight shower heads all in a row and then we had to get ready for school before going for breakfast and doing our morning jobs.
41. I can't remember what time we went to bed, whether it was eight o'clock or nine. There was a curfew and that was it, lights out. We were in bed early because we had to get up early to do our jobs in the morning.

Bedwetting

42. Bedwetting was dealt with very poorly. All the boys that wet their beds were put into one room and **CHC** my brother was one of them. The rest of us boys used to call it the 'stink room', because of the smell from the wet beds. The boys in that room had to get up in the morning and take their sheets down to the laundry and soak them.

43. I since found out when my brother ^{CHC} told me that the staff tried to think up ways of stopping the boys from wetting the beds by waking them up before they did so. They got this little electronic thing that they'd put on the boys' penises so that when the dampness came they got a shock and woke up. It didn't really work, but that was the sort of thing they were doing and I think now that it was pretty cruel.

Mealtimes

44. The lady in the kitchen was a great cook. Meals were quite good, except the porridge in the morning and the sago and tapioca, which I didn't like.
45. When I was in Glasgow we weren't very well fed. If we had bread and dripping we were doing pretty well. Most times we lived on coupons and a lot of the money used to be spent on beer by the men. As a result, I thought the meals were pretty good at Dhurringile. We were getting roast lamb and beef and that sort of thing. Lunch was usually sandwiches that I think the boys made the night before. They were mostly vegemite though, which I hated at the time and used to toss most of mine.
46. When we came home from school, especially in winter, we'd get a big cup of cocoa. That was always welcomed.

Clothing

47. Most of our clothes came from church stores and donations from people and various organisations. I remember always wearing shoes that were too small for me and now my toes are all misshapen. The staff sorted the donations out when they arrived and gave items to each of us.
48. There was a fairly big laundry, which had its own boiler system and a lady worked there and washed all our clothes and bedding.

Leisure time

49. We had our own Australian rules football team after we'd learnt a bit about the game. We were never any good at it, but we played other schools on a Saturday. We also had our own cricket team and we were very much involved in sports. We were a bit better at cricket than football and we actually won the local competition one year. My brother ^{CHC} was a keen player in both the football and cricket teams.
50. A few years ago we had a fifty-year reunion at [REDACTED] home. A friend of [REDACTED] who played football against us said they knew that when the Dhurringile truck arrived they would win the game but never the fights. We were a rough bunch.
51. We also had our own pipe band. A couple of men came in from Shepparton to teach us, Jock Lawrie, who was the pipe major, and Jim Coach. They had a plumbing business in Shepparton. They took us down into the dungeons and taught us how to play the chanter and the drums. [REDACTED] and I both played the pipes and ^{CHC} played the tenor drum.
52. Eventually they got pipes and Highland dress from somewhere and we went out and played at shows around the countryside. Everywhere we went, we went in that truck. We entered a couple of competitions and the year I was in hospital the band actually played at the ANZAC march in Melbourne. The Queen came out in 1954 on the train and we played for her arriving in Tatura.

Schooling

53. We caught a bus to Murchison State school, about five miles away. We would walk down the brae and the bus would stop at the gates. There were maybe half a dozen kids from other properties nearby and then we'd get on and the bus would be full.
54. We were not the best students, we were pretty rough. We used to take the girls' basketball and kick it around, rather than play with the odd-shaped Australian rules football.
55. We probably created a bit of animosity amongst the other students at first. 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 that 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.

56. The education was really good and I have since managed to obtain some of my reports that had been completed by Mr Milvain. He recognised that I was good in some subjects and not so good in others. There was one comment that we seemed to be a bit backward in our learning, but it was a completely different system.
57. We all went on to high school and I would have been fourteen when I went. I did quite well at school, but I've always liked to read a bit.

