

1 Friday, 26 July 2019

2 (10.00 am)

3 Housekeeping

4 LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome to the last day of
5 this section of this case study.

6 Because I know that not everyone who is here in the
7 mornings is able to be present in the afternoons,
8 particularly at the end of the week, I would like at
9 this stage just to say one or two things about where we
10 are with the inquiry and where we will be going after
11 today.

12 Let me turn firstly to my findings in relation to
13 the Quarriers, Aberlour and Barnardo's case study.
14 Those findings are progressing well and I would like to
15 assure everyone that advance notice of the publication
16 date of those will be given in the usual way.

17 Turning to hearings during the rest of 2019, first
18 of all phase 4, which is covering male religious orders,
19 we are going to resume the hearings in the Benedictine
20 case study on 10 September, and we plan to conclude them
21 on 2 October.

22 Then the final case study in this phase of evidence
23 will examine provision run by the Marist Brothers at
24 St Columba's in Largs and St Joseph's in Dumfries. That
25 case study will start on 3 October and we anticipate

1 concluding it on 5 November.

2 Turning then to phase 5, which covers child
3 migration. In early December we will be moving to that
4 phase and our case study into child migration
5 programmes. The case study will be in two parts. We
6 are planning to lead video link evidence over the course
7 of a week or so and the second part of the case study
8 will commence in late February 2020. So videos in
9 December is our current plan and then moving to the
10 second part of the case study in late February 2020,
11 starting with oral evidence from witnesses who are here
12 in person and who are applicants in the child migration
13 case study.

14 Turning then to what we call broadly that part of
15 our hearings that will look into the Scottish Government
16 responses, in spring 2020 we are intending to return to
17 evidence on the background to and context within which
18 the inquiry was established, and that will be with
19 hearings that will include looking at the
20 Scottish Government's knowledge of and response to
21 allegations of abuse of children in care.

22 So far as future case studies are concerned, next
23 summer, summer 2020, we are planning to progress to our
24 case study hearings in relation to our investigations
25 into the abuse of children in boarding schools. The

1 establishments currently under investigation are Fettes
2 College, Gordonstoun School, the Keil School in
3 Dumbarton, Loretto School, Merchiston Castle School,
4 Morrison's Academy during the time it was a boarding
5 school, and the Queen Victoria School in Dunblane.

6 We are interested in hearing from anyone about their
7 experiences in boarding schools, particularly those who
8 attended one of the schools currently under wider
9 investigation in more recent times and up to
10 December 2014.

11 After boarding schools we will be moving on to
12 a case study examining foster care and the current plan
13 is that we will start looking at the historical position
14 around the end of 2020. We will look at existing foster
15 care provision and how well it is working at a later
16 stage.

17 Further details on the hearings schedule will be
18 provided well in advance of hearings, and I would
19 encourage anyone, of course, to keep in touch with what
20 is posted on the website where updates are put.

21 It is perhaps also worth my emphasising at this
22 stage that due to the volume of evidence we are
23 receiving, it will not be possible to hold a case study
24 into every institution, but can I assure everyone that
25 all evidence received by the inquiry will be carefully

1 considered and will inform my final findings and report.

2 There is still much work to be done. Investigations
3 that we are and will be carrying out extend beyond those
4 that I have mentioned today and again you will find more
5 information about that now and as we move forward on the
6 website.

7 Finally, can I encourage anyone who has evidence to
8 offer in relation to any of our investigations to please
9 get in touch with our witness support team. The details
10 are on the website and when we are in hearings there are
11 always people here who can help to direct people towards
12 those who they need to speak to and to arrange that if
13 they wish to do so.

14 Thank you very much.

15 We turn now to this morning's evidence. Ms MacLeod.

16 MS MacLEOD: Good morning my Lady. The first witness is
17 ready he is an applicant who wishes to remain anonymous
18 and to use the name "Duncan" in giving his evidence.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

20 "DUNCAN" (affirmed)

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

22 You can see the red light is now on on
23 the microphone so it will help us to hear you and in
24 particular the stenographers to hear you through the
25 sound system. Can I ask you to try to stay in a good

1 position for that because it really is a great help.

2 Ms MacLeod will explain the red file to you in
3 a moment. If you are ready, I will hand over to her and
4 she will take over from there. Is that all right?

5 A. That is fine, thank you.

6 LADY SMITH: Ms MacLeod.

7 Questions from MS MacLEOD

8 MS MacLEOD: My Lady.

9 Good morning, Duncan.

10 A. Good morning.

11 Q. I don't need your date of birth but can you tell me
12 this: were you born in 1975?

13 A. I was.

14 Q. And are you now 44 years old?

15 A. I am.

16 Q. You have provided a statement for the inquiry, and there
17 is a copy of that in the red file on your desk. Part of
18 the statement will also come on the screen in front of
19 you. Could you begin, please, by looking at the final
20 page of the statement for me. I will give the reference
21 for the statement, which is WIT.001.002.3627.

22 If you could turn to the final page in the file.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Have you signed the statement?

25 A. I have, yes.

- 1 Q. In the very final paragraph do you say:
- 2 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
- 3 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry"?
- 4 A. I do.
- 5 Q. Do you go on to say:
- 6 "I believe the facts stated in the witness statement
- 7 are true"?
- 8 A. I do.
- 9 Q. Thank you. To begin with, Duncan, you tell us a little
- 10 bit about your family background. I think you tell us
- 11 that you were born in Islay; is that right?
- 12 A. My parents were living in Islay. I was actually born at
- 13 the Queen Mother's Hospital in Glasgow, but we were
- 14 living in Islay at the time.
- 15 Q. I see. When you were you, around 3 years old, you moved
- 16 to the mainland; is that right?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Did you attend a primary school on the mainland
- 19 initially?
- 20 A. I did, yes.
- 21 Q. When it came to choosing a secondary school for you, was
- 22 the decision taken that it may be appropriate for you to
- 23 go to boarding school?
- 24 A. It was, yes.
- 25 Q. And I think you tell us that your parents saw an advert

- 1 in the Oban Times --
- 2 A. They did.
- 3 Q. -- for Fort Augustus Abbey School?
- 4 A. They did, yes.
- 5 Q. You tell us, I think, there were assisted scheme places
- 6 available at that time.
- 7 A. There was, yes. There was an assisted scheme to help
- 8 with the finances.
- 9 LADY SMITH: The Assisted Places Scheme carried on
- 10 throughout 1980s and into the early 1990s, I think, as
- 11 well.
- 12 MS MacLEOD: Did you visit the school before you attended
- 13 formally?
- 14 A. We did. I was in Primary 7 and we went for a trip to
- 15 visit. When I went along and met the headmaster and had
- 16 a tour of the school with my parents.
- 17 Q. And then when you were 11 years old, in [REDACTED] 1986,
- 18 did you start at Fort Augustus?
- 19 A. I did, on [REDACTED] 1986.
- 20 Q. Just to get our dates right from the outset, did you go
- 21 to the school then for around two and a half years to
- 22 [REDACTED] 1989 when you were 14?
- 23 A. That is correct, yes.
- 24 Q. Did you then come out of the school for around a year?
- 25 A. That is right.

1 Q. And you went back into the school in [REDACTED] 1990?

2 A. Yes, that sounds about right: it was another year

3 I spent at the school then.

4 Q. Someone you mention throughout your statement and we

5 will be looking at is a Father [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] was he

6 at the school during your first period there?

7 A. Yes, for the -- for the first two years I was at the

8 school.

9 Q. Did he leave the schooled around summer 1988 --

10 A. He did.

11 Q. -- after you had been there for two years?

12 A. He did, yes.

13 Q. So when you arrived at the school then, Duncan, can you

14 set the scene for me? What was your first impression of

15 the school?

16 A. My parents brought me up. We had spent the day

17 travelling and we arrived early evening or late evening.

18 We had a meal in a small café in the village and then

19 went down to the school. And it was just incredibly

20 overwhelming. I can still feel the intensity of the

21 arrival, lots of people buzzing around, lots of noise.

22 I had a second-hand trunk which they hauled out of the

23 car and we some boys came out to greet me, some of the

24 older boys helped carry the trunk up the stairs. I was

25 taken up to the dormitory. [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] came to

1 meet us and told my parents it would be best if they
2 left as quickly as possible and I was deposited pretty
3 much at bedtime at the school, so pretty much the first
4 thing you had to do was just go to bed.

5 And it was -- it was incredibly -- it was ...
6 I really genuinely can't describe the pain that you feel
7 when you watch that car driving away, watch your parents
8 leave, and you are deposited in a dormitory full of
9 people you don't know, in a cubicle that -- I had
10 a roommate in a cubicle and that was it. We were told
11 lights will be out in 15 minutes, no talking or you get
12 belted. That is the first thing you are aware --

13 Q. I think you tell us, Duncan, that on the first morning
14 you were there, you couldn't get out of bed.

15 A. No, I felt paralysed. I was just -- lost, adrift.
16 I remember I had the bottom bunk and my roommate, the
17 cubicle mate, he got up -- the routine was such that you
18 were supposed to -- I didn't know this, of course, but
19 you were supposed to go downstairs -- where our junior
20 dormitory was upstairs, in more or less the attics
21 of the school, and you had to go all the way down to the
22 basement, which -- the fort -- it was a Jacobite fort --
23 the dungeon area had been converted into a wash room and
24 you had to march all the way down there with your wash
25 bag.

- 1 I wasn't aware of any of this routine, and
2 I couldn't get out of bed -- and the first night the
3 school captain had been the prefect left in charge of
4 the dormitory, so he was urging me to get out of bed.
- 5 Q. Were you crying?
- 6 A. I was. I remember just being -- just blinking the tears
7 back, and a lad, who would be in my class, he came to
8 explain to me that you really need to do what your told,
9 and you need to get up and get downstairs before you get
10 punished, punishment will come if you don't get your
11 dressing gown on and go downstairs.
- 12 Q. I think you reflect on it in your statement and you say:
13 "In retrospect it was like the first day in prison."
- 14 A. I would imagine the first day in prison to be -- I can
15 only imagine that is how it would be. It was -- it --
16 no other feeling before or since -- and I hope never to
17 experience anything like that again.
- 18 Q. Did you get --
- 19 LADY SMITH: Just before you go on, how big was your primary
20 school?
- 21 A. There were about 100 or so pupils at my primary
22 school --
- 23 LADY SMITH: In the whole school?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 LADY SMITH: So in your class at primary school?

1 A. About 20 or 25 maybe, sometimes mixed like with maybe P1
2 and P2 in the class.

3 LADY SMITH: That was a day school?

4 A. It was a day school, yes. In my family there was no
5 experience of boarding schools, no -- I have no -- no
6 background and no comparison to make.

7 LADY SMITH: And your primary school would have been a mix
8 of boys and girls, was it?

9 A. It was, and we had never experienced -- I have now with
10 my own son outdoor school experiences when you go to
11 camps and things, the outdoor centre for Strathclyde
12 region was in my village so we didn't go away, so I had
13 never been away to a camp or anything, so I had never
14 had that experience before.

15 LADY SMITH: This was all acutely foreign territory for you?

16 A. Entirely foreign territory.

17 LADY SMITH: And you knew nobody else there?

18 A. Not a soul.

19 LADY SMITH: Or anybody else who had been there?

20 A. No. So the ritual -- almost ritual-like experience --
21 in my statement I describe exactly how the days were
22 regimented, but I wasn't aware of any of that and none
23 of that -- you talk about where you go to a school, like
24 my son is going through the transition where you are --
25 and you are exposed to the routine, none of that had

1 been explained to us before.

2 LADY SMITH: How big a family had you come from?

3 A. At that time it was just myself; I was an only child.

4 LADY SMITH: Ms MacLeod.

5 MS MacLEOD: Who was [REDACTED] of the school? Who was the

6 [REDACTED] when you arrived?

7 A. At that point it was [REDACTED] MRQ

8 Q. You have mentioned [REDACTED] MFC as someone you met

9 on your first evening there. What was his role in

10 relation to you?

11 A. He was the housemaster for Vaughan house -- there were

12 two houses, Vaughan and Lovat, and so [REDACTED] MFC

13 was the Vaughan housemaster and then there was

14 a housemaster in Lovat, who was [REDACTED] MER. And

15 there was a third unofficial housemaster, Anthony,

16 Father Anthony. He was nominally in charge of our

17 dormitory, so he would lead us in prayer. So the first

18 night, before we had gone to sleep, he had appeared in

19 the dormitory, almost by magic to my mind, and read

20 prayers to us before departing into the monks' ...

21 Q. I think you mention in your statement that there was

22 a door in your dormitory that led into the monks' area.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And that a monk would come through there to read

25 prayers?

1 A. Almost like a stage magician they would appear. Towards
2 the dormitory was a long room separated by -- each of
3 the cubicles were separated by wooden panels and one of
4 those cubicles had a doorway in it and there was one
5 bed, so there was a boy's bed in that doorway, and it
6 was the second-from-the-end cubicle, and that was
7 connected, as I understood it, to where the monks slept,
8 to their rooms.

9 Q. I think you tell us you can still remember the sound of
10 that door opening.

11 A. Yes. That door doesn't leave you. It had a very
12 peculiar creak and then a noise it made just before --
13 it must have been as a hinge retracted or perhaps it was
14 the door closer on it. It had a very, very peculiar
15 noise. In my third term I think, I -- because you moved
16 each term, the cubicle you were in, I was in cubicle
17 right next to the door, so I became very aware of it
18 then, particularly when monks would make the effort to
19 come in to catch you speaking after lights out -- and
20 monks in particular would open the door very, very
21 quietly because they were aware of -- rather than just
22 put oil on it or a bit of WD40, in their attempts to
23 actually catch you, they would stand and the boy who was
24 unfortunate enough to have the bed in that cubicle would
25 tell me that the monks were standing there waiting,

1 listening, so that boy wouldn't be speaking or making
2 any noise after lights out, but the monk would stand
3 there waiting to listen.

4 Q. You have mentioned already the wash area. Can you
5 describe for me what was the set-up in relation to
6 showers at the school?

7 A. In the first two -- it all changed when I returned for
8 my final year, but in the first few years, at the very
9 bottom of the school, beneath the main school tower,
10 there was a large ceramic floor, ceramic-walled room
11 which had lines of wash-hand basins very -- one or two
12 of them were had some hot water, most of them just had
13 one cold water tap, and then at the end of the room
14 there was a cast-iron bath -- that was the only bath in
15 the school -- and then along one wall were the showers,
16 which were separated by -- there was a -- the doorway
17 that led in on both sides of the room and the showers
18 were bisected by this doorway, there were maybe five or
19 four showers on each side.

20 Q. Were there any cubicles or anything in the shower area?

21 A. No.

22 Q. It was completely open?

23 A. The whole room was completely open. You had a small
24 changing room on both sides -- there was a little
25 changing room -- there were three exits, one only went

1 into a changing room and the heating store, and then you
2 had -- you could -- I mentioned it in my statement, but
3 you could have a strange route that led you down the
4 bottom of the school tower and you could walk through
5 our wash room on the way back up to the west wing of the
6 school.

7 Q. I see. If you wanted a shower, could you go ahead and
8 do that or did you have to ask somebody?

9 A. No, in the morning you had to ask the permission. You
10 could ask via -- each night in the dormitory a prefect
11 was assigned to look after the dormitory, and they would
12 have to come -- the sixth formers in the school had
13 their own studies in the east wing of the school, and
14 they would be made to look at -- sleep -- one of them
15 would be made to sleep in the end cubicle. So you could
16 perhaps them but they would tell you had to go and ask
17 the housemaster.

18 Q. If you wanted a shower what did you have to do?

19 A. The usual route was the night before, at what were
20 called socials, when you were in your housemaster's
21 study or if you didn't have a social you would just
22 knock on the door before you went to bed and you would
23 just ask your housemaster if you could have a shower in
24 the morning.

25 Q. In your case was that Father MFC ?

- 1 A. That would be [REDACTED] MFC
- 2 Q. What would determine whether or not you were granted
3 permission to have a shower?
- 4 A. I don't really recall the criteria because mainly they
5 would sometimes -- he would turn you down because you
6 were -- your shower time was officially after games --
7 you were meant to shower -- you will see it in my
8 statement, but you had an official games time every day
9 and following the games, before you had afternoon tea,
10 you were supposed to shower at that point, and often --
11 I can remember him turning people down when we were in
12 the middle of social -- someone would knock on the door
13 and come in and say -- maybe a third year or fourth year
14 and say, can I have a shower in the morning, and he
15 would say, no, you can have it after games.
- 16 Q. Who supervised the showers?
- 17 A. Officially no one supervised them because the prefects
18 had their own showers -- and the way the disciplinary
19 worked in Fort Augustus was always prefect system, which
20 I mention here.
- 21 What would happen during the showers is that
22 [REDACTED] MFC would appear. Ostensibly he would tell
23 me to make sure no one was using a shower that shouldn't
24 and also make sure that the boys were washing correctly.
- 25 Q. Is that what he told you?

1 A. That's what he told me. In particular -- he would do
2 this twice through the day, so he would appear on
3 morning run -- although he hadn't been anywhere near us
4 when we were waking up -- that was done -- usually done
5 by the prefect -- he would suddenly appear in the shower
6 area but -- and then he would appear again in
7 the afternoon when we were back for our afternoon
8 showers.

9 Q. In the morning then, when he would appear in the shower
10 area, can you explain to me what he would do?

11 A. He would come in -- as I explained, there was a set of
12 steps that led down from the main tower. There was
13 a changing room just outside the door and he would come
14 through and come in and then would look left, right and
15 most of us would be just with wash bags -- I think --
16 and then he would start talking to the boys and he would
17 instruct one or other to get out the shower because they
18 didn't have permission, they shouldn't have been there,
19 it would -- in the afternoon showers he would
20 particularly be telling people they weren't washing
21 properly or they had missed a bit or, as I explained in
22 my statement, he would instruct some of us to shower
23 with other boys.

24 Q. When you say he would pretend to do that, what was he
25 actually doing?

1 A. I didn't -- did I say "pretend"?

2 Q. I thought --

3 A. No, he would -- in the afternoon he would be telling us
4 to -- sorry, I am not sure when I said "pretend".

5 Q. He would -- what would he be saying to you?

6 A. He would be telling us to wash, you've missed a bit of
7 mud, or, get that part there, or he would tell us to
8 shower with other boys to save water.

9 Q. I see.

10 LADY SMITH: Would that be to save hot water?

11 A. Apparently.

12 LADY SMITH: I don't suppose there would be water shortages
13 in the Highlands.

14 A. No, his claim was that there was only so much hot water
15 and it was needed in the afternoon and it was needed by
16 the monks, so we would need to save hot water.

17 MS MacLEOD: You mention in your statement that there was
18 general violence and unhappiness in the dormitories.

19 A. There was violence, but not just in the dormitories.
20 The underpinning philosophy of the school was violence.
21 Violence was everyone where throughout the day. In your
22 class there was no safety. In the dormitories it would
23 manifest itself -- the official -- when you were in
24 first and second year your official bedtime was 9.15,
25 but you went up to your dormitory at 8.45 and the

1 prefect -- it was in his interests to get out so he
2 could go to his common room to watch television, so he
3 wanted you in bed as quickly as possible. And the way
4 to make you got into bed as quickly as possible was to
5 be violent.

6 Q. What would happen then?

7 A. The violence would manifest itself in various ways. In
8 particular, I talk in my statement about something that
9 became known as the "Gray treatment", which was either
10 named after the hockey stick itself or [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED] where you would be held with your legs and
13 arms apart, and the prefect would come from behind and
14 ram the hockey stick as hard as possible between your
15 legs.

16 Q. How would that come about?

17 A. That would come about for what they would regard as
18 cheek or lack of discipline, not doing what you are
19 told, not being in bed fast enough.

20 Q. Did this happen to you?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. How many times do you think that happened to you?

23 A. At least twice.

24 Q. Was it painful?

25 A. Yes, exceptionally painful. I have since discovered

1 I have a varicocele, which the consultant told me is
2 most likely because of the trauma experienced at that
3 time.

4 LADY SMITH: Which end of the hockey stick did they use?

5 A. They used curved end and hammered it up between your
6 legs. But this -- at that period you were also given
7 a choice. There was -- almost a Hobson's choice: you
8 could take the Gray treatment or you could go and see
9 the housemaster to be belted. So there was an element
10 of that.

11 I don't know if you want to talk about that side of
12 the discipline --

13 LADY SMITH: Just a small detail before we come to that: you
14 said Gray might have been named after the hockey stick
15 is that Gray, G-R-A-Y, the hockey stick manufacturer?

16 A. Yes, most of us had a Gray hockey stick. [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED]

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 MS MacLEOD: You have mentioned that happened to yourself on
22 two occasions. Did you also see it happen to other
23 boys, the Gray treatment?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Being sent to your housemaster for punishment, what did

- 1 that involve?
- 2 A. This is the difficulty for me in that I -- I explained
3 this in my statement, that I -- as the son of a
4 policeman, I was acutely aware of discipline and not
5 trying to get into trouble, so I endeavoured never to be
6 belted, and I was never belted as a result. I am aware
7 of others, from the state that they were in when they
8 came back, from their -- so this is my opinion of what
9 took place, not what I witnessed.
- 10 Q. Were you ever sent to your housemaster for punishment?
- 11 A. Yes, but never belted, which led to part of the problems
12 that I had at the school because it was perceived as
13 favouritism.
- 14 Q. So would you then be sent to your housemaster,
15 MFC by the prefect for punishment?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. What would happen when you got to his room?
- 18 A. He would explain to me -- he would explain to me how
19 much trouble I was in. He would make me sit, we would
20 talk about it, and then he would not punish me and
21 explain why he hadn't. But others would be belted -- at
22 the school at that time the punishment would be -- in
23 his study would be up to twice-six of the Lochgelly
24 tawse which he kept in a cupboard behind his desk.
- 25 And if you had been sent to MER it would

1 be twice-six with the Lochgelly tawse or up to six with
2 the cane.

3 Q. Is this something that you heard about from other boys?

4 A. Oh, yes, many times -- and witnessed after they had
5 returned from -- the regular reasons you would be sent
6 there were mainly for talking after lights out in
7 the dormitory, after the lights had been turned out, or
8 pillow fighting or smoking outsides or general acts of
9 indiscipline as it was seen in -- I remember throwing
10 stones in the canal, the Caledonian Canal and that was
11 seen as reason enough to be sent to the housemasters.

12 I remember two boys in particular in my year who had
13 regular visits to [REDACTED] MER [REDACTED] for punishment and the
14 state they would be in when they would come back,
15 clutching their hands having had up to twice-six.

16 Q. Did you see any injuries on any of the boys?

17 A. I saw the welts on their hands. They were in a bad way.
18 They would talk about being caned but I never saw --
19 having been caned on their bare buttocks, but they
20 didn't show those welts.

21 Q. Did boys tell you they had been caned on their bare
22 buttocks --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- by [REDACTED] MER [REDACTED] ?

25 A. Yes. There was also unofficial punishment.

1 **MER** would walk around the school swishing his
2 cane or a fencing foil and use that in the corridors,
3 and then --

4 Q. How would he use that in the corridors?

5 A. Just as a general deterrent for boys loitering -- not
6 an absolute official "bend over and you will get" -- but
7 just to make you aware he was there swishing it as he
8 went.

9 Q. Did you see that?

10 A. Yes, usually in the queue around what they called -- it
11 was the canteen, but they called it the refectory, and
12 then the teachers themselves would employ a series --
13 the lay teachers or the occasional monks who would
14 teach, but mainly the lay teachers, would have their own
15 forms of physical punishment.

16 Q. If we can look then at some of the teachers. You
17 mentioned the teacher, **MIG**

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. How did he discipline children?

20 A. A variety of ways. He would demean and call you names
21 and create names for children that he didn't
22 particularly like. But his physical punishments -- the
23 most notorious was to grab the short hair at the back of
24 your neck or above your ear and haul you up and down off
25 of his bench shouting, "Acceleration", and,

1 "Deceleration", as he did so.

2 Q. Did that happen to you?

3 A. Yes, on -- several occasions.

4 Q. Did you see it happen to other boys?

5 A. Many boys.

6 Q. You mention also a [REDACTED] teacher, [REDACTED] MIF [REDACTED]

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. How did he discipline children?

9 A. Usually, like most of the teachers, with a lot of

10 shouting, but in my case violence on one occasion, where

11 he punched me square in the face when he was driving

12 a minibus. He pulled the car up and punched me square

13 in the face because he didn't like what I was saying and

14 then attacked me when I got off the bus.

15 So I didn't see any kind of violence to anyone else,

16 just on one occasion to me.

17 Q. Were you on a camping trip?

18 A. It wasn't a camping trip it was -- we were visiting

19 [REDACTED] and as part -- he was [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED] the naval cadets, and he had taken us there

21 and we had climbed a hill near my parents' house, but

22 for whatever reason he hadn't let me visit, although we

23 had stopped literally -- absolutely literally -- maybe

24 [REDACTED] from my parents home and he wouldn't even let

25 me briefly visit them, which had left me a little

1 scunnered, I guess, and I had been complaining about it,
2 and we were driving to a hockey game in the evening
3 against a local army team, or against someone -- I have
4 no idea who because I didn't make it there -- and he
5 didn't like what I was saying -- I was sitting directly
6 behind him in the driver's seat -- and he pulled the van
7 in and just punched me in the face and told me to be
8 quiet.

