

1 Friday, 7 December 2018

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning. Ms Rattray, I think today we've
4 got three oral witnesses, is that right?

5 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady.

6 LADY SMITH: And we are turning to a new provider today?

7 MS RATTRAY: Yes, we're turning to consider Aberlour Child
8 Care Trust.

9 The first witness is an applicant who has decided to
10 waive his anonymity and he is Ron Aitchison.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 RON AITCHISON (sworn)

13 LADY SMITH: Please sit down and make yourself comfortable.

14 Can I just ask you to try to make sure that you stay
15 in a good position for the microphone. It's very
16 important that everybody in the room is able to hear
17 you, particularly for the stenographers, who listen to
18 you through the sound system. Some people drift away
19 a bit at times. I'll let you know if we have a problem.
20 I'll hand over to Ms Rattray and she will explain what
21 happens next.

22 Questions from MS RATTRAY

23 MS RATTRAY: Good morning, Ron.

24 A. Good morning, Jane.

25 Q. In the red folder in front of you you will find a paper

1 copy of the statement that you have given to the
2 inquiry. We've given that a reference, which I'll be
3 referring to throughout this morning, and that is
4 WIT.001.001.8737.

5 A copy of your statement will also come up on the
6 screen in front of you, so when we look at your
7 evidence, and we're looking at a particular part of it,
8 if you prefer to look at the statement or on the screen,
9 whichever works best for you.

10 But in the first instance, if you could look at the
11 paper copy and if you could turn to the very back page,
12 which is 8768.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Can you confirm that you have signed your statement?

15 A. Yes, I can confirm that's my signature on 14 May.

16 Q. I think you state at paragraph 183 that you have no
17 objection to your witness statement being published as
18 part of the evidence to the inquiry and you believe the
19 facts stated in your witness statement are true.

20 A. I'm sorry, I missed part of that.

21 Q. Sorry. At paragraph 183, just above where you've signed
22 your statement, you say you have no objection to your
23 witness statement being published as part of the
24 evidence to the inquiry and you believe the facts stated
25 in your witness statement are true.

1 A. Yes, I can confirm that.

2 Q. To start, could you please confirm the year of your
3 birth? I don't need the date or the month, simply the
4 year.

5 A. 1949.

6 Q. What I'm going to do is ask you questions about the
7 evidence in your statement in four general parts. In
8 the first part, I'll just be asking you about some
9 background information and dates. The second part, I'll
10 be asking you about your experiences and the information
11 that you've gathered about Aberlour Orphanage. In the
12 third part, I'll ask you about the impact your
13 experiences have had on you in adult life. Fourthly,
14 I'm going to ask you a little about the personal
15 research that you have carried out in relation to the
16 orphanage and one or two of the documents which you have
17 shared with the inquiry.

18 Firstly, turning to background. In relation to your
19 life before care, you tell us a little background at
20 page 8737. Your understanding, when you signed your
21 statement, is you were taken into care, probably to
22 Aberlour, at the age of about 10 months in 1950. But
23 obviously, given your age, you've got no real memories
24 of that time.

25 You have since learned certain things in more recent

1 years and you tell us that you had [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED] is that right?

3 A. That's right.

4 Q. You lived with your family in Leith, your parents were
5 unable to cope with the care of you [REDACTED].
6 Your family was known to Edinburgh Corporation Welfare
7 Department and then you were placed in Aberlour by
8 Edinburgh Corporation. That's generally your
9 understanding of the circumstances in which you came
10 into care; is that right?

11 A. Yes, that's right.

12 Q. I think you [REDACTED] were placed at Aberlour
13 [REDACTED]?

14 A. When I went into care, my mother [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED].

17 Q. Okay. Your recollection is that you lived at
18 Aberlour Orphanage until you were aged 14 in 1964. You
19 do tell us later in your statement that you haven't
20 recovered any of your records, either from Aberlour or
21 from Edinburgh.

22 A. I'm aware that they're available to me, but I have never
23 had the occasion to call on them.

24 Q. As has been explained to you earlier, the inquiry has
25 recovered your records, both from Aberlour and

1 Edinburgh, the local authority. We're able to confirm
2 certain dates. What those records say is that you were
3 initially admitted into the care of
4 Edinburgh Corporation and to Clerwood Children's Home in
5 Edinburgh on [REDACTED] 1950 and that you were then
6 boarded out by Edinburgh Corporation to
7 Aberlour Orphanage on [REDACTED] 1951.

8 There was a short period when you were discharged
9 from the orphanage from [REDACTED] 1960 and then you
10 were readmitted on [REDACTED] 1961. It would appear
11 from the records that that coincides with your memory of
12 at one stage being returned to the care of your parents
13 for a trial period, but your parents were still unable
14 to cope, and therefore you were returned to care.

15 Then the final date we have in relation to Aberlour
16 is that you were discharged from Aberlour Orphanage on
17 [REDACTED] 1965.

18 A. That's right, yes.

19 Q. On [REDACTED] 1965, you would have been about 15;
20 is that correct?

21 A. I think so.

22 Q. Ron, in later life you tell us that you carried out
23 a great deal of research into Aberlour Orphanage, and
24 I'll ask you more details of that later on. But at this
25 stage I think it's fair to say that your statement has

1 been informed by a mixture of your personal childhood
2 memories and also information garnered from research
3 you've carried out.

4 A. Yes, that's correct.

5 Q. Ron, turning to the second part of what I was going to
6 ask you about, which is turning to your experience and
7 your life in Aberlour Orphanage, at page 8738 you tell
8 us from your memory that you arrived as baby and
9 certainly you arrived as a very young child.

10 But under the heading "Routine at
11 Aberlour Orphanage" at paragraph 6, you are able to tell
12 us a little about the history of the orphanage and how
13 it was founded. Can you tell us more about that?

14 A. Absolutely, Jane. Aberlour Orphanage was really founded
15 by a Miss Macpherson Grant, who had the idea of looking
16 after the destitute children in her area. And she
17 placed an advert in the national papers to seek
18 a minister from the Scottish Episcopalian Church to
19 assist her with this venture.

20 She came across a Canon Charles Jupp who had been
21 in the industrial heartlands of the Newcastle & Tyne
22 area and had been having some success, but he'd been
23 advised by his doctor, due to his ill health at that
24 time, to seek some fresh air and a better style of life
25 rather than the industrial heartlands and smog and smoke

1 of Newcastle. So he responded to
2 Miss Macpherson Grant's advert and the two of them
3 worked together to set up the idea of an institute to
4 look after the destitute boys and girls of the area.

5 Miss Macpherson Grant was from quite a well-off --
6 she was from a well-connected family and she was
7 prepared to fund up to a certain point, you know, the
8 different aspects of building an orphanage.

9 In 1875 the church of St Margaret's had been opened
10 and was built as the first structure. I have to say
11 it's now only the only structure that's left, just
12 about, in Aberlour Orphanage to remind anyone who goes
13 up there to see what's left.

14 LADY SMITH: And we should probably just confirm, when you
15 say up there, you're talking about Aberlour in
16 Morayshire?

17 A. Yes.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Please carry on.

19 A. A few years later, Miss Macpherson Grant was seeking
20 through her well-connected society friends financial
21 assistance to continue with this project and she
22 involved Canon Jupp to help with the funding and setting
23 up the place.

24 The orphanage itself was to be built in three
25 stages. It was to have a boys' wing, a school, and

1 a girls' wing. That was the principles laid down at the
2 time, to have separate boys' and girls' buildings, and
3 the school was to be in the centre of that.

4 My recollection is that halfway through the building
5 of the girls' wing, there was a disastrous fire and that
6 set them back somewhat as far as the building of the --
7 structure of the building and getting the place up and
8 running was concerned.

9 Then another setback befell them all when
10 Miss Macpherson Grant died suddenly and had not
11 mentioned Aberlour or the orphanage in her will. So
12 poor Canon Jupp was more or less left high and dry as
13 far as his benefactor was concerned. However, he
14 continued with this quest of building this orphanage,
15 and he sought the help of a Mr Grant from
16 Wester Elchies, which was a large house or was a large
17 house in the Aberlour area.

18 This Mr Grant and Miss Macpherson Grant were not
19 connected in any way; it was the same name but they
20 weren't connected in any way. He donated them quite
21 a large sum of money at the time to assist with the
22 continuance of the building of the orphanage.

23 After that, Canon Jupp was quite good at going round
24 seeking financial assistance and donations and any help
25 that he could get to continue with the building of his

1 orphanage. He was quite well-known throughout the area
2 and he started doing one or two innovative ideas to help
3 with his funding.

4 If I could maybe cite a small example of that. He
5 would go round the local parishes throughout the
6 Morayshire area and what he would do is he'd say to the
7 local ministers, "I'll give you a day off on your Sunday
8 service or I will take the service for you and the only
9 condition I would ask is that the congregational funding
10 is given to the Aberlour Orphanage fund for the building
11 programme".

12 And that was quite innovative because ministers
13 locally at that time had never heard of getting a day
14 off on a Sunday, and he was quite unusual in that
15 respect. After a while, he got a reputation as being
16 the "Beggar of the North" because his pleading for the
17 funds for this quite large project took him over the
18 counties in the north of Scotland and he had a great job
19 to seek the funding of this particular building.

20 I think when Canon Jupp arrived at the
21 Aberlour Orphanage, with Miss Macpherson Grant, he was
22 quite an elderly man. I can't say what age he was, but
23 I think he had arrived as quite an elderly man. And
24 of course, when he passed away, his sub-warden -- the
25 warden was what we called the chief person or the senior

1 person within the building -- his sub-warden took the
2 job on and I think we had a series of different
3 gentlemen who survived. This was taking us from 1875
4 through in the 1920s and into the early 1930s at this
5 point.

6 One particular warden who had an excellent
7 reputation, who had started life as quite a young cleric
8 at the orphanage, was a Dean Wolfe, and he arrived in
9 1928 and his term of office ran until he retired in
10 1958. So he had a 30-year span as the warden, as the
11 controller, as the senior religious member at the
12 orphanage.

13 MS RATTRAY: Is this the person who you refer in your
14 statement to be called Wolfie?

15 A. Yes. All the children called Dean Wolfe "Wolfie". It
16 was just a familiar name that the kids got used to
17 calling him. That was the only name I ever knew him as.

18 Q. When you were actually speaking to Dean Wolfe at any
19 point in time, were the children allowed to call him
20 Wolfie to his face?

21 A. I think they were allowed to call him that to his face,
22 but you know, I think because of the respect that we had
23 for the office that he held, he was referred to as "the
24 dean".

25 Q. I think you refer elsewhere in your statement that,

1 generally speaking, the children would address staff in
2 a respectful manner, by sir and madam.

3 A. Absolutely, Jane, absolutely. Yes, Dean Wolfe was quite
4 a character. He was always full of fun, always had
5 sweeties in his pockets for the kids, but he was a good
6 manager of the place, he was a good controller and
7 a good manager of the place. He again was very good at
8 knowing how to seek out donations and to seek out
9 funding from local tradesmen and local institutes in
10 various forms.

11 Because I have so many stories and memories within
12 my head, it's very difficult to get them all out because
13 there's a lifetime's events going on.

14 LADY SMITH: Don't worry. I'm quite used to that.

15 But am I right in thinking then that, given the
16 period that you were at Aberlour, you must have got to
17 know Wolfie quite well yourself when you were young?

18 A. Very much so. There's no doubt that Wolfie was
19 a character and was much missed by ...

20 LADY SMITH: Somebody who inspired a lot of affection?

21 A. Absolutely.

22 MS RATTRAY: When you were there and Dean Wolfe was in
23 charge, how often would you see him?

24 A. Sometimes on a daily basis. Because Aberlour Orphanage
25 was a large institute, and Wolfie happened to have two

1 dogs, two black Labradors that he always had, and when
2 one died, he always replaced them with another one.
3 We would know when Wolfie was coming into our particular
4 building because the dogs would precede him. There was
5 nothing wrong with that. We had no fear of the man.
6 And we all got excited knowing that Wolfie was on his
7 way because the dogs had given us the previous warning.

8 Q. So are you saying that he would come round the various
9 places in the orphanage where the children were living
10 on a daily basis?

11 A. I can't really say that it was on a daily basis, but
12 he was certainly always around. He did have his office
13 duties to attend to and obviously his staff duties to
14 attend to, but he was certainly very familiar throughout
15 the place.

16 Q. When he came round, would he speak with the children?

17 A. Yes, he would. He would chat to all the children and,
18 of course, having sweeties in his pocket, which we knew
19 about, we were always hanging around looking for
20 a sweetie. Yes, he always seemed to be there. He
21 seemed to be a person that you could go to and you could
22 seek him out if you needed to speak to him about
23 anything. I found him a very easy person to chat with.

24 Q. You tell us that Dean Wolfe, his term of office ended in
25 1958. Who was the person who succeeded him?

1 A. A certain Charles Leslie followed Dean Wolfe, who was
2 a very different kettle of fish completely. The
3 children found poor Charles Leslie very cold and not
4 a very loving type of person. We were rather suspicious
5 of Mr Leslie inasmuch as he had a centre parting to his
6 hair. He had a German sausage dog as a pet, which after
7 the two Labradors that ran around everywhere was
8 a rather tame little thing. But even as children, with
9 rumours of the war having been in the past, we were
10 suspicious of anything that was German.

11 Charles Leslie had a different way of approaching
12 the children at the orphanage. At that time, we all
13 thought that the change from our Dean Wolfe to
14 Charles Leslie was not a good change. The children did
15 feel it, they felt he was very heartless. He wasn't
16 particularly strict, I'm not saying that he was strict
17 inasmuch as he would harm the children or anything like
18 that or had bad policies, but he just seemed to run it
19 more like an office as opposed to a parent. And I think
20 that's the difference: he was a manager as opposed to
21 a parental figure.

22 Q. So was he someone who it would be easy for the children
23 to speak with and have a chat with?

24 A. I think he probably was, but he just seemed a colder
25 person. He wasn't a warm, loving person in the

1 children's eyes, and I have spoken to his daughter
2 since. Obviously she feels that he was a very loving
3 and forthright person, but as children, we never saw
4 that part of him.

5 Q. What was his daily practice in relation to contact with
6 the children? You have spoken about how Dean Wolfe
7 would come round on a very regular basis, if not daily.
8 What about the Reverend Leslie? Did he come round to
9 the various houses you were living in?

10 A. My recollection is that I didn't see him as much.

11 Q. Did he come round sometimes?

12 A. Oh yes, absolutely, and he was always there when
13 activities were going on and, you know, he was ...
14 He was there, but I just don't think he was as
15 approachable from the children's point of view.

16 Q. In terms of the layout of the orphanage, you explain in
17 your statement that there were two wings, so it was
18 built according to what you've told us about the plan,
19 with a school in between. And it was in a very rural
20 setting; is that right?

21 A. Yes. Aberlour itself is in the heart of Speyside,
22 in the centre of whisky country. Even when I left the
23 orphanage, I always returned to Aberlour for holidays,
24 and particularly in the autumn to see the colours, the
25 autumn leaves. And when I got married to my wife and

1 had family, we constantly had holidays up in the
2 Aberlour area.

3 Eventually, when my children became old enough and
4 left our family home to their own things, my wife and
5 I moved back to Aberlour and I think, looking at that
6 from 2018, I look back and think to myself that I myself
7 was really on a journey of exploration to look more at
8 my background to Aberlour and the orphanage and my care
9 there.

10 When I returned to the Aberlour area to stay with my
11 wife, that was in 2004. We stayed there for 12 years.
12 I learned an awful lot more than I had ever known about
13 before. Yes, I was meeting characters that I'd known
14 when I was in the orphanage, such as the tradesmen
15 within the village and their families, and I was
16 constantly running into people that I knew from the
17 Aberlour experience.

18 Q. You have told us about Dean Wolfe and Reverend Leslie.
19 Can you tell us now a little about the other staff that
20 were there? If Dean Wolfe and Reverend Leslie were the
21 persons in charge, was there someone below them in
22 a hierarchy?

23 A. Aberlour Orphanage what split into what you'd describe
24 as houses and the houses had different names for them.
25 Some of them were called after tartans and various other

1 things; there was a whole range of names that the
2 Aberlour Orphanage used. My understanding is that when
3 you arrived as a youngster, you went into a house
4 between, let's just say, the ages of 5 and 7. You then
5 went to another house between the ages of 7 and 9, and
6 up through the scale that way into the different houses.
7 So the big boys' house, as we would call it, would be
8 the final house that you would actually be in before you
9 left the orphanage.

10 Q. In your statement you help us with the names of some of
11 houses at page 8741, paragraph 24. You tell us that the
12 boy's wing consisted of five or possibly six houses, the
13 first one was called "The Wee Kids". The second one was
14 Spey House. Then Mount Stephen House. And then you had
15 Gordon House and Jupp House.

16 A. Yes, that's right.

17 Q. Is that what you remember? And I think you also tell us
18 the age range for those houses.

19 A. Yes. As I was in these different houses, because --
20 bearing in mind that I had a full term at the orphanage
21 building, from a young baby right to the time that
22 I left at 14 or 15 years old. So I went through all of
23 these different houses.

24 Some of these houses were run by a housemistress,
25 some were run by housemasters -- really, all of the

1 orphanage houses consisted of a housemaster or
2 housemistress with an assistant who would maybe be
3 a younger person, possibly in training, to look after
4 the house and the children within the house. I can't
5 recall how many children were in each house at that
6 time.

7 Q. I think you tell us in your statement -- and this is
8 probably from the research you've done -- that there
9 were up to 500 children in the orphanage itself in the
10 1960s; is that right?

11 A. Yes. That's right. At a guess I would suspect there
12 would be about 20 to 22 children in each house
13 throughout the times that I was at the orphanage.

14 Q. So the housemasters or housemistresses would then report
15 direct to Dean Wolfe or Reverend Leslie?

16 A. Yes, they would report to the warden of the orphanage.

17 Q. And if there were other staff supporting them, would
18 they report directly to the dean or reverend as well or
19 would they report to the housemaster or mistress do you
20 think?

21 A. It's a good question, Jane, and I don't really know the
22 answer to that.

23 Q. Okay. In fact, what you tell us in your statement
24 is that when you first arrived at Aberlour, you weren't
25 put in a house straightaway because of your age; there

1 was a provision of a nursery on site in the orphanage.

2 Can you tell us more about that?

3 A. Yes. My understanding is that when I arrived at the
4 orphanage, they had what was called an infirmary, which
5 was part of the main building. I think it was located
6 in the girls' wing because some of the older girls could
7 lend a hand to assist with babies, taking them out in
8 prams and suchlike.

9 The orphanage buildings itself was very
10 self-sufficient in everything it had. Apart from just
11 the nursery and the infirmary that it had, it also had
12 its own laundry, its own dairy, which was quite unusual,
13 it had its own farm. It had a whole host of additional
14 buildings and services that were linked to the thing
15 that helped the building to run self-sufficiently.

16 When we were older, we would assist with the farm
17 and the fieldwork. The girls and the boys would both
18 assist with the -- help in the laundry. But as
19 a youngster, the laundry was seen to be a very dangerous
20 place because there was huge rollers and steam and irons
21 and presses and that type of thing. So there had to be
22 quite strict control in the laundry. It was a very
23 industrial type of thing with a huge chimney stack on
24 the outside.

25 LADY SMITH: What age were children at the time that they

1 started working in the laundry?

2 A. I don't know the answer to that, Lady Smith, I'm sorry.

3 LADY SMITH: You haven't a feel of how young or old they
4 would be, primary stage, secondary stage?

5 A. They would certainly not be youngsters, very young
6 children in the laundry running around. I would hazard
7 a guess, and I may be wrong, from about maybe 8 or
8 9 years upwards.

9 LADY SMITH: Right. What about working on the farm?

10 A. That was very much an older boys' chore for potato
11 picking and for bringing in the hay at harvest time.
12 I would imagine from about 12 or 13 years on.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14 A. We also had our own cobbler's, who repaired the shoes,
15 and we had our own sewing rooms where the girls darned
16 socks and repaired damaged clothing.

17 Of all the orphanage buildings I do recall being
18 locked -- and none of the doors were ever locked -- the
19 outside doors were never locked, they were all left
20 unlocked at night-time. But of the doors that were
21 locked, there was always two that was always locked and
22 that was the kitchen, for obvious reasons, and,
23 secondly, the laundry rooms in each house, because if
24 some young destructive child got into the laundry rooms
25 and upset all the system of us having fresh clothes to

1 be turned over and replaced every week with your laundry
2 system, then that could create quite a lot of havoc.

3 MS RATTRAY: Can I ask you, you mentioned the cobbler's:
4 whereabouts was the cobbler's based?

5 A. It was based in the boys' wing. It was a fairly small
6 Victorian type of ... Because the cobbler's ran with
7 the machinery and the large belts that drove the
8 different machines on the workshop tables for polishing
9 and cutting and sewing the shoes together, the cobbler's
10 was a little industrial place, but it was quite small.
11 It was run by a very elderly gentleman who had obviously
12 been the cobbler for a long, long time.

