

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 [REDACTED] BBL?, who was a character.
- 8 [REDACTED] BBL? 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 [REDACTED] BBL? 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 [REDACTED] BBL? or
- 21 [REDACTED], because I have heard both names and I want to
- 22 clarify?
- 23 A. [REDACTED] BBL?
- 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, [REDACTED] would say, "Just go and tell him to  
9 eff off", type of thing. And that was [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] way worked quite well.

13 I could also point out that [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED]

- 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 [REDACTED] BBR -- sorry, not mister, [REDACTED] BBR .

- 1           What are your memories of [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] ?
- 2           A. I have a very expansive knowledge of
- 3           [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED]. Whether he was a [REDACTED] or not,
- 4           I don't know. It's said or rumoured that he was
- 5           a [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED], but that was possibly
- 6           only because he drove an [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] ?
- 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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] when
- 12          you were there?
- 13          A. As a member of the staff, I knew very well of
- 14          [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED]. I maybe haven't said in my statement
- 15          that I knew [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED]'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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] was known by the boys  
3 because he drove certain cars or had an interest in  
4 cars?

5 A. [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] 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] pink convertible  
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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] 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. [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED]  
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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED]  
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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] 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, [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] 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 pink convertible?

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 [REDACTED] BBR  
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           [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED]  
18           He was adopted by [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] BBR . 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. And ever since then,  
4 I have never had any contact with my other [REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED] Yes, I know where they live and where they  
6 stay, but I've got them scattered across the world, but  
7 I certainly don't have daily contact with them.

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 [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] BBG . Who was Mrs [REDACTED] BBG

11 A. Mrs [REDACTED] BBG was -- Mr Leslie and Mrs [REDACTED] BBG 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 [REDACTED] BBG 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 [REDACTED] BHM .

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

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

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

3 Q. Just to be clear about [REDACTED] 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, [REDACTED] BBE [REDACTED], 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 [REDACTED] BBE [REDACTED]; 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 [REDACTED] BBL/BGT [REDACTED]. I was sitting on the bench at the door  
19          waiting to go to church and then [REDACTED] BBE [REDACTED] 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 **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 [REDACTED] BBE and [REDACTED] BLJ -- [REDACTED] BBL  
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 [REDACTED] BBE : 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 and BLJ 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, [REDACTED] 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. [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] BBE used to do things.
- 20          A. Mm-hm.
- 21          Q. What did [REDACTED] 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**, Mr and Mrs **BBP/BGZ** **BBG**, Mr and  
25 Mrs **BBL/BGT** and a man **BBE**. 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 [REDACTED] BGX [REDACTED], and Jupp House  
3 was [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED], and the White House was  
4 a [REDACTED] BGG [REDACTED] 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. [REDACTED] BBR .

3 Q. What do you remember about [REDACTED] 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** who lifted you out?
- 2           A. Oh definitely. I don't need to -- he was a fat guy,  
3           a big fat guy, **BBR**. 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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED]. 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 [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] AJP [REDACTED]. He was in the same --  
20 now at this moment in time he's called [REDACTED] AJP [REDACTED]. 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 [REDACTED] AJP [REDACTED] got in  
24 touch with [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] and moved back and stayed with  
25 him. I just don't trust the guy because he stayed with

1 [REDACTED] BBR .

2 Q. So [REDACTED] AJP 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 [REDACTED] AJP 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 [REDACTED] BBR , changed his name to [REDACTED] AJP instead  
16 of [REDACTED] AJP .

17 Q. Do you know at all the nature of the relationship  
18 between [REDACTED] AJP , now [REDACTED] AJP , and [REDACTED] BBR ?

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 [REDACTED] BGX -- well, [REDACTED] BGX. I think it's [REDACTED] BGX.  
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 [REDACTED] BGX 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 [REDACTED] 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. [REDACTED] AJP was  
11 there to begin with, but he left obviously to go back  
12 with [REDACTED] 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 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 **[REDACTED]**  
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 RATTRAY .....1

"MARY" (sworn) .....80

Questions from MS RATTRAY .....80

"WILLIAM" (sworn) .....132

Questions from MS RATTRAY .....132

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