9 Q. Was that in front of other boys?

10 A. That was in front of a -- yes, the entire minibus was
11 filled with pupils.

12 Q. Were you injured?

13 A. My face was sore. There was no blood or damage, but the
14 whole minibus went very quiet, and nobody spoke until we
15 arrived at wherever -- where we were playing hockey.

16 I got out of the bus and I remember I -- I was very much
17 what would be described as a goody two shoes. I never
18 swore because that would have led to punishment. I
19 remember saying, "What the fuck do you think you are
20 doing?" because I thought that was some way of stopping
21 this behaviour.

22 Q. How did he respond?

23 A. The attack continued.

24 Q. What was that attack?

25 A. That was coming towards me and grabbing me. So

1 I remember pushing him away, throwing my hockey stick at
2 him and then walking off -- running off, actually -- and
3 I went up the hill, utterly lost.

4 Q. How old were you?

5 A. Either 15 or 16, 15 or 16.

6 Q. You mention an occasion in your statement where you say
7 that [REDACTED] knocked you over with his car.

8 A. His Land Rover. That was on a camp. We were made to go
9 on occasional camping trips into the hills above
10 Fort Augustus, and I am afraid I'm not a good camper,
11 even today. After a particularly long, arduous journey
12 with a backpack, we were almost at the camp, and [REDACTED]
13 had been -- with his Land Rover to deposit the food and
14 whatever else we needed at the campsite and was
15 returning in his vehicle, and I was walking along, by
16 myself, along the road, the trackway, and whether he
17 meant to or whether he didn't, but he certainly couldn't
18 have not seen that he had done it, he clipped me with
19 his -- the mirror of the Land Rover and knocked me
20 sprawling into the ditch, head over.

21 Q. What happened? Did he stop?

22 A. No, he carried on.

23 Q. Did you raise with this him afterwards?

24 A. Well, it was -- the [REDACTED] teacher, [REDACTED] MIF
25 who was on the -- because he wasn't waiting, he was on

1 his way home in the Land Rover, but I raised with
2 [REDACTED] MIF when I got to the camp and he just told
3 me that it was more of my moaning.

4 Q. I think you say in your statement:

5 "There is no way [REDACTED] MIG didn't know what he had
6 done."

7 A. Absolutely no way. As a driver of many years myself
8 there is no way on earth this man did not know he had
9 just hit a pupil or just hit a person. You would
10 absolutely have heard the -- he caught me and sent me
11 flying.

12 Q. How old were you?

13 A. Again, around about 15.

14 Q. You mention also in relation to [REDACTED] MIG that he would
15 attempt to set fire to your blazer.

16 A. This was something he saw as humour. He would use
17 a mirror, a shaped mirror, and catch the sun's rays.
18 I happily admit I did not understand [REDACTED], he did not
19 make it an easy subject, and I would often daydream and
20 look out the window of his [REDACTED] His way of
21 bringing you back around was the smell of burning from
22 your blazer.

23 Q. You go on to tell us in paragraph 39 of your statement
24 that there was what you call a big scandal in 1998/1999
25 when a new [REDACTED] teacher came on the scene,

1 George Nicholson. Can you tell me what happened then in
2 relation to [REDACTED] MIG ?

3 A. He was a -- he was an older teacher. I think he was
4 probably older than [REDACTED] MIG , so he taught [REDACTED] but
5 he appeared to have a [REDACTED] background. And in
6 particular George Nicholson, I recall him being quite
7 slating of his predecessor, Paul Vallot, who he claimed
8 didn't have any teaching background. So amongst other
9 things, he was bringing in -- George was bringing in
10 [REDACTED] and do actual [REDACTED]
11 where we had never done anything like that before,
12 and -- but he was -- he seemed to be falling out with
13 other teachers, and what I knew about it particularly
14 was a letter to my parents from -- which I have since
15 given -- I think I gave it either to yourselves or to
16 the police, one or the other, but the letter was talking
17 about how he couldn't get equipment for his pupils
18 because it was being hoarded by [REDACTED] MIG

19 Q. So this is a letter that George Nicholson wrote to the
20 parents of the pupils?

21 A. Yes, he must have got -- via the school secretary got
22 hold of every parents' home address.

23 Q. You go on to say that George Nicholson had problems at
24 the school and stopped being a teacher.

25 A. Yes, so when we returned he was no longer there and we

1 had another letter and I think it appeared maybe in
2 the Herald, there was a brief story, and it was also at
3 the point [REDACTED] MRQ [REDACTED] was sacked [REDACTED]
4 and replaced by [REDACTED] MEW [REDACTED].

5 Q. You have provided letters in relation to this to the
6 inquiry. I don't propose to take you to them today but
7 I can give the references for the transcript:
8 WIT.003.001.9442, and WIT.003.001.9447 to 9449.

9 Can we now, Duncan, look at [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] and
10 your relationship with him and how that developed. So
11 you have told me that he was somebody you met on your
12 first day.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. How did things progress from there?

15 A. I think, when I look back in retrospect, he identified
16 very quickly how lonely I was, so I became very quickly
17 his favourite, at least in the eyes of everyone else,
18 and I spent a lot of time in his study, which was on the
19 first floor of the school, en route to the junior
20 dormitory, next to the snooker room. I hadn't realised,
21 again not being familiar with the social structure of
22 how a boarding school operated, I hadn't realised how
23 much this marked me out in the school.

24 Q. How did that start? Did he invite you to his study?
25 How did it come about?

1 A. I would be invited to his study. I could spend break
2 times there, which no other boys did. Eventually one
3 other boy did in my year and he and I would spend some
4 breaks -- me much more so, occasionally. So I have
5 photographs of the two of us that [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] would
6 provide.

7 And I would -- and I joined his archery club and
8 I -- I would get to come to -- these socials were the
9 main reason when you would socialise with one of
10 the monks and you had two a week, one with Anthony and
11 one with [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED], and then he would alternate
12 the years, so you might be -- first and second year
13 would be on one day and third and fourth year would be
14 on another day.

15 Q. Would this be something that would take place in his
16 study --

17 A. In his study. So he would provide -- in your regimented
18 day this official bedtime at 8.45, once your final prep
19 was finished, if you were fortunate enough, you could
20 extend your bedtime by going to a social. So you would
21 go straight to either a tower room where Anthony was or
22 [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED]'s study or [REDACTED] MER [REDACTED]'s study.

23 There would be a toaster and they might provide you with
24 hot chocolate, a cup of tea or a glass of milk.

25 Q. Would there be various socials going on at the same time

- 1 and/or would they be on different evenings?
- 2 A. There would be various ones at different times. As
3 I recall, strangely a Sunday night, I think, was
4 Anthony's and then at various times in the year,
5 whatever day of the week, you would either -- so Lovat
6 house would have theirs over in the west wing of the
7 school where [REDACTED] MER 's study was, or
8 [REDACTED] MFC would have his in the main body of the
9 school in his study.
- 10 Q. Did you ever go to any other social apart from
11 [REDACTED] MFC 's?
- 12 A. I went to Anthony's because Anthony had these extra
13 junior socials.
- 14 Q. If we just look at Anthony's socials briefly, what would
15 happen at Anthony's socials? How many boys would be
16 there?
- 17 A. Not many. It would be first year or second year, so
18 there would only maybe be 13 or 14 -- there was no
19 obligation to go, you were just invited to go, but
20 because the food was so poor at the school, this was
21 an opportunity to feed up on bread, so you go for that
22 purpose. There would almost always be bread or bread
23 and butter in his case -- sometimes he didn't often have
24 peanut butter or Marmite or anything, but his socials
25 were renowned, so he had have a pot of tea and bread,

1 but he would spend maybe half an hour or 40 minutes
2 before just cooking a whole loaf of bread, so that it
3 would be cold toast just sitting waiting for you when
4 you arrived.

5 LADY SMITH: By your time at the school were the first and
6 second years boys who would be 11 and 12 years of age?

7 A. Yes.

8 MS MacLEOD: As well as eating the toast, what else would
9 happen at the social? Can you set the scene what would
10 people be doing?

11 A. Anthony's -- in particular, in that -- his room was on
12 the first floor of the tower and there were lots of old
13 chess sets. So we might play a game of chess or a game
14 of draughts. In MFC s he had a lot of
15 books -- his room was originally -- looking at the
16 architecture it was two rooms knocked through, and so
17 one of those rooms had lots and lots of books and
18 National Geographics and he had card games and board
19 games, so he taught me how to play cribbage or canasta
20 or bezique and various games.

21 Q. Was that at the socials?

22 A. Yes, and he also -- for a while it was my television
23 that was used -- I had a black and white television set
24 which he kept, which he allowed us to watch because as
25 junior boys we weren't allowed to watch television.

1 There was a senior common room that had a television in
2 it but we weren't allowed -- so you would occasionally
3 got to watch something.

4 So I particularly remember watching in his room sumo
5 wrestling.

6 Q. In [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] s room?

7 A. In [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] s room.

8 Q. At [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] 's socials, how many boys would be
9 there?

10 A. It would be the same because these were officially
11 a class social, so again maybe 13, but quite often --
12 well, actually less because some of those would be in
13 Lovat, so there might only be six or seven, but
14 sometimes -- sometimes -- people would come from the
15 other house if they were invited along. The difficulty
16 was always your bedtime was still officially 9.15 so you
17 could end up in trouble with your prefect if you were
18 later than 9.15, so that might lead to more problems for
19 you, and he would occasionally keep you later.

20 Q. [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] ?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So those are occasions that you were in his study with
23 other boys?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How did it come about that you were in his study on your

1 own?

2 A. Most often because I would be escaping from -- as time
3 went on, it became self-perpetuating, I was being
4 bullied at the school because of my friendship with
5 [REDACTED] MFC, therefore the only safe haven was
6 [REDACTED] MFC's study, so the two would just cycle in
7 that way.

8 So I would spend break times -- when all the other
9 boys would be out kicking around a ball or throwing
10 around a rugby ball, I would be up hiding in his study.
11 He --

12 Q. Would he be there too?

13 A. He would be there too, yes. Also during the break time
14 there would be -- Anthony would be operating a tuck shop
15 on the ground floor, but in order to get money you had
16 to get that from your housemaster, so I would go there,
17 when he was operating his bank from his desk, and
18 I would be sitting in the side reading a book or a
19 National Geographic while other boys might be coming in
20 or coming and going and getting money.

21 Q. So other boys would see you were there?

22 A. Yes, and as I talk about it, I would remember
23 discussions about -- with older boys saying, "What the
24 hell were you doing in there again? You shouldn't have
25 been there", and also on the days when we would have

1 archery practice, he would be -- I would go there first
2 because I ended up -- after he left, I ended up teaching
3 archery at the school for the year when I went back and
4 after he had left. So I would be in his room before we
5 went count to the archery shed at the rear of school.

6 Q. How quickly after you started at the school do you think
7 you started going to [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] s study on your
8 own?

9 A. I don't honestly remember when I started. It must have
10 been very, very quickly. I went with -- a friend
11 regularly -- [REDACTED], he and I would go to the
12 study fairly regularly and then [REDACTED] stopped going.

13 Q. Why did he stop going?

14 A. He never -- he never explained why he stopped. I often
15 wonder why he stopped but he -- and he was -- when
16 I returned to the school after my time off he was a very
17 changed young man, but he made a very conscious -- and
18 I were roommates in our second year perhaps, and he was
19 regularly -- regularly would have gone, but then he made
20 a very conscious decision he wasn't going to [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] s
21 study anymore.

22 Q. Did [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] start giving you gifts?

23 A. Yes he gave me many, many, many gifts.

24 Q. When did that start?

25 A. Almost immediately, sweets usually. He -- one of

1 the things that wasn't on the -- you had a very
2 prescribed official list of things you were supposed to
3 bring. You weren't supposed to have many possessions.
4 Obviously wealthier boys had but I certainly didn't but
5 one of the things not on the list was a tuck box, so he
6 very quickly had one made for me by the school
7 carpenter, and he gifted that to me but he encouraged me
8 to keep that in his study.

9 Q. Did other boys keep their tuck box in the dormitory?

10 A. Nobody else kept them in his study; everybody else kept
11 them under his bed, if they had one. But he encouraged
12 me to keep it in his study and then I would go in and he
13 kept keys to the padlock and he would have put sweeties
14 in it, filled it up, because my parents couldn't afford
15 to send me -- and he would also top up the cash -- he
16 occasionally put a pound in the bank for me so I could
17 withdraw some money.

18 Q. Do you remember other physical gifts that he gave you
19 while you were at the school?

20 A. Yes, he gave me -- because when he came and stayed with
21 my parents, he gave me a large silver chain with a gold
22 crucifix on it, a Victorinox penknife, a Swiss Army
23 knife. He gave me a very thick bracelet, which he had
24 engraved with my initials. He -- there was another
25 penknife. Yes, there were regular gifts.

1 Q. You mentioned there visits to your parents; can you tell
2 me -- how did he start making contact with your parents?

3 A. He said -- there were photographs that he would send to
4 my parents. There was regular contact -- when my
5 parents would drop me off, he would speak to them
6 outside his study. One in particular I remember was how
7 angry he was when he was outside his study talking to my
8 parents and one of my classmates was walking back from
9 [REDACTED] MER [REDACTED] s study, gripping his hands, and these
10 were the things that parents were not supposed to see --
11 the boy had just been belted by [REDACTED] MER [REDACTED] -- and he had
12 a relationship with my parents on a level of friendly --
13 they didn't talk about anything difficult.

14 Q. How could you tell he was unhappy about that?

15 A. Because he urged -- sorry, I'm not sure if I'm supposed
16 to mention the lad's name --

17 Q. That's all right.

18 A. He urged [REDACTED] to go past quickly and, "You should
19 be up at your room: go, go". There was a very clear --
20 and it was very obvious to me this was not intended for
21 parental sight.

22 LADY SMITH: Just to reassure you, Duncan: within this room
23 it is okay to mention names which are entitled to
24 anonymity, but I am hoping everyone remembers there is
25 a restriction order preventing them being mentioned

1 outside the room. I don't want to stop the flow of your
2 evidence if it is easier for you to name names.

3 A. Thank you.

4 MS MacLEOD: So he would speak --

5 A. He would speak regularly to my parents. He would call
6 them. He would send them letters. I provided some of
7 the letters to you. I haven't provided them all --

8 Q. Were you aware of this at the time that he was sending
9 things to your parents and phoning your parents?

10 A. I wasn't aware until much more recently about
11 the letters. I also wasn't aware that he had been
12 paying my school fees.

13 Q. We will come on to that.

14 A. So he was making regular contact and calling them,
15 giving them updates, particularly about my homesickness.
16 My reasons -- he would encourage me to come to his room
17 because I was incredibly homesick, crying an awful lot,
18 so he would tell me to come and distract me and read
19 a book, "Come and read the National Geographic", "Let's
20 go and do archery", and I would hear from my dad that
21 [REDACTED] MFC had phoned to say everything was all
22 right after they had left me.

23 Then he came to stay with us -- at that time we were
24 living, when I first started, in the police station in
25 [REDACTED] and he stayed with us there.

- 1 Q. When was the first time he came to stay with you?
- 2 A. I don't remember. It was before my little brother came
3 along, so I must have been about 11 or 12, so it must
4 have been about 1987.
- 5 Q. So quite early on?
- 6 A. Quite early on. And he came to stay with us at the
7 police station.
- 8 Q. Can you tell me about that? What did he do when he was
9 there?
- 10 A. He was -- I was a very late learner to ride a bike, I
11 had very poor balance, and I remember him teaching me
12 that. He definitely saw himself as a father figure in
13 that way, and he would go drinking with my dad. My
14 father has an -- had an alcohol problem and so he would
15 go chumming with my father and take him out drinking,
16 and then come back and, you know, so there was
17 an attempt to be a father figure in that way.
- 18 Q. How do you think your parents perceived him and his role
19 at the time?
- 20 A. The oddity of time, looking back -- my parents were --
21 my father is an atheist, but I guess he would tick the
22 box of being Protestant. My mother was a Sunday school
23 teacher, but a Protestant, but they both saw this
24 individual as a holy man to be respected and he would
25 encourage us all to call him **MFC** or **MFC** when not

1 at school. He particularly encouraged them to call him
2 [REDACTED] MFC and for me to call him [REDACTED] MFC or [REDACTED] MFC.

3 Q. How long did you spend at your home on the first
4 occasion?

5 A. I don't remember. I should have asked my parents. They
6 just don't like talking about it now, so ...

7 The second occasion I remember clearly because we
8 had moved to a different house and he stayed with us for
9 several days, and we went on day trips to Loch Fyne,
10 picked up oysters, he bought them back and introduced my
11 parents to oysters, and malt whisky, going up to the
12 Inverannan -- so he stayed -- by that time I had a baby
13 brother and there are pictures of me holding -- he would
14 later on send me pictures of us together.

15 Q. How did you perceive him at the time and him coming to
16 stay with you?

17 A. There was a growing uneasiness because at school the
18 sexualised language of -- I was very, very naive only
19 child, not particularly understanding -- I had certainly
20 never met a homosexual before. I had never really
21 discussed it before. It hadn't been taught at [REDACTED]
22 Primary School. But there was an almost immediate --
23 I mention in my testimony the humiliation of having
24 songs written about me that were sung out during --
25 before morning assembly, before the headmaster would

1 come, in even after [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] had gone, so I was
2 very aware -- I was becoming very aware of what
3 homosexuality was and I began to wonder if that was what
4 he wanted, but I was very clear about keeping him at a
5 distance. So at these moments where he would undress in
6 front of me or offered to -- sorry, you looked as though
7 you were about to say something -- there were particular
8 occasions where I knew I felt very uncomfortable with
9 him. Prior to archery class he would undress and he
10 would lock his door and strip off his religious robes,
11 right down to just a pair of underpants, and that would
12 take him a very long time. I would try to leave but he
13 would say, "No, no, you stay, stay here", and he would
14 lock -- use the Yale lock to keep me and physically
15 block me from leaving.

16 Q. What would you do?

17 A. I would spend a lot of time picking up books,
18 National Geographics and looking through them in
19 the corner of the room and avoiding his eye contact and
20 just pretend this wasn't happening.

21 Q. How many times do you think this process took place
22 whereby he took his clothes off --

23 A. Many, many, many times. I couldn't put a number on it.

24 Archery was a great relief. It was about the only
25 sport I could do well in my first two years there and

1 I didn't want to lose that, that escape. So this was
2 something that I put up with. He just saw it as
3 natural: he had seen me naked in the showers so why
4 wouldn't I see him when he was getting changed?

5 Q. Did he lock the door on most of these occasions?

6 A. All of these occasions.

7 Q. Did he actually lock the door?

8 A. He physically locked the door. His room had a false
9 door that had been blocked up and which was the second
10 room and then the main door just had a little golden
11 Yale and he would lock that.

12 Q. When he undressed, what clothes did he have left on?

13 A. Just a pair of underpants.

14 Q. Did he ever take his underpants off?

15 A. No, not that I recall, but I -- I was very, very good at
16 focusing wholeheartedly on a book in the corner of the
17 room, until this exercise was over. The other occasion
18 that springs easily to mind is when I was having pains
19 in the testicles, possibly as a result of the Gray
20 treatment -- I can't genuinely connect -- it may have
21 been this growing varicocele -- and he offered to
22 physically examine them for me. When -- and how he had
23 found out about it, because I had about been going to
24 the matron to talk about it, but he somehow knew about
25 it and was offering to examine my testicles for me.

- 1 Q. How did you respond to that?
- 2 A. I declined, "That is absolutely fine, the pain has gone
3 now", or, "I will just put up with it".
- 4 Q. On any of the occasions that you went to his study did
5 he make physical contact with you?
- 6 A. There was a lot of hugging, there was -- I injured
7 myself quite badly -- the school had a dump that was
8 used by the entire village for their refuse, so the
9 villagers would use the low road, not the main driveway,
10 and dump all their rubbish and the groundspeople would
11 occasionally burn some of it and push some of it further
12 into a swamp area. As boys, we would all go rummaging
13 around for anything interesting, and I stood on a nail,
14 and I was hauled up to the school in a wheelbarrow
15 having yanked the nail and the wood off my foot and I
16 was taken up to his study and he was getting me to take
17 off my trousers to bathe the foot.
- 18 Q. Did he bathe the foot?
- 19 A. He bathed the foot and then I was taken up to the
20 village doctor in the village, the doctor at the GP's
21 surgery, who then bandaged it up.
- 22 Q. Can you recall any other occasion where he made physical
23 contact with you?
- 24 A. I remember lots of hugs.
- 25 Q. Can you tell me the hugs how would they come about?

1 A. Usually when I was distressed, crying, upset about some
2 issue or other.

3 Q. In what way would he hug you? What would he do?

4 A. He would put both arms around me and rest his head on
5 top of my head and hold me tight.

6 Q. How often or how regularly do you think that happened?
7 Was it on a weekly basis --

8 A. I was in a lot of fights and a lot of -- so I would
9 imagine fairly regularly.

10 Q. Did he ever make any sexual contact with you?

11 A. Not that I recall. The only thing I mention in my
12 statement -- and I've no idea whether it was him or
13 not -- the only experience that I had at the school
14 that I particularly recall happening to me that came
15 close to what a sexual experience was being ill alone in
16 the dormitory and the monks -- I explain in my statement
17 that you were left pretty much to your own devices,
18 sometimes people would remember to bring you food,
19 sometimes they wouldn't. The matron might occasionally
20 visit you, but I remember being in the dormitory alone
21 while everybody was out at games or at class or
22 something, but there was certainly nobody else there,
23 and I heard the door from the monastery opening, and
24 footsteps coming all the way down the corridor to the
25 cubicle, and I turned and faced the wood panelling in my

1 bed and pretended to be asleep.

2 This -- I presumed it to be a monk -- came into my
3 cubicle, lifted off my bed covers, and stood behind me
4 for what then seemed like an eternity, breathing
5 heavily, and I continued to look at the wall and
6 pretended to be asleep, and the covers were lowered
7 after what felt -- it was probably only a minute or two
8 and then the person retreated back to the monastery
9 again.

10 Q. What were you wearing under the bed covers?

11 A. Pyjamas.

12 Q. Do you know who that was?

13 A. I didn't turn around. I didn't look. I didn't check.
14 I didn't want to acknowledge that I was awake.

15 Q. When you say that you can't recall any sexual contact
16 from [REDACTED] MFC, do you think that is something
17 that could have happened but you have forgotten about?

18 A. I don't think so, no.

19 Q. You mention some letters that you came across in

20 [REDACTED] MFC's study.

21 A. Yes. Lots of times this other lad and I, [REDACTED],
22 would spend time in his study and on one occasion he
23 asked me to clean -- he had a roll-top desk in his part
24 of the room, where he kept his belt and other things and
25 his bank, and in the roll-top desk we took out lots

1 of -- the usual paraphernalia of the 1980s -- there was
2 ink bottles and old ink pens -- and I'm not sure why he
3 asked us to clean out his desk but behind one of
4 the pull-out drawers I discovered at the back a letter,
5 written in lovely copperscript (sic), maybe from the
6 1950s. It was pushed to the back behind one of
7 the pull-out drawers, and I couldn't quite read it, and
8 he took it out of my hands and said, "That is not for
9 you", and then he paced around for a little while, read
10 the letter, and tore it up and put it in his bin, his
11 wastepaper basket.

12 I was a very inquisitive, nosey person --
13 still am -- and I wanted to read it and I remember when
14 he was distracted by something else, I went over and
15 took it out and tried to sort of piece it together.
16 This was one of the rare occasions where he got very
17 angry with me and grabbed it out of my hand and
18 explained it was about allegations of something that had
19 happened in the past, to one of his predecessors -- or,
20 as he described it, it was written to one of his
21 predecessors, not that that person had carried out the
22 abuse, and that they wouldn't want me seeing that and it
23 is not for me and how dare I try and read it, "I have
24 told you not to read it", and he threw it back in the
25 bin again.

- 1 Q. What did you make of that at the time?
- 2 A. If fitted with a growing image of abuse. I probably
3 didn't think too deeply about it beyond something
4 terrible happened to a pupil, but in my mind by another
5 pupil, not by a monk, not by a teacher or a grown-up.
6 I probably put it down to -- this was probably someone
7 who was being bullied and their parents had written
8 about it.
- 9 Q. We have talked about how this relationship with
10 **MFC** developed from quite early on in your
11 time at the school. For how long did it continue?
- 12 A. The entire time at the school that he was there. And --
- 13 Q. Was that your first two academic years --
- 14 A. The first two years --
- 15 Q. -- at the school?
- 16 A. He made it very plain to me when he stayed with us after
17 the first year that he was only extending his time at
18 the school because of me. I remember him telling me
19 this when we visited Helensburgh, when he bought me the
20 Celtic cross. He explained to me that he was only
21 staying there because of me and he had planned to go to
22 **██████████** before then, he said he had planned to go at the
23 end of the 1987 term, but he was staying on for an extra
24 year because he needed to look after me.
- 25 Q. And were your parents there when he said that?