13 The orphanage had a practice of making do and mend
14 for most of the items that would wear out on a child's
15 upbringing.

16 Q. If we come back to your experience and your journey,
17 if we put it like that, through the orphanage, you
18 started off in the infirmary because you were in effect
19 a baby.

20 A. That's right, Jane. However, the orphanage was looking
21 at that particular issue and in 1954, after they had
22 purchased a large estate called the ...

23 Q. Is it The Dowans?

24 A. Yes, I'm thinking of the estate they bought where they
25 bought over more land and they bought parts of the

1 fishing on the River Spey and they bought over a large
2 mansion house called The Dowans.

3 However, I have just forgotten the name of it, but
4 it's not particularly important. What the orphanage
5 board of Governors had decided to do was to open this
6 Dowans building into a nursery specifically for the up
7 to 5-year-old children. It was to be the latest, state
8 of the art for the youngsters concerned. For instance,
9 the wash-hand basins were set at a low level so children
10 could reach them. Toilets were specially installed for
11 the use of the children.

12 The playing area was exceptional. We had sandpits
13 and all sorts of other activities and we're not talking
14 about just old second-hand tyres-on-a-rope type thing;
15 we're talking about proper seesaws, climbing frames,
16 swings and other activities for the children.

17 Q. Who was in charge of the nursery?

18 A. The orphanage had specifically put a superintendent,
19 a lady superintendent, in. Her name was Dorothy Heap.
20 This was when it was first opened. I don't know the
21 names of the later superintendents. But at my time it
22 was a Miss Dorothy Heap. Dorothy Heap had a very loving
23 and calming way with the children.

24 Bear in mind we're talking about up to 5-year-old
25 kids that would run around and be quite riotous and

1 there'd be all sorts of noises going on with the
2 activity of children. But she had a very calming effect
3 and she ran the place with a small team of assistants
4 and again there would be some young girls and some young
5 trainees under her charge. And I think Dean Wolfe and
6 Dorothy Heap ran the building very well.

7 Q. I think you tell us that you had a special part in the
8 official opening of the nursery at The Dowans.

9 A. Yes. The Dowans was simply the name of the building but
10 it was not to be called The Dowans, it was to be called
11 the Princess Margaret Nursery Home. In 1954,
12 Princess Margaret had been invited to come up and
13 officially open the building, probably with a plaque and
14 something to recognise the place.

15 Dean Wolfe -- the children had been playing in the
16 grounds in the different activities and Dean Wolfe had
17 asked who would like to present Princess Margaret with
18 a bucket of sand to open the new sandpit. I was the
19 first to get a bucket of sand to Princess Margaret.
20 It's my only moment of fame with royalty that I gave
21 Princess Margaret a bucket of sand to open the
22 Princess Margaret Nursery Home.

23 Of course, the press were there at the time and
24 there was lots of photographing, but Dean Wolfe was
25 quite astute inasmuch as when the crowds had flocked up,

1 because Princess Margaret was a great celebrity, and the
2 crowds had flocked and the villagers all wanted to be
3 able to see her, he did specifically say to them that he
4 wanted this event to be for the children and not for
5 everybody else. Yes, there would be visits with the
6 princess afterwards, and there would be cups of tea and
7 all the dignitaries wanted to be part of it as well, but
8 Canon Wolfe did feel that this event was to be for the
9 children and not for the grown-ups.

10 Q. When you finished your time in the nursery, when I think
11 you were about age 5, that was a point that you moved
12 back to the main orphanage and were put in a house;
13 is that correct?

14 A. That's correct.

15 Q. So what was the first house you were put in?

16 A. The first house I would be put into would be called Wee
17 Kids. And I think the age range there would be 5 to
18 about 7 years old.

19 Q. What are your memories of that house?

20 A. Very little memories of the Wee Kids. I can say it was
21 run by a lady who had been with the orphanage for quite
22 a long time.

23 I would like to explain that although I did say at
24 the beginning that the orphanage had been set up under
25 the auspices of the Scottish Episcopalian Church,

1 we weren't run as a religious order, we didn't
2 have people running around with religious garb on. The
3 only person that wore any official religious outfit
4 would be the dean or the warden. They would wear a dog
5 collar every day of the week, really, so that we
6 recognised his authority. But nobody else wore any
7 religious clothing at all. Yes, we had our prayers
8 in the morning and our prayers at night-time and our
9 graces before dinner, but it wasn't a strict religious
10 upbringing.

11 Q. I think you tell us at the start of your statement that
12 you had some involvement in the church throughout your
13 childhood at page 8738, paragraph 8 there, and you tell
14 us that you were a choirboy, a head choirboy, an altar
15 boy and a bell-ringer.

16 A. Yes. I took part in all of these activities. In fact,
17 the church was one area where I did enjoy the orphanage
18 life. It seemed to be something that, as a youngster,
19 I took to quite well.

20 Yes, it was a grand time at the church.

21 LADY SMITH: As you say, you had your own church in the
22 grounds of Aberlour; yes?

23 A. It was in the grounds of the orphanage.

24 LADY SMITH: Was it just for you people or did outsiders
25 come and worship at that church? You may not remember.

1 A. I do recall. It was really for the children, although
2 we would have occasional interaction with the
3 religious ... We weren't very far from the village and
4 there wasn't a "them and us" situation with the village
5 at all. We interacted quite a lot with the village
6 through sport and through different activities. A lot
7 of the village people were invited up to the orphanage
8 to help with various activities such as, say, Scottish
9 country dancing, to teach us things like that, outwith
10 school hours.

11 The orphanage and the village did intermix an awful
12 lot. I think it was a good bridge that Dean Wolfe had
13 made between the village and the orphanage kids.

14 LADY SMITH: Was that the village of Craigellachie?

15 A. No, this is the village of Aberlour.

16 LADY SMITH: How far from Craigellachie was the orphanage?

17 A. Two miles.

18 LADY SMITH: But the village was less than a mile, the
19 centre of the village?

20 A. The village was just a matter of a short walk away.

21 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

22 Ms Rattray.

23 MS RATTRAY: Once you'd finished or grown beyond the Wee
24 Kids house, where did you move next? Was that
25 Mount Stephen?

1 A. We then moved on to Mount Stephen House and they would
2 be aged up to about 12 years old.

3 Q. I think in your statement at page 8741, paragraph 26,
4 what you have told us is that you moved to Mount Stephen
5 House at about 7 to 8.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And then from there it was to Spey House from age 8 to 9
8 and a half; is that right?

9 A. Yes. I have a bit of trouble with this because my
10 memory is now being asked to go back many years.

11 Q. Of course.

12 A. I think perhaps some houses stick out more in your mind
13 because of the different activities and perhaps maybe
14 your fondness for the housemaster stand out better than
15 other houses. So you appear to have been in that house
16 for a longer period of time, but only because there was
17 so much going on in it, whereas in other houses there
18 might not have been as much going on, and although you
19 maybe spent the same length of time there, because life
20 just strolled along and you got on with it, maybe it
21 didn't stand out as well.

22 Q. So when you were in Mount Stephen, who was the head of
23 that house?

24 A. Most of the time I was in Mount Stephen house I had
25 a housemaster called BGX

1 Q. What were your impressions of him? What was he like as
2 a housemaster?

3 A. BGX brought to the orphanage and particularly
4 Mount Stephen House -- he brought to the young children
5 a sense of adventure, of getting out of the confines of
6 the orphanage building and taking on scouting and
7 bridge-building activities, which sounds today
8 horrendous, but we took on a bridge-building programme
9 in the countryside, covering small streams and footpaths
10 and things like that. So much so that I liked

11 BGX, I found him to be fair, I found him to be
12 loving, I found him to be an excellent choice of
13 housemaster.

14 Q. We might hear in the course of this case study
15 a different view being taken of this housemaster, of
16 someone who beat children. Do you recall anything about
17 that?

18 A. I understand where this is coming from and I think every
19 child can only, in retrospect, report on what it was
20 like for them at that time. I found BGX to be
21 a good housemaster, but I've equally spoken to older
22 orphanage boys and girls who did not.

23 Q. And during your time there, you found him to be a good
24 housemaster. Were you aware of any of your peers who
25 were there at the same time who didn't find him so good

1 at the time you were there?

2 A. I can't say that I did, Jane.

3 Q. From Mount Stephen you moved on to Spey House?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Who was your housemaster there?

6 A. I think for a short period of time my housemaster at
7 that point was a BBL? [REDACTED], who was a character.

8 [REDACTED] as a young man had polio and had

9 a [REDACTED], so he had [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]. Of course, as children, there is no sympathy
11 passed across to anyone that has that unfortunate
12 situation.

13 He also smoked, which was highly unusual in
14 orphanage life, amongst the housemasters. He also swore
15 sometimes, which again was highly unusual with the
16 housemasters and housemistresses in the orphanage. But
17 I do believe that BBL? [REDACTED] had quite a few redeeming
18 features.

19 Q. Before you tell us about his redeeming features, can
20 I just double-check his name? Is it BBL? [REDACTED] or
21 [REDACTED], because I have heard both names and I want to
22 clarify?

23 A. BBL? [REDACTED].

24 Q. You were going to tell us about his redeeming features.

25 A. He had a really nice way with the children. He kind of

1 got to the nub of any difficulty that you had. And the
2 swearing wasn't gratuitous, it wasn't used
3 unnecessarily; it was always used to make a point.

4 LADY SMITH: Can you give me an example of the point he
5 would be making when he was swearing?

6 A. A simple example would be if you'd maybe had trouble
7 with a boy who was upsetting you or maybe bullying you
8 or something, BBL? would say, "Just go and tell him to
9 eff off", type of thing. And that was BBL?'s sort of
10 casual way about life. I know it's not seen to be good
11 management from the children's point of view, but you
12 invariably found that BBL?'s way worked quite well.

13 I could also point out that BBL? married
14 a housemistress who had been quite popular in the house
15 as well and they went on to run a smaller
16 children's home in the Kirkcaldy area and possibly other
17 areas as well for what was then the Aberlour Child Care
18 Trust, who followed after the board of governors of the
19 Aberlour Orphanage.

20 So my understanding is that BBL? had quite
21 a long and colourful career at Aberlour and its
22 orphanage and the following childcare trust homes.

23 MS RATTRAY: Can you remember the name of the lady he
24 married?

25 A. I think I would only know her as a Miss

1 Q. Once again it may well be that we hear from other
2 witnesses who had a less positive experience with the
3 BBL? Is that anything you can help us with?

4 A. I'm sorry, Jane, I can't. What I can tell you is when
5 I left the orphanage, I do recall visiting BBL?
6 and his wife in one of the homes and it appeared to
7 be -- and I wasn't there to inspect it, but it appeared
8 to be well-run and an enjoyable place for the kids to be
9 brought up in.

10 Q. I think from Spey House, you then moved to Gordon House;
11 is that right?

12 A. I moved to Gordon House.

13 Q. And who was the housemaster there?

14 A. We had another BGG? Now, this is the same name
15 but BGG?, BGG? He was a much more elderly
16 man, a much more bookish type of housemaster. He had
17 been with the orphanage for quite a long time. He was
18 almost like an absent-minded professor, was our
19 BGG?

20 I think because of his age, he was a rather stiff,
21 elderly gentleman, who ran the orphanage -- the
22 Gordon House for the orphanage. He had one particularly
23 bad habit, which I don't think I've explained in any of
24 my statement, but it just comes to mind. Because as
25 I said earlier, one has a mine of little stories in

1 one's head and when something is maybe just highlighted
2 about a person or their name, a story will come out and
3 a remembrance will come out of it as well.

4 BGG? had a particularly nasty habit of at
5 bath time, inspecting the children's bottoms for
6 whatever reason I will make no comment on. We just
7 thought it was a laugh and a rather stupid thing to do,
8 but that was his habit.

9 Q. When you say inspecting the children's bottoms, in what
10 way? Can you describe that for us?

11 A. He would bend you over and look at your bottom to make
12 sure that after a bath, you'd cleaned it. I'm sure that
13 it was perfectly innocent in its day, but this is
14 a child abuse inquiry and these things are not looked on
15 favourably at all today. But as children, we just
16 thought it was the stupidest thing and quite often
17 laughed and giggled about it all at the time, you know.

18 Q. I think we understand from your statement that your
19 experience in Aberlour was generally a very positive
20 one; is that true?

21 A. I think I had a thoroughly good upbringing in
22 Aberlour Orphanage. I've always said that. I think as
23 an adult, I look back on it and I do say to myself that
24 I had a good upbringing at the orphanage. And yes, when
25 I read the papers and I know of all of different

1 activities that have gone on and the abuse (pause),
2 I still state that I had a thoroughly good upbringing in
3 Aberlour Orphanage.

4 Q. You do summarise this for us at paragraph 99, page 8754,
5 and it was in the context when we were asking you about
6 discipline, but you do say:

7 "I never felt that the treatment in the orphanage
8 was excessive or abusive. I had a thoroughly good
9 upbringing there. I was fed three times a day with good
10 food, I was entertained, kept active. There were lots
11 of things to do and we constantly went for walks in the
12 surrounding area. We also had a good school upbringing
13 and we had the best facilities in the area. I haven't
14 a bad word to say about Aberlour Orphanage."

15 And I think, in fairness, that sums up your personal
16 experience of your childhood there?

17 A. Absolutely, Jane. Short of repeating it all again, I do
18 still stand by that statement.

19 Q. One of the matters which has come up in other settings
20 about simply discussing children's experiences in care
21 is that a child could be provided with three meals a day
22 and clean clothes and education and so forth, but what
23 about affection? Was there anyone that you could turn
24 to for a form of parental affection, a hug, for example?
25 Did that form any part of your childhood experience

1 there?

2 A. I think the staff at Aberlour Orphanage were loving as
3 much as a member of staff could be, without showing too
4 much affection for one child or another. Yes, I'm sure
5 there were housemasters' pets, favourite children. But
6 to run an orphanage house efficiently, things had to be
7 done, discipline had to be maintained. We weren't on
8 strict religious or strict militarian type of running
9 the place. But I think fair's fair. You had to have
10 order when you had up to 20 or maybe even 30 boys in one
11 house with its own dormitory, its own dining room, its
12 own games room, its own bathrooms and toilet facilities,
13 and its own laundry and stores.

14 I think the housemaster's job was primarily to use
15 the children to help him to run that efficiently. When
16 I use the word "use", I don't mean use detrimentally,
17 I mean just to simply keep the place alive, not any
18 different than running an office. You have to use
19 members of staff to run an office efficiently. You have
20 to use the children to run -- you have to make sure
21 they're dressed at 7 o'clock in the morning, you've got
22 to make sure that the housework's done, you've got to
23 make sure they're ready in time for school. All these
24 small disciplines have to be done and you need to
25 involve the children to let them understand about the

1 timetable and about the strictness of the ruling that
2 certain things have to be done by a certain time.

3 I don't see that was a difficulty.

4 Q. I think you tell us when you were asked about various
5 aspects of life in the orphanage, you tell us about
6 routine there. I think to start in the morning, you
7 tell us that -- well, let's start at night perhaps.
8 Before bed you were responsible for taking all your
9 clothes and folding them up neatly and there was
10 something involving a snake belt.

11 A. A snake belt was an old elasticated type of belt with
12 coloured stripes around it and the central clasp was
13 just simply a hook over. It was called a snake belt
14 because it did kind of look like a snake. You put your
15 clothes into a little bundle and wrapped it with a snake
16 belt. The idea being, historically Aberlour had had one
17 or two fires which, with all the children involved,
18 could be quite disastrous. However the idea was that
19 the snake belt allowed to you pick up your bundle by the
20 snake belt and vacate the building and at least you
21 would have your clothes with you.

22 Q. I see. And you tell us that in the morning when you got
23 out of bed, you had to strip your bed and fold your
24 sheeting so that it was laid out for inspection.
25 What was that about?

1 A. Well, I think all housemasters had to have that type of
2 discipline where the bedding was all made and ready for
3 the following evening. Because if you allow children
4 just to run around and throw bedding and pillows
5 everywhere, you'll just have mayhem. So I think it's
6 fair that you had to have that discipline set up and it
7 was done in the morning, you know, so the beds would be
8 left nice and tidy for the day.

9 Q. What would happen if someone hadn't left their bed tidy
10 or didn't pass the inspection?

11 A. The housemaster -- sorry, I should say the housemasters,
12 not the housemaster as such, would have a system of
13 taking notes of what children did, when they did it and
14 how often they did it. If it was a repeat offence going
15 on, they had to discipline them eventually. There was
16 various minor disciplinary actions that they could take.
17 One of them would be standing in a corner isolated for
18 a short period of time. I'm never keen to say that it
19 went on for hours because I don't recall -- for any
20 child standing for five minutes seems like a lifetime
21 and will report it as such, that it was a lifetime. But
22 I think small disciplines had to be taken into account.

23 Where a child got further out of hand and, let's
24 say, for instance, refused to make a bed, as an example,
25 and was a repeat offender, then they would be given the

1 strap.

2 Q. Who was it that gave the strap?

3 A. That would be the housemaster's duty. However, again,
4 if that offender continued to offend and to keep
5 becoming difficult to work with, they would be reported
6 to the warden and it was for the warden to take up the
7 disciplinary matter from there.

8 Q. So did you ever behave in a way that you got the strap
9 from the housemaster?

10 A. Jane, I wouldn't really like to answer that question.

11 LADY SMITH: From that answer, are you in a position to tell
12 me what the strap was like?

13 A. It was very sore.

14 LADY SMITH: Was it leather?

15 A. It was a leather tawse. Perhaps I should maybe explain.
16 My understanding of the orphanage disciplinary
17 procedures was not as severe as the teaching staff
18 in the school. The teaching staff had a particularly
19 aggressive way of applying discipline with the strap.
20 If I can maybe move to that for a minute or two --

21 LADY SMITH: Yes.

22 A. -- and explain that when you were given the strap by
23 a housemaster or housemistress, you simply put your hand
24 out and you were given a tap across the hand. When we
25 were in the school, if you had upset the teachers, the

1 disciplinary style was different. What they would do is
2 they would ask you to roll up your sleeve and the strap
3 was applied from your hand all the way up your arm. And
4 because of the softer tissue in your arm, it always left
5 two purple forks or tongues from the tawse.

6 LADY SMITH: And you say the strap was a tawse: are you
7 telling me that it was what we know was called the
8 Lochgelly tawse because the manufacturers of these
9 tawses are based in Lochgelly?

10 A. The Lochgelly tawse, yes, I do understand it was the
11 Lochgelly tawse, which was about 18 inches long.

12 LADY SMITH: And it split into fingers at one end?

13 A. Fingers at the end.

14 LADY SMITH: It could be two or three.

15 A. And it's also quite a thick implement. It's about
16 20 centimetres thick -- sorry, 20 millimetres thick.
17 It's about 18 inches long.

18 I had actually hoped to bring a tawse to show
19 your Ladyship. However, the person who's got it has now
20 become a bit frightened to let it out of his sight.

21 LADY SMITH: Don't worry, I think we've got a clear picture
22 of what the Lochgelly tawse was all about. I think you
23 can still get them, actually, but that's by the by.

24 Ms Rattray.

25 MS RATTRAY: You have mentioned on the subject of

1 discipline, since we've moved there, a child might be
2 sent to stand in a corner for a period of time. If it
3 was a more serious matter they might get the strap and
4 you say across their hand with a tawse. How many
5 strokes generally would the housemaster give?

6 A. Usually one, for a slightly more severe disciplinary,
7 two. Maximum ever four. Six was definitely seen as
8 abuse and the children knew that as well.

9 Some other forms of small disciplinary procedures
10 would be taking away of privileges. A child would maybe
11 have certain privileges. I can't recall all the
12 individual privileges that you would have, but you just
13 took them for granted. It might even be like being able
14 to read for an hour before bed or play games or be
15 allowed outside to run around playing.

16 There may be small other disciplines like that that
17 would take place.

18 Q. Can I ask, did discipline issues or punishment ever
19 involve being sent to bed early?

20 A. I dare say that would be a disciplinary act to have
21 happened, yes.

22 Q. Is that something you remember happening?

23 A. Not me personally. But yes, when you mention it, I do
24 recall going to bed early would have been something, you
25 know.

1 Q. What about chores? You mention that as part of the
2 children's daily routine, certain chores would be
3 carried out, including before breakfast, and you
4 describe these for us at paragraphs 35 and 36 on
5 page 8743. There was a regime of doing different chores
6 in the morning. You didn't think they were particularly
7 hard, you would get up and you had to polish the long
8 parquet flooring with very large polishing buffs, and
9 younger children would be given lighter duties.

