

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Frederick Wooltorton SMITH

Support person present: No

1. My name is Frederick Wooltorton Smith. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1938 and I am presently 81 years of age. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. As an adult I learned from my family in Scotland that I was born in Dundee and that I was handed over to the nuns of the Sisters of Nazareth when I was just a baby. I believe the nuns then took me down to England and registered my birth at Chelmsford in Essex.
3. I think my mum was called [REDACTED] and my dad was [REDACTED]. I never met my dad who I think was English. Apparently I had one step-brother, one step-sister, two sisters and a brother, but they're all dead now. All my family except my dad were from Dundee and I think of myself as Scottish.

Life in care – UK

Nazareth House records

4. I have been shown a document that was passed to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry by the Sisters of Nazareth from their records. They have me recorded as 'Frederick P. Smith'. I believe the 'P' stands for Patrick and was my baptismal name. The records

do not show my middle name, which is Wooltorton. I have no idea where that name comes from, but I first found out that's what it was when I turned twenty-one and the Child Welfare Department gave me my birth certificate.

5. The records also show that I was baptised at St Joseph's in Maidenhead and detail my parents' names and that my father was a labourer. They say that my parents were Catholic and that they were in very poor circumstances. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6. The records show that I was handed over to the Sisters of Nazareth on 3 December 1938 when I was about eight months old and that I was placed with the Sisters of Nazareth in Lancaster, which I'm told was known as the 'babies home'. After that the records show that I went to Carlisle when I was about two years old. This is all new to me, I didn't know any of this before.

Nazareth House, Carlisle

7. I remember the home at Nazareth House in Carlisle was big and that it had a bit of land. We were supervised by the nuns and I remember we used to have to line up every day for a spoonful of malt out of a big ceramic jar. I liked that, that was a real bonus.
8. I don't remember much of the routine other than going to church a lot and vague memories of going to school in the orphanage. I don't remember much about mealtimes, other than I think the food was alright. I think it was usually porridge in the morning, a cup of tea and a piece of bread. Dinner was soup and bread mostly and tea was much the same.
9. I think I had friends there amongst the other boys, but I can't remember. I don't recall any of their names, but I do know that there was a mixture of Scottish and English boys.
10. We used to clean our teeth with salt until the Americans moved into the area for some reason or other. This would have been during the war and I think there must have

been an airbase nearby. They handed over tins of pink toothpaste to the nuns for us and they also brought ice cream and chocolate. That was the first time I'd ever tasted either.

11. I never had any visitors. I didn't even know I had any family until years later when I was an adult. I don't remember anyone other than the Americans coming to see us either and I certainly don't remember any officials coming.
12. We used to have to do chores like mopping the floors and polishing them, making our beds and things like that, but there was no hard physical work and I found it alright at Nazareth House in Carlisle. The nuns were pretty good. They would give you a rap on the knuckles or a slap with the belt that hung down from their habits, but that was about it.
13. I don't really know what you would have to do to get punished, it's hard to say now. I remember some boys would get a belting from the nuns if they wet their beds, but I'm not sure what else we might get punished for.

Migration

14. I was at Carlisle until 13 November 1947 when I was sent to Australia as a child migrant when I was nine years old.

Selection/information

15. The first thing I knew about going to Australia was when the Mother Superior called us into the hall and told us that some of us were going to be "picked to go for a trip to Australia". We were told we were war orphans and that's why we were going to be shipped out.
16. She told us that a couple of men from Australia were going to speak to us and a couple of Brothers in black dresses came to the orphanage. They were Christian Brothers, but I don't know who they were or what their names were. They told us how good

Australia was and they told us about the sun always shining and about the fruit growing on the trees.

17. After that the two Brothers walked through us all and told each of us to stand in different places. They were selecting which ones of us they wanted to go.
18. Once they had chosen who they wanted, both the Brothers went away for a while, I don't know how long. When they came back we all had to get a medical and a doctor came to the orphanage and checked us out. We were given a clean bill of health and that was us good to go. We left pretty much straight afterwards.

