

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BFW

Support person present: No

1. My name is BFW. My date of birth is 1953. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I was taken into the care of the Corporation of Edinburgh at the age of three months. I lived at Aberlour Orphanage before the corporation moved me to a foster home in Loanhead. Thereafter, I arrived at university in 1972. I was nineteen. I was studying for a collective social sciences degree. There were sections on social anthropology, social history, criminology and administration on nursing. I did very well at criminology, but I was doing equally well in social anthropology. I was being invited to seriously consider doing social anthropology. I stayed in halls of residence year round throughout my time at university.
3. When I was a student, I received a grant to help me with my fees at the halls of residence. I was living there all year round. I also received subvention from the Corporation of Edinburgh, who retained some financial responsibility for me after I left care, but it was very little. It was still hard to make ends meet. Students at that time needed some sort of vacation employment. The jobs that I had were rosehip picking, potato picking, working in a bar and a spell working at Rosslyn Lee mental hospital.
4. There was also the possibility of canvassing major institutions around, such as the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, where I got a job as an orderly for a while, and the local

authority social work department. I wrote to the local authority and advised that I was on vacation between certain dates and asked if I could help out. That was how I got my first job at Clerwood, which was a children's home ran by the local authority. I was about to start my third year at university. I was basically an extra pair of hands. I have no idea what my job title was. I think I had to provide references, but I don't know whether there was any vetting process.

Clerwood Children's Home, Clermiston Road, Edinburgh

5. There was a vacation period from university in 1974 when I worked at Clerwood. That finished and I returned again for the summer and autumn of 1975 before leaving in April 1976. During that period, I was working there in a full time capacity. I would work shifts during the day. I can't remember working overnight. There were other staff on duty at night time. From memory, I worked during the working day, starting at breakfast. I can't recall exactly the time of my shifts, but it was light and I was actively involved with the children. I can't remember whether it was weekends as well as weekdays. I didn't have a contract or any formal letter of appointment.
6. Clerwood Children's Home was a big building. There were alley ways within the building. Although I walked around the grounds, I largely walked around at the front. At the back, the children's home backed onto trees. It was still part of the grounds, but I didn't think there was anything there. If there was an air-raid shelter there, it's not something I can recall.
7. There were times when I prepared tables for meals. Basically, I was a pair of hands, helping out. I would be with the kids and interact with them. I can't remember doing anything individually with the children, such as reading a story. It was all very practical stuff, cleaning up, making sure the floor was swept and tidy, a bit of dusting.
8. I think there about twelve to fifteen children at Clerwood, boys and girls. There may have been slightly more. There was a range of ages, but most of them were seven, eight or nine. There were a couple of older ones, maybe round about twelve. There

was one very young child who was about eighteen months to three years old. The toddler stood out for me because I remember having a birthday celebration for her.

First impressions

9. It was a very large house. The largeness struck me. I was brought up in Aberlour Orphanage, so I automatically compared it to what I knew. It was very small compared to Aberlour Orphanage, as it was one big house. The building wasn't novel or architecturally beautiful, but the reason that stuck in my mind was because they were doing scaffolding on one occasion fairly early on in my time there.
10. When I was on duty, one of the workers fell from the scaffolding and I was first on the scene. I was administering first aid. There was bloody everywhere. I had to take his teeth out and try and get him to breathe. The other staff called an ambulance and he was taken to hospital. Unfortunately, he subsequently died. I was called in as a witness to the Fatal Accident Inquiry.
11. It prompted me to look up. I realised that it was quite a tall building and that the scaffolding went up quite a distance. That was my first impression, that it wasn't structurally like Aberlour and that it was a tall building.
12. The second thing that struck me was that there were two older members of staff. The rest of us were very young. My entire period working at Clerwood was between the ages of 21 and 22. The other members of staff were slightly older, but not vastly older. Towards the end of my time, there was somebody who was possibly even younger. I was never close to the other members of staff. I was social, but I didn't spend a great deal of time interacting with them. I was there to do a particular job and then get myself back to university.
13. The two older members of staff were at least twice our age. They appeared to spend most of their lives at work in the office, which was like the staff room, drinking tea or coffee. That was the matron and the deputy matron, who were both female and the most senior members of staff. They were in charge.

