

Tuesday, 11 December 2018

(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH: CC Good Morning.

(SWORN IN)

Please make yourself comfortable. I am going to hand you over to Mr People's in a moment but can I just say at the outset apart from thanking you for coming along today that I do know you have given us a lot of information about your life as a child and it is all very helpful to us and we are very interested in all of it. Today we are just going to be focussing on the Aberlour part of your evidence but please don't think that that means that we don't value the other information you are bringing to us and we may come back to that at a later date. If you are puzzled about why Mr People's is only asking you about Aberlour that is the reason, it doesn't mean that we have ditched the rest of the evidence, far from it. I hope that reassures and now let me handover to Mr People's.

JIM PEOPLES: Good Morning CC.

CC: Good Morning Sir.

JIM PEOPLES: Can I just explain a few things before I begin asking some questions today. There is a red folder in front of you just to your left and in that folder there is a copy of your statement that you provided to the Inquiry and the folder is there for your use and if at any point you want to look at a particular part then feel free to do so. The statement will also come up in front of you on the screen, although there may be parts

of it blanked out so if you want to see the full statement you could look at the red folder rather than the screen in front of you but use whichever one suits you best.

CC: My name is BCY

JIM PEOPLES: No, that is just a set of letters that we give to protect your identity and so don't worry about that. Your name today is CC and that is what I intend to call you today, don't worry about those letters it is just so that you would be protected. If I could then CC asked you to open the folder in front of you and turn to hopefully the final page, I will give you the reference of the document that you have in the folder for the benefit of the recording of your evidence WIT.001.001.1250 and what I would like you to do is to turn the final page of your statement in the red folder and it is at page 1283, that is the number we have given to it and can you confirm for me that you have signed your statement on that page.

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: If I could ask you to turn to the first page of your statement which is in the red folder and can you confirm for me at this stage that you were born in the year 1959. I don't need your full date of birth so don't give me that. You were born in 1959?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: CC clearly we want listen to you and as Lady Smith has explained to you that we want to hear today about your experiences at Aberlour Orphanage and the Dowans and you deal with that in your statement and I am going to take to you to that part of your statement

shortly. So far as the rest of your statement is concerned can I also confirm that that we have all read your statement carefully and we know the background which led to you going into care and we have also read about your experiences in other care settings. It is not my plan to ask you about those today for the reasons already explained but be assured that we have considered these carefully and they will be part of your evidence to the Inquiry. What I propose to do is to ask you some questions about your time in the care of Aberlour and then hope that I can then move on to look at the positive things in the statement that you have given us including why you have come here today and what you now intend to do with the rest of your life. I will deal with it in that way if I may so that will hopefully explain where we are going this morning. With that introduction can I take you to where you start dealing with your life at Aberlour and it starts I think on page 1252 in the folder and if you can turn to that page please and you tell us about Aberlour Orphanage to begin with. CC before I do ask you about some of the things you have said there, I am just going to get some dates from you. You told us that you remember I think going into Aberlour at quite a young age. Now we have seen some records and I think you have seen the same records and they indicate that you were first admitted to Aberlour to the orphanage I think on [REDACTED] 1964. Would that be about right? You would around the age of four when you first went to Aberlour, do you remember that?

CC: Yes four.

JIM PEOPLES: You stayed in Aberlour firstly in the orphanage and then in a place called the Dowans?

CC: Not St Margaret's.

JIM PEOPLES: Not St Margaret's, we will come to that and you stayed in those two parts of the establishments at Aberlour until [REDACTED] 1970 I think according to the records when you would be about age ten, is that right?

CC: I was eleven when I left. I may have just have been eleven.

JIM PEOPLES: That would be right. I think just by way of background you have two brothers and a sister. Is that correct? Are they all older than you?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: As you have told us you spent most of your childhood in care at various settings including the orphanage and the Dowans. So far as the orphanage is concerned CC, can you tell me what you remember about the orphanage about what sort of place it was?

CC: I remember they had different dormitory – dormitories situation. I don't remember how many children were in the dormitories but there was a lot. The beds were sort of lined up all away along the corridor on each side and I remember being in one, the nearest St Margaret's church. I think it was four small children and then eventually they put me to school when I was four which was in a quadrangle in Aberlour orphanage, the big Aberlour orphanage and the first horrific memories that I have were there were I had Bri-nylon school pants for doing physical exercise in and I had taken a [wooden roller] and I had a grey uniform on and it was

like a pinafore and it had buttons up here on each side and it came down and then it was pleats and for some unknown reason this lady come running towards me with her tawse in her hand and started laying into me and she got me down on the floor and she started whipping me and I just didn't know what the earth I had done and it was long long time after that I found out that it was showing my pants off.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you tell us in your statement at paragraph 14 that the name of this person that you recall was a teacher?

CC: Yes her name was Mrs BGY

JIM PEOPLES: You say that this happened when you had just recently gone to the school in Abelour when you were about four years of age?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Where you still in the orphanage part of the house?

CC: I was still in the dormitories.

JIM PEOPLES: In the main orphanage building, is that right? You said that you went to the orphanage first for a few months and then you went to the Dowans?

CC: That's correct.

JIM PEOPLES: Where you still in the orphanage when this happened?

CC: Yes I was in the big one.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you describe that she had her tawse and you were on the floor and she was hitting you?

CC: She was slapping indiscriminately, right up my legs, towards my waist even and it was just like []like she was lashing me.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you get any impression of what sort of state she was in when she was doing this?

CC: She was extremely aggressive and angry. I thought it was because I had shown these PE school pants off.

JIM PEOPLES: So you went to school when you were still in the orphanage part but within a few months you moved to the Dowans. Is that right?

CC: Yes but when I was at the school I had a couple of things that happened there as well and I had been in the quadrangle and I remember one of the teachers sent me for something and unfortunately there was an elder boy, there was like a cloakroom area outside the classrooms and this quadrangle and they were sort of inverted leading away from the hall and all our little coats were set on them and stuff and this boy was, I don't even like saying it.....

JIM PEOPLES: Is this the one that you talk about on page 1253 CC that he was basically sexually arousing himself, I think that is how you describe it in your statement. So you saw something.....

CC: I ran when I was four. There was another one who had a tawse as well and he was holding it out and offered children quarter pennies and half pennies whatever it might have been to take the tawse off him.

JIM PEOPLES: So he was going around with a tawse?

CC: Yes and there wa [REDACTED] and others and it was all the rage back then it was the mother of pearl pen knives and they used to use their clothes and wrap them round their arms and use them to hit each other with and then try to stab each other and this was allow to continue.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you think that the staff were aware that they were doing these things?

CC: Oh yes because it was all in a quadrangle which the staff had access to every single window around the building.

JIM PEOPLES: You are pretty sure that they would have been able to see what was going on with these boys with these pen knives?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: The boy with the tawse was this a teacher's belt?

CC: Yes. It appeared to be.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you know where he got it from?

CC: No I have absolutely no idea but he was a strange guy, I remember that.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you think that the teachers would know that he was going around doing this or not?

CC: I would have thought with the amount of children that were actually there he would have been reported.

LADY SMITH: CC you are doing really well with the microphone. If you could sit back a little from it.

JIM PEOPLES: You think also that some children might have said something about these things going on as well. Did you say anything? I know you were very young and maybe too young to say too much?

CC: I can't remember.

JIM PEOPLES: That's fair enough.

CC: I can only remember things that affected me.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you tell us about these experiences on 1253 of your statement. It wasn't long after you moved to Aberlour after a few months

that you tell us that you went to the Dowans. Can you just tell us where the Dowans is because we know that there is a big Aberlour Orphanage and we know that it is a building with wings and [].....

CC: It is now a gaming hotel. It brings in the most money in Morayshire. It is the elite and the privileged that go there.

JIM PEOPLES: Today?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: In the past I think it is our understanding, we have had some evidence about Aberlour and the history of it and I think that the evidence that has been given so far is that Dowans was historically a large mansion house which was bought by Aberlour.

CC: It was the soldiers, the second world soldiers that used that place before because I remember in the kitchen we had underground passages that went right through the whole building were the soldiers could hide to save their life in case Britain was attacked.

JIM PEOPLES: So it was used in wartime by service personnel?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: We understand that I think it was possibly in the 1950's that Aberlour purchased the Dowans and some of the ground that was part of the estate that the house was built on. I don't know if that was something you or not?

CC: I don't know.

JIM PEOPLES: You arrived in the Dowans in what would be 1964, is that right?

CC: It would be.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us that it is a little bit of way from the orphanage itself. You have to walk from the orphanage down the High Street in Aberlour to get to the Dowans?

CC: It is probably about a mile in a quarter or a mile and a half from one orphanage to the other one because we had to walk in the snow up to our knees all the way through the village and quite often inadequately dressed in clothes, was freezing.

JIM PEOPLES: You had to walk I take it to get from the Dowans to the school for example?

CC: No, we went to Aberlour High School but we walked every Sunday to go to St Margaret's church which was next door Canon Wolf used to run?

JIM PEOPLES: During the services of Canon Wolf.

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: We heard it is sometimes called Wolfy. But he was there.

CC: It was Mr Robertson that was there when I was there.

JIM PEOPLES: Mr Robertson was he the head master of the school?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Tommy Robertson, did you know his first name?

CC: I am not sure of his first name.

JIM PEOPLES: So far as the Dowans is concerned it was essentially a big house, was it a big mansion house?

CC: Yes that had turrets and I got my picture taken with Princess Margaret and a little boy called [REDACTED] at the back door and it was arched and it was set at the back of the side of the building.

JIM PEOPLES: Was this a visit that Princess Margaret came to.....

CC: Yes she came to open it as a children's nursery and I need to be quite specific about the fact that it was never called Lady Margaret Orphanage, it was called the Dowans at all given times. She came to open it which didn't merit it being called Lady Margaret Orphanage.

JIM PEOPLES: I think when you went to the Dowans in 1964 according to the records I think the home was run by a couple, can you tell us their names?

CC: [REDACTED] BCJ and [REDACTED] BCI

JIM PEOPLES: On page 1254 of your statement CC if you want to turn to that at paragraph 20, it is page 5 of your statement to find it there. You tell us that you thought that there was maybe around fifty children. Is this in the Dowans, boys and girls?

CC: It seemed to vary between 43-50 as I remember.

JIM PEOPLES: You estimate that they range from the very young children to about fifteen years of age, around that age?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: And you tell us that the children's slept in the dormitories, is that the sort of dormitory that you describe a big room with beds on either side?

CC: It was quite different from the other orphanage place, the other orphanage was extremely large and it was very very long in the sleeping arrangements area, I think there might have been around about thirty to a room there.

JIM PEOPLES: The big orphanage.

CC: Yes but this one, this other one I would say.....

JIM PEOPLES: Don't worry if you can't remember precisely.

CC: 10-16 kids but maybe the lower side as opposed to the higher.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us a bit about life in the Dowans and the first thing that I would like to ask you about is what you tell us in paragraph 21, if we just scroll down in the screen and it is in your statement as well, you tell us that the [REDACTED] picked on the most damaged children. Can you just explain what you recall about that.

CC: The pile ups in the garden.

JIM PEOPLES: Just tell us what you remember.

CC: I was often, em, children could make allegations against each other and say CC made comments about the dinner being not very nice, we will put it like that and the next thing CC was taken in to the kitchen and they had a great big cane and I had welts right up the back of my legs right up to the back of my back and I stood there and they were swinging the cane like they were swinging a golf club and laying into me and I was tied to beds to be given hidings.

JIM PEOPLES: Who was doing this to you?

CC: [REDACTED] was doing that to me.

JIM PEOPLES: When you were getting hit with the cane was that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

CC: [REDACTED]

JIM PEOPLES: Both?

CC: Both of them. They even kicked a dog the stairs. They had a little dog called [REDACTED] and it was a white poodle and they booted it the whole length of the stairs as they us did for bed wetting, any [REDACTED].

JIM PEOPLES: I will just take some of these things just that you tell us about and I think you tell us about all of those matters in your statement. Just in terms of picking on damaged children, I think the point, as I understand that you are making in paragraph 21 is that some children got picked on but others didn't so there is a difference of treatment.

CC: [REDACTED] as a girl that was in the home with me and she was sent to Coventry. Now everybody was so frightened of the [REDACTED] BCJ/BCI they wouldn't speak to her and every time I looked at her she was crying and she was just sitting amongst the rhododendron bushes with her back to everybody howling her eyes out. I was a little chancer and I couldn't stand and watch that and so I went over and I was like "what's wrong, what's going on?". Even though I was so small it was, I have had it all anyway so I just keep going.

JIM PEOPLES: You spoke to her but what did she tell you when you went over?

CC: She cried and cried and cried and then she disappeared from the home.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you tell us in your statement CC that she told you to go away as they would do you?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: So you would get the same treatment she was saying?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you know why she was given this treatment?

CC: None at all. I have no idea at all. I presume she might have got the same treatment as me by being taken upstairs after our meal, tea or dinner or something like that and something had been said or maybe I

had said something out of turn, I don't know and taken up stairs and she could have been tied to a bed, hypothetically speaking.

JIM PEOPLES: You didn't see that though?

CC: No I didn't no. Something happened.

JIM PEOPLES: The time you saw her crying, you seem to indicate that she was.....

CC: She was broken hearted

JIM PEOPLES:on her own for quite a lot of the time at that time and you say she was sent to Coventry and the [REDACTED] wouldn't allow you to speak to her?

CC: None of us were allowed to speak to her at all.

JIM PEOPLES: Did the [REDACTED] tell you that, no one speak to her?

CC: Yes, else we'd be punished.

JIM PEOPLES: If I can turn to page 6 of your statement on 1255, that we call it, at paragraph 23. Now I think you have already said something about clothing in winter but you tell us a little bit about what might happen at the weekends in the winter that you would be left outside all day. Can you tell us what you remember about that?

CC: White finger, like Raynaud's disease. Everybody crying and everybody begging each other to go to the back door and beg to get in and everybody being frightened to do so and having wellies that were slapping against the back of our thighs and little inadequate socks and inadequate clothes on, full stop. Freezing, sucking our fingers, crying all together and who is going to be the one that is going to go to the door and I went to the door one time and there was a little kid, a little boy with

blonde hair and he went to the door and [REDACTED] BCI [REDACTED] come to the door and he slammed the door shut and it took the little guy's finger off.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you think he lost his finger?

CC: Well it was hanging.

JIM PEOPLES: It was a bad injury to his finger?

CC: He was screaming his face off.

JIM PEOPLES: Was he just trying to get in?

CC: We were all trying to get in.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you have explained by, you say it was cold and you were freezing.

CC: Yes we were sent out there, I don't know if it was a Saturday or a Sunday but in the winter time this was often done to us just like the mini-Hillsborough disaster that they had in the garden as well. It was a regular occurrence. Sorry I shouldn't have said that, that's disrespectful towards the Hillsborough disaster, sorry. I nearly died a heap of times, I know that.

JIM PEOPLES: We will focus on what you remember about the Dowans. Don't worry just tell us what you remember about that period of your life. You have told us what would happen in Winter and you would be outside and trying to get in and you wouldn't be let in by the [REDACTED] BCJ/BCI [REDACTED] on these occasions and you tell us about the boy whose finger was injured. You also tell us in paragraph 24 CC about something else that would happen when you would be playing outside and when the [REDACTED] BCJ/BCI [REDACTED] would come out.

CC: They would stand at the front door and point and start tracing all over the upper garden and then they would go like that and whoever that child was, was the kid that was going to be in the bottom of the pile.

JIM PEOPLES: What would happen to the kid that was picked out.

CC: Nearly killed. Screaming for hours after it because you were so traumatised because I remember doing it so many times myself, just hyperventilating and just in a terrible condition, covered in bruises because you were so badly squashed. I was only two stone, just over two stone.