Trips and holidays

58. Over the years at Dhurringile we always went on any trips in the back of the truck we had arrived in. We were all at risk in the back of that truck and sometimes we would get tossed around on the rough roads. We were probably lucky to survive.
59. During all of the school holidays we were billeted out to different families. I went to stay with [REDACTED] and his family all the time I was at Dhurringile. They came and picked me up for the Christmas holidays and I spent nearly six weeks at their place. My brothers [REDACTED] and CHC [REDACTED] went to different families.
60. It was a wonderful experience for me because the [REDACTED] had a lovely Jersey stud dairy farm. I worked beside [REDACTED] brother [REDACTED] and they became like family to me.
61. In 1955, when I was fifteen, I was riding the horse back to the farm when the horse slipped. I was riding bareback and came right off and landed on a rock. [REDACTED] came along on the tractor and told me to jump on the 'carry-all' on the back of the tractor. I did and the pain was intense. When I got back to the house I collapsed and later found out I had fractured two lumber vertebrae.

Healthcare

62. One of the doctors that came to Dhurringile was a Dr McKellar from Mooroopna, about twelve or fourteen miles away. He was a very fine doctor and used to come out once a week or once a fortnight. He would examine us all and I remember he would give us all a teaspoon of yeast. It was terrible stuff.
63. We all had to get our tonsils taken out by the doctor in Tatura, Dr Lowery. I think the theory at the time was that it was better to take kids' tonsils out than have them get infections.
64. Dr Lowery was a bit of a butcher. We went to the hospital nine-at-a-time and he just plucked out our tonsils and sent us home again. The nursing sisters there, Sister George and Sister Golding, set up one of the dormitories as a sick bay and we spent a week in there afterwards being nursed by them.
65. After fracturing my lumbar vertebrae I spent eleven months in Mooroopna hospital and did a whole year's schooling while I was in there. It was all arranged through the public hospital system in Victoria, which was free. My doctor's name was Dr Dickman, who was the orthopaedic surgeon and Dr McKellar used to come and see me as well.
66. The nurses were pretty good and an occupational therapist came to see me every day. I did all sorts of activities with the occupational therapist and she taught me school lessons as well. As a result, I did quite well at school.
67. After seven-and-a-half months in bed I had to learn to walk again and had weeks of physiotherapy and rehabilitation. I was fitted with a special brace to wear for another five months when I left the hospital. I was a bit like a protected species when I went back because they had to look after me.

Religious instruction

68. Every morning we had devotional time when there would be a reading from a big bible that was about a hundred years old. Every Sunday we were all dressed up a

bit and taken to the church in Tatura in the truck. They used to give us sixpence each for the collection. We all sat in the two front rows of the church and took turns keeping three bob for cigarettes from the money we were supposed to put in.

Work

69. Within a week of us arriving at Dhurringile we were put on a roster and everybody had a job. Every Sunday night you had to go and look at the board and check what your job for the week was.
70. The jobs consisted of cleaning the whole building and polishing the floors on your hands and knees and also using a big floor polisher. Another job was preparing all the vegetables for about forty people, including staff. Potatoes would have to be peeled, pumpkins prepared and all the other vegetables done by whichever three boys were on kitchen duty. There was also a roster for washing up after each meal and two or three boys would have to set the tables for each meal and clear up afterwards.
71. There were outside jobs too. Two or three boys would be allocated to work in the dairy and feed the pigs. One of the dirtiest jobs I can remember was cleaning out the silage. The silage pit was probably about seven feet by three 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 that we had dug before.
72. We also planted an orchard with several different fruit trees and we grew tomatoes next to the house. We boys actually cleaned up the old tennis courts as well so that the staff mainly could use them again.
73. We never got any money for any of the work we did. The only money we ever got was the sixpence for church on a Sunday.

Christmas and Birthdays

74. Dhurringile used to advertise over the radio for people willing to take boys for the Christmas holidays. People were very good and we all went to stay with someone. I was fortunate enough to go to the [REDACTED] and my brother went to other families. I didn't know a lot about how they got on with those families.
75. It was a normal Christmas with the [REDACTED]. They had two daughters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], who were like my sisters, and a baby boy called [REDACTED]. We all got a few gifts from them and there was a proper celebration. I got some sweets and clothes, which I'd take back to Dhurringile. The home itself never provided any of those gifts.
76. I don't remember birthdays being celebrated at all.