- 1 A. They had just left him and I to wander around the
2 streets. We were looking in jewellery shops in
3 Helensburgh.
- 4 Q. What did you think of that?
- 5 A. There is a confusing issue in retrospect, I think, that
6 I probably thought: here is this father figure that
7 I didn't really have at home, somebody who wanted to
8 look after me, and I tried to put to the back of my mind
9 all of the -- by then, the first year, I had --
10 I remember sitting with one lad in the art class as they
11 worked out on a piece of paper how many different names
12 people had for me at the school and they had over 100.
13 Most of them were connected in some way to
14 **MFC**
- 15 Q. If we look at that now then, how did this name calling
16 and response from other boys develop? When did that
17 start?
- 18 A. It started almost immediately -- in fact it must have
19 started immediately. There are various -- it seemed to
20 be part and parcel of the school philosophy but the
21 reason I raised it just there is because as an adult
22 I tried to look back and compartmentalise what I must
23 have done as a child. I had this father figure and
24 I had to put to the back of my mind I was being accused
25 of having sex with this man, or performing oral sex --

1 that tended to be the usual -- performing oral sex on
2 him. This was a constant discussion and it was written
3 into -- at one point into this song that was played on
4 a piano about me before an assembly.

5 Q. Was that other boys?

6 A. Yes, yes.

7 Q. Were other monks aware of those things being said?

8 A. **MER** was certainly aware of it because we had
9 this discussion after **MFC** left when **MER**
10 became my housemaster. I remember having the discussion
11 with him about how -- I remember explaining to him
12 I didn't think -- because I was homesick and I didn't
13 think I could continue at the school without

14 **MFC** "You are just going to have to, you
15 are going to have to grow up and deal with it, he is not
16 here, he has gone, he got you into a lot of trouble, you
17 spent a lot of time in his study, you shouldn't have
18 been doing that", so **MER** was certainly aware and
19 **MRQ** was as well.

20 I mentioned in my statement some of the worst fights
21 I recall, which then led me to **MRQ**'s study,
22 particularly after a particularly bad fight that
23 happened during -- the boys -- on a Friday night we had
24 to -- was it Friday night or Saturday night? Whatever
25 night it was, we had it practice our singing for church,

1 and I was being attacked by a lad -- a much older lad
2 behind me all through this service and I eventually had
3 enough -- and I had already collected in all of the song
4 sheets and I threw them at him and stormed out the
5 church and then went and hid in the monastery.

6 Q. Was he making comments, the other boy, at this time
7 about [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] ?

8 A. Constant comments about me performing oral sex on
9 [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED]. This became -- I couldn't go to lunch
10 without someone saying words like, "Are you just back
11 from sucking [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED]'s cock?" That would be the usual
12 way it would be discussed.

13 Q. You have mentioned that [REDACTED] MER [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] MRQ [REDACTED]
14 were aware of people saying these things to you.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Did they either of them ask you about these things being
17 said?

18 A. Sorry? Asked me about --

19 Q. Did they raise with you that these things were being
20 said about you?

21 A. Yes, it was -- the usual response was, "Sticks and
22 stones will break your bones ... these are just names,
23 come on grow up, this is just name-calling". Other
24 teachers were aware of it; it wasn't just the
25 housemasters.

1 Q. Did any teacher or monk ask you if there was anything to
2 be concerned about, any truth behind what was being
3 said?

4 A. No. They hinted I was too close Paul Vallot, he --
5 suggested I was too close to the housemaster, on one
6 occasion, to me and to my mother.

7 Q. What did he say?

8 A. He said, "You need to spend more time with the boys and
9 less time -- it is has been noted your son spends too
10 much time with teachers -- with his housemaster he
11 should be spending more time -- he is a bit immature in
12 that way, he needs to grow up". It wasn't ever noted
13 that there is some -- there maybe something problematic,
14 there may be some problematic relationship there.

15 Q. **MRQ** would he have been aware of what was
16 being said to you, that it was being suggested that you
17 were having a sexual relationship with **MFC**?

18 A. In those bald terms perhaps not. There is no way --
19 there is no way that in that small community that they
20 wouldn't have heard -- when I was in tears, going and
21 complaining about behaviour or about something that had
22 just happened, a physical assault or being called
23 names -- I mentioned in my statement there was one
24 senior boy who once told me I had ruined the entire
25 ethos of the school and brought about its downfall

1 because I had broken the system -- by grassing, I had
2 broken this unwritten code because I would go -- I had
3 no -- at 11 years old, if I wasn't the youngest in
4 the school, I was certainly the smallest, and there was
5 nothing I could do when I was being held by the throat
6 by an 18-year-old and thrust up a wall and called these
7 names, being told -- but your direct line of complaint
8 was to [REDACTED] MFC so I couldn't really --
9 I couldn't say to him, oh, by the way I'm here today
10 because I told someone to get lost because they said
11 I was sucking -- so I couldn't explain to him but I am
12 trying to think ... on that occasion where I was being
13 kicked, [REDACTED] MFC was still there but he may not have
14 been at the school at the time, but for whatever reason
15 I ended up in [REDACTED] study.

16 Q. The occasion in church?

17 A. [REDACTED] MER had these discussion after -- the only reason you
18 would go and see [REDACTED] MFC or [REDACTED] MRQ -- sorry, the only
19 reason you would see [REDACTED] MER or [REDACTED] MRQ was if
20 [REDACTED] MFC happened to be away from the school, as
21 he was on occasion, visiting people or do something.

22 Q. You said you wouldn't have said to [REDACTED] MFC
23 directly yourself what people were saying to you.

24 A. No.

25 Q. But would [REDACTED] MFC himself be aware these

1 rumours were going around the school?

2 A. In my opinion there is absolutely no way that he
3 wouldn't know. There is -- when I started at the school
4 there were, I think, 84 or 85 boys, there were about
5 a dozen teachers, less than a dozen staff in total
6 working in the kitchens or in the grounds, and about
7 twenty monks. This was not a big institution. The
8 monks could in theory be split off from the rest but we
9 all knew each other's business from first to sixth year:
10 teachers who had a drink problem, who didn't. We knew
11 everything about everyone in that small institution.

12 LADY SMITH: Given those numbers, how many boys were in your
13 class?

14 A. I think in first year 13.

15 LADY SMITH: Thirteen?

16 A. Thirteen or 14.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18 MS MacLEOD: When MFC did leave the school, how
19 did you find out about that at the time?

20 A. He -- I was aware of -- I wasn't aware of him paying my
21 fees. My parents kept that from me, but as I discovered
22 from the letters afterwards, he was putting enormous
23 pressure on them to tell me that he was paying my fees.
24 So he came and stayed with us and he was planning this
25 big move to , he was going to be staying with his

1 sister first of all, and then he was going to get
2 a parish house and wanted me to visit him. He couldn't
3 pay my fare, but he would put me up the entire time
4 I was there. There were all of these letters begging me
5 to go and visit him in [REDACTED].

6 Q. We will now perhaps look at some of the letters that you
7 provided copies of to the inquiry. These will come on
8 the screen for you. If we can start by looking at
9 WIT.003.001.9427. You will see that part of the letters
10 have been blacked out: that is to protect anonymity.

11 On the first letter here, there doesn't seem to be
12 a date if we go to the top of the letter on the actual
13 letter itself.

14 A. No.

15 Q. But if we go over briefly to the next page, 9426,
16 I don't know if you can see the date stamp there, but it
17 appears to be 1986.

18 A. Indeed, yes.

19 Q. So we can see from that it is some time in 1986, so your
20 first year at the school?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. If we go back to the letter itself at 9427, do you see
23 this is a letter to yourself:

24 "My dear Duncan, I enclose a rare and valuable work
25 of art, a genuine old master. Have a fabulous mid-term.

1 Your invitation gave me great joy and I really feel
2 honoured. One day, please God, I will be able to accept
3 [one] more. Thank you. Yours ever, MFC "

4 A. I think that is not "one more" but "once more",
5 thank you.

6 Q. Is that a letter that he wrote to you quite early on in
7 your time at school?

8 A. Yes, yes. And the old master will be he -- he gave me
9 several photographs of himself -- the police have
10 several of these items which they took from me some
11 years ago when these investigations began. Some of them
12 are younger pictures of himself, when he was a young
13 man. He also -- but I don't know what this refers to
14 because there is another letter somewhere, another
15 mention somewhere, where he sent me -- he me gave me
16 a picture of himself in black and white as a novice,
17 when he was probably in his teens, and a picture of
18 an old withered man and said, "This is what you did to
19 me: you turned me into this, from this to this, a
20 beautiful man to this old man", but I do not know if
21 that is what this particular thing is referring to.

22 Q. The next document is WIT.003.001.9397. Is this a letter
23 which looks to be written from the Abbey on
24 27 December 1986? Would that be around the time of the
25 Christmas of your first year at the school?

- 1 A. That's right.
- 2 Q. Do we see at the top:
- 3 "My dear Duncan ..."
- 4 If we go to the next paragraph do you see he is
- 5 setting out there -- telling you about his own Christmas
- 6 and what he got up to?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. And then he goes on to say:
- 9 "Enjoy your holiday. Talking to you on Christmas
- 10 Day, you sounded utterly [rogue-ish] ..."
- 11 A. That's actually "wog-ish". That's a term he used.
- 12 Regularly he would call me "a little wog".
- 13 Q. "... just made my day complete -- a complete disaster
- 14 that is."
- 15 Do you know what that means?
- 16 A. I don't know what it means. I know he called us on
- 17 Christmas Day, I can remember that. I don't know what
- 18 he would mean by that at all, no.
- 19 Q. He goes on to say:
- 20 "I have not yet got any photos of you ..."
- 21 A. "... and I'm clean out of archery targets."
- 22 Q. And then he goes on over the page to sign off the letter
- 23 saying:
- 24 "Lots of love and God bless. Ever yours, **MFC** "
- 25 A. There was a lot of -- these aren't all -- there are post

1 cards and letters and they are always, "Lots of love",
2 "Best love", "Much love", "Yours ever".

3 Q. Do we see further down that letter, after he signed off,
4 he writes:

5 "Incidentally, thought the two pictures might
6 interest you. One is from August 1986 and the other was
7 taken a few days ago. Shows what three months of
8 looking after Duncan can do to a man."

9 A. Yes, this I presume is the one I was referring to where
10 he sent me two different photographs. Yes, that is --
11 that is all I can account for that. I put these in
12 a photograph album afterwards, which I still have, and
13 the police took the earlier photo.

14 Q. The next document is at WIT.003.001.9401. Do we see
15 from the top of this letter that this is again written
16 from the Abbey, dated 4 January 1987, so the year after
17 the letter at Christmas we have just been looking at.
18 This letter is to your mother, but her name is blanked
19 out to protect her identity. It starts:

20 "I enclose a cutting from a newspaper. You really
21 ought it keep a better eye on that awful son of yours."

22 Then he goes on to speak about various things in the
23 next paragraph. And about four lines from the bottom he
24 says:

25 "I am well. Have enjoyed the rest and break from

1 the boys. To be honest, there is only one I miss."

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Then he signs off "Father MFC on the following page.

4 A. Yes. What became very clear when I discovered these --

5 I had a cache of these letters that I had kept around --

6 I am a historian, I preserve documents, and I gave

7 a large cache of these some years ago to the police.

8 And then I visited -- when I knew I was going to come to

9 the inquiry, I made a deliberate effort to clear my

10 parents -- to clear out their basement because

11 I believed I put a large cache of them down there. Sure

12 enough, I discovered all of these ones. As I read

13 through them a few months ago, it became increasingly

14 clear how much he worked my parents.

15 My father is a letter writer and a diary keeper, but

16 doesn't -- I'm not aware of him. These are mainly

17 letters to my mother. He really he really worked on

18 that relationship.

19 LADY SMITH: As you read these letters now in adulthood,

20 what do you make of the tone and level of maturity of

21 their author?

22 A. To be blunt, from my own work and looking through

23 letters, it is like someone with a crush, it's like

24 a lovesick teenager at times: constantly trying to

25 express that love, the letters and post cards. He --

1 the police have the poem he wrote to me after I stood on
2 the nail. He wrote poetry, typed it out, and even gave
3 it to me. Post-it notes, documents, the constant effort
4 to show me what he was like when he was younger, the
5 constant effort to say, no, look I wasn't always this
6 middle-aged man, here I am as a young virile late teen.

7 LADY SMITH: To be accepted as one of the boys?

8 A. Very much to be accepted as one of the boys. He -- the
9 socials were a big part of that: he wanted to be one --
10 just one of the lads. But he was renowned for his anger
11 and his utter -- utter, utter temper tantrums even -- as
12 your investigations have continued and his name has
13 appeared in the paper or in the newspapers, there was
14 discussions recently on an -- it is actually a public
15 Facebook old boys' site and several boys were
16 reminiscing, something that we all remember -- I'm not
17 in contact really with anybody from Fort Augustus but
18 something when there has been contact or there has been
19 discussions, how he was renowned for going almost purple
20 with rage, and he would fly between these two moods.

21 So you had this man who wanted to play a game of
22 cards with you or play a game with you, and then the
23 next day, or a few hours later, he could be incandescent
24 with anger, throwing hockey sticks at you or screaming
25 or belting you, but still wanting to be the pal.

1 LADY SMITH: Ms MacLeod.

2 MS MacLEOD: The next document is at WIT.003.001.9411. Do
3 we see here a letter which again appears to be sent from
4 the Abbey dated 15 January? There is no year on this
5 letter, but do you see it is to your parents and he
6 starts by saying:

7 "I would like to confirm to you in writing what
8 I said in our phone conversation. The main thing is
9 that Duncan's education here is assured, at least until
10 July."

11 He goes on to make references there to letters your
12 parents have had from the bursar and the headmaster
13 about fees. Did your parents have some difficulties
14 paying the fees at the school?

15 A. Yes, my parents could not afford to send me to private
16 school, there was no doubt at all. My father -- I
17 didn't turn them over -- I didn't see them as pertinent,
18 but my father was very aware of this, acutely aware of
19 this and this caused problems in their marriage. My
20 mother wanted me to go to boarding school. It was her
21 social aspiration to put me there and she was in total
22 denial about this fact. So any source of money would
23 have been clearly very, very welcome and here is this
24 man -- I don't know whether it was arranged through
25 telephone calls or whether it was arranged as

1 a short-term loan, but what I was aware of was that he
2 told me that, I think, a great aunt had died in England
3 somewhere and, amongst other things, she had left some
4 money and she had also left -- he told me it was a piece
5 of furniture, some sort of 18th century bureau, which
6 had been sold and he made it -- I was aware he wasn't
7 allowed to keep this -- as part of the Benedictine Order
8 you don't have personal possessions, you have collective
9 possessions, but what I realised from this letter is
10 that he was diverting that money in lieu of my parents
11 paying their fees.

12 Q. Do we see that towards the bottom of this page, about
13 five lines from the end he says:

14 "If I had not assured bursar and headmaster last
15 summer that my friend would help to pay for the
16 September term, Duncan would not have been here this
17 term at all."

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Then over the page -- I think this is perhaps what you
20 were just referring to -- he says:

21 "Anyway, an old aunt of mine died a week ago. She
22 was 97. She has left me £1,000 and most of the rest of
23 her money to the Abbey. I went to the Abbot and asked
24 if my money and some of the rest could be used to keep
25 a boy at the school whose family were having difficulty

1 with fees."

2 A. Yes. My awareness of this was he maybe had a few more
3 possessions -- he bought himself a very nice camera,
4 for example, with that money and he was -- so he simply
5 starting taking photography. That was when there was an
6 increase of photographs taken of me, for example, that
7 were then sent back to my parents. He eventually gifted
8 that camera to me when he left for [REDACTED] So I was
9 aware he came into money; I was not aware of this until
10 the discovery of these letters.

11 Q. If we move to the final paragraph of that letter he
12 says, do you see:

13 "Among friends there is no question of repayment.
14 I am happy to do this for Duncan. I would like you some
15 time, when you judge the time right, to tell Duncan
16 about this. I shall not say a word to him myself."

17 A. Talking to my mother about it latterly, she explains she
18 became increasingly uncomfortable about the pressure
19 that was brought on her to explain. However, that is in
20 retrospect, given that he did come to stay with us after
21 this, so ...

22 MS MacLEOD: My Lady it is 11.30 am.

23 LADY SMITH: Yes. Duncan, we usually take a break at this
24 stage, so if that is all right with you, we will stop
25 now for about 15 minutes and then I will sit again.

1 (11.30 am)

2 (A short break)

3 LADY SMITH: Duncan, are you ready to carry on?

4 A. Yes.

5 LADY SMITH: Ms MacLeod.

6 MS MacLEOD: My Lady, the next document I would like to put

7 on the screen is WIT.003.001.9413. Do we see this is

8 a letter written from the Abbey dated 5 September with

9 no year on this?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Do you see the letter starts "Dear Blubber-guts"?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Is that something [REDACTED] MFC called you?

14 A. Yes, this would be a way of dealing with the -- my

15 crying, I guess. I can remember he would have a box of

16 tissues and, "Come on, you can't be a blubber-guts",

17 so ...

18 Q. In this letter do you see that [REDACTED] MFC writes:

19 "I just wants to say how much I enjoyed my visit to

20 your home and getting to know your parents better. They

21 could not have been kinder. I felt at home there and

22 that is as high a compliment I could pay. You couldn't

23 have been kinder either or treated me better. Thank you

24 from the bottom of my heart. I'm not looking forward

25 too much to the coming school year, but at least we have

1 each other's friendship to sustain us in the bad
2 times -- and there are lots of good times too."
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. Do you see he signed that off "Yours ever, [REDACTED] MFC" ?
5 A. Yes, it comes back to what we said before the break:
6 this reads like a lovesick teenager to me.
7 Q. Then if we go on to next document at WIT.003.001.9421,
8 again this is a letter to your parents -- their names
9 have been blanked out -- dated 2 October. There is no
10 year on this document. Do you see that?
11 A. Yes.
12 Q. In this letter [REDACTED] MFC appears to write:
13 "A few photos of the monster."
14 Is that you?
15 A. It could be me or it could be my little brother.
16 Q. I see:
17 "Hope you are both well. Duncan is fine and so
18 am I in spite of the ..."
19 A. "Awsome".
20 Q. "... awesome burden of looking after him."
21 A. Yes.
22 Q. So --
23 LADY SMITH: What is the reference to sales?
24 A. I would imagine it was -- my mother briefly, although
25 she gave it up roughly at the point where I started at

1 the school, or maybe not long afterwards, she had
2 a little craft shop and I think it may be reference to
3 that.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5 MS MacLEOD: Do we see here that [REDACTED] MFC is making
6 it clear to your parents that he is looking after you at
7 the school?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. If we go over to the next document at WIT.003.001.9417,
10 do you see that it is a letter again written on Abbey
11 notepaper, dated 4 November, and if we go just forward
12 a couple of pages to 9419, I think we can get a year for
13 this by looking at the post stamp.

14 A. Yes, October 1987.

15 Q. If we go back to 9417, do we see the letter says -- it
16 is addressed to your mother and he begins by saying:

17 "First, let me express my warm thanks for your
18 recent hospitality and the kindness which you have
19 extended to me."

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And then over the page on to 9418, about four lines in
22 does he write:

23 "What you don't perhaps realise is the resentment
24 towards Duncan by other boys and other staff members
25 because this coming back late occurs on a regular basis

1 and that really bothers me."

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you recall anything about that?

4 A. Yes. Because of my desire not to go back to the school

5 I would work on my dad to -- so that we didn't go back,

6 so if I was home for a mid-term break, I would try and

7 extend the mid-term break as much as I could so they

8 wouldn't take me back and then eventually -- so I was

9 effectively bunking off school or stretching it out as

10 along as I could.

11 Q. When you did go back, were there occasions when you

12 wouldn't come out of the car?

13 A. Yes, I can recall one -- because it was about

14 100 miles -- just before I go further, I am aware of my

15 anonymity, but you haven't redacted my parents'

16 address --

17 Q. I did notice that.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you for picking that up. I am very

19 sorry; we should have done. It will be redacted after

20 today.

21 If anybody has noticed it, please forget it and do

22 not repeat it outside this room.

23 A. Thank you.

24 LADY SMITH: Sorry about that.

25 A. That's all right.

1 So I recall in particular one occasion where I had
2 come back -- it is about 100-and-something miles, maybe
3 115 miles, so it was a long journey up the A82 to
4 Fort Augustus. We would always arrive very late and my
5 dad would probably deliberately leave it late so he
6 would spend as much time with me not at school.

7 I remember arriving and holding on to the car seat
8 and refusing to get out and screaming and crying and my
9 mother going in to get [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] to persuade me
10 to come out of the car, how it was for my own good, and
11 my dad saying, "Look, you don't have to be here if you
12 don't want to be here, just tell me and you can go
13 home," and my mother insisting I had to stay.

14 Q. How old do you think you were about that time?

15 A. About 11 or 12, certainly early on, certainly no older
16 than 13. I remember that very, very clearly: parked by
17 the school tower in the darkness and just tears rolling
18 down my face, crying, not wanting to come into the
19 school.

20 Q. If we go to the next paragraph of that letter at
21 page 9418, do we see that [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] again there
22 is discussing fees and communications that he says he
23 has had with the bursar and that he goes on to say he
24 has paid £550 towards your fees.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. If we move on then to the final letter in this series at
2 WIT.003.001.9415, do we see this is a letter on Abbey
3 notepaper, again dated 17 November, and this is a letter
4 to your mother? Her name has been blanked out. Here
5 MFC appears to write:

6 "Would you please send me the little cross I bought
7 for Duncan's Christmas."

8 A. Yes. He bought me a gold Celtic cross pendant in
9 a jeweller's in Helensburgh, but it didn't come with
10 a chain so he then bought a very -- a thick silver chain
11 for me to wear with it.

12 Q. If we go to the foot of that page, do we see that he is
13 saying:

14 "Duncan has tried to phone several times and
15 unsuccessfully. Either you weren't in or too many boys
16 were waiting for the phone."

17 A. Yes, there was a real problem with trying to communicate
18 out of the school. There was one telephone for the
19 whole school to use and we only had the break times,
20 which were about 15 minutes, to use them. You couldn't
21 use them after your last study. You had the hour when
22 you were supposed to be eating dinner and you would all
23 be queueing up for this one call. If anybody called in
24 on the line, they could stay on the phone as long as
25 they could, and if a parent called in, you were

1 supposed -- in theory you would go and get the boy from
2 wherever they might be, but in reality most people
3 didn't do that because they were waiting on a phone call
4 or waiting to use the telephone themselves.

5 Q. Did [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] continue to write to you once he
6 had moved to [REDACTED]?

7 A. He did. He would send -- he sent lots of post cards, he
8 sent photographs, numerous photographs of him where he
9 was staying of carnivals in the town, in [REDACTED], of both
10 his sister's property and his own, including one fairly
11 odd photograph of him just wearing a pair of shorts,
12 sunbathing with nothing else but a pair of shorts on,
13 outside -- I think it was his sister's property. And
14 also pictures of the parish house, I think, where he was
15 staying, and inducing me, encouraging me to -- if
16 I could rob a bank and come and stay with him he would
17 look after me and put me up.

18 Q. So you have provided copies of some of these letters to
19 the inquiry. I just want to look at a couple of those
20 with you, if that's all right. The first one is
21 WIT.003.001.9403. This letter reads:

22 "My dear Duncan, the first letter goes to you
23 because you are most in my thoughts and prayers."

24 Do you see that?

25 A. I do, yes.

1 Q. To get a date for this letter, can we turn over to the
2 next page, 9404. Can you see that on the envelope, just
3 above the air mail symbol, that there is a date of
4 26 July 1988?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is that just shortly after [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] went to
7 [REDACTED]?

8 A. That would be about right, yes.

9 Q. Do we then see, going back to the letter itself at 9403,
10 again does he mention there in the first paragraph:

11 "I enjoyed my visit to your house. Everyone was so
12 kind, even you. I was happy that you [underlined] were
13 there to see me off and make sure I went."

14 A. Yes my father and I drove him to Prestwick Airport to
15 see him off. He stayed with us just before he left,
16 yes. So we were there. I remember being in the upper
17 lounge and watching his plane fly off.

18 Q. If we go to the second page of the document, to the end
19 of the letter, at 9404 -- perhaps we can rotate that --
20 in the final paragraph does he say:

21 "Please write soon. I miss you terribly even though
22 you are rotten and" --

23 LADY SMITH: Are we looking for 9404? We are back to the
24 page we had before.

25 MS MacLEOD: It is that page there, just the final

1 paragraph:

2 "Please write soon. I miss you terribly even though
3 you are rotten and ..."