Staff arrangements

14. Most of the staff there were permanent. I can only vaguely remember a couple of individuals who were like me and who were temping for a short period of time. One was a very young lady, but I don't know what she was doing. I can't really recall the names of staff members at that time. I think there were about nine members of staff in total.
15. Nobody told us what to do when we arrived in the morning. I'd never worked in such a situation before. I'd had experience work in Rosslyn Lee hospital and the Royal Infirmary. It was all very direct in those places and you did things with other staff members. In the Royal Infirmary, the sister in charge of the ward would tell you what to do. It was completely in contrast to Clerwood. At Clerwood, nobody really told you what to do. There was no direction or instruction.
16. That wasn't a fault that I recognised at the time, it was just how Clerwood operated. It seemed to operate spontaneously. The staff just sort of reacted to things as the day progressed. We were containing the children, making sure they were clean, fed and watered, if they weren't at school. We might be seeing their visitors. On rare occasions, there would be a visit from a relative. More often, it would be a social worker. Periodically, I'd open the door, invite them in and they'd go straight to the matron or the deputy matron. That's what we did, along with cleaning.
17. The second vacation that I worked at Clerwood was similar. The only difference was the arrival of somebody from abroad, a rather large lady who seemed to have been given a position. I think she may have come to work there with her husband. They were the same age as the matron and the deputy matron. They just suddenly appeared. They also appeared to have some sort of assigned position within Clerwood. They had an authoritative manner. I vaguely remember a slight change in that way, although I can't remember being directed to do anything by them.
18. My third period working at Clerwood was from autumn 1975 until spring 1976, whilst I finished off my degree. I was offered a room right at the top of the building. I was

attending university classes and doing my assignments, but also living and working at Clerwood. I can't remember what it cost or whether I had to pay for the room. The nature of my job didn't change. I can remember the room, which was quite large and very nice. It was very quiet because I was cut off from the rest of the building. It was a good room for studying.

19. There wasn't a long term investment in Clerwood on my part. It was a vacation post and I was doing my degree. I was concentrating on my studies and handing in assignments. I needed the income and I enjoyed the job, but it was a vacation job so I didn't invest a huge amount of my life in the day to day stuff. I liked what I was doing. I thought the kids were fine, although sometimes their behaviour was really grim. I did what I needed to do and when my shift was up, I was off, either back to my room or to the university.

Routine at Clerwood Children's Home

Mornings and bedtime

20. I can't recall being involved with getting the children up in the morning nor putting them to bed at night. There were male and female members of staff. I think the job of getting the children up, putting them to bed and bathing them was generally done by the female staff.
21. I never worked nights; I don't know why that was. I think there may have been permanent members of staff who wanted specific shifts. I know there were some staff who worked nights because they disappeared early in the morning. I don't know how staff responded if a child wet the bed.

Laundry

22. There was a laundry room that we used to put the clothes in. I can remember looking at the washing machine and having to stir the water. The young staff were involved in

the washing of clothes. I think that was one of our duties, together with washing the bed sheets.

Leisure time/trips

23. I remember times when I played with the children or interacted with them on the grounds at the front of Clerwood. We had to be reasonably vigilant because I don't think there was a gate. We had to make sure the kids weren't in the way of any traffic coming in.
24. Whether the kids were outside or not often depended upon the weather. If the weather was good, they'd be outside for most of the day. It also depended which staff were on. It's harder work looking after children in an open setting. It's much easier to look after them in a room. If the kids were out when I was on duty, they'd be at the front. There'd be no anticipation or expectation they'd be at the back of the house. Part of the ground at the front was grassy. Sometimes you'd be at the front door, looking through the glass to keep an eye out for any cars coming up the drive.
25. Sometimes, we had little breaks where we went on trips. I remember quite a lot of the kids being taken near the sea. I remember playing in the sand. I think there were a couple of trips to the seaside.

Birthdays and Christmas

26. There was a toddler at Clermiston who sticks in my mind because I remember her birthday celebration. I bought her an elephant soft toy. I remember giving it to her in a group, at the birthday tea. The staff were all around.

Discipline

27. Discipline was made up as we went along. It never struck me as exceptional in any way. If a child was playing up or being rude, he or she would be told off by staff members, both male and female. There was nothing standard or written down. I wasn't

given any guidance about discipline or permitted punishments before working there. There was no discussion with staff about what you would do if certain situations arose.

28. I do remember that if a child was bad mouthing or cursing, he or she would be told that was not on or unacceptable. Such behaviour was not ignored, by any staff members.
29. I do remember an older male child being held by a staff member outside and appearing to be a bit out of control. The staff member was not holding the child tightly, just trying to hold him to try and get a conversation going. That didn't strike me as unusual or a cause for concern.