Family

77. Even though [REDACTED] and CHC [REDACTED] were my actual brothers, all the boys at Dhurringile were like my brothers, we were all very close. We were always known as the [REDACTED] family name boys.
78. About a year-and-a-half after we arrived in Australia, Dad came over as well. I found out many years later from the archives that he tried to get us out of Dhurringile, but the Welfare Department didn't treat him very well and he wasn't able to.

Visitors

79. The official opening of Dhurringile was in June 1951. The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church was there along with the Premier of Victoria, Mr Macdonald, a local member of government and Superintendent MOY [REDACTED]
80. I have since obtained some photographs that were taken at the official opening, showing a few of the dignitaries and some of us boys sitting at tables. There is also one with Superintendent MOY [REDACTED] doing a bible reading to all of us. I have passed a copy of these photographs to the Inquiry.

81. Once Dad moved over to Australia, he used to visit once every three weeks or so. He would travel the hundred miles from Melbourne on the bus. The bus would pull up outside the gate and he'd walk up the brae and we'd have about three hours with him. He'd always bring a few lollies and things like that and he'd give us two shillings each to put in our bank. He was the only visitor we had.
82. I think Dad was getting a bit fed up with the way he was being treated by the Welfare Department so after a while he went back to Scotland. He didn't get on well back in Scotland though because I think there was a bit of animosity between him and my mother's brothers and sisters. They weren't happy with him for sending us to Australia.
83. Apart from the official opening of Dhurringile, I don't remember any formal visitors or inspectors coming to Dhurringile, only the doctors.

Discipline

84. I wasn't one that misbehaved and I was always clean and tidy and pretty up front about things, however the lifestyle at Dhurringile was something that we boys just had to grow up into and get used to. It was a strict environment and there wasn't much we could have done to change anything.
85. I always thought that the discipline was a bit over the top. We were pretty much drilled in what we had to do and it had to be done. If it wasn't we were punished and they were a bit heavy-handed a lot of the time. I never thought the punishment matched the offence. We might have been out catching rabbits and got home late and we would be punished for that.
86. One form of discipline was to get extra duties, which I got from time to time over the years. Another was to get the strap from the superintendent. He was the only person that gave the strap. If any of the staff thought you had done anything, it would be reported to the superintendent and he would take you into his office and strap you.

87. Although we hadn't been treated softly in Glasgow, my brothers and I hadn't really been used to that sort of treatment before. It was a very different environment at Dhurringile and some of it was quite brutal.

Abuse at Dhurringile

88. Other than what I considered to be over-the-top discipline, I was physically abused at Dhurringile. I was not sexually abused, although I now know that my brother **CHC** was. Even at a young age I would never have allowed anything like that to happen to me. I do believe that we all suffered physical abuse while we were there.

CHC

89. I have since learned that most of the boys that wet their beds were actually sexually abused. I think they took advantage of boys that were a bit more timid and my brother **CHC** was one of them. **CHC** never talked much about what happened to him and it was only much later, in 1992, that I learned about it. I think a fair bit of the sexual abuse that happened to **CHC** went on while I was in hospital.
90. I am now aware from what my brother **CHC** told me of nine boys who were sexually abused while they were at Dhurringile. **CHC** told me that they went to the Presbyterian minister in Tatura, The Reverend Collard and he said that he would look into it but he never did. At our fiftieth reunion a number of boys spoke of the sexual abuse as well and many years later I read an interview in the newspaper of a lad called **CHC** I recognised his name straight away as one of the Irish boys that had been at Dhurringile.
91. **CHC** was talking about the sexual abuse he suffered at Dhurringile, how he suffered mentally and how it had ripped his marriage apart. **CHC** was there and I told him I had no idea anything like that had happened. **CHC** broke down and told me it had happened to him as well. That was the first I knew about it.