10 Was there ever a system whereby a child might be
11 given an additional chore as a punishment?

12 A. Yes, I think that's fair to say, Jane. They would be
13 given different chores, possibly at the worst, you know,
14 having to clean the toilets or something like that. And
15 of course, the housemaster would come round to inspect
16 that the work had been done correctly and to the right
17 standard.

18 Q. What would happen if it hadn't been done to the correct
19 standard?

20 A. Again, more discipline had to be brought into play. And
21 as I said earlier, if the housemaster felt that the
22 child had become so unruly that the disciplinary rules
23 were not being followed, then he could report that child
24 to the warden and the warden would then have to look
25 at the disciplinary action to be taken.

1 Q. You mentioned that six strokes of the tawse would have
2 been regarded by the children as abusive. Did that ever
3 happen when you were there, to your memory?

4 A. I don't recall. Some other people reporting here may
5 say that that was regular, but I don't recall. As kids,
6 we would all sort of say, "How many did you get?" so
7 we were always aware of how many a child got. I think
8 if you got six, that was a really -- that was really
9 excessive.

10 Q. But you're not able to help us as to whether or not
11 anyone did get six?

12 A. Not that -- I can't recall a specific name. I certainly
13 never got six. I was a good boy.

14 Q. As a good boy, are you able to help us at all as to what
15 happened if the matter of discipline was referred to the
16 warden?

17 A. I think even just going to visit the warden in his
18 office was quite a ... That was a serious experience,
19 you know. Even just to be given the strap once or twice
20 in the warden's office -- and he would certainly be able
21 to speak to you and explain why you were getting it, why
22 you were getting the strap, and what he wanted to see
23 happen afterwards. That was all important.

24 Q. I think you tell us -- and we'll come on to that topic
25 later -- when you were leaving Aberlour and you were

1 called to the warden's office, you were very worried
2 about going to the warden's office because you were
3 thinking about what you might have done wrong. So would
4 it be generally the experience of children that if they
5 were being called to the warden's office it was to do
6 with having done something wrong?

7 A. It was associated with having done something wrong and
8 it was always kind of seen as a frightening place to be.
9 It was a lovely building as such, lovely office, lovely
10 wood-panelled walls and lovely parquet type flooring.
11 It was very Victorian in style, of course. But you knew
12 that when you went to the warden's office, you'd done
13 something quite serious.

14 Q. So how many strokes of the -- was it a tawse?

15 A. A tawse.

16 Q. How many strokes did the warden give?

17 A. I have to say I don't think the warden ever lost his
18 temper and ever took excessive punishment to a child.

19 Q. Do you have experience of that yourself, being sent to
20 the warden's office?

21 A. I can't answer that, Jane.

22 Q. Can you not remember?

23 A. I do remember.

24 Q. Can you perhaps share that with us?

25 A. I do recall going to the warden's office on one or two

1 occasions and I think possibly that's what instilled the
2 discipline into me at that time. I jokingly said
3 earlier that I was a good boy at the orphanage. I think
4 when you take it in context, having been there as
5 a baby, having gone through the different houses, having
6 been brought up in the place, having spent my childhood
7 there, I wasn't looking for a difficult life, I was
8 looking for an easy life, as easy as one could make for
9 oneself. I didn't do this -- thinking about it, it just
10 worked that way. And because of that, you know, you
11 would do the chores and the jobs that you were asked of
12 to be done.

13 You would fit in with the work cycle of cleaning the
14 floors and cleaning the toilets and accepting the
15 discipline if you strayed away from that. So I learned
16 quite quickly from being brought up with the whole
17 system of making it as easy for myself as I could.
18 After all, I was in this alone. There was nobody else.
19 Yes, I could go to my pals, my young kid friends in the
20 orphanage, and have a laugh and a joke and discuss all
21 that was wrong with the world, as children do today.
22 However, there was something more than that. You were
23 on your own and it was for you to make the best of what
24 you were offered, and I took that opportunity and
25 grasped it.

1 So I wasn't looking to make life difficult for
2 myself by not doing the chores. I fitted in with the
3 regimental type of system and timetables to make my life
4 better and more enjoyable.

5 Q. But if we take it that at some stage you did something
6 which was regarded as wrong and you were sent to the
7 warden's office, what happened on that occasion when you
8 got to the warden's office?

9 A. A severe dressing down verbally. I think on one
10 occasion it was one of the strap, and a discussion
11 afterwards to note that the housemaster will be keeping
12 a check on my behaviour afterwards. And I think that
13 put me right.

14 Q. Was that Dean Wolfe or was it Reverend Leslie?

15 A. In my case it was Dean Wolfe.

16 Q. Did you ever have to go to the warden's office for
17 misbehaving in some way when Reverend Leslie was there?

18 A. No.

19 Q. You tell us about mealtimes. How was the food? Did you
20 enjoy the food?

21 A. Yes, I did. The orphanage kitchens were based in the
22 girls' wing and I have to say, for obvious reasons,
23 because we had the girls down there, and we had the
24 female staff down there, the orphanage at that time had
25 a system of running the food from the girls' wing to the

1 boys' wing, which was only a few yards, by trolleys,
2 heated trolleys, which could be reheated.

3 The food was wholesome. There was a good variety.
4 Fish was always on the menu. Mince and tatties was
5 always on the menu. And we had puddings and we had
6 soups. I think we had a thoroughly good range of foods.

7 But as a youngster, I seemed to learn about the
8 things I didn't like in life, such as some of the
9 vegetables and the onions -- even to this day, I still
10 draw them to one side. This all came from the variety
11 of foods that were available from the orphanage.

12 Q. You don't tell us in your statement, but we've obviously
13 heard about problems arising in other settings where
14 children don't like the food that's been put in front of
15 them and won't eat it or finish it. Can you remember
16 what the response of staff would be if a child didn't
17 want to eat their meal or didn't finish it?

18 A. It's a good question, Jane, and it's an area I've never
19 really explored other than to say that, as a child,
20 I ate everything that was put in front of me. You would
21 still find reasons to go down to the local village and
22 nick apples and pears from the orchard trees that were
23 available. Why, one doesn't know, but that's the way of
24 children.

25 I don't really recall what the disciplinary

1 procedure was if you never ate your food. I think when
2 you have boys all running around playing games, playing
3 sport, going walks, going swimming in the local streams
4 and rivers, I think that's enough to keep the appetite
5 healthy for any child.

6 Q. You weren't aware then of any practice of re-serving one
7 meal at the next meal, the same food, because it hadn't
8 been eaten or anything of that nature?

9 A. I can't help with you that enquiry, Jane.

10 Q. Are you aware of any practice where a child might be
11 force-fed, with food fed spooned into a child's mouth,
12 because they were refusing to eat?

13 A. In all my time in the orphanage, I've never, ever heard
14 of anybody being force-fed.

15 Q. Another I think I would like to ask you about is
16 bed-wetting. From your memories, how did staff handle
17 a situation where a child had wet the bed?

18 A. Whilst I wasn't guilty of that particular activity, I do
19 think that bed-wetting went on. I don't recall any
20 disciplinary actions being taken. Perhaps this is why
21 I maybe have a rose-tinted outlook of my upbringing
22 in the orphanage, because I don't recall the
23 disciplinary procedures if you never ate your food,
24 I don't recall the disciplinary procedures if you wet
25 the bed, and perhaps maybe I just blocked that out, you

1 know, but I do not know of any particular instances of
2 that. Yet I do know that bed-wetting would have went
3 on.

4 Q. When it comes to baths, you say in your statement that
5 you can't remember whether baths were shared. Was there
6 any sort of formal arrangement around bath times, like
7 for example children queueing up on bath night or
8 something like that, or were children able to choose as
9 and when they would take their own bath? Can you
10 remember anything about that?

11 A. What I can say about the baths is it was in one room and
12 there would be six baths, five or six baths, and the
13 children at a younger age would share them. I think the
14 children at an older age would get the bath to
15 themselves. Because you could time the bathing sessions
16 for the youngsters to be first at a certain time and
17 then the older ones going in at a different time.

18 I do recall, as a slightly older boy, getting the
19 baths to ourselves. You still shared the bathroom with
20 other children, but you got the bath to yourself because
21 you were a bigger person, of course. But for the
22 youngsters and the toddlers, two to a bath would be
23 normal.

24 Q. Can you remember whether the bathwater was changed
25 between children going in and out of the bath?

1 A. I don't know that I can answer that specifically. But
2 what I can say is I don't ever recall seeing dirty water
3 in a bath that you had to use.

4 Q. Do you ever recall the water being cold, for example?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Ron, in relation to clothing, at page 8744 you tell us
7 in paragraph 40 about the clothing. You describe it as
8 a regulation uniform and also regulation haircuts. The
9 uniform you describe, was that just for school or was
10 that what the children wore throughout the day and at
11 weekends as well?

12 A. We did have play outfits and we did have Sunday outfits
13 and we had sport outfits. Each child was responsible
14 for their own daily looking after of their clothes, but
15 you did have a change of clothes available during the
16 day if need be and you could report to your housemaster
17 and sort of say, "I've got this particular garment dirty
18 and I need to have another one", and you'd be able to
19 get another one.

20 Q. And the clothes you wore, were they your own clothes,
21 like they had names on them? So the pair of shorts you
22 wore one day, once they were washed, they would come
23 back to you, or were they communal clothes that all went
24 off to be washed and it came back and you might get
25 something different?

1 A. I think it was different than that, Jane. My
2 understanding is -- sorry, I should say my recollection
3 is that we all had a number. We had what you'd describe
4 as a laundry number, and each child was given a set of
5 clothes, one that you would wear, one that you had in
6 your laundry store, and another was away being washed
7 for you and laundered for you. So there was a constant
8 cycle of laundry coming through a system whereby you
9 always had something clean available on a shelf in
10 a store that you could draw on. The laundry would be
11 changed every week, but if you needed to -- if there was
12 a particular need for a pair of trousers or a pair of
13 pants over and above that, you could draw from that
14 store of clothes.

15 But you had to have your laundry number.

16 Q. I think you tell us later in your statement, in the
17 context of discussing children running away, that the
18 clothing that children wore or their haircuts, or both
19 together, would mark them out if they ran away and they
20 would be immediately obvious that they were from the
21 orphanage; is that right?

22 A. It identified you as coming from the orphanage. And
23 I think overall, you know, that was no bad thing. At
24 least you knew who was an orphanage child and who
25 wasn't.

1 LADY SMITH: Just before we leave what you were wearing,
2 what about shoes? Did you have your own shoes?

3 A. We did have shoes. We had sandals, which were the
4 old-fashioned sort of strap over the front type with
5 a clasp at the side, for day-to-day activity. We did
6 have boots for when we went walking, and again the
7 cobbler's job was to ensure that the boots were up to
8 speed for condition. That was the sort of tackety boot
9 type system with tacks in them. And you had slippers
10 for when you were inside the home.

11 LADY SMITH: What about when you grew out of the shoes and
12 boots that you were wearing? Did you get new ones or
13 did you get cast-offs from other children.

14 A. The whole thing about the cobbler's was that he would be
15 repairing them constantly, so you'd move on to the next
16 size and it would have been the size that someone else
17 had worn before you. In one part of the orphanage -- it
18 was usually at the front door porch -- there was
19 a shoebox system, which all had numbers on them, and
20 when you came in the front door you changed your shoes
21 at that point, put your slippers on and you put your
22 boots back into the box that you were allocated.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 MS RATTRAY: I was going to move on and ask you one or two
25 things about school. You've already told us a bit about

1 school and the school building and discipline in the
2 school.

3 In your statement at paragraph 44 on page 8744, you
4 tell us that you thought the school was a poor aspect of
5 your experience in care. Can you expand upon that and
6 tell us why you think it was poor?

7 A. Yes. I do feel that the teachers at the Aberlour
8 school, the orphanage school, they never brought the
9 best out in us. I think the records will show that very
10 few of the orphanage children ever achieved anything
11 higher than, you know, than what we had at the school.
12 The eleven-plus was the exam at that time. I would even
13 be interested to know how many children did achieve
14 universities.

15 My thinking at the time was that the teachers -- it
16 appeared to me that the teachers just wanted to get you
17 through the system without really looking for anybody
18 that excelled or had special achievements that could be
19 got.

20 LADY SMITH: When you refer to the Aberlour Orphanage
21 school, is that the school that took you up to age 11,
22 the primary school?

23 A. It was the only school that you had at the orphanage and
24 it took you beyond 11 to 15.

25 LADY SMITH: So you're thinking of the entirety of the

1 education?

2 A. Yes. Absolutely, Lady Smith.

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

4 MS RATTRAY: The orphanage school, you do make clear in your
5 statement that the teachers there were employed by the
6 local authority, the education authority, it wasn't the
7 orphanage itself?

8 A. That's my understanding, Jane. I may be corrected on
9 that if that's not right, but my understanding is that
10 the teachers were employed by the Local Education
11 Authority and not by the orphanage itself.

12 Q. In the orphanage and in the various houses you were in,
13 to what extent was there any encouragement to sort of
14 work hard at school? Was there any homework support or
15 anything of that nature?

16 A. We certainly had homework and we certainly brought it
17 home and the housemaster would ensure that that
18 homework -- and give you assistance with spelling,
19 writing, grammar, et cetera, to see you through your
20 homework. I don't think the housemaster's remit was to
21 take them beyond -- in other words to try and achieve
22 any extra education. I think the housemaster's role was
23 just simply to make sure that the kids did their
24 homework and assist them with it.

25 I think what I'm trying to say is that, looking back

1 on my childhood at Aberlour Orphanage, I know that
2 I could have excelled better in a further educational
3 system, but never had that opportunity. And I do think
4 that the teachers -- and I'm saying specifically the
5 teachers at the school -- never let that light shine.

6 Q. The children who attended the school in the orphanage,
7 was it only the children in the orphanage or did
8 children from outwith the orphanage attend?

9 A. It would only be children from the orphanage.

10 Q. In relation to leisure, in your statement you provide us
11 with some detail about the various outdoor pursuits that
12 you were able to enjoy at Aberlour. You mention that
13 you thought you had some freedom. How far did you have
14 freedom to leave the grounds of the orphanage and, for
15 example, go into the village?

16 A. We were allowed into the village, which wasn't far away.
17 Obviously, one had to tell the housemaster or ask the
18 housemaster's permission to go to the village. We were
19 also allotted certain days of the week where we could
20 visit the village to spend our pocket money in the local
21 shops.

22 Q. Would you be supervised on that occasion or were
23 children allowed to leave on their own?

24 A. I would say it would be a mixture, Jane. It would be
25 a mixture of occasional supervision, depending on the

1 age of the child, and as you got older you were allowed,
2 as a great bonus, to go down on your own or with your
3 pals.

4 Q. And what age were you allowed to go on your own?

5 A. Probably from about 12 upwards.

6 Q. In relation to birthdays and Christmas, you describe
7 a Christmas in which you received gifts; is that right?

8 A. Yes. Birthdays and Christmas were a particularly good
9 time, and maybe this is why I have a good recollection
10 of the orphanage, because the Dean Wolfe certainly made
11 sure that he visited each child on its birthday. He
12 came round and you were given a card and you were made
13 to feel special. He also had a very large set of
14 buildings which he had kept aside and never used for the
15 children, where he would collect all the donated toys
16 that people had either brought in or sent in or had
17 donated to the orphanage.

18 It was a huge array of toys, anything from a small
19 doll up to a huge bike. The warden would walk you round
20 to that particular building and invite you to choose or
21 select a gift, anything. And of course, if you were,
22 say, 6 years old and you went for an adult's bike, he
23 might say, "That might not be suitable for you but how
24 about a bike this size?" He would steer you and help
25 you. You virtually had carte blanche to select a gift.

1 And if he thought it was suitable, then that's what you
2 got.

3 Q. And when you received a gift of that nature, was that
4 something you were allowed to keep for yourself and was
5 there a place in the house that you were living in
6 at the time that you were able to keep your own
7 belongings?

8 A. Yes, the gift was to be for you and you alone. You had
9 a locker you could keep it in. It wasn't lockable,
10 there were no locks and suchlike in Aberlour, but you
11 did have a locker that you could keep things in. If
12 you'd got -- if you were big enough or old enough for
13 a bike, there was a place that it could be kept.
14 Anybody that got a bike was seen to be -- you know, it
15 was, oh, that was great.

16 LADY SMITH: I think on that happy note, we'll stop now for
17 the morning break. We break for about 15 minutes at
18 this stage, Ron, and I'll sit again after that.

19 (11.33 am)

20 (A short break)

21 (11.48 am)

22 LADY SMITH: Ron, if you're ready we'll carry on.

23 A. Thank you.

24 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

25 MS RATTRAY: Ron, at page 8756 of your statement you tell us

1 about an awareness of abuse that took place at
2 Aberlour Orphanage, and whilst that wasn't something you
3 experienced yourself, you did have awareness of sexual
4 abuse of other children whilst you were there.

5 A. Yes, Jane.

6 Q. You mention a housemaster involved in abuse called
7 Mr Lees. Can you tell us what you remember about what
8 happened?

9 A. At some stage in my orphanage life, when I was in
10 Mount Stephen House, the house below us, which I think
11 would be called Wee Kids, the housemaster had sexually
12 abused some children. I don't know the nature of the
13 abuse, but, like any other building with lots of
14 children in it, the rumours do go flying and the stories
15 go flying around. But we soon learned that these were
16 not just stories or rumours, we learned that it was
17 true.

18 We never, ever did see the police at the orphanage,
19 but we do know that this particular housemaster had been
20 charged with the offence of sexual abuse and that he had
21 been sent to prison.

22 Q. Did you know at the time how many children had been
23 involved in that?

24 A. I don't know the answer to that. My understanding was
25 it wasn't just one child.

1 Q. At the time when rumours were flying around, do you know
2 whether there were rumours flying around about this
3 housemaster before he was charged?

4 A. No, it just seemed to be a single event.

5 Q. The children obviously were talking about this.

6 A. Yes, it was common knowledge throughout the orphanage
7 children.

8 Q. Were the children allowed to speak about this? If
9 a housemaster overheard children talking about what had
10 happened and this housemaster, Mr Lees, would the
11 children be encouraged to open up and share their views
12 on it or were they perhaps told not to talk about it?

13 A. I'm really sorry, Jane, but I don't have an answer for
14 you on that one.

15 Q. That's fine. I appreciate it's a long time ago. It
16 happened in a house that you weren't in at the time, to
17 your knowledge.

18 A. I wasn't in that house at that time.

19 Q. Do you remember the housemaster involved at all?

20 A. The name of the housemaster?

21 Q. No, no. You mention Mr Lees; I think in fact his name
22 was Eric Lee, we know. Do you have any memories of him
23 yourself?

24 A. Not really, no. I just know that he was a housemaster
25 there. He never had any interaction with me or my group

1 or my house. You just knew that he was a housemaster of
2 a different house.

3 I think that was the thing about the orphanage. To
4 a certain extent, you isolated yourself to your own
5 friends and your own activities. You didn't really --
6 yes, there would be younger children in the school and
7 round about the orphanage grounds, but your interaction
8 was mostly with the people that you boarded with.

9 Q. You express the view that you felt the orphanage dealt
10 with it quite well at the time in respect that they
11 reported the abuse to the police and the police were
12 involved and then obviously things were taken further by
13 the police. Do you know what, if any, support was
14 provided to the children who had been abused?

15 A. I'm sorry, I can't answer that, Jane, because I don't
16 know the answer to that.

17 LADY SMITH: Do you know what age group they were?

18 A. They would be younger than me, Lady Smith. They would
19 be younger than me. I'm just trying to recall what age
20 I would have been at the time. I think I might have
21 been 9 or 10. These children would have been 6 or 7, in
22 my understanding, my recollection.

23 MS RATTRAY: Another name you've mentioned -- earlier in
24 your statement, you mention a housemaster of [REDACTED] House,
25 a Mr BBR [REDACTED] -- sorry, not mister, BBR [REDACTED].

1 What are your memories of BBR ?

2 A. I have a very expansive knowledge of

3 BBR . Whether he was a or not,

4 I don't know. It's said or rumoured that he was

5 a in the , but that was possibly

6 only because he drove an car. I think I will

7 need to ask you to be more specific about your question.

8 Q. Were you ever in the house headed up by BBR ?

9 A. No, never.

10 Q. Not being a member of his house, what contact or direct

11 contact, if any, did you have with BBR when

12 you were there?

13 A. As a member of the staff, I knew very well of

14 BBR . I maybe haven't said in my statement

15 that I knew BBR long after my life in the

16 orphanage and in fact I visited him with my wife on many

17 occasions. I'm still in contact with his stepson, who

18 was a boarder at Aberlour Orphanage.

19 Q. Am I correct in my understanding that the stepson you

20 refer to, who was at Aberlour Orphanage, that that

21 person then took on BBR 's surname at one

22 stage?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Is that correct?

25 A. Yes, and still does.

1 Q. When you were at the orphanage, am I right in my
2 understanding that BBR was known by the boys
3 because he drove certain cars or had an interest in
4 cars?