Physical contact with and access to children

30. I think the staff were tactile towards the children. Comparing it to Aberlour, my house mother, Auntie ^{AJF}, would give us a hug. She would give us a kiss as we went to school and once we'd brushed our teeth. That sort of thing didn't happen at Clerwood as far as I saw. There wasn't that element of tactile interaction.
31. There would be putting your arm around a child or bending down to get close to a child if you were talking to them. That would be what I would consider then and still consider now to be normal stuff. I would do that with my own children and I do it now with my grandchildren. In terms of having children sit on knees, I didn't see that either. It wasn't that the children were at arm's length, but it wasn't that sort of place.
32. In terms of staff members being alone with children, I can't recall coming across a member of staff and a child together. That's not to say that individual staff members were not on their own with individual children. There were times, for example, when you might be going down the hill from Clerwood and a member of staff would be taking a child out on foot. I can't remember any other mode of transport. Even when social workers visited, I can't remember where they parked, whether it was in the grounds of Clerwood or out on the street.

33. I don't remember seeing a member of staff taking a child out somewhere. I was a member of staff who floated around a lot. I was very active and I cleaned things up. Certainly during my time, I can't recall that. If I was on a shift and a staff member said they were taking a child somewhere, I would presumably be told because otherwise I would notice that child was missing. Nothing like that sticks in my mind.

Allegations of abuse at Clerwood

34. I can't remember the staff being together at the one time to talk about anything relating to the children. I remember one occasion when we went out somewhere, maybe it was a meal or a show or something. Although the staff seemed to get on well, it was very rare for the staff to do something like that. They weren't a collective, interactive team that went out every week. They may have done it individually with one other staff member, but I wasn't part of that. I wasn't really around. I was doing work in my room or at university.
35. During the periods I worked at Clerwood, I didn't see anything that caused me concern. I was too busy doing the day to day practical bits. There were quite a lot of them so I really was occupied. I was never sitting around in the staff room with the two older members of staff, chatting. I tended to be out and about, interacting with the children. I didn't spend much time with the staff during my shift. I wasn't aware of anything untoward happening. I wasn't excluded, but the staff didn't talk to me about things that had happened. There was no handover between night staff and day staff. The night staff just had their jackets on and then they went off.
36. I didn't have the training at the time to observe things that might have caused me concern as a trained person. I didn't notice anything that concerned me, so when the police spoke to me about allegations in [REDACTED], it came it was a bit of a shock. Looking back, the only thing struck me about the regime of Clerwood was that there was no regime. Basically, we made things up as we went along. That's how it appeared to operate in very stark contrast to Aberlour. At Aberlour, virtually every minute was

accounted for. From the minute you woke up until you went to bed, your day was very structured. There was nothing like that at Clerwood.

37. I can honestly say that I cannot recall any incident during my time at Clerwood where a staff member behaved inappropriately with a child or indeed with another staff member. I never heard about any such incidents either. The staff who frequented the staff room more often than me may well have discussed things, but they never involved me. The staff did involve me and invited me to at least one social occasion, but it was a staff that interacted whilst working and some individuals paired off to do other things.

Allegations against me by BHE

38. BHE has given evidence to the Inquiry. The name BHE doesn't mean anything to me. I never saw any witness statements in . I was just told the nature of the allegations. I have been advised that BHE left Clerwood in 1976 or 1977. He describes me as being "sadistic". He goes on to say, "*He didn't physically abuse you, but if you didn't eat your dinner, you'd be forced to eat it. He would say horrible things about your family and how you didn't have one.*"
39. He has alleged that I mixed food together in a big white enamel dish with a blue rim. He stated, "*He would force you to eat it. He would do this if you didn't finish your food. He would mix your food with your dessert and add other condiments and tell you to eat it. This could be a mixture of your main meal, your dessert, soup, ketchup, brown sauce, salt, sugar or whatever. He would stand over you and intimidate you. You would not be allowed to leave until you'd finished it. This happened to someone at least twice a week.*"
40. The first thing I want to say in response to those allegations is about individuals' life story statements. Each statement, whether it's a witness statement or somebody talking about incidents in their lives, has to be treated with the maximum of respect, irrespective of what the reader thinks of the statement. I would like to say that I respect and acknowledge the statement that was sent to me. Essentially, it is the witness'

truth, as he sees it. There's no question of me disputing or rubbishing someone's interpretation of their life story.