92. I later learned that **CHC** abuser was a member of staff called **MOW**. At first I couldn't recollect anyone called **MOW** but I now think I do remember him. **CHC** also mentioned another member of staff called **MOX** who abused other boys, although I'm not sure if **MOX** abused **CHC**
- [REDACTED]**

93. I witnessed **[REDACTED]** and another boy's thrashing by the superintendent when they were only about twelve years old. I think it might have been Superintendent **MOY**, the first one at Dhurringile, although if it wasn't **MOY** it was the fellow after him, whose name I can't recall.
94. **[REDACTED]** and this boy had been late home for some reason and so we were all lined up to witness their 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 on top of the light clothes they were wearing across the buttock area and the back with a shaving strap, which was leather and a few inches wide with a handle. The superintendent had really lost it for some reason and he took it out on the boys.
95. I'm not sure how long the thrashing went on, but it wouldn't take much for such a big strap to do the damage it did to a twelve year old boy. **[REDACTED]** back was bleeding and that is something I will never forget. What sort of a man would do that sort of thing?
96. A couple of the older boys who were about sixteen at the time intervened. They pulled the strap off the superintendent and pushed him away. I think the superintendent must have realised that he'd gone over the top. I don't know what happened after that, although I think **[REDACTED]** must have got some medical attention because his back was bleeding.
97. This was the only public thrashing I saw. Any other stuff that went on was behind closed doors in the superintendent's office.

Reporting of abuse at Dhurringile

98. CHC later told me that at the time he and the other boys had gone as a group to report their abuse to the Presbyterian minister in Tatura, the Reverend Collard. CHC said that the response had been that the minister found it hard to believe but said he would look into it. That's about as far as it went and it was never looked into. As a result, the boys grew up thinking that nobody would believe them.
99. I don't believe the superintendent's public thrashing of [REDACTED] was ever reported to anyone. I have since obtained archive material from Dhurringile and there is certainly no mention of it in there.

Leaving Dhurringile

100. My brother [REDACTED] left Dhurringile before me because he was a bit older and moved to Shepparton where he lived with a couple of other boys. By that time [REDACTED] was starting to get in a bit of trouble. He had got into bad company after he left and was involved with the police.
101. Eventually Dad came back to Australia in 1958 and lived in Shepparton. We were still living in Dhurringile at the time and working locally. I had a job as an electrical apprentice until the guy I was working for was made bankrupt. He got me a job with another contractor, but I'd had enough. The pay was not good and I saw other lads getting much more money doing seasonal work.
102. When I finished with the electrician, the home sent me to work on a farm near Wangaratta, on the border between Victoria and New South Wales. I'd had a bit of farm experience because I'd been at the [REDACTED]. By that time I was seventeen and that was when I left Dhurringile.

Life after Dhurringile

103. The farm near Wangaratta was run by an elderly couple whose name was Newton. They were a good Christian couple who went to church every Sunday, so I had to go as well.
104. Mr Newton was an old-time farmer who still had Clydesdale horses working his machinery. I worked hard there. I felt privileged to work in the environment and I enjoyed it.
105. [REDACTED] came up to see me while I was there because he was in a bit of trouble and wanted some help. He stayed a couple of days and then I went with back him to Shepparton to help him sort a few things out.
106. I never went back to the farm. I sorted him out and decided to take a job at a local factory where some of my friends were working.
107. Around the time that [REDACTED] was about twenty-one, Dad moved back to Scotland again and [REDACTED] decided to go with him. I spoke to CHC [REDACTED] and said that I thought Australia was the best place for us so we both stayed and to this day I sometimes regret it. CHC [REDACTED] might have been better off if he had gone home to Scotland.
108. After a while of working in the factory, some friends encouraged me to become a seasonal worker and cut sugarcane up in Queensland. I was twenty or twenty-one by this time and my pay for cutting the cane was three times more than the average wage, although you worked three times harder than the average worker. We lived in the barracks that were on the farm, which were pretty dilapidated. I did that for three years and it was a hard job.
109. I was drinking and smoking a lot at the time. I was travelling between Queensland and Victoria and earning fairly good money. In 1964 I bought my first car. It was brand new and I paid cash for it. I drove it back to Queensland and started working in the mill and became a locomotive driver, hauling in the cane. When the crushing of the sugarcane finished the mill had a big expansion program during the off-season, working ten hours a day, six days a week, so I stayed on. We were laying new rail track, which was very hard work in the heat.