Migration papers

19. I have since obtained a copy of my migration form and I have given a copy to the Inquiry.
20. On the form I am recorded as Frederick Smith from Nazareth House in Carlisle. My guardian is shown as a Sister Mary Fidelis, the Mother Superior, and she has signed the form agreeing for me to go.

Leaving Carlisle

21. There was a whole crowd of boys selected to go to Australia, both Scottish and English, but I don't remember anyone's name. Along with the others, I was put in a little grey suit and socks and given a small suitcase with clothes in it like underpants and whatever. I don't remember having any papers with me or anything.
22. We were put on a bus and taken to the train station, which I would imagine was Carlisle, and then we all got on the train to Southampton. Some nuns went with us as well as the two Brothers who had spoken to us and they were with us all the way to Australia.

Journey on SS Asturias

23. I have a copy of the passenger list for the SS Asturias, which was the ship I went on. I am aware that the Inquiry have a copy of the list as well.
24. The passenger list shows that we arrived in Fremantle, Western Australia (WA) on 10 December 1947. I am recorded as 'Master Frederick Smith', aged nine and male and that the organisation that took us across were the Catholic Immigration authorities.
25. There was a mixture of boys and girls amongst us kids being sent to Australia, but I don't know any names. We weren't allowed to mix with the girls, they were kept separate.
26. We had a ball on the ship. The food was brilliant and there was plenty of it. The nuns and the Brothers couldn't control us because there was such a mob of us. We used to run deckchairs at each other, scream and carry on. The nuns would tell us the boat was going to sink to the very bottom of the ocean if we kept playing up. They must have said that every night. They couldn't hit us because there were other passengers on the boat and they would have been seen.

Arrival in Australia

27. When we arrived in Fremantle and got off the boat, we were all lined up while they took a photo and then guys in suits started talking to us all.
28. There were more Christian Brothers there at the port and we were all put on buses and taken to Clontarf Boys Home, WA. We only stayed a night or so at Clontarf before we were split up and sent to different places.
29. The next thing I knew I was on another bus and heading up to Bindoon Boys' Town, which was sixty miles north of Perth, WA. I don't know who the other boys were who went to Bindoon with me, there were too many of us. I only started getting to know other boys when I got to Bindoon.

Life in care – Australia

30. In 1996 I completed a statement that I called 'Nine years under the Christian Brothers – the fifteen evil ones' in which I detailed the physical, sexual and emotional abuse I suffered during my time in the Christian Brothers' orphanages in Australia.
31. In 2008 I participated in the Redress WA scheme and I also detailed my abuse in my application for that. In addition I have compiled a list of the institutions I was in, which includes the names of the Brothers who abused me and the nature of the abuse.
32. In 2018 I compiled a further statement in which I describe aspects of child migration and how it has affected me.
33. I have provided the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry with copies of all these documents and I can confirm that everything within them is true and accurate.

Bindoon Boys' Town

General

34. I was at Bindoon from December 1947 through to May 1948.

First day

35. When we arrived at Bindoon we were all made to line up on the quadrangle before they split us up and told us what dorm we were to go to. I was put on the verandah and others were given dorms.
36. Then we had to get undressed and put all our gear into a pile. Everything had to be handed over, all of our clothes and all of our cases. Then we were given a pair of khaki shorts and a shirt to wear, no underwear, no socks and no shoes. That was what we wore for the whole time I was at Bindoon. I don't know what happened to the stuff we handed over, I never saw any of it again.

37. At first the Brothers called us by our first names but soon after it was last names. They would just shout out "Smith", [REDACTED], [REDACTED] or whatever.
38. Brother ^{MDJ}[REDACTED] was in charge while I was at Bindoon and he was a big man. A big bastard.

Daily routine

39. When we got up in the morning we went to church and then we had breakfast. Then we went to school and had catechism. After school we were sent outside to chip mortar off old bricks so that the bricks could be used again.

Schooling

40. I was only at Bindoon for a short time and I suppose because I was nine I would have been in Grade One at school. I don't know much about the education.
41. The Brothers taught us and they were very strict. Classes were mainly religious stuff along with reading, writing and arithmetic. I learned nothing at Bindoon, I was always nervous. I was never able to concentrate.