5 A. BBR had come from quite a well-off family in
6 Falmouth in the south of England. He did arrive in
7 Aberlour Orphanage with an [REDACTED]
8 car, which is completely out of character with the
9 Victorian surroundings of the orphanage, and the warden
10 even asked him to dispose of the car and buy something
11 a bit more sober.

12 Another thing that BBR would quite often do
13 is when we went on picnics, we would have the standard
14 fare of a sandwich and a bottle of milk to drink on our
15 picnics when we went out in the country. BBR
16 always seemed to have lemonade and ice cream, which was
17 quite unusual. So his boys were always seen to be
18 getting better looked after because of BBR's
19 input, through his own generosity, would be better than
20 ours, is how it appeared to us.

21 Q. Did you ever have any concerns about BBR at the
22 time you were a child at Aberlour? By that I mean
23 concerns about his relationship or behaviour towards the
24 boys.

25 A. When I was a child, BBR frightened me

1 because he was a very large man, he was very tall, and
2 he was a very large character. To give you a for
3 instance, if I was walking down a corridor and
4 BBR was passing me in the opposite direction,
5 we'd quite often crack a joke, and roar with laughter,
6 which frightened the life out of me. But that's only
7 because it was unusual in as much as the other
8 housemasters never behaved like that. He would find
9 something to comment about and make a joke about it and
10 roar his head off with laughter. I just found it, as
11 a youngster, a bit disconcerting.

12 However, I have to also explain that whilst
13 BBR was not a housemaster of mine, he did
14 instil in me a great love of motor cars and
15 I subsequently, through his teachings, got involved
16 in the motor trade. I learned a lot about BBR
17 afterwards.

18 LADY SMITH: Did he get rid of the ?

19 A. Absolutely, yes, he replaced it with an Austin Princess,
20 which is a totally different kettle of fish.

21 MS RATTRAY: Were there any rumours flying around when you
22 were a boy at the orphanage in relation to BBR ?

23 A. I don't recall rumours at the time. But I certainly do
24 recall discussions and rumours at a later date. And in
25 fact, even today, I'm still in contact with his stepson,

1 who I'm great friends with because he, like me, spent
2 his whole time in the orphanage [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED] He and I are still friends. He's just
4 hitting retirement now and I've been retired for a few
5 years.

6 I still do not know if there was a sexual
7 relationship between him and BBR [REDACTED]
8 I just don't know.

9 Q. You don't know, but is that the subject of what might
10 have been rumours at some time?

11 A. I think there were rumours and I had heard rumours from
12 boys and from some of the local villagers that he did
13 have an interest in men.

14 He never tried anything on with me. My wife, who is
15 with me today, will vouch for the fact that when we
16 visited him, even when we had a family, he was just the
17 same then, where he would laugh and joke, slightly
18 risqué type of jokes, never totally rude, but we'd
19 always be roaring with laughter at whatever he'd said.

20 Q. In relation to your contact with him later in life, did
21 you maintain contact with him when you left the
22 orphanage straightaway or did you meet up with him later
23 in life and there was a gap of time?

24 A. To recap, when I left the orphanage, because of the
25 circumstances that I left the orphanage, which I know

1 you might want to talk about later, because of my
2 instant removal from the orphanage, I always had this
3 yearning to go back. I didn't see or hear from
4 BBR for quite a few years, but in my late
5 teens I do recall going back up to Aberlour and meeting
6 up with him. After all, my friend, who's now his
7 stepson, was really the reason why I was going up to
8 visit anyway. I maintained a visiting relationship with
9 him until he died.

10 Q. You say your friend is his stepson. Do I take it from
11 that that BBR married your friend's mother?

12 A. No, he adopted him.

13 LADY SMITH: You're talking about the stepson being
14 a friend?

15 A. Yes, I beg your pardon, Lady Smith. I'm still friendly
16 with his stepson. Maybe the stepson is not the right
17 name. What I can say is he now uses the name .
18 He was adopted by BBR .

19 MS RATTRAY: When you say he was adopted, do you know
20 whether that was a formal legal adoption or just a sort
21 of practical adoption?

22 A. I don't know the answer to that, Jane.

23 Q. Moving now, Ron, to the circumstances of you leaving
24 Aberlour Orphanage. You tell us in some detail about
25 what happened there at page 8755 --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- and then at 8757.

3 A. I'm happy to do that, Jane, but I'd just like to make
4 a point to the chair that it's not uncommon for young
5 boys to be in admiration of their house parents. I know
6 of one particular boy who's had at least six different
7 name changes and they've all been -- the name changes he
8 has taken have all been of the different foster parents
9 that he's ended up going to stay with. So in some years
10 when I would see him, he would be called one thing and
11 then the next time I would say to him, "How are you?",
12 and whatever his name was, he would say, "That's not my
13 name now, my name is such-and-such".

14 So I have to say it's not uncommon for certain
15 children, boys or girls -- I don't know of an instance
16 with girls, so I'm talking about boys here -- to take
17 the name of their foster or house parent, whether by
18 legal adoption or just for the sake of identity, I don't
19 know.

20 Q. Just on that subject then: your friend who you refer to
21 as BBR's stepson, do you know at what age he
22 left care at the orphanage? Did he leave as a child or
23 did he leave at the age of 15/16?

24 A. He left at the same age as me, at 15.

25 Q. Moving on now to your own experience of when you left.

1 You tell us about that in some detail at pages 8757 to
2 8759. Can you summarise for us what happened to you on
3 the day you left?

4 A. Yes. It was a particularly traumatic experience and
5 even when I talk to ex-Aberlour Orphanage boys and girls
6 who have left, they all suffered the same experience.
7 I've even spoken to ex-members of the board of governors
8 about this subject.

9 The first I knew that I was leaving
10 Aberlour Orphanage was when I was summoned by my
11 housemaster to attend the warden's office. As
12 I explained previously, when you were summoned to the
13 warden's office you instantly felt there was trouble
14 afoot: you had done something wrong and you were being
15 summoned for disciplinary action. One associated the
16 warden's office with that because he was the most senior
17 representative.

18 So I marched along to the warden's office -- this
19 was just before I left for going to school. My
20 housemaster had summoned me and said, you're not going
21 to school today, Ronnie, the warden would like to see
22 you in his office. So I went along to the warden's
23 office and on the way through the long corridors of the
24 institute, I kept thinking to myself what I had done
25 wrong and what excuses could I prepare myself with for

1 this imaginary disciplinary meeting that I was going
2 for. But when I arrived at the warden's office, there
3 in front of me was the warden and a lady I knew to be
4 from Edinburgh Children's Welfare Department called
5 Miss Talbot.

6 Miss Talbot was a tall lady who I had met before
7 when I had left the orphanage temporarily and I knew to
8 be my children's welfare officer. So my suspicions were
9 instantly ignited when the warden asked me, "Now,
10 Ronnie, what do you want to do when you leave the
11 orphanage?" I had absolutely no preparation for this at
12 all. I had never given any thought about leaving the
13 orphanage. Here I was today, I was going to go off to
14 school and get on with what was ahead of me, but I had
15 no inkling that I was going to leave the orphanage that
16 day.

17 So I kind of stuttered a few words out in surprise
18 to this and said to the warden that I wasn't -- I hadn't
19 thought about leaving. He said, well, you'll have to
20 think about it, you'll need to leave some time and
21 you'll need to be thinking about getting a job. So this
22 subject was kind of foisted on me without any
23 preparation on my behalf.

24 I think between the warden and Miss Talbot, they had
25 sort of given me an interview that I wasn't really

1 enjoying and I wasn't prepared for, and one of them
2 said, "What sort of job would you like to do when you
3 leave?" Well, I had no training for a job, I didn't
4 know anything about a job. I probably blurted out
5 stupidly, "Well, I don't know".

6 Then the subject of an apprenticeship came up. I'm
7 just looking at the words here. This was a big word for
8 me, I had never heard of an apprenticeship, didn't know
9 what it was, what it involved. When it was explained to
10 me that it was a training on a job, I kind of blurted
11 out, "I would like to be a train driver". That was
12 a childish thing to say, you know, but at the time it
13 seemed to be the best I could do.

14 So the warden said, "They're not really looking for
15 any train drivers just now", and Miss Talbot suggested
16 to me, "What about a job in electrics?" I didn't know
17 anything about electrics and suchlike, so I kind of
18 looked at them with a gawp. My mouth was wide open and
19 I didn't really know what to answer. I was really stuck
20 on this interview, I do recall that.

21 However, the upshot was that Miss Talbot was going
22 to take me to Edinburgh and she was going to get me
23 a job as an apprentice in electrics or as an
24 electrician.

25 All this just -- I had learned from experience just

1 to accept what any adult had said to me with a certain
2 amount of respect and kind of agreed to all this without
3 really knowing what it meant for me. What struck me,
4 what really floored me, was when the warden said to me,
5 "That's settled, we'll have you on the 10.30 train to
6 Edinburgh today", and that instantly drew a reaction
7 from me: I couldn't possibly go on the 10.30 train that
8 day, I had school to go to and I had a life in the
9 orphanage to continue, I had friends and schoolteachers
10 and housemasters to think about. And now that I'd got
11 my head round the fact that I was leaving, I had to go
12 and say cheerio to them. But I wasn't allowed that.
13 And I had favourite things that I had collected over my
14 term in the orphanage that I considered to be my
15 possessions, possibly some of my previous birthday
16 presents or little knick-knacks that one owned that you
17 treasured. I had all these to collect and that was all
18 pooh-poohed, "No, no, Miss Talbot's got a bag here for
19 your laundry and your bits and pieces are all here,
20 she's got the tickets and we'll have you ready for the
21 10.30 train from Aberlour station".

22 I can then expand on that, Jane. But that was
23 basically the day that I left the orphanage. I was
24 absolutely floored. I have since discovered when
25 talking to other people that they all had -- at that

1 time anyway, you know, at that period in the 1960s when
2 I left, they all had that experience. How long this had
3 been going on with the orphanage hierarchy and the
4 orphanage board of governors, I don't know, but that was
5 the way that I left the orphanage and I know that
6 that is the way that a lot of my other colleagues left
7 the orphanage as well.

8 Q. I think you even tell us that you were given a suitcase
9 with some clothing in it and that was the first time
10 you'd been given a set of long trousers.

11 A. Yes. I don't ever recall wearing long trousers prior to
12 that. This was a new thing for me. As I said,
13 everything was prepared and ready for me, which just
14 floored me. I don't particularly recall tears at that;
15 I just recall being absolutely stuck for words.

16 Q. Essentially, what you're saying, as I understand it, is
17 you got up in the morning as a schoolboy in short
18 trousers, who had spent your entire life in an orphanage
19 in a very rural setting, and by the evening you were
20 being treated as a young adult on your own in the
21 capital city.

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. Is that essentially what happened?

24 A. 100% that's what happened. And I had difficulties --
25 I think I've always had difficulties with that. It was

1 like the guillotine blade had come down and there was no
2 going back.

3 Q. I think from page 8763 in your statement, you tell us
4 about the impact your experiences at Aberlour have had
5 upon you. I think whilst your experience in general
6 terms was very positive at Aberlour, I think you
7 indicate that the lack of preparation had an effect on
8 you. I think you mention financial problems. Was that
9 perhaps linked to not being prepared to budget or to
10 handle money at all?

11 A. There's many things going through my head here on that,
12 Jane. The difficulty I have is trying to understand why
13 the orphanage did it that way. I mean, it was just ...
14 It was just so unfortunate, I think. Given that they
15 had -- even as an adult, they had a very good reputation
16 going for them with the childcare that they provided up
17 until that point, but that was a particularly
18 unfortunate way of dealing with it. And I think in
19 childcare terms, it was really bad.

20 Q. I think another matter you mention in terms of impact,
21 which we haven't touched on in your statement before,
22 but I'll touch on now, is that you entered the orphanage

23

24

25

I think you explain because

1 children were divided by gender into the boys' and
2 girls' wings, but also, as you've explained, they were
3 then sub-divided by age. And I think you've explained
4 to us that that has had a significant effect upon your
5 [REDACTED] adult life.

6 A. It has and that's been very unfortunate throughout my
7 life. I can recall one instance when I was playing
8 with, oddly enough, this stepson of BBR [REDACTED]. I was
9 playing with him with a broken mirror in the playground
10 and we'd been annoying the girls on the other side of
11 the playground with the reflection of the mirror,
12 flashing it in their face and things like that. We
13 thought it was a great hoot.

14 The young lad said to me, "You see that girl you've
15 got the mirror on? [REDACTED]".
16 That's the first I recall having [REDACTED] at the
17 orphanage.

18 This friend of mine then turned round and said to
19 me, "You see that boy over there playing in that corner?
20 [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]". I didn't realise this.

22 I have to say at this point, when I've spoken to [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED] about this incident, of only having
24 seen [REDACTED] when I was 7, they don't
25 have the same story as me. They tell me, no, that's not

1 right, [REDACTED]

2 How much the orphanage hierarchy had to do with
3 making sure that [REDACTED] I can't answer.

4 I just know that the first time I recall seeing
5 [REDACTED] in the orphanage was when I was
6 6 years old.

7 Q. I would like to now turn to the last section I was going
8 to ask you about, which is just to get a little bit of
9 background in relation to the research you carried out
10 in relation to the history of the orphanage.

11 You have listed in your statement various documents
12 which you have very helpfully provided to the inquiry.
13 These include logs, handwritten logbooks of daily logs
14 which appeared to be kept by staff members. Can you
15 explain to us how you came by these logs?

16 A. You need to remind me, Jane, which logs you have.
17 Do you have them to show? Can you just remind me?

18 Q. What we have is we have a series of notebooks in
19 different colours: there is a grey notebook, a green
20 notebook, there's a wine-coloured notebook, there's
21 a red notebook. In two of them, it appears to be logs
22 kept by a member of staff, which narrates the routine,
23 the daily routine as things happened. It also appears
24 to, in one of them anyway, narrate the outcome of
25 inspections and cleaning inspections or bed inspections.

1 It seems to list the names of children who perhaps have
2 been late to a meal or late out of the dormitory or have
3 worn the wrong shoes in the dormitory, something of that
4 nature. And then it seems to suggest that these
5 children have been punished either by an early bed or
6 further chores and so forth.

7 I think we have the other notebooks, which appear to
8 narrate some procedures or guidance in handwriting about
9 how children should be managed or how daily life should
10 be managed. I'm just wondering how you came to acquire
11 those.

12 A. I do recall the notebooks now, Jane. The previously
13 mentioned **BGX** who was my housemaster for
14 a while -- and I had an ongoing visiting arrangement
15 with **BGX** over many years after he left the orphanage.
16 I came by these books when he had left the orphanage.
17 Some time later, I think when he passed away, his
18 brother sent them up to me along with anything that
19 he had relating to his orphanage time.

20 I think the daybooks do show the small minutiae of
21 detail about discipline on the young children in care.
22 A for instance is that today, a teacher of young
23 children would maybe have a star system -- you know,
24 gain five stars and you get a free lollipop, that type
25 of thing. Again, we would have had a star rating to try

1 and achieve a goal. I think the notes that the daybooks
2 relate to, these notebooks and daybooks relate to, is to
3 allow the housemaster to tally up the weekly or monthly
4 scores of that child to see how they are performing in
5 terms of their star value.

6 Q. Obviously, presumably, you have had a chance to read
7 those notebooks in the past. Do they reflect the
8 routine and experience that you had at Aberlour?

9 A. I think they're a very interesting window when I look
10 back on it now, given that it was 50 years ago. I think
11 the attention to detail, such as a boy arrived in the
12 dining room with his boots on instead of his slippers,
13 or his sandals, that type of thing is just -- why would
14 somebody bother to make a note of that? But that's the
15 discipline that had to be set out. It wasn't to berate
16 the child, it was just simply to have a system of
17 control.

18 Q. I think in conclusion, whilst you had a very positive
19 experience at Aberlour, I think you've been very fair,
20 if I might say that, in that you've recognised that
21 whilst you were in Aberlour from a baby and therefore
22 hadn't known a life any different to that, I think you
23 acknowledge in your statement that some children came in
24 at a later age and may have had a quite troubled
25 background and, for that reason, it may well be that

1 their experience of Aberlour was very different from
2 your own.

3 A. That's right, Jane. I have to say that I am a product
4 of the childcare system, having spent my whole childhood
5 in a Victorian institute. Perhaps looking at it now, in
6 2018, I was perhaps wrongly sent there by the local
7 authority at such a young age and [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED] rather than looking at the needs of the parent
9 and the housing requirements at the time.

10 I would also like to say that I'm grateful to
11 Lady Smith for allowing me to have an opportunity to
12 expand on some of the points that you've raised. I do
13 try and be objective about Aberlour. I still think that
14 the way that I -- and when I say myself, I do really
15 mean all of my immediate friends and young boys and
16 girls that were at Aberlour with me. I'm not making
17 a statement on all their behalves, I'm making
18 a statement that I think covers a blanket of time in the
19 1960s that I was at the orphanage. Because I think it's
20 quite unusual to have such a long term at an orphanage
21 from a baby through to leaving at 15 years old. I think
22 it makes me a good reporter of what it was like because
23 that was my story.

24 When children arrived at an age of, say, 7 or
25 8 years old, possibly from difficult circumstances,

1 a family breakup, an abusive parent, whatever other
2 reason, they would arrive at the orphanage and become
3 quite disruptive. They wanted to run away, they wanted
4 to "set fire to the place". They wouldn't be happy
5 children. The orphanage staff had quite a difficult job
6 keeping that in check when a new boy or girl arrived and
7 they had come from a broken home.

8 That's very different to my experience having been
9 brought up as a baby and kind of just getting on and
10 accepting life as it was as opposed to trying to change
11 what there is.

12 I think the other thing that Aberlour Orphanage was
13 particularly good at was instilling a certain discipline
14 as a young person, whether you be a boy or a girl, to
15 respect your fellow man and to treat authority with
16 respect as well.

17 LADY SMITH: Ron, one thing that you haven't mentioned is
18 your parents. You were removed from your parents when
19 you were a baby and you had a short period back, as
20 I understand; you probably have no memory of that,
21 I suppose, or do you?

22 A. I do, and it didn't work out well. We had things like
23 bed bugs and poor food which we had never had at the
24 orphanage. So it was a sad reflection on my parents.

25 I should also say that my parents lived until I was

1 in my thirties but I never made any contact with them.
2 If they came to maybe make contact with me, I wouldn't
3 be particularly kind to them. [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 LADY SMITH: What about Aberlour? Did they make any effort
9 to maintain contact between you and your parents?

10 A. I can't recall, Lady Smith. I don't recall any effort
11 being made, apart from the one visit that I did have,
12 which turned out to be unsuccessful.

13 LADY SMITH: The one where you went back to Edinburgh?

14 A. The one when I came back to Edinburgh, yes.

15 LADY SMITH: What about visits to you in Aberlour?

16 A. It's a good question and we haven't touched on that at
17 all, but there is a story to tell there inasmuch as
18 I think the orphanage staff or the orphanage hierarchy,
19 the board of governors, didn't really encourage parents
20 to come and visit their children. I think it was seen
21 as disruptive, they thought it would upset the children.
22 Some people who maybe knew or loved their parents before
23 going to the orphanage -- not me in my case but other
24 children -- would find that quite distressing, their
25 parents having to go away again.

1 So I didn't feel that way. I did see my parents
2 once or twice at the orphanage, they did come up and
3 holiday and they did try to spend time with me and take
4 me out, but I just saw them as total strangers.
5 I didn't see them as being -- I would be closer to my
6 house parent or house mother than I would be to my real
7 parents.

8 LADY SMITH: You wouldn't have had the chance to build a
9 good relationship or any relationship with them, nor
10 they with you, I suppose.

11 A. I had no relationship with them at all.

12 LADY SMITH: And we're also talking about a place that was
13 situated a long way from Edinburgh -- when you mentioned
14 getting the train when you left, that would be from
15 Elgin, would it?

16 A. Aberlour was connected to the train system at that
17 point.

18 LADY SMITH: There was a station in Aberlour then?

19 A. There was a station in Aberlour then, yes.

20 LADY SMITH: But it would still have been quite a long
21 journey to get to Edinburgh by train, wouldn't it?

22 A. Yes.

23 LADY SMITH: And going by road was before there was any dual
24 carriageway up to that part of Scotland.

25 A. It was the middle of nowhere.

1 I do reflect and think that, you know, the
2 authorities at Edinburgh Children's Welfare Department,
3 you have to question the thinking behind why they sent
4 a [REDACTED] that far away and without trying to give
5 [REDACTED] the contact with [REDACTED] parents. It all seems a bit
6 strange to me and it is unfortunate, you know. I see
7 myself lucky inasmuch as my wife of -- 42 years,
8 darling?