41. The second thing I'd like to say is that this individual's truth and interpretation does not coincide with mine. I don't recognise it. It's not a question of not acknowledging and respecting his version of the truth, it's that I don't recognise myself or the actions attributed to me in the statement. There are variations in interpretation of truth.
42. I don't recognise myself in the statement that says, "BFW [REDACTED] was quite sadistic," at any time in my life. In terms of the allegation that BFW [REDACTED] "was sadistic. He didn't physically abuse you", and, "he would say horrible things about your family and how you didn't have one", that is not my truth. I dispute that. How could I be criticising a child's circumstances of origin, development and life story when, in fact, the life story is reflective of my own? I think I'm an expert in not having a family and being disowned, abandoned and neglected. Even at the age of 21 and 22, there's absolutely no way that I'd be coming out with such statements against a child or anybody.
43. If those things were said in the way BHE [REDACTED] described, I do not dispute that that would be a form of abuse, at that time or at any other time. I did not say horrible things about his family or that he didn't have one. The reason I am categorical about that is because of how I know myself. I have been through huge amounts of pain, distress, abandonment and neglect. If anybody knows about pain in terms of the family, I'm frankly in the award stands on that.
44. I have a deep knowledge of myself and there is absolutely no way I would say such a thing. It's not a question of remembering a particular conversation with a witness during a particular meal or whatever. What I am saying is knowing myself at the time and knowing deeply about my history and how I felt about various events in my life, there's absolutely no way I could say these things.
45. I'm unaware of any of the staff or children knowing of my background in care. There is absolutely no way I would have raised it with the children. I was still working through a number of personal issues in relation to the care system. They all contributed to me

not being willing to talk to anybody, let alone the kids, about my own personal circumstances.

46. I was a spare pair of hands in the establishment and I was enjoying being there. I had an income, which was helping me with my studies, I was doing my studies and I was shortly going to graduate, provided I got through the exams. My mind set was focussed on other things. My task was not to make the lives of individuals any more difficult than they already were. I can say very confidently, without knowing or remembering the detail of any of the conversations with the kids, that those comments are most definitely not my truth.
47. I respect anybody's interpretation of his or her life story and events in his or her life. I don't know motivations and I'm not going to be critical of what he has said. This is his truth and I respect that it's his truth. I'm saying categorically that it is not my truth and I contest what he has said.
48. I have a deep knowledge of where I've come from and how I've handled it over the years. Also, there's no reflection whatsoever of any such similar commentary in any of my interaction with clients and so forth over a forty year plus period. I am consistent.
49. People's life stories change from time to time and they mould. They're influenced by circumstances. That's why we've got to be very careful about these statements. I'm not criticising ^{BHE} [REDACTED]. He's made a statement and I'm not happy about it, but it is his statement. Nobody likes to be called sadistic, but that is his interpretation.
50. In relation to the accusation that I frequently engaged in a practice of mixing food together in an enamel dish, standing over children, intimidating them until they ate up and until that happened I didn't let them leave the table, I would again say that I respect and acknowledge what ^{BHE} [REDACTED] has said. It is not a reflection of how I conduct myself.

Gordon Knott and Brian McLellan

51. I don't remember Brian McLellan. The only person that the police named of whom I had any knowledge of was Gordon Knott. The reason I remembered him was because he had long hair. The staff loved him. He appeared to be fun. I am aware that he and Brian McLellan were convicted of sexual offences at Clerwood and other places in Edinburgh in 1997 and received lengthy prison sentences. I have been advised that Gordon Knott was convicted of further offences early this year and received a further sentence of four years. I had not been aware of that and I am very shocked.
52. I had no indication that this was going on when I was at Clerwood. I remember Gordon Knott being fun. He was the sort of person that staff loved interacting with. He was fun, he was social and he often went out with them. I didn't go out. I was rather dull compared to Gordon.
53. I have been advised that an Inquiry was set up by the City of Edinburgh Council following the convictions of Gordon Knott and Brian McLellan. I am told that a report was prepared by Kathleen Marshall, Cathy Jamieson and Alan Finlayson in 1999. I understand that one former resident of Clerwood was interviewed for the report and stated, at paragraph 3.31, that other staff members *"must have known was going on at Clerwood because they often came in and out of rooms and stayed out of the road when things were happening"* to her. I have no knowledge of people reporting any abuse during my time at Clerwood. I honestly had no concerns.
54. There were indications given to the authors of the report that McLellan and Knott took children to the bathroom, the air raid shelter and the boiler room. The boiler room was the laundry where we washed the clothes. All of this is news to me.
55. I am told that paragraph 3.39 of the report refers to some of the former residents talking about, *"being forced to eat food out of the "trough" if they misbehaved. The trough contained a mixture of all kinds of food and ingredients. If they didn't eat it their heads and faces were pushed into the food on the trays."* I don't know anything about that.