110. I had a bit of a turning point in my life at that time. I joined the Presbyterian Church where there were some lovely old people who would take me to their homes for meals. I got particularly attached to one couple, Mr and Mrs [REDACTED], and I had lots of meals with them. They were like family and I would do some work for them, mowing their lawn and some gardening and cleaning.
111. 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 [REDACTED].
112. After laying the tracks on the railway I became a locomotive driver and did that for another four or five years, pulling sugarcane. While I had that job I stayed in the barracks at the mill because I had no other home to go to. After a time I became an auxiliary fireman and eventually the local chief offered me a room at the station, so I moved in there. It was really good staying there and I enjoyed it.
113. [REDACTED] and I got married in 1966. Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] came to the wedding and were like my parents at the ceremony. Dad was back in Scotland at the time. [REDACTED] and I will now have been married for fifty-three years and we have two daughters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
114. While I was an auxiliary fireman, the local ambulance superintendent arranged with the mill manager for me to relieve the ambulance officers for their holidays, so I worked six months at the ambulance and six months at the mill. I joined the permanent staff with the ambulance and served as a paramedic for thirty-four years.
115. I became an elder of the Presbyterian Church in 1968 and have been fairly active in the church over the years.
116. In 1971 a job came up with the ambulance service in Ayr so I applied and got a full time job, qualified as a paramedic and worked my way up through the ranks. I had learned a lot about caring for people when I spent so long in hospital as a boy and I

wanted to do that as well. I stayed in the ambulance service for thirty-four years and retired when I was fifty-seven.

117. After I retired I became a contractor and carried on with training paramedics, fire service and the police with portable defibrillators. I did that until I was sixty when I retired altogether.
118. [REDACTED] got married after he moved back to Scotland and lived in East Kilbride. He and his wife had a daughter [REDACTED] and a son [REDACTED] and they sent us the occasional photos of them. [REDACTED] suffered a severe stroke in 1997 and was seriously incapacitated. He spent several weeks in hospital and the hospital were going to move him to an institution, however the family were not happy with that because of the time he had spent in an institution as a child. They wanted him home, so his daughter [REDACTED] gave up her job as a hairdresser and trained to be her father's carer and he had two nursing sisters visit him every day to also assist with the training. They obtained a portable lift to be able to get [REDACTED] out of bed and into a wheelchair. He had to be assisted with his food and he was unable to talk. He never recovered and died in [REDACTED] 2000, aged fifty-nine years. We were able to visit him before he died and I would take him for a walk, pushing his wheelchair around East Kilbride.
119. Dad didn't stay in Scotland long, probably four or five years, because he and [REDACTED] had a falling out. I don't know exactly what happened, but Dad came back to Australia again.
120. On his way back Dad met an English lady called [REDACTED] who had lived with her husband in Upwey, Victoria before her husband died. Dad and [REDACTED] ended up living together there. My wife [REDACTED] and I went to visit them a couple of times there and Dad and [REDACTED] came up to visit us.
121. After my brother ^{CHC}[REDACTED] left Dhurringile he got a few different jobs; back then there was always lots of work. He got a job in a butter factory in Tatura and then he got another job in a soup factory there. I had moved to Queensland by then. Later on ^{CHC}[REDACTED] moved up to Queensland as well and also worked in the sugarcane mill and