Healthcare

42. If you were unwell you went to the infirmary, which was run by the nuns. I don't remember being ill anytime and the only injuries I ever got were cuts to my hands from chipping mortar off the bricks. I never got any medical treatment for those injuries though.

Work

43. We boys built Bindoon. While I was there most of the work we did was chipping mortar off the old bricks. A truckload of bricks would be brought in and tipped out in the paddock and then we boys would have to separate them and stack them up. After that we would sit in the sun with a hammer, chipping the mortar off them.
44. We never got any money for doing any of the work and we didn't get any pocket money either.

Christmas and Birthdays

45. Christmas was just religious, there was nothing special. The food might have changed on Christmas Day, we maybe got some meat, but there were no toys or presents.
46. At the time I didn't know how old I was. I didn't even know what day my birthday was. If one of my mates told me it was their birthday, I just made it mine too.

Visits and inspections

47. I thought I was an orphan and didn't know I had family. There was certainly never any contact with anyone.
48. The only visitors I remember were guys in suits who would come to Bindoon every now and then. I believe they were government child welfare workers, but I don't know who they were. Some boys were picked out by the Brothers and dressed up before they had to talk to these people, while the rest of us had to stay down in the paddock. I was never chosen to speak to them and I never did.
49. There was what the Brothers called a 'Field Day' once a year when visitors came to see what building work had been done. We had to have clean clothes on and we were given five pence to buy ice cream and tins of condensed milk, but that was just a one off.

Emotional care/support

50. There was nobody to speak to. You learned never to speak to a Brother about anything. If you did you were punished and given a beating, so you learned not to. You learned not to tell your mates anything either because if they spoke to someone else it would eventually get around to the Brothers and you were in trouble. If any of your mates asked you anything, you would just tell them you'd been given a belting and that was it.

Abuse at Bindoon Boys' Town

51. In addition to the abuse I detailed in the documents I have given the Inquiry, I would say that discipline was very harsh at Bindoon. If you were slow at school you would get plenty of beltings from the Brothers and I did. You would get a smack in the mouth or a kick up the bum or the strap across your hands. The strap was unreal. You would get six on the hand or six on the bum.
52. It didn't matter what you'd done. If you did something wrong or you spelt something wrong or you didn't write something properly, the strap would come straight down onto your knuckles or you would get a smack across the mouth without any warning.
53. Beatings were a regular, day-to-day occurrence for all the boys. I never had any injuries, but I lived in fear of the Brothers and spent all my time just trying to do the right thing.
54. Brother MDJ used to ride a horse, which he would ride straight at you and knock you over with if you were too slow. He was a huge man and you could be sitting working away when he would come up on his horse and knock you over.
55. He had a thing called a shillelagh, which was like a walking stick that was all knotted and had a large knob at the end. He'd whack you right across the back with it if he thought you weren't working hard enough. That was the norm. If they thought you didn't work hard you got a good hiding.
56. All my sexual abuse started while I was at Bindoon after I got blisters on my back from the sun and Brother MIU took me into his room and rubbed calamine lotion onto the

blisters. All the Brothers had con jobs of how to trick you so that they could abuse you. That was the first con job and that is how all my sexual abuse started. I have described what happened to me in detail in the documents I have given the Inquiry.

Leaving Bindoon Boys' Town

57. On 28 May 1948 I left Bindoon and was sent to Castledare Boys' Home. I think I was at Castledare until the end of 1949 or the beginning of 1950.

Castledare Boys' Home

General

58. I can't remember who was in charge at Castledare, but two of the Brothers were Brother ^{MYK} and Brother ^{MDF}
59. Castledare was a breeze really. You got a hiding if you were playing up and you had to work to get the eggs in and feed the pigs, but everything was pretty normal. The brutality wasn't the same as at Bindoon.

Daily routine

60. The daily routine at Castledare was much the same as Bindoon though. We had to go to church when we got up in the morning and then we had breakfast before we went to school.

Mealtimes

61. Food was much the same at Castledare as well. Porridge, soup, a bit of meat, that sort of thing.

Schooling

62. It was the same in class at Castledare as well. You would still get the belt across the knuckle or a clip across the ear if they thought you'd done something wrong.