4 A. "... and an utter wimp and reject."

5 The "reject" was something he would constantly -- it
6 was a way of denigrating, to be familiar, "Oh, you're
7 a reject, you're a reject". That was something --

8 Q. Something he would say to you?

9 A. Yes, regularly.

10 Q. "I love you very much and your friendship means
11 everything to me. Maybe your mum will tell you what
12 I did for you last year."

13 A. Yes. I presume that is a reference to his paying my
14 fees.

15 Q. "Take care and God bless. Your friend forever, MFC "

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Do you remember receiving this letter?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What did you think at the time?

20 A. It's all part of the increasingly uncomfortable
21 relationship that I had. I was aware it was
22 uncomfortable I was aware there was -- here is
23 an individual that perhaps wanted to be more than
24 a friend, I probably tried to rationalise it as a child,
25 with the poor relationship I had with my own father,

1 here was somebody who wanted to be a father figure.
2 However, anything else wasn't something that I wanted.
3 I don't know what else you have here. I genuinely
4 don't remember what the police have, but they -- the
5 letters continued, the emails, the birthday cards, all
6 hinting at "Why are you not writing to me? Write to me.
7 You must write to me. I can't believe you have not
8 written to me". And they are increasingly fraught
9 because I didn't write back to him. I think I wrote one
10 letter back to him.

11 LADY SMITH: I see "Summer '88", so you would be over
12 13 years by that age?

13 A. Yes, [REDACTED] --

14 LADY SMITH: 1975 was your birth date so you would be about
15 13 at the time of this.

16 A. Yes.

17 MS MacLEOD: The next letter is at WIT.003.001.9405. Do we
18 see this is a letter sent from [REDACTED] dated
19 26 October 1988?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. "My dear Duncan ..."

22 And he begins by telling you he is well and gives
23 some details about what he has been doing and his parish
24 work.

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Do you see, just before the final paragraph:
- 2 "I did my first baptism the other day for over
- 3 30 years, but there is nothing exciting happening. How
- 4 are you? I am really disappointed that I have not yet
- 5 heard from you and maybe a letter is winging its way
- 6 towards me as I write at this moment. I live in hope.
- 7 I am just dying to know what school you are going to and
- 8 what it is like and if you have made some friends and
- 9 whether you still have to play rugby."
- 10 A. Yes. Before you go further, I have identified my little
- 11 brother there and left his name unredacted in that
- 12 previous letter.
- 13 LADY SMITH: I did notice that as well, Duncan. It might
- 14 have been the name of a pet, but don't worry about it;
- 15 we will take it out. Again, that name cannot be
- 16 repeated. You are absolutely right to be as cautious as
- 17 you like as far as names are concerned.
- 18 A. Thank you.
- 19 MS MacLEOD: Further on in that second page, he confirms he
- 20 has enclosed some photographs for you and then at the
- 21 very last line of the letter:
- 22 "Please do write like a good friend should."
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. And he signs off, "Lots of love **MFC**", and there are
- 25 some kisses.

1 A. Yes.

2 LADY SMITH: At this stage there was talk of you going to
3 another school I take it; is that right?

4 A. My parents -- quite obviously their money had long since
5 run out, they had attempted to -- he has gone, so there
6 is no extra cash coming in. I think they tried to --
7 this was in the early stage of credit cards and that
8 didn't work. So I suspect they just told him and the
9 school I was going to another school. In actual fact
10 I didn't; I stayed at home.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 A. I wouldn't be wanting to -- part of the reason
13 I wouldn't have written to him wasn't necessarily about
14 being uncomfortable, I wouldn't want to respond because
15 I wasn't at school, I was hiding the fact I wasn't at
16 any school at the age of 13.

17 LADY SMITH: That is well understandable.

18 MS MacLEOD: We see on the letter that we have just looked
19 at that [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] put kisses at the end of that
20 letter. I just want to ask you this: did

21 [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED] ever kiss you at the school?

22 A. No, not that I recall. No.

23 LADY SMITH: What about when he was hugging you, did he kiss
24 on the top of the head?

25 A. Yes -- well, not -- a memory that sticks in mind --

1 I remember him resting his head on my head but I don't
2 remember a smooch noise or ...

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

4 MS MacLEOD: The next document is WIT.003.001.9407.

5 LADY SMITH: I think we have already been to this document,
6 Ms MacLeod.

7 MS MacLEOD: 9407. Do we see this is a letter dated
8 18 March 1989, again written from [REDACTED]?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Does this start:

11 "My dear Slime-face ..."

12 A. It does.

13 Q. "I hope you are unwell and in bed with botulism and
14 swine flu. Again, as you can see, I am in good form and
15 happy to be so far away from your ugly features and bad
16 temper. The only good thing about life here is that
17 I don't have to speak to you and have you coming into my
18 room all the time, so I am thinking of staying.
19 In fact, I may have told you in one of my million
20 letters I have applied for another three years. I have
21 to get permission from the abbot. The archbishop here
22 is happy with my service and I cannot think why. He
23 doesn't know me very well as yet."

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What was your understanding from this at the time? Can

1 you remember what your thoughts were?

2 A. About the content of the letter?

3 Q. Yes, this kind of --

4 A. As I recall in my time off before I went -- returned to
5 school again, contact with him was fairly frequent, in
6 post card form, letters -- I don't know if I have all of
7 them because, as I say, these only survived in my
8 parents' basement just by sheer chance. This is --
9 a sort of standard chastisement from him for not
10 communicating with him. And I wasn't writing -- I was
11 still not a terribly good letter-writer, but I had
12 effectively cut off contact by this stage with him.

13 Q. Do we see there the next line he says:

14 "Truly, as you might just know, the only bad thing
15 about life here is that you are so far away."

16 A. Yes, and then adding:

17 "... and I miss you not coming into my room all the
18 time and I miss your company and I miss your toad-like
19 dial."

20 That was another name he would call me:

21 "And most of all I miss you. You always cheered me
22 up and made life great."

23 These were the sort of discussion you would have
24 with him.

25 But this is the hard part as a child I tried to

1 balance and in particular I gave you testimony about the
2 drowning experience that I had at school, where I was
3 being --

4 LADY SMITH: This was when you couldn't swim?

5 A. I still can't swim, but there was an outdoor swimming
6 pool -- I don't know if your inquiry has so far shown --
7 I gave you an overhead shot.

8 LADY SMITH: We have heard about the pool, yes.

9 A. The pool was slightly away from the building, and at the
10 end of the year, the only time you ever had an external
11 person that came to Fort Augustus that I am aware of was
12 -- a member of the military would come in and inspect
13 the cadet force and this person came to -- there would
14 be -- the army and navy cadets would be inspected and it
15 could be from the navy or from the army. Again, this is
16 the first time I had experienced this annual inspection,
17 and at the end of it the head boy was thrown into the
18 swimming pool and lots of boys have gathered and some of
19 these boys who had a bit of an axe to grind with me saw
20 me nearby laughing at this spectacle and grabbed me and
21 stripped me down to my underwear, which sadly was
22 a little bit holey and a bit patchy and I had a rather
23 large hole in my Y-fronts, which -- I well recall the
24 gathered crowd explaining this was where
25 MFC inserted his penis. They then held me

1 over the pool and starting dipping me in and out of the
2 pool, and I was begging, crying ...

3 LADY SMITH: Duncan, it must have been ghastly.

4 A. It was a fairly unpleasant place, but the long and short
5 of that experience was, after being thrown in, one of
6 these individuals jumped in and stood on me under the
7 water at the bottom, and all I particularly recall is
8 staring up at the -- this figure, this individual who
9 was in perhaps third or fourth year -- I remember him
10 very clearly -- who knows what his problem really was --
11 laughing as he held me and then the head boy, who had
12 been in the pool, came to my rescue and punched this boy
13 and hauled him off, hauled me out, put me on my stomach,
14 had me spluttering out water, having started to black
15 out at the bottom of this pool. Then I gathered up my
16 clothes, shouted something, and went back in my holey,
17 wet underwear, back to the school tower, running
18 across -- and saw MFC staring.

19 He had watched this whole spectacle. I went running
20 past him, "I can't believe you didn't stop that".

21 I don't think he said anything at that point, but later
22 when he was comforting me in his room, he was explaining
23 he couldn't intervene in all of these things, I had to
24 be a grown-up, I had to be -- I had to stand on your own
25 two feet and if he interfered in everything that

1 happened, that would only make life worse for me.

2 I had to balance this with this constant profession
3 of love, "I love you, I want to spend this time with
4 you, you are a bit of wog, aren't you, a bit of a toad,
5 a toad-face, slime-face?"

6 LADY SMITH: How old were you at the time of the swimming
7 pool incident?

8 A. Twelve.

9 LADY SMITH: Were there any staff around supervising?

10 A. That was the interesting thing about the school: there
11 was no real supervision in the school. Occasionally
12 someone like MFA would be out and about --

13 LADY SMITH: At the swimming pool there was nobody?

14 A. Nobody.

15 LADY SMITH: Had anyone checked whether all the boys could
16 swim or not?

17 A. No, no. We are talking about the swimming pool. The
18 loch was right beside us as well and as naval cadets,
19 you were continually thrown in there, sometimes with the
20 benefit of a life jacket, sometimes not. So I was out
21 many a time in the cutter without a life jacket, so I am
22 afraid for me that has led to a -- as a result of this
23 inquiry, I discovered that I have complex PTSD, and one
24 of my triggers is chlorine from swimming pools, so for
25 my own son it has been ... slightly problematic anyway.

1 would express -- he would tell me in no uncertain terms
2 why he continued to stay, that he had planned to leave
3 at the end of my first year, at the end of -- the 1987
4 summer term, and he had stayed on and he explained to me
5 he did that because of a growing affection he had for me
6 and he wanted to look after and care for me as I needed
7 to be cared for.

8 Q. You mentioned earlier occasions when you were sent to
9 his room for punishment and he didn't punish you --

10 A. He would explain how disappointed he was in me but he
11 couldn't bring himself -- if had been other boys, he
12 would have belted them but -- I explained in my
13 testimony he made sure I understood. I didn't mention
14 this earlier but he kept a stick on the mantelpiece of
15 this boarded-up fire in his study, next to his desk,
16 which he explained he had broken over a boy's -- when he
17 was hitting him, but he kept it because it was a very
18 nice stick. It had -- an egg in a hand as the pommel of
19 the stick, and he kept it because of that and there were
20 bits of glue on it where he tried to glue it back
21 together when it had broken --

22 Q. Was it your understanding it was a stick he had used to
23 punish a boy?

24 A. Everybody told me it was. He used it -- I wasn't clear.
25 He had also explained the reason he had stopped caning

1 was he put a boy in hospital, a boy had had to go to
2 Raigmore he claimed. I have no idea of the veracity of
3 this, but that is certainly what he told me. By way of
4 mitigation he explained to me this was because he --
5 they had -- the boy had a medical condition that the
6 skin around his buttocks was too thin.

7 LADY SMITH: When you say "Raigmore", I take it you mean
8 Raigmore Hospital in Inverness?

9 A. Yes, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

10 MS MacLEOD: We can now look at another document:

11 WIT.003.001.9409. Do you see this is again written from
12 [REDACTED] dated 22 May 1989, so coming up for a year after
13 he had moved to [REDACTED]?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Do we see here he says:

16 "My dear Duncan, this may be the last time you hear
17 from me. I have written so often and have just one
18 letter in reply."

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And then down towards maybe four lines from the bottom
21 of the page he says:

22 "Anyway, I shall never forget you and shall always
23 keep you in my prayers. You will no doubt find other
24 good friends, but will never have a friend who loves you
25 more than I do."

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Do we also see in that letter he mentions that he is
3 coming to Scotland and trying to make plans to meet you?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Did you meet him at any time when he returned from
6 Scotland?
- 7 A. I don't recall. I really don't recall. The visits --
8 I'm afraid -- I have such good recall of mainly negative
9 things from childhood but I don't recall meeting -- if
10 we did or if he did come and stay with us if he did
11 return.
- 12 Q. Finally, if we look at WIT.003.001.9401, we see that
13 this is a letter from [REDACTED], again dated 4 June 1990,
14 this is a letter to your mother; her name has been
15 redacted. Do we see about four lines down that he is
16 saying:
- 17 "I look forward to hearing from him [ie you] to get
18 all the news. I am not sure why you said on the phone
19 that Duncan was writing to me. It is just so unlikely
20 but I live in hope we are still friends and that he
21 still thinks of me. I remember him daily."
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Were you aware he was writing to your parents from
24 [REDACTED] as well as to yourself?
- 25 A. I was aware. My parents were going through a difficult

1 period in their marriage. They were writing to him at
2 that time, but there was a problem in the letters that
3 they had written, confused communication. I wasn't
4 really aware of this until -- this particular letter
5 until I discovered it recently, I think I just -- when
6 I buried -- effectively buried these in the basement
7 30 years ago, I gathered any paperwork around the house
8 I recognised -- he has very distinct handwriting that
9 I always recognise and so it wasn't until I discovered
10 these a few months ago that I was aware of this
11 particular letter. But it certainly fits with
12 everything else. I can remember my mother saying, "Oh
13 you must write, you must write to Father [REDACTED] MFC", and me
14 not writing to him.

15 Q. So there came a time -- I think we have touched on it
16 there -- that you left Fort Augustus, is that right, in
17 around [REDACTED] after [REDACTED] MFC had left, so
18 [REDACTED] 1989?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Did that come about because of fees hadn't been paid?

21 A. Yes, my parents simply could not afford -- I had long
22 exhausted -- my parents were on the verge of bankruptcy
23 and this -- well, at various times sheriff's officers
24 visited, so we were at the end of the road.

25 Q. Did you then spend around a year not going to the Abbey

1 School?

2 A. That's correct.

3 Q. Did you go to any other school during that time?

4 A. I did not, no.

5 Q. When you returned to the Abbey School, I think we said
6 that was in [REDACTED] 1990.

7 A. I was thinking about that and I'm not sure that is
8 actually correct because I tried to go back on occasion
9 and I think that is -- that refers to -- my father drove
10 us all the way up -- and I do mention that in my
11 testimony, I just didn't know the exact date -- and that
12 was probably in [REDACTED].

13 Q. So you were brought back up by your father and did he
14 ask the school to take you back?

15 A. To take me back and he brought a collection of credit
16 cards and various things to try and pay for a term's
17 fees but the bursar rejected it, so we drove home,
18 and I found out when I did return at the beginning of
19 the following term that I had appeared on the school
20 rolls because I remember the geography teacher pointing
21 out, "Oh, we didn't know whether you were coming, your
22 name appeared ..." and told me my name -- you were
23 always referred to by your surname and your name had
24 appeared on the school roll the last time and I think
25 that is what that record refers to.

1 Q. So do you think it was actually [REDACTED] 1990 then that
2 you actually went back to the school?

3 A. I think it was, yes.

4 Q. For your final year?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You tell us you noticed quite a lot of changes in
7 the school and the regime when you went back. Could you
8 just tell me what you noticed those changes to be?

9 A. It was an utterly different school. The number -- the
10 roll had fallen to perhaps about 63 or 64 boys. We had
11 all moved out of dormitories. When I had started at the
12 school first and second year were in the junior dorm,
13 third and fourth were in the senior dorm, fifth year had
14 shared rooms along a corridor in the one of the wings,
15 I think the west wing, and the sixth formers had their
16 own studies, individual studies, in the east wing. When
17 I returned to the school the dormitories had all closed
18 and they had -- since the mid-80s they had been trying
19 to raise cash. I can't remember if I gave it to your
20 inquiry, but there was a prospectus to raise cash from
21 all the boys and other things and they finally managed
22 to do up a monastery wing that wasn't being used any
23 longer, the "hospice wing" as it was called, and this
24 had more state-of-the-art studies. So almost the entire
25 school, apart from the sixth formers, were now moved

1 into various floors in that school. They brought in
2 a lay housemaster, certainly for the whole time during
3 my time, and he came and went, so the house structure
4 had changed. The nature -- because there was no longer
5 corporal punishment, we weren't being belted or caned
6 officially, that much had changed. There was much
7 chagrin from lay teachers who thought that discipline
8 had gone to hell and would tell us so. So there was
9 more -- instead of physical chastisement there was
10 physical punishment. [REDACTED] MER [REDACTED] would have you
11 kneeling all through the night, or it felt like through
12 the night, into the small hours holding books aloft in
13 the library.

14 Q. Did that happen to you?

15 A. Only once and only briefly, when [REDACTED] and I had
16 been caught talking. There was one -- after lights out.
17 But that was actually before -- that was after -- that
18 was before I had gone away, that was -- because corporal
19 punishment was done away with just before -- at the end
20 of my first year I think before my second year. As
21 I understood it, it was only -- the school only got rid
22 of it because, under the Thatcher government it
23 became -- as I understood it although I have never
24 investigated this, but it is my understanding you could
25 no longer get assisted places if you continued with

1 corporal punishment. That may have been the case. That
2 is how it was explained to us --

3 LADY SMITH: I don't think that was the condition, but the
4 assisted places scheme stopped itself.

5 A. I don't know --

6 LADY SMITH: It wasn't on condition of --

7 A. As I understood it from MRQ it was explained
8 that corporal punishment could continue in private
9 schools but you would no longer have access to the
10 assisted place scheme. Whether that was true or not,
11 that was certainly the boys' understanding. We couldn't
12 really understand why they decided to stop belting us
13 halfway through but they certainly did stop belting us
14 around about 1988.

15 MS MacLEOD: What about the bullying that you have told us
16 you experienced so much of it in the earlier period you
17 were in the school. How was that for you on your return
18 in 1990?

19 A. I was bigger. I was 15, I was -- 15/16, so I had bulked
20 out. Instead of being the small weedy 11/12 year old
21 who despised rugby I now had this determination to be
22 a part of it. So increasingly the numbers of
23 individuals who had bullied me who were 18/19 in some
24 cases when I was 11/12, they had all gone. There had
25 been quite a fresh intake of pupils who hadn't

1 experienced corporal punishment, so there wasn't --
2 I didn't -- I mentioned it in my written testimony, the
3 seniority system, as they called it there -- I think in
4 the English public school system they call it "fagging"
5 but in this school they called it "seniority", that had
6 lessened as much. There was much more freedom so people
7 didn't seem quite as angry as they were. There was
8 still a great deal of fighting. In those first two
9 years I genuinely don't think there was possibly a week
10 or even a fortnight that would go by where I wasn't in
11 the basement having a bare knuckle fist fight organised
12 ostensibly by the older boys.

13 Q. Would you be asked to come down to do that?

14 A. Or dragged down if you refused, and it would be for some
15 slight or other that had been perceived by an older boy
16 usually and then it was, "Right, that's it, down the
17 basement". This almost always took place around about
18 6.30 of an evening and, Lord of the Flies style, this is
19 I presume an outlet for these boys; bare knuckle
20 fighting, surrounded by boys from the school, lots of
21 the older prefects, the ones who are supposed to be
22 maintaining discipline, watching.

23 But that didn't seem to happen by the time I came
24 back in the 1990s, mainly because we were occupying
25 a different part of the school. Much of the trouble,

1 much of the fraught anger and behaviour quite often
2 centred around the study hall in particular and we -- we
3 weren't using -- we were kept to our studies by the late
4 1980s -- or in the 1990s we had desks in our studies,
5 which we didn't have then.

6 Q. Was there a time where you contemplated taking your own
7 life?

8 A. There was. The only time in my entire life. I think it
9 was at this point -- my parents were not in a good
10 place, I was not in a good place in the school, I don't
11 know what was the circumstance that pushed me over the
12 edge. It may well have been -- I had been in a fright
13 and I had had a tooth knocked out.

14 Q. Your front tooth?

15 A. My front tooth. I had -- so there was some -- while
16 I say it was improved, it wasn't that improved but you
17 didn't leave the school building. Sixth formers were
18 known to leave the school to go and meet village girls,
19 or for whatever reason, smoke, drink, but you didn't
20 leave the school building and I chose to and I went down
21 and sat -- I don't know how well you have discussed
22 grounds of Fort Augustus, but the pier is a few hundred
23 metres away from the school, it reaches out into the
24 bottom -- the southern shore of Loch Ness and within
25 four or five feet, or less in places, from the edge of

1 the pier there is an immediate 300-foot drop. It is one
2 of the deepest parts of the loch.

3 I ably recall sitting, contemplating how easy it
4 would be just to jump in and slip away. The only thing
5 that stopped me was [REDACTED] MFA, on his many
6 perambulations had seen me -- the monks' garden is not
7 now separated because the school obviously has closed
8 but the monks' garden was separated from areas that the
9 boys would go by a wall and a gate and the monks
10 didn't -- they would have a wander down by the shore
11 side beyond that. But whether he had been wandering out
12 there and seen me and was wondering why I was out late
13 in the evening, wondering what I was doing out at the
14 end of the pier. But he came over and talked to me.

15 I don't -- have a great deal of a -- I don't have
16 a memory of the discussion other than, "Chin up, back to
17 the school, what are you doing out here? You will get
18 in trouble for being out here".

19 Q. Did you go back?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. There came a time when you left Fort Augustus Abbey and
22 I think you tell us that you -- did you go to a local
23 school?

24 A. I did. Eventually I had some more time off school
25 afterwards, sadly. There was a contemplation for me to

1 go to live with my grandparents on Islay and go to
2 school there, but then I went to the school I should
3 have gone to after primary school.

4 Q. And then on to Glasgow University?

5 A. I did.

6 Q. Did you meet your wife there?

7 A. I did.

8 Q. Did you then spend tomorrow time working in pubs and
9 running pubs?

10 A. Yes, I did for over a decade.

11 Q. You have told us you are a historian.

12 A. Yes, I completed a PhD very recently.

13 Q. Do you often think about your time at Fort Augustus?

14 A. Sadly I do, yes. It is something that has -- has stayed
15 with me for 30-plus years. It is not something --
16 I have suffered for many years since childhood with
17 night terrors, something my wife has very kindly put up
18 with, so that is where it tends to come back to you. It
19 comes back to you in the wee small hours and it doesn't
20 leave and sadly -- not sadly, because I decided to give
21 evidence to yourselves, but with the help of [REDACTED] here,
22 she suggested I seek professional help for the first
23 time, and I recently very recently had a diagnosis of
24 complex post-traumatic stress disorder.

25 Q. In relation to the impact you feel your experience has

1 had on you, you set out some details of that for us in
2 paragraph 112 of your statement onwards. You say that
3 you feel you spend a lot of time putting on an act.

4 A. Yes. I -- I had genuinely had no idea -- it is not
5 something that I had ever looked into. PTSD is
6 something people experience who have far more traumatic
7 experiences than I had, far more traumatic experiences
8 than I had. I wasn't aware -- my wife has always
9 described it as risk assessment, I guess. I sit in
10 the corners of rooms and scan for trouble. I am always
11 looking for body language, as I have done since I have
12 walked into this room, and been looking at everybody
13 within my eyeline to see how they are behaving, how they
14 look, their body language. It's just something I have
15 done for a very long time. So, yes, it has had
16 an effect in that way.

17 Q. I think you tell us that you feel like you haven't slept
18 properly for 30 years.

19 A. I don't feel -- I know I haven't slept properly for
20 30 years. I don't get through a night without
21 something -- not always night terrors, not always
22 screaming or shouting. Mercifully they reduce because
23 of this diagnosis. For the first time I have had
24 a small batch of -- just discussions with a counsellor
25 and I'm hoping that will work towards the reduction of

1 these uncontrollable parts of life, that -- you can
2 subvert and compartmentalise the sad stories while you
3 are conscious; it's the unconscious that I struggle
4 with.

5 My main motivation isn't even so much the dealing
6 with the unconscious, because I can put on a good act --
7 we can all put on a good act, that is how we get through
8 life. My main motivation is I don't pass on any of this
9 to my 11-year-old son. I am determined these anxieties
10 will not be multi-generational.

11 Q. You mention trust issues as well and that you have
12 difficulties trusting people, particularly in relation
13 to your son perhaps.

14 A. I ... (Pause). Yes, I certainly do have issues when it
15 comes to entrusting my son to others. Schools don't --
16 this is the odd -- it wasn't until I contacted
17 your Ladyship that I even heard the idea that I had been
18 in care. There was not care at Fort Augustus. The idea
19 of entrusting my son into someone else's care,
20 particularly overnight, is something that I ... I very
21 much struggle with.

22 Q. You tell us in your statement, Duncan, that you spoke to
23 the police, is that right, I think in about 2014?

24 A. Yes [REDACTED]

25 [REDACTED]. I had a couple of

1 meetings with a CID officer who came and took some
2 statements and took away a deal of material that I then
3 had to hand about my time at Fort Augustus: documents,
4 report cards. I mean, I am a magpie, I keep particular
5 documentation so I had report cards from my time at
6 school and things to do with [REDACTED] MFC [REDACTED].

7 Q. Did you also provide a statement to the police?

8 A. I did, yes.

9 Q. At the end of your statement, Duncan, you speak of
10 lessons which you think might be learned from your
11 experiences and I think at paragraph 126 you say:

12 "All residential schools and boarding schools should
13 be closed."