9 LADY SMITH: I think you're getting the nod.

10 A. She has given me great support. When I talk about this
11 subject to her. She does understand why I am the way
12 I am and my relationship with my children and my
13 grandchildren and other people in life. But it doesn't
14 paint a bad picture because I have done well in life,
15 I have been successful in life, I've retired early in
16 life, I enjoy a good life. But I just haven't had
17 a good childhood or relationship with my family. That
18 has been torn from me and it's irreparable.

19 LADY SMITH: I can well understand that. Thank you for
20 being so frank about that, Ron, it's very helpful to me.

21 Ms Rattray.

22 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, I have no further questions for Ron
23 and it just remains for me to thank Ron very much for
24 answering the questions that I've had.

25 I don't know if any further points or questions are

1 to be put by anyone.

2 LADY SMITH: Let me check if there are any outstanding
3 applications for questions. No.

4 Ron, those are all the questions we have for you
5 today. It just remains for me to thank you very much
6 for engaging with the inquiry as you have done, both by
7 providing your detailed written statement, which is an
8 enormous help to us, and by providing the documents that
9 Ms Rattray referred to. We will be looking at those in
10 more detail and if we need to come back to you for any
11 information, we'll do that, but it's very good to have
12 them.

13 Thank you for coming today to tell us so much about
14 your memories and indeed about your researches into
15 Aberlour's history. It's very interesting to hear that.
16 But of course, it is particularly interesting to hear
17 about your personal experience and your memories, so
18 thank you.

19 I'm now able to let you go.

20 (The witness withdrew)

21 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray, shall we just have a couple of
22 minutes' break to check that the next witness is ready?

23 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady.

24 (12.32 pm)

25 (A short break)

1 (12.45 pm)

2 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

3 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, the next witness is an applicant who
4 has chosen the pseudonym "Mary".

5 "MARY" (sworn)

6 LADY SMITH: Please sit down and we'll get you comfortable
7 over there.

8 Something that's very important, Mary, is that we
9 hear you through that microphone. You'll see there's
10 a light on it now. Could you stay in a good position
11 for it to pick up your voice? I'll let you know if
12 there's a problem and I'm sorry if I seem to be
13 a nuisance about that.

14 Ms Rattray.

15 Questions from MS RATTRAY

16 MS RATTRAY: Mary, in the red folder in front of you you'll
17 find a paper copy of the statement that you have given
18 to the inquiry. A copy of your statement will also come
19 up on the screen in front of you. So when we're looking
20 at your statement, if you feel better looking at the
21 screen or the folder, you can choose which one you
22 prefer.

23 A. The screen is bigger.

24 Q. Okay, that's good.

25 Unfortunately, to start with, I will have to take

1 you to the paper copy. We've given your statement
2 a reference and the reference is WIT.001.001.9733. Just
3 for your information, you'll see that number at the top
4 right-hand corner of the page. But looking at the paper
5 copy, what I would like you to do is turn to the very
6 back page and that's at page 9758. All I want to ask
7 you is to confirm that you have signed your statement.

8 A. Yes, I did.

9 Q. And just to confirm as well that, as it says at
10 paragraph 120, just above where you have signed your
11 statement, you have no objection to your witness
12 statement being published as part of the evidence to the
13 inquiry and you believe the facts stated in your witness
14 statement are true.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. That's fine. You can set aside the paper copy now and
17 we'll just focus on the screen if need be.

18 Mary, my questions are going to be asking you about
19 some parts of the statement you have given us and when
20 I do that, I'm going to do it in four parts. In the
21 first part I'm just going to look at a wee bit of your
22 background before you came into care, just to confirm
23 some dates. In the second part, I'm going to ask you
24 about what you tell us of your experiences at
25 Aberlour Orphanage. In the third part, I'm going to ask

1 you about some of your experiences at Whytemans Brae in
2 Kirkcaldy. In the final part, the fourth part, I'm
3 going to ask you about what effect your experiences at
4 Aberlour have had upon you in your adult life.

5 To start with, could you confirm the year you were
6 born? I don't need the date or the month, simply the
7 year.

8 A. 1957.

9 Q. Thank you.

10 Turning to the first part that I spoke about, I'll
11 just summarise essentially what your background is and
12 what you tell us in your statement.

13 You tell us that you were born in Glasgow and you
14 lived there when you were very young, that you have five
15 siblings, four brothers and one sister, and you have
16 used the records from Aberlour to help piece together
17 your life before care. Initially, you were placed in
18 care, as you remember, in [REDACTED] 1959, in
19 Tollard House Children's Home, but you're not sure where
20 that is.

21 A. I don't remember that part of my life. I was quite
22 young then.

23 LADY SMITH: You'd be a 2-year-old. It's not surprising if
24 you don't have any memory of going to Tollard House:
25 you'd be very young.

1 A. Mm.

2 MS RATTRAY: You tell us -- and I think you have gathered
3 that information from records and other documents
4 you have since seen -- that you were there probably for
5 about a year and you went back to your parents in
6 [REDACTED] 1960. You were then boarded out for a week
7 before being admitted to Aberlour Orphanage in
8 [REDACTED] 1961. At that stage you would be aged about 4?

9 A. Mm.

10 Q. Then you tell us that you left Aberlour Orphanage in
11 1967, when you were aged about 10, and you moved to
12 Aberlour's children's home at Whytemans Brae in
13 Kirkcaldy and you were there from about [REDACTED] 1967
14 to [REDACTED] 1970.

15 In [REDACTED] 1970, when you were 13, you left
16 Whytemans Brae and you moved on to another
17 children's home, I think An Cala Children's Home in
18 Lochgilphead.

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. Obviously, for today's hearing, we're focusing on what
21 happened to you in Aberlour. You tell us about other
22 experiences in your statement and those are very
23 important to us, but we'll be thinking about these in
24 more detail at another time. Do you understand that?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. We've obviously been able to see your children's records
2 and from what's recorded in their records about dates,
3 that confirms your understanding of your time in care.
4 What they say is that you were admitted to
5 Aberlour Orphanage on [REDACTED] 1961 and you moved to the
6 family group home at Sycamore Cottage,
7 44 Whytemans Brae, Kirkcaldy, on [REDACTED] 1967, and
8 you were discharged from Whytemans Brae on [REDACTED] 1970.

9 A. Mm-hm.

10 Q. Mary, just turning to the next part of the questions,
11 which is really about your experiences in
12 Aberlour Orphanage, you say that you were first admitted
13 at the age of 4 and initially you went to the
14 Princess Margaret Nursery there.

15 A. That was for younger children, yes.

16 Q. You were very young at that time, but do you have any
17 memories of your time at the nursery?

18 A. Yes. There was a woman called BHL [REDACTED]. She
19 was very nice. Although the other staff were quite
20 strict, you know, she was lovely. There were times when
21 I did call her mum, which I thought she was, and
22 I thought, well, she might adopt me.

23 Mrs BBG [REDACTED] called me into her office and said that
24 I was going to get adopted with my brother.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. But my father said no, they can have my son but not my
2 daughter, so I wasn't adopted.

3 Q. Right, okay. You tell us in your statement that your
4 brother was adopted.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Was that brother in the orphanage with you?

7 A. I really don't know [REDACTED] upbringing very well
8 because he was younger than me, so I really don't know
9 much about him, if you know what I mean.

10 Q. You mentioned Mrs BBG [REDACTED]. Who was Mrs BBG [REDACTED]?

11 A. Mrs BBG [REDACTED] was -- Mr Leslie and Mrs BBG [REDACTED] were the
12 [REDACTED], as you call it, which I know of now, who [REDACTED]
13 the orphanage. I don't know [REDACTED] or what they
14 were, I really don't know. I just know they were the
15 [REDACTED] people.

16 Q. So Mrs BBG [REDACTED] and Mr Leslie were the persons in [REDACTED]
17 as far as you understood?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You also mention a lady called Mrs BHM [REDACTED].

20 A. Mrs BHM [REDACTED], aye: she was one of the staff in Aberlour
21 yes.

22 Q. How was Mrs BHM [REDACTED]? Was she a nice lady like
23 Mrs BHL [REDACTED]?

24 A. She had her moments. But then -- we used to have to get
25 quite close with Mrs BHM [REDACTED]. Um ... she was okay.

1 Q. You tell us -- I appreciate there are some quite
2 difficult memories in relation to some of your time at
3 the nursery and that's in relation to bed-wetting.

4 A. Yes. I did have toilet problems through the way I was
5 brought up, obviously, you know, going back to my
6 childhood. I did have a lot of issues with the toilet
7 where I was getting smacked a lot, put to bed, wasn't
8 allowed tea. All sorts of things were going on then.
9 That was your punishment, really, I've got to punish the
10 kids, you know, as they did in those days.

11 Q. I think in your statement you explain a situation that
12 if you wet the bed, you wouldn't be punished there and
13 then, they would wait until night-time; is that what
14 happened?

15 A. Yes. That was in the big orphanage. In the orphanage
16 there were different houses --

17 Q. Right.

18 A. -- where there was a house mother and house father in
19 different houses. I was put in the house in Aberlour
20 with the BBP/BGZ and she made a list of
21 names, she kept a list of names who done things wrong,
22 and then at teatime they'd be called up and they'd be
23 put over her knee, basically, in front of everybody at
24 mealtimes, with the slipper.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. And that was with your pants down in front of boys and
2 girls.

3 Q. That was later with Mr and Mrs BBP/BGZ

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. You tell us something -- and it may be I haven't read it
6 correctly -- about also being punished when you were at
7 the nursery. You tell us that if you misbehaved, you
8 were punished with a slipper.

9 A. That's right, yes.

10 Q. And you said:

11 "[You] can't remember the staff members who gave out
12 the slipper, [you] can only remember
13 Mrs BHL and Mrs BHM by name and they
14 also gave out the slipper."

15 A. That's right, they did.

16 Q. You tell us that you'd get the slipper on your bare
17 bottom for simple things like wetting the bed and
18 wetting your pants.

19 A. That's right. I had a lot of toilet issues when I was
20 wee through circumstances that you know.

21 Q. And you say that you'd get it when you were going for
22 your bath.

23 A. That's right, you would. That's right.

24 Q. In relation to the use of the slipper, what kind of
25 slipper was it? Can you remember at all?

1 A. Years ago, you used to get the old-fashioned mules.

2 Q. The sole of the slipper, was it a hard or soft sole?

3 A. It was a very hard sole.

4 Q. It was one of the hard-soled ones? How hard did they
5 hit you?

6 A. Hard enough.

7 Q. Was it sore?

8 A. It was sore, aye.

9 Q. Were you crying at the time?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Do you know -- and it may well be you don't -- whether
12 it left a mark on you?

13 A. It did, actually.

14 Q. Can you tell us what the mark looked like?

15 A. A red mark on your bottom.

16 Q. Did this happen to other children as well as yourself?

17 A. Yes, uh-huh, yes.

18 Q. How young were you when this first happened?

19 A. When I was in the orphanage, I would be about -- oh
20 goodness ... I don't remember the age.

21 Q. You tell us that you were first admitted to the
22 Princess Margaret Nursery when you were 4. Did this
23 kind of thing happen when you were bed-wetting at the
24 age of about 4 or was hitting with the slipper not
25 happening until you were older?

1 A. Um ... I'm sorry, I'm getting ... I'm sorry.

2 Q. That's okay, don't worry. Don't worry if you can't
3 remember.

4 You then tell us that you moved from the nursery
5 into the main orphanage, and as you've said, you moved
6 into a house with Mr and Mrs BBP/BGZ

7 A. That's right.

8 Q. Whereabouts in the orphanage was your house with Mr and
9 Mrs BBP/BGZ

10 A. The boys' bit -- it was a huge orphanage, it was
11 massive, a huge building. The boys' bit was further up
12 this way (indicating), so the clock tower would be here
13 (indicating) --

14 Q. Right.

15 A. -- so I'd be down here (indicating).

16 Q. So what you're describing is, I think, there's a clock
17 tower in the middle?

18 A. That's right.

19 Q. And the boys' bit was over to one side?

20 A. That's right.

21 Q. And the girls' bit was over to the other side?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And that's where your house with BBP/BGZ was
24 based?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. I think you tell us that children stayed in the nursery
2 until they were maybe about 5 or school age, something
3 like that, and that would be about the age that you
4 moved into the main part?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You tell us that it was divided into houses. Can you
7 remember any of the names of the houses? If you can
8 help with that, fine. If you can't remember, don't
9 worry about it.

10 A. I think there was a Gordon -- I think it was
11 Gordon House.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. If I'm right. I could be wrong. But I think there's
14 a Gordon House.

15 Q. I think we've heard already there was a Gordon House, so
16 I think you might be right there. Can you remember the
17 name of the house you were in?

18 A. (Pause). I'm so sorry.

19 Q. No, no, please do not apologise. You're talking about
20 events from a very long time ago when you were a small
21 child. Please do not be sorry.

22 How many children were in the house that you were
23 in, can you remember that at all?

24 A. Yes. (Pause). I'm trying to count the beds in the
25 bedroom.

1 Q. So you're counting the beds in the bedroom. Were all
2 the children in the one bedroom?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. So it was a dormitory?

5 A. Yes, it was dormitories.

6 Q. I think in your statement, actually, you tell us that it
7 might have been between about 20 and 25 children, you
8 reckon?

9 A. Yes, roughly, yes.

10 Q. And in that dormitory, there were boys and girls?

11 A. Yes.

12 MS RATTRAY: At this stage I was going to move on and ask
13 you about routine in the house, but I don't know
14 whether, my Lady, that would be an appropriate time to
15 stop for lunch?

16 LADY SMITH: I think we could break at that point.

17 Mary, we usually take the lunch break about now and
18 I will sit again at 2 o'clock.

19 (1.03 pm)

20 (The lunch adjournment)

21 (1.59 pm)

22 LADY SMITH: Mary, if you're ready we'll carry on with the
23 evidence now; is that all right? Ms Rattray.

24 MS RATTRAY: Before lunch, I was about to ask you about the
25 routine of daily life when you lived in

1 Aberlour Orphanage in the house with Mr and Mrs BBP/BGZ
2 You were telling us a little about the sleeping
3 arrangements and how the boys and girls all shared one
4 dormitory. Is that right?

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. Was there anywhere in the dormitory that you had to keep
7 your own personal possessions?

8 A. We had a locker at the side of the bed where we kept our
9 pyjamas and things were put in there, and slippers,
10 housecoat, it was all put in the locker. But that was
11 all.

12 Q. What about staff, did staff sleep nearby?

13 A. Sorry?

14 Q. Did members of staff sleep near where the children were
15 sleeping?

16 A. Yes, Mr and Mrs BBP/BGZ room was at the end of the
17 dormitory. So the dormitory was here (indicating) and
18 at the end of the dormitory was their room at the end.

19 Q. In the house, you've told us about the nursery. In the
20 actual house in the orphanage, how did staff respond to
21 bed-wetting there?

22 A. BBP/BGZ were very strict. That was the ones that gave
23 us the slipper. Mrs BBP was the one that gave us the
24 slipper in Aberlour Orphanage. That was done, as
25 I said, at teatime in front of the other kids.

1 Q. So from what you're saying, although you wet your bed,
2 it might have been discovered in the morning --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- but you had to wait until teatime --

5 A. No -- yes, because I also had urine problems during the
6 day also.

7 Q. I think you might have described something which
8 involves your names being read out.

9 A. That's right, on a list.

10 Q. And the names of the children read out, they would be
11 punished?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And what happened with the punishment?

14 A. As I said before, we were just told to get the slipper
15 when the names were called out, and it was quite
16 degrading.

17 Q. That was in front of everyone?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You also describe a situation where you had to make your
20 own beds.

21 A. Yes, that's right.

22 Q. And there were special corners that you had to do?

23 A. Yes, we had like a flat sheet for the bottom and a flat
24 sheet for the top and blankets. We had to make our own
25 beds in the morning and we were shown a couple of times

1 how to do it. You put the bottom sheet on, then you
2 tuck in the top and you tuck in the bottom and then you
3 do the corners. And then you tuck the corners in and
4 also it has a top sheet, so you put the top sheet on,
5 tuck it in the bottom, do the corners, you put the
6 blanket on and then you fold down the sheet.

7 Q. You said that you had to stand and the bed would be
8 inspected?

9 A. We had to actually stand at the bottom of the bed until
10 they came round to inspect the beds.

11 Q. Who was carrying out this inspection?

12 A. Mr and Mrs BBP/BGZ

13 Q. What would happen if the bed didn't meet their
14 requirements?

15 A. It was stripped.

16 Q. The bed was stripped?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And did that mean that you would have to do it all over
19 again?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did that happen to all the children or just the children
22 who had wet the bed?

23 A. No, that happened to everybody.

24 Q. Was there any other punishment if you got the bed wrong
25 or anything like that?

1 A. We did get shouted and bawled at. They were a very
2 strict couple. They weren't old-old, but they were
3 a sort of middle-class couple, middle-aged, you know,
4 very strict. Aberlour was run like an army camp. I've
5 never been in the army, but ...

6 Q. Your idea of what an army camp would involve, being
7 a regime, very strict?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. That's what your experience was at Aberlour?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And you also tell us about mealtimes in BBP/BGZ house.
12 How was the food? Was the food good?

13 A. I was sick quite a lot at mealtimes. I don't know
14 what was wrong but there were certain things that I ate
15 that I couldn't keep down. I still don't know what was
16 wrong. But I'd been sick a few times at mealtimes,
17 where it would be on my plate and over the table.

18 Q. What happened if that happened to you, if you were sick
19 at a mealtime?

20 A. I was forced to eat it. (Pause). Sorry. I was forced
21 to eat it.

22 Q. Who forced you to eat it?

23 A. The BBP/BGZ

24 Q. What did BBP/BGZ actually do to force you to eat this?

25 A. They said to me, "You'd better eat that, you made the

1 mess, you can eat it".

2 Q. And in your statement, you tell us that Mrs BBP would
3 make you eat the vomit that was all over the plate and
4 the table.

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. And she'd physically hold the spoon to force the sick
7 into your mouth?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And that happened to you?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Were there other children there at the time?

12 A. There was. Because we had a dining room where we had
13 our food, so we were all in the dining room having our
14 food.

15 Q. Did this happen to other children?

16 A. Never seen it happen to anyone else, to be honest.

17 Q. Do you know what happened to any other children if they
18 didn't want to eat their food?

19 A. Yes, they didn't get anything and they were forced to
20 eat it the next day.

21 Q. So the food they refused to eat would be re-served to
22 them?

23 A. That's right.

24 Q. In relation to washing and taking a bath, what was the
25 routine or arrangements for having a bath there?

1 A. In Aberlour the baths were lined up against a wall. So
2 there was rows of baths here (indicating) and rows of
3 baths here (indicating). We'd all take baths together.

4 Q. So the boys and the girls would have baths together?

5 A. No, the boys would be in when the girls were finished.
6 But they would line up at the door with their towels
7 round them.

8 Q. So the boys would be lining up at the door with the
9 towels round them. What about the girls? What happened
10 to the girls?

11 A. Well, the boys would line up outside the door with their
12 towels round them until we were finished.

13 Q. Right. I think in your statement you refer to the girls
14 being supervised by Mrs BBP and you were in a queue as
15 well, but a different queue; is that right?

16 A. That's right.

17 Q. Did you have towels round you too?

18 A. No, when we came out of the bath, there were hooks on
19 the wall, a big row of hooks, where they hung the
20 towels. So when we were getting into the bath we had to
21 go to the hook and get the towels down.

22 Q. Okay. And before you got into the bath or out of the
23 bath, did you have towels round you beforehand?

24 A. No.

25 Q. So were you still wearing your clothes at that time?

1 A. We had housecoats.

2 Q. Right. In relation to your clothes, you tell us that
3 the attic of the main orphanage was full of clothes.

4 A. That's right.

5 Q. But you didn't go out and buy any new ones?

6 A. We didn't know what a shop was. We never, ever went to
7 a shop to buy clothes. When we got up in the morning,
8 all our clothes were put out on our beds for the next
9 day. So we didn't know what a shop was.

10 Q. The clothes that you wore one day, if you'd finished
11 wearing them and they were off to be washed, would the
12 same clothes come back to you to wear again?

13 A. No, we got different ones, I'm sure.

14 LADY SMITH: You may be talking at cross-purposes. I think
15 what Ms Rattray is asking is did you have your own
16 clothes marked with a number or a name on it.

17 A. I'm sorry, our clothes were labelled.

18 LADY SMITH: So you would have the clothes you were wearing
19 and some in the wash and you'd get your clothes back
20 from the wash?

21 A. Yes, because our clothes were all labelled.

22 LADY SMITH: What about shoes?

23 A. We wore -- everybody in the home wore black, heavy
24 lace-up shoes, which were very heavy. Going to
25 school --

1 LADY SMITH: Did you have your own shoes?

2 A. No, they were there in the orphanage.

3 LADY SMITH: So as you grew out of one pair of shoes, are
4 you telling me that you got another pair of shoes that
5 had previously been worn by another child?