Healthcare

63. Again the nuns who were at Castledare looked after healthcare in the infirmary, although I was never in there for anything.

Work

64. The work at Castledare was minimal really, nothing like it had been at Bindoon. All we had to do was feed the animals on the farm and things like that.

Visitors

65. The only visitors to Castledare were the men in suits from the Child Welfare Department who came to have a look round the place. Again there was a group of boys selected to speak to them, but I never was.

Discipline

66. Discipline wasn't as strict at Castledare. Brother **MYK** and Brother **MDF** would hit you with the straps that they carried, but that was just the system. Their straps were probably about twelve inches long and one inch wide.

Bedwetting

67. Bedwetters were separated and put into a different dorm called the 'wet-the-bed' dorm, which is what we called them, and if a boy wet their bed they would get a belting. Whichever Brother it was would tell them they were "nothing but a filthy animal" and then give them six of the belt across the hand.
68. A lot of kids got very upset, they used to cry their eyes out being called dirty animals or whatever. For some reason it didn't bother me, they were just words.

Abuse at Castledare Boys' Home

69. The only words I didn't like were "Fred" and "Freddie", which meant a different punishment for me. I detail what those words meant in the documents I have given to the Inquiry.

Leaving Castledare Boys' Home

70. About 1950 I moved to Clontarf Boys' Home and I was there for about two years.

Clontarf Boys' Home

General

71. Clontarf Boys' Home really opened the floodgates of abuse, especially the brutality of the physical abuse. All the Brothers were violent, but the ones that were in charge of us were nutcases. One was Brother **MXC**, who was a little fat Irish mongrel. He arrived a year before I left Clontarf, although he wasn't my boss. He was a violent and cruel nutcase.
72. Brother **AKG** was in charge at first before **MXC** took over. Amongst the other Brothers at Clontarf were **AKP**, **MDI**, **AKG**, **MHZ**, **MYK** and another that we used to call **MXD**. His name was Brother **MXD** and he ran the tuck shop. We called him **MXD** because he used to sneak around the bedrooms every night.
73. Among the other staff at Clontarf was an Aboriginal man called **LZD**, who had been the bandmaster there for many years.
74. I think there were probably fifteen Brothers at Clontarf, trying to control two hundred and eighty boys and they did so with violence.

Leisure time

75. Despite the brutality of the Brothers, I made a lot of friends in Clontarf. We used to play cowboys and indians and we had a lot of fun amongst ourselves. It wasn't all bad, we used to swim a lot and play handball in the courts that were there.

Schooling

76. My education stopped at Clontarf. I got called into Brother **AKG** office not long after I got there and he told me that I was 'uneducationable'. He said that Brother **MDI** had told him I wasn't learning at school and so from the next morning I was to be with Brother **MHZ** working in the piggery and milking the cows.
77. I had no more schooling after that, just catechism in the morning.

Healthcare

78. If you broke an arm or a leg when you were climbing the trees you were taken off to hospital, but anything else that could be fixed at the home had to be done there. We used to have a fireworks night in November and one year a rocket went straight into the eye of one of the other boys, **[REDACTED]**. It took his eye out and he was taken away to hospital, but that was unusual.
79. If you cut yourself working or if one of the Brothers had kicked you so hard that you couldn't move, they dealt with it at the orphanage. It didn't matter how serious it might have been, the Brothers dealt with it because they had to answer to the Child Welfare Department.

Religious instruction

80. As well as catechism in the morning, along with the other boys I had to go to church every morning and every evening.

Work

81. I started my first fulltime labouring job at Clontarf when Brother **AKG** sent me to work with Brother **MHZ** instead of going to school.
82. All the work was farm work, which I didn't mind. I was quite happy working with the chickens, milking the cows at three o'clock in the morning and feeding the pigs, because while I was doing that I was away from the Brothers and I wasn't getting belted. Occasionally though one of the Brothers came down to the paddock and if they thought something was a bit dirty or whatever, they'd get me.
83. Clontarf wasn't on the mains sewage network, it had its own septic tank and we had to empty it. There would be a few boys, dressed only in our shorts, filling buckets which we would pass to each other and empty into a drum on the back of a trailer. That was three weeks of dirty work cleaning it out and all we got was a block of chocolate for doing it.