14 A. I did say that half in jest to the team when we were
15 speaking. I am acutely aware that boarding schools will
16 not be closed. What I was leading on to was what I do
17 really feel, as we have worked on named persons
18 legislation and it has caused a great deal of
19 controversy in public -- I am a strong advocate for the
20 named person legislation, even perhaps -- even further
21 the difficulty I could see with it when it comes to this
22 circumstance is that the named person is often
23 headmaster of a school when it come to a residential
24 organisation. I feel the named person must be someone
25 external to a boarding school, external to a residential

1 school, I ...

2 There is an attempt to be anonymous. I briefly had
3 [REDACTED] and I had to defend the named person
4 legislation robustly but without going into my own care
5 experience. Having someone that I could have gone to,
6 having someone I could have turned to. Having someone
7 would have made all the difference and I wouldn't,
8 30 years later, be sitting here discussing this.
9 I firmly believe if there is effectively a third party,
10 that there is the regular opportunity -- not just once
11 a month like the Swiss Red Cross coming to a prisoner of
12 war camp, it has to be a better mechanism than that,
13 because, by God, I know how Fort Augustus tidied itself
14 up when the annual inspection came round.

15 But there must be a mechanism that allows -- if you
16 want to prevent this from ever happening again, which to
17 my mind appears impossible, because there are always
18 going to be predatory individuals, but one way is to
19 ensure that the named persons scheme allows this third
20 party.

21 MS MacLEOD: Thank you Duncan. I don't have any further
22 questions for you. My Lady, I am not aware of any other
23 questions for Duncan.

24 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
25 questions? No.

1 Duncan, that does complete all the questions we have
2 for you. Thank you so much for engaging with the
3 inquiry. I can see from listening to you how
4 challenging it will have been for you to do so, but you
5 have provided us with an enormously helpful written
6 statement, and you have added to that today by coming
7 along and talking about all your memories and it does
8 make such a difference for me to have seen you and heard
9 from you in person, so thank you very much for that.

10 A. Could I add --

11 LADY SMITH: Please do.

12 A. Since I gave this evidence, I was contacted by one of
13 the members of the Old Boys' Association. I'm not
14 a member of the Old Boys' Association. I was emailed
15 and they made it aware on their Facebook page that the
16 lawyers for the Benedictine Order were seeking the
17 positive testimony of boys who were at the school and
18 they were actively seeking this. I can't honestly
19 express how appalled I was to hear that as if in any way
20 this testimony -- I wish -- I greatly wish the
21 Benedictine Order could understand that in no way do
22 those who have experienced various forms of abuse
23 believe it happened to everyone. Of course there were
24 those who had positive experiences but I find the
25 attempt to send out a trawl for positive experiences to

1 be one of the most appalling things they have done since
2 they apparently apologised in 2013. I just wanted to
3 add that on to the record.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much for that.

5 Can I assure you I do not see this exercise as
6 an arithmetical one where enough pluses can eliminate
7 the minuses. And indeed, when I hear evidence of
8 positive experiences -- which I have done in all the
9 case studies -- it can serve to underline how the
10 particular organisation or institution appears to have
11 been able to get it right for some children. That then
12 leads to the question: why could they not do it for all
13 children.

14 A. Thank you.

15 LADY SMITH: I do see that.

16 A. I appreciate --

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you for articulating it the way you have
18 done. I am now able to let you go. Thank you very
19 much.

20 A. Thank you.

21 (The witness withdrew)

22 LADY SMITH: I will rise briefly, for no more than
23 five minutes, just to get organised for the next
24 witness. Thank you.

25 (12.40 pm)

1 (A short break)

2 (12.49 pm)

3 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

4 MR MacAULAY: My Lady the next witness wants to remain

5 anonymous and to use the name "Liz" when giving

6 evidence.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 "LIZ" (sworn)

9 LADY SMITH: Please sit down. It is all right if I call you

10 Liz, is it?

11 A. Yes.

12 LADY SMITH: Make yourself comfortable.

13 A. Do I call you "my Lady"?

14 LADY SMITH: A lot of people do, yes.

15 A. Thank you.

16 LADY SMITH: You will see the light is on for

17 the microphone, Liz. Try to stay in a good position

18 that would be very helpful. I will now hand over to

19 Mr MacAulay.

20 Questions from MR MacAULAY

21 MR MacAULAY: Good afternoon, Liz.

22 A. Good afternoon.

23 Q. In the red folder you see in front of you you will find

24 your statement. That is the statement you provided to

25 the inquiry. I will provide the reference of the

1 statement for the transcript: WIT.001.002.5142.

2 If I could ask you, Liz to turn to the final page of
3 the statement, the hard copy of the statement.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Can I ask you to confirm that you have signed it.

6 A. I have signed it.

7 Q. And do you say in the final paragraph:

8 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
9 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry"?

10 Is that right?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. Do you go on to say:

13 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
14 statement are true"?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. I don't need your date of birth but just to try and get
17 a timeframe, can you confirm that the year of your birth
18 is 1948?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. You have come here today to give evidence really in
21 connection with your late son, and I think we refer to
22 him as "Alex"; is that right?

23 A. That is true.

24 Q. Alex was one of four children; is that right?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Where did he come in the pecking order?

2 A. The third.

3 Q. I think he had two older brothers and a younger sister?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Alex died in 2009; is that right?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. We will look at that in due course. In the first part

8 of your statement you give us some information about

9 your family background, and in particular there was

10 a time when you were living in Wales; is that right?

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. In the mid-1970s?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You also tell us about your husband and in particular

15 how he had some mental health issues?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. In due course did you separate from him?

18 A. We did.

19 Q. What did you do at that time?

20 A. I separated from him because of his mental health

21 issues. I took advice from his psychiatrists that

22 I would go for a legal separation which meant that we

23 weren't divorced but it also meant that I wasn't free to

24 engage in another relationship or get married. I felt

25 that would be softer and kinder to him given his mental

1 state.

2 I took the children to Scotland. My parents very
3 kindly offered us refuge. And I didn't get divorced
4 until many, many years later when I lived in Warrington.

5 Q. The date you tell us that you came to Scotland was in
6 1981.

7 A. That is correct.

8 Q. So the four children would be young?

9 A. Very young, yes.

10 Q. And you went to stay with your parents who seem to have
11 had the accommodation to cater for you and the children?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Can we focus for a moment or two on Alex and what he was
14 like as a younger child. Did he become difficult to
15 manage?

16 A. I think it was about ten days after Alex's birth -- Alex
17 was born on [REDACTED] 1978 -- and while he was in the
18 cot beside my bed, my husband then had, for want of
19 a better description, a psychotic episode. He lifted
20 an armless armchair and threw it right across the room,
21 skimming the top of the cot, and going straight out the
22 bedroom window. [REDACTED] MLJ [REDACTED], in my mind, was never right
23 from then on.

24 Q. What --

25 A. He was difficult.

1 Q. What age was he then at that time?

2 A. He was born [REDACTED] and this was at the end
3 of [REDACTED] I can only link the date because it was
4 round about the time when the rugby internationals would
5 be on.

6 Q. So he was very young baby then?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And you have in fact pointed out that his date of birth
9 is 1978 and that is relevant also to the timeframes we
10 are looking at. So when you came to Scotland in 1981 he
11 would have been about 3 or so?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. As you indicated here, there were two older brothers but
14 also there was a younger sister?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. When in Scotland then, and coming back to the question
17 I had asked you, did there come a point in time at least
18 when Alex was becoming particularly difficult to manage?

19 A. He was difficult to manage. He wet the bed a lot. He
20 always seemed to be contrary, in other words if we
21 decided to do something as a family, he didn't want to
22 do it. He was very disruptive.

23 He was a very needy child. He needed a lot of
24 attention and a lot of love, but I also was the
25 breadwinner, I had to work, and I went back to my old

1 employer, and worked there, which unfortunately meant
2 that I would have to do a tour of duty in one place and
3 then maybe a tour of duty somewhere else. I was able to
4 get a contract where they limited my tours of duty to
5 a 40-mile radius of Stirling, but some people obviously
6 don't bother with learning geography and because it was
7 only an inch down on the map, they moved me to Carlisle.

8 Q. Do I take from that, Liz, that because you were staying
9 with your parents, your parents would bear the brunt?

10 A. Yes, they did. My mother bore the brunt.

11 Q. But did there come a time when the child psychiatric
12 services became involved with Alex?

13 A. Yes. Because when I was in Carlisle, obviously that
14 meant that I was away for most of the week and came back
15 at weekends. And while I was away **MLJ** ran away
16 from my parents and was found at Stirling railway
17 station trying to buy a ticket to where his mummy lived,
18 and my father then said -- I think he called Social
19 Services and said **MLJ** was beyond parental control
20 and that is when child services became involved.

21 Q. In particular the child psychiatric services became
22 involved?

23 A. Yes.

24 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, that is 1 o'clock. We have clearly
25 got a little bit to go --

1 LADY SMITH: We certainly do.

2 MR MacAULAY: -- and there is also another witness
3 programmed to come today.

4 LADY SMITH: If we just were able to shorten the lunch break
5 a little, would that be of some assistance? We normally
6 take an hour, Liz, but could you bear it if we took just
7 45 to 50 minutes over the lunch break and picked up your
8 evidence after that?

9 A. Yes.

10 LADY SMITH: If we aim for about 1.45 pm, normal experience
11 tells me that we will actually get started by 1.50 pm.
12 Thank you.

13 (1.00 pm)

14 (The short adjournment)

15 (1.45 pm)

16 LADY SMITH: Thank you all very much for being ready to
17 start early.

18 Liz, are you ready for us -- I don't think your
19 microphone is on. It needs to be pressed, the button at
20 the bottom. Thank you.

21 I will hand over to Mr MacAulay to carry on then.
22 Thank you.

23 MR MacAULAY: My Lady.

24 Just before lunch, Liz, we had come up to the point
25 where Alex was to be taken into care, and I think you

1 tell us in your statement that you were advised that it
2 would be better for Alex to be taken into care on
3 a voluntary basis.

4 A. Yes, but just before lunch we were talking about my
5 working in Carlisle. I was still based in Stirling at
6 that time, but what I didn't say was that prior to my
7 father saying he was beyond parental control, I had
8 actually asked our GP, because I was having difficulties
9 with [REDACTED] MLJ and my husband who had been diagnosed
10 with manic depression in those days, which now is
11 bipolar, I was introduced to psychiatric child services
12 at Stirling Royal Infirmary. Nothing came out of that
13 and the psychiatrist didn't think there were any issues.

14 Then my father said he was beyond parental control
15 and we had a social worker who suggested getting in
16 touch with the Mount Royal Hospital in Perth where they
17 had a bigger department.

18 So I then moved to [REDACTED] because it was better to
19 be in Perthshire. I left my job, I got a new job
20 and I moved to [REDACTED]. And it was there that I was told
21 that it would be better if [REDACTED] MLJ was placed in care,
22 but on a voluntary basis.

23 Q. I think what happened was he was placed in a unit in
24 Liff; is that right?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Is that right?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. And can you remember what age he was when that happened?
- 4 A. I moved to [REDACTED] in 1987 so it was round about then,
5 1987 or 1988.
- 6 Q. So he would be about nine or possibly coming up to ten?
- 7 A. Yes, probably.
- 8 Q. I think the procedure there involved him staying during
9 the week at the unit and coming home for weekends?
- 10 A. Correct.
- 11 Q. There came a point when he left the unit and came back
12 to stay with you full-time; is that right?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. But again he didn't seem to settle well?
- 15 A. No, he didn't settle at all.
- 16 Q. You tell us in your statement -- I am looking at
17 paragraph 11 -- that he also moved to a children's home
18 in Perth. Can I say, Liz, the statement will come on
19 the screen and you might find it easier to work from the
20 screen.
- 21 You tell you he moved to a children's home in Perth
22 and went to school in Perth; is that correct?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. I think there were also some spells of foster care.
- 25 A. Yes, there were.

1 Q. But eventually -- and this is really what we want to
2 come to because it is why you have come here to give
3 your evidence -- he eventually went to Fort Augustus
4 School in Inverness-shire?

5 A. He did.

6 Q. How did that come about?

7 A. Basically we had exhausted -- Social Services had
8 exhausted all the offering that were possible. We tried
9 fostering, we had tried different schools, we tried
10 everything --

11 LADY SMITH: Just one moment, Liz: somebody's phone is
12 ringing; could they switch it off, please? Thank you.

13 Yes, Liz. You tried fostering and this is en route
14 to Fort Augustus being the decision.

15 A. Yes.

16 LADY SMITH: Yes.

17 A. Yes, and the then social worker suggested placing
18 MLJ in this school.

19 MR MacAULAY: Did you understand that it was possible for
20 a local authority to place a child at Fort Augustus
21 School at this time.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. That is what happened in fact, isn't it?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. MLJ was placed at Fort Augustus?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. So far as the records that we have recovered go to show,
3 Liz, he entered Fort Augustus in about [REDACTED] 1990,
4 which would be the beginning of that academic year.
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And he left toward the end of that academic year, in
7 [REDACTED] 1991?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Would that fit with your own recollection?
- 10 A. Yes; he only did a year at Fort Augustus.
- 11 Q. So if we look at his date of birth, he would be about 12
12 in [REDACTED] 1990 and he would be coming up to 13 when
13 he left?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Did you yourself go to Fort Augustus before Alex went
16 there?
- 17 A. Yes. I asked the social worker if I could visit the
18 school because I felt it was important as the mother to
19 go and see where my son was going. She did tell me that
20 it was used by Social Services in Glasgow to great
21 effect.
- 22 Q. Then when you came to visit the school, who did you see
23 on that visit?
- 24 A. In all honesty, I can't remember. I will have met the
25 chief abbot, the chief monk. I was taken around the

1 school. I met Father Stephen, because he was going to
2 be in charge of where [REDACTED] MLJ would be sleeping.
3 I was shocked. The facilities were very basic but, you
4 know ... it was what it was.

5 Q. And you understood the school itself was run by the
6 Benedictine monks?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I think [REDACTED] MLJ, over the piece, would have told you
9 some aspects of the routine there. For example, I think
10 you make mention in your statement about the communal
11 shower arrangement.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Did he tell you about that?

14 A. He did.

15 Q. What --

16 A. He didn't like it.

17 Q. Did he say why not?

18 A. He said there was a lot of abuse from the senior boys on
19 the younger boys.

20 Q. I think you tell us in your statement that for the first
21 term Alex seemed to be quite happy at Fort Augustus.

22 A. Yes, he seemed to settle in quite well. An indication
23 of that tends to be how well they are performing in
24 their different subjects and he was enjoying it and he
25 was quite happy, and then it just went down like the

- 1 Titanic.
- 2 Q. So far as the shower situation was concerned then and
3 abuse by senior boys, did he tell you what happened,
4 what would happen?
- 5 A. That came out later.
- 6 Q. We will come to that then.
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Did he come home for the Christmas holidays?
- 9 A. He did.
- 10 Q. Did he appear quite content with the school at that
11 time?
- 12 A. I hate to admit it, but I really cannot remember
13 precisely when he just went bananas.
- 14 Q. So far as contact with him during the term was
15 concerned, did the social worker visit him?
- 16 A. She visited him. It was suggested that I did not visit
17 and I would only visit when advised by the social
18 worker. There was -- I think it was after Christmas
19 when there were a lot of telephone calls.
- 20 Q. I will come to that in a moment.
- 21 So far as visits by the social worker would be
22 concerned, did the social worker then report to you
23 about the visits?
- 24 A. Yes, but I had no way of verifying.
- 25 Q. Again in the pre-Christmas period, were there any

- 1 reports made?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. There was nothing untoward in these reports?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. What about any reports subsequently? Was there anything
6 said by the social work that caused you any concern
7 about how Alex was getting on?
- 8 A. At one point [REDACTED] MLJ had a nosebleed -- no, that was
9 later.
- 10 Q. Can I go back a bit: post-Christmas, when [REDACTED] MLJ goes
11 back to Fort Augustus, did [REDACTED] MLJ himself make
12 contact with you?
- 13 A. Yes, he did, but at some point I was told by the social
14 worker to change my telephone number because he was
15 calling me too often and it was being disruptive.
- 16 Q. But he was making telephone calls to you?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. This was in the post-Christmas period?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. What was he saying in the course of these telephone
21 calls?
- 22 A. Asking to be removed.
- 23 Q. Did he tell you why?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. Did he say whether or not he was unhappy at the school?

- 1 A. No.
- 2 Q. Can you just give us some understanding as to what he
3 was saying?
- 4 A. When something was not of **MLJ**'s liking, he would
5 plead for -- you know, in other words, if we were going
6 out as a family, he would not want to go, so he would be
7 disruptive. If we were playing a game, me with four
8 children, and it wasn't going his way, he would be
9 disruptive. If it wasn't going his way, he would say,
10 "We're not going, take me away, I want to go home," and
11 it was very difficult because even though I went to see
12 him he would not open up on why he was not happy, why he
13 did not like it.
- 14 Q. Did you go to see him at Fort Augustus during that
15 second term?
- 16 A. Yes, I did.
- 17 Q. Did he then at the end of the term come home for the
18 Easter holidays?
- 19 A. He did.
- 20 Q. How was he at that time?
- 21 A. I can't remember if it was the Easter holidays because
22 when I was to take him back to school it was dark and
23 I -- I have lost track of when the time changes in
24 Scotland vis-a-vis England, I do apologise. But it was
25 pitch black when I got to Crianlarich.

- 1 Q. So this is you taking him back to school after the
2 holidays?
- 3 A. Yes and we were to meet up with a bus at --
- 4 LADY SMITH: What time of day would he be taken back to
5 school?
- 6 A. About 6 o'clock-ish.
- 7 LADY SMITH: Yes. After the Easter holidays, depending when
8 Easter is, it could be dark in the Highlands by then,
9 yes.
- 10 MR MacAULAY: I think you told us that at the Christmas
11 holidays he was reasonably content.
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. We are now moving into the second term and the Easter
14 holidays. Of course the third term is the summer term
15 when he leaves in any event.
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. So --
- 18 A. But the final term was the disruptive one.
- 19 Q. Coming to the point when you are taking him back, are
20 your other children with you?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. Is [REDACTED] MLJ expressing unhappiness about going back?
- 23 A. [REDACTED] MLJ was extremely aggressive and violent at the
24 thought of being taken back. As we left [REDACTED] it was
25 manageable but the closer we got to Crianlarich it

- 1 became unbelievable.
- 2 Q. And did something happen at Crianlarich itself?
- 3 A. As soon as I stopped the car, he climbed over everybody,
4 shot out the passenger door, and disappeared into the
5 dark. At that time -- I don't know what Crianlarich is
6 like now but at that time it was pitch black; I think
7 there was only one street light.
- 8 Q. Was he tracked down by the police?
- 9 A. Eventually because he went into a local hotel. There
10 was a big hotel on the left as you are going through, a
11 bit set back, and apparently he had run in there
12 pleading and begging not to be sent back it
13 Fort Augustus.
- 14 Q. Were you taking him to Crianlarich to put him on the
15 train?
- 16 A. On the bus.
- 17 Q. On the bus?
- 18 A. There was a because that came up from Glasgow and that
19 was the meeting point.
- 20 Q. Was the upshot of this episode the fact that you took
21 him back home?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. When you took him back home, was there something about
24 his behaviour that caught your attention?
- 25 A. He was very clean.

- 1 Q. Can you elaborate on that?
- 2 A. Yes: he would go and have a shower and he would scrub
3 himself until his skin bled.
- 4 Q. Did you discuss this issue with the social worker?
- 5 A. I discussed it with [REDACTED] MLJ and I discussed it with
6 the social worker.
- 7 Q. What did [REDACTED] MLJ say about this?
- 8 A. [REDACTED] MLJ just shot off and didn't want to talk about
9 it.
- 10 Q. Did the social worker --
- 11 A. The social worker suggested that in her opinion and in
12 her experience when somebody went to that length to
13 clean themselves it could be indicative of sexual abuse.
- 14 Q. What was your reaction to that?
- 15 A. I was shocked.
- 16 Q. Did you raise this with [REDACTED] MLJ at all?
- 17 A. I was advised not to raise it directly because the
18 shutters come down if somebody has been abused, but
19 I did raise it with Social Services in Perth.
- 20 Q. What reaction did you get?
- 21 A. Not a very positive one.
- 22 Q. I think it is the case, Liz, that [REDACTED] MLJ eventually
23 did go back to Fort Augustus for the summer term.
- 24 A. He went back because the charge nurse, charge hand, the
25 senior person at the children's unit in Liff was called

- 1 upon and he took [REDACTED] MLJ [REDACTED] back.
- 2 Q. So you did not go back with him on that occasion?
- 3 A. No, but I did go back to visit him.
- 4 Q. So this was then -- post-Easter he is back at the school
- 5 for the summer term?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Did he still make telephone calls to you?
- 8 A. Not so frequently.
- 9 Q. But was there a telephone call at some point where he
- 10 told you that a friend of his had run away from the
- 11 school?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. Was that before or after Easter?
- 14 A. I think that was just after.
- 15 Q. What did he tell you at that point?
- 16 A. He rang to say that [REDACTED] had run away because there were
- 17 bad things happening to him.
- 18 Q. Did he say what the bad things were?
- 19 A. He was whispering them to me -- they must have had
- 20 a telephone booth, but he was whispering them
- 21 and I said, "Speak up louder", and he was too scared to
- 22 speak up louder.
- 23 Q. But did he tell you what the bad things were?
- 24 A. No, no.
- 25 Q. Did he say anything as to what [REDACTED] had done?

- 1 A. No, other than he had run away.
- 2 Q. Did he say if the police had been contacted or anything
3 along those lines?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. What did he say about that?
- 6 A. He said the police had been contacted and, we are not
7 allow to talk about it, and it was a it.
- 8 Q. Did he say who had contacted the police?
- 9 A. No.
- 10 Q. Did he say how the police had become involved?
- 11 A. No, I think it was [REDACTED] who rang the police but
12 I don't know if [REDACTED] rang the police before he left or
13 after he had run away.
- 14 Q. You mentioned a moment ago, Liz, that you also visited
15 [REDACTED] MLJ --
- 16 A. Uh-huh.
- 17 Q. -- during the summer term. How often did you visit?
- 18 A. I think a couple of times.
- 19 Q. And how was he in these visits?
- 20 A. Again, he was shining. He had obviously scrubbed
21 himself so clean his face was absolutely -- you know how
22 the skin goes tight and shiny? He wanted to go away
23 from the school and wouldn't spend any time at the
24 school, so we just went into Fort William or just walked
25 around Fort Augustus.

1 Q. Did he tell you anything about anything happening at the
2 school?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Either on these visits or on the telephone did he say
5 anything to you in relation to what might have been
6 happening at the school?

7 A. He just said that [REDACTED] had told him that naughty things
8 were happening. It wasn't until he was at Balnacraig
9 that he told me that he had been raped and sexually
10 abused and tortured.

11 Q. Again I will come on to that. We are focused then on
12 the fact that Alex left Fort Augustus in [REDACTED] 1991.
13 He came home at that time?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Was the plan after he had been placed there by the local
16 authority that he would be there just for the year or
17 was the plan that he would be there for longer than
18 that?

19 A. Because of the outburst returning him to school, and
20 I don't know whether he disclosed more information to
21 the social worker or to Harry, the person from the Liff
22 children's unit, but I do know that his bed was moved to
23 an outer room so that he would be closer to
24 Father Stephen, who would keep an eye on what was
25 happening or not happening.

1 It was decided that he would see out the year and
2 then we would -- we, Social Services, would review the
3 circumstances and the situation.

4 Q. Then did he come to stay at home after that?

5 A. Yes, he did.

6 Q. You tell us in your statement, Liz, about an incident
7 that involved [REDACTED] MLJ and his younger sister.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. As a consequence of that, was [REDACTED] MLJ sent to
10 Balnacraig School in Perth?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Again, that is a residential school?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Is that right? How did he get on at Balnacraig?

15 A. He seemed to be fine to begin with. He related better
16 to the female staff than he did to the male staff. And
17 then I got a phone call asking me to go and see him.

18 Q. What was the reason for that?

19 A. That is when he told me that he had been raped.

20 Q. So this is -- I think we will move on to look at another
21 disclosure he made much later on in life; is that right?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. You made some notes about that?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. But so far as this occasion is concerned, what age was

- 1 he when you got this call?
- 2 A. It was within the year having left Fort Augustus.
- 3 Q. So he would be about 13?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. And you went to Balnacraig School?
- 6 A. Yes I did.
- 7 Q. Who did you see when you went there?
- 8 A. I saw a worker called Jenny who said that MLJ was
9 waiting for me, and I went into the meeting room and she
10 had told me that he had something very serious to tell
11 me, and because of my -- the work that I did with
12 Marks & Spencer, we had been trained in what is known as
13 "mirroring", so you mirror the person's position and you
14 create empathy in that way so they can open up. So
15 I tried to do that to encourage him to tell me exactly
16 what had happened and that is when he told me.
- 17 Q. What did he tell you on this occasion?
- 18 A. On this occasion he told me that he had been raped.
19 I then stood up and brought him to sit on my lap and
20 told him that I was there to help him and listen to him.
- 21 Q. What did he have to say to you?
- 22 A. He said it was a man with jet-black hair and white hair,
23 two men.
- 24 Q. Did he tell you where this had happened?
- 25 A. This apparently took place in the toilets in

1 Fort Augustus because he was on his way back from having
2 seen -- I can't remember the name of the teacher, but
3 one of the teachers had a daughter and he referred to
4 this daughter as his girlfriend.