JIM PEOPLES: What sort of age would be when this practice happened?

CC: Four.

JIM PEOPLES: This would start when you were four. For how long did this continue?

CC: This went on all the time that I was there.

JIM PEOPLES: So from four until maybe aged ten or eleven, this was a practice.

CC: Eleven.

JIM PEOPLES: The facts would be that a child would be picked out and then the other children...

CC: Everybody was running and the noises that were coming out of the kids it was just horrible because we knew exactly what was going to happen.

JIM PEOPLES: Was it a particular age of child that was picked on?

CC: It was every single child that was there but there was certain children that I remember and I still know to this day and they don't want to go backwards to what happened but there were certain boys that I knew and they didn't get picked on. It seemed to be the weakest and the most

vulnerable and the ones that were most damaged that were the targets.

JIM PEOPLES: You were a target...

CC: Big time

JIM PEOPLES: big time? so it happened to you quite a lot?

CC: Yes because I was classed as bad.

JIM PEOPLES: And what you are describing is a situation when you were picked or another child was picked out, all the other children would run towards them and pile on top of them, is that right?

CC: Yes they had no option out of fear. They were frightened in case it was going to turn to them and they were going to be.....nobody knew who was going to get it.

LADY SMITH: Was this supposed to be some sort of game?

CC: This was their entertainment. They were evil.

JIM PEOPLES: You say entertainment CC so who was being entertained in this?

CC: The BCJ/BCI

JIM PEOPLES: It wasn't a game for the children?

CC: Certainly not.

JIM PEOPLES: You felt that they were getting entertainment from it?

CC: They were sadistic.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us also about what might happen or what did happen to children who wet the bed. You deal with that at paragraph 25 CC on page 6 of your statement at 1255 of our numbering. Can you tell what would happen to people who wet the bed?

CC: I am absolutely sure if it was older kids from the home that were made to lift the children by the arms and legs and pick up into a swing and if I remember correctly it was either 16 or 18 steps, broad concrete steps, covered in carpet and the bannister was highly intricate because it was all hand-carved and it was dark dark wood and they would lift you into a big massive kind of swinging motion and then throw you.

JIM PEOPLES: So you would be almost like a hammock that was being held by children at both ends, your legs and your arms and they would throw you down the stairs?

CC: Right down the stairs.

JIM PEOPLES: Was this something that happened to children who wet the bed?

CC: Yes, we were all lined up in the morning to stand to attention at the bottom of the bed and then they would go round and I even split my ear trying to hide wet sheets that I'd wet, you know the Victorian old radiators that are piped I used to stuff my sheets down there but they put the heating off at night time in the home and quite often they would go like that and they would just look at me and pull the sheet right behind me and that was me going to get it and that was it.

JIM PEOPLES: This practice of throwing children who wet the bed down the stairs, was this simply for people who wet the bed or did it happen for other reasons?

CC: Maybe if they defecated the bed I don't know.

JIM PEOPLES: It was to do with soiling the bed or wetting the bed?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: And the bed-wetters would be picked out and this would happen.....

CC: Lined up and wait for their turn to get slung down the stairs.

JIM PEOPLES: Were the [REDACTED] present when these children were throwing the children down the stairs?

CC: As far as I remember yes because they were instigating the whole thing.

JIM PEOPLES: So they would know and this was facing at their direction. It was their direction or instruction?

CC: They knew alright. They got asked questions about any racism and refused to answer one question and they were allowed to walk out that home and on their merry little way but every single one of us were damaged.

JIM PEOPLES: I think what you are referring to is that subsequently there was a report about how they behaved towards people who wet the bed?

CC: And the rest of what they did.

JIM PEOPLES: I think that the home, the Dowans did close not long after you left.

CC: It was closed within 48 hours on me leaving that house. I was the first to be thrown out

JIM PEOPLES: Well we maybe come back to that but on these occasions, how often would this happen to you that you would be thrown down the stairs in this way?

CC: Pretty often.

JIM PEOPLES: You said that there was a carpet, did you suffer any form of mark or injury?

CC:: Black and blue. I don't really remember I just know that it was horrific. It was very very frightening and it could have very easily broke my neck if I had hit the bannisters or anything like that, it was a serious situation.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you ever have to go for any treatment because of what happened?

CC: I don't think I was out of the hospital while I was there.

JIM PEOPLES: You went into the Dowans when you were quite a young child, you were four or thereabouts and you were someone who wet the bed at that time. What happened when you got older, did you continue to be a bed wetter?

CC: I don't think so. It was knocked right out of me.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you stop getting thrown down the stairs as you got older then because your bed wetting stopped? Is that what you remember?

CC: Yes but there was other things that would happen to replace that.

JIM PEOPLES: In your case at least that stopped as you ceased wetting the bed?

CC: I just seem to have memories of that – I can't remember towards the end of being in the Dowans, I had only specific memories about that happening.

JIM PEOPLES: Did it happen to other children?

CC: Yes it happened to a lot of kids.

JIM PEOPLES: Up to the time that you left?

CC: Yes absolutely. I couldn't even name them but I know that there was a lot of us.

JIM PEOPLES: Where you ever asked to be one of the kids that did the throwing?

CC: No. I wouldn't be doing it anyway, it would have just smashed me up.

JIM PEOPLES: Some of the older children did do this?

CC: I think so.

JIM PEOPLES: Why do you think they.....

CC: Absolutely fear.

JIM PEOPLES: You have already told us that the **BCJ/BCI** would

sometimes hit you with canes across your backside and back legs and leaving welts and you tell us about that on page 6 of your statement at paragraph 26 and I think you explained why they tied you to the bed because you would try and resist is that right?

CC: Because I was nearly murdered before that.

JIM PEOPLES: On these occasions you say they left welts. How long would these marks remain on your legs.....

CC: I know that I was in absolutely agony and I had purple and red thick welts across my legs and up to my waist even.

JIM PEOPLES: How often would this happen to you?

CC: It didn't happen a lot with the cane, no.

JIM PEOPLES: Can you remember what sort of age you would have been when the cane was being used in this way?

CC: I got caned when I was 9-10 because another little girl had said that the dinner was [] and she said CC.....

JIM PEOPLES: You got blamed for saying that the dinner was bad and you got caned?

CC: It wasn't even me but this was the way it was with them. As I said for sheer enjoyment of setting the kids on each other and I think they deliberately liked to watch kids suffer. I am absolutely sure about that.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us that apart from the cane and I moving to page 7 of the statement that you have in front of you at page 1256 CC at paragraph 27 you say that they also used some straps from armchairs, what did they do with those?

CC: They had metal clips on the end of them and what happened was a lot of the chairs were defunct, they were like armchairs and they were like tweedy cotton bobbly chairs. I remember them being in red, in mustard, in green and brown and I remember there was like a clip on each side of the chairs and it was inserted into a wooden piece and then it was stretched along and then clipped into that other side but often these chairs malfunctioned so what they did was they kept the rubber straps with the metal clips to whip the kids. When I had pyjamas on as well.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you experience being hit by these straps?

CC: I remember that there was a very massive storm outside and we were all freaking out and it was like, you know how kids [] normal kids anyway but we were frightened and said what if that fire escapes opens because I was right next to the fire escape and I was the smallest and if that opens I am for it and then the next thing the thing burst open and there was like a round piece that came round and the BCJ/BCI room was right next door to that and everybody was absolutely petrified to go near that door because the wind and the

banging that was coming off the fire escape door and it was right over my bed, it was like a certain amount of steps and you would come down from them and my bed was there, right over the door and [REDACTED] BCI [REDACTED] came in and he started roaring and he is going right who opened that door and of course nobody opened the door, everybody was so frightened, it was her and this was me.

JIM PEOPLES: You were blamed for opening the door?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: What happened to you?

CC: He went downstairs and he got the rubber belt with the metal clips on the end if and I remember either blue or pink flowery nylon pyjamas on because I know I had two pairs, one was pink and one was blue and he came right up and he pulled the Paddington Bear cover back and just laid in at me and I was screaming but because the pain was generating through the nylon as well and he just kept whacking and whacking and whacking in to me for something I didn't even do.

JIM PEOPLES: So, he pulled the cover back and then used this strap with metal clips?

CC: He did things in the bath as well to me.

JIM PEOPLES: We will come to that in a moment. So, on this occasion he used this strap to beat you with. Repeatedly?

CC: Yes. He just kept going.

JIM PEOPLES: What sort of state was he in when he was doing this?

CC: Absolutely boiling with anger.

JIM PEOPLES: He was angry and he believed that someone had opened the door and took you to the fire escape?

CC: Nobody had opened that door whatsoever. They were all lying shivering and shaking and wondering what outcome this was going to be because we knew that they were going to come back and it was all going to kick off

JIM PEOPLES: Did you see other children being strapped in this way using or getting struck with these or hit with these armchair straps, did you ever see other children get what you've described?

CC: I can't really say that I did but I remember that a lot of children were removed and taken up to the dormitory when we were in the children's play area or where the tv area was which were both together or at meals, at breakfast in the dining hall or they could have been outside. I think they were fairly choosy when they did things and when they didn't.

JIM PEOPLES: So you have a memory that children being removed from the areas that other children were playing and taken?

CC: I didn't always see everything that was going on.

JIM PEOPLES: You got this armchair strap used on you?

CC: Yes but I don't think I was the only one, I think there was about six or seven of us that were classed as bad instead of sad and really really screwed up kids and they made sure that we were singled out as being out as being bad and disruptive and wouldn't do what we were told and stuff like that and all the time it was all the nonsense that was going round in our heads because of what we had been through before, even going there.

JIM PEOPLES: They just treated you as bad children and took it out on you? Is that what you are saying in the ways that you have described this morning?

CC: Yes they created the monster.

JIM PEOPLES: On the occasion when the door, the fire escape door blew open and when you were struck with the strap, did it leave any marks?

CC: Yes I had welts across me.

JIM PEOPLES: You have already told us at paragraph 28 about the time you recall or you recall them striking their dog, poodle dog and you say he was booted down the stairs. Was that basically what happened?

CC: Freaks me totally out. His name was [REDACTED] I used to call it [REDACTED] [REDACTED] because it was their dog and they were the [REDACTED] BCJ/BCI and I remember her, [REDACTED] BCJ just lifting her foot and lifting the dog up by the backside and it going right through the air down the stairs, like what she did to the kids and what they did to the kids, other children.

JIM PEOPLES: So she lifted the dog from the back end of the dog. But you also saw them use their feet on the dog.

CC: Yes she used her foot because I remember the dog was airborne and then it came crashing down on the ground and I was like what have you just done?

JIM PEOPLES: You mentioned there specifically Mrs [REDACTED] BCJ did you ever see Mr [REDACTED] BCI do this?

CC: No.

JIM PEOPLES: You do say that they often had violent temper tantrums and I think you have already told us I think that Mr [REDACTED] BCI would be

angry from time to time. Was that something that was a frequent experience?

CC: Yes. Between the two of them it was like they were playing off each other, they were playing off the children to create violence and to create their own sort of twisted fun.

JIM PEOPLES: Did they have any children of their own?

CC: No. They would be in care if they were.

JIM PEOPLES: I know it is difficult to remember these things but what sort of age do you think they were when you were there in the Downes. I know it is hard to estimate age when you are a child?

CC: Late 30's, early 40's. She was a heavy smoker.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us at paragraph 29 something about what would happen when you brought homework back from school. What would happen then because I think you told us that you struggled at school?

CC: Well I have got post-traumatic stress syndrome and I used to just sit like that at school and I couldn't learn my sums or nothing would go in there because it all went out there before it even got in there it was out there and I struggled immensely at school because of the flashbacks from everything that had happened to me.

JIM PEOPLES: Before you went in there?

CC: Yes and I was belted regularly for not doing school work.

JIM PEOPLES: By whom?

CC: By the teachers at school. We did go to the Dowans Aberlour. When we went to the Dowans High School, Aberlour High School, sorry.

JIM PEOPLES: Did something happen in the Dowans itself if you didn't get your homework right?

CC: Yes it did.

JIM PEOPLES: Can you tell us about that, what would happen?

CC: I remember being in total fear because they used to have, I think it was more the weekend stint as opposed to during the week and we were expected to do a lot of homework at the weekends and stuff like that and they would take us and it was spell this and spell that and I remember being absolutely petrified to even try and spell in case I got it wrong because if he got it wrong you were locked down, into a corner like that with your legs and arms folded and that was you for the whole weekend and you were allowed to put your hand up to go to the toilet and that was it. You ate your meals there as well.

JIM PEOPLES: So that was your punishment for not getting your homework right?

CC: Thing is, you were that scared, you were going to get it wrong anyway.

JIM PEOPLES: It made you worse still because you knew that could happen if you got it wrong?

CC: They couldn't see that what they were dishing out was making children worse.

JIM PEOPLES: Did that happen to other children?

CC: Yes, yes umpteen children. Over and over and over again we had to go through this.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us also CC that on page 7 of your statement at paragraph 32 what would happen at meals times. There was some

things you didn't like and I think you tell us that in your statement. What would happen if you didn't like a meal or you didn't want to eat a meal that was served up?

CC: Well unfortunately I hate pork pies because of the jelly and I just didn't like them, they were disgusting with pastry, everything about them and there was another girl called [REDACTED] who hated chicken and I remember her taking the chicken and throwing it right up the wall but I never had the guts to do that. I know the pork pies were dished out on a Tuesday and if you didn't eat it, it was presented in front of you on a Friday and then it was binned and so basically you went for three days without food.

JIM PEOPLES: So it would be served on a Tuesday and if you didn't eat it, it would be re-served each mealtime ...

CC: Until it was rancid.

JIM PEOPLES: ...and then it was just binned if you didn't eat it but did you get any other food as a choice instead?

CC: No.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you say that that is the way that they dealt with other children who didn't like something that was served up?

CC: Yes but I think most of them were probably a bit better than me and just ate it whether they liked it or not but I just couldn't stand pork pies.

[REDACTED] certainly couldn't stand chicken and just thrown up the wall.

JIM PEOPLES: You told us earlier or you were about to tell me a little bit about something happened at bath time with [REDACTED] BCI [REDACTED] and if you

turn to page 8 of your statement I think that this is maybe the occasion.

Can you tell us about what you remember about this occasion.

CC: Said I was different, and there was another girl in the bath with me. I think, I am not very sure if it is this actual girl but I think it might have been but I won't mention the name anyway.

JIM PEOPLES: What happened on this occasion that you recall so vividly?

CC: He just let me feel like a freak.

JIM PEOPLES: Did he do something to you? Can you describe? You don't have to go into detail.

CC: He said I was totally different from everybody else.

JIM PEOPLES: But did he touch you?

CC: Yes he done that inside me.

JIM PEOPLES: Are you are indicating that he used a finger, was it to penetrate you?

LADY SMITH: You are nodding your head CC. CC you don't have to go into details if you can't face it. We have got what is written in your statement.

CC: It's not being able to face me getting married, feeling like a freak because of what she did to me.

JIM PEOPLES: Don't worry I don't want to ask you anymore but I just wanted to know what you meant by touching and I think you have told us sufficient. We understand what you are describing. The only other thing CC about this occasion, I think you estimate that you were about nine when this happened?

CC: Eight, nine, ten, but I've never ever forgot it because I thought oh I am different from everybody else and I still have the horrors of what that bitch done to me.

JIM PEOPLES: I think we know and don't worry as I said, I assured you I wasn't going to go back to that and we know what you are talking about and we know the background to what you are saying. So be assured I am not going to go there. So far is, If we go to the Dowans CC. Are you ok?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: If we go back to the Dowans, there is one other thing that you tell us about on page 7 of your statement that you ran away a few times?