Bedwetting

84. There was a 'wet-the-bed' dorm at Clontarf too and before I was put up to the workers' dorm, I was in there. We used to have to put our sheets over our heads in the morning and stand out in the sun until they dried. The Brothers would line us up in the quadrangle so that all the other boys could see us and make fun of us. Once the sheet had dried you had to put it back on your bed and make the bed.

Abuse at Clontarf Boys' Home

85. There wasn't one Brother at Clontarf who was not violent. I don't mean just a clip across the face or a backhander, they used their fists, their boots, or any weapon they could get their hands on. They ruled by fear and they didn't care who they got stuck into. I have described what they did to me and others at Clontarf in the documents I have given the Inquiry.
86. They would make you stand up against the wall and punch you in the face so hard that the back of your head smashed against the bricks.

87. The Brother we used to call MXD [REDACTED], Brother MXD [REDACTED] would sneak around the bedrooms at night. He was so quiet you couldn't hear him coming. He would belt kids and then to shut them up he would give them a block of chocolate.
88. I was also sexually abused by the bandmaster, LZD [REDACTED]. It's only now, more recently, that I have associated his behaviour with sexual abuse because, unlike the Brothers, there was never any pain involved.
89. LZD [REDACTED] used to put lipstick on me and on other boys and would make us put on girls' dresses in the band room, which was a relatively private area. Then he would ask us to fondle his genitals while he did the same to us. I don't know how often this happened, but it was certainly on multiple occasions.
90. If you stepped out of line, it didn't matter what was there, Brother MXC [REDACTED] would pick it up and smash it across your head. He would use a bit of four-by-two wood on you, or a bit of pipe, or a rifle butt across the head if we were out shooting the kangaroos.
91. In the kitchen was a very large, commercial-sized, galvanised trough, which we used to wash the dishes in. One day I was in the kitchen when Brother MXC [REDACTED] told a young boy to put his hands into the trough, which was full of very hot water. The boy said "It's hot Brother" and wouldn't do so and MXC [REDACTED] got very angry. He picked the boy up and bodily threw him into the hot trough and the boy's head and whole body went under. I could see the boy was bright red and he was screaming his head off so we boys took him straight to the infirmary, where he stayed for about a week.
92. Brother MXC [REDACTED] was gun crazy and one day while we were all lined up to go into church, he shot all the pet dogs that we had. After he had done that, he told us boys to get the horses from the stables and take them to the piggery, where he shot them too. After that, we boys had to cut the horses up into pieces and throw the pieces into a very large cooking vat. Then we cooked the horsemeat, which was fed to the pigs and we had to bury the dogs.

93. As a result, we refused to go into church and one of the wilder boys started up a shout that we all joined in. The Brothers hid in their quarters and called the police until eventually we all settled down.
94. While the Brothers were hiding, the boys who were the Brothers' pets wrote down the names of the ringleaders. I don't know how they picked me out, but I was supposed to be a ringleader. Once the Brothers got hold of all of the ringleaders, they belted us. They absolutely flogged us and as a result I was shifted to another orphanage at Tardun.

Leaving Clontarf Boys' Home

95. On 24 September 1952 I was moved from Clontarf to Tardun Farm School and I was there until 4 May 1954.

Tardun Farm School

Daily Routine

96. All I did at Tardun was work, no school, from when I was fourteen until I was sixteen.
97. Along with the other boys we would do the fencing, crush rock, harvest and seed the wheat and the barley. We also dealt with the livestock, feeding the sheep and working in the shearing sheds, working with the cattle and feeding the pigs. It was full-on hard work and all for no pay.
98. There were seventy-three thousand acres at Tardun and all the paddocks were big. It was hard physical work, especially doing what we called 'sucker-bashing'. After all the scrub was cut down, it was bulldozed up into heaps and we'd have to walk the three-hundred acre paddock with axes and chop the roots of the scrub so that it wouldn't grow again.