- helped with the planting. While he had that job he also had a room in the barracks at the mill.
122. CHC had problems drinking heavily over the years and was never one to make friends outside the pub. By the time he was fifty-three he was on a lot of medication. I took him to a cardiologist that I knew who changed CHC prescription and he started to get a bit better. Unfortunately though, because of all of his abuse of alcohol over the years, his major organs were starting to deteriorate and he was not very well.
 123. CHC moved into a housing unit in Gordonville and my Dad came up to stay with him because his partner had died by then. Dad had developed prostate cancer by then and never did anything about it and it went into his lungs. I went round to him every night with oxygen and a nebuliser so that he could sleep. Eventually, in 1987, Dad had to go into hospital and passed away in there when he was seventy.
 124. CHC met a girl called , who was an enrolled nurse at the hospital, and they got married in Grafton after a while. Later they moved to Brisbane and did a little bit of work when they were well enough to do so. They were both on invalid pension and worked at St Vinnies church shop for nine dollars a day each.
 125. CHC was becoming more unwell and after I moved with my job to Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast, CHC would come to any family functions that we had, but he was getting even more sick. He was in and out of hospital with cardiac problems and actually arrested one time.
 126. About three years ago and I decided to go to New Zealand for a few weeks. CHC was back in hospital again, however he insisted we go and unfortunately while we were there he passed away. his wife, phoned me but by that time she had already had him cremated. I wasn't happy about that, CHC deserved better. When I got back I had a memorial for him and sixty-five people turned up.

127. After I retired, [REDACTED] and I sold our house and bought a motorhome. We spent the next four years travelling all around Australia and Tasmania. Now we stay in a retirement village and have lived there for twelve years.

Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

128. When the Royal Commission was first set up [CHC] told me that he was going to submit a statement. He was a very sick man by that time and said that he just wanted to get some recognition. He wanted people to know how it was for him. I helped [CHC] to get through the initial processes and to understand what the Terms of Reference were.
129. [CHC] prepared a statement for the Royal Commission with the help of the Child Migrants Trust (CMT) and it was submitted on [REDACTED] 2013. I have provided a copy of his statement to the Inquiry.
130. Unfortunately, three years before the Royal Commission brought out their report, [CHC] died.
131. [CHC] wouldn't talk to me directly about what had happened to him, but I read his statement. In his statement he also mentions reporting his abuse much later on when he raised it again with the Presbyterian Church. Around 2004, he wrote a letter to the Moderator of the Church, but never received a reply at the time. He confirms in his statement that it was only later that he discovered the church had in fact replied.
132. One boy's account of his abuse at Dhurringile was actually highlighted in the Royal Commission. I think his name was [REDACTED] and he was from Ireland. He was also there when I was and he gave a very profound statement of how he was sexually abused and it was published online. [REDACTED] and his brother came out to Australia about eighteen months after us and he too has had a pretty miserable quality of life afterwards.

133. [REDACTED] statement was very similar in lots of ways to CHC [REDACTED] and to [REDACTED] [REDACTED], the boy who did the interview for the newspaper.
134. CHC [REDACTED] was very sick when he was involved with the Royal Commission, so much so that he could hardly walk and yet appointments were made for him to go and make his statement. Sometimes he couldn't make the appointments and when he did he could hardly speak. The Commission didn't seem to recognise that CHC [REDACTED] was a really sick man.

Campaigning/awareness raising/other organisations

135. I have had some involvement over the years with the CMT and still do. I am aware that the UK government has offered £20,000 to all former child migrants, regardless of whether they had been abused. That's pretty good.

National Apologies

136. After the Royal Commission I was actually invited down to Canberra in October 2018 to hear an apology. [REDACTED] me and our daughter [REDACTED] went into the parliament and listened to the direct responses from the Prime Minister and from the leader of the opposition. A lot of people were in tears and I was very emotional too.
137. I thought they both did it very well, but the apology was focussed on sexual abuse and to my way of thinking it should have been broader than that. It should have been for emotional and physical abuse as well. Many children were treated very badly and although they were not actually sexually abused, they, including me and my two brothers, were physically abused.

138. I actually managed to speak to the Australian Prime Minister during the luncheon that was held after the apology. I wanted to talk to him about child migration and I was pleased that he did seem to listen.
139. My first response to the apologies that were made nine or ten years ago in relation to child migration by Gordon Brown and Kevin Rudd was that they were long time overdue. The UK and Australian Governments had initially disowned the whole thing and I thought that at least now there was some recognition from the British Government.
140. An apology though is just about saying sorry, it didn't do anything else at the time. It's only now that they are starting to look at redress. The Redress Scheme is long overdue and is moving far too slowly.

Redress

141. A lot of the people are now getting older and I know that one of the Ministers here in Australia just recently said that there needs to be some urgency to the processes. They need to realise that this needs to be dealt with and bureaucracy needs to be set aside. Firm decisions need to be made on what needs to be done and those decisions need to be carried out quickly.
142. Unfortunately my brother CHC died before he could claim any redress. He could have done with that money. He never had any money and that hurt me a bit. He had never had any real quality of life or happiness and he had gone to the grave with no recognition of his suffering.
143. I was very angry for a time after he died and wrote a letter to my local federal member. He was blown away by what I had to tell him and I pointed out that the Terms of Reference should have been much broader and should have included emotional and physical abuse as well. He wrote to the minister in charge of the redress scheme, who in turn wrote back to me, but I just left it at that. Neither [REDACTED]

nor I had an opportunity to seek redress because there has not been anything available for physical or emotional abuse.

Treatment/support

144. [REDACTED] always had a bad back in later years and I always blamed it on the time he was beaten. When he left Australia and went back to Scotland he started to get a bit of a stoop. He had a job at the Rolls Royce plant in East Kilbride and it got so bad that he couldn't actually stand up. They put him on the inspection line so his job was sitting down, but eventually he had to be pensioned off. Rolls Royce looked after him well though.
145. I am aware that my brother ^{CHC}[REDACTED] received some counselling over the years when he was in contact with the Royal Commission, but I certainly haven't had any and I don't think [REDACTED] did either.

Photographs

146. Around 1969, Matron Harrison, one of the staff at Dhurringile, traced me when I was living in North Queensland. She brought a number of original photographs and the big bible that we used to get readings from. She told me she didn't think many of the other boys would be interested and wanted me to have them.
147. I have provided copies of some of those photographs to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.

Records and family tracing

148. I asked the CMT to help me get my records and I now have a number of documents. My brothers [REDACTED] and ^{CHC}[REDACTED] never tried to obtain their records.

149. The CMT and the social workers have been very good helping me with my records and I have obtained quite a lot of files, but most of the information on me is very brief. It was strange to read about my life in the harsh language of the time.
150. I have provided the Inquiry with a copy of some of the records I have managed to obtain.
151. There are also letters relating to Dad's arrival in Australia and his involvement with the Child Welfare Department. I found I became very emotional when I read those letters. There are positive things said about my Dad, how he was when he visited and mention of his leaving money for my brothers and I and chocolate for all the boys at Dhurringile. It is clear though that Dad was treated very badly by the Child Welfare Department.
152. Also within the records I have was a letter that Mr Newton, the farmer I worked with near Wangaratta, had written to the Dhurringile boys' home. He explained about my brother [REDACTED] coming to the farm and me going back to Shepparton with [REDACTED] and never coming back. He said that he had wages for me and some of my clothes and said that he would send them all back to the home.
153. It upset me a bit to read that, because I don't do that to people, but being young, I had. I went back years later, long after Mr and Mrs Newton had died, and met their son [REDACTED] so that I could apologise to him. He told me that his parents had been really upset, but he appreciated my apologising. They were lovely people.
154. There are very few health records within the documents I obtained. On [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1999 I had an aortic valve replacement and at the time the cardiologist told me I must have had rheumatic fever when I was younger. I was unable to confirm that because I didn't have any records.
155. I approached the CMT again and they managed to get a copy of my mum's death certificate, which I had never managed to find myself. It was only then that I found out that Mum had died of rheumatic carditis in 1949 when she was thirty-two years old. I discovered that I was actually a carrier.

Visits to family

156. It was a long time before I made contact with my family in Scotland and I have now visited four times altogether. I paid for the first two trips myself and the other two were funded by the Australian and UK Governments who had set up family restoration funds.
157. I first went back in 1992 with my wife [REDACTED] and we visited my brother [REDACTED] and his family while we were there. I made a few enquiries and met my auntie [REDACTED] and a few of my cousins and I eventually found my mother's grave at Cardonald Cemetery. It was a pauper's grave and eventually I had a proper headstone erected.
158. In 1998 [REDACTED] and I went back to Scotland to visit [REDACTED] and his family, which was after he had had his stroke. It was very sad to see him confined to the wheelchair and not able to talk, although he could acknowledge with his hand and smile. I spent a lot of time taking him for walks around the town in the wheelchair.
159. After the apology that the Australian Government made, they had a scheme to fund trips back for former child migrants. [REDACTED] and I went back through that scheme in 2005 and met the family and visited [REDACTED] memorial grave.
160. The last time [REDACTED] and I were in Scotland was also funded by the restoration fund in 2015, however while we were touring New Zealand I heard that my cousin [REDACTED] and her husband [REDACTED] lived there. My cousin [REDACTED] and her husband were flying over from Scotland to have a family reunion with them so I notified the CMT and they assisted me with the cost of our flight and accommodation. I only met [REDACTED] for the first time while we were in Scotland in 1992.
161. I got in touch with the CMT and told them about the reunion and they helped me out with that and actually reimbursed our fares through the restoration fund, paid for our accommodation and gave us money for a hire car. I thought that was just amazing.

Other matters for relating to migration

162. A lot of the boys at Dhurringile were orphans, but 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.
163. I am aware now that some of those 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.
164. I suppose I've 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, however he never told us at the time. It was such a shock when I read that and I felt really upset.

Citizenship

165. I remember reading about Australian citizenship around 1982 and decided to apply. My understanding of my citizenship previously had been that I was a British subject living in Australia. I never had a passport from either the UK or Australia prior to that. I didn't realise until that time that there was a charge, although I'm not sure if I paid a fee for my citizenship.
166. On 26 November 1997 the CMT wrote a letter on my behalf, which refers to the fee to be waived for Australian citizenship. I have provided the Inquiry with a copy of that letter. I can't recall what that was about as I has already become an Australian citizen by then.
167. I now have an Australian passport and get a pension and other state benefits without difficulty.

Impact

168. I probably adjusted better to life after being migrated than a lot of people did. If I talk about it, it hurts, but I have put it behind me and I have come to terms with it.
169. I tend not to talk about being a child migrant, but when I turned sixty I published my memoirs and some of my friends read about it. A few mentioned it to me and I discussed it briefly with them, but then I quickly moved on. All that I wrote in my memoirs is detailed in this statement.

Lessons to be learned

170. I was annoyed when child migration was eventually recognised by government, but nobody wanted to claim responsibility. Governments claimed it was years ago and therefore they didn't know much about it, but of course they did. It was only after the constant pressure applied by Margaret Humphreys of the CMT that they did start to acknowledge what happened.
171. I think the apologies were a good start as a response, but they should be followed up by redress. Some people are still really struggling and a bit of financial support at the end of their lives would be a boost for them. There is too much bureaucracy, too much toing and froing and it is all taking too long.
172. I feel that my brothers have been let down. They have already passed away. They were physically and sexually abused and during their lifetimes there was no recognition of that. They passed on feeling that nobody really cared. That hurts me. The issues of child migration and child abuse should have been acknowledged much sooner.
173. Over many years I 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. They have managed to come to terms with the situation over the years, but it has not been easy for them knowing that I was a child migrant and that I was sent to a boys' home in Australia in 1950.

174. The apologies by governments and the Royal Commission into child abuse, has again caused much pain and stress to us all. [REDACTED] and I and our daughter [REDACTED] attended the government's apology in Canberra last year for children who had been sexually abused. That was a very sad day for us, knowing that [CHC] [REDACTED], my daughters' uncle and my brother, had suffered all those years and died without any recognition or being believed. We have suffered physical and emotional abuse since we arrived in Australia in 1950.
175. The British Government's lack of recognition of the fundamentally flawed nature of the historic child migration programs that occurred from the early 1940s to the late 1960s and the failings that took place over many years was a betrayal to many thousands of British children.
176. To my mind child migration was a betrayal by the British government. It was terrible and it was unforgivable.
177. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..... CGO [REDACTED]

Dated..... 20 JUNE 2019