5 Q. You mean Alex referred to the girl as his girlfriend?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So he had been to see the teacher --

8 A. He was on his way back, had popped into the toilets, and
9 these men raped him.

10 Q. You are talking about two men?

11 A. Two men.

12 Q. Did he provide you with any other details as to what had
13 happened?

14 A. They stuffed toilet paper down his throat and raped him.

15 Q. Was he able to give you any descriptions additional to
16 what you have just told me about the men?

17 A. Other than one had jet-black hair and the other had
18 white hair.

19 Q. Were they monks?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Did he tell you that they were not monks?

22 A. No.

23 Q. What did he say --

24 A. Just two men. I must confess that at the time I wasn't
25 thinking terribly clearly because it was quite a shock

1 for a mother to be holding her 13-year-old son and to
2 hear that he has been raped. It is a lot to take in.

3 Q. Did he tell you when this had happened?

4 A. No.

5 Q. So you don't know if it was the first term, second or
6 third term?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Did he say what time of day it was that this had
9 happened?

10 A. I presumed that it was round about 4 o'clock because he
11 would be going back to school for tea.

12 Q. But you understood that the toilets in question were
13 toilets within the school itself?

14 A. No, I understood the toilets to be public toilets on the
15 main street.

16 Q. In Fort Augustus?

17 A. In Fort Augustus.

18 Q. I follow. I misunderstood you then. When you talk
19 about the toilets these are public toilets --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- not connected to the school?

22 A. That was my understanding at the time.

23 Q. So the house that he would have been visiting then would
24 that have been in the village?

25 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. But was there some social work involvement thereafter in
2 particular in relation to having testing carried out?

3 A. Yes. Jenny then told me afterwards -- because after
4 MLJ spoke to me, he had obviously unburdened
5 himself to a degree, and then he wanted to go off and
6 I could understand that. So I spoke to Jenny and she
7 said not to worry and that he was being counselled for
8 HIV testing. I challenged her and I said I didn't think
9 that being tested for HIV was really the issue here,
10 that it was more important for him to be counselled for
11 what had actually happened.

12 Q. What about the police though? Was any thought given to
13 reporting this to the police?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Did you yourself consider that?

16 A. Not at that stage, no. It just didn't cross my mind.
17 It just didn't cross my mind.

18 Q. Then, as you tell us in your statement, MLJ seemed
19 to have settled not too badly at Balnacraig; is that
20 correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Thereafter was he again involved in foster care?

23 A. Yes, he was.

24 Q. I think he was again back to Balnacraig?

25 A. Yes, he went back and forth.

- 1 Q. Ultimately was a flat found for him in Falkirk when he
2 was a bit older?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Who was he living with in Falkirk? Was he staying with
5 anybody?
- 6 A. No, he was by himself.
- 7 Q. What age was he by then?
- 8 A. He was 16.
- 9 Q. In your statement, Liz, at paragraph 39 you tell us that
10 when he was living in Falkirk, Alex made a report of the
11 abuse to the local police. Do you see that?
- 12 A. Yes. He was encouraged by his social worker,
13 Molly Buchanan, that he should actually make a report to
14 the police. I think it took -- I think it took her
15 quite some time to get him to that point, to actually do
16 it and say it.
- 17 Q. But do you know if he did make such a report?
- 18 A. Yes, he did.
- 19 Q. Was the report about the incident you have told us about
20 already or about something different?
- 21 A. I think it was about the same incident. I wasn't
22 actually involved at this stage because he was now
23 considered old enough for independent living. He was --
24 Social Services were trying to ease him into living in
25 society.

- 1 Q. Did he himself tell you that --
- 2 A. He told me that he had made -- lodged a complaint or
- 3 a claim.
- 4 Q. Did he tell you as to what reaction he had got?
- 5 A. No, that came later.
- 6 Q. What were you told later?
- 7 A. What date?
- 8 Q. No, what were you told later?
- 9 A. That it was thrown out because there was a statute of
- 10 limitation on it and he was too late.
- 11 Q. Thereafter in your statement, Liz, you provide us with
- 12 some information as to how life developed for Alex.
- 13 I think what you say is he had his difficulties, if
- 14 I can put it that way.
- 15 A. He did, yes.
- 16 Q. But he did spend some time working on different jobs?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. I think at a point in time he did in fact tell you
- 19 something more about Fort Augustus.
- 20 A. He told me more about Fort Augustus when I moved to
- 21 Warrington.
- 22 Q. Where was MLJ at this time? Was he with you or
- 23 somewhere else?
- 24 A. He had moved to Warrington as well to be with me.
- 25 Q. Was he living with you?

- 1 A. Yes, he was.
- 2 Q. Can you remember when it was you moved to Warrington?
- 3 A. I moved to Warrington in 1997.
- 4 Q. Did MLJ move with you at that time?
- 5 A. Yes, he did.
- 6 Q. Was he essentially staying with you?
- 7 A. He was living with me, yes.
- 8 Q. Did he stay with you continually or was he going to
- 9 other places over that period of time?
- 10 A. He lived with me for quite a bit until -- he wanted to
- 11 live with me because he wanted to try and address the
- 12 imbalance of his education, and he signed up at
- 13 Warrington College to try and get some GCSEs or
- 14 A-levels. So maybe for a year he lived with me and then
- 15 he felt that he wanted to branch out.
- 16 He got a telesales job in Bolton, and travelled back
- 17 and forth every day and seemed to be doing very well and
- 18 seemed to be reasonably content. Then one day he asked
- 19 for a pay rise and his boss, whether jokingly or not,
- 20 gave a retort that just made him snap.
- 21 Q. What happened after that then as far as his life was
- 22 concerned?
- 23 A. It went into free fall.
- 24 Q. Where was he living at this time?
- 25 A. He came back to live with me.

- 1 Q. Was it when he was living with you that he made
2 a disclosure to you about things that he said happened
3 to him when he was at Fort Augustus?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. At that time were you able to make a note of what he had
6 said to you?
- 7 A. Sometimes I was, sometimes I wasn't, but any notes
8 I made I have given to the inquiry.
- 9 Q. The disclosure he made, did it happen on one occasion or
10 did it go over a period of time?
- 11 A. Oh, it went over a period of time, a long period of
12 time. The worst episode was when he heard that for some
13 reason Fort Augustus Abbey School had been closed and
14 that the monks were seen burning documents in the
15 grounds on the afternoon of the closure.
- 16 Q. Where had he heard this?
- 17 A. He was still in touch with a friend, [REDACTED] whose family
18 lived Inverness way, so -- and he was on the website.
19 There was a forum for former pupils -- I hadn't realised
20 just how much had been going on until I went on to the
21 forum because it was on the web. And what I read shook
22 me to the core.
- 23 Q. Can we focus on what [REDACTED] MLJ [REDACTED] said to you then over
24 this period when he is disclosing matters affecting him?
25 If I can put this document on the screen for you first

1 of all: WIT.003.002.2223. Can we just scroll to the
2 bottom. It's heavily redacted but can you identify what
3 this document is, Liz?

4 A. Yes, it was -- you can see it was quarter past 11 on
5 19 August. Obviously [REDACTED] MLJ had been having
6 a seriously bad day because at this stage [REDACTED] MLJ was
7 depressed, wouldn't get up, couldn't sleep. His whole
8 life was inside out. He had been offloading, so before
9 I went to bed, I just quickly scribbled the notes, the
10 gist of what he was telling me.

11 Q. So this is a note in your handwriting --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- as to what he had told you in the course of that day?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. That particular day?

16 A. That would have been in the course of the evening.

17 Q. As you pointed out the time is 11.15 pm, 19 August 2004?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So at this time in 2004 was [REDACTED] MLJ staying with you?

20 A. Yes, he was.

21 Q. Had he been for some time before that?

22 A. Yes, he had.

23 Q. Can we go back to the top then and if you can just tell
24 us what you have written. In the first line, what have
25 you noted down there?

- 1 A. He was claiming that one teacher, who was married with
2 a child, was in fact an abuser but -- well, given the
3 teacher is married with a child then it is one of
4 the lay teachers and not one of the monks.
- 5 Q. In the next entry there is part of it that has been
6 redacted, but it refers to a Father **MER** Was that
7 a name you had heard before?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. **MER** was, I think, was the monk's name.
- 10 A. I only knew him as Father **MER**
- 11 Q. What did Alex tell you about him?
- 12 A. That he was a vicious abuser.
- 13 Q. I think, if I read this correctly -- does that say "slap
14 in face"?
- 15 A. "Slap in face", yes. So he had obviously given
16 **MLJ** a slap in the face.
- 17 Q. But did he say more to you than that as to what
18 Father **MER** had allegedly done at this point?
- 19 A. He had -- not on this particular occasion, but he had
20 said that when he first went to Fort Augustus he was
21 quite pleased to assist in Mass. Afterwards he stopped
22 going to Mass because, as a Catholic, he would have to
23 take communion, even though he wasn't -- he hadn't --
24 wasn't confirmed. Because when he went in to give his
25 confession, the priest hearing his confession would make

1 him perform oral sex on him. And this went on and so he
2 stopped going to church.

3 Q. Who was the priest?

4 A. Father **MER**

5 Q. Was that the name he gave you?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Did he tell you for how long this had gone on for?

8 A. A long time.

9 Q. Then there is another reference, I think, to a teacher's
10 name below Father **MER**'s name. Does that say, "Hit
11 with hockey stick"?

12 A. Yes, they used to be battered and hit with the hockey
13 sticks in the communal showers.

14 Q. Who would do that?

15 A. The monks, the pupils.

16 Q. Did he describe in what way they were hit with the
17 hockey stick?

18 A. Usually on the genitals.

19 LADY SMITH: Did he explain how at the time he would be
20 sitting, standing?

21 A. Standing.

22 LADY SMITH: Was there anything particular about the way he
23 was standing?

24 A. He would be in the shower and they would come -- they
25 would approach.

- 1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
- 2 MR MacAULAY: The next line I think says, "[REDACTED] okay".
- 3 A. Yes, that is my shorthand for the [REDACTED] teacher was
4 okay because he was dating his daughter -- Alex was
5 dating his daughter.
- 6 Q. You have mentioned that already.
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. That was the daughter he had visited before the other
9 incident you told us about.
- 10 Then the next -- can you read the next line for
11 me -- it's blanked out, so you can't. It looks like it
12 says --
- 13 A. Well whoever it refers to is "evil, raped and beat,
14 somebody up".
- 15 Q. Can I just -- I will read it for you then:
16 "Evil. Raped and beat Alex up."
17 And we are given the names of pupils. Did he
18 mention pupils' names?
- 19 A. Yes, he did.
- 20 Q. That he had been raped by certain pupils?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. And he described them here, as I think we see in
23 the next line, as "sadistic and evil"?
- 24 A. Yes, they were two brothers.
- 25 Q. Then the next line, does that say "top dormitory"?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Can you read the rest of it for me?
- 3 A. Apparently in the top dormitory there were handcuffs
4 attached to the beds -- this was in the east wing, which
5 was at that time derelict and at night lights would be
6 on and it is where the boys were taken to be abused.
- 7 Q. By whom? Did he say?
- 8 A. By other boys. There was a culture in the school
9 because the monks were doing it and percolated down. He
10 says he was not taken to that dormitory, but he was
11 handcuffed to pipes under the stage.
- 12 Q. Did he say why that happened?
- 13 A. Because he had been naughty.
- 14 Q. Did he say who did that?
- 15 A. No.
- 16 Q. Did he say if it was monk or --
- 17 A. Yes, that is where the monks hid them.
- 18 Q. And if we read on then, does that go on to say:
19 "Pulled out of bed in dead of night"?
- 20 A. At night when they thought that they were kind of
21 asleep, the monks would pull them out of the bed or the
22 boys would take -- the senior boys would pull them out
23 of the bed and take them down to the showers where they
24 were sexually abused.
- 25 Q. When you say "they" --

- 1 A. There was a group of them.
- 2 Q. When you say "they were sexually abused", was Alex
3 saying it wasn't just him that was being abused?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. There is some reference to nettles; can you help me with
6 that? That is towards the end of the paragraph.
- 7 A. Where the communal showers were located in
8 Fort Augustus, you literally came in the door from the
9 outside opened into the showers, so there is a lot of
10 water and allsorts on the floor, and when they had done
11 what they had done, they just picked the boys up or
12 threw them out or, in this case, they picked MLJ
13 up and threw him out. The ground around the school was
14 fairly unkempt and fairly covered in nettles.
- 15 Q. Was MLJ naked when this happened?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Did he specify if this behaviour was done by other boys
18 or by the monks?
- 19 A. Sometimes it was done by other senior boys and sometimes
20 it was the monks.
- 21 Q. Did he use the word "monks" in plural or was it
22 a particular monk?
- 23 A. Monks.
- 24 Q. The other document I want you to look at, Liz, is at
25 WIT.003.002.2224. If we can scroll down a little bit.

1 A. This is the sort of expansion on my very brief scribble.

2 I was just trying to make more sense of what I had
3 written down.

4 Q. So this is, as it were, some time after the scribble
5 that you have mentioned?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Was it a day or two afterwards?

8 A. No, it was the day after.

9 Q. The day after.

10 I think you have covered quite a bit of what you
11 have already mentioned to us, but if you look at
12 point 8, you make reference to being placed in a rowing
13 boat; do you see that?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Can you help me with that? What was that about?

16 A. They were taken down to the showers and when you go out
17 of the showers at Fort Augustus, you go on to grass and
18 gravel and nettles and it leads down to a jetty, and he
19 was placed in the rowing boat, which was tied at the
20 jetty, a couple of them were --

21 Q. By whom?

22 A. I understood it to be some of the pupils. And then they
23 pushed the boat out into Loch Ness in the dark of night.

24 Q. Was it just Alex himself who was in the boat?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Was he naked?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. But was the rope of the boat being held by a person on
4 land? I think you use the word prefects here.

5 A. Yes, which indicates that it is pupils.

6 Q. But did he refer to prefects --

7 A. Yes, yes.

8 Q. You have noted the prefects kept hold of the rope?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Do you know how this episode ended? Did he tell you?

11 A. It freaked him out.

12 Q. But did he tell you how it came to an end?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Can I ask you this, Liz: did you believe him?

15 A. Yes. Given what he was going through, not being able to
16 sleep, the nightmares, the depression, and the very
17 obvious PTSD that was now coming out to the fore.

18 Q. At this time in 2004, Alex would be -- he was born in
19 1978, so he would be 26 or thereabouts?

20 A. A grown man.

21 Q. You have just touched upon Alex's mental state at this
22 time; did that improve at all?

23 A. No, it deteriorated.

24 Q. Did he stay with you or did he go to live somewhere
25 else?

1 A. He lived with me. He tried living independently. It
2 wouldn't work out and he came back.

3 Q. Did he talk of suicide?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. What did he say about that?

6 A. That life just wasn't worth living.

7 Q. Did he say why?

8 A. Because when he closed his eyes he saw himself lying in
9 the shower -- the communal shower rooms on the concrete
10 floor covered in blood and excrement that they had put
11 on him. He didn't specify who, but "they". He couldn't
12 close his eyes because that is what he saw.

13 Q. I think at one point he did move to live in London; is
14 that right?

15 A. That was towards the end of his life.

16 Q. Why did he go to London?

17 A. He thought that the anonymity that a city like London
18 gives and that maybe he could tap into the mental health
19 resources. Because at this time he had been in and out
20 of the Priory in Altrincham, which his brothers had paid
21 for. And his psychiatrist at the time said MLJ
22 had so many layers to be removed that we as a family did
23 not have the resources to pay for that. He called
24 a meeting between the police, the NHS, four of them, so
25 there was Dr Haslam, the police, the NHS and

1 I don't know who the fourth party would be, to discuss
2 [REDACTED] MLJ's mental health issues and who, if anybody,
3 could help him because he alone couldn't do it.
4 Q. Was it after that that he moved to London?
5 A. Yes.
6 Q. What was the purpose in him moving to London then?
7 A. To the try and tap into mental health services through
8 the NHS.
9 Q. Did he do that so far as you know?
10 A. Yes, he did.
11 Q. Was he in regular contact --
12 A. Yes.
13 Q. -- with you after he moved to London?
14 LADY SMITH: You say in your statement that he was sectioned
15 on and off; at what stage or stages did that happen?
16 A. It happened in Warrington and it happened in London.
17 LADY SMITH: So how old would he have been at these times
18 then?
19 A. So it happened when he was about 27, 28, 29 it happened.
20 LADY SMITH: So the latter part of his 20s?
21 A. Yes.
22 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
23 Mr MacAulay.
24 MR MacAULAY: I think you told me a moment ago that he kept
25 in contact with you.

- 1 A. Yes, he did.
- 2 Q. After he had moved to London, did he ever come back home
3 again after moving to London?
- 4 A. He did.
- 5 Q. Can you remember when it was he went to London? He died
6 in 2009 so perhaps that can give you a marker.
- 7 A. It would have been 2008. He came home for a visit, and
8 I returned home from work to find the front door open,
9 so I knew there was something wrong. When I got through
10 to the kitchen, he was lying comatose on the floor.
11 I could see from the angle of his foot that something
12 had happened. Then he started to try and stand up but
13 I had run my hand down his leg and I could feel the bone
14 underneath his trousers, so when he tried to stand up
15 I knew that that would be disastrous because he had
16 broken his leg.
- 17 So I sat on him and managed to get my handbag from
18 under the kitchen table, get my mobile phone and dial
19 999. The ambulance then came and I was still holding on
20 to his head, but also sitting on him so that he wouldn't
21 stand up.
- 22 Q. Do you know how he came to break his leg?
- 23 A. I have no idea.
- 24 Q. But then did he receive some treatment for that break?
- 25 A. He received treatment. He was -- the doctors in

1 Warrington wanted to section him because he was talking
2 of suicide.

3 Q. After this episode did he go back to London?

4 A. Yes, he did. It was after this episode, when he still
5 had his leg in plaster, that he told me he was going to
6 go away for a very, very long time because he had
7 fought -- he had spent since Balnacraig fighting the
8 demons that Fort Augustus had foisted on him.

9 Q. Was that --

10 A. And I knew that what he meant was he was going to go and
11 commit suicide.

12 Q. And I think that is what happened.

13 A. Yes. He also asked me then to make sure that I told his
14 story and I think, to try and stop me crying, he asked
15 me what I would wear to his funeral.

16 Q. I think I took from you earlier, Liz, that his body was
17 found at least on [REDACTED] 2009.

18 A. Yes -- and his body was found because I received a phone
19 call from his psychiatric social worker to tell me that
20 he tried to make contact with [REDACTED] MLJ and he could
21 hear his voice from behind the door, but he didn't move
22 in because he didn't think it was right to move in,
23 knowing that [REDACTED] MLJ was depressed. So I rang a local
24 locksmith and asked him to meet the psychiatric social
25 worker and the building manager to gain access. It was

1 the locksmith that rang me back to say that they had
2 entered and that the young man was found dead, and that
3 is how I found out that my son had died.

4 Q. You have told us, Liz, the impact that Alex said life at
5 Fort Augustus had had on him. What about you and your
6 family?

7 A. He died in 2009 and I went into shock. In 2010 I got
8 made redundant, I didn't really care. So I just sat at
9 home in Warrington and I didn't go out for three years.
10 I didn't speak to anybody. I went to Asda to get my
11 milk, I didn't eat, and I just sank and my children to
12 this day find it difficult to talk about Fort Augustus
13 and to talk about what happened.

14 Q. Did you tell your children what Alex had told you?

15 A. I haven't told them in detail. MLJ sent them
16 an email after he had had -- I suppose what they call
17 a post-traumatic stress disorder outburst. He sent them
18 an email to apologise for what he had done to my house,
19 because he had completely trashed it, he had broken
20 every single reflective surface. He told them that
21 while he was at Fort Augustus he had been sexually
22 abused and tortured. They all came up from London -- my
23 three were in London at that time and they all came up.

24 Q. Could I put this document on the screen briefly. It's
25 WIT.003.002.1575. Is this the email you had in mind?

1 A. No.

2 Q. We can take that off the screen, thank you.

3 A. No, that is off the website. This was an email -- it
4 was specific to his brothers and his sister.

5 Q. The email we put on the screen was one that has been
6 download from the website you have already mentioned?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. But it is by MLJ ?

9 A. Yes, I know. I recognised it.

10 Q. We have it in our documents. Was there an inquest into
11 MLJ 's death?

12 A. There was.

13 Q. What was the result of that?

14 A. Do you know, as I sit here, I can't really remember.

15 LADY SMITH: You said something about it in your statement
16 from, if it triggers your memory, at paragraph 53.

17 MR MacAULAY: It is on the screen if it is easier for you.
18 I will just read out what it says:

19 "At the inquest into MLJ 's death, the coroner
20 agreed the NHS had been going through the motions."
21 Does that ring a bell?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. What does that mean?

24 A. During the inquest the psychiatrist responsible for
25 MLJ actually admitted negligence but she had the

1 top barrister in the country who managed to
2 manipulate -- that is probably not the right word, but
3 she was able to guide her client into recognising the
4 mistake that she had made and to retract the word
5 "negligence".

6 Q. But what you do tell us in that paragraph is that --
7 I think this is what the coroner concluded -- that
8 **MLJ** should have been treated in the community at
9 a level of care that would be afforded to a patient in
10 a hospital.

11 A. Yes, yes. We were at that point in care in
12 the community where there was a judicial review going
13 through and, dependent upon that judicial review, care
14 in the community would then be classified as being on
15 a par with hospital treatment, but we fell through the
16 gap. To be fair, **MLJ** fell through the gaps
17 repeatedly.

18 Q. One thing you have done I think, Liz, is go to the
19 police.

20 A. Yes, I did.

21 Q. When did you do that?

22 A. The police had been involved with **MLJ** and me in
23 Warrington over quite a period of time because PTSD
24 results in some very violent behaviour. Sometimes I was
25 subjected to the violence, other times it was the house

1 that was subjected to the violence. Then I [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED] and I also read
3 something where the Chief Constable of Manchester was
4 committed to helping abuse victims. So I went to my
5 local police. Of course, all the episodes that I had
6 had with the police prior to that then sort of connected
7 up.

8 Q. But did you then get in contact with the police in
9 Scotland?

10 A. Yes, I did.

11 Q. Did you make a report, a report to the police in
12 Scotland on the back of what [REDACTED] MLJ had told you
13 about the abuse?

14 A. Yes, I did.

15 Q. When was that?

16 A. I can't remember precisely. I can remember it was
17 a Deborah Docherty who came down from Inverness to speak
18 with me and take my statement and I gave them the same
19 information that I have given the inquiry.

20 Q. What was the eventual outcome of the report you made?

21 A. No further action.

22 Q. Were you told why at that time?

23 A. It was because [REDACTED] MLJ was not the alive there was
24 nothing they could do.

25 Q. Have you since been told that the person that [REDACTED] MLJ

1 has identified as the monk who abused him,
2 Father **MER** has died?

3 A. Yes, the day before yesterday I received a letter from
4 the procurator fiscal.

5 Q. I think he died earlier this year; is that correct?

6 A. Do you know I don't know. All I know is he died.
7 I didn't bother reading the rest.

8 LADY SMITH: Liz, can I just take you back. I think you
9 said Alex must have been about nine, maybe a little bit
10 younger, when he first was referred to children's
11 psychiatric services. You linked it to the time he ran
12 away, to try and make his way back to you and getting
13 a train ticket.

14 A. Yes.

15 LADY SMITH: By the time the decision was made by Perth
16 Social Services that Fort Augustus was the place he
17 should be sent to, he had had some years of
18 involvement --

19 A. Yes.

20 LADY SMITH: -- with children's psychiatric services by
21 then.

22 A. Yes.

23 LADY SMITH: Do you know whether Fort Augustus were given
24 any specific details of Alex's particular special needs
25 in that regard?

1 A. I personally don't know but I know that the social
2 worker, Jan Mitchell, was heavily involved in talking
3 with the school.

4 LADY SMITH: So you were reliant on her --

5 A. Yes.

6 LADY SMITH: -- to see to it that the school --

7 A. I had to walk a very fine line.

8 LADY SMITH: Yes, I see that.

9 A. Because at that time either [REDACTED] MLJ [REDACTED] was to be taken
10 from me and put up for adoption and I was doing battle
11 with Social Services in Perth saying -- at the time
12 I worked for a parcel company and I said, "We treat our
13 parcels better than you treat human beings" -- sorry.