56. BHE's statement to the Inquiry refers to wrestling and horsing around, which lead to other activity with McLellan and Knott. I wasn't aware of that sort of activity at the time. When children were outside, they might be running and chased by staff. I was certainly never witness to any wrestling activity. I'm surprised that I wouldn't have been aware of that kind of activity. If there was a situation of boys wrestling with little or no clothes on, I wasn't aware of it.
57. Even although I wasn't exactly like a Gordon Knott in terms of socialising with staff members, they would still talk to me if there were areas of concern. There were two male members of staff, maybe a third who arrived later. I think if staff had known what was going on, they would let me know because I would be fairly safe to talk to. I wasn't part of the gang, as such. If I'd been aware of such concerns, I would have gone straight to the matron. It would have been automatic to report it. I think I would have left because it would be too damaging.
58. Because the place operated just step by step and you made it up as you went along, you can see how things could quite easily go astray. However, I never thought that going astray could include some of the things that I have now been alerted to. I respected the staff. I think the female staff would, had they known, have talked. They used to spend more time in the staff room than me. The matron and the deputy matron were in the staff room so I think they would have said something. I may be wrong.
59. I have been advised that there was a woman named on the original charges, called Olive Lothian or Olive Bradshaw. That name rings a bell. I think she must have been the deputy matron.

Disciplinary proceedings at Clerwood

60. When I was interviewed by the police in [REDACTED], I did recall one occasion when I was giving a punishment to one child who had been repeatedly warned as to what would happen if he continued with his behaviour. I made the child eat from a dish on the floor. The incident itself is no longer in my memory.

61. It was treated as a disciplinary matter at the time. It was the subject of formal proceedings and resulted in me leaving Clerwood. I never discovered who made the complaint. I never even asked at the time. It didn't worry me because at the time I was responding in writing to what had been said about why I'd given the punishment in the first place. The local authority required me to leave and that was the end of my time at Clerwood. I was not given any findings in writing, other than a letter terminating my employment and stating words to the effect that my conduct had not been acceptable. There was no process in which they told me what the allegations were. I didn't seek to challenge my dismissal on any formal basis. I was a student. I was 21 or 22. I didn't have any previous experience of working. I didn't take any legal advice at the time.
62. With hindsight and even during my social work training course I started to think differently. I was learning new things and ways of disciplining that were appropriate. There is absolutely no way I would even contemplate doing anything remotely similar, even at the age of 23 or 24. But what I did with no training, no education, no management, no supervision was what I thought was right at the time, using what resources I had to hand.
63. That gets back to the importance of training, education, supervision and so forth. This is an example of what can go wrong in a situation where there's a lack of preparedness, a lack of insight into what you're doing at the time, using your own best knowledge, as it were, as an innocent in many instances, doing what you think will work with the children. Going back to Aberlour and the mission statement, what I knew then was that you really had to be in a position by the end of your time in care of being tooled up to contribute positively to society. If you're going to behave in a way that is constantly inappropriate, you're not being set up by the care system to actually play your part and be an able member of your community.
64. I didn't disclose this matter in any future job applications. The way I saw it at the time was that it was a vacation position. It was very temporary. It ended and I then started my professional education in social work and training at Moray House. It was a two year programme. Post qualification, I moved on from that.

Police investigation into Clerwood

65. The accusation that I had stood over children, intimidating them, and not allowing them to leave the table until they had finished food I'd mixed together was part of the allegation that the Lord Advocate referred to in [REDACTED]. It was raised with me at that time, although I didn't know the identity of any person making the allegations nor did I ever see any witness statements.
66. On [REDACTED], the police interviewed me in the police station. That was when it all started. I was invited up to have a chat with them as a possible witness. Then when I got there, I was told it was as a possible suspect. There was no warning at all. I was cautioned before spending some time in a police cell. I was then interviewed by two police officers. The interview was taped. After the interview ended, I was charged with various offences.
67. I am conscious about keeping some sort of record of what I get up to. After the interview with the police, I was on the train back to London's Kings Cross. I wrote a contemporaneous record of the police interview, which I have provide to the Inquiry:

"I am sitting on the 4pm direct train in Edinburgh Waverley station en route to London Kings Cross, reflecting on what has been perhaps one of the most painful few hours of my life. I came up to Edinburgh last night on the sleeper and met Brian Donald, solicitor, shortly after 9am. We travelled to Lothian and Borders police station and arrived shortly after 10am. I was initially seen by Detective Sergeant Liddle and Detective Constable Wilson in the company of my solicitor. During this initial meeting I was informed I was being cautioned in respect of a number of matters which had arisen as a result of a police investigation and was read my rights.