99. We had to cut the fence poles from the trees and drill each pole with a brace and bit as there were no electric tools. Rock crushing was the worst job. The rocks were crushed by a machine. We fed the rocks by hand onto the rollers and we would get showered with splinters of rocks and get cuts all the time.
100. It was a full working day from eight o'clock in the morning until four-thirty in the evening. We would go out into the paddock with a jam sandwich for lunch and that was it until we finished in the evening and went in for a shower. After that we went to church.

Leisure time

101. The only time we had off was on a Saturday and Sunday when we could play games amongst ourselves. We would also set rabbit traps and just muck around.

Healthcare

102. I was medically neglected in Tardun. At the time I didn't know what it was, but I've since found out I contracted rheumatic fever.
103. My wrists started to swell up at first and then my ankles and then my knees. I was in constant pain. I even used to have to crawl on my bum to get to the toilet. Half the time I wouldn't make it and if that happened I would get a belting from one of the Brothers, even though I used to apologise to them for messing myself.
104. I would get a shower and a change of shorts, but this went on for months and I got no medical attention. I was never even sent to the infirmary.
105. Eventually one morning I was in so much agony I couldn't even get out of bed. Brother AKJ came up to me and told me to get up, but all I could move were my eyes, everything else was so swollen and painful. I couldn't talk so AKJ grabbed me by the head, pulled me out of bed and stood me up, but I just collapsed. I saw fear in his eyes and I was taken to hospital and kept in there for sixty-one days.

Visitors

106. Again at Tardun, guys from Child Welfare would come in their suits and hats to have a look around. Special boys, who we used to call 'pets' were picked out to talk to them there as well. We were kept out of the way.

Abuse at Tardun Farm School

107. In some way, by the time I got to Tardun, I knew I was being conned by the Brothers so that they could sexually abuse me, but I didn't understand it. I didn't know what it meant. I detail what happened to me at Tardun in the documents that I have given to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.
108. Tardun was another very brutal place where the Brothers used to belt us, punch us and beat us daily. Brother **LZG** was in charge and two of the worst Brothers were **LZE** and **LZF**.
109. **LZG** was Irish and I used to have to go to him for special treatment because I wasn't working hard enough when I had the rheumatic fever. I would be told to go to his office and he'd use a bamboo cane on me.
110. Even while I was suffering with rheumatic fever, I still had to work, I was still getting hidings and I was still getting sexually abused.

Reporting of abuse at Tardun Farm School

111. Sometime in 1953, while I was in hospital with rheumatic fever and after I had started to feel better, one of the nurses caught me playing with myself. She couldn't understand that I wasn't embarrassed, but I had no idea at the time that it was wrong. I told her a bit about my sexual abuse by the Christian Brothers.
112. The following day my doctor, Dr Lynch, came to me and asked me a whole lot of questions about the abuse. He was shocked when I told him what happened in the orphanage.

113. He mentioned it to the Christian Brothers and, although my sexual abuse didn't stop, the brutality did.
114. I was still pretty ill after I left hospital and my meals improved. I had to have eggs and bacon in the morning and I had to get decent meals, not just a bowl of soup and a piece of bread. I also had to have plenty of full cream milk, whereas the other boys only got separated milk.
115. About a year after that I tried to tell a Mr White of the Child Welfare Department about what was happening to me at Tardun. He had been made my probation officer until I turned twenty-one, although I never understood why because I hadn't been in jail.
116. He asked me how the orphanage was and I started talking. I told him all the heavy stuff about the abuse. Eventually he came back to me and told me that they had stopped us getting our heads shaved and getting six whacks of the belt on the bum without our pants on. I wondered what use that was.
117. He told me they knew all about the abuse, but that there was nothing more they could do.

Leaving Tardun Farm School

118. On 17 March 1954 I learned for the first time that this was my birthday and that I was sixteen. I was told this by Brother ^{LZG} [REDACTED] who called me into his office. He had ^{AKJ} [REDACTED] in with him and he told me, "Smith, we've tried our best to do the right thing by you, to educate you, but you're just a hopeless bugger". He said, "One day they're going to make a rope and they're going to hang you".
119. ^{AKJ} [REDACTED] was told to take me to the railway station and I was given a little case with some sandwiches in it and that was it. That was the end of my stay with the Christian Brothers and that was when I found out my age. ^{LZG} [REDACTED] told me I was sixteen years old and that I was born on [REDACTED] 1938.