14 LADY SMITH: No, I can see why you would be driven to that.

15 A. The analogy is -- that is when Jan said, "It would be
16 better if you voluntarily put [REDACTED] MLJ [REDACTED] into care
17 because then you are involved, "but you are not really
18 involved because the decisions are made for you and if
19 you object to anything that they are deciding or
20 thinking, you are then challenged with either being
21 homophobic or this phobic or that phobic.

22 LADY SMITH: Do you know why Perth Social Services thought
23 the right place for Alex was Fort Augustus? I know you
24 weren't keen on Balnacraig at that time but how -- why
25 did they think Fort Augustus could make provision for

1 a child with his needs for psychiatric help?

2 A. My Lady, with all due respect at that time, and maybe
3 even so still today, the resources for mental health
4 issues, especially for children, were non-existent.
5 They really were non-existent.

6 Because I tried -- I was working at
7 Stirling University at the time and I tried through all
8 my contacts in psychiatry and clinical psychology, I:
9 tried to find somebody who could give my son the
10 necessary counselling after having been abused, and
11 there was nothing. Nothing.

12 LADY SMITH: Of course that was later on.

13 A. Yes.

14 LADY SMITH: We are here -- I am thinking back to when the
15 decision was made to send him to Fort Augustus. Is it
16 as simple as some assumption being made about
17 Fort Augustus? I don't want to put words into your
18 mouth, but I am struggling to understand exactly why
19 Fort Augustus.

20 A. Jan made the reference that as a family we were
21 different to the families or the non-existent families
22 of the children at Balnacraig.

23 MR MacAULAY: Was it thought possibly Fort Augustus might
24 give Alex some structure?

25 A. They thought it would give him structure. They also

1 thought it would give him more similarity to his
2 siblings because they were at Morrison's Academy.

3 LADY SMITH: Right.

4 A. So maybe -- she touched on it but just touched on it.

5 MR MacAULAY: They were going to a fee-paying school, which
6 was Morrison's Academy?

7 A. Yes, they had won bursaries.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

9 MR MacAULAY: Can I take you to paragraph 54 of your
10 statement then, Liz. I just want to take this from you
11 where you say at the top here -- you are dealing with
12 your hopes nfor the inquiry:

13 "I hope the inquiry exposes the culprits of sexual
14 abuse against children and that this highlights areas
15 where action should be taken so these things will not
16 happen again."

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Is that your particular hope for this inquiry?

19 A. Yes. I am here because MLJ asked me to tell his
20 story and I am trying to tell it the best I can.

21 MR MacAULAY: Very well, Liz. Thank you for coming to do
22 precisely that.

23 A. I would like to thank you for holding this inquiry.

24 MR MacAULAY: Thank you for coming.

25 My Lady, I have not been sent any questions to put

1 to Liz.

2 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
3 questions of Liz? No.

4 Liz, that completes the questions we have for you.
5 Thank you so much for engaging with us, both by
6 providing your written statement and coming along to
7 face what cannot have been an easy task today. I am
8 very grateful to you and I am sure if Alex were here he
9 would thank you as well. Thank you.

10 I am now able to let you go.

11 A. Thank you.

12 (The witness withdrew)

13 LADY SMITH: If we take a five-minute break now,
14 Mr MacAulay, and then start with the next witness.

15 (2.51 pm)

16 (A short break)

17 (3.04 pm)

18 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

19 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, the next witness is Donald Angus
20 MacLeod.

21 DONALD ANGUS MacLEOD (sworn)

22 LADY SMITH: Donald, would you like to sit down. Is it all
23 right if I call you Donald? Do make yourself
24 comfortable. You will see the red light shows you
25 the microphone is switched on on the desk in front of

1 you. If you can stay in a good position for it, that is
2 really helpful to us.

3 It you are ready, Donald, I will hand over to
4 Mr MacAulay and he will explain what happens next; is
5 that all right?

6 Questions from MR MacAULAY

7 MR MacAULAY: Good afternoon, Donald.

8 Your full name is Donald Angus MacLeod?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. In the red folder in front of you you will find your
11 statement I will give the reference, the reference in
12 the top right, to the stenographers for the transcript:
13 WIT.001.002.3552. If I could ask you Donald to turn to
14 the last page of the statement, the very last page of
15 the hard copy, can you confirm you have signed it.

16 A. That is my signature, yes.

17 Q. And do you say in the final paragraph that:

18 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
19 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry"?

20 Is that right?

21 A. That is correct, yes.

22 Q. Do you also go on to say:

23 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
24 statement are true"?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You will notice, Donald, that the witness statement will
2 also come up on the screen in front of you and sometimes
3 witnesses have found it easier to look at the screen
4 rather than leaf through the hard copy, but it is
5 entirely a matter for you.

6 I will be asking you questions based on your witness
7 statement. If things come to mind that you haven't
8 covered in the statement, but you would like to tell us
9 about, then feel free to do so. Do you follow that?

10 A. Certainly.

11 Q. Were you born on [REDACTED] 1947?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. So you are now, I think, 71?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. In the first part of your statement you provide us with
16 some background in connection with your family. With
17 a name like MacLeod, clearly you have some sort of
18 Scottish connection.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. I think what you tell us in fact your father came from
21 the Isle of Skye?

22 A. That is right, yes.

23 Q. You then tell us a little about what your family did and
24 in particular the time spent abroad. Your family stayed
25 in a number of different countries?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. For example, you tell us in paragraph 6 that when your
3 father was posted to Bombay in India, that is where your
4 sister was born?
- 5 A. That is where my sister was born, yes.
- 6 Q. Is that a younger sister?
- 7 A. Yes, she was is 1957, ten years apart.
- 8 Q. After that you tell us that your father was posted to
9 Sydney, Australia.
- 10 A. That is right, yes.
- 11 Q. And indeed you spent some time at a Christian Brothers'
12 school in Sydney --
- 13 A. That is right.
- 14 Q. -- when you were much younger?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Did there come a time when it was decided you should
17 come back and get a Scottish Catholic education?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. And was that how it came to be that you went to
20 Fort Augustus School in Inverness-shire?
- 21 A. Correct, yes.
- 22 Q. According to the records that we have recovered, you
23 first went to Fort Augustus in September 1961?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. And you would be aged about 13 or 14 then?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. You left in 1965?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Was that at the end of the academic year?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So you would be aged 17 at that time?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. In the first part of your statement, paragraphs 7
9 through to 11, you provide us with some information
10 about the layout and the facilities at Fort Augustus.
11 We needn't dwell on that because we have covered that in
12 other evidence, but one thing I do want to ask you about
13 is the set-up in relation to the houses because you tell
14 us there were two distinct houses in Fort Augustus. Can
15 you elaborate on that?

16 A. Yes, I was in a house called Lovat and there was another
17 house called Vaughan. Each had a housemaster who was
18 responsible for the welfare discipline and just about
19 everything to do with our stay there as boarders.

20 Q. Who was your housemaster throughout your period at
21 Fort Augustus?

22 A. Father [REDACTED] MFE

23 Q. Who was [REDACTED] ?

24 A. It was [REDACTED] MFF but for -- on and off. I believe
25 he was ill or something and a Father [REDACTED] MKT

1 used to step in [REDACTED]?

2 Q. And did there come a point in time when

3 Father [REDACTED] MKT [REDACTED] took over as [REDACTED]?

4 A. I believe so. Yes, that was my last year, yes.

5 Q. I think -- again, the information we have from records

6 is that [REDACTED] MFF [REDACTED] might have been [REDACTED] for

7 about 1961 to 1964.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And [REDACTED] MKT [REDACTED] took over after that?

10 A. Yes, in my last year, before my leaving, yes.

11 Q. Could you just come a little closer to the microphone.

12 A. Certainly.

13 Q. We have mentioned two of the monks; was there also

14 a Father Aidan Duggan there during your time?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. We are going to talk about him later. There was also

17 a Father [REDACTED] MEW [REDACTED] is that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And I think [REDACTED] MRQ [REDACTED] does that name ring a bell?

20 A. He taught me, yes.

21 Q. Were there also lay teachers at the school at that time?

22 A. There were a few, yes.

23 Q. One point you make is that although there were lay

24 teachers -- this is paragraph 20 -- you very rarely had

25 a young lay teacher teaching.

1 A. No, I don't remember any very young. I would say the
2 youngest I can remember was about 40-ish. It is very
3 difficult as a young boy to guess adults' ages but they
4 seemed about that.

5 Q. Although the monastery itself was part of the set-up,
6 I think what you tell us in your statement is that there
7 was very little interaction between the monastery and
8 the school.

9 A. That is correct. The monks that taught us used to come
10 over to the school and we had what were called brothers
11 who used to come, because they did cooking and serving
12 stuff at the meals and a bit of cleaning, but I would
13 say that the majority of the monks were what we called
14 contemplative, where they had just to praise the Lord
15 and do what monks do.

16 Q. What do you think the population, the boy population of
17 the school was during your time?

18 A. It was between 100 and 150. 130 was a figure that
19 seemed to come to mind. But it was in that region.

20 Q. When you went in at the age of about 13 coming on 14,
21 would you go into a particular form?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. It wouldn't be the lowest form then?

24 A. No, I went into the second.

25 Q. The second form.

1 At paragraphs 34 through to 40, you provide the
2 inquiry with some insight into the various aspects of
3 the routine at Fort Augustus.

4 Just to pick up a few points. First of all, the
5 sleeping arrangements: what is your recollection as to
6 the set-up?

7 A. The young ones up until to about the fifth and sixth
8 forms -- those that stayed on to the sixth forms were
9 different. The young ones were in dormitories and they
10 could vary from four up to about twelve, maybe a bit
11 more. The very senior boys had separate single study
12 rooms really.

13 Q. When you got to that stage, did you have your own
14 separate room --

15 A. No, I never --

16 Q. You never reached that stage?

17 A. I never went in -- there was an option but it was really
18 based on academic expectations, so there was more
19 ability for private study. So I would say about 50% of
20 the sixth form would have private rooms and the
21 occasional fifth former, but that was about it.

22 Q. But were the sleeping arrangements arranged according to
23 age?

24 A. I think it was perhaps -- in the dormitories it was by
25 age. In the private rooms it was more ability, I think,

1 was the decision. Obviously, older coming up to
2 leaving, getting into Highers and A-levels, who were
3 expected to do very well -- the school wanted pupils to
4 do very well and enhance their reputation, which I think
5 is very understandable.

6 Q. You touch upon letter writing in paragraph 51. Can you
7 help me with this: first of all, at this time when you
8 started off at Fort Augustus, were your parents still
9 abroad?

10 A. Yes. They came with me to Fort Augustus before the
11 school term started, and then we went to Ireland and
12 then I went to Fort Augustus, and they went back to
13 Sydney.

14 Q. Did you write letters to them?

15 A. I did, yes.

16 Q. What you say is any letters that were written were
17 censored?

18 A. Yes, I think so.

19 Q. Would you require to write the letter and leave it
20 unsealed?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What is your recollection of the schooling? How would
23 you classify the level of schooling that was available
24 at Fort Augustus?

25 A. It was incredibly mixed. There were some appalling

1 teachers, particularly monks, that were put in to
2 teaching although they had no formal qualifications, and
3 sometimes didn't know very much. My history consisted
4 of the agricultural and agrarian revolutions and the
5 following year we did the agriculture and agrarian
6 revolutions because that is all he knew. Some were
7 extremely good. It was very strong in religious
8 knowledge.

9 Q. Religion was quite a significant aspect of life, was it?

10 A. It was very key and obviously the monks were highly
11 trained in that area.

12 Q. For holidays would you go home?

13 A. For half terms I used to stay at school because it was
14 too far away and for -- initially for the longer holiday
15 I could go home, but for the two shorter holidays,
16 Christmas and Easter, I would go to my uncle's farm in
17 Ireland.

18 Q. I think you enjoyed that.

19 A. Oh yes.

20 Q. Do you remember any school inspectors coming to inspect
21 the school?

22 A. No, I don't have any recollection of that, but there may
23 have been. I don't ever remember any inspectors coming.

24 Q. We will look at the regime itself very shortly, but
25 I just want to ask you about this: did any boy ever run

- 1 away from the school?
- 2 A. A couple tried but they didn't get very far.
- 3 Q. You never tried?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. The couple that tried, do you know what happened to them
6 when they came back?
- 7 A. Not really. They would be caned and initially -- it
8 depended. I seem to remember -- and this is going
9 back -- that one of the boys came back, was at the
10 school for a short time, and then he left, I think. It
11 must have been to do with his parents and ... the
12 problem was the nearest rail station was Crianlarich and
13 the stationmaster at Crianlarich used to report back to
14 the school if ever a young boy alone appeared looking to
15 buy a ticket.
- 16 Q. What you say at paragraph 88 in your statement -- it
17 will come on the screen in a moment. If you just focus
18 on paragraph 88:
- 19 "When the boys who had run away came back, they were
20 punished so severely that no one else wanted to try to
21 run away."
- 22 A. Yes, definitely in one case.
- 23 Q. What happened in that particular case?
- 24 A. I have forgotten who it was, but he got caned by both
25 the headmaster and the housemaster I think.

1 Q. How do you know that?

2 A. Because -- this was hearsay obviously but, no, you could
3 tell. The caning was something that everyone was
4 acutely aware of and it -- it was impossible not to be
5 aware. There were scars on certain parts of the body
6 and things like that.

7 Q. I will come on to that.

8 Can I just ask you generally about discipline. How
9 was discipline managed at the school?

10 A. It was mostly the housemaster who was responsible for
11 the discipline among the boys in the dormitories, in
12 the school. The headmaster used to get involved in
13 discipline very often if there was academic problems.
14 He generally didn't get involved in the running but he
15 also had a facility for discipline.

16 Q. If we look then at the role of the housemaster first of
17 all, how would the housemaster become aware that
18 a particular boy required to be punished?

19 A. The monks would report back, the prefects sometimes
20 reported back. The housemasters used to walk around
21 a lot, so they were quite aware of what was happening in
22 the school and they would see.

23 I remember once Father MFE seeing me with my
24 hands in my pockets, so ... which was silly because it
25 was against the rules but he punished me, so he did it

1 himself. I got sent occasionally for other
2 misdemeanours, anything that was against the rules, by
3 other members of the staff or ... only once by
4 a prefect, I think.

5 LADY SMITH: What happened to you for having your hands in
6 your pockets?

7 A. With father MFE That was -- he -- I was actually
8 outside his room at the time. He decided that rather
9 than take me into his room for the cane he took me all
10 around the school, telling me, "Come and get the cane",
11 and that is -- sometimes the anticipation of getting the
12 cane was worse than the actual cane, and this was why he
13 did that, to put the fear of God into me.

14 LADY SMITH: Sorry I am not sure I follow. You say he
15 followed you around the school telling you you were
16 going to get the cane?

17 A. Sorry, I followed him. He made me follow him saying,
18 "Come and get the cane, boy, come and get the cane".

19 MR MacAULAY: I think what you are saying is the
20 misdemeanour you mentioned happened outside his room.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And he clearly caught you, as it were, in the act; is
23 that right?

24 A. That was just in the act. But he could have walked me
25 straight into his room, but he didn't, he took me

- 1 around.
- 2 Q. He took you on a trip around the school?
- 3 A. That's right, yes.
- 4 Q. Where did this trip end up?
- 5 A. Back in his room.
- 6 Q. So was it a question of you following him on this
- 7 particular trip and ending up --
- 8 A. Back where we started, yes, and then I got the cane.
- 9 Q. Can I just understand what the procedure was with the
- 10 cane then. If you are looking at Father MFE
- 11 who you are talking about now, how would he cane you?
- 12 A. How?
- 13 Q. How would you cane you? How would he do it?
- 14 A. It varied. For a lot of it he knelt you on a chair and
- 15 you were given strokes on the posterior. For minor
- 16 misdemeanour they had a strap on the hand.
- 17 Q. If you are looking at Father MFE, if he was
- 18 to be using the cane on your posterior, would it be on
- 19 your clothes or not?
- 20 A. It would be mostly with clothes on.
- 21 Q. Were there times when it wasn't?
- 22 A. Just once for me, but I believe it happened to others.
- 23 Q. The once for you, was there a particular reason why he
- 24 did it on your naked posterior rather than on top of
- 25 your clothing?

- 1 A. I don't think it was anything more than my usual
2 reasons, for doing something wrong in the school or ...
3 you know sometimes you got the cane for bad results when
4 you were expected to have better ...
- 5 Q. From him?
- 6 A. The only time I was caned naked was -- I don't know why.
- 7 Q. Did the caning cause injuries?
- 8 A. Well, you had what was called stripes.
- 9 Q. Does that mean there were marks left on your bottom?
- 10 A. Yes. Sometimes just bruises, sometimes a bit of blood.
11 It varied.
- 12 Q. Did you see other boys with such marks on their bodies?
- 13 A. Yes, obviously. When we were changing to go to play
14 rugby or whatever, it was a communal changing room.
- 15 Q. And I think communal showers as well?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. And how commonplace was it to see boys with injuries?
- 18 A. Regularly. Every week at least, yes. They lasted
19 a few -- a while sometimes, so ... it was hard to know
20 whether ... some boys showed it off as a badge of
21 honour, but most didn't.
- 22 Q. You have mentioned the occasion when Father MFE
23 MFE took a roundabout way to caning you. Generally,
24 if you were to be sent to him to be caned, how would
25 that be managed?

- 1 A. If he was in his room it could -- when you got there --
2 it could be you were sent there and when you got there
3 it could be immediate. Sometimes he had a little room
4 beside his room that you would have to wait in.
5 Sometimes, of course, if he wasn't there, you would have
6 to wait until he came back so ...
- 7 Q. And could there be more than one boy waiting?
- 8 A. Oh, yes.
- 9 Q. You describe Father MFE in paragraph 96 as
10 "a bit of a sadist"; can you explain that?
- 11 A. I just -- it's difficult to explain but you can
12 sometimes tell if people are really enjoying it. It's
13 not something that I can write down on paper, but there
14 are times when he was quite gleeful about giving us the
15 cane.
- 16 Q. Generally how many strokes would you get?
- 17 A. Oh anything from one to -- I think the maximum I had was
18 six, but I had heard of people getting more.
- 19 Q. What about the teaching monks, if I can refer to that
20 category of monk? Leaving aside housemasters and the
21 headmaster, did they use any form of corporal
22 punishment?
- 23 A. They didn't have an official cane or stroke but they --
24 the Benedictine monks wear a sash with a long thing with
25 a tassel on the bottom, and sometimes they would get

1 that and just give you a good old swiping in
2 the classroom immediately. Some of the monks were
3 extremely gentle and never did anything like that. Some
4 seemed to have -- I don't know whether they flew into
5 fits of temper, or I can't say for certain what the
6 motivation was, but some of them did use any instrument
7 that was nearby and that was one of the favourite ones
8 because it was always there.

9 Q. You have mentioned the [REDACTED], [REDACTED] MFF and
10 [REDACTED] MKT [REDACTED] Let's just look at [REDACTED] MFF [REDACTED].
11 Were you ever punished by [REDACTED] MFF ?

12 A. No, I never got punished by [REDACTED] MFF .

13 Q. What about [REDACTED] MKT ? Were you ever punished by
14 him?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Is that incident you tell us about later when you made
17 a certain report.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Was that just the one time you were punished by him?

20 A. By him, yes.

21 Q. The other area I want to look at at the moment with you,
22 Donald, is bullying. What can you tell me about
23 bullying at Fort Augustus?

24 A. There was a system where -- among the boys there was
25 bullying and I -- the elders bullied the youngsters.

1 The monks could be very, you know, bullying in the way
2 I have kind of described, if that is considered
3 bullying, but older boys could bully, particularly the
4 new intake, when they had what were called "fags". That
5 was an accepted thing, that the older boys would have
6 a fag from the new intake who would do all their things
7 for them and I think as well it was common for boys to
8 pick on younger boys.

9 Both mental and physical bullying went on and
10 generally speaking it was reasonably rife but
11 fortunately I didn't actually have too much problems.
12 I did first when I first went there, for various
13 reasons -- my Australian accent was one of them because
14 you are different and anybody who was different tended
15 to get bullied.

16 Q. One thing you say in your statement at paragraph 102 --
17 it's on the screen, third line down:

18 "I used to find a lot of things I saw distasteful."

19 This would be the context of bullying. I just
20 wondered what you meant by that description?

21 A. There were a number of times when boys would pick on
22 younger boys and hold them up and, you know, pin them
23 against walls, beat them, this sort of thing, for
24 possibly very little reason, but the attitude I think
25 among a lot of the monks and teaching staff was this

1 part of the way of making a man out of you, so it wasn't
2 really stamped down on in the way I think one would
3 expect today.

4 Q. You also say at paragraph 105 that some boys got bullied
5 a lot, and you go on to say, "It was murder for them".

6 A. There were some boys who were bullied continuously and
7 they really had a bad time. There was a problem should
8 you get involved or not. I am afraid I looked the other
9 way most of the time.

10 Q. When you say, "It was murder for them", would they be
11 upset by --

12 A. Oh, yes, yes.

13 Q. Tearful?

14 A. Very much so, yes. But some boys just lent themselves
15 to be, just by their nature, picked on by other older
16 boys and stronger boys. Sometimes in their own class
17 there were bigger boys and if he was a small boy, he got
18 picked on.

19 Q. I now want to focus on Aidan Duggan, if I may.
20 Aidan Duggan was somebody that your parents met; is that
21 right?

22 A. Yes, what happened was that my parents came to the
23 school. It was sort of open day before the start of the
24 1961 term. My mother met Father Aidan, who was
25 Australian, when they were living in Australia. I had

1 just come from Australia, so she asked him specifically
2 to look out for me and she felt, you know, I would be in
3 safe hands because of the connection.

4 Q. What sort of age would you reckon Father Aidan Duggan
5 was at this particular time when you first went to
6 Fort Augustus?

7 A. Sorry, I beg your pardon?

8 Q. What age do you think he was when you went to
9 Fort Augustus?

10 A. He seemed quite old to me. It's very difficult to put
11 ages on ... he could have been in his 40s, 30s, 40s.
12 I am afraid I wasn't very good at telling ages. It
13 would just be a guess.

14 LADY SMITH: It is very difficult for children to work out
15 adults' ages, so you don't need to apologise for that.

16 MR MacAULAY: During your early period then of your first
17 year, did you go and see Father Aidan?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. How did you get on with him?

20 A. Very well. He was very good. He did a lot of extra
21 things for me. He helped me out sometimes when I was in
22 a bit of a pickle. He helped me particularly at parts
23 of the curriculum -- because the Australian curriculum
24 was so different to the Scottish one, he helped me when
25 I was having a bit of trouble. He gave me private

1 tuition and I did want to learn the piano and at the
2 time he helped me with that because I don't know if he
3 was a good pianist or not, but he seemed like a good one
4 to me at the time.

5 Q. Just in relation to the piano lessons then did something
6 happen when he was teaching you the piano?

7 A. Yes, I didn't really remember that much at the time, but
8 the piano rooms, they had soundproof cladding -- it was
9 a piano in a little room and he would take me in there
10 and of course we would be beside each other and he used
11 to put his hand on me, which I thought was, you know,
12 quite -- kindly really, but then he started sliding his
13 hands up my legs and stuff, so I pushed him away and he
14 didn't really pursue it that much. But the next time he
15 would try it again and at the time I knew it was wrong
16 but on the other hand I thought he was being friendly.
17 I can't describe the emotion. Looking back it is
18 ridiculously stupid but that is the way I thought at the
19 time.

20 Q. And you were wearing shorts at this time?

21 A. In summer I wore shorts, in winter I didn't, so it would
22 be both.

23 Q. Sorry, at this time, the age you were, you were still
24 wearing short trousers?

25 A. I had long trousers in the winter terms and short in

1 the summer.

2 Q. When he was putting his hand up your leg, were you
3 wearing short trousers or long trousers?

4 A. Both, I think.

5 Q. How often did this happen?

6 A. I don't know, quite a few times though.

7 Q. Did he make any contact with your genital area?

8 A. Because I pushed him away, he didn't push it any further
9 than that.

10 Q. You do go on in your statement to tell us about
11 a particular episode -- and I think the background to
12 this episode is that you had received a camera for your
13 birthday; is that right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Was that in 1961?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. So what age were you at that time?

18 A. That would be my 14th birthday, I think.

19 Q. What happened then when you received the camera for your
20 birthday insofar as Aidan Duggan was concerned?

21 A. I was taking photographs and it was before all the
22 modern technology when you had to get the films
23 developed, and the school actually had certain strengths
24 and one of them was quite well-equipped places. A dark
25 room for developing of the films was quite well-equipped

1 and I wasn't able -- I didn't know how to do it so he
2 said he would help me.

3 Q. And can you tell me what then happened?

4 A. He was helping me with the developing and then --

5 Q. You were in the dark room?

6 A. Together, yes, there was a red light outside. He asked
7 me to get some chemical from under the bench, and when
8 I bent down he forced me so I was sort of stuck under
9 the bench and then he pulled his trousers down -- my
10 trousers and his and raised his cassock, or whatever he
11 was doing behind me, and I felt severe pain as he forced
12 himself into me.