I was then taken to a police cell with one window with 24 round, solid glass panels which let in some light. The room consisted of a toilet, which was encrusted with excrement and other matter and contained a giant piece of faeces. There was no toilet paper. There was no way I could force myself to use such a "convenience". A block of concrete edged into the cell from the wall opposite the door on which lay a blue plastic

mattress. I could not sit on that either. I stood throughout my period in the cell before being taken to an interview room. Before interview, pockets emptied, searched etc, catalogued, signed for and placed in what appeared to be a strong plastic bag.

In the interview, I was read my rights again and the interview video and tape recorded. DS Liddle and DC Wilson were present. DC Wilson led in the questioning. I was taken through my professional and educational career, in terms of jobs and experience up until [REDACTED] I was asked about my own family background as a child in care and young adult. I was asked about my foster family experience and experience in residential care at Aberlour Orphanage. I stated that my experience at Aberlour Orphanage was a positive and happy one overall which contrasted with a less happy and less positive experience in the foster home, where I stated that I was seen as a guest in the house. I was asked towards the end of the interview as to whether I personally was sexually abused in either the residential children's home that I grew up in or in the foster home and stated that I was not.

The bulk of the interview, perhaps a couple of hours long, with a couple of brief breaks, one for some refreshments and change over of tapes and one for DS Liddle to go to the toilet and to change over the tape focused on my time at Clerwood Children's Home. DC Wilson had access to a number of documents which he regularly quoted from, including what appeared to me to be a copy of my application to Lothian Social Work Department in respect of Clerwood Children's Home around 1975.

Questions were asked as to how I got the job in the first place. I could not recall the detail but I did state at that time that many students went around organisations asking whether there were any temporary jobs and I had a number, both during my school vacations as a late teenager and as a university student. The jobs undertaken included potato picking, rosehip picking, strawberry picking, acting as a ward orderly at Rosslyn Lee Psychiatric hospital and as a ward orderly in the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh. I could not recall precise dates.

Questions were asked about how I felt and related to staff and children at Clerwood Children's Home and I stated that I felt I related reasonably well. I felt that I was

regarded as a good member of staff and the reference I received from the children's home in respect of my application to undertake a professional social work course at Morray House College was positive. I stated that in all residential units there are tensions from time to time and there would have been tensions likewise in Clerwood Children's Home. On the whole, however, I felt from what memory I had at the time that the staff team got on reasonably well.

Questions were asked as to how I got on with the children. As with staff, I felt from memory that I was an effective member of staff, committed to the unit and felt that I related reasonably well to the children. I stated that I could not recall at any time I was there, any allegations either being made about me or anybody else at the unit except in respect of a punishment I had given to what I thought was one child that transpired to be several children at the one time.

Questions were asked as to whether I could recall the names of any members of staff at the time to which I replied I did not. Even when towards the end of the interview, certain names were read out they did not register with me. The only name which vaguely came to mind when stated by the police was Gordon Knott. In what capacity the name registered I do not know. Whether a staff member, visitor or whatever, names of residents at Clerwood Children's Home were read out but did not register either.

So the only event that sticks out at the time, and even then a lot of the detail I could not recall, was a punishment I gave to what I thought was one child the police said it was four children I think at the same time. This related to repeated misbehaviour at the meal table. I cannot recall which meal and I made the child subsequently, according to the police a group of children at the one time, eat the meal from a dish on the floor. The police quoted from what appeared to be documentation prepared at the time of the incident, stated that the meal consisted of the entire meal, tea included, salt and that I forced the children to eat it and struck one of the children during this incident. I cannot recall this in such a detail. What I do recall is giving a punishment to what I thought from memory was one child who I felt from memory, knew what he was

doing, had been repeatedly warned on what would happen if it continued and I gave the punishment.

At the time I would have been between 21 and 22 years and I had no previous experience whatsoever working with children. I was subsequently disciplined for this and eventually lost this job. I saw the job as temporary as I was due to start my social work programme later in the year. There was a disciplinary hearing of sorts, the precise detail of which I can't recall from memory. I believe at the time that the punishment was taken out of context by those responsible for investigating the incident and I do recall entering into correspondence with the social work management headquarters over the incident but it got nowhere.

DC Wilson, quoting from a letter written by the Head of Social Work at the time in Lothian Region outlining the reasons why I did not continue in the post, stated that he, as in DC Wilson, could not understand why I did not appeal, go to an Industrial Tribunal. I stated that I had done all I felt I could do at the time and there was nothing else I could do. I cannot even recall at the time whether the possibility of an industrial tribunal was even considered by me or whether I knew what an industrial tribunal was.