6 A. I couldn't tell you that.

7 LADY SMITH: Did you ever get new shoes, brand-new shoes?
8 Did you ever?

9 A. I don't know because it was --

10 LADY SMITH: If you don't remember, it doesn't matter.

11 A. I'm sorry. All our shoes were the same. They were
12 heavy, black lace-up shoes that we all wore going to
13 school, going out anywhere.

14 When we were in the orphanage, we had our own
15 church --

16 LADY SMITH: Yes.

17 A. -- we had our own swimming pool, we had our own school.
18 So we didn't go out for anything. We didn't know what
19 a shop was, you know? So everything was just there, you
20 know?

21 MS RATTRAY: Yes. You mentioned school and you tell us that
22 you started at St Margaret's School in April 1962.
23 St Margaret's School, is that the school which was
24 in the grounds of the orphanage?

25 A. No. Princess Margaret Nursery was further up --

1 Q. Right.

2 A. -- in Aberlour. That was further away from the
3 orphanage.

4 Q. Okay. The school, did the school have a name?

5 A. You're talking about the nursery school or Aberlour
6 school?

7 Q. The school itself, not the nursery school.

8 A. Aberlour Orphanage? Right. The school was called
9 Aberlour --

10 LADY SMITH: Mary, I know I told you to make sure you were
11 using the microphone: I think you're just a little too
12 near it at the moment.

13 A. Sorry.

14 LADY SMITH: There's no need to apologise. It's difficult
15 to get used to it.

16 A. Everything in Aberlour was called Aberlour Orphanage.
17 The school was called Aberlour. The church was called
18 Aberlour Episcopal Church. So it was like one huge sort
19 of complex. So everything there was called Aberlour.

20 MS RATTRAY: Right.

21 A. Aberlour School, everything.

22 Q. What was school like? Did you enjoy school?

23 A. I liked school, uh-huh. We sort of ... I sort of
24 looked after the younger ones, made sure they were okay.
25 There was a lot of things going on. So I was trying to

1 protect the younger ones from a lot of stuff.

2 Q. What kind of things were going on that you were
3 protecting the younger ones from?

4 A. The staff were just bullies, just total bullies to the
5 younger ones, and even to the older ones, you know.

6 I was trying to sort of protect the younger ones, like
7 you would your own kids, obviously.

8 Q. And the staff who were bullies, were they the staff
9 in the house or were they the staff at school?

10 A. No, the staff in the house.

11 Q. You tell us that at school the teachers were strict.

12 A. They were very strict at school, yes.

13 Q. You mention that you got the belt many times.

14 A. Yes. A few times, yes.

15 Q. What did the belt look like?

16 A. Just a brown strap with prongs at the end.

17 Q. When you got the belt, whereabouts were you hit with the
18 belt?

19 A. On the hands.

20 Q. Can you tell us, were you hit up and down your hands or
21 were you hit across your hands?

22 A. Sometimes it was on the wrist.

23 Q. How did it feel to be hit on the wrist as opposed to
24 being hit on the palm of your hand?

25 A. It was very sore.

1 Q. It was more sore to be hit on the wrist.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. How many times would you be hit with the belt on one
4 occasion of getting the belt?

5 A. Oh ... it depended what kind of mood they were in.

6 Q. Would you just get it the once or would it be more than
7 once, do you think?

8 A. More than once, yes.

9 Q. You also tell us in your statement, moving on from
10 chores -- moving on from school, sorry, on the subject
11 of chores, you tell us that you got chores to do if you
12 misbehaved or you were cheeky or had a laugh at
13 something.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And that's in the house, in the main orphanage?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. What kind of chores were you given to do?

18 A. In the orphanage, it was all stone floors, with a sort
19 of shiny look to it. As you go down the corridor in
20 Aberlour Orphanage, there was Mrs BBG's room and
21 Mr Leslie's office, and we were made to clean that with
22 a toothbrush.

23 Q. With a toothbrush?

24 A. Mm-hm, it was a toothbrush. We were down on our hands
25 and knees cleaning the floor with a toothbrush.

1 Q. You say "we" --

2 A. There were a few of us.

3 Q. For how long would you be on your hands and knees
4 cleaning the floor?

5 A. It'd be an hour, an hour and a half, it all depends.

6 Q. Who told you to do that?

7 A. The BBP/BGZ spoke to Mrs BBG about
8 a punishment and Mrs BBG was very strict and she gave
9 out the order that we were to clean the corridor, the
10 stone floor, with a toothbrush.

11 Q. Can you help me, how did you know that it was Mrs BBG
12 who told BBP/BGZ to do that?

13 A. Because Mrs BBP says to us, "I spoke to Mrs BBG about
14 a punishment for youse and she came up with you've got
15 to scrub the corridor with a toothbrush".

16 Q. You tell us in your statement that there would be three
17 or four of you cleaning the floor, or maybe more, and
18 you'd have to do it until it was finished --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- or until bedtime?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And then you would be told that you could stop cleaning,
23 so you'd be sent to bed. You tell us that you didn't
24 have to finish it the next day.

25 A. No.

1 Q. But sometimes you had to miss your tea --

2 A. Yes, that's right.

3 Q. -- so you could clean the floor?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. If you missed your tea, were you given something else to
6 eat later?

7 A. No.

8 LADY SMITH: So you weren't given anything to eat if you
9 missed your tea? Did I pick you up correctly: if you
10 missed your tea because of the floor cleaning
11 punishment, you wouldn't be given anything to eat?

12 A. That's right.

13 MS RATTRAY: Mary, you also tell us a little bit about
14 leisure time when you weren't doing your chores or you
15 weren't at school. You mention that in winter, you
16 would sledge down the hill.

17 A. That's right, we had sledges. In Aberlour we had --
18 at the back of the orphanage we had a hill, so we used
19 to sledge down there in the winter.

20 Q. What other kind of leisure time or play things would you
21 do when you were there?

22 A. We were forced to play hockey, rounders, you know.

23 Q. Were there fun times there as well as bad times?

24 A. I think we were still wary, you know, of what was going
25 to come next. I think we ... We weren't sure of

1 what was going to come next, put it that way. One
2 minute everything could be okay, the next thing,
3 everything could just go ... you know.

4 Q. So if you were feeling wary that something might happen,
5 did that make you feel quite anxious?

6 A. Mm-hm. Yes.

7 Q. So even if you were going out to play, you might still
8 be worried about what might happen?

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. What about birthdays and Christmases? Were they good
11 times?

12 A. We had a cupboard in the orphanage and it was full of
13 toys. We were allowed to go down and pick one toy from
14 the cupboard.

15 Q. Was there anything else that happened at Christmas?

16 A. We had the Christmas tree up, went to church, we came
17 back from church, we had one present each, Santa Claus
18 came. It was okay, a good day, but you know, nothing
19 spectacular, if you know what I mean.

20 Q. In relation to holidays, I think you tell us in your
21 statement that at the orphanage, there was a holiday to
22 Rothesay --

23 A. That's right.

24 Q. -- and you weren't able to go to the holiday. Can you
25 explain to us why you weren't able to go to Rothesay?

1 A. I couldn't go to Rothesay because I wet myself.

2 Q. So you had a problem with wetting yourself and because
3 of that you weren't allowed to go on holiday?

4 A. That's right.

5 Q. Did you get another holiday instead?

6 A. Yes, I got sent to Hopeman House.

7 Q. Can you tell us about Hopeman House?

8 A. Hopeman House, oh my ... It was run by the BBL/BGT who
9 I had never met before, never heard of. I arrived at
10 Hopeman House and I was there for about maybe two weeks.
11 He was very, very strict. It was BGT and BBL
12 When I arrived there, I was told one morning to clean
13 the bedroom, to Hoover it and dust it. And I said to
14 him that I didn't know how to do it, "I don't know what
15 a duster is, I don't know what anything is".

16 I was on the top landing and the duster flew out of
17 the window and he said, "You can just jolly well go down
18 and get that duster". As I was going down the stairs,
19 he went like that (indicating), right across my ear on
20 this side, because I was on the stairs like this
21 (indicating), and he was standing here (indicating), and
22 he went (indicating), full force. I don't know what
23 happened after that. I really don't know what happened
24 after that. I must have just blacked out or something.

25 Q. In your statement you say you think you were knocked

1 out.

2 A. Yes, I don't know what happened after that.

3 Q. Do you remember waking up?

4 A. I remember waking up in my bed.

5 Q. Do you remember whether you were taken to see a doctor?

6 A. I don't know. I honestly don't know.

7 Q. You tell us in your statement at paragraph 45,
8 page 9742, that when you went to Hopeman House you went
9 in the orphanage minibus.

10 A. That's right.

11 Q. And it was just you that went with the driver?

12 A. Mm-hm, that's right.

13 Q. So were there any of the children of the same age as
14 you?

15 A. No. If there was, they all went to Rothesay.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. I couldn't go because of the problem I had.

18 Q. But you tell us that you came across a boy at
19 Hopeman House and you think he was older.

20 A. BBE

21 Q. I think you thought he was too old to be in care.

22 A. Yes. When I was in Hopeman House, there was older kids
23 there, they were older than me, and I thought that was
24 a place for older kids. I didn't know what it was,
25 Hopeman House, what it was for, I don't know. But

1 I thought it was actually for older kids and that's
2 where I met BBE .

3 Q. Just to be clear about BBE , Aberlour Child Care
4 Trust have checked his file and say that he was born in
5 1951 and therefore would have probably been about 15 at
6 this stage. We do know from your own records that the
7 holiday, this particular holiday in Hopeman that you
8 were sent on, because you weren't allowed to Rothesay,
9 took place in the summer of 1966, because there's
10 a exchange of letters between the warden and your
11 children's officer, and indeed your mum, because your
12 mum had asked why was it that you weren't allowed to go
13 to Rothesay.

14 In an exchange of letters in June 1966, it's
15 referred to that the warden says that you would not be
16 going to Rothesay with the remainder of the children.
17 He says:

18 "The fact is we cannot have a repetition of last
19 year's events when [you] became a constant source of
20 embarrassment [as he says] to the house parents due to
21 continual wetting, both day and night."

22 We know that's exchanged in 1966 and there's some
23 concern expressed about the embarrassment to the
24 house parents and for that reason it appears that you've
25 been sent on a very different holiday.

1 Therefore, we'll know then that although the person
2 you mentioned, BBE, if he was born in 1951, he
3 would have been about 15 and you were obviously a much
4 younger child at that age, so would it be fair to say
5 that he might well have appeared much older to you?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. But you saw something happen with BBE; what was
8 that?

9 A. There was a wee baby -- I don't know whose baby it was
10 or where it came from, but they were all standing in
11 a circle, all the men, throwing this baby round in
12 a circle, catching it. I thought, they're going to drop
13 this baby. If they miss it, it's going to fall to the
14 ground. They were swinging it from each person. He
15 sort of kept looking at me in a funny manner, which
16 I didn't like, and I felt uneasy about.

17 And there was one morning I decided to go to church
18 with the BBL/BGT. I was sitting on the bench at the door
19 waiting to go to church and then BBE appeared.
20 He sort of kept looking at me and I thought, I don't
21 like this, you don't feel right. I felt really uneasy.
22 I said I wasn't going to church because he was going.
23 And I thought, I'm not going to go, and he went and
24 said, "I thought you were going to church", and I said,
25 "I'm not going now", "Why not?" "I said, it doesn't

1 matter".

2 But I didn't have much dealings with him, if you
3 know what I mean, because I sort of stayed my distance.

4 Q. I think we know that if this was in 1966, you'd have
5 been aged about 9 at this time.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. I would like to ask you a little about visits by your
8 family. Did any family members come and see you when
9 you were at Aberlour?

10 A. My father and mother came at one stage to
11 Aberlour Orphanage. I was taken to a room and I was
12 left with them and I didn't believe they were --
13 I didn't even believe they were my parents. Because to
14 me, they were just total strangers. So I just said,
15 "I don't think you're my parents".

16 Q. In relation to siblings, were any of your brothers and
17 sisters with you?

18 A. Yes. There was [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] They were in the same
19 Aberlour Orphanage as me with the [REDACTED] BBP/BGZ

20 Q. So when you were at the orphanage, you had a brother and
21 sister in the same house with you?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Moving on, Mary, to the subject of discipline, you have
24 mentioned -- given us some information about punishment
25 so far. At paragraph 41 on page 9741, you also mention

1 that at times you'd be told to stand in a corner and
2 face the wall.

3 A. That's right.

4 Q. For how long would you have to face the wall?

5 A. About an hour or something.

6 Q. What kind of things would result in a child being asked
7 to stand in the corner and face the wall?

8 A. If they got fed up with us and we weren't doing as
9 we were told, we were told to go away and stand against
10 the wall in a corner.

11 Q. Was that a punishment that was used for other children
12 as well?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Mary, you mention an occasion where you were out for
15 a walk with BBP/BGZ and you were standing next to a big
16 waterfall.

17 A. That's right.

18 Q. Tell us what happened then?

19 A. We were out for a walk in Aberlour. As you went through
20 the -- it is like a forestry walk. There's a big
21 waterfall and somebody fell in. He actually drowned,
22 the wee boy drowned.

23 Q. A boy fell in and drowned? Did anyone do anything to
24 try and save him?

25 A. I think one of the staff had jumped in but couldn't find

1 the body, couldn't find him.

2 Q. Do you know who it was, which member of staff tried to
3 do that?

4 A. I don't know who it was.

5 Q. At that time how many staff members were with you?

6 A. There was three.

7 Q. Three staff members. And how many children were there?

8 A. Oh goodness. Maybe 12 or something.

9 Q. You tell us that there was a funeral for the wee boy.

10 A. That's right.

11 Q. Did you and the other children go to the funeral?

12 A. No, we didn't, it was just the staff members.

13 Q. You mention that a Union Jack was placed on his bed in
14 the dorm.

15 A. That's right.

16 Q. This was a wee boy who lived in your house and you
17 shared a dormitory with?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Can you remember how old you were when this happened?

20 A. I would say maybe, roughly ... I'm just trying to
21 think. (Pause). I would say maybe -- oh goodness me.
22 I'm not precise, I'm sorry.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I'd just be guessing.

25 Q. Fair enough.

1 What support was given to you and the other
2 children?

3 A. There was none.

4 Q. You weren't offered any support to deal with the fact
5 that one of your friends, one of your other children in
6 the dormitory had died?

7 A. No, it's not like today. Today you can get counselling
8 support, you can get -- you couldn't get that in these
9 days.

10 Q. Even if you couldn't get counselling support, did anyone
11 come up and give you a hug?

12 A. That never happened in the orphanage. We never got
13 hugs, we never got anything like that. Nothing, no. We
14 didn't know anything like that. I've got a grown son
15 who's 28 and I still give him cuddles. He's going to
16 work in the morning, he goes out of the house, and
17 I give him cuddles. I've got two grandkids, I give them
18 cuddles.

19 Q. So do I understand from that that hugs and cuddles are
20 important for people and children --

21 A. Absolutely, yes.

22 Q. But no one hugged you or the other children?

23 A. No, we never got anything like that, no.

24 Q. At paragraph 43 on page 9742 of your statement, Mary, if
25 you can have a look at that. It should appear in front

1 of you. What point are you explaining to us here?

2 A. I'm sorry?

3 Q. Perhaps if I read out paragraph 43, Mary. What you tell
4 us is:

5 "When children are put in care, it is not their own
6 fault that their parents cannot look after them. The
7 children go into the care of others and these people are
8 there to care about them, but they think they can do
9 whatever they like to the children."

10 A. Well, it's true, you know. We weren't asked to go into
11 care. (Pause). Give me a minute.

12 (Pause)

13 It isn't their own fault they go into care. We
14 don't ask to go into care. It's up to the parents to
15 look after their kids properly, nourish them and bring
16 them up. These kids who are in care shouldn't have to
17 go through what we went through. People in authority
18 should be there to protect these kids and to make sure
19 they're okay. We didn't have any of that. There's
20 nobody out there for us.

21 Q. So what you're saying, as I understand it, is that
22 children in care should be treated with the same care
23 and respect and have the same opportunities perhaps as
24 children who would grow up in a family?

25 A. Exactly, yes. That's what I'm saying, yes.

1 Q. Mary, I'm going to move on at this point and ask you
2 about your experiences at Whytemans Brae in Kirkcaldy.
3 If you remember at the outset, I said we would do this
4 thing in three parts and this is the third part.

5 You tell us that you left Aberlour Orphanage in
6 1967 --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- and you were aged 10 at the time. You tell us that
9 the orphanage was closing down as it was too expensive
10 to keep and they built new smaller homes round Scotland,
11 in Kirkcaldy, Cumbernauld and Dunfermline.

12 A. That's right.

13 Q. At page 9745 of your statement, you tell us that you
14 left the orphanage for the new smaller Aberlour
15 children's home in Kirkcaldy and you were there for
16 three years.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Who ran the home in Kirkcaldy, which I think was you
19 tell us was at Whytemans Brae?

20 A. It was actually the **BBL/BGT**. When the orphanage was
21 closing down, we weren't told who was going to look
22 after us. We were just told we were going to Kirkcaldy.
23 We didn't know who was going to look after us,
24 we weren't informed about anything.

25 I remember going on the train from Aberlour to

1 Kirkcaldy with the staff and then we were there a few
2 days and Mrs BGT turned up in Kirkcaldy. Quite an old
3 lady. I said to her one day -- she was sitting on the
4 stairs unpacking big wooden crates, you know, the wooden
5 crates you used to get. She had maybe six of them
6 at the stairs. So she's sitting on the stairs unpacking
7 these great big crates of porcelain ladies you used to
8 get, all different ladies, the porcelain.

9 Q. Okay, yes.

10 LADY SMITH: Yes. A manufacturer called Royal Doulton --

11 A. That's right.

12 LADY SMITH: -- used to make them and the name of the lady
13 would be on the bottom of the ornament and --

14 A. Right.

15 LADY SMITH: -- they would have different figures doing
16 different activities.

17 A. Yes, so there were big crates of these and she was
18 sitting on the stairs unpacking all these because they
19 were wrapped up in straw and sort of other stuff as well
20 to protect them. I says to her -- she was sitting on
21 the stairs, and I says to her, "I'm terrified of your
22 husband, by the way". She said, "Well, you'd better
23 behave yourself then".

24 MS RATTRAY: This couple, Mr and Mrs BBL/BGT these were the
25 same people who were at Hopeman House?

1 A. That's right.

2 Q. So you had reason to be scared of Mr BBL because he's
3 the one I think you said slapped you --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- and you think you blacked out?

6 A. Mm-hm.

7 Q. You describe the property at Hopeman House, the actual
8 physical house there. How many children were there?

9 A. In Hopeman House?

10 Q. No, no, sorry, my mistake. At Whytemans Brae.

11 A. Whytemans Brae? (Pause). I think there were about
12 maybe six or seven children, I think, roughly. About
13 six or seven.

14 Q. From what you tell us at paragraph 59 of your statement,
15 you tell us the home was very modern.

16 A. It was very modern, yes, it had just been built. It had
17 two glass, big glass windows at the front, and you
18 had -- the front door was here (indicating) and then, as
19 you came out the front door, came down the pathway, it
20 was slabbed in the middle, white slabs down the middle,
21 and then you had slabs along here at the front
22 (indicating), and then you had a big lawn here
23 (indicating), a big square lawn, and a big square lawn
24 here, and as it went round to the back, a sort of
25 embankment with slabs going round to the back of the

1 house. Then you had the washing line at the back.

2 As you go in the house, the lounge was here
3 (indicating). You had a sitting room. The hallway was
4 here (indicating). Then as you go through the hallway,
5 round to the back, there's a fire escape door, just
6 at the back of the house, and then you had the stairs
7 going up to the bedrooms.

8 Q. So it's a very different set-up to what you've described
9 as Aberlour?

10 A. Very different, yes. Very different, very modern.
11 There was wooden floors and there was a coal fire in the
12 lounge. The lounge had wooden floors, there was wooden
13 floors in the hall. The dining room was off the hall,
14 facing you, as you came in the door. It was just off
15 the hall, but in a separate sort of room, if you know
16 what I mean. As you went through that way (indicating)
17 you came to the kitchen.

18 Q. So were you sleeping in bedrooms now rather than one
19 large dormitory?

20 A. Me and my sister shared a bedroom.

21 Q. Did you have any of your other siblings there?

22 A. [REDACTED] was there. My brother, [REDACTED].

23 Q. So you've described a very different environment, a very
24 different building you were living in. The care and the
25 routine that you lived in at Whytemans Brae, was that

1 very different to Aberlour as well? What changes, if
2 any, were there?

3 A. It was a lot harder. Honestly, it was really, really
4 hard. We were absolutely petrified.

5 Q. Can you explain that for us?

6 A. Yes. Mr BBL was a very strict, very strict man, and
7 his wife was very strict. The rules and regulations
8 were a lot harder. He said he got the pick of the worst
9 bunch of kids, basically, because nobody else wanted us.
10 That was his story.