Life after the orphanages

120. That was my last contact with the Christian Brothers and I went straight onto working on farms as soon as I left.
121. I wanted to do an apprenticeship in either painting or plumbing, but because I was uneducated I couldn't take one on.
122. I joined the army on 1 February 1958 and stayed in until June 1964. I was in the 28th Infantry Battalion and the Cameron Highlanders. I never went overseas, but I enjoyed the army. I was used to the discipline, but in the army there was no brutality.
123. I'm sorry that I left when I did, but there again, I couldn't get promoted even if I had stayed in because I was uneducated. I couldn't write or spell and so I couldn't do the forms.
124. After I left the army I went on the oilrigs, mainly driving trucks all round Australia, looking for oil.
125. I met my wife [REDACTED] and after a while we got married. We never had any children.

Reporting of abuse after leaving

126. Unfortunately when all the abuse was going on, the local police commissioner, a bloke whose name, I think, was O'Brien, put an embargo on any reporting and said that the police didn't want to hear about any of it. He claimed that the Brothers didn't do that sort of stuff and that the boys were lying.
127. Years later, in the 1990s, I got in touch with the sexual abuse team in the police and told them about my abuse. I had a good session with the police actually, they were very understanding.
128. Eventually a detective sergeant caught up with [REDACTED] LZE and a couple of the other Brothers. One of the Brothers, I don't know which, admitted it, but couldn't be touched

because he had been eighteen at the time and was underage. Brother MDF was taken to court, but the judge said that he wasn't fit to stand trial.

Other action taken

129. It took me a long time to write 'Nine years under the Christian Brothers – the fifteen evil ones'. In 1964 I started talking to others and thinking about everything that had happened to me and I got friendly with a bloke who was in the University Regiment while I was in the army. He told me that he couldn't understand why nothing worried me. I wasn't concerned about any punishments or being confined to barracks, I just brushed it off.
130. He thought something must have happened to me in my life and I told him about my time in the orphanages. He was shocked and said I should write it down.
131. In 1969 I started to write and had about a hundred pages so I whittled it down a bit. I gave it to another mate who had been in the same situation as me and he tidied it up, although it is all my own words. Eventually we got it down to twenty-one pages and I finished it in December 1996. I gave it to my lawyers sometime between 2010 and 2012.

Redress/Other Inquiries

132. In 2008 I submitted an application to the Redress WA scheme and I was eventually awarded forty-five thousand Australian dollars. I have provided a copy of my redress application to the Inquiry.
133. I have also had a private session with one of the commissioners from the Australian Royal Commission at a hotel in Perth. I felt really good after that session, the psychiatrist was very good and everything went well.

134. I have never taken part in any of the court cases there have been against the Christian Brothers in the past although my lawyers are now representing me in cases against them, the State Government and the Federal Government. They are all to blame.

'The Fifth Estate'

135. I am aware that the Inquiry has a copy of a book called 'The Fifth Estate', which has my account in it.
136. I was approached by the author, who was an ex-police officer called Terence, and he told me he wanted to put my story in it. I don't know how he got hold of my name. He wanted to write my story but I insisted it had to be my words.

Treatment/support

137. I participated in the 'Towards Healing' programme that the Christian Brothers set up. I had to meet some social workers and one of them told me that I had to try and see the Brothers side of it before I could be healed. They offered all sorts of excuses for the Brothers, saying that they weren't trained, that they had varicose veins and other stuff. I told the social workers I wasn't interested in what the Brothers' problems were and that I didn't like the social workers' attitude.
138. They sent me to a psychiatrist, a Susan Priest, who asked me a whole lot of questions as well. She never understood me and it didn't do a thing for me. Like the social workers, she told me I had to forgive the Brothers, but there's no way in the world I'm going to do that.
139. I believe that around 1997 there was a UK Health Committee Inquiry in London and that somebody from the Swan Clinic in WA put in a submission about what happened to the child migrants. I'm told that my account was included in that submission. Following that, I was sent to the Swan Clinic and I saw a psychiatrist there as well. The psychiatrist wanted me to have a few sessions, but I didn't feel I needed it.