Questions were raised by the police of my views regarding discipline at the time. I responded in the sense that discipline was important, standards were important, modelling was important in the sense of trying to demonstrate in your own behaviour the expectations of the unit, that one is in terms of your own behaviour the expectations of the unit that one is, in terms of conduct, going about one's business generally. I could not recall in response to questions as to what the procedure was for disciplining children at the time in the unit nor what the reporting arrangements, if there were any, for punishments at that time. I continued to answer the discipline question by stating that I had felt individuals had been told of the standards and urged to meet them.

DC Wilson and DS Liddle asked what I would have done if, in spite of what individuals were told, they continued to misbehave or words to that effect. Basically my answer was more of what I have already said. I did state at one stage that possibly a child may have been smacked but again I could not recall the detail. The police stated that I had

been in the unit for at least a four month period before that period and that during that time there had been a number of staff meetings which included comments, guidance on discipline. I responded by stating that I could not recall such meetings on disciplining matters but there were team meetings in the children's home but with what frequency and duration I could not recall.

The police stated towards the end of the interview that I had been at the children's home for some 9 months, whether that included suspension time in respect of the punishment I gave to the child I didn't know. The period in question appeared to end in March 76. The police in question had jumped back and forward a few times going over old ground, reporting why I remembered some things and I couldn't recall the others and so forth and so on and I basically repeated what I had already said."

68. I acknowledged in what I told the police that something did happen on one occasion, at a meal time, involving one boy. What I recalled in my contemporaneous notes in [REDACTED] is my best recollection of what happened. It was suggested that contact was made with more than one child. I didn't exclude the possibility that I might have smacked a child. The one matter that I set out to the police was my recollection of one incident, which involved me giving a form of punishment, involving food being placed on the floor in a bowl.
69. They closed the interview, went over some career history and basically that was the end of that. After the interview, everything stopped and then they said they were charging me and I am told by the police that I didn't do myself any favours in my response in not recollecting X, Y and Z. On the way back to the cell, various derogatory remarks were made. These became the subject to subsequent of formal complaints. In my contemporaneous record, I noted:

"On the way out of the interview room en route back to the cell DC Wilson recalled some alleged comments from individuals who were in police custody as I came in to be interviewed. They were allegedly discussing why I was there and said he is a beast, interfering or hurting wee bairns. DC Wilson stated that they were right. I did not rise to the comment. DS Liddle was present in the room at the time. En route to the cell,

DC Wilson stated to DC Liddle, "Did you hear that?" I can't recall hearing what response DS Liddle made. DC Wilson responded by saying, "It's pigeons coming home to roost." This was an obvious dig but again I did not respond to the comment, bearing in mind experiential age of BFW [REDACTED]. I was then photographed, finger printed and a swab was taken from the inside of my mouth. I could not begin to describe how angry and dismayed I was at this time but I kept my composure and I was my usual polite and responsive self.

I was then given my belongings back and released just before 3pm. Brian Donald, solicitor, met me shortly afterwards. DC Wilson during the interview apparently recounted comments, allegations from a number of adults who were children at the time at Clerwood, who referred to the [REDACTED] man or [REDACTED] man did this or that. I was asked if I was the only [REDACTED] person in the unit at the time. I cannot recall any other [REDACTED] person at the time in the unit, let alone in the children's home. The police also referred to whether I thought there was a conspiracy against me in the children's home by the children getting together, as they were allegedly all saying the same thing. I said I was not a believer in conspiracies. To the question put as to whether the children, now adults, were lying, I responded by saying that my recollection was different or words to that effect.

DC Wilson asked if I'd disclosed my job at Clerwood and reasons for departure to my first employer in London. I can't recall to be honest but I said in response that I may not have. I regarded the job as temporary. It was pre my social work training which lasted 2 years. However, I must have put Clerwood on at least one application in 1975 76 because DC Wilson quoted a response from a Miss Hunter who allegedly stated that she could not provide a reference for me as she did not have the relevant information or words to that effect.

DC Wilson stated at the end of the interview as the tape was being put away that the outlook for me looked bleak with a fall out which would affect my whole family not to mention my professional life. I did not know whether this was to be interpreted by me as a threat or a dispassionate, realistic assessment of how he sees the future in

respect of myself. DC Wilson also stated whilst he was fingerprinting me that the police had contact with my wife and that she was very upset by the call."

That was written contemporaneously, on the same day as I was interviewed by the police. The comments made by DC Wilson were made after the formal interview. They were not formally recorded by the police officers. Two other individuals, possibly attending for interview, had made comments about me. They were making comment about my appearance. I was dressed very smartly and they asked who I was and what I was in for. DS Liddle was adding to that, giving his take. More things were said at that point.