11 Q. So he told you that you were the pick of the worst bunch
12 of kids?

13 A. Mm-hm.

14 Q. Did he tell that to the other children as well?

15 A. Oh, he told us all.

16 Q. How did that make you feel?

17 A. I thought, well, he's here to rule us, we've not got any
18 say in the matter. We've got to go by his rules and
19 regulations, you know. We were terrified. We were
20 terrified of this man. What happened was -- Mr BBL
21 had a [REDACTED], he had [REDACTED] so
22 he sort of [REDACTED], and we were
23 that scared, we used to go, "Shush, shush, shush,
24 there's [REDACTED] coming". I know it sounds -- I'm sorry
25 to say this, but ...

1 LADY SMITH: It's the way children talk. I've heard worse,
2 don't worry.

3 A. We used to say, "Shush, shush, there's [REDACTED] coming".
4 We couldn't -- we were even too scared to breathe. It
5 was terrible. Absolutely shocking. He was just so
6 strict.

7 MS RATTRAY: You tell us that although you moved to
8 Kirkcaldy, you were wearing the same clothes you were
9 wearing in Aberlour in the orphanage?

10 A. Yes, the clothes were still handed in. In Kirkcaldy,
11 honestly, we didn't even go to a shop. Just -- the
12 clothes were still handed in.

13 Q. When you went to school, did that mean you stood out
14 a bit if you were wearing the same clothes, orphanage
15 type clothes?

16 A. No, we were still -- because it was still attached to
17 the orphanage, we were still wearing the clothes from
18 the orphanage for some reason. We don't know why. But
19 we still wore the same black shoes, laced up shoes,
20 which are really heavy to walk in. They were really
21 heavy. We wore cardigans, the long grey skirts with the
22 grey socks. We still wore all that. We didn't know
23 what a shop was. We were still getting clothes from
24 Aberlour Orphanage.

25 Q. So when you were wearing the long grey skirts and the

1 big black shoes and you were going to school in
2 Kirkcaldy, what were the other children at school
3 wearing?

4 A. They were wearing far different from us. It was
5 difficult, but we accepted it because -- I got put into
6 a special school, I got sent to a special school in
7 Kirkcaldy.

8 Q. What about mealtimes? What happened at mealtimes?

9 A. Mealtimes, we were all sitting -- we sat at a dining
10 table in the dining room and had our meals. So we all
11 had our meals together in the dining room.

12 Q. You tell us that one of the staff, Carol, did the
13 cooking, and it was better food than in the orphanage.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. But if you didn't eat the food, you'd be told to eat it,
16 or the next day it would be served up for breakfast?

17 A. Yes, that's right.

18 Q. And if you didn't eat it then, it would be served up
19 again at the next meal?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And they wouldn't give you any other food until you did
22 eat what you'd been given?

23 A. That's right.

24 Q. Was there any force-feeding there?

25 A. No.

1 Q. If you didn't behave, what happened?

2 A. You were sent to your rooms or you weren't allowed out.

3 Q. Compared to the orphanage, was there any hitting with
4 a slipper?

5 A. No, but they used their hands.

6 Q. So there was still physical punishment?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And who used their hands?

9 A. Mrs BGT and Mr BBL.

10 Q. How did they hit you with their hands?

11 A. Just slapped on the face.

12 Q. Would that be with an open hand or a closed hand?

13 A. Open hand.

14 Q. Did they slap you hard?

15 A. Yes. You felt it, put it that way.

16 Q. Was it sore?

17 A. Of course it was sore. Dear me, it was terrible.

18 Q. Did it leave any marks?

19 A. It left a red mark on your face, but then it sort of
20 wore away, if you know what I mean.

21 Q. You tell us at paragraph 66 that your sister ran away.

22 A. She did, yes.

23 Q. Why did your sister run away?

24 A. Because she got fed up with the regime in Kirkcaldy --

25 I seen some horrible things in Kirkcaldy. I seen a lot

1 of horrible things that shouldn't have happened.

2 Seriously.

3 Q. Can you tell us about those things?

4 A. I was at the Guides -- I used to go to church in
5 Kirkcaldy, we were all made to go to church in Kirkcaldy
6 and it was Kirkcaldy Episcopalian Church and I joined
7 the Guides in Kirkcaldy.

8 And ... my brother used to get some beatings,

9 literally, by BBE [REDACTED] and BBL [REDACTED] -- BBL [REDACTED]
10 his name was. They used to give him some beatings and
11 he used to scream the place down and I couldn't do
12 a thing about it.

13 Q. You mentioned BBE [REDACTED] is the same boy or young
14 man --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- who you saw at Hopeman?

17 A. Yes, I couldn't do a thing about it.

18 I phoned up the home from Guide camp -- I went to
19 Guide camp in Pitlochry in Perth. They had a Guide camp
20 up there, like a big wooden cabin that was for -- Guides
21 and Scouts and things used to use it. I was up there in
22 Perth. I'd phoned the home to see how [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
23 were, and I could hear him screaming through the phone.

24 He said, "He can't come to the phone right now".

25 Q. Who told you?

1 A. Mr BBL .

2 Q. You said they were being hit by Mr BBL and

3 BBE ?

4 A. I've seen it, yes. I couldn't do a thing about it.

5 Q. How did you know it was them when you were on the phone?

6 A. Because I could hear it through the phone, if you know
7 what I mean. I could hear it through the phone and
8 they're saying to me, "He can't come to the phone right
9 now, he's busy". I'd been in Kirkcaldy home in the
10 sitting room, and they used to drink beer, but like big
11 crates of beer. They used to bring in cans. [REDACTED]
12 used to get blamed for taking one or two of them, so
13 they used to beat him up in the corridor.

14 Q. Who beat him up in the corridor?

15 A. BBE [REDACTED] and BBL [REDACTED] used to beat [REDACTED] up
16 in the corridor at the back of the lounge, in between
17 the hall -- in between the living room and the hall,
18 there's a corridor that the kitchen was off of, and
19 I think there were also toilets there as well and an
20 utility room or something. It was between that that he
21 used to beat my brother up.

22 Q. How old was your brother at this time?

23 A. Well, he's two years younger than me.

24 Q. You moved when you were about 10, you were there from
25 about the age of 10 until 13, would that be about right?

1 So your brother would be 8 until 11 or thereabouts?

2 A. Yes. This is two grown men, two adults.

3 Q. You tell us at page 9748 of your statement, Mary, about
4 an occasion after you'd been asleep, BGT had to
5 wash your hair as it had something sticky in it.

6 A. That's right.

7 Q. What happened there?

8 A. BBE used to come into the bedroom when I was in
9 my bed. I said to him, "What do you want in here? You
10 shouldn't be in here", he said, "Don't tell anybody I'm
11 in here". He used to do things. One day, Mrs BGT was
12 washing my hair and it had been all sticky with
13 something and I didn't know what it was, so she asked
14 somebody to go down to the clinic to get a bottle. And
15 she took the bottle into the toilet and took it off my
16 hair and then sent it down to the clinic, and it was
17 just after that I had to go and see a doctor and get an
18 internal examination.

19 Q. You said that BBE used to do things.

20 A. Mm-hm.

21 Q. What did BBE do?

22 A. Just things, you know.

23 Q. Is that something you're able to share with us or would
24 you prefer not to? It's fine if you would prefer not
25 to.

1 A. Well, it's things that shouldn't happen to anybody else,
2 put it that way.

3 LADY SMITH: How old were you?

4 A. I was still in Kirkcaldy then, so ... Maybe 11 or
5 something.

6 LADY SMITH: Still primary school age?

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: And when you say BBE used to do
9 things, was he touching himself and doing things close
10 to you?

11 A. Yes.

12 LADY SMITH: Touching his private parts?

13 A. Mm-hm.

14 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

15 MS RATTRAY: You tell us that not long after that, you left
16 Aberlour children's home and were moved to An Cala home
17 in Lochgilphead.

18 A. That's right. That's right, I left Kirkcaldy and I went
19 to An Cala. That's right.

20 Q. But before you left, you tell us about other occasions.
21 You tell us that Mrs BGT put your head down the toilet
22 pan and flushed it.

23 A. That's right, she did, yes.

24 Q. On how many occasions did she do that?

25 A. Quite a few occasions.

1 Q. You also tell us that if you didn't do the bed right,
2 you'd be made to go for a cold bath.

3 A. Mm-hm, yes.

4 Q. And it was Mrs BGT that made you do that?

5 A. Yes. She stood and she made sure that I got into the
6 bath.

7 Q. Mary, in your Aberlour notes, your children's file,
8 there is a reference, it seems to be a note that was
9 recorded on 24 March 1970, so this would be when you
10 were at Kirkcaldy. It apparently relates to a report on
11 13 March 1970. In that report it seems to say that you
12 and your sister's behaviour had been pretty bad this
13 week, and then it says:

14 "Ending with a week in the cooler for [Mary]."

15 For you. Obviously they're using your real name.
16 Can you remember anything about ending with a week
17 in the cooler?

18 A. I think there was a cupboard under the stairs they used
19 to lock you in, a wee cupboard under the stairs, like
20 a storage cupboard under the stairs. They used to put
21 us in there and close it over.

22 Q. Were you kept in there for as long as a week?

23 A. We'd go out for meals and to go to school. But then
24 we were put back in again. So nobody knew because
25 nobody -- there was nobody there to come and inspect the

1 home like you have now. There was nobody we could even
2 go to. We couldn't go to the police and say to the
3 police, look. Do you think they're going to believe us?
4 We had nobody to go to. We had nobody. We were left to
5 our own devices, to get on with life, you know. But
6 I still protected the young ones, the best I could.

7 Q. The note also says that your sister had the belt, and
8 a tape recording of her bad language had been taken for
9 the house mother to hear some time.

10 A. That's right.

11 Q. So was the belt used as a means of punishment in
12 Kirkcaldy?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And who used the belt?

15 A. Mrs BGT.

16 Q. What kind of belt? Was this a tawse again or was it
17 a different kind of belt?

18 A. No, it's like the brown belt with tassels at the end.
19 They were just cruel people. They didn't care.

20 Q. Mary, you tell us that you never reported the abusive
21 behaviour of either BBP/BGZ or Mr and Mrs BBL/BGT
22 and you have told us here when you were in care you had
23 no one to go to.

24 A. That's right.

25 Q. And you had no one to turn to.

1 A. That's right, we had nobody whatsoever. We couldn't go
2 to the police because who's going to believe a bunch of
3 kids? We were absolutely terrified of this couple and
4 if we went to the police, and they done nothing about
5 it, things would have got worse. Things would have got
6 ten times worse than they were.

7 Q. Finally, Mary, the last section of the questions I want
8 to ask you about is about the impact your experiences
9 have had upon you. In what way have your experiences in
10 care with Aberlour at the orphanage and at Kirkcaldy
11 affected you in your adult life?

12 A. I still find things difficult. I'm not saying things
13 are easy. Things are still difficult. But the good
14 thing is that I've got a lovely son, who's got a head on
15 his shoulders, very wise, and I've got two lovely
16 grandkids. It hasn't been easy, it's been hard.
17 There's been a lot of things, obstacles I've had to get
18 over. I still can't sleep with the light off, I've got
19 to keep the lamp on.

20 I find rooms like this very crowded, I get --
21 I can't cope with crowded rooms. Things, you know.

22 Okay, there's -- in the past, aye, I've tried
23 suicide because my life wasn't going anywhere.
24 I couldn't see round the corner, I didn't know where
25 I was going. I came out of care, I had nobody. I came

1 out of care from An Cala to more problems and more
2 problems and more problems. There was nobody there for
3 me, I had nobody to turn to. I had nobody when I came
4 out of care.

5 The only blessing was that I was walking down
6 Bath Street one day and I couldn't see round the corner,
7 I couldn't see my life going anywhere, and the Adelaide
8 Place Baptist Church was open and I thought, no, I'm not
9 going in there, I am not going in this door. But then
10 I did go into Adelaide Place Baptist Church, and it was
11 them that helped me. If they hadn't helped me,
12 I wouldn't be here today. I could have been dead,
13 basically. But it was the church and their strength
14 that got me through.

15 Q. Mary, you conclude your statement by telling us that
16 you are pleased that your life is so much better than it
17 used to be, and years ago you wouldn't have been able to
18 give your statement to the inquiry.

19 A. No, I couldn't, no. If you'd asked me to do this years
20 and years before today, I could never have done it.
21 I wouldn't have the strength, you know.

22 The only thing I live for now -- and I'm telling you
23 the truth here -- is my son and my grandkids and his
24 girlfriend and her family and the church. That's what
25 I live for now.

1 MS RATTRAY: Mary, I have no further questions for you. It
2 just remains for me to thank you very much for answering
3 all my questions today.

4 I don't know if there are any other questions to be
5 asked of this witness.

6 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
7 questions? No.

8 Mary, those are all the questions we have for you
9 today. Thank you very much for engaging with the
10 inquiry as you have done, both by providing your written
11 statement, which is evidence before us, and then adding
12 to that by coming along today to talk to us.

13 I know it's obviously been difficult. Thank you for
14 being strong enough so that I can hear from you directly
15 how it all was. That's very, very helpful. I am now
16 able to let you go.

17 A. Thank you so much.

18 (The witness withdrew)

19 LADY SMITH: Before I rise for the mid-afternoon break,

20 I just want to draw attention to the fact that that
21 witness named a number of people in relation to
22 allegations of abuse of her and other children. They
23 are all there in the transcript, but they include

24 BHL [REDACTED], Mr and Mrs BBP/BGZ [REDACTED] BBG [REDACTED], Mr and
25 Mrs BBL/BGT [REDACTED] and a man BBE [REDACTED]. They are all

1 protected by my general restriction order and so they
2 can't be identified as being people about whom
3 allegations have been made outside the hearing room.

4 I'll now rise for the afternoon break.

5 (3.04 pm)

6 (A short break)

7 (3.17 pm)

8 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

9 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, the next witness is an applicant who
10 has chosen the pseudonym "William".

11 "WILLIAM" (sworn)

12 LADY SMITH: Please sit down and make yourself comfortable.

13 William, we need you to be in a good position for
14 the microphone that's got the light on now, because
15 you'll only be heard properly if you're using the
16 microphone.

17 I'm going to hand over to Ms Rattray now and she'll
18 explain what happens next.

19 Questions from MS RATTRAY

20 MS RATTRAY: William, in the red file in front of you,
21 you'll find a paper copy of the statement that you have
22 given to the inquiry. Just for our purposes, we've
23 given it a reference number and that reference is
24 WIT.001.002.0408.

25 You will see that a copy of your statement will also

1 come up on the screen in front of you, albeit that one
2 will have certain bits blacked out, but the full copy
3 will be in the red folder. If it's easier for you to
4 use the screen or the folder, feel free to use either or
5 both.

6 If at first you can go to the paper copy and turn to
7 the back page for me, which is page 0421. Can you
8 confirm that you have signed your statement?

9 A. Yes, I have signed my statement.

10 Q. And do we see from paragraph 72, just above your
11 signature, that you have no objection to your witness
12 statement being published as part of the evidence to the
13 inquiry and you believe the facts stated in this witness
14 statement are true? Is that right?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. William, I'm going to ask you questions about your
17 statement and I'll do it in three parts.

18 In the first part I'll just look at a bit of the
19 background of you coming into care and confirm some
20 dates. The second part will be you telling us about
21 your experiences in Aberlour when you were there. The
22 third part will be about the impact on you of your
23 experiences of life at Aberlour.

24 Firstly, could you please confirm the year of your
25 birth? I don't need the date or the month, simply the

1 year you were born.

2 A. 1950.

3 Q. Turning to the first part, the background, you tell us
4 in your statement that you can't remember going into
5 care and that all you know is that you went into
6 Aberlour Orphanage in 1952.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And you were about 2 years old at that time?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You went there with two sisters; is that right?

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. Certainly, we've been able to confirm from your
13 children's records at Aberlour that you were admitted
14 there on [REDACTED] 1952 and you left there on
15 [REDACTED] 1966.

16 A. That's right.

17 Q. Does that work in with your own memories?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Turning to the second part, which relates to your
20 experiences there, what were your first impressions?
21 Obviously you went in at a very young age, so you
22 probably won't remember when you first were admitted
23 there, but what are your first memories of
24 Aberlour Orphanage?

25 A. It was huge. There were about 500 children in the

1 place. Everybody left when they were 15. I was there
2 until I was 15 and a half -- but nobody stayed beyond
3 that, that I know of. Nobody reached 16 in there.

4 Q. So your memories relate to the size and the numbers of
5 children?

6 A. Aye.

7 Q. It was a very large place?

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. And I think you tell us on page 0410, in paragraph 11,
10 that you remember something happening when you were 4,
11 that you banged your head or something?

12 A. I injured my head on a grand piano, up in St Margaret's
13 Nursery, which is part of the orphanage. It was an
14 accident.

15 Q. But that's one of your earliest memory?

16 A. That's one of my earliest memories.

17 Q. I think you tell us who was in charge of the orphanage
18 when you were there. Who was that?

19 A. Well, in different houses ... The main man in charge
20 was Dean Wolfe.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. Then there was Dean Leslie. I don't know what time he
23 took over. But it was split in nine houses, Aberlour --
24 nine or ten, I can't remember. There was a house mother
25 and house father in charge of each house. When I left

1 St Margaret's Nursery, I was in Spey House; I don't know
2 who was in charge. MS was an BGX , and Jupp House
3 was BBR , and the White House was
4 a BGG that I remember.

5 Q. The house that you were in, was it boys and girls or was
6 it only boys?

7 A. Just boys. It was -- Aberlour Orphanage separated --
8 the boys were up on one side, the girls were down the
9 bottom, and in between was the school. The boys and
10 girls were kept separate, but not at the school.

11 Q. Right. The school itself, that was there within the
12 grounds of the orphanage; is that right?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You tell us a little about the routine, what happened
15 every day. You speak about getting up and going for
16 breakfast. How did you find the meals there?

17 A. How did I find the meals?

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. That's all I knew. I went in there when I was 2 years
20 old until I left. It was all I knew and I found the
21 food -- the biggest majority of the food good.

22 Q. Right. You tell us that there wasn't much that you
23 wouldn't eat.

24 A. That's correct.

25 Q. You tell us that perhaps other children wouldn't eat the

1 food.

2 A. Aye. I don't know what it is there, but when you're
3 brought up there from when you're 2 year old until
4 you're 15 and a half -- that's all the food I knew.
5 I didn't know any other food. I just found the food all
6 right. But other folk that probably weren't in the
7 orphanage as young as I was, they would find the food
8 quite difficult to eat.

9 Q. Can you remember what would happen if there was a child
10 there who didn't want to eat the food?

11 A. Not really. I know they were forced to eat it, probably
12 the second day. If they never ate it the first day, it
13 was put back in front of them again.

14 Q. You tell us at paragraph 15 of your statement, William,
15 on page 0410, that you saw that some were forced to eat
16 and if they didn't eat it was put down to them the next
17 day. If they still didn't eat, you think they were
18 punished?

19 A. Aye. I think definitely some of them were punished.
20 I don't know how the punishment was. Because basically,
21 you didn't speak about your punishments.

22 Q. Right. In relation to washing and having a bath, you
23 tell us about that at paragraph 16 of your statement.
24 You talk about there being six to eight baths.

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. Were they all separate or were they all in the one room?

2 A. They were all in the one room. You washed regularly, it
3 was never supervised. It was always clean water.

4 Always hot or warm water.

5 Q. What about the clothes you were wearing? What were the
6 clothes like?

7 A. They were always supplied by Marks & Spencers, most of
8 the clothes. I'm almost sure the clothes were the best
9 of clothes. We had school clothes, play clothes and
10 kilts, the full rig out -- we had the full rig out of
11 the kilt for wearing on a Sunday only or special
12 occasions, for church.

13 You went to church until you were 14 or 15, then you
14 changed. Everybody went to church on Sunday. I ended
15 up being the head choirboy because I liked singing.
16 Every Sunday we went for a walk, no matter what the
17 weather was like. It was just a way of life.

18 Q. The clothes you had, were they your own clothes? Whilst
19 you were in the orphanage, were they labelled in some
20 way so that they would always come back to you?

21 A. Yes. They were labelled with your name. I know they
22 were Marks & Spencers because you went to a place and
23 you got re-rigged -- obviously you were growing and they
24 had all the clothes, masses of clothes.

25 Q. When you say Marks & Spencers, did you know that because

1 that's what it said on the label, or were you taken out
2 to a Marks & Spencers shop?

3 A. No, it was a clothes store within the orphanage. They
4 had quite a variety of different sizes of shirts and
5 jumpers, trousers, shorts. You just got to try the
6 things on and see if they fitted. In general, I'd say
7 the clothes were great.