140. I have had more counselling and I have had to see psychiatrists through my lawyers, but I haven't seen anyone for years. I don't think it helps, things are in my mind all the time anyway and I don't think it does me any good. I don't think anything would really help. I'm pretty alright.

Apologies

141. I apologised thousands of times and shed so many tears over the years in those orphanages for things that I never did, especially when I was being sexually abused. Any apologies now mean nothing to me.
142. The Australian Government and the UK Government have apologised, but I think it's just words. They don't really mean it and they don't understand what went on.

Records and family tracing

143. I have spent a long time trying to get my records. They have come in dribs and drabs over the years and I don't remember now where I got them all from. There are no health records in any documents I have obtained, only the rheumatic fever is mentioned.
144. I also have a number of photographs of me while I was in the orphanages that I got from a book the Christian Brothers had out.
145. I have given a copy of my baptism certificate to the Inquiry, which shows that I was baptised at St Joseph's, Maidenhead, Berkshire on 15 December 1938.
146. According to my records I was born in England, but when I'm asked now I just say I'm Scottish. I prefer to believe what my sisters and other relatives told me, rather than the nuns.
147. I don't know when it was, but one night I got a call from Margaret Humphreys of the Child Migrants Trust (CMT) who told me that a newspaper in England had somehow got hold of my story. After that, the newspaper flew me over to Scotland to meet my

family who all lived in Dundee. The journalists were there with me at the airport, with their cameras, when I met my brother and two sisters.

148. Everyone was bawling and snivelling and I was thinking that I didn't know any of them from a bar of soap. I couldn't handle it.
149. I spent time with them individually, but I couldn't relate to them. We said that we'd keep in touch and wrote to each other, but after a while the letters just dropped off.
150. I went back to Dundee another time after the Bishop in Scotland paid for a trip through my family. I met my sister's son-in-law [REDACTED] and stayed with him and he drove me around a bit. I'm hoping to get another trip to Scotland funded by the CMT soon, which will be my third time going over.

Nationality

151. It's weird because when I was in the army I could have travelled anywhere in the world and I didn't need a passport, but what a lot of trouble it was when I did need one when I was in my mid-thirties.
152. I didn't know what to do. I had no paperwork, I had no birth certificate, I had nothing. Eventually, with a bit of help from the Child Welfare Department who came up with some paperwork, I managed to get an Australian passport, although I did have to pay for it.
153. I now get a state pension and there's no problem with getting benefits or anything like that.

Impact


154. The statement that I made in 2018 and which my lawyers provided to the Inquiry details a lot of the impact my time in the orphanages has had on me.

155. The rheumatic fever and the effects it had and still has on my health was bad, but being uneducated was the worst thing throughout my life. It affected my chances of getting an apprenticeship, getting promoted in the army and getting on in life. It cost me big time.
156. When I was still under the Child Welfare and in my late teens, I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a melanoma from not having a shirt on or wearing any sun screen while I was working in the paddock at Tardun. I had major surgery and they took all my glands out, right to the middle of my spine. I was in hospital for six or seven weeks.
157. The fact that my wife [REDACTED] and I don't have kids stems from the Christian Brothers and the brutality I went through. Although [REDACTED] wanted kids I said no. I couldn't bear it if something were to happen to me and the kids had to go into an orphanage. That was the only reason we never had children.
158. I wouldn't wish what happened to me on anyone and I know that it is still going on.

Final thoughts/Lessons to be learned

159. People who look after children should be professionals, they shouldn't be untrained. They have to know how to handle children. There is no doubt that we boys in the orphanages would have been difficult, but the Brothers had no idea how to deal with us.
160. They need to have compassion and they need to know how to pick up how a child is feeling, their moods and whatever, instead of using violence as the Brothers did. Whether its sexual or physical, violence has got to be eliminated completely.
161. It used to get me on a war footing when the social workers I had to see after I left the orphanages said to me, "I know what you're going through". They didn't have a clue. People need to understand and they need to be professional.
162. I have no drama about my story being public because if it can help someone it'll be such a bonus.

163. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed... 
Dated... 22.08.2019.