13 Q. I think you are saying he raped you.

14 A. Yes. That is a phrase I hadn't used until not that long
15 ago because I never really -- yes, it was -- that is
16 effectively what he did, yes. It is what he did.

17 Q. And it was very painful for you?

18 A. It was very sore and frightening because I actually was
19 very naive.

20 Q. Did you understand what was happening at the time?

21 A. No. I was -- I knew he had done this to me, and
22 I thought I was bleeding, and I had this white blood
23 which I thought was really scary as well --

24 Q. Were you in fact bleeding as well?

25 A. No, I don't think so.

- 1 Q. So what you are saying is that he --
- 2 A. It was like a bit of a whirlwind at the time for me as
3 well, but I remember, you know, being very sore for
4 quite a while.
- 5 Q. When you say you had this white blood, I think you are
6 suggesting he ejaculated?
- 7 A. I presume so, yes.
- 8 Q. Did he say anything to you?
- 9 A. No. He -- he then told -- well, he did he told me to
10 get my trousers on and everything else and then he went.
11 I don't remember him saying anything particularly.
12 I can't -- it's -- I can't recall. I can recall the
13 actual event, but I can't recall all the stuff that went
14 round it. It just seems as if -- it was a whirlwind.
- 15 Q. What did you do?
- 16 A. I was in tears. I went to the shower, where the
17 bathroom was, and I cleaned myself up and all the rest
18 of it. I was quite distraught. Father MFE wasn't
19 there, but I went to [REDACTED].
- 20 Q. Before we come to that, I think you said you were in
21 pain because of this. Did that mean -- how do ... Were
22 you able to sit?
- 23 A. I can't remember. I don't think ... I can't remember
24 that. I can remember moving around --
- 25 Q. So you were moving around for a while?

1 A. Yes. The wash basins and baths and everything were down
2 in the basement and the dark room is up in the new
3 block, and I just didn't know what to do really.

4 Q. Were you shocked?

5 A. I must have been but I can't sort of remember thinking
6 of being shock at the time. I didn't know actually
7 fully -- I couldn't fully understand what had happened.

8 Q. What then did you decide to do?

9 A. Sorry?

10 Q. What did you decide to do?

11 A. I didn't know who to go to. My problem was if I had
12 problems before I would go to Father Aidan. I think
13 I tried to go to Father MFE and then he wasn't
14 available and I -- I wanted to talk to the other boys
15 but it was, although boys talked about the beatings and
16 everything, they never talked about anything like that
17 it was just never spoken. I ended up back in the new
18 wing and I went to see Father MFE who was acting
19 for Father MFF at that time.

20 Q. When you say -- did you mean Father MKT?

21 A. Father MKT.

22 Q. You went to see Father MKT?

23 A. Yes, [REDACTED]

24 Q. How long after the event do you think it was you went to
25 speak to Father MKT?

1 A. I really don't know whether it was -- it was -- this
2 happened in the afternoon and I went before prep so it
3 would have been after lunch, which would have finished
4 about 2ish. Prep started about 6, I think. I really
5 don't remember the time, to be honest.

6 LADY SMITH: Do you remember if it was the same day or was
7 it another day? The same day or not?

8 A. I think so, yes.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

10 MR MacAULAY: What did you tell Father MKT ?

11 A. I told him what had happened to me, and he told me that
12 I had -- I was lying, accused me of lying, and all the
13 rest of that. He told me it was a mortal sin to lie
14 about a priest and I would go to eternal damnation.
15 I thought he was going to really lay into me for telling
16 lies about a priest, because that is what I would have
17 expected him to do, but he didn't. I don't know why,
18 but he didn't cane me on that occasion.

19 Q. I will come on to another occasion in a moment. But
20 just so I can understand the message you were conveying
21 to him when you spoke about this, did you tell him what
22 you have told the inquiry?

23 A. I got about as far as saying that he had pushed me
24 forward and pulled my trousers down and I think that is
25 when he flew into a rage. I wasn't able to continue

1 telling him exactly the full details. He just didn't
2 want to know. He just wanted to lecture me about lying
3 about priests and you know ... I don't recall -- I don't
4 think I actually told him about the fact there was
5 penetration. I don't think he ever let me get that far.

6 Q. How long did this meeting with Father MKT last
7 for?

8 A. It seemed like hours, but it could have only been short.
9 I can't remember. It was just not -- it can't have been
10 terribly long actually. It seemed like it.

11 Q. But what you are saying is that because of what he was
12 accusing you of, you expected to be caned but you
13 weren't?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. What about Aidan Duggan after that? Did you have
16 anything to do with him after that?

17 A. He avoided me actually and I -- I didn't really want to
18 see him either, so we didn't. From what had seemed
19 quite a close relationship, because although he put his
20 hand on me and everything, I still saw him as being the
21 person that was going to be my kind of mentor because my
22 mum had asked him and that, but after that I hardly
23 spoke to him.

24 I recall him actually walking -- when I thought
25 about it recently, I seem to remember him -- I was

1 walking along the corridor and he was walking towards me
2 and he turned and went the other way. So it was a case
3 of he was avoiding me after this and he never helped me
4 with anything or abused me again.

5 Q. What about the other monks? Did you get any impression
6 from the other monks or any other monk that they knew
7 that something had been said against Father Duggan?

8 A. Yes, there were some monks that were very kindly and the
9 one actually who I hear other things about that I --
10 seems strange was Father [REDACTED] MEW [REDACTED] who you mentioned
11 earlier. He was terribly kind to me after that.

12 Q. Was that out of character for him?

13 A. Yes, because he wasn't one of what I would call the more
14 devout of the monks, monk-y, holy, if you like, whatever
15 the word should be.

16 LADY SMITH: It's a small detail, Donald, but you say his
17 name was [REDACTED] MEW [REDACTED] Was it all one word? I know you say
18 somewhere his name was [REDACTED] MEW [REDACTED].

19 A. He was [REDACTED] and it was [REDACTED] MEW [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED] MEW [REDACTED].

20 LADY SMITH: We have seen some different pronunciations and
21 spellings of it; it will help the transcript.

22 A. He taught me. I have his name on the reports and
23 things.

24 MR MacAULAY: The incident you have been telling us about
25 happened after you had got the camera for your birthday

1 and I think we know your birthday was in [REDACTED] So
2 the incident was in that same month or a bit later?
3 A. It would have been after my birthday. It was before the
4 end of term, which would have been mid-December.
5 LADY SMITH: I suppose you would have had to use up a whole
6 film or at least one whole film in your camera before
7 you were developing it.
8 A. I used up a film. I must have used two because I was
9 given two with the camera. But I used them up very
10 quickly because it was new. I took photographs of
11 everything. I think it might have been late
12 October/early November.
13 LADY SMITH: That would take you to the second half of your
14 first term at Fort Augustus.
15 A. Yes.
16 LADY SMITH: Would that be right?
17 A. Yes.
18 MR MacAULAY: What I wanted to get at then because you go
19 home for the Christmas holidays; is that correct?
20 A. I went to Ireland, yes.
21 Q. You went to Ireland. What about your own family? Did
22 you tell your parents what had happened to you?
23 A. Yes.
24 Q. Where was that? Where did you meet up with your
25 parents?

1 A. They must have been in Ireland or I might have gone to
2 Australia. I didn't normally go out for the short
3 holidays. I remember mum and dad being there that
4 Christmas, so I think it was in Ireland.

5 Q. What did you say to your parents?

6 A. I started -- actually it was my mother mainly. I said
7 that he had attacked me and then I told her about
8 the hands on my knee, the earlier bits, because they
9 began to worry me a lot more, and she just told me to
10 not lie because, you know. Her belief is that priests
11 just were holy men and just wouldn't do that sort of
12 thing. She said, "Priests don't do that sort of thing",
13 and it was a belief that she held firmly and there was
14 absolutely no point in going any further. The door was
15 shut on the case, the whole thing.

16 Q. Do you know if your mother spoke to
17 Father [REDACTED] about it?

18 A. She sent a letter because Father [REDACTED] had me in at
19 a later date.

20 Q. After you went back? After the holidays?

21 A. Gosh ...

22 Q. I can put the paragraph of your statement on the
23 screen -- it is actually on the screen in front of
24 you -- where you are telling us about telling your
25 mother in particular and her reaction. You go on to

- 1 say:
- 2 "My mother must have told Father [REDACTED] MKT because
- 3 after Christmas I was called into his office again."
- 4 Does that ring a bell with you?
- 5 A. She must have written or told him. I don't know how
- 6 that information got through. She must have told or
- 7 written to him. That would have been over that
- 8 Christmas.
- 9 Q. Were you then summoned to see Father [REDACTED] MKT
- 10 after you went back?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. What did he say to you on this occasion?
- 13 A. He was extremely worried that I had been talking outside
- 14 the school as well. He told me I was lying and he had
- 15 already told me not to lie, and having told this lie to
- 16 my parents, he gave me the cane.
- 17 Q. I think that is the only time you were caned by him?
- 18 A. The second time.
- 19 Q. So far as the caning was concerned, how was that done?
- 20 Was it on your clothing or --
- 21 A. It was on my clothing. It was -- I had to kneel over
- 22 a chair and he gave me six.
- 23 Q. What about Aidan Duggan then? What happened to him?
- 24 A. I don't really know.
- 25 Q. Did he leave?

- 1 A. He disappeared.
- 2 Q. He disappeared?
- 3 A. Yes. I have heard subsequently he went to various
4 places. There were rumours he had been transferred to
5 some nuns and there was ...
- 6 Q. But in any event --
- 7 A. But we were never informed when priests -- priests were
8 coming and going on a regular basis and we were never
9 informed. They would appear and disappear. It wasn't
10 ...
- 11 Q. In any event, shortly after this incident, he had left
12 the school, is that the position?
- 13 A. Yes. It was a bit after the incident. I'm not sure if
14 it was the following term -- I'm not sure exactly how
15 long he was there for. He was there for a little while
16 after the incident, but not hugely long.
- 17 Q. Apart from telling your mother, did you also speak to
18 your uncle about what had happened?
- 19 A. Yes. My uncle was a very kindly man and he was very
20 sympathetic. He saw priests as priests but he also saw
21 them as men, and that was a big difference between him
22 and my mother which ... we talked about it. He was
23 a great help because I had to go back to Fort Augustus,
24 my parents were not going to take me out and I was very
25 worried, but he said he thought I would be very safe

1 after this because, from everything I had told him, he
2 thought it was fairly likely that the priests discussed
3 this among themselves and that it would not be known.

4 He had experience of problems at school himself so
5 he was in a way one of the first people that I ever met
6 who could understand.

7 Q. Insofar as continuing at Fort Augustus was concerned
8 then, Donald, how was life there after this incident?

9 A. I fell back into the routine and there is a knack in
10 an institution like that that if you excel at something,
11 you are in the limelight, and if you are very bad at
12 something, you are not a limelight. Being in the middle
13 was the best place to be. Don't be the best at
14 anything.

15 If you were the best, boys who were very clever or
16 good at rugby, and then if they had a bad period they
17 used to get really castigated for that because you were
18 letting the side down. The boys that were bad at these
19 things used to get all sorts of punishments. Apart from
20 the cane there was penances and detentions and God knows
21 what for underperformance. But if you are in the
22 middle, it was the safest place to be.

23 Q. And that is where you were?

24 A. I worked very hard at that.

25 Q. We have already touched upon this, Donald, but you left

1 Fort Augustus at the end of the summer term of 1965 and
2 at that time was your family in Singapore?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. I think you spent some time in Singapore after you left
5 Fort Augustus; is that correct?

6 A. Yes, I was there for --

7 Q. You provide us with some information about your life
8 thereafter and in particular what qualifications you
9 obtained and what employment you took on; is that right?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You also tell us a little bit about your personal life.
12 We can read it and we needn't dwell on that.

13 Looking at it broadly, do you think that what
14 happened to you at Fort Augustus had an impact upon your
15 life?

16 A. Yes. But it sort of got worse later on, strangely
17 enough.

18 Q. Sorry?

19 A. It got worse later on for some reason.

20 Q. Are you able to elaborate upon that?

21 A. When I first left, it was completely new life being
22 outside the school, and I threw myself in college and
23 work and ... the memories were there but I didn't have
24 the -- immediately after leaving school I didn't have
25 the sort of -- I had terrible sleepless nights dreaming

1 about the incident with Father -- later on I just got
2 down and worked as hard as I could when I left school.

3 Q. But you have mentioned later on you did develop problems
4 and you had dreams about what had happened; is that
5 correct?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Is that the incident with Aidan Duggan that you dreamt
8 about?

9 A. Yes. In fact, that one incident seemed to overtake in
10 my brain a lot of the other things, like the bad things
11 that went on like the canings, because I don't remember
12 most of them. There were some very good times at
13 Fort Augustus as well which I remember, but the incident
14 with Father Aidan really sort of took precedence in my
15 memory of it, I suppose. There was ... there were times
16 when I didn't dwell on it but there were times when it
17 just came at me, particularly at night, and those hours
18 in bed when I wasn't quite asleep and couldn't get to
19 sleep and things like that.

20 Q. I think you have sought treatment, though.

21 A. I had treatment -- well, I actually developed an alcohol
22 problem, so I was treated by various -- I was in rehab
23 a couple of times for alcohol and then the third time
24 I was put into rehab, after a couple of weeks the
25 counsellor I had said, "We are wasting our time treating

1 you for alcohol", so he sent me to an abuse counsellor
2 who was -- it was the first time I really started
3 addressing this properly.

4 Q. I think you tell us about that in your statement. What
5 I want to move on to now then, Donald, is the reporting
6 of what happened to you by Aidan Duggan. What you tell
7 us in your statement is that in 2013 there was a knock
8 on your door.

9 A. Uh-huh, out of the blue.

10 Q. And who was this coming to visit?

11 A. Sorry.

12 Q. Who was coming to visit you at that time? Who was it?

13 A. My wife was at work and I was getting stuff ready
14 because we were coming up to Galashiels and this guy
15 arrived at the back door out of the blue and said he was
16 from [REDACTED] I didn't believe him. He showed me his
17 credentials and then he said he wanted to talk about
18 Fort Augustus and I said okay. He started showing me
19 and I realised this guy had really researched and so
20 that gave me confidence to open up to him again.

21 I had been previously opened up to my counsellor.
22 It was really the second time I went into any detail
23 with anybody. He was quite persuasive.

24 Q. [REDACTED]

25

- 1 A. That is what he was working on at the time.
- 2 Q. You played a part in this?
- 3 A. Yes. I didn't initially want to but there were some
4 pretty powerful arguments made. Even then, although
5 I had had counselling, I didn't realise -- for a long
6 time I believed I was the only one that had been
7 sexually abused at Fort Augustus and it wasn't until he
8 came and he said he had evidence, not just of
9 Fort Augustus but of other schools, that I realised how
10 widespread it was and he made a very powerful argument
11 that if I didn't do something about it, then it would
12 just continue. He said, "People need to say it and then
13 other people will know that they weren't alone and come
14 forward". He was very convincing and actually he was
15 right.
- 16 Q. Your abuser was Aidan Duggan. I think we have talked
17 about him and the fact that he left some time after he
18 had abused you. Were you able to work out subsequently
19 what his history was?
- 20 A. No. I knew very little about his history until the
21 people [REDACTED] who had been investigating and looking
22 at this -- in fact -- actually, when I first heard it,
23 I was quite appalled that there were accusations of him
24 previously and that he had been transferred to
25 Fort Augustus before that. It seemed incredible to me.

1 I honestly thought when I first knew Father Aidan
2 that he was a really good monk with a pure history.

3 Q. Did you learn that [REDACTED] --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- who had also come to Scotland?

6 A. Yes. I didn't come across him particularly.

7 Q. I think what you set out in particular in paragraphs 145
8 and 146 is essentially information that you have learned
9 over the period of time that you were involved
10 [REDACTED] from other sources.

11 A. A lot of it is, yes. A lot of it is.

12 Q. In paragraph 145, you are setting out that you learned
13 that at one point that Aidan Duggan was sent to a girls'
14 school run by nuns in Lancashire somewhere?

15 A. That was after my ...

16 Q. That was after the incident with you?

17 A. I believe it was a convent, yes.

18 Q. You tell us that -- you make reference to a letter from
19 a local GP in that area, do you see that, towards the
20 top of page 3587. Take a moment to read that.

21 A. Yes, they were --

22 Q. Having read it, can I just ask you this: you make
23 reference to this letter from a local GP saying
24 something along the lines of, "He can't stay down here,
25 we can't handle this". Did you see that letter or was

- 1 that just something you were told about in the letter?
- 2 A. I was told about the letter. [REDACTED]
- 3 [REDACTED]
- 4 Q. You also talk about another letter from the Mother
- 5 Superior of the convent saying roughly the same thing?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Did in fact Aidan Duggan come back to Fort Augustus
- 8 shortly before you left?
- 9 A. He did, but he wasn't on the teaching staff and I didn't
- 10 have anything to do with him.
- 11 Q. That would have been about 1965?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 LADY SMITH: I see from your statement those two letters you
- 14 referred to are letters which you understand to be held
- 15 by [REDACTED] is that right?
- 16 A. Yes, they -- they were part of the investigation that
- 17 I was told about.
- 18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
- 19 MR MacAULAY: Did you also learn that, after being back at
- 20 Fort Augustus, Aidan Duggan was then sent back to
- 21 Australia?
- 22 A. I learned that subsequently, yes.
- 23 Q. Do you know what happened? Did you hear what happened
- 24 there?
- 25 A. Yes. They say he continued to abuse people in

1 Fort Augustus (sic) and there was one in particular who
2 made -- brought a big court case out.

3 LADY SMITH: He continued to abuse people in Australia when
4 he went back?

5 A. I have been told that.

6 LADY SMITH: You said Fort Augustus, but I thought you didn't
7 mean that.

8 A. Sorry, I meant Australia.

9 MR MacAULAY: I think he went back to Sydney.

10 A. I have been told that.

11 Q. It is public knowledge there was a court action raised
12 making allegations of abuse against him; you are aware
13 of that?

14 A. Yes, I am.

15 Q. Can I take you to that part of your statement, Donald,
16 where you talk about lessons to be learned; it's at
17 paragraph 147. You focus on external inspections as
18 being an important thing to have when you are looking at
19 an establishment like Fort Augustus.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Is that correct? You had no knowledge of any
22 inspections taking place at Fort Augustus itself?

23 A. Not in my knowledge while I was there.

24 Q. At 149 you say:

25 "I'd no one to turn to other than the headmaster."

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Is the suggestion there if you had someone who you could
3 have turned to then the position would have been
4 different?
- 5 A. Yes. If there had been external people in authority --
6 the headmaster and the housemasters were really the only
7 people in authority that you could take anything to.
8 Had there been some sort of independent safeguarding
9 system in place where you could go to, somebody
10 independent, then I would have done that, but there
11 wasn't. It is a very remote place, Fort Augustus, it's
12 very insular and those were the only channels that were
13 available at the time.
- 14 Q. You also provide us with some final thoughts from
15 paragraphs 150 onwards. You begin by saying:
- 16 "Not everyone who goes to a boarding school has
17 a bad experience."
- 18 A. Absolutely true, yes.
- 19 Q. "We all suffered the beatings"; should you have?
- 20 A. Should we ...
- 21 Q. Have suffered beatings?
- 22 A. Today I would have said no, but in 1961 I just assumed
23 it was normal.
- 24 LADY SMITH: Really? Beatings that leave weals and cause
25 bleeding? Is that really --

1 A. It did seem normal at the time. It seemed quite normal.

2 LADY SMITH: The fact it seemed normal, as in it was
3 happening, doesn't necessarily mean that it was okay,
4 even by the standards of the day, does it?

5 A. By the standards of the day corporal punishment in
6 schools was seen as normal. My parents --

7 LADY SMITH: Corporal punishment was allowed, I accept that,
8 but what I am becoming, I have to say, more and more
9 interested in is what was actually done in the name of
10 corporal punishment. We have now heard so many accounts
11 of children being left with terrible markings and
12 bleeding from canings, for example, and swellings on
13 their hands, I am just struggling to look at that as
14 being something that would have been acceptable at the
15 time.

16 A. As a boy in Fort Augustus, the canings and the strap
17 I mentioned earlier on the hands which left these
18 bruises were happening to everyone, more so some boys
19 than others, but because it was in the open, everyone
20 knew about it and boys talk about this sort of thing.
21 It just became a sort of -- it is what happens in
22 schools.

23 I didn't really have any knowledge that
24 Fort Augustus at the time was significantly worse than
25 others -- although having been to two Catholic schools

1 before, one boarding and one day, it wasn't as severe as
2 Fort Augustus was. The regime was very different.

3 LADY SMITH: Two? One was in the south of England, I think
4 you said, yes.

5 A. Yes, Ramsgate, yes.

6 LADY SMITH: And then there was the day school in Australia?

7 A. Yes. And in Ramsgate we used to get the cane, but
8 mostly for serious misdemeanours and it wasn't common.
9 And it wasn't many strokes of the cane. The
10 Christian Brothers in Sydney, they had a
11 strap-on-the-hand system, which was actually
12 administered by them. It was done by the actual teacher
13 in the class if there was a reason and it was done in
14 front of class. So the situation in Fort Augustus was
15 like that, only worse, more severe. So it seemed more
16 like an extension than anything fantastically unusual.

17 My parents, they sent me there -- as I have said
18 before, many times, they were expecting corporal
19 punishment, but the level of it, I don't believe they
20 were expecting, no.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 MR MacAULAY: In paragraph 154, Donald, there is some
23 further reference to Father Aidan Duggan, and you say:

24 "I think he had some form of addiction."

25 I think you say that against the background of

1 information you have now discovered. You go on to say:

2 "What I don't understand is why the Catholic Church
3 and the English Benedictines in particular moved
4 Father Aidan around when they knew this problem
5 existed."

6 That is something you don't understand?

7 A. Actually I don't fully understand, but I believe that
8 one of the things that the Catholic Church and the
9 English Benedictines -- and I have only discussed this
10 recently when I was in Ireland earlier this year
11 in March -- was that the Catholic Church's attitude was
12 self-protection to a very large extent and that if abuse
13 and any of these things got out, and were believed by
14 the general congregations, then their standing in the
15 communities would be diminished. I suppose that could
16 be one of the reasons, but I am speculating to some
17 extent there.

18 Q. One point you do make -- and I will take you to this --
19 in paragraph 156, and this is against the context of the
20 fact being that you did report the abuse to the
21 headmaster, and what you say there is:

22 "The daft thing is that if they had gone to the
23 police at the time, in my particular case father Aidan
24 would have been prosecuted and if he had been found
25 guilty, it would all have died."

1 You go on to say:

2 "He would not have gone on to abuse other boys."

3 A. By "died" I meant he would have been found guilty --

4 Q. The point you are making there is if a report had been
5 made, then it would have protected prospective victims.

6 A. If the police had prosecuted him, first of all, he would
7 have been ended up in jail so he couldn't have abused
8 other boys, except people in prison, I don't know about
9 that. But it would also have sent a significant message
10 to other potential abusers, I believe.

11 Because the fact that people were just moved from
12 one place to the other was not really a deterrent to
13 other people who might have similar inclinations.

14 MR MacAULAY: Very well, Donald. Thank you for coming to
15 give your evidence. It has not been easy for you.
16 Thank you for engaging with the inquiry and for
17 answering my questions today.

18 My Lady, no questions have been submitted to me to
19 be put to Donald.

20 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
21 questions for Donald? No.

22 Donald, it only remains for me to thank you so much
23 for engaging with the inquiry as you have done and
24 I know you have done that against the background of also
25 engaging with [REDACTED] previously and opening up a past

1 that maybe you thought you were never going to talk
2 about again and you have come along here today to talk
3 about what you have put in your written statement to us.
4 It's enormously helpful for me to have heard that and it
5 cannot have been easy for you. I am very grateful to
6 you for having come along. Thank you and I am now able
7 to let you go.

8 (The witness withdrew)

9 Mr MacAulay.

10 MR MacAULAY: That is it for this week, my Lady, and indeed
11 until we come back on 10 September.

12 LADY SMITH: We will be resuming hearings on 10 September.

13 I hope people don't think we go away and do nothing
14 between now and 10 September, because that is not right.
15 The inquiry will be, as I alluded to this morning,
16 carrying on its important work in the meantime.

17 But I wish any of you who are going to have a break
18 in the summer between now and then a good break, and
19 I look forward to seeing everyone who is interested in
20 this case study again on 10 September. Thank you very
21 much.

22 (4.17 pm)

23 (The inquiry adjourned until
24 Tuesday, 10 September 2019 at a time to be determined)

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11
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14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Housekeeping1

"DUNCAN" (affirmed)4

 Questions from MS MacLEOD5

"LIZ" (sworn)99

 Questions from MR MacAULAY99

DONALD ANGUS MacLEOD (sworn)149

 Questions from MR MacAULAY150

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7