CC: A lot of times.

JIM PEOPLES: This might seem a very obvious question but I need to ask it to get the answer, why did you run away?

CC: We were all terrified of them and I remember just before I left the building I kidded on that I was helping him catch the rest of them that had ran away because I was lagging miles behind everybody else and I managed to blag that one. I remember them using coat hangers and just laiding into people with wooden coat hangers for running away but this was just not me who was running away, this was happening on a regular basis with a lot of children.

JIM PEOPLES: So a lot of people ran away because they were terrified and when they got back they were punished?

CC: Absolutely.

JIM PEOPLES: You said that one form of punishment would be that some children would be struck with wooden coat hangers?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you remember any other punishments that they might have received?

CC: No, there was so much.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you get the coat hanger treatment?

CC: No I could have done but I didn't because I kidded on I was trying to help them find them.

JIM PEOPLES: CC you tell us about what I call official visitors and you deal with that on page 8, the Cravens and the Leslie's, you said that they would come from time to time from Aberdeen?

CC: I think it was every 6 months and we were vetted and the best dress was put on and you shut your mouth and you speak when you are spoken to or else.

JIM PEOPLES: I think the way you put it is that you did get a warning from the [REDACTED] BCJ/BCI What was the warning that you were getting?

CC: Just your mouth and speak when you are spoken to or else.

JIM PEOPLES: Was anything said about not saying anything about the experiences you told us about this morning?

CC: We wouldn't dare. I think you would have been quite capable of killing us and sticking us in the ground and kidding on that we went missing, that is why I keep wondering about [REDACTED] and the little guy that's finger was hanging off that disappeared into thin air.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us that, well we know from the records that you left around [REDACTED] 1970....

CC: They had a great way of covering up their own tracks.

JIM PEOPLES: I think as you tell us on page 9 of your statement and we have some records and we are not going to trouble you by going into the details as we can read them for ourselves but the home did close around that time?

CC: Before I even left the building there was people with suits on who had come from Aberdeen, there was lots of people milling about the home and I was just one of the ones that was saying that there is something not right here, they have been found out for everything that they were doing and it looks like they are all going to be split up and taken away from each other and within 48 hours that place was cleared out but I was the very first child to leave and I remember Mr Dickson the social worker taking me in his car and I tried to do a deal with him for [REDACTED] it was a little girl who was the same age as me but by this time I was a eleven and she was four or five but she was cute and she had little pink National Health specs on and she had a brother [REDACTED] she had a sister [REDACTED] and there was a brother [REDACTED] and she was the tiniest kid in the home and I just absolutely adored this child and I said I will leave if you let me take her but I was dragged out screaming, kicking and I remember trying to open the car door and jump out the car, I probably have got all my skin ripped off me but who cares.

JIM PEOPLES: That was the way you left the Dowans.

CC: I was the very first to go. I had nightmares, I was sleepwalking and I was on anti-depressants right after that.

JIM PEOPLES: Have you seen any records about this investigation into the [REDACTED] did you ever see records?

CC: Nothing.

JIM PEOPLES: I maybe just briefly put these records into the record of what was going on because I think they are relevant to what you have been telling us. Maybe we could just put on screen ABE.001.008.7433. It is not in your folder CC, I am just going to put on the screen.

LADY SMITH: If you just watch it will come up on the screen in a moment.

JIM PEOPLES: What we have here is a part of a document that is part of the records of Aberlour which tells us a bit about the circumstances in which the Dowans was closed and I am not going to read it all for you but you will see that on that page on the screen that there is a report by the Principal. Now do you know who the principal would have been? Could that have been Miss Craven?

CC: Miss Craven or Mr Leslie.

JIM PEOPLES: One of the two. You see on that page that has been put on the screen that the Principal reported an incident it says connected with the home on the morning of Tuesday, 30 June 1970. Miss Lawrie...

CC: I have already read most of this statement.

JIM PEOPLES: That's good, I will just read it for the benefit of the transcript. I will just read it for you if I may "Miss Lawrie of the Social Work Services Group, Home Department telephoned the principal and reported that she had received a telephone call from one of the inspectors in

Edinburgh regarding an allegation made by an ex-member of the Trust staff, enuretics, that is those who wet the bed at the Dowans had been called “filthy pigs” and had their noses rubbed in their wet sheet.

CC: That’s right.

JIM PEOPLES: Is that bringing back a memory?

CC: Yes it is one of the memories. I got, might as well, I got table spoons of salt rammed down my face.

JIM PEOPLES: What was rammed down, can you just help me with that?

CC: My Auntie saved my life before I went there, she said do you remember great big tablespoons of salt getting rammed down your face and I just went into a meltdown and that it was my mother.

JIM PEOPLES: That is something that happened with your mother. I will stick if I may, I know it has brought a memory back but if I just carry on with the document if I may CC. It says that – you will see that the initial reaction of the principal is recorded at that stage when the report is being recorded.

CC: He called us that all the time, filthy pigs, just all of the disgusting names that they could possibly think, but I can’t remember what they were but I know that he held your head down all the time and he had no confidence.

JIM PEOPLES: He would use names.....

CC: To abuse us as well canes or belts.

JIM PEOPLES: If I just go on with the document again it says “the principal had been horrified to learn of this allegation, the house parents at the Dowans had a very good relationship with the children. Now I wonder...

CC: Did they not.

JIM PEOPLES: I just wondered whether you had a comment on that?

CC: Absolute lies.

JIM PEOPLES: Can I ask you one other thing CC on that point, what sort of couple were the [REDACTED] in terms of did they ever show you or other children affection?

CC: No affection whatsoever. Abuse yes.

JIM PEOPLES: You will see that obviously.....

CC: Never put their arm around us, give us a cuddle or a pat on the back. Maybe a slap on the coupon, sorry face.

JIM PEOPLES: You will see that there is a record of some degree of some sort of investigation had been made by the principal and the depute principal and it says "naturally Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] as one would expect were very indignant and had flatly denied knowledge of any such treatment.

CC: They would.

JIM PEOPLES: And they said that they also felt that none of their junior staff were capable of such action.

CC: Staff never even touched us. Innes(?) and Margaret Morris never touched us.

JIM PEOPLES: They were ok?

CC: Yes, absolutely. They were terrified of them as well, in case they would lose their job.

JIM PEOPLES: It goes on that "at present according to Mrs [REDACTED] the Dowans only had one persistent bed wetter and another boy who was

an occasional bed wetter, Mr [BCJ] had her however cited an incident to the principal when she had lost her temper and called a child “a dirty little brat”. When this incident was explained to the committee they were in complete agreement that any house mother or parent would have acted in precisely the same manner”. Do you see what is recorded there?

CC: They would be wouldn't they. Absolute nonsense. Anyway apart from that there was loads of kids lined up to get thrown down the stairs in the mornings. We had to stand to attention at the bottom of the beds and they would come round and they would go like that all over the bed and then the next thing lined up facing the stairs waiting to get shoved down the stairs

JIM PEOPLES: You will see if I read on what they said.....

CC: They were dirty rats that's what they were and Aberlour have got a lot to answer for, Aberlour Trust. Oh they didn't even know that the Dowans existed that is what I got on the phone from them.

JIM PEOPLES: I will just read on to see what was said by Mrs [BCJ] apparently or Mr [BCI] ..

CC: They were evil.

JIM PEOPLES: What they were saying apparently as recorded here was it was explained to the committee that the practises laid down by the Trust was to treat bed wetters like any ordinary child. Enuresis was ignored insofar as the children were not punished in any way.

CC: They are liars

JIM PEOPLES: That's lies?

CC: That is absolute lies.

LADY SMITH: We can have a short break but before you go just let me reassure you that all that Mr Peoples is doing is reading from a report there is more in it.

CC: I don't understand why they are lying so much.

LADY SMITH: I am hearing that and I do fully appreciate that is your position and it is helpful to me to know that.

CC: Lots of kids wet the bed because they were traumatised. These animals.

ADJOURNED

LADY SMITH: Are you ready to carry on CC?

CC: Yes, sorry.

LADY SMITH: There is no need to apologise at all I just wanted to know if you feel ready to carry on with your evidence then we can do it and if you are not ready we can accommodate that.

CC: OK.

LADY SMITH: Mr Peoples.

JIM PEOPLES: CC I am going to go back to the record and it is not because I am – I just want to put to you what was recorded at the time and you are very free to make any comment you want and if you think that there is something there that is a variance with your recollection of events

then please say so. It is simply to put what was said but I will not be too long with it but I would like just to be able to record what was said....

CC: Regarding my behaviour probably.

JIM PEOPLES: No it is about the behaviour of the [REDACTED] BCJ/BCI and what the investigation disclosed so if I could go back to the document we were looking at which was ABE.001.008.7433 because the document that I am showing you doesn't in fact make any mention directly of you so don't worry about that. I am not going to surprise you with something that you haven't seen before.

CC: I expect them to say that I was bad because.....

LADY SMITH: CC please listen to what Mr Peoples is explaining and what I am explaining is what he is interested in looking at doesn't mention you at all. It is about the people who you have been telling us about, alright, who were in charge of the Dowans. There is a lot about them in this document. Bear with him.

JIM PEOPLES: If I could just take you back to the document, don't worry I will take you there and just one or two things that I want to just bring out as to what was recorded at the time in 1970 and we were at ABE.001.008.7433 and that is on the screen in front of you CC. On the 2 July 1970 the record is stating that at that time it said and I am reading half-way down at the centre with the paragraph that begins 'knowing Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] BCJ 'the principal personally could not believe that this allegation, this is about the bed wetting could be true but of course it was impossible for her to state categorically that it did not happen. This was an incident which would happen anywhere' and then the record goes on

“Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] as house parents did have a number of short comings of which the principal was aware in that they were not too particular about keeping the house tidy and recently the principal had had occasion to speak to them on this account.

CC: It was full of broken chairs and broken hearts.

JIM PEOPLES: I don't think I need to perhaps read the rest of that page at this stage and if I could move on to the next page that I want you to look at which is page 7434 where we have moved on in time. It will come on the screen in front of you if you just bear with us. That has moved matters on to the 1 September 1970 according to the date on that document. It tells us a bit more about what is going on about this investigation into the [REDACTED] If the page can be scrolled down towards the foot of that page we see after dealing with other matters, this document has a section headed the Dowans, Aberlour and it goes on and I will just read it for you “The Principal reported, this was on 1 September 1970 CC, reported that following upon the initial investigation carried out by the Deputy Principal and herself resulting from an allegation being made about the treatment of enuretics at the Dowans, further information had come to light from a member of staff who had been working at the Dowans. This particular member of staff had in fact been threatened by Mr [REDACTED]

CC: Margaret Morris.

JIM PEOPLES: It doesn't mention who the person was but I will read on.
You think it could be Margaret Morris?

CC: Frances Innes.

JIM PEOPLES: So it says this particular member of staff had in fact been threatened by Mr [BCI] and she had been sufficiently frightened as to pack her bags and ring for her father in Edinburgh to come and collect her.

CC: Margaret Innes, sorry Frances Innes I think because she had left.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you remember her leaving?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: I says the girl and her father then reported to Headquarters as the girl's father insisted that the whole matter – now I will move on to the next page, page 7435 and it will come on screen. The girl and her father then reported to Headquarters as the girl's father insisted that the whole matter should have been discussed with the Principal in the first instance and it goes on, apparently the girl in question had applied for a post in Edinburgh and the person interviewing her had asked certain questions relating to enuretics. Without thinking the girl had said exactly what did happen and it was from this that the Inquiry emerged from the Home Office. Apparently however the person interviewing this girl had had this information before from another ex-member of the Dowans staff and this had led her into asking further questions. So it looks like what we are being told CC is that there was two sources of information that there was something going on in relation to the treatment of people who wet the bed. Now the report that is in front of us goes on, "this young girl was questioned very closely by the Principal but she has been absolutely adamant that Mr and Mrs [BCJ/BCI] had not observed regulations laid down by the Trust. This had worried her and she had

decided to leave the Trust's employment. Mr [BCI] had suspected that she had been the person responsible for the allegation and had made very serious threats to the girl".

CC: That I absolutely believe, like he did the kids.

JIM PEOPLES: Well you have told us that certain things were said to the children. It then goes on and I will just carry on, on this page if I may, "as the Deputy Principal had been on holiday and it was thought advisable that someone present at any further interview with Mr and Mrs [BCJ/BCI] Colonel MacIntosh had consented to come to the Principal to the Dowans. The [BCJ/BCI] had then been asked to resign in light of further information received. Mrs [BCJ] immediately agreed to resign but Mr [BCI] did not. Mr [BCI] was then asked why he threatened a member of staff and he admitted having done so and implied that he had been trying to frighten the girl into admitting that she had been responsible for the abuse".

CC: She never touched us.

JIM PEOPLES: No, you have told us that.

CC: They never touched us and they were quiet, they were withdrawn and it was like they had to do what they were told.

JIM PEOPLES: You will see that Mr [BCI] appeared to be trying to get the girl by threats to say that she did what was alleged.

CC: That is not true.

JIM PEOPLES: Then it goes on "the [BCJ/BCI] were in fact asked to resign on the grounds of lack of co-operation with senior staff during the course of and official Inquiry as at the time there had been no definite proof that

they had committed any of the actions suggested". That merely suggests that the [REDACTED] by this stage may have left the Dowans and I think that is something that you seem to have recollection. This just seems to be discussing further information and reporting back. It says "The Chairman and the Principal had later interviewed four boys and from the information obtained it seemed that the [REDACTED] had violated some of the Trust Regulations although of course it was their word against the children's and that of a junior member of staff". So the [REDACTED] were saying one thing and when a number of people, including staff and children were saying something very different..."

CC: [REDACTED] said things as well, I don't know.

JIM PEOPLES: What we learn from the next paragraph is that "although losing house parents at such short notice made things very difficult it suggests that the [REDACTED] had gone it would have been possible to keep the house running, I think that is the Dowans by putting in relief staff. The children were at present being split up and being accommodated elsewhere and I think it was around that time that you CC were moved..."

CC: Mr Dick took me away and I was screaming and crying, crying to do a deal for [REDACTED] I wanted [REDACTED] to come with me. She was the youngest member in the home.

JIM PEOPLES: If I can carry on this report and pick out another couple of things that were said. You will see at the bottom of the page, on page 7435, the report goes on, "the members were concerned, some of the members of the committee were concerned about the difficulties with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] and asked the Principal what steps could be taken to

ensure that such an occurrence of this nature did not happen again. The Principal indicated that all applications were posted, house parents were thoroughly investigated and references obtained. The Trust like all other social services could only appoint staff from the applicants applying for posts. The standard of applicants had improved considerably in recent years and were still improving. It was impossible, and I will just move to the next page, page 7436, I will read on a little bit, "it was impossible to give an absolute guarantee that instances would not occur" and then it goes on "everything possible was done in the way of supervision visits to homes and staff were constantly reminded of Regulations and their own responsibilities that staff had to be trusted. I think you say that there was some visits by Mrs Craven or the Cravens or the Leslie's but only twice a years. Is that right?

CC: Yes, well I think it was around about that. When we were to put on our best clothes and we were told to keep our mouths shut and say absolutely nothing and only answer questions that they asked.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you said that before we had a little break but we understand the position. Then it says "the appointment of a social worker would give an added safeguard but even so it was still possible for isolated incidents to occur. All residential establishments were faced with similar possibilities and even were high ranking officials lived within these establishments it was still possible for incidents to occur without their knowledge". Then it goes on, "one member of the committee, a Mrs Carnegie or Buffner raised the question of Members of the Board of Management calling on homes in their area from time to time. The

Chairman indicated that this was something which he had wanted to discuss further with the Principal and the Deputy Principal and it was agreed that this matter be left in abeyance for the present". That rather suggests that at that time perhaps Members of the Board of Management, the most senior part of the organisation were not making regular visits to places like the Dowans.

CC: No I don't think there were any – I knew they came to see us but I don't think it was – it was basically probably the day before that we found out that they were coming and that is when all the nice clothes were taken out and we were specifically warned.

JIM PEOPLES: Not to say anything?

CC: Yes

JIM PEOPLES: The people you have in mind that came were the Cravens and the Leslies. I don't know if they were on the Board of Management which was the very highest level I think.....

CC: I don't know about Carnegie.

JIM PEOPLES: No, there seems to have been some discussion that perhaps people from the Board should visit homes from time to time and then if I could go on to another part of the.....

CC: It was sold to a social worker by then, the Dowans.

JIM PEOPLES: The property?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Then if we go to another part of the records of Aberlour on this matter it is at page 7437, it is the next page and I think we have moved on to 3 November 1970 by now, it should come on the screen

shortly and you will see that the Principal is making a further report on matters and at the top of that page it says "The Principal gave full detail to the Governors", that is a different case, I don't need to read that about.

In fact I am not sure that there is anything said specifically about.....

LADY SMITH: I don't think this page relates to the Dowans, does it?

JIM PEOPLES: It doesn't.

LADY SMITH: It is the next page on.

JIM PEOPLES: I think that all we can say about this page if we scroll half way down I see there is some reference to under "Assistant House Parent Staff", the Principal indicated the situation regarding assistant childcare staff would be eased when the Dowans closed as the existing childcare staff had accepted posts to various other homes of the Trust so we see that there looks to be steps to be taken to close the Dowans at this stage so that much is made clear from the record.

CC: Staff were very very good to us but they were frightened to do their job I guess because of the fear from the BCJ/BCI

JIM PEOPLES: Do you think they knew what was happening?

CC: The staff? I think so. I think probably they might have whistle blown on them as well.

JIM PEOPLES: If I go on to another page and we are starting to see this story unfold to its outcome, it is a document ABE.001.008.7438 and this I think tells us a little bit more about what was going on within the organisation. You will see that on the 6 October 1970 a meeting was held at the Board of Management at No.23 [] Aberdeen which I think was probably their headquarters.

CC: I was there for years.

JIM PEOPLES: Right, and you will see that the Members of the Board of Management met on that occasion and we will see that it shows the persons present, Mrs Carnegie Arbuthnott who has been mentioned before, Colonel MacIntosh has been mentioned before, he was the Chair of the Board at that time.

CC: Mrs Herd was from Aberlour.

JIM PEOPLES: So you recognise her name?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: There were other names as well and you will see there and I think this gives us a clue as to who was the Principal referred to in the earlier records that we have looked at.....

CC: Miss Savage, I remember her, she was an elder lady.

JIM PEOPLES: CC I think if you look the Principal is a Mrs Craven and it says that the Deputy Principal is a Mr Savage. Does that name....

CC: I don't remember him. It was an old lady that worked there and she used to take us on long walks.

JIM PEOPLES: I think we can tell from the apologies who some of the members of the Board of Management were at the time and one was perhaps ex officio was the Right Reverend the Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney.....

CC: Would that have been.....

JIM PEOPLES: If it comes back to you just say so. Then we see at that meeting there is discussion of various matters and the principal is again making a report to the Board at that time about the Dowans and that is about two thirds of the way down and we see there that what the

Principal is reporting on 6 October to the Board is that the number of children at this home had been reduced from twenty to twelve with two more discharges likely to take place by the end of October.

CC: I was the first one to be discharged.

JIM PEOPLES: It said some difficulties were still being experienced with the children mainly due to the temporary staff there not being particularly capable of coping with the situations. It sounds like....

CC: This kids were screwed. Completely messed up.

JIM PEOPLES: It says that in view of the current and past difficulties that goes on the Principal felt that it would be to the advantage of children, staff and administration if the Dowans could be prematurely closed by the beginning of November and it said that it was anticipated that this could be accomplished by transferring the remaining children to families in the reception home in Aberdeen until such time as the Stirling and Hamilton homes were ready so it looks like other homes were being established in other parts of the country and then it says after that on second last paragraph on this page, page 7438 "the Board and Management were in complete agreement with the Principal's feelings on this matter and duly approved of the proposed arrangements for the closing of the Dowans" so it is a formal decision to close it. So that kind of tells us how that matter played out CC. You may not have known about all of that but that is something that is contained in the notes. The only other thing that I would ask you is do you happen to know when the BCJ/BCI came under investigation at that time, do you happen to know whether there was any police involvement in this matter?

CC: There was no police present whatsoever.

JIM PEOPLES: You certainly weren't asked by a police officer or anyone?

CC: I was the first one to get thrown out, I didn't get the chance to tell anything. I was put to [] to a woodcutter and his wife and I started having nightmares and sleep walking and walking about the woods and I wrecked the whole bedroom that I was in because I was so traumatised. Having to leave my brothers and sisters because that is what they were to me and then I received a letter from my mother saying sorry and that she wanted me home and I was very very scared that they put me there.

JIM PEOPLES: We can tell from your statement what happened when you left the Dowans and what I said to you at the beginning and I will repeat, I am going to ask you just now having looked at these records to maybe have a look at some of the more positive things that have happened to you more recently. Firstly can I take you to page 26 of your statement CC which is page 1275 at paragraph 135. It should be in the red folder on page 26 if you can find the page. I am looking at a statement that says when I look at my life now I think I have got no desire to destroy myself anymore and I think you say on page 27, the following page that you want to make some sort of difference and I think that is your attitude now. Is that very much the case?

CC: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: You are trying to be very positive and.....

CC: If a child is on a risk register obviously if they are at risk they should not be sent back to the person that they are at risk from because they will end up dead and you see that in Fife.

JIM PEOPLES: You make that point and a fair point to make and if we take page 28 of your statement CC at paragraph 142 I think that you give us perhaps what coming here today means for you. Is that right? You tell us something there that I think is important to you that nobody has ever listened to me, I feel that everyone thinks I am a liar, I have never been believed. I think that you are using this opportunity to say what you want to say and to be listened to?

CC: Yes, because I never got the chance maybe like the other kids that were left in the home did because I was led out screaming and crying and kicking and I actually tried to throw myself out of the car when he was driving it and that was Mr Dick the social worker.

JIM PEOPLES: Just picking up on that theme of being listened to, can I take you to the final page of your statement CC at paragraph 167 at 1283 on our numbering, it is page 34, it is where you signed your statement and I think you tell us there that coming here today I felt a lot of relief getting all of this off my chest, nobody has ever listened to me before.

CC: It has been locked inside me for years.

JIM PEOPLES: And I would do anything I could to help make sure that other kids don't suffer, that is what it is about for me. Is that why you have come here today to help the Inquiry?

CC: Absolutely and for kids tomorrow and if they are on that risk register they should not be sent back if they are at risk. It doesn't make any sense whatsoever.

JIM PEOPLES: You have offered these thoughts for the Inquiry to consider and we will consider them very carefully.

CC: My dog had to go into foster care while I came here. I have got a little [REDACTED] called [REDACTED]. Now they were vetted by the police before they could take my dog, I don't know what I am trying to say but.....

LADY SMITH: I think you are trying to point out that we have moved on and that we can recognise where risks arising...

CC: Animals should have the same risk register. If a child is at risk for abuse or murder there shouldn't be such a thing as at risk, they should not be put in that situation, any child.

JIM PEOPLES: These are all the questions I have. I don't think there are any questions from other parties....

CC: It doesn't make sense if a child is at risk, it's at risk, they get murdered quite often. Does anybody get charged for putting them back to somewhere that is really risky for them to the point where they might be murdered.

JIM PEOPLES: I am sure we will take these comments on board and consider them very carefully. These are the questions that I have for you CC and all I want to say is thank you for coming today and I do hope you get the joy in your life from now on what you are looking for and thank you for coming today.

LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for questions. CC I can confirm that those are all the questions that we have for you today and it just remains for me to thank you very much for engaging with the Inquiry, giving us all the information that is in your written statement which as I said at the beginning I know goes on your experiences in Aberlour and it will all be taken into account.....

CC: They are trying to take me out my council house just now in Elgin. It is as I have become involved in this Inquiry it has just been coming thick and fast at me. I was out of trouble for many many years and it is just one thing after another and my doctor even admitted that I was being victimised by the local hospital. I had a nut stuck right down the back of my tongue down here and they stood and guffawed and laughed and said it would melt and it was stuck there for three and a half days and I had to leave crying.

LADY SMITH: Well CC I very much hope as you leave here today to go back North that you do find there the support that you need. I hope you find a way to go in your life which will be better. I wish you very well with and I am able to let you go.

CC: I just hope I can get the help to work it out, where I need to go. Thanks.

LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

Tuesday, 11 December 2018

(11.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good Morning Pauline, thank you for coming today.

JIM PEOPLES: Good Morning Pauline.

PAULINE: Good Morning.

JIM PEOPLES: Can I just explain a couple of things, that, you have in the red folder in front of you a copy of the statement that you provided to the Inquiry before coming here today to give evidence and you are very welcome to use that statement and hopefully if you need any assistance to turn the pages we can do that for you. But I will come to the statement in a moment. In front of you as well you will also see that your statement appears on the screen. Some parts are blanked out just to protect anonym..identity so if you want to see the full version you have got the statement in the folder and please feel free to use it at any point if I am asking questions about the matters you have told us about. Can I begin simply for the benefit of our recording of the evidence by giving the number that we have used to identify your statement and it is WIT.001.002.1733. You don't need to worry too much about that. But that's just, you will see that it is on the top right hand corner of the page of your statement. What I would ask you to do and I think hopefully the pages in front of you is to turn to the and look at the final page of your, the statement at page 1749. It is page 17 of your statement and just confirm for me if you could that you have signed your statement on that page?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Again can you just confirm that you have no objection to your statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry and that you believe the facts stated in your witness statement are true? Is that..

PAULINE: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: So Pauline with that introduction and I will give you a little time can we go to the front page of the statement now if you can manage and can I begin, by just asking you to confirm that you were born in the year 1948. I don't need your date of birth.

PAULINE: It was yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What I have got to do today is ask you about your time in care, in the care of Aberlour Childcare Trust or its predecessor and you have given a statement on that matter. Now, before I do that I will just get a little bit of background and I don't need too much, we have got the statement and we have obviously read it all and it will all be considered. You have told us that you were born in 1948 and I think that really for much of your childhood you spent your childhood in care. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: In the care of Aberlour?

PAULINE: Yip.

JIM PEOPLES: And I think you tell us that was from about the age of 5 until you were 16 years old?

PAULINE: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: And that would take us I think from about 1953 until about 1964?

PAULINE: Something like that.

JIM PEOPLES: Something like that. I am not sure I have got any precise dates for you from records that we have seen but can I just say this. You tell us in your statement that you have five brothers and a sister, is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And if we just focus on your sister, I think she was born in 1949 is that right so she is about a year younger?

PAULINE: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Was she admitted to Aberlour at the same time as you were?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And did she, was she discharged from Aberlour about the same time as you were?

PAULINE: We both went together yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you leave together as well?

PAULINE: I think so yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What I can say is that I have seen some records relating to your sister which show that she was admitted on [REDACTED] 1955 which is maybe a little bit later than you perhaps thought and she was discharged from the care of Aberlour on [REDACTED] 1965 so would that be roughly the sort of time period?

PAULINE: I think we both went together.

JIM PEOPLES: So if she went in [REDACTED] 1955 do you think that you would have gone then too?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And I think, apart from two short spells between 1955 and 1965 in a place called Ladybridge Hospital I think your sister was in care for basically the same time as you were. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Are you okay?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Can I just ask you, you went with your sister when you were quite young in 1955 or thereabouts, what about your brothers did they also go into Aberlour at the same time or can you remember?

PAULINE: No I think just the three youngest, my two oldest never.

JIM PEOPLES: They never?

PAULINE: No, they never went.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you tell us in your statement that you were born near the village of [REDACTED]. Is that right?

PAULINE: [REDACTED] yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: [REDACTED], which is just the north side of the Cromarty Firth. Is that right?

PAULINE: Somewhere up there, yes.

JIM PEOPLES: It is not that far from [REDACTED] If we were trying to find a major town. It is a little bit north of [REDACTED] is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Now what you tell us is, you don't have a huge memory of life before going into care. Is that right?

PAULINE: Not when I was – not before.

JIM PEOPLES: Basically, I think you, from what you have learned about your parents they weren't really looking after you properly or your brothers and sisters. Is that right?

PAULINE: Definitely not.

JIM PEOPLES: On page 2 of your statement Pauline at page 1734 you start telling us about Aberlour Orphanage itself and you can take it Pauline that we have some knowledge know of the layout of Aberlour and what it was like so if I don't ask you all the details it is not that I am ignoring it, so we have a little bit of information so I could perhaps make that quite short but one of the things you tell us about the orphanage itself in paragraph 7 on page 2 of your statement, that is page 1734 of our identifying number, you say there is a big hall with long wooden floors in the orphanage and you had to polish the floors every day. Is that something you remember?

PAULINE: An old fashioned dummy

JIM PEOPLES: Just describe what you had to do on a regular daily basis?

PAULINE: You had to put like a cloth over this dummy and go back and fore all the time and shine it up and polish it and shine it and it was quite heavy. I had to do that.

JIM PEOPLES: What sort of age were you when you started having to do this chore?

PAULINE: 8 or 9?

JIM PEOPLES: Quite young?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: How many children would be involved in this sort of work?

PAULINE: Well different people did it ever day so maybe about 3 of us maybe. It was quite a big hall and a lot of floor boards and so there was quite a lot to do.

JIM PEOPLES: So there was quite a lot to do?

PAULINE: Yeah

JIM PEOPLES: When would you be asked to clean?

PAULINE: Down on our hands and knees.

JIM PEOPLES: You can remember it quite well I can tell.

PAULINE: I put on all the polish and got down on my hands and knees.

JIM PEOPLES: When did you have to do this polishing of the floors? What time of day?

PAULINE: It was afternoon I think. I think it was when we came home from school.

JIM PEOPLES: Okay. And em, you have got a section in your statement about the general routine at Aberlour and you have at least one impression of your first day that you tell us about at paragraph 8 about having your hair cut.

PAULINE: Oh, I know.

JIM PEOPLES: What do you remember about that?

PAULINE: Well, it was just, you know when you get nits in your hair well the first thing that they did was cut your hair and go through it wae a big bone comb, it was sore.

JIM PEOPLES: It was quite sore?

PAULINE: Yes but they had to do it.

JIM PEOPLES: They were doing it for the best of reason I take it.

PAULINE: Yes, exactly

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us and I think we have had some evidence about this already that there were various houses in the orphanage that were given different names. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES There was houses that had girls and houses that had boys. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yip.

JIM PEOPLES: When you were there did the houses ever get mixed up with boys and girls?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: You don't remember?

PAULINE: Never remembered being mixed up no.

JIM PEOPLES: So at your time at least it would be boys in some houses and girls in some houses.

PAULINE: Yip

JIM PEOPLES: I think we understand that some houses were
that the girls or boys in particular houses were allocated there
according to age or approximate age?

PAULINE: The ages, yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Is that right

PAULINE: Yeah

JIM PEOPLES: That accords with your memory of how it was.

PAULINE: Well it started off like in a nursery and then you went to,
different ages and then you went to different houses.

JIM PEOPLES: There was this nursery. Maybe just so that we are clear,
was this the nursery that was opened in the 1950's?

PAULINE: The Dowans.

JIM PEOPLES: It is called The Dowans. Was it opened in the 1950's or
do you know. Was it open when you were there?

PAULINE: Yes it was because my brothers went there.

JIM PEOPLES: You didn't go to Dowans?

PAULINE: No I was older.

JIM PEOPLES: You were too old. Was it for pre-school children?

PAULINE: Yes just for babies until they were maybe 5 year old and
then they would go.....

JIM PEOPLES: To the main orphanage?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: I think we have heard that the Dowans was physically a
distance away from the orphanage?

PAULINE: It was, a bit of a way from the orphanage yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Just on page 3 of your statement, I'm going to ask you a little bit about some of the staff that you recall in your time at Aberlour Orphanage but before I go on, in paragraph 10 I think you, in line 3 of your statement you may see there it is called, I think it's Dowans? D O W A N S is that correct?

PAULINE: Yeah the Dowans.

JIM PEOPLES: So that is just a little mistake in the statement but I'll maybe just correct it whilst we have it in front of us. Now you tell us a wee bit about staff and you have got a particular memory of two individuals one being Mrs BHM Is that?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Who was called BHM Was that a term of affection or not?

PAULINE: It was just what everybody called her.

JIM PEOPLES: That is what she was known as?

PAULINE: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: And there was another lady called Mrs QNK

PAULINE: QNK yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You seem to have reasonable memories of BHM and you describe her as an old battle axe but you felt that she was alright generally?

PAULINE: She was yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: But you didn't have quite the same opinion of the other lady, Mrs QNK

PAULINE: No she was a baddie.

JIM PEOPLES: Okay. So are you comparing [BHM] and Mrs [QNK] when you are saying one was a battle axe but alright but the other was horrible? Is that?

PAULINE: Yeah, more or less yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And you also have a memory of another woman who was on the staff at your time at the orphanage called [AJF] ?

PAULINE: [AJF], yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Your recollection was that she was a nice lady?

PAULINE: She was.

JIM PEOPLES: You mention another individual as well, is it Helen Topple. Was she another house mother?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Are these individuals [AJF] and Helen Topple were they house mothers in some of the houses?

PAULINE: That I was in yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Where you in the houses that they were in?

PAULINE: Yeah, well they were all in different ones. You see you would be put up you know when you got older.

JIM PEOPLES: So did you have dealings with all four of these individuals during your time at Aberlour?

PAULINE: I did yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: As you got older you would have different people?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: So who was the first one that you came across. Was it Mrs [QNK] and [BHM] ?

PAULINE: She was the first one Mrs QNK and I think that BHM as there at the same time but she was horrible Mrs QNK

JIM PEOPLES: I think we will find out why you think that in a moment, if I can come to that. So they were the first two that you remember being your house mother or the assistant?

PAULINE: Yes. When I first went to Aberlour they were the ones that were there.

JIM PEOPLES: When do you think that you moved on to have a different house mother? What sort of age would you have been?

PAULINE: Ehm. Maybe about 10-11 maybe.

JIM PEOPLES: Who would have been the house mother by then?

PAULINE: It would have been AJF I think.

JIM PEOPLES: Right

PAULINE: She was next and then it would have been Helen Toppole when you got older, 14 maybe.

JIM PEOPLES: Did AJF stay the whole time you were there or did she leave?

PAULINE: No no, she was there the whole time.

JIM PEOPLES: Can you remember what house she was in?

PAULINE: I don't remember what house she was in.

JIM PEOPLES: If I mention Spey House was she ever in Spey House?

PAULINE: No, that was boys.

JIM PEOPLES: You think that is a boys house?

PAULINE: Yes I think so yes.

JIM PEOPLES: So you wouldn't know if she had a connection.....

PAULINE: I can't even remember them having names on them,
there was so much of them.

JIM PEOPLES: That's understandable, it is a long time ago as well so I am
just trying to get some sort general picture of the staff and where they
were.

PAULINE: St Margaret's maybe it was.

JIM PEOPLES: You think was one of the names?

PAULINE: Aye it could have been yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Don't worry I don't think we need to worry too much. If you
can remember the people that were there that is the important thing. You
tell us that St Margaret's you think might have been the first house you
were in? St Margaret's. You tell us in paragraph 13....

PAULINE: I think I probably was yes, I just can't remember now.

JIM PEOPLES: But you have a memory that it was a big dormitory?

PAULINE: It was yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: There were lots of girls in the dormitory?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you estimated that there was about 20 girls in all?

PAULINE: It was quite a big bedroom, quite a big place, yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And they were all roughly the same age?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And as you tell us that you would move up to a different
dormitory as you got older?

PAULINE: As you got older, yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us about your sister, I don't need her name obviously, your sister who is a year younger, she wasn't in the same dormitory?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: Was she ever in the same dormitory to you?

PAULINE: No she was never. No.

JIM PEOPLES: Although she was just a year younger she was in a different group?

PAULINE: Yeah. She had a different house mother and house.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you find that odd or strange that you were separated from your younger sister who was just a year younger when you got there or was that.....

PAULINE: No really, I just thought that was because of the age. I did wonder what happened to her half the time I must admit it.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you have a lot of contact with her when you were in the orphanage?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: So who did you tend to have contact with when you were in the orphanage, was it your own group of girls?

PAULINE: It was just the girls that I was with yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us a little bit about BHM at paragraph 15 at page 3 on how she would come in to wake you up in the morning. I think she had a way of doing it?

PAULINE: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: How would she do that?

PAULINE: Probably just strip the bed and start bawling and get you out of bed.

JIM PEOPLES: You also say that Mrs QNK could also be someone who would get you up in the morning? Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Now you tell us about what would happen in the morning after you got up. You deal with that on page 4 of your statement at page 1736. Pauline, if you just tell me at paragraph 16 and you will see it there. Can you manage?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You have told us a little bit but can you just tell us in your own words.

PAULINE: You had to get up – in the morning you used to get out of bed and stand. You know I told you we had wooden floors?

JIM PEOPLES: Yes.

PAULINE: Well you had to stand with your toes, they had like lines and seams in them and you had to stand with your toes on this line and if your toes were even a wee bit over the line they would take the cane around your leg. Then they would make you late for school and if you were late for school you used to get the strap for being late and it was their fault that we were late.

JIM PEOPLES: You say they would do this. Now when you say they who are you talking about?

PAULINE: This was this Mrs QNK

JIM PEOPLES: It would be Mrs QNK that would be doing this?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What about BHM did she do that?

PAULINE: She really wasn't really all that bad no.

JIM PEOPLES: Was it ever explained to you why it was necessary to be able to put your toes right exactly on the line?

PAULINE: It was just a rule the rule that they had. I wasn't the only one that had to do it, we all had to do it.

JIM PEOPLES: Anyone who is not on the line would get the cane?

PAULINE: Cane.

JIM PEOPLES: Can you describe this cane?

PAULINE: It was just a cane that they had. A wooden thing that they used to....

JIM PEOPLES: Like a long wooden stick?

PAULINE: Yes like a stick thing.

JIM PEOPLES: Did it have a handle on it?

PAULINE: It was just a cane.

JIM PEOPLES: It didn't necessarily have a round handle? Or something that you could grip?

PAULINE: I can't remember it having a round handle. A wooden stick thing.

JIM PEOPLES: Like a walking stick?

PAULINE: Yeah like that yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: How often would people get caned on the legs and body?

PAULINE: Oh quite a few times.

JIM PEOPLES: This would happen when you were still in the house with Mrs QNK

PAULINE: Yeah I was only young at the time. I was just about 8 or 9 like I said.

JIM PEOPLES: Once you left that house did that practice continue when you left Mrs QNK house?

PAULINE: No when I got that bit older.

JIM PEOPLES: How often, how many times on a particular occasion would you be caned on the leg if you didn't have your toe right on the line?

PAULINE: In a day, you mean? Oh quite a few times. It was difficult to tell.

JIM PEOPLES: Would you be struck several times with the cane?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You say it was on the legs?

PAULINE: On the legs yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Was it the back or the front of the legs.

PAULINE: Just the back, just around the side. She is in front of you and she would go like that with the cane.

JIM PEOPLES: She is in front of you and she would just use the cane to hit the back of your legs or the side?

PAULINE: Just take it down the side of your leg. Down my left hand.

JIM PEOPLES: Don't worry. Somewhere between the knee and the ankle?

PAULINE: Yes in between there.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you have any clothing between you and the cane if you like?

PAULINE: No I just had a pair of socks and a dirndle skirt on. Bare legs, never trousers.

JIM PEOPLES: How hard was the cane when it was used. How much force was used?

PAULINE: It was sore let me put it that way.

JIM PEOPLES: Did it leave any marks?

PAULINE: Yes big red marks.

JIM PEOPLES: Can you recall how long the marks might be there?

PAULINE: It would sting for ages.

JIM PEOPLES: Stinging for ages. How long would the marks remain?

PAULINE: A couple of days I would say.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us a little bit about the situation of making your bed. It was inspected, is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: If it wasn't done properly you had to do it again?

PAULINE: You had to do it again.

JIM PEOPLES: You mention **BHM** in paragraph 17, would Mrs **QNK** do the same? Did she check the beds and make you do them again if you didn't do them right?

PAULINE: Yes she would do it as well.

JIM PEOPLES: That was just a practice that if you didn't do it right....

PAULINE: You had to go and make it again yes.

JIM PEOPLES: What was the thinking behind that?

PAULINE: Having to make the bed, I have no idea. It is probably just something to make us late for school.

JIM PEOPLES: You did say that these things caused you to be late for school and you ended up getting the belt.

PAULINE: And then you would end up getting the belt.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us a little bit about washing and bathing at paragraph 18, is that right that there was a separate bathroom for each dorm?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: With a bath and sinks and some toilets. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us that it was all girls but it was all open so we could see each other getting washed. There wasn't much privacy.

PAULINE: It was a big open place yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: All of it?

PAULINE: Well the whole bathroom was yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Would the toilets be in cubicles?

PAULINE: Yeah we had separate little toilets.

JIM PEOPLES: The sinks were open?

PAULINE: Yes they were open.

JIM PEOPLES: The bath as well?

PAULINE: Yeah. We were only little.

JIM PEOPLES: That is fair enough but would you all just be running around without any clothes on?

PAULINE: Yeah probably.

JIM PEOPLES: As you got older though, what was the situation when you had bathing, did you get more privacy?

PAULINE: Yeah it was better when you got older yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us that you had quite regular baths when you were in the house with BHM and Mrs QNK and you think that you would share a bath when you were young.

PAULINE: Yes when you were younger yes.

JIM PEOPLES: That would be sharing the same water?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Was that a problem for you?

PAULINE: I never took much notice really. I never paid much attention. When you're young and you don't really know do you.

JIM PEOPLES: It didn't leave any bad memories then?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: One thing that maybe didn't leave such a good memory was mealtimes. Was that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us a little bit about that at paragraph 21 on page 4 of the statement. Our numbering is 1736. You have a memory of, is this breakfast time when you were served up porridge?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Can you tell us about the occasions that you were served up porridge. Was that a regular occurrence?

PAULINE: I don't like porridge.

JIM PEOPLES: You have got it on page 4 and 5. I hope you can turn the page, just take your time. Paragraph 21. Have you got that?

PAULINE: Yeah. If you never ate it they used to shove it down your throat so you had to eat it.

JIM PEOPLES: When you say shove it down your throat, what do you mean by that?

PAULINE: Well she used to spoon it into your mouth.

JIM PEOPLES: Forcefully?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: If you didn't like it?

PAULINE: Yeah she used to force you to eat it. I still don't like porridge to this day.

JIM PEOPLES: How often were you served up porridge?

PAULINE: Nearly every morning.

JIM PEOPLES: So were you getting a lot of this force-feeding when you were younger?

PAULINE: Well if you didn't eat they just forced you to eat it. It was the same when I had spam, I didn't like eating spam and I had to eat it and I was sick and they made me eat my sick. Its written down there somewhere.

JIM PEOPLES: It is written down. If you carry on page 5.....

LADY SMITH: If you go to page 5 at paragraph 22 I think you cover that.

JIM PEOPLES: You deal with that. So was that something you were served up at a different time of day?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: But you didn't like that?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: And you say that when it was served up you would be made to eat it?

PAULINE: Well I was sick and I had to eat it and I was sick and when I was sick they made me eat my own sick. And the more they made me eat it the more I was being sick, it was horrible.

JIM PEOPLES: You seem to have a memory that the person that was doing this was Mrs QNK

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What about BHM did she ever do anything like that?

PAULINE: No I don't remember her doing it, it was always just Mrs

QNK

JIM PEOPLES: It doesn't seem that you had very happy memories at mealtimes. Is that right?

PAULINE: No, none at all.

JIM PEOPLES: Well, that's fair enough. You tell us about the person who was the warden, the person in charge, Canon Wolffe. What did you know him as, did he have a name, a nickname?

PAULINE: Just called him Dean Wolffe.

JIM PEOPLES: We have sometimes heard the name Wolffy used. Was that something that the children would sometimes describe him as call him Wolffy?

PAULINE: He could have been, I never called him it, I just called him Dean Wolffe. Never saw a lot of him anyway.

JIM PEOPLES: No but you liked him?

PAULINE: Yeah I did like him yeah. Never had a problem with him.

JIM PEOPLES: What did you think of his successor, the Reverend
Leslie? What sort of man was he?

PAULINE: He was alright. I never had much dealings with him
either, but I preferred Dean Wolffe.

JIM PEOPLES: On page 6 of the statement at paragraph 28 you deal with
contact. You have already told us I think that you can't actually
remember seeing your sister at mealtimes or seeing her a lot at all.

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: You don't recall seeing your brothers very much either. Is
that right?

PAULINE: No I don't remember seeing them at all.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us a little bit about the clothing situation when
you were there and you have got a memory of wearing a particular type
of skirt. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yes, a dirndle. I think they all came from the jupps
sale. You know that they used to have sales and I think all the clothes
came from there or I presume they did.

JIM PEOPLES: When you say the sales did the sales generate money to
buy these clothes or were they made for the sales?

PAULINE: No I think they were bought from the sales.

JIM PEOPLES: So the Canon would be, it wouldn't be Canon Jupp
because he had long since gone.

PAULINE: No it wasn't him.

JIM PEOPLES: No but there would be sales?

PAULINE: No we had sales when I was there as well. They had sales nearly every so often.

LADY SMITH: You are talking about Jumble Sales were people from the outside donated clothes?

PAULINE: Yes.

LADY SMITH: And you think that some of your clothes actually came from what had been donated as jumble?

PAULINE: Yes that is what I am trying to say.

JIM PEOPLES: These skirts, dirndle skirts were the ones that you have a memory of that they were quite frequently the sort of skirts you wore?

PAULINE: That is what we had all the time more or less.

JIM PEOPLES: Is that what other children in Aberlour were wearing at the time?

PAULINE: We all had them, well mostly all the girls had them yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What about children in the village? Would you stand out if you were wearing that sort of skirt?

PAULINE: I would think so yeah. I think everybody knew who we were and where we came from.

JIM PEOPLES: It was a small place. You tell us about the school and we know already I think that there was a school in the orphanage, I think there was a school building on wings on both sides for boys and girls. You have a view about the quality of the schooling. You tell us at paragraph 30 on page 6 that you don't think the school was very good. What do you mean by that, what was not good about it?

PAULINE: I don't know, I can't really explain that one really. I didn't really like the school. I think there was too much bullying going on. I never learnt very much.

JIM PEOPLES: That's the other thing, did you feel that the classes taught you very much?

PAULINE: Not really no.

JIM PEOPLES: And you say you don't recall getting exams?

PAULINE: No never got any exams. That is why I am thick today.

JIM PEOPLES: I wasn't wanting you to say that I just wanted to find out what sort of education you were receiving. I take it then you didn't have any qualifications when you left school?

PAULINE: No, none at all.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you go to the school in Aberlour for the whole time you were there?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Did some other children go to other schools?

PAULINE: Not as far as I know. I think they all went to the school.

LADY SMITH: Pauline, I think you are being a bit hard on yourself. I know from your statement that you did achieve qualifications later on as an adult.

PAULINE: I don't know, did I?

LADY SMITH: Well you don't get qualifications if you're thick as you put it.

PAULINE: Not in Aberlour I didn't

LADY SMITH: No, but don't be too hard on yourself.

JIM PEOPLES: Did anybody every say these things to you or suggest that you were not very clever?

PAULINE: No, that was just me saying it.

JIM PEOPLES: That was just your own assessment?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: But you didn't get people saying that to you?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: Ok. You tell us – your recollection was that you didn't find the teachers too bad. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Some of the children weren't so good with their behaviour?

PAULINE: No, bad.

JIM PEOPLES: Did the teachers see this bad behaviour going on?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Did they do anything about it?

PAULINE: Not a thing.

JIM PEOPLES: Did they just let it continue?

PAULINE: Times haven't changed have they?

JIM PEOPLES: I just want your time there, they may not have done.

PAULINE: They never did anything about it. A waste of time.

JIM PEOPLES: But they saw it?

PAULINE: Yeah, they did see what was going on yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: On page 7 of your statement and I won't go through this in too much detail with you Pauline but you tell us about some of the more positive things perhaps, well I think they are that there were plenty of toys and books to read.

PAULINE: We had plenty of that yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And you would go for long walks at the weekend. Was that something that you enjoyed?

PAULINE: Yeah I liked the walks.

JIM PEOPLES: Sundays you would go to church. Did you enjoy church?

PAULINE: It was alright.

JIM PEOPLES: Ok. You say in paragraph 36 on page 7 that you weren't allowed to go into the village on your own.

PAULINE: No we weren't allowed to do that.

JIM PEOPLES: Did there become a time when you were old enough to be allowed to go on your own?

PAULINE: Never went to the village on our own.

JIM PEOPLES: You don't remember going?

PAULINE: No we never went.

JIM PEOPLES: Was there some reason why you weren't allowed to go on your own?

PAULINE: I think they were scared in case we ran away or something.

JIM PEOPLES: I see. Did children run away?

PAULINE: Yeah they did.

JIM PEOPLES: How often would that happen?

PAULINE: My brother did a few times.

JIM PEOPLES: Okay. Why would he be running away?

PAULINE: Because he didn't like it.

JIM PEOPLES: We maybe come to a bit more about your brother if I can in due course. You also have a memory that during the holidays you would go to Hopeman House. Is that right for a couple of weeks?

PAULINE: Yeah, we did.

JIM PEOPLES: Was that something you enjoyed?

PAULINE: I did yeah, I enjoyed going there. It was good, it was beside the beach and it was good.

JIM PEOPLES: On page 8 of your statement you have got a memory of day trips to air displays at Lossiemouth and Kinross.

PAULINE: I liked that.

JIM PEOPLES: You seemed to have enjoyed the planes?

PAULINE: I liked the aeroplanes.

JIM PEOPLES: And indeed you tell us about something that was a special occasion for Dean Wolfe on his retiral. He was the subject of This is your Life TV programme and I think that you participated in that did you?

PAULINE: I did.

JIM PEOPLES: As part of a choir?

PAULINE: I was singing.

JIM PEOPLES: And sang during the show, is that right?

PAULINE: I did that.

JIM PEOPLES: Was the days of Eamon Andrews?

PAULINE: Yip, it was him that took the show.

JIM PEOPLES: I remember that individual. It was quite a popular show at the time.

PAULINE: Singing My Lord is my Shepherd.

JIM PEOPLES: That was to mark his retirement from Aberlour?

PAULINE: Yes it was.

JIM PEOPLES: He was replaced as you have told us by the Reverend Leslie, is that right?

PAULINE: Leslie, yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: I am not going to go into birthdays and Christmas other than to say I think you said Christmas was a good celebration, is that right for the children?

PAULINE: Yeah, yeah it was ok.

JIM PEOPLES: Nothing more than ok?

PAULINE: That's it.

JIM PEOPLES: You don't remember your own birthday being celebrated. You were there for a while. You don't remember any birthday celebrations for you?

PAULINE: None at all. Nope.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us a bit about visitors but you didn't get a lot of visitors did you personally, is that right?

PAULINE: No but my dad used to come. It is probably written in here. He was almost thrown out....

JIM PEOPLES: I think you tell us on the next page that he wasn't admitted because he was drunk when he turned up. You have a

memory of some visitors at least coming to the orphanage on the sports days?

PAULINE: Yeah there used to be yeah. There used to be quite a few that came to see people then.

JIM PEOPLES: Was that just because it was a sports day?

PAULINE: Because of the sports day yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Would these be people from the village or people from further afield?

PAULINE: I think there was some of the people who came from – parents or whatever of the children as far as I remember. A lot of them came from the village as well to the sports. Nobody came to see me.

JIM PEOPLES: Was there any sort of well known figures come to the sports day as a guest of honour.

PAULINE: I think Princess Margaret. Did she not come once?

JIM PEOPLES: I think we have heard that she did come to the orphanage.

PAULINE: I think it was a sports day that she came as well.

Because she opened the Dowans and I think that was also a sports day. It could have been then.

JIM PEOPLES: As you say on page 9 of your statement Pauline, some parents would visit their children. My, our understanding is that some of the children who were in Aberlour would have come from quite far afield in Scotland and so they wouldn't all have been born in Easter Ross like you?

PAULINE: No, no, no.

JIM PEOPLES: In your case you say your Dad tried to visit but he didn't get in because he wasn't sober?

PAULINE: He was always drunk.

JIM PEOPLES: You don't remember your mother coming at all?

PAULINE: She never came once in the whole time that I was there.

JIM PEOPLES: In relation to visitors or official visitors if I can put it this way at paragraph 46 you don't have any memory of social worker inspectors coming to see the place?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: And if they did they certainly didn't speak to you?

PAULINE: Definitely not.

JIM PEOPLES: The way you put it when you tell us about that is that nobody cared or worried about us. Is that the way you felt at the time?

PAULINE: Well it was true, it was the way that I felt at the time yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: During your period there, you were there as you say from quite a young age to age 16. Did you get a lot of affection or warmth from the staff?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: Cuddles, hugs, comforting?

PAULINE: No way.

JIM PEOPLES: Not at all?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: You didn't like Mrs QNK and you thought Mrs BHM was ok but did none of the house parents that you had dealings with were particularly affectionate or warm, is that right?

PAULINE: Not at all.

JIM PEOPLES: What affect did that have on you? Did it have an effect at the time? Did you feel that there were times when you wanted that sort of attention or affection?

PAULINE: You weren't use to it anyway so it didn't really bother me really.

JIM PEOPLES: You didn't know any better?

PAULINE: No, I didn't know any better.

JIM PEOPLES: As you got older and you have got your own family I think you would have probably realised the importance of it?

PAULINE: Now. I do now.

JIM PEOPLES: It wasn't apparent to you at the time?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us about healthcare and I just want to be clear about what Nurse Grant was doing at paragraph 48 on page 9. You had a problem with your knee that you dislocated one of your knees and you went to see the nurse and you tell us that the nurse – she seems to have used her fist to knock the knee back into place?

PAULINE: It was dislocated and I suppose she couldn't do anything else but just to knock it back into place.

JIM PEOPLES: So you think she was doing it for the best of intentions?

PAULINE: She should have just took me to the hospital really.

JIM PEOPLES: That is what you think should have happened?

PAULINE: Yea, instead of trying to thump it back in.

JIM PEOPLES: You didn't think this was the appropriate way to deal with it?

PAULINE: No, not at the time no. It was blooming sore.

JIM PEOPLES: I can imagine. You said you didn't like her much after that. Did you have a lot of dealings with her?

PAULINE: Not really. I was scared of her after that.

JIM PEOPLES: It certainly hurt what she did and you thought it was a bit inappropriate?

PAULINE: I suppose maybe she had to do it, maybe that is the way you treat a dislocatio.

JIM PEOPLES: I am not so sure that that the description is one that maybe the medics would have approved even then. But you remember that happening.

PAULINE: Oh yeah definitely. I was taken to Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin and they put a big plaster thing or whatever it is called.

JIM PEOPLES: We see that it was serious enough to get treatment at Dr Gray's Hospital and have a plaster applied?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And indeed I think you say in more recent times you had to have some surgical procedures to sort out some of the bones? It was the same knee?

PAULINE: The same knee yeah. Maybe she made it worse.

JIM PEOPLES: Maybe she did. On page 10 Pauline you tell us a bit about running away and I think you said earlier to me that children ran away was a regular occurrence was it?

PAULINE: Yeah. Cannae blame them.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us specifically that one of your brothers....

PAULINE: [REDACTED]

JIM PEOPLES: ...would run away and he would get into trouble for doing so. And you do say that you know that children were punished for running away. How did you come to find that out. How did it become knowledge?

PAULINE: I knew because some of the girls even ran away and I knew what happened to them. It was a waste of time running away because they always got caught.

JIM PEOPLES: It is a difficult place to run away from.

PAULINE: It is really, I know.

JIM PEOPLES: If they did get caught and they were taken back and they were punished how were they punished?

PAULINE: Just got the cane and sent to bed and no breakfast or food or anything.

JIM PEOPLES: Did they tell you that they were caned?

PAULINE: Yeah, well I knew because one of my friends ran away and it was her that actually told me

JIM PEOPLES: She got caned?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Who would do the caning?

PAULINE: I don't know Mrs [REDACTED] QNK well if it was the girls it would have been her, I don't know if it had been the boys.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you ever run away?

PAULINE: No, too scared. I wouldn't have gotten very far. Maybe to the pub.

JIM PEOPLES: I am sure some may have tried to get there at least for one reason or another. But you tell us about bed wetting because you say that you had a problem with bed wetting. Tell me about that, how was that treated, what happened if you wet the bed?

PAULINE: You just had to go and change the bed and no wonder I wet the bed we were treated so bad, no wonder. They used to check your bed in the morning and if your bed was wet they just used to gie you the strap as well for wetting the bed.

JIM PEOPLES: So you were punished for wetting the bed?

PAULINE: Oh yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us, this is at paragraph 51 on 1742 Pauline in your statement. Who would be giving you the belt?

PAULINE: Well that [REDACTED] BHM [REDACTED] id give us it if we did wet the bed like.

JIM PEOPLES: Who else gave you the belt if you wet the bed?

PAULINE: Mrs [REDACTED] QNK [REDACTED] as well.

JIM PEOPLES: What sort of belt are we talking about here? Was it like a school belt?

PAULINE: Yeah like that.

JIM PEOPLES: A tawes. A leather belt, like a school belt?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: The type you would get belted at school?

PAULINE: It had two things at the end of it, I just remember that bit.

JIM PEOPLES: Was that kept in the house?

PAULINE: Yeah they had one there.

JIM PEOPLES: It would be brought out if you wet the bed?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us also that you would get the belt or people who wet the bed would get the belt in front of everyone. Is that how it was done?

PAULINE: Yeah. You just had to stand in a line and just hold out your hand and it would go wallop.

JIM PEOPLES: How did you feel about that?

PAULINE: Terrible. It was blooming sore.

JIM PEOPLES: Apart from being sore you were getting the belt in front of people that you knew for wetting the bed. How did you feel about that?

PAULINE: There was nothing you could do really was there? It was just the way you had to do it. It was sad really.

JIM PEOPLES: Some might say that is a bit degrading and humiliating....

PAULINE: Well it was really.

JIM PEOPLES: Worse still to be punished in front of other children?

PAULINE: But we were all the same. We just had to stand in a line and just come along and wallop you.

JIM PEOPLES: How many times would you get the belt on one occasion for wetting the bed?

PAULINE: It was just once in the morning that you got it yeah. It was a waste of time because if you wet the bed the following day you got it again.

JIM PEOPLES: Where would the belt be used, on your hands?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You say that you were a nervous wreck living there.

What was it that was making you nervous when you were living.....

PAULINE: Just the way that you are treated.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you ever feel other than nervous?

PAULINE: I went away from my mum and dad and as I was getting abused there and then I went to Aberlour and I was getting abused there. They are supposed to look after you.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you ever feel a time when you felt that you weren't nervous or that you felt ok or comfortable?

PAULINE: Maybe once I got that bit older I wasn't so bad. When I was young it was terrible.

JIM PEOPLES: You have got a section in your statement Pauline about discipline and you tell us at paragraph 52 on page 10 about the type of discipline and in particular Mrs QNK and BHM would administer to you or indeed perhaps others. Can you tell us about that?

PAULINE: I was terrified. As I said you just live in fear all the time.

JIM PEOPLES: Mrs QNK

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What about BHM were you terrified of her?

PAULINE: Yeah a bittie. She wasn't really as bad, I could handle her but that Mrs QNK no. It would have been a much better place if they had got rid of her.

JIM PEOPLES: You tell us about Mrs QNK using a cane, is that right?

PAULINE: Yes she always used a cane. She was quite happy with that cane.

JIM PEOPLES: You told us that you got it on the backs of your legs and on your bare bottom?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: When this happened where were you caned? What place were you? Did she do in front of other children?

PAULINE: Well if you wet the bed it was in front of other children. It was in the dormitory that she used to do it but there was another room, I don't know where it was, some room that they took you to.

JIM PEOPLES: To give you a cane?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: If it was given on your bare bottom would that be in another room?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Would there be other children there?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: You have also memories of BHM clipping you around the ear?

PAULINE: Oh aye.

JIM PEOPLES: You sound as if that wasn't an isolated occurrence?

PAULINE: No I got that a few times. They pulled your hair as well, that is another thing?

JIM PEOPLES: Who did that?

PAULINE: BHM

JIM PEOPLES: When she clipped you around the ear, can you just describe how she would do it?

PAULINE: Just wallop you around the ear.

JIM PEOPLES: With her open hand?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Again how much force was used?

PAULINE: Well she was quite a big woman.

JIM PEOPLES: What age would you be when this was happening?

PAULINE: About 9, 8 or 9?

JIM PEOPLES: Was it sore?

PAULINE: Yeah, I have still got a sore ear today.

JIM PEOPLES: So it left you with a legacy of an ear problem. Is that right?

PAULINE: I have got something wrong with my ear yes.

JIM PEOPLES: And you think it has got some connection with that?

PAULINE: Probably, all the times I got walloped.

JIM PEOPLES: Are you saying that it happened quite a lot?

PAULINE: Yeah. You didn't have to do anything they just maybe n have an excuse and just do it.

JIM PEOPLES: That is another thing, what were you getting, the cane or getting a clip around the ear?

PAULINE: They didn't really need an excuse, it was the least little thing that you did and they used to just give you a scud or pull your hair or belt you or do something.

JIM PEOPLES: So there is various things done, the cane, the clip around the ear, the belt... all used.

PAULINE: That was all used, yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: By the people in the house mainly?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you ever get any of these punishments from anyone in a more senior positions like the warden?

PAULINE: I don't think they knew what was going on actually.

JIM PEOPLES: Why do you think that?

PAULINE: Well I think they would have got rid of them, would they not?

JIM PEOPLES: Well you would like to think so but you don't think that they knew?

PAULINE: No I don't think they did know.

JIM PEOPLES: Because you think if they had you believe that they might have done something?

PAULINE: Well I would have hoped so. I would have liked to have thought that they would have. But you were too scared to say anything because they probably wouldn't believe you.

JIM PEOPLES: Mrs QNK and BHM sounds as if they were....

PAULINE: Baddies

JIM PEOPLES: Well apart from that they were a bit older, were they?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Was there any young staff?

PAULINE: Mrs Topple and that [REDACTED] AJF they were a bit younger.

JIM PEOPLES: [REDACTED] BHM and Mrs [REDACTED] QNK house was there younger staff at all?

PAULINE: I don't remember anybody else being there. I just remember them.

JIM PEOPLES: So that just ran the show on their own?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And you say, I think you tell us this at paragraph 52 that you were scared to open your mouth or say anything that was going on?

PAULINE: Yes you were.

JIM PEOPLES: And indeed you thought you would just get into more trouble?

PAULINE: Exactly. Go hide in a corner and say nothing.

JIM PEOPLES: You say that you were terrified about Mrs [REDACTED] QNK

PAULINE: I was, I was petrified. I hated her. If had a gun I would have shot her.

JIM PEOPLES: Moving on to page 11 Pauline at paragraph 53, you have a memory of having got into a bit of fight with some of the other girls. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yes underneath the creepy bridge.

JIM PEOPLES: The creepy bridge?

PAULINE: That is what it was called.

JIM PEOPLES: Ok, so you had this fight when you were around 12 and you were caught and you were taken back by the scruff of the neck?

PAULINE: Well somebody reported us and that [REDACTED] BHM had come to collect us and she grabbed me by the head of the hair and took me back to the orphanage and I got the strap for that and sent to bed.

JIM PEOPLES: You also say she knocked your heads together?

PAULINE: Yes she did that as well.

JIM PEOPLES: On this occasion?

PAULINE: Yeah. Knocked our heads together.

JIM PEOPLES: In the next section of your statement.....

PAULINE: This is the sad part.

JIM PEOPLES: I know this is difficult for you. I just want to try and establish what you can tell us about this. This is to do with your sisters so you find this difficult to deal with. You tell us, if I just take a little bit from page 11 that your sister, at least at some point in her stay between 1955 and 1965 was in the care of a couple called Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] BBP/B G7 Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: In one of the houses?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: They were house parents?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: I think what you tell us Pauline. Are you ok?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Just take your time. What you tell us Pauline is that you came to learn that they were bad to your sister, is that right?

PAULINE: Really bad.

JIM PEOPLES: Did you see the treatment that she got from them?

PAULINE: Well I knew what was going on but I saw the bruises.

JIM PEOPLES: You saw the results of it?

PAULINE: The results of it, yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Well let's find out what you did learn and see. You say that she was in a different dormitory.

PAULINE: Yes she was different from me.

JIM PEOPLES: But you have a recollection that quite frequently one of the other girls in the other dormitory would come and tell you that your sister as you say had been beaten up?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Did she indicate what sort of beatings she received?

PAULINE: Just a good hiding, that's all. Probably punched and kicked and strapped and caned. Then when I used to go through to try and help her but when I got through that swing doors they used to just shove me back to where I came. And then I remember a time when I was actually locked in a cupboard with my sister, I remember that, being locked because she was often locked up my sister.

JIM PEOPLES: Because you tell us I think in your statement that the swing doors would take you from your dormitory right through to the other one?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Right to your sister's dormitory but you say that you weren't allowed to see her.

PAULINE: No I wasn't allowed in.

JIM PEOPLES: Who stopped you seeing her?

PAULINE: Just that Mr and Mrs QNK

JIM PEOPLES: Is that QNK or BBP/BGZ

PAULINE: No, sorry BBP/BGZ I apologise, it was BBP/BGZ

JIM PEOPLES: You also say that one of the reasons you didn't see her was that she had been locked in a cupboard?

PAULINE: She was always locked in a cupboard. She could've been dead for all I knew.

JIM PEOPLES: How did you hear about that? Who told you?

PAULINE: Well the other girls in the room used to tell me. I know it happened to her. I definitely know.

JIM PEOPLES: Presumably, what you are describing on the impression from what I am reading is that whoever would come through to tell you this was sufficiently concerned to let you know so they must have thought something bad was going on.

PAULINE: Well they knew yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You have a memory on at least one occasion you were in a cupboard with her.

PAULINE: I definitely was locked up. I think I must have been too young if it was my mum and dad's house because I would have remembered. I remember being in the cupboard with her.

JIM PEOPLES: On an occasion. You think it was Aberlour?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You were certainly told from time to time that your sister being locked in a cupboard, was it Mrs **BBP** or Mr **BGZ** or both?

PAULINE: Both of them, they were both there.

JIM PEOPLES: Presumably there wouldn't have been much doubt if a child was put in a cupboard and locked that the people who were in charge would know of that whether it was Mrs **BBP** that took her to the cupboard or her husband was likely to know what was going on.

PAULINE: Yeah, well the girls would know.

JIM PEOPLES: You say that it happened quite a lot?

PAULINE: Oh quite a lot yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Can you remember what sort of age would your sister have been when these things – when the girls were running through to tell you about this?

PAULINE: She would have been about 7 or 8 I would think at the time.

JIM PEOPLES: That would make you either 8 or 9?

PAULINE: 8 or 9 yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Did there come a time when your sister moved to a different dormitory and had different house parents?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: Did she always have.....

PAULINE: She always had Mr and Mrs **BBP/BGZ** I think they liked her there so that they could just beat her up.

JIM PEOPLES: You do tell us that you can recall an occasion, one occasion certainly were you saw your sister and she was black and blue.

PAULINE: I have seen her a few times black and blue that is why I knew she was getting badly treated and getting locked up and whatever they did to her. There was a few times I never saw her for ages and I thought she could be dead for all I know, the way they treated her.

JIM PEOPLES: Did she tell you though how she became black and blue? Did she ever confide in you?

PAULINE: No she never really said. They used to drag her on the floor by the head of the hair and everything.

JIM PEOPLES: Was that something that you learned from the other girls what would happen?

PAULINE: Yeah

JIM PEOPLES: So apart from being locked in a cupboard, being black and blue through being beaten she was pulled or dragged by the hair?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: When she was in this house?

PAULINE: Yip.

JIM PEOPLES: Can I move on to something else that you remember about your time in Aberlour and I think this concerns a man who was the [REDACTED] at Aberlour. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What do you remember about this occasion?

PAULINE: Well, I just remember that, eh, what do you call her...

JIM PEOPLES: Maybe not mention names. You can mention the name of the [REDACTED]

PAULINE: I'll just call her the domestic teacher, had told us to go to the garden and get kale. I never knew what kale was, I didn't know where the garden was never mind anything else. So there was my friend and I had gone along and I was walking quite a bittie and we come across this [REDACTED] and was going to stop and ask him where it was. Because we never knew where it was. So the door was a wee bittie open so we shouted in the door "hello" and I am not going to mention his name.

JIM PEOPLES: No you can mention his name here. What was his name?

PAULINE: Mr [REDACTED] AJB

JIM PEOPLES: I think we have got information that Mr [REDACTED] AJB did work for Aberlour and Mr [REDACTED] AJB is a [REDACTED].

PAULINE: Yes he was a [REDACTED].

JIM PEOPLES: Tell us what happened on this occasion.

PAULINE: This friend of mine had gone in and says "hello, is anybody there" and then we stuck our head in the door and here was the [REDACTED], he stood up and he was naked from the waist down. And there was, I don't know if I should say this really. There was a girl from the orphanage actually on the floor. I knew who it was but we just thought it was a relation of his because the funny thing was that her last was the same name as his and we just thought it was a relation so we just ran away after that.

JIM PEOPLES: Just to be clear what age was this girl. I don't need her name.

PAULINE: She would have been ages with me maybe about 10 – 11 maybe at the time.

JIM PEOPLES: I think you estimated in the statement at page 12 that she might have been 13 or 14?

PAULINE: Yes she could have been yes. Maybe she was a bit older than me actually, she could have been.

JIM PEOPLES: You were 10 when you saw this?

PAULINE: Yeah but we never thought nothing about it, we just ran away and we went back to, we never even got the kale yet because we forgot all about it. We told some of the girls which maybe we shouldn't have done, of course the house mothers got to know about it and we got belted for telling lies because they never believed us so we got a hiding for telling lies.

JIM PEOPLES: I think your recollection was that it was [REDACTED] BHM

PAULINE: Yes it was her yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You said that you got sent to bed and accused of telling lies. You say that you got a hiding on that occasion. Can you remember what sort of hiding?

PAULINE: Well just punched and hair pulled, the usual, just the same and then we got put to bed and that was it.

JIM PEOPLES: You described seeking directions to find where the kale was and you went to what you call the [REDACTED] house. Was it a house or a [REDACTED]

PAULINE: No it was a [REDACTED] It wasn't his house, it was a [REDACTED]

JIM PEOPLES: We understand and some evidence that we heard last week that there was a [REDACTED] in the boys wing or near the boy wing. I think there is some evidence of.

PAULINE: That could have been there yes.

JIM PEOPLES: Was it a place that had machinery or for working in rather a cottage to live in?

PAULINE: No it was a workplace. It wasn't a house.

JIM PEOPLES: Was this during the day?

PAULINE: It was later on in afternoon it would have been.

JIM PEOPLES: It appears from what happened to you that at least some of the girls that you had told what you saw that they must have reported that back to [REDACTED] BHM

PAULINE: Yes.

JIM PEOPLES: So she would get to know what you said you had seen and her reaction was to say that she didn't believe you and you got punished in the way that you have described?

PAULINE: That was it. I shouldn't have opened my mouth really.

JIM PEOPLES: You seem to think more generally that this individual, Mr [REDACTED] AJB you put him in the same kind of category as Mrs [REDACTED] QNK in a sense that you would say that he was a horrible man?

PAULINE: He was a horrible man.

JIM PEOPLES: You say he was a creep or creepy. Was that just an impression from just your observations of him?

PAULINE: No that was just me. I thought he was a bit creepy, I didn't like the look of him.

JIM PEOPLES: It would appear that there was some stories going around at the time that maybe things were happening and that what you saw wasn't unique?

PAULINE: I don't think it was I think it was happening quite a few times.

JIM PEOPLES: You say that you heard a few stories about him?

PAULINE: Well it was my brother [REDACTED] it was him that mentioned it.

JIM PEOPLES: What did he sort of indicate to you?

PAULINE: He just said what he knew what was going on about abusing the boys. Abusing some boys as well.

JIM PEOPLES: Mr [REDACTED] AJB

PAULINE: Mr [REDACTED] AJB yes. I believe he would like.

JIM PEOPLES: When you say abusing, obviously you are describing what you saw that looks like a sexual encounter

PAULINE: Yeah, it was

JIM PEOPLES: So are you saying when he abused the boys that he was doing similar things to the boys according to your brother, what he told you?

PAULINE: Yip.

JIM PEOPLES: Did he go into any kind of detail of what he knew?

PAULINE: No he never, well just what he knew and what he said. He believed that is what happened.

JIM PEOPLES: I am going to ask you about this shortly that something happened with your brother that you were told about with a.....

PAULINE: [REDACTED] BBR

JIM PEOPLES: But leaving him aside, did your brother indicate that he ever had problems with Mr [REDACTED] AJB [REDACTED] ?

PAULINE: No, he never said anything about him no.

JIM PEOPLES: He did tell you that certainly he was aware that some things had gone on.

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: So what you saw wasn't an isolated occurrence?

PAULINE: No, definitely not.

JIM PEOPLES: Moving on to [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED] he was a house father. Was he in a different house?

PAULINE: I didn't really know him.

JIM PEOPLES: Were you aware of who he was though?

PAULINE: Yeah I had heard of him. I was aware of who he was yes but I didn't really know him all that well. Because he was in with all the boys.

JIM PEOPLES: You were told something by your late brother, is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: What did he tell you about [REDACTED] BBR [REDACTED]

PAULINE: He just told me that he was abused by him, sexually abused.

JIM PEOPLES: Did he go into any kind of detail about the nature of the abuse?

PAULINE: No he never really said much no. I think he kept it all to himself.

JIM PEOPLES: But he confided in you that this had happened?

PAULINE: Yeah he did tell me.

JIM PEOPLES: Did he indicate that he may have been abused in this way?

PAULINE: No he never said. But I know that it definitely happened, I don't think [REDACTED] was the only one as far as I am led to believe.

JIM PEOPLES: Your statement at paragraph 61 on page 12 says that [REDACTED] BBR sexually abused some of the boys. Was that based on what [REDACTED] had said to you?

PAULINE: Yeah but I think I knew when I was there myself anyway at Aberlour that it was going on. Like I said I didn't really know [REDACTED] BBR

[REDACTED] BBR

JIM PEOPLES: Was there talk?

PAULINE: Yeah, that is the word I am looking for.

JIM PEOPLES: That things were happening.

PAULINE: Yip. That is the exact word I am looking for.

JIM PEOPLES: When [REDACTED] told you about Mr [REDACTED] AJB was that when you had left Aberlour? Remember you said that he indicated Mr [REDACTED] AJB what you saw wasn't maybe an isolated occurrence and that something had happened to boys. Did [REDACTED] tell you that when he was an adult and you were an adult?

PAULINE: Yeah, he told me quite a lot.

JIM PEOPLES: About?

PAULINE: It is a shame he is not here today, he would have been here today if he was alive.

JIM PEOPLES: Are you able to help us at all with any more detail of what he told you?

PAULINE: He never really said all that much really, I just know that he was being sexually abused by this [REDACTED] BBR

JIM PEOPLES: What age would he have been when he started to tell you these things?

PAULINE: I am not sure what age I would have been.

JIM PEOPLES: Not exactly.

PAULINE: I don't think that it is that long ago actually.

JIM PEOPLES: When did he die?

PAULINE: My brother? About a year and a half ago.

JIM PEOPLES: So how many years before that do you think he may have talked to you about these things?

PAULINE: About 3. He would be have been in his 60's or 50's.

JIM PEOPLES: Just on the subject on page 13 of your statement Pauline you basically deal with reporting abuse and you say that it would have been a waste of time.

PAULINE: Yeah. I am going to say that when all this came out – there is a man called a [REDACTED] BCS who was brought up at Aberlour and he was quite friendly with my brother. And I think he made a documentary or something and I think that it was just after that that my brother told me about what was going on.

JIM PEOPLES: So you can relate it to that. You say yourself that you said reporting what was going on would have been a waste of time?

PAULINE: Oh yeah a waste of time. Nobody listened to you.

JIM PEOPLES: I suppose you did have one example of it that you told or at least it got to BHM ears what you had seen involving Mr AJB and you have told us what happened on that occasion.

PAULINE: Yip, waste of time.

JIM PEOPLES: I am not going to ask you about what happened afterwards, we can read that and we know that you left Aberlour when you were 16 and your sister also left and she spent quite a lot of her late teens and early adulthood in Ladysbridge Hospital in Banff. Is that correct?

PAULINE: Yeah, that was their fault.

JIM PEOPLES: You spent a little time at Ladybridge but you didn't stay there very long, you didn't think it was a great place to be.

PAULINE: It was a horrible place. The assessor said should probably never have been there in the first place.

JIM PEOPLES: Do you know why they thought that was the right place to send you?

PAULINE: Well I don't think there was anywhere else for us to go so I think that they just put us there. I think they just thought that [REDACTED] was mad, so.

JIM PEOPLES: She stayed there for a long time?

PAULINE: She stayed longer than me, yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: You also went to another place and you tell us about that in page 14 that you were sent to Wellwood, Cults in Aberdeen. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah. Do I have to mention this?

LADY SMITH: We are not going to look at that.

JIM PEOPLES: You spent time but then you found work. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: I am not sure what age you were but you applied for a job in an old folks home in Balmedie. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: That is on page 14 and you say you were 18 you say at the time. Is that right?

PAULINE: About that.

JIM PEOPLES: You were quite young?

PAULINE: Yeah I was young yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: Indeed it was while you were working there that you met your husband. Is that right?

PAULINE: Yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: And you got married and your husband was in the army at the time. So you travelled about a bit through his army career and you tell us about that. We can read that for ourselves. To some extent things got a lot better. Would that be the right thing to say? Things were looking up?

PAULINE: They were.

JIM PEOPLES: If you go to page 15 and again I don't need the detail but you and your husband have 3 daughters and 5 grand-children and I think you tell us that you are obviously very proud of them and you say that you never treated your children the way you were treated at Aberlour.

PAULINE: Never.

JIM PEOPLES: You have never hit them and you give them everything that you didn't get and you feel that they probably been quite spoilt in comparison to yours. Is that a legacy of how you were treated when you were younger?

PAULINE: Yeah probably.

JIM PEOPLES: And I think you tell us and I think this is the point that Lady Smith has stated that you did get a qualification. You have been very modest and at paragraph 77 you got an SVQ and you worked for most of your adult life in nursing homes in various locations as a carer for the elderly.

PAULINE: I just retired from there a couple of years ago.

JIM PEOPLES: You say that you were working in Aberdeenshire at Torphins for a while. Is Muirhead near Glasgow?

PAULINE: No it's in Alford, just outside Alford. Its near where I live.

JIM PEOPLES: You try to capture on page 16 Pauline of your statement at paragraph 81, you try to tell us a bit of how you felt when you were in Aberlour and I think you say you were alone and miserable. Does that sum it up?

PAULINE: That's exactly how I felt. Yip exactly.

JIM PEOPLES: And as you have said before you did not see a great deal of your brothers and you didn't really see much of your sister?

PAULINE: No.

JIM PEOPLES: And I think you tell us there I think you believe that that has affected your relationship with them?

PAULINE: Oh definitely. I never see much of them now anyway like. I see my sister she lives in the same village.

JIM PEOPLES: At paragraph 82, you make a point I think, and this maybe goes back to how you felt at the time whether things were normal or not normal about affection and so forth. You make the point at paragraph 82 that you think everyone is brought up the way you are?

PAULINE: You know when you are young you think everybody is brought up the same way.

JIM PEOPLES: But you realised as you get older that was not.

PAULINE: Yeah exactly.

JIM PEOPLES: And indeed the way that you are treated wasn't the right way to treat children?

PAULINE: Not at all.

JIM PEOPLES: You say and I think it is something that we have heard before that you already said that you didn't report anything of your experiences to the police?

PAULINE: No I never reported anything at all.

JIM PEOPLES: You also say that it wasn't easy to report things back then. What did you mean by that?

PAULINE: Nobody believed you did they? Waste of time. All you got was a hiding.

JIM PEOPLES: Just finally Pauline, on the final page of your statement at paragraph 88, I think your feeling is that you didn't think that people

really cared for the children when you were in Aberlour. They saw it just as a job?

PAULINE: Yeah, it was true.

JIM PEOPLES: And you didn't feel that there was anyone you could talk to or anyone who would listen to you?

PAULINE: No. Not a soul.

JIM PEOPLES: And indeed I think you also say you feel that there ought to be more monitoring of what was going on in the various places, the houses?

PAULINE: There should have been yeah. It was a long time ago and that was probably just the way it was.

JIM PEOPLES: I suppose you can compare it with some of the places you have worked in as an adult?

PAULINE: Oh yeah.

JIM PEOPLES: There is a lot more monitoring, training, more education about what is right and what is not right. Things of that kind?

PAULINE: If it had been like that then it would have been an entirely different story altogether.

JIM PEOPLES: Pauline these are all the questions that I have got for you today. I don't think there are any questions that I have been asked to ask you so I would just like to thank you for coming today and I appreciate you coming with a problem shoulder which I hope will heal.

PAULINE: It will get better.

JIM PEOPLES: And that you don't have too much discomfort from that.

Thank you again.

PAULINE: You're welcome.

LADY SMITH: Are they any outstanding applications for questions?

Pauline those are all the questions we have for you today. I know it is hard to pick up where we are coming from sometimes and it just remains for me to thank you very much for engaging with the Inquiry as you have done. Your written statement is very helpful and hearing you talk today yourself about your experiences in care has added to the value that we already have from that statement quite considerably. So thank you very much indeed. I am now able to let you go.

PAULINE: Thank you.

11 December 2019

This following is a statement of an applicant who wishes to remain anonymous and has chosen the pseudonym "Amber". Her statement can be found at WIT.001.001.9427

My name is Amber. I was born in 1949. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. At paragraphs 2 to 4 Amber says that she things she was born in Inverness and lived with her parents and her six siblings, one sister and five brothers. She says she was admitted to Aberlour orphanage at the age of six with her sister and three younger brothers as her parents were unable to cope.

Moving now to paragraph 5. I was in Aberlour until I was about eleven and was back and forward like a yoyo after that. I was put in Ladysbridge Hospital in Banff for a couple of weeks and then went back to Aberlour. When I was fifteen I was put back in Ladysbridge and kept in there til I was about thirty-five years old. After that I was put in Wellwood Hospital in Aberdeen. I had to go to Wellwood as a day patient after that and finally I got discharged when I was about forty-one.

My Lady, the Aberlour records record that Amber was admitted to the orphanage on the [REDACTED] 1955. That she was then admitted to Ladysbridge Hospital on the [REDACTED] 1964 and returned to the orphanage on the [REDACTED] 1965. She was admitted to Ladysbridge Hospital once again on [REDACTED] 1965 and returned to the orphanage on [REDACTED] 1965. She was finally discharged from the orphanage on the [REDACTED] 1965 when she was admitted to Ladysbridge Hospital.

I was six years old when I went into Aberlour. I remember arriving at Aberlour Orphanage and somebody taking us away to get changed. I had been wearing a pair of black shoes, white socks, a kilt, white shirt and a brown jacket. I never saw those

[Type here]

clothes again. It's funny what you can remember.

There was a school, a farm and everything at Aberlour. Everything was along one big long road with buildings along the sides. There were children of all ages there from babies right up to fifteen or sixteen. The babies were kept separate in a nursery, that's why I never knew my younger brothers.

Everyone was put into houses and there was a few houses at Aberlour, all with different names. Two or three were in separate buildings and the rest were in the one building. At first I was put in a house with other girls and my sister. I think it was called Appleby. When I was eight I was moved into another house, which was called Gordon. I was in there with a group of boys, I was the only girl, but I don't why that was.

Mrs **BBG** was in charge of Aberlour. She was horrible. There were also different people in charge of the different houses, some were married couples, some were single. They were known as the house mothers and house fathers. The one I remember most was Mrs **BBP**. She was really coarse and wicked to me. She was in charge of the house I was in when I first went into, Appleby House. I don't remember who was in charge of the house I moved to later on. As well as the house mothers and fathers, there was a few staff in the kitchen and the grounds. One was a **AJF** **AJF** she was alright. There was also a Mrs Abernethy and a Mrs **BHM** I can't remember the names of the others.

We slept in big dormitories with lots of beds and lots of other children. When we were woken in the morning we all had to make our own beds, then get washed and dressed. After that we would go down the stairs for breakfast. Even though I was only six when I first went, I still had to wash and dress myself. We just had to learn ourselves.

At eight o'clock in the evening we were all sent to get washed and changed into our pyjamas. Then we had to go to bed.

There was one huge dining room for all the houses and we all sat at big tables in it. We ate all our meals in there, even on school days when we had to go back for lunch. About half-past five we got our tea, but it was just an apple and a bit of bread. Before bed we got a cup of hot chocolate.

If you didn't eat your food, you just had to sit there. It would be kept for you the next morning if you still didn't eat it. I used to spit mine on the floor and would get a hiding for that from Mrs BBP and then would have to sweep it up. I remember one night being given cauliflower and cheese and I hate that. I couldn't eat it so I was made to sit there all night.

I remember there being sinks, but I don't remember any baths or showers. There maybe were. Girls and boys all washed together.

All our clothes must have been provided by the home. I remember having a "dirndl", a skirt with an elasticated waist, and a white blouse. I wore that all the time.

We all went to the school that was part of Aberlour. None of the other kids would walk with me though so the staff would make me stay back and walk there myself. Every time I got to the school and shut the door behind me, a thermometer would fall off the back of the door. It wasn't my fault, but I would get hit for it by the teacher. Sometimes I wouldn't go to school because I was too scared.

There were different classes for the different ages, and a few teachers. I never learnt anything at school there, I was a quiet child and often never went. I would just spend the time outside in the playground. The staff would have known, but they never did anything, they weren't worried about me. We got sports as well, but I used to hate sports.

We used to have to dust and clean the floors and do other things like that. The staff would supervise us when we were doing them.

We weren't allowed to play very often, but we did get to now and again. We all had

toys that we shared, some were in a courtyard at the back of the dormitories, bikes and things. Others were in a playroom inside. There weren't very many to go round.

I was always by myself and would stand outside the playroom, watching the kids inside playing with toys or reading the books. I often went for a walk in the fields as well. Sometimes I just felt like getting away.

Now and again some of the kids would get taken to the cinema, but I never got to go. I had to stay behind.

On a Saturday we would be allowed to go down to the shops and got sixpence to buy sweets or whatever. It depended how old you were, if you were younger a member of staff would take you, otherwise you could go yourself. I never used to go to the shops though, I used to be kept indoors. I don't know why. I was always being punished for something. You only got the sixpence pocket money when you were good, so I didn't always get it.

We would go to Hopeman at Elgin for holidays once a year and go to the beach there. There was a house for the orphanage kids there. It was alright because it wasn't staff from Aberlour there, it was other people. We would get to play in the water and go for walks.

I remember someone took photographs of us on the beach at Hopeman, but not of me. There were never any photos taken of me at Aberlour. That just shows you how much they liked me.

When it was someone's birthday, they used to have to go to what was called "Room 99". There were toys and games and dolls in there and we used to get to pick whatever we wanted.

Christmas was quite good. I remember a tree in the dining hall because we used to have parties in there for Christmas. I can remember going to the parties a few times although I wouldn't get to go if they thought I'd been bad. I didn't really like the parties anyway. I didn't like crowds of people, I was scared and nobody would dance with me.

We went to church twice every Sunday at Aberlour, at eleven o'clock in the morning and about six o'clock at night. After church in the morning we were taken on walks around the village.

My dad came to visit a couple of times on a Saturday. He would meet my sister and me outside, but he was always drunk. He used to shout and say that he was going to kill mum if she came for us. He would do it in front of us, it was horrible. I don't think he wanted to see us, I think he just wanted to shout at people. I think he was the only one that came, I don't remember mum coming.

The social work never came to see me, I had to go and see them. I wish they had because I could have told them everything. When I was about nine or ten, I remember taking a train to see a social worker in Aberdeen or Huntly with one of the staff, I don't remember who. It was the first time I had been on the train.

A doctor used to come to us at Aberlour and there was an infirmary there too. All the people that were sick had to go to the infirmary. I was in a couple of times, but I can't remember why.

When I was about eleven I had to go to Aberdeen hospital and was given E.C.T. (Electroconvulsive Therapy), because they thought I was crazy. I wasn't, it was just the way I was being treated. After that I was put into Ladysbridge Hospital in Banff for two weeks.

I was a really shy child and wouldn't speak to anybody. I used to keep myself to myself and had no friends. I think that was the reason why everything that went wrong happened to me. I was bullied by the staff and kids at Aberlour. If somebody bullied me, I remember my sister sticking up for me, but she would get hit as well.

I had a few hidings at Aberlour, mainly from Mrs BBP It didn't matter what I did, I got it from her. She would throw me down and hit me with her hands. I don't know if other kids got it too, maybe they did. I couldn't breathe without somebody doing something to me.

My sister told me when we were older that the staff used to lock me in a cupboard, but I don't remember that. Maybe they did, I just don't remember it. She also said that they used to make folk eat their own sick, but I don't remember that either.

Some of the other kids would do things to me as well. I had spiders put down my back and I can't stand spiders. The staff would see the other kids bullying me, but none of them did anything about it. I know Mrs **BHM** aw, but she turned a blind eye.

Many a time Mrs **BBG** pulled me by the hair from one end of the building to her office at the other end. I don't know why she did it, I never used to say very much and I had never done anything that I can remember. I didn't see her doing it to anyone else.

One of the house fathers was called **BBR**. He was one of those that you couldn't trust. I don't know if he ever did anything to anyone, I didn't see, but he was creepy.

I had to leave Aberlour when I was fifteen and they put me into Ladysbridge Hospital in Banff. I had already been sent there for two weeks when I was eleven. I don't know for sure who made the decision to send me there, but I think it was a Dr Cook from Ladysbridge. I don't know why.

After I had stayed at Ladysbridge for the two weeks in 1960, when I was eleven, I went back to Aberlour and it was a bit better. Nobody bothered me. Then when I was around fifteen I was put back to Ladysbridge to stay for good this time. I'm not sure of the dates I went or what age I was, except I definitely went for two weeks when I was eleven.

After a while at Ladysbridge, maybe a couple of years, I was put into Wellwood Hospital in Aberdeen, which was connected to Ladysbridge. I was about seventeen then. It was sort of a halfway house.

From paragraph 42 to 48 Amber tells of her experiences in Ladysbridge Hospital in Banff and Wellwood Hospital in Aberdeen.

Moving now to paragraph 49 on page 9435

I left Wellwood in 1984, I remember because I had my son in 1985. That was my life starting when he was born. I don't know what changed and I don't know why they had kept me there in the first place.

I was put into a little bedsit and had to go back to Wellwood as a day patient. Even when my son born I still had to go and had to take him with me. They had a creche for babies and my son had to go there.

After about a year I got a house in Aberdeen and made the only friend I have ever had while I was there. She was good and she looked after my son to give me a break.

I was a day patient at Wellwood for six years and I remember my son was given a social worker called Sam McBrearty. I got pregnant again and he told me I had to get rid of the child because I wasn't fit to look after it. I didn't realise at the time that that man used to abuse kids. He used to take my son out and about and it made me wonder what he might have done. He's in the jail now.

I lived in a two bedroom house for a few years and used to take my son for walks everywhere. I just wanted to be out, I didn't know what it was like.

I've lived everywhere, I just can't settle. I think it's because I don't know where my home is. I must have been in eight or nine houses and my son has been everywhere with me, it's a shame. I moved about six years ago to be nearer my sister. She just lives up the road.

I only kept in touch with one of my brothers, but he died last year. I've not had anything to do with the others.

I have no self-confidence and I think they took it all that away from me. Before I went to Aberlour I was quite happy, but once I got older, things just got worse. I know something happened to me at Aberlour, but I can't remember what it was. I think

that's why I've got no self-confidence.

I still keep myself to myself. I don't like when folks are behind me, I don't know why. I don't like crowds and I'm scared of people. I believe that Aberlour and Ladysbridge spoilt my life. I never had a life up until I had my son. They took it all away from me.

I never had an education. I can't read or write very well and I can't add up.

I get tablets for depression, I've had to take them for a long time.

I've never reported to anyone in authority what happened to me at Aberlour, Ladysbridge or Wellwood to anybody. I just couldn't.

I got some of my records from Aberlour about a year ago and on them it says I was impudent to [REDACTED] AJF I don't think I was ever impudent though, I was just a kid. My records cover when I was in Aberlour and Ladysbridge, but I couldn't read them. It wasn't nice to read and I got rid of them. They said I got moved to Ladysbridge because I broke windows, but I never did that.

I did read in my records that someone from England had been writing to Aberlour, wondering if I had got the presents they had sent. I don't know anything about that though. I don't know who that was and I don't remember getting any presents.

My son joined the army, although he's left now and lives in America with his wife. They live in Denver and just had a wee baby boy.

I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Amber signed her statement on 6 June 2018

My Lady, that includes the evidence for today.