8 Q. In relation to school, you went to a school which was
9 in the grounds of the orphanage. The children who went
10 to that school, were they children just from the
11 orphanage or did children from the local village go to
12 that school as well?

13 A. As far as I know, it was just children from the
14 orphanage.

15 Q. In your statement you say that you found school all
16 right, but you think they could have done a lot better.
17 Can you help us with what you mean by that?

18 A. Well, they used to send -- my brother, he was
19 particularly intelligent. He ended up going to Aberlour
20 High School, which was in the village, not
21 St Margaret's. They never pushed you enough, the
22 orphans, to go to the Aberlour High School, to integrate
23 with them, to get a better education. Because I think
24 the education within Aberlour, St Margaret's, was
25 limited, if you know what I mean.

1 Q. At least in the case of your brother, he got the chance
2 to --

3 A. Aye --

4 Q. -- to go to the school in the village rather than in the
5 grounds of the orphanage?

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. You tell us a little about trips and holidays, and you
8 went on holiday to Hopeman House.

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. Are these good memories?

11 A. Yes. Definitely. Any trip out of the orphanage was
12 great memories. Going to Lossiemouth to see the RAF
13 displays, they were brilliant.

14 Q. You say that you were in the gym team and the Highland
15 dancing team?

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. And you would go out to different areas and compete?

18 A. Aye. Round about Banffshire and Elgin, that kind of
19 area. It was a day out, you enjoyed -- I enjoyed doing
20 that.

21 Q. You tell us Christmas was celebrated and birthdays were
22 also celebrated.

23 A. Uh-huh. Yes, they were. They used to take you to
24 a place called "19" -- it was the name of the house --
25 and they gave you a present.

1 At Christmas you got a toy, maybe an apple, an
2 orange, some sweets. That's all I knew.

3 Q. You tell us that in relation to visits, you don't
4 remember any social worker coming to see you.

5 A. I can't remember any social worker coming to visit me
6 apart from the one that took me away when I left the
7 orphanage. I can't remember anybody coming to see me.

8 Q. But you tell us that Princess Margaret visited the
9 nursery.

10 A. Ah.

11 Q. Is that something you remember happening?

12 A. I don't remember it, but I know I was in the nursery
13 when it did happen.

14 Q. Was that the new nursery that had been opened at
15 The Dowans?

16 A. Aye; it was called St Margaret's Nursery.

17 Q. In relation to healthcare, you tell us that you don't
18 think you saw a dentist.

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. I've been asked to raise this: we have seen your
21 children's records and there appears to be in those
22 records something called a dental card. What that
23 suggests from the dental card is there's a record of,
24 I think, a dental visit or seeing a dentist on,
25 I think -- it's not clear as to whether it's 1950 or

1 1958, but some time around then. Then maybe a visit in
2 1962, two occasions in 1963, two occasions in 1964, and
3 quite a few occasions in 1965.

4 That's not something you remember? That's not
5 stayed with you?

6 A. No. It's not stayed with me, that. I can't remember
7 a dentist.

8 Q. Something that we sometimes hear about children in
9 children's homes is about if a child wets the bed. Do
10 you remember what would happen if a child wet the bed?

11 A. I think there was definitely a bed-wetting problem for
12 others. I think I did it when I was about 5 years old.
13 I don't know if those who had a problem with it were
14 punished. I have no idea whatsoever about that.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. They probably did.

17 Q. You say probably did, but that's not something you
18 remember yourself, it doesn't stand out in your memory?

19 A. It doesn't stand out in my memory, anyway.

20 Q. You mention that there were certain chores that the
21 children were involved with. What kind of chores did
22 the children have to do?

23 A. Polishing the rooms -- most of the rooms in the
24 Aberlour Orphanage were made of wood and we used to have
25 to polish the bedrooms, the dining walls. It was all

1 wooden floors. You didn't have the electric polishers,
2 the things to polish them up. You had to Ronick the
3 floors and polish them with our feet, running up and
4 down and shining them up. Other than that, I can't
5 remember doing anything else.

6 We were sent potato picking, you got paid for that,
7 just pennies, but it meant you could get flags(?).

8 Q. And you tell us that during the winter, there were
9 books, games, record player and a TV?

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. And you could play outside in the summer, playing
12 fields, football, build dens. You think that they must
13 have given you pocket money because you remember going
14 into the village to spend it on sweets; is that right?

15 A. Aye. There was a kind of wee wooden cabin in Aberlour
16 High Street and you spent your money there. I think
17 most folk would get -- I don't know if there was ...
18 Yes, we would definitely get pocket money.

19 Q. When you went into the village, would children be
20 allowed to go on their own in a group or were they
21 always supervised by a member of staff?

22 A. They were supervised up to a certain age. I think it
23 was after the age of 13 you were allowed to go into
24 Aberlour Village with another group of boys, probably
25 a group of you went for a walk.

1 Q. At page 0414 of your statement, you tell us about seeing
2 your big sister and you saw her twice.

3 A. I have two big sisters. Not the oldest sister, the next
4 sister up, she used to be in the pantomimes, so I always
5 saw her because I was in the pantomimes along with her.
6 But there was very little communication between us, if
7 there was any. The reason for the lack of communication
8 is when you're in an orphanage, you tended to just talk
9 to the people to the same age group that you were in and
10 not to somebody elder.

11 But I did see my other sister. The two of them
12 walked by me one day and somebody pointed out to me,
13 "There's your two sisters". But there was a big age gap
14 between us. I think it's seven years between the bottom
15 and 11 years between my older sister.

16 Q. You tell us at paragraph 35 of your statement that:

17 "They kept families apart in the orphanage and this
18 is a big issue with [you]."

19 A. Oh, most definitely. Most definitely.

20 Q. Tell us about that.

21 A. I'd never seen my sister until this year and that's
22 a total disgrace. 65 years apart. (Pause). I think
23 that's really abusive, if you ask me. Keeping families
24 apart like that, I mean ...

25 Q. So essentially, you were living apart within the same

1 orphanage?

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. And arrangements weren't made for you to keep up your
4 family life with her?

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. And then when she was older she left and you entirely
7 lost contact; is that right? Is that what happened?

8 A. Aye. Nobody told me where my sisters were. Nothing.
9 Nothing to try and get you to go back together as
10 a family or some kind of family thing. There was
11 nothing. No after ... You left the orphanage, there
12 was nothing. You were out there and on your own, on
13 your tod. It's just unbelievable that they can leave
14 you there hanging and never knowing your family. That's
15 a disgrace. Absolute disgrace. There must be a few
16 families affected by that. In fact, I know there are
17 families affected. It's a big thing with me.

18 Q. Before we move on to that subject in more detail,
19 William, I'm going to ask you about discipline at the
20 orphanage. If a child didn't behave himself, what
21 happened? Was there any punishment?

22 A. The belt was the kind of official -- I had heard of the
23 cane, but I never seen the cane, unless it changed. The
24 belt was the one I got. I got six of the belt for
25 smoking, maybe a couple of times.

1 I remember one night six of us had to stand in the
2 main hall for hours one night because one boy had
3 wandered down to the girls' wing. They wanted to find
4 out who it was, so they picked six of us and they made
5 us stand there all night and nobody admitted it. That
6 was quite stunning. I think we stood there for about --
7 from 4 o'clock to 11 o'clock at night, seven hours.

8 Q. When you got six of the belt, who gave you the belt?

9 A. If it was within the school, the head of the school
10 would give you it. If it was within the orphanage
11 grounds -- Dean Wolfe never gave me the belt, but
12 Dean Leslie gave me six of the belt once.

13 Q. How about housemasters or house parents, did they ever
14 give the belt to you or other children?

15 A. Not that I know of. Not that I know of.

16 Q. So if you didn't behave, would it be that they would
17 report it to the dean?

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. How old were you when you got the belt?

20 A. I think I must have been about 12 or 13. I do remember
21 starting daft smoking maybe when I was about 9 years
22 old, but eventually you get caught, and six of the belt.

23 Q. William, I'm going to move on to ask you about what
24 happened to you when you were in Jupp House. You tell
25 us that you were probably 11 years old when you went

1 into Jupp House. Who was the housemaster there?

2 A. BBR .

3 Q. What do you remember about BBR ?

4 A. One night, I remember getting lifted out of my bed.

5 I don't know how old I was, really. I think I was

6 between 10 and 11. I got lifted out of my bed and put

7 into his bed. He had a private room, which was

8 a dormitory, private room, dormitory. He was lying in

9 the bed. Within my own heart, I knew there was

10 something wrong, so I pretended to keep sleeping and he

11 kept lifting my hand and putting it on his private

12 parts. I kept pulling it away and kidding on I was

13 sleeping. Eventually, he lifted me up and put me back

14 in my bed. That's all the abuse I remember, but it was

15 totally frightening, really.

16 I remember about two or three weeks after that there

17 was a fire escape in the boys' bedroom and I was going

18 to jump from the top. I was going to top myself. It

19 was because of that particular abuse. I had to be

20 talked down. I remember shouting out, "He's nothing but

21 a poofy bastard". I was going off my head. I totally

22 lost it.

23 Can I just add to that, it made me an aggressive

24 man, but I controlled the aggression by lifting weights.

25 Q. You say that you remember getting lifted out your bed.

1 Was it BBR [REDACTED] who lifted you out?

2 A. Oh definitely. I don't need to -- he was a fat guy,
3 a big fat guy, BBR [REDACTED]. It was definitely him.
4 I didn't even need to open my eyes -- again, it was
5 definitely him.

6 Q. Did this happen on the one occasion that you can
7 remember or did it happen --

8 A. That was the only occasion -- I know ... There was
9 another night -- because of what happened that night,
10 I used to kind of light sleep. I know I did see him
11 once taking another child or boy out of the room into
12 his bed.

13 It totally affects your real life, even with
14 homosexuals, because I don't ... I'm a bit wary of
15 homosexuals because of that. I'm anti ... Again, I'm
16 totally against homosexuals, really, because of that.
17 Again, it's all the norm now, but not for me. It
18 shouldn't be forced upon you.

19 Q. But you think your feelings about that have been
20 directly affected by your experience as a child?

21 A. Definitely. Definitely.

22 Q. How long were you in Jupp House, can you remember?

23 A. Maybe a couple of years. A couple of years.

24 Q. You've told us about being on the fire escape: who was
25 it who talked you down?

1 A. There was a guy called Peter Walker. He was another
2 housemaster in a different home. He was all right, that
3 guy, Peter Walker. I think it was him that talked me
4 down.

5 Q. Did anyone speak to you about why you were wanting to
6 jump off the fire escape?

7 A. No.

8 Q. No one asked you why?

9 A. No one asked me why. In all probability, right at that
10 moment, I would never have told him because I think it's
11 fear. It's just total fear. I was actually scared of
12 BBR. I was scared of him. When he was in the
13 house, I totally avoided him after that.

14 Q. Who else do you think knew what BBR was doing
15 if he was taking boys out of their bed at night?

16 A. The funny thing about that is ... There's a guy ...
17 Can I name him?

18 Q. Yes. Please do.

19 A. There's a guy called AJP. He was in the same --
20 now at this moment in time he's called AJP. He
21 stayed in the orphanage and he also -- when I moved from
22 the orphanage, he moved to a place in Greenock. It was
23 a working boys' home in Greenock and AJP got in
24 touch with BBR and moved back and stayed with
25 him. I just don't trust the guy because he stayed with

1 BBR [REDACTED].

2 Q. So AJP [REDACTED] was another child in Jupp House; is that
3 right?

4 A. That's right.

5 Q. And he was a child in there about the same time that you
6 were there?

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. Do you know whether he was a child that was lifted out
9 of his bed at night?

10 A. Definitely. He must have been. I think the age
11 difference is very, very slender between the two of us,
12 between AJP [REDACTED] and -- he's probably 69/70. I don't think
13 there's very much difference in age between the two of
14 us. But he's definitely had -- he stayed with
15 BBR [REDACTED], changed his name to AJP [REDACTED] instead
16 of AJP [REDACTED].

17 Q. Do you know at all the nature of the relationship
18 between AJP [REDACTED], now AJP [REDACTED], and BBR [REDACTED]?

19 A. I don't know what it was. I don't know whether he
20 adopted him or whether he married him or what.
21 I haven't a clue what that's all about.

22 Q. William, you tell us about another thing that happened
23 while you were at Aberlour. You tell us that you
24 remember, when you were 14 or 15, they started mixing
25 the boys and the girls and you were down in the girls'

1 wing. You have mentioned about maybe standing up in the
2 hall. But you refer to another boy and something
3 happened to him.

4 A. Aye. Once again, I remember this boy called
5 [REDACTED]. He went to the army, [REDACTED]. He got an
6 absolute leathering in the toilets in that house from
7 BGX [REDACTED] -- well, BGX [REDACTED]. I think it's BGX [REDACTED].
8 It was horrible. He was screaming. But there was
9 nothing you could do.

10 Q. Did you see it happening?

11 A. You were going to get the same. I never seen it happen.
12 What happened ... He was absolutely screaming his head
13 off. It was shocking.

14 Q. So you didn't see it happen, but you heard the
15 screaming?

16 A. Aye. He was another one I was scared of.

17 Q. Which house was BGX [REDACTED] the housemaster of?

18 A. At one time it was M and S, but he was in charge of the
19 mixed -- when they went mixed, the house, the first
20 house that was mixed, he was in charge of it along with
21 another woman. I forget who the woman's name was.

22 Q. So when you say MS, would that be Mount Stephen?

23 A. Mount Stephen, that's right.

24 Q. So he was with Mount Stephen and then he moved to
25 a house mixed with boys and girls?

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. The boy you referred to who was screaming, did you
3 see -- did he speak to you afterwards and tell you what
4 happened?

5 A. No. He never told us. I think these kind of things you
6 kept to yourself. It's like me with BBR [REDACTED], you
7 kept it to yourself.

8 Q. So you didn't even tell your friends about that?

9 A. No, no. The first person to ever know about it was
10 (indicating) [REDACTED]. My partner was the first person to
11 ever know about it. I never even told my own child.
12 I think it was just fear, and through the years ...
13 I mean, [REDACTED] used to say to me, "You're an angry young
14 man". I think that would have made anybody angry.

15 Q. William, the next thing I'm going to ask you about is
16 when you left Aberlour.

17 Can you tell us what preparations were put in place
18 for you being discharged from there?

19 A. No preparation whatsoever. You were told one day and
20 you were away the next. It was shocking. Because you
21 never got to say goodbye to anybody you knew or ...
22 Quite frightening to be out into the big world and all
23 you knew was the orphanage and they're taking you away
24 to somewhere hundreds of miles away. It was totally
25 frightening.

1 Q. Where was it that you were taken to?

2 A. Greenock, Finnart Boys' Working Home.

3 Q. If I understand what you're saying, you have lived your
4 entire life in Aberlour, in a very rural location, since
5 you were 2 years old, and then one day you're suddenly
6 in Greenock.

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. Was anyone with you in Greenock to give you support?

9 A. You eventually got pally with the guys that was in
10 there, in the Finnart Street house. AJP was
11 there to begin with, but he left obviously to go back
12 with BBR. I think there was another boy, but
13 I cannot remember his name offhand, that was in
14 Aberlour Orphanage.

15 Q. Was there any adult, any professional, like
16 a social worker, who might be there to show you how to
17 live life, how to manage a budget or how to do anything?

18 A. They were there. All they did really was feed you and
19 I think we used to have to pay so much of our wages to
20 them. But they fed you. But they never showed you what
21 life's about, money and all that.

22 Q. What about getting a job? Did they find you a job?

23 A. They helped, aye. They helped you to find a job.

24 Q. What job did you get?

25 A. I had quite a few jobs, actually, within the Greenock

1 area. I worked in a tyre(?) merchant's, I worked in
2 a lemonade factory, delivering. I ended up in the
3 Caledonian Foundry. I ended up going to college in
4 Paisley through that: it was to do with the shipyards.
5 It was nine months at Greenock College and learning
6 welding and all that. I went for a medical and they
7 failed me. All that time wasted for nothing.

8 Q. In general terms, you tell us in your statement that you
9 loved the orphanage, other than the occasions of abuse
10 that you have told us about. It was your home for
11 13 years, it was all you knew, and overall it was
12 a great experience.

13 A. I've got to totally agree with you. I mean, that is --
14 honestly that is true. I love Aberlour, but that one
15 thing will affect me the rest of my life, that one real
16 thing. Plus the fact that -- the family thing.

17 Q. You have told us -- and I want to move on to the third
18 part and the final part of my questions -- about the
19 effect that your experiences in care have had upon you
20 in your adult life. I think you've already told us some
21 of that in relation to your family and in relation to
22 not being prepared for leaving care and the effect that
23 the occasion with BBR [REDACTED] had upon you.

24 Is there anything you would like to add to that or
25 tell us about that in terms of the effect it's had upon

1 your adult life?

2 A. The biggest thing for me, I think, was family. I always
3 thought about my two sisters and I tried to find them
4 and all this kind of carry-on. I found one, but she had
5 too many bad memories. We got in touch through the
6 Salvation Army, but she had never got over the fact that
7 I'd moved back to Kilmarnock and it kind of upset her.
8 She's now dead anyway, my sister, [REDACTED].

9 But the best thing was meeting up with my older
10 sister, the oldest one. The two of us are like peas in
11 a pod, we get on so well. How did that not happen years
12 ago?

13 Q. Tell us how you managed to make contact with her.

14 A. I run a Facebook page [REDACTED]
15 Because I was going through all the stuff, trying to
16 find my older sister. Eventually, this year,
17 a [REDACTED] asked to join [REDACTED] and
18 I ... yes, aye. Three weeks later, there was photos up
19 of me with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]'s holding me as a 3-year-old
20 and she must have seen it and she's wrote back, in three
21 weeks, "I think you must be my brother -- in fact,
22 I know you're my brother". And that was it. I was over
23 the moon. Unbelievable.

24 Q. As I understand it, you set up the [REDACTED] Facebook
25 page?

1 A. I did.

2 Q. And you did it because you hoped you would find your
3 sister?

4 A. Aye, and the intention is that other folk can find their
5 families through that. So the Facebook page
6 continues -- although we've found each other, it still
7 continues, but there's not a great deal of ex-orphans on
8 it. I don't know, a lot of folk don't ... A lot of
9 folk in Kilmarnock where I stay never knew I stayed in
10 an orphanage because there was a stigma. It was
11 a stigma back in the 1960s, 1970s, the 1980s even, that
12 you were an ex-orphan. It was even a stigma to get
13 jobs: ex-orphan, don't touch. But any job I got --
14 I ended up with a job in Kilmarnock and I stayed in that
15 job for 36 years, and I think maybe about two folk knew
16 I was an ex-orphan. That was a big factory,
17 [REDACTED]. Ex-orphans were stigmatised, if you know
18 what I mean.

19 MS RATTRAY: Well, William, that concludes my questions.

20 I have no further questions to ask you and it remains to
21 thank you very much for answering the questions that
22 I had for you. I just want to check, but I'm not aware
23 of there being any further questions, my Lady.

24 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
25 questions? No.

1 William, those are all the questions we have for
2 you. Thank you for coming forward and helping us here
3 at the inquiry, both with your written statement, which
4 is evidence before us, and by adding to it by coming
5 along this afternoon and talking to us more about your
6 time at Aberlour. It's very helpful to me in the work
7 we have to do here and I'm now able to let you go.

8 Thank you.

9 A. Thank you.

10 (The witness withdrew)

11 LADY SMITH: The last mention today of my general
12 restriction order. Could I highlight four names that
13 were mentioned by the last witness of people who cannot
14 be identified as being the subject of allegations
15 outside the hearing room: there was BBR
16 BGX AJP or AJP -- not because he
17 is the subject of allegations but because he was a child
18 in care -- and likewise someone called
19 because he was in a child in care. Children in care
20 also have the protection of the order in adulthood as
21 well as in childhood.

22 I think those are all the names that I have to
23 cover; is that right, Ms Rattray?

24 MS RATTRAY: I think the only other names would be family
25 members of the witnesses.

1 LADY SMITH: Yes, obviously, family members, but we've only
2 had first names, so they probably anonymise themselves
3 in that way. That, as I understand, is all for today
4 and takes us until next week when we are going to start
5 a little earlier on Tuesday; is that right?

6 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady. We have two witnesses and
7 a read-in, but that is scheduled for Tuesday at the
8 earlier time of 9.00 am. Also, the hearing will not be
9 taking place on Wednesday.

10 LADY SMITH: That's right and then we'll resume on Thursday.
11 Thank you very much. Until Tuesday.

12 (4.04 pm)

13 (The inquiry adjourned until Tuesday,

14 11 December 2018 at 9.00 am)

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RON AITCHISON (sworn)1

Questions from MS RATTRAY1

"MARY" (sworn)80

Questions from MS RATTRAY80

"WILLIAM" (sworn)132

Questions from MS RATTRAY132

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