Aftermath of police investigation

70. In a letter from the Lord Advocate's private secretary, 25 Chambers Street in Edinburgh dated [REDACTED], it discusses the time I was at Clerwood. It was addressed to my solicitors, McCourts Solicitors, 53 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh:

"I refer to your letter of [REDACTED] addressed to the Lord Advocate. He has asked me to reply on his behalf. The Lord advocate had now considered the circumstances of the case against your client and has instructed that no criminal proceedings are to be taken against him, arising out of allegations that he assaulted and ill-treated children in Clerwood children's home, Clermiston Road, Edinburgh between 14 December 1974 and 5 April 1976."

71. What subsequently happened was that three formal complaints were lodged by my solicitor. I have provided copies of all the relevant correspondence to the Inquiry. Alistair Duff was acting for me by then. The first complaint was to the Crown Agent, dated 10 February 1999:

"We refer to our above named client and enclose herewith a copy of a letter which we have sent to the Procurator Fiscal. We have intimated this to you since it is a complaint directed at the Crown Service generally. In addition our client wishes to complain that the Crown Office issued misleading, inaccurate and profoundly damaging information

about Mr BFW to [REDACTED] which information was subsequently [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] We have already taken this matter up with [REDACTED] who has advised us that the information [REDACTED] had been provided by your office. We should be grateful if you would look into this matter and advise us of your position.”

72. The second letter of the same date, 10 February 1999, as addressed to the Procurator Fiscal, 29 Chambers Street, Edinburgh. Referring to myself, it stated:

“We represent the above named who wishes to complain about the way in which his case was dealt with by your office. Mr BFW was charged by the police on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] It took until [REDACTED] for a decision to be made regarding the outcome of proceedings against our client. During the intervening period Mr BFW has been effectively unemployable. The longer it took for a decision to be made, the greater the damage was caused to Mr BFW’s business, family and reputation, not to mention his health and that of his family. We should be grateful if you would look into the circumstances surrounding the delay and advise us as to why such delay occurred.”

There was a [REDACTED] period between the initial allegations, police interview in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and the Lord Advocate’s letter.

73. The last letter went to the Chief Constable of Lothian and Borders Police, based at Fettes Avenue, Edinburgh. Again, it is dated 10 February 1999 and refers to myself:

“We would refer you to our letter dated [REDACTED] which has not been acknowledged by you. Our client wishes to complain about various matters associated with his case.

(1) when our client was interviewed by DC Wilson and DC Liddle on [REDACTED] he was treated in what he describes as a gratuitously offensive, unprofessional and abusive way, particularly by DC Wilson.

(2) it appears that police officers provided information to [REDACTED] concerning the content of the interview which took place on [REDACTED] and included details of Mr BFW’s personal circumstances including his address. The leaking of this

information appeared to be designed to cause maximum damage to Mr BFW's personal and professional life, in which respect it was entirely successful.

(3) Finally, as already mentioned, Mr BFW wishes to complain that there has been no response to the letter dated [REDACTED] sent to you by this office regarding destruction of the various items mentioned. We should be grateful if you would investigate this whole matter."

The Procurator Fiscal responded, the Chief Constable responded and the Crown Agent responded. I have provided copies of the responses to the Inquiry. In a letter dated 28 April 1999, I received an apology from the Crown Agent, they did provide misleading information, it was all a mistake, it was all our fault and so forth and so on.

74. The Chief Constable said that his officers had behaved impeccably. He wasn't prepared to concede anything at all. My solicitor told me that was no surprise. The Procurator Fiscal said it was a complicated case because there were co-accused on different charges.
75. After graduating from my postgraduate social work qualification in 1978, I worked as a social worker for a number of years, reaching the top of my profession. In 1993, I decided to work for myself. I set up my own consultancy in social work, community well-being and housing.
76. After the police interview, my business collapsed immediately. I was [REDACTED] the day after the interview. My first cancellation was the day after the interview as well. I was on various boards, which I had to come off. I was a guardian ad litem before the police investigation. I had to send letters to all my clients' solicitors to tell them what had happened. I have provided copies of those letters to the Inquiry. I was very open. I received wonderful, positive letters back in terms of my work with their clients.
77. Even though it was very painful and disastrous in terms of my business, because I had operated in a particular way right up until the allegations arose, there was a large body of very positive comment about myself. These letters came from very senior people, including directors of social work. They were aghast at how I had been treated. The

police thought they had a big catch and they wanted to make a big deal out of it. Basically, I was in this toxic swirl where I was fair game. The police made the most of it and destroyed my business. They said to me on the day of my interview that they would do that, and they did. I had to retrain. I went to the London School of Economics, to try and tool myself up. I studied for a masters in housing management.

78. 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.....
Dated.....
